

could be drawn between kaffirs and those who depended on themselves for a livelihood, and that they should pay a different tax.

Yes. As illustrating the difficulty, I will give you a case which happened to myself. I have a man in my employ and he is very dark, but his father is an Englishman, who is married to a woman who is descended from a St. Helena woman and a white man. Out of nine children this man is the dark one; all the others are white.

—Was the case before the court?

Yes.—And the Landdrost gave judgment?

Yes. I am not finding fault, as originally I made the man take out a pass. But would it not simplify the law very much if these people were made to pay a separate charge—a reasonable amount, and give them licences.—That is being dealt with at the present moment.

There are some of these amendments which, if I may suggest it, I should like to send to the mine managers. I think if the amendments were put before the Mine Managers' Committee, asking them to send a reply in writing whether they approved or disapproved of these alterations, that could be handed to Mr. Kock for his consideration. I understand Mr. Kock to say in his report that the pass regulations taken as a whole are good, and that the fault of the law not being properly administered is mainly because of the pass office having been undermanned.—The law is a good one, although several articles require modification.

Replying to the Chairman, witness said the registration of kaffirs was good enough at the present moment. One of the objects of his suggestion regarding hiring natives was that nobody should be able to hire kaffirs who were not in possession of district passes, and he hoped that would stop desertion to a great extent.

MR. ALEXANDER BUCHAN FYFFE was called, and being duly sworn in, said that he wished to give evidence on the working man's wages on the Rand. He said:

Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, in the first place allow me to apologise for not being present this morning when I was first called. I only knew yesterday that I had to appear before the Commission this morning, and I was in the Orange Free State. I then left by the first possible train last night, and arrived here this morning. I have to thank you, on behalf of the working men of the Rand, for allowing me to give in a statement with regard to the working man's wages on the Rand. In the first place, I wish to point out that the wages of white men generally, working on the Witwatersrand goldfields, are none too high, considering the cost of living. That has been amply proved by those who have already appeared before the Commission—by Mr. George Albu and Mr. Fitzpatrick. Let me say that the average wage of a carpenter, the trade to which I belong, is £1 per day. On the average that comes to about £27 per month, and the expenses are made up in much the following fashion:—Food comes to £6 per month at a mine boarding house. Some of the mines again charge 10s. per month for a room. Then you have to provide for your wife and family, who are generally not provided with a house on the property on which you work. That house rent in the district of Krugersdorp, costs at least £7 per month. Then you have to provide food for your wife and family, and this costs about £7 per month, and that leaves you with about £6 with which to buy clothing and to educate your children, and to make provision for a rainy day, doctor's fees, and such little odds and ends as clothing for yourself, and tobacco, and some little enjoyment. Most of us now present on the Rand left our homes in Britain and America because of the view put before us by the capitalists that wages were high on the Rand, and the cost of living not exorbitant. We left our comfortable homes and the pleasures of life,

