

Special Investigations.

All the mining laws except those of Quebec and Saskatchewan contain clauses authorizing the holding of special investigations. In Alberta and in both classes of mines in Nova Scotia, the Minister or Commissioner may appoint one or more persons possessing legal or special knowledge to act with the inspector in holding an investigation into any accident, or into any matter connected with the working of any mine. The Inspector may make the investigation in the way he considers most effectual, and he has right of entry to any place and power to require production of any document, and to take evidence under oath. He must make a full report of the inquiry which may be made public. The Mining Ordinance of the Yukon authorizes a similar investigation to be made by the inspector unaided. The British Columbia Coal Mines Act empowers the Minister to appoint any person scientific or other qualifications to make a special investigation and report upon any mining operations so far as they relate to the safety of life and property in any mine, such person to have right of entry and access to records. The report of such inquiry may also be made public. Under the laws of Ontario and Manitoba and the Metalliferous Mines Act of British Columbia, the Minister may require the inspector to make a special report of any accident which has caused loss of life or serious personal injury to any person, the first named province giving him power to take evidence on oath and compel attendance of witnesses and production of documents. Under the British Columbia Act, the report of such investigation may be made public.

The Canada Explosives Act provides for an investigation into the cause of any accident from explosion of an explosive occurring in any mine or quarry in provinces whose laws make no provision for such inquiry.

First Aid and Mine Rescue Work.

The Workmen's Compensation Acts of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Alberta and British Columbia provide that employers in any industries may be required to maintain such first aid appliances and service and transportation for injured workmen as the Board may direct. The Coal Mines Act of Nova Scotia also contains a clause to the effect that properly constructed ambulances or stretchers with splints and bandages shall be kept at all mines ready for instant use. The same law empowers the Commissioner of Mines to make any necessary regulations for the purpose of ascertaining the fitness and qualifications of and the granting of certificates to persons skilled in the use of mine rescue apparatus. Alberta requires every applicant for a certificate as manager, overman or mine examiner to produce a certificate in ambulance work from a qualified medical practitioner or a recognized ambulance society.

The Ontario Mining Act directs that a properly constructed stretcher and the first aid service prescribed by the Workmen's Compensation Board, and, where poisonous or dangerous compounds, solutions or gases are used or produced, proper antidotes plainly labelled with explicit directions for use, must be kept in an accessible place. Life lines, and belts in good order are to be kept ready for immediate use. At all blast furnaces, breathing apparatus and portable resuscitating apparatus of approved type with an adequate supply of oxygen and absorbent material must always be maintained. In each working shift one or more workmen

appointed by the Superintendent and trained in the use of this apparatus must be always on duty.

The Mining Act of Alberta authorizes the Lieutenant-Governor in Council to make arrangements for the installation and operation of mine rescue stations and cars, and to make regulations regarding the provision of emergency hospitals and any other matter that he may consider advisable in the interests of safety. This Act directs that properly constructed stretchers with splints and bandages be kept ready for immediate use.

The Ambulance Act of British Columbia requires that any employer of labour directly or indirectly operating any mine, (except those operating under the Coal Mines Act) or any camp, employing more than 30 persons situated more than 6 miles from the office of a physician, shall employ at least one person possessing a certificate of competency to render first aid, and also provide one or more good ambulance boxes. The employer must forward to the Provincial Secretary the name of the person in his camp who is qualified to render first aid and the number of such person's certificate.

The Coal Mines Regulation Act requires the owner, agent or manager of every colliery to establish such number of oxygen helmets or some form of mine rescue apparatus as may be approved by the Minister, and to keep them in workable condition and so placed as to be immediately available when wanted. This Act empowers the Lieutenant-Governor in Council to establish mine rescue stations for the purpose of supplementing, in case of need, the colliery installations of mine rescue apparatus, and also for the training of holders of certificates of competence in the use of such apparatus, and the owner, agent or manager of every mine must see that all physically fit certified officials, and such number of workmen as the Chief Inspector may direct, receive such training. The rescue stations are, subject to the order of an inspector, available in case of emergency for the use of any trained corps of mine rescuers, qualified medical practitioners, or trained first aid corps.

Conclusion.

From the foregoing account it will be seen that none of the mining laws of the Dominion conforms on all points to the standard set by the report of the Commission on Uniformity of Labour Laws. Two provinces have fixed the minimum age for boys at the age named in the report and five have adopted the 8-hour day either wholly or in part. Two provinces have laid down all the rules regarding payment of wages that the Commission considered desirable, and in one province and the Yukon provision is made for miners' liens. In two provinces examination of candidates for certificates are conducted by a board of three members, but only one province demands the qualifications which the Commission deemed necessary for such candidates. Two provinces give full power to inspectors and arrange for arbitration in case of disagreement. Four provinces provide for adequate ventilation and inspection, and all have some measure of protection for the health of employees in mining camps. Five provinces and the Yukon make some provision for special investigations. The standards laid down by the Commission regarding deductions from wages, qualifications of mining inspectors and the minimum age for workmen in charge of power machinery are not attained by any province. The administration of first aid and mine rescue work is in no case entirely in the hands of the Workmen's Compensation Board.