

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.

August 10

THE EVOLUTION OF THE MINING SCHOOLS.

The visit of the Royal Commission on Technical Education has aroused considerable interest in the province. In the evidence reference has more than once been made to the mining schools. How they are so often referred to as evening classes or night schools is a matter of surprise, as long ago night schools as well as mining schools, were established by the local government. The night schools were asked for by the mine workers as an aid to the mining schools, also asked for by the mine workers through the P. W. A. The night schools, though asked for by the mine workers, were taken advantage of by those residing in the rural districts. Indeed from the rural districts came a larger demand for night schools than from the mining districts. The fact is that the demand exceeded the willingness of the government to supply. The establishment in rural districts was not discouraged wholly from economic considerations but rather on the plea that they might weaken the efficiency of the ordinary day schools. The night schools, while in demand in the country districts, were a partial failure in the mining districts where it was thought they were most needed. The night schools, if our memory is not at fault, were asked for as a corollary to the mining schools, and came after the mining schools had demonstrated the need of better elementary education, so that the instructors of the mining schools might have more time for pupils with a fair education.

As the night schools were the corollary of the mining schools, these in their turn were a consequence of the demand for certificated mine officials, made in 1881.

It may be said that in 1881 was laid the foundations of what were afterward to be known as the mining schools. And after the following manner was the foundation laid. Section 10 of chapter 5 of the Acts of 1881 reads:

"The Governor in Council shall have power to make regulations for establishing and organizing a Board of Examiners, and prescribe their duties as to examining and giving certificates of competency to all underground managers, overmen, and foremen, as to their knowledge of ventilation, gases, mines and mining, and shall have power to fix a time after which it shall not be lawful for any person, not having a certificate of competency, to be employed at any mine in the pro-

vince."

That was the first stage; the second comes a year or two later. In chapter 7, section 8 of the Revised Statutes, fifth series, we read:

"The Governor in Council is authorized to select and appoint a Board of Examiners to be composed of the Inspector of Mines and seven persons conversant with coal mining, two of whom shall be colliers in actual practice, who shall have obtained certificates of competency, etc."

About this time the following sections were inserted in the Regulation of Mines Act:

"Every coal mine to which this Chapter applies shall after the first of January 1885 be under the control and supervision of a manager, etc."

"The underground workings of every coal mine to which this chapter applies shall be under the daily charge of an underground manager and overman, holding certificates under this chapter."

"A person shall not be qualified to be a manager, underground manager or overman unless he is the holder of a certificate under this chapter."

Mining schools had been established in the mining districts under the authority of the Governor in Council, and in 1880 they secured statutory enactment. As the schools were the first of their kind in any country, and to this day stand out as unique, it may be well to give a majority of the sections of the act, (Chapter 20, 1880):

"The Governor-in-Council may authorize the establishing of a school of instruction of miners at any place in the province at which coal mining operations are carried on, for the purpose of instructing persons who may wish to prepare themselves to undergo examination before the board of examiners referred to in section 8 of chapter 7, Revised Statutes, and may appoint teachers for such schools, and may fix the time for which such teachers shall hold their appointments."

"The teachers of the schools established under the provisions of the first section shall prepare candidates in accordance with the rules now prescribed or hereafter to be prescribed by the board of examiners, or with such rules as may be made by the Governor-in-Council."

"Each teacher preparing and sending up for examination not less than two properly qualified candidates, shall be entitled to a fee or retainer of one hundred dollars per annum from the province. If it shall appear to the satisfaction of the Commissioner of Public Works and Mines that the failure of candidates to pass the examination was not due to any default of the teacher, such teacher shall be entitled to the said fee or retainer notwithstanding the candidate's failure."

"Any teacher who prepared candidates who have successfully passed the Board of Examiners shall be entitled to such fees for each candidate passed as an overman or underground manager as may be fixed by the Governor-in-Council, such fees to be paid by the Commissioner of Public Works and Mines on the certificate of the chairman of the Board of Examiners."

"No teacher shall be allowed to exact from any intending candidate any fee for the instruction given him; provided however that this shall not apply to any person desiring instruction but not contemplating examination."