

*Kiripaka Colliery* (Mr. E. W. Tattley, mine-manager).—Work during the year consisted chiefly of pillar-extraction, and every reasonable precaution was taken by the manager and men. A high percentage of pillar coal has been extracted, and the company has also done some useful prospecting, a valuable seam of coal being located about two miles from the present mine. It is the company's intention to lay a tram-line connecting the new section with the railway, and to develop the property. This discovery may encourage more extensive prospecting than has hitherto been carried out. The mine-ventilation has been satisfactory, and a good supply of timber has been maintained. The output of coal for the year was 32,554 tons. An average of forty-five men were employed.

*Whangarei Colliery* (Mr. A. H. Taylor, mine-manager).—As the main dip was driven it was found that seams Nos. 1 and 2 junctioned, having a thickness of 6 ft. A little work has been done off the main dip at levels Nos. 1 and 2, but owing to the coal being thin and much faulted it was decided to continue the main dip for some distance, where it is expected that the coal will widen to 10 ft. and improve in quality. The output for the year was 1,404 tons. An average of eighteen men were employed.

*Taupiri Coal-mines (Limited)*.—Ralph's Mine (Mr. J. Fletcher, mine-manager): The drive connecting the Taupiri West shaft with Ralph's Mine has been converted into a subsidiary haulage-road, in order to deal with the coal won from under Lake Rotoiti. During the latter three months of the year coal has been obtained from this area. Preparations are now in progress to considerably increase the output. The haulage is by the main and tail rope system, and when the section is fully opened out it is expected to act as a great feeder to the main endless-rope haulage by which the whole of the output is transported underground. The main rope road dip heading has been advanced 6 chains, 2 chains of which is through coal. A connection has been made between the little dip and No. 7 north sections, the result being improved ventilation. Several additions were made to the plant during the year; a new winding-engine (Tangye) has been erected, having direct motion, 14½ in. cylinders, with 28 in. stroke, and having steam reversing gear. The displaced winding-engine was utilized for a main and tail rope haulage for the Taupiri West Mine. The pumps and all the haulage engines below ground are driven by compressed air, and have pressure-gauges attached. The damaged pillar area has been further strengthened, and the pillars are not showing any signs of crushing. The mine officials examine the sections from time to time, and record their reports as required. The ventilation has been adequate, averaging about 300 cubic feet per minute per man. The travelling-roads and working-places are generally in good order. The output for the year was 108,740 tons, being an increase of 11,401 tons.

*Extended Mine* (Mr. W. Wood, mine-manager): Headings have been vigorously pushed ahead to develop the various sections. The principal work of the year consisted of the completion of the west heading stone drive, 12 chains in length, driven to specified grade to intercept the coal-seam proved by surface boreholes. The north-west heading was driven 7 chains in highly inclined coal, but operations were suspended during the latter half of the year until the back ventilating heading, parallel to the dip, was completed. A water-lodgment has been constructed having a capacity of 5,000,000 gallons, to be drained by a Cameron pump, which will force the water to the surface through a 500 ft. borehole of 5 in. diameter. A well-equipped engineer's shop has been erected at the mine. During the year I made several inspections, and found that the air was well distributed in the mine in the proportion of 300 cubic feet per minute per man. The roads and working-places were well timbered, and generally in good order. No fatal accidents occurred during the year, although there were several of a minor character. The mine-cages, ropes, chains, &c., were examined during the year. The output for the year was 143,522 tons, being an increase of 13,710 tons. An average of 252 men were employed.

*Union Collieries* (Mr. F. J. Tattley, mine-manager).—The mine having proved unprofitable to the then-owners, it was closed down in the early part of the year, but subsequently was acquired by a new company, who intend to reopen it at an early date.

*Kawakawa Colliery* (Mr. W. H. Culley, mine-manager).—An adit has been driven, and several pillars of coal left in by the old company were located, but the extent of pillar coal available is unknown. The mine was examined, and the timbering and ventilation found satisfactory.

*Waipa Colliery*.—No work has been done during the year. A contract for the construction of the railway-line from Ngaruawahia to the mine has been let, and is being proceeded with.

*Pukemiro Collieries* (Mr. E. S. Wight, mine-manager).—No work has yet been done at the mine. Plant and material are being sent out from England; and when the railway and traffic bridge over the Waikato River is available the plant will be conveyed to the ground.

*Mangapapa Colliery* (Mr. William Lennox, mine-manager).—Since the installation of the small exhaust fan, of local design, the ventilation of the mine has been satisfactory. In October I found that 12,000 cubic feet of air was supplied for eight men and one horse. The mine was inspected, and found to be in good order. The output of coal was 3,811 tons, being a decrease as compared with that of the previous year.

I have, &c.,

B. BENNIE.

Inspector of Mines.

The INSPECTOR OF MINES, West Coast District, to the UNDER-SECRETARY, Mines Department, Wellington.

SIR,—

Inspector of Mines' Office, Westport, 1st February, 1912.

I have the honour, in compliance with section 78 of the Coal-mines Act, 1908, to present my report on the coal-mines in the West Coast Inspection District for the year ended 31st December, 1911.