BLUE METAL AT BOMBO

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The enterprise of the State Metal Quarries is well shown by their installation of an all-electric navvy at the Bombo quarry. The navvy is the first of a pair of these machines which will be in full working order within a few months, the second navvy having already completed her tests in readiness for shipment from England.

Speed, indeed, has been the essence of the job, as the unloading of the various parts of the navvy at Bombo was not commenced until the 3rd of April, with the Easter Holidays intervening, and the men are already within sight of the completion of their work. The navvy was brought from Sydney by road, and a six-wheeler lorry was necessary to take the heaviest piece of all, the massive base which alone weighs 13½ tons. Complete, the navvy has a total weight of a hundred and two tons and its rapid assembling and erection is a credit to the men engaged in the job.

The steam navvy, an earlier model made by Messrs. Ruston and Hornsby, who have constructed the new machine, was the best of her kind at the time, but the "No. 25" all-electric will be able to show her plenty of points.
The capacity of the new navvy is three and a half cubic yards (roughly about eight tons each lift), while that of its predecessors was only two and a half. The new bucket, a very capacious affair, weighs six tons itself.

Coming to the technical detail, the new navvy is electrically-controlled in every motion. It uses a 415 voltage and obtains the current from an eighty foot trailing cable. The main motor develops 140 horsepower.

There is a reminiscence of the war in the caterpillar tracks, heavy and efficient as those on the famous Tanks, tracks which take any kind of country in their stride. Another novel feature is the poise of the huge super structure which swings round on a ring of ball-bearing rollers.

The navvy can work at every conceivable angle, and yet the controls appear to be as simple to operate as those of an ordinary tram.

The other men in charge under Mr. P. A. Dean are Messrs. T. Tongue and J. F. Kelly (Ruston and Hornsby), their offsiders being Messrs. Tom Kemp, W. Longbottom. On the steam navvy were Mr. Cecil Fleming, the driver, with his assistant, Mr. J. McDonald.

When the steam navvy has finished its work of erection at the Bombo quarry it is to be dismantled and taken to the Kiama State quarry, where it will commence its second career.

The two electric navvies for Bombo will cost approximately £26,000, but will, of course, effect a tremendous reduction in handling charges. The output of the quarry will also be very largely increased.