and we came out here in the hope of making a little money, and at some future date of going home to see our friends and the place of our childhood. Now, I hold that a living wage is what a working married man can live on in peace and comfort. According to the evidence given you by Mr. Barrow, you will see that the working man, unless he gets a house provided on the mine on which he works, cannot keep a wife and family in this country out of the wage he at present receives, because, gentlemen, the majority of men in this country are not carpenters but are miners, and their wages do not rise as high as £27, but who have, gentlemen, on an average, £20 per month. Now, sir, in estimating the cost of white labour on these fields, all divisions of white labour, from the general manager downwards to the lowest working man on the mine, have been thrown into one lump sum, and this has been taken as the average expenses of white labour on these mines. No witness as yet examined has stated in detail how these wages are paid. I would suggest that the Commission have a public auditor appointed to enquire into the various items which figure as white labour on these mines. Gentlemen, it is unfair to saddle the working man with the entire cost of working these mines. I should suggest that a statement be got from the leading companies giving in detail the following:—The London and Johannesburg directors' fees, the London and Johannesburg secretaries' fees, then the consulting engineer's salary, the general manager's salary, the mine secretary's salary, the total clerical staff's salaries. Put these down and get the cost per ton, and in another column get the cost of the qualified working man's wages. In regard to the question of rent, I see that some companies adopt a very unjust line. Take the following instance: a company puts up 12 single men's rooms on their property. This costs at the outside £800. They charge you on an average £1 per room per month; therefore they draw from these 12 rooms the sum of £144 per annum, and the return on their outlay of £800 is about 16 per cent. Now, gentlemen, if the mine directors and the mine manager grumble about the extortionate charges of the Netherlands Railway, they ought also, in the first instance, to make their own house clean, so that if we have to pay rent for rooms let it be a fair return on their outlay. Let me here state that all mines do not charge for rooms; some mines provide good married men's houses, and also good single men's quarters, without charging anything for them from employees. Again, I wish to point out another item on which the Commission ought to get some information from mine managers and directors. If I am rightly informed, the cost of dynamite is about £4 5s. per case. How does it come about that on certain mines they charge men who are working under contract from £5 10s. to as high as £6 per case. I saw this from the bill of a contractor on the Randfontein Estates for 25 cases of gelatine. I think, according to the statement of the manager of the Crown Reef, that gelatine costs £5 2s. 6d., while Mr. J. B. Robinson charges £6 for a case of gelatine. How do they charge so much more to contractors than the actual cost of the article. Take another item, perhaps small in its way, but still important, namely, fuse. That costs, at the very outside, in Johannesburg, 5d. per coil. In Randfontein, contractors are charged 6d. per coil. Now, Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, I wish to point out another thing which has a very important bearing on the wages of working men on these mines. In the first place, on many mines—I don't say on all mines, of course there are exceptions—there is simply no provision made for enjoyment or pleasure of any kind for employees. A man is supposed to rise in the morning, take his breakfast and go to work; work till dinner time, take his dinner, and go to work again till tea time, and then there is nothing left for him to do but to go to his room—which, in some cases, hardly fit for a kaffir—to spend the rest of the evening. We have no enjoyment whatever, and I hold that unless you can make the lives of the employees of the mine happy and comfortable, the best men at present working in the country will find

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does not pay to work here, and will go home to their own country, where they can enjoy life, and have the pleasures and comforts of a home life. Another point I wish to bring before the Commission is the question of dismissing men on short notice. When a man comes to a mine and gets work, he is told first of all to go down to the office and sign an agreement, whereby he gives or takes 24 hours' notice. Now, gentlemen, this is not optional, because they don't compel you in the strict sense of the word to sign this document; you are compelled by the exigencies of the case to do so. If you don't do so, you are not employed. Another thing which the working men on the mines are much against is this compulsory signing of an insurance coupon. The man when received on to a mine must agree to take a stipulated sum in the case of receiving an accident on that mine when in the company's employ. The outside limit on the mines I have worked on is £300. Now, gentlemen, I claim if a man, through the culpability of a manager or the officials of a mine, in which he is working, sustains an injury whereby he is disabled for life, he is entitled to a little more than £300. I would urge the Commission to approach the Government with a view to introducing an amendment to those two items in regard to employment on the mines. I consider in this country we ought to have an Employers' Liability Bill, framed on somewhat similar lines as the Employers' Liability Bill in Great Britain, whereby an employee is not allowed to contract himself out of the benefits of the Employers' Liability Bill. At Home if a man sustains injury when in the employment of the company, although he has signed an agreement that he will take a certain sum, he has the right to sue that company for not providing sufficient means for safe working on that company's property. As I said at the commencement, gentlemen, the living wage I laid down as an irrefutable maxim, is what a married man can exist upon. Now everyone agrees that unless there is a home life in a country, that country has not the elements of success and stability in it. Is there any inducement in this country at the present moment for a man to settle down and make it his home? You want to make the conditions of life here pleasant enough to induce married men to settle instead of coming here for a few years and going back again. Some talk has been going on about the mines closing down in the event of no reduction being made in the burdens resting on the industry, namely, the cost of labour and dynamite. I wish to point out that if the Government allow the mines to close down they are exposing themselves to a great and grave danger. If the mines are closed down a large number of men will be thrown out of work. These have not enough money to take them out of the country, and they will be compelled to live in the country, although starving. Unrest will ensue, and the consequences will be that the Government of this country will be in danger. This is no fanciful picture, gentlemen, and I would like to point out that in Australia, in the Victorian Colony, when the managers closed down the mines, and threw a large number of men out of employment, the Government of the country stepped in and gave them a fortnight's notice to open the mines, with the option of having them confiscated. Now, I don't know that I have much more to say, because I have not been able to place before you the written statement which I had prepared, and I have had to speak entirely from memory, and I hope the Commission will excuse my disjointed remarks. I shall be pleased to give any further information. I would again impress upon the Government the necessity for making the life in the country such, that married men can settle down and become citizens of the country. If you want to make this a healthy, happy, prosperous country, you have got to keep up the standard rate of wage, and induce the best men to come here, because in the long run it will come to this—that good men will not come here, and the rag-tag and

