

AROUND THE COLLIERIES.

Would the Local Government be justified in rendering financial assistance to parties prepared to open out and establish small collieries tapping the thinner coal seams, that is seams four feet and under? In the Record's opinion the Government would be wholly justified. It would be a commendable action. The country must have coal, and at this time, if the demand is to be met to even a partial extent, every available source should be tapped! It may be said in objection that the thin seam mines, the smaller collieries, would rob the larger of men. That does not always follow. In several districts in Cumberland, for instance, there are many men who have left their farms, their small holdings or their homes to work in the mines. After absence from their homes for a time they forsook the mines and returned to their holdings, the distance of their homes from the mines obliging them to board out. If a mine were nearer their homes they would willingly work in it. There is Thorburn, for instance. Men have been found quite willing to work in the new Greenwood Mine, or the old McBean, who could not be prevailed upon to work in Stellarton, even with train accommodation. No doubt there is something in the contention of a coal operator when he says, "Why should I divide my forces. Why should I work three mines when two of them can accommodate all the workmen I can secure?" The argument is reasonable in the main, yet it does not apply in every case.

The Dominion Coal Coy. is coming in for compliments these days. This from a contemporary:—"The Canadian Government feel compelled to allow the entrance of wheat into the United States because of the restricted outlet caused by submarine operations and the shortage of ships, and concurrently with this apparent surplus of wheat in Canada, the price of flour jumps in one week from \$12.50 to over \$15.00 per barrel, and it is confidently predicted flour will shortly reach \$20.00 per barrel! The Dominion Coal Company had the courage and foresight to use its purchasing capacity last summer to purchase flour in large quantities, and it is and has been selling flour to its workpeople at from \$3.00 to \$5.00 per barrel below the wholesale price. This Company is selling potatoes to its workpeople at 85 cents per bushel, while the local farmers are asking \$2.00 a bushel. What is there that makes the same bushel of potatoes worth 75 cents last autumn and \$2.00 to-day, when the cost of transportation and all other costs play no part in the increase?"

A correspondent writing to the Halifax Herald also commends the big Company for keeping down prices. Says Mr. Buckley:—"I also wish to assert that we would be paying \$10.00 for soft coal if it were not for the fact that the Dominion Coal Co. stood between the dealers and the citizens in regard

to the price of coal. This goes to prove that the D. C. Co. is not the grinding monopoly it was predicted it would be."

Despatches in certain daily papers claimed that the work of the Royal Commission was as great a success in Springhill as in Cape Breton County. The Springhill Record cannot be said to be jubilant over results. The report in that paper of a meeting of the employees leaves the impression that the work done by the Commission was not greatly appreciated, as witness:—

"The result of the Royal Commission's visit here is that conditions are practically the same as before their coming, but the Commission gave the Committee to understand that they could not change conditions. The schedule, as submitted to the men by the management of the Company a few weeks ago, was unchanged, the only change being an agreement for paying for shovelling down coal."

It is further stated that the men did not seem to be altogether pleased with the results of the Commission's visit. That can well be believed. There are some who set their faces against being pleased. Further our Springhill contemporary says:—

"The principal business of the evening was the organizing of a Labor Union in Springhill. Messrs. Baxter and Barrett, of Glace Bay, who were introduced by Mr. Bonnyman, told of forming unions in different parts of Cape Breton, and of the many difficulties they experienced. For the present the new Union is to be called the Mine Workers of Nova Scotia, but later the name may be changed. The two Unions in Cape Breton, the U. M. W. and P. W. A. have amalgamated and all the property owned by the P. W. A. has been transferred to the new Union, and in Cape Breton the management of the Company has agreed to stop off the dues in the office."

In response to the Government's appeal for increased production of foodstuffs, the Dom. Coal Co., has decided to plant five hundred bushels of potatoes on that large tract of land formerly known as the Lingan Golf Links. Mr. J. D. McKinnon, of the General Office staff, an expert in this particular line of agriculture, is supervising the work. High School boys from Glace Bay, under the direction of several experienced men, have been employed for the past two weeks preparing the ground for seeding. When the crop is gathered in the fall it is understood that it will be retailed to the Company's employees at reasonable prices through their stores.