

NOVA SCOTIA COAL MINES.

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NOVA SCOTIA is rich in mineral resources, probably more so than any other portion of the continent of North America. Coal, iron and gold are found in almost illimitable quantities and in almost every section of the Province. Copper, limestone, gypsum, marble and building stone are also to be found in abundance, and there is no room for doubt that when these minerals are properly developed by the influx of capital, Nova Scotia will become one of the greatest centres of industry in America.

At present it is proposed to speak entirely in respect of the coal seams of the Province, which at this time are evoking more than usual interest. Coal was discovered in Nova Scotia before the beginning of the present century, and efforts were made to work and utilize these seams on a very small and crude scale until 1826, when His Majesty, George IV., recognizing in Nova Scotia only a Crown colony with the casual and territorial revenue reserved to the Crown and administered at the pleasure of the Lieutenant-Governor, without reference to the Legislature, undertook to grant a lease of all the discovered minerals of Nova Scotia to Frederick, Duke of York, for 60 years beginning from the 25th day of August, 1826. The consideration for this lease was a rental of £3,000 sterling a year. The annual revenue of rental was, of course, available for the special use of the Crown and was not a part of the revenues of Nova Scotia.

The struggle for responsible government, however, began in Nova Scotia rather in advance of the other Provinces, and was certainly, thanks to the superior genius of Joseph Howe, conducted with a great deal more skill

and intelligence than in the other colonies. The result was that in 1849 the last step towards accomplishing full responsibility to the people in the administration of public affairs was achieved by the passage of an Act relating to Casual and Territorial Revenue introduced by Mr. Howe, adopted by both branches of the Legislature, and assented to by the Lieutenant-Governor in the name of the Queen. This Act is very brief and may be summarized as follows:—

The first section provides that the proceeds of all casual and territorial revenues of the Crown in the Province shall be paid into the Provincial Treasury.

Section two provides that the casual and territorial revenues are defined by the Act to be all lands, sums of money, returns, profits and emoluments arising, reserved, due or owing in any manner, etc., in respect of any lease, demise, sale, grant, transfer or occupation of any of the Crown Lands, mines, minerals or royalties of Her Majesty within the Province, including the Island of Cape Breton, of whatsoever nature or description, and all fees and payments and commutation therefor.

The third section provides that the right and title of Her Majesty, whether in reversion or otherwise, of, in, to and out of all mines, minerals and oils whatsoever within the Province, and also all rents and profits arising therefrom, are assigned, transferred and surrendered to the disposal of the General Assembly of the Province, subject only to the existing rights of lessees, and shall be managed, leased, disposed of, made available, paid and applied in such manner as by Act of the General Assembly shall be directed.