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bobtail will; and even the companies will be the losers by their policy. As the poet Burns said:—

Go make a happy fireside clime for weans and wife
Is the true pathos and sublime of human life.

That is all I have to say, and I have only to thank the Commission for having so patiently listened to my rambling remarks.

Mr. Smit.

Have you been employed by one of the mines?—Yes, on the Violet Consolidated, Krugersdorp.

To whom did that mine belong?—Mr. J. F. Henderson, I think, is the principal shareholder.

What salary did you get there?—£1 per day. We were paid monthly, but we are liable to dismissal at 24 hours' notice.

You say that the average of white labour is calculated on the basis of lumping together all the big salaries and the workmen's salaries, and then the average is struck. I quite agree that the men getting the smaller wages must suffer; can you officials' give an instance of any big salary paid to officials?—I cannot give information es. because I have not seen the books. The report is that the manager on the mine I was working on received £2,000 per year, and one of the witnesses before the Commission stated there were instances of mine managers receiving as high as £3,000 a year.

You say that the Government must adopt such means as to make it a good place sal of min- to live for married people; what do you mean by that?—I mean that the Government should interfere in the instance I have mentioned. A man being dismissed at 24 hours' notice, where he is paid monthly, is putting the men in a wrong position because it places him at the mercy of the company, and I would ask the Commission, and through them the Government, to make a regulation that if a man is paid monthly he should get a month's notice. I may say that the kaffirs on these fields receive a month's notice, and the white workmen on the Randfontein Estates, when the reduction took place, only got three hours' notice. The Government can put the white workmen on the same basis as the kaffirs, and give them at least a month's notice.

You are entitled to a month's notice unless you make a special contract by which you bind yourself voluntarily to accept 24 hours, and how can the Government step in?—If you don't take work on these conditions, you won't get work at all. It is impossible for a man to refuse, because if he does he is turned adrift. There is no union amongst the men sufficiently strong yet to take up the case of the men.

Supposing the mine managers and the directors think that the wages must come good living down, how could the Government meet you there?—The only way to make it ge. possible to live here is by giving the men a good living wage. Most of the witnesses including Mr. Albu and Mr. Johns, stated that the wages of white labour cannot be reduced under present conditions. It is absurd for the companies to throw the whole blame of the mines not paying at the door of the Government and at the door of the white men's wages. There are mines on the Rand which will never pay even though the cost is reduced to 15s. per ton.

Supposing the Government improve the conditions, and the mining men will not pay you good wages, how can the Government help you?—Well, for one thing, they can reduce the cost of living materially, and bring it down to the same level as in the Cape Colony, where a man can live for at least £1 2s. 6d. per week. of living of hite miners ducible by overnment don.

