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Oct. 30. 1891 I. a. (1

National Union of Gasworkers & General Labourers of Gt. Britain & Ireland.

Interview with W. Thorne, General Secy, at the registered office, 144 Barking Rd. Gave me the following documents: Rules, 2nd annual report & balance sheet, balance sheet of brickmakers strike at Cowley, Bucks, conducted by the Union & just concluded; form of transfer; & the rules of a National Labour Federation (estab. 1890) with wh. this Union was formerly affiliated (A. Letchford, general secy), but wh. has apparently been knocked out by the formation of Pelem. Edwards's federation

This Union is established on a very broad basis, including both men & women. It claims to have 60,000 members (2000 of them women), working in over 70 different occupations. About 20,000 belong to the London district, of whom some 15000 are connected with gas works,

the rest being labourers at soap, chemical & manure works, engineers labourers at ironworks, gasales, cokeies, &c.

The organisation is socialistic in character, its objects (Rule 2), including the obtaining of an 8 hr. day wherever possible, abolition of overtime, same rate of pay for men & women, & the promotion of legislation in the interests of the working classes. To this end it takes a prominent part in Town Council, Parly & other elections, & already has representatives on the Town Councils of Richmond & Liverpool, although only established 2 or 3 years. It has also taken a leading part in an international labour movement with a view of getting the workers to support each other in their struggles. The first step has been the appointment of an international labour secretary in several countries

whose duty in case of a strike in any country wd. be to prevent men going from other countries to take the place of the strikers, or to enlist sympathy for them.

Management. – The Union has a great number of branches, these being formed into districts. Wherever branches outside the metropolitan area have more than 2000 members they may form themselves into a district. These districts are managed by Councils, wh. have complete local autonomy. They contribute 5 o/o of their total income to the central office, to support the general work of the Union. They have power to order a strike of not more than 100 men; if that number is exceeded they must get the sanction of the Central Executive, wh. consists of President, Secretary, Treasurer, ~~& 15 members~~, &

& ~~of which are~~ members from the London district, & 1 from each other district.

The cost of a strike is borne by all the branches, being in the first place paid by the districts in wh. it occurs, & afterwards collected from all the branches, each in proportion to its no. of members.

The metropolitan area is all one district, & has also several isolated country branches attached to it.

The Executive Committee meets quarterly; the district committees meet weekly.

There being now no disputes on hand, a vigorous effort is about to be made to reorganise London.

<u>Subscriptions & benefits.</u> — The entrance fee is for men 1/5, for women 9d. This includes rule book, card & first week's contribution. Subsequent contribution is 2d a week for men, 1d for

women; with 3d & 1½d respectively as quarterage.

Members may be transferred from one branch to another, provided their subscription is paid up.

Busy & slack times. – In the London gasworks there are about 15000 men employed in busiest time (winter). This may fall, so far as gas manufacture is concerned, to about 5,000 in slackest part of summer, but as some compensation to this there are in summer a great many more yard men employed – bricklayers labourers, engineers labourers, &c. – in rebuilding & repairing retorts, &c. The same men do both kinds of work. Those turned away in summer go as bricklayers labourers, brickmakers, & at other laboring work.

Hours & wages. – The gas stokers work 8 hrs. a day, & are paid by the week at the rate of 5/4 a day. The foremen (who clean the fires, &c) get 5/6 a day.

There is no overtime, but double pay for Sunday work, of wh. there is a certain amount in winter. The labourers get 4/- per day of 8 hrs. The regular men are under a monthly agreement with the compy, the casual are under a weekly agreement.

The bricklayers labourers & engineers labourers get 4/- per day of 9 hrs. are also on weekly engagement in gas works.

The coalies & cokies are on piece work. The coalies might get in a boat & clear it in 10 hrs., getting £1 for the job. Then they might have to wait 2 days for another job. The cokies might average 35/- a week in winter, but are slack in summer.

The regular men at gas works wd. rarely make full work thro' year. The work is so hard & excessive that they must lose some time. Provided they do not lose more than 7 days in

the year they are given a week's holiday, with a gratuity of 4/6. The bricklayers labourers & other casuals are supposed to get a day's holiday & 4/6 gratuity if they have worked at the gas works for 6 weeks previous to the holidays commencing, but they do not always get it. The men go off so many at a time, the holidays extending over 3 mos. of the summer, so there is always work for a certain number of additional hands in filling the places of those on leave. At Xmas time all those who have worked for 6 wks. previous have a gratuity of 4/6, provided they work all thro' Xmas week.

The casual labourers will probably average, one way or another, about 9 mos. work in the year

Labourers in ironworks, soap, chemical, &c. have fairly constant work.

Method of Work. —

Disputes. - In the gas-works there is no difficulty in regard to wages. The friction arises in the attempts of

the foremen (so Mr. Thorne puts it) to make the men do more than the amount of work agreed upon. Although the men are paid by time, they are supposed to do a certain task of work. Three men work together. The number of retorts they have to charge varies from 72 to 76 at different places. For a days work they have to carbonise 300-weight of coal in each retort. The scoops they use are supposed to hold 100-weight of coal, but the Company have been having new scoops made, as the old ones wear out, wh. hold 10 or 12 lbs more. Then the foremen come round & bully the men for not heaping the scoops quite full, but will not accept the men's challenge to have the coal weighed, nor will they measure off the quantity of work done.

Strikes. - One of the most

remarkable strikes the union has had was that of the gravediggers at Glasnevin Cemetery, Ireland lost. They formed a ~~very~~ strong branch of the union, but were defeated, & the branch was now broken up.

Particulars of strikes held last year, & of the friction at the Beckton works of the Gas Light & Coke Compy, wh. led to elaborate preparations on the part of the Compy & the Government, are given in the annual report.

This year the union has had a strike at Gowden in Wales against a 10 % reduction in manuf. of iron rails. after being out a month, the men got back the old terms. There has also been the strike of brickmakers at Cowley, Bucks, of which details are given in the separate report of

that strike. 1750 men were out for 17 weeks. The strike was primarily for an advance of 6d a thousand in the price of bricks, but a determined attempt was also made to abolish an old trade custom by wh. the masters claim the right to discharge the men at a moment's notice, whilst the men were compelled to complete the season. A sum varying from 2d to 4d per 1000 bricks is kept back by the masters until the end of the season, so in the event of a man leaving before this he forfeits the money. The men gained the 6d increase, but were unable to get the objectionable custom abolished. This strike is remarkable for the very small sum spent in working expenses.

The ramifications of this union are so wide that a strike in any skilled trade is sure to involve

some of its members.

Nearly all the labourers in the gasworks belong to this union. They rely on moral suasion to effect this. Those who do not belong to it get such a hackling from their fellow workmen that they are generally brought in.

Young & old men. — Youths are admitted to membership from the age of 16. There are only a few under 20.

Some of the old men at the gas works get the privilege of working in the yard, but the general tendency is against employing old men. In several factories (as at the soap works) men over 35 are not required, & 40 is becoming a general age for refusing men & discharging them.

Up to the present the men at the gasworks have lived to a fair

old age, but Mr. Thorne very much doubts whether this will be the case in the future. During the last 10 years the work has got 50 % harder than it used to be. New methods have greatly increased the power & heat of the generating furnaces, so that whilst it used to take 8 hrs to carbonise 300 weight of coal, it is now done in 4 hrs. In some places they are now charging the furnaces with oil instead of cannel coal. The consequence of these changes is that the heat is very excessive & the sulphurous fumes very bad. The men are very subject to colds & rheumatism.

Since the 8 hr. day was introduced the company are continually bringing in new labour-saving machinery.

Federation. – This Union belongs to Glen Edwards federation. It also sends 20 delegates to the London Trades

Council.

Winter is best time for the Union. They are enrolling now at rate of 100 a week, but others are dropping out.

Women. - The women in the Union include 1500 cotton workers at Bristol. There are also jam, india rubber, & tobacco workers, & there is a branch of laundresses at Fulham.

Mr. Thorne is a strong believer in the legal 8 hrs. day. He says they cannot hold it without. In some instances they have obtained the 8 hrs. after a great struggle, but have afterwards lost it again. Thousands of pounds have been lost in this way.

He says they get very few members from the Dockers Union. There has been some friction between the two organisations, owing to their

fees being lower.

[Mrs. Aveling is one of the leading spirits of this organization, wh. probably partly accounts for its Socialistic character]

Nov. 1891 J. A.

Mr. Elleston, Secy of Greenwich B branch of Gasworkers Union; formed 4th June, 1890, from the original Greenwich branch. Started with 98 members, & have had 590 on books. At end of last qr (Sept. 26) there were 426 on books, of whom 247 were financial. 28 were struck off during the quarter. Very few have transferred – about 12 since the branch started.

All the members are employed in cable manf^re by the Telegraph Construction & Maintenance Compy, 80 Old Broad St., who have their factory here. This compy employs nearly 2000 hands in busiest periods, but in slackest times, as at present, it falls to about 100. About 80% of those employed at any time & more than that in busy periods, are labourers, & all belong to a

Trade Union. It is the only big strictly union shop on the South-side of the River, Mr. Elleston thinks. Even in busiest times it is only under extreme pressure, & after the union supply is exhausted, that non-unionists are taken on, & they are quickly dropped again unless they join the Union. They may have 600 of their own members on at these times, the rest of the labour coming from the Dockers & other Unions. They are able to maintain this privilege because the leading hands, who have the taking on of the men, are members of their Union.

