

Unfulfilled Expectations.

The Commission suggests that many of the hopes which are held out by advocates of nationalisation are unlikely to be fulfilled.

1.—There can be no assurance that labour disputes will be avoided. No more definite basis for determining wages than now exists is proposed. Negotiations would be essentially the same in character as they are to-day.

As the last resort there would be the same recourse to a strike or lock-out.

2.—The Scheme does not satisfy the expectation of the miners that their condition would be improved under nationalisation by the £6,000,000 "now withdrawn from industry" for the payment of royalties.

The witnesses for the Scheme recognised that payment for the mineral itself was a legitimate charge. They contemplated that the sums now paid to mineral owners should still be collected on behalf of the State.

3.—The Scheme intends the industry to be self-supporting financially. If it is, the miners' conditions will still be dependent upon good and bad management and upon the fluctuations of its economic conditions.

The proposals are, therefore, not consistent with the hope that the miners will enjoy the guarantee as to wages and regularity of employment which is possessed by post-office workers, municipal workers and others whose remuneration is a direct charge upon public funds.