NEW ZEALAND.

1891. Sess. II.

REPORT

OF THE

COMMISSIONERS

APPOINTED BY HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR TO INQUIRE INTO AND REPORT UPON THE

GREY VALLEY COAL-MINES,

TOGETHER WITH

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS AND EVIDENCE AND APPENDIX.

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

WELLINGTON.
BY AUTHORITY: GEORGE DIDSBURY, GOVERNMENT PRINTER.

1891.

CONTENTS.

Page

1. Commission 5
2. Report—
   - Interruptions, and Concessions on Royalties and Haulage 7
   - Interruptions 13
   - Wages 14
   - Mines opened 17
     - Brunner 17
     - Coal-pit Heath 18
     - Wallsend 19
     - Tyneside 20
   - Mines not yet opened 21
     - Point Elizabeth 21
     - Cobden 21
     - Stillwater 22
     - Blackball 22
   - Arrangements for opening New Mines 22
   - Terms of Leases 23
   - Condition and Prospects of Mines 24
   - Cost of Railway and Harbour-works 27
   - Port of Greymouth 30
   - Storage 32
   - Greymouth Harbour Board 34
   - Inspection 37
3. Minutes of Proceedings 38
4. List of Witnesses 43
5. Minutes of Evidence 43

   Kennedy, p. 43 and 129; Martin, 52 and 141; Kilgour, 55; Smith, 58; Taylor, 60; Bishop, 64 and 146; Calders, 77; Andrew, 77; Lindop, 86; Armstrong, 90; Ancell, 95; Clementson, 100; Robinson, 104; Connor, 112; Gills, 115; Newton, 117; Stone, 119; Nancarrow, 126; Dunn, 134; Boase, 153; Roberts, 158; Morris, 162; Green, 165; Waters, 168; Brown, 169; Lomas, 170; O'Connor, 170; McKerrow, 176; Wilson, 180

6. Appendix—
   - Schedule of Exhibits 184
   - Abstracts of Correspondence 184
   - Abstracts of Returns and Statistics 194
     - Greymouth Harbour Board Revenue 194, 195
     - Hands employed 195
     - Abstract of Output 196
     - Wages paid 196
     - Wages earned by Miners, 1st January to 8th March, and 10th March to 19th July, 1890 197
     - Wages paid to Coal-miners, 24th March to 28th June, 1890 197
     - Coal produced, 1st January to 8th March, 1890 198
     - " 10th March to 19th July, 1890 198
     - Statement showing Earnings of most successful and least successful Pair of Coal-miners in each Mine, 24th March to 28th June, 1890 199
     - Movable Plant, Inventory Returns 199
     - Revenue and Expenditure, Greymouth-Brunnerton Railway 199
     - Particulars of Traffic " " 200
     - Realisation and Cost of Coal 200
     - " " Coke 201
     - Memorandum of Fireclay Account 201
     - Items not included in Cost of Coal 202
     - Circular *re* Employment 202
     - Regulations and Conditions of Employment 202
     - Return showing Tonnage of Steamers 203, 204
     - " " (division between Summer and Winter Months) 203, 204
     - Quantity of Coal shipped from Port, 1st January, 1884, to 30th September, 1890 203
     - Number of Days in succession when Bar was unworkable, 15th June, 1887, to 29th October, 1890 204
     - Detention of Vessels in Port 205

   Plans, Diagrams, and Maps—
   - I. Plan showing Area of Workings in the Brunner, Coal-pit Heath, and Tyneside Collieries.
   - II. Map of the Grey Coalfield and Surroundings.
   - III. Chart showing Depths on Bar, Grey River.
   - IV. Plan of Greymouth Harbour, showing Improvements, 1878 to 1890.
   - V. Diagram showing Distribution of Expenditure, Greymouth Harbour and Brunner Railway.

COMMISSION.

APPOINTING COMMISSIONERS TO INQUIRE INTO QUESTION OF COAL-WORKINGS AT BRUNNERTON AND WALLSEND.

To all to whom these presents shall come, and to Sir JAMES HECTOR, of Wellington, in the Colony of New Zealand, Knight Commander of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George; RIDLEY WILLIAM MOODY, of Auckland, in the said colony, Esquire; and WILLIAM BROWN, of Dunedin, in the said colony, Esquire,—

GREETING:

WHEREAS representations have been made to me to the effect that certain extensive and valuable collieries in the Cobden and Brunnerton-Mawheranui districts of the said colony cannot at present be profitably worked, in view of the high charges to the lessees of the said collieries in respect of rents and royalties payable to the Crown, and the cost of haulage of the coal by rail to the Port of Greymouth:

And whereas it is expedient that a Commission should be issued for the purpose of inquiring into the correctness or otherwise of the said representations, and for other the purposes hereinafter mentioned:

Now, therefore, know ye that I, William Hillier, Earl of Onslow, the Governor of the Colony of New Zealand, reposing trust and confidence in your knowledge, integrity, and ability, and by and with the advice and consent of the Executive Council of the said colony, do hereby constitute and appoint you, the said

Sir JAMES HECTOR,
RIDLEY WILLIAM MOODY, and
WILLIAM BROWN,

to be Commissioners for the purpose of making inquiry into the representations hereinbefore referred to, and into the several other matters mentioned in these presents:—

1. As to the extent to which the work in the said coal-mines in the Cobden and Brunnerton-Mawheranui districts aforesaid has been interrupted and intermittent from various causes, and the nature of such causes of interruption.

2. As to whether, in your opinion, any steps can reasonably be taken by or on behalf of the Crown, or the lessees of the said coal-mines, or the miners, in the shape of better provision for storing coal or otherwise, in order to prevent or reduce the interruptions in the working hitherto subsisting.

3. As to the rates of wages which it has been possible for the miners engaged in the said coal-mines to earn, shortly before and since the month of March of this year, under the several conditions subsisting in respect of such mines as to the prices paid for hewing or getting the coal, and the regulations as to the size of coal to be produced, and all other regulations or conditions affecting the winning or obtaining the coal from the said mines by the miners; and also as to the wages which such miners did earn prior to and since the said period.

4. As to the cost per ton to the lessees at various times (including rents and royalties, and railway- and sea-carriage) of producing and delivering Greymouth coal at the chief ports of New Zealand and Australia, and the prices obtainable by the lessees for such coal at such ports. The cost of the lessees' head-office administration chargeable to Greymouth mines. The total annual export for some years in the past, and probable export in the future. The probable total quantity of coal made accessible by the lessees' existing works, machinery, and appliances. The market-value of such of the said works, machinery, and appliances as have been from time to time in use, corresponding with the annual exports hereinbefore mentioned. The return which the lessees have been getting from time to time, and could probably get in the future, as interest on the market-value of the works, machinery, and appliances in use as aforesaid.

5. As to whether the processes adopted in working the said coal-mines or any of them, or the general administration thereof, could be so improved as to yield better results in the

future; and as to the method of disposal of slack coal, and whether same could be turned to better advantage than hitherto.

6. And generally to make inquiry into any matter or thing arising out of or connected with the several subjects of inquiry hereinbefore mentioned, or which, in your opinion, may be of assistance in fully ascertaining, explaining, or assisting in arriving at a fair and just conclusion in respect of the subjects of inquiry, or any of them, or any part thereof or in relation thereto.

And, for the better enabling you to carry these presents into effect, you are hereby authorised and empowered to make and conduct any inquiry under these presents at such place or places in the said colony as you may deem expedient, and to call before you and examine, on oath and otherwise, as may be allowed by law, such person or persons as you may think capable of affording you information in the premises; and you are also hereby empowered to call for and examine all such books, documents, papers, maps, plans, accounts, or records as you shall judge likely to afford you the fullest information on the subject of this Commission, and to inquire of and concerning the premises by all other lawful ways and means whatsoever.

And, lastly, that, using all diligence, you do report to me, under your hands and seals, your opinion, resulting from the said inquiry, in respect of the several matters and things inquired into by you under or by virtue of these presents, not later than the thirtieth day of November next ensuing, stating in such report what steps, if any, it would, in your opinion, be expedient to adopt under the circumstances which you find to exist, and in what manner effect should be given to such recommendation.

And it is hereby declared that this Commission shall continue in full force and virtue although the inquiry be not regularly continued from time to time by adjournment, and that you or any two of you shall and may from time to time proceed in the execution hereof, and of every power, matter, and thing herein contained.

In witness whereof I, William Hillier, Earl of Onslow, the Governor of the Colony of New Zealand, acting by and with the advice and consent of the Executive Council of the said colony, have hereunto set my hand, and have caused these presents to be issued under the Seal of the said Colony, at Christchurch, in the said colony, this fourth day of October, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and ninety.

(L.S.) ONSLOW,
Governor.

Issued in Executive Council.

HUGH POLLEN,
(For the Clerk of the Executive Council.)

REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONERS.

To His Excellency the Right Honourable WILLIAM HILLIER, Earl of Onslow, of Onslow in the County of Salop; Viscount Cranley, of Cranley in the County of Surrey; Baron Onslow, of Onslow in the County of Salop, and of West Clandon in the County of Surrey; Baron Cranley, of Imbercourt; Baronet; Knight Grand Cross of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George; Governor and Commander-in-Chief in and over Her Majesty's Colony of New Zealand and its Dependencies, and Vice-Admiral of the same.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,—

On the receipt of your Excellency's Commission, on Monday, the 6th October, the Commissioners at once proceeded to Greymouth, arriving there on Wednesday evening, the 8th October, and on the following day commenced the performance of their duties. By public notification in the local papers all persons interested in the inquiry were invited to give notice to the Secretary if they desired to prefer evidence.

2. The Commissioners decided, after due consideration, that the inquiry should be conducted in private, each witness being examined alone. The preliminary examination of the coal-mines and of documents and plans, and the adoption of a scheme of procedure, occupied the Commissioners for three days; and on Monday, the 13th, the first sitting was held for the taking of evidence, in the office of the Harbour Board at Greymouth.

3. The Commissioners append hereto the minutes of their proceedings and a list of the witnesses, whose evidence was taken in full, and is also appended to this report.

The Commissioners also examined and perused the plans, documents, and accounts which are referred to by the witnesses, and which are enumerated in the appendix hereto.

INTERRUPTIONS AND CONCESSIONS ON ROYALTIES AND HAULAGE.

4. With regard to the main question submitted to us by your Excellency—namely, the correctness or otherwise of the representations which had been made that certain coal-mines cannot be worked with profit in view of the high charges to the lessees in respect of rents and royalties and for haulage of the coal to the Port of Greymouth—we have the honour to report as follows:—

5. That, after periods during which they were worked with more or less success as competitors, the mines at present open and those recently closed passed away, by successive transfers previous to August, 1888, from the original lessees, and were represented at that date by only two separate interests—namely, the Westport Coal Company and Messrs. Kennedy Brothers.

6. That at the date mentioned a limited liability company was formed, under the name of the Grey Valley Coal Company, by which these several interests were amalgamated in certain agreed proportions. The Union Steamship Company also at that time acquired an interest as shareholders in the newly-formed company, and an agreement was entered into under which, as stated by Mr. Kennedy, the Grey Valley Coal Company agreed to retain all its New Zealand freights for the Union Steamship Company, and the latter agreed to provide tonnage for the freight requirements of the former within the colony. Shipments to any port beyond New Zealand were, however, exempt from this agreement, as also was the coal required by the steamers of the Anchor Line. Since then the Grey Valley Coal Company has been the sole proprietor of working mines in the Grey Valley, and the sole shipper of coal from the Port of Greymouth.

7. Four mines have been worked in the district—namely, the Brunner Mine and the Coal-pit Heath Mine—both of which are on the north side of the Grey River, and were in work at the time of the recent strike—and the Tyneside Mine and the Wallsend Mine, on the south side of the river, both of which have been closed since they were transferred to the Grey Valley Coal Company.

8. Moreover, through various causes, the coal available in the two first mines for working from the solid has been greatly restricted, and for some time recourse has been taken to working out the pillars, which, having been more or less crushed by the superincumbent weight, yield a smaller quantity of screened or marketable coal, and a larger quantity of slack or dross, part of which has been utilised in the manufacture of coke, but a large part of which, in the absence of demand, has been turned into the river as waste.

9. That the working in the Tyneside Mine has been abandoned since the formation of the Grey Valley Company already referred to, and that more recently the Wallsend Mine was completely closed—in August of this year—with the view of concentrating the company's operations in the Coal-pit Heath and Brunner Mines.

10. That up to the 8th March of this year the coal-hewers were paid by a tonnage-rate of 4s. for each ton of screened coal turned out, the daily quantity being ascertained by screening and weighing one skip or truck for each miner or party of miners, and adjusting the rest of their output for that day to that weight.

11. That this system of weighing seems to have been satisfactory to the miners, as no evidence has been tendered to the Commissioners of complaints against it having been made to the company.

12. That in the latter part of 1888 exception was, however, taken to the rate of remuneration for coal-hewing, and a demand was made upon the company for payment by a tonnage-rate on the output of coal unscreened as sent out by the miners, and that consequently the company, with the view of complying, appointed three referees to act with three appointed by the miners, and ascertain the tonnage-rate for unscreened coal at each mine which would be equivalent to 4s. per ton on screened coal.

13. That these referees reported on the 8th December, 1888—

1. That the gross output from the respective mines from the 3rd September to the 27th October, 1888, both inclusive, had been—

From the Brunner Mine	16,906 tons.
„ Wallsend Mine	12,396 „
„ Coal-pit Heath Mine	8,512 „

2. That the miners' weight for the same period was—

At the Brunner Mine	10,700 „
„ Wallsend Mine	7,800 „
„ Coal-pit Heath Mine...	5,716 „

3. That, had the gross-weight system been in force, the price per ton would have been—

At Brunner Mine, and Wallsend	2s. 6¼d. per ton
At Coal-pit Heath Mine	2s. 8¼d. „

4. And that "it is therefore our duty to report that the said prices shall be the hewing-prices at the respective mines under the gross-weight system in future."

14. That, whilst the company was willing to adopt the rates thus ascertained, the miners, at a conference amongst themselves, by a small majority decided to decline them, and no change was thereafter made till March, 1890.

15. That early in 1890 the question of tonnage-rate was again raised, and the coal-hewers demanded payment by a tonnage-rate on the unscreened coal, and, seeing that 2s. 10d. per ton was paid for hewing at Westport (as equivalent for 3s. 10d. on screened coal), this was claimed as being a "district rate," and the miners declined sundry modified offers of the company, and refused to work under that figure.

16. That the coal at Westport mines is being worked from the solid, and that at the Grey Valley mines, being from the pillars, the latter is obtained with comparatively little work, and the output at the former is marketable without being screened, whereas the slack of the Grey Valley mines is waste.

17. That no such district rate has hitherto been established as being common to the mines, nor has any test of the relative value of hewing in these

separate districts ever been made, but that the Grey Valley Company, being under contract for the supply of coal, and under penalty for non-fulfilment of contracts, yielded the demand made, and from the 10th March, 1890, paid 2s. 10d. per ton on the gross weight at Coal-pit Heath and Wallsend, and 2s. 6d. at Brunner.

18. That in June, 1890, the company, finding that their operations left a loss, demanded that the hewing-rates should be reduced by 20 per cent., but the miners declined, and after some negotiation the company agreed to permit an inspection of its books, both at Greymouth and at Dunedin, to substantiate its allegation as to this loss.

19. That such inspection was made at both places at the instance of the miners, with the result shown in a document submitted by Mr. Kennedy, and which appears in the appendix—namely, that from the 1st January, 1890, to the 8th March, when hewers were paid at 4s. per ton, screened, the net result realised from sales, less freight and all other costs and charges, from Greymouth Wharf was £0 10 10½

Against a cost for hewing and other wages of	£0	6	2
And all other costs at mine, and till delivered f.o.b.	0	3	1
	0	9	3
Leaving, per ton, profit	0	1	7½

And that from the 10th March to the 28th June, during which period the miners were paid at the rate of 2s. 10d. per ton, gross weight, the sales, less freight and all other costs and charges, from the wharf realised, per ton £0 10 11¼

Against cost for hewing and other wages of	£0	7	9
And all other costs at mine, and till delivered f.o.b.	0	3	2½
	0	10	11½
Leaving, per ton, loss	0	0	0¼

And that the essential difference between these two periods lay in the wages, and was 1s. 7d. per ton, partly caused by an increase in their amount, and partly by an increase of waste.

20. That, besides the costs above referred to, the company had to pay for general management at Dunedin, Wellington, and Greymouth, and for rates, taxes, &c., £1,691 12s. 2d.

21. That the output of marketable coal during the first of these periods was 30,571 tons; and during the second, 49,638 tons, or in all 80,209 tons; and that the items comprising the above sum of £1,691 12s. 2d. involved a further general expense of 5d. per ton over both periods. And that, besides this, the company had to provide for new works, main headings, depreciation on plant, works, and leases, and interest on capital.

22. That these figures do not take into account a small but fluctuating and uncertain profit arising from coke-burning and the manufacture of fireclay goods, by which a small part of the waste coal was utilised; but this, being in the nature of a separate business, does not affect the general question.

23. That on the 19th July the company, having failed to obtain the concession sought for, of 20 per centum on the hewing-rate, declined to incur further loss, and ceased to work the mines, thus causing a "lock-out" not only of the hewers, but also of all the wages-men employed at trucking, hauling, screening, &c.

24. That on the 16th July Mr. Kennedy wrote to the Hon. the Premier representing the position of matters existing between the company and the miners, and said: "I would suggest that a temporary suspension of the 6d. per ton royalty, together with the Railway Commissioners allowing a reduction on the railage, as the proper course to meet in part the deficit, as during suspension there would be neither royalty nor railway receipts." To this the Secretary to the Cabinet replied, on the 17th July: "I am to inform you that it is quite out of the power of the Government to assist the company by suspending the payment of the royalty from the collieries. The Railway Commissioners also, to

whom your letter was referred, do not see their way to abate or reduce the railway charges on the haulage of coal from Brunnerton to Greymouth."

25. That shortly after this, a general labour Conference having been convened in Wellington, Messrs. Lomas and Newton attended as delegates, representing the Amalgamated Miners' and Labourers' Association of New Zealand, and, on behalf of the miners, made a similar application to the Premier for an abatement of the royalty or of the railage.

26. That on the return of the delegates to Greymouth, and on further extended negotiations taking place between the company and the coal-hewers represented by the A.M.L.A., it was agreed that the hewers would concede 2d. per ton permanently, and also, pending report after an inquiry into the matter, a further sum of 3d. per ton, making in all 5d. per ton, no part of which was to be refunded by the company; but it has been alleged by the miners that if no concession is made in respect of the royalty or railage the question would be reopened, and some further arrangement would be necessary.

27. That on the 28th August the manager of the Grey Valley Company received from the secretary of the A.M.L.A. a letter confirming this arrangement, and agreeing that the miners should resume work on the following Monday, the 1st September.

28. That on Saturday, the 30th August, after a meeting of the A.M.L.A. held that evening, the manager received another letter from the secretary importing a further element into the dispute, and laying down as a condition of work that no coal should be supplied to the steamers of the Union Steamship Company. This condition was in consequence of instructions issued by the Maritime Council in Dunedin because of a strike entered upon by the seamen against that company which, however, was in no way connected with the relations between that company and its seamen, but was entered upon in support of a strike in Australia between other companies and their seamen. That, as none of the Union Steamship Company's steamers were then available, the mine-manager agreed to this condition being observed by the coal company, and work was resumed and continued to be carried on for three weeks.

29. That the Union Steamship Company, having succeeded in keeping their boats manned by "free" labour, and in resuming their regular traffic, claimed from the Grey Valley Company fulfilment of their contract for the supply of coal, and notice of this was given to the miners by the manager on the 20th September. At the same time the "Brunner," a Union Steamship Company's steamer, coming into Greymouth, was supplied with coal by the Grey Valley Company, whereupon the miners ceased work, by direction of the A.M.L.A., in terms of the secretary's letter of the 30th August.

30. That after a lapse of some weeks, during which no terms could be arranged between the coal company and the miners—who would not recede from the position assumed of blocking the Union Steamship Company's steamers—the company advertised in Dunedin, Wellington, and other centres for miners to carry on the work, offering 12s. per day for coal-hewing, and succeeded in obtaining the services of about a hundred and twenty men.

31. That on or about the 23rd October, when it became known that these men were engaged to fill the places of the strikers, negotiations were opened with the company by a miner, Mr. Dunn (the chief executive officers of the A.M.L.A being at the time absent from the district), and the company agreed to take on as many of the union strikers as might personally apply for re-employment unconditionally, and that, although at first the miners refused to do so unless the company consented to negotiate with them as a union, the company afterwards received many individual applications, and, with the "free" labourers engaged elsewhere, reopened the mines on Monday, the 3rd November.

32. That, whilst the company offered 12s. per day for coal-hewers, it at the same time promised, after the expiry of six months, that if the hewers desired, payment by tonnage-rates of 2s. 3d. for Coal-pit Heath and 2s. for Brunner on the unscreened or gross weight of the coal should be again resumed.

33. That the rates thus offered were equivalent to a reduction of 20 per cent. on the tonnage-rates paid from the 10th March, 1890, till the 19th July, when the

lock-out took place, and consequently the terms of engagement of new hands and of re-engagement of old hands were, after six months at daily wages equivalent to the full concession formerly required by the company being agreed to by the strikers, and at the same time all interference on their part between the company and the customers to whom they sold coal was withdrawn.

34. That during these negotiations with the miners they requested the company not to impose this condition of delaying the introduction of the tonnage-rate for six months, but to grant them employment at once on the reduced tonnage-rates in lieu of days' wages at 12s., and that this was agreed to by the company.

35. That this fact indicates very clearly that the reduction of 20 per cent. required by the company in July was reasonable and just, and would still have left the coal-hewers more than 12s. per day.

36. That, whilst the lock-out on the 19th July was because of the loss incurred through an increase of the cost of hewing by the change of system on the 10th March, 1890, and whilst it continued as already described to the 30th August, quite as many men paid by the day as the coal-hewers paid by the ton were thrown out of employment, and, as these had no interest whatever in the dispute, their earnings were sacrificed by the quarrel of the miners, without any prospect of benefit to themselves.

37. That thus, because of arbitrary instructions issued by the Maritime Council in Dunedin, with which body the A.M.L.A. was affiliated, the lock-out of the 19th July was no sooner terminated on the 30th August than conditions were imposed which were not in the interests either of the company or of the men, and which resulted in a strike on the 20th September, and threw out of employment nearly five hundred hewers and wages-men because of a principle which, in our opinion, could not be of benefit to any interests in the Grey Valley.

38. That the remuneration of the coal-hewers was sufficient has also been confirmed by evidence which the Commissioners obtained, and they would refer to a return put in by Mr. Robinson, a miner, in which the manager of the company states that the earnings of the men averaged 14s. 8d. per day, and to the evidence of Mr. Robinson criticizing that statement, and representing the drawbacks from that amount which the miners desired him to claim as reasonable, and which amounted only to 4d. per day.

39. That the men had at the time opportunity afforded them of examining the company's pay-sheets, and satisfying themselves of the accuracy of statement published; but, powder and fuse having been taken into account therein, they found no other fault with it than that their weekly payments for doctor, accident fund, and sundry minor charges amounted, as above, to 4d. per day. The Commissioners also during their inquiries had access to the company's pay-sheets, and satisfied themselves that the rates of remuneration were as stated by the manager.

40. That the Commissioners, having intimated by repeated advertisement in the local newspapers that they were prepared to receive evidence from all parties interested in the subjects to be inquired into, and having specially addressed the secretary of the A.M.L.A., forwarding a copy of the Commission and a memorandum of matters on which they wished to receive evidence, found throughout their sittings that no evidence was offered by the miners bearing on the subject of the application for a reduction of royalty or railage, and that on directly asking some of them touching this question they appeared to have no valid reasons for urging the Commissioners to recommend such an important concession.

41. That Mr. Newton, one of the delegates who made the application to Government for a reduction of royalty or railage, did not avail himself of the invitation to proffer evidence to the Commissioners on that or any other subject relating thereto.

42. That the Commissioners proceeded to Westport and Denniston, and there took the evidence of Mr. Lomas, president of the A.M.L.A., and specially asked him what reasons could be urged in favour of the application, but had from

him no other reason than that he understood, although not fully conversant with the discussions of the miners at Greymouth, that it was assumed by them that, if the mine was not paying, the concession applied for should be made by Government to save the district. Mr. Lomas did not urge any other reason.

43. That such concession, if made, must necessarily be considered from two different aspects—firstly, its effects on those who would benefit by it; secondly, on those who would suffer by it.

44. That, with regard to the first aspect, it is evident that, primarily, the company would, apparently, be the beneficiary; but the Commissioners have had evidence from Mr. Kennedy that, whilst he also had on the 16th July, 1890, made a similar application, he asked for it only as a temporary measure, and from Mr. Bishop, the mine-manager, that a royalty of 6d. per ton is a reasonable rate, and that railage at 2s. per ton for receiving the coal at the mine, hauling seven miles, and delivering into the vessel by hydraulic cranes is not excessive when compared with railage charges elsewhere.

45. That so far as the company is concerned it has been able, without any such extraneous aid, to arrange for a resumption of work at the reduced rates of wages offered.

46. That in making the application it clearly was not the intention of the miners to benefit the company, but to enable it to pay the hewers the higher rate of wages involved in the change of system introduced in March, 1890; but it is clear, from what the Commissioners have already reported, that such increase was not warranted, for the following reasons:—

(1.) Because, when the change of system was made, it was only insisted on by the hewers as an equivalent to the rate of 4s. previously paid on screened coal, although it resulted in an increase of cost to the extent of 1s. 7d. per ton.

(2.) Because the wages earned by the hewers who were directly interested, and also by the wages-men who were not interested, are very much in excess of what is earned by similar labour in other parts of the colony.

(3.) Because, in the face of the fact that the men had forced up hewing-wages in March, 1890, to a price which left the employing company a direct loss, they, for purposes of their own, by arrangement among themselves, and without notice to the company, voluntarily restricted their output so that no man should earn more than 16s. per day, without handing over the surplus to their association—a restriction which tended to inflate the company's loss by keeping the large staff of wages-men without full occupation.

(4.) Because the different character of coal at Westport and Greymouth seems to afford no reason why the rates at the mines at these places should be the same, the present workings at the latter being much easier than the former; nor do the conditions of life at either place, nor the respective cost of stores or of house accommodation, into all of which the Commissioners made inquiry, furnish any reason for equalising the hewing-rates on the pillar-coal at Brunnerton with the solid coal at Westport.

(5.) Because, after the system of payment had been altered from 4s. on screened to 2s. 10d. on unscreened coal, the waste from the slack screened out increased from 37½ per cent. to 45 per cent., and whilst it is alleged by the men that this was caused by increased pillar-workings, this is denied by the manager, and it is affirmed by Mr. Kennedy that it was because the hewers had no incentive to turn out a better quality of coal.

47. That, as regards the second aspect mentioned—viz., the effect of the concession on those who would suffer by it—that is, the Government of the colony and the public generally—there does not, in our opinion, appear to be any reason why they should forego a revenue which is admittedly not exorbitant from those who use, and in using exhaust, public property or estate in so valuable a class of coal.

48. That a royalty of 6d. per ton is a common rate over the whole of the West Coast, as well as elsewhere, and the opening-up of other coal-areas in the same district is being proceeded with by other lessees, who would have as much ground for a concession as the present lessees have, and who would no doubt also press for similar and perhaps greater concessions.

49. That it has been represented in evidence by Mr. Wilson, engineer and manager of the Midland Railway Company, that, in negotiating with the Government, the revenues derivable from coal areas and leases lying within the area of lands reserved for that company were taken into account in determining the conditions on which the company entered upon the contract to construct the line, and that it would be somewhat in the nature of a breach of faith if the Government reduced the royalties to the Crown lessees, and so gave to them an advantage over lessees mining in the Midland Railway Company's lands, which would tend to practically diminish the revenues which that company was led by Government to anticipate, and that on this ground Mr. Wilson protests against the concession of royalty or railage to the Grey Valley Coal Company referred to in this report as unfair to the Midland Railway Company.

50. That the railage of 2s. per ton is also, in our opinion, a reasonable one, and, indeed, moderate, when it is considered that it includes haulage by horses from the mines across the Brunner Bridge, wagon by wagon; haulage for over seven miles from Brunner to Greymouth; storage in the trucks till delivered; and finally delivery on board ship by hydraulic cranes, which lift the railway-wagons into the hold to be there emptied.

51. That the railway work undertaken is therefore much greater than in other parts of the colony, where the duties of the Railway Commissioners as carriers cease as soon as the trucks are brought to their destination, and, although paying as much railage, the consignees have the onus and expense of discharging them.

52. That the plant necessary to complete this extra work is necessarily costly, involving for storage, for which no demurrage rate is levied, 257 trucks of a capacity of 6 tons each, with their maintenance, and that of wharves, cranes, &c.

53. That the railway net revenues, which are principally derived from haulage of coal, are by "The Greymouth Harbour Act, 1884," constituted part of the revenues of the Greymouth Harbour Board, and a special security, on which the Board has exercised, to the full extent of £150,000, the borrowing-powers conferred upon it.

54. That other coal areas in the same district are about to be opened up on the output of which the same royalties are provided for, and the railage involved will be in proportion to those at present charged, the relative distance being considered.

55. That, as those other mines are opened up, increased accommodation and appliances will be required to overtake the traffic, the funds to provide which must be found by the Harbour Board out of the above revenue.

56. That the Commissioners, for the foregoing reasons, cannot recommend that any concession should be made either in respect of the royalties or haulage-charges at present levied.

Interruptions.

The Commissioners have the honour also to report—

57. That they have not learned from the evidence of any general stoppage of the mines worked by the Grey Valley Coal Company since its formation, except what has arisen from the disputes between the company and the miners already referred to, and from which arose a lock-out, which took place on the 19th July and terminated on the 30th August of this year, and the subsequent strike, which lasted from the 20th September till the 3rd November, the salient points of which have been given above.

58. That there have, however, been periods when partial interruptions have taken place, or when the output has been more or less intermittent, and these have arisen from causes otherwise herein referred to.

Wages.

59. The Commissioners made repeated inquiries on the subject of the wages earned both at the Grey Valley mines and at those in the vicinity of Westport, and had submitted to them the pay-sheets at both places, together with statements of aggregate amounts, averages, and other details too voluminous to incorporate in this report. Ample details of this documentary evidence will be found in the appendix hereto, and, without troubling your Excellency with more than the general results, the Commissioners have the honour to report as follows:—

60. That throughout the West Coast district the rate of wages for daily labourers, whilst it was for a short time 8s., has since been raised again to the rate of 10s. formerly paid.

61. That there appears to be no distinction made between the wages of labourers in towns, where they have the advantage of living in their own homes, and the wages of men employed by the day in bush or country work, where the conditions of life are rougher, and operations are subject to frequent interruption from rain or other climatic influence.

62. That the Commissioners did not learn of there being many men unemployed, except from the late strike or its consequences.

63. That the Midland Railway Company, which employs on its present works a large number of men, pays the rate named.

64. That the wages for similar labour on the east coast of the colony is well known to be much below that figure, and relief-works have frequently been opened by Government and by the principal municipal corporations to afford work for unemployed men at or about 4s. 6d. or 5s. per day.

65. That the Grey Valley Company employs at its mines truckers, banksmen, stokers, drawers, &c., to the number of seventy or over, at a daily wage of 10s., besides twenty or twenty-five youths and men at 7s. to 9s., and thirty-five boys at 4s. to 6s.

66. That weighmen and enginemen, of whom there are nine or ten in the same employment, receive 11s. per day, whilst the staff of blacksmiths, fitters, and carpenters are paid 12s., and one foreman 13s. 4d.

67. That weekly wages are also paid to four overmen at £4, to two engine-wrights at £3 12s. and £4, and to two clerks at £2 10s. and £4.

68. That none of these men struck for higher wages or shorter hours, and had nothing to gain from the disputes of the miners; but, with the exception of the clerks, weighmen, and overmen being members, with the coal-hewers, of the A.M.L.A., and consequently affiliated with the Maritime Council, they appear to have sacrificed themselves first to their neighbours the hewers during the lock-out, and next to strangers in Australia during the strike ordered by the Maritime Council, on a mistaken idea of loyalty or honour, from which they and their families have suffered severely.

69. That, although not in the employment of the Grey Valley Coal Company, there are about fifty labourers on the wharf at Greymouth who are employed in connection with the shipping, and whose principal work must necessarily be in trimming the coal-cargoes.

70. That these men are paid at the rate of 2s. per hour, and they are as a rule members of the A.M.L.A., or of a local branch of that union, and that during the interruption to the traffic through the lock-out all of these were virtually thrown out of employment, and during the strike refused to handle any coal for the use of, or to be carried by, the Union Steamship Company's steamers.

71. That 170 to 180 coal-hewers were employed by the company previous to the work being interrupted, and these were paid by a tonnage-rate upon the coal they sent out.

72. That there is evidence of an occurrence and recurrence of broken time for short periods from want of available tonnage when the bar is impassable from high seas or river-floods, during which the railway-trucks are occupied with stored coal, and no further output is practicable from the mines which have no storage facilities.

73. That there is evidence also of broken time caused by the coal-hewers preparing their places underground and timbering the roof, that being part of their duty, and covered by the tonnage-rate.

74. That there is also a rule of the A.M.L.A., or, rather, a recent resolution not yet printed, that when there is not work for all hands a number of hewers give place to others, or admit of a third man working in their places, and carrying on thus for a month, to keep the surplus men on the spot waiting a busier time.

75. That there was also during part of this year a voluntary restriction of output imposed by the A.M.L.A., so as to limit each hewer's earnings to 15s. (Bishop) or 16s. (Robinson) per day, evasions of which were both accomplished and attempted by the men themselves, but which acted prejudicially to the interests of the company, by passing less than should have been passed through the hands of their wages-men.

76. That, as, however, the workings have for some time been confined to removing pillars which are considerably crushed, a very large output when at full work is easily accomplished.

77. That, the coal-hewer's pay being by a tonnage-rate, his actual working-hours are not checked, but consist nominally of eight hours for each shift, one of which begins at 6 a.m. and ends at 2 p.m., and the other begins at 2 p.m. and finishes at 10 p.m.

78. That, whilst, previous to March, 1890, the men had to be in their places at the beginning of each shift, they decided in association to reckon the time from "bank to bank"—that is, to enter the mine at the beginning of the shift and leave it as it closed.

79. That reaching and leaving their places within the eight hours must inevitably have caused to themselves a loss of thirty or forty minutes per day, and a slack time for the truckers, screeners, and other men in attendance, waiting output and working on day's wages; whilst an allowance of half an hour for meals would reduce the shift of eight hours to six and three-quarters of actual work.

80. That the actual daily wages of the miners has been put in by Mr. Robinson, a miner who was deputed by the A.M.L.A. to take up this subject, in his evidence before the Commissioners, and who submitted the statement as undisputed, but subject to expenses amounting to 4d. per day for Accident Fund, doctor, &c., as before mentioned.

81. That this statement comprises the results of seven fortnightly pay-sheets, or fourteen weeks, ending 28th June, the rate being 2s. 10d. per ton unscreened since 8th March, and gives the following results, after deduction of blasting materials:—

Wallsend	3,839	shifts;	£2,691 10s. 1d.,	averaging	14s.	per man per day.
Coal-pit Heath	4,233	"	£3,020 16s. 6d.,	"	14s. 3d.	"
Brunner	3,629	"	£2,706 14s. 9d.,	"	15s. 9d.	"
	11,501	"	£8,419 1s. 4d.,	"	14s. 8d.	"

Besides which there was paid over all to the same men for other work £562 8s. 9d., which increased the final average to 15s. 7¼d. per man per day.

82. That a similar statement was also obtained from the mine-manager, in which, however, the payments for extra work are not included, and which, apart from these, gives the following results for ten weeks ending 8th March, the rate being 4s. per ton screened, and blasting materials being deducted:—

Wallsend	2,060	shifts;	£1,409 17s. 7d.,	average	13s. 8d.	per man per day.
Coal-pit Heath	3,150	"	£2,235 10s. 7d.,	"	14s. 2d.	"
Brunner	2,342	"	£1,481 19s. 2d.,	"	12s. 8d.	"
	7,552	"	£5,127 7s. 4d.,	"	13s. 7d.	"

And for twenty weeks ending the 26th July, the rate having been changed on 8th March to 2s. 10d. per ton unscreened—

Wallsend	4,856	shifts;	£3,412 3s. 3d.,	average	14s. 1d.	per man per day.
Coal-pit Heath	5,717	"	£4,079 7s. 3d.	"	14s. 3d.	"
Brunner	4,649	"	£3,626 10s. 7d.	"	15s. 7d.	"
	15,222	"	£11,118 1s. 1d.	"	14s. 7d.	"

As against an average without extras of 14s. 8d. per man per day.

83. That another statement put in by the mine-manager shows the respective earnings of "A," the most successful pair of coal-miners in each mine, and also the earnings of "B," the pair who received the lowest wages per fortnight's work from the 24th March, 1890, to the 28th June, 1890. From this the Commissioners extract the following figures:—

Wallsend	A, highest average,	£20 3s. 4d.;	B, lowest average,	£9 12s. 5d.
Coal-pit Heath	"	£17 8s. 9d.	"	£10 13s. 1d.
Brunner	"	£17 17s. 1d.	"	£13 18s. 11d.
General average of highest		£18 9s. 9d.;	of lowest	£11 8s. 3d.

Which, on being reduced to a daily average per man, gives for the highest 15s. 5d., and for the lowest 9s. 6d., free of broken time or expense for blasting materials.

84. That the possible wages of the miners referred to in the Commission for the reasons already given cannot be definitely ascertained, but would evidently exceed the actual wages by a considerable amount, assuming the hewers to be active men, working ordinary hours, skilful at their work, unencumbered with surplus labour in the places, free from useless and unfair restrictions, and able and willing to make the best use of their time both for their employers and themselves.

85. That it is alleged by Mr. Kennedy, managing director, and by Mr. Bishop, the mine-manager, that at such pillar-work, which involves much less pick-work, good men could readily make £1 5s. or £1 10s. per day at the rates recently paid, and, whilst this view may be somewhat exaggerated, it is evident to the Commissioners that, whilst making remarkably good wages, the miners have not made the best use of their time and opportunities for their own interests.

86. That at Denniston, where the work is in solid coal at 2s. 10d. per ton unscreened, the Commissioners received from the mine-manager of the Westport Company's mines a statement of the amounts earned by four different parties working at "top-and-bottom" coal for the six weeks ending the 7th June, 1890, and which shows that two of these parties, working in different places, made an average of £1 2s. 4½d. per man per day, another £1 1s. 8d., and the fourth 19s. 4d.

87. That before leaving the subject of wages, both in its principal aspect as a part of the inquiry enjoined on the Commissioners and in its direct bearing on the subject of interruptions to the working of the mines in the Grey Valley, the Commissioners would fall short of their duty if they did not refer to their impressions of the conduct of the men affected by these questions.

88. That the Commissioners therefore have the honour to report that, in view of the amounts actually earned, or which could have been earned, by the coal-hewers in these mines, they are surprised at the support accorded them during the lock-out, both by the men on daily wages at the mines and by the wharf-labourers with whom they were associated, and which could result in nothing short of direct loss and privation to themselves, and that the loyalty and devotion of those who were thus associated in a labour union comprising such discordant elements was in itself admirable, though perhaps mistaken, and indicative of a staunchness which was worthy of a better cause.

89. That the same aspects were visible during the strike, both on the part of the same men and on the part of the coal-hewers, when they jointly abandoned lucrative employment on the arbitrary instructions of the leaders of the Maritime Council in Dunedin, without apparently having any clear idea of the immediate reasons for the issue of such instructions.

90. That the strike so far as it concerned the Grey Valley was, in our opinion, an exercise of despotic power on the part of the leaders of the Maritime Council, and a wanton sacrifice of the Grey Valley Coal Company and its employés, inasmuch as it involved an interruption to the trade and work just at the time the seamen's struggle in New Zealand on behalf of others in Australia had proved itself to be already a defeated cause, the "Brunner," which was the occasion of the strike, being amongst the last of the Union Steamship Company's steamers which resumed its usual traffic, the larger steamers on the more important lines having been previously re-established on their usual lines.

91. That the disastrous results apparent throughout this struggle have, in our opinion, arisen through the men giving heed to crude and deceptive teachings, and fostering amongst themselves unwise and misleading views on the respective relations between capital and labour, without really knowing their interdependence upon each other, or, indeed, without having truly defined the meaning of the terms, or formed correct views of the distinctive functions which capital and labour are called upon to fulfil in the world's work.

92. That the correspondence printed in Mr. Bishop's evidence, and in the appendix, between the local unions at the Grey and at the Buller, and their respective mine-managers, as well as other letters submitted to the Commissioners, proves the fact that the leaders of these unions, and no doubt their members also, had gradually assumed an attitude towards their employers under which it was fast becoming impossible to carry on the necessary work of the mines, and which if persevered in must ultimately have led to the company refusing to accept trade contracts, and to such a serious restriction of trade that many of their employés must have been thrown idle.

93. That the system of affiliation with distant unions, and, indeed, the whole system of unionism, unless administered by leaders who have had opportunities of studying the great social problems involved, must inevitably lead to deeper errors than those they seek to rectify.

94. That under more perfect administration such associations would doubtless be productive of benefit, both to the operatives who seek employment and to those who provide employment.

Savings of Mining Population.

95. That in the course of the inquiry evidence was given to the Commissioners to the effect that the miners largely avail themselves of the credit system in the purchase of their supplies, and that since the strike their rents have been allowed to fall considerably in arrear; the Commissioners therefore took steps to ascertain the extent of the savings-bank operations during this year, in so far as they are usually gazetted at the end of each financial year, with the object of obtaining a broader view of their general position.

96. That the following figures indicate a position amongst the frugal part of the people there indicative of comfort:—

		£	s.	d.
Total amount of balances at credit of 134 depositors on 31st December, 1889 (average, £59 5s. 3d.)		7,940	10	1
Deposits during nine months to 30th September, 1890	£3,340 1 7			
Withdrawals during same period	2,767 9 11			
Increase of aggregate deposits		572	11	8
Total amount of balances at credit of 138 depositors on 30th September, 1890 (average, £61 13s. 9½d.)		£8,513	1	9
47 accounts closed during twelve months of 1889: amount		£2,510	14	3
36 " nine " 1890: "		1,920	16	3

Mines Opened.

97. The Commissioners have the honour to report in respect of the past history of the leases affecting the Grey Valley—

98. That the several mines there were originally opened by different proprietors, who held leases of different dates and on different terms, and that each of these was separately opened, and independently worked.

Brunner Mine.

99. That the Brunner Mine area consists of 1,280 acres, comprised in Section 2A, Square 119, Grey Coal Reserve, a lease of which was originally granted to Messrs. Croaker, Hughes, and McCarthy for twenty-one years from 1st January, 1874. This lease was by them transferred to the Brunner Coal-mining Company in 1875, and afterwards, in 1879, to Mr. Martin Ken-

nedy, who surrendered it in December, 1886, and obtained in lieu thereof a new lease for sixty-three years from 1st January, 1887, at an increased rental and output. This lease is still in force, but was acquired by the Grey Valley Coal Company in August, 1888. The conditions are the payment of a dead-rent and the outturn of a specific quantity of coal, as follows:—

First eight years	....	Rent, £480;	output, 45,000 tons.
Next twenty-eight years		„ £750;	„ 75,000 „
Last twenty-seven years		„ £1,000;	„ 100,000 „

And during the first eight years a royalty of 6d. per ton, to be thereafter increased for the remainder of the lease to 1s. The dead-rent, however, is merely a minimum of royalty, and is not chargeable when the royalty exceeds it in amount.

100. The output from this mine from 1874 to 1889, both inclusive, has been 609,710 tons, and the royalty derived therefrom, at 6d. per ton, has amounted to £15,242 14 4

A surface lease granted to the Grey Valley Coal Company for a term concurrent with the coal lease has yielded to the end of 1889 .... 150 0 0

In all 15,392 14 4

Since this mine passed into the hands of the Grey Valley Coal Company the output has materially diminished, and fell last year below what is required by the lease, although the dead-rent was nearly equalled by the royalty.

The following table shows the figures during the currency of the above leases, inclusive of 1889:—

	Tons	cwt.	Tons	cwt.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
1874, Royalty at 6d. on	13,730	0			343	5	0			
1875, „ „	17,266	10			431	13	3			
1876, „ „	18,837	10			470	18	9			
			49,834	0				1,245	17	0
1877, „ „	22,167	0			554	3	6			
1878, „ „	19,404	13			485	2	0			
1879, „ „	26,724	4			668	2	0			
1880, „ „	27,981	10			699	10	9			
1881, „ „	25,565	10			639	2	9			
1882, „ „	37,385	17			934	13	0			
1883, „ „	53,567	3			1,339	3	6			
1884, „ „	63,316	4			1,582	18	1			
1885, „ „	80,461	0			2,011	10	6			
1886, „ „	68,313	0			1,707	16	6			
1887, „ „	61,104	11			1,527	12	3			
1888, „ „	54,741	0			1,368	10	6			
1889, „ „	19,143	16			478	12	0			
			559,875	8				13,996	17	4
			609,709	8				15,242	14	4

Coal-pit Heath Mine.

101. That the area of the Coal-pit Heath Mine is 777 acres, comprised in Section 231, Square 119, Grey Coal Reserve, a lease of which was originally granted to the Coal-pit Heath Company from the 1st January, 1875, and was transferred to the Westport Coal Company in September, 1887. The rights of this area were, in August, 1888, acquired by the Grey Valley Coal Company, although not then, and probably not yet, actually transferred to it. A surrender, however, has taken place, and a new lease, also in name of the Westport Coal Company, for sixty-three years from the 1st January, 1889, has been issued, the conditions of which are—

102. The payment of a dead-rent and the output of a specified quantity of coal, as follows:—

First eight years	....	Rent, £250;	output, 8 years, 25,000 tons.
Next twenty-eight years	....	„ £500;	next 21 years, 30,000 „
Last twenty-seven years	....	„ £750;	remainder, 50,000 „

And during the first twenty-one years a royalty of 6d. per ton is provided, to be thereafter increased to 1s. per ton. The rent, however, is not chargeable if the royalty exceeds it in amount.

103. From this mine no output appears to have resulted for the first three years of the first-mentioned lease; or, at all events, if coal was extracted it did not exceed at 6d. per ton the dead-rent, which was therefore charged in lieu thereof.

	£	s.	d.
During 1875, 1876, and 1877, this amounted to	582	15	0
From 1878 to 1889, both inclusive, the output was 290,385 tons, and yielded in royalty at 6d. per ton	7,258	7	6
Since the 1st July, 1886, under a lease of surface granted to Charles Taylor and others for nine years at £35 per annum, 3½ years to the end of 1889 having accrued, yielded	122	10	0
In all	7,963	12	6

The output from this mine has materially increased since the amalgamation under the Grey Valley Coal Company.

The following table shows the figures during the currency of the above leases, inclusive of 1889:—

		£	s.	d.
1875	Dead-rent,	194	5	0
1876	„	194	5	0
1877	„	194	5	0
Total		£582	15	0

		Tons	cwt.		Returns for Payments. £	s.	d.
1878	Royalty on	8,000	0	at 6d.,	200	0	0
1879	„	13,833	0	„	345	16	6
1880	„	14,373	0	„	359	6	6
1881	„	13,957	0	„	348	18	6
1882	„	16,308	0	„	407	14	0
1883	„	15,659	0	„	391	9	6
1884	„	25,848	0	„	646	4	0
1885	„	29,548	0	„	738	14	0
1886	„	33,384	0	„	834	12	0
1887	„	26,573	18	„	664	6	6
1888	„	33,460	0	„	836	10	0
1889	„	59,391	0	„	1,484	16	0
Total	„	290,334	18	„	7,258	7	6

104. We are unable to report the amount of the railway revenue derived from the coal-output under these two leases, but, as the Brunner–Mawheranui Railway was opened in 1876, leaving out all the coal on which royalty has been paid in that and previous years, and assuming that all the subsequent output has passed over the line, this railway has carried—

From the Brunner Mine	559,875 tons.
And from Coal-pit Heath	290,335 „
	850,210 „

Wallsend Mine.

105. The lease of the Wallsend Mine was originally granted to the Greymouth Coal Company in 1875. The first shaft was sunk by that company to a depth of 640ft., but encountered difficulties and sold to a syndicate, which again transferred to the Westport Coal Company. A second shaft was then sunk near to the first, and that is the present Wallsend Mine.

106. This lease, which was granted by the Minister for Public Works covered an area of about 1,000 acres, and contained a proviso that in the event of the company fulfilling all the conditions thereof and paying all

revenues accruing thereunder, it should have a right of purchase over 150 acres at £5 per acre at any time within the last five years of the lease. Before this right had arisen by effluxion of time the company appears to have been allowed to exercise it and acquire this freehold, which, as surveyed, is intersected by the railway line, the shaft itself and all the plant being situated on the part of the freehold, comprising over six acres, and lying between the railway and the river. The leasehold area has therefore been reduced to 853 acres, and the term extends for twenty-one years from the 1st August, 1873. The conditions of this lease we give below, but there appears to have been negotiations for a surrender and the issue of a new lease, which, as it contained a proviso for an increase of the royalty to 1s. after a term of years, has not been agreed to and has not been executed. Under the original lease a dead-rent and minimum output is provided for as follows:—

Whole term, rent, £20;	first year,	output 2,000 tons
	second year,	" 5,000 "
	remaining term,	" 15,000 "

107. A royalty of 6d. per ton was also provided, but as soon as the railway was opened this royalty was to cease in respect of all coal carried on the line; and, as this took place in 1876, and the old system of river-carriage was then done away with, the royalty has since been practically abolished. Since then it may be said that the royalty has been included in the railway-carriage, but whilst the railage from Brunner and Coal-pit Heath remains at 2s. exclusive of royalty, it is difficult to see why the coal from Wallsend should be carried the same distance for 1s. 6d. per ton if the 2s. paid thereon includes 6d. as royalty. The Wallsend is one of the mines amalgamated by the Grey Valley Coal Company, but since the lock-out on the 19th July it has not been worked, and, the company having withdrawn the working-plant and material therein, it is completely closed for the present.

108. Under these circumstances it is our duty to call attention in this report to the facts that, as the lease is framed, there is no relation between the annual rent of £20 and the minimum output provided, and that consequently there is no monetary obligation accruing as a leverage to enforce the output clauses. The total amount of coal, calculated from the working-plan (see appendix), which has been taken from the Wallsend Mine has been 218,849 tons. Of this about 127,000 tons has been mined from the company's freehold, 24,000 tons from under the railway reserve, 52,000 tons from under the river-bed, and 15,000 tons from under the private township known as Taylorville, and none at all from the leasehold except the output from the Tyneside Mine next referred to.

Tyneside Mine.

109. The first workings at the Tyneside Mine were opened by Mr. Joseph Kilgour; then a shaft was sunk by the Greymouth Coal Company within the area now comprised in the Wallsend lease; but faults had to be contended with, and it was abandoned without any extensive work having been prosecuted. After the Wallsend Mine had been acquired by the Westport Coal Company, Mr. Kilgour, in June, 1885, obtained from it a sub-lease of about 70 acres, including the first Tyneside shaft, which he wrought until the formation of the Grey Valley Coal Company. He then sold his interest to that company, and his steamer, the "Oreti," to the Union Steamship Company. The mine was then closed, and the work of that company was confined to the Brunner, the Coal-pit Heath, and the Wallsend. The lordship paid by Mr. Kilgour to the Westport Company was 6d. per ton, with a proviso as to dead-rent, which, however, was inoperative, as the royalty always covered it. The output of this mine is stated in the official returns as 18,398 tons.

110. The mines above mentioned are, or were, the four operative mines in the Grey Valley, and the rights of all of them were acquired in August, 1888, by the Grey Valley Coal Company. The state of their workings will be dealt with in another part of this report. Only the Brunner and Coal-pit Heath Mines are at present maintained in an active condition by the Company.

MINES NOT YET OPENED.

111. The Commissioners have the honour further to report the existence of other coal leases in the Grey district, none of which, however, have reached an operative stage. These comprise the areas leased by or in the interests of the Point Elizabeth Coal Company, the Cobden Railway and Coal Company (Coal Creek), the Stillwater Creek Company, and the Blackball Coal Company, the latter lying within the area of the Midland Railway Company's reserve. The particulars of these are as follows :—

POINT ELIZABETH COAL COMPANY.

112. Lease of Section 25, Square 124, Grey Coal Reserve, containing 1,280 acres, after several surrenders of same area, was granted to William Simson Smith for sixty-six years from the 1st January, 1889, under which there is provided a dead-rent and output as follows :—

Two years' rental,	£64 ;	output not provided.
Third year, "	£128 ;	" 12,000 tons
Fourth year, "	£320 ;	" 12,000 "
Fifth to twenty-first year, rental,	£320 ;	" 15,000 tons, and increases by 3,000 tons in each year from 4th to 10th ; 11th to 21st, 30,000 tons.
Remaining term, rental,	£640 ;	output, 100,000 tons.

The royalty hereunder is 6d. per ton for the first twenty-one years, and for the remainder of the term 1s. per ton. This lease was granted in lieu of another for six and a half years from 1st July, 1882, surrendered, but under which dead-rent was paid for two years at £32 per annum, and for four and a half years at £64 per annum. The output clauses have been suspended pending completion of railway to be constructed by the Cobden Railway and Coal Company. The present lease was granted on a bond for £1,000 being given to expend £5,000 within the first two years of the term, and is one of those referred to in the evidence of Mr. Smith as held by the Point Elizabeth Coal Company.

113. Lease of Section 26, Square 124, Grey Coal Reserve, containing 1,280 acres, in favour of William Simson Smith and Francis Hamilton, for sixty-six years from the 1st January, 1889, under which is provided a dead-rent and output precisely similar to the foregoing lease. The royalty also is the same, being 6d. per ton for the first twenty-one years, and thereafter 1s. per ton. Dead-rent has been paid for 1889, but the output clauses have been suspended as in the above case. This lease is also held for account of the Point Elizabeth Coal Company.

114. Lease of Section 4, Block I., Cobden, in favour of W. S. Smith and F. Hamilton, and also for account of the Point Elizabeth Company, comprising 223 acres for sixty-five years, from 1st January, 1889. The rent and output hereunder is as follows :—

First year, rent,	£11 4s. ;	output, nil.
Second year, "	£22 8s. ;	" 3,000 tons.
Third to twentieth year, rent,	£56 0s. ;	" 3rd and 4th years, 6,000 tons.
Remainder of term, "	£112 0s. ;	" remaining term, 12,000 "

The royalty provided is 6d. per ton for twenty years, and thereafter 1s. per ton.

COBDEN RAILWAY AND COAL COMPANY.

115. Lease (afterwards surrendered) of Section 24, Square 124, Cobden, containing 1,036 acres, in favour of Holder, Fowler, and Rose, for twenty-one years from the 1st January, 1882, under which was provided a dead-rent for the first two years of £51 16s., and for the remainder of the term of £259 per annum. The royalty hereunder was 6d. per ton. In this case the dead-rent was paid for seven years at the same rate as for the first year—viz., 1s. per acre—but the area is now included in the next undernoted lease—viz., lease of Section 11, Block III., Cobden, 4,000 acres, in favour of A. MacDougall and others, forming the Cobden Railway and Coal Company, for sixty-six years from the 1st July, 1888. Under this lease the rent accrues only from the 1st January, 1889, and that and the output provided are stated to be as follows :—

Two years' rental,	£200;	output,	3rd and 4th years,	25,000	tons.
Five "	£500;	"	next 6 years,	50,000	"
Seven "	£750;	"	" 11 "	75,000	"
Seven "	£1,000;	"	remaining years,	100,000	"
Residue of term,	£2,000.				

The royalty is 6d. per ton for the first twenty-one years, and thereafter 1s. per ton. The dead-rent in this case has been paid, but the output clauses have been suspended for the years 1890 and 1891.

116. Lease of Section 5, Block I., Cobden, 685 acres, in favour of A. MacDougall and others, representing the Cobden Railway and Coal Company, for sixty-five years from the 1st January, 1890. The dead-rent and output hereunder is:—

First year, rental,	£34 5s.;	output,	nil.		
Second "	£68 10s.;	"	2nd year,	5,000	tons.
Third to twentieth year, rental,	£171 5s.;	"	3rd and 4th years,	10,000	"
Residue, rental,	£342 10s.;	"	residue,	20,000	"

The royalty is, for the first twenty years, 6d. per ton, and thereafter 1s. per ton. In this case the rent and output clauses have been suspended for the years 1890 and 1891.

STILLWATER CREEK COAL COMPANY.

117. Lease of Section 734, Blocks X. and XI., Arnold Survey District, containing 640 acres, in favour of Joseph Taylor and another on behalf of the Stillwater Creek Company, for twenty-one years from the 1st January, 1889. The rent and output hereunder are as follow:—

First three years' rental,	£20;	output,	1st year,	nil.	
Next four "	£100;	"	2nd to 6th year,	4,000	tons.
" seven "	£200;	"	next seven years,	8,000	"
" " "	£250;	"	last "	10,000	"

The royalty provided is 6d. per ton during the whole term. The coal in this lease is at present being actively prospected with a view to its being opened out at an early date. The workings are situated east of the Brunner Bridge and on the south side of the Grey, and will easily connect with the Stillwater section of the railway.

BLACK-BALL COAL COMPANY.

118. Lease in favour of Messrs. Wilson, Hill, and Bishop, for the Blackball Coal Company (Limited), of Section 1, Block II., Mawheranui, comprising 640 acres, for twenty-one years from 1st January, 1886; the rent and output being as follows:—

First two years' rental,	£16;	output,	third year,	5,000	tons.
Next three years' "	£64;	"	next four years,	10,000	"
Remaining term, "	£160;	"	remaining term,	20,000	"

The royalty hereunder is 6d. per ton throughout the term of the lease.

Lease of Section 2, Block II., Mawheranui, comprising 640 acres, to same parties, on same terms and conditions.

Lease of Section 3, Block II., Mawheranui, comprising 634 acres, to same parties, and on same terms and conditions.

These three leases were originally held by Messrs. Kilgour, Schofield, and Halcrow, but were transferred in 1886 to the Blackball Coal Company. The output clauses were suspended for two years from 1st January, 1888, on the company showing that they were using efforts to raise the necessary capital to work the mines, and that they were negotiating for the construction of the railway by the Midland Railway Company, which has the right under their contract to take over these leases.

ARRANGEMENTS FOR OPENING NEW MINES.

119. That in connection with the latter subject it is in evidence (Smith's evidence) that the Point Elizabeth Company, with the view of forming an

estimate of the probable cost of getting their coals to market, have applied to the Railway Commissioners for a quotation of the terminal charges which would be involved on their coal if sent on by a branch railway constructed at their own cost to connect with the Greymouth–Brunner line by way of the Cobden Bridge.

120. That such connection would involve the use of the Greymouth–Brunner line over about half a mile, and delivery to vessels in the usual course by hydraulic cranes, and probably to some extent the use of any storage bins or staiths which might be available.

121. That the rate quoted by the Railway Commissioners for this service was 1s. 3d. per ton, which the Point Elizabeth Company considered as prohibitive.

122. That negotiations for the construction of the branch line have taken various shapes between the Government on the one hand, and on the other the Point Elizabeth Company, the Cobden Railway and Coal Company, and the Paparoa Railway Company, to all of which this branch was an important feature.

123. That the present position of the matter appears, from the *Gazette* of the 14th August, 1890, to be that the Cobden Railway and Coal Company have acquired rights under the District Railways Act to construct a branch of 4 miles and 78 chains from the northern approach of the Cobden Bridge to a point near the Seven-Mile Creek, with the right to charge (*inter alia*) 1s. 6d. per ton for coal; and that, in the event of the company extending this line over the Cobden Bridge into Greymouth, and connecting it with the Brunner Railway, such rate should cover haulage and delivery at the Greymouth station or wharf, subject to such additional rate as the Railway Commissioners shall charge the company for the use of the Government lines, station, wharves, and appliances.

124. That this line would make available the coal-area held by that company at Coal Creek, and also that of the Point Elizabeth Company, with an extension of 1 mile and 40 chains, which they would have to construct.

125. That, thus, the Point Elizabeth Company estimate their total cost to the port as follows:—

	£	s.	d.
Haulage by the Cobden Railway and Coal Company	0	1	6
Terminal charges at Greymouth	0	1	3
Haulage on their own branch	0	0	6
Royalty	0	0	6
Per ton	£0	3	9

126. That the terminal charge is an arbitrary charge added to all railway haulage to cover cost of railway-stations and other works in use at the terminal points, and has in the present instance been assessed at 1s. 3d. per ton.

127. That, whilst a terminal charge is a usual and necessary impost, the rate in this case has been partly arrived at from the consideration that any coal shipped at Greymouth from mines other than those at Brunnerton would reduce the traffic on the Government line and the profit derived from it, and that coals from any other source should therefore be charged such rate as would leave a profit equivalent to that now derived from the output at Brunner.

128. That, whilst it is not to be expected that a uniform scale can be applied to coal or any other commodity carried irrespective of distance, and whilst the Commissioners cannot gauge what the true value of this service may be, they are of opinion that on colonial railways the rates should be commensurate with the service rendered, irrespective of the private interests involved.

Terms of Leases.

129. The Commissioners beg to call attention to the disparity of conditions existing in the various leases quoted, and are of opinion that, whilst leases have been issued in the past at different dates, by different controlling departments or officers, and possibly to meet the views of different lessees, in future issues more uniform conditions might be arranged, and that a model lease to insure uniformity would tend to simplify the control of the lessors' interests, would prevent jealousy amongst lessees and applications for concessions during the currency of the leases.

130. That thedead-rent should in all cases bear a proper relation to the minimum output provided.

131. That, in view of the increasing difficulty of access to coal as time goes on and the works reach a greater distance from the main shafts or adits, there are serious objections to the provision introduced into some although not all of the leases for an increase of royalty from 6d. to 1s. per ton after a lapse of years.

132. That, when the period for increase so provided for shall have arrived, this clause where introduced must necessarily cause the lessees much annoyance, and will in all probability require to be waived, so as to equalise the terms to those imposed on neighbouring and competing lessees.

133. That it would probably save dispute or misunderstanding hereafter to introduce in all coal leases a clause providing for sinking the dead-rent when it is exceeded by the royalty, calculating the respective amounts retrospectively over a period of years (say, three to five) from each successive adjustment.

134. That where adjacent areas are leased to different lessees, or where they may by transfer or assignment pass into different hands, provision should be made to prevent the percolation of water from the workings of one mine to those of another, and also to prevent any communication between the areas comprised in separate leases, which might prove prejudicial to lessors' interests in after-years through surrender of one or other of the leases. Barriers of coal of not less than 20 yards in thickness should be left (one-half by each lessee) for the whole distance between the royalties held by each lessee.

135. That where more than one area is leased to one lessee or body of lessees, or by transfer may pass into the hands of one lessee or body of lessees, the output clauses require some readjustment, for where it is intended that the coal in adjoining areas should be obtained from one shaft or tunnel it must necessarily be sunk in one only of the areas whilst the adjoining area is held in reserve, and whilst thus held no output arises from it, and therefore no royalty. In such cases it should therefore be clearly expressed whether it is intended or whether it is permissible to apply the royalty first to the extinction of dead-rent under the lease under which it arises, and next to the extinction of the dead-rent for the adjoining areas till it is exhausted, or whether the specific rents and royalties under each lease are intended to be adjusted without reference to the position of the adjoining areas and leases, if any.

Condition and Prospects of Mines.

136. In reporting on that branch of the subject which relates to the present condition and future prospects of the Grey coalfields, it may be of interest to give a brief notice of its past history.

137. That the existence of coal was first discovered by the late Mr. Thomas Brunner, on the 16th July, 1847. Mr. Brunner was at that time engaged in exploring the West Coast, with no other companions but the Natives, and for nearly two years and a half endured most severe privations. The following is the extract from his journal which describes the discovery of the coal :—

> 26th January, 1848.—Starting from the pah at the mouth of the Grey River in four canoes we came five miles up and camped at an old fishing-station, prettily situated on an island called Motutapu. About a mile above Motutapu is a seam of coal, apparently of very fine quality, which presents itself under a stratum of mica-slate. The coal is hard and brittle, very bright and sparkling, burns freely, and is free from smell. The seam is 4ft. deep, and level with the water's edge.

This natural outcrop of the Brunner seam is still to be seen on the north side of the river, a few chains below the railway-bridge.

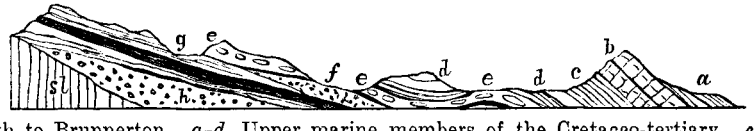
138. That the next mention of any examination of these coal-seams is by the late Sir Julius von Haast, in his narrative of his geological exploration of the Nelson Province (page 43).

> From the 17th to the 28th May, 1860, I was occupied in examining this most important district. After having followed the different ferruginous sandstones, clays, and grindstones which occur in regular succession, I found, below the underlying grits, the first small seams of coal, the examination of which completed my first day's work.
>
> The next morning, continuing in a systematic way, I soon had the pleasure of discovering the main seam, which I followed up to the bed of a small rivulet, where it was lying exposed to a depth

of 12ft. 6in. I must confess that I was much excited, because, on examining the coal *in situ*, it was clear to me that I had to do with a real coal, its compactness, specific gravity, lustre, and combustibility, leaving nothing to be desired. As the seam struck in a regular way across the river, whilst at the same time I was able to trace it towards the north, I had no difficulty in concluding that the spot upon which I was standing would prove a source of great wealth not only to this district, but to the colony at large. In a few years, I said to myself, instead of the wilderness, we shall have the dwellings of men; instead of a few birds, now its only inhabitants, we shall have a busy population of miners enlivening the country; the shriek of the locomotive will resound through its valleys, and busy life and animation will everywhere be seen. The harbour will be the resort of numerous colliers, and an active population will replace the inert savages who now occupy the pah. The Grey district, possessing easy communication with other parts of the colony, will, I hope, soon be peopled, and its farmers find their market amongst a mining population. I may be pardoned if instead of reporting mere fact I have here given way to my feelings, but I conceive that the most matter-of-fact man would become imaginative when standing upon a spot containing such a vast store of mineral wealth.

139. That in the same year, 1860, the Native title to all the West Coast land was extinguished by purchase, and surveys were commenced, followed by the arrival of settlers. Certain areas were set aside as coal reserves on both sides of the river, but it was not till 1865 that mining was commenced, about which date the Nelson Provincial Government granted a lease to a Ballarat company, which, as one of the conditions, was required to construct a railway to connect with the Port of Greymouth. The company, however, only made a horse-track along the north side of the river, and continued to convey the coal to the seaport in barges. These barges were towed up stream by horses, and enormous damage was caused by the destruction of the banks of the river, due to the cutting of the towing-paths, widening the channel of the river to a great shingle-bed, and thus supplying the shingle-bars that are continually on the move down stream, and add to the cost of the harbour-works. Owing to this company's failure to fulfil the conditions, the lease was cancelled, and for a few years the mine was worked by the Nelson Government, and subsequently leases were granted of various portions of the coal reserves, as has been already described in this report. The reserves made include only the portion of the coalfield which lies on the seaward side of the coast range, and all the other coal-areas are included in the selection area which has been hypothecated to the Midland Railway Company.

140. That the geological formation containing the coal-seams belongs to the Upper Cretaceous period, and consists of mica-sandstones, quartz-grits, and conglomerates, having somewhat irregular stratification, but rising in an easterly direction to a height of 3,000ft. in Mount Davy. To the west, the formation dips below the sea-level with a cover of about 300ft. of tough ferruginous sandstone, known as the "island sandstone," followed by about 500ft. of septaria clays, greensands, and chalk-marls, which pass upwards into the limestone 700ft. thick that forms the bold range of hills that is intersected by the Cobden Gorge. The extent of the coalfield parallel with the coast is about twelve miles to where it is cut off by the slate and granite. The general arrangement of the formation can be best understood by reference to the following section and to the general map attached to this report.



Section, Greymouth to Brunnerton. *a–d.* Upper marine members of the Cretaceo-tertiary. *e.* Island sandstone. *f.* Upper or pitch coal. *g.* Lower coal, bituminous. *h.* Conglomerate. *sl.* Slate.

The total area of the coal reserve on the north or Nelson side of the Grey River is 10,331 acres, and on the south or Westland side 3,015 acres, and the whole of these areas is at present held under lease.

141. That the condition of the workings at the present time is as follows:—

142. The Brunner Mine leasehold has an area of 1,280 acres, of which 183 acres has been worked, and yielded 778,325 tons, and the average yield per acre before any of the pillars were removed was 6,000 tons. There are several seams, but only the main seam has been opened on. It dips to the west, and the boundary of the leasehold in that direction appears to have been laid off with the view of securing only the portion of the seam which could be worked to

the rise. As the water-level was advanced it was, however, found to bear off to the north-east, and at a distance of 18 chains from the entrance the coal is cut by the Brunner fault, to pass through which threw the water-level still further to the east, and away from the boundary; so that the property has been proved to contain a considerable area of coal, which lies to the dip. That portion of the dip coal which lies on the south side of the fault has been worked out, but the large portion beyond the fault is still intact. The extension of the mine to the north is at present stopped by a second fault, which was partially explored three years ago by a stone drift 13 chains long and two bore-holes, but without satisfactory results. As far as this fault, the whole of the coal to the rise has been mined on the pillar-and-stall system. In what are known as the "old workings," lying to the south of the Brunner fault, the coal was very thick, frequently over 20ft., and the chambers were very large, and when the roof had flaked off were in some cases as lofty as 26ft. This portion of the workings is now closed up, so that its present condition cannot be ascertained. No pillars are now being worked there, but at a former time some of the pillars at no great distance back from the outcrop were partially removed, and some near the fault wholly excavated, and the roof allowed to settle. From the rise-workings beyond the fault the pillars are now being worked out, and the roof is settling down in a satisfactory manner, the coal in this part of the mine being much thinner. The pillars have also been worked out along the south side of the Brunner fault, in the dip-workings.

143. The Coal-pit Heath leasehold is 777 acres, of which 46 acres have been worked, with a total yield of 354,821 tons. The mine is in reality a continuation of the front part of the Brunner Mine, or the "old workings" to the dip. No headings have ever been carried through the Brunner fault in the Coal-pit Heath Mine, and, now that these are under one management, the dip-coal from beyond the fault in the Coal-pit Heath will be brought up the dip-workings which are being opened from the Brunner Mine lease. Besides this limitation of the workings by the Brunner fault, which runs east and west, the extension of the mine to the dip has been for the present stopped by a north-and-south fault, which it is calculated throws the coal down about 180ft. Formerly the Coal-pit Heath Mine was worked by a shaft 280ft. deep, but since the amalgamation this shaft has been abandoned, and the access to the mine is by an incline, up which the coal is hauled to the Brunner Mine stage. A strong rib of coal, varying from 60ft. in front to 400ft. near the fault, has been left unworked along the boundary between the Coal-pit Heath and Brunner Mines. This gives support to the hill, and formerly cut off all the drainage from the Brunner Mine, so that at one time the dip-workings in that mine were flooded, but now the water finds its way into the Coal-pit Heath, and is pumped from there. From a large area, the pillars along the side of the fault have been worked from the Coal-pit Heath, and since then serious cracks in the roof have extended to the surface, admitting storm-water to such an extent that the pumps were unable to cope with it, and the mine at present stands with water up to the first level. Measures have been taken to stop the surface-cracks on the hill-top, and to divert the creeks clear of them, and more powerful pumping-machinery is being erected, so that before long the water will be kept under. The danger of a heavy slip from the hill in consequence of the excavation of the coal is not imminent so long as the pillars in the old Brunner Mine and in the southern part of the Coal-pit Heath Mine and the before-mentioned dividing-rib of coal are left untouched. We are of opinion, however, that great caution must be exercised, as there is evidence of extensive slips from the hill having taken place in former years higher up the river than the present Brunner Mine. These slips have brought down the coal-strata to the river-level in a very crushed and irregular manner, which has given rise to the idea that there are lower seams, and that the strata at this place have, through an anticlinal arrangement, acquired an easterly dip. By following up the spur of the mountain, however, it is found that the coal-strata rise steadily to the eastward until they rest on the basement-rock of slate which forms the true core of the anticline, as after crossing the slate-belt the coal is found in

Stillwater on the south and Blackball on the north of the Grey River, with a regular easterly dip.

144. Only two mines have been opened on the Westland Coal Reserve, situated on the south side of the Grey River.

145. The Tyneside Mine is opposite the Brunner Mine, and in it the coal was at first worked level-free, and then by a shaft; but this part of the field is much disturbed by parallel faultings, that cross the strike of the coal obliquely, and cut it up into long, narrow areas, so that extensive bords cannot be set off, and the system of working became expensive and too limited to be remunerative.

146. The Wallsend Mine, situated further down the river from the Tyneside, is the most important and costly mining adventure in the district. Two shafts have been sunk to a depth of 650ft., and were furnished with most costly appliances. The seam of coal in this part of the field was 16ft. thick. The workings were eastward to the rise until a north-and-south fault was met with, which is supposed to be the same which cuts off the Coal-pit Heath Mine to the dip. The extension of the levels to the south was also stopped by broken and faulty ground, which was not explored, as the coal became of inferior quality in that direction. The level workings to the north were extended right under and across the river. In these level workings several cross-faults were passed through without difficulty. An incline working was also carried to the dip, also passing under the river and for some distance under Taylorville on the opposite side, until an east-and-west fault was met with. This is known as the Taylorville fault, and is parallel with but considerably to the south of the line of the Brunner fault. It is estimated to cause a downthrow of the coal of 250ft. on the west side. No working levels were opened from this dip exploration, so that the coal—which is described as being of good quality in this part of the field, which has an extent of 54 acres—is still untouched.

147. The mining in the Wallsend Mine, which, as already pointed out in a previous section of this report, has never been extended into the leasehold, has an extent of 13 acres within the 150 acres freehold, upon which also the shafts and mining-plant are situated. The mine, therefore, excepting the portion under the railway reserve and under the river, is entirely a private property. On the 26th July last it was closed, apparently against the advice of experts; and this very expensive mine, which is stated to have cost altogether £120,000, is at present a dead loss.

148. These are all the mines which up to the present time or until recently have been supplying coal, and from the foregoing account of their present condition it is evident that their future prospects are not very bright unless more activity is shown in exploring faults and boring in other parts of the holdings, so that an extension of mining operations may be provided for as soon as the present limited workings are exhausted. From the evidence it would appear that the expenditure of at least £10,000 will be required to effect this, and if it is not commenced promptly there is a probability that the pillar-coal, on which the mines at present depend, will be exhausted before fresh areas of solid coal are opened out.

149. The remainder of the Nelson Coal Reserve, north of the Brunner and Coal-pit Heath leaseholds, has been leased by companies who are taking measures to open mines, but no work has been done beyond exploring outcrops. As bearing on the prospects of these prospective mines, the Commissioners beg to refer to the evidence of Messrs. Smith, Taylor, and Lindop. With reference to the latter gentleman, the statements he made as to the extent and favourable mode of occurrence of the coal in the Blackball lease have received confirmation since his evidence was taken, the coal having been cut in the exploring tunnel very close to where he anticipated that it would be found, thus making it certain that a very large area of valuable and easily-worked coal will soon be available.

Cost of Railway and Harbour-works.

150. The Commissioners made inquiry as to the expenditure which has taken place on the Brunner-Mawheranui Railway, connecting the Grey Valley mines with the port, and on the harbour-works, reclamations, and bridges over the river, and have the honour to report on this subject as follows:—

151. That what is known as the Stillwater section of the railway, a short portion of the line connecting with the Brunner–Mawheranui line at one end, and to which is connected at the other end the railway to Nelson in course of construction by the Midland Railway Company, has had expended on it the sum of £14,000 before it was ceded to the Midland Railway Company.

152. That the Brunner Bridge, over which the output of the Brunner and the Coalpit Heath Mines passes to the railway, cost £7,000
That the section of the line running from the above bridge to the Cobden Bridge at Greymouth, and inclusive of £20,000, the cost of a "slip-bridge," or viaduct, carrying the line over faulty ground on part of its course, cost 78,000
That the continuation of the line from Cobden Bridge to the lower end of the wharf at Greymouth, and exclusive of the wharves, cost 26,000
That the wharves and wharf-reclamations connected with the railway have absorbed 44,000
That on the wharf there are stationed two hydraulic cranes, by which the trucks are lifted into the holds of vessels to be emptied, and these with their connections cost 17,000
And that the rolling-stock in use on the railway, including 257 coal-trucks, has cost 71,000
So that up to the present the total capital value expended on the railway, and on the bridges, wharves, and works in immediate connection with and used by the railway, and on its rolling-stock and cranes, has been £243,000

153. That the expenditure in the construction of the various harbour-works at the Port of Greymouth not directly used by the railway has been as follows:—

		£
On the	South breakwater	158,000
"	North "	45,000
"	Cobden groin north side	5,000
"	Coal Creek training-wall "	8,000
"	Middle " "	4,000
"	Lower " "	11,000
"	Tainui Street " "	3,000
"	Cobden Bridge, contributed by Harbour Board	1,000
"	Reclamation for wharf-frontage not at present utilised	23,000
"	Dredging in river opposite wharves	6,000
"	Offices of Harbour Board and miscellaneous	5,000
"	Tug "Westland" (paddle-steamer)	10,000
		£279,000

154. That the traffic returns of this railway are to some extent, and no doubt a material extent, affected by the passenger- and dray-traffic with sundry gold-mining centres, such as Reefton and others, lying beyond Brunnerton.

155. That the construction of the Midland Railway Company's line, the carriage of its material, and the opening of its first section, to Ahaura, has also contributed in recent times, and will no doubt yet further as it advances contribute, to the returns on this railway.

156. That the great bulk of the returns, however, have till recently been chiefly dependent on the coal-output from the Brunner, Coal-pit Heath, and Wallsend Mines, and upon the passenger- and goods-traffic directly or indirectly connected with the coal industry there.

157. That in the official railway returns giving particulars of the Greymouth Railway the cost of the opened railway at Greymouth in March, 1889, is set down as £199,121

The revenue, 1888–89, at	£27,235	
The expenditure at	14,047	
		£13,188

And the rate per centum of interest yielded thereby at .... £6 12s. 6d.

158. That in a footnote attached thereto it appears that the above sum on which this interest was calculated did not include £127,234 expended on harbour-works by the Government out of Public Works Fund, nor any expenditure by the Greymouth Harbour Board.

159. That the omission of large sums which should have been included in the cost of the railway gives a misleading result in the rate of return assumed to be derived from the traffic, and that the above net revenue, if calculated on a cost of £243,000, as already shown, would give the reduced percentage of £5 8s. 6d.

160. That it is, however, certain that the railway traffic, largely dependent as it is on the coal industry, would not have attained its present magnitude without the construction, at great cost, of harbour-works to give facilities for a large export trade, and so connect the line with ocean traffic.

161. That, in view of the fact, to be afterwards explained, that the colonial funds and credit have to a large extent been utilised to provide funds both for rail and harbour, and that none of the revenues derivable from either are available as colonial revenue, it would, in our opinion, give a better estimate of the position to calculate the revenues from both as the return from the cost of the

railway	£243,000
Plus the cost of harbour-works	279,000
	£522,000

162. That from a return compiled by Mr. C. Y. O'Connor, Marine Engineer, and which appears in the appendix, the Commissioners learn that the net revenues of the Greymouth Harbour Board, which include the earnings of the railway, were to 31st March—

1886–87	.... £12,867, yielding on	£522,000	£2 9s. 3½d. per cent.
1887–88	.... £14,606	"	£2 16s. 0d. "
1888–89	.... £9,470	"	£1 16s. 2½d. "

163. That, having regard to the fact that the Greymouth Harbour Board has borrowed £150,000, at an annual cost of £7,900 for interest and sinking fund payable out of the revenues of the Board as a first charge, the above annual figures may be regarded as reduced by that sum in estimating the yearly return on the original cost, and the capital amount of £522,000 as reduced to £372,000. Thus,—

1886–87....	.... £12,867 – £7,900 = £4,967, yielding per cent.	£1	6s. 8¼d.
1887–88....	.... £14,606 – £7,900 = £6,706, "	£1	16s. 0½d.
1888–89....	.... £9,470 – £7,900 = £1,570, "	£0	8s. 5¼d.

164. That, whilst these figures are sufficiently interesting as a computation of returns, it will be afterwards explained that none of these returns are included in the colonial revenues as a return from colonial expenditure.

165. That the only revenues from the Port of Greymouth which benefit the colonial funds are those derivable from the Customs duties and those levied as general taxation.

166. That the Commissioners are of opinion that the assumed profits derived from the Brunner Railway have been regarded by some as showing that the rates levied under its tariff are too high, and that if the royalties could not be reduced a considerable concession could at least be made on the railway charges.

167. That the above aspect of the railway revenue may be disputed on the ground that it is not usual to combine the cost of a railway to any port with the cost of the harbour-works at that port, nor to mix up the respective revenues from each; and this may be conceded: but an examination of the financial position of the Harbour Board leads us to adopt the view as inevitable under the exceptional nature of the Board's endowments.

168. That, before closing our report under the heading of costs, we may allude to the interests that are involved in the main industry of the port, and utilising the facilities afforded by it. These may thus be summarised:—

169. That the Coal-pit Heath Mine, originally held and worked by Mr. Taylor, was purchased from him by the Westport Coal Company.

170. That the first Tyneside Mine, originally opened and worked by the Greymouth Coal Company, and the first workings by Wallsend shaft, also passed into the possession of the Westport Coal Company, which opened the second or working Wallsend shaft.

171. That the second Tyneside Mine was opened and worked by Mr. Kilgour under a sub-lease from the Westport Coal Company, which ultimately bought out his interest, and re-entered on possession of the whole area.

172. That the Brunner Mine was then the only active one remaining in competition, and was worked by Messrs. Kennedy Bros.

173. That in August, 1888, all these mines were amalgamated by their being handed over to the Grey Valley Coal Company, which was then constituted, and which comprises the interests of the Westport Coal Company to the extent of one-half, Messrs. Kennedy Bros. of one-fourth, and the Union Steamship Company of one-fourth.

174. That since then the Grey Valley Coal Company has had sole control of the coal industry of the Grey Valley, and, inasmuch as the other traffic at that port is so largely contingent on the coal industry, it may be said that, directly or indirectly, the chief traffic of the port and railway, which have involved so large an expenditure of public moneys, has been mainly dependent on the operations of that company, whose interests, by reason of its constitution, are those both of producers and carriers by sea.

175. That two of the interests represented by the Grey Valley Coal Company are also the controlling powers of the coal industry at Westport, although not there associated as at Greymouth.

176. That the Commissioners have no definite evidence of this concentration and association of interests having been used prejudicially to public interests since it was effected, but are of opinion that such monopolies are not beneficial to public interests, and they believe it will be generally conceded that the opening-up of new mines in the district should be fostered, and may avert in the future derangements of trade.

177. That, however this may be, if the amalgamation of interests into one company, and if the advantage that company has by having in its service all the appliances of rail and port, which have cost over half a million of money, undisturbed by competition in the district, does not enable it to carry on the coal industry without loss, the field cannot be worth working, and should never have been opened.

Port of Greymouth.

178. The cost of harbour-works having been given, something remains to be said about the harbour itself, and the Commissioners have therefore to report as follows:—

179. That the works were begun about ten years ago, and had not progressed to any great extent when the present engineer, Mr. Martin, took charge, under the control of the previous Harbour Board.

180. That the plan was designed by Sir John Coode, and has throughout been adhered to, except in a few particulars.

181. That the entrance, which was designed to be 400ft., has since been enlarged to 450ft.

182. That the general scope of the work at the entrance has been that of pushing out, from the points at which the North and South Lagoons emerge upon the river, two training-walls, which, passing across and beyond the beach, form the north and south breakwaters, the south, however, extending about 400ft. farther to seaward than the north, as a protection from the general direction of the heaviest seas.

183. That the south, or chief, breakwater follows the lagoon for a few chains, and then takes a straight course outwards in a north-westerly direction, the whole length being about 50 chains.

184. That the north breakwater takes at first a westerly course along the margin of shoaler water, and curves away to the north-west, parallel with that on the opposite side.

185. That the lower training-wall on the north side lies parallel with the south breakwater, and gathers into one volume between these works the waters of the ebb and flow of the North and South Lagoons, and the whole of the waters of the Grey River, delivering them in a straight course to the mouth.

186. That above the mouth of the North Lagoon the current is diverted from the old beach and drift-beds occurring there by several training-walls—the "Middle" and "Tainui Street," which spring from the beaches and, sweeping round to the direction of the base, throw the current over to the south—and that another training-wall, for the same purpose, springs from the rocky face at the mouth of Coal Creek, and passes under and below Cobden Bridge.

187. That on the south side from the Cobden Bridge, to the mouth of the South Lagoon, lies the retaining-wall along the railway-line, and lower down, the wharf and berthing for the ships, which affords a range of about 1,900ft., and has at its upper end accommodation to the extent of 450ft. with a depth of 10ft., followed by 650ft. with a depth of 12ft., and then 800ft. with a depth of 15ft., at low-water spring-tides.

188. That the straight course of the river below the South Lagoon, and between the breakwater and the lower training-wall, affords a navigable channel in the course of the scour of 23ft. at high-water springs, which, although changing to some extent, is defined by movable beacons above.

189. That the depth of water on the bar is a varying quantity, corresponding to the power exercised in either direction by the contending forces of the sea and of the river, and since 1880 has ranged from a minimum of 10ft. to 12ft. for 305 days in that year, to a maximum for 15 days of the years ending the 31st March, 1888 and 1889, of over 24ft.

190. That during these latter years the range of depth was as follows:—

	1888. Days.	1889. Days.
12ft. to 14ft.	6	1
14ft. to 16ft.	108	11
16ft. to 18ft.	105	60
18ft. to 20ft.	119	146
20ft. to 22ft.	28	99
22ft. to 24ft.	....	33
24ft. and over	....	15

191. That, so far as the depth of water on the bar is concerned, there is a satisfactory improvement observable; but there is, of course, a limit to which expenditure may be carried to effect this, and, without dogmatizing on a point which lies within the domain of engineering skill, that point has, in the opinion of the Commissioners, been already reached.

192. That in support of this opinion the Commissioners would submit the following reasons:—

(1.) That the depth of the bar must bear some proportion to the width of the entrance, which, being limited to 450ft., does not now, and is not likely to, attract a large class of vessels requiring greater depth.

(2.) That the depth of water at berthage at the wharves must also be regarded as a gauge of the requirements on the bar, and the latter has already sufficient water for any vessel that can at present be berthed.

(3.) That between the navigable channel below the lagoons and the wharves there is a bank on which the depth is less than in either of these, and which has not been removed by the scour of the river alone, unaided as it is at that point by the inflow and outflow of the lagoons.

(4.) That, so far as the output of the present mines is concerned, there does not seem much probability of any large increase; (*a*) for the working-places have been diminished, and will not be materially increased without months of pumping in Coal-pit Heath, and extensive fault-proving in the Brunner, (*b*) and because since the amalgamation of interests under the Grey Valley Coal Company the aggregate output of these fell off in 1889 by 10,000 tons, whilst this year the Wallsend Mine has been entirely closed.

(5.) That the public expenditure on that port has more than kept pace with the past extension of the coal industry there.

(6.) That, apart from the depth of either river or bar, the port, from its position, is practically closed on a number of days in the year from stress of weather outside or floods inside, as shown by a table in the appendix; from

which it may be observed that with the depth given above the bar was unworkable—

During the last half of 1887, for 33 days.
" first " 1888, " 30 "
" last " 1888, " 31 "
" first " 1889, " 16 "
" last " 1889, " 17 "
" 10 months, 1890, " 21 "

The last three figures being probably due to finer seasons.

(7.) That by another table given in the appendix, and which, although not showing the delays which may have kept vessels outside, shows the detention from all causes in port after arrival, waiting cargo, loading, and waiting opportunity of leaving, it may be observed that from the 1st April, 1888, to the 31st October, 1890, both inclusive, 1,515 vessels entered the port; and, of these, 497 left the same day, 630 left the following day,—many of which may have only been a tide in port,—188 sailed on the second day, and 89 on the fourth day, and 111 suffered detention from four to ten days or more. As the bar, however, was only closed for four days and over on seven occasions since June, 1887, it is to be presumed that only a few of the vessels included in the latter number were detained from that cause.

Storage.

193. The Commissioners have the honour to report on the subject of storage of coal—

194. That interruption to the working of the mines, or in the shipment of coal, takes place to some extent for short periods, from the absence of storage facilities, either at the port or at the mines themselves.

195. That the only storage at present available is the railway-trucks, of which there are 257, carrying 6 tons each, and these when necessity arises are availed of for this purpose without charge for demurrage.

196. That the railway authorities thus accept delivery of the coal at the mines, convey it to port, a distance of over seven miles, and then either discharge it at once by the use of stationary hydraulic cranes, which lift the truck-hoppers into the holds of the vessels, or keep the coal-trucks till vessels are available.

197. That delays only take place when several vessels come in to load at once, and chiefly after the port has been closed for a few days from the state of the river or bar, when vessels waiting entry come in together.

198. That formerly such delays or interruptions were greater than they are now, when the trucks were not so numerous, and the delays in entering the port were longer and more numerous, and when the different interests representing the mines were each competitors for a supply of trucks.

199. That since the amalgamation under the Grey Valley Coal Company this competition for trucks has ceased; since the port has been improved the entry of vessels day by day has been facilitated; and with the additions to the truck-accommodation increased facilities for storage have been provided.

200. That when delay does occur now it arises from the same causes—tonnage waiting at wharf, the trucks full, and none available at the mines to be filled till those at port have been discharged and are returned to Brunnerton.

201. The storage available in trucks, if pressed to its utmost limit, would accommodate 1,500 tons, or three days' average output; and it will be seen from another part of this report that the delays in shipping do not often exceed such requirements of storage.

202. That, whatever delays of this character take place, they give rise to more or less interruption at the mines, more or less loss of time there, and consequently an increase of broken time to the men, the loss from which falls ultimately on the mine-owners.

203. That the subject of increased storage has been inquired into at considerable length, and suggestions as to the methods of attaining this have been proffered, at Greymouth by Mr. Martin and Mr. Stone, and at Wellington by Mr. O'Connor, and, as their suggestions are too long to incorporate in this report, the Commissioners are compelled to refer for full particulars to their evidence.

204. That these suggestions comprise storage for 2,000 tons, or four days' output.

(*a.*) By supplying bins at the port and near to the wharf to hold the coal and redeliver it into trucks.

(*b.*) By staiths to store and redeliver by shoots into vessels when required.

(*c.*) By increasing the number of wagons, so that the present system might be extended.

(*d.*) By furnishing a larger number of wagon hopper-bodies, which, like those now in use, could be lifted from their wagon-frame and piled on a stage by the travelling-cranes till they could be again replaced on their frames and taken alongside the vessel as at present.

205. That the estimates for these various systems differ very greatly, being for—

	£
(*a.*)	6,000
(*b.*)	30,000
(*c.*)	40,000
(*d.*)	12,000

206. That the coal of this district, or, at all events, of those mines at present in operation, is regarded as "tender," and easily injured by falling or sliding down shoots, although when shipped in an unscreened state the loss is not so great as when screened.

207. That screening at port of delivery or sale is not practicable with consumers who contract for supply of screened, and that this would in any case involve considerable loss in freight on the unmarketable portion of the cargo.

208. That, unlike Westport coal, the slack from this district is regarded and treated as waste, except so far as it can be utilised for coke or fireclay at the mines or sold as unscreened coal to steamers for steam purposes.

209. That, apart from the expense of providing storage, this is a serious element in deciding as to the methods to be employed; for the system which will involve the least handling, and subject the coal to the fewest operations, is evidently to be preferred as causing the least breakage.

210. That storage in either staiths or bins would certainly involve dropping or shooting the coal into them, and, again, dropping it out of them into the trucks or into the vessels, and so increase the proportion of slack.

211. That the supply of 300 wagons of the present form would do little more than double the present system of storage, and would involve a much greater proportionate cost, and probably an extension of siding-accommodation for the extra number of trucks to be managed.

212. That the supply of an equal number of hopper-truck "bodies" without wheel-carriages would admit of their being lifted with their contents and piled on staging, there to remain for vessels on arrival, whilst the present number of wheel-frames would be sufficient to carry on the running-traffic with the "bodies" now in use.

213. That, notwithstanding the opinions received that the damage complained of by the consumers is due to rough treatment in delivering out of the wagons, it seems to the Commissioners highly probable that it is in much greater measure caused by the necessary trimming of the coal after it is in the hold by shovelling it away from under the hatches, and, again, on its being delivered out of the hold to the drays, and by the drays at the point of consumption.

214. That it has further to be considered in respect of storage that, whilst at present there are only the mines of the Grey Valley Coal Company to provide for, there is an early prospect of those at Stillwater and Blackball being opened up, and, later on, those of the Cobden Coal Company and the Point Elizabeth Coal Company, all of which may send their output wholly or partially to the port, whilst the above extent of storage, with its cost and estimates, only takes into account the present output from the Grey Valley Company's mines.

215. That there is yet a further consideration—namely, the question of who or what body is to find the funds for the construction of those works.

216. That the position of the Greymouth Harbour Board and its finances have already been given, showing that there are at present no funds available out of which such expensive works could be constructed.

217. That, on the other hand, it is difficult to allege any just reason why the whole of these costs should be borne by the Board.

218. That in other centres coal-owners or coal-consignees have to take delivery of consignments from the railway-trucks as they arrive at point of destination, and if they do not effect this within a limited time they are liable for demurrage to the Railway Commissioners.

219. That, this being so, the system of storing free of cost is exceptional, and apparently limited to the West Coast; but that, in any case, there is no reason for thinking that coal-owners would themselves bear the burden of storage, in the same way in which goods of other classes are charged.

220. That it is doubtful, however, whether it is contemplated by the owners thus to increase the vested capital of their mines, and also whether such storage-accommodation, if supplied by the Board, would command an increase of revenue equivalent to the expenditure, seeing that the pressure is always for a reduction of cost.

221. That it is to be remembered in respect of the staith or bin system that different classes of coal are delivered by the Grey Valley Coal Company, which, to prevent admixture, must occupy separate bins, and that, with the opening-up of the other mines referred to, still more numerous subdivisions of storage-accommodation would be necessary; and also that there may be more or less trouble arising from competitive demand for the successive use of such divisions.

222. That it has been discussed to some extent in Mr. Martin's evidence as to who should pay the cost of this accommodation if constructed by the Board, and it has also been suggested that each coal-owner requiring such accommodation should have it provided at his own cost, on terms somewhat similar to those on which private sidings are provided by the Railway Commissioners—namely, paying first cost and having ten years' tenure rent free.

223. That, apart from the consideration of this subject given above, there is another method by which this difficulty may be overcome, and which has been suggested—namely, that the mine-owners themselves should provide storage at the pit-mouth. In this case also what has previously been represented with respect to damage from frequent handling would apply; and, further, it has been represented that storage at that point would not obviate the pressure upon the railway traffic arising from the intermittent character of the trade.

224. That, from a railway point of view, authorities are divided, and the opinion seems to have some weight that storage at the port itself would enable delivery to take place by cranes at once, whilst the traffic was being continued in the ordinary way, and that hands in the railway service could be more continuously occupied by this method, and thus fewer required. On the other hand, it seems difficult to realise that with a short railway-line such as the Greymouth–Brunner line additional trains could not be kept going to draw away the supply of coal if there was such supply stored at the mines.

225. That no doubt additional locomotive-power would be required, but, in the opinion of the Commissioners, such considerations should not weigh if there be additional traffic to warrant it.

226. That, before anything is decided in respect to this question, sufficient time should be given for properly weighing all the surrounding difficulties or advantages of any of these systems. But the Commissioners incline to the opinion that expenditure out of public funds is not at present advisable, in view of the fact that the coal industry is at present in one ownership, which has had, as already pointed out, provided for them all the advantages and benefits from a large expenditure, and that regard should be had to the documents hereinafter to be referred to, and which show the extent of interruptions to the shipping arising from the state of the river or bar.

Greymouth Harbour Board.

227. That, in order to a better comprehension of the position of the Greymouth Harbour Board, its endowments and finances, the Commissioners have shown in the appendix the clauses of various Acts which bear on the subject, and to which they would refer for the text of such enactments.

228. That from "The Westland and Nelson Coalfields Administration Act, 1877," it appears that the Westland-Grey Coal Reserve therein scheduled, and the moneys arising therefrom, were set apart as a security for the sum of £114,439 1s. expended on the Greymouth-Brunner Coalfield Railway up to the 31st December, 1876, and for any subsequent expenditure thereon, till repaid with interest at 5 per cent.

229. That by the same Act the Nelson-Grey Coal Reserve, and the moneys arising therefrom, also scheduled, were similarly set apart as a security for the sum of £27,200 expended on the same line up to 31st December, 1876, and for any subsequent expenditure thereon, till repaid with interest at 5 per cent.

230. That a special account was provided for all rents, royalties, fees, and other moneys arising from the sale, lease, or occupation of these reserves, out of which were to be paid, first, the above interest, and next, the sums thus secured, special mention being made of the expenses of the said railway.

231. That finally it was provided that, when by such means the interest and principal sums so secured over these reserves should be fully paid, the rents, &c., arising from each of them were to be treated as an endowment for the Harbour Board at the time being for the improvement of the Port of Greymouth; and if no such Harbour Board existed they were to be regarded as land revenue, and paid into the Land Fund.

232. That "The Greymouth Harbour Board Act, 1884," and a second Act of same name passed in same year, endowed the Board with the following:—

(1.) The rents, royalties, fees, &c., and all moneys arising from the lease, occupation, or other disposal of these reserves as already described.
(2.) The net profits of the Greymouth-Brunner Coalfield Railway.
(3.) All wharfage and tonnage rates, and charges for the use of staiths, and other charges on coals, less the cost of collecting same.

The Board, however, was not authorised to exercise authority or control over the Railway Wharf, or alter any charges in respect of it, the control being reserved to the authority administering the railway.

233. That the Board was empowered to borrow, on the security of its endowments, £150,000 at or under 6 per cent., for the construction or completion of the harbour-works in, or towards the improvement of, the harbour; and the Governor in Council, if satisfied that the Board had revenues sufficient to meet the interest and provide a sinking fund on the same, was empowered to declare such loan and interest to be guaranteed. If, however, under such guarantee any advances from the Consolidated Fund should become necessary, the amounts of same were to be charged against the revenue of the Board, and repaid by the Board, with a sinking fund to liquidate their amounts.

234. That the rents, royalties, and other moneys arising from the Westland-Grey and the Nelson-Grey Coal Reserves, which, by "The Westland and Nelson Coalfields Administration Act, 1877," constituted securities for the repayment of the sums of £114,439 1s. and £27,200 respectively, having been constituted by the last-quoted Act an endowment for the Harbour Board, it was now, in the Act of 1884 (section 12), provided that "so soon as £100,000 had been spent out of public moneys in the improvement of the harbour there shall be paid, in respect of every ton of coal brought for shipment in the said harbour, by the shipper thereof, a sum of 3d. as a special rate for the purpose of being applied towards the repayment of the moneys authorised to be borrowed under this Act and the interest thereon, and to the repayment of the sums of £114,439 1s. and £27,200 charged upon the Westland-Grey Coal Reserve and the Nelson-Grey Coal Reserve respectively by 'The Westland and Nelson Coalfields Administration Act, 1877,' together with interest on the said sums. The aforesaid rate shall be collected as and from such day and by such persons as the Governor may from time to time appoint, and when collected shall be paid to the Board, to be applied by it for the purpose hereinbefore mentioned."

235. That by another Act, in 1885 (Railways Authorisation), the Greymouth Harbour Board was authorised, for the purposes of carrying out harbour-works, with the approval of the Governor in Council, to make additions or alterations to the rolling-stock, buildings, and plant, and to construct railways and sidings.

236. That the Board has exercised to the full extent of £150,000 the borrowing-powers conferred upon it, the rate of interest being 4 per cent., with a sinking fund of 1 per cent.; and that this loan has been guaranteed by the Government as a colonial loan.

237. That the interest has been duly met and the sinking fund paid into the hands of the Sinking Fund Commissioners, and that the latter has accumulated to about £5,000.

238. That the Board is also indebted to the Colonial Treasury in a sum of £6,000 (more or less), on which is charged 4½ per cent. interest in current account, and the principal of which is chargeable against the revenue of and repayable by the Board in terms of the Act of 1884, already quoted.

239. That before that Act had been passed the sum of £100,000 and more had already been expended out of public moneys in the improvement of the harbour, but that the rate of 3d. per ton payable thereafter by shippers of coal has never been collected, nor has any appointment been as yet made of persons to collect it.

240. That up to December, 1884, the harbour-works were carried on under the supervision of the Public Works Department, and the expenditure had then amounted to £127,000
From that date till March, 1888, they were controlled and supervised by a local Board appointed under the Act, and having in its constitution certain local representation. This Board expended 122,000
From April, 1888, to March, 1890, inclusive, the present Board has regulated the expenditure, which has amounted in that period to 43,000
These sums, together with a contribution to the cost of the Cobden Bridge of 1,000

Make up a total on harbour-works of £293,000

241. That the present Board is not in any sense a representative Board, but, whilst complying with the Act of 1884, consists entirely of officers in the employment of the Government, the office of Chairman being occupied by the Resident Engineer, and the remaining members being the Resident Magistrate, the Chief Postmaster, the Railway Manager, the Collector of Customs, the Assistant Engineer at Westport, and the Clerk of the Resident Magistrate's Court at Greymouth.

242. That this Board now exercises, with the consent of the Marine Engineer, all the functions and powers conferred by the Act of 1884, and controls the works and expenditure on the harbour to the extent which the surplus revenue and Treasury advances will admit, and that its functions comprise not only harbour works in the ordinary sense, but such additions and alterations to the railway and railway plant as are deemed desirable for the furtherance of its trade, as, for instance, those quoted as still advisable or in contemplation.

243. That, whilst the Board is thus an exceptional one (although Westport is somewhat similar), and cannot be said to be a local Board in the sense that that term is used elsewhere, and whilst the expenditure is thus placed in the hands of the Government, the system has at least one merit—that it tends to obviate recurring applications for further votes.

244. That of the £522,000 of expenditure on harbour and railway already shown, the loan has provided £150,000
There has been expended out of surplus revenue (see Mr. Martin's evidence) 49,700
The Treasury has advanced against future revenue 6,000
And the amount which has been at one time or another expended out of public moneys has amounted to 316,300

£522,000

245. That, whilst expending surplus revenue in permanent works, it does not appear that the provisions of the Acts quoted as to the repayment of the loan of £150,000, or of the costs of railway charged against the Nelson-Grey

and the Westland-Grey coal reserves, amounting to £114,439 1s. and £27,200 respectively, and subsequently provided for by a special rate of 3d. per ton on coal, have been complied with, except in respect of the payment of a sinking fund of 1 per cent. on the loan.

246. That the expenditure of public money at Greymouth is shown to have been very large, and, whilst the Act of 1877 creates an obligation confirmed by and provided for by the Act of 1884 to recoup the expenditure on railway up to December, 1876, the further expenditure between those dates and subsequently to the later date has not been made the basis of an extension of that obligation, but is in the same category as the sums mentioned.

247. That it does not seem to be certain that the work on the harbour is regarded as finished; so that the expenditure has apparently not yet ceased. In the evidence of Mr. Martin, Chairman and Engineer of the Board, mention is made of further works which are contemplated—viz., an extension of both breakwaters seawards, at a cost dependent upon the extent to which they may be carried, but at a probable cost of £40,000
A continuation of Tainui Street training-wall 5,000
And for dredging opposite the wharves 8,000

£53,000

248. That the non-collection of the special rate of 3d. has operated since 1884 as a remission to that extent of the rates leviable upon the coal-owners or the carriers by sea.

249. That it is unusual to expect the capital cost of a railway to be recouped by any impost chargeable against those who use it, and in the present case 3d. per ton on the export of coal, assuming it at 160,000 tons annually, would amount to only £2,000, or 16s. 5½d. per cent. upon the £243,000 to which the cost of the railway has swelled. On the other hand, it is to be remembered that the railway revenue in the Grey Valley, unlike other districts, is in no sense colonial revenue, but is paid over to the Harbour Board to meet as a first charge the interest on loan, and thereafter with other revenues to be spent locally.

INSPECTION.

250. That, as regards this subject, the Commissioners are impressed with the belief that the inspection of mines should be attended to in a direction beyond that which appears from the published reports to be generally undertaken.

251. That in respect of the inspection provided for the purpose of preventing accident and, so far as practicable, protecting the men working in the mines from injury, it is alleged by some of the witnesses that more frequent visits are required, and that the hazardous features of a mine may arise and result injuriously in the intervals between such visits as are at present made.

252. That, besides the above necessity for inspection, the Government in this colony has interests equivalent to those of any landlord who in leasing coal-areas appoints in his own interests a check viewer to control the lessees' operations, and prevent the mine being worked in any way to the loss or disadvantage of the lessor.

253. That it is probable that as lessors the Government would find public interests conserved, mines kept in better condition, and revenues therefrom better maintained, if Inspectors were charged with this aspect of the matter as well as the first as a special duty, and their authority extended so far as necessary to attain this object.

Given at Wellington under our hands and seals this twenty-sixth day of November, 1890.

JAMES HECTOR,
Chairman.
R. W. MOODY.
WILLIAM BROWN.

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS.

WEDNESDAY, 8TH OCTOBER, 1890.

THE Commissioners arrived in Greymouth by coach, *viâ* the Christchurch and West Coast route, at 6 p.m.

THURSDAY, 9TH OCTOBER, 1890.

The Commissioners, after conferring with Mr. Martin, District Engineer, and Mr. Stone, Traffic Manager, proceeded to Brunner by train, in company with Mr. Martin, and were shown over the works by Mr. Bishop, the mine-manager. An inspection of the mines was deferred to a future date.

In the three local papers—namely, at Greymouth and Brunner—the following advertisement was directed to be inserted from Thursday, 9th October, until Monday, 13th :—"Grey Valley Coal Commission.—The Commissioners appointed by His Excellency the Governor to examine into the Greymouth coal-mining dispute, will hold their first sitting for taking evidence at 10 a.m. on Monday next, at the Greymouth Harbour Board Office. All persons who are desirous of tendering evidence, or who desire to make any representation to the Commissioners, should at once give notice of the same, addressed to the Secretary to the Commission at the above office.—By order of the Commissioners.—H. M. GORE, Secretary."

FRIDAY, 10TH OCTOBER, 1890.

The Commissioners met in the Harbour Board Offices, Greymouth, at 10 a.m.

Present : Messrs. William Brown, R. W. Moody, and Sir James Hector.

Sir James Hector was elected Chairman of the Commission.

The Commission was read by the Secretary.

The day was spent arranging course of procedure, which was fully discussed and formally drawn up in the following form :—

Clause I.—A : Extent of interruption. B : Causes of interruption—(*a*) Breakdown of mine ; (*b*) harbour defects ; (*c*) storage (short) ; (*d*) short shipping ; (*e*) strikes.

Clause II. — Remedies for interruption (better storage) — A, by Crown ; B, by lessees ; C, by miners.

Clause III.—Wages (possible)—A : Before March, 1890—(*a*) Hewing and getting ; (*b*) regulations as to size of coal ; (*c*) all other regulations and conditions affecting winning and obtaining by miners—viz., (1) miners' regulations, (2) engine-power, (3) plant and appliances, (4) miners' accommodation and rents, (5) hours and broken time, (6) store system, (7) general wages in district, (8) pillar-workings, (9) trucking and hauling, &c. (dead work), (10) dead work (prospecting and exploring), (11) number of men mining coal, coke, mining and working fireclay, dead work, exploring. B : Same after 8th March, 1890.

Clause IV.—Cost—A : History of leases—(*a*) Rents and royalties ; (*b*) if at any time suspended or modified. B : Carriage, mine to port—(*a*) Previous to railway ; (*b*) by railway. C : Sea-carriage—(*a*) Previous to present harbour-works ; (*b*) since construction of harbour-works ; (*c*) to ports of New Zealand ; (*d*) to ports in Australia. D : Prices obtained by lessees (various ports). E : Cost of lessee, head office administration—(1) In Dunedin, (2) local office, (3) mine-management. F : Coal, coke, and fireclay. G : Annual reports for some years—(1) Tonnage on which wages paid, (2) tonnage exported, (3) waste from slack. H : Probable total quantity accessible. I : Cost of appliances—(1) Prime cost, (2) transfer value, (3) present value. J : Interest on the market-value of the properties—(1) In past times, (2) for the future.

Clause V. — Process of working — A, Brunner ; B, Coal-pit Heath ; C, Wallsend. A : (1) Present system of working, (2) possible improvements, (3) method of disposing of slack, (4) turning slack to better advantage, (5) sufficiency and safety of working-plant. B : Same. C : Same, and why stopped. D : General administration—(1) Present system of working, (2) possible improvements.

Clause VI.—Miscellaneous—A : Prospective coal-mines.

SATURDAY, 11TH OCTOBER, 1890.

The Commissioners met at 10 a.m.

Present : All the Commissioners.

The minutes of the previous sittings were read and confirmed.

