

The stripping has now become so heavy that the advisability of driving out the coal is being considered. Four men usually employed.

*Argyle Coal-pit, Upper Waikaia* (J. and T. Baxter, lessees).—This opencast pit is still worked by hauling off the overburden before taking up the coal. The supply is principally to settlers in the Upper Waikaia district. Two men generally employed.

*Pyramids Coal-pit, Mandeville* (E. Macallister, owner; W. and J. Hollows, lessees).—371 tons of coal were raised up to April, 1905, when the mine was closed down. The mine has not been reopened since.

*Waimea Coal-pit, Longridge Village, Waimea*.—This pit has been idle throughout the year.

*Radford's Coal-pit, Balfour* (E. Radford, lessee).—This pit has been opened to mine for lignite on E. Fitzgerald's freehold property.

*Roderick McKenzie's Coal-pit, Blackmount Station, Takitimo District*.—This property has been purchased for H. Studholme, who mines coal for private and station requirements.

*Waimumu Coal-pit, Mataura* (C. P. Sleeman, owner).—(15/4/1905): Owing to the recent wet weather the work of stripping has fallen into arrears, but the manager expects to overtake this shortly. Blasting-powder is stored in a suitable locked magazine, and canisters are used. 9,419 tons of coal were raised from this pit during the year. Seven men are generally employed in and about the pit.

*Boghead Coal-pit, Mataura (lately Bogside Pit, Mutch and Hurst)*, (A. Cameron and James Duncan, lessees).—(15/4/1905): Three men are engaged reopening this pit, which was flooded for some time. The pit was not in good working-order on this date, but efforts were being made to improve the condition. Suitable powder magazine and canisters required. 2,139 tons of lignite were raised during the year.

*Mataura Lignite-pit, Mataura* (Beattie, Coster, and Co., owners; W. Coster, manager).—(15/4/1905): Opencast pit. 22 chains of tramway connect the pit with the roadside depot. Arrangements are being completed to connect with the Mataura Railway-siding to enable the coal to be railed outside the district. The pit is now well opened up in two working-faces, and the overburden kept well stripped in advance. The blasting-powder is well stored and carefully used. 5,707 tons of lignite were raised during the year. Eight men on an average are employed.

*McGilvray's Coal-pit, Mataura*.—Lignite is raised for private use only, but 55 tons of hæmatite were supplied to the Mataura Paper-mills during the year.

*Wainumu Colliery Company, Wainumu* (W. J. Williams, manager; H. W. Royds, secretary, Invercargill).—(6/4/1905): Opencast pit; stripping, 16 ft. Three seams, having total thickness of 21 ft., are being worked. A large area of coal has been stripped. The supply is principally to dredges in the Wainumu Valley. 4,811 tons of coal were raised during the year. Seven men generally employed.

*Nightcaps Colliery, Nightcaps* (J. Lloyd, mine-manager; William Handyside, managing director).—(25/5/1905): Dip section: Seams being worked are upper seam (rise headings) and middle seam, each 15 ft. in thickness; the lower seam, 12 ft., being left underfoot. In No. 3 section rise headings are driven to outcrop, pillars being left for the future. On line of fault, or outcrop, on north-eastern boundary coal thinning to an unworkable size. The "rosin" seam (4 ft. 6 in.) overlying upper seam is being carefully kept up where pillars are to be drawn on account of its liability to spontaneous ignition. A recent case of spontaneous fire underground had been detected and overcome. Similarly, an outbreak in the open face against the opencast, making the third case within three years, which is noteworthy, as it had been considered by the management that the mine-workings were not liable to fire spontaneously. No. 2 section continues to be well robbed, coming back on the middle- and bottom-seam pillars from the outcrop homeward. As is usual, timber is freely used, and a large stock is kept on the premises. The fan-revolutions are to be increased. I found that the powder-smoke did not clear so rapidly as desirable. (16/11/1905): No. 1 district (including dip section) is being developed in coal of excellent quality up to the fault, which has not yet been proved, but there are indications of considerable disturbance. Ventilation satisfactory—brattice well up to working-faces, and powder-smoke is rapidly cleared away. No. 2 district comprises workings in No. 1 seam, which are now pillared back to their limit, 1 chain from main haulage-road, also middle-seam workings on pillars, 3 chains yet from haulage-road. Every care exercised in pillar-workings throughout No. 2 district; roof being bad is heavily timbered, and a plentiful supply of suitable timber is kept on hand. In No. 3 district, with outlet to No. 2, driving in solid in lower seam to boundary; the roof in No. 3 (in coal) is strong, and comparatively free from diagonal backs, and less timber is required than in other parts of the mine. Nos. 2 and 3 districts: Brattice up to faces, and ventilation good. Opencast: A considerable area is stripped ahead, and the three seams are exposed in section, coal aggregating 35 ft. in thickness, having small bands of dirt between the seams. An installation of acetylene gas has been furnished for illumination of railway premises, yard loading-bank, engine-room, and haulage-road. This colliery has been remarkably free from accident throughout the year. Rules posted; plan well kept; and report-books to date.

*Hit or Miss Coal-mine, Nightcaps* (William Tinker).—(16/11/1905): Underground mining at present suspended in favour of opencast work on the freehold side of the boundary, but preparations are being made to resume work on the area held under lease from the Crown.

*Lamont's Coal-mine (H.B.), Nightcaps* (David McKenzie, permit; A. Lamont, deceased).—(16/11/1905): Being Lamont's inheritor, McKenzie has started to win the coal opencast and is stripping an area for that purpose. Underground working suspended meanwhile.

*Morley Coal-pit, Nightcaps* (George R. Spence).—(16/11/1905): An opencast pit on Burrell's freehold. Seam from 6 ft. to 10 ft. in thickness. Stripping kept well ahead.

*McBride's Coal-mine, Nightcaps* (William Reed, lessee, permit).—Opencast workings for supply of local requirements.