

BRUNNERTON, 15TH MAY, 1896.

NEIL DUNDONALD COCHRANE re-examined.

1. *Mr. Joyce.*] What part of the mine did you measure the air passing through, Mr. Cochrane?—In very many different parts—in the main level, in the return, in various parts of the main dips, and in the different splits.

2. Did you ever examine the air at the working-faces? Did you take the quantity by an air instrument?—I examined the air at the faces with a safety-lamp, but to try to measure the quantity right at the face would be absurd. The anemometer will not record a very low velocity.

3. What distance from the working-faces would it reach?—That depends on the sectional area of the place affecting the velocity, and the distance varies in different faces, according to where the brattice is led forward.

4. Do you think a special measurement ought to be made at the working-faces?—No anemometer will give a reliable measurement of the regulation quantity for one face in such large places as in the Brunner Mine.

5. Is it the fact that you cannot test the amount of air which is going along the working-faces?—I measured at the inclines and near the faces, but you cannot measure the quantity for a single-board face unless the place is small.

6. If you cannot test along the working-face, could not you make some other test along the return?—Yes; I have done that, and found the quantity to agree with that in the splits. Speaking from memory, 5,000 cubic feet per minute passed round the sump-side, and 9,000 round the pillar-workings.

7. In your opinion, there was enough air going through the mine?—Yes. I have already told you there was double, or more than double, the quantity provided for by the Act; but at times places would get ahead of the air, and I would request brattice to be put up, and it would be done. When I thought the powder-smoke was not clearing quick enough some two years ago, I spoke about it, and the undercast was put in, which kept it away from the men ahead.

8. Do you think the lamp-cabin is in a safe place in the dip?—When there are only two or three lamps used, I consider down the dip all right.

9. But if you have to use a large number of safeties in the future, you consider the lamp-cabin should be outside?—I would have it outside.

10. Did you order safeties to be used after the explosion, or by whose instructions are they used in the mine now?—I have already told you (in my examination in chief) that after the explosion, with so much to do in order to insure safety, and to get "breathing-time," and before deciding what the cause of the explosion was, I requested that none but safety-lamps be used, and no blasting with powder be done in the dip-workings section.

11. But why are safety-lamps to be used in the future if there was no indication of a gas explosion in the mine?—Because I think the mine was shaken by the explosion.

12. Cannot naked lights be substituted without your permission?—No.

13. Then you do not think the mine safe to be worked now without safety-lamps?—Not at present.

14. Why?—Because at two or three of the falls we found gas in small quantities, but more than before.

15. Have you ever doubted that safety-lamps should always be used in a mine after an explosion?—No.

GREYMOUTH, MONDAY, 18TH MAY, 1896.

JAMES BISHOP re-examined.

1. *Sir J. Hector.*] What was the cause, Mr. Bishop, of the closing down of the mine on the 25th March?—Owing to the want of shipping, caused by the state of the weather, the steamers not being able to get in. We had only worked one day from the 20th to the 26th March—namely, on the 24th.

2. How old was the youngest of the lads Geoghegan?—Nineteen years.

3. Had he had much experience in coal-mining?—A good many months' experience with his brother. He had been working as a hewer.

4. *Mr. Park.*] His father said he was under the instructions of his brother at the time, and that he would do nothing without his brother's sanction?—I dare say he would not.

5. *Sir J. Hector.*] What kind of weather was it on the morning of the explosion?—Very fine weather.

6. Do you remember if the barometer was read and noted that morning at 8 o'clock?—I believe the barometer read about 30 degrees.

7. Has your barometer been compared with other standard barometers?—Not recently.

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8. *Mr. Proud.*] Kindly state the duties of an Inspector under the Coal-mines Act, and inform the Commissioners how you discharged those duties?—Of course I have duties as a Gold-mine Inspector as well as a Coal-mines Inspector, and many other duties I am instructed to perform by the Under-Secretary of the department. My duties under the Coal-mines Act are to inspect the coal-mines, and see that the Act is carried out.

9. *Mr. Park.*] Is there anything you would like to add to your previous evidence?—I have already in my evidence shown you how I have carried out these duties. I take it the most requirements are good ventilation and timbering. The ventilation has been shown to be more than double what the Act provides for, and to be fairly well carried round the working-faces. The freedom from accidents by falls from the roof and side shows that the timbering is attended to.