

30. *Mr. J. Allen.*] You state that the miners desire that the working-hours should be eight from bank to bank?—Yes.
31. Does that include the meal-time?—No. As we are working now at Brunnerton we are in the mine eight hours and a half.
32. How much of that is crib-time?—Half an hour.
33. Do you include in what you call working-time the time taken up in going to and from the face?—Yes.
34. What I want to get at is the actual time you are working at the face getting coal, excluding crib-time and the time you are travelling?—We are seven hours and a half coal-getting, excluding crib-time.
35. Do you know what this Bill proposes?—Yes; eight hours from bank to bank.
36. If you take off the crib-time and the time travelling, how much will be the actual working-time at the face?—Seven hours and a half, I suppose.
37. How do you make that out? You say that it would be eight hours from bank to bank under the Bill. There has to come off that half an hour for crib and half an hour for travelling: is that so?—Yes.
38. Then, what would be your working-time at the face if you exclude the crib and travelling time?—Seven hours.
39. That would be half an hour's less coal-getting every day?—Yes, I suppose so.
40. Do you think that the miners can get, working half an hour a day less, as much coal as they are now getting?—I think, myself, that the miners would get as much coal in six hours as they get in eight, because coal-miners do not go into a mine to waste their time. They work as hard as they can.
41. Do they work as hard as they can now?—Yes. By the time six or seven hours are up they are fagged out.
42. They could get as much coal in seven hours as in eight?—Yes, practically speaking. The men are just about tired out after six hours' work.
43. Does that apply to every miner in the mine?—To the majority.
44. What about the others?—All the men do not work the same. Some of the men work as hard as they can so as to get all the money they can.
45. Under the new Bill those men could get as much money as they get now?—Yes, to a certain extent.
46. You are not quite sure about it? Now, I want to know, if the men have to work shorter hours—I am referring to day-wages men—and have to take less pay for the shorter hours, will they prefer that to the present hours and the present pay?—I think the pay is little enough.
47. They want shorter hours and the same pay: is that what they want?—They want no less pay.
48. Is your mine covered by the two-years agreement that has been mentioned?—Our agreement is a twelve-months agreement.
49. When was it made?—I could not tell you.
50. Have you been working in the mine lately?—Yes.
51. When?—I knocked off about three weeks ago.
52. You do not know when the agreement was made?—At the beginning of this year.
53. Were the hours of labour and the wages specified in that agreement?—Yes.
54. Is it your desire that this Bill, if passed, should interfere with that agreement? Do you think it fair that the law should come in and upset an agreement which you honourably made?—But it was made under that eight-hour Bill.
55. Which?—The last one passed.
56. Do you think the law should come in and alter an agreement that you have made for twelve months?—The agreement was made for the twelve months, and we will have to abide by that. It is about the future that we are thinking.
57. You know something about the underground haulage in your mine, I suppose?—Yes.
58. Is it now doing all it can?—Yes, all it can do.
59. Are you sure of that?—We could send more coal out if we had more miners in.
60. The capacity of the haulage is greater than the quantity of coal that is sent out now?—We could haul more underground.
61. And haul more up to the surface?—Yes.
62. And the surface-hands could deal with more?—I think so.
63. Do you mean to tell me that if the hours of labour underground are shortened by half an hour a day it will not increase the cost of production?—I do not think it will, because the men could put out more and do it in less time than the underground haulage could take it.
64. If you have to work half an hour less time, are there sufficient skips to keep the miners going, doing more labour in the shorter time?—We could take more coal out.
65. Do you think there are sufficient skips in the mine now to bring out the same amount of coal in half an hour's less time?—I say there are.
66. You think the miners would get plenty of skips without putting any fresh ones in?—Yes, I believe they would.
67. *Mr. W. Fraser.*] In answer to Mr. Guinness, you said that it was the duty of the miner to report the state of the face to the deputy, and not to the incoming shift?—I said, if he saw his relieving mate he would tell him.
68. Where would he see his mate, as a rule—or does he ever see him?—I am speaking of the Brunner Mine only. He might see him at times, but at other times would not see him at all.
69. That might not apply to other mines?—No, it might not.
70. You do not know whether it would apply to gold-mining?—No.