

the cliffs and conveying it to their homes. It was somewhat akin to our smuggling traffic with St. Pierre, and rendered them liable to the seizure and confiscation of their vessels, if not worse punishment. In the meantime, numerous applications were being made to the Government, chiefly by army officers of distinction, who had served in the various wars of the period, for grants to work the coal mines.

Offers to Pay a Handsome Royalty, Establish Settlements, Build Towns, &c.,

and every inducement that could be brought forward to strengthen their applications were made, but all to no purpose. His Britannic Majesty, with the advice of the English Board of Trade, invariably refused his assent, and even went so far as to positively forbid any attempt to work the mines on an extensive scale. All this time the illicit traffic by the colonists continued to grow in proportions, till at length the Government awakened to the futility of keeping the coal locked up any longer, seeing their inability to cope with the smugglers. In 1788, the first lease for mining was granted to one Thomas Moxley. Other leases followed from time to time, all being of short duration, from seven to ten years only, and

Subject to a Heavy Royalty Per Ton.

At intervals between the expiration of one lease and the commencement of another, the Government took over the mines and worked them; but, like most enterprises of the kind worked on Government account, they did not pay, the profits being eaten up in salaries to numerous and unnecessary officials. It does not appear that the private speculators derived much profit either in their attempts to mine the coal, for nearly all of them failed to carry out the terms of their leases. This is not a matter to cause much astonishment, however, when it is considered they were obliged to pay from three to four shillings sterling per ton royalty, and were at the same time

Compelled to Sell for About Ten or Eleven Shillings per Ton.

All this has long past now, and the coal industry of the tight little island of Cape Breton is established on a per