

remark that, previous to last year's investigation of the St. George's Bay carboniferous area, it was generally thought that the latter also was destitute of workable coal seams. It had been regarded as occupied almost entirely by the lower unproductive measures of the formation, viz.: the carboniferous limestone and millstone-grit formations. I now have the satisfaction of informing you that, upon referring the fossil plants then collected to Sir William Dawson, Principal of McGill University, Montreal, and one of the most eminent authorities upon fossil botany in North America, he has, in one of his letters to me, made the following reference thereto: "I may say that the specimens now sent indicate a development of "the coal measures not unlike that of eastern Cape Breton, with "which, I fancy, your beds may be connected under the Gulf. This "is much more evident in the specimens you have sent than in "those previously collected by Mr. Murray, which had the aspect of the lower coal measures, or even of the millstone-grit series."

This is a most important announcement, coming as it does from so distinguished a source. In a later letter, Sir William adds: "Your Government might make a point as to the West "Shore, by informing the English Government of the value of the "coals on the West Coast, and their prospective importance to "Britain and Newfoundland, as well as to the other colonies. *You "have the nearest coal to England on this side the Atlantic.*"

A thorough investigation then of this central trough, might have the result of proving that here also the measures are not entirely confined to the lower portion of the formation. This supposition is further borne out from the fact that some at least of the latter, especially the gypsiferous strata, are not known to exist at all so far as the central trough has been examined up to the present time. In traversing the shore of Grand Lake, many fragments of good coal were observed strewn about the beaches which may, or may not, have been derived from those small seams, whose existence was ascertained by the boring operations.

The hills around Deer Lake and the lower valley of the Humber are chiefly composed of a finely micaceous slate rock, interbedded with greyish quartzite, through which numerous quartz veins penetrate; some of these look as if they should carry gold, traces of which, along with silver, were shown, by analysis, to exist in some quartz specimens from Humber Arm, procured by Mr.