

LABOR AND WAGE CONDITIONS AT THE NOVA SCOTIA COLLIERIES.

Since the Wage Scale Committee of the United Mine Workers refused to accept the responsibility of accepting the agreement to which the executive officers of the union are parties, and decided to refer the issue to a referendum of the members of the union, there have been no developments. Although much opposition to the so-called Montreal agreement has been voiced, the unqualified recommendation of the international officers in its favor, and the growing feeling that the Secretary of the Union did not indulge in hyperbole when he said "the last cent had been wrung from the operators," indicate that there will be no stoppage of work at this time at the collieries.

The referendum is to be taken on December 14th.

The strike of the railwaymen at the Sydney Steel Plant and at Sydney Mines still continues.

At Sydney, the Steel Company has endeavored to maintain men at work in those operations requiring a minimum of transportation, such as the work of the Nail Mill, but the number of men for whom work can be found under the existing conditions is daily growing less. The seven hour ultimatum of the railwaymen threatened the equipment of the plant with disaster, and although, by the help of scratch crews of officials and others, the blast-furnaces, open-hearths and coke-ovens were cooled off gradually, yet the Company has issued a statement indicating that the No. 4 Blast Furnace may sustain a burst in the crucible portion as a result of expansion of the limestone in the furnace, which under the enforced stoppage of movement of coal and coke, it was not possible to flux off in the available time.

The railwaymen claim the status of passenger and freight line employees, and ask for adjudication of the dispute by the Adjustment Board provided for railway disputes, but the Department of Labor does not consider the employees on the steel plants to come within the category of railwaymen, and suggests a Board of Conciliation, which the strikers refuse.

The employees of the Sydney & Louisburg Railway, a subsidiary of the Dominion Steel Corporation, were given the advances prescribed under the McAdoo schedule during the Summer, and have recently also obtained the further advances under the so-called Chicago award. It is unlikely that any cessation of work will take place on this railroad, or that the operations of the collieries will be interfered with from this cause. At the present time, the strike of the steel railwaymen is causing a lessened demand upon the collieries for cooking coal to the extent of between 2,000 and 3,000 tons daily.

At Sydney Mines, where previously to the action of the railwaymen, the blast furnace and open-hearths had been closed down through trade conditions, the volunteer crews are keeping the collieries in operation, and little inconvenience has resulted from the precipitate strike.

Coal production has improved markedly during the past two weeks. The officials of the Dominion Coal Company look for an output in November of 295,000 tons, which, if obtained, will be the largest single month's production since August 1917. Outputs running over 13,000 tons daily have been obtained on a number of recent occasions. Should the improvement in production continue, the output of the Glace Bay collieries for 1920 may reach 3,250,000 tons, which will

exceed 1918 by 170,000 tons, but will be smaller than any year of the war period, or its immediate predecessors.

The production from the Springhill Mines expected in November is 40,000 tons, a figure that has not been attained since 1909. Indications are that Springhill outputs may reach 420,000 tons in 1920, a figure that has not been approached since 1912.

For the first time since 1916 there is noticeable a strong upward trend to production of coal in Nova Scotia.

With the existing demand for coal, should the United Mine Workers accept the rate of increase proposed by the Montreal agreement, their opportunity for earning large wages has no precedent in Nova Scotia annals.

VANCOUVER NOTES.

Dr. Dolmage Farewelled by Vancouver Branch, C. I. M. & M.

Dr. Victor Dolmage, before leaving Vancouver for Ottawa to take up new duties there, was given a farewell luncheon by the Vancouver Branch of the Institute. Dr. Dolmage has been in charge of petrographic work in the Vancouver Office of the Survey, for two years, or since the office there was opened.

The luncheon, presided over by Dean Brock, was attended by members of the Institute and friends of Dr. Dolmage. Dean Brock said he regretted that Dr. Dolmage was leaving because his work has been of public benefit. Dr. McKenzie also spoke, referring to his first meeting with Dr. Dolmage in the field in Queen Charlotte Islands.

In reply Dr. Dolmage said there were three types of mining men to which the Vancouver office sought to help, namely, the mining engineer, in regard to branches of science in which he might not have specialised; the prospector, to whom great assistance could be rendered—and they were always an interesting type of men to help;—the small investor, to whom advice as regards a particular property was a delicate matter, but who could always be advised regarding the securing of proper reports from reliable parties. It had been his experience, Dr. Dolmage believed, to be of assistance to all these types. He would like to see the mines owned by Canadians, and not altogether by New York or Spokane people.

To Hold Monthly Meetings.

The Vancouver Branch is to hold a luncheon on the first Wednesday in each month beginning in December. The aim of these luncheons is to create greater interest in the Institute.

The February Meeting of the Institute.

Attention is being concentrated upon making the 2nd. Annual Vancouver Meeting a successful one, and it is hoped that any members of the Institute from the East who may plan on being within reach of Vancouver in February will endeavor to be present at the meetings. The invitation is extended to members of the American Institute of Mining Engineers also.

B. C. Chamber of Mines Popular.

The rooms of the B. C. Chamber of Mines, and the mineral exhibit there, attracts much attention, and visitors during one month, selected at random from the register, include well-known mining men from White Horse, Yukon, Prince Rupert, Ontario, Alberta, Quebec, Los Angeles, Arkansas, Arizona, England, and all the camps in the province itself.