

a footing in the New England markets. Nova Scotia's shipments to the United States are constantly diminishing. The recently enacted legislation as to smoke nuisance tends to complete the United States control of these manufacturing centres. Moreover, Nova Scotia cannot compete except in rare instances with the cheaper labour, the more perfect transportation, and the immensely larger organizations that characterize coal mining in the States.

Over and above all these considerations, one fact obtrudes itself. Even if it be costlier at present, and this is a matter of debate, it is demonstrably wiser for Eastern Canada to be self-sufficient as regards coal supplies. A terminable arrangement with a much richer and more powerful nation is decidedly dangerous. We can be afforded no guarantee as to the continuity or as to the prices of coal supplies from the south. Is it not distinctly more advisable to depend upon our own developed resources? How can we safely place hostages in the hands of our commercial rivals?

This, however, is obviously presenting one side of the case. Western coal operators are as ardent for reciprocity as eastern operators are against. The case for the West must not be overlooked. It is quite distinct from the East in principle. But in practice, the same factors obtain, though positions are reversed. The West keenly desires reciprocity. Western operators believe firmly that their future depends upon free access to United States markets. This belief may be modified by the speedy development of local demand, but the physical advantages of West Canadian collieries are such that free trade means expansion.

Looking at the question from a broad viewpoint, it is evident that there is danger of emphasizing special interests at the expense of the country generally. It would be interesting to learn why Nova Scotian collieries could not hold the St. Lawrence market if the present duty were removed. Water carriage, loading and trans-shipping facilities, and established markets are a few of the advantages that cannot be created rapidly. It is hard to see, therefore, that this heavy part of the market would be lost to Nova Scotia were the present duty to be removed. Neither does it seem probable that the Maritime Province market could not be held. In fact, there seems to be something radically wrong in the contention that Nova Scotian coal cannot on its own merits compete with the United States product. This point needs further explication.

With the statement that a fair share of trade with the United States is not obtainable we are entirely in accord. The position of American collieries is too commanding to encourage intrusion. On the other hand, the assertion that the present duty is the only safeguard against ruinous competition is going too far. Doubtless Nova Scotia would suffer loss were reciprocity to become an established fact. But the probable extent of that loss has been greatly exaggerated.

Western operators have much to gain through free trade in coal. Eastern operators have something to lose. The country as a whole may secure slightly cheaper fuel. Just how far lower prices will obtain can only be guessed. But, judging by past history, it is safe to bet that the reduction in prices will be considerably less than the amount of the duty.

It is well to give respectful attention to such documents as that under consideration. It is well also to keep ever before one's mind the fact that special interests are pleading. It is our deliberate opinion that were our economic conditions sound we would have little to fear from free trade in coal. As it is, the whole problem cannot be dismissed lightly. The situation is by no means a simple one. One of the first requisites is a plain statement of facts and a clear presentation of comparative costs and profits. Such work could well be taken up by the Canadian Mining Institute.

We cannot fairly accept the pamphlet issued by the Nova Scotian operators as conclusive. More facts are needed. Meanwhile, we may take it for granted that there are two sides to the problem. The burden of proof is distinctly on the East.

THE LORD'S DAY ALLIANCE AND THE MINING INDUSTRY.

The institutional church of to-day is the conservator of much good. The efforts of religious societies, and the work of certain non-denominational bodies are manifestations of an earnest desire to cleanse the body politic. But there is something profoundly irritating in the misdirected zeal of that inept aggregation known as the Lord's Day Alliance.

This association has with unbridled vigour fought the insidious Sunday ice-cream. It has sought, not without success, to suppress such unspeakable sins as bathing on Sunday. In fact, its prime aim is to impose upon all of us the joyless Sabbatical traditions of the Puritan.

In Nova Scotia, in Ontario, and in British Columbia, mining men have suffered from the interference of agents of the Alliance. The latest instance comes from Cobalt, where the Alliance sought to close all concentrating mills at midnight on Saturday, instead of at seven o'clock on Sunday morning. Incidentally, this could do no good to the workmen, and would inflict loss on both employers and employees. Such a consideration does not in the least deter the Alliance.

There is humour in the situation. The Alliance no doubt is honestly convinced that Sunday ice-cream, and Saturday night-work are sapping our national health. But it overlooks certain diseased conditions that may not fall far short of both these horrid crimes. For instance, new mining camps are usually infested with women of ill-repute and with purveyors of unspeakably bad liquor. These cater to a small but reckless part of the community. To the majority of operators and workmen they are unwelcome. We have yet to hear of the