The cake work is divided into 4 or 5 different depts., each of wh. is worked mainly by unskilled labourers, some of those taken on at busy times being of the very lowest type. The better known & steady hands, who

all belong to this branch, have preference in slack time, & get pretty constant work. Between 70 & 80 of the 100 now on are members of the branch, the rest ~~being~~ including a few blacksmiths, engineers, bricklayers & other mechanics, with the office staff.

Subscription & Levies. - The subscription is 2d a week; entrance fee 1/- There was a levy of 3d per week during gas strike & one of 1/- for brickmakers. They were paid in most cases, those who did not do so at time thought being out of work doing so afterwards. The levies were looked against them.

Subscriptions are received at branch meetings every Tuesday, at Dove's Coffee Tavern, Trafalgar Rd, East Greenwich.

Old & Young men. - There are about

a dozen members under 20, but they do men's work & get men's pay. about 6 old men, who are put to the lighter kinds of work.

Hours & Wages. – The men are paid 4/- for a 9 hours actual working day, worked between 6 a.m & 5 p.m., or about 5½d per hour, pay being reckoned by the hour. The leading hands get more than this. Elleston himself, who is a machine driver, gets 4/8 a day, or 28/- a week, & other leading hands range from 26/- to 33/- a week.

There is sometimes a lot of overtime. This is absolutely necessary, owing to accidents to cables. The men are paid time & a quarter till 7, & time & half after; if working all night & day they get 18½ hours pay for the night, working till 6 next morning. If they work after 1 on Saturday they get time & half right

throughs; Sunday work, double time, & same for Good Friday & Xmas-day.

Seamen Staff. – This Company has its own ships, & keeps a special staff of sailors to lay the cables. They get £6. 10 a month when at sea. It is very dangerous work. They are fully competent seamen. When on land they work as labourers, taking their chance of work with the rest.

Strikes. – The hours & wages above named were the outcome of the strike at this firm wh. took place concurrently with the great dock strike. Prior to this they were paid by the day, wh. lasted fm. 6 to 6, with 1½ hrs for meals. The great grievance wh. led to the strike was the fact that the mechanics left at 5, whilst the labourers, though sometimes engaged on exactly the same work, had to stay till 6.

According to the strike at Silver's

telegraph factory (Silvertown), wh. was also supported by the Gasworkers Union, Mr. Ellestor said this failed through Silver's having a big factory in France wh. did just the same kind of work. Silver's largely increased the wages of the Frenchmen, & so kept them at work.

Irregularity.— This work depends entirely on the obtaining of contracts by the firms, & has nothing to do with the seasons. A firm might get an order or two lasting a couple of years, & then be at a standstill. This happened with his firm, who were full of work for over a year, & then came quite to a stop. The consequence was the wholesale discharge of the men, & much distress ensued in East Greenwich, where most of the men live. The tradespeople & everybody felt it severely.

These sudden stoppages made Greenwich & Deptford a fine recruiting ground for blacklegs. They hoped to be busy again in another month, with the construction of a long contemplated cable, to be laid between Mauritius & Zanzibar. This company were almost certain to get the work if it was decided on, because they had all lines in that part of the Globe - the Mediterranean, China, India, &c.

There are 3 other telegraph factories, as follows:-

Siemens, at Charlton. They have the Atlantic cables - Brazil, &c. Have also a great electric light business. Employ more than Ellestons firm, on the whole, a great many of them Germans; have German supervisors, &c. Pay very low wages to laborers - 4½d hour, or 1d less than here.

Silvers, at Silvertown. South

American cables. Also have India rubber & w'proof works. Pay about same as here, but the ship loading, coiling of cable, &c, is done piece work.

Henley's, North Woolwich. Have West India & Bermuda lines. Not such large works as the others.

Having their other premises, there is always work going at Siemens & Silver's; but here & at Henley's they may have nothing to do. They are never all busy at once, nor quite slack at once, & the men hover about between the four firms & if work cannot be got at either of them try at the docks, or some may chance to get a job at the other factories in the neighbourhood, wh. include the following:-

Thames Soap Works. Nearly 200 men employed. Pretty regular work. They were unionists, but have

fallen away a good deal. Got 10% rise after the strike, but have since lost part of it.

Hollick's Cement Works. – [Full particulars given in interview with Devile]

Ashby & Son's Cement Works. – About 40 men, all in Union. (See Devile).

Sayers, Mawdsley, & Co., Boiler makers. Not union firm. Pay very low wages. Have a good deal of work, & it is of very heavy character, including boilers for the Navy. Have been working night & day for last 3 years.

Howlem, Burt & Co's stone works. – The labourers here, about 20 in number (wharf hands, &c.) have just come into the union. Hours are 6 to 5.30 (less 1½ hr. meals), except ~~meals~~ Saturday; wages 27/- These men struck at Imperial Institute

for 6d an hour, & got it.

Sayers, Johnson & Phillips, electric engineers. Large firm. When busy, employ about 500 hands. Are busy at same time as Ellestons firm, because they make a good deal of the material wh. his firm use. Some of the men belong to the Union; a great number of them were members, but Johnson threatened to lock them out if they joined the union.

Machinery. – Everything in the cable works is being done by machinery now. The very machine he is driving is doing twice as much as it was 4 years ago; they are constantly improving & adding. On the old machines it was reckoned good work to do 2 miles a day; now they must do 4½ or 5 miles. There is really a good deal more work to do, but owing to machinery there is not as much

for the men as there used to be. The men call the machines "alligators," because they swallow up the work.

Nov. 1891. S. A.

Mr. Devile, Greenwich A Branch of Gasworkers Union. Founded Apr. 1889

This is the original Greenwich Branch, from wh. 4 others have since been formed. In Sept, 89, before the first offshoot was formed, it was over 1700 strong.

There are now in books 425; 193 financial. Several have transferred to Hammermen's, Carmen's & other Unions. Are making new members every week.

Most of the members work at Hollicks's or Ashby's Cement works; the rest are general labourers.

Hollicks employ 70; Ashby, 40.

~~It is~~

Process of Cement Manufre. — The sand & chalk of wh. the cement is made is brought to the works in barges, wh. also bring the coal, coke

& breeze wh. is consumed. This is unloaded by 2 gangs of 4 men each, one working by day & the other by night. They also load the cement in sacks & casks for delivery. They work by the piece (as do nearly all the men in the firm), & are paid $2\frac{1}{2}$d per ton, except for coke, wh. is at per chaldron. Their working day is from 6 to 6, less 2 hrs for meals. Their earnings vary according to material, some kinds of wh. can be handled very much faster than others.

The mud & chalk are taken to the washmill by 2 gangs of 3 men each (one for day & one for night work) [Mr. Devik will send on particulars of pay] From the washmill the composition is pumped on to red hot floors for drying, wh are heated by means of furnaces underneath. From here it is wheeled to & deposited in the

kilns by the floor or plate gang, who load the kilns in the following way: a layer of faggots is placed at the bottom, & is ~~then~~ covered with a layer of coke; then a layer of the composition; & so alternately a layer of each until the top of the kiln is reached. It is then lighted, & at the end of 24 hours the contents settle down & make room for more. Other layers are added until the kiln is full, when fine firing is put at the top & it is left to cool. There are 2 floor gangs, each consisting of 8 men & 2 boys, but both gangs work in the day time only. Their pay is 2/- a ton now; before the big strike it was only 1/8½; as a result of the strike it was raised to 1/9½; then in 1890, on comparing prices with those ruling in the Medway district, they found they were

getting less than was paid there. On this being proved to their employer, he, after some demur, consented to increase to present rate. The plate gang is the principal gang, on whom the carrying out of the work mainly depends.

When the contents of the ~~ch~~ kiln have cooled, the cement is taken out in the shape of a large hard clinker by the draw gangs. There is here again a day & night gang, each comprising 2 men & a boy. They are paid 6d a ton. They take the cement to the crusher, whence it is conveyed in small pieces by machinery (a broad grooved band) to the mill on the upper floor, & there ground fine. There are 2 millers, who are also on piece. The cement is finally packed into casks or sacks by a gang of 4 men, termed fillers, who are paid

6d a ton & only work in day time.

There are in addition 3 stokers, who keep the furnaces going, & get 1¼d a ton, 1 leveller, who keeps the composition well spread out on the drying floor, & also gets 1¼d a ton; then there are a few day workers, at 5d an hour for odd work, & an engine driver and crane driver, who are paid about 5/- or 5/6 a day.

Hours. – The recognised time for day workers is from 6 to 6, less 2 hours for meals; piece workers go on according to amount of work to do, but do not work after 6 (a.m or pm, as the case may be. The men set their faces against overtime, preferring to give the extra work to the unemployed. 300 tons is reckoned a weeks work for the plate gangs to turn out, but the employer, wishing to get more

work out of them, offered 6d per ton extra for all over 300 up to 350, & 1/- over 350. The men accepted the offer, but instead of doing extra work themselves took on another gang, & the extra money was divided between the 3 gangs, so the odd gang got 2/2 or more per ton for the work they did.

The reason they are able so completely to control the work at Hollicks's (to wh. the foregoing description solely applies) is because the gangers, who take on the men, are all Unionists.

This is a very busy firm, the employer having, at certain periods, more work than he can do. He then buys from other English makers. He has only got storage room for 300 or 400 tons, wh. is only a weeks work for those he employs. The cement is made mainly for

Russia; hence there is some slackness fm. Nov. to March, when the boats cannot get there & there is not the demand for cement. The machinery is, however, going all the year, with the exception of about a month at Xmas.

The piece workers do not go anywhere else in slack time, but may get some odd work in clearing rubbish, wh. they contract for at so much a ton. There is little doing anywhere else when work is stopped here.

