

Mr. ROBERT BARROW was the next witness called. He made the following statement:—

I am a miner from the North Lancashire District of England, and have been working underground for 26 years. At present I am mine foreman at the Jumpers Deep, Limited, and have been in South Africa since the latter end of 1887. On arrival I worked for six months in Kimberley in the De Beers Mines; since then I have worked in the Transvaal. I have a wife and four children. When I came to South Africa I left my wife and family living in Dalton-in-Furness, Lancashire, where they remained five years, when they came out here, and have been living here with me about four years. I have read the evidence submitted to this Commission, and, generally, agree with it, especially with the evidence given by Mr. Fitzpatrick. I therefore intend to confine my statement to a simple analysis, and a comparison of cost of living in England with my family and the cost of living here, and the difficulties of coming out to this country.

The cost of living and the wage earned by a miner in Lancashire, England, will be dealt with in order that a comparison of facts and figures leading up to the point under notice, viz., cost of living in the Transvaal, may be arrived at.

of miners  
land.

A miner receives 5s. per day of eight hours, the month being composed of 22 working days. This totals up to £5 10s. per month.

The 22 working days are as follows, viz. :—

	Days.
First week—Monday, 6 a.m. till 2 p.m., and so on till Saturday, 12 p.m. ... ..	6
Second week—Monday, 2 p.m. till 10 p.m., and so on till Friday night, 10 p.m. ... ..	5

(Saturday being a half-holiday, he does not go down to work at 2 p.m., therefore no work is done from Friday night at 10 p.m. till Monday at 6 a.m.)

	Days.
Third week—Monday, 6 a.m. till 2 p.m., and so on till Satur- day, 12 p.m. ... ..	6
Fourth week—Monday, 2 p.m. till 10 p.m., and so on till Friday night, 10 p.m. ... ..	5
	22

The balance of a month of 30 days being made up as follows:—

Sundays, non-working days, 4; two Saturdays, non-working, 2; Saturday, 12 p.m.—Monday, 2 p.m., no work, 2	8
Total days ... ..	30

use rent of  
miners in Eng-  
land.

An ordinary miner's cottage of six rooms costs 3s. 6d. per week, or 16s. per month, in England, leaving a balance of £4 14s. per month for food, clothing, &c.

In the Transvaal the same cottage would cost £8 per month, i.e., £7 4s. more.

t of food to  
miners in Eng-  
land.

The food consists principally of porridge, bread, butter, meat, vegetables, tea coffee, milk, and eggs.

The following is a table of the approximate cost of these articles in England:—

TABLE I.

Butter, 10d. to 1s. per lb.
Flour, 1s. 8d. per st. (14 lbs.)
Bacon, 4d. per lb.
Tea, 1s. per lb.
Coffee, 1s. per lb.
Eggs, 9d. per doz.
Milk, 1d. per pint.
Potatoes, 3d. per 14 lbs. (stone).
Meat, 8d. per lb.
Oatmeal, about 1½d. per lb.

Clothing.—This in England is, at the very least, 43 per cent. cheaper than in the Transvaal. For example, a suit of clothes costing 20s. in England would, for the same quality and material, cost 35s. in the Transvaal.

A pair of ready-made miner's boots, costing 8s. 6d. in England, would, for the same quality, cost 17s. 6d. here.

A detailed estimate of the cost of living per week, for a miner's family of five, in England is given:—

TABLE II.

				£	s.	d.	
Milk, 1 pint per day at 1d. per pint	...	...	...	0	0	7	per week.
Butter, 2 lbs. per week at 10d. per lb.	...	...	...	0	1	8	"
Meat, 9 lbs. per week (three times per week) at 8d.	...	...	...	0	6	0	"
Vegetables, per week	...	...	...	0	2	6	"
Bread (a 4 lb. loaf and a half per day), at 6d. per loaf...	...	...	...	0	5	3	"
Groceries (tea, sugar, soap, coal, etc.)	...	...	...	0	5	6	"
				£1 1 6			
				4			
Per month				...	£4	6	0
Rent per month	...	...	...	0	16	0	
Doctor's fees for whole family	...	...	...	0	1	0	
Schooling (free)...	...	...	...	0	0	0	
				£5 3 0			
Leaving balance for clothing of	...	...	...	0	7	0	
				£5 10 0			

Further, a miner generally belongs to one of the numerous benefit societies in England, by which for the payment of 2s. per month he is entitled to receive 12s. per week in case of sickness. In case of his death his wife receives from the society £14 down, and in case of his wife's death the husband receives £7 down. Numerous privileges are also enjoyed by a miner, for which he pays nothing, such as free reading rooms and free recreation grounds. The above expenditure per month enables a miner and his family to live in greater comfort and enjoyment than it is possible to do here at £1 per day. Leaving the cost of living in England for the moment, the expenses connected with a voyage to the Cape will now be noted. A third-class passage to the

