

mission affirms the principle that the same should be limited, but that the exact height should be left to the proposed committee to determine according to the local conditions.

The safety afforded by splitting all pillars, in distinction to the various methods of working "lifts" or strips off them, has been advocated by some of the witnesses, and has received our consideration. The size of the pillars in some cases must preclude all splitting. We are of opinion that this question should be left to, and can be best dealt with by, the proposed additional special rules.

The question of giving power to Inspectors of Mines to require that the panel system of working should be followed in any mine or any portion of a mine met with our consideration. It need not be further outlined than to state that by this system the mine is divided into districts by barrier pillars or solid strips of coal, so that if underground fires, which are not uncommon in New Zealand, should break out, or if an explosion occurs, their effects should be limited. Your Commission considers this is a question for decision according to the local conditions.

(iv.) *Metalliferous Mining.*

We recommend—

- (1.) That Regulation No. 1 (5B) of 7th September, 1911, be so amended that the maximum height of stopes shall be 8 ft. 6 in., measured from the ordinary level of the working-floor of that stope.
- (2.) That all ladderways in constant use for travelling, where it is difficult to carry an open light, shall be lighted by fixed lights, if in the opinion of the Inspector of Mines such is required.
- (3.) That sufficient space be made in all levels at convenient intervals for men passing trucks.
- (4.) That it be compulsory for chambermen and bracemen to be always at their posts; but this is not to be construed as requiring a chamberman at each level.
- (5.) That speaking-tubes, or some approved method of communication, be required between levels and shafts and levels and stopes if over 50 ft. in height.
- (6.) That all ladders in mines extend for at least 3 ft. above the top of the shaft, platform, or landing-place.
- (7.) That the provisions for two outlets from a mine to the surface, as recommended by the Transvaal Mining Commission, 1910, be adopted to the following extent:—

In connection with every mine there shall be at least two shafts or outlets to the surface, with which every reef or mineral bed for the time being worked in the mine shall have a communication of not less than three feet wide and three feet high, so that such shafts or outlets shall afford separate means of ingress or egress available to all persons employed in such mine: Provided that it shall not be necessary for such shafts or outlets to be situated on the same mine. Such shafts or outlets must not lead to the surface in one and the same shaft-shed, and must not at any point be nearer to one another than thirty feet.

(1.) The provisions hereinbefore contained with regard to shafts or outlets shall not apply—

(a.) To any mine in which one of the shafts or outlets has temporarily become unavailable for the persons employed in the mine so long as every effort is being made by the manager to repair the damage:

(b.) To any mine in which not more than ten persons are at any one time employed below ground in or in connection with any workings connected with any shaft or outlet which is unconnected with any other shaft or outlet.

- (8.) That shift bosses should be required to examine "backs" and sides of working-places and travelling-ways, irrespective of the examination by miners' and workmen's inspectors.
- (9.) That the use of all tamping other than plastic clay or water be prohibited.