The day hands are the more casual. They are merely taken on as occasion requires. The piece workers are paid weekly.

At Ashby's, although most of the men are Unionists, they have not so much control. Here there is new machinery, in wh. the drying chambers & kilns are together, thus utilising the

same heat for both purposes & saving a good deal of labour. The plate gang is reduced to 3 men & a boy (instead of 8 men & 2 boys). The men's earnings here, taking last year right through, did not average 17/- a week.

Disputes. - There have been no strikes at Hollicks since the great turn-out of 1889, but at Asleby's there was one against a reduction of prices varying from 10 to 40 % arising out of the erection of the new kilns. The men were successful in nearly all cases, the result being a piece work scale ~~all~~ throughout, part having previously been day work.

At Hollicks there was a dispute arising out of the changing of a gauger. The gauger of the plate gang left about 2 years ago to go into some business for himself, & another man was appointed in his place. Recently, having failed

in his venture, he wished to be restored to his old position, & applied to the employer, who undertook to put him back in his old place, & to shift the present ganger into the ranks again. This the latter objected to, & the men strongly siding with him & refusing to work under the old ganger, the employer had to yield. The men, however, soon found a job for the old ganger in another firm.

Mr. Devlin mentioned other instances to show the way in wh. the men here stand together.

Medway mud makes the best cement. It is supposed to be stronger, & is not so sandy as other mud.

The cement made now is not so good as it used to be. ~~It~~ The mud used to lay 12 mos. to allow the sandy sediment to drain off. Now it is used at once, & there

is no means of taking out the sand.

The coal is discharged, sometimes by the Docks Company, but mostly by the gas Co's own men, & is conveyed to the retort

South Metrop. Gas Co.

Interview with Mr Livesey at 709a Old Kent Road 13 Jany 1893.

I began by explaining the general plan of my work telling him that my object was to show the conditions of employment of gas workers. I showed him that the numbers so returned in the Census were much smaller than the numbers employed for the reason that many of their employés appeared as Coal porters, Engineers, Carpenters &c or as ordinary 'labourers'. The Bd of Trade return for Octr 1886 divides the men & Mr Livesey kindly promised to do it for me for June & Dec 1892 with detailed weekly earnings & to give also total annual amount paid. This will be a somewhat more elaborate return than that prepared by him for the Royal Comn in 1891 of which we have a copy.

The gas supply of London is practically in the hands of the ~~Company~~ & the Gas Light & Coke Co & the South Metropolitan Gas Company ~~the South Metrop Co~~ ~~the Gas Light Company~~ does not cross the river at all but the Gas L & Coke Co does so at Lambeth & again further west. There are a number of sub-urban companies two of which may cross the southern metrop boundary. [Map showing the distribution of the area will be lent]

The process of the work is as follows:

(1) discharging the coal. The Surrey Commercial do some of this but most is done by the Gas Co's men: cost being deducted from suppliers.

(2) Conveying the coal to the retort houses where it is so disposed as to fall by gravitation to the stokers feet (?)

South Metrop Co

(3) Work in the retort houses. The retorts are long fire brick ovens arranged over & heated by a coke furnace. These retorts are filled from both ends by long 'scoops' which meet in the middle, the retort being about 20 to 25 feet long & the scoops half this. Two men lift the scoop about the middle with a bent iron bar, & one man, holding a handle at the closed end, steers the scoop into the retort & when pushed home turns it upside down so discharging its load of coal. This is done (repeated) three times for each retort the scoop being turned first right & then left. The oven doors are then shut being sealed up with a sort of cement so as to be perfectly tight, & the coal is baked for 6 hours at the end of which time the gas has all escaped & the coke remains. The gas is drawn off by a pipe at each end of the tube & is then passed through water, any return of air being thus prevented. When the gas is all made the doors are taken off and the red hot coke is taken out, water is thrown on it & when cool it is removed & stacked for sale. The moving of the coke is done partly by barrows & partly by travelling bands worked by steam. The filling & emptying of the retorts is also done partly by a machine which travels backwards & forwards in two sections, one passing the coal in, & the other taking out the coke. The machine imitates hand work very successfully. The strike gave a great impetus to the introduction of such machines

South Metropolitan Co

(4) Purifying the gas. The crude gas is first cooled - passing along pipes immersed in cold water. It contains water & tar which condense & flow along the pipes (which are (always with a fall) to reservoirs. The gas then passes into a chamber filled with wooden slats which are kept wet - the wet surface absorbs amonia & gas which in turn can be extracted from the water. Other products of value are obtained & finally lime is used to absorb the sulphur, the result being a bulky waste product

(5) Engines are used for pumping the gas &c through the pipes & there are besides engineers a number of mechanics & yard labourers.

(6) When purified & ready for use the gas passes into the large Gasometers which consist of a telescopic cylinder standing in water.

(7) The Company employ men to lay the mains & street lamposts & also company lamp lighters

(8) They also make & fix meters

(9) The repairing & rebuilding of retorts is partly special work partly that of any bricklayer - This work is mostly done in summer & the Company arrange when they can to take men for it who are gas making &c in the winter

The Company's works of the South Metrop. Gas Company are 6 in number, viz.,

* Has all the newest appliances
The new gasometer is capable of holding
9 million (cub ft?)
† Central station for repairs: all the meters
are sold & mended here:

South Metropn Co

Vauxhall (large)
Bankside
Rotherhithe
Greenwich Creek
} (small)
* East Greenwich (makes as much gas as the Old Kent Road)
† Old Kent Road. (Principal place)
The three latter are small works.

At Vauxhall & Old Kent Road the 3 shift 8 hour day obtains - at the four others the men have preferred after a trial of both methods, to go back to the 12 ~~hour~~ (or rather 11 hour) system.
The times of employment of 3 shifts are 6 AM to 2 pm., 2 pm to 10 pm & 10 pm to 6 am. The retorts are arranged so that there is a draw every hour, which keeps the men pretty fully occupied. The 2 shifts under the shift system the men work from 6 AM to 6 pm, but vice versa the draws are only every 2 hours, which makes the work easier. Practically the last draw is clear at 5 o'clock.

When the change from 12 to 8 hours was made the days pay remained the same - the men gained 1/3rd of the time (nominally) & did 1/6 more work per hour.
On going back to the 12 hours plan the men ~~got~~ obtained an advance of 1/6th on their wages - the work on either plan thus costs the same, & the men ~~take~~ may prefer the higher pay & less arduous work.

South Metro. Co

Labour is continued

Work goes on day & night, except for part of Sunday day time, & advantage is taken of this to make the change from day to night, & this is usually once a fortnight, but is at the men's choice. In the 3 shifts Mr Livesey believed the change was made in regular rotation – a fortnight at each set of hours.

Other men from in other branches work 54 hours a week, or 9½ on 5 days, & 6½ on Sat.

Mr Livesey said their relations with the men were now excellent. Since the strike & especially since a public declaration by Mr Thorne that in future they would not give the legal weeks notice but on striking come out at once. The Company has refused to employ men belonging to the Gas Workers or Coal Porters unions. A notice to this effect was put up & acted on so far as they knew. Any man who worked for them in effect declared that he did not belong. The tone amongst the men, Mr Livesey said, was against the union – so much so that they had refused to work with known union men – reporting them & asking to have them discharged – which has been done.

The story of the strike as told by Mr Livesey is that everything

4 C

* Mr Sims said on Feb. 7. 93. they had no Union Man in their employment

had been granted - the men had then 8 hours & rise of pay - but the relations between the managers & the men only got worse. Any man who was even civil was marked so it was not possible to exchange a friendly word. Then little hours were made such as the refusal of the retort men to grease the hinges of the retort doors which they had been accustomed to do but this was labourers work the union said. Finally a man who made trouble was discharged - the Union took it up & threatened a general strike if he were not reinstated. Mr Livesey gave way - said he should be reinstated & agreed to meet the Union officials. Not content with the victory so obtained, the union had the notices sent in for 2000 men, an hour before the meeting - the directors did not like it but could do nothing but give in. This was in September 1889 (?). They however felt that they were sitting on a volcano & prepared for war, getting everything ready for bringing in outside labour housing & feeding them. They also pushed forward the profit sharing scheme. To this the union objected as "aimed at destroying the union" - the particular points to which they objected were removed. The money should be paid year by year (if the men wished to draw it out) & on leaving at any time - strike is no strike. Still the object in remained. The plan

(Copy of balance sheet & rules received.)

(There is also a benefit & superannuation fund of which I received rules & balance sheet)

was intended to bind the men to the Company by improving their position & thus the union would not have. The union denounced the scheme & in Dec demanded the discharge of some men who accepted it. On this Lwesey decided to fight & at once put in motion the arrangements that had been prepared. The men were beaten, enough outside labour being obtained to turn the corner, & then many of the old hands came back disgusted with the Union.

The Profit Sharing scheme remains in force & works well. At first 5% was paid - but it is now only 3% (on the wages) - the rate goes on a sliding scale with the dividend paid - that is with the price of gas. Low gas allows for improved dividend by law. The men have the right to draw the money out when they please & also to pay in what they please - account is kept at 4% int. A good deal is drawn out at once but some remains & those who once leave it let the amount grow. In all the Company held £27.000 of the men's money now.

The reduction of hours (or increase of pay in place of reduction) remains to the credit of Union action.

Coal-Porters.

National Amalgamated Coal-Porters' Union.

Mr. Brill (president) Feb 8/92.

The Union includes all men who handle coal themselves as manual labourers, whether coal-whippers, trimmers, drivers of coal-carts, coal-hawkers or what not. They are however careful to exclude capitalists, as former Unions have been damaged by the admission of small merchants.

