

ground for the last time; these two seams are shining in the creek, just below that flat. The next seam I saw was 1,738 feet above the sea. I could not see the bottom of the seam; the creek cut right through, the creek bottom being coal. I measured one face 17 feet high, good hard bright black coal. This seam is a little beyond where you and I turned back from. From a point above this spot two faces of coal are visible a little further up the hill. I then went due west to within half a mile of the seaward face of the mountain, and in the main branch of a creek (which flows into the lagoon a little to the southward of the Mautoria rocks) examined two other outcrops; the highest was 1,603 feet above sea, and the other 1,355. In both cases the creek had cut through and exposed the seam for several chains. The top of the coal was covered, so I could not ascertain its thickness, but I measured 9 feet of good hard coal. The seams here lay close upon the granite and slates. In crossing the slopes going westward, every creek contained drift coal. The two last-mentioned seams were dipping to the north and west; one appears dipping slightly to the eastward, but that must have been, I think, only local. I returned to the beach, following down the creek to the lagoon, passing over sandstone and shale most of the way. I should not be surprised if the coal was found very much lower down; in fact, with a few faults intervening, I think it will be probably traced from the mine right up the mountain.

There is nothing new about what has been found, but it has proved beyond all doubt what you always said about the Mount Frederick seams.

It rained nearly all the day I was on the mountain, so I was unable to make a sketch map of the northern slopes as I had intended.

With the bush lines that are now cut, in ten hours one can see everything worth seeing. I think the seams are fairly continuous on the plateau at the head of Mine Creek; a drift coal abounds in every stream. I reckon (or estimate) this plateau to be about a mile in extent, and that it would supply at least twenty million tons without any trouble to get at it. From the dip of the seams in Granite Creek (the creek south of Mautoria), I think the outcrop should be found on the seaward face, about 1,000 feet above sea level.

Dr. James Hector.

I am, &c.,

A. DUDLEY DOBSON.

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MR. R. C. CHAMBERS to the HON. the MINISTER for PUBLIC WORKS.

SIR,—

Wellington, 5th March, 1873.

I take the liberty to address you to call your attention to the advisability of early action being taken to assist in opening up the extensive coal field near the Buller, Province of Nelson, either by constructing a tramway to Westport or by harbour works at Ngakawau, and respectfully request an early inspection of the district, in order to decide the most advisable course to pursue.

I have been informed that a sum of money has been appropriated for the purpose of making a railway between Mount Rochfort and the Buller (subject to the coal not being found in a more accessible position). The proposed line to Mount Rochfort would only allow the working of a small portion of the upper part of the coal field, and would render the working of the coal to the dip an expensive operation; whereas by continuing the line along the coast to Ngakawau, thence up Mine Creek to the plateau, a large area will be opened up at comparatively small expense. I would respectfully submit to your Honor's attention the great importance of early action being taken on this subject, seeing that a sum of £100,000 is annually sent out of the Colony for a supply of coal inferior in quality for steam purposes to that proved to exist in abundance between the Ngakawau and Mount Rochfort. It therefore becomes a matter of national importance that no time be lost in utilizing the coal deposits that have been placed at command in such quantities as to allow not only supplying the wants of New Zealand, but also to admit the Colony to become a large exporter to California and Victoria, in order to compete with New South Wales in these markets. Large vessels of the screw-collier class will be necessary, and the only port on the West Coast where such vessels can be accommodated is the Buller, where a comparatively small outlay will make the harbour available for vessels specially constructed for the coal trade of 1,000 tons burthen.

As an example of what can be done in river improvement, I would respectfully refer you to the present state of the Tyne, compared to what it was eighteen years ago; and I have no hesitation in saying, that with the same spirit of enterprise, and judicious expenditure, the Buller would become the Tyne of New Zealand.

Your Honor and the Government have now an opportunity (that only occurs at rare intervals), by judicious assistance, of giving such an impetus to the coal trade of the Colony as will benefit all classes of the community.

Pleading the importance of the subject for thus addressing you,

I have, &c.,

R. C. CHAMBERS,

(for the Shareholders of the Ngakawau Coal Mining Company, Westport).

The Hon. the Minister for Public Works, Wellington.

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The Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY to the SUPERINTENDENT of NELSON.

SIR,—

Colonial Secretary's Office, Wellington, 13th March, 1873.

I have the honor to inform you that application has been made to the Minister for Public Works by a Mr. Chambers, representing the Ngakawau Coal Mining Company, to expend the whole or portion of the money appropriated by Parliament for purposes of constructing railway to Mount Rochfort Coal Fields.

Mr. Chambers also has furnished the Minister for Public Works with copy of letter from the Provincial Secretary of Nelson, dated 9th December last, defining the terms on which it is proposed to grant the above Company a lease of 400 acres.

Before the Government can go any further in this matter, it is necessary that they should be informed of the real position of the Mount Rochfort Coal Reserves.