

gases generated in the waste, and mechanical ventilation is urgently required. I subsequently wrote the mine-manager and the general manager of the company to that effect, and pointed out the immediate necessity of attending to the matter. (6/11/1901): There was an improvement throughout the mine as regards ventilation. Air at intake, 6,958 cubic feet per minute for thirty-five men. Alexander's and Crawford's places in No. 8 jig were stopped off when the shale was worked out, but the barrier has crushed. The damp is leaking, and goes direct to the south level. This part of the mine is the furthest in of the rise workings, and the air is always reported dull here. Owing to the roof in the waste falling irregularly, the fire between Nos. 3 and 4 has not yet been cut off, smoke still drawing out. The crosscut to Nos. 1 and 5 jigs has been repaired and put in thorough good order. Timber is plentifully used throughout the mine, and full supplies kept handy to the working-places. Every care is taken for prevention of accidents and safety of workmen.

Clifton Coal-mine, Invercargill (Thomas Gillies).—(23/7/1901): A seam of lignite in Seaward Bush lying near the surface, but beneath the water-level of the surrounding country. To be worked opencast.

REMARKS.

The output of coal and lignite (Southern District) during the year is returned at 383,730 tons, and of shale 12,048 tons, a total increase of 56,274 tons over the previous year. Returns of output from the several portions of the district are as follows:—

							Tons	cwt.
Canterbury	...	...	...	...	...	...	16,100	4
North Otago	...	...	...	...	...	...	37,650	19
South Otago	...	...	...	...	...	...	200,464	0
Central Otago	...	...	...	...	...	...	51,207	0
Southland	...	...	...	...	...	...	78,307	18
							383,730	1
Output for previous year	...	...	...	...	...	...	339,504	0
							44,226	1
Increase	...	...	...	...	...	...	12,048	0
Shale added	...	...	...	...	...	...		
							56,274	1
Total increase	...	...	...	...	...	...		

New mines have been opened at Brockley, at Riccarton, and at several other small places. A good deal of prospecting is being conducted throughout the district, with varied results. At Taratu a branch line of railway is being constructed from the Lovell's Flat Railway-station to the coalfields, about seven miles. The coal areas granted on Crown lands in Central Otago during the past two years, with few exceptions, are not being worked.

The contributions to the Coal-miners' Relief Fund amounted to £370 5s, while payments have been recommended amounting to £400 18s. 9d.

ACCIDENTS.

4th September, 1901.—Walter H. Guttery, miner, one of the lessees of the H.B. Coal-mine, Nightcaps, was suffocated (while trucking) by a fall of dirt at the mine-mouth. The corner of Guttery's box struck the right-hand prop at the mine-mouth, knocking it out, and three sets of timber fell. An accumulation of fine dirt, which had weathered from the bank above, slid down and covered deceased, who, when uncovered fifteen minutes afterwards, was lying face down with about 2 ft. of dirt covering his head. The tram-road was canted, and it was usual for the boxes to be twisted past the prop on which the corner of the box struck. An iron bar was brought to the spot for the purpose of drawing the road off the prop, but it had not been done. The Coroner's jury brought in a verdict of "Death by suffocation, caused by an accidental fall of dirt." I reported fully on this accident under date the 9th September, 1901.

1st October, 1901.—James R. Quested, miner, Nightcaps: Killed by a fall of timber and coal from the roof. Was trimming a bar preparatory to setting a centre prop when it collapsed. James Mason, underviewer and examiner, told deceased that the bar was "weighting," and instructed him to set a centre prop to it. Deceased unfortunately started to trim the bar with a tomahawk, when the bar broke at the part being trimmed. Care had apparently been taken to provide good timber. The bar was selected by the mine-manager, and accepted by deceased and his mates. I subsequently wrote to Mr. Lloyd, pointing out that minimum timber sizes in wide places should be increased. The Coroner's jury brought in a verdict of "Accidental death; no blame attachable to any one." I reported this accident fully to you under date the 8th October, 1901.

16th January, 1901.—George Ferguson, Shag Point: Fractured thigh, crushed between two boxes.

20th January, 1901.—Robert McNatty, Beck's, Rough Ridge: Fractured thigh; cause, dray running over him in the pit.

3rd April, 1901.—Hugh Jones, Cromwell and Bannockburn Collieries: Hip bruised by a fall of coal from roof while drawing a prop.

15th June, 1901.—Thomas G. Spain, Mosgiel, Saddle Hill: Injury to spine by fall of coal from face.

7th August, 1901.—Edward Mackie, Kaitangata: Fractured thigh. Fall of coal from roof while dropping tops.

20th December, 1901.—William McNeil, in charge of a sinking shaft, Walton Park: Was in the bottom, when a piece of clay fell from the side and fractured two ribs.