

## STATE COLLIERIES.

## JAMES MINE.

Underground development work was carried on continuously throughout the year, and the results obtained were very satisfactory. The coal produced is of excellent quality for household purposes and has a ready sale. The mine is now in a position to meet all the requirements of the Department for household coal for the depots.

## OUTPUT AND SALES.

The operations of the State coal-mines and State coal-depots for the year ended 31st March, 1923, are briefly reviewed hereunder.

*Liverpool Colliery.*—The gross output for the year was 134,320 tons, as compared with 116,285 tons for last year, an increase of 18,035 tons.

*James Colliery.*—The gross output for the year was 25,797 tons, as compared with 2,889 tons for last year, an increase of 22,908 tons. The colliery did not commence to actively produce coal until August, 1923.

A comparative statement for the two years is shown hereunder :—

Mine.	Output in Tons, 1923-24.		Output in Tons, 1922-23.	
	Gross.	Net.	Gross.	Net.
Liverpool .. ..	134,320	129,663	116,285	112,358
James .. ..	25,797	24,036	..	2,889

NOTE.—The difference between the gross and the net output is the allowance for mine consumption and waste. In addition to the above 5,923 tons of coal were purchased for resale, of which 3,522 tons were purchased from co-operative parties on the West Coast.

The disposal, inclusive of stock on hand at the beginning of the year, was as follows: Supplied to—Depots, 45,124 tons; railways, 3,666 tons; other Government Departments, 6,117 tons; shipping, 26,598 tons; gasworks, 71,440 tons; other consumers, 4,870 tons: total, 157,815 tons.

The total sales of State coal from the Liverpool Mine for the year amounted to 129,329 tons, value £204,176, as compared with 112,515 tons, value £180,534, for last year—an increase of 16,814 tons, with an increase in value of £23,642.

The average price realized by the mine on the total sales for the year was £1 11s. 6·89d., a decrease of 6·20d. on last year's average. This decrease is due to sales to Christchurch depot being changed from a c.i.f. Lyttelton basis to f.o.r. Rewanui consequent upon the opening of the Otira Tunnel.

The total sales of State coal from the James Mine for the year amounted to 22,693 tons, value £36,817, giving an average of £1 12s. 5·37d. per ton.

The sales of coal, &c., through the medium of the depots totalled 119,387 tons, value £246,976, as against 87,042 tons, value £187,057, for last year.

The profit at the mines was £15,114, and the depots, &c., £5,180, making a total of £20,294, out of which £4,552 was applied to the Sinking Fund Account, leaving £15,742 to be carried forward. There was keen competition in the sale of coal during the year, owing mainly to large importations of coal by private enterprise from Australia.

Losses on coal sold to miners, concessions in the form of special railway facilities, and of allowances for railway fares to miners and workmen amounted to £4,931, and this sum was allowed for in arriving at the net profit for the year.

## TREE-PLANTING—STATE COAL AREAS.

The question of obtaining supplies of suitable timber for use at the State collieries is a most important one; and, in order that requirements may be assured in the future, an area of about 84 acres has been planted at Waikokowai. Arrangements have also been made to plant an area on the State Colliery Reserve near Dunollie, where it is proposed to plant annually for the next three years an area of 75 acres.

At Waikokowai the trees planted consisted mainly of *Pinus radiata* and Eucalyptus, and it is proposed to plant Douglas fir and Eucalyptus at Dunollie.