

Welfare.

In the Waikato district the principal coal companies and local bodies subscribed liberally to the Huntly School of Mines. The amounts donated, together with the Department's subsidy, enabled the Managers of the school to maintain a teacher for the promotion of mining education to eighty students. Other welfare work, in connection with providing recreation-grounds, has progressed during the year. The Taupiri Mines Company (Limited) has completed a concrete tennis court at Rotowaro, and another is in course of construction. The Glen Afton Collieries Company (Limited) has provided two asphalt tennis-courts. At Glen Massey two courts were laid down by the Waipa Collieries Co. (Limited), and a bowling-green is also projected for the ensuing year. The tennis-courts and football-ground provided by the Pukemiro Collieries Company (Limited), and managed by a local committee, have been well maintained and patronized during the year.

In the Northern District at Waro (Hikurangi) the work in connection with the conversion of twelve two-roomed huts to four-roomed houses, finished with fencing, drainage, and water laid on from the town supply, is almost completed, due principally to the interest that the Hon. Minister of Mines had taken in the matter. A recreation-ground conveniently placed to the new township and working-mines would be a great boon to the people, as a large proportion of the mine-workers live close to the mines, where there are no public grounds for recreation purposes.

Prosecution.

On the 16th July, 1925, a mine-manager was convicted and fined £5 and costs for failing to provide the minimum allowance of air in the working-places, as required by the regulations.

Dangerous Occurrences (Regulation 94).

On the 6th March, 1925, Manager A. Penman reported a fire in the return airway No. 3 section, Rotowaro Mine. The heated coal was subsequently filled out.

On the 1st August, 1925, a fire was reported in the goaf in No. 3 pillar section, Rotowaro Mine. The fire area was isolated by means of brick stoppings.

On the 14th December, 1925, the manager of the Hikurangi Coal Company's (Shafts) Colliery reported a serious fire in the East section pillar workings. The management was successful in controlling the fire by the erection of fourteen stoppings.

Serious Non-fatal Accidents.

On the 20th January, 1925, George McLay, a miner working at Waipa Colliery, sustained a fractured leg due to a fall of roof stone at the face—liberated by insufficient roof-supports.

On the 22nd January, 1925, Joseph Norman, a miner working at Wilson's Colliery, received injuries which caused a fracture to his left leg. He was engaged in holing a rib of pillar coal in a place where the timber supports were spaced 3 ft. apart. The holing released the face before he had time to step back to safety.

On the 7th February, 1925, J. Mandeno, working at Glen Afton Colliery, met with an accident to his right hand. He was engaged in connecting skips to the rope when his right hand got caught between the clip and the rope. He was disabled for eighty-one days.

On the 8th April, 1925, Robert Dawson, a miner working at Wilson's Colliery, received a compound fracture of his right leg, due to a fall of roof-stone from a face 5 ft. in height. A few minutes before the accident he tried to take down, with a pick, a piece of overhanging suspected stone, but failed to do so; it was left unsupported and subsequently fell upon this man whilst he was engaged in filling a skip.

On the 17th April, 1925, David Porteous, a miner working at Hikurangi Colliery, sustained a fracture of his left leg, due to a lump of coal (50 lb. in weight) becoming dislodged from a sooty back at the commencement of the under-holing and falling on him. The accident could hardly have been anticipated, as the face appeared to be safe.

On the 23rd April, 1925, Albert Carlyon, a miner working at Waikato Extended Colliery, received an injury to his right eye which subsequently became septic and impaired the vision. Carlyon was off work 112 days.

On the 23rd May, 1925, Thomas Grimshaw, a miner working at Pukemiro Colliery, sustained an accident to his left foot, due to a rail falling thereon. Grimshaw was off work 216 days.

On the 4th July, 1925, Thomas Hall, a miner working at Pukemiro Colliery, sustained the loss of half vision of his left eye, due to a septic wound on the pupil caused by flying coal. Duration of disablement, seventy-three days.

On the 3rd July, 1925, Thomas Webb, a miner working at Glen Afton Colliery, sustained the loss of his left eye, due to being injured by a piece of coal from the pick-point. Webb was incapacitated fifty-seven days.

WEST COAST INSPECTION DISTRICT (MR. C. J. STRONGMAN, Inspector).

Coal-output.

During 1925 the coal output for the combined Grey, Reefton, Buller, and Nelson districts was 950,845 tons, being a decrease of 39,767 tons, made up as follows: Buller district (decrease), 21,497 tons; Nelson district (decrease), 1,125 tons; Reefton district (increase), 2,617 tons; Grey district (decrease), 19,762 tons.

The alteration in the output from the various districts is accounted for as follows:—

Buller District: At the Millerton Mine a considerable number of working-days was lost owing to slackness of the steam-coal trade, and the output from this mine fell from 257,121 tons in 1924 to 224,883 in 1925, a reduction of 32,238 tons.

Nelson District: The output from the Puponga Mine shows a decrease of 1,015 tons when compared with that of the preceding year.

Reefton District: The output from the Reefton Coal Company's mine shows an increase of 4,621 tons for the year as compared with 1924.

Grey District: In the Grey district the State Mines show a reduction, caused by a strike, of 18,119 tons as compared with 1924.

Number of Men employed.

The total number of men employed during the year was 2,392, being a decrease of 88.

Buller District.

DENNISTON COLLIERIES.

Coalbrookdale Mine.—Birchall's Section: The main headings have reached the outcrop at Sullivan's Creek, the total distance driven being 34 chains, and a valuable area of coal has been opened up. Before the rope-road can be extended a considerable amount of grading remains to be done. All recent development in this mine has been on the panel system. In furtherance of this system two headings have been driven in a south-westerly direction for a distance of 12 chains. The coal in this direction is rapidly thinning, and several bands of stone are showing in the face.

McIlwain's Section: Two main headings are being driven with a slight dip gradient in a south-westerly direction. These show coal of good quality, 10 ft. of which is being worked. A third drive located in the bottom seam is being driven to drain the upper seam.

Waterloo: Development in this section is proceeding in a north-westerly direction. The coal is of good quality, 16 ft. in thickness, but stone intrusions cause some difficulty in working. Going north-east the coal shows signs of thinning, but there is an entire absence of stone bands.

Extended Dip Section: All solid workings having been exhausted the output from this section is being won entirely from pillars.