

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.

June 13, 1917.

THE HIGH COST OF LIVING.

It is refreshing to have some arresting remarks on this much-discussed theme. What Prof. D. J. MacDonald says is not new to many, but the points he makes are not, as a rule, reiterated in the press. They are not the kind out of which political capital can be made, and, therefore, such points are studiously avoided by the partizan newspapers. The following extracts of the lecture, which was given last week in Glace Bay, are from the Glace Bay Gazette. It is to be hoped that the editor will read the lecture over several times, and send marked copies to all of his liberal brothers-in-arms. A reading of what was said might lead to a lessening of much rancorous writing:—

The reverend lecturer in opening his remarks drew attention to the importance of the subject and to the countless so-called solutions which are offered for the High Cost of Living. He said: "Next to the war there is no question more discussed to-day than the High Cost of Living. Everybody is talking about it and either giving or seeking reasons for the high prices that prevail. Some blame this, some blame that. The farmer blames the middleman and excessive railway charges, and the railway man blames unscientific farming. The union labor man blames 'trusts,' and the big manufacturer retorts unionist restriction of output and wages. The Liberals blame the Conservatives, and the Conservatives blame the weather."

Dr. MacDonald went very thoroughly into the question of the increase in the general level of prices. "In recent years," he said, "the supply of money has been increased more rapidly than the demand for it. Therefore, the value of money has been going down, and so prices have risen. The tremendous rise in prices even since the war began may be ascribed largely to the increase in supply of money. The Allies are paying for supplies through issues of bonds, and this excessive bond issue has had evil results. It has sent commodity price up. Prices have gone up not alone because there has been an increase in the amount of actual money in the country, but also because there has been an increase in the amount of substitutes for money."

"But bad as is a period of rising prices, a period of falling prices would be even worse. It is a period of depression. It was to remedy the evils of falling prices that Bryan advocated the free coinage of silver in the presidential campaign of 1896."

"Price depends on demand and supply. The great increase in the prices of food products, then, can be

explained through lessened supply. Several things show us that supply has not kept pace with demand in Canada. People will use about the same amount of the necessities of life, whether the price is high or low. If then there is a shortage of supply, people compete for the usual amount they consumed and prices go up."

The speaker then made some remarks on the great increase in the price of flour and wheat. He said that it was not enough for us to consider the Canadian supply of wheat when talking about the price of flour. In the case of wheat, he remarked, it is the world supply that influences its price and not the supply of any one country. The world supply has not kept pace with the demand, and hence the enhanced price. A part of the price, he said, was due no doubt to speculation. "In Canada, no doubt, part of the price of wheat and flour represents monopoly profit which should be wiped out by the government, but that the price of flour could be kept down to anything like its old price is sheer buncombe."

In summing up the speaker said, that the high cost of living is due largely to the declining value of gold and to the decreased supply of commodities. The first, he said, is only a hardship in so far as money incomes are distributed unjustly. High prices work hardships to the people whose incomes do not rise so fast as the rise of prices. The solution for this part of the trouble is a little more Christianity, justice and labor union activity. The remedy for the second cause is increased production. "The present increased cost of living may not be such a misfortune after all if it will bring plainer and simpler living. Before the war a taste for luxury had developed—a taste for those things which no longer count as essentials in the life of the individual or of the nation. The present crisis may lead us to estimate a man's worth, not according to his service to the community. The wage-earners of the country who do not at present get their share of the spoils may get a chance in the uneven fight between capital and labor."

"Let us hope that society will distribute its wealth differently. The solution of the problem depends on the spread of a sense of justice, on the spread of altruism, on the sense of the brotherhood of man. We need a greater diffusion of Christian principles. The grasping, selfish abuse of ability and strength is incompatible with the Gospel. It is the selfishness, worldliness and luxury of the higher classes which in a great measure bring about the degradation of the poor. Let us then have more Christianity, let us have a Christian public sentiment that will make men just in their dealings with their neighbors. Let us distribute the product of industry: that is, fix wages and profits rationally and not blindly as is now being done by brute strength."

THE COAL MINING SITUATION IN THE WEST.

The Lethbridge Board of Trade sends the following article, by G. R. Marnoch, on matters in the West, which is rather interesting. The Record agrees with Mr. Marnoch that the increasing cost of living, as a plea for frequent increases of wages, is being somewhat overdone. In Parliament the other day a Nova Scotian representative declared