RETURN

To an Address of the Legislative Assembly showing copies of all correspondence between the Inspector of Mines and the Owners and Managers of Collieries in this Province, with reference to their compliance or otherwise with the provisions of the "Coal Mines Regulation Act, 1877."

By Command.
A. C. ELLIOTT,
Provincial Secretary.

Provincial Secretary's Office,
15*th March*, 1878.

The Inspector of Mines to Mr. Bryden.

INSPECTOR OF MINES' OFFICE,
Victoria, November 1st, 1877.

SIR,—Having recently made an inspection of the Vancouver Coal Mining and Land Company's Collieries, on behalf of the Provincial Government, I have the honour to draw your attention, as Manager of the said collieries, to the following statements, viz:

Douglas Pit

I found that in some stalls in No. 2 incline, No. 4 level, the airways were closed up with dross, thereby not allowing the good current of air, which would otherwise have been passing, to sweep the faces. In the stalls off No. 6 level's incline the air was very light at the faces, there being only an average of 121 cubic feet per man, and the bratticing was too far behind in several of the stalls. I would be allowed to suggest that the brattice might be kept up much nearer to the faces without danger of being broken by the shots.

Knowing, as I do, the extreme difficulty you have to contend with in providing good ventilation in such an old and irregular pit, I consider that the amount of air passing around the workings is sufficient, except in No. 6 levels and the adjacent stalls. With regard to these places I must beg that you will carry out the alterations you promised with as little delay as possible, in order that the men may have better air to work in.

I would also call your attention to the following articles in the "Coal Mines Regulation Act, 1877," with which I think you have not as yet complied, viz.:—clause 5; clause 46, article 9, paragraphs *b* and *d*; clause 46, articles 25, 26, 27, and 33. In conformity with the provisions set forth in article 9, paragraph *d*, I must request you to see that by the 30th November, 1877, either copper or wooden tampers and needles are substituted in the place of the iron ones now in use.

With regard to the proper meaning of article 33, I have to inform you that no Chinaman is allowed to be in a responsible position, such as attending a ventilating furnace, &c., whether he can speak English or not.

Chase River Mine.

This mine being, in my opinion, in such an excellent condition both as regards ventilation and safety to the men employed, I have only to remind you of three articles in the Act, viz.:—clause 46, article 9, paragraphs *b* and *d*; clause 46, articles 26 and 27.

Fitzwilliam Mine.

The air in this mine, although rather light, was well conducted round the faces, and I have no doubt the quantity will be greatly increased when the alterations you spoke of have been made to the furnace and upcast shaft. The following articles claim your attention in regard to this mine:—Clause 46, article 9, paragraphs *b* and *d*; clause 46, articles 26, 27, and 33.

As the Act came into force on August 15th, 1877, you will confer a favour upon me by submitting a copy of the "Special Rules" which you wish to be in force at the collieries under your charge, at as early a date as possible, in order that I may obtain the sanction of the Minister of Mines to the same.

Hoping you will make it convenient to attend to the above-mentioned alterations and additions,

I have, etc.,
(Signed) EDWD. GAWLER PRIOR,
Inspector of Mines.

P. S.—I forward 2 copies of the "Coal Mines Regulation Act, 1877."

The Inspector of Mines to Mr. R. Dunsmuir.

INSPECTOR OF MINES' OFFICE,
Victoria, November 1st, 1877.

SIR,—I have the honour to inform you that, as I have recently made an inspection of your Wellington Colliery on behalf of the Provincial Government, I would beg to call your attention to some of the clauses in the "Coal Mines Regulation Act, 1877," with which, I believe, you have not as yet complied:—Clause 46, articles 2 (the latter portion), 3, 6, 9 (paragraphs *b* and *d*), 26, and 27.

In reference to the first mentioned clause I may be allowed to say, that, as I know it is next to impossible to keep wooden bratticing so close to the faces, on account of the heavy blasting of the coal, I would suggest that men driving slopes, levels, headings, etc., be supplied with a few yards of brattice cloth, which they can set in position when not firing, thereby taking the air well up to the faces.

The places where I noticed this was most needed were the main slope, the cross-cuts from slope to main air-courses, and the faces of Nos. 7, 8, and 9 levels.

In regard to paragraph *d*, article 9, clause 46, I noticed that, without exception, this rule was being violated, and, therefore, I must beg that you will see that the use of iron needles and tampers is discontinued, and copper or wooden ones substituted in their stead, by 30th November, 1877.

In accordance with clause 47, every manager of a colliery is expected to draw out a set of "Special Rules" and submit them to the Inspector, for the sanction of the Minister of Mines, within three months after the Act comes into force.

