

built. This, in itself, shows some negligence. Now, assuming for argument that Young became underviewer by the agreement put in, the defendant was negligent in not seeing that the duties required by the Special Rules and the Act were carried out properly. With regard to ventilation, Young says the mine was never fit for men to work in. Curtis and Frewin speak of foul air, and the difficulty in keeping lights burning. Curtis fell asleep from effects of air, and says he complained of the air to defendant. Defendant denies this; and Moore says air was always good in the mine, but he has not been in the mine for some months prior to the accident. The evidence of Frewin and Curtis must be taken as that of independent witnesses, and reliable. Attention must be drawn to defendant's action in presenting to the Inspector a book purporting to be filled up, day by day, by William Young as underviewer, when he knew that the book was entered up after the accident from entries in the defendant's diary, thereby endeavouring to mislead the Inspector, and make him believe the book was regularly and properly filled. These facts would, had a fatal accident occurred, have gone far as against the defendant in making him responsible at law for the lives of the persons employed in the mine. As manager, the defendant neglected to see that the Act and rules were carried out, and he is therefore guilty of a breach of the Act, and is fined on this information in the sum of £5, and costs of Court, 17s.; witnesses, £7 1s.

Binns v. Young.—In this case against William Young, as contractor, for not examining the mine with a safety lamp, the defendant pleaded guilty; indeed, in the face of the number of witnesses to his act, he could scarcely do otherwise. He must be held responsible as contractor for the carrying out of the Act and rules. The contract with him must be held to have been continuing at the time of the accident. He was in the habit of entering the mine with naked lights, and even after finding the "fall," he proceeded to examine it with a naked light, and without any precaution, and thus occasioned the explosion. Every man employed in a mine is responsible for the safety of his fellow-workmen and himself, and is bound by the rules to neglect no precaution for their protection. I am doubtful how far the defendant can be held liable as underviewer, in view of all the circumstances, but there can be no doubt as to his liability as contractor. The defendant will be fined £2, and costs, 17s.

Methods of Working.

The method of working each mine may be gathered from the attached statistical table; but in order to show the proportions of various methods, I give the following: Worked by adits, 49; horses used, 9; self-acting inclines, 2; engine planes, 3; hand-power, 35; open-worked, 26; prospecting, 8; worked by shafts, 16; steam power, 8; horse-power, 4; water-power, 1; manual labour, 3; no information, 2: total, 101.

I have, &c.,

GEORGE J. BINNS,

Inspector of Mines.

The Under-Secretary for Mines, Wellington.

ADDITIONAL REPORT BY MR. BINNS.

SIR,—

Dunedin, 4th June, 1881.

I have the honor, in compliance with your instructions dated the 20th ultimo, to make the following report on the mines which in my annual report are not shown to have been inspected, but which have been visited since. To facilitate reference, the attached numbers correspond with those in the statistical table attached to the annual report and the date shows, in each case, the date of last inspection.

1. *Wallsend (Collingwood) Coal Mine* (12th February, 1881).—In January, the directors of this mine requested me to visit it with a view to determining whether the incline could be safely worked. I therefore made inspections on February 12th and 13th, and, having decided that the incline was totally unfit for working, gave notice under section 19 to discontinue using it. On February 22nd, Mr. Marshall wrote agreeing to this course. With regard to the other portions of the Act, it could not be expected that every detail would be observed, as the mine had not previously been inspected. The workings were in good order; ventilation (natural) very good, measuring 4,560 cubic feet per minute in the main return. The plan is up to date. Boys were employed after hours on Saturdays, and no register was kept, as required by section 13. The horns have been stripped off the incline drum, but men are no longer raised and lowered on the incline: the brake framework is rotten, and the drum insufficiently stayed, the handle in the wrong place, and the rope is utterly worn out.

10. *Gulline's Coal Mine* was off work during my stay in the Inangahua, so has not been visited.

14 and 15. *Dugan's and Burke's Coal Mines* still unite in affording employment for one man. The owner, Mr. H. Dugan, has been supplied with a copy of Special Rules.

26. *Ferndale Colliery.*—Mr. Hamilton, who employed some men prospecting here, writes to me (29th June, 1881) that the works are abandoned, and all shafts duly fenced.

29. *Hart's Coal Mine* (27th April, 1881).—I visited this pit, but was unable to penetrate into the workings on account of water. Introduced Act, and agreed not to require a plan at present. The mine is worked by a dip-drive, which was driven 240 feet before a return air-course was made, air-pipes and a pair of bellows having been used for ventilation. A communication has now been made. This is the only mine in New Zealand where females are employed: one woman and one girl of thirteen have been employed above ground, assisting at the windlass and at the bellows aforesaid. Special Rules have been provided.

30. *Wallsend Colliery* (27th April, 1881).—The old shafts are fenced, and Mr. Wilkie, managing partner in a new proprietary, has been boring. Coal has been found, and a shaft will be sunk shortly.

31. *Brockley, No. 1, Coal Mine* (23rd April, 1881).—This is the Rockwood Coal Mine of last year's report. The coal is vertical, and in one place two lifts of about six feet each have been taken, and the whole space supported with timber, which has yielded to the side pressure. There was, however, another outlet from this place, and I requested the manager to set additional timber. Special Rules have been sent.

32. *Mount Somers Coal Mine.*—Open-work. Not visited since December, 1879.

33. *Albury Coal Mine.*—I went to Albury, but finding this mine had been abandoned for several months, did not visit it. Mr. Palmer, of Albury, has been good enough to afford the information given in the table.

34. *Kakahu Coal Mine* (2nd May, 1881).—This mine, which has been worked by means of a slope and shaft, was full of water, and had been abandoned ever since November 17th, 1880. A company is now being floated for the purpose of recommencing work. The timbering of the slope is very insecure, and the shaft required fencing. On my writing to Mr. Meredith, owner of the ground, and pointing out these defects, he wrote that the shaft should be fenced and the mine not worked until after inspection.

43. *Hill's Creek Coal Mine* (6th April, 1881).—Though new on the list, this mine has been worked