

### BEGINNING A UNIVERSITY.

In presenting the University Bill before the British Columbia Legislature, the Hon. Dr. Young remarked that it was not the intention of the Government to decide immediately upon a site for the proposed buildings. The first efforts would be confined to establishing preparatory classes throughout the Province. By this means the germs of practical higher education will be implanted in a large number of young men and the best possible foundation laid for the University.

### BRITISH AGITATION AGAINST THE EIGHT HOUR BILL.

Speaking before Mr. Herbert Gladstone, a representative of the British Iron Trade Association outlined the probable effects of the proposed shortening of the hours of labor. Conditions in South Staffordshire were principally referred to. At present the miners start to go down into the mines at 7 a.m. They are allowed a maximum of one hour for meals. Contract men seldom take more than half an hour. Between 7 a.m. and 4 p.m. the output for one gang of contract men is 22 tons or 40 tubs. If the day is reduced to 8 hours the output will be diminished by 9 tubs. The colliers go down in the owners' time and come up in their own time.

In addition to increasing the cost per ton of coal raised the effect upon the iron and steel industry would be marked. It is claimed that in the Tipton district 27 tons of water must be raised for every ton of coal. Decreasing the output by shortening the hours of labor will have the effect of increasing the relative amount of water pumped per ton of coal won to between 32 and 35 tons. This, it is stated, would be ruinous.

The collieries spoken of are owned and operated by manufacturers of iron and steel. Therefore their representative speaks with some degree of authority when he asserts that six shillings per ton will be added to the cost of manufacture of finished iron and steel.

In the foregoing paragraph is contained the essence of the whole matter. Labor unions, by complete organization, have attained a solidarity and, consequently, a political influence that gives their contentions tremendous weight. These contentions are so impressed upon the politicians and statesmen of the day that the claims of the employer are either overlooked or considered as the protests of class selfishness.

Time was when labor and capital were justly looked upon as the two eternal protagonists of our body politic. This conception to-day should be obsolete. The interests of both employers and labor are closely conjoined and are inextricably interwoven with those of every other class. Unreasonable concessions to either side may sometimes appear expedient, but will always be unprofitable and costly in the long run. In Great Britain the predominating tendency is to concede everything to the unions.

In Canada, whilst by no means so pronounced, this tendency exists. Legislation, such as the Lemieux Act, is the best corrective that modern statesmanship has devised.

Canadian employers and employees should watch closely the trend of events in Great Britain.

### THE HAMMER DRILL.

The air hammer drill is coming into prominence. Whilst it will not replace the reciprocating drill, yet its sphere of usefulness is larger than in commonly believed. The increasing number of types manufactured give it a wider application. Under certain conditions of shaft sinking the hammer drill is undeniably economical. For cutting hitches it is an essential if cheap work is to be obtained. But its limitations for drifting, stopping and cross-cutting have not yet been demonstrated.

In our Special Correspondence columns we give some valuable figures from an actual test.

### THE PORT HOOD DISASTER REPORT.

The report upon the recent explosion in the Port Hood-Richmond Coal & Railway Company's colliery, handed in by a committee appointed by the Provincial Government, is not, in some important respects, in accord with the bulk of the evidence adduced. The report itself is reprinted in full in our news columns.

We have before us the evidence taken at Port Hood. Whilst we cannot now enter into a full discussion of this evidence, yet it appears to us that the facts, such as they are, point to an explosion of powder and not of gas. Our readers will have an opportunity later on of deciding the matter for themselves.

Meanwhile we cannot do better than quote from the last letter of our Glace Bay correspondent, who refers as follows to the present system of coal mine inspection in Nova Scotia:

"There is one matter which is suggested by the eighth clause of Dr. Kendall's resolution, 'the enforcement of laws intended to lessen or prevent accidents,' and that is the personnel of the mines inspectorate of Nova Scotia. One of the facts that can be ascertained is that nothing will so tend to the prevention of accidents and the preservation of life and property as the existence of a vigilant and capable inspectorate. The men who compose the present force of inspectors are good men, we have no doubt, but they were not appointed by competitive examination, and we do not think that any of them are men with a college training.

"The Inspector of Mines should be a man of considerable scientific attainments and extensive knowledge of modern mining methods, in addition to having a thorough grasp of practical mining and all that appertains to it. He should be a man that can advise and direct in