

school books that teach the child nothing about the country in which all of us live and move and have our being.

THE SPRINGHILL SITUATION.

If we remember correctly, the number of strikes that have occurred at the Springhill collieries of the Cumberland Coal and Railway Company approximate roughly twenty-three in the last score of years. During this period the collieries have been under the management of one person.

The present strike, declared some eight months ago, had for its ostensible cause the refusal on the part of the management to recognize the U. M. W. A. In this instance the management has our entire sympathy. We believe that official recognition of the U. M. W. A. would be inimical to the interests of mining in Nova Scotia. Nevertheless we cannot but be impressed by the fact that the miners of Springhill, good and responsible citizens, have readily accepted this as a bone of contention.

Strikes are costly luxuries. They are the most wasteful means devised by man for settling industrial disputes quite irrespective of the merits of the questions involved. Moreover, strikes are distinctly bad business. Their occurrence generally argues a sad lack of tact and foresight on the part of the management. Generally also it may be safely said that the employees make unreasonable demands. But it is hard to imagine that the men are uniformly to blame. In the case of Springhill we are inclined to believe that the management is at least equally to blame. Under Manager Cowans' administration strikes have been the order of the day. Nowhere else in Canadian mining districts have industrial disturbances occurred with such regularity. We must therefore conclude that the present management is not free from blame. In fact, we can go further and state our conviction that in other hands the Springhill collieries would have been producing peacefully to-day.

We are unqualifiedly opposed to the pretensions of the U. M. W. A. This attitude, however, cannot prevent us from recognizing the failings of employers. In short, we can see nothing that can sufficiently justify the unenviable record of the Springhill collieries during the regime of the present management.

A PROTEST FROM COBALT.

The Canadian Mining Journal voiced the first protest against the inaccurate statements issued by the Conservation Commission regarding the fatality rate in Cobalt mines. Later the Canadian Mining Institute passed a resolution correcting these inaccuracies. One more protest, this time from the Temiskaming Mine Managers' Association, appears on another page of this issue of the Journal.

In an editorial published on February 15th, we referred thus to Mr. Sifton's speech:—

“In his exceptionally forceful address, delivered

at Ottawa on January 18th, Mr. Sifton covered a great deal of ground. . . . Mr. Sifton made certain specific references to mining and minerals. Several of these are absolutely incorrect, one or two are absurdly wrong, and others are tinctured with error. Before discussing these in detail, it is well to state that we are perfectly in accord with the spirit that pervades Mr. Sifton's address. It is obvious, however, that in facts and figures relating to mining some one has been leading him very much astray. For various good reasons, including strong internal evidence, we believe that Dr. Haanel is responsible.”

The protest of the Temiskaming Mine Managers' Association deals with an article written by Dr. Haanel, and published in the February number of “Industrial Canada.” In the course of the article Dr. Haanel uses precisely the same figures that were used by Mr. Sifton, and makes the same disparaging remarks concerning Canadian metallurgical practice. And, as pointed out in the Association's protest, he has made no formal correction of these inexcusable misstatements, although their erroneousness has been brought to his notice, not once, but many times.

It is appropriate here to remark that ample and prompt apology should be demanded of Dr. Haanel as Director of the Mines Branch. Gratuitous criticisms from a public official are offensive enough; but when those criticisms are based upon inaccurate information and are spread broadcast over the country, they constitute a grave breach of decorum. In the words of the Temiskaming Mine Managers' Association, the episode “has done much to undermine the faith of mining men in its statistics and suggestions.” This is literally true. How can the public be expected to place confidence in a department whose official head is permitted, without rebuke from his Minister, to discredit Canadian mining and metallurgical practice!

We are sincerely glad to have the entirely unsolicited support of the Cobalt mine managers. Our own earlier remarks concerning Dr. Haanel were written only after mature deliberation. That these remarks were not uncalled-for is now sufficiently evident.

Before leaving this painful subject we must take exception to one paragraph in the “Statement of the Temiskaming Mine Managers' Association.” While we have every reason to believe that good results are now being obtained at Copper Cliff, Thorold, and Deloro, yet we cannot accept this as proving that present processes for treating cobalt-silver ores are not susceptible of material improvement. There is nothing final in metallurgy. Improvements are being made weekly and daily. Radical changes may be introduced at any time. But these changes and improvements can only be arrived at by experienced specialists. The Mines Branch will meet with nothing but encouragement and support in any sane efforts that it makes in furthering this branch of metallurgy. On the other hand, the Mines Branch will irrevocably lose its usefulness if its official head is per-