

plied with a draft copy, which appeared to me to be sufficient for these very small mines, and to avoid the faults of the set mentioned in the report of 1879 (p. 19) This comprises all on the list.

#### NEW MINES.

1. *Brockley, No. 2* (23rd April, 1881).—This is a new mine, near No. 31. Having been worked only since 24th January, 1881, this mine is not, of course, on last year's list. The coal is nearly vertical, as in Brockley No. 1. Four men are employed by the contractors, Messrs. Learmouth and Fibbs. Mr. Storey is manager, and has been supplied with a copy of the Act and draft Special Rules. The mine is well timbered and the air pretty good.

2. *Perseverance Coal Mine, Cromwell* (21st May, 1881).—This is a shaft, sunk by the owners of the old Cromwell Mine. The dimensions are 3 feet 6 inches by 6 feet, by 81 feet, divided by a brattice. Two other shafts were commenced, but abandoned. Vertical ladders were being put in; but, on my pointing out the illegality of this, Mr. McNulty promised to make other arrangements. The seam is six or seven feet thick, and dips 1 in 3. Horse power is used for winding. I put the manager in the way of observing the Act, and supplied draft Special Rules. No plan is required. The shaft is sunk through the coal, and a drive in the direction of the dip is intended to foot the seam, when a rise heading will be driven in order to make a communication with the other division of the shaft.

3. *Clyde Coal Mine, Holt's* (23rd January, 1881).—Mr. Holt has sunk a pair of shafts, and work will be commenced when a road is made to the mine.

I have, &c.,

GEORGE J BINNS,  
Inspector of Mines.

The Under-Secretary for Mines, Wellington.

#### No. 4.

#### REPORT UPON INSPECTION OF COAL MINES, NORTH AND SOUTH ISLAND DISTRICTS.

Mr. Inspector Cox to the UNDER-SECRETARY for MINES.

SIR,—

Wellington, 25th May, 1881.

I have the honor to inform you that, having been gazetted an Inspector of Mines to each of the mining districts of the colony, as defined in the *New Zealand Gazette* of 22nd April, 1880—namely, the Mining Districts of Kawakawa, Waikato, Pelorus, Kaikoura, West Wanganui, Greymouth, Westport, Jackson's Bay, Malvern, Timaru, Otago, and Southland, and having, in accordance with the instructions of the Minister of Mines, had the reports of the other District Inspectors submitted to me, that I might decide which mines required the most attention, I have visited those in the South Island which, from Mr. Binns's report, I considered necessary, and propose visiting the North Island mines immediately.

In forming my opinion as to what mines most required attention, I grouped them, firstly in the order of the number of men employed, which showed that out of the one hundred mines which Mr. Binns mentions in the South Island, only twelve were employing more than ten men below ground; that one mine employed ten men; that no information was to hand concerning seven mines; and that sixty-six mines were either stopped entirely, or employed only one or two men.

List of mines, grouped according to the number of men employed:—No information, 7; not working, 12; employing 1 man, 29; 2 men, 25; 3 men, 5; 4 men, 4; 5 men, 2; 6 men, 1; 7 men, 1; 8 men, 1; 10 men, 1; more than 10 men, 12: total, 100.

Since Mr. Binns's report, the Wallsend Mine, Greymouth, employing fifteen men, has been stopped, as has also the Mokihinui Mine, employing five men.

I decided then, that as the time at my disposal was limited before the commencement of the session, by which time I had to furnish a report, that my attention should be chiefly directed to those mines which employed more than ten men; but that, when I had time on my hands, and the opportunity of visiting other and smaller mines, I would do so.

The classifying of the mines in this manner shows that in reality the total number of mines in New Zealand which have any claims to be considered as such (that is, striking out all mines employing less than three men) and in which I apprehend the Act can be enforced, is only thirty-three, viz., twenty-seven in the South Island and six in the North Island, and that these numbers have since been reduced, by two mines in the South Island and one in the North Island having been stopped; besides which, the Kaitangata Railway and Coal Company's Mine, and No. 1 Kaitangata, being now worked together and connected by drives, the total number will be reduced to twenty-nine mines. It appears necessary to mention this, because the number which appears in the list (106) is apt to give an undue importance to our coal-mining industry as at present developed, and to be liable to mislead the public at large. It is, moreover, I fear, the means of bringing to the colony a number of mining managers in search of occupation, when there is no probability of their obtaining work on their arrival.

With regard to these small mines which are worked by one or two men, and in one case two mines being worked by one man at different times, I would submit that no amount of inspection is likely to be of any use unless an Inspector stayed at each of them and managed the mine.

I have not, of course, visited many of these, but one or two have come under my notice. At Springfield there is a mine, known as the Eureka, which is owned and worked by one man, at such times as he is not employed at the Springfield Colliery or elsewhere. When I was there, I could not find him. The Waugaloa Mine, at Kaitangata, is worked by a carter, who takes out enough coal for a return-load when carting in that direction. The Allandale Mine is worked by one man, his brother carting the coal meantime; the lease is but a small one, and beyond dangers from falls of the roof, which cannot be prevented by inspection, unless a responsible manager is in charge, no dangers are to be apprehended; and to attempt to enforce minor provisions of the Act in such cases would not only be arbitrary, but it appears to me utterly uncalled for.

Again, as regards Special Rules in mines of this sort, they cannot apply in any way, since the one man is manager, overman, collier, &c., and the rules being framed for the protection of the miners at the risk of the manager and overman, they appear to me to be useless. Special Rules have only been