

DOMINION COAL COMPANY.

FROM THE BOSTON NEWS BUREAU.

"It is estimated that the Dominion Iron and Steel Co. will save \$100,000 per annum through a straight lease of the Dominion Coal Co. on an 8 p.c. basis rather than a 6 p.c. lease with the many provisions attaching thereto. It is figured that a 6 p.c. lease would have called for the payment of \$1,700,000 per annum by the Dominion Iron & Steel Co. to the Coal Co. stockholders, whereas an 8 p.c. lease calls for but \$1,600,000. When the 6 p.c. lease was drawn the provision was inserted requiring the payment of 15 cts. per ton to the Dominion Coal Co. on all coal produced above 3,000,000 tons. At that time a 3,000,000 ton production was considered to be about the limit. The new 8 p.c. lease provides for the payment to the Dominion Coal Co. of 7½ cts. per ton on all coal produced above 3,000,000 tons per annum, which leaves the way open for Dominion Coal stockholders to receive larger dividends than 8 p.c. The Coal Co. is this year sure of the sale of 3,200,000 tons as this output has already been practically contracted for. A profit of 70 cts. per ton is figured on this production equal to \$2,100,000 which is equal to 10½ p.c. on the \$20,000,000 of Dominion Coal Co. stock.

"It is estimated that at the end of 1904 the Dominion Coal Co. will be marketing 5,000,000 tons of coal per annum. Such an output would give the stockholders of the Coal Co. an additional profit of \$150,000 per annum—7½ cts. per ton on 2,000,000 tons. "Mr. Ross and his Canadian associates are figuring on a still greater output than this. They say that when the Dominion shaft No. 2 is in full commission it can alone produce 2,000,000 tons of coal per annum, and the property will then have a possible output of 6,800,000 tons of coal. They believe that they will be able to extend the markets of the Company to such an extent as to be able to dispose of this output in time. Such an output would make the Dominion Coal Co. the largest producing coal mine in the world. The mine is now capable of producing 16,000 tons of coal per day, equal to 4,800,000 tons per annum. Dominion Coal stockholders retain the general stores of the Company under the 8 p.c. lease. These stores contain \$500,000 worth of merchandise and return a profit of about \$50,000 per annum, equal to ¼ p.c. upon the \$20,000,000 Coal Co. stock. The Dominion Coal speculation in Canada has created considerable interest in England, and a delegation of English miners is now *en route* to Cape Breton to examine and report upon the property and the improved methods of coal mining at Cape Breton.

"The Dominion Coal Co. is handicapped in having to pay very high wages for mining. The wages at Cape Breton are from 25 to 50 p.c. higher than the scale of wages paid in Pennsylvania."

In view of the general attention being paid to the Dominion Coal Co., the above will be found very interesting.

PROMINENT TOPICS.

The representative of the Life Assurance Companies in the Province of Quebec have decided to form an Association. A meeting to promote this object will be held in this city to-morrow, Saturday, the 26th inst.

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The Halifax Board of Trade recently passed a resolution which reads:

"Be it resolved that, in order to encourage the investment of capital and labour in the steel ship-building industry, this board recommends, that the Government at Ottawa pass a measure granting assistance to steel ship-building in Canada, which shall be sufficient in amount to place Canada on a parity at least, with our chief competitors, and extend over a term of years long enough to fairly establish this industry, so that it may hold its way against outside competition."

The board declared its inability to specify what amount of subsidy would be required to fully equalize conditions of ship-building in Canada as compared with Great Britain and elsewhere, but declared it to be "a serious reflection on the commercial standing of Canada for its products to be carried in foreign vessels through foreign channels." The large capital involved in building steel vessels suggests the economic desirability of this industry being conducted in its initial stages in association with some established enterprise that would supply the chief materials at first hand. To start an industry like this independently, on a large scale, would be to court disaster. Such enterprises need to gather gradually around them a body of expert, experienced employees, they are more healthy if they come by development rather than by a sudden outburst. No principle can be urged against the Government subsidizing such an industry; it is a question of pure expediency, so what Nova Scotia has to do is to convince the Government that a subsidy to ship-building would be of advantage to Canada. It would certainly be a source of just pride to see Canadian steel vessels as numerous on the ocean as wooden ones were in earlier days. The Dominion Manufacturers' Association will support the above claim.

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The question of questions for Canada is the settlement of population upon the untilled lands of this country. Evidences are accumulating that in this respect the Northwest is making gratifying progress. The Minister of the Interior a few nights ago gave the number of new settlers this year as 25,000 to 30,000, as against 17,937 in 1901. The Bishop of Saskatchewan, now in this city, is very sanguine in