

MARITIME MINING RECORD.

The MARITIME MINING RECORD is published the second and fourth Wednesday in each month.

The RECORD is devoted to the Mining—particularly Coal Mining—Industries of the Maritime Provinces.

Advertising rates, which are moderate may be had on application.

Subscription \$1.00 a year. Single Copies 5 cents.

R. DRUMMOND, PUBLISHER.

STELLARTON, N. S.

July 12 1911

SPECIAL RULES.

By statute each coal company in Nova Scotia is authorized to frame a set of special rules for the guidance of officials and workmen, which when approved of by the Inspector of Mines, have all the force of law. In the matter of Special Rules, it may be said, in a sense, that each coal mining company is a law unto itself. For this reason one does not find uniformity in the several codes. The rule of one company, on a given point, may not differ much from that of another, but still there is so much difference that a workman knowing the rules in vogue at a particular gassy mine may, on removing to another colliery, be unfamiliar with the rules prevailing there. The question arises: "Is this desirable?" Gas is gas and acts in one colliery as it would in another, and though safety lamps may go by different names, one broad principle enters into their construction and one broad rule into their use. There may be appliances, modes of working, etc., at one colliery which are not at another, and it is possible that special rules, applicable to the handling of the appliances, etc., be framed. But is it not possible to frame a set of rules the main body of which would be applicable to all collieries. Is uniformity desirable? Certainly, if obtainable. We make bold to say that we know of no set of special rules which are in points or places not open to criticism, as to their construction, or grammar. In one or two instances though the meaning be understood, the wording does not clearly convey the meaning. Is it not time that the managers of the mines should take concerted action in framing special rules which would have the merit of striving after uniformity. To show the difference there is in the construction of the rules we will make comparisons, and in doing so, hint that the difference may be traceable to a pride, that while harmless, is unnecessary.

One company only makes mention of an official called a superintendent. Another company has several third officers but has no 'rule' for them for the reason probably that 'superintendent' is not mentioned in the Mines Regulation Chapter.

Quoting from the Dominion Coal Co.'s rules re Manager: "2. The Manager shall have the daily supervision and control of the mine. He shall appoint such competent persons as may be necessary for carrying out the provisions of the Mines Regulation Chapter of the Revised Statutes, and shall

to the best of his power, enforce the observance of the Chapter and of the General and Special Rules, and he shall provide at the office of the mine a plan showing Air Courses, Stoppings, Doors, Grades, and Elevation, and Air and Water Pipe Lines."

In two companies' definitions, the words 'and instruct' come after 'shall appoint'. What is the meaning of the words 'and instruct'? In one instance they cannot mean 'to give instructions'—which is the meaning one might think intended, for a rule says that all heads of departments shall receive instructions from the superintendent. Only the one company places the providing of plans among the duties of manager. It might be better that all the companies adopted the rule quoted above.

The definition of the duties of U. G. M. occupy a space of from 35 lines to 49 lines according to the company. It would almost appear as if the duties of U. G. M. and Overman had got mixed up. On the mainland a rule requires the U. G. M. to personally visit such parts of the mine as are reported to be unsafe, while on the Island the duty of inspection devolves on the Overman, and in a case the duty of personal inspection devolves on both U. G. M. and Overman. This might lead to confusion and ill-will. The rule giving the inspection to overman is much better expressed than that giving it to the U. G. M. Here is the rule for the overman: "He shall at once personally inspect any part of the pit reported to him to be unsafe" etc., and this for the U. G. M.: "... To give immediate attention to any complaints of, and to personally inspect such parts of the mine, or waste, or shafts or slopes," etc. That is badly constructed. Complaints of what? Complaints of whom? The shafts or the slopes cannot very well complain. Of course the U. G. M. is to listen to complaints about the condition of places, by the men, and why not let that be tersely expressed as in the overman's case. In two of the copies of rules before us five paragraphs are given to the duties of overman, in a third, ten paragraphs, and in a fourth, eleven paragraphs. Is it a case of saying too little in the one instance, and too much in the other. Again the Mainland rules enjoin that the U. G. M. shall provide sufficient supply of pit materials, and that the overman shall see to its proper distribution, while on the Island, while the overman is similarly instructed, the U. G. M. has to see that the miners are supplied with timber for the safe keeping of their places, and no mention made of brattice, etc. The Mainland wording is perhaps the best. The manager has to see that "all necessary supplies of timber, brattice, etc., for the use of the pit"—not of the mines owner—are provided. In one of the copies the overman is not expressly ordered to report to the U. G. M.; in a second he is simply ordered to report, while in two instances, on the Mainland, he is ordered to make a daily written report, and if the Mainland errs, it is certainly on the side of accuracy. Taking Rule 1, under the heading 'Overman' in the Mainland Rules it reads: "He shall have the daily supervision and responsible charge of the pit, or portion of one, etc., etc. Then turn back and look at Rule 1 under heading 'Underground Manager': "His duties shall be to attend the section of