

MARITIME MINING RECORD.

The MARITIME MINING RECORD is published the second and fourth Wednesday in each month.

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

Advertising rates, which are moderate, may be had on application.

Subscription \$1 00 a year.

Single Copies 5 cents

R. DRUMMOND, PUBLISHER.

ST. LARTON, N. S.

June 23

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE.

Workingmen may not have the same objections to compulsory insurance against sickness, accident, and unemployment, as some of them have to being compelled to pay to an old age pension scheme. Old age may be considered by many too remote to make any provision for it, while others say 'Why should we be compelled to contribute to a scheme from which we may never derive benefit; we may not live to be old'. This of course is a selfish way to look at it, but it is still human nature though this be the twentieth century of the Christian era. A pension in old age may be a fine thing for the aged but it does not appeal to the younger men other than something remote, misty, and intangible. Sickness, invalidity, and in Britain if not in Nova Scotia, unemployment, are visible virtues. They are continually met with, are felt because they are real, and so it may happen that the very persons who oppose contributions to a pension scheme may gladly contribute to a scheme which will ensure them against want should employment fail, or sickness overtake them. The proposed system of national insurance is, Mr. Churchill states, an essential corollary to the Labor Exchanges bill. The two systems are like man and wife, naturally supporting and sustaining one another. It is not practical at present to establish a system of universal insurance. The Government had, therefore, to decide between insuring some workmen in all trades and all workmen in some trades. In the first case there would be a voluntary and in the second case a compulsory system. A voluntary system, State subsidised, always attracted those men who were most likely to be unemployed, and for this reason all such systems had broken down. On the other hand, compulsory systems had broken down because of the refusal of the higher ranks of workers to assume, unsupported, the great burden of the weaker members of the community. The Government had decided to adopt the compulsory system, and their scheme would present these main features:

This would involve contributions from the workpeople and the employers, to which would be added a substantial subvention from the State. It would be insurance by trades, following the suggestion of the Royal Commission, and would be compulsory within those trades on all, unionists and non unionists, skilled and unskilled workmen and employers alike. The trades selected for a beginning were:

House building and works of construction. Engineering, machine and tool making. Ship and boat building, vehicles. Sawyers and general labourers working at those trades.

This group according to the census returns of the last ten years, comprised 2,250,000 of adult males, and roughly speaking, one-third of the total population of the United Kingdom engaged in purely industrial work, and it will cover very nearly one-half of the whole field of unemployment, and that the worst half.

It was necessary to raise something between 5d. and 6d. per man per week, and it was proposed to divide this not necessarily in equal proportions between the workmen, the employers, and the State. The German example would be followed of insurance cards or books, to which stamps would be fixed every week, and when a worker in an insured trade lost his employment, if he had kept to the rules of the system all he would have to do would be to take his card to the nearest Labor Exchange, which would be responsible, in conjunction with the insurance office, either for finding him a job or for paying his benefits.

After giving the above explanation of the proposed measure Mr. Churchill stated that the government could not touch the insurance question this year; they had not got the time now and they had not yet got the money.

PRES. LEWIS IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE.

From the fact that, in his public utterances, and more particularly in his 'dictated' statements, President Lewis was wholly on the side of peace, there are very many who declare that there shall be no stoppage of work or strike in Cape Breton. While there are many who think that there will be no strike, they do not base that opinion on Pres. Lewis' disclaimer of the U. M. W.'s being breeders of strife, nor on the further assertion that their preferences all the time are pacific, but rather on the ground that the men at the collieries of Cape Breton could not be guilty of so amazing a piece of folly. On the other hand there are not a few who express the opinion that there will be no stoppage of work and yet there will be a strike of the U. M. W.'s. The latter hope that they may be joined by the P. W. A. men, but in this they may be mistaken. There will be no strike of the U. M. W. if Pres. Lewis' public pacific declarations were ratified by him privately in the lodges. It is here that perplexity arises. There are those, seemingly well informed, who declare that in his public utterances one had no key to what was in Pres. Lewis' mind. They are ready to declare that while publicly he advocated peace privately he advised war. It is declared by some who say their information is correct that Pres. Lewis went back to Cape Breton, after his visit to Halifax, etc., and said: "It would never do for me to order a strike. I find there is a national prejudice against the recognition of the U. M. W. and if the 'International' President declared a strike the province would rise up and say 'Look, that Yankee has come in and incited our men to strike.' With public opinion running bitterly and strongly against us there would be no hope of success. It would be bad diplomacy on my part,