

to acquire the right to the full mining property by paying the difference between the price of mining property and what they had paid for an agricultural lot. It will be seen by this that no interference with the rights of property were attempted. The rights of owners of property granted by the Crown were not interfered with, and they remained with their ownership quite undisturbed.

The whole of this existing state of things is changed by the Statute now complained of—Clause 1425, which is substituted for the former clause designated by the corresponding number, enacts: 2. "As it is admitted that mines, whether upon public or private lands, belong to the Crown, any person discovering a mine may purchase the same by complying with the provisions of this section.

It is submitted that no enactment corresponding to this can be found in any legislation heretofore passed by any dependency of the British Empire, still less in the Imperial Parliament, for it not only in a few words takes the property from a large number of Her Majesty's subjects, but falsely asserts that the right to do so was admitted. It would be interesting to find the person who admitted that the Government had the right to take his property from him, and it further seems unnecessary, if it were universally admitted that the baser metals belonged to the Crown and not to the owner of the soil, to pass a Statute altering the existing law, and declaring that such minerals belong to the Crown.

The Statute to which we object then proceeds from Section 1455 to 1512, to provide for the means by which any stranger, on obtaining a permit from the Government, may proceed to expropriate the mine, which happens to be on private lands, and take it away from the proprietor unless the latter chooses to pay the price which may be determined on; the law, however, giving to the proprietor the option of buying his own property if he is willing to submit to this imposition.

It is submitted that this Statute interferes with private rights in such a way as to render its disallowance necessary and constitutional.

(Signed),

GEORGE IRVINE,

*President General Mining Association*

*of the Province of Quebec.*

QUEBEC, 31st March, 1891.

So far, I think our interview with Mr. Mercier, although it has not yet produced any beneficial results, was satisfactory as far as it went. In the meantime I have drafted a petition containing fuller information than the previous one, praying for the disallowance of this Act, which I will submit to this meeting, and will be glad to make any changes that may be deemed necessary.