

be allowed or used in that part without the sanction of the Inspector of the district, which sanction shall not be withheld unreasonably, and any question as to whether such sanction has been unreasonably withheld shall be determined in manner provided for by the Coal-mines Act.

(4.) The average percentage of inflammable gas found in six samples of air taken by an Inspector in the air-current in the return airway in the ventilating district at intervals of not less than a fortnight shall, for the purposes of this section, be deemed to be the percentage normally contained in the air.

33. Wherever safety-lamps are required by the Coal-mines Act, or Special Rules, or Additional Special Rules to be used, no safety-lamp shall be used by any person employed in the mine unless it is provided by the owner of the mine, and is of a type for the time being approved as respects the class of mines to which the mine belongs by the Minister of Mines.

34. In any mine or part of a mine in which safety-lamps are required by the Coal-mines Act, or Special Rules, or Additional Special Rules to be used—

- (i.) A safety-lamp shall not be used unless it has since last in use been thoroughly examined at the surface by a competent person appointed by the manager for the purpose, and found by him in safe working-order and securely locked; and a record shall be kept of the men to whom the several lamps are given out.
- (ii.) Such competent person as aforesaid shall also examine every lamp on its being returned, and if on such examination any lamp is found to be damaged he shall record the nature of the damage in a book to be kept at the mine for the purpose, and the person to whom the lamp was given out shall be deemed to have wilfully damaged the lamp unless he proves that the damage was due to no fault of his own, and that he immediately gave notice of the damage to the fireman, examiner, or deputy.
- (iii.) A safety-lamp shall not be unlocked except at an appointed lamp-station (which shall not be in a return airway) by a competent person appointed by the manager for the purpose, nor, except in the case of electric hand-lamps, shall it be relighted except by such a person at an appointed lamp-station after examination by him, and no person other than such person as aforesaid shall have in his possession any contrivance for relighting or opening the lock of any safety-lamp.
- (iv.) No part of a safety-lamp shall be removed by any person whilst the lamp is in ordinary use.

(6.) The question of the use of electricity underground and the withdrawal of the men from gaseous places will be dealt with under the head of "The Ventilation of Mines." The matter is also important under "Accidents," hence we recommend—

(a.) That the Inspector shall have power to prohibit the use of electricity in any mine or part of a mine where, on account of the risk of explosion of gas or coaldust, such use would be dangerous.

(b.) That the use of electricity in any mine or part of a mine be discontinued where the amount of inflammable gas in the air exceeds one-half of one per cent.

(c.) That workmen shall be withdrawn from any place where the proportion of inflammable gas exceeds two and one-half per cent.

(7.) We also recommend that the length of time which should elapse before a man returns to a misfire should be the same as is provided in the British Act and the Royal Commission's Report of 1909—viz., one hour for fuse firing, and half an hour for electric firing—both under the Mining and Coal-mines Acts. (Messrs. Dowgray and Parry dissenting from clause 7.)

We recommend that the following matters be left to the proposed committees to frame additional special rules for each coal-mine:—

- (1.) Whether some person should accompany the deputy on his rounds of inspection;
 - (2.) The number of men a deputy can supervise in each particular mine.
- Regarding the height of first workings, bords, and cut-throughs, your Com-