The expenses of living cannot be the same here as in the Cape Colony, as, for instance, grain has to be brought by transport 1,200 miles?—What is to hinder this country producing all the grain it requires?

Mr. *Hugo*.

Witness.] I came to Johannesburg in November, 1895. I was employed at the Randfontein Mines, not directly, but through a contractor.

There has been some agitation there recently in connection with the reduction of wages?—Yes.

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You took a rather active part in it?—Yes.

What has been the result of the reduction?—Well, the effect of the reduction has been something like this: Mr. Robinson threatened to reduce wages of carpenters from £1 to 16s. 8d. per day. The men refused to work, and the company has been compelled to get the whole or at least the bulk of the carpentering work done by contract. The contractor got most of the men who were formerly working on the Randfontein Estates, and he gives them £1 2s. 6d. for nine hours, and Mr. J. B. Robinson was only going to give 16s. 8d. for 10 hours.

Are any of the men going back to the Randfontein Mines to work who left on account of the reduction of wages?—I left Randfontein on Saturday, and up to that time no carpenters had gone back to work. A drill sharpener took work by contract, and instead of earning 18s. 4d. per day as proposed, he earned £1 7s. 6d. That is the testimony of some of the men at present working by contract.

Have you any experience on other fields?—No.

You think the life of white workmen in this country is not very favourable?—

No.

Is it not a fact that they are able to participate very liberally in subscription lists and sweepstakes?—I cannot say that they have gone in for sweepstakes; I have not been able to go in for sweepstakes myself. I was seven months on the Violet, and no subscriptions were got up during that time. I worked till March, 1896, and then I took typhoid fever. I was off for sixteen weeks, and that sickness cost me at least £200—over £100 in expenses. I am also counting the money I would have received had I been working. It takes all my money to pay my current expenses.

Sweep

You appear to make a strong point of the fact that companies invest £800 in building rooms, and charge £1 per month; is it not a fact that buildings of that description depreciate very considerably?—I think the charge is exorbitant. If a building is properly put up it lasts as long again as a mine.

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Do I understand that the Robinson group charge contractors £6 for blasting gelatine?—I saw the account of one man who came out on strike; he was not affected by the reduction of workmen's wages, and he was charged for 25 cases of gelatine, £150.

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You say the price of gelatine delivered at the mine is £5 2s. 6d. I think that is a mistake; the charge is about £5 9s. 6d.?—I might have made a mistake. They sell to contractors, and pay no licence for stores at all.

Mr. *Hay*.

In your statement, where you calculate how much miners receive, and then how much they pay out, you made a statement there that they sometimes paid a rent of 10s. per month for a room?—I made the statement that single men paid 10s. on some properties, and that married men, in the majority of cases, cannot get rooms on the mines.

Rents of
quar

Subsequently you went into a calculation, and said that on some mines they charged unfairly. You calculated that a charge of £1 per room per month, on an outlay of £800, would return 16 per cent.—Yes; but you are forgetting the fact that in single men's quarters on the mines there are always two occupants in a room, and they have to pay 10s. each.

Do you think the charge for a room is universal on the mines?—No, I don't say so; but there are mines that do.

Practically you don't know anything at all about it, except the mines you have been on?—I may say that on the mine I was on I was not charged.

Practically it is only what you have heard. You can only answer for some mines?—Yes; but why should it be on some mines?

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But you would not expect people to be paid at the same rate on every mine? Is that what you are arguing, and, irrespective whether a man is competent or a mere "botch," he should be paid at the same rate?—I argue that the same rate should obtain on the East Rand as on the West Rand.

