

The output from this mine, and also from the Bruce Colliery, is limited to local consumption, since their being situated 5 miles from any line of railway necessitates cartage for that distance, which can only be done at a moderate rate in the most favourable weather, and even then they can scarcely compete with the Kaitangata and other mines, who can bring coal to Tokomairiro at a cheaper rate than these companies can, which entirely precludes their sending their coal to other districts.

The coal appears to basin to the eastward of these mines towards Mount Misery, along the eastern slopes of which, towards Kaitangata, outcrops occur, as also along the banks of the Tokomairiro River. A coal field, therefore, exists here of considerable extent, a great part of which could be wrought level free.

*Bruce Coal-Mining Company, Tokomairiro*, is situated a few chains north of the last mentioned mine. The coal here is 10 feet thick, and is wrought by a tunnel which has been driven through a spur a distance of 12 chains 96 links. This tunnel, which serves the purpose of a main level and air way is along the base of a trough, the measures rising on each side of it, and the workings have been opened out on the north-east side upon an irregular system of room-and-rance. Five feet of the lower part of the seam only is won, leaving the remainder overhead to protect the roof, which, from its soft nature, requires some such support.

The roadways are at times very troublesome owing to creep, as the coal is taken out right to the floor, which is fireclay, and swells when it is exposed to the weather. To obviate this it will be necessary to leave at least 1 foot of coal under foot, as is done in the Green Island collieries, and I think this extra foot might be taken overhead without in any way endangering the safety of the workings.

The workings are generally in fair order, and the ventilation is all that can be desired.

The timber employed is in no way stinted, is well set up with props and cap-pieces, whilst the spaces are built up, thus taking much of the superincumbent pressure from the timbers, which are in no way giving.

The present workings cannot be expected to be of any great extent, as the coal is lapping on to a slate ridge to the north-east, at a distance of about 2 chains from the main level, and the coal generally poors in that direction. The coal undulates considerably here, but at a distance of 20 chains, south-east, and further south from there, three prospecting drives have been entered upon coal of good quality, 10 to 12 feet in thickness, and dipping steadily north-east. It is at this point that the future permanent workings may be looked for, the coal basining from the slate ridge to dip, or towards the Real Mackay outcrop.

*No. 1, Kaitangata Colliery (Shores').*—The coal which has been worked in this colliery is a higher one than that in the Kaitangata Company's workings, and is only 3 feet 9 inches thick, dipping east 1 in 3. It is entered upon by two tunnels, driven a little off the strike of the coal, with headings or V levels placed at a slight angle to the tunnels, an irregular post-and-stall workings being thus obtained. This system appears to give a safe working, the levels and headings being driven of a fair average width, being well timbered, with shale walls built in the intervening spaces, thus easing well the pressure off the stoops, which stand well, and show no indications of being weighted.

The coal has here been wrought out to the march, and the pillars are now being stooped back upon, and, as the conglomerate roof appears to stand well, the removal of the whole of the coal can be undertaken with safety.

The ventilation of this mine is satisfactory, the downcast air being led by a tunnel at a low level, in which it is confined until reaching the working faces, whence it is discharged along another tunnel, at a higher elevation.

A new shaft is being sunk, with a view of cutting the seam wrought in the Kaitangata Company's workings, which, at date of survey, 10th December, 1877, was sunk to a depth of 52 feet through conglomerate.

*Kaitangata Coal-Mining Company.*—This mine has been opened on a somewhat broken or irregular system of post-and-stall, the posts being cut at short distances, with a view of winning as large a proportion of coal as possible as the workings advance. These are generally sound and in good order, the conglomerate forming a safe, strong roof. The timber employed is of sufficient strength, and is well set up, in no instance giving to the pressure.

The ventilation here is perfectly satisfactory, the downcast air being led along the level until reaching the working-faces, along which it is allowed to spread, the return air being taken from the end of the main level through the waste, and being eventually discharged through a small air-shaft.

Numerous faults are being met with in these workings, which are now noted on the plans made by Mr. Denniston, the company not being in possession of any plan previously.

Lately a change has been made in the system of working this mine, viz.: in place of leaving from 8 feet to 10 feet of the lower part of the coal, the whole thickness is now taken out in the headings, the roof being found to stand equally well under this system as under that formerly adopted.

*The Shag Point Colliery* is wrought by an easy incline plane cutting the coal about 3 chains from the entrance, and continued on the coal, forming the main level of the mine. The coal is wrought upon an irregular system, which approaches nearest to post-and-stall. The workings were originally set out on a system of room-and-rance, which has not, however, been adhered to; but on the whole the system adopted gives a sound workings, to which both the roof and floor are all that could be desired.

A small extent of the wrought area has recently been on fire, having been ignited by the furnace which is used in the upcast air-shaft. This fire at one time threatened to destroy the whole mine, but at the time it was visited it had been well got under by building stoppings across the mouths of the rooms and headings round the ignited area, thus cutting it off from other portions of the mine.

The material used for these stoppings was shale, puddled with clay, a light material to resist any great pressure of black damp which might gather in the waste, and at the time of the survey the