

still vested in the Dominion. The same condition holds as regards Manitoba's rights in the territory recently put within her boundaries. The government now in power at Ottawa is committed, however, to the policy of giving the natural resources to these three provinces. The transfer will likely be made within a few years, and it will benefit both the mineral industry and the provinces. In Alberta, for instance, under present conditions there is the peculiar and unsatisfactory arrangement of the Dominion Government officials collecting royalty on the output of the mines, and the provincial authorities making laws and enforcing them as regards the safety of employees, and so forth. Provincial governments should be much more competent to look after the development and conservation of local natural resources than is a distant Federal Government, especially one that has under its control so vast a country as Canada.

#### AMENDMENTS TO THE MINING ACT OF ONTARIO.

A bill has been introduced in the Ontario Legislature by Hon. W. H. Hearst, Minister of Lands, Forests and Mines, to amend the Mining Act of Ontario. These amendments do not make any radical changes in taking up mining claims, but cover such points that have been found necessary in the administration of the Act. One of the changes is that where the first 30 days' work required to be done on a claim falls due between the 16th of November and the 15th of April it may be postponed until the expiration of that period.

Another clause provides for the granting of jack-pine on a mining claim, on land not under timber license or in a forest reserve, to the owner of the mining claim without payment of government dues. Additional requirements are made for surveyors, in surveying a claim, for examining the ground to ascertain if there is any subsisting claim which conflicts with the claim being surveyed.

A number of amendments are made to the parts of the Act relating to the operation of mines, to provide for the better protection of the workmen at mines, quarries and metallurgical works. Boys under the age of 17 are not permitted to be employed underground, and boys under the age of 14 are not allowed to be employed around any mine. The rules relating to the thawing of explosives are made more rigid and prohibit the keeping of fuse, caps, electric detonators, etc., in any thawing house. A new principle has been adopted in prohibiting the use of ordinary fuse in sinking shafts or winzes. This is now made possible by the recent introduction of delay fuse which combines all the advantages of both former methods of blasting. Crushing plants are allowed to be erected in connection with the shaft house provided there is a proper auxiliary exit. New rules have been formulated for the proper safeguarding of

all moving machinery and for the keeping of articles at the mines suitable for first aid to the injured.

Provisions have also been made for the removal or allaying of dust both in mills and working places underground. With the introduction of the hammer-drill the dust problem has become quite serious in some of the mines and will become more serious with the opening up of the quartz veins in the new gold camps. Old mining countries have already taken steps to mitigate this danger, and it is well that Ontario is taking up this matter before the dreaded disease phthisis has made its inroads in the ranks of the miners. Another section provides that no person under the influence of or carrying intoxicating liquor shall enter a mine or be in proximity to any working place on the surface.

Another section has been amended to make clear who are responsible for offences against the Act and to designate the amount of penalty for such offences.

Provisions are also made that, where required for or in connection with the working of a mine or quarry, the owner may acquire the right to drain or bring in water through adjoining lands and construct roads, tramways and power lines through adjoining lands on compensation fixed by the Mining Commissioner.

#### INSPECTION OF EXPLOSIVES.

We regret to note that the session of the Dominion Parliament has come to a close without taking up the question of the inspection of explosives. This neglect is inexcusable. Even while Parliament was in session the country was shocked to hear of a premature explosion near Fort Frances, where some 14 men while engaged on railway construction lost their lives. According to the report of the Chief Inspector of Mines for Ontario 50 per cent. of the fatalities in the mines of Ontario for 1911 were due to explosives. The report further states:

"There has never been in Canada any legislation dealing with the inspection of explosives, which is a matter coming within the jurisdiction of the Federal Government. At present anyone who has a substance that will explode may sell it, if he can get a buyer. Before the quality of the explosive is proven accidents may result. It is not only the small dealer who needs inspection, but also the large producers. In the competition for making sales and the desire for large profits, the grade of the explosive may not be kept up to the standard. Improper mixing, improper proportion of ingredients, improper packing, all tend to render the explosive unsafe and to increase the accident rate. Old explosives that have been in storage for more than a year are sometimes shipped into the less accessible camps in the winter time, and have to be used by the mining companies during the summer, as no others can be obtained. When an accident occurs now from an explosive, there is no way by which this ex-