

129. What kind of timber did you use?—Sawn timber, except the two uprights.

130. What thickness was the timber?—Almost all was 6 in. by 12 in.

131. Whereabouts was the log-dam put in?—Was it nearer to the mouth than the other?—We asked Mr. Tennent to show us the place where he was going to put that No. 3 dam, and he would not tell us.

132. Are you quite positive there was no one in authority who said anything at all about the kind of foundation that should be put in for this dam?—I am quite sure that no one said anything to me about it.

133. Was the clay put in loose or puddled?—It was puddled—a greasy kind of clay.

134. What was the size of your wedges for caulking purposes?—They varied.

135. Did you find any of your caulking come out again at all?—Yes, it was like a shower-bath all over the place.

136. Did you just get wedges and drive the clay in in a loose way?—Yes; we drove it as well as we could. The timber was right enough.

137. Do you think it was the force of water that lifted the floor?—I do not think there was any break in the bottom.

138. Was there a leak in the bottom?—The bottom never gave way, and I do not think anything of that kind happened.

139. After the water came out of the pipes you put down, where did it go to?—It just ran down towards the mouth of the tunnel and out of it again.

140. You say that what Mr. Hayes has said about the quantity of water there is not true?—Yes, I do.

141. You say that if No. 3 dam had been put at No. 4 it would have saved the mine?—It would have saved the north block.

142. Was there no fire between the main road and the mine-mouth?—There never was fire down there. It would have saved the block of coal showed on the plan.

143. *Mr. Proud.*] A hand-fan and pipes, I suppose, were not procurable?—We had one on the works.

144. But you would have wanted pipes as well?—If we did not use a pipe for the big fan, why should we use pipes for the small fan?

145. Do you think a dam could have been put in much nearer to the fire?—Yes; and the whole of that north block ought to have been saved, in my opinion. I heard that Mr. Corby made an offer to the Minister of Mines to put the fire out for £500, and did not expect to receive anything if he did not succeed. There was not much fire in the mine then.

ROBERT TENNENT, examined.

1. *The Chairman.*] What are you?—Inspector of Mines for the Nelson, Marlborough, and Westland Districts.

2. *Mr. Harden.*] Will you kindly make any statement you wish to make regarding the fire at the Cardiff Mine?—About noon on Sunday, the 28th January, 1900, Mr. Roland Broome, caretaker of the mine and brother to the late mine-manager, informed me at my residence that a fire had broken out in the Mokihinui Mine. This statement did not at first alarm me, as I knew that fire always did exist in the Mokihinui workings since the year 1894. I and Mr. Broome went to the Westport Stationmaster, and arrangements were made to proceed by tricycle to Mokihinui. Reaching Cardiff at half-past seven o'clock, I went direct into the mine at the main entrance and proceeded round the first curve until my light was lost. It was put out by the gases. I could see that nothing could be done that night to reach the seat of the fire. The brattice was then nailed down satisfactorily across the mouth of the drive. Early on Monday morning, the 29th January, I went up to the mine and entered by the main entrance tunnel to near the second stone drive, about 14 chains in. Coming outside from that point I found that Mr. Dixon had just arrived. He was manager at Granity Creek Colliery. Mr. Dixon and I then proceeded about 15 or 16 chains in the main tunnel until we saw the air-current reversing. We turned back then and visited the North block old workings, and satisfied ourselves that fire did not exist in that region. Coming back on the main haulage-road, we found the gases before us, and we had to make our way to the daylight—to the tunnel-mouth. We then decided to go over the hill to the bridge-end tunnel. Smoke was issuing from the bridge end of the main tunnel, but after a few minutes the current changed, and we then got in about 10 chains into the drive. Finding it impossible to proceed further on account of the gases, we ordered the haulage-trucks to be taken outside and the tunnel bratticed off; also an opening at the old ventilation fan-drift was bratticed off. Going back to the main entrance, the smoke and gases were very strong, and it was with great difficulty we could get the brattice put down and made tight. Mr. Dixon and I decided then to remove the ventilating-fan from the Bridge section of workings and build it at the main-tunnel exit to bridge. This work was put into the hands of P. A. Mumm, who had been formerly engineer at the colliery. As my duties compelled me to leave to supervise the mine-managers' examinations at Reefton, I left on the 29th January, the mine being temporarily sealed down. Mr. Dixon left along with me and returned on the Wednesday. I was not present again at the mine until the 5th February. Mr. Dixon was left in charge. He was appointed to take charge on Monday, the 29th January. On reaching the property on the 5th February, I found everything satisfactorily sealed off as Mr. Dixon had left it, and before opening any of the stoppings I went over to the bridge end of the property, when I found active fire burning through the grass on the highest points of the Hannah Hector outcrops. Giving instructions to start the fan, I went back then to the main entrance and opened the stopping. Heading a party of ten men, I proceeded to the junction of the furnace drift, where fierce fire was discovered ahead in the main haulage-road, and a dense volume of heated smoke continued to roll down the furnace drift, so that it was impossible for man to live