

NELSON INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT.

(656.) TAITAPU MINERS.—RECOMMENDATIONS.

Recommendations of the Board of Conciliation, Nelson District, in the matter of an industrial dispute between the Taitapu Miners Industrial Union of Workers and the Taitapu Gold Estates Company (Limited), and the Golden Blocks Company, quartz-mine owners.

THE Conciliation Board for the Nelson Industrial District proceeded to Collingwood on Wednesday, the 23rd September, where, for six whole days, they were engaged taking evidence regarding the above-mentioned industrial dispute. Fifteen witnesses were exhaustively examined on the various matters mentioned in the reference placed before the Board. Prior to the Board taking any evidence on the 24th September the parties concerned in the dispute were allowed to meet in conference, when they came to an agreement regarding several of the matters which had been placed on the reference to the Board, agreed to strike out others, and left the remainder for the Board to deal with. The matters agreed to at the said conference are herewith filed. Other minor points were agreed to as the Board's investigation proceeded, and the whole of the issues mutually agreed to by the parties are embodied in the Board's recommendations, which are as follows:—

RATES OF WAGES.

1. The following shall be the minimum rate of wages which shall be paid by the companies respectively to persons employed by such companies respectively in the capacities undermentioned—that is to say: (1) mine-shift bosses, 12s. a day; (2) sawyers, 10s. 6d. a day; (3) bushmen, 9s. 6d. a day; (4) men employed on rise, winze, or shaft, 10s. a day, provided that in the event of a rise, or any portion of such rise not less than 15 ft. in length, being at an angle of 45°, or at a greater angle, such portion of the rise shall be paid for at the same rate—namely, 10s. per day; further provided that in the case of a dispute arising as to the angle of the rise the question shall be decided by the manager of the mine and a representative of the Miners' Union, or, in the event of their failing to agree, by such umpire as they may appoint before considering the ques-

tion; (5) miners, 9s. 6d. a day; (6) winders, requiring Government certificate, 11s. 8d. a day; (7) engine-drivers, not requiring a winder's certificate, 10s. a day; (7A) engine-drivers, not requiring a Government certificate, 8s. 6d. a day; (8) blacksmiths, 11s. a day; (9) blacksmiths' strikers, 9s. a day; (Nos. 10, 11, 13, 14, 19, 20, 21, 22, and 23 appearing on the reference to the Board were struck out by mutual consent); (12) truckers, 8s. 6d. a day; (15) men in charge of aerial, 10s. a day; (16) men filling aerial, 8s. 6d. a day; (17) men tipping aerial, 8s. 6d. a day; (18) men in charge of shifts at batteries, 9s. 6d. per day; (the rate of wages for battery superintendent or manager was not included in the reference to the Board); (24) horse-drivers, 9s. a day; (25) miners in wet ground (six hours to constitute a shift), 1s extra per day, namely, 10s. 6d. per day.

2. *Surface Work*.—Men taken from the face in the mine to do temporary work on the surface, not exceeding one week, to be paid at the same rate as if at the face, and the same hours of labour shall be observed.

3. (This clause, referring to youths, was by mutual consent struck out.)

4. (This clause, referring to winding-men, was by mutual consent struck out.)

5. *Contracts*.—In all cases in which tenders are called for work written specifications shall be provided to work by, and the companies shall not enter into any contract for the performance of work in or about a mine without making it a binding stipulation of such contract that the contractor shall pay to the wages-men employed by him the minimum rate of wages, namely, 9s. 6d. per day.

6. *Holidays*.—Christmas holidays shall be from the 24th December to the 1st January, both days inclusive; but if New Year's Day should fall upon a Sunday, the following Monday shall be observed as a holiday. The birthday of the reigning sovereign and Labour Day shall be observed as holidays: Provided that this clause shall not apply to batteries or reduction-works; but it shall be incumbent on each company to allow each of the men employed in the batteries or reduction-works holidays of equal duration at some other convenient time, without thereby affecting the employment of any such men. This proviso to be applied in the cases of youths when such are employed in batteries or reduction-works. No payment to be made for holidays unless work is done on such days. Work on Sundays and holidays, or any overtime on any other days, shall be paid for at the rate of time and a quarter.

7. *Monday and Saturday Shifts*.—The night shift following the Sunday shall go on at 1 a.m. on Monday morning, and shall cease work at 8 a.m. The day shift on Saturday shall go on at 8 a.m., and shall cease work at 2 p.m. The afternoon shift on Saturday shall go on at 2 p.m., and cease work at 8 p.m.

8. *Hours of Labour*.—Except as provided in clause 7, the hours

of work shall be eight hours at the face in each shift, in which eight hours the customary half-hour shall be allowed for crib-time.

9. *Matters not provided for.*—Any matter not provided for in the industrial agreement, made on the basis of the Board's recommendations shall be settled by agreement between the company or companies concerned and the committee of the Taitapu Miners' Industrial Union of Workers.

10. *Preference to Unionists.*—(a.) So long as the rules of the aforesaid workers' union permit any person of good character and sober habits now employed as a miner in this industrial district, and any other person now residing or who may hereafter reside in this industrial district, and who is of good character and sober habits, and who is a competent worker, to become a member of such union upon payment of an entrance fee not exceeding 5s., and subsequent contributions (whether payable weekly or otherwise) not exceeding 6d. per week, without ballot or other election, then and in such case and thereafter each of the companies shall employ members of the aforesaid workers' union in preference to non-members, provided that there are members of the aforesaid workers' union equally qualified with non-members of the union to perform the particular work required to be done, and ready and willing to undertake it.

(b.) No company shall discriminate against members of the aforesaid workers' union, and no company shall, in the employment or dismissal of men or in the conduct of the mine, do anything for the purpose of injuring the aforesaid workers' union whether directly or indirectly.

(c.) Provided that it shall at no time be obligatory upon the companies concerned, or either of them, to discharge any non-unionist worker who may then be in their employment by reason of the fact of a member of the aforesaid union applying for the position occupied by such non-unionist. Provided also that, should circumstances render it necessary for one of the companies to reduce the number of men employed, it shall be in the absolute discretion of such company's manager to decide whether unionists or non-unionists shall be discharged, regard being had in good faith solely to the fitness in every respect of the men retained for the position they may occupy.

11. (This clause, referring to the workers' union keeping an employment-book, was struck out of the reference by mutual consent of the parties.)

12. *Industrial Agreement.*—An industrial agreement shall be entered into between the parties, embodying the recommendations of the Board, on or before the 2nd November, 1903, and the same shall remain in force until the 31st October, 1905.

WALTER HILL,
Chairman, Conciliation Board for
Nelson Industrial District.

Nelson, 7th October, 1903.