Schedules were prepared of the points on which information will be required by the Commissioners from the following gentlemen : Messrs. Martin, District Engineer ; Stone, Traffic Manager ; M. Kennedy, managing director, Grey Valley Coal Company ; J. Bishop, mine-manager. Letters were directed to be sent to each of these gentlemen, enclosing this schedule of evidence required of them.

A letter was directed to be sent to Mr. S. Andrew, Secretary to the Miners' Association, Brunnerton, informing him that the Commissioners will be prepared to hear evidence in reference

to the application to the Government, and asking him to state what time and place would be most convenient for him to appear before the Commissioners.

The Commissioners passed the remainder of the sitting examining plans and documents connected with the inquiry.

The Commissioners adjourned at 1 p.m. to Monday, the 13th October.

MONDAY, 13TH OCTOBER, 1890.

The Commissioners met at 10 a.m.

Present: All the Commissioners.

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and confirmed.

The Chairman read telegrams received from the Hon. the Premier and the Under Colonial Secretary, authorising the Commissioners to summon such witnesses as they might find necessary, and the payment of expenses where unavoidable.

Mr. Martin Kennedy, having been sworn, gave evidence before the Commission. His evidence was taken down.

The Commissioners adjourned at 4 p.m. to 10 a.m. the next day.

TUESDAY, 14TH OCTOBER, 1890.

The Commissioners met at 9.30 a.m.

Present: All the Commissioners.

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and confirmed.

Mr. Martin Kennedy attended and resumed his evidence, which was concluded at 1 p.m. His evidence was taken down.

Mr. Andrews and Mr. Boase waited on the Commission on behalf of the Amalgamated Miners' and Labourers' Association of New Zealand, and a letter was received from Mr. Andrew stating that they will be prepared to offer evidence on the subject of miners' wages and other points at Brunnerton, and requesting that the public be admitted to the inquiry, and that a memorandum of the chief points of evidence should be furnished to them.

The Commissioners replied by letter, enclosing the following memorandum of the principal points concerning which evidence would be sought from the miners, and fixing, as suggested by Mr. Andrew, Monday, the 20th, at 10.30 a.m., as the time of first sitting at Brunnerton. The Commissioners also explained that the inquiry in its present stage should be a private one, each witness being separately examined, and asking Mr. Andrew to suggest a list of names of witnesses:—

Memorandum of some Points, among others, on which the Commissioners desire to obtain Evidence from the Miners at Brunnerton.

1. As to the dates on which interruptions to the working of the mines have occurred, and the periods for which such interruptions continued in each case.
2. How far these interruptions have arisen from the condition of the mines or from the action of the management.
3. To what extent they may have arisen from deficient provision having been made for the storage of coal at the mine, at the railway, or at the shipping port.
4. Particular evidence will be required as to the extent to which interruptions have been due to strikes or lock-outs.
5. As to the causes which have led to such stoppages of the working, and as to the points which are at present in dispute between the miners and their employers.
6. As to the wages (actual and possible) which have been or might have been earned by coal-hewers, truckers, and surfacemen, together with any earnings for extras for which the men are paid, and distinguishing the period previous to 8th March from the period following.
7. As to the cost of living at Brunnerton, such as rents, prices of food, fuel, and clothing.
8. As to the remedies which the miners have already suggested, or may be prepared to suggest, for the avoidance of interruptions in future.
9. As to the existence of any restrictions which are imposed on the miners, either by their own rules or those of the management, which may affect the daily output of the mines.
10. As to the size of coal produced and paid for to the miners, and the amount of solid and pillar coal respectively, and the condition of the latter, so far as it affects its comparative facility for being worked.
11. As to how far special rules and regulations and by-laws of the mines are satisfactory, and if they are in any way oppressive or unsuitable to the circumstances of the mine.
12. As to the efficiency of the engine-plant and other appliances for securing delivery of the output and keeping the mines in good condition.
13. As to the hours per week worked by hewers, truckers, and surfacemen, and what broken time the men have, if any, and the causes which lead to same.
14. As to the number of men employed in hewing, trucking, and on the surface, and how far that number obtain full-time work with the average output of the mine.
15. As to the general rates of wages in the district obtained by persons not connected with the collieries.
16. As to what waste of coal takes place at the mines from slack or other causes.
17. As to any complaints the miners or other workmen have to allege against the general administration of the mines.

A letter was received from Mr. W. S. Smith, on behalf of the Point Elizabeth Coal-mining Company, tendering evidence bearing on the question of terminal rates proposed by the Railway Commissioners. Mr. Smith was asked to attend.

The Commissioners adjourned at 5 p.m. to 9.30 the next day.

WEDNESDAY, 15TH OCTOBER, 1890.

The Commissioners met pursuant to adjournment.

Present: All the Commissioners.

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and confirmed.

Mr. F. W. Martin, District Engineer, was sworn and examined. His evidence was taken down.

The afternoon was spent in examining accounts and evidence.

The Commissioners adjourned at 5 p.m.

THURSDAY, 16TH OCTOBER, 1890.

The Commissioners met pursuant to adjournment at 9.30 a.m.

Present: All the Commissioners.

The following witnesses were sworn, and gave evidence before the Commission: viz., Messrs. Joseph Kilgour, William Smith, and Joseph Taylor. Their evidence was taken down.

The Commissioners adjourned at 5 p.m. to 9.30 the next day.

FRIDAY, 17TH OCTOBER, 1890.

The Commissioners met pursuant to adjournment.

Present: All the Commissioners.

The minutes of the two previous meetings were read and confirmed.

Messrs. James Bishop, mine-manager, Brunnerton, and Hugh Calders were sworn, and gave evidence before the Commission. The evidence of these witnesses was taken down.

The Commissioners adjourned at 5 p.m. to the next day.

SATURDAY, 18TH OCTOBER, 1890.

The Commissioners met pursuant to adjournment.

Present: All the Commissioners.

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and confirmed.

The forenoon was employed in examining accounts, plans, and documents, and in consultation with the District Engineer.

The Commissioners adjourned at 1 p.m. to the following Monday.

MONDAY, 20TH OCTOBER, 1890.

The Commissioners proceeded to Brunnerton by the 9.30 train by appointment, but, finding that no suitable room had been prepared, returned at once with the only witness called, and resumed at 11 a.m. in the Harbour Board Office.

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and confirmed.

Mr. Samuel Andrew, having been sworn, gave evidence before the Commission. His evidence was taken down.

The Commissioners adjourned at 4.30 p.m. to the next day.

TUESDAY, 21ST OCTOBER, 1890.

The Commissioners met at 9.30 a.m.

Present: All the Commissioners.

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and confirmed.

Messrs. A. B. Lindop, Richard Armstrong, and G. A. Ancell, having been sworn, gave evidence before the Commission. Their evidence was taken down.

The Commissioners adjourned at 5 p.m. to the next day.

WEDNESDAY, 22ND OCTOBER, 1890.

The Commissioners met at 9.30 a.m.

Present: All the Commissioners.

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and confirmed.

Mr. W. S. Smith gave further evidence before the Commissioners, and Messrs. William Clementson and Thomas Robertson, having been sworn, also gave evidence. The evidence of all these witnesses was taken down.

The Commissioners adjourned at 5 p.m.

THURSDAY, 23RD OCTOBER, 1890.

The Commissioners met at 9.30 a.m.

Present: All the Commissioners.

The Commissioners spent the day examining plans, documents, and accounts, and adjourned at 5 p.m. to the next day.

FRIDAY, 24TH OCTOBER, 1890.

The Commissioners met at 9.30 a.m.

Present: All the Commissioners.

The minutes of the two previous meetings were read and confirmed.

Messrs. John Connor, Harbourmaster, John Gills, Richard Newton, and William Stone, District Railway Manager, having been sworn, gave evidence before the Commission. The evidence of all these witnesses was taken down.

The Commissioners adjourned at 5 p.m. to the next day.

SATURDAY, 25TH OCTOBER, 1890.

The Commissioners met at 9.30 a.m.

Present: All the Commissioners.

Mr. Richard Nancarrow, having been sworn, gave evidence before the Commission, and Mr. Martin Kennedy, re-examined, gave further evidence.

The Commissioners adjourned at 1 p.m. to Monday, the 27th.

MONDAY, 27TH OCTOBER, 1890.

The Commissioners met at 9 a.m.

Present: All the Commissioners.

The minutes of the two previous meetings were read and confirmed.

Mr. Hugh Calders, re-examined, gave further evidence, and Mr. William Dunn, having been sworn, gave evidence, before the Commission. The evidence of both these witnesses was taken down.

The Commissioners spent the afternoon considering points of evidence and perusing the various exhibits, and adjourned at 5 p.m. to the next day.

TUESDAY, 28TH OCTOBER, 1890.

The Commissioners met at 9.30 a.m.

Present: All the Commissioners.

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and confirmed.

Messrs. F. W. Martin, District Engineer, and James Bishop, mine-manager, were re-examined, and gave further evidence before the Commissioners. The evidence of these witnesses was taken down.

The Commissioners adjourned at 5 p.m. to the next day.

WEDNESDAY, 29TH OCTOBER, 1890.

The Commissioners proceeded by the 9.30 train to Ahaura and Brunnerton, where they examined the mine and the different faults, and returned to Greymouth at 5.45 p.m.

THURSDAY, 30TH OCTOBER, 1890.

The Commissioners met at 9.30 a.m.

Present: All the Commissioners.

The minutes of the two previous meetings were read and confirmed.

Messrs. W. H. Boase, John Roberts, John Morris, and John Green, having been sworn, gave evidence before the Commission. Their evidence was taken down.

The Commissioners adjourned at 5 p.m.

FRIDAY, 31ST OCTOBER, 1890.

The Commissioners spent the day inspecting the mines at Brunnerton.

SATURDAY, 1ST NOVEMBER, 1890.

The Commissioners left Greymouth by the 9.30 train to Ahaura, and thence proceeded by coach to Reefton, and on Monday, 3rd November, journeyed by coach from Reefton to Westport.

TUESDAY, 4TH NOVEMBER.

The Commissioners examined the coal-staiths and other arrangements in connection with coal-storage, after which a formal meeting was held, at which all the Commissioners were present.

Mr. T. J. Waters, engineer to the Westport Coal Company, gave evidence before the Commission. His evidence was taken down.

The Commissioners adjourned at 5.30 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, 5TH NOVEMBER, 1890.

The Commissioners proceeded to Denniston, where they examined the coal-mines; and in the afternoon they took the evidence of Messrs. T. Brown, mine-manager, and J. Lomas, chairman of the Amalgamated Miners' and Labourers' Association. The Chairman proceeded to Wellington by steamer direct in the afternoon.

THURSDAY, 6TH NOVEMBER, 1890.

The Commissioners spent the day in examining the harbour-works and appliances for coal at Westport, and in seeing soundings of the bar taken; and on Friday, 7th November, proceeded overland by coach to Nelson, where they arrived on Saturday evening, reaching Wellington by steamer on the following Monday evening.

TUESDAY, 11TH NOVEMBER, 1890.

The Commissioners met in the Cabinet-room, Parliament Buildings, Wellington, at 2.30 p.m.

Present: All the Commissioners.

Mr. Brown reported the evidence taken by himself and Mr. Moody on the 5th November at Denniston.

WEDNESDAY, 12TH NOVEMBER, 1890.

The Commissioners sat during the day considering their report.

THURSDAY, 13TH NOVEMBER, 1890.

The Commissioners took the evidence of Mr. C. Y. O'Connor, Marine Engineer for the Colony, and further considered their report.

FRIDAY, 14TH NOVEMBER, 1890.

The Commissioners were engaged during the day further considering their report.

SATURDAY, 15TH NOVEMBER, 1890.

The Commissioners examined Mr. J. McKerrow, Chief Commissioner of Railways for the Colony.

MONDAY, 17TH NOVEMBER, 1890.

The Commissioners further considered their report, and in the afternoon examined Mr. Robert Wilson, chief engineer and general manager of the New Zealand Midland Railway.

TUESDAY, 18TH NOVEMBER, 1890.

On this day, and on Wednesday, the 19th, Thursday, the 20th, Friday, the 21st, and Saturday, the 22nd November, the Commissioners sat and considered their report.

WEDNESDAY, 26TH NOVEMBER, 1890.

The final revise of the report was brought up and signed by the Commissioners, and the Chairman was authorised to forward it to the Minister of Public Works for the information of His Excellency the Governor.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

LIST OF WITNESSES.

Mr. Martin Kennedy, managing director, Grey Valley Coal Company.
Mr. F. W. Martin, district engineer, Greymouth.
Mr. J. Kilgour, coal proprietor.
Mr. W. Smith, coal proprietor.
Mr. J. Taylor, coal proprietor.
Mr. J. Bishop, mine manager, Brunnerton.
Mr. H. Calders, Chief Postmaster, Greymouth.
Mr. S. Andrews, miner, and secretary Miners' Association, Brunnerton.
Mr. A. B. Lyndop, mining engineer.
Mr. R. Armstrong, miner.
Mr. G. A. Ancell, miner.
Mr. W. Clementson, miner.
Mr. T. Robertson, miner.
Mr. J. Connor, Harbourmaster, Greymouth.
Mr. J. Gills, miner.
Mr. R. Newton, miner.
Mr. W. Stone, District Railway Manager, Greymouth-Brunner Railway.
Mr. R. Nancarrow, agent for the Union Steamship Company, Greymouth.
Mr. W. Dunn, miner.
Mr. W. H. Boase, secretary, Wharf Labourers' Union, Greymouth.
Mr. J. Roberts, miner and underground manager.
Mr. J. Morris, deputy and fireman.
Mr. J. Green, miner and underground manager.
Mr. T. J. Waters, C.E., engineer to the Westport Coal Company.
Mr. T. Brown, mine manager of Westport Coal Company.
Mr. J. Lomas, miner, and chairman of the Amalgamated Miners' and Labourers' Association.
Mr. C. Y. O'Connor, C.E., Marine Engineer of the colony.
Mr. J. McKerrow, Chief Commissioner of Railways of the colony.
Mr. R. Wilson, C.E., engineer-in-chief and general manager of the New Zealand Midland Railway Company.

MONDAY, 13TH OCTOBER, 1890.

Mr. MARTIN KENNEDY sworn and examined.

1. *The Chairman.*] What is your position, Mr. Kennedy?—I am managing director of the Grey Valley Coal Company (Limited).

2. I think you have had a copy of the Commission sent to you?—Yes.

3. I may explain, as I dare say you are aware, that this Commission has been issued by His Excellency the Governor, partly in consequence of a letter written by you on the 16th July to the Government, and partly in consequence of subsequent communications received from Messrs. Andrews, Lomas, and Newton on behalf of the Miners' Association?—Yes.

4. I think there are one or two points in this letter upon which the Commissioners are desirous of obtaining more information, but it would perhaps first be as well for you to answer a few questions we wish to ask. We understand from your letter that the work in the mine has been interrupted?—At the time that letter was written it was threatened to be interrupted.

5. It has since taken place?—Yes; what I apprehended at the time occurred immediately after I wrote the letter.

6. There was dissatisfaction existing at that time amongst the miners?—No; the dissatisfaction at that time was on our own part. As I explained in my letter, up to the 8th March previous we used to pay on the net-weight system on the screened coal, and at that time we had no profits in the strict sense of the word, and we only had a very small margin towards permanent charges. Then the Grey Valley Miners' Association gave notice that they wished to be paid on the gross weight, or unscreened coal.

7. How was that notice given?—In writing to the manager.

8. Who was it signed by?—By Mr. Andrews, the secretary.

9. Was that in consequence of a meeting of the miners?—I do not know.

10. Have you got that notice?—Mr. Bishop will have it. The fortnight's notice was to terminate on the 10th March. Unless the mode of payment was changed they would strike. I then came here for the purpose of trying to get it settled to prevent a strike. After a good deal of negotiation we found we could not alter their determination that they would have a change to what was an equivalent in the gross for the net weight. We had previously entered upon a test on the same question. It was quite a year before (Mr. Bishop has the exact date) when they were press-

ing for the gross weight. It was then made a question to be dealt with under the form of arbitration, or reference to accountants. Major Keddell was to act as referee if there happened to be any difference between the accountants, but, there being no difference, Major Keddell's services were not required.

11. Can that form of arbitration be produced?—Yes; and that would show that the equivalent rate then was about 2s. 3d.

12. I understand, then, that as the result of arbitration previous to the present dispute you arrived at a basis?—Yes; we arrived at what was an equivalent in gross weight to the then net-weight payment—that was, 2s. 3d. to 2s. 5d. as against 4s.

13. *Mr. Moody.*] You did not make an alteration then?—No; they would not take it then, as at that time we made a proposition to them in this way: We said, "We will give you your choice as to whether you shall continue on the net-weight system, but we will check the accounts, and when they are ascertained you can still take your choice whether you will continue on the same system."

14. *The Chairman.*] Then, when the result was ascertained they chose to go on with the net weight?—Yes; they elected to continue on the old system. They had an idea in their own minds that it would run out to 3s. When they found it would run to 2s. 6d. and 2s. 8d. they said, "We will continue as we are."

15. That was entirely at their own option?—Yes; they elected to continue on the old system, and continued until early in March last, when by their notice dated 24th February to cease work unless payment was made at 2s. 10d. ton on gross weight. We then referred them to the old arbitration, and said, "If you will persist in demanding payment on gross weight we will adopt these figures." They replied, "No; we will have the district rate as paid at Westport," which was 2s. 10d. And as a choice of evils we gave way as to Wallsend and Coal-pit Heath Mines.

16. They did not insist that 2s. 10d. was the equivalent of 4s.?—No; they insisted on a district rate.

17. *Mr. Moody.*] What was the rate at Reefton?—There was no regular rate there that I know of.

18. *The Chairman.*] What do you mean by a district rate?—Well, it was in such an area as the association chose to cover. In this case it meant Westport and Greymouth. We did not recognise it until we were forced to do so at their dictation.

19. *Mr. Moody.*] Were they paid on the net production at Westport?—No, on the gross. For some years they were paid on net weight, but some five years ago they had a dispute which was settled by paying on gross weight.

20. *The Chairman.*] Now we come to the particular rates. How did the pillar-coal get into the dispute? Who raised the question first?—The mine-manager raised the question.

21. In what form?—The Brunner working was all pillars, and the manager, finding a heavy loss resulting from working, stopped them about January of that year, and work was only resumed in that district on the 10th of March, as stated. The position of the Brunner Mine at the present time is, that the only solid coal workable is to the dip, and to work that we want more special pumping appliances, which are not there yet, but are being provided by electric power. The coal available in the Brunner Mine to work at the present time is pillar-coal only, and these pillars being considerably crushed and soft, the percentage of round coal is much less in consequence. We said then that this was practically filling coal, not hewing. We imagined, or, at least, the manager asserted, that the men could make wages at 1s. 6d. per ton: 2s. was what we offered them first for pillar-work in Brunner and 2s. 4d. in Coal-pit Heath, but, secondly, 2s. 4d. in Brunner and 2s. 6d. in Coal-pit Heath.

22. Was this subsequent to the 8th March?—No, it was early in March.

23. Was it discussed apart from the former question of gross and net?—It was discussed simultaneously. When we found we could not get them to accept our offer, we conceded 2s. 10d. in the Wallsend and Coal-pit Heath rather than have a strike. That is, 2s. 10d. per ton all round for gross in both mines. They would make no distinction. Their iron heel was on us, which we recognised for two years before, and we had to accede. On account of the Brunner pillars being badly crushed, we offered them 2s. 3d., although 2s. was what we considered a fair wage. They would not accept the 2s. 3d., and then I think we increased it to 2s. 4d., but they would not accept that; and then I made them an offer myself of 14s. a day, rather than give them 2s. 10d. They accepted this offer, and went in to work at 14s. a day.

24. That is to say, there was no strike or interruption at that time?—No; we would not resist their demand, exorbitant and tyrannical though it was, because we were under very heavy contracts at the time to supply coal to all the railways and gas companies in New Zealand, the New Zealand Shipping Company, and other steam-users.

25. *Mr. Moody.*] Did you pay that to all the miners, irrespective of their ability?—Yes; every man that went to work at the Brunner pillars was paid at the rate of 14s. a day, and the coal sent out just cost the 2s. 4d. we offered them.

26. *The Chairman.*] How long did that continue?—I think the payment of day-wages only continued two weeks. They then changed from 14s. a day to 2s. 6d. per ton all round, the manager giving way so far, as the cost of supervising day-labour was too great.

27. *Mr. Moody.*] Of course it was all pillar-working?—Yes.

28. *The Chairman.*] Then, the next change?—We found in working that we were losing very heavily at these rates, and we gave notice, by letter dated the 30th June, of a conditional reduction of 20 per cent. on the hewing-rates, and stated that unless they conceded the mines would have to be stopped. Before this letter there was a telegram sent by me to Mr. Bishop on the 24th June, which was communicated on the 25th to Mr. Andrews, and subsequently, on my arrival at Greymouth, I wrote to the association a letter on the subject, which was published in the *Grey River Argus* of the 28th June, now produced. In that letter, and Mr. Bishop's subsequently, we offered to submit the question to arbitration, to have the mines worked on the co-operative principle, or to

pay a lump sum per ton for whole cost at the screens, or to lease them the mines at a nominal interest on the capital value of the plant.

29. Did that apply to all the mines?—It was on the hewing-rates of the three mines.

30. How was that notified to the men?—It was notified by the manager to Mr. Andrews, the secretary of the Miners' Association, by letter dated the 30th June.

31. In a notification of that kind, how was it known that it reached the men? was it stuck up in the mine?—No; it is a recognised thing at Brunner that any communications made to the members of the association should be sent through their secretary whom they elect. That has been going on for years.

32. Do you think that is a good thing for the men?—I do not regard it myself as beneficial for the miners, and I am quite sure it is not beneficial to the mine-owners.

33. I mean this way of communicating with the members of the unions?—I think if the union is to exist at all we cannot use any other way.

34. Do you think it is a good thing for the men?—I cannot, of course, tell that.

35. What ensued after they received the notice of this reduction?—We were informed that a meeting of miners was convened, and our proposition was placed before them, and a ballot taken, which resulted in their deciding to go out on strike if our reduction of 20 per cent. was insisted upon. The papers showing the circumstances will be produced by Mr. Bishop. We simply informed them that our pay-sheets showed a serious loss, and we wished to devise some means whereby this loss could be covered, and we wished to be allowed to retain 20 per cent. in our hands in suspense.

36. *Mr. Brown.*] For what purpose?—For the purpose of recouping the loss we were making on the then work. If we failed to establish the position we stated, that amount, or some proportion of it, should go back to them.

37. *The Chairman.*] And that is how the 20-per-cent. reduction was demanded?—Yes; and I can give you a further reason why that was made. It was made primarily because we were sustaining a loss, and secondly because we saw that their wages were increased to that extent—that is to say, they could afford to lose 20 per cent. and still make good wages.

38. Then, the result of the ballot was that this proposed arrangement was rejected?—Yes.

39. Then, what ensued?—I wrote this letter to the Premier dated the 16th July, of which you have a copy.

40. This letter sets forth the position in your mind: will you tell us what actually took place in the mines as the result of their declining to accept these terms?—When they declined they drew their tools and ceased working.

41. On the date that you made this proposal?—No, not at that time. They first asked for an extension of the date, as in my letter we offered to submit our books, in proof that the loss actually existed, to any accountant they might appoint. They wanted the extension in order that they might appoint accountants to look into the books. We granted that and a second extension, without the 20 per cent. operating. We tried each time to get it, but each time we gave way rather than stop working.

42. *Mr. Moody.*] Your loss was still going on?—Yes. Then I went away to Wellington after the first extension—2nd July—was granted, knowing that it was a question of accounts. I was in Wellington when I wrote this letter.

43. It was after your second extension of time—14th July—and while the books were being examined, that you wrote this letter?—Yes. I saw that there was little or no prospect of their agreeing to the 20 per cent., then I wrote the letter to the Premier on the 16th July.

44. On what day did the men draw their tools?—Well, the accountants, of which Mr. Commissioner Brown was one, telegraphed to them the result of the account-taking, from Dunedin to Greymouth. I think that would be about the middle of July. Then we pointed out to them that the accounts clearly proved our contention, and that unless they agreed to concede the 20 per cent. the mines must be closed on Monday, the 21st July, and work was stopped on that date, but the tools were not taken out until the 1st August. Meantime there was a demand made that we should allow them a further extension of time to receive the written statement of accounts. This was declined.

45. Do you think it could be argued with any reason, you having given them this notice, that they were to be locked out of the mine?—Of course, looking at it in that way, it would be locking out in one sense. The reduction we were asking them to concede would enable them to earn the same rates as they earned before March on the net-weight system, which had been in operation for years. We pointed out simply that on the net-weight system an average of 12s. 3d. per shift of seven hours was earned, and on the gross-weight 14s. 8d. for like time. In that increase is comprised, very largely, our loss. We could not increase our selling rates, as nine-tenths of the trade was under contract for the current year, and we told them that this excess they had imposed upon us meant an immense loss, and we wanted them to go back to the rates which would give them 12s. 3d., and upon which our contracts were based.

46. And they refused to work at the reduced wage?—Yes.

47. *Mr. Brown.*] You did not ask for a reduction beyond the previous rate of pay?—No; and we did not ask for a reduction below that which, in our opinion, would enable them to earn a fair rate of pay.

48. *The Chairman.*] That is to say, had they not struck they would have received an average of 12s. 3d.?—Yes; we considered they would, by working fairly at the rates we were offering them. The 20 per cent., you will observe, was only on the hewers: it did not apply to the truckers and other labourers. Nevertheless we expected to get 20 per cent. on the truckers and others through a more efficient mode of working, because the percentage on the hewers would not have made up the deficiency.

49. Is there any recognised rule or understanding between employers and employed as to the exact definition of the term "lock-out" as opposed to "strike"?—I am not aware. The only thing, I suppose, is that when an owner asks for a reduction and does not get it, it is a "lock-out."

50. Then, if the men ask for an increase and do not get it, it is a strike?—Yes.

51. If you had resisted their demands in the first instance it would have been a strike?—Yes.

52. But, having given their demands a trial, you wanted to go back to the old system, and that constitutes a lock-out?—That is what I understand. Though I have been only connected with coal-mines for twelve or fifteen years—this is the only place in which I have been connected with coal—so that I am not, of course, an authority, but to my mind that is the basis of it.

53. Now, with reference to your letter to the Premier, do you still hold the same opinions as set forth in the letter? [Letter handed to Mr. Kennedy.]—Yes. I should, however, like to make some comments upon this enclosure published in the *Grey River Argus* of the 7th July. With reference to the statement there that the loss has been £1,390, I wish to explain that that includes, as the letter states, 1s. 6d. per ton for general charges and interest, which of course means that, exclusive of this amount, the receipts just about balanced the expenditure. We had just sufficient to pay the wages and freights—that is all. There was nothing left for development of the mines, for proving faults, for supplying machinery, depreciation, &c. My estimate of that was 1s. 6d. per ton on gross weight, as paid to miners; and I still hold that it was not too much, but upon the weights sold 2s. per ton would be about the equivalent.

54. Will you explain how you arrived at that?—I have a list at the office, and I will put in the details. I do not wish it to go forth that we were incurring that loss as between receipts and expenditure. It is a loss nevertheless, for the mines could not and cannot be worked without expending the money contemplated therein for development. Now, with regard to the following statement in my letter of the 16th July: "The returns show a loss of 7½ per cent. of good marketable coal in favour of slack washed into the river. This alone is a loss of £4,000 yearly." That is explainable in this way: Taking the three last months upon which we paid on the net-weight system, to the 8th March, the proportion of screened coal was 62½ per cent. of the output, whereas for the subsequent three months, which was the first three months of the gross-weight system, the proportion was 55 per cent., a difference of 7½ per cent.

55. *Mr. Brown.*] That the waste was 7½ per cent. greater after the 8th March than before?—Yes.

56. *Mr. Moody.*] There was no difference in the screens?—No. And my contention is that it was on account of the recklessness in the coal-hewing. The miners' defence is that it was a sudden crush. But I think that would not be likely to occur at the very time of the change in the mode of payment. At any rate, 7½ per cent. of screened coal was lost—made into slack, and washed into the river.

57. And you think it was owing to carelessness on the part of the miners?—I think it was due to the want of incentive on the part of the miners to make good coal. That is my version of it, but I think it would come better from Mr. Bishop.

58. Do you think it could be caused by a change in the screens?—There was no change in the screens. In my opinion, as I have said before, it was due to a want of incentive on the part of the miners to make good coal. By the gross-weight payment rubbish is paid for the same as good coal. At Newcastle, New South Wales, all mines pay on the net weight, and generally so throughout Great Britain.

59. *The Chairman.*] Are there any other points in the letter you wish to make any remarks on?—The remedy I proposed is to return to the net-weight system in whole coal, and paying a fair rate on pillars badly crushed, on the gross system, as the round coal in them runs too uneven for making a fair average. This they would not have. They went out on Saturday, the 19th July.

60. You proposed two remedies, I think, one being the remission of royalty, and the other a reversion to the net-weight system?—I suggested at that time a remission of the royalty, or a portion of the royalty, pending some settlement between us and the miners; but the real cure for it was to revert to the state of things that existed before the 8th March. I think we could do this without any remission of royalty.

61. *Mr. Moody.*] On the screened-coal system?—Yes.

62. That is, 4s. a ton?—Yes; but on badly-crushed pillars, as stated, payment could be made on the gross weight.

63. *The Chairman.*] Now, that brings us to the present state of things. Since that date, has the mine been working at all?—Yes. After that letter was written, and the miners went out, they made a proposal to us through their secretary that they would allow 2d. off the tonnage-rate if the Union Steamship Company would allow 2d. and the railway 2d., making in all 6d. in that way divided by these three interests. We did not entertain that offer: we stood upon our old offer of 20 per cent. reduction to cover our loss. Subsequently communication was made to us to know if we would join them in a request to the Government to reduce railage and royalty by 6d. a ton.

64. Was the Wallsend Mine closed before or after this?—A few days after the strike set in the directors resolved to close the Wallsend Mine. It had been under consideration for months before.

65. It was while the Wallsend was still in a condition to be worked that this application was made, or before you decided to close the mine?—Yes. They made the application to Mr. Bishop, and he wired me to know whether we would join them in making an application to the Government for a reduction of the royalty. I said Yes, although I did not see that it would do much good, as I had already made application, and it was refused. Still, the deputation came to Wellington.

66. This was after the Wallsend was abandoned?—No; the resolve to close the Wallsend occurred about three weeks before finally closing, on the 14th August, the movable plant being removed during that time.

67. Was your company disposed to agree with this application to the Government?—The

proposition was this: We were demanding a reduction of 20 per cent., which would run into 7d. or 8d. per ton; and the deputation in Wellington were asking for a reduction of 6d. per ton royalty, which, with 2d. from the miners, amounted to our demand. I said our demand was so much, and we need not examine too closely where it came from. We were prepared to start the mine so long as we got a reduction of 8d., from whatever source it came.

68. How much did you demand?—Twenty per cent. off 2s. 10d.—nearly 7d. It was only an offer; we might have taken a little less, or we might have insisted on a little more. I produce extract from the *Grey River Argus* of the 7th August, giving a report of three alternative offers to the miners to work the mines. I may add to this that the 5s. 6d. we offered only left 1s. per ton for the company, to cover permanent charges and interest, as the price realised after paying all charges for royalty, railage, and marine freight only left 6s. 6d. per ton net at the mine-screens, calculated on the weights paid to the miners. All overtures were declined; they would only abate 2d. per ton on pillars.

69. Would the miners give 2d. permanently?—Yes.

70. This, in addition to the 6d. from the Government, would be 8d. altogether?—Yes. As the result of their negotiations in Wellington they informed myself and the Hon. Mr. McLean, who is chairman of the company, that the Government would appoint a Commission, and in the meantime would take authority from Parliament to give effect to the Commissioners' report. The Premier accompanied that statement with a request that they should go to work immediately.

71. In that offer was there any mention made that it would be retrospective?—A conclusion had been arrived at that the arrangement would be retrospective. I am, of course, only giving the version that came to me.

72. You do not know definitely?—No.

73. Did they go to work?—We had a good bit of discussion on the matter, and it resulted in this way: I made them an offer in this direction: we were naturally anxious to get to work, both for our sakes and for theirs. I said this: "Pending the report of the Commission, if you allow 2d. permanently, and the half of what is promised by the Commission, 3d.—that is, you allow us 5d.—we will join you in the risk of the 6d." We still held to the claim of 8d., but we would take 5d. pending the result of the Commission. The 5d., of course, comes off the two-and-tenpenny rate in Coal-pit Heath and the half-crown rate in Brunner.

74. Then, under what arrangements did they work?—They worked for the 5d. reduction—that is, 2d. certain, and 3d. pending the result of the Commission.

75. *Mr. Moody.*] When did they work?—A general strike set in before they got to work, and they intimated to the mine-manager that they would not cut coal for the Union Company's steamers.

76. *The Chairman.*] That was before the mine got to work?—It was while the mine was being prepared for work. That is to say, the modification of my offer was accepted, as stated, on the 27th August, and on the 30th August we were notified that the miners would not give coal to the Union Steamship Company's steamers. Personally, I agreed to that, as at that time it was uncertain when the Union Steamship Company could replace the seamen just then called out.

77. *Mr. Brown.*] All the local difficulties between the company and its men were arranged, and the men were going to work when this other distinct strike arose?—Yes.

78. *The Chairman.*] And then they went to work on that basis?—Yes.

79. How long did the strike last?—The work of preparation began on Monday, the 22nd September; on Saturday, the 30th, 34 tons of coal were sent down by rail; and on Monday work ceased.

80. I mean to say, when they refused to cut coal for the Union Steamship Company: did they strike on that occasion?—No.

81. You at once conceded?—Yes. There was no interruption. There were only about a third of the men employed, however, as the work was limited, owing to their refusal to ship by the Union Steamship Company's boats, or any other boats carrying "blackleg" labour or in conflict with unions, or for use by such people.

82. *Mr. Brown.*] Were there other boats available?—There were the "Stormbird," "Huia," "Queen of the South," "Kiwi," "Kahu;" Anchor line—"Kennedy," "Charles Edward," "Murray," and "Lawrence;" and some sailing-vessels.

83. *The Chairman.*] Then, they continued at that state of things up to about three weeks ago?—Yes, up to the 22nd September; and then the Union Steamship Company made a demand on us owing to an agreement with the Grey Valley Company made three years ago, and renewed six months ago, whereby the Grey Valley Company agreed to give all its carriage to the Union Steamship Company and the Union Company undertook to provide sufficient steamers to carry all our coal requirements, and upon us loading the "Brunner" the miners went out on strike; but if the "Brunner," or any other Union boat, was not loaded the miners would cease work the following week, as all the available tonnage was withdrawn from us by the seamen being called out, and all the wagons would be full; in fact, I regard the calling-out of the crews of all these small steamers, excepting only the "Lawrence," as a breach of the agreement made on the 30th August, and the "Lawrence's" freight was £1 5s. to £1 15s., against the Union Company's 7s. to 9s., while our contract price for coal delivered was £1 to £1 4s.

84. Could you produce the agreement?—It is in writing in Dunedin. I know the spirit of it, and I carry it out. It is for our mutual advantage.

85. *Mr. Brown.*] Then the agreement is this: that the Grey Valley Company agree to retain all its New Zealand freights for the Union Steamship Company, and the latter agree to provide tonnage for all your freight requirements in New Zealand?—That is correctly expressed.

86. *The Chairman.*] You can sell to steamers going beyond the colony or to sailing-vessels?—We have perfect freedom. There is no restriction at all beyond the colony, so long as we get a market. The Union Steamship Company has no control at all beyond the colony.

87. How do you deal with the Anchor Company under this agreement?—The Anchor Company has been always made an exception to this agreement.

88. Were any others exempted? How did you supply the "Lawrence" and "Stormbird"?—During the strike period, of course, as manager, I considered that the agreement with the Union Steamship Company was suspended until they were fit to resume it again.

89. How, in the ordinary course of business, did these outsiders get coal?—They used to get it by arrangement with the Union Company.

90. Does the "Murray" ever coal here?—Yes; all the Anchor boats get it without restriction. They work in harmony with one another. The "Stormbird" belongs to Messrs. Seager and party. Supposing they wanted to come here with a cargo of cattle freight—this is only occasionally, it does not pay to come empty—they arrange with the Union Company to get coal freights to suitable ports.

91. The "Lawrence" belongs to the Mokihinui Coal Company?—She would not come here except in strike time.

92. The next point is, whether the men went out under this arrangement. You say there were only one-third of the men at work. How many would that represent?—At this time there would be about a hundred and fifty men in work.

93. *Mr. Brown.*] What is the full complement?—Four hundred and fifty men. They, the hundred and fifty, used to work alternately up to the end of September.

94. *The Chairman.*] And then what happened?—The Union Company, by virtue of their agreement, demanded to have all the coal shipped by them. Then, in loading the steamer "Brunner," the miners left off work.

95. And since this they have not resumed?—No.

96. That, then, is the whole narrative of what has taken place since your letter?—Yes.

97. And what you have stated is the cause of the present strike?—Yes.

98. *Mr. Brown.*] Then, it is not the same difficulty alluded to on the 16th July—in fact, that one was actually settled, and the cause of the present strike was the loading of the "Brunner"?—Yes.

99. *The Chairman.*] Can you give us any account of the history of the leases, the transfers, and the different amalgamations of mines? There is a parliamentary paper here that might assist you. How long have you been connected with this coal-mining district?—I have been connected with the Brunner Mine since 1874. My arrival in the district was in 1865.

100. When did you first acquire an interest in the coal-mines?—My first interest was in June, 1874, in the Brunner Mine lease.

101. What was the arrangement?—I purchased the interest of the then lessees—Messrs. Croaker, Hughes, and McCarthy.

102. Did you then constitute the Brunner Coal-mining Company?—Yes. I was really the individual owner. In 1879 I resumed from the company.

103. *Mr. Brown.*] Was this company a limited liability company? Under what form was it run?—At that time it was under seven names, but they were only nominal shareholders. After that I took over all the interests—in 1879.

104. Up to what time did this continue?—I was sole owner until August, 1888, when my interest was joined with the other mines, under the name of the Grey Valley Coal-mining Company.

105. *The Chairman.*] Can you tell us anything about the Coal-pit Heath Mine?—I only know of it as a neighbour, but I have had no connection with it.

106. Who originally took up the Coal-pit Heath Company?—There was a private owner I think at first named Mr. Taylor, and then it was granted to the company in 1875, and then transferred to the Westport Company in 1887. It was surrendered and a new lease granted in January, 1889. It incurs dead-rent and double royalty after twenty-one years.

107. You know, as a matter of fact, that it was transferred to the Westport Company?—Well, no. All I can tell you is this: that there was an agreement on the part of the Westport Company to transfer it to the Grey Valley Coal Company.

108. On what date was the agreement made to transfer it to the Grey Valley Coal Company?—In August, 1888.

109. What was agreed to be transferred? Was the lease subsequent to the application for surrender and reissue?—Yes.

110. Then the new lease was not granted to the Westport Company, was it?—I am not very clear whether it stands in the name of the Westport Company or the Grey Valley. I think it is in the name of the Westport Company yet, but there was an agreement to transfer.

111. Do you know the history of the Grey coal reserves? Is part of that reserve now owned by the Grey Valley Company?—Yes. I was one of the parties who took it up first.

112. And the Wallsend Mine you originally took up?—I was one of the promoters of the company that first obtained a lease of that.

113. In what year?—I think it would be in 1874. That lease originally was, I think, for forty-two years, or twenty-one with a right of renewal for a further twenty-one years.

114. What became of that lease?—It was worked in what was called the Greymouth Coal Company. The shares were held largely in Dunedin and other places.

115. Then, what became of the lease?—The company, after spending, I think, £45,000, sold their interest by auction for £11,800 to some parties at Dunedin—Edwin Prosser and others.

116. Was the lease transferred to them?—I am inclined to think it was transferred to them at first, and they spent £5,000 or £6,000 on it, and then the Westport Company acquired it from them. They allowed them shares worth £20,000 for it in their new company just then floated.

116A. They did not give them any cash?—No.

117. It belongs now to the Westport Company?—It did belong to the Westport Company for

a considerable period, and then it was transferred to the Grey Valley Coal Company. The expenditure standing in their books is, I think, £120,000 on the Wallsend Mine. They have spent £70,000 or £80,000 in sinking a new shaft and supplying plant and machinery and other improvements, &c.

118. You now have an interest in it as a holder in the Grey Valley Company?—All these three interests were joined in 1888, under the style of the Grey Valley Coal Company, of which I was appointed managing director.

119. Is all the land held by the company leasehold?—Yes, with the exception of a small portion of the 147 acres of the Westport Coal Company's freehold, and upon which our shaft and plant stands.

120. When was this purchased?—I could not say, but it was since the Westport Company acquired the property. The fee-simple remains with the Westport Company, with the right by the Grey Valley Company to mine the coal, and it is occupied by the shaft and plant.

121. Do you know anything at all about the circumstances of the sale of that piece? Who was it sold by?—The Government, but I do not know by what department.

122. Do you know the condition of Rents and Royalties Account up to, say, last quarter?—In point of practice we pay all the reserve rents in advance, payment being made from the Dunedin office. I really made one payment yearly; that was generally on the 31st March.

123. *Mr. Moody.*] This is done in the Dunedin office now?—Yes.

124. *The Chairman.*] How did you manage about the royalties?—They were paid in the same way.

125. They must be paid on the coal?—Yes; on the 31st March at the end of each year. We ascertained what the royalties were, and from that royalty we deducted the dead-rent previously paid. I then sent a cheque for the remaining royalty and a separate cheque for advance rent for the succeeding year. Suppose we had no output, the rent was still payable; we had to pay all the same.

126. Are there any arrears due by the company?—No; there is nothing that would not be paid on demand.

127. In the case of transfers there were no arrears overlooked, or condoned, or anything of the sort?—No. The Brunner lease is the only one which has changed from one name to another.

128. How do you settle the railway and harbour charges?—They are paid weekly. The rate of 2s. per ton covers everything. The royalty is paid to a separate department, and the railage is paid weekly, as ascertained.

129. In paying this, whose weighing did you accept?—We took the railway weights, and we charged our clients on the weights so ascertained.

130. *Mr. Moody.*] Do you weigh as it goes out of the mine?—Yes; we weigh as between the miners and ourselves.

131. *The Chairman.*] Have you any method of keeping note of the output and amount of coal shipped, so that it would be possible to check the amount of coal actually lost?—Yes; that is all available. I can get that.

132. Do you know what goes for firebricks and coke?—We have it approximately. Account is taken and checked now and then, but we do not weigh it.

133. The balance goes to those places, except what is thrown into the river?—Yes.

134. *Mr. Moody.*] How much goes into the river?—Just at the period of the change in the mode of paying from net to gross weight there was more than usual. It happened to be winter time, and we had little or no demand here for slack.

135. Did you supply the coal merchants?—Yes.

136. Did they pay you a certain price for it?—We generally have to sell it at nominal prices.

137. And they get for it what they can?—Yes, I suppose so.

138. *Mr. Brown.*] Will you kindly look at that return marked C.-3, page 202. I refer to the amounts giving total output of the Brunner, Wallsend, and Coal-pit Heath. Are these figures, in your opinion, correct? You have in the Brunner 18,000 tons as a total and 5,000 tons slack, leaving 13,000 tons round coal?—I cannot say; I should have to compare them with the company's books.

139. What means have the Government of making up a statistical statement of that sort?—We are expected to keep a record of the whole of the coal put out of the mine, and we pay a royalty to the Government on the amount of coal sold. The figures are obtained this way.

140. Do you pay royalty on slack?—Only on the slack that is sold, not on slack put into the river.

TUESDAY, 14TH OCTOBER, 1890.

Mr. MARTIN KENNEDY'S evidence continued.

Mr. Kennedy put in copy of the special rules for the Grey Valley Company's mines (Exhibit No. 2).

141. *The Chairman.*] Can you give us a schedule of the freights charged by the Union Steamship Company to the various ports?—From Greymouth to Wellington, 7s. per ton; Greymouth to Lyttelton, 8s. per ton; Bluff, Timaru, and Oamaru, 9s. per ton; Picton and Manukau, 9s. 6d. per ton; Dunedin, 8s. 6d. per ton; Napier and Wanganui, 10s. per ton; Auckland, 12s. per ton; Gisborne, 13s. per ton.

142. Now as to the prices obtained at the different ports?—These fluctuate very much, but on an average the price for screened coal only in Wellington is £1; Lyttelton, Timaru, Oamaru, Dunedin, and Bluff, £1 1s.; also Wanganui, £1 1s.: unscreened coal, 2s. per ton less; and small coal 4s. less than unscreened. We have no trade at Manukau. I am only speaking now of where the coal is sold. At Wanganui it is used only for gas and railways.

143. Have you the figures showing the cost of head office administration and management?—Yes; for Dunedin office, directors and auditors, telegrams, &c., £850; managing director, including travelling, &c., £560; proving faults and driving main headings and other new works, yearly, £2,000; new plant, machinery, and depreciation of plant, leases and works, yearly, £3,000; extra fire-risks and risks not provided for, £1,500; interest on capital—say, £200,000 at 5 per cent.—£10,000. Total cost of administration amounts to £17,910. To provide this sum requires then on the gross output for the year, say, on 160,000 tons, at 2s., £16,000; profit on firebricks and coke, £1,910: total, £17,910. The local charges amount to £26 per week, including mine-manager's salary; that is, for management.

144. What are the items of that?—The Greymouth office includes salaries of mine-manager, two clerks, and rent of office, and telegrams and all other charges are on the pay-sheets.

145. What is the registered capital of the company?—£200,000.

146. *Mr. Brown.*] How much of that is paid up?—It is all paid up. I may explain that the company's property was taken as that value at the time of the amalgamation, this being the value at which the property was taken over by the company.

147. *The Chairman.*] There are two points in the Commission we wish to ask you about, the first is, "The market value of such of the said works, machinery, and appliances as have been from time to time in use, corresponding with the annual exports hereinbefore mentioned." This is a quotation from the Commission itself?—I can only answer that it would be very difficult to fix a market value. The difficulty would be to find any company or buyer to offer a value for that property. What might be worth £200,000 might not fetch £20,000 at a sale. We could not say what this property would fetch. The question of royalty has a large bearing on the value of the property. The doubling of royalty after the lease is half worked out is, I think, fixed on a false principle. If there is any change in the amount of royalty during the tenure of the lease it should diminish rather than increase. This difficulty is beginning to press upon us, as the increase will become due in about four years. I have already applied to the Government on this subject. I will furnish a copy of the letter which has been addressed to the Premier.

148. Then you cannot fix a market value?—No.

149. What are the interests represented in the Grey Valley Coal Company?—Well, the Westport Company's position is peculiar; it is difficult to say what shares they hold. The shares of the company have not yet been fully issued, owing to certain legal difficulties, but it is contemplated to do so at a future date. At present only eight shares have been issued, and these were divided in proportion to the division of the capital, the remainder of the capital being held as debentures under a separate deed. These debentures are held—one-half by the Westport Company, one-fourth by the Union Company, and one-fourth by myself. On the formation of the company, all the capital being paid up, there was no working capital; we simply brought the properties all together. The business that I carried on before we made this amalgamation included branches throughout the colony—retail businesses, which were to sell the coal for me. I used to employ from £12,000 to £16,000 in this way. It would, of course, vary according to the stocks. To acquire these branches and stocks the company borrowed £16,000—that is, the company borrowed from its own members.

151. *Mr. Brown.*] On what security?—There was no security; each interest subscribed its share.

152. *The Chairman.*] Then, in addition to the debenture-capital, there is a further loan of £16,000 which is not represented by debentures?—Yes.

153. Was that allocated to this special purpose you have mentioned?—It is absorbed in the accounts at the various branches at which retail business is carried on.

154. I will now ask you about the next passage in the Commission, viz.: "The return which the lessees have been getting from time to time and could probably get in the future as interest on the market value of the works, machinery, and appliances in use as aforesaid"?—Well, the capital invested by the company is £200,000. For my part, I am quite willing that it should be sold for £100,000, and to take my quarterly share—viz., £25,000. The company has paid no dividend since its formation, nor has there been any interest paid on the debentures.

155. Did the debentures bear any specific rate?—No; there has been some interest paid on account of the £16,000 loan, amounting to £3,000 for the two years.

156. Is that paid out of profits?—It would be paid out of what appears as profits, except about £2,000 was realised on sale of the plant.

157. *Mr. Moody.*] Was that replaced at all?—No.

158. *The Chairman.*] Now, about the future prospects of the company?—I may say that if we have to work with the unions as we have for the past two years—I say if such a state of things is to continue—I see no prospect of being able to work the mines with any chance of a commercial profit to the company; but if the company are at liberty to work the mines free from the control of unionism I consider we can work them at commercial profit, and pay the miners a fair average wage.

159. What have been the causes hitherto of the interruption in the working of the mines?—First, the unequal demand between the summer months—December to April inclusive—and winter months—May to November inclusive—the falling-off being one-third less in summer. The summer of 1889 was exceptionally bad, owing to railways, gas companies, and other large consumers of steam coal with whom we have contracts laying in four months' extra supply while the Newcastle strike was on, thus absorbing all our output and leaving none available for outside sales, where extra prices could have been obtained, and afterwards, when that strike ceased, leaving us with little or no trade during the summer months. During the present summer there has been no falling off from the winter months. This was due to both railways and gas companies not having large stocks in December, and also to the extra cargo-steamers employed in the Home trade by the New Zealand Shipping Company, which took an extra 2,000 tons monthly. The second cause was the want of tonnage, owing to steamers being detained by adverse weather on the voyage, or prevented

from entering the river by floods or heavy seas on the bar. These causes are now merely nominal as compared with a few years past by reason of the great improvement made in the bar by the harbour-works. The amalgamation of all the mines has also very much lessened the stoppages from want of tonnage. Previously it frequently happened that while one mine was idle, all the available trucks for it being full, the other mines had steamers waiting for cargoes; consequently the stoppages from this cause are very much less than formerly. The third cause is the breakages in the machinery and pumping-appliances, faults, want of sufficient ground being opened up. Fourthly, the numerous holidays taken by miners throughout the year. Miners take several of their own making, such as anniversary of the union, &c., a week at Christmas, the same at St. Patrick's day. Cavilling, or changing places quarterly, causes a loss of output equal to one day's work on each occasion. On Saturday there is only one shift, which means only half a day's work. Then there are the usual statutory holidays and absences of individual workmen from sickness and other causes. Taking all the foregoing into consideration, I estimate the average work, when the demand for coal is continuous throughout the year, would not exceed, for all the hewers, four days per week. Many would have four days and a half, some five, while others would not exceed three.

160. What remedy would you suggest for this state of things? Have you any storage at the mine?—We have a bin to hold small coal only, available for about 500 tons, for export; then the wagons afford storage for about two days' output—about 1,000 tons. Therefore, if no steamers are loading for two days, the mine would be idle the third day. The remedy for this would be extra hopper wagons or bins at the port, equal to another two days' work, thus giving four days in all. All the carrying being in one company is as good as 500 tons extra storage, as their steamers load in the order of arrival. This could not be if split up into two or more interests.

161. Is there any provision for housing the miners?—No; they have, as a rule, houses of their own. Small houses may be rented from private owners at from 3s. to 5s. weekly, some of the larger at 7s. 6d.

162. Can you tell us anything about the prices of provisions?—Miners obtain provisions in open market at Brunnerton and Greymouth. I think the cash-prices may be taken at 10 per cent. over Wellington rates.

163. Can you tell us anything about the average rate of wages other than for coal-mining?—The wages used to rule about a year ago, at, say, 8s., 9s., and 10s., but the union have insisted upon the current rate being 10s.; this has been fixed arbitrarily within the last twelve months.

164. What caused the stoppage of the Wallsend Mine?—The inferior quality of the coal, and its being fault-locked; this made the cost of working very great, and meant a serious loss, it would be safe to say, at the rate of £250 per month. We then decided to stop working.

165. How will you get out of the compulsory output clause of the lease?—We expect to put out the full quantity from the other two mines. We purpose to take as much from the two mines as if we had three going.

166. Have you had the leases amalgamated?—No; but we trust to the Government to acquiesce in that arrangement.

167. What kind of a deed would be necessary to make that quite safe?—To give it legal effect it would be desirable to have an agreement, at all events, that, so long as the whole output was obtained from one or more of the mines, it would be considered to be the output for the whole.

168. Have you applied for that yet?—No.

169. Have you any remarks as to the principle that governs the payment of wages?—Nothing, except that the company has no desire to see "average miners in average places get less than 1s. 6d. per hour's work"—that is, we intend paying piecework rates to give that. That would be the basis of any future arrangements, and for labour in the mines 10s. a day.

170. Now, with regard to the rates, assessments, &c.?—The rents are merged in the royalty, which is fixed by lease at 6d. per ton on coal sold. The rates payable to the Brunner Borough and the Grey County Council are—Brunner Borough, £347 5s.; Grey County, £90 3s. 9d.: total, £437 8s. 9d. The property-tax is paid in terms of the Act, on, say, £200,000, as per balance-sheet.

171. What property-tax does the Westport Company pay?—It pays on its £100,000. The others pay on valuation of their debentures.

172. Have you any other points upon which you wish to make a statement?—Yes. I would like to say that, in reference to the arrangement we made in giving the Union Company no coal, the action of the Seamen's Union in calling out the crews of steamers other than the Union Steamship Company rendered it impossible for us to continue working, as there was nothing left but the s.s. "Lawrence;" so that, even if the Union Steamship Company had not enforced their contract, work would have ceased immediately, as we had not sufficient tonnage left to warrant us in working the mine even on a small scale.

173. *Mr. Brown.*] You had not sufficient demand?—We could have had any quantity of demand if we could get boats to carry for us. Another objection to continuing under such restrictions is this: that we have extensive contracts throughout the colony, and these people, seeing that our mines were working, were constantly pressing us to fulfil our obligations. We found then that it would not be convenient for us to continue working under such restrictions; for instance, we have some contracts with strike clauses in them. In such instances, the parties would have a legal claim against us had we continued work and not supplied them. Further, the rates of freight by the boats that were carrying ranged from 15s. to £1 5s., and to Napier £1 15s., as against the Union Company's rates as per schedule; so that you see it would be impossible for us to fulfil our contracts with such restrictions as that put on us.

174. As to the question of the practicability of sending it all away unscreened?—I should say that would be impracticable, as it frequently happens that in sending the screened coal to our contracts they insist on rescreening it at our cost, throwing the small on our hands.

175. Does the coal suffer as much damage in travelling when shipped in the unscreened state as when in the screened state?—No, perhaps not; but screening it on delivery would not be practicable.

176. They are virtually compelled to screen it here, then?—Yes.

177. You do not screen it all?—No; we sell unscreened coal. We have differential rates for screened and unscreened and small coal.

178. With reference to your objection to the unions, does that refer to the administration or to the unions themselves?—My objection is to the interference, on behalf of the unions, in the management of our mines.

179. Has the affiliation of the unions here with other unions had anything to do with the present troubles?—My impression is that it is the affiliation with other unions that has caused the troubles.

180. You had local unions here before the system of affiliation began?—Yes.

181. Had you any troubles then?—The troubles have been growing for the last two years. My impression is simply this: that affiliation makes them more tyrannical and their demands more unreasonable.

182. Then, you are involved not only in local troubles, but in affiliation troubles?—Yes; we have been under their iron heel for two years, and this is only the crisis.

183. I think we have it in your previous evidence that the strike, so far as it was local, was really settled?—It was settled provisionally, as I stated before, pending the result of the report of this Commission.

184. And it was the loading of the "Brunner" which caused the present trouble?—That was only the immediate cause, as we should have been compelled to stop in a week for want of storage, there being no vessels coming in to take the coal away.

185. As regards the strike, is it only the hewers, or all the men, who have struck?—The strike affects all; but the question of rates is really a question only between the owners and hewers.

186. What proportion of hewers is there to other labourers and surface-men?—About half of the men employed in the mine are hewers. They have all struck, as they all belong to the same union. The miners and labourers are all under the one association called the Amalgamated Miners' and Labourers' Association.

187. With reference to possible improvements in the present system of working, your suggestion only runs in the direction of storage?—Yes. I think there are very good facilities for loading the ships.

188. *Mr. Moody.*] Is there any rent or royalty charged upon coal used in coke-ovens or for fire-bricks?—That is a moot point. The lease provides that we have to pay upon what is sold. The coal is what we used to wash into the river at one time, but we have tried by degrees to find a market for it. In the meantime we pay for all the coal we sell in any way, except for miners' uses.

189. You do not pay royalty on the coke?—No.

190. *Mr. Brown.*] The colliers, then, get their coal free?—Yes. When we found that we were losing we proposed that they should pay the labour-cost of the coal they use—that is to say, the money they get from us in this way must be returned to us. That was going to be the subject of a strike, too, I believe, and was only averted by giving a fortnight's notice to charge it, and at the end of the notice the strike took place, as stated, because we loaded a Union Company's steamer. I present returns, as asked, of the coal output of the three collieries from the 1st January to the 8th March, and from the 10th March to the 28th June, under the headings as kept in the company's books.

WEDNESDAY, 15TH OCTOBER, 1890.

Mr. FRANCIS WILLIAM MARTIN sworn and examined.

191. *The Chairman.*] What position do you occupy, Mr. Martin?—I am Government District Engineer for the West Coast, Middle Island, also Chairman and Engineer, Greymouth Harbour Board.

192. You are a member of the Institution of Civil Engineers, are you not?—Yes.

193 What departments or works are you in charge of?—As District Engineer I am in charge of all the Government local works on the West Coast.

194. That is for the Public Works Department?—I act for several departments: for the Public Works with respect to buildings, &c., for the Marine Department with respect to harbours, and for the Public Works and sometimes the Survey Department with respect to roads and bridges.

195. You have nothing to do with the Native reserves?—No; unless I happened to be called upon to do anything professionally.

196. How long have you been on the Coast?—I have been ten years as District Engineer. I have been on the Coast altogether about twenty years.

197. Have you anything more than Greymouth under your charge?—Yes. My duties include the supervision of works at Westport, and on the West Coast generally.

198. In what state were the harbour-works when you took charge first?—When I first took charge here for the Government, ten years ago, the harbour-works were only just commenced—that is, the breakwater works; then it passed into the hands of the Harbour Board for two or three years. It was then a local Board, and I had nothing to do with it at that time. They had a separate engineer of their own. When the Government took over the harbour-works again the breakwater on the south side was within about 200ft. of its present length, and on the other side also within about 250ft. The lower training-bank was made—that was all.

199. Was there a departure from the original plan?—The plan was originally made by Sir John Coode. In some part of his report he mentions that the width of the entrance was subject to alteration; and the width of the entrance was ultimately altered from 400ft. to 450ft. That was done by authority of the Marine Department, as provided by law.

200. So that from the commencement to the present time one plan has been adhered to?—Yes, with the above exception.

201. In what state was the railway when you took charge?—It was finished.

202. Do you know the date at which the railway commenced to carry coal?—It was opened, I think, in 1876.

203. Have you any return of the amount of rolling-stock available for coal-carrying purposes?—I do not know more than is in the Working Railways returns.

204. Have you anything to do with the Railway Commissioners?—No. I think you can get that information from Mr. Stone.

205. Have any works been done on the railways during your time, under your supervision during the last ten years?—The erection of wharf and hydraulic machinery has been done in my time, and, as it is not usual to keep an engineer here for Working Railways, anything that does not come within the scope of the manager's functions my services are usually obtained for it.

206. Have there been any breakdowns or accidents on the railway during this time?—Not that I recollect. At any rate, there have been no serious stoppages.

207. You have not been called upon to repair any serious damage?—No.

208. Do you know of any reason why accommodation should be refused by the railway to coal companies?—No; but I should not necessarily know these things.

209. Can you say what accommodation there is at the wharf, both as to length of berthage and depth of water?—The berthage is as follows: For the lower 800ft. of the wharf the depth is 15ft. at low water, spring-tides; the middle 650ft. is 12ft. at low water, spring-tides; and the upper 450ft. is 10ft. at low water, spring-tides. That is a total length of 1,900ft.

210. *Mr. Brown.*] What is that intended to provide for?—The lower 650ft. of wharf will accommodate two ships loading coal at hydraulic cranes, but with regard to the rest it will depend very much on their size. The Harbourmaster will be able to tell how many ships can be put in.

211. How many cranes have you provided for?—There are two hydraulic cranes and one steam-crane.

212. Can the vessels lie two deep?—Yes; it is frequently done.

213. *The Chairman.*] Have you got any return of expenditure by the Government on harbour and various works, including railway?—Yes. I will divide the harbour-works expenditure into three periods.

214. What are those periods?—The first period was prior to the constitution of the Harbour Board in 1885, when under the control of the Government the expenditure was £114,000 on harbour-works. The second period is to the end of March, 1888, when under the control of a local Board, £122,000. The third period is from the 1st April, 1888, to the middle of 1890, £43,000—that is, under the Government Board, consisting of Government officers, the Board being necessary in order to pass accounts in accordance with the statute.

215. Who are the present members of the Board?—Major Keddell, Resident Magistrate; Mr. Calders, Chief Postmaster; Mr. Stone, Railway Manager; Mr. Burton, Clerk of the Court; Mr. Wilson, Assistant Engineer at Westport; Mr. Woon, the Collector of Customs; and myself, as Chairman.

216. Are there two separate Boards for Westport and Greymouth?—Yes.

217. And Mr. Wilson is on this Board also?—Yes.

218. *Mr. Brown.*] Has there been much expenditure since the 31st March, 1890?—No; there has not been much expenditure since that date.

219. *The Chairman.*] Can you tell us in general terms what was included in this expenditure?—It includes the works on the south side of the river below the lower end of the wharf, and all the works on the north side of the river up to the Cobden Bridge. It includes everything that does not belong to railways or is not used by railways. I will put in a plan showing the exact distribution of the expenditure.

220. Now, what has been the expenditure on railway works?—I propose to classify them as follows: In the first place there is the expenditure on the Brunner Railway from the Cobden Bridge to Brunnerton, including Brunner Bridge and Brunner Station. The total of this amounts to £85,000.

221. *Mr. Brown.*] Can you give us the cost of the bridge separately?—Not exactly; but it was about £7,000. The next item is the expenditure on the Stillwater Section—that is, above Brunnerton, 4 chains above the bridge. A portion of this has been handed over to the Midland Railway Company. The expenditure on that was £14,000. Then there is the cost of the remainder of the railway—that is, the railway and sidings within Greymouth. The cost of that was £13,000.

222. What is the cost of rolling-stock?—£71,000. That comprises five engines and 257 coal-wagons. Then there is the cost of cranes, accumulators, &c., £17,000; cost of stone quay wall from quarry to Tainui Street, £13,000; wharves from Tainui Street downward, £30,000; £14,000 for reclamation behind them: that is, £243,000 altogether for railway works. Total for harbour and railway works, £536,000.

223. Then, there are no other charges?—No.

224. Under the heading of "Railway works amount charged against railway," what amount, in your opinion, should be taken as the basis for calculating the traffic returns?—£243,000; but I see in parliamentary paper I.-6, 1889, the amount up to the 31st March, 1889, charged against railway is £199,121. This leaves a difference of £43,000.

225. Can you explain the discrepancy?—Well, out of the £71,000 expended on rolling-stock, £20,000 was spent by the Harbour Board. Then, there is the £17,000 for cranes and accumulators. There will be other small items.

226. These amounts, then, were expended by the Harbour Board, and the works handed over to the railway?—Yes.

227. But were they expended out of public works loan-money or out of the Greymouth Harbour loan?—Out of the Greymouth loan.

228. Seeing that the harbour-works are essentially for the working of the railways, what in your opinion should be taken as the basis on which the traffic returns are computed, in comparing these particular traffic returns with those of other railways in the colony? How far should the harbour-works be included?—This is a little difficult to answer, but I think they should not be included, as in other parts of the colony harbour-works have been considered as special things. On the Greymouth Harbour Act being passed, all the past expenditure was practically given over to the locality. The Government had already constructed a railway out of public works loan-money; then by the passing of a special Act all the profits of that railway passed away from the Government to the local body.

229. The whole system was altered by that Act?—Yes.

230. *The Chairman.*] How much has been raised by special loan by the Board?—£150,000.

231. Then there remains the fact that, out of this £150,000 special loan, £20,000 was expended by the Harbour Board for rolling-stock, and £17,000 for cranes and accumulators, and now the railway has control of these two items?—Yes. Besides this £150,000 there has been also spent a sum out of the profits of the railway. The total amount spent out of railway and harbour revenue since the commencement of the Harbour Boards in 1885 is £49,700. Then there is about £6,000 advanced by the Government, which is still owing by the Board. That is the whole expenditure of the Board. The balance of the expenditure has been entirely by the Government.

233. Has it been voted by the House out of public works loan?—Yes, I suppose so. The balance is £329,000.

234. In your opinion, now, the capital value upon which traffic returns should be reckoned is £243,000?—That, in my opinion, is the capital value of the railway from Brunnerton to the port used by the collieries for their purposes; and that, besides this, there is a large expenditure on harbour-works upon which no direct revenue is derivable or being collected. I am not prepared to say whether this should be included in the capital value on which the traffic returns are calculated.

235. Are you aware whether any statutory provision has ever been made providing for payment of interest on that Harbour Board expenditure?—The only special provision is that in clause 12 of "The Greymouth Harbour Board Act, 1884," which provides for a special rate of 3d. per ton to be paid by the shippers as soon as £100,000 has been expended upon the works.

236. When was the amount of £100,000 expended?—At the date of the passing of the Act £113,000 had been expended.

237. Has this 3d. per ton been regularly collected?—It has never been collected.

238. *Mr. Brown.*] Do you think it may have been collected in the 2s. 6d. royalty and haulage charges?—No.

239. Have you ever called attention to this circumstance, or has there been any correspondence about it?—I have mentioned in reports that it might be collected or imposed.

240. To whom?—To the Engineer-in-Chief, I think.

241. Was there any reply made to it?—No; it is a matter for the Government to decide. I considered that I had done all that was necessary in mentioning the matter and calling attention to it.

242. There was no action taken by the Government?—Not that I am aware of. They could not impose the rate except through the local Board.

243. *The Chairman.*] Now, with reference to the revenues, how is the 2s. 6d. per ton on coal arrived at?—When the lease was granted, 2s. for freight and 6d. for royalty was fixed. The 2s. covers the railage, cranage, &c., and delivery to ships. Up to the 31st March, 1889, the railway received a revenue of £27,234, and expended £14,000.

244. What does that £27,234 include?—It includes the freight on coal under the rates specified in the coal leases, and charges for use of wharf.

245. Then, this revenue, so far as it arises from coal, is made up from the 2s. per ton freights?—Yes.

246. Does that 2s. include the statutory 3d. per ton special rate?—I am pretty sure it does not.

247. Can you give us any information about the Harbour Board revenue that has arisen?—I put in the balance-sheets of the Greymouth Harbour Board for the years 1885, 1886, 1887, 1888, and 1889? [Exhibit No. 3.]

248. Can you say anything of before 1885 about the revenue?—I will compile a statement from the Working Railways returns from the date of the opening of the railway.

249. You cannot say at all what charges were collected before the opening of the railway?—No. I do not think there were any at all before 1876.

250. Now, will you give us the figures showing the revenue of the Harbour Board?—During the year 1885 the revenue of the Harbour Board from the Greymouth Railway and Wharf was £10,156, and from the coal reserves it was £2,244. That is £12,400 gross receipts.

251. What do the Railway Commissioners get?—They get nothing—only enough to pay expenses. They deduct the expenses from the revenue.

252. All this railage comes into your hands ultimately?—Yes; all that is not expended. With reference to the Harbour Board revenue, the Board really receives the whole of the revenue arising from the railway and harbour-works, less the cost of working and the royalty, under clause 7 of "The Greymouth Harbour Board Act, 1884." The Commissioners hand over everything they make to the Harbour Board.

253. Will you give us the amounts received by the Harbour Board from all sources since 1885?—In 1885, £12,401; 1886, £12,501; 1887, £16,829; 1888, £10,261; 1889, £15,389.

254. Does the royalty come to you also?—Yes.

255. Was there anything outstanding on the 31st March last?—About £3,000.

256. So that about £70,000 was received or receivable during that period?—Yes.

257. What are the liabilities in respect of loans?—They are £100,000 raised in London at 4 per cent. interest, *plus* 1 per cent. sinking fund, payable in forty years; and £50,000 raised by the Government, part of it borrowed from the Post Office. The interest on this is 5 per cent. for five years.

258. From what date?—January 1st, 1888. The due date is January 1st, 1893. We pay 5 per cent. interest on both amounts. Then, we owe the Government about £6,000 for advances in cash. This bears interest at 4½ per cent.

259. On what security?—On no special security. It is simply a Treasury advance, like an overdraft.

260. What provision is being made to pay back the £50,000 raised by the Government?—I believe the present issue is not to be looked upon as the final debentures; they are to be reissued when they run out.

261. What is the position of this sinking fund?—We pay that separately to the Public Debts Sinking Fund Commissioners; it appears on the balance-sheet.

262. The security is simply the Government guarantee?—Yes, under the Greymouth Harbour Act. It is secured by the Greymouth Harbour Board endowment as well as the guarantee.

263. What was the sinking fund on the first loan at the end of the year?—£4,959 15s. 9d.

264. Supposing it was shown that, owing to a deficient amount of storage, the work in the coal-mines was intermittent, could you suggest any plan for overcoming that difficulty?—I cannot say immediately, but I will go into the matter, and prepare myself to lay the whole state of the case before you.

265. *Mr. Brown.*] You are aware that there are other mines likely to be opened up, and that you would require traffic and storage capacity for all?—Yes.

266. *Mr. Moody.*] Would the present rolling-stock be sufficient in the event of other mines being opened up?—Not if many more were opened.

267. *The Chairman.*] Can you give us any notion of the number of steamers that visit the port, and of the tonnage loading coal?—There are about four hundred steamers a year, and about 90,000 tons a year.

268. How are they distributed? It has been alleged that the number varies very much at different seasons of the year, and that this is a cause of interruption?—I will put it in a table giving this information.

THURSDAY, 16TH OCTOBER, 1889.

Mr. JOSEPH KILGOUR sworn and examined.

269. *The Chairman.*] What is your occupation, Mr. Kilgour?—I am an ironfounder.

270. How long have you been in Greymouth?—I have lived in Greymouth ever since its foundation.

271. You have been connected with collieries?—Yes, more or less during that time. My first connection was with the original colliery company, who had the mine after Mr. Batty got it. My connection with it was the purchasing of the whole of the river plant, barges and everything outside belonging to them—in fact, the whole of the property for carrying coal to Greymouth from the mines—that is, the Brunner Mine, which was worked by the Nelson Government at that time.

272. At that time what mines were open?—Only the Brunner Mine.

273. Was it a large or a small mine?—It had not been extended very far.

274. Can you remember anything about the output?—No; I do not remember the tonnage. I only bought the carrying-plant for £700. I bought the coal from the Nelson Government at the mine. They were then working the mine themselves. I paid 10s. per ton to the Nelson Government; then they raised it to 12s. I then went into communication with a Christchurch company, for whom Mr. Moorhouse and others took the coal-leases on this side. Dobson was sent over to make a report.

275. That is now called the Wallsend side?—Yes. As I saw the coal at Tyneside, I thought it safe to make overtures for the working of the mine at a royalty of 1s. per ton, and they ultimately accepted. We commenced operations, the result of which was that I put a tunnel in about 300 yards above the present Brunner Bridge. I wrought the mine there for some time. We made several shots in opening the drive, but we could only put out a limited quantity. We had to keep barges lying there, and when the floods came two or three barges were lost. At that time I was a partner with others. We ultimately sold out the plant by auction. That finished me with coal-mining for fifteen or sixteen years. I was a shareholder in the Greymouth company afterwards. Mr. Simpson, of Newcastle, was the manager, and he sunk the present Tyneside shaft. I thought at the time he was too near the fault that I had met with in the lower tunnel and proved. In consequence of our disagreeing I left the company—in fact, sold out.

276. Is it known that it could have been worked had the shaft been properly placed?—Yes, with the exception of about 8 or 9 chains of coal above the fault.

277. What was the depth in the Tyneside shaft?—About 100ft. through to the coal. They then had to contend with difficulties in pumping, and at last had to abandon the shaft altogether. The company that put down the present Wallsend shaft on the recommendation of Mr. Simpson hoped to get coal at 300ft. or 350ft. Mr. Simpson put a borehole down. This borehole put down above the present Wallsend reached coal at about 200ft. They then commenced to put down the first Wallsend shaft, and after sinking to 300ft. or 350ft. where they expected to get coal they put a borehole from the bottom of the shaft and got coal.

278. Do you know the depth?—About 640ft., I think.

279. What was the thickness of the seam?—About 16ft. The seam runs pretty regularly all through.

280. How do you explain their not getting the coal at the depth they expected?—I believe it was owing to their having passed over a fault in choosing the ground. The difficulties encountered caused the failure of the company, and the mine was sold by auction to a Dunedin syndicate.

281. What did they pay for it?—About £10,000 or £11,000. That syndicate ultimately sold, and another Dunedin company took it up—I think the Westport Coal Company—and it finally merged into the present Grey Valley Coal Company.

282. Who sunk the present shaft?—The Westport Colliery Company. About 1885, feeling sure that there was coal, and finding that the Westport Company had secured all the ground, I applied to them and obtained a special lease of seventy acres in the vicinity of the old Tyneside Mine.

283. You commenced to work that?—Yes; I got a lease of seventy acres.

284. How long did you work that?—I wrought it until I sold it on the 20th August, 1888, for the sum of £4,000, to the Grey Valley Coal Company.

285. Had you any steamers?—Yes; in order to work the mine I acquired a steamer. During the working of the mine for two years I found it profitable so long as the coal was level-free. When it went to the dip the cost was greatly increased. After the Grey Valley Company bought Mr. Kennedy out I was doing very well between the two companies, the Westport and Mr. Kennedy, as they were running against each other. They had large vessels coming here, and occasionally wanted ten or twelve trucks of coal to fill the vessel. My business was consequently going on well, independent of the small craft I had coming to me. I had a good town trade, and was selling at a very reasonable figure—9s. and 10s. when first I started, and the last month or so 11s. Then came the amalgamation, and I lost the trade of both companies. I was beginning to get the Tyneside Mine fairly opened. It had cost me a good deal of money, and some negotiations. I then got the "Oreti."

286. Did your work succeed?—Yes; until they bought me out.

287. You were competing with them?—Yes.

288. Had you any difficulty in obtaining railway plant?—I was nearly driven out of the place about it.

289. Can you tell us the circumstances?—A certain proportion of trucks were allowed to each mine, and as I was only just beginning I required very few, but when I began to get the coal I applied for more, and was informed that I could only be allowed five per diem.

290. Were they sufficient for your output?—No.

291. How many did you want?—I battled until I got fifteen, as I wanted increased numbers as I got my drives in.

292. Were fifteen sufficient?—No. Further on again I found I wanted thirty, and I went up to Wellington and saw Mr. Maxwell about it. I wanted them for loading the "Oreti," which was in and out frequently independent of other trade.

293. Did you get the thirty?—Yes.

294. There was no real obstruction then?—Yes, there was. I went up again to apply for another thirty, as my drives were still opening up, and output increasing. I did not get this other thirty. Just about this time the Grey Valley Coal Company, which had already bought Mr. Kennedy's Brunner Mine, seeing that I was getting along, made overtures to me, which I ultimately accepted, and sold out.

295. Did you also sell the "Oreti"?—Yes; I sold the "Oreti" for £4,500. I got a cheque for £9,000 for the two.

296. During your experience in shipping coal, have you found the condition of the river and bar a very great obstacle to regularity?—Yes; of course we used to feel the interruptions.

297. Do you think they have been materially reduced by the present harbour-works?—Yes; whatever may be the opinions of anybody, I say the harbour is very favourable now. I believe at present there is no great delay arising from insufficiency of tonnage for carrying coal. There was originally; that was one of the troubles we had to contend with; but of course, since the Union Company have got the business they have been able to keep it in full swing. Lately, at least to the best of my knowledge, they have regulated the trade to suit their own convenience.

298. Is the business in Greymouth which depends upon the export of coal as flourishing as it was previous to the amalgamation?—No; not by 40 or 50 per cent. I refer, of course, to the output of coal.

299. Have you any reason to believe that ships are kept waiting for coal owing to the absence of storage accommodation?—Yes, I have known ships waiting.

300. How long have they had to wait?—I have known sailing vessels to wait six weeks, but not recently.

301. Within the last twelve months?—No. The Union Company's steamers are never kept waiting on that account.

302. How do you account for that?—Well, being interested in the mines, they regulate their tonnage for their own convenience.

303. If there was much competition in shipping coal from the port by steamer, would storage be then necessary? I believe it would be. Another thing is that there are only two cranes for use now. If the Blackball and other mines were opened up there would be a regular jamb.

304. If the port was in full employment, then these cranes would not be sufficient for shipping coal?—No.

305. Would the rolling-stock be sufficient?—No. The Blackball would take it all.

306. Supposing the Blackball and Coal Creek Mines were opened up, in addition to the existing mines, would the present appliances be sufficient?—No; they would not.

307. Do you consider it desirable, under the present condition of the demand for coal at the port, that further mines should be opened up?—I do.

308. For what reason?—I say we should be able to compete against Newcastle and foreign coal coming into the place. If these mines were opened out we should require more plant of every description. We should have plenty of vessels if we had the cranes. There are sufficient facilities afforded by the harbour improvements to work four times the trade we are doing now.

309. What wages did you in former days pay, say, for hewing?—I produce, as an instance, the pay-sheet for November, 1885, in which it appears that the rate of wages paid to miners was 12s. per day. I produce another sheet, which is dated the 16th August, 1888, and I take the case of Winter and his mate Hughes: together they turned out £12 15s., for the fortnight, in which time they put out 273 skips of coal. Each skip is half a ton, one-half of it being small, consisting of dross and nuts. The men pay for fuse and powder. I take as another instance the pay-sheet of February, 1888, from which it appears that Winter, the same miner, received at the rate of 4s. a ton on screened coal. The extreme was made by Winter and company, who got out fifty-six trucks in one day, which would be equal to £1 8s. a day: that was the highest wages I ever paid for a day's work, but these men were splendid workers.

310. What would be the ordinary wages?—About £3 5s. a week. The average earnings are from 12s. to 14s. a day of eight hours' work.

311. How are the surface-men paid?—We paid at the rate of 10s. That is the usual rate throughout the coast. I put in my original pay-sheets in support of these statements. [Exhibit No. 4.] These rates show that at this time I paid 2s. per ton for unscreened coal—that is, the same for which the company now pay 2s. 10d. at the Brunner Mine.

312. Were the wages you paid to the men satisfactory to them?—Yes, I believe so.

313. Were there any strikes?—There were no strikes. There were constant grievances, which were referred to me for settlement, and not to a union. I always managed to settle them.

314. How long have you been an employer of labour?—I have employed labour since 1854, and I never knew men to receive their pay with so little thanks as coal-miners. Other men seem to feel grateful for their money, but the coal-miners always seem to look at you as if you were trying to rob them.

315. What railway freight did you pay?—I paid 2s. 6d.

316. What rent did you pay for your lease?—I paid the Westport Company 6d. a ton rent, and that covered all royalty. The 2s. covered all railway freights and wharf charges; that was all. I had to pay 2s. 6d. for everything—for my face coal, but this was only at first; it was afterwards reduced to 2s. for railway freight all round.

317. Did you ever freight coal on your own account?—Yes.

318. How much did you pay?—I paid, I think, 10s. to Lyttelton, and 9s. to Wellington.

319. By sailing ship or by steamer?—By Union Steamship Company's steamers, I think.

320. What did you do with all your slack?—I used to use it in many ways. I took some of it up to my flax-mill, some I stored in my back-yard, and so on.

321. Are you aware if there is any demand for slack for gas-making?—They would not use it here.

322. From your experience would you say that Greymouth coal is favourable for gas-making?—I believe it is.

323. Have you supplied coal to any company for gas-making?—No.

324. What is the Grey coal most adapted for?—It is better adapted for smelting-works than anything I know of, as it will make a good hard coke. As I am an iron-founder I use a good deal of it every day, and it will beat anything I have ever seen in the furnace.

325. Does slack make as good coke as the head coal?—It is coke that is made from the slack.

326. What is the market value of Greymouth coke?—They charge me £1 10s. a ton for it. It ranges from £1 5s. to £1 10s.

327. Which of the mines do you consider turns out the best coal?—The Tyneside was preferred by the blacksmiths and others to any of the other Grey River coals. It is peculiarly adapted for blacksmiths' work, being a beautiful clean coal, and it does not scale the iron. It gives out a very great heat. The Grey Valley coals are all equally good, the Wallsend, the Coal-pit Heath, and the Brunner. The Greymouth coal is the best coal I know of. I do not think there is a better coal in the Southern Hemisphere for manufacturing purposes and for coke.

328. Is it as good for household purposes?—Not quite so good, on account of its richness, not because of its inferiority.

329. Would you call it a good steam-coal?—Yes, a grand steam-coal.

330. What is your idea of the quantity of coal in the district that is still available?—In my opinion there is still abundance of coal in the Brunner district, but of course it is not so easily obtained as in the earlier years on account of the increasing depth.

331. Will you tell us about the Blackball?—There is no mine working at the Blackball.

332. What other mines may be opened in the district?—There are several—there are the Coal Creek, the Point Elizabeth, and also the Blackball.

333. Would they all use the Greymouth Harbour?—Yes, unless a harbour is made at Point Elizabeth.

334. These you have just mentioned are leases actually existing?—Yes; besides which there is a quantity of coal available for working under similar circumstances to Mount Rochfort, which is held by the Westport Company.

335. Have you any interest in the Point Elizabeth and Blackball mines?—Yes.

336. Are you looking to public expenditure to open up the mines?—To a certain extent, yes.

337. What will be required to make the Blackball available?—My estimate is £30,000 for access to port.

338. What is the extent of the mine?—Three square miles.
339. Point Elizabeth has not got access to Greymouth yet?—No.
340. What will that require?—A railway of about five or six miles.
341. And what distance for the Coal Creek?—About four or five miles, I think.
342. The Blackball lease is now on land owned by the Midland Railway?—Yes; and it is on account of that that I feel almost hopeless in the matter.
343. Are any of the other leases you have mentioned in the same position?—No; the Coal Creek is on the Nelson coal reserve.
344. What is the thickness of your seam at the Blackball?—It is about 20ft. to 21ft.
345. Is it a clean seam?—No. There is 11ft. to 13ft. of good coal, then there is a stone band of about a foot in thickness, and then about 6ft. or 7ft. of good coal again on the top of that.

Mr. William Simpson Smith sworn and examined.

346. *The Chairman.*] Are you a resident in Greymouth?—No; I reside in Amberley, Canterbury.
347. What is your connection with coal-mining here?—I am interested, in company with Mr. F. Hamilton, of Nelson, and others, in three leases at Point Elizabeth.
348. You have written to the Commissioners desiring to make a statement?—Yes. We are the lessees at Point Elizabeth, and we have surveyed a line of railway from there to Greymouth, and have applied to the Government for authority to construct it, and then we applied to the Railway Commissioners to know what the terminal rates would be. They fixed them at 1s. 3d., we having to construct the line and find the plant and rolling-stock and work it. We are to use all that portion of the line and sidings on this side of the river.
349. That is to say, you will have to pay 1s. 3d. for what are really wharf charges?—Yes; as compared with the Brunner Mines, that leaves the charge for use of the railway between Greymouth and Brunner at equal to 9d., as the Brunner pays 2s. altogether.
350. Are you aware how that 1s. 3d. was arrived at? Has there been any correspondence on the subject?—Yes; there have been interviews and correspondence.
351. What do you consider fair?—We consider that 6d. would be fair, as that would place us in the same position as the Brunner Mine. We would have even paid 9d., although we consider that too much, considering our expense in the construction of the line.
352. What is the length of the line?—From Johnston Street to our lease is 7 miles 10 chains.
353. In that railway you would require a bridge over the Grey River: how do you propose to effect that?—The Government have offered to give us the use of the Cobden Bridge.
354. What department?—The Public Works.
355. On what terms?—That the company alter the bridge so as to carry a railway over the present bridge.
356. Is there any rent to be charged?—No.
357. Do you know if it is possible that the 1s. 3d. may cover some charge for the use of the bridge?—No; I do not think there is anything of the sort.
358. What length of Government line would you require to use?—Just from the end of the bridge down to the wharf, about half a mile.
359. Then, the services you will require from the Government will be the use of the line from the bridge to the shipping, also the sidings?—Yes.
360. And will they run the line for you?—Yes; they take charge when we put it on their sidings.
361. Is the line not to be conveyed to the Railway Commissioners and run on the ordinary railway system?—No; it is to be run as a coal line, under the District Railways Act.
362. Are you to provide your own rolling-stock, including locomotives?—Yes.
363. What provision has been made or contemplated for sheds or other necessary conveniences in Greymouth? Are you to trust to the Railway Commissioners to provide the accommodation?—The Government propose to give us some siding space near the quarries, but we shall have to make our own alterations.
364. Do you think the rent of 1s. 3d. will be meant to cover any of that?—No; because it is under the Public Works Department. Our company has to provide shed-sites in Greymouth.
365. Have you asked for an explanation of the items of the 1s. 3d.?—Yes; but they have made no reply; they did not particularise the charges. They say they make so much on the Brunner line, and they consider that, as this would be a rival line, it would draw so much of the traffic away from them, and they would require to make the same profit afterwards as they are doing now.
366. Have they expressed that in correspondence?—No; in interviews. I formed one of a deputation which waited upon the Railway Commissioners, in Wellington, on this subject, and I then heard their views.
367. What capital does the company propose to expend in preliminary works?—£5,000. It will cost, in railway and rolling-stock, over £60,000.
368. What seams do you propose to work?—It is proposed to work two seams. The principal seam is a very clean coal, close to the beach and easily accessible. Then, we have seams of bituminous coal, one about 16ft. 9in. good coal, also a seam 8ft. 6in. I believe that coal extends over the whole of the property. There are two leases of 1,280 acres each, and 220 acres extra for access to the property.
369. Will it be shaft-sinking or level-driving?—We shall commence by taking the coal to the rise. There are three seams altogether on the property.
370. Has there been a company formed?—Yes, we have formed a company in Melbourne, but we have not conveyed the property or anything of that sort yet. We have to make sure of a railway to deliver coals at 2s. 3d., including terminal rates, before the company will take it off our hands.

371. What is the capital of the company? Please state all the circumstances?—£25,000 for developing the mines up to an output of 35,000 tons per annum, when it is to be increased. This does not include the company for making the railway, the capital of which is £75,000. This is called the Point Elizabeth Railway Company. Previous to the formation of this company I was in negotiation with Mr. H. Allan Scott, on behalf of the Midland Railway Company, to make the railway, find the plant, carry coals, and deliver, f.o.b., at a rate of 2s. per ton, the same as on the Brunner line, on a guarantee of an output of 35,000 tons for the first two years, and 60,000 for the following eight years. The Coal Creek Company was to have given a like guarantee. The line was to have been in working order twelve months from signing the agreement; but the negotiations were broken off with the Coal Creek Company on account of a difference over the branch lines. On the 1st May, 1889, the Point Elizabeth Company deposited plans with the Government, and applied under the District Railways Act for authority to make the railway; and the Cobden and Coal Creek Company did the same the following day. After considerable delay and expense had been incurred, the rival companies agreed to join together and form a new railway company, to be called the Paparoa Railway Company, to make the line, find the plant and rolling-stock, and carry for both the coal companies at a rate of 2s. per ton, f.o.b., on a guarantee of an output of 35.000 tons each company for the first two years, and 60,000 tons each company for the subsequent years. On application to the Commissioners for Railways to fix terminal rates, after many interviews the promoters of the Paparoa Railway Company were informed that 1s. 3d. per ton would be the rate charged, and from this decision no concession has been made. This would only leave 9d. per ton to pay working expenses and interest on capital and depreciation on plant; so that the promoters could not see their way to go on, and decided upon waiting until Parliament met and try and obtain some relief. But the Coal Creek Company withdrew from the arrangement, and independently applied to the Government to grant them the right to make the line up to the north boundary of their lease, 4 miles 70 chains from Cobden, leaving about 1 mile 40 chains to make to our lease. The arrangement they made is gazetted on the 14th August, 1890, page 912. This leaves us in a less favourable position than if the arrangement for making the line had been adhered to.

372. You would have then been free to pay your share of the railway?—Yes. From the schedule in the *Gazette* it sahll be seen that we will be subject to 1s. 6d. for coal besides the 1s. 3d. terminal rates; and in addition there will be the charges and interest on the mile and a half of railway we should still have to make. The charge, however, would, I believe, be still 1s. 6d., as it is for ten miles or under.

373. Have you not endeavoured to make some arrangement in this matter?—No. Their manager left for London a day or two after this arrangement was gazetted, and I have had no opportunity.

374. Will the Coal Creek Company have to find their own trucks?—Yes, under their contract.

375. Could you have your own trucks running?—Yes, by arrangement with the company, I believe the Government can grant us running-powers over the line. Both companies hope, however, that the Railway Commissioners will find the plant and work the line.

376. I gather from your remarks that you, on behalf of your company, do not think that this arrangement as it at present stands, either with the Coal Creek Company or with the Railway Commissioners, is satisfactory?—No. We do not think 1s. 6d. is too much for six miles for hauling coals from our mine; but we do object to the terminal rate of 1s. 3d., and to our not being made aware of how it was arrived at. The demurrage clause also we object to, as it appears in the *Gazette*. We have a royalty of 6d., which goes to the Harbour Board also.

377. Have you any dead-rent?—Yes; for the first two years it was 1s. an acre. After that it is 5s., which merges in the royalty.

378. Taken altogether, then, the charges on the coal would amount to 3s. 9d.?—Yes, without counting any demurrage that might accrue. All these circumstances led us to go into the question of having a harbour under the shelter of Port Elizabeth; but the only schemes according to estimates we have as yet had would involve such an enormous expenditure that we are now making inquiries with regard to a mode of shipment by means of an ocean jetty similar to that at Bulli, New South Wales.

379. *Mr. Moody.*] In the event of the erection of storage staiths, do you think they should be provided by the company or by the Government?—It would depend on whether the staiths were put on the wharf or at the mines. We intended to have storage at the mine, because our coals will stand it: some other coals will not.

380. Have you made any estimate of the cost?—We intended to put up storage for 1,000 tons, and with that and the trucks we should have always had about 1,200 tons on hand, and we should always be ready to load a vessel when she came.

381. *Mr. Brown.*] Would public staiths be any benefit?—Yes, very great. It is a great pity they were not carried out here in the original plan in Greymouth; but there was a great outcry at the time against them.

382. *Mr. Moody.*] I presume the different collieries would be prepared to pay rent if the staiths were erected?—Very likely.

383. *Mr. Brown.*] How would they work that? How would the storage be allocated?—I presume each mine would require a certain number of bins set apart for them. That is the only way it could be done.

384. Would you get the full use of the staiths in that way?—I think so.

385. Would it be more satisfactory to make the bins at the mines or down here?—I think it would be better for us to have storage at the mine, because the place appears to be just made for it.

386. *Mr. Moody.*] I suppose you are now only waiting until some arrangements are made by Government?—Yes; the Coal Creek Company have got three years to do that work—that is, to complete the railway—and seven months to commence it in.

Mr. Joseph Taylor sworn and examined.

387. *The Chairman.*] In what capacity do you appear before us, Mr. Taylor?—I am a coal-mine owner residing at Cobden.

388. How long have you been in the district?—About twenty-three years.

389. What mines have you been connected with? Give us a short history from the beginning?—Of course, in the first instance I had nothing to do with it personally. I merely came down with my father when he was appointed manager of the Brunner Mine.

390. Was that the only mine open then?—Yes. It was then being worked by the Ballarat Company, and they had to make a line to the port. They did not use as much energy as they might have done in making the railway, and it resulted in the mines being retaken by the Provincial Goverment of Nelson. Then so far the connection of my father and myself with the Brunner Mine ceased. Others then took it up. Some little time after that my father and myself took up the Coal-pit Heath, which was the adjoining property to the Brunner. We were the first to work that. We had associated with us some other gentleman who joined in the undertaking, and formed a company in which we were large shareholders. When we had been working for about ten years, and as we were drawing towards the end of our capital, Captain Williams, of Wellington, joined us, and we continued working for another two years. I may say, as a matter of fact, that during its whole career the company had been most unfortunate so far as dividends were concerned, as we never declared one up to the time that Captain Williams joined us nor after. The result was that most shareholders who were in the concern were anxious to get out of it. After that, and seeing that Captain Williams had power to obtain ships, when there would be a better chance of making it payable, we bought out all the others at about the end of the twelve years. In the meantime my father died. The reason of our failure was due to want of shipping. Captain Williams shortly afterwards handed his interest over to his son, who was then going into the shipping business. We ultimately sold out the whole of the interest to the Westport Coal Company. About twelve months before the termination of the twelve years—viz., in 1885—Captain Williams wished to obtain coal for his steamers as freight. There was a strike on then at Westport, and the coal here was in great demand, and the Union Steamship Company's boats came very frequently. Captain Williams was thus placed at a disadvantage, and he claimed that his ships should have first preference, as he was a shareholder in the company. This he did not get, and he informed me this was one of the causes he had for selling his steamers.

391. Whom did he sell to?—To the Union Steamship Company.

392. All his steamers?—Yes. The Union Steamship Company's were at that time the only boats competing with him, excepting the Brunner Coal Company's line.

393. What happened then to the Coal-pit Heath?—We went on for some time, Captain Williams continuing to buy up any shares that might be offered.

394. Then, there was no other material change until you sold to the Westport Company?—No. The cause of our selling was that we could not make any money. We found the difficulties of competing successfully with the larger companies too great.

395. In what year did you sell to the Westport Company?—In 1886.

396. What was it sold for?—£16,000. We had actually expended from £22,000 to £24,000 upon the company according to our balance-sheet. The failure to make the mine pay was undoubtedly due to the want of shipping facilities.

397. Was there no other cause besides the difficulty of getting freights?—No. We had no more than the ordinary mining difficulties to contend with. In fact they were not so serious as they have more recently become.

398. Had you any strikes?—Yes, for higher wages.

399. Have you any knowledge of the state of the mine since 1886?—Yes, I have been down a few times in the mine.

400. What amount of coal was put out from from the Coal-pit Heath?—I could not tell from memory.

401. What was the thickness of the seam?—It varied from 12ft. to 17ft.

402. Was it pretty steady?—Yes, fairly so.

403. Was it obtained by working to the dip?—Only partly. We were working from the dip when we broke off; we had some rise-workings, but they were worked out earlier.

404. This, then, involved the cost of pumping and hauling?—Yes.

405. Did you work it by pillar-and-stall system?—Yes.

406. Had you no difficulty with faults?—Yes; we met a big west fault, besides some smaller ones.

407. Did that cut off your workings entirely?—We never got through.

408. Did you ever try?—No; because we knew the Brunner had already spent a good deal of money on it.

409. How much of that is left untouched?—777 acres is the area; I do not suppose we have worked much more than 50 acres altogether, leaving 600 acres or more to which access has not been obtained.

410. Had you anything to do with any of the other mines?—Only as a shareholder in the Westport Coal Company. I had a few shares in that.

411. *Mr. Moody.*] Who managed the Coal-pit Heath Mine at that time?—Mr. Thomas Alexander.

412. During the whole time?—No. First of all, in the early stages my father managed it during his life. Then there was Mr. Geary, who is now up in Auckland—he managed it for a short time; then finally Mr. Alexander for some six or seven years. He was in charge at the time of the transfer.

413. Have you recollection of the numbers of men employed, and the wages paid?—The

number of men during the period of twelve years would be considerably varied. I should think on an average we would have probably from 150 to 170 men all told.

414. Have you any idea of the wages of the miners?—They were paid by the ton. I think it was 4s. a ton for screened coal, and yardage in narrow places. Formerly, I think we used to get it for 3s. per ton, but as things advanced we had to advance the prices.

415. What proportion did the screened coal form? What slack was there?—About a third slack, perhaps not so much. There is not near so much slack in our's as there is in the Brunner.

416. *Mr. Brown.*] Have you any recollection of the amount of wages earned by the miners at that place?—The wages earned were always fairly good. The average was reduced a good deal by irregularities of shipping trade. It was about from 10s. to 15s. a day, according to the place of working. In addition to their wages, the miners got their coal, but they paid for their own powder and fuse. We used to pay the surface-men 10s. a day. This was between 1885 and 1886.

417. What generally caused the interruption?—Want of trade as a rule.

418. Was it actually want of demand for coal?—Not always; sometimes there was plenty of demand for coal, and other times it was slack.

419. How do you mean then?—The fact is, it was more the want of shipping facilities; so, of course, in that sense there was a want of demand.

420. Were the railway facilities sufficient?—The rolling-stock was rather short; but since then it has been considerably increased. On many occasions our operations were considerably hampered.

421. *The Chairman.*] Are you satisfied that the improvements to the harbour-works have effected a difference?—I am satisfied that great improvements have been made; at the same time, during bad or indifferent weather, or owing to the flooded state of the river, there are always some delays to shipping. It is now what I would call a better "good weather" port, but it is closed as much as ever in bad weather.

422. You are not actually engaged now in any coal-mining?—No, with the exception of a little prospecting we are doing in the Stillwater. Myself and two others are doing that. I am also interested largely in a large coal area which has been taken up by the Cobden Railway and Coal Company. We have already expended about £4,000 in rents, surveys of railway, and prospecting.

423. Are you doing anything now?—We have done a lot of prospecting in the Coal Creek and the Seven-mile Creek.

424. Are you interested in both the Coal Creek and the Point Elizabeth?—Not in the Point Elizabeth.

425. What do you call the Seven-mile Creek?—That is between our company's lease and the Coal Creek lease, and is now included in the company's area.

426. What condition is the company in now—I mean the Cobden Railway and Coal Company?—I am one of the directors of that company, and Mr. McDougal is the legal manager. Some little time ago—about twelve months—application was made by the company to construct a railway line on their own account. Permission was accordingly given us to do so. It was very necessary to bring the coal to Greymouth, as there was no other means of shipment. Application was also made to the Railway Commissioners for carrying coal over their portion of the line from the Cobden Bridge to Greymouth. They decided to fix the terminal charge at 1s. 3d. per ton. This completely upset our calculations, as we considered 6d. per ton would be sufficient. Of course the 1s. 3d. completely knocked us out of time; so we said it would be better for us to give it up altogether. We intended to make our own line and purchase rolling-stock at a risk of £50,000 or £60,000. A company was formed, and the money was there ready to go on with the work, but the decision of the Commissioners blocked us, and also the lease Mr. William Smith is interested in—viz., the Point Elizabeth.

427. Are you aware that any arrangement was made to join with the Point Elizabeth?—Yes; it was to be called the Paparoa Railway Company, but it fell through in consequence of this difficulty with the 1s. 3d.

428. And since then your company has got no concession?—Nothing definite that I am aware.

429. How do you make out that 6d. would be a fair terminal charge? What do you expect to have done for that?—It would be taken down on to the wharf, and loaded by the cranes on to the vessels. At the present time the total charge for the Brunner people is 2s. a ton: that includes haulage of the coal over the bridge, and carriage by rail down to Greymouth, and putting on board the vessel by the Commissioners. Well, considering that all the rolling-stock would be our own, and considering the capital invested, we think 6d. for simply loading and shunting would pay handsomely. We should use only a very small portion of the line, not much more than a quarter of a mile. If we spend £70,000—I think that is the estimate—to make the railway, and rolling-stock to bring it down to the present railway-station, we consider we are entitled to 1s. 6d. and 6d. to the Commissioners for terminal rates. That would be 2s. altogether, and would place us on the same footing with the Brunner—that is, 6d. would be a fair terminal charge in proportion to the total 2s. paid by the Brunner Company.

430. In other words, if they charge you 1s. 3d., to this must be added the first 1s. 6d.: that makes 2s. 9d. altogether?—Yes; and then we have to pay royalty as well.

431. You have to make the line from your works to join the railway here, and to bring it over the bridge at Cobden by strengthening it—bring a viaduct over so as to connect the traffic?—Yes; the whole thing has been designed and worked out. It is pretty expensive.

432. Have you the estimate?—The engineer has it. I think it is £12,000 for the bridge and approaches; and to connect to the bridge, make the tunnel, and purchase rolling-stock comes to from £60,000 to £70,000.

433. Have you ever contemplated making arrangements for using Point Elizabeth for discharging coal?—We have had it in view. It has been looked upon as being a most suitable place. There is, of course, the difficulty of knowing how to get it done.

434. *Mr. Moody.*] Have you sea-frontage to your property?—We have not exactly sea-frontage, but we have next to it.

435. There would be no difficulty in getting the land to go through to that point?—No.

436. *The Chairman.*] Do you know what a jetty would cost?—We have under consideration Leuthwaite's patent system of breakwater. I believe some negotiations have been made with the Government for a right to construct it, but so far nothing definite has been done that I am aware of.

437. How long was your lease for?—I think it is sixty-six years.

438. Of how many acres?—About 4,640 acres.

439. Is there any addition to that royalty rent to be made in the future?—I think after twenty-one years the royalty is to be increased to 1s. From my experience of the difficulties of coal-mining here, after twenty-one years the royalty should be reduced instead of increased.

440. What is the dead-rent?—For the first two years, £200 per annum; the next five years, £500; the next seven years, £750; the next seven years, £1,000; and the remainder of the term—that is, forty-five years—at £2,000 per annum.

441. Does this merge into the royalty after the royalties are greater?—Yes.

442. Are you aware to whom these royalties go under the terms of the lease—do they go, like the Brunnerton royalties, to the Harbour Board?—Yes, they do, because it is all on the same reserve.

443. Can you say whether, in the event of these new places being opened out, the shipping appliances are sufficient to supply the new places and the present ones as well?—If they were to develop they would require additional plant for shipping: that is, the railway would require more loading-accommodation, such as cranes, &c. Almost at any time coal staiths would give more facilities for regulating the working of the mines—even now, or in the future, or in the past.

444. Then, if vessels had been in front of the cranes they would have been enabled to get their load?—Yes. Very often there have been vessels lying there unable to load. There has been very great difficulty, particularly so when there has been any opposition. Now that they have got their 150 or 200 trucks it does not occur to the same extent, and through the amalgamation of the whole business, a stop having been put to the competition. This was one of the difficulties we had to contend against. Out of the 150 wagons, I have known the Brunner Company, which had then the largest business, occupying 137 of them; and, if their ships did not turn up, we had to go on loading with only eight to twelve wagons a 500-ton boat. This kind of thing occurred frequently, and this, in common with other things, necessitated our selling out of the Coal-pit Heath Mine.

445. Do you think the amalgamation of these mines has had a beneficial effect or otherwise on the trade of the port? I include also the agreement with the Union Steamship Company?—Speaking from experience, I should say it has not had a good effect.

446. Has it decreased the trade?—Yes; I think so, and it has created a very unsatisfactory feeling in the mining community, particularly about the Brunner.

447. You have had long experience amongst the miners: are you aware of the circumstances of the present disagreement, from your own personal knowledge?—Yes; I know pretty well the gist of the present dispute. It was occasioned by the fact that the owners found that they were losing considerable sums of money—as a matter of fact, the demands which the miners were continually making were consuming all their profits—and that their returns showed a considerable loss. They therefore decided to ask the men to accept a reduction.

448. Was there not trouble about March last, after which there was a rearrangement in the coal-hewing wages?—Yes; the men for a time were paid 2s. 10d. on the gross unscreened coal.

449. Were the men reasonable in demanding this increase? Do you think 2s. 10d. was too much or too little?—I think for pillar working it is too much. The owners then proposed to make a reduction of 20 per cent.

450. Could the men have earned fair wages with this reduction?—I do not know about 20 per cent. actual reduction, but they could have stood 10 per cent. at least.

451. *Mr. Moody.*] As a practical man, what do you consider a fair wage?—I should say, at any rate, 2s. 4d. to 2s. 3d. would be—even at 2s. per ton they could make fair wages for working pillar coal; and for the coal which is not pillar working, where the faces are in solid coal, it is possible that the company could have afforded to give 2s. 10d. for solid coal, because there would not be so much dross or slack made as there would be in pillar workings.

452. *The Chairman.*] Do you think the method of paying upon the gross coal is as likely to secure the output of good coal as payment on the net-weight system?—No; I do not think so. I think they would be too much inclined to send out anything, and not use sufficient care. So long as they get a truck full some men do not care so long as they get the weight.

453. You are acquainted with the population of Brunnerton?—Yes.

454. Are they generally in good circumstances?—They are not badly off, though there are a number of them that owe considerable sums of money.

455. How is that brought about? Are there too many there for the work there is to do?—Yes; there are now.

456. Is that the only reason? Would storage and coal-staiths afford any relief, do you think?—Well, that would keep a lesser number of hands at Brunnerton; and it would keep those hands going better, and that would be better for everybody. There appears to be one objection to the coal-staiths, however, and I understand Mr. Kennedy does not favour them, for this reason: that is, the coal would be much more liable to be broken in falling through the staiths. There is nothing like the cranes for loading coal. They are very good.*

457. Do you say that one of the causes of the debts owing by the miners is the irregularity of

* This answer only applies to the Brunner seam. The Blackball, Coal Creek, Seven-mile, and Point Elizabeth seams are mostly much harder, and would stand more handling.—J.T.

work?—Yes; sometimes they have not got a week's work in the month—it has been very intermittent. Then, again, of course there are accidents, and many when they have got any money do not, as a rule, keep it.

458. Are you in a position to know anything about the payment of rents?—Yes.

459. You own property that you let to some of these miners?—Yes. Some of the tenants are very good. There would be, I suppose, half of them who are prompt, in good or bad times, excepting since the strikes have commenced, as now all have stopped paying.

460. Do you know if they are making other payments now?—I do not think they are. I should think at the present time at Brunnerton there must be an amount outstanding of from £15,000 to £17,000 owing by the mining community. That, at least, is my impression.

461. About one-half of the tenants pay well, you say. What about the other half?—They paid moderately during the time they were at work, perhaps one-quarter they would pay, and after that some of them would not pay at all.

462. And now all are in arrear?—Yes.

463. Does that apply to miners or surface-men?—All of them together.

464. Do the men give any reasons for not paying rent?—Want of money, they say.

465. Do the men get any strike pay?—I think not. They only get food-cards.

466. What hours do you have in the coal-pits?—Eight a.m. to four p.m.—practically seven hours' work. In the case of where they have long distances to go, they sometimes take half an hour to get to their work. We should not sometimes get more than six and a half hours' work—that is, actual work at the face—out of them.

467. Eight hours has been the very longest, then?—Yes. Our day-men, of course, work from 8 to 5, allowing one hour for dinner.

468. Have you heard anything about unreasonable demands for holidays?—Yes, that has been known to arise. When there are holidays they will have them; it would not matter to them how long they had been idle before. If St. Patrick's Day happened to come just after a few idle weeks, they would take the holidays; they will not make the slightest attempt to make up a little for the forced holidays by working on fixed ones.

469. What is the longest period at which they are forced to be idle on account of want of shipping, &c.?—I suppose a week. I have known nearly a fortnight, when there has been a real block, and a great deal more for sailing-vessels; but this was in the earlier days. Then all the ships would come up together.

470. Do many sailing-vessels come now?—Not many; it is mostly all done by steamers.

471. I suppose the Union Steamship Company takes most of the coal?—Yes, and the Anchor line.

472. What does the Coal-pit Heath Company do with its slack?—It used to make what it could into coke. Of course there was always a percentage of the dross that had to go into the river, as it could not be utilised.

473. Did you get a fair profit on the coke?—Yes.

474. What price did you get?—I think about £1 or £1 5s. f.o.b. from Greymouth. It used to cost us 6s. to make it—that was, for the actual burning. I suppose it would take about 60 per cent. of small for coke.

475. You never used the fireclay at the Coal-pit Heath?—No, the fireclay there was not get-at-able.

476. *Mr. Moody.*] How do you account for this state of indebtedness on the part of the miners?—It is no doubt caused to a great extent by the irregularity of the work, occasioned by the state of the bar very often. That is one of the reasons; but I think a great deal of the indebtedness is due to a want of thrift, and to the fact that the business people are too liberal; they give too much credit, and supply them too largely.

477. *The Chairman.*] Are the interruptions to the miners' work greater or less since the amalgamation of the mines?—Until this stoppage arose they were doing very well, and a good trade was being done. I think that probably the business has a good deal to do with the grain seasons. If the grain season is very good a large quantity of grain goes to New South Wales, and the boats bring back shipments of coal as ballast, and sell at a very low figure.

478. They are the great competitors of the West Coast coals?—Yes; all the time they are conducting this business the West Coast mines are very much affected. I think this last year there has not been such a quantity of produce carried away to New South Wales; consequently the business in coal was better here. I know, in fact, that that has something to do with it.

479. During the drought in New South Wales vessels took produce over, and brought back coal and competed with the coal here?—Yes.

480. Is there any coke imported into New Zealand?—No.

481. Do you know what becomes of the coke made here?—Until the Broken Hill turned up most of it was used in New Zealand, and some was sent to Melbourne; but now, since the Broken-Hill rush, of course large amounts have been sold over there. I am not aware what price they got for it.

482. Is there any difference in the price of freights for coal and coke?—Yes; coke is charged at freight and a half on account of its bulk. Even the railways charge more for coke.

