

172. Do you think that was improper or unsafe?—It was not for me to think whether it was improper or not.

173. But you are check inspector?—I do not think it is any part of my duty to report anything of that sort in the company's books.

174. Do you or do you not think it was safe?—I do not think it was any part of my duty to report anything about it.

175. Did you think it was safe?—I did not think it was safe.

176. And you say you did not report this?—I did not think it was part of my duty.

177. Why did you not think it part of your duty?—I think that is the Inspector's duty, not mine. I have no authority or power.

178. Should not your duty to your union compel you to see that the Government Inspector does his duty?—I do not know about that. The Government Inspector comes round so very seldom.

179. *Mr. Harden.*] You are a check inspector appointed by the men under the Act?—Yes.

180. What did you consider your duties were?—To see that the trucking- and travelling-roads were in good order, that timber was supplied to the men, and generally to note the conditions of the mine.

181. And if you saw anything wrong what did you consider it your duty to do?—To report it in the company's books.

182. Did you consider the employment of an inexperienced man at the face with a boy in charge an improper thing?—Yes; but I thought that was the Government Inspector's duty to see to, not mine.

183. The matter cropped up later at a meeting of your union, and you wrote this letter?—Yes.

184. Did you think it was a proper thing to complain to the Minister?—Yes.

185. Are you a member of the union?—Yes.

186. Have you a vote?—Yes.

187. Did you support the motion that this complaint should be lodged with the Minister?—I do not think I am obliged to answer that question.

188. Did you support the motion?—I believed in it.

189. Do you think this was a proper charge to lay against the Inspector?—Yes.

190. *The Chairman.*] The inspection of machinery is specially mentioned as part of your duties in the Act?—I have never inspected the machinery yet.

191. *Mr. Harden.*] Is there any other check inspector for the machinery?—No.

192. *The Chairman.*] I do not suppose you would be expected to examine the boilers and other machinery of that kind, but you could have inspected the coal-cutting machines, and I understood you to say you did not consider it your duty to do so?—I said I did not think it was my duty to report about these men working at the machines, and I considered that to be the duty of the Government Inspector.

193. *Mr. Harden.*] Supposing you saw a man who was not spragging properly, do you not think that would be a matter for you to report?—Yes, if it came under my personal inspection.

194. Did you inspect this place where Bruhn was working?—No; the accident inspectors visited that.

195. Had you seen him working there?—No. I saw him sitting on a table there. I never saw him working the "iron man."

196. Who supplies the timber for spragging?—The company.

197. Is there a plentiful supply always on hand?—Yes; I have always seen plenty when I went round.

198. Then, if a man does not put up sufficient spragging, whose fault is it?—The fault of the man.

199. I suppose you are aware that, as a matter of law, he is liable to be fined if he does not comply with the Act in that respect?—Yes.

200. Have there been many complaints of insufficient spragging within your knowledge: is it a common complaint?—There was a man fined the other day. The complaints do no come to me.

201. Have you noticed much default in that respect in the course of your inspections?—As I have said before, there are very few machines working when I go round.

202. *The Chairman.*] That is not an answer. You have to sprag whether you are hewing or cutting with a machine. The question is, when you have been going round the mine have you noticed any deficiency in spragging?—I cannot say I have.

203. *Mr. Harden.*] In answer to Mr. Cottrell, you said it was difficult to get at Mr. Tennent because he generally stopped at the company's quarters?—I said he used to.

204. How long ago is it since he stopped at the company's quarters?—I cannot say. He came to stop at my place about twelve months ago.

205. Do you know how often he has stopped at the company's quarters?—No.

206. Did you ever endeavour to see him and find you could not because he was staying at the company's quarters?—I know a gentleman who did try.

207. Who is the gentleman?—Mr. Foster tried to see him, and that is why we came to know he was stopping at the company's quarters.

208. As a responsible officer of the union, do you seriously wish the Commissioners to believe that Mr. Tennent could not be seen because he was stopping at the company's quarters?—I do not want to make any capital out of it.

209. How long was he stopping there?—A day or two each time. Recently he has not been stopping there—for a period of about six months.

210. Did you frequently see him when he was stopping at your place?—No.