

MARITIME MINING RECORD.

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OLD AGE PENSIONS.

At the last session of the Local Legislature an Act was passed authorising the government to appoint a commission to enquire into the subject of old age pensions. The members of the commission lately appointed are: W. Crowe, Barrister, Sydney, Chairman; R. Drummond of Stellarton; Stephen B. McNeil, Glace Bay and W. Hodge of Springhill. As defined in the Act the duty of the commission shall be "to examine into and report upon the feasibility of adopting some scheme providing old age pensions for workmen and particularly for such workmen as have either by themselves or in conjunction with their employers established benefit or relief societies, and shall also examine into and report upon the organization and administration of all societies formed under the provisions of Chapter 33 "The Revised Statutes of Nova Scotia, 1900." If the commission enquires into the workings of all the societies formed under Chapter 23 then it has some work before it as such societies have been formed at nearly all the collieries of the province. A question for the commission to decide will be whether Odd-fellows or Foresters societies and societies with similar objects will come within the scope of the enquiry. In some localities, take Stellarton, Westville, Springhill etc., the members of these societies are nearly all "workmen" and yet as they did not form the societies as members of a particular work or factory, it may be that they are excluded. No doubt, however, the commission will take steps to obtain the views of the members of 'fraternal' societies on this big subject. The commission will meet immediately to organize and formulate a plan of procedure. It is likely the commission will hold meetings at three or four of the more important industrial centres. All persons interested in the subject and who wish to present their views will no doubt be welcomed by the commission.

NORTH ATLANTIC COLLIERIES, LTD.

This company having been regularly organized and all legal and other formalities having been gone through has begun with energy to carry out the programme published exclusively, as the newspapers would say, in the Record several months ago. Mr. Richardson, a Mining Engineer from England is in charge of operations and he will likely have as manager Mr. Wilson—coal inspector

for the Dominion Coal Co.—of Glace Bay. The company is going to do no shouting nor make big pretensions. It will do its business quietly and systematically and, what is of vital importance, conduct operations with a due regard to economy. Mr. B. F. Pearson has assumed, until the first regular meeting of the shareholders, supreme control, and so far he is doing remarkably well. From conversing with him one gathers that he has been reading up on coal and coal mining, and one may also gather from the ease with which he flings around mining phrases that he has been pumping the authorities great and small from Hiram Donkin downwards. Without levity it may be said that B. F.—one of the best fellows in Canada—has entered upon his new duties as Managing Director of a coal company con amore, and in making a half a dozen contracts for work and repairs to be done at Port Morien, he has shown that he knows some values. The contracts that have been awarded are at such figures as would if published, make some other managers envious of the perspicacity of this latest, but not least, addition to their honorable ranks.

The work presently being done and that will be carried on for the next few weeks is chiefly preparatory to shipments which are expected to begin about November. If nothing goes contrary the colliery will be in full swing in November with an output of three or four hundred tons. The first prime necessity is water. That hitherto used was impure and played the mischief with the boilers etc. A supply is to be obtained from Sand Lake for immediate use. The pipes, as the demand is urgent, will be laid on the surface and afterwards covered. The pipe to be laid down is of 3 inch size, but before ditching begins it might be well to lay say a six inch pipe so that a supply of good water can be had for the company houses. The time is not far distant when coal company tenants will insist that the houses have all modern conveniences and the most desirable of these is water. Some half dozen contracts for various kinds of work have been let. These undertakings are all necessary to the production of coal at a reasonable rate. The company it is said will make an offer to the Dom. Coal Co. to mine the coal to the crop of the Gowrie on a royalty basis. If some arrangement can be come to it would certainly be in the interests of both companies. After it has found a market for all of the output of the colliery on which improvements are presently proceeding the company will direct attention to the exploitation of the Blockhouse seam, which it is claimed contains excellent coal for metallurgical purposes. A shaft by and bye will probably be sunk at Long Beach. The coal from the Blockhouse seam will not be offered at the furnaces in Sydney but for a furnace to be erected elsewhere, and in which the ores of the Annapolis Valley will be utilized. Indeed the Record is inclined to the opinion that there is some connection between the coal at Port Morien and the iron ore at Annapolis, and that the interests of the promoters of the North Atlantic collieries are in some way bound up with the development of the ore properties at Annapolis. The Record will not be at all surprised, if ultimately the owners of the ore areas and the holders of the coal properties openly join forces. One thing may be taken for granted