

a considerable period over 30 ft. per day. With regard to the rest of the men not working in the bottom heading, we allowed a bonus of 6d. per cubic yard for all that was put out, and it amounted to about 6d. per day increase in the wage.

56. *Mr. McLean.*] Did that increase the output?—It is rather hard to say. I do not think it did.

57. In your opinion it did not, notwithstanding that the wages were increased?—I have an open mind on the subject. I cannot say it did increase the output. There was a similar sort of bonus given to the men doing the lining-work, a bonus which would enable them to earn about 8d. a day additional.

58. *Mr. Blow.*] Did any of the men earn it?—Everybody in the tunnel earned those last two bonuses I have mentioned.

59. *Mr. McLean.*] It has been said here on one occasion, at any rate, that the sanitary arrangements in the tunnel are defective, and also that the air that the men are working in is bad. Will you describe to the Committee what effort has been made in regard to both those matters?—With regard to the sanitary arrangements, we first of all made a sort of wooden seat for the men to sit on in conjunction with kerosene-tins. Certain men were detailed to shift those kerosene-tins every day, which they did by putting the tins with their contents into a truck, and it was run outside and tipped over the dump. That was more or less satisfactory, but some took to stealing the kerosene-tins for washing previous to their use, and there was some difficulty in getting the men to attend to them. A lot of them thought they were rather above that sort of thing, and thought they ought to leave it to somebody else. Then we came to the end of our supply of kerosene-tins. We then got good large iron buckets and put them in different parts of the tunnel, and we have been doing that even since, except that in the lower part of the tunnel where the drain is the men now use the drain, and it is all washed away in a moment. There is a good flow of water there, and there is no trouble to anybody whatever. Further up the tunnel one bucket is kept now, and the men in the forward part of the tunnel use that. It is very difficult to provide anything that is comfortable in the head of the tunnel, because everything is being pushed along and shifted as the work goes ahead, and you cannot have anything of a permanent nature there. We are keeping on with the bucket business, but there is the trouble about the men not wanting to empty it. I think the most satisfactory way would be not to have buckets but to let the men do it in a shovel and put it into the truck, when it will be taken away. With regard to the ventilation, that is entirely satisfactory as far as it goes. As long as everything goes on satisfactorily in the tunnel and there are no hitches, the ventilation is altogether satisfactory. The way we have it arranged is that there is a 16 in. pipe leading from a Roots' blower, which is outside the tunnel, and that admits fresh air into the tunnel and sometimes exhausts the foul air, but you cannot take a 16 in. pipe in through the bottom heading. There is blasting going on there all the time, and we simply had pipe cut to pieces. We are in pretty nearly two miles at the Otira end now, and the end of the ventilation-pipe will be in a mile and a half. Through that mile and a half and a little bit further up the ventilation is all that can be desired: At the other face, where they are shooting, immediately after firing the smoke hangs a little bit, and they turn on the air-cocks and the ventilation is done by means of compressed air. In the heading the ventilation is again satisfactory, because the air-cocks are turned on and the air blows down the tunnel.

60. How many cubic feet of air are admitted per minute?—Roughly, 300 or 400 cubic feet per minute.

61. *Hon. Mr. R. McKenzie.*] Have you got a gauge there to test the quantity of air that goes into the tunnel?—No.

62. *Mr. McLean.*] You are speaking of the compressed air?—Yes.

63. As soon as they have finished the boring and fired they turn on the compressed air from the compressors?—Yes, that is right.

64. And how long does it take to get the smoke away and the men back?—Twenty minutes.

65. And then they are working in clear air?—Yes, the air is absolutely good in twenty minutes.

66. *The Chairman.*] And recognized to be good by the men?—Yes.

67. *Mr. McLean.*] You have had no complaints made to you?—No.

68. Have you had any complaints made as to the housing of the men?—No.

69. No complaints about firewood?—No.

70. No request that the contractors should obtain coal and sell it to the men?—Not to me personally. I believe something of that sort was mooted some time ago.

71. It would be a violation of the Truck Act if the contractors were to sell coal to the men?—I do not know if they sold it for cash whether it would be, but I am not a lawyer. I might say that in regard to the scarcity of labour, in addition to the bonuses, the wages were raised about February. A considerable increase was made in the wages solely for the purpose of attracting more men.

72. Did you not insert advertisements in the papers all over the Australian Colonies?—Yes, we advertised in the Australian Colonies and in New Zealand for men. We advertised on several occasions from time to time.

73. Have you had any complaints made in regard to working in the tunnel?—No.

74. Have you found the men making complaints in regard to the bad conditions in the tunnel?—No. There have been no complaints made at all that I know of. Occasionally a small thing is complained of, but it is always fixed up.

75. In regard to wet places in the tunnel. I suppose you get complaints occasionally that it is disagreeable to work in?—I have had complaints of very wet places, but as far as I am aware the men there now are quite satisfied, and have no complaints to make whatever.