

a leading business house in Pictou, and on the termination of his engagement began business there on his own account.

While still at school in Pictou, at the age of 12, he developed a love for Natural Science, inherited from his father, and made large collections of fossil plants from the Nova Scotia coal measures, so well exposed about his native place. He speaks of himself at the time as being a "moderately diligent but not a specially brilliant pupil." On leaving school he studied at Pictou Academy, and subsequently at the University of Edinburgh. While at the former seat of learning, at the age of 13, he read before the local Natural History Society his first paper, having the somewhat ambitious title "On the Structure and History of the Earth." He returned to Nova Scotia in 1847, and two years later went to Halifax to give a course of lectures on Natural History subjects in connection with Dalhousie College, and organized classes for practical work in mineralogy and palæontology. These were attended by students, citizens and pupils of higher schools, a foreshadowing of university extension. In 1850, at the age of 30, having already attracted some attention by the publication of a number of papers, reports and lectures, he was appointed Superintendent of Education for Nova Scotia. From this time he became known in his native province as an indefatigable promoter of educational progress and a founder of educational institutions. His work in connection with this position obliged him to travel continually through all parts of the Province, and on these journeys he accumulated that immense mass of information concerning the geology and mineral resources of Nova Scotia, which are incorporated in his largest work, that entitled *Acadian Geology*.

Sir Charles Lyell, in 1841, on his first visit to America, met Sir William, and was by him conducted to many