

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENCE

NOVA SCOTIA.

The heavy storms occurring at intervals during February interfered, to a considerable extent, with shipments for the month. Notwithstanding, a majority of the larger collieries show increases when compared with the corresponding month of 1906. The Inverness Railway & Coal Company, the Nova Scotia Steel & Coal Company, the Intercolonial Coal Company show substantial increases. The Cumberland Railway & Coal Company, owing to an outbreak of damp, has fallen badly behind in shipments for the past two months; so far behind, indeed, that it will take good work for many future weeks to effect a recovery.

Everyone connected with the coal trade is in good cheer. Prospects never were brighter. The Dominion Coal Company alone has sold close on 1,300,000 tons in Montreal, and an additional hundred thousand or two more could readily have been sold, had the company considered it was in a position to fill the quantity. The Dominion Coal Company are figuring on an increase of half a million tons for 1907. Last year the Intercolonial Coal Company beat all of its former records, and it looks as if the management was determined to make a still better record this year. The quantity shipped last year, 280,000 tons, may not strike the ordinary reader as calling for special comment, but the figures are remarkable when it is considered that the colliery is some two score years old, that its slope is about a mile and a half long, on a pitch of twenty-two, and that the face of the level is a mile or more from the bottom of the slope. It is merry hoisting to bring 1,200 or more boxes along a level and up a slope the long distance specified.

The Province is in excellent cheer over the continued prosperity of the provincial coal trade, and the Premier gave voice to this in bringing down his budget the other day. Royalty on coal is the chief item of revenue of the Province. Last year the revenue from the Mines Department was \$642,000, mostly from coal. The revenue from all sources was \$1,300,000. Premier Murray predicts that in eight years the royalty from coal alone will equal the total revenue of the Province for 1906. In view of these things, Nova Scotians may well be proud of their mineral heritage.

It is generally believed, down this way, that matters looking to a settlement of the Steel-Coal difficulty are progressing satisfactorily, and that a definite arrangement is only a matter of time—a few weeks—perhaps. But a settlement does not mean that the Steel Company will abandon efforts to secure an adequate supply of fuel from its own mines. When the furore was at its height reports were current that the Steel Company had acquired options on territory at Langan, Port Morien, etc. Those in the ken shook their heads and muttered, "this will not do." There were other larger and better areas left out of count, and until the Steel Company sought and obtained options on these they were not in earnest in the matter. That they were in earnest is now made clear by the Steel Company securing options on the Burchell areas at Point Aconi. It is claimed that in these areas there are hundreds of millions of tons. I am content to put the available quantity at seventy-five millions. The areas are submarine, and in order to have easy access to the outlying areas it is necessary to go through an area owned by the Dominion Coal Company. The Government evidently favors granting permission to the Steel Company, as a bill dealing fully with the matter of an entrance to submarine areas has been brought in. A striking feature of the bill is that the Government are the sole judges as to the damages to be allowed the holders of the areas through which an entrance is effected. This bill, however, does not dispose satisfactorily of the whole question of submarine areas. It is this way. A dozen or more years ago few people attached much value to the areas under water. For instance, the General

Mining Association when in operation—though they could have acquired miles seaward—were content with taking up one mile only out from shore. Similarly, the Dominion Coal Company did not see the wisdom of extending their areas at Table Head (Dom. No. 2) more than a mile and a half seaward. At that time it was either considered that the coal did not extend far seaward, or that it could not be profitably mined for more than a mile or two beyond the high water mark. Opinions since then have changed, and it is now believed that mining can be prosecuted under water almost indefinitely. The Nova Scotia Steel & Coal Company took it into its head that it would take up some sea areas in front of the Dominion Coal Company at Table Head, and did so, securing many miles. Then the Dominion Coal Company thought it would pay back in kind, so stalked over to Point Aconi and took out many areas in front of the Nova Scotia Steel Company, and so we have the spectacle of the Steel Company property in front of the Coal Company and preventing extensions seaward, and a similar thing in the case of the Coal Company. There are other companies besides these two which are in similar awkward predicaments. It is suggested that a commission be appointed for the purpose of effecting an amicable exchange of submarine areas, the Dominion Coal Company, for instance, abandoning the areas at Point Aconi, and the Nova Scotia Steel & Coal Company abandoning in turn those at Table Head, the one for the other.

The Miner's Union has made a demand on the Government for the enactment of an eight-hour day, weekly pays, certificates for iron ore miners, and old-age pensions. The Government will be unable to see its way to comply with either of the three first named, but will appoint a commission to enquire into the schemes of old-age pensions in other lands.

It is reported that the Nova Scotia Steel & Coal Company have acquired options on what are held to be extensive iron ore areas at Arisaig, N.S. It is freely predicted that from this out the iron ore trade of Nova Scotia, which has shown little activity for years, will take on vigorous new life. The talk generally is optimistic. Included in this talk is the re-opening of the unlucky Broughton Colliery. It is said a further large sum of money has been obtained in Britain whereby to purchase an area of the Dominion Coal Company which stood in the way of economical developments, and to complete new plans for successfully operating the colliery.

NOVA SCOTIA GOLD MINES.

Moose River District.—The Consolidated Mines Company of Canada, capitalized at \$5,000,000, has been organized to work the amalgamated properties of the G. & K. Mining Company and the Moose River Mining Company. The G. & K. property now has a forty-stamp mill and it is proposed to enlarge this. At present, attention is being devoted to getting a summer's supply of wood, and not much mining is being done. New boilers will shortly be installed, also an air compressor, as they are now getting their air from the Tourquoy Mining Company, which has a water-driven compressor. The company also contemplates developing water power at Scraggy Lake and transmitting it electrically over to the mine.

The Tourquoy Gold Mining Company, under the management of Mr. Robert Kaulback, has been successful in again finding the pay chute in No. 3 belt, which they lost a little more than a year ago. The Britannia belt is also showing good values. The company's dam has been repaired, and sufficient wood has been hauled out to last the summer. There is about 150 tons of ore now in the mine ready to be crushed.

Upper Seal Harbour.—The Dolliver Mountain Mining Company are contemplating the transmission of electrical power from their power plant to outlying mines in Isaac's Harbour.