

1884.
NEW ZEALAND.

CONTROL AND INSPECTION OF MINES

(REPORT ON).

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

To the Honourable WILLIAM ROLLESTON, Minister of Mines.

SIR,—

Mines Department, Wellington, 20th June, 1884.

I have the honour to forward you the general and detailed reports on the inspection of mines, under "The Regulation of Mines Act, 1874," for the year ending the 31st December, 1883.

I have, &c.,

JAMES MCKERROW,

The Hon. the Minister of Mines.

Secretary for Mines.

REPORT.

COAL MINES.

THE rapid and progressive development of the coal-mining industry in the colony demands continual watchfulness on the part of the department to see that the workings of the various mines are conducted with due regard to a proper system of ventilation and other precautions in the interests of the safety of those daily engaged in them.

As by far the most valuable and extensive coal fields belong to the Crown, it behoves the Government to see that they are worked on a systematic principle, so that there may be no waste, and that the mines may be opened out so that the largest percentage of coal may be taken from the seams that it is possible to obtain.

As the mines get developed by an extension of their workings their ventilation becomes more intricate, and requires minute inspection to guard against the accumulation of noxious gases and spontaneous combustion. The efforts of the Mines Department in this direction have so far been successful, and it is both satisfactory and gratifying to state that proprietors and those intrusted with the management of mines show their ready acquiescence by co-operating with the Inspectors whenever necessity requires them to do so.

All the principal mines in the colony have been periodically inspected, and those that have demanded particular attention have been attended to by Mr. J. McLaren in the North Island, in conjunction with his other duties as Mining Inspector under "The Gold-Mining Districts Act, 1873;" and Mr. G. J. Binns and Mr. S. H. Cox have inspected those in the Middle Island. The latter gentleman fulfilled these duties satisfactorily in conjunction with those of Assistant-Geologist of the Colony, but he has recently resigned both appointments owing to his departure to occupy an official position in New South Wales.