

CANTERBURY.

Springfield Colliery, Springfield (J. Taylor, permit).—(19/8/04) : The mine is in good working-order. Timber is well used throughout the mine. Ventilation fair. The return airway to the shaft required attention, but a new heading is being driven in coal to connect with the shaft. Six men are employed. 413 tons 10 cwt. of fireclay raised from this pit during the year.

Victoria Mine, Springfield (W. J. Cloudesley).—(19/8/1904) : A new mine driven outside the boundary of the company's fence found the coal-seam disturbed and troubled by an upthrow fault to such an extent that work has been discontinued until the return of the proprietor, who is on a visit to England.

Homebush Colliery, Glentunnel (J. C. Campbell, manager).—(20/8/1904) : New cross-measures drive east from main level at 136 yards struck 6 ft. seam of coal in which levels are being turned away north and south. Dip section : Dip extension suspended meanwhile, north and south low levels being driven narrow (6 ft.), and false roof being taken down to provide permanent air and travelling ways. Drum heading section : Work to rise still confined to splitting and extracting pillars. Henry Nicol sustained bruises to loins on the 6th August ; a flake of false roof had fallen and borne Nicol to the floor. The mine-manager had instructed Nicol to take the flake down. Nicol and his mate had, however, decided to first fill a box of coal. 209 tons of fireclay had been taken from this mine during the year.

St. Helen's Colliery, Whitecliffs (H. Levick, permit).—(20/8/1904) : Mine-workings in good order, and ventilation fair. The levels are driven to the faults, and the pillars are being brought back. Timber is well used. Development of the mine has been considerably hampered by faults struck in the north and south sections. The main cross-measures drive has been extended to search for a new seam, but without success.

Mount Somers Coal Company, Mount Somers (M. Neilson, mine-manager).—(11/11/1904) : A new mine-entrance has been made to rise of old workings, and south levels are driven practically on the western boundary, leaving the bulk of the seam unworked to the dip. When the proposed tramway is laid up the Woolshed Creek Valley there will be little difficulty in driving a water-free level to the dip of the seam, which will command a large block of coal to the rise. Thickness of seam, 24 ft. Work during the year has been seriously hampered by twelve successive falls of snow, a serious consideration, seeing that there are eleven miles of tramway above ground from the mine-mouth to the Mount Somers Railway-station.

Woolshed Creek Colliery, Mount Somers (J. Healey, permit ; W. T. Doak, secretary).—(11/11/1904) : Coal to rise becoming rapidly exhausted. Pillars are robbed almost to their last extremity. A new drive at a lower level will soon be a necessity, or, as an alternative, a drive to the dip, when hauling and pumping plant will be required. In further working it would not be advisable to work above the main stone band in the centre of the seam, there being a full 12 ft. of good coal below the band, and, if substantial pillars be left, a large percentage of coal might be won. Several props were required in the level roadway for better security.

Albury Coal-mine, Albury (J. M. Willetts).—(24/8/1904) : Air-shaft at front of workings, and good air now circulating through the mine. Coal is won by means of crosscuts instead of headings and bords. The tongues of pillars at breakaways are left too small for permanent roof-support, and I instructed Mr. Willetts to that effect. The mine is situate upon Opawa Station, now known as Chamberlain Settlement.

Waihao Coal-mine, Waihao Forks (A. A. Adamson).—(26/8/1904) : This mine had been worked in sections, each section being pillared as a new one was opened out. In the early part of the year the mine was found to be on fire, and was at once closed off. The mine was still closed on the date of my visit. Adamson has since surrendered his lease to Mr. Grant, the landowner.

Waihao Forks Coal-mine, Waihao Forks (D. McPherson, owner ; George Lomas, permit).—(26/8/1904) : This property had hitherto been worked in a small way, opencast. A dip drive has been driven 120 ft., and levels broken off. Three men have been employed. The owner has now granted a lease over 80 acres to a Christchurch syndicate for twenty-five years on a royalty basis. The property is to be worked on a more extensive scale, for which purpose a steam winding and pumping plant is to be erected.

Elephant Hill, Waihao Downs (Lewis Mathias, runholder).—(26/8/1904) : This mine was worked in the early part of the year by A. A. Adamson, who subsequently surrendered his lease to the landowner, Mr. L. Mathias. The mine has recently been retimbered in accordance with instructions received from this office, and is now in safe working-order. Coal is obtained for station requirements. One man employed.

NORTH OTAGO.

St. Andrew's Colliery, Papakaio (Thomas Nimmo).—(22/10/1904) : Still coming homeward on the pillars ; ash stoppings regularly inserted to imprison black damp in waste ground, thus minimising risk of spontaneous fire. Rules posted ; plan to date.

Prince Alfred Colliery, Papakaio (G. N. Willetts, permit).—(22/10/1904) : New shaft sunk in front of advancing workings, giving good ventilation. Underground workings are now bordering on the Coal Reserve, and the plan requires to be brought up to date.

Ngapara Colliery, Ngapara (William Nimmo).—(20/10/1904) : Coal-seam 25 ft. in thickness, of which 6 ft. to 8 ft. in the centre of the seam is being worked. A dry crevice or cavity, 15 ft. by 12 ft., met with in the level was found full of black damp. A new shaft is being sunk to the rise to increase the efficiency of this well-ventilated mine. All dross is drawn. Roadways and working-places in good order.

Allandale Colliery, Shag Point (C. H. Westfield, mine-manager).—(23/12/1904) : Roadways, working-places, and return airways continue to be maintained in good order and condition. Timber