483. What appear to be the prospects of the Stillwater seam?—Well, we have just opened that up; the prospects are very favourable; the roof is improving, and the coal is getting flatter towards the eastward; the seam is now about 3ft. 6in., and is slowly thickening. The quality of the coal is very good, and access is convenient.

484. What area have you?—We have 640 acres, on a twenty-one years' lease.

485. In your opinion, is there still abundance of coal in the Greymouth district?—Yes, I am satisfied there is. Of course there are great drawbacks to be met with on account of the number of

troubles and faults to be met with, also shipping difficulties and want of rolling-stock, and interruptions from the state of the bar.

486. Do you consider the coal-mining business has been fairly satisfactory to the mine-owners?—No; I think it has been anything but satisfactory in the past so far as investment is concerned. We worked for twelve years and got nothing. We sold out for £16,000 of the £22,000 we put into it. We did not actually pay that all in at once, but we made it up in the twelve years. If we made a thousand pounds profit we would spend fifteen hundred or so.

487. You are not of opinion that an outside trade could be successfully established here in coal?—Of course the outside trade could be established well enough, but it becomes a question of competition.

488. We have evidence that vessels carrying from 1,600 to 1,700 tons have gone out of this port?—Although we send cargo over to Melbourne, I do not think more than two cargoes have gone over, and then, possibly, there may have been some special reason. But I do not think the coal would pay at the price they were getting for it over at Melbourne.

489. Do you know if there is any coal-duty in Victoria?—I think there is about 1s. a ton. My experience of the coal trade is this: The great difficulties in its working are, as a matter of fact, due to the causes I have mentioned, and the keen competition and the great facilities other mines, such as at Newcastle, have had—good ports to load at, and the seams get-at-able—so that people who have put money into it here have not been able to get much out of it. What between the railway freights and royalty, well, the lion's share is gone and the wages takes the balance. The Westport Company have never paid more than a 5-per-cent. dividend for the last year, and perhaps 2½ per cent. before that. The Brunner may possibly have done a little on account of its shipping. The drawbacks are too great for any small company to make money. If we could have kept the work going steadily I believe we could have made good money. I know this: that so far as this coal district is concerned it wants all the help it can get. If we could have had a port at Point Elizabeth where a vessel could have sailed in and loaded up it would have been all right. So far as getting money is concerned, investors in West Coast coal-mines have not made a fortune yet.

FRIDAY, 17TH OCTOBER, 1890.

Mr. JAMES BISHOP sworn and examined.

490. *The Chairman.*] What are you, Mr. Bishop?—I am manager of the Grey Valley Coal Company's mine.

491. You have certificates, and are on the New Zealand Register?—Yes.

492. What experience have you had as mine-manager?—I have had twenty-five years' experience.

493. How long have you been in New Zealand?—I have been eleven years in New Zealand.

494. And where did you come from?—I came from England to New Zealand, to Shag Point first, and from there to the West Coast. I have been now eight years on the West Coast, where I was first in the Brunner Mine, and since the amalgamation of the Grey Valley mines I have been the manager of the amalgamated mines.

495. Who was your employer when you first took charge?—Mr. Martin Kennedy.

496. In what year was that?—On the 4th August, 1882, I took charge of the Brunner Mine, and on the 7th August, 1888, the properties were amalgamated.

497. You then had charge of the Brunner, Coal-pit Heath, Wallsend, and Tyneside?—Yes.

498. Can you give us a sketch of the work that has been done—we will take the Brunner Mine first—during the time you have had charge of it?—The Brunner Mine, at the time I took charge of the coal-workings, was to the dip of the field. Finding a piece of coal lying between the Coal-pit Heath and the Brunner on the east side of the fault, we commenced trying to recover the coal to the west of the main fault.

499. What measures did you take?—Opening up the stone-drift and carrying it along the bearing of the fault, and thus opening up access to the coal. This drive is 920ft.

500. Was there not a trial drive put in in another direction?—Yes.

501. What did it cost?—I do not know, because it was done prior to my entering Mr. Kennedy's employment; but we spent about £4,000, exclusive of money spent prior to my taking charge.

502. That is, in proving that main fault?—Yes. Then, after securing the coal beyond the fault, we worked some coal to the extreme rise of that fault, where it dies out. The coal on the two sides of the fault comes together again to the rise.

503. The coal was worked too high up on the hill?—Yes. We made an incline through the old workings. The pillars had been partly taken out. We have been taking the pillars out in the workings I have referred to.

504. Which working?—That was the upper working.

505. Has the roof come down?—Yes.

506. It is closed up entirely, then?—Yes.

507. How high is that above the main water-level?—That must be about 350ft.

508. How far back from the brow of the cliff?—It was about 1,000 yards to the level. Directly back from the river it would not be more than 700 or 800 yards.

509. There are no pillars taken out nearer the river than that?—Not since I came.

510. How far would your pillars be taken out in relation to that precipitous cliff at the back of the mine?—A considerable distance—about 400 or 500 yards.

511. What cover had you where the roof came down?—We have taken no means of ascertaining it. The roof falls particularly where the timber has been removed,

512. Has surface-water gained access to the mine?—Yes; but that has only taken place in Pit Heath. That is naturally where you would expect the water to gather.

513. The water can easily find its way down, I suppose?—Yes.

514. Then, beyond the fault what coal did you take out?—The workings are shown on the plan.

515. Were they extensive?—Yes; there is about sixty acres in extent.

516. What was the thickness of the seam you got beyond the fault?—At first it was something like 15ft., and then it came down. I do not suppose the average was more than 7½ft. We have had it down to 5ft. with rolls coming in.

517. Where did these rolls come in?—We have some in the floor, but mostly in the roof.

518. Is there any change in the nature of the roof where the rolls occur?—Yes; sometimes there are loose and detached pieces. They detach themselves from the main rock roof.

519. What was the output from beyond the first fault? What have you already won for the return of £4,000 in the mine?—I could easily supply a return showing that output. The cost of proving the fault is not covered by the £4,000 stated as having been spent after I took charge. The work must have cost thousands prior to my taking the management. I put the quantity of coal worked from this area at 250,000 tons.

520. What was the nature of the roof where those rolls came in?—It was practically the same sandstone roof. The workings were continued until we met another fault.

521. What is the level of your last drive beyond the fault? How does it relate to the different levels on the old workings?—The present working-level is to the rise of water-level shown on old plan.

522. Has all the coal been worked out?—It has been worked to the rise, and now we are working the pillars. It is desirable that they should be taken out, as the longer they stand the more difficult they are to get and the more they are deteriorated. I regret sometimes they are not worked quicker.

523. Are your workings limited on the level beyond the fault?—Yes, they are limited by a second fault.

524. What is the nature of that fault?—So far as we have proved it, the coal is pinched out.

525. What is the thickness of the coal when it reaches this pinch?—About 6ft. thick. At the second fault it is 6ft. thick.

526. How far had you to drive before you picked up the coal beyond that fault?—We have not picked it up yet. We put a prospecting drive in for about 12 chains on a thin seam of coal. The work done here has cost about £1,500.

527. Did you follow that coal on the level?—Yes, without any displacement.

528. Have you ever driven in the direction of the rise on the dip for the purpose of seeing if the seam is displaced?—No; we have gone neither to one side nor the other, but we put a borehole down in the entrance of the prospecting-tunnel and found no coal. We put it down 140ft.

529. What did you pass through?—Grit like the roof over the coal.

530. So that there is a possibility that the coal might be displaced downwards beyond the fault?—It may be, but the strata underlying the coal in the Brunner field are like the strata overlying it. The borehole is not by any means a certain indication of our seams below water-level, and the frequent ridges in the roof change the apparent irregularity in the plane.

531. During your management of the mines, have there been many interruptions or stoppages of the workings?—No; very few indeed. The first six years we had no interruptions in consequence of differences with our workmen.

532. Had you any through stoppages by the railway, or any defects in the mine, or through not not having coal won, so to speak?—No, nothing of that kind; but we have had stoppages through bad weather, causing a bad bar and thus preventing shipping.

533. That has been the only cause of stoppage?—Yes, during the last six years. Then, this trouble began at the beginning of this year.

534. Not before this year?—No; we had no stoppage with our men until this year.

535. Would you describe how the stoppages have arisen? Would the want of storage have any effect in causing interruptions?—It would have partly obviated the interruptions had there been storage.

536. Did a deficiency in shipping and the state of the bar ever stop the mines?—I dare say we have had occasional interruptions in that way.

537. Through want of tonnage?—Yes.

538. When such stoppages occur are the whole of the men knocked off work?—A large portion of the underground workmen are knocked off—that is, the coal-hewers—and a number of the surface-men. Of course, the carpenters and the men that we always have to keep going are not knocked off.

539. What notice do you give them?—We give them no notice. It is simply a matter of trucks, and when they are filled up there is a block.

540. What is the greatest duration of a block?—I have known a week on the occasion of a bad bar.

541. Has that occurred frequently in recent times?—No.

542. Do you think this has been obviated by the harbour improvements?—Yes, largely.

543. Now we come to the interruptions from strikes: they have been confined to this year?—Yes.

544. Can you put us in possession of such points as the causes that led up to them, and what are the exact demands of the men?—On the 24th February I was served with a notice by the miners that they desired to change the system of weighing from the screened coal, which is known as the "Billy Fairplay."

545. That is, to pay on the gross weight instead of the screened coal?—Yes. There had been a prior request of a similar nature to this, and on the 8th December, 1888, we concluded an arbitration on the question. I now put in a copy of the report of the committee of accountants appointed by the Grey Valley Miners' Association on the one part and the Grey Valley Coal Company on the other part, to ascertain the gross output from the Brunner, Wallsend, and Coal-pit Heath Mines from the 3rd September to the 27th October, both inclusive, and to ascertain what price would have been paid to miners per ton had the gross-weight system been in operation during the said period. [Exhibit No. 5.]

546. Was this disputed or referred to the umpire?—No; the Committee agreed.

547. Some of these were miners?—Yes, three of them, and three were acting on behalf of the proprietors.

548. Did the men go back to work cheerfully after that?—They refused to accept the report of the arbitration, though the management was quite willing to do so. The miners then withdrew their application.

549. I presume, then, it was in consequence of an application that the report was made?—Yes. A similar application was made on the 24th February of this year. I will read the application:—

From the Amalgamated Miners' and Labourers' Association of New Zealand, Brunnerton.—To Mr. James Bishop, Mine-manager.—SIR,—As you were informed some months ago, the miners in your employ are very much dissatisfied with the present system of weighing the coal on which payment is made to the hewers. They are convinced that the only just system that can be adopted is payment by gross weight, and they are pretty well tired of the Billy Fairplay lottery plan now in operation. I am directed to give you notice that on and after fourteen days from date the miners demand payment on the gross weight of the coal sent to bank, and at the rates of 2s. 10d. per ton, both on bord and pillar work. Hoping that you will accede to this, I remain, &c., SAMUEL ANDREW, Secretary.

550. Did you answer that letter?—Yes, on the same day.

551. Tell us generally what you did?—We proposed to go to arbitration as formerly, in order to determine the price; and then further correspondence ensued. I wrote as follows:—

Brunner Mines, 24th February, 1890.—Hewing-prices.—DEAR SIR,—Your favour informing me of the dissatisfaction of the miners with the present weighing system, and notice that in fourteen days from date they demand a change of system, together with a hewing-price of 2s. 10d. per ton, came to hand in due course, and in reply I may be allowed to say that, so far as negotiations for a change of system, &c., have been considered between ourselves and the workmen, it has always been on the basis of paying for gross weight such price per ton as would be equivalent to 4s. on screened coal; and, as you well know, the prices required were ascertained by arbitrators representing both sides, but, for some reason best known to your members, were rejected by them. At present there is nothing to justify the demand for the increase of price indicated in your present notification, but in order to come to an equitable settlement we are prepared to proceed with a new arbitration on the basis of that formerly carried out. Hoping this will meet the views of the general body of the men, I am, &c., JAMES BISHOP.—Mr. S. Andrew, Secretary.

On the 3rd March there was another letter from Mr. Andrew, the Secretary, as follows:—

DEAR SIR,—Your letter relative to the gross-weight question was laid before a general meeting on Saturday evening last. It was decided to adhere to the former resolution, of which you had notice on the 24th February. The miners wish to have an idle day not later than Thursday, in order to take a ballot as provided by rule 25. If it will be inconvenient to lay all the mines idle, I have to request you to lay Coal-pit Heath and Brunner off on the back shift, and give Wallsend a 6-o'clock start on Thursday, if no previous opportunity is afforded to hold a general meeting.—Yours truly, SAMUEL ANDREW, Secretary.

552. What did you reply to that?—As follows:—

Brunner, 3rd March, 1890.—Mr. Samuel Andrew, Secretary, Grey Valley Coal-miners' Association.—DEAR SIR,—I am in receipt of your favour of this date, informing me that a general meeting of your members had decided to adhere to a former resolution demanding 2s. 10d. a ton gross weight. In reply, I can only express regret, and may be allowed to renew my former offer—viz., to arbitrate on the question. Or, as an alternative, I am prepared to give effect to the principle of paying on the gross weight on the basis of prices already ascertained, and, if found unsatisfactory after three months' trial, we may proceed to arbitrate and ascertain what further advance of price, if any, is necessary. Hoping that the members of your Association will be found ready to adopt the principle of arbitration, in order to overcome what otherwise may prove injurious to all concerned, I am, &c., JAMES BISHOP.

3rd March, 1890.—Mr. Samuel Andrew, Secretary, Miners' Union.—*Re* ballot.—DEAR SIR,—I cannot see any reason why this cannot be accomplished without making idle time. It seems to me that the ballot of the Coal-pit Heath and Brunner Mines can easily be taken in changing-time. Hoping this suggestion will meet with your approval, I am, &c., JAMES BISHOP.

553. Was the idle day granted?—Yes. Then, on the 4th March they wrote again the following letter:—

Mr. J. Bishop, Mine-manager.—DEAR SIR,—The means you suggest for taking the ballot would not do at all, inasmuch as the rule provides that this must be done at a meeting called for the purpose. As far as I can see it is only a form to be gone through, which will not affect the question at issue in any way. Notice has been given the company as to the intention of the miners if the gross-weight price asked for is not agreed to, and it is of no consequence really whether the ballot is taken or not, only that such a step as that contemplated may be done according to the rule. In regard to the prices said to have been ascertained by arbitrators previously on the gross-weight question, I am sure they can never become acceptable. The question, from the miners' point of view, is 4s. per ton for screened coal, or 2s. 11d. per ton gross weight, and any intermediate price can find no supporters. It is difficult to understand why the company has not already acceded to the very reasonable request of the miners. All that is asked for is that the mineral shall be weighed in a more satisfactory manner, and according to the law, and paid for at an established rate per ton. I was instructed to call a general meeting not later than Thursday, but before deciding on what time or day it was necessary to consult you, according to previous agreement, in this matter. If you have decided to give the 2s. 10d. per ton, of course the general meeting will not be needed, and I should like to receive your answer before posting the notices.—Yours truly, S. ANDREW, Secretary.

554. What did you reply to that?—

Brunner Mine, 5th March, 1890.—Mr. Samuel Andrew, Secretary, Grey Valley Coal-miners' Association.—DEAR SIR,—I am in receipt of your favour of yesterday's date, wherein you point out that taking the ballot is a mere matter of form to be gone through in accordance with a rule of your Association. As regards this, I have no objection to your forms being carried out so long as your doing so does not cause loss of trade, which would be detrimental to all. And it was in order to avoid such that my suggestion was made, and which I regret cannot be given effect to. At present, so far as can be seen, Friday afternoon will suit us best to lay Brunner and Coal-pit Heath off, and shall be glad to know this afternoon if this arrangement will suit you. Coming to the question of price to be paid for hewing on the gross weight, you say the prices already ascertained will not become acceptable, and that, from the miners' point of view, 2s. 10d. per ton gross weight is equivalent to the 4s. per ton now paid for screened coal; and, further, you say it is difficult to understand why the company have not already acceded to the very reasonable request

of the miners. In reply to this part of your letter, I have to say that the only reason why the company have not acceded to your request to pay 2s. 10d. per ton is found in the fact that the price named is a large advance on the price now paid for screened coal. As regards the change of system, the company cannot reasonably be held accountable for not giving effect to this, the delay having been caused by the miners themselves. And now I may be allowed to repeat that the company are quite ready to give effect to the gross-weight system, the price to be paid to be ascertained by arbitrators representing both sides. Regretting there should be any difference of opinion, I am, &c., JAMES BISHOP.

Then, on the 5th March another letter was received :—

Brunnerton, 5th March, 1890.—Mr. J. Bishop, Mine-manager.—DEAR SIR,—I regret that your answer is not satisfactory, and that there should be any need for taking the ballot. The reasons you give as to Friday being more suitable for the trade to lay Coal-pit Heath and Brunner back shifts off will justify the officers of the union in delaying the matter until then. Will you please give Wallsend a 6-o'clock start on Friday morning. The meeting will take place at 4 o'clock; therefore the miners will not be able to work later than 2 o'clock. Hoping yet to receive a favourable answer, I remain, &c., SAMUEL ANDREW, Secretary.

I replied to that on the 7th March :—

Brunner, 7th March, 1890.—Mr. Samuel Andrew, Secretary, Grey Valley Coal-miners' Association.—DEAR SIR,—In further reference to your favour of the 4th, and more especially your remarks expressing surprise that the demand of the miners has not already been conceded, I may be allowed to say that the demand made does not come before the company as a reasonable one, but rather as an attempt to compel them to pay the rate obtaining at Westport without any good reason being put forward in support of the demand. On the other hand, there are several reasons why the company cannot reasonably be expected to pay the same price as Westport. 1st. It cannot be said that 2s. 10d. is a district rate, as Westport and Greymouth cannot be taken as one district. 2nd. The largest proportion of the output of Westport mines commands 2s. a ton more than the produce of the Grey Valley Mines. 3rd. The Grey Valley Coal Company cannot pay the large increase you demand and compete in the coal trade of the colony, and any attempt to compel them to do so can only result in injury to all concerned. 4th. The demand made is not warranted by the wages now current in the several mines of the company, for, while the all-round earnings of the workmen are good, the company have no margin of profit. Notwithstanding the reasons above named, the directors are ready to sanction arbitration being resorted to, and they will spare no effort to effect an amicable and equitable settlement; and, should you so desire, they will be prepared to meet your representatives in conference to-morrow. I may just add that the continued uncertainty caused by the action of the miners in these matters has a bad effect all round, as customers of the company are already drawing supplies from other sources, thus causing unnecessary loss. Hoping you will bring this before your members, I am, &c., JAMES BISHOP.

The next letter from them is on the 7th March :—

Mr. James Bishop, Mine-manager.—DEAR SIR,—Your communications on the gross-weight question were laid before the general meeting this evening, after which the ballot was taken, and it was decided by a very large majority that unless the 2s. 10d. per ton gross weight was conceded the tools will be brought out and work will cease on Saturday (to-morrow).—Yours truly, SAMUEL ANDREW, Secretary.

My reply to that on the 7th March was as follows :—

Brunner, 7th March, 1890.—Mr. Samuel Andrew, Secretary, Grey Valley Coal-miners' Association.—DEAR SIR,—I regret the decision of your members as conveyed to me by your note of this evening, and in further reference to the question of payment under the gross-weight system I may say again that the directors of this company are prepared to make every effort to effect an amicable and equitable settlement; and in order that some chance of this may be afforded them I have to request that your members will delay taking out their tools—always an undesirable step—until the directors have had a chance of meeting your representatives. This cannot possibly be before 2.30 p.m. to-morrow, about which time they will arrive here. Hoping this may meet your approval, I am, &c., JAMES BISHOP. —Any reply you may have to give will reach me early to-morrow morning if left at Brunner office.

On the 8th March there was another letter from Mr. Andrew to myself. This is the letter :—

Mr. J. Bishop, Mine-manager.—DEAR SIR,—In deference to your request the miners will not bring out their tools to-day. Representatives of the union will be prepared to meet the directors at 3 p.m., or later if more convenient. If you consider this course advisable will you please reply. I am not working to-day, and will attend to it.—Yours truly, SAMUEL ANDREW, Secretary.

Well, I had asked for the delay because I knew that the directors were coming from Dunedin.

555. What reply did you make?—

Wallsend, 8th March, 1890.—Mr. Samuel Andrew, Secretary, Grey Valley Coal-miners' Association.—DEAR SIR,—With the desire to effect a settlement of the present difficulty in connection with the payment for coal-hewing under the gross-weight system, I have to submit the undermentioned list of hewing-prices which the company are willing should be paid :—Coal-pit Heath: Whole coal, 2s. 10d. a ton; pillars, 2s. 8d. a ton. Wallsend: Whole coal, 2s. 8d. a ton; pillars, 2s. 6d. a ton. Brunner: Whole coal, 2s. 8d. a ton; pillars, 2s. 4d. a ton. All loose coal requiring to be filled away, also taking down top coal which may have been left, to be paid at the pillar rates, except in case of special difficulty, when extra may be allowed. In making this offer we do so believing the rates named are fair, and in the event of the miners so wishing, arbitration may be conducted during such period of trial as may be mutually agreed upon. I think we are right in saying that the change of system will cause the company a very considerable extra cost in working, amounting to some hundreds a year on the three mines. At the same time there is no desire on the part of the company to have the miners working at unreasonable or inadequate rates of pay; and in making the offer as herein set forth the company are confident that very liberal pay can be earned. As regards the figures named in the case of Coal-pit Heath Mine—viz., 2s. 10d. and 2s. 8d.—I may say that the pillars being worked at present may for all practical purposes be regarded as "whole coal," and the pillar rate need not come into immediate operation except in case of felling loose coal, but as the pillars become crushed, thus causing a large amount of slack, with a corresponding advantage to the hewers, the pillar price would then be applicable. As regards Wallsend, the coal now being got in this mine partakes more of the character of pillar workings than whole coal, hence the lower hewing-price as compared with Coal-pit Heath. For pillar workings in this mine it is scarcely necessary to provide, as these are not likely to be worked for some years. Brunner, you will see from the figures supplied you this afternoon, and which show in a practical way the effect the change of system would have, that the price now offered is a very liberal one for pillars as now being worked; and as regards the whole coal in this mine it is unfortunately not workable at present, but from past experience the price offered should prove ample. In further reference to tests made by me this afternoon, I may point out that these tests were not made with the view of binding the miners in any way, but simply to test the working of the system, and further tests can be taken at the respective mines, extending over a time to be mutually agreed upon. In starting work under the change of system it will be understood by your members that we can only weigh one truck from each pair of miners as in the past, but if the system is given effect to no time will be lost in procuring the necessary machines to weigh each truck as brought out of the mines. In conclusion allow me to suggest that your members resume work at once on the basis of figures as given above, and during a period to be agreed upon more exhaustive tests may be carried out, with the object of proving whether the figures now submitted are correct or otherwise, and if found inadequate the company bind themselves to pay such increase as the parties representing both sides may find necessary. Hoping you will lay this before your meeting, and that the result will be a resumption of work, I am, &c., JAMES BISHOP, of Grey Valley Coal Company.

Wallsend, 10th March, 1890.—Mr. Samuel Andrew, Secretary, Grey Valley Coal-miners' Association.—*Re* gross weight.—DEAR SIR,—I may be allowed to supplement what I have already written you on this subject, more especially

as regards Brunner and Wallsend. In the case of the former, if you will take the figures supplied you on Saturday, and average the screened-coal trucks, you will find the average value per truck to be about 1s. 2d. Taking the trucks tested for gross weight, and treating them in the same way, the value per truck is about 1s. 8d., or an increase of 40 per cent. This I maintain the company cannot pay, seeing that the increased value to the miner is largely made up by slack, the greater portion of which has to be run into the river. Wallsend: In connection with this mine there are ten places which we are fairly entitled to treat as being specially advantageous to the miner, and in which the two-and-eightpenny rate should take effect, the other places being paid at 2s. 10d. Should your meeting so wish, I shall be glad to confer with your representatives this afternoon. Trusting you will read this together with my letter of Saturday, I am, &c., J. BISHOP.—P.S.: As a proof that there need be no question of wages in dispute, I am prepared to guarantee the average miner 14s. a day at the pillars in the Brunner Mine, and at the price offered they can earn more.

Then, on the 10th March the following letter was received:—

Mr. J. Bishop, Mine-manager.—DEAR SIR,—The same deputation as met you on Saturday, with the addition of Mr. Newton, has been appointed to wait on you this afternoon. I am unable to propose a time just now, but will write or see you later in the day.—Yours truly, SAMUEL ANDREW, Secretary.

On the same day we received the reply of the Miners' Association, accepting this offer:—

10th March, 1890.—Mr. J. Bishop, Mine-manager.—DEAR SIR,—Your offer to pay 2s. 10d. per ton gross weight for Coal-pit Heath and Wallsend Mines, and 14s. a day for Brunner miners, has been accepted. Inasmuch as a uniform tonnage price has been sought, the Brunner agreement is accepted under protest. The miners will be ready to commence work to-morrow.—Yours truly, SAMUEL ANDREW, Secretary.

Brunner, 20th March, 1890.—Mr. Samuel Andrew, Secretary, Grey Valley Coal-miners' Association.—*Re* starting new hands.—DEAR SIR,—I fail to understand the meaning of your memo. *re* above, but, so far, I presume it relates to the miners working on wages in the Brunner Mine. In reply to your memo. I may explain that my position in the matter of starting new hands is to refrain from doing so until the demand for coal warrants my putting on men sufficient to meet the demand. The time for this action has now arrived, as may be proved by vessels having to remain in port waiting for cargo, and others, which should have loaded at Greymouth, have had to go to Westport. In addition, the machinery at the mines is not kept going. In conclusion, so long as my setting on new hands does not injure those now employed, I cannot delay taking steps to meet the requirements of the company's trade: for me to do so means lasting injury to all concerned. As you are aware, if we fail to supply vessels, other producers will. Hoping this explanation will prove satisfactory, I am, &c., J. BISHOP.

The reason of our giving way on that 2s. 10d. per ton was that we could not help ourselves: we had contracts, and could not allow the mines to stand. We would rather pay 14s. a day than give them 2s. 10d. a ton.

556. Why?—Because they could earn £1 5s. a day in the Brunner at 2s. 10d., the coal was so very much easier to get. There was a little whole coal, but not much, and the bulk of it was pillars.

557. Why do you mention the pillars?—That is because in pillar coal there is no powder to use, for one thing, and there is no cost of that kind; and being somewhat crushed, it does not require the same amount of labour—there is no cutting; it is tender.

558. Then, they only worked a fortnight at the 14s., and they made you an offer to go on at 2s. 6d.?—The arrangement as applied to the Brunner only lasted a fortnight at the 14s. a day, and then they went to work at 2s. 6d. a ton, and at these prices we continued to work until the present difficulty cropped up.

559. When was that?—They continued to work up to June. As I remarked, they were working under protest at the 14s.

560. And after you granted 2s. 6d. per ton for Brunner working, did you ever go back to the 14s. per day?—The protest was never revived.

561. So that, until what you call the present trouble, which began in June, the mine was worked on those terms?—Yes.

562. Was there any difference of opinion during that period, or irritation on either side?—We found that the prices then ruling in all the mines were too high, especially in the Coal-pit Heath and Brunner, where it was all pillar-workings practically, and it led up to our serving the miners with a notice for a reduction.

563. That is, you found, from experience in the returns you were getting, that you were working at a loss?—Yes.

564. Can you put in any letters you have about that?—Some time about the 27th June we had an interview with them on the subject we were about to approach them on. Mr. Kennedy came down from Wellington, and called a deputation of them together, and explained the position of affairs to them, the position the company was in, and to deal with the whole question of prices. They afterwards laid these proposals before a general meeting of themselves; and the following is a letter written subsequent to that meeting, giving them notice of the reduction we wished them to accept—viz.:—

Brunnerton, 30th June, 1890.—To Mr. S. Andrew, Secretary, Grey Valley Miners' Association.—DEAR SIR,—I regret to notice that your Association meeting of Saturday last evidently treated the company's application for revision of rates and alternative proposals very lightly. Admitting the right of your Association to have ample time for discussion of the subject, I trust they will recognise the injustice of expecting this company to bear the heavy loss disclosed week after week, pending settlement. Without prejudice to a settlement on the lines of Mr. Kennedy's letter of Friday last, and to afford ample time for discussion, I have to ask your Association to make the following concession during the interval—viz.: to allow 20 per cent. off all hewing rates. In making this request, I am fully aware that the hewers are quite able to do this without the fear of their earnings falling below what must be considered fair pay. Failing acceptance of this proposal, or some other equitable adjustment being made meantime, I am reluctantly compelled to give you the following notice: "That the collieries cease work on and after Monday next." Relying on your Association being as fully impressed as we are of the irreparable loss to all interests and the distress which would arise by the closing of the collieries, especially were the stoppage prolonged, and recognising that lock-outs and strikes should only take place after all reasonable means were exhausted, and as the same means exist for an amicable adjustment before as after stoppage, we invite you (failing an early adjustment between ourselves) to agree to refer the question in dispute to arbitration. As bearing on the question, I may mention that, after much negotiation, we succeeded in obtaining the offer of the coal supply to Auckland Gas Company and Onehunga Ironworks, upwards of 15,000 tons, but have been obliged to decline them.—Yours faithfully, JAMES BISHOP, Manager.

The matter was then adjourned for seven days.

565. Did they reply to this?—The reply I received was asking for an extension of time, first to audit the books and go through the accounts of the company. That being granted, they applied for a further extension, instead of a proposal we made in a letter of the 19th July that the mines should be closed on the following Monday to allow of the matter being fully discussed. This is the correspondence which ensued:—

Brunner Mine, 2nd July, 1890.—The Secretary, Miners' Association, Taylorville.—DEAR SIR,—In reference to your request for permission to appoint accountants for the purpose of examining accounts bearing on the costs of coal, &c., as disclosed by figures already supplied to you, also that notice be withdrawn pending inquiry, I may be allowed to point out to you that no amount of examination of accounts can alter the unfortunate position of the company. At the same time, we are ready to submit accounts for the inspection of any competent accountant whom you may appoint, and will withdraw notices during the progress of inquiry, providing that your Association agrees to the reduction of 20 per cent. as per terms of my letter of the 30th June. The above-named reduction to be effective only if the loss exceed the amount claimed, exclusive of interest on capital and depreciation of plant. The books to be examined here are our pay-books, showing working-costs. Royalty and railage are fixed charges. Sales and receipts accounts are kept at the head office in Dunedin, and any accountant appointed by yourselves may inspect them there. As stated at the outset, no examination you may make can alter the position of the company; and, feeling sure that your members are fully alive, as we are, to the gravity of the situation and the necessity which exists for prompt action, we ask you to give the matter your early attention; and should you require any further information we shall be glad to supply same, or meet any members of your executive who may be appointed to confer with us on the subject.—I am, &c., JAS. BISHOP.

Brunner Mine, 11th July, 1890.—Mr. Samuel Andrew, Secretary, Coal-miners' Association.—DEAR SIR,—You may take it for granted that your request for extension of time one week, to allow of accounts being completed, has been acceded to. I have no definite reply *re* brick and coke accounts. Will communicate decision soon as it comes to hand.—I am, &c., J. BISHOP.

Brunner Mine, 14th July, 1890.—Mr. Samuel Andrew, Secretary, Coal-miners' Association.—*Re* coke and brick accounts.—DEAR SIR,—The directors reply, "No need to enter on the above accounts, as they in no way affect the loss on coal; would only prolong investigation. If Association decide to lease mines, can have coke and bricks also." I may just add that I hope you are pushing on your inquiry, and that you will be able to complete during present week.—I am, &c., J. BISHOP.

Brunnerton, 14th July, 1890.—Mr. James Bishop, Mine-manager.—DEAR SIR,—I have received your note which refuses to permit inspection of the coke and firebrick accounts. It is certainly a matter of regret that the company should have taken up this position. Enginemen's wages: I have to point out, for fear of any misunderstanding, that we consider Bainbridge and Fergusson to be working under their former rate of wages (and this is their own impression too). If this is not so, it will be for you to stop them at once. In regard to Pender, McGrath, and Meehan we do not differ from you. Williams, Meehan, McGee, Smith, and Henderson, truckers, out of employment, have been offered division of work with men at work. If you offer no objection it will be done on same terms as with miners.—Yours truly, S. ANDREW, Secretary.

Brunner Mine, 15th July, 1890.—Mr. Samuel Andrew, Secretary, Miners' Association.—DEAR SIR,—Your favour of yesterday's date reached me this afternoon; and, in reply, I may be allowed to remark that, instead of the "non-inspection" of brick and coke accounts being cause for regret, it should be quite the reverse, as no good purpose can be served by mixing two sets of accounts. *Re* Bainbridge and Fergusson: There need be no misunderstanding. The men have been informed their pay is now 10s., as per my notice, and I see no need to send them away, or, as you say, stop them at once. *Re* truckers: In this case your notice reached me after the arrangement had been given effect to, and, I regret to say, with considerable loss to the company, as, by sending men into the mine who were strangers at the jigging, the same amount of coal could not be got as with the old hands. I have therefore to offer a decided objection unless we have due notice and time to arrange for the men being placed as we require them.—Yours, &c., J. BISHOP.

Brunnerton, 17th July, 1890.—Mr. James Bishop, Mine-manager.—DEAR SIR,—I have been informed by Mr. Newton that the division of work undertaken by the Brunner truckers was done on their own responsibility. I may say also that the committee quite agree with your remarks on this point. In regard to Fergusson and Bainbridge, I understand they are quite prepared to do firemen's work for firemen's pay; but the Association will object to them or any one else performing enginemen's duties for the lower rate. You are requested to treat this case as one between the union and yourself, and not a personal one with the men. They are members of the union, and are bound to act under its direction in a case of this kind.—Yours truly, S. ANDREW, Secretary.

Then, on the 21st July the following communication was received by me:—

Brunnerton, 21st July, 1890.—Mr. James Bishop, Mine-manager.—DEAR SIR,—You state in your letter of 19th that the mines will be laid idle on Monday to allow of the wages question being fully discussed, and that work will be resumed on Tuesday providing a reduction of 20 per cent. is agreed to or a reference of the case to arbitration. As you are aware, when the demand for a reduction was first made the Association requested permission to examine the company's books, and that the notice given for the stoppage of the works should in the meantime be suspended. These requests were apparently conceded. Auditors were appointed to examine the Brunner and Greymouth accounts, and, although it was thought desirable that the same persons should examine the Dunedin books also, but, in order to prevent delay or any cause of complaint on the part of the company, it was decided to appoint an accountant at Dunedin, and so hasten the examination as much as possible. You remember also that the company refused to submit the coke and firebrick accounts for examination, which was the means of some delay. The company was well aware that the audit had been pushed on with all speed, and were assured that the question would be considered as soon as the Association was in possession of the reports. It came, therefore, as a surprise to receive notice of an idle day for the discussion of matter which the company must have known as well as ourselves was not obtainable on Monday. The Association is now asked to forego all consideration of the expected report, which it has been at so much expense to obtain, accept the company's statement in full, and unconditionally agree to their demand on pain of being at once locked out. We can only term this a very arbitrary proceeding, when, at the most, another week would have been sufficient (with the expected report for Thursday) to have considered the whole question. Therefore we claim, only as a matter of justice, sufficient time for due deliberation.—Yours truly, S. ANDREW, Secretary.

As a matter of fact, they had exhausted the time that we had promised, and, instead of pushing on the audit, they did not appoint their accountant for more than a week after they had arranged to do so. When this letter was written they had in their hands a telegraphic summary of the accountant's report; then the secretary complains of my action in the matter.

566. What was your action upon this?—The mines remained idle. On Saturday morning, the 19th July, they got the telegraphic report, and they expected to have the full report on the following Thursday.

567. What did you do next?—The mines were then closed.

568. Do you consider that that action was one that constituted a "lock-out" or a strike?—I should consider it a "lock-out."

569. What happened next?—We remained idle for about six weeks, and the following correspondence ensued;—

Brunner Mine, 28th July, 1890.—Mr. Samuel Andrew, Secretary, Miners' Association.—DEAR SIR,—As having some bearing on the question now under consideration of your Association, I may be allowed to inform you that the present uncertainty is causing a permanent loss of trade, as the company are now refusing to renew certain important contracts; indeed, I may say the contracts in question have been the mainstay of the Brunner Mine for some considerable time, and if lost to us the demand for Grey coal for some considerable time, at all events, will be much less than it has been for some time past. And if this is so, it may be affirmed that the need for reductions will be greater than ever. My object in writing you is to suggest that you should, as speedily as may be consistent with proper consideration, give consent for the matters now in dispute being dealt with by a Court of Arbitration. Meantime the work, at least so far as I am concerned, may proceed. Hoping you will consider this matter, and the serious consequences likely to arise from a loss of trade, I am, Sir, yours truly, JAMES BISHOP.—P.S. : I believe I am right in saying that Wallsend Mine may be left out of your consideration, as the company see no hope of carrying it on with the large outlay of capital now required.

Brunner Mine, 30th July, 1890.—Mr. Samuel Andrew, Secretary, Miners' Association.—DEAR SIR,—I am sorry to have to inform you that your proposal for a settlement of the difficulty as to hewing-rates falls far short of what is required to meet the end. In order to make the position clear to yourself and all concerned, I send you herewith a table showing the working-cost, calculated on the average output obtained from the Coal-pit Heath and Brunner Mines: the Wallsend is left out of consideration. The amount for hewing is calculated at 2d. a ton reduction, in order to see how it would affect the position; and in many items there is reduction, such as overmen, &c. By studying all the items you will see how the total cost is arrived at; but when done I shall be glad if you will be good enough to say how the deficiency is to be met. From my standpoint the hewer can make a very large concession without feeling any bad effects: at all events, it is reasonable to expect the hewers to give way to the extent of the advantage gained by them owing to change from one system to another, the price for gross weight having been fixed on a wrong basis. It has been said the past six months has been a time of exceptional cost: granting this, I see no chance of costs being much reduced during the next six months. Extra pumping-power to apply at Coal-pit Heath, new pumping-power to apply for Brunner dip, and new workings to open up, all involving extra cost, give but poor hope of reducing costs: instead of reducing, additional expense has to be incurred on every hand. And I fear that if the workmen cannot take less than they are now getting the mines cannot be worked. Hoping you will give the matter your careful consideration, and favour me with early reply, I am, Sir, yours truly, JAMES BISHOP.

Brunnerton, 1st August, 1890.—Mr. James Bishop, Mine-manager.—DEAR SIR,—I have to inform you that the proposal for the hewing-price on pillar-work to be reduced 2d. per ton is now withdrawn. Your suggestion for the Association to undertake the working of the mines is under consideration. In regard to the stopping of Wallsend, it is not at all likely any settlement will be arrived at which does not provide for the re-employment of all the men now locked out. It is to be regretted so little consideration was given to the proposed reduction in favour of the company, and the apparent deadlock in negotiations that has now occurred for a settlement on the tonnage-price. —I am, &c., SAMUEL ANDREW, Secretary.

Brunner Mines, 1st August, 1890.—Mr. Samuel Andrew.—DEAR SIR,—I am in receipt of your favour of this day's date, and note you are considering the suggestion for your Association working the mines on contract, including all labour on coal delivered into railway-trucks. Wallsend.—For reasons which I have already explained to you, the stoppage of this mine has been under consideration for a long time, and it is now absolutely forced upon the company. And to say that it is not likely any settlement will be arrived at which does not provide for the re-employment of all the men now unfortunately idle is to my mind importing an element into the dispute which has no right there. The stoppage of this mine has nothing to do with the matters in dispute, and is not being carried out with the object of affecting the result in any way, but I may say, further, that if I had carried out my instructions the stoppage would have been given effect to three months ago, and it was very much owing to my wish to keep all hands going that the mine has been kept open till now. On one hand, we are blamed for having too many hands; on the other hand, we are blamed for reducing hands; although I must say that you are mainly responsible for the large number of extra hands. I do not say that it is a fault on the part of your Association, but we cannot be blamed for what they have insisted upon, much to the injury of the company. As to consideration of the matter now under dispute, surely we cannot be blamed for having failed in this respect. The subject is under constant consideration; and, so far as we are concerned, there need be no such thing as deadlock. I may say, in conclusion, that the company will use their utmost endeavour to provide working-places for the men dispensed with in the Wallsend Mine; but, as you are doubtless aware, there is a large amount of work to be done before this can be accomplished, and progress in this direction is being delayed owing to present uncertainty. Once let this be removed, and the necessary work will be put in hand. Regretting we have not made more progress towards a settlement, and hoping for better things, I am, Sir, yours truly, JAMES BISHOP.—P.S.: In a letter of yours appearing in yesterday's issue of the *Brunner News* you speak of two surface "bosses" at Brunner Mine. As I am not aware of any "boss" on the surface works at Brunner, it may not be asking too much for you to let me have the names of the men you had in your mind at time of writing.

Wallsend, 2nd August, 1890.—Mr. Samuel Andrew, Secretary, Grey Valley Coal-miners' Association.—DEAR SIR,—I send you herewith a list showing prices that I am prepared to recommend the company to pay for coal-hewing and all attendant labour inside of the Brunner and Coal-pit Heath Mines, the prices so named to include all labour connected with the delivery of coal on to the pit-bank, exclusive of pumping and the underviewer's salary. This officer, I hold, must be appointed by and be paid by the company. In addition to the figures asked for by Messrs. Newton and Philips, I take the liberty of stating alternative proposals, and I may say the company are prepared to contract for any of the systems; but you will please bear in mind that any proposal discussed by us, or which I may place before you, must be subject to the approval of the directors of the company. Hoping you will consider these proposals favourably, I am, Sir, yours, &c., J. BISHOP.

Proposals for working Coal at Brunner Mines under a Contract System.—1. For all coal delivered on pit-bank, the contractor doing all labour except pumping and underviewer, prices as under:—Coal-pit Heath: Pillar-coal, 3s. 4d. per ton gross weight; solid coal, bords and 4s. gross weight, if paid on coal shipped 4s. 2d.; on coal shipped, 4s. 8d. Brunner Mine: Pillar-coal, 3s. 8d. per ton gross weight; solid coal, bords and 4s. 6d. gross weight, if paid on coal shipped 4s. 2d.; on coal shipped, 4s. 8d. 2. For coal delivered into railway-trucks, this contract to include all labour and stores, the company paying mine-management, railage, royalty, my office, price per ton, 5s. 6d. 3. The company will accept the sum of 1s. a ton for use of plant sunk. The contractor to sell the produce as now done by the company. The above offers are made subject to approval of the board of directors.—J. BISHOP, Manager.

Wallsend, 5th August, 1890.—Mr. Samuel Andrew, Secretary, Grey Valley Miners' Association.—DEAR SIR,—Your offer for delivery of coal on to pit-bank from Brunner and Coal-pit Heath Mines has been fully considered, and I find the present offer is a very close adherence to the former offer of 2d. a ton reduction. In reference to this, I think I may venture to say that none of your members who have experience of the work in question can conscientiously say that 2d. a ton is a fair concession to make, and if I am right in this I hold it is their duty to deal with the question fairly, and make such concession as will give the company some chance of carrying on operations, and at the same time allow good pay to be earned. With every desire to see the matter speedily and amicably settled, I regret cannot recommend acceptance of your offer, but submit the following for your consideration: 3s. 8d. Coal-pit Heath pillars, 4s. 1d. Coal-pit Heath solid; 3s. 6d. Brunner pillars, 4s. 6d. Brunner solid (all offers made subject to company's approval).—Yours, &c., J. BISHOP.

Brunner Mine, 7th August, 1890.—Mr. Samuel Andrew, Secretary, Miners' Association.—DEAR SIR,—I have forwarded wire in reference to your proposed deputation to Wellington. Answer will be sent you soon as it arrives. In thinking over the subject since our interview I must say that I have no confidence in any concession being obtained from Government or railway authorities; but, taking this view, I can only urge upon the members of your council the necessity for coming to some decision on the proposals now before them. Persistent agitation

and long-continued pressure joined in by all coal-owners and workers may ultimately succeed in getting some concession, but I fear the time has not arrived, and meantime the trade of this place is being ruined, and the need for reduction on all hands is becoming intensified. As I have already said to you, our trade is leaving us, people are finding their coal-supply in other directions, and if the stoppage is prolonged our contracts will be gone, and all other channels of trade closed against us. The offers made you are more liberal than I am justified in making, and your council should not lightly set them aside.—Yours truly, J. BISHOP.—P.S.: If your council still considers it best to see Government *re* railage charge, I should recommend their doing so at once, and I feel sure the company will assist deputation all they can.

Brunnerton, 8th August, 1890.—Mr. James Bishop, Mine-manager.—DEAR SIR,—Messrs. Lomas and Newton have been appointed to go to Wellington to endeavour, in concert with your company, to get a reduction on the charge for carrying coal on the Brunner line. We have some hope of success, but in the meantime are of opinion that it would not be conducive to a good result to make the matter public just now. Mr. Newton will leave by the 2 o'clock train, and if there is any plans you would like to send Mr. Kennedy, or any suggestions to make, Mr. Newton would be glad to take them. We had hopes that you could have started Brunner and Coal-pit Heath on a temporary settlement in the meantime, as requested.—Yours truly, S. ANDREW, General Secretary, A.M.L.A.

Brunner Mines, 19th August, 1890.—Mr. Samuel Andrew, Secretary, Grey Valley Coal-miners' Association.—*Re* Royal Commission, &c.—DEAR SIR,—On receiving your letter informing me that Royal Commission was to be appointed, and suggesting work being resumed at old rates pending report of the proposed Commission, I wired to Wellington, and have just now received the following reply: "Cabinet proposes appointing Commission to examine whole question, including miners' earnings, meantime taking legislative authority to give effect to Commission's report; and asks miners to start work immediately, allowing 8d. off present rates. Delegates refuse this, or to allowing inquiry into their earnings. Association should act on this proposal, reserving the right to discontinue if insufficient allowed them." This is the wire as I have it. I think it becomes the duty of your executive to set about solving the difficulty by making some such concession as indicated by this telegram, reserving right as suggested.—I am, &c., JAMES BISHOP.

Brunnerton, 20th August, 1890.—Mr. S. Andrew, Secretary, Grey Valley Miners' Association.—DEAR SIR,—In further reference to the matter of hewing-rates, &c., I may be allowed to remind you of the opinion to which I gave expression prior to the departure of your delegates to Wellington—viz., that "I could not see any hope or chance of Government making the concession which your delegates were empowered to ask for." In this opinion I am confirmed by a letter from the Hon. the Premier to Messrs. Lomas and Newton, setting forth that the Government are prepared to appoint, or, rather, they suggest the appointment of, a Royal Commission to inquire into the matter affecting this dispute. Since reading this letter and considering it in all its bearings I am satisfied that if a resumption of work has to take place the parties affected will have to rely on their own resources. From the outset I have advocated a settlement by arbitration (and do so still), and by the men accepting this mode of dealing with the matter work need not have stood a day. As it is now I appeal to your executive to bring forward proposals giving such concession as may, together with other reductions to be made in the staff, give the company some chance of carrying on the work pending the decision of an Arbitration Court. Further, I may just repeat, by continuing the present state of things works necessary for opening-up of mines is being delayed, and by this your members will be longer out of employment they they need otherwise be; trade is also being lost, and the need for reduction increased. I take it for granted that you are fully aware of the amount of wages being lost in the meantime, but for general information may state it here. This being the fifth week of stoppage, the men employed at the mines have lost £6,250, and putting cartage of timber and other wages will reach £6,500, and taking the workers in connection with loading and handling the coal at Greymouth the sum lost to the district will not fall far short of £10,000, figures large enough to make all concerned feel exceedingly anxious that a settlement should be arrived at as speedily as possible. Hoping you will give the matter your careful consideration, I am, &c., JAMES BISHOP, the Grey Valley Coal Company (Limited).

570. How did the idleness cease? What was the first action that led to the resumption of work?—What brought it about was this: When the delegates returned from Wellington they offered to concede 2d. per ton permanently on the 2s. 10d. for gross weight, and 2d. per ton on the 2s. 6d., and in addition to that they would concede 3d. per ton in each case pending the report of this Commission.

571. Was that offer made in writing?—Yes. I will read it:—

28th August, 1890.—Mr. James Bishop, Mine-manager.—DEAR SIR,—I have to inform you that the Association has consented to a reduction of 2d. per ton on pillar rates; also, in order to effect a temporary settlement pending the result of the Commission about to be appointed, a further reduction of 3d. per ton on pillar work is agreed to. Expecting this will end the dispute, I remain, &c., S. ANDREW, Secretary.

This was not the first offer, for previous to the delegates going to Wellington an offer of 2d. reduction was made: in fact negotiations had been going on during the previous six weeks.

572. Was there any suggestion about a reduction of royalty?—Yes; many suggested a reduction of royalty, but of course I took no notice of representations on this point. They sent a man to Wellington to interview the Government, and on their returning with this additional offer the miners commenced work again.

573. Then they went to work?—Yes.

574. What followed next?—All the mines were worked — Coal-pit Heath, Brunner, and Wallsend.

575. How many men were employed?—About one hundred and eighty hewers in the three mines.

576. In these negotiations all the hewers only were affected?—Yes, so far as wages are concerned.

577. It did not affect surface-men?—No. There were about one hundred and ninety surface and other men, and they were also out.

578. They returned also to work—truckers, screen-men, and all?—Yes.

579. They were on day wage?—Yes.

580. Did they resume at their former wages?—Yes; 9s. to 12s.

581. Did these men return to work without gaining anything?—Yes.

582. When the Wallsend Mine was closed on the 14th August, how many hewers did that throw out?—From forty to forty-four about.

583. And how many surface-men?—About thirty surface and other wages men.

584. Were these men taken on to increase the output in the other mines?—We could not employ them all, but we put them on to any special work there was for them to do as far as possible. We, however, had really very little for them. We had not places in the other mines to take them up.

585. What do you mean by saying there were no places for them?—There were not places enough opened up in the mine-workings for them all,

586. Would it have been possible to have increased the output so as to increase the number of men, by opening up fresh works for instance?—Yes; it would have been possible in about three months.

587. Was the demand for coal sufficient to employ them all?—No. It has never been enough to keep the three mines going. I may say that one reason why we were short of places at that time was on account of the trouble with water in Coal-pit Heath.

588. How did that arise?—Extra water getting into the mine.

589. There was no cessation of pumping during the strike?—No.

590. I suppose it had something to do with the weather?—Yes; it was surface-water.

591. And it had nothing to do with the strike?—No.

592. What was the next stage leading to the present state of affairs? Did you consider at this time that the lock-out had ceased?—Yes, we expected it had ceased, and that the subject of wages was closed, pending the decision of the Commissioner, as agreed in Mr. Andrew's letter of the 28th August.

593. What followed?—Trouble arose with the Shipping Company.

594. On what date?—On the 30th August, 1890, the Secretary wrote me the following letter, when the delegates had returned from Wellington, and they were about to go to work:—

30th August, 1890.—Mr. James Bishop, Mine-manager.—DEAR SIR,—Please understand that one of the conditions of the settlement is that the coal mined shall be carried by vessels manned by union sailors, the miners declining to fill coal directly or indirectly for the Union Shipping Company, or any other company employing black-leg labour. We understand from your letter of to-day there is no misunderstanding on this point. If your company should determine on any other course, we shall be obliged if informed so at once.—Yours truly, S. ANDREW, Secretary.

595. With reference to this letter, had such conditions ever before been mooted?—There was no condition about shipping mentioned.

596. Do you think it arose from any circumstance connected with the Brunner Mine or district? No; it is purely from some outside source.

597. Did you reply to this?—I had written to this effect: that owing to shipping difficulties we might not be able to start the mines as soon as we had intended. The following are letters I sent to the Secretary:—

Brunnerton, 30th August, 1890.—Mr. S. Andrew.—DEAR SIR,—In consequence of the difficulty in connection with shipping, it is doubtful if much work can be done next week. But I am informed that we may have steamers and sailing-vessels apart from the Union Company and manned by union men, in which case I presume there would be no difficulty about our loading them. Feeling sure there would not be, I have wired Mr. Kennedy to get such steamers if possible. Meantime the arrangement to start Coal-pit Heath on Monday will be carried out by our getting coal for local requirements.—Yours truly, JAMES BISHOP, the Grey Valley Coal Company (Limited).

Brunner Mine, 2nd September, 1890.—Mr. Samuel Andrew, Secretary, Miners' Association.—DEAR SIR,—I find a number of men cavilled into Coal-pit Heath, and probably Brunner Mine, who are not entitled to be there, and I must say that their being put there looks as though the executive of your Association wish to add to the loss from which this company is already suffering. But, whether or not, I must protest against men being set on by the Association. Men wanting employment must be good enough to apply at the mine office. Successful working cannot be attained under a system such as now being considered. In conclusion, I regret having to say that we cannot, pending shipping troubles, work more than a single shift in Brunner and Pit Heath Mines. Hoping this will only be temporary, I am, &c., J. BISHOP.

The next letter is dated 7th September, from Mr. Andrew again:—

7th September, 1890.—Mr. James Bishop, Mine-manager.—DEAR SIR,—The Committee is of the opinion that it would save the time of the Commission about to sit here, and give part of the evidence to be collected a more reliable character, if yourself and the Committee could agree on an average wage, to be stated, that would be true in every particular. Your statement on this head and those made on the authority of the Association could not be reconciled by the general public: not, perhaps, because they differed materially as to the facts, but in the forms they were placed, and the impressions they were intended to convey. Your figures, for instance, showed an average wage for coal-hewers of 14s. 8d. per day, whereas if the day-work shown on the same table had been worked on the average (and, being incidental to the coal-hewing, it should have been) the average would have been reduced to about 14s. 4d. I suppose you will readily admit that any part of this that may be required for tools and lights cannot be counted as wages. During the time the average has been taken over, a greater proportion of pillar-coal was worked than in any former period. This enabled a larger average wage to be earned than would have been the case had Kimberley workings been kept going, as our averages plainly show. These are fair considerations, which should be allowed to have their due weight before the Commissioners. An early answer to the suggestions herein contained will oblige, yours truly, S. ANDREW, Secretary.

598. Did you answer that letter?—I do not think I replied to that letter, but I met a deputation.

599. Then, having suggested that, they have taken no further action in this particular direction?—No. At that time none of the Union Steamship Company's steamers were available. We were depending on any small steamers we could pick up outside the Union Steamship Company. The next thing is a letter written by myself to Mr. Andrew, as follows:—

Greymouth, 20th September, 1890.—Mr. Samuel Andrew, Secretary, Miners' Association.—DEAR SIR,—I have to inform you that the Union Shipping Company insist on having the carrying of all output from the Grey Valley Coal Company's mines as provided for by contract: this being so, the Greymouth agent may at any time receive orders to load one of these steamers, and give all available coal. Further, I may say the present output of coal does not supply the company's contracts, so that they are now threatened by heavy penalties; thus it is to the Coal Company's interest and to the miners' interest that a larger output should be procured, and, without shipping, such cannot be got. If so, may I ask you to take into consideration the advisability of allowing the miners to continue working, so long as the cargoes carried by the Union Company's vessels are delivered in fulfilment of Grey Valley Coal Company's contracts. Hoping you will bring the matter under the notice of your Executive, I am, &c., JAMES BISHOP.—PS.: Will be at Wallsend Office to-morrow evening at 5 o'clock, and will be glad to confer with you or any other member of the Association.—J.B.

Before the 20th September the Union Steamship Company had resumed running their boats, and this was written in consequence of their resuming. On the same day I received the following letter from Mr. Andrew, demanding an idle day:—

20th September, 1890.—Mr. James Bishop, Mine-manager.—DEAR SIR,—I have to request you to lay the mines idle on Monday, as, owing to business requiring a general meeting, one will be called at 10 o'clock in the morning.—Yours truly, S. ANDREW, Secretary.

I handed Mr. Andrew my letter, and he handed me his on the Saturday evening.

600. On an idle day are the men paid?—No.

601. But the whole expense of running the mine does not cease?—No.

602. What ensued then?—We have been standing ever since that date. We gave them the idle day, and they never resumed work.

603. They went out on strike then?—Yes.

604. Was that before any coal was actually supplied to the Union Company?—The company took coal on the following Monday in the "Brunner," and since then the mines have been idle.

605. Was the "Brunner" in before the Monday?—Yes; she was in discharging before the Monday.

606. Have the company made any overtures to the miners to resume work?—No; they have made no definite offers to them.

607. In your opinion, then, the stoppage of the works at present is because of the Union Company's steamers getting coal?—Yes; the men having been called out by the Maritime Council.

608. Did they know the "Brunner" was loading coal?—No; but I think they got to know on Sunday that there was some chance of the "Brunner" being loaded. I know one of their officers came up and told them that it was rumoured that she was going to load. They came to know, I think, when she had loaded the coal on the Monday. Indeed, we had no other ships to take it.

609. Did they give you any notice of not continuing work after that?—It was taken for granted.

610. You consider they went out in consequence of the notice contained in your letter of the 30th August, they having previously declined to fill coal for the Union Steamship Company?—Yes.

611. Now about other interruptions to the working: how far could they be remedied by anything that could be done by the railway authorities?—I do not know what the Railway Department could do, except to provide extra storage.

612. Have you thought of any scheme?—There are two ways of doing it; additional trucks or staiths could be erected in Greymouth.

613. To what extent would extra storage be required, do you think?—I should say about 3,000 tons.

614. For what period would that suffice?—That would give something like a week's work with the trucks now available. I am speaking now of the present mines. If any other mines were opened up they would require increase of storage according to their output.

615. Apart from the question of expense, which would be the most satisfactory way, in your opinion, of providing storage?—The coal-trucks, I consider, would be the best.

616. Are the present trucks satisfactory?—Very suitable.

617. If staiths were adopted, where would be the best place to erect them?—At the lower end of the wharf; but I think they would only be available for unscreened coal.

618. You consider the dropping the coal into the vessel would damage it?—Yes, it would.

619. With the present system of lifting the trucks from the frames and lowering them into the vessel, have you observed if it breaks the screened coal and forms fresh slack?—There is very much less breakage than in dropping the coal from the staiths, where you require a greater elevation.

620. Supposing, instead of staiths on the wharf, storage was supplied down on a reserve in such a way that that severe drop was avoided—that is to say, the trucks run over bunkers, and when the coal is taken from the reserve supply the train is run underneath the bunkers—do you you think that would obviate the danger to the coal?—I think it would prevent breakage to a considerable extent.

621. What proportion to the whole coal that is shipped does this screened coal, for which special provision has to be made, form?—I should think probably 70 or 80 per cent.

622. That quantity would require these precautions?—Yes. I think the present trucks for the mines now working would form a very good reserve for screened coal alone, provided there was staith accommodation for the unscreened. I think staiths on the wharf would be ruinous to the screened coal.

623. Is there any other provision that could be made by the Harbour Board in the way of increasing the facilities for getting away the coal?—I do not know that there is. There is, however, sometimes a little difficulty about getting special trains up. I think they should do all they can to run specials.

624. What is the practice when specials are required?—Applications are made from our Greymouth office by our agent there.

625. Then there is nothing else that you can think of? Is the wharf accommodation quite sufficient?—Yes. The cranes work very well.

626. Have you any suggestions to make as to the interruptions caused by miners—I mean in general terms?—Of course there are the union holidays. They insist upon taking them. They have provided for them in their union rules; and at times they are very inconventent to the company.

627. Are these numerous?—I cannot give you the number, but I think about four or five in the year. Sometimes they have a couple of days at a time.

628. Are there any other holidays?—There are the usual holidays in the district, of course, and these generally lay the mines off.

629. Are these public holidays?—Yes, and for races and other things. They generally take them all.

630. Do they, as a rule, work steadily? Have they ever gone off work, or anything of that kind?—Of course there are a few who neglect their work, but on the whole they are regular in their attendance when there are no holidays. I should call them a fairly steady body of men.

631. Are there not a week or two holidays as well?—Yes; Christmas and St. Patrick's holidays. I should be glad if they would study the trade a little more, and take the holidays when more convenient. For instance, if a steamer comes in in St. Patrick's week, there is no chance of its being loaded.

632. Are the same men working continuously in the mine, or are they in the habit of changing places? Do they divide the work?—Yes; when there is a greater number of men than we have places for. They have a rule that they will share under such circumstances, taking week about, or something like that.

633. Is this detrimental?—Yes; it keeps down their earnings. It is also detrimental to the working to have fresh men continually coming into the places.

634. How many hewers do you think would be a proper complement for the mine?—About two hundred miners would be sufficient.

635. How many are really employed?—Previous to the stoppage there were 178 hewers.

636. You were, then, not at that time employing the full number of men?—No; because of difficulties with water, and other things, we had not places for them.

637. That is, for the hewing-men?—Yes.

638. Without the Wallsend Mine?—Yes.

639. What proportion of surface-men to that?—The surface-men would be about fifty people.

640. Does that include truckers? Are they included in the two hundred?—There are about forty truckers: that is in proportion to the two hundred. We work the mines in two shifts with these men; that would make 320 to 330 men working two shifts. Previous to that the number had been considerably greater.

641. How many men are about Brunnerton now available for the mines?—There are fully three hundred men available for working—miners and surface-men.

642. Now unemployed?—Yes, I should say so.

643. How many left the district?—A few have gone to New South Wales and other parts.

644. Still you have more men than you need?—Yes. At one time there was employment for a larger number. Prior to the amalgamation, in the Wallsend the average time per man was two days and a quarter per week; and in the other two the average was from four or five, because they had most of the trade.

645. What are the hours worked by the hewers and day labourers, and what drawbacks and overtime payments are made?—Prior to the 8th March the coal-hewers and all other labour employed underground worked a full eight-hours shift. Since that date they have refused to do so, and work what is known as eight hours from bank to bank: thus the company lose an hour daily on all underground labour, and some of the men working on the surface are affected to the same extent. This change took place immediately after the gross-weight system was given effect to.

646. What is the reason of that?—The only reason I can see is that their increased pay enabled them to shorten their hours.

647. Can you give us the general average of wages in the Grey Valley district?—So far as I am aware, the wages for surface-labour in the district range from 8s. to 10s.; there are very few at 8s.; every employer has been by the unions compelled to pay 10s.

648. What is the present state of the mines, and the proportions of solid work and pillar-work, also day work?—At present the mines are being worked on pillar coal only. In Coal-pit Heath, large feeders of water have been met, necessitating constant pumping, and considerable expenditure for new plant. In consequence of the increase of water the lower parts of the workings are flooded, and the solid coal in the mine cannot be worked. In the Brunner Mine we have no pumping; the coal now being worked is on the rise-side of water-level, but, having decided to open up workings to the dip, pumping-plant has been provided, and will be erected forthwith. The present output from this is, as in the Coal-pit Heath, from pillar workings only.

649. What are the different methods of working the several mines, and have there been any alterations or improvements in these methods?—The system in vogue in all the mines is what is known as bord-and-pillar. The headings are turned on the level and driven almost on the full rise. Bords are turned away at 20 yards centres, and being 6 yards wide. The pillars are 14 yards thick. The first working yields about 40 per cent. of the whole.

650. How far will it be possible to take out pillars from the mine to render the other 60 per cent. of coal available?—I think we can get almost the whole of it. We may lose 5 or 10 per cent. in dross and rough, and we shall have to leave some of the pillars to protect main roads, &c.

651. Do you think the system of mining in the past has been such as will admit of your taking out all the pillars as you come back?—Yes; except the pillars at the front, which it will be impossible to touch.

652. How near to the river will they work the pillars?—I do not think it is possible to work any pillars at the riverside of the Brunner fault.

653. Are the Coal-pit Heath pillars quite safe to work?—Yes; being below the water-level, I consider the Coal-pit Heath pillars are quite safe to work.

654. In what condition are the plant and other appliances for working the mine, as to safety and sufficiency for the objects to be obtained?—It has been the constant aim of the company and management to keep the plant in a state of efficiency, and since the amalgamation large sums of money have been spent in adding to and improving the plant; and now we have a quantity of new machinery for pumping, haulage, &c., ready for erection, and which would have been at work but for the stoppage owing to the strike.

655. Could you describe the circumstances that led to the stoppage of the Wallsend Mine, and the reason of it?—Well, the sole reason for this may be said to be want of sufficient trade to keep all the mines profitably employed. It is true that just after the properties were amalgamated all

three were kept going fully, but this was due to the strike of New South Wales coal-miners, and as soon as they returned to work the trade fell off. As showing the work done by the mine prior to the amalgamation, it may be mentioned that two days and a quarter for work was the average time made, and, as the other mines were not fully employed, the coal from Wallsend could have been supplied by them. In consequence of want of trade it was found necessary to close the Brunner Mine for a period in the beginning of 1889. It remained idle about four months, and has resumed in consequence of customers requiring this coal for special purposes. At the time of amalgamating the mines the connecting of the Wallsend shaft with the leases on the other side of the river was looked upon as a desirable thing; but, with recent developments, faults in the Wallsend, and extra water in the Coal-pit Heath, it has been deemed advisable to delay making such connection, and that meanwhile efforts should be directed to opening up the coal in Brunner and the working-out of Coal-pit Heath pillars as speedily as possible, this plan of drawing the output from the two mines being more likely to give a profitable return than would be possible by spreading it over the three mines. Before closing the Wallsend there was a joint report prepared by the engineer to the Westport Coal Company and myself. It was sent to the companies interested.

656. Is the coal interchangeable in the mines? Are they all of the same quality?—The iron-workers prefer the Brunner, and the gas companies prefer the Coal-pit Heath.

657. What is the character of the Wallsend?—I think the railway people took the largest quantity, but it is inferior to the others. It is rather stony coal.

658. In what form does this stone occur?—In nodules, not in bands.

659. What proportion do they form to the whole?—They form a considerable proportion. They come irregularly. You have patches of clean coal, and considerable patches containing these stones.

660. And you say the Coal-pit Heath is preferred for gas purposes?—Yes.

661. So that they are not altogether interchangeable?—No, not altogether. I put in a return of hands employed and rates of pay by the Grey Valley Coal Company. [Exhibit No. 9.]

662. Have your brick- and coke-works been affected by the strike?—Yes; the coke-works have.

663. From the want of supply of coal?—Yes. The brick-works were stopped during the first stoppage, but not this time.

664. Are these men engaged on coke- and brick-works all union men?—Yes; but they did not call out the brick-works men. We had to stop the coke-works by reason of want of coal. The men we have continued to employ throughout the strike have been engine-men, pump-tenders, and brickmakers.

665. All the others were called out?—Yes. I hand in pay-sheets from the 1st January to the 8th March, 1890. [Exhibit No. 10.] The next return is a return of slack used in making coke. [Exhibit No. 11.] Also a return of the earnings of the men before the 8th March and after the 8th March, 1890. [Exhibit No. 12.]

666. How does the alteration of places in the mines affect this last return?—That would tend to bring down the averages.

667. How many individuals were there sharing places?—We had 178 men at the time who were actually engaged in hewing—that is, individuals who went into the shift for a fortnight. It has affected the average, because they would not be looked upon as permanent wage-earners. I have two returns showing the coals produced from the mines from the 1st January to the 8th March, 1890, and from the 10th March to the 19th July, 1890. [Exhibit No. 13.]

668. If you have more miners than the place would employ regularly every day, how is the difficulty got over?—They shift work from week to week. There is a rule passed by their body that they will share the work during any period when there is a scarcity of work, and the men do not leave. We have, of course, no power to compel them to do so.

669. Why will they not leave for other places?—I cannot say that.

670. Were the company instrumental in bringing them here?—Well, the Westport Company did bring men down from Westport for the Wallsend Mine, and the Koranui Mine happened to be stopped at the time, and took them up.

671. Have you ever advertised for men?—We have, but not for years, until this week.

672. Have they freehold houses?—Yes; some of the idle men have freehold houses.

673. Have the company any houses?—No. I now hand in a statement showing the men who received the highest wages and those who received the lowest wages. [Exhibit No. 14.] Also a statement of the wages paid on account of coke and fireclay departments. [Exhibit No. 15.] Also statement of the valuation of plant. [Exhibit No. 16.]

674. Does the quantity of small coal cost anything for coke?—Yes; we pay the same as if it was big coal. We pay 2s. 10d. per ton for hewing it, and all other charges come against it the same as for screened coal. We do not pay royalty.

675. Since the change to paying on the gross coal, has it increased the amount upon which the company has to pay royalty?—I do not know that it has.

676. You still screen the coal, and you make the royalty returns on the screened coal?—Yes; the amount is given in that return that we pay royalty on.

677. You pay on everything but the slack?—Yes.

678. I wanted to know if there is a profit or loss upon the fireclay-works and the coke-works?—It may be said that when they are working there is a profit, but there was large expenditure on developing the trade and on plant, so that, in reality, there has been loss. We doubled the coke-plant not long ago, and we got no return for it: the demand from Broken Hill began to fall off.

679. You had a large market at Broken Hill, had you not?—It was seemingly a large one, but we never got hold of it.

680. What was the cause of the cessation of the demand at Broken Hill?—It ceased as far as we were concerned. I do not know whether it was due to any stoppage of the mines there.

681. You do not know the cause?—No.

682. *Mr. Moody.*] Can you supply a statement of the tonnage prices paid to the coal-miners for the different methods of coal-getting during your management; also the hours constituting a day's work, with dates of alteration, if any, during the same period?—I will supply those statements. The hewing rates were always paid on screened coal until the last short period before the stoppage. When I came here first the price was 3s. per ton for screened coal.

683. I want to know if any alterations have been made in hewing-prices since?—In 1882 the hewing-price was 3s. per ton; it continued at 3s. for some two or three years, with the exception of a small portion of the works in the rise, when we had to give an advance per ton in consequence of the amount of slack. When opening out these works beyond the fault there was a readjustment of prices demanded, and we then agreed to pay 4s. per ton: that was about five years ago, in 1885 or 1886.

684. In what does the coal-miners' employment consist besides actual coal-getting?—The coal-miners' employment consists of hewing coal and trucking it to their bord end.

685. No laying-down of rails?—No; but they set their own timber.

686. Where is the timber required by the miners placed?—It is put on a truck and delivered to them; they take it into the face.

687. Delivered on the main road?—Yes. Rule No. 37 bears on the question of timber.

688. Where do you place the empty trucks?—They are taken to the bord ends.

689. They are removed from the bord ends to the face?—Yes. The length of the bord is 50 yards. The headings are broken away at 50 yards. There are occasional times when they go over that, and we sometimes have trouble with them on that account.

690. After loading the skips in their working place, do the miners remove them?—Yes, to the bord end; they run them down to the first jig. So far, the miners have had their coal free before this stoppage took place. Then we told them in future we would charge them at the rate of 7s. 6d. per ton for their screened coal. It is the best nut-coal, screened or unscreened as it comes from the mine: that would amount to about 4s. a dray-load delivered at their homes; they pay 2s. a load for cartage.

691. *The Chairman.*] In removing the pillars, do you find them much damaged or crushed?—There are some of them severely crushed, but, as I have mentioned, there are places in the mine where the solid coal even is in a state of crush.

692. That is near the pillar-working, I expect?—It is difficult to account for it. As soon as you drive through the solid pillar you will find the incline rise so much that you have to take up the bottom and relay the road.

693. Do you consider the same prices should be paid for pillar-work as in the whole coal?—I think pillar-work should be done at a lower price, as it can be done at a greater advantage to the miners. Pillar-coal should be cheaper, because in England I have known a difference where the price is lower by 15 or 20 per cent. I think it is certainly worth 20 per cent. of the whole coal.

694. Have you ever known of any coal-mine in which the same prices are paid for pillar-work as are paid in the same mine for solid or whole coal?—It is certainly not a rule in the North of England. I do not know what it is in other parts.

695. When you speak of two shifts a day, at what time do they begin?—The first one begins at 6 o'clock in the morning, and it knocks off at 2 o'clock in the afternoon; then the next shift begins.

696. So you then get two men's day's work out of the mines each day?—Yes.

697. How many men are in the mine at one time when the shift is working?—There are about forty to forty-five men in the Brunner Mine—that is, hewers and truckers—and rather less in the Coal-pit Heath. About seventy-five altogether.

698. What is the quantity and quality of the coal used on the fireclay-works and for coke-ovens respectively?—It appears in the return I have put in; also the quantity of slack used in making coke.

699. What amount of coal has gone to waste?—It is on the returns. The waste since the 10th March has been 1,965 tons, out of 23,495 tons on which wages are paid.

700. Do you let the fireclay-work by day work?—We let it by the cubic yard. We provide a trucker for it. Two men in the face at so much a cubic yard.

701. Do they deliver it on the surface?—We keep the trucking-plant. It runs about 4s. a cubic yard. Taking truckers' wages into consideration the whole cost was about 5s. outside.

702. Can you answer this question in the Commission, viz.: "the market value of such of the said works, machinery, and appliances as have been from time to time in use, corresponding with the annual exports hereinbefore mentioned"?—We have a valuation of the works and plant as it was taken for the amalgamation, to which must be added the cost of buildings (Exhibit No. 16).

703. Can you answer the following question in the Commission: "the return which the lessees have been getting from time to time, and could probably get in the future, as interest on the market value of the works, machinery, and appliances in use as aforesaid"?—Looking at it in that way, years ago the Brunner Mine was in a position to produce a much larger output without any plant at all. We have now a plant capable of producing a much larger output than we have trade for.

704. Were the valuations exactly in this form as shown in Exhibit No. 16?—That is a copy of the inventory taken since then. It is practically in the same form in which the buildings, plant, and machinery were taken altogether.

705. Do the miners find their own tools and powder?—Yes.

706. Do they pay for their own sharpening?—No; we pay for that. The powder is all deducted before making up the average wages. We supply them with powder from a store. The difficulty would be for them to get it otherwise in proper quantities.

707. *Mr. Brown.*] In this return marked No. 16, for movable plant in use there is £11,296 in the Wallsend Mine. How could this be in use if the Wallsend Mine was closed?—The explanation of that is that this inventory is only made up to 30th June before the mine was closed.

708. Is that return (No. 13) a return of unscreened coal?—Yes.

709. Previous to that you had screened coal?—Yes. That was in accordance with the system of payment. There was no change in the character of the work; I mean in the character of the coal that was worked. We had got through the whole coal working at the time that return was made up to. We then had no whole coal coming out. The unscreened system had not been given effect to. With the pillar-work the coal was still paid for on the screened-coal system.

710. The period from the 10th March to July is all pillar-working?—Yes; except in the Wallsend Mine.

711. Have you any by-laws?—No. We were nearly having a big strike over some proposed by-laws, and they were never given effect to.

712. Will you please explain why, for the period previous to the 8th March, the tonnage upon which wages are paid is less than the tonnage upon which royalty is paid?—That is due to paying on the screened coal, excluding nut.

713. For the period after the 8th March the reverse appears to be the case?—In that period we paid the miners on everything that came out of the mine.

714. In that return (No. 12) under the head of "Days worked," you mean in shifts?—Yes.

715. The men supply themselves with stores as they please, I suppose?—Yes, at the various shops.

716. You would not have had so much trouble with the men had they not affiliated themselves with the Maritime Council?—No; we had very little trouble before that.

717. *The Chairman.*] Is there much gas in the mines?—The Coal-pit Heath we worked with naked lights, also the Brunner.

718. Have there been many accidents from fire?—There was an accident in Wallsend which gave rise to an inquiry some time back: that was previous to my taking charge of the mine. Since I took charge there have been none.

719. Is the inspection of the mine satisfactorily performed? Is the Act carried out satisfactorily?—Yes.

720. You are, I suppose, relieved of all responsibility?—I do not think the object of inspection is to relieve the manager of responsibility.

721. Does the Inspector give you a certificate?—No; he gives us no information at all on the subject. He goes away and leaves us entirely in the dark, unless he finds some cause to write about something, until the end of the year, when he presents his report to Parliament.

722. Do you think that is a good plan?—I do not think so. I think he ought to call attention to any defects.

723. How often is the inspection made?—They are not very frequent—about once every four, five, or six months. The Inspector has no regular times for coming, and he does not advise us when he is coming. The miners have been continually agitating for a resident local Inspector.

724. You consider the miners generally a steady lot?—Yes, I consider them a very steady lot on the whole.

Mr. Hugh Calders sworn and examined.

725. *The Chairman.*] What are you, Mr. Calders?—I am Chief Postmaster for the Greymouth Postal District.

726. How long have you been in charge here?—Upwards of seven years.

727. Is the Brunnerton Post Office in your district?—It is.

728. Among your other duties you have charge of the Post Office Savings-bank accounts?—Yes, I have.

729. Can you give us any idea of the population of Brunnerton?—It has been estimated by my Postmaster there, and by several others, and judging from my own knowledge of the population, and the number of houses in the town, I should think the population would be about two thousand persons.

730. What proportion of these would be male adults?—I should think, roughly estimated, about five hundred men.

731. Their chief occupation, I presume, is coal-mining?—Yes.

732. Is there any other business there that employs a large number of men beyond the coal-mining industry and the stores?—No; it may be taken as a coal-mining population.

733. Can you tell the Commissioners, in general terms, the number of depositors in the Post Office Savings-bank for the past three years in Brunnerton, at the same time the amounts deposited, so that we can get an average of the amounts withdrawn?—I furnish herewith a statement which has been prepared, and the total balances and principal of depositors. [Statement produced and marked No. 24 Exhibit.]

Monday, 20th October, 1890.

Mr. Samuel Andrew sworn and examined.

734. *The Chairman.*] What do you describe yourself as, Mr. Andrew?—A coal-miner.

735. How long have you been a coal-miner?—Fourteen years.

736. How long have you been in New Zealand?—Fifteen years.

737. How long have you been in the Brunner Mine?—It must be about fourteen years since I first went to work there.

738. Have you ever mined anywhere else?—Yes, at Denniston Hill, but first at Waimangaroa—that is, the Wellington Mine—then at Denniston, and then since at Mokihinui. I returned

here again, I suppose, about nine years ago. I have mined at Home at iron-ore, ironstone, and copper. I have worked at the Cleveland Mines in Yorkshire; and I have also worked in Somersetshire in the iron-ore.

739. And where have you worked at copper?—In Devonshire.

740. Which mines have you been working in at Brunnerton?—I have worked in all four.

741. Have you been working lately in the Brunner?—Yes.

742. For how long?—Since July, 1889—about a year, as I was not working in the mine during the last three months.

743. In your experience in the mines have there been many interruptions—I mean since you came back during the past nine years?—Interruptions to the working were not frequent until the amalgamation.

744. What do you call the amalgamation?—I mean the amalgamation of the companies in the Grey Valley.

745. Did it take place at one time, or was it gradually done? I understand that at first one mine, the Wallsend, became the property?—I do not know the date, but I know that the amalgamation was in existence in 1888.

746. Some time in 1888 the whole of the mines became the property of one company?—Yes.

747. Prior to that what were the interruptions due to?—One interruption was due to the stoppage of the Wallsend Mine.

748. *Mr. Moody.*] What was that caused by?—The Greymouth Company had possession of it then, and they only had one shaft at that time. I suppose, too, there was not sufficient sale.

749. Do you remember the date of that?—No, I do not.

750. *The Chairman.*] Did that throw a number of men out of work at the time?—Yes.

751. How many do you think?—About forty men.

752. How long did it last?—The interruption to that upper mine lasted until the shaft was sunk again.

753. Then, there was another shaft sunk?—Yes.

754. How long would that interruption be?—About two years, I think.

755. Was that owing to only one shaft, or to ventilation, or to what?—The expense of working the mine, it was said. I suppose the mine could not have paid. There was a larger amount of capital sunk in it at that time.

756. Who sunk the second shaft? Was it the same company that had stopped the mine?—It was the Westport company.

757. After the amalgamation?—No, prior to the amalgamation.

758. Was there any other stoppage of importance that threw the men out of work that occurs to you prior to the amalgamation? Were there frequent stoppages for want of trucks, and not being able to get away coal?—The stoppages were more frequent at that time on account of the bar.

759. You mean than since the amalgamation, or than at the present time?—I meant resulting from the bar-harbour, and from the harbour-works not being so useful as at present.

760. Can you give us any idea of what was the amount of broken time in the week or in the fortnight? What was the short time deducted?—I do not suppose the miners worked more than six days in the fortnight, sending coal out.

761. They did not fill coal more than six days a fortnight?—No.

762. And since then what has been the amount of interruptions from that cause?—I suppose stoppages will not allow more than seven days and a half being worked in a fortnight, or at the most eight days.

763. You could not give us separately how much of the stoppages resulted from the state of the bar and shipping?—No.

764. To summarise it, all the causes in earlier years would not allow more than six days' work in a fortnight, and all the causes now will perhaps allow of eight days being worked?—That is about it.

765. What are the stoppages you include in this last lot?—First, the state of the bar. The next principal cause I should say was the state of the mines.

766. Has the railway had anything to do with it?—No; I am not aware that the railway is any cause of stoppage.

767. Has the want of shipping?—There have been times when the want of shipping has caused a stoppage.

768. Any other causes?—There is one cause I was going to mention, but which is really not within my own knowledge—that is, the action of the management in stopping one mine and putting more men into another, or it may be a partial stoppage of one mine. It is, of course, something in the business of the company.

769. *Mr. Moody.*] Was there any interruption through the company putting more men on the works than there was room for at the time?—I do not know of any interruptions on that account, though I do not quite understand what you mean.

770. Supposing the work there was to do demanded the employment of, say, a hundred men, and there were 120 to 150 men available on the place, the whole of the men could not get constant employment?—There are no men that would come to Brunnerton unless they were actually employed. They would not come there and remain on the place and consider themselves employés unless they had been employed.

771. *The Chairman.*] Were there more men at Brunnerton than could actually find employment?—At times there are a number out of work, and again at times they are all employed.

772. *Mr. Brown.*] Has there been any partial stoppage of the working from any cause since the amalgamation?—The first stoppage was by the Tyneside.

773. *The Chairman.*] Then by the Wallsend?—No; the Brunner was stopped just after that.
774. When was the Tyneside stopped?—Just after the amalgamation.
775. And the Brunner also after the amalgamation?—Yes.
776. And the Wallsend?—Yes. In May of 1889 there were thirty men stopped at Wallsend. The Brunner Mine was not wholly stopped. There were 200 men engaged in the Brunner Mine.
777. On the matter of the Tyneside, what occurred before the amalgamation?—I may explain that I did not consider I should be required to answer any of these questions. Such questions as these were to be answered by Mr. Ancell before the Committee.
778. You only know that the Tyneside was stopped and the Brunner was partially stopped?—I know, of course, that the Tyneside stopped at the time of the amalgamation, and has never worked since. Thirty men were thrown out of employment.
779. *Mr. Brown.*] Did that include surface-men and miners as well? You say there was a partial stoppage of the Brunner?—Yes; there were sixty-six men discharged from the Brunner in December, 1888; and in January, 1889, about the same number; and the men stopped completely in March.
780. For how long?—It was stopped until July, 1889.
781. Do you know the cause of that stoppage?—The cause given by the company was that there was no sale for the coal at all.
782. *The Chairman.*] How was it intimated to the men? Was it stuck up in the mine or stated to the men?—Yes; it was stated to the men. That was one statement made; but, about a week after the mine was stopped, the men were called together and asked by the manager to take 6d. per ton reduction.
783. Did that affect the whole of the men or only the hewers?—The hewers.
784. What had they been getting before?—This reduction was to be upon 4s. for the screened coal.
785. When they resumed in July what was the state of things?—They reopened at the old prices, 4s. per ton for screened coal.
786. This only affected the Brunner Mine?—Yes.
787. What was the reason alleged for this reduction?—That the mine would not pay. That was the reason the manager conveyed to me as secretary, in writing.
788. What were the workings in—solid or pillars?—They were in pillars.
789. Did the terms of the reduction refer to the difference in the value of pillar-coal as against solid?—Yes.
790. Then there was a further reason given for the reduction?—The manager also said that the mine would not pay unless the reduction was accepted.
791. *Mr. Brown.*] What was the reason of the reduction in January and December?—Because it was pillar-working.
792. What was the alleged reason of the previous reduction when you say there were sixty-six men reduced, and a similar number in 1889?—The only reason I ever heard was that there was not sufficient sale.
793. They only reduced the quantity of men?—Yes. The output was larger than they required.
794. *The Chairman.*] Now, about this pillar-coal: is it easier to work pillar-coal than solid—can a man do more in a given time? How many tons could you yourself get out in a day in the screened coal?—Well, in the net weight—the skips carry such differences of weight.
795. Can you tell what is about the average per day?—I should say about 3½ tons of screened coal.
796. Did you ever work in pillar-coal when it was screened before it was weighed?—Yes.
797. What did you get out then in the pillars?—About 3½ tons of screened in the bords; but that is in the best sort of coal for working.
798. What would you get for screened coal in pillar-working? You say you would get seven skips in the one: how much would you get in the other?—Probably about 5 tons, but I cannot say definitely; I should prefer to answer these questions afterwards if you would allow me, as it is difficult to remember what one's average wages were. There is so much difference. For instance, the quantities I have mentioned are for the best sort of coal. There are other times when a man would be working for very low wages—when the coal is very soft.
799. What is the lowest you have ever made?—In the pillar-workings, when there was payment for screened coal, I have earned down to 8s. a day: that is 2 tons.
800. We want now your average in bord coal?—You can put out 5 tons where you can take small, big, and everything.
801. What used you to get out of a bord?—It is a difficult thing to give an exact average. The mines are so different.
802. You have worked in solid in the Brunner. What did you probably do as a good day's work?—Rather over 3 tons in screened coal.
803. If you ever worked in the Brunner Mine, where you got the whole coal out of the solid, what did you get then?—It is five years ago since I worked in the solid.
804. At that time did you get paid for the whole coal without screening?—It was only screened coal that was paid 4s. for. Sometimes at Brunner the men have got very high wages, and sometimes very low.
805. What do you call a very fair amount in coal?—About 4 tons of screened coal in the Brunner—that is, both from the pillar and from solid as well.
806. What is the most the men have made in pillar-coal?—I do not know the highest; the check-weighman will be able to give evidence about that. I myself have put out 5 tons, but I do not remember the maximum.

807. Does the check-weighman keep a record?—Yes. In fact, all these questions as to tonnage, which you have been asking me, can be obtained at once from him.

808. Well, we simply wanted to hear what was in your own mind on the subject. We will go back to July, when the mines reopened at the old rate of wages. What was the next stoppage after that?—The next considerable stoppage after that was in April. The Brunner Mine went on working, but it only reopened with nine faces after July, 1889.

809. With two men to each place?—Yes; working double shifts. There were only eighteen hewers started, instead of formerly probably one hundred and twenty.

810. How long did that continue? Has the number increased?—Yes, the number has been increased—soon afterwards. There are now fifty-six coal-hewers.

811. That is twenty-eight places, two men in a place?—Yes. Keeping to this one mine, there was no change except the gradual increase I spoke of until July of this year.

812. What day?—On the 21st July.

813. Then what happened?—Then that was when the lock-out took place.

814. Can you tell us about this lock-out? How did it come about?—I have a circular here, reprinted from the *Brunner News*, which fully sets forth the circumstances; it was written some time in August. It reads as follows:—

SIR,—The following is a brief explanation of the cause of the lock-out and the position of the miners in the dispute: The company having demanded a reduction of 20 per cent., or that the matter should be settled by arbitration, the Association requested permission to examine the company's books with a view of finding whether their operations had been profitable or otherwise. This was agreed to; but on the 19th July, four days before the result of the audit could be obtained, the mines were closed. After considering the auditor's report it was decided to offer a reduction of 2d. per ton on pillar-work, providing the Government would reduce the cost of haulage to port, and the Union Shipping Company the freights by sea. Both the Brunner line and Shipping Company were known to be making large profits on the carriage of the coal, while the coal-hewers were not making over a fair wage, which the following figures, taken from the company's books, will show. During the last sixteen weeks' work the total output was 63,524 tons, which was produced at a hewing-cost of £9,564. This sum was paid for hewing, timber-setting, and other incidental charges connected with getting the coal. In the same period 194 miners were employed, among whom, if the earnings are divided as above, shows the average wages to have been £3 1s. per week. Miners pay for their own blasting materials and lights. Also the average number of days worked per week within the sixteen weeks under review was more than one day above the average when taken over any lengthened period in the past, and more than could be expected to continue through the year. Reductions that must be made on the wage above stated, owing to these considerations, reduce it to about £2 5s. per week during the year. It cannot be supposed that the miners willingly consented, or felt they were justly entitled to suffer a reduction on this rate; but the matter was too serious for them to decline offering some compromise in order that the work should continue. The hewing-prices last paid are: 2s. 10d. per ton for whole coal and for getting Coal-pit Heath Mine pillars, and 2s. 6d. per ton for Brunner Mine pillars. This, as far as the Brunner Mine is concerned, is already 4d. per ton below Denniston hewing-price, which is a uniform rate of 2s. 10d. both for solid and pillar work. The proposed reduction of 2d. per ton on pillar work would make the difference 6d. per ton between Denniston and Brunner Mine prices. Figures have been put out by the company which seem to show very much higher average earnings than those above stated, but in their calculations the whole of the men employed are not counted. It is quite true that a higher average earnings could be made if the company would employ only such a number of men as they could find regular work for. But, in spite of the objections made by the Association, strangers are readily given employment even at the time coal-hewers are out of places; therefore the workman must work under the conditions which the employer imposes. Much has been made of the fact that coal-hewers have divided the work with those who were temporarily unemployed. This has been done in accordance with a rule which it was found necessary to adopt. The following is a *précis* of the rule: In case of breakage of machinery or the flooding of any portion of the workings, causing the workmen there employed to be temporarily thrown idle, arrangements shall be at once made with the manager for them to have an equal share of the work, such arrangement to continue one month only. It must be evident that this custom is equally an advantage to the employers and men, seeing that it has the effect of keeping skilled labour in the district ready to supply the trade directly the temporary stoppage of any part of the workings has been overcome. In well-managed mines such a contingency ought not often to occur, and it is not probable the rule will remain in force if it becomes necessary to often put it in operation. At the time the lock-out took place fifty coal-hewers were out of places through the flooding of a part of the Coal-pit Heath Mine, and these were receiving a share of the work and money which the manager now attempts to show was earned by a smaller number than has been acknowledged to be in the company's employ by the managing director. The following statement gives the number of men employed at each of the mines on two dates during the last sixteen weeks, and if necessary the names can be given as well as the number: On the 12th April, 56 hewing in Brunner Mine; 108 hewing in Coal-pit Heath; 44 hewing in Wallsend: total, 208. On the 21st June, 56 hewing in Brunner Mine; 71 hewing in Coal-pit Heath; 53 hewing in Wallsend: total, 180. These figures give an average of 194 miners engaged in that period. In estimating the rate of wages the company carefully abstains from giving a general average through the year or per week, and yet every one knows this is the average from which the tucker-bills must be met. You will be kept duly informed of further developments and of attempts made in the direction of a settlement, which we will strive to effect, or otherwise as the case may be.—S. ANDREW, General Secretary, A.M.L.A.

815. This, then, is your explanation. You give this as part of your evidence?—Yes.

816. What followed? Was any compromise arrived at?—Yes.

817. On what date?—28th August.

818. What followed then?—Work was resumed on a compromise that there should be a reduction of 2d. per ton on pillar-coal—that was what might be termed permanent—also an additional temporary reduction of 3d., making 5d. in all, pending the report of the Commission.

819. Explain exactly what you understood was to become of that 3d. Was it to be held back in the meantime?—Yes; but it is not a permanent settlement. I mean that, providing this Commission advise the Government to make a reduction, say, of 6d. per ton either in haulage or royalty, that 3d. per ton would be again given to the men.

820. Is there to be any back payment? I mean, would the men consider they had any claim for payment of that 3d.?—No. They say, in case the Government is advised by this Commission, and accepts the advice, not to reduce the royalty, of course the dispute is not ended.

821. Then you agreed to accept a reduction in the meantime of 5d.?—Yes. Then after the report of the Commission fresh arrangements must be made.

822. On these terms, then, you went to work?—A ballot was taken on the 28th in favour of going to work at once.

823. What followed next?—Work went on for three weeks until the general strike took place,

or until the workmen took part in the general strike. Of course one of the conditions of working was that the company should supply no coal to the Union Steamship Company.

824. This was an additional element in the compromise?—Yes.

825. On what date was that?—On the 30th August I sent a letter to the manager asking him not to do so.

826. When was it accepted by the company?—3rd September. The following is the letter of the 30th August:—

Mr. James Bishop, Mine-manager.—DEAR SIR,—Please understand that one of the conditions of the settlement is that the coal mined shall be carried by vessels manned by union sailors, the miners declining to fill coal directly or indirectly for the Union Shipping Company, or any other company employing blackleg labour. We understand from your letter to-day there is no misunderstanding on this point. If your company should determine on any other course we shall be obliged if informed so at once.—S. ANDREW, Secretary.

827. When did the company first get notice that they were not to carry coal?—This was the first intimation the manager received from us.

828. How did he come to write any letter at all—because in your letter you seem to refer to one received from the manager?—I do not recollect that he received any direct intimation that the coal was not to be supplied to the Union Company. I do not know how he got the intimation.

829. Was this question not definitely considered at the time of the ballot?—No. Although it was not mentioned, there was a tacit understanding.

830. Between whom?—The men themselves, and, I have no doubt, the company.

831. When was that understanding arrived at?—On the 3rd September we received the letter. On the 28th August a ballot was taken, and the matter was there decided without any direct question having been raised as to whom the coal should be filled for, yet with the complete knowledge of all hands of the affiliation existing between the sailors' union and the coal-miners, who were part of the Maritime Council. Under these circumstances it was known at once that they would not take the part of the company.

832. When did the miners join the Maritime Council?—I cannot give the exact date, but perhaps it was a year and a half ago.

833. Did your joining with the Maritime Council necessitate your taking up the position indicated in your letter?—Yes, I should say so, on that account.

834. How does that necessity arise? Is it in any rules, or how is it expressed?—The affiliation of the unions is made up in this way—in fact, I think I can give you the rule relating to it from memory: "That the Maritime Council is made up of delegates representing various maritime bodies, which are pledged to support each other in time of trouble."

835. Are the miners considered a part of the Maritime Council for this purpose?—Yes.

836. By "support" is it meant that they are to give assistance in case of any suspension of wages?—Yes.

837. And did it mean anything beyond that?—It meant, of course, any movement that would support any other union.

838. You say the miners are required to take up this position: is it because of the rule you have just quoted?—Yes. Of course, if the miners here fill coal for the Union Company and enable them to go on with their trade as usual, that would be helping the other side.

839. *Mr. Brown.*] I understand by this that the miners are pledged to take up the business of the Maritime Council?—Yes.

840. Have you any phrase in your rules representing "boycotting"?—There is a rule in our rules that requires us not to work with non-unionists. I hardly know what you mean by boycotting in this case.

841. Do you mean rules adopted by the association of miners?—Yes.

842. That was the real cause of the present strike?—Yes.

843. That was the real cause of the letter of the 30th August, I understand?—Yes.

844. Has the manager of the mine ever seen your rules?—I think he has.

845. Has there been any special recognition by the company of these rules?—During the last two years the company has fully recognised them.

846. Were they consenting parties to them, so that the labour, if employed, was to be pledged to these rules?—Yes, I think so; but the conditions are such that the company would do away with them altogether. The acceptance of the unions is, however, with the majority of the men. It is the will of the men to form a union. I do not know if the rules have been submitted to the company for approval. This union has been in existence for the last five years—that is, the Brunner local union.

847. With the same rules?—The rules are slightly altered from time to time.

848. *The Chairman.*] What was the effect of the affiliation? Do you think it was necessary? Could the union have effected its purpose during its period of existence without affiliation?—No. I think it is impossible for a local union to fulfil its purpose alone; affiliation is necessary.

849. That is why you affiliated with the Maritime Council?—Yes. Employers are affiliated, and of course the workmen must necessarily do the same to protect themselves.

850. Were the employers affiliated two years ago? Was that a cause?—I will say this in explanation: that the affiliation takes place to enable unions to have increased strength. I said there, and I still mean, that it is necessary. I do not mean that it is a consequence of the affiliation of the companies, though I believe the Union Company as far back as 1884 or 1885 joined the Australian Company of Shipowners, and the unions in New Zealand were not so early as that, so that the affiliation of employers did precede the affiliation of the workmen.

851. Do you know that from your own knowledge?—No, not from my own knowledge, but I believe it to be so. I say this on the authority of a letter by Sir Robert Stout, in the *Otago Daily Times*.

852. You mentioned that the Grey Valley Coal-miners' Association had rules?—Yes; I produce a copy. [Exhibit No. —.]

853. You mentioned that among the rules was a rule against members of the Association working with non-unionists?—I do not think this copy of the rules includes that.

854. When was it passed?—Probably about twelve months since. That is as near as I can say now.

855. Do you remember the wording of it at all?—It said the men were not to work with non-unionists.

856. Did it refer only to the men employed in the mines?—Yes, in the case of these local rules.

857. Then you have told us that there was a tacit understanding between the miners and the coal company that they were not to load coal on the Union Steamship Company's ships. How did the rules come to apply to the Union Company's ships? Were they included in your rules?—No; not in these local rules.

858. Well, then, how could it be said that the miners under the Association were in any sense working alongside non-union men on board the Union Steamship Company's steamers?—Because the Brunner miners are a branch of the Amalgamated Miners' and Labourers' Association.

859. What is this new association? Have they a rule to that effect?—Yes.

860. When did you join this Amalgamated Miners' and Labourers' Association?—That was formed in December last.

861. Is mining coal and loading trucks a matter of working alongside non-unionists on board the steamers according to any rules?—Yes.

862. Is there any rule the wording of which would prevent miners from loading coal for non-unionist bodies?—That is only an exchange of term. The sailors' union became involved in a dispute with their company—the Union Steamship Company—and non-union men are placed on board their ships.

863. I want to trace this rule to its origin. Is it one of the rules of the Amalgamated Miners' and Labourers' Association that their members are not to work with non-unionists?—Yes.

864. How is it worded? Does it mean in your own particular industry or trade?—Yes; on the industries represented in that association.

865. I mean that, supposing now that there was some body of men bringing timber to the mine, or any case of that kind, not having formed a union amongst themselves, and not being affiliated or in unity with any other body of workmen?—We would not take any objection to their joining in the affiliation. Then the rule still applies that we must not work with non-unionists when unionists were available for that employment.

866. But if unionists were not available for that employment?—In that case, of course, we would work.

867. If unionists were not available for running the Union Company's boats and they were compelled to employ free labour, would you then be debarred from loading those boats?—Yes.

868. Did you become subject to a more general rule at a later date?—Before this last body was formed there was in existence a body called the Delegates' Council. This was confined to the Coast. Then the Amalgamated Miners' and Labourers' Association came into existence and took the place of that body, and of course it has now bodies outside of the Coast connected with it.

869. Were the miners fully aware when they joined this affiliation of unions they might be required to strike for matters that did not affect their work? Were they individually made aware of that?—We understand that any matter that affects one body of labourers affects the whole, if it is in the direction of an attempt to break down unionism. We cannot understand any disconnection. In a strike, for instance, of one body, all the other bodies must join in maintaining their position.

870. Is it necessary they must strike in order to embarrass the employers who are in controversy with their men?—Yes.

871. I will put it in another way. Referring to that strike that took place at the end of August, was that the first strike that has taken place within the last two years?—We do not call that a strike. We call that a lock-out, because the men were quite willing to continue working if the company were willing to continue paying the usual wages. There was no strike at all: the company closed the mine.

872. *Mr. Moody.*] That was the time the 20 per cent. was brought in?—Yes.

873. *The Chairman.*] Well, there was a strike in September?—Yes.

874. Was that the first time the men refused to work?—That is the first strike that has affected the three mines.

875. That is the strike upon which they are now out?—Yes.

876. What is the difference between a strike and a lock-out?—In the former the men seek to impose terms that are unfavourable to the company, and in the latter the company seek to impose terms unfavourable to the men.

877. You spoke about the strike of the 22nd September: did your men strike?—Yes; because they came out in support of the affiliated bodies.

878. We have left out one stage. What was the date of the company giving in to the demands of the men for payment of 2s. 10d. per ton on the whole coal?—I think, in March, 1890. In all the mines the men requested payment by gross weight.

879. And was that granted at once?—That was granted without any stoppage.

880. *Mr. Moody.*] That was the 2s. 10d. granted for gross weight?—Yes; for solid working and for pillars in Wallsend and Coal-pit Heath Mines, and 2s. 6d. per ton for Brunner pillars.

881. *The Chairman.*] Had any previous attempt ever been made to have payment by the gross weight?—Yes; but that was before I took any official position in the union.

882. Do you remember what the result was in that case?—As regards the Brunner Mine there

was an arbitration board appointed to find what was an equivalent price in the gross weight for the net weight. The price was found to be 2s. 6¼d., I think, at that time.

883. Was that accepted by the miners?—No. I am not certain of the prices found for the other two mines, but I am nearly positive it was 2s. 8d. for the Wallsend.

884. You do not consider that any of these differences between the company and the miners led to a strike?—There was nothing in the nature of a strike at the time.

885. Why was the arbitration price not accepted? Was there any desire for an increased rate of pay at that time?—In the first place, I think some of the men were not satisfied that the price was an equivalent. I know I have heard it generally given as an opinion by a good many that the prices as found by the arbitrators were not equivalent.

886. *Mr. Brown.*] Had they been satisfied on that point would they have accepted that price as brought out by the arbitration?—I cannot say. I was then working on the roads more as a deputy. I did not attend union meetings at that time, although I was in the union, and so I was not then fully acquainted with the men's feelings.

887. Well, you have given no evidence of what occurred in March. You say that the company gave way, and granted 2s. 10d. on the whole coal in the Wallsend and Coal-pit Heath Mines, both pillar and solid workings?—Yes; the prices were uniform except in the case of the Brunner pillars, which was 2s. 6d.

888. Then, you have already told us that the matter was referred to arbitration and settled, and this scale went on for sixteen weeks?—Yes.

889. And then the lock-out took place when the company requested the miners to accept a reduction of 20 per cent. or arbitration?—Yes.

890. How was it that the mine was not carried on while the matter was under arbitration?—The terms offered were not accepted; so there was a lock-out.

891. Was the arbitration accepted?—No.

892. Was the 20 per cent. reduction accepted?—No. They received notice that the mine would be closed on a certain day unless certain terms were conceded. In fact the miners got notice to quit, which was a lock-out.

893. *The Chairman.*] In the case of a lock-out do your rules offer assistance, and do the affiliated rules apply?—Yes; it is viewed in the same light as a strike.

894. Is that view of it also accepted by the affiliated unions under the Maritime Council? Do they look upon it in the light of a strike?—Of course the conditions have to be agreed to. It is always understood that one body shall inform the others what the conditions of the dispute are. They do not support one another without some explanation. It must be explained and proved to be necessary.

895. Was there any explanation or notice offered to the Maritime Council by the Miners' Association of this lock-out?—On the 21st July notice was given.

896. To whom?—To the Amalgamated Miners' and Labourers' Association, and to the Maritime Council, which would of course include the whole.

897. Have you got a copy of that notice? Was it in the form of a letter?—Yes.

898. What reply was made?—The reply was to the effect that the local branch of the union would be supported in resisting the reduction.

899. Was any support given?—Yes.

900. In what form?—In the form of money, partly.

901. Did they call out the seamen on board the steamers?—No.

902. Can you say why not?—It was not considered necessary.

903. Do you know of any reason why it should not be? You say you gave the necessary intimation, and they promised support, and they gave it partly in money. Did they impose conditions which were afterwards imposed in another struggle?—The Maritime Council did not consider it necessary in this case.

904. Did they explain the reason?—The reasons were satisfactory for the time being.

905. What were they?—That it was more to the interest of the union to localise the strike.

906. *Mr. Brown.*] Of course that does not really answer the question. I would ask you again, have you any idea of the reason? Was your Association consulted, or was it at your request or desire that the full strength of the combination was not exercised?—Yes; the union were satisfied that the best course was adopted.

907. Your union?—Yes.

908. How was it placed before the miners? You say that the local union was satisfied with the course adopted: how did they express satisfaction? Was there a meeting, and the whole thing there explained to them?—In the first place, if the strike were not localised it would have affected Westport, where there is no dispute whatever. There was no general question in that case; it was only a local question of wages. The matter was different altogether from the present circumstances. This is a question of unionism.

909. I will ask you again, how was that explained to the miners, and were they called together to express an opinion by ballot or vote or in any way in this matter?—The union business is being continuously voted on or debated by the body of the men themselves.

910. Do the delegates act on the instructions of the men when they are going to take a serious step, by first referring the question to a general ballot or consultation?—Yes.

911. Were you consulted before the subsequent general strike took place?—Yes.

912. And did you take the sense of the Miners' Association here?—Yes, locally.

913. And they agreed?—Yes. I can give you a case in point. In the Shag Point difficulty, for instance, there was no thought of bringing out the affiliated bodies on that account—there was not the slightest need for it; and Shag Point is a branch of the Association.

914. Was there not a strong threat to do it in that case?—Only in regard to the persons who

owned the mine, and the traffic of those particular owners, that would not have affected the Brunner. I only mention that as a case in point where a strike was localised.

915. Have you ever, since you joined the union, worked alongside non-union men?—Yes, for a short time when the union first commenced.

916. But not of late years?—No.

917. Has there been any non-union labour in connection with the Grey Valley mines?—Not during about the last twelve months. The only non-union men were such men as were mutually agreed upon between the Association and the manager, who should remain out of the union on account of their official position, or perhaps their position of certain responsibility.

918. *Mr. Moody.*] You mean clerks and others?—Yes; and in one case the top-man—that is, the lander.

919. *The Chairman.*] What has been the maximum population of Brunnerton, do you think?—The number on the union books is 385 previous to the stoppage.

920. How long have these men been at Brunnerton, and can you give us any idea of how the miners arrived there, if they came in large bodies together?—I do not know how they came.

921. Were there as many nine years ago, when you first began to work?—Yes, I believe so.

922. Have not the numbers increased since?—I cannot tell you, but even during the last twelve months, although the numbers of miners have not increased, the day-labourers in connection with the mines have increased.

923. What has led to that increase?—The attraction of labour and more employment offered from time to time. I mean, there has been employment given to outsiders when there was enough on the place.

924. Can you tell us the number of men that have lost their employment owing to changes? You tell us about sixty-six being discharged, and some from the Brunner mine?—When the stoppage took place the miners themselves paid the passages of twenty-nine men. That was when the Brunner stoppage took place. The men themselves subscribed £137 3s. to pay the passages of twenty-nine families.

925. Where did they go to?—Most of them went to Australia.

926. Do you know where they originally came from and whether they came to this country as coal-miners?—Most of them came as coal-miners from Scotland, Yorkshire, Durham, and other places at Home.

927. Mostly from British collieries?—Yes.

928. *Mr. Moody.*] Some of them came back from Australia, did they not?—Yes; but not half of them.

929. *Mr. Brown.*] What became of the other families that were out of employment?—Well, the interruption as regards the employment only lasted until April—that is, when the Kimberley was pumped out. The Kimberley is a portion of the Coal-pit Heath workings, the deepest part. Most of the men then found employment.

930. Does that include those who were reduced from the Brunner in December and January?—I include some of those twenty-nine who were sent away. I suppose there must have been thirty-five men at Brunnerton continuously for four months without work.

931. Was there any division of work at that time?—No. I might explain that, when I said there were sixty-six men reduced from the Brunner Mine, some of that number found employment in the Wallsend. In March, 1889, that mine stopped completely.

932. *The Chairman.*] In the Brunner Mine there were about two hundred men engaged underground; in December, 1888, about sixty-six were discharged; in January, 1889, the month following, about the same number; then the mine stopped in March; and the last lot that left the Brunner were transferred to the Wallsend?—Yes.

933. *Mr. Moody.*] How long did the Brunner stand?—Until the 18th July.

934. *The Chairman.*] How many men were thrown out at Wallsend? Is this correct: At the Brunner Mine there were about two hundred men engaged underground, about one-third were discharged, and then followed another third in the month following; then in March the mine stopped and all these men were thrown out of employment; some of course went away, leaving the district altogether, twenty-nine of them being assisted away, while about thirty-five remained out of employment for about four months until July?—No; until April, because I gave as a date April, when some of the men found employment on the Kimberley works being pumped out, which had been previously under water. Shortly afterwards—that is, in May—all the men got employment. There were about thirty men thrown out of employment at Wallsend, and at Coal-pit Heath about the same number.

935. *Mr. Moody.*] What was the cause of that then?—Well, the miners believed that the cause was an attempt to force a reduction, because there had been all these thirty-five men out of employment. Many of these were the same men thrown out of work again both in May at Wallsend, and again at Coal-pit Heath; and by the time the manager consented to give 4s. per ton there were sixty men out of employment.

936. *The Chairman.*] You mean consented to resume 4s. per ton?—Yes; it might be assumed that of course these workmen were in a very bad position to resist a reduction at that time, seeing that so many of them had been out of employment for such a long period. And not only that, but the manager told any one that came about that he had plenty of employment at 3s. 6d. per ton.

937. Notwithstanding that, he agreed to the old terms?—Yes.

938. And he did not get a reduction?—No.

939. Were these sixty men ever taken on again? Were they all taken on at 4s. in addition to the men at the mine?—Most of them were re-engaged at the time of the lock-out. There were fifty men at the places sharing employment. This was, of course, owing to part of the mine being flooded.

940. *Mr. Moody.*] That is this last lock-out in July, 1890?—Yes.

941. *The Chairman.*] It is still flooded, is it not?—Yes; the water is still rising, I believe.

