

other countries. Comparisons of this figure must, however, be taken together with information as to the height and width of the seams, the hardness of the coal, proportion of stone, the distances travelled underground, the amount of machinery used, and so forth, in the different localities or at the different dates compared, as well as the method of calculating the average number employed for the year. The number of mine workers decreased by 740, or nearly 16 per cent., from 1914 to 1918.

Table 14 shows how the labour-supply has been distributed over the principal collieries of the Dominion during the last two years.

TABLE 14.—LABOUR AT PRINCIPAL COLLIERIES.

Name of Colliery.	Locality.	Class of Coal.	Output for 1917.	Total Output to 31st December, 1917.	Total Number of Persons ordinarily employed.	Output for 1918.	Total Output to 31st December, 1918.	Total Number of Persons ordinarily employed.
<i>Northern District.</i>								
Hikurangi ..	Hikurangi ..	Semi-bituminous	Tons. 31,881	Tons. 1,099,922	95	Tons. 65,361	Tons. 1,165,283	109
Taupiri Extended ..	Huntly ..	Brown ..	192,205	2,182,181	339	234,633	2,418,470	442
Pukemiro ..	Pukemiro ..	" ..	89,375	181,966	145	114,458	296,424	160
Waipa ..	Glen Massey ..	" ..	81,718	319,699	100	69,085	388,784	73
<i>West Coast District.</i>								
Coalbrookdale ..	Millerton ..	Bituminous ..	279,760	5,252,425	440	240,096	5,492,521	406
" ..	Denniston ..	" ..	200,950	7,601,588	409	179,630	7,781,218	391
Westport-Stockton ..	Mangatini ..	" ..	167,122	1,203,492	280	154,120	1,357,612	276
State Coal-mines—								
Point Elizabeth ..	Dunollie ..	Semi-bituminous	119,411	2,255,717	189	95,106	2,350,823	134
Liverpool ..	Rewanui ..	Bituminous ..	145,856	472,471	302	113,013	585,484	298
Blackball ..	Blackball ..	" ..	132,515	2,588,380	286	121,259	2,709,639	234
<i>Southern District.</i>								
Kaitangata and Castle Hill	Kaitangata ..	Brown ..	107,274	3,507,495	288	124,985	3,632,480	293
Nightcaps ..	Nightcaps ..	" ..	73,133	1,254,144	116	53,805	1,307,949	109
Other New Zealand collieries	All coalfields	Various ..	445,519	18,329,110	994	434,554	18,408,459	934
Totals ..	..	..	2,068,419	46,158,590	3,983	2,034,250	48,192,840	3,994

The efficiency of the coal-worker in New Zealand, in the opinion of competent authorities, compares favourably with that of similar workers in the leading fields of other countries. A fairly large proportion of the miners are immigrants from the mining districts of England, Scotland, and Wales, many of them arriving after having worked for some time in the mines of Canada, the United States, and New South Wales. The coal-miner has strong migratory habits, developed, according to the opinion of the president of the Miners' Federation, largely by the rapidly changing nature of the conditions in which the miner works; he moves from one place to another to escape bad conditions or to discover better, and these conditions change more rapidly than is the case with most other workers. A classification of the miners in respect of birthplace promises interesting results. A witness of the widest experience and high authority was emphatic in the expression of his opinion that the native-born and locally trained New-Zealander makes the best miner. (On the other hand, the opinion of traders was just as emphatic that the immigrant miner excels in thrift and punctual payment of debts.)

It was interesting to find that a very large proportion of the management posts (mine and administrative) are filled by men who have risen to them through the ordinary grades of labour.

The employments in and about and essential to a coal-mine are many and varied. The following is a more or less complete list, excluding the clerical operations, as described by Mr. J. Bishop:—

Underground Labour.—Hewing (contract work), timbering, trucking and hauling, crushing, baling water and pumping, overmen and deputies, maintenance work, ventilation, lamp-trimming, mine-management.

Overground Labour.—Tipping, loading, screening, weighing, blacksmiths and fitters, carpenters, enginemen and stokers, engine-wright, tub-cleaning, general labour.

In the personal qualities that control the efficiency of an individual's work the average miner does not appear to fall below the level of other workers. The character of his work, much of which is by no means of a routine nature, calls for the exercise of intelligence, initiative, resourcefulness, and adaptability, whilst the fact that he is in continual contact with his fellow-men conduces to the discussion of ideas, though the position of the mining settlements, and their uniform class constitution, tend to narrow their views. The character of the underground work draws heavily on the mine worker's store of physical and nervous strength; and the light and air underground, even where conditions are most favourable, can never be as satisfactory as on the surface. The special dangers of mining help to develop certain generous traits of character, and the aggregation and isolation together breed a strong communal spirit; but the general environment is, in present conditions, not such as to moralize the work and the life—both individual and social—to the full extent that should be possible. Whether these conditions are capable of improvement or not is an important subject for consideration in the main part of the report. (See Chapters VII and VIII.)