*Murray Creek Mine, Reefton* (J. Billett, owner).—(5/10/1903): This openface property continues to supply a superior steaming-coal to the Consolidated Goldfields' Murray Creek battery. The leasehold was further extended during the year, and work is now proceeding to open out the coal-seam. Scarcity of water for the stripping-off of the surface cover has been much felt during the very dry season.

*Phœnix Coal-mine, Reefton* (John Knight, owner).– (5/10/1903): The output has been chiefly supplied from the low-level working adjoining the rise. In view of increased demand for household fuel during the winter months, a new adit is being driven which will facilitate mining and trucking very materially, and also win the coal east from a main faulting. Ventilation is well maintained from the rise level.

*Lockington's Leasehold, Bourke's Creek, Reefton.*—(5/10/1903): The coal-seam won by the rock adit at 400 ft. showed 7 ft. of fair average coal in the face, but the full thickness was not then fully determined. It is anticipated, however, that coal will be supplied during the winter months. Air is maintained by water-blast.

*Blackadder's Leasehold, Reefton Town Belt.*—(6/10/1903): The high-level adit originally driven to win the coal-seam, being simply of a prospecting character, was subsequently abandoned and replaced by a larger and more securely timbered low level. Unfortunately, quality has not favoured anticipations, as the large bars of pyritical stone, by which the coal-seam is affected, tend largely to increase cost of production and to reduce the output of round coal.

*Lankey's Creek Coal-mine, Reefton.*—(2/10/1903): The owners gave notice that operations were suspended during the summer months.

*The New Inkerman Coal-mine, Reefton* (owners, New Inkerman Mines Company, Limited).—(2/10/1903): This mine is very successfully worked on the stoping system to supply steaming-coal for driving the stamp-mill and air-compressing installations on the company's property. Ventilation is fully maintained through the open outcrops, and through the care taken by the miners in securely timbering the ground the seam is exhausted without loss.

*Devil's Creek Coal-mine, Reefton.*—The adit has collapsed since the lease was surrendered.

*Progress New Coal-mine, Reefton.*—(3/10/1903): Steaming-coal for the company's works is supplied from a new mine recently opened on the eastern boundary. The seam is opening out well, and furnishes an average fuel. Working-conditions are good.

*Loughnan's Coal-mine, Reefton.*—(3/10/1903): This leasehold is practically at a standstill. A new tramway has been laid, but nothing further has been done.

*Blackball Colliery* (owners, Blackball Coal Company; James Leitch, mining manager).—(29/9/1903): Operations at this colliery have been continuous. The gross tonnage for the year was 88,949 tons, which shows a decrease of 10,648 tons as compared with the preceding year. Deficiency of output is chiefly attributable to restricted demands on the colliery, particularly during the second half-yearly period. Efficiency in working-conditions has been well maintained, considering the complicated difficulties experienced in the removal of pillars. The unfavourable conditions which follow a soft roof and floor necessitate the exclusive use of set timbering, while the necessary factors accessory to spontaneous ignition are constant. Successive walling off of the exhausted ground has, however, proved eminently effective in suppressing the resultant gases exuding from the smouldering fires located in the abandoned and exhausted workings. The excessive inflow of surface water through the open fissures occasioned by broken overlying strata has proved a source of hindrance to haulage traffic during very wet seasons. According to calculations made on the further productive capacity of the rise pillar working, the output is not anticipated to extend beyond the current year, but in this event trade requirements will be fully maintained from the new dip development. The No. 2 rock tunnel, 10 ft. by 7 ft. in the clear, dipping at an angle of 10 degrees, tapped the bottom coal-seam at a driven distance of 568 ft. 6 in. from day. The formations pierced comprised a continued series of hard sandstone and grits, heavily watered from open fissures, which during driving operations necessitated the continuous use of steam-driven pumps. East and west heading levels, branching from the bottom of the stone drift, are actively pushed. Electric-pumping installation is in active progress to meet existing requirements, pending the completion of the drainage-adit which at time of writing is driving from Ford's Creek. The calculated length of this adit will be 1,260 ft. The Robey engine newly installed for dip haulage is now raising coal on a single line from the new works. It is expected that a Capel fan of large capacity, under order from Britain, will shortly be erected to replace the furnace now in use. Haulage and electric plants are in good order and condition. Reports and other provisions of the Act are strictly observed. There were no accidents of a serious nature. Six inspections of this mine were made during the year.

*Brunner Mines* (R. Allison, mining manager).—(27/9/1903): Regarding the output of coal and fireclay from the rapidly exhausting pillar areas, one is brought to wonder where in this colliery is the coal won that finds so ready a market. The output for the year, 92,280 tons, shows a decrease of 24,434 tons. In framing a report on the rapidly exhausting and varied working of this old mine, it would appear that the necessary material to build such a structure must belong to a past period, as the operative progressive works to maintain output are simply a repetition of opening out and retimbering old headings, which in some instances require great care on account of broken roofs, the result of many years' standing. However, the extended section of dip working recently unwatered has furnished a substantial factor to the life of the mine. With the exceptional care taken by officers and workmen alike to make the most of circumstances, every bit of coal procurable is filled and sent out to bank. Accumulations of silt washed down from higher levels by heavy inflows of surface water during wet seasons have caused considerable work to keep free drainage on the low level. Precaution is taken to filter the loaded water over small temporary dams, from which the slack can be readily filled.