942. This brings us to the time of the shutting-up of the Wallsend Mine. That was during the time the mines were standing?—Yes. Of course if the dispute should end to-morrow there would still be 150 men out of employment.

943. You mean, after filling up all the places?—Yes.

944. How much of the workings are available?—The Kimberley workings are the only solid workings in the Coal-pit Heath at all.

945. How many men would that employ if the water were out?—It would employ sixty hewers at least.

946. Half of those out of employment if they started work now?—Yes. Of course a good many of them have gone away.

947. Have they taken any means to get that water out?—I do not know; but there is evidence to show that from time to time it is pumped out, and the miners taken on to the pillar-workings again; and then it stands, with all the water coming through the surface. The best block of coal is in the Kimberley. It is a solid block.

948. Is the pump kept going continuously?—It is kept going, but the pumping-gear cannot be sufficient.

949. Is the water rising now?—It is just above the very top working-level.

950. And while pumping operations are carried on?—Yes; always carried on. There are very few places open for working except the pillars.

951. How came the Wallsend to be closed?—The general reason given for the closing of the Wallsend is that the company want to prove faults.

952. *Mr. Moody.*] Was anything said about the quality of the coal and its not being workable?—Yes, there was something said about the quality of the coal. The coal on the north side of the river is considered a better class of coal, and the level has been standing at a fault for the last two years. In fact there have been no new works opened on that side since the amalgamation.

953. Is the mine worked out?—The mine is not worked out, because it is standing on pillars. There are no pillars taken out of the Wallsend yet, or the mine would soon be ruined. It cannot of course work unless there is new ground opened up. They must prove faults.

954. *The Chairman.*] You say 150 men would be idle to-morrow if the work were resumed. How many men would there be work for if the dispute were ended to-morrow, taking the mine in its present state?—I should not like to say how many the manager would put to work, but to keep men in a good condition there could, in my opinion, be no more than thirteen places available—that is, twenty-six men with double shifts.

955. *Mr. Moody.*] What about the Coal-pit Heath?—These are outcrop workings. The pillars, according to any practical mode of working a mine, near the edges at any rate, should not be worked until the dip is worked out, and the dip is standing in solid coal yet under water.

956. That is to say, these Kimberley workings should be worked out before the upper part of the field—the outer edge—should be worked at all?—Yes.

957. *The Chairman.*] Is there any reason except the water difficulty to prevent the Coal-pit Heath being worked?—I could not say.

958. If the Kimberley were pumped how many more men would it take?—There would be room for sixty coal-hewers. I do not know the number of faces.

959. How long would it take to pump the Kimberley?—I have no idea. The Brunner would take fifty-two men.

960. Is that the whole of the available space for mining at the present time?—I mean, of course, that it is possible to put men into the top level at the Coal-pit Heath, and they will perhaps be put there when the dispute ends, but it is a question whether the mine is not injured thereby, by opening for more surface-water.

961. *Mr. Brown.*] Then, these fifty-two men only would be able to work?—Yes; according to the ordinary mode of working.

962. And what proportion of surface-men would there be to these?—As many again. In fact, as far as the condition of the mine is concerned, it seems absolutely necessary that, if the mines are to continue employing the same number of men as hitherto, fault-proving must be pushed on and new works opened up. The company has done nothing for the last two years in this direction. There is really no coal available but the pillars, except what is shut up by faults.

963. *The Chairman.*] Is there not a mass of coal in the Brunner to the dip inside the first fault?—Yes; between the two faults.

964. Would that be available if they had pumping there?—If they commenced to work that it would injure the level. It would appear necessary that the dip drive should be driven lower down at first, and then an airway put in.

965. You mean the only coal immediately available is the pillar-workings in the Brunner and the Coal-pit Heath?—It is available if they wish to take it out.

966. Does that apply to working the pillars out to the rise in the Brunner? Does not that injure the chance of working the coal to the dip in the Brunner?—No; because they have not reached level yet. What I mean in regard to the dip is, if they commenced to work in regard to faults they would not be able to prove the second fault.

967. *Mr. Brown.*] The water comes in more freely now than it used to do?—There is greater difficulty now than ever there was.

968. Do you know if any arrangements are being made for fresh pipes?—Yes, I believe so, but I cannot give any particular information or opinion about it. I have heard so, and I think it only right that the attention of the Government should, at any rate, be drawn to the mode of working. There should be more stringent inspections than there have been. In fact, from the

condition of the mines it is not at all surprising that they do not pay, and, as for reductions, they want as many reductions as they can get. When the available coal is worked out, and no new works opened out for such a long period, it will become more expensive to open up new works. There will be a necessity to undergo great expense to open out and prove the faults. Nothing of any consequence has been done during the last two years.

969. It will have to be done all at once then, I suppose?—Yes. If it had been done I presume the cost would be charged against the working in the past.

970. *The Chairman.*] Have you any suggestions to make about the want of storage for the coal? You said there was sometimes short-shipping?—In regard to these matters, I think that the owners themselves can best judge as to whether the storage of coal would injure its quality for sale. Undoubtedly, if the value of the coal were not deteriorated the storage would be a great advantage: it would keep the men going more regularly. I cannot say, however, whether it would be an advantage to the company.

971. Is there anything else you have made a note of?—I have noted down one thing—where we objected to so many men being employed. I will read the letter dated the 4th November: "I have been instructed to request you not to employ any more men while the depression of trade continues until there is a reasonable amount of employment for the men now engaged."

972. Was there any answer to that letter?—No. The letter continues: "The Association will not admit any more members."

973. Do you remember any reply to that?—No; but, in reply to a similar communication, the following reply was received:—

SIR,—I am agreeable that, in the case of new hands starting, they should be informed that, in the opinion of other men, old employés being out of places in any of the mines, the new hands should be removed to make room for those having a prior claim.—JAMES BISHOP.

974. Is there anything else you can think of?—No.

TUESDAY, 21ST OCTOBER, 1890.

Mr. ALFRED BENJAMIN LINDOP sworn and examined.

975. *The Chairman.*] What do you describe yourself as, Mr. Lindop?—I am a mining engineer, and am at present manager of the Blackball Coal Company.

976. Are you certificated in New Zealand?—Yes.

977. You hold also an English certificate?—Yes.

978. You are manager of the Springfield Coal-mine?—Yes.

979. How long have you been in New Zealand?—Seven years.

980. What experience have you had in New Zealand?—I have reported upon a good many coal-mines in New Zealand, both for the Geological Department and also privately.

981. How long have you been connected with the West Coast coal-mines?—Off and on for the last six years.

982. What mines are you particularly acquainted with on the West Coast?—Most particularly with our own Blackball Mine, which is not developed yet. The last one upon which I reported was the Koranui—that is, to the north of Westport.

983. Can you describe the Blackball Mine?—The lease is 1,957 acres, which is well selected, being about 170½ chains long by 114½ chains wide, and is situated on the north side of the Grey River, about sixteen miles from Greymouth, and nine from Brunnerton. The coal dips at 1 in 6 to the S.E.

984. How many outcrops?—Seven in a distance of 80 chains. The average thickness of the coal-seams is 5ft. and 12ft. respectively, or a total thickness of 17ft.

985. There is a stone band, is there not?—Yes, there is 1ft. of band. It seems to get thicker at the north-east end of the lease, being there 6ft. In some places it disappears.

986. Whereabouts is that?—At the top end of the lease.

987. And the coal is all together?—Yes.

988. It is 17ft. thick?—Yes.

989. Without the band at all?—Yes.

990. Then the band is not replaced by coal?—Not at all. The 17ft. coal keeps standing, and the band wedges it apart.

991. What proof have you that it goes to the dip?—We traced it as a cross-section.

992. Did you put in pits?—It has been traced to the dip.

993. For how far?—For 20 chains, and a tunnel has been put in.

994. What is the height of the outcrop?—The altitude is 603ft. The tunnel that is being put in is 920ft., and we expect to cut the coal daily.

995. Is there any indication of the country being faulted?—There are no signs of fault within the strike.

996. Have you made any estimate of the quantity of coal?—Yes; I estimated the coal-bearing part will be 1,700 acres; that is, within the lease.

997. Will you be able to work it all out, or will you have to pillar-and-stall it?—I take 16ft. thick for the coal on an average, and I have reckoned it at 1,000 tons per foot; that is, 16,000ft. per acre; that is a total of about 27,000,000 tons. Then I estimated at that time that we could get 11,000,000 tons of coal from the present levels; that was, in the absence of any survey levels. The new tunnel will win about 7,000,000 tons of level free coal.

998. That is what you intend it to give?—Yes; we will be able to command that.

999. What is the quality of the coal?—It is a hard bituminous caking coal.

1000. Does it make a good coke?—Yes; it is very clean and makes good coke; in fact, we took the first prize at the Dunedin Exhibition with it.

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. 2¾d. 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.

1036. Have the railway company mentioned any figure?—Well, they have stated that the distance to Christchurch will not preclude its being economically carried to a market. It will command the Christchurch market you might say.

1037. *Mr. Moody.*] I suppose there are no places in between, along the railway-line to Christchurch, where you might find a market?—No; they would not sell it between. Springfield would be the first place they would come to of any importance.

1038. *Mr. Brown.*] I was going to ask about the staiths. If the staiths were erected here in Greymouth, I presume, that being public property, all classes of coal would be tumbled in together?—That would be the difficulty, you see.

1039. At any rate, it would not be the duty of the railway company to put up separate staiths here for the separate mines of the district or the separate coal companies?—No.

1040. In erecting staiths up at your mines, do you anticipate any block of railway carriage? Have you considered the point?—We have considered the point, but we have been promised that trucks will be provided for us by the Midland Railway Company if not by the Government.

1041. *Mr. Moody.*] I suppose special trains might be required? Have you any knowledge of interruptions in the past from trucks getting blocked?—No; not any special knowledge; only from general observation.

1042. Supposing there was a vessel in loading coal from the Blackball and the Brunner, would there not be a competition between these two companies for trucks?—I suppose it would be the duty of the Government to provide sufficient trucks for that purpose, to prevent a block.

1043. Have you any knowledge of any jamb taking place from that cause?—No.

1044. *Mr. Brown.*] Have you accommodation for the men up at the Blackball?—No; they provide their own accommodation.

1045. You have mentioned 10s. as the price paid by the contractor to the men now at work: is there any difference between the rate of wages in the bush and the rate of wages in town?—No; I think the rate of 10s. is pretty general on the Coast. All our surface-men get 10s.

1046. There is not, so far as you know, in the district, any definition between town working and bush working when wages are concerned?—Not that I am aware of.

1047. *Mr. Moody.*] What are the daily wages at Springfield?—Eight shillings down in the pit and 8s. on the surface.

1048. Are the miners there paid by contract?—They get 4s. per ton, and at that they can make something like £1 a day; these are the practical miners; there are other miners as well, but this is considered a special time now.

1049. *The Chairman.*] I suppose you are aware that there are other coalfields in this district which will probably be opened up shortly?—Yes.

1050. This will, of course, increase the competition. Is there any necessity for a corresponding increase in the quantity of railway-plant?—Yes, there is.

1051. Have you ever made an examination of the Brunner Mine?—No. I have only just gone in privately with Mr. Bishop.

1052. You have no idea of the quantity of the coal available there?—No.

1053. What is the dead-rent in connection with the Blackball lease?—For the first two years £48, the next three years £192, and £480 for the remainder.

1054. What is the extent of the lease?—Twenty-one years from January, 1886.

1055. Does the royalty increase in proportion to the dead-rent?—I think I ought to tell you that the output clauses are suspended to 1891.

1056. Does the dead-rent merge in the royalty?—Yes.

1057. What is the royalty?—Sixpence per ton.

1058. There is no increase in the royalty?—No.

1059. Have you seen any lease in which there has been an increase of royalty?—No.

1060. You have had a good deal of experience in coal leases?—Yes; I may say that there was always one clause which appeared in coal leases at Home and which I never see here. It was the five-years-to-recoup clause.

1061. Explain that, please?—There was a minimum royalty of 6d. per ton. When I say minimum royalty, that was the amount it came to at £200. It should not be less than 6d. per ton and the dead-rent should never be less than £200. We will, for instance, take £480 as the minimum royalty under the recouping clause for a period of five years, and supposing in the second year you can put out up to £300, you still have to pay the £480 in the five years.

1062. That is, you spread the royalty payment over five years, if you had one bad year?—You can either look backwards or forwards in that five years.

1063. *Mr. Moody.*] That is what we call making up shorts at Home, in regard to the certain rents?—Yes.

1064. You have not got such a clause in your lease?—No; I have never seen one in New Zealand. I suggested that to the Midland Railway Company when we wanted the extension, but they granted it to us without going into that. It would insure to the Government that the mine should be developed.

1065. It helps the miners in cases of strikes or anything of that sort?—Yes. Our landlords are the Midland Railway Company.

1066. Was it waste land?—No; the lease was from the Nelson and Westland Land Board, but the property is now included in the Midland Railway Reserve.

1067. *Mr. Brown.*] Is it the Midland Railway Company who have suspended the dead-rent?—Yes.

1068. Does the Midland Railway Company propose to form a connection between the present line and the mine?—That is not settled yet; there is some question of finance between the two, and they will have to consider it. The plans are not quite finished yet.

1069. Have you any idea how these dead-rents are arranged; upon what basis?—No; I have not the slightest idea.

1070. Do you know anything of the terms in connection with other mines—that they differ as regards output?—No; but I notice by the evidence given before the Waste Lands Committee that they did differ in the royalties.

1071. You cannot tell why?—No; I cannot.

1072. Each lease is a matter of negotiation?—Yes. It depends upon the position and facilities.

1073. Have there been any arrangements made for shipping when your mine starts?—That would be more within the knowledge of the secretary. I believe some arrangements have been made with Melbourne.

1074. Have you any knowledge of the co-operative system of coal-mining, where there is a partial sharing of the profits by the miners?—No. I have known it in the Old Country, but I believe it has never been a success.

1075. Can you say why?—No, I cannot.

1076. Have you any individual knowledge of the operation of strikes? Are there any strikes in Springfield?—I have had no experience of strikes in the colony. I have at Home.

1077. Is there anything you could state to us bearing on the present strike?—I think I could, and I believe what I am telling you is correct. I think the present trouble is due to having too many men engaged in the mines. What I mean by that is that, when the men are working only three days per week, the men become dissatisfied; they expect to make as much in those three days as if they had worked six days. I think the remedy would be for the mine to be worked regularly by providing staiths. There are a good number of these men in the neighbourhood who are good practical miners, and the surplus men about the place help to pull down their wages.

1078. Is it not that the inferior men are rated up to the standard of the best men?—That is what I intended to convey. They do not give such a chance to the good men. If the men make more than 15s. a day they have to pay it back again to the union. There is, therefore, no inducement to these practical men to work properly. They are to make all alike when they enter the union.

1079. When you say if they get more than 15s. they hand it over to the union, do you know what the union does with the excess?—I do not know, but it is not often got, I can assure you, under the circumstances. I think the only cure for this short-time working by the men would be storage at the mines, and only sufficient hands to be kept on to give them regular employment. They keep so many now, so as to enable them to rush a boat out as quickly as possible.

1080. Suppose you were to put out 500 tons a day, and were blocked for over a week for want of shipping?—Then, of course, we would be at a standstill, though I do not think there are many days in the week on which the bar is blocked. I have known them at the Wallsend, when I have been over there, working only two or three days a fortnight.

1081. Have you been down the Wallsend Mine? Can you give us any idea of the nature of the coal?—It seemed to be of good quality.

1082. Is it mixed with stone?—There was stone in some of it. Yes.

1083. Was that general, or was it confined to near the fault?—I should think it was pretty general, because there seemed to be a good stack of stone around the mine, which had evidently been thrown out.

1084. Did you see similar stone in the Coal-pit Heath?—I did not look for it. I was not reporting on the place.

1085. Would you expect that if the Wallsend Mine is in the same seam as the Coal-pit Heath there would be a great difference?—Not in a short horizontal distance like that. I do not think it would make much difference; but it seems very difficult to account for these things. At any rate, I should expect it.

1086. Do you know the Tyneside coal?—I have seen it, and I do not think there is much difference.

1087. Is there any stone in it?—I do not think there is much stone in it.

1088. What, in your opinion, should be the proportionate payment for pillar-working as compared with the whole coal, say, in the Brunner Mine? How much can a man do at pillar-work as against solid-coal work?—I suppose he would do quite double the quantity on pillar-coal.

1089. So that, if he were paid in both cases upon the whole coal put out, he would make twice the rate of wages at the pillar-work?—He would, at the present scale of 2s. 10d. per ton all round. But, then, on the other hand, the coal in the pillars is crushed very much.

1090. I mean in screened coal: what allowance would have to be made?—I could hardly tell that. In pillar-work I should prefer to do all on the same system, and make some allowance for slack.

1091. Have you any knowledge of the present method of working followed in the Brunner?—No.

1092. Have you worked pillars by day-labour?—No. We paid by contract, but then we paid for slack at the rate of 1s. 6d. per ton and 4s. for whole coal—that would come to about 3s. 4½d. for gross.

1093. And the men, at that rate, make good wages?—Yes. Some of them make £1 a day; on the other hand, there are some of them making 10s. a day on exactly the same conditions, and they are perfectly satisfied; that is due to the quality of the men.

1094. What is the thickness of the seam they are working?—Four feet.

1095. Is the coal hard?—Yes. We are not getting out of the solid now, it is the pillars we are working.

Mr. Richard Armstrong sworn and examined.

1096. *The Chairman.*] What are you, Mr. Armstrong?—A coal-miner.

1097. For how long?—I have been fourteen years in Brunnerton.

1098. Were you a coal-miner before that?—No.

1099. Never anywhere else?—Only at Brunnerton.

1100. What mines have you worked in?—I have worked in the Brunner, the Coal-pit Heath, and the Wallsend.

1101. Which one have you been working in last?—The Coal-pit Heath.

1102. What class of work were you engaged in?—I have been hewing, but I have been at all sorts of jobs in the several mines at Brunner, especially timber-drawing and repairing.

1103. You have had good opportunities of seeing the mine, I suppose? Are you acquainted with all the circumstances in connection with the various stoppages and short times in the mine?—Yes.

1104. Could you say, in a few words, what the causes of interruption have been?—There are several causes of interruption—for instance, the flooding of the Grey River, the state of the bar, the faults to be met with, the sudden accumulation of water in the mine. All these have a tendency to stoppage.

1105. Anything else?—Of course the present difficulty is one cause.

1106. That is, the strike?—Yes; that is an interruption.

1107. What I wanted more particularly to ask you about is the stoppage in the mine. Have these interruptions you have mentioned caused an actual stoppage on any occasion, or has it been a matter of short time for the men?—It has been a matter of short time chiefly.

1108. Can you give us any case of a stoppage in the Brunner Mine?—In former times there used to be stoppages on account of insufficient storage-accommodation for coal, and even at the present time when the bar is bad and the boats cannot get in there is a want of accommodation for storage. If staiths were erected in Greymouth here it would have a tendency to create a great demand for slack.

1109. Then, you think there would be a breakage of the coal from the staiths?—Yes. As regards faults, when they are met with there is not sufficient pit-room.

1110. Will you explain what you mean by an insufficiency of pit-room?—When there is not sufficient pit-room they have to take the pillars out, which ought not to be done until such time as they have either got to the boundary or proved the fault.

1111. By pit-room you mean that there is not sufficient solid coal won?—That is actually the sense of it.

1112. Then they have to take out the pillars while they are going on proving the fault, or else they have to diminish the work for the hands?—Yes.

1113. *Mr. Moody.*] When you come to a fault the cutting of the whole coal is all done, and the men are put on the pillars?—Yes; that is exactly it.

1114. *The Chairman.*] Then the pillars, in your opinion, should not be taken out? They should not be taken out until such times as they have gone to the boundary or proved the fault.

1115. Do they diminish the number of men so as to cause a stoppage in any case?—Yes.

1116. What was the cause of the stoppage in the Brunner Mine?—Well, they were between the two faults, and when they came to the second fault all the whole coal was taken out, and they had to resort to the pillars.

1117. *Mr. Moody.*] That has reduced the output, of course?—Yes.

1118. *The Chairman.*] Was that the reason of the stoppage of the mine in December last?—I could not be certain as to dates, but I know it materially lessens the output.

1119. Have you been continuously employed yourself?—Yes, more or less. I believe I have worked about as much as any of them up there.

1120. In your experience you have known men to be out of employment up at Brunnerton?—Yes; a great number.

1121. Could you give us an idea, when the mine is in full working, and the output is about an average, how many men would be unemployed there?—I really could not say exactly; but there would be a good few. We were working two shifts, four in a place, and it came to be divided by seven.

1122. That was three in excess?—Yes.

1123. *Mr. Brown.*] What period was this?—During the last six months.

1124. That is as much as to say that the amount earned by the seven men was just exactly what the four should have had?—Yes.

1125. *The Chairman.*] What remedy would you suggest for that? On talking the matter over with your mates, what has been considered the remedy?—Well, more pit-room would give a remedy, and winning more coal by proving the faults; that, in my opinion, would mean a further expenditure by the company of £14,000 in proving the Brunner faults. They have already spent about £15,000.

1126. And it will require £14,000 now in your opinion?—Yes.

1127. How long have they been spending that £15,000? What period has that expenditure been spread over?—Perhaps about nine or ten years.

1128. Now, you say it wants £14,000 more expenditure for proving faults: which fault have you in your mind? I suppose you have some clear idea of the nature of the work you propose?—I mean in trying to prove the inner fault, and going to the dip.

1129. Have you been at the fault?—Yes; it is like all other faults, being a face of stone.

1130. Is there a leader of coal in it?—The outside fault is a dip fault.

1131. What is the inside fault?—I have not examined it thoroughly, and I have not taken particular notice of it.

1132. Which do you call the outer fault?—The Brunner fault.
1133. And the other fault, is there no leader in it?—The last time I examined the mine I was, of course, unable to go right in. You cannot get in there now.
1134. What is the size of the fault?—I forget that; it is what is termed in the reports "the Brunner fault." It is the first fault of all, and is a dip fault.
1135. It runs out to nothing to the rise?—Yes.
1136. And that is what you would spend £14,000 on?—Yes.
1137. Has the whole coal been worked out between these faults?—Yes.
1138. Of course you cannot say anything about the coal to the dip?—No.
1139. What state are the old Brunner workings in?—I examined them about twelve months ago—that is, the place marked old working on the plan—they are in a pretty fair state.
1140. Have any of the pillars been taken out there?—Yes; some portion of them.
1141. In what part?—It is in what they call the fireclay workings.
1142. Had the roof settled?—I did not notice any falls there as I was going through.
1143. Even when the pillars were taken out?—No; I did not notice any falls there; we travelled through a portion of the old workings.
1144. To what extent were the pillars taken out?—Not to any great extent.
1145. That is, in the old workings?—Yes.
1146. And in the 16ft. seam along the fault?—The roof has come down there. I have good reason to know it, as I have had to clear a time or two from it.
1147. Did it make much noise?—Oh yes.
1148. Do you think the roof came down and parted from the fault?—I should think so, as the coal was worked out clean to the fault.
1149. Have you ever been over the surface?—Yes; shooting, and having a look round with my brother, who had charge of some mine up there.
1150. Is he at Brunnerton now?—Yes.
1151. Have you ever observed any signs of a fissure on the top?—Yes; there is a lower ledge.
1152. Is it recent?—Yes, I think so; it is high up on the west side this ledge has parted.
1153. Which way has it dropped?—It has come towards the river.
1154. Do you think the surface-water gets in there now the pillars are out?—Yes.
1155. How had the roof come down?—It has come down particularly where the timber was taken away. There has been a great settlement there.
1156. How? Did it crack?—Sometimes it breaks away about 9ft. The last time I took the timber away from there it came about 50 yards, I should reckon.
1157. Does the settlement take place slowly?—Sometimes. It depends very much upon the strength of the rock.
1158. I suppose the timber is put in upright?—Yes.
1159. You have taken out timber?—Yes. I have done a good deal of that work.
1160. Have you ever noticed that any of the timber has shifted?—Yes.
1161. Which way does it cant?—Uphill, with the swell of the floor; that cants them.
1162. Have you ever seen any timbers crushed?—Yes.
1163. How do they crush?—They bend as if the strain was uphill.
1164. Do you think there is any motion of the roof—any shearing motion from each joint?—I should think not.
1165. Then it is a fair settlement all over?—Yes.
1166. Do you think, if a proper rib of coal is left, it will be safe to work to the dip?—Perfectly safe.
1167. How about the extra water to pump? Do you think there will be enough water left to pump?—I should not think there would be if there is a proper rib of coal between.
1168. Now we will take the Coal-pit Heath. Have you worked in the lower part, towards the water-level; in the Brunner, that in the first dip?—Yes. I was in the first rise; I was in the first of that, and, in fact, in the last of it.
1169. Did the water gather in there?—Yes.
1170. Whereabouts? I mean, did it ever gather so as to menace the Coal-pit Heath?—That I could not say.
1171. Do you remember any water standing there?—Yes, I do.
1172. Was that after the amalgamation?—Yes; it was about the first stoppage of the Brunner—of about fourteen weeks, I should think.
1173. What was that due to?—There was an incline driven to the Coal-pit Heath to connect with the Brunner.
1174. How did they stop at the Brunner?—A break in the rope took place at that time. It was nothing to do with the water; it was just an accident.
1175. *Mr. Moody.*] In your opinion, as a practical miner, would it not be better to get down to the bottom of the dip before they started to take the pillars out?—Yes, I should think so. That is usual. I have not seen it worked, but I have seen sketches.
1176. Do you consider that that is much better than starting to take the pillars out before they get to the bottom?—They ought to go to the dip-workings, and then work back.
1177. I suppose the reason they cannot do that in the Coal-pit Heath is that they have too much water?—Yes.
1178. What is the condition of the pillars?—We get from 70 to 75 per cent. of pillars to face coal at the present time. There is a large amount of dip coal to be worked out, and it necessarily follows there must be a great outlay of capital for haulage and pumping-plant.
1179. *Mr. Brown.*] Are the figures you have given us your own estimate? Is this amount for working-plant in addition to the sum you have already mentioned—namely, £14,000—which you

think should be expended in proving faults?—You must understand that in working to the dip you will require special plant; you would require pipes to be laid to the inside fault.

1180. *The Chairman.*] You have worked in solid coal?—Yes.

1181. And pillar-workings?—Yes.

1182. How many tons or skips did you put out for your own share in a day of eight hours?—I should think about 3 tons or 3½ tons in the solid coal; sometimes not that.

1183. *Mr. Moody.*] What was the price per ton?—Four shillings.

1184. *The Chairman.*] Suppose you were paid on the whole coal, how many skips of coal would there be (unscreened)?—Perhaps about nine or ten skips.

1185. That is, about 4½ to 5 tons of the whole coal unscreened?—Yes.

1186. Have you worked at this coal under the new arrangement—that is, payment on the gross weight?—Yes.

1187. And then what did you make per day? How much did your wages reach under that arrangement for nine or ten skips, as compared with the previous arrangement?—They were just about an equivalent. I consider the payment of 4s. on screened coal would be an equivalent.

1188. To how much of the whole coal?—I consider it would be equal to 2s. 8½d. on the gross coal.

1189. Are the Brunner pillars easy to work?—Yes; they are very crushed, and not such a height as in the Coal-pit Heath.

1190. Is it a greater advantage to have them high or low?—They should be about 7ft.

1191. Do you take all the coal out at once?—We take it out in lifts.

1192. You have, I suppose, to set timber?—Yes. That is where the miners generally grumble, having more timber to set.

1193. The timber-setting is included in the tonnage-price?—Yes.

1194. Supposing the whole coal from the Coal-pit Heath pillars is worth 2s. 8d. per ton, what do you think the Brunner pillars would be worth?—About 4d. or 5d. per ton less. That is to say, they are easier to work.

1195. Notwithstanding the timber-working and the working in lifts?—You understand, it is not easier to work; but the timber is longer, and it is not so easy to set 16ft. props as 7ft. You could put two 7ft. props up in the same time that one 16ft. would take. I should like to call attention to Rule No. 37 of the "Special Rules," under the "Regulation of Coal-mines Act, 1886," for the Grey Valley Coal Company. Rule No. 37 says: "Every collier shall, under direction of the underviewer or his deputy, set a sufficient quantity of props and bars for safely supporting the roof and sides in his working-place. The timber shall be properly set, and be removed and renewed as often as is necessary." I do not think that rule is sufficiently definite as to the distance.

1196. I think 12ft. is a fair amount?—If a man keeps the place properly timbered-up that is all that is expected of him.

1197. You say you think 2s. 4d. or 2s. 5d. should be the price for the Brunner pillars?—Yes.

1198. *Mr. Moody.*] You do not lay the skip-road down?—No; the roads are laid down by the company for that purpose.

1199. Where are the skips placed for the use of the miners?—You have got to run them to the incline.

1200. What distance is that from the face generally?—It depends upon the distance between the two inclines. The stipulated distance is 50 yards, but sometimes it is varied to 60 or 65. We have to take the full skip from the bord to the top of the incline jig and send it down to the bottom, and this brings up the empty.

1201. Where is the timber placed?—It is brought to the sidings, and the truckers have to bring it up the incline from the bottom.

1202. Do you take possession of it from the bottom of the incline?—Yes; or, if working on the level, from the first "flat sheet."

1203. Then the timber for the use of the miners is brought to the bottom of the workings, and you have to truck it up to your face?—To the bottom of the incline it is brought, and we have to jig it up to the top and take it to the working-places.

1204. *Mr. Brown.*] What distance would that be?—About 50 yards or 70 yards; it just depends upon the length of the incline. If the incline is what we call a double incline you have to take it a double distance.

1205. *The Chairman.*] Have you any remarks to make as to how far the engine, plant, and the keeping the mines in good order is sufficient?—I may say in the Coal-pit Heath the main road is kept in good order, and also the air-ways. It is necessary they should be always looked to.

1206. Is the ventilation good?—Yes; it is fairly good.

1207. Have you any trouble with the chains or hauling-gear? Have you any complaints to make about that?—No.

1208. Is it a chain or a rope?—A chain and staple. Sometimes a winch if it is too far to run.

1209. Is there much waste of coal at the mine?—In pillar-work there is always a lot of waste.

1210. What is done with the waste coal?—I see they have been firing with it lately for the engine. There is nothing else to take, and it can be utilised for coke.

1211. Is there much coal put into the river?—I have never noticed a great deal going into the river.

1212. Is the miners' firing coal small coal?—Yes; but sometimes it is pretty good, and at other times you can scarcely burn it.

1213. Have you anything else to remark?—I think it would be necessary for the Government to place a subsidy on the estimates of £3,000 or £4,000 for proving the coal leases by boring.

1214. Even after they are leased?—Yes; I think it would be to their own advantage.

1215. Would not that be a bad precedent to start?—They could use discretion in it. I think

also that the existing coal leases should be compelled to start work within twelve months, or if they fail to do so they ought to be cancelled by the Governor. Some of the leases here have been locked up now for the last fifteen years, and have not been worked.

1216. *Mr. Brown.*] Can you give the names?—Well, some in Coal Creek have been locked up that time.

1217. Who are the lessees? Can you name any of them?—I think Mr. Hamilton, of the Nine-mile, and Mr. Rose.

1218. Coal Creek and Nine-mile?—Yes.

1219. Would there be any advantage in opening up any more mines in the district?—Of course there would be more revenue to the Government, employment of labour, and a general development of the place. There would be a market for the coal; it could go as straight as the crow flies over to China.

1220. Is there any other reason why it would be advantageous to have other coal-mines opened at the same time? Do you think competition is a good or a bad thing?—If we had some competition now we would not have this bother. Monopoly has simply ruined this place; at any rate, to a certain extent.

1221. Tell us what is in your mind about it?—Well, when there is only one company they can charge any price they like. I think it should be free from any individual or any individual shipping company. It should be made compulsory to supply any ship with coal that requires it.

1222. That is not the case at present?—No. But it should be a condition stipulated in the lease making it compulsory to supply coal to the first comer. In fact, now the Union Shipping Company can just charge what they like.

1223. How was it before the amalgamation?—Before that any person who came in here with a vessel could get a cargo of coal.

1224. That is, the amalgamation of 1888?—Yes.

1225. Did it work well?—Yes.

1226. You mean, better for the interests of the miners?—Yes.

1227. Was there a larger output at that time than now, and were there more men employed?—There were certainly not so many idle.

1228. Have you any estimate of the number of men these mines occupy now?—I suppose if the men were to start working to-morrow on a single shift there would be forty-six men employed. That would be ninety-two on a double shift from 6 a.m. to 2 p.m., and from 2 p.m. to 10 p.m. for coal-hewers. That would be ten places in the Coal-pit Heath and thirteen in the Brunner, taking the pillars in Coal-pit Heath.

1229. You have told us that they should not go on?—As a matter of fact, they should not go on, but that is not to say they could not be employed at it. I do not mean that it would be dangerous, but it would not be judicious at the present time, I should say.

1230. How many truckers, haulers, and surface-men would the mines occupy?—Perhaps about sixty or seventy; so that there would be about 160 people employed altogether.

1231. Have you any idea of the number there are at present?—I have no idea whatever.

1232. How many are employed in the coke- and fireclay-works?—I should say nine or ten, but I have not been in the habit of going near them.

1233. Are there more than 150 miners and surface-men at Brunnerton now waiting for work?—Twice as many—about 300 altogether, I should think.

1234. How many of these would be miners?—Perhaps about 170 or 180 hewers.

1235. Then the number is very much in excess of what the mines will employ?—Yes; that is on account of the Wallsend stopping.

1236. *The Chairman.*] I suppose the Wallsend is like the Coal-pit Heath—it could not be opened until more work has been done exploring?—I believe they could work a portion of it.

1337. You believe the Wallsend might be reopened; and would that absorb all the surplus labour?—Yes, I believe it would. There are sufficient places to absorb all the surplus population.

1238. Would there be room for eighty hewers in the Wallsend?—About forty hewers and about the same number of wages-men. In the dip there are very good places, I believe.

1239. How would they get their dip dry?—There is very little water in portion of it, and there is good coal to the dip. There is also some good coal to work out to the north-east part.

1240. *Mr. Brown.*] Has this state of short employment continued long here?—They have always kept more men about here than was necessary.

1241. Have the company induced them to come, and kept them here, or are they here voluntarily?—That I could not say. I have heard several different statements.

1242. I should like to know what they are?—Well, they have started men to work when they have had no right to start them. The men upon several occasions requested the company not to start fresh men, but they were started, and so adding to the number. They were men who had not been there before.

1243. What do you think was the reason of that?—I do not know, unless it was to keep the mines overcrowded.

1244. Then, new men have been employed?—Yes. I think the Government ought to make all railways for opening up new coalfields—that is, up to the works.

1245. Before they are worked?—Yes. I am alluding to the Coal Creek, the Blackball, and the north of the Brunner, and others on the other side of the present Brunner.

1246. You do not apply that to the whole colony?—Yes; I should apply it to the whole colony. Of course, there would have to be a lot of discretion used in that.

1247. *The Chairman.*] Do you know the Blackball seam?—I have been up there and all round it.

1248. Do you think well of it?—It is a nice piece of coal, if there was sufficient of it there

1249. Have you any reason to doubt it?—Not so far as looks go.

1250. This North Brunner Mine—what is it like?—I have been over the ground, and seen only the outcrop. It is up above Stoney Creek, by Langden's. I suppose it is a continuation to the rise of the Brunner Mine.

1251. Have you any notion of which way it dips?—It dips the opposite way.

1252. It is an anticline?—Yes.

1253. Have you been down about the Coal Creek outcrops or the Nine-mile?—Yes.

1254. And back in the hills?—Yes. I did not, however, get right back to the main ranges.

1255. Do you think there is a large extent of coal measures?—Yes; on the Seven-mile there are some grand seams, on Taylor's and Smith's leases.

1256. What do you think of Mr. Smith's seam?—I think Mr. Smith's would be a very fair lease. If there was a harbour there it would be a grand thing for them.

1257. Do you think all the coal is worked out yet?—In the event of any one applying for a lease, I think they should not be granted more than 1,000 acres. There is a limited quantity of coal, and I think 1,000 acres would be a sufficient area for each lease.

1258. Also in the case of amalgamation?—Amalgamations should not be allowed.

1259. Would you not make provision for amalgamation when it would afford greater facilities for working?—What I mean to say is that I do not believe in the amalgamation of ten leases or so.

1260. Is all the population of Brunnerton connected with the union?—Yes, I think you may say the majority are connected with the union, with the exception, of course, of a few business people.

1261. That is the Amalgamated Miners' and Labourers' Union?—Yes.

1262. *Mr. Moody.*] Were the labourers here compelled to go into the union—I mean the day-wages men, not the miners?—They were not compelled, but of course it was a matter of principle. They were asked to join. I think myself, in connection with the union, that there should be a board of conciliation appointed to settle mining disputes, consisting of, say, two employers and two miners.

1263. Is there anything to prevent that being done now? Such a thing would not be illegal, I suppose?—No, I do not think so. I think it would be by mutual agreement now; but it is not compulsory.

1264. Do you think it would be an advantage to make such a thing compulsory?—I think it would be best if it was mutually agreed on by both parties. Under the present circumstances, I think, perhaps, such a board would be able to facilitate matters.

1265. Have you thought out the constitution of such a thing?—I have not thought it out thoroughly. I am merely giving it as my opinion that it would have a tendency to avoid any unpleasantness generally. Both parties should be represented by two delegates, with an umpire to act as a referee.

1266. *Mr. Brown.*] How could it be made compulsory?—I would leave it to be mutual between the two parties.

1267. But the way is open for that now?—Yes; and has been all along. In fact, a question was submitted last year to arbitration.

1268. A board of conciliation was virtually appointed then with regard to prices?—Yes.

1269. There was an umpire also appointed who was not referred to?—Yes; that was Major Kadell.

1270. Then, the miners did not accept that decision?—The decision of that Board was rejected by a very small majority.

1271. Was not their majority in favour of the decision by one?—No; there was a majority against the decision, and of course the minority is always ruled by the majority.

1272. *The Chairman.*] What is the condition of the miners at present? Are they feeling the effects of this protracted struggle very much?—I rather think they are—at least, some of them are feeling it very badly. But they are still disposed to hang out to their own fare of it, on a matter of principle.

1273. *Mr. Brown.*] Can you tell us what that principle is—the principle of unionism?—I may say that, so far as Mr. Kennedy is concerned, as an employer of labour, I have no reason to complain of him, nor of the management.

1274. The principle in this case was the loading of the Union Steamship Company's boats?—Yes.

1275. It was not a question of wages?—No, not at all; that had been settled. Of course, we were waiting the decision of this Commission.

1276. So that the present strike is really on behalf of the Maritime Council?—Yes.

1277. And the principle is that the one party support the other?—Yes.

1278. Do they always do so?—I believe so; but this is the first strike I have ever been in.

1279. There was a strike here previously, at Brunnerton: did the seamen go out on that occasion?—I think they promised that if they were called upon they would block the coal; that was on the matter of principle.

1280. Every one, of course, that reads the newspapers sees and hears a great deal about principle; so I wanted to ascertain what the real principle was. So far as I understand, the principle is mutual support between those who are in the affiliated unions, and the non-admission of non-union labourers to the same employment?—Yes.

1281. Has not that a tendency to form a sort of guild of the miners and the seamen?—No, I should think not, inasmuch as no person may come into the mine without first having had to earn some experience. A man requires an apprenticeship before he can take charge of any place. Suppose you were to take any of these men to do any sort of work, they would be no good. In

the Brunner, at the pillars, it would be as if they were going to commit suicide. We should exclude them for their own sakes.

1282. Suppose, on the other hand, a skilled man came round and said, "I want work, and I want to get into your union"?—We would admit him, and assist him in every way.

1283. And under the present circumstances of there being a larger proportion of men than there is work for—how then would you arrange places?—Divide with them.

1284. Always?—Yes; we have been in the habit of dividing already.

1285. You said a little while ago that the management were requested not to employ any more men: do you mean, to the exclusion of some who were still members of the union, or to the exclusion of those only who were not members of the union?—If you understand, there may be some who come to the manager from other places and ask for work, when, as a matter of fact, there are already more than are really required. I think, in the interests of employers and employés, if there are not sufficient places for the number of men, it would be much better for the manager to say to an applicant for employment, "I really cannot start you; you must go somewhere else."

1286. *The Chairman.*] Does the weather stop the work at all—I mean those men who are under cover—the ordinary labourers?—We might find something for them to do inside the mine.

1287. Would the weather affect them more in the bush?—It is possible they might find more work in the bush than they would find up there.

1288. What is about the most a hewer can make in a week, in full swing the whole of his time, in the Brunner?—I think the highest average I got was £2 16s. per week, or £3 per week.

1289. What is the highest a good man could earn with plenty of work under contract?—I think he might average 11s. or 12s. per day.

1290. Is that counting broken time?—I think they might make 13s.

1291. I think the limit is 15s.?—What limit?

1292. Does not the union impose a limit to the daily wage of 15s.?—No, there is no rule to that effect. I would be very glad if I could get to that limit.

Mr. George Alfred Ancell sworn and examined.

1293. *The Chairman.*] What are you?—A coal-miner.

1294. How long have you been in the district?—In the Brunner Company between six and seven years.

1295. Have you had any previous experience in New Zealand?—I was at Shag Point before I came here. I was engine-driving there.

1296. Have you worked in all the three mines up in Brunner?—I have worked in the Coal-pit Heath and Brunner Mines, but only a short time in the Coal-pit Heath.

1297. Hewing?—Yes, all the time.

1298. You are acquainted with all the circumstances connected with the mine?—Yes.

1299. And are you acquainted with the general feeling among the miners?—Yes, I think I am fairly acquainted with the general opinion of the miners.

1300. Can you tell the Commissioners any points of complaint they may have against the manner in which the mines are managed?—Well, I can scarcely call them complaints; but there is one thing I think they wish to be brought forward, and that is the tendency of the mine-manager since this Commission of Inquiry was commenced here not to inspect the mine more than once a week.

1301. Is that a general thing, or does it relate only to the present time?—The mine-manager does not inspect the inner workings of the mine possibly more than once a week.

1302. Does he not go into the mine more than once a week?—I could not say that, but what I have stated was the general opinion of the miners when the other Commission sat here before.

1303. By the "mine-manager" you mean the local manager?—Yes.

1304. And do you say that he does not inspect this mine more than once a week, or that he does not feel obliged to inspect it more than once a week?—I do not think he does it. I have not seen him more than about once a week during the whole of my experience. I think it is through a misunderstanding of the reading of the Act, and although the Government Inspectors rather sided with the view that the manager was only compelled to go in once a week, I consider, myself, it is contrary to the reading of the Act. I think you will find in clause 18 of "The Coal-mines Act, 1886," that the mines are supposed to be under the control and daily supervision of a certified manager; and what we contend is that the manager cannot supervise the working of a mine at the same time. The following is the clause: "Every coal-mine shall be under the control and daily supervision of a manager, and the owner or agent of every such mine shall nominate himself or some other person (not being a contractor for getting the mineral in such mine, or a person in the employ of such contractor) to be the manager of such mine." The clause there seems to point to days—it must be under the daily supervision. What we say is that unless the manager is around, and visits the inside workings of the mine once a day, he cannot be carrying out that Act.

1305. *Mr. Moody.*] Have they not overmen?—Yes, but they do not hold certificates.

1306. They inspect every part of the mine—all the working-faces?—Of course it would not be possible for the manager to go round all the working-faces in one day, but he might inspect the air-courses one day and the roads another day, and the faces the next day. I think if he would be inside the mine he would be carrying out the spirit of the Act.

1307. *The Chairman.*] Has any inconvenience arisen from this as yet? Do you know of any accident or miscarriage that you could trace to this want of supervision?—No; I cannot trace any accident to the want of it; but the mine-manager should see for himself what is required to be done, and give instructions that such work shall be done immediately, instead of having to wait for the reports of his overmen. Practically speaking, it is shifting the responsibility of the manager to the overman, and this we consider should not be done.

1308. They are not certificated, you say?—No; but there is a clause in the new amended Act providing that second-class certificates will be given to these deputies upon examination.

1309. Do you think this new Act will be an improvement?—It will go a long way, because the overmen will be put in possession of second-class certificates, and that will, of course, obviate the difficulty in this direction. That is section 5 of the amended Act. There would be nothing to hinder these second-class certificates being gained by the overmen.

1310. How many overmen are there?—There are at present a front and a back overman in the Brunner and in the Coal-pit Heath.

1311. And firemen?—The firemen are of course independent of them. There will be two firemen for each shift in each place—that is, four firemen.

1312. When will that Act come into force?—The Act is already in force; but no examination has yet been held for second-class certificates.

1313. Then the complaint you have tendered is one that is really remedied in that Act?—There is one thing in regard to it, and that is the length of time which intervenes between the visits of the Inspector of Mines.

1314. Is that defined or fixed by statute? Are there any definite times for inspection?—No; he might visit once in a week, or once in a twelvemonth. They have all the duties of an Inspector, but there is no definition of the time.

1315. You think that should be remedied?—We consider that the mine should be inspected at least once a month, especially where the pillars are being taken out. The changes which will occur in a month when taking pillars out are scarcely credible except to any one practically acquainted with the working of mines.

1316. Have you been working at the taking-out of pillars?—Yes; I have taken pillars out from the Brunner.

1317. In the high ground?—Yes.

1318. How high is the coal where you commenced to take it?—Eighteen feet at the fault end of the main level. That was the first pillar I took out.

1319. Has the roof settled?—No, it had not settled then, but it is all down now.

1320. How did it come down? do you remember?—In a body.

1321. Short?—No, not very short.

1322. Did it come away at the fault?—It broke away at the fault.

1323. That will be a settlement of 18ft. on the line of fault?—Yes; somewhere about that.

1324. Have you ever been on the top of the hill on the surface?—I make it a rule never to go about the works after my day's work is done.

1325. How long ago is it since you were working in that part of the mine?—About five years last May.

1326. Since then where were you working?—I was shifted about—first up to some solid workings there, when the Brunner Mine was drowned out.

1327. What do you mean by "drowned out"?—There was a leakage of water at the commencement that filled a certain portion of the mine; then I think there was a breakage in the roof, because the water rushed in very rapidly. It was left standing there, and was never pumped out. A good deal of it was let into the Coal-pit Heath Mine.

1328. That was after the amalgamation?—Yes. There was always an open space in the rock somewhere about this point. There was a clause introduced into the first Bill in Parliament known as the "percolating clause," and Mr. Martin Kennedy took a very hasty exit from here and went to Wellington, to get this percolating clause struck out. The object of the clause was to prevent any water percolating from one mine into another. In this case there was a barrier left, but it was opened by a break in the rock.

1329. Used this water standing in the Brunner workings to percolate into the Coal-pit Heath workings?—Yes. When these workings were drowned out I was sent into the fault workings.

1330. Can you remember how long it has taken to take out that piece between the two faults?—I commenced work there last May.

1331. Was that at the commencement?—Soon after the beginning of the working.

1332. Then, this piece has been taken out since then?—Yes; it has been taken out in the solid.

1333. And from this shaded portion on the plan all the coal has been extracted, even from the pillars?—Yes.

1334. Is this plan before the Commission correct?—Yes; the plan of the mines is generally correct.

1335. How has the roof behaved in that part of the mine?—Some of it is good, perhaps 2ft. 9in. and 2ft. false roof. It is lying on the top of the coals, and separated from the main roof by a parting. That is where the danger comes in. The difficulty to be contended with in working these pillars is the blocks of stone coming down.

1336. *Mr. Moody.*] Do they come down in large blocks?—Sometimes in blocks of two or three tons. In fact, I think there was a block of about four tons, which we at first thought was a small piece of coal. I was standing in a truck at the time, when a whole lot came down, cutting the prop and knocking me down.

1337. *The Chairman.*] What is the roof like above that?—It is as good as it can be above this 2ft. of false roof.

1338. If it breaks down in large blocks it is likely to go through to the surface?—Yes. The only thing to prevent that is the soundness of the bottom. The bottom may lift to the roof.

1339. Is the seam thick?—It is pretty thick, but it varies. You might have 8ft. of coal one day, and in a week's time you would not have more than 5ft. It is a rolling seam.

1340. What rolls—the top or the floor?—The top rolls; the bottom is fireclay.

1341. And comes away readily?—Yes.

1342. Now, when this coming-down takes place that you have told us of, does it come down pretty vertically?—Yes.

1343. Slowly?—It might not give you two minutes.

1344. Have you ever noticed if there is any lateral movement down to the dip as it comes down? Do the timbers ever show any upsetting?—The bottom of the timber moves down the hill—that is, the foot of the props takes a downward motion.

1345. Now, when the floor rises and the fireclay rises, where does it spew?—It generally breaks up from both sides of the coal.

1346. Does it come up equally on both sides?—Yes; it will rise completely to the roof very often. That is a great difficulty, and causes a crushing of the coal. They are not capable of filling until the props break away from the coal.

1347. *Mr. Moody.*] Until you take the pillars out it continues to come down; then it will relieve the crushing of the coal a good deal?—Yes. The great difficulty is that the bottom lifts so much that way that we cannot draw the timber very often. The timber has oftentimes not been drawn, as the bottom lifts until it holds the roof up. The pillars should have been taken out sooner immediately to the goaf, and while the roads were still in good repair. The consequence of the present style of working has been that all the inclines have had to be redriven and relaid, and the coal was unnecessarily crushed.

1348. How is the redriving of the inclines paid for—by day-wage?—No; it is paid at so much a yard. The bords have to be crossed again. It might cost from £10 to £20 to cross the bord. In some instances they have driven in the coal, and, splitting the pillars, have then redriven back through the bord.

1349. Splitting the pillars instead of taking them out?—Yes.

1350. *The Chairman.*] The question we were at was the inspection of mines and the visits of the Inspector?—Yes; that is one of the points the Inspector should see to more frequently than he does at present. We think the Inspector should examine the mine once a week. There is another thing that is causing a good deal of comment amongst the men, and that is the incapability or the inexperience of the present Inspector of the mines as to coal-mining. He is not a practical coal-miner. He may be a very good man, no doubt. Personally, I have every respect for the gentleman, and I believe the men have every respect for him; but, as to his knowledge of coal-mining, the man has never had any experience.

1351. Is he not certificated?—I cannot say whether he is or not. All we know is that the man is not an experienced coal-miner.

1352. Do the men expect that an Inspector of coal-mines should be certificated?—We do hold that he should have at least as much experience in working as a mine-manager, and I consider he should have superior qualifications. We object to the present gentleman on account of his non-experience. We hold that in mines as dangerous as the Coal-pit Heath and the Brunner a thoroughly practical man is required to go in and examine these mines. Taking into consideration the height of that seam, and the way in which it is broken about, I consider there should be a thoroughly practical man as a mine-inspector. I do not know whether any witness has mentioned it before to you that even at the present time, when the mine is not being worked, she is shifting to the surface.

1353. The whole of the workings are on the move?—Yes; because a man told me the other day that she made a bump that shifted the crockery on the shelves.

1354. Have you felt it at all?—Yes, I felt it before, near the working of the pillars.

1355. Since then has it got worse?—Yes.

1356. Is that in any particular part of the workings, or all over?—Where they are working the pillars at the present time, I consider, myself, that it will require great care and caution, because there are no pillars left in the mine to support the mine. I believe there is nothing else but pillar-workings going on.

1357. Is that in Coal-pit Heath?—Yes, in the Coal-pit Heath and the Brunner. It appears that the water has risen up to where they have taken the pillars out. A part of the coal will be lost, because, if the pillars break away, with the amount of water there is coming down, they will not be able to get the pumping-gear through to get it out.

1358. *Mr. Moody.*] Are you aware that when the mine is filled up with water in that way the water keeps the roof up, and when it is taken out the roof collapses?—Yes, I know, but I say there must be something to sustain the roof; but in this instance I refer to workings that are further back than where they are working now. I think, with regard to that, that this Commission should have power to send some one in to look at these pillars. The pillars have been broken to that extent that there is nothing left to support the roof. I am afraid there will be some accident similar to that at Newcastle lately. These pillars have been robbed by the present management, and under the previous management it was just getting the coal anywhere they could. You know what "robbing" a pillar means?

1359. You say, then, formerly the pillars were robbed?—Yes. You could not get down now to see these pillars for water. Of course the pillars under water are let off a little.

1360. Where the pillars have been taken out has the roof settled?—Yes; and where the pillars were left they were so small that there is not support to the roof.

1361. There are pillars which are not sufficient to bear the roof?—Yes.

1362. Do you think a portion of this water is surface-water?—Yes.

1363. Have you any idea of what portion of the whole is left—that is, what is get-at-able at present in the Coal-pit Heath Mine in pillars?—There is a lot of coal left that you could get at, but I could give you no information on that point unless I had the plan here.

1364. I want to know what available coal there is to get at?—The number they could employ

there is forty-four men, there being eleven faces. There was a discussion yesterday as to whether there were ten or eleven, and I am giving the company the benefit of the doubt. They cannot get at the solid now on account of the water.

1365. Have you ever been at the face of the fault?—No; not in the Coal-pit Heath, as the time they got there was the time I got my leg broken.

1366. How many surface-men and truckers would be employed with these forty-four men?—I could not give that exactly: I should say, four truckers to each shift. There would be other day-wage men, of course—such as deputies, haulers, and road-men—on each shift. They are about an equal number to the hewers.

1367. Suppose the mine started to-morrow, there would be eleven faces open, you say, employing forty-four men; that would also employ a considerable number of truckers and surface-men?—Yes.

1368. Do you know, from the coal available at the present time, what number of men could be employed at the Brunner Mine?—I believe they could employ twenty-six men each shift coal-hewing—that is, fifty-two miners in the two shifts; two men in a place at thirteen faces. That was what was going on when the stoppage took place.

1369. *The Chairman.*] Is there any other point which you wish to bring up?—Yes, there is another point which will have to take a prominent place: that is, with regard to the non-practical miners being taken into the mines at the present time.

1370. You assert that it would be dangerous in the state the mines are in at the present time?—In the Coal-pit Heath and the Brunner it would be detrimental both to the interests of the employers and the men to do so. They should put in skilled men to take these pillars out.

1371. Has it been done yet—I mean the employment of unskilled labour?—No, not at present. I may say that I consider the miners in the Grey Valley are some of the finest in the world—in fact, they are the pick. I brought this question of unskilled labour under the notice of Sir Harry Atkinson some months since, and requested him to insert a clause in the new Mines Act to provide that no man should be employed without having previously had two years' experience in a mine. There is a clause to that effect in the Old Country. Before a man is allowed to take charge of a face we consider he should have had first about two years' work in a mine; otherwise he does not know how to set timber, and he does not know whether the roof is safe or not.

1372. *Mr. Brown.*] You mean that every new-comer should first have to work with a practical man?—We mean that they should not be allowed to take in non-practical men—for instance, a seaman, who has never before been inside a mine—and that it would be dangerous both to the property and to the miners' lives.

1373. Do I understand you to recommend that the non-practical men should go and work under a man that is a practical miner?—That is not objected to, of course. When a trucker, for instance, wishes to go on to coal-hewing, we take that step now—we allow the trucker to be put with an experienced man. Experience should be gained either at trucking or by working with a practical man before a man is really allowed to take charge of a place. The Government of Great Britain has taken that matter up, as they found that accidents arising from this cause were so numerous.

1374. Since when has that law come into force in England?—I think it is about two years ago.

1375. That is, in fact, a species of apprenticeship for two years?—Yes.

1376. *The Chairman.*] Is there any other point?—The question I was going to bring under the notice of the Commissioners was as to the dangerous state of the Coal-pit Heath Mine, where they are weakening the pillars. I think that a competent expert should be sent to examine the Coal-pit Heath Mine, both in the interests of the Government and in the interests of the miners and mine. There is also the question of ventilation of the mine. I consider where they have solid workings there should be splits made in the air.

1377. Is not that done?—It has not been done to the extent it should have been done. In fact, if the Mines Act was carried out, the air would be properly managed. When a body of air is carried round perhaps twenty-seven or twenty-eight places, no man can say it is pure air.

1378. What length are the pillars driven?—Fifty yards. The air at present is sent past the men in blasts, and becomes impure. They carry the whole of the same air round all the faces, and it becomes contaminated. The whole column is driven round, and that supply is for ten, twenty, or thirty men, or whatever number there may be. These men should be supplied with a certain amount of fresh air, and that air should be carried over and not allowed to go into any other places. That has not been done sufficiently in the Brunner Mine. Now the men, instead of getting pure air, are getting powder and smoke.

1379. You use powder there?—Yes, in some places.

1380. *Mr. Moody.*] Are there not brattices used?—Yes; they had to use brattices.

1381. Are there brattices on the bord-ends at all?—There is only one put on the bottom of the incline.

1382. Have you employed any trappers at all here?—I have never seen trappers since I left the Old Country.

1383. You mean the boy to work the air-door?—Yes.

1384. *The Chairman.*] Have you seen much fire in any of the mines?—I have seen gas on several occasions in the Brunner Mine, but not more than you generally find.

1385. Have you been in at the second fault?—Yes, I have worked up to the second fault.

1386. Did the coal thin before you reached it?—There was not a great deal of difference in the coal when I worked up to the fault.

1387. Then you did work up to the fault?—Yes.

1388. You have no knowledge of what like this fault is?—No.

1389. Do you know who had charge of the facings of the new level to the second fault?—I

know one of the men named John Bayley, who was working the stone drift from the second fault, and the secretary, Mr. Andrew, who was here yesterday. They put the bore-hole down 110ft. or 115ft. I can give you the names of the men. These works have been contracting ever since the amalgamation. In the Coal-pit Heath they are winning the levels there connecting to the main fault.

1390. Is that in consequence of the amalgamation? Do you think that since the amalgamation the fault-proving has been carried on with less vigour than before?—Yes, I do.

1391. Have they done anything in that direction?—Very little that I am aware of.

1392. That is to say, the Grey Valley Company have done nothing?—I will not say "nothing," but very little. Of course, the Wallsend Mine being now fault-bound, we are off work there at the present time.

1393. You do not know that mine, do you?—I have been in it. I was there after the explosion.

1394. Does the seam look to you the same as ever?—It is a good seam of coal.

1395. Are there not places in it very stony?—There are some parts stony, but there are some parts of the Coal-pit Heath and the Brunner dip very stony. Of course I am not certain regarding the Wallsend, but my opinion is that the reason they have closed the Wallsend is that the principal part of the workings has been under the river-bed, and they would not dare to attempt to work the pillars. There certainly has been a falling-off in the trade since the amalgamation.

1396. Suppose the mines opened out to-morrow, how many men would be out of work?—I should think half the miners. There is only the Brunner Mine and the Coal-pit Heath Mine now. In July, 1889, there were employed at Wallsend seventy-nine men coal-hewing, so they are all thrown out.

1397. *Mr. Brown.*] Do they get work at the other mines?—Some get work, of course, as the work has been shared.

1398. *Mr. Moody.*] In your opinion, has the cost of the coal at the Brunner been more than it ought to be, on account of the great many more day-wage men being employed for the production of the present output?—I should consider the cost has increased.

1399. What are the duties of the deputies?—What we called deputies at Home were the road-men and the timber-men, and what we used to call overmen at Home are called deputies here.

1400. Do the miners get any special pay for setting the timber?—No; that is included in the tonnage price. There is another point with regard to tonnage price, and that is that they are supposed to drag the coals 50 yards and then down the incline another 16 yards.

1401. How did they get their timber-supply?—The timber is put at the flat sheet. The miners do not take possession of it at the bottom of the incline, but at the top.

1402. You have to jig it up. You have to take it round the flat sheet and take it into your face, and then you have to set it?—Yes. Practically speaking it is the trucker's duty, but the miners are expected to do it. I have done better in the Old Country owing to that saving of time.

1403. What wages did you make in the Old Country?—I have had as much as 15s. for eight tons.

1404. Is that screened coal?—No, unscreened coal.

1405. Even though your wages were less at Home, what were they?—The last pay I had in Great Britain was 7s. 2d. for six hours' work. We never worked more than six hours for some years.

1406. Where was that?—In County Durham.

1407. What was contract work?—It was at the rate of 1s. 6d. per ton.

1408. Then you have done better owing to the excess of work thrown on the hewers here that should properly be trucker's work. You have done better at 1s. 6d. per ton than at the present rise?—Yes.

1409. What was the thickness of the seam?—3ft. 8in. to 4ft. at the seam, County Durham. The floor makes a great deal of difference in getting coal.

1410. *The Chairman.*] As to the present difficulty between the miners and employers, can you give us any accurate information about that, and how the Government were asked to make some concession of royalty, or the Railway Commissioners of haulage, or otherwise, so to reduce the cost of coal at the shipping-place, so as to increase the miners' earnings?—As regards the miners' earnings I had better begin and go up to the case. After the amalgamation took place the Newcastle strike began, and a larger number of men were employed. Then, since the Newcastle strike collapsed, the Brunner Mine in December closed one district called the fireclay district, as, of course, the importation of Newcastle coal commenced again. A large number of men had to leave the district. In March of the following year, 1889, the Brunner Mine was closed altogether, and the company then demanded 6d. per ton reduction. The result was that Committee which was held, better known as the West Coast Coalfields Committee (report No. I.–6, 1889).

1411. That was because the company demanded 6d.?—It was partly through the stoppage of the mine and the falling-off of trade which had taken place. The falling-off was to the extent of 24,000 tons for the six months from January to July, 1889, as compared with January to July of 1888. The price of coal had been risen by the amalgamation—that is, to the steamers.

1412. Do you know what extent the rise of price was?—I can give it to you. I gave that evidence before the Committee. The price paid here by the dealers before the amalgamation was 12s. 6d. per ton for round screened coal, and after the amalgamation it was 15s. per ton. Nuts were risen from 7s. 6d. per ton to 9s. per ton.

1413. Then you think in some way the falling-off was due to the action of the company?—The raising of the price would naturally cause a falling-off in the consumption.

1414. Why did they raise the price?—Because they had a monopoly.

1415. Can you tell us whether that was reverting to the old price which was broken down by the Newcastle competition ?—No ; it had never been at that price before. That was given to me by Mr. James Brindley.

1416. Was the position changed in any way in consequence of the rise in price ?—Besides this rise in price they asked the miners to submit to a reduction of 6d. per ton in the Brunner Mine. This was declined, and the old arrangement was carried on until March, 1890, and according to Mr. Kennedy's statement I believe it was at a profit. And, to be plain, there was a profit at the arrangement of 4s. per ton before the reduction, as Mr. Kennedy admitted. He did not get the reduction he asked for in May, 1889, and still there was a fair profit up to March, 1890. Then the miners, seeing that the coal in the pillars was crushed to such an extent, and that, in filling 12cwt. of coal, they only got from 2cwt. to 7cwt. of screened—that is only approximate, I would not say exactly as to the amount—they asked to be paid on the gross weight of screened coal, 2s. 6d. for the Brunner, and 2s. 10d. for Coal-pit Heath and Wallsend. This was acceded to, and there was no other alteration made until Mr. Kennedy demanded the 20-per-cent. reduction up to the end of June, after which the men were locked out. As to the royalty, I considered that, these faults requiring to be proved, and the mines not paying, the men were being reduced down to a price at which they could not possibly work. The one thing necessary to foster the industry and to prove these faults is for the Government to make some concession on the royalty. Of course, I am not aware of the position the company is in, but, so far as the position of the men is concerned, they cannot afford to forego the wages.

1417. How far would the storage obviate that ?—That would obviate the mere bar difficulty, but the principal thing that I can see is the question of relief, to enable the company to get through these faults.

1418. Do you think that would set them free to prove the faults if they were released from the royalty payment ? If it would take the amount stated by you to prove these faults, the reduction would not relieve them ?—If they were sending down a certain amount of coal every day—say, £3,000, with 6d. off for haulage, that would keep some of the men going in these inner drives.

1419. *Mr. Moody.*] Then, the object you are aiming at would be a temporary measure, to enable them to overcome these faults ?—That is to say, the Government have leased a property which has proved from experience to have great difficulties or defects, owing to these faults, and in their position as landlord they should contribute something towards overcoming the difficulties.

1420. Is it not usual in coal-mining for the management to keep a good stock of whole coal in front of them, instead of, when they come to a fault, starting to take all the pillars out behind ?—That is a question of management. I have not seen it in the colonies. It is usual in the colonies to take the pillars.

WEDNESDAY, 22ND OCTOBER, 1890.

Mr. WILLIAM WHITECROSS CLEMENTSON sworn and examined.

1421. *The Chairman.*] What are you, Mr. Clementson ?—I am a coal-miner.

1422. How long have you been at Brunnerton ?—Five years.

1423. Where were you previously ?—I was in England, and from there I went to Tasmania.

1424. You are check-weighman for the miners at Brunnerton, I believe ?—Yes. I have been check-weighman for the last fifteen months at the Brunner Mine, and for nine months previously at the Coal-pit Heath. I changed to the Brunner when the working of the Coal-pit Heath was amalgamated with it.

1425. What are your duties ?—Our duties are, in the morning, to see all tokens out, and what men are at work ; so far as possible, to see what coal is taken out each day, and keep an account of it.

1426. When you say "our duties," who weighs with you ?—The company's weighman.

1427. Do you work together as if you were mates at the work ?—Yes.

1428. You weigh together and you check together ?—Yes. We say, "We will begin weighing now," and then we might weigh one or two.

1429. *Mr. Brown.*] You do not weigh every truck ?—No ; we only weigh one for each man.

1430. In the day ?—Yes.

1431. You average a day's work by that one skip ?—Yes.

1432. What is the average amount in the skips ?—It will range from 9cwt. to 12cwt. in the Coal-pit Heath—sometimes we get one a little over—and in the Brunner from 9¾cwt. to 15cwt.

1433. Have you anything to do with reckoning the quantity of slack after the coal is screened ?—No.

1434. You have no means of forming any opinion ?—No ; it is not our duty at all.

1435. What was the maximum and minimum made by any man during the nine months you were at Coal-pit Heath, before the combination of the two mines, under the old system ? How many skips did the men turn out ?—Different quantities. Sometimes a man would be able to do twenty or twenty-two in one day, and another day not more than ten or twelve by the same man.

1436. Do you know the cause of the difference ?—With the full twenty or twenty-two it would be a back-end shaft, and with the smaller quantity it would be what is called a sumper-shaft, or header.

1437. Is there much difference in the coal put out by the different men ? Are some men better than others ?—Yes ; but it depends a good deal upon the places.

1438. I suppose some men could make more than others, no matter what places they were in ?—Yes, that is only natural.

1439. The day that a man was putting out twenty or twenty-two skips, would any men be making more than that ?—Yes.

1440. How much?—Four or five skips, but that would only be from time to time, because, as a rule, they would not get more skips than they could fill. There are other men that never reach to fifteen or sixteen skips.

1441. When you came to the Brunner Mine did you notice any change?—Yes, there was a change in the quantity, because just about the time we went to the Brunner we started the pillars in both mines.

1442. In both mines?—Yes; the Brunner was working the pillars before that, but about that time they commenced working the pillars in the Coal-pit Heath.

1443. So that all the coal brought to the stages was pillar-coal?—Yes. I should like to make myself clear. All the coal that came from the Coal-pit Heath did not come out of the pillars: for instance, there was the Kimberley, at which for a short time they were working in the solid.

1444. Just that one portion before the water rose in Kimberley?—Yes.

1445. We will take the pillar-coal from the Coal-pit Heath. What was the number of skips per day there?—It varied, but most of them could fill twenty-five if they had good trucks.

1446. *Mr. Moody.*] What was the average weight of them?—About 10½cwt. of gross coal, unscreened.

1447. *The Chairman.*] The previous coal you have been talking about has been screened coal?—Yes.

1448. At the same time for the Brunner Mine: how many skips did each man send out?—About twenty-seven or twenty-eight some of them would send out.

1449. Down to what?—Fifteen or twenty, as there are bad places in the Brunner.

1450. That is, bad places caused delay?—Yes.

1451. What was the tonnage-price for unscreened coal altogether in the Coal-pit Heath?—Two shillings and sixpence.

1452. You have mentioned that the number of skips you have been giving us was of screened coal. Was the twenty-seven or twenty-eight trucks a day screened or unscreened coal?—Both on the "Billy Fair-play" system. They were paid 4s. per ton in the Brunner and 2s. 10d. per ton in the Coal-pit Heath.

1453. From the Brunner they turned out twenty-seven or twenty-eight skips per man, you say, and down to fourteen or fifteen. Was that skips before it was screened?—Yes.

1454. You are now taking over the whole period. We will take before the gross-weight system commenced—that is, the screen coal?—Yes.

1455. I want to know exactly what occurred when you were taking the weight upon the screened coal?—The skips are run out of the mine, and they are brought to the weighbridge and then to the screen, and screened and weighed down below into the box. Of course, the slack runs away through the screen.

1456. When you say that the skips varied from 9cwt. to 12cwt., do you mean the skips before they were tipped on the screens?—Yes.

1457. After the change to pillar-working they commenced the Coal-pit Heath. In talking of the skips, does that also mean before they were tipped?—Yes. The average weight would be 10½ tons gross; that is the weight before it is tipped.

1458. I am talking of the time that you changed to the Brunner stage. Were you weighing on the top of the stage and screening on the top of the stage?—We we were weighing on the top of the stage before screening.

1459. Was that before the skip was tipped?—Yes.

1460. At the same time, they would get from the Brunner twenty-seven or twenty-eight skips?—Yes; down to fourteen or fifteen, as there are bad places which caused delay.

1461. This was also on the top before screening?—Yes.

1462. Now, from the Coal-pit Heath, when they were working in the solid: could you state the proportion of weight of coal from the skip after screening—I mean the average?—About 7¼cwt.

1463. Now, from the pillar-workings in the Coal-pit Heath: what was the average weight?—About the same.

1464. Now, the pillars in the Brunner, of which you only have experience—you have had no experience in the solid—how much would they run for each skip?—About 5¾cwt. on an average.

1465. *Mr. Brown.*] Can you give us the maximum and minimum there?—No; but I can forward it to you.

1466. You have given 9cwt. to 15cwt. as the range per skip for screened coal in the Brunner: what would be the average unscreened skip?—The average weight would be about 11½cwt., or rather as near as possible. I could give you the maximum and minimum weights. We have had as low as 1½cwt. and as high as 11½cwt. of screened coal. They are both pillars; but one is very bad and the other is very good. It has been less than that before I went to the weighbridge.

1467. As against that, the getting of the coal would be very easy—mere shovelling, would it not?—Yes; the timbering is the most difficult part.

1468. Have you formed any idea of what would be a fair proportional weight per day of screened coal at 4s. per ton, if the men said, "We would rather be paid on the whole coal in the Coal-pit Heath Mine"?—Well, I have taken an average of about four days previous to when the gross weight came into operation, and the average was 3 tons 15cwt.

1469. Per man per day?—Yes.

1470. That is at the 4s. for screened?—Yes.

1471. What was the average for unscreened?—For the four days after the gross-weight system came in it was 4 tons 19cwt. That makes a difference of 1 ton 4cwt.

1472. That is for the Coal-pit Heath?—Yes.

1473. Would you explain whether that includes broken time or is that what each man would

have?—It was per man per day. Under the "Billy Fair-play" system it was 3 tons 2cwt. in the Brunner.

1474. Then, on the gross, in the Brunner?—5 tons 13cwt.

1475. Did you make any deduction from these weights as to what the relative prices should be?—No, it was no business of mine; you will be able to get that from Mr. Robertson.

1476. Is there anything you can think of yourself that you would like to say?—No.

1477. *Mr. Moody.*] You do not know anything outside your own duties?—I do not interfere in anything else. In fact, I have very little time, to tell you the truth.

1478. *The Chairman.*] What are you hours of working?—Sometimes I work twelve, but I am not at the mine all the time.

1479. Do the union find fault with you for working twelve hours?—I am not aware that they do.

1480. *Mr. Brown.*] How do you expect this difficulty to be settled?—I suppose both sides will have to give a little.

1481. There is no question of wages pending, is there?—No.

1482. What is the question at present in dispute?—It is just a question of principle at present.

1483. Can you justify the principle?—Our rules forbid us working alongside non-unionists; that is the only definition I can give you.

1484. Your local rules forbid you working alongside non-unionists: are they printed?—I do not know that that rule is printed yet.

1485. Have you anything to do with other unions?—We are affiliated, of course—that is, with the Maritime Council and its bodies.

1486. Have they interposed in this dispute at all?—Yes, of course; they called us out; at least, we, being affiliated with them, agreed not to supply any coal to the Union Steamship Company's boats manned by "blacklegs."

1487. Was that done at their request or by your own action?—It was our own action entirely.

1488. Are you a member of the executive of the union yourself?—Yes.

1489. And you know pretty well what is going on?—Yes.

1490. Can you tell us how it is that in other places in the colony where there are union men they supply the coal they have worked to any one that wants it—in the North Island especially, at Kawakawa, and in the Waikato?—I do not know anything about that.

1491. This also occurs at the Kamo and Taupiri Mines; also at Springfield, in the South Island. You say your rules prevent you from working with "blacklegs." Does that mean as mates with "blacklegs," or working in the same mine?—The present question is not as to working with "blacklegs" in the mines; it is a question of supplying the Union Steamship Company with coal.

1492. Does your rule extend so far as that?—Yes; it was passed at a general meeting.

1493. Then this is an emergency rule or resolution?—Yes.

1494. Is supplying the Union Steamship Company, working with "blacklegs"?—It is not necessarily working with "blacklegs," but still it is, because we are affiliated with the unions who are interested, and we are all one society.

1495. Are you aware how far the Union Company are running their steamers without union men?—I am not. Only that they are running, and that the strike still continues, so far as the Union steamers are concerned.

1496. *The Chairman.*] I thought a "blackleg" was a man who seceded from a union, and that the name, as applied here, was erroneous?—A man who works where union men have struck is a "blackleg;" if he was a union man he would not work.

1497. Have you any idea of how a solution of this difficulty is to be arrived at, seeing that the Union Company's boats are already manned by men outside the union? Are you to remain out altogether because the seamen are out?—There are only a very small number of their boats manned; there are a great number of their boats laid up.

1498. Are you aware that there are thirty-four out of forty-two already manned?—I thought they had twenty-one or twenty-two.

1499. I saw it stated in the newspapers a fortnight ago that there were thirty-four, and since then the "Rotorua" and two others have been put on commission. If these seamen remain out, and all their places are supplied, would the miners still remain out?—I could not say that.

1500. *Mr. Brown.*] I want to see if there is any hope of a termination of this?—Personally speaking, I believe there is.

1501. Will the principle require to be altered to enable the strike to cease?—I do not know I am sure. I hope a solution will be arrived at this week, or in a few days, at Lyttelton.

1502. Is there a conference there now?—Yes.

1503. Do you say that union men object to work in the same mine with non-union men?—Yes, they do.

1504. *The Chairman.*] Have you had experience in strikes before?—Yes; two or three. This is the best of them, though. I can manage this one better than the others. I have no one to keep but myself now.

1505. There are many men with wives and families, are there not?—Yes.

1506. Are they feeling the pinch?—Not very much. There is not a great lack of food yet.

1507. Are they getting very much in debt?—No; they are allowed so much per week per adult, and so much per child.

1508. *Mr. Brown.*] The question that constitutes the trouble just now is not a local one?—No.

1509. Could you suspend a strike that arose from outside?—It would be a breach of faith if we did.

1510. What is the point the outside leaders want to carry before they let you go to work again?—They want to settle the difficulty with the seamen.

1511. That is a question of wages?—Yes.

1512. Do you know anything of Mr. Champion's views: he is a prominent leader at Home?—He must be very young, because I never knew him at Home.

1513. Have you noticed his expressions as regards the cessation of strikes?—Yes; and I do not agree with him at all. His argument is that we should work with "free" labour.

1514. Will you explain why "free" labourers are not allowed to work with union men?—Because they do not subscribe to our association. Whatever benefit we may derive from that association they are receiving the same benefit, and they do not pay their quantum; that is my objection to them.

1515. Do they regard it as a benefit?—Yes, they do; but they will not give anything towards it. They are afraid of the contribution, I suppose.

1516. Do the unions hold that they have the right to a monopoly in any labour district in the labour market? If there were "free" labourers here, and they were excluded from work, would not that be an exclusion in the nature of a monopoly?—We would not exclude them from joining the union, but we could not work with them if they did not join.

1517. You recognise the free right of employment?—Still, we have no right to work with them.

1518. The position, then, is this: You are waiting orders from some outside body—the Maritime Council—and if they told you to go to work you would feel satisfied that they had obtained what they wanted. Supposing they sent you to work without getting what they wished to get?—I should still go to work.

1519. Supposing the Union Steamship Company's boats were properly equipped with "free" labour—that is, without union labour—would the Maritime Council then remove the restriction against your working? Would it be fair, or would it be any use making you fight hopelessly against such a state of things?—I can only give you my private opinion. I do not think they would give the permission to go to work.

1520. Even if the boats were manned with "free" labour, and though the consequence would be the shutting-up of this as a coal port and the transfer of the trade to Westport, would you be satisfied with that?—I do not know that I should be personally satisfied.

1521. *Mr. Moody.*] You would not like it, of course?—The thing is to carry our point.

1522. *Mr. Brown.*] It often occurs in life that when a man finds he cannot attain his object all at once he has to take his time, and he lies by, gaining a little as the time becomes ripe. Is there any use in lying absolutely idle while a principle is being fought?—Things of this kind can only be obtained by degrees.

1523. Do you consider the employers or the employés brought on this difficulty? Have there been any lock-outs in this case?—I understand that the employers brought it on. There has been a lock-out.

1524. Not on this question?—No; on the 20-per-cent. reduction question.

1525. That was settled and the men went to work. What occurred now is not a lock-out?—It is a strike.

1526. You are now striking here for the sake of raising the wages of the seamen?—Not altogether.

1527. I thought you said it was?—It is a question of wages and maintaining a position in which seamen were concerned.

1528. New Zealand seamen?—Yes; and all the colonies, I suppose.

1529. Are you aware that it is so? Have you been informed so by the Maritime Council?—No; but that is the general opinion.

1530. What is the general opinion in Brunnerton?—The general opinion is that it is for the Australian Colonies, and that the Australian Colonies were the cause of it.

1531. Is it there a question of wages?—I could not say exactly.

1532. Are you satisfied with the results of the union efforts up to the present point?—Yes, quite.

1533. You do not see the end of it?—No; I wish I could see the end of it.

1534. Have you anything to suggest as to obviating strikes in future?—No.

1535. Have you ever seen boards of conciliation appointed to consider matters of this sort?—I fancy an association of that sort might draw up some report, or try to induce something of the sort to settle these affairs.

1536. Does your organization go so far as to say that if a quarrel or dispute arose between employers and employed at any point in the Australian Colonies you should be called out?—So far as we are affiliated, we might be called out.

1537. Is it not your opinion that it would have been better for this affair to have been confined to New Zealand alone, and let New Zealand fight her own battles?—I would not like to venture an opinion upon that point.

1538. You have an opinion, I suppose?—I do not know that I have much of an opinion about it.

1539. Are many of the people up at Brunnerton in debt?—There may be some, but the indebtedness of many of them was incurred previous to this affair. I do not think it has been added to during the strike.

1540. Is the strike-pay sufficient to keep the wolf from the door?—Yes.

1541. That pay comes from the Maritime Council, I suppose?—It comes from different places. I would not say that the fund here was not drawn upon.

1542. Is there a large fund here?—I could not say what funds there are just now. What

funds there are here I do not think are touched at present. Funds are coming in from other sources outside the district.

1543. Other employés in employment are contributing out of their own pay?—Yes.

Mr. Thomas Robinson sworn and examined.

1544. *The Chairman.*] What are you?—A coal-miner.

1545. How long have you been at Brunnerton?—About four years.

1546. And before that where were you?—I was in Canterbury.

1547. At which mine?—Springfield.

1548. And before that?—I came from the Home-country—from the County of Durham.

1549. Have you been a coal-miner all your life?—Very nearly.

1550. Which of the mines have you been working in during the last four years?—Principally the Brunner.

1551. Which part of the mine—in the whole coal anywhere?—Yes; in the present block of coal that they are now working.

1552. Is there any solid work now in the Brunner?—No solid work at present. They are taking the pillars now in the Brunner. I have worked in the solid there between the faults.

1553. You have not worked any dip-coal in the Brunner?—No.

1554. Latterly you have only worked pillar-coal?—Yes.

1555. We have had a good deal of evidence showing that the work in the mine has been interrupted from various causes. I understand from Andrew that you were prepared to explain what remedies the miners have suggested or would like to suggest for these interruptions?—No; I do not think that has been allocated to me. I principally take up the averages.

1556. On what points would you like to give information to the Commissioners?—I have a brief statement here if you would like me to read it. It is as follows: The company has published an average wage made up on the earnings of miners in full employment, and is stated at 14s. 8d. per shift for coal-hewing. But on the same table is given the amount earned by coal-hewers at other work, which, being work incidental to coal-hewing, must be counted in the average. This will show the company's stated average to be 14s. 4d. per shift. The miners accept these figures with modifications on considerations not accounted for in the published statement of the company. First, the miners pay for their own tools and lights at a cost of 6d. per day. Second, loss of wages through accidents amounts to 3d. per day more. This will show an average wage of 13s. 7d. per day for almost exclusively pillar-work for that section of the men who have continuous employment. These do not average over four days a week, or £2 14s. 4d. in wages.

1557. How do you get the £2 14s. 4d. in wages?—We adopt the company's figures.

1558. You are referring to the previous period upon which the men have gone to work pending the result of this Commission?—That is during the two or three weeks. It was made some time within the last month at the Coal-pit Heath during this trouble. The following is a statement relating to the averages in the Coal-pit Heath Mine:—Pay ending the 6th September: Number of days, 293; total amount, £161 2s. 8d.; average per day, 10s. 11¾d. Pay ending the 20th September, including fifty-one shift-work, £28 1s. 9d.; number of days, 397; total amount, £228 3s. 3d.; average per day, 11s. 5¾d. Commenced the 5th April, ending with the 31st May. The company also makes a statement that this shift-work is incidental; it is an extra. The shift-work included in that statement is not done by separate men; it is charged against the time of the miner, and included in the price paid for the coal, and it ought to be included in the miner's average. It makes 4d. per day difference. I am quoting from the company's statement.

1559. Your position is, that in the company's published statement allowance is not made for certain drawbacks, which makes the wage appear higher than it really is?—Yes. I put in a return for the period 14th December, 1889, to 27th September, 1890, showing the names of persons who have met with accidents, and dates of same; also the time out of work in weeks and days, and the amount of benefit received from the society formed for that purpose [Exhibit No. 20]. The totals show that in the above period there were 211 weeks lost through accidents, and the total sum of benefit distributed is £283 19s. 4d.

1560. Is this benefit society one which is supported by the weekly payments of the men?—Yes.

1561. How much is the payment?—Sixpence per man per week.

1562. Is it one of the friendly societies registered?—Yes.

1563. Does the company pay anything towards the society?—No.

1564. In this return, how do you arrive at the 3d. per day to be deducted for accidents?—Well, 3d. was considered a fair average, as in some periods there are more accidents than at others. I wish to explain that this return shows 3¼d., as it was considered that during this period the accidents were in excess. We are agreeable to make an average of 3d. per day on account of accidents.

1565. *Mr. Brown.*] Threepence per day was arrived at as something under what you were entitled to claim?—Yes.

1566. Have you any knowledge of how these benefit societies are regarded in other places: is the payment to the benefit society looked upon as a deduction from wages?—Well, I cannot say; I have not had any experience in that direction.

1567. I mean, in other places; in reckoning your wages at 7s., 8s., 10s., or 15s. per day, is the deduction for a benefit society taken into account?—I do not know; but I think it is only a fair deduction.

1568. *The Chairman.*] In the case of these accidents, would the company pay anything towards the accidents?—Not that I know of.

1569. In any case has the company ever paid for an accident?—I have not heard of any case.

1570. Is there anything else you wish to state under this heading?—There is another cause

which tends to materially reduce the earnings of the men, and that is that there are constantly men out of places—they are thrown out of places from time to time—from 3 to 5 per cent. of the men.

1571. You mean there are more men on the place than can be employed?—I mean that there are constantly that number of men out, because there are not sufficient places prepared for them.

1572. And is that altogether apart from the extra labour about the place wanting to get in, or the changing of places?—Yes. In the whole coal it would be for want of mine-room, and on the pillars it is for want of places and mine-room, because it seems as if the room was always being curtailed. Why should they be off work if the pillars are not ready?

1573. Is that a defect in the management? Whose business is it to prepare the pillars for work?—It may be sometimes a defect on the part of the management in not setting out sufficient work, or in the miners coming to too close quarters.

1574. Being brought within the limit of safety?—Yes.

1575. That makes short time?—Yes.

1576. Is there any other cause of reduction of earnings?—I have nothing further to state.

1577. *Mr. Brown.*] Tools and lights cost you 6d. per day?—Yes.

1578. Is powder and fuse included in that 6d.?—No; because powder and fuse are taken off the averages you have before you.

1579. It is a previous deduction?—Yes.

1580. Lights you get?—We find lights and tools. It costs very nearly 4d. per day for lights alone, and I am sure you could not allow very much less than 2d. for tools.

1581. *Mr. Moody.*] The company sharpen the tools?—Yes.

1582. Do they repair them?—Not that I am aware of.

1583. What do you think would be a fair price for working the pillars—the price per ton as it comes out in the gross?—I think about 2s. 6d. per ton is a fair price; and, for the Coal-pit Heath, for the pillars, I think 2s. 10d. is little enough.

1584. *Mr. Brown.*] In reference to the accident statement, would it not be fair to take it this way: If the men pay 6d. per week, which 6d. is contributed by them all, it is really 1d. per day, which should be put down as an abatement from the wages, as the payment is spread over the whole, and not merely over the number of accidents?—Yes; that is really the deduction which may be drawn on that point. It is not 3d. per day from all the men.

1585. It would be 6d. per week on every man employed, but the total cost has been 3½d. per day for those who have been hurt?—Yes; that is what is paid in. Then there is another 6d. per week to come off for the doctor; that is 2d. per day altogether.

1586. *Mr. Moody.*] The men pay him a certain amount every year, and he has private practice as well?—Yes.

1587. *Mr. Brown.*] Then the proper deduction is 1d. per day all round for the accident fund and 1d. per day for the doctor?—Yes.

1588. That comes off all hands?—Yes.

1589. *The Chairman.*] What has been the average weekly time of late years, since the amalgamation—how many days a week?—I could not tell that. I know Mr. Kennedy stated to the Premier in Wellington that it was not possible to do an average of four days a week. That is what the union average was in taking the Brunner average for eighteen months and the Coal-pit Heath average for eighteen months. It is not quite eight days a fortnight for the Coal-pit Heath.

1590. *Mr. Moody.*] Was that brought about by the amalgamation, do you think?—No, I do not think so. The causes of that lie more in the harbour and shipping arrangements, also the West Coast weather and the floods in the river.

1591. Are all these holidays made by the miners included in the loss of these two days per week?—I think so. Yes.

1592. Can you tell us what the holidays are?—I have a copy of the miners' rules, which state the holidays. When a meeting is required urgently the manager is asked whether it is convenient to grant an idle day, and oftentimes it is postponed for several days in order to complete a shipping. The holidays which Mr. Moody has asked about are all mentioned in the rules of the Association. The only holidays that the miners take over and above or apart from the general holidays are the 14th June, 18th March, and the two following days after Boxing Day. These holidays were made to enable the men to attend the Dobsontown sports, but since the bridge has been put up there has been no need for them, as the sports have been done away with. Last year one of these days was done away with, as the Association did not recognise both days; they only now recognise one.

1593. *The Chairman.*] How many days do they amount to?—There are ten, including the six general holidays which are recognised all over the colony.

1594. Is there not a week at St. Patrick's Day and another week at Christmas?—It is usual to work all the Christmas week excepting Boxing Day and the 31st December. There are only four holidays recognised apart from the general holidays.

1595. *Mr. Moody.*] I know you are a practical miner, Mr. Robinson. Will you tell me whether it is easier, in your opinion, to work the pillars than the whole coal; and do they make more money at the pillars?—Well, in some of the pillars it is easier work, yet it is more dangerous; but there are exceptions to every rule, and there is certainly an exception to that one.

1596. *The Chairman.*] How do the exceptions arise—from the nature of the coal or from the character of the pillar?—Yes; it may be from the character of the pillar sometimes.

1597. Is there any danger arising from the management, or rather from the manager, not visiting the mine every day, or the Inspector, at what is considered necessary intervals?—The deputy or the charge man examines the mine every day.

1598. At every place?—When the overman does not the deputies do. They are the foremen as well.

1599. Do you frequently see Mr. Bishop in the mine going about?—Some weeks.
1600. Do you see him every week?—Not every week.
1601. Have you formed any opinion as to how often the Government Inspector should visit the mine?—In this pillar-working, I believe it would be better if they were oftener inspected or visited.
1602. Have you any idea how often he visits them now?—No. I can frame no correct idea, but I think once in two months is little enough for Government inspection.
1603. Do you think any practical mischief has yet arisen through inspection being infrequent? —I think so. I cannot, however, deal with this question, from the simple fact that I have not been working in the neglected part.
1604. Where do you think there has been neglect?—In the Coal-pit Heath.
1605. *Mr. Brown.*] What is it you refer to?—I mean the taking the outer edges out first, instead of going in and taking out the back pillars first, which has caused the rock to break.
1606. *The Chairman.*] You mean robbing the pillars?—Commencing to thin the pillars at the outer edges of the coal-seam instead of going in to the seam and working back. I believe, although I have not seen it myself, that if the Inspector had been there more frequently he would not have allowed the pillars to have been taken out in the Coal-pit Heath, and thus let the water into the Coal-pit Heath Mine.
1607. Have you ever experienced any heavy shocks in the mine, or loud noises, or seen any movement?—That is frequent in all the mines where pillars are taken out or worked.
1608. This has been nothing out of the common, then?—I have heard of such things, but I have never seen them myself.
1609. *Mr. Brown.*] You worked in Durham, I think you said. What was the number of hours they worked there per day?—I think it was six when I was there.
1610. *Mr. Moody.*] That did not apply to the datal men?—No, they worked ten.
1611. *Mr. Brown.*] When was the reduction made to the six hours? Was it six hours in your time?—Yes.
1612. Was that considered a full day's work in the mine, or because of the number of men there was to do the work?—It was a regularly accepted thing that the day's work should be six hours.
1613. Was it compulsory on the part of the union to compel the men to work only six hours? Did any of them work more than that?—I can remember longer.
1614. But at the time you were there?—It was six hours a day.
1615. If it was contract work, why could you not work eight hours if you had wanted to do so?—There were only two six-hour shifts in the day.
1616. That was during all your term there?—Yes.
1617. That was before you arrived here, of course?—Yes.
1618. Can you specify the years?—About 1868, I think.
1619. Six hours seems a short time?—It is plenty long enough in a coal-mine. You do not need to make them eight hours.
1620. You do not need to work these six hours, I suppose, if you are paid by the ton?—Yes.
1621. You can come out if you like?—I do not think so; not very well.
1622. Does this Durham six hours commence at the mine-mouth or at the face? Who fixes the time—is it the employer?—We start when the whistle goes in the morning, and the engine-man calls us to knock off at night, by the instructions of the manager.
1623. Then, the management fixed the time of knocking off and commencing; and whether you were doing contract work, or work by the day, you still had to keep to the six hours?—Yes.
1624. Do you remember what your earnings were in six hours' work in Durham?—They varied as trade varied, according to the ruling prices of coal.
1625. Was there a sliding-scale the men were paid by?—No; the sliding-scale came into operation when I was about to leave the country; the average at the time was 5s. per day.
1626. How much a ton were you paid?—I think it was about 6½d. per ton.
1627. What was the thickness of the seam?—2ft. 10in.; that was the last seam; the seam previous was 4ft. There was no blasting required there.
1628. Had you to find your own lights?—Yes, in one of the mines.
1629. You worked with your own lamps?—No; they were all lighted with candles.
1630. Was there any mine in which you were allowed so much for candles?—Yes; in fact, they gave the candles.
1631. *Mr. Moody.*] Have you heard any remarks at the mine amongst the miners about the inexperience of the Government Inspector?—Yes, I have heard a lot of grumbling about the appointment of the Inspector. He is a gentleman I have only seen twice at the outside, and that was when he was travelling round the mine with Mr. Bishop. I do not know anything about his former career, but I have heard a lot said in connection with it—that he is not a practical coal-miner; and amongst some of the older hands at Brunnerton there seems to be a great aversion to his appointment.
1632. In your opinion, has the amalgamation of the mines affected the output of coal here, or interfered with the trade of the district?—I am not prepared to say that.
1633. *Mr. Brown.*] Have you any suggestions to make as to remedying the point that you have brought up—the abatements for instance, and in connection with the inspection?—If it was visited oftener I think the mine could be better worked.
1634. You think the mine has not been properly worked?—I think it has been a great detriment to the district at large; but for that there would have been more places and room for more men; certainly, there would not have been water in. There is another cause, and that is the pumping-gear. It is not sufficient to get out the water. If she was making ever so little over and

above what the gear was taking out you can see how the water would gain upon it. But, still, I think they might have rubbed along even with the present gear, and worked Kimberley, had the surface-water not been allowed to come in.

1635. You know the Brunner Mine, and the Coal-pit Heath pretty well?—I know the Brunner Mine.

1636. How many places are there room for, supposing the men went to work now?—Thirteen places in the Brunner.

1637. And how many in the Coal-pit Heath?—There are ten; that is twenty-three altogether. That is above the level where the water is at present. They give the places to four men each at present.

1638. What proportion of wages-men would that employ to these ninety-two hewers?—There were about fifteen or sixteen deputies and roadmen and firemen, but I really could not give you the whole number offhanded. There are, of course, the weighmen, the boys, truckers, surface-men, and engine-men.

1639. I mean as a whole. How many is there room for altogether? Is there room for all that went out at the beginning of September?—No, there is not.

1640. By how many?—I should think there would be fully a hundred and fifty here off work.

1641. Were all these men in work when it closed?—They had to share the work, but they could not find full-time; nothing like it.

1642. There were twenty-three places, at which ninety-two men were working, and about an equal proportion of others employed with them. That would be giving the full-time to each man?—Yes.

1643. But with sharing it would possibly employ a few more?—Yes, I dare say there would be a few more employed.

1644. At short-time?—Yes; about three hundred in all by sharing, but only two hundred without sharing.

1645. Did you share week and week about?—No; it was left in the check-weighman's hands, and it was posted up who should go into the places the following day.

1646. I suppose it is dangerous for a man not accustomed to a particular place in the part of the mine to go and work there?—A certain amount of precaution is required in all fresh places. There may be some parts dangerous, that strange men would not know about; so that they would have to go into the face with a man who knew the place.

1647. Would the overman not tell them about it?—I do not reckon that that would be quite sufficient: he should be sent in with a man of sound judgment.

1648. Going back, say, eighteen months: has there been any interruptions from disagreement before the present one?—I could not be positive, but I do not think there has been any strike before the present one.

1649. That is to say, any disagreements there may have been did not stop the mine?—Yes. There have been little bits of quarrels, but they were decided without a stoppage.

1650. Then the present is the only stoppage that you can remember?—Well, there was a trouble something like this.

1651. Previous to this?—Yes.

1652. That was in July?—It was some time ago; I could not give you the date of it. Mr. Andrew would know more about the matter.

1653. Have you anything to do with the management of the Miners' Union here?—No; I have nothing to do with the management, but I am a member of the union.

1654. Is there usually a reference to the members when any dispute arises, or is it generally settled by the committee? It is always managed by the members; the meetings settle everything. The committee are only a channel of communication between the employers and the men. A vote is taken on any question.

1655. Are these meetings well attended?—It generally depends upon the nature of the business.

1656. Was the present strike submitted to the men generally or was it arranged by the executive?—All phases have been brought before the men.

1657. Before the decision, and not afterwards?—The matter is brought up in this manner: The executive deal with the business first, and they draw up a recommendation, and the business is then placed before a general meeting, when it is usually discussed. The committee allow a discussion to go on before the recommendation, and it is further discussed after the recommendation, and the meeting vote.

1658. *Mr. Moody.*] Is this decisive?—Yes.

1659. *The Chairman.*] What was the exact question submitted to the meeting on the occasion of this strike?—I could not tell you.

1660. *Mr. Brown.*] I suppose there would be a motion of some kind before the meeting when they decided to go out?—There was a communication from the Maritime Council, which was submitted to the meeting. It was discussed in committee first, and then it was submitted to the meeting.

1661. What was that communication?—I could not tell you exactly; but it was placed before the men, and they decided by unanimous vote to come out.

1662. Was there any previous correspondence?—Oh, yes.

1663. What was the kind of question that was before them when they decided this?—They decided not to work alongside non-union labour.

1664. Had you been called upon to work with non-union labourers?—Not locally.

1664A. Then, was it in the nature of a report that in other places men had been called upon to work with non-union men?—Yes; that led up to it from the other side, when the employers were pressing to engage non-union labour.

1665. Can you not remember what the telegram said about that that led to the final decision? No; I could not tell you; there were so many telegrams.

1666. What, then, is the basis of the strike as you have it now? What is your impression?—That it is an effort on the part of capital to crush unionism.

1667. You think capital does not approve of unionism?—No.

1668. What was the direct question at issue which the miners came out upon? What was proposed to that meeting? You say it went to the ballot, and they decided by a majority to come out. What was the question put to you, Yea or Nay?—It seems to me that you are driving at something that does not hit the circumstances at Brunner.

1669. Oh, no; I simply want to get at the real facts of the matter?—I am quite willing to answer anything I can. When we went back to work after the previous trouble we went back on the condition that the Union Steamship Company should not get any coal.

1670. Was that one of the conditions?—Yes; and it was agreed to by the company through Mr. Bishop; and the company broke their agreement, and that caused the present trouble or interruption.

1671. Are you speaking from your own knowledge, as a member of the committee? Have you seen any of these documents before relating to the arrangements under which the men went back?—Yes. I also saw Mr. Bishop's pledge. The breach of that pledge was the loading of the "Brunner," which was the boat manned by non-union labour.

1672. Was it before or after the loading of the "Brunner" that the meeting took place at which the strike was decided on?—It was after the coals were put into the "Brunner."

1673. You regarded that as a breach of agreement?—Yes.

1674. Do you think the loading of the company's boats under the circumstances would be working alongside non-union men?—I could not say that.

1675. Your rules absolutely prohibit your working with non-union men?—They have agreed not to do so. It is a resolution, not a rule, or rather not a printed rule.

1676. And that points to your not working with non-union labour. If a steamer came in and loaded coals, would you regard it in that light?—I do not understand.

1677. You, as a body of miners at Brunnerton, were working as a union in these mines, and no non-union labour can work alongside of you: had a steamer come in manned by non-union labour, and you refused to load coal for her, do you consider that getting coal out to be put on a vessel where there is non-union labour is working with non-union labour?—It is not working alongside non-union labour, but we have pledged ourselves not to mine coal for such vessels.

1678. When was that pledge made, and to whom was it given?—The pledge has been made amongst ourselves.

1679. And that pledge was not given to any one?—I do not know to whom it could be given at all; it was an agreement amongst ourselves.

1680. That is the resolution we have heard about, which simply forbids working with non-union labour?—They do not seem distinct in my mind at all. They seem one and the same thing.

1681. I thought working in the mine with non-union labour was what was meant by working with non-unionists. Then, there comes the further pledge which you mention, that you will not supply the Union Steamship Company's boats manned by non-union labour?—I do not think that phase of the question has ever been dealt with; but I have no hesitation in saying that the men would not mine coal for a boat manned by a non-union crew.

1682. As a general rule, do you regard mining coal as being for the customers or for the employers? Do the customers have anything to do with the employment or the wages?—Not until the present trouble.

1683. The Grey Valley Coal Company are your employers?—Yes.

1684. Then you have no direct connection with the Union Steamship Company's boats at all, have you?—No; not that I know of.

1685. You refuse to mine for the company. Do you pass over the employers, and trace the history and the destination of this coal, and say that, unless it actually is for certain people, you are not going to cut it?—That is the position we have taken up.

1686. You mentioned a telegram received, I suppose, from Mr. Millar: was it in consequence of that communication that you have decided upon that phase of it—I mean the correspondence or the telegram received from him that was laid before the meeting and discussed?—Perhaps, in stating that some specific telegram came, you may have got a wrong impression.

1687. At any rate, there was correspondence about it. It was not a local matter?—No; it is on account of affiliation with other bodies.

1688. And you give merely mutual support when in trouble or on strike?—Yes; we mutually assist each other in times of trouble.

1689. By money-grants?—Yes.

1690. Anything else?—I do not think there is anything else.

1691. Do you regard it as assistance to anybody else that you should cease work?—I think it has been looked upon as such.

1692. But from your own experience and knowledge, have you found it as such?—If it succeeds.

1693. And has it succeeded?—I do not know as yet; it has not developed far enough.

1694. Suppose you received a telegram from Dunedin with imperative instructions to you to go to work?—It would be sifted. It would be discussed first.

1695. Is the local body here, then, under the control of itself or under the control of a distant body?—It manages its own local affairs entirely.

1696. In its general policy, is it guided by direction from without or from within? I will put it this way: Could you patch up a quarrel with your employers without reference to any one outside

your own local body? Could you come to terms, and resume work without reference to an outside body?—I dare say such a thing could be done, but I do not think it would be done.

1697. I suppose, in a few words, you are not out on strike because of any quarrel with your employers, but because some one else has quarrelled with his employers?—I should think that is about it.

1698. Do you regard that as assisting a body with which you are affiliated in any way?—Yes.

1699. In the way of harassing the employers of these other people—in fact, blocking the boats, so to speak?—Yes.

1700. It seems to be using a power or pressure to strive to bring them into certain courses?—I think that seems to be it.

1701. Is that or is it not akin to boycott?—I could not say.

1702. There is a certain amount of outside control as regards your union?—Yes. We have representatives and delegates from the various branches.

1703. And does this distant union correspond with you and ask for your assistance—I mean this Maritime Council?—Yes.

1704. Of which Mr. Millar is the chief executive officer?—Yes.

1705. And if the telegram came now from him that you may go to work, would you accept it? If a telegram came from Dunedin and the Maritime Council, would you be willing to go to work? I understand you have no local dispute; it is beyond you, in a distant place. If, then, the chief executive officer at Dunedin, with whom you say you are affiliated, and who controls your actions, ordered you to go to work, would you be satisfied?—That would be the end of the dispute, because he would have reasons for saying such.

1706. You would accept it then?—Yes.

1707. Without asking whether his reasons were right or wrong. Are you sufficiently informed here of the real basis of the quarrel between the Maritime Council and another body to be able to judge independently for yourselves?—I think so.

1708. What is the point you would have to be satisfied about?—Well, if Mr. McLean would allow the union to go to work and let the affiliations "sack" the "blacklegs" we would undoubtedly go to work at once.

1709. Then the question put before your local body would be that if you received a telegram ordering you to go to work from Dunedin you would then inquire if they had succeeded in dismissing every "free" labourer?—We would want to know the terms of the settlement.

1710. Have you a definition of a "blackleg"? Is he a man who has never been in a union or a man who has seceded from a union?—A man who will not join a union, but who will want to work for as good pay. Now the union men sometimes get better pay.

1711. If you had a brother who was a non-union man, would you refuse to work with him?—I do not think he would be a non-unionist.

1712. Have you ever considered what is to become of those non-union men if they are excluded from all employment?—Yes; I think so. If union principles were universal, and the co-operation was operating with full force upon the masses, there would be no room for "blacklegs" or any cause for them.

1713. It is said sometimes in connection with the unions that persistent demands are made on the employers, and that paltry and petty grievances are often brought up. Are you aware if this is so?—I cannot remember anything of the sort, though I quite believe that unions and union men as a body are as liable to make mistakes as any other body of men.

1714. You are quite satisfied with the results of the operations of the union during the last six months?—Yes, so far as I can grasp the situation.

1715. You indorse all that has been done by them?—Yes.

1716. But you would be glad if it was over?—Yes.

1717. Do you consider that it would be wise to appoint boards of arbitration to deal with these matters from both sides?—Yes; so long as they should not be fettered by either side. I do not think either party should be fettered.

1718. You think they should take the decision of the board and act upon it?—I do not think compulsory arbitration ought to be the means of settlement.

1719. *The Chairman.*] Should both parties agree to submit the points of dispute to arbitration and generally to select the arbitrators? What is your view on that subject?—I think that if the men agree to go to arbitration, or to place the matter in the hands of a board of conciliation, both parties ought to abide by the decision, but without its being made compulsory by law.

1720. *Mr. Brown.*] Have you ever asked for arbitration in this particular case—for the employer to submit the matter to arbitration?—I do not think in this present dispute, so far as I am aware, that there has been anything offered in that direction.

1721. Are you aware that employers have been blamed for not entering into arbitration, not necessarily here, but elsewhere?—It seems like something distant in my mind that something of that sort has been offered.

1722. You have seen the public press accounts that come over from Australia constantly about the disputes?—Yes. I am pretty well versed in the trouble on the other side.

1723. If both sides do agree to go to arbitration, you think they ought to submit to the decision arrived at?—Yes.

1724. Do you know why, in the arbitration of July last year, when the equivalent of 4s. per ton was arrived at, it was not accepted. I mean the time that Major Kadell acted as umpire?—It was because the men did not think it was an arbitration case; it was a reference case.

1725. The figures came out showing an equivalent. They got independent parties to act for them and decide. Did they review the decision before they declined to accept it?—The masters declined to agree.

1726. We were informed that the miners refused to agree to the price allotted by the board of arbitrators?—They did not think it a fair equivalent.

1727. They went to arbitration, then, and did not accept the decision. Do you see any end to the present trouble or dispute? Is there anything you can do to bring it to a conclusion, or anything you can suggest as regards this terrible trouble? Let us put it to you in this way: If I understand your strike aright, it is not a local strike; the question of wages is settled. But immediately there comes a distant strike by the seamen against the Union Steamship Company. Because of this you refuse to work coal intended for the company's boats. So far as I understand, the Union Company are well supplied with men for thirty-four or more boats out of forty or forty-two. Thirty-four of their boats are running as before?—I cannot see what solution there is ahead of us in the difficulty. I do not know of any. The only answer I can give is what Sandy, the Scotchman, replied the other day to a question asking what they were waiting for. Sandy said, "Well, we are waiting for the Union Company to give in."

1728. Do you think it is likely to give in?—I think so.

1729. When there are so many other collieries opening?—There is no coal that can class itself with Westport.

1730. Is not the coal being supplied from other places, and the trade is being taken away from here?—Undoubtedly; it is like a war, it means loss on both sides.

1731. Are not you the only people who are suffering any great hardships?—Unionism is fighting for a principle. There is something elevating in it that lifts us, and is calculated to lift the masses, and the masses are the working people, who are fighting for a principle.

1732. What is the principle they are fighting for? I would like to get a clear definition?—To be allowed to hold their union, and to maintain their rights, and to affiliate.

1733. Then, I suppose you would give the same right to those who do not join?—Those who do not join have exercised their right by accepting employment on the Union boats.

1734. Then you exercise your right, and say, "We will not tackle work," and so the two bodies stand apart?—I think the "blackleg" labour are in a minority at present, and they ought to join the majority.

1735. You acknowledge there has been a very great improvement in the position of the workers as compared with past years?—Yes. Step by step the position has in many ways been improved by unions. I can remember when I was a lad not seeing the light of day more than once a week.

1736. Was that not achieved by the Earl of Shaftesbury? Has there been any great demand in the past that has obtained a great deal at one time? Is not a strike like this generally allowed to be a temporary failure?—Undoubtedly there has been a lot of failure.

1737. *The Chairman.*] In your opinion, and from your experience, do you consider the unions, on this occasion, may have been too grasping to gain public sympathy?—I do not think they are trying to grasp on this present occasion of the strike. It is the right to maintain. Even if there is a temporary defeat, it can only possibly be temporary.

1738. *Mr. Brown.*] Have you any idea of the population of Brunnerton and surroundings—I mean the male adult population?—I should think there is about five or six hundred.

1739. And you say by full-time work there is employment for about two hundred?—About three hundred at the mines, but we have diggers and others resident about the place.

1740. Then there is a part of the population of Brunnerton that are otherwise employed than in the mines?—Yes; there is just what there always is about such a place. They are not all dependent upon the mines. There are a few stores occupied by butchers, painters, paperhangers, grocers, &c.

1741. They are all dependent upon the miners?—Yes.

1742. Are the people generally in favourable circumstances?—Moderately fair.

1743. Have they been enabled to pay their way hitherto?—Some of them may be in arrear.

1744. Were they compelled to fall in arrear owing to the circumstances?—Yes. I believe there are some who have got a long way back in the store-book owing to not being fully employed.

1745. Do you think there are more people to work at the mines than the mines can give employment to? Has there been any movement to reduce that number or are they trusting to the mines being extended?—I do not know what the movement could be, or where the men could go to. A good many men have left, particularly young men, those who have got the means to go away.

1746. Would that three hundred men, finding employment in the mines, be really the only mining population there—that is, the two hundred who could get full work and the other hundred occasional hands?—We calculate there would be a hundred and fifty out in case this present difficulty ends, and all the available places start work.

1747. What is to become of the other hundred and fifty?—They will have to share the work unless there is additional pit-room provided, or they could get away to other work.