Cape from any part of England costs sixteen guineas. Add to this railway fare, third class, from the Cape to Johannesburg (which is £4 8s. 9d.), the expenditure for the voyage amounts to £21 4s. 9d. This does not include cost of food during the three days occupied in the journey by train, which would bring the amount up to £22. Further, the majority of miners arriving here have to allow for about a month of being out of employment, necessitating a further expenditure of £8 (or more) for living during this time. Taking into consideration all these items, amounting to £30, and referring to Table II., by which it will be seen that he has only 7s. per month left over from the actual cost of living for himself and family, for clothing, etc., it is not difficult to judge of the length of time it would be necessary for him to save up sufficient money to bring him out to Johannesburg, and what sacrifices he and his family would have to undergo in order to enable him to do so. As a matter of fact, it is impossible for him to collect enough out of his earnings for this purpose, and he has to borrow the amount from his unmarried friends. Bearing the above in mind, it is only natural to suppose that he undergoes these sacrifices in the hopes of obtaining sufficient pay, once arrived here, and at work, to make up for these.

#### AVERAGE RATE OF WAGES FOR MINERS ON THE RAND.

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75 per cent. rock-drill men at 20s. per day.

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With this amount per month a married man with a family, say of five altogether, has to pay the following. The undernoted different amounts are the actual averages for mine families.

TABLE III.

	£	s.	d.	
Rent ... ..	6	10	0	per month.
Butcher's account ... ..	2	10	0	"
Baker's account ... ..	2	0	0	"
Milk (1 bottle per day) ... ..	0	15	0	"
Groceries ... ..	8	0	0	"
Fuel ... ..	1	1	0	"
Total ... ..	£20	6	0	"

This amount is merely for absolute necessities to sustain life and to give a shelter for the head, placed at the lowest estimate. It will be noticed that the amount does not take into account the following absolute necessities also:—

TABLE IV.

	£	s.	d.	
Clothing ... ..	4	0	0	per month.
Schooling ... ..	1	10	0	" (not including books).
Doctor's fees ... ..	0	7	6	"
Kitchen boy ... ..	3	0	0	"
Railway fares ... ..	1	2	6	" (for children to school).
	£10	0	0	

Making the total £30 6s. per month for mere natural and compulsory wants leaving out all consideration of such small items as reading matter, school books

recreation, and small comforts indispensable for comfort and enjoyment. It will be seen that in Table III., groceries exceed in cost all other items, taking them one by one, and it would be as well to give here a table showing how this amount is made up.

TABLE V.

	£	s.	d.	
Butter, 2 lbs. per week, at 2s. 6d. per lb. ...	1	0	0	per month.
Tea, 2 lbs. per week, at 2s. 6d. per lb. ...	1	0	0	"
Sugar, 10 bs. per week, at 4d. per lb. ...	0	13	4	"
Coffee, 2 lbs. per week, at 3s. per lb. ...	1	4	0	"
Flour, 6 lb. per week, at 4d. per lb. ...	0	8	0	"
Jams, three tins per week, at 9d. per tin ...	0	9	0	"
Condensed milk, three tins per week, at 8d. per tin	0	8	0	"
Cheese, 4 lbs. per month at 1s. 6d. ...	0	6	0	"
Rice, 4 lbs. per week, about 3d. per lb. ...	0	4	0	"
Soap ... ..	0	6	0	"
Lights ... ..	0	10	0	"
Small sundries (too numerous to mention) ...	1	11	8	"
	£8 0 0			

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In order to show more clearly the difference of cost of living in England and in Johannesburg, I will bring forward table No. 1 of cost of living of a miner and his family in England, and put beside it the cost of living in Johannesburg for exactly the same articles :—

TABLE VI.

	England.			Transvaal.			
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	
Milk ... ..	0	2	4	0	15	0	Comp cost of min ily in and tl vaal.
Butter ... ..	0	6	8	1	0	0	
Meat ... ..	1	4	0	2	10	0	
Vegetables ... ..	0	10	0	—	—	—	
Bread ... ..	1	1	0	2	0	0	
Groceries ... ..	1	2	0	8	0	0	
Rent ... ..	0	16	0	6	0	0	
Doctor's fees ... ..	0	1	0	0	7	6	
	£5 3 0			£20 12 6			

A difference in favour of England of no less than £15 9s. 6d. On looking through Table No. II. in this statement, it will be seen that a balance of only 7s. per month is left for clothing, and it will be asked: "How can a miner clothe himself and family on 7s. per month?" The answer to this is that he cannot, but it must be remembered that at home there are wealthy men in every district who help by their charity, to say nothing of different "Dorcas Societies," who make clothing and distribute it among the poorer classes; and there are philanthropists who found free institutions for the benefit of workmen. In fact there are many things which help miners to tide over any misfortune through sickness or otherwise. There is none of this in the Transvaal, and every man has to help himself or sink.

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Mr. Smit.

Have the mines never imported workmen and paid their expenses out?—Not that I am aware of.

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Mr. Brochon.

In this statement we see that you have white men working at 12s. and 15s. per shift. Is that so?—Yes, we have got them at the Jumpers Deep. We have got as many at 12s. as at 15s.

Mr. Albu.

