

## MARITIME MINING RECORD.

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## THAT PLEBISCITE BILL.

As there is now no official daily report of the proceedings of either branch of the local legislature people have to be content with the summary which the Chronicle or the Herald may be pleased to give. Possibly these summaries are not absolutely to be depended upon. Even if each paper tried to give an impartial account, there remains to be taken into consideration the subconscious bias. In assuming that an endeavor is made to be impartial, it is possible we are a little more than generous, for some members on each side do not hesitate to say they have been misrepresented, and not unintentionally. However, let that go. The bill was discussed on several occasions in the House of Assembly. We give elsewhere, copied from the Herald whose report was the fullest, and the more correct, a report of one of these debates, preceded by an explanation of the bill by the Herald.

It will be noticed that in this latter the Herald says there are two factions among the miners of Cape Breton. We do not like the word, as it may convey a wrong impression. There is one faction the U. M. W.'s. The P. W. A. had and held the field for a quarter of a century before the U. M. W.'s of America, and some thirty-six years before the U. M. W.'s of Nova Scotia made attempts to usurp the place so long held by it. The Herald styles the P. W. A. the "Moffat faction," and the U. M. W.'s the "anti-Moffat faction," and says that the Moffat faction is recognized by the company and has its membership dues collected.

The P. W. A. had lodges in Cape Breton recognized by the operators of the several collieries over twenty years before the Dominion Coal Coy. was organized. When the Dominion Coal Coy. came on the scene in 1893, it continued the policy of recognition, adopted by its predecessors, and continues it to this day. To ask the Dominion Coal Co., after all these years, to recognize a "faction" is asking a little too much. It is, as we have frequently said, asking the Dominion Coal Coy. to recognize two labor unions, not rivals, but determinedly antagonistic to each other. The Company has done business with the P. W. A. since it took over the Southern C. B. collieries, and no good reason has been advanced to show why the Company should transfer its friendship to new and untried friends. Friends

did we say? Not friends, but those who in season and out of season denounce the Company in no stinted or stulted phraseology. The Company is not yet "off" with the old love, and it cannot well be "on" with the new. That two rival organizations, striving for supremacy, should be recognized by a corporation, is an impossible thought. It would, to waste no words, be hell to the Company. The why so is obvious. The Record-wholly agrees with the remarks of Premier Murray. The passage of such a bill could only mean that the breach presently existing would be widened. Any such legislation would be pernicious and far farther reaching than its promoters dream of. Make it applicable to the coal trade this year and then similar legislation could next year be made applicable to every industry in Nova Scotia. It would surely be a case of sauce for the goose being sauce for the gander.

## NOVA SCOTIA'S UNDEVELOPED MINERAL WEALTH.

It was an oft-repeated tale, forty or less years ago, that large as were the extent of her coal fields, there was more iron ore in the province than there was coal to smelt it with. Possibly people to-day are not so enthusiastic on this point as were those who preceded them, and this possibly is not to be wondered at, seeing heroic attempts have been made to locate deposits of quantity and quality entitling them to be classed as of present day commercial value, and have failed. The day may come, when owing to the scarcity of richer, the large deposits of low grade ore, may be utilized, but that day is not yet. To-day, any old rock of the color of coal is, so we are told, being palmed off on the public as the genuine article, and the public is glad to get it. And so may it be, in some day in the future, that furnace men may be willing, not to say glad, to secure any ore that carries iron.

While there, reasonably, may be doubts as to the quality and the quantity of her iron ore deposits, there is no doubt as to the vast extent and value of her oil shales. For many years, and more particularly since the time the writer had the privilege of visiting and going through the several departments of one of the four largest of the Scottish shale plants at Broxburn, in the Lothians, he has wondered that no big effort has been made to utilize native shale. The quantity of oil distilled from the Broxburn shale was low in comparison with that obtained, say fifty years ago, from the Stellar coal at Stellarton. It is possible that there are no other shales in the province comparable with this oil coal, which covers considerable territory in Pictou County, but the Record's opinion is that there are shales in several counties, notably Antigonish and Colchester, which yield oil in larger quantity than the Scottish shales. The first of the oil shale works established in Scotland has not, from a dividend-paying standpoint, been as successful as those that came later, and that is not to be wondered at, as the business was new, and as a rule experience is at times a somewhat costly article. The works, however, all along have paid a fair dividend, while that earned and paid by the later established concerns can best be described by the word handsome. Shortly