

65. Do you know anything about this matter up to June from your own personal knowledge?—So far as my own personal knowledge goes, I can only speak from being in the mine once last year, before the fire, and before Mr. Broome left.

66. The mine was not working?—No; it had just ceased. When in the district at the end of February or the beginning of March—I had heard incidentally of the fire—I saw what was done, and was quite satisfied that what had been done up to that time was all that possibly could be done under the circumstances.

67. What was the condition of the mine when you saw it in October?—It was very clean—so clean that I was rather struck with it.

68. There was no refuse or anything lying about?—There was much less than I had expected to find.

69. Do you know whether the fire started with the slack coal?—I do not know.

70. Did the Inspector ever report to the department or to you that he insisted upon the refuse being taken out of the mine in October?—No, I do not know that he did, but I understood it was the practice to do it.

71. I want you to tell us what you know of your own personal knowledge?—When I was there in February I saw that the mine entrance and outlet had been sealed up, and, as far as I could judge, what had been done to preserve the coal remaining there had been well done.

72. What date was that?—The 24th February.

73. No start had been made to dam the water?—Not at that time. I was not there again until the end of June.

74. And, of course, you could not get near the mine then?—No.

75. In their report Messrs. Shore, Alison, and Foster recommend that a certain course should be adopted?—Yes.

76. Did not the Inspector put a 2 in. pipe across the gully before that?—Yes.

77. When did he put it in?—I do not know. It was not in when I was there in February.

78. Did he ever report on it?—I expect he did, but I have not got the report.

79. Have you no report at all?—I could get it at the office.

80. Messrs. Shore, Alison, and Foster recommended that either a 4 in. or 6 in. pipe should be put across the gully?—Yes.

81. What size pipe did you put in?—A 2 in. pipe.

82. I mean after their report?—There was no more pipe put in. There was no water the thickness of my finger when I saw it in June. When I was there for several days a $\frac{3}{4}$ in. pipe would have carried any water coming in.

83. Have you ever been there in wet weather?—Yes, fairly wet.

84. Was there no water then?—It was just off and on.

85. This is what Shore, Alison, and Foster say about the water-supply: "The present method of dealing with surface outbreak at Chasm Creek, between K and H, is: A 2 in. pipe has been laid from a creek on Bridge section across bridge to above tunnel; a 20 ft. piece of canvas hose with nozzle is attached to this, and for eight hours per day, from 8 a.m. to 4.30 p.m., one man is in charge playing the water upon the fiercest flames"—I think with all due deference to those gentlemen they did not grasp the meaning of that pipe and why it was there.

86. Why did you allow the water to run to waste sixteen hours out of the twenty-four?—I was not there. The gentlemen who made this report did not grasp the conditions fully.

87. Why not?—Because had they done so they would have reported very differently.

88. These three gentlemen were all qualified men—as qualified as yourself, Mr. Hayes?—Will you allow me to state the object of that 2 in. pipe? It was not to cope with the surface outbreak of fire, as such, at all: The object was to conserve the stopping put in the tunnel, so that if they could get the dam in lower down they might put a watertight dam in the tunnel near the bridge.

89. Can you tell why you put a nozzle on for that purpose?—Just to play round about.

90. Suppose you wanted to conserve that, why did you not use it the whole twenty-four hours?—It was so used.

91. Here it says it was not?—It does not follow that it was to be played all about.

92. You say you never took the water across to flood the mine?—No.

93. Still, you put a dam in?—Yes.

94. This is what these gentlemen say about it: "We must certainly condemn the above system of working. The water-supply is inadequate, and what is available is not being used to advantage"—That is their opinion. I do not admit that last portion.

95. They go on to say: "We would recommend that a 4 in. or larger line of pipes for main column be laid from source of supply to end of bridge at mine-exit; a T-piece with 2 in. branches be then connected to the column, and the present 2 in. pipes be laid along face of cliff on both sides, extending altogether from H to L"—That is their opinion.

96. Here is a quotation from Mr. Dixon's report at page 9: "No. 6. The fire in mine was located to-day in the back heading of the Long Jig." Can you tell us where that is?—Yes. [Indicated on plan.]

97. Which way did they go into the mine to locate that fire?—[Indicated on plan.] They were driven back by the smoke and gas.

98. Where does he say that?—In the report sent to the department.

99. Of course they had the fan working at this time?—A fan was erected temporarily with the object of drawing sufficient air in to enable them to get in and build a stopping. Had the heavy fall not taken place they would have been able to get a really good dam in.

100. Suppose there are people who are prepared to give evidence that there was no serious difficulty or trouble in throwing water on the fire?—I think it would be a very foolish method to