

viewer's books, and the Act is generally observed in its details. The deep gulch, which received so much notice in the papers, does not exist, so far as is known at the mine; but two or three small gulches, which extend from the surface to a depth below the workings, occur; and one of these has been of considerable service in draining some of the dip-workings before the cliff was reached. A certain part of the workings have been completely gutted, and the roof allowed to settle down, and thus ease the workings; and this work was very successfully carried out. A drive is about to be entered from the face of the cliff, through some broken ground, to connect with the workings; and here Mr. Denniston proposes to erect a furnace, which will keep the ventilation more under control, and the position is admirably adapted for it. The works are being steadily pushed on towards the "South Branch," and, when this is reached, the main body of coal belonging to this mine will be opened out; but, in the meantime, there is sufficient ground opened to yield a large output.

I have found throughout the mines which I have visited that the provisions of the Act are carefully complied with, and that the managers are, one and all, willing to do anything suggested to them for the safety of their workings; and I must compliment Mr. Binns on having, in a comparatively short space of time, brought about an observance of details which, while readily adopted by some, must have required constant attention in other cases.

I have, &c.,

S. HERBERT COX,

Inspector of Mines.

The Under-Secretary for Mines, Wellington.

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

SIR,—

Auckland, 17th June, 1881.

I have the honor to inform you that I have visited the various coal mines now at work in the North Island, and herewith submit my report on the same.

*Kawakawa Colliery.*—No fault can be found with the workings at this mine, which are in good order throughout, and, under the able management of Mr. T P Moody, may claim to be the largest and best ventilated mine in the colony, over 15,000 cubic feet of air per minute being carried through the workings.

Since I last visited the mine, the new incline has been connected with the sinking-pit, and the old pumping-shaft has been bricked from top to bottom and converted into the main up-cast of the mine, a furnace being erected at the bottom. The air is well guided throughout, and is perfectly fresh at every part of the mine, and, being frequently split, the greatest available power of the current is gained. The mine is examined every morning with a safety-lamp by the deputy-overman, before the men go to their work, but no register of his inspection is kept; as, however, no gas has yet been found, this is not required by the provisions of the Act. The system of working generally has been the post and stall, but a little longwall work has been done in part of the upper seam near the shaft. This has now been stopped while the lower seam is being worked, and then Mr. Moody proposes to take down the clay parting, and finish drawing the top seam. Pillars have been drawn in several parts of the mine and the roof allowed to come down, the timber being generally left in the mine as useless after having done its work. The roof is not good; and it says a great deal for the careful management that no accidents have occurred during the past year. Timber is used unsparingly throughout, a good supply being constantly on hand, due supervision being exercised to see that this is well and securely set and used whenever it is necessary. The provisions of the Act appear to be complied with in every particular.

*Waikato Coal Company's Mine.*—This mine, which I visited on the 13th June, is still under the management of Mr. A. McGlynn. The workings are all in good order, and are standing well. A plan of the mine is kept, and the Act well observed, as far as I could judge, since the men were not at work when I visited it. The mine is only wrought now to supply orders, and is, I understand, standing half its time, only eight men being employed. This is to be regretted, as the coal from this lease is a very good sample of its sort, is easily worked, and has a good roof, thus allowing the whole thickness to be drawn in the bords, a proceeding which was impracticable in the Waikato Mine on the railway side of the river, now abandoned. The old workings which have been struck lately are standing well; but the extent of roof which has been left entirely unsupported makes one wonder that the whole of it has not collapsed long ago. The air was very good for a natural current when I was in the mine, and Mr. McGlynn says that at times it is much better than even then. A large area of coal has been proved on this property, and it would well repay the shareholders to either throw a wire tramway-bridge over the river, or at least provide some more efficient means of transporting the coal than that practised now of tipping it into barges, towing these five miles up the river to Taupiri, and then reloading into railway trucks.

*Taupiri Colliery.*—This mine, which I visited on the 14th June, I found in very good order, and the ventilation good. A considerable number of pillars have now been drawn in the old mine, and the work in connection with these has involved constant care and attention on the part of the manager, but it has been carried on very successfully so far. The roof is quite soft, but has been found to give ample warning before coming down. Mr. Collins, the manager, inspects the mine every morning, but has not kept a book recording his inspection; he proposes to do this in the future, although not necessary for compliance with the Act. The slack is drawn from this mine, but is not utilized in any way; and it is to be regretted that, with the quantity of clay on the property, it is not employed in brick-burning. This is the only mine in the colony in which I have seen an indicator attached to the winding-gear to show the position of the hutchies in the incline.

*Whau Whau Coal Mine.*—Only a small amount of work is being done in this mine at present, three men only being employed underground. The air is remarkably good for a natural current, and the mine generally is in good order.

*Kamo Coal Mine.*—At this mine, also, the output is at present small, the principal work lately having been expended on the surface, and in prospecting. As noted by Mr. McLaren, the upper seam has been struck and works have been opened on this, the greater number of men being employed in this part of the mine. The ventilation here is very defective, no attempt whatever being made to