1748. This sharing would bring down the average wages?—Yes; it brings down the weekly average for each man.

1749. Not to the employer?—No.

1750. Are the rates you have mentioned—viz., 4s. and 2s. 10d. per ton—calculated on the change of working, or would they still be required if the men were working full-time? Is the reason of the change of these rates because there would be a hundred and fifty surplus men chipping in with you and interchanging?—No. You see it is not possible at present under any circumstance to work more than an average of four days per week.

1751. That is, four days out of six, at, say, 12s. per day per man. Then in the other two days another portion of the men get on who otherwise would be idle?—They change with those who occupy the places. This is what reduces the average to each man.

1752. *The Chairman.*] Do they charge more for getting the coal because they have to share the time?—It is the usual price. If they can work all the time even they would have to get that price.

1753. So that the sharing is a matter of charity between man and man, and the loss in the sharing is to the miner and not to the company?—Yes.

1754. What is the rate of wages outside?—For labourers' wages, 10s. a day; actual work, eight hours.

1755. Has that always been the case in your district in your time?—Yes. I know the Borough Council and the contract on the Midland Railway pay 10s.

1756. Is that for skilled labour?—No; mechanics get about £3 10s. or £3 12s. per week.

1757. Now, has that rate of wage been fixed by any one lately, or is it just what has prevailed in the district?—It has not been fixed by the union. No.

1758. Can you form any opinion as to how it has come about—whether it is in consequence of the earnings that diggers can make, or whether it is on account of the extra amount of broken time owing to weather on this coast?—I think it is owing to the climate, and the wet, and one thing or another.

1759. I should have asked if you are aware that it is in excess of any other place in the colony?—Well, living is higher; and then there is the weather. I think 10s. is paid simply on account of its being on the West Coast in particular. I would rather live over at Springfield at 7s. or 8s. a day than 10s. here.

1760. Are the rents high at Brunnerton? What could you get a four-roomed cottage for there?—I have not gone into the rent question.

1761. How do you live yourself?—I live free.

1762. You bought a section, I suppose?—Yes; I bought a section, and brought the wife over and got settled. My cottage has three rooms.

1763. What did it cost you to pay for the section?—£25 for the section.

1764. Is that an average price?—It is the eighth of an acre. It is something like an average price, or it was when I bought. The sections have gone up since, and then dropped a little.

1765. What would it cost to put up a house?—It cost about £60 for a house of three rooms.

1766. That is £85 altogether. How long has your house been standing?—About three years.

1767. I suppose yours is an average sample of the houses up there?—Yes.

1768. What is the rent for that sort of cottage?—Four or five shillings per week. When I was about to build, and thought about bringing the wife, I could not get a cottage at that time under 11s. They were scarce. I really could not tell you now what the rents are or the rates.

1769. What would such a house as you have built fetch if rented?—It might have brought 7s. or 8s. per week. They are expensive to build with casual skilled labour at 15s. per day—carpenters, paperhangers, &c.

1770. As to the restrictions, are there any restrictions at the mine which may affect the daily output?—There is no restriction in our rule; none at all.

1771. Was there not something about no miner being allowed to earn more than 15s. a day, and anything in excess of that was to be paid over to the union?—It was a limit of 16s.

1772. Was that put in a printed rule?—It was a motion passed at a general meeting in order to lead to a better distribution of the trucks in the mine.

1773. Has there been any interruption to the work in the mine for want of trucks? Perhaps you will explain what you mean?—I was going to state the reason why that was imposed was because of the places near at hand getting most of the trucks, which were sometimes pushed into the easiest of the places or the nearest or the safest, so as to keep up the movement of the working.

1774. And the near places got more trucks?—Yes. That restriction was put on to prevent that. There is no hiding the question in the least that it was undoubtedly a restriction to a certain extent upon the output. But as soon as capital ceases to hold up these particular places, where most of the trucks are to be got, and hence the highest wages—as soon as they cease to do that the restrictions will be removed.

1775. Was this a deliberate action on the part of capital, this pushing in of the trucks to a certain point?—Well, whenever there was a safe place or a place near at hand, the trucks used to be run in there. Now, it might not be at all times purposely designed by the management; it may be sometimes done by the truckers; but it was a continual source of trouble to us.

1776. Then, the people in the further parts of the mine could not get their share of the trucks; and you say it may have sometimes been the fault of the truckers?—Yes; it may have been sometimes.

1777. Had the company any direct interest in doing that?—Yes; because I see they have published a sheet of the highest and lowest wages, and I think that is a false statement altogether to the public.

1778. Do you account in this way for the great inequalities which sometimes occur between the fortnightly earnings of different men? For instance, we found from a return that we got for that fortnight ending the 19th April that one of the men earned £20 5s. 8d. for his fortnight's work, another man received £8 12s. 1d. That was in the Wallsend. We will take the Brunner for the same period: one man got £19 1s., and another 19s. 3d.?—They have held it up to the country that the men could earn more than is actually the case, as some men have had an unfair share of the tubs; and my explanation accounts for the large disparity of wages in this sheet. There are other sources you can get at.

1779. Are the men pretty steady up there at Brunnerton?—I have never been in a mining community in which there has been so little beer-drinking. We do not see any rowdyism, but I suppose there is a certain amount of drinking going on. It seems, however, to be a religious kind of drinking. For my own part, I have not tasted any liquor since I came into the colony.

1780. You say any surplus over the restricted 16s. was dealt with by the committee?—There are very few of that character; so few could reach the 16s. that it has never been a bugbear.

1781. They could not reach it?—Only in very exceptional cases.

1782. Was any surplus divided amongst those who did not reach it?—No; it went into the general fund, and it was used for the general purposes of the union.

1783. There would not, of course, be any incentive for any person to earn more?—No; certainly it was a hindrance in that direction while it lasted. When Mr. Kennedy began to make so much ado about it it was thought wise to give him that point.

FRIDAY, 24TH OCTOBER, 1890.

Mr. JOHN CONNOR sworn and examined.

1784. *The Chairman.*] What is your position, Captain Connor?—A master mariner. I am at present Harbourmaster at Greymouth.

1785. How long have you held that post?—For three years.

1786. Have you ever been in the position of Harbourmaster elsewhere?—No; I have been signalman two years previous—five years in all here.

1787. Could you explain to the Commissioners what records you keep to show the changes in the state of the bar and river?—Yes. I take the barometer, wind, and everything connected with the bar, morning, noon, and evening—direction and force of wind and current, the state of sea, and depth of water.

1788. Do you take the depth of water at regular intervals?—When smooth enough.

1789. Have you a tide-gauge of any kind?—We have gauge-boards in the river.

1790. What datum-level are they reduced to?—Low-water springs.

1791. You say you take the water on the bar as often as possible: how frequently is that?—Generally about three times a week; that will be about the average.

1792. At what time of the tide do you take it?—Always at high water.

1793. Are these things all entered in the one book?—No. I have a tide-book as well as the soundings. They are all recorded.

1794. Do you find any sudden changes in the depth of the water on the bar?—Not more than about 18in. We find that frequently.

1795. You take the actual soundings on the bar?—Yes; we do it with ordinary lead-lines.

1796. And when you read off a sounding do you make any deduction?—Yes; we take off the reading on the tide-gauge.

1797. Then your soundings are really measured downwards from your zero?—Yes; reading the gauge at the same time.

1798. Do you think it possible that any sudden changes in the depth could escape you?—No: so soon as the weather moderates we go over the bar carefully again.

1799. In your experience what is the effect of the tides on the bar in fine weather? Does the bar heap? Does it shoal at neap-tides and springs?—I do not know that there is much difference.

1800. How do the floods affect it?—The floods always produce a scour.

1801. Is there always a strong outflow found at high water in floods?—Yes; there is always a very strong one.

1802. How far is the bar out beyond the point?—The bar is just about level with the south tip-head, tailing off gradually. It is quite a narrow bar.

1803. How far does it reach over? Does it run to the other tip-head?—It does go pretty near it. The bar is generally about 100ft. wide.

1804. Has it a distinct gut in it anywhere?—No. The bar is a bank, and the depth is regular right across upon it.

1805. So that there is no opening of the channel?—No; there is no channel or gut. Three years ago we had the Jubilee flood, and it piled up an island at the entrance.

1806. How far did the flood rise?—The town was flooded at that time.

1807. Have you ever seen anything like that before?—No; not for fifteen or sixteen years. After this flood it was found the channel had gone out along the north beach; the channel was pushed over so that it ran parallel with the north beach.

1808. How long did that remain?—About ten days, during which time the beacons had to be shifted.

1809. How did the island disappear?—It disappeared gradually.

1810. Is the bar frequently unworkable?—Not very often.

1811. What is the usual length of time that it ever remains unworkable?—I think the longest period was in March, 1888—namely, twelve days.

1812. Is that the longest you have known?—Yes.

1813. What are the other usual periods?—About three days is the average.

1814. Have you got your returns for the last fortnight?—This return is up to the 30th September. I put in a table showing all the blocks since June, 1887, up to date, marked "Exhibit No. 21."

1815. What are these blocks generally due to?—Either to heavy sea or fresh in the river.

1816. Which is the most frequent?—Generally in bad weather when the sea breaks the fresh makes: both occur at the same time.

1817. Which sea is the most common in blocking?—The south-west sea, which follows along the beach. The block is caused by the break, not by the shallowness of the bar.

1818. Will vessels strike in the trough when a heavy sea is running?—No, not in fine weather.

1819. What would you say the average depth on the bar was, as a seaman?—It may be considered a 19ft. bar. That is normal.

1820. And it shallows to what?—It comes down to 14ft. 6in. sometimes in the winter time. That is about the lowest. There are more vessels jammed outside coming in than going out.

1821. Why is that?—Owing to the danger of being thrown on to the tip-heads. They will not steer in broken water.

1822. It is owing to the want of steerage-way?—Yes, due to the break.

1823. What do they do when they are compelled to stand off?—Very often they have to anchor.

1824. Is there a good anchorage?—Very good anchorage.

1825. In what depth?—From 10 to 15 fathoms.

1826. In what depth have you seen a break?—I have seen a break in 13 fathoms.

1827. You said it was good solid holding-ground?—Yes, very good.

1828. Have there been any accidents to vessels anchored there?—No, very rarely. The only danger is of breaking their windlasses in the heavy surge.

1829. *Mr. Brown.*] Has that occurred at all in your experience?—Yes; a good few of them have broken their windlasses here, particularly the steam-windlasses they have got now. They are very easily broken.

1830. *The Chairman.*] Is that when they are trying to lift the anchor?—Yes; the vessels do not ride heavy.

1831. You have nothing to do with the wharf-fronting now?—I merely shift the vessels.

1832. Could you describe how: do you generally slue them?—It all depends upon the vessels. The larger-sized ones have got to be slued before they are loaded.

1833. Do you do that?—Yes.

1834. Do you encounter any difficulty in sluing them under the present arrangements?—No; but it depends upon the current: if there is much current it is pretty difficult to get round. We have to wait until nearly high water if there is much of a run in the river.

1835. Does high water check the current?—Yes.

1836. Even in heavy freshes?—Yes.

1837. How high up does the water come?—The water backs up 9ft. 6in., and it will go down to 2ft. or 3ft. on the gauge. It will run like a mill-race at low water.

1838. How far does it ordinarily run up when there is no fresh in the river?—I do not know how much above the wharf it checks. The current always runs down.

1839. How long are the vessels ever stuck up, afraid to cast off to slue?—Sometimes they are detained perhaps five or six hours.

1840. Never a day's length?—I will tell you where there is some delay too. If they are loading shipping at the fixed cranes, and want to shift place to suit the hatches at low water, they cannot if there is any run in the river.

1841. This delays loading?—Yes.

1842. Is there any obstacle in the river, or any danger to vessels sluing, from these groins?—No; there is no danger with an ordinary crew if you do not try to swing them with too much fresh on.

1843. It would not be damaged at all with these training-walls on the north side?—Not at all; it shallows too much; she would ground too soon. A vessel could not shoot; she would take the shingle first before she would reach the stone walls.

1844. Have you seen much improvement in the harbour in your time?—Yes; a good deal more water during the last five years.

1844A. Are the stoppages less frequent?—Oh, yes! it is only the weather now we have got to contend with. There is another thing I would bring under your notice. There is never more than 8ft. in the river below low-water zero. Whatever the depth of the bar, this part of the river never alters. I mean the water on the river-bar, abreast of the lagoon.

1845. What about freshes or droughts?—There may be, perhaps, 6in., but it is quite independent of the bar.

1846. That is therefore the limitation to the port, no matter how deep the outer bar was?—Yes. The depth of water on the bar at springs is 18ft. 6in., and at neaps 16ft. 6in. A few go, say, 19ft.

1847. This is really the workable depth of the port?—Yes.

1848. What is the draught of vessels entering here?—It is 16ft., but they could not come in if there was any sea on; they would only be detained in the roadstead. There is not more than 16ft. at the wharves, average low water. They would be aground.

1849. With 16ft. entering the bar, what about the water inside by the wharves?—As I tell you, there is always a foot of water on the gauge. It would never go down to zero, except in very fine weather.

1850. What is the largest vessel that has ever been in here?—The steamer "Pukaki," 843 tons register, draught 16ft. 9in., carried 1,711 tons of coal, and the barque "Mersey," 963 tons register, draught 13ft. 6in., carried 212 tons of coal and 839 tons of coke. The "Mersey" was a very light draught, but she was very long.

1851. About the question of tugging: how does the tug-work? have you any difficulty?—No. Of course the tug is getting used less every year.

1852. There is no chance of a vessel sailing in?—No.

1853. How do you manage with sailing-vessels?—They are getting less and less—dropping off, in fact—not worth talking about.

1854. *Mr. Brown.*] The tug is only for sailing-vessels?—Very few steamers tug here, only large ones. It is chiefly for sailing-vessels.

1855. *The Chairman.*] Is that in coming in or going out?—They must tug them both ways.

1856. What are the charges for the tug?—The large boats £15, and for small ones so much a ton.

1857. Has there been much gathering of sand following out the south breakwater?—We have not noticed it much the last few years, since they put in the stones. It has made up a good bit before that period, but we would hardly notice it lately.

1858. Where the signalman's house is?—Yes. A flagstaff was there at one time. The beach has made out on the south. It must be between 800ft. and 1,000ft.

1859. Is it far from the end of the south tip? How far could you walk out at low water from the south tip?—Not more than 600ft. or 700ft.

1860. Is it still going out that way?—I think so. I think it is gradually shallowing.

1861. So that you have not come to the neutral point yet?—No.

1862. Where does the shingle pitch—on the north side?—Yes; it comes in right at the back, and fetches up at the back. The shingle that comes out of the river passes across the bar and goes to the north side, and spreads along to the north beach.

1863. How far has it gone out in your time—the north beach?—It must be somewhere nearly about the same; there is not much difference.

1864. Notwithstanding that the tip-head is shorter, it is making in the same proportion?—I do not think the tip-head has anything to do with it.

1865. Do you think the current is altogether dependent on the south wind?—Yes. The prevailing wind, of course, is westerly.

1866. Have you ever been at Port Curtis, at Point Elizabeth?—I have been there, I think, only twice.

1867. Did you anchor there?—No; we steered round and sounded.

1868. Would you consider it a safe place for shipping in?—No.

1869. No vessels have entered there at all?—It is too open, too much sea runs in there; it runs in fearfully, even from the southward. There is no protection there at all.

1870. Is there any chance of having a strong jetty there to ship coals? would there be no chance of it standing?—I think there would be. It is something like the breakwater—it breaks so far out that the force of the sea is broken up. That is to say, the beach shoals so gradually that the sea breaks outside in 12 or 13 fathoms of water. The broken sea would affect a vessel anchoring, but it would not affect the jetty—its force would be spent. As a proof of this small stones may be seen lying unmoved on the tip-head. Just about the ordinary amount of damage; very little to what you would expect, looking to the sea and the stones.

1871. Is there anything more you can give us? Have you any opinion as to whether storage should be provided for coal?—There should be a week's storage.

1872. How should that be provided, do you think?—Well, they introduced the cranes here because they said the coal was soft and easily broken. The cranes cause a good deal of detention, as there is a considerable run on the river.

1873. If they had staiths for loading instead of cranes there would be no detention?—No.

1874. Is this mostly arising from the rapid current in the river?—Yes.

1875. A vessel having two or three hatches would have to be shifted?—Yes; there is a good deal of detention from that. There would be no detention as at present. This arises from the rapid current of the river. We are all night sometimes shifting or mooring a vessel incessantly.

1876. I do not see why you shift them from the cranes?—The cranes ought to be moved themselves. We cannot bring up the vessels. The vessel is placed where the shifting of the crane reaches to, and when that crane is blocked up you have to bring her on to another hatch. So if a strong current is running down you can see the difficulty. We have not shoots enough.

1877. Did you ever have them here?—All the time before the cranes we had what was called the gadget or shifting shoots. There was less detention with them.

1878. Could you work them at high water?—No; there was a little time lost at high water.

1879. How did you get the coal into them when they were higher?—There was a third crane, and the wagons came up on an incline to abreast of the vessel. That gadget has since been taken away. They killed one and injured two or three people, letting the wagons run down. An incline would be necessary with staiths also. They would fetch the coal right over the wharf so as to give it a fall.

1880. What height was this incline here?—It was about 9ft., I should think.

1881. What was the length of the gadget?—It was about 200ft. And this gadget they put on it is just like that at Westport, only on a small scale. There was nothing to check the wagon running right through the wharf, and through the people and everything else. The contents of the wagon were shot down the shoots, and let go at the back of the gadget.

1882. Was there no one attending upon them?—The man let them rip at the time. There was a man at the sheds looking after them when they arrived.

1883. Then these inclines were badly planned, and were dangerous?—Yes; they killed people. One man had his leg cut off, and another was killed.

1884. How long ago was that?—Only about three years ago.

1885. Have these cranes only been up three years?—Yes.

1886. These accidents must have been before the cranes?—Yes.

1887. Do you think it would be possible to revert to this plan again—I mean this arrangement of the inclines?—No; not without rearranging the whole of the wharf. You would have to alter everything. In fact, you could not revert to the gadget unless we were to extend the wharf and make another arrangement altogether. You could not work shoots upon the present wharf—not with the cranes, I should think. You must have one or the other. The dip to the crane would be too high. Having once adopted the present plan we cannot go back to the shoots. Of course, as I said before, if they were to extend the wharves it might be done.

1888. You had a lot of cranes?—There was only one crane there before; now there are two hydraulics as well. The gadget has done all the work pretty well.

1889. There are loading-shoots besides what you call the gadget?—Yes; there would be about a dozen places where they could load coals off the wharf with shoots.

Mr. JOHN GILLS sworn and examined.

1890. *The Chairman.*] What is your position, Mr. Gills?—I am a coal-weigher.

1891. What is your business?—I am a coal-miner.

1892. At what mine?—At the Brunner; but, of course, we weigh both for the Coal-pit Heath and the Brunner at the same place.

1893. For how long have you been weighing?—Nearly twelve months.

1894. Were you a weighman before what is known as the amalgamation?—Yes.

1895. That is, before the twelve months?—No; I think it is in March.

1896. Were you at the Brunner before then?—Yes.

1897. It is only since then you have had the Coal-pit Heath to weigh?—Yes.

1898. Do you keep any record of the skips? Have you got books with you?—Yes.

1899. Your duty is to weigh certain of the skips?—Yes.

1900. For each man?—Each pair of men.

1901. Along with the men's check-weighman?—Yes.

1902. Do you keep separate entries in the books?—Yes; the check-weighman keeps his own books, and we keep separate books.

1903. Do you compare entries?—We compare each day, after the day's work is over, and also at the end of each fortnight, and when making up the pay-sheets.

1904. Have you ever any difference of opinion with the check-weighman?—Sometimes a little.

1905. What points are they generally upon which a difference could occur?—We are supposed to weigh one tub for each pair of men each shift, and the remainder of their coal that they put out is calculated on that tub, so that the selection of the tub to be weighed is sometimes a matter of discussion.

1906. Do you select these tubs after they make their appearance out of the mine?—No; I will explain to you. Each pair of men is distinguished by a tally and a number, which was fixed to his skip, and we agree to take any number that may come first. It is an agreement, of course, that we extend the weighing of the coal as near as possible over the entire shift. So that we do not hurry the weighing.

1907. *Mr. Moody.*] So that the men will never know when their skips will be weighed?—The men are not supposed to know.

1908. *Mr. Brown.*] As a matter of fact, do they know?—No; I do not see how they could know.

1909. Will you explain that answer you gave first, that you agreed to take whatever number of tallies came first. If number one came first, would you take that?—Whatever number comes, we take it. If it is the first thing in the morning, we weigh that number, and say, for that day for that pair of men, that is to be the weight—whatever comes out first. The inside cannot know which is coming out first.

1910. You do not mean in the number of the whole race?—No, the number of the tally on the top.

1911. Do the men know when the first numbers are taken in the first race?—No; they might conjecture, but it would simply be conjecture. Of course, if the man filled two or three good tubs early on in the first shift he might run the risk, and then one of those might possibly be one of them, but he could not possibly know.

1912. He does not know that the first numbers are taken by the weighmen?—Yes, they know the first numbers are taken out, but as to which of those numbers are taken they do not know.

1913. How do they come in a race of eight, nine, or ten? Do they take all the numbers in the race?—No, just one of the numbers.

1914. It is optional on the part of the weighman?—Yes; we generally agree, and say we will start with this race when we start in the morning. Then we take the first number in the race and weigh it, and we do not take any more in that race. We weigh equally the next race. That is in the Coal-pit Heath Mine. In the Brunner we work with the endless chain.

1915. In the first race you take the first number that has not been previously weighed?—Yes.

1916. That does not apply to the first race that comes out so much?—No.

1917. You only take one skip out of the first race?—Yes.

1918. And the one taken forms the skip in the first race?—Yes.

1919. In the Brunner you have an endless chain?—Yes.

1920. You take the foremost in the first train and the foremost of the next train if not previously weighed?—Yes.

1921. Suppose you generally took the first skip in the train, would not the miners in the mine not try to get their skip put first if it should be a good skip, so that it should be weighed?—Very possibly; but, if I suspected that, I should deem it my duty to say, "We will commence on the second of the race this morning." I have that power as the company's weighman. If the miners suspected that the first skip of the first train was sure to be taken, they would be sure to fill that skip well, so that they would get that full weight for the day.

1922. Do the men inside the mines, then, have no knowledge what places their particular skip takes in the train?—Not to my knowledge.

1923. *Mr. Moody.*] The miners never attend at the places where the set of skips or train are made up?—No.

1924. It would be a good distance from their working place?—Yes.

1925. *The Chairman.*] You never take a second number of the same train on the same day?—No.

1926. Of course you have a large number to go through—that is, at the Coal-pit Heath. What about the Brunner?—We proceed on a very simple principle. The Brunner coal skips come singly, or sometimes in twos or threes. There is an endless rope.

1927. How do you manage, then?—We extend the weighing from the commencement of the shift until near about the finish.

1928. What difference does it make, this coming in an endless rope?—Well, they come in a race from the Coal-pit Heath, and from the Brunner they come in ones, twos, and threes.

1929. Does that give rise to any difference of opinion between you and the check weighman?—I was going to explain what occasioned sometimes little disputes: If a truck comes out that we want to weigh, and it happens to be badly filled, the check-weighman might say that that truck has been upset in the mine, and we are not supposed to weigh tubs that have been upset. When a tub is upset they are supposed to mark it "Upset by the truckers."

1930. How does he mark it?—With a chalk. All tubs so marked, of course, we do not weigh. Occasionally tubs may appear not well filled, but not marked "Upset;" and hence the slight differences between the two weighmen.

1931. *Mr. Brown.*] Will you explain the system upon which those Brunner tubs are selected, as they come singly out of the mine?—We take three tubs to weigh—any numbers, of course, that we want we take. As there is only a limited number of men in the Brunner this last eight months—but I could not be particular to a month or two—we have only had twelve or thirteen numbers running. We weigh two or three in a given time, and then rest awhile, and then take another two or three in a given time, so as to extend it over the whole shift, as we had only twelve or thirteen numbers during the entire shift.

1932. We will take the Coal-pit Heath first, where they work in the solid coal—during the time you have been weighing in the Coal-pit Heath?—There has been some working in the solid coal; but during the last few months there have been mostly all pillars.

1933. Is there not still some working in the solid?—Oh, yes; they are still taking whole coal from the bord-workings.

1934. In the whole coal, can you give us some figures, so that we might arrive at the average weight of the tubs, and the average number the men put out, also the extreme number that a man puts out?—I do not think we could do that for the whole coal; I do not think that we could make any distinction.

1935. I should like to know, are those weights taken before or after screening?—In March we commenced the gross weight; prior to that it was screened coal.

1936. Where did you take the weights then, at that time? How did you manage after screening it?—We have a separate screen—what we call the "Billy Fair-play." We tip the skip on to the screen, and when it is screened we weigh it below the screen. That is what is called the "Billy Fair-play."

1937. The company take delivery of the whole coal unscreened, whether they are paying on the screened or unscreened?—They take it on the unscreened. They were paying the men on the screened coal.

1938. But even when paying on the screened coal, do not the company take delivery on the unscreened?—Sometimes they do and sometimes they do not. The company have shoots put over their screens when they want unscreened coal; but when they want to screen the coal they take up these shoots.

1939. How are the weights in the Billy Fair-play adjusted,—what kind of a weighing-machine is it?—It is a platform weighbridge, and, of course, the box is placed upon the platform.

1940. I suppose that is checked occasionally?—Yes; the weighbridge is checked both by myself and the check-weighman. We have proper Government stamped weights to test it with.

1941. *The Chairman.*] Now, you say you cannot distinguish the solid coal from the other?—No.

1942. Will you tell us about the Coal-pit Heath screened coal? Could you tell us anything about the weights got by the miners in the skips? How do they manage in shifting or changing places? Do they come and take their mates' numbers?—As a rule they do: during the last few weeks before they stopped altogether. I produce my day-book and also my pay-book.

1943. That is for the whole period?—Yes.

1944. Is this for the Brunner or Coal-pit Heath?—Both; also the Wallsend, which was kept by Walter Lover.

1945. Is he at the mine now?—Yes; he still lives at Brunner.

1946. Was that on the same system?—Yes. Since the gross weight was adopted at Wallsend they might weigh two for each day, and sometimes three or sometimes four for each pair.

1947. In any case, their books represent the accepted weight as between the miners and the company?—Yes, because they are checked every day and every fortnight.

1948. What is the difference in the system?—The only difference is perhaps this: that the Brunner is an easier method of keeping the books.

1949. How do you check the gross coal? How is it weighed?—We take the tubs on the same principle as I have described; but we weigh the coal and the tub altogether first, then we empty the skip and weigh the tub alone, and deduct. There was a special weighbridge on the same principle fixed on the top; the other was below. Of course there is a deduction for stone.

1950. How do you do that?—When we weighed on the Billy Fair-play it was my duty to take out whatever stone I got before weighing the coal.

1951. And with the other system do you take out all the stone?—We could not take the stone out so well; we did so for a time, but we gave it up, because the men and the manager, Mr. Bishop, agreed to deduct 26lb. for stone out of each tub.

1952. Was that ever complained against by any of the men?—Not that I know of.

1953. Or by the check-weighman?—As far as I know it was never complained against.

1954. It was an agreement, as through the Association, and none of the men objected to it?—Yes.

1955. Do you think that represents a fair average quantity of stone coming from the mine?—I believe Mr. Bishop wanted more.

1956. *Mr. Brown.*] How is it in the Coal-pit Heath and the Brunner Mines respectively, as regards stone?—I should explain that in the Brunner there is no stone deducted.

1957. Did you work at Wallsend at all?—I was weighman two years for the men.

1958. How did that seem as regards stone?—There was a good deal of stone.

1959. What do you mean by "a good deal"?—I think there was more than 26lb. I think it would average more than that.

1960. *Mr. Moody.*] More than in the Coal-pit Heath?—I think so; but it was only guesswork.

1961. *Mr. Brown.*] The same class of stone, but not so much stone?—Not so much white stone in the Wallsend Mine as in the Coal-pit Heath. There is a sort of grey mixed with it in the Wallsend; there is some like that in the Coal-pit Heath, but more white stone.

1962. How do you come to keep the books separate?—We have to, because we want to get the amounts from the different mines.

1963. How did you manage if the men happened to be sharing for any period?—I could not give you the exact differences. It was perhaps for a month or six weeks. I might have ascertained if I had known it would be required.

1964. How do the sharing men appear in these books?—There was no sharing of work from January to the 8th March, nor again until the 19th July, when the lock-out took place; in fact the only sharing has been during the September previous to the last strike.

1965. Then, there were three, four, or five men in a shift during September?—There were three men in a place where two had previously been. There were not four, but always, I think, three; it was owing to some misunderstanding if there were not three.

1966. *The Chairman.*] In a shift there might be three different men, or often the same three men, on the same day, I suppose?—I will furnish as nearly as possible the total number of individual miners drawing wages from the mine during September.

1967. Could the men make as good wages three in a place as two in a place?—No; but the total wages would perhaps be greater.

1968. Can you tell me now why this sharing of work became necessary in September?—I think some parts of the mine were drowned out.

1969. You are aware that there was a stoppage on the 19th July, called a "lock-out"?—I could not be correct about the date.

1970. And the work apparently began again about September. Did the same number of men get back again that left in July?—I would not be sure. It took a considerable time for some of the places to get ready; but so soon as they could get ready they put men on after the stoppage. The men had been idle so long.

1971. When you refer to the water getting in, do you mean to the Coal-pit Heath?—Yes. I will not say that was the only cause of the stoppage, but especially where they are taking the pillars out I have seen them literally close. Then the sharing of work becomes incessant.

1972. In consequence of that, do you think?—Yes; partly in consequence of that, and partly from the fact that the water was in the Coal-pit Heath Mine, so that the same number of men could not get to work afterwards at the same time.

1973. Have there been any more places opened up since?—Yes; after they had been out for awhile they opened out as quickly as they could.

1974. So this sharing was only a temporary measure until they properly opened the mine?—There is a difficulty yet in reference to getting out the water.

1975. Is the water rising during that stoppage?—I could not say.

1976. Is it flooding out places?—I could not say. The Wallsend was another case as well, whilst the men were occupied with places up to July when the stoppage occurred.

1977. Were many of the men unemployed about the place wanting admission to the mine?—I am just wondering whether they did not share when the Wallsend was stopped.

1978. They had to share in order to find work for these men?—Yes.

1979. That was the middle of August?—I think so. I remember distinctly before the mine stopped a part of the men had been out of employment in the Coal-pit Heath, and some of them were drafted off to share work with the men in the Wallsend Mine. I would, however, not be sure about what I have said in reference to the sharing of the work with the Wallsend men, because we had done very little when work was stopped.

1980. There has been really no sharing up to the middle of July?—No. By far the greater portion of the men that would share the work would come from the Wallsend.

1981. And what was the date of the last pay in the Wallsend?—26th July, 1890.

1982. Your position, I think, exempts you from being a member of the union?—Yes; that is a rule throughout the coal trade all over the world—that the masters' weighmen must not join a union.

Mr. Richard Newton sworn and examined.

1983. *The Chairman.*] What are you?—A coal-miner; but I have also been quartz-mining for a long time in New Zealand.

1984. How long have you been at the Grey mines?—Five years last July.

1985. Were you employed putting in the stone drift, to prove the second fault in the mine?—Yes.

1986. How long were you working at that?—I was two spells at it—two months the first spell and three months the second spell.

1987. How many mates had you?—I had five.
1988. Working in two shifts?—Working in three shifts.
1989. In a day's work?—Yes.
1990. *Mr. Moody.*] That is two of you at a time?—Yes.
1991. *The Chairman.*] What size is the drift?—8ft. wide and 6ft. high; some places less and in some places higher than that.
1992. Was that the whole time the drift has been driving?—We worked the whole time, but I did not put in the whole 12 chains. I was in at the beginning and when we left the coal.
1993. You say 12 chains?—I think there was 13.
1994. Was it hard driving?—Very good driving—all contract work.
1995. At how much per foot?—We had three contract prices—£1, £2, and £1 7s., according to the hardness of the ground.
1996. What made the change? Did you change from the rock?—We had a leader of fireclay and coal rising—rising to the west; they were as much as 1ft. and 18in. thick, rising before us.
1997. It was water-level?—Yes.
1998. How did that make the driving harder?—Because it was mostly grit coming up from the bottom.
1999. And you could not get holing—that was the disadvantage?—We had to draw it instead of holing.
2000. Did any of these coal leaders go with you steady?—We had one or two for about a fortnight to keep with us, but we always lost it in the roof before they passed on.
2001. You did not follow them up in the roof always?—No.
2002. How far was it before you came to any change?—We got a big change in the last 50ft.
2003. What was it?—Hard solid rock driving.
2004. Did you notice the nature of the change? Was it a slide? What did it change with?—It was a slide instead of that hard rock. There was a big foot-wall. We got more scaly stuff. After going through the hard we came on a big slide.
2005. How many feet going through the hard stuff?—We drove 40ft. odd.
2006. With a dip before you into the floor?—Yes.
2007. Not in the drive?—It was sideways, opposite to the drive. It was dipping from the upside on the long-ways and driving to the left hand. We had the best work in that bend [indicating on plan], but the manager turned us to the hill.
2008. Why was that?—He thought we could catch the coal quicker by going to the hill. It was dipping 1 in 3 to the left-hand side and driving in the last straight piece on the plan.
2009. Was it mullocky?—Yes, it was very hard and shiny.
2010. Did it burst at all?—No.
2011. What did you come to? Did you keep following that along?—Yes; it made driving good.
2012. It was a good parting?—Yes; we put a hole in it on the upper side. It was coaly stuff, the same as we had when we started before on the hanging-wall.
2013. What was its lowest thickness?—1ft. 18in.
2014. What was over it?—It seemed to be grit; very hard.
2015. That was all you had on to the face?—That was all we had on to the face.
2016. That is the last you saw?—Yes.
2017. That straight piece is bad driving on the face on that side?—Yes.
2018. Where were the boreholes put down?—We drove to the west pretty steep—under 1 in 3—for 30ft., and then put down a borehole 50ft.
2019. Did you get any coal?—We are supposed to have struck that side [shown on plan]: that gave off a lot of gas.
2020. Is that the first gas you got on the stone drift?—Yes.
2021. You never got coal in that?—No; when we got to the slide the gas came off, and we put another borehole down: that borehole was 120ft.
2022. What did you get?—We supposed we struck the solid, but we never got any gas; we did not get any gas at all; we never completed even the first hole; we followed the soft stuff until we lost it altogether, and then we had to drive through the hard solid stuff to the top.
2023. And is that the whole of what was done?—That is all that was done in that locality ever since.
2024. What did you and your mates think about these operations?—We had opinions of our own; our opinion, of course, was that the coal was this side of the slide [indicating on plan]. If we had put in a drive the same length on the other side of the slide we think we should have got the coal.
2025. That is, if you had cross-driven to the right through the foot-wall of the solid?—Yes.
2026. Why did you think so?—Because we thought it was a throw-over, and that the slide had thrown the coal on its end, very nearly, at that time.
2027. You did not go into the foot-wall at all?—No.
2028. What did you think it was made by?—I have seen leaders of coal about it, and so have my mates, but there was nothing done inside of the foot-wall.
2029. Was it like a rough coal outside?—Yes.
2030. It was grit, then?—Yes; what they call loose crushed.
2031. *Mr Moody.*] What do you think were the average quantities that you drove at the £1, £1 7s., and £2?—We had no big contracts. It was just month for month. If we got hard ground it would be a bigger price. There would be an average of 29ft. for the three prices.
2032. Would that be a good average?—Yes.
2033. *The Chairman.*] When were you in last?—It will be three years next November. There has been no work done since then, when the boring-gear was brought out.

2034. When did they bring that out?—That was six weeks before the strikes commenced.
2035. What did they find it like when they got in there?—I did not ask any questions. I saw the gear brought out, and I inquired who had been in. I was told it was the man who had been in the road to clear it.
2036. The place will be kept clean now?—Yes.
2037. Would it be expensive to resume exploring?—No; it is all ready to go on again, except that the road is taken up.
2038. Have you ever done any more deadwork in the mine of the same kind in any other part?—Yes.
2039. Where? Did you have anything to do with the Wallsend—any working?—I sunk the pit from the top in the Wallsend.
2040. Both of them?—No, the last new one.
2041. What did you have for sinking?—Day-wages. We met lots of gas going down.
2042. At any particular places?—I could not say. There is one at 200ft., and I fancy it is 360ft. down to the second blow of gas.
2043. What was it like?—When we came down to it in the water, it was like taking down kerosene and throwing over it. It would light anywhere. We used to work by it at any time instead of candles. It was all going up the shaft. There was nothing stopping there.
2044. Did you get any extra gas when you struck the coal?—The gas came from the last floor or two with the same pitch as the coal when we struck it at the bottom of the pit.
2045. Did you go through any changes of rock? Had you any soft shale-beds or sands?—Yes, we had one very soft; we had some soft beds, but the country was very regular.
2046. You would have a ventilator?—Yes, we would have what we called a "windsail."
2047. When you got the coal did much gas come off?—No.
2048. Have you done any more driving in any other part of the field about there?—I drove through a fault in the Wallsend dip—the Taylorville fault.
2049. What was it like?—Hard grit the whole way, 25ft.
2050. *Mr. Moody.*] Did you drive level?—Yes.
2051. You did not get through the fault?—Yes.
2052. *The Chairman.*] What did you come to?—The coal came up from the bottom, and we followed the coal until it got to the height of the drive.
2053. Then the coal was dipping to you?—Yes.
2054. You were driving under the river?—Yes; to the west, or towards Taylorville.
2055. What was the coal like?—The best coal I have ever seen in the mine.
2056. *Mr. Moody.*] Was it free from stone?—No stone in it.
2057. *The Chairman.*] You came into it through the roof [indicating on plan]: what was the roof made of?—It was a nice yellow roof, very regular. It was sandstone grit.
2058. Did you try any of that coal at all? Did you burn any of it?—No, I did not burn any, but I heard one of the employers was burning some of it when they took it up. The bosses reckoned it was the best coal in the pit.
2059. Did you get any gas coming through that fault?—Yes, we got a good deal of gas. We used to fire with safety cartridges.
2060. Why was the thing not followed on? Did you know there was nothing?—We got another turn. We went through the coal and straight on and came to another slide, and it turned us right round uphill.
2061. How far did you go through the coal to the next slide?—I think 20ft.
2062. Do you know how thick the seam was?—We never got to the fireclay on the bottom.
2063. What depth of dip had she? Was it heavy?—It was dipping from us.
2064. You never went through the coal?—No; we drove 20 yards on it. We came to a slide then, but supposed the coal was in the bottom.
2065. Why did you think so?—Because there was every indication of it.
2066. That would not mean a very serious fault, then?—No, that did not.
2067. Was that the end of the work?—We left that work for the time being; but we afterwards got what they called a perpendicular fault.
2068. What did you do? Did you put down a bore or a blast?—We put a blast in the face of it.
2069. What kind of fault was it?—It had every indication of a downthrow.
2070. Did you get anything more?—No.
2071. That is all that was done there?—Yes.
2072. When were you in there last? Was it soon before the mine was opened or closed?—It might have been six or eight weeks before the mine was drowned.
2073. That fault was never proved?—No.
2074. Do you think if they had driven further than 20 yards they would have driven further than the coal?—I think the slide they cut there is the main fault; I fancy the coal is below this. That was the main fault from the way it looked.
2075. Was it completely cut off?—Yes.
2076. You supposed the coal was in the bottom?—Yes.
2077. *Mr. Brown.*] Referring back to the Brunner drift: where did you deliver the stuff that you got from the drift?—We went to the river.
2078. Was it included in your contract price?—No; we put it to the last incline, and the truckers took it from there and put it on the endless rope.

Mr. William Stone sworn and examined.

2079. *The Chairman.*] What are you, Mr. Stone?—District Railway Manager.

2080. How long have you been here in that position?—Nearly six years.
2081. Can you describe exactly the nature of your charge?—The whole of the railway is under my charge—the traffic, rolling-stock, and the permanent-way.
2082. And have you anything to do with the shipping on the wharf?—Yes, and to control the wharf.
2083. How far does your control of the wharf extend?—Well, it includes the whole of the working of the wharf—everything but the actual leaving of the vessels.
2084. You regulate the loading and unloading?—Yes.
2085. And the loading-up of trucks, and everything of that kind?—Yes.
2086. I see that you were asked to produce a classified return, in weekly parts, of the traffic, including the receipts and expenditure?—Now that we are working in connection with the Midland Railway all our accounts are prepared in Wellington, because they have to be divided; but I have taken them out four-weekly as they are published in the *Gazette*, and by dividing by 4 you get a very fair average for a week. [Here the witness handed in Exhibit No. 22.]
2087. These are for different years?—They are all for one year—the year ending the 31st March, 1890, under different headings.
2088. Is the charge for freight upon fireclay goods and coke the same as the charge that has been agreed to upon coal?—For bricks and fireclay it is the same, but not for coke. There is some special rate.
2089. There is a special rate for coke?—Yes.
2090. *Mr. Moody.*] You mean to say the charge upon coke is not the same as for coal?—Yes.
2091. How much for bricks and fireclay—2s. 6d. a ton?—Two shillings.
2092. *The Chairman.*] Do we understand this 150,000 tons will be all charged at 2s.?—Some of that will be higher.
2093. The fireclay?—The coke.
2094. Some will be coke?—Yes.
2095. Then, if these returns were taken as the basis of payment of royalty, they might mislead, if the royalty is not payable on coke or firebrick?—Yes; and the coal from Wallsend is included in that, and I believe there is no royalty payable.
2096. But the royalty is charged on a different account—the royalty on the Brunner and Coal-pit Heath? You have nothing to do with the collection of that?—No; but if you take the whole of that as approximately the quantity of coal put out, and take the royalty at 6d. a ton on that, it would be including the coal put out from the Wallsend Mine, upon which no 6d. a ton is paid.
2098. *Mr. Moody.*] Very little from freehold?—Not from freehold, but from lease. I understand, from their lease, there is no royalty payable at Wallsend. The uniform charge on minerals is 2s. per ton, except for coke, for which there is a special charge, being 3s. per ton for coke used within New Zealand, and 2s. 6d. per ton for coke for shipment beyond New Zealand to foreign ports.
2099. *Mr. Brown.*] What is the reason for the distinction between New Zealand coke and foreign coke?—It is a special arrangement which Mr. Kennedy obtained, to encourage foreign trade.
2100. This was arranged at Mr. Kennedy's request?—Yes.
2101. Is it usual to make a distinction between goods consigned to England and those to ports of New Zealand?—I am not aware of it.
2102. Did you ever hear of such a thing before?—No, I do not think so.
2103. It was not done at your suggestion?—No; I believe there has been something similar in the case of timber for Australia. From some of the North Island ports there has been some lower rate.
2104. Have you any return which would enable the Commission to distinguish between the carriage of round coal, nuts and dross, coke, and fireclay goods?—No.
2105. You could not prepare that return?—No.
2106. When the mines have been busy has the rolling-stock you have been provided with been sufficient to overtake the traffic?—Now they have amalgamated, it is.
2107. What was the reason it was insufficient before? Was there more coal put out previously?—No, only each mine was working independently, and those with a small daily output wanted to be in a position to have a load for a steamer.
2108. *Mr. Moody.*] It required more rolling-stock?—Yes.
2109. *The Chairman.*] The rival demand for wagons required a large number?—Yes.
2110. That meant that many of the wagons were idle for a time because they were promised to certain mines that had not ships ready?—Yes.
2111. Would you explain exactly why, before the amalgamation, the wagons were insufficient without the output being greater?—It was in this way: The mine with the smallest output, if they had a large-sized vessel coming, would want to be on the same footing as a mine with a large output, and would want to start earlier.
2112. They would occupy the wagons longer?—Yes.
2113. Are there any other wagons charged for by day at all—anything in the shape of demurrage?—Not for ordinary coal trade.
2114. Is there any demurrage charge from their being loaded and kept standing?—There has been no charge for that.
2115. *Mr. Brown.*] Was there an allocation of trucks to separate mines?—Yes.
2116. *The Chairman.*] Was that fixed by you?—Yes.
2117. You were in conference with the mine-owners?—Yes; it was allocated monthly.
2118. *Mr. Brown.*] So many to each mine?—Yes, according to the previous month's output. That worked very well.

2119. Does that mean specific trucks allocated to one mine, and used for no other mine?—A specific number, and they were allowed to fill that number in anticipation.

2120. But not specific trucks?—No, not specific trucks.

2121. *The Chairman.*] That worked very well?—Yes, except in one instance in one mine.

2122. Which was that?—It was the Tyneside.

2123. What was the matter there?—The monthly output was small. They were only entitled to a small number of trucks.

2124. Is your mineral traffic ever stopped from the trucks being all filled with coal?—Not much recently; nor for the last two years.

2125. The traffic has not been stopped from the trucks being all filled, above a day or so?—No.

2126. I understand from that that the trucks are emptied with sufficient rapidity to enable them to be returned to the mine, but that occasionally a day occurs on which the mines have to stop, and you have to stop?—Yes.

2127. That is owing to the want of shipping?—Yes, generally. It is, of course, really due to the shipping, because ships may be on the way, and at other times they may be detained outside by bad weather.

2128. Have you any return showing the stoppages? Do you keep any such record?—I have not kept any record.

2129. The railway is stopped and everything is quite idle at these times?—Not entirely idle. We try to find something for the men to do, but it is not full employment.

2130. That leads to the question as to how far, in your opinion, increased storage would facilitate the traffic?—It would if we had storage at the port. It would stop some of these idle days.

2131. Would storage at the mine effect that?—It would have no effect on that. Since the amalgamation the Wallsend Mine has been frequently stopped.

2132. Why?—Because there was more demand for the other coal. The company would stop the Wallsend Mine working and keep the other two going when there was a limited number of trucks.

2133. So that in that case it was not really the want of trucks, but it was simply that they were used for other mines?—That is it.

2134. Increased storage would not have had any effect upon that, because it would not have removed that cause?—No.

2135. How much storage do you think it desirable to provide at the port? Have you made any notes on that at all?—No; I have not made any notes. Our average output is 3,000 tons per week. That is the average quantity shipped.

2136. Yes; and how much do your wagons store?—Our wagons will store 1,500 tons.

2137. What is the average time for a wagon to be occupied, from the time it leaves the mine until it returns to the mine? Can you give us any idea of that? How many trips does a wagon make in a week?—I could not tell you that. I have known instances where trucks have gone up from Greymouth at 1 o'clock, say, been loaded at the mine with nuts out of the bins, and been back here at a quarter to 3.

2138. Not three hours?—It is only an hour and three-quarters. It is only the time of running up there and back again, and thirty-five minutes up there shunting. While they were shunting the train they filled those trucks.

2139. But if your weekly output is 3,000 tons, and your wagon-space is 1,500 tons, on the average a wagon only makes two trips a week?—Yes; it would only average that.

2140. Whereas they could make several trips a day?—They could not always do that.

2141. What would be the time they could work without interfering with the general traffic?—They might make two trips a day.

2142. Twelve trips a week?—Yes, supposing the steamers were there to receive the coal.

2143. That would be six times the present output?—Yes.

2144. *Mr. Moody.*] Would your cranes be able to do 18,000 tons a week?—They could do 3,000 tons a day. A day would mean twenty-four hours.

2145. *The Chairman.*] In three shifts?—Yes. We do occasionally work twenty-four hours shipping coal.

2146. The cranes could put this through?—Yes.

2147. But the work would have to be continuous, night and day?—It often is.

2148. *Mr. Moody.*] You have two cranes?—Yes.

2149. *Mr. Brown.*] You have no limitation as to the hours in the railway service here?—No.

2150. *The Chairman.*] Do you pay overtime?—We have an extra staff of men for day and night work.

2151. Would you have locomotives enough to overtake that extra work?—Yes. It might perhaps require another locomotive. We should also require more men, because they would work night and day. We do not work every night and day.

2152. You would certainly require more men?—Yes.

2153. In the event of additional storage accommodation being provided at the port, what, in your opinion, would be the best form—additional wagons, or to have self-delivering staiths, such as at Westport, or what other system?—I would recommend simply storage-bins.

2154. *Mr. Moody.*] The coal would be shipped from these bins direct into the vessel?—No; they would be away from the ship.

2155. *The Chairman.*] And from these bins the coal would be redelivered into wagons?—Yes.

2156. And put on board ship by cranes in the ordinary way?—Yes. I might say that I should only reckon upon those bins being used for steamer or unscreened coal.

2157. Have you considered what would be the cost of the extra handling involved in such a

method? What would be the extra handling, in the first place?—You might put it at 4d. per ton for putting it in and taking it out again.

2158. From the bins?—Yes.

2159. The taking-out process would be self-acting, would it not?—Partly. There would be shoots to be formed, and men to open the doors; and the trucks might require to be trimmed a little.

2160. You think 4d. would cover all that?—Yes; I think so.

2161. *Mr. Moody.*] What quantity do you propose that these bins should contain?—I reckon that with 1,500 tons our trucks hold, and 500 tons at the mine—I do not know exactly what their average capacity is in the way of nuts and slack—that would be 2,000 tons, and from 1,000 to 2,000 more tons would be the average week's quantity shipped. Three thousand tons is the average quantity shipped; so, from 1,000 to 2,000 tons over would make over the average quantity.

2162. *The Chairman.*] And that would make you sure of having coal during the suspension of a week?—Yes. It would provide for a week's suspension of traffic over the bar.

2163. *Mr. Moody.*] Have you made any estimate of the cost of a bin to hold 1,500 tons?—I gave Mr. Martin a sketch of what I think would be suitable.

2164. *Mr. Brown.*] How many of the trucks have you here?—We have actually 257, but I only reckon 250 as being available. There are always one or two in repair, and so on.

2165. *Mr. Moody.*] They carry six tons?—Fully six tons.

2166. *The Chairman.*] How should this 4d. be paid? Against whom should it be charged? It would be an extra charge on the coal?—On those who used the bins.

2167. Beyond the 2s.?—Yes.

2168. The 4d. should be an extra charge against the coal?—Yes.

2169. *Mr. Brown.*] That is only for handling, of course?—That does not include the cost of the bin.

2170. *The Chairman.*] That is beyond any charge for the use of the bin?—Yes.

2171. *Mr. Moody.*] Fourpence a ton?—Yes, 4d. a ton.

2172. *The Chairman.*] I understand that the present arrangement of working the coal with hydraulic cranes has only been in operation for a few years?—Yes, that is all.

2173. What was before that?—Previous to that there was a stage about 7ft. 6in. in height and about the length of an ordinary vessel—rather longer—with an incline at one end for hauling up the trucks, which was done by a rope worked from the crane.

2174. A steam crane, was it not?—A steam crane; yes. And on this stage there were several shoots to suit the hatches of the steamer. The coal was dropped through these shoots, and when the truck was emptied it was run to the other end of the stage. The empty truck was run down another incline at the opposite end of the stage.

2175. And in which direction would that one run?—The loaded trucks went westward going up the incline, and the empty ones went eastward going down.

2176. Was that an expensive system?—No; it was a very cheap system.

2177. The object in raising it to 7ft. 6in. was to get sufficient fall for the coal to run of itself into the hold of the vessel?—Yes; at high water.

2178. If in the original construction the wharf had been made 7ft. 6in. higher, shoots could have gone straight in?—Yes.

2179. *Mr. Moody.*] What quantity of coal were you shipping from the shoots then there?—There was as much as we are doing now.

2180. *The Chairman.*] Three thousand tons a week?—Very nearly, some weeks. It did not average so much in a year as that; but some weeks it would be as much as that.

2181. *Mr. Moody.*] Was that as cheap as the present system?—Cheaper.

2182. *The Chairman.*] At whose instance was it done away with?—It was done away with on account of the hydraulic cranes being substituted.

2183. Why was the substitution made?—I believe it was on Mr. Kennedy's representation of the breakage that was caused.

2184. The cranes were put up at Mr. Kennedy's request?—Yes.

2185. Was there correspondence with the department about it?—I think so.

2186. Did he complain?—He always complained of the breakage.

2187. *Mr. Moody.*] Have you a copy of that correspondence?—No; it did not pass through my hands.

2188. Could we obtain a copy of it?—I should think from the Railway Commissioners. They would have the correspondence on it. I think there would be a further reason for providing the cranes—namely, that the stage only accommodated one steamer. We could only load one steamer at a time.

2189. The extension of the stage would have met that, I suppose?—Yes, or putting up another one.

2190. *The Chairman.*] Would it have answered quite well if the wharf had been raised for a considerable length? Is there any real objection to that?—We could not very well have raised the wharf. It might have been remedied by constructing the original wharf that much higher.

2191. Was this stage part of the wharf structure, or placed on the wharf?—Placed on the wharf.

2192. If a stage could be placed on the wharf, could not that elevating addition to the wharf be made?—Yes, but it would be difficult to get shunting across. It would be an obstruction to all traffic—for all trucks and engines getting past it.

2193. *Mr. Brown.*] Was this the case with the old stage?—Yes; it was only a few feet wide, about the width of a truck.

2194. *The Chairman.*] What is your opinion, from your own observation, about the extent of the damage done to the coal in loading?—With the present system?

2195. About this former system: did it damage the coal much?—Yes; with the old kinds of wagons and the shoots the coal was damaged.

2196. When were the new hopper-wagons introduced?—since the shoots were done away with?—No, they were in use while we had the stage; they saved a great deal of breakage even with the shoots.

2197. Under the present system what is the amount of the breakage?—I should say it is nothing except in the case of the first truck-load that is put in.

2198. There is no breakage except, perhaps, in the case of the first truck, which is dropped into the bottom of the vessel?—Yes.

2199. *Mr. Moody.*] You stated, I believe, that, if stores at the port would avoid loss of time at the mines, stores at the mine would not do so: will you state why stores at the mine would not answer the purpose?—The storage at the mine would not benefit the railway.

2200. But it would benefit the mines. As I understand it, the storage is to avoid loss of time at the mine?—I think I stated that if the storage were provided at the port it would keep both the mine and railway working continuously. To provide it at the mine only would be to provide work for the mine, and the railway would be idle a portion of the time; and then when the vessels came in the railway would have double work to do on some days and nothing to do on other days. But by having the storage at the port the work would be going on continuously all the time. All the trucks would be coming down loaded with coal, and the men who would be employed in loading the vessels would then, when the vessels were not in, be loading this coal into the storage bins.

2201. *Mr. Brown.*] Can you say what average number of vessels take this average of 3,000 tons per week?—It varies.

2202. It naturally will vary. You have no idea of the average?—I could not tell you; the Harbourmaster might.

2203. *The Chairman.*] We could get it from the shipping returns?—Yes. There is one steamer that came here that has done 1,500 tons. Then, there are the "Ohau" and the "Taupo," which take 900 tons.

2204. *Mr. Brown.*] Your difficulty as to the railway is that the trucks would not run up and back again in time. They would not be filled at the mine quickly; there would be so many vessels here to load?—They would not fill them as fast as they were emptied.

2205. If they had storage at the mine, would they not fill them quickly enough?—They would then; but that is one of our troubles. When we have steamers in and the bins full of coal, and the mine at work, the coal accumulates very fast, and we have to run special trains. They fill too quickly for us in those days. We are compelled to have an extra set of men to keep the sidings clear when we are working like that. But say the trucks are full, and the bins full, and there are no steamers in, we have not ordinary work for all those men.

2206. Would you require to fill up your trucks here if the storage was at the mine?—It depends upon whether they would store screened coals in bins.

2207. *The Chairman.*] Even if they stored the coal at the mine, it would have to be brought down when the steamer was here to receive it; not at other times?—Yes; not at other times.

2208. The off-time of the miners would be occupied in filling the bins; but the off-time of the railway employés would not be occupied—there would be nothing for them to do?—There would be nothing for them to do.

2209. *Mr. Brown.*] It is not a double line?—It is a single line.

2210. There are sidings on the way?—We have one at Kaiata.

2211. *Mr. Moody.*] Even if those stores were erected here, you propose that they should contain nothing but unscreened coal, so that they could put some out of the mine unscreened; and they could fill as fast as you could empty here?—I am recommending it to be at the port. I am not considering the railway; but I am considering what would suit both.

2212. *Mr. Brown.*] In ordinary weather, when the bar is not bound, and there is no fresh, are there always steamers in? Have there been in the past?—Not always.

2213. Sometimes your works are idle?—Yes.

2214. *Mr. Moody.*] Has that been more frequently the case since the amalgamation than previously?—I do not think so.

2215. Is there less competition now for carrying the coal from the place than there was before the amalgamation?—There are not three mines competing with one another.

2216. I mean, in the shipping?—I did not know that there was any competition in the shipping.

2217. Is there no other company but the Union and the Anchor that come in here now?—That is all.

2218. *The Chairman.*] Have you considered who should pay the cost of the erection of the shoots and the storage here, and the cost of working the plant necessary to empty the stores?—I have reckoned that the mine-owners or the coal company would do it.

2219. What, in proportion to the whole, do you think it would cost?—I think the bin could be constructed and the appliances provided for filling, emptying, and so on, for about £2 per ton capacity of coal store.

2220. £3,000 for 1,500 tons?—Yes.

2221. *Mr. Brown.*] Do you know of any other place where railways provide storage?—No; not to my knowledge.

2222. As far as you know, railways are confined to carrying and delivering?—That is it.

2223. And the storage elsewhere, as far as you know, is employed by the owners of the goods?—Yes.

2224. *The Chairman.*] Not at Westport?—Westport is similar to here.

2225. Westport has storage staiths?—It was never intended in the design that they should be used for stores. It was found that they could, by making some additions, store small quantities of

coal, but I understand that the staiths were built expressly for shipping at a good height. There was no intention of providing storage at the time. The capacity is very small indeed for storage. Carriers do not store as a usual rule. They only store the goods for delivery and while waiting despatch.

2226. *Mr. Moody.*] What do you think would be the total cost per ton of the stores being erected here, and carrying on the work? You say it would take 4d. a ton to put it into these bins and take it out?—Yes.

2227. Then, there is the interest on the £3,000?—Yes.

2228. What would that be? About 6d. a ton altogether, I suppose?—I dare say it would. It would depend on how much use is made of the bins.

2229. *The Chairman.*] If you spent £3,000 on building the bins you must bind down certain persons to pay enough to cover the interest and cost?—I should deal with them in the same way as they do with private sidings. The persons who apply for it pay the cost of the siding, and have the use of it for ten years.

2230. Can you assist us in breaking up the 2s. that is charged by the railway for carrying coal from the mine to the port and handling the coal at the port in the process of shipment? Can you tell us how much of that 2s. you consider goes for carriage? Have you any scale?—No.

2231. What is the scale elsewhere? What is the usual scale for minerals in other ports of the colony for eight miles?—It is higher than this. It would be 2s. 6d. There would be the weighing charge, the wharfage charge, and the handling charge. The schedule charge for native coal is 2s. 6d. per eight miles.

2232. *Mr. Brown.*] Does that include the mileage and terminal charge?—Yes, the terminal charge is included in the 2s. 6d.

2233. Do you know what that charge is?—2s. 6d. is the minimum charge.

2234. *Mr. Moody.*] They are favoured here by only being charged 2s., and 6d. for royalty?—Yes.

2235. *The Chairman.*] The question comes to be of importance, because we have it in evidence that application is made by other companies who propose to work the coal, and who would only require the wharf handling, and very slight use of the railway—only, in fact, the use of that portion which is along the edge of the river, this side of the bridge; and they have been informed they would be charged 1s. 3d.?—Yes.

2236. Was that question referred to you at all?—No.

2237. You have never been consulted?—No.

2238. So that you can give no reason why the charge for wharfage alone should be 1s. 3d., whereas the charge for wharfage and the carriage for eight miles is 2s.?—No, I could not tell you. A terminal charge of 1s. at each end is a usual charge.

2239. That does not cover the working of the hydraulic cranes, I suppose?—No; that is only the ordinary cost.

2240. That is merely taking the coal or other goods from the wagons, or doing the necessary shunting to enable them to be taken away by private persons?—Yes, and clerical work in connection with it.

2241. But here the terminal charge would be intended, I presume, to cover the cost of working the hydraulic cranes?—Yes.

2242. And weighing?—Yes.

2243. And doing the work of delivering the coal?—Yes.

2244. Doing the work of the wharf-labourer?—Yes.

2245. There is no wharf-labour employed upon the coal, beyond that of the railway company, until it goes on board the steamer?—No; the wharf-labourers who handle the coal are in the Railway employment here.

2246. *Mr. Moody.*] Where would you consider the most convenient place here to erect the storage?—I have not looked at the plan. You require to see the plan to see the line of street laid out here; but I think somewhere in the line of this building, at the lower end of the wharf, a site could be found for it.

2247. *The Chairman.*] On the whole, after considering the matter, do you think that the supply of extra storage is a very urgent matter?—I do not.

2248. Would it not greatly improve the output of coal from the port?—I do not think so.

2249. *Mr. Moody.*] Would you have sufficient rolling-stock, supposing the Blackball was getting into operation, and doing five or six hundred tons a day, to work that traffic too?—Not in addition to the present, I think. The distance would be longer, and the trucks would be longer away, for one thing.

2250. You would, I suppose, if this Coal Creek coalfield opened up?—For two or three years.

2251. Because you would have a coal delivery at this end of the bridge?—Yes.

2252. *The Chairman.*] Now, supposing the Railway Commissioners were to undertake the working of the Coal Creek Mine, would the present rolling-stock be sufficient?—I think so, for two or three years.

2253. If the Commissioners had to provide rolling-stock and everything?—Yes.

2254. *Mr. Brown.*] You have 250 wagons here?—Yes.

2255. Is that the greatest number you have ever had here in use?—Yes.

2256. You have never had more?—We have never had more.

2257. Has the output been greater than it is now?—No, not very much. I think there was one year in which it was rather more than in the past twelve months.

2258. *The Chairman.*] We observed old wagons that are along the line—the square wagons: have there been a number of these sent to Westport?—Yes.

2259. When that is done is there a transfer of account from the one railway branch to the

other?—I believe this line would be credited with them. The transaction is not complete, so that the transfer has not been made. The stoppage in the shipping has stopped the wagons being sent, as they would have been.

2260. Would they be wholly unsuitable for this place? Could they not have been used for storage?—I do not know that we could use them for that.

2261. The running gear has all been utilised for the hopper-wagons?—Yes.

2262. The cash revenue is remitted straight to Wellington?—It is put in the bank here to the credit of the Public Account.

2263. And then a transfer is made of the net profits to the Harbour Board?—Yes.

2264. You are a member of the Harbour Board?—Yes.

2265. You have nothing to do with the accounts of the Harbour Board?—No.

2266. In the event of fresh works being entered upon is there special authority got for this from Wellington, or does the Harbour Board decide on them?—It is got from Wellington by special authority—generally by Order in Council for special works.

2267. Even when these have to be paid for out of the Board's revenue?—Yes.

2268. Then, do you make a recommendation to Wellington that it is desirable certain work should be undertaken?—Recently there has been nothing we could do in that respect. Mr. Martin, as Engineer, generally deals with those matters.

2269. *Mr. Brown.*] In the extra storage you have mentioned, do you take into account the other mines?—Only the present mines.

2270. In connection with these bins you speak of, was your view directed to one large bin for storage, or several?—I should think it would be better to divide them into bins of from 300 to 400 tons each.

2271. And you suggest their being erected by the miners?—Yes.

2272. *The Chairman.*] Not erected by the mine-owners absolutely—they are erected by the Railway, but the cash has to be lodged?—Yes, before the work is carried on.

2273. There would be as many bins as there would be applicants for them?—Whatever they applied for would be put up.

2274. *Mr. Moody.*] They would require to put different kinds of coal in them, and there would have to be partitions?—Yes.

2275. *Mr. Brown.*] Or would you suggest that they should pay the cost and a rental, or simply the cost?—Simply the cost, and have the use of it for ten years.

2276. *The Chairman.*] And after that a rental?—After that some special agreement could be come to. If the bins were in good order they might grant it for a further period.

2277. *Mr. Brown.*] Would you suggest that the period for which they held the use of these bins should have any connection with the termination of the lease of the mine?—Yes, of course, they should not run beyond the lease; they should not overlap the lease.

2278. *Mr. Moody.*] Who would do the repairs?—I think the Railway Department might keep them in ordinary repair for the first ten years.

2279. *Mr. Brown.*] Supposing these bins were not adopted, and you had to continue the present system, would you require any very great increase to your rolling-stock?—That is, with an increased output of coal?

2280. Yes?—Well, if the present output were doubled, that might require, perhaps, 25 per cent. more wagons.

2281. Would you have sufficient accommodation for them on the present wharf?—Yes, I think so.

2282. *The Chairman.*] I see in the last year's accounts of the Greymouth Harbour Board, of which you are a member, it is put in Greymouth railway and wharf net earnings. That, I presume, consists of the net earnings of the revenue over expenditure on the railway, and some earnings on the wharf?—Yes.

2283. Do you know how the second portion is arrived at—the earnings on the wharf?—That does not mean more than that whatever is collected on the wharf is included in the railway earnings.

2284. That is what that entry means?—Whatever may be collected on the wharf is considered as railway earnings.

2285. Is that done anywhere else?—It is the general custom where the wharves belong to the railways.

2286. And then the whole net earnings are handed over to the Harbour Board?—Yes.

2287. That is under a special Act?—Yes, under a special Act.

2288. So that really the Railway Commissioners do not receive anything at all on this line?—No, nothing.

2289. In computing the earnings per mile, or the interest on the capital in the railway returns, is the whole expenditure on the railway and wharf taken as capital?—Yes.

2290. This [referring to Parliamentary Paper I.-6, 1889, p. 90] is the computation of the rate of interest. For instance, for the year 1889 £6 12s. 6d. is put as the rate of interest, the capital being taken at £199,121, which is the cost of the open line, but does that include the cost of the harbour-works?—No, not the harbour-works. It includes the cost of the works that were carried out under the Public Works Act.

2291. And the hydraulic cranes?—I am not sure whether it includes them.

2292. *Mr. Moody.*] And the rolling-stock?—Well, the Harbour Board paid for the last hundred wagons.

2293. *The Chairman.*] I see here [referring to paper] that there is a sum on the expenditure side of rolling-stock, £1,035, that is paid out of the revenue of the Harbour Board?—Yes. Any additional rolling-stock supplied to this railway is paid for by the Harbour Board. The Harbour Board paid for the cranes and the wharf-extension; but I do not know if that has been included in that item or not.

2294. *Mr. Brown.*] It would be fair to include in the capital value of the railway the cost of the wharf from Tainui Street down?—That includes the wharf up to a certain point; but I am not certain if it includes the last addition to the wharf. It includes the greater portion of the wharf.

2295. *The Chairman.*] It includes some of the wharf, but not the last addition?—Yes.

2296. *Mr. Brown.*] The cranes and accumulators—these are all railway plant, are they not?—They are railway plant.

2297. And the rolling-stock and engines, of course?—Yes.

2298. And the quay to Tainui Street?—That is railway.

2299. You had some little trouble with your men lately, had you not?—I do not think so.

2300. *The Chairman.*] Did your wharf-labourers not strike?—None of our regular men struck.

2301. Are they members of the union?—I believe they belong to the railway union.

2302. Who did strike?—The casual labourers who work for the shipping.

2303. *Mr. Brown.*] They were not in your employ?—No. Well, many of them that we have employed would not handle the Union Company's goods.

2304. *The Chairman.*] And what did you do to them?—We did not take any notice of them.

2305. Just let them go?—Yes.

2306. Found plenty of men without them?—We just sent our own men—regular employés—men who work on the line, and platelayers—to do what there was to do.

2307. Did they make no objection?—No.

2308. *Mr. Brown.*] Was there no representation made at all to you, by the union or otherwise, on account of men being put on to supply the places of the strikers?—No.

2309. *Mr. Moody.*] On two occasions the revenue, I see, was considerably less than the expenditure?—I think you will rather find the expenditure very much over the average. It is not the revenue at fault, it is the expenditure.

SATURDAY, 25TH OCTOBER, 1890.

Mr. RICHARD NANCARROW sworn and examined.

2310. *The Chairman.*] What are you, Mr. Nancarrow?—Agent for the Union Steamship Company in Greymouth.

2311. Are you also connected with insurance business at all?—Yes, I am representative of the South British Insurance Company.

2312. The Commissioners wish to obtain information as to the rates of freight and insurance. Can you give us any information on that subject, specially comparing the last few years and formerly. I mean as to the vessels entering and leaving Greymouth Harbour?—Well, I think the average rates of freight of the Union Steamship Company charged for the last few years to ports in the Middle Island are about from 7s. 6d. to 9s. 6d. per ton.

2313. Is that general?—Yes, to the ports of the Middle Island. Of course, Wellington would be the lowest rate of freight, and outports such as Timaru and Oamaru would be the highest rates.

2314. But Wellington is in the North Island?—Well, I should have said to Wellington and the South Island.

2315. Then, to other ports?—I am not very sure about the other ports. The rates of freight do not come immediately under my observation, because the Union Steamship Company have an arrangement with the Grey Valley Coal Company for carrying their freights, which is made from time to time at Dunedin.

2316. That is, as far as it affects the coal trade?—That is, as far as it affects the coal trade. I take it the freights you ask me about refer to coal from here.

2317. And generally. We want all the freights. Our object in the first instance is to see what effect the expenditure on harbour improvements has had on freights and insurance?—Just so; but, of course, the exports from here outside the coal are very small.

2318. Yes?—And a few sacks of hides and sheepskins, and a few bales of wool—skins that are dealt with by the fellmongers, of course, and hides from off cattle imported from Wanganui.

2319. The imports are considerable?—The imports of general merchandise are very considerable.

2320. I suppose you are not in a position to give us any figures; we should get them better from the shipping people?—Yes. The Railway Department could supply the whole of that, because the wharf, as you are aware, is under the control of the railway.

2321. We have got it that from 7s. 6d. to 9s. 6d. is the general freight at the present time?—Yes.

2322. Has it been that for any long period?—It has been that since the completion of the harbour-works.

2323. At what date did you put that?—I put that for the last two years.

2324. Prior to that what were the freights?—Prior to that the freights were, at any rate, not less than 50 per cent. higher.

2325. That applies to the imports and exports both? You have nothing to do with the freights paid on arrival here?—I have all to do with that.

2326. But not the exports?—Not the exports. It comes to me only in a general way. The foregoing refers exclusively to the export of coal.

2327. *Mr. Brown.*] The completion of the harbour-works about two years ago was about the same date as the amalgamation of the mines?—It was about the same time.

2328. Was the change of rate then due, in your opinion, to the amalgamation or to the completion of the works?—I think to both combined.

2329. *The Chairman.*] Both these causes led to the lowering of the rates?—Yes.

2330. Now, as to the premiums charged on insurance, what is the rate at the present time?—There is very little insurance done here. The whole of the export of coal is made by the Grey Valley Coal Company, and, although I do not know positively, I believe they take their own risk as to insurance.

2331. The work is done by the Union Steamship Company?—The whole carriage is done by the Union Steamship Company, and the Grey Valley Coal Company are the only exporters, and they take their own risk, I believe.

2332. You are not in a position to know what the insurance risks are? What were they formerly, before the Grey Valley Coal Company?—Before the completion of the harbour-works?

2333. Yes?—The rates of insurance on merchandise now coming to this port are about 12s. 6d. to £1 per cent.

2334. On imports?—Yes; it would be the same on exports.

2335. What was it formerly, before the harbour-works?—One and a half.

2336. *Mr. Brown.*] Have you any fixed tariff of rates in this quarter?—There is an underwriters' association in the colony, and they rule it. Their headquarters are in Christchurch.

2337. These are fixed by the Christchurch association?—Yes. Mr. W. D. Meares is president of it.

2338. Have you heard of any fluctuations having taken place through competition, apart from the merits of the port at all?—No, sir, I have not.

2339. *The Chairman.*] The carrying is in the hands of the Union Steamship Company now?—Yes.

2340. Is the communication kept up with regularity? Are there long intervals when coal would be available without steamers being available?—Previous to the strike there was nothing to complain of in that respect.

2341. Previous to the strike there was regular tonnage afforded?—Yes, to take all the coal that was available for export.

2342. Have your company merely a prior claim on the Grey Valley coal, or are they prohibited by the agreement from selling to any other steamers? Are you aware of the circumstances of the agreement?—No, I am not aware of the circumstances of the agreement.

2343. *Mr. Brown.*] In your last reply you say, before the strike there was tonnage to take all available coal? May I put it in this way: was the tonnage regulated to the coal or the coal regulated to the tonnage in any way?—The tonnage was regulated to the requirements of the Grey Valley Coal Company. There was daily telegraphic communication. In fact, it was arranged in this way: I was asked on the Saturday or Monday in each week to state the requirements for that week to the head office in Dunedin, and every Monday morning I stated the requirements of coal for all the ports in the colony.

2344. *The Chairman.*] Applications having been received by the Grey Valley Coal Company for supplies of coal, and they forwarded those applications to you, and you provided the necessary shipping by wiring to Dunedin?—That is it, exactly.

2345. And did they always supply your demands in that way, subject to the weather, of course?—Yes; they always complied with them to the extent of the vessels that were available. They did not always come up to the actual requirements; but sometimes it was in excess.

2346. Have you, in your business as agent for the company, suffered any hindrance from any defect on the part of the railway arrangements on the supply of coal from the mine?—I have brought under the notice of the railway authorities here drawbacks in shipping coal.

2347. Arising from—?—Arising from the want of sidings on the reclaimed land opposite the loading berths—opposite the hydraulic cranes.

2348. How does that affect it?—They have only one line of rails there, and all the shunting had to be done at the loading-berths, which caused frequent delays.

2349. *Mr. Moody.*] Was there not a siding for empties as well as for the loaded ones?—No. If you inspect it there any of the railway people would explain that there is only one line running there, and the wagons have to be run down full, and as they are emptied they have to be run back again.

2350. *Mr. Brown.*] That is to say, that the whole train has to be emptied before you can shunt away your empties?—Yes, that is it; and that has to be done right opposite the shipping. I spoke to Mr. Stone, the District Railway Manager, about bringing this matter before you.

2351. *The Chairman.*] It has never been remedied?—It has never been remedied, and I said this would be a good opportunity to bring it before the Commissioners, and he said some matters were in training.

The Chairman: He said nothing to us about it.

2352. *Mr. Moody.*] Is there plenty of room for more sidings?—I think there is plenty of room.

2353. *The Chairman.*] It would not be costly to remedy these defects?—No.

2354. *Mr. Moody.*] There is plenty of room?—I fancy there is room.

2355. *The Chairman.*] Do you think that storage of the coal would be beneficial to the trade of the port, as a means of keeping a good supply in stock instead of having to trust to the trains for loading?—Yes.

2356. At Westport they have storage staiths?—But I do not think that they hold a large quantity—about 300 tons.

2357. Is that all?—I think so. Of course, this port is not so convenient for staiths as Westport.

2358. Would it be an advantage to have 2,000 tons here?—I should say it would be an advantage.

2359. To whose gain would it be if there was storage for 2,000 tons?—It would be to the gain of the company in the despatch of ships. They would be able to despatch their ships more quickly.

A vessel coming in in ballast could be loaded and despatched in the same tide, whereas at present the most we can do is to send a vessel away at the next tide.

2360. It takes three tides?—If she came in this morning she would go away this evening. A vessel coming in in ballast, say, by this morning's tide could be despatched by this evening's tide—twelve hours.

2361. At what rate can you load coal into a vessel from these hopper-trucks?—At about 100 tons an hour.

2362. Then, the delay you mention would be from the coal not coming forward, not from the increased facility?—Which delay?

2363. You say that at present there is a delay, and if there was storage for 2,000 tons it would be an advantage?—Yes.

2364. You mean, of course, that the coal would be in self-delivering staiths, in order to save time?—Yes.

2365. And to benefit the shipping from the company's point of view?—Yes.

2366. No other storage would effect this?—I mean that no other storage gives the despatch to the ships so that a vessel could load immediately she arrives.

2367. *Mr. Brown.*] You are speaking from a shipping point of view?—Of course.

2368. Have you had any delays in consequence of the short delivery of coal?—We have had cases where ships have arrived and there has been no stock of coal on hand in the trucks. Then steamers have had to wait until the coal was mined.

2369. *The Chairman.*] That, of course, would not affect the Union Steamship Company, I suppose, under their arrangement, as far as demurrage was concerned?—No.

2370. But, if it was an outside ship, would demurrage be charged in consequence?—Certainly it is possible that it might. Of course, it would depend on the terms of the charter-party as to the number of lay-by days.

2371. *Mr. Moody.*] Is there much household or screened coal sent from here?—Yes, a great deal.

2372. *The Chairman.*] How are the cargoes arranged? Does one vessel take a cargo of household coal and another a cargo of whole coal?—Not always. Sometimes it is assorted coal, and coke forms part of the cargo.

2373. *Mr. Moody.*] Supposing a vessel comes in and wants a cargo of screened or household coal, and the principal part of the railway-wagons are filled with unscreened coal, they would be stopped?—They would have to wait then until a vessel came in for the unscreened coal, to empty the wagons. But all the wagons would not be full of the unscreened coal; some would be full of the household coal. They would discharge those first, and then send them to the mine and get them refilled.

2374. It would depend on the trucks that were occupied?—It would, of course.

2375. *The Chairman.*] Have you any record of the period when the mines started after they were closed in July—they started some time in August—when they were working under an arrangement with the miners for payment on whole coal? Have you any record to show whether there was less or more screened coal exported during that period?—I have no record of that.

2376. You could not say whether the company at that time took most of the whole coal for steam-service?—No, I could not say.

2377. *Mr. Moody.*] Of course, an extra quantity of wagons would remedy the delay to which I referred just now?—Yes, an extra number would. They have two hundred odd now.

2378. That would be the only remedy for it, unless they had those coal-boxes here?—If we had another two hundred wagons it would remedy it.

2379. Or the coal-boxes to hold 200 or 300 tons of each coal: that would assist it?—Yes. And, as showing the interruptions to the shipping of the place and the period for which vessels have to lay loading, I produce the office record.

2380. You have not the causes of delay shown there?—No; only the different arrivals and departures.

2381. Do you recollect the time before the cranes were erected?—Yes, I do.

2382. They had shoots here?—Yes.

2383. You have an idea of what you consider the best mode of shipping coal, whether by the cranes or by those shoots?—I have a distinct idea about that.

2384. Which do you think the most expeditious method?—I consider the hydraulic cranes far and away the best. They are the most expeditious means, and are a great saving to the breakage of the coal. This coal is very brittle, and the less handling it has the better. For that reason, having staiths or bins, and for the coal to be put in the hopper-wagons again, would be to place the coal at a disadvantage.

2385. But they could ship it from these staiths into the vessels?—Some, of course, would not receive any extra handling; but to place it in the bins, and then remove it into the hopper-wagons to be discharged into the ship, would give it two extra handlings.

2386. *The Chairman.*] Do you have many complaints made to the office of the state in which the coal arrives at other ports?—Such complaints would not come to me.

2387. *Mr. Brown.*] Steamers themselves use the whole coal?—No, they do not; they use the small coal.

2388. *Mr. Moody.*] Unscreened?—Yes, unscreened.

2389. *The Chairman.*] That is, the whole coal? I mean the coal that comes straight out and is never screened: that is what they use?—Yes; what they call steamer coal.

2390. *Mr. Brown.*] Do you know for what purposes the screened coal is generally used?—For household purposes, I understand.

2391. And the gas companies, what do they use?—Yes, screened coal is preferred for the gas-works.

Mr. Martin Kennedy re-examined.

2391A. *The Chairman*] Can you, Mr. Kennedy, give the Commissioners any particulars as to the cost of getting coal for two periods, from January to March, and from March to June, as arrived at by the special audit which was held in Dunedin?—Yes. I received a report from the head office, which had been made by the auditors who were employed in July last to investigate the accounts, and I put in an abstract of that report, which sets forth all the results arrived at. [Abstract put in.] I may say that this statement coincides exactly with the results I myself arrived at with regard to the cost and sale of coal, and published in the *Grey River Argus* of the 7th July, 1890. [Exhibit marked No. 1 referred to.]

2392. That was the statement you forwarded to the Premier with your letter?—Yes. I enclosed a copy of the statement published in that paper in my letter to the Premier on the 16th July. My second letter, of the latter end of August, to the Premier referred only to the unfairness of the increasing scale of royalty, and asking that, as the question of royalty was to be reviewed, this might be taken into consideration.

2393. *Mr. Brown.*] I understand this Commission has been appointed in consequence of representations asking for a reduction of the 6d. per ton. Can you state any grounds upon which that might be fairly done? With whom did the suggestion first originate?—Well, I believe I made the first application on the subject to the Premier.

2394. You made the first application, then, to the Premier for the reduction of the 6d. royalty?—It was a provisional and temporary reduction I asked for. I did not ask for a permanent reduction. At that time we were making a big loss, and, as I set out in my letter, I asked, pending the negotiations which would ensue between the miners and ourselves, if the Government would suspend the royalty, or a portion of it, during those negotiations.

2394A. What you applied for was a suspension?—Yes; that was my application.

2395. Was that discussed at all with the Miners' Association?—I never put it to the Miners' Association. I simply made that application to the Government.

2396. You learnt afterwards that they discussed the same thing?—Yes; and I had a reply from the Premier and the Railway Commissioners that they declined to entertain this application.

2397. As far as your direct application was concerned?—Yes.

2398. But you became aware afterwards that the miners were discussing something similar?—Yes.

2399. Although there had been no communication between you on the subject?—No.

2400. *The Chairman.*] I will read the exact words you used in your letter to the Premier. You said, "I would suggest that a temporary suspension of the 6d. ton royalty, together with the Railway Commissioners allowing a reduction on the railage, as the proper source to meet in part the deficit, as during suspension there would be neither royalty nor railway receipts"?—That is it.

2401. That was the only reason you urged in support of the thing at the time?—Yes.

2402. *Mr. Brown.*] Your application was for the purpose of preventing a strike?—Yes; for the purpose of warding off a strike whilst we were negotiating. I wanted to keep them working while we were negotiating.

2403. Afterwards the miners made a similar suggestion, did they not?—Yes.

2404. Do you know how it came to be discussed with them?—I was at Wellington by this time, and I had a communication merely asking if the company would join with them in making application to the Government for a reduction of the royalty, and that they would allow 2d., and they wanted the 6d. to be taken off the railage or royalty.

2405. Did you gather from their letter that they meant a permanent reduction, or a temporary reduction, as in your application?—They meant a permanent reduction at 6d. either on the royalty or railage—they did not mind which. They wanted a permanent reduction of 6d. off 2s. 6d.

2406. Did that meet with your approval?—My reply at that time was that while I would join with them I did not expect the application would be acceded to, as I had already received a reply in the negative.

2407. Are there any reasons why the royalty should be reduced?—I desire to make this point clear by referring and adding to my previous evidence. [See additions to previous evidence, page 21.]

2408. *The Chairman.*] Can you urge any reasons that appear to you sound to support the concession of the royalty?—The principal argument that the miners urged against the adoption of our proposition was that the Denniston rates were better than our rates—that is, the Denniston rates for coal-cutting. They said the Denniston rates were as good as the rates they were then getting, and upon which we were insisting upon a reduction; and they urged that if Denniston could pay those rates why could we not pay them equally well.

2409. What was the royalty at Denniston?—Sixpence—the same as ours: that is, the royalty at Denniston is 6d. a ton for the whole period of their lease.

2410. *Mr. Moody*] No alteration?—Yes, that is it; that is the difference. That appeared to me the strongest position they could take and did take—that the rates there were as good as what we were then paying, and upon which we wanted a reduction. Of course I would naturally have to make a reply to that.

2411. Did they say anything to you to the effect that there was a difference in the seam at all?—They held that the work was as easy there as here. To that my answer is this: that within my own knowledge the whole output of Westport coal for the whole year commanded 2s. 2d. a ton more than our coal for the whole period; and I said that while they got 2s. 2d. a ton more than us, the dividend only equalled 1s. 6d. per ton, consequently, if our coal cost as much as Westport, that we would be losing 8d. a ton without any interest on capital at all. That was my answer, and that was the position; and I invited them to show me how the thing was to be covered, as, if I attempted to increase the prices it would mean shutting up the mine. Of course I had proof of

it, because I have often tendered at 1s. 6d. per ton less than the Westport Company's tender, and theirs was taken in preference. Their tender, to my own knowledge, was 1s. 6d. a ton higher than my tender, and even then I lost it, which proved to me that if I increased my prices it meant shutting up the mine—so far reducing the output that we could not work at all with any hope of success.

2412. *The Chairman.*] How do you urge that as a reason for the Government foregoing the royalty?—I will come to that now.

2413. But how can we find in that a reason for supporting the application for the royalty being reduced or done away with?—It may be a reason for a differential royalty or railage as between Westport and here. If their coal-command is 2s. 2d. on the whole or 2s. 6d. a ton more than ours, how is the difference to be met? If Westport is able to supply the whole demand of the colony, it commands so much more than ours. If our coal costs as much as theirs we cannot work, and it would be a question for the Government as to whether they can make some concession, and we asked for it on that ground.

2414. Your argument would be that you are leasing a less valuable thing from the Government than the Westport people, and therefore you should get it at a lower rent?—Yes, to help us to work it. Practically the Government are partners with us: indeed, we say more—that they are the partners receiving something certain in the way of profit, whereas we are receiving nothing.

2415. *Mr. Moody.*] Does their coal cost as much per ton as yours in getting it and delivering it on board?—I understand that the cost, f.o.b. at Westport, would be something greater than our cost, but I do not know the exact amount.

2416. *Mr. Brown.*] Do they pay railage as well as royalty?—Yes. They pay something extra on railage to what we do. Their railage is something higher than ours.

2417. You do not know how much?—No. I have it, however, officially from the Secretary, that their turnover gross is 2s. 2d. more than our turnover.

2418. *The Chairman.*] Who is that?—Mr. Joachim, secretary of the Grey Valley Coal Company, and manager of the Westport Coal Company. The accounts are kept in the same office.

2419. *Mr. Brown.*] Do you know of any precedent for such a reduction?—No, I know of no precedent.

2420. *The Chairman.*] It is clearly an application for a reduction of rent, and it appears to have come from you as the lessee, and also from the miners as workmen?—Yes; it is an application for a reduction of rent.

2421. *Mr. Moody.*] But it was applied for merely temporarily?—Yes.

2422. *The Chairman.*] On your part it was temporary; but on the part of the miners, as far as you are aware, it was for a permanent reduction?—Yes.

2423. Or even abolition of the rent?—Yes. Of course their intention was to ask for a reduction of the railage at first, but, finding the Commissioners obdurate and the Government more pliable, they turned on the royalty.

2424. *Mr. Brown.*] It results in this: that the railage and the royalty go to a separate department altogether?—Yes.

2425. *The Chairman.*] You mean that they are collected by different departments?—The net result goes to the same department, although they are collected separately.

2426. It would not make any difference to the final amount, whether they came by one or the other?—They belong to the same fund ultimately, and that fund is the Greymouth Harbour Board Endowment.

2427. Is there any other reason you can urge for reducing either the royalty or the railage?—There is no other reason I know of. I had no other reason in my mind at the time.

2428. *Mr. Brown.*] Do you know if the Greymouth Harbour Board have any authority to reduce the value of their endowment?—They have no control over it at all. The Greymouth Harbour Board simply receive the net revenue monthly, and they have to take it unquestioned.

2429. Are these revenues not in some way hypothecated for loans?—Yes, they are; but all the loans are guaranteed by the colony.

2430. The guarantee comes at the back of the security, as it were?—Yes.

2431. The reduction of the royalty in this case would be the reduction of the material security?—Yes, and would be throwing more responsibility on the Consolidated Fund. It would not affect the security in that way of the individual creditor, inasmuch as the colony is responsible for it.

2432. *The Chairman.*] Here is a letter referred to us by Mr. Greenfield, Crown Agent in Nelson, which I have no doubt you can explain. He says he has forwarded the letter to you on the 2nd October, but here is a copy of it [producing copy], and he suggests that you can give the explanation to us. From this letter it appears there is a discrepancy as to the amount of coal put out from the Brunner Mine between 1884 and 1887, as stated in your evidence before a Committee of the House of Representatives, and the statement made for the same period to the Land Office, and on which the royalty is charged. Can you explain the reason for this discrepancy?—The return sent to the Land Department was always for the screened coal exactly, made up for each quarter; and the returns quoted in the Committee of the House were the usual ones given to the Inspector of Mines, and included all the small as well as the screened, and we were not always exact in the quantities in that return sent to the Inspector.

2433. You do not consider there is any outstanding royalty for that period?—That is so.

2434. In making the return for the royalty, I observe, in a paper put in by you, that the royalty is reckoned on the coal carried by the railway [showing Exhibit No. 11 to witness]?—The royalty is reckoned on the coal sold, whether it is screened or unscreened.

2435. *Mr. Moody.*] You have no difference in royalty between screened and small?—Not in the lease. That is the interpretation our company has put on the new lease, and that is the inter-

pretation of the lease by this new company since they came together, and they wish to comply with it literally. I would like to explain that in former years we sold nothing but screened coal—the rest was washed into the river; but when the steamers began to come we found a market for some of the small coal, but the returns continued to be made in the same form until the termination of that lease. Under the new lease the arrangement I have just described for the payment of the royalty is the one adopted—namely, paying on all the coal sold. Further, I wish to add, as to the former lease, that I had a very heavy expense in proving what we called the main fault in the Brunner Mine, which cost about £10,000. I applied to the Commissioner of Crown Lands at the time for some consideration towards this, and urged that the royalty should be suspended, as a contribution towards this cost, as there was no profit on the working of the mine. He replied that he had no authority to do this. On two or three periodical visits of Mr. Greenfield, the Commissioner of Crown Lands, to the district, I pointed out to him that my returns only included the screened coal, as I was not making returns for royalty on the small coal; and his reply at the time was, that, after all, it was not so much a question of revenue to be derived from it, as what the Government wanted was that the mine should be worked and the output clauses fulfilled. That was the answer. I took it then that, though the lease may have contemplated payment on the small coal, the Government was willing to waive it, by way of contribution to the proving of this fault.

2436. *The Chairman.*] Have you replied to the letter from the Crown Agent in Nelson, of the 2nd October?—Yes; I have replied in terms similar to the evidence I have now given. I wish also to make a further addition to my previous evidence. [See previous evidence, page 126.]

2437. I think you said in your evidence—or Mr. Bishop did in his—that the stoppage of the Wallsend Mine was after conference with Mr. Waters?—Yes, it would be. They had several conferences.

2438. Do you remember the real reason of the stoppage?—I have stated already in evidence that it was because the mine was not paying.

2439. There had been some exploring work done, I believe?—It was because it was not paying, and because we were standing at a fault which was estimated to cost £6,000 to prove.

2440. That was the Taylorville fault?—Yes; and I should say, also, on several other faults in the Wallsend property.

2441. I understand the Grey Valley Coal Company have a lease of the Taylorville land for coal-mining purposes?—Yes.

2442. How much, do you remember, was spent, approximately, in the Wallsend Mine in what you would call exploring faults?—Do you mean our company?

2443. I mean by your company—the Grey Valley Coal Company—in the last two years?—Well, we spent £11,000 on the whole property.

2444. That is, getting coal out too?—No, not coal-getting. We spent £11,000 in extra plant and in proving faults, and in permanent work.

2445. That is, in all the mines?—Yes.

2446. You cannot particularise how much was spent in the Wallsend Mine, but the total expenditure in fault-proving was £11,000 since the existence of the Grey Valley Coal Company?—In fault-proving, in permanent works, and additional machinery, £11,000 in the two years since the company was formed, in August, 1888.

2447. Do you consider that a fair proportionate amount of money was expended in endeavouring to keep work ahead for the miners?—Yes, that is so.

2448. Was the stone drift to prove the second fault on the Brunner Mine before or after the present company was formed?—It was before the present company was formed.

2449. Was there any favourable result from that exploration?—No favourable result was obtained—I should say it was decidedly unfavourable.

2450. What did that drift cost?—I should say that exploration cost £1,000 in that second fault. I would not confine it to that drift. In that exploration two or three things were done—boring, &c.

2451. *Mr. Moody.*] Do you intend to carry that exploring drift further?—There is no resolve on the matter now; but if we can get the royalty placed on a proper footing the company intend to spend a good deal of money in prospecting and in carrying out the proper explorations.

2452. What do you mean by "proper footing"?—That is, if we get the royalty put on at 6d. a ton for the whole period—if we get it put at a uniform rate for the whole period. And, while on this, I may say that you asked if there was a precedent for a certain application in regard to the reductions, and I can give a precedent for a reduction putting the royalty on a uniform basis. This was done in the case of the Westport Colliery Company, who got an extension of their lease from twenty-one to sixty-six—if not ninety-nine—years, and, instead of a royalty being charged on a sliding scale, it was limited to 6d. a ton during the duration of the lease.

2453. *The Chairman.*] Has the Grey Valley Coal Company got any renewal or change of the conditions of the lease since the company was formed, for any of the mines? With reference to this, I refer you to a draft of a new lease which has been furnished to us attached to the old lease?—I am aware of that; but that new lease has not been executed, but was declined owing to the royalty demanded.

2454. The present Wallsend lease will expire in 1894?—To that I may reply that, according to my memory, the Wallsend lease was for twenty-one years; but the lease contains the right of renewal at the end of the term for a further term of twenty-one years.

2455. *Mr. Moody.*] Have you any idea how often the Government Inspector of Mines visits the Brunner mines?—I think Mr. Bishop's statement upon that would be better than mine, and you could ask him that.

2456. *Mr. Brown.*] Do you know if the duties of the Government Inspector are confined to simple inspection as a Government Inspector, without regarding the Government as lessor?—I

could not tell you at all what his duties are. The mine-manager always received the Inspector, and I therefore had no knowledge of what his duties were or what he did.

2457. *The Chairman.*] Have you issued any instructions as to the duties of the mine-manager respecting the frequency of his visits to the mine?—No. It is laid down in the rules, and he has no instructions other than what are contained in them. [Exhibit No. 2 referred to.]

2458. Had you any correspondence with the Railway Commissioners recommending the removal of the stages that were on the wharf, from which the coal was delivered by shoots, and the substitution of hydraulic cranes as a means of loading?—I had correspondence urging the adoption of the hydraulic cranes in preference to loading through shoots.

2459. Were you dissatisfied with the working of the stages then?—Yes.

2460. And was it on your representation that the new method was adopted?—I could not say that.

2461. *Mr. Moody.*] Have you a copy of that correspondence?—I regard as very informal any representations I made on the subject. I might have.

2462. *The Chairman.*] Your point of recommendation was that instead of staiths there should be hydraulic cranes?—That the mode of loading should be by cranes. As a company, we urged the loading by cranes instead of shoots, as being easier on the coal in regard to breakage. Then the Harbour Board asked for steam-cranes, and they got hydraulics. I was a member of the Harbour Board at the time. In fact, I was Chairman of the Board, and therefore I remember what occurred.

2463. How has that water in the Coal-pit Heath Mine accumulated? You have said that pumping has not been stopped in consequence of the strike, in your evidence, I think?—Yes; I said that the water was there before the strike. It got there for want of sufficient pumping-power.

2464. It was not want of a sufficient pump?—It was want of sufficient boiler for steam.

2465. When did that first come to your notice as manager—that the steam-generating power was insufficient?—It came to our notice a couple of months before the strike occurred.

2466. And did you apprehend from that it would diminish the working-space in the mines—that if the water gained on you you would have less mine-room?—We were hopeful that possibly with the present power we might be able to overtake it; and there is only a small area to work out before reaching a fault which has not yet been explored.

2467. Have these faults been explored, or has any scheme been considered for extending the working beyond the fault?—They have been partly explored. The work in the Brunner Mine, for instance, clearly indicates where the coal is beyond the main fault, and we are taking steps to work that. It is a question of pumping-power there also, and it cannot be commanded by steam. It is too far away from the boilers for the pumps to be worked by steam, and we have had to consider what is the motive-power to be applied for that purpose. Before the amalgamation I had provided an air-compressor for that purpose, but it is now considered by the manager that electric power might be better than compressed air; and we have in Wellington an electric power ready to be proceeded with, and which would have been erected had it not been for the strike.

2468. Is the water that goes into the Coal-pit Heath Mine proper mine-water, or is it supposed to be surface-water?—It is supposed to be surface-water.

2469. How has that got in?—It has got in through the crevices all over the surface.

2470. Have you had to consider how far those crevices have been widened or increased by taking out the pillars and so increasing the surface-water?—I have no opinion on that. I am not an expert on that, but I may say, however, that in my opinion it has not been increased much. That is my private impression. These rents are all over the locality before the ground is worked at all underneath.

2471. Have any formed since the ground was worked?—I am not aware of any since.

2472. *Mr. Brown.*] Have there been any miners' places lost in the Coal-pit Heath through the rising of the water lately?—I cannot answer that, but I do not think so, lately. Any loss would only be temporary until we could get the water pumped out again. And I might say that we have one of our main boilers shifted—indeed, we have shifted two. Some time ago we shifted one, and now there is a second one in the course of erection from Wallsend to pump this Coal-pit Heath Mine; and that would have been done long since but for the suspension by the strike, which stopped everything. We could not afford to go on with the expense that would be incurred.

2473. *The Chairman.*] Is there as much mine-room at present for providing places for the miners as there was before the strike?—There is, excepting Wallsend.

2474. I am referring to the last strike?—I consider there is the same space now available as there was when they went out last time.

2475. The mine has not deteriorated, nor is less able to afford employment? The field for employment has not been reduced?—I expect it will cost a little to put it in order; but in two or three weeks after resuming we expect to be at the same point where we left off.

2476. How many places will that afford for two men each at Coal-pit Heath and Brunner?—At the present time they will only afford about thirty working-places.

2477. That would be sixty men?—Yes, sixty men for one shift.

2478. That is a hundred and twenty miners, and how many day-wage men in proportion?—There are about double the quantity.

2479. About as many more, or two hundred and forty in all?—Yes. And I may say that number may be increased one-half by working three men in a place, as had been done before they left their work.

2480. Is that a system which is good either for the miners or the company? Can three men really work in one place at one time? Is it not a case of three men doing two men's work?—They elected to do it in order that employment might be found for them all. It is not quite so advantageous as two.

2481. Do they increase the output of coal in proportion?—Yes.

2482. Do you pay wages for the three men?—We pay the tonnage-rate; and if it were day-wages we should pay for three men. Recent propositions have been made for paying day-wages, and I put this in, which is a printed copy of the proposals of the company [Paper produced, and marked "Exhibit No. 24"].

2483. Under these recent propositions, would the company be prepared to pay three men in a place?—Yes, if we put three men in a place.

2484. Would you allow the men to do as they did before, and arrange how many should be in a place?—That would be left to the manager and the men.

2485. *Mr. Moody.*] It would depend on circumstances?—Yes; if there is a demand for coal.

2486. *The Chairman.*] But you might put yourself in an awkward position? You say that the three men do not do three men's work—that it is to a certain extent disadvantageous to have three men in a place?—I say that probably they do not do quite so much work; but it may be advantageous to get these pillar-workings out rapidly. And I may say that probably we would do that, in order to afford employment to the extra men, pending the pumping-out at Coal-pit Heath.

2487. Do you anticipate that new miners going into the mines will be subject to extraordinary risk from want of familiarity with the workings?—No, I do not think so.

2488. I mean if men went into the work who were not accustomed to mining?—We shall only put men to get coal who are either gold-miners or coal-miners.

2489. You only put men in who know the work?—Only men who have had previous experience as miners. We have a large number of deputies and roadmen who instruct these men, and experienced men have to do what our deputies tell them, and these deputies will protect and guard the new men too.

2490. Are these deputies and roadmen union men?—Most of them were union men, but we have appointed six deputies who have signified their willingness to work with either "free" labourers or unionists.

2491. Have you felt at all that your proportion of daily-wage men and surface-men had become a charge on the mine beyond what its fair proportion should be, through any circumstances of late years? Have you felt that the day-labour was in excess of the number of miners employed, thereby increasing the cost of the coal beyond what was necessary?—Yes, of late we have felt that.

2492. What do you attribute that to?—I attribute it to the miners shortening their time of working at the face, and to their restricting their output.

2493. Were these causes beyond your control?—Yes.

2494. Do you remember anything about the price of coal charged to the dealers in Greymouth before and after the amalgamation? was there any change made?—Yes, there was some change made. It was 12s. 6d. before the amalgamation, and 14s. subsequently.

2495. Were there good business reasons for that?—Yes. The 12s. 6d. did not pay the cost. The dealers used to have it specially screened: they would not take the ordinary screened coal for export, the price of which was 12s. 6d., and so through the competition they used to get the specially screened at 12s. 6d. Upon the amalgamation I knew how the thing stood, and that the 12s. 6d. was not paying us, and we fixed the rate at 14s.

2496. This rise on coal did not indicate that there was a general increase in the price of coal all through the colony?—No, not at all.

2497. What proportion did the locally-used coal bear to the coal exported?—I think I had better get the exact figures at the office. I will supply the figures. Reckoned on the screened coal only, it was 3¼ per cent.—on the unscreened weight, as paid the miners, it was under 2 per cent.—of the whole.

2498. *Mr. Moody.*] Have you dépôts here for local coal?—We confine our sales to two dealers locally, and they retail it.

2499. *The Chairman.*] You understand that I mean by local coal the coal on which the price was raised from 12s. 6d. to 14s.?—Yes.

2500. Returning to the question of royalty, have you any definite suggestion to make?—Yes. I propose: (1.) That, in lieu of royalty, I would prefer paying a reasonable percentage of the net profit resulting yearly on the coal workings and sales. (2.) That, failing this change, the 6d. royalty appears a high charge, considering the company cannot hope for over 1s. a ton profit on a fair capital value of their improvements and machinery. (3.) That, whatever royalty is maintained, it should not increase as the mine gets worked out or the workings further back and more costly, but rather the reverse; and that, small coal being sold at half-price, screened should only pay half royalty rates on actual sales. With reference to the working railways at Greymouth, I would like to add the following: There are not sufficient lines for shunting at the hydraulic cranes, and this causes great loss of time to vessels loading, and when this is being done outside of the hours between 8 and 5 the Railway Department alone receives 12s. to 14s. per hour as overtime from the vessel loading. This could be avoided by having more lines, so that the shunting could be done without interfering with the line from which the vessels are loaded. Overtime: A ship being due at tide-time, say midnight, notice must be given to the railway authorities before 5 p.m. The railway men then come out, and if the ship does not arrive she must pay the overtime just the same. Remedy: That notice be given steamer is expected, and if she arrives a man to be sent round to call the railway men some time before she is ready for loading. Railway time-table: As the present running of three trains daily is evidently sufficient for all traffic except coal, why not make the extra trains purely mineral trains, to be run at such hours as would best suit for facilitating the despatch of steamers?

MONDAY, 27TH OCTOBER, 1890.

Mr. WILLIAM DUNN sworn and examined.

2501. *The Chairman.*] What are you, Mr. Dunn?—A coal-miner.

2502. How long have you been in Brunnerton?—It will be eleven years in January since I came to Brunnerton.

2503. Did you come from the Old Country then?—Yes, I came from Durham.

2504. What mines have you chiefly worked in?—I have worked in the Brunner Mine mostly; but I have also worked three months in the other mines.

2505. Have you any official position in the mine?—No, I am employed as a hewer.

2506. Are you an officer of the Miners' Association?—No.

2507. You are a member?—Yes, I am a member.

2508. Can you make any statement as to the cause of the present difficulty with the miners?—Well, I am not prepared to make any statement, but I came prepared to answer any questions.

2509. Do you remember the circumstances that led to the stoppage of the mine in July last, when the managers proposed a reduction of 20 per cent.?—Yes, I remember.

2510. For some time up to that period the hewers had been receiving a price on whole coal, had they not?—No; there had been no whole coal. There was a price arranged for pillar-workings only in the Brunner Mine, and at the same time it was whole coal in the Coal-pit Heath Mine, the pillars and whole coal being fixed at one price, 2s. 10d. a ton. That was from the 10th March until the 19th July.

2511. Then a change was, I understand, proposed at the instance of the company, of a reduction of 20 per cent.?—Yes.

2512. And that was not accepted by the miners?—No.

2513. Were you at that time, as a miner, dissatisfied with the price of 2s. 10d.?—No.

2514. You thought it sufficient?—Yes, the 2s. 10d. for the Coal-pit Heath coal.

2515. What was the price for the Brunner pillars at that time?—It was 2s. 6d.

2516. And did you understand that the 20-per-cent. reduction was to apply to the 2s. 6d. also?—Yes.

2517. What was the amount earned by the miners under the foregoing rates as compared with what they had been under the payment of 4s. on screened coal previous to March?—As to the Coal-pit Heath Mine, I could not say; but I do not think there was much difference. They would be paid considerably better in the Coal-pit Heath and in the Brunner pillar-workings. I am speaking now of the period from the 10th March.

2518. You say they were getting more earnings under the latter conditions than under the former?—Generally speaking, they were.

2519. By how much?—So far as I am myself concerned, I was making considerably more.

2520. *Mr. Moody.*] What was the amount of earnings you had been making before, and also during the time you were making considerably more?—The wages I was making previously, as near as I can tell, would be from 10s. to 12s. a day without offtakes; and afterwards from 12s. to 14s. Sometimes I might make more, sometimes less, also without the offtakes.

2521. By the offtakes you mean lights, powder, &c.?—Yes, and check-weighmen. That item amounts to 4s. 6d. in a fortnight for two men.

2522. Two shillings and threepence each a fortnight?—Yes. Before the Wallsend Mine was opened it would not be more than 1s. 6d.

2523. Do you think, then, that it was unreasonable for the company, finding that they were losing money, to ask for a reduction in the wages?—That is a question open to considerable discussion, and a direct answer Yes or No would not meet the case.

2524. *Mr. Brown.*] Were you satisfied with the rates before March?—Not by any means. In the Brunner Mine, where I was working, the coal happened to be particularly good—that is, in other places it was so much crushed that the amount of screened coal obtained by some of the hewers would not enable them to make more than 5s. to 7s. a day. This was due to the nature of the coal. In other places, however, owing to the coal being less crushed, from 16s. to 17s. a day might have been obtained.

2525. And you say was obtained?—I do not say it was obtained.

2526. And it was this reason that led you to seek the change from payment on screened coal to payment on gross?—Yes.

2527. Then, I presume that after the payment on gross coal was commenced the rate of earnings was more equal to all the men?—Yes.

2528. So that probably some had less than they had formerly?—Yes.

2529. But those who had very little formerly had a fair share?—Yes.

2530. If, under these circumstances, the company found they were actually paying more wages for getting the coal than previously, would that have been a fair reason for asking for a reduction of the price, or to demand an inquiry?—I believe it would be a fair reason for demanding an inquiry.

2531. Was such an inquiry agreed to by all parties?—There was an inquiry agreed to by the executive committee.

2532. An audit was held in Dunedin?—Partly in Dunedin and partly in Brunner.

2533. And the result of that audit showed?—A loss to the company.

2534. Not a very large one, was it?—To take it upon their figures, although the result of the audit at Dunedin showed a slight gain if certain items which were omitted had been included, there would have been a loss.

2535. Do you remember what those items were?—I could not say.

2536. They were objected to by the miners here?—I could not say they were objected to.

They were, I believe, such items as interest on capital, proving faults, and other dead works. In our audit at Brunnerton all these things were taken into account that showed the loss. In the audit at Dunedin there were certain items which were omitted for these things, and therefore it showed a slight gain.

2537. Will you look at the results of the Dunedin audit, put in by Mr. Kennedy, and say if the small profit you speak of was not a loss?—Yes [referring to results], I now see it was so.

2538. Will you also look at page 4. These are the items you refer to as omitted from the calculation in the Dunedin audit, are they not?—Yes, interest on capital, depreciation, main headings, &c.

2539. *The Chairman.*] Then the amount shown on that page has to be added to the tonnage shown on the other page?—Yes.

2540. But, on the whole, was the contention of the company borne out that they were really losing—or, if not losing, at any rate not making any profit with the existing rates of wages?—I should say, if you allowed a percentage on capital and for the opening-up of new works, they could not possibly be making any profits at the price paid to us.

2541. As a miner, do you think it a necessary part of the expenditure of the mine to be opening up fresh mine-room?—Yes, for the welfare of the mine.

2542. And the employment of the miners?—Yes.

2543. So that you think that the cost of exploring faults and winning coal is a fair charge against the working of the mine?—Yes.

2544. We have had in evidence that an arrangement was agreed to under which the men went to work again?—Yes.

2545. And what was that arrangement?—That arrangement was that, pending this inquiry, the miners were willing, in addition to a permanent reduction of 2d., to accept a temporary reduction of 3d., making 5d. in all for the present?—Yes; those prices to be paid until such time as this Commission made its report as to whether they could recommend the Government to allow the company any relief or not.

2546. And in the event of the Commissioners not recommending any reduction of rents, royalties, or freights, what would follow?—That is a question I could not answer. Probably it might be an arbitration case.

2547. The decision of the Commissioners would not be looked upon as an arbitration?—No.

2548. It would be looked upon as only collecting material for an arbitration?—If the Commissioners could see their way clear to recommend a reduction of 6d. per ton, this would enable the company to get the reduction they say they could carry on the mines with and pay this temporary reduction to the miners. If the Commissioners did not report as to any reduction being given, the question would stand over for further discussion.

2549. Then, subsequently the miners all went out?—Yes. This was about three weeks after they had resumed.

2550. Did they go out on any grounds connected with the arrangement that had been arrived at?—Yes, they went out on grounds connected with the arrangement that they were working under.

