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THE CHECKING OF PIECE-WORK WAGES IN DOCK LABOUR.

DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE

ON THE

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CHECKING OF PIECE-WORK WAGES

IN

DOCK LABOUR.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

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1908.

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## WARRANT OF APPOINTMENT.

I hereby appoint—

ERNEST F. G. HATCH, Esq. (Chairman);  
JAMES ANDERSON, Esq. (Amalgamated Stevedores' Labour Protection League);  
GERALD BELLHOUSE, Esq. (one of H.M. Inspectors of Factories);  
C. W. GORDON, Esq. (Gordon Steam Shipping Co.);  
THOMAS HARDY, Esq. (Manager of the London and India Docks Co.);  
JAMES HARRINGTON, Esq. (London Master Stevedores' Association);  
JAMES LARKIN, Esq. (National Union of Dock Labourers);  
J. C. MEAD, Esq. (of Messrs. Mead, Son, and Hussey, Shipowners);  
J. LLOYD MORGAN, Esq., K.C., M.P.;  
H. ORBELL, Esq. (Dock, Wharf, Riverside, and General Workers' Union);  
J. HERBERT SCRUTTON, Esq. (of Messrs. Scrutton, Sons, and Co., Shipowners);  
JAMES SEXTON, Esq. (National Union of Dock Labourers);  
JAMES WIGNALL, Esq. (Dock, Wharf, Riverside, and General Workers' Union);

to be a Committee to consider and report what would be the best means of securing to persons employed in dock labour who are paid by weight or measurement the means of checking the correctness of the wages they receive.

And I further appoint ERNEST F. G. HATCH, Esq., to be Chairman, and ALEXANDER MAXWELL, Esq., of the Home Office, to be Secretary, of the Committee.

H. J. GLADSTONE.

Whitehall,

15th December 1907.

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# THE CHECKING OF PIECE-WORK WAGES IN DOCK LABOUR.

## FIRST DAY.

Friday, 24th January 1908.

### PRESENT

ERNEST F. G. HATCH, Esq. (Chairman).

JAMES ANDERSON, Esq. (Amalgamated Stevedores' Labour Protection League).

GERALD BELLHOUSE, Esq. (one of His Majesty's Inspectors of Factories).

C. W. GORDON, Esq. (Gordon Steam Shipping Company).

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J. HERBERT SCRUTTON, Esq. (of Messrs. Scrutton, Sons & Company, Shipowners).

JAMES SEXTON, Esq. (National Union of Dock Labourers).

JAMES WIGNALL, Esq. (Dock, Wharf, Riverside, and General Workers' Union).

Mr. JAMES BARCLAY called and examined.

1. (Chairman.) What is your official position?—I am secretary of the Dock Labourers' Branch in Aberdeen just now.

2. How long have you held that position?—For over 10 years.

3. How many men in your district are members of the union?—About 500.

4. What proportion of these men are employed in docks, wharves, or riverside labour?—They are mostly all employed in the docks.

5. Can you tell us what proportion of the work done by these men is done at tonnage rates?—I expect that there would be about 400 of them.

6. About 400 out of 500?—Yes.

7. Have you heard complaints that men paid by tonnage rates do not receive the amount due to them?—Yes, I have heard complaints for years.

8. How many complaints do you receive in a year on an average?—I could not say that, Sir, but we have complaints nearly every day when there is a steamer out, more or less.

9. Have you investigated those complaints?—Yes.

10. Did you find that they were justified?—Yes.

11. Will you please tell the Committee the circumstances of one or two cases where you found a genuine grievance?—The first case that I had to deal with was about 1900 in connection with a firm of coal merchants. We had trouble practically with that firm every steamer. The men complained that they were short paid. I always managed to get the money squeezed out of them till one steamer.

12. What was the actual loss you say the men incurred?—On one steamer alone the loss of money to the men was about 11. 11s., or thereabouts.

13. How many tons?—40 tons for the one boat.

14. How often did that occur?—That practically finished that firm.

15. How many steamers a week did the firm run?—We sometimes had two and sometimes three steamers a week.

16. Did you find that there was a deficiency each time?—Yes, mostly—more or less.

17. Has that continued to the present day?—No; they are getting on all right now.

18. When did they stop?—Just after that. The son, who was the manager at that date, and the foreman were both taken to prison.

19. Did the men take action?—No, we could not take action. I was going to, but we got them to pay up.

20. What were they prosecuted for?—Practically for cheating the coaling trawlers and they were cheating our men too. It was a swindle all round.

21. (Mr. Anderson.) They were cheating everybody?—Yes.

22. (Chairman.) How many years ago was that settled?—About seven or eight years ago.

23. Have you any other cases to tell us about?—Yes. Another company started about 1900. They principally coaled their own trawlers. Before they got any steamers built they had chartered steamers where they could pick them up, small or large. Then they got a steamer built for themselves supposed to carry over a thousand tons. The men thought that they were not being properly paid. There were no harbour meters to weigh the coal. Most of the firms in Aberdeen when they weigh the coal employ the harbour meters, but this firm employed their own meters, old men, and drove the coal to their own steel yard and weighed it there. When the men went for the money they had to take what they could get from the cashier. Sometimes they were paid a certain sum less, and the next boat it might be a good few shillings down. There were always complaints. I told the men to keep the weights—a man on each hatch. By what a man is paid we calculate the tons. I got pressure to bear through one of the Harbour Board. He got me to go down there, and they looked up the books and compared the figures for a month. We found at that time that it was a good bit short.

24. How much?—30 or 40 tons for the month. We sent a deputation to the members of the firm and explained this, and told them that they would have to stop it. The chairman said at that time, seeing that they had the new steamer, that they had not been sending on properly the bills of lading from the other end. They were only sending once a week instead of every steamer, but he would see that the thing was made all right. This went on for a certain time.

25. How long?—I could not say if it was 12 months or what, but the men began to complain again that they were short paid. Then they got the harbour meters and weighed the steamer out once, but she was not full, she was short. Then after that, the firm said to the men, "This is all the steamer carries." It was very nearly 100 tons short when she was weighed out. This went on for several years and we could get no

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Barclay.

24 Jan. 1908.

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Barclay.]  
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redress. About 12 months ago they took the linings out of the steamer and made some alterations in No. 4 hold as regards the tank, so that the steamer would carry more coal. That was done, but we found that the men were getting less money. I started and got the system of appointing a man in each hatch to give me the amount paid, and we calculated that into tons. I have a statement here.

26. What do you consider was the loss the men made in the last 12 months?—I am coming to that. That is a statement that I kept for five weeks, 16 cargoes (*handing the same to the Committee*).

27. Would you give us some simple figures of loss which you consider the men suffered in any given period?—We found 8,662 tons loss. That was for three years back.

28. (*Mr. Anderson.*) At what rate per ton?—10½. We could not go further back than three years.

29. One firm?—One firm.

30. (*Chairman.*) Was that admitted by the firm?—Yes, I have a letter here admitting it. We were going to take them into court, but they paid up everything and saved us from taking them into court.

31. You threatened to prosecute, and they paid up?—Yes.

32. When did they pay up?—In December, a little before Christmas.

33. 1907?—Yes.

34. Have you had any complaints since?—No, not since.

35. Have you anything else to say?—We have other firms on a smaller scale. Another firm works on the same system as the company I referred to just now. The only way we can get the weight is practically through the Custom House. We cannot get them through our own Dock Board. This goes up to 14 or 20 tons. There are four members of the company of which I speak who are members of the Dock Board.

36. Are there any other cargoes besides coal?—Yes, esparto grass, phosphate rock, and copper ore. That is all done by stevedore work. For instance, we have 1,500 tons to discharge, but the steamer might have 1,600 or 1,800. The man has no way of getting the weight, but has to take what the stevedore says.

37. Are the men to your knowledge anxious to have a legal right to check these weights?—Certainly, and they have been for years.

38. With regard to loading ships, have you anything to say?—No. It is mostly discharging. Aberdeen is the port for the north of Scotland for distributing the coal going away north by railway waggons.

39. Do you think that it would be difficult for the employer to furnish at any time evidence of the amount of cargo unloaded?—I do not think so. He must know the correct weight of the tally before he can make it up to pay the men what he does. He gets the actual weight that the steamer has in her. That comes along with the steamer.

40. Is there anything else you would like to tell the Committee?—No; I think that is about all.

41. (*Mr. Sexton.*) What are the average earnings of men working by tonnage at Aberdeen?—There are different rates. There are fillers, carriers, lifters and winchmen.

42. Never mind the sections, strike an average?—25s.

43. A week?—Yes, taking it all over, that would be the average.

44. For a full week's work?—Yes.

45. Working night and day, overtime as well?—Yes, whatever time they have to work.

46. There is no recognised or established system of ascertaining the weight. You cannot get it unless you can compel it?—No.

47. Have you ever asked for the production of documents?—Yes.

48. How many times a week?—I could not say how many times a week, but I have asked the employer, and several times the harbour office.

49. What has been the reply?—They hold that the bills of lading are their own private property and will not give them.

50. Can you give us a case where you have gone to the Custom House and procured the necessary document?—Yes.

51. What had you to pay for it?—5s. for each cargo.

52. They refuse to give it without payment?—Yes.

53. Have you any reason to believe that you got the correct statement there?—Yes, through the Custom House.

54. Do you know of any case where men who have asked for the information with respect to the tonnage have been victimised?—I could not exactly say victimised, but it is like this: if there is one man in a squad or a gang sticking up for his rights and demanding his money he is not victimised; but when the next steamer comes he is told that there is no job for him. There is generally one man in the gang who sticks up.

55. I want to know a particular case where any man, through taking action on account of short tonnage, has been left off as you say?—That is the only explanation I can give. They will not exactly say, "You will not get a job"—but you do not.

56. Have strikes ever occurred through the refusal of the employer to pay the right weight?—No, there have been no strikes.

57. With regard to the employer you mentioned first, have you on more than one occasion compelled him to pay that shortage?—Yes.

58. In 1897 or 1898 did I go with you to this man's offices demanding the money?—Yes.

59. Was that one of the occasions you had in your mind?—Yes, that was one that I had in my mind.

60. Were some proceedings taken against him?—We threatened him often. He had letters from our agent, but he always paid up. We could not get him before the sheriff.

61. How many cases had you with that man?—I could not say the exact number we had. It was more or less every week for a couple of years.

62. And this man traded not only in Aberdeen, but in Dundee?—Yes. His head place was there. It was a branch in Aberdeen, his son acting as manager.

63. You have not had direct complaints from Dundee?—No.

64. But you knew of the thing happening there?—Yes.

65. Is it the custom in Aberdeen when the ship has finished that the piecework money is paid or was paid to one man?—Yes.

66. The one man went to the public-house, or some other place, and doled it out to the men working with him?—Yes.

67. Does that prevail now?—I believe that in one or two firms it does.

68. So that the men have practically to take what this man gives them?—Yes.

69. Do you know that the Plimsoll mark has been raised by recent legislation?—I am not aware of that.

70. Is it the fact, or is it not, that the men are told that the tonnage is paid on the draught of the vessel?—No.

71. (*Mr. Larkin.*) Do you know of any vessel since July 1905 whose tonnage has increased though her load-line has been actually raised. Do you know any stevedore that has paid on a higher tonnage since that legislation?—No.

72. (*Mr. Sexton.*) On the evidence put in showing the difference between the tonnage in one ship and another, the total amount paid over by the firm to these men, where there was admittedly shortage, is 293l. 1s. 3d.?—Yes.

73. Is that correct?—Yes.

74. Was that paid over by the firm after proceedings had been taken by our branch?—Yes.

75. (*Mr. Anderson.*) You are now referring to the second case you mentioned?—Yes.

76. (*Mr. Larkin.*) If a shipowner chartered a boat for the coal company, would the coal company accept the shipowner's statement that she carried so many tons of coal?—I do not know that they would.

77. Do you not think that they would see that they had legal means of ascertaining the quantity?—Yes.

78. If you saw the freight bill that was actually paid would not you be satisfied?—We get it through the Custom House and compare with their bills.

79. Have you to your knowledge ever found that the bills of lading have been falsified; that is to say, that spurious bills of lading have been submitted to the men, while the real bill of lading has been kept in the office?—I only knew that once. In Aberdeen they will not let the men see them at all. They count them as their own property.

80. Do you know one such case?—Yes, once I was shown a bogus bill of lading. When I got the men's money the firm said that it was sent on in mistake, and then they sent it on to Aberdeen.

81. (*Mr. Sexton.*) What remedy do you suggest to the Committee?—We think that the best policy, if Parliament would take it up and pass it, would be a sort of Act to help us in this matter. As the employers have the bills and the full tonnage beside them, they ought to make up a sort of billet, so that the amount that the men work on each hatch could be posted up. When the men went for the money they would see the amount of tons they had worked. We think it should be something the same as in the textile factories.

82. (*Mr. Larkin.*) Would you follow that up by this: once a month the official representative of the men should go to the office and be allowed to see the documents?—Yes, I do not know that they would allow it. It would be a stiffer job.

83. (*Mr. Sexton.*) The men want some security that they are being paid for what they work?—Yes, that is what they ask for. At this time they have none. They have to take whatever the cashier pays.

84. (*Mr. Larkin.*) Do you find as a rule that the stevedore is at fault, and not the company?—Many times the stevedore is.

85. The middle man?—Yes.

86. In nearly all cases you find this going on where there is a contractor or middle man?—Yes; I believe it was through the manager of this firm that this was going on.

87. (*Mr. Sexton.*) Have you any cases where a cooper has paid short?—No.

88. You have known the contractor in Aberdeen to take a contract at a lower price than the men could do it at themselves if they were without a contractor?—Yes.

89. Let me put it in this way. We have the fact that the men themselves offered to do the work for the Gas Company or the Municipality in Aberdeen at a certain rate, which, having been gone into by the Committee, was found to be the lowest possible figure it could be done at without the intervention of a contractor?—Yes.

90. The stevedore stepped in and took it at a less rate than that, and employed men who had never been employed on the work before?—Yes, and he was found out too—cheating the men sometimes as much as 20 tons on the gas coal per boat.

91. (*Chairman.*) Deliberately cheating them or, was it a clerical error?—It was proved that he was filching.

92. (*Mr. Larkin.*) The coal was weighed over a machine?—Yes.

93. And he was paid on that weight?—Yes.

94. And he paid the men short?—Yes. He kept some back for himself.

95. (*Mr. Sexton.*) That was proved to the satisfaction of the Gas Committee of the Aberdeen Corporation?—Yes. He has lost that contract now. There is another stevedore working now since that day.

96. (*Mr. Anderson.*) With reference to these three different cargoes that you have mentioned, esparto grass, phosphate rock, and copper ore, are they discharged on to the quays, or are they discharged over-side?—The esparto grass is sometimes weighed. It goes into the country to the paper mills.

97. Is that before it is landed?—It is landed on to the quay.

98. Is it weighed on the ship's deck or on the quay?—On the quay.

99. Before it leaves the quay side?—Yes, some firms have it weighed every time and the harbour meters weigh it for them.

100. In those cases you have the correct weight given to you?—The men get the weight by favour from the meters.

101. But there is no obligation to supply the weight?—No.

102. Would it not obviate the trouble if in all cases where the cargo was weighed at the ship's side or on the deck the weights were compulsorily supplied to the men?—Yes, it would be a great help to them.

103. Does that apply to phosphate rock and copper ore?—That is different. It is carted away right into their own stores and sent to companies. It is weighed on the company's steel-yard. There might be harbour meters employed, or there might not. The men working on the ship cannot get the tonnage. It may be driven a mile from the ship to the works.

104. Have you any cases where this is discharged into small coasters and taken round to another port?—No.

105. It is all for firms in the vicinity of Aberdeen?—No.

106. Is it weighed on the ship at all?—No.

107. It is weighed at their works?—It is weighed at their works. It is put into barrels.

108. There would be no difficulty in the weights being supplied if it was made compulsory?—No.

109. Would it be an extraordinary thing to ask for? It would not inconvenience the owners of the freight or the master stevedore to supply those particulars to the men or their representative?—No, not a bit.

110. With regard to the bills of lading, have you ever at any time had any experience or knowledge of the bills of lading themselves, although they were the true bills of lading, not being correct?—Only that one time I mentioned to you, in the case of that one firm.

111. That was a false bill of lading?—Yes.

112. I am not referring to that; but with regard to copper ore or phosphate rock. You see sometimes about, say, 2,000 tons put down in a Customs entry. You find when it is weighed there is 150 or 200 tons more in the ship?—Yes.

113. So that in all cases the bills of lading would not be a satisfactory guarantee that the men were receiving the actual tonnage they had discharged from the ship?—No.

114. All these objections would be met if the correct weights were supplied, within a certain time after the discharge of the vessel, to someone authorised by the men to receive the particulars?—Yes. In Aberdeen the men have no way at all of getting their tonnage weighed. That is our simple case.

115. (*Mr. Sexton.*) Have you ever heard of any cases where a ship goes under a colliery tip in the collieries and when the ship goes under the tip, the water in the bilges is allowed to accumulate as much as a foot and a half, and when she is loaded the water is pumped out?—I have never heard of it.

116. I am speaking of where men are paid by the draught. That is not the method in Aberdeen?—No. They are all paid by the ton and not by the draught in Aberdeen.

117. (*Mr. Gordon.*) You mention "invoice tonnage" on this statement that you put in. Is that the shippers' invoice?—Yes.

118. The colliery invoice?—The colliery invoice.

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119. Did the company who employed your men produce the invoice to you?—They made out that statement for us.

120. But are the invoices quoted in this statement, the tonnage to the trawlers?—This is the tonnage from the pit. This is the tonnage paid to the men. This is the tonnage under-paid (*pointing to the statement*).

121. Is this invoice tonnage what the owner of the colliery in Durham or Northumberland sent to Aberdeen?—Yes.

122. That is based on colliery weights?—Yes, I expect so.

123. As you know, sometimes collieries are 40 or 50 miles from the shipping place. Do you make no allowance between the colliery and the discharge of the cargo in Aberdeen for loss in weight for handling the coal?—No, there would be nothing in that.

124. May I tell you as a practical man, a shipowner, that there is a loss, and we suffer that loss? I have checked it personally, so I know exactly. This two per cent. seems a little excessive on the quantity. I can only say you are extremely fortunate because the ships never discharge the full quantity as from the colliery. I want it to be perfectly clear: Is this the weight of the cargo weighed out at Aberdeen, or is it the weight of the coal that is put into the trucks in Durham or Northumberland?—It is the weight of the coal at the pits; and when weighed out here over their own steelyard the steamer turned out more tons of coal than that.

125. A shipowner would not get what you call here "invoice tonnage." Sometimes we are fortunate enough to get bill of lading weights which may or may not be correct. You have been distinctly fortunate to get it, because the shipowner does not as a rule get it. What your men want is to be paid on what the shipowner receives his freight on?—Our men ask to be paid for the work they actually do.

126. I take it that what you want is the same tonnage as the shipowner?—That is all.

127. (*Mr. Gordon.*) You told us of cases where you had had trouble and succeeded in recovering what you considered you were short of. Have you any cases where you have not succeeded in recovering what you thought you were short of?—No.

128. Your existing powers have enabled you to bring these gentlemen, who have been apparently doing what they ought not to, to book?—Yes.

129. (*Mr. Wignall.*) It has caused a lot of worry and bother?—Yes.

130. That is what you want to avoid?—Yes. We can never get it except through the Custom House.

131. (*Mr. Gordon.*) Where do the Custom House get their figures from?—In the same way, and they are short too. I have a statement here.

132. The Custom House merely get a statement from the owners?—Yes. I do not know if they are going to take steps or not. On the 300 tons we were short, we find that the Custom House is likewise short of 260 tons.

133. You have under column 5, "Tonnage from the Collieries." Where did you get that information from?—From the collieries. It is stated there in column 1 or 2 where each ship was loaded.

134. That is not the actual tonnage discharged, but the tonnage shipped?—Yes. This is the tonnage from the collieries.

135. Has this quantity been admitted by anybody as the quantity that was discharged from those ships?—The company at Aberdeen admit that our men were 300 tons and 17 tons more short.

136. Do they weigh this coal when they take it in?—Over their own steelyard.

137. (*Mr. Anderson.*) That is when it is being discharged?—Yes.

138. (*Mr. Gordon.*) If they put it over their own scale, it is curious that you have not the weight shown by their own scale?—We took proceedings first. The five weeks was a test case.

139. Did the proceedings come to anything, or did you settle it without going into court?—We settled it without going into court; but we had to take those proceedings first. A tally was kept for five weeks. That was 16 cargoes. I went on to the Custom House and they sent a man, as far as I know, to the different pits. It is admitted that that short weight is correct, and more than that.

140. (*Mr. Wignall.*) They paid the money?—Yes.

141. And they admitted that it was more than you thought?—Yes.

142. Rather than go into court they paid the amount?—Yes.

143. (*Mr. Anderson.*) Which they would not have done if you had not been correct?—No.

144. (*Mr. Mead.*) I take it you would be prepared to produce the weight notes to substantiate your case if it was taken into court?—The point we were driving at was to take the firm into court to produce their books. We only had the five weeks to start with.

145. You have no evidence to show the actual weight that was put out by these steamers at Aberdeen?—Yes, the man who weighed the coal on their own steelyards.

146. It may be that the men have not been paid on the correct weight. In ultimately settling up the consignees of the cargoes paid on even a higher weight than they are debited with by the colliery owners, and a very great point is made of that. Why did they pay on that increased weight?—The men, perhaps, did not give the exact tally.

147. (*Mr. Larkin.*) The firm themselves admitted that it was 317 tons. Did your men reckon up 300 tons?—Yes.

148. And the firm admitted 317 tons?—Yes. Our men might not have been correct.

149. (*Mr. Mead.*) How do you arrive at the weights that you said that the vessels turned out?—We have only the statement got through the Custom House.

150. How was that statement arrived at?—The Custom House got that statement.

151. I take it that this coal is coastwise?—Yes.

152. Then what interest have the Custom House in that coal?—I do not know.

153. Where did those men get the weight from?—They got no weight. They knew the weight by the money they were paid.

154. By estimating what the ship had?—No. There are four hatches on the steamer. One man goes and draws the money for each hatch. Perhaps there are six. They divide the money among them, and it is only then that they know the actual amount that they are paid for.

155. Will you tell me where the four men get their information from to make this statement?—They get no information; they go by the money they get.

156. (*Mr. Larkin.*) What was your evidence when you went before the sheriff?—We never went before the sheriff.

157. (*Mr. Mead.*) On what were you going to base your case that you had not been paid on the work that you had actually done. What was your evidence that you were going to produce in court?—We had this evidence that we got from the pit. That was all the evidence that we had to go by.

158. (*Mr. Sexton.*) And did you not get the evidence of one man of the exact weights, that he knew were discharged?—Yes, the man that was at their own steelyards weighing the cargoes was there for three years. The way in which he knew this was that he saw the bill that the men were paid on for the full cargo of the steamer, and after weighing the whole steamer out, he had a statement of the tonnage.

159. It was passed over the steelyard by him?—Yes, and then he saw by the bill that the men were sometimes 40 or 45 tons short.

160. (*Mr. Larkin.*) Supposing I was working on a ship and I was not satisfied with what I was getting paid, and I went before a magistrate in England,

and, or Scotland, and sued for a balance of wages due, would not the shipowner or the consignee be bound to appear in court and produce his bills of lading and way bills to contradict my case?—Yes. I think the sheriff would compel them to do that.

161. (*Mr. Hardy.*) I understand that in this particular case the men made out somehow or other that they were short paid to the extent of 300 tons?—Yes.

162. You cannot say how they arrived at that, but they must have arrived at it by some method of calculation?—Yes, when they were paid their money.

163. And they made a demand for 300 tons?—Yes.

164. Whereupon the employer said: "We have really made a mistake of 317 tons?"—No, not at that time. It was when we were going to press him on the three years that he made that statement.

165. It does not look as if there was any attempt at cheating in that case where the coal owner, or coal receiver, voluntarily offered to pay more than the men's demand?—No. They were cheating all along.

166. You have mentioned several cases of this kind of thing at Aberdeen. Have you any reason to think that there are similar cases which you have not been able to find out?—Yes, I believe there are.

167. The employers in one case, I understand, delivered a statement showing that they owed 293*l.* 1*s.* 3*d.*?—Yes.

168. You were satisfied with that statement?—Yes.

169. Have you any reason to think that that was wrong?—There is one point there that the men were not altogether satisfied on, and that is that they had no overtime in that three years. That was not disputed. There is nothing allowed to the men for starting the steamer off at one or two o'clock in the morning.

170. The statement was prepared by the employers who were interested in the figures?—Yes, prepared by them.

171. Would the men be satisfied, generally speaking, with a statement from those who have to pay the wages?—They had nothing to do but just to accept it. They could not help themselves.

172. I should like to know whether you think it would be practicable that where the weighing is done, as in the case of phosphate rock and copper ore, not at the ships side at all, but at the works of the receivers, there should be a law to compel those receivers who have nothing whatever to do with the labour of discharging the ship, to disclose the weights of the cargo. Is that the suggestion?—Unless there were any other means of weighing it before it went there. The phosphate is never weighed from the time it leaves the hold of the ship till it gets to the steel-yard of the receiver.

173. Do you suggest that cargo which would not otherwise be weighed on the ship, should be merely weighed for the purpose of ascertaining the wages of the men?—I think it is only fair. I think a man is entitled to be paid for what he works for.

174. But my question was, do you suggest that cargo which would not otherwise be weighed on the ship should be merely weighed for the purpose of ascertaining the wages of the men?—Yes, if the men were working by the ton.

175. You think that there should be that delay?—Yes.

176. Is it not possible with phosphate rock and copper ore and esparto grass, which is in barrels, I take it, for men to form a very close estimate of the weight without actual weighing?—No, they could not. You will not get two cargoes of bales running near the same weight with grass.

177. But you say it is sometimes weighed on the quay?—Yes, certain firms require that.

178. Therefore those weights are accessible?—The men get them as a sort of favour from the harbour meter. They are not bound to give them unless they like.

179. Now, would you be satisfied with the weights from the Custom House?—We cannot say if they are

genuine or not. We have to accept what proof we have got.

180. Would you be satisfied with it?—If you have always to go to the Custom House it means a lot of bother and a lot of expense.

181. Parliament can do anything. Assuming that the Custom House were open to the men free for this purpose (anybody can look at the Bill of Entries, and so on, by paying a nominal fee), and supposing that were waived in the case of labourers interested in the cargo, would you be satisfied with that?—As far as the feeling among our men goes, they suggest that they have a billet posted up, as I said previously.

182. You suggest that the shipowner, or stevedore, or person interested in paying the wages should post up on the mast of the ship or on each hatch?—Or at the pay-box, where the men go for their money.

183. Yes—what the cargo is made out to be. How would that help you?—He would know, I suppose.

184. Quite so—he would know; but what protection would you suggest for false accounts being put up?—If he did that he should be dealt with.

185. There is already a penalty for false particulars given to the Custom House. When you have ascertained the correct particulars you check your entry at the Custom House, and there is a penalty if you do not get the correct particulars. If a penalty would satisfy you there is a penalty already?—Yes.

186. Now, that first case you mentioned seems to be rather a bad case; 120 tons were supposed to be loaded into a trawler, whereas only 90 tons were actually loaded?—

187. Is the grievance that, whereas only 90 tons were put into the trawler and 120 tons charged for the men were paid for less than 120?—Yes.

188. Is that the grievance then—that they did not participate in the plunder?—No.

189. Ninety tons were put into the trawler, as I understand, and 120 charged for. Is it the grievance that the men were paid on less than 120?—That was only a suggestion. I could not follow that up with figures and check it.

190. Perhaps you do not know whether the men were paid on less than the 90 or less than 120?—No.

191. (*Mr. Scrutton.*) Would it be sufficient in Aberdeen, if in cases of bale goods the merchant who received the bale goods showed to you an invoice showing what he was paying for. Would that be sufficient evidence to your mind?—Really, I could not say right offhand.

192. (*Mr. Hardy.*) I gather that in some cases contractors have taken work at a lower rate per ton than the rates which the men themselves knew they were to receive?—Yes.

193. And the men knew the rate at which the contractor was to be paid?—Yes.

194. I do not say that it would justify the contractor in cheating them, but how did they expect to be paid a higher rate than the man himself was receiving?—Well, you see, the stevedore who got the men out and got the work, took on this contract and then, getting less money, he deducted so much off the men's tonnage. That would be, I suppose, to make up his own deficiency.

195. The dock companies in London have certain piecework conditions and arrangements with their men, and amongst others there are these: that "All labourers, including crane men employed on a job, are to be paid at the piecework rates which are set down in the agreement, and each man is to receive the amount due to him direct from the company's officers at the end of the job. Accounts are to be prepared by the company's officers showing (1) the amount payable under this agreement; (2) its distribution: (a) the amount advanced; (b) the allowances for special duties; (c) the balance paid to each man. Such accounts to be open at any reasonable time for the inspection of the men associated in the work." Would those be conditions that you would consider satisfactory?—There is not a word about the bills of lading or the tonnage being shown.

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196. Those bills of lading are not in the hands of the dock company, nor are they in the hands of the stevedores, so how do you expect to get the bills of lading? This is the kind of document which a dock company would get on the discharge of a ship. This is a copy of the manifest, and it is also a plan of the stowage of the ship (*handing the same to the Witness*). Would that help the men at all?—I could not say with regard to that.

197. You will allow that a dock company or an employer of labour cannot show the men anything that the company or the employer has not got?—Yes.

198. If I tell you that that is the kind of thing that they have, would that help the men at all if it were open to their inspection?—I could not decide right off. It needs some study.

199. Can you tell me any document that is in the possession of an employer that you would like to see?—I suppose that there is nothing but the bill of lading.

200. You do not suggest that that is in the hands of the stevedores, do you?—No, not in the hands of the stevedores.

201. Where is it?—I suppose the captain of the steamer would have that. He generally brings the bill of lading.

202. Do you propose then that the captain of the steamer should show the men the bills of lading?—No, I do not mean that at all. Say a ship is coming in with phosphate, the captain would have a bill of lading that he could hand over to the broker, or someone like that. I do not know. I only suggest that, but I could not pass a definite opinion.

203. You are here to show us a way out of this trouble. Nobody sitting here would do anything to support wrongdoing to the men. We want to arrive at some way of securing their wages fully, and also of satisfying them that they are being paid in full. I want to know how that can be brought about. What documents do you suggest should be shown?—I could not say what documents come about the actual tonnage

in steamers for the broker and so forth. We say that the men should be shown the billet, with the amount of tons.

204. It is quite conceivable that Parliament should say that the captain of every ship shall show the men at work discharging the ship the bills of lading. The captain has the bill of lading, no doubt?—Yes.

205. Is that what you want?—Something to that effect to give us an idea of the tonnage.

206. (*Mr. Sexton.*) Mr. Hardy asked you what method you would recommend in cases where, for the convenience of the employer, the cargo is not weighed. In cases like that would it not be sufficient that either the colliery weight or the ultimate weight should be shown to you; that you should have a certificate from the place where the stuff went—the weight at its destination; would that satisfy you?—Yes.

207. (*Mr. Bellhouse.*) Your whole complaint has been about coal. Have you any complaints to make about other cargoes besides coal?—There are not so many complaints because the men can make no complaints, because, as I say, with regard to the esparto grass or phosphate they have to take the money that the stevedore offers them. If they clear out a steamer carrying, say, copper ore, the stevedore may say that the steamer carries only 1,500. But it might be 1,600 or 1,700.

208. Then you have complaints, I understand, about copper ore and other things as well?—Yes.

209. But it is mere assumption that the men have been underpaid. You have no evidence that you can bring forward?—You see we cannot get at these cargoes; we have no means of getting at them.

210. Is there any piecework payment by measurement in Aberdeen, or is it all by tons?—It is all by tons—either by the day, hour, or tonnage. There is no measurement work in Aberdeen.

211. (*Mr. Larkin.*) Timber is paid by measurement?—No; that is by the hour.

The witness withdrew.

Mr. W.  
Gorman.

Mr. WILLIAM GORMAN, called and examined.

212. (*Chairman.*) What is your position?—I am District Secretary of the Dockers' Union in the Bristol district.

213. How long have you held that position?—Seventeen years.

214. How many men in your district are members of the Union?—About 1,600.

215. What proportion of those men are paid on tonnage rates?—About two-thirds.

216. Have you heard complaints that the men paid tonnage rates do not receive the amount due to them?—I cannot say that they say that they are being robbed, but they do express dissatisfaction; they have thought they have earned more.

217. On an average how many complaints do you receive a year?—Very nearly every steamboat that is discharged on that system.

218. Do you investigate these complaints?—No, I have no opportunity.

219. Then you cannot say whether they are justified?—No.

220. Can you tell us any of the grievances that you have heard?—That the men expected to get paid several shillings more according to the amount of work.

221. Are the men, to your knowledge, anxious to have some legal right to check their weights?—Yes.

222. What cargoes are discharged at Bristol?—Principally grain. With regard to that we have no complaints, because the man who weighs the grain is one of the gang, and they are all paid on the weights of that man.

223. Do I understand that the principal product loaded and unloaded in Bristol is grain?—Yes.

224. And of that you have no complaint to make?—No.

225. The complaints, I may take it, are very small at Bristol?—Yes. The ores and things are not in great quantities as in some parts.

226. What cargoes have you complaints about?—Copper ore and phosphate rock.

227. What are the complaints in respect of those cargoes?—That the men, according to their own opinion, do not get paid the wages that they should be paid according to their estimate.

228. Would they be satisfied, if they were allowed to see the manifest of the ship?—Yes, I think so. They would be satisfied if I could see it on their behalf.

229. (*Mr. Sexton.*) Have you known of any case where documents have been asked for by the men, or their representatives, and have been refused?—Yes.

230. In how many cases?—In nearly every case where the men have complained and I have investigated I have got no satisfaction.

231. Do you yourself ask for the production of the documents?—Yes.

232. What has been the reply?—"It is no business of yours."

233. (*Mr. Wignall.*) The men are dissatisfied with the present conditions?—Yes.

234. And there have been, as Mr. Sexton put to you, innumerable complaints?—Yes, with the exception of the grain, in which case there is no complaint.

235. There you have a method adopted of checking the weight which gives satisfaction?—Yes.

236. And outside of that there is general dissatisfaction?—Outside of that there is general dissatisfaction.

The men are paid what the employer feels disposed to pay. There is no method of getting at the weight. The shipowner does not do the work at all; in our case it is a middle man, and he sub-lets, and oftentimes we surmise that the men are not being paid for the work they do from the price that he undertakes to do the work at.

237. When the men are dissatisfied you apply for proofs, you frequently, or always, get refusals from the contractor, and you have no assistance from any other people?—None at all.

238. You are always refused any assistance or any documentary evidence?—Yes. We have got so tired that we do not go now. We have got sick of it."

239. (*Mr. Orbell.*) When you say that you have no chance of investigating the grievances, what do you mean? Do you mean to say that it is no good trying to investigate because they refuse you any access to documents?—We have no law giving us a right to go to a shipowner and say, "Show us the bill of lading." The men are dissatisfied. They have nothing to corroborate what they are paid on. Even if they are paid right, they do not know whether they are or not.

240. Have you any cases where a man has made a stand by going to the office, or to the foreman, with the result that he has not been taken on?—We never get any remedy, they will not give it.

241. Do you know of cases where a man has been left out of employment, and, as far as you know and he knows, it has been because he has demanded his right?—Through the labour market being in such a state it is very rare that a man demands his right. He is afraid of being supplanted.

242. The complaint is in regard to everything but grain?—On any ton work. Where the men are paid by the ton it would be satisfactory to me, and to the men concerned, if the bill of lading was comeatable by anyone interested in the men engaged. If he said; "I want to see the bill of lading to satisfy myself that the men are being paid the right tonnage," then the complaint would fall through; but we have not that. The men are working, as it were, blindfolded. They are paid just what the employers like. We have no data to go on. I do not say that all the employers are unscrupulous but there are very unscrupulous employers—middle men, and so on. They all get a bit out of it.

243. You said that in dealing with grain one of the gang was weighmaster?—Yes.

244. And, therefore, you are satisfied that in that case you got something near the correct weight?—Yes.

245. That applies to grain only, and to no other cargo?—No. The receiver gets the same amount as our men are paid for. Some ore is taken from the ships without being weighed. It is taken to the employer's yard and there weighed, but we never get to know why that is done.

246. Have you any cases in your experience where you have had to sue an employer for the recovery of wages paid short?—Not in the matter of tonnage; we could not sue because we have not known the tonnage.

247. Have you any timber men under your control?—All the timber work is day work.

248. Not paid by the standard?—No

249. (*Mr. Anderson.*) With regard to this copper ore and phosphate rock, is it at any time weighed on board the ship or near the ship when it is being discharged?—I have never known a whole cargo weighed. Probably there is more than one consignee. A small portion may be taken out. The remainder would go in bulk to the other consignee.

250. How far does that go?—Up the River Avon, up to the chemical works.

251. It is generally weighed at the wharf of the consignee, is it not?—Yes.

252. The correct weights could be supplied without much difficulty, then?—They could be supplied without

much extra cost if we had the legal right to demand them.

253. There would be no serious inconvenience to the consignee in your requiring the supply of correct weights by the shipowner or the stevedore?—No there would be no difficulty whatever.

254. When you said the production of the manifest would be satisfactory did you mean that statement to apply to bulk cases or general cargoes?—In all cases where the men are paid by the ton.

255. You include bulk cargoes?—Yes. We should be satisfied if we were paid on the ship's freight. The shipowner sees that he does not carry freight for nothing. What is good enough for him is good enough for us.

256. Do you know that you cannot always depend on the manifest?—I know there are discrepancies.

257. You cannot depend on it as being a correct record of the quantity in the ship?—The manifest and the bill of lading are different things.

258. Do you know that the Customs' entry will tell you it is about so-and-so. In cases where it is not weighed in at the Spanish mines or the South African shipping ports, and so on, it is estimated roughly. Have you ever known a discrepancy between the estimated weight and the actual output?—No. We have never had an opportunity of checking it, but I am of opinion that a shipowner will not bring a lot of freight for nothing.

259. No. Do not you worry about the shipowner. He gets his freight. He looks after himself; but we are talking about the men who discharge or load the cargo. Now, just now you said that men did not care to make themselves obnoxious at times by asking for particulars, and, owing to the state of the labour market, it would not be very nice for any man, or any number of men, after having discharged a ship to have to go to ask for access to the necessary documents to prove what they had actually done?—If they went and made a demand, they need not look for any work at that place again. They do not tell them, but they look over their heads next time.

260. Even though it was the law that the employers should allow inspection of the documents?—In that case I should examine the document on behalf of the men and so prevent any ill effect to them.

261. Do not you think that the details should be supplied compulsorily without having to be asked for?—Yes.

262. And that applies where they are accessible to everybody interested, or the representative of the men?—Yes.

263. (*Mr. Lloyd Morgan.*) You say that this grievance has been in existence for a long time. Has your union ever done anything to get the grievance righted by legislation?—I think we have done a good deal towards that.

264. In what way?—It has not been very effective. We always report on such things to our central office.

265. Has there been any deputation to the Home Secretary, or anything of the kind?—Not that I am aware of.

266. (*Mr. Sexton.*) Are you not aware that both your union and ours have co-operated in the matter of bringing this before the Home Secretary?—Not on this particular point; I am not aware of it.

267. Let me refresh your memory. Do you remember the time when the late Mr. Ritchie was Home Secretary? Do not you remember being up in London when you and I, and others placed the matter before Mr. Ritchie and got a reply from him to the effect that if we could prove any case of downright deduction he would investigate it?—I have not a recollection of the deputation.

268. Do you remember the Amendment of the Factories Acts which brought docks, wharves, and quays within its provisions?—Yes.

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269. Did you follow the passage of that through the House?—Yes.

270. Do not you remember that there we applied for the extension of the particulars clause to this very question we are discussing?—That may be.

271. And we were defeated in Committee by a small majority?—I was on the Committee for Docks Regulation, but I was not on that Committee, and it has slipped my memory.

The witness withdrew.

[Adjourned for a short time.]

Mr. T. B.  
Davies.

Mr. TOM BRETT DAVIES called and examined.

272. (Chairman.) What is your position in your union?—I am the District Secretary of the Dockers' Union for the North-east Coast.

273. How long have you held that position?—15 years.

274. How many men in your district are members of the union?—Practically the whole of the men employed in that particular branch of industry, dock and river work. We have no non-unionists to speak of.

275. What is the number of men?—Approximately 1,250.

276. Can you estimate what proportion of the work done by these men is done at tonnage rates?—Yes; roughly speaking, three-fourths as near as I can gauge it.

277. Have you heard complaints that the men paid tonnage rates do not receive the amount due to them?—Yes, from time to time I have had complaints.

278. How many complaints do you receive in a year on an average?—It is impossible to give any specific number, but, as I have mentioned, quite three-fourths of the work done is done at tonnage rates. I may explain that the whole of the work that is done on the river apart from the dock is done at tonnage rates, both import and export, and there is a general state of dissatisfaction prevailing on the part of the men.

279. How many complaints have you had, do you think, in the last 12 months?—20 to 30 perhaps.

280. Have you brought any of these complaints to the notice of the employers?—Yes, I have occasionally.

281. With what results?—The employers simply say: "We weigh the stuff, and you will have to take our word for it."

282. Who are the employers of your men?—A very large number. There are on the Tees, which I am more particularly concerned with, from the entrance of the river to the top end, probably about 20 to 27 wharves, and each of those wharves is adjacent to particular ironworks of different employers. I could enumerate the whole of the 27 if you wished it.

283. No, thank you. Do I understand that the wharfingers employ the men?—Not the wharfingers—the firms themselves. We have not contractors. It is all done by the firms themselves.

284. The ironmasters?—Yes, the ironmasters employ all the labour directly. There is no contracting and there is no sub-contracting.

285. Do I understand that stevedores are not employed?—Not as contractors. The work is done directly by the employers themselves.

286. What are the different kinds of cargo that they handle?—Pig iron, steel and iron plates, rails and basic slag, manufactured iron and its resultants.

287. Are the men to your knowledge anxious to have some legal right to check the weights?—Emphatically so.

288. Is there in the possession of the employer any document showing the amount of goods loaded or unloaded which can be shown to the men?—If I might briefly explain the method, you will understand it better. The ships in the case of imports are unloaded to the wharf which is close to the works as I have mentioned. The stuff is unloaded into waggons and it passes over a weighbridge and there the employer has a man weighing on his behalf. Occasionally the shipowner also has a weighman there, but that is purely optional and is not a frequent occurrence, so that the employer has the weights taken by one weigher

in the case of imports. In the case of exports, the iron plates and so on are weighed in the place previous to shipment. So that he has documentary evidence ascertained by his own servants as to the weights received and forwarded.

289. Your case is that you want the men to be allowed to check the weights of the imports and exports?—My case is this. The men are working continuously, night and day shifts, with no interval at all. There is no overtime. There are two shifts. Men have been working all night discharging or loading and stowing iron. All they know in the morning is that there is a ticket stuck in the cabin window saying such a ship has discharged so many tons of iron ore, or in the case of export loaded so many tons of pig iron. Generally speaking it is unsatisfactory.

290. Would your men be satisfied if they were allowed to see the weight taken by the employer?—I should not put it quite that way. I would say that satisfaction would exist if the men had the same right as is conceded by the receivers, the merchants, to the shipowners, that is to say, if they had the right to put a checkweighman precisely as in the case of mines to check the stuff passed over the weighbridge.

291. Would the men be prepared to pay for that checkweighman?—I should say that there would be no question as to that.

292. They would?—Yes, I think so.

293. I have been informed that sometimes when work is slack it is customary to distribute one job amongst two or more gangs, so that one gang may unload or load only part of a cargo. Have you known cases where this has occurred among gangs?—Owing to the action of the union we have obviated any difficulty in that direction. If we are going to put twelve men where six have been working previously it is ascertained what amount of stuff the gang of six men had discharged or loaded prior to the additional work coming in. It is weighed off.

294. Sometimes a cargo is lighter when it arrives in port than it is shown to be by the ship's manifest owing to shrinkage caused by the draining away of moisture or the loss of deck cargo in rough weather?—We have not any deck cargo. Iron ore which comes from Spain very often when it is loaded is very moist indeed, and then on the voyage there is a certain amount of evaporation, and I say that it is very much more frequent than anything else that the weight of the cargo received differs essentially from the weight shipped originally at the port of embarkation.

295. How do you propose to meet that difficulty?—I am not concerned about it. I have not thought of a remedy.

296. In some cases I am told that the exact amount of cargo landed is not ascertained until the goods reach the consignee or merchant, which is some time after the unloading. How would you deal with that?—I have not had that to contend with. At Hartlepool the ore received has to be transferred a distance, and very often it is two or three days before it reaches its destination, but in those cases the railway company who own the docks weigh the cargo immediately it is filled into the wagons from the ship, and therefore that difficulty does not arise.

297. (Mr. Sexton.) Have you ever asked employers to produce the necessary documents of a satisfactory character to prove how much exactly was discharged or loaded. Have you ever asked for them?—We have.

298. Have the men ever made any complaints that they have not received a satisfactory document?—We have not asked for any document. We pin our faith

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to what I am putting before you now; that is a right to see the stuff weighed.

299. You say that the only evidence you have now is a note posted up in the cabin window. Have you ever asked for anything of a more satisfactory character?—I have said to the employers, and the men have said themselves, when a ship comes to the quay, "This ship brought 3,700 tons last time, and it has only turned out 3,250. Now how do you account for that?" "We cannot account for it at all, you have been paid on all that she has brought. If she brought so much on the last occasion we cannot help it." The employers keep a record.

300. Does the employer produce any document to satisfy you of that?—He does not produce any document. You have to take his word. They never offer to produce a document, and I should say that they would be offended if you asked for one.

301. Do you know any actual cases where there was good ground for believing that the man had been paid short tonnage?—Yes, in my own mind I do. I have reason to think that there have been several such cases. I have good grounds for believing so.

