

2860. When did you receive the subsequent letter from Mr. Andrew, of the 30th August, imposing the condition as to not loading the Union Steamship Company's steamers—at what time?—It would be either late in the evening or the first thing in the morning, after the meeting. It was certainly after the meeting was held on the Saturday evening.

2861. *The Chairman.*] The attention of the Commissioners has been called to an alleged indefiniteness in Rule 37, which does not provide for the distance back from the working-face that a miner is required to lay down the timber?—There was an understanding between myself and the men that a slip should be pasted in there to make the rule complete. The slip has been printed, and approved by the Mines Department, or by the Inspector.

2862. Can you supply that?—Yes.

2863. So that practically the rule has been amended in the direction that the miners require?—Yes.

2864. What is the distance?—There is no distance. There is no renewal after it is once set back any distance behind their face. I will send you a copy of the slip.

2865. *Mr. Moody.*] If any of the timber fails behind they are not obliged to go back to repair it?—No, not without some allowance for it.

2866. What is the length of the bord? You state here it is 50 yards?—Yes.

2867. But it does not scale that on the plan you have given us: it scales only 50ft.?—It must scale that from incline to incline [showing on plan].

2868. Then that is the extreme distance that a miner has to put the coal on to the road?—That is the recognised distance. I do not say it is carried out with mathematical accuracy in all cases. It might be a few feet more sometimes.

2869. Is that in excess of what is usual in other mines?—Yes. I dare say in some of them the truck takes it from the face. They do so in some mines.

2870. In very flat mines?—Yes.

2871. But have the men never complained about the loss of time?—Yes; they sometimes mention that the trucking is long, and that sort of thing.

2872. I suppose if it was half as short again they would complain?—It is the recognised distance.

2873. *Mr. Brown.*] The average wages you have mentioned includes loss of time?—Yes.

2874. *The Chairman.*] The flat-sheet, to which the coal is taken by the miner, and where he gets delivery of the timber he requires, is at the lower end of the bord?—Yes.

2875. And therefore, in fact, more than 50 yards from where he should be working?—Yes; and the average distance is, of course, half that.

2876. There seems to be some doubt as to whether the coal used by the miners pays royalty or not?—I think it is included in the output of nuts.

2877. In the return it appears that the amount of coal forwarded by rail is exactly the same as the amount of coal on which royalty is paid. That occurs in both cases?—It may not be included.

2878. *Mr. Brown.*] It is free coal, at all events?—It is not sold.

2879. *The Chairman.*] There is also another point. You say, in reference to the Wallsend Mine, that there was so much coal carried by the railway, and it appears also that royalty was paid on the same amount of coal?—This is a mistake in the return, which I should be glad to have an opportunity of rectifying. It is a clerical error. [Error rectified accordingly.]

2880. You promised to furnish us with the cost of buildings and plant?—I have now a telegram from the Dunedin office on the question of the building costs. The faulting on the present plan is, according to my inventory which I have already handed in, valued at £38,000; works and lease, £173,000; making a total of £211,000.

2881. Works and lease?—That is, building, shafts, cost of surveys, &c., £173,000.

2882. *Mr. Moody.*] That is your valuation?—Yes, as they stand in the books; our valuation of what has been added since being £200,000, as taken over at the time of the amalgamation, and balanced in September, 1888.

2883. Do the Miners' Association supply you with a copy of their rules?—I have had one copy of them, and that I sent to Mr. Kennedy some months ago.

2884. Do you feel in any way bound by them?—No.

2885. There is a book kept by the inspectors appointed by the men?—Yes.

2886. There are two inspectors: what are they called?—Check inspectors.

2887. And there is a book in which their complaints are entered?—Yes. They come round monthly and make an inspection, and enter up anything they may see or wish to suggest.

2888. Is that copy in your office?—We are compelled by the Act to keep it for them, and to leave it there.

2889. Is that book always looked at by the Government Inspector when he comes round?—Yes.

2890. And does he require any answer to their complaints?—He takes copies of their reports.

2891. And what answer do they obtain; or how do they know what action is being taken in consequence of their report?—They do not know what action is being taken. They have never reported anything that any one need take action about.

2892. Do they measure the ventilation by the instrument?—They make an attempt at it. They sometimes ask me for the anemometer, but I do not think they make anything of it.

2893. *The Chairman.*] Can you give the exact amount, in general terms, of what additions have been made or are being made to the pumping-gear and the boilers in connection with the mine?—We are putting down a new 30ft. boiler, a 7ft. Lancashire boiler, and a large Tangye pump, and a complete renewal of the larger bore-pipes in the Coal-pit Heath Mine.