

Three informations were laid against mine-managers under Regulation 238 (3) (g) for failure to take representative samples of road dust every three months. In two cases convictions and fines of £2 and costs were inflicted, and in the third case the manager was convicted and fined £1 and costs.

Two informations were laid against a mine-owner for failure to comply with the requisition to install fans at his mines as required by Regulation 180. He was convicted and fined £2 and costs on one charge while the other charge was dismissed, as the Magistrate decided that the defendant was not the legal owner of the mine.

For failing to provide a sufficient supply of proper materials and appliances in accordance with Regulation 78, an information was laid against a mine-owner. This charge was dismissed, as it was held by the Magistrate that the defendant was not the legal owner of the mine. An alternative charge for failing to provide a sufficient supply of proper materials, &c., was laid against the mine-manager under Regulation 78. A conviction was recorded and a fine of £1 10s. imposed.

The underviewer of the same mine was charged under Regulation 89 with failing to see that the necessary materials and appliances were sent into the districts. He was convicted and fined £1 and costs.

A mine-owner was charged that, being the owner of a mine during which time the manager failed to appoint in writing a sufficient number of duly qualified officials, as provided for by section 61, he was guilty of a breach of section 198 (2). He was convicted and fined £2 and costs. An alternative charge laid against the mine-manager was thereupon withdrawn.

The acting-deputy of a mine was charged under section 126 (e) with failing to record in a book kept for the purpose a report stating what steps had been taken to mitigate the dangers arising from coaldust. A conviction was recorded and a fine of £1 and costs inflicted.

Two miners were each convicted and ordered to pay costs for failing to systematically and adequately support the roof of their working-faces at such regular intervals and in such manner as specified by notice at the mine. (Section 117 (1).)

An information was laid against a winch-driver under section 98 (1) for having in his possession cigarette-tobacco in a mine where safety-lamps are used. He was convicted and ordered to pay Court costs.

A shot-firer was charged under Regulation 234 (1) (f) with failing to keep a record of the number of shots fired by him and the number of miss-shots. He was convicted and fined £1 and Court costs.

SOUTHERN INSPECTION DISTRICT (JOB HUGHES, Inspector of Mines).

COAL OUTPUT.

It is pleasing to report a slightly better position in the industry for the year under review. The total output for this district shows an increase of 20,404 tons compared with 1932; however, the output is still much below the normal figures of previous years. It is worthy of note that the increased output was obtained with a decreased number of persons employed. This is partly accounted for as a result of the concentration on pillar-extraction at some of the larger mines, probably in an effort to reduce working-costs and thereby reduce the selling-price of the product; unfortunately, this process has its limits. The Canterbury output increased 2,703 tons; North Otago decreased 1,617 tons; Central Otago decreased 133 tons; South Otago increased 5,513 tons; and Southland increased 13,938 tons. It is noteworthy that the resumption of work in any district following an industrial dispute has been accompanied by a decrease in the number of employees engaged. The current year has seen the introduction of coal-cutting plant in one of the larger mines, and there appears to be no doubt that the innovation has proved successful from the company's viewpoint and that this will be the forerunner to the further installation of machine-mining plant. Mining operations generally have been carried out in a reasonably safe manner as is indicated by a decrease from 178 in 1932 to 160 in 1933 in the total number of accidents which occurred in and about the mines in the district.

Canterbury District.

Springfield Mine.—This mine has been worked only intermittently. There was a little development carried out to the north-east, also a few pillars robbed on the west side of the dip. The general mining conditions are only fair and very primitive.

Konomy Mine.—A limited amount of development work was carried out during the year, comprising the extending of the dip heading and the driving of two levels east for a distance of 2 chains; thickness of coal, 2 ft. 6 in.

Bonanza Mine.—The development levels at this mine having been driven through the hill and connected to the surface, a commencement was made, about the middle of the year, to extract the pillars, and was continued satisfactorily throughout the year.

Clearview Mine.—Pillar-extraction has continued during the year in a satisfactory manner.

Lucknow Clay-pit.—Pillar-extraction has been continued and the pillars are now extracted to within 3 chains of the mine-entrance. The intermittent manner in which these clay-pits operate tends to make roof conditions unsatisfactory.

Klondyke Mine.—The main level, proceeding north-east, was stopped in outcrop coal after being driven approximately 30 chains. Pillar-extraction was commenced about the middle of the year. The seam lies at a gradient of approximately 50° and is about 30 ft. thick. A series of small dimensioned levels is driven along the strike of the seam and at various heights from the floor. The whole of the coal is shot down, in comparative safety, from these levels and it runs into V-shaped openings made in the seam on the higher side of the lower level, from whence it is run into the mine trucks. This method of work has, so far, proved safe and economical.

Bush Gully Mine.—In the No. 2 level pillar-extraction was completed during the year and the development of the seam from the lower level has been extended a distance of approximately 8 chains south-west. An additional air-shaft was constructed during the year.

Homebush Fireclay Mine.—Work has been carried out intermittently on a small scale to the west of the main level.

Homebush Mine.—Several attempts have been made during the year to locate a profitable area of coal, but all efforts have proved more or less disappointing. A remnant of the "engine" seam is at present being worked, at the high end of the old workings, under difficult conditions.

McClimont's Mine.—Work was suspended during the year, following a small amount of prospecting.

Sunnydale Mine.—Work has been of a prospecting nature and the results have so far proved disappointing.

Blackburn Coal Co.'s Mine.—No new development has taken place towards the dip, and levels were driven east with a view to proving a new area. However, this was not persevered with, and work is now being concentrated on a small area of coal which can probably be worked opencast.

Mount Somers Coal Co.'s Mine.—Development work has been continued easterly. A level stone drive was connected up in this area during the year and the development of the mine continued from this point. The coal-seam appears inclined to thin under the creek, going east. Pillar-extraction has been continued during the year in the old section.

Meadowbank Mine, Waihao Forks.—This is a new mine commenced adjacent to the old Meadowbank Mine. A dip heading has been driven 200 ft. to the north-west and a companion heading started for a return airway. The seam of lignite is 20 ft. thick and of fair quality.

Albury Mine.—The mine has continued to be developed to the north by means of an additional level. All places are driven 8 ft. wide. An additional airshaft was constructed during the year.