302. Have you asked for the production of the manifest or way bill?—The manifest does not give the weight. The only thing we can ask for is the bill of lading, and I am quite certain that there are very few cases where the bill of lading and the output of cargo are anything like exact.

303. I agree that the principle of a checkweighman is a good one, but would not you require a checkweighman for every hatch?—No. The stuff is landed at the wharf, speaking of the Tees, and the same applies to the Tyne and Hartlepool. The wharf has so many cranes on it. There is a rail track down from the works to the wharf very often 200 yards or half a mile. Usually at the end of the track there is a weigh-cabin—the track as distinct from the wharf. We could work nine cranes on one wharf if required. There are two prices paid for discharging ore, that is, one price where the cargo can be worked from the bottom of the ship, and another price where you have to break down or dig down through the centre of the cargo. Where it has been necessary to break down, the tickets have on them B.D., meaning break down. Where it is got from the bottom there is no mark whatever. Now we are confident that we get paid for a number of tons at the lower rate that are really B.D., and if we had our own checkweighman we would see that anything of that sort did not occur. But we should not want a checkweighman for every hold, and I think I could explain to the Committee satisfactory grounds why it would not be necessary to have one for each wharf.

304. (*Chairman.*) If you had a checkweighman to weigh the whole of the stuff as it goes into the works, how would you distribute the weight amongst the different gangs?—At most wharves, to use the vernacular, the men "chuck in." You always differentiate what ship the stuff has come out of. It is ticketed. The men working on that ship all share and share alike. If men are working at a bad hold and only turn out 220 tons, and others are working on a good hold and turn out 240, the output is shared. In wharves where the men are paid according to the stuff they turn out the wagon tickets specify out of which hold the stuff has come, so there is no difficulty on that point.

305. Where they have a system of pooling such as you have mentioned, do not those who work harder grumble?—No. The men share the output. We have a very rough and ready way of dealing with a man who does not do his share.

306. You watch that closely?—If he deliberately does not do what he ought to do we take care that he does do it.

307. Men paid in that way are satisfied?—Perfectly satisfied.

308. (*Mr. Wignall.*) Supposing you had someone in authority to go down and check a cargo at any time you wished to check, would that be satisfactory? Suppose you or any official went down?—I should not have time and I do not think it would be satisfactory if I had time, if I may say so. I think that a checkweighman should be a man who was expert at the work, and was

not directly a servant of the trade union. That is my own opinion. I have had great experience and I do not think that it would be effective to have a man who would go down like an inspector of weights and measures catching coal-men taking an odd cargo here and there. It should be regular to be of any use. If you singled out a particular employer he would naturally conclude that, by inference, you suggested that he was more dishonest than his neighbour.

309. I do not suggest that. There is no other port in the kingdom that carries on work under the same conditions as Middlesbrough. It is practically isolated?—I should be happy to tell you where there are others.

310. Newcastle?—There is no iron ore at Newcastle.

311. Tyne Dock?—The whole of the Tyne is conducted on exactly the same principle, with this difference, that at Jarrow, Palmer's do their own work. The Tyne Dock belongs to the North-Eastern Railway Company, and they work as nearly as possible on exactly the same system as we do at Middlesbrough. At West Hartlepool they have no iron exports but a considerable amount of iron ore imports. This is a very important phase of the question and I want you to keep that in sight. The witnesses from Wales will tell you that, practically, they have almost the same system.

312. You want to employ a checkweighman. Knowing all these ports and having worked at Newcastle-on-Tyne and this port, my experience is that you are practically isolated as a port from any other port in the country. At West Hartlepool general cargo is imported and exported?—That is incorrect; pardon me.

313. And in Sunderland the same thing?—I have no knowledge of Sunderland whatever, but I think I can claim to have a fairly good knowledge of West Hartlepool. At West Hartlepool the imports are almost entirely confined to timber and the exports to coal. They have a certain amount of iron ore for Seton Carew and Dinsdale, but it is almost entirely confined to timber, as I have said, and it is a seasonal import at that.

314. At West Hartlepool?—Yes.

315. You have given your evidence very clearly. Knowing the place I can sum up the whole thing in one word. There is general dissatisfaction amongst the men. They believe they are not always paid what they are entitled to and that is the crux of the whole position?—That is the crux of the whole position.

316. They are willing to appoint their own checkweighmen if facilities are given them for so doing?—Yes.

317. You in your own opinion believe it to be to the general advantage if some facility of that kind was given to check weights?—I think it would be to the general advantage.

318. I can quite corroborate what you say from my own knowledge?—Yes.

319. (*Mr. Orbell.*) With reference to the stuff running over the scale, do you know what the weighman weigh to—to 100 or to 200. Do you catch my meaning?—I think so. You mean to say to how low a fraction of ——— weight do they come.

320. That is it?—We get to quarters of a cwt.

321. Do you?—Yes. But with regard to the former part of your question I should like to add to my answer that on any line of rail or wharf you will see a tremendous amount of leakage. You see the stuff that has come up piled upon the wharves. The men lose that; there is no question of it. Any employer will admit it and he will tell you that he cannot help it, but it is perfectly true.

322. (*Mr. Anderson.*) Is not that passed over a scale afterwards?—No. The same applies to pig iron also. Pigs drop off the bogies; you cannot help it.

323. Following the appointment of checkweighmen do you think it would be satisfactory if an employer was compelled to produce a statement of particulars giving the tonnage worked by the men either discharging or loading, with a penalty for supplying false information?—My relations with employers are extremely friendly and I want to say that they have

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always exhibited the greatest willingness to show me any documentary evidence that they had. But penalty clauses are altogether a different thing, of course. I think it would be advisable. Personally I do not imagine that any reasonable employer would offer any objection to our being placed on exactly the same footing as coalminers and iron-ore miners, that is to say, being given the right to appoint a checkweigher.

324. But do not you see that this is a system that could not be applied to all the processes of loading and discharging in the United Kingdom?—I suggest that any regulation should be permissive in its operation, and where a system of checkweighing can be adopted the men should have permission to adopt it. In our case there is no question that it could be adopted, and I can see no objection to it.

325. Do I understand that no food stuffs, for instance, are discharged at Middlesbrough at all. Is there no other cargo discharged?—I do not say no other cargo. Distinction should be made between the dock and the river at this port.

326. What do you discharge at the docks?—Occasionally in the docks we discharge timber. Middlesbrough is not a port of export very largely of other goods than iron.

327. Is that piece work?—We have a uniform rate of 8s. a day and we do not work piece work in the docks under any circumstances whatever.

328. Then it does not concern it all.

329. (Mr. Wignall.) Your evidence is confined to the river work?—My evidence is confined to the river work.

330. And it does not touch the docks?—There is no piece work in the docks.

331. (Mr. Mead.) I understand that employers have never refused to give the weights when you have asked them?—When I have said to the superintendent wharfinger, "That ship did not turn out as well as we expected; it has 200 tons less than last time," he

has said, "Look here; this is what we have," and he has shown me the weights with the greatest willingness.

332. The weights as arrived at over their weighing scales?—Such as he had.

333. Do you find any dissatisfaction with the weights?—Yes. I am not imputing dishonesty, but I simply say that it is unsatisfactory. If I buy or sell an article I want to see it weighed, it is no satisfaction to be told that it is right.

334. In other words you have to take word of mouth?—We have to take word of mouth.

335. (Mr. Hardy.) Who employ the men—the ironmasters?—Yes.

336. Is it the shipowners' business?—No, the receivers of the cargo, the ironmasters.

337. Where is the labelling "B.D." done?—On the wharf. The stuff goes from the wharf to the furnaces.

338. Who puts the B.D. label on?—Someone employed by the receiver of the cargo.

339. You said that the ticket was taken off again?—No, pardon me, I did not.

340. Do you mean that the ticket is not put on in every case?—When a man is in the weighhouse till two or three o'clock in the morning, he does not see that every waggon has B.D. on. Many a waggon should be paid at 5d., but it is not observed.

341. How would that be remedied by a man being in the weighhouse. Can he tell by the look of it?—No. But instead of sticking in the cabin and looking through the window, it would be his duty as a servant of the men to come outside and say to the other men: "Look, this is a breakdown waggon."

342. He would have to exercise care?—Yes, he would not be entitled just to trust to Providence.

343. (Mr. Larkin.) Being a servant of the men you would make him come out of the box?—Yes.

The witness withdrew.

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Mr. GEORGE H. LOCK called and examined.

344. (Chairman.) What is your position?—District secretary of the Dockers' Union, Cardiff.

345. For how long have you held that position?—Four years.

346. How many men in the district are members of the union?—About 1,500.

347. What proportion of the work done by these men is done at tonnage rates?—About 90 per cent.

348. Have you heard complaints that men paid tonnage rates do not receive the amount due to them?—Yes, in all grades.

349. About how many complaints do you receive a year, on an average?—Three or four some weeks. It is all according to whether there are a large or small number of boats.

350. Have you investigated these complaints?—Yes.

351. Do you find that some of them are justified?—Yes, and I am prepared to prove it.

352. Let us take the cases one by one. What are the principal cargoes that you import?—We have grain. There is a large number for the various firms at Cardiff. Then pit wood. There is the rough timber or fir timber. There are two sets of wood coming there; one is known as Norwegian which we call props in South Wales. The other is pit wood which is fir and has its bark. Then there are deals and baulk timber and iron ore, broken stones and copper ore and burnt ore.

353. Who employs the men?—The majority of it is done by a contractor.

354. What are the contractors known as?—Stevedores and contractors. If you get one of the cards you see "stevedores and contractors." That is the position they take. We have a large shipping of rails and steel sleepers also.

355. Do you assert that the men in some cases receive less wages than they should receive?—Yes. In one case in two days' work there were 50 tons per gang short. I have the proof in my possession.

356. What cargo was that?—Iron ore.

357. When was that?—Last year. I have the dates in my pocket.

358. What were the particulars in that instance?—These cargoes are loaded into dukes, as we call them, or large iron waggons at the Roath Docks. They are taken across to the works and tipped right out. These waggons run from 15 to 18 tons, and the men were paid 15 tons on the average.

359. How did you ascertain from the wages paid that the weight was short?—This was done by the contractor, I may say, and I asked permission from the manager of the company if he would allow me to check these particulars and he gave me the opportunity. That I did, and I went over the weights. I went to the contractor about the matter. He afterwards paid one gang 22 tons, and the other ones something less. I have the exact figures here.

360. That is near enough?—He paid one gang 22 tons and the other 14.

361. And the whole of the loss to the men before that was what?—They were paid 873 tons whereas 977 were due to the men.

362. And what was paid to the men afterwards?—36 tons only were paid to the men.

363. Did the employer give any reason for that?—He gave a reason which I did not consider was fair.

364. What was the reason?—He said that he had paid other men for it and he could not pay it to two lots of men. He paid the men working by night on

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the 15-ton average. He deducted that from the day workmen and put it on to the night men, making every man equal although he did not do the work.

365. And some of the men suffered in consequence?—Evidently. As I have stated, the true weight was 977. The total received by the two gangs was 909, leaving a shortage of 68 tons.

366. Have you any other grievances?—I have another case of the same sort which I went over.

367. What was the particular cargo in this case?—Iron ore—the same contractor. That was the 25th May 1906. While checking 91 waggons I found that the items varied from 1 cwt. up to 1 ton 4 cwts., and we had one waggon 2 tons 6 cwt. short. Those waggons were weighed by the railway company—the Rhymney Railway Company.

368. What happened then?—After allowing for one waggon to the benefit of the contractor we made it 13 tons odd. That was then taken from the men.

369. Did you bring the case before the employers?—Yes.

370. What did they say?—The usual thing—that the contractor had paid out the whole of the weight, and he made reference to that when the attention of his superiors was called to the matter. He said that if one section of men had been underpaid the others were overpaid, and, therefore, the whole of the bulk of the ship was actually paid out.

371. Did you bring this statement to the notice of the employer of the contractor?—Yes. I should not have stated it here to-day if I had not.

372. I know, but I want to get it on record. What did the employer of the contractor say?—He gave me a letter on the matter, and he asked me if I could find the number of men that were working on the particular ship. He wanted the amount given to the other men. A gang may be here to-day and shifted elsewhere to-morrow.

373. Have you any other cases?—Every week and every day that I go on the dock.

374. The same kind of thing?—Yes.

375. Are there complaints about iron ore?—Yes. There are complaints in every grade.

376. Are there complaints with regard to the grain?—No, not so much with regard to grain, but the men complain that they are paid on 62 lbs. to a bushel and they say that they ought to be paid on less.

377. That is a question for their union?—I only mention that.

378. With regard to timber have you had complaints?—Yes, many. Last year we had a boat that brought 647 standards and 50 cubic feet. The second time the same year it brought 626 standards and 145 cubic feet and the men who worked the latter had half-a-crown more than the men who worked the first cargo although there was a difference of 20 standards, I am giving the figures according to the Custom House measurement. I have the exact figures and anybody who cares to have them can have them. They can be got from the Cardiff "Journal of Commerce" which is very useful to the men. On July 12th, 1907, a Swedish boat had 2,126 loads. That is 646 standards and 49 cubic feet over.

379. What are these?—These are deals. We get them in loads and I have to make them up into standards. August the 27th the same paper shows the same boat as having 2,065 loads which I make 625 standards and 125 cubic feet over, and the men who did the 625 standards had half-a-crown more than the men who did 647.

380. At the same rate per standard?—At the same rate per standard, because our tariff is signed for two years and cannot be broken for two years. Last year, during one week alone, through getting one or two measurements from one firm, we were able to get 15l. one week from one particular stevedore for this particular work.

381. (Mr. Wignall.) Which was underpaid?—It was underpaid; I can give the names of the boat and what was paid to each man.

382. (Chairman.) Did he give any explanation?—No. When he saw that I had got the measurements and that I was determined to go to law about it, he gave the payment sooner than get his name into the paper.

383. What are your principal exports?—General goods in detail, but chiefly iron and steel sleepers. We have a lot of tin sometimes, and lots of things going away.

384. Are the men employed by the stevedore in the matter of exports?—Yes.

385. Have you any complaint to make about the system?—Yes. We have no possible means at our disposal of getting the weight, not even the same as for the iron ore or for the timber. We have simply to take the word of the stevedore for what it is worth.

386. What would satisfy the men with regard to this?—So far as the men are concerned they would be satisfied if I had permission to see the captain's bills of quantity or his bills of lading.

387. Both inwards and outwards?—Both inwards and outwards.

388. The men would be quite satisfied if you saw that?—Certainly. They would take my word for it if I got the privilege. That is what they desire.

389. What do you suggest should be done in the case of deck cargo which is lost in rough weather?—That is already dealt with. If a cargo is lost in a storm we always find that the insurance people or some other parties who are concerned in the matter send a tallyman there who checks every piece, piece by piece, over the side of the ship to the carrier who carries it to the waggon or pile.

390. What document would the men require in that instance?—I would take the same. If it was the Dock Company that had to do that I would be satisfied, and the men also would be satisfied with having their report upon that subject.

391. To sum up, may I say that in cases where the men are employed at piece-work rates there is generally a document in the possession of their employer showing the exact amount loaded or unloaded?—Yes.

392. And if the men had the legal right to see that document they would be satisfied?—Perfectly satisfied. You have not mentioned the pit wood. There they have to depend only on a list given by the foremen to the men. There is no chance of seeing the weight of a waggon or going into a machine, or anything else whatsoever. We simply see, "ss. So-and-so, paid so much," and the cargoes go on to the particular collieries that have taken the pit wood, and we have no check either aboard or ashore.

393. (Mr. Wignall.) From your experience as a trade union official, and from your practical experience of work at the dock, which extends practically over your whole lifetime, you are able to speak not only as to things as they are now but with regard to work at the dock prior to your employment as a trade union official?—Yes.

394. This is an old standing grievance about the loss of tonnage and not a new grievance?—That is so, alteration of figures as well.

395. During your experience as a trade union official, when the men have complained to you that they have been underpaid, you have been to a lot of trouble in getting evidence from the receivers of cargo or railway companies or anybody who could give evidence to prove that the figures are right or wrong?—At Cardiff the railway companies will give no information whatever. There is only one person in the timber trade who will give you the measurements.

396. So that you have repeatedly applied for and been refused access to documents which would prove your case?—Yes. That occurs every week when I have to go to the employers.

397. When iron ore is imported directed to firms whose wharves are full up and whose cargoes have to be handed over to a contractor, you invariably have trouble with the contractor?—Every week regularly.

398. Then you have to go to the firm receiving the ore and they sometimes give you the weight?—Yes.

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399. Invariably you prove that the men are not paid what they are entitled to?—They prove that my figures are correct.

400. In that way you have recovered a considerable sum of money in past years?—Yes.

401. When you have applied to the contractor has he refused?—I may say that he has absolutely refused.

402. He has not only refused but you have been turned away?—Yes, by policemen.

403. Have the men for a long time been agitating for a checkweigher?—Yes. They would like to have a checkweigher, but they are not in the happy position of having enough money to pay a man.

404. Did not the iron-ore men propose themselves at one time to pay one shilling a week for a checkweigher?—Yes.

405. Is it not a fact that they actually commenced paying until I pointed out that they had no right to appoint a checkweigher and they were wasting money?—Yes.

406. The whole scheme fell through?—Yes.

407. Is it within your knowledge that the men have said that it would be worth 5s. or 6s. a week to each man to get a checkweigher appointed?—Yes; only last week they told me that it would be worth 5s. or 6s. a week.

408. They were quite willing then to appoint a checkweigher if they had facilities for appointing a man to check the stuff where it was weighed?—Yes, they would have been only too glad to do it then.

409. There is general dissatisfaction with the conditions that exist at the present time?—Yes.

410. That applies to the whole of the men?—The whole of the docks.

411. Have you had considerable trouble with men outside of those who agree with the tariff, coming in and getting on board ships and taking cargoes at prices which we knew would not pay?—Yes.

412. Is it a fact that your men have come to you and complained that they have not been paid on the full cargo?—Yes.

413. Because these people have come in and arranged with the captain or the broker at a low rate?—Yes.

414. Is it a fact that these men have done occasional jobs and you have never been able to recover anything from them?—Yes.

415. Because they have no money?—Because they have no money.

416. So that taking it all round, the matter has been a source of constant trouble to you?—Yes, and it will be until it is altered. In fact one man we had to sell up.

417. (Mr. Orbell.) You stated that owing to getting some figures from a particular employer you were able to get 15l. from some other employer who was at fault?—Yes.

418. If the employer had refused to give you those figures would you have had any other means of ascertaining what was short?—None whatever except the Customs measurement and the master stevedore, the employer of the men, denies that that is correct.

419. Do the men accept the Customs measurement?—They are agreeable to accept it.

420. Have you any trouble in getting these measurements in Cardiff?—Not now, because a paper has started which gives these details.

421. That paper is not a Government concern, is it?—No, it is not a Government concern.

422. But speaking of the Customs, do you have much trouble in getting this information from the Customs?—5s. 6d. I paid and I had to work out the details myself afterwards. It was given to me in loads.

423. Does the Customs put any obstacle in your way?—It takes you some time before you can get it.

424. Then it is sometimes difficult to get it?—Yes.

425. (Mr. Anderson.) The appointment of a checkweighman would not solve the question of the weights which are handled in loading?—No.

426. How do you propose to deal with that?—We would take the captains' bills of quantity as I think they are called.

427. (Chairman.) Bills of lading?—I do not know what they call them going out; it is bills of lading coming home.

428. (Mr. Anderson.) Bills of lading?—That would do for us.

429. Would it be satisfactory if it were made compulsory on the part of the employer to place a statement of particulars somewhere where it would be accessible to the men or their representatives?—They would much prefer that I saw them.

430. Under a penalty for giving false particulars?—The men would much prefer that their official saw these figures rather than themselves, because there are many reasons why men do not like to go for these particulars. A man has to consider his wife and family, and if he makes himself rather obnoxious in this matter he is not required.

431. Just simply giving access to the men interested in the job would not satisfy them?—No; they want their officials to see them.

432. They want it to be compulsory that the information should be provided, so that they would not have to pay for asking for it?—Yes; they want their officials to see it.

433. (Mr. Hardy.) Are pit wood and props paid by weight or measurement?—Pit wood is paid by tonnage, the pit props is by measurement, and that makes the difference between the two.

434. Where is the weighing or the measurement done?—The pit props is done day-work.

435. Where?—At Cardiff and Barry it is done piece-work.

436. Is it weighed at the ship's side?—The props are measured at the ship's side. The Norwegian props the Cardiff Railway Company does, and pays day-work at Cardiff.

437. Is it suggested that the men or the men's representatives should have access to records which are only in the possession of somebody who is not the employer of the men?—They would be satisfied as long as they have weights.

438. Is that what you want?—We would be satisfied with the weight the captain gets.

439. Do you wish to send a man to the consignee's warehouse where he weighs quite independently of the ship's weighing?—They have no weighing machine—besides, it is done by the Cardiff Railway Company.

440. Then the railway company are the receivers of the goods. Do they employ the men on the ship?—No.

441. Then you want somebody who does not employ the men to give you information?—We would rather have it from the captain, because the man who employs the labourers does not often act honestly, and that is the man we are grumbling at.

442. Is it not rather a strong order to ask that somebody who is not concerned with the employment of the men should have his records overhauled?—I will give you an illustration. I know this case well: The foreman is stevedore for the ship or for the company who has brought the pit wood over for sale, and he is also foreman for a colliery company who has to receive the same pit wood as well as to discharge it. That man has to give the bill either way. He may alter the weights against the men to his own satisfaction, which has been done.

443. Take a case of this sort. A number of men are employed on a ship discharging sugar. Those men are paid by the shipowner or by some contractor who is working out the ship. That sugar is not weighed until it gets, say, to Hammersmith. Do you suggest that the men employed on the ship should have the right to send somebody to Hammersmith to the

receiver's place and see the sugar weighed. The receiver has nothing to do with the cost of discharge of the ship nor the employment of the men on the ship?—We should be satisfied with the captain's bill of lading there.

444. (Mr. Harrington.) With reference to the question of the contractor paying men short tonnage, did you find out whether he had paid the other gang extra money or not?—You see that on some of these particular cargoes you get as many as a dozen different gangs of men all paid for the one cargo, and then when you go to find these men it is impossible to tell. To-day you will get one gang and to-night you will have another gang; to-morrow you may have another, and following that you may have four more gangs, strangers, mixed up, and you have to take about 12 lists from the men to find out a ship's quantity.

445. It is customary to average out the trucks?—Yes; that is what is done. The foreman has in his possession the weights from the company every morning. If he has sent any trucks to, say, Crawshaw Brothers or Dowlais Upper Works, he gets a bill from the Rhymney Railway Company similar to what I have in my possession, or he can have it. It is a permit, as we call it, similar to this (*handing the same to the Committee*). From that he can check the men's weights and could from that give the men the proper weights. Instead of that he marks off 1 cwt. and so on, running up to 1 ton 4 and 2 tons 4. These waggons, according to the Board of Trade, must not run over 10 tons. Many of them are re-discharged up at the top of the Rhymney because they have more weight on them than the Board of Trade will allow them to take on the line. That never gets to the men. It is transferred to other waggons and the men are not paid for that. I have a weight here, 9 tons 17 cwt., supposed to be weighed on the Rhymney weighbridge, and here it is 8 tons 5. If any of you gentlemen were ever in Cardiff you may have seen plenty of waggons on the Rhymney Railway overloaded. You could ascertain that by going on the Rhymney bridge. The men never get the tonnage at all.

446. Is there any possible chance of their being overpaid at any time?—When they are overpaid the men have it deducted the following week, "Less paid on such and such a boat." I have brought the documents with me to show you if you wish to have them.

The witness withdrew.

Mr. FREDERICK H. ROGERS called and examined.

459. (Chairman.) What is your position?—District secretary of the Dock Wharf, Riverside Union, at Barry Dock.

460. How long have you held that position?—I have held that position for nine years.

461. How many men in your district are members of the union?—Close on 1,200.

462. What proportion of the work done by these men is done at tonnage rates?—About 90 per cent.

463. Have you heard complaints that men paid at tonnage rates do not receive the amount due to them?—Complaints are made, and I have gone into the matter, but we have no way of finding out the correct weights or the measurements.

464. How many complaints do you get in a year?—Really, I do not keep any account of them.

465. Are they very frequent?—Yes.

466. How frequent?—I may say that we get about two in a week, and perhaps three.

467. Do you investigate the complaints?—Yes.

468. Do you find that some of them are justified?—Yes, in some cases.

469. What are the principal cargoes that you have come to speak about?—I have not come to speak about any in particular. There is coal and pit wood.

470. What are your principal imports?—Pit wood and a few cargoes of grain.

447. (Mr. Anderson.) There is never any difficulty in getting the particulars then, is there?—None in the least.

448. (Mr. Wignall.) Is it not a fact that you have been applied to on more than one occasion when the cargo has been made up and the contractor has found that he has overpaid a gang?—Yes.

449. He has come to you with all the particulars of the cargo and all the evidence that could be obtained from the four corners of the earth, so to speak, to prove that he has overpaid, and is it not a fact that you have gone and got the money back for the contractor?—Yes. A steamship was discharged on the 22nd. It was listed to have 3,310 loads. I make it 972 standards 120 cubic feet. These men were paid 930. I have an application now from the stevedore to get him back 60 standards, which means about 2s. a man back.

450. As a matter of fact when the men have been satisfied that they were overpaid they have repaid the money?—Yes.

451. When the contractor has overpaid there is no difficulty in getting the documentary evidence is there?—None at all.

452. But when you claim for short payment you cannot get the documentary evidence, that is the point?—No. He can get the information over the telephone from the merchant, but I cannot get it in any way.

453. (Mr. Lloyd Morgan.) Did you say a short time ago, that even if the men had a right to appoint a checkweigher, you doubted whether they would do it?—I said they are not in a position at present.

454. Why?—Because trade has gone down terribly.

455. Who is to do the checkweighing?—They would be perfectly satisfied if I had the chance of seeing the company's weights.

456. That is to say they would appoint you as their checkweighman?—Yes.

457. (Mr. Sexton.) In cases where the poverty of the men will not allow the appointment of checkweighmen, the men would be perfectly satisfied that the trade union official should be appointed as checkweighman?—Yes.

458. (Mr. Lloyd Morgan.) That is to say that the men should be allowed to appoint, if they like, one of the officials of the trade union to act as their checkweighman?—Yes.

471. Who employs the men?—The Barry Railway Company mostly with regard to the pit wood.

472. Do they contract with regard to any of the work?—Not to my knowledge.

473. Have you any information to show that the men have received short wages?—No.

474. Then what is your specific complaint?—I have no specific complaint. The only thing is that our men would like to have a check to know the amount they have discharged during the day or the week from a particular vessel.

475. You mean that they think the present system unsatisfactory?—Yes.

476. And they think that they may not get their full wages?—Yes.

477. And what do they propose should be done as a remedy?—Speaking for myself personally, I would suggest that the bill of lading be produced.

478. Would that satisfy the men?—I have no doubt it would.

479. Are there any occasions where the particular cargo is of such a nature that it would be impossible for the men to ascertain the precise weight until the merchant receives it?—Really, on that I could not answer you.

480. (Mr. Wignall.) Taking Barry Dock as a whole, that is about one of the best places in the United Kingdom?—There is no doubt about that.

Mr. G. H. Lock.

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Mr. F. H. Rogers.



Mr. F. H.  
Hogers.  
24 Jan. 1908.

481. The conditions are better there?—Yes.
482. Largely because the Barry Dock Company are the employers of labour at the dock?—Yes.
483. And it is only when an occasional contractor comes there (and that is getting less every day) that any dissatisfaction arises at all?—Yes.
484. Since the elimination of the contractor and the Barry Company insisting on the right to do all their own work practically, the trouble has been very much reduced?—Yes.
485. Apart from the feeling of the men that there is nothing to guarantee that they have the weight, there is not very much to complain about in the Barry Dock?—No.
486. The import of timber may sometimes cause a little grumbling?—Our deals, as a rule, are charged at day-work rate.

487. If there was any serious case you think that the Barry Company would give you what documentary evidence there is in their power?—They have generally done that.

488. They are very good?—Yes.

489. And that is the general position with large companies?—Yes.

490. And it is the interloper, the man that comes in between, that causes the trouble?—Yes.

491. That is the precise position?—Yes.

492. (Mr. Scrutton.) Are you aware that all bills of lading are marked "Weight unknown"?—I really could not tell you that.

493. (Mr. Wignall.) The real reason of that is that you have seen so very few of them that you scarcely know what they are like?—Yes, that is so. We have to take it for granted.

The witness withdrew.

Mr. J. Larkin.

MR. JAMES LARKIN (a Member of the Committee) called and examined.

494. (Chairman.) What is your official position?—At present my official position is organiser of the National Union of Dock Labourers.

495. Where are you stationed?—At present in Dublin.

496. For how long have you held that position?—For two years or thereabouts.

497. How many men in your district are members of the union?—In the Dublin district at the present time there are something like 2,500. Practically all the men in the port are in the union.

498. Can you estimate what proportion of the work done by these men is done at tonnage rates?—60 per cent.

499. Have you had complaints that men paid tonnage rates do not receive the amount due to them?—I have, sir—too many.

500. About how many complaints do you receive in the course of the year?—We have about three a night; that is, seven days a week.

501. Have you investigated these complaints?—Yes. I have some information with reference to this point.

502. Do you find that some of them are justified?—We have not had a case in point where we have been in the wrong.

503. When you found a general grievance have you brought the matter to the notice of the employers?—As a matter of fact we have had two small strikes for this particular reason.

504. What has been the result of your application to the employers?—In two cases, by the pressure of the strike, we got certain documents produced.

505. What cargoes do your men principally handle?—In the port of Dublin they handle all classes, but principally coal. The cross-channel traffic is general traffic.

506. Who are the employers of the men?—One would have some difficulty in saying. The stevedores do the bulk of the work apart from what is done by the railway company. It is nearly all stevedore work.

507. That is what I wanted to know?—The brokers may employ one stevedore or they may employ all the stevedores in turn according as the boats turn up—you really do not know unless you go to serious trouble and go to the police court. You find out who the employer is then.

508. The work is generally done by stevedores?—Yes.

509. How have you ascertained that the wages paid to the men are short?—In one case where we brought a man into court over a cargo of phosphate, Mr. Healy, M.P., was the counsel on behalf of the union. The case was tried before Mr. Swift, magistrate.

510. What is the date?—1902. Twenty men were working on this particular ship. They should have

received 6d. per ton. The men were paid 14s. in all for 560 tons. Upon going into court the firm offered 27s. 9d., = 1,154 tons. Mr. Healy refused to accept less than 28s. per man and all costs. That is exactly double. Then there is another case in point: There was a man who was a stevedore and also a shipbroker at the port of Dublin, and who is, at present, a shipbroker and stevedore. He was fined by the collector of customs, in the year 1901, the sum of 25l. for falsifying bills of lading. He paid the men 240 tons on account. On the men differing with the stevedore, he paid them another 10 tons, as they say over there, for the purpose of closing their mouths; but upon the men objecting and threatening to bring him into court, he produced sufficient money to pay another 12 tons or 262 tons in all, and the stamped bill of lading, a copy of which he had deposited in the Port Entry Office, which he had altered himself, was produced. The man, himself, actually altered the figures. We got a copy of the bill of lading and a man prepared to swear that it was altered, and that was proved. The actual weight discharged was 284 tons 4 cwts. He was fined 25l., and paid the men in full. Then there is another case. An agent paid on a certain boat for 429 tons. The same men who discharged the boat loaded the following day 475 tons of wheat in sacks. The fore hatch was bulkheaded off to keep her head up. The boat took 475 tons of wheat which was tallied in by one of the men who discharged the steamer. The coals were bunker coals, she was flying light in the forward hatch. Freight was paid on the tally. The coal was not weighed out, and we had to accept their own statement.

511. I understood you to say that this boat was said to contain 429 tons of coal?—We were paid for 429 tons.

512. And it was found to total 475 tons of wheat in sacks?—Yes.

513. You draw the deduction that you were underpaid for the coal?—Yes.

514. When was this particular instance?—A fortnight ago. The man who tallied it was one of the men who actually discharged her. On another boat the agent pays 400 tons. When she is chartered the firm pays 460 tons.

515. The same kind of coal?—Yes, Yorkshire coal. Then there is another boat, on which two stevedores have been employed. The boat was discharged by one of them on the 22nd of December. She had Newcastle slack; 2,414 tons were paid for, or 2l. 6s. 11½d. per man, at the rate of 5½d. a ton for discharging. The same boat came in on the 10th of January from the same port, with the same coal, consigned to the same parties, and was unloaded by another stevedore, who paid only 2,251 tons, or 2l. 3s. per man. That is a deduction of 3s. 11½d. per man on 24 men.

516. (Mr. Anderson.) Was it possible that she was not so deep that trip?—She was drawing as much water, and she was full up to the coamings.

517. (*Chairman.*) Did you complain to the stevedore about this?—We complained to the stevedore, but we cannot get definite information from anybody. They have rails alongside the ship. The coal is filled into what they call grabbers, which are taken over a scale, and weighed inside the gasworks, and it is tipped then into the fire. It is actually in the fire 10 minutes after it is out of the ship. We want a check of the weight going into the gasworks. There is a right to stop a cart in the street if I sell a sack of coal. We ask the same right, or the right to get the weight by some means or other. We want to check the actual weight discharged out of the ship—never mind the bill of lading, because anybody who understands knows that it is not the weight on the bill of lading. The stevedore is only put there as a chopping-block, and we do not want to make the stevedore responsible in order that, in case of injury, the actual employer may try to get out of paying compensation. We do not want stevedores.

518. Is the stevedore not employed by the shipper?—No; he may be employed by the consignee.

519. Is he not paid so much per ton?—He is paid all right.

520. Is he paid on a tonnage rate?—On the actual freight.

521. If you saw the document on which he was paid would that be satisfactory to the men?—Quite satisfactory if we have the right to get that. When we go they simply ignore us. I have been for 18 years at this business—since I was 14 years of age—and Mr. Sexton will know that before I came into office I was superintendent of the Harrison line of Liverpool, one of the biggest in the world, and I know that this thing is done deliberately. I have been at work myself, and I speak of what I know.

522. Have you anything else to say?—I can see good grounds for great faith in a tally of grain, but if I bought I would not accept a tally.

523. With regard to grain at Dublin?—A man is put on by the stevedore to tally the cargo out. He may give the parties buying the grain correct returns, and I do not say that he does not, but he may cook the weight against the men. If they are selling 2,000 quarters of wheat we want to be paid on that 2,000 quarters. If it is not in the ship we do not want to be paid for it. We do not want money that we do not work for.

524. I take it that you do not wish to ask for anything that will impose on the employers or the merchants any tax?—Not the least. If a vessel turns out 1 per cent. short we are prepared to take 1 per cent. short. In the case of gunny bags payment is by measurement. All these gunny bags are averaged out at 9 cwt. a bale. Anyone who has practical knowledge knows that they range from 3 cwt. As a rule those we handle at Liverpool are New Orleans that go up to 16 cwt. We have to take 8 cwt. all round. With regard to minerals in Glasgow, there is no check at all. A stevedore takes the money, and he throws out, as we say, a handful of coppers to the men. The minerals are weighed over the scales, but we can never get the actual weights. A stevedore is only an exploiter of the men.

525. (*Mr. Sexton.*) Previously to your present position you were working both at the docks and at sea since you were about 12 years old?—Yes.

526. Therefore you have a complete knowledge of the work of the docks?—Yes.

527. When you were sent to Belfast what kind of system did you find there. First of all, how many men in Belfast to-day are members of the union?—I should say from 4,000 to 5,200. It fluctuates to a hundred or two.

528. What is the percentage of the men in the union as compared with men working at the dock?—97 per cent.

529. When you went to Belfast what system did you find there with regard to piece-work?—Simply chaos. A stevedore was employed, and he paid the men just what he pleased. There was one man paying 3½d. a ton to fillers for discharging coal. Another man was paying 4d. a ton per man. The main hatch gang

were paid by the man who was paying 3½d. a ton 13s. 11d., and the man who was paying 4d. a ton paid 10s. 11d. *Mr. J. Larkin.*

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530. The same ship?—The same ship. One man was paying 3½d. = eight men.

531. There is more than one stevedore in one firm sometimes?—Yes, there may be three.

532. These stevedores sometimes have no capital?—Sometimes they have not enough for a week. Sometimes they have to borrow money when a ship comes up.

533. They were employed to evade legal responsibility?—Yes, and they are still kept on.

534. These men are paid by the employer direct the full amount of tonnage discharged?—Yes. A firm at Belfast was paying a man 6d. a ton for discharging rails or plate iron. The men were to get 5d. a ton. Their agent, who is still employed, was paying 3d. a ton for years, and told the men that the firm would not pay more. He was illegally deducting 2d. a ton. He was threatened with a summons and he then paid it.

535. The system which you have described generally prevailed before you went to Belfast?—Yes.

536. Were the men given any satisfaction whatever at any time before or after as to the actual amount of tonnage discharged?—No; that was the cause of the strike.

537. That was the original cause of the big dispute?—Yes.

538. They asked for the information and it was refused, and the men came out on strike?—Yes.

539. That was the general prevailing condition at Belfast at that time?—Yes.

540. The men had no protection?—No.

541. If they had asked for the information they would have got the sack?—Yes, and the men in some cases were forcibly expelled when they asked for information.

542. Going to Newry and Dundalk, what do you say?—At Newry there is a firm who employ as stevedores two illiterate men who cannot write their own name and cannot reckon up. These men avowed that they paid the money out which they received from the shipowner, and I have known a case in point where a cargo has been actually weighed bag for bag and the men have not got within 90 tons of the ship's cargo. The money was always paid in public-houses.

543. Until you stopped it?—Yes, until we stopped it.

544. Coming back to Belfast, the coal is weighed on the quay?—Yes, every ounce of it.

545. On hand scales?—Yes.

546. And a tally kept?—Yes.

547. It is sold to retailers, who go down and buy it and sell it in the town?—Yes.

548. So that there would be no difficulty, as a tally is kept, in ascertaining the exact amount, even to a cwt.?—Not the slightest.

549. Now, with regard to Dundalk?—In Dundalk we had a dispute, when the agent appeared before the Dundalk Harbour Commissioners and admitted that the men were getting certain tonnages stopped from them; it had not been done with his knowledge, but he admitted that. The stevedore was getting 17 men's money and going into a public-house and putting 13 and 14 men's money on one side and paying it out. As to the remainder, he admitted himself that he did not know where it went to.

550. It was the cause of a very big dispute in Dundalk?—Yes, it was the cause of a very big dispute. It has now been satisfactorily settled.

551. (*Chairman.*) Is there evidence which can be procured, corroborating what you have just said about the Dundalk case?—Yes. The Chairman of the Harbour Commissioners will give a copy and I can send the "Dundalk Democrat" to you.

552. (*Mr. Sexton.*) What was the average wages of dock labourers previous to your going to Belfast?—

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The average would work out at 17s. a week taking tonnage men and casual men. They work night and day at times.

553. Have you any idea of the average amount of coal passing over the quays at Belfast?—Roughly, 30,000 tons a month, that is 6,000 tons for the Corporation and the remainder for retail distribution.

554. What is the average number of men employed on the average five days a week?—Something like 1,100 men work in and out of the yards. It is better now, because we have lessened the hours.

555. Is there any difficulty now in procuring documents to show the tonnage?—No. The agreement drawn up as a result of the big strike has been modified since by the Board of Trade, but in the first agreement which I drew up, and which was signed by the stevedores and by the employers, they agreed that at any time within reason, if we applied to the offices we could get the documents, and in some cases they gave us the documents. It was always stated that bills of lading and quantity or freight bills should be shown upon application.

556. But there is no legal right?—There is no legal right. It has been refused in one or two cases since they found that out.

The witness withdrew.

557. (*Mr. Bellhouse.*) To what extent was this agreement modified by the Board of Trade?—That clause is practically struck out altogether.

558. Was there any particular reason given?—They thought it was unnecessary. They thought that the honesty of the employers was sufficient guarantee that we would get hold of the information.

559. (*Mr. Hardy.*) In the case of the gunny bags, what hardship was there?—The usual system in Liverpool is daily work, but in this particular job, gunny bags discharging over ship's side into lighter going from the Harrison south docks to the north docks, it is by tonnage.

560. And a separate agreement made?—A separate agreement.

561. The men knew what they were doing, so what hardship was there?—We did not agree. We agreed to work at a halfpenny a ton per man, but afterwards they struck the average.

562. (*Mr. Anderson.*) To which you did not agree?—No. We did not know at first.

563. You did not know what was going on?—No, not for months, until I found the matter out when I became foreman. I worked on the job myself and then I became foreman of the job.

## SECOND DAY.

Thursday, 30th January 1908.

### PRESENT:

ERNEST F. G. HATCH, Esq. (Chairman).

JAMES ANDERSON, Esq. (Amalgamated Stevedores' Labour Protection League).

GERALD BELLHOUSE, Esq. (one of His Majesty's Inspectors of Factories).

C. W. GORDON, Esq. (Gordon Steam Shipping Company).

THOMAS HARDY, Esq. (Manager of the London and India Docks Company).

JAMES HARRINGTON, Esq. (London Master Stevedores' Association).

JAMES LARKIN, Esq. (National Union of Dock Labourers).

J. C. MEAD, Esq. (of Messrs. Mead, Son, and Hussey, Shipowners).

H. ORBELL, Esq. (Dock, Wharf, Riverside, and General Workers' Union).

J. HERBERT SCRUTTON, Esq. (of Messrs. Scrutton, Sons, and Company, Shipowners).

JAMES SEXTON, Esq. (National Union of Dock Labourers).

JAMES WIGNALL, Esq. (Dock, Wharves, &c., &c., Union).

Mr. PATRICK CUMMINS called and examined.

*Mr. P. Cummins.*  
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564. (*Chairman.*) What is your position?—Dock labourer; working at the docks in Belfast.

565. Do you belong to any association?—Yes; I belong to the Dock Labourers' Union.

566. Are you an official of that union?—No. I am a member of the committee, and have been for some time.

567. Can you tell me how many men in your district are members of the union?—We have been over 5,000 strong.

568. Are they all employed in dock labour?—Yes; all in some department—the general cargo or coal department.

569. What proportion of the work done by these men is done at tonnage rates?—The coal trade is the only work done by tonnage, except when they load iron ore there.

570. What proportion of the 5,000 men you told us about are employed at tonnage rates?—I dare say there might be close on 2,000 employed in the coal department, I could not say exactly.

571. Have you heard complaints that men paid tonnage rates do not receive the amount due to them?—I have.

572. About how many complaints have you heard, on an average, in a year?—I have had many myself. I have not taken a note of them exactly, but I have notes here of a portion that I remember.

573. A considerable number?—A considerable number.

574. Are the men usually employed by stevedores?—A large number in the case of small merchants that cannot afford to keep a weekly staff. A big merchant keeps a weekly staff and employs the men on the weekly

wage system. The smaller merchants that cannot afford to do that give the work to the stevedore, and it is done at tonnage rate.

575. The stevedores are employed by the merchant?—Yes.

576. Will you tell the Committee the circumstances of one or two cases where you have found a genuine grievance. First of all will you give me the date?—I can give you the year, but there have been many cases, and I have not taken particular note of the date. I am cognisant of so much of it, and I am so used to it, and the men in the port are so used to that kind of thing that it is impossible to give any particular dates. It is an everyday grievance the year round, day in and day out. I took a note of these particular cases so that I should have them ready when I came before the Committee, for there is so much of that sort of thing that I cannot remember it all when I am asked the question. In 1893 I was one of a gang discharging a ship which we had been in the habit of discharging for about two years previous, about three times in a fortnight. She carried gas coal for the gasworks. Our men that did her on this occasion were in the habit of discharging her all this time. This vessel carried 520 tons. That was her carrying capacity, and that is what they usually paid on for carrying to the gasworks. The manager, on this occasion, paid us 420 tons. We protested, but took it as part payment. It was on a Saturday night at midnight. We had no remedy on a Saturday at midnight, and we would not be doing very well to be going home without some money in our pockets for Sunday. I was president at that time of the branch of the Dock Labourers' Union. I was working amongst a gang of union men. I instructed our delegate on Monday morning to ask for the bill of lading. The manager stated that he had paid us correctly. The coals are all weighed, every pound, as it goes into the gasworks. It is weighed over the bridge, so we knew well what the vessel carried. Three days afterwards, our delegate, calling two or three times, saw the head of the firm and stated his case, and when the firm saw that it was likely to lead on to a law case which it was sure to do, he caused the bill of lading to be produced. It was then found, when the bill of lading was produced, that we were paid 100 tons short, and we got the money.

577. That was in 1893?—That was in 1893.

578. Cannot you give us more recent cases than that?—I am going to give you some.

579. I do not want too many. I do not want to take evidence of what happened 15 years ago?—That was one case, and I want to show you the difference and how we stood when we had the union. We gained this point.

580. What date do you refer to now?—This is about two years ago.

581. (Mr. Gordon.) What is the exact date?—I cannot tell you. I did not take note of it, but I will give as near as I can the time.

582. (Chairman.) I take it that you have the exact date?—I have not, but it is about two years ago—the case that I am going to give you now.

583. But we shall want something more precise than the recollection of a case. Cannot you give us the exact date?—I could not. It is impossible for me. I did not take any note. If I had been aware that you would require the exact date I might have taken means to find it out. When I get back I can forward the date. I will keep as near to it as possible.

584. But that will not do?—I do not want to put you in a false position, and I do not want to put myself in a false position.

585. (Mr. Orbell.) Can you give us the month?—I cannot.

586. (Chairman.) Have you any cases where you can give us the dates?—I cannot; it is impossible for me, because it is a thing that is so usual an occurrence that we have never taken any particular note.

587. Have you had any cases in the last three months?—No. We have cause for grievance every day in the week and every day in the month, but we have no remedy.

