

to the dams, which were subsequently erected, at the ordinary rate it was coming in?—No; I had no idea what water was coming in.

1023. *Hon. Mr. Stout.*] Did you taste the water to ascertain if it was salt or fresh?—No; I did not.

1024. *Mr. Chapman.*] I just want to ask you this, Mr. Twining: You were through the mine; now, was there any reason, that you could see, to prevent the mine manager from keeping the workings pumped and dry?—Not of the water that was coming in.

1025. No; but supposing that you thought that it was safer not to take any more coal out, could the mine manager have gone on keeping the whole workings dry?—Yes.

1025A. *Mr. Reid.*] I want to ask you this, as a professional opinion from you: would, in your opinion, the keeping of the mine dry have the effect of keeping the sea out for a longer time than allowing the mine to fill with water?—No.

1026. You understand my question?—You mean, if it had been kept dry, would it have had the effect of keeping the roof up.

1027. Yes; would it keep the sea out?—No; it would keep up better if the mine were filled with water.

1028. You think it would have kept up better if the mine had been allowed to fill with water?—Yes.

MONDAY, 6TH OCTOBER, 1884.

Mr. BISHOP, examined on oath by Frank Bird, Esq., R.M., at Greymouth.

[Questions sent and replies received by telegraph.]

1029. What are you and how engaged at present?—Am mining engineer engaged as manager of Brunner Mine.

1030. What experience have you had?—Some twenty years as coal-mine manager.

1031. Have you any experience of brown coal-mining in any other part of the world than in New Zealand?—Yes; in Bohemia.

1032. If so, what, and for how long?—Two years, as manager.

1033. How long were you at Shag Point Colliery, and in what capacity?—Nearly two years; mechanical engineer and surveyor.

1034. When did you leave?—July, 1882.

1035. Did you survey submarine workings up to date of leaving?—No; but nearly so.

1036. In your survey, did you show exact width of bords and pillars, or only approximately?—Only approximately.

1037. Are you aware if the widths of the bords was increased after you left?—Not to my own knowledge.

1038. Were there any falls in submarine area when you left; if so, state particulars?—There were some slight falls in south level, and also in some bords on the rise of this level.

1039. With a cover of from 118ft. to 200ft. over the seam in the submarine workings at Shag Point, what sized pillars and what sized bords would you leave at the least, consistent with safety?—The bords 5 yards wide, and the pillars 11 yards.

1040. Ought the coal to be got regularly?—Yes.

1041. Do you consider that allowing the submarine area to fill with water would have effect of so damaging the reef as to assist in letting the sea in?—No.

1042. Would the hydrostatic pressure of the water assist in sustaining the roof?—Yes; I believe it would.

1043. Have you any knowledge of a creep having set in in any mine where the floor was dry?—It is quite a common occurrence for a creep to set in.

TUESDAY, 7TH OCTOBER, 1884.

Mr. Chapman: There is a matter I wish to bring before the notice of the Committee. At the last meeting Mr. Twining was examined, and a great deal was made of the plan that he produced. The objection that we had to this was this: That, although it is now stated to have been the very ground of closing the working of the mine, it was not served on the manager of the mine at the time that it was made, nor was it stated to have been the ground for closing the mine; and as we are not now in a position to survey the mine we complain that we are at a great disadvantage. The chairman of directors of the Kaitangata Coal-Mining Company is present, and I should like the Committee to call him (as his company has employed Mr. Twining from time to time), and to ask him what reliance is to be placed upon his surveys.

Mr. Reid: I object to any one being called to give evidence as to the value of another witness's testimony; if that course were to be pursued the Committee would never end. If you are to drag in some one for the purpose of saying that such and such a witness is not a trustworthy person, we should claim a like privilege. If Mr. Brydone can give us any evidence as to the practical working of the mine, or the letting-in of the water, it is properly admissible; but I object to any one being called to throw aspersions on the evidence of a witness who has now gone away.

Mr. Chapman: It is not a matter of throwing aspersions. But I wish to impress on the Committee that this survey was not stated as the grounds for closing the mine in the letter which Mr. Binns forwarded ordering the works to be closed, and we have had no opportunity of verifying it. We have shown grounds for casting a doubt on it, and the only way we can meet it is by evidence of the sort which I wish to be called. I simply ask the Committee to ask Mr. Brydone what reliance can be placed upon the surveys.