

THE WESTERN COAL STRIKE

A satisfactory settlement has been reached at last. On May 6th Deputy Minister of Labor Mr. W. L. Mackenzie King announced in an official telegram to his Department in Ottawa, that, as a result of conciliation proceedings, an agreement had been signed and the miners would resume work on the morrow.

By the terms of the agreement the men receive a five per cent. increase in wages and an eight-hour day from bank to bank. Other substantial concessions are made. It is agreed that if, in case of dispute, the difficulty is not settled by the first camp board, there shall be an immediate appeal to a board of arbitrators, whose chairman shall be named by the Minister of Labor. The agreement stands for two years, and provision is made for a meeting of operators and representatives of the union, sixty days before its expiry, for the purpose of arranging a renewal of the agreement.

If during this protracted struggle the men had remained at work, pending the action of the Board of Conciliation, they would have deserved in full measure public sympathy and support. In stopping work they took a step that entailed heavy loss to the industries depending upon a regular supply of fuel. For this they have no excuse. It is fatuous to affirm that this was done without the sanction of the Executive of the United Mine Workers. The stoppage of work was the result of concerted action by the members of the union, and this the public must remember, should disputes arise at any future time.

Mr. Mackenzie King appears to have performed his delicate task with skill and tact. The peculiar difficulties of the situation tested the new Labor Act very thoroughly. That a settlement has been reached peacefully reflects credit upon the Department of Labor, as represented by Mr. King, upon the operators and, in a much less degree, upon the miners themselves.

TO THE PUBLIC

A persistent attempt is being made to boom the Larder Lake district. In view of the prestige attaching to mining in Ontario because of Cobalt's great showing, it is not unlikely that many small investors will be induced to risk their money in one or other of the extravagantly advertised concerns which have been recently floated. At present, although something like four thousand locations have been staked out in the district, no development work of importance has been done and consequently the only foundations for the assumption that the area is a rich one are the newspaper reports of valuable finds and the publication of assay returns in prospectuses, which may mean anything or nothing. As a sample of the absurdities now being published by the daily press, we cut the following from a Montreal evening paper:—

“One prominent mining man of large experience in the different gold camps of the world, after visiting the

camp, stated this could hardly be termed a mining camp at all, that it more nearly resembled a large manufacturing industry, with sufficient raw material on hand to run for centuries. The question, in his opinion, was simply one of the capacity of the machinery, and the amount of gold bars turned out would be limited only by the size of the plant for treating the ore.”

How men of ordinary intelligence can possibly be influenced by such obvious nonsense as this baffles explanation. And yet the fact remains that it is just this sort of thing that the public will swallow without so much as winking.

AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF MINING ENGINEERS

The American Institute of Mining Engineers held its regular spring meeting in the auditorium of the new United Engineering Building on April 18th and 19th. Dr. Rossiter W. Raymond, the veteran secretary of the Institute, was called upon to speak by the President of the Council, Mr. John Hays Hammond. Dr. Raymond touched lightly on the history of the organization. He referred to the fact that for more than thirty years the Institute was not incorporated, nor had it settled headquarters. Any attempt to place it at one spot would simply have been a signal for the appearance of other local societies in other spots. There had been a time when Philadelphia, as the capital of a mining State, had strong claims to become the headquarters of the Institute. The establishment of a rival Institute in the West or of other national societies for iron, coal and steel had been projected at various times. But through all this troublous period the Institute, by being peripatetic, had kept itself national.

Dr. Raymond spoke in most glowingly laudatory terms of the work of Mr. Henry G. Morse, the junior member of the firm of architects who erected the building.

THE BUSINESS OF MINING

We wish to draw especial attention to an article which appears in this issue. It is entitled “Requirements of Modern Mining,” and is reprinted from our contemporary, the *Mining and Scientific Press*, of San Francisco. We had intended commencing a series of articles defining and describing the *business* and profession of mining. This article covers so succinctly and so forcibly the whole subject that it deserves the most careful perusal. Taking it as a text, we shall attempt, in succeeding issues, to demonstrate how little the great majority of alleged “mining” schemes have to do with the legitimate business of mining. We most emphatically disclaim any intention of injuring individual mining camps. But, unfortunately, one or two of our otherwise promising districts have been made the hatching places of utterly extravagant schemes. If, in attacking these promotions, we cause incidental hardships to the mining districts involved, we shall be sorry—but it cannot be helped.