

834. Then, what was the use of the dams?—In case of a sudden outburst, as expressed in my letter.

835. You are playing with my question: what I wanted to know is, whether these workings were under that portion you wanted to fill with water: if the water rises to a certain level it would come down there?—Yes.

836. You put in the dams to stop it?—Yes.

837. Then, why did you tell the Committee that those workings were not lower than the others?—I did not say that; I said they were not below.

838. Seeing the fact that these dams were of no use when the water had risen to that level, was not that the reason why the lower workings were closed?—The dams were of use.

839. Did they prevent the mine being closed?—They prevented the men from being caught, and allowed the machinery to be got out.

840. You directed the men to be removed, did you not, from the high workings?—No; not from the high workings.

841. How, then, did they come to leave them?—By high workings, do you mean higher in level?

842. The workings that you intended to fill with water with a view of keeping up the roof?—I directed the men to withdraw from those workings.

843. That is the question I put to you: you directed them?—Yes.

844. Did not Messrs. Williams and Rich say at that time they were quite willing to withdraw the men if you would allow them to keep that portion of the mine dry?—That was in order that they might allow the men to work it.

845. Did not they agree to withdraw the men so long as you would allow that portion to be kept dry?—Yes.

846. Did not they point out to you that, if you let the water in, the result that took place would take place?—No; it was never mentioned until it broke in; then every one knew of it.

847. *Mr. Chapman.*] Did not Mr. Rich point out to you that the filling of the upper-seam workings with water would inevitably result in the closing of the lower-seam workings?—No; certainly not. He was going on projecting expensive works until the day the water broke in.

848. *Mr. McKenzie.*] Are you aware that, when you gave directions to leave these upper workings, every practical man said the mine was ruined?—No; I am aware that I was congratulated all over the country on my action by miners and managers.

849. I have heard it stated as I put it?—Very likely.

850. *Mr. Rolleston.*] I want to put these questions, Mr. Binns: Was the order to withdraw from the portion of the submarine workings in consequence of your opinion that the workings were unsafe, and that it was dangerous to life for the men remaining there?—It was.

851. Was not the filling with water a necessary consequence of that order?—It was.

852. Would it have made any difference in your order whether the filling with water supported the roof or not?—I do not think that it would. I should have withdrawn all the men more readily, perhaps.

853. You understand my question?—Yes; I said it would not.

854. Then, the question of your opinion upon the technical point of the support of the roof is not material to the main question of whether it was proper to withdraw the men or not?—No; I considered the place grossly unsafe.

855. *Mr. McKenzie.*] You abandon that portion of your theory, then?—No; not at all: I have a number of witnesses to support it.

Mr. C. E. TWINING, examined.

856. *Mr. Reid.*] What are you, Mr. Twining?—A mining engineer.

857. What experience have you had as a mining engineer?—It is between nineteen and twenty years since I served my articles, and I have been at it ever since.

858. How long have you practised as a mining engineer?—About fourteen years.

859. What are you doing now?—Practising as a mining engineer.

860. Still practising?—Yes.

861. Are you acquainted with the Shag Point Coal Mine, in the South Island?—I have been there on two occasions.

862. Are you acquainted with other collieries in New Zealand?—Yes.

863. Have you visited any collieries at Home?—Yes.

864. How many?—I could not answer that question: a great many.

865. More than one?—Well, I had to survey seventy-three different pits belonging to one company. I could not tell you how many.

866. *Mr. Rolleston.*] In what part of England?—Lancashire, North Wales, and South Wales.

867. *Mr. Reid.*] Were you called in to make a survey for the Government of the Shag Point Mine on one occasion?—Yes.

868. Will you tell us when that was?—In was on the 31st January, 1883, when I went there.

869. Who instructed you to make the survey?—Mr. Binns.

870. Did he give you any special instructions as to making the survey: if so, what were they?—To make an accurate survey of the mine, showing all falls, heaps of dross, and any wider places there might be; a general survey; a detailed survey of the mine.

871. Did you proceed to make a detailed and accurate survey?—Yes.

872. Did you complete it?—Yes.

873. How long did it take you?—Ten days, I think; at least, I was four days at the mine, and to make a plan took ten days.

874. You said you went to the mine on the 31st January, 1883?—Yes.