Your argument is that every man who is a carpenter, wherever he lives—whether at Modderfontein or Randfontein—should get exactly the same rate always, competent or not.—No, decidedly not. If a man is incompetent he should be kicked off the property, but I hold that a competent man deserves £1 per day.

ages.
The question is whether a mine can pay or not. It appears that a man must be paid £1 per day. Now, if a mine cannot afford to pay £1 a day, what are the managers to do?—Well, they should approach the Government and try to get such concessions as to make the mines not paying, pay. Speaking for myself and the rest of the working men, if the cost of living be reduced they will be quite prepared to take a good deal less than £1 per day.

You recommend, or warn the Government in a way, that the mines will be closed down?—Yes.

Supposing a mine does not pay to work then, what is to become of that mine? Is it to be closed down or go on?—I hardly follow you.

Supposing there is a mine which does not pay to work—and you have said there are mines on this Rand which will never pay—then what do you propose to do; is that mine to be closed down or go on?—Well, if it is proved that nothing will make that mine pay they must close it down. But there are plenty of mines which were paying which will be shut down, I suppose, if the white man's wages are not reduced and concessions are not granted the industry by the Government. If the Government does this these mines will be compelled to keep open.

What authority have you for making the statement that mines will be closed down if the concessions are not granted by this Commission?—If you judge from the companies which have shut down which were paying, you can easily see that other companies will follow suit.

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Will you name a company that has closed down which paid to work?—The North Randfontein was paying, and it closed down for several months.

Why was it closed down?—I don't know what reason it had for closing down. It had a good output, and it was closed for several months; and Mr. J. B. Robinson said that, if he did not get white labour reduced to the rate he wanted, he would close down Porges Randfontein, which is a paying mine.

Then you mean to say Mr. Robinson made that statement?—Yes. I mean to say that Mr. Robinson made a statement to the effect that if he could not get white labour reduced, and other concessions, he would close down the Porges mine.

The North Randfontein was re-started again?—It stood about a fortnight during the lock-out; now, I believe, it is at work again.

Therefore, as far as you know, the closing down of the mine may have been for some very good reason?—It may have been.

Is it not a fact that the mine was closed down because the natives were drunk, and that no native labour could be got?—No; I don't think so. I will give you an instance. I was speaking to an official of Block A, which is presently to be closed down, and he told me that on that mine they never had any scarcity of boys, even when the difficulty of getting native labour was at its worst; and the common belief is that Block A was closed down because there was no reef there.

That was inevitable if there was no reef there?—No; and I don't think capitalists will float mines unless the reef is there, and then saddle the Government and the working man with the blame if these mines are not paying.

You refer to the question of blasting gelatine. The price at the factory at Modderfontein is £5 7s. 6d. per case, and it costs practically 2s. 6d. to bring it to Johannesburg. That would bring it up to £5 10s., and to that there is the carriage to Randfontein.—I can produce evidence in confirmation of what I have stated regarding the price dynamite was sold at to a contractor.

You seem to complain because the companies insure men's lives against accident.—It is a grievance to me that a man is compelled to insure, and if he is injured he gets less than he would in a court of law. Miners' i
ces.

If a man works on a property, and the injury he receives is the result of his own carelessness, he has no claim on his employer. Is that a fact or not?—Yes, that is a fact.

Not only here, but elsewhere, the same conditions exist?—Not only here, but all over the world.

If I employ a man to work for me, and he sustains an injury through his own fault, am I liable for that or not?—In a court of law you are not.

You say that £300 is the limit of compensation a company pays in the case of total disablement?—I am speaking from the agreement I signed myself. The agreement on the mines here is that, if a man is killed, the company pays a year's wages, with the limit of £500. That is, those who earn more than £500 are limited to £500. That is the universal custom on these fields. On the mine on which I worked, if a man were totally disabled he got a year's pay.

With the limit of £300?—I did not say the limit was £300.

Yes, you did.—I don't know whether he was alluding to the secretary or not.

It is a year's pay with the limit of £300?—Is there a working man in any branch of trade getting more than £300?

Yes, there is. I am speaking from knowledge. I know that during last year we have paid a lot in compensation.—Do you hold that £300 is sufficient for a man totally disabled?

