

191. Have you ever fainted?—No. I have always kept on at my work till I put my fingers down my throat and forced the vomit up.

192. You have never left work through it?—No, never once.

193. Were there any other symptoms you have known?—No, nothing else.

194. *Hon. Mr. Fisher.*] Were you not in the Auckland Hospital once?—Yes, once.

195. What for?—I might say that I stole some apples with a lot of other fellows working there. We ate the apples, and I had also strained myself. I was working long hours, and I was levelling up on concrete pillars, and in lifting up the frame I got a twitch on the left side. I then went on with my work, but two hours after that I felt a tightening round the loins towards the front, just as if you put a rope round and screwed it up. When I felt it coming on and as it tightened up I could not speak with the pain. I beckoned to the boss and he came up, and said, "Johnston, you are looking bad—you have cramps." By that time I got my breath again. Then I got another twitch, and then as soon as the pain stopped I swore, and I swore for two hours like that. There were half a dozen fellows there, and they said, "Don't swear because you may die any minute." I said, "Yes, if I die I will go to hell, and no man has ever fought so hard for his wife and children as I have done." I then went up on to the hill out of the water, and they brought me some brandy and hot water, and I asked for more after drinking it. They then got me a flask of whisky, and I drank the whole bottle, which stopped the pain. I had never had whisky before. They brought a stretcher, but I said I would walk. The pains then came on again, and I said that if they came on any severer I could not stand them much longer—I was getting weak. I told them not to speak to me, because if I did not have a sleep I would never pull through, and I could always sleep at a moment's notice. They took me into a house and put me on a double bed in a room. A nurse appeared shortly afterwards, and I was left alone most of the time, but I heard every movement in the house. The nurse came and looked at me and laid her hand on my heart, and she said, "He's dead." Just then the doctor came in and she said, "Hope is all gone, doctor, he is dead." The doctor looked at me, felt my pulse, laid his hand on my heart, and then he felt my chest and stomach. He then went to the telephone and rang up the hospital and said, "I will be sending Johnston along in an ambulance shortly." He said, "I do not know exactly what is the matter with him, but he is either poisoned or in an epileptic fit." I may tell you, gentlemen, that I left the hospital again on my own responsibility. When I was in bed I got better and stronger, and I asked one of the people there to drive me home, but they would not send for the cab. At the head of the bed I saw the board and saw what was on it, and I said to my wife, "If you want me to live get me out of this hospital, or if not I will die."

196. What was on the board?—"Bromide, light food" or "diet." That was sufficient for me. I asked for more food. I said to the nurses, "If you want me to get out of this give me more food and I will be all right."

197. What did the board say was the nature of your complaint?—I did not read it. "Bromide" was one word.

198. How long were you in the hospital?—About three days. I had a row with the nurses and doctors before I could get out, and I went out on my own responsibility. By the look of the nurses there I thought that they found out what was telephoned through, that I had either been poisoned or had had a fit, but I was rather inclined to think by the manner in which they treated my wife that they thought she had poisoned me. I never saw a woman treated more like a dog than my wife when she came to see me. When I got home I sent for Dr. Kinder, who sent me there. I never paid him, and do not intend to. As soon as he came to the house I said to him, "What did you diagnose that I was suffering from at the hospital—as having had a fit?" I told him about the strain, and how I had worked long hours in water, and spoke in regard to the abdominal cramp. He put a lot of questions to me about my father, and he certified to that effect. He asked me if I had ever had an epileptic fit or if my father had, and he said, "I am a firm believer that you have never had an epileptic fit and won't have an epileptic fit." He said what was wrong with me then was abdominal cramp. The insurance company in Auckland can produce the papers to show that he certified I had abdominal cramp.

199. How long were you in the hospital?—From memory, about three days.

200. Are you certain about it?—It may have been four days.

201. Were you conscious during the whole time?—Yes, except when I went to sleep.

202. How long ago is it?—It was before we went up to Kumeu.

203. Were you examined for life insurance?—Yes, twice.

204. And passed?—Yes. I was accepted at first rates and examined by two different doctors in the space of thirty days.

205. Did you take out a policy?—Yes, one for £300 and another for £250. The first doctor that examined me was Dr. Gore Gillon for a £250 policy. I had to get examined on account of a land transaction and get insured, and I handed the policy over as part security. Then I took out another insurance policy for Mrs. Johnston on my life, which I gave to her as a present. Both policies were taken out in the Government Life Department, and they were both at the cheapest rates with the bonuses forfeited. The Department wrote me to go up to Helensville to see Dr. Meinhold for the second.

206. Both those policies were taken out?—Yes.

207. Did you keep the policies running?—I have kept my own of £300 running.

208. What happened to the other one?—I do not know.

209. Are you not keeping the payments up?—Buchanan, who was in the land transaction, had to.

210. *Mr. Isitt.*] Have you got steady work?—Yes, steady work at 9s. 6d. a day in the Waihi Mine.

211. Is that likely to be continued?—Yes, but no chance in a contract to earn more.