

How do these compare with Johannesburg?—I do not know what the rate is at Johannesburg. We pay a miner from £18 to £22, or even up to £25 per month. Carpenters get £5 10s. to £6 a week, while for native labour we pay at the rate of about 50s. per month.

What is the cost of living? Do the white men complain of the cost of living?—I ^{Cost}_B never heard of any complaints.

How does the cost of living compare with Johannesburg?—That I cannot say. Many of the men get free quarters, and then feed themselves. Since the special duties have been taken off, I should say that they have no complaint in our district. In the old days, when the old duties were in force, they had cause to complain, for then there were many things which a miner could do with which he could not have. Under the present conditions, however, they had no cause for complaint.

Mr. Brochon.

What is the charge for living at the boarding houses?—Well, there are no boarding houses.

But big mines like the Sheba have boarding houses on the property; is that not so?—Yes, there are boarding houses on some of them, but the men do not use them much. On the Sheba mine, I believe, the men pay about £6 10s. a month. ^{She}_{bo}^{ses}

Have you read the evidence given with regard to married men at Johannesburg?—No, I have not read that specially.

Do you think the married men can live on £20 or £22 per month?—Well, with married men there is a difference. I should think that a married man could just live on that and little more; that is, after he has paid his household expenses, food for his family, etc.

Mr. Brakhan.

Is it usual to give the married men quarters?—Well, that depends to a great ^{Marr}_{qu} extent on the managers.

For the single as well as the married men?—No.

Mr. Albu.

How do you arrive at the cost of dynamite to be 53s.; is that from merchants? ^{Price}_{mit}
—Yes; in Johannesburg.

Mr. de Beer.

What is the cost of production per ton?—I have no statistics on that point.

You say that Johannesburg employs touts for the kaffir labour. You have the ^{Native} right to do the same thing.—Yes, but we have not the wealth. We complain of boys leaving their homes to come to Barberton and being intercepted, and practically forced to go to Johannesburg.

Mr. WILLIAM SHANKS was next called and duly sworn. He said:

^{Mr. W}_{ev}^{id}

I am the manager of the Barberton Consolidated Mine. I have not made any statement, as all the questions have been so thoroughly thrashed out by the Johannesburg witnesses; but I will hand in a table of figures showing in detail the cost of the mine for the last four months so as to give you an idea of the various items. I have a few remarks to make on native labour. You will notice from the statement that ^{Native} the native labour is by far the largest item of the cost. To begin with, these costs ^{sup}_{cost} are for developing and not for the mines running in full operation. It is not the amount we pay the kaffir per month that runs up that cost; it is the fact that we

have no guarantee whatever that we can keep up the supply. To-day probably we may be fully supplied, and next week we may be many natives short. The boys clear out without giving notice. This is a matter which affects the whole of the gold mining industry of the Transvaal, and, in my opinion, it has to be dealt with chiefly by the mining community of Johannesburg and the Government. The question of efficiency is one which must be dealt with. I think they should get the boys to work for a fixed time, say with a minimum of 8 or 12 months. Then we should get much higher efficiency out of them than we do at the present time. By far the dearest natives are those who get paid the lowest wage, these being the green and untrained boys. Then the largest percentage of those who are getting used to the work leave. Now, I should think that if there were a committee appointed in Johannesburg to deal with this question, consisting of representatives of the Government and representatives of the mining industry, and if they legislated in the direction I have indicated to get kaffirs to bind themselves for 8 or 12 months, I think we should derive much benefit. This same unreliableness of the natives also affects the cost of our white labour. We have always to keep a full supply of white labour whether there are sufficient natives or not, because if we are short we may always get others from time to time. To do anything in this matter the whole mining community must be unanimous. They have lately reduced the kaffir wages, and it is a well-known fact that many of the mines have not stuck to the agreement. They have been very unanimous at the Mine Managers' meetings, and afterwards many have paid the natives just what they pleased. Of course the chief cause of this want of co-operation is due to the fact that it is rarely ever that the native supply is equal to the demand. But I think if the companies were unanimous, not only on the wages question, but on other points, such as the making of some arrangements binding them to work for a fixed time, that the mining community in general would greatly benefit by it. But, as before stated, we must have the co-operation of the Government in carrying out any scheme we may formulate as regards the price of white labour. I have read some of the evidence given before the Commission, and, under present conditions, I agree that we cannot reduce the cost. Taking the mines in this country, we find that they are in a totally different position to what they are in Europe, where they have to do the work themselves. In this country they are more in the position of foremen to look after so many natives, and for this reason we have to select the best men for this purpose, and therefore many miners who come to this country are not suitable, and they cannot get employment unless there is a scarcity. The cost of dynamite has been fully dealt with by other witnesses, and I myself use only the blasting gelatine. If you look at the cost of that as before you, you will see that is very heavy. It is something like £6 per case, buying 50 cases at a time. If we could get it for about half the price this reduction would materially assist us. With regard to the railway rates, I had a small consignment of goods from Johannesburg, and it cost me at the rate of £8 or £10 per ton, and this seems to me to be out of all proportion.

