

tunnels, constitute the whole works in progress. The main features of the works embody the construction of a mile and a quarter of railway to join with the Government line (now under construction to Blackball), together with ample siding accommodation, the erection of coal-bins of about 5,000 tons capacity, 50 chains of incline on a rising gradient of 1 in 3, and a high-level rock-tunnel, of which length and gradient are not yet determined, the whole system to be constructed and equipped for endless-rope haulage. In addition to the work stated, prospecting is vigorously pushed, in order to expose and define the various coal-seams more fully than has been hitherto done. (Mine-manager, Mr. J. T. Watson, late Assistant Inspector of Coal-mines, New South Wales.)

Tyneside Proprietary Company (Mr. R. Alison, mining-manager).—(7/12/1906): To meet the pressing demands on the Brunner coal double shifting became an urgent necessity. Under these conditions output was well maintained, and although fresh developments were not important, the gross tonnage raised (61,547 tons) showed the substantial increase of 17,500 tons when compared with that of the preceding year. Working westward from the main haulage road, the whole line of face was compulsorily abandoned on the boundary of the River Grey, but not until ample provision was made for the circulation of free and reliable air-currents (without brattice) against any probable accumulations of gas. Pumping still continuing to be a formidable tax on the property, extension of the dip-working failed to make any further progress, and in consequence output is chiefly maintained from the upper levels on the eastern section of the field. Progress, however, is being made riseward, and a holing is early expected whereby ventilation will be induced from daylight direct on the working-face. Fortunately, the urgency of increased pumping-power has been seriously considered. A plant of large capacity has just arrived from Home. The screening, sorting, and storage of coal has received further attention, and demands on the colliery are more urgent for all classes of coal. Monthly inspections are regularly made by the workmen in accordance with the Act, and the reports are honest and truthful records. William Morris (jun.) was killed in the face by a falling prop. Reports to date, and seven inspections made.

Brunner Mine (Mr. R. Alison, mining-manager).—(7/12/1906): The history of this old-established and notable mine commenced in the year 1870, and terminated by its total exhaustion and abandonment on the 22nd December, 1906. During the period stated the gross tonnage raised was approximately 2,167,231 tons, and, as taken from the colliery-plan, the exhausted and proved barren areas of the coal lease may be roughly estimated at 450 acres. In the matter of exhaustion, the coal-seam was practically worked to daylight, with the exception of a few standing pillars to support a certain section of the elevated terraces, so that the Mines Department and colliery management are fairly assured against any argument that may in future be raised on the matter of partial exhaustion. At the coke- and brick-making industries change of output is not likely to occur for several years to come, as raw clay is well provided on stock, and coal for coking purposes will be supplied both from the St. Kilda Mine on the Brunner lease and the Tyneside Proprietary.

The St. Kilda section of the Brunner lease, located on the north bank of the Grey River and near the upper end of the Brunner Gorge, was firstly opened by Mr. Martin Kennedy, and after a short period of prospecting operations was subsequently abandoned. The existing company, however, has recently opened the mine and carried out some useful developments, which have provided employment for a goodly number of resident miners formerly employed in the old mine. Coal of suitable quality is thus supplied for the manufacture of coke, the properties of the coal being soft and free from earthy impurities. As a means of conveyance from the mine, the original horse tram-line was reconstructed, and a shoot erected near the coke ovens for the delivery of the coal.

Fleming's Coal-lease, Stillwater.—On commencing mining operations, this lease was opened by a rock-tunnel, 6 ft. by 5 ft., driven in the terrace which forms the western boundary of the Stillwater Valley, and at a point about 100 yards from the Midland Railway. The total drivings as shown by colliery-plan are as follows: Rock drivings, 919 ft.; coal drivings, 252 ft.; sinking and raising on coal, 120 ft.: total, 1,291 ft. The average thickness of coal-seam may be taken as 2 ft. 4 in.; quality, soft; angle of inclination, 1 in 1 nearly; and at a depth of 66 ft. below the main level, thickness of seam was 2 ft.; practically valueless. To further extend development in the locality selected there certainly can be no hope of encouragement, as the geological features of the field are seriously against promise in that direction. Total coal raised for 1906 (from all work) was 130 tons. Operations were suspended on the 5th March, 1907, pending further instruction.

Nine-mile Beach.—This property, worked by John Kane, of Greymouth, was not visited.

COAL-MINERS' ACCIDENT RELIEF FUND, ADMINISTERED UNDER THE COAL-MINES ACT.

Where the funds are managed under medical associations the following table shows the contributions paid by the various coal companies, the balances credited at the Post-Office Savings-Bank, the amounts expended on accident allowance, and the increase on fund for the year 1906:—

Name of Colliery.	Contributions.	Balance in Savings-Bank.	Accident Allowance.	Increase.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Denniston	608 15 1	5,101 9 10	452 7 0	302 19 11
Milerton	525 8 5	2,120 13 8	439 12 4	147 9 11
Blackball	142 5 5	926 5 9	60 4 3	95 4 7
Brunner and Tyneside	199 12 6	1,010 16 9	128 12 11	73 0 5
Interest	245 9 2
Totals	1,721 10 7	9,159 6 0	1,080 16 6	618 14 10