

ACCIDENTS AND FATALITIES.

Ironbridge Mine, Denniston Colliery (30/5/1901).—A miner named William Hendy, while working in the "big pillars," was killed by a fall of coal. Verdict: "Accidental death."

Mokihinui Mine (9/1/1901).—A pony-driver named John Bain was kicked on the head by his horse. Injuries were not serious.

GENERAL REMARKS.

Comparing the productive capacities of the large collieries with the increased trade requirements for 1901, the ratio of increased production, as compared with 1900, has fully confirmed anticipations, which in itself is a source of considerable satisfaction. It is, however, to be regretted—if the present condition of trade be any guide on which to base approximate statistical calculations for the forthcoming year—that at the time of writing the Brunner Mines, which produced 127,016 tons last year, has reduced employment to single shift, while the Mokihinui Mine has been practically at a standstill for some time past. These facts point to a descent of prosperity which cannot be overlooked from a commercial point of view.

The export of coal from the Westport Coal Company's collieries to places outside the colony for the twelve months ended 31st December, 1901, amounted to 32,236 tons, as compared with 17,470 tons in 1900, and 6,955 tons in 1899. Although we cannot speak encouragingly with regard to the exportation of our fine coals from the limited natural resources of our coalfields, still, considering the efficient development of our mines, it must be admitted that the avenue of trade opened in the foreign coal-market constitutes a considerable factor of employment which the otherwise variable consumption of the colony itself could not maintain.

Accidents in the various large collieries throughout the inspection district show a marked decrease, while the respective accident relief funds (under the Coal-mines Act) show a satisfactory increase.

The future development and working of the Seddonville Colliery under State control will be watched with interest not only in New Zealand, but in more important mining centres.

FOREIGN TRADE.

The quantity of coal shipped by the Westport Coal Company from the 31st December, 1900, to the 31st December, 1901, to ports outside the colony was 32,236 tons. This statement, compared with the preceding year's shipments, shows an increase of 14,766 tons.

I have, &c.,

R. TENNENT,

Inspector of Mines.

The Under-Secretary, Mines Department, Wellington.

No. 4.

Mr. E. R. GREEN, Inspector of Mines, to the UNDER-SECRETARY, Mines Department, Wellington.

Office of Inspector of Mines (Southern District), Dunedin,

SIR,—

31st March, 1902.

In compliance with section 67 of "The Coal-mines Act, 1891," I have the honour to submit the following report on the coal-mines in this district for the year ending 31st December, 1901:—

CANTERBURY.

Springfield Colliery, Springfield (P. Campbell, permit).—(18/11/1901): Very little coal is now sold from this pit, in which work mainly consists of providing coal and fireclay for the local pottery. It was fortunate that I visited the pit on this date. I found Campbell at work in a cross-measures rise drive some 3 chains from the level. There was every indication that the face was in the immediate vicinity of a standage of water in old workings, a plan of which, if made, cannot now be found. I instructed Campbell to withdraw from the place for a few days, after which drill-holes were to be carefully bored in the roof and sides to locate the body of water. Campbell was quite unconscious that he was in a place of danger until it was pointed out to him. The air to three far-in working-faces is badly conducted, and damp leaking from the waste is consequently not carried away. I instructed Campbell, and also Mr. Horsley, proprietor, as to these matters. Drawing-roads wet and muddy. Report-book up to date. (4/12/1901): Revisited the pit to see if work required had been carried out. I found that the cross-measures heading was standing as when last seen, water from joints in roof and sides flowing much more freely than it was a fortnight ago. Air fair to-day, but stentons not yet put through at the faces.

Victoria Mine, Springfield (W. J. Cloudesley, permit).—(18/11/1901): Adit level in 100 yards to shaft 50 ft. deep. A cross-measures drive to the main seam is being put in. There are old workings in the vicinity of the shaft, but the water is said to be drained away.

Dalethorpe Pit, Springfield (A. J. Nuthall).—(18/11/1901): New drive is in about 1 chain to face. The timber at the face requires renewing. The pit has been idle for some time.

Sheffield Colliery, Sheffield (J. Austin).—(14/11/1901): Nothing doing here now. Plant lifted and removed.

Homebush Colliery, Glentunnel (J. C. Campbell, manager).—(14/11/1901): Considerable life is being infused into this property, which contains the largest coalfield at present being worked in Canterbury. Preparations are being made for boring from the surface for the purpose of learning what is contained in the measures underlying the seam of coal being worked. A new dip drive has been started away from the main haulage-road, and a shaft 50 ft. deep has been sunk, down which the