

Barricades adjacent to the pillar faces are erected, with a further one fitted at the termination of each shift in the roadway as a precautionary measure. The demand for slack has enabled all the old workings to be cleaned out, and these are in good condition.

By sinking through the under-measures some 20 ft. to the underlying gravels, timbering this shaft, and syphoning clean water from the sump, a unique system of drainage is provided.

Rockvale Mine (Herbert) (D. R. Gaudion (Deputy), Mine-manager).—An area to the west of Marshall's area, which is sealed, is being developed, the seam being 7 ft. in thickness of good coal with a coal-stone roof which stands well. Places 8 ft. to 9 ft. wide are in good order, and the measures are almost level, the access being a narrow, arched adit of a short distance.

Shag Point Mine (W. McLaren (Deputy), Mine-manager).—Pillar work of limited extent has been undertaken, but towards the end of the year negotiations for a change of ownership took place and the mine has been idle for a short period, but operations have now resumed and greater activity is expected in the near future.

CENTRAL OTAGO DISTRICT

Coal Creek, Oturchua, Cambrian, Idaburn, and Belmont Pits.—Opencast operations to meet local requirements have been continued on similar lines to those of previous years at the above pits.

Corcoran's Mine (Hoxburgh).—Very little work has been done on this lease, which was recently granted—a drive of a few yards opening up a full face of coal with neither roof or floor showing. On my visit no work was being done, but a pump had been operating on an opencast pit adjacent which appeared to have been worked many years ago.

The lessees would be better to make a few trenches and prospecting pits farther up the gully, when no doubt a good face, water-free, and which can be operated by opencast methods for a time, will be proved.

The new hydro power scheme should create greater activity, and in all probability the owners are awaiting this trade.

Shepherd's Creek Mine (J. Hodson (Second Class), Mine-manager).—Pillaring-work has been carried out with satisfactory results, and as the last row of pillars is being extracted the life of the mine is limited, but I was informed that a new area a short distance away is to be developed.

Cairnmuir Mine (W. Hodson (Deputy), Mine-manager).—The failure of the owners resulted in this mine being idle for a period, but a working party of three recently resumed operations. Driving of the lower level is being proceeded with, and it is intended to project the dip a further 100 ft. to form a sump, and open up another two levels.

The seam of good coal is, at the dip face, almost vertical, and I have been advised that a run of sand has, for the time being, caused a halt in the proposed dip extension, but meanwhile the bottom level can be developed and a pillar or two at the end of upper level extracted to place the men.

OTAGO AND SOUTH OTAGO DISTRICTS

Barclay's Mine (Fairfield) (F. Barclay (Second Class), Mine-manager).—The seam in the Crown lease split, with the upper 6 ft. section thinning to 3 ft. 6 in. at half a chain from the western boundary. The party is now concentrating on an area of old Walton Park workings, where the places are standing in good condition beyond Christie's Mine, which ceased in 1924. The thickness of seam of good coal is 12 ft. to 16 ft. with a good coal-stone parting, but the old places are wide with narrow, long pillars.

An electric pump of small capacity has been installed and the water lowered, but on account of floor heave and closed places on the line of intended development some difficulty has been experienced but better results are now being had. Should further trouble be met, a crosscut off the main dip to tap the old level below will be driven.

Negotiations for a further area adjacent to be worked simultaneously with the present section are in trend. The Crown lease pillars are not to be extracted, as this would spoil future access to the area beyond.

Victory Mine (Brighton) (L. Tikey (Deputy), Mine-manager).—Development has been continued. The seam of good coal being 5 ft. to 6 ft., but irregularities with thinnings, particularly to the north-east, are experienced. Places are driven 6 ft. wide and stand well. Conditions generally are damp and, combined with the low seam, uncomfortable, but to the left the seam is 6 ft. with an easy grade and conditions much better.

Prospecting to the north-east after passing troubled measures showed an improvement, but later struck Mr. Coll's old workings, the drive being fallen and tight through floor heave.

Fernhill Mine (M. Hewitson (Deputy), Mine-manager).—Pillar work in the No. 4 Mine is being continued with excellent results from the 6 ft. seam, the goaf packing tightly with sand immediately behind the retreating line of faces. Places have been kept narrow, and with splits, also 6 ft. in width a high percentage extraction is obtained.

The No. 3 Mine, an adjacent area of very limited extent of solid workings, has been idle, but recently preparations to extend the dip were being made and probably to work other faces.

Willoubank Mine (A. Edmond (Deputy), Mine-manager).—Faulting, cutting diagonally across, has occurred, with the seam also splitting, and work is now confined to pillar-extraction on a narrow width at present. Good results are being obtained, and as the faces retreat an improvement should