Most of the accidents which occur are the men's fault.—I don't say that, because at least nine-tenths of the accidents on these mines are the fault of the company, as far as my experience goes.

These things were talked over long before you came into this country, and the conditions have been considered fair and equitable.—I don't think so. I know the case of a man with a broken arm who has lost more than the company have paid him.

How much do you think a man ought to get? You ask the Government to step in and help you. What sum do you think the Government ought to fix?—I think it would be presumptuous for me to fix a sum for the Government. It ought to be left to a court of law to settle, and I am quite confident that the working man would get more than he receives in compensation.

Do you think it would be best to give one, two, or ten years' wages?—I don't think I should express anything of the kind; that ought to be left to a court of law.

The question is do you think that £300 is too small. What do you think would be fair?—I don't think it would be a fair question to ask at all.

When you say the amount is too small, the question is a fair one.—At home, if a man is injured, he can go to the law courts. He can't contract out of the benefits of the Employers' Liability Bill.

officials' sal- You say in the first part that you think many managers' salaries are too high. You think a man with £2,000 a year is overpaid?—In some cases I think he is. I don't consider any man on these fields, whatever is his experience, is worth £3,000 a year.

Still you think a man ought to get more in this country than in Europe?—Yes.

In the same way you would get here £1 a day; how much did you get in Europe?—When I was in Glasgow I was in receipt of £1 18s. 6d. a week.

Then you get in this country three times as much as you got in Glasgow?—You have to bear in mind that a manager's salary is not only two or three thousand pounds; he has, in many instances, a carriage and pair, servants, coal and light. All these perquisites count up to about £1,000 a year. A working man only gets his bare £6 a week.

A man with a manager's appointment is supposed to be a man who has been well trained?—I have undergone a training also, and have had as much training as any man here. The fact remains that there has been no attempt to reduce these officials' salaries; it is always the working man. In Mr. J. B. Robinson's circular there was nothing about reducing the consulting engineer's salary, or the manager's salary.

Chairman.

re' insur- What premium have you to pay for insurance; or do the mines pay it?—On some mines you pay it, and on some mines you don't pay anything. I did not pay anything on the Violet for insuring my life. If it had been optional I would not have insured my life, but I was compelled to sign the agreements of 24 hours' notice and insurance, or lose the prospect of work, which is none too plentiful at the present time. On some mines I believe they do pay a small sum per month for insurance, doctor's fees, and other things of that description.

Mr. Hay.

The insurance is not mixed up with the doctors' fees; they are quite different.

Chairman.

Your objection is that there is an obligation to sign these agreements?—It is practically compulsory, because, if he does not sign, he would not get a job on the mine.

What premium have you to pay in the accident companies for £300?—I cannot say as to this country at all. I was insured for £300 at home, and my premium was £2 5s. a year. That was against accident.

You object, because, having signed that agreement, you have no action against the company?—Yes, you have to accept a sum, in most cases, totally inadequate to the injuries received.

comparative wages and cost of living in Scotland and in the Rand. Now, as regard wages. Here wages are £1 a day, in Scotland £1 18s. 6d. per week. Now, what is the comparison between the two countries in the matter of wages and the cost of living?—Well, my board and lodging, mending, washing, and ironing in Glasgow came to 13s. per week. That included a comfortable room, well furnished

in addition. Washing and mending comes to a pretty sum here when they charge 4s. per dozen articles. Plenty of men live in Glasgow and other parts of Scotland as low as 8s. per week. Here in Johannesburg if you work, as I did, in town, they charge £6 and £7 per month for food; £3 per month for your room. My washing bill came to about 10s. per month on an average. Clothes cost three times as much as they do at home, and the quality is very much lower; and boots last about a third of the time they do at home, and cost about twice as much.

