

### A Plea from Nova Scotia.

Alarmed at the possible effect of new United States tariff arrangements regarding bituminous coal, Mr. McKenzie, of North Cape Breton, this week offered a resolution that steps should be taken as may be deemed most effective in conserving the home market to Canadian coal operators. The coal trade, he claimed, was the basis of Nova Scotia's prosperity. The amount of capital involved was large. In British Columbia \$20,000,000 was invested; in Alberta, \$15,000,000, and in Nova Scotia, \$64,000,000. One hundred and three thousand people in Nova Scotia depended upon coal mining for their living. If reciprocity came about he contended that the coal trade of the Maritime Provinces would go to Boston. To-day steamers brought the coal to Montreal, and, as return cargoes, secured cheap freights for necessary manufactured goods. If the trade went to Boston this trade, Mr. McKenzie said, would also go.

### Financial and Insurance Items.

THE ONTARIO GOVERNMENT a week ago enunciated its policy regarding the Canadian Northern's Railway's application for provincial aid in tapping the clay belt of the North. Neither cash grants nor bond guarantees will be given in the matter, but the Government will allow a grant of 4,000 acres per mile for approximately 500 miles of railway from Sellwood to Fort William. None of the miners' area is to be given and the Government will retain the right to the minerals under the land and the pine timber thereon. The right is also reserved to dictate to the road when the land granted shall be sold and the price for which it must be disposed of.

THE NOVA SCOTIA PROVINCIAL TREASURER'S account shows a surplus of \$158,707 for the past year, but the Premier says that, deducting from this amount the appropriation for road services unpaid on September 30, but subsequently paid within the fiscal year, the actual surplus of revenue over expenditure is \$86,589. Total revenue was \$1,783,647. Mines royalties yielded \$683,016; succession duties, \$79,045; Crown lands, \$30,861; Dominion subsidy, \$600,294.

SHAREHOLDERS OF THE BRITISH-CANADIAN ASBESTOS COMPANY, which is to be absorbed by the new Amalgamated Asbestos Corporation, will have the opportunity of subscribing for the underwriting of the new company to the extent of one-half of their present holdings. As the British-Canadian Company will be paid for the stock of Asbestos on hand, the shareholders will receive something more than \$95 per share, and also the dividend of \$1.50 per share, recently declared, which will be due on April 27.

A FIRE LOOK-OUT SYSTEM for preventing forest conflagrations is recommended by Mr. W. C. J. Hall, superintendent of the Forest Protection Branch of the Quebec Provincial Department of Lands and Forests. The system, which is in practice in Maine, consists in the establishing of hill look-out stations throughout the territory to be protected. These are connected by telephone with the fire-wardens' head-quarters and with limit-owners' camps.

THERE WERE ELEVEN COBALT SHIPPERS last week, the same as previous week, but the tonnage was considerably heavier, due to substantial shipment from the Nipissing, La Rose, Crown Reserve and Chambers-Ferland. Shipments for the week totalled 1,182,360 lbs., or 501 tons. Previous week, 527.85 tons. Shipments since the beginning of the year amount to 12,141,353 lbs., or 6,070 tons.

ILLINOIS TRACTION'S gross earnings for February amounted to \$321,847, as compared with \$304,538 for February, 1908. Expenses were \$176,539, as against \$176,612 for the same period a year ago. Total expenses and taxes are given at \$186,030, while for the same month in 1908 they were \$183,368, leaving the balance, as net earnings, of \$130,191 for last month, as compared with \$121,170 a year ago.

THERE WILL BE NO STRIKE of Pennsylvania coal miners for the present—the men having decided to continue work after April 1st, pending further negotiations with the operators. It looks as though the miners had horse sense enough to realize that the present is no time to throw away what they have, in the slim hope of getting more by fighting.

THE ACTION FOR \$15,000 brought against the Crown Life Assurance Company by the widow of the late Victor G. Gray, of Montreal, has resulted in the plaintiff's favour—the Toronto jury having brought in a verdict that death was not due to suicide as contended by the company. It is stated that an appeal may be entered by the company.

A SERIOUS FIRE AT VICTORIA, B.C., on 23rd inst., destroyed the Pacific Club and adjoining buildings of the block bounded by Port, Broad and Boughton streets, owned by F. B. Pemberton—a two storey block with stores fronting on three streets. The property loss is stated at about \$150,000. Insurance details will be given next week.

THE SENATE THIS WEEK gave the six months' hoist to the bill of Senator Choquette, which sought to amend the law relating to the protest of bills of exchange, cheques and promissory notes by removing the need to protest a note to hold the endorser liable when not paid at maturity.

THE C. P. R. IS ACTIVELY CO-OPERATING with the New Brunswick Government in an immigration campaign to re-people vacant farms in the province. There is no doubt, that many comers from the old-country would be more at home, and do better work, on farms in the older provinces than by striking for the Far West.

THE AMALGAMATION PROJECT for the breweries of Quebec Province seems to have fallen through, owing to the not unnatural difficulty in getting the individual firms to agree upon joint terms.

THE BURNING AT CORNWALL, ONT., of the Windsor Hotel resulted in the death of three guests. The loss to building and contents is stated at about \$25,000, with insurance of \$9,000.

MR. TREVOR A. EVANS, of the insurance firm of Esinhart & Evans, sails on the "Baltic" to-morrow on a combined business and pleasure trip to the old country.