

other coal-producing provinces the exigent need of following in Nova Scotia's steps. They will thus be advancing in a practical and useful manner the work of conserving our natural resources. The word "conservation" is limited arbitrarily by the unthinking to apply merely to nature untouched by man. But the one great lesson that all of us must learn is the duty of using properly what we actually possess. Nova Scotia has mastered the alphabet.

#### AMERICAN LABOUR UNIONISM IN CANADA.

That American labour unions are losing ground in Canada is patent. It follows, naturally, that home-made labour unions are gathering strength. But the most pregnant fact is that there is now definitely declared opposition to the invasion of Canada by American labour organizations.

For this the costly strike forced upon the employees of the Dominion Coal Company may be thanked. In this strike loud-mouthed agitators from the other side, aided by irresponsible local disturbers of the peace, attempted to gain absolute control of the workmen and to destroy the purely Canadian organization, the P. W. A. In this attempt they failed. Their methods could not carry them to lasting success. They appealed not to the loyalty and decency of the men, but to their cupidity. And good resulted from evil, for the P. W. A., a body deserving of confidence and respect, fought a good fight and emerged strong and confident.

To those who watch current events it would seem a national calamity were American unionism ever to dominate Canada. We are quite capable of conducting our own affairs. If we may judge by a comparison of the U. M. W. A. with the P. W. A., it is obvious that our labour leaders are saner and wiser citizens than any of their foreign opponents.

#### MINERS' PHTHISIS.

The report of the South African Mining Regulations Commission states that while the death rate among surface and underground white mining males in the three years, 1905, 1906 and 1907, was comparatively low, yet this low death rate concealed a very high mortality among a limited class of white rock drillers. The death rate among mining males is 60 per cent. higher than among those who are not constantly underground. Miners' phthisis (silicosis) carries off six times more underground workers than surface employees. The exact figures of underground death rates are not obtainable as it is known that a considerable number of the afflicted go home to Cornwall to die.

The Commission's Report emphasizes the fact that miners' phthisis is induced almost entirely by the inhalation of dust created by rock drilling and shovelling, and, incidentally, by air vitiation after blasting. The terrible condition of affairs is illustrated by the statement that the average term of rock drillers' employment

is seven to nine years; that is, a driller's usefulness is gone after he has worked from seven to nine years.

As a preventive, the Commission strongly urges the compulsory use of sufficient quantities of water. It is pointed out, however, that the men, and not the managements, are to blame. The miners are incredibly indifferent to the danger of phthisis. As a necessary measure it is recommended that no tuberculars be permitted to work underground.

#### ONE VIEW OF MODERN EDUCATION.

A passage in the inaugural speech of Dr. James Moir, president of the Chemical, Metallurgical and Mining Society of South Africa, is so apt that we quote it here in full. Dr. Moir hits hard and straight:

"What is wanted of modern education is that it shall produce a man who is both a gentleman and an accurate problem-solver; as an American writer says, 'it is necessary to understand that moderately accurate knowledge is like a moderately fresh egg;' and I may say at once that accurate knowledge is not to be gained from text-books and a 50 per cent. pass examination, but solely from the experimental method. Unfortunately, as Armstrong says, our headquarters are 'people who have never knowingly made an experiment, and do not even know how to set about making one.' The result is seen in the so-called 'educated population,' three-quarters of whom still believe in water-diving, or in finding live frogs in stones or similar superstitions, all on evidence, too, that wouldn't convict a nigger. Even the universities want reforming badly: they should leave text-book examinations to preparatory schools, and they should give proper scientific degrees. Why, for example, should the Cape University call a man a Bachelor of Arts after he has passed an Honours examination in Science? What they should organize is a degree in Technics, or Applied Science, only to be given after training in experiment and research. I assume, of course, that elementary science will have been taught at school. The fact is, that British university training, is, almost everywhere except in Scotland, modelled on the Oxford and Cambridge type: the former of these universities apparently considers the acme of human culture to consist in the knack of rendering into more or less indifferent Greek such things as 'we don't want to fight, but by Jingo if we do,' whilst the strong point of the other university appears to be the cultivation of a certain carefully artificialized variety of English speech; and, in both universities, sad to say, Chemistry, almost the most fundamental branch of human knowledge, is relegated to a back seat under the name of 'Stinks.' I will myself say nothing of the educative and disciplinary value of chemistry; let Nernst speak: 'the doctrine of the constitution of organic compounds stands at the head of all theories that the human mind has ever conceived.'"