

521. *Mr. Joyce.*] As a fireman in Wallsend, at what time did you make your report?—After I came out at night, or after the shift was over.

522. *Mr. Proud.*] Do you think that No. 4 bord would be a likely place to put two men into, or one man, if they were short of working-places?—Yes, I think it is a likely place; they could do no damage to the pillar; it is a big one.

523. *Mr. Skellon.*] Where the air is split at the cabin, there is a three-cornered piece of coal. Do you know that place?—I do not know it, as I did not work down there.

524. *Mr. Skellon.*] I want to know if there is a stopping in the stenton below that triangular pillar?

*Mr. Bishop:* I can tell you that. There is a stopping below the sump; there was no stopping in the stenton below the pillar referred to.

EDWARD MOORE examined.

525. *Mr. Joyce.*] You are a coal-miner, Mr. Moore?—Yes.

526. I think you worked in the dip-workings of the Brunner Mine?—I did.

527. When did you work there?—Last Christmas.

528. Did you find any accumulation of gas?—Yes.

529. Where?—In the bottom place, sump-workings, now covered by water.

530. What height was the gas you found?—There might have been from 6ft. to 7ft. of gas in the high side of the bord—the last bit I was in.

531. What length did it extend?—It might have been 20ft. from the face.

532. Were there any steps taken then to brattice it out?—There was water in the place.

533. In other portions of the mine did you see gas making?—Yes, in the sump-level—in two places below the sump-level; that is where I saw the 7ft. of gas.

534. What was the height of the wall on the high side?—Between 12ft. and 13ft.

535. *Sir J. Hector.*] Was there any hole there?—There was a hole there—the bottom went down.

536. *Mr. Joyce.*] Did you say you saw gas accumulating in the sump-level?—I did not find it. I saw men working with safety-lamps in it.

537. How were you informed there was 7ft. on the high side?—That was in my place—in the bottom place. I was not working in the 7ft. of gas. I went for my tools and found it there.

538. Was any one with you when you found the gas?—John Roberts, the fireman.

539. Did Morris test it?—Yes; that is the reason I know there was 7ft. We were driven out by the water.

540. When you saw the men working in the sump-level with their clannys, the gas being there, was the brattice right up to the face?—I did not take any notice of it.

541. Did you ever work with safeties in any gas?—Yes, in different parts of the mine.

542. Was there gas present when you were working with safeties?—When we started it was cleared by the air.

543. When the gas was there, was it not the custom to allow the men to work below you in the air-course with naked lights?—Yes; I have seen them working above and below with naked lights.

544. Have you ever seen a gas explosion?—No; I have never been burnt or scorched.

545. With reference to the ventilation, how did you find it?—In some places it was bad, and in some good. I do not know where they split the air.

546. *Mr. Park.*] Do you think a person could work in 5ft. of gas?—I do not know.

547. Have you any idea what quantity of gas there was in the sump-level where they were working with safeties?—No; in part of the drive they were working with safeties.

548. How do you know there was any gas there at all?—The men said it was there. I do not know whether there was any there or not.

549. *Mr. Guinness.*] You say you went and took out your tools when you were working the lower level. Who ordered you to do that?—The deputy.

550. Why?—Because they were frightened we would not get them again, on account of the water rising.

551. Was it because the water was rising, or because gas was discovered there?—The deputy did not tell me. He told me to get the tools out, as I might not get them again.

552. Did you notice if the gas showed a "cap"?—I had it not in the lamp.

553. Nothing more took place about it?—No.

553a. *Mr. Beare.*] Are you prepared to state that the height of the outside wall was between 12ft. and 13ft.?—I would not swear to an inch, but I think it was very near to that.

554. Was there any coal there at all?—I could not say. There was coal when I was working.

555. Twelve feet to the top?—I would not swear to an inch. I reckoned about 12ft. back on the high side.

556. *Sir J. Hector.*] When you talk of 7ft. back, you mean 7ft. measured down, so that if the bord were 13ft. high the gas would not have been within your reach?—Yes, it would be if you went along the middle of the road.

557. If it were 13ft. high, and the gas stood 7ft. down from the upper side, it would run level from there till it came to the roof. It would be 6ft. clear of air underneath?—I was in the middle of the bord.

558. *Mr. Proud.*] Did you always find the brattice and doors in a good state?—Yes, they were always kept good.

559. *Mr. Skellon.*] When you went to get your tools, did you have a naked light?—Yes.

560. You went into a place where the men were working with safeties?—No; I left it a long way back. I had a Clanny with me.