

*Coalbrookdale Colliery* (owners, Wesport Coal Company).—(21/12/99): The total outputs of the Denniston collieries show a gross increase of 9,663 tons over the preceding year. At the commencement of the year the endless-rope haulage was extended 15 chains towards the dip of Cascade section. This extension placed the main levels in position to win and open out the coal-field in the direction of what is locally named the "Look-out" area. From present developments the prospects of this field are very encouraging, the seam having an average thickness of 20 ft. It is all mined by percussive pick-machines actuated by compressed air. The power generated is from a newly erected plant situated near the entrance of Cascade dip-incline. It consists of two Leyner straight-line driven compressors, with 14½ in. steam, 16 in. low-pressure and 10 in. high-pressure air-cylinders. Steam is supplied from one of Babcock and Wilcox 120-horse-power boilers, but, in view of utilising compressed air as a motive-power for pumping and haulage purposes in the mine, the company intend to provide additional boiler-power. On the upper side of the 13 ft. downthrow fault, which intersects this section of the coalfield, the east and west pillar districts have been successfully worked backwards to within safe distance of the main haulage-road. Roadways, airways, and working-faces receive careful attention, as every necessary precaution is enforced to minimise risk to life and property. All working-faces are inspected and securely timbered by the company's officers previous to fitters or machine-men being allowed to start work. The company's officers are wholly responsible for the inspection and safety of the workmen referred to. No serious accidents reported. Reports kept to date. Air-measurement, 28,000 cubic feet per minute. Four inspections made. Munsie's: In this district of pillars twelve pairs of miners are employed. John Mason was slightly injured by a thin flake of roof-stone in the face bruising his ankle and hips.

*Ironbridge Colliery*.—(20/12/99): The dip-workings in Cedar Creek area are extended by two parallel dip-headings. The coal-seam is over 20 ft. in thickness. Extending northward, this coal-field is intersected by the north branch of the Waimangaroa River, and in order to win the coal from the north section a rise-heading was driven in direct course to cut the south outcrop at the most suitable position to bridge the ravine. At this point a wooden bridge is constructed, with 30 ft. span, built to a gradient of 1 in 4, which runs in direct line with front heading of north workings, the outlet, or back heading, being 50 yards eastward. Gravity is the power used to lower the coal to the low level of old mine. From thence it is conveyed by horse, and attached to the iron-bridge endless-rope haulage. In both sections of solid working all the coal is mined by pick-machines, of which there are two types in use—viz., Morgan and Gardiner's, actuated by electrical power, and Yoch's pick-machines, by compressed air. The electrical power generated at Coalbrookdale is transmitted two miles and a half over the surface by bare copper cables, and is also used for pumping and hauling. As a result of careful and practical experiments extending over a considerable time in reference to the adaptability and applicability of electrical *versus* compressed power for mining operations, it was confirmed beyond doubt that compressed air as a motive-power is the most suitable and practical factor of safety and economy; and it has been decided that compressed air will be the future power at the Denniston collieries. Acting on these facts, an extensive air-compressor plant is newly erected in a central position at Ironbridge Mine, midway between Cedar Creek dip-workings and North Waimangaroa Coalfield. This plant has equal capacity with the one referred to in the Coalbrookdale Mine; steam is generated by Roots's tubular boilers. Attention has been directed to the natural drainage of Cedar Creek area, and it is contemplated to drive a water-channel 30 chains in length, so as to drain, and enable an extensive pillar area to be exhausted. In addition to these pillars, a large solid area will be freed of water; also the bottom seam, which is proved to be 9 ft. thick, and underlying the present seam at a depth of 90 ft., will be under command. The working-conditions of this mine are satisfactory, and the provisions of the Act strictly carried out. Air-measurement, 17,500 cubic feet per minute. Four inspections made. No serious accidents reported.

*Langford Coal-mine*.—This mine still continues to be shut down.

*Whitecliffs Coal-mine*.—The owner applied for a lignite license, but on the plea that the coal is bituminous I objected.

*Flaxbush Coal-mine*.—(2/3/1900): This mine has been reopened by a low-level rock tunnel 150 ft. in length. The coal is 2 ft. thick, and has a vertical position. Ventilation good. Timber freely used. Two men employed.

*Coal Creek Coal-mine*.—(14/11/99): During the year only 25 tons of coal was mined, but, in view of the Rocklands Gold-dredging Company starting operations in this locality, there is a better future.

*Golden Treasure Coal-mine*.—(18/11/99): On this lease two men are employed, who depend chiefly on the gold saved from sluicing off the surface cover. 196 tons of coal was mined.

*Murray Creek Coal-mine* (Lewis Betts, owner).—(18/11/99): This lease adjoins the Golden Treasure, and is worked open face. Whilst sluicing off the surface cover fair quantities of gold are saved. The coal is a good household fuel, and finds a ready local market. Three men employed.

*Phoenix Coal-mine* (John Fox, owner).—(18/11/99): This lease contains two valuable coal-seams, parted by a 6 ft. layer of shaly fireclay. These are hard bright coals, 50 ft. and 22 ft. in thickness, and as a household fuel compares favourably with Westport best. Fox being a practical miner, the mine is worked in an orderly manner. Three men employed. A complete plan, showing position of workings with surface boundaries, was duly received.

*Lankey's Creek Coal-mine* (William Lamberton, owner).—(10/9/99): The owner of this mine continues to push his drive westward. In the face the coal is split with a rock band, which thickens in a north-westerly course, and in view of getting clear of the stone a rise-heading is started.

*Bourke Creek Coal-mine*.—(7/11/99): Cairns and McLiver, who own this mine, are not colliers, but lately practical colliers are employed to mine the coal. The workings are safe, tidy, and there is good air. When last visited the bottom level touched a fault, but from what could be seen of