So you agree with the mine managers that it is impossible to reduce white labour at present?—Under present conditions it is impossible. If the cost of living is reduced to a reasonable rate, there is no workman who would not be willing to accept a good reduction in wages, and be prepared to accept 16s. per day if the cost of living was proportionately reduced. We have no desire to keep up the £1 per day for good, bad, and indifferent men, but so long as living continues as high as at present, it is absolutely impossible for a workman to live in a decent manner under £1 per day.

What is the object of your evidence?—I may say that I was appointed by the newly-formed Mineworkers' Union, which takes in all branches of employment on the mines—miners, carpenters, blacksmiths, drill-sharpeners, handy men, and all others—to represent before this Commission the fact that wages could not be reduced from current rates unless living was proportionately reduced. I am not representing myself alone, and I have no desire to come here, as I am losing time. I was asked by this union to appear before you and give their views on these questions of wages and cost of living.

You said we must try and get a statement from the different mine managers showing the salaries and wages paid from the highest to the lowest?—Why should not mine companies be compelled to properly audit their books to show exactly how the money is spent.

The average given us of the percentage of cost of white labour ranges between £23 and £28 per month. Now, if we were to get the wages of all, that average would be reduced?—Most decidedly it would be. A mine manager drawing £3,000 per annum would pay, and will pay, the salaries of a good many workmen. One of the witnesses examined before the Commission would lead the public to believe that the working men were getting the vast bulk of that percentage. I hold that a very large proportion of it goes in salaries, of which there is no mention of reducing at all. I don't mean to say that mine managers' salaries should be reduced, because, as a mine manager said to me, "If my salary is reduced, yours will have to come down also." What we want is a living wage for ourselves. That is what we are fighting for, and we will allow the mine managers to look after themselves. I don't care if a mine manager gets £3,000 a year, so long—

Do I understand that, with reference to the closing down of these mines of Mr. Robinson's, that after the work had been stopped through the proposal to reduce wages, the work was given out to contract?—Yes, on Porges Randfontein; where they are putting up large workshops, and the work was practically begun, the foundations having been laid, and it was intended to be completed by the company. This has been let out to a contractor who is employing a good few of the men who were locked out, at the rate of 22s. 6d. per day.

So you think that at the present moment the work will cost more than it would have done at the original rate of wages?—Of course it will cost more, as far as I can see. The contractor will do the work quicker no doubt, but it will cost more than if the wages had not been reduced below £1 per day.

Mr. Smit.

insur- You say you did not pay your accident insurance?—I did not pay it on the
s. Violet.

Why are you against it?—Because I am compelled to receive a lower sum than I would receive if I put it before a Court of law.

The contract you sign there prevents your going to a Court in case of accident?—Yes.

It does not prevent further insurance of your life?—Certainly not; it does not control your private actions.

Mr. Brakhan.

wages. You stated that the wages of miners are inferior to those of carpenters, and you give us a figure of £20 per month. Isn't it a fact that a competent miner earns £40, £50, and even more per month?—I don't know what the average wage is per month for miners. I know that the wages on the Randfontein Estates were reduced to £4 10s. per week.

You speak of Randfontein Estates. Why don't you speak of the Rand generally? I know for a fact, and it has been stated before the Commission, that the average wage is considerably more than £20 per month?—I quite agree that where a man is working by contract he can earn more than £20 per month; but the fact remains that where a man is not working by contract, and I take it the majority of miners don't work by contract, their wages are not above £20 per month.

Is it not a fact that most miners prefer to work by contract than by the day? I speak of mining in the mine, not surface work?—There are some parts of work that cannot be let out by contract. A stope cannot be let by contract, and the stope is paid 8s. 6d. per day.

I know one mine which does not work by contract, and the average pay of miners last month was somewhat over £29. Some did better, some worse, on account of working better?—Yes; you have got a number of these men who get big pay, who lay work on work on Saturdays and Sundays.
nes.

Do you mean to say there is any work done on Sundays?—Most certainly.