2551. Would you explain how?—There was an agreement between the company and the workmen that coals should not be supplied to the Union Steamship Company.

2552. Do you mean at the beginning of the three weeks?—Yes.

2553. This is the condition you mean: On the 28th August there was a notice given to Mr. Bishop, the mine-manager, that the miners were willing to return to work on a reduced price of 2d. per ton on pillar-rates, and also, in order to effect a temporary settlement pending the result of the Commission, a further reduction of 3d. per ton on the pillar-work. Then, on the 30th August the secretary of the Miners' Association writes further to Mr. Bishop, saying that one of the conditions of settlement is "that the coal mined shall be carried by vessels manned by union sailors"?—Yes.

2554. That is what you refer to?—In referring to the arrangement I take Mr. Bishop's letter to Mr. Andrew, the secretary, as the agreement.

2555. Then, was the strike in consequence of the coal being carried by the Union Company's vessels?—Yes; clearly so.

2556. Had the company agreed to this condition?—Yes.

2557. By letter, then?—You have Mr. Bishop's letter to the committee, which will show clearly what the agreement was. I think you will find that the final arrangement was made with two alterations in the letter he sent.

2558. *Mr. Brown.*] In imposing that condition were the miners fully aware of what it might lead to?—It is only speculative. A strike is speculative at any time.

2559. Did they understand that it might mean closing the shipping trade?—Yes. The miners were quite willing to carry out their arrangement until the end of the difficulty had the Union boats not been brought in.

2560. What I mean, rather, was the question of whether the miners were fully alive to all the consequences of making such a condition at the time they made it?—Yes.

2561. That they were putting themselves in the power of outside persons who might—to take an extraordinary case—have an interest in having the mines shut up?—No; I do not know that they were.

2562. They were not alive to that?—No.

2563. Do you think it is possible that could be a factor in the controversy existing now?—We have no quarrel with the manager nor the coal company up till now.

2564. Then your quarrel is with whom?—With nobody. We were simply refusing to give coal to assist the shipping companies to carry on a struggle against the seamen. We have no

quarrel with the company; but we contend that there was a great principle at stake, and the strike has been going on at the instance of the Maritime Council really, and the refusal to supply coal to the Union Steamship Company is to assist the seamen in their endeavours to obtain the right to affiliate, one body with another.

2565. Take an extreme case. Supposing it was to some persons' interest to shut up Greymouth as a coal-port, would you not be really playing into their hands by the action the miners have taken?—Certainly so.

2566. Have you any suggestion to make as to any possible solution of this terrible difficulty?—I have been exerting myself all this last week, and I suggested terms to Mr. Kennedy on Thursday which I believe would have had the effect of settling the affair this morning could they have been accepted.

2567. What were the terms?—They were for a material reduction, and to allow the old workmen to resume work. It is advertised in this morning's paper, I believe.

2568. I presume the former question of wages did not affect the surface-men?—No.

2569. Only the miners?—Only the miners.

2570. So that they have been out on strike on both occasions without having any material point to gain for themselves?—The first occasion was a lock-out for a 20-per-cent. reduction.

2571. It did not affect the surface-men, did it? They got 10s. a day?—Yes; but the miners' trouble compelled the surface-men to go out. Where there has been work for them they have been employed all the time.

2572. But still it is true that all these men who were paid daily wages have been out on both these occasions without having any material personal object at stake?—Yes. There is no work for them when the coal-miners have left work.

2573. *The Chairman.*] Now, to return to the propositions you say you made last week—I presume to Mr. Kennedy—what were they?—They were as follows [reading from manuscript]: "That the hewers be allowed to resume work on the following basis: Pillars—Coal-pit Heath 2s. 3d. a ton, Brunner 2s. a ton; whole coal—Coal-pit Heath 2s. 8d., Brunner 2s. 6d. This agreement as to prices not to be disturbed for at least twelve months." This arrangement [explaining] contemplated the working of whole coal in the future which is at present not available, as it was thought better to settle the terms now before the men went to work, in order to avoid future disputes. Then, a further condition was that the company were to retain all non-unionists now employed or engaged, and were to be free to employ in the future unionists or non-unionists indifferently at their discretion. Also, "That a committee of two representing the owners, and two the miners, and a fifth to be chairman, be appointed, which committee shall settle all matters of disagreement arising in the course of work, such committee to be appointed for twelve months." I saw Mr. Bishop last Saturday night. I was speaking to him in the railway-station, and he asked me if anything could be done to bring about a settlement, and, after considering the matter, I thought there might be some arrangement made whereby the thing could be settled. I interviewed Mr. Bishop on three different occasions, at the very end of the week, and I made suggestions, which were considered by Mr. Kennedy, and which were finally rejected. I came down to Greymouth and saw Mr. Kennedy on Thursday, the date of this letter, and after a long discussion with him he showed me a telegram he had just received from Dunedin, stating that there were about fifty men—different kinds of miners—engaged, and that some of those might wish to have their engagement carried out; hence this clause in the proposed agreement as to all the men now employed or engaged.

2574. But was this agreed to by Mr. Kennedy?—Yes; Mr. Kennedy personally was quite willing to agree to it.

2575. But did he say he had to reserve it for the directors, or something of that sort?—He did not say that.

2576. Then, is this in force now? is it accepted by the miners as well?—No.

2577. The miners will not accept it?—They did not get the chance. Mr. Kennedy said he considered it a reasonable proposition for the settlement of the dispute, and that he would wire to Dunedin to stop any further engagement of men, as there was a likelihood of the old hands agreeing to resume work at once. He did wire at once to that effect to Dunedin. He was at Brunner on Friday and met Mr. Bishop at the mine, and Mr. Bishop sent me a long letter from Mr. Kennedy, addressed to me, stating that, as there had been considerably more men employed in Dunedin than was first stated, he could only employ about eighty of the old hands. This prevented any further action being taken on the proposed agreement.

2578. Well, then, on Saturday?—On Saturday I went to see Mr. Bishop the first thing in the morning. There was a meeting on Friday night, at which I explained the whole of my transactions in the matter, and the attempt I had made to bring about a settlement; and I read to the meeting the proposed agreement and Mr. Kennedy's letter on Friday. I saw Mr. Bishop on the Saturday morning, and told him I had done all I possibly could in the matter, but that I had failed to bring about a settlement. I then suggested to Mr. Bishop that he might go down to Greymouth and see some of the principal merchants there, and ascertain if they could bring influence to bear on the directors to allow the arrangement arrived at between Mr. Kennedy and myself to be given effect to. I came down to Greymouth and saw Mr. McLean, and he had an interview with Mr. Kennedy, who sent for me to wait upon him at his office at 2 o'clock. I did so, and he gave me a full explanation of the change in the affairs.

2579. Owing to the increased number of men that had been employed?—Yes.

2580. *Mr. Brown.*] Does that end your negotiations?—Yes; that was the last of my negotiations, and the matter rested there. Mr. Kennedy would see himself that I had done all I possibly could. He simply wanted to make an explanation of the change in the affairs and the reason for it.

2581. This does not end the difficulty?—No.

2582. How long had similar propositions to these been offered to the miners by the company?—Similar propositions to these were offered by the company to the miners. This is rather less than they asked for in the 20-per-cent. reduction.

2583. So far as the wage question was involved the men were giving way, in fact?—So far as the wage question was concerned, the men did not give way. These were suggestions I was prepared to lay before the men and ask them to submit to.

2584. You certainly would have submitted them?—I feel confident, if these suggestions of mine had been accepted, the men would have been at work this morning.

2585. With a proposed reduction of wages similar to the 20-per-cent. reduction formerly asked by the company?—The 20-per-cent. reduction would have reduced the Coal-pit Heath price by 7d. per ton; the 20 per cent. on the Brunner Mine would reduce it by 5d. a ton.

2586. The 20-per-cent. reduction would reduce the Coal-pit Heath pillars from 2s. 10d. to 2s. 3d.—that was your offer?—Yes; I have offered now 2s. 3d. on the Coal-pit Heath pillars, and on the Coal-pit Heath whole coal 2s. 8d.

2587. There would have been only 2d. reduction on the Coal-pit Heath whole coal; but the Coal-pit Heath pillars would have been reduced by 7d., or 20 per cent., and the Brunner pillars by 6d., or exactly 20 per cent.?—Yes.

2588. In a few words, the price on pillars has been conceded in both mines, but not on the whole coal?—Yes.

2589. But, while the company are insisting now on the 20-per-cent. reduction in pillar-workings, they are willing for solid coal to arrange for only 2d. a ton reduction on Coal-pit Heath, and 4d. on Brunner?—Yes.

2590. *The Chairman.*] So far the miners have practically given way to what the company originally demanded?—So far as the price is concerned, I have undertaken to recommend them to do so.

2591. You have taken it on yourself to recommend the other miners to do so?—Yes.

2592. How do you propose to get over the other difficulty, that led to the second strike—the difficulty of not coaling?—My proposition made no restriction upon them as to coaling any boats.

2593. You would give way on the coaling of the Union Company's boats?—Yes.

2594. And the only point that remains between you is, unfortunately, that they cannot take the whole of the men back?—They insist on bringing a hundred and twenty new hands into the place, while they only take on, perhaps, eighty old hands.

2595. But I presume they were pledged to those new hands before your offer was made?—According to the telegram which Mr. Kennedy showed me when I was making these offers, they were pledged to about fifty.

2596. And did he delay at all in sending his telegram?—That telegram was sent before my proposed agreement was written.

2597. And still it was too late?—I do not think they engaged any more men before 11 o'clock on Saturday. Perhaps Mr. Kennedy could give you evidence on that point. I cannot speak with authority. He has the telegram and correspondence.

2598. Then, I understand that, as far as you are concerned, you are prepared to concede both points upon which the lock-out in July and the strike in September took place?—Yes.

2599. And go to work again?—Yes. I also proposed that three men should work in a place instead of two, although we should get less wages for the time being, and that he might keep the experienced hands to go into the whole coal as they opened up the mine.

2600. We understand from Mr. Kennedy that, if you took a daily wage for a while until the thing was done, the company would pay day-wages to all the three men—that they quite contemplated paying three men's wages?—Yes.

2601. But, of course, when they came to paying by weight of coal, or contract-work, it would be more difficult?—It would not affect him so much.

2602. He said it would be more difficult to know how they should be paid; but he said it might not be a loss to the men working on day-wages if they paid them all, and they were quite prepared to do that; so it seems that both sides are exceedingly anxious to meet one another, and I hope it will be settled somehow?—If they would settle with the men without bringing those new men from Dunedin, there would be no difficulty; but they insist on bringing those men from Dunedin, hence the difficulty.

2603. That brings me back to the question of how long was this or a similar offer under consideration by the miners without their adopting it?—An offer was under consideration by the miners up to the 17th, but the prices offered were not so favourable. That offer required a personal application of the men, and not an agreement with the whole.

2604. *Mr. Brown.*] You say that there is no whole coal available just now?—But it is quite possible there may be in a few weeks.

2605. There are pillars working both in the Coal-pit Heath and Brunner Mines?—Yes.

2606. The concession, therefore, of 2s. 3d. in the Coal-pit Heath and 2s. in the Brunner is really yielding the 20 per cent. asked for on the 19th July?—Yes.

2607. Then, the offer made by the company so far back as the 19th July is only now being negotiated as being accepted by the miners?—It is only offered by me. It is not accepted by the miners.

2608. Those are the terms with which you negotiated?—Yes; and I have every reason to believe they would have accepted them.

2609. This offer has been standing, as far as the company were concerned, for three months?—Yes.

2610. After that the strike took place, not on a question of work or wages?—No.

2611. But in support of the seamen's strike with the Union Steamship Company?—Yes.

2612. Then there has been another strike since? They only went to work for the three weeks, and since this the mines have been idle?—Yes.

2613. The company's business, then, as coal-producers, must have been materially interfered with?—Yes.

2614. Do you think that would have any tendency to irritate the company?—Most certainly; but I know it irritated the workmen when the Union Steamship Company's boats came and took the coal in the face of the fact that they had a distinct agreement that it should not be supplied to that company's boats.

2615. You worked for the coal company, did you not?—Yes.

2616. Not for the Union Steamship Company?—No.

2617. Is it usual for employés to inquire what is done with the production of a factory or coal-mine?—We labour under extraordinary circumstances.

2618. Were they circumstances of oppression in any way?—No, I could not say that; but we were passing through one of the greatest convulsions of trade possible at the time.

2619. In what respect?—In the dispute between capital and labour, as to whether labour should amalgamate, one society with another, or not.

2620. That is, affiliating your unions?—Yes. We wished to keep aloof from that dispute if the Grey Valley Coal Company could find other boats than those interested in that dispute to carry the coal.

2621. Did that really affect your interests here, do you think?—Well, that is speculative. You might say it might and it might not.

2622. You were not aware that it had affected your interests in the past?—I think it could be proved that it had affected our interests—or working-men's interests—on previous occasions.

2623. I speak of your interests. Had it affected your interests in the past?—It had not directly affected our interests in the past.

2624. Then the whole of this quarrel really arose outside the district altogether?—Yes; outside of New Zealand, so far as I know.

2625. And chiefly in Australia?—Yes.

2626. Do you know what the dispute in Australia was that gave rise to this difficulty here?—The nearest that I can get to it is that the marine officers desired to affiliate with the Maritime Council of Australia.

2627. Of course that was a matter of opinion as to whether it was right or wrong?—Yes.

2628. The employers held that they should not?—Yes.

2629. They thought they should?—Yes.

2630. Have the mine officers joined a union?—The mine officers have an association of their own, and are not affiliated with the miners. Their association is called the Deputies' Union.

2631. The deputies were not affiliated?—No. I am speaking of Brunnerton now. There was a contention that the deputies ought to be in the Miners' Association, but the workmen gave way and consented to their remaining an association by themselves.

2632. Then the affiliation of the marine officers with the Seamen's Union in Australia was really the seat of the dispute?—So far as I know, it really was.

2633. Then, are the miners now opposing a principle they have already accepted as applied to their own deputies?—No. I must explain that the proposition was made by the miners to include the deputies in the Miners' Association, but the mine-manager objected, and the miners gave way. The miners thought that they should be included in their union, as they would all work more harmoniously together; but the manager objected upon the ground that they would be out of his control and under the control of the union rules, and thus he would lose proper control in the management of the mine. In consequence therefore of his representation the miners gave way against their own union.

2634. Was not that the contention of the Shipowners' Association in Australia in regard to the ships' officers?—I think so.

2635. Then you have given way in this district upon a similar point, but you strike because others contend for that principle in another place?—Yes; we gave way on representations.

2636. You conceded the point here amongst yourselves locally, but you strike because there is some other body wanting the thing elsewhere?—There is a general question.

2637. And now personally you propose to give way on that point even?—Yes: what I would recommend would be to practically accept the whole of the Grey Valley Coal Company's terms, and leave them a free market.

2638. In negotiating this matter with Mr. Kennedy, you went as an individual, not as a representative, did you not?—As an individual. The Miners' Association was not aware of what I was doing—in fact, there were some very strong opinions expressed about my interviewing the manager, and seeing Mr. Kennedy, before they knew what I was doing; but when I explained the position of affairs, and what I had done, the meeting, which was a big one, passed a resolution, without a dissentient voice, approving of the step I had taken.

2639. *The Chairman.*] Was that a meeting of the members of the union?—Yes; a formal meeting of the union was called, and the hall was packed.

2640. *Mr. Brown.*] What date was it held on?—On Friday night. Another meeting was called, and I further explained what I had been doing in endeavouring to get some independent party to intercede in the matter, and again a motion was carried upholding what I had done, and thanking me for my exertions in trying to bring about a settlement.

2641. Why did the executive of the union not take up these negotiations?—I am not prepared to answer that question.

2642. At all events, the executive have taken no steps?—No. Well, I believe they did so on Friday afternoon, while I was interviewing Mr. Kennedy.

2643. Although the feeling of the men had been in favour of your proposition?—Yes, they seemed so; but my proposition could not be discussed in the face of Mr. Kennedy's telegram.

2644. You were not, under those circumstances, prepared to say to Mr. Kennedy that the men would give in?—But if he would agree to allow his own men to man the mines, and not bring those other men from Dunedin, I thought I could guarantee an answer within a couple of hours.

2645. You could not at that time say, "Here is a definite proposition from the union"?—Not from the union.

2646. In Mr. Kennedy's report to his co-directors in Dunedin they could not be informed that this was definite on the part of the miners?—But Mr. Kennedy told them that he had an assurance that such a thing could be effected.

2647. And the feeling of the miners was pretty unanimous at this crowded meeting?—Yes.

2648. In approving of what you had done?—Yes. The resolution on Friday night upheld what I had done; and on Saturday night, at a meeting which was even more packed, my action was again approved, and with a vote of thanks.

2649. *The Chairman.*] Were the officers of the union present, do you know?—The whole of them were there.

2650. Does that become an action adopted by the union?—No.

2651. It was not a formal meeting of the union?—Yes, so far as the resolution upholding what I had done was concerned, but they did not pass a resolution formally accepting the proposition.

2652. That is to say, your section of the union has now approved of an offer of a free port to the Grey Valley Coal Company?—They approved of the action I took in endeavouring to bring about a settlement.

2653. Which includes that?—Yes, which includes that.

2654. *Mr. Brown.*] What has led to the change of mind on that point? I understand that you were unanimous in going out, and from your now conceding the terms in reference to which the strike took place I take it there must be a change of mind?—I suppose the developments of the strike as they are proceeding.

2655. *Mr. Moody.*] Was this movement never thought of before this?—Yes; it has been spoken of, and a fortnight ago I was prepared to take the same steps as I have now done.

2656. *The Chairman.*] And what prevented you taking them then?—The feeling of the men themselves. I saw no chance of carrying it at that time.

2657. *Mr. Brown.*] Do the men still hold by the same principles? Has there been any alteration in their views on this point since the fortnight?—Most certainly, or I should not have taken those steps.

2658. Since the strike?—So far as their views are concerned, they are still of opinion that labour associations ought to be allowed to affiliate one with another.

2659. In fact, that the grounds of the strike were justified?—Yes; but circumstances are not favourable to the present strike being carried any further.

2660. To put it in other words, that they concede the points because they cannot carry them?—Well, they concede the points rather than carry the strike any further.

2661. Because they cannot carry those points at present?—I do not say that. I say they will concede them rather than carry it any further. They still believe in the principles upon which the strike originated, that the associations should be allowed to affiliate one with another; but it is not expedient to press it further at the present time.

2662. *The Chairman.*] Before giving in on that point has your local association to obtain the consent of the Maritime Council?—I could not say that. I would not give a direct answer.

2663. You are not aware if they will lose any position?—I am not aware of that.

2664. *Mr. Brown.*] You did not intend, yourself, to consult the Maritime Council?—In what I have done I did not consult the committee of the association until I had arranged this agreement with Mr. Kennedy, and was prepared to put something before them.

2665. Supposing the men are agreeable to go into this, and the Maritime Council, through your executive, said, "No," how would that affect your negotiations?—I believe that it would not affect my negotiations, providing the men say they will go to work.

2666. Would that have affected your negotiations a fortnight or three weeks ago?—Yes, it would. That was the reason I did not take the steps then.

2667. I think you said you were at work at Durham?—Yes.

2668. Can you give the Commissioners any information as to what the hewers' hours are at Durham?—They are from six to seven hours. I have not got the average, but I can tell you where you could get it. You could get it from the *Colliery Guardian* for the 29th August, 1890, page 330, a return moved for in Parliament by Mr. A. D. Provend. There is a full report there. It gives all the different times—the average number of hours worked from bank to bank. The time of men and boys in getting mineral in the United Kingdom is 8·6—that means about 8 hours and 35 minutes—compared with 7·43 hours, or 7½, on the face—the average time per day actually worked on the face. The usual number of days worked in the United Kingdom averaged 5½. But, of course, you can see the full report.

2669. Have you formed any opinion as to whether the surface-men at the mine are in excess of the requirements? I mean the wages-men and the truckers?—Under the present state of the mines all hands are in excess.

2670. Does that mean miners as well?—Yes. That is the reason they were working three in a place. The daily-wage men have also been in excess. Some of them have always been lying idle, so that the work might be shared.

2671. Has that continued for any length of time with the daily men?—No, but it has with the miners a good bit.

2672. How long have they been working three in a place?—The three in a place only applies to the last three weeks' working. Previous to that the men lay idle instead of working three in a place.

2673. Did they change shifts with one another, or how?—Those who were at the places went into two men's places to-day, and then would go into another two men's places to-morrow.

2674. They would take alternate days?—They would take their turns in lying idle, to give more room.

2675. There would be four men one day and another four the next day?—Instead of putting two strange men into a place they would put one man in on each shift—that is, one man belonging to a place would lay idle a shift, and that would give two men a day's work in that place.

2676. *Mr. Moody.*] Can you tell us the amount of wage that was made in Durham when you left, for the six hours?—I could not give you the exact average, but I think it was something like 4s. 8d. or 4s. 9d. a day.

2677. What was the tonnage rate? Do you recollect?—It varied very much. There was coal got there as low as 1s. 2d. and 1s. 3d. a ton, and some paid as high as 2s. 6d. to 2s. 8d. It would depend on the thickness of the seam and the quality of the coal. In the coking collieries, where there was soft coal, the prices were very low—from 1s. to 1s. 8d. and 2s. per ton; and in the steam collieries it would be 2s. 6d. and 2s. 8d. a ton, and in some places more than that.

2678. *The Chairman.*] There was a proposition made to the Government, to which you have referred, that reduction should be made either in the royalty paid by the lessee of the mine or upon the charge for railage and wharfage of the coal: were you a party to that proposition?—No.

2679. Are you aware of arguments in favour of it?—The arguments in favour of it would come from the report of the auditors who went through the books here and in Dunedin.

2680. Did they suggest that the Government should forego the royalty?—No, it was not the auditors' duty.

2681. How do you think their report would support such a proposition?—The figures laid before them showed that there was only a small margin of profits, according to the Dunedin report, to pay for opening up the mine, proving faults, &c.

2682. Who first suggested that the relief should be given?—I do not know.

2683. *Mr. Brown.*] I think it arose in a letter from Mr. Lomas and Mr. Newton, did it not?—I do not know if Mr. Newton could give you any information upon it or not.

2684. Your suggestion is that because the mine is working at a loss—that is the only reason?—The only reason for them suggesting it would be, I think, that the average weekly wages the miners were making, and the high rate of living upon this coast, made it impracticable for them to reasonably submit to a reduction, and they thought the Government might give some relief for the time being.

2685. Was there any change in the character of the coal being worked immediately on the 8th March?—Previous to the 8th March it would be principally whole coal.

2686. Not pillars?—Not pillars. Since the 8th March there has been a great amount of pillars taken out of the Brunner Mine that have been sorely crushed.

2687. Do you think that would have affected the results?—Very materially. Had there been whole coal worked along with it, the results would not have been so bad for the company.

2688. *Mr. Moody.*] I suppose that was on account of so much small going through the screens from the pillar-workings?—Yes, and no whole coal going to recompense them for it.

2689. *Mr. Brown.*] You take it, at the pillar-workings these rates would be unprofitable?—According to the figures laid before us, yes.

2690. There was whole coal being worked up to the 8th March?—Yes; but not in the Brunner Mine.

2691. In the Coal-pit Heath?—Yes, and in the Wallsend.

2692. Have you been in the mines lately, since the stoppage?—I have not.

2693. You do not know if there are as many places open now as when the men left off?—About the same. Mr. Bishop told me on Saturday morning that he could start about twenty-four places.

2694. In Brunner or Coal-pit Heath?—In both, by working three in a place, and putting three shifts on. That would be nine men in each place, and he would very soon open up.

2695. *Mr. Moody.*] How many in a shift?—Three, and three shifts. They would have to work in three shifts if the demand required it.

2696. *The Chairman.*] In the present state of the storage would it be possible to work in three shifts?—If there was plenty of trade to demand it.

2697. That is, supposing there were plenty of boats in?—Yes.

2698. But, supposing they did not come in regularly?—Then it would mean the shifts lying off when the boats were not there.

2699. That is, on account of want of storage?—Yes; that applies regularly here.

2700. That has been usual all through?—Yes.

2701. *Mr. Moody.*] Do you think that if the present appliances for keeping water out of the Coal-pit Heath Mine had been properly applied the water would have accumulated to such an extent?—I do not know what to say about answering that question.

2702. *The Chairman.*] You are not aware of the circumstances under which the water has accumulated?—The water has accumulated there on account of the machinery being too light.

2703. *Mr. Brown.*] Is it that the machinery is too light or the steam too light?—The machinery was too light, and he had not enough steam to work them with high pressure. The new arrangements are sufficient to take the whole of the water out of the mine.

2704. *The Chairman.*] Have you anything to say about the mine being in any respects in an unsafe condition? Does the roof come down in a proper way?—For practical miners the mines are safe.

2705. How does the roof come down when the pillars are taken out?—Generally it comes very well, with a good slow settlement, and plenty of notice. Experienced miners can keep themselves quite safe in working the pillars out.

2706. *Mr. Moody.*] Do you know of your own knowledge if there has been any complaint made about the insufficient attendance of the Government Inspector?—I do not know that there has. The miners have the privilege of sending men round for themselves, and they did so right up till they struck.

2707. *The Chairman.*] These men report to whom?—They write their remarks in a report-book kept in the manager's office. The Inspector of Mines reads that book, or is supposed to do so. Any complaint these Inspectors may have to make, or any suggestions or alterations for the better working or ventilation of the mines, are entered in this book.

2708. And how are these men selected?—From the whole of the miners at the union meeting.

2709. How many are there selected generally?—Two men.

2710. And they hold office for how long?—For three months.

2711. Do they get extra pay?—The miners pay them something extra.

2712. Just as they pay check-weighmen?—They pay them a day's wage for each man every inspection they make.

TUESDAY, 28TH OCTOBER, 1890.

MR. FRANCIS WILLIAM MARTIN re-examined.

2713. *The Chairman.*] There are just a few points we wish to clear up in regard to the evidence you gave before, Mr. Martin. You promised to put in a tracing showing the exact distribution of the expenditure?—Yes, I have it here. [Tracing put in, and marked "Exhibit No. 26."]

2714. Can you point out to us what works are still in progress?—There is nothing in progress except the Tainui-street training-wall.

2715. This is up to the 31st March, is it not?—It is up to about the middle of this year.

2716. What expenditure has there been since the 31st March. The returns you put in were made up to that date?—There has been about £10,000 expenditure.

2717. What, in your opinion, will be the expenditure for the future, and upon what works?—This Tainui-street training-bank has to be finished yet. It has to go down I do not know exactly how far, but say £5,000 will be required to complete it.

2718. Any other work?—There have been strong representations for some time as to increasing the length of the south breakwater.

2719. From whom?—From ships' masters, owing to the difficulty as to the south wall not projecting sufficiently. The position can best be understood by referring to a map of Greymouth Harbour in Parliamentary Paper D.–8, 1889. [Parliamentary paper produced, and marked "Exhibit No. 27."] When a vessel is coming in she is apt to get driven on to the north breakwater by the force of the sea before she gets under the protection of the south breakwater, and the ships' masters are very much in favour of extending this south breakwater so as to get some protection, so that the north breakwater would be under the lee of it when the heaviest sea is on. But against that there is a certain amount of danger in extending it, for fear of the shingle getting round the end of the south wall if this is taken too far away from the place where the channel is contracted.

2720. Then you might get a shingle-bar?—There is a danger of that.

2721. Did Sir John Coode contemplate this contingency in his plans?—He showed a breakwater, and then an extension of that breakwater, and we have made his original breakwater and his extension; but he does not seem to have realised the difficulty and danger found by the shipping. There has already been one vessel, named the "Gerda," driven on to the north breakwater, and another vessel, called the "Mawhera," was driven round and narrowly escaped the breakwater, but got beached; while another vessel had an extremely narrow escape that I have heard of. I know that the captains of the vessels coming here look upon this danger with great dread, and they think if the south wall could be extended without deteriorating the harbour it would be a great benefit. It is hard to say, but probably the best and only way of meeting the difficulty would be to go on and endeavour to extend it, and so long as no deterioration took place we could continue it until shelter was obtained. If a slight deterioration did take place, the north breakwater could be extended a little to correct it.

2722. What would such extensions of the breakwater cost per chain, say?—They cost about £50 a foot; but as you get further out the exposure becomes greater, and you require to use bigger stones. I should therefore estimate £70 a foot, to cover contingencies.

2723. How many feet do you contemplate?—Five hundred feet has been advocated; but it is hard to say if that could be carried out, for the reason that we might have to stop before we got so far as that. Supposing the proposition to be carried out, £35,000 or £40,000 would be necessary for it.

2724. Is there any other work contemplated?—No, there is no other work contemplated unless it is this: that it is very likely some dredging would be desirable in the river-channel.

2725. What would the dredging cost?—It is hard to say what quantity there would be.

2726. Is it done by contract or by day-labour?—By day-labour. This would be the simplest way to realise it: a channel about 50ft. wide and about 3ft. deep throughout the frontage of the wharf would cost about £800.

2727. And is it such a channel as you contemplate having to be kept clear?—It ought to be

made more than that. I should put down £3,000 for dredging, but it is a thing hard to estimate with any exactness.

2728. That is absolutely necessary in order to keep the harbour in sufficient order?—It is not an absolute necessity; it might possibly be done without.

2729. I suppose the shingle is all cutting off from the bank below the Cobden Bridge, and tending to fill up this pool [indicating on tracing]?—Yes, to some extent.

2730. I understand that between the bridge and the bar there is a shoal opposite the lagoon. Is that shoal permanent?—Yes.

2731. And does the action of the river, beyond filling up the pool, carry the shingle over this inner bar? Have you any observations bearing on that?—It must do so, or the pool would fill up altogether in a little time, which we know it does not.

2732. I ask, because otherwise the dredging of this pool will be a matter of continual necessity?—It will be necessary to dredge from time to time, but not very frequently. It is probable that if it were once done thoroughly it might last eight or nine years before anything more would be required to be done. This is the result of experience here and at Westport. But it is only against the wharves it would so maintain itself, not all across the river; but against the wharves is all that is wanted.

2733. Have you a section of the bend of the river through the pool and out to the bar?—No.

2734. Have you the material for making one? Can you supply one?—Yes.

2735. Is there any other work you have in contemplation?—That is all the harbour-works.

2736. How could the harbour-works you have mentioned be provided for?—They would, I suppose, be provided for by borrowing money on the security of the Board's revenue.

2737. Is the security not exhausted?—The sum of money authorised to be borrowed by the special Act has been exhausted.

2738. A fresh Act would be necessary?—I think a fresh Act would be necessary. But there is a revenue over and above what is required for interest—there is in normal times—which ought to be available to pay interest on further borrowing. I will refer to that afterwards when you come to consider the accounts.

2739. In the letter from Mr. Blair of the 7th April it states that the general conduct of the works will be undertaken by the various Government departments immediately concerned. Does that mean that all works are undertaken at the suggestion and under the authority of the Government?—Yes.

2740. By the Public Works Department?—Yes. Practically the Public Works Department, and recently the Marine Department, has had charge of the whole business except the land-endowments.

2741. That is since the 7th April, 1888?—Since this Board was gazetted. I think, perhaps, it was a few days before that.

2742. Then, are these works included in the public works estimates passed by the House?—No. So long as the £150,000 which the Board was authorised to borrow was unexhausted it was provided for out of that. Since that they have been provided for by funds advanced by the Government, who hold the Board's revenue as against them.

2743. Then they differ from other public works in the colony?—In that respect.

2744. In that they are not voted by the House?—Yes; that they are not voted by the House.

2745. Have you the estimates for last year or the year before?—Yes.

2746. We had better see them, and refer to the public works estimates?—[Estimates for several years produced.] I think [after reference to estimates] they are in the Treasury accounts. They do not come before the House, I think. There is nothing in these estimates.

2747. Then out of what vote are they paid for?—I cannot say. The Government advance the money, but I could not say what funds they come out of.

2748. *Mr. Brown.*] Do they appear on the Public Works Statement, do you know, Mr. Martin? I mean, as regards this expenditure generally on the works that are undertaken here, do you know if they appear in the Minister's Public Works Statement?—As to the fund they come out of, do you mean?

2749. Yes?—There is nothing said in the Public Works Statement about that, that I remember. The Treasury on the one hand are receiving the Board's revenue, and on the other hand they are making advances as they are required.

2750. Does the Audit Department pass it as a sum coming out of the £150,000 loan?—No; that is expended.

2751. Then, how do they pass it? I do not understand how the Audit could otherwise pass a sum of money for the purpose?—I expect it is passed under "Unauthorised Expenditure." But, really I have no knowledge on the point. The best way would be to ask the Treasury for the information.

2752. Do you know of any allocation by law of the surplus revenue that arises here, or any rule by which it might be allocated?—The Harbour Board have the power to spend the revenue on any object upon which such a Board can legally spend it.

2753. *The Chairman.*] The question the Commissioners wish to arrive at is this: what is earning this surplus revenue, and whether it is a real surplus revenue available for works, or whether it should go to the payment of interest?—Which surplus revenue?

2754. The surplus you have alluded to here. Can you mention what the surplus revenue was last year?—It was very small.

2755. What was it?—Only about £1,400 or £1,500.

2756. What was it the year before?—It was about £7,000 or £8,000 the year before.

2757. And the year before that?—About £5,000 or £6,000.

2758. Then, I assume that the Board is responsible only for the £150,000 and the overdraft from the Government?—That is all they are responsible for at the present moment.

2759. And without devoting any of the revenue of the Board to the payment of interest on the balance of the money that has been expended on the harbour-works. I do not quite understand it. The total sum spent on harbour-works you have put in as £279,000, apart from the railway altogether. There is only about £150,000 of that covered by the loan, so that there is £100,000 spent on harbour-works on which interest is not paid by the Harbour Board?—Yes. It is not paid out of the Harbour Board revenue.

2760. So that, if the interest was paid out of the harbour revenue on the whole amount, it would do away with the apparent profit?—Yes; much more so if the cost of the Brunner Railway was taken into account.

2761. As the whole debt would be £536,000?—Yes; it would not be 2 per cent. on the lot. The harbour revenue would not pay more than about 2 per cent., even in a good year, on the total expenditure.

2762. *Mr. Brown.*] I would like to get at what I asked you a little time ago as to the restrictions or regulations under which surplus is expended on the harbour here. Is there any printed document we could refer to as to the constitution and powers of the Harbour Board?—The Harbour Board is under the control of the Government, and when a work has to be undertaken the Public Works Department, usually by the Under-Secretary, writes to the Board and requests them to take the legal steps to get it authorised by the Marine Department, which they do, and it is carried out by the Public Works Department.

2763. What are the legal steps?—Just applying to the Marine Department for authority.

2764. They have to do that under colonial statute, have they not?—Under "The Harbours Act, 1878."

2765. *The Chairman.*] Have you any plan or statistics to show the state of the bar before the harbour-works—say, ten years ago, or before that? You mentioned in your previous evidence that you would get something of that kind?—I have not got it ready yet.

2766. We want to see some kind of plan to show the harbour in its original state and as it is now. You said in your evidence that you would get something. You have not that ready?—I have not, but I will supply it in a day or two. I have been occupied by other returns asked for by the Commission, and with my ordinary work; so I am sorry I have not been able to attend to this yet.

2767. You said you had correspondence respecting a special provision which is made of 3d. a ton to be paid by the shippers as soon as £100,000 had been expended on the works. Have you looked up that correspondence?—No, I did not look it up. I think what I said was that I had mentioned in reports to the Engineer-in-Chief that this was a rate that might be levied, and I had not had an answer.

2768. We should be glad if you would kindly give us an extract from the letter, so that we could make it the basis for a further application, and have the matter cleared up?—I shall do so.

2769. You were to furnish us with a table of the steamers that loaded coal, and a return dividing the summer months and the winter months?—Yes; I have it here. [Table put in, and marked "Exhibit No. 28."]

2770. There was also a return showing the number of days in succession when the bar has been unworkable, and a diagram showing the state of the bar?—Yes; it is here. [Return and diagram put in, and marked Exhibits Nos. 29 and 30 respectively.]

2771. Then you were also to put in a statement of accounts, being an analysis of the Greymouth Harbour revenue for three years?—Yes, taking the revenue really accruing. The return shows a considerable difference with the cash account, owing to the money not coming to credit exactly in the way it accrues. [Statement put in, and marked "Exhibit No. 31."]

2772. You were about to explain the authority that the Harbour Board had for expending its revenue without its passing through the consolidated revenue?—It has the same power that every Harbour Board in the colony has. Clause 153 of the Harbour Boards Act says that "every Harbour Board may, within the limits of its jurisdiction, and subject to the provisions of this Act, make, construct, erect, and maintain harbour-works as defined by this Act."

2773. Then, has the Harbour Board the right to deal with this revenue? Could it, for instance, reduce its charges? How are the charges by which the revenue is collected fixed?—The Harbour Board has nothing to do with the charges. Under the Greymouth Harbour Board Act it receives the net revenue of the Brunner Railway and the coalfields endowment. But this endowment is managed by the Government, and the railways are managed by the Railway Commissioners, and it is they who have the power of fixing the rate.

2774. *Mr. Brown.*] That is "The Greymouth Harbour Board Act, 1884"?—Yes.

2775. You could neither reduce nor increase the charges?—The Harbour Board have no power to alter the charges in any way. They have only the power to alter the charges as to the tug, which they purchased and which they work themselves. But the rates on the railway are fixed by the Railway Commissioners, and the royalties and the rents, &c., are fixed by the Lands or Mines Department.

2776. But, if the royalties or the haulage-rates were modified, that would affect the revenue of the Harbour Board?—Yes; it would affect their revenue, but they have no power to control that.

2777. You have stated that the Harbour Board has a surplus revenue. Do you think that revenue could be applied to the reduction of the royalty or the haulage-charges?—I do not think it would be a wise thing to do it in view of the absolute certainty that more money will have to be borrowed to cover further expenditure on the harbour-works and any additions required to the railway, because anything the railway requires has to come out of this harbour fund also. The Government are not likely, I think, to provide moneys to make additions to the railway. All the

rolling-stock and additions to the railway have for some time past been charged to the Harbour Fund.

2778. All the recent expenditure in rolling-stock?—Yes, and additions to the railway generally—anything chargeable to the capital account. That was provided for by "The Railways Authorisation Act, 1885." The Board were given power under that Act, in the 7th clause, to construct certain railways and sidings.

2779. The Harbour Board Act would not give them power to spend money on harbour-works?—But this special Act was passed authorising them to spend money on railways at Greymouth and Westport.

2780. What is the procedure when you are going to act under that clause?—The Railway Department sends in a requisition for the work to the Harbour Board, and the Harbour Board passes a resolution recommending it for the approval of His Excellency the Governor in Council, which is sent to the Marine Department, which authorises the work to be undertaken; and the actual carrying-out of it is sometimes done by the Railway Department and sometimes by the Public Works Department.

2781. And charged to what?—It was charged to the loan, but when the loan ran out we had to stop doing such works; and the Railway Commissioners have been wanting sheds and improvements of various kinds which we have been unable to provide money for. Sheds are badly wanted on the new wharf, but there is no money for them.

2782. *The Chairman.*] You promised to think over the matter of the best way of supplying storage?—Yes. After considering the subject I arrived at these views: that the average output of the existing mines has in the past been under 150,000 tons per annum, or, say, 500 tons per working-day. The storage-room at present available in coal-trucks is about 1,500 tons, or, say, three days' supply, not counting 500 tons capacity of bins at the mines at present. The number of days during which the bar is liable to be blocked by bad weather may, from the experience of the past two years, be taken as not exceeding seven, except under extraordinary circumstances, and at such long intervals that large expense would not be justified in making provisions to meet these unusual occurrences. Allowing for the storage in the trucks, this would leave four days' supply, or 2,000 tons, as the storage-capacity required to equalise the output over the whole year, and to employ the smallest number of men in the mine with the greatest regularity, so far as the regularity is affected by the natural obstructions of the harbour. The different methods which suggested themselves to me by which this storage can be obtained are as follows: (*a.*) By providing further coal-trucks. This would cost £120 per truck carrying six tons, or £20 per ton of coal, equal to £40,000 for 2,000 tons storage. (*b.*) By building on the river-bank staiths similar to those at Westport, but with continuous lines of bins instead of only one here and there along the length, with an approach-line from the projected station-yard at Tivoli, together with a few sidings at Tivoli sufficient to hold one day's storage, and a weighbridge and a few offices. This would cost as follows: Siding, &c., at Tivoli, £1,500; approach-line from station to staiths, £9,000; staiths, 700ft. long, holding 2,000 tons, in 40 bays, each 17½ft. long, at £27 per running-foot, £18,900: total, £29,400—say £30,000.

2783. Are you aware how much the staiths at Westport hold—what storage?—I am not certain. I think it is 350 tons. There is no genuine storage. It is one bin at intervals. They are about 35-ton bins, and there are about ten of them there at intervals.

2784. And what did these staiths cost, do you remember, at Westport?—I could not say exactly, but I think it was £12,000.

2785. Could you supply that?—It would be rather difficult to do so. It would involve going into records fifteen years old, and would not apply to present proposals, as storage is not continuous at Westport.

2786. The staiths proposed here would be very much larger than those at Westport?—Larger than the present ones at Westport.

2787. It has been suggested that the staiths at Westport are not so much staiths for storing coal as merely for shooting the coal into the vessels?—Yes; but they have some storage.

2788. It does not provide storage in the proper sense of the term?—It does not; but the staiths which are now projected to be built at Westport are intended to provide storage similar to that which I have contemplated in this estimate.

2789. Then your next plan would be what?—By building on a site adjacent to the existing sidings behind the new wharf an ordinary storage-bin, similar to those commonly used at mines, with sliding-doors at the bottom, and elevated above the ground sufficiently for coal-trucks to be run underneath and loaded by opening the sliding-doors in the bottom of the bin. The bins to be filled by raising the truck-bodies and coal by a hydraulic crane to the top-level of the bin and placing them on under-frames, to be run along top of staging and emptied into the bin where required. The empty body would then be run back to the crane and lowered on to its own under-carriage again. The coal-bins to be made, say, three lines of rails in width, so as to make the distance the coal would have to be run on the top of the framing as short as possible, and the return of the trucks consequently as rapid as possible. The cost of this would be—Bins to hold 2,000 tons, £3,500; hydraulic crane, piping, foundation, &c., £2,000: total, £5,500.

2790. What would be the comparative cost of these methods?—In choosing between these methods it must be borne in mind that the alternative called (*b*)—namely, staiths like Westport, but with more bins—provides more than mere storage-capacity, and are coal-loading appliances themselves; so that in comparing them with either of the other alternatives the cost of, say, 700ft. of wharf and of two hydraulic cranes should be added to those other alternatives to put them on a par as to the total accommodation afforded. The cost of the wharf and cranes would be—700ft. of wharf at £12 per foot, £8,400; two hydraulic cranes with cylinder foundations like the present ones, but not including boilers, engines, or accumulator, as present one would probably suffice, £4,600: total, £13,000.

2791. The total costs, then, for comparison, will be what?—(*a*) Coal-trucks, &c., £53,000; (*b*) staiths or river-bank, £30,000; (*c*) coal-bins, &c., £19,000. It will thus be seen that the coal-bins remain much the cheapest way of providing storage-capacity and loading-facilities together, as well as being much the cheapest way of providing storing-capacity alone. One common objection to both the coal-staiths and the coal-bin system is the alleged breakage of coal, which is said to amount to as much as 2s. per ton on certain kinds of coal, though I would submit that this point requires careful inquiry, both as to the loss per ton and as to the number of tons which are thus deteriorated.

2792. *Mr. Brown.*] Can you give the percentage as regards quantity as to this 2s. per ton?—It applies, I believe, only to household coal, and the question has arisen whether it need apply to this if the coal were screened at the port of consumption instead of at the port of shipment. And it is also a question to what extent the breakage is really due to the fall from the coal-staiths or bins alone, or whether much of it does not take place in the trimming in the ships and in the process of unloading, both of which causes of damage will remain, however the coal were handled here. Assuming, however, that the loss is caused by the fall from the bins or staiths, the only way to avoid it under the alternatives I have named would be to provide coal-truck storage at the cost of £34,000 above the cost of bins. This would require an additional income of £1,700, or about 3d. on every ton of coal exported to meet it. Whether coal-owners would be willing to submit to this extra rate for the sake of saving the breakage is, I should think, very doubtful. That is all the information I have upon it. I have no personal knowledge of the prices obtained for coal in other places. I understand that 2s. is what Mr. Kennedy has estimated is the loss by breakage on household coal.

2793. The 2s. a ton refers to the market-value rather than to the quantity lost?—I cannot give a percentage. All I mean is that the assertion is that, owing to the breakage, the coal, whatever its price in any port may be, is worth 2s. a ton less on account of the breakage.

2794. *The Chairman.*] Where should the funds come from to meet this extra storage-supply?—The source from which funds are obtainable to meet the more expensive method is not clear, as it would run very close up to the margin available from revenue to meet interest on further borrowing; and, although it may be said that this might be provided by an additional rate if shippers were willing, still it would, in the first place, need some existent or fairly-certain prospective revenue to borrow upon, while all pressure hitherto has been towards a reduction of rates. In the case of the coal-bins the actual outlay now required would only be £5,500, as, although for purposes of comparison the cost of the wharves, &c., is added in, they would probably not be required until an extension of trade takes place considerably beyond what has hitherto existed. It is also an important point to be remarked that the loss by the coal-bin system would probably be small in reality, as the mine-owners would take care to store only steam-coal in them, which is not injured by the breakage. This consideration seems to destroy the only justification for the more expensive methods of storage.

2795. What would be the cost of working the bin system?—The cost of lifting the coal-trucks and emptying them would, of course, add to the working-expenses of the railway, but it might not practically do so to any great extent, as the coal-bins would be filled at times when the staff attached to the hydraulic cranes might otherwise not be fully employed, and, being permanent employés, their pay would run on anyhow; consequently the working-expenses of this method would probably not be very heavy. There would, no doubt, be some time taken in moving the trucks to and fro on the top of the staging, but a small additional expenditure would probably provide a rope-haulage system which would make it much quicker; and I have no doubt 100 tons an hour could be filled by this means. Without rope-haulage probably 50 tons an hour would be about as much as could be tipped. The bins could, of course, be divided into compartments, so as to keep the coal of different companies separate, if that were required in the future. It will be a question for the railway management to decide what charge will be made for putting coal into these bins and taking it out again.

2796. You prefer the coal-bin system?—Yes. The coal-bin system seems to be the only one that is at present financially feasible. When the wooden bins are decayed, in twelve or fourteen years hence, the whole question can be considered again by the light of new developments, and everything remodelled to suit new conditions without the necessity of casting away any expensive appliances. I submit for the examination of the Commissioners drawings prepared some years ago by Mr. O'Connor for river-bank staiths similar to the Westport ones, also a sketch of the cheaper form of coal-bins suggested now. Coal-trucks would be similar to the ones with movable bodies of which there are a number now in use at Greymouth. [Drawings produced; sketch put in and marked "Exhibit No. 32."]

2797. Have you considered how the cost of the erection of such bins as you propose should be allotted?—Yes, I have; but it is rather a difficult thing to form an opinion upon.

2798. What would guide you in deciding at whose expense such bins should be erected?—Under ordinary circumstances I should think that the coal-owners would be the people who would have to erect bins for storing their own coal. But against that, of course, they now say it is the duty of the Harbour Board to do everything they can to keep the port open at all times.

2799. In the event of the Harbour Board doing it, would you consider that it would be reasonable to increase the rates for wharfage so as to cover the interest?—That is a matter the Railway Department have the control of. I really do not care to express an opinion on the subject. The Commissioners will be better able to answer that themselves with all the facts before them. The whole matter is one on which I am rather reluctant to express any strong opinion; but it might be discussed from the different points of view I have just mentioned.

2800. Who, then, should bear the cost of putting up these coal-bins, in your opinion?—It is rather hard to say. On the one hand it may be said that, as the storage is required to meet the

vicissitudes of the harbour, the cost should be borne as a part of the harbour-works; while, on the other hand, it may be said that there is no reason why the harbour-works should be charged with the expenditure merely to enable the coal-mining companies to avoid the difficulties of a natural obstacle which they can avoid by storing the coal themselves at the mine. It might not, however, suit the railway for the coal to be stored at the mine, as this would necessitate the use of more coal-trucks and the running of more frequent trains over the main line, involving more locomotive-power in order to draw off the stored supplies after a block had occurred at the port. It would therefore seem to be a matter for a compromise, I think. I do not see any fixed principle upon which the expenditure could be divided.

2801. Have you considered what the working-charges of handling the coal with these bins would amount to?—I think 4d. a ton would cover the cost of handling.

2802. *Mr. Brown.*] Is that under the wagon system?—No; the bin system and double handling. It is 2½d. for putting coal into bin, and 1½d. for taking it out.

2803. What would an extra locomotive cost?—Four pounds a day. For the purpose of comparison, I furnish a table showing the result of working out the actual cost per ton that would be involved in carrying out each of these three methods of storage.

Mr. James Bishop re-examined.

2804. *The Chairman.*] In your previous evidence, Mr. Bishop, you said there was a letter in reply to Mr. Andrew's letter of the 3rd March, and that you had replied to the whole of Mr. Andrew's letters?—I will now put in the correspondence relating to the first period I have referred to, commencing on the 24th February and ending on the 20th March. I also furnish the letters which refer to the second period, commencing on the 27th June and ending on the 5th August. [Correspondence put in, and marked "Exhibit No. 34."]

2805. You said in your previous evidence, in reply to a question, that you would rather pay 14s. a day than give 2s. 10d. a ton, because the miners could earn £1 5s. a day in the Brunner Mine at 2s. 10d., the coal was so much easier to get. Can you give some explanation of how you arrive at that? Do you say that any men ever did earn £1 5s. a day?—Yes; men have earned £1 5s. a day.

2806. Many of them?—Yes, many of them.

2807. Does that appear in the pay-sheets you have handed in to us?—I do not know if it appears there.

2808. You gave us a return of the maximum and minimum earned by the men?—I dare say some of those will reach it [looking at return]. The number of shifts worked is not shown there, so that it is difficult to say what they earn per shift; but we can produce pay-books showing the number of men who have earned £1 6s. and £1 7s. per day, fortnight after fortnight, even in the whole coal.

2809. Is it possible that any misunderstanding as to the wages earned could arise from the men acquiring double tickets?—Yes; on several occasions that has been done. The men have applied for double tickets, and I believe obtained them from our clerk.

2810. What do you mean by "double tickets"?—They used to conceal some of their earnings from their secretary, or the person who is appointed by the union to see what they were earning.

2811. How would they get over the check-taker in that case?—It would have to be for special work that they would get the separate ticket. It would not be for the coal-hewing.

2812. It would not appear on the hewing?—Anything extra they would be doing. It would not be for their hewing.

2813. And how many men do you think have been in the habit of earning these high wages?—I cannot say that exactly just off-hand; but a considerable number of them are quite able to earn that, and have earned it.

2814. At what period was that? During the gross-payment period?—Before the gross-payment period.

2815. Do you think they earned more after the gross-payment system?—Well, their average was higher; but there was not such individual high earnings as during the steam-coal period.

2816. That is, skill and experience were not of so much use to the miner in taking out whole coal as in taking out pillars?—Yes.

2817. What were the average earnings, do you consider, for the second period?—14s. 8d. a day. A return was made to that effect.

2818. And did the miners accept that?—Yes.

2819. Was there not some reduction of 4d.?—It was proposed that there should be a reduction of 4d. for lights, picks, and tools, and so on.

2820. So that 14s. 4d. was paid during the whole-coal period?—The gross-weight period.

2821. And this was accepted by the miners as a fair statement?—Yes.

2822. And was substantially the same as that arrived at by the company?—They accepted our figures, except that they wanted an allowance for picks and lights.

2823. *Mr. Brown.*] Was that a steady rate of earnings?—On gross, very steady.

2824. Or was there much broken time?—It was very steady during the gross-weight period. It was the steadiest time we have had.

2825. Then each man was, week by week, earning good pay?—Yes, practically full pay.

2826. You mentioned in the previous part of your evidence that the average rate of earning was from four and a half to five days a week: does that apply to this period?—No; they made a higher average during this gross-weight period.

2827. *The Chairman.*] You described the circumstances that led to the resumption of work pending the decision of this Commission, and that involved the question of whether a reduction should be made in the royalty or the haulage?—Yes.

2828. Can you inform the Commissioners who first originated the idea of reducing the royalty or haulage charges?—It came from the men.

2829. Do you remember the occasion?—Certainly. It came from the men to me by a deputation of themselves. They came and asked if I would accompany them to Wellington and take a part with a deputation in interviewing the Government on the subject. I do not say that the owners of the mines have not tried on previous occasions to get a reduction of royalty or haulage charges, but I say on this occasion it emanated from the men.

2830. *Mr. Brown.*] Who were those men?—Messrs. Lomas, Newton, and Andrew, I think, formed the deputation.

2831. *The Chairman.*] That was to you?—Yes.

2832. Do you remember the argument they used for throwing the burden of the loss on the Government?—The only argument was that the railway was earning 45 per cent. profit, and had no right to be paying 45 per cent. profit, and that they could very well afford to take it off the haulage. I would refer to my letters to Mr. Andrew on the subject on the 7th August and the 20th.

2833. Then you never heard any further reasons urged for throwing the loss upon the royalty excepting those you have named?—They thought that the miners' wages ought not to be reduced, and, seeing that the company was paying so much, the Government should take it off the haulage.

2834. That does not affect the royalty question?—They did not urge any reasons about the royalty that I am aware.

2835. But you remember the reduction of the royalty was talked of?—It was mentioned.

2836. As a permanent reduction, or merely temporary, to enable the mines to be carried on while something was being done?—I believe, as far as it affected the royalty, they mentioned it as a temporary measure.

2837. In your opinion, as manager of the mine, do you think it a desirable thing that the royalty should be interfered with—the present royalty?—I think the present royalty is reasonable. I do not see any just reason for asking that the present royalty should be reduced.

2838. Do you think the concession of the whole or any part of the royalty would be a material advantage, so far as to determine whether the mines were or were not to be carried on?—Certainly not. I do not think the suspension of the royalty would determine the carrying-on or otherwise of the mines. A suspension of the royalty for the time being would be a benefit while the mines were in the difficult position they are in now.

2839. That is to say, to remedy to some extent the loss caused by the action of the men?—To tide over the difficulty.

2840. *Mr. Brown.*] Do you regard the railway rates as reasonable?—Well, I considered the rates somewhat high, but, looking at recent railway returns from England and other places, and taking everything into consideration, I think they are not excessive. I used to think the railway haulage somewhat high, but I think it is not so excessive as it appeared at first sight.

2841. Is the work undertaken by the railway more than in other places, apart from the rate charged?—Yes; the work undertaken is more than is customary, I think.

2842. Is it usual for railways to undertake storage in trucks?—No, it is not usual.

2843. I am speaking now of Home matters?—No, it is not usual to provide storage.

2844. Then the railways do more work here than in your experience they do elsewhere?—Yes.

2845. As regards the rate itself, does it cover the seven-mile section of the railway at a fair price?—The rate itself for railway haulage would be excessive, I think.

2846. Have you any knowledge of the rates of haulage in other districts of New Zealand?—I do not know what it is.

2847. There is a tariff?—Yes.

2848. Is it above or below that?—I think it is in keeping with the tariff.

2849. But with more work to be done?—I think they are within their tariff.

2850. You mean that it is lower than the tariff?—Yes; I think from my inquiry into the matter some time ago that they are within the tariff.

2851. The tariff applicable to other places where less work is done? Within what they would be allowed to charge?—For haulage only, yes.

2852. *The Chairman.*] I wish to ask you concerning the last stoppage that took place in the mine. There were two letters dated the 30th August, one from you to Mr. Andrew and one from Mr. Andrew to you: which of these letters was first delivered?—My letter to Mr. Andrew.

2853. *Mr. Brown.*] Was Mr. Andrew's letter to you received on that date?—I think it was received on that day.

2854. Do you remember if that was a Saturday?—It would be a Saturday. My reason for writing the letter was because by the seamen being called out steamers were not likely to come to hand to enable the work at the mine to be resumed as we had arranged.

2855. *The Chairman.*] You have been already asked the question, but I want it more distinctly. Do you consider the condition contained in Mr. Andrew's letter that the coal was not to be supplied to the Union Company's steamers was part of the arrangement under which the men resumed work?—It was not part of the arrangement.

2856. What was the date they resumed work?—On the 1st September.

2857. That was the date they were to resume work, but they did not really resume work?—No.

2858. It was suddenly thought of in consequence of the Maritime Council having called out the Union Company's seamen?—That was the fact.

2859. *Mr. Brown.*] Was this letter of the 28th August the final acceptance of the terms arranged upon which they were to return to work?—That is the letter. Yes.

2860. When did you receive the subsequent letter from Mr. Andrew, of the 30th August, imposing the condition as to not loading the Union Steamship Company's steamers—at what time?—It would be either late in the evening or the first thing in the morning, after the meeting. It was certainly after the meeting was held on the Saturday evening.

2861. *The Chairman.*] The attention of the Commissioners has been called to an alleged indefiniteness in Rule 37, which does not provide for the distance back from the working-face that a miner is required to lay down the timber?—There was an understanding between myself and the men that a slip should be pasted in there to make the rule complete. The slip has been printed, and approved by the Mines Department, or by the Inspector.

2862. Can you supply that?—Yes.

2863. So that practically the rule has been amended in the direction that the miners require?—Yes.

2864. What is the distance?—There is no distance. There is no renewal after it is once set back any distance behind their face. I will send you a copy of the slip.

2865. *Mr. Moody.*] If any of the timber fails behind they are not obliged to go back to repair it?—No, not without some allowance for it.

2866. What is the length of the bord? You state here it is 50 yards?—Yes.

2867. But it does not scale that on the plan you have given us: it scales only 50ft.?—It must scale that from incline to incline [showing on plan].

2868. Then that is the extreme distance that a miner has to put the coal on to the road?—That is the recognised distance. I do not say it is carried out with mathematical accuracy in all cases. It might be a few feet more sometimes.

2869. Is that in excess of what is usual in other mines?—Yes. I dare say in some of them the truck takes it from the face. They do so in some mines.

2870. In very flat mines?—Yes.

2871. But have the men never complained about the loss of time?—Yes; they sometimes mention that the trucking is long, and that sort of thing.

2872. I suppose if it was half as short again they would complain?—It is the recognised distance.

2873. *Mr. Brown.*] The average wages you have mentioned includes loss of time?—Yes.

2874. *The Chairman.*] The flat-sheet, to which the coal is taken by the miner, and where he gets delivery of the timber he requires, is at the lower end of the bord?—Yes.

2875. And therefore, in fact, more than 50 yards from where he should be working?—Yes; and the average distance is, of course, half that.

2876. There seems to be some doubt as to whether the coal used by the miners pays royalty or not?—I think it is included in the output of nuts.

2877. In the return it appears that the amount of coal forwarded by rail is exactly the same as the amount of coal on which royalty is paid. That occurs in both cases?—It may not be included.

2878. *Mr. Brown.*] It is free coal, at all events?—It is not sold.

2879. *The Chairman.*] There is also another point. You say, in reference to the Wallsend Mine, that there was so much coal carried by the railway, and it appears also that royalty was paid on the same amount of coal?—This is a mistake in the return, which I should be glad to have an opportunity of rectifying, It is a clerical error. [Error rectified accordingly.]

2880. You promised to furnish us with the cost of buildings and plant?—I have now a telegram from the Dunedin office on the question of the building costs. The faulting on the present plan is, according to my inventory which I have already handed in, valued at £38,000; works and lease, £173,000; making a total of £211,000.

2881. Works and lease?—That is, building, shafts, cost of surveys, &c., £173,000.

2882. *Mr. Moody.*] That is your valuation?—Yes, as they stand in the books; our valuation of what has been added since being £200,000, as taken over at the time of the amalgamation, and balanced in September, 1888.

2883. Do the Miners' Association supply you with a copy of their rules?—I have had one copy of them, and that I sent to Mr. Kennedy some months ago.

2884. Do you feel in any way bound by them?—No.

2885. There is a book kept by the inspectors appointed by the men?—Yes.

2886. There are two inspectors: what are they called?—Check inspectors.

2887. And there is a book in which their complaints are entered?—Yes. They come round monthly and make an inspection, and enter up anything they may see or wish to suggest.

2888. Is that copy in your office?—We are compelled by the Act to keep it for them, and to leave it there.

2889. Is that book always looked at by the Government Inspector when he comes round?—Yes.

2890. And does he require any answer to their complaints?—He takes copies of their reports.

2891. And what answer do they obtain; or how do they know what action is being taken in consequence of their report?—They do not know what action is being taken. They have never reported anything that any one need take action about.

2892. Do they measure the ventilation by the instrument?—They make an attempt at it. They sometimes ask me for the anemometer, but I do not think they make anything of it.

2893. *The Chairman.*] Can you give the exact amount, in general terms, of what additions have been made or are being made to the pumping-gear and the boilers in connection with the mine?—We are putting down a new 30ft. boiler, a 7ft. Lancashire boiler, and a large Tangye pump, and a complete renewal of the larger bore-pipes in the Coal-pit Heath Mine.

2894. What do you expect to effect with that?—We expect to drain the Coal-pit Heath workings.

2895. How long will that take?—Three months' pumping. We have just got the pumps started, although the boiler is not ready. The long-continued wet weather is giving us as much as we can do to keep it down.

2896. Is there any other arrangement being made for pumping, or for holing the coal beyond the fault?—We have new plant in the colony, and we are about to proceed to put that down.

2897. *Mr. Brown.*] For pumping beyond the fault?—Yes, that is, in the Brunner Mine.

2898. *The Chairman.*] When will that be in order?—In three or four months' time.

2899. So that in three or four months' time from now you will have a large additional amount of mine-room available?—Yes. We hope to have the Brunner dip-workings ready for opening out. We have 12 chains of the heading driven now, and we hope to lower the workings in the Coal-pit Heath.

2900. *Mr. Moody.*] Have you any whole coal available at present?—They have in the dip of the Brunner.

2901. Is that free from water?—No, it will not be available until the pumping-plant is down.

2902. *The Chairman.*] How many would be a reasonable number of men to find employment for with the two shifts working after two months from now?—Two hundred hewers are quite sufficient for our trade unless it becomes abnormal.

2903. *Mr. Brown.*] Can you find room for that number then?—Yes, quite easily.

2904. *The Chairman.*] How many can you find room for now?—For 150 men in the two shifts.

2905. How many years' coal would you consider you had won under those circumstances. I am not talking of coal beyond the faults. That is, with 200 hewers?—That is, the coal-dip at Brunner?

2906. And the Coal-pit Heath too—that is, taking 200 hewers?—We have ten years' work.

2907. How would you arrive at the value of the coal in order to compare it with the coal from any other place. For instance, if it was stated that the coal from the Grey Valley Company was worth so much more than the Westport coal, how would you proceed to arrive at that result, as a manager?—Do you mean the value in the market or the mining value?

2908. As a manager I want to leave it to you?—We know that in the market there is a difference in the value.

2909. Amounting to what?—Amounting to 2s. 6d. a ton.

2910. In favour of the Westport coal?—Yes.

2911. To what is that attributed?—Well, the Westport coal is very much approved of as a household coal, and meets with a readier market, and for steaming purposes as well.

2912. Is that due to the nature of the coal or to the state in which it is delivered? Is it owing to any peculiarity or to the treatment it receives?—It is due to the character of the coal. It is altogether different coal; it is softer. The Westport coal has not the coking qualities which the Greymouth coal has. The Westport coal not coking, as ours does, renders it more suitable for household purposes, and also for steaming.

2913. It does not clog the furnace?—No.

2914. So that the difference may be looked upon as a fundamental difference that cannot be overcome?—It cannot be overcome; it is in the character of the coal itself.

2915. Does the plan that you have given us show the full work that has been done towards proving the second fault?—It shows all the channels.

2916. I would like to ask you a few questions about the stone drift beyond the second fault. Can you describe what was passed through?—Yes. After getting clear of where we made the fault first we picked up from 1ft. to 2ft. of coal, with a fireclay holing underneath it. It was lying practically level [showing on plan]. A number of the measures were lying flat. We went on for some 12 chains until we struck the second slip.

2917. *Mr. Moody.*] Which way was the slip lying?—It was lying from us.

2918. *The Chairman.*] Then you drove along that?—Yes, about 1½ chains.

2919. Was there any coal showing?—There was no coal showing there, and we turned off on the level in the direction of the dip again. There the measures were rising above us—that is to say, dipping towards the east—and it was in that part of the channel that a bore over 140ft. was put down.

2920. The results obtained were not, then, satisfactory?—No. The only way will be to bore from the surface, in my opinion.

2921. Do you know what cover there is to the surface at that point?—I do not think there is more than 100ft. of cover there to the top of the hill at this point [indicating on plan].

2922. In clearing up the Taylorville fault, would you also recommend boring should be done from the surface?—Yes; it would be advisable to prove the whole of that field by boring—or, rather, to prospect it.

2923. From the knowledge you at present have of the area covered by the Grey Valley Company's present leases, what prospect of coal do you consider there is for the future if these faults are proved?—I have an opinion that there will be a good yield of coal between the Taylorville fault and the great fault of the Brunner Mine, and we shall have a fairly good coal to the dip beyond the Brunner fault again between those two faults. In the Wallsend lease I consider the coal will be limited to the coal on the west side of the broken ground, where the slate comes in.

2924. Have you no opinion as to the coal extending on the east side of the slate-belt—that is to say, east of the Wallsend Mine?—I think it will come in there—there will be coal there. And a joint report we have sent in to the company deals with the matter, and recommends boring the whole of the lease to the east of the slate-area.

2925. *Mr. Moody.*] Have you a copy of that report?—I will put in a copy of the report, and you will see a joint note attached to it.

2926. *The Chairman.*] How frequently do you visit the mine?—Two or three times a week, sometimes two or three times a day.

2927. You are never a month without going into the mine?—I would not be.

2928. *Mr. Moody.*] I suppose when you find it necessary you go in?—And many times when I do not think it necessary. I go to see what is going on there. I do not wait until something calls me there.

2929. *Mr. Brown.*] Has ever any complaint appeared in the Inspector's book as to the manager not having visited the mine sufficiently?—No.

2930. *The Chairman.*] Would there be any special danger to new hands being employed in the mine—provided they were miners having had experience elsewhere—arising from anything peculiar in the nature of the mine?—Provided they had been experienced miners elsewhere, there would be no special danger. For some time they would want a little more supervision.

2931. *Mr. Moody.*] Until they got used to the place?—Yes.

2932. *The Chairman.*] Could the number of men who are paid day-wages in proportion to the number of hewers be decreased with advantage?—No; there is very little room for a decrease in the number of day-wage people. That fluctuates considerably according to the position of the places.

2933. Is it possible that the cost of the coal is increased by an unnecessary expenditure on day-wage labour?—No; there is no unnecessary labour. All the labour put on has been on necessary work.

2934. Is there anything in the nature of the working in the mine that causes an undue loss of time to the hewers in setting in their timber?—No. In the Coal-pit Heath working the ground is high, and it takes a little extra time to set the timber; but, on the other hand, they have the advantage of the high seams, yielding a larger proportion of coal with one undercutting.

2935. What led to the stoppage of the Brunner Mine for some time, which you referred to in your previous evidence?—There was a stoppage of four months' duration.

2936. That was in the beginning of 1889?—Yes.

2937. And the cause of that was?—Want of sale.

2938. Was there no other cause?—No; we did not ship enough to keep the whole of the mines going.

2939. Had it anything to do with the breaking of the rope?—No, nothing whatever. We had a new rope on the ground to put on if we required it; but we did not deem it necessary to put the rope on.

2940. *Mr. Brown.*] Had the demand, then, fallen away at that time?—The demand was falling away, and it was after the Newcastle strike had been ended. We had filled up all our dépôts and hulks.

2941. You mean the Union Steamship Company's dépôts and hulks?—Yes; it was in the slack season, the summer time.

2942. *The Chairman.*] Has there been any weakness of the roof in the Coal-pit Heath in the neighbourhood of the roads by the taking-out of pillars?—No.

2943. How far have the cracks on the surface been produced by the taking-out of the pillars in the Coal-pit Heath?—I cannot say whether it was due to the taking-out of pillars or not. The roof may crack and the pillars be left intact as the working goes on, even in the first working. I do not attribute the breaking of the roof or the cracking of the surface to the taking-out of the pillars. The pillars are not taken out to that extent.

2944. Have these surface-breaks been increasing of late years?—I do not know that they have. Of course, I have only the two years' experience since the amalgamation, so far as Coal-pit Heath is concerned, and I found there had been old cracks previous to this that had been filled up, because on examining the surface we found them.

2945. Is it by these breaks that the surface-water gets access to the mine?—I think it is partly owing to that.

2946. Are there any surface-breaks over the Brunner Mine?—There must be surface-breaks, but we have not found them.

2947. Have you taken any steps to divert the surface-water from entering these breaks?—We have been taking out the creek-beds, and diverting the water where we found it necessary.

2948. What amount of labour has been expended?—We have had as many as from fifteen to twenty men employed on them; and that extra labour, and the cost of it, will be all shown in the pay-sheets put before you, under a separate heading.

2949. Are there no splits employed in guiding and controlling the ventilation?—Well, we have had no district large enough to necessitate splitting the air.

2950. Has there ever been any want of good air at the face?—Not during my time.

2951. Have any complaints been entered in the Mine-inspectors' book?—Not in the Inspectors' book. I do not think so.

2952. Would you expect them to be entered if they found anything wrong?—Yes. I have had my attention called to the air requiring to be guided to the face.

2953. And has that been attended to?—Yes, attended to immediately. Those are things which occur daily in mining to any extent.

2954. *Mr. Moody.*] Do you use much bratticing?—We have in the Wallsend. The Brunner does not require much bratticing because we have no gas there.

2955. You had gas in the Coal-pit Heath?—Yes, and in the Wallsend—more in the Wallsend.

2956. *The Chairman.*] What is the market-value of the Wallsend coal?—I cannot say what the prices are as compared with any of the others.

2957. Was it decidedly less valuable?—Yes; but I do not know how much, nor how they deal with it.

2958. *Mr. Moody.*] It contained a good many of these nodular stones?—It was very full of stone.

2959. There were no continuous bands?—No.

2960. Were there stony places in the Coal-pit Heath and Brunner Mines?—Yes. More in Coal-pit Heath and Wallsend than in Brunner. The Brunner was very clean, especially in the coal beyond the fault.

2961. What is the general load of your skips?—I think the Brunner averages 11¾cwt. to 12cwt.

2962. And if the skips carried 12cwt. in coal and put out from 2cwt. to 3cwt. in screened coal would you consider that a fair proportion?—We can only work on the average of the whole. A truck may have gone 2cwt., but the average is over 6cwt. It is a very small coal.

2963. What we call the holings?—I have known men weighed on a truck that only went 3cwt., and the other trucks would weigh from 10cwt. to 11cwt. or 12cwt. I have known cases where the majority of a man's trucks would weigh 12cwt., but he has filled one with holings and cuttings, and he has only weighed on that, and that counted his weight for the day.

2964. *Mr. Brown.*] That is hard luck?—No, because they bring their hard luck about themselves. They fill these holings with the round coal, but they may get out an extra truck with it and get caught. One man came out to see if his truck went on the weighbridge, and I had been in the mine previous to his doing this and saw the state of his place, and on looking at the book in the morning to see how many had been filled in the various places I saw this man had only filled two. I asked how he found his place in the morning, and learnt that it was full of coal. I knew he had his truck put on the weighbridge overnight, and saw how light it was, and he sent out no more trucks that day.

2965. Have the men any opportunities of observing that their trucks are weighed?—No, I do not think they have.

2966. This must have been a very exceptional instance?—Yes, it was. He made an excuse to come out of the mine, and saw this truck was one that had gone on the bridge, and he refused to fill any more. The man was dismissed for it, and was six months in the Coal-pit Heath after that, and he came back and asked me if I had punished him enough.

2967. Was being in the Coal-pit Heath considered as a punishment?—Yes; it was at that time, because there was very little work going.

2968. *The Chairman.*] How much has been spent in fault-proving by the company since the amalgamation took place?—Well, in actual fault-proving there has not been a great deal spent. We have been finding faults, but not proving them. We have had a fault on the east side of the mine which involved a little outlay, but not much. It was on the east side of the Wallsend, and we had prospecting up to the one in the Taylorville side, and some faulty ground to go over before we found the main fault.

2969. There has been nothing done to the second Brunner fault since the amalgamation?—No.

2970. What are the depths of the different shafts that have been put down?—Wallsend is 650ft., and Coal-pit Heath 300ft.

2971. *Mr. Moody.*] What was the Tyneside?—That was about 90ft., I think.

2972. *The Chairman.*] What was the depth of the borehole between the Tyneside and the Wallsend?—I have heard it stated to be about 220ft., I think.

2973. There have been no other boreholes on the surface?—No.

2974. What was the grade of the average dip of the coal in the Brunner Mine between the two faults?—Between the two faults the average is about 1 in 3¼, or about 17°, and in the coal between the Brunner fault and the river it is about 1 in 5.

2975. And in the Coal-pit Heath?—It would average about the same—about 1 in 5.

2976. But there are heavy drops, are there not?—Yes, near the river, beyond the winding-shaft, there are heavy drops.

2977. Are they cut off by the fault, or do they disappear?—They disappear.

2978. Have they anything to do with the drop towards the river?—Yes, there is a series of steps, and it is only shown near the river.

2979. About the Greymouth management, what does the £26 cover?—It covers mine-management, the Brunner office, and the Greymouth office.

2980. Does that include your secretary too?—Yes.

2981. Now, you mentioned that some of the men were, to your knowledge, in the habit of getting duplicate tickets?—Yes.

2982. And that that was done through your clerk?—It could only have been done through him.

2983. What is his name?—Mr. Franklin.

2984. You know nothing about it further than that, personally?—No.

2985. Have you been cognizant of the attempts that have been made within the last few days to arrive at some settlement of the dispute with the miners?—Yes.

2986. *Mr. Brown.*] Between Mr. Dunn and Mr. Kennedy?—Yes.

2987. Was there an arrangement offered by the company to pay 12s. a day?—Yes.

2988. Was that satisfactory to the miners, do you know?—I understand that the men elected to take a tonnage rate.

2989. Did they apply for a tonnage rate?—Yes, to take immediate effect.

2990. Does the printed form we have represent the offer made by the company?—Those are the terms now offered—yes.

2991. With a price for whole coal as well as pillars?—Yes.
2992. Is there any whole coal to work?—Not just now.
2993. Then the offer in respect to whole coal does not apply to present circumstances at all?—Not work we are likely to do now.
2994. Until you have proved the faults?—Not till we have taken the water out of the Coal-pit Heath or gone to the dip in the Brunner Mine.
2995. And now, as to the other portion of the offer in connection with the pillars?—That makes 20 per cent. off in both cases.
2996. So far as the coal that is being worked at present is concerned, you offer the same rates as in your letter of July?—Yes.
2997. Have they accepted that, then, or were they prepared to accept it last week?—Yes, they would have gone to work on those conditions.
2998. Mr. Dunn was negotiating on these terms?—Yes.
2999. And even at that reduced rate they preferred piecework to 12s. a day?—Yes.
3000. What conclusion would you draw from that?—That they accept the rates as being sufficient to enable them to earn good wages, or over 12s. a day.
3001. That they would earn more by piecework with the 20-per-cent. reduction than they would at 12s. per day?—Yes.
3002. Did you send a written notice to the union of your withdrawal from the agreement about not supplying the Union Steamship Company's vessels?—I sent them a notice to the effect that the Union Steamship Company demanded the carrying of the Grey Valley Coal Company's coal.
3003. That was immediately before the "Brunner" was loaded?—Yes.
3004. Is that letter in evidence?—I think you have it. It was put in when I was here before.
3005. *The Chairman.*] You have put in an inventory of the plant that was taken over by the new company upon the amalgamation, from the Coal-pit Heath?—Yes.
3006. Can you describe what condition it was in when it was taken over?—Yes. There was some of it in rather a shaky condition, so that it had to be partly renewed immediately after the amalgamation. The whole valuation of the Coal-pit Heath plant at that time amounted to £11,000. Their winding-engine required renewal, and we took immediate steps to make it safe by putting on a new cylinder, although there was a new engine on the ground that we could have erected, but we had not the opportunity of doing so. Then, the shaft and timber were giving way, and it was deemed unsafe to continue working there, which was the reason for opening the shaft and making the tunnel to connect with the Brunner. In going through the shaft with me the Inspector called attention to its condition, but we were perfectly aware of it before, and there was a necessity for making a second outlet from the mine.
3007. Do you consider the valuation you put in was in excess?—Certainly not.
3008. In other words, the valuation you put in made allowance for defective plant. And what has been spent in the improvement of the plant since the mine was taken over by the amalgamated company?—We have abandoned the winding on that shaft, and erected a new engine for the purpose of hauling the coal to the Brunner loading-stage, there having been about £5,000 spent in developing that mine altogether.
3009. *Mr. Moody.*] In what condition was the pumping-gear?—In a very poor condition. A 10in. Tangye pump was the main pump, and we duplicated that by adding two Worthington pumps immediately after the amalgamation.
3010. *Mr. Brown.*] You did publish a statement about the average wages in some month?—Yes.
3011. *The Chairman.*] It was published on the 22nd August, 1890. And these two exhibits, Nos. 12 and 14, correspond, then, do they, with the published statement?—Yes; No. 14 exactly corresponds, and Exhibit No. 12 is substantially the same, but extends over a slightly longer period.
3012. *Mr. Brown.*] Had the miners any opportunity of checking this statement?—Yes; I sent them a copy of it.
3013. They would see a copy of it in the newspaper?—But I wrote, enclosing a copy.
3014. Had they any opportunity of checking them?—They came and asked permission to examine our books in order to see how we had made up the averages; and they were allowed the privilege, and went through the pay-sheets and books with our clerk.
3015. And did they find them correspond?—They expressed themselves satisfied, with the exception that they wanted us to agree that they should be allowed 4d. a day for picks and lights and renewing of tools.
3016. As to Exhibit 12, what am I to understand by these shifts there earning so much money? Do these shifts represent so many men?—Yes, and the number of days worked.
3017. Or pairs of men?—Yes, or pairs of men.
3018. So that from that sheet we can get at what each man earns?—Yes.
3019. As to the several values when the amalgamation took place, can you give us any information on that point?—We have separate values.
3020. Is that obtainable from any of the returns we have here?—No, it is not in any of the returns before you. I have the inventory made for the purposes of the amalgamation. I can furnish the total values on each from the foundation of the amalgamation.
3021. May I ask why the fluctuation on the output in these returns was so great?—There were only four days' pay. There were only four days of the last fortnight, and then they stopped.
3022. *Mr. Moody.*] Can you give us any idea of the number of holidays or idle days which the men had during the twelve months, and the different causes?—There is a return being made up of that. It is a difficult return to make up.

3023. What expenditure would be required to reopen and commence operations at the Wallsend Mine? Can you give us any idea of that?—It would take two months to pump out the workings, and before we could get the coal from Wallsend there would be an expenditure of something like £6,000 or £7,000 to undertake. We would not think of going to the rise again.

3024. Is all the material taken out of the rise?—All the material is taken out of the rise workings, and we do not think of going to the rise again.

3025. Can you state the average cost per ton of coal put into wagons at the mine for each department?—All that will be before you in the pay-sheets coming down.

3026. *Mr. Brown.*] Would not that sheet from the audit at Dunedin give the cost at the mine subject to the 2s. 6d. per ton?—Yes; the audit in Dunedin must give the cost of the mine, because they must have had all the cost before them there.

3027. There was a mixture of Wallsend and Brunner there?—In making up the average cost they do put the lot together, but we can show it separately on the pay-sheets.

3028. *Mr. Moody.*] What is the quantity of small coal thrown into the river?—The returns now before you show that.

3029. Can you give us any idea if any further attempts will be made to prove the fault in the Brunnerton Mine?—As soon as the weather is fine and we get started at work we shall proceed to prospect from the surface.

3030. What quantity of air is there passing down in the Brunnerton Mine?—There are 50,000ft. or 60,000ft. passing as a rule. It depends on the number of men we have as to how we run the fan, and what we are doing.

THURSDAY, 30TH OCTOBER, 1890.

Mr. WILLIAM HARVEY BOASE sworn and examined.

3031. *The Chairman.*] You are an old resident in Greymouth?—Yes.

3032. For how long have you resided here?—Twenty-six years.

3033. Are you connected with the labour unions here?—Yes; I am secretary of the wharf-labourers' union here.

3034. You had some connection with the mines in the earlier days, had you not?—Yes; I was clerk to the Ballarat Company at the time they had the mine.

3035. What date was that, do you remember?—About 1868 or 1870, I think.

3036. Have you visited the mines since then?—Yes, frequently. I have been down there several times since then—years ago.

3037. Have you been there lately?—No.

3038. Have you been about Brunnerton lately?—Yes; I hardly miss a week. I am frequently at Brunnerton.

3039. Then you know all that is going on about there?—Yes; I am fully aware of what is going on.

3040. And the opinions the miners hold on various matters?—Yes, and I might mention an opinion advanced to me by one of the oldest miners—I might say he was born in the mine.

3041. What is his name?—John Morris, I think it is. His father was one of the parties that came from Ballarat as coal-miners. I was talking with him some time ago, and I said, "Now, I wish to talk to you apart altogether from the strike, and apart from anything you have to do with it. I would like to know your opinion with reference to working the mine, and its dangers." Well, he told me himself that he is very often timid in working the mine.

3042. *Mr. Brown.*] Which mine do you speak of?—He referred to Coal-pit Heath. There has been, you know, a chasm open at the top of the hill over Coal-pit Heath, and the company has employed men for weeks and months there in stuffing down clay in the chasm, to keep the water from going down. And I may say that I indorsed Sir James Hector's opinion when I first saw it in the paper, knowing what I did of the Brunner Mine and the lay of the rock. I said that was a true opinion of the mine, and that if the pillars were ever removed the tendency would be to throw the whole hill into the river. Well, this chasm opened, and men, as I said before, were employed there months stuffing down clay in the crevice to prevent the water going down, and this very much frightened the miners.

3043. *The Chairman.*] Have you seen this crevice yourself?—I know exactly its position, but I never went to see it.

3044. I suppose Morris will be able to tell us all about that?—Yes. I asked him if he thought the plan they were adopting would stop it?—I thought, myself, it never would; and he said it would never stop it. It never would stop it, because if the hill still gives way it will be always opening. I always understood that there was a stipulation in the Ballarat Company's lease that the pillars were not to be taken out.

3045. You would be made aware of that in your position as clerk to the company?—Yes.

3046. Do you know where that lease is to be found?—I remember, and [to the Chairman] you may also recollect it too. You yourself, Mr. Taylor, and I went into the mine to make some measurements one night, and I asked you the question. In fact, I do not know but that I put it down in an old pocket-book of mine, and you said you thought there was such a stipulation in the lease—that the pillars were not to be taken out.

3047. *Mr. Brown.*] You have not yourself been in the mine lately?—No.

3048. Nor examined this crack?—No; I have never seen it. I was always under the impression that such a stipulation was in the lease. And this has also occurred to my mind: that I was a member of the Nelson Provincial Council, and we had a little dispute in that Council with reference to the mine, and I asked Mr. Curtis, who was then Superintendent, whether such was not the case, and he confirmed it. I have had several conversations with some of the oldest and best miners

there with regard to the mine and the necessity for careful working, and I always tried to lead them to give their answers apart from the question of the strike, because I know men will speak as they feel in these kind of matters. I have gone to such men as I could mostly depend upon, and who have been there from the time I was clerk of the mine, and they all say it requires most careful working.

3049. *The Chairman.*] Do you remember in your time how the hewers were paid—by piece-work?—Yes.

3050. On screened coal?—Yes.

3051. Do you remember what they got?—From 3s. 6d. to 4s. 3d. and 5s. 3d.

3052. Per ton of screened coal?—Yes.

3053. Why were these differences of prices?—The difference would be on account of the bords they were working in. It would be easier to get coal from one place than another.

3054. So that they had a differential rate?—Yes.

3055. By whom was the differential rate set up?—The difference was entirely in the hands of the manager.

3056. And did his decision in those cases give perfect satisfaction?—Yes, perfect satisfaction, I believe.

3057. You never heard complaints from the men?—I never heard complaints, and I was in a position to hear them, because it was my duty to pay the men every fortnight.

3058. Did they get anything extra beyond that? Were they paid for timbering, clearing up, or anything of that sort?—No. Very often Mr. Taylor would during the night time put in a shift of men to timber for them.

3059. They got their timbering done for them?—Yes.

3060. Was that done by day-wages?—If they were coal-miners he would engage them, and pay them so much for a week's or a month's timbering.

3061. That would be extra, then?—Yes, it was an extra.

3062. It was simply this: the men were engaged in mining, but they got an extra allowance, or so much per month, for putting in their timbering overtime?—That is correct. He endeavoured to do it at night time, when the mine was free from the miners.

3063. Was there any combination of the miners in those days?—As a union?

3064. Yes?—No. But I remember that Mr. Taylor discharged several men who came from Ballarat as coal-miners, but who he proved were not coal-miners, because there was an agreement which they had signed in Ballarat as coal-miners. He himself, being a thorough judge, discharged them.

3065. But why do you connect that with the fact of there being no union?—I never knew of any combination at that time; but I think he did it purely on the ground of the men's incompetency. I remember the circumstances particularly, as I wrote to the traffic manager calling his attention to what would appear to be a discrepancy between his books and mine (this will lead to the cause of the mine-manager discharging some of those incompetent men); so the traffic manager asked me my reasons for making that statement. "Well," I said, "Mr. Lucas, when they look over my books and see that I have been paying men for a certain amount of coal, and your books do not show so much as that having been sold, there is the discrepancy." One fortnight his books showed a less amount of ninety tons of coal being sold in Greymouth than I had paid the men for at the Brunner Mine, and he asked me how I thought it might be remedied. "Well," I said, "I know how it can be done. You have men here who are not coal-miners, and instead of bringing out coal it is slack, and is all passing through the screens." Each truck carried 12cwt., and they were allowed 2cwt. on the tub or truck of coal for slack. They were supposed to bring 12cwt. out, and were paid for 10cwt.

3066. That is, they mined 12cwt. and were paid for 10cwt.?—Yes.

3067. In those days the coal was carried down in barges?—Yes.

3068. And it was under the charge of Mr. Lucas?—Yes.

3069. Do you remember how much the barges carried?—From 16 tons to 22 tons.

3070. What was the cost per ton of the carriage of the coal by barges? Was it by contract?—There were four men working a boat, and each man had £4 per week.

3071. And how many trips did they make in a week?—Generally one trip a day. That was the average. Sometimes they made two.

3072. Were there many interruptions owing to the state of the river?—Sometimes a boat could not get up for a fortnight at a stretch.

3073. Do you remember anything about the output of coal in those times—how much it came to in a year?—No.

3074. How many boats were employed?—There were, I think, six boats employed.

3075. *Mr. Brown.*] How were they got up the river?—By horses.

3076. That would be an additional cost?—Yes, it would be an additional cost; it would be for four men in a boat and one driver.

3077. *The Chairman.*] Did the driver work by contract?—No; he was paid day-wages. I think he had from £3 to £3 10s. a week.

3078. For him and his horses?—The company found the horses. That wage was just for driving.

3079. And you have no clear idea of what the cost of the coal was in taking it down in that way?—Only as to the wages paid for it and the cost of the horses. The men had to discharge all the coal themselves.

3080. When the thing was going it would be about 5s. or 6s. a ton without allowing for the interruptions?—Yes; these five men had to be paid, wet or dry.

3081. *Mr. Brown.*] Do you know what the value of those boats was?—Yes. Most of the boats were built here, at from £100 to £120 each.

3082. Did they last long?—Yes; some of them lasted a long time unless an accident occurred.
3083. *The Chairman.*] There are some of them on the beach there now?—Yes.
3084. *Mr. Brown.*] Perhaps there are none of the earlier ones there?—I think one of the old boats is there now.
3085. *The Chairman.*] They lasted a long time?—Yes. In regard to the discrepancy between Mr. Lucas's books and mine, Mr. Lucas asked me how the matter might be remedied, and I said, "If you will write me a letter giving me full authority to deal with the question, I know how to remedy the matter." He said, "I will do so;" and he wrote me a letter and gave me full authority to deal with the question. I then got a boat cleaned out. The coal was always put in shoots that hung out over the river at the time, and the coal would run over the screen down into the shoot—into a staith. And I got scales and weights, and went in to one set of miners who were there, and told them to send me out 12 tons of coal. They did not know my object in doing this. After I got their 12 tons of coal into the boat I weighed it, and found, out of the 12 tons sent out there was 7½ tons.
3086. *Mr. Brown.*] That is, after it was screened?—Yes. I wrote immediately to Mr. Lucas, showing him where the discrepancy would be. That boat would be supposed to take down 12 tons of coal, whereas really there was only 7½ tons brought to the town. This was in consequence, therefore, of bad mining, the coal being made into slack in the hewing.
3087. *The Chairman.*] Was it remedied then?—Yes.
3088. You had paid wages for 90 tons more than was delivered?—Yes; and after adopting this method of discovering the discrepancy I effected a reduction in the first fortnight of 30 tons, and in the next fortnight there was very little discrepancy shown. The manager discharged those men.
3089. They were not working pillars at that time?—No.
3090. In the solid?—Yes.
3091. How high were the workings?—Fourteen feet were the highest at that time.
3092. That was in the low-water level?—Yes. I noticed in that mine that the fireclay was continually rising, and sometimes a night shift had to be put in to cut the baulks down and fix the tram-level.
3093. And relay the road, in fact?—Yes; and some of the miners I have spoken to told me this is still the case. I have myself been attending the men whilst they were cutting the baulks on a night.
3094. *Mr. Brown.*] Which is the mine that the Ballarat Company worked?—It would be the Brunner Mine. The Coal-pit Heath was not working at all then.
3095. Do you know anything of the recent history of the mine?—Not as regards the mining, but I do as regards the troubles and interruptions to the mine.
3096. Have you been connected with the men at all as an adviser?—No. I have had nothing to do with the coal-miners at all.
3097. *The Chairman.*] Are you a member of the Miners and Labourers' Association?—No; the Greymouth Labour Union.
3098. *Mr. Brown.*] You have only to do with the wharf department?—That is all.
3099. The wharf-labourers are in the same union as the Brunner miners?—The only affiliation there should be, I think, is of the miners, lumpers, and seamen.
3100. For what reason?—Because they are all so connected. The lumpers are of no use here unless the mine is working, as trimming the coal gives them their living.
3101. The miners now are paid by piecework, are they not, and have been all along?—Yes.
3102. A considerable number of day-wage men are employed at the mine?—Yes, and at the time when the company were making up their losses it was unaccountable how so many men were employed on the surface.
3103. The wharf-labourers are also day-wage men?—They are paid 2s. an hour.
3104. Have the wharf-labourers themselves been satisfied with the pay they have received?—There have never been any complaints in Greymouth as to the wages; the 2s. an hour satisfied them perfectly.
3105. Do you know of any complaint in connection with the surface-men at the mines. I mean the wages-men?—I think of late, since the establishment of the labour unions in the district, the pay has been 10s. a day, and there has been no complaint.
3106. We have been informed that the wages-men are about one-half of the employés—that is to say, that the tonnage-rate men and the wages-men are, in round numbers, about equal?—I was under the impression that within the last three months of the first lock-out the surface-men had actually been more in number—they were more than a half.
3107. You say "the first lock-out." Were there two lock-outs?—Yes; there was a lock-out between six and seven weeks before the Brunner strike took place.
3108. When did that take place?—It was on account of the company making out their losses on the mine, and there was an endeavour to bring the miners to some terms so as to make up the loss.
3109. That was in July?—Yes.
3110. Was there any further lock-out besides that one?—No. There was a lock-out just before this present New Zealand strike, of about six weeks, or between six and seven weeks.
3111. There was only one lock-out?—Yes; and then the miners and the company came to terms, and went to work again, and then this New Zealand strike took place.
3112. How were the wages-men affected by this strike?—They were all out.
3113. On account of any grievance of their own?—No.
3114. The strike is on the part of the miners?—Yes.
3115. Were those men satisfied to forego their employment and wages for the benefit of the miners?—Yes, they were quite satisfied; they were in the one union.

3116. And it was resolved on by the whole?—Yes.

3117. The wharf-labourers and the wages-men will receive no benefit whatever by the strike?—No.

3118. Even if the miners got all they ask for?—If the miners got all they asked for, and were working, the benefit the lumpers would get would be that they would be in full work. As you know, they trim the coal.

3119. They had that before the dispute arose, and they will receive no further benefit at all from this strike, will they?— No.

3120. And they will return to their old employment?—The only benefit has been some strike-pay, which has been very small.

3121. Is the strike-pay equal to what they were earning?—The strike-pay would not be one-quarter equal to what they were earning.

3122. How many men are employed on the wharf in connection with the coal work?—The average would be about forty. I have seen seventy-two men engaged on the wharf.

3123. Is this present stoppage connected with the question of wages at all?—No, it is not throughout the whole of New Zealand a complaint as to wages.

3124. What is the trouble then?—The struggle commenced in Australia, and the main factor in the cause of the strike there was the shipping companies. For instance, Howard Smith and Co. made their officers sign when they were paid for £15 a month, but there was always a rebate of £2, and the officers would not stand that any longer. That I consider is the main factor in the present struggle.

3125. How do you get your information in this district as to this distant dispute?—Well, I suppose the Maritime Council gets it from Australia.

3126. Then it is entirely *ex parte*, I presume?—Well, I heard of this affair of the shipping companies in Australia long before this strike took place.

3127. Your information comes chiefly through the Maritime Council?—Yes, and I believe it is reliable.

3128. Do they write at length explaining matters, or do they send telegrams?—If you get a telegram to a certain effect, you get a letter of instructions afterwards, and a full statement.

3129. You say you have no dispute here at all?—No.

3130. Are you aware of the object of this Commission?—I understood that it was to inquire into the reason of the miners' not working, and to see if the haulage by the railway could be altered. I have gone over the miners' books, and their average wage cannot be stated for the last eighteen months to reach £3 per week per man.

3131. You are aware that one of the purposes of the Commission is to see if a reduction of the royalty or railage should be made?—Yes.

3132. Can you tell the Commissioners how that question can be connected with the dispute of the marine officers in Australia, and which you say is the basis of the strike?—I think that is a dispute between the miners and the loss the company endeavours to make up.

3133. The miners, at all events, are satisfied with their wages?—I could not say that the miners are satisfied.

3134. The wages-men are?—The surface-men are satisfied with their 10s. a day, and the wharf-men with their 2s. an hour.

3135. But you are aware of the miners having entered into an arrangement with the owners of the mine as regards wages?—I think, when the first lock-out occurred they came to terms.

3136. So that there was an agreement?—Yes.

3137. The strike has nothing to do with that agreement, but with the Australian quarrel?—Yes.

3138. And application is made to the Government to reduce the railage whilst the men are out on an Australian quarrel?—Yes.

3139. Is there any connection between the two—between the Government giving, say, a reduction of 6d. on the royalty or railage and the marine officers' dispute?—No. I always thought the object of the Commission was to meet the question between the miners and the company.

3140. Which is settled, practically?—I never connected that with the strike in Australia or the strike in this colony at all. I never could see it in that light.

3141. Does the union here take its instructions from the Maritime Council?—Properly speaking, all the unions take their instructions from the Maritime Council in the colony.

3142. Have you opportunities of judging whether the Maritime Council's decisions are wise or otherwise?—I must admit that I differed in the Conference——

3143. Even with the *ex parte* statements received?——and I also found fault with them. For instance, I remember Mr. McLean talking with me one Sunday afternoon in Wellington for a few hours, and I advanced an opinion or two, and he asked me why I did not express those opinions before the strike took place; and I said, "Well, Mr. McLean, I am not a member of the Maritime Council, and therefore was not admitted to that body, otherwise I should certainly have urged with all my powers that we should prevent the strike coming to New Zealand."

3144. Have you accepted the position of the strike at the instance of a distant body with whom you differ?—Yes. If I am joined to a body, although I may not agree with all their opinions, I acknowledge the head, and yield my difference and try to be loyal to that body.

3145. Are you satisfied with the success or otherwise of the union up to the present time?—I cannot say I am satisfied, although, if this strike does end as the unions would wish it, I am satisfied that, notwithstanding that it has been a great loss to the colony generally, eventually it will work a good.

3146. In what direction?—The question was put to me in Wellington as to whether I would go in for a complete victory on either side. "Well," I said, "no; I would not go in for a complete

victory on either side. My opinion of the capitalists generally, and my experience and knowledge of human nature, is that if the capitalists had complete victory there would be a tendency to tyranny, and if the labour side had complete victory there would be a tendency to insubordination and cheek. I consider that if the strike is ever concluded properly it must be upon a give-and-take principle."

3147. Does "give-and-take" mean getting all the profits that are made out of a concern?—No; but there should be a little yielding on the points of difference on each side.

3148. But there is no point of difference in connection with the strike?—No; but if there is a union I think one party, if he has not a just cause himself of complaint, must support the party that has, and be loyal to the union.

3149. Does not that involve similar tactics on the part of the employers?—Yes, probably.

3150. And then you are just where you started from. You consider affiliation between the unions to be a right thing?—Not entirely. My own opinion is that the officers should never affiliate with the seamen. I hold that to be an evil. I contend that the working-classes are undoubtedly a class of people not educated yet, at all events, so as to know their place; and I hold that an employer has a right to be, and must be, considered as master. I always contend—and there is where I differ with the maritime view of affiliation—that a ship at sea is a little world of itself, and if the officers are affiliated with the seamen in some union there is a danger of the working-classes being insubordinate and turning round impudently and giving cheek to an officer.

3151. Then, do you think that coal-miners are sufficiently well informed to know the rights and interests of bricklayers, bootmakers, and others?—Well, no.

3152. Nor are bakers and others sufficiently interested to know miners' interests?—No.

3153. Then, is this affiliation between trades of such different interests wise or advisable?—No. Almost the only affiliation that I agree with is that of the wharf-labourers, miners, and seamen, because their work is so identical. I consider that an affiliation in their case is useful.

3154. Now let us come to the present position. Are you aware of the date when the men recently went to work?—I do not know, but I should think it would be just before the date of this present strike.

3155. We have been informed that they continued work for three weeks—say, up to the 21st September?—I know they went to work, and the coal was coming down again.

3156. And then the "Brunner" arrived?—Of course, when the strike took place the miners forbade the coals being given to the Union Steamship Company's boats.

3157. Do you think that the miners, being paid for the mining of the coal, should control the destination of it?—There was an agreement with the mine-manager and Mr. Kennedy that the coal should not be supplied to the Union Steamship Company's boats during the struggle.

3158. Do you think that the men who mine the coal for the company should control what the company does with that coal as a matter of business? Could the commerce of the world be carried on, do you think, if that principle were admitted?—I admit that on the side of the company it was a very stupid agreement for them to enter into.

3159. Are you aware that the "Brunner" was here because the seamen's strike with the Union Steamship Company was virtually over?—I cannot say that it is over yet.

3160. You cannot?—No.

3161. What constitutes the end of a strike?—That is rather a difficult question to answer.

3162. Is it a true principle, as stated by a leader in Australia, that when the men's places are filled up the strike is over?—No. Every sensible man must admit that while there is only something in the shape of a man in a position you cannot call it being filled up.

3163. If the men work the boats, a mine, or any other thing efficiently, to the satisfaction of their employers, are not the positions filled up?—I, for one, from experience and positive proof, will never admit yet that it is worked to the satisfaction of the employers.

3164. Your reply, then, leads to this: that the employés constitute themselves a body who judge of the efficiency of the seamen running the Union Company's boats on the 22nd September and now?—I myself consider that any man, whether he is a seaman, a labourer, or a miner, can judge, as a rule, to a certain extent, as to whether a man is a seaman or is calculated to act as a seaman.

3165. And because the Union boats are not manned by what the miners consider seamen they refuse to supply them with coal?—Not totally on that ground. They refused to supply them with coal because of the strike then going on, not because of the bad seamen on board. I was driven into that corner because I thought on the 22nd September, when the "Brunner" arrived, and the places of the seamen being filled up, the strike was over.

3166. If you were driven into that position, it is not over yet. The boats are running?—Yes; but they are manned in a most unsatisfactory state.

3167. Are the miners called upon to judge as to the ability of the seamen?—I have heard the murmuring of the officers, for instance, in the "Brunner." You would admit that it is not an officer's place to mount the rigging, or go up and regulate the gear for the taking-out of the cargo. An English officer would not dare do it; he would not think of doing it. I have been to sea, and I know an officer's position.

3168. Our object is to get at the exact sentiments which should guide these things?—If an officer goes out of his place to do what is a common seaman's duty, undoubtedly it might be said that is unsatisfactory. I will give you a particular instance of the difference between the wharf being manned by "free" labour and unionist labour. At the time you refer to, when the "Brunner" came here she had sixteen seamen on board, termed "free" labourers, and about 600 tons of cargo. The "Lawrence" came here with 450 tons of cargo, and a union crew of six men—being, in fact, manned by a union crew. Our lumpers went to discharge her, and I noticed this particularly and called the Press on the wharf to note it also: that there was a considerable difference

between the time occupied in discharging the cargoes of the two vessels. The "Lawrence" was discharged and loaded with coal ready for sea in as many hours as it took days to discharge the "Brunner." I made the statement to Mr. McLean, when he said—and with a smile—that the Union boats were manned with the flower of New Zealand. I must admit that better crews than those who went out on strike never manned the Union Company's boats, for they were able-bodied men who could fill the places; but it cannot be said that the boats are properly manned now. The instance I have mentioned I consider a direct proof of the difference between unionist and "free" labour. I hope the Commission, if it is within the province of their duties, will recommend a board of conciliation in the future.

3169. Has conciliation not always been open to the local bodies contending in the dispute here?—No.

3170. Has arbitration not been offered by the coal-masters here?—They did offer to have the matter settled by arbitration.

3171. But the men refused?—Yes, the miners refused—with which I disagree.

3172. Are you aware of a previous instance in which arbitration was entered upon, and the result was not accepted by the miners?—I do not remember that.

3173. At the same time, you know, I believe, when arbitration was spoken of by the company?—There was a little connection with it, but it was not a free, and open, and decided idea of arbitration. I must admit that I did not agree with the Arbitration Bill before the House, in all its clauses.

3174. *The Chairman.*] What would be your idea of the proper constitution of an arbitration board or Court?—My opinion is, that there should be an actual method laid down by law for dealing with disputes between employers and employed. Of course, you must state some dimensions of a dispute, as it would not be necessary to deal with a single dispute between one man and one employer. It should be a law to deal with disputes likely to affect the commerce of the colony. It should be an Act binding each party to abide by the decision of the arbitrators.

3175. Arrived at upon the issues set forth before they entered into the bond?—Yes.

3176. *Mr. Brown.*] That is a voluntary arbitration on both sides, is it not?—Yes.

3177. Is there anything in law that can bind people to voluntarily bind themselves?—I really believe that, seeing the great mischief that such a strike is calculated to do in the country, it is absolutely necessary to have it as an enactment.

3178. That they should voluntarily bind themselves?—I do.

3179. *The Chairman.*] You mean that the enactment should provide the machinery by which the thing is to be done?—Yes; by which it is to be done.

3180. That they need not necessarily go to arbitration, but if they do, and follow the course of procedure laid down by law, then it will be incumbent upon them to accept that position?—Yes. Of course you would understand that I do not mean that if I, as a labourer, have a dispute with my employer it is absolutely necessary to set all the proposed machinery in motion if he and I can agree without it. I really think that there could be measures adopted to settle a dispute amicably between the parties without entailing such a calamity upon the colony as the present one, and I see nothing for it but boards of conciliation. Of course, when the proposition for boards of conciliation is fully ventilated men will put their heads together to think of what position it should take, or how it should be done; but until it is ventilated men would not think what should be done. These are the difficulties upon which we try to get information from those who have had the opportunity of thinking about them.

Mr. John Roberts sworn and examined.

3181. *The Chairman.*] You are a coal-miner, are you not?—Yes.

3182. How long have you been at Brunnerton?—I have been in Brunnerton fourteen years.

3183. You are first deputy there, are you not?—I am manager's deputy.

3184. How long have you been that?—About two years.

3185. Do your duties take you into the mine frequently?—Daily.

3186. What are your duties?—To examine the workings, and see to the safety of the men.

3187. In regard to what?—The timber being put in correctly. I inspect the timber.

3188. The state of the roofs?—Yes.

3189. Do you lay off the work for preparing the roads?—Yes.

3190. Do you measure up the special work?—Yes.

3191. Can you inform the Commissioners about the state of the coal in the Brunner Mine?—At present?

3192. Yes, the condition of the coal that is being worked?—It is all pillar-working.

3193. Is it about equal everywhere, or are some parts more crushed than others?—It is in a place or two. When the weight comes on the pillars the hindmost pillar gets crushed a little more than the others.

3194. That is a thing that follows the working?—Yes.

3195. Does the roof ever move while the working is in progress?—Very little. Sometimes she starts working, and then you withdraw your men and take them to another place while she settles, or draw the timber and let her fall.

3196. In falling, how does it come away?—As a body properly.

3197. In how large blocks?—Some make heavier falls than others. Some go to a great height.

3198. Does it ever go in big cracks?—Yes, if she breaks she will give you indications of it. The stone splinters, there is a crack, and then that is where she will make her next fall from.

3199. How far do these cracks run?—About 20 yards, perhaps.

3200. And do they continue in the same line as the cracks in the roof that has fallen before?—No, they split always.

3201. Is there any tendency in the roof and the overlying rock to form gaping cracks?—I have not seen any gaping cracks.

3202. Is the crush on the timbers pretty straight when the pillars are drawn?—Fairly well.

3203. How do they lie when they are crushed?—The weight of the stone will break your timber, or else it will crush it down into the bottom. In many cases the timber is crushed into the bottom.

3204. Is there any sheer in the timber, as if it did not settle straight, but sliding?—It depends how the timber is set. If it is set true to its work it would not do that. It will break first if the timber is set true.

3205. Have you been through the old workings on this side of the Brunner fault?—Yes, partly.

3206. Now [pointing, on plan] what state is that part of the mine in?—I could hardly tell now.

3207. There has been no work done there for many years?—No.

3208. Were you working in it ever?—No; the top end of the old working was going on when I came here.

3209. Were any pillars drawn in the old workings?—Some pillars were taken out; they were split pillars chiefly.

3210. What is the greatest height in any of the old workings?—About 15ft.

3211. And where were these pillars split—anywhere near the fault?—Well, yes, next to the stone drift. In some places the roof fell, but mostly it was bodily crushed.

3212. That part of the mine has settled down?—That part of the mine has perfectly settled down.

3213. And have any pillars been taken out near the river that you are aware of?—Not that I am aware of.

3214. Could they have been taken out without your knowing it?—Not in my time.

3215. Do you know anything about the Coal-pit Heath Mine?—No, I have not been in the Coal-pit Heath for ten years, I suppose.

3216. Then, I understand, it is not until the workings advance on a pillar that the coal begins to crush?—Yes.

3217. Is it as good as bord coal?—Just the same.

3218. Could that crush not be avoided to any extent?—You could not avoid it. It is an impossibility.

3219. You are obliged to let them crush as you begin working?—Yes, and there is nothing can prevent it.

3220. Do you think that this tendency to crush would increase as time goes on, and be worse to deal with?—I do not think it would.

3221. Do you think it was a mistake not to have taken out the pillars formerly?—To a certain extent it would have been better to have taken them out formerly, because less expense would have been incurred in making the banks right again. It takes a considerable amount of money to get the roads made up.

3222. Do you think it possible that it can affect the safety of the deeper parts of the mine when they come to be worked?—Not in the slightest.

3223. Do you know anything of the cracks that go through the surface?—I have not been on the range. I have heard Armstrong say there are cracks, and that surface-water gets in.

3224. Is there any special danger in the Brunner Mine in working these pillar-workings?—No more than in ordinary coal-mines.

3225. Have you ever had an accident from falls?—No.

3226. When new men are taken into the mine, what are they set to do first?—New miners?

3227. Yes?—Perhaps lower some pillars. But as it is now, if new men come they would have to go into the face to work.

3228. There are two men in each place at the face?—Yes.

3229. You have to do with the arranging of them?—I should be there to direct them to the place, and should let a deputy go with one pair, and I should go with another pair. We should see these pairs into the face, and I should go round all the workings until I had all my men in their places.

3230. In doing so, would you explain to them any special thing?—I should draw their attention to the roof first, and caution them as to the danger of the stone, and as to the main point of putting the timber in right. I should have to go over the works two or three times during the shift to see that the timber was put in correctly.

3231. And with these precautions, do you think that there would be no extra danger to fresh men?—I do not think there would.

3232. Provided they were coal-miners?—If they were coal-miners there would be no special danger.

3233. Would there be any special danger to quartz-miners?—I do not think there would.

3234. Have you ever worked at quartz?—No, but I know that, as a rule, quartz-miners are more up to timbering than the coal-miners.

3235. Do any of the pillars work out pretty solid?—We do not take them all out.

3236. I was going to ask you about the proportion of solid to slack in the pillars. Do some work out more solid coal than others?—Yes.

3237. What do the most solid ones work out? Take a skip of the best pillars, would it give as much solid coal as if it were bord coal?—Yes, just the same.

