

"All air-measurements for the purpose of this classification shall be taken at the entrance to each ventilating-section, and shall there be no less in volume than the minimum statutory allowance per man and horse per minute. The total number of men ordinarily employed in any ventilating-section shall not exceed fifty.

"The obligation imposed by this section shall be in addition to, and not in substitution for, the obligation to provide an adequate amount of ventilation imposed by the foregoing paragraphs.

*"Proposed Regulations under the Mining Act.*

"These regulations to classify mines as follows:—

"Class A: All mining operations on Thames and Waihi goldfields below the 800 ft. level, 200 cubic feet of air per man per minute minimum, 500 cubic feet per minute for each horse.

"Class B: Other metal-mining operations, 150 cubic feet per man per minute minimum, 500 cubic feet per minute for each horse."

*Change and Bath Houses for Miners.*—With regard to the question of providing change and bath houses at mines, the Royal Commission report that they found the request for the same to be quite unanimous. The medical evidence also emphasized the necessity for such a provision in the interests of the general health and as a particular preventive against miners' phthisis. The constant exposure of men to warm temperatures underground renders a sudden change, in wet clothing, to colder conditions above ground injurious to health. It is therefore of primary importance that men should be able to change their wet clothing immediately on coming out of the mines under conditions of reasonable comfort. In mining communities it is, for the most part, impossible for miners' dwellings to be supplied with bathing-accommodation. To meet this want the Commission recommend that both change and bath-houses be provided at mines.

The Commission also report that the suggestions as regards baths and change-houses given in evidence by the miners throughout the Dominion were generally favourably received by the mine-owners and managers, who recognized that the benefits accruing to the men from such facilities are in the interests of the industry. The consensus of opinion among the witnesses who represented the workers was, however, adverse to the proposal that the use of baths should be made compulsory. In order that small mines should not be unduly burdened, the Commissioners recommend that a limit should be made in the number of men employed to define where bath-accommodation should be provided, but that there should be no limit so far as change-houses are concerned.

The following are the final recommendations of the Commission as regards bath and change houses:—

- "That bath-houses be erected at all metal-mines, excepting those employing ten men or under and all open alluvial mines.
- "That change-houses be provided at all mines.
- "That change and bath houses to be erected be in accordance, as near as possible, with the plan annexed to the Commission's report.
- "That the hook-and-pulley system is the best design from a hygienic point of view and as a means of keeping each man's clothes separate.
- "That the floor-space in every change-room be not less than 12 square feet for each man.
- "That where change-houses already exist they be fitted with hooks and pulleys within eighteen months.
- "That bath-houses be fitted with hot and cold showers, hand-basins, with an adequate supply of water, and suitable tubs for the men to wash their clothing.
- "That there be one shower-bath and one basin for every five men employed underground on the largest shift at one time.
- "That two-fifths of such shower-baths be partitioned off to secure complete privacy.
- "That the floors of every bath-house shall be of concrete and properly drained.
- "That the cost of erection, care, and management of change and bath houses be borne by the mine-owners.
- "That the change and bath houses be under the control of a caretaker, whose duty it shall be to keep the same clean and attend to the drying arrangements.
- "That no mine-owner shall be compelled to erect bath-houses until a vote be taken of the miners working underground in the mine, nor unless 75 per cent. of the men where the number is twenty or under, 50 per cent. where the number is fifty or under, and 30 per cent. where the number is over fifty, request the erection of the same.
- "That if satisfactory use is not made of the baths the manager may give notice to the workmen's inspector that he proposes to take a tally of the men using the baths for a period of one month, and if it is found that the total number using the baths is less than 20 per cent. of the men employed underground where the number does not exceed fifty, and 30 per cent. of the number who voted for the erection of the baths when the number exceeds fifty, it shall be optional with the manager whether he keeps the baths open or not.
- "That if the baths are closed under the powers of the preceding clause no vote shall be taken to reopen the same for at least three months.
- "That if a tally be taken under clause 14 by the manager full facilities shall be given to the workmen's inspector to take a similar tally over the same period."

*Miners' Phthisis.*—From the evidence given before the Commission by medical men and by miners, also from official statistics, the Commissioners reported that it is apparent that miners' phthisis has not in New Zealand assumed such proportions as indicated by the returns from Cornwall, Bendigo, Queensland, West Australia, and the Transvaal, and they believed that if the remedial measures recommended by them were adopted the disease might be much reduced, if not entirely eradicated from the Dominion.