Hoping you will attend to these details,

I have, etc.,
(Signed) EDWD. GAWLER PRIOR.

P. S.—I forward you 2 copies of the "Coal Mines Regulation Act, 1877."

The Inspector of Mines to Mr. T. A. Bulkley.

INSPECTOR OF MINES' OFFICE,
Victoria, November 1st, 1877.

SIR,—I have the honour to draw your attention to the following articles in the "Coal Mines Regulation Act, 1877," with which, I believe, you have not, up to the present time, complied:—Clause 46, article 9, paragraphs *b* and *d*; clause 46, article 33; clause 47.

In compliance with the provisions of the Act set forward in article 9, paragraph *d*, I must request you to see that by the 30th November, 1877, the iron tampers and needles now used by the miners are taken out of your Harewood Colliery, and copper or wooden ones used in their stead.

With regard to the proper meaning of article 33, I beg to state that *no* Chinaman, whether speaking English or not, is allowed to be in charge of a ventilating furnace; and, therefore, I must beg you to make the necessary change in your furnace-man at the above-mentioned pit.

I forward you two copies of the "Coal Mines Regulation Act, 1877."

I have, etc.,
(Signed) EDWD. GAWLER PRIOR.

The Inspector of Mines to Mr. A. Dick, Underground Manager, Baynes Sound.

INSPECTOR OF MINES' OFFICE,
Victoria, November 1st, 1877.

SIR,—I have the honour to forward you two copies of the "Coal Mines Regulation Act, 1877," with the request that you will comply with the following articles, viz.:—Clause 46, article 9, paragraphs *b* and *d*; clause 47.

I must beg you to see that by 30th November, 1877, the iron tampers and needles, which are usually in the possession of the miners, are taken out of the mine and replaced by copper or wooden ones.

I have, etc.,
(Signed) EDWD. GAWLER PRIOR.

The Inspector of Mines to Mr. Bryden.

INSPECTOR OF MINES' OFFICE,
Victoria, December 27th, 1877.

SIR,—I beg to inform you that as yet I have not received any official notice of the lamentable accident which took place in the Chase River Mine, by which the late John Wood met his death.

Although I was verbally notified of the same, yet it is necessary that I should receive a written notice from you, in order to keep a record of same.

I have, etc.,
(Signed) EDWD. GAWLER PRIOR.

The Inspector of Mines to Mr. Bryden.

INSPECTOR OF MINES' OFFICE,
Victoria, January 10th, 1878.

SIR,—I beg to again draw your attention to the fact that a written notice is needed of the death of John Wood, which took place in the Chase River Mine on 10th December last.

I am sorry to have to trouble you again, but as I am making out my report I am very much in need of the above mentioned document, and there is very little time to spare. If you will forward it by return steamer you will greatly oblige me.

I have, etc.,
(Signed) EDWD. GAWLER PRIOR.

Mr Bryden to the Inspector of Mines.

NANAIMO, December 11th, 1877.
(Received 14th January, 1878.)

SIR,—I beg to inform you that John Wood was killed on the evening of the 10th inst., while at work in his stall in the new Douglas Mine.

I have, etc.,
(Signed) JOHN BRYDEN.

The Inspector of Mines to Mr. R. Dunsmuir.

INSPECTOR OF MINES' OFFICE,
Victoria, January 11th, 1878.

SIR,—I have the honour to request that you will be good enough to inform me under what circumstances the two miners, Hibben and Quailly, were burnt in your Wellington Colliery on Monday last. The newspaper report is that their injuries were caused "by incautiously firing the gas in their stall." I cannot see how such can be the case; for if the fireman had been his round of inspection and found gas, the men ought not to have been allowed to enter their stall until it was cleared out.

It appears to me that either the fireman has neglected his duty or the men must have disobeyed the rules of the colliery, unless it was a sudden outburst of gas.

If you will favour me with a *full account* of how the accident came about, in addition to the official notice required by the Act to be given, you will greatly oblige me.

I have, etc.,
(Signed) EDWD. GAWLER PRIOR.

Mr. R. Dunsmuir to the Inspector of Mines.

WELLINGTON COLLIERY,
16th January, 1878.

DEAR SIR,—In answer to your letter by last mail, relative to two miners being burned with gas in the Wellington Mine, I knew nothing of it until I saw the report in the *Press;* but was aware that the mine was not working, nor had been working for over a week previous to the insertion in the *Press* of the item.

Yours, etc.,
(Signed) R. DUNSMUIR.