

24. You cannot hear the warnings?—No. Before taking pillars out bords should not be driven too wide—say, 12 ft. to 14 ft.

25. And what height?—I would not recommend more than 10 ft.

26. And what thickness of coal would it be safe to leave overhead—supposing you have a seam a little over 10 ft.?—That has never struck me. I think 10 ft. is sufficient to work with any safety. There is another matter I should like to mention, and that has reference to the check inspectors. I think they should have more power.

27. Do you agree that they should be required to pass a deputy's examination?—No. I can tell from my own experience whether a place is safe or not.

28. That may be so, but can all check inspectors do that?—Well, a competent man is usually chosen as a check inspector.

29. If a man is competent should he not be able to pass a deputy's examination?—No. The fact that he is appointed by a body of miners shows that they have confidence in him.

30. But you are asking for very extended powers for the check inspectors?—Well, I do not think they are extended powers. I do not ask for power to prosecute—only to stop the place.

31. You do not agree with the previous witness as to examinations?—No. There is another matter I want to touch on: I think these blocks and anchor-chains should be compulsorily provided—the company should be compelled to put them there. The anchor-chains only apply to the face-jig.

32. The anchor-chain would be a double precaution?—Yes.

33. *Mr. Dowgray.*] If you had only 12 ft. of coal, would you be in favour of working it 10 ft.?—I think it would be quite safe then.

34. Do you think pillar coal should be limited to 10 ft.?—Well, not 10 ft. on the lift-up.

35. What height do you consider would be safe to bring back from a split?—12 ft. or 13 ft.

36. Do you mean by a pillar being split for the whole of the pillars being run out?—Certainly.

37. You stated that the fans in the Millerton Mine had stopped: did it cause any inconvenience to the men?—I understand the men had to be brought back from the faces. There is also another matter I was going to mention. I think working double shifts in pillars is altogether against the safety of the men. If only one shift is worked a man knows the condition of his place, and how the timber is set. In pillars, particularly, I think it would be better to have only one shift.

38. You consider it a source of danger for men to follow other men in timbering?—Yes, certainly; if only one shift is worked a man knows whether it is secure or not.

39. Have you had any experience of drawing timber?—Well, I was acting as deputy for a short time, but I did not draw a great number of props.

40. What is your opinion of the method of drawing timber in this district?—Well, I do not approve of it—it is inclined to be a bit dangerous.

41. What is the method?—You take a hammer and try to knock them out.

42. You do not use a chain and lever?—No, but I think that is the safest method. I have seen it used in the Old Country.

43. Would you be in favour of timber being drawn by chain and lever?—Yes, certainly; I consider that is the best style of drawing timber.

44. *Mr. Cochrane.*] Would you make it clear what you mean as to the distribution of the air round the faces?—Well, I would like to see that amount of air in every working-face.

45. Which amount of air—the whole volume of the split?—150 cubic feet.

46. Then, if there were six men working there, would you want 900 ft.?—I would not go to extremes like that.

47. So long as they get 150 ft.?—Yes, at each working-place.

48. *The Chairman.*] Take one particular split for a district: do you suggest that the whole of that air should circulate round each face, or that separate air should be taken into each separate place?—I believe that the air should be split.

49. *Mr. Cochrane.*] Supposing it is split into three splits?—There should be 150 ft. for each man.

50. And for it to pass on and do for another section of the mine?—Yes, if the section is not too big. You can understand the impurities that the air would gather up.

51. *Mr. Reed.*] You stated that you would be satisfied if there were 150 ft. going into one working-face: you really want 150 ft. in one face, so that it does not matter if there is one man or two men?—Yes.

52. Supposing there were two men working there one day and three men the next, would you alter the quantity?—I want 150 ft. for each man.

53. So that if there were two men there would be 300 ft.?—No, I do not mean that.

54. Supposing on one day that working-place had two men in it, would you want 150 ft. or 300 ft. of air in it?—What I want is 150 ft. per man in the working-face.

55. The quantity of air you want would depend on the number of men: supposing there were ten men, would you require ten times as much air as for one man?—Well, I am not here to advocate anything like that. I simply want the law carried out.

56. Are you satisfied with the existing law?—No, I am not.

57. What you want is for the standard quantity of air to circulate to the men where they are?—Yes, that is my meaning. Then, in regard to baths, one witness has said that four men to one bath would be sufficient. I think that would be too much. I should say there ought to be one bath to every two or three men. A man does not want to wait too long.

58. *The Chairman.*] In regard to baths for metal-mines, we have had a suggestion that there should be one bath to six men, and that stalls should be provided?—That is too much of a crowd; a man would have to wait till the fifth man got a bath.

59. You think there should be one bath to every two or three men?—I said three at the most.