

243. So you think that if the property is worth four times as much now as it was ten years ago it has no bearing on the question? Is that your opinion?—That is my opinion.

244. *Mr. Reid.*] You were asked about the management of the mine—whether you were a certificated mine-manager: you are legally responsible to the company for the observance of health conditions, I take it?—Yes.

245. Was that committee that you said recommended that the medical officer should be under the company and not under the miners a committee elected by the miners?—Yes.

246. A committee of the miners themselves recommended that the officer should be under, not the direction of the miners, but the direction of the company itself?—That the appointment should be. That was the recommendation of the Denniston Medical Association's committee to the Millerton Medical Association's committee. The Denniston and Millerton mines are under one company.

247. When was that recommendation made?—About twelve months ago.

248. Is this Medical Association, then, an association selected by the miners from their own number?—Yes, formed by the men themselves, and properly registered.

249. Then, we may take that as being what the men themselves think is the best method of appointing their medical officer?—As far as I know, that is their feeling.

250. Is the health of the men in your neighbourhood good generally?—Exceptionally good in our district.

251. Is there any word of what is known as miners' anæmia among the men?—No.

252. I dare say you have seen mention in the miners' papers recently of some contagious disease: there is no word of it?—No.

253. Do you know if there is any in New Zealand?—No.

254. *Mr. McKenzie* asked you just now as to increasing the output of the mine by 100,000 tons at a future period, and you said that you could not do that. What is it that would limit the output?—The shortening of the hours will limit the output. Understand that when I say that the output cannot be increased, I mean that it cannot be increased without additional expense of £15,000 or £20,000 at each place.

255. And depreciating the value of the property accordingly in the way of dividend?—Yes.

256. *The Chairman.*] With regard to the Medical Association: was Dr. Wills there in your time?—Yes.

257. Do you remember his leaving?—Yes.

258. Do you remember the men calling for applications for a doctor?—Yes.

259. And you remember the men appointing Dr. FitzGerald?—Yes.

260. Did the company then object to Dr. FitzGerald?—They did.

261. Do you remember the company giving notice to the Medical Association that they were to remove from the house which the company had given for the Medical Association?—Yes.

262. And that they would withdraw their subsidy if Dr. FitzGerald was appointed?—If the appointment of the doctor was not made by the company.

263. If the men insisted on appointing Dr. FitzGerald instead of the company?—Yes.

264. Do you remember also that the company gave notice to the men that they would not draw the medical pence?—Yes, I remember that.

265. You said that you had had no dispute formerly with the men about the doctor?—We have had no dispute since Dr. FitzGerald was appointed by the company. That is what I mean.

266. Dr. FitzGerald was first appointed by the men?—I will tell you how he got there. Dr. Wills had a quarrel with the men, and gave three months' notice. A vacancy occurred, and it would suit him if he could get away at the right time. During his notice the miners advertised in the papers for a medical officer. Dr. FitzGerald applied for it, and Dr. Wills, in order to get a *locum tenens* to liberate him, engaged Dr. FitzGerald; and Dr. FitzGerald came just about a fortnight or three weeks before Dr. Wills's notice expired. Dr. FitzGerald came there, and was treated as if he were Dr. Wills during the term he was acting for Dr. Wills. The men wanted to appoint him. The owners did not care to appoint him; they had reasons for not giving way to it. However, the matter was cleared up, and I recommended the company to appoint Dr. FitzGerald and to let the men know he was going to be appointed by the company. There was a meeting of men, which I attended, and the voting was in favour of Dr. FitzGerald being appointed by the company. Since then everything has gone on smoothly.

267. But the men insisted on appointing a doctor themselves at that time—they took a stand? Yes, they wanted to appoint a doctor themselves.

268. The Westport Coal Company wanted the patronage of appointing the doctor by giving this £100 and the house and the horse? The company wanted to have the patronage of appointing the doctor, independent of the men?—Yes, their reason for that was that they were better able to recommend a good man by their intimacy with other respectable men, and they kept upon that score in order to get a respectable man for the workmen and their families. It was for nothing else but to keep a respectable man amongst them.

269. Is it not a fact that up to the time of Dr. FitzGerald every doctor appointed by the company had been a young man with no experience, who had just taken his degree in the University in Dunedin? Were the medical officers who were appointed prior to Dr. FitzGerald men of experience for families and cases of accident in the coal-mine?—I know that Dr. Wills was a Dunedin student, but Dr. FitzGerald studied in the Old Country.

270. But previous to Dr. FitzGerald?—I only knew Dr. Wills. Dr. Reid is a New Zealand man.

271. And a good man too?—Yes; but whilst you may get a young man from the university to take up a practice, I do not think that because of his being newly fledged he is to be despised, because the young men have had opportunities of seeing the latest operations.