588. (Mr. Gordon.) What is the grievance?—The grievance is that they will not produce a bill of lading, and it is not safe for a workman to look for it or enquire for it. If he does, he is not required.

589. (Chairman.) Do I understand that the grievance that the men are not paid their full tonnage rates is general amongst your workmen who are paid by tonnage rates?—Quite so; that is quite correct.

590. Have those grievances been on the increase or decrease since 1893—since the case you mentioned to us?—Since that time the men, as I have already, I believe, stated, are in such a position that it is more than their employment is worth to seek or look for a bill of lading, and they have never attempted it. When any man had the nerve or the courage to look for his weight he was victimised immediately afterwards. The only satisfaction he could get was that they fetched out a slip of common paper on which was written such a ship so many tons. That was all the satisfaction he got. He had to take their word for it.

591. Would you say that last year, 1907, there were more grievances than in 1906?—I would not say that, because in 1907 the union was got up.

592. How often do you have grievances now?—Our grievances really existed all the time, as I have already stated. There is no such thing as a bill of lading produced, and we are not paid on the bill of lading.

593. The men are not satisfied?—The men are not satisfied, certainly not, and they dare not seek for the bill of lading.

594. (Mr. Sexton.) What were the average earnings of the tonnage piece-work men on coal in 1906. What would they earn in a week?—If trade was good they would average 30s.

595. At how much a ton?—At a halfpenny per ton per man.

596. How did that compare with 1893?—1893 was something similar. We were working under the same conditions.

597. I am not going back as far back as 1893, but I will bring you to the commencement of 1907. Do you remember the commencement of Kelly's dispute on the coal quay?—I do. Their men were weekly men. They were not working by the ton for that firm.

598. I know, but you remember Kelly's dispute?—Yes I do.

599. Were any of the disputes that occurred about that period after Kelly's dispute, owing to the fact that the men were paid short?—Decidedly.

600. Can you give us any specific case in that particular period?—Yes, I believe I can.

601. This was May, 1907?—I just happen to have 1907. I mind it well without taking the date. There was a man who was a sort of sub-stevedore; he got the discharge of a steamboat that carries 600 tons. I happen to have discharged her many times myself, and I know a fair lot about her. The men were paid 490 tons. When they threatened law proceedings they got another 50 tons. That would be 540 tons. They were still 60 tons behind.

602. That is what they alleged, that they were 60 tons behind?—That they were 60 tons behind. That is one case.

603. That was the cause of a dispute too, was it not?—Yes. I can also tell you something else. You see the contractor who employed this sub-stevedore has a staff of weekly men on a weekly wage, but sometimes he is overpowered by the amount of trade he has, and has to give some of it away at a tonnage rate, and it is I and men like me who follow that business.

604. Since you have commenced this agitation and demand for the production of what you call bills of lading, have the employers made any attempt to abolish the tonnage system and to compel you to adopt the weekly system?—In every case where they can get at it.

605. In every case where you have threatened to take action?—Yes.

Mr. P.  
Cummins.  
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Mr. P.  
Cummins.

30 Jan. 1908.

606. And that is generally the policy of the employer now?—That is generally the way in which the trade acts towards us.

607. You have been on the quay for over 20 years, have you not?—For over 30.

608. And you have worked at nothing else or, at any rate, very little else but coal on tonnage?—I have been in the business on nothing else but tonnage all that time. I have been in the capacity of workman and the capacity of boss a portion of that time.

609. You have said already that when men asked for what they considered their rights they were boycotted?—Decidedly.

610. Have you known of any cases lately?—I was going to tell you that that sub-stevedore and the eight men were told after that that they need not call there, and they never got another job in the same firm, and I can give other cases.

611. That case is quite enough?—To put it roughly, it is necessary for a fellow to have a strong nerve to look after his rights. If he does it secretly he may be found out. He has to do it straight and square and above board, and if he does it he is not wanted any more.

612. (Mr. Scrutton.) You mentioned one firm. Have you complaints against any other firm?—I could give complaints, but you want to be concise on the matter. You want real genuine evidence, but I know, personally, that what I say is the case, for I, myself, on many occasions, have had the courage to look for my rights and my fellow workmen's rights, and claim a bill of lading from employers. I have a case here, if I might read it to you, that it will be worth your while to listen to. I will not keep you many seconds.

613. That is not an answer to the question. Have you complaints against other employers than the one mentioned?—Yes, certainly.

614. Do you suggest that this system of short paying to men is general among all the employers?—Yes, I do. To give you further information, as you are on that question, I work with a stevedore at the present time in Belfast. I have had occasion many times to ask him with regard to tonnage rates. I said to him only last week: "Do you really see a bill of lading when you are paid by these offices yourself?" "No," he said, "I never see a bill of lading." "How do you settle your accounts?" I said. He said: "I take what I get and say nothing. If I did not I should not get the work again from that office." That is the answer I got from him.

615. Is that general?—Yes, it is general. It could not be any generaler without putting us underneath.

616. (Mr. Hardy.) You spoke of day wage instead of tonnage rate. Do the men object to day pay and prefer piece-work?—There was a class of men that happened to think that tonnage would not suit them, and they put them on the weekly wage system. They have a very curious way of working down there.

617. Would not that get over the difficulty. There would be no cheating then?—They would be doubly and trebly cheated then—if you understood it as I do, you would know that where they should be getting about 50s. they would be getting about 25s.

618. Do you mean that with all this cheating a man earns double as much as he would by day-work?—If you get anything at all to speak of for your labour it is by piece-work, not by day-work.

619. (Mr. Orbell.) I suppose you mean to say that when the men are changed from piece-work to day-work they have to go on at piece-work speed for day-work pay, which is generally about half the amount of what they would earn for shipping the same number of tons of coals?—That is really it.

620. That is the objection that the men have?—That is just what it means.

621. (Mr. Bellhouse.) What remedy do you suggest? Do you suggest, as a remedy, the production of the bill of lading?—Yes, that is one thing that is very necessary. I may tell you that there is such a thing as three bills of lading coming with every ship. I have a case noted down here. There was a contract with the

Union, Belfast. It is let out in contracts every year. Some merchants obtain the Scotch portion and others the English. The master of the work is supposed to see the bill of lading before the ship is discharged. The master took it on himself on this occasion to ask for the bill of lading. The captain gave him his bill of lading. When the agent, or the merchant, or somebody came in the morning and heard of this, he sent for the man and said: "How is it you got from the captain the bill of lading and gave it to Mr. —?" "He asked me to do so." He said: "I am going to tell you I think of dismissing you for doing it. You have done it without my instructions. That might have been the wrong bill of lading that you gave that man." The man that gave me that information was a boss, and he says: "I have known bills of lading given by the captain, and there were 60 tons more in the ship than what the captain's bill of lading specified."

622. (Chairman.) That would be absolute fraud?—Well, fraud or whatever you like to call it. That is his statement. He says he is prepared to swear it.

623. (Mr. Bellhouse.) Is it the custom in Belfast to pay the stevedore on the bill of lading or the actual freight?—That should be the case, but I have already stated that I asked the stevedore did he really get paid himself on the bill of lading when I challenged him on the amount of tonnage we were getting paid for, and he said he could not pay us on other than what he got himself.

624. It is suggested to us and it is a fact that the bill of lading is not an accurate account of what there is on the ship. Can you suggest anything else besides the bill of lading which could be produced to the workers as evidence of what there is to be unloaded?—No, excepting where the coals can be weighed after they leave the ship, as in the case of the gasworks. You can obtain the weight there.

625. By a checkweighman?—It is not in every case. The coals are put into yards.

626. (Mr. Sexton.) They are weighed out in bags?—Yes, I know that, but there might be two or three different cargoes in one pile.

627. (Mr. Hardy.) How do you suggest that the men can be satisfied about that?—It is very difficult for me to make a suggestion. I can see nothing except to put the employers in a position of having to produce the document in connection with the cargo.

628. What document—the bill of lading?—The bill of lading.

629. You are a practical man. Tell us how you suggest that the men can be satisfied that they are being fairly paid?—The remedy is to make them produce the document with the original weight that the ship has taken in. That is the only remedy I know of. How you can do that is the question.

630. (Mr. Scrutton.) The men would be quite satisfied if they received payment on the same weight that the shipowner receives payment on in respect of his freight?—Yes.

631. (Mr. Mead.) With regard to this dispute that you mentioned with a firm in 1893, was that a firm of merchants?—Yes, coal merchants.

632. Are they shipowners as well?—Yes.

633. There was a dispute about a vessel which, as a rule, carried 520 tons?—Yes.

634. On what do you base her carrying capacity as being 520?—She was taken to the gasworks for about two years, and we were in the habit of discharging her.

635. Did she always turn out 520?—It might be 10 or 15 more or less. There may be a waggon or two over at one time, and a waggon or two less the next. On an average it is 520 tons.

636. You base it on your own personal working?—Yes.

637. You stated that the manager paid you on this occasion?—Yes.

638. Was he the man who was in the habit of paying you?—I have already stated, and I say it again,

that we only do a little work for this firm. It is only when they cannot overtake their work that they take on the likes of us. The man who paid us was the manager in their employ.

639. Had you ever worked for that man before?—No.

640. He might not have known at the time when he paid you late on Saturday night what the ship had on board her?—He said that that was all he would pay on the ship when he was paying extra men.

641. Was anything put into writing when you threatened proceedings?—I did not threaten proceedings. I said that we would take it as part payment.

642. You waited on them several times afterwards?—The delegate did.

643. Everything was done by word of mouth?—Yes.

644. What did they ultimately pay you on?—On 520 tons.

645. On what you say the ship ought to have carried?—Yes.

646. Was any record kept of the increased weight they paid you on? You spoke of a slip of paper?—I have no slip.

647. There is no record that they increased the payment to 520 tons?—No, there is no record. I have only kept it in my memory.

648. There is no record that they paid you 100 tons more?—No.

649. You are making this statement that a certain thing took place. You were one of the men who were the recipients. Was no slip given to you on the 420, and no increase slip given when the 520 was paid?—Nothing at all. You have to take the word of mouth of these gentlemen when you are paid.

650. You have stated already that a slip is given?—I said, in some cases. When you inquire for the tonnage of a particular vessel, in two or three days they will produce a slip of paper and say: "That is the weight on such a boat."

651. That is not an answer to my question?—With regard to what you ask about, there is no record that I am aware of.

The witness withdrew.

Mr. THOMAS HUTCHCROFT called and examined.

665. (Chairman.) Where do you come from?—Goole.

666. Are you an officer of the trade union?—Yes, at the present time.

667. What position do you hold?—Branch secretary.

668. How long have you held that position?—About a year and nine months.

669. How many men in your district are members of the union?—380 at the present time.

670. Are these men employed in dock labour?—Yes.

671. Can you tell what proportion of them are paid by tonnage rates?—About 75 per cent.

672. Have you heard complaints that the men who are paid tonnage rates do not receive the amount due to them?—Many complaints.

673. About how many complaints do you receive in a year?—As a rule we have an average of one or two a week.

674. Have you investigated these complaints?—I have.

675. Do you find that some of them are justified?—Yes.

676. What are the principal cargoes handled by your men at tonnage rates?—Coal chiefly, copper ore, hog ore, iron ore, and pitch.

677. Do grievances arise in respect of all these cargoes?—No.

652. Did you ever ask for a slip when they paid you on 420?—No.

653. Did you ever ask for a slip when they paid you on 520?—I did not.

654. You did not in either case ask for any document to show you why they paid you a certain weight?—I certainly never did.

655. With regard to your story about "the wrong bill of lading," do you know how many bills of lading are signed as a rule for a steamer?—No, I do not.

656. Then you are not aware that there are certain bills of lading, one of which may come by the steamer, and others which may come by post to the merchant or consignees?—I am informed of that.

657. Do you know that of your own personal knowledge?—No, I do not, only by that statement.

658. Are you aware of the fact that whilst the particulars on the body of a bill of lading, which is intended for the captain, would be precisely the same as on that intended for the consignee, there would still be a different bill of lading. Do you know the difference between a merchant's copy and the captain's copy?—I cannot say that I know; but I suppose the captain gets the original and the merchant gets another.

659. I want to know whether you understand that there are various bills of lading in existence?—I have already stated that I cannot make the statement personally.

660. You said that the remark made was that the wrong bill of lading had been given. It is perfectly feasible that a wrong bill of lading was given because it was intended for the merchant?—I think you misunderstand me.

661. (Mr. Gordon.) Do you know anything about bills of lading?—I would know a bill of lading when I saw it.

662. Do you know enough about the purport of a bill of lading or the practice in connection with bills of lading?—What do you mean by "the practice"?

663. The practice as between the merchant and the shipper or as between the receiver of the goods and the shipowner?—No, I do not.

664. (Mr. Sexton.) You know that you have not been paid what you have earned?—That is it.

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678. Which of them?—Coal chiefly.

679. Are there no grievances with regard to the ores that you handle?—With regard to the ores the cargoes are always weighed out in our port by a weighman. They are put on to the scale as soon as they are lifted out of the hold and weighed, and then tipped into a lighter over the side. It is the same with pitch.

680. Are the men satisfied with that system?—Yes.

681. They have no complaints at all to make?—They have no complaints to make when it is weighed.

682. Do they ask for a checkweighman?—Yes. The weighman is one of the gang and he has the weight first hand.

683. Do the men check the weighing themselves?—Yes, the weighman does.

684. Does the weighman act on behalf of the workmen?—Yes. He is one of the workmen, but he is paid by the owners of the cargo. He is paid by the merchant to weigh, but still he is one of the stevedore's men.

685. (Mr. Sexton.) He returns the weight to the employer and gives it to the men at the same time voluntarily?—Yes.

686. (Chairman.) The grievance is entirely confined to coal?—Yes.

687. What is the precise grievance the men have?—The precise grievance the men have is that we have no

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system at all of ascertaining the tonnage work. We have no possible way of getting the weight.

688. Are the men usually employed by stevedores?—Yes.

689. By whom are the stevedores employed?—By the shipowner or his agent.

690. Can you give the Committee the circumstances of one or two cases where you have found a genuine grievance?—Yes.

691. Can you give me the date and full authentic particulars?—No.

692. I do not think that the Committee under these circumstances would care to hear the cases that you have. You say that to your knowledge the men have a general grievance?—Yes.

693. (Mr. Sexton.) Can you give any instance where money has been recovered on short tonnage?—Yes, I can.

694. And can you tell us how many men were affected?—Yes.

695. Give us that, then?—In connection with one particular gang there were six men employed by the stevedore.

696. (Chairman.) When?—About 18 months ago. The general rule is for a stevedore to get a note out of the shipowner's or his agent's office, as the case might be, with the amount of tonnage. It has been this particular stevedore's practice to take a copy of that official note and make a lead-pencil scribbling note of it to show it to the men so that he had not to show the proper note. In this particular case that comes to my mind, when the money was paid out they thought there was something wrong and that they ought to have had more than was paid to them; they made a noise about it and grumbled, and he said that that was all he had been able to recover and that was all they were entitled to. One man, a little bit more prominent than the rest, said, "Why not show us the proper note?" and he would not produce it. He said that if there was going to be any grumbling about it he would clear them all out and have a fresh gang.

697. Do you mean by the "proper note" the note that the stevedore received from the people who employed him?—Yes; and he would not show the proper note, and he has never done it to this day. However, he discharged the gang on the Saturday and got a fresh gang on the Monday; and after he had put the fresh gang on the men brought the grievance to the union office and we threatened proceedings, with the result that these men were paid 5s. a piece extra on the following Monday after the men had been discharged.

698. (Mr. Sexton.) And that did not satisfy them?—That did not satisfy them. They were entitled to 7s. 6d.

699. (Chairman.) Have you any particulars of that case?—No, I have not.

700. Can you get them?—I do not know whether I can or not. It is about 18 months ago. I do not think I could.

701. Have you had any similar cases since?—Not to the extent of this one. We have had several cases similar. We have never been able to get at the root of the thing because we have no system of checking.

702. Have you recovered money in cases similar to that of which you have just told us?—Yes, in two or three instances, but we have not had so much trouble to get it, and it has not resulted in the discharge of the men.

703. The grievance of the men is, I take it, that they have no legal right to insist on seeing the documents on which the stevedores are paid?—Yes, that is the whole case.

704. (Mr. Wignall.) With regard to those men who insisted on seeing the documents and recovered 5s., did the men who recovered the 5s. ever recover their job?—No, not to this day.

705. They lost it entirely?—Yes.

706. They have never had any more employment from this man?—No.

707. Because they demanded the money that was due to them the gang was disbanded, and was thrown out into the cold?—Yes.

708. There is nothing in existence in your district to give the men the right to demand the production of any proof that they are getting the right payment?—Nothing whatever.

709. Even if they are getting the correct tonnage rates the men cannot be satisfied that they are getting them?—Yes.

710. That is the position?—Yes.

711. (Mr. Sexton.) The man employed to weigh the iron ore first gives the weight to the employer?—Yes.

712. Then when the men ask him, as a matter of courtesy, not of right, he gives them a copy of what purports to be the right figure?—Yes.

713. Have they any knowledge as to whether it is correct?—No.

714. They have only his word for it?—Yes.

715. (Mr. Gordon.) That the weight he gives them is the same as he gives to the employer?—Yes.

716. Who were the men who had the dispute to which you referred? Were they at the hoist or were they coal trimmers or what?—Coal trimmers.

717. What size steamer was she?—About 1,000 tons, I should think.

718. Have they not a fixed sum within a few shillings for such boats?—It depends on the state of the tide; that is the difficulty in our ports. If it is a neap tide she can only take half. The following week on a spring tide she can take a full cargo away. She has to load to a certain draught, 14 or 15 feet, as the tide will allow. There are scarcely two voyages alike.

719. Are there no tickets on the trucks?—On some of them there are and on some there are not.

720. Do the coals pass over any weighbridge?—No.

721. They simply have the colliery weights?—Simply the colliery weights.

722. Did you apply to the shipowner or his agent for the weight?—No.

723. (Mr. Mead.) I believe it is the custom in Goole to load coal in two ways, is it not?—Yes.

724. What are the ways?—One is rail-borne coal and the other canal-borne.

725. What we call "compartments"?—Yes.

726. Of which system do you have most complaints?—The railway system.

727. Are there any complaints at all with the compartment system?—We have not had any yet.

728. And that system has been in vogue for a considerable time?—Yes.

729. We can dismiss that altogether. With the compartment system you are satisfied?—We should like a better production than we have.

730. But I want to know have you any grievances with regard to compartment loading?—Yes, I think we have a legitimate grievance.

731. Can you cite a case of a compartment grievance?—No, I cannot.

732. With regard to railway weights, do you know at all what the system is that is employed at Goole?—Yes.

733. What is it?—All the coal is weighed at the pit as it is put into the waggons, and the colliery company advises their agent at the port of shipment of the numbers and the corresponding weight in each waggon. The consignment is sent to Goole and tipped on board the ship. The waggon numbers are taken by the man in charge for the railway company. The colliery agent knows the weight. The shipowner gets the weight shipped on board that ship from the colliery agent.

734. When they know how many trucks the ship has taken they "compile" the cargo as it is called?—Yes, and the shipowner is advised. Where the waggon is labelled the labels are taken off and taken to the

colliery agent's office, and used as a check against the pit weight, but in some cases the waggons are not labelled at all.

735. Do most of the steamship owners in Goole employ stevedores, or do any of them do their own work?—The Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway do their own work, but all the others employ stevedores.

736. You are the branch secretary at Goole. When you have had grievances mentioned to you, have you kept any record of those grievances?—No.

737. You keep no record of the complaints made to you at all as a secretary?—We have not in the past with regard to this particular business.

738. You have no record of the grievances which you say exist?—No, only memory.

739. (Mr. Sexton.) When you get a complaint you at once investigate it personally?—Yes.

740. (Mr. Orbell.) I suppose if a case was reported at your branch meeting, it would come forward in the ordinary minutes?—Yes.

741. Is it a fact that most of these complaints are lodged probably in the street or when you are round the dock?—Always in the street.

742. If it did come to the branch, there would be a record in the minutes?—Yes.

743. (Mr. Hardy.) The grievance at Goole, I understand, is confined to coal loading?—No.

744. You said so?—No, not confined to coal loading, out chiefly in connection with coal loading. There is a very big grievance in connection with tonnage work.

745. How does the stevedore get his information, do you know? He is paid by the ton, I suppose, when the loading is done?—It is bad to tell how the stevedore is paid.

746. Bad to tell because you do not know, or because it is too bad to tell?—I do know, if I might explain. One stevedore will be paid perhaps 5s. a week out of the particular firm's office that he is stevedore for, and the rest of the wage comes out of commission from the men that he employs. Some will give a good commission and some will give a bad commission. Another stevedore might be paid 10s. a week for looking after the employer's interest, and the rest would come out of the men's wages. Some will give 5 per cent., and some 7, and some 10.

747. (Chairman.) Do the men pay the stevedore a portion of what they receive themselves?—Yes.

748. (Mr. Hardy.) The stevedore pays the men?—The stevedore pays the men, but there is a deduction made from the lump sum.

749. By whom is the stevedore paid?—By the shipowner or his agent.

750. He gets something from the men, but he is paid by the shipowner?—Yes.

751. And he is paid by a tonnage rate, I take it?—Yes.

752. Would you be satisfied with the evidence that the stevedore has of the tonnage?—No.

The witness withdrew.

Mr. SAMUEL FISHER called and examined.

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771. (Chairman.) What is your official position?—I am general secretary to the Cardiff, Penarth and Barry Coal Trimmers and Tipplers Union.

772. For how long have you held that position?—For 21 years.

773. How many men in your district are members of the union?—About 1,300.

774. Are they all employed in dock labour?—They are employed in the tipping and trimming of coal and coke.

775. What proportion of them are paid by tonnage rates?—The whole of them.

776. Have you heard complaints that the men paid tonnage rates do not receive the amount due to

753. From whom do you want to get the evidence?—I would not take the stevedore's evidence.

754. Do you want to make it penal upon the shipowner, who has nothing to do with the men, that he should supply the men with information?—Yes, clear of the stevedore altogether.

755. You want to get behind the stevedore?—Yes.

756. (Mr. Sexton.) The shipowner employs the stevedore?—The shipowner or his agent.

757. Or the consignee?—No, the shipowner or his agent.

758. Then he insists as a condition of employment that the men shall pay him more than half of his wages?—Yes.

759. (Mr. Hardy.) I want to know who is the man to be hit, that is the point. Coals are not weighed at the ship's side, I understand; they are weighed at the colliery?—Yes. There is no coal weighed at the port of shipment at all.

760. Who has the colliery weights?—The colliery agent.

761. Do you suggest that he should be obliged to show the weights?—Yes.

762. He has nothing to do with the men?—He has nothing at all to do with the men.

763. (Chairman.) You do not mean to suggest that people who have nothing to do with the employment of the men should be made to show documents to them?—I should, if necessary.

764. (Mr. Scrutton.) Supposing that the stevedore produced a certificate from these people, it would be satisfactory?—Yes, if it was properly signed.

765. (Mr. Orbell.) Your objection to taking the stevedore's word is because, to take the case of those six men, for instance, a false note may be shown. That is, you do not see an authentic document?—It is possible, in my opinion, for the stevedore to be in league with the shipowner or his agent as a paid servant.

766. Dropping the shipowner for a moment, you do know of cases where the stevedore has produced, in your opinion, an improper note?—Yes.

767. For instance, you stated, "He showed us a note and we said we wanted to see the proper note"?—Yes.

768. Because you thought that the money he had paid you was short?—Yes.

769. (Mr. Hardy.) You want the stevedore to show you the information which he has and from which he makes up his charge?—Yes.

770. (Mr. Orbell.) That is what you mean. You do not mean to say that you want to run into the shipowner's office and to hold him responsible over the stevedore's head, providing you can get some amount of guarantee that what you receive from the stevedore is really the proper account?—That is what we require—a properly signed account and a declaration that it is correct.

them?—No. In our district there is no difficulty at all, that I know of, concerning the weights.

777. The principal cargoes handled by your men, I understand, are coal?—Yes, coal and coke.

778. Who employs the men?—The coal shipper, the colliery proprietor or the freighter.

779. Does the colliery proprietor ever let the contract out to stevedores?—Only to this extent—that the colliery proprietor or several of them might engage the same foreman, as we call them. We do not call them stevedores. One foreman might act as a sort of contractor and do work for half a dozen or more firms. Only to that extent is the work let out.

Mr. S. Fisher.



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780. Do the firms submit a statement of the weights to the men?—The foreman of each gang would get the total amount shipped.

781. Would he get a statement in such a form that the men would be satisfied?—Yes. He would get a correct statement from the ship. The ship weight would be given to the foreman, and the foreman would have a list of the boats or vessels loaded during the week with the tonnage shipped into each, and that would be put on the table when the men were being paid, so that all the men could see the list of steamers they had worked on or vessels, and the weight carried in each.

782. Then I take it that there is no possibility of your men having a grievance, because they can see precisely what they had handled?—I do not see very well how a grievance could crop up. I would like to explain, if you please, that the coal is put over machines. The colliery weight to start with is given to each office, and then the coal is weighed over machines at each tip.

783. Where?—At the docks. There are weighing machines for each tip. There are two weighing machines (there used to be one only) at each tip. There may be a few still with only one, but there are not many anyhow. The full waggon is weighed and run on to the tip. Then the coal is discharged into the shoot and from the shoot into the vessel. Then the empty waggon is run back over the empty road and over a machine, and the empty waggon is weighed so that they do not go absolutely by the tare painted on the waggon; but they re-weigh each waggon as it has been discharged, so that they get an accurate weight of the coal shipped.

784. You say that the coal is weighed at the colliery, and also weighed just before it is tipped into the ship?—Yes.

785. Do you find any difference between those two weighings?—Yes, they vary.

786. What is the percentage of difference between the two weighings?—I do not think I am in a position to say.

787. Can you give us an average?—I am afraid I am not in a position to.

788. (Mr. Hardy.) The weight would be less on shipment than at the colliery?—Yes, I think so, because there would be wastage coming down the line. The bumping would shake lumps off and that sort of thing. I am in a position to say, although I could not prove it, that in some cases the weight is more. It varies.

789. (Chairman.) How could it be more?—The machines vary a little, and the colliery machine would not be so accurate perhaps.

790. Would the weight be more because of the absorption of moisture?—Yes. For instance, if it came out of a pit on a dry day and then it rained heavily, coming down from the colliery to the dock the weight would increase considerably.

791. It could not be more if it is weighed properly at the colliery than it is when it is tipped into the ship unless the weight is increased by absorption?—No. We have found very often that the machine at the colliery perhaps is not so well looked after as the machine at the dock.

792. (Mr. Wignall.) Your work is exclusively confined to the shipping of coal at Cardiff, Penarth, and Barry?—Yes.

793. Your union does not extend to any other operations outside coal and coke shipping?—No; it is only coal and coke shipping.

794. There is a weigher appointed at the tips to weigh all the coal before it is tipped into the ship?—Yes. The dock people employ the weigher.

795. Where do you get a copy of the weight from?—From the weigher, or from the dock people really.

796. And you have no difficulty in obtaining that copy?—No, absolutely none.

797. It is given to you as a favour, although you have never been refused a copy of the weights?—I do not know that it is a favour. I think it is a right that the men in the district possess to have the weights.

798. (Chairman.) Custom, I suppose?—Custom at any rate.

799. (Mr. Wignall.) The dock companies do funny things sometimes. Supposing they issued instructions that on and from next Monday the weights were not to be handed out to anybody, but were to be kept in their office, they would have a legal right to do so, would they not?—Yes, I think so.

800. If they did issue that instruction, you would have no right to demand from the weigher who was there for the company, and who was paid by them, a copy of the weights?—No; that is so.

801. Up to now they give you the weights without any difficulty, and the men are satisfied with the weight they obtain?—Yes, that is right.

802. Though the copy of the weight is given, it is given by a party who does not employ them, who does not pay them, and who has no right of control over them?—Yes.

803. (Mr. Hardy.) Are not the trimmers employed by the dock company?—No. I said just now that they are employed by the colliery proprietors and the freighters.

804. To whom does the dock company give the weights—to the men employed by the dock company or to other men?—The men employed by the dock company have the weights. The weigher and his gang belong to the dock company and nobody can keep the information from them. They have it.

805. Are they paid by the piece, too?—Yes, they are paid tonnage rate, too.

806. Then I understand the dock company's men to have the weight in the first instance?—Yes.

807. Do those men give to the other men on the ship, or does the dock company independently give it to those men, or does the weigher give it?—The weigher makes out the total quantity and hands it to the trimming foreman.

808. (Mr. Wignall.) I want to make it clear that trimmers are not employed by the dock company at all?—No.

809. And the dock company has no control over the trimmers?—That is so.

810. They are employed entirely by what you may call a middleman, if you like, outside of the dock company's interest altogether?—Yes.

811. The dock company will employ and pay the weigher, the hoist men, and the tippers, and all the men employed on and about the dock?—Yes.

812. The trimmer is the man that goes into the hold to trim the coal on the ship or to level it out in the hold of the ship?—Yes.

813. These are employed by the foreman who represents some office in the district?—Yes.

814. The dock company does not pay any compensation when accidents occur. The trimmers are employed by the colliery owners?—Yes, by the owners of the coal, the colliery proprietor, or a middleman who contracts for large quantities of coal.

815. (Chairman.) How is the contractor paid?—So much per ton.

816. (Mr. Wignall.) There is a tariff?—We have a tariff.

817. (Chairman.) Where does he get the particulars from upon which he is paid?—From the weighing machine.

818. (Mr. Hardy.) I understand that at Barry and the South Wales ports there is no difficulty; it all works very well?—As far as the society I represent is concerned we have no grievance.

819. The men on the ship get information from the dock company, although they are not in the employ of the dock company?—Yes. There is no difficulty.

820. (Mr. Wignall.) I want the Committee to go away with the fixed idea in their minds that these trimmers are not in the employ of the dock company, and they are not in the employ of the shippers. They

are in the employ of the middleman, and they get a copy of their weights from the dock company's employé, who is there for that purpose?—Yes.

821. If it was not for that document being available at any time to you or your men, you would be largely at the mercy of the middleman with regard to the exact tonnage?—Yes.

822. As a matter of fact, you have never had any difficulty up to the present time?—I can appreciate Mr. Wignall's position very well. He is supposing a condition of things something like this—that for some reason or other the dock authorities issue a notice to their weighers forbidding them to give any information at all as to the quantity shipped into any vessel, and that they also raise other difficulties so that the men then would not know how much coal had been shipped into any particular vessel. If they were working for a contractor such as I spoke of just now, he might be making money out of them; he would not be employed directly by one colliery proprietor and paid by that colliery proprietor; he would be a sort of contractor getting work from where he could. It would then be to his advantage to hoodwink the men and to say that only a certain quantity had been shipped when a greater quantity had been shipped. Then he would be making money.

823. (Chairman.) I understand that the dock company give the particulars to the men as a matter of grace?—Yes.

824. Not as a matter of right?—No, not as a matter of right.

The witness withdrew.

Mr. HENRY SEER called and examined.

833. (Chairman.) What is your official capacity?—I am secretary to the Dockers' Union at Newport.

834. For how long have you held that position?—For 17 years.

835. How many men in your district are members of the union?—In the town about 1,400.

836. Are they all employed in dock labour?—They are all employed in dock labour.

837. Can you estimate what proportion of the work done by them is done at tonnage rates?—In general there are 700 men employed on tonnage work.

838. Have you heard complaints that any of these men do not receive the amount due to them?—Yes, hundreds of times.

839. About how many complaints do you receive in a year on the average. Do you get them, for instance, once a week?—We do not expect them once a week, but sometimes we get three or four in one week.

840. Have you investigated these complaints?—I have.

841. Do you find that some of them are justified?—Yes, a very large number.

842. What are the principal cargoes that are handled by your men at tonnage rates?—General cargoes and coal-tipping and stowing and so on, pit-wood discharging, and all kinds of timber large and small, and iron ore.

843. Are the men usually employed by stevedores?—Yes, in some cases they are, in other cases by the dock and wharf companies.

844. Do the shipping companies employ the men direct?—No. There is hardly anything of that kind in our town.

845. Will you tell the Committee the circumstances of one or two cases where you have found a general grievance. I want as recent an instance as possible, and the date and the general particulars. Take the general cargo first?—January 1902.

846. Cannot you give us something a little later than that?—Yes, I can give you the first and the last up to that date. From there on I have not any record, for certain reasons. In January 1902 after being paid by the stevedore we recovered 35*l.* 15*s.* 7*d.* That was recovered by making a stand. What I mean by that is this, there was dissatisfaction on the part of the whole

825. The contractor is paid on the weight which the dock company send to the colliery proprietor as their charge for handling the coal?—Yes.

826. So that the men would be satisfied if they saw an authentic statement issued by the colliery proprietor to the contractor as to the amount of weight that the men had really handled?—The men would be satisfied with that.

827. The proper way of dealing with the matter by legislation would be to require the colliery proprietor to provide the contractor with a signed statement which the men could see?—Yes.

828. (Mr. Wignall.) In your experience have you ever had a case where men have complained that they thought that they had not the full amount of tonnage?—Yes.

829. And you have had to resort to the weighman's sheet?—Yes.

830. That has been not an isolated case, but often occurring?—Yes, more or less frequently. We have gang men, preference men, and hobblers. The hobbler is a casual man. He may not be satisfied with the weight that has been supplied to him, and he has come to me as the secretary, and I have gone and secured the correct tonnage and handed it to him.

831. You have never had any difficulty in getting access to the weighman's sheet?—No, I have not found any difficulty.

832. And that has always given satisfaction?—Yes.

of the men, and, together with the men concerned, we approached the brokers for the ship and prevailed upon them to let us have the measurement of the cargo. They gave us a copy of the ship's manifest. We employed an expert in cubing cargoes, who has done it for many years, and the result of that was to recover 35*l.* 15*s.* 7*d.*

847. Did you have any difficulty in getting that money?—No, not when we proved our case.

848. What excuse was given for the deficiency?—As a matter of fact we did not intend to resume work until this matter was cleared up.

849. Who employed the men in that case?—A firm of stevedores.

850. What is the next case that you have?—A case of discharging deals in August 1902. Nineteen men were engaged, and in consequence of dissatisfaction when they received their pay, we succeeded again in getting the exact output, and recovered 4*s.* 5*d.* each for 19 men.

851. Who employed the men in that case?—The same stevedore.

852. Did he give any reasons for the deficiency?—No; no reason whatever. He was unable to dispute our figures, because we had them from the merchant.

853. Were there other cases in 1902?—I have another case in October the same year.

854. You had three cases in 1902?—I have taken down three cases in 1902.

855. How many had you in 1903?—I have only taken down one in 1903—December 11th, 1903.

856. What did you recover in that case?—Sixteen men 5*s.* 6*d.* each.

857. Who employed the men?—In this case a contractor to the dock company.

858. (Mr. Mead.) What kind of cargo was it?—I have not the particulars, but, as far as I can recollect, I fancy that this must have been general cargo.

859. (Mr. Hardy.) Inward?—Out.

860. (Chairman.) Had you any cases in 1904?—I have taken one case in 1904—the same contractor with the dock company. In April 1904 I have two ships belonging to the same owners, on which we recovered 5*l.* 11*s.* 4*d.*

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861. What did you do in 1905?—Will you accept another one in 1904? I have an important case here. It was the same boat, the same owners, and the same man for the dock company. We had to go into court to prove our case, and we recovered 18l. 13s. 5d. Ten men recovered 23s. 2d. each, six men recovered 18s. 8d. each, and six men recovered 4s. 6d. each.

862. (Chairman.) What defence was adduced?—When we produced the measurement, it was a question of this kind—that under certain conditions dead weight should be paid, and not the measurement. That applied to beer as well as to boilers.

863. (Mr. Hardy.) That is a thing about which there might well have been a dispute?—Yes. I want to be fair in the matter, and I do not want to give only one side. It appears—and it is very often done, and that is why I would like to mention it—that some ship-owners in order to secure freight will arrange with companies to carry their goods at dead-weight freightage if they cannot get it by measurement. In this case this beer was carried, or arrangements were made to carry it, at dead-weight freightage instead of measurement, which is considerably more, and would be more to the men.

864. (Chairman.) Do you consider that the defence in that case was a fair one?—No. We claim to be paid by measurement, and it does not matter to us whether the ships carry at dead weight or anything else. We succeeded on our point with regard to measurement.

865. You do not suggest that there is any desire on the part of employers to be unfair to the men with regard to this question?—I am hardly in a position to say. We were paid in the first instance dead weight, and the action taken resulted in getting measurement.

866. (Mr. Wignall.) Anyhow the judge was satisfied that your case was a good one?—Yes, and he gave judgment for us.

867. (Chairman.) What do you say about 1905?—I have two cases in 1905. Both of them are cargoes of deals. One is in January. This is again the contractor for the dock company whom I mentioned before. I obtained the weights from the merchant, and recovered 2s. 2d. each for 24 men. In August the same year, on a cargo of deals, 24 men recovered 4s. 6d. after obtaining the weight from the merchant.

868. Were all these recoveries made by making a protest to the stevedore?—They would not give it unless they were obliged to. When we get the account and the men are dissatisfied from some information received, perhaps from somebody on board or somebody ashore, as the case may be, and they complain and say that they are not satisfied, they usually apply to me to try to prove the case, which I do in the way that I have described, by getting information where I can, sometimes from one and sometimes another.

869. When you have proved your case, have you had any difficulty in getting the thing adjusted?—No. They are afraid to go into court as a rule. They do not like it.

870. In 1906?—I have three or four cases that I have taken out.

871. We do not need to have them all?—I will give you the first and last if you like.

872. Very well?—From the same contractor for the dock company as I mentioned before, on a general cargo in one hold, for eight men we recovered 4s. 2d. each. There is another one, if you will take it, in March the same year, the same man, general cargo. For 35 men we recovered 13s. 2d. each. In April the same year, the same man, general cargo, we recovered 3s. each for 26 men.

873. (Mr. Scrutton.) That was simply by putting the case before him. You showed him that he was not paying quite enough and he agreed to pay more?—It was not quite as easy as that.

874. (Chairman.) What do you say about last year?—I have only a record of one case. There have been cases, but I am not prepared to give chapter and verse for them. I have one in April, a general cargo. We recovered 2s. 1d. for 34 men.

875. You have given us several instances of where you have recovered certain sums for the men in the years 1902 down to 1907. Are we to understand that those are all the cases you had in those particular years?—No.

876. Were there many more?—Yes; I expect ten times the number. I am not quite sure. I cannot give it you exactly, but very many more.

877. (Mr. Scrutton.) Do you suggest that the stevedore in these cases received payment on a certain tonnage, and that he then put forward a lower rate of tonnage, or that he was settling with the men provisionally before making a final settlement with the employer?—Unless we have ground for complaint after a settlement of this kind we hear no more about it. It is only when we can prove our case, and show by information, gathered sometimes from the brokers, sometimes from the owners, sometimes from other people not directly concerned, that there is a difference, that we are able to recover.

878. But that is not an answer to the question. My question was: Do you suggest that this contractor was deliberately receiving payment on one basis of tonnage and then coming and trying to settle with you on a lower basis?—I know it; I am positive of it.

879. What evidence have you of that?—This is my evidence—that in every case, bar one, that I have given, we have gone to the people from whom they have had payment, and got information from them that has enabled us to establish our case and demand payment.

880. How long afterwards?—Sometimes it takes a good time. I have a case here where I have been to the agent for information. The case occurred on November the 2nd, 1907. The actual weight in that ship—general cargo—would amount to a little over 800 tons, and the measurement weight would amount to 1,961 tons, all under frames—about 180 pairs of wheels included in the 1,961—very nearly three times the actual weight. So far as the agents and brokers are concerned we cannot get any further. They say that they have given us a correct copy of the ship's manifest, but even with that our men are not satisfied.

881. Why?—Because they believe that they have put more on board and are entitled to more measurement than they have been paid for.

882. Did you say that they had seen the ship's manifest?—I said that the ship's brokers had given us what they said was a correct account as sent to the owners of the ship, although they say that the men who stowed the cargo are not satisfied that they have had what is due to them.

883. (Mr. Hardy.) Is it suggested that the men have been deliberately told the dead weight when they thought they were being told the measurement weight, or have they been given both weights and the dispute has been whether they should be paid by weight or measurement?—There is a case in which the actual weight is 716 tons. I expect the wheels are included, but that is not very much. The measurement weight is 1,961 tons, but there is nothing in the world said as to whether this measurement was dead weight or not. A total is given of 1,961.

884. You cannot complain of 1,961 having been given. You might complain that 716 tons was given as the weight on which the men ought to be paid. Did they get both weights?—They do not say what is the dead weight, nor do they say the difference between the dead weight and the measurement weight. We think it would facilitate matters and be very much more satisfactory to the men doing the stowing.

885. 1,961 tons is the biggest weight?—That is according to the measurement, but whether it is the exact measurement or not I am not prepared to say.

886. (Chairman.) What would satisfy the men; what are they asking for?—In work of this kind they would like to have something more reliable and something that would enable them to have confidence in the thing to prevent dissatisfaction.

887. What do you suggest that should be?—I am hardly prepared to give an immediate answer, but it seems to me that if a sworn copy or a reliable copy of the ship's manifest is placed in the hands of people from whom it might be obtained by the men, or somebody

representing them, something of that kind that would meet the case.

888. Some documentary evidence which is impartial?—Yes.

889. (Mr. Scrutton.) That would only give rise to disputes. Would they be satisfied to be paid at the same rate as the stevedore or the contractor is paid?—They would, providing that it is in accordance with the conditions of their tariff.

890. (Mr. Wignall.) So far as the coal shipping is concerned there is no complaint, because there is a weighman appointed by the dock company?—At our tips at Newport we have a machine to every tip, and the machine is very close to the tip, and there is very little objection on the part of the dock company to men asking for information of that kind from their weigher when they require it, but it is not then the official weight. It is only official when it has been passed through from the weigher to the general office and checked, and so on; then it becomes official.

891. Have you opportunities of seeing that document?—You can get it as a favour sometimes, and sometimes you have to give a tip for it if you want it, or to get it how you can.

892. And it is possible for the dock company to issue instructions to prevent you having access to it at all?—As a matter of fact, in the beginning of 1906, when they took over most of the import work in particular, they closed their machines to everybody except the men directly employed by themselves. In a little time we prevailed upon them to allow the machines to be opened. As far as I know with regard to pit wood, the men may have the weight by paying the weigher and keeping an account of every truck they load with iron ore or pit wood. That means one man from each gang in each hold of the ship must come up out of the hold, take the number of the truck and keep the numbers of all trucks, and when they have finished the day or the job approach the weigher to have the weights filled in. That is the privilege just now.

893. The bulk of your trouble lies with the general cargo, and not with the coal?—The shippers are usually the owners of the coal, and they employ their own men, and get their own gangs. If they are dissatisfied with the weights on the spot, they can approach the colliery people and get the weights there. Then they can go to the brokers, and they do not very often refuse to give it to them.

894. How do the colliery people obtain a copy of the weight that is shipped on the steamer, or whatever it may be?—There are three copies. The freighters are supplied with one and the dock company with another, and another is kept on the spot. They get them every morning. As soon as possible after office hours, the previous day and night's shipping is sent by the dock company to the colliery owners, or shippers as they call themselves.

895. Every case you have mentioned to-day of recovering an amount of money has represented an enormous amount of time and trouble in getting information?—Yes, about six months in some cases.

896. You have frequently been refused information?—Yes.

897. There are documents in existence which you could obtain if they were willing to give them to you, which would satisfy the men on the quays?—Yes.

898. Taking the general cargo men—the iron ore men, and so on—if facilities were given them for appointing a checkweighman, would they be willing to appoint one of their own number to check weights?—No; they could not afford it.

899. They get a copy of the weights now by paying for it, as you say?—I will give you a case. We have a very large wharf, with two large berths, capable of accommodating a ship carrying 3,000 tons. It can take in two ships of 3,000 tons each, and can put out from 2,000 to 2,400 tons in 24 hours, and they have not a machine on the premises nor in their name. If they want other than the weight that is supplied by the contractor for the wharf company, they have to go to the Great Western people, and they cannot get it unless they pay them a farthing a ton. They never

have had a machine. They have been in existence for about 30 years doing a great deal of work, employing sometimes as many as 60 men, and doing a very large output. They have not a machine on their premises, and no means in the world for getting at the weights of what they put out until they get it from the railway company.

900. To sum it up, there is general dissatisfaction?—Yes. Where there are machines belonging to the wharf company, they have to take their numbers, and take off the weights for each truck loaded by them. That is the only means they have.

901. (Mr. Larkin.) Do you think it is simply a mistake on the part of the stevedore in not paying the correct weight?—A clerical error?

902. Yes. Or is it deliberate?—It is deliberate.

903. (Mr. Orbell.) You got 35*l.* 15*s.* 7*d.* in January 1902. You told one gentleman here that you would not have got the clerks to prove that you were entitled to that sum, except for the fact that there was some question whether the men would resume work if they did not get it?—I mentioned that because in this case a man did actually stop. They had just got their stomachs full. Every time they get paid for a ship they expect more money, and that disappointment just brought them up to that pinch that they would not work any longer until they had this matter cleared up. They accompanied me to the broker's office, about 40 or 50 men, the whole of them.

904. But do you think it was on account of the doubt with regard to the men going to work that you managed to get the facts as to the proper tonnage the men were entitled to?—I expect it was more than anything else.

905. It was not by the goodwill, or the honesty, or the love of right of the agent who was to pay, that you were paid?—No; we cannot get that at all.

906. With regard to the case in 1903, where you recovered for 16 men 5*s.* 6*d.* each, they received some money, did they not, when they finished the job?—Yes.

907. What was the length of time between the finishing of the job and the receiving of the 5*s.* 6*d.*?—I do not think I have that.

908. It does not matter about the exact time, but was the ship cleared from the dock?—Yes; and I have known cases when the ship has been back for another cargo, and gone away before we have got through with it.

