

*No. 2 Tunnel.*—This short tunnel, on the tram-line between the shoots and main tunnel, has been thoroughly overhauled, with heavy black-birch intermediate sets placed nearly the whole length. This tunnel is now in good repair.

The entrance section of the main drive into the old mine-workings is driven in a soft clay until it reaches the solid rock. In this section the heavy set timbers are gradually crushing in at the foot, and in a short time will incur considerable expense for repairs.

The company have been advised with regard to these urgent repairs.

I have, &c.,

R. TENNENT, Inspector of Mines.

The Under-Secretary, Mines Department, Wellington.

Inspector of Mines' Office, Westport, 28th April, 1900.

[Subject: Cardiff Fire.]

SIR,—

In compliance with your letter dated the 20th instant, I visited Cardiff Mine on the 25th instant. The workmanship in wedging up the log-dam next to the roof has proved defective, and in consequence the mine-water has not yet reached the outlet or bridge end of main tunnel. However, the leakage may not be considered serious, and the colliery carpenter, who assisted to construct the dam, is instructed to caulk the leaks with dry wood wedges. After this dam is efficiently watertight I will build another dam as aforesaid in the outlet of same tunnel, as flooding is the only practical and effective way in dealing with the fire, for the number of outcrop openings to contend against makes the ordinary way of "sealing off" quite impracticable.

Since my letter of the 23rd ultimo, the company has taken no steps to suppress the fire, neither do they intend to incur further expense. The matter will receive my full attention, and effective measures will be carried out. Approximate cost, £50—that is, as far as can be seen at present.

I have, &c.,

R. TENNENT, Inspector of Mines.

The Under-Secretary, Mines Department, Wellington.

TELEGRAMS FROM R. TENNENT, Inspector of Mines, Westport, to the UNDER-SECRETARY, Mines, Wellington.

5th May, 1900.

EVERY practical measure has been taken to cope with fire in Cardiff Mine. Latest investigations made discovered a low-level surface subsidence over pillared workings, from which I anticipate mine-water is flowing freely. This matter is receiving attention previous to further expenditure.

7th May, 1900.

LATEST advice on Cardiff fire states that subsidence referred to on Saturday is connected with mine-working. There is no change to report.

Inspector of Mines' Office, Westport, 11th May, 1900.

[Subject: Westport Cardiff Coal-mine Fire.]

SIR,—

In compliance with your letter dated the 1st instant, I report as follows on the progress and existing conditions of the above-named fire:—

For over two years previous to the outbreak of fire, the outcrops along the Chasm Creek cliffs (which rise 150 ft. to 200 ft. above the stream) were exhausted, caved in, and subsided direct to the surface. Thus combustion is supported by the free admission of fresh air through the mass of broken rocks overlying the burning districts. Under these conditions it is practically impossible to locate or extinguish the fire by cutting off the existing air-currents by means of stoppings. Another difficulty to contend against is the open drives that were holed for ventilation and other purposes as the workings advanced towards the outcrops. Such was the position over the bridge approach of main tunnel, where the fire shows greatest activity. This section I anticipated from the first outbreak would eventually fire, for during the time we were engaged building the first stoppings, these old drives over the main tunnel caved in and collapsed the whole hillside; therefore all practical means of dealing with these outlets were cut off. Hence my original suggestion to partly flood the mine was in view of raising the water through these old drives, where ventilation-fan was formerly placed. About 100 ft. southward from the adit the coal-seam is bisected by a main down-throw fault which absolutely cuts off the fire in that direction. On the 25th ultimo open fire was burning against that fault-line, but was extinguished by diverting a hillside stream that runs during heavy rains. Again, on the 10th instant, fire was renewed on same fault for want of water running constantly over the place. In order to cope with this and other outside fires that may occur over the tunnel, I have arranged with Peter Martin, colliery carpenter, to lay on a 2 in. pipe-line from Cascade Creek, a distance of 15 chains. Cost £15.

Since my letter of the 29th ultimo the log-dam in main inlet was made practically watertight, and, during the heavy rains, the flood waters from two adjacent creeks were turned into the mine. I intend to renew this dam as the bottom shows signs of failure, the workmanship being bad throughout the whole job. At present two miners are cutting out the seat for building. As soon as the seat is ready the raising of the dam will receive my full attention, as I am anxious to