

The report that the Commissioners have the honour to present has been written in such a manner as to reproduce in a convenient shape the salient points of the voluminous materials collected together, and published in the form of appendices; and, while it varies considerably from the usual form of official documents, its usefulness will, the Commissioners hope, by that means be increased.

They have adopted in their report a narrative, in preference to a didactic style, desiring not so much to give utterance to their own opinions as to communicate fairly the views and experience of those whose statements they have had before them.

All the proceedings of the Commissioners, whether at meetings for deliberation, or for the examination of witnesses, have been open, and usually attended by representatives of the press, who have also had access to any documents and statements in the possession of the Commissioners. To this, the Commissioners believe, is largely due the public interest in the Commission, and the friendly spirit in which its labours have from time to time been noticed. The examinations of witnesses have been conducted in as informal and conversational a manner as was consistent with good order, and the despatch of business.

With these observations the Commissioners will now address themselves to a review of the evidence, making, as they proceed, such comments as the facts seem to demand.