909. In your opinion, even if there was a dispute over the dead weight or measurement, there had been good time for them to clear up any difficulty in that direction and to pay?—The men were paid, but they were not paid what they had earned.

910. Exactly; but you were asked whether, in the first place, the stevedore had paid on dead weight as a kind of sum in advance, an instalment, and afterwards paid on measurement, which brought out a greater sum. Whether that was so or not, there was ample time to adjust it before you made a request to get that sum?—Yes. The men would not have got any more, unless we had found out that something was due to them.

911. And, as a matter of fact, are there many disputes on account of men not being paid the proper amount of wages due to them?—They are just about in that frame of mind now at this very moment. I told them that in all probability I should be called upon to give some evidence touching upon these matters, and that has, perhaps, pacified them to some extent. They are pleased to think that the matter is going to have some consideration, and they are looking forward and hoping that a means will be found by which they shall have what they earn.

912. There is no question as to the amount per ton, but as to the number of tons that the men handle. You have a printed tariff agreed to by the stevedores and so on that fixes the price per ton, the number of men, and the detail. The dispute is as to the number of tons that the men have been paid for, and not the price per ton?—The number of tons—not the price.

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913. (*Chairman.*) Is it clearly stated on the tariff whether the men are to be paid by measurement or dead weight?—Yes.

914. (*Mr. Gordon.*) Have you ever applied direct to the shipowner with regard to these disputes?—I have. A very very long time ago I applied to some Cardiff owners. I could not give you the name of the ship, because I did not know it would be wanted; I could if I was nearer to my books. I have been led to believe that whether the thing is right or wrong they do not like to give information of that kind.

915. Have you ever applied—because that is only hearsay—to any shipowner for assistance in these matters?—Direct only to one or two, or three, perhaps, at the utmost.

916. With what result?—Really, I cannot tell you exactly what the results were now. That is a very, very long time ago. I had a case of pit wood discharged on the wharf, where, as I said just now, there is no machine, and never has been. The men were very dissatisfied with regard to the pit wood. They knew what the ship used to put out, and in this case they had a great deal less than they had had before. That was the ground of their dissatisfaction. In that case I applied to a Cardiff owner, and eventually I had the weight from the shipowner, but in that case it turned out to be exactly what the contractors had paid the men.

917. Did the shipowner say that that was what he received freight on?—I do not know what he was paid freight on. I have been led to believe that for certain reasons of their own, if there is an appreciable difference between what the ship had put out and what they knew had been paid the men for discharging, they would hesitate or really refuse to give us the information.

918. Have you ever applied to a shipowner?—I have never troubled them since 14 or 15 years ago. I have been told that shipbrokers and shipowners, and people of that kind, hardly care to give information, because they have a dislike to being, perhaps, taken into court should anything happen. There is a case now in which the people said the very same thing: "Look here, what is going to happen if we give you the information you ask for? Are you going to subpoena us? Are you going to take us into court and expose us?" This stands a great deal in the way of getting information from people who are hardly concerned at all. I take it that the ship's broker is not concerned in the least about the matter.

919. (*Mr. Larkin.*) There is a very serious point here; we want it cleared up. Do you know that the broker has given you the actual weight, and do you know that the shipowners pay the broker the proper freight, and does the broker in collusion with the stevedore make it his business not to pay the men the actual weight they have loaded or unloaded?—If you ask me if I know it and I say yes, I shall have to prove it, but I am fully convinced that in some cases they do—not in all.

920. (*Mr. Hardy.*) Your chief complaint is against a man who is employed, as I understand, as a contractor by the dock company?—That is my chief complaint.

921. Have all these cases, or any of them, been brought to the notice of the dock company?—One case, because it was their own contractor that we were taking action against.

922. I did not ask for information about the action in the county court to which you referred, because there appears to have been a genuine difference of opinion about how the men should be paid. I want to know whether these instances of what you think are nothing but robbery have been brought to the notice of the dock company?—I have not had a case against the Newport Dock Company.

923. But this contractor is employed by them?—He is their contractor.

924. Do they know of these wrong doings?—They knew of the case of the boilers and they knew of the case of the beer.

925. In the case of the boilers there was an honest difference of opinion, I can imagine, and with regard to the beer too. You have given sample cases?—For the last two years and three months the contractor that I

have mentioned has been on his own, so you had better distinguish.

926. Is he not on for the dock company now?—He is not on for the dock company now; he is on his own.

927. (*Mr. Mead.*) Certain of these cargoes that you have mentioned are timber cargoes. Would you tell me what the custom is at Newport of arriving at the output of a vessel with timber?—In some cases the cargo is measured up by the Customs measurer.

928. By whose authority?—I cannot tell you. They have their own man in Newport and he engages other men and he receives his orders from the Customs authorities—I do not know from whom in particular.

929. To measure up to see what the out-turn of the cargo is?—Yes.

930. Do you pay your men in Newport so much per standard?—So much per standard for deals.

931. What is the average time from the day that a vessel discharges her cargo of timber up to the day of final output as we call it?—It all depends. Sometimes they are taken out very quickly and sometimes they take as much as eight weeks.

932. To get the out-turn of a steamer's cargo?—But we have a clause in our tariff to the effect that a ship shall pay according to her bills of lading, and in the cases that I have given you the men are paid (I do not know where they get their information from) in the course of the week two or three times (?), and that is the end of the matter.

933. The contract with the men who employ the labourers is that in all cases the labourers are to be paid on the bill of lading standard capacity?—We like that, but we do not get it.

934. I thought you said so just now. What is your bargain?—I do not know that they ever pay on bills of lading.

935. I want an answer. What is the basis on which the men undertake the work? How are they supposed to be paid?—They undertake the work at so much per standard.

936. On the out-turn of standards?—Yes, I expect that is what it would be.

937. Is that so, or is it on what the vessel is supposed to have taken in?—There is nothing distinct. There is no definite law laid down beyond what I have told you, and that has not been adhered to—to pay the men on the ships' bills of landing.

938. But I ask you is the contract on the output standard capacity or on the bill of lading capacity? Is it on the number of standards discharged?—There is no doubt that is how they are paid.

939. Then there is no breach of contract?—There is no breach of contract.

940. It is sometimes eight weeks before it is cleared up?—Sometimes they are taken right away at once.

941. Say a fortnight or a month or six weeks. I do not bind you to eight weeks. How are the men paid during the interim from the time the ship has discharged her cargo till the final out-turn is arrived at?—I cannot answer.

942. How do they arrive at the amount they are to pay whilst the men are doing the work?—I cannot tell you, but the contractor pays them on a certain number of standards.

943. I want to know the system and you say they are paid on the out-turn standard. I want to know what system is employed from the date that the ship is finally discharged till you know what she has actually put out?—I do not know how they pay the men. I have mentioned the fact that in our tariff, which they do not adhere to, we have asked to be paid on the ship's bills of lading. I cannot tell you when they use the ship's bills of lading or when they use a certain output. They pay on standards. When we find the difference between what they have been paid and what the ship has turned out we take action.

944. That may be a matter of weeks?—Yes. I have known cases to take eight weeks. I have known a case where it has been dealt with right away at once.

945. (*Mr. Scrutton.*) With regard to general cargoes, you know that sometimes a ship is paid by weight and sometimes she is paid by measurement?—Yes.

946. And there might be a case where the ship being paid by weight the men think they ought to be paid by measurement?—Yes, quite so.

947. Therefore there is room for difference of opinion in these general cargoes?—No, not with regard to the men.

948. You have said that there may be a difference of opinion and the men may think when the ship is paid by weight that they ought to be paid by measurement. Take an article like railway wheels, for example?—The ship sometimes gets freightage on actual or dead weight, but it is invariable and it never changes its conditions with regard to stowing as far as the men are concerned.

949. The men think they ought to be paid by measurement?—It is laid down in the tariff and printed and everybody knows it. I can give you a case in which the charterers are carrying for dead-weight freightage but the men are to be paid on measurement. If they have measurement goods to stow on board the ship it makes no difference to them whether she is carrying her cargo for dead-weight freightage or measurement freightage.

950. Therefore the measurement has to be agreed as between the contractor and the men in every case?—No, there is no need of any special agreement at all. The rule is laid down with the figures and the conditions.

951. But my point is that there are no definite figures for such a cargo. That is the point I was coming to. It has to be agreed every time?—No.

952. Where are the figures of measurement of the cargo on which the men have to be settled with?—We have it in print. Every broker in Newport has it.

The witness withdrew.

[Adjourned for a short time.]

Mr. HENRY H. WATTS called and examined.

Mr. H. H.  
Watts.

963. (*Chairman.*) What is your official position in the London Docks?—I am assistant manager and staff inspector, London and India Docks.

964. I believe that for some years past you have been in intimate connection with labour and are acquainted with the conditions in relation to piece-work?—Yes. Shall I read the statement that I have?

965. Yes, if you please?—"The labourers employed by the dock company are guaranteed a minimum wage, whether on day-work or on piece-work, and their earnings on piece-work can never be less than if they were on the daily or hourly rate of pay. The work of discharging ships is chiefly performed by master porters or stevedores, acting as contractors for the shipowners, and in some cases the work is done by direct employment of labour by the shipowners themselves. A certain amount of ship discharging is, however, done by the dock company, who have also a large number of labourers employed on the quays and in the warehouses. 83 per cent. of the labour of the dock company (exclusive of foremen, &c.), is performed by piece-work at rates which are either agreed with the men, or are fixed as the result of experience and are well known to the men. Some of these rates are tonnage rates, and some are package rates. Wool, for instance, is discharged at so much per 100 bales, the rate varying according to description. Goods that are paid for by weight are not always weighed at the ship, and it would cause great delay and expense if such were required. Some of the goods are sent away by barge to up-river wharves and warehouses where they are weighed, and the dock company, whose charges for the discharging depend upon weight in some cases, obtain a return from those wharves and warehouses of the ascertained weight."

966. You said, "in some cases." Is it not general?—We obtain weights where we do not get the weights at the dock. I follow on and say: "In other cases, the

953. But you have not the measurement of cargo. Where are the figures of the tonnage on which you are to be paid?—The figures are in the men's stowing book.

954. The men have not the measurements of the cargo?—They cannot have until the cargo is measured.

955. But the cargo is not always measured?—Measurement—portions of the cargo are measured when they come under measurement rules, but if it is a dead-weight cargo and no condition is applied as to the stowage then it is not necessary.

956. No figure exists which represents the basis on which the men expect to be paid?—Yes, there is a clear and definite figure laid down.

957. (*Chairman.*) May I put it in this way to you. Are the conditions upon which the men are engaged these: If the men are paid by weight and freight is paid on dead weight there is no dispute. If, on the other hand, goods are of the measurement class, notwithstanding that the employers have to carry those by weight, do I understand that the agreement with the men is that they must be paid by measurement?—Yes.

958. That is the agreement?—Yes. Let me just explain.

959. I quite understand the point?—You had better allow me to explain, because there is difficulty and doubt about the matter. All kinds of classes of goods are named. The kind of goods that go at dead-weight stowage are named, and the kind of goods that go at measurement charges are also named.

960. So that it does not matter what the employer arranges about the freight?—Not a particle.

961. The men must be paid on the basis that you have named?—Yes.

962. (*Mr. Hardy.*) If the shipowner is carrying these goods by weight there is no document which he has and can show to the men that will give the measurement, is there?—No.

"dock company weigh representative packages in order to ascertain the average weight. The charges of the dock company are made upon the weights so ascertained. At the end of the job an account is made up in detail of the work done and priced at the agreed or fixed rates, and the amount due to the labourers, after deducting payments on account, distributed to the men according to the number of hours worked by each man. I hand in a specimen account." That is worked out to one-tenth of a *ld.* That is the usual practice. The total number of hours of the men employed on the job, and the surplus after the wages have been deducted is reduced to one-tenth of a *ld.*, and then paid over to each man according to the number of hours that he has worked. "As soon as the balance is ascertained, the amount per hour is published on a board at the departmental office, and payment is made to each man separately by the company's pay officer. The account of the work is open to the inspection of any representative man who has been engaged on the job. It would be quite impracticable in the discharge or handling of general cargoes that a checkweigher on behalf of the men should supervise the weighing, because, as I have pointed out, portions of the cargo may be weighed at various places miles away from the ship, and at places over which the employer of the men has no control. I have stated that the charges of the dock company depend upon the weight and quantities, and the evidence that satisfies them ought to be sufficient for the labourers. The manifest of the cargo of a ship being discharged by the dock company is in the departmental office, and is useful as a general indication of the contents of the ship, but it is not a document that could be relied upon, as it frequently happens that cargo not manifested is in the ship, and contrariwise that manifested cargo is not turned out. Moreover the manifest does not state weights in many cases. I hand in a copy of a ship's manifest and of a plan which also does not state weights even if it

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"were in other respects reliable. I expect that the documents are quite familiar to you" (*handing the same to the Committee*). "The number of bills of lading for a general cargo is often very great. They specify the weight or measurement in some terms, but it would be a work too difficult for ordinary labourers to transpose these weights or measurements into avoirdupois in many cases. Where the cargo is discharged overside, the dock company do not come into possession of the bills of lading, and not always even when the cargo is landed. It is the practice of some shipowners to retain the bills of lading and give releases authorising delivery without production of bill of lading. There is no objection to the men seeing any document in the possession of the company as evidence of weight or quantity, but it could not be tolerated that goods should be weighed for the mere purpose of ascertaining wages."

967. For how long have you been engaged in dock work?—More or less, for 30 years.

968. You have told us that the proportion of work done in the London Docks at tonnage rates is about 80 per cent.—That is the proportion of the work performed by contract of our total labour.

969. Have you known of complaints from the men that they have not had their full tonnage?—No, I cannot recall any case. Any general complaint of any kind would not come under my immediate notice. A man might raise a question with a department and he would be satisfied.

970. When stevedores are employed, are they paid by weight?—Yes. We do not employ stevedores. We employ ordinary dock labourers. Most dock labourers are our own weekly men.

971. What evidence of the weights do you suggest could be given to the men?—With regard to the weights that we get together from the one or two sources I have mentioned, and upon which we levy our charges for the discharging of the ship or casting over the quay and delivery of the goods or any other services, in our piece-work account, we make them agree with the return that is made to the office of charges on which the bill to the shipowner is rendered.

972. So, in your opinion, that would be quite sufficient evidence to enable the men to form an estimate of what they ought to get?—Yes. I do not see anything better. We are satisfied with that, and we take all the means possible to ensure that it is correct. We have an independent staff who are quite apart from the departmental staff. They are known as examiners, and are not under the control of the superintendent at all. One of these officers always examines these accounts and compares them.

973. Would you have any objection to the men seeing that piece-work statement?—No, not at all.

974. You say that with a certain kind of cargo the weight is only ascertained after the goods reach the merchant. How long would it be before the dock company ascertains that weight?—Sometimes a week or a fortnight, three weeks in some cases.

975. Would it be easy after that time to find the men who had been employed on the job?—They are all booked, and they follow the department or the dock. When the account is made up and the surplus to be paid is declared it is notified, and the men come and get their bonus. They are not kept without their pay in the meantime.

976. Do you consider that the demands of the men are reasonable, that they should be allowed to check the weight upon which their wages are paid?—I think it is quite reasonable that they should be satisfied that they are being paid upon the correct weight, but I cannot answer for employers other than the docks company.

977. That is what I want to know?—From the docks company point of view, I do not know how they could be better satisfied than with the weights that we rely upon.

978. But at present they are not available to the men?—Yes. It is a general understanding. Our officers have always been instructed that whenever men employed on any particular job wish to have information about the way in which the piece-work bill is made up, it should be given to them.

979. Have they ever asked you for the information?—Yes, occasionally; some pretty regularly follow the bill up to a certain extent.

980. Have they never been refused?—I do not think so. It would not be tolerated if it was known to any of the responsible officers.

981. (*Mr Orbell*.) I understood you to say that there is no difficulty in ascertaining the exact weight or numbers of tons that the men have handled on the piece-work arrangement?—No, not eventually.

982. Then of course there would be no objection to giving those weights that you have received to the men concerned?—No; we should be quite willing that the piece-work account upon which we pay the men should be open to them.

983. That would be the plus system, would it not? I am not very well acquainted with the plus system myself?—You have to make up the bill. You get the total weights of the cargo in the ship. In order to make up the bill at certain rates, from which is deducted the ordinary pay of the men giving the balance, you must have the information to make up your bill.

984. (*Mr. Anderson*.) It is really a statement of particulars?—Yes, and the tonnage is the total tonnage from which we have collected our charges from the shipowner.

985. (*Mr. Orbell*.) You have not known of any dissatisfaction on the part of the men because of not being paid on their proper tonnage?—No.

986. They have expressed no dissatisfaction at all?—There is a large number of men spread over all the docks in London and there are accounts every day in every department and men might complain, but the officer would be obliged to give them all the detailed information necessary to satisfy them, and I do not recall a single case where we have had complaint made to headquarters that such information has been withheld.

987. You would not say that the men have not complained?—They might complain quite unreasonably.

988. Have they complained to some persons whom they considered to be officials?—They may have done. With regard to our system it is so generally understood by our officers that they are to give that information where it is called for, that I cannot understand any cause for complaint or dissatisfaction connected with the dock company.

989. That may be, but you have not been one of those who have had to share in the plus. Are you in a position to-day to know that complaints are lodged?—There are a number of departments. I cannot say that a labourer may not have complained at Victoria Dock last week that he thought the balance ought to be more than it was. It would not be conveyed to me, but if there was any general idea that the men were not being fairly treated we should hear it at the Dock House before long and enquire very closely into it, and if there was the slightest cause for dissatisfaction we should have it put right.

990. That would be when it got to you. You have confessed that complaints might be lodged in the various departments, and might not come to your notice. You are not really in a position to know unless your superintendent of the department reports it to you, the quay superintendent or clerk or any of these officials whose duty it would be to report complaints to you?—No.

991. Unless they do that, you do not know anything about it?—No. You, representing a trades union, would not know whether a man had a cause of complaint unless it was reported to you or he came to you and made it known.

992. Then should I be quite justified in saying that he had no complaint even although they had not come to my notice?—I do not think you would be justified in saying one thing or the other. In just the same way, I cannot say whether there has or has not been a complaint at the docks. While you are on that point, I have here a form of contract that was used for many years about the docks when contracts were made with

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the men. One of the clauses is, I notice: "Such accounts to be open at any reasonable time for the inspection of the men associated in the work."

993. I believe you are quoting from the agreement made in 1889. Is that a part of it?—It is a form that came into operation after that time.

994. We will say 1890, somewhere about November?—Very likely.

995. It is so, if you look at the date?—I think it was the dock company's form. I do not think it had any particular reference to that. It was instituted some time after that.

996. Is that contract put into force to-day by the men to whom you give work out as piece-work?—Until comparatively recently it has been.

997. What would you call recently?—It might be the last year or so. I do not think it is much in use now, as a matter of fact.

998. No, it is not?—But these lines are followed. The men sign this form of agreement, and they know that all these conditions obtain. Where there has been any alteration, I think it has been rather in favour of the men.

999. If you will pardon me, I must be clear on this one particular point. That agreement or form of contract was enforced up till recently. That would mean anything from a year to a year or so ago. When you say that the men to-day sign that, you do not mean that; you mean up to a year or two ago?—I did not say that the men to-day sign this. I produce this to show that the conditions upon which we have worked with the men for a good many years embody a clause which says that the accounts are to be open at any reasonable time for the inspection of the men associated in the work. These contracts were signed by the men as well as by the docks company.

1000. Were signed—not are signed?—That is hardly the point. The thing is that the men understand that they have this opportunity whether they sign a contract or whether they do not. All our piece-work arrangements are on the lines of the men having the option of calling into question our returns and of being satisfied, as far as possible, that our accounts are correct.

1001. You would not object to the men carrying out that particular clause?—No.

1002. And if any man got left outside or did not get his regular turn of work because he asked for the particulars of the ship, you would not agree with it?—No, there is no such feeling as that.

1003. I suppose you would not go so far as to say that no man has been left outside because he has asked for such particulars?—I should say certainly he has not. It would be a very bad day's work for the officer who did it.

1004. I am very pleased to hear that. Now as to distributing the plus or the balance of a ship, I think in answer to the Chairman, if I remember rightly, you said that these men follow up the boat, and there is no difficulty in finding a man for him to receive the plus that belongs to him?—It is rather that the man finds the ship or the department where the job has been undertaken. He comes for his plus where he knows the job has been declared where it is not paid by the day. But we recognise that short reckonings make long friends, and we get the plus declared as quickly as possible, and in more cases during the last few months than formerly we have declared the bonus each day, and paid it on the estimated weights ascertained for the day, and then we have cleared up the job at the end. It is purely in the interest of the men so as not to keep them out of anything which is due to them longer than we can possibly help.

1005. When you refer to men generally finding the ship, are you referring to the registered men—the A or B list?—Yes.

1006. And the permanent men that may be taken off your permanent staff for the time being, and put on to contract work?—Yes.

1007. How would that apply to the casual man? He would not be an A or B man. How is it with him?—He follows it up. Supposing the plus is not

made up till next week, and the ship is finished this week, he may be at work at some other part of the dock, and he comes round at 4 o'clock or at dinner time when he hears that the job is declared and is on the board, and he gets his pay.

1008. (Chairman.) If he were working outside the dock would he be permitted to go inside to see?—Yes. There is very little supervision exercised over that kind of man coming in. The constable might say, "What are you going in for?" and he would say "Plus." It is a recognised thing.

1009. (Mr. Orbell.) Whilst you say that no man would be left outside and not got his proper turn of work through asking particulars about a ship, you would not say that it does not happen through some of your subordinates?—I cannot answer for all our people, but I want to assure you that it is not allowed under any circumstances. It is such a recognised well-known condition between the company and the men that they have this opportunity that we do not regard it as anything offensive if they ask for particulars.

1010. With regard to the casual hand, that is a class outside the A and B or permanent class, do you think it would be possible for one of these men to make a complaint or ask questions as to the plus and the proper return of the ship, and for that complaint not to reach your ears?—Yes, I think it is possible.

1011. Do you think it is probable?—You see, that if there are a few casual men employed on a job, there are also a large number of permanent A and B men.

1012. What would you call a few?—It depends. It varies a good deal, but most of our work is done by the permanent registered and B men and not by the casuals. The casual work at our docks is a very small proportion of the whole.

1013. Would that statement apply when you are dealing with wools in the wool season?—Yes.

1014. But most of the men on that work are registered men?—Yes, the larger proportion of the wool work, taking one year round, would be done by weekly and B men.

1015. Of course I accept your statement?—I am speaking of what I know. We have those figures given to us and we keep very close supervision over those kind of things. I was going to point out that if there is any occasion for a casual man to raise the question that he has not been properly treated over a ship, it would apply equally to the A and B and all other men, because every man is treated alike. Although a man may be a permanent man he does not get a penny more pay than a casual man. He gets his sixpence and his equal division of the bonuses, so that the idea of treating casual men in a different way to the other men cannot come in.

1016. No, but as a matter of fact your permanent men will not complain and your A men will not complain, and it is the man who has only a little bit to lose that complains, and he loses that little bit that he has got. Mind you, I do not blame you because it does not come to your knowledge?—I cannot carry it further.

1017. (Mr. Anderson.) You said something about general contractors in your first statement. Have you any contractors now for discharging?—No, not to speak of. I will read the clause again: "The work of discharging ships is chiefly performed by master porters or stevedores acting as contractors for the ship-owners, and in some cases the work is done by direct employment of labour by the shipowners themselves."

1018. I do not mean that particular statement, but further on there is something about the contractors?—We have no contractors.

1019. That is what made me ask the question?—One of our strong points is that we employ our own men and pay each man separately.

1020. You employ them weekly, and are in direct touch with the men employed in discharging vessels in the docks now?—Yes. I might say there is the small job of piling soft wood, and that is about the only instance where we occasionally employ a man who comes in and brings his own men.



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1021. I am not concerned with that?—We deprecate employing a man who has to dole out the money to someone else. It is a strong point.

1022. (Mr. Sexton.) Your system is not generally adopted by the big firms in London, is it?—I cannot answer for the big firms in London, but I do not think it is. Ours is a system of our own.

1023. It is entirely unique so far as London is concerned?—Yes, I think so.

1024. I suppose you could not give us any reason why the system is not adopted by the other companies. Have you any knowledge with regard to that?—No, I cannot answer that. It does involve, shall I say, more trouble and more care and supervision than individual employers might care about.

1025. How many men do you employ that are included in the preference and the A and the B list?—There are about 1,200 permanent men.

1026. (Chairman.) Are they A's?—Yes, about 1,000 A men and 2,000 B men.

1027. (Mr. Sexton.) Roughly about 4,000 altogether?—Yes, roughly about 4,000.

1028. These men are shifted about from dock to dock as required?—Yes. We shift the permanent and the A men, but the B men we do not actually shift; they go of their own accord. We publish information as to where there will be work from time to time.

1029. Supposing that some of these men were at Tilbury Dock one day and they were shifted to St. Katharine's Dock the next day and kept there for a fortnight, how would they ascertain the plus from Tilbury Dock without going down to Tilbury Dock?—If they were weekly men they would probably live at Grays and would come up. We transfer men to a very small extent in that way from Tilbury to the upper dock. We avoid it as much as possible.

1030. I will confine the area and make it smaller. Supposing that a man is working at St. Katharine's and he is transferred to the nearest dock to St. Katharine's and is kept there for a week and has not time to go to St. Katharine's, how does he ascertain the plus that is due to him at St. Katharine's; is it sent on?—In the best way he can, is the answer to that.

1031. You see there is difficulty there?—I do not think there is much difficulty. If they are weekly men the pay is conveyed to them wherever they are. If a man is working at another dock—if he is a London Dock man, say, and is employed at Victoria Dock on the pay day—the pay is passed through to him with his surplus and everything.

1032. (Mr. Wignall.) With regard to that statement of particulars of cargo that you have just handed in, is there a copy of that posted within reach of the men who are working, so that they can see it without difficulty or trouble?—No, it is not posted; it is in the departmental office, that is the nearest office to where the ship is discharging.

1033. For the men to get access to it would mean coming to the office?—Yes. They might have it on board the ship.

1034. That account is made up after the cargo is completed?—Yes. You cannot get it together until afterwards.

1035. When it is made up is it available for the men who have worked on that particular cargo to see it?—Yes.

1036. But they have to apply to the office for permission to see it?—Yes.

1037. That is where our objection comes in. We assume that the average dock-worker does not care about coming to the office; and if he comes to the office, he is not always treated in the most amiable way?—You must not say that of the London and India Docks.

1038. We are glad we have found out the ideal place at last, but that is my point—that the men ought not to have to ask for it?—In the general way it works by way of a representative man. If there is a little dissatisfaction, it is spoken about amongst the men, and one of the men, perhaps the more intelligent, will come up and see the office about it.

1039. (Mr. Orbell.) Does that apply to general cargo? Are not you quoting the tea business?—No. Perhaps in the tea department the idea of a representative man has been better recognised on the part of the men. They appointed a man distinctly, and he used to follow it up week by week, and that has continued longer than it has been done in the general work of the dock. But the principle is the same. If on any particular job the men are not satisfied, one or two men will come up and speak to the officer, and he will go into it with them.

1040. (Mr. Larkin.) You say that ordinary labourers cannot transpose weights. I would like to ask who transposes the weights for the dock company in London?—I am speaking of foreign weights.

1041. So am I?—I do not say they cannot, but it would not be easy for them to do it.

1042. Who does it in London?—The officers of the department if they use those weights.

1043. Are you aware that in Liverpool the casual labourers do that, and do it correctly?—Yes.

1044. I have done it for some years myself. Another point you make is that men can go to the office and ask for the particulars. Do you think the A or preference man would dare to ask, knowing that the casual man would be very likely used against him and get his job?—I think so. The permanent man certainly could not be dismissed for asking for the information that the company undertake to give. He has nothing to fear.

1045. Unfortunately, my own knowledge of this matter is that it may be so, but Mr. Orbell is more conversant with the facts in London. With regard to the tea department, why is the representative man appointed by the firm to go to ask the weights?—The representative man is appointed by the men—we do not appoint him.

1046. He is above the ordinary victimisation point, although he is employed by the men?—The fact that he is not victimised rather proves that if we had a lot of them they would not be victimised.

1047. What are the ordinary commodities that you take the estimated weights of?—It happens with regard to almost any general cargo that is not actually weighed.

1048. Will you specify one particular commodity?—Wool is sometimes paid for by the 100 bales, but sometimes it is paid for by the weight. So many bales are taken to the ton—an average weight.

1049. What would you estimate a bale of jute at or a bale of gunnys roughly?—We do not estimate them in a rough-and-ready way. Some of them are taken and the estimate is arrived at by the actual weight taken of an average.

1050. Can you tell me of any commodity that comes into the Port of London from an East Indian port where you do not get the actual weight?—I do not know that anything occurs to me at the moment. Bales of goods go to private places; I do not know that I could name any particular article. When goods are going away unweighed from the ship they may be weighed at some other destination. If it is not a recognised destination, we take the particulars of the weights—an average weight for our own satisfaction. We depend upon that.

1051. With regard to all commodities from India, is not the Indian weight upon the bales?—I cannot say.

1052. You are quite satisfied to tell the Committee that you really do not know that there is any specific commodity that is not actually weighed over scales, either in your place or the consignee's place?—I could not mention anything. There is a lot of transhipment, but we get at the weight as well as we can.

1053. You do not know of a case where you cannot get the actual weights of any commodity if you wish it?—We get the very best possible weights. It is to our interest to get the weight. That is not ascertained merely to pay the wages on.

1054. (Mr. Anderson.) You say that you do, as nearly as possible, ascertain the correct weights when

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you are sending in your account to the shipowners?  
—Yes.

1055. Then you go on to say at the end of the job an account is made up in detail of the work done and priced at the agreed or fixed rates, and the amount due to the labourers, after deducting payments on account, distributed to the men according to the number of hours worked by each man. I hand in a specimen account. As soon as the balance is ascertained the amount per hour is published on a board at the departmental office, and payment is made to each man separately by the company's pay officer. The account of the work is open to the inspection of any representative man who has been engaged on the job. The amount per hour is published on a board at the departmental office?—Yes.

1056. Is there any objection to publishing on that board instead of the amount due per hour a statement of particulars as you send it in to the shipowner?—I think that there would be an objection to that.

1057. You say that the accounts are open, and that the men engaged on the job can have access to the accounts. We do not want you hang them out in the streets somewhere. What we suggest is that they should be exhibited on the board where you exhibited the notice as to plus or nil where the men can readily have access without having to apply, because they are victimised according to the allegations made, as you have heard?—I do not know, but I daresay it could be done. It would not be convenient, and it could only be done, of course, in cases of a ship discharging. We have a lot of piece-work not connected with discharging.

1058. I am only referring to the process of discharging or loading ships. That leads me to another point. The 4,200 men in the three classes are not all engaged in discharging, are they?—No.

1059. A very small proportion now?—Yes.

1060. You have much less now than ever?—Yes.

1061. What proportion is now engaged?—We discharge in the London and St. Katharine's Dock and the East and West India Docks, and a little at Tilbury, not much. I should think that we discharge in the year from 800,000 to 1,000,000 tons.

1062. I should like a definite answer. I want to know whether you have any objection to publishing the statement of particulars on your notice board in the same way as you do your rough statement, as to whether there is any plus or nil. If you have any objections, what are those objections?—Well, I am a witness here. I could not commit my company, and on looking into it, I might find more difficulties than strike me at first about it. All things are possible, but whether it would be convenient to do it I do not know.

1063. If you cannot answer the question offhand it is of no use labouring it?—Very well.

1064. (*Mr. Hardy.*) I would suggest to the witness and to you, Mr. Anderson, that the dock offices are more or less public. Anybody has access to the docks. Do you think that a dock employer or any employer would be willing to publish to all the world the details of the wages which he pays to his men for certain work?—I think there would be great objection to that. When the question was asked, and when I gave some kind of assent to it, I had in my mind nearly a list of the tonnages without any other details.

1065. Without prices?—Without prices. I do not see the slightest objection to that.

1066. No. Mr. Orbell seems to be living a good deal in the past as to the grievances which dock labourers have. A good deal has happened in the docks in the last 10 or 15 years in the way of organising the labour?—Yes. There is great improvement, I think.

1067. I think that not more than 3 per cent. of the labour employed by the dock company is in the nature of purely casual labour?—Yes, about 3 per cent.

1068. Is there any reason why a permanent man who is regularly employed should not make any complaints he pleases direct to the directors?—No.

1069. Can anybody but the directors discharge a permanent man?—No.

1070. Have you ever heard of any case of a man being left off because he asked for particulars?—No, certainly not, and, as I said at first, if such a thing was known it would not be tolerated.

1071. With regard to the form of agreement or conditions of agreement signed, at any rate at one time signed by somebody on behalf of the men, those conditions are well known to the men and are observed?—Yes, except in one or two cases.

1072. Can you tell us the percentage of men employed by the dock company or about the percentage of men employed by the dock company that are on regular weekly wages?—It is 70 per cent.

1073. The men that are sent from dock to dock, the transfer being arranged by the dock officers, are men that are on weekly wages?—Yes, the permanent and the A men.

1074. I put this in relation to Mr. Sexton's question as to how the men are to know when they have a bonus due to them. In the case of weekly men, the bonus is paid to them on their wages at the end of the week, is it not?—Yes.

1075. Therefore there is no necessity that they should go about from place to place to ascertain what their bonus is?—That is so. Wherever they are stationed on the pay day, there they are paid the money that they may have earned in two or three different docks.

1076. Can you suggest any reason why a man should be left off by a foreman, supposing a foreman had such power in his hands because he made inquiry about his wages?—I cannot imagine any, because it is so well understood by the officers that the men are at liberty to make that inquiry, and, further, I say that during the last few years, as a result of the organisation of the labouring classes, and the strict instructions that I may say are observed as to the order in which the different classes of men are to be employed, the foreman has not the power of dealing with the men in the way in which he did some years ago. It is not in the hands of the taking-on foremen to act towards the men in the way that used to be the case some years ago.

1077. Has any foreman, or any officer of any sort or kind at the office, any possible interest in withholding from a man the amount of his bonus?—Not the slightest.

1078. And as a matter of fact do the men generally apply for their bonus?—They generally apply for their bonus, and it is always available for them directly it is notified that it is ready.

1079. (*Mr. Orbell.*) It is a fact, you say, that nobody but the directors can discharge a man?—A permanent man.

1080. Has a departmental superintendent, for instance, power to suspend a permanent man?—For a grave offence he could suspend a man, but he has to report the particulars to the Dock House.

1081. I understand that, but he could suspend him?—Yes.

1082. It would be possible to suspend a man for a sufficient time for the directors to meet, and then to discharge him?—The directors meet every day.

1083. You have power to suspend a man?—Yes.

1084. You have suspended some?—Yes, I expect so, in my time.

1085. A permanent man?—Yes, I expect so. I do not recall a case at the moment.

1086. The directors only have power to dismiss entirely, but a subordinate has power of suspension, and that suspension can go over to a period when the man may be discharged?—If he suspends him he must report the circumstances.

1087. (*Mr. Mead.*) Arising out of the question put to you about transshipping cargo, I take it, with regard to any weight that you require in connection with a

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cargo that goes to the continent or elsewhere, that you would accept the weight that the shipowner hands to you?—Yes. Sometimes we get the weight from abroad, say Hamburg.

1088. From many ports abroad you would not get the weight, because it is not the custom to weigh it.

In those cases you would accept the figure that the shipowner gave to you?—Yes. We satisfy ourselves that it is about correct.

1089. (Mr. Larkin.) May I ask you what port you could not get the weight from?—I cannot give one offhand.

The witness withdrew.

Mr. G. Hart.

Mr. GEORGE HART called and examined.

1090. (Chairman.) What is your position?—Delegated of the Stevedores Executive Council.

1091. Of what association?—The Amalgamated Society of Stevedores, London.

1092. For how long have you held that position?—For two years.

1093. How many men in your district are members of the union?—About 1,200.

1094. Are they all employed in dock labour?—Yes, as far as I know.

1095. What proportion of the work done by these men is done at tonnage rates?—The majority of it.

1096. What proportion of the men in your union are paid on piece-work rates?—The greater proportion.

1097. Have you heard complaints that the men doing this kind of work do not receive the amount due to them?—As far as the deal work goes, generally, there is a dispute amongst ourselves on every job we have finished. We consider that we have not been paid out for the number of standards in the ship.

1098. Have you investigated these complaints?—I investigated one (I had not time to go farther back) within the last month.

1099. When you made the investigation, did you find that the complaints of the men were justified?—Yes.

1100. Is it entirely timber that the men deal with?—Yes; deals, and boards, and scantlings.

1101. By whom are the men employed?—By a member of the society.

1102. But who pays your men's wages?—The master stevedore, whom they are working for. There are several masters. They are working for one man to-day and in a couple of days' time they are working for another master.

1103. What is the general complaint of the men that you represent?—The general complaint is this: You go on a ship; she is supposed to have so many standards in her. You ask the mate how many she has. I can quote one—1,240. When we were finished we were paid for 1,193. There is a discrepancy of 47 standards. The stevedore shows you a paper and says, "That is all I can tell you."

1104. What paper is that?—The account of the ship's clerk.

1105. How is the stevedore paid? Is he paid by measurement?—He is paid by standard.

1106. If you had the document upon which the stevedore is paid, would that satisfy the men?—Yes, if we saw that actual document.

1107. The men would be quite satisfied if they saw that?—Yes, they would be quite satisfied if they saw that; but, in this case, the paper shown to you is not the actual document.

1108. (Mr. Anderson.) In the case you mentioned, you were told by the mate of the steamer that she had 1,240 standards in her?—Yes.

1109. Have you seen any other evidence as to what she had in her?—Yes; some of the men finished about two hours previous to me on the same job, and they went down to the library and looked at the "Timber Trades Journal." It was quoted there as 1,240.

1110. As a matter of fact, did you see that paper yourself?—Yes.

1111. What did you see there?—"1,240 standards."

1112. You know from your own knowledge that you were only paid for 1,193 standards?—Yes.

1113. Have you had any satisfaction with regard to that point?—Not as regards the money.

1114. Was it pointed out to the employer that the ship had 1,240 standards in her?—It was pointed out to him that it had 1,240 standards, and it was quoted in the Trades Journal.

1115. What did he say?—He shoved the paper on the counter and said: "All the account I have is 1,193, and I cannot pay on anything more."

1116. Was it possible for him to have the exact account?—I should think so. The mate said 1,240, and the Journal put in the same figure.

1117. Had she lost any on the passage?—Not that I know of.

1118. Would you have been told if she had?—I should have been told. There was no reference made to any loss, and you can always tell within a little, because the cargo is shifted on the deck.

1119. Is the complaint general?—It is general.

1120. Not only with regard to this steamship and this particular firm, but with other firms as well?—Yes. It is a general complaint at the Commercial Dock.

1121. Is it a fact that you cannot get the particulars?—Yes.

1122. Is it a fact that, going back 10 years ago, you could get the particulars?—At one time we could go to the ship's clerk, and by giving him two or three shillings, we could get an account of the job, and it was paid out on that. We put 3d. a man.

1123. You were satisfied with that?—Yes. You could get it also from the Customs. Now you cannot get it. I have been told, in fact, on more than one occasion, by the ship's clerk, "It is more than I dare do."

1124. Have you ever known a case of anybody being victimised?—Yes. A few years ago—10 or 11—I was manning a job. I disputed 60 standards. I could not get conclusive proof in writing, but I was convinced that the boat had 60 standards more in her. I applied for the money and could not get it.

1125. Did you get some?—We got some, but I do not know exactly the amount. The stevedore threw down the money and said, "There is a bit for yourselves, and if I hear any further account of it I will let you have it." I never heard any more. The result of that was that I was boycotted by that firm for about seven years, until the outside foreman died. Until he died I never did an hour's work again for that firm.

1126. Have you very good reason to believe that it was because you applied for particulars of the job and for the balance due?—That is the only conclusion I could come to.

1127. You were always able to do your work?—Yes.

1128. You were good enough for other firms?—I never was discharged for incompetency yet.

1129. (Mr. Gordon.) Did you apply to the shipowner or the ship's agent for any particulars?—I applied to the dock office and to the Customs, and I asked the clerks that I actually thought did know, but I did not go to any shipowner.

1130. Nor to the steamship owner's agent?—No. At that time I did not actually know who were the people to apply to. I went to the superintendent of the Surrey Commercial Dock at that time. He took me to his office and got his clerk to turn this particular job up.

1131. And you were shown the particulars?—Yes.

1132. (*Mr. Harrington.*) In the case you referred to, were you informed that you were not to work for that firm any more?—The man told me point blank that he would see I never did another hour's work in the firm while he was there. He was the outside foreman.

1133. The steamer as to which you recently had a grievance had a deck load?—It was after the deck load season. She had an ordinary 6 feet deck load.

1134. You had no idea, except from what the mate told you, of the amount of cargo?—Yes. I had the "Timber Trades Journal."

1135. You are quite aware that when the deals are stocked on the quay they turn out short in the case of timber vessels arriving in London?—It is not a common occurrence. I should think it is rather exceptional.

1136. But it is a fact, is it not?—The job would take about 10 weeks to put up off the quay. The job is not up now. It will not be up for some weeks. We started this job on New Year's day, on Wednesday, and finished on the following Tuesday at half-past two in the afternoon, six days' work, and working until 10 o'clock on the Monday night. My statement is this: If the stevedore gets a paper quoting so many standards, and he pays out on that, and in the Journal it shows 40 or 50 standards more, we think we are justified in receiving pay for that.

1137. (*Chairman.*) On asking for some information?—Yes, without the ship has shot any of her cargo or anything of the kind. We are acquainted with that fact, and it only happens, as a rule, in the case of a big deck load.

1138. (*Mr. Harrington.*) You are aware of the fact that very likely the stevedore has not received a return of the steamer at all yet?—That I could not say. I do not understand that part of the business.

1139. (*Chairman.*) In the ordinary course of events would you have expected any further sum in respect of the ship if you had not called attention to the point?—We have a good grumble, and it goes at that. We get no further satisfaction. We might get a promise, but on no occasion have I ever had any money handed to me after a time when we have finished a job as a balance of that job. That is my experience.

1140. That is the point?—I have been promised on many occasions: "When we get the papers we will let you know, and if there is anything to come, you shall get it."

The witness withdrew.

Mr. JAMES MURPHY called and examined.

1154. (*Chairman.*) What is your official position?—I am assistant secretary of a branch of the Amalgamated Stevedores' Labour Protection League, London.

1155. For how long have you held that position?—Seven years.

1156. How many men in your district are members of the union?—I suppose over 2,000.

1157. Are they all employed in dock labour?—And river work.

1158. What proportion is employed on piece-work?—There is a lot of shovel work and a lot of cargo work—taking in and discharging, done at piece-work rates.

1159. What proportion?—Most. Some firms do it by day-work.

1160. Have the men who are paid by tonnage rates complained that they do not receive the amount due to them?—Yes, plenty have complained; some more particularly.

1161. How many complaints do you receive on an average in a year?—There is no satisfaction with regard to the boats that bring phosphorous rock, copper ore, locust beans, and so on, when the cargo is not weighed.

1162. How many do you receive, on an average, in the year?—I have had two this last fortnight.

1141. (*Mr. Harrington.*) You would be satisfied if your master told you that?—I have had to be, whether I was or not.

1142. If he could not get the figures you could not get them, could you? If it is not possible for him it is not possible for you?—But surely a ship does not come from the Baltic with a load of wood unless it is known what she is shipping.

1143. Yes, very, very frequently?—Is that so.

1144. (*Mr. Anderson.*) The point is this—that you never hear when a job turns out in excess of what you have been paid for?—Never.

1145. Has a master stevedore ever come to you and said: "That job has turned out 30 standards more than I paid you for. I have paid you 30 standards short. Here is 30s."?—No, never in my experience.

1146. Have you ever had it the other way about?—Yes, and had to pay back.

1147. The master got the particulars then?—I have had the *vice versa* experience.

1148. The employer has shown the statement?—Yes.

1149. He has had no difficulty in getting full particulars then?—No. What has happened has been this: The man I have been working under has called us out and has said "I paid you for 30 too many!" and we have had to pay it back.

1150. So if it is possible to get particulars when you are overpaid it is quite possible to get them when you are underpaid?—It seems to me so.

1151. (*Mr. Anderson.*) Do you know of any cases where a master stevedore has voluntarily come forward and made up the balance?—No, never in my experience. We have had occasions when we have found out, and there has been a summons in the ordinary way, and we have got it in that way, but never voluntarily.

1152. (*Chairman.*) I take it you would be quite satisfied if you were to see the statement upon which the stevedore himself is paid?—I would be more satisfied if it was within our province when we were working on a job to walk on a ship and look in the chart room and see a note of what that ship actually has in her without being under obligation to anybody by having to ask.

1153. (*Mr. Larkin.*) Would you be satisfied if you got the final measurement or the Customs measurement or the official measurement that the cargo of pine or spruce is paid for on?—Yes, with regard to the number of standards, I would.

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Murphy.

1163. Two a fortnight, may I say?—I have had two this last fortnight. I have known it for 20 years.

1164. How many did you have before?—There might not be anybody connected with our branch on the particular ship.

1165. How many do you think you have a year?—Twenty.

1166. Do you investigate the complaints?—Yes, and we try to rectify the state of things if there is any proof.

1167. Have you found any claims that were not justified?—I have found some. The men have not a chance of getting a correct statement. They will not give it to them. A man was asked, and he said: "No."

1168. What are the principal cargoes your men handle?—I am speaking of shovel work, copper ore, phosphorous rock, locust beans, and general cargoes of all kinds—tallow and cement.

1169. Do grievances arise in respect of all these cargoes?—Not every one.

1170. But on the different kinds of cargoes?—Yes. There are discrepancies, with cement, for instance.

1171. Who employs the men?—The master stevedore.

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1172. Do the master stevedores present a statement to the men, showing what wages they have earned?—No. You only get a return for what you have earned according to the tonnage when it is finished. It is counted up, and you get so much. If there is a dispute, you may get it corrected sometimes; other times you may not.