3238. And the most crushed pillars, what would they give?—Perhaps about 5cwt.

3239. To the skip?—Yes.

3240. You are taking a skip of about 11cwt.?—Yes.
3241. About 5cwt. of sound coal out of 11cwt.?—Yes.
3242. How many of these pillars on the places, so to speak, are good pillars, and how many are crushed pillars?—There are eight good pillars.
3243. You are now talking of the mine as it was when the strike set in?—Yes.
3244. There were eight good pillars?—Yes, and five fairish ones—you could not call them bad pillars, but the eight were the best.
3245. Were those all the places?—They were all that were being worked when we stopped.
3246. Thirteen places?—Yes.
3247. How many men did that employ?—Twenty-six.
3248. In each shift?—Yes.
3249. You generally work two shifts?—We have been working one shift of late, but as a rule we would work two shifts.
3250. Then, when that coal from the eight good pillars is screened it should turn out as much good coal as solid workings?—Yes.
3251. Can you form any idea of what the men were earning a week in the three weeks before the strike?—The last three weeks.
3252. Yes; what they were earning, putting it in weeks' wages?—I could not tell exactly. That was the time they were working three in a shift.
3253. What was the shift earning?—Fifteen and sixteen shillings a day per man.
3254. That is, taking two men in a shift?—Yes. The restriction was on, and they could not make more than 16s. a day each.
3255. Then, two men could each earn from 15s. to 17s. a day?—Yes, easily.
3256. But owing to the restriction?—Owing to the restriction they could only make 16s. a day; that was their limit.
3257. *Mr. Moody.*] Anything over that, of course, went to the union?—On anything over that there was a fine.
3258. *The Chairman.*] Did they ever evade that?—There have been cases in which they have evaded the scrutiny of the union.
3259. Then, the three men in a place reduced the wages?—There being three men in a place reduced the actual earnings of each by one-third.
3260. But that was a matter of their own arrangement?—Yes.
3261. Had those men gone to seek work elsewhere it would not have been necessary?—I do not think they were allowed to go away by the union, as far as I can make out.
3262. What number of hands do you think you could take into the mine without this, and letting each man earn his fair wage?—Do you mean two shifts?
3263. I mean double shifts, with only two men in a place?—I believe fifty could be put in—that is, working two shifts.
3264. *Mr. Moody.*] That is in the Brunner Mine?—In the Brunner Mine.
3265. *The Chairman.*] And these men could make, working on the gross coal, how much?—There is nothing to prevent them, if they are working on the gross, at the prices the company offer, making 15s. and 16s. a day, at 2s. per ton on gross weight.
3266. And on gross coal at 2s. per ton they could make how much?—Say, from 14s. to 16s.
3267. Is that exclusive of drawbacks or deductions?—Yes; that is if there is no restriction on them, and the men are allowed to go into a place and work as men have done formerly.
3268. Let them have full swing?—Yes, let them have full swing.
3269. *Mr. Brown.*] You think they do not work full time, then?—What, of late?
3270. Yes?—No.
3271. Even when there were three in a shift?—You could hardly work full time if two could do as much as the three.
3272. Do the three men do more than the two?—Just about the same.
3273. Would it be possible to arrange the work in a place so that three men could really do much more work than two could do in a shift?—I do not think it would be.
3274. *The Chairman.*] So that if the third man in a place were paid by day-wages it would be a piece of charity?—The third man would be a hindrance.
3275. *Mr. Brown.*] What about the hours? How many hours are they supposed to work?—They are supposed to work eight hours, but of late they made eight hours from bank to bank.
3276. What is the meaning of that?—From the time they start from the surface until they land at the surface again.
3277. So that they include in their eight hours the time occupied in going into their place?—And in coming back again, and the "tucker"- or meal-times.
3278. Does that come off the eight hours too?—Yes—that is, of late.
3279. What would that reduce the actual working-time to?—I should say seven hours.
3280. How long did they take to get into their place?—They could get to their place in twenty minutes.
3281. And it would take them twenty minutes in coming out?—They can come out in less time.
3282. Then, their "tucker"-time is a quarter of an hour?—It is supposed to be that, but it is a little more than that sometimes.
3283. Have they a smoke time?—No, the pipe is frequently in their mouth.
3284. They do not wait for that?—No.
3285. When was the system of restriction introduced by the union?—I should say three or four months ago, or somewhere thereabouts.
3286. It was in operation before this last spell of work?—It was in operation before the strike commenced.

3287. *The Chairman.*] Before the lock-out, do you mean?—Before the 20-per-cent. arrangement.

3288. *Mr. Brown.*] The company did not introduce it?—It was introduced by the miners.

3289. Do you know why it was introduced?—Well, their side of the question is this: They reckon that by their putting on the restriction every man would have equal pay.

3290. That there would be an equality?—Yes.

3291. Was that levelling down or up?—It was levelling down to some and levelling up to others.

3292. How did it level up?—Perhaps one pair of men might be in a near place and the others might be farther into the mine, and those who are near would probably get more trucks than those so far off; therefore one pair of men might make a five-pound note more than the others.

3293. How is the delivery of the empty trucks to the miners arranged?—They are so arranged that each one has his turn—that is, if he can keep his turn going.

3294. *The Chairman.*] Would you explain exactly how that is done?—There are so many trucks on to an incline, and they go all round until each man has had his turn. If, however, one man is not ready when he is called upon they call upon the next man.

3295. You mean if he has not a full truck ready?—Yes, if he has not a full truck ready he is passed.

3296. *Mr. Brown.*] The company's instructions to their truckers are to deliver to each man equally as soon as they are ready?—Yes.

3297. *The Chairman.*] If this were carried out fairly, would the truckers near the outlet at the mine have any advantage over the others?—No.

3298. So that if there is anything wrong in this respect it arises from the action of the truckers?—Yes.

3299. Then, I suppose, any difficulty as to any difference in the value of a place in the mine is overcome by what is termed cavilling?—Yes.

3300. *Mr. Brown.*] How is that carried out?—The cavilling?

3301. Yes?—It is simply a lottery. The names are put on slips of paper and the numbers of the places on other slips, and these are put into a box and the men draw them.

3302. *The Chairman.*] It is a ballot?—Yes; just the same.

3303. *Mr. Brown.*] Do the truckers shirk the duty that lies upon them of equally distributing these trucks?—No.

3304. You are not aware of their doing so?—No. They do not do it wilfully.

3305. But a man might be missed?—Yes, a man might be easily missed.

3306. You, as deputy, never interfere with the truckers, do you?—No; but if one of the men lodged a complaint saying that So-and-so had so many trucks more than he did on any day I should go then and tell the trucker to make that man back his turn, so as to keep the turns square.

3307. Have you had complaints of that sort?—Yes, very often.

3308. And you have rectified them?—Yes; according to the best of my ability.

3309. Is there a complaint-book in the mine into which miners can enter any complaints?—Yes; they have a report book.

3310. You look at the book?—Yes; they come and examine the mine once a month chiefly.

3311. By "they" you mean the Inspectors?—Yes. If there is anything they wish to put in the book it is there for them to do so.

3312. If there was a complaint about the regularity of the trucks it would be the Inspector's business to enter that in the book?—If they thought fit, or go to the manager. If they thought I did not take steps sufficient to give them satisfaction they might go to the manager and lodge a complaint with him. It has never yet been done in connection with such a thing as the truck system.

3313. I have not yet got your explanation about levelling up through this process of restriction. How does it level up?—There is a great deal of difference in the men's abilities. We will say an inferior man does not strive to earn as much as another man anxious to get on in the world, and the one man would earn more money than the other; and to alter this they put on this restriction, so that each man should share alike. That was not their idea from the foundation of it: it was merely because they would stop earning so much money.

3314. The restriction was at the point at which the inferior man stopped?—No. It was carried in their meeting that this restriction should be put on.

3315. On the men who made the most money?—On the men who made the most money. But the foundation of it is this: that taking them right through they found they had a pretty good safe thing on, I suppose, and they put this restriction on so that they would not make more than this amount, which every man in the mine could make.

3316. *Mr. Moody.*] They did not want the outside world to see that they could make so much more money than they ought to make for a reasonable day's work?—Yes; that is about the size of it.

3317. *Mr. Brown.*] Then, did they forego their right to make so much money and take it out in easier hours?—They could make their money perhaps in a three-quarter day; in fact, I have seen men myself on a Saturday, when I have been going round out of the meal-hour, sitting down, having earned enough during that week.

3318. Yet at the same time the company had to pay the truckers there?—Yes, and the surface-men as well.

3319. Have you any opportunity of judging of the amount of slack turned out in the mine before March and afterwards?—I have not.

3320. Your position frees you from being a member of the union at all?—Yes.

3321. You do not really know what their councils are?—I do not know.
3322. *Mr. Moody.*] Do any of the men work with safety-lamps?—Not of late.
3323. But when they did work with the lamps, was there an extra allowance to the miners for that?—No, there was not that I am aware of.
3324. In taking out the pillars, when the top comes down is there any gas emitted?—I have not seen a particle in the Brunner, not even in the goaf.
3325. The only coal gas seen was in the experiment in going through the fault?—Yes; there was when we were working the solid coal. We have had gas in there then.
3326. But none comes down from the top?—I have not seen any from the rise. It was from the bottom that they used to meet the gas.
3327. Of course that would release the gas when the bottom heels up?—Yes.
3328. *Mr. Brown.*] Are the wages-men quite aware of the easy hours the miners are taking?—They know all about it.
3329. And are they satisfied to lie idle during the strike?—It is like this: they are compelled to do it.
3330. Have they not a voice in the councils?—Yes.
3331. *The Chairman.*] In a ballot to go to work?—There has not been a ballot taken on it. If you talk to them individually they will hold with your views on the subject; but as soon as they get before the whole body of men you know they are up in arms directly.
3332. *Mr. Moody.*] They change their tone?—They change their tone directly.
3333. *Mr. Brown.*] So that you think the decisions of the council are not really the feelings of the men?—They are not, judging from talking with them outside.
3334. *Mr. Moody.*] Intimidation is the cause?—Yes.
3335. You say there was no ballot taken. Is it not in the rules that there should be a ballot?—Yes.
3336. They have done away with the ballot lately?—They took a ballot for something up there.
3337. *Mr. Brown.*] There have been some negotiations lately as to resuming work, have there not?—Yes.
3338. Do they come from the union?—Yes.
3339. Or was it initiated by Mr. Dunn?—No; I think there was a deputation from the union last night to Mr. Bishop.
3340. Is the secretary of the union here at present?—No; he is at Westport, I think.
3341. That is Mr. Andrew?—Yes.
3342. Is Mr. Newton one of the leading men?—Yes.
3343. Is he away too?—Yes.
3344. Then the officers of the union are not all here?—Those are the only two away just now, I think.

Mr. JOHN MORRIS sworn and examined.

3345. *The Chairman.*] You are a coal-miner?—Yes.
3346. You are at present a deputy and fireman in the Brunner Mine?—Yes, I have been for a number of years.
3347. For how many years?—For twenty-four years.
3348. Are you in the mine pretty well every day?—Yes.
3349. You must have been in the mine under the old Ballarat Company?—Yes, under Mr. Taylor.
3350. Were they the first to open it?—It was opened a few yards in previously, but they were the first company that worked the mine.
3351. Were you afterwards under the Nelson Provincial Government?—Yes.
3352. When they worked the mine?—Yes.
3353. Who was the manager then?—Mr. Dent.
3354. How long did that last?—I could not say.
3355. And since then?—Under McCarthy, Hughes, Scott, and Croker, Mr. Dent being still manager.
3356. Then after them came?—Then under Mr. Kennedy.
3357. And then the amalgamation?—Yes.
3358. *Mr. Brown.*] Who were managers during that period?—Elliott was first manager after Dent, then Harrison and Lees.
3359. And who came after Lees?—Mr. Bishop.
3360. Was there not one between him and Bishop?—Tatley was there a few months.
3361. And then came Mr. Bishop?—Yes.
3362. Do you remember the old rise-workings on this side of the main fault?—Yes; I used to travel them every morning.
3363. When did you see them last?—It is a good while since I saw them last. I have been nearest the fault all the while.
3364. Do you know if much change has taken place in these old workings between the fault and the river?—I could not say what change has taken place for several years, as I have not been in there.
3365. Was there much change between the first day you visited them and the last? Were the workings falling in?—No.
3366. Do you think they are still open?—There has been a pillar-working since in that part.

3367. When was that pillar-working done?—Between the river and the fault pillars have been working since Mr. Bishop came.

3368. *Mr. Moody.*] Were there many pillars taken out at that time?—I could not say. I never was up in that district.

3369. *The Chairman.*] You have not seen where the pillars were taken out?—Not in the rise. The dip-workings were in hand then, and that was my district.

3370. What is your exact duty in the mine?—That of fireman and deputy.

3371. But what do you do in the day when you go there?—I go round the places and see what is wanted.

3372. You go all round the roads?—Yes.

3373. And do you put men on?—We have the power if there is anything in the way.

3374. You have the power to put men on to put any road in order, for instance?—Not for putting a road in order. We do that ourselves during the day if anything goes wrong with the roads.

3375. If anything goes wrong with the roads you put it right with your own hands?—During the working-hours, yes.

3376. Supposing anything serious happened to the road, such as a fall, or it rise up, or anything of that sort?—We should get help.

3377. And is that done by extra men during working-hours?—Yes.

3378. And those miners or daily-wage men are taken out of the bords?—Yes; and it is sometimes done at night by extra men.

3380. *Mr. Brown.*] Do these miners get extra pay for that?—Yes.

3381. Do you give them their tallies for that?—No; there is an overman who does that in the proper man's absence. If we put on men to help us they are paid without giving the time in.

3382. *The Chairman.*] Have you had frequently to report or do anything in consequence of the roof getting suddenly dangerous in any parts of the mine?—We have had to report it.

3383. Have you ever had to do so?—Yes.

3384. Frequently?—Not frequently in my district.

3385. In what part of your district?—In the fault district.

3386. Between the two faults?—Yes.

3387. What was the nature of those sudden changes?—Sometimes the timber breaks away.

3388. Do you ever observe any cracks in the roof apart from the scaling-down of the roof from settlement?—There are sometimes. It comes out in slips and continues until the roof goes.

3389. These are the flat partings. I meant more vertical cracks?—There are those also.

3390. Do they go far, do you think?—I could not tell how far they go. Next to the outcrop, between the fault and the outcrop, they used to go the surface.

3391. But that is the case in all mines with an outcrop, is it not?—I think so.

3392. Do you know anything at all about the gaps on the surface?—No; I have not been on the top of the hill.

3393. *Mr. Brown.*] Have you seen kerosene come through?—No.

3394. *The Chairman.*] Have you much fire in the mine?—Not at the present time.

3395. *Mr. Moody.*] There has been, I suppose?—Yes.

3396. *The Chairman.*] But still, you go round every morning and test it all?—Every morning.

3397. *Mr. Moody.*] Do you take a lamp around with you?—Yes.

3398. *The Chairman.*] Is there any fire near the second fault?—No, not now.

3399. Was there more fire there than anywhere else at first?—Before we got to the fault there was more fire in the mine than at any other time. And again, in cutting through the second fault, when we began to get the coal, there was a great deal of gas.

3400. Have you ever had any accident from gas in the mine?—There have been a few burns.

3401. Anything serious, causing loss of life?—No.

3402. Have you ever had any accident, do you remember, in the mine from falls?—Yes, one man named Barran was killed by the coal.

3403. How long ago was that?—It was about twenty years ago; perhaps it might be more.

3404. Was it his own fault, through working with too little timber, or what?—It was a fall of coal after the shot.

3405. Was that the only case?—There was also Clarke; he was killed by coal.

3406. In the same way?—It caught him as he was driving an incline up. The coal came suddenly and fell on him.

3407. Do you remember any others?—There was a German who was also killed by a fall of coal.

3408. That is three you have mentioned; and they were all killed through falls of coal: and are those the chief accidents in your time?—I do not remember any more.

3409. Of late years, while they have been working the pillars, have there been any accidents?—There was to a man named Sheehan, who was working the dip-pillars.

3410. *Mr. Moody.*] Is it usual in the pillar-workings for them to put in sprags?—Yes.

3411. Do they do that now?—Yes; but in the fault pillars sprags will not stand as the coal is too soft.

3412. Is it provided for in the rules that they must use sprags?—Yes.

3413. *The Chairman.*] Is the coal near the faults very much more crushed than the other pillars?—Very much more crushed.

3414. From your experience, do you consider there is any extra danger or risk in working these pillars?—There is.

3415. To working the other coal?—Yes, a little extra for a man who is not practicable.

3416. Not accustomed to it?—Yes.

3417. The danger is that the coal might fall upon him with greater suddenness than as if he were working in the solid?—And the rock also.

3418. You mentioned one accident that occurred in this pillar-working of the dip: how did that arise?—The coal came over the sprag.

3419. And that is the only accident that occurred?—Yes.

3420. Experience has not shown that there have been more accidents during the pillar-workings than during the solid?—No.

3421. And on the whole the mine has been remarkably free from accident considering the time it has been working and the number of men employed?—Yes.

3422. Is it possible for a deputy to instruct new hands sufficiently for them to work in safety with an old hand?—Yes, with an old hand; he might keep him right.

3423. If they were working alone, would it be safe?—For new hands?

3424. Yes. Would it be safe for two new hands to be in a place?—I do not think it would be safe.

2425. Even if they were experienced quartz-miners?—Quartz is different altogether to coal.

3426. Do you think a quartz-miner's experience is of no use in coal-mining?—It is not the same as a coal-miner's experience, as where there is rock and the position low there is not so much danger of the material falling upon a man as in a coalfield where it is 17ft. high: there it is dangerous.

3427. *Mr. Brown.*] Have you any knowledge of the system under which the skips are put into the mine?—No.

3428. *The Chairman.*] You have nothing to do with them?—No, I have nothing to do with them.

3429. *Mr. Brown.*] Do you know how it is arranged?—It is not my branch at all, and I never interfere in it.

3430. *Mr. Moody.*] You have nothing to do with the Wallsend, I suppose?—No. I have been solely occupied in the Brunner Mine the whole of my time here.

3431. Do you know the drive that is being put to the dip coal beyond the fault?—No, I have not been there.

3432. Is not that part of your duty?—Not at that time, when they are driving down. It was only one place.

3433. And who looked after that?—There was one man told off to lay the road and look after it for the two men.

3434. Are you in the accident fund?—Yes.

3435. Has there been some attempt lately to withdraw money from it?—I have heard that there has been, but I could not tell if it is a fact or not. It was being brought before a meeting lately.

3436. The miners wish it to be withdrawn. I do not know if it is a general desire. A few wish it, it seems.

3437. But they are not able to withdraw it?—I do not think they will be able to do it. It is a case of desperation, they want to break everything up, and make every one the same.

3438. What do you pay into the fund?—One shilling a fortnight.

3439. What do you get out?—A pound a week.

3440. During the time you may be laid up?—Yes; in the case of an accident.

3441. For the whole of the time?—Yes. I think they have been paid £1 5s. a week lately.

3442. *The Chairman.*] As you understand the accident fund, do you think it would be a fair thing to have it broken up, and divided among the men?—I could not say that.

3443. How long have you subscribed to it?—A good many years. From soon after the commencement of it.

3444. Was that in the early days?—I was insured formerly in a Greymouth office.

3445. You are not insured in the office in Greymouth now?—No.

3446. Then of course all you have accumulated to the fund remains in it?—Yes.

3447. *Mr. Moody.*] Have you any idea of the amount deposited in it?—I have heard that there is somewhere near £700 in it at the present time, but whether that is correct or not I could not say.

3448. You are not a member of the committee of management?—No.

3449. *The Chairman.*] Are you a member of the union?—No.

3450. You had a union of deputies, I think; is that still in existence?—I have left it.

3451. Why was that?—It was at the time of the bother. There was a manager's rule that they should do all the repairs in the mine, and they said it was not right to do it, and so I left them.

3452. You thought it was right to do all the repairs?—Yes.

3453. *Mr. Brown.*] Was that a local or colonial union?—It was here, and limited to the three mines, the Brunner, Coal-pit Heath, and Wallsend.

3454. *The Chairman.*] Do you know the feeling among the daily-wage men about this strike? Are they anxious to keep it up?—It seems so with a good few.

3455. They have nothing to gain by it, have they?—No.

3456. And yet they want to keep it up?—Yes. Just a few of the leaders agitate the thing. They know their case is hopeless, and they want to make every one the same, I think.

3457. *Mr. Broun.*] What do you mean by that?—They want every one to be punished alike. They know their case is bad, and they want everybody to be bad alike. I think that is about it.

3458. Have you in your inspection of the mine seen the miners taking idle day underground?—No.

3459. They are always at work?—Yes.

3460. What number of hours per day do you think the miners work?—Eight hours.

3461. That is from bank to bank?—Yes. When the men are working I go two hours before they come in and look round all the places, and I come away two hours before they knock off.

3462. *The Chairman.*] How long do the men work?—Eight hours, from bank to bank.

3463. *Mr. Brown.*] How many hours would that be at face?—I should think about seven, or a little over.

3464. Are you aware of any restrictions recently put on the men as to the output?—I did think that some of them could have done a little more if they had been wishing to do it.

3465. *Mr. Moody.*] If they did more than a certain amount they had to pay it into the union?—Yes.

3466. *Mr. Brown.*] Do you think the union recently established has been beneficial to the miners on the whole?—Well, it is a hard question to answer. If the unions were conducted as they ought to be they would be beneficial, but when fools get to the head of affairs it makes things bad, and the unions do more harm than good.

3467. You think everything rests on a wise administration?—Yes.

3468. From your experience, you think the administration has not been wise?—No, it has not been wise.

3469. Do you refer to local unions or to unions generally?—All through I think they have been very unwise.

3470. *The Chairman.*] What point would you take exception to in the action they have been taking?—In the first place, as to the shipping affair; as soon as they found the officers giving over they ought to have let the men go into work.

3471. *Mr. Brown.*] What is the principle they are standing out for?—To protect the shipping officers.

3472. In New Zealand, do I understand?—It started in Australia first, I think.

3473. You do not know of any dispute between the shipping officers and employers in New Zealand?—Nothing, but just the Union Company.

3474. Nothing except that their big brother in Australia is grumbling?—Yes.

3475. And when the officers went back to work, you think the men should have been allowed to go back too?—Yes, if they had acted wisely.

3476. Were they prevented from going back by their own body or some outside body?—They were prevented by the Maritime Council.

3477. Why?—The Maritime Council was held in a species of admiration by the executive here, and because a few of the leaders were headstrong.

3478. Do you know anything about the accident to Robert Cherry?—No; that was in Wallsend.

Mr. John Green sworn and examined.

3479. *The Chairman.*] You are a coal-miner, are you not?—Well, yes, I have been brought up to coal-mining, although during the last three years I have been occupying a position in the company.

3480. You have been overman for three years, have you not?—Yes.

3481. In the Wallsend Mine?—Yes.

3482. Have you any knowledge of the other mines?—I have worked in all of them; but it is a considerable time since I was in the Coal-pit Heath.

3483. What was your duty as overman in the Wallsend Mine?—My duty was practically this: To keep the mine in proper working-order and safe, and to get the men's coal away from them.

3484. So that you were constantly in the mine—every day?—Yes.

3485. Had you the whole mine under your charge?—During the last six months the whole of it was under my charge, but prior to that there were two overmen.

3486. Were you there from the beginning of the working, after the second shaft was sunk?—No.

3487. How much of the mine was worked before you took charge?—The furthest distance away from the shaft would not be more than 300 yards to the west.

3488. Were all the east and north workings done during your time, or before?—The north working was not far extended at that time. The north headings would be about 100 yards, and the east about the same distance. And there was nothing done to the dip on this side.

3489. What was the character of the coal? Was it pretty uniform?—I do not think the quality was as good as these other mines.

3490. What was the drawback?—It seemed to be crushed up, and to have been affected by heat at some time.

3491. Do you mean that it was coked?—It appeared chemically altered. It seemed to me that fire had been somewhere not very far from it at one time.

3492. Do you mean that it was so all through the mine?—Practically speaking it was through all parts of the mine.

3493. What was the thickness of the seam?—It varied from 10ft. to 16ft.

3494. And what was the effect of this alteration of the coal? Did it make it hard?—It crushed a good deal more after it was cut.

3495. It made more small?—Yes.

3496. Smaller than the Coal-pit Heath or the Brunner?—More small than the whole coal of either the Brunner or the Coal-pit Heath.

3497. How did it compare with the Tyneside coal?—There was not a great deal of difference between the Tyneside and this.

3498. It was like the Tyneside?—Very much like it.

3499. What was the proportion of slack in it do you say from that cause?—It was worked out

some time ago by the miners and the company's clerk, and there appears to have been nearly two-fifths of slack.

3500. Did the coal improve at all to the dip?—Practically speaking no. We crossed a good patch of coal about 3 chains wide just after getting under the west side of the river.

3501. What was the coal like in driving underneath the river?—About the same.

3502. Was there much loss through stone in the coal?—There was a very large quantity of stone in the coal.

3503. *Mr. Moody.*] Small nodules?—Yes; great nodules sticking out like claws. I suppose it is limestone a good deal of it.

3504. Does the coal come clean off the stone?—No, it adheres to it very fast.

3505. *The Chairman.*] What stopped you in driving to the dip?—This place here at the end of the dip [showing on plan] was giving out a good deal of gas, and the company, I suppose, did not think it worth while to prove it further there.

3506. Was there a roll, or crush, or any indication of a fault?—The roof came down about 2ft.

3507. Then there was a level set off?—My impression is that just before we met this fault here we crossed a roll in the roof which nearly cuts the coal, and this same roll was met with in the level driving that was put off before reaching the Taylorville fault.

3508. Can you describe that fault?—It is a downthrow fault in my opinion.

3509. Is it vertical?—No, it is inclining something like that [indicating with hand], with a dip to the west.

3510. Was it hard rock?—It was hard rock, and of a considerable size too.

3511. The drop is considerable, judging by the metals?—I had metals from the shaft higher up and compared the two, and I think it is a considerable size myself.

3512. How much would you guess?—I would say 200ft.

3513. Then, in driving to the north, did you encounter a fault?—There was this fault here [showing on plan].

3514. That is an upthrow?—Yes, it is an upthrow. Of course the fault itself does not give any indications. We came to a lot of pug and dirty stuff, and never proved it. We know that the coal is higher up.

3515. Would it be possible to take out the pillar-workings with safety in the Wallsend Mine at any future time?—If I had a say in it I would not recommend them to take out the pillars there, in the neighbourhood of the river at all events. I think it would be very unsafe.

3516. Now, this working that stopped to the eastward, why was that stopped?—Well, everything was stopped when the mine was shut down.

3517. Did the coal change or stop?—It continued. We crossed two faults from the shaft here [showing on plan], 12ft. each, and the coal seems to be of the same character behind the second fault as in the other part of the mine.

3518. When you left off was there as good prospect of the coal as in the previous workings?—Yes.

3519. What was the thickness of the seam when you left off working eastward?—It was not proved the whole distance, but where we left off it was 12ft. Just behind the fault it was 12ft.

3520. That is, on the east side of the fault?—Yes.

3521. How many days a week did the men have working in the Wallsend?—The time varied very considerably.

3522. Can you give us any indication?—I do not think it would average more than four days a week for the last twelve months.

8523. *Mr. Brown.*] You refer to the Wallsend now?—Yes.

3524. *The Chairman.*] What was the reason of that? Was the output limited?—Yes. I believe the company could not sell the coal.

3525. Was it disagreeable coal to burn?—Well, yes, it was of a worse quality than the other coal, even for domestic purposes.

3526. Have you any idea of the difference in the value? Had it a different market-price?—I am not aware of it.

3527. Was it that there was only a demand for a certain output, and the men had to be let off to keep it down?—Yes.

3528. How many men were employed?—Towards the last there were forty-four coal-miners.

3529. Did they work in single shifts or double?—Single shifts.

3530. That is, twenty-two in a place?—Yes, for the last four or five months.

3531. How much used those men to earn? Do you know what they put out?—I know pretty well what they put out. The average throughout the mine used to be from 12s. 4d. to 12s. 6d. and 12s. 8d.—that is, taking all the men together.

3532. And did any place earn more than that?—I have known men to earn, for three months together, 16s. or 17s. a day, and some less than 10s. even.

3533. That would be for four days a week?—Yes.

3534. Having two idle days?—I am speaking of the daily earnings.

3535. Was that when they were being paid on the gross coal?—It will extend to both systems, screened and gross.

3536. Was there much difference in the earnings under the two systems?—Well, if my judgment is anything to go by, I believe the men got an advance of something like 3d. a ton.

3537. When the change was made from the "Billy Play-fair" to the gross coal the men got an advantage of 3d. a ton?—Yes.

3538. *Mr. Moody.*] What was the price paid then?—It was 4s.—that is, with the "Billy Play-fair," and 4s. for screened coal, and when the change took place—of course, in saying it was 2s. 10d. for gross weight, I was not getting any coal at this time; but I am quite satisfied, in my own opinion, that the men had an advantage to that extent.

3539. Was that at the time there was a limitation imposed by the union as to what the men should earn?—It was before, and at the time too; it extended to both times. There is one thing I might point out: Towards the close at Wallsend a large percentage of the places turned out to be good working-places.

3540. What part of the mine was that?—This was in the eastward working. In those places that commenced to work well they got a larger advantage by the gross weight than the ordinary places would do; and, to answer that question you put a short time since, those men's earnings began to be so much, that the union had to, or at least they did, put on a restriction.

3541. What was the object in putting on a restriction?—Well, in my opinion, it was to prevent the public seeing that they earned so much money.

3542. Did the miners try to evade that restriction in any way?—Yes, it has been evaded. It has been both evaded and attempted without succeeding.

3543. How did they attempt to evade it?—By asking me to get them two tickets made out, one to show the union, and another to keep away from the union.

3544. Were the union authorities aware that this was going on at the time?—I do not think they were.

3545. You say they evaded it. You have just stated how they attempted to evade it, but you could have prevented that when they applied?—It was in my power to prevent it; but they had money to receive in various ways. Sometimes a man might have so much for measurement and so much per ton for his coals on those measurements; and on other days a man might have so much to go in from the company for doing day-work—timbering, or anything of that sort. This measure went into my book, and the day-work and timbering also went into my book; and they could get separate tickets made out by the clerk—one for the other work, to keep it away from the union, and one for the coal to present to the union.

3546. That is how they did actually evade it?—Yes.

3547. *Mr. Brown.*] Was the limit 15s.?—I have heard it stated to be 15s., and from 15s. to 16s., but not more than 16s.

3548. *The Chairman.*] Did that restriction cause the men to idle their time?—In some instances. Men who used to have extraordinary good places would idle their time away when they had earned the amount of money to which they were restricted.

3549. And during that time the running expenses of the mine were going on?—Yes, just the same.

3550. So that the owners were not getting the advantage of the good places in their mine?—Just so.

3551. Being familiar with the Wallsend Mine, do you think it might be said to have been worked out, or worked to such a degree that it became necessary to close it?—My impression is that it could be worked for years to come.

3552. Can you explain more about that?—Providing there was a market for the coal; that, I think, would be the only drawback to the Wallsend being worked.

3553. *Mr. Moody.*] Was 12ft. the usual thickness of the coal?—Sixteen feet would be called the usual thickness.

3554. *The Chairman.*] What would be the loss from stone?—It would require a minute calculation to answer that.

3555. But, roughly speaking. Where was the stone separated, in the mine or the screen?—It was taken in the screen. The men would not pick an ounce out.

3556. You could form an idea, then. How was it separated?—The coal broke from it in the screens, and the stone was thrown away; but a good deal of it went into the market, I believe.

3557. That would account for the bad market-value of the coal?—It would help in a measure.

3558. Would it not be possible by some measure of water-screening to separate it?—It would not make any difference to that; it would have to be broken up with picks; but there was so much stone among it that all the coal would have to be broken up into very small coal to get it clear of the stone.

3559. The men were paid on the stone as well as the coal?—No, they were not. Allow me to explain. Under the "Billy Play-fair" system the stone was all picked out before the stuff was weighed; the same practice was carried out in the rough system. The coal was broken up and the stone taken out, and an average reduction made for the stone, the weight of the stone being reduced from the truck.

3560. That would give an idea of how much stone was in the coal?—I never made it my business to pay any special attention to that; but there is a very large quantity of stone in this coal, especially the bottom portion. As much as is practicable is left in the mine and not worked at all on account of this.

3561. Notwithstanding these drawbacks, if there could be a market for the coal, you have plenty more coal there to work?—Yes, a very large area could be worked if there was a market for it.

3562. *Mr. Moody.*] What about the coal through the fault? We have evidence that the coal was very much better through the roll?—For the first 15 yards there was no change. Then we came upon about perhaps 12 yards of very nice bright coal, with good facings, fracture good, and everything good.

3563. Was it stony?—There was a percentage of stone, but less than in other parts of the mine. That was to the fault.

3564. And the fault cut it off?—Yes.

3565. Do you think the manner in which the stone occurs in that coal is such as to lead you to expect that a change in the quality of the coal right over the field will take place to the dip in all parts, or is it anything peculiar owing to a change having been worked in the nature of the coal by

the influence of the faults?—I think it is owing to the influence of eruptions that the change in the coal is brought about, and I think to the dip, the same side as we have worked, of the Taylorville fault it will all be the same. The coal will not improve anything to the dip; but my impression is, judging from the other two mines, behind the fault it will be very much better.

3566. That is the dip fault from the Wallsend?—Yes.

3567. The principal part of the coal lays down there—the Taylorville Estate?—Yes.

3568. Are you aware of a slate boundary at the back, to the eastward?—Yes.

3569. How near to it was the mine worked?—Well, going in the eastward levels, we are not a long distance from it, perhaps 200 or 300 yards.

3570. *The Chairman.*] Do you think it possible that may have influenced the coal?—I do think so.

3571. *Mr. Brown.*] Had you to do with the Brunner or Coal-pit Heath?—I have worked in them, but have not held any official position there. I was a miner in the Brunner a number of years—more or less, seven years.

3572. Were you in the Brunner at the time of the stoppage?—No, I was in the Wallsend then.

TUESDAY, 4TH NOVEMBER, 1890.

Mr. THOMAS JAMES WATERS, C.E., M.A.Inst.M.E., F.R.G.S., examined.

Witness: I am managing engineer to the Westport Coal Company at Westport. I have charge of the landing of coal into the railway-wagons at the foot of the incline, and am also in charge, as mining engineer, of the Coalbrookdale Mine. For this I have a certificated manager under me—Mr. Brown—as mine-manager, and Mr. Cameron as underground manager. Another mine is under my charge—namely, Granity Creek—which is not yet opened. The Coalbrookdale Mine area is about 2,800 acres, 85 per cent. of which area is coal-bearing. Of this area only about 100 acres has yet been worked. The Granity Creek area comprises 3,000 acres, about 80 per cent. of which contains available coal. The seam in Coalbrookdale is from 4ft. to 26ft. thick; but in Granity it reaches a thickness of 36ft. In Coalbrookdale are indications of a split of the seam into three parts, and also of a second distinct seam called the "Banbury Seam," which averages 5ft. in thickness. The average thickness of the Coalbrookdale seam is 17ft. I have had charge of the mine since August, 1885. Last year the output was 163,000 tons up to the 1st July, 1890, and in the previous year 130,000 tons. At the former date there was an average of from 400 to 410 hands of all kinds employed, 250 of whom were hewers. All the men are paid fortnightly in Denniston in cash. No cheques are given except in the case of men leaving the place. The wages for hewing are 2s. 10d. per ton on whole coal. No difference is made for the cost of hewing top or bottom coal from the seam; but an allowance of 6s. per yard is made to the hewers for heading-work, calculated 9ft. wide. This is a payment over and above that for the coal-getting. The truckers get 10s. a day, with 6d. extra for lights; and the other hands are paid 10s. per day, except mechanics and tradesmen, who are paid as follows: Enginewright, £4 per week; assistants, 12s. per day; smiths, 12s. per day; masons, 12s. and 10s. per day; carpenters, 11s. per day. Formerly the miners were paid at the rate of 3s. 10d. per ton on screened coal and its equivalent, as 2s. 10d. on whole coal was ascertained by trial. The change was made at the request of the miners about four years ago. There is no rule for this equivalent, as it varies greatly in different mines, and even in different parts of the same seam. In considering the output of coal by hewers it is necessary to distinguish before and after July, 1890, as at that date the union rules imposed a double restriction on the men—first, that no man should average more than nine boxes of 12cwt. each per diem; and, second, that the average output of the whole mine for any week should not exceed the weekly average for the previous six months. Notice of this was given to the manager by the secretary to the Miners' Association. Mr. Brown, the manager, can give particulars relating to this. Before this restriction the average for the first six months of the year was nine and three-quarter boxes of coal per day per man. Since the restriction was enforced by the miners' union the average for the month before the strike was seven and a half boxes per day per man, which was below the limit fixed by the union. The total loss caused to the coal company by this was 77½ tons per diem, or equal to the work of seventeen extra hewers. Formerly some men filled thirteen boxes when working in the top and bottom coal, which is the easiest—easier even than pillar-working, such as at the Brunner. I mean by this that where the seam is too thick to reach easily either the top or the bottom 8ft. or 10ft. is first taken out, according to the nature of the roof or floor. This mode of mining involves double timbering, by short props in the first instance, and then by long props. The employés put in these timbers, but they are supplied to them at the face by the company. Before the restriction the time worked at the face was eight hours. Except when there was a double shift in some places only seven hours and a half was the time actually worked by each pair of men. After this restriction the average time was reduced to six hours. In general double shifts are worked. The wages made before the restriction may be reckoned by this return. [Return produced and marked "Exhibit No. 36."] From this it will be seen that the average earning for six months by hewers was at the rate of 15s. 7d. per day per man, but if the top and bottom coal is excluded from this calculation the earning would be reduced to 14s. 11½d. The men have to find their own powder, fuse, and light out of their earnings. These deductions amount to 1s. The average distance the men have to truck from the face in the Coalbrookdale Mine is 20 yards, instead of 50 yards as in the Brunner Mine. The highest daily earning per man in top and bottom coal was an average of £1 2s. 4d. for each man of one party during six weeks. Another in the same period earned the same, another £1 1s. 8d., and a fourth 19s. 4d. per day. This was for a period extending from the 10th May to the 7th June. At that time they were working seven hours and a half on the face. These men were working full time—

that is to say, every working-day—but the average time for the last six months has only been 4·4 days a week. Thus before the restriction the weekly average earning per man was £3 8s. 11d. per week. The maximum was earned by the same party as earned the £1 2s. 4d. after the restriction in the period ending the 30th August, and the earning for each man of that period only amounted to 15s. per working-day. I have computed the actual loss to the company by the restriction, and it amounts, I find, to 77 tons per diem. The cost of hewing and trucking this is certainly saved, but, on the other hand, all the other running-expenses of the mine are continued at the same rate. Therefore, if the output is reduced, the cost per ton of coal delivered is rapidly increased. I may explain this by an instance. If the output were increased from 2,500 to 10,000 tons per fortnight the cost of the coal in the wagons is reduced by 33 per cent. owing to this cost alone.

3573. *The Chairman.*] Can you afford such particulars as will enable the Commissioners to arrive at the actual cost of the coal per ton when the yield is about an average?—I furnish the office return made up for the fortnight ending the 30th August, which gives all the detailed charges and shows the final cost of the coal to be 10s. 7d. This was when there was an average output of 7,277 tons for a fortnight. [Return put in, and marked "Exhibit No. 41."] Since the strike no alteration has been made in the tariff or rate of wages. I put in a copy of the regulations now in force. [Copy of regulations put in, and marked "Exhibit No. 42."] The real reason for the restriction I believe to have been an endeavour to drop down the maximum earning, and so reduce the average, that the company would be unable to reduce the rate of wages. Thus, with good places, and when the good hewers were restricted in their output, the company were the sufferers.

3574. Could you inform the Commissioners as to the relative market-value and the uses of the Westport coal as compared with other New Zealand coal—say, Greymouth coal?—The Westport coal is not very uniform in character. In some places it is stony, and one bord will be in very stony coal and the next in beautiful coal. I put in a printed document showing its comparative value with the Grey coal and other coals, both in New Zealand and elsewhere, for gas and steam purposes. For gas purposes the Westport Coal-mine manager considers it equal to the Greymouth coal, but elsewhere the Greymouth coal is undoubtedly preferred for that purpose. The alleged difference in value has been fully worked out by Mr. Graham, of Dunedin, whose report I put in. [Report put in, and marked "Exhibit No. 43."] For steam-generating purposes, the Coalbrookdale coal is as good as can be found in any part of the world. The report of the trial made by Mr. Cunningham Smith shows it to be 25 per cent. better than the New South Wales coal. For locomotive purposes the Coal-pit Heath coal is stated to be slightly better than the Coalbrookdale coal, according to a report by Mr. Rotherham, who made special trials of these coals; but for household purposes the Coalbrookdale coal commands 2s. advance on the Grey Valley coal.

3575. Can you inform the Commissioners if there are any hardships involved in the conditions under which the men work at the Denniston mines, as compared with the Brunner Mine?—Denniston stands 2,000ft. above the sea; it is healthy, and there is not much frost, but a good deal of fog. I do not consider that there is any great difference arising from the climate that will affect the life of the miner; but, of course, it is not of such easy access as Brunnerton. All the cottages at Denniston excepting seventy belong to the men. The company own the rest, having built or bought them.

3576. Will you give the Commissioners any information as to the reasons that led you to recommend the shutting-up of the Wallsend Mine?—I will supply a copy of my report to the directors of the Grey Valley Coal Company, as to the best mode of working their properties, and in which my reasons are given for recommending the closing of the Wallsend Mine.

3577. What are the charges on the coal?—The royalty is 6d., and the railage 2s. 6d., including wharfage charges. I think this is reduced now to 2s. 4½d. No storage is paid for by the company. There is storage for about 1,000 tons in wagons and for about 400 tons in the staiths at the wharf; and, in addition, there is about 1,000 tons storage provided for by bins on the hill. That is where the small line wagons are emptied, thus making 2,400 tons of storage in all. This storage-space is used when there are no steamers in port, so as to prevent the stoppage of the mine. They are never used except for steam-coal. The bins at the mine cost the company about £1 per ton; they are self-delivering into the railway-wagons.

WEDNESDAY, 5TH NOVEMBER, 1890

Mr. THOMAS BROWN examined.

Witness: I am mine-manager for the Westport Coal Company, and have been so for six years. I was previously manager at Wallsend Mine, Greymouth. I hold a manager's certificate. The rentals of the houses belonging to the company, of which there are about forty or fifty of two, four, and eight rooms each, are from 4s. 6d. for two rooms per week to 10s. for eight rooms per week. These are the rates charged to the men. As to the restrictions on the output, I got no notice of this from the union. We heard about it and found it in operation, causing a diminished output of 77 tons or over per day from the previous output. I protested against it by letter to the secretary of the Miners' Association, but no notice of this letter was taken by the Association. Although I wrote on the subject twice—namely, on the 16th and 17th June—I received no reply to my letters till the 22nd July. [Copies of letters put in.] This system was continued until the middle of August; but Mr. Waters wrote to me on the subject on the 20th August, and I sent a copy of his letter to the secretary of the association. I received a reply from him dated the 25th August. [Copy of letter put in.] There were two restrictions—one restricting each man to nine tubs per day, and the other limiting the weekly output to what it was six months before. The letter of the 25th August complained of want of boxes; but the men were fully supplied with boxes, and the

complaint was quite unfounded. The daily output per man fell from nine and three-quarter boxes to nine and a quarter boxes after this restriction was imposed. These negotiations were still going on when, on the 28th August, I received notice of the strike, on the ground of instructions from the Maritime Council. [Letter put in.] The notice was to cease work on the next day at 2 o'clock. The object of this half-day's notice was not for the company's benefit, but to get up by the return trucks a supply of goods for themselves, and over 20 tons of provisions were brought up that day. The strikers forbade the supplying of coal to the Union Steamship Company, and that was the alleged cause of the strike. I will now put in the correspondence from the 15th June to the 1st September. [Correspondence put in, and, with other letters handed in by witness, marked "Exhibit No. 45."] Stores are obtained by the men themselves, who have a co-operative society, at which they chiefly deal. There were other stores at which they could obtain supplies till the co-operative society was started. I think supplies are as cheap in Denniston as at Westport. The company charges for the carriage as per scale put in, but it is a low scale, and does not affect the cost much. Up till the strike the men obtained their coals free, but had to hew them; and the hewers charged the wages-men for what they got. The company charged nothing. Powder, fuse, and tools would, I think, cost the hewers 1s. per day on a full estimate. The company sharpens the men's tools free of charge. I was at Wallsend for four years, but that was ten years ago. I know the place well, and I do not think the conditions of life there are inferior to those here. In fact, there is not much to choose between life there and here.

Mr. John Lomas examined.

Witness: I am a coal-miner at Denniston, and I have been so for eight years. I am president of the Amalgamated Miners' and Labourers' Association. I was one of the delegates who went to Wellington to represent the Association in Conference with the Government. The Greymouth branch was satisfied, from an examination of the company's books, that the company was losing money, and we considered that, as the hewers had made concessions on the pillar-price of coal, the hewing-price was below the district rate. We include Westport in the district. When in March, 1890, the request for a change in the payment for hewing was made at Greymouth it was based upon the scale per ton in Denniston. I do not know how the coal there and the coal here would compare, as I never worked there, but some of the men have worked at both places. I could not say what they experienced, but we offered to submit the matter to arbitration, based on a practical comparative test. This, however, was declined, the manager replying that the coals did not sell at the same price. We would have had men sent to Denniston to test the matter. There had been no district rate established. I do not know what the men found the average wage at Denniston to be. Here we weigh every tub, but there one tub is weighed for the day's output. I went to Wellington as president of the Association, to make a representation of matters, and to endeavour to arrive at some settlement, and I interviewed the Premier on the subject. We thought that, as the mine was not paying the company, and the men had consented to work at a price under the district rate, in order to save the district the Government should meet us by making some concession for a time. The Association at Greymouth first suggested the reduction of the royalty or railage, as they pleased, and at Wellington we represented this to the Premier. He then promised a Commission of inquiry. We made personal application for the reduction, and our reasons for so doing are embraced in what I have already said. I know of no other reasons that I can speak of with safety, as they are not within my own knowledge. I reside here, and am not acquainted with Greymouth matters so intimately as to speak of their reasons.

Thursday, 13th November, 1890.

Mr. Charles Yelverton O'Connor examined.

3578. *The Chairman.*] You are a civil engineer, Mr. O'Connor, are you not?—Yes, I am a civil engineer.

3579. And your position in the Government service is Marine Engineer for the colony?—Yes.

3580. I understand that you were connected for a long time with the West Coast, and particularly with the Greymouth Harbour-works?—Yes.

3581. Was that the time you were in the position of District Engineer?—Yes; part of the time, and part of the time as Inspecting Engineer for the Middle Island.

3582. What were the dates during which you had charge of the Greymouth Harbour-works?—I had immediate charge of them from 1870 to 1872, and from 1875 to 1879 as District Engineer, and to some extent from 1872 to 1883 as Inspecting Engineer of the Middle Island.

3583. You wrote a memorandum to the Minister on the 27th September on the subject of this Commission?—Yes.

3584. Is that it [producing memorandum]?—Yes.

3585. Will you read it?—To save reading at all, I think it might be summarised in this way: "The scope of the inquiry into the question of the coal-working at Brunnerton must necessarily be very wide, in order to cover the whole ground. The Commissioners must apparently either accept evidence of the company's losses (presuming that such is forthcoming) as proof positive that such losses are unavoidable, or else the inquiry will have to go into the whole question of working and administration from a commercial and expert point of view, in order to satisfactorily determine as to whether or not a large sacrifice of revenue by the colony or the Harbour Board is really the only means by which the working of the mines can be continued with profit."

3586. And the Commission was drafted on those lines?—Yes.

3587. You raised, in your instructions to Mr. Martin, the District Engineer in Greymouth, the uestion of extra storage as the only means of keeping the miners in continuous work?—Yes; I

may state, as supplementary to what I have quoted from my memorandum to the Minister, that I was strongly of opinion that the great difficulty in the way of economical working of the mines was the want of sufficient storage; that had there been sufficient storage a much less number of men would have sufficed to have met all the requirements, whereas by the interruptions that now go on in the navigation of the port a large number of men are required to meet the exigencies when a number of vessels get in together. Consequently the staff in the mine has to be very much greater than it would be if it could be worked consecutively and regularly all the year round; and the rate per ton which has to be paid to these men in order to afford them reasonable wages for their year's work has to be much higher than if they could work continuously and earn a day's wages every day.

3588. The Commissioners took evidence from Mr. Martin on the subject, he having carefully considered it, and we propose to read to you a portion of his evidence, and you might then make any remarks upon it. [The Chairman then read Mr. Martin's evidence from page 52.] Having heard these suggestions of Mr. Martin's, what remark have you to make upon them?—What I understand Mr. Martin to say, in effect, is that he has considered three alternatives for the storage of coal—(1) By additional trucks, to cost £40,000; (2) by staiths (700ft. in length) alongside the river, to cost £30,000; (3) by bins entirely on the shore, to cost £6,000—but that it should also be borne in mind that whereas the staiths alongside the river would provide some 700ft. additional wharfage that this would not be provided by either of the other alternatives, and that, if additional wharfage (or berthage) came to be required, it would be necessary to add £13,000 for 700ft. of wharfage to each of the other alternatives to put them on a par with the staiths plan. This would make the plan by trucks £53,000, and the plan by bins £19,000. My own opinion on the subject, after having thought carefully about it, and having now heard what Mr. Martin has said, is that, if storage is to be provided at the port at all rather than at the mines, a modified form of storage by trucks, such as has already been suggested by Sir James Hector himself, would probably be better than any of the other alternatives mentioned. The 330 trucks estimated for by Mr. Martin would cost, as he says, £120 each, amounting in all to £40,000, but the bodies of these coal-trucks, which are made to lift off, would not, I think, cost probably more than £30 a piece, and 330 of these at £30 would come to, say, £10,000, or, allowing for stands and other contingencies, say, £12,000. The alternative I should propose, therefore, would be to provide not 330 entirely complete trucks, but 330 bodies of trucks, and not to discharge them into anything whatever—bins or otherwise—but to provide staging or platforms at each side of, say, two lines of rails on spare ground in the vicinity of the wharf on which these truck bodies could be stacked by means of a travelling crane, and there is a 12-ton steam travelling crane at Greymouth now which would, I think, suit the purpose. There are also several cranes at Westport which will be available in the course of time. As Mr. Martin says, the expense of doing this stacking would be practically nil, as the time when such stacking is required must manifestly be when no ships are requiring to be loaded, and when, consequently, the present wharf-cranes and their staff would be idle. I should not, however, recommend that these additional truck bodies should be provided unless the coal-owners agree to pay something for the advantages which they would thus attain, either in the shape of a contribution towards the cost or else an additional rate per ton. I think, in fact, that, if the Government entertains the proposal at all, the companies should be invited to at least contribute towards the cost of the work. A constant supply of coal available for ships without delay would no doubt be a benefit to the colony at large, but it must also manifestly be a benefit to the coal-owners. On many of the English railways, in order to obtain that amount of convenience which is necessary for their business, the coal-owners provide some, if not the whole, of the trucks required to work their mines, and it would not be altogether unreasonable, therefore, to expect the coal-owners in this case to provide the whole of these extra truck bodies if they wish to have them, or else to provide storage themselves in whatever other form they think best. Possibly, however, the Government or the Harbour Board might reasonably advance the money required on a guarantee of interest, or on the strength of an additional charge for the haulage and handling of the coal.

The Chairman: The method you have now referred to, of the extra hopper bodies, was mentioned to Mr. Martin, who considered it, but for some reason or other dismissed it.

3589. *Mr. Moody.*] Do you think it would be likely that the coal-owners would contribute towards supplying these wagon bodies, as they, of course, would have no control over them?—I can only say that if I were managing one of the coal companies I would immediately go in for a system of storage, as I believe it would pay them handsomely. It must, I think, be manifest to anybody who really looks into the matter that the rates the companies have to pay their men are far higher than would be necessary if the men could get constant work all the year round—that is to say, if they could make full time; or, in other words, that dividing the work amongst such a lot of men as are necessary in consequence of the interruptions to navigation involves the companies paying higher rates for cutting the coal than would be necessary if the hands were reduced, as they could be by providing sufficient storage; and I feel quite satisfied that the saving in the cost of working the mine which might thus be attained would be considerably more than the interest on the cost of providing this storage.

3590. Do you not think it more likely that the coal-owners would supply a certain number of wagons themselves, which would be their own property?—If they did so it would be much more expensive. It would cost £40,000 that way.

3591. But I mean if they supplied a portion of them?—But, why spend £40,000 if £12,000 will do? The only difference is the matter of lifting these wagon bodies off the trucks and placing them alongside a spare line, which would be done at a time when there would be practically nothing else doing.

3592. *Mr. Brown.*] Do you contemplate that the coal-owners should contribute to the capital cost of furnishing these bodies?—I should say it would not be unreasonable to expect them to provide the whole of it, or else to pay interest on it.

3593. Or could it be arranged in the way of their paying a certain tonnage rate for their use?—I suggested that also—either way would do. The Harbour Board might find the money, because the revenue goes to them, and I take it it would be immaterial to the Harbour Board or the Government whether they find the money or not, so long as they make sure of getting full interest on it. The undertaking would not, I take it, cost the colony anything if they get recouped for the full interest on the money expended, and the additional expense, if any, of working.

3594. If the owners were only paying for the temporary or periodical use of these trucks you would not know altogether if you would get interest or not. You would have to take it out as a matter of storage?—Yes; that would be so if the charge were a storage or demurrage charge, but not if it were a charge per ton on all coal carried.

3595. The use they would make of these trucks for storage purposes would be only during broken weather or stoppage through the bar?—We might put it in this way: If we established a demurrage charge, and let it rest with them whether they would fill the trucks or not, they would be brought face to face with the advantages of the thing in that way as strongly as they could in any way—that is to say, you might let it be optional with them when there is a stoppage in the navigation of the port as to whether they will fill the trucks or not. If they do fill the trucks they would, of course, do it subject to the demurrage charge; but I feel convinced they would rather face that than throw the mine out of work, and cause delay to the vessels coming for coal. As a matter of fact, the same thing already obtains at other ports of New Zealand.

3596. Is not a demurrage charge common in all other ports of the colony?—I presume it is. I happened to hear of a case which occurred at Timaru a short time back. A ship was expected there on the Saturday, and a merchant asked for trucks on the Friday to load grain for her. He loaded the grain, but the ship did not appear until the Tuesday or Wednesday following, and he had to pay a large sum—from £20 to £30, I think—for demurrage for the time the grain was in the trucks. So that it is manifestly a custom already to charge demurrage.

3597. There would be many applications for reduction of demurrage under those circumstances?—It should, of course, be made perfectly clear that demurrage on storage would be charged. So far I have been considering only the various alternatives proposed for storage at the port. I think myself, however, that a much better plan would be to have the storage at the mines. It would be much the cheapest plan in first cost, and also cheaper to work.

3598. *The Chairman.*] Are you aware of the arrangement offered or made for the purpose of developing the new coal-mines at Coal Creek? Has that come before you officially?—There is a company proposing to open up the mines at Coal Creek, and they have applied to the Government to know on what terms they may have the benefit of the harbour and wharfage and partial use of the railway?—Yes; I know about that case.

3599. And there has been a *Gazette* notice, gazetting the terms upon which they are to have the use of the Government railway?—Gazetting the terms?

3600. Yes. The Commissioners wish to know how the terms were arrived at?—Was it not the company's own tariff of charges which was gazetted? If there has been anything more than that gazetted, any arrangement as regards the terms on which their coal should be shipped, the Railway Commissioners could give you evidence of that. The circumstances of the arrangement between the Coal Creek and Point Elizabeth Coal Companies and the Government, which you wish to know about, are these: Two coal companies, the Point Elizabeth Coal Company and the Coal Creek Coal Company, practically simultaneously applied to the Government for the right to construct the railway from Point Elizabeth to Greymouth. It seemed doubtful as to which had priority of claim, and they were therefore advised to try and settle the matter amongst themselves. After a long interval, and several intermediate propositions, it was determined that the Coal Creek Company should be permitted to make the line, with power to charge to the Point Elizabeth Company certain rates for the haulage of their coal. At an early stage of the proceedings, negotiations were opened by the companies with the Railway Commissioners as to the terms upon which they would discharge the coal into ships from trucks delivered by either of these coal companies on the quay at Greymouth, and the reply to this by the Railway Commissioners was that the charge would be 1s. 3d. This was considered by the coal companies to be practically prohibitive. They reckoned that the actual cost to the Commissioners would not exceed 3d., but they were willing to pay 6d., and, ultimately, as much as 9d. The Railway Commissioners, however, I understand, declined to make any reduction. Their view of the matter was, I believe, that, as custodians of a colonial property, they were called upon to see that they suffered no loss of revenue. The rate from Brunnerton to Greymouth is 2s., which, I believe, yields a profit of about 6d., and the Commissioners were of opinion, so I understood, that by just so much coal as the Point Elizabeth and Coal Creek Coal Companies exported by just so much would the Brunnerton output decrease. They therefore reckoned, so it was understood, that, quite irrespective of what the relative extent of the work done for the respective companies was, they should make 6d. profit in any case—that is to say, they reckoned that they ought to make 6d. profit off the half-mile haulage which the Point Elizabeth and Cobden Companies required them to do, the same as they were making off the eight-mile haulage which they were doing for the coal companies at Brunnerton.

3601. Are you aware how they were to deal with the Blackball Mine when it was opened?—No, I do not know anything about that.

3602. Has there been any correspondence about the Blackball at all?—I cannot say.

3603. You are not aware that there will be a question arising immediately?—I suppose there is bound to be, but it is not in my department now. I have no longer anything to say to the authorising of these railways.

3604. Will you now resume as regards the Point Elizabeth and Coal Creek Companies?—The companies, or one of them, having failed to arrange with the Railway Commissioners, then made a proposition to the Government to be allowed to construct a wharf at Cobden—that is to say,

on the north side of the river, opposite Greymouth—on the plea that, as the demands of the Railway Commissioners were entirely prohibitive, some other alternative should be opened to them, and the Government being anxious to help their industry if possible got this question carefully inquired into, but were reluctantly obliged to decline to permit the wharf to be erected there, as Sir John Coode, on the question being referred to him, advised the Government that it would be very dangerous to put up a wharf and viaduct where suggested by the companies, as it would confine the river too much. The companies had therefore to fall back on their original proposition to cross the river at Cobden, and deliver the coal on the Greymouth side; or rather, the Cobden Coal Company has decided to adopt this course, the Point Elizabeth Company being of opinion, I believe, that it cannot afford to pay the rate claimed by the Railway Commissioners. As far as I know, there has not been any modification in the Railway Commissioners' demand of 1s. 3d.

3605. Are you aware that the original correspondence was with an independent Cobden and Point Elizabeth Railway Company, supported by Melbourne capital, not with those other coal companies? And I will ask you if it was not owing to the Government negotiating with one of the coal companies alone that the negotiations with the railway company which was distinct from these two coal companies fell through?—It is perfectly correct that the companies agreed, being both competitors for the grant, to make the railway—that they would form a sort of neutral company (composed, I believe, mostly of the shareholders of the two companies) to make the railway. They did form this company, which was, I dare say, supported by Melbourne capital, and it was duly inaugurated as a railway company, quite distinct from the other companies; but when the negotiations were entered into with the Railway Commissioners, and the charge demanded was regarded to be too heavy, the Point Elizabeth shareholders in the railway company refused to go on with it, saying that it could not pay, and that they preferred to let it rest for the time being. The joint railway company then ceased to exist, but the Cobden (Coal Creek) Company thereupon revived its original application to be permitted to make the railway. They said they wanted to go on with it at once, and that the other company should not be considered, as they did not want to go on; and the Minister consequently informed the Point Elizabeth Company, through its solicitor, Mr. Fell, of Nelson, that he had been again applied to by the Cobden (Coal Creek) Company to be allowed to make the railway, and that, unless the Point Elizabeth Company was still desirous of undertaking the work at once, he intended to give the right of doing it to the Cobden Company. The Point Elizabeth Company, I believe, thereupon said they were not inclined to construct the railway under present circumstances, but hoped that their interests would be duly protected in any authority given to the Cobden Company, and desiring to be allowed some voice in the fixing of the tariff rates that they would be subject to. They got an opportunity, accordingly, of seeing the rates proposed, and of expressing opinions on them, but did not express any opinion after receiving list of rates proposed. Finally the rates were authorised on what the Minister considered a fair basis.

3606. *Mr. Brown.*] I understand you to say that the terminal rate which has been fixed upon for these coal companies near the port is not adjusted to fair payment for the work to be done, but is a prohibitive rate, so as to prevent them rivalling the coal from the Brunner Mine—so as to create a profit equal to that on the Brunner Railway?—You are now speaking about a rate which is being demanded by the Railway Commissioners, not the tariff the Cobden Coal Company is authorised to levy?

3607. I am talking about the terminal charges which will be levied by the Railway Commissioners, who, I understand, will levy all wharf and railway charges in exactly the same way as they do in the case of the Brunner Mine?—They propose to charge 1s. 3d. to these people.

3608. And they do so, not because they do work equivalent to that amount per ton, but in order to keep up the profit?—Yes; to save a loss on the net revenue.

3609. Not for work done?—That is what I understand the position to be.

3610. You know where that revenue goes to?—Yes.

3611. Not to the colony?—No; to the Harbour Board.

3612. Is it anywhere called railway revenue?—Yes; in the railway returns.

3613. Why is it included in the railway returns, when the colony does not get it?—The Railway Commissioners, as they are working the railway, naturally want to show the whole of their transactions; and, as a matter of fact, the Colonial Treasurer receives the whole of the returns, but subsequently pays over so much of it as they are entitled to to the Harbour Board at Greymouth; but in the Railway Commissioners' statement of accounts of receipts and working-expenses it, of course, comes in, as they hold and work the railway.

3614. In that statement of working-expenses, showing the percentage of profit yielded by the railway on the Greymouth Section, are you aware whether the takings from the wharfage charges are included?—I think so.

3614A. They are included?—Yes. For the year ending March, 1889, the wharf rates were £2,553, and the tonnage dues £1,269; total, £3,822; out of total railway receipts, £25,085. These wharf and tonnage rates must form a large percentage of the net receipts (£8,338), as they do not, probably, involve proportional working-expenses. *Vide* statement of the Harbour Board's revenue, which I have already furnished to the Commission.

3615. Are you aware of the method of accounts under which the Railway Commissioners claim to make a profit of £6 12s. 6d. on the Greymouth Railway in 1888–89?—The cost of railway on which this is based is simply the expenditure (about £200,000) out of the Public Works Fund on the railway itself, including, of course, all its equipment. It does not include further expenditure since 1884 out of the Greymouth Harbour Board's funds to the extent of £50,000 or so, which was, I believe, mostly derived from surplus revenue of the railway, over and above what was required to pay interest on the harbour loan. The endowment of the Greymouth Harbour Board practically amounted to giving them a railway property which was intrinsically and commercially

worth £200,000, in order to enable them to borrow on the security of this property a sufficient amount to complete the harbour-works—namely, from £150,000 to £200,000—so that the colony continues to pay the interest on the £200,000, the cost of the Brunner Railway, while the net revenues of that railway go entirely to the Board, to be utilised—first, in paying interest on the further loan raised to construct the harbour-works; and, secondly, on construction-works when in excess of amount required for interest. Whatever profit is made on the Brunner Railway, therefore, goes to the locality in the shape of further works or for payment of interest on loans for harbour-works.

3616. *The Chairman.*] Are you aware that there is special provision made in the Greymouth Harbour Board Act for the collection of 3d. a ton from the shippers of coal, in order to create a sinking fund to meet the expenditure on the railway?—I know there is such a provision.

3617. Are you aware that it has never been collected?—Yes.

3618. Can you explain to the Commissioners why it has not been collected?—It was not wanted to pay interest, for one thing.

3619. I understand that the interest is never paid on the cost of the railway to the colony?—The threepenny rate would never go to the Government anyhow. If it had been levied it would have gone to the Harbour Board. The Act provides that after the raising of a certain sum of money there may be a further rate levied on the coal, the intention having been, as I understand it, to make up the interest if there was any deficit. But there has always been a surplus of interest. There has always been a net revenue from both Greymouth and Westport Railways more than was sufficient to pay interest on the loan raised by the Harbour Board.

3620. But not to pay interest on the expenditure by the colony?—As I understand it the Act of 1884 bodily vests the railway and all its proceeds in the Harbour Board, and the colony could never get anything out of it anyhow.

3621. I refer you to clause 12 of the Greymouth Harbour Act [handing Act to witness]. Can you explain how, if there was always sufficient revenue to pay interest on the special loan and to have a balance over, it was still unnecessary to collect the 3d. per ton from the shippers of coal, as required by that clause, for the repayment of the sums mentioned therein?—It has never been considered from that point of view, the railway having been vested in the Harbour Board as an endowment, to enable it to construct harbour-works, without, so far as I understood, any reservation in the endowment, the whole of the revenues coming from the railway were presumed to be at the disposal of the Board (and they have been so treated) for the construction of harbour-works only. Therefore, where the revenue from the railway has been in excess of the amount required to pay interest on the money borrowed for harbour-works, this surplus revenue has been used towards construction of harbour-works or the additions to the railway as the case required; and in the case of the Greymouth Harbour Board, the sum of about £50,000 surplus revenue has, I believe, been so utilised.

3622. But do you think the explanation you give touches the point in clause 12, because, besides the revenue under the Act, it is obvious that clause 12 indicates a special rate for a particular purpose? Do you consider that purpose has been carried out?—Well, as regards this 3d., it has never been collected.

3623. Is it not part of the 2s.?—No.

3624. If the 2s. produced more than is necessary, would it not be considered as being part of the 2s.?—The view the Government took of it, as I understood it, was this: that, although the Act provides for an extra 3d. being charged in the first place, it was not required for payment of interest; and, in the second place, the two-shilling rate was stated to be too high, and it was, I think, at any rate, agreed on all hands that the rate was probably high enough. Whatever was done at Greymouth would probably have had to be done at Westport. In the case of Greymouth, the rate already charged was far more than sufficient to pay interest on the Harbour Board loan, and the Government, as I understood it, therefore held that if they had put on this 3d., on the one hand, in order to conform to the Act, they would have had by *Gazette* notice to have lowered the railway charge correspondingly, which would have brought it to the same thing, and nothing would have been gained beyond a merely technical compliance with the Act.

3625. *Mr. Brown.*] When you say "interest on loan," do you mean on the £150,000 borrowed?—Yes.

3626. But the £150,000 borrowed does not represent the capital cost of the railway?—No. There is no relationship at all between the £150,000 borrowed for further harbour-works and the capital cost of the railway and original wharfs and harbour-works.

3627. You mean, then, that the net railway revenue was more than sufficient to pay interest on the £150,000 borrowed direct by the Harbour Board?—Yes, that is so.

3628. But not the interest on other loans—public loans—out of which the railway has been constructed?—Not in addition; it would pay interest on either, but not on both.

3629. Do you know how the railway rate of 2s. was arrived at?—I think it was originally fixed a very long time ago, before ever there was a railway, in connection with some of the earlier leases let by the Nelson Provincial Government.

3630. It appeared in some of the leases?—My impression was that it did appear in the leases, but that has been denied. However, there was, I think, a tacit understanding, if there was not a written one, when the leases were granted by the Nelson Provincial Government, that if a railway were made the rate to be charged should be 2s.; and in one at least of the leases it is provided that, if they did not use the railway, they would have to pay the rate of 2s. or 2s. 6d. It was rather implied than expressed that they should pay 2s., or 2s. 6d. if they did use the railway. The general rate for native coal is 2s. 6d. up to 12 miles, and then it goes on increasing 2d. a mile at first, and afterwards 1d., getting lower in comparison as it goes on. I understand the railways do fairly well off the shorter distances, but make very little on the longer distances.

3631. Is it usual for railways in the colonies to undertake anything of this process of delivery, or do they bring it into the station and leave the consignees to accept delivery?—Of coal, do you mean?

3632. Yes, of coal?—Well, I had better not attempt to give you any information on that, as I have no personal knowledge on the subject. My impression is that whenever coal has to be shipped they put it on board the vessel, but I would not like to say so positively.

3633. You have mentioned, I think, that the railway was vested in the Harbour Board for the purpose of security; and you mean by that, I presume, that the railway revenue, and not the railway itself, was vested?—I find by reference to the Act that it is the revenue only which is vested.

3634. I presume that the broad way to look at it would be that the expenditure on railway and harbour-works as a total being £550,000, and £150,000 having been borrowed by the Board as a special loan, the remaining £400,000 is expenditure out of public funds not bearing interest; and the surplus profit actually received is devoted to further expenditure on the completion of the harbour-works?—Yes; there has been practically an expenditure of about £340,000 out of the Public Works Fund, which has become an asset of the Board in the shape of railway and harbour-works; and the Board have added to this out of proceeds of endowment, chiefly railway revenue, to the extent of about £50,000 more, making, say, £390,000, or nearly £400,000, which has been obtained entirely out of colonial funds.

3635. *The Chairman.*] I would like to recall your attention to an estimate you made in 1871 [showing witness D.-6B., 1871] of the cost at the time when it was being discussed whether the railway to connect with the mines from the port should be made on the north or south side of the Grey River. You and Mr. Dobson jointly made an estimate of the cost?—That is no doubt rather a difficult thing to explain. I may say that that was the first time I had had anything to say to the construction of railways in New Zealand, although I had had a great deal of experience in railway-construction at Home. I do not know if you [to the Chairman] remember when you were with Mr. Blackett at Greymouth. On one occasion I expressed complete scepticism as to the possibility of building a railway at this place by either of the routes at less than, probably, from £8,000 to £10,000 a mile, which would have been from £60,000 to £80,000 for the railway alone, irrespective, of course, of wharves and all the rest of it. And the railway now has, I believe, cost the Government somwhere about £80,000; but that also includes sidings and various things that were not originally contemplated. There are three or four miles of steep siding and some exceptionally bad slipping ground. However, Mr. Blackett, who was then the Engineer-in-Chief, and at Greymouth, said that a railway such as I contemplated was quite out of the question, and that they could make railways now for infinitely less than they used to be made, and that this railway could be constructed at less than £4,000 a mile. As a matter of fact, I did not know any way of arriving at the cost of a railway of that description in the absence of proper plans, sections, and drawings of bridges and retaining walls, and quantities, and so on, except by a rough estimate of so much per mile; and my way of estimating it would have been to put it down at so much per mile, and I thought (judging by other railways which I had been engaged upon) that it would cost from £8,000 to £10,000 a mile. My avocation at that particular time was to represent the Westland side of the question as compared with the Nelson side, and I was deputed by the Westland Government to wait on the Commissioners who were to decide the route and give them every information possible, and, in fact, to do whatever they told me to do. But, seeing that Mr. Dobson, who was making the estimate on the other side, was going to estimate the work at what I regarded as ridiculously cheap rates, I requested Mr. Blackett (seeing that otherwise there was not the smallest prospect of our estimates being anywhere within reasonable comparison of one another) to be good enough to fix some scale for us to go upon. I said it was obvious the Westland side was the cheaper of the two, but if I were called upon to make an estimate according to my views, while Mr. Dobson went upon his views, they would be immensely dissimilar, because I had an idea of the cost which was entirely different to the idea he had. Well, Mr. Blackett did fix rates, largely on Mr. Dobson's representations, and I thought them altogether too low, and that there was no possibility of getting at a correct result that way; but I simply adopted those rates, and so we get at the £24,000. Shortly afterwards I made an estimate on my own account of the Hokitika to Greymouth Railway, which I estimated would probably cost £200,000 odd, and it is being made within that amount; but I adopted a very different method of getting at it to that adopted for the Brunner Railway. It will also be noticed that Mr. Blackett, in submitting these Brunner Railway estimates to the Government, is so convinced of the method adopted giving ample results, that he says he believes both the estimates are excessive. I do not know if you remember it, Sir James, but at the time I said most emphatically that I did not believe the thing could be done for anything near the money, and I remember saying that the cheapest railway I had ever known at Home—and I had been connected with several railways in Ireland—cost £6,000 a mile. I did not believe, therefore, that in country anything like so rough as the Brunner line a railway could be made under £8,000 to £10,000 a mile, and I think that, in the absence of proper details, taking so much a mile, by previous experience, is the only way of making an estimate of that description.

3636. Then the work, as completed, was not that contemplated in the estimate which you made in 1871?—The railway, as carried out, is doubtless of an entirely different character to that contemplated by Mr. Blackett, and I may say that nearly all the railways first projected under the Public Works Acts have been evidently carried out on an entirely different basis to that contemplated when the estimates for them were framed.

3637. *Mr. Moody.*] So that the estimate of £24,000 expenditure at Greymouth placed before the public at that time has, in consequence of the changes, extended into an expenditure of £550,000?—No; not through that, because there was no provision made for harbour-works in that estimate.

3638. It only extended from £24,000 to £80,000?—Yes, that is all.

3639. *The Chairman.*] It extended from £21,000 to £80,000—that is, the railway?—That £80,000 includes the wharf.

3640. No; nothing at all. It does not include the bridge at the Gorge nor any protective-works?—It is £21,000 to £80,000. Yes; that is quite probable. The expense of the railway was greatly increased by the erection of what is called the "Slip Bridge," which alone cost, I think, about £20,000, in order to cope with a continually sliding mass of semi-liquid clay that was encountered there. As regards the question of making estimates without details, I had a similar sort of thing to do a little while ago. There were four routes to be examined and decided upon, and the best one chosen, for the railway between Canterbury and the West Coast. I quite realised—partly from my memory of this Brunner Railway case—that, as there were four engineers (one on each route), each of whom would have ideas of his own as to railway-construction, and also possibly a little bias in favour of his own route, it would eventuate that unless we supplied them with a specification of the class of work to be provided for, and a complete schedule of prices, as a basis to go upon in making their estimates, we should possibly find that what was considered to be the cheapest line by the engineer having charge of the survey of it might in reality, if put on the same basis as the others, be the most expensive line; and the only possible way of obtaining estimates relatively correct, in view of the work to be done, was to furnish all the engineers engaged with a complete and exhaustive schedule of prices of the various classes of work to be adopted. This was actually carried out, as I will be happy to show to the Commissioners if they wish. In that case I went very carefully into the question, and, on the basis of what railway-work had cost all through New Zealand, I made out a scale of prices, not based on any theory, but on actual experience, and this was furnished to the engineers, who had to follow it. The consequence was that we got estimates which truly represented the relative cost of those lines. This is proved to be so by the fact that Mr. Bell, who surveyed the line from Springfield to Brunnerton, or the greater part of it, finds now that the estimate which he made upon the basis of those prices is working out in practice very close indeed—that is to say, he is able to make the line from point to point for the amount arrived at in his original estimate; whereas, on the other hand, the portion of the railway from Brunnerton to Belgrove which was surveyed and estimated in 1878 by a quite different process cannot be constructed for anything like the original estimate. I merely mention this to show that everything depends upon the basis originally adopted, and, as a matter of fact, I never believed in those Brunner estimates being more than a basis for comparing the two routes. I may also mention that Mr. Carruthers, the Engineer-in-Chief, in the following year, in making up his estimates from merely walking over the ground, more than doubled the estimate for the Greymouth line [*vide* Parliamentary Paper D.–No. 5A, 1872], and I quite concurred in that at the time. I should also say that I am absolutely convinced that whatever the railway on the south side has cost the railway on the north side would have cost at least as much if made on the same scale and up to the same standard.

3641. *Mr. Brown.*] What is your idea of the movement on foot just now for making a wharf at Point Elizabeth?—I am clearly of opinion that anything in the shape of a solid mole at Point Elizabeth would be sure to fail. In the same parliamentary paper which contains the original estimate for the Brunner Railway it will be seen that Sir James Hector and Mr. Blackett gave an opinion on the subject—I think it was in 1871—in which they say there would not be the smallest chance of a harbour there succeeding, in consequence of the travelling shingle. If the projectors were to adopt what I recommended to Mr. Smith and Mr. Hamilton, an open viaduct, leaving complete freedom for the shingle to travel through, they might succeed in loading ships there in ordinary weather; but, of course, an open viaduct would not give any shelter. I think there is an immense shingle travel at Point Elizabeth. I went to look at it a short time ago, for the first time, especially to satisfy myself on that question.

SATURDAY, 15TH NOVEMBER, 1890.

Mr. JAMES MCKERROW, F.R.A.S., examined.

3642. *The Chairman.*] You are Chief Commissioner of Railways to the colony, Mr. McKerrow?—Yes.

3643. The Commissioners are anxious to find out how the charge of 2s. made for haulage on the Greymouth–Brunner line is arrived at?—It is made up of the actual cost of hauling the coal down, and a terminal charge in respect of the very large expenditure that has been made at Greymouth on works—harbour improvements and sea-walls.

3644. Is the terminal charge also supposed to cover the expense of handling the coal?—Yes.

3645. And loading it?—Everything—cranage and all the wharf labour.

3646. What portion of that would be credited to the railway supposing, as in other places, that the wharf charges were separate from the railway charges?—To say "wharf charges" is scarcely a proper way of putting it. We call it a terminal charge. About 9d. for haulage and 1s. 3d. for the terminal charge.

3647. Is that in accordance with the scale in other parts of the colony, or the tariff that is published in the *Gazette?*—There is nothing else analagous in the colony, except on the Westport Railway, where the charges are assessed in the same manner.

3648. For instance, we find from a telegram we have received that the Green Island coal, hauled about the same distance is charged 2s., and there there were no terminal charges?—Yes; there is included in this a terminal charge in respect of the Dunedin Railway-station, which cost several hundred thousand pounds.

3649. I mean that portion of the terminal charge which meets the expense of handling the coal and shipping it. That is not, I understand, done by the railway at Dunedin?—Not at Dunedin,

but I would like to remark that as between the Greymouth and Green Island there is this very great distinction: that at Greymouth there is a large quantity to handle, while of the Green Island coal there is comparatively a small quantity. That enters very largely into the question of charges.

3650. *Mr. Brown.*] You have also the Kaitangata coming in?—Yes, but it is taken and delivered to the railway at Stirling, and hauled in and delivered over to the company's men in Dunedin; so that in that case there is no terminal handling to be paid for except just the haulage. But the terminal charges enters into the rates for all goods. I may remark, for the information of the Commission, that in Great Britain the railway clearing-house has a uniform charge of 9d. on all minerals as a terminal charge as between two companies. For instance, if the traffic originates with one company and terminates with the other the company that takes delivery receives not only its proportional haulage, but a fixed terminal charge of 9d. on every ton of coal in respect of the expenditure on stations and so forth.

3651. *The Chairman.*] And in the case of Greymouth, that terminal charge would be met by the 1s. 3d.?—Yes; that is about the proportion in a rough way, because it is really impossible to go minutely into it, as one charge merges into the other.

3652. We have ascertained that any profits arising from the charges made by the Railway Department do not really go to the Railway Department funds?—No.

3653. They really are collected only on behalf of the Greymouth Harbour Board?—They are collected, of course, in the usual way and handed over to the Treasury, and the ultimate destination is the Harbour Board.

3654. In the return made from time to time taken from the railway returns it appears that the net revenue yielded a rate of interest on the Greymouth line in 1888–89 of £6 12s. 6d.?—Yes, it was so that year, but last year it was down to £4 and some odd shillings. It fluctuates.

3655. Is that really rate of interest, or does it depend on the amount of the capital on which it is computed?—It is computed on the £199,121. I do not know how that sum is quite arrived at, but it is the initial cost of the railway, the rolling-stock, and, I believe, some portion of the terminus expenses at Greymouth — that is, the station-yard and so forth. [Table No. 4, I.–6, 1889.] But I would like to say this: that the whole expenditure at Greymouth is really in connection with the railway. It is simply to enable the railway to deliver goods into the ships that are to take away those goods; so that you must take the whole thing, looking at it from a colonial point of view. The whole amount of capital sunk as against the railway and the harbour is really something over half a million.

3656. We have ascertained that it is £550,000. Do you think that should be substituted for the £200,000 in this computation, reducing the rate of earning in the case of 1888 from £6 12s. 6d. to somewhere about 2 per cent.?—Not only that, but all the expenditure up to that date should be set against it. I do not think that as printed is the correct way of stating it.

3657. Although this officially comes from you, you follow the procedure of previous years, and do not, yourself, consider it a correct way of putting it?—No; it is misleading, when taken as the return on the capital invested by the colony.

3658. In the Greymouth Harbour Board Act there was provision made for a special rate?—Yes, 3d. a ton.

3659. Evidently with the view of paying off some moneys that had been expended in Greymouth before the passing of this Act?—Yes.

3660. Are you aware that has never been collected?—I am aware that it has never been collected.

3661. Can you explain the reason?—I cannot. It is purely a matter for the Government to bring into force, but they have not done so, and I do not know why.

3662. In whose department would it be? Would it not be part of the Greymouth Harbour Board's duty, as they are empowered under this Act?—It is really [referring to the Act] for the Government to put it into force.

3663. *Mr. Brown.*] The responsibility rests with the Governor?—With the Government really.

3664. *The Chairman.*] So far as you can say from this, there has really been a remission of 3d. a ton all this time on the coal?—Yes.

3665. And that would have been paid by the shippers?—Yes. That would really be by the coal-mine proprietors.

3666. We have had it evidence that arrangements are being made for opening up other mines than those at present being worked?—Yes.

3667. I may state—I do not know if you are aware of it—that the present mines are all held by one company?—Practically so.

3668. They are really; there is only one company?—Yes; the Greymouth Valley Coal Company.

3669. And that company is under contract with the Union Steamship Company to supply coal to no other shippers to New Zealand ports?—Yes.

3670. Then it might therefore be a matter of public importance that no undue obstacle should be thrown in the way of opening up other coal-mines?—Quite so.

3671. So as to give the public the benefit of competition?—Yes.

3672. Now, there was a *Gazette* notice published some time ago, I think issued from your office, defining the terms on which what is known as the Cobden and Coal Creek Coal Company could construct a railway and collect rates of any other coal company wishing to run over its lines?—Yes.

3673. I think the rate in that was 1s. 3d.?—That was the terminal charge. The company was to bring the coal over the Cobden Bridge, and deliver it on sidings on our line, and we were to take it forward to the wharf and ship it, for which we were to charge 1s. 3d. a ton. Of course, the

company expostulated, thinking it very high; but we think it extremely reasonable, on the ground I have already stated, of the enormous expenditure on this terminus, without which the company could not ship its coals at all. If we lowered the rate to that company we would have had to reduce the rate of 2s. from the Brunner Mine, and landed ourselves in something like this position: that there would be no money to meet the interest on this very heavy outlay, which would fall on the general taxpayer of the colony instead of upon the goods brought along the line.

3674. *Mr. Brown.*] Is it not now falling on the general taxpayer?—Partly it is. There is half a million, in round numbers, I think, at 5 per cent., and the whole gross revenue from the railway, wharfage, and tonnage is only £25,000.

3675. Gross?—Gross, yes; and out of that last year we expended, I think, speaking in round numbers, about £17,000 in working-expenses, leaving a margin of about £8,000 for interest.

3676. *The Chairman.*] The interest at the present time is £8,000, without counting the overdraft they have got?—Yes.

3677. *Mr. Brown.*] From the Harbour Board balance-sheets the net revenue has brought in apparently £10,000, £9,000, and £13,000?—I may remark that that includes, of course, the royalties. The Harbour Board also gets the royalties on the mines. It is collected by the Land Department.

3678. I am reading the figures now for the last five years back. In 1889 there was £11,500 net railway revenue; 1888, £9,100; 1887, £13,400; 1886, £9,000; 1885, £10,000?—Last year it was only a little over £8,000, and you can see how it fluctuates. Suppose you renew your rolling-stock.

3679. But that is not charged against capital?—No; but if we put a number of new wagons on the line that would be charged against capital. Such work, however, as the renewal of wagons, rails, and the permanent-way, &c., is charged in the working-expenses.

3680. *The Chairman.*] We understand that £10,000 has been spent from the revenue of the Harbour Board in new wagons?—I could not say exactly. We had a requisition for some rolling-stock some time ago.

3681. *Mr. Brown.*] As a matter of fact, the colonial revenue gets no benefit from the railway return at all?—It does not.

3682. It all goes into the Harbour Board?—Yes.

3683. You say that the terminal charge of 1s. 3d. is included in the 2s. charged on the Brunner coal, leaving 9d. for haulage?—Yes.

3684. You regard the haulage as about equivalent to 1¼d. a ton per mile?—Just about that, getting it in large quantities. I may mention another thing, too. There is considerable revenue derived from all coal-lines in taking back merchandise and passengers. There are a good many thousands yielded in this way on the Greymouth line alone. I might also say that while we were negotiating with the Point Elizabeth Company about the railway and the connection of our line we thought we had power—but subsequently, however, found we had not—to enter into a contract to do all the running for them. And, supposing we had the power to take up the running for them and run on their line, we were prepared to do the whole thing for 2s. a ton, the same as from Brunner, and hand back to the company 8d. for the use of their line, or, in other words, we should have done it for 1s. 4d. a ton.

3685. *The Chairman.*] That is the attitude the Commissioners took in the controversy, but you found you had not the power?—No; we were advised by the Law Officers that we had no power without a special Bill, so that the terminal charges would be 1s. 3d.

3686. *Mr. Brown.*] The terminal charges, 1s. 3d., *plus* haulage, 9d., would be 2s.?—Yes. We were to have all the rates from passengers and merchandise going up the line, which would have been considerable.

3687. All the incidental traffic would have been yours?—Yes; but we were to work the line. They were to put their capital in the loan-market. The estimate was £70,000, and we would have given them back 8d. per ton. They said in three years their output would have been 120,000 tons, and 8d. per ton all round for the use of the railway would have given them £4,000 a year, which is very nearly 6 per cent. on the £70,000, the estimated cost of the railway. But the company said that they wished to float the railway not as an adjunct to their mine, but as an independent enterprise, and unless they could offer a prospective profit of at least 8 per cent. they would not be able to raise the necessary capital independently.

3688. *The Chairman.*] Was there any other reason that weighed with the Commissioners in deciding to impose the terminal charge that they asked from the Cobden Coal Company?—Yes; we considered that there was only a certain output of coal required for New Zealand purposes, and that if the Point Elizabeth Company turned out 120,000 tons, as they assumed they would, there would be so much less from other mines; and, if they got an undue advantage in respect of terminal charge, it would not be made up from other mines, and therefore the loss would fall upon the colony.

3689. *Mr. Moody.*] Do you not think that there will be a progressive increase on the output of coal in New Zealand?—Yes, but not at a very rapid rate. The rate of increase principally depends, so far as Greymouth and Westport coal are concerned, on the direct steam service to England, and the consumption of gasworks, forges, and foundries.

3690. *The Chairman.*] Is there not a growing tendency to develop trade with San Francisco for gas purposes?—I think that would be comparatively small. I may inform you that it has been stated to the Commissioners several times that a large trade may be opened up with China, Valparaiso, and other foreign parts; but on looking into the matter we find these things are largely controlled by what is called the "course of trade." Unless you can have cargo coming to the colony from those places, you cannot expect large steamers to come down in ballast to take away coal; hence the most you could expect to send to China in the course of trade would be three or

four cargoes by large steamers per year, and that would be by the return tea and rice ships that come down.

3691. Are you aware that constructing-powers for the railway have been granted to the Coal Creek Company, and that it has been gazetted, with the rates of haulage, demurrage, &c.?—The Working Railways Department has nothing to do with construction; that belongs to the Public Works Department. But so far as the railway rates are concerned, the Railway Commissioners in October, 1889, in response to the Hon. the Minister for Public Works, furnished a schedule of maximum rates to be allowed to be levied on the Point Elizabeth Railway by the company. In July, 1890, the Public Works Department forwarded for the consideration of the Railway Commissioners a copy of the schedule of the maximum rates which the Cobden Railway and Coal Company proposed to levy on their railway. In reply it was pointed out that, as the Point Elizabeth and the Cobden Railways were practically the same line under different names, the Commissioners had nothing to add to the schedule of rates and charges recommended in the first instance in October, 1889. The schedule notified in the *New Zealand Gazette*, No. 44, 14th August, 1890, is, with one or two minor alterations, identical with that recommended by the Commissioners, and differs from that of the schedule proposed by or on behalf of the Cobden Railway and Coal Company in having fewer charges and a lower maximum in some classes.

3692. The particular point to which exception was taken was the charge for demurrage. The scale of demurrage charges seemed to be unsatisfactory, and in some way it would probably be unnecessarily unsatisfactory to the Coal Creek Company if they undertook the haulage of coal over their line for the Point Elizabeth Company, which is beyond their property?—I may remark to the Commission that demurrage is a very necessary provision, for this reason: that there is a great tendency on the part of coal-mine proprietors to use the wagons as storage.

3693. Can you give any explanation to the Commissioners of the anomalous position of the Wallsend leases, as it appears since the railway was opened the royalty has there ceased to be collected, or has been collected by the Railway Commissioners instead of by the Crown Lands Department?—It has not been collected by the Railway Commissioners, and, as I read the lease, it was not intended to be collected by any one. If you turn to Parliamentary Paper C.-3, Session II., 1884, Lease of Wallsend Coal-mine, you will find that on page 2 it is stated that 6d. per ton royalty is to be charged until the railway is completed. After completion a royalty of 2s. 6d. per ton for every ton which could be and is not carried by the railway is to be levied.

3694. You are not aware why the 6d. royalty was conceded? Do you consider the Wallsend Mine at the present time does not pay royalty?—It never has.

3695. Has any application been made by the Midland Railway about the proposal to take over the management or administration of the Greymouth-Brunner Railway?—Yes.

3696. *Mr. Moody.*] Your section of the railway from Brunnerton to Greymouth?—Not to the Railway Commissioners; but I understand some proposition has been made to the Government to that effect, and it was forwarded to the Commissioners for an expression of opinion, and we gave a very decided adverse decision upon it.

3697. *The Chairman.*] Do you remember what the terms were?—They were not divulged to us. It was simply put to us whether we thought it would be wise as a matter of policy, and we distinctly stated we thought it would not, on various grounds, such as, that it would carry with it the control of one of the principal harbours of the colony, that it would give a private company an undue preference in the matter of other coal companies that would develop the coal measures in the valley, and altogether we very strongly and very decidedly advised the Government not to entertain any such proposition.

3698. Will you supply us with a copy of your report in the matter?—Yes.

3699. Has any communication been made to the Railway Commissioners as to the course of action they will take when the Blackball coal-mining area comes to be developed?—No. We are aware that a lease has been issued, and I understand the mine is of a promising character; but we have no official communication from any one on the subject.

3700. It belongs to the Midland Railway Company?—There are terms arranged between the Midland Railway Company and the Commissioners as to running along the line generally, including everything.

3701. What are those terms?—They are set forth in Supplement to the *New Zealand Gazette* No. 40, 26th June, 1889, and are practically the regulations in force on the Government railways, with such modifications as are necessary for interchange of traffic. [Copy of *Gazette* herewith].

3702. The storage question has been a matter brought before the Commissioners a good deal. It has been proposed to store in several ways. One plan is by staiths such as are at Westport, but made not only delivery staiths, but larger-sized continuous staiths to hold coal; another, to provide more trucks and extra sidings that the trucks can stand on full; a third proposal is to make bins on the wharf, into which the coal can be discharged when there are no vessels in, and from which the coal could be discharged back again into the trucks, which could then be run in below the bins to be loaded in the ordinary way; while a fourth plan suggested is, instead of providing more trucks, to put on more hoppers, thereby reducing the cost, and to have a stage on which these full hoppers could remain, so as to keep a supply of coal in store waiting the arrival of vessels. All this would involve more or less additional work to the Railway Department; and that has been computed at about 4d. on the ton for the different handlings. How would you think it probable that the Railway Commissioners would deal with that? Would they undertake to do that without making any extra charge?—I think not.

3703. On whom do you think that charge should fall?—Certainly on those to whom the service was rendered.

3704. Then the charge would be made to those who had the coal stored?—Yes.

3705. Would it be a charge taking the form of demurrage?—It would be demurrage if the

wagons were used as stores. There are certain limits of time allowed within which wagons must be discharged, and after that there is a certain charge for demurrage.

3706. But if these appliances continued to be occupied by the coal in consequence of the defective bar, is that a matter for which the coal-shippers should be held responsible, as that would not be a case of demurrage where the detention is caused by the coal-owner?—Under certain circumstances, such as you mention, the department takes a discretionary view of the matter. We are very careful before we impose a demurrage charge.

3707. *Mr. Brown.*] Is there any demurrage charge imposed now at Greymouth?—Very rarely. It is more *in terrorem*. All over the railway system there is a great tendency to use wagons as stores, and we have this demurrage charge *in terrorem*, which we levy to check the evil.

3708. *The Chairman.*] How, in your opinion, should the prime cost of supply—say, these extra wagons, or wagon-bodies, or staiths—be met?—I may state that it has been suggested that it might be met in the same way and on the same terms as private sidings are provided.

3709. What are those terms?—The terms are these: The cost of building the private siding is borne by the party who wishes it, and he gets it for a term of years, at the end of which the siding becomes public property.

3710. *Mr. Moody.*] Has he to pay anything further during that time?—Not on coal or other produce generally; but if he is a merchant dealing he would be rented on a main station £50 a year, and on a little country station £25 a year.

3711. Beside the cost of construction?—Yes; we have to shunt wagons in, break up trains, and so forth.

3712. What is the opinion of the Railway Commissioners as to the efficiency of the rolling-stock on the Greymouth Section?—Our opinion is that we have more than is required for the proper working of the line. We have 257 wagons, and we consider, under the extreme fluctuation that has taken place of late, less would do—150 wagons well handled would be quite enough if there was storage. It has been proposed several times to have bins up at the mines. That is where they should be really.

3713. Your opinion is that the coal-owners should provide bins at the mine?—Yes.

3714. In whichever place the bins were put, who do you think should bear the expense of them?—I should think certainly the coal-owners. It is for their benefit and service. If they are erected at Greymouth no doubt the Harbour Board will be at the expense of them, and then there will be a charge put on against the outlay.

3715. *The Chairman.*] We have it in evidence that there has been some reduction made in the haulage charges at Westport?—A little. It amounts to ½d. in the ton; it is now 2s. 3d. a ton from the foot of the incline. Formerly it was 2s. 5d.; but there was a refund of 1½d. a ton given to the company for the use of their line. It is their line from the foot of the incline to Waimangaroa, and in recasting this tariff a short time ago we decided to simply charge 2s. 3d., and not give any refund.

3716. What distance is that?—Twelve miles from the foot of the incline to Westport; and I may just mention that our great heavy wagons are dragged up the incline and pulled and mauled about and get rapidly into disrepair, so that we charge as a wagon-rent 1½d. a ton on all coal that comes down.

3717. *Mr. Moody.*] Then that makes 2s. 4½d.?—Yes; but it is not a haulage charge. The wagons are not on our line at all when on the incline.

3718. It is really 2s. 4½d. a ton cost over the line?—Yes; that is so.

3719. *The Chairman.*] And there has been no other concession made?—None.

3720. *Mr. Moody.*] Of course, when an accident occurs at the incline the Westport Company are at the expense of repairs to your wagons?—Yes.

3721. And the railway beyond Waimangaroa belongs to the company?—Yes.

MONDAY, 17TH NOVEMBER, 1890.

Mr. ROBERT WILSON, C.E., examined.

3722. *The Chairman.*] What is your official position, Mr. Wilson?—Engineer-in-Chief and General Manager for the New Zealand Midland Railway Company.

3723. You are, perhaps, aware that one of the points which have been referred to this Commission is whether it is advisable for the Government to forego royalties, in certain cases, that are paid by lessees of coal-mines?—Yes.

3724. I understand you, acting for your company, have already let some coal-mine leases which have been taken over; perhaps you will explain the matter?—The position is this: Outside the coal-reserve area of Greymouth we have certain known coal properties which come to us, one particularly being the Blackball Coalfield, which is specially mentioned in our contract, and we shall take it over. It is not taken over by us yet, but reserved for us to take over as soon as we choose to do so. In view of the fact that another coal is underlying the lease handed over to us under the last grant, I have protested—whether rightly or wrongly, or whether I have any legal status, I do not know—against the royalty being withdrawn or abandoned, as it will entirely reduce the values of our property; because, if the Government were to allow people to mine on Government land free of royalty entirely we should not be able to get people to mine on our land and pay us a royalty. I argue, therefore, that it becomes a question really under the contract—and probably one which would have to be decided in the Courts—whether the Government, in the face of their having given us a land-grant that carries coal, and having hitherto charged a royalty, should either not continue to charge that royalty or give us additional land to make up for the loss they would cause us by removing the royalty. I entered this protest in the form of a letter to the Government, and so far the matter rests there.

3725. What is the date of it?—I cannot give you the exact date, but I think it was written about a fortnight ago. When I heard this Commission was sitting I thought it right that I should enter such a protest.

3726. Who was the letter addressed to?—The Minister for Public Works. Since then I have merely received an acknowledgment of the receipt of the letter.

3727. *Mr. Brown.*] The Blackball lease is situated on the land which is going to be granted to the Midland Company?—Yes; it comes in the reserve area, and no doubt we shall take it.

3728. Can you tell us anything of the terms of the Blackball lease from memory?—Speaking from memory, I may say that they have to make a certain minimum output of coal within a given number of years, and then an increased output year by year to ascertain the amount; but during the time they are not turning out coal they have to pay a rental of so much an acre, which merges into a royalty whenever they work.

3729. Who are the lessees?—I fancy they are the Blackball Coal Company.

3730. Have you a right to alter the terms of the lease?—We have the right to direct them. We gave them an undertaking when we took it over that we shall not enforce those terms.

3731. It is a provisional agreement?—Yes, they were to do certain works. I may say that the Government extended the time of the output clauses of this lease about a year ago, and at that time I protested against the Government doing so without consulting the company; but I believe they got over the difficulty by obtaining permission on referring the question to the manager out here, and he granted it. Whether he has power to do so or not is an open question.

3732. The output clauses have been extended?—They have been extended for a year. The annual dead-rent was, for the first two years, £16 per annum; next three years, £64 per annum; and for the remainder of the term, £160 per annum. There was a royalty of 6d. a ton on this.

3733. That is throughout the whole period?—Yes. The annual output required by lease was for the third year 5,000 tons, next four years 10,000 tons per annum, and for the remainder of the term 20,000 tons per annum. The same applies to the whole of the leases. They were (quoting from a return of coal leases in Parliamentary Paper I.–6, 1889) "originally held by Kilgour, Schofield, and Halcrow; transferred to the Blackball Coal Company in 1886. The output clauses of these leases were suspended for two years from the 1st January, 1888, the company having satisfied the Land Board that they were using efforts to raise the necessary capital to work the mines, and were also negotiating for the construction of the railway with the Midland Railway Company, who have the right to take over these leases by their contract."

3734. *The Chairman.*] And since then you have given a further extension of time?—Yes.

3735. Was it contemplated by the Midland Company to make a branch railway?—No; I have rather objected to it, because I consider it would be rather a doubtful outlay of capital for a company to spend probably as much as £38,000 to open up one coal-mine, which might collapse. I therefore advised the coal company to construct their own branch, and ultimately the Midland Railway Company might purchase it if they extended the line to the north-western side of the Grey River, but not otherwise, so that they would run in and join us at a point below the Nelson Creek River.

3736. I presume your company would work the coal company's line and take delivery of the coal at the mine?—Yes, we would work the line and take delivery of the coal at the screens. There is an absolute agreement between the Midland Railway Company and the coal company as to how they would work it.

3737. *Mr. Brown.*] Have you heard whether they have struck the coal?—I have heard that they have struck the coal 40ft. below their present heading, and it seems to show a dip. They have taken the strike of the coal, and it seems to be very uniform from the outcrops.

3738. *The Chairman.*] The anticipations of Mr. Lindop, the mining engineer, have been verified?—Yes; they have been apparently verified.

3739. *Mr. Brown.*] Will the coal be exported from Greymouth or be conveyed inland?—Of course, until we get the line through from east to west, you cannot say there would be any trade to speak of inland; but when we get our line open to Reefton there will, I anticipate, be considerable coal traffic from there down to the valley for household purposes. The coal at Reefton is excellent household coal, and I should prefer that to either the Blackball or the other coals.

3740. *The Chairman.* What arrangements have been made, if any, so far, for running the coal that comes to the Midland Railway over the Government section of line?—We have a certain scale of charges which have been fixed, and have all appeared in an issue of the *Gazette*. I cannot tell you from memory exactly what they are, but practically they are embodied in our running-powers over the Government lines. You will find there is a special issue of the *Gazette* which gives the arrangements with the company.

3741. On what date?—There was a new one issued about six weeks ago, which shows the agreement between the company and the Commissioners for working the through traffic, and local traffic on the company's lines. We have an arrangement with the Government under our contract for running-powers over the Government lines which connect with ours, and if the company were running traffic over the Government lines there would be certain through rates arranged—the Government would receive 60 per cent. of the total, and the company 40 per cent., and *vice versa;* if the Government traffic was coming off their line over the company's line the company would receive 60 per cent. for its mileage, and the Government 40 per cent. That is practically the arrangement which is in force. Of course, probably many of the detail rates might not work out, and there might be disagreement.

3742. Virtually, the Blackball Company would not send out coal until their own railway is connected?—They cannot.

3743. How far have they now to construct it?—About two miles and a half. The expensive part is the bridge over the Grey.

3744. They will have coal in the market before the railway is available for Reefton?—They could have coal in the market before Reefton is available if they set to work at once; but it will be a very near thing, because I hope, before the end of 1891, to have the line open and working to Reefton.

3745. *Mr. Moody.*] Have you made any movement towards taking over the working of the Greymouth-Brunner Railway?—We have made offers to the Government, and I have tried to meet them in every way.

3746. *The Chairman.*] Describe what your offers were?—The first offer was, speaking from memory, to take over the working of the line from Brunnerton to Greymouth, and to pay the Government in the first instance 35 per cent. of the gross receipts on the traffic, of course including the through as well as the local traffic, and we were then to expend money to complete the line from Greymouth to Hokitika. We were, of course, to have the advantages of working that line; but in the event of the Government purchasing the whole of the company's line they were to pay to the company the amount they expended in completing the Hokitika line, including the rolling-stock, and all the accessories. And they were also to pay for any improvements which the company might make on the Greymouth-Brunner line, such as widening, doubling, or anything like that. The company were to maintain the line, the cost of which would be included in the amount they retained from the gross rates. This, however, was not considered good enough; and I then offered to increase the percentage to 40 per cent. of the gross receipts, and asked for a limitation in the amount of the total to be paid to the Government—that is to say, the company were to give the Government 40 per cent. of the gross receipts until a certain sum, which I think was fixed at about £13,000 per annum, was paid. After the £13,000 was paid out of the earnings, anything over that amount was to be divided between the company and the Government. That was not considered good enough; and then, with a view of getting a final and definite offer from the Government, in the face of capital having been arranged for in England, so that the line could be opened and set to work at once, I said, if the Government would make me an offer, and state 45 per cent. as their basis, I would submit it to the consideration of the Board, but would not commit myself to accept such terms as these; but until now I have received no definite reply from them.

3747. *Mr. Brown.*] And there it stands?—Yes, there it stands.

3748. *Mr. Moody.*] Of course, if you took over that it would include the harbour-works?—No; because the objection was raised that we should have the export and import trade of that harbour. I said, to overcome that difficulty we would leave the control of the harbour in their hands, and simply deal with the traffic. When the proposition was made it was evident that there was not much to be got out of Hokitika; nor would there be much profit to the company in giving them 45 or even 40 per cent. of the gross receipts. And I foresee that when we get our line open to Reefton, if we have to exchange traffic at a little place like Brunnerton, we shall have no end of difficulties. At present, of course, the arrangement is that passengers have to get out of the Government train at Brunnerton, and get into our train at the same point to be conveyed on to Ahaura, and in coming back they have to get out at Brunnerton and wait perhaps twenty minutes, half an hour, or even an hour, because the other trains do not fit in. If, however, we were to work the line right through we should make arrangements by which our through traffic and passenger-traffic could be run distinct from the coal-traffic, dealing with the latter by special coal-trains. If that arrangement falls through, then, when we get to Reefton, we shall be compelled to insist upon the running-powers which we have under our contract, and arrange to run trains through to Greymouth. It would not, of course, pay the company to complete the line to Hokitika and have an intermediate section of Government line between us and the other piece; we could not think of it.

3749. *The Chairman.*] Have you secured, under your contract, power to run over the Government line?—We have secured power, under the contract, to the extent of running on all Government lines which connect with ours. The terms of the running-powers are: We have to give the Government 60 per cent. for the through traffic over their line and they give us 60 per cent. for the through traffic over our line.

3750. Can you go over any line?—Only those which connect with ours.

3751. Can you go to Hokitika, for instance?—No doubt we could.

3752. Is that by special arrangement? because that hardly connects with your line?—I think perhaps that is rather open. I know we can run over the Government line to the Ports of Lyttelton, Nelson, and Greymouth; but beyond that I am not quite certain. It may be doubtful if we could run over the line to Hokitika; but it is specified in the contract as to the ports.

3753. *Mr. Moody.*] If you had taken their line from Greymouth to Brunnerton, would you have also taken the rolling-stock?—Yes, everything.

3754. At valuation?—No; we should take the whole line as it stands, and pay the percentage of the gross receipts, which is practically what they are receiving. The whole point is the convenience of working, and there would be a profit to the company in taking it upon that head alone.

3755. *The Chairman.*] Have you considered, from a railway point of view, what would be the best place for coal storage? I mean for an extra supply of coal to be stored to meet the interruptions to the shipping?—If you had proper facilities by which you could store coal so as to be able to shoot it into your coal-trucks at the mine it would probably be more convenient for handling; but where you have no provision of that kind it would be far better to get your coal stored at the wharf. Take, for instance, the Brunner Mine. There you have no room for storage sidings or anything else, and there is no question in such a case that the only thing to do is to store it on the wharves.

3756. What is the distance over your line from Greymouth to Reefton?—It is about thirty-eight miles.

3757. For what rate would you be able to bring coal down?—It is set out in our schedules. It agrees, of course, with the mileage. I think the maximum charge is about 2s. a ton according

to our schedules, but as the distance increases there is a slight decrease in proportion. These schedules are in our contract, and the 2s. is the maximum charge we are allowed to make under that contract, but there is nothing to prevent us reducing the rates to meet the traffic. Of course if we found by reducing the rates to a smaller figure it would increase the traffic considerably it would pay the company no doubt to do so, as it pays the companies at Home on mineral traffic, as that traffic will not bear heavy rates, and at Home is ½d. and lower for long distances.

3758. Have you ever computed what the probable rate on coal would be?—Over our own line we ought to be able to bring it to Springfield for 8s. or 9s. a ton. I should think we ought to be able to deliver it in Lyttelton for that, unless we were restricted by certain charges over the Government line.

3759. You have no power to fix the running charges?—We cannot fix the Government charges, but only our own maximum charges, and in going over the Government line we shall be subject to the charges the Commissioners choose to make.

3760. *Mr. Brown.*] Can you tell us anything about terminal charges?—They include transhipping, all the expense of storing, handling, shunting, and various other things of that character, which is practically a covering charge for all the expense when you have done your haulage pure and simple.

3761. What proportion does it bear usually to the haulage?—Well, terminal charges are more or less fixed at so much per ton. From memory, I should say it varies from 1s. 6d. to 3s., according to the class of stuff.

3762. *Mr. Moody.*] But for minerals—coal, coke, &c.?—I cannot remember exactly what it is, but I do not think it is so heavy for minerals as for merchandise, because where you have facilities for distributing minerals, loading into carts, &c., the terminal charges are not so high.

3763. It would be under 1s. 6d. in that case?—I might say it would be probably under 1s. 6d.

3764. You cannot form an estimate?—From memory I cannot, but it is evidence easily obtained. Referring to the protest I made against the royalty being taken off the coal, I suggested to the Government in my letter that it would be far better if they could see their way to reduce their freights rather than to disturb the royalty—that it would be better to take off 6d. a ton from the freight than on the amount charged as royalty. I offered, if they could see their way to do that, and meet the companies wishes as to royalty, to lay the matter before the board of directors, and ask them to co-operate with the Government in the reduction on minerals from these particular mines.

3765. That is for freight?—Yes.

3766. *The Chairman.*] Do you know the kind of work done at Greymouth for the coal?—Yes; they have got good machinery.

3767. Do you consider, apart altogether from any calculation as to the cost of the appliances, that the sum of 1s. 3d. is a fair terminal charge for the work done?—With the special machinery which they have, apart from its cost, I should say the work ought to be done for considerably less. But you must take into consideration that they have a large expenditure in hydraulic machinery and in the maintenance of special plant.

3768. That is what I am asking you, what would it cost?—I should think it might possibly be done for less money than that, but I am not so conversant with the cost of maintaining machinery out here as at Home. At Home I should think it could be done for considerably less with special machinery like that.

3769. *Mr. Brown.*] What is the practice at Home as regards delivery and storage of minerals?—On a great many railways in England the coal-owner provides his own trucks, and takes delivery very often on his own private sidings, the coal and trucks being handed over to him and he avoiding demurrage charges; but on the Midland line the practice has been to endeavour to purchase private trucks as far as possible, and to avoid private owners, that being done more for the sake of keeping control of the stock, and to avoid anything like a break down or failure on the road.

