

times been put on the same pillar, or rather near to one another. This, I consider, affects the miners' safety, as when one pair of men has stopped working to observe if a fall is likely to occur the noise of the other pair's shovels or picks may prevent them hearing the danger signals.

Linton No. 2 Mine.—In the No. 1 south section heating developed about the middle of the year. Owing to the shallow overburden the fire broke through to the surface, and much clay and soil had to be shot down into the cavity to check the fire. Good concrete stoppings were built underground. A good deal of pillar coal, in which eight pairs of miners were working early in the year, was lost owing to the fire. Pillaring to the west of this heated area has been done from the No. 3 south section, and a large fall took place there in August. So far no heating has occurred, and, should it develop, stoppings would have to be put in to prevent it spreading into the lower No. 3 south workings. The No. 2 south section has been reopened, and pillaring is now proceeding there. Five pillar places are also being worked in No. 3 south, while in No. 4 section six solid places are being worked. This mine has been singularly free from inflammable gas during the year, only two reports of small quantities being recorded. Telephones have been installed on the main haulage-road. The panel system of working, almost in abeyance a couple of years ago, is again being followed in this mine. Should heating occur in the goaf of the No. 3 south pillars, difficulty will be experienced in sealing it off owing to the lack of a proper barrier pillar between the Nos. 2 and 3 south sections. Most of the solid workings require no timber, but there is a tendency, where tender roof occurs, to delay the putting up of the necessary timber supports. The management was instructed to amend the timbering rules by requiring props to be put up under the lip in every place where "top" coal is being worked.

Birchwood Mine.—No attempt was made to reopen the main drives, which had been sealed owing to an underground fire. Even should the fire die out, the available pillar coal would not warrant the reopening. The pumps were withdrawn, and the dip workings are now filling with water. A small area of thin coal to the east of the main entrance of the closed mine was worked for a few months. A borehole was put down to ascertain if the thick upper seam existed above the sealed workings. It was stopped when 120 ft. down, as only a thin seam, 6 in. thick, was met.

Ohai Coal Co.'s Mine.—A small output has been produced throughout the year from the few pillars in this mine. Heating developed in the north side pillars in March, but after allowing the mine water to rise and submerge the heated area the section was reopened in June and the pillaring recommenced there. Gradually the output diminished, and the mine was exhausted at the end of the year. Three additional bores were put down by a petrol-driven percussive machine in the central portion of the lease and north of the large downthrow fault. The first bore proved three seams of coal—8 ft., 27 ft., and 4 ft. thick. The second hole, 10 chains west, reached the 8 ft. seam at 372 ft. from surface, and the 20 ft. seam at 456 ft. No coal was proven in the last hole, which was stopped at 400 ft. A level drive to cross the overlying measures will soon be commenced from near the north bank of the Morley Stream, and it should reach the thick seam when about 10 chains in.

Black Lion Mine.—Development has proceeded to the north, and the main north drive is now in over 14 chains, and within 4 chains of a dip driven a couple of years ago from the workings higher up the hill. The seam is now 13 ft. in thickness. The present workings are bounded on the east side by a downthrow fault running north-east and south-west which was met in a dip when only 2 chains in from the main north drive. It is intended soon to drive through this fault into the upper seam. Only a couple of places are being worked on the west side, owing to a "washout" which runs parallel to and only a chain from the main north drive. The air-compressor is now driven by steam from a multitubular boiler, as the cost of running it with an electric motor was found to be prohibitive.

Beaumont Coal Syndicate's Mine.—Early in the year four local miners took over this small mine on tribute. A dip was driven going west, and when down 100 ft. met a downthrow fault running north-west. They put down a borehole 65 ft., and about 17 yards ahead of the face of the dip, but did not prove the seam. A little pillar coal was won and the mine abandoned in April.

Bridgehead Mine.—Two miners purchased a 3 h.p. electric motor and pump and unwatered this small mine in March. After driving a couple of places 10 yards to the east the seam was too broken and dirty to continue working, so the mine was again closed down.

Tussock Creek Coal-pit.—The owner stripped the 5 ft. of overlying clay from the timber sets in the drive and then worked opencast to the south. The 9 ft. seam of lignite is inclined at 80° to the east, and there is a band of 12 in. of claystone in the middle of the seam. In June the pit was flooded, and it has not been worked since.

FATAL ACCIDENTS.

Shag Point Coal-mining Co.'s Mine.—On the 4th April a trucker named John Gourley was killed by a fall of stone, which was caused by a low set of timber on the trucking-road being knocked out. No one saw the accident, but it is surmised the set was knocked out by a runaway tub which the deceased was endeavouring to stop when the fall occurred.

Shag Point Coal-mining Co.'s Mine.—On the 23rd May a miner named William J. Robinson was killed by a fall of stone in his working-place. He and a timberman named Burrows were setting an extra 6 ft. prop, when a block of stone about 10 ft. square and 3 ft. thick fell, swinging all the props and killing Robinson instantly. The floor had been ripped to obtain sufficient trucking-height, and the large block of stone rested on both sides of the top of the canch, and Burrows was able to crawl out from under the fallen stone.

Linton No. 1 Mine.—On the 20th June a miner named Guy Cockburn was instantly killed by a fall of about 40 tons of top coal. He and his mate had been trying to bar down this overhanging coal some time previously, but, being unable to do so, they decided to leave it until near "knock-off," when they intended to shoot it down. The body was recovered, badly mutilated, an hour after the fall occurred.

SERIOUS NON-FATAL ACCIDENTS.

Ramsay's (North Chatton) Mine.—9th February: Peter Ramsay, miner and owner of the lignite-pit, was severely bruised about the face and body by a fall of about 2 cwt. of "tops." He had tried previously with pick and bar to pull down the lump that fell. He is not yet able to resume work.

Mossbank No. 1 Mine.—16th May: George Clarke, miner, was burned about the face and right arm by blasting-powder which somehow was ignited by his naked carbide lamp.

DANGEROUS OCCURRENCES NOTIFIED UNDER REGULATION 82.

Kaitangata No. 1 Mine.—14th February: Black-damp was reported by the examining deputy being given off at the entrance to an old level near the main haulage-road. The heated area located in old workings of thirty years ago was effectively sealed off by building a substantial stopping in the old level.

Taratu Mine.—15th February: A small hole was found burned through the No. 3 west side stopping. This was immediately repaired.

Taratu Mine.—28th February: The fire in the west pillar section again burned through two stoppings, and it was not until 7 p.m. that the fire was again sealed off.

Ohai Coal Co.'s Mine.—2nd March. The goaf on the north side showed signs of heating, so the section was sealed off and the water allowed to rise over the affected area.

Whiterig Mine.—21st March: A fire broke out in an old bord, to the west of the main drive, and connected to old workings. The mine-water was allowed to rise to drown the fire but on reopening the mine in June the fire again broke out. Other attempts were made to reopen the mine, but heavy falls had occurred in the main drive, so it was decided towards the end of the year to abandon the mine. To again work the area a new dip would have to be driven.