

the average, taken on an average?—I do not know what the actuaries have to say about it, but from what I have seen of their statements I think they are wrong.

256. You say that two-fifths of the men at Kaitangata are working for wages?—From one-third to two-fifths, I estimate.

257. Could the number of men in the Kaitangata Mine be increased if it were made the law that they must be on eight hours from bank to bank?—They would have to make provision for them.

258. Could provision be made?—Yes, it could. All the places are filled at present, I may say.

259. But other places could be made?—They would have to go in for more development.

260. Could the output, by increasing the number of men or by putting on another shift, be kept up to what it is at present?—Yes.

261. Is it a fact that a great number of the wages-men are employed by the week?—Yes.

262. So that, as far as they are concerned, it does not make a bit of difference how long they work in the mine—they are paid all the same?—Yes.

263. Do you know anything about the Allandale Mine?—Yes.

264. What sort of a mine is it?—It was in very good order last week.

265. How was it a year or two ago?—On one occasion the air happened to be rather dull.

266. Did you consider it fit for men to work in for more than eight hours a day two or three years ago?—It is a mine practically free from accident.

267. How about ventilation?—They have a large shaft which was down 75 ft. when I was there last week. They estimate that it has another 160 ft. to go to reach the bottom.

268. When you reported on this mine a year or two ago did you consider it would tend to lengthen the men's lives by working more than eight hours a day in it?—On that occasion the air was very dull.

269. You see, the principle of this Bill is to lengthen miners' lives, and not to have the men always in the hands of the doctors. When you made that report a couple of years ago did you consider it would be an advantage to the miners or tend to lengthen their lives if they worked more than eight hours a day?—It would have been advantageous to work less than eight hours as the mine was at that date.

270. Supposing this Bill were passed and the time was made eight hours from bank to bank, do you think it would mean a serious loss to the proprietors of the Kaitangata or Allandale Mines?—Unless extra coal was produced there would certainly be a loss. It must be so if the wages are kept up.

271. You said that, as far as Kaitangata was concerned, they could keep up the present output by putting on more men: could the same be done at Allandale?—Yes.

272. Those are the principal mines that you have to deal with?—They are among them.

273. Is it a fact that at any of the coal-mines in your district by increasing the number of men they could maintain their present output?—Yes.

274. So that the management would really cost them no more?—Yes, the same men could manage the mines; but if they put on another shift more officials would be required.

275. If the half-hour were taken off there would be a less quantity of coal come out of the mine: could the truckers be reduced proportionately?—Yes, they could be reduced, but not so much so. There is generally one trucker to a pair of men, so they could not be reduced much.

276. You have no quartz-mines in your district?—Yes.

277. What effect would this Bill have on them?—As far as I can see at present, you could not bring in this amendment as the law stands in the main Act.

278. That is a matter for the Crown Law Officers?—As Inspectors we are naturally concerned with the safety of the men. Section 212, clause (3), I think, provides that the men shall change shifts at the face.

279. That is one, or two, or three shifts?—Yes; so that if three shifts are working in twenty-four hours and you get—

280. This Bill would not make any difference?—Yes; if a man changes his shift at the face and it takes him a quarter of an hour going to and from the face, it must be eight hours and a half from bank to bank.

281. The law now is that the men can only be eight hours from face to face?—The law is that they have to change shift at the face, and there are three shifts in the twenty-four hours, so you must add the time occupied in travelling to and from the face. It makes a difference whether they change at the face or at the mine's mouth, because the men going on shift are told what the mine is like by the men going off.

282. Supposing the men change at the face—they can do it and be on only eight hours from bank to bank all the same?—You must take the time occupied in travelling. If it took the men an hour to travel it would make nine hours from bank to bank.

283. Not necessarily?—If they changed at the face it would.

284. Will you explain to us, Mr. Green, how it is that you cannot alter it so that the time in the mine shall be eight hours and still have eight hours from bank to bank?—I will try to explain. If the first shift leaves the bank at 8 o'clock, and it takes them half an hour to travel to their place, they are there at half-past 8, and they must be up on the bank again at 4 o'clock. Then the men relieving must leave the bank at 3 in order to be at the face at half-past 3. The first shift leaves the bank at 8, and the next at 3—that means seven hours only; and if the next shift is seven hours, and the next seven, how are the shifts to dovetail in at the finish?

285. Could not it be arranged by special provision at the end and beginning of the week?—No; because instead of a twenty-four-hours day it would mean a twenty-one-hours day. That is the only way in which you could work it in; so that the men would work more than eight hours in twenty-four, which would be another breach of the law.