

Professor Park ("Geology of New Zealand," p. 292) is of opinion that the choicest and most available half of our coal will have been consumed by 1970, and that the date of complete exhaustion should be somewhere about one hundred and thirty years from the present time; but this estimate is based on the assumption that the rate of increase in production indicated by the decade 1901–11 will continue in the immediate future. This assumption, however, has been temporarily falsified by the abnormal conditions created by the war.

The following table shows the contribution of each of the well-defined coalfields to the total output of coal in the Dominion up to the 31st December, 1918:—

TABLE 5.

Name of Coalfield.	Approximate Total Output up to 31st December, 1917.		Approximate Total Output up to 31st December, 1918.	
	Tons.		Tons.	
North Auckland .. .. .	..	3,613,954	..	3,739,303
Waikato (including Mokau) .. .. .	..	4,929,983	..	5,354,412
Nelson .. .. .	..	328,287	..	342,241
Buller .. .. .	..	15,053,254	..	15,634,050
Inangahua .. .. .	..	279,275	..	395,512
Grey .. .. .	..	9,170,671	..	9,566,773
Canterbury .. .. .	..	736,660	..	757,135
Otago .. .. .	..	9,127,443	..	9,443,892
Southland .. .. .	..	2,919,063	..	3,069,522
Totals .. .. .	..	46,158,590	..	48,192,840

The next table shows how the total output has been distributed over the different classes of coal:—

TABLE 6.

Class of Coal.	Approximate Total Output to the 31st December, 1917.		Approximate Total Output to the 31st December, 1918.	
	Tons.		Tons.	
Bituminous and semi-bituminous .. .. .	..	30,048,697	..	31,171,005
Brown .. .. .	..	13,774,384	..	14,480,157
Lignite .. .. .	..	2,335,509	..	2,541,678
Totals .. .. .	..	46,158,590	..	48,192,840

(vii.) THE RATE AND AMOUNT OF CONSUMPTION; EXPORTS AND IMPORTS.

The amount of coal annually available for consumption in the Dominion is ascertainable by adding the excess of coal imported over that exported during the year to the amount mined.

Tables 7 and 8 show this information as well as providing a means of comparison with the growth in population.

TABLE 7.—COAL-PRODUCTION, EXPORTS, AND IMPORTS.

Year.	Amount mined. 000 omitted.	Amount ex- ported. 000 omitted.	Amount im- ported. 000 omitted.	Year.	Amount mined. 000 omitted.	Amount ex- ported. 000 omitted.	Amount im- ported. 000 omitted.
	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.		Tons.	Tons.	Tons.
1878 ..	162	6	174	1899 ..	975	89	100
1879 ..	231	7	158	1900 ..	1,094	113	124
1880 ..	300	7	123	1901 ..	1,240	160	150
1881 ..	337	7	130	1902 ..	1,365	189	129
1882 ..	378	3	130	1903 ..	1,421	152	164
1883 ..	421	7	124	1904 ..	1,538	165	147
1884 ..	481	6	148	1905 ..	1,586	123	169
1885 ..	511	44	130	1906 ..	1,730	142	208
1886 ..	534	46	120	1907 ..	1,831	129	221
1887 ..	559	44	107	1908 ..	1,861	101	288
1888 ..	614	64	101	1909 ..	1,911	202	258
1889 ..	586	79	128	1910 ..	2,197	277	232
1890 ..	637	70	111	1911 ..	2,066	223	188
1891 ..	669	92	125	1912 ..	2,178	229	364
1892 ..	673	79	125	1913 ..	1,888	212	469
1893 ..	692	69	117	1914 ..	2,275	303	518
1894 ..	720	75	113	1915 ..	2,209	326	353
1895 ..	727	86	108	1916 ..	2,257	332	294
1896 ..	793	80	102	1917 ..	2,068	229	292
1897 ..	841	76	111	1918 ..	2,034	186	255
1898 ..	907	56	115				