

67. Do you think there is any necessity for that fund to remain in existence now that the Workers' Compensation for Accidents Act is in operation?—No.

68. Does the Compensation for Accidents cover the same ground?—It does, I believe.

69. Do you know of any cases in which men have received from these two sources and from their own relief funds amounts equivalent to their actual wages?—Yes.

70. Do you know of more than one case?—I can give you two in which the men received close upon what they were earning. We have men receiving £5 a fortnight out of relief funds.

71. Out of which?—They get £1 5s. a fortnight each from the Medical Association.

72. That is their own?—Yes; and £1 5s. a fortnight from the $\frac{1}{4}$ d.-a-ton fund, and 50 per cent. of their wages from the Workers' Compensation for Accidents.

73. *Mr. Herries.*] Are you still working under the same award as when you gave evidence last year?—Yes, under the same award.

74. When does it run out?—On the 31st of next March.

75. Was the subject of bank-to-bank considered when the award was made. I forget now whether you told us last time?—It was.

76. How was it decided?—It was a give-and-take arrangement, suggested by the President, Judge Cooper. We used to run coal down the incline fully eight hours a day. Now, if it had to be eight hours from bank to bank exclusive of meal-time, our men could not travel to the workings if they commenced to enter the mine at the mine-mouth, but if they walked over the hill to the adit next to the far-off mine they could do it in a less time. But we were afraid that if we compelled the men to travel over to Mine Creek on wet days—and we have a lot of rain—they would not be at work, and it would be a loss to them and to us, because they could not travel over the hill in wet weather. Terms were made that the men should be at their places ready to work at 8 o'clock in the morning, and cease at five minutes to 4. That overcame the difficulty.

77. There was an agreement between yourselves and the men?—It was mutually agreed upon, at the suggestion of the President of the Court.

78. How many hours do the men actually work underground?—They are at the face seven hours fifty-five minutes.

79. They are at present more than eight hours underground, including travelling-time?—Yes.

80. *Mr. J. Allen.*] A quarter of an hour going in and a quarter of an hour going out?—Yes.

81. *Mr. Herries.*] Are there many complaints?—I have not heard a complaint about it—not until this Bill was sent to me by our official at Wellington.

82. Do I understand you to say that the time the men are working underground now is a part of their agreement with you?—Yes. It was mutually agreed between the men and the management after it was suggested by the President of the Arbitration Court.

83. You think that if the words "or hereafter" are struck out it will affect the future awards of the Court?—Yes, it will. The matter should be settled by the Arbitration Court.

84. You would rather have it settled by the Court than by Act of Parliament?—Yes, because when you go before the Court evidence can be given which you cannot get here, and both sides are able to explain to the Judge, and you can effect a compromise. When the Judge sees a way out of it and makes a suggestion, we try to agree to his suggestion, without causing friction. I think the Arbitration Court ought to settle the hours as well as the wages. It seems strange for the hours to be dealt with at one place and the wages at another.

85. *Mr. Bennet.*] I do not remember if Mr. Allen asked you what wages the coal-hewers get?—Our hewers make big wages; they make 19s. a day. But understand that that is owing to the fact of our having few hewers, and that they are working at the nearest portion of the mine. If the whole time was being worked the average for the coal-hewers would not be so large. It is by having a few coal-hewers in that section that they can always get plenty of tubs to fill. We are extracting the pillars there.

86. What do those who are paid day wages get—those hewing coals, not working the machines?—They are paid by the ton, and make 19s. a day each.

87. They are pieceworkers?—Yes.

88. Has there been any agitation amongst the men for this Bill?—I never heard a word about it.

89. *Mr. R. McKenzie.*] They did not ask you to sign a large petition?—They asked me to sign nothing, nor did they speak to me about it, nor yet have I heard anything mooted. Even Mr. Colvin, our respected representative, did not tell us about it in his pre-sessional speeches, so that we could have guided him not to bother with it.

90. *Hon. Mr. McGowan.*] What are the conditions at the present time under which the men obtaining coal are working with reference to ventilation and conditions of labour?—You could not go to a colliery in the Southern Hemisphere, nor yet in the Old Country, better ventilated and more easily worked than ours.

91. Have you any knowledge of any other mines than your own in New Zealand?—I have not.

92. As to the Inspectors, are they attentive and careful to the requirements of proper ventilation, proper conditions of working, and everything connected with the safety of life and property?—With regard to the Inspector in our district, there could not be a more careful man than Mr. Tennent.

93. If the definition of "miner" was altered to include every man working in, on, or about a mine, that would be likely to increase the number of those who would be subject to receiving assistance from the Accident Fund?—I understand that all men working in a mine participate in the $\frac{1}{4}$ d.-a-ton allowance. Is that what you mean?

94. Yes. Supposing a carpenter was down there and he met with an accident?—I suppose he would expect assistance.