There are about 10000 in the London Branches of the Union scattered all over London. The head centre is at King's Cross, owing to the great coal depots near the Railway terminus, there are a great many members in E. London (the Port) and others in every district in London.

There are in all 45 Branches, of which 32 are in London.

In East London there are Five Branches as follows:-

Limehouse 300 members

Stratford	550
Canning Town	300
Whitechapel	400
Mile End	150

The Central Branch King's Cross has 1400 members.

Some of the largest employers are

(1). Sea-borne Coal. Cory (The Derricks Bugsby Reach)
Lambert (Galleons Reach)

(2) Inland Coal, Woods
Rickett Smith

Many of the merchants, including all given above are colliery-proprietors also.

Probably the coal ~~imported into~~ brought into London is about equally divided between inland & sea-borne trade, but there are no statistics. (? returns at time of coal dues would shew this).

Almost all business is done at the Coal Exchange, near Billingsgate (Mondays,

Wednesdays & Fridays). There is a Masters' Association connected with the exchange.

Organisation of Union.

Subscription 2d a week all of which goes to the Centre + an extra sub. for Branch expenses (? amount; ~~probably~~ borne by Branch)
Entrance fee 10s.

The Council consists of one member from each London Branch, whether great or small; it meets once a fortnight, but has no Executive Powers, referring every proposal back to the Branches through the delegates to be voted on. Voting takes place by Branches each Branch counting as a Unit and is decided by verdict of a majority of Branches.

The same mode of voting is adopted on question of grant-in-aid from the Union, or other matters requiring the Referendum.

Mr. Brill thinks this method the right one & very important, "it's here that most Unions go wrong". Otherwise

the little Branches would be swamped by the big ones.
He thinks the method of the Coal-Porters Union is democratic.
The reference of all questions to the vote of the main body makes the Union rather unwieldy, e.g. sudden strikes are impossible, but it keeps up the interest of the whole body & prevents suspicion of the Union Officials which is the curse of most centralised Unions.

He says the Union is resisting the byelaws of the Comm[Council] bearing hardly on the hawkers of coal; that it has already raised their pay from 1/6 a ton to 2/—. They never own the coal but are employed by merchants.
Coal Whipping is raising coal from hold in baskets by ropes going over pulleys, and held by men who stand on a raised platform & thence jump down on to deck with rope in hand, thus raising up the coal baskets.

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Notes from Rules & Reports of Coal-Porters' Union.

Entrance fee 10/-, weekly contribution 2d. Funds centralised; the whole 2d. & entrance fees going to Centre. Branch Expenses paid for extra, by a Branch levy.

Union consists of those engaged in "filling, carrying, delivering, teeming, & trimming coals, & those engaged in working Block fuel".

Council consists of one delegate from each Branch + the President, Treasurer, General & Assistant Secretaries; ~~elected annually by Branches.~~

~~There is an Annual Conference = Mass meeting.~~

The officers are elected annually ~~by~~ at Branch meetings by ballot.

The delegates are elected ½ yearly by ballot. They may if unable to attend General Council give their Agenda paper & credentials to a financial member of the branch who shall act as substitute.

There is an annual Conference – Mass Meeting.

XVIII. "If at any time the funds of this Union decrease through any legitimate cause, the General Council shall determine & order a levy to be made to bring up the funds, the said levy to be equal on all members."

XX. Any member ~~xx~~ going to work drunk to be fined 2/6 (if found guilty by his fellow-members). Also fined 2/6 if he refuses to quit the work-place when ordered by his ganger or foreman to do so.

XXII. Any one except a Coal-Merchant subscribing £1.1.0 may be made an honorary member by a two thirds vote at a Branch meeting, He has right of attending Branch meetings, & Speaking & voting on all except financial matters.

XXV. All the business to be conducted in hall or school-room in preference to a Public-house.

The Council meets fortnightly from 7-10.

Districts to be formed where deemed necessary by the General Council; ~~consisting of one representative~~

District Councils to consist of one representative of each Branch in the district, & the chairman to have a representative vote & a casting vote.

District councils are to look after interests of Branches in their district; & to be subservient to General Council in all matters relative to general welfare of Union.

They have power to frame their own bye laws, subject to General Council, & in accordance with Rules of Union. They may manage local affairs, & try to settle disputes amicably before communicating with General Council. If they want to make new claims on behalf of their members they must submit them to General Council stating

(1) existing conditions,

(2) number of men affected,

(3), proportion of Unionists to non-Unionists employed

(4). Any other details necessary to reliable judgment.

not less than 10 days before next Council meeting.

Genl Sec. shall then write to District Councils in all districts affected asking them to meet & report to the Genl Council on the merits of the case. Genl Council then meets to consider claims & reports, & if approved assist District

Council claiming to negotiate them.

If a strike is entered on without consent of Genl Council they shall not be responsible for it, but no member shall be allowed to do the work of those on strike.

District Councils meet once a quarter, (or oftener for special purposes).

District Secretaries appointed by election by all Branches. They act as Secs of district Councils. Also visit & overhaul the books &c of Branches.

Salaries		£	
President	not more than	150	& expenses
Genl Sec.	not more than	150	
District Secs	not more than	130	
Assistant Sec.	not more than	110	

The rules were revised in 1891. They are very loosely & badly drawn, & so illiterate as to be something unintelligible.

Chief points of difference from Rules (1889).

(1). Council's name changed from "Executive" to "General".

~~(2) Branch Representatives changed to Delegates.~~

(2). District Councils & Secretaries introduced.

(3). "Investigators" disappear. ? powers given to District Councils

(4) Salaries & other matters made more precise.

&c &c.

Coalporters. Notes from Mr. J. O'Connor General Sec.

~~March~~ Feb 29 /92

Branches in London.

	King's Cross	1400		Walthamstow Park
	Limehouse	300,	20	Penge
	Camberwell	530,		Homerton
	Stratford	300.		Walthamstow
5	Whitechapel	400		Old Ford
	Mile End	150		Edmonton
	N. Woolwich	94		Turnham Green
	Deptford	200		Chelsea
	Greenwich	250		West Green
10	W. Kensington (over)	400		
	Westminster			
	Battersea over	400	30	
	Kentish Town	280		
	Brixton			
15	Holloway	400		
	Walworth	250		
	Kilburn			
	Nunhead			

The strength of the Union is north of the River, The greater bulk of the Coal comes by rail inland, especially the household coal. Gas & Steam-Coal is sea-borne.

Estimated number of coal porters in <u>sea-borne</u> trade of the Port.

North Side, 500 at Derricks (Canning Town)
250 Limehouse
+ ...
} 1000 from Beckton to London Bridge.

Total (both sides), 1500 loading out of steamships into Barges, up to London Bridge.
500 Riverside men (Putney-Blackfriars)
2000.

Leaving 5000 inland workers. There are no coal whippers now in Thames. Work now done by Winchmen & Cranks; such as belong to a Union belong to "Coal porters' Assn." but most are Federation men.

The Inland ~~members~~ workers are divided into
Carmen,
loaders,
trollymen

The carmen unload their own coal, therefore belong to Coal-porters not Carmen's Union. Some members of Carmen's Union have however come into the trade since & are recognised.

Complaints of Carmen taking into their Union refractory members of other Unions.

Only exception to rule that those who handle coal belong to Coal-porters' Union is the men who unload coal in Beckton-Works, who belong to Gas-workers, (with consent of Coal porters – no friction)

Coal Exchange, meets Mondays, Wednesdays & Fridays.

Two Societies, (i) Coal-Factors' Society,
Sec. – W. H. Edgley.
(ii) Coal-Merchants' Society,
Sec. – Mr. Lockett.

with separate rooms on the Market.

The great bulk of London trade is done on the Exchange, but a certain amount is done by yearly contract agents

A good many firms e.g. Charrington Sells Dale & Co, Sargent Longstaff & Co are both inland & sea-borne merchants.

Some (e.g. Lamberts' at Galleons Reach) are both merchants, factors, and Colliery owners.

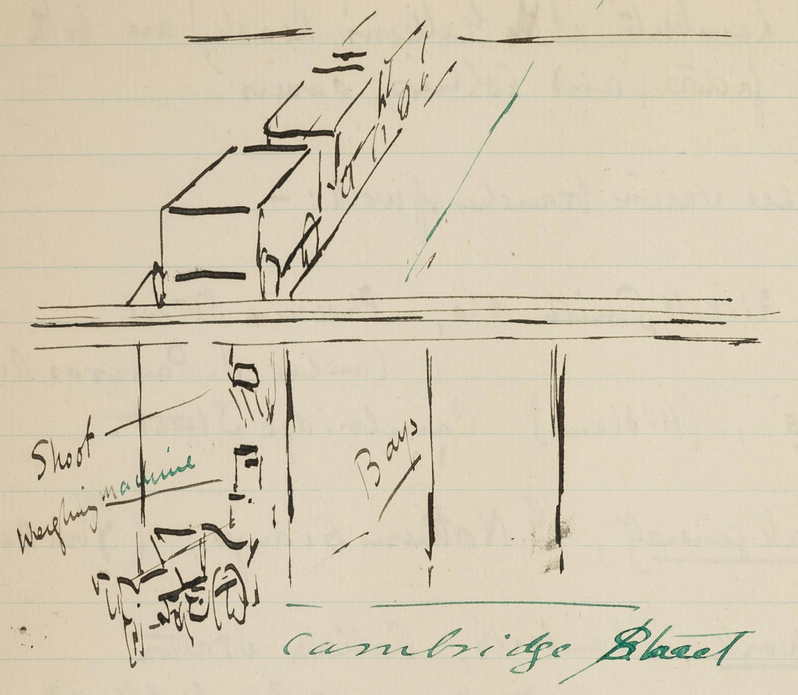
Best places to see various branches of work: –

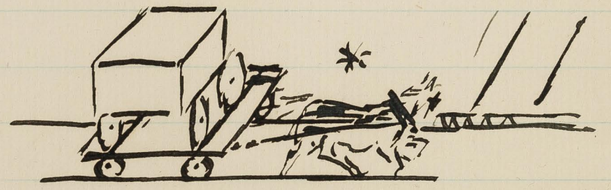
Loaders, Rickett Smith & Co, Phoenix Street, (under S. Pancras Arches)

Shoot-works, (Midland) Cambridge Street.

