

Q. Could you give us approximately the prices of these various fuels?—A. I am sorry I did not know exactly that you wanted that information. I could have given it to you definitely. I do not think my memory will carry me back. I think the peat cost us \$5 at the mine.

Q. If it would not be too much trouble, would you have some one give us, say, a statement showing what is a fair difference in Montreal in the prices of these various fuels.

Hon. Mr. WEBSTER: Mr. Robertson could give us the relative values.

The CHAIRMAN: Your idea of what would be the relative values.

The WITNESS: We had a cable only yesterday or the day before, asking us 8 or 9 shillings more than we paid last year on the other side. So it is pretty hard to gauge.

*By the Chairman:*

Q. American anthracite has been the standard fuel of this country for a long time?—A. Yes.

Q. Where would you place Welsh anthracite in relation to that?—A. As to values?

Q. As to values.—A. Or quality?

Q. Or quality.—A. Well, it is pretty hard for me to define that very closely. Some people will take Welsh anthracite coal if they can get it at the same price. Others will tell you they will pay a dollar more, and they will forget all about it.

Q. When you are making the next trade?—A. The next deal. So the emergency fuel you cannot figure out as a fair criterion to go on, at all.

Q. But those fuels are all— A. In emergencies they are all right.

Q. They are satisfactory fuels?—A. Yes.

Q. It is a question as to preference and conditions of the market and one thing or another?—A. Yes.

*By Hon. Mr. Webster:*

Q. You consider there is always sufficient emergency fuel to take care of any crisis?—A. Oh, yes. You see now—you talk about last year—if there had been no strike, I think the American anthracite market would have been more or less demoralized, because there was some coal left over.

*By the Chairman:*

Q. From the year before?—A. From the year before.

Q. When you had five and a half months of idleness it made the supply short enough, particularly towards the winter time. But there would have been a surplus of coal this year if it were not for that strike.

Q. What is your impression as a purchaser of anthracite over a long time, as to the probable course of prices?—A. I do not think we shall ever have anthracite at the prices we used to get it at. The tendency is now, they claim—I am not personally familiar with this—that the anthracite coal is getting comparatively scarce. You see, in the early days in mining the coal it was easy to get at. Now they are going back over those properties and pulling out—

Q. Taking out pillars, etc.?—A. Yes.

*By Hon. Mr. Webster:*

Q. May I just here ask this question, Mr. Robertson? You have been one of the largest distributors of domestic coal in Montreal. Did you witness any real distress last year?—A. Absolutely none.

[Mr. Farquhar Robertson.]