On the mine to which I refer there was no work on Sundays except in the milling. Therefore, it shows clearly that a competent workman is able to earn a very good wage on the Rand, and that those who don't earn such good money are not such good men, and are not taken on by the contractors. I don't say in all cases, but in good many.—I have seen it stated in the papers that on one of the mines, contractors after the beginning of June, would not be allowed to make more than £26 per month. I know plenty of mines where there are no contracts given out. If I were allowed overtime I could make considerably more than £1 per day.
vertime.

Experience is not in favour of overtime, as it is found that work is done during overtime in three hours which takes four hours by day work?—That is the fault of the foreman.

It is to be regretted that intelligent men have to be watched?—If any of the companies had men of the class referred to they ought to be put off the mines, as there are plenty of men to do a fair day's work for a fair day's wage.

ite wages. The point is this: a competent miner is not confined to £20, his pay, in many cases, averages much more. There may be some who only get £15 per month, but the companies would be much more ready to pay them £30 by contract if good work done, than pay at a smaller rate and yet be to the good. There is no endeavour to cut down miners' wages if they do good work. It is not correct to say that

wage of miners is £20 per month.—I hold it is not above £20. It has not been proved before this Commission or anywhere else. The average of any mine should not be taken, you should take the average for the whole Rand.

Some men are earning nearly £100 per month?—Yes, I saw where the manager of the Simmer and Jack gave £140, but you must point out the opposite at Randfontein. How many men at the Simmer and Jack get £140 per month?

There is one statement you made that capitalists had told the workmen that high wages were earned on the Rand; can you give any names?—That is a general statement. What I mean is that there are men going round about at Home, I do not know whether they are in the pay of capitalists or in the pay of steamship companies, or whose pay they are in, but the fact remains that these men lecture at Home about the big wages paid, indirectly inducing men to come out here without their having a true knowledge of the state of affairs.

Can you substantiate the statement with regard to the capitalists?—I say it lies either with the capitalists of the mines or the capitalists of the steamship companies.

I want to elicit where capitalists who control the mines have been spreading these reports with the consequences you name?—I say that last year there was a letter sent out by the Master Builders' Association enlarging on the rate of wages on the Rand, and contrasting the high rate of wages here with the low rate of wages, as they call it, at Home. I take it you would call them capitalists because they are directly responsible to the mining industry; without the mining industry Johannesburg would not last six months.

You do not accuse any of the mining houses spreading about such reports?—No, I cannot give you the names of any mining houses, but I know there are men going about lecturing for this purpose, and they do not do it for love, and it follows that men who pay them will reap the benefit of the men coming to this country.

Now about the short notice. Cannot the man just as well give 24 hours' notice to leave as the company?—Yes. Most decidedly. I think I said so in my statement.

So it is a hardship on the company also if a man gives 24 hours' notice. It cuts both ways.—You won't find a man who will throw up a good job to take the chance of getting work in another place.

I know two years ago, carpenters have thrown up and left in 24 hours' notice, because they could get 2s. 6d. more at another mine.—I know a man who got a job on a mine not far from Krugersdorp, a married man, who took his wife and family to the district. He was only there three or four days, and he had all the expense of taking his belongings, and furniture out, and because he was at the mercy of the consulting engineer he was thrown out.

Anyhow, it cuts both ways. In the case of the men the chance is the men are not competent, and the company is justified in dismissing them?—If they are going to dismiss them, they ought to get a month's notice, as they pay them monthly. If they are going to dismiss a man by the day they ought to pay him daily. I don't contend they ought to be paid daily. In the case of clerks, secretaries, and amalgamators, they get a month's notice and they are paid monthly. If a secretary is dismissed at a day's notice, he claims a month's pay.

Chairman.

I understand you have a written declaration, but, being called at short notice, you could not bring it with you?—Yes, I had a statement written out, but owing to the fact that I was in the Free State yesterday, and I had to appear to-day, I was unable to bring it with me.