

Coal-bearing area having been exhausted, the plant was drawn, and the colliery is now closed down. The shafts are well covered over and fenced around. I duly received notice of the abandonment of the colliery under section 57 of "The Coal-mines Act, 1891." The greater part of the surface plant has been removed to the recently acquired property known as the Real Mackay Coal-mine at Akatore, Milton district, Tokomairiro.

*Wallsend Coal-mine, Lovell's Flat* (R. Hewitson).—An opencast pit. Output mainly used for supply of local requirements.

*Benhar Coal-mine, Stirling* (P. McSkimming and Sons, owners; J. McLeod, permit).—(28/6/05): The south-eastern section of the mine collapsed owing to the bottom heaving and coal working up to a "thread" fault which traverses the seam. The workings are now confined to the north-west section of the mine, in which the roof is sound and workings strong. (4/7/1905): The present haulage dip, having become affected by the "trouble," has been abandoned, and the No. 1, or old dip, has been reopened and put in working-order. This section of the mine is more free from faults, and is not affected by the movement. A good supply of timber is maintained and well used. Rules posted; plan kept; report-book to date.

*Mount Wallace Coal-mine, Stirling* (James Walls, lessee; A. H. Anderson, owner).—(28/6/1905): This mine is situated on A. H. Anderson's freehold property. The main dip is now down 220 ft. in strong coal, and the necessity for a pumping plant is being felt. The mine is in good order. Ventilation good. Access to this pit by road is difficult, and hinders extensive development of the property.

*Taratu Railway and Coal Company: Taratu Colliery, Kaitangata* (Thomas Shore, mine-manager; George R. Cheeseman, general manager).—(11/1/1905): The extraordinary and unusual amount of robbing of roof and pillars to which this new mine had been subjected resulted in the practical loss of that portion of the field as a convenient inlet to the coal-deposit lying to the south-westward. Heavy falls occurred in the workings, and involved the main level, which had originally been driven too wide and high and the pillars left too small for security, so that the whole of the area became lost. A new mine is started to the eastward of present opening. (27/10/1905): The late mine, having exhibited symptoms of taking fire, has been blocked off. The new mine is driven eastward, and a level tramway therefrom laid to the screens and loading-bank. Seam 15 ft., lying practically level; roof good in coal, and very little timber required. Proper canisters in use for carriage of explosive (gelignite). Ventilation satisfactory. Boring operations for prospecting purposes are being conducted by Mr. Osborne, the well-known Christchurch borer.

*Kaitangata Colliery, Kaitangata* (New Zealand Coal and Oil Company, owners; O. G. Lockhart, secretary, Dunedin; R. S. Jordan, mine-manager).—(22/2/1905): Thomas Barclay appointed mine-manager. A prospecting borehole has been put down 60 ft. in the main stone-drive extension eastward, but was unsuccessful in finding a workable seam of coal. The main seam, south district, has been fully developed. An alteration of the direction of dip from westward to south-west to southerly (or periclinal as it appears to be), has latterly taken place in this section. Nos. 9 and 10 levels are driven east by north, and a large area of coal thereby proved. No. 10 is up to what may prove to be No. 7 fault, and is stopped at a blower giving off quantities of water with gas, which is generally accepted in this colliery as a good sign, and indicative of another seam of coal in the vicinity. Dip sections: Nos. 7, 15, and 16 dip districts are pillared out and finished, and blocked off with fire-stoppings. No. 12 dip pillars are also extracted up to No. 5 landing, above which the few remaining pillars are being rapidly exhausted. No. 17 dip coal-seam thinning to southward, and now coming back on the pillars. New dips are Nos. 18 and 19, from main south level, main seam. A fatality occurred in new seam on the 2nd February, 1905, Allan McKinnie, miner, being instantaneously killed by a fall of roof and side in his working-place, caused by an exceptionally heavy "nug" or bump from the solid—a pure accident. A slight ignition of gas occurred on the 23rd September, 1905, in No. 2 heading, main seam. The district had been worked out and stopped off; the fire-stopping at No. 3 bord had sagged a little, and fire was coming out. A party of officials were effecting repairs when the ignition occurred, and two of the men were slightly burned. There was no explosion. It appeared that there had been an atmospheric depression (barometer 29.65), and consequent leakage from stoppings and strata, and the low percentage of gas present became ignited at the living fire at the stopping. Only safety-lamps were in use in this district. A large stock of pit timber is kept on hand, and an adequate supply distributed throughout the mine as required. The steam-winch at surface of upcast air-shaft is regularly tried and kept in good condition for working in the event of its being required. Strict attention is paid to examinations of the various working districts, and all reports of same are duly entered in the proper report-books, and attested by examiners. Gas in small quantities reported from time to time, an unusually large quantity, coming from the blower at No. 10 level, new seam, interfering somewhat with regularity of work in that section, is cleared by ventilation, and gradually draining off. Foot of McDougall's and drum headings regularly examined, and results of same duly reported. Up to about the month of June the general conditions of the mine workings, roadways, and airways might be said to have been more favourable than had been usual—in fact, better than they had been for some years previously. Unfortunately, this state has not been maintained; roadways, and especially return airways, have deteriorated, and the ventilation become depreciated to the extent of from 10,000 to 12,000 cubic feet per minute less than had been recorded at the commencement of the year. A matter of importance was the removal of the lamp-station notice from the cabin at No. 2 (where it had been fixed by the late Mr. Jordan) to in-by at No. 14 crossing, thus allowing use of naked lights and consequently of tobacco-pipes, cigarettes, and matches on main haulage-roads and at entrance to all working sections. I strenuously opposed removal of the notice, which, however, was not restored until the end of the year. Complaints made on behalf of the men as to the lack of ventilation in No. 17 dip were investigated and sustained, improvements being immediately effected. Another complaint as to escape of smoke from brick arch stopping on main roadway at No. 7 crossing, causing pollution