

*Millerton Mine.*—During October a fire was discovered in the pillar workings in the Third West dip section. Strenuous efforts were made for some weeks to locate the seat of the fire, in order to either fill out the heated material or to drown the fire with water, but without success. Eventually it was found necessary to build nine large concrete dams and to flood the area.

*Hikurangi Shafts Colliery.*—In the East section pillar workings the weight was excessive for the size of pillars and crushing of the pillars occurred. On the 14th December a fire broke out, and effective measures were not immediately taken to check it, with the result that the fire soon attained serious dimensions. Eventually the fire was sealed off by the erection of fourteen stoppings. A considerable quantity of coal has been irretrievably lost as a result of this fire.

(e.) ELECTRICITY AT COLLIERIES.

(Regulation 253.)

The following is a summary of the annual returns, in accordance with Regulation 253 (c), regarding electrical apparatus at collieries :—

Number of collieries at which electrical apparatus is installed	..	..	20
Number of continuous-current installations	..	..	12
Number of alternating-current installations	..	..	8
Number of collieries electrically lighted	..	..	18
Number of collieries using electrical ventilating-machines	..	..	13
Number of collieries using electrical pumping plants	..	..	13
Number of collieries using electrical haulage plants	..	..	11
Number of collieries using electrical screening plants	..	..	5
Number of collieries using electrical miscellaneous plants	..	..	9
Number of collieries using electrical locomotives	..	..	1
Total horse-power employed from motors on surface	..	..	2,735
Total horse-power employed from motors below ground	..	..	1,745

(f.) PROSECUTIONS.

There were thirteen prosecutions during the year.

1. A mine-manager was prosecuted for a breach of Regulation 246. The mine was a safety-lamp mine, and he failed to withdraw the men on the occasion of an underground fire. He was fined £5 and costs.

2. Two miners were prosecuted for taking into the mine explosives which were not in a securely covered case or canister. They were each fined £1 and costs.

3. A mine-manager was prosecuted on two charges, the first for failing to provide in the bath-house efficient means for drying clothes, and, the second, for failing to provide the necessary warm water to showers and hand-basins. On the first charge he was fined £1 and costs, and on the second charge £5 and costs.

4. A manager was prosecuted on three charges for failing to comply with the requirements of the Act as regards ventilation. On the first charge he was fined £5 and costs, and was convicted and ordered to pay costs on the other charges.

5. A miner was prosecuted for failing to set sprags in his working-place prior to commencing holing. He was fined 5s. and costs.

6. A deputy was prosecuted for failing to see that a working-place was properly timbered. This prosecution did not succeed.

7. A mine-manager was prosecuted for permitting a place, where a serious accident had occurred, to be interfered with before it had been examined by the Inspector. He was convicted and ordered to pay costs.

8. A miner was prosecuted for taking into the mine explosives which were not in a securely covered case or canister. He was fined £2 and costs.

9. A mine-manager was prosecuted for failing to provide in the working-places the minimum amount of ventilation required by the Act. He was fined £5 and costs.

10. A mine-manager was prosecuted for permitting a place, where a serious accident had occurred, to be interfered with before it had been examined by the Inspector. He was fined £5 and costs.

11. The owner of a mine was prosecuted for not having a mine-manager as required by law. He was fined 5s. and costs.

12. A deputy was prosecuted for firing a shot in a place which contained inflammable gas. He was fined £1 and costs.

13. A manager was prosecuted for failing to provide an amount of ventilation sufficient to keep the working-places free from inflammable gas. He was fined £5 and costs.

SECTION V.—LEGISLATION AFFECTING COAL-MINES.

The Coal-mines Act, 1925, consolidated and amended the Coal-mines Act, 1908, and the Coal-mines Amendment Acts of 1908, 1909, 1910, 1914, 1915, 1919, 1920, 1922, and 1924, and also certain sections of the Finance Acts of 1916 and 1921-22. The new Act is divided into four parts: Part I deals with the granting of coal-mining rights; Part II deals with the regulation of coal-mines, administration, management, provisions as to safety, accidents, and health and welfare; Part III provides for the operations of State coal-mines; Part IV contains general provisions.