

second shaft will eventually be required if there are to be more coal-hewers employed in the pit. I have suggested to Mr. Rivers the advisability of sinking a second shaft at an early date, and that it be made to comply with General Rule 26 of "The Coal-mines Act, 1891."

*L. Gards's Pit, Alexandra.*—(11/1/96): Examined all the working-places, several of which are very wet overhead. About 6 ft. of coal is being hewn, and the pillars standing are from 15 ft. to 18 ft. thick. The longest headings are to the south-east, and nearly level, but to the north-east—into the flat—the floor dips 1 in 12, and, as a matter of course, cannot be conveniently followed any distance without cutting a drain in the floor, a deep drain in which is not safe in consequence of a layer of quicksand having been found under the coal when sinking the well in the shaft. A portable engine does the winding and pumping. The shaft is 65 ft. deep to the floor of the workings, partitioned into two compartments. The pump and ladder compartment is in one, 2 ft. 3 in. by 2 ft. 10 in. The hoisting compartment is 2 ft. 10 in. by 3 ft. 5 in. It is a tight fit for me to get up or down the ladder. The pump has a 6 in. column and a 3½ ft. stroke, requiring fifteen strokes per minute to keep the water down below the pit-floor, and working sixteen hours in the twenty-four. The air is not as good as it should be. When I suggested the advisability of at once sinking a second shaft to comply with General Rule 26, Gards said he "would rather abandon the pit; it would not pay him to sink another shaft."

*Dunge's Pit, Cambrian's.*—(20/1/96): The appearance of the working-face is much the same as it was last year. The stripping is all hard-packed gravel from 9 ft. to 10 ft. deep, and has to be carted away a few chains to keep the open paddock clear for the horse-teams to turn about. The coal is of the best quality of its kind in the district, and the seam is from 5 ft. to 10 ft. deep. The pit, being on the crown of a round hill, is always dry underfoot.

*Jones's Coal-pit, Cambrian's.*—(20/1/96): The present workings are at the south end of the long open cutting, where the coal is being taken out to a depth of about 16 ft., and not to the floor of the coal. The quality of the coal is said to be remarkably good. The stripping is from 15 ft. to 20 ft., and is partly removed by water when available in a sufficient quantity to sluice it off. This can be done only at times of heavy rain. The open drain to the pit is now being cleaned out and in places covered. The walls and covering are being done with stone. The lowest part of the old working-face is now filled with water to a depth of about 5 ft.

*G. Field's Pit, Earnscliffe.*—(13/6/96): It is now five or six years since I visited this pit, during which time little or no coal has been mined therefrom. Now that there is a ready sale for coal of good quality at the dredges between Alexandra and Clyde a fresh start has been made to open the pit in a new place, a few chains south of the old workings. A shaft has been sunk to a depth of about 70 ft., a portion of which depth is in the coal to where it is solid. The seam standing nearly vertical, very much of the top of it is soft and useless. However, at the level sunk to the coal is said to be hard, and a drive to the westward, which is supposed to be across the seam, has been made a distance of about 27 ft. without finding the outer edge of the coal. The shaft is not the size required by the Act, and is not big enough to admit of ladders. Field therefore purposes driving a tunnel at an early date to the coal at a level below the bottom of the shaft. I understood him to say that the timber for the tunnel was now on its way up from Heriot. The coal has a bright shiny appearance, and by those who have used it it is classed as the best in the district. There is a good road from the pit to the Clutha River at Clyde and Alexandra.

*Beck's Pit, Idaburn.*—(17/6/96): This pit has been worked for some years by Beck and McLean, but it is now being worked by Beck alone. The stripping is from 5 ft. to 8 ft., and the depth of coal quarried out is from 20 ft. to 25 ft. The laminations of the coal-seam at the east end of the open face now show very clearly a sharp dip to the north. The quality of the coal on the south side of a certain lamination in the centre of the coal-face is very much better and cleaner than the coal previously worked on the north side. The pit is in good order.

*McLean's Pit, Idaburn.*—(20/1/96): Mr. McLean, it is said, has parted company with Mr. Beck, with whom he has been a partner for some years past. McLean has a pit of his own on the east side of and adjoining Mrs. Andrews's pit. I did not see McLean, but was told he intends hewing coal in his own pit at an early date. There is a good sample of kerosene-shale in this pit, but I do not think the deposit is extensive.

*Finnisey's Pit, Idaburn.*—(21/1/96): This is a new pit situated in the face of a high terrace on the west side of the Idaburn Stream, within a mile of the foot of the main range at the head of the Idaburn, and on the range side of the Naseby Water-race. The coal is exposed on the face of the terrace by sluicing off the gravel, which is from 2 ft. to 10 ft. deep. There is not much work done yet, but enough to show that the seam stands at a very steep angle—nearly vertical it appeared to me. I think the distance to the pit from the main Naseby Road is probably three miles, over a tussock road, which is very soft in some places. I think the quality of the coal is very good, probably the best in that locality. I did not see any one at the pit.

*Mrs. Andrews's Pit, Idaburn.*—(20/1/96): The working-face in this large pit is being carried on to the eastward, in which direction the coal-seam is thinning considerably. The partings and old open watercourses in the coal make it easy to hew it down. I understand there is good coal being left underfoot, but I do not know how much.

*Dougherty's Pit, Gimmerburn.*—(21/1/96): I found Mr. Dougherty at the pit stripping at the south end of the long open face. His intention is to extend the open face in this direction in order to reach an old drain, which he thinks can be utilised to carry away the pit-water from the hand-pump, which will then have to lift the water a much less height than it does now at the north end of the pit. The pit is in a safe condition.

*Archer's Pit, Kyeburn.*—(22/1/96): Coal is being brought out of the same dip-drive used last year, but the coal-hewing is not now on the same level. The level from the dip last year, after working to the south fault, was abandoned, and a level tunnel, 5 ft. to 6 ft. high, immediately under the old workings, is now being driven towards the north fault, and is supposed to be within