1076. When did you first write about the danger of letting the water in?—When I wrote to Mr. Rich in June, 1883.

1077. What did you apprehend would be the immediate or ultimate danger of letting the water in?—Exactly what I pointed out to Mr. Binns: that, as soon as pumping stopped, and water accumulated, the roofing would at once commence to fall in from the action of the water.

1078. What would follow from the roof breaking: would not the sea come in?—In time; the roof would break up until it reached the last sandstone under the sea, and then it would allow the sea to come in.

1079. Did you ever make any estimate as to the time it would take for the sea to come in?—Not exactly as to the time the sea would take to come in, but as to when we should have to stop working. I put it down as about eighteen months; but the fresh water rose faster than I calculated.

1080. If you thought the sea-water was likely to come in, how was it that you pushed on the works in the mine, making efforts to connect the level in the lower seam with the shaft in the north?—I was not going to stop the work in the mine because the sea was coming in in eighteen months' time; I had to push the works on.

1081. You did not think the sea would come in until after eighteen months?—No; I could not of course speak with any positiveness that it would come in on a certain day; but I thought that, in eighteen months, when the water rose to a certain height, and the dams did not answer (which I did not expect them to do), it would stop me from work below.

1082. How long after was it that the sea came in?—I cannot say.

1083. When do you think it came in?—I could not tell you; I could not say that it has come in now. All the damage that has been done has been caused by the actual rising of the water, that should have been pumped out.

1084. Do you not believe, as a matter of fact, that the sea coming in on the roof was the cause of the flooding of the mine; forcing the water into the dams and round them?—No; as the sea-water had not come in before the water was up to the dams, the dams being 141ft. below the sea-level.

1085. When did the water reach the dams?—On the 19th February, I think.

1086. Then, when did the sea-water come in after that?—I cannot say.

1087. Did you ever observe sea-water in the shafts round the dams?—No; I could not say that it was sea-water.

1088. Did you ever taste it?—Yes.

1089. Was it brackish?—It was more brackish after the 11th February.

1090. If the sea came in, it would force the fresh water up to the dams?—No; the sea-water would remain above the level of the dams.

1091. Have you ever told Mr. Binns that the tide was rising and falling round the claims in the mine?—No; I told him I believed that there was a rise and fall in the water of about 4in.

1092. What would that be caused by?—I told him that I believed it was the action of the tide; but I could not say positively.

1093. I suppose it is impossible to say positively, but you can form a good idea of where a large body of water would come from in workings of this sort?—I know that the large body was fresh water that we were pumping out.

1094. Do you mean to tell the Committee that the flooding of the mine was entirely due to the fresh water?—Yes; entirely so. The damage done was entirely due to it; the sea has had nothing to do with it. The damage was done where the sea-water was 140ft. above the level of the dam.

1095. Did you ever mention to Mr. Binns, either verbally or by letter, that the sea was likely to break in?—No; I never mentioned it as being likely to break in. I said that the sandstones and shales would gradually wear away till the last sandstone was reached, which would then crack and allow a small portion of water to come in.

1096. It would only come in, not break in?—No; what I call breaking in would be pouring in.

1097. You have seen this plan (Bishop and Taylor's) before?—That is a tracing taken from the plan.

1098. Where is the plan itself?—At Shag Point.

1099. You have not produced that?—No.

1100. Does the company's plan show more on it than this tracing?—Yes; there are four cross-cuts in the submarine portion of the mine, marked A in the tracing.

1101. Were they cross-cuts or bords?—Bords put through.

1102. Narrow or wide?—Some 14ft.

1103. Do you know any to be more than 14ft.?—Only in one case.

1104. What is the width of that, and which is it?—It is the second. On going through the mine with Mr. Binns I found the men had cut it nearly 20ft. wide for about 3ft. in length.

1105. This tracing is taken from a plan made some time ago: How long ago?—It was made at different dates.

1106. When was the portion marked A made?—In 1880 or 1881. It was the first portion done.

1107. When was the portion to the north of A made?—Somewhere about the same time. Part of it was added to as the works progressed.

1108. What do you call this portion?—I have no name to identify it; it is at the north side of the submarine works; A is about the centre.

1109. Was any alteration in this part of the works made on the plan subsequently to the date of survey from which this tracing was taken?—The only alteration I know of was the inaccuracy of the top bord, next the water-lodge room.

1110. What was the inaccuracy there?—The bord should not exist at all; and with Mr. Binns's consent I marked off a new bord in the centre of the block of coal and worked it.