

51. *Fern Hill Colliery, Green Island.*—The Act is observed, except as to the distribution of General Rules. The rope which I reported on 12th September, 1879, as being in bad repair, has since broken; fortunately nobody was hurt, and but little damage done. The workings of this mine are in some danger from a water-race which runs round the V of the hill, just above the entrance. I requested Mr. Shaw to exercise the greatest care in allowing men in the dip-workings when the full volume of water was first turned on. He assured me of his intention to exercise every precaution.

52. *Green Island Colliery.*—Here a boy was employed underground, beyond the time allowed; the engineman also works too long. Special rules not distributed in every case, and General Rules not at all. The ventilation of the dook was poor; a slit was commenced for the purpose of improving it, but unfortunately thirled into an old water-lodge, and had to be recommenced. The old workings have been pervaded to a considerable extent by a creep. A plan is kept. Engine and shaft well fenced.

53. *Saddle Hill Colliery.*—General Rules not promulgated. Only one outlet. Ventilation good. Plan kept.

54. *Walton Park Colliery.*—The weekly report had been allowed to get rather behind-hand, as the pit worked irregularly. A boy under nine years of age was in the mine, but without the manager's knowledge, and he was not at work. The ventilation is good, and the above-ground requirements of the Act carefully attended to. Of the 16,000 tons raised in 1879, 2,000 tons dross was used for the brick-yard in connection with the colliery, and for other purposes.

55. *Abbotsroyd Colliery.*—Ventilation much requires guiding. Plan made up regularly. General Rules not promulgated. Nine hundred and twenty tons of the output for 1879 consisted of dross.

56. *Lawrence Coal Mine.*—The old shaft is, I am glad to say, abandoned. A new working has been opened near where the coal was formerly worked. Twenty-five pounds of powder was stored in the mine. The owner has Special but not General Rules.

57. *Frying-pan Coal Mine.*—A prospecting shaft.

58. *Johnston Coal Mine.*—Standing.

59. *Bruce Coal Mine.*—When visited, this mine was worked by Mr. Hardwick; but it has since passed into Mr. Millar's hands.

60. *Real Mackay Coal Mine.*—Mr. Wilson, the manager of this mine, though previously warned, has done absolutely nothing to observe the Act. The main drive has fallen in, as predicted in Mr. Cox's report of last year.

61. *Elliott Vale Coal Mine.*—Nothing done to observe Act. Only one man working.

62. *Hurdstone Coal Mine.*—A new mine, only about thirty yards driven.

63 and 64. *Cannon's and Bryce's.*—Openwork.

65. *Benhar Coal Mine.*—A good plan is kept, and regularly made up. Special, but not General Rules, promulgated. I found a keg of powder, containing about 10 pounds, so cautioned the owner, and had it removed. Mr. Nelson has worked this mine for about five years, during which time he has raised the 12,000 tons given in the statistical table. The output for 1879 is compiled from information given by the owner, and may not be absolutely correct.

66. *Phoenix Colliery.*—I was unable to get the output, as the former owners had left the district.

67. *Kaitangata Railway and Coal Company's Mine.*—An explosion of gas occurred in this mine on 18th December last, one boy being slightly burned. Perhaps on account of the trifling character of the injuries, the accident was not reported. In Great Britain, if a person is at all injured by an explosion, it is necessary to report it. The gas came from a very small blower in the main intake. Naked lights are used in the mine except in, or in close proximity to, places where gas has been seen within the previous week. On my recommendation Mr. Samson agreed to use lamps in such places.

68. *Shore's No. 1 Kaitangata Colliery.*—The air at this mine requires more guiding, and I found that a man had been tampering with the brattice, which is a very serious offence, particularly in a fiery mine. General Rules hung up but not distributed. The workings are examined before the men go in. Mr. Shore is driving a pair of heads to the rise, in order to make a second communication with the surface. The seam rises in one place at an angle of $49\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$, which makes it not only difficult to ventilate but bad to work.

69 to 75. All openwork and employing no men regularly. Mr. McKinnon (74) informs me that prior to 1879 his mine was not worked for sale. Mr. J. McQueen informs me that No. 73 is used only for supplying a shepherd's hut. The two seams noted as being worked at Scott's mine are separated by about 12 inches of carbonaceous shale.

76 to 79. These mines have not been visited. * As may be seen by those outputs that are given, they are all on a very small scale.

80 to 82. All openwork lignite mines.

83. *Nightcaps Coal Mine.*—Wrey's Bush. Introduced Act. Operations only recently commenced.

84. *Preservation Inlet Coal Mine.*—Regular work has not yet commenced, and the mine has not been visited.

Note.—I have always pointed out to owners or managers the points which required their attention in order to keep the Act.

I have, &c.,

GEORGE J. BINNS,
Inspector for Mines.

The Under Secretary for Mines, Wellington.

No. 6.

CORRESPONDENCE UPON SHAG POINT COAL MINE.

The UNDER-SECRETARY for MINES to Mr. Inspector BINNS.

(Telegram.)

Wellington, 23rd June, 1880.

URGENT.—To G. J. Binns, Esq., Inspector of Mines, Dunedin.—Is there any truth in report that last week four or five men employed in Shag Point Coal Mine had to be carried to surface, in consequence of defective ventilation? If so, what steps have you taken or do you propose to take? If you have information reply urgent, at once; if not, report on matter soon as possible, of course taking any necessary steps meanwhile.—OLIVER WAKEFIELD, Under-Secretary for Mines.