

be effected for probably two years, owing to the distance that has to be driven, and to other causes consequent on the anticlinal formation of the floor of the coal-seam. A series of boreholes is being put down from the surface to ascertain the depth of the floor of the coal-seam so that headings can be driven to a uniform grade, as they will be used later on as haulage-roads. I have made several visits to the mine, and found the working-places in good order, and the mine ventilated. I examined the damaged pillar area in the old workings under the river, and believe no additional damage has resulted in the last year. Nothing has been done in the direction of strengthening these pillars. At the close of the year the manager reported that a creep had set in among the pillars in the No. 3 south-west section of the mine. The area is free from water overlying the coal, and steps were immediately taken to close off the area to prevent a mine-fire which might take place as the result of coal-crushing. The output for the year amounted to 91,771 tons of coal. One hundred and seventy-two men were employed.

*The Extended section (William Wood, manager):* Considerable improvements have taken place in this section. Electric light has been installed around the pit-bottom and along the haulage-way. The main haulage system has been extended in the west and north-west districts, which will give increased facilities for the coal-extraction. In the west heading a fault downthrow was met with, through which a stone drift is being driven to reach the displaced coal-seam. The drift will be 12 chains long. Some improvements are being made in the mine-drainage. This section has been examined from time to time, and found in good order. The output for the year was 77,462 tons of coal, and 173 men were employed.

*Taupiri Reserve section (William Wood, manager):* Owing to the difficulty in disposing of the coal mined, only a limited number of men are employed. The quality of coal is inferior to that of the coal obtained in the other sections of the company's property. The mine was inspected during the year, and found to be in good order. Twelve men were employed.

*Taupiri South (William Leather, manager).—*This is an old colliery with an eventful history. Coal was mined years ago, but owing to carelessness in leaving small coal in the mine, the pillars took fire and the mine had to be abandoned temporarily until it was thought that the fire had burnt itself out. About the beginning of the year the manager attempted to reopen the mine, and after spending a considerable amount of money had to relinquish operations, as the fire still burnt. Later a fresh entry was made, leaving the fire district to the left, and it is believed that a large quantity of coal will be won from the section. I examined the mine on several occasions, and found it in good order. The output for the year was 200 tons. From two to six men were employed.

*Taupiri West (R. McEwen, manager).—*Very little work has been done on this property. Early in the year negotiations were proceeding between the company and the Taupiri Company for the purchase of the property, which was effected about the middle of the year. It is the intention of the new owners to work the coal by driving a main haulage-tunnel from Ralph's section to the Taupiri West shaft. Ninety-one tons of coal was mined, and two men employed.

*Union Collieries Mine (F. J. Tattley, manager).—*The old section has been worked out, and the main dip driven a further distance of 250 ft., where new work is now being opened out. From this point a drive is being driven to connect with a shaft sunk by a former company. This shaft is lined with brickwork, and is in good order. When this connection is effected there should be an improvement in the ventilation, which has not been all that could be desired. Early in the year a serious accident occurred at the mine, resulting in the loss of two lives. The mine was inspected several times during the year, and everything with the exception of the ventilation appeared satisfactory. The output for the year totalled 14,876 tons, being an increase of 4,488 tons over the previous year. Twenty-seven men were employed.

*Ngaruawahia Colliery (J. Duncan, manager).—*This is a new property, situated about six miles west of Ngaruawahia on the road to Raglan. The coal-seam was found outcropping in a small stream, and an examination revealed that the seam was 11 ft. thick, and in appearance similar to the Taupiri coal. The coal is bright and hard. As there are no waters overlying, a mine, if developed, would be practically free from water, which will permit of the pillar-coal being extracted. The greatest drawback to this company is the lack of sufficient capital to undertake the construction of a railway from the mine to the Government line at Ngaruawahia. I inspected the mine early in the year. Only two men were employed for a few months.

*Drury Colliery (James Holden, manager).—*This mine is worked principally for the fireclay, which is utilised in the manufacture of bricks, pottery, &c. Extensive additions were made to the brick and pipe works, where some very fine fireclay goods are made. The coalfield is much faulted and broken. About half a mile from the works a borehole was put down 800 ft. to prove the existence of a coal-seam to the dip of the present workings, but the country passed through was mostly fireclay, and no trace of coal was found. Five hundred and eighty-nine tons of coal and 1,470 tons of fireclay were mined for the year. The mine was inspected on several occasions, and found to be in good order. Five men were employed.

*Mangapapa Mine (Mokau) (William Lennox, manager).—*The Mokau coalfield is but little faulted and very extensive. The rocks overlying the coal are sandstone and limestone, which is a great advantage, as but little timbering is required. The great obstacle which the company has had to contend with in the past is the uncertainty of communication with the outside world. The township is situated in an isolated locality, and the only means of transit for the coal is by way of the river. The boats used for conveying the coal are subject to frequent interruption owing to the shallowness of the river, and often the service is suspended owing to the periodical stormy weather. The output for the year was 5,989 tons. The mine was inspected during the year, and excepting the ventilation, everything gave complete satisfaction.