

1001. Where was that coke made?—At Brunnerton. Mr. Bishop made it.

1002. Have you got an analysis?—No, I have not. It is, I think, in the prospectus.

1003. What do you expect it would take to open it out? Is it in the hands of a limited company?—I could not say what has been spent up to the present time, but the company have spent a good deal of money.

1004. Is the work let?—Yes, at £2 19s. per foot. I suppose the company have spent about £6,000, roughly speaking.

1005. What is the tunnel that is going in?—9ft. by 6ft. It is to cost £2 19s. per foot.

1006. How many men are at it?—Twelve men. The contract is held by one man. The twelve men are working in three shifts.

1007. How long have they been driving?—Twelve months, a distance of 900ft. That is an average of 20ft. a week. It costs £5 per week for wages. Then they use a tremendous lot of dynamite, and that is very expensive.

1008. Do they use their own tools?—Yes.

1009. What wages are they paying per day?—The contractor pays 10s. per day. They use about a packet of dynamite each shift.

1010. What does that cost?—Ten shillings.

1011. Have they had hard driving all the way through?—Yes, it has been pretty strong driving; it has not been the same sort of grit we have now. It has been sandstone.

1012. Have you any more information on the subject?—I have got what I think the coal could be delivered at Greymouth for.

1013. How do you propose to dispose of the coal when the mine is opened up?—Forward it to Greymouth and take it overland by the New Zealand Midland Railway. It is estimated the railway-rates will amount to 3s. 8d. per ton; but I think Mr. Bell will be able to give you information about that.

1014. What do you think it should cost?—I have taken an assumed output of 1,500 tons per week, and getting coal at 4s. per ton. Then there is dead-work, including management, timbering, repairing roads, and trucking, 1s. per ton; royalty, 6d.

1015. Is the royalty fixed already?—Yes. Then there is railway shipping charges to Greymouth, 3s. 8d.; the latter is given on the authority of Mr. Wilson, Engineer of the Midland Railway Company.

1016. That means they would charge 1s. 6d.?—I presume so. I have set down 9s. 2½d. per ton as the price at which the coal can be delivered at Greymouth.

1017. You think the coal could be delivered at that?—Yes.

1018. How do you arrive at your getting 4s.?—At that time that was the rate on the Coast.

1019. Is that on screened or unscreened coal?—On screened coal. In putting it at 4s. I have allowed that to include screening on the surface and every expense at the mine. The only disadvantage of the lease, as compared with the Brunner and Wallsend Coal-mines, is that the railway rate from their mine to Greymouth is 2s. per ton as against 3s. 8d.

1020. In the event of your mine being opened, would the present facilities for shipping be sufficient?—Yes; but we should have to erect staiths, I presume.

1021. Would it be part of the work of the company to erect staiths? I mean, you would not look upon it as part of the duty of the railway?—I think it is the duty of every private company to erect them; that is, for storing coal at Greymouth.

1022. Have you, as an engineer, considered the method of erection of the staiths?—I think that has really been the trouble of the district all along; I mean at the present time. Do you mean the want of private staiths?

1023. Yes. Have you made any estimate of the probable cost?—I have gone into it roughly. I think you could construct one that would hold 2,000 tons.

1024. How would you propose to do it?—I would erect wooden staiths near to the mine.

1025. Not at the shipping-place?—No; near to the mine, and tip the trucks into them.

1026. Would that damage the coal in any way?—Yes; but I think the other advantages would compensate for that.

1027. Then, you would not expect a block in railway-carriages?—No.

1028. What is your idea about wagons: should they belong to the line?—I think the railway company should provide the wagons.

1029. How about getting over the difficulty of interruptions, through not getting wagons with promptitude?—In the event of railway-trucks being limited, and no shipping being in, I would commence to load my bins; that is, the staiths.

1030. Then, if there was a rush of shipping, would you load from the mine or the staith?—I would load from the mine and staiths as well, and get the boat away, of course, as quickly as possible.

1031. Do you not think it would be a better plan to have the storage at the port?—If you have it at the port it becomes public at once. I think it is the first principle of every manager to work his mine regularly every day.

1032. Then, you think interruptions to the shipping is not so serious if you take care the mine-working is not interrupted?—Just so. Another advantage is that the Midland Railway, when it is opened, will be enabled to use the same storage.

1033. How do you mean it will serve the Midland Railway?—I should say it will help the mine to be worked more regularly; they would take the coal away in a contrary direction.

1034. How do you propose to get it overland? Have you any idea of the price?—We have been told that the rate will enable us to get into Christchurch overland.

1035. You have no idea what the distance will be?—I could not say. About 140 miles from the Blackball, I think.