

List of Serious Non-fatal Accidents.

Denniston.—(25/3/12): W. Jackson, trucker, broken leg; caused by a runaway truck down the jig. (6/7/12): Henry Knight, miner, internal injuries; caused by a fall of coal in Wiseman's place. (17/10/12): J. Derbyshire, trucker, serious spinal injuries; caused by a fall of coal at the working-face.

Brunner.—(19/2/12): John Allen, miner, broken leg; caused by a runaway truck down wheel bank.

Millerton.—(2/2/12): William McDonald, trucker, broken leg; caused by a runaway truck down jig bank.

Seddonville.—(19/3/12): L. McGrane, miner, broken leg; caused by a fall of coal at the face.

Puponga.—(16/5/12): Henry Crook, miner, fractured skull; caused by a fall of coal at the face.

Blackball Mine.—(9/5/12): R. Clayton, trucker, fractured skull; caused by a runaway truck. (13/12/12): John Leitch, miner, injury to eyes; caused by blasting at the coal-face.

Two of the fatal accidents were caused by falls from the roof; one by being struck on the head by a falling prop, the prop being dislodged by a fall of coal from the face of the lift in pillar-workings; two were caused by runaway trucks down jigs—one by the breaking of the rope, and one by sending the truck away without attachment to the rope.

Regarding the non-fatal serious accidents, four of these were the result of runaway trucks down jigs, four by falls of coal at the working-face, and one by blasting operations at the face. No serious or fatal accident occurred above ground.

Referring to accidents in coal-mines, I am strongly of the opinion that a great number of these could and would be prevented if a little more care was taken. By far the greater number are what might be termed avoidable, and are directly the result of either ignorance or carelessness, or cases where the workmen themselves take a certain risk, knowing full well that there is the possibility present of results that may lead to accident. This, in my opinion, is the most fruitful source of mine accidents, and I am confident that they cannot be effectively dealt with by legislation. What is needed is a keener appreciation of the dangers that are present in every department of underground work in a coal-mine, in order that no undue risk will be taken. This is necessary on the part of every one concerned, and especially those who have the life, limb, and health of others in their keeping. More strict discipline and closer supervision of the various operations, especially at the working-face would no doubt have a decided tendency to eliminate the avoidable accidents.

SOUTHERN INSPECTORATE: MR. E. R. GREEN.

Canterbury.

Springfield Colliery, Springfield.—In common with other Canterbury mines, water-drainage is excessive, owing to recent wet and stormy weather. The pit is worked chiefly for fireclay, which underlies a 2 ft. seam of coal, the latter being subsequently dropped and railed with fireclay to the owner's sanitary stoneware and pipe-manufacturing works in Christchurch. 1,324 tons of fireclay was mined during the year. Five men employed.

Homebush Colliery, Glentunnel.—The original mine is finished and shut down, the seam being exhausted. Output is maintained from the Engine seam (5 ft. 6 in.), of which about 3 acres remain unworked, also a portion of the 3 ft. 6 in. seam in the south side, where a few men are working. The seams worked hitherto are bounded by faults and local disturbances. Prospecting and boring operations extending over a period of two years has failed to locate a workable seam in the Glentunnel basin. At 70 chains northward two workable seams were found at a depth of 250 ft. by the diamond drill. These, with the Bush Gully seam farther north, will probably form supply for future requirements. The Engine seam heading is being driven to surface.

St. Helens Colliery, Whitecliffs.—The mine-inlet which was closed in June, 1911, on account of spontaneous fire is abandoned. The plant has been removed to an old site on the frontage, where a steep dip is driven to the lower or 6 ft. seam, where it had previously been left unworked below drainage-level. Three levels are driven 5 chains westerly, and the top pillar is being drawn.

Tripp's Coal-mine, Mount Somers (late Woolshed Creek).—Work having been resumed, the roadways are restored and ventilation conducted by brattice to working-faces.

Albury Coal-mine, Albury.—Workings in good order, and a steady supply of coal being produced for local requirements.

North Otago.

St. Andrew's Colliery, Papakaio.—Mine in good order, and ventilation good. Pillaring outward from incrop; abundance of timber on hand for use as required. Two separate shafts are provided for ventilation and second outlet.

Prince Alfred Colliery, Papakaio.—A slight heating was apparent at the head of the old dip, where the stopping required to be reinforced. Ventilation could be improved at the working-face, where pillaring, by attention to air-brattice, which required repairs.

Ngapara Coal-mine, Ngapara.—Seam strong. Output reduced as compared with former years.

Broadleaf Coal-mine, Shag Point.—Workable coal-seam between the fault and outcrop now nearly exhausted. Prospecting is being conducted on the hill-face fronting the sea.

Shag Point Coal-mine, Shag Point.—Coal to rise of workings now practically exhausted. The dip is being extended, and a pair of new lower levels are driven therefrom to work homeward longwall.

Allandale Colliery, Shag Point.—Work continues extracting pillars left at first working, where those to rise are approaching exhaustion. It is not decided whether the lower seam will be reopened and developed.