Do you consider them good men?—They are men new out from home, and they have not had much experience and they are glad to work for almost anything.

They are not miners, but men who come out here and say they have learned nothing?—Yes.

But these men would not get a shift at £5 10s. per month at home?—There is a probability that they might. We are not supposed to know what a man is until we try him.

What is the average pay in England for competent miners such as those you would engage as stoping men. What is the pay in coal mines or tin mines at home?—I worked in the iron ore mines, and the average pay was what my opening statement says—5s. per day. That was ten years ago.

I will admit that £20 won't go a very long way in the case of a married man, especially if he has to pay house rent; but is it not a fact that most married men are provided with a cottage on the mine?—No, there are not 10 per cent. who have got cottages on the mine.

A single man on a mine pays about £5 or £5 10s. per month on the mine for board?—At the present day he pays £6.

I think £6 is an excessive amount.—I am speaking of the boarding-house at our mine.

I know of a boarding-house at a Pretoria factory and the charge is £3 10s. per month, and the men seem very well satisfied. A workman here who pays £6 per month gets his room, light, and his coal. Now, the average earning of the competent miner is between £20 and £22 per month. If he pays £6 per month out of that he has £16 over. Don't you think he could save a good deal out of that?—Yes, I think the single miner ought to save a little out of that, but he has got a much better chance than a married man.

In your statement I find that at home, a married man with a family of five, has 9-lbs. of meat per week at 8d. per lb., that is 6s. In the table relating to this country the butcher's account is put down at £2 10s. Now meat does not cost as much here as at home?—No, but it is much inferior, it has not the same substance and it takes so much more to serve you.

Do you think a married miner's lot would be considerably improved if the mine companies were to erect cottages and charge a small rental for them, and that it would save the miner a lot?—If the companies could erect cottages and let them about £2, I think it would. Of course my figures refer to a miner who has to take a house in a place like Jeppestown.

All over the world if a man starts as a clerk or miner and is married, it is awkward to make both ends meet, is it not?—I am only speaking of England.

Do you think a man with three children is justified in taking a cottage at £8 per month?—Not at all. I am speaking of a man and wife with five children.

But you give us an exceptionally bad case. It must be very hard on a woman and five children if the husband has got no further in life than a miner?—Yes, but you know we all make these mistakes.

The married miner with five children is badly off. What would you suggest to remedy the evil. I want to be fair to the married as well as to the unmarried miner?—I beg your pardon, I did not quite catch what you said.

I am giving the married and the unmarried an equal chance. You admit that £20 to £22 is a good wage for an unmarried man. I admit that for a married man it is nothing more than sufficient. What would you suggest to me to do. Can I give the married man a higher wage than the unmarried because the former has got a wife and five children, and is not a better labourer than the unmarried. How can you suggest to get out of this difficulty, if his labour is not worth to me more than the unmarried?—The only thing I can suggest is to bring down the cost of provisions and house rent.

That is what we are all trying for, to get the Government to bring down the cost of living. The consequence would be that I would say to the unmarried man, "I can only pay you £15 per month." I would like to see the man with five children get on as well as the other.—It is very hard to suggest anything, because one man is as good as the other.

Well, what is the use of complaining if you cannot bring forward a remedy?—The remedy would be to bring down the cost of provisions and house rent.

Then the standard of wages will come down. It is a question which is troubling the whole world. I don't call an unmarried miner getting £16 or £18 a poor man. It is for the poor man I am speaking. I have been waiting for the answer for the last 10 years.—I am afraid you will have to wait for another 10.

I can see that the married man cannot save anything out of £22. I admit that. Evidence is being taken for the purpose of trying to remedy the evil. But you have come forward with evidence showing the evil, but cannot suggest a remedy.—Well, I know it is an evil.

Yes, I know. We know the price of dynamite is an evil, and the high freights are an evil, and the gentlemen who have given evidence have suggested remedies?—Well, that is the only one that I can suggest.

All I can say is that the man with five children, who has not been able to hold a better position than the ordinary miner, is better to leave his wife and children at home. If wherever he goes, to America or Australia, he is only able to earn the lowest standard wage, he cannot support them properly anywhere. I say it is a social question, and you deserve the gratitude of mankind if you are able to solve this question.

Mr. Hay.

In this Table IV., where you calculate out the cost of living in the Transvaal, you have set down £3 a month for kitchen boy. In calculating the corresponding table for England you don't put down anything for assistance in the shape of labour?—No, I have made a slight mistake in that.

Of course it is quite apparent that in England it is a struggle for existence according to the statement made, and the chances are that if a man, with a wife and five children, would have to depend at times on charity for clothing, these people would never need to have any assistance in the house work?—No, that is quite right.

And in the corresponding position in this country they would not need to have assistance. The woman would have to do the housework?—Yes.

Mr. Schmitz-Dumont.

In this statement you reckon the family of five to be the man and wife and three children?—No. A wife and four children. That makes six with the husband.

In England have the married miners any advantage over the unmarried miners? <sup>Married</sup> <sub>single mi:</sub>—Not at all.