Atlantic coast, and supplies the provinces of New Brunswick and Quebec with the greater part of what they consume. During the summer it has a water route up the St. Lawrence, and it is also carried by the Inter-Colonial Railway at exceptionally low rates, in accordance with the Government policy of giving all possible encouragement to inter-provincial trade.

The consumption of Nova Scotian coal in Quebec, which in 1877 amounted to 95,000 tons, had risen in 1891 to 775,000 tons. The whole of the Dominion Government railways, of which 1,397 miles are in operation, are worked with Nova Scotian coal. Most of the other railways of the lower provinces, including the Atlantic connection of the Canadian Pacific, as far west as Montreal, draw their supplies from the same source.

When we cross the continent to the Pacific coast we find, in connection with the coal of British Columbia, a group of facts scarcely less striking than those to which reference has already been made. Along the whole Pacific coast of South America no coal is found suited for steaming purposes. There is none along the coast of North America until we come to Puget Sound. On different points on the Sound mines are being worked on American territory, but the coal is all of a distinctly inferior quality. It is only when we cross the boundary line into Canadian territory that in Vancouver Island, the site of Britain's only naval station on the western coast of America, we meet with large deposits of good steaming coal. The superiority of this coal is proved beyond question by the published tables of the War Department of the United States, in which are given the comparative values for steam raising purposes of the various fuels found on the Pacific coast. In this statement --certainly not a partial one—the Nanaimo coal is rated far above any found in Washington, Oregon, or California. The annual output of the mines at Nanaimo and Wellington has now risen beyond a million tons. At Nanaimo the principal mine is directly upon the shore, and the galleries are being run out far under the arm of the sea which divides Vancouver Island from the mainland, so that here, as at Cape Breton, ships of heavy tonnage take in coal while moored immediately over the place from which it is obtained. In either case the facility for easy and rapid coaling could not well be excelled. The very facility of approach creates a responsibility. When ships can sail in from the open sea and come directly to the place where large stores of coal are ordinarily accumulated, it is clear that these stores must have some means of defence if they are not to fall into the hands of the first comer. The full appreciation of the value of these coaling positions ought to secure for them some adequate defence, such as they do not at present possess. Canada is now co-operating with Britain in providing adequate defence for the naval station of Esquimalt, the importance of which was well illustrated when I was there by the presence in the fine graving dock of the *Warspite*, undergoing repairs after her serious mishap. Doubtless Esquimalt must be the main reliance for the safety of the fleet in the North Pacific, but some subsidiary protection seems imperative for the security of actual coaling ports like Nanaimo, if they are to be safe against sudden attack. Full and joint provision for this may only be possible when the motherland and the colonies have arrived at a clear understanding in regard to the distribution of national responsibility. The defence, however, ought certainly to be given, and it would be wiser to plan carefully and complete in time of peace what would of necessity