

preparatory work. The coal that was being tipped on the surface appeared to be much crushed and looked like slack. I again visited the mine on the 17th, and learned from the manager that some preparatory work was still going on at or near the bottom of the shaft, and that the mine would not be in working-order for three months yet. I instructed him to at once put up signal lines, and fix a cradle at top of shaft for cage to lift in reaching the surface, which he promised to do. Since making these notes I learn from Mr. Gibson that he has suspended all work at the mine for the time being, in consequence of not finding any solid hard coal near the pit-bottom, but that he will resume work at some future time, when he has had time to think over the uncertainty of mining specs.

Elliott Hill Coal-mine, Lovel's Flat (16th July, 1891; Peter McGee, manager).—An incline-tunnel of $1\frac{1}{2}$ chains in length leads into the mine, where the seam of coal is from 6ft. to 8ft. thick, and nearly horizontal. The mine is in good order; only one man working.

Benhar Coal-mine (John Nelson, proprietor; 13th January, 1891).—I found that the old mine-workings east of the railway-line were on fire. The manager was at the time of my visit building up a stopping of brickwork, $4\frac{1}{2}$ ft. thick, 6ft. wide, and 7ft. high. The work was to be completed in a few days. I found the mine well ventilated and well timbered. The Act is generally observed. Examined journal and day-book.

J. Morrison's Coal-mine, Benhar (13th February, 1891).—This mine has not been working for some months past.

Thomas Aitken, Benhar Coal-mine (13th February, 1891).—The workings are being extended down the dip, where the seam maintains its thickness, 18ft., and of good quality. The seam is in good order, and the air is good.

Kaitangata Coal-mine (17th February, 1891; Mr. Thom, manager).—Accompanied by the manager, I examined all the workings throughout the mine. I measured the air in the return near the furnace, and found it to be 27,000ft., which is more than is required by the Act. I found the mine in good order, and the Act well observed. I have been in the mine several times since the above date, and found the men careful in doing their work, and the workings in good order. 30th September: Inspected all the workings, south and north, and found them in good order.

Castle Hill, Kaitangata (Mr. Carson, manager; 17th February, 1891).—Examined this mine throughout, and found it in good order. The pillars and roof are in the same condition as when last inspected by me. The air is also good, and no trace of gas.

Kaitangata, Fraser's Mine (12th October).—I visited some old workings, but did not see any one about. Having heard that a small quantity of coal came from this property into Kaitangata, I think there must be another pit in the locality, as the old workings visited by me did not look as if coal had been hewn there lately. I will at some other time make another search.

Castle Hill New Mine, Kaitangata (Mr. Hay, manager).—A new shaft, 13ft. in diameter, is being sunk and lined with bricks. This work is going on at the base of, and in the west side of, the hills facing the lake. While the sinking of the shaft is going on a railway-line is being constructed through the main street of Kaitangata to the shaft from the Kaitangata Coal-mining Company's line. The latter company agrees to draw the coal from the new company's pit to Stirling. The pit is supposed to cut the coal at about 600ft. from the surface. A winding-engine with a built-in boiler is at work; a brickmaking-machine is making the bricks close to the shaft, and a reservoir is just completed in a gully just a short distance above the shaft and other works, and which will hold a never-failing supply of water for the engine. The whole of the works have been very systematically laid out, and are considered extensive for Kaitangata. I have visited the works twice since the above notes were made, and may add that the shaft is now down over 400ft. in fairly good sinking, but inclined to be soft and sandy in places. More boilers and larger pumps have lately been put on the ground to cope with the extra water met with as the shaft is deepened. I expect to see the surface-plant made very complete after the coal is struck.

Castle Hill Coal-mining Company (28th September, 1891).—Since my last annual report the small prospecting shaft then being sunk found an 8ft. seam of good coal, and a new company has been formed to open out the mine on a large scale. The site selected for the new pit is some little distance to the north of the prospecting shaft referred to, and was chosen because of the dip of the coal in that direction. It is also hoped that the new pit will cut the seam at the lowest dip in the lease, which would greatly facilitate the working of the mine. The shaft now being sunk is a round one, of 13ft. diameter, lined with bricks, which are being made on the spot. A portion of the shaft is to be bratticed off with boards to act as an upcast till the air-shaft—the prospecting shaft—is driven to. The sinking is through hard sand at times, and hard layers of shells. As the sinking proceeds the water is getting heavier every week; so much so that more than one set of new pumps have been in use a while and then set aside. I think it is more than likely that some of these discarded pumps would have done all that was required of them if the water carried a much less quantity of sand in suspension. The shaft, at the time of my last visit, was down over 400ft. The winding-engines are the best in Otago, and work very smoothly.

Wangaloa, Kaitangata (29th September, 1891).—I visited the mine and looked over the workings, but did not see any one there. I did not see any new wheel-tracks at the pit-mouth, and came to the conclusion that there was very little doing there.

Lesmahagow, Kaitangata (29th September, 1891).—Inspected Mr. Sewell's workings, and found them in good order, and plenty of air passing through the mine. The output of coal is very small.

Crofthead, Kaitangata (29th September).—Inspected all the workings in this mine, and found the mine-levels and working-faces in good order. I found some of the old levels chipping very much overhead, especially where timbering had been done. The timber in the old workings is no longer able to hold the roof up. There is not now any necessity for the workmen to pass through these old workings.

Waikohoi Pukirau, J. Collins's Mine (3rd October).—This is an open face at the head of a small gully where a small quantity of coal has been removed. I do not think Collins pays much attention