

MARITIME MINING RECORD.

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PROFITEERING.

These days much is being said, heard and printed about "profiteering." From the speeches of those candidates who are not running as candidates on the Union ticket one would think that the discussion of this topic should take precedence of all others, and from comments in the anti-Union papers people are almost forced to the belief that every other business firm or large corporation was out to see how much they could benefit by the war. Indeed some seek to insinuate that a majority of people have one common object, namely to see how they can make profit out of the country's necessity. The Record scents such an idea. Speaking for ourselves, we know that the war has been a serious loss financially, without any compensations, except the knowledge that our loss must be the country's gain. There is no doubt that many large firms are making big profits. Are these shared only by a very few? They are not, but thousands of possibly needy shareholders are participants. Why are only manufacturing concerns and their heads denounced? Are there not thousands of farmers who are of opinion that they do no wrong when instead of marketing the products of the farm they keep their potatoes, for instance, in their cellars, holding on to them for higher prices. We do not call these profiteers, and yet they may be as much entitled to the sneer as those who are called capitalists. The Government is blamed for this profiteering. Well, the Government has a job bigger than any government can undertake if it is expected to do what the religious bodies, backed up by the Ten Commandments, have failed to do, not in a term of parliament, but in thousands of years. Avarice has still a place in the hearts of most people. Instead of denouncing the profiteering of the past it might be well that candidates would suggest some practical plan of stamping it out in future. That would be a worthy object. [We cannot, as intended, pursue the subject, as startling news has come that Halifax is in flames, ships blown up, and that calls for firemen has been sent out through all the near counties of the province.]

FUEL CONTROL.

The Record would like to have more information as to the duties and powers of the Canadian Fuel Controller. The duties of a Fuel Controller may be

defined as providing for an adequate supply of fuel for domestic and manufacturing purposes, and the fixing of a maximum price at which fuel, let us say coal, may be sold. To fix a maximum price is comparatively an easy matter: to regulate supply and demand is no trifling affair. The Canadian Fuel Controller has no power, evidently, over output. He cannot demand of the operators that their mines supply a fixed quantity of coal daily. Has the Fuel Controller any power to demand that the railway supply a sufficient number of cars to take away the full product of the mines? While he has certain powers as to price, and division of supply, has he any powers over the railway in regard to transportation of coal from the mine? In October and November several of the Mainland collieries suffered from an insufficient supply of cars. Two or more collieries in these months were forced to bank a large quantity of coal, and at least one other colliery was idle on several occasions, because cars were not procurable. The Canadian Government Railway is buying a large quantity of American coal. This, let it be admitted, is a necessity, but it is wholly unnecessary surely to buy dear American coal so long as Nova Scotia coal at a more reasonable rate could be obtained if there were a sufficient supply of cars. Possibly in October and November thirty thousand tons of coal were banked or were not hoisted from the mines owing to lack of transportation. A Controller should control, not in part, but fully. He should have power to command the railway officials to keep the mine supplied with cars. If he has not that power, then his powers are too circumscribed to be of the best value to the community. Suppose that a company suspends operations for a time, either because the price fixed is unprofitable, or that it prefers to stop work rather than work spasmodically, has the Controller power to say to the company, "Work the mine, or I will work it for you"? If he has that power, then what are his powers if a union declares that its members will only work four days a week? Can he do anything? Can he penalize the ringleaders who suggest, or carry out, such a course? The Controller has been distinctly told, at least once, that unless a request was complied with there would be a serious shortening of output. What action did the Controller take when informed of the proposed proceeding? If the Controller has power to penalize the operators who do not comply with his orders, is he powerless to bring the idlers on two days a week to task? Of course it is admitted that it is a comparatively easy matter to penalize the operators for non-compliance with orders, and it is by no means an easy matter to get at the men who curtail output, but surely something can be done to prevent hasty leaders of unions from making mischievous threats.

Mineral Resources Commission
AN IRATE EDITOR.

Ordinary individuals might imagine that Great Britain being what might be termed an "old country, over every foot of which the geologist had trod, knew well what she possessed in the way of minerals, and yet some few months ago a Mineral Resources Commission was appointed. The officials