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Published by Ronald Caplan on 1984/6/1

capital would employ their money in an undertaking of magnitude under a lease of five or seven years; and it is equally certain that, without capital, the mines could not be worked with profit. An intelligent foreigner, the Abbe Raynal, in his "History of the Commerce of the West Indies," had pointed this out, so far back as the year 1781, when he asserted that nothing but capital was wanted to open the mines of Cape Breton, and make them sources of profit both to the colony and the adventurers, as an advantageous mart would be found in the islands and on the continent of America, where the dearth of wood was already experienced. It will be seen that the mines, after struggling through many difficulties, fell at length into the hands of parties provided with ample capital, and that, under the guarantee of a long lease, they have, as foretold by Raynal, proved a source of profit both to the colony and the adventurers. Before we close this chapter the reader, perhaps, will peruse with some interest a short account of the system upon which the works were conducted in the early days of mining in Cape Breton--a system which happily has been long abandoned--as it will enable him to see how vulnerable a community is in its tracks. Some thoughtless people "just for the fun of it", use insulators for target practice. In fact, this happens a lot. I know because I'm a Power Corporation lineman, and it's my job to search for the cause of a power failure. People who shoot out insulators forget that a single shot can bring down a house, a factory, a hospital or even an entire city. That's why the Power Corporation offers rewards for information resulting in the conviction of persons responsible for damage to our property. So, if you have information concerning such an incident, please contact your local police or call the Power Corporation. I know just how important stamping out this crime is, my home is just as vulnerable as yours. Nova Scotia Power Corporation to compare it with that which now generally prevails, to the manifest advantage both of the lessees and their employees. The Sydney main seam was first opened in 1785 by driving an adit from the shore near the old wharf. (An "adit" is an almost horizontal entrance to a mine.) This adit, as it proceeded along the strike of the seam, drained all the coal lying between high-water level and the outcrop--a belt about one mile in length, with an average width of 200 yards. As the workings advanced from the shore in a westerly direction, new shafts were sunk at intervals of about 200 yards, so that the length of haulage from the faces of the bords, or rooms, to the bottom of the shaft never exceeded that distance. The bords were intended to be six yards wide, separated by pillars of four yards, driven parallel with the adit or level; but this parallelism was rarely maintained, and it was not unusual to find the bords seven or eight yards, and the pillars only two or three yards, wide. As a natural consequence, the pillars, being too weak to bear the weight of the superincumbent strata, were crushed in and entirely lost; whereas, if they had been left sufficiently strong, at least three-fourths of the coal which they contained might have been saved. The coal was worked by "holing" across the bord in the middle, "sheering" the sides, and breaking it down by wedging. As no separation of large and small



was made, the same price being paid for the whole, the colliers had no interest in making as much large coal as possible, so that before it left the face of the bord the proportion of large coal obtained did not amount to two-thirds of the whole. (The workmen were mostly young Irishmen who had been employed in the Newfoundland fisheries. Having earned enough for their purposes, some purchased crown land in Cape Breton, others proceeded to the United States, but very few remained any length of time at the mines. There were, consequently, very few skilled colliers regularly employed at the mines.) The coal was hauled in "two-bushel" tubs, upon small iron-shod sledges, over a roadway formed of round poles two to

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