

1312. You can submit a copy of that table?—I will do so.

1313. Is the number of men employed larger at Greymouth?—There is certainly a larger output of coal.

1314. Are you speaking of the present time or any time within the last three months?—I believe that Greymouth has gone off a good deal, and that Westport has overtaken it.

1315. Is the number of men now employed greater than at Greymouth—nearly double?—It may be; I cannot tell what happened since I was there except from hearsay.

1316. As to the West Coast mines generally: are they safely worked?—They are tolerably safe mines—ordinarily speaking, they are safe. There is an amount of explosive gas at Greymouth.

1317. How about the ventilation?—At Greymouth, the Wallsend Colliery is very well ventilated. The Coal-pit Heath is better ventilated than it was; but still, though the amount of air is large, it is somewhat deteriorated by heat from the underground engines: this difficulty is being gradually overcome. The Westport is pretty well ventilated; and the Brunner is well ventilated.

1318. Are these the only mines in active work in Greymouth?—Yes; the Tyneside is closed.

1319. What about Westport?—That is pretty well ventilated, but it is not perfect.

1320. When you say "not perfect," do the miners run any risk?—No; not at all. There is no gas at Westport.

1321. Going further down the coast—the Mokihinui—are they at work?—No; not when I was round.

1322. The Collingwood Mine, at Nelson?—I have not been there for some time.

1323. For how long?—In December last. That is well ventilated. It is a very small mine.

1324. How many miners are employed there?—Twenty hands all told.

1325. Is that the only mine at work over there?—Yes.

1326. Do the Committee understand from you that the inspection is twice a year?—Yes; never less than twice a year.

1327. Does that, in your opinion, meet the requirements of the case as regards safety?—It is very much oftener than in England. There is no detailed inspection there such as we carry out here.

1328. Will you describe the course you pursue in making your inspection through the mines?—I arrive at the mine without giving the manager notice, except in cases of special visits; I then proceed through the mine, examining all the workings, working places, workings of roads, and, if necessary, old workings.

1329. If necessary—why necessary?—Where there is supposed to be gas old workings might be very dangerous. I make a careful examination of the shafts. As to the steam machinery, I have nothing to do with that.

1330. Your duties only relate to the mine itself?—Yes.

1331. *Mr. Withy.*] Are you in the habit of tapping coal in the different parts of the mine?—Yes; I constantly try places for gas, and tap the coal. I have also to see that the ventilation and the timbering are right.

1332. Are there Sub-Inspectors of Mines?—No; there are other Inspectors besides myself, but they hold exactly the same position.

1333. *The Chairman.*] Do they reside on the spot?—Yes. Mr. Gow resides on the West Coast.

1334. Does he act under your instructions?—No; he is perfectly independent of me; he co-operates with me, but he is independent of me.

1335. *Mr. Withy.*] Do you look to the health and comfort of the men, or only to their safety?—To their health and comfort as well: they have to be provided with sufficient air to be able to breathe freely.

1336. What is the amount of air?—One hundred cubic feet of air per man per minute. That is the statutory quantity; that has always been found sufficient as a general rule.

1337. Do not different mines vary considerably in respect to the ventilation necessary?—Oh, yes.

1338. A mine at Greymouth would require more care than one at Westport?—Yes. Mr. Gow is appointed to investigate accidents promptly in cases where I cannot get over the ground; he has to investigate them promptly. It is impossible for the Inspector to get over every place where he has to go in time to make such investigations on the spot.

1339. *The Chairman.*] Is he a coal-viewer?—I do not think he has much experience in coal-mining, but he has a large experience in gold-mining.

1340. *Mr. Hutchison.*] Who is the officer that has to see to the due performance of the conditions of the lease?—The Crown Lands Agent, Mr. Greenfield.

1341. Who is there to see to the conditions of the lease under the Mining Act being performed?—I am not sure. I have an appointment under the Nelson Act too. I was appointed under the Brunner lease for a specific object.

1342. You are not aware there is any one?—There have been several new leases granted.

1343. Does that apply to the Westport Company or Coal-pit Heath?—I never saw that lease until this morning.

1344. Do you know how the output is gauged for the purpose of royalty?—No.

1345. Do you know any officer to whom that duty belongs?—No.

1346. Who takes that duty?—The railway authorities, I should imagine.

1347. It is stated that royalty is not paid on the quantity which the railway carries, but on a good deal less?—They furnish reports of the output under the Act; I obtain these from the manager; I get it direct; it is purely a proceeding under the Act. The reports are forwarded to me.

1348. What is there to show whether the company is working inside or outside its leasehold?—I have not the slightest idea.