

## ACCIDENTS.

16th October.—William McCormack was burnt on the arms by an ignition of gas at Kaitangata Colliery. While kneeling down to couple up a length of pipe which had just been added to the branch line of pipes conveying compressed air to the coal-cutting machines in Telford's heading, a "blow through" was given to clean any dust out that may have been in the pipe. Shortly after the "blow through" the ignition occurred, with the result that McCormack was burnt, while J. Brown, an assistant, some 20 ft. away, escaped uninjured. McCormack's light was on the floor, and there can be no doubt that the "blow through" of compressed air raised up a quantity of fine dust made by the holing-machines, dashed same against the coal-face, and on the rebound the dust (probably associated with a little gas that might have accumulated during the time the compressed air was off, thus forming a most explosive mixture, which on reaching the light on the floor) promptly ignited. Mr. McCormack was unable to attend to his work for a month. I reported specially on this matter under date the 6th November.

Four other slight accidents occurred not of sufficient importance to specify individually.

I have, &c.,

E. R. GREEN,

Inspector of Mines.

The Under-Secretary, Mines Department, Wellington.

## No. 3.

Mr. J. COURTTS, Inspector of Mines, to the UNDER-SECRETARY, Mines Department.

SIR,—

Inspector of Mines' Office, Thames, 14th February, 1900.

I have the honour to transmit to the Hon. the Minister of Mines the following report on the coal-mines in the Auckland District, in compliance with section 67 of "The Coal-mines Act, 1891," for the year ending the 31st December, 1899:—

## KAWAKAWA.

*Kawakawa Mine.*—This mine until the early part of this year was the property of the New Bay of Islands Company (Limited), who worked it for a term of five years and a half, and then sold the mining requisites, &c., to Robert Hislop and party, who have worked it continuously ever since. The present party's operations have been confined to that portion of the mine known as "Moody's Outcrop." The seam where it is at present worked is very thin, varying from 1 ft. 6 in. to 3 ft. in thickness, and a few pillars left by the old company were 4 ft. thick, the present party being successful in getting them out. The seam being thin, the cost of getting the coal is, of course, much greater than in thick seams; and, as it has to be taken along a tramway for a considerable distance to the railway, the present owners can barely make it pay. Still, as the mine was considered to be worked out years ago, it is pleasing to know that a few men are making a living from the coal produced from it. Seven men have been employed, and the output of coal for the year was 3,945 tons. Robert Hislop has a permit to manage this mine, and has exercised great care in carrying on the work. No accidents.

## HIKURANGI.

*Hikurangi Coal Company.*—The operations in this company's mine have been steadily pushed ahead, and the mine opened up to such an extent that a considerable quantity of coal can be procured at a small cost, as there is little water to contend with in the present workings. The output from this mine is increasing every year, and, with a view to be in a position to keep up the supply to meet the increasing demands for some time to come, the company contemplates commencing operations on the eastern side of the Government railway to open up the seam of coal on this part of their property. Several bores have already been put down, and excellent coal is said to have been obtained, and, as the company has a large area of ground in this direction, the prospects may be considered encouraging. This mine was inspected twice during the year. The ventilation was good, the workings were safe, and were carried out in an efficient manner. Fifty-one men have been employed, and the output of coal for the year was 34,037 tons, an increase of 1,064 tons as compared with the previous year.

*Phoenix Mine.*—Work in this mine has ceased for the present.

*West Bryan's.*—There was only 23 tons of coal taken out of this mine in the early part of the year, which was principally for Mr. Smith's own use.

*Hikurangi Colliery.*—This company's works in the mine are being carried on from adit-levels driven from the side of the hill, the covering on the coal in the deepest place never exceeding 50 ft. The seam where recently worked is 14 ft. thick, but only about 9 ft. is taken out. The mine was twice visited during the year, and on each occasion the ventilation was good and the workings safe. There was also an abundance of timber, such as props, &c., on the mine, to be used as required. Twenty-two men have been employed, and the output of coal for the year was 13,656 tons, this being an increase of 1,719 tons on that obtained for the previous year.

## WHANGAREI.

*New Kamo Mine.*—The lease of this mine was sold during the year to William Beehre, and is now being worked under the management of Donald McDonald, who was granted a permit in accordance with section 21 of "The Coal-mines Act, 1891." The work in the early part of the year was confined to taking out pillars left in the old mine, but the present owner directed the operations to be made in opening up the seam to the north of the old workings, and has been suc-