

be obtained at a very small cost wherever required. The output of coal for the year was 22,382 tons, and the average number of men employed thirty-five.

*Phoenix Mine, Hikurangi* (R. McEwan, manager).—The work carried out in this mine has been very limited. In the early part of the year the operations were mostly confined to taking out pillars which are now exhausted, and the manager's attention is now directed to opening up the mine near the railway, some considerable distance away from the old workings. A small shaft has been sunk to a depth of 40 ft., and a small engine erected to pump the water out. This will drain the dip incline where the coal is to be raised to the surface and then conveyed by a short length of tramway to a hopper on the side of the railway. The prospects of the mine opening out well are more hopeful than have been the case for some time past, the work carried out being of a more satisfactory nature. The output of coal for the year was 6,234 tons, and an average of fourteen men were employed.

*Ngunguru Mine, Kiripaka* (A. H. Taylor, manager).—The seam of coal in this mine is operated on from three adit levels from the surface, and the workings from each adit level is alphabetically termed the A, B, and C sections. To reach the mine a steep incline tramway is constructed on the surface for a distance of 8 chains in length. This rises to a vertical height of 154 ft., then a short incline with an easy grade enters the A section of the mine, which has been worked for the last eleven years. This section has produced a large quantity of coal, the seam varying from 2 ft. to 6 ft. in thickness. Considerable difficulties have been encountered owing to the number of faults met with. A large quantity of fireclay has been obtained from here, and being of good quality a good price was paid for it in Auckland. This portion of the mine will be worked out in the course of a few months. B section: In the adit incline the seam dipped 1 in 9, and is cut out in the north heading by a fault that throws the coal up 46 ft., and south of the heading the coal thins out to nothing. As there is no solid coal now left the work here is confined to taking out the pillars. C section: An incline of 3 chains in length and a grade of 1 in 4 connects this section with the main tramway. The coal was intersected a few feet in from the entrance to the adit, where it was sunk down on and also driven upon. The seam here has varied from 2 ft. to 5 ft. in thickness and is of good quality, but a succession of faults with little strips of coal lying between them tends to depreciate the value of this section of the property. The company put down two boreholes near the Panipo Coal-mine on the side of the river, and discovered the seam of coal in one bore to be 14 ft. thick and in the other 16 ft. thick; this is some distance away from the present workings. The output of coal during the year was 17,824 tons, a slight decrease on the previous year. An average of fifty men were employed. The ventilation was good and the work generally carried out in an efficient manner.

*Kiripaka Mine, Panipo* (G. Clemo, manager).—The old mine on the top of the spur was worked out on the 5th May, and just as this was finished coal was discovered at a much lower level near the side of the river, and here a mine has been opened out by adit levels at a very small outlay. The seam at this new opening has varied from 6 ft. to 16 ft. in thickness and is of very fair quality, and the prospects of the company having a good mine are most encouraging. Boring is also being carried on at another portion of the property to the dip of their present workings, and in one borehole the coal was found to be over 12 ft. thick. The output of coal for the year was 12,011 tons, a decrease of 2,127 tons as compared with the previous year; and an average of sixteen men were employed.

*Mangapapa (Mokau) Mine*.—Operations in this mine are still very limited and the output small. A Sydney syndicate intended to purchase the mine and for some time took an interest in opening it up with a view to increasing the output, and spent a considerable amount of money in the building and purchasing of boats to convey the coal from the mine to the market ports. In this latter scheme they were very unfortunate, as neither the s.s. "Mokau" nor the s.s. "Mangapapa" were suitable for the trade, being either too large for the river or of too great a draught. I understand that in consequence of these drawbacks the syndicate has given up the project. The property is now in the hands of Mr. Stubbs, and the s.s. "Manakau" and s.s. "Ngunguru" are engaged in carrying the coal from the mine to the ports. The operations in the mine generally are being supervised better than formerly. The ventilating-furnace has been further improved, which has left little to complain of on my last visit of inspection. In the main heading—which was extended in a northerly direction—a fault was met which had the effect of throwing the coal down 8 ft. After following down the fault to the depth named it was found that the floor of the coal would come back to the same level as that worked on the south side of the fault and thus be water-level-free. The coal is now being opened up on the north side of the fault, and it will not be necessary to penetrate through the fault as each bord comes up to it, as only a return airway will be put through where required. The output of coal from this mine for the year was 6,150 tons, an increase of 1,900 tons over the previous year. An average of thirteen men were employed.

*Taupiri Coal-mines, Huntly* (E. S. Wight, manager).—During the past year operations in the different sections of this company's property have been systematically carried on, and although the Kimihia section for the last six months has contributed very little towards the output, yet the amount of coal won from the mines shows an increase of 6,293 tons over the preceding year, the largest tonnage having been obtained from Ralph's section, on which a considerable amount of improvements have been effected, and others are being carried out both on the surface and underground, which will enable the output to be considerably increased if found necessary, and the coal handled more cheaply and expeditiously than hitherto. On the top of the shaft a new set of poppet-legs are being erected to replace the old ones which were found to be inadequate for an increased output. Boreholes, protected by iron tubing, have been put down from the surface and connected with the main underground workings for the purpose of installing an endless-rope system of haulage on the main line towards that portion of the mine under the Waahi Lake. This haulage arrangement will be ready for work in a few months' time. The bottom of the shaft and a portion of the main hauling-road have been lighted up with electricity. This is a great improve-