

*Mr. Reid* : I do not know whether the witness understands. That was not the closing by his order, but the water coming in.

800. *Hon. Mr. Stout.*] I want the closing by his order?—I think the date was the 19th or 20th March, 1883.

801. The questions *Mr. Macandrew* has been putting, and you have been answering, about consulting people, refer to what date?—February, 1883, I imagine to be the date referred to by *Mr. Macandrew's* question.

802. Now, I want to know when did *Mr. Williams* first object to the closing of the submarine workings in writing to you or to the Minister, to your knowledge?—There is a copy of the letter in evidence; it is dated the 30th June, 1883.

803. *Hon. Mr. Rolleston.*] There was nothing to show, was there, during the months of March and April, and for some time after the order was given, that it was accepted in anything but a friendly spirit?—That was my impression.

804. And that was the information which the department had, that everything was satisfactorily arranged as between you and the petitioner; that your action was agreed to by the petitioner?—That was my impression, and the impression conveyed to the department.

805. *Hon. Mr. Stout.*] From the latter part of *Mr. Williams's* letter it appears that the objection to the closing was not the loss of the coal in the lower workings, but the danger to the workings in the other part of the mine?—Yes; the workings that I closed, to be filled with water, were not above any workings at all.

806. It says here that they were?—Yes; but that is a mistake.

807. Were these lower workings to which *Mr. Williams* refers abandoned?—Yes; but not by my orders.

808. All that you closed was district A on that map: state shortly what was the reason for closing district A: it was not the mere loss of one man's life?—No; twenty men were working down there possibly. My reasons were on account of the insufficient cover, irregular working, and bad roof.

809. What was the roof?—It was composed principally of sandstones, shales, with a few harder bands and coal in it.

810. How much coal did they leave in the roof?—They took the whole of the coal out of it.

811. Is that usual?—In a thin seam like that it is necessary; it is about 3ft. 6in. thick.

812. On what plan do they work the mine?—They work it on a system of bord without pillar.

813. It is not on the long-wall system?—No; not long-wall.

814. Not as the Green Island Mines are worked?—No. Here is a plan of the mine, which we are going to put in.

815. It is not on the rance-and-room, nor on the longitudinal, system?—No.

816. *Mr. Chapman.*] We do not agree with that plan?—I have compared it with the plan on the wall.

817. *Hon. Mr. Stout.*] Where did you get that plan from?—It is from actual survey, made by *Mr. Twining.*

818. You had authorized this working as the only mode of working the mine: I suppose long-wall working would have been too expensive?—Long-wall working would be inadmissible, the roof is too bad.

819. What do they leave as pillars, seeing that they left no roof?—The average that I took, where it was possible, was a little over 10ft.

820. What are the pillars in the Green Island Mine?—I cannot say exactly, 4 or 5 yards.

821. *Mr. Rolleston.*] You say that they ought to have been 14ft.?—They ought to have been 18ft. at least; the witnesses on the other side have given evidence on that point.

822. *Hon. Mr. Stout.*] What I understand is, you were afraid, if these workings were continued, the roof would fall in and the miners would be killed?—That was my fear.

823. *Mr. Macandrew.*] One of your reasons for allowing the mine to be filled with water was that the hydrostatic pressure would help to keep up the roof?—That was a powerful reason.

824. Were you not a little startled to find that *Dr. Hector*, who is supposed to be a high authority, pooh-poohed that?—I did not hear that.

825. *Hon. Mr. Stout.*] I understand that, whether or not with the roof as it was, it would have been dangerous to work there?—I consider it would have been imminently dangerous.

826. Where is your letter ordering the mine to be filled with water?—It was agreed on the 19th March.

827. There is nothing in writing about that?—I wrote to *Mr. Williams* on the 20th March, 1883. I said, "You have already, I presume, stopped all work except that necessary for getting out material from the subaqueous area."

828. Was there any distinct order by you to fill the mine with water?—I do not think I have a record of such.

829. *Mr. McKenzie.*] When you authorized the men to be withdrawn, was it not your intention to have the mine filled with water?—Not until later.

830. Although you did not express it in writing?—It was agreed between us: it was unnecessary to state it in writing.

831. You state there was no working under that which you decided should be filled with water?—Yes, I did.

832. How, then, did the water come in?—Those are the workings [pointing to the plan]. These in red are the deep workings. The Committee will observe that these workings are not under those workings.

833. They were accessible by means of shafts, drives, and so on?—No; if the water was kept down here, pumped from this level, and syphoned from here down that shaft, there would be no danger to the workings until the sea broke in; if the sea broke in, of course the whole would be flooded.