Inland-work generally, G. Northern Sidings; (off York Road)

Sea-borne work, Lamberts', Galleon Station at entrance to Royal Albert Dock, (Ask for one of the coal-porters, or Mr. Shepherd (? manager))

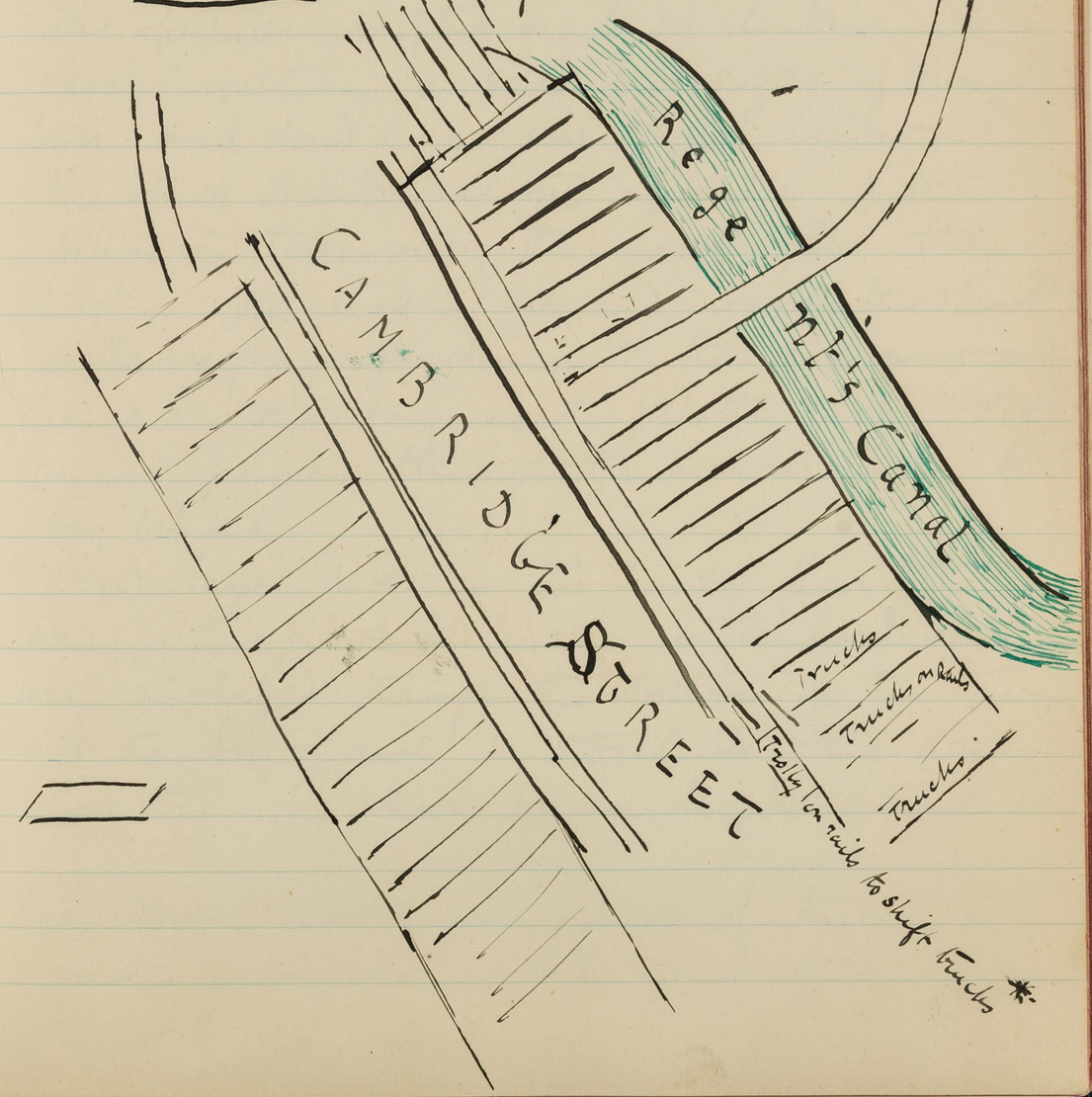




Notes on Visits to coal works.

(March 1 ~~Feb 29~~, and March 8. On second occasion with Messrs Brill & O'Connor).

(I). Shoot-Works. (Cambridge Street)



The trucks are run on to a high-level siding & are shunted on to short transverse rails as in figure by means of a trolly. On the siding are holes, communicating with the "bays" or storehouses for coal underneath.

The apertures are of two kinds (1) leading into a "shoot" containing a "screen" or sifter of iron bars, and closed by an iron door below. The truck stands over the aperture & the bottom is taken out; the coal fills the shoot. The sack is placed under the shoot on the weighing machine & the door ~~[illegible]~~ opened. The large coal fills the sack, & the small passes through the screen into the bay behind.

(2). larger holes in the hinder part of the siding, through which entire truck load of coal are discharged through the bottom of the trucks into the bays and so stored in the dry, where they will keep for any length of time.

The men work in gangs of three or sometimes more. ~~H~~ Some of the heaviest

They are where necessary, "screened" or "sifted" with a hand sifter.

work is done in loading sacks & bringing them out by hand from the back of the bays where they are stored to the front & loading them on to carts.
For this work 8d a ton is paid.
For loading from the shoots, 5d a ton is paid.
In the gang of three there is a leading man, who ~~[illegible]~~ acts as weigh man, & with shares equally with the others the earnings made. The work is too heavy for the regular members of the gang to work full time for six days in the week, so that casual outside men get a chance. These outsiders are called "scurfs" and are employed by the gang, but paid their full Union piece rate like the others.
On them however falls the bulk of irregular work. Many (? most) coal-porters begin as outsiders, e.g. as boys working trolleys &c, and get taken into a gang afterwards. The outsiders are also partly recruited by men who have fallen out of regular employ through drink, misbehaviour &c.
? Are they also old men?
The hours are 6 – 5?, not of course

And because by City byelaws, no Coal may be shot in the City after 10 a.m. Hence there is no "losing a quarter" as in skilled trades – lose a minute & you lose a day.

3/400
12/133

continuous work. If a man's one minute behind 6 o'clock, he loses a whole day, & an outsider takes his place. This Mess. Brill & O'Connor think quite right – to give the outsiders a chance.

There are about the same no. of gangs of regular men employed always at the Short-walls &c, but on emergencies all the outsiders & anyone who can be procured are taken on. When work is slack, ~~No clear cuts~~ each gang does less & earns less.

As to amount of irregularity no very clear answer. Average wages one week with another throughout the year: about 30s, in summer slack times often not more than 18s. A gang of three men can load & bring out 50 tons at 8d a ton, from the bays, in one day, giving earnings of 11s each per day, but they could not keep it up for a whole week.

Brill thinks that out of the 1400 members

of the King's Cross Branch there are probably 100 "scurfs".

(N.B. the same name as is used by Fellowship Porters of their outside labour)

Brill & O'Connor denounce the public house as the chief enemy of the coal-porters. They often "drink two & three tons a day" (i.e. two & three eight-pences), 5 half-pints before breakfast, & so forth. Thus they have never anything in hand. There are however many teetotallers in the Union who do the work quite as well.

The men are paid on two systems:—

(1) What they have earned, paid every night

(2). Once a week, + (say) 10s "subsistence" money on Tuesday.

Many live from hand to mouth and so require to be paid every day. They feed well, & it is necessary for their work.

A good many of the men live in the Country & come in to work. Others in the streets round King's Cross, York Road &c &c.

II. Phoenix Street (St. Pancras Arches).
Rickett Smith & Co's Loaders.

Here the ~~trucks are~~ carts stand under the arches of the high level sidings, on which are the loaded coal trucks. Underneath also are rails. A truck is shunted on to a lift and lowered bodily to the lower level through the siding, and then drawn off the lift on to the lower rails & unloaded into sacks. The side of the truck is opened on a hinge, and a gang of three unload the sacks. One holds the sack open, two shovel coal into it; then the 1st one shoulders it on to his back with their help & with a curious "knack" deposits it safely upright in the cart.

If necessary the coal is "screened" (i.e. sifted) by hand.

The work here is heaviest of all: Coal is hard & heavy & men cannot possibly put in a full week at a time

III. Coal sidings of G. Northern & L. & N. Western.

Here the coal-trucks are run direct on to sidings: the carts stand by them & the trucks are unloaded into them through side as described under (ii)

Historical Notes on Coal Trade of London. From Parliamentary Papers.

(1). 1838 Committee on Coal Trade of London Port.

Report that Act 1 & 2 Will. IV. c. 76 passed in 1830 "provided that the system which previously existed of selling Coals by measure under the control of the City of London should be abolished, & that they should hereafter be sold by weight in an open market, & that the various dues payable to the Corporation should be commuted for 13d upon every ton of Coal sold within the limits of the City jurisdiction, whether brought by sea or by the Grand Junction & Paddington Canals."

