

thoroughly test the water in the mine. Taking data from a borehole which taps the main-haulage road, there are 60 ft. in depth of standing water in the mine.

Referring to the removal of the movable plant from Bridge section of workings, the company has contracted with Peter Martin, colliery carpenter, to carry out the work, and a tram-line is laid over the hill for conveying the material. With regard to removal of the plant, I could raise no objection, because the material will be safe and more convenient for use if wanted on other sections of the property. Mr. Bayfield informed me to-day that Mr. Hargreaves, chairman for the company, has given instructions to select the plant into sections, with the object of selling or otherwise disposing of it.

In conclusion, granting that my efforts in building a new dam are most successful, I am not confident that mine-water can be raised the desired height, for the subsidence—already referred to by wire—shows evident signs of being connected with the workings, and in all probability will act as an overflow. I may state that the fire now existing in the old mine, even though it burns to its utmost limit, cannot possibly interfere with or damage any other section of the coalfield. The Bridge or western section is separated along its whole boundary by Chasm Creek Gorge, while the Cave Creek area is disconnected by main fault lines, and the intervening workings southward are under water. The smoke has ceased to rise from the Hannah Hector outcrops over the incline workings where it was first discovered, and appears to travel eastward along the cliffs towards No. 1 workings, the rocks over this district being very much broken.

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.

18th May, 1900.

LEAVING for Cardiff Mine to meet the persons appointed to examine fire.

22nd May, 1900.

RETURNED from Cardiff Mine yesterday (Monday) with Messrs. Shore, Alison, and Foster.

DEAR SIR,—

Westport, 23rd May, 1900.

We have the honour of submitting to you, as per your instructions of 12th May, our report on the Westport Cardiff Coal Mine, accompanied by tracing of mine workings, copies of reports, and photographs.

We have, &c.,

W. M. SHORE.

ROBERT ALISON.

JOHN FOSTER.

H. J. H. Elliott, Esq., Under-Secretary for Mines, Wellington.

DEAR SIR,—

Westport, 23rd May, 1900.

The photos accompanying report are not toned, and therefore upon exposure will fade. I have no chemicals here to tone them, and the photographer left Westport on Monday. Upon my return to Brunner I will get a set toned and forward them to you, and will be much obliged if you will attach them to report in place of those temporarily forwarded.

I have, &c.,

H. J. H. Elliott, Esq., Under-Secretary for Mines, Wellington.

ROBERT ALISON.

REPORT ON WESTPORT CARDIFF MINE.

ACCORDING to instructions contained in your letter of date 12th May, 1900, we met in Westport and immediately proceeded to the Westport Cardiff Coal-mine on the 17th of May.

On examination we found the mine in a very serious position, there being fierce fires raging along the cliffs facing Chasm Creek for a distance of at least 12 chains between the points marked H. and L. on attached tracing, the most serious part being immediately over Bridge entrance (between H. and F. on tracing) to main haulage-way, the whole presenting a most alarming appearance. We also found staff of men preparing to bring in water-supply. Having examined the water-tight stoppings at point marked A. on tracing that were put in in February last, we came to the conclusion that whatever water had accumulated at an earlier stage had now escaped through the floor of entrance-stopping. The Bridge entrance-stopping, marked F. on tracing, was leaking and admitting a considerable quantity of air, which no doubt was assisting to feed the fire. Having examined so far we returned to company's office to post ourselves with particulars of plan of underground workings.

On the 18th May we returned to Bridge end of workings accompanied by Mr. Tennent, Inspector of Mines; had a general conversation as to position of inside workings prior to fire being discovered. Then, Mr. Tennent giving his attention to getting the water-supply turned on, we made a further examination of burning mass along the outcrops. Some of the places that were on fire were inaccessible, although smoke was given off freely; those parts which could be reached displayed considerable activity, and, when opened to the surface, resembled a blast-furnace more than anything else; in some cases huge masses of the roof rocks, weighing tons, were one solid mass of red heat, the points only being approachable under great difficulty. After consultation we