

*Taitapu Gold Estates (Limited)* (N. L. Buchanan, attorney).—This company is now prospecting for coal on their property, and in furtherance of this work six men are engaged on three shifts, cross-cutting a coal-seam about 11 ft. in thickness, with the intention of ascertaining the extent and direction of the coal-seam. In addition to the six men mentioned, two other miners are engaged to open and develop the seam on another part of the property, whilst a third party will prospect for outcrops on the opposite side of the gully, situate in the vicinity of the first-named workings.

*Mokihinui Colliery*.—The only item of importance is the old smouldering mine.

*Westport-Stockton Coal Company (Limited)* (Geo. H. Broome, mining manager).—(7/12/1907): The varied works in connection with this property continue to be in the development stage. B and C tunnels have been completed during the year—B tunnel, 62 chains in length, intersecting the coal-seam lying between Mine Creek and Mangatini Creek; and C tunnel, 26 chains in length, intersecting the coal-area lying between Mangatini and Ford's Creeks. D tunnel has also been driven a short distance, but will be further extended before commencing to put out coal. As stated in report of last year, the ventilation for tunnel driving has been efficiently induced by No. 5 Sturtevant fans, driven by Tangye oil-engines, 2½-horse power, exhausting through iron pipes, 12 in. diameter. The main ventilation of the mine, however, will be induced by electrically driven fans of the improved Waddle type. The formation of the tramway from the mouth of A tunnel to the brake-head on Swampy Flat has been completed, with the exception of a small gap at Sandy Creek, where a culvert of large dimensions has been constructed, and the valley crossed by a large embankment. The formations in general are constructed in a substantial manner, and bridging avoided, embankments having been found more practical and economical in all cases. The formation for the upper incline, 40 chains in length, with an average grade of 1 in 6·7 and a maximum grade of 1 in 5, is now completed, with the exception of a big filling where an embankment is being constructed in preference to bridging. Also the formation of the lower incline, and the bridge over Mine Creek, are completed, grading having received special care in both inclines. On the upper incline, 7 chains of sandstone tunnelling was encountered, but the lower incline is open the whole distance. Referring to the hydraulic-brake installations, the site for the upper brake is being prepared, and on the lower incline the site has been excavated. Both inclines are to be worked on the endless-rope system of haulage. The Ngakawau rock tunnel, 28 chains in length, with a gradient of 1 in 63 in favour of the load, has been completed and railed, whilst the approach is finished and strengthened by the construction of a concrete arch with wing walls. Towards the construction of the storage-bins and screening-plant, the piles for the foundations, and the trestle work for the viaduct which connects with the Ngakawau Tunnel mouth have been driven, and the several buildings in which Australian ironbark timber is being largely employed are making satisfactory progress. Also, the concrete foundations for the power station, which fronts the Government railway and the company's sidings at Ngakawau, are being actively pushed. Steam will be supplied by four Babcock and Wilcox boilers, which are now being installed. Special care is being observed throughout to insure permanence in the working details, and safety to life and property. Whilst the rock and coal tunnels were being driven, examinations with locked safety-lamps were made before the commencement of each shift of eight hours, and the reports accordingly made.

*Millerton Colliery* (owners, Westport Coal Company, Limited: George Fletcher, mining manager).—(5/12/1907): Mining operations and general equipment continue to maintain their usual high efficiency, while the tonnage raised was 297,754 tons, a total increase of 33,753 tons as compared with the preceding year.

Mine Creek section: With reference to the Mine Creek section of solid and pillar working, which comprise the chief centre of supply, underground operations have been non-important, the removal of pillars being exclusively confined to hand-labour, and solid work to coal cutting by machinery, attention having been chiefly directed to extend the development of the adjoining southern section of the lease across the Mangatini Gorge. This extension being of considerable magnitude, work of a difficult and expensive character in rock driving and heavy surface cuttings was undertaken, and in order to maintain a direct and permanent line of haulage, the mountain stream was wisely diverted through a stone-built culvert of adequate dimensions. These works are, however, nearing completion, and the management anticipates that coal will be produced from this new area some time in March. Work is likewise in progress to install two new Babcock steam-boilers and a Sirocco fan of high capacity.

In addition to the extensive mining works under review, the company is building a large and commodious boarding-house, suitably situated near the mine-mouth, which will provide comfortable quarters for the workmen employed, and tend much to lessen the travel over this hilly region.

The New Tunnel district has, during the year, received more than ordinary attention, the output showing a total of 27,471 tons, while the quality and thickness of the seam is maintained. On the western section of the lease faulting was encountered, and driving actively pushed with rock-drills, actuated by compressed air, for a distance of 450 ft., while the tunnel face now operated on is a compact body of grey granite, the hardness of which almost defies the hardest steel. Water is plentifully supplied for boring purposes, and adequate ventilation is produced at the working-face by compressed-air blast.

The provisions of the Act are strictly observed in every detail. Unfortunately, I have to report the first fatal accident which has happened to a coal-miner in this colliery, against a total of 2,334,460 tons of coal produced.

*Denniston Collieries* (owners, Westport Coal Company, Limited: J. Dixon, mining manager).—During the year 1907 the gross tonnage raised and lowered down the inclines for shipment was 313,005 tons. The Ironbridge Mine worked double shift and the Coalbrookdale Mine single shift. In a general way development has been kept well apace with the workings, and, with respect to