

locked up land till those who held it fixed on the portion they wanted. This had not been done. An available water frontage was taken up already. Judging from Dr. Hector's report, I have every reason to think that there is a very large quantity of coal available, sufficient to justify the expense of improving the harbour. The improvement of the Ngakawaho Harbour is a question of funds. I would certainly desire to see it done, but it might be well to see whether it was necessary, and the probable expense. If it is not going to cost more than £400 or £500, I consider it would be desirable to do it at once.

*Mr. Curtis.*  
16th Aug., 1872.

TUESDAY, 20TH AUGUST, 1872.

Mr. NANCARROW, Inspector of Steam Boats, in attendance, and examined.

*Mr. Nancarrow.*  
20th Aug., 1872.

51. Witness stated:—Grey coal is the coal I know most about. It is well suited for steam purposes, so far as it has yet been proved. It has been tried ten years, and is 20 per cent. better coal than the New South Wales for lasting as well as in other respects. For household and gas purposes it is also superior to New South Wales coal. The Kawa Kawa coal is adapted for steam purposes, especially with steamboats carrying locomotive boilers. It is well suited for land boilers, but is not equal to the New South Wales coal for general purposes. Waikato coal is well suited for boilers in mills, and for steamboats with locomotive boilers. It is of a light quality, and the consumption will be 20 per cent. more than the average New South Wales coal. The Molyneux coal is not quite so good as the Waikato: it is of a lighter quality, and the consumption will possibly be 10 per cent. more than the Waikato coal. The Collingwood coal I know little about. I have never been at sea with it, and know little from my own knowledge. The Ngahuhu coal I saw burning at the Buller last month, and ascertained from an engineer of a small steamer there, fitted with a portable boiler, that it answered well on board that steamer. Another steamer, the "Lyttelton," brought a load from Ngahuhu to Nelson,—about eighty tons. The engineer complained that the coal burned the bars, and it contained also a large percentage of sulphur. As far as I have seen of it, I think it the next best to the Grey coal in quality. I speak from my own knowledge of the Grey, the Kawa Kawa, Waikato, and the Molyneux. The Grey coal pulverizes the least from exposure to the air. At the port of Westport, vessels drawing from 9 to 11 feet of water can enter. Steam colliers carrying 400 tons could be built to trade to Westport, or even 500 tons. The bar at the Buller could be easily improved by dredging, for vessels carrying 500 tons, but I consider the improvement would only last a few months,—it would not be permanent. Steam colliers are the vessels we want most. The Buller roadstead is certainly the best anchorage on that coast, and is safe except in N.W. weather. It is sheltered by Cape Foulwind in S.W. weather, which is the prevailing wind throughout the greater portion of the year.—The Grey Harbour: This bar has an average draft of water at high water of 10 feet on the bar. It is a difficult channel to navigate. A steam collier could trade there carrying 350 tons, and the insurance of vessels would be about 16 per cent. at least, trading to these ports. I think steam colliers would certainly be the best for the trade; and I believe, from my knowledge of the subject, that they would pay. I think steam colliers could deliver coal at Nelson, Wellington, Canterbury, and Otago, at an average of 12s. per ton freight. The coal could be put on board at the Grey at 12s., when the railway is made. A steam collier to carry 400 tons would cost about £10,000, and she should be about 30 horse-power nominal. The lowest price of coal at Lyttelton is 30s. a ton; at Wellington, 26s.; Otago, 26s. These have been the lowest prices. I think that the Kawa Kawa coal is greatly improved since it was first used in steamboats.

52. *Hon. Mr. Williamson.*—Which of the two ports, Kawa Kawa or the Grey, would a collier trading prefer to go to?—The Kawa Kawa, because much larger vessels could go there; but steam colliers adapted for the port would prefer to go to Greymouth in consequence of obtaining freight both ways. Sailing colliers would not do for the West Coast, but would do for the Bay of Islands.

TUESDAY, 27TH AUGUST, 1872.

Lieut.-Colonel GORTON, Inspector of Stores, in attendance, and examined.

*Lt.-Col. Gorton.*  
27th Aug., 1872.

53. *The Chairman.* Will you give the Committee any information as to the cost or any other particulars regarding the articles on the table?—I have here an invoice of the prices of the different woollen articles placed before the Committee, sent up by Messrs. Burns and Co., from Dunedin. With reference to the plaiding marked "F 99," it can be sold at 2s. 10d. per yard, and if it could be produced of a stronger texture, and dyed a blue colour, at an advance of 1s. per yard, it would be suitable for the use of the Constabulary, and preferable to the serge obtained at the present time in the Colony. The samples before you are good but they are high priced, and the men would not take them unless they could be sold cheaper. If competition outside sold under our price, even though we sold them without any profit, we could not get quit of them. Of course, if there is no particular necessity for the colour of the Constabulary uniform being blue, that could be changed. The grey cloth shown would be very suitable for Volunteers: it is the same as they already have. 250 yards of the pattern shown, No. 1,183, has been obtained from Messrs. Burns and Co., Dunedin. The price of this is: for not less than 250 yards, 5s. 6d. per yard; for not less than 500 yards, 5s. 3d. per yard; for not less than 3,000 yards, 5s. 2d. per yard. I produce, also, a sample of Nelson cloth, of which about 7,000 yards have already been obtained. The price at which it is now procured is 5s. per yard: it has been as low as 4s. 9d. per yard. I consider it superior to the sample of Messrs. Burns and Co., being thicker and stronger. The socks shown are good; but, owing to the high price, I am afraid the Colonial troops would not be disposed to take them. The drawers are good, and cheap at the money; but I do not think the troops would wear them, except, perhaps, in Taupo. I, however, see no objection to trying a small supply of each in the stores, and then the men could judge for themselves. After wearing them, finding the articles of superior quality, they might be disposed to take them, even if they were a little more expensive than the shop prices. It might also be advisable to send patterns of what is wanted to all the factories in the Colony, and ascertain what they could be supplied for. I would let them know at what rate they were being issued from the store, and it would be then seen if