

would be a great deal of trouble, especially if the department was very busy. When the pay is made up the contribution to the benefit society is taken off and entered in a book, and as soon as the clerk has completed the fortnightly payments he hands the book to me, and I enter it in a book I keep.

91. *The Chairman.*] You say that this word "shall" is used only to make the employes believe they are compelled to join; you do not think the firm would take action on any report of yours to discharge a man?—Certainly not. The firm have nothing to do with it at all. The only thing they see is the money we send down every fortnight; they act as bankers, and allow us 7 per cent.

92. As a business-man, what do you think is their reason for giving the bonus?—I think it is to help the society.

93. *Hon. Major Steward.*] Would it not relieve them of subscription-lists also?—As a firm, they would not be asked under the old régime to contribute. The manager might donate something as an employé.

94. Suppose a boy or a girl meets with an accident amongst the machinery; there is a doctor's bill to pay, and they may be laid up three or four weeks. In an ordinary case the firm has to pay their wages; but do they ever now in such a case tell them they are drawing money from the benefit society? What happens in the case of a boy or girl who gets injured?—They get money from the society so long as they are laid up.

95. What would happen to that boy or girl if there were no benefit society?—Well, the only thing to do in case of an accident, or anything of that kind, would be to get up a subscription-list in the mill.

96. Would the employer contribute anything?—I do not know about that.

97. Surely you know what would happen?—I will give you a case in point. I cannot say what the employer would do. A boy after being in the mill a month got his hand caught in the wool-scouring machine. It had to be taken off. He had just qualified for benefit, and the committee met and voted him £10. Messrs. Ross and Glendinning, outside the benefit society, offered to put the lad to school in order to qualify him for work in the warehouse, but the boy was not on for it.

98. He got nothing from Messrs. Ross and Glendinning?—No; Mr. Glendinning gave him the offer, but I could not say if they paid the boy anything over and above his wages.

99. Then, there is a very good reason for paying a bonus to this society; they seem to relieve themselves of the obligation by means of the society, which is surely to their advantage?—Oh, that is a question I have never gone into.

100. *Mr. Fisher.*] What would happen to a recalcitrant man who objected to the compulsory deduction of the contribution from his wages and who objected to belong to the society?—It would not affect his position in the mill as an employé—that I am sure of.

101. What do you think in regard to registration; do you think the society would be better registered or unregistered?—So far as the Roslyn Mills benefit society is concerned, I do not think it would be any better for registration, for this reason: Between the 24th December and the 4th January there is no benefit society. It does not exist then.

102. *The Chairman.*] Why does it not exist for that interval?—That is the holiday season. It is only a yearly benefit society, and was never intended to be anything else. For instance, I would have nothing to do with the society if it were carried on for more than a year.

103. But a balance is carried on till next year?—That is only a proviso, because if the society is not carried on that would have to be dealt with in another way.

104. By whom?—By the members, at a special general meeting. At the annual general meeting, which is held somewhere about the 22nd December, the first business after the adoption of the report is the question as to whether the society is to be carried on. A motion to that effect is regularly moved and seconded, and put to the meeting and carried unanimously; but in the event of an amendment being carried that the society is not to be carried on it would cease. Then that small balance which appears to be carried forward would have to be dealt with by the members.

105. *Mr. Fisher.*] In the event of an employé from any cause suddenly leaving the employ of the firm, does he or she, in accordance with Rule 4, receive his or her proportion of the funds?—Yes; that has been paid over, less his or her proportion of the amount paid for sick or funeral allowance.

106. You are quite sure that happens in every case?—Yes, because I have to impart the information. We have two order-forms, one for sick and funeral allowance and one specially printed for Rule 4.

107. *The Chairman.*] Rule 10 says, "In the event of accidents," &c.: What benefits are supposed to be given to members of this society who meet with an accident in the performance of their duty?—An accident is made a special feature. The committee have power to vote a lump-sum or to allow them to go on as sick members.

108. Supposing, for instance, that a girl employed in the mill was sleeping in a private house, fell downstairs, hurt herself seriously, and was laid up for six weeks, what would happen then?—The committee would have discretionary power.

109. But the rule says, "in the performance of their duties" they shall have discretionary power?—That is the rule as it stands, but I could show where cases have occurred where the weekly allowance has been given in certain cases where the accidents have occurred outside the mill. I know the case of a girl some years ago who broke her ankle in her garden. Her people were not in very good circumstances, and, although she could not really demand it under the rules, the committee, with the consent of members, made her an allowance.

110. Can you tell us why the women pay only half the amount that males pay? Are they not as liable to sickness?—Oh, yes.