

REFERENCE NO. 8.—THE INCREASES SINCE THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE PRESENT WAR IN THE EARNINGS OF THE MEN ENGAGED IN THE PRODUCTION OF COAL, DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN INCREASES, IF ANY, PRIOR TO AND SUBSEQUENT TO THE SAID AGREEMENTS.

Up to September, 1918, the rates of pay to miners (hewers) had increased by  $17\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. by two bonuses, one of 10 per cent. in the first half of 1916 and the other of  $7\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. about the middle of 1917; all other workers in and about the mines received two bonuses each of 10 per cent. at the same time. From September to October, 1918, miners received 25 per cent. increase on the 1914 rates of pay, and other workers 30 per cent.

Mine workers generally, as explained in Chapter V, section 3, pages 65-6, have received increased actual earnings beyond the increases in the rates of pay. The increase in labour-cost of production has been already stated in this summary (see p. 92). Underground workers' earnings have increased in some cases beyond 50 per cent., and the average increase cannot be far from 30 per cent. as between 1913 and 1918. These increases have been due not only to the increase in the rates, but also to the fact that the mine-work has during the war been concentrated largely on those parts of the mines where the conditions of production are most favourable to a high output per worker, and that more time in the year has been put in by workers in many cases.

The increase in the wages actually earned by surface workers does not exceed the increase in their rates of pay to such a degree as in the case of miners, but earnings in excess of the increased rates are the rule.

The increases in miners' actual earnings have a very close connection with the increases in the rates of pay provided for by the industrial agreements of 1916 and 1917; these were followed in most cases by a more than proportionate increase in actual earnings, the whole of which, however, as pointed out above, cannot be ascribed to the increased rates alone. (For the several factors bearing upon actual earnings see Chapter V, section 2, pp. 63-5.)

While the mine-worker's income has increased, his expenditure on tools and other necessities used in the mine, which he provides wholly or in part, has increased by at least £10 a year. His cost of living has also increased (see last section).

The "real wages" of the mine worker as defined and discussed in Chapter V, pages 69-76, had increased very little, if at all, by September, 1918, unless the unknown factor, family earnings, had increased. The effect of the third bonus then granted should be to increase them beyond their level in 1913-14.

It is to be noted that these results, like those in respect of profits, are generalizations or averages true of the mass, and that there are to be found within the period particular cases, both of individuals and mines, showing considerable divergency on either side from the average.

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