The total duties per ton were 13d.

The duties repealed being:

			Commuted to
1	Orphans' duty	6d per chaldron	8d. ton
2	Metage Duty for public improvements (5 & 6 W. & Mary c. 10) & succeeding acts	4d	
3	City Metage by prescription, confirmed by charter	4d	4d. ton*
4	Coal Market duty	1d	1d. ton
5	Water-bailage 4d per "Newcastle or Double Chaldron"; 8d per Ship groundage, & 1/6 per ship to Lord Mayor for permit.		*

* 3 & 5 commuted for 4d a ton to include compensation to Coal-meters.

The Act was temporary, & if it lapsed the former privileges of City would revive.
Committee however being satisfied that "the system of selling Coals by weight is better than that of selling them by measure", & that commuted dues were less vexatious than former dues, recommend its continuance

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Price of coal paid at Greenwich Hospital since July 1836.
Contract price for Newcastle Coals delivered in whole cargoes at the Wharf of the Hospital

1836	17 s 3	per ton
1837	1 . 1 . 3	
1838	1 s 0 s 11 .	

+ cost of cartage to the cellars, trimming &c. 2/6 a ton.

Amount of Coal imported into Port of London from Newcastle Sunderland, & other ports 1834 — 1837 inclusive. (000 omitted)

	1834 Tons	1835 Tons	1836 Tons	1837 Tons
Newcastle	1142,	1266	1235	1279
Sunderland	559	629	743	834
Stockton	221	230	268	370
Blyth,	64	65	71	71
Scotland	39	40	22	18
Wales	33	38	35	35
Yorkshire	17	27	21	16
	2075			2623

Notes from Evidence.

Reference to "Coal & Corn Committee of Corporation".
Court of Aldermen empowered to make by-laws for regulation of Coal-market. did not do so.

A Coal factors' Society existed to make regulations for the supply of the market. They adopted in 1835, a scale; e.g.
"3 Nov. 1836. Resolved - that in consequence of the advance in price at the pits the scale be advanced 17

22s to admit ... 40 cargoes
22/3 or 22/6 ..... 50 ...
22/9 or 23/- ---- 60 ...
23s & upward - - - 70 ...

and so forth (See p. 7 of Minutes of Evidence, (R. Clarke)

In 1837 a scale was made varying with summer & winter.

The factors' Society collected information from their correspondents and decided the scale, then communicated it through their Sec. to the Sec. of the Coal-owners' Association in the North, the prices of the day, & the resolutions of the Coal factors being thus sent North 3 times a week.

All gas ships were entitled to deliver at once ditto ships with less than 130 tons. Others had to wait their turn, the number of cargoes to be

delivered being regulated by the ~~fac~~ scale.
If any ship breaks through the "turn" it is reported to the North, & will not be loaded again with coal. They would also be reported to the North if they sold the coal direct without going through the market; but the witness alleges that they would not be boycotted.
All the ships reported for breaking the factors' regulations are given in an appendix.
"In the trade we mean by "consumers" parties who buy large quantities of coals for breweries & manufacturing purposes."
R Clarke

Directly the old system of coal measuring by the Corporation ceased in 1832 an independent "Coal-Meters' Office" was set up for supplying weighers of coal, for which 3d was charged per ton & 2d paid to the ~~weig~~ meters or weighers. The Coal-meters' Office was under the direction of nine coal-factors & nine coal-buyers; the factors representing interests of ship & coal owners; the buyers, of the Coal-merchants. There were 160 meters in 1837. They had no cognisance of the Factors' Regulations.
There were a good many coal-meters not working under the direction of the Coal meters' Office

"Most of them (the coal-meters) belong to what they term the Meters' Philanthropic Society." (Mr. W. Vale, p. 50)

Complaints were made to the Committee by two Coal-whippers of the evils due to employment of coal-whippers by publicans whose drink they were compelled to consume in order to get a job. They had to buy about 8s of drink a week. Lieut. Arnold had, from philanthropic motives, established a Coal-Whippers' Office for supplying Coal-whippers. He was greatly abused by publicans & their employees, & boycotted until he reduced the charge to ship owners from 1s 4d to 1d per ton, when he got a good many ships. The publicans however followed suit. They used to square the captains. See Arnold's Evidence

Note from Mayhew vol ii

Under the Coal-Whippers' Act 1843 all Coal-Whippers were required to be registered, at fee of 4d. They might not be employed by publicans, & a Coal-Whippers' Office was started, the men being divided into 218 gangs of 8 each + a basketman who acted as foreman, who got the offer of work in turn. The regulations were ~~made~~ entrusted to a body of Commissioners. The effects in improving the condition of the men were very marked and rapid.

A benefit Society of Coal Whippers was formed, + a school accommodating 600 children by their own contributions.

Notes from London Directory.

Coal Factors, & Merchants.

The Directory gives a list of 29 Coal Factors of whom 15 are also given under the list of Merchants.

There are 356 enumerated as Coal Merchants.

——— 61 ——— Coal Agents.

Coal Merchants & Coal Agents	Coal Factors & Coal Merchants	Coal Factors & Coal Merchants & Coal Agents.	Coal Factors only	Coal Merchants only	Coal Agents only.
12	10	5	14	341	49

Mr. Russell Rea. 22 Leadenhall Street E.C.
Coal ~~Mr~~ Merchant. March 14/92.

Mr Rea's firm is entirely engaged with steam coal from S. Wales for loading outward bound ships. They act as agents for Sir W. Lewis's Collieries Rhondda Vale, & supply the Orient & other lines of steamers with coal. He says he knows very little of the inland household coal trade.

There are three methods pursued in the distribution of Coals

(a) Where Collieries deal direct with their customers, the whole business of distribution being done by officials & servants of the Colliery owners.
e.g. Lord Londonderry's Collieries,
Newton, Chambers & Co &c.

(b). Where Collieries have agents in London who sell to dealers on the Coal Exchange.

(c) Where independent men take agencies for a colliery and are also general dealers.

There is no clear division of function between the Coal-factor and the coal-merchant, ~~but~~

and most factors are also merchants & dealers.
Where the word "factor" is used the interest thought of is mainly that of the producer (colliery owner) whereas "merchant" implies rather the "buyers" (consumers') interest.

Factors are as a rule more or less closely attached to particular collieries for their own interest, but take work outside.

~~There are now t~~ Mr. Rea buys coal in S. Wales; there is a sort of quasi-partnership with ~~Sir Wal~~ the Rhondda Colliery proprietors, so that they arrange between themselves the price at which the coal shall be bought before Rea makes a tender to (say) the Orient Company.

As a rule the Factors & Merchants buy the coal at the pit's mouth, & ~~the~~ cart it to the railway trucks themselves, & bring it up to London. This is how it was that the whole benefit of the late rise in prices went to the factors & Middlemen.

A large part of the London Coal-Trade is now not centred in the Coal Exchange. E.g. Mr. Russell Rea himself never goes to the

Coal exchange. More & more is done by correspondence or by buyers' agents in the Colliery districts. The factors' ring would probably try to boycott an outsider who attempted to undersell them.

One of the great reasons which keeps up the ring is the fact that most sidings available are rented completely by a few merchants & factors. There are a few open sidings but not many in London.

As regards the riverside unloading trade Cory has a concession from the Thames Conservancy to erect Derricks or Cranes, & charge for unloading. There are also Derricks belonging to Regent's Canal Company, & others owned by Lambert (at Gallion Station) who discharges his own coal there, & by Victoria Dock Coal Company which discharge for Mr Rea.

Beckton Gas-works discharge their own Coal. Most merchants importing Coal sea-wise have to go to Cory. 10d. a ton is charged for the discharge.

Coal porters who discharge coal belong to O'Connor's Union

The men who ~~unload barges~~ load ships from barges are quite another set, & belong to a different Union. Coal Porters' (Windmen) Association. Mr Rea thinks it very awkward that ~~there should be~~ the same Union should embrace, as the National Coal Porters' Union does, sections of men united by no common bond. The men unloading his coal were called out at recent strike although they really had no connection with the section of men affected by Lockett's Circular.

He also dislikes the ring of coal-factors, never himself goes on 'Change.

Mr Rea coals the Orient Co's line at Tilbury i.e. he delivers coal in barges to Tilbury dock, & the Orient Co. load their own ships with it, employing a Coal Stevedore. The usual plan however with other lines is for Mr. Rea to coal the steamers himself.

For method of coaling see below p( ).

Since the strike of 1889 the no. of men in a gang has been increased by 1.

Some time ago a Coal Stevedore invented a machine which reduced the no

required in a gang by two. But the men successfully resisted its introduction. Mr Rea thinks they were quite right in this. The strength of the men's position in resisting such an innovation is that a stoppage of coaling would delay the steamer, & no steamship line will risk a stoppage by a strike for the sake of introducing the new method.

Night work. Men who work a full night are paid 7/6 + the tonnage rate. For half a night they get 2/6 + tonnage rate.

The night pay being high the men sometimes try to delay, so as to ~~[illegible]~~ a job into night-work, and for this purpose have had small temporary strikes ~~all coming to nothing~~ for no particular reason in order to delay. (Is this a master's account?)

~~The P & O., British~~

Mr Rea considers the Coal Meters Office an anachronism. They license weighers. (Find more about this) It is every one's interest at every stage of the work to give short weight.

