

AROUND THE COLLIERIES.

The Joggins mine banked some 9,000 tons of slack last year. This bank is being gradually filled away.

Things are looking bright for the Joggins during this year. The output for the past three months was 17,000 tons per month, whatever more.

If the labor shortage does not increase during 1916 the chances are that the colliery outputs will be at least as good as last year. The possibility is that the shortage may be more acute, as recruiting is still continuing.

There are some 140 men on the pay roll of the Cumming's shell factory. A majority of these are making 'big money' and go about their work as if they had been bred to the business.

The firm of J. W. Cumming & Son, New Glasgow, have so far sent forward seven cars of shells, and expect to put to the credit of January five car loads more. On a rough guess we would say there are 1650 high explosive 4.5 shells to a car.

Why is it that the makers of shells require to be so very particular as to give the shells two coats of varnish in the inside, and two coats of paint outside? The varnishing is not required in the smaller, but in the high explosive shells it is, as the Lyddite has a peculiar chemical action on the steel, and they are painted as a precaution against rust.

The output of the Inverness Ry. & Coal Co. in 1914 was 265,000 tons against 245,000 tons for 1915. The falling off is more than accounted for by the absence of shipments to the St. Lawrence, which in 1914 amounted to 25,000 tons. The St. Lawrence trade was abandoned because it was a profitless business at prevailing high transportation rates.

It has been stated that the shortage of labor in C. B., at the collieries, is more imaginative than actual. In opposition to this the officials of the Dominion Coal Company, for instance, point to the fact that in the early summer of 1915 the output went as high as 21,000 tons a day, whereas in the autumn and fall months the best that could be obtained was 17,000 tons.

Goodness! Here we were contentedly living in the belief that we knew all of the seams in Pictou County, and all about them, while it turns out that our knowledge has been of an elementary kind. The discovery of a twenty-one foot seam most colliery owners would consider a big bonanza, but what term can be applied to the announcement that thirty-eight feet below the long known 'Stellar' seam another six foot seam has been found. The drill core indicates that 5 ft. 6 of this new seam is of excellent quality. In last issue we said that possibly there were other surprises in store for the people of the County, but really we did not expect the glad surprise would come as a New Year's gift.

There have been no labor troubles at Springhill, or the Joggins, or elsewhere in Cumberland County during the year, and prospects of continued peace during 1916 are bright.

The surface plant of the Maritime Coal, Ry. & Power Co. was greatly improved during the past year. The railway also came in for attention. A new 67 ton locomotive, consolidated—without tender—was bought, and the purchase of a second one is being completed.

It is suggested that 1916 will turn out to be the best year in the history of the Maritime Coal, Railway & Power Co. That is well, for the company had its own share of lean years. Mr. R. J. Bell, the General Manager, is winning laurels, and if he is elated, he has reason for it.

The Maritime Coal, Railway & Power Co. had some slack time during the early summer of last year. Gradually business improved until at the present time the demand is greater than the production. The company also suffered from shortage of men; this, too, is being remedied, and almost all the men necessary are being obtained.

The output of the Colonial Coal Company for 1915 was some 4,000 tons ahead of that of 1914. But it must not be forgotten that the company had only one colliery in operation against two for the best portion of 1914. The output of the Colonial mine, the one colliery being operated, was, in 1914, 30,000 tons, while in 1915 it went up to 57,000 tons, a very fair increase, and one reflecting credit on the General Manager, G. B. Barchell.

There is sufficient coal in sight, in the seven foot seam now being worked at Inverness, to keep things going at an average output of 1200 tons per day for 20 years. After that there is the 13 ft. seam to fall back upon. Possibly the bond-holders may fare better than they had expected six months ago. There is now hope that the property may be placed on a paying basis.

A deputation from Thorburn, consisting of five representative citizens, and accompanied by Messrs R. M. McGregor and R. H. McKay, M. P. P's., waited on General Manager Prudhomme, of the Acadia Coal Company, in reference to the re-opening of the mine at Thorburn. The interview was long and no harsh words passed, though the delegation did not attain their object. The delegation suggested to the General Manager that if the company could not see its way clear to the re-opening of the mine, that they would sub-lease it, for a time, to others. To this the reply was that such a proceeding might interfere with the future intentions of the company. No definite promise was given by the General Manager, but the hint was thrown out that at a time not far distant plans might be adopted for the re-working of the long idle McBean seam.