

If this work be completed and fan ventilation adopted, the main engine plane would become the intake airway, and the long air-courses in the old workings could then be cut off. Plan and report-books to date. (21/6/1901): Work is being carried on in three seams. In the No. 1 seam work is now confined to taking out pillar-coal, and this was being done with due regard to safety. The air is good. Floor heaving considerably, pressure due to "creep" and soft bottom not having quite subsided yet. In the No. 2 seam the air is good throughout all the working-places. The bottom is heaving somewhat, but attention to the roadways prevented this from becoming a source of danger—that is, the roof is brushed, timber renewed, and the floor lifted wherever necessary. In the No. 3 seam the air is not good in advancing places; the rotten nature of the roof in this seam rendered the working difficult. A little clearance is required at some points in the intake airway, but throughout its length it was in good order. (30/8/1901): Air at intake, 8,200 cubic feet per minute. The intake airway is in good order, and from 5 ft. to 6 ft. in height. Owing to bad roof and soft bottom the No. 3 seam workings are unprofitable. Close timbering is required, and the places are driven narrow, maintenance being difficult. In the No. 2 seam, main workings, the coal-seam is thin, but is of good quality. The air is good throughout the mine. Some improvements have recently been made to the ventilation. Double doors have been erected at the mine-mouth (upcast), and a chimney 20 ft. high, 6 ft. by 5 ft., built on a shaft 25 ft. deep, with a fire at the bottom. A steam-jet is also laid ready for use when required to increase ventilation. (29/10/1901): Air at intake, 7,560 cubic feet per minute. No. 2 seam at the north level has pinched out to 2 ft. in thickness. A cross-measures drive to No. 1 seam has proved 7 ft. seam of good clean coal. This is important, as 12 chains of rise-coal is proved to be available. The No. 3 seam workings are from 4 ft. 6 in. to 6 ft. high, and roof still bad and hard to maintain. Air dull in McMillan's bord, which is nearly through to the heading. Only two men now on the pillars. (12/12/1901): Air at upcast, 6,000 cubic feet per minute. The intake airway requires attention in several places. No improvement in the No. 3 seam workings; roof still tender and floor soft as ever. The No. 1 seam places are turning out well, as expected, and, the seam being 6 ft. thick, good returns may be looked for from this part of the mine. Air good throughout the mine. Preparatory to sinking a shaft for new upcast a trial bore is to be put down at a point near the schoolhouse. The work will be commenced at an early date.

SOUTH OTAGO.

Fernhill Colliery, Abbotsford (James Gray, manager).—(4/1/1901): Air well conducted by wooden brattice to working-faces. Owing to pressure caused by a "creep," two stoppings on roads leading to old workings are leaking "damp" slightly. The prospecting-drives in the fault area to south-west are standing full of water, and are not now being persevered with. Report-book to date, and rules posted. (17/9/1901): The "creep" mentioned on the occasion of my last visit has developed into a "sit." Numerous plumps have taken place in the mine-workings, and fires broke out, but are now subdued. The whole of the north and east workings are bratticed off, and only the south side is now being worked. A new air-shaft, 4 ft. 6 in. by 2 ft. 6 in., 40 ft. deep, has been sunk to the rise. Small quantities of damp and fire-stink are escaping from two stoppings and fouling the air in the working-places. Mr. Gray is attending to this, and is daily decreasing the leakage. Report-book to date.

Freeman's Coal Company, Abbotsford (Robert Hill, manager).—(4/1/1901): Notified manager that McCabe's old shaft was unprotected and required to be filled up or covered over and fenced. Mr. Hill subsequently wrote me that the shaft had been filled up. (22/3/1901): All work consists of drawing pillars, and the faces are gradually retreating to the engine plane. Air good generally throughout the mine, but rather dull in one place some distance from the return. (17/9/1901): The pillar-workings are being rapidly brought back. The mouth of the drift to the air-course requires to be cleaned up; also a door at mine-mouth and a chimney on the upcast shaft to provide surplus air required to carry off the damp exuding from the waste. Mr. Hill promised to attend to these matters. The workings are conducted with due regard to safety. Timber freely used where required. A new mine to the west of the recent workings is being opened; the drive will skirt the old mine-workings to the rise. A shaft sunk some years ago near the Fernhill Railway is in good order, and will be utilised for an upcast. Air good. Report-book and plan to date.

Walton Park Coal Company, Walton Park (J. Kenyon, manager).—(4/1/1901): Air, 9,000 cubic feet per minute at intake. Work still consists of dropping roof-coal and extracting pillars left in by the old company near the outcrop. The overburden on coal-seam here being not more than 20 ft. to 30 ft., the surface is very much broken where pillars are out. A brisk fire is maintained at the furnace, and is required to carry off the considerable quantity of "damp" squeezing out of the old workings. The damp is not allowed to permeate the working-places, but is carried to the furnace upcast behind substantial wooden brattice erected for the purpose. The ladder-shaft forms the second outlet for the men, and is also the upcast for the working-faces. Rules posted. (22/3/1901): Smell of fire-stink on main intake, and intake air somewhat mixed with damp from leaking stopping on roadside. A good current of air is carried into the mine, and circulates round the working-faces. The furnace is well attended to. (26/9/1901): Old mine-entrance is now stopped off owing to an outbreak of fire from old workings through a stopping near the main wall. Coal is being worked opencast in the gully, where the stripping is only 3 ft., but thickens rapidly into the hill on each side. (23/12/1901): Work still consists of extracting pillars and head-coal. The old furnace upcast is now cut off. Two new upcast shafts sunk near the working-faces carry off the damp from old workings. Wooden brattice is erected to conduct the vitiated air to the upcasts, and prevent it from pervading the working-places.

Jubilee Colliery, Saddle Hill (P. Campbell, manager).—(22/3/1901): Air good. Mine in good order. (26/9/1901): A new mine-entrance and upcast air-shaft at a point near the faces supplies excellent air. The old workings are standing in good order. Pillars intact. The mine and plant