

SOME OF THE OFFICIALS. destruction around. The firemen are also continually busy on their rounds examining for gas (they follow up the work of the firemen of preceding shifts) and test every place where it is likely to accumulate; they also watch the ventilation of the mine. The "boss" pusher is also an important personage in effecting the output. While "lunch" is on, the powder smoke has time to clear out of the stalls, and I leave the "inside" (of the great fault) and in due course return to the pit bottom.

Later I am taken to see what is generally the first "sight" shown below,—the stables. To the south of the pit, in the No. 1 south level is an excavated chamber, forming comfortable stabling quarters for about fifty mules, half of which are on the inside, miles

away, hauling cars to the inclines—they are trotted along the No. 1 level, from which the electric current had been cut off, before the descent of the morning shift, and the coming home of these animals and the shutting off of the electric current to enable them to traverse the level means that the men must find their way out on foot, but they make use of short cuts and so the journey is not so long. Of course the animals that are now eating so contentedly will go to relieve their brethren so as to be on hand before the afternoon shift come down at two o'clock. Nothing is wanting to make the under ground life of the poor beasts as tolerable as possible. They have the best of fodder, not omitting the succulent roots produced on "the farm," and Chase River water is brought in pipes down the pit, in abundance. The bedding is of peaty soil from spots on the company's estate, sent down for the purpose, which, after use, goes up with the manure to fertilize the farm. Mules working in places off the main slope, are lodged in the "stables" on the surface. The mule drivers' and stablemen's lives may not be thought by them to be very happy ones, but one cannot help feeling that the mules themselves have a good enough time.

Proceeding to the well lighted landing, and observing the dispatch of cars made by the "cagers," who standing in a perpetual downpour of air from above, damp and cold in temperature, as it were in a constant draught, yet have positively no time to "catch cold," from mere press of work, for the cars come and go without any respite. The cager's job is not a sinecure. In the engine room near the head of the main slope is a fine winding engine, of sixteen inches cylinder, thirty-six inch stroke, and five foot drum, which hoists cars from the slope. The steam comes down the No. 2 shaft, into which the exhaust is conducted. The main slope has been driven for upwards of 6,600 feet in an easterly direction—at the face the depth below the surface datum level is about 1,450 ft. On both sides of this long slope

THE MAIN SLOPE. counter slopes are driven as far down as 2,400 ft., and from thence a counter on one side. Off the slope are levels running north and south, numbered from 1 to 5. Of the No. 1 north I have already spoken, and of the others, suffice it to say that No. 3 north is connected with the Protection Island shaft workings. The air in the workings off the slope is brought from the downcast of No. 1 shaft, and returns up the No. 2 or upcast shaft. I noticed some very fine looking coal on the slope, and one's attention is at once di-

rected to the uniform, hard texture, and cubical fracture of these huge specimens. It is true, hard, bituminous coal, without any bony or foreign matter to be seen. The depth of this slope is about a mile and a quarter.

I have now trespassed somewhat considerably upon Mr. McGregor's valuable time and so thanking him for his kind escort I ascend once more to the surface.

After taking in some of the remainder of the company's widespread undertakings in the suburbs, to describe which fully would require a volume, I note briefly that the No. 5 pit, already mentioned, is down 508 feet to a part of the Douglas seam, having the characteristics of what is known on the market as

THE SOUTHFIELD COAL. "Southfield coal"—a first-class steaming and coking coal. The mine is worked on the same principle and by machinery and appliances similar to those of the No. 1 shaft, excepting the

electricity. The fuel is in great demand—it is said to burn to the last particle, leaving no waste from dross or small coal. The railway connects with the esplanade shipping wharves, and is about six miles in length. The field of coal is very extensive and is now under development by diamond drilling machines. The company owns large areas of coal lands to the dip and southwards of the No. 1 and No. 5 shafts, which are now being thoroughly explored. Mr. Richard Gibson is overman.

The Protection Island shaft and its workings are in effect an expansion of the No. 1 Shaft mine. The workings have been carried far by two main slopes to northeast and eastward, each of them being upwards of a mine in the direction of Gabriola Island, where the company has a large field. The colliery plant on Protection Island is, with its engines, bunkers and wharves, etc., a model of successful mechanical application. The coal is similar to that raised in No. 1 shaft. The extent and limits of the field are in course of exploration, and the possibilities are very great. Mr. Thomas Morgan is overman.

The Northfield colliery is about four miles from Departure Bay. Here the seam is called "New Wellington coal." The seam averages from three to five feet thick. The shaft is 400 feet in depth, the length of the slope at the foot of the shaft is 1,000 yards. The system of working is that called the "Longwall," in which all the coal is extracted as mining proceeds. At this mine the machinery and plant are all first-class. The pit is served by a railway of five miles, which terminates in a wharf of splendid construction at Departure Bay.

In all the mines of the company, naked lights are used in ordinary work, but the Firemen and Workmen's Committee of examination, of course use safety lamps. The "dip" of the seam or seams in the company's estate is from six to eight degrees. Coal washing machinery is constantly in operation, and utilizes all the small coal which is not consumed in the furnaces. There are about 1,000 men in the company's service.

Every precaution has been taken to guard against the spreading of fire in the workings, hydrants and hose being placed handily at convenient stations.

The company's business embraces the disposition of their landed properties for actual settlement, and special inducements are afforded to those who desire