

46. As the dam was constructed by you, did you expect it to withstand greater pressure of water than would be required to fill the mouth of the tunnel immediately behind the dam?—The question never gave me any thought. I never considered anything about the pressure she should stand.

47. *Mr. Cottrell.*] In reference to the taking of this contract, were all the negotiations made by Mitchell?—Yes, so far as how to complete the contract. In the money matters we were sharing.

48. Who gave all the directions in the construction of the dam?—Mitchell gave them to the workmen and to myself.

49. Although you shared the profits, were you not simply in the position of a workman?—Yes.

50. Mr. Hayes, in his report to the department, says in reference to the contract, "Instead of placing this in Mitchell's hands, it appears the company let the work by contract to Peter Martin, a carpenter at the colliery." You say that that is all wrong?—Yes.

51. You relied upon your partner for all instructions?—Yes.

52. And you took no active part in the selection of the clay or anything else?—No.

53. Did Roland Broome ever see you about it?—Yes; about the money part of it, after he got word about it from Mr. Bayfeild, the agent. This dam was let to Mitchell two or three days previously, before Roland Broome knew anything about the money.

54. *The Chairman.*] How long had Mitchell had the job before you knew you were going to share with him?—He got it before dinner, and I got it that night about 6 o'clock.

55. Had you shared any jobs before with Mitchell?—Yes.

56. How many?—One or two jobs from the company, and we had been timbering together two or three times.

57. Was he not with you in the machinery job?—No. We tendered together once, but it was not let.

58. Did he not work with you in it?—No.

59. *Mr. Cottrell.*] The anchorage of the bridge is mentioned in Mr. Hayes's report: I thought you put that in some time previously?—I am the builder of the bridge.

60. In answer to question No. 200 in the evidence taken before the Goldfields and Mines Committee last session of Parliament, Mr. Hayes says, "The ground was slipping, and the anchorages (of the bridge) were weakening"?—When I saw that report about the bridge I went out to see it, thinking something might have happened to it in consequence of the fire.

61. You went to see if the anchorage was all right?—Yes.

62. What state did you find it in?—In the same condition as when I left it in 1897.

63. Do you think there was any soft coal where the anchorage was put in?—No, I deny that. It was solid rock.

64. Do you fear that these reports have done you any harm?—I do. I feel that so long as those reports stand against me I dare not go to any other colliery to ask for a billet as a colliery carpenter.

65. *Mr. Corby.*] Mr. Hayes also complains about this tunnel being broken up: do you remember yourself and Mr. Mitchell drawing the water out through the pipe some time previous to the writing of the letter?—We did.

66. That was after the dam was supposed to be full?—Yes.

67. That is what the vigilance committee referred to in the letter?—Yes.

68. You assisted Mr. Mitchell to draw the water?—Yes. We let the water go several times. It was nothing uncommon.

69. *Mr. Lomas.*] How many props were set in the centre of the road to support the dam you built by contract?—Two.

70. How far were they from the centre of the road?—They were supposed to be 2 ft. apart. There was the wall, then a prop, then an opening, and then another prop. They were let into the bottom and wedged fast into the roof.

71. Did you go into the dam after it burst through, or notice whether the props ever moved?—I never went in to see them.

72. *Mr. Proud.*] What experience have you had in the construction of dams?—A good deal. I built a dam in Humphrey's Gully fifteen years ago—a large dam. I have built dams for sawmill-sites at a place called Back Creek, at Hokitika, and I think I know how to build them.

73. *Mr. Lomas.*] How would you construct a log dam?—I put my timber in not across the face, but 6 ft. or 8 ft. long, and then plug them.

74. Without any clay at all?—Without clay, but to let a little sawdust in.

75. You mean that the dam would be 6 ft. of solid timber, well plugged?—Yes, centre-plugged.

76. *Mr. Proud.*] You have never seen a brick dam put in?—No.

77. *Mr. Corby.*] Did you go in and cut the rope to bring it out of the mine on the night when they put up the first stopping?—Yes; that was on the 5th. The first stopping was not up, but they were working at the foundation.

78. Did you experience much difficulty in getting up?—No.

79. Did you get up far enough to see the fire?—No.

80. Did it take long to get the rope?—No.

81. Would you have been afraid to remain an hour there?—I would not have been afraid to stop there all night in the state of the atmosphere then.

82. How long do you think it would have taken four men to put a temporary stopping of brattice up?—Four men should do it, if they had their appliances with them, in ten minutes.

83. Do you think that stopping could have been as easily put in where we say it was wanted, in the plan, as where it is now?—Yes.