

Cardrona Coal-pit, Cardrona (Crown lease ; R. McDougall, lessee and permit-holder).—(24/3/10) : Opencast pit. The lower part of the pit to northward has been cleared, with the result that the workings are in good order for sluicing top stuff away, and the tramway was being lifted and water laid on for that purpose. The lower part of the block has been worked to bottom, and available coal extracted. Good batter kept on sides of pit, and no high or overhanging faces, as used to be the case on frequent occasions. This mountain-pit (altitude 3,500 ft. above sea-level) is closed during winter months, being then inaccessible owing to frost and snow. A minimum quantity of explosives now in use. Rules posted ; report-books kept.

Gibbston Coal-mine, Gibbston Saddle (Crown lease ; J. Duncan, lessee and mine-manager). — (23/3/10) : Drive now 22 chains to level-face in coal of fairly good quality. Having crossed the fault the manager is hoping to get through the saddle to Doolan's Creek outfall, when it is intended to bring water in and strip the overburden off the coal-seam, utilizing the main level for haulage. By this means (if successful in carrying out his plans) the manager estimates that there will be sufficient coal to the rise to last thirty years at present rate of output. Air dull in level-face, owing to a stenton not being through, but which was almost pricked, as we could talk through it ; two shifts of work should remedy this defect. Altitude of mine, 3,350 ft. above sea-level.

SOUTHLAND.

Pukerau Coal-mine, Pukerau (Crown lease, coal reserve ; Hamilton, Sheddan, and Gill, lessees ; J. Hamilton, permit, manager).—(8/12/10) : Driving to dip in piece of solid coal left at first working on account of water having to be pumped. Owing to there being so many openings, ventilation adequate. Powder safely handled.

Nelson's Coal-mine, Pukerau (Crown land ; J. H. Nelson, lessee, permit, manager).—(8/12/10) : Main level driven to outcrop on southern boundary, and now driving to dip, where water-drainage rather heavy for the size of the pit.

Heffernan's Coal-mine, East Gore (G. B. Paterson and Co., owners ; J. Hoffman, permit, manager).—(5/8/10) : Timber required on dip road has been put in since last visit. Driving to dip progressing slowly, and too much lignite being taken out to leave satisfactory pillars for support of roof. However, the land being freehold, these would appear to be matters lying between landlord and tenant. Rules posted, and report-books kept.

Green's Coal-mine, Gore (Thomas Green, owner ; Johnson and Smyth, lessees ; W. C. Johnson, permit, manager).—(2/12/10) : Under the influence of the small fan recently erected, the satisfactory ventilation of this pit presents no difficulties. Seam strong and roof safe, a minimum of timber being required for support and safety of workmen. Rules posted, and report-book kept.

Smyth's Coal-mine, Gore (W. H. Paterson, owner ; Broome Bros. and Brown, late lessees).—(2/12/10) : As the lignite is practically exhausted, plant has been drawn and the mine abandoned.

Bushy Park Coal-mine, Croydon (J. R. Tait and Co., owners ; W. Dixon, permit, manager).—(28/1/10) : Underground working abandoned, and the seam is being worked opencast ; 1,733 tons produced during the year.

Burnwell Coal-mine, East Chatton (Cameron and Johnston, lessees ; D. Cameron, permit, manager).—(9/12/10) : Driving to dip and opening bords off same in the usual way. Seam strong, therefore workings are safely taken wide and high without timber. By accidental communication between the workings in this and the adjoining mine (Ramsay's) a full and free current of air is travelling and ventilating both mines as never before. Powder-magazine approved.

Chatton Coal-mine, East Chatton (Crown land ; Ramsay Bros., lessees ; G. Ramsay, permit, manager).—(9/12/10) : Conditions prevailing in this mine much resemble those in Burnwell Mine. Owing to the strength of the seam, wide and high workings are safely driven without timber. The cover to surface is not deep.

Pacey's Freehold Coal-mine, East Chatton (Crown land ; T. H. Maslin, lessee ; J. Buchols, permit, manager).—(9/12/10) : Open joints occur in the seam filled with clay, and form "muck-backs" as they are called. These "run" and have to be plugged, iron rail bars being used for bearers in the coal-roof. Workings in good order ; ventilation adequate.

Springfield Coal-mine, Waikaka Valley (Crown land ; R. Mee Chang, lessee and permit-holder).—(10/12/10) : Chiefly opencast, but an attempt is being made to drive underground where stripping too heavy. At one place in the opencast the face was undermined, and I cautioned Chang, and warned him as to the danger of that method of working, which he promised to discontinue. Powder apparently safely handled.

Willowbank Coal-mine, Waikaka Valley (William Jones, lessee and permit-holder).—(10/12/10) : Mine in good working-condition, and ventilation fair. The "fault" met with in western level, being an upthrow, is less detrimental than might have been expected, but I pointed out necessity for pillars being left larger to compensate for the troubled nature of the coal-seam at this point. Rules posted ; report-book kept. Powder-magazine on surface approved. A new air-shaft is proposed in the near future.

Glenlee Coal-mine, Wendon (Crown land ; D. T. McGill, lessee and permit-holder).—(9/12/10) : Opencast working only, the underground workings not being at present continued.