

on the average, the number of miners decreased, and the demand for coal rose—all tending to increase the total amount and the constancy of employment. *A rise in money earnings per day, therefore, in this period carried with it also the possibility of a still greater rise in annual earnings, owing to more employment being available, and this without prejudice to health and efficiency.* Thus, viewed from this standpoint, real wages tended to increase beyond the amount suggested merely by the actual rise in daily remuneration. This was a force operating to counteract to some degree the fall in real wages occasioned by the fall in the value of money and the lag of wages behind retail prices. The degree to which the workers availed themselves of the opportunity thus to offset falling real wages is suggested, roughly, by the facts summarized in Table 80, though the most significant figure, the number of weeks worked over the whole year per miner, is not definitely calculable from the available data.

(iv.) In assessing the real wages of mining we must, on the one hand, reckon in *the money worth of any perquisites, bonuses, supplementary earnings, &c., received, and, on the other hand, deduct or make allowance for any peculiar expenses to which the miner may be liable, expenditure on purchase and upkeep of tools, extraordinary expenditure on clothes, or on rent.* It is then necessary to inquire how far these peculiar sources of income and expenditure have varied during the war period.

In a few cases the mine worker is offered the opportunity of obtaining grazing for a horse or cow at a specially low rate; a common item on the income side is *the low price at which he purchases his coal.* At all collieries it is customary for mine workers to obtain their coal at a much lower price than that paid by the ordinary consumer. The amount of coal sold to employees at the Point Elizabeth and Liverpool State Mines for the year ending the 31st March, 1918, was 2,558 tons, or 5½ tons per adult man employed, representing a bonus of over £3. In most cases the price charged is below the cost of production. The case of the State mines is typical.

TABLE 82.—SHOWING LOSS DUE TO COAL BEING SUPPLIED TO EMPLOYEES AT 3s. PER TON, SINCE THE YEAR ENDING 31st MARCH, 1913, TO THE HALF-YEAR ENDING 30th SEPTEMBER, 1918, AT THE STATE COLLIERIES.

Year.				Tons.	Cost per Ton.		Rate to Workmen.	Loss per Ton.		Total.	
					s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	£	s. d.
1913	..	..	..	2,705	8	1 76	3	0	5	1 76	705 19 6
1914	..	..	..	2,190	8	1 76	3	0	5	1 76	563 9 5
1915	..	..	..	3,030	7	8 24	3	0	4	8 24	710 0 7
1916	..	..	..	3,022	6	10 13	3	0	3	10 13	579 4 2
1917	..	..	..	2,935	7	4	3	0	4	4	635 19 2
1918	..	..	..	2,558	7	6 88	3	0	4	6 88	575 1 0
1918 (half-year)	..	..	..	1,787	7	11 78	3	0	4	11 78	446 15 0

The figures shown in the last column (total) above represent the Department's annual loss through supplying employees with coal at a price less than it costs to produce. The difference between the price to the workmen and the price to the public at the pit-mouth is shown in the following table:—

TABLE 83.

Year.				Tons.	Selling-rate to Public.*		Workmen's Rate.	Loss per Ton.		Total Loss.	
					s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	£	s. d.
1913	..	..	..	2,705	13	2	3	0	10	2	1,375 0 10
1914	..	..	..	2,190	13	2	3	0	10	2	1,113 5 0
1915	..	..	..	3,030	13	2	3	0	10	2	1,540 5 0
1916	..	..	..	3,022	14	6	3	0	11	6	1,737 13 0
1917	..	..	..	2,935	14	6	3	0	11	6	1,687 12 6
1918	..	..	..	2,558	14	6	3	0	11	6	1,470 17 0
1918 (half-year)	..	..	..	1,787	16	3	3	0	13	3	1,183 17 9

\* At the mine for "run of the mine" or through coal—i.e., as the coal comes from the face.

The following table shows the prices charged the mine workers for coal at the different mines. Since there has been little or no change in these prices during the period, whilst prices to the public have increased considerably, the mine worker, in regard to this particular expense, is relatively to other workers in a better position than in 1913:—

Mine.	Price of Coal to Employees, per Ton (cartage excluded).	
	s.	d.
Denniston .. .. .	3	0 (miners).
" .. .. .	4	0 (shift-men).
Millerton .. .. .	3	9
Westport-Stockton .. .. .	5	6
Pukemiro .. .. .	3	1 (2s. per load of 13 cwt.).
Taupiri .. .. .	5	0.
Kaitangata .. .. .	12	6 (including delivery).
Nightcaps .. .. .	9	0

In some occupations the *opportunities for employment open to members of the wage-earner's family* are important elements in estimating the net advantages of the occupation. The wage to be