

*Accidents.*

The following is a summary of fatal and non-fatal accidents during 1908 on the northern coalfields :—

	Fatal Accidents.		Non-fatal Accidents.	
	Number of Separate Fatal Accidents.	Number of Deaths.	Number of Separate Non-fatal Accidents.	Number of Persons injured, including those injured by Accidents which proved Fatal to their Companions.
Explosions of firedamp ...	...	...	...	...
Falls in mine ...	1	2	2	2
Shaft accidents ...	...	...	...	...
Miscellaneous—				
Underground ...	...	...	14	14
On surface ...	...	...	...	...
<b>Totals ...</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>16</b>

I have, &c.,  
B. BENNIE,  
Inspector of Mines.

Mr. ROBERT TENNENT, Inspector of Mines, Westport, to the UNDER-SECRETARY, Mines Department.

SIR,—

Inspector of Mines' Office, Westport, 20th March, 1909.

I have the honour, in compliance with section 78 of "The Coal-mines Act, 1908," to report as follows on the West Coast coal-mines for the year ended 31st December, 1908 :—

*Golden Bay Coal-mine, Motupipi.*—Nothing further has been done on this property.

*Pakawau Coal-mine* (owner, E. G. Pilcher, of Wellington ; P. McCaffrey, mine-manager).—(24/10/08) : With the exception of driving a dip heading 140 ft. in the 3 ft. seam, for a yield of 480 tons of coal for the year, all other mining operations have been suspended.

*Puponga Colliery* (owners, Puponga Coal and Gold Mining Company (Limited), (British) ; C. Y. Fell, Nelson, attorney ; A. H. Taylor, mine-manager).—(24/10/08) : This company suspended mining operations on the 31st March last, for the purpose of installing Ingersoll coal-cutting and air-compressing machinery. To erect this plant in a central position, and under the same roof with the haulage and boiler installations, a favourable site was of importance, as considerable excavation was necessary. This preparatory work was completed in September, and the plant erected and in operation when visited in October, the whole installation being satisfactory, while the percentage of round coal won showed a large increase as compared with hand-labour formerly employed. When using the Ingersoll coal-cutter, particularly in workings of medium height, any difficulty relative to angle of inclination is simply removed by setting the column at an angle favourable to the pitch of the seam ; whilst the average duty per minute is stated to be 250 blows of 300 lb. by 9 in. stroke, under a working air-pressure of 70 lb. per square inch. In order to intersect and exhaust a rise section of the lease, and extend the use of coal-cutting machines, 7 chains of self-acting surface incline was constructed in direct connection with the screening plant, on gradients varying from 1 in 5 to 1 in 3. Connecting with the incline, a main crosscut level is being driven and timbered, 10 ft. by 7 ft. in the clear. This level has touched the outcrop. Whilst these developments were in progress, extensive repairs were effected throughout the dip working ; also a change-room and baths have been provided for the convenience of the workmen.

*Westport-Stockton Colliery* (owners, Westport-Stockton Coal Company (Limited) ; George H. Broome, general mining-manager).—(6/12/08) : This colliery was officially opened on the 6th October last, and, with the exception of some two weeks' stoppage to complete the laying-down of the third (brake) rail on the electrical haulage-line, mining operations have since been carried out by double shift without further hitch. In opening the colliery, mining was commenced east and west off B tunnel (under the ordinary bord-and-pillar system) with electrically driven coal-cutting machines and hand-labour equally employed. The main ventilation is induced by a motor-driven fan, 7 ft. in diameter, of the improved Waddle type, and the narrow-heading work by auxiliary motor-driven fans exhausting through 12-in.-diameter pipe-lines, the whole ventilating system being of a high standard.

Electrical installation : The power-house consists of a ferro-concrete construction, in length 174 ft., width 50 ft., and height 25 ft., divided into three compartments—engine-room, condenser-room, and boiler-room. The two main generator sets are British-Thompson-Houston three-phase generators, 300 kilowatts, 6,600 volts, direct-connected, and on a common bedplate with a 475 brake horse-power Belliss and Morcom triple-expansion condensing-engine ; whilst the exciting-current for the fields is supplied by two exciter sets, each consisting of a British-Thompson-Houston 14-kilowatt 88-volt