

Pukemiro Collieries (Mr. E. S. Wight, general manager).—The property taken up by the company is situated about seven miles west of Huntly. Several outcrops have been located as a result of prospecting. The coal-seams are thick and extensive. The extraction should be high, as there are no lakes or rivers overlying. Mining operations will be undertaken when the bridge and railway-line are completed.

Drury Colliery (Mr. James Holden, mine-manager).—It having been considered too expensive to continue working the mine, the company closed it down, and are now purchasing the coal required in connection with their brick and pottery works. Prior to closing down, the manager, acting on instructions, removed a quantity of fireclay overlying the drive, with the result that the side-pressure caused the sets of timber in the drive to collapse. The output for the year was 156 tons of coal and 174 tons of fireclay. Five men were employed.

Mangapapa Colliery (Mr. William Lennox, mine-manager).—The mine was examined during the year, and found to be in good condition. The ventilation was highly satisfactory. The coal maintains its quality and thickness. The band of stone in the coal is perceptibly thinning; in fact, it is not visible in places. Special and general rules posted, report-book kept, and reports entered regularly.

I have, &c.,

B. BENNIE,

Inspector of Mines.

Mr. A. G. MARSHALL, Inspector of Mines, West Coast Inspection District, to the UNDER-SECRETARY,
Mines Department, Wellington.

SIR,—

Inspector of Mines' Office, Westport, 10th February, 1911.

I have the honour, in compliance with section 78 of the Coal-mines Act, 1908, to present my report on the West Coast coal-mines for the year ended 31st December, 1910.

Enner Glynn Coal-mine, Nelson (James Carroll, permit).—(2/7/10): Upon the new level or crosscut, mentioned in my report of last year, reaching a driven distance of 130 ft., a small seam of coal 4 ft. to 5 ft. in thickness was intersected, which, on being driven on, proved to be only 40 ft. in length. From the inby or northern end of this block of coal, and adjacent to the old workings of the former company, the manager commenced stoping, rising on the seam to a height of 45 ft. At this height the coal showed no signs of improvement in quality, and work in this direction was therefore abandoned. From here an intermediate level was set out on the line of strike, and carried on for a considerable distance, the coal gradually thinning and continuing soft and unsaleable. Owing to the want of capital to further prospect and develop the property, the owners were compelled to close down on the 29th August, 1910. The mine has been fenced off, and notice of abandonment of same, in compliance with the Coal-mines Act, received in this office.

Smythe's Coal-lease, Mataura, Collingwood (A. Walker, permit).—(29/11/10): During the year the systematic prospecting of this field has been carried out, a large amount of exploratory work having been done, and three coal-tunnels driven. Aggregate distance driven, 140 ft.

Seaford Colliery, Pakawau.—This mine continues closed down, and no work has been done during the year.

Taupata Estates (R. G. Filluil, owner; Messrs. Forbes and Riley, lessees; James Hawthorn, permit).—(29/11/10): During the early months of the year the vigorous prospecting of this estate was continued by Messrs. Lewis Brothers and Forbes, but as their efforts met with little success they abandoned the project in July last. However, Mr. Forbes, who appears to have been more sanguine as to the prospects of the field, continued to prospect same, and his perseverance has been rewarded by the cutting of a seam of coal, 3 ft. 6 in. thick, of good quality.

Puponga Colliery (C. Y. Fell, attorney, Nelson; R. McEwan, mine-manager).—(28/11/10): Recent developments in the bottom levels and to the east of the main dip are highly satisfactory, and at no time have the prospects in the lower workings been more promising. How long this satisfactory state of affairs may continue is a matter of conjecture, no boreholes having been put down to prove the field in advance of the dip. The main dip heading has been sunk only some 3 chains during the year, the coal in the face having been displaced by bands of stone. Therefore, to win the coal lying to the north-east of the present dip face, it has been considered advisable to slightly deviate the main dip haulage-road in this direction. All driving will be in coal, and if it is proved to live beyond the troubled area now showing in the dip, the main haulage-road can again be straightened up. No. 10 east level: From its intersection with the dip this level advanced only some 10 chains, when the coal was gradually cut out by bands of stone, and became unprofitable. The same thing happened in No. 12 level, after driving 14 chains. No. 13 east level has now advanced about 6½ chains, and shows excellent prospects for the levels to the northward. Without doubt, the good coal is extending in an easterly direction, and indications point to this level reaching at least 20 chains before any thinning should take place, and it is just possible that the coal may extend from this level to the Puponga Flats. A few pillars have been extracted along the boundary of the unworkable coal, much of which has been very stony, soft, and crushed. To cope with any influx of water that may take place, a large Tangye pump has been installed, which is giving every satisfaction. Five Radialaxe coal-cutting machines continue to be employed in the lower levels, with considerable success. The machines hole in one of the bands of stone, and produce a large percentage of round coal. Much of the main dip has been retimbered and otherwise repaired. During the year a borehole was put down to a depth of 130 ft. at the entrance to the mine, and, though several small seams of coal were passed through, nothing payable was encountered. Considering the highly improved nature of the coal and the increased area in sight, the prospects for the company are now brighter than at any time heretofore. Rules posted, and reports to date.