

AROUND THE COLLIERIES.

The Dom. Coal Co. are showing a marked improvement in the quality of the coal since the introduction of shearing. All the room coal is now being sheared.

For the first three months of the fiscal year, 1905-1906, that is for Oct., Nov., Decr., 1905, the increase in sales over the same months of the preceding year is in round figures 140,000 tons. The increase for the second three months will show an increase of nigh a quarter million tons, giving for the six months an increase of 390,000 tons. This must be pleasing to the government as it is augury of large revenue from royalty for the year ending next September; the biggest revenue on record. It is also indicative of the prosperity prevailing at the coal mines, and when the mines are prosperous it goes without saying that there is general prosperity throughout the province.

A pitman named Rochet, an old and experienced mine worker, was killed last week at International Mine, by a fall of stone. The men were engaged at what is technically called brushing, that is taking down roof, coal or stone, or both in order to give height for the horses to travel. The verdict of the jury at the inquest attributed the accident as due in part to the negligence of the officials. Blame the officials certainly if they are to blame, but a reading of the evidence does not show in what respect blame is due them or in what the negligence consisted. It could not be because they had failed to warn the deceased and his companion that the place was dangerous. Brushing is always attended with more or less risk. It is dangerous work at the best. It could scarcely be either owing to the fact that the place was not timbered, for the accident occurred at the spot where the men were at work and when one of them was employed in prying down the roof and had warned the deceased to go back. Had the fall occurred behind or where timber would not interfere with them working, and had the accident occurred there, then the lack of timber might have been urged as the cause of the accident. The evidence as published is not at all satisfactory. The Record is anxious that blame should always be laid at the proper door, whether of a manager, underground manager, or workman, but if others are to profit by the finding of a jury, the reasons for their finding should be given in specific and not vague and general terms. What were the reasons that satisfied the jury that there was negligence?

I hear that all the money needed for the reopening of the Port Hood Colliery has been subscribed. The colliery is advertised for sale, but that is a mere matter of form to make the reconstruction complete. After all the formalities have been complied with, work at the mine will be resumed. The Record hopes that the company will have better luck in the future than in the past.

A bill before the Legislature asks permission for the Municipality of Inverness to borrow a sum not exceeding fifty thousand dollars for payment of a bonus of one thousand dollars a mile in lieu of the free right of way—to the Margaree Coal & Railway Company. The municipality of Inverness has been doing its full share of bonusing during the past few years. It is to be hoped that its investments will turn out profitably for all concerned.

AMENDMENTS TO "THE COAL MINES ACT."

The following are the amendments proposed to The Coal Mines Regulation Act, introduced by the government at the suggestion of the P. W. A. Of the amendments it may be said they are harmless, but it is just possible they do not indicate progress:—

1. Sub-section (one), of Section 22 of Chapter 19 of the Revised Statutes, 1900, "The Coal Mines Regulation Act," is amended by adding thereto the following words: Every such check-weighman shall be a certificated miner of at least three years service, and shall be at the time of his appointment, employed as a miner in the colliery at which he is to serve.

2. Said Chapter is further amended by adding thereto, after Section 11, the following Section:—

11 a. The Governor-in-Council may appoint in each district, defined for the purpose of examination, a commission of three persons, who shall respectively possess the qualifications of members of the Board of Examiners, and may be members of such Board, whose duty it shall be to investigate and report to the Commissioners when safety lamps should be used in any mine in the district for which they are appointed.

3. Section 11 of said Chapter is amended by inserting the words "and commissioners" after the word "examiners" in line two thereof.

4. Section 56 of said Chapter is amended by inserting the words "not less than one, nor more than" at the end of the third line thereof.

5. Clause (d) of Section 57 of said Chapter, is amended by striking out the words "appointed in writing to institute such prosecution by not less than twelve persons so employed."

A C. B. correspondent who has been all his life about the collieries writes very strongly on the subject of old age pensions. He says they are a curse in disguise. He is of opinion that the thought of a possible pension may be a deterrent to industry and thrift. He says there are men working in the collieries of C. B. over 60 years old, and making four dollars a day. If those men cannot live and save on that amount how is it possible they can subsist on a pension of a little over four dollars a month. There are no old men paupers at our collieries.