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Early in the year a modified method of rising was introduced at Great Western Consolidated M.L. This is "stage rising" on a diamond drill hole. The miner stands on a stage and borer out the rise cut using the diamond drill hole as the "burn" hole. The stage is raised into position and held there by a hoist rigged above the collar of the hole. This hole provides a type of ventilation for the miner working on the stage, and definitely clears out the rise after firing. However, in my opinion it breaks down in the fact that compressed air only is blown down the hole. No reports are that conditions in the rise are really satisfactory. Rising on a drill hole has been carried on at the mine of course for some time but without using the stage. Here the normal venturi cloth is also provided in case the diamond drill hole is closed or blocked. In the stage rising it is impossible to carry the venturi cloth up as the stage occupies the area of the rise. Some method of inducing fresh air through the diamond drill hole with the compressed air is required. This may be possible with a hole drilled to meet the diamond drill hole at an acute angle. This could be the restricted section of a type of venturi blower.

Alterations to the treatment plant of Australian Blue Asbestos Limited at Wittenoom Gorge, to be completed by February 1956, were commenced. These alterations will make the treatment a wet process. The flow sheet is to be: Primary and secondary crushing as at present. The ore then to three rod mills and four classifiers in open circuit. The classifier overflow will go to a three trommels where the fibre will be separated. The underflow from the trommels will pass through another trommel and the fibre recovered added to the initial fibre. The whole of the fibre will be transported by a screw conveyor to a roller for the moisture to be squeezed out, and thence to the rotary drier for final drying. The dried fibre will pass to another trommel for cleaning and grading and finally to a bagging section. When this process is completed and operating efficiently it is anticipated that a decided improvement will be shown in regard to dust content in the plant.

During the year a mining equipment company introduced a new piece of equipment to these fields, which involved dry boring and the collection through the steel into a container of the dust so created. During the demonstration dust samples were taken by Assistant Inspector Simmons and included in a report. The number of samples taken are not conclusive but indicate that at the demonstration the dust collection was quite efficient.

Aluminium Therapy:

With the cessation of mining activities at Big Bell Mines Limited the number of changerooms in which aluminium therapy powder is dispersed has dropped to 26. The concentration of powder in the changerooms are measured by the ventilation officer on the mine and are checked at irregular intervals by officers of this department.

A census of men receiving Aluminium Therapy was taken during the period of January - March of the year under review. The method of conducting the census was the same as that used in previous census and explained in the Annual Report for 1953. (The tabulated result of this census is attached) The tabulation shows a comparison of results for the four census made during the period 1953-1955 is also attached.

Mining Accidents:

Two fatal accidents and fourteen minor injury accidents were reported to the Department during the year.

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