

than actual coal-cutters or quartz-winners, would be included as miners, and be subject to an eight-hours-from-bank-to-bank regulation?—Yes.

56. What has a deputy got to do?—To go down before the men go into the mine at all, and go round to all the working-faces, and leave word on a board on which he chalks that it is safe for the men to enter before they do so; and he is the last man to leave the mine at night.

57. Would he be able to do that if the clause were amended in the way proposed?—No, not without being paid overtime.

58. There are cases, I suppose, when firemen have to go below?—Yes.

59. Would they go before the miners, as a rule?—Yes.

60. And if this clause were amended they would have to be paid overtime?—Yes.

61. Would that be different to what exists now?—Yes, certainly.

62. Would it make the wages higher?—Yes.

63. And the cost of getting the coal more?—Whatever the wages were, the men would have to be paid overtime.

64. With regard to truckers in coal-mines—and, I suppose, in gold-mines too—in some cases, I suppose, they are paid by piecework?—By piecework and wages in both quartz and coal mines.

65. There are a great many instances, I suppose, where they are paid by day wages?—Yes. A great number, I think, in quartz-mines are on wages; but in coal-mines a good deal of the coal-getting is done on piecework.

66. In cases where the truckers were paid a day wage, what would be the effect of eight hours from bank to bank?—I would really mean that the coal would cost a good deal more to produce.

67. And the gold, too?—Yes.

68. Is it a fact that coal-miners are employed on piecework all over New Zealand?—Not all of them.

69. Some are employed on day wages?—There are plenty employed on day wages, because in all the Arbitration Court awards that I have seen there is a provision that if you want men to do some particular class of work you must pay them so-much day wages.

70. Do all the Arbitration Court awards fix so-much a day for day wages?—Yes. And the same with truckers.

71. You are a director of a coal-mine?—Yes.

72. Have you lately had an award of the Arbitration Court, or entered into an industrial agreement with the men?—Since last year we have had another award.

73. Was it an award made by the Court, or an industrial agreement?—An award of the Court.

74. Did this question crop up at all?—Yes; but the eight hours from bank to bank was put into the Mining Act, and we had to agree to that.

75. What was your award?—We have to abide by the eight hours from bank to bank, and it costs us 7 per cent. more to get coal than it did previously.

76. That is your experience?—Yes.

77. You are working eight hours from bank to bank now under that award?—Yes.

78. What effect on the day wages had that award of eight hours from bank to bank—any?—It had an effect.

79. Did the Court, in fixing the day wage, fix it at the same rate?—Yes, we pay the same rate as before.

80. It has affected the price of coal?—Yes, 7 per cent.

81. You say that the eight hours from bank to bank will mean in coal-mines six hours and a half a day actual coal-getting?—That is so. It does with us.

82. How do you make that out?—You start, we will say, at 8 o'clock. The men assemble then. It takes a quarter of an hour to get all the men down, and it takes fully fifteen or twenty minutes for the men to get to the faces; and then they come back for crib, and it takes the same time to get out again. It means six hours and a half actual coal-getting.

83. Where do they come back for crib-time?—They come back from the face some distance, and generally meet together.

84. What difference will eight hours from bank to bank make in a gold-mine?—It will increase the cost of gold, and you cannot possibly get any higher price for it. It is really putting a tax on, which I am afraid will frighten capital away from entering into gold-mining. In coal-mining you can put the extra cost on to the price of coal, but in gold-mining you cannot. If you do not get the gold to pay for the extra cost you cannot work the mine. It increases the cost of working a gold-mine.

85. Coming back to the hands employed, a number of hands are employed on the surface?—Yes.

86. Is it the custom now to pay them for an eight-hours-day's work?—Yes.

87. How will this eight hours affect the men on the top?—It does not affect them with us, because we have been able to find other work for them to do, such as clearing away. We cannot sell all the refuse coal; there is a certain amount of slack that we have to get clear of.

88. Are there instances where you can imagine the surfacemen would be affected by the shorter hours underground?—There may be some instances; there is no doubt that if the employers could not find employment for them they would have to waste time.

89. Can you employ truckers underground all the time?—No.

90. Then they are wasting time?—Yes. It makes a difference in the trucking underground.

91. You have a very wide experience of mining generally?—Yes.

92. Do mines differ a great deal as regards their capacity for employing men—I mean as regards ventilation and conveniences for work?—Yes, there is a great difference in that.

93. Some mines are better to work in, and well ventilated?—Some mines are much easier to work in than others.

94. Others are not so well ventilated, and the working is not so convenient?—That is so.

95. Would it be fair, then, to make a hard-and-fast rule with regard to all mines?—You could not carry it out, because, as far as ventilation is concerned, there are times when you will get into gas which you do not expect. You cannot make a hard-and-fast rule.