

187. Then, tell us what would be the effect in your district?—It would shorten the time of haulage. That time is a dead loss. If we have to further put back the haulage-time half an hour in the eight hours, that is half an hour's dead loss.

188. Would the Bill affect the haulage?—Certainly. We would have to reduce the time further. We have lost half an hour in the haulage as it stands. Formerly we ran the haulage a full eight hours a day. Then the meal was outside the eight hours, so we ran eight hours and a half. Now it is a strict eight hours, and the meal-time is less the haulage.

189. And if we pass the Bill?—There will be a further reduction.

190. *Mr. R. McKenzie.*] How do you get at that? This Bill says that it shall be eight hours from bank to bank?—Yes.

191. That is what it is at the present time?—It is practically that, only the haulage—

192. You say that the haulage is seven hours and a half, and it takes half an hour to get into the mine and out again on an average?—Yes.

193. The men at Denniston, you said, could get into the mine, have their fifteen minutes for crib, and still be out of the mine in eight hours?—I do not think I told you that. I thought you wanted to get the time over the eight hours.

194. We want to make it eight hours from bank to bank. Your haulage now is seven hours and a half?—Yes. Formerly it was eight hours.

195. This Bill would make it eight hours from bank to bank, including crib-time?—That would make another half-hour or forty minutes lost haulage.

196. How do you make that out? You say the men work seven hours and a half. They start at 8 in the morning and knock off at 4: is that a fact?—The rope starts at 8 in the morning—

197. Never mind the rope. What time do the men enter the mine?—They are at the face at 8 o'clock and leave the face at 4.

198. You now contradict entirely all the evidence you gave us before.

199. *Hon. Mr. McGowan.*] The men now do their travelling in their own time?—Yes.

200. *Mr. R. McKenzie.*] My point is that the men work practically only eight hours now, and it does not make any difference to them whether this Bill is passed or not.

EDWIN R. GREEN examined. (No. 3.)

201. *The Chairman.*] What is your name?—Edwin R. Green.

202. You are an Inspector of Coal and Gold Mines?—Yes, for the Canterbury, Otago, and Southland Districts.

203. *Mr. J. Allen.*] Do you know the agreement that is made with the Kaitangata coal-miners—the agreement that they themselves made with their employers lately?—I do not know of the agreement, but I know the hours of work.

204. What hours are they working underground?—They leave the bank at 7 o'clock in the morning. The rope starts at half-past 7. By that time all the men are at the face ready to start work. They have half an hour in the middle of the day for crib. The rope stops at 3, and a change of shift takes place. The men leave the face for the incoming men on the next shift, and the men leaving are on the bank at half-past or before. The men coming on are at the face at half-past also, and the rope starts again.

205. Is there a loss of time on the rope? How long does it stop at the change of shift?—Half an hour.

206. And for crib?—Half an hour also.

207. How many shifts are there?—Two main shifts and a back shift for repairs.

208. In the two shifts of sixteen hours how much is the loss of time upon the rope?—The time would be more than sixteen hours; it would be seventeen. There are two shifts of eight hours and a half.

209. There are 8½-hour shifts?—Yes, from bank to bank.

210. Out of the eight hours and a half there is half an hour for crib?—Yes.

211. So the men are eight hours and a half underground from the time they leave the pit's mouth?—At the outside. Many of the men are underground less than eight hours and a half if they are working near the pit's mouth.

212. Is that by agreement between the men and the owners?—I do not know of any agreement.

213. You have seen this Bill before us?—Yes.

214. What effect would it have on the present arrangement at Kaitangata, supposing it came into force at once and no provision was made for allowing the agreement to run?—It would shorten the hours at the face by half an hour.

215. Would that mean shortening the rope-running too?—Per shift it would.

216. That would mean further loss of time?—It would mean that there would be less coal coming out in any one shift unless the men made it up.

217. How could they make it up?—By increased energy or by shortening their crib-time; that is the only way I can see.

218. How many wages-men are there employed at Kaitangata in proportion to pieceworkers?—All the men getting coal are on piecework, with the exception of any at deficient places that there may be.

219. How about the truckers?—They are all on contract.

220. The men on the surface?—Day's wages.

221. With regard to the surface-men, if this Bill is passed will the men be working half an hour less than at present?—I should say that is so.

222. That is to say, they will be coal-winning less time than now?—Yes; half an hour, I take it.