

the Government to bring the labor trouble at Cumberland and Extension to an end, the officials of the union determined to call a general strike of the coalminers of the Island. The locals had previously voted for a strike but had to wait for official consent. This was given and a strike declared on May 1st. It would doubtless have been better had a ballot been taken, as less than two-thirds of the miners were then members of the union. Within a week, however, 95 per cent. of the men had joined the union. These men, citizens of Nanaimo, are almost all of them from the Northern Counties of England, from Scotland, Ireland and Wales, consequently they thoroughly believe in Trades Unionism. Most of them have their union cards and on their arrival in this city were surprised to find there was no recognized union. They soon learned, however, that the spy system around Nanaimo was so perfect that it was not safe to mention unionism, therefore the local union grew slowly. However, they believe they have the same right to a union as any other body of workmen or professional men and that unionism is a benefit to both masters and men. They ask for the recognition of their union as the basis of settlement. The operators object to the U. M. W. of A., calling it a foreign organization. while the men contend that an organization of less strength would be useless.

It is true that a two years' agreement drawn up by the company existed between the Western Fuel Co., and their employees, but this was never considered satisfactory by the men who, in the absence of a union, felt obliged to accept it.

During the long weeks of enforced idleness and privation since the strike was declared, the strikers conducted themselves in an exemplary way. The city