

**MARITIME MINING RECORD.**

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THE RECORD is devoted to the Mining—particularly Coal Mining—Industries of the Maritime Provinces.

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**CONCERNING COAL PRICES.**

Time was, and not so long ago, when people could not understand why coal cost so much more at the pit mouth in Nova Scotia than it did in the United States. It was no use to tell them that seams here were steeper, haulage heavier, pit water more troublesome, and pit roofs more tender, requiring more timber. They could not be convinced. The tables have now turned, and the Nova Scotia coal producers are asking the former complainants to explain why and how coal has risen very much more proportionately in the United States than here. Three years ago, or even less, the price of coal at the mines in, say, Pennsylvania—the largest producer—was not more than a dollar and twenty cents a ton. It is now four dollars and twenty-five cents a ton, or an increase of a little over three hundred and fifty per cent. Whereas the increase up to date, in Nova Scotia, has been only eighty per cent. Lucky Nova Scotia. The price of bunker coal at Newport News was, last week, \$6.25 per ton. A Nova Scotia company sought to obtain six or more thousand tons of American coal for a particular consumer. No guarantee could be given of delivery at any set time. The coal famine, it is thus seen, is not confined to Nova Scotia. It is said there are six thousand men in Nova Scotia still eligible for enlistment. That means presumably that there are that number whose services in the work they are engaged in can be dispensed with. An increased production of coal seems to be an absolute necessity if the alleged famine is to be alleviated. Why not call up the six thousand spare men, and allot half for military service and the other half for service at the coal mines.

**COAL COMPANIES IN CANADA.**

There are twenty coal companies in Nova Scotia and the total of the collieries, in operation, is double that number, divided among fourteen companies only, at least seven of the companies are making no shipments at the present time. According to a list of coal mine operators issued by the Mines Branch, Ottawa, one of these is in Pictou, one in Cape Breton, one in Richmond and four in Cumberland. The company marked inactive in Pictou is now producing coal, and still the number of inactive companies is seven, as in the "list" no mention is made of the Port Hood Coal Co., which, so far as we know, has not relinquished its leases. There was a time, say, in the late seventies of last century, when there were no fewer than twenty-seven coal companies in Nova

Scotia, but though the companies were more numerous the number of collieries were fewer. Twenty-eight years ago a colliery was considered a big producer if it yielded a hundred and fifty thousand tons a year. Today the colliery producing less than that quantity is held in small repute. The two biggest producers in 1878 were the Albion Mine, with 139,000 tons, and Sydney Mines with 135,000 tons. There is today in Nova Scotia a colliery that can produce in a year, under normal conditions, more than the whole twenty-four companies with their collieries produced in 1878. This is the day of big companies and big collieries, though we have here and there a colliery which serves as a reminder of the past.

In New Brunswick there are thirteen companies and eight collieries only. Only four of the companies made returns for last year. Of these two may be placed in the progressive list.

If one has a hankering after numbers, quantity, then he can have his craving satisfied by counting the operators and collieries in Saskatchewan and Alberta. There are seventy-three coal companies or lessees in the former, and no fewer than three hundred and fifty in the latter. There were no returns from half of the total of companies in Saskatchewan. Alberta's returns are something remarkable, as no fewer than two hundred of the operators made returns. If Alberta had the market she would, in the matter of coal production, show her heels to all the other coal producing provinces in the Dominion. Of course that is as regards quantity. When it comes to quality the story may be different.

British Columbia has some twenty coal companies. Of that number seven only sent in returns. The output from these was creditable. There are two coal companies operating in the Yukon. No reference is made to other provinces than these above referred to, which leads to the conclusion that at least half the provinces have no coal within their borders.

**ASSISTANCE TO SHIPBUILDING.**

The president of the N. S. S. and Coal Co. made reference lately to the countries that had given encouragement to shipbuilding. We did not notice any specific reference to France. The first regular line of transatlantic steamers sailing from that country—Cherbourg we think was the port—was inaugurated under government auspices and assistance. The fleet consisted of seven steamers, three of which were built by Scott & Co., Greenock, the remainder—four—were built in France under the supervision of the Scotts and by Scottish artisans in part. Those artisans were to initiate the French into the art of shipbuilding. Canada is to be asked to help put shipbuilding on a solid footing. To the Financial Post, when asked for his views on the advisability of government assistance to the shipbuilding industry, Colonel Cantley said: A committee composed of representatives of shipbuilding interests and the past presidents of the Manufacturers Association has been at work for some time on a proposal that assistance be rendered to the shipbuilding industry, and this has been laid before the dominion government. Great benefits have accrued to the dominion as a whole through the establishment of government assistance to the steel industry by way of bounties, etc., in the last fifteen years. It was the fact that there was a government made steel industry that made the present munitions industry possible, to say nothing of the great indus-