

CHAPTER XXVI.

Progress and Resources of Nova Scotia.—Highland Settlers.—Timber Duties.—Cobequid Hills.—Conflagration of Forests.—Albion Mines.—Humming Birds.—Estuary of the Shubenacadie.—Stakes cut by Beavers.—Promotion of Science.—Social Equality.—Nova Scotians “going home.”—Return to England.

THE day after my arrival in Nova Scotia, a fellow-passenger in the coach from Halifax to Windsor, a native of the country, and who, from small beginnings, had acquired a large fortune, bore testimony to the rapid strides which the province had made, within his recollection, by deploring the universal increase of luxury. He spoke of the superior simplicity of manners in his younger days, when the wives and daughters of farmers were accustomed to ride to church, each on horseback behind their husbands and fathers, whereas now they were not content unless they could ride there in their own carriage.

In spite of the large extent of barren and siliceous soil in the south, and, what is a more serious evil, those seven or eight months of frost and snow which crowd the labours of the agriculturist into so brief a season, the resources of this province are extremely great. They have magnificent harbours and fine navigable estuaries, large areas of the richest soil gained from the sea, vast supplies of coal and gypsum, and abundance of timber.