

AROUND THE COLLIERIES.

The shipments of the Dominion Coal Co. for December '07 given, in the table, are approximate. Owing to the labor involved in preparing the schedule of wage rates, the time of the staff was taxed severely.

The Springhill mine officials are being well, if not favorably, advertised. After all they are much like 'ither fowk' and not bad fellows in the main. They should adopt the philosophy of the immortal Burns:—

"The mair' they talk I'm kent the better
Een let them clash,
An auid wifes tongue sa feckless matter,
Ta gie ane fash.

The Springhill collieries are busy. An occasional runaway, on one or other of the slopes, breaks in on the steady routine of work. The scales seem to be eminently satisfactory to the large majority of the men. The management also are satisfied,

For the first time, in all probability in the history of coal mines in this province, oil has been struck in a coal pit. The night man at the Vale in the course of his visits to the goaves or the gobs, and the working places, discovered a black liquid dropping from the roof. His discovery he kept a profound secret until he had analysed the stuff, or tested its merits. The latter he did by applying some of the liquid to his once loose joints which had become sore and stiff through 'rheumatics'. A few applications made the man who had limped hop about like a cricket, or as he himself puts it "feel as frisky as a two year old." His mate wondered at the change and asked the cause. He muttered something about being a firm believer in the saying of 'every man being his own doctor'. And then pitying other rheumatics he divulged his secret. Harry of course 'got wind' of it, and he also after his amazement had subsided, thought too to make a test of it. Being sprightly as a lark and free from gout, he decided to apply it to the stiff turning wheels of the pit boxes. One application and the engine-man was astonished at the ease with which the engine drew her load. The quantity of oil that drips is probably not more than a gallon a day. A free advice man told Harry he should bore up into the roof, but when the advisor was asked "And what if it should drown the pit," he had nothing to say. The oil can scarcely come from ordinary shale, as there is comparatively little weight of strata, and there can be no friction. The discovery is interesting, and like most accidental discoveries may turn out to be important.

Springhill enjoyed the merriest Xmas and the happiest New Year, probably in its history.

The Dominion Coal Co'y. began to bank actively at its two stations at the Hub and Bridgeport in December.

The 30th. of December, pay day at the Springhill collieries, was one of the most robust ever handled by the tellers.

But for the mysterious boiler explosion at Dom. No. 2, December at that colliery would have shown a surprising output.

The people of Springhill are wondering why the present prosperous condition of the town cannot be maintained—and its no wonder they are wondering.

The Arbitration Board has not materialized as yet in Springhill. There is some loud conjecturing by many as to what is hoped to be gained by it, when the Company's ultimatum is considered.

A new washhouse is being built at Port Hood; The slope is being tracked part of the way to give a larger output next summer. It is intended to draw pillars as soon as a proper barrier is left to support and protect the upper workings.

A new angle deep has been driven in the Inverness mine to give an easier grade for hauling this will be the main deep in future. This foresight on the part of Manager Benton has saved the company the necessity of installing a new and more powerful hoisting engine with additional boilers, as the bottom of the present main slope is pitching at an angle of 40 degrees. A tunnel is to be driven from a level at the foot of the angle deep to the 15ft. seam. All of this coal which is yet untouched will be won within the next few years, without further additions to the surface plant.

It is to be hoped that 1908 will be a better year for the Cumberland Railway and Coal Co. than its predecessor. Of the past year it may be said that it was the worst financially in the life of the company. There was trouble for the management in No. 3 slope from which recovery was not made till last July, and at the end of that month came the deplorable strike which caused havoc, and the losses and consequences, of that strike coriscited what should have been a fairly profitable year, into one showing a big deficit. There has been more than enough of trouble at Springhill and there are those who unhesitatingly lay the blame to too big wages, or too much prosperity. It is said that prosperity has a bad effect on men, and it is true that only two in twenty can keep their heads in prosperity. Let us hope that peace will reign during 1908, and that the company will be able this year to recover some of its leeway.