

operations under the former Act, not only would it have been unfair, as already pointed out by Mr. Gordon in last year's report, to have compelled them to comply with the Amendment Act, but would probably have resulted in a claim for compensation.

Waikato Colliery (7th July).—This mine employs twenty-one men underground. The places are all driven on bearings, but the plan is only in pencil, and undated. This will be seen to. In the working places to the east of the top of main jig the air is poor, but screens are to be put in, which will improve it.

Taupiri Reserve Colliery (8th July).—The workings in this mine are principally under Lake Kimihia. All the bords are driven on bearings, and kept very regular. In most places there is a coal floor left, and I am informed by Mr. Harrison that there is never less than 4ft. of coal-roof. At the west level face there is a trickle of water, which keeps with the advanced faces. I could see further back where such had been running and had now ceased. The dip is to north-west, at one in five, so that as the workings progress under the lake additional cover is gained. Reports kept. Special and general rules posted. Plan up to date, and air good.

Ralph's Taupiri Mine (8th July).—Only two men employed, at pillar-work near the out-crop. General and special rules hung, the latter without the required names. I requested Mr. Ralph to see to this. Shaft unfenced. This was attended to at once.

Miranda Mine (9th July).—This is a very thick coal seam, running up to 50ft., and adjoining swamp land, from which it dips, so that working to the rise is inadmissible. Only five men were working at the time of my inspection. Neither special nor general rules hung up. Plan undated. Report not kept. I requested Mr. Snow to attend to these, also to look places with safety-lamp, and to provide bars at landings and jump-up. There was a good current of air, but a lot of it was lost before reaching the men.

GENERAL.

In such workings as the Taupiri Reserve, Taupiri Extended, and Miranda Mines, adjacent to or underneath lakes, in spite of all precautions, there is a risk of inundation. The roof appears to be carefully watched, and so far a large area of fireclay floor has not been exposed. There still remains the possibility of striking a fissure or fault, which may serve as a channel for the water overhead to reach the workings. This will require the greatest care to be exercised, and at present this appears to be done.

I have, &c.,

N. D. COCHRANE, Inspector of Mines.

The Under-Secretary, Mines Department, Wellington.

SOUTH ISLAND.

Mr. N. D. COCHRANE, Inspector of Mines, to the UNDER-SECRETARY of MINES, Wellington.
Sir,—

Westport, 31st March, 1892.

I have the honour, in compliance with section 67 of "The Coal-mines Act, 1891," to report as follows for the information of the Hon. Minister of Mines, and to attach list of accidents and table of statistics for the West Coast coal-mines:—

Wallsend Colliery, Collingwood (27th July).—There were seven faces in this mine working one shift, and the dip was working three shifts, employing a total of twenty-four men at the time of my visit. The seam is thin, and the workings scattered for long-wall. The air in the face next to the level in No. 1 seam was dull, but the place would be holed through in a few days, when this would be remedied. Manager's name and rules at mine-mouth illegible; no copy of Act at mine, and plan not made up to date. These will be attended to.

Motupipi Bridge Mine, Takaka (29th July).—Three drives from the river-bank, evidently not worked for some time, in a seam of the following section: Coal 2ft., sand 1ft. 9in., coal 2ft. 6in. The laths were not strong enough; cautioned Mr. Manson if work should be resumed.

Simpson's Mine, Takaka (29th July).—Merely a prospecting-cut into outcrop, which was being taken in 12ft. wide, with the view of getting as much coal as possible. Width is to be reduced.

Brownville Coal-mine, Takaka (29th July).—This drive is only a few yards in, in proximity to old workings. It adjoins the opencast workings on the beach, which were under water when I passed. I have notified the owner as to the advisability of having a practical miner in such ground.

Mokihinui Colliery, Mokihinui (6th April).—The workings were in what is known as the big seam, employing twenty-two men in two shifts. Air dull in some of the faces; roof not very good, but sufficient timber; no special rules; manager's name not posted; and a bar required at blind shaft. (16th November): A down-throw fault with vertical shear, met with in the dip-drive, has been cut, and the coal struck on the south-east side. Three faces are opening up here. Requirements as to special rules, manager's name, and blind shaft, have been attended to. The plan is kept well posted by Mr. Shaw. A ventilating-furnace has been put in, and a system of steam-haulage fitted up with an engine recovered from the s.s. "Lawrence," which was unfortunately lost at the entrance of the river, during the year. The full thickness of the seam has been used to construct bins capable of holding 500 tons. The full benefit of these improvements can only be experienced when railway connection is established.

Ngakawau Coal-mine, Ngakawau (17th November).—The workings on the level of the railway have been abandoned, as the seam was found too thin when followed to the dip. The prospecting, from the plans shown me, does not appear commensurate with the surface outlay. However, a number of sections have been run and a route fixed on for an incline-tramway to convey the coal from the plateau, where Mr. Broome, who is now in charge, informs me a large coal-bearing area exists, under favourable conditions for working. Operations are to be started shortly. This company put in a prospecting-drive at Fairdown (11th July) for some 300ft., but no coal-seam was met with, the ground being still broken when driving was stopped.