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THE NOVA SCOTIA COAL QUESTION.

Premier Fielding replies to Dr. Weldon, M.P.

[The following letter from Hon. W. S. Fielding, Premier of Nova Scotia, was published in the Halifax journals, the *Morning Chronicle* and *Acadian Recorder*, on the 16th of March, 1893. The speech reviewed was made a few days earlier in the House of Commons of Canada by Dr. Weldon, member for Albert County, New Brunswick:]

SIR:

It is unfortunate for Dr. Weldon, M. P., that his appeal to the Governor-General on behalf of imaginary "Imperial interests" and the numerous rebuffs he has received from his own leader and friends at Ottawa, in connection with the Nova Scotia coal question, have so discounted his utterances on the subject that even if he had a good ground of objection to the scheme it could hardly receive the respect which would otherwise have been accorded to it. Nevertheless, as he attempted in his last speech to discuss the merits of the question, and the speech has been spread out in the pages of a friendly journal as the best possible exposition of the case against the Local Government's scheme, I propose to consider somewhat briefly his chief objections, and see how far they will stand the touchstone of fact.

I shall pass over his general denunciations of combines, which, considering the political record of the speaker, must have caused many hearers to smile; and his suggestions

of possible corruption in Provincial legislative halls, which are most untimely as applied to the case of Nova Scotia. Nor shall I make more than a passing reference to his mysterious and "confidential" information of an imaginary conference at Boston last December between Mr. Whitney, Mr. Van Horne, a Mr. McLeod and Mr. Fielding, at which this coal business is supposed to have been settled. On that point I shall only suggest that if the member for Albert is to draw so freely on his somewhat unwholesome imagination he should at least use some skill in designing his plots. The introduction into his story of a mysterious December conference to bring about an agreement that had been signed, sealed and delivered more than six months before is, to say the least, a very clumsy kind of romance, and not calculated to establish the doctor's reputation as an artist in his line.

UNCALLED FOR CHAMPIONSHIP.

I cannot help remarking on the extraordinary fact that this intense zeal on behalf of the people of the Province is manifested by a gentle-