

191. In your opinion, should these men be qualified men, with at least five years' experience?—I think it is quite reasonable that they be practical miners.

192. Clause 48 (e) says that "The persons so appointed shall make a full and accurate report in writing under their hands of the result of their inspection, and shall within twenty-four hours of the making of such inspection furnish a copy of such report to the mine-manager." Is it not fair to expect them to report the result of their inspection in the office of the mine as soon as they come out from the mine, without waiting till the next day?—I think, the sooner the better.

193. When a man examines a mine he reports immediately on what he has seen, whether he has to make an examination prior to the men going into the mine or an ordinary examination—he always reports immediately he comes from the mine. Do you not think the same rule should apply to the examination and the report by the workmen's inspectors?—I think it is quite reasonable to ask them to report immediately they leave the mine.

194. *The Chairman.*] Would not a man make a better final report if he were allowed to make a preliminary report, and then after some time to make a final report?—It has been the practice to make the report in the report-books as soon as they come up. They have always done it straight away with us, and it is better for all concerned to have the report made forthwith when everything seen during the inspection is fresh in the minds of the inspectors.

195. *Mr. Brown.*] In regard to section 48 (f), which provides that if the workmen's inspectors report the mine as dangerous they may request the manager to cease work and withdraw the men, if the workmen or anybody who examines the mine is to have the same right as the manager in regard to the withdrawal of the men should he not have the same qualifications?—I do not know that he should. It is not worth while setting up that idea. I think if you get practical miners to make the inspections there will not be any trouble.

196. Should they not have some qualifications?—Yes, the qualifications of a practical miner.

197. Clause 13 of the Bill deals with the height of lifts and pillar workings. You will see there that lifts are limited to 10 ft., and the Inspector is to determine the height it is to be worked up to?—Yes.

198. Assuming that it is 12 or 14 ft. high with a clean hard roof, would it not be unwise to work to that and leave the coal there?—You could not do it, the cost of keeping up the coal over 10 ft. may be so excessive; and, again, it may be dangerous to attempt it.

199. Would it not be more dangerous than if you took it right to the main roof?—Yes, I think so.

200. Who is in the better position to judge—the man who has the whole supervision of the workings, the manager, or the man who comes in and inspects once a month or perhaps less?—I do not look upon this clause seriously: it is a clause that cannot be worked.

201. Is there any other clause in the Bill you would like to refer to?—I do not think there is, except that one which provides for the Committee on special rules (clause 9). I think the construction of that Committee is wrong. The Inspector of Mines should not be on it.

202. You are of the opinion that the constitution of the Committee is wrong?—Yes, it puts the Inspector in a wrong position. It should be the Magistrate instead of the Inspector. I do not think it is an objectionable clause if you get reasonable men on the Committee.

203. *Mr. Douglass.*] Do you agree with clause 21 (a) in the schedule to the Bill, which provides that "All deputies shall during their rounds examine the roof and sides of the mine, irrespectively of the examination by workmen and workmen's inspectors? Is not that very necessary?—I think that is quite right and necessary.

204. *Mr. Brown.*] You heard Professor Dixon give his evidence: have you ever come across any reference to him in the mining works?—Yes, I have known his name for a long time.

205. Is he not a recognized authority?—Yes, on the analysis of coaldust and the chemistry and behaviour of coaldust.

206. Would you mind reading that out [book handed to witness]?—[Witness read as follows.] "Transactions of the Institution of Mining Engineers, Vol. xlvii, Part 2, 1913-14.—The president (Sir Thos. H. Holland) wrote regretting that, in consequence of an important meeting in London of the Royal Commission on Navy Fuel, he could not be present at the general meeting of the society to support the proposal to elect Professor Dixon as a honorary member. Professor Dixon was, however, well known to the members of the society, as his researches had had so direct and important a bearing on problems connected with coal-mining. He had served on the Royal Commission on Explosions of Coaldust in Mines and on the Royal Commission on Coal-supplies. He was still a member of the Home Office Committee on Explosions in Mines, and thus continued, purely in the public interest, to devote his time and unusual ability to the solution of problems that added to the safety and amenities of the miner. It was now twenty years since Professor Dixon had delivered the Bakerian lecture to the Royal Society on the 'Rate of Explosion in Gases,' and the researches then described had formed the basis on which progress had since been made not only in regard to the purely theoretical problems, but in regard to the practical application of the principles established. Apart altogether from the way in which Professor Dixon's work had been of direct value to the mining community, his position in the scientific world was such that the society might well regard it as an honour to include his name in its list of members. After a distinguished career at Oxford as a student, as a Fellow, and as a lecturer, Professor Dixon had in 1886 succeeded Sir Henry Roscoe as Professor of Chemistry at the Owens College, having been elected in the same year a Fellow of the Royal Society. Since then he had been president of the Chemical Society in London, and in 1913 the Royal Medal of the Royal Society was awarded to him in special recognition of his contributions to chemical science. His own direct contributions to science form but a part of those due indirectly to his activities, as he had now for twenty-eight years been in charge of one of the largest and most active chemical schools in the country."