1173. Can you give me any particular instance?—Yes. At one time Government casked cement weighed 4 cwt. a cask. Then they deducted the weight of the cask itself, and gave the net weight only. It weighed to 4 cwt. some odd pounds. One particular firm I work for very often pay us 90 tons, and the actual weight of the casks is 95 tons, according to their own weight. There are so many few odd pounds that they do not give to us.

1174. Do you assume that the stevedore was paid for a lighter tonnage than he paid the men on?—Yes, because there are so many odd pounds that they do not count at all in the different casks. It should be really 95 tons to the 500 casks, and they pay 90.

1175. Is that done deliberately?—We take an average, because we have agreed to it. We have no other way to rectify it.

1176. You agree to it?—We have to.

1177. Do I understand, then, that the stevedore is paid on a higher tonnage than the men are paid on?—Yes. We get it from a good authentic source, namely, the foreman.

1178. For how long have you accepted this condition of things?—Five or six years.

1179. What remedy do you propose?—I propose the doing of what should be done, that is, making it compulsory to have a kind of return shown the same as the master stevedores are paid on.

1180. You want to see some definite statement upon which the stevedore is paid his own tonnage?—Yes. As he is paid so we should be paid. With regard to phosphorus rock, they cannot get the returns in a day or two. It might take two or three weeks, and we are quite willing to wait that time, provided we get the proper payment eventually.

1181. You would be quite satisfied to take a certain part of the wage provisionally and to have the balance paid as soon as the returns came in?—Yes.

1182. (*Mr. Anderson.*) You were asked if you knew of any claims that had not been justified. If there are any, is it not because you could not get the particulars to justify them?—Yes.

The witness withdrew.

*Mr. T. Merrells*

*Mr. T. MERRELLS* called and examined.

1199. (*Chairman.*) What is your official position?—I am district secretary of the Dock, Wharf, Riverside, and General Workers' Union.

1200. For how long have you been in that position?—Eight and a half years.

1201. How many men in your district are members of the union?—Do you mean Swansea alone, or the district I cover.

1202. The district you cover?—Approximately about 1,800.

1203. Are they all employed in dock labour?—Yes.

1204. What proportion of the work is done by tonnage rates?—Including piece and tonnage rates, I should say 95 per cent.

1205. Have you ever heard complaints that the men do not receive the amount due to them?—Yes, frequently.

1206. How many complaints do you receive a year?—50 or 60, perhaps.

1207. Do you investigate the complaints?—Yes, every one that is made to me.

1208. Do you find the complaint is justified?—Yes, as far as mistakes are concerned.

1183. You have been unable to?—Yes.

1184. A few years back was it comparatively easy to get the returns from ship's clerks and others on demand at a small fee?—Yes, at one time.

1185. Is there any alteration now?—Yes, a lot.

1186. Can you get them at all from them?—If you do the men are afraid they will run a risk.

1187. They do it under fear?—They will pledge you to secrecy before they give it to you, in case they get discharged for doing it.

1188. For goodness sake do not tell anybody I told you?—Yes.

1189. They sympathise with you to the extent of giving you particulars?—Some do and some do not. The consignees at one time would give them to you right direct, but now they would attempt to lock you up if you asked them.

1190. Have you ever been victimised yourself in consequence of asking for particulars of what you have done?—Unfortunately I have on more than one occasion.

1191. By more than one firm?—Yes, two firms particularly, for the same reason. I have been made the scapegoat.

1192. Have you ever been employed there since?—When they have been compelled.

1193. I mean when they could help themselves?—No, only when they could not get another society man to take on.

1194. That was in consequence of asking for particulars of what you had done?—Yes, I have pencilled for particulars several times.

1195. (*Mr. Hardy.*) Everybody knows that so many casks of cement weigh so many tons. You know it, and the employer knows it?—We get 90 tons now.

1196. There is no concealment about it?—But they only pay us 90.

1197. You know it, and the employers know it. How would an alteration in the law better your position?—We should get the correct weight.

1198. (*Mr. Anderson.*) Would the remedy be this: that the master stevedore, the employer, should furnish you with the statement of tonnage on which he is paid?—Yes, that is what I am trying to say. That is what would satisfy us; that is just the point.

1209. Are they generally adjusted by the employer?—Yes, in every instance, as far as I know. We are in a rather favourable position as far as our docks are concerned. We have no hostility on the part of the employers. If anything arises we can generally get the thing rectified. They are ready to show us their accounts.

1210. What are the principal cargoes handled by your men?—General cargoes, tin plates, coal, and various ores—copper and iron.

1211. If there is any discrepancy, which is liable to occur in all business matters, do I understand that the employers are ready to adjust it?—Yes, that is my experience. I might say that I hold rather a unique position so far as the port of Swansea is concerned. I happen to be a member of the Swansea Harbour Board, and as such I can always get ready access to the accounts.

1212. Do you consider that you are in a more favourable position than most?—Yes; from what I know, I should say so.

1213. Are the men employed by stevedores?—A very small percentage.

1214. Who actually employs the men?—So far as the general work of the port is concerned, apart from the shipment of coal, the harbour board employ about

75 per cent. of the labour, I should say, and the bulk of the labour is employed direct by shipping firms or their agents. There is very little contracting in Swansea.

1215. With regard to what little there is, how is that arranged?—It is chiefly confined to the timber trade and other cargoes that come along, such as road metal.

1216. Are the men paid in those circumstances by the contractor?—They are paid by the contractor. There are only two contractors in the port of Swansea.

1217. Do you hear of any grievance in those respects?—Yes. Men oftentimes are of the opinion that they have not exactly what is due to them, and they come to me and explain the position, and I go frequently to the harbour office to see. I get the account that is rendered to the office for the dues. Sometimes there are discrepancies, and I see the employer, the contractor, and in almost every instance the discrepancy is made good.

1218. Do you consider that, because you have access to the documents, that is the reason why the account is adjusted?—I would not say the sole reason. If there has been any question at all, I have never yet been refused. If I go to the shippers or merchants, they are always ready.

1219. Would it be any advantage to the men if such particulars were to be presented by right and not by favour?—I should say yes to safeguard the future, because we cannot say how long the present condition of affairs will last. An employer might refuse me, and I may not be a member of the harbour board after this year. I had a conversation with the manager at Swansea Harbour. I told him, and he expressed the opinion that, so far as they were concerned, they would be quite ready at any time. He thought it a proper thing and the right thing. That is not the opinion of the board itself, but his own private opinion.

1220. (*Mr. Wignall.*) The conditions with regard to the question we are dealing with now are very much improved compared with what they used to be?—Yes, since the harbour trust has done the work direct.

1221. Since the abolition of the contract with the middle man and the harbour board taking over the work a good many of the grievances have been removed?—Undoubtedly.

1222. And the conditions all round are much better?—Undoubtedly.

1223. You have explained your means of getting access to the books, and so on, so that as far as the work direct for the board is concerned, through your access to the books you are able to satisfy the men as to whether their grievance is justified or otherwise, although there may be frequent complaints?—Yes. You will understand that I am not making a charge of any attempt at fraud, but in this season starting now there is a large quantity of copperas shipped at Swansea in casks. It is shipped by various firms. With regard to a particular steamship company, we find that the casks do not average the same as with any other firm. At the same time I know of my own knowledge that the men are paid on the return that is made to the harbour. But we have no means of checking it except by that. So if there is any discrepancy, not only are the men receiving less, but also the harbour dues. With casks of the same size the men can check the number of casks that go in, and when the total is paid the average always turns out greater with one firm than with the other. I cannot fathom it because we have no check.

1224. Before you were elected to the harbour board you had occasion to apply to the customs on more than one occasion for a copy of the manifest?—Yes. That is not a reliable return.

1225. You have been driven to that to justify the men's claim?—Yes, on many occasions. I have had to pay half a crown on each occasion.

1226. Your experience is not confined to Swansea?—No.

1227. It extends to other places?—Yes.

1228. You have heard complaints from other ports?—Yes, at Llanelly, for instance, the tin plates are not even weighed. They are taken direct from the works over a private railway and shipped into coasting boats, and there is no means whatever of checking.

1229. You have heard the men say that it would be a great advantage to them if they had some sort of return from the employers?—I discussed this with them a fortnight ago on the first intimation that I was likely to be called, and they said it would pay them to appoint somebody. They are only a small body of men, about 60 or 70 regular men, getting their living there.

1230. Summing up the whole thing, generally speaking, notwithstanding the conditions that exist and your unique position, there are complaints, and the men feel that there ought to be some protection to guarantee their tonnage rates being paid in full?—There is no question of their opinion.

1231. (*Mr. Hardy.*) You would not suggest that things should be weighed that otherwise would not be weighed?—That would be impracticable. If everything had to be weighed it would necessitate employing a dozen checkweighers.

1232. (*Mr. Ballhouse.*) Where are the tin plates weighed that you mentioned just now?—At Llanelly.

1233. At the consignees?—I do not want you to understand that it refers to Swansea, but to Llanelly. They are sold at so much per box, and they go out of the works where they are manufactured direct over a railway. They are not weighed at all.

1234. (*Mr. Larkin.*) They are transhipped to Liverpool?—Yes.

1235. Do you know that they are weighed at Liverpool actually?—No, I do not know that.

1236. Sheet by sheet. 5 per cent. of it is weighed.—That is only for sampling purposes.

1237. To get the estimated weight of the cargo, and they get the actual weight if they want it?—All the tin plates that are shipped in Swansea are weighed over the railway. The bulk is put to store and shipped out again from the shed. It would be impracticable to weigh those. The only check that the men have is very ineffective. They ask the hatchway man or call man to keep a tally of the number coming aboard.

1238. (*Chairman.*) The check made by the railway company is sufficient for all practical purposes?—Yes, but it might be made by the railway company, and the stuff might not be shipped for a month or two months. There are hundreds of consignments coming to the same warehouse. Of course every pile is kept separate.

1239. You do not wish to introduce any new method by which the trade in any respect would be interfered with?—No, I do not, and I say it would interfere if we asked for the plates to be weighed when they come into the warehouse and when they go out.

1240. A box of tin plates of the same size would not vary much?—Not to any degree.

1241. (*Mr. Larkin.*) You say you would not be satisfied with railway weights?—Yes, I should.

1242. Are you aware that 21 cwts. of coal is taken as a ton?—I was not speaking of coal.

1243. You want the actual weight?—Yes, certainly that is the point.

The witness withdrew.

*Mr. T. Merralls.*

30 Jan. 1908.

## THIRD DAY.

### Informal Meeting of some Members of the Committee.

Thursday, 6th February 1908.

PRESENT :

ERNEST F. G. HATCH, Esq. (Chairman).

JAMES SEXTON, Esq. (National Union of Dock Labourers).

JAMES LARKIN, Esq. (National Union of Dock Labourers).

*Mr. J. Woods.*

Mr. JOHN WOODS called and examined.

6 Feb. 1908.

1244. (*Chairman.*) What is your official position?—I am secretary of the Liverpool branch of the Docker's Union.

1245. How long have you held that position?—Four years now.

1246. How many men in your district are members of the union?—Roughly speaking eleven or twelve thousand.

1247. Are all these men employed in dock labour?—Yes.

1248. What proportion of work done is at tonnage rates?—I can only give an estimate, say, about 3,000 or more.

1249. Have you heard complaints that the men paid tonnage rates do not receive the amount due to them?—Yes.

1250. About how many complaints do you receive a year on an average?—I cannot exactly say how many, they have become so common.

1251. How many in a month?—I might get a dozen.

1252. Have you investigated these complaints?—Sometimes.

1253. Do you think that some of them were justified?—Yes.

1254. What are the principal cargoes handled at tonnage rates?—Coal, salt, gravel, phosphate rock.

1255. Do grievances arise in respect of all these cargoes?—Yes, in every branch of them.

1256. Can you tell us any instances where you investigated complaints and found that they were justified, in regard to salt?—Yes, a case arose seven or eight weeks ago. A barge of salt was lying in the King's Dock, Liverpool. The men discharging the salt were paid for 244 tons. A week afterwards, for unloading the same barge, the men were only paid for 204 tons.

1257. How do you know the barge contained the same amount in both instances?—I have only the men's word for it.

1258. Did you make any complaint to the employers?—No.

1259. Why?—Because it is no use. They would simply tell us the tonnage and that is the end of it.

1260. Have you no other instances to tell us of any other kind of cargo?—No.

1261. You told us just now that you have as many as 12 cases a month?—I often have, but I am so used to them that I take no notice.

1262. Then the men suffer all these grievances without making any attempt to remedy them?—Yes, they have got used to it.

1263. Are the men, generally speaking, dissatisfied with the present system?—They would like to know the amount of tonnage. The captains dare not tell the tonnage. If the men could only demand to see the tonnage note they would be quite contented. There is

a case in point where a captain told his tonnage and he was suspended by his employers.

1264. Is there in the possession of the employer any document showing the amount of the stuff loaded?—I think so. Every barge gets a shipping note.

1265. Do they weigh it going into the barge?—I think so.

1266. Some documents showing the actual weight would be procurable?—I think so.

1267. The men would be quite satisfied if they could see a document?—Yes.

1268. A shipping note would be a satisfactory and truthful account of the quantity of stuff in a barge?—Yes, I believe so.

1269. (*Mr. Sexton.*) You have had a good deal to do with all kinds of material. Have you had no complaints from the men who work coal?—They all complain but they have no redress, they can take it or leave it.

1270. In respect to the cargoes of salt. How long does it take them to get from the salt works to the Mersey?—I really could not say. Probably they would do it in one tide.

1271. Eight hours?—From Northwich it takes 4½ hours and from Winsford 6 hours.

1272. Therefore there is no reason to believe that during the transit from the salt works to the ship there is any depreciation in the weight of the salt?—There may be a little, but a great deal of the salt is perfectly dry and, in a great many instances, as hard as rock.

1273. There is no depreciation in eight hours?—No.

1274. In respect to macadam, is there any depreciation?—No, it is hard and the water has no effect.

1275. In respect to coal, there are complaints every day?—Continual complaints.

1276. You spoke of a captain who told his tonnage and was suspended, where did you get this information from?—From the men who were on the barge, but they will not give the captain of the barge away, for if they did it would be detrimental to him.

1277. Have they ever asked for his tonnage?—Yes, but they get rather a peculiar answer, the captain says, "she is not christened yet." His meaning is that he knows his tonnage but he will not tell it until he has cleared his ship and been up to the town office and ascertained the official tonnage.

1278. The men are continually complaining that they can get no document?—Yes.

1279. Was there no better method a few years ago than there is now?—Twenty years ago.

1280. What was that?—They showed their notes.

1281. Now they will not show them at all?—No.

1282. When they are asked, what is the answer?—The man who asked would not be answered.

1283. Have the men ever had to go to the Custom House for the weights?—The gravel men, I believe, can get the weights from the Custom House by payment of 3d.

1284. Is it a fact that the men knowing the uselessness of making application for these documents have gradually accepted the inevitable?—As a rule.

1285. If they protest what happens?—They are told that they are not wanted any more, and therefore they are afraid to speak.

1286. What is the average earnings of these men?—I have not any idea.

1287. What is the average earnings of men in salt, do they average 1*l.* a week?—No, I do not think so.

1288.—Do you know of any cases where men have taken action on their own?—I know of a case in Birkenhead about three years ago. I think it can be proved. A vessel of phosphate rock was being unloaded. The men depended on the tonnage put into the railway wagons and weighed over the machine. One of the men went to the weighing department of the railway

company and asked for the weights. He was refused, so he said, "I am a foreman; I cannot pay the men until I get the tonnage." Then he got the weights, but when the men received their money it was 13*s.* a man less than the correct tonnage.

1289. (*Chairman.*) How long had they been working?—About a week.

1290. What action did the man take?—He would not take his money. He said "I have got the actual tonnage" and when they saw he could prove it they paid the 13*s.* without any bother.

1291-2. (*Chairman.*) Was any explanation given by the firm of the shortage?—No. Two years ago we had another clear case. Men on lighters were filling tubs to be transferred into the ship. They were paid on 197 tons. The stevedores were paid on the tonnage which the mate got from the Salt Union, and they were paid on 11 tons more.

*Mr. J. Woods.*

6 Feb. 1908.

## FOURTH DAY.

Thursday, 13th February 1908.

### PRESENT:

ERNEST F. G. HATCH, Esq. (*Chairman.*)

JAMES ANDERSON, Esq. (*Amalgamated Stevedores' Labour Protection League.*)

GERALD BELLHOUSE, Esq. (*one of His Majesty's Inspectors of Factories.*)

C. W. GORDON, Esq. (*Gordon Steam Shipping Company.*)

THOMAS HARDY, Esq. (*Manager of the London and India Docks Company.*)

JAMES HARRINGTON, Esq. (*London Master Stevedores' Association.*)

JAMES LARKIN, Esq. (*National Union of Dock Labourers.*)

J. C. MEAD, Esq. (*of Messrs. Mead, Son and Hussey, Shipowners.*)

J. LLOYD MORGAN, Esq., K.C., M.P.

H. ORBELL, Esq. (*Dock Wharf, Riverside, and General Workers' Union.*)

J. HERBERT SCRUTTON, Esq. (*of Messrs. Scrutton, Sons & Co., Shipowners.*)

JAMES SEXTON, Esq. (*National Union of Dock Labourers.*)

JAMES WIGNALL, Esq. (*Dock, Wharf, Riverside, and General Workers' Union.*)

Mr. ALFRED EDWARD CLARK called and examined.

1293. (*Chairman.*) What is your position?—Coal porter.

1294. You are not an official of the union?—No; I am a member of the union.

1295. How long have you been employed as a coal porter?—Turned 18 years.

1296. Have you heard complaints among your men paid by tonnage rates with whom you work, that they do not receive the amount due to them?—Quite so.

1297. How many complaints do you hear in the course of—say—a month?—It is almost a daily thing to have dissatisfaction amongst the men. We work, and when we have done we are not paid for what we really know ourselves is the amount of work we do; and the system is such that we cannot demand this money. The reason why we cannot demand it is that we would be boycotted wherever we went afterwards.

1298. Please give some instances of what you refer to?—Take, for example, one vessel that we had in the Tilbury Dock. We had to do that ship without a weighman.

1299. What were you unloading?—Coal. It was about July 1906. It was some time in July when we started work. We started at five o'clock in the morning and we stopped at 11 o'clock and asked what coals there were in the after hold of the vessel. It was a vessel with three holds. The foreman told us it was 480 tons. We knew that that was not satisfactory. We refused to do any more work till we got to know the proper tonnage or something slightly inclined towards the proper tonnage.

1300. How did you know that 480 tons was not satisfactory?—Because we had had the ship so frequently. We are like everyone else. If you were going to write on a sheet of foolscap paper by the knowledge you have already got, you would know how long it would take you to do it. We know by the quantity of coals in the hold how long we will take doing it. We have the ships to do frequently, and we know how long it takes to do them.

1301. What was the difference between the tonnage you were paid for and what you estimated was in the ship?—We estimated 520 to 530 tons of coals, in that ship.

1302. And you were paid for 480?—The foreman told us 470 tons first, and when we stopped he made it 487.

1303. You and the other men thought that they ought to be paid for 520 tons?—Yes, quite so. Then again there is another case on the 16th of December, 1906. We had to put all her cargo on the quay. When we started work the foreman told us it was 480 tons in the hold. We protested against it. We knew that there was more cargo than that in the hold. He told us that if we did not like to do it he would have to get someone else. The men wavered, and things being rather bad in the labour market with us, we had to do it. We had to take the coals as 480 tons. The same ship came again not quite a month later—about the 5th January 1907. She made out then 537 tons which we maintain was the proper complement the first time.

1304. How did you know that?—We know by the same class of coal, and the hold being as full of coal,

*Mr. A. E. Clark.*



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because years of experience teach us how much is in the hold. If you asked us when a vessel was lying there, how much was in the vessel, we could tell you within 10 tons. If we see the bulk of coal in the hold we can tell you within three or four tons, how much coal is in the hold by years of experience.

1305. Have you had any similar experience in connection with any other cargoes?—Yes.

1306. What cargoes?—Not exactly myself—not my own experience. We will take, for instance, the men who work what they call by piece work, and yet they are forced to work by a quantity limit.

1307. (Mr. Hardy.) Are you speaking of general cargo?—Yes, sugar—piece-work—chiefly run for the Clan Line in the Tilbury Dock. The men start, for example, this morning first thing. When they are done to-night they are told it is 200 tons, their limit, when they know as a fact that they have done upwards of 230 tons.

1308. (The Chairman.) What do you mean by "200 tons, their limit?"—The bosses tell them that that is all that you can do in a day and yet they know it is 230. If they insist on having it, they are left on the stones next morning; they are not required. They are not sacked. None of us are sacked—far from it—but we are left out next morning, or if not exactly left out next morning, two or three mornings afterwards.

1309. Have you made any complaints to the employers about these grievances you have told us about?—That is more than the men dare do. Those who have their families to study have to think of their families and sacrifice their principle.

1310. (Mr. Hardy.) Were you employed on this job to which you refer?—No, not on this work.

1311. (Chairman.) Have you anything else to tell us?—Yes. Now we will take a case—

1312. Tell us things you know of your own knowledge?—This is my own knowledge. I might explain that these grievances are talked over in our branch room, so that these men are almost like myself. We all work in different sections in the dock. In this next case. One gang of men on the 17th December last filled 377 tanks of coal for 240 tons, and the firm said that these tanks weighed 19 cwts. I might explain that these tanks have a proper weighing machine that they put on the chain every now and again to see if there is the correct weights coming out of the tanks at all times of the vessel discharging. When they start the first two or three tanks are weighed, and after being worked for two or three hours they put the thing on again and weigh two or three more. The men were paid for 240 tons. They protested against it, and the manager said that he could do nothing further in it, and that they had to take it. When the firm loads these barges—by my own experience, because I work there—the result is that when a 95 ton barge comes along they put 100 tanks into it, and why should not we not be paid for the 95 tons which the barge takes, and which we know the barges take.

1313. You were paid for filling 240 tons?—Yes.

1314. What do you suggest you should have been paid for?—We should be paid for 350 to 360 tons.

1315. (Mr. Lloyd Morgan.) Do you mean that you are defrauded out of about 70 tons?—Yes. It is over 100 tons that we are defrauded of.

1316. Over what period would that extend?—A matter of about 10 to 12 hours' work.

1317. (Chairman.) Did you make any complaint in respect of this?—Yes, frequent complaints. There are always complaints.

1318. But in respect of this one instance did you make complaints?—The men did. I was not exactly in this. I was not in turn for the ship. I was on the ship previous to this.

1319. (Mr. Gordon.) Do not the firm make a distinction between large and small coal?—There is large and small coal, but this coal is weighed at certain periods of the shift to see that the tanks are all running the same.

1320. If you are discharging large coal or Welsh coal in tanks, they will not carry so much as if it were

dead small coal—gas coal, for instance?—Yes. Welsh coal is the heaviest coal we fill.

1321. Steam coal?—Yes.

1322. Do you distinguish between the light and the heavy coal?—Yes, there is that distinction. Take, for example, our heaviest coal, Welsh small. When that comes, the same tanks which run 19 cwts. of north country coal will run 21 to 25 cwts. of that coal.

1323. (Chairman.) The last case you told us is not within your own personal knowledge?—Yes, it is within my own personal knowledge.

1324. But you had no personal experience?—No; I was not in it.

1325. You were told of it by some of your fellow workmen?—Yes, my own workmates, but it is my own personal knowledge.

1326. (Mr. Wignall.) Is all the coal weighed before it is put into these tanks? Is it weighed on the wharf or near by?—No, not at this particular place. They have not the weighing machines on the cranes. If they had, every tank would be weighed. Instead of that they have their proper weighing machine which they fix to the chain and fix to the tank, and they weigh three or four. In two hours' time they weigh three or four more, and in another two hours they weigh three or four more and average them.

1327. They have a record of the weight in the office or somewhere?—Yes, they have the record of weight by what is in the ship.

1328. So there is a document to be examined or a paper to be produced to prove the exact weight on the lighter?—They go by the water-mark on the lighter. When the lighter is up to a certain mark it has its complement in, and we know that because we can see the marks ourselves.

1329. (Chairman.) What do you suggest the men would be satisfied with?—Being paid on what the ship get paid on for fetching it. That would be our satisfaction.

1330. (Mr. Wignall.) This coal is discharged out of the ship into the lighter?—Quite so.

1331. So what the ship is carrying should be the tonnage upon which you are paid for transferring into the lighter?—Yes.

1332. And all you want is proof of what the ship carries to satisfy the men of the exact tonnage that they handle?—Quite so.

1333. (Mr. Orbell.) In reference to those cases which you say are not within your own personal experience, do you mean to say by that that you were not employed on the job, but you were with the gangs when they were being paid and lodged the complaints?—I am not with the gangs all the time; I am with them directly afterwards.

1334. How did you hear of the complaint with regard to the coals?—I was there at the time the men were being paid.

1335. That is how you got to know of the complaint?—Yes.

1336. And it has been reported in the Branch repeatedly?—Yes.

1337. You say that if the men who are employed were to lodge a complaint, they would be left on the stones?—Yes.

1338. Left out?—Yes.

1339. They would not be told overnight that they would not be wanted to-morrow morning when they were at the box and lodged the complaint?—No, we do not hear of anything like that.

1340. How would it take place. In what way is a man left out of work if he lodges a complaint. He is not told overnight or he is not told at the time when he lodges the complaint. When is he told? When does he realise that he is being punished for that?—All the man knows is that two or three days afterwards he is not taken on, and there is no explanation given to the man at all.

1341. What did you mean by 200 tons limit?—There is a proper man to keep tally of this stuff as it

comes out, and the officers on the ship tell the men how much is in the ship when they ask for it. When they have done at night they know that they have done 230 tons by the tally. The men can keep check besides doing the work by chalking on a stanchion each one as it goes out. When they go to get their pay they are told that 200 tons is the limit. Suppose that they are three days on the sugar in a ship that has 700 tons. It is less than that generally. On the average it is about 500 tons with this particular cargo. The men are, say, two-and-a-half-days. The first day and second day they will be paid for about 150 tons. Then comes the third day and they are paid for 100 tons. Say there are about 470 tons in the vessel, the third day they will receive about 100 tons, and then there are 70 tons which they have done and which they are not paid for in the three days, and the men want to know where that goes to.

1342. When they complain about not receiving their proper money and they call the foreman's or somebody's attention to the check that they have been keeping, which totals a greater number of tons than they have been paid for, is that the time that the foreman or somebody responsible says that 200 tons is the limit per day?—Yes.

1343. That is the only authority they have for the 200 tons limit?—Yes. I might say the only authority the men have with regard to what tonnage is in the hold is by the officers of the vessel.

1344. Other than the men's rough check?—Yes.

1345. You have been chiefly talking about sugar?—Yes.

1346. (*Mr. Sexton.*) How do you know you are 70 tons short?—By what the officers say that are in the vessel.

1347. That is the information they give?—Yes. And then again at the end of it the men know they are short because they keep a tally of what weight goes out. For example they are sending ton sets out. The men keep a tally of that so they must know what they do at the end of the day, and yet 200 tons is the limit for a day's work.

1348. (*Mr. Harrington.*) Are not these bags all the same weight?—No, not exactly the same weight. One will be softer stuff and the other harder and drier stuff. There will be a few lbs. difference—not many lbs.

1349. (*Chairman.*) Is there a difference in weight caused by absorption and leakage?—Yes; the bottom bags get heavier because they get all the liquid out of the top bags.

1350. (*Mr. Sexton.*) Are the bags damaged in transit?—Not with that class of stuff. It all sticks together. It is only by the liquid running out of it.

1351. Is it wet sugar?—Yes.

1352. (*Mr. Orbell.*) Generally speaking, there is an average weight that you can fix on a bag of sugar?—Yes.

1353. (*Mr. Harrington.*) Is it sugar or jaggery?—We call it sugar; I do not know what you call it.

1354. (*Mr. Hardy.*) Is it from the East Indies?—Chiefly.

1355. It is jaggery, then?—We call it sugar.

1356. (*Mr. Orbell.*) Have you any complaints with regard to the same firm in connexion with other cargoes than sugar. Take linseed, for instance?—Yes, we had a very serious complaint with regard to linseed with the same firm. There was a gang of men employed to stow linseed.

1357. (*Chairman.*) Is this within your own knowledge?—This is knowledge brought to the branch room where we discuss all our complaints; it is not my own personal experience.

1358. (*Mr. Sexton.*) Was this particular grievance that you are now giving the Committee discussed at the branch meeting?—It was.

1359. Before Committee?—No, before a full branch meeting.

1360. What decision did the branch come to?—The decision of the branch was that the men were robbed,

and they could not do anything in it, for each one would be boycotted who handled it.

1361. Did the men who made the complaint give the facts at the branch meeting?—Yes.

1362. As you state them now?—Yes, the men that were directly working it.

1363. As you are giving them now?—Yes.

1364. (*Mr. Orbell.*) Do you know of a case of shortage of pay or a case which gave cause for suspicion as to shortage of pay on linseed?—Yes, sometime about last July or last August, the men were employed on this linseed, and they were to get 7d. per hour, and then go and get their bonus over as plus. The next day they turned up for their plus and it was not out. The day afterwards they turned up for the plus again, and they were told they were a halfpenny an hour in debt. The men themselves claimed that they had earned between 1s. 1d. and 1s. 2d. an hour. The men are paid 7d. per hour, and they go and get the bonus at the finish.

1365. (*Mr. Harrington.*) How much a ton was this?—11d. a ton.

1366. (*Mr. Orbell.*) Was there a man who expressed his dissatisfaction to the foreman?—Yes.

1367. Or to somebody in charge?—Yes.

1368. What happened?—He has not been wanted since. He was one of the general ones to be called on when there was any work. He has walked about and has not been wanted since.

1369. What further results were there?—He went away from the district. He has had to go away from the district.

1370. (*Chairman.*) Who actually selects these workmen?—The calling-on foreman.

1371. Do I understand that you tell the Committee that that foreman was deliberately told not to employ that man?—I cannot say whether the foreman was told not to employ him or whether he did it by himself.

1372. But could it benefit him personally not to employ the man. I will put it in this way: Would the foreman, by paying you shortage of weight, have received any benefit?—Quite likely.

1373. From whom?—If it is like that, it must be by all who are in the office.

1374. (*Mr. Lloyd Morgan.*) This is a matter you cannot have knowledge of?—All I know is that the men did not receive what they had reckoned; that is all I have knowledge of, and who causes the robbery I do not know, and whether the foreman is only the second hand in it or not I cannot tell.

1375. (*Mr. Orbell.*) In your own particular case you have lodged complaints repeatedly, have you not?—Quite so.

1376. And in reference to this case of 480 tons which the men were told they would be paid for, which should be in your opinion 530 tons, I understood that the men had to stop work before they got any satisfaction?—Yes.

1377. And did they get paid after the stoppage for the 500 odd tons?—No, we got 17 tons more.

1378. What has happened to you personally in reference to losing work through speaking. Give us your own personal experience?—Through speaking I am practically boycotted. I am not going to say that in the coal department. I am boycotted because I go to work there, but when there is no work there I am not required up at the dock where I used to be required.

1379. (*Mr. Gordon.*) With regard to the first case you quoted, what is the total dead weight capacity of that boat?—The total carrying capacity?

1380. Yes?—What sort of coals—the ordinary coal which is Durham unscrubbed.

1381. Yes, the ordinary coal?—She would be 560 to 580—the after hold, 440 middle, and about 310 to 320 forward.

1382. Three holds?—Yes.

1383. Have you ever known a steamer to vary in regard to the contents of a hold when compared with another hold when carrying the same class of goods?—

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Yes, when they have had to come out to save tides and the likes of that, but then the holds are not full, and we know that when we go aboard.

1384. How were the other men paid in the other holds in this particular instance—were they paid more, or what?—No. They were paid about the general run.

1385. Was the shortage confined to one hold or was there a shortage on the whole ship?—It was only the hold that I was in personally.

1386. How were the other men paid; did you ever ask?—They got the general run.

1387. The men altogether were getting shortage on the whole ship?—No, only the one gang that was aft. We work by gangs.

1388. I know, but listen for a moment; say it was 470 tons. Do you know whether the other men were paid the ordinary quantity on the other holds?—Yes, quite so, they were paid the ordinary quantity.

1389. Was the vessel down to the ordinary water-mark, or was she short on that voyage?—She was down to the ordinary water-mark.

1390. You know that?—Yes, and the holds were full.

1391. Does she always fill with Durham unscreened?—That was house coal.

1392. We are speaking of Durham unscreened?—The forehold was not full of Durham unscreened. It is heavier coal. With a vessel like her, taking her all over, to fill her up full it would be about 70 tons, more of unscreened house coal.

1393. The boat you referred to is an old boat?—Yes.

1394. A very odd shape, and do not you know that coal will vary tremendously?—With heavy coal she never carries herself full.

1395. She would go out of trim, I suppose?—Yes. The men that were forward got paid for what they thought was about the fair complement for the general run of the vessel, but we aft knew we were short.

1396. Was the draught of the vessel the same as on the previous voyages?—Yes, about the general run.

1397. (Chairman.) Was the hold that you were working as full as the holds that the other men were working?—Yes, our hold was right full.

1398. Exactly the same kind of coal?—Yes.

1399. And yet you say you were paid short and they were not paid short?—Quite so.

1400. (Mr. Gordon.) Do the firm weigh at Tilbury?—Yes. Some goes on the quay.

1401. How do they weigh—by grabs?—No. As each tank comes out they have a proper weighing machine on the crane.

1402. Is it weighed on the quay?—No. If it goes on the quay it is not weighed. The other that goes in barges it would be easy to check, because we know the size of the barges. They come alongside the vessel. They get full. But as to the other that goes on the quay, we want to know where that goes to. We claim at the least 50 tons short.

1403. It is not weighed at all?—No. It is house coal that goes on the quay to be sold out retail.

1404. How do you suggest that the firm get paid for handling that coal, because most of it is not their own coal?—I cannot say anything at all about that. Then there is another steamer, a Newcastle steamer. The captain of that vessel tells us that whenever she goes up the Baltic or to Hamburg, or those places on the continent, he has at the least 580 to 600 tons in her middle hold. We have had to do that hold for 540 tons, and once 530.

1405. But does it not occur to you at once that that captain has not explained to you that when the boat goes to the Baltic it has a totally different quantity of bunkers from a boat coming to London?—Quite so, and it ought to be all the more.

1406. There would be less coal in the holds?—That is a different thing with regard to the bunkers, but we

know when a hold is full. If it has 600 tons, and then comes to London, it ought to have more in the holds. It ought to make 620 when it comes to London or 630.

1407. They put a bulkhead in the hold?—Yes, but this vessel has not a bulkhead.

1408. But they put a bulkhead in the hold, you know?—Yes, they hundreds of them.

1409. (Mr. Mead.) What is your position—day workman or what?—Piece-work. Almost all coal discharged is piece-work.

1410. With regard to your first case, you knocked off work because you were not satisfied with the amount of coal which was declared to be in the after-hold?—Yes.

1411. It was declared to you as 480 and you were ultimately paid on 497?—We were paid on 17 tons more. In the first place the foreman told us there were 470 tons in the hold.

1412. What did he offer to pay you on?—On 487.

1413. You were paid ultimately on 487?—Yes.

1414. You are satisfied from your own knowledge that the men were paid on the ordinary quantity that the steamer carried in the other two holds?—Yes.

1415. What is her dead weight—about 1,330 tons?—Something like that.

1416. So it was a question of 17 tons on 1,330?—We claim that at the least in that hold there were about 520 tons to 530. I have had the working of her over 100 times, I dare say. It is not only once.

1417. You accepted payment on 17 tons?—Yes.

1418. That is about one and a half per cent. Why did you take payment on this amount?—Because we are helpless.

1419. If you are helpless how did you get the 17 tons?—All I can say is that we stopped work, and the foreman went to the office and came out again and told us that he had made a mistake, and 17 tons was put on top of it. But even then we knew that we were being robbed.

1420. You returned to work on that?—If we had had a weighman here to weigh the coals it would have differed.

1421. You resumed work on being told that you should be paid 17 tons more?—We were not satisfied.

1422. But you resumed work?—We resumed work.

1423. Was this ship quite full?—Yes.

1424. In your experience of working coal steamers do you find that to all appearances they are full when their hatches are taken off but when you work down they are sometimes not full below?—Yes, quite so.

1425. Therefore the way in which a vessel may be trimmed at the port of loading may, unless her draught is known to be correct by cargo, only show an appearance that is very misleading?—Yes, but we do not go by the appearance of a vessel.

1426. But as you work down you find that she has spaces although she appears to be perfectly full?—Yes.

1427. (Mr. Orbell.) Was it the case that there were spaces when you got down in this particular cargo?—No.

1428. (Mr. Seston.) Was this cargo properly trimmed?—Yes.

1429. Right full?—Yes.

1430. (Mr. Mead.) You say that the vessel was absolutely full all over?—Yes.

1431. Can you give us the name of the steamer with regard to the linseed?—It was not their steamers but their barges.

1432. Who was the cargo going to?—That I could not say. It was taken from barges to the shore.

1433. Being stowed?—Yes.

1434. How had it got into the barges?—Out of steamers—or it may have come down the river.

1435. Was the barge discharged from steamer in the dock or how did it come into the dock?—I could not say whether it was discharged from steamer in the dock or how it was brought into the dock.

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1436. Can you give us the name of the barge?—I cannot.

1437. How can we refute this if you do not give the actual dates and facts?—Unfortunately I have not those dates and facts, but the time when it happened was about July or August last year.

1438. It did not happen to you personally?—No.

1439. It has been reported to you?—It has been reported to me.

1440. Therefore, as far as you personally are concerned, you have no knowledge of it?—No, quite so.

1441. It is hearsay?—Yes. When we are engaged we do not make inquiries to see where the cargo has come from, and all the likes of that. All we know is that we are told to do the work, and we do it.

1442. (Mr. Harrington.) Were the bags put out of the barge on to the quay?—Yes, or into the warehouse.

1443. (Mr. Lloyd-Morgan.) You know nothing about the lined from your own personal knowledge?—No.

1444. Have you any personal knowledge with regard to the sugar question?—Not personally.

1445. All you know is with reference to coal?—Yes.

1446. You say that the men are afraid to make representations of their grievances?—Yes.

1447. You have made many complaints yourself?—Quite so, and, well, I have suffered from it.

1448. You are still employed, I suppose?—Yes, I am employed at my place.

1449. How have you suffered by making representations of grievances? What followed?—When there is no work at our place I am not wanted at other places where I use to be.

1450. (Chairman.) What do you call other places?—Other employers in the dock and round the dock.

1451. (Mr. Sexton.) As a matter of fact you are not now employed at the place where you made complaints?—No, I am not employed there now.

1452. And you do not get any work, I suppose, where you made the complaint?—No.

1453. (Mr. Bellhouse.) Do I understand that the different gangs in the holds are quite independent of one another?—Quite so.

1454. There is no method of hotch potch when you have unloaded a ship. Each gang is paid on what they themselves unload from a particular hold. They do not pool the tonnage?—No.

1455. You told us that the coal that is put on the quay is not weighed at all?—Quite so.

1456. How would you suggest that you could allocate between the three gangs if there are three holds in the ship the amount of coal that has been unloaded by any particular gang. I presume it is all put in one big pile on the quay?—Yes, but only this one gang puts it on the quay. The other two gangs that work on the vessel put it in barges.

1457. In the one case on to the quay and in the case of the other two into barges?—Yes.

1458. It would not go out from more than one hold at a time. My difficulty is this: If it is all put into one heap in any case on the quay it may be very difficult when you get the actual weight from the ship-owner, which I take it is what you want, to allocate how much ought to go to each particular gang?—That is what we require—that each particular gang should be paid for what they do.

1459. (Mr. Seaton.) You do not understand the question. Do you ascertain the tonnage in each hatch?—When they are not weighed?

1460. Yes?—We go by our previous experience on these vessels. If it was a strange vessel we should not be any wiser, and could not be. The only thing we could say would be that the coals were very light. We know the number of tanks.

1461. (Mr. Bellhouse.) The object of the inquiry is that you shall have something in writing to show you what is in each hold. Where is that information coming from then if the coal is all piled up together in

a heap on the quay?—It would not matter to us if it was piled up in a heap on the quay.

1462. How would you know how much No. 1 hatch has done and how much No. 2 hatch has done. Where would you get that information?—I have never seen yet two hatches together shot on the quay. It is only one hold at a time.

1463. (Mr. Orbell.) As a matter of fact do you know of any case where they take cargo from two distinct holds and put it in one bulk on the quay?—Yes. We will take, for example, Beckton Gas Works. The system there of working is this: It comes out of the vessel, goes over a weighbridge, and each tank of coal is tallied as it comes out. It is averaged as 12 cwts. When it exceeds that each gang gets the quantity over, and if it goes under, each gang gets the quantity under.

1464. But I want to know this: Coming closer, where they put the coals in bulk on the quay, is it the general custom to take each hold in the ship and place the cargo separately on the quay, or some overside into a lighter or trucks and some on the quay, or do they put the whole lot from all three holds in one bulk on the quay?—No; they only put one on the quay, the other goes in lighters.

1465. There may be exceptions; that is, generally speaking?—Yes.

1466. Therefore there would not be the difficulty with regard to the various gangs that Mr. Bellhouse mentioned?—No.

1467. (Mr. Wignall.) Is it within your knowledge that all the coal put into the steamer is weighed to the lb. at the port of departure, and the captain knows absolutely within a lb.; how much coal is in every hatch of the ship when she leaves the port of departure?—Yes.

1468. Do you know that?—Yes.

1469. And you know that there must be in somebody's possession a document showing almost to the lb. the amount of coal on that ship in every hatch?—Yes.

1470. Take, for instance, Welsh coal coming to London. If they leave Cardiff, Barry, Swansea or Penarth, the captain or mate of the ship knows exactly almost to the lb. how much coal he has in the ship and how much is in every hatch?—Yes.

1471. And he ought to be in a position to produce a document to show how much coal the ship took in?—Yes.

1472. And how much is in every hatch?—Yes.

1473. (Mr. Bellhouse.) Are men paid by the draught when they are loading into barges?—No; they are paid by the tonnage.

1474. Did not you say something different?—The barges are marked to take so much.

1475. That mark would not be very accurate. It might be affected by bilge water?—I could not say anything with regard to that.

1476. (Mr. Anderson.) I did not hear what your statement was, but did you suggest that sometimes when the barge was not fully loaded they estimated the quantity in the barge by the draught. You know that that is done very often?—Yes, that is done.

1477. (Mr. Gordon.) In dealing with the London coal trade, you are dealing with coasting vessels generally?—Yes, quite so.

1478. Take, for instance, the north country trade. Have you any knowledge whatever of the mode of shipping coals at Tyne Dock?—Yes.

1479. Have you been there?—Yes.

1480. Do you know the weight of a truck of coal?—The trucks vary.

1481. Approximately. Give me a general idea of the weight of a truck of coal?—I could not say that at all.

1482. Take it from me that it is about 30 tons. Do you know the mode of shipment of coal?—Yes.

1483. How is it shipped?—It comes along the jetty and is put into the steamers.

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1484. In the Tyne Dock?—Yes.
1485. When a hold is considered to contain sufficient, do you know that the shoot is stopped at the end?—Yes.
1486. And no account of the weight in the shoot exists. You do not know whether it holds 30 or 50 tons?—No.
1487. How do you know the weight that is going into the next hold at the start?—You are asking me now of what I have very little experience of.
1488. But you made a definite statement?—I have seen it, it is true, but I have not worked there, and I cannot give you anything like that.
1489. You stated definitely that the mate of the vessel knew exactly how much there was in each hold, when you spoke as to the general custom with regard to each steamer that came to London?—No, I never said that at all. I did not say that the mate knows definitely.

From the ship's papers the owners of the vessel or someone on the vessel knows what is put into her.

1490. In each hold?—Yes.
1491. Do you know from your own knowledge that they know that?—Yes.
1492. How do you know that?—Because the mate told us.
1493. That he knows what is in each hold?—Yes.
1494. As a shipper, I can tell you that I do not know it, and my captains do not know it, and it is impossible to know it?—With regard to being a cwt. or two cwt., or a ton or two, I cannot speak to that.
1495. 20 or 30 tons?—It cannot be 20 or 30 tons.
1496. (*Mr. Bellhouse.*) Are gangs removed from one ship to another, before the unloading of any particular ship is completed?—No.
1497. You always complete a ship?—We always complete a vessel.

The witness withdrew.

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Mr. JAMES SEXTON (a member of the Committee) examined.

1498. (*Chairman.*) You are general secretary of the National Union of Dock Labourers?—Yes.
1499. For how long have you been in that position?—Since 1893.
1500. What was your previous occupation?—Dock labourer.
1501. What area does your union cover?—It covers Goole in Yorkshire, Liverpool, Preston, Fleetwood, Heysham, Ireland, and Scotland.
1502. Can you tell us about the number of members your union contains?—I cannot give it accurately now, but I should say about 20,000.
1503. What proportion of those men are engaged in piece-work?—I should say 60 per cent.
1504. Have you had brought before you any complaints of the men not receiving their full amount on piece-work?—Yes—continually—of a general character.
1505. How often?—Every week.
1506. What is the general nature of the complaints?—The general nature is that they cannot get any evidence, no matter how they may ask for it, except in some special cases which I will mention, of the actual amount of tonnage that they work. The complaints refer to ballast gravel and sand, slag, macadam, iron ore, coal, and, in some cases, standards—timber measurements and grain. The general complaint is that there are no means of getting to know, and if they ask for it it is point-blank refused, except in special cases which I will mention as an example of what can be done.
1507. Would you tell us who it is that employs the men?—In a great measure it is the contractor. There are some firms that employ their own men direct, but they are only few in number. I may say, with respect to Liverpool, that the tonnage system is on the decrease; it is gradually disappearing.
1508. What is it precisely that the men require?—They require, I should say, an extension of the principle, where possible, of the checkweighman's system, or, as an alternative, the production of some document after their work is done to certify the exact amount of tonnage discharged or loaded.
1509. Are you of opinion that in all cases it would be possible for the employers to produce documentary evidence of the weights in question?—I think it would.
1510. Have you any instances in your own mind where it would not be possible?—The difficulty would be with respect to general cargoes.
1511. I was going to ask about general cargoes. Are the men who are engaged in loading and unloading general cargoes generally employed by piece-work?—In our case very very few.
1512. But supposing they were employed by piece-work, would it be possible in every instance, taking into consideration the mixed cargo that they would have to handle, and the very large number of bills of

lading, to present to the men a statement?—I think it would in course of time. It is a question of how long.

