

2191. *Mr. Withy.*] Then, does that agreement apply in the altered circumstances?—It has been held to apply.

2192. *The Chairman.*] The Waimangaroa and Ngakawau are the only amalgamated leases?—There are more than that by the return.

2193. Has the amalgamation made no return to the Government and the Harbour Board in respect to the output of coal?—The output was increased by 20 per cent.

2194. Has that output increased the haulage and the receipts?—Yes.

2195. *Mr. Hutchison.*] Do you know whether there is any agreement subsisting in regard to amalgamation in future?—I know of none.

Mr. PARK in attendance and examined.

2196. *The Chairman.*] You are connected with the Geological Department?—Yes.

2197. Have you been long connected with it?—About ten years altogether.

2198. Do you know much about the Westland coalfields, or that portion of the country where coal-seams exist?—The only portions of that country that I know much about are the West Wanganui areas.

2199. Will you describe to the Committee the country where they are?—They are mostly in the north-west extension of the South Island—that is, between Collingwood and West Wanganui Inlet.

2200. That is, if taken in a direct line, it would strike the coast about the mouth of the West Wanganui River?—No; about Kauerangi Point.

2201. What district is it known as?—The West Wanganui coalfield. I can produce a tracing of it, and give you the results of my last trip.

2202. How long were you there?—About five weeks altogether. Since then I have made a survey of the part that runs to the Aorere River.

2203. What is the depth of water on the bar at West Wanganui Inlet: do you know?—14ft. at high-water spring-tides. The harbour is a safe one at all times. It is said to be superior to Greymouth or Westport by mariners who frequent it.

2204. What area did you cover in these five weeks?—Twenty miles square, approximately—that is, about four hundred square miles.

2205. Did you find many traces of coal?—Yes; I examined outcrops of coal in a great many places.

2206. Will you describe to the Committee any important seams that you have discovered?—I have notes of the observations I made on the ground.

2207. You might make a *précis* of them for the use of the Committee?—I will do so.

2208. You may also describe to the Committee generally, from your notes, the coal-seams that you examined during the five weeks you were surveying the district?—Yes. The coal consists of three different kinds: (1) a bituminous coal of very fine quality; (2) a pitch-coal; (3) a brown coal. The bituminous coal occurs in the lower coal-measures; the pitch-coal in the upper coal-measures, passing southwards into the brown coal.

2209. Which predominated?—In this district I calculated that there are 25,260,000 tons of coal.

2210. That is, Collingwood?—Yes. Most of it is under water-level. 12,600,000 tons of brown coal, of which 3,600,000 tons are level free. There remains 9,000,000 tons of pitch-coal below water-level.

2211. Then, the bituminous coal?—They are exposed along the face opposite the Aorere Valley, or Collingwood district.

2212. Was there much of that?—I can give you the particulars. The number of seams known along the line of outcrop facing the valley is said to be seventeen, of which only five are known to be of any size.

2213. What do you call of any size, for we have been accustomed to hear of seams 25ft. and 26ft. thick?—I mean approaching to workable size.

2214. Three feet, would you say?—No; about 2ft. Only 2ft. seams have been worked at the present time at the coal-mine at Ferntown.

2215. Have they been regularly worked?—Yes.

2216. Where are they situated?—At Ferntown, Collingwood.

2217. Are you alluding to the Collingwood Coal Company?—Yes; the company that supplies the gasworks at Nelson.

2218. What is the output?—It is very limited. It takes them all their time to supply enough coal for the gasworks. It is very small indeed.

2219. Did you find any seams on the West Wanganui?—Yes; there are some large and workable.

2220. What size?—About 4ft. or 5ft. in thickness.

2221. Does it extend a long distance?—For a distance of about two miles extension.

2222. Along the coast?—Parallel with the coast.

2223. Did you trace them back from the coast?—No; they are not traceable inland. They dip to the westward, under the water-level.

2224. Towards the sea?—Yes; that is why I calculated the coal to 1,000ft. below water-level.

2225. Are there facilities for coal trade there?—The facilities are very great indeed.

2226. For shipment? Do you know what distance the Mokihinui River is from West Wanganui? What is the distance from Cape Farewell?—About eighty miles; sixty-five to West Wanganui River.

2227. Then, the whole of that country appears to be intersected with coalfields?—Yes.

2228. *Mr. Guinness.*] Have you made any survey of the coal-measures in the Grey Valley district?—No; I have not been so far south as that.