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RECIPROCITY IN COAL.

A pamphlet entitled "Memoranda Respecting Reciprocity in Coal," has been issued conjointly by nine coal companies operating in Nova Scotia. It comprises a memorandum submitted to the Government of Nova Scotia by all nine companies; a memorandum submitted to the Federal Minister of Finance by the Dominion Coal Company, Limited; a letter written by the Nova Scotia Steel & Coal Company, Limited, to the Minister; similar letters from the Acadia Coal Company, Limited, and the International Coal Mining Company, Limited; and, in conclusion, a characteristic paper by the Hon. Robert Drummond.

Time was when the coal operators of Nova Scotia were popularly looked upon as bold, bad barons. And they did little to discourage this view. Now, however, times have changed, and the mine owners recognize the final importance of engaging public sympathy by a full and open statement of their case.

That case can be set forth in a few paragraphs.

The main contentions of the operators are, in effect, that reciprocity in coal will assuredly throw out of employment between 17,000 and 20,000 men and boys, who, with their families, are directly dependent upon coal mining; and, further, that a much larger number of persons will be indirectly affected. This, if we may accept as facts the statements of the operators, is an obvious proposition. How they substantiate their assertions we shall see later.

Other arguments against reciprocity are that, since the sum of \$50,000,000 is invested in Nova Scotian coal mines, and since this is preponderatingly Canadian money, and, also, since some millions of dollars have been spent in providing transportation and dockage facilities for the present channels of trade, therefore any re-adjustment of markets would be disastrous. This argument is supported by the fact that the trade with New England ports is constantly decreasing. Moreover, it is pointed out that the United States operator is able, even now, against a heavy duty, to seize an ever-increasing proportion of the St. Lawrence and Quebec trade.

But possibly the most cogent argument of all is the flat assertion that the removal of duties guarantees no reduction in price. In fact, if we may accept the arguments of those opposed to reciprocity, it means merely that Quebec and Eastern Ontario will place themselves at the mercy of United States producers who may at any time cease dumping into Canada when they happen to find a more profitable market elsewhere. It were superfluous here to enter into particulars. It is sufficient to state that there is little chance of Nova Scotia securing