

good in all places. In my reports for 1881 and 1882, and in Mr. Cox's report for May, 1882, the 2nd September, 1882, was mentioned as the date for forming a second outlet, consequently, on the 1st August I wrote to Mr. Moody, who was then manager, on this subject. He replied, "I am fully aware of the fact that the New Zealand Mines Act provides that only ten men shall be employed in a mine at one time, having only one opening to the surface, after the expiration of two years from the original opening thereof." In December last, while at Westport, I received a letter from Captain Parker, who had taken the management, pointing out that, in his opinion, the borings were not broken off till the 5th March, 1881, and that, therefore, the time for reducing the number of men should have been the 5th March, 1883. On investigation it appeared that by some means a mistake had arisen, and that, as Mr. Ball, C.E., the former manager, informed me, the working-faces were broken off on the 15th February, 1881. The correspondence lasted some time, and, finally, on the 12th March, you sent me a copy of a letter sent by Captain Parker to the Hon. the Minister, asking permission to employ a greater number of men than ten for a period of six months from the 5th March, 1883. Before the receipt of this letter, however, and just after having visited Springfield in the ordinary course of inspection, I received a telegram in which you stated, "Letter from manager just received, stating that the former managers are responsible for the date mentioned." In Wellington, on the 31st March, after discussing the matter, I received from you authorization to use my discretion in allowing four men extra for a period of six months from the 5th March, upon condition that the mine was to be ventilated to my satisfaction. This proviso was inserted at my suggestion, for if the mine had not been, for the first time in my experience, well ventilated in October, I should never have given permission; whereas, under the circumstances, I was very glad to do so. This company, as Captain Parker says, in the letter mentioned above, has always striven hard against adverse circumstances for a number of years, and has always employed as much labour as trade would admit of. A diamond drill is to be used to put down a bore-hole on the flat, in the hopes of finding better coal. The reports are well kept.

24. *Smithfield Coal Mine, Springfield*.—This mine was butted by Mr. H. Ball, from the Springfield Company. On the 10th August a boy, named H. White, eleven years of age, was employed below ground. On writing to Mr. Moody, he replied: "There is no boy so young as you state employed." This was satisfactory, as wilful violation of this section would infallibly lead to legal proceedings. On the 8th March, 1883, I examined a new mine which has been driven to the south of the old Springfield drive, into which it has holed. A good air was passing. Special rules were gazetted for the old mine, and no boy employed underground.

25. *Kowai Pass Coal Mine, Springfield*.—On the 11th August the workings of this mine were very hot, and Mr. Kaye promised to drive a return air-course. On the 27th August he wrote that it was completed. A number of dangerous prospecting-holes existed near this mine, on Mr. McRae's ground; so on the 1st September I gave him notice to have them closed, and on inquiry in April last found this had been done. These old holes, in many cases full of water, are very dangerous near habitations. On the 12th October, 1882, a boy, ten years of age, was employed. It appears that he was ordinarily employed on Saturdays after 2 p.m. Warned the owner. On the 8th March last there was only one man at work removing some pillars. The manager told me that rules were posted up in the house, and a report kept. This mine is worked out.

26. *Canterbury Colliery, Sheffield*.—An accident which occurred at this mine in 1882 was duly reported on by Mr. Cox. On the 9th August the air was only moderately good, though the fire-bucket was in full operation. The main return was 3,823 cubic feet per minute for seventeen men and a horse. This would be enough if properly distributed. On the 11th October the air was not good. This year the mine has been examined once: ventilation only 1,521 cubic feet per minute for fifteen men and a horse (half-time). This is not enough, and was not distributed. The men were timbering moderately well. Report one week back. A plan had been made, but all the workings were not shown. The coal to the rise is almost worked out, and a new dip-drive has been put in. The ventilation is capable of great improvement.

27. *Homebush Colliery, Glentunnel*.—On the 12th August the main level was 76 yards before the air. In the fourth slit from the end the air measured 1,680 cubic feet per minute for four men, but it was not guided. The mine was in good order, except as regards air. Report kept. A furnace had been built, which the manager was afraid to light, lest it should set fire to the coal. The furnace is far too small, and is badly placed. On the 9th October the air was better distributed, stoppings having been put in.

28. *Hart's Colliery, Whitecliffs*.—Very little has been done here. On the 13th August, on visiting the mine, I found only pumping being carried on.

29. *Wallsend Colliery, South Malvern*.—Has not been working. On the 13th August the shaft was covered with slabs, one of which was loose, so I nailed it on. The upcast door was off, so I wrote to Mr. Grinrod, who is said to be agent for the owner, requiring it to be properly fenced.

30. *Brockley Coal Mine, Whitecliffs*.—Visited the 10th October, 1882. Air good. Eleven men working. Mine very wet. Report kept, but no rules up or plan. The mine has since been closed, being too far from the railway.

31. *Whitecliffs Coal Mine, Whitecliffs*.—On the 13th August this mine was merely a prospecting drive, and I have not since been there.

32. *Mount Somers Coal Mine*.—Has not been revisited.

TIMARU DISTRICT.

33. *Elephant Hill Coal Mine, Waimate*.—A station-mine, employing one man: seems carefully worked. Copy of Act and set of draft special rules sent on the 29th January, 1883.

OTAGO DISTRICT.

34 and 35.—*Wharekuri and Kurou Coal Mines*.—Have not been revisited. I have had no time during the past year for these small out-of-the-way mines.