3770. In a great many of the shipping places this machinery for shipping coal directly into the vessels is provided: is there any extra charge for that?—No, I think not. Where there is special plant of that kind the terminal cost is reduced, of course, because the work can be done cheaper with a well-designed plant than it can by the ordinary methods of hand-cranes, or any such arrangement.

3771. In cases of delay in the delivery into a vessel, through the bar, stress of weather, or anything of that sort, do the railway authorities continue to take custody of minerals without charge for demurrage?—In cases of that kind, where a man has private trucks, the whole of the responsibility rests with him, as he has the trucks on his own sidings.

3772. But in the case of a man who has no private sidings?—I cannot answer that definitely.

3773. *The Chairman.*] As to the schedule for the management of the railway which it is proposed to make for opening up other coal-mines at Greymouth, will you look at the scale of charges for demurrage [handing witness *Gazette*, 4th August, 1890, containing scale of charges] and see if they will have a restrictive operation, especially where more than one company is using the line?—I see that there is a charge here [referring to *Gazette*] "on trucks not unloaded by the consignees within four working-hours of their arrival, per truck 5s.;" and "on trucks not unloaded within eight working-hours of their arrival, per truck 10s.;" and then "for each additional eight working-hours, per truck 10s." These trucks carry 6 tons of coal, and I should say it would be a serious thing if there were demurrage charges like these; they are simply prohibitory.

3774. Suppose the company that is getting these rates will have a portion of the railway nearest to the port of shipment, and beyond them is another company going to construct a mile and a half of line in the event of any interchange of trucks and the use of common rolling-stock, will that operate against the farther company if it is put into operation?—If these demurrage rates are put into operation they will act with an equally deterrent effect on each company, because any company might be stuck up with coal.

APPENDIX.

SCHEDULE OF EXHIBITS.

1. Correspondence between the Government and Mr. Kennedy, and the Government and the Miners' Association, *re* reduction of royalty.
2. Special rules for the Grey Valley Coal Company's collieries.
3. Treasurer's statement of accounts of Greymouth Harbour Board, 1885–90.
4. Original pay-sheets of the Tyneside Mine, 1886–90.
5. Report of Committee of Accountants on gross output from Brunner, Wallsend, and Coal-pit Heath Mines, 1888.
9. Number of hands employed by Grey Valley Coal Company, and rates of pay.
10. Summary of wages paid in Wallsend, Coal-pit Heath, and Brunner Mines, 1890.
11. Classification of coal output in Grey Valley Coal Company's mines.
12. Wages earned by miners in Grey Valley mines.
13. Coals produced from Grey Valley mines, January to July, 1890.
14. Statement of highest and lowest earnings, 24th March to 28th June, 1890.
15. Cost of producing coke and fireclay goods.
16. Inventory and valuation of plant in Wallsend, Coal-pit Heath, Brunner, and Tyneside Mines.
17. Rules of Grey Valley Coal-miners' Association.
18. Report on Point Elizabeth coal leases.
19. Statement of wages paid to miners, 24th March to 28th June, 1890.
20. Return of amounts paid out of Accident Fund.
22. Particulars of traffic, revenue, and expenditure on Greymouth–Brunner Railway, year ending March, 1890.
23. Realisation and cost of coal and coke from January to March, 1890.
24. Notice to miners by Grey Valley Company, and conditions of employment.
25. Return of savings-bank balances at Brunnerton.
27. Correspondence *re* management of West Coast coal-harbours.
28. Return showing number and tonnage of steamers which loaded coal at Greymouth from December, 1886, to September, 1890.
29. List of days when bar at Greymouth has been unworkable.
31. Statement of Greymouth Harbour Board revenue, 1888, 1889, 1890.
33. Correspondence between Manager of Grey Valley Coal Company and Secretary of Miners' Association from February to September, 1890, *re* reduction of wages.
35. Extract from report of District Engineer, Greymouth, *re* endowment rate, 3d. a ton.
36. Working-expenses of storage.
36A. Particulars of leases on the Grey and Buller Coal Reserves.
37. Return showing output of coal from Brunner, Coal-pit Heath, and Wallsend Mines, August to December, 1888.
38. Return of number of days vessels in Greymouth from April, 1888, to October, 1890.
39. Copy of letter from Minister for Public Works to Chairman, Greymouth Harbour Board, 21st May, 1885, *re* expenditure of Harbour Board funds.
40. List of average daily wages paid by Westport Coal Company for six months.
41. Return showing cost of coal raised from Coalbrookdale Mine for fortnight ending 30th August, 1890.
42. Conditions of employment by the Westport Coal Company.
43. Particulars as to quality and value of Westport Coal Company's coal.
44. List showing average earnings of miners in Westport Coal Company's mines.
45. Copy of correspondence between Westport Coal Company and Miners' Association *re* restriction on output.
46. List of prices of provisions at stores in Denniston.
47. Table showing mean depth of water on Buller bar.
48. Abstracts from Brunner pay-sheet.
49. Pay-sheets at the Brunner, Wallsend, and Coal-pit Heath Mines.
50. Report of Mr. Bishop on Grey Valley coal-mines.
51. Report of Mr. Waters on Grey Valley coal-mines.
52. Copy of letter from Railway Commissioners to Minister for Public Works, 28th September, 1889, *re* proposal to lease Greymouth section of railway to New Zealand Midland Railway Company.

ABSTRACT OF CORRESPONDENCE, ETC.

I.—CORRESPONDENCE WITH GOVERNMENT WHICH LED TO THE APPOINTMENT OF THE COMMISSION.

The MANAGING DIRECTOR, Grey Valley Coal Company, to the Hon. the PREMIER.

Wellington, 16th July, 1890.

SIR,— *Proposed Stoppage Brunner Collieries.*

As the stoppage of these mines would throw out of employment upwards of five hundred workpeople at Brunnerton and Greymouth, and probably cause serious hindrances to trade all over the colony, I deem it my duty to bring the subject under your notice, especially as the

Government are directly concerned as lessors of the collieries, the royalty from which and the traffic of our minerals on the Brunner Railway yield a weekly revenue of about £500, in the hope that, having satisfied you our company have done all that can be expected of them, and much more, to keep the collieries working, you may see your way to suggest some mode of averting such a catastrophe as the stoppage would be. And here I would suggest a temporary suspension of the 6d. a ton. royalty, together with the Railway Commissioners allowing a reduction on the railage, as the proper source to meet in part the deficit, as during suspension there would be neither royalty nor railway receipts.

In proof of our company having done all that could be expected of any company to do, I beg to enclose extract from *Grey River Argus* of the 7th instant, giving a letter of mine on the subject. The £1,390 loss therein stated for four weeks will be vouched for by the Miners' Union Association accountants, now examining the company's books. This huge loss, upwards of £17,000 yearly, no one can expect the company to continue making: indeed, for myself, holding one-fourth of the company's share-capital, it is impossible for me to continue another week; and, having already extended the notice on two separate occasions to allow examination of company's accounts, though it could have been done in half that time, no object can be served by further extension.

As you will be unacquainted with the circumstances leading up to this difficulty, allow me to explain briefly. Prior to the 10th March last the mode of payment at Brunnerton was on the screened coal delivered by the miners. The same practice obtains throughout New South Wales and most part of Great Britain. Under that system the wages earned by the miners at our collieries run from 10s. to 18s. daily for about seven hours, or an average of 12s. 3d. However, for a long time previous to the change there were a few miners agitating for a change, resulting at date named of the union's ultimatum to our mine-manager, by which we had to accept the payment of 2s. 10d. gross weight or submit to a strike, the union's vote for which being almost unanimous. At the same time the union protested they did not seek an advance in pay, contending this 2s. 10d. was the equivalent of 4s. net, while we had proof of 2s. 3d. being the equivalent, and also that additional great loss would ensue, owing to there being no inducement in the gross-weight payment to miners sending out good coal, being paid as much for rubbish as for good coal. The past four months' experience of this change has unfortunately only too forcibly demonstrated the truth of our contention. The returns show a loss of 7½ per cent. of good marketable coal in favour of slack washed into the river. This alone is a loss of £4,000 yearly. The hewers, numbering 194 men, are making excessive pay—upwards of £4 weekly for less than forty hours' work; and some of them do, notwithstanding the restrictions put on them by the union, make upwards of £1 daily. This restriction of output, coupled with union interference with the mine-manager's duties, have added largely to all headings of cost at the collieries, culminating in the losses shown, instead of the small profit previously earned under the net-weight system. I observe by Press telegrams from Brunnerton it is alleged the losses are due to mismanagement and excess surface-labour, &c. The same management and labour continue since the 10th March as previously, with the extra labour employed in cleaning, screening, and loading coal necessitated by the change named, and the excessive staff is necessitated by the obligation to comply with the Mining Act and union rules. All this loss and trouble has been brought about by the agitation of a few men not content with payment under the net-weight system; indeed, it is safe to say their number does not exceed one hundred that will benefit by this change—a change which threatens to destroy the large capital sunk in the development of these coal-mines; to ruin what has hitherto been the best-paying railway in the colony, the cost of which, together with the Greymouth Harbour works, exceeds £400,000; and to throw out of employment upwards of four hundred and fifty men and boys at the collieries alone, in addition to the railway staff and labourers at Greymouth, and thus inflict on the whole district incalculable injury, for it is quite certain the greater part of the entire population at Greymouth and Brunnerton —some five thousand people—are depending on the continuance of this coal business.

The remedy we propose is a return to the former system of net-weight payment, or a reduction on the present rates on the gross weight equivalent to that previously paid on the net weight; or the company are willing to consider any proposal by the Miners' Union to work the collieries on any equitable co-operative basis, whereby the miners may earn a fair wage, while giving the capital invested therein a small interest after providing for permanent charges.

Saturday next being the last working-day for the collieries unless the reductions asked for are conceded, and from the attitude adopted by their Unions Association I confess I have great fears of them doing so, or, at all events, to such extent as will at all meet the difficulty.

In view of the whole circumstances, I trust the Government and the Railway Commissioners may be able to suggest a means to enable our company to keep the collieries working with some assurance of assistance to meet the difficulty, pending the result of negotiations should the notice for stoppage be postponed to a further date.

I have, &c.,
M. Kennedy,
Managing Director, Grey Valley Coal Company.

The Secretary to the Cabinet to M. Kennedy, Esq.

Sir,— Premier's Office, Wellington, 17th July, 1890.

I have been directed by the Hon. the Premier to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 16th instant, relative to the proposed stoppage of the Brunner collieries.

The Government was previously aware of the dispute between the miners and your company—upon the merits of which, however, it cannot offer an opinion—and, while regretting exceedingly that any such dispute should have arisen, I am to inform you that it is quite out of the power of the Government to assist the company by suspending the payment of the royalty from the collieries. The Railway Commissioners also, to whom your letter was referred, do not see their way to abate or reduce the railway-charges on the haulage of coal from Brunnerton to Greymouth.

I am to add that the only suggestion the Government can make is, that the matter in dispute should be referred to arbitration. I have, &c.,
ALEX. WILLIS.

The SECRETARY, Miners' Union, to the Hon. the MINISTER of MINES.

(Telegram.) Brunnerton, 4th August, 1890.

OWNERS taking material out Wallsend Mine; Coal-pit Heath filling with water. One hundred and fifty men would be out of employment even if the dispute were at once settled. According to the Company's statement, no reduction we can make will be sufficient to keep the industry going as before. Desire an inquiry be made at Brunnerton as to whether, in the present condition of the mines, temporary relief in haulage and royalty should be given, and the owners be forced to act up to conditions of leases.
S. ANDREW,
The Minister of Mines, Wellington. Secretary, Miners' Union.

The Hon. the MINISTER for PUBLIC WORKS to S. ANDREW, Esq.

(Telegram.) Wellington, 7th August, 1890.

YOUR telegram of 4th instant to hand. Matter does not appear to be one in which Government could interfere.
T. FERGUS.
S. Andrew, Esq., Secretary, Miners' Association, Brunnerton.

The ACTING-SECRETARY to the CABINET to Messrs. LOMAS and NEWTON.

GENTLEMEN,— Premier's Office, Wellington, 16th August, 1890.

With reference to the interview which you had with the Premier on the subject of suspending the royalty payable in respect of the Brunner and Coal-pit Heath Coal-mines, in order to enable those mines to be reopened, I have the honour to inform you that, after giving your application very careful consideration, the Government find they are unable to deal with it without legislation.

You are aware that the royalty forms a portion of the endowment of the Greymouth Harbour Board, and also that this matter must necessarily raise the question of royalties payable in respect of other mines. The Government therefore think that before any definite action would be taken by Parliament it would require full information on the subject.

While, therefore, recognising the urgency of the matter, and in view of the fact that even a temporary stoppage of the mines would be a serious disaster, possibly involving their abandonment through flooding, the Government believe that the question of the remission by them of the royalty, or any part of it, can only be satisfactorily settled after the fullest information is obtained, and time is given for its complete consideration.

The Government have therefore decided to appoint a Royal Commission to inquire and report as soon as practicable as to whether or not existing circumstances are such as to justify a remission of the whole or part of the royalty.

In the meantime, it being evident that this is all the Government are justified in doing, it is earnestly hoped that, pending the report of the Royal Commission, which will be obtained as early as possible, the miners and the company will, in the interests of the colony as well as their own interests, temporarily come to arrangements to continue working the mines pending a permanent settlement of the matter. I have, &c.,
AMELIUS M. SMITH,
Messrs. Lomas and Newton, Wellington. Acting-Secretary to Cabinet.

Messrs. LOMAS and NEWTON to the Hon. the PREMIER.

SIR,— Wellington, 16th August, 1890.

Your memo. of even date just to hand, and in reply we beg to say that we are at a loss to know how such a Commission can help us out of our present difficulty. We should, however, esteem it a favour if you would kindly give us some idea of the nature of this Commission.

If it is to inquire into the question of wages we shall most decidedly object to the Government interfering between us and our employers on these matters; at the same time, we have not the slightest objection to the fullest inquiry that may be arranged between us and the Grey Valley Coal Company, such inquiry to be based on the rate of wages paid to coal-miners on the West Coast. An answer to the above inquiries at your earliest opportunity will greatly oblige
Yours, &c.,
The Hon. the Premier. LOMAS and NEWTON.

Messrs. LOMAS and NEWTON to the Hon. the PREMIER.

SIR,— Wellington, 18th August, 1890.

We have no wish to bore you, but, as we have not received an answer to our communication of Saturday's date, our only reason for again troubling you is in consequence of us not being able to make any temporary arrangements for starting the mines again pending the result of the Royal Commission.

Sir, could you not by resolution of the House concede the royalty until the Commission have done their work, so as to start the mines again? Trusting you may help us in this matter, apologizing for troubling you again, we remain,
Yours, &c.,
The Hon. the Premier. LOMAS and NEWTON.

P.S.—We leave for home at noon to-morrow by the "Mawhera."

The Hon. the PREMIER to Messrs. LOMAS and NEWTON.

GENTLEMEN,— Premier's Office, Wellington, 18th August, 1890.

With reference to your letter of last Saturday evening, and to your query as to how a Royal Commission can help the miners out of this difficulty, I have the honour to state that from the nature of the difficulty which has arisen the Government are unable directly to render assistance. All they can do is, by a full inquiry into the whole subject, to ascertain whether the amount levied for royalty and freight by them is excessive, which can only be done in the manner already indicated to you.

The Government propose to appoint a Royal Commission in consequence of your request that the State should remit 6d. per ton of the 2s. 6d. now paid to the Government in royalty, and for freight by railway from the mines to the harbour.

This, as I have informed you, the Government can only do with the sanction of Parliament, and that sanction cannot be asked without at the same time affording Parliament the fullest information as to the position of matters at the mines, and the causes which have led to the present deplorable difficulty.

As I understand the question from representations made by you and the statements of the company, the position is this:—

In March of this year the miners, being dissatisfied with their position, determined to alter the mode and rate of payment for getting coal. After some negotiations the company accepted the miners' terms as a trial. The new rate continued from March till June, when the company declined to continue the work on the new terms, alleging that they were losing at the rate of about £250 per week, and offering to permit the examination of their books by an expert appointed by the miners to ascertain the truth or otherwise of their statement. This examination took place, and I understand it is now admitted by you that the work cannot continue at the present rates without serious loss to the company. It is therefore proposed by the miners to reduce their price for getting the coal by 2d. per ton, and to ask the Government to remit 6d. in royalty on railway freight, making 8d. in all, at which rate it is thought the company will be willing to resume work on certain conditions. This proposal, as you will see, opens up two very large questions all over the colony—namely, railway freight and royalties.

It is impossible for the Government to touch either question without the fullest knowledge of all the circumstances of the case, and the Government know of no way of obtaining such information except by a full inquiry on the spot by a Royal Commission.

The Commission will therefore, if appointed, certainly, amongst other things, have to inquire into the amount of wages earned by the miners, as well as the profits made by the company, and the rates of freight paid by land and sea, &c.

The Government have no intention in any way to interfere between the company and the miners, and they have only proposed to inquire into the matter when, as trustees of public property, they have been asked by yourselves, as representing the miners, to forego certain revenue belonging to the public. This, as I have said, it is impossible for them to do without strong reasons being shown to Parliament which would justify such action. I have, &c.,

Messrs. Lomas and Newton, Wellington. H. A. ATKINSON.

The MANAGING DIRECTOR, Grey Valley Coal Company, to the Hon. the PREMIER.

Wellington, 30th August, 1890.

SIR,— *Royalty, Brunner Coal Lease.*

I have the honour to bring under your notice that, under the provisions of this lease, the royalty for the first twenty-one years is fixed at 6d. per ton, and for a further forty-two years at 1s. per ton: the first period expires on the 31st December, 1894, and I respectfully submit that there is no prospect of the company being able to pay the increased royalty when the time arrives. I bring this under your notice now for the following reasons:—

1. As there is a probability of some legislation taking place on the question of royalty and railage affecting the Greymouth mines, it appears to me the most fitting time to ask that the whole subject may be reviewed.

2. The prospect of the company being able to work the mines advantageously, even at the reduced railage or royalty as suggested, is not assured. This has been brought about by the labour difficulty, and the numerous faults and inferior character of the coal met with over a large area of the field already opened up.

3. Since the formation of this company, two years ago, the collieries being then fairly well equipped with machinery and plant, we have spent upwards of £11,000 in proving faults and supplementing the machinery and plant, and it is no exaggeration to assume a similar proportion of expenditure must be continued if these mines are to be kept open and comply with the output conditions of the leases; and with the knowledge of the 6d. increase within four years there is no prospect or encouragement to the company to continue so large an outlay: for instance, to work the best portion of the Brunner lease, say 500 acres remaining untouched, it becomes necessary to provide pumping-power, either electricity or compressed air, as the circumstances, by reason of the numerous faults met with, render steam impracticable for the purpose. We have now the electric power in Wellington. The first instalment only is a trial. This has cost £2,000, and probably another £1,000 before completed; and we are standing at another fault in the mine—the cost to "prove" is estimated at £6,000. I therefore submit it is the interest of all concerned to offer the company encouragement to continue their efforts to keep these mines in an efficient working condition, otherwise there will be no alternative but liquidating, even at the loss of the present plant on the collieries, or so much of it as cannot be removed and sold.

I may be asked what is the prospect of these collieries being worked if the concessions asked are conceded. I reply that if the railage and royalty combined were fixed at 2s. per ton the company could pay ordinary surface-hands 9s. a day, best surface-hands and labour in mines 10s. a day, and miners 1s. 6d. per hour working at the face; and with this the best we could expect would be to make a small interest on capital.

I may further add that the conditions of work at Greymouth render it improbable that over four days average weekly, or 200 days in the year, will be made by the miners. This arises by reason of all the trade being export, and consequently the uncertainty of steamers' arrival, through bad weather, heavy sea on the bar detaining them sometimes outside and sometimes inside, floods in the river, &c. Then there is official holidays and holidays of their own making; men are off betimes through sickness, &c.; Saturday at best is only a half-day; time is lost through cabling for places several times yearly; there is only storage for two days' work, after which miners are idle till steamers arrive; and the company, taking all this into account, must keep sufficient hands to provide their weekly output in four days; occasionally there is a slackness of orders or trade, and the men are idle in consequence—this applies particularly to the summer months. I have known, before the formation of this present company, the miners in Wallsend and Coal-pit Heath to only make two to three days in a fortnightly pay, and it occurred with this company almost as bad the first summer, eighteen months ago. All this keeps the average down, as I have stated, to at best four days weekly. Then, the miners have to provide from their earnings powder, fuse, oil for lights or candles, their own working-tools; the company keep a blacksmith to sharpen or point their picks. But I believe 6d. a day, or 2s. to 2s. 6d. per week, would have to be allowed for these costs, including the cost of their check-weighman in coal-weighing, and it is inclusive of costs of the Medical and Accident Association, which they maintain very creditably.

I have, &c.,

MARTIN KENNEDY,
Managing Director.

The Hon. the Premier, Wellington.

P.S.—I may add that it would be manifestly unfair that our company could pay 6d. per ton, amounting to thousands of pounds extra, over other competent companies now in the market, and the new fields being more cheaply worked than the old ones.—M.K.

II.—CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN THE A.M.L. ASSOCIATION AND THE GREY VALLEY COAL COMPANY.

[Part of this correspondence appears in Mr. Bishop's evidence—see question No. 564.]

The Grey Valley Coal Company (Limited),
Brunnerton, Greymouth, 24th June, 1890.

DEAR SIR,—

I am requested to consult with your Association as to when it will suit them to meet Mr. Kennedy, who will be here in a day or two.

There are several questions affecting the working of the mines which may be brought up for discussion, and which, if treated in a reasonable way, may tend to prosperity of all concerned; otherwise the state of matters is serious.

Hoping to be favoured with your early reply,

I am, &c.,
JAMES BISHOP.

Mr. Samuel Andrew, Secretary, Miners' Association.

The Grey Valley Coal Company (Limited),
Brunnerton, Greymouth, 27th June, 1890.

DEAR SIR,—

Referring to the communication made to you by Mr. Bishop, and also the interview between your delegates and myself and Mr. Bishop yesterday evening: As requested, I now beg to enclose you cost-sheets for the fortnights ending the 3rd and the 17th May, showing a loss of £573 and £645 respectively, or equal to 2s. a ton, to which must be added 6d. per ton for depreciation of plant, making a total loss of 2s. 6d. per ton on all coal and slack sold for that period, and of course being the whole marketable coal sent from the mine during that period, save the quantity of slack washed into the river, for which we could not find a market.

It will be evident to your Association that this company cannot continue to work the mines at so great a loss. In endeavouring to find a solution of this difficulty, the company readily admit that the miners and others in their employ are entitled to fair wages for their labour, and to content themselves with a very limited income for their capital.

This condition cannot be fulfilled while the Miners' Union maintain a rate of pay outrageously extravagant and unfair to the company, a rate at which, despite fines and threats, many men continue to make 15s. and 20s. per day, and some have avowed they could make 30s.

I have fully considered the whole subject with Mr. Bishop, the manager, and we are quite satisfied the prices realised for the sale of the coal are sufficient to pay a fair cost and interest on capital.

But it is not only the hewing-price that is in excess, but also the trucking and several of the other headings on the cost-sheet have increased, apparently in sympathy with the hewing-price. Indeed, this condition was realised up to the date of the recent change from the payment by net weight to that of gross weight, and, as the conditions of the collieries and the selling-rates have not materially altered since, we ask you to revert to that system again, which we regard as the only practicable solution for working these collieries, for the figures we submit fully bear out our contention that under the gross-weight system there is no incentive to miners to get good coal: thus, during the first five fortnightly pays of the present year the quantity of coal sent to bank was 22,420 tons, which yielded 62¼ per cent. screened coal; while the coal since the 10th March, the date of the change, only gives 55 per cent., representing a loss of 6d. a ton on that head alone, besides giving us an excess of 500 tons of slack weekly, which is washed into the river for want of sale, and equals another loss of 6d. to 1s. per ton.

If you ask us to cover the deficiency by increased selling-rates, I reply that it would require full 2s. per ton on sales to do so, and it is quite impracticable in the face of the price New South Wales coal is being sold at and the favour Westport coal commands.

Believing there is much misconception in the public mind as to the prices we realise, it may be some information to you to know the actual facts: we therefore attach a schedule giving them in detail, and add that these rates have not been changed for upwards of two years, and are available to all coal-dealers, steam-users, and manufacturers.

As the loss now being incurred by the company on the whole mine's output is so serious, we request the earliest possible reply to this communication; and, as further proof of the company's wish to work harmoniously with your Association, we are quite willing to work the collieries on any equitable co-operative basis that you may suggest.

We suggest you take the collieries on lease, or take a contract to deliver us the coal at whole cost at the screens, owners reserving in either case efficient control and supervision, and this leasing or contract may be for a lengthened term of years in either case, or in any other alternative which your Association may suggest. I can promise you the hearty co-operation of the company to make the result a financial success.

Yours, &c.,

The Secretary, Miners' Association. M. Kennedy, Managing Director.

Coal Sales Price.

Place.	Screened.	Unscreened.	Small.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
F.o.b. at Greymouth ... ... per ton	0 12 7	0 10 6	0 6 6
C.f.c. at—			
Wellington ... . "	1 0 0	0 18 0	0 14 0
Lyttelton ... ... "	1 1 0	0 19 0	0 15 0
Dunedin ... ... "	1 2 0	1 0 0	0 16 0

N.B.—Retail dealers at Wellington require an advance of from 10s. to 12s. a ton on cost price to cover all charges and make a living at the business.

We pay freight as follows:—

	s. d.
Greymouth to Wellington	7 0
Greymouth to Lyttelton	8 0
Greymouth to Dunedin	9 0
To Timaru and Oamaru	9 6

III.—CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN THE A.M.L. ASSOCIATION, WESTPORT, AND THE WESTPORT COAL COMPANY.

Dear Sir,— The Westport Coal Company (Limited), Westport, 16th June, 1890.

I want a deputation to-night at 7 o'clock; kindly arrange for some one to take your place for a short time. I find your restriction applied to-day reduces our output by $77\frac{10}{20}$ tons per day. This would take sixteen additional hewers to make up the output to what it was before your enforced restriction.

I have received a communication from Mr. Waters on the subject. You have certainly treated us in a harsh and scornful manner. You did not even deem it necessary to inform us of your intention until I asked if the thing was true. I am perfectly satisfied the company will not stand this, let the consequence be what it may.

Yours, &c.,

Thomas Brown,

Mr. John Lomas, President, Miners' Association, Denniston. Mine-manager.

Gentlemen,— The Westport Coal Company (Limited), Westport, 17th June, 1890.

Permit me to ask you to reconsider the decision you arrived at on Friday night—namely, to restrict each man's output to nine tubs per shift. I find, after going carefully through the work-books, that it will make a difference to our daily output of 77 tons 8cwt., or 464 tons 8cwt. per week. This is a very serious matter to the company. The trade has increased beyond our capabilities now; of course, this is largely owing to such a number of men lying idle; but you will admit that it is not an easy matter to obtain the services of seventeen coal-miners without at least fair notice. The restriction, if enforced, will necessitate the immediate employment of the above number—namely, seventeen men—to produce the same quantity of coal that is now being produced by you without restriction. As a matter of fact, the wages for the extra men have to be deducted from the amount now paid to yourselves. It has always been my opinion that the fewer men were about the place the better it would be for those who were employed on the work. The trade is not steady all the year round; hence the necessity for both workmen and employers to take advantage of good trade when obtainable. If restricting those who are able to fill more than nine tubs would enable those who fill less to fill the nine there could not be much objection; but that result cannot be brought about by the process named. I ask you therefore to allow the work to go on as heretofore. It would be both cruel and unjust to the company to reduce their output by at least one full day per fortnight without giving sufficient time to have the case considered in all its bearings.

I am, &c.,

Thomas Brown,

To the miners' meeting. Mine-manager.

DEAR SIR,— Denniston, 22nd July, 1890.

According to instructions that we have received from the secretary of the A.M.L. Association *re* the increase of more miners and the increase of the output, this is to request you not to employ any more miners pending the Brunner dispute; and we will take the average number of days we have worked per week for the last six months, and also the average tonnage that has come out of the mine per week for the last six months, and we intend to work accordingly to what the average gives, pending the Brunner dispute, as we will call a general meeting of our members for to-morrow at 11 o'clock a.m., and if you have any communication to put before them on this question it will receive careful consideration.

PS.—We do not intend to take any action in reference to you re-employing the men that you have discharged within the last two weeks.

I have, &c.,
W. TORRANCE,
Miners' Secretary.

Thomas Brown, Esq., Manager.

DEAR SIR,— The Westport Coal Company (Limited), Westport, 23rd July, 1890.

In reference to your letter of yesterday's date, will you kindly defer consideration of limiting output until to-morrow.

Yours, &c.,
THOMAS BROWN,
Mine-manager.

The Secretary, Miners' Association, Denniston.

DEAR SIR,— The Westport Coal Company (Limited), Denniston, 23rd July, 1890.

In reply to yours of this date in reference to limiting the output: We do not intend to limit it, but we must take our instructions from the executive of the A.M.L. Association, and I fail to see where we would be putting a limit on by giving you the average that you have had for the previous six months. But I am of the opinion that the committee would consider the days that the mine has been idle through breakages in connection with the works. But an average we are compelled to carry out during the Brunner dispute, and as soon as we have the average number of days and tons per week drawn out we will supply you with a copy of the same. I may also inform you that there was a resolution passed, at a general meeting on the 5th July, to the following effect: that when a member dies the members of this Association will remain idle on the day of his funeral: so James Hazeldine's funeral will take place on Friday, the 25th instant.

Yours, &c.,
W. TORRANCE,
Miners' Secretary.

Thomas Brown, Esq., Manager, Wéstport Coal Company.

DEAR SIR,— The Westport Coal Company (Limited), Westport, 26th July, 1890.

Referring to the question of your Association restricting the output to the same as last six months, I beg to submit a copy of reply from the company's managing engineer.

You may not be aware that one of your committeemen—viz., John Allen—went into the mine, after your last meeting, and instructed Mr. Harris, the overman, that he was not to put any person on to fill loose coal in the mine. Kindly intimate to me, at your earliest, whether he was acting from instructions issued by your Association or otherwise. Unless this resolution be rescinded to-day I will give orders to the weighman to book the actual weight only that passes over the weighbridge, and will not pay the average for boxes that may have been tipped up.

I have, &c.,
THOMAS BROWN,
Mine-manager.

The Secretary, Miners' Association, Denniston.

(Enclosure.)

DEAR SIR,— The Westport Coal Company (Limited), Westport, 25th July, 1890.

In reply to your communication of this day, I beg of you to inform the Denniston Miners' Association that—

1. The company cannot submit to any reduction of the output, or to waive their right to engage more hands if required, as during the winter months the demand is always better than in summer;

2. The company cannot relinquish the right to fill loose coal in the mine, and cannot pay the same for filling as for coal that needs preparation;

3. Any person interfering with the Mine-manager's instructions, or giving orders to workmen on the works without his instructions, will be liable to instant dismissal, be the consequences what they may.

I have, &c.,
THOMAS J. WATERS,
Managing Engineer.

The Mine-manager, Coalbrookdale.

DEAR SIR,— Denniston, 29th July, 1890.

I here forward to you the average that has been taken for the last six months; and, according to this, the miners will only require to work nine days per fortnight, but owing to us only working eight shifts last week we will work ten shifts this week. So this is to notify you that the miners will be idle on Saturday, 2nd August, if the Brunner dispute remains unsettled to this date.

I have, &c.,
W. TORRANCE,
Secretary.

Thomas Brown, Esq., Manager.

[AVERAGE OUTPUT, ETC.]

Pay ending	Tons	cwt.	qr.	Shifts.
Feb. 1, 1890	7,094	3	3	16
" 15, "	9,200	10	0	21
March 1, "	8,618	8	2	20
" 15, "	9,789	3	2	21
" 29, "	7,807	14	2	17
April 12, "	8,217	2	0	19
" 26, "	6,972	18	1	16
May 10, "	6,691	5	1	15
" 24, "	7,733	7	0	17
June 7, "	8,574	9	3	22
" 21, "	8,605	5	2	20
July 5, "	6,596	19	3	15
" 19, "	6,624	13	1	15
Total tons	102,526	1	0	234
Tons per week	3,943	6	0	9 shifts per week.
Number of tons that came out last week	3,541	1	2	8

W. T.

DEAR SIR,— Denniston, 4th August, 1890.

I have been instructed to acquaint you that we desire to declare our idle day on Thursday, the 7th instant, if it will not inconvenience the company in any manner, as it would suit us to have it on that day owing to pressing business that we have to get done by a general meeting.

If that will suit you, please let me know by to-morrow morning, and you will oblige,

Yours, &c.,
W. TORRANCE,
Secretary.

Thomas Brown, Esq., Manager, Westport Coal Company.

DEAR SIR,— The Westport Coal Company (Limited), Westport, 5th August, 1890.

In reply to your note *re* idle day on Thursday, I fear it will inconvenience us to a vary great extent. The new boiler is not steaming satisfactorily, and our output, in consequence, is very small: in fact, unless an improvement is effected we shall not be able to get the average quantity this week by working full. Another reason I wish to urge for taking the idle time at the end of the week is to get a larger boiler and engine placed at Coalbrookdale. The least stoppage there cannot be made up, the present engine being too small. The idle time, and Sunday, would enable us to do this. Kindly give this favourable consideration,—it will prove beneficial to all,—and oblige,

Yours, &c.,
THOMAS BROWN,
Mine-manager.

The Secretary, Miners' Association, Denniston.

DEAR SIR,— Denniston, 12th August, 1890.

This is to notify the management of the Westport Coal Company that Thursday, the 14th instant, will be an idle day for both shifts.

I have, &c.,
W. TORRANCE,
Miners' Secretary.

Thomas Brown, Esq., Manager.

DEAR SIR,— The Westport Coal Company (Limited), Westport, 20th August, 1890.

With the present output the company is little more than paying expenses, while Newcastle coal is being imported in large quantities, thus damaging our present trade and laying a foundation for worse times in the immediate future. In Newcastle the miners are only working about half time, so they certainly will not refuse to supply the New Zealand market.

I would therefore ask you to lay the question of taking off the restriction both per man and per week before the miners, as their present action can in no way help to settle the Greymouth dispute, for no person, however rich, can carry on a business that loses him £12,000 a year.

I have, &c.,
THOMAS J. WATERS.

Thomas Brown, Esq., Mine-manager, Coalbrookdale.

DEAR SIR,— Denniston, 25th August, 1890.

Owing to negotiations going on at the present time with a view to a settlement of the Brunner dispute, I beg to inform you that the committee of this Association postpone giving a reply to Mr. Waters's letters of the 20th instant, in reference to restriction per week, for a few days. And we are surprised at you asking us to consider restriction per man, when you know well that you are not giving the limit that was decided upon. Hence it will be time to consider this when you are able to supply more than the number of boxes per man that the constitution restricted, but not otherwise.

I have, &c.,
W. TORRANCE,
Miners' Secretary.

Thomas Brown, Esq., Manager.

DEAR SIR,— Denniston, 28th August, 1890.

We regret to inform you that we have this day received instructions from the Maritime Council to cease work at once, owing to the action of the Union S.S. Company with their employés; but we have decided to work the front shift to-morrow. So this is to notify you that work will cease to-morrow, at 2 o'clock, until further notice.

I have, &c.,
W. TORRANCE,
Miners' Secretary.

Thomas Brown, Esq., Mine-manager.

DEAR SIR,— Denniston, 28th August, 1890.

As we have no quarrel with the Westport Coal Company, it is our opinion that you are at liberty to employ any member of this union that you require, so long as they are not producing coal to supply the Union Steamship Company's boats.

I have, &c.,
W. TORRANCE,
Miners' Secretary.

Thomas Brown, Esq., Mine-manager.

DEAR SIR,— Denniston, 1st September, 1890.

I am instructed to inform you that we are willing to supply any trade that your company may require, providing that you give a written pledge that the coals that we produce will not be given, either directly or indirectly, to the Union Company. A reply will oblige.

Yours, &c.,
W. TORRANCE,
Miners' Secretary.

Thomas Brown, Esq., Mine-manager.

DEAR SIR,— The Westport Coal Company (Limited), Westport, 3rd September, 1890.

In reply to yours of the 1st instant, I beg to state that our directors wire me they cannot entertain the proposal contained therein.

Yours, &c.,
THOMAS BROWN,
Mine-manager.

The Secretary, Miners' Association, Denniston.

EXTRACT from "The Westland and Nelson Coalfields Administration Act, 1877."

4. The pieces of land described in the First, Second, and Fourth Schedules hereto are hereby declared to be Crown lands; and the pieces of land described in the Third Schedule hereto shall, on the passing of this Act, cease to be subject to "The Public Reserves Act, 1854," and to the trusts and purposes under and subject to which the same were Crown-granted, and shall become and be Crown lands.

5. The piece of land described in the First Schedule hereto as the Westland-Grey Coal Reserve, and the purchase and other moneys arising from the sale, lease, occupation, or disposal thereof, and the rents, royalties, fees, and other moneys arising therefrom, shall be and be deemed to have been, as and from the sixteenth day of November, one thousand eight hundred and seventy-one, a security for the sum of one hundred and fourteen thousand four hundred and thirty-nine pounds one shilling, and of such further sums of money as have been, since the thirty-first day of December, one thousand eight hundred and seventy-six, and shall from time to time hereafter be, expended in the construction of the Greymouth–Brunner Coalfield Railway, together with interest on the said sum of one hundred and fourteen thousand four hundred and thirty-nine pounds one shilling from the thirty-first day of December, one thousand eight hundred and seventy-six, and upon such further sums of money from the respective times of expending the same, at the rate of five per centum per annum, chargeable half-yearly, until such moneys and interest, minus all credits being first given for any profits over and above the working-expenses and other charges of said railway, shall be paid and satisfied.

6. The piece of land described in the Second Schedule hereto as the Nelson-Grey Coal Reserve, and the purchase and other moneys arising from the sale, lease, occupation, or disposal thereof, and the rents, royalties, fees, and other moneys arising therefrom, shall be and be deemed to have been, as and from the sixteenth day of November, one thousand eight hundred and seventy-one, a security for the sum of twenty-seven thousand two hundred pounds, expended in the construction of the Greymouth–Brunner Coalfield Railway, together with interest on the said sum of twenty-seven thousand two hundred pounds, from the thirty-first day of December, one thousand eight hundred and seventy-six, at the rate of five per centum per annum, chargeable half-yearly, until such moneys and interest, minus all credits being first given for any profits over and above the working-expenses and other charges of said railway, shall be paid and satisfied.

8. [How land in the First, Second, and Third Schedules is to be dealt with.]

9. [Extension, amalgamation, and assignment of coal-mining leases.]

10. [Land Board, with consent of Minister, may allow surrender or extension of lease.]

12. All rents, royalties, fees, and other moneys arising from any sale, lease, occupation, or disposal of the lands described in the First and Second Schedules hereto shall be paid into the Public Account to the credit of a separate account intituled "The Greymouth–Brunner Coalfield Railway Account," and all moneys so paid shall from time to time be applied in or towards payment first of the interest and next in payment of the other moneys mentioned in sections five and six of this Act. . . . .

13. When by such means such interest and other moneys shall be fully paid, the said pieces of land shall be freed and discharged therefrom, and thereafter they shall respectively be and are hereby dedicated in the manner following, that is to say,—

(1.) The rents, royalties, fees, moneys, and proceeds derivable from the Westland-Grey Coal Reserve, described in the First Schedule hereto, to be an endowment for the Harbour Board at the time being for the improvement of the Port of Greymouth; but, in the event of there being no such Board, the said rents, royalties, fees, moneys, and proceeds shall form portion of Her Majesty's land revenue of the colony, and shall be paid into the Public Account to the credit of the Land Fund.

(2.) The rents, royalties, fees, moneys, and proceeds derivable from the Nelson-Grey Coal Reserve, described in the Second Schedule hereto, to be also an endowment for the Harbour Board at the time being for the improvement of the Port of Greymouth; but, in the event of there being no such Board, the said rents, royalties, fees, moneys, and proceeds shall form portion of Her Majesty's land revenue of the colony, and be paid into the Public Account to the credit of the Land Fund.

[First Schedule describes the Westland-Grey Coalfield Reserve.]

[Second Schedule describes the Nelson-Grey Coalfield Reserve.]

EXTRACT from "The Greymouth Harbour Board Act, 1884."

7. The Board is hereby endowed with the revenues hereinafter next mentioned, and all such revenues, as they accrue from time to time, shall be paid to the Board in manner as the Governor shall direct, that is to say,—

(1.) All moneys arising from the lease, occupation, or other disposal, and the rents, royalties, fees, and other moneys derivable from the pieces of land known as the Westland-Grey Coal Reserve, and the Nelson-Grey Coal Reserve, as the same are respectively described in the First and Second Schedules of "The Nelson and Westland Coalfields Administration Act, 1877," less all costs and expenses of collecting the same;

(2.) All profits arising from the Greymouth–Brunner Coalfield Railway remaining after payment of all the cost of maintenance and working expenses, and any claims for compensation in respect of injuries arising from accidents on the railway; and

(3.) All wharfage and tonnage rates in the Harbour of Greymouth, including all charges for the use of staiths and other charges on coal brought for shipment in the said harbour, less all costs and expenses of collecting the same:

Provided that nothing in this section contained shall be deemed to give the Board any authority or control over the railway-wharf at Greymouth, nor authorise the said Board to alter any charges or tolls leviable thereat; but the said wharf shall remain under the administration of the authority having control of the railway to which the said wharf is annexed.

8. The Board shall have power from time to time to borrow on the security of its endowments, subject to the provisions of the said Act, and to the Governor's previous approval of a plan of the works proposed to be constructed, any sum not exceeding one hundred thousand pounds, for the construction or completion of harbour works in, or towards the improvement of, the said harbour.

But no money shall be borrowed under the authority of this Act at a higher rate of interest than six per centum per annum, anything contained in the said Act notwithstanding.

9. Prior to the issue of a loan the Governor in Council, if satisfied at any time that the revenues accruing to the Board under this Act are sufficient to meet the interest on any loan proposed to be raised under the authority of this Act, and to provide a sinking fund for repayment thereof, may declare such loan and interest to be guaranteed under this Act; and, from the date of the Order in Council declaring the guarantee, the interest on such loan shall be paid out of the Consolidated Fund.

But no greater sum than one hundred thousand pounds in the whole shall be guaranteed under this Act, except such extended guarantee be sanctioned by a resolution passed in that behalf by each House of the General Assembly.

10. [Form of debentures in case of guarantee.]

11. All moneys advanced from the Consolidated Fund under the last-preceding section shall be charged against the revenues of the Board, and shall be repaid to the said fund by the Board, together with so much added as will provide a sinking fund to liquidate the amount of the loan guaranteed under this Act.

Such sinking fund shall be of such amount and payable at such dates respectively, commencing not later than five years after the date when the guarantee aforesaid takes effect, as shall be agreed upon between the Governor and the Board.

12. So soon as a sum of one hundred thousand pounds has been expended out of any public moneys in the improvement of the Harbour of Greymouth, there shall be paid, in respect of every ton of coal brought for shipment in the said harbour by the shippers thereof, a sum of threepence as a special rate for the purpose of being applied towards the repayment of the moneys authorised to be borrowed under this Act, and the interest thereon, and to the repayment of the sums of one hundred and fourteen thousand four hundred and thirty-nine pounds one shilling and twenty-seven thousand two hundred pounds charged upon the Westland-Grey Coal Reserve and the Nelson-Grey Coal Reserve respectively by "The Westland and Nelson Coalfields Administration Act, 1877," together with interest on the said sums.

The aforesaid rate shall be collected as and from such day and by such persons as the Governor may from time to time appoint, and when collected shall be paid to the Board, to be applied by it for the purpose hereinabove mentioned.

13. The Board constituted under this Act may be dissolved at any time in the event that the General Assembly shall pass an Act authorising the Governor to take over the harbour-works progressing at the said harbour, together with all contracts and engagements of the Board in relation thereto, as well as all other contracts and engagements of the Board, and its assets and liabilities, and to complete the said works on behalf of Her Majesty the Queen.

14. So much of "The Westland and Nelson Coalfields Administration Act, 1877," as is repugnant to or in conflict with the provisions of this Act is hereby repealed.

EXTRACT from "The Greymouth Harbour Board Act (No. 2), 1884."

1. The Short Title of this Act is "The Greymouth Harbour Board Act (No. 2), 1884," and it shall be read together with and be deemed to be incorporated with the said Act.

2. Section eight of the said Act, and all other provisions of the said Act, shall be read and construed as if the words "one hundred and fifty thousand pounds" had been originally enacted in section eight aforesaid, in the place of the words "one hundred thousand pounds" where they occur in the said section.

EXTRACT from "The Railways Authorisation Act, 1885."

7. For the purposes of carrying out harbour-works at the Ports of Greymouth and Westport, and also to construct such sidings to the railways already constructed, and to make such additions or alterations to the rolling-stock, buildings, and plant thereon, as may be found necessary or desirable for the purpose of facilitating the working of the railways and the construction of such harbour-works, it shall be lawful for the Greymouth Harbour Board and the Westport Harbour Board respectively to construct such railways and sidings and make such additions as may be approved by the Governor in Council on the recommendations of such Harbour Boards or either of them respectively.

And it is hereby expressly declared that such railways and such additions so approved as aforesaid are works which the said Boards respectively are authorised to construct or provide for under the provisions of "The Greymouth Harbour Board Act, 1884," and "The Westport Harbour Board Act, 1884," or any Act incorporated therewith; and for that purpose, and for the working and management of such railways, or any additions thereto, each of such Boards shall have and may exercise all the powers and authorities which by "The Public Works Act, 1882," or any amendment thereof, are vested in, or may be exercised by, the Governor or the Minister for Public Works as effectually as if all such powers and authorities had been set out in this Act:

Provided that where, by "The Public Works Act, 1882," or any amendment thereof, anything is required to be done by Proclamation or notice gazetted, the same may be done by either of such Boards by a notice publicly notified in the manner prescribed by the last-mentioned Acts.

ABSTRACTS OF RETURNS AND STATISTICS.

EXHIBIT III.—GREYMOUTH HARBOUR BOARD REVENUE.

REVISED STATEMENT showing the Calculated Actual Earnings of the Board's Endowments during the Years ending 31st March, 1888, 1889, and 1890, compiled from figures supplied by the District Engineer, the Railway Commissioners, the Treasury, the Receivers of Land Revenue at Nelson and Hokitika, and the Receivers of Gold Revenue at Westport and Greymouth (as distinct from revenues brought to book in Board's annual balance-sheets, which are very variable, depending upon the dates that the amounts happened to be received through the Treasury).

Description of Earnings.	Financial Years		
	1887–88.	1888–89.	1889–90.
Through the Railway Commissioners,—	£	£	£
Brunner Railway—Mineral traffic[1]	17,000	17,473	15,060
" Other traffic	7,714	5,377	6,203
Greymouth—Wharfage[2]	2,768	2,886	2,553
" Tonnage-dues[3]	1,335	1,498	1,269
Gross total...	28,817	27,234	25,085
Deduct working-expenses, as shown in railway statements	17,367	14,047	16,747
Total earnings through the Railway Commissioners ...	11,450	13,187	8,338
Through the Lands and Mines Departments,—			
Land revenue—Rents, coal-leases, Nelson	755	910	1,109[8]
" " " Westland	60	65[5]	40[9]
" " colliery reserve sections, Brunner, Wallsend, and Dobson	561[4]	598[6]	610[10]
Total rents	1,376	1,573	1,759
" Royalties, coal-leases, Nelson	1,661	1,457[7]	1,176[11]
" " " Westland	Nil	Nil	Nil
Total royalties	1,661	1,457	1,176
" Miscellaneous, Nelson	3	Nil	Nil
" " Westland	149	258	4
Total miscellaneous	152	258	4

REVISED STATEMENT of the Calculated Actual Earnings of the Board's Endowments, &c.—*cont.*

Description of Earnings.	Financial Years		
	1887–88.	1888–89.	1889–90.
Through the Lands and Mines Departments,—			
Goldfields revenue, Nelson	...	...	...
" Westland	...	...	...
Total from gold-workings	...	...	...
Total earnings through the Lands and Mines Departments	3,189	3,288	2,939
By the Harbour Board itself,—			
Towage charges	689[12]	1,273	1,160
Less working-expenses of tug	943[12]	1,809	1,506
Total earnings by the Harbour Board itself (minus) ...	−254	−536	−346
Grand total actual earnings	14,385	15,939	10,931
Working-expenses of Board chargeable to revenue—namely, harbour and office expenses and salaries	1,518	1,333	1,461
Net earnings left available for payment of interest and sinking fund, &c., &c.	12,867	14,606	9,470

The interest and sinking fund payable on present indebtedness of Board amount to about £7,900 per annum.

Marine Department, Wellington, 11th October, 1890.

C. Y. O'CONNOR, Marine Engineer.

[1] Quantities: 1887–88, 170,000 tons; 1888–89, 174,730 tons; 1889–90, 150,600 tons. Tariff rate, 2s. per ton.
[2] On goods (exclusive of coal) crossing wharf. The wharf rate on coal is included in railway charge. For wharfage rates chargeable, *vide New Zealand Gazette* of 30th May, 1890 (page 669, under heading "Rates").
[3] Payable by ships using wharf. For tonnage-dues chargeable, *vide New Zealand Gazette* of 30th May, 1890 (pages 668–69, under heading "Charges for Use of Wharf").
In addition to these rates, there were also levied light-dues to extent as follows:—1887–88, £142; 1888–89, £170; and 1889–90, £168; but these amounts go to General Government revenue, not to Harbour Board revenue. For rates chargeable, *vide New Zealand Gazette* of 31st March, 1887, page 407.
[4] This is exclusive of £29 remitted.
[6] This is exclusive of £116 remitted.
[8] This is exclusive of £125 remitted, being one-quarter of £500 rental for year ending the 31st December, 1890, remitted to Cobden Coal Company, in consequence of delay in arrangements for shipping coal.
[9] This is exclusive of £50 remitted.
[10] This is exclusive of £16 remitted.

[4] This includes £61 still outstanding on 31st March, 1890.—Total outstanding for year 1887–88, £61
[5] This includes £20 still outstanding on 31st March, 1890
[6] This includes £174 " " " " " } Total outstanding for year 1888–89, £503
[7] This includes £309 " " " " "
[8] This includes £128 still outstanding on 31st March, 1890
[9] This includes £25 " " " " "
[10] This includes £499 " " " " " } Total outstanding for year 1889–90, £1,828
[11] This includes £1,176 " " " " "

£2,392

[12] These are for four months, commencing the 1st December, 1887 (the date tug purchased by Board).

EXHIBIT IX.—THE GREY VALLEY COAL COMPANY (LIMITED).

HANDS EMPLOYED AND RATES OF PAY.

Hewers, 170 to 180		Carpenters, 5	12s.
Truckers, 40	10s. and 11s.	Lampmen, 2	9s.
Banksmen, screenmen, &c., 16 ...	10s.	Enginemen, 6	11s.
Weighmen, 3	11s.	Stokers, 5	10s.
Labourers, 6	10s.	Pump-tenters, 3	9s. and 10s.
Labourers, 2	9s.	Cartman, 1	10s.
Youths, 8	7s. to 8s. 6d.	Coke-drawers, &c., 6	10s.
Boys, 30	4s. to 6s.	Coke foreman, 1	12s.
Oversmen, 4	£4 per week.	Enginewrights, 2	...£3 12s. and £4 per week respectively.
Fitter, 1	12s.		
Blacksmiths, 3	10s. to 12s.	Clerks, 2 ...	...£2 10s. and £4 per week respectively.
Strikers and assistants, 3 (infirm, 5s.), 8s. and 9s.			

Brickworks.

Foreman, 1	13s. 4d.	Youth, 1	7s.
Labourers and Brickmakers, 5 ...	9s.	Boys, 5	3s. to 4s.

EXHIBIT X.

SUMMARY of WAGES paid at WALLSEND, COAL-PIT HEATH, and BRUNNER MINES.

Class of Labour.	WALLSEND.		COAL-PIT HEATH.		BRUNNER.	
	5,950 Tons of Screened Coal worked from 1st Jan. to 31st Mar., 1890.	20,896 Tons of Unscreened Coal worked from 9th Mar. to 26th July,* 1890.	10,532 Tons of Screened Coal worked from 1st Jan. to 8th Mar., 1890.	31,412 Tons of Unscreened Coal worked from 9th Mar. to 20th Sept., 1890.	6,751 Tons of Screened Coal worked from 1st Jan. to 8th Mar., 1890.	28,973 Tons of Unscreened Coal worked from 9th Mar. to 20th Sept., 1890.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Hewing	1,449 14 9	3,471 2 10	2,183 18 9	4,600 7 4	1,483 9 0	3,959 11 8
Trucking	338 4 9	872 0 7	585 8 3	1,292 8 9	403 13 9	1,068 6 3
Winding and tipping ..	125 9 5	291 17 2	214 9 9	361 13 9	164 3 2	449 5 0
Loading	98 4 11	258 12 10	153 13 2	510 3 1	109 9 0	338 18 2
Lamp-trimming	45 18 0	100 8 0	..	..	..	..
Maintenance, shafts, &c., underground	198 14 3	440 14 3	269 4 4	736 18 0	258 11 0	938 1 4
Pit timber	..	..	18 16 6	25 15 0	41 15 6	46 1 6
Enginemen	114 5 11	230 5 3	196 17 0	473 6 6	69 8 3	189 17 8
Oversmen	48 0 0	92 13 4	69 0 0	163 0 6	72 0 0	181 6 8
Blacksmiths	73 1 1	129 19 2	69 18 3	217 12 3	40 15 0	134 18 8
Carpenters	31 1 0	71 8 0	53 19 9	125 3 6	56 8 6	159 0 6
Pumping	116 13 10	177 6 1	379 2 6	1,147 13 3	..	..
Office expenses—Clerk's salary	20 0 0	40 0 0	20 0 0	56 0 0	25 0 0	60 0 0
Office expenses — Telegrams, stamps, &c.	..	2 19 4	1 3 4	1 7 7	..	5 2 6
Proving fault	70 0 0	..	..	..	..	..
Main headings	..	51 9 1	314 18 5	576 7 0	142 9 0	186 18 8
Connection with Brunner Mine	..	..	19 5 0	..	..	..
Plant—Endless rope, hauling gear	..	..	26 0 11	..	..	..
Plant—Mine tubs	..	..	..	51 2 5	..	..
Plant—Dip-hauling engine converted into pump	..	..	13 16 6	..	..	..
Boiler inspection	..	..	..	14 11 7	..	..
Water storage in mine ..	..	..	..	154 12 3	..	..
Cutting off surface-water ..	..	..	..	242 11 0	..	..
Fixed plant—Boiler-seats ..	..	..	..	..	160 10 6	46 9 7
Movable plant — Boilers removal and repairs	..	..	..	..	..	33 0 0
Gross wages ..	2,729 7 11	6,230 15 11	4,589 12 5	10,750 13 9	3,027 12 8	7,796 19 2
Deductions—						
a. Mine stores — blasting materials, &c.	20 9 6	53 13 8	41 2 9	86 10 8	1 19 10	7 19 2
b. Coals won by day-labour	12 9 7	1 7 9	3 4 11	173 14 4	..	24 17 0
Total deductions ..	32 19 1	55 1 5	44 7 8	260 5 0	1 19 10	32 16 2
Net wages paid ..	2,696 8 10	6,175 14 6	4,545 4 9	10,490 8 9	3,025 12 10	7,764 3 0
Wages paid four weeks ending the 23rd August, no output ..				196 7 10		
Total				10,686 16 7		
Wages paid four weeks ending the 23rd August, during which mine-work was suspended ..						36 18 10
Total						£7,801 1 10

* Date of closing mine.

EXHIBIT XI.

ABSTRACT of OUTPUT of GREY VALLEY COAL COMPANY'S MINES.

Period: 1st January to 8th March, 1890.

				£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Wallsend	5,950	tons	screened coal,	2,696 8 10	
Coal-pit Heath	10,532	"	" "	4,545 4 9	
Brunner	6,751	"	" "	3,025 12 10	
	23,233	"			10,267 6 5

Period: 8th March to 20th September, 1890.

				£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Wallsend*	20,896	tons	unscreened coal,	6,175 14 6	
Coal-pit Heath	31,412	"	" "	10,686 16 7	
Brunner	28,973	"	" "	7,801 1 10	
	81,281	"			24,663 12 11
					£34,930 19 4

* Wallsend closed 26th July.

EXHIBIT XII.—THE GREY VALLEY COAL COMPANY (LIMITED).

WAGES EARNED by MINERS getting COAL at WALLSEND, COAL-PIT HEATH, and BRUNNER MINES, Periods 1st January to 8th March, 1890, and 10th March to 19th July, respectively.

Date 1890.—Fortnight ending	Wallsend.			Coal-pit Heath.			Brunner.*			Total.		
	Shifts worked.	Amount.	Average.	Shifts worked.	Amount.	Average.	Shifts worked.	Amount.	Average.	Shifts worked.	Amount.	Average.
		£ s. d.	s. d.		£ s. d.	s. d.		£ s. d.	s. d.		£ s. d.	s. d.
January 11	400	289 8 1	14 6	526	363 8 0	13 10	228	168 6 6	14 9	..	..	..
„ 25	226	144 8 9	12 9	612	430 5 0	14 1	388	217 1 6	11 2	..	..	..
February 8	511	330 5 11	12 11	654	483 5 1	14 9	592	358 17 6	12 1	..	..	..
„ 22	476	325 11 0	13 8	642	415 3 1	12 11	592	359 4 6	12 2	..	..	..
March 8	447	320 3 10	14 4	716	543 9 5	15 2	542	378 9 2	14 0	..	..	..
Total, first period	2,060	1,409 17 7	13 8	3,150	2,235 10 7	14 2	2,342	1,481 19 2	12 8	7,552	5,127 7 4	13 7
March 22	346	247 16 11	14 4	582	405 13 7	13 11	395	276 10 0	*14 0	..	..	..
April 5	377	247 3 0	13 1	922	525 3 2	11 5	402	309 16 6	15 5	..	..	..
„ 19	449	337 18 3	15 1	668	494 17 1	14 10	533	433 14 4	16 3	..	..	..
May 3	526	363 11 11	13 10	365	304 7 8	16 8	520	410 19 6	15 10	..	..	..
„ 17	786	523 1 4	13 4	391	306 6 8	15 8	553	423 9 3	15 4	..	..	..
„ 31	699	490 1 0	14 0	520	345 5 4	13 3	445	366 9 0	16 6	..	..	..
June 14	490	366 3 0	14 11	650	465 5 10	14 4	443	346 14 8	15 8	..	..	..
„ 28	512	363 11 7	14 2	717	579 10 9	16 2	533	415 11 6	15 7	..	..	..
July 12	432	297 0 9	13 9	620	440 9 1	14 2	523	415 5 6	15 11	..	..	..
„ 26	239	175 15 6	14 9	282	212 8 1	15 1	302	228 0 4	15 1	..	..	..
Total	4,856	3,412 3 3	14 1	5,717	4,079 7 3	14 3	4,649	3,626 10 7	15 7	15,222	11,118 1 1	14 7

* The Brunner miners were not paid by weight during the fortnight ending March 22, but at 14s. per day.

STATEMENT of WAGES PAID to COAL-MINERS, 24th March to 28th June, 1890, inclusive.

Fortnight ending	Wages paid for Coal-hewing only.												To same for Other Work.	
	Wallsend.			Coal-pit Heath.			Brunner.			Total.				
	No. of Shifts.	Amount.	Average per Shift.	No. of Shifts.	Amount.	Average per Shift.	No. of Shifts.	Amount.	Average per Shift.	No. of Shifts.	Amount.	Average per Shift.	No. of Shifts.	Amount.
		£ s. d.	s. d.		£ s. d.	s. d.		£ s. d.	s. d.		£ s. d.	s. d.		£ s. d.
April 5, 1890	377	247 3 0	13 1	922	525 3 2	11 5	402	309 16 6	15 5	1,701	1,082 2 8	12 9	56	30 5 6
„ 19, „	449	337 18 3	15 1	668	494 17 1	14 10	533	433 14 4	16 3	1,650	1,266 9 8	15 4	127	65 8 0
May 3, „	526	363 11 11	13 10	365	304 7 8	16 8	520	410 19 6	15 10	1,411	1,078 19 1	15 4	236	121 12 6
„ 17, „	786	523 1 4	13 4	391	306 6 8	15 8	553	423 9 3	15 4	1,730	1,252 17 3	14 6	223	120 19 0
„ 31, „	699	490 1 0	14 0	520	345 5 4	13 3	445	366 9 0	16 6	1,664	1,201 15 4	14 5	191	103 18 6
June 14, „	490	366 3 0	14 11	650	465 5 10	14 4	443	346 14 8	15 8	1,583	1,178 3 6	14 11	144	79 4 0
„ 28, „	512	363 11 7	14 2	717	579 10 9	16 2	533	415 11 6	15 7	1,762	1,358 13 10	15 5	76	41 1 3
Total	3,839	2,691 10 1	..	4,233	3,020 16 6	..	3,429	2,706 14 9	..	11,501	8,419 1 4	..	1,053	562 8 9
Average earnings per shift	..	..	14 0	..	..	14 3	..	..	15 9	..	..	14 8	..	..

EXHIBIT XIII.—THE GREY VALLEY COAL COMPANY (LIMITED).

COALS produced from WALLSEND, COAL-PIT HEATH, and BRUNNER MINES, 1st January to 8th March, 1890.

Date: Fortnight ending	Wallsend.			Coal-pit Heath.			Brunner.			Total.		
	Screened Coal.		Unscreened Coal: Estimated Gross Contents of Tubs.*	Screened Coal.		Unscreened Coal: Estimated Gross Contents of Tubs.*	Screened Coal.		Unscreened Coal: Estimated Gross Contents of Tubs.*	Screened Coal.		Unscreened Coal: Estimated Gross Contents of Tubs.*
	Tubs.	Tons.	Tons.	Tubs.	Tons.	Tons.	Tubs.	Tons.	Tons.	Tubs.	Tons.	Tons.
January 11, 1890	3,398	1,251	..	4,111	1,717	..	2,704	813	..	10,213	3,781	..
„ 25, „	1,630	586	..	4,897	1,920	..	3,220	1,020	..	9,747	3,526	..
February 8, „	3,821	1,394	..	5,490	2,125	..	5,699	1,693	..	15,010	5,212	..
„ 22, „	3,690	1,325	..	5,027	2,070	..	5,476	1,590	..	14,193	4,985	..
March 8, „	3,940	1,394	..	6,456	2,700	..	5,309	1,635	..	15,705	5,729	..
Total	16,479	5,950	9,130	25,981	10,532	14,324	22,408	6,751	13,615	64,868	23,233	37,069

* The estimate of gross weight produced is based upon the quantity delivered during the period commencing 10th March, when the coals were weighed in that condition.

COALS produced from WALLSEND, COAL-PIT HEATH, and BRUNNER MINES, 10th March to 19th July (inclusive), 1890.

Date: Fortnight ending	Wallsend.		Coal-pit Heath.		Brunner.		Total.	
	Tubs.	Tons.*	Tubs.	Tons.*	Tubs.	Tons.*	Tubs.	Tons.*
March 22, 1890	2,633	1,452	4,758	2,736	3,801	2,200	11,192	6,388
April 5, „	2,668	1,494	5,637	3,192	3,675	2,256	11,980	6,942
„ 19, „	3,670	2,057	5,933	3,300	5,263	3,199	14,866	8,556
May 3, „	3,810	2,150	4,106	2,187	5,097	3,086	13,013	7,423
„ 17, „	5,665	3,153	3,922	2,160	4,654	2,982	14,241	8,295
„ 31, „	5,742	3,020	4,788	2,600	4,502	2,750	15,032	8,370
June 14, „	4,017	2,250	6,027	3,260	4,364	2,650	14,408	8,160
„ 28, „	4,143	2,300	7,402	4,060	5,030	3,030	16,575	9,390
July 12, „	3,354	1,880	6,217	3,380	5,000	3,040	14,571	8,300
„ 26, „	2,024	1,140	2,767	1,550	2,787	1,660	7,578	4,350
Total	37,726	20,896	51,557	28,425	44,173	26,853	133,456	76,174

* Unscreened.

EXHIBIT XIV.—THE GREY VALLEY COAL COMPANY (LIMITED).

STATEMENT showing the respective EARNINGS of (A) the Most Successful Pair of COAL-MINERS in each Mine, and also the Earnings of (B) the Pair who received the Lowest Wages per Fortnight's Work (24th March to 28th June, 1890).

Date: Fortnight ending	Wallsend.		Coal-pit Heath.		Brunner.	
	A.	B.	A.	B.	A.	B.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
April 5	17 19 0	8 9 10	14 17 2	7 2 2	13 18 1	10 9 6
„ 19	20 5 8	8 12 1	18 3 0	9 4 11	19 1 0	13 16 3
May 3	19 18 10	10 3 2	18 14 6	11 3 1	18 13 0	14 5 0
„ 17	22 4 11	7 1 8	19 4 8	12 4 4	18 8 3	14 16 6
„ 31	21 2 9	6 18 1	14 13 11	11 0 2	18 2 8	14 12 0
June 14	19 2 0	13 2 6	17 0 3	10 12 8	18 3 3	14 15 9
„ 28	20 10 2	12 19 7	19 7 8	13 4 3	18 13 6	14 17 3
Average	20 3 4	9 12 5	17 8 9	10 13 1	17 17 1	13 18 11

Average A, £18 9s. 9d. Average B, £11 8s. 3d.

EXHIBIT XVI.—THE GREY VALLEY COAL COMPANY (LIMITED).

SUMMARY of MOVABLE PLANT INVENTORY RETURNS, 30th June, 1890.

	Not in Use.	In Use.	Total.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Wallsend Mine	1,356 0 0	11,296 14 7*	12,652 14 7
Coal-pit Heath Mine	..	6,708 4 11	6,708 4 11
Brunner Mine	2,749 1 8	11,871 18 10	14,621 0 6
Tyneside Mine	856 2 6	..	856 2 6
Brunner Coke-ovens	..	309 0 0	309 0 0
Brunner Brickworks	..	644 0 0	644 0 0
	4,961 4 2	30,829 18 4	35,791 2 6

New pumping-plant about to be erected for Brunner dip-coal, at a cost of £3,000 0 0

* Has not been in use since the mine was closed, on the 29th July.

EXHIBIT XXII.—GREYMOUTH-BRUNNERTON RAILWAY.

PARTICULARS of REVENUE and EXPENDITURE for the Year ending 31st March, 1890.

Four Weeks ending	Passengers.	Parcels and Luggage.	Goods.	Miscellaneous.	Rents and Commissions.	Total Revenue.	Expenditure.
1889.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
April 27 ..	207 11 0	6 14 7	1,188 4 1	15 18 7	7 12 3	1,426 0 6	838 3 1
May 25 ..	181 0 5	7 15 10	1,295 14 8	20 15 4	6 1 0	1,511 7 3	1,101 4 9
June 22 ..	210 13 2	5 11 1	1,638 13 3	42 16 0	2 17 3	1,900 10 9	1,225 14 7
July 20 ..	192 8 8	5 12 9	1,608 11 4	56 6 3	42 19 0	1,905 18 0	1,028 18 1
Aug. 17 ..	234 0 9	6 13 8	1,898 15 4	42 6 2	..	2,181 15 11	1,443 9 11
Sept. 14 ..	212 2 8	6 13 3	1,857 10 5	56 19 1	3 16 3	2,137 1 8	875 12 2
Oct. 12 ..	258 12 9	8 8 4	1,466 16 11	43 16 6	22 2 6	1,799 17 0	2,232 3 11
Nov. 9 ..	273 12 6	9 3 3	1,375 10 2	68 9 1	0 6 3	1,727 1 3	2,066 1 5
Dec. 7 ..	287 18 9	9 15 8	1,574 8 7	81 1 11	3 16 3	1,957 1 2	1,012 0 9
1890.							
Jan. 4 ..	470 4 4	15 15 4	1,055 3 5	41 15 3	20 0 0	1,602 18 4	910 12 5
Feb. 1 ..	342 12 1	16 3 4	1,569 8 2	48 13 2	2 11 3	1,979 8 0	1,233 7 9
Mar. 1 ..	266 17 6	13 8 6	2,135 0 10	93 8 3	3 16 3	2,512 11 4	1,403 13 11
Mar. 31 ..	466 2 6	18 10 9	1,895 8 8	58 15 2	5 0 0	2,443 17 1	1,376 1 6
Total ..	3,603 17 1	130 6 4	20,559 5 10	671 0 9	120 18 3	25,085 8 3	16,747 4 3

GREYMOUTH-BRUNNER RAILWAY.

PARTICULARS of TRAFFIC for the Year ended 31st March, 1890.

Four Weeks ending	Chaff.	Wool.	Firewood.	Timber.	Grain.	Merchandise.	Minerals.
	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.
April 27, 1889 ..	..	..	..	91	..	214	8,748
May 25, „ ..	..	..	..	72	..	199	9,698
June 22, „ ..	..	..	..	46	..	229	12,604
July 20, „ ..	..	..	5	85	..	268	12,607
Aug. 17, „ ..	..	..	..	79	14	365	14,051
Sept. 14, „ ..	..	..	60	66	20	345	14,388
Oct. 12, „ ..	..	..	114	63	19	357	10,857
Nov. 9, „ ..	..	..	48	113	22	356	10,138
Dec. 7, „ ..	..	5	42	108	29	440	10,813
Jan. 4, 1890 ..	..	..	24	92	16	397	6,715
Feb. 1, „ ..	..	..	48	144	17	532	11,285
March 1, „ ..	5	3	78	148	35	1,020	15,084
March 31, „ ..	5	..	72	110	27	745	13,669
Total ..	10	8	491	1,217	199	5,467	150,657

GREYMOUTH-BRUNNER RAILWAY.

PARTICULARS of TRAFFIC for the Year ending 31st March, 1890—*continued.*

Four Weeks ending	Passengers.	Parcels.	Horses.	Carriages.	Dogs.	Season Tickets.
April 27, 1889	4,488	102	..	..	11	33
May 25, „	3,740	97	..	..	8	11
June 22, „	4,478	113	..	..	8	7
July 20, „	4,188	102	..	..	7	41
Aug. 17, „	4,434	137	..	..	5	18
Sept. 14, „	4,451	147	..	..	10	9
Oct. 12, „	4,829	166	..	..	10	43
Nov. 9, „	5,095	218	..	..	26	19
Dec. 7, „	5,938	213	..	..	21	14
Jan. 4, 1890	13,039	233	16	..	26	12
Feb. 1, „	6,660	250	7	..	29	42
March 1, „	5,498	260	..	..	25	22
March 31, „	10,855	239	32	..	20	12
Total	77,693	2,277	55	..	206	283

GREYMOUTH-BRUNNER RAILWAY.

PARTICULARS of TRAFFIC for the Year ending 31st March, 1890—*continued.*

Four Weeks ending	Drays.	Cattle.	Calves.	Sheep.	Pigs.
April 27, 1889	..	..	..	..	19
May 25, „	..	..	1	..	2
June 22, „	..	..	3	..	10
July 20, „	..	..	2	..	21
Aug. 17, „	..	..	..	2	1
Sept. 14, „	..	..	1	..	6
Oct. 12, „	..	..	2	..	4
Nov. 9, „	..	..	2	..	25
Dec. 7, „	..	..	1	20	21
Jan. 4, 1890	..	..	..	..	22
Feb. 1, „	..	..	..	..	15
March 1, „	..	..	1	..	18
March 31, „	1	..	..	3	..
Total	1	..	13	25	164

EXHIBIT XXIII.—REALISATION AND COST OF COAL.

MEMORANDUM of RESULTS of EXAMINATION of the GREY VALLEY COMPANY'S BOOKS in Dunedin, at the Request of the Miners.

Period from 1st January to 8th March, 1890, when Coal-hewers were paid 4s. on Screened Coal.

	£	s.	d.
Tons sold, 28,050; realised average per ton	0	18	0
Less freights, commission, and charges, per ton	0	7	1½
Net result f.o.b.	0	10	10½
Cost of 30,571 tons coal (marketable)—			
Engineer, stores, haulage, royalty, &c.	0	3	1
Mining wages	0	6	2
	0	9	3
Net profit per ton	£0	1	7½

This does not include 2,100 tons of slack used in making coke, and credited Coal Account at 2s. 6d.

Period from 8th March to 28th June, 1890, when Hewers were paid 2s. 10d. on Unscreened Coal.

	£	s.	d.
Tons sold, 51,405; realising average per ton	0	18	5¼
Less freights, commissions, and charges per ton	0	7	6
Net result f.o.b.	0	10	11¼
Cost of 49,638 tons coal (marketable)—			
Engineer, stores, haulage, royalty, &c.	0	3	2½
Mining wages	0	7	9
	0	10	11½
Net loss per ton	£0	0	0¼

This does not include 4,150 tons of slack used in making coke, and credited Coal Account at 2s. 6d.

REALISATION AND COST OF COKE.

Period from 1st January to 8th March, 1890.

	£	s.	d.
Sales, 758 tons 16½cwt., at an average price of	2	11	3
Less sale-charges, including freights, commission, and other charges, average	1	4	5
Net average price f.o.b.	1	6	10
Output during same period was 945 tons 8cwt., at an average price for slack coal of 2s. 6d. per ton burning, hauling, &c. ...	0	16	11
Net average profit per ton	£0	9	11
Net profit of the account deduced from averages (758 tons 16½cwt., at 9s. 11d. per ton)	£376	4	10

Period from 8th March to 28th June, 1890.

	£	s.	d.
Sales, 1,526 tons 7½cwt., at an average price of	2	8	8
Less sale-charges, including freights, commission, and other charges, average	1	13	6½
Net average price f.o.b.	0	15	1½
Output during same period was 2,289 tons 11cwt., at an average price for slack coal of 2s. 6d. per ton, burning, hauling, &c. ...	0	13	4
Net average profit per ton	£0	1	9½
Net profit of the account deduced from averages, 1,526 tons 7½cwt., at 1s. 9½d. per ton	£136	15	4

MEMORANDUM OF FIRECLAY ACCOUNT.

Period from 1st January to 8th March, 1890.

	£	s.	d.
Sales of bricks, tiles, retorts, and other fireclay goods	1,349	12	10
Less sale-charges, freights, commission, &c.	245	1	7
Net returns f.o.b.	£1,104	11	3
Manufacturing and mining charges and expenses during same period	430	10	1

Period from 8th March to 28th June, 1890.

	£	s.	d.
Sales of bricks, tiles, retorts, and other fireclay goods	1,412	0	9
Less sale-charges, freights, commission, &c.	522	13	11
Net returns f.o.b.	£889	6	10
Manufacturing and mining charges and expenses during same period	639	4	6

MEMO.—The returns for March have been apportioned so as to give as nearly as possible the actual results in each of above periods. Stock lists at beginning and end of each period were not available, so that the profits of each could not be ascertained; nor could profits be deduced from average prices, on account of the variety of the articles manufactured.

MEMORANDUM of ITEMS of MANAGEMENT not included in Cost of Coal, applicable to the whole Business of the Company.

Period, Six Months ending 30th June, 1890.

	£	s.	d.
Management in Dunedin Office—			
Directors, auditors, &c.	426	3	5
Management in Wellington	279	0	9
Management in Greymouth...	325	8	3
Rates and taxes, inclusive of property-tax	630	19	9
General charges	30	0	0
	£1,691	12	2

Besides the above items, no account has been taken of expenditure on new works or main headings, nor of depreciation on plant, works, or leases, nor of interest on capital.

GREY VALLEY COAL COMPANY (LIMITED).

[CIRCULAR.]

IF you sign the enclosed application and return or post it to-day to me, a place will be reserved for you, after which all vacancies will be filled up. There are only eighty places now available.

If miners prefer a tonnage rate to the day wages it can be adopted from the start, viz.:—

Coal-pit Heath, pillars	2s. 3d.
Brunner, pillars	2s. 0d.
Coal-pit Heath, whole coal	2s. 8d.
Brunner, whole coal	2s. 6d.

25th October. J. BISHOP.

Mr. J. Bishop.

PLEASE reserve a place for me in the mine. I am ready to start work in terms of the company's printed rules or tonnage rate as notified.

_____Name.

EXHIBIT XXIV.—GREY VALLEY COAL COMPANY (LIMITED).

REGULATIONS AND CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT AND TERMS OF ENGAGEMENT.

ALL persons employed by the Grey Valley Coal Company (Limited) are engaged subject to the following conditions:—

1. The management of the works to be in the hands of the mine-manager for the time being, appointed by the board of directors of the said company.

2. The mine-manager will appoint all officers and workmen for the efficient carrying-on of the colliery work.

3. Eight hours' work at the face, exclusive of meal-hours, is to constitute a day's work. The company will not be liable to provide work for any employé when the mines are not working, and will only pay for time actually worked.

Rate of Wages.

4. Experienced miners approved by the manager, 12s. per day; new hands, 10s. per day, advancing with experience, at the discretion of the manager, to 12s. per day. At the expiration of six months those working whole coal may, by a two-thirds majority, elect to adopt a tonnage rate of 4s. net or 2s. 6d. gross weight, in lieu of day's wages, when the headings (9ft. wide) will be paid at the rate of 6s. per yard.

All other labour by special arrangement with the manager.

Dismissal from Work.

5. Any person employed by the company is entitled to fourteen days' notice, or in lieu a fortnight's pay before dismissal, unless in the case of a special agreement, in which case the employment ceases with the expiry of the agreement, unless it be mutually agreed to continue it.

Employés will be liable to instant dismissal for the following causes, viz.:—

(*a.*) Interference with the management.

(*b.*) Obstructing the work of the mine, interfering with or hindering any employé of the company in carrying out his work, or in the execution of his duty.

(*c.*) Conviction before a Magistrate or Justice of the Peace of a wilful breach of any of the special or general rules of "The Coal-mines Act, 1886."

(*d.*) Incapacity or gross carelessness in the execution of duty, or in carrying out work.

(*e.*) Wilfully or negligently damaging or injuring any of the company's property.

(*f.*) Refusing to carry out the lawful instructions of the mine-manager or his representatives.

(*g.*) Absence from work for two consecutive days, or for three days in any one week, without the permission of the mine-manager.

(*h.*) Agitation or inciting the employés to insubordination.

(*i.*) Being on the company's works in a state of intoxication.

Any workman absenting himself for more than one shift without sufficient reason may be excluded from the mine or place where he has been employed for a time equal to that of his absence.

Any person having a grievance to be redressed is to apply to the mine-manager in person and not by deputy, when his case will receive prompt attention.

Household (small) coal will be supplied to workmen at 5s. per ton; cartage extra.

Brunnerton, 22nd October, 1890. J. Bishop, Mine-manager.

EXHIBIT XLII.—WESTPORT COAL COMPANY (LIMITED).

Regulations and Conditions of Employment and Terms of Engagement.

All persons employed by the Westport Coal Company (Limited) are engaged subject to the following conditions:—

1. The management of the works is to be in the hands of the mine-manager for the time being, appointed by the board of directors of the said company.

2. The mine-manager will appoint all officers and workmen for the efficient carrying-on of the colliery work.

3. Eight hours, exclusive of meal-hours, is to constitute a day's work.

Rate of Wages.

4. Ordinary labour, 10s. per day. Coal-cutting, bords, 2s. 10d. per ton; pillars, tops, and bottoms at special rates, as per future agreement. Headings, 9ft. wide, 6s. per yard per single shift; 6s. 6d. per yard double shift; 7s. 6d. per yard three shifts. All other labour by special arrangement with the manager.

Dismissal from Work.

5. Any person employed by the company is entitled to fourteen days' notice, or in lieu fourteen days' pay before dismissal, unless in the case of a special agreement, in which case the employment ceases with the expiry of the agreement, unless it be mutually agreed to continue it.

Persons will be liable to instant dismissal for the following causes, viz.:—

(*a.*) Interfering with the management.

(*b.*) Obstructing the work of the mine, interfering with or hindering any employé of the company in carrying out his work, or in the execution of his duty.

(*c.*) Conviction before a Magistrate or Justice of the Peace of a wilful breach of any of the special or general rules of "The Coal-mines Act, 1886."

(*d.*) Incapacity or gross carelessness in the execution of duty, or in carrying out work.

(*e.*) Wilfully damaging or injuring any of the company's property.

(*f.*) Refusing to carry out the lawful instructions of the mine-manager or his representatives.

(*g.*) Absence from work for two consecutive days, or for three days in any one week, without the permission of the mine-manager.

(*h.*) Agitation or inciting the employés to insubordination.

(*i.*) Being on the company's works in a state of intoxication.

Any person having a grievance to be redressed is to apply to the mine-manager in person, and not by deputy, when his case will receive prompt attention.

Thos. J. Waters, Managing Engineer.

Denniston, 20th September, 1890. Thos. Brown, Mine-manager.

EXHIBIT XXVIII.—GREYMOUTH HARBOUR.

Summary showing Division between the Summer and Winter Months each Year.

(Summer months taken as December to April inclusive; winter months taken as May to November inclusive.)

Date.	Summer Months.		Winter Months.	
	Number of Steamers.	Registered Tonnage.	Number of Steamers.	Registered Tonnage.
1886–87	153	35,676	221	53,462
1887–88	154	36,127	258	65,844
1888–89	129	33,239	253	56,901
1889–90	188	39,573	...	...

EXHIBIT XXVIIIa.

Return showing Quantity of Coal shipped from the Port of Greymouth from the 1st January, 1884, to the 30th September, 1890.

Year.	Tons.
1884	98,407
1885	129,608
1886	117,620
1887	157,817
1888	155,545
1889	121,280
1890 (nine months)	94,363

EXHIBIT XXIX.—GREYMOUTH HARBOUR.

RETURN showing Number and Tonnage of STEAMERS which loaded Coal at Greymouth from 1st December, 1886, to 30th September, 1890.

Date.	Number of Steamers.	Registered Tonnage.
1886.		
December	24	5,379
1887.		
January	29	6,989
February	31	6,369
March	37	9,027
April	32	7,912
May	34	7,537
June	40	9,471
July	30	6,887
August	24	5,765
September	27	6,691
October	33	8,764
November	33	8,347
December	35	7,919
	385	91,678
1888.		
January	33	7,705
February	34	8,126
March	22	5,321
April	30	7,056
May	43	10,456
June	35	8,312
July	26	6,254
August	33	7,611
September	52	14,214
October	30	8,266
November	39	10,731
December	26	7,211
	403	101,263
1889.		
January	32	8,815
February	27	6,514
March	22	5,235
April	22	5,464
May	27	6,796
June	32	8,519
July	40	8,903
August	46	10,466
September	35	7,619
October	32	7,122
November	41	7,476
December	35	5,534
	391	88,463
1890.		
January	34	7,848
February	48	9,899
March	36	8,013
April	35	8,279
May	35	8,255
June	48	10,963
July	29	7,139
August	9	2,248
September	22	2,974
	296	65,618

SUMMARY showing the NUMBER of DAYS in Succession when BAR has been UNWORKABLE.

Date.	Number of Consecutive Days.	Date.	Number of Consecutive Days.	Date.	Number of Consecutive Days.	Date.	Number of Consecutive Days.
1887.		1888.		1889.		1890.	
June 15 ..	1	Jan. 22–23 ..	2	Jan. 7 ..	1	March 2 ..	1
July 6–8 ..	3	Jan. 26 ..	1	Jan. 30 ..	1	March 24 ..	1
July 13 ..	1	Feb. 6 ..	1	Feb. 21 ..	1	March 30 ..	1
July 27 ..	1	Feb. 18 ..	1	March 9–10 ..	2	May 31 ..	1
Sept. 2–6 ..	5	March 8 ..	1	March 13 ..	1	June 17 ..	1
Sept. 8–10 ..	3	March 11–21 ..	12	March 25 ..	1	Aug. 3–5 ..	3
Sept. 12–13 ..	2	April 3–4 ..	2	April 13 ..	1	Aug. 29 ..	1
Sept. 18 ..	1	April 14–16 ..	3	April 27–28 ..	2	Sept. 30 ..	1
Sept. 30 ..	1	May 22 ..	1	April 30 ..	1	Oct. 15–19 ..	5
Oct. 14 ..	1	June 12 ..	1	May 6 ..	1	Oct. 21–22 ..	2
Oct. 18 ..	1	June 14–16 ..	3	June 9–12 ..	4	Oct. 26–29 ..	4
Oct. 20–24 ..	5	June 23 ..	1	July 16 ..	1		
Nov. 8 ..	1	June 25 ..	1	July 18 ..	1		
Nov. 24 ..	1	July 7–8 ..	2	Aug. 15 ..	1		
Nov. 27-28 ..	2	July 18–19 ..	2	Aug. 24 ..	1		
Dec. 3 ..	1	July 23–24 ..	2	Sept. 4 ..	1		
Dec. 5 ..	1	Aug. 22 ..	1	Sept. 11 ..	1		
Dec. 26 ..	1	Aug. 24–26 ..	3	Oct. 6–10 ..	5		
Dec. 27 ..	1	Aug. 30–31 ..	2	Oct. 12 ..	1		
		Sept. 5 ..	1	Oct. 21 ..	1		
		Oct. 2 ..	1	Dec. 17–19 ..	3		
		Oct. 5–6 ..	2	Dec. 31 ..	1		
		Oct. 9 ..	1				
		Oct. 20 ..	1				
		Oct. 22 ..	1				
		Oct. 29–31 ..	3				
		Nov. 1 ..	1				
		Nov. 15–17 ..	3				
		Nov. 22 ..	1				
		Dec. 2 ..	1				
		Dec. 10 ..	1				
		Dec. 13 ..	1				
		Dec. 24 ..	1				
	33		61		33		21*

* 10 months.

EXHIBIT XXXVIII.—PORT OF GREYMOUTH.

DETENTION OF VESSELS IN PORT.

Date.	Number of Vessels entered Inwards.	Number of Days Vessels were respectively in Port.											
		0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	More than 10 Days.
1888.													
April	56	16	27	7	1	2	1	2	..	..	..	..	
May	62	19	30	8	2	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	
June	60	11	29	9	4	1	..	1	3	2	..	..	
July	51	20	14	8	5	1	3	..	..	..	..	..	
August	48	8	21	11	5	..	..	1	2	..	..	..	
September	74	17	34	9	3	5	2	2	2	..	..	..	
October	50	12	15	7	5	6	1	1	2	1	..	..	
November	54	18	24	3	5	3	1	..	..	..	..	..	
December	53	20	19	7	5	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	
1889.													
January	55	18	21	10	6	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	
February	45	15	18	6	5	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	
March	44	13	19	7	3	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	
April	40	17	16	4	..	2	..	..	..	1	..	..	
May	51	20	25	2	3	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	
June	44	16	23	4	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	
July	51	16	23	5	3	1	1	..	1	1	..	..	
August	56	15	27	7	2	1	2	1	1	..	..	..	
September	46	16	18	8	3	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	
October	38	15	19	3	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	
November	46	20	17	5	2	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1, 25 days.
December	37	14	15	5	1	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	
1890.													
January	43	19	14	5	4	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	
February	57	21	28	6	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1, 13 days.
March	43	20	14	3	3	2	..	..	1	..	..	..	
April	50	17	19	6	1	3	..	..	..	..	..	1	1, 11 days. 1, 16 days. 1, 17 days.
May	53	13	27	8	4	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	
June	60	19	21	8	5	3	3	..	..	..	1	..	
July	43	18	18	3	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1, 11 days. 1, 18 days.
August	33	15	10	3	..	2	..	1	..	..	..	1	1, 16 days.
September	45	14	14	7	4	2	2	1	..	..	..	..	1*
October	27	5	11	4	1	1	..	5	..	..	..	..	
	1,515	497	630	188	89	45	16	15	16	6	1	3	9

* One still in port on the 31st October, 1890.

MEMO.—The above table is an abstract from a record kept by Mr. Nancarrow, showing the arrivals and departures since March, 1888, and shows only the detention in port.

[*Approximate Cost of Paper.*—Preparation, nil; printing (1,350 copies), £147 10s.]

By Authority: GEORGE DIDSBURY, Government Printer, Wellington.—1890.

PLAN Nº 1.

— PLAN OF THE —
— GREY VALLEY COAL Coˢ MINES. —
— COMPILED FROM —
— SURVEYS SUPPLIED BY Mr BISHOP. —
— MINE MANAGER. —

NOTE :- AREAS WORKED OUT SHOWN THUS ▨

James Hector
Chairman of Directors Coal Co.

— COAL PIT HEATH MINE —
AREA 777 ACRES. AREA WORKED 46 ACRES.

— BRUNNER MINE —
AREA 1280 ACRES. AREA WORKED 183 ACRES.

— TYNESIDE — MINE
AREA 853ᴬ 3ᴿ 15ᴾ.

— WALLSEND MINE —
AREA 150 ACRES.

TOTAL AREA WORKED IN FREEHOLD & LEASEHOLD 27 ACRES.

WESTPORT COAL Coˢ FREEHOLD.

WESTPORT COAL Coˢ LEASEHOLD.

GENERAL PLAN — SHOWING — COAL LEASES &c.

— SCALE OF CHAINS —

— REFERENCE —
PRESENT WORKINGS THUS
AREA WORKED OUT

COAL PIT HEATH MINE
BRUNNER MINE
TAYLORVILLE
DOBSON
MILLERS HOUSE
TYNESIDE MINE
WALLSEND MINE
GREY R.
GREY VALLEY CREEK

TAYLORVILLE FAULT
Downthrow to West 250 ft (Calculated)

Fault line as proved from C.P.H. 180'

FAULT

No 3 LEVEL
No 2 LEVEL
Water Dams No 2 & No 3 LEVEL

No 1 DRIFT

Fault 30ft Downthrow to North. Proved in No 1 Drift

Upthrow to South

BORE-HOLE

PUMPING SHAFT

FAULTED GROUND

INFERIOR COAL

AIR SHAFT

SCREENS

BRIDGE

G R E Y R I V E R

PROSPECTING DRIVE

Coal Pinched out

Proposed Workings in Solid Coal

OLD BRUNNER WORKINGS
PILLARS PARTLY WORKED OUT
PLAN UNCERTAIN

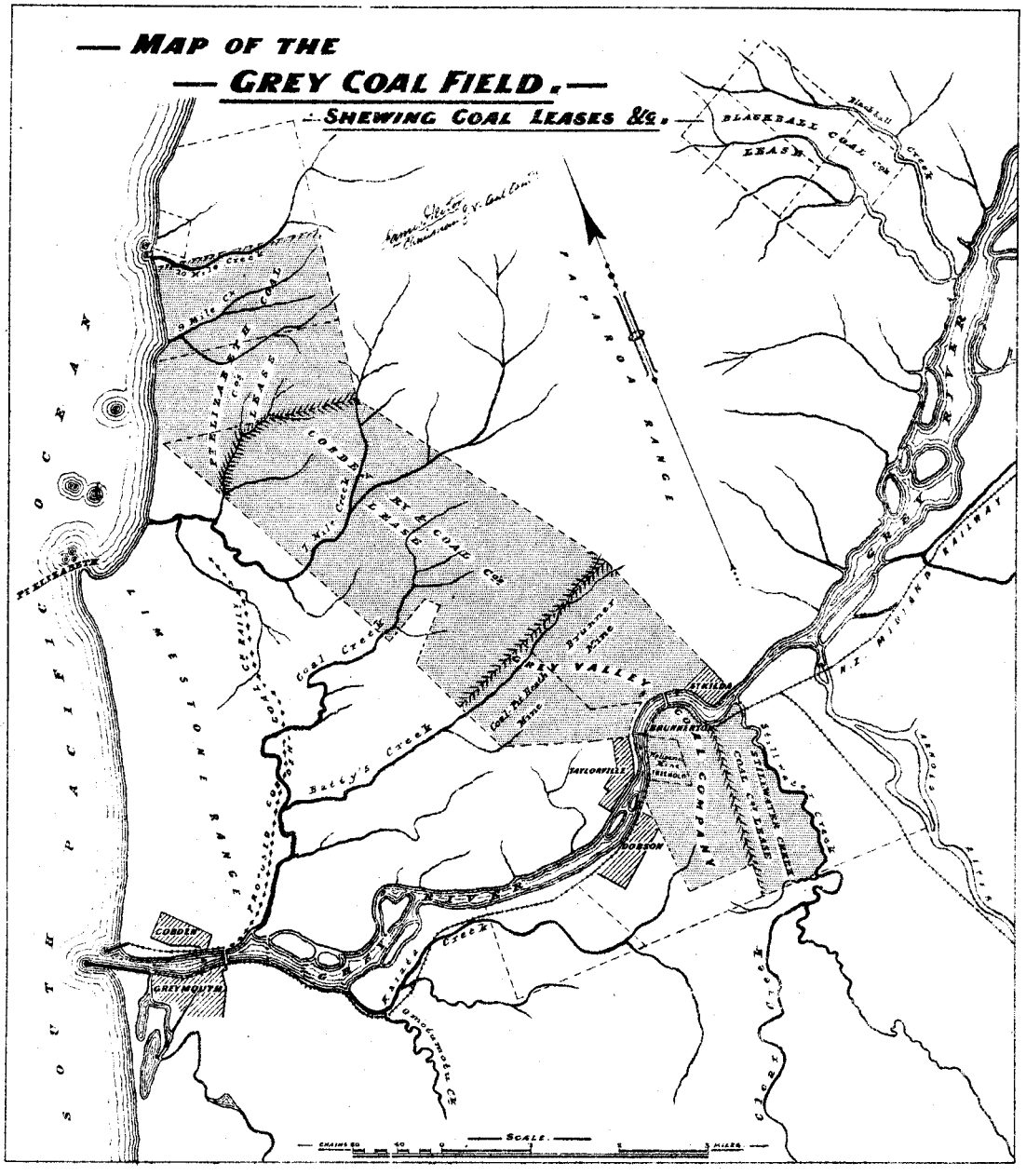
WORKING INCLINE

T.N.
M.N.

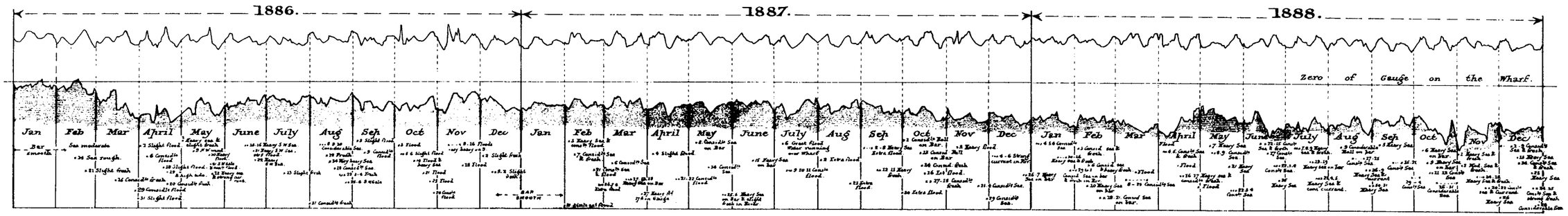
— SCALE OF CHAINS. —
0 5 10 15 20

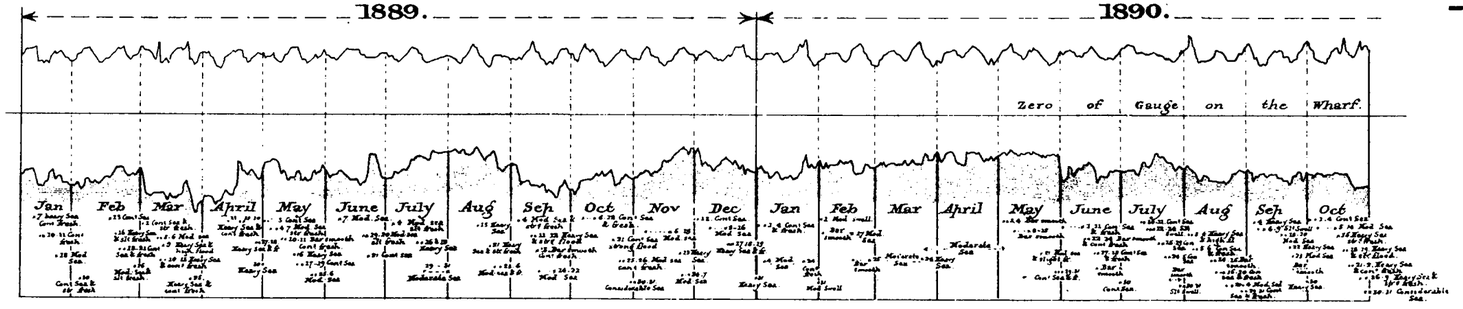
100 0 1000
— SCALE OF FEET. —

PLAN No 2.


— MAP OF THE
— GREY COAL FIELD. —
— SHEWING COAL LEASES &c. —
BLACKBALL COAL CO'S LEASE
BLACKBALL CREEK
PAPAROA RANGE
SOUTH PACIFIC OCEAN
GREY VALLEY
GREY RIVER
NEW ZEALAND MIDLAND RAILWAY
BRUNNERTON
TAYLORVILLE
DOBSON
COBDEN
GREYMOUTH
SCALE.

PLAN No 3.





GREYMOUTH HARBOUR.

SECTIONS

SHOWING

DEPTHS ON THE BAR.

Compiled from Drawings supplied by

Mr F W Martin Dist Engineer.

HORIZONTAL SCALE

DAYS. 10 0 50 100 150 DAYS.

VERTICAL SCALE

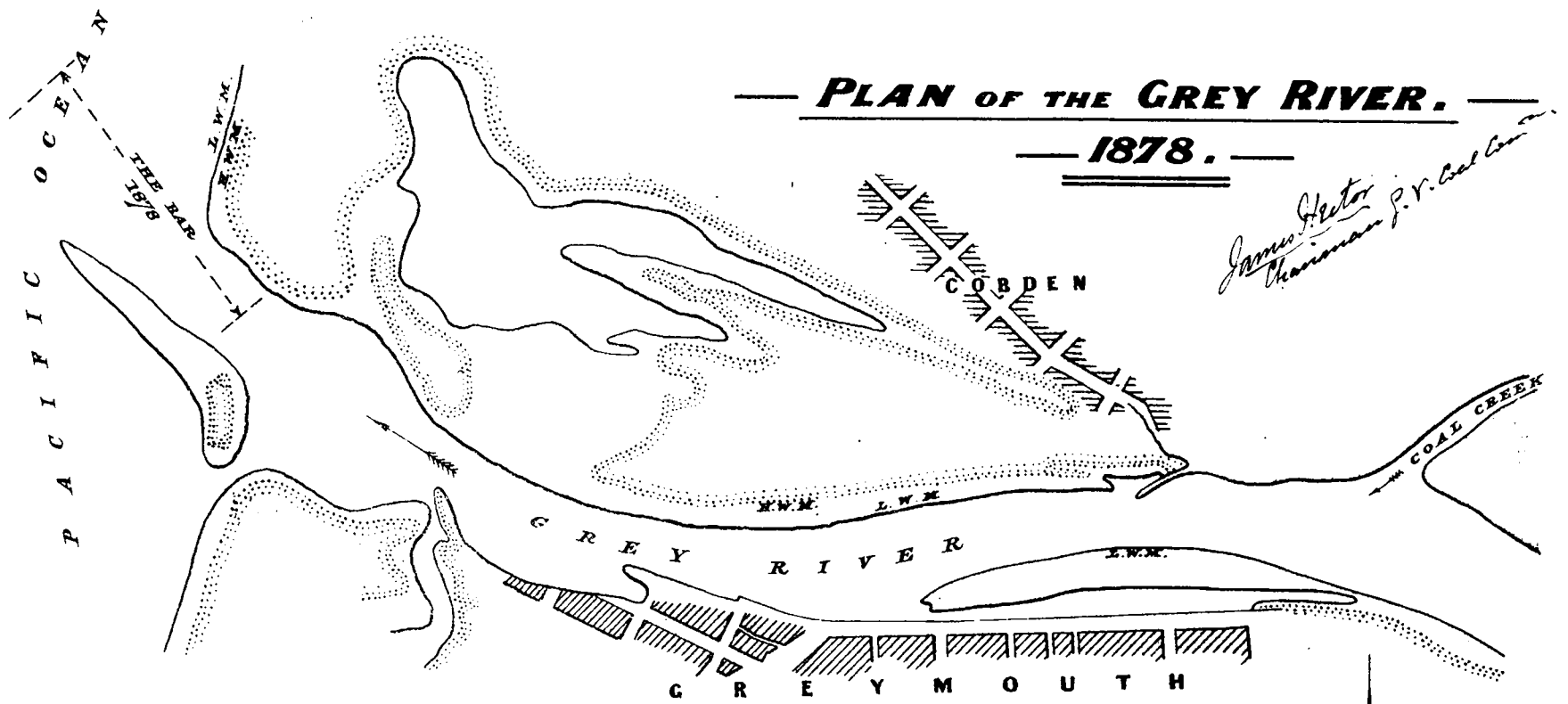
FEET 10 5 0 10 20 30 40 50 FEET.

Jno. Hetley
Chairman G.V. Coal Co.

PLAN Nº4.

PLAN OF THE GREY RIVER. 1878.

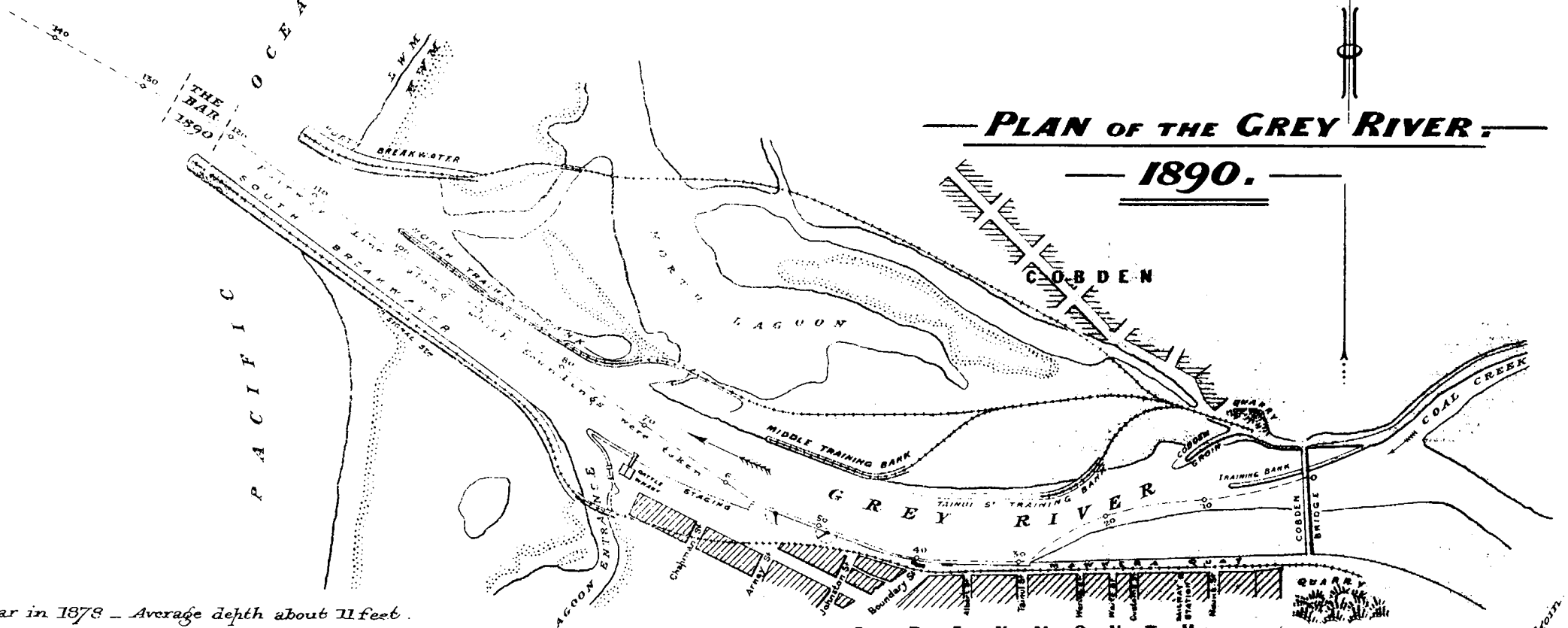
James Hector
Chairman G.R. Coal Com.



HORIZONTAL SCALE.
CHAINS 10 5 0 10 20 30 40 CHAINS.

VERTICAL SCALE.
FEET 10 5 0 10 20 30 40 50 FEET.

PLAN OF THE GREY RIVER. 1890.



Bar in 1878 – Average depth about 11 feet.
" " 1890 – " " " 13 " .
Improvement about 7 feet.

LONGITUDINAL SECTION OF BED OF THE GREY RIVER IN 1890.
Dotted lines indicate River Bed in 1878.

Compiled from Drawings supplied by Mr F W Martin Dist Engineer.

PLAN No 5.

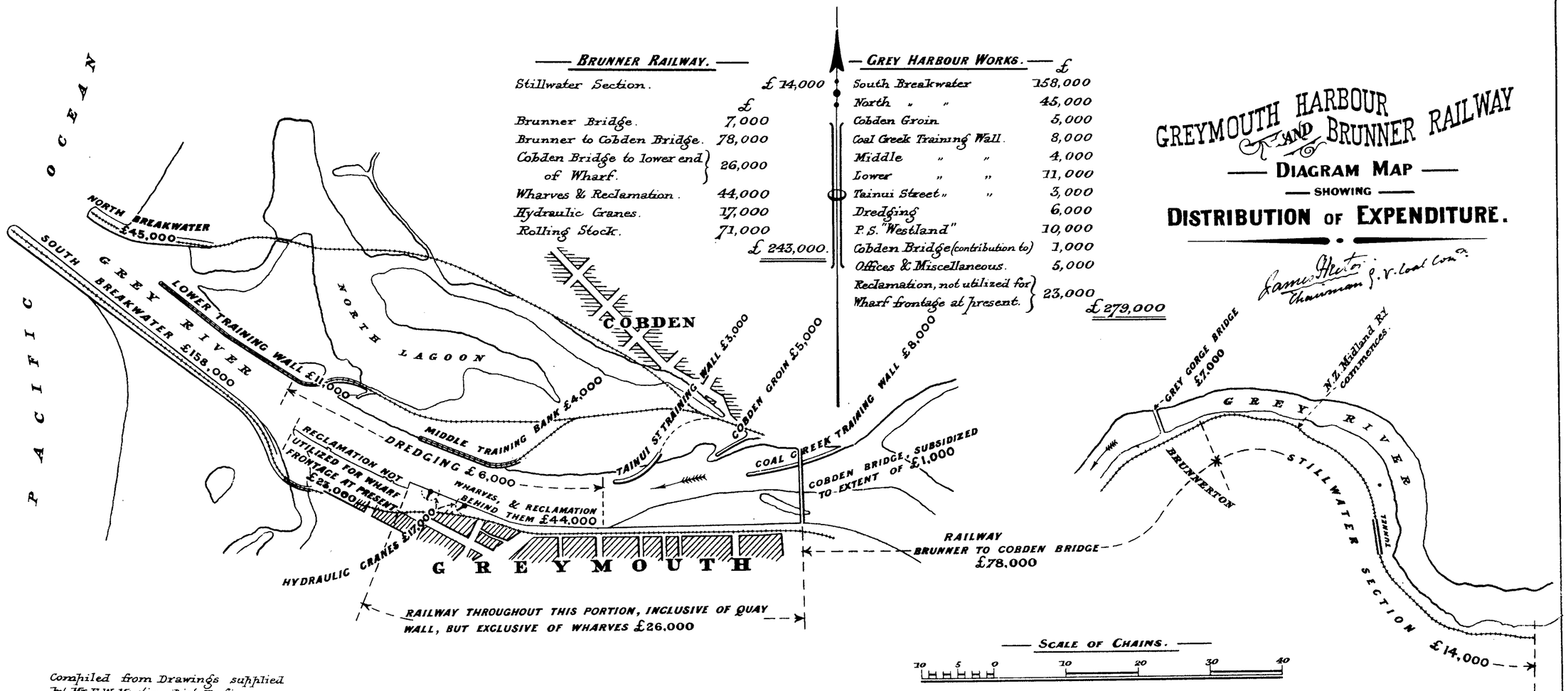
GREYMOUTH HARBOUR AND BRUNNER RAILWAY

DIAGRAM MAP

SHOWING

DISTRIBUTION OF EXPENDITURE.

James Mackay
Chairman G.V. Coal Co.



BRUNNER RAILWAY.

	£
Stillwater Section.	£ 14,000
Brunner Bridge.	7,000
Brunner to Cobden Bridge.	78,000
Cobden Bridge to lower end of Wharf.	26,000
Wharves & Reclamation.	44,000
Hydraulic Cranes.	17,000
Rolling Stock.	71,000
	£ 243,000.

GREY HARBOUR WORKS.

	£
South Breakwater	158,000
North " "	45,000
Cobden Groin	5,000
Coal Creek Training Wall.	8,000
Middle " "	4,000
Lower " "	11,000
Tainui Street " "	3,000
Dredging	6,000
P.S. "Westland"	10,000
Cobden Bridge (contribution to)	1,000
Offices & Miscellaneous.	5,000
Reclamation, not utilized for Wharf frontage at present.	23,000
	£ 279,000

Compiled from Drawings supplied by Mr F.W. Martin. Dist Engineer.