

3. With respect to the Wallsend Mine, the shafts and plant are upon an area of 150 acres, purchased some years ago by the Westport Coal Company. The rent of the leasehold, which surrounds the freehold on three sides is £20 per annum. The royalty reserved when the lease was granted in 1875 ceased when the railway from Greymouth to Wallsend was completed. It is in evidence that the output from this mine has lately been from seams extending under the Grey River, in the direction of the Coal-pit Heath on the north side of the river. The evidence of the Inspector of Mines indicates that up to the 31st October, 1888, upwards of 20,000 tons have been, in his opinion, hewn from seams outside the company's boundaries. The present lease of the Wallsend expires on the 1st August, 1894. Negotiations for renewal were entered upon last year but have not been completed. The Committee recommend that no further steps be taken in the matter, except in accordance with the general recommendations at the conclusion of this report.

4. With respect to the Brunner Mine, the output was practically suspended during the first half of the present year. Operations have been recently directed to working the pillars or supports of the roof of the mine. The Committee desire to direct special attention to the evidence of Sir James Hector on the subject: "I have always looked with suspicion on the working of that mine. It will require very great care in dealing with any of the supports to the roof. To take an extreme case, it resembles a ship shored up and ready for launching, as there is a great weight and sheering strain from the hill-top. If a slip occurred the Grey River might be suddenly dammed back, but afterwards would force its way through, and do serious damage. . . . This mine requires to be very carefully watched, for, unless the abandoned workings are regularly inspected, which is not a very easy or safe thing to do, no one would know what is going on. The tendency of this bearing-down motion would be to crush the pillars. The floor I do not think would give way, but the roof would go by fracture. It is a hard gritty sandstone, and, if it goes at all, it will go by fracture, and not by settling, as in the case of a shale roof. But the peculiar danger is in the sheer, oblique, and pushing-forward motion."

5. The Coal-pit Heath mine calls for no particular notice, the output being maintained.

6. To the north of Greymouth, in the neighbourhood of Coal Creek and Point Elizabeth, there are three leases,—

- (1.) Cobden Railway and Coal Company, 4,685 acres.
- (2.) Point Elizabeth Coal Company, 2,783 acres.
- (3.) Masters and Co., 1,280 acres.

The two former companies have proved the existence of seams of coal in their leaseholds, and have applied to the Government for the necessary permission to construct lines connecting with the Port of Greymouth. The length of railway proposed to be constructed by the Cobden Company is four miles seventy chains, and that by the Point Elizabeth Company seven miles ten chains.

7. There is another coal-mine situated on the western side of the Grey River, at Blackball Creek, the distance from Brunnerton being eleven and a half miles. The Midland Railway Company have constructed their line from the Government railway terminus at Brunnerton to Nelson Creek, a distance of eight and a half miles, within three miles of the Blackball Mine.

8. The expenditure on the harbour-works at Greymouth has already yielded satisfactory results particularly as to the depth of water on the bar.

9. The erection and working of hydraulic-cranes have vastly improved the shipping facilities for coal at this port.

II. WESTPORT.

1. Included in this field are the following leases:—

- (1.) The Coalbrookdale, including the Kawatiri, 2,479 acres, leased to the Westport Coal Company (Limited).
- (2.) Granity Creek, 2,951 acres, leased to the Westport Coal Company. Total to this company, 5,430 acres.
- (3.) Ngakawau, 3,118 acres, leased to the Ngakawau Coal Company—an Australian proprietary.
- (4.) Bayfeild's lease, 320 acres, leased to A. D. Bayfeild.
- (5.) Mokihinui (2 leases), 800 acres, leased to the Mokihinui Coal Company.

2. Applications for coal-leases have also been granted, but the leases are not yet issued, to—

- (1.) Ballan and others, 1,920 acres.
- (2.) Haselden and others, for the Buller Coal-mining Company, 2,560 acres.
- (3.) Mokihinui Coal Company, 1,400 acres (including existing lease of 640 acres about to be surrendered).
- (4.) Bayfeild and others, for the New Cardiff Coal Company, 1,800 acres.
- (5.) Moynihan, 3,000 acres.

Nos. 3, 4, and 5 are situated in the Mokihinui District.

3. The Westport or Buller coalfield is on a plateau sloping towards the north, and in the neighbourhood of Westport it is about 2,500ft. above the sea-level. The Government railway is constructed from Westport to Ngakawau, a distance of nineteen miles, access being obtained to the plateau from the railway by two valleys, one at Waimangaroa and the other at Granity Creek, eighteen miles from Westport. At Waimangaroa coal-leases were originally held by the Koranui Coal Company, the Wellington Coal Company, and the Westport Colliery Company. These properties have now become vested in the Westport Coal Company, which commands the frontages at Waimangaroa. At Granity Creek the frontage is also held by the Westport Coal Company, but no output of coal has yet taken place.

4. Two miles to the north of Granity Creek, at the terminus of the railway on the Ngakawau River, the Ngakawau Coal Company is now working deposits of crushed or slip coal at the railway