1513. We have heard of cases where the actual weight of a cargo is not known for some weeks, or even months, after the ship is unloaded. Would the men be satisfied to have an adjustment when those actual figures were produced?—I think they would if they could not get it before.

1514. I am assuming that they cannot get it before?—If they were sure that they would eventually get it, and if some satisfactory evidence was produced, I think they would be satisfied.

1515. I think you mentioned the other day that you could have brought many more witnesses and fuller evidence to establish cases of grievance?—Yes, I could. I have their statements here signed.

1516. But you thought it wiser not to do that because you heard that in principle the Committee had agreed to accede to the men's demand?—Yes, and it would be overlapping. They would give practically the same evidence. Some of the cases stated here are cases of fact.

1517. May we consider that, so far as the men whom you represent are concerned, the case is closed?—Except that I want to give you a few cases here, that is all.

1518. Will you kindly give those?—Take Burnt-island and Methven, two coal ports in Scotland. The evidence from both of these places is to the effect that there is not the slightest difficulty on the part of the men in both of these ports to get the exact weight. They get it from the railway offices. The foreman gets it for them and gives it to them, and there is no difficulty about it at all. In Grangemouth, strange to say, there is a difficulty. There is the same kind of work done in Grangemouth and there is a difficulty in the men getting to know the tonnage, because when they ask for it it is refused. With regard to Bowness the same thing applies. There is no difficulty there, as, of course, the union is pretty strong, and there is only one firm who refuse to give the information. Mr. James Carlow, our branch secretary, says: "This company has repeatedly refused to show us the bills or proper weights." As far as the rest of our piece-work is concerned, he says: "When discharging a cargo the men get the weigh-bill from the weigher. They take it to the pay office themselves, and they are paid on the weigh-bill they get. In Grangemouth this is not done." Our secretary in Londonderry, Mr. W. J. McNulty, says that they have two systems of discharging coal there—sometimes by the crane, when the men are not paid for as full an amount as when it is worked by hand. They have no method of finding out how much except when it is worked by hand. He goes to the men who weigh the coal at the weighbridge, but they refuse to give it to him. The employers say that they are paying on the bills of lading, but they never show them. One boat comes

to Derry two or three times a week, and when she is weighed by hand the men receive 20 tons more than when she is put out by the crane. The employers have stopped the men who weigh the coals over the bridges from giving our men the amounts they weigh out of each boat. The captains and mates of boats have been told not to give the weights. The amounts used to be obtained from the captains or mates, or even from the men who weigh over the bridges, or firms who have no interest in the output, who used to give it, but that is all stopped? It has been stopped lately. We have had repeatedly cases where boats have been weighed by beams, and the employer has reduced the amount weighed out by 20 tons, and said that she was that amount over her bills of lading. That is in Derry. There is one case from our secretary in Preston. He gives the name of the shipowner and that of the shipbroker. Three or four months ago the men asked for the right and were refused. Afterwards, however, when the men protested, they were paid 1s. 6d. per head extra. A steamer from Hamburg was loaded with wood for paving streets. This was put upon waggons. The men were engaged on piece-work. They were not paid for the weight loaded up, and when they asked for the bill of lading or the manifest it was refused. From Drogheda Robert Nugent, branch secretary, writes on the 15th:—"I went on Saturday last to a firm where two coal-boats were discharging. I saw the manager, and asked to see the weigh-bills, and he wanted to know what business it was of mine. He told me that they pay a lump sum to one man, and he divides the tonnage money amongst them, but he would not let me see the weigh-bills." Another case is a man of the name of Johnson, who asked his employer to show the weigh-bill of the boat he was discharging. He was refused, and dismissed from employment. This man went to the Customs House, and paid to see the bills, which were 20 tons short. After the boat had discharged 250 tons it was only paid on 230. He writes on 7th December: "I went to the Customs House to inquire about the weigh-bills of a Newry steamer laden with coal. The officer went to the employer and asked to see the weigh-bills. The Customs House officer came back and told me the exact amount of tonnage, but I did not see the weigh-bill. This boat discharged 385 tons in one firm one day, and in another firm the following day 370. There is another boat, the \_\_\_\_\_, of Newry, which discharges 340 tons in one firm and 214 tons in another. It has been proved in this case to be 26 tons short each time, I could multiply these, but I do not think it is necessary."

1519. (*Mr. Hardy.*) Is this all coal?—It is all coal.

1520. (*Chairman.*) Have you, as a leading trade union official, brought any of these cases before the employers?—I could give you half-a-dozen cases which I have brought before the employer himself, and where I have been ordered out of the place. That is four or five years ago.

1521. Did you attend any of the depositions to the Home Secretary, when they appeared before him to present the workmen's grievances?—Yes. I put the case myself to the late Lord Ritchie when he was Home Secretary, as a member of the Parliamentary Committee of the Trades Union Congress.

1522. (*Mr. Bellhouse.*) I am looking at this, of course, entirely from an administrative point of view. You say that you think that there would be no difficulty in producing documents. Do you suggest that this should be a compulsory production, or that they should only be asked for where wanted?—I should make it compulsory. Anything else would be useless.

1523. Is there always an office or some place of that sort, where such notices could be affixed or in evidence? I had some little experience in Dublin, and I know that there some of the stevedores were in a very small way of business, and I do not think they had any offices at all?—Yes, but in every case I think the employer, whether he be a shipowner employing direct or a contractor, even in loading, surely has a shipping note to which he can get access.

1524. But I take it you do not want that the men should have to go to ask for this; you want it put up

somewhere?—I would not go so far as that. There could be no objection, of course, to its being put up—it would be much better if it was—but I think if a representative of the men were to ask for it in a respectful manner, it ought to be shown to him.

1525. Yes, but there have been a great many complaints in the evidence that has been given, that the fact of asking has led to non-employment. Do you think that if it was made compulsory by law that these things should be produced, you would get rid of the difficulty of non-employment?—You would not where the men individually have to ask, but as far as the organised trades are concerned, a paid representative of the men would ask. I have no objection to its being posted up.

1526. But you do not think it absolutely necessary?—No.

1527. Take this case: I go down to visit a ship; I presume you consider that this proposed provision would be enforced by the factory inspector. These things generally fall on him in the result. How am I, as a factory inspector, unless you make it compulsory to hang the information up, to get any evidence as to whether the men are getting the particulars as required?—I admit that there is a very great difficulty in that case. If I may say so, trying to be absolutely fair, although I cannot be impartial, our chaps are not angels any more than the employers. I do not want to diagnose their faults. If you put a power (to be perfectly frank) like that in their hands, for a gang of men to demand (supposing we will say there are 40 or 50), the number of tons of ballast in a ship's hold, there are some cases where it would not work. I will tell you how. A ship has taken ballast from a rubbish heap—broken bricks and earth—each cartload is weighed over a weighbridge. The only test you would have there would be the total of the tickets of the weighbridge after the job was completed. Then, you see, the men would have to wait until the job was completed; it might be a day or two days; and then they would go to the weighbridge and get the total weight of broken bricks or rubbish and then come down and post it up. But if it were compulsory to put up the particulars of weight in a case like that, the difficulty would be that these men, knowing that they had the right to do it, might knock off the job at once until each weigh-bill was posted up as the cart went over the machine. That is the only difficulty I see, but in a general sense I think you are right.

1528. A witness certainly told us (I think he came from Cardiff) that the gangs do not always complete a ship. They may be moved on from one to another?—Mr. Wignall said that that is not so in his case, but it is so in ours.

1529. Do you, in your experience, know of such cases?—I know such cases in Aberdeen.

1530. If they are moved from ship to ship, and you cannot get the weights at the time, how are you going to allocate your wages amongst the different gangs?—When a man commences a job on tonnage, unless he commits himself, he should be allowed to finish it and should not be shifted.

1531. But I understand that in practice it is not so?—Generally speaking it is, but there are cases where it is not.

1532. I mean where a whole gang is shifted?—Do you mean where the gang is moved by the employer from a hatch or ship that is not finished?

1533. Yes.—It is almost impossible to ascertain the exact amount of tonnage that that man has put out. The general rule is that a man finishes a hatch.

1534. I want to know what the remedy is. How will you allocate the wages amongst the different gangs?—In a case like that it is impossible.

1535. (*Chairman.*) How is it done to-day?—The men take the bull by the horns, and say, "If you are going to shift us from this hatch, then we are going to be paid on all that is in it."

1536. (*Mr. Bellhouse.*) Where the shipowner is paid on dead weight, and the men discharge on

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measurement weight, where are you going to get your paper or your notice in writing to show what the actual measurement weight is?—Personally I have not had much experience of payment by weight or measurement.

1537. How do you propose to arrive at the particulars to enable the men to be paid measurement weight?—There should be some system of either accepting measurement or dead weight.

1538. Would the men be willing to provide an expert measurer in such cases?—Speaking generally, I think that where the work is all done by piece-work they would. It would pay them to do it.

1539. Can you suggest any other solution, because that is one of the difficulties?—That would meet it.

1540. Would it be possible to have a contract in writing for each of the cases?—My reply to that is that where the cargo is handled wholesale in the way spoken of by Mr. Wignall, if the men desire to appoint a measurer or a weigher they should have the privilege of doing it legally.

1541. You would not be satisfied with an agreement on each occasion?—No; I do not think it would act at all. It would cause trouble and confusion if you did that.

1542. (Mr. Scrutton.) The difficulty you have at present is not the settlement, but the basis of the settlement. It is merely that the men do not get settlement on the proper tonnage?—That is so.

1543. The settlements go through all right?—Yes.

1544. (Mr. Hardy.) You speak principally of coals and bulk cargoes of that kind?—Coals, minerals, and grain.

1545. Is the difficulty pretty much confined to that class of cargo?—In our case, yes.

1546. Take for instance a cargo of Yankee notions such as they have at Liverpool. You do not suggest that all that can be weighed?—We work that as day-work.

1547. But it is conceivable that it might be worked by some sort of piece-work somewhere. You do not suggest, I suppose, that cargo which could not be weighed or measured in the ordinary course could be weighed or measured for this purpose?—It would be very difficult I admit.

1548. (Mr. Gordon.) With regard to dead-weight cargoes, you are aware that the shipowner gets paid on the total dead-weight the ship discharges?—Yes.

1549. No record, as far as he is concerned, is kept of the output of each hold?—But is it not a fact, that the total weight that the ship carries is registered?

1550. Yes; but as a matter of fact the shipowner only receives payment on the total output. He does not know what comes out of each hold; there is no evidence of that, nor is there any evidence kept by the receiver even?—But there is a ship's plan showing the weight of each hatch.

1551. With dead-weight cargo that would be of no value to the men or the shipowner?—With regard to nitre, for instance, there is a manifest for each hatch; that is dead-weight cargo.

1552. That is exceptional cargo?—There is a ship's plan showing the amount of weight for each hatch.

1553. No?—I understand there is.

1554. No, you may take it from me that it is not so?—Very well.

1555. Taking generally dead-weight cargoes the shipowner receives freight on the total output of the vessel, and in 19 out of 20 cases he knows nothing of what is in each hold?—I think that the difficulty can be met in this way. Of course it would require a lapse of time, but the consignee knows what he is getting.

1556. He knows the total he is getting, but he does not know what has come out of each hold. The gangs in each hold want to be paid a certain sum of money, and neither the receiver of the cargo nor the shipowner has evidence on that point?—There are what they call

counters off—the men who check the cargo. They have a book of each hatch.

1557. Whose man is this?—He is employed by the consignee or the stevedore or the contractor. He has to give a tally of the hatch. There will be no difficulty in getting the counters off books when the ship is discharged, and totalling each book up for each hatch.

1558. But there again you are dealing more with packed cargoes, but take the case of dead-weight bulk cargoes—coal or iron ore or phosphate—where there is no such record kept at each hatch, and where neither the shipowner nor the receiver of that cargo knows what has come out of each hatch. How do you propose to deal with that, because, after all, the contract of the foreman stevedore with the men has nothing to do with his contract with the shipowner?—I know there is a difficulty there, but, if I might suggest it, it might be met in this way. I know that in Bilbao and the Spanish ports each hatch is checked by the mine-owner. A tally is kept, then it is easy.

1559. In some instances certainly, but from your experience is it not a fact that, from the shipowner's point of view, it is absolutely unreliable, because there are no trades where there are greater disputes than the ore trade as between the shipowner and the receiver?—But there is a tally kept of each hatch.

1560. (Chairman.) How are the men paid to-day?—They are paid on the tonnage of each hatch.

1561. How is the weight ascertained?—They ask the mate or the captain and he says "There is so much in that hatch, and so much in that hatch."

1562. Is it guess-work?—They have to take his word for it.

1563. (Mr. Gordon.) But it may be incorrect. He may tell you approximately, but he does not know absolutely?—Where men are constantly employed on iron ore they should have the privilege of the extension of the checkweighman's system and appoint their own checkweighman or their own official to ascertain the weights at each hatch.

1564. You are discharging ore into trucks, say, at Middlesbrough, and these trucks are not weighed until they get some distance from the vessel; perhaps 100 yards. There is no record kept as to which hatch the cargo has come from?—The checkweigher can keep a record.

1565. How?—He can mark the truck.

1566. Do you propose that your men should do this?—Yes, where the men are constantly employed on that kind of work. The shipowner pays so much a ton on the entire capacity of the vessel to a master stevedore, and that master stevedore pays the men on each hatchway, which is a totally different thing, and that is where the difficulty arises.

1567. The employer or his man could mark the trucks "No. 1 hatch," "No. 2 hatch," "No. 3 hatch," or the men themselves could.

1568. (Mr. Scrutton.) Do not you think it would be sufficient if the men knew the total weight out of a ship. They could settle the matter amongst themselves?—The difficulty there would be that you would have to pool the whole of the tonnage.

1569. But if the employer furnished the total weight could not they get over the difficulty?—I think they could average the whole thing if that was done.

1570. (Mr. Mead.) Would you be satisfied that, required by the men, the employer of the labour should furnish you with a certificate of the amount of the entire cargo loaded or discharged; and if the cargo not weighed or measured before or during the loading or during or after discharge, the workmen will accept the settlement of their wages on the weight on which the carrier receives his payment of freight?—I think that that would meet the case. I understand exactly your question: if the employers produce documents of a satisfactory character, showing the exact amount of weight or measurement, should we be satisfied with that?

1571. Yes; perhaps you would like to defer your answer so that I can show you exactly what I mean?—I cannot give any other answer than I have given. We should be satisfied.

1572. I believe that where a worthless man is in the habit of living by making a profit out of working men in a dishonest way, you, representing the men, desire to see him disappear?—Yes.

Mr. JAMES ANDERSON (a member of the Committee) examined.

1575. (Chairman.) How many men are members of your union?—3,600.

1576. Is the membership confined to London?—Yes, to the port of London.

1577. Entirely?—It includes Tilbury.

1578. For how long have you been an official of the union?—For 13 years general secretary.

1579. About how often have you heard complaints from men that they have not received the full money due to them?—Continually, ever since I have been in office.

1580. How many times a month?—Sometimes two or three times in a week.

1581. Has the question of having a check on the amount of the men's wages been discussed by the union?—We have supported the motion before congress for a number of years past.

1582. What is the opinion of the men on the subject?—They feel that they are not paid correctly, and they complain of not having access to the correct figures.

1583. Are there any special points in connection with work in London which you wish to put before us?—So far as our work is concerned we see no difficulty whatever in the correct figures being supplied to the men within a reasonable time after the work is performed.

1584. Can you suggest any particular forms of cargo where there would be difficulty in the employers of the men providing the necessary documents?—No, we do not know of any.

1585. In your capacity as a trade union official have you brought any of these grievances before the notice of the employers?—I have spoken to employers from time to time, and where, by some means or other, we have been able to get hold of the correct figures and present the account to the employer, it has always been met without any dispute. I have a list of cases here.

1586. Is it your opinion that if there were a statutory liability upon the employers to produce documents the grievances would disappear?—Yes. I will give you a list of a few cases which have occurred. I have only gone back to 1900. These are comparatively small amounts.

1587. If you would give us a case or two which occurred last year, and say in your evidence that you could produce so many in other years, that would be sufficient?—These are the only cases where we have been able to get the correct figures. We say that the cases where we have not been able to get the correct figures are much more numerous. I will not take you very far back. There is a small matter here in 1904, July 12th. The men got some figures; I presented them to Mr. Harrington, who is in the room now, and he paid me the balance due to the men. That was 13s. 4d. That is a comparatively small amount. I have before me a claim against a steamship for 3l. 19s. This amount is due to perhaps seven or eight men. It is rather an important matter. Here is a case against a steamship for 6l. 5s. 5d.

1588. These are cases where the men had been underpaid?—Where the men had been underpaid. The men, through their officials, got the correct figures.

1589. (Mr. Bellhouse.) Each man or the gang?—6l. 5s. 5d. due to eight men.

1590. (Mr. Harrington.) Was it timber?—No; general cargo.

1573. This would have the effect of making it not worth his while to go on?—Yes, that is the remedy. As a matter of fact, the present system pays that kind of man.

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1574. The present system makes it possible—we will put it in that way?—Yes.

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1591. Was the other case general cargo?—Yes; general cargo also. There is quite a recent one, July 27th, 1907, a vessel discharging phosphate rock. One gang discharged 689 tons and they were paid for 655 tons. I got the corrected figures and received the balance 1l. 11s. 2d. due to eight men. A case occurred this year where the men were paid for 225 tons out of the after hold, and the captain told them he knew there were 280 tons in the after hold.

1592. (Chairman.) Has that been remedied?—No, it has not been remedied, and the men have no remedy.

1593. (Mr. Scrutton.) Did you get the total weight?—We did not trouble about the weights of the other hatches.

1594. If you had got the total weight that would have settled the question?—I do not think it would.

1595. You would have evidence of exactly what the ship turned out then?—We have had the total weights over and over again, and we have found that the men have been paid considerably less than what she has been manifested.

1596. That is quite possible?—When the total weight on the manifest has been pointed out to the employer he has said, "You cannot go by the manifest," and we know that you cannot.

1597. That is quite right?—When we have taken the total weights that the men have been paid on for the whole of the ship they have been sometimes as much as 200 tons more than the manifest showed.

1598. (Mr. Mead.) But in this case there is nothing to show that the men were underpaid?—The captain who saw the stuff put into the ship knows within a few tons what is put down.

1599. What month was that?—January 1908.

1600. Have you the figures for the whole ship?—No, I have not the figures for the whole ship.

1601. I want to know the entire weight of the ship?—The only figures supplied to me are the figures with regard to that particular gang. I might say that in London each gang is paid separately for what they do, but we do not anticipate any difficulty in that direction in London, because an account is kept of the barges which are loaded out of the different hatches. Take the case of a phosphate rock cargo which I have done a great deal of myself; an account is kept by either the foreman or the ship's clerk of the barges which are loaded out of that ship and of the particular hatchways that they are loaded from. The barges are taken to their destination. When by some miscalculation or other the men have been overpaid, the employer has always been in a position to give us a list of the barges and the exact weights of the cargo within a pound.

1602. (Chairman.) So you say that, conversely, he could do it in the case of under-payment?—Yes.

1603. (Mr. Scrutton.) Did you apply for that information?—We have an outstanding dispute with that firm and he has point-blank refused to pay. It has been standing over for nine months and I know it is absolutely useless to apply to him. I have brought their case before him, the thing is still going on, and I am convinced that when the correct weights are brought forward we shall find that the captain's estimate is much nearer the mark than the employer's.

1604. (Mr. Harrington.) Phosphate rock and copper ore when not weighed on board are weighed on the wharf?—Yes.

1605. The bill of lading is always on the ship?—Yes.



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1606. It is always possible to get the weight from the wharf?—No, it is not.

1607. Have you ever tried?—Yes. That leads me to the other point which was made by our witnesses and which I can confirm by my own personal experience, and that is that until about five years ago, by going to the various wharves, I could get the weights from the weigh clerk. It meant a small honorarium, but we did not mind that. Now I am absolutely refused point-blank any information respecting the weights of barges discharged.

1608. (Mr. Lloyd Morgan.) How has this change come about?—By some mysterious means which I am not able to probe.

1609. Has it arisen from some dispute with the authorities?—I could not tell you. I can only say that the change has come about, and it is universal.

1610. (Mr. Harrington.) Until a short time ago was it not practically one master stevedore who did the whole of the phosphate rock work?—I cannot say that.

1611. Practically?—Up to 10 years ago one man had practically the handling of the whole of the bulk phosphate or copper ore, but now there are three or four men on the market.

1612. Is it not usual to pay out on the bill of lading?—It is not. It was at one time; it is not now. These different men cut one another up to get into shipowners' offices, and then they try to take it out of the men at the finish. Where at one time the master stevedores were prepared to pay out on the bill of lading and take the chance of overpaying on one job and making it up on the next, now they will pay 200 tons short, say, and say "She is bound not to turn out her full weight." They keep 200 or 300 tons in hand, but you never hear anything of it afterwards.

1613. (Chairman.) Do not they adjust afterwards?—No, except where by mischance they overpay, I have never known a case where a master stevedore has voluntarily come forward and said, "You did not get enough on that last ship; here is the balance." The only time they come forward with the figures is where they overpay.

1614. (Mr. Scrutton.) Do the men pay anything back?—Yes. Where our men have been overpaid, and that has been satisfactorily proved by the employers, the men always pay it back.

1615. (Chairman.) Have you ever had any difficulty in getting them to pay it back?—No. We have pretty good control over our members, and when they know they have to pay, they pay.

1616. (Mr. Larkin.) Is there any necessity for stevedores at all in this particular work?—One or two firms are managing without them.

1617. (Mr. Mead.) Is the whole of your experience confined to the lower river?—The docks and the river.

1618. How far up the river do you come?—Up to the Tower Bridge.

1619. As far as the Tower Bridge, but not beyond?—No.

1620. You heard the question I asked Mr. Sexton: would you be satisfied that, if required by the men, the employer shall furnish a certificate of the amount of the entire cargo, loaded or discharged, and if the cargo is not weighed or measured before or during the loading or during or after the discharge, the workmen will accept the settlement of their wages on the weight that the carrier receives his payment of freight?—Yes, except in the cases where the master stevedore has a proper settlement on the actual weights later on, where the actual weights are obtainable.

1621. The actual weight is what the freight is payable on, is it not?—Yes.

1622. I said on the weight upon which the carrier receives his payment for freight?—I want to make it perfectly clear that what would satisfy us is the production by the employer, as soon as possible, of a document showing the actual amount of tonnage that he is paid for, but I do not want any such provision as this: "if required by the men." It should be compulsory.

1623. The men have to ask for it if they want it, have they not?—I would not make it obligatory on the men or any person to ask for it before it is produced. I think it should be compulsory on the part of the employer to produce it, and there should be a penalty for supplying false information or not producing it at all.

1624. I have asked you that leading question. Subject to certain qualifications, the arrangement indicated in my question would satisfy you, would it not?—Yes, that would satisfy us, the production of a document showing the amount of tonnage that the employer was paid for.

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Mr. JAMES WIGNALL (a member of the Committee) examined.

1625. Chairman. What is your official position?—General Organiser to the Dock Wharf Riverside and Workers' Union.

1626. How many men are there in your union?—Approximately between 16,000 and 17,000 men.

1627. For how long have you been in that position?—I have been in my present position about eight years. Previous to that I was district secretary for about 10 years.

1628. What area does your union cover?—We cover the whole of South Wales, parts of London and the north-east coast and various centres throughout the country.

1629. What proportion of your members are paid by piece-work?—Confining myself to South Wales, where my work largely lies, I should say that 90 per cent of the men employed at docks in loading, discharging, or handling cargo would be paid on the piece-work system.

1630. Do you have many complaints from the men that they are not satisfied with the amount of wages they received?—Yes, we have very many complaints, but in some parts the complaints are considerably less; for instance, at Barry Dock, where the middleman or contractor is almost entirely unknown, things are pretty well settled down to peace and contentment. The men are satisfied. They get the weights from the office where they want them. Then in Swansea, again, where the contractor has been removed and the Harbour Trust do the work, the men are perfectly well

satisfied that the company would not do them out of the tonnage. The complaints centre more on the middleman, the man of straw who comes in, gets on board ship, and by some mysterious means gets the work, and then we get trouble with him.

1631. To what do you attribute the cause of these grievances?—First of all there is the general feeling among the men that there is no guarantee that they get paid for what they handle. That is getting less, as I say; but taking the contractor, the middleman, that comes in between the men and the shipowner, they can get no satisfaction from such men at all.

1632. Do I understand that it is the shipowner who lets out the contract to a middleman, and that the middleman does not treat the men fairly in every instance?—No. He gives them no satisfaction at all.

1633. If the men had a statutory right to demand a document showing the precise amount of weight which the employer was paid for, would that satisfy the men?—Undoubtedly; that is all we want. To take a case in point; only last Wednesday, some men working for ——— came rushing along the street to me, "We are paid a certain amount of tonnage short, how are we going to get it?" We could get no satisfaction out of the employer. I do not know whether they have got it yet. We left that to our district secretary to handle.

1634. You could have brought a greater number of witnesses and given fuller evidence to establish the grievances, I understand?—Yes. Fortunately the fear

of victimisation is unknown to us in South Wales. We have a system there that is entirely different from that in vogue at the London Docks and other large centres.

1635. I understand that as the Committee generally agree to accept the principle of the men's demand, you refrain from calling more witnesses?—Yes. We have covered the district very well and whatever other evidence there might be would only overlap and be repetition.

1636. Have you, as a trades union official, brought these cases to the notice of employers?—Covering the last 10 years, hundreds, if not thousands of cases.

1637. With what response?—It was a daily occurrence when the work was largely given out to contract. We never could get satisfactory information if we applied to the brokers' or the shipowners' representatives. As district secretary, in many scores of cases, I have written to the shipowners or brokers. They could give no information. We have gone to the Customs and paid half-a-crown or 5s., as the case might be, for the ship's manifest, and we have resorted to every means and have taken cases to court. That has been largely removed by the disappearance of the middleman, but for seven or eight years I had a very very busy time.

1638. As far as your district is concerned may we take it that your case is closed?—Yes, unless you like to call for more evidence. We have any amount more evidence. I might explain that in Cardiff there is a question of discharging iron ores. Take the Dowlais Company who deal with an enormous quantity. We have no trouble with them if they do the work themselves, but where they give it out to a contractor we have trouble. In several cases the Dowlais Iron Company have got the weights and they give us almost to the exact lb. the stuff that has been taken out of the ship, and in most cases we have had balances of money paid to the men. They have a record of practically every ton that comes out of the ship, and what hatch it comes out of.

1639. (Mr. Mead.) The total cargo?—I say every ton that comes out of every hatch.

1640. (Chairman.) Where is the weighing done?—I take it that it is weighed on the railway or on their own weighbridge.

1641. Is it weighed by the Dowlais people?—It is probably weighed on their own weighbridge in the works. There is the fact that when we have gone to them and they have agreed to check off the cargo they have been able to give us almost to the lb. the weight

Adjourned for a short time.

Mr. OWEN WADE, called and examined.

1649. (Chairman.) What is your exact position?—I am official district delegate of the National Amalgamated Union of Labour.

1650. I understand that your union act as contractors for the North-Eastern Railway Company?—Yes.

1651. Are you employed by the railway company?—No, I am not employed by the North-Eastern Railway Company, but our members are employed by the North-Eastern Railway Company.

1652. What are their precise duties?—The precise duty is discharging iron ore, loading up plate-iron, bricks, pig-iron, or anything of the sort.

1653. The members of the trade union, I understand, are paid by the railway company?—Yes; we have the price that they would pay to the stevedore. The men have the same price that the stevedore would have.

1654. And so they save the middleman's profit?—Yes.

1655. The workmen got the benefit of that?—Yes.

1656. Does the system answers satisfactorily?—Yes.

1657. Have the men any complaints?—The men have not any complaints to make.

1658. Are they allowed to see the documents?—We are not allowed to see the documents. We get the weights from the railway company. They give the men

of the cargo and the hatch it has come out of, and in many cases the contractors have paid the men various sums of money claimed. Invariably we have found that the men were right in their claim.

1602. (Mr. Mead.) Really, what you have in your mind is that without in any way hampering trade you wish to have just means found whereby the men may be satisfied that they are receiving payment on the amount of work which they have actually done?—Precisely. That is exactly my position and the position of the men. I should like, if it can be brought about in our finding, that there should be some permissive arrangement by which men, if they so desire, could appoint a checkweigher similar to what is done in the mines—not compulsory, but permissive to the men if they desire to do so.

1643. (Mr. Hardy.) That is, in cases where weighing is done at present?—Yes, and from my experience I do not know where it is not done. In the districts I cover they are always exact in weighing cargoes in and out.

1644. But I want to know whether you suggest that it should be done where weighing is not now done?—So far as my knowledge goes, I do not know what is not weighed. I cannot find out.

1645. (Mr. Mead.) You agree that weighing should not be specially done to arrive at the payment of wages?—Yes, but where the stuff is weighed out now, if the men desire to appoint a checkweigher they should have the right to do it.

1646. (Mr. Bellhouse.) As regards general cargoes, is not your district peculiarly situated; is not nearly everything paid piece-work?—Yes, nearly everything is paid piece-work.

1647. Do you foresee any difficulty in connection with general cargoes in getting particulars from the shipowner or any other people that would not occur with bulk cargo?—Really, I have never found a difficulty. Take Swansea, for instance, where we have a lot of general cargo imported or exported. Sometimes it is a very mixed cargo. When the office take the trouble to satisfy us if we ask them to do so—and in most cases they do—they can give us every information, we find, almost to the last lb. of stuff in the boat.

1648. You do not think that there is more difficulty with general cargo than there is with bulk cargo?—As far as the Harbour Trust goes, we have no difficulty at all. It is the other fellows that make the trouble, and, in my opinion, middlemen are the cause of all the trouble.

the weight that goes over the bars. It is weighed by the company it is consigned to, such as the Consett Iron Company and other companies.

1659. What do the men see?—They get a return of the amount of tonnage which has been put out of No. 1, No. 2, or No. 3 hold.

1660. Were you asked to give evidence on behalf of the men?—Yes.

1661. What do you wish to convey to the Committee?—I wish to convey to the Committee that it is essential that we should see the documents. The men acting for the North-Eastern Railway Company are not our only members. We have other sections of our members who are employed in loading and discharging vessels which come to the Tyne.

1662. You want those men to have the same privileges as the men employed by the North-Eastern have?—Not exactly, but there is a system wanted with regard to the necessary documents.

1663. Your point is that if the North-Eastern can provide the necessary documents the stevedores ought to be able to do the same thing?—Yes.

1664. Are there any cargoes that your men handle where it would be difficult for the stevedore to show their documents?—I do not think so. There is a certain amount of timber discharged where the documents could be seen—log timber, deals and battens.

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1665. In some parts of the country, I understand, the weight of the timber is not actually ascertained until the merchant receives it?—I do not know. We had a Norwegian vessel in August; she discharged log timber in the Tyne. Her men complained through the branches when the settling-up day came that they were 150 short, which amounted to about 6*l.* 6*s.* 0*d.* We consider that it was very hard that they were paid that amount short.

1666. In the ports which you represent in the north of England, is the actual weight of the timber known until it is received by the merchant?—I do not know anything about that. Our people who are working for the stevedore generally ask the mate or the second mate or an official what cargo is in and they tell them.

1667. Have you heard of other cases where the men have complained that they have not received the whole of their wages for loading timber?—Yes; another steamer showed a deficiency of 37*l.*, which worked out at 18*s.* a head.

1668. Have you investigated those complaints?—Only so far as they came through the branches to me and I got talking to the men.

1669. How many complaints do you receive in a year?—We receive numerous complaints in a year with regard to short tonnage.

1670. Is it in connection with any particular cargo?—Different cargoes. With a certain steamer loaded with coal it amounted to about 16*s.* 2*d.* a head for 12 men—an ordinary job. She could not take the coal in from the coal stage and therefore she had to take it in from what you may call a barge in this part.

1671. The grievances which your men suffer from are not confined to coal?—Coal and other discharging.

1672. All cargoes?—Such as copper ore and bricks.

1673. Any other kind of cargoes?—Bricks and tar.

1674. (Mr. Sexton.) How did the present relations between you and the North-Eastern Railway Company come about?—The men were working for a stevedore at 5*s.* a day, I think, discharging iron ore, and they came out for an advance of a shilling per day. The stevedore said his price was so low that he could not afford to give any advance of wages. Mr. Hicks was then District Superintendent of the North-Eastern and he got the men together and asked them if they would do the work at the price the stevedore was doing it at. They said they would. They took it on and shortly afterwards they went in and got an advance on the price—4*d.* or 5*d.* a ton—and it stands at that now.

1675. How do you ascertain the exact tonnage?—The North-Eastern Railway have a weigh bar on the west side where the stuff is weighed before it goes to Consett or other iron works. They check it there themselves and it is checked at the other end. The men have been paid on the North-Eastern weight.

1676. Have you any agent?—Yes; we have a deputy there who supervises the work.

1677. Do not misunderstand me. He is acting as the stevedore for the union?—Yes.

1678. And therefore he gets the weight for the company and for you at the same time?—Yes; a sort of checkweighman.

1679.—Not exactly a checkweighman, but he is acting in that capacity and he is practically doing the work of a checkweighman?—Yes.

1680.—Are those the exact copies that you have there that are supplied to the North-Eastern by the weighmen?—Yes; they are signed by J. R. Roach, our deputy, and I take it that they are accurate. They come from the company, or the North Eastern proper.

1681. Those give the tonnage in each hatch?—Yes.

1682. How do you ascertain that?—It is weighed on a weigh bar, as already explained.

1683. How do you know out of which hatch it comes, 1 or 2?—I am not in a position to say. He can say. It is from him I get it.

1684. I will not press it. The other companies that you work for will not agree to give you the same facilities as the North-Eastern?—No, they will not.

1685. Have they refused them?—Yes.

1686. Have you applied for them?—They have applied to the stevedores and they have refused.

1687. What do they tell you?—That they have not got them themselves.

1688. Is that the only explanation?—Yes, that is all; that is all they tell me.

1689. With regard to the case of 16*s.* a man paid short, how did you ascertain that?—With regard to bunker coals, according to the men's tariff all ships under 1,500 tons are 1*s.* a ton; above 1,500 up to 2,500 or part thereof it is 1*s.* 3*d.* a ton; but if it is over 2,500 tons another 1*d.* goes on to that, which would give the men 1*s.* 4*d.* a ton. The stevedore contended that the ship was below the 2,500, hence he would only pay 1*s.* 3*d.* a ton.

1690. How did you ascertain that it was above?—From what I could gather from the men who had been to the Board of Trade or the Custom House.

1691. I wanted to get at that. What did they get at the Custom House?—The Customs said that the net tonnage of the vessel was 2,581.

1692. On what estimate was that, the bill of lading?—That is the net registered tonnage of the vessel, 25,813·6.

1693. Do you get paid on the net registered tonnage of the vessel?—Yes.

1694. Not on the actual amount of tonnage she carries as cargo?—She shipped 4,000 odd tons.

1695. How did you ascertain that the tonnage carried by the ship was in conformity with the Customs' document?—We ascertained it at the Customs, the registered tonnage and the net tonnage.

1696. I do not quite follow that?—The registered tonnage of the vessel is 2,581 tons.

1697. (Mr. Larkin.) And she shipped 4,000 odd tons?—Yes.

1698. (Mr. Sexton.) What did the bills of lading say?—The bills of lading did not show that; this was the registered and not tonnage.

1699. You were bunkering these coals?—Yes, and these were taken out of the craft.

1700. (Mr. Scrutton.) This was a dispute with the stevedore as to how much should be paid for the size of the ship, there being a certain weight for a certain size?—Yes.

1701. (Mr. Harrington.) When you took over the North-Eastern Railway work you took it at the price that the previous stevedore had been paid?—Yes, 3½*d.* a ton.

1702. Did you find that it did not pay you at that rate?—It did pay us, but the men thought they should get a little extra for doing the same work for the company, and they tried and got it.

1703. The North-Eastern gave you a price which they would not pay the stevedore?—Yes. They put us on the same level as the north-east coast and what they pay in the Tees district. We started at the stevedore's price and got a matter of 8*s.* to 8*s.* 6*d.*

1704. Instead of 5*s.*?—Yes, 8*s.* instead of 5*s.*

1705. (Mr. Hardy.) You are satisfied with what the North-Eastern pay?—Yes, we are satisfied with what the North-Eastern pay; there is no doubt about that. It applies to other sections. In the Hartlepool district the men do the work themselves also.

1706. You have been speaking of the Tyne Dock?—Of the Tyne Dock.

1707. (Mr. Larkin.) Would you be prepared to act in that way in any other port? Do you think that it would be wiser that the workmen should do the work directly without the intervention of a stevedore?—I think so.

1708. There is no necessity for a stevedore?—Not in the least. Our people were very foolish when the employers offered them the work in the nineties and they did not accept it.

1709. (Mr. Wignall.) The general opinion of the men is that they would be more satisfied if they could get the documents proving the exact tonnage in the ship?—That is it.

The witness withdrew.

Mr. J. HERBERT SCRUTTON (a Member of the Committee) examined.

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1710. (Chairman.) I understand that so far as the shipowners are concerned you have no evidence you wish to produce?—I do not see, as a shipowner, that there is anything in the evidence given that it is necessary for the shipowner to answer.

1711. You mean that so far as shipowners are concerned, there has been no complaint made against them directly?—That I understand to be the tenour of the evidence.

1712. I should like to ask you a few questions with regard to the system on which this work is done. Would you please tell us why the bills of lading would not be satisfactory evidence of the weight?—A bill of lading is very often more or less an estimated quantity. The bill of lading is signed: "Weight and contents unknown."

1713. The ship's manifest is a summary of the bills of lading, is it not?—It is a summary of the bills of lading.

1714. We hear that in a number of cases the men are paid on the bills of lading, so that I take it the bills of lading are in some cases accurate. Can you explain in what cases the bills of lading would be satisfactory evidence of weight, and in what cases they would not?—There are so many trades and so many different customs, that it is very difficult to give a general answer to that question.

1715. Would you explain the methods by which the shipowners ascertain the weights or measurements of the cargoes for the purpose of charging freight dues?—Unless cargo is absolutely weighed or measured at the time of delivery or after delivery, the shipowner would, in the ordinary course, be satisfied with the weight or measurement on which an actual transaction took place; that is to say, that if there was a weight or measurement which was used for the purpose of the sale of the article in question, it would be accepted by the shipowner as satisfactory from the freight point of view.

1716. I take it that the shipowner must have some data to go upon to make out his freight bill?—The shipowner gets the weight supplied to him by the merchant in most cases, and he satisfies himself that that is a correct weight.

1717. And so far as the shipowner is concerned, there would be no objection to supplying that document to the person whom the shipowner employed to unload the ship?—The shipowner would be quite prepared to satisfy his sub-contractor by the granting of this information, so long as it was in his possession.

1718. Do you know of any cases where the shipowner is not interested in ascertaining the weight of the cargo? I will give you an illustration of what I mean. A Gloucester firm writes as follows: "We presume from the wording of your circular that the question arises in the case of parcel and general goods cargoes, where the shipowner is not directly interested in the weight or measurement, as in the case of liners carrying their own goods or freightage. In such cases the dock company's tolls or tonnages are collected upon some reliable ascertained weight, and we would suggest that they should be required to give a certificate at a nominal charge to anyone desiring the information." Can you explain that paragraph?—No, I do not understand altogether what they mean. The only case in which the shipowner is not directly interested in the weight or measurement of the cargo would be where the payment is made in a lump sum.

1719. Are there such cases where you take a batch of goods for a lump sum without knowing the weight?—Yes, but it does not follow that there is piece-work done on that particular cargo. It would apply more to general cargoes, where the question of piece-work would not arise.

1720. If there are certain cases where the shipowner does not know the weight of the cargo, are there any cases where both the shipowner and the dock company are ignorant of the weights or where there is no dock company concerned?—I should think it is

very very exceptional for there to be no ascertainable weight either on shipment or discharge.

1721. May I take it that where there was no ascertainable weight the shipowners would employ people to unload or load, as the case might be, by time and not by weight?—Generally speaking, I should think so.

1722. It seems to me that the first question which we have to settle is, who are the persons to issue the certificates of weight or measurement which are to be supplied to the men. Supposing that the men were employed by a stevedore and he was obliged by law to provide them with a certificate, he must obtain that certificate from the person by whom he is employed. I want, therefore, to find out what classes of persons employ stevedores, that is to say, what classes of persons are responsible for loading and unloading ships?—It would be either the shipowner or the receiver of the goods.

1723. I will put them *seriatim*. First, in what cases is the shipowner responsible for unloading or loading?—Where he contracts to carry cargo at a rate which includes the discharge.

1724. When the merchant sends the goods to the dock is the shipowner responsible for putting them into the ship?—Yes, as a rule.

1725. And when a ship arrives in port is the shipowner usually responsible for unloading the cargo on to the quay side?—The shipowner is responsible for delivering the cargo from his tackles to the receiver.

1726. Are there any cases where the shipowner does not undertake to load or unload the goods?—There may be exceptional cases in which the shipper or receiver undertakes to load or discharge.

1727. By whom is it done then?—By the owner of the goods or his representatives.

1728. Does not the dock company ever do it?—Only as the agent of the shipowner, I should say.

1729. You have put in a memorandum here in conjunction with Mr. Gordon and Mr. Mead, in which I understand you concede the principle of conceding the men's demands. I will read the memorandum:—

1. In loading or discharging ships, where the workmen undertake to load or discharge the cargo at a rate per ton weight or measurement, the settlement with the employer with whom they have contracted to perform the work shall be made in the following manner.

2. The employer shall, if required, furnish a certificate of the quantity of cargo loaded or discharged.

3. If the cargo is not weighed or measured before, or during, the loading, or during, or after, discharge of the ship, the employer shall produce a certificate from the shipowner or the ship-broker, acting on his behalf, showing the quantity of cargo on which the shipowner has received, or is to receive, payment of freight, and the workmen shall accept a settlement of their wages on the basis of such certificate.

4. For the purpose of the settlement of wages as above, the employer, or the shipowner or his agent, shall have the right to demand from shippers or receivers of cargo, dock companies or wharfingers, or any other persons having particulars of the weights or measurements of cargo loaded or discharged, particulars of the total weight or measurements of such cargo, as and when they are ascertained, and such particulars shall be furnished without charge.

May I take it that that is the unanimous decision of the three gentlemen representing the shipowners?—This is a memorandum drawn up by myself and my co-shipowners on this Committee for the purpose of assisting you in preparing the draft report, and it expresses the lines on which we think it should be possible to frame regulations for dealing with the points in dispute.

1730. The difficulty which I see is not in the cases where it is plain sailing, so to speak, but in the cases which are outside the ordinary rule where documents are not easily obtainable. What would you suggest in

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such cases?—You mean where there is no possibility of furnishing a certificate of the quantity of cargo loaded or discharged?

1731. Yes?—It is difficult to imagine a case where some satisfactory evidence cannot be obtained, because if cargo is shipped there must be some particulars existing of the quantity.

1732. Are there cases where men are employed by a firm unloading goods from the firm's own barges on to the firm's own quay, and consequently, as the firm are carrying their own goods in their own barges, there are no freight notes?—But they must have purchased those goods somewhere.

1733. But what kind of certificate can the men get in these cases?—There must be some invoice or bill of cost existing in respect of those goods which could be furnished by the owner.

1734. I will read an extract from a letter from one of the firms:—"We should not refuse to show our men any certificate or weight note which was in this office, but we should object to be obliged to procure any specially defined certificates such as those mentioned in the claim. In some cases we have no freight notes, and we rarely pay dock dues on our imports, so that we have no dock certificates. A barge note could always be shown." What do you think of that?—I cannot imagine a case in which someone is not doing work in connection with a parcel of goods which would define the quantity.

1735. Then there is the question of mixed cargoes. The Swansea Harbour Trust writes:—"We would point out that in the case of general cargo exports a single cargo may consist of, say, 50 to 100 separate consignments, and it is difficult to conceive what certificates can be produced to prove to the men that they are being paid on the weight or measurement on which freight or dock dues are paid. The Trustees do not weigh such general cargo, but accept the weight declared to them by the consigners"?—They are paid for doing the work, and in consequence they have to arrive at some estimate of the quantity of cargo which they handle.

1736. The exact words are:—"The cargo may consist of, say, 50 to 100 separate consignments, and it is difficult to conceive what certificates can be produced to prove to the men that they are being paid on weight or measurement on which

freight or dock dues are paid"?—The point which I want to bring out is that they have the information in their possession for their own purposes. In a case like that it would be sufficient if the employer of the men produced a certificate showing the basis upon which he himself received payment.

1737. Then there is the case mentioned just now of different gangs working different holds. How are the men to ascertain the amount in each hold?—That was answered by Mr. Sexton. They would be satisfied if they get the total amount that the ship has discharged. The men among themselves would be able to apportion it out.

1738. (*Mr. Sexton.*) Are you aware that there is a system now in operation whereby the contractor whom the shipowner gets to discharge his ship is also the contractor for the consignee and receives the stuff on the quay?—I know of cases where the man who is discharging the ship under contract with the shipowner is also handling the goods for the consignee.

