

while in the remaining case the man was suffocated by resultant gases generated from spontaneous ignition.

No serious accidents are reported from the Brunner Mine.

FOREIGN TRADE.

The quantity of coal shipped by the Westport Coal Company from the 1st April, 1900, to the 31st March, 1901, to ports outside the colony was 17,470 tons. This statement, compared with the preceding year's shipments, shows an increase of 10,515 tons.

The Under-Secretary, Mines Department, Wellington.

I have, &c.,
R. TENNENT,
Inspector of Mines.

No. 4.

Mr. E. R. GREEN, Inspector of Mines, to the UNDER-SECRETARY, Mines Department, Wellington.

Office of Inspector of Mines (Southern District), Dunedin,
11th March, 1901.

SIR,—

In compliance with section 67 of "The Coal-mines Act, 1891," I have the honour to submit the following report on the coal-mines in this district for the year ending 31st December, 1900:—

CANTERBURY.

Springfield Colliery, Springfield (H. Barker, permit).—(5/6/1900): Mr. Horseley, of Christchurch, recently acquired this property. Work underground mostly robbing pillars and getting fireclay where available. Return airway to second outlet almost blocked up by an ugly fall. Mr. Barker promised to drive a new road in the pillar past this fall.

Sheffield, Sheffield (John Austin).—(5/6/1900): Mr. Austin took the pit over from Austin Brothers on the 12th May. The second outlet has fallen in. A fire to improve the air made in the return about Christmas-time set the coal-pillars alight, and had such a hold when noticed that it could not be put out. As the coal burned out the roof fell. The fire is now smothered by falls, and what air is circulating in the mine leaks through this fall. There are only a few pillars on the roadside available, and this mine will soon be finished. Damp was squeezing out of the "gob," and I found it on the floor where the men were working. I pointed this out to Mr. Austin, and instructed the three men at work as to its danger. The level and main horse-road is very dirty. A few places, which I pointed out, require timber, which Mr. Austin promised to see to. (6/10/1900): The men in the mine having made a complaint to me under section 44 of "The Coal Mines Act, 1891," I visited as above. There was no one about. Subsequently Mr. Austin wrote me that he had discharged all hands and abandoned the mine.

Homebush, Glentunnel (T. Brown).—(8/6/1900): Substantial pillars were left when the mine was opened up; they are now being extracted successfully, a very small percentage of coal being lost. Timber used freely. Air good, but the drift to second outlet is very muddy.

St. Helen's Colliery, Whitecliffs (H. Levick).—(7/6/1900): Driving across the measures at water-level, and blocking out coal to the crop-out. Timber well set up to working-faces all over mine. Air good, rents to surface being somewhat numerous. Coal under water-level not being worked, the measures being steep (dip 30°). A considerable outlay would be required for pumping and hauling plant.

Hartley, Whitecliffs (A. Thompson).—(7/6/1900): Old mine abandoned. New drive well timbered, dipping 1 in 4; down 4 chains in "stone." Is under and now believed to be beyond old workings. A 4 in. Tangye pump keeps the water down easily.

Mount Somers Coal Company, Mount Somers (A. Harris, permit).—(27/6/1900): Stripping and opencast now discontinued. Seam 40 ft. thick. Bands of stone alternating with workable layers of good coal. The lower 10 ft. and upper 10 ft. are not being worked. A number of promiscuous drives having been put into the face, a low level is now being driven to cut off old workings. The coal is very hard, and the roof stands well. A new mine about a mile and a half to the north of the present workings has been driven 50 ft. into a face of coal, which is said to be 60 ft. thick, and of superior quality. It is proposed to lay a tramway to the new seam from the present tip-head, which is the terminus of the Selwyn County Council tramway.

Springburn Lime Company, Staveley (W. Healy, lately J. Duke).—(28/6/1900): A low-level tunnel has been driven across the measures, which are vertical. At 150 yards a 5 ft. seam of coal was struck, and it has been driven on both sides of the level. The air is dull at the face, and I arranged with Mr. Healy to have the south drive pushed on to daylight, there being about a chain to drive. Limestone resembling the Mount Somers stone occurs near the mine. A circular kiln has been built, and coal got is used for lime-burning only.

Rutherford's, Albury (J. H. Willetts).—(25/6/1900): Old workings in vertical seam are abandoned, mine-entrance fenced across, and air-shaft covered. A new drive on the opposite side of the creek is in about 33 yards on the strike of the seam, which is here apparently gradually flattening. A rise crosscut in the coal is driven off the level at such a low angle that only a thin tongue of pillar is left. The seam is about 20 ft. thick, of which 7 ft. on the bottom is not worked, being inferior.

Waihao Forks, Waihao Forks (D. MacPherson).—(10/8/1900): Opencast discontinued. Tunnel in 16 yards Coal-seam 4 ft. thick, dipping 1 in 3.