

## PREFATORY OBSERVATIONS.

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IN submitting the following Charters to public notice, the intention is to offer a few observations upon them, with a view that the rights of the Earl of Stirling, derived from the Grants therein contained, may be more generally known.

By those Charters, the King constituted Sir William Alexander, the great-great-grandfather of the present Earl of Stirling, Hereditary Lieutenant, Admiral and Justice-General of the country; gave him the appointment of all public officers, as well civil as ecclesiastical and military, with power to enact laws as nearly as possible in conformity to the laws of Scotland; and with the very special privilege, that no appeal should lie from the judgments given in any of his courts to any other tribunal out of the country. But it is not here necessary to recite all the particular powers, privileges, and immunities granted to him, or the extent and boundaries of the country, inasmuch as they are most amply set forth in the Charters, and may be seen with reference thereto. It may therefore suffice to observe, that although his family have not for a long time claimed the exercise of the high offices, or the actual appropriation of the unlocated lands, the various causes for the omission are of such a nature, as not to have deprived them of their right of inheritance.

The situation of Nova Scotia, with reference to its prosperous state, is very different to what it was before the retrocession made by the French at the Peace of Paris in 1763, and the value of the country, as such, has become more important for him to consider, now that he finds the British Government in the act of assuming an ownership over those lands, which, as waste or unsettled, have never been heretofore disposed of by his predecessors, and consequently remain his property, for those purposes to which he may be inclined to allot them.

In all the controversies between Great Britain and France, affecting their respective American territories, the first settling of Nova Scotia by Sir William Alexander, and the Charters granted to him, were always brought forward to assert and maintain the British rights, and Nova Scotia was always demanded as a province which had been usurped by the French, but

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