Coal-Porters (Winchmen). March 14/92

Mr Jones senr & Mr Jones junr Coal Stevedores

There are two Branches, No 1 (Sec Daly) for the London & St Katharine district &, No 2 (Sec. Mahony) for the Albert & Victoria. In all there are about 900 members. Since a dispute a short time back (see below) a considerable no (?) of Federation men do Coal-loading in the Albert, & times are very slack with the Union.

This Union is quite different from the big O'Connor's Union. It was founded in 1887, about same time as United Stevedores.

Previous Unions among same class of men, - 1872, a Union to which Mr Jones senr belonged, same time as, but said to have no connection with the Old Labours Protection League. Broke down, - someone ~~so~~ absconding with the cash (?) Two other Unions since then before the present one, one only lasted a few months, the other? Mr Jones senr belonged to them all. Jones junr used to be Secretary of existing Union: he is reticent about its constitution to Mr Rea.

A few months ago when work was brisk the

Union closed its books (much disapproved of by the foremen) and absolutely refused to take in outsiders. They employed dockers, stevedores &c as helpers in some cases (thus becoming small masters), and in other cases the work had often to wait. Finally the Shipping Fed. broke through the monopoly and now Mr. Jones's men have been idle for nine days.

~~The work of~~ The Coal-porters, - winchmen are the same class of men who used to do "coal-whipping" now almost extinct on the rivers; also identical with Coal-heavers.

They work in gangs of from six upwards to eleven. Four at the winch: two filling (in the barge), and if necessary "backers" & "trimmers" to carry the coal to a further part of the ship's hold & stow it. In some cases the coal-baskets may be tipped direct into the hold with no further work, but this is not the rule. Thus the no. in a gang depends on the shape of the ship & ship's hold, and the variable element on whom the bulk of irregular employment falls are the

backers and trimmers.

Some men do all branches of work; others confine themselves to one. Some good backers are no good at the winch, & vice versa. J. knows a man who for 20 years has done nothing but back coal, & if there are no backers wanted will not turn to anything else

Most of the coal-loading used to be done by coalies organised by coal-stevedores. Now ~~all~~ coal as cargo is done by ordinary cargo-stevedores, and cargo stevedores are encroaching more & more on "coalies'" work. J. just thinks that major of coal loading work is now done by cargo stevedores.

The coalies are paid by the piece 2/5 d per man per ton. Hence it is interest of men to get as many employed in a gang as possible.

Cargo stevedores when handling coal are paid as usual by time 8d an hour + 1s ~~a~~ ~~town~~ day "dirt money".

The P & O. British India & Shaw Savill lines

have organised a coaling department among the Federation men! The Orient is done by Union men who as a rule go down each day from Victoria & Albert, i.e. are engaged at Vic & Albert district & sent down by Coal Stevedores.

The men do not earn above 25 - 30s a week all the year round. As a rule they would not work full time if they could, - it is too heavy.

They are affected by season trades, e.g. Wool seasons, the steamers they coal timing their voyages for the Australian & other Wool seasons. Mr. Jones is vague as to the actual amount of loss of time through irregularity.

Coal Stevedores are compelled by the custom of the men to pay them what they have earned within ½ hour after they have knocked off, under penalty of 1s per head extra! This custom

Mr. Jones senr. resents. It is often very difficult to forecast when a particular set of men will knock off. The coal stevedore will be away, ~~and~~ attending to men elsewhere, when ~~the~~ a gang of men are compelled to stop because the corn gangs or cargo stevedores want the ship - or for some other reason. The ~~stev~~ coal-stevedore returns to find that the men have knocked off & often has scarcely time to get to the place where they are paid off in time.

He thinks that a regular time in the day for all payments would be the best.

Generally speaking Mr. Jones's instincts & attitude are on the side of the men & the Union.

He says there are a good many tee-totallers among them.

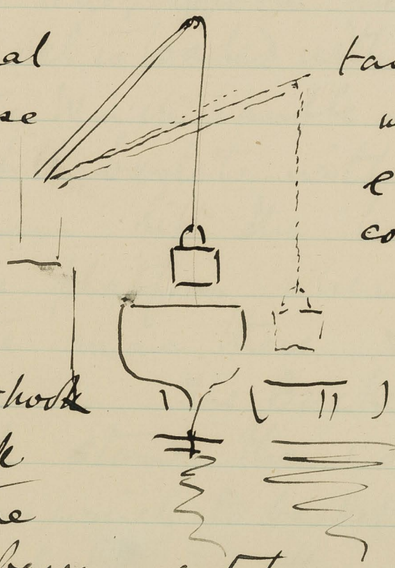
(Get some facts as to ages & efficiency)

Notes of visit to Albert Dock & Galleon Station
March 21/92

(I.) Tank Work. Unloading of ships into barges in the river; at Lamberts' Derricks, Galleon Station, Albert Dock. (The men belong to O'Connor's Union).

Hydraulic Crane (or "Derrick") raises tank full of coal out of ship's hold & lowers it on to barge

There are several tanks in the hold. (4 in the case watched), and two men to each tank with spades, continually busy filling the tanks with coal. One man on deck with a boat-hook catches and guides the empty tank as it is lowered again into the hold. One man on the barge catches the ~~tank~~ full tank as it descends & tips it over so as to empty it. ~~Then, there~~

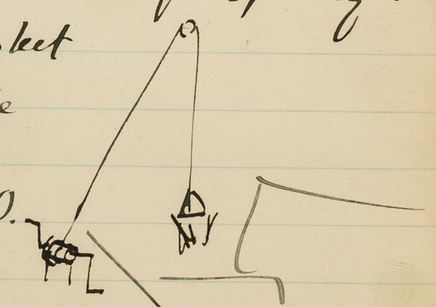


II. Royal Albert Dock.
Loading of ships.

Between the ship & the quay is the barge loaded with coal. On the quay is a hand winch usually kept in its place by some blocks of heavy coal.

One man stands on a suspended platform against ship's side, opposite the porthole by which the vessel is loaded with coal. Three men turn the winch handle. Two men in the barge fill baskets with coal, and the winchmen lift the baskets to the level of the platform where they are caught by the man there & tipped in at the window. The Backers & trimmers in the hold stow the coal properly.

The rope from winch to basket passes over a pulley in the ship's rigging.



In one case I saw a P & O. boat being partly loaded by a crane on deck raising a much larger

basket direct from the barge & emptying it into the hold from the top

May 29. 95

Messrs. Brill & O'Connor
Coal Porters Union
Club Union Buildings
Clerkenwell Rd. E.C.

Since Mr. L. Smith saw them (Feb. 1892) there have not been any important changes, but following alterations may be noted:-

(a) Weekly contribution now 3d. (instead of 2d.)
(b) The Union has become affiliated to the Miners' Federation, & forms the "Coal Porters district" of that Federation
(c) There are now 45 branches, of wh. 32 are in London.
(d) The strongest branch of the Winchmen (viz. Tidal Basin, Canning Town) have joined this Union.

There is still a separate Society for Winchmen belonging to Shadwell, Wapping & neighbourhood. Meet at a Temperance Bar (formerly p. house) in High St. Shadwell.

Nos.

Estimated no. of coal porters in London (including all the inland men) — about 12,000.

Will not give nos. in the union.

Wages. See card attached

NATIONAL
Amalgamated Coal Porters' Union
AND
Inland and Sea-borne Coal Workers,
Chief Office—44, REGENT SQUARE, W.C.

This is the agreed pay from present date the rates printed below for the various kinds of Coal-work, which rates were agreed to at the meeting of employers and employed, at the Coal Exchange, August 28th, 1889.

FOR INLAND COAL PORTERS.
Loaders' Wages on all Sidings.

Big sacks, 8d. pr ton; small sacks, 11d. pr ton.
Making small from trucks, 1s. 6d. per ton.
Picking and cleaning slates, 1s. per sack of 2 cwt., and ½d. per sack for coke.
Landing, 6d. per ton.
Making small from heaps, 1s. 3d. per ton.
Bays or shoots 1d. advance on all classes of work

Carmen's Wages.

Delivery Men—Driving, 1s. per day and 7d. per ton. Small sacks 1s. per ton extra.
Trolly Men—Retailing, 2s. per ton, and driving money, 1s. per day. Delivery 7d. per ton. Delivery of small sacks, 1s. per ton extra. Coke and commission as before.

That no tickets be issued from the office after 5 p.m., and work to finish at 4 p.m. on Saturdays. Work to commence at 6 a.m.

FOR SEA-BORNE COAL PORTERS.
Rate of Filling for Ships or Barges.

	Per Ton.
Welsh Coal	5½d.
Welsh Coal (Through and Through)	5d.
Large House Coal	4½d.
" Hartley Coal	4½d.
" House and Hartley, Unscreened	4d.
" Yorkshire, Barnsley, Bed, Hard and Barblow	4¾d.
" Gas Coal, Newcastle & Yorkshire	4d.
" Rough Small	4d.
" Cannel Coal	6d.
" Welsh Rough, Small	4½d. ~~4¼d.~~
" Nuts	4d.
Coke	8d.

RIVERSIDE MEN.

For three-back wharfs ...	11¾d. per ton.
For making small	1s. 8d. "
Slates	1s per sack.
Coke	10d. per chldrn.

Half Sacks 6d. per ton extra.

Where permanent screener is employed, 4d. per ton to be paid for making small.

For two-back wharfs ...	9½d. per ton.
Large turnovers	10d. "
Small	9d. "

Barges of 75 tons carrying capacity & upwards, 1 extra back

See also "Agreement" with Cory & Sons
The Union claims to have advanced wages.

Nos.

Estimated no. of coal porters in London (including all the riverside men) – about 12,000.

Will not give nos. in the union.

