

The requirement of the Act, that all contracting-out schemes must be approved by the Compensation Board, will ensure that all the existing Relief Societies will be placed on a satisfactory basis.

It will be noticed in the figures given relating to the Dominion Coal Company Employees Benefit Society, that the expenditure exceeded the income in 1915; and in addition, liabilities were incurred for the future support of the families of deceased members. The experience of this Society, since the consolidation of all the colliery branches into one Society, in 1910, has been made the subject of expert actuarial investigation, and a scheme is under consideration to improve the benefits, and to place the Society on a basis that will ensure permanent solvency. To do this will necessitate increased contributions from all parties concerned.

The medical needs of the miners and their families are looked after by the colliery doctors. These practitioners are paid by monthly amounts, usually about fifty or sixty cents from each man, deducted from the payrolls. The workmen designate the doctor they desire to have, and the coal companies are required to collect the amounts and pay them over to the doctors.

The chief colliery districts are well provided with hospitals. These are maintained by monthly contributions from the colliery workmen, usually thirty cents per month, supplemented by the Government hospital grant, by donations from the coal companies and private individuals, and by hospital fees paid by private patients. The miner receives free hospital treatment, although some fees are charged by the hospitals and the doctors for special operations. The hospital equipment is good, and modern.

Legislation and Technical Education.

The regulation of the coal mines is directed by provincial statutes: embodying, in their present form, the accumulated experience of one hundred years in the working of coal mines in Nova Scotia.

Mine inspection is carried out by a staff of Deputy Inspectors of Mines, reporting to the Inspector of Mines in Halifax, who is also the Deputy Commissioner of Public Works and Mines, reporting to the Commissioner of Works and Mines. The last named office is really that of Provincial Minister of Mines, and the holder is ex-officio a member of the Provincial Executive.

Federal legislation has so far had little or no bearing on the coal industry except in so far as it has related to customs duties, labour laws affecting disputes between employers and employees, and laws regulating immigration.

A pressing need exists for the establishment of a central authority on such matters as the testing of mine explosives, and general research work on problems affecting mining, following, in some measure, the lead of the Bureau of Mines in the United States. The financial resources of the individual provinces of Canada will not permit of separate provincial establishments, nor in any case, would such a duplication of effort be advisable.