

the United States for \$1.50 it can surely send coal as far as Toronto for \$3.75. The figures given as received by the Dominion Coal Co. are in neither case, I believe, correct. The price given as received for the Everett coal is a long way out. The Dominion Coal Co. should have nothing to complain of if it got \$2.00 per ton for 'slack' coal alongside at Everett. The coal however that will require to be sent through the lakes, will not be slack coal as in the case of the Gas Co., nor run a mine as in that of the Steel Coy. The very best round will require to be sent as it will come into competition with the certainly solid, and the assumed superiority of the American coals; The Dominion Coal Company may be justified in selling its surplus slack to Everett at a small profit, and its run a mine to the steel works at a figure barely covering expenses, but to say that for these reasons it should also send coal through the lakes on similar terms is asking too much, and is advice to do what is contrary to sound business principles. In order to produce say a million tons of coal cheaply, or at a cheaper rate than a less quantity it may be good business policy to sell 200,000 tons at little or no profit; The surplus—so to speak—only is sold at a low rate. It would be folly for a company producing say three million tons, to sell two thirds of it at a low rate, merely to be able to say it was increasing its output, and had secured a market in which there was no profit; The Everett and steel propositions are reasonable and can be defended; the proposition to extend the principle to Ontario would be unreasonable and indefensible.

It is stated in the press, and I have it from private sources, that the mainland delegates to sub-council meeting, where the agreement made between the Dominion Coal Company and its employees was discussed, took strong grounds against the clause which they call the 'restriction' one, that is, the clause giving the company the option to sell its coal when, where and to whom it pleases. Funny, isn't it, how different eyes look at things. If there is any clause I would tick off in red as all right, that would be the one. What is the reason given for opposition to it? This—that it precludes the possibility of sympathetic strikes. I don't believe it was aimed at that, or put there for that purpose, but if it was I'm prepared to vote early and vote often for it. Sympathetic strikes be hanged! Can you find me a half dozen intelligent miners in N. S. who believe that such strikes would serve any good purpose in Nova Scotia. They are the most childish sort of strikes I know of, and are the weapons of brainless leaders and bawling, beaten men. There is neither rhyme nor reason in them. They invariably fail of accomplishing any practical good. Of course, there's the sympathy I admit, but I've never been quite able to count up how much it means in cents, to the original strikers. A sympathetic strike is no good. It reminds me of a story told of two of my countrymen. Both of them had a good jag on—as a Nova Scotian might say—is they wended their way homeward. One, whose stomach was not quite so strong as that of the other, stumbled and fell, and having fallen concluded it was easier to stay that way. His companion tried to raise him once, twice, thrice, but failed. In a fourth attempt he fell himself, and then philosophically said "I've done my best, but it seems I canna lift ye, so when to show my sympathy I'll lie down beside ye." In Nova Scotia we have been

free, so far, of sympathetic strikes, and we don't want them. In our case they would be senseless affairs. What would be the object of a sympathetic strike at a colliery for instance. It might be ordered for the purpose of assisting the men on strike at some other colliery. How would it do this. I'm sure I cannot tell. It seems to me that the operator of a colliery whose men went on strike because they had, or thought they had, a grievance, would have no objections to a sympathetic strike. He would feel more contented. He would not have the dread of losing some of his customers, which certainly haunts him when his men only are on strike. The idea of sympathetic strikes by the mine workers of Nova Scotia is a crazy one.

A mainland operator, asked what he thought of the agreement in Cape Breton between the Dominion Coal Co. and its employees, and if it would effect the position of the operators in the mainland, gave no plain answer but said, "Agreement or no agreement the fact remains that rates on the mainland are too high. The employees are now getting all, or nearly all, leaving to the employers the experience and the doubtful pleasure of working for nothing. No concern—he continued—can pay out more than it is taking in and live, and this is about the condition of the coal trade of the province to-day. None of the companies to my mind, except one which produces a small per centage of slack, and has good local markets, has made anything in 1904. It has been asked "Why with modern appliances and increased outputs is there this cry of excessive charges?"—"The answer is this—Mining rates are almost prohibitive, with shorter hours worked there is a lessened average yield per man; and there is a marked indifference to regular work. These combined make the cost of production excessive." The RECORD at this time makes no comment but leaves the statement with its readers.

The Sydney Record speaks well out in reference to the suggestion of higher duties, as a means of securing a portion of the Ontario market for Nova Scotia. It evidently favors the reimposition of the duty on anthracite. The repeal of the duty was a big blunder on the part of the conservative government. They should have resisted the clamor of the Ontario members. I remember when it was announced that the duty on anthracite was to be removed I was inclined rather freely to blame the government. Then M. P. for the county thought it well that I should subdue my ardor, and told me if I knew the difficulty the government had in maintaining the duty on bituminous I would stay dumb in reference to the duty on bituminous. That kept me from loud barking but I couldn't wholly suppress an occasional growl. I am glad the Record as a liberal organ is not afraid to speak its mind. At the same time I haven't the least idea that the Ontario people will be a whit less selfish in the future than they have—to our ward appearances—been in the past. Here is what the Record says:—

But we heartily agree with Mr. McDougall that an earnest effort should be made all round to dispose of some of our coal in Ontario. Unquestionably there are certain portions of that province when more or less of a market may be obtained. We should not only be in favor of an increase in the duty on soft coal but the imposition of a duty on hard coal as well. It will be

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