

## MARITIME MINING RECORD.

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The RECORD is devoted to the Mining—particularly Coal Mining—Industries of the Maritime Provinces.

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## THE RETIREMENT OF J. R. COWANS

To many, or at least to some, the announcement of Mr. J. R. Cowans' retirement from the active and direct management of the Springhill collieries did not come as a matter of much surprise. These knew that such retirement was in contemplation for the past two or three years, and was only postponed by the desire of Mr. Cowans to leave the collieries in that state of efficiency which would place them in the first rank as regards plant, machinery, and general equipment. Circumstances compel him to leave Springhill at a time when the collieries are slowly, yet surely recovering from a long continued strike of the workmen. Certain papers may view with equanimity Mr. Cowans' departure. Their solution of the labor troubles was for Mr. Cowans to retire, and for certain workmen to retire at the same time. After that there would be peace in Springhill. Those who held or hold such an idea do not know Springhill. The question has been asked: 'How is there trouble so frequently at Springhill?' The answer is: 'Because there is not another colliery in the province like it.' Conditions are different and harder. In almost every mine there are two sides, North and South side, and it is a peculiarity of Nova Scotia mines that the two sides are not wholly similar. One side is harder to mine than the other. Take Sydney Mines for instance. Years ago, at certain intervals, there was a 'cable', that is, a drawing of lots to see who was to go to the North side and who to the South. Both sides were paid the same, but one side was a snap compared with the other. Throughout the pit the same work was paid at the same rate. At Springhill there were not two sides merely, but a balance differed in working conditions from its next neighbor, and more than that the places in a balance differed from each other. It was these differences in places that made Springhill so hard to manage, and which caused ceaseless and aggravating annoyance. The management had a hard time of it. Let me illustrate: The two upper places in a balance were paid two cents a box more than the lower on the plea of the men that they were hard to work. The men in the lower places heard of the concession and put in the plea that their places also were very hard. The concession was extended to them. A day or two after, while two men in a lower place were hard at work holing, the one was overheard to say to the other: 'Man—doesn't she cut like

cheese." If the management grew suspicious, and hard of hearing perhaps it is not to be wondered at. Mr. Cowans did splendid work in bringing the collieries into shape, and no doubt his one regret is that he is forced to leave them in the present unsatisfactory condition. He will remove to Montreal the latter part of this month. All the operators of the province will regret his going, as he was held by them in the highest esteem, as a gentleman of unquestioned probity and fair dealing. In his business relations with other mine men he did not resort to subterfuge, but played the game. And this is what is said by one and all. The writer had long relations with Mr. Cowans in matters affecting labor, and can testify to his invariable urbanity. Had he any failings? Yes, one at least, and yet it was a failing that lent to virtue's side. He was over loyal to his staff. What they said, he was inclined to at all times regard as gospel, and forthwith proceeded to make it law reversing a little the order of things. While a rigid disciplinarian, he was kind and true to the offenceless. In common with all those who had relations with him, business or social, the RECORD joins in wishing Mr. Cowans and family all happiness in their new sphere, and in regretting that he is leaving us, and making a blank which may never be filled.

## THE PRICE OF COAL IN C. B. AND B. C.

What the marvellous emancipator of the workmen of Glace Bay and vicinity does not know about the coal trade, would, to use a common formula, fill a book. Mr. Jas. B. McLachlan is one of those queer characters, who, the less they know of a subject the more they spout about it. James is also one of the kind who are long in conceit and short in knowledge. The following are some of Mr. McLachlan's reflections on the profits of the coal barons, and the poverty of the coal workers:

"We will give in parallel columns from these two tables the prices obtained the first day of each month for the years 1901 and 1909 in each of the above named markets, and we ask you, Mr. Nova Scotia mine worker, to try and answer the question to yourself, why you are paid so much less than the fellows in British Columbia if it is not the direct result of your half organized condition?"

Price per net ton, F. O. B. at the mines on the first day of each market month. Montreal on first market day of each market month. Quotations supplied by Crow's Nest Pass Coal Co., Limited. (wholesaler at Montreal).

1901	1909	1901	1908
\$1 73	\$2 04	January	\$3 88
1 74	2 07	February	3 88
1 77	2 07	March	3 88
1 77	2 03	April	3 88
1 78	2 04	May	3 43
1 81	2 07	June	3 43
1 77	2 13	July	3 43
1 80	2 14	August	3 43
1 78	2 21	September	3 43
1 76	2 21	October	3 43
1 82	2 23	November	3 43
1 88	2 21	December	3 70
\$1 78	\$2 12	Average	\$3 49
			\$3 60