Mr. de Beer.

From the statement before me it would appear that the labour ranges from 6 per cent. to 70 per cent. of the total cost, and then you must allow about 7 per cent. for food. Can you explain why Barberton is so much higher than the Witwatersrand, which is only from 50 per cent. to 60 per cent.?—The reason I have pointed out is that these figures are for development, and at present we have no machinery at work as is the case in Johannesburg. Therefore our percentage of expenditure on labour is less.

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December, 1896 to March, 1897.

"PIONEER" DEVELOPMENT.	January Cost per foot.		February Cost per foot.		March Cost per foot.		Average Cost per foot.		Perc
	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	
European wages ...	62	9-908	59	9-699	61	8-636	54	11-703	30
Native wages ...	55	6-646	72	1-808	73	6-000	60	2-721	33
Explosives ...	31	6-615	21	3-726	30	10-909	23	8-252	13
Lighting ...	4	3-785	3	5-918	4	10-909	3	10-707	2
Lubricants ...	0	1-846	0	2-466	0	1-767	0
Food ...	15	2-585	13	6-247	17	1-091	13	4-183	7
Fuel ...	1	4-677	1	1-151	1	3-273	1	2-262	0
Tools ...	5	11-723	3	0-082	11	11-864	5	7-444	3
Stable ...	4	9-784	4	1-068	3	6-364	3	11-865	2
Small stores ...	1	1-108	0	11-918	2	9-818	1	4-556	0
Miscellaneous ...	0	1-385	0	6-082	0	6-818	0	5-294	0
Totals ...	9	8-769	10	6-630	11	8-182	11	2-301	6
Footage ...	192	8-831	190	8-795	219	11-864	180	1-055	100
	32 ft.	6 in.	36 ft.	6 in.	22 ft.		32 ft.		

"UNION" EXPLORATION.	January Cost per foot.		February Cost per foot.		March Cost per foot.		Average Cost per foot.		Percent
	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	
European wages ...	10	10-857	21	6-085	30	1-350	20	1-165	45-1
Native wages ...	8	11-714	11	8-282	12	7-050	11	0-587	24-8
Explosives ...	5	5-476	4	0-282	13	0-500	7	1-832	16-0
Lighting ...	0	3-679	0	2-155	0	8-550	0	4-353	0-8
Lubricants ...	1	9-500	2	11-746	3	6-300	2	6-421	5-6
Food ...	0	1-178	0	2-704	0	3-600	0	2-589	0-4
Fuel ...	0	10-107	0	1-268	0	1-125	0	3-125	0-5
Tools ...	0	7-679	1	0-253	1	9-150	1	1-717	2-5
Stable ...	1	7-572	1	7-986	2	3-525	1	8-352	3-8
Small stores ...									
Miscellaneous ...	30	7-762	43	4-761	64	5-150	44	6-141	100-00
Totals ...	84 ft.		71 ft.		40 ft.		61 ft. 7½ in.		
Footage ...									

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