

Southern Inspection District.

On the 22nd April, G. Gray, labourer, was convicted and fined £5, with £7 11s. 6d. costs, and D. L. Baird, labourer, was convicted of a breach of Regulation 126 (4), in that before firing a shot at opencast workings at Mount Linton Colliery they did not see that Frederick Reid, a trucker, had taken proper shelter, a stone from which shot killed him.

On the 14th June, William Lloyd, a rope-attendant, was convicted and fined £5 for a breach of Special Rule 57A, in that he neglected to attach a backstay or trailer to an ascending set of trucks on an inclined haulage-road at Nightcaps Colliery, by which neglect Thomas Prior, a roadsman, was seriously injured.

On the 25th August, Thomas F. Slowey, mine-owner and manager by permit, was convicted and fined £3, with costs £8 10s. 4d., for offences which were responsible for the death of J. H. Robertson, a miner—viz., neglecting to carry out his duties as mine-manager at Chamberlain Coal-mine, Albury, and that he did not control or supervise the mine, a contravention of the Coal-mines Act, section 24 (1); also that he failed to securely protect and make safe Robertson's working-place, in contravention of the Coal-mines Act, section 40 (9); also that he did not withdraw Robertson from a dangerous place, a contravention of section 40 (45). The permit of T. F. Slowey as mine-manager was cancelled by the Inspector of Mines.

SECTION V.—LEGISLATION AFFECTING COAL-MINES.

No amendment of the Coal-mines Act, other than provision relating to State coal-mines accounts, was made during 1921.

Regulations under the said Act by Order in Council dated the 12th April, 1921, contained provisions regarding—(2) the travelling-expenses of members of the Board of Examiners for certificates of competency; (22) the Sick and Accident Fund; (29) the Coal-miners' Relief Fund; (56) systematic timbering; (127) miss-fired shots; (154) continuously produced ventilation; (155) precautions against coal-dust; (179) precautions against spontaneous combustion of coal.

Regulations dated the 3rd May, 1921, made additional provisions regarding the Coal-miners' Medical Fund.

Leaflets relating to coal-mine explosions and ignitions of gases, and to the testing for gas by shot-firers, have been drafted, and when printed will be circulated amongst the colliery-managers throughout the Dominion for their information and guidance.

I have, &c.,

FRANK REED,

Inspecting Engineer and Chief Inspector of Coal-mines.

ANNEXURE A.

SUMMARY OF REPORTS BY INSPECTORS OF MINES.

NORTHERN INSPECTION DISTRICT (MR. WILLIAM BARCLAY, Inspector).

Hikurangi Colliery.—Pillars are being extracted from the Phoenix dip section, and solid bord workings continued to the rise in No. 1 and No. 2 sections. The output at this colliery is decreasing owing to extraction of pillars and a restricted coal area for developing new sections.

The company have commenced the development of a new colliery about 100 chains from the present loading-bank and railway. Two concrete-lined circular shafts, 12 ft. 6 in. and 10 ft. inside diameter respectively, are being sunk to a depth of 450 ft. A coal-seam 10 ft. in thickness has been proved by several boreholes. The output from this new colliery will be delivered to the present screens and loading-bank by endless-rope tramways on the surface.

Northern Taurangi (Wilson's Collieries, Limited).—This mine, situated upon the company's freehold about a mile from the railway, is worked by a party of co-operative miners. The thickness of the coal-seam is 3 ft. 6 in.

Northern Kiriwaka.—Mining operations were discontinued during the year. All plant was withdrawn and mine abandoned.

Kerr and Co. (McLeod's Freehold).—A party of co-operative miners reopened the workings in this mine, finding a number of coal pillars standing in good order. Bords have since been continued for 5 chains along the north main road. Preparations are being made to extend the dip to the west of the road.

Silverdale (Foot and Doel: Crown Lease).—There are three sections on this property, each having a separate intake and return. Pillars are being successfully extracted. Thickness of coal-seam 4 ft., with a shaly band of stone on the centre. Output is delivered to railway-siding by about 100 chains of surface tramway.

Northern Co-operative (Cunningham).—The workings are in close proximity to the Main Valley Road. Several small drives following the outcrop have been driven during the year. Heavy rains flood the drives with surface water, and considerable time and expense is incurred in unwatering. The coal-seam is 6 ft. thick.

Kerr and Wyath.—Pillars are being extracted by the retreating method. The roof of the coal-seam is soft and friable, and strong timber is required to support the main heading. Thickness of coal-seam is 5 ft. The mine is worked by a party of co-operative miners, with a manager in charge.

Rayburn's Colliery (Christie's Freehold).—Mining operations conducted by a party of co-operative miners, with a mine-manager in charge. The coal-seam is worked from a dip drive, and a small steam-pump installed for drainage. Only a small quantity of coal is available, as the seam is faulted and unmarketable near the outcrop.

New Zealand Coal and Cement Company (formerly North Auckland Coal Company).—Situated about three miles from Whangarei. Operations have been suspended for a number of years. During the current year electrical machinery was installed to unwater the shafts and mine-workings, the electric power being supplied from the Whangarei town power-station. The mine-workings were found in good order after the mine was unwatered. The thickness of the coal-seam at the face of north level from main dip is 10 ft., with a strong roof. The dip is being extended to develop the thick coal area.

Wilson's Collieries (formerly Northern Waro Coal-mine).—The mine was reopened during the year, and connected to the main railway with a short branch railway from Waro Station. The following electrical equipment has been