

collieries presently working cannot procure all the labor they need. The reopening of mines at the present time would not, owing to labor scarcity, appreciably increase outputs, as a whole. That is the Record's view, and therefore it has not been clamorous for commissions. Of course the Record regrets the inconvenience to which the dwellers in and around the closed mines have been put. That inconvenience is not a wanton imposition, but, from a business standpoint, unavoidable. It is possible to imagine a case where the closing down of a mine instead of tending to a diminution of output actually tended in an opposite direction. At colliery X of a certain company the output per miner is five tons a day for each of 100 men. Colliery XX of the same company is short handed a hundred men. Colliery X is closed down and the men transferred to colliery XX. With what result? An increase of 50 tons a day, as the output per man in XX, owing to better mining conditions, is $5\frac{1}{2}$ tons. This may not be wholly a supposititious case.

COAL MINING ACCIDENTS.

A conference was held in Halifax Tuesday and Wednesday of last week, which, though obscured, possibly, to a certain extent by the debate preceding on the extension of the N. S. Temperance act, is bound to have, unless the Record is greatly mistaken, far reaching results.

Of late in the Record there have appeared several articles bearing upon the frequency of coal mining fatalities in the province. In one of these articles it was suggested that the mine operators, the Deputy Inspectors and officials and workmen of the company and representatives of the P. W. A. not necessarily workmen, and one or two others, known to take deep interest in the subject should meet on common ground and talk the subject of accidents calmly and despassionately over.

Of the Department of Mines it may be said that it is not too proud to take suggestions coming from outside. From remarks made by the Hon. Mr. Armstrong, Commissioner of Mines, at the opening of the conference, it was made plain that the articles in the Record, and some remarks on the Mines Report by the Record editor in the Legislative Council, were in a measure responsible for the conference. In giving the names of those present at the conference we do not claim that the list is complete. Possibly the name of one or more delegates has been omitted. The omission may be rectified in next issue: D. H. McDougall, General Manager, Dominion Steel and Coal; Mr. Tonge, Chief Mining Engineer; T. J. Brown, Chief, Supt. N. S. S. & Coal Co., and John Johnstone, Mines Supt., Sydney Mines; F. W. Armstrong, Auditor, etc., of the Dom. Co.'s Relief Funds; Genl. Manager Maxwell, of the Int. Coal Co.; Jos. Johnston, Superintendent Inv. Ry. & Coal Co.; J. Nicolson, Manager, Springhill; J. S. Burton, Manager Minnie Coal Co.; A. McEachern, District Supt., New Waterford; J. Douglas, M. P. P.; R. Butts, M. P. P.; Hon. Robt. McGregor, M. P. P.; R. H. McKay, M. P. P.; Robt. Drummond, M. L. C.; Messrs. Paul, Gray, McNeil, Nicolson and Davies, Deputy Inspector; the Hon. Commissioner of Mines and Deputy Commissioner Donkin; S. B. McNeil, G. M., and John Moffatt, G. S., P. W. A., and Messrs. P. McIntyre, Jas. R. McNeil, Stewart, Melvor, Hulbert, McIsaac, D. Macdonald, H. Mc-

Kinnon, M. McNeil, Anderson and Fergus Byrne.

The Hon. Commissioner of Mines opened the proceedings in a few apt remarks. He welcomed the various members of the conference; was convinced that they had all met for a common purpose, namely, to discover means whereby it might be possible to lessen the number of accidents in the coal mines, and assured the meeting that the government was ready to accept all suggestions that might tend to so desirable an end. He asked Mr. Drummond to make some remarks based on the suggestions he had made in the Mining Record and the Legislative Council. After the request had been complied with the meeting was ready for a general discussion. There was no adherence to parliamentary rules. No notice of motions required; anyone and everyone was allowed to have his say in his own way. Not once did the permanent chairman, Hiram Donkin, require to call a speaker to order as being away from the subject.

T. J. Brown, of Sydney Mines, who has of late years developed into a pleasing and informative speaker, his remarks being the more interesting from the fact that he says things open at times to challenge, said that until he came to Halifax he was not aware of the true object of the gathering. Coming up in the train and seeing so many connected with coal mining there, he wondered what new devilment was on foot. Looking over the audience he was compelled to confess that it was a wonderful gathering. Here were officials of the mining companies and workmen, officers of the P. W. A. and members. Here were interests supposed to be antagonistic, all blended harmoniously together, with one common aspiration, namely, to make "safety first" a living fact, and not a sickly fiction. He could not imagine that just such an assemblage could be called together on any other part of the American continent. He sympathized wholeheartedly with the objects of the gathering, and accepted all present that his company were ready to accept any reasonable suggestions likely to aid in the prevention of accidents. After Mr. Brown, re-succession from Messrs. D. H. McDougall, McEachern, Moffatt, John Johnstone and others. The pith of the remarks of the several speakers we hope to be able to give in next issue. We cannot, however, conclude these, prefatory call them, remarks, without emphasizing the fact that not a jarring word fell from the lips of the numerous speakers. The casual for the expression of fantastic views, but one in which there was room only for that which might prove of immediate practical value.

THE TRIUMPH OF KING COAL.

It is possible, aye probable, that not one man in a hundred, in this Nova Scotia of ours, whose future is bound up with the production of coal has anything like a full conception of the wonderful part coal is playing in this great war. Some know that at a big work in Cape Breton, tonol, which plays a part in the manufacture of a high explosive, is being produced. More know that from coal is produced aniline dyes, but we venture the opinion that few are aware that these dyes and high explosives are intimately connected. No excuse therefore is necessary for publication of the following in