

OUR HOME PAGE

Skilled Workers Are Migrating to U.S.

Freeman Felker, representative of the International Molders' union, views with alarm the number of skilled mechanics that are migrating to the United States. It is his opinion that something should be done to remedy this condition, due to the fact that these workmen invariably adopt the U. S. as their homes. "It is to be regretted that the best workers in the Dominion have to leave their native country to seek employment in foreign lands," he said.

Seeking the Best

Almost every industry is affected by this condition just now, and close students of the labor movement are of the opinion that considerable difficulty will be experienced in filling the positions that will be vacant when industrial conditions reassert themselves. The claim is made that in many occupations highly-skilled men are hard to obtain.

Hard to Cope With

This is becoming an acute situation and is causing much concern not only to manufacturers and employers of labor, but also to union officials, who realize that this migration must be stopped if the standards of the unions are to be maintained. It is a big problem and one which gives much food for thought.

The Settlement

(From the Sydney Record)

The settlement arrived at by the representatives of the United Mine Workers and representatives of the British Empire Steel Corporation in regard to wage rates in the collieries is, of course, a compromise. Everybody knew that settlement would come through compromise. When the dispute came to a head each party stood on stiffer conditions than they expected to see accepted. It is not the usual thing in negotiations or bargaining for a man to make his best offer first. The negotiations have brought both parties to an intermediate point where they are prepared to agree. The Corporation agrees to pay more than the 1923 rates; the United Mine Workers' representatives accept less than the 1923 rates; each side has given 'way' to some extent, and they have found common ground. In addition to establishing certain new rates of wages the agreement signed at Montreal provides also for the continuance of the existing practice with regard to explosives and their price and for the adjustment of longwall mining rates in the Scotia collieries by mutual agreement. It is understood, too, that under the terms of settlement the price of house coal to the miners is to be \$3.60 a ton and an important provision—grievance that may arise during the life of the contract are immediately to be referred to a joint committee for consideration. Public satisfaction over the conclusion of a settlement, will be mingled with some regret that the term of the contract is to be for one year only. There had been hope that the negotiators would be able to reach an agreement covering several years at least. But if that hope has not been realized there may at least be the hope that the settlement that has been reached and the spirit in which it has been negotiated will make the conclusion of another arrangement year hence a matter of no great difficulty.

Agreement between the disputants this week was directly due to the intervention of the Federal Department of Labor. Agents of the Minister of Labor brought the two parties together at the week-end when there was danger that the negotiations would end without a settlement having been reached, and it may be taken for granted that the Department had a great deal of influence in hastening agreement after the discussions had resumed. Mr. W. F. Carroll, M. P., did good work for Cape Breton, and all Nova Scotia, when he urged the Minister of Labor to intervene in the trouble. But though the intervention of the Labor Department was the immediate means of bringing about the resumption of negotiations last Friday there could not have been successful intervention and the conclusion of an agreement had

it not been for the cordial and conciliatory attitude maintained by the representatives of the two sides. Having regard to the future industrial relations in Cape Breton and the future of the coal mining industry the most gratifying fact in connection with the recent negotiations and the settlement now reached is that from start to finish of the discussions there was an absence of bitterness and anger. That fact is full of promise of happier relations and more stable conditions. The trouble-makers here who sought to foment bitterness and anger in order to serve their own mean ends made a complete failure of a vicious job. The representatives of the United Mine Workers conducted their case vigorously at all times but at all times they conducted it with equal good spirit and with freedom from any of these methods which made the Livingstone-McLachlan leadership so disastrous to the miners. And, on the other hand, were it necessary, Mr. Steele and Mr. Barrett and their associates of the U. M. W. side would probably admit quite frankly that they found Mr. Wolvin and his associates on the corporation side far from being the unfair and unreasonable men that they had been pictured by the would-be makers of trouble. The worst enemies of the miners and the business men of Cape Breton are the schemers who try to spread distrust and to create friction between Besco and its employees. It is a great thing that this time the schemers failed.

May Resuscitation Miners' Union

U.M.W.A. May Re-establish on Island After Over Ten Years

Vancouver, Feb. 9.—The United Mine Workers of America had a very active district on Vancouver Island during the great coal strike of 1913, which originated in the Canadian Collieries, and spread to the whole of the coal mining district of Vancouver Island. How many thousands of dollars were spent in the fight with the operators will never perhaps be known, one estimate being as high as \$2,000,000.

According to a message from Calgary, quoting William Sherman, president of District No. 18, the question to be discussed at the convention of Montana and Washington District of the U.M.W. A. to be held in May, The International has not recognized the Vancouver Island field since the great strike, it is said. Coal mining hitherto has been localized in British Columbia to the Island, Nicola and Crow's Nest fields; but with the development in the Central North and the North Thompson, it may be more difficult to organize the colliery employees than was the case some years ago. Men like Frank Farrington, who were prominent organizers on the Island in 1912 and 1913, have since taken prominent positions in the international organization.

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Pay \$670,524 in Compensation

Annual Report on Workmen's Accidents States 39 Were Fatal in 1923

Winnipeg.—Disbursements by the Manitoba workmen's compensation board during 1923 amounted to \$670,524, compared with \$562,316.25, or an increase of 18 per cent. over 1922. The disbursements will show an increase year by year owing to the continual additions of beneficiaries by reason of total and permanent accident disability.

The report of this board was tabled in the legislature Friday by Hon. F. M. Black, provincial treasurer. It showed a total of 9,546 accidents reported during 1923, of which 39 were fatal, compared with 9,676 during 1922. This represents a decrease in accidents of but 1.3 per cent.

Classified, the accidents called for medical aid only in 1,962 cases; permanent total disabilities resulted in three cases; permanent disability in 171 cases; minor disabilities, under three days totalled 4,120, while temporary disabilities lasting over three days totalled 3,405.

The value of the board orders during 1923 for payment of compensation, including all orders respecting Dominion government employees and amounts set aside to reserve to provide for pensions awarded, was \$544,289.27, as compared with \$558,785.24 for 1922, a decrease of 1.7 per cent.

Employers assessed by the board in 1923 numbered 4,116 on actual payrolls of \$54,869,710.85 for 1922, as compared with 4,315 employers in 1922, with payrolls totalling \$59,678,980.88 during 1921. The details of the various classes of employers, A to G, during these two years follow:—

C.P.R.	\$8,578,609.65	\$8,826,879.98
G. T. P.	\$27,826.18	\$60,000.00
C.N.R.	\$7,115,726.65	\$9,307,547.52
Province	\$2,594,720.87	\$2,145,165.02
Clt.	\$2,617,822.33	\$2,409,759.40
Employer's	\$2,843,129.46	\$2,876,219.23
W.E.R.	\$2,501,085.75	\$2,504,139.70
	\$59,678,980.88	\$54,869,710.85

During the year the number of cases treated by the board's chief medical officer for minor injuries numbered 870, for which, had fees been paid, the sum of \$6,621.50 would have been disbursed. In 1922 the number of similar cases treated was 893, fees chargeable totalling \$7,366. The aggregate days of disability of all cases treated in 1923 was 2,872 days, an average of 3.3 days per case as against an average of 4.2 days in 1922.

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