

coalfields. Thus all means of coal transit is cut off. Bridge section was the chief source of supply for fully twelve months previous to operations being ceased at the colliery, and in the old mine coal has not been mined in No. 1 and No. 2 incline pillars for over eighteen months.

My last visit of inspection was in October, 1899, in company with Mr. Broome, mining-manager, and Mr. John Hayes, Inspecting Engineer, when all parts of the mine-workings were found safe and in a very satisfactory condition. Further, Mr. G. H. Broome's report in the colliery report-books shows the mine in safe condition.

18th January, 1900: I beg to inform you that from the 28th ultimo to the 10th inst. I superintended all underground operations with the exception of the passage made into the mine on the 2nd inst. by Mr. Dixon and party. The difficulties contended against from after-gases and other causes were diligently and fearlessly carried out, and under the most trying times my post was at the seat of operations, cheering the men on.

I have, &c.

R. TENNENT, Inspector of Mines.

The Under-Secretary, Mines Department, Wellington.

WESTPORT CARDIFF COAL-MINE UNDERGROUND MANAGER'S REPORT.

I HAVE this day examined the whole of the workings in the above-named mine and found them in safe condition. Ventilation sufficient. All levels, headings, and bords are well timbered and a ——— of timber found on all working-places for the purpose of spragging and securing the roof. Indication of gas seen during examination. Barometer, ; thermometer,

Remarks.—A few small falls on rope road. Centre prop required under carrying set at top of No. 2 dip. Several sets required in second tunnel to thoroughly secure.

Time of Examination.—10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Date.—18th January, 1900.

GEO. H. BROOME, Underground Manager.

Cardiff Mine, 2nd February, 1900.

THE fire in mine was located to-day in the back heading of Long Jig.

Before entering the mine the fan was started, and a measured current 10,440 ft. of air was obtained. The party consisted of J. Dixon, A. Mitchel, R. Broome, J. Clarke, and J. Smith. The party travelled to a point some 29 chains on main road, returned to Long Jig back heading, and discovered the fire some chains up said heading.

The main road was closely bratticed off, and air diverted up heading. Success attended the efforts, and at same time the mass burst into flame for a distance back of 10 or 12 yards. Falls continued, one very heavy one taking place. The fire being so active, and falling roof so continuous, it was decided to abandon efforts to reach the seat. It was positively unsafe to attempt anything of the kind. I therefore decided to withdraw the workmen and close the mine as far as possible until further considered and seen by the Government Inspector.

The heading was closely bratticed at 5 p.m., also all openings to mine reclosed, practically sealing the mine by temporary means. From my close observance of the conditions, I hereby state that the fire is extensive, and the only safe remedy is to seal off the affected district as soon as possible.

5 p.m., 2nd February, 1900.

J. DIXON.

Cardiff Mine, 29th January, 1900.

In connection with the underground fire in the Westport Cardiff Company's Mine, we, the undersigned, have this day endeavoured to locate position of said fire, but owing to the unreliable ventilation, which is "natural," and the air-current thereby reversing every few minutes, we are unable to reach the affected part without incurring undue risk.

We have therefore decided that no further risk to human life be incurred, and that a reliable current of air must be established to obviate this. To secure such current we decide the fan shall be removed from its present position, and temporarily set at opening to Chasm Creek from first section of the mine. Further, in the meantime all openings to-day are to be sealed off by close bratticing, and no workmen are to enter the section of the mine until authorised by the person in full control of operations.

R. TENNENT, Inspector of Mines.

JONATHAN DIXON, Mining Manager.

Inspector of Mines' Office, Westport, 23rd March, 1900.

[Subject: Inspection of Westport Cardiff Coal-mine.]

SIR,—

On the 21st instant I visited and made a full inspection of all workings in the Bridge district, which I consider are safe and in satisfactory condition. I can see no change on the roadways, airways, and faces since the mine was shut down. The stoppings in connection with the fire district of old mine are satisfactory. On my recommendation the company authorised £20 to build a log-dam in the intake end of main tunnel. This work is completed, and the water is rising on the workings. A similar sum is asked from the company to construct another dam in the outlet or bridge end of same tunnel. I consider when these dams are completed we should be able to flood nearly all the coal that is standing in pillars, which will very much lessen the extent of fire area. The surface indications of burning on the Hannah Hector outcrop are very much lessened, the smoke emitted therefrom being chiefly a white steam.