

the "*dens ex machina*." He was anxious to see the Whitney project carried through to a successful issue, foreseeing as he did, that, apart from any advantage his Treasury might derive from the amalgamation, introduction of millions of foreign money to work the mines to an extent impossible under the existing state of affairs, was just what was wanted by the Province in general and Cape Breton in particular. The result of negotiations between Mr. Fielding and the Whitney syndicate, as it had come to be styled, was that, in return for a 99 year lease of the areas they might acquire, the syndicate agreed to pay the Government a fixed and unalterable royalty of 12½ cents per ton, and furthermore, as an evidence of *bona fides*, and to stifle the voices of the prophets of evil who were loudly vociferating that the Philistines were upon them, and that the mines, as soon as purchased, would be closed down in the interests of Pennsylvania coal barons; they undertook to pay this rate of royalty upon the largest quantity of coal produced in any one year up to that time by all the mines they proposed to operate, as a minimum annual contribution to the Provincial coffers, no matter if they failed to ship that quantity. This legislation once agreed upon, all was comparatively plain sailing. The syndicate had purchased options upon all the principal properties, and the majority of them were taken over and paid for in the early days of 1893, to wit, the International mines, (and with them the Black Diamond line of five steamers), the Caledonia, Glace Bay, Gowrie, Gardiner and Old Bridgeport, (which, a short time before had been acquired by the International Coal Company), while the "Reserve" property was secured by means of purchasing sufficient stock on the London market to give the syndicate a control of it. The options upon the two collieries of the General Mining Association were continued throughout 1893, with the eventual result that the Victoria Colliery was taken over on the 1st January, 1894, while it was decided not to acquire the Old Sydney mines, which, therefore remains the only independent colliery of any size on the Island. Meanwhile, the syndicate legislation of Mr. Fielding had been bitterly opposed by the Conservatives, and the curious spectacle was presented of a commercial undertaking, promising results of a magnitude unparalleled in the history of the Province, being promoted and opposed on the simple lines of party politics. Mr. Fielding's guns, however, were too heavy and the legislation passed both houses. The Whitney syndicate had now broadened out into the Dominion Coal Company Ltd., with a board of directors, including Mr. Whitney, of course, as president, his brother-in-law, Mr. Dimock, the Messrs. Winsor, (representing the interests of Kidder, Peabody & Co., who acted as financial agents in floating the company), and Mr. F. S. Pearson, together with such substantial Canadian representatives as Sir Donald A. Smith, Sir W. C. Van Horne, and Mr. Hugh McLennan, of Montreal, while Mr. W. B. Ross, of Halifax, was added as the legal member of the board. Mr. John S. McLennan, who had been so conspicuously successful as the managing director of the International Coal Company, and than whom no one, if we except Mr. Whitney himself, had played a more important part in the later stages of the new company's development, became treasurer, and Mr. B. F. Pearson, who had acted from the start as Mr. Whitney's agent and political lobbyist, was rewarded with the post of secretary. Mr. F. S. Pearson, in addition to having a seat on the board of directors, was named engineer in chief, while the important appointment of resident manager was offered to and accepted by Mr. David McKeen, M.P., up to that time, and for many years past, manager of the Caledonia mines. Many people fancied and perhaps fancy still, that a younger man of modern ideas and altogether of a more pronounced "*fin de siècle*" type, might more fitly have been chosen to engineer a large concern of this kind, but it has been and still is our opinion that the choice was in many respects a wise one. Mr. McKeen is a man of remarkable originality and determined will, while the history of his past career supplies abundant evidence of shrewd ability and foresight. "*Festina lente*," might very appropriately be adopted by him as a motto, and his pronounced conservatism and distrust of new-fangled notions have acted as a very effectual and salutary brake upon younger and more ardent

spirits, who had framed a programme for his execution, calling for 10,000 ton steamers, shafts with a daily capacity of 5,000 tons, and loading dock rivalling Cardiff in cost and magnitude—all to be provided within a short space of time and before markets had been found for the boundless store of coal to be produced. When Mr. McKeen disapproves and disagrees he does so with a blunt outspoken frankness which is in the highest degree disconcerting to anyone holding and propounding views opposed to his own, and he may be trusted to drive his arguments home with a force well nigh irresistible. For him as is well known the sun has risen and set for many years at the Caledonia colliery, and it has cost him a considerable effort to enlarge his horizon and to extend a sympathetic embrace to the other, and, in some instances, larger collieries which are now under his management. But if he falls short of a thoroughly comprehensive grasp of the reins of management, he can be relied upon to discourage and frown down any rash and immature experiments, avoiding extravagant changes as much as possible, and working on and up with characteristic Scotch caution and cannieness. At the time the new company assumed control of its property, arrangements for the year's business had in many cases been already made, and it was confident that little or nothing could be done in 1893 in the way of new developments. As a matter of fact work was carried on throughout last year pretty much on the old lines, and the only new work of any importance that was undertaken, was the extension of the International Railway in the direction of Louisburg *via* Glace Bay and Cow Bay. This work was actively pushed on under the superintendence of Mr. Hiram Donkin, who had already made his mark in Cape Breton as the constructor of the I. C. R. extension from Point Tupper to Sydney, with the result that the line was opened for traffic to Glace Bay at the close of last year, when the season of navigation had terminated. Several important developments and changes were taken in hand, notably the practical re-building of the old International shipping pier on Sydney Harbor, which was to be replaced by a new structure containing the latest contrivances for shipping coal with the maximum of despatch and the minimum of breakage; the sinking of a large shaft (Dominion No. 1) on the line of the Company's railway near Bridgeport, to win coal from the popular Phelan seam, and the erection of a new heapstead, with the most up-to-date hoisting and screening arrangements, at Caledonia, and to a less important degree at Old Bridgeport also. It cannot be denied that the prosecution of these works has been attended by a considerable amount of disappointment and disillusion. The difficulties under which outdoor work is carried on in Cape Breton during the winter months, could not have been correctly gauged by the powers at Boston, and it was evident when navigation opened in 1894, that the management had attempted to do too much at one time. The new pier was still in an embryonic state, presenting difficulties which had never been experienced even in shipping from its much despised predecessor, and the two collieries, to which so much had been done and from which so much was expected, were not only ready to produce coal but remained unproductive for a considerable time after the season of active shipping had commenced. Moreover the new and elaborate hoisting and screening arrangements with which they were eventually equipped, developed the habit of running amuck at frequent intervals, and the result, therefore, has been very far from showing any advantage gained over the old methods, either in the cost of production or the quantity of coal shipped. It is not our business to surmise as to whose shoulders the blame of these failures and delays should rest upon, but we do no one an injustice in hazarding the conjecture that a great deal of the new work was somewhat too experimental in character and that the new management made the mistake of presuming that the changes they had planned could be effected with as much ease in Cape Breton as in America; and mindful of the facts that materials had to be imported from great distances, that the climate in winter renders work very difficult and uncertain, and finally that the local mechanics, good and reliable men as they undoubtedly are, could hardly be expected to adopt themselves immediately to revolutionary ideas and methods. But