

the pit bottom to the former eastern boundary of the Scotia submarine areas, where the haulage engines used for assembling the coal won from the new submarine extensions will be located and where the trip to the pit bottom will be made up. This roadway being double tracked, perfectly straight, and of uniform grade, is expected to be operated at high speed and at a minimum cost of transport.

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of a full month's output, and will retard operations for months to come. In Inverness county the shortage of 25,000 tons is wholly due to the impossibility of making shipments to the St. Lawrence, and "break even" at prevailing charter rates. And yet in the case of the Inverness Railway and Coal company, the loss of shipments to the St. Lawrence could not result in other than a financial gain to the bondholders. The company, as is known, is now in the hands of a receiver, J. McGillivray, and if all that is told be true, there might have been no default of bond interest had it been wholly in his hands years ago.

(The figures in the Herald in reference to the Joggins are incorrect. There has been an increase and not a decrease.)

The decrease shown by the Colonial Coal company is due to the fact that one of its mines—the McKay—closed down in August of 1914, and that the briquetting plant, like most every other plant of the kind on the continent, was put out of commission owing to the purchasing public not becoming enamored of the product. Briquette making won't pay until a cheaper binder is discovered. So it is seen that though in ordinary years lessened demand is responsible for lessened output, other and sinister causes must, this year, shoulder the responsibility.

There has been a marked increase of sales to the United States, as compared with previous years, which were marked by a steady decline. This increase is attributable to the perseverance of A. Dick, who sweltered in Boston in the dog days of 1914, chasing certain railway magnates and finally inducing them to make contracts for a fairly large quantity of other than slack coal. Whether contracts will be renewed is problematical. If freights decline the chances should be even, but lower transportation may not be looked for at present.

For a war year the coal trade has been fairly satisfactory. There would have been fuller satisfaction were it not that the number of individual fatal accidents is markedly in excess of any previous year. My opinion, that the fatality percentages in Nova Scotia for 1915 will show in a more unfavorable light than those of the United States which, in the past, in the matter of mine accidents, has had an unsavory reputation, will, I fear, turn out correct. This is to be deplored. In spite of the motto endorsed by every mine manager and superintendent, "safety first," accidents not only keep on occurring, but increasing. What is to be done? Our Mines Regulation act, and the special rules, for the guidance of employees at the several collieries, are good—none better. Our superintendents, while energetic and hustling, are careful, and our colliery workers are above the average, and

still constantly men are being killed in larger proportion than in other coal producing countries. Why, it may be asked? A satisfactory answer is not at hand. Possibly the sharp angle of the coal seams, or the fickle nature of the roofs, the overhead metals—makes mining in Nova Scotia more hazardous than in some countries. The reasons should be sought out and made known, and in this the government should take a leading part. "Government by commission" is a butt which certain newspapers delight to keep firing at and yet I would suggest that the increase in mine fatalities should be gone into by a commission, whose composition might be somewhat as follows:—The inspector of mines and the several deputies; the managers or superintendents of the several mines; the underground manager and a practical miner—from each colliery, and any others interested in the matter. The companies should pay the small expenses of the officials, and of the miners in localities where there is no union. The railway department, no doubt, if asked, would provide transportation free, or at a nominal charge. The only cost to the local government would be hall rent, printing, and other small incidentals. The subject is of such importance that something must be done and soon.

Time was, and not so long ago, when certain newspapers and their correspondents, took keen delight in railing at the "coal barons," so called. Of late there has been none of this. Why, I wonder? Possibly, chiefly, because audiences took little interest in the matter, more than from the possibility that the eyes of the consumers had been opened. But, when former assailants are silent, how comes it that no newspaper has been generous enough to give the robber barons the credit of having renounced their alleged evil ways? Has The Herald and its readers taken notice that though, since the beginning of the war, prices of material have kept on increasing, wages gone higher, and the expenses of the living of the barons increased, they have not, since 1912, increased the price of coal at the pit head. This is "one of the barons," I should say, though there has been no press commendation.

There have been no serious labor troubles during the year. A couple of appeals to the Industrial Disputes act resulted in day's wage men being granted a moderate addition to their day's wage. At present there is no apparent disturbing element, and peace is expected to prevail during the coming year.

Operations at the Drummond colliery have once more been checked by fire, but it is expected matters will soon be put to rights. The Acadian is rapidly recovering from the fire in the big Allan mine. Beyond these there are no untoward incidents from a material standpoint, of a serious kind to be recorded.

The Herald will kindly intimate to those who think there is big money in coal production, that there are a half dozen or so unworked coal mines in the province, which may be had for a snap. A rare chance for governmental operation, or, better, for those who think coal should be sold at half its present price.

There have been comparatively few changes at the collieries. The more notable of the few are the appointment of H. Poudhomme, who took a leading part in the promotion of the Belgian relief fund,