

crease of \$48,000 or, say 750 per cent. Suppose we take the yearly increase in revenue from these three minor sources, at \$38,000, and not \$48,000, as I might, and multiply by 16, we have an income, in that period of over half a million dollars. That, in my opinion, may be called "found" money, for I do not believe the holding of the areas by companies and individuals has prevented the exploitation of a single coal seam.

Of the 988 miles under lease, it should not be overlooked that probably 350 are submarine, of use only to the holders of the land areas. Of the remaining 930 it is problematical whether five hundred contain anything nearer resembling coal than lifeless black rock.

Of the 1,008 miles held under right of search it is not known how many contain coal. Rights of search cannot be other than purely speculative. If there was any certainty as to the contents of areas, there would be no necessity whatever for taking out rights to search.

I am strongly of the opinion that the country is, and will be to a much greater degree in the future, indebted to the speculative spirit in its people for the advancement it is making. Is it not well for the province that our young men see visions and our old men dream dreams; and the seeing and the dreaming will continue just so long as the spirit to exploit, explore and prospect remains buoyant and active in us. There are speculations, and speculations; some are what are counted insane; some fool-hardy; some doubtful; some hopeful; and some brimful of promise. While frowning on the two first, should we not rather favor the remainder.

Up till 1880 or 1890, how many of the three or four hundred miles of sub-marine areas, since taken up, were considered of any commercial value? Some daring spirits seized with the belief that they must some day become of value; that science would find some way of mining coal, miles out to sea, took them up, that is, leased them with the result that to-day, the coast line from Morien all the way to Mabou, is covered with leases extending in some cases five miles seaward. The vast majority of these are held, and rightly so by those owning the land areas.

Some people jump to the conclusion that, because there are some 230 miles under lease for coal in Cumberland county unworked, every one of the miles areas contain coal, which men of grit and gold are yearning for the chance to open up. In a vast majority of cases neither the government nor the lessees, nor any other body, corporate or incorporate, has the slightest idea whether, underlying the sod, there are or are not seams of coal of commercial value, or masses of valueless clinker. How the government should compel the lessees to work what they do not know they possess surpasses comprehension. If I am not mistaken there are some 300 miles under license to search for coal in Cumberland county. A heroic effort has been made, and thousands of dollars have been spent, in an effort to locate coal in 275 of the 300 square miles so held, but, alas, all that has been found so far, is conglomerate, and lots of it, extending in depth or thickness 2000 feet and over. These areas have been held for years. Can we imagine a government so merciless, as to say to the lessees, "In such event well might the lessees say to the government, 'Find us a market for conglomerate and we will develop the areas with a will.' The rights of search for coal in Pictou county cover some fifty odd square miles.

'Tis an old saying, "Physician heal thyself." As the leader of the opposition, in the other house, who represents Pictou considers himself, in all respects, a well man, he cannot perform any operation on himself, so he does

the next best thing, he seeks, with the aid of the government, to administer healing remedies to his relatives. He has no compunction in giving it to them in drastic doses. Of the fifty square miles held under license in Pictou, a fifth of these are held by a relative of the member for Pictou; at least that relative is the moving spirit of the holders. It might be well for the government to immediately call upon the holder, or holders of these ten areas, to forth-with set to work or forth-with leaving the said member on his return to Pictou county, to the tender mercies of the said relative.

Assuming a more serious tone I wish now to draw the attention of the chamber to some remarks made in the other branch of the legislature by the leader of the opposition in reference to certain abandoned mines in Pictou county. I quote from his remarks as follows:

In Pictou county, which has valuable coal mines, there are no less than, I think, five abandoned pits, which have been lost through fire. I do not find fault with the company or management for this, because they are probably doing the best they can, but what I say is, must to see to and assist, because this is the property of the people and the government is the trustee. As far as I know, neither this government nor any preceding government has ever given any device or aid or made any effort to investigate whether the methods used by the companies in Pictou county to bring these mines again within the category of producing mines were right or wrong. I maintain that it is the duty of any government to see that corporations or individuals having any of such mines under lease, are putting forth well directed efforts to have them restored to the list of producing mines and that they shall not be forever lost to the province."

In need not be a matter of surprise if the premier of the province in his concisely comprehensive, well reasoned and moderate speech, the other day, in answer to certain critics of the government, failed to direct attention to this amazing slip, amazing in view of the fact that the one who made it hails from Pictou county and, naturally, is supposed to be conversant with happenings there. But it is surprising that the member for Pictou should call, and that so loudly, for an investigation or commission. How often does he want an investigation, a commission to inquire into a thing already investigated, in an open and thorough manner?

I hold in my hand a blue book on the title page of which I read:

Halifax, December 31, 1895.

To the Hon. W. S. Fielding, Provincial Secretary:
Sir,—I beg leave in accordance with the instructions received from his honor the lieutenant-governor, dated June 4th, 1895, appointing me a commissioner to enquire into the cause, history and effects of the fires in the coal seams in Pictou county, and authorizing me to employ such mining experts, or other persons as, in my judgment, might be necessary or useful in the prosecution of the inquiry to submit the following report and evidence.

Yours, etc.,

EDWIN GILPIN, Jr.

Inspector of Mines.

The men of Pictou are in so high repute that it is a little mortifying to find one of themselves detracting from and discrediting that reputation. I would commend to the attention of the member for Pictou and at least one of his colleague this sentence of Fielding, the essayist, "It is desirable that a man should know something of a subject before attempting to discourse upon it." Let those who choose apply the moral.