

331. What was the custom of the underviewer? Did he make an examination daily?—Yes; I have seen him personally examining the edges of the goafs adjacent to the working-places.

332. I suppose the underviewer took nearly the whole day in making his examination?—In making his examination, a part of the day.

333. Do you remember the explosion of the 26th March?—Yes.

334. Is it probable that the underviewer would not have seen the bottom part of the mine on that day before the explosion occurred?—It is just possible that he might have gone in the west side first, and by doing so he would not have seen the bottom workings.

335. Have you had any experience in blasting at the Brunner Mine?—Yes, but have had no blown-out shots. I have seen blown-out shots. If a shot is in too heavy, it is possible for it to blow out. Provided it is not overcharged, and it is properly undercut, and that the weakest part is not out towards the hole, it will not blow out.

336. Can you always get a successful shot under those conditions?—It is not practicable, under those conditions, to have a blown-out shot.

337. Did you ever see a blown-out shot?—Yes; I have seen them in this mine.

338. Did it produce much commotion, or raise much coal-dust?—Yes. I saw a shot blown out in the old Brunner dip-workings that raised a great cloud of dust and filled the place full of fire; but it did not produce any further explosion.

339. How long ago was that?—About eleven years ago.

340. Have you been aware that coal-dust is a very explosive agent, for some time past?—Yes, for some years.

341. Do you know whether the majority of men working in a mine are under the same impression?—A great many are under that impression, and a great many do not believe in it.

342. Do you think that watering round a shot would minimise the danger of an explosion?—In a dusty mine, certainly it would.

343. In the Brunner Mine, do you think the danger would be minimised?—I could not say that it would be minimised much unless it was watered for a considerable distance away from the shot.

344. Say, for a radius of 20 yards?—That might do.

345. Do you think a high explosive would be better than powder?—Yes, on account of producing less flame.

346. Is there any particular explosive which you have seen which would be much better than powder?—I have seen roburite, but it was not a great success, probably on account of defective quality of the material. At the same time no flame came from it.

347. If roburite were used instead of powder, and assuming that this explosion was caused by blown-out shot, do you think you would have had this explosion?—I do not.

348. Gas is only tried for with the Davy lamp?—With an improved Davy.

349. That will show you up to 3 per cent. of gas?—Yes.

350. Do you not think you could get some better form of lamp, or a proper indicator?—I do not think it is necessary to have under 3 per cent. I think the Davy lamp is sufficient for ordinary purposes, but for extraordinary purposes it is useful to have those machines that indicate $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of gas.

351. Do you know that $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of gas mixed with coal-dust is a very explosive mixture?—Yes; and 2 per cent. is very explosive.

352. So that mixture in a mine would not be detected if you had no better means of detecting for it than a Davy?—Yes.

353. Do you not think it is necessary, seeing that that amount of gas and coal-dust is explosive, that we should have a better means of testing for it?—Yes.

354. Did you go down the mine immediately after the explosion?—Yes.

355. How far did you get the first day after the explosion?—To the top of the dip. There were no falls in that distance, but there was a set of timber down; but no stone. We met the first fall down the main dip.

356. Did you meet any falls which completely covered the passage from the floor to the roof?—No.

357. There was room for the air to get over the top?—Yes.

358. Have you ever examined the return airway?—Yes, frequently since the explosion.

359. Was the return air-course ever pointed out to you before the explosion?—No, it was not necessary. I was not working in that part of the mine.

360. When you were working in the dip, where would you have got out?—I came out at the return, and I had no difficulty in finding it by the air-current.

361. Do you not think it would have been an improvement if the return had been made larger?—The larger the better.

362. What do you think of the ventilation?—Good.

363. We had some evidence to-day that the ventilation could have been much better?—That would apply to every mine.

364. You have worked in the collieries at Home?—Yes.

365. Was the ventilation in the Brunner better than it is at Home?—It will favourably compare with the majority of mines I have worked in.

366. You know where the dam is?—Yes.

367. Have you seen the air-regulator there?—Yes.

368. I believe it averages 6ft. by 18in.?—The area is about 10ft.

369. Do you think that regulator is sufficient for the purpose?—Yes.

370. If the air had been split lower down, would not there have been greater facilities for escape in case of an explosion?—No; that is no part of the escape from that part of the district.

371. Could not you make an escape?—Yes; but there are different roads independent of that.