

980. I understand you to tell the Committee you could not get into the places where the falls had taken place to any extent?—No.

981. *Hon. Mr. Stout.*] You saw the mine before it was closed, did you not?—Yes; I made this survey.

982. The men were working in it then?—Yes.

983. Did you form any opinion as to whether it was safe or not to work the mine, looking at the support that was left and the pillars?—Not at that time; when I was plotting it I had my own thoughts about it, but I was never asked for my opinion.

984. What were your thoughts at the time you examined it?—I thought that the mine did not look in a very good condition.

985. Supposing the men had been withdrawn from these workings, what would have happened: would the water have come in, or not?—In time it would, I should think.

986. Was there any pumping going on when you were there?—Yes.

987. In what way?—There was a Tangye pump at the bottom of the shaft.

988. Had they a well?—I think they pumped out of the lower level, but I did not see. There is one on that plan (Mr. Bishop's).

989. You say the mine was not in a good condition: was that from insufficient support?—Yes; through the pillars being so uneven.

990. Through too much coal being taken away?—Yes.

991. You say you think you saw a creep in one place?—The roof was on the move.

992. You hear a noise from the pavement when there is a creep in the mine, do you not?—No; I have never heard it.

993. You saw no creeps in the mine, at all events?—No; only falls.

994. Did you see the roof falling in at any place?—No; I never saw any actual falling.

995. *Mr. Bruce.*] Had you any experience in submarine mining at Home?—No.

996. You say you have had twenty years' experience, at least, of coal mines?—Not quite.

997. There or thereabouts, I suppose: did you consider that the action of the Government Inspector, in the first place, in letting water into the mine was judicious, or otherwise?—I do not know what the state of the mine was when he stopped it; I could not say.

998. Do you think that letting it in would have led to the eventual abandonment of the mine as it appears to have done?—I thought the sea would break in sooner or later.

999. I understood you to say that you fully approve, with the experience you have had of mining, the action of the Government Inspector in causing certain workings there to be abandoned?—I should certainly have withdrawn the men from that part of the mine.

1000. *Mr. Rolleston.*] After the men were withdrawn, was the filling with water a natural consequence?—They could still have had a pump working in it.

1001. Would that have been safe?—The pump would have done no harm; it could have been kept working.

1002. *Mr. Bruce.*] Would it not have entailed the necessity of having a man down there in the place you say was unsafe?—The pump could have been removed, and they could have had it at the top instead of at the bottom.

1003. *Hon. Mr. Stout.*] How deep was the shaft: a pump can only pump 32ft.?—They could have had a ram.

1004. *The Chairman.*] Have you had any experience amongst shales except in this colony?—In general measures of coal mines.

1005. Only in this colony?—At Home.

1006. Among shales?—Yes; all sorts of measures connected with coal.

1007. *Mr. Macandrew.*] The mine could have been kept dry without having any man down in it?—Yes; by having the gear on the top and sending a man down occasionally.

1008. How often?—Perhaps once a fortnight or once a month.

1009. For how long?—Perhaps an hour.

1010. Perhaps he need not have gone down more than once in six months?—It just depends how the bucket was and the valves were.

1011. *The Chairman.*] Referring to your plan: is that plan prepared in the usual way, such as mining engineers adopt?—Well, the falls and the cross heaps that Mr. Binns wanted specially to be put in would not have been put in a working-plan.

1012. Are the bords and pillars shown properly in the usual way?—If I was surveying for a colliery, and stationed at the colliery, I should survey it in that way. If I was simply making a general survey, I should not go into these details.

1013. Were you influenced by any feeling adverse to the mineowners in making that plan?—Not the slightest.

1014. Would the other plan (Bishop and Taylor's) fairly represent the workings: does that plan fairly represent the bords and pillars?—They are not all in it.

1015. Does it fairly represent those that are?—Not for a colliery survey; for a working plan it does.

1016. Would you explain what you mean by that?—If I were surveying for a colliery, and wanted a detail plan to know what I was doing, I should go into details. If I was surveying for this sort of plan, if the mine was abandoned, I should go in for a plan like that.

1017. Does it fairly represent the width of the bords and the pillars?—No.

1018. I want to know whether it is an absolute plan of the mine?—No.

1019. Was water collecting at all when you were in the mine?—They were pumping.

1020. Do you know at all at what portion it was coming in?—No; I have no idea.

1021. Was it coming in from anywhere except the ordinary drainage of the mine?—I do not know where it was coming from.

1022. Then, you cannot give us any information as to how long it would take to fill the mine up