1739. We call them in Liverpool master stevedores and master porters. The reason why I ask that question is that in the case you were putting you said that the consignee received his own stuff, and I wanted to make it clear that the one man does the two jobs in Liverpool, generally speaking?—I follow.

1740. (*Mr. Larkin.*) I would like to ask what is the basis that the shipowners pay the stevedores on?—It depends on the bargain.

1740a. It must be the measurement or tonnage or piece or day system?—It depends on the individual bargain.

1741. What is it, generally speaking?—Generally speaking, I should say a weight rate.

1742. I want to convince this Committee and also any persons outside that the stevedore, being the agent of the shipowner, would have access to documents to prove what the ship was carrying and the master porter acting for the consignee, would have the actual weight. Somebody between the shipowner and the worker must have the actual weight?—I have said already that somebody must have the actual weight.

1743. (*Chairman.*) So far as the shipowners are concerned, then, you do not propose to call any evidence?—I do not see any necessity for it.

*Mr. J. C.  
Mead.*

*Mr. J. C. MEAD (a Member of the Committee) examined.*

1744. (*Chairman.*) I am very anxious that every branch of the shipping industry should have an opportunity of putting their views before the Committee. Would you tell us what branch of the shipping industry you represent?—Roughly speaking, I represent, I take it, most of the regular lines that utilise the Thames. When I say the Thames, I mean not including, as a rule, the docks, although many of our owners whom I represent at times utilise the docks.

1745. Have you had an opportunity of conferring with them or with their representatives on the matter which this Committee is reviewing?—I hardly occupy that position. I was asked whether I would act as their representative, and, therefore, when I accepted I simply came here representing a certain tonnage to do what I considered was right as an individual.

1746. Would you tell us what that tonnage is?—I should say that the turnover amounts to many million tons a year. I cannot say exactly.

1747. You have been a party to this document which has been handed in, which shows clearly that in principle you agree with the men's demands?—In principle, I think that a case has been shown as to the desirability of some means being found for satisfying the men as to the correctness of the weights upon which they are paid.

1748. You have told us that you are here practically in a representative character and that the people whom you represent will agree to any decision you arrive at?—As I have been requested to represent certain interests, I have no reason for doubting that they will agree to any decision I may be a party to.

*Mr. J.  
Harrington.*

*Mr. JAMES HARRINGTON (a Member of the Committee) examined.*

1749. (*Chairman.*) What is your exact position?—I am Vice-Chairman of the Port of London Master Stevedores' Association.

1750. About how much of the work of the Port of London is done at piece-work rates?—With regard to general cargo I should say about 25 to 30 per cent., and with regard to timber about 80 per cent.

1751. Have you had many complaints from the men with regard to the tonnage they have been paid upon?—Yes, continually.

1752. Now with regard to timber discharging, will you give us some information with regard to that sort

of cargo?—With regard to timber discharging the unloading is practically done day work. The delivery over the side, that is, loading of barges or putting it on to the quay, is done at piece-work rates. It is sublet by the master stevedore to one of the men. The greatest difficulty of timber discharging is to get a return. Although the bills of lading are there they are not correct, invariably not correct, with the consequence that until this timber is stacked on the quay and measured, or delivered to the consignee's barges and delivered to the different wharves and measured, you cannot get a return of what is in the ship.

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1753. Are the stevedores not paid finally until they get a return from the merchant?—That is so.

1754. How do you pay the men?—We take the bills of lading as practically a guide, and keep ourselves on the safe side so that we are not paying them too much.

1755. Do you ever pay them in addition?—We very often pay them over.

1756. When you have paid a certain sum do you ever adjust the accounts and give them the difference?—Yes; on several occasions that has been done.

1757. Would your society consent to giving the men's representatives full information and, if necessary, documents to prove that they had received the full tonnage they had handled?—Certainly.

1758. What is your association's opinion with regard to this inquiry?—They would be perfectly agreeable to a short Act being passed in order to make the men secure. We should feel that our troubles with the men would be finished because they would have the necessary documents and we should be able to pay them the right amount.

1759. Then I understand that you would welcome any such legislation?—Yes, we should.

1760. What is the usual custom in the Port of London when you have had a dispute with the men?—It is referred to the men's association and their representative comes and takes the matter up, and it is mutually settled. If it is not mutually settled we go to the Chamber or London Conciliation Board for arbitration and the matter is finished.

1761. Do you know or have you ever heard of any prosecutions of master stevedores or contractors in London with regard to having deliberately falsified the men's tonnage?—No.

1762. When you have had any disputes with the men have they been adjusted without any necessity for prosecution?—Yes.

1763. I want to know precisely what your association represents?—It is an association formed of just over 40 of the principal master stevedores in the Port of London.

1764. How many master stevedores are there altogether in London?—I should think that there were about 100.

1765. You do not represent quite half?—We represent the principal stevedores of the Port of London. There are a number of small men that we do not recognise as master stevedores at all.

1766. You feel that you speak in a truly representative capacity?—I represent 80 per cent. of the stevedore work.

1767. (*Mr. Larkin.*) What is the reason that stevedores who have substantial backing behind them give away their work on the tonnage basis. There must be some reason for it. These men who are substantial people give it away to people who have no standing, and these are the men whom the difficulty arises with all the time?—I do not think I understand you.

1768. (*Chairman.*) Do you ever sublet your contracts?—It is always done with regard to timber work, but it is sublet to trade union men. With regard to the overside work with a 2,000 or 3,000 ton steamer, there are about 16 men employed, and one takes it on and divides the money amongst the 16. It is really a trades union arrangement.

1769. In subletting the contracts you give the sub-contractors the information which could be handed to the men?—Yes.

1770. (*Mr. Anderson.*) As a matter of fact, is it a sub-contract in the true sense of the word? Is it not rather letting the outside work, as we term it, piece-work?—You may describe it in that way if you like.

1771. The other man does not get any more profit out of it than the men?—No. It is divided amongst the men.

1772. It is all shared equally between the whole of the men?—Yes.

1773. There may be 16, 18, or 20 outside the ship?—Yes; he employs what he thinks is necessary.

1774. And they share it equally?—Yes.

1775. (*Mr. Wignall.*) Your Association of Master Stevedores is confined strictly, I understand, to London?—Yes, London only.

1776. Do you have any difficulty in getting your accounts made up by the shipowner?—No; we get them made up as soon as they get the returns.

1777. What is the average length of time that it takes between the discharge of the cargo and the making of the returns?—We find the greatest time is with timber. It would be two months sometimes before we got a return, not owing to the shipowner's fault, but on account of the consignees not returning the amount of measurement.

1778. You pay the men approximately what you believe the cargo is till you get the measurement?—Yes.

1779. Do you then publish a statement to the men if they ask for it?—Always.

1780. If you found out that you had paid them too much, you would not wait for them to ask?—We should refer it to the union.

1781. If they are underpaid do you apply to them then to come to claim the money?—I do not know.

1782. (*Mr. Bellhouse.*) It may be two months, you say, before you get the details of the timber?—Yes.

1783. Do you keep a record of the actual labourers who worked on the ship that is unloaded?—Yes, a daily record.

1784. You always have a record?—Yes.

1785. (*Mr. Anderson.*) In the case where a complete list is not kept of the whole of the men, you have a record of those who have charge of the gangs?—Yes. You mean with regard to the outside work?

1786. Yes?—Yes.

1787. So you would have no difficulty in finding the men if any balance was due to them?—No. It could be done through me.

1788. If this Act passes?—It would be a most satisfactory way that the delegate of the men should see the returns, and if there is any balance to take, the delegate should take it and divide it among the men.

1789. (*Mr. Bellhouse.*) Would you object to keeping a register of outstanding ships which would be available for inspection by the Factory Inspector?—No; I should be perfectly agreeable to that.

1790. (*Chairman.*) I understand that you do not wish to call any evidence?—I do not think so. We are perfectly in agreement on the whole matter.

## FIFTH DAY.

Thursday, 27th February 1908.

PRESENT:

ERNEST F. G. HATCH, Esq. (Chairman).

JAMES ANDERSON, Esq. (Amalgamated Stevedores' Labour Protection League).

GERALD BELLHOUSE, Esq. (one of His Majesty's Inspectors of Factories).

C. W. GORDON, Esq. (Gordon Steam Shipping Company).

THOMAS HARDY, Esq. (Manager of the London and India Docks Company).

JAMES HARRINGTON, Esq. (London Master Stevedores' Association).

JAMES LARKIN, Esq. (National Union of Dock Labourers).

J. C. MEAD, Esq. (of Messrs. Mead, Son, and Hussey, Shipowners).

J. LLOYD MORGAN, Esq., K.C., M.P.

H. ORBELL, Esq. (Dock, Wharf, Riverside, and General Workers' Union).

J. HERBERT SCRUTTON, Esq. (of Messrs. Scrutton, Sons & Co., Shipowners).

JAMES SEXTON, Esq. (National Union of Dock Labourers).

JAMES WIGNALL, Esq. (Dock, Wharf, Riverside, and General Workers' Union).

Mr. JAMES HURMAN called and examined.

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1791. (*Chairman.*) I understand that you are the Superintendent of the Cardiff Railway Company?—Yes, and the Bute Docks.

1792. The company owns the Bute Docks, Cardiff, does it not?—Yes.

1793. By whom are the men engaged in loading or unloading at these docks employed?—By the Cardiff Railway Company now. The dock company is merged into the railway company.

1794. Are they ever engaged by stevedores?—No, not for coal-tipping. There are men engaged by stevedores on other work.

1795. What other work is that?—Discharging iron ore, loading rails, plates, and general work of that kind—chiefly iron ore and pit wood.

1796. Does the dock company confine itself entirely to loading and unloading coal?—No. We load rails and plates at times ourselves by our own men by piece-work, and the stevedores' labour is done by day-work. There is no piece-work there or tonnage work. The only tonnage work we have is the coal at so much per 100 tons for the men.

1797. I wanted to get at that. The only tonnage work at the Cardiff Docks, I understand, is in connection with coal?—No, I cannot say that, because the iron ore is paid by ton.

1798. Kindly tell us what you handle?—Take coal first. The coal is brought down in freighters' trucks and remains on the railway company's sidings or our sidings until required for shipment. The order is then given by the merchant to tip the coals into certain vessels. The railway companies or ourselves bring the coal forward on to the tip sidings, and it is there marshalled as required for mixing or for whatever else the merchant requires, and the coal is tipped into the vessel. There are three roads, as a rule, leading to the staith sidings. Before getting to the staiths they have to pass the coal over a weighing machine which is kept in order by ourselves, and by Pooley and Sons, who do this by contract.

1799. Pooley and Company being —?—Being the medium for the proper testing of the accuracy of the machines.

• 1800. Are they the makers of the machines?—Yes. As a rule the coal-tipping machines are maintained by them. We have machines of other makers. Messrs. Pooley keep a staff on the ground for the purpose of testing the machines every morning. It is rather peculiar in South Wales ports. Taking Newport, going down southward to Cardiff, Penarth, Barry, Port Talbot, and Swansea, all these docks do their work under similar

circumstances; that is, they pay the men per 100 tons. We have two methods of tipping coal—by crane and by fixed tips and by movable tips. The men are engaged by the company, and form a gang of three men to the cranes and four men to the tips; they select amongst themselves, subject to our approval, the better class men to undertake the weighing.

1801. What do you mean by "undertake the weighing"?—They do the weighing themselves and are paid upon their own weight. It is the same process. They weigh and tip. The first operation is weighing. The weigher then assists in turning the waggon on to a turntable, and it goes on to a cradle to the fixed tip and it is lifted up by hydraulic power. Three men perform that work. The other system is the Lewis and Hunter system. There the waggons are tipped into a receptacle five feet below the ground level; this large hopper holding eight or ten tons as required is lifted from a pit on board of the vessel and dropped into the hold of the vessel.

1802. Are these men employed by the dock company?—They are the servants of and are paid by the dock company, but they are the medium between three parties. They are paid by piece-work.

1803. Would you please put it a little more simply; I only want to know whether these men are employed entirely by the dock company?—Yes.

1804-5. They are never employed by contractors?—Never.

1806. Is there any objection to the men having the right to appoint a checkweighman?—I will answer that question by saying that they are their own checkweighmen.

1807. But is there any objection to having that right by legal enactment?—I should say yes; it would be very detrimental to the interests of the trade and is not required. It would be a man upon a man.

1808. Would you kindly tell us in what way it would be detrimental to the trade?—It would stultify the ordinary course of the weighing, and the man might have the power to interfere unnecessarily. Our men do not ask for this kind of thing.

1809-10. But the principle of allowing the men a legal right to appoint checkweighmen has been given in all coal mines?—That is so because the difference is so very apparent. The coal is worked down at the bottom of the earth and worked up, and the men down below have no knowledge of what becomes of that. The checkweigher at the top is the instrument of their being paid rightly, but with us the men are themselves the instruments of their own payments.

1811. What objection is there to allowing the men to have as legal right what you give them as a customary arrangement?—I cannot answer for other people, but with regard to ourselves I have a strong objection.

1812. What difference would it make to the working of your system?—The difference is that we should have a man there doing nothing. The weigher makes his own return to the merchant, to the ship, to the dock company, and to himself; and a fourth man there would be a useless man.

1813. If the men were satisfied they would not wish to appoint a checkweighman?—But there is nothing to satisfy them upon.

1814. But if the men were satisfied, as you say they are, then there would be no object in the men appointing a checkweighman?—No; that is what I say; that is my contention. There is no object.

1815. So that there could be no objection to their having a right which they would have no reason to exercise?—As a dock company we have objection to a man loafing about our premises and going in seeing what may be wanted or required.

1816. You know that in all cases of checkweighmen if a man is not behaving himself he can be summarily removed?—But we do not want to have any objectionable men or even a person who would be objectionable. He is not required.

1817. In every trade that we have investigated there is no objection at all in principle to allowing the men to have the right to appoint checkweighmen?—I do not object to the principle of a body of men who cannot control the work themselves having someone to look after their interests, but here it is totally different. We have to trust to the men themselves. A man weighs a waggon. It contains 20 tons of coal, say. The net weight is taken, and he is paid on that himself, and we accept his weight and the merchant accepts his weight.

1818. Yes, but I cannot see that giving him the legal right to do what you let him do to-day without a legal right is going to interfere with your work?—We have 62 tips and to force 62 men to remain in idleness on our property I think would be objectionable.

1819. But do not you see that the men would not exercise the power unless they thought it necessary. The checkweighmen would be paid by the men, and they would not go to the expense of appointing them unless they thought it necessary?—I do not think that our men, or any men in South Wales ports, require a checkweigher. He is a useless article.

1820. Then if he is not wanted, and the men are satisfied, they will not appoint him. Any provision will be purely permissive?—Yes, but we do not want to give the men power to bring men on our dock just when they think proper. It is our property, not the men's.

1821. But the principle has been conceded in other industries?—As far as I am concerned, with reference to the dock company I object to the principle.

1822. You object?—Certainly. I do not concede it, because it is unnecessary.

1823. I do not think that you have brought forward any argument to show us that it would be detrimental to the interests of your dock company?—Well, I give you the facts as to what is taking place day by day.

1824. You have only given us the fact that the men are satisfied?—Yes, and I also give my own opinion that I think an additional man to stand doing nothing

1825. But, excuse me, the additional man would not be appointed unless the men were dissatisfied. You say that the men are satisfied, and that if they had the chance of checking the weights they would refuse the power that Parliament might give them?—I see your contention, but I want to be fair to you and fair to the men. The checkweigher would be an abstraction from the men's wages. He must be paid by somebody. The dock company would not pay him.

1826. That is the men's business and they would not appoint checkweighmen unless they thought it

necessary. You say that they do the checking themselves?—Yes.

1827. We could not, as a Committee, recommend that one particular industry should be exempt from any Act of Parliament. If the men are to have a legal right to appoint checkweighmen in some cases, we must include all similar cases?—We are the people that pay the men and we are the people that find the capital, and we ought to have some voice in the matter of how our work should be done, without having men forced on us.

1828. You accept the principle, I understand, that the men should have the right of knowing the weights which they handle?—Speaking for myself and our own docks, they have the right now, but I do not accept the principle of an additional man.

1829. Do you accept the principle that the men should have the right to know the weights which they handle?—Not by an outside party, because they have it themselves. I must protect myself.

1830. But, please, answer the question. Do you accept the principle that the men should have the right to know the weights which they handle?—Not in my particular case; I object to it.

1831. You do not think they ought to have the right to know the weights that they handle?—Not so far as I particularly am concerned, and the work I am responsible for.

1832. Surely it is common justice?—I am perfectly willing to be just and reasonable, but I am not willing to have some one imposed on me that the men or myself do not want. I cannot give any other reply.

1833. I have pointed out that if they do not want a checkweighman they will not impose one?—I do not want any one to have the power to enforce it.

1834. Would you yourself object to having anyone about the works if the men wanted to know exactly what the weights were?—I cannot accept that. The men make the weights themselves now, and to have another man loafing about (because he would be loafing on our premises, I put it broadly) I object to.

1835. Now I will ask you about French pit wood. You say in your letter that the importer discharges the pit wood from the vessels into the coal waggons?—Yes.

1836. Whom do you mean by the importer?—The man that buys the timber in France.

1837. Does he employ the men engaged in loading the wood?—Yes; that is day-work. We have nothing to do with that.

1838. Is it weighed on the dock company's machines?—Yes; after being loaded it is weighed.

1839. Does the dock company employ the weighmen?—Yes.

1840. Does the dock company give a return of the weights to the employer of the men?—They do not give them, but the men see them for themselves. The foreman who has the discharging of each ship goes to the machine and takes the weight. A copy of the invoice is taken by the importer and merchant. It follows the traffic, and on that the importer gets paid by the merchant.

1841. Does the buyer accept the weights taken by the dock company?—He does.

1842. In regard to Norwegian timber are the men paid piece-work in unloading?—Paid by the day, not piece-work.

1843. Now with regard to grain cargoes, in bulk? Who employs the men engaged in discharging the grain?—Two parties. Spillers and Baker, who import very largely, have their own "bushellers," as we call them, in the hold of the vessel. They load the corn into bags. It is brought up by men on to the deck and there weighed.

1844. Who employs the men engaged on the grain? In some cases we undertake the work, and in some cases Spillers do it themselves.

1845. They have their own bushellers, you say?—Yes.

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1846. Are the bushellers and the carriers employed by the same person?—Yes, at times.

1847. Is the grain weighed at the dock?—On the deck of the vessel.

1848. Is the weighman employed by the dock company?—In some instances, and in some instances by the importer.

1849. Does the company give a return of the weights to the employer of the men?—The men take them themselves. We take the weight from the men.

1850. Have the men access to the returns?—Yes. It is on their own return that the invoices are made up. The weights are ascertained by the men themselves, who have a machine on the deck. They enter them in their books, and so they have them.

1851. With regard to grain in bags, is the same system adopted in dealing with this kind of cargo?—Yes. The grain is brought up and taken on the machine on the vessel and weighed and taken by the carriers over the side of the vessel into the warehouses.

1852. With regard to general cargoes I understand that the men are paid day wages for general cargo, except when handling timber and deal?—Yes, in every instance.

1853. Who employs the men engaged in unloading these cargoes?—The dock company does.

1854. Are the men paid by the standard?—Yes, by the standard. That is, in discharging from the vessel to the rail and from there on it is paid by day-work.

1855. I am only speaking of tonnage rates. Do they receive so much on account?—Yes.

1856. In other words is there any adjustment afterwards?—They receive so much on account until the whole of the cargo is discharged and taken into the different yards and rearranged. They are in different lengths, and they are put into 12 feet lengths or 14 feet lengths to arrive at the standard, and on that the men are paid. In the meantime the adjustment is made as nearly as possible. Sometimes the master stevedore loses by the transaction, and the next time he pays more than he ought to pay.

1857. In cases where they do not get the exact standard is there any adjustment afterwards?—Yes, there is a readjustment between the men and the stevedore on ascertaining from the timber merchant against the manifest of the vessel as to the quantity of standards on board.

1858. The shipowner is not paid, I suppose, until the measure is accurately ascertained?—No. The vessel is paid on the ascertained manifest tonnage.

1859. Does the dock company receive any payment in respect of these cargoes?—Only in the shape of dock dues and wharfage charges.

1860. How are these payments calculated?—They are calculated on the registered tonnage of the vessel.

1861. And dues on the goods?—Dues on the goods in that instance. The coal is paid for on actual shipments.

1862. The dock dues are on the registered tonnage?—They are on the registered tonnage.

1863. How is the number of standards ascertained at present for the purpose of paying the men?—By the manifest, in the first instance. It gives them a guide. And then there is a man on the deck who is a counter, and he takes account of what passes over. The men are pretty accurate on their own behalf to find out how many standards have passed over the rail. Until the whole of the cargo is discharged, if it remains on our trucks, not getting into the yard for days and weeks, and the account is outstanding, there is difficulty in our getting the weight from the merchants.

1864. In those cases the men are not paid until those weights are received from the merchant?—Not in some cases.

1865. Therefore they get so much on account and the rest is adjusted when those weights are received from the merchant?—When the delivery is effected and the standards are arranged they find out how many standards have been received.

1866. Have you ever heard the men complain that they do not get the full weight?—No. I have instances where stevedores have paid more money and have failed to get it back again.

1867. You have never heard the converse?—No, I have never heard the converse.

1868. (Mr. Hardy.) Your idea is, I take it, that if there were checkweighmen appointed it would be surplusage altogether?—Entirely.

1869. And although the men would have to pay for their own checkweigher in some form or other, at some time or other, that having been an expense of the work it would fall back on the employer?—I think that the ultimate result would be that we should have to pay for it.

1870. Would you mind if the men themselves agreed to the weigher that you employed?—He is the checkweigher now.

1871. But he is the man that you appoint?—Yes.

1872. Would you mind if you had to get the men's consent to the appointment of that particular man to do the weighing?—Yes, I should, because I think he would not do what the present weigher does, that is, assist in tipping the coal. He would be merely a weigher pure and simple.

1873. I quite see your point. You say that another man would be surplusage, and somehow or other he would have to be paid for?—Yes, and would be detrimental to the work.

1874. That I quite understand, but would you have any objection to the men nominating the man who is now doing the work and letting him do what he now does?—That is done at the present moment. The men select the weigher amongst themselves and pass him on to us to accept.

1875. You do not object to that?—Not to the present principle, but I do object to having a man that I do not employ.

1876. I follow all that. I quite see that it might be a waste of money to put another man there, and in the long run the extra expense would fall on the dock company?—Yes.

1877. I want to know whether you would object to the men employed in the work assenting to this particular weigher?—No, because we assent to it now.

1878. (Mr. Lloyd Morgan.) Supposing that the men were not satisfied with the particular man who did the weighing, how could they get rid of him?—By reporting to me some irregularity. We do not discharge a man because another man complains or else it would be a very sorry thing.

1879. Take it that there was some reasonable complaint, that the man was careless, or that something had happened through which the weights were not properly given?—I should discharge him if I found the complaint a proper one and useful one.

1880. You would hold a kind of inquiry?—I should satisfy myself and make the men prove what they said against the man. Every man must have fair play.

1881. Supposing that after having made that inquiry you came to the conclusion that you were not satisfied that there was anything in the men's complaint, supposing you thought that the men's complaint was groundless, would you, in that case, object to their appointing another man to satisfy themselves as to the weight?—But I should not want another man if I retained him.

1882. I am afraid you do not follow me?—I do. You first of all must get rid of that man.

1883. But the men cannot get rid of him?—I can get rid of him.

1884. I know that, but the men cannot get rid of him. Take it, first of all, that the men are not satisfied, and in the second place you refuse to get rid of him?—Without just cause?

1885. Let us say simply that you refuse to get rid of him. Would you in that case be willing for the men to appoint some one else to check the weights?—And I am to employ the man they appoint?

1886. Yes?—I should object.

1887. (*Mr. Hardy.*) If the men are dissatisfied with this particular weigher, and yet he is wronging them, would you mind putting a man on that would satisfy them?—In all probability I should remove the man to another machine and bring another man from another machine there. I should ring the changes.

1888. I perfectly follow your objection to having a man there as checkweigher who is surplusage and has to be paid by somebody and, no doubt, eventually has to be paid by the dock company. He is an unnecessary man, that I quite follow; but what I do wish to know is whether you would have any objection to satisfying the men as to the man that you put there?—In what way must I satisfy them? You put a question to me which I cannot follow.

1889. If they think that that man is wronging them, would you have any objection to putting another man there?—I am assuming three men. I should have objection to putting a fourth man as a check, but I should take such action as would prevent the other two men having cause to complain of the third man by removing him and putting another man in his place.

1890. Substituting another man?—Yes.

1891. If you had Jones at the weighbridge, and Smith in the gang objected, and said, "He is not giving the correct weights," you would not mind putting another man there and giving Jones a chance somewhere else?—That is what I should do if I thought that Jones was doing what was wrong.

1892. (*Mr. Lloyd Morgan.*) If the other gang would not have him or did not want him, what would you do then?—I cannot suppose that. They would have to.

1893. (*Mr. Anderson.*) Has it ever been done?—No.

1894. (*Mr. Mead.*) With regard to grain, it is weighed on the ship's deck?—Yes.

1895. Who supplies those weighers—I do not quite understand?—We do.

1896. As a dock company?—In some instances, and the importer in others. When they undertake the work themselves they supply their own men.

1897. Are those weights checked at all?—They are checked, because sacks, as a rule, hold five bushels, and within a shade either up or down the men themselves know the weight by the fact of the sacks holding five bushels.

1898. I did not quite mean that. You specially mentioned Spillers and Baker. They get cargoes from Ralli Brothers, I suppose. They are in the habit, are they not, of sending somebody down to check the weight?—Always standing on the deck, but they do not weigh.

1899. Do they check the weight taken by the man appointed?—Yes. Spillers would have a man there.

1900. The weight is checked by the seller?—And the buyer in his own interest.

1901. There is a check as far as buyer and seller are concerned. How do the men arrive at the weight, is it passed on to them?—They make up the weight themselves of their own working.

1902. How can they do that?—Every sack is entered in a book by the men themselves.

1903. Do the men put some one there to check the weights?—No. The man who weighs is part and parcel of the men who are paid on those weights.

1904. Who appoints him?—In Spillers' case he is appointed by Spillers, and in our case by us.

1905. He may be one of the men, but he is not appointed by the men themselves. Have they any choice in the man put there to check those weights?—No, I do not think they have.

1906. I understood you to say with regard to timber that the basis of payment was the ship's manifest?—With regard to the dock company, but the standard discharged from the ship is the basis of payment on which the men receive payment.

1907. I am coming to that. The basis on which you pay in the first instance is the manifest?—It is gathered from the manifest. It is an assumed figure.

1908. The actual payment, or the actual standard capacity, is only arrived at after the timber has been piled in the receiver's yards?—Yes, or at our own yards.

1909. Take the case now of a receiver's yard. You say that the pieces are put in their various lengths, and so on. Are you absolutely bound to accept the measurements given to you by the receiver?—Yes, we have no check upon them. We know the number of deals upon every truck. They are loaded on trucks from the ship's side.

1910. That is not my point. I want to know about the measurement. With regard to payment on standard capacity, are there no means offered by the receiver for having the measurement checked?—Not until the trucks are in his yard and discharged and the timber sorted.

1911. When they are in the yard and discharged does anybody have an opportunity of checking the measurements?—They would have an opportunity if they went to a yard. Take Bland and Company, who are large people. After a cargo has been discharged a fortnight or three weeks after the vessel has sailed before they can take the whole of the deals in and sort them into sizes, and into lengths, they are put together and I suppose they ascertain that there is a pile of so many deals of 12 feet and so many of 14, and they reduce them to standards.

1912. The consignee does that, the receiver?—Yes.

1913. Has nobody the opportunity of checking that?—I cannot answer.

1914. The standard capacity arrived at for freight and labour purposes is a capacity which is not found on delivery from the steamer, but is found after it has been piled in the receiver's yards?—That is my impression.

1915. (*Mr. Bellhous.*) With regard to pit wood you said that the men can go to the weighhouse and see the weight?—Yes.

1916. That is simply by grace. They have no right to go there?—We feel that they have a right.

1917. They have no legal right at any rate; it is only a moral right. It is by your permission at present?—It is by practice, and it has got into legality, if I may use the word.

1918. But you could, as a matter of fact, forbid them?—We could certainly.

1919. Would you object to that being made a legal right?—Not in the particular instance, because I do not think it would stultify the work.

1920. Your present arrangements apparently are entirely satisfactory both to yourselves and to the men with regard to coal. To take a case where there is dispute between you and the men and you say: "No, I will appoint the weighman in future, and he shall not be one of your gang at all," would you object then to their having a checkweighman supposing they did not make their own weight?—You must not ask me to suppose a thing of that kind.

1921. But there are heaps of cases of that sort in the country. I am asking as a matter of principle?—I am not aware of them and I object to the principle.

1922. You object to it?—Yes.

1923. To go to ordinary timber, there are often, you told us, weeks of delay before the outstanding accounts can be adjusted?—Two or three weeks probably.

1924. Is any register of outstanding accounts of that sort kept?—Yes, it is kept by the stevedores. I should have given a little further explanation; all the deals are loaded on to trucks. Sometimes they are dumped on the ground. If they are dumped on the ground for the sake of despatch they are reloaded into trucks. The stevedore or the foreman takes the number of every truck that passes from the dock side waiting delivery to the timber merchant. I am not quite sure of my ground but I should imagine that they would follow the timber to the yard and find out the delivery from each truck.

1925. That is a little more than I intended. I want to know whether you would have any objection with

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regard to your own men to keeping a register in some form to be prescribed by the Secretary of State, say, showing the date upon which you receive the particulars upon which you are paid, and the date upon which the particulars are supplied to the foreman of the men?—That is a broad question. I should require to know what the Secretary of State would propose before I could answer that.

1926. Supposing he says you shall keep a register in which you shall enter the date at which you receive the particulars on which you are paid and also enter the date upon which you give those particulars to the workmen on which his wages are based, have you any objection to keeping a register of that sort?—We keep the register now.

1927. Assuming that these suggestions became law and had to be administered by some Government department or local department, as the case may be, would you have any objection to that register being open to inspection by an officer of that department, or even I may go further and say by a duly appointed representative of the men?—No, not if he was duly appointed by the men, but except by appointment of the men I should object to any outsider.

1928. You do not want anybody to come in, but you do not mind a proper representative of the men, and you would not object, I take it, to a Government official?—I do not know. I rather think that I should.

1929. You would?—Yes. You see we do not want our privacy or the relations between our customer and ourselves placed in the hands of everybody.

1930. That does not enter into it. It is merely a question between yourselves and your workmen as to whether you give them the particulars of the weights or not?—If our particulars were not correct at the present moment, I should not object to their coming to me and saying, "We are not satisfied; allow us to look at the weighings."

1931. You would not object?—No; that is fair.

1932. You do keep registers and so on that are open to the Government inspector now?—We have the Factory Act inspector upon us and we have others that we get on very well with.

1933. (Mr. Sexton). Mr. Hardy put a question, to you that eventually the price of the checkweighman would fall upon the dock company?—It is an unknown matter as to how it would work.

1934. I wanted to know how that was calculated. You always hear when the men are overpaid?—Yes.

1935. Have you never heard of their being underpaid?—I have never heard of their being underpaid.

1936. Has it never occurred?—No; I think that the men are quite capable of looking after themselves, and they are not underpaid because they get subs, as you know, at different times. Sometimes they are over-subbed and it is very difficult to get anything back when they are over-subbed.

1937. Does it not occur to you that they may be underpaid at times?—If they are underpaid, I expect that they get paid by some means or other. They would make the stevedore pay up.

1938. You said that checkweighmen would be detrimental to the work because it would be necessary to appoint 62. Why would it be necessary to do that?—Because we have 62 tips.

1939. But does it follow that with 62 tips you would want 62 checkweighmen?—Yes. We tip a wagon in 2½ minutes. He could not walk from one tip to another to check the weights.

1940. Take it from me it would not be the intention of the men to employ 62 checkweighmen?—Then it would not be a proper record on the part of the men. While the checkweighman was away, if they liked, they could enter in wrong weights. The checkweighman is a man there to prevent any irregularity, I take it.

1941. Supposing that the men had the chance of appointing one checkweighman for the 62 tips, would you have any objection?—It would be like a drop in the ocean.

1942. But I am asking you if you would have any objection?—Yes. I have an objection on principle. The same thing applies to one as to the whole.

1943. You say that the stevedore checks the trucks?—The stevedore's foreman—the man that is on the ground.

1944. Who employs the stevedores; do you?—No, not in every instance.

1945. In any instance are they employed by you?—In some instances they are.

1946. Do they check the trucks, then?—Yes, certainly.

1947. Why?—The same principle applies. We do the work for so much money, and the stevedore arranges with us to do the work for so much money.

1948. Do they check the trucks to see whether you pay them the right weight?—The same principle applies if the outsider employs them or the importers themselves.

1949. May I take it that they do not trust you?—They will not trust anybody.

1950. But the men are to trust everybody?—The men take an account themselves.

1951. Is not that an unfair position to place the men in?—I do not think so.

1952. A stevedore has the right to check because he does not trust you, and the men have no right to check?—That is your language, not mine.

1953. Why does the stevedore check?—To satisfy himself of what he shall pay the men.

1954. He will not take your word?—We do not give the word. It is not in our hands.

1955. Why does he check the trucks?—To ascertain what quantity has passed over the side.

1956. And to see that they get the correct weight?—To see that they get the correct weight from the merchant after the discharging.

1957. To see that they get the correct weight from those who employ them?—Yes.

1958. You do not extend the same right to the men?—They are paid by day-work.

1959. You said that they were paid by standard?—Yes—or by standard.

1960. (Mr. Larkin.) Have you had a varied experience as manager of a dock company?—I have had 35 years' experience.

1961. In case there is any difficulty on a question on tonnage, the men would have to apply to you, I take it?—You must particularise the tonnage.

1962. Supposing there was a discrepancy in the amount paid, and the men said, "You have not paid us sufficient for these standards" or "this coal," they would have to come to you to make complaint?—No. You do not quite understand. The men themselves make up the tonnage.

1963. I want to understand you?—I am telling you what the men do. The men make up the tonnage themselves, and they themselves make up their slip as to what they should get.

1964. Supposing that there was some difference between them and the weigher, who is the person they would have to appeal to?—To me.

1965. And you have the right to decide the question?—Yes, and I have never had an appeal yet.

1966. (Mr. Wignall.) I have been very interested in your evidence, which, I think, has been a very fair statement. Now, you spoke about outsiders. Would you consider a duly appointed paid official of a trade union an outsider, who had no right to inquire into the weights of the men?—Yes, I should.

1967. And you would refuse to acknowledge him, and you would refuse to give him any information?—Yes, I should.

1968. As a rule, your company are very unsympathetic towards organised labour; is not that so?—I cannot answer that question.

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1969. We have cleared up the ground with regard to that, because your previous answer has already answered it. With regard to coal, I did not think that this Committee, after the evidence given, was going very largely into the question, but as a matter of fact, all that you have said with reference to the payment and conditions of labour applies merely to the hoistman, the tipper, and the weighman?—It applies to all the men who deal with coal shipments.

1970. Do you employ the trimmers?—No.

1971. Do you pay the trimmers?—No.

1972. So that my first question is right. The men that you employ are the tippers and the hoistmen and the men employed round about the tip?—Yes; on the ground.

1973. So that the trimmers are a body of men very, very much larger than the tippers and hoistmen and so on, and they have to be paid according to the weights?—By the merchant who employs them, or rather the foreman who employs the gang. He looks after the weights.

1974. All the coal is weighed before going into the ship on your weighbridge?—Yes; that is evidence of contract between the seller and the buyer.

1975. Is it not a fact that a printed notice is posted in the weigh offices, and that they are not allowed to give a copy of the weights to any person or people who apply for them?—No.

1976. Has ever such a notice been posted up?—No, but your question leads to another. I will tell you what we do. What is allowed and what is done is either the captain or the chief mate goes into the weighing office and verifies the weights as they are taken when and how he thinks proper. That is done for the purpose of trimming to some extent, and the foreman trimmer does the same thing. If he puts into the middle hold 2,000 tons a mark is made, or the weigher makes it when the hold is finished and ascertains the weight. The mate goes to the captain to see how he shall trim his vessel.

1977. But you can instruct the weighman in your employ to refuse to give a copy of the weights to the trimmers if you so desire; it is within your right?—I cannot answer in that way, because we do not desire. The foreman trimmer is continually about the vessel and is bound to be there to give orders as to what coal shall be shipped, and he has the *entrées* to the machine and gets his weights.

1978. Under present conditions there is not much to complain about in the Bristol Channel as far as coal tipping and shipping is concerned. I have admitted that from the first and I will admit it now. The present system is almost perfect if it will continue?—Why do you say if it will continue?

1979. Because the trimmers are not in your employ at all, and they are dependent on those weights?—Yes, subject to their foreman satisfying himself as to the accuracy.

1980. Have they no other means of checking the tonnage?—No.

1981. Then it is at present a mere act of courtesy for them to get a copy of the weights?—I do not suppose that they have any right. It is by courtesy, and we are very courteous and give the weights.

1982. You object to making the courtesy into a legal act?—In that sense, yes.

1983. That is the crux of the whole thing. The foreman is not employed by you at all?—No.

1984. He is employed by the shipper?—Yes, by the merchant—the shipper.

1985. You made a statement a moment ago in reply to a question. You said that the men appoint the weigher and he is one of themselves?—They select the man and he is recommended to us. To give an instance, supposing a weigher gets ill or dies or goes out of the way the other men say they would like to have so-and-so appointed. If he is a scholar and equal to doing the work we have no objection.

1986. You limit it to the weighers themselves?—Certainly, because they are the people interested.

1987. That is the distinction. They are a complete body in the employ. When you say "the men" you mean only the weighers; you do not touch the trimmers?—Certainly. There is no object in their being under our control.

1988. Would you respect the right of the trimmers to recommend a man?—If he was a good man we would put him on.

1989. You would resent the right of the trimmers to interfere?—Certainly. We want to control our own work.

1990. I thought you said that at Cardiff you did nearly all the work?—No, I did not, indeed.

1991. I am glad you correct that. That was what was conveyed to my mind. Outside of coal and timber you say that nearly the whole of the work is done by stevedores or contractors or importers except the supervision by the dock company?—That is right. The contractor deals with all the Norway timber and the importer deals with his own French pit wood.

1992. You have nothing to do with the work with regard to grain, mineral, iron ore, exports of rails, iron, steel, and so on?—Wherever it is necessary to weigh over our machines any of the traffic we are the medium between the buyer and the seller.

1993. You know the names of Jellings, Fletcher, Gray, and Stephens?—Yes; they are all stevedores and take up work from the outside people irrespective of us.

1994. They are all respectable men—you understand that—I only mention the names to show that they are contractors at the dock?—Yes.

1995. With regard to the province of these men you never interfere?—Yes, sometimes when it is necessary.

1996. Do you know whether the men are satisfied with the tonnage they receive when they are employed by those men?—No, no complaint is ever made to me of any dissatisfaction existing between them.

1997. You said just now that the men were satisfied?—I say that because I get no complaints.

1998. But would the men employed by any one of this list of names come to you to complain?—No, I do not suppose they would.

1999. The trimmers would not come to you?—They would have the right to come if they liked.

2000. But would they come as a matter of fact?—If they had a complaint, because I am the one to be appealed to. I am the medium between the men and the contractor.

2001. The contractors take the work, employ the men, pay the men, and in every sense of the word are the employers of the men?—Even the stevedore cannot do as he likes on the dock. He is subject to our supervision. As I said just now, I often have to take up matters that are wrong.

2002. That we accept, as a matter of course. They are there by your permission, but 101 complaints could occur in a week and you would have no knowledge of them at all?—Certainly not—if they are not brought to me I should not.

2003. And the men employed by these contractors may be a very large number and be full of dissatisfaction and you would have no knowledge of it?—You are assuming something now.

2004. But, as a matter of fact, it is not possible?—It is possible. Everything is possible. If the men have cause to complain they know where to appeal to.

2005. When you say that they are satisfied you base your knowledge on the tippers and the weighmen and the few who are directly in your employ?—No, excuse me, I base my reply on the whole of the work of the dock in every section.

2006. Have you ever had communication made to you that the men have been underpaid in their tonnage rates?—What men?

2007. Say discharging iron ore, the men have complained that they are not paid on the full tonnage handled, and after investigation a balance has been paid to them which proves the reason of their complaint?—I am not aware of that.

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2008. If the men made a statement you would assume that it was true because you had nothing to prove the contrary?—It would hardly be in my province. Iron ore is discharged by the importers at their own wharves, and by a stevedore, therefore it is outside my province to know if there is any dispute. I have knowledge by reason of differences with our company as to their method of doing their work. That is what you refer to, do you not?

2009. That is exactly the point I was getting at. You have answered the question exactly as I understand it to be?—I am not responsible for that; that is outside the dock.

2010. The number of men employed by the contractors is very large, especially in the summer time?—Yes.

2011. And very much larger than the number of men you employ yourselves?—No, I will not say that. You are particularising the iron ore business. That is not very large.

2012. You particularised iron ore, not I. Taking the general dock work at the busy season, the number of men employed by the contractors would be in excess of the number of men employed by your company direct?—Only in one particular, and that is the Norway timber. In everything else we are the larger employers. We have not discharged iron ore for some time by our own labour, but it is done at our wharf.

2013. But you do not follow my question. Taking the general imports and exports except coal, including the Norway timber?—Do you classify under that the coal trimmers?

2014. No. Leaving coal out altogether I said?—We employ the larger number.

2015. You state that?—I do.

2016. Would you be surprised if I said that in my opinion the larger number is employed by the contractors?—I should be surprised, excepting the Norway timber.

2017. Leaving that out?—I make that exception. In other respects we are the larger employers.

2018. Would you contradict any statement coming from the men that there is general dissatisfaction among the men and that they are anxious, especially in Cardiff more than in any other port in South Wales, to get the legal right to ascertain the tonnage handled?—As I sit here now and with the knowledge which I possess I deny that they are dissatisfied.

2019. You have admitted that your knowledge is limited to very few men who have no right to be dissatisfied?—I admit nothing of the kind.

2020. The men employed on Swedish and Norwegian timber are paid day-work rate and it would not apply to them. The men employed on the French pit wood you do not employ and they are paid by piece-work and you cannot say anything about them. The men employed on iron ore are paid piece-work and you do not employ them?—Only rarely.

2021. Very, very rarely indeed?—Quite right.

2022. So rarely that you cannot remember when it occurred last?—You must not make a statement of that kind. You test my memory. Last week we discharged a vessel by our own men.

2023. Up to recently that was done by contractors?—We have always done that for one firm. Sometimes we have seven or eight vessels in for them. Their wharf will only take four, and they come back to our wharf and we do the work then. It happens continually.

2024. I take it that those who do the surplus amount of work for the Dowlais people are employed direct?— is the man.

2025. He employs those men and pays them?—Yes, and we pay him.

2026. Does he compensate the men in case of injury?—Yes.

2027. Would it surprise you if I said this is the first time I ever knew, or the men knew, that he was in your employ for this particular class of work?—You say so; I do not admit it.

2028. It would surprise you?—It would surprise me, certainly.

2029. Do you know that the men have always recognised him as their direct employer?—Yes, the contractor engages the men, and finds all necessary labour, reducing his proportion to less than 2d. For instance, we pay him 10d., not 1s.

2030. I understand the principle. You have never had information conveyed to you of any disputes between him and his men?—No.

2031. That surprises me. If the men came to you next week and asked for a copy of the returns of a particular boat, would you give it to the men, as against this contractor?—No, I do not think I should.

2032. (Mr. Harrington.) With regard to the timber boats you first of all pay these men out on the manifest weight?—Yes. They ascertain as near as they can as they discharge what they discharge, and they get subs until the final return.

2033. With regard to the final return, what is your experience?—It does not affect the company. It is a matter between the stevedore, the men, and the merchant. It does not come through our books at all. It is an outside arrangement between parties.

2034. They work up from the manifest first of all?—Yes.

2035. Do you find that the steamers turn out invariably short?—Not invariably; they do sometimes. A dock cargo may get lost and so on. There are many things to account for it, but that does not come into my province really with regard to inquiring into it.

2036. When you have the measurements at the finish, if the steamer is supposed to have had 900 standards in her you have very seldom found out that she had 905 or 906?—I cannot answer that in the affirmative. It does not affect us. It is between other parties. We are paid dock dues on the registered tonnage of the vessel, and the gross cargo is no element as far as we are concerned with regard to ascertaining its value or its number; that is between other people.

2037. (Mr. Wignall.) Have you ever had knowledge of a case where the contractor complained that he had overpaid the men and recovered the money from the men?—I had better give you a statement received from the contractor previously mentioned on that point. He writes to me, "In several cases the ship has turned out less than the actual bill of lading quantities, and although payment has been made on less than the bill of lading quantity the difference has caused a loss to the stevedore. In one case, 68 standards were overpaid by the stevedore; in another, 22 standards, and in another, 14 standards, the stevedore, being unable to get any of the overpayment back from the men. On the other hand, when the out-turn is greater than that upon which the men have been paid, the men are paid the difference, accepting the importer's measurement." That is from the contractor himself.

2038. Have you ever known a case where the contractor has deducted from the second week's pay any overpayment made the week previous?—That I do not know.

2039. He has not given you all the information, has he?—He has given me this.

2040. Would you be prepared to go into this matter when we get back to Cardiff?—No, I do not think I should.

2041. (Mr. Anderson.) You have already told us that you have a very strong objection to the appointment of checkweighmen. Have you any objection to its being made compulsory upon your company to supply the correct weights of any cargo discharged on or about your premises to either party interested in having those correct weights?—I must first answer that by saying that we do not issue incorrect weights. Our weights are correct.