Wages. See card attached

See also "agreement" with Cory & Sons
The Union claims to have advanced wages.

taking it all round, by 9/- a week.

The Employers make very few attempts to reduce wages.

In the landing of coals there has been an advance in rates of pay of quite 25 %.

Most of the principal firms (particularly those who deal in Seaborne coals) employ all Union men. The Union is strongest on the River, where the work is concentrated among big firms; weakest among the smaller coal retailers.

Cameron's is one of the worst firms. They trade under a great variety of names, & pay bad wages. Sell very cheap & inferior coal.

Mr. Brill thinks County Council have effected considerable improvement in getting proper weight given by the London merchants, but there is still a very great deal of dishonesty

practised. Until lately, the men employed were brought up to be dishonest in every way & at every point, & had no chance of employment otherwise.

When the L.C.C. got to work some of the dealers had to get an entirely new stock of sacks & bags, & others had to have collars put on their old sacks.

Memorandum of Wages paid to Coal Workers By Alexr Gray, Dawes & Co.

Coals put on board during 1890	January to June.	13840·6	Tons
	July to December.	13.909·0	"
			27.749·6
Cost of putting on board.	January to June.	£970.16.11.	
	July to December.	£1.108.19.8	£2079. 16. 7
	Overtime in addition		66. 0. 0
			£2145. 16. 7
Average per Ton.	January to June.		1. 4 5/6 (s. d.) per Ton.
	July to December.		1. 7 1/8 " "
	Overtime in addition		0. 0 1/2 " "
	For the year, inclusive		1. 6 1/2 " "
Giving an average wage for the year.	The following statement gives the actual amount earned by one gang working for us, but, as they only worked 111 days out of a total of 280 working days, they were probably often employed on other vessels.		
	Actual earnings of 1 man for 11 months		£54. 7. 11 1/2
	" " " 1 gang.		£271. 19. 9 1/2
	" " per week for 47 weeks per gang of 5 men.		£5. 15. 8 1/4
	" " " " " per man.		£1. 3. 1 1/2
	The earnings of 1 man per day, working 111 days averaged.		9. 9 1/2
Cost before the strike of 1889	Contract, 1. 3 (s. d.)		

June 14. 95 J.A. ~~44~~ 115

Mr. Bates (Radford & Co. coal merchants, Leadenhall St.)

Carmen. Wages return sent is for carmen only – trollymen are not employed by this firm.

The carmen are paid the union rate – 7d a ton for delivery & 1/- day for driving horse.

The working day for carmen varies but usually averages about 12 hrs., commencing from 6 a.m., & includes meals wh. are taken on the journeys. A days work is reckoned to be the delivery of 6 tons, or 3 journeys of 2 tons each. The journeys are made to fit in as far as possible, as one long & 2 short distances, &c.

He is not sure about overtime, but probably more paid for (See union rules)

Loaders.

These work in gangs of 4 or 5

men each & are all on piece.
There is a foreman to each, ~~who~~ to whom all money earned by the gang is paid over, & he receives an extra payment (1/- 5/- weekly) from the firm for his services, in addition to his share of earnings of gang.

Earnings vary greatly, & it will be very difficult to get any representative figures, but he will send a statement in bulk showing total amount paid to men at each depot in a busy & a slack week.

Seasons

Messrs Redford are both seaborne & inland merchants. Seaborne workers are not much affected, as vessels have to be worked in summer as in winter; but in inland (mainly timber) trade there is of course pressure of work in winter & slackness in

summer. The difference is not much felt here, but with purely inland merchants wd. be great.

Regulation of Prices.

This is done by a ring comprising all the large merchants, who meet at the Coal exchange on Market Days – 3 times a week.

(Messrs. R's manager, thro' Mr. Bates, promises to send introductions to their Leabotte manager & wharf manager at Camden Depot.)

Best steam coal is Welsh, shipped at Cardiff; a second quality is shipped at Newport or Swansea

Best steam coal from Northumberland is shipped at Newcastle

Durham coal, mostly house or gas, is shipped at Sunderland.

June 26. 95

Mr. Collingwood, manager of seaborne trade of Radford & Co., Coal merchants.

The seaborne trade is of 2 kinds (a) for the supply of steamers; (b) for the supply of house coal (wharf work).

Seaborne steam coal comes from Northumberland & S. Wales; house coal from Durham. It is taken from the mine to the nearest port by rail, (usually Newcastle or Cardiff for steam coal), & then brought by collier steamers to the Thames, where it is discharged at certain stations, of wh. there is one at Albert Dock, one at Victoria Dock, one at Tilbury, one in the river, & one in Regents Canal Basin. At these places it is discharged into barges, & taken either to export steamers or to the wharves.

A few large factors buy the whole output of a colliery, & sell it here in the steamers or barges to small merchants; other large merchants buy the steamer's load at the

port of departure "free on board," & either retail it themselves or dispose of it by the barge load to dealers. All the merchants in anything like a large way have an agreement with the mine owners for the supply of certain classes of coal, agreeing to take a certain quantity in 12 mths. at a fixed price.

~~Discharging~~

The discharging stations are in the hands of certain contractors, & they employ men to do the work, & charge from 1/- to 1/2 a ton for it, this being reckoned in as part of the freightage, half to be paid by the owners of the steamer, & half by the buyers of the coal.

The discharging is done by means of hydraulic machinery, the coal being loaded into tubs, wh. are then hoisted by cranes & emptied into the barge. The men, known as fillers & tank men, are paid so much per ton, & average from

£2. 5 to £3 a-week, taking the year through.

Carts are the largest people doing this work.

If the coal is for steamers, it is taken alongside in the barge by lightermen, & is discharged into the steamer by winchmen. These are piece-workers, & their employment is very precarious. There are particular points at wh. they wait for work, & they are sent for either at 7, 9, or 12 o'clk by the merchants' foremen, who engages them as required.

Their pay is 7/6 a ton per man for every 50 tons put into the steamer. 6 men usually constitute a gang, but this may be increased to 10 in different cases, all depending on the nature of the work, & the speed necessary. The number, however, above 6 makes no difference to the men, each of whom gets his 7/6 for every 50 tons discharged by the gang. The gang of 6 is divided into: 2 filling, 3 at the

winch, & / attending to the basket (the coal is loaded into baskets).

Independent of the gang, but paid at the same rate, there are backers or trimmers, who attend to the proper stowing of the coal in the ~~barges~~ steamers. There are generally one or two of these, but more where required.

For night work 7/6 extra is paid irrespective of the tonnage rate.

The average amount for a day's work is 70 to 75 tons. Has been a gang to do 120 tons, but that was an exceptionally easy job.

<u>Earnings</u> of these men of course vary greatly. The foreman naturally gives preference to the <u>best</u> men, & these may average from 30/- to 35/- a week. The inferior men have quite casual work.

He has known men to earn 30/- for a day & nights work: viz., 150 tons = 22.6, + 7/6 for night duty = 30/-

The smallest ~~amount~~ amount paid to a man

if, as often alleged, short weight is a prevailing feature of the trade, it is not for want of a sufficient check

that there is a full check upon it.

Inland coal is weighed by the colliery or the railway company.

Quality & prices.

Steam coal or house coal are quite distinct, & the one wd. not serve for the other. House coal is the best, & of this the highest quality is Seaham, prime Durham.

Seaham coal is practically confined to steam & gas coal, & the first quality house coal.

Inland coal, coming by rail from the Midland district, includes some very good & all kinds of inferior coal.

Prices for Seaham coal are practically regulated by the "free on board" price at the port market to the mine, cost of freightage, &c., being added. But the price is actually fixed by the ring of merchants at

if taken at is 3/9 = 25 tons; if the work is more than 25, but less than 50, he is paid for 50 tons.

There is a ganger to each gang, who selects his own assistants. The foreman merely tells the gangers to bring his men along for a certain job, but he of course knows the capability of the gang. The gangs always rig their own gear.

The men prefer the present irregular piece work system, & resist any attempt to introduce regular weekly wages

Coal meters.

Before the abolition of the coal dues the coal meters office, wh. is at the Coal Exchange, had very important duties. All weighers were licensed by it, & it kept the record of all coal entering London. It is still kept on, but it no longer is necessary for weighers to be licensed, & almost its only work is the supply of independent weighers in any case of dispute as to the weight of a cargo.

the Coal Exchange, who meet on market days – 3 times a week.

The price of inland coal is entirely regulated by them.

Character of the men.

There has been some improvement of late years, but the men are still a thriftless lot, & drink heavily. There are however, a few gangs of ~~teto~~totallers, & they are the best men for work.

Often a man who has taken 18/- or 20/- overnight will come to "work" 1/- at dinner-time next day.

Abolition of Coal Dues.

Colliery owners & railway co's benefited most by this. Consumers were not much affected.

Import.

There is no import of coal, & the only export is for the vessels' own use. Steamers coal here between most convenient time.

All the large factors & merchants keep their own weighers, & a uniform charge is made of 2d a ton for weighing, shared equally between buyer & seller. In some cases the weigher has a weekly wage, & in others has a portion of each 2d paid, the remainder ~~The whole of the 2d does not go to the weigher, a certain proportion being retained by the employers for use of machinery, &c.~~

The weighing apparatus forms part of the crane wh. is used in discharging the coal, & the weigher sits in a little house wh is permanently fixed on the crane. He gives a certificate of the amount weighed into each barge, & it is on this certificate that the buyer in the market purchases. In buying coal wholesale it is always understood that 1d per ton for weighing will be added to the agreed price.

The coal has been previously weighed by the colliery, the railway, & the dock company, each for their own purpose, so

(To pages 123 & 124