

*Charleston.*—During our sojourn at Westport I was enabled to visit Charleston, on the coast, where a great deal of mining had been done in years past. The district, however, when I saw it, presented a depopulated appearance. Around the old workings, some two to four miles back from the town, I found active mining going on by several parties. Alluvial mining by sluicing seems the method that obtains, but a much greater supply of water is necessary to thoroughly develop the auriferous capacity of a large area of ground. An important work, the Argyle Water-race, is being constructed on the siphon principle, and will likely become of great benefit to mining interests when completed.

While at Charleston I met several Shetlanders who had been residing about four miles away on the sea-coast for many years, their chief occupation having been mining on the sea sands. Every tide that flows to the shore brings them a portion of their daily harvest, and their earnings from this source throughout the year run from 15s. to over £1 per diem.

Between Charleston and Westport I passed through Addison's Flat, where several well-paying claims are actively at work. The mining is deep alluvial, and much of the washdirt very rich. Water, however, is somewhat troublesome to keep down.

*Ngakawau Coal Mine.*—We occupied one day in visiting and inspecting the Ngakawau Coal Mine, on the Denniston Plateau, belonging to the Westport Coal Company. It is needless to say that the extent of this coalfield is almost boundless, and the quality of the coal superb, either for steam or gas purposes. The same remarks will apply to the Koranui Company's mine, not far distant, and in the same neighbourhood. Each proprietary has had enormous difficulties to overcome, and has been compelled to spend large capital in winning the coal and in providing means for conveying it to port for shipment; but when the harbour is improved sufficiently to admit vessels of large carrying capacity to call in and load at the staiths a very great benefit will accrue to the colony and to the enterprising people who are more directly interested.

*Reefton.*—On the 5th July we followed up the Buller Valley to what is known as "the Landing," and crossed the Inangahua, on our way to Reefton. From this important centre we visited Boatman's, another large reefing district, and saw the low-level tunnel, the famous Welcome Mine, and Fiery Cross battery, all works of magnitude and great enterprise.

An immense amount of mining has been carried on at Boatman's and surrounding localities, and I was glad to find that the miners were hopeful of good results to come. A track is much required to Larry's Creek, where alluvial workings exist, and which would benefit the district. Little Boatman's Tunnel had been driven 1,200ft., and there were 2,400ft. yet to drive.

From Reefton the next day we went up the Inangahua and saw the Keep-it-Dark and Wealth-of-Nations Company's works. In the former mine the reef showed a face of 8ft., all gold-bearing.

I then visited a large mine and powerful battery several miles up Rainy Creek, which was crushing very good stone. The machinery was driven by steam-power; and, on the opposite side of the gully from the company's reef, at a distance of thirteen chains, a large seam of excellent true coal was being worked for the supply of fuel to the battery; indeed, most of the mines using steam-power in the district of Boatman's and Reefton need not look far for fuel, as seams of the finest coal abound over a large extent of country.

*Grey Valley.*—We finally left Reefton on the 9th February, and proceeded to Ahaura, at the junction of that river with the Grey. In the afternoon I went four miles up the Ahaura to inspect some sluicing claims being worked on the opposite bank of the river. A great quantity of the river-bank was being washed by the miners, about twenty in number, who seemed pleased with results, but complained of the inadequate supply of water.

We went from Ahaura to Hatter's Terrace on Nelson Creek, some four miles off the main road, and there learned the wants of the miners. A Resident Magistrate and Miners' Court was asked for, to sit monthly; also aid to prospecting, to impart fresh stimulus to mining in the district; while the charges made on the Nelson Creek water-race and rents for leases were complained of as