2042. I am not questioning the correctness of the particulars when you supply them. I do not say that you have supplied incorrect weights, but have you any objection to its being made compulsory for you to supply weights where you do not supply them now.

I will leave out the "correct"?—I take that as a qualified question. I do not admit that we have incorrect weights. We are not living on incorrect weights, and I object to the term, but I have no objection to giving weights to properly authorised persons who are entitled to receive them.

2043. Any person interested in having the weights in order to settle up their accounts?—The interests

The witness withdrew.

Mr. JOHN LAURENCE THOMPSON called and examined.

2046. (Chairman.) You are the Assistant Superintendent of the Hull and Barnsley Railway Dock?—That is so.

2047. The general manager of the railway company, in his letter to us of the 14th February, told us that piece-work at this dock was practically confined to the handling of coals and timber?—That is so.

2048. Are there any other cargoes upon which the men are paid by weight or measurement, and, if so, what are they?—None but coal and timber.

2049. You say "practically confined," that is why I ask. What do you mean by "practically," if there are no others?—The other work is all done by day-work.

2050. As to coals, the general manager says that the men engaged in shipping coals are paid at a rate per waggon?—That is so.

2051. But he also implies that their wages depend on the weight of the waggon loads. Will you please explain the system of payment?—The men take the tickets off the waggon sides themselves.

2052. There is usually a ticket showing the weight?—Yes.

2053. Where have the waggons been weighed, and by whom?—At the colliery by the different collieries who send the coal to Alexandra Dock.

2054. Why are the men interested in the weight?—because it is piece-work. They ship the waggons by piece-work.

2055. Are they paid so much per ton?—Yes, and so much per waggon; it depends. If they are shipping the coal by crane, they are paid by the ton, but if they are shipping the coal by the hoist they get so much per waggon.

2056. Are the waggons weighed?—Not at the dock.

2057. But they are weighed at the colliery?—Yes, they are weighed at the colliery when they leave.

2058. Does the person who weighs the waggons send a return of the weights to the employer of the men engaged in loading the coal?—No. The weight of the waggon is put on the label and put on the waggon side, and the piece-work men take the label off when it arrives at the dock, and they know exactly what weight is in the waggon.

2059. Is the weight usually shown on the tickets of the waggon?—I think it is a general thing.

2060. When is it not done?—I have not seen any waggons where it has not been shown.

2061. In the general manager's letter he speaks of the tickets on which the weight "is usually shown"?—Yes.

2062. It is not always shown then?—Supposing it is not always shown, then they get the weight of the waggon from the invoice which we accept for carriage. That is the invoice from the station at the colliery.

2063. Those waggons have not been weighed then?—Yes. The waggons are weighed before they leave the colliery, because they are not weighed at the dock.

2064. If the men are paid on the weight shown in the invoice, is there any objection to showing that invoice to the men?—None whatever.

2065. Are the men engaged in unloading timber employed by your company?—In the timber yards, very few.

2066. By whom are they employed?—They are employed by the Hull and Barnsley Railway Company and the timber merchants.

are so varied that I cannot answer a general question like that.

2044. There are only one or two—the men who do the work and the persons whom they work for?—They have it now.

2045. You have no objection?—No objection to giving what they are already having and what they are entitled to.

2067. They are employed by your company?—Yes, but most of the men are employed by the merchants, may I say.

2068. I said the men unloading timber?—Do you mean from ships or from bogies.

2069. In any case?—We do no stevedoring at all.

2070. In what way do you unload?—We simply unload the bogies that are loaded by the stevedore. The custom is different from most docks.

2071. How are the men paid for that unloading?—Piece-work.

2072. How is it calculated?—By the standard.

2073. Is the timber measured by your company before it leaves the docks?—The timber is measured by a tallyman engaged by the dock company.

2074. Would you have any objection to allowing the men to appoint a representative at their own expense to check these measurements?—Well, you see we allow the men to have a look at the tally books any time they like, but we never have any dispute with our men.

2075. Exactly; but supposing it was necessary to frame an Act of Parliament for the whole country you would have no objection to the men being allowed, if they wished, to appoint a representative to see the books?—Personally I cannot answer the question; that is a question for the company. So far as the men are concerned we should have no objection to showing the books at any time.

2076. And in that case they would very likely not wish to have a representative. All that the men desire is to be certain that they are getting the exact weight, and if they are satisfied, they would not go to the expense of having a checkweighman?—Of course.

2077. Does your company charge the merchant for the labour of unloading the timber?—Yes.

2078. Are the charges based on measurement?—On measurement.

2079. Would you have any objection to allowing a representative of the men to satisfy himself that the charges made to the merchant and the wages paid to the men are based on the same measurements?—So far as that is concerned I might answer it in this way: that we have no objection to the men, or the ganger (the head man in the gang) coming to see the books; but what we charge to the merchant has nothing to do with the ganger.

2080. It is not the actual charge but the measurement that I am speaking of?—He could see the measurements at any time as far as we are concerned.

2081. Could he see if the merchant was charged on those measurements?—It has nothing to do with the men what we charge.

2082. I want to know whether the men receive their wages on the same measurements as those upon which the merchant is charged?—Yes, because the same account is made by the timber clerk to the merchant.

2083. So there would be no objection to the men being satisfied on that point?—Certainly not.

2084. Have you different rates of wages for dealing with different kinds of timber and various methods of handling it?—Yes. There are different rates. For instance, a man is paid a higher price for boards than he is for battens and deals.

2085. Would you explain what the differences are?—Might I just say that I have not the particulars in

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front of me now, but small boards are paid at higher rates than 3 by 9 or 3 by 7 deals. The small stuff takes much more handling, and our piece-work rates have been agreed by the men some time ago.

2086. Are the charges to the merchants, and the wages of the men, always calculated on the same basis?—Yes.

2087. So that it would be always possible for the men to check the wages?—Yes.

2088. For instance, you say in your letter that different rates of wages are paid for different operations?—Yes.

2089. Are there correspondingly different charges to the merchant in these different operations?—Yes. There is a higher price charged to the merchant for boards than there is for 3 by 7 or 3 by 9 deals, as I have said.

2090. (Mr. Gordon.) You said with regard to timber that the dock company's tallyman measures it?—Take deals. He takes the account of the measurement. The ganger, as we term him, is in charge of the piece-work gang. He is one of the set. He measures the deals and calls out to the tallyman.

2091. Does he measure to obtain the Petersburg standard?—Yes.

2092. Is he employed by your dock company?—Yes.

2093. You pay him?—We pay him.

2094. With regard to the other docks in Hull, is the practice the same?—Yes. Our work is exactly the same as theirs.

2095. I have in my mind the case of private timber yards bordering on the quays at the docks—Wade's, for instance, and some of the bigger receivers in Hull. They have their own wharf on the dock company's property?—Yes.

2096. Who measures the timber in that case?—Wade's own men; they do the work themselves.

2097. What check has the workman on that measurement?—They have a ganger of a gang. The ganger is the head man of the gang.

2098. He is paid by Wade's?—Yes, by Wade's.

2099. What check has the ordinary workman on Wade's measurements?—He measures the timber himself.

2100. Who?—The ganger.

2101. He is employed by Wade's. I am not suggesting anything wrong against them, but what check has an ordinary workman on the measurement. He never sees it?—The ganger is in a set of eight men. They are all in together.

2102. But still he is on private property?—Yes.

2103. You said that in the Hull and Barnsley case your dock company take the measurement, but it is not the practice in all the docks. There are private wharves?—Yes.

2104. (Mr. Mead.) With regard to this measurement which is arrived at by the tallyman employed by the dock company, is that measurement the one which is accepted and on which the merchants pay you as a dock company?—Yes.

2105. Is it also accepted by the men employed by the stevedore as the basis on which the men are paid?—Yes.

2106. Is it also accepted by the shipowner as the basis upon which his freight is settled?—I do not know anything about that. It is done by stevedore.

2107. (Mr. Sexton.) You can only answer with regard to the stevedore's men and the men employed by you?—Yes.

2108. It is accepted there?—Yes.

2109. You only represent a portion of the dock system of Hull?—Yes, that is all.

2110. And a very small portion?—Not a very small portion.

2111. Have you a map there of the dock company's system?—Yes, I have brought a map, I thought it might be useful (*handing the same to the Committee*).

2112. (Mr. Bellhouse.) Is there ever any difficulty between you and your men as to the price per ton, or the price per standard, on which they are paid?—No difficulty whatever.

2113. How was that fixed?—The piece-work rates were fixed by the men about eight or nine years ago, as near as I can guess, with the late Mr. Anderson, the dock superintendent.

2114. Is that price list available anywhere?—Yes, I did not bring it with me.

2115. But it is available to the men?—Yes.

2116. It was arrived at by agreement?—Yes, a deputation of the men.

2117. Between the union and the masters?—No. A deputation from the deal carriers came to see Mr. Anderson and asked for an increase of wages. I was present when that deputation was received by Mr. Anderson, who asked me if I agreed to the increase of wages under the circumstances. I said that they were getting extra pay at the other docks and we increased their wages. No one was present but the men themselves.

2118. It was an agreement between the railway company and the men then?—Yes.

2119. Is it in writing; I take it that it is?—Yes.

2120. It appears to me to be as necessary to the man to know how much per ton he is going to be paid as to know how many tons he is going to be paid on?—Yes, and he knows that.

2121. With regard to coal, are the gangs in the separate holds of the ships distinct one from another?—We only ship the coal; we do not do any trimming.

2122. (Mr. Sexton.) You do not do any discharging of timber direct?—We do no discharging.

2123. That is in the hands of the contractor—the stevedore?—What we call stevedores—yes.

2124. Would there be any objection on your part to supplying the stevedore, if he asked for it, or if an Act was passed of a compulsory character, with the exact measurements? Would you have any objection to giving it to him to supply to the men?—May I say that we do not employ the stevedore. The stevedore is employed by the shipbroker.

2125. Do not you measure the timber to ascertain the exact amount of measurement that you carry in the ship?—Yes. We measure timber.

2126. Would you have any objection to supplying that to the stevedore?—If the stevedore asked me how many standards the ship had discharged and I had the information, I should certainly not give it.

2127. That is not my point. The point is would you object to supplying the document showing the exact measurement?—Yes, to the stevedore.

2128. You would?—Yes, because he is not employed by us.

2129. You would object to supplying it?—Yes—to the stevedore.

2130. Would you give us the grounds of your objection?—Just what I have said—he is not employed by us.

2131. I put it in this way: Supposing all the men wanted to ascertain the exact measurement of the timber, and it could be got from you by the stevedore, would you object to supplying it to the stevedore to show to the men?—May I put in this way, please: The proper course for the stevedore to pursue in that case would be to ask the shipbroker how many standards the ship had discharged. If the shipbroker asked the dock company how many standards she had discharged we should tell him, so that the information could be given to the stevedore through the proper course—through the shipbroker.

2132. You would have no objection to supplying it through that course?—No.

2133. You spoke about the ganger taking the measurement?—Yes.

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2134. But you do not employ that ganger to give the measurement to anyone but yourselves?—He gives the measurement to us.

2135. As a duty?—As a duty. He knows exactly what is done.

2136. But you do not employ him to give the measurement to the men at the same time. He must give it to you direct?—He gives us the measurement.

2137. You employ him for that purpose; you do not employ him to give it to the men as well?—May I say that the ganger and the men are all what we call one set. They are all workmen.

2138-9. My point is that you do not employ the ganger, who is the head of the gang, to take measurements to give to the men?—No.

2140. You employ him to give the measurements to you?—Yes, so that we can supply the information to the merchant.

2141. Would you have any objection to the ganger supplying the same information to the men?—Certainly not.

2142. (Chairman.) He does now, I suppose?—Yes.

2143. (Mr. Seston.) And he does it, of course, as a matter of courtesy?—Yes.

2144. He has no right to ask for it?—The men have a right to know what they have done.

2145. You do not object to giving it?—No, certainly not.

2146. Well, that is very good of you. Now the trimmers in each ship are in a majority, are they not, as compared with the men that you actually and directly employ?—As I said before, the trimmers are not employed by us.

2147. No, they are not; but they are greater in number than the men you do employ?—Yes, considerably more.

2148. Could you tell me how they would ascertain the weight?—I cannot speak for the trimmers, really, because they are not employed by us.

2149. If, as you say, the only way in which the weight is ascertained now is by the labels on the waggons, is that the only method by which the trimmers could get to know the exact weight?—I do not think that that question ought to be put to me. Seeing that the trimmers are not employed by the Hull and Barnsley Railway, I do not know how they get their weight.

2150. I will not press it?—I do not know how they get it, and it would not be right for me to answer that question.

2151. Would you give the stevedore who employs the trimmers the weights that you have if he asked for them?—He could get them through the same source—through the shipbroker.

2152. (Mr. Hardy.) You do not know the outturn of a ship in the Alexandra Dock?—We do so little work now in comparison with what we used to.

2153. There is a great deal of overside work, upon which you get nothing, and of which you have no record?—Yes.

2154. Therefore you do not know the outturn?—The grain trade goes over the side, but the deals, battens, and pit props, and boards are all landed.

2155. In a great many cases there is overside work?—Very seldom in timber.

2156. But in grain—not timber?—Yes.

2157. You could not give information with regard to that because you do not know yourself?—No, I do not.

2158. (Mr. Larkin.) On what basis do you charge the lighterage?—I do not know, we do not do the work.

2159. But somebody must do the lighterage?—It is done by the merchant and the "lighter owner."

2160. The point has been raised by Mr. Hardy that you, to your knowledge, know nothing about these charges and that you could not get them. We say on this side of the table that we can get the charges at some place or time?—But you cannot get them from us because we do not know them.

2161. The measurer—that is the technical term—the ganger, has an assistant. Two men really measure. One is calling out the weights and one marks them down. Supposing six men are carrying off or stowing, or so on, what check have they against the ganger?—What I want to impress upon you is this: The ganger is part of the piece-work men.

2162. I am aware of that. I have been a ganger myself and one of the men?—He is part of the men as I have said before, and they implicitly trust him. If they want to know the figures he has a little book, and if he strikes 2½ standards off a pile he puts that in the book, and the men at what they call the pipe time look in the books and know exactly what they have done.

2163. Eight months ago in the docks at Preston there was a strike because the man measuring was in collusion with the stevedore?—We never have that.

2164. They are exceptional men in Hull?—The deal carriers in Hull are very good men.

2165. I am glad to hear that, and I wish they were all the same; but we want to apply all round a check in order to know that we are getting dealt with honestly. If it is honest in Hull it may be dishonest somewhere else. You do not object to our having a legal right of access to the documents?—I do not object that the men should have a legal right.

2166. (Mr. Orbell.) With reference to the coal you said that some of the trucks have not weigh tickets on them?—Very few have not.

2167. But still there are some?—Yes.

2168. (Mr. Gordon.) The invoice could be seen?—Yes, that could be seen.

2169. All collieries send a waybill, with the number of each truck and the weight of each truck?—There is no objection whatever to that being seen.

2170. (Mr. Orbell.) There are eight men in the gang, I understand you to say, and they are paid according to the tariff?—Yes.

2171. A printed tariff?—Yes.

2172. You have it in book form?—Each man carries the book with him.

2173. It is a reprint of what was signed by Mr. Pellett and myself with Mr. Anderson?—It was after that.

2174. It was a reprint from that?—Yes.

2175. Do the eight men share equally in the amount of money earned by the gang?—Yes, they share equally with the ganger.

2176. He gets nothing extra?—He gets nothing extra.

2177. I suppose it is to his interest to see that the remainder of his gang get the right weights or the right measurement, because he shares equally?—Yes, he shares equally.

2178. Have you ever had any complaints lodged with you about dissatisfaction?—None whatever from the men.

2179. Or from anybody?—No, it is rather strange but we have very little trouble with our men just now.

2180. Have you no complaints about going beyond a certain height of piling?—No. We have no very large cargoes now; we only have small parcels.

2181-2. But I am speaking with regard to the height of the deals. There is a different price for different heights?—They go six tiers high.

2183. There have been complaints, you will find, I think, about going higher?—I have never pressed our men to go higher.



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2184. There is a different price for the height. It may be six tiers or six standards high. If you go eight you pay more for it?—The men would ask for more.

2185. You would pay more for that?—Yes.

2186. You have gone higher than six tiers?—Not with the Hull and Barnsley. We never ask them to. It is not safe to go higher than six tiers.

2187. It is a matter of record and, probably, you have not gone into that?—I have never asked the men to go higher than six tiers.

2188. Now, supposing one of the gang, not the measurer nor the checker, came to the office in an ordinary business way and asked to have a correct return of the week's work, it might cover many ships?—Yes.

2189. Would you object to giving it?—Certainly not.

2190. If it became law that that should be done you would have no objection to such a law or an order?—If the men came to the office and said that they were not satisfied with the account of what they had done during the week we should say: "There are the tally books, my lads; let your checker go through the books."

2191. But the checker would be the man called into question?—But may I put it that the checker is employed by the Hull and Barnsley Railway.

2192. Is the checker, who is employed by the Hull and Barnsley Railway, one of the eight?—No, he is not.

2193. And he is the one they would have to appeal to?—Yes.

2194. The man who is one of the eight is only the man who has the rod to measure the length of the deal or whatever it may be?—Yes.

2195. The man who enters it in the book is not one of the eight?—He is not.

2196. He is employed by your company?—He is employed by our company.

2197. Your company pays for the amount of work done?—Yes.

2198. It would be against that man that the men would have the dispute or the doubt if there was a doubt?—Yes, if there was a doubt.

2199. Would you have an objection to one of the ordinary gang—not the measurer now because you do not put anybody to measure, do you?—No.

2200. Strike the measurer out. Now supposing he had some ground in his own opinion to doubt the accuracy of his payment, if he came to the office to whom would you send him? You would give him the checker's book?—We would allow him to look through the tally book if he was not satisfied.

2201. But this man in nine cases out of ten would not be able to understand that book, even if he looked at it, and certainly would not be able to total up the amount of timber delivered or piled, as the case may be?—We would explain it to him then.

2202. Do not associate this particular question with trade unionism. Remove that for the moment from your mind. Supposing that the gang said: "We will appoint so and so to examine these books." Would you object to that?—Yes.

2203. Why?—Because the man is not employed by us.

2204. But this is the man employed by the gang of men who are employed, who have reason to think that the payment is not correct, and if they are not capable, or the one appointed is not capable, of checking these accounts, would you say that there is no right to appoint a capable man?—We would not allow him to have access to our books if he was not one of the gang.

2205. Supposing that the men said, "We will appoint a Government inspector," for instance, would you object to him?—That is a different thing.

2206. You would not object to a Government inspector?—I would not object to a Government inspector.

2207. If the order was worded that the men should appoint one of their number or appoint a representative to go over the accounts you would object to that?—Yes.

2208. Because the men appointed him?—Yes.

2209. If they appointed the Government inspector you would not object to him?—We could not. If the Government inspector comes on the dock to make inquiries we cannot object.

2210. He comes on the dock at the present time, I understand, to check the accuracy of the scales or accidents to gear, &c.?—He comes to inquire into accidents.

2211. In the case of wages he could not touch your figures. In actual working, now, at the present time no Government inspector, I take it, comes to inquire whether the men have been paid the right number of standards?—No.

2212. If the men appointed a Government inspector to come and inquire, would you object to him?—No.

2213. If they appointed someone, who was not a Government inspector, to come and inquire, would you object to him?—Yes.

2214. Why?—Because he is not employed by the company.

2215. Neither would the Government inspector be?—He is different altogether.

2216. But he comes there as a citizen or an ordinary workman?—Yes, but if he comes on to the docks and inquires into accidents or anything of the sort we give him any information he likes.

2217. At the present time the law says that the Government inspector has the right to come in, but I do not think it says at the present time, although we hope it will do, that the Government inspector has the right to inquire between the employer and the workmen as to the amount of money paid and received. It does say so at the present time?—No, I believe not.

The witness withdrew.

## SIXTH DAY.

Thursday, 12th March 1908.

PRESENT:

ERNEST F. G. HATCH, Esq. (Chairman).

JAMES ANDERSON, Esq. (Amalgamated Stevedores' Labour Protection League).

GERALD BELLHOUSE, Esq. (one of His Majesty's Inspectors of Factories).

C. W. GORDON, Esq. (Gordon Steam Shipping Company).

THOMAS HARDY, Esq. (Manager of the London and India Docks Company).

JAMES HARRINGTON, Esq. (London Master Stevedores' Association).

JAMES LARKIN, Esq. (National Union of Dock Labourers).

J. C. MEAD, Esq. (of Messrs. Mead, Son, and Hussey, Shipowners).

J. LLOYD MORGAN, Esq., K.C., M.P.

H. ORBELL, Esq. (Dock, Wharf, Riverside, and General Workers' Union).

J. HERBERT SCRUTTON, Esq. (of Messrs. Scrutton, Sons & Co., Shipowners).

JAMES SEXTON, Esq. (National Union of Dock labourers).

JAMES WIGNALL, Esq. (Dock, Wharf, Riverside, and General Workers' Union).

Mr. PAUL FIELDING called and examined.

2218. (*Chairman.*) You are manager of the derricks of Messrs. Cory and Sons?—Yes.

2219. About how many men do you employ in loading and unloading?—Do you mean at the total number of discharging berths? We have several up and down the river.

2220. Yes?—It might comprise roughly about a couple of thousand hands.

2221. How much of the work is done at piece-work rates?—Pretty well the bulk of it. There is very little that is not done by piece-work. A very slight percentage is done by day-work labour.

2222. Do you pay a fixed minimum wage and in addition a bonus or plus calculated on weights or measurements?—Our payment is by rate according to the kind of coal. Welsh coal has a different rate paid for discharging than we pay for north country coal, and the various grades of Welsh and north country coal are paid various prices.

2223. Is coal the only kind of cargo you load or unload?—Yes, only coal.

2224. Will you tell me your system of paying the men?—As a ship comes alongside so in each ship we put a crane to each particular hatch or hold. Each hold has a gang to work out that particular hold and to each gang we appoint a man whom we term a meter; in other words a checker—a weigher. That man is paid piece-work and so are our gangs. It is then that man's duty on the completion of his particular hold (each hold has a meter as well as a gang) to make out a pay-ticket according to the number of tons he has discharged. He gives his gang that pay-ticket—fore hold, main hold, after hold. Here is one of the tickets.

2225. May I see that please (*the same was handed to the Committee*)?—Before he leaves the depôt at which he is working, the derrick or discharging berth, he gives the ganger that ticket. The ganger then proceeds down to the Dock and hands it in at the pay window, and not until he hands it in is it our property. When he hands it in he is then paid. The ganger is then in a position to see how much the meter has discharged out of that hold and he can inform his men and the meter is paid the same number of tons as the ganger receives.

2226. That seems a very complete system. Is there any other system that you adopt?—No. The same applies to all the derricks.

2227. Have the men any means of checking these weights?—That is their means of checking.

2228. But I understand that the weights are taken by your own men—the men whom you pay yourselves?—We pay our men ourselves and he is one of them.

2229. (*Mr. Scrutton.*) One of the actual gang?—One of the actual gang. He is the thirteenth man in and is a member of the gang just as the other 12.

2230. (*Chairman.*) Are your men satisfied with the system?—Perfectly. They have no ground of complaint and we have no complaint, because it is to the meter's interest that he should make out a correct account, otherwise he gets short paid himself if the gang gets short paid. If he made an error and said that he had only discharged 350 tons out of the hold instead of 400 or 450 he would only get paid on 350. Of course we catch a thing like that up because we practically know what a ship's hold ought to carry if she is our own ship. With an outside ship it is sometimes difficult to get.

2231. Are there any cargoes handled by you of which the exact weight is not known at the time of unloading and is only ascertained afterwards when the goods have reached the consignee?—Yes, and we cannot ascertain it even then. If the coal is brought up by our clients in ships, either their own or ships chartered by them, it is impossible for us to know.

2232. (*Mr. Gordon.*) You do not understand the question. What the Chairman means, I take it, is whether in every case where you discharge a vessel you have the same certificates?—Decidedly.

2233. Whether it is one of your boats or not?—Yes, decidedly.

2234. (*Chairman.*) There is no instance where the certificates are not available?—No. These appear in every cargo, even if it were not a cargo of a ship. If it was the freight of a barge we should then have one of these made out by the meter who weighs that particular barge out.

2235. If the men at any time in the future question the accuracy of that certificate would you object to allowing one of them, or a representative of the gang on their behalf, to see the original documents in your office which show the weights?—No, but these tickets are the original documents and have been in the possession of the men at one time. As I say, they are handed to the gang before we ourselves as a company, get them. As you see in numerous cases they are very dirty where the ganger puts them in his pocket. He brings them to our pay window. They are his property.

2236. Supposing the men had any reason, whether just or unjust, to question the accuracy of the weighman, would you have any objection to the men verifying the

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figures to be quite sure that they were getting the correct weight?—No, decidedly not—whatever the complaint was.

2237. Would you object if a person undertaking the verification was not one of the workmen themselves, but a representative from outside?—We would really prefer the workman himself because the workman has a greater interest in it.

2238. Supposing the workman for some reason or another would rather not make a direct appeal to you, would you have any objection to his nominating somebody else from outside to act on his behalf?—I am not in a position to answer that, of course. I could answer it if at the same time I could say that if it would entail no cost to us, decidedly then we should have no objection whatever. If we had to appoint another man it would mean additional cost.

2239. (Mr. Sexton.) The meters are paid a higher rate than the ordinary gang, are they not?—Let me see; I will consider that. A gang will get 6d. a ton on Welsh coal. It works out with a gang of eight men in a hold, at 6d., at over a ½d. per ton. Eight men 12 half-pennies. The meter would receive less pay than the gang in a case like that. The meter only gets ½d. a ton.

2240. Whatever price or whatever rate you pay on Welsh coal or on north country coal it is all on the basis of so much a ton, is it not?—Yes, so much per ton according to the quality of the coal.

2241. Therefore there is a common basis of payment by the ton?—Yes.

2242. Does not the meter get something extra per ton more than the men?—No. He receives actually, as I say, less, because his is a fixed rate no matter what the coal is. The men go in grades. For a very easy working coal they receive so much; for a slightly harder working coal they receive a slightly higher price; for harder coal still they receive a still higher price. But the meter, never mind whether the coal is wet, dusty, or exceptionally large, and no matter what is the matter with it or what coal it is, receives one rate all through.

2243. One rate per ton?—Yes, per ton. Although the coal may occupy twice as long to discharge, his rate is still just the same rate.

2244. He does not actually handle the coal?—He does not actually handle the coal; he merely weighs it. With the men it is more a question of labour. The harder coal takes a longer time to discharge, therefore they receive more money.

2245. That does not matter much. It is not material to my point. The meter is chosen by you?—Yes.

2246. For his special adaptability to the job?—He is more a clerk than a labouring man.

2247. Is this document which he presents to you a copy of the one he keeps?—He does not keep a copy of that at all; that is made up from his weighing book.

2248. He keeps the book?—He keeps the book. His book is always available for himself or his men.

2249. So far as you know—and I do not dispute it for a moment—that document is an exact copy of his book?—Decidedly; I have no hesitation in saying that.

2250. And you say that it is not probable that the meter would give a false copy to the men?—It would be against his own interest.

2251. But let me ask you, is it probable?—No, it is not probable.

2252. Is he paid on that ticket?—Yes.

2253. The meter is?—Yes.

2254. That is a very good system. Would it surprise you to know that where meters are engaged down in the North of Scotland, men have been paid short on the meter's own certificate?—That could only be done by collusion.

2255. Exactly?—Collusion between the firm and the meter. Then, I take it that at the place where the men were paid short in your instance, the firm must keep the books correctly. Although the men might be

paid short, the firm would have an entry in their books which would correspond with the exact amount that was worked.

2256. I have no doubt of that at all, and I am not casting any reflection on your system?—Quite so. I want to prove it. You want additional proof. When our meters return these tickets, we then have to make our return to our city people, and all these accounts such as you have here are tallied then with our wages sheet, which we return to our city office.

2257. I take it that that blue mark on that ticket is your sign manual that it has been paid?—It is not mine; it is the cashier's.

2258. That is what I mean. The cashier does that when he pays the bill?—Yes.

2259. (Mr. Larkin.) How is it that the name of the meter is not on that bill, and that there are only 12 men's names. There are 13 men in the gang?—It may be on. I will not say whether it is before I look at it; but the men draw their money as they complete the work. At the finish of a hold, whether it is three o'clock in the afternoon or one o'clock in the morning or half-past two in the morning, or three, they receive their pay immediately. We have a day and night staff, but the meter draws his money once a week, for his own convenience.

2260. (Mr. Sexton.) Arising out of that, is the meter paid at the end of the week?—Yes.

2261. On the totals of those accounts handed in?—On the total that he has done. He may have done three ships; he may have done one.

2262. He is not paid on sight of that ticket. When that is handed in he is not paid?—No, but it is logged in a book.

2263. At the end of the week you total up and pay him on the total?—Yes. In some cases they draw it at once. We have instances of that. A man may not be in a position to hang out to the end of the week, and he draws his money.

2264. I want to ask you another question. I would like this point cleared up, because I do not think it was brought out clearly and I would like it registered: I understood you to say with regard to cargoes brought up by your clients, that whether they were brought up in full cargoes or not, all cargoes were weighed out under the same system by you?—Certainly.

2265. You said that at one time the original document was at the command of the men. What do you mean by the "original document"?—This document (showing the pay-ticket).

2266. There never were other documents at the command of the men?—No. These are the pay-tickets that the men receive, and until they produce them they are not paid.

2267. You said that the original document used to be at the command of the men, and I want to know what that is. The Chairman put the question?—May I ask what original document you mean?

2268. (Chairman.) I meant, anything to verify the figures shown on the pay-ticket?—Of what the ship has in her?

2269. Yes?—We are not in a position to know that.

2270. You said just now, in answer to a question, that in the case of the firm in the north of Scotland where there must be collusion, it would be possible to ascertain whether there was any difference between what the men were paid and the other sum, by looking at the company's books; and that is the sort of thing I meant when I asked the question?—The pay-notes agree with our return to our city office. That return is open to the men if they choose to look at it.

2271. (Mr. Sexton.) That is all right; that is what I wanted to know?—And it is tallied down to the last halfpenny on a return of 200 or 2,000. This is a return (showing document) for only one depôt, not the whole of the depôts. The inside sheet gives the labour.

2272. (Mr. Lloyd Morgan.) Have you ever known any case of collusion between the men's representative and the representative of the employers?—In our business?

2273. Yes?—No.

2274. Mr. Sexton referred to one case. Do you know of any case yourself?—Not in our own business.

2275. Or in any other business?—I should condemn myself, for all the depôts are under me.

2276. Have you ever heard of a case?—I might state at this moment that until January this year there was one depôt not under me, and that is our depôt at Tilbury. It was a little too far afield to be under me; but certain irregularities I understand did occur there. I was not told or given to understand what the irregularities were. I could form my own opinion. My directors saw fit to dismiss the manager there, and the depôt is now under my own charge; but it has been shut and it is not yet practically open. We shall be working there this week, I think.

2277. (Mr. Sexton.) I think it is a mistake to call the meter the men's representative. He is your representative?—He is their representative. He is equally his own and equally the men's.

2278. But the men have no direct representative at that point themselves?—Oh, no, they have no direct representative in that sense.

2279. Are you aware that in the north of Scotland, where the very same system that you work, one firm refunded to the men 290l. that had been short paid?—No. I am not aware of that; but of course, as you say, a thing like that would be possible in a colliery; but on a ship I should say impossible; because any sane man, a worker, a coalee in a ship, or myself, not a worker, could judge what a ship's hold would contain within a certain quantity. Each tank that comes out carries practically the same, within a few quarters, each time she comes up. Eight men in a gang could themselves tally alone the tanks; in fact it is a common habit for them to tally.

2280. I know it is; but supposing they did that and had any reason to believe that they were not getting paid the full amount?—They would come and complain to me.

2281. Supposing they did tally, and supposing they knew the exact measurement of a hold, if they had any reason to believe that there was more in that hold than they were getting paid for, would it be possible in that case for the men to be a little bit shy of putting the question?—I do not think that they are very shy with me; they are the wrong gentlemen to be shy. I am more shy with them, I think, but still I face it out at times.

2282. You are an exception?—You see I have been intimately connected with our men for the last 14 years. They know me now as well as they know themselves.

2283. Supposing I put it in another way: if the men came to you and said "There was more coal in that hatch than we have got paid for," would that have any effect upon you as regards employing those men again?—None whatever.

2284. Do not you think it is possible that it might have that effect with some managers?—Not under our system; because we have men there that we have quarrelled with many and many a time and who have been with us 30 odd years.

2285. Do not you think that the tendency would be in that direction generally speaking?—Knowing the coalee's nature as I know it, I say no. Never a day, never an hour goes by but what he has a grumble of some sort. He is like the proverbial Englishman who is not happy unless he has a complaint.

2286. Yes, I know that is his characteristic, but we know the coalees, and perhaps we have the advantage of you in some respects in knowing some of the coal contractors too. We have the special advantage of knowing some of the contractors whom you do not know?—Quite so.

2287. Would you be surprised to hear that when men have asked they have been dismissed and not employed again?—No, I should not be surprised.

2288. It could be done?—It could be done; but where you know there is no justification you do not feel sore at a man's coming and making a complaint.

2289. If they were all like you, I think we should not have much trouble?—Our system is absolutely clean and perfect.

2290. (Mr. Orbell.) Is there a weighman employed on every ship?—I have just stated that at every hatch there is a weighman; and not only so, but there are as many as five on some ships; eight with a very very big ship where we can get eight cranes into her.

2291. (Mr. Wignall.) A meter to each crane?—A meter to each crane and a crane to each hatch where suitable. Sometimes we cannot get it into a hatch, the crane does not plumb.

2292. (Mr. Orbell.) Have you the account of the "Nellie Wise" there?—Do you mean any particular instance.

2293. Yes. Take December 16th 1906?—December 16th she loaded, and she discharged December 18th and 19th.

2294. Did she have a weighman on her?—She had the usual weighman. We do not discharge any of our ships without a weighman.

2295. Would the statement that she was without a weighman be untrue?—I can prove to you that she was not without. I have no need to say whether it is untrue.

2296. Would that weighman's returns be correct?—We have them here to show you.

2297. How do you account then for there being something like 200 tons deficiency?—It is impossible with a little boat like the "Nellie Wise."

2298. Have you the amount which she had in her?—Yes.

2299. Would you tell us, please?—The total quantity she had in her? She had the usual number of cranes in her, three, and she discharged a quantity of 1,213 tons, and the gang were paid on the quantity of 1,213 tons. Would you like me to give you the various hatches?

2300. I would like the hatches if you do not mind?—No. 1 hatch put out 176 tons; No. 2 hatch put out 489 tons; and No. 3 hatch put out 548 tons. The difference in the quantity is by reason of the size of the hatch. She is bulkheaded off and is smaller in some hatches than in others.

2301. (Mr. Wignall.) According to the build of the ship?—Yes.

2302. (Mr. Orbell.) Have you the 5th January—the same ship?—I am afraid that I have not that date. She discharged at Tilbury. I have only the return made by our man at Tilbury. I very much regret it, but not being in charge of that place at that time, I cannot give you the information. I can show you the return from Tilbury made by our man.

2303. (Mr. Gordon.) What was the total quantity that she discharged?—On the 5th January, Tilbury, 1,170 tons. The difference is largely because it was a totally different kind of coal. Some ships will carry more of one class of coal than another.

2304. (Mr. Orbell.) It would not be fair to question you on the deficiency of payment at Tilbury. The men eventually got their payment. You have had to get rid of the man who was in charge down there, and you prefaced your statement by saying that you believe there were some irregularities there?—Yes, I believe so.

2305. And that was the reason for getting rid of him?—That was so.

2306. That being the case, I do not think it would be fair, because it practically confirms our case. There was something of the kind or you could not have got rid of him?—I am not in a position to say what occurred there. It was not under my charge.

2307. (Mr. Scrutton.) Your case is not confirmed with regard to the 200 tons on December 18th?—The 200 tons was under my charge. I can answer with regard to that.

2308. (Mr. Orbell.) She was at Tilbury Dock?—The 5th January, but not December. Where I have given you separate outputs of the holds the men are all under my own charge.

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2309. (*Chairman.*) Do you know why the man who was in charge at Tilbury was discharged?—No, I do not know absolutely. As I say, I believe there were certain irregularities.

2310. But what kind of irregularities were they? Are we to assume that he was paying the men less than they ought to have been paid?—I have had tales of that sort brought to me by my own men.

2311. Do you know in what way it happened?—No, I cannot say, except that I heard that there were irregularities in the payment of the men. Whether they received less than he made the return for to our city office or not, I cannot say. I was never in touch with the man.

2312. You have not investigated the case yourself?—No. I was never told by my Board and I never asked. If I had asked, it would have been out of my province.

2313. (*Mr. Gordon.*) Was it ever suggested to you that the difference between the two voyages of the ship was 200 tons and that that was a reason for the man being discharged?—No, never.

2314. The difference was, in fact, 47 tons?—200 tons difference on a boat of 1,200 tons total capacity is absurd.

2315. (*Mr. Mead.*) Forty tons would not surprise you?—No. Any shipowner knows that a ship will carry 40 tons less of one cargo than of another.

2316. As I say, it would not surprise you?—No.

2317. (*Chairman.*) You accept the fact that there were irregularities at Tilbury, and that the man responsible was discharged?—Yes, that is so. That was the reason of his dismissal—that there were irregularities.

2318. (*Mr. Larkin.*) The witness says that Messrs. Cory's system is a perfect system, but at Tilbury the system was abused?—The system was not carried out.

2319. The perfect system was not carried out?—The system which we have was not carried out there. I am at liberty to tell you that, because since taking over the place I have found that the system was not such as we have at all our other depôts.

2320. (*Chairman.*) In what way was it lacking?—Inasmuch as the men never received these pay-tickets from the meter.

2321. (*Mr. Sexton.*) You did not know it?—It was not under my charge.

2322. But did the firm know it?—No, the firm did not know it.

2323. They thought that the system was being carried out?—Yes.

2324. (*Mr. Larkin.*) Supposing that a representative of the men had asked for the tickets, that would have been found out sooner?—Yes. The men were very lax in not demanding the documents. They had the right and power to do it, and it was very foolish and absurd of them not to do so. The same men come from depôt to depôt and they know that at all the places higher up than Tilbury they receive these pay-tickets.

2325. If the men had asked the gentleman in charge at Tilbury for the tickets he would have sacked them, or not put them on, perhaps?—The Head office could be complained to then. They could say then that they were not receiving their pay-tickets, and a case like that would have been investigated.

2326. (*Mr. Sexton.*) I put it again: would not the men be shy of that?—I should say not. I should not be. Of course you are always in the power of your servants to a certain extent.

2327. (*Mr. Orbell.*) You say that you are going to enforce at Tilbury the system which you have at the places higher up the river. You will not object, I take it, if the men have any ground for complaint, to their seeing the document?—It is not a case of objecting. I should welcome it for the simple reason that it is to my advantage. If the men do not receive these before they are paid, they ought to do so. They must, in fact.

2328. (*Chairman.*) You would welcome the men, or the men's representative, having the right to see the

documents?—Decidedly, but being only a servant myself I cannot say whether the company would welcome the additional expense if they had to bear it.

2329. There would be no expense?—In that case it satisfies the men doubly and we should welcome it.

2330. (*Mr. Wignall.*) When you discharge Welsh coal, do you get a copy of the weigh-sheet from the port of loading?—Our city people do, I believe. They are forwarded. In the natural order of events they would get a certificate from the colliery with the quantity on.

2331. From the dock?—Yes; what we might call a bill of lading.

2332. So that they know the exact amount of coal that has gone into the ship, at the port of loading?—Yes.

2333. At each hatch?—Yes.

2334. You pay on what you get out of her?—Yes. The ship is very often discharged before they get that.

2335. (*Mr. Bellhouse.*) Are your firm's charges based upon these weights or not, do you know?—For what?

2336. For carrying coal, for instance?—Decidedly. Whatever the ship puts out we are paid on and the men are paid for.

2337. (*Mr. Hardy.*) These figures are sent to the city office, I suppose?—In a lump total for the filling. May I explain? It is very simple.

(*The witness explained.*)

2338. Some of the discharges are done by Messrs. Cory for other people. They are not always coals in which they themselves are interested?—Exactly.

2339. Whatever tonnage is set down here, that is the tonnage on which they themselves are paid?—Yes.

2340. Therefore if there is anything wrong in these figures, so much the worse for Messrs. Cory?—We can only charge on what is put out.

2341. There is no object, therefore, in putting a lower figure here?—No, we should be the losers.

2342. And these tickets, I understand, are actually open to the inspection of the men on the spot?—Yes; they receive them and peruse them before we get them.

2343. They actually receive them and peruse them?—Yes. Each man knows what he is going to take before we get the figures.

2344. If somebody other than the men on the job were to have the right of coming in at the end of the job to look at the figures, that is the thing that he would see?—He would see that.

2345. And he could see nothing else?—He could not see anything else, because that is the only document we have.

2346. And that the men themselves can see?—The men have it and see it.

2347. If then another man came in, what could that other man do to help the men?—He would only be an additional meter. It would be two instead of one on one hold.

2348. The work is done before he could come in at all?—Yes.

2349. Could he have any further information than that which is on this ticket?—He could not possibly. That is all the information.

2350. And that the men themselves can have and do have?—Yes.

2351. (*Mr. Sexton.*) You say that that is the only document to be seen. Will you take it from me that we do not want the appointment of any additional meters, but we want the men to have the right in case anything happens such as happened at Tilbury to examine some document other than that if they have any doubt. You said that if they had any doubt they could have access to the returns of your own office?—Decidedly.

2352. Is there any objection to the men having access?—There is no objection whatever.

2353. (*Mr. Hardy.*) The men themselves?—No.

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2354. (*Mr. Seaton.*) Supposing the men themselves did not want to come and they appointed a representative of their own, a workman outside their particular gang, would you have any objection to his speaking on their behalf?—We should have no objection to their appointing a representative, but I do not know that we should care to show an utter stranger who had nothing to do with our work the entire method of our working. We have no objection to showing the men, and the men know beforehand.

2355. I do not suggest that you should show him the entire working of your concern, but in the particular case of this hold or ship, if there was any doubt in the men's minds that the return that they were getting corresponded with their own opinion with regard to what ought to be in the hold, and the men did not want to risk offending the employer (not in your own case but in any case), would you have any objection to their appointing a representative to come to see you?—We should not have any objection that I can see, provided the cost did not come on the firm.

2356. There would be no cost at all?—I may say this, since you put it in that way, that if I were of a mind to do it I could far more easily diddle an outside man than I could one of our own gang who know to an ounce what a ship will carry and everything else.

2357. Yes, but could you diddle him if you showed him the exact freightage that you were paid on?—Oh no, and with regard to figures decidedly not.

2358. That is my point?—I follow.

2359. (*Mr. Hardy.*) Would a man who is not employed on the work and who came in after the job was finished know anything more about it than the men themselves would know who were working at these things?—He would know less—by far less.

2360. (*Mr. Seaton.*) Supposing he knew less, putting it that way, if the men were content with it you would not object?—No, we should not object if they were satisfied. We should only think them fools for appointing such a man.

2361. They take the risk of that?—Very well.

2362. (*Mr. Wignall.*) Assuming that the men were all members of a trade union and assuming that there was some dissatisfaction among the men as to the exact tonnage or otherwise, and there was a recognised trade union official whom you recognised at your office as being the representative of the men, would not you prefer the men going on with their work and voicing their grievance in your office through their official than for the men to stop work and see you themselves?—I would heartily welcome a trade union official. I have dealt with trade union officials before and have never hesitated to give them every information in my power. I have frequently given Mr. Will Thorne every atom of information possible.

2363. (*Mr. Larkin.*) There would be no stoppages if all managers were like you?—I have met with nothing but courtesy from him and I have received every help from him in times of little strikes.

2364. (*Mr. Hardy.*) We all feel like that, but I want to get this information from you; whether the trades union official would be better qualified than one of the men themselves to examine the account?—No, decidedly not; he would not be and could not be.

2365. (*Mr. Seaton.*) If they were satisfied you would not object?—No.

2366. (*Mr. Gordon.*) Have you any intakes and outturns of Cardiff weights and London weights for comparison?—Yes, I have those very two mentioned. An instance was given where the "Nellie Wise" loaded on the 16th of December and discharged on the 19th and put out a tonnage of 1,213 tons.

2367. (*Mr. Wignall.*) Where did she load?—She loaded in the north of England under the Walker Drops. I cannot tell you what she loaded in each individual hold. She loaded one class of coal only. She put out 1,213 tons. Here is her loading slip.

2368. (*Mr. Gordon.*) I want the bill of lading; have you that?—This is the loading slip from the colliery. She loaded 1,200 tons.

2369. (*Mr. Wignall.*) Was that an exceptional case?—No. They weigh out to the ounce sometimes. Here is a Welsh coal case, a boat by the name of "Sir Galahad." She loaded in Wales with a cargo of large Welsh coal. She loaded 1,212 tons and she put out a tonnage of 1,231 tons. I can give you another instance, I find. You spoke of the "Nellie Wise" at Tilbury. I can only tell you what our man returned her there. He returned her as having discharged 1,170 tons. She loaded 1,180 tons.

2370. What date was that?—January the 4th, 1907, 10 tons short.

2371. It might have gone to make up the other cargo?—You cannot tell. Sometimes they will come short and sometimes they will come over.

2372. Your evidence surprises me because at the Welsh ports every pound is weighed in?—Do they weigh all?

2373. Every ounce even?—Do not they sometimes weigh one truck and run in a lot and estimate?

2374. (*Mr. Orbell.*) As we have raised questions with regard to complaints at Tilbury, it is only fair that I should express our pleasure in knowing that the system that prevails at the up-river warehouses is going to be in force at Tilbury?—It is in force already.

(*Mr. Orbell.*) I am very glad of that.

(*Witness.*) The depôt is under my charge.

The witness withdrew.