

## PETITION.

To the Honourable the Speaker and Members of the House of Representatives  
of New Zealand in Parliament assembled.

THE HUMBLE PETITION OF FRANCIS DYER RICH, OF OTAGO, IN THE COLONY OF NEW ZEALAND,  
SHEEP-FARMER, AND WILLIAM HENRY WILLIAMS, OF SHAG POINT, IN THE COLONY OF NEW  
ZEALAND, MINING MANAGER.

SHOWETH,—

1. THAT your petitioners are the occupiers of the public coal field and of certain lands, namely, a quarry reserve of 40 acres, and a portion of a coal reserve, containing in all 170 acres, situated at Shag Point, Block III., Moeraki Survey District, in the Provincial District of Otago, under lease, for the purpose of carrying on mining operations on the said lands.

2. That mining operations have been carried on on the said lands for a period of six years, up to the 11th day of February, 1884.

3. That, in carrying on the said operations and works incidental thereto, and in the purchase of machinery for such works, your petitioners have incurred a large expenditure, exceeding in all the sum of £20,000.

4. That, for the better carrying on of the said operations, and for further developing the said works, your petitioners, on the 2nd day of September, 1881, applied to the General Government of New Zealand for a lease of 190 acres of land under the sea, and adjoining the land then held by your petitioners.

5. That your petitioners were prevented by section 147 of "The Harbours Act, 1878," from obtaining a lease of the said land so applied for; but a license to carry on mining operations, revocable at will, was granted to your petitioners as from the 1st day of September, 1881, and the said license contained no regulations as to the manner in which the said operations were to be carried on.

6. That your petitioners thereupon opened up the said land held on license by a dip-incline on the true dip of the seam, 7 chains in length from the boundary of the land held on lease, with a cover at the lowest point of 211 feet, and at the shallowest of 96 feet, and from this incline opened up the seam both north and south on the strike of the seam by working bord-and-pillar system, and also sunk a shaft for an upcast to a depth of 160 feet, and that shaft a further depth of 100 feet, for the purpose of the more economical winning and hoisting of the coal.

7. That your petitioners have laid out a considerable sum of money on the said shaft and submarine drives, amounting in all to the sum of £7,000.

8. That the said submarine workings in the land held under the said license were carried on for a period of about two years, and in a satisfactory manner.

9. That, at the end of that period, after a considerable quantity of coal had been won, the said workings, on being inspected from time to time by the Inspector of Mines, were found to be in a very satisfactory condition, and no complaint was made by him.

10. That, on the 24th day of January, 1883, the Inspector of Mines made a further inspection of the said workings, and took exception to the state of the north end of the upper drive where the roof was soft and falls of roof frequent. He also objected to the width of the pillars supporting the roof of the said drive.

11. That your petitioners' mining manager, on the 31st day of January, 1883, received notice from the Inspector of Mines to have a fresh survey made of the mine and workings.

12. That, on the same day, the Inspector of Mines visited the mine for the purpose of making a survey.

13. That some time previous to this date your petitioners' mining manager had informed the said Inspector that one part of the then existing plan of the mine surveyed by a Mr. Bishop was incorrect, but that the inaccuracy was quite immaterial; and also, during the Inspector's survey, called his attention to the fact that he was making the working-places wider than they actually were, by taking his measurements at the cross-cut openings, which would show a greater width than really existed.

14. That your petitioners' mining manager, on the 14th day of February, 1883, received from the Inspector of Mines a written notice that the works were to be carried on, subject to certain conditions, as follows:—

"No more pillars to be weakened by splitting or taking ribs off. The following places are to be continued:—

"(1.) Three bords to the north side of the north cuddy to the rise, for the purpose of exploring this portion of the field;

"(2.) Two bords off the main return (old back, heading main dip);

"(3.) The bords off the south cuddy;

"(4.) The cross-cut for continuation of engine plane, which will be driven as small as possible, close-timbered, and packed:

"Provided that no bord be driven wider than 14 feet, and driven with lines; bolt-holes to be driven every 33 yards, and the air guided through with cloths or stoppings;

"The dams which it was agreed were to be constructed, so as to have the power to immediately shut off the mine-workings from the shaft, will be put in."

And the said conditions were accepted in writing by your petitioners' mining manager.