

AROUND THE COLLIERIES.

There are still some good men in Springhill who are glad that the star of the P. W. A. is still in the ascendant.

Springhill still keeps up its reputation for steady work, but absenteeism is still the thorn in the side of the management and a potent factor in lessening the output.

There is once again talk of development of coal areas at St. Rose, Inverness Co., and of the extension of the Inverness Railway. The Record hopes something is on foot.

The new Tunnel seam in No. 2 mine, Springhill, is fulfilling all expectations and is being rapidly opened out. The new seam is known as No. 1, and the coal is of just that quality.

At a meeting of the Scottish Federation of Miners held end of December, the chairman expressed the hope that in 1909 they would not have to fight for the minimum wage of six shillings per day.

The Record has it, on excellent authority that unsuccessful efforts were made by the Dominion Coal Co., to find cases of want among its workmen at the biggest colliery, near the biggest town in Cape Breton.

The Eight Hour Day Commission began its sittings in Truro Monday. To-day it proceeds to Glace Bay, and from thence to Sydney Mines, and thereafter to Inverness, dropping off at Port Hood on the return trip. After meeting in Pictou Co. the Commission will go to Cumberland, Yarmouth and other counties. Dr. McGill is Chairman.

The coming civic elections in Springhill are bringing out some queer talent—and other things—to the surface. The Socialists are out in force and have five men in the field, viz: Charles Perch, Edward Bradley, Calvin Ward, Thos. Blinkhorn, and Duncan Blue, all very decent fellows individually, but looked upon in the aggregate as Socialists they are not taken very seriously.

Ten days ago the larger coal operators had a conference with Premier Murray and several other members of the Executive Council on the matter of extended markets for coal so that the colliery workers would receive increased employment. The conference was a success, and before navigation opens it is likely that some steps will be taken in the direction indicated and desired.

It is understood that to the cool request of the U. M. W. lodge at Springhill for recognition the manager replied that he could not treat with them meantime as he understands the affairs of Pioneer Lodge are in law. The C. B. papers say the General Manager was waited upon by a committee of the U. M. W.'s. He kindly told them that John Moffatt he knew, and the P. W. A. he knew, but who the dickens was Mullins and who were the U. M. W. He of course recognized the union, the leading union in C. B. the P. W. A., which he understood was still carrying on business at the old stand, and was likely to continue to do so.

Open lights in the Nova Scotia mines are going out of fashion. The Maritime Coal Ry. & Power Co. have taken open lights out of their Chignecto colliery and substituted safety lamps, and thus the good work goes on surely if slowly.

The Cumb. Ry. & Coal Co. railway men have recently organized a lodge of the Canadian Union of Railway men. These men recognize the fact that there is brain and ability enough in Canada to look after Canadian interests.

It is said that 'papers' have been served on the men who, it is said, tried illegally to dispose of the P. W. A. property, with the intention of reconveying it to the U. M. W. officials. Certainly if there is any money in the business the Yankees will go for it. They may however be headed off in this instance. The property involved is a valuable corner lot, and buildings containing a commodious hall, assembly rooms, and large store, with \$2700 in cash, so it is said.

It is said a Local Assembly of the U. M. W. of America has been organized in Springhill, but there is considerable doubt as to the legality of the society as applied to Nova Scotia. Great dissatisfaction as to the proposed amount of the assessments per month; a strong feeling among the men that they have been fooled into joining a society that is actually unpopular, that will be of little avail though expensive; and a move, looked at from a National standpoint, unpatriotic and certainly UNCANADIAN.

It is wonderful. Passengers between Stellarton and Westville on the Tram line, on reaching the company's crossing at the Asphalt, are perhaps unaware that at this point if they could see down through the ground a distance of say 2,000 feet perpendicular they would find men busily employed at the face of the Drummond slopes. Just fancy the distance from the Drummond colliery to the Asphalt driven through coal all the way. Where is the slope going to end? Will it cross the river or what.

Anthracite coal is admitted free into Canada. There are no means of knowing the quantity of anthracite dust that came into the province of Quebec last year, out it is proposed that much more came in than is generally supposed. This coal is not of itself good enough for steam purposes. It needs a lighter, and as stated in last issue Nova Scotia coal is used for that purpose, in the proportion of one of Nova Scotia coal to three or four of anthracite dust. This means that thousands of tons of coal are being lost to the Nova Scotia operators. It was never intended that American anthracite dust should come into competition with Nova Scotia coal in the St. Lawrence market. It is quite possible that the government may be asked to prohibit the importation of anthracite dust, or asked to admit no coal of less than a certain size, prohibit coal that has passed through a screen of more than three quarter inch or perhaps an inch mesh.