

Crown Lease, Aria.—I visited the mine on the 12th November, 1917, and found that, since my previous visit, a road had been formed to the mine and the adit level driven into the coal, approximately 140 ft., the drive being securely timbered. The seam is broken. I expect that an upthrow fault will be met with after about 25 ft. more driving, and beyond that fault or slide the coal-seam will be firmer and the coal of a better quality, with less waste. 75 tons of coal were sold during the year, mostly to the butter-factory at Aria.

Mangapapa Mine (Mokau).—Owing to the accumulation of logs in the Mokau River, referred to in the previous report, preventing shipping from reaching the mine, the mine has been idle during the year.

Hikurangi Colliery.—Early in the year this company had great difficulties to overcome in the drainage of the mine. The water-free coal has been mined, and the surface has subsided, resulting in the surface drainage entering and flooding the lower levels of the mine during the winter months. A shaft was sunk to the deepest part of the mine, and the water is bailed therefrom. The mine was drained and work resumed in December. There is an extensive area of pillar coal to be worked under the Waro limestone rocks. The Phoenix section, which has been closed for many years, is now being worked, but there are several faults, which will considerably increase the cost of mining. The company have purchased all the coal mined from a Crown lease near-by, which is owned and worked by a co-operative company of workmen.

I have visited the mine many times during the year.

Northern Colliery, Hikurangi Section.—The company's Tauranga section (the Old Northern Mine) is almost exhausted, only two miners being at work there on a small outcrop pillar of coal. In the company's Crown lease, Section 2, Block XVI, Little and party, tributors, the coal-seam has been from 8 ft. to 10 ft. thick, and of good, clean, hard coal, but the area is small. The Waro Rocks section is still closed.

Northern Colliery, Kiripaka Section.—(Crown lease, Block VII, Whangarei Survey, District.) The mine is situated on the bank of the Waitangi Stream, Te Kiripaka. The coal is good, but the seam is much faulted, which has hindered the development in opening up the mine. The coal-seam is from 6 ft. to 12 ft. thick. A section of the seam is folded, and the coal is inclined at an angle of 45°. Some of the places have been worked up the fold to a height of 60 ft., where the same angle continues. At the south-east portion of the mine the coal is displaced by faulting. Ventilation is fair.

Crown Lease, being a Portion of Section 2, Block XVI, Hikurangi.—(Doel and Foot, lessees.) This is a small area adjoining the Northern Coal Company's lease. The coal is good, the seam being from 6 ft. to 9 ft. thick.

Crown Lease, Section N.E. 39, Block XVI, Hikurangi.—(Kerr and Co., lessees.) The company are working small areas left by a former mining company. There is nothing permanent, but at one point got into a fine block, where the coal was 15 ft. thick, and is worked from an adit. The coal is sold to the Hikurangi Coal-mining Company. The ventilation is good.

Crown Lease, Section 48 N.E., Block XVI, Hikurangi.—Some small outcrop pillars of coal, left in by a former company, are now being worked. The coal is sold at the mine and carted to the settlers in the district.

North New Zealand Coal and Cement Mining Company.—During the past year a greater number of men have been employed and a record output of coal obtained, but development has been neglected owing to inadequate pumping machinery.

The coal in the deepest workings is much improved in thickness and quality. The ventilation of the mine has been fair, but, owing to the pumps in the mine being driven by steam, more air is required to keep the temperature at a reasonable minimum. A Hayes fan is being installed.

An electric-lighting plant has been erected.

Several minor improvements have been made during the year. I have made many visits of inspection of the mine.

Fatal and Serious Non-fatal Accidents.

FATAL ACCIDENT.

James Gibson: Aged thirty-one, clipper, crushed by trucks in Taupiri Extended Colliery on the 14th December, 1916. Died in Avondale Asylum seven months later on the 13th July, 1917, from "exhaustion from acute mania." In the doctor's opinion this mania was the result of the injuries to his head received when crushed in the Extended Mine.

SERIOUS NON-FATAL ACCIDENTS.

J. Moore, Pukemiro Colliery: Fractured knee-cap, 31st May, 1917.

D. Cumming, Pukemiro Colliery: Compound fracture of leg, caused by fall of coal in his working-place on 6th December, 1917.

D. Burt, Waipa Colliery: Crushed ankle-joint, on 2nd August, 1917.

S. Martin, Taupiri Extended Colliery: Total loss of the sight of one eye.

WEST COAST INSPECTION DISTRICT. (Mr. JAMES NEWTON, Inspector.)

New Zealand State Coal-mines.

Liverpool Colliery, Nos. 1 and 3A Sections.—In the No. 1 section, lying to the east of the Seven-mile Creek, development has proceeded continuously in a north-easterly direction. The seam going eastward has pinched to an unprofitable thickness, and winning of the pillars has