

by a double inlet Capell fan, calculated to maintain a safe working-capacity of 100,000 cubic feet per minute; but, although the present authorised engine speed of fifty to fifty-two strokes per minute produces a volume of 60,000 cubic feet of air per minute to supply a hundred men and youths employed, complaints have been of frequent occurrence from our socialist friends; even the mean velocity in the return airway (9 ft. by 6 ft.) exceeds 1,000 ft. per minute. Systematic set timbering is specially carried out in every working bord, the pillars are extracted directly they are made, and the exhausted ground effectively sealed off. Reports and other provisions of the Act strictly enforced.

Tyneside Proprietary Company (R. Alison, mining manager).—As the trade demands continue to show no decrease on the resources of this colliery, double shifting was necessary throughout the whole year, the output showing a satisfactory increase of 13,315 tons. Regarding mining operations, coal for commercial purposes has been taken exclusively from the upper levels, which are now extended east and west from the main dip haulage to their respective boundaries. Thus, the output is wholly obtained from the extraction of pillars. Fortunately, the difficulty of pumping has been largely set aside by the installation of a double-acting 12 in. diameter plunger pump, placed directly on the line of the main haulage road, shortly below the junction of the upped levels; but the normal water level at starting, however, has not been reduced, hence the life of the mining operations is easily within visible distance of termination. The inrush of water through the broken overlying strata is not seriously affected by rainfall. Surface equipments in screening, sorting, and hauling are well maintained, whilst strict observance is made by the workmen in their monthly inspections of the mine. Reports to date. Seven inspections made.

Brunner Mine (R. Alison, mine-manager).—With respect to the troubled character of the St. Kilda section of the lease, anticipations have been fully met. The field is purely a geological puzzle, interlaced with all sorts of peculiar faulting, with singular and intricate positions, positively unsuited to economic mining. The working faces afford employment to six miners, who supply coal for the manufacture of coke, which, according to report, maintains its original efficiency for iron smelting. The output of fireclay goods for the year 1907 was 1,405 tons.

Thornton's Coal-lease, South Brunner (Arthur P. Harper, solicitor, Greymouth, attorney).—Active prospecting has been carried on during the year, with the result that the coalfield so far prospected is considered to give favourable promise, the owners being confident that the existence of the Paparoa coal-seams are within reasonable and economic depths. Relative to the geological features and probable coal-bearing capacities of the coalfield, the lease was examined by a British expert, but the outcome of his report remains unpublished. Surveys of the projected routes of railway and tram haulages have been completed, together with other preliminary works. On an average, eight men have been generally employed throughout the year.

Paparoa Coal-mining Company, Limited (J. T. Watson, mine-manager).—(12/11/1907): In connection with the development of this extensive property, the various works have been vigorously pushed throughout the year. The extensive employment of labour in railway construction, tunnelling, and other important work is evidence of the absolute confidence in the future possibilities of the coalfield. Referring to the rock-drivings now in progress, one of the principal factors worthy of note is the provision made to facilitate haulage and ventilation, as these tunnels have each finished dimensions of 11 ft. by 7 ft. in the clear of all timbering over the completed tram-line. The lower incline rising from the proposed bin-site, on an average gradient of 1 in 3, encounters 20 chains of rock tunnelling, followed by the erection of several chains of bridging before a landing is effected with the delivery from No. 2 tunnel. This 20-chain tunnel is being driven from both ends, and is expected to hole shortly. The distances driven are 480 ft. and 231 ft. respectively. The No. 2 rock tunnel, rising on a gradient of 1 in 11, will intersect Nos. 1 and 2 coal-seams, and provide direct connection between the Ford's Creek and Soldier's Creek sides of the range, at a computed length of 52 chains. (28/1/1908): Rock-drills, actuated by compressed air, were introduced on the lower end of No. 2 tunnel, and preparatory work was in active operation for a similar instalation on the Soldier's Creek side of the property. The respective drivings on this tunnel from both ends are 363 ft. and 297 ft. The fan drift, 6 ft. by 6 ft., is in course of construction. Meantime, ventilation has been efficiently promoted by steam and water blast. The main ventilation will be induced by Sirocco fans of high power. Reports kept to date, and other provisions of the Act strictly observed.

COAL-MINERS' ACCIDENT RELIEF FUND, ADMINISTERED UNDER THE COAL-MINES ACT.

Where the funds are managed under medical associations, the following table shows the contributions paid by the various coal companies, the balances credited at the Post-Office Savings-Bank, the amounts expended on accident allowance, and the increase or decrease on fund for the year 1907:—

Colliery.	Contributions and Interest.			Balance in Savings-Bank.			Accident Allowance.			Increase			Decrease.		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Denniston	857	17	5	5,232	7	0	583	9	10	134	2	3	...	...	...
Millerton	693	14	9	2,104	18	11	708	15	9	...	...	...	15	14	9
Blackball	189	7	11	966	3	5	162	8	9	26	19	2	...	...	...
Brunner and Tyneside	195	6	3	1,002	12	2	202	14	2	...	...	...	8	4	7
Point Elizabeth	217	14	11	196	18	3	20	16	8	196	18	3	...	...	...
Totals	2,154	1	3	9,502	19	9	1,678	5	2	334	0	4	...	...	...