

There are certain proportions for limbs, arms, thumbs, and fingers just as in the other case, as well as for other permanent injuries. I am supplying this information to show you that this aspect of the matter is receiving consideration (and in one case practical effect) in other countries; and in view of what I say I think that the schedule should be altered and extended as in the appendix hereto. While the Committee may regard some of these suggestions as tentative, still, on the other hand, some such scheme if adopted would prove of great advantage in actually administering the law. There is no doubt that in the experience in this Dominion these matters are not at present settled by any uniform method, but simply according to the pertinacity of the worker, or the pertinacity and ability of his lawyer. There are no merits in many of the cases, and the Department, in common with all the insurance companies, simply gets out of the difficulty as best it can without litigation. By having a simple scheme which would be fair to all, much of the existing friction and difficulty would be avoided. It is impossible at present to deal with such matters on a uniform basis.

29. *Mr. Ell.*] The companies never know where they are?—No. If there was some such scheme as this there would be much less litigation, because the employer would know, if a man lost his finger, how much he would have to pay, and the same with other injuries.

30. *Mr. Bollard.*] There are many serious injuries that a man may receive which would not be covered by that?—Yes, there are internal injuries; but, of course, no schedule could possibly provide for those.

31. If this Bill becomes law will it increase premiums?—We have gone into that very carefully in the office, and taken into consideration the increased benefits under the Bill, and, so far as we can see, the extra benefits would not increase the present premiums beyond $7\frac{1}{2}$ to 10 per cent. We are as confident as we can be in the circumstances of that, so that if a man was paying a premium of 10s. on his wages at present he would simply pay about 11s. under this Bill.

32. It would be 10 per cent on the present premium?—Yes. In connection with the premiums generally we are, of course, more or less groping in the dark, as the companies did and are still to some extent doing in England; but I do not think that the premiums should be increased more than I have stated.

33. It would not be more than 10 per cent. in any case—not even in some of these special trades?—No, I think not. Of course, all our premiums are subject to alterations. As we gain experience from the statistics we are keeping, that must happen. What I should say is that, apart from any other reasons which would operate whether or not this Bill is passed, we do not think that the actual passing of the Bill would increase premiums by more than 10 per cent.

34. *Mr. Hardy.*] In the case of farm labourers—that is a tremendous section of the business of the country—will it increase the premiums?—I do not think so—not more than generally. I know of no reason why it should.

35. Do you think it would increase them by from $7\frac{1}{2}$ to 10 per cent.?—I think so.

36. You have given us a great deal of information about the schedules: have you taken into consideration, in dealing with the special trades, why some limb should be more valuable to a farm labourer than to a clerk, or more valuable to a clerk than to a farm labourer, or does your scheme place all on the same level?—We have considered that, but in a scheme of this kind we can only deal with matters in the rough.

37. Have you any scheme which would assess the value of limbs according to the special trades in which those limbs would be required?—I do not think so. It would become so involved that it would be impossible to work it out in practice.

38. The loss of a leg might not injure a clerk very much, but it would almost entirely incapacitate a farm labourer, and it would be of very much greater value to him than to a clerk: I presume you know that?—Yes, but we could not deal with that aspect of the matter practically, because, as I say, the effect would be different in every occupation.

39. Then you think it would be better to deal with all alike and put all on the same footing in accordance with the amount insured?—I do not see how you are going to arrive at any scheme of so extended a character, at all events until much more experience has been accumulated.

40. You think there may be special value to these limbs according to the occupation?—I think the loss of a leg would be more serious to a farm labourer than to a clerk, but I do not see any method by which we can deal with such a matter.

41. You fear it might break down the usefulness of the schedule?—I do not think that.

42. Then why not provide for it?—Because we should need to have an extended schedule, and the matter is somewhat involved. We are not at present prepared to formulate such a detailed scheme.

43. If it is a good thing, why not have an extended schedule?—I am not prepared just now to suggest to the Committee the basis of an extended schedule. I think it would be sufficient at present to give the proposed scheme a fair trial, and then, if we find we could extend it, to do so. We could feel our way as we went along. I think the whole idea an excellent one, and, as you will see from what I have said, there is independent authority in England in the same direction. Your suggestion is, however, one that might fairly be considered later on as we accumulate experience. We might find that the whole thing might require reshuffling, and we could then possibly suggest what is needed. The Government could then adopt some such idea if it thought fit. I have no doubt the Government would carry out any reasonable suggestion the Department might make, because their desire would be to make the Act as fair and workable as possible.

44. *Mr. Barber.*] I am not quite satisfied with the First Schedule. The object is to enable you to charge differential rates in the trades defined as hazardous, which will be required to pay a higher premium?—So far as I am concerned such an idea never entered into my mind as to make a distinction merely because of the schedule. The object is to get rid of that doubtful expression “hazardous.” Under the present law the position, where the employment is one not