

Down North and Up Along



WAITING FOR THE TIDE

Down North and Up Along

By

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etc.

With Illustrations



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*The illustrations in this book are from photographs by Amelia M. Watson,
Edith S. Watson, and Frank G. Warner.*

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Down North and Up Along

I

DIGBY

THE St. John River runs uphill. Not through its whole course, and not all the time. Still, it runs uphill, as one can readily see by standing at high tide on the bridge that crosses its mouth at the town of St. John, and watching the water rush like a mill-race up from the Bay of Fundy into the land, where it pours over rocks in cascades that fall the wrong way.

Aside from this eccentricity, the St. John is an orderly and very beautiful stream, winding in its course and bordered by lovely headlands.

From St. John, New Brunswick, to Digby, Nova Scotia, is a three or five hours' sail, according to the condition of the "St. Rupert's" steam cylinders, that humorous vessel having a way of blowing one or more of them out just before the hour of starting.

The way from St. John to Digby lies across the Bay of Fundy. What better port of entry to a new country could be desired than the

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sounding Bay of Fundy, with the high tides of one's childhood's geography still beating on its shores?

And then the thrill of mingled indignation and satisfaction with which one suddenly discovers the English flag over one's head instead of the stars and stripes! Indignation thus to be sailing under a foreign flag in one's own country, as it were, but satisfaction to have reached foreign soil with so little effort. One always observes with regret that the English flag is far more beautiful than the stars and stripes,—for no amount of loyalty can blend a stripe of red and then of white into a harmony truly grateful to the eye.

The Bay of Fundy cannot be described as an exciting spectacle on that calm August day when first we saw it. Indeed, it very much resembled any other expanse of water, and if its tides are beyond all reason we did not perceive it then.

We came sailing through the Digby Gut at sunset, the clear waters of Fundy behind us, the Annapolis Basin opening dream-like in front, while to the right the bold front of Beaman's Mountain, and to the left the abrupt termina-

Digby

tion of North Mountain, narrowed the Gut to its present mile-wide channel, holding it in sure rocky bonds that no monster tides nor winter storms could unloose.

If the gods are propitious, when the traveller sails through Digby Gut he will have a clear sky under which the Annapolis Basin will lie blue, and in the distance misty, defined by the pleasing outlines of its purple-blue hills. On the right Digby will lie, so dream-like and lovely that one fears to draw near, lest it vanish and a commonplace village take its place.

If the gods are wholly inclined to favour the traveller, he will approach Digby, not only at sunset, on a clear day, but at low tide as well. Then the village that in the distance was a vision of wonderful blues and purples will not grow commonplace as he comes near, for he will forget all about it.

By the time he is close enough to discover its unpoetical and actual state his attention will be centred upon the wharf that towers high above the smoke-stack of the steamer as it comes alongside it. Far above the passengers' heads a heavy wall of planks is hung with wet

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seaweeds and painted deep browns and greens by the ocean, while clusters of barnacles add their gray and white to the strange decorations. There is a strong salt smell in the air, that fragrance of seaweed that always brings loving memories of landing on distant shores.

The "St. Rupert" did not seem so small a saint until we came under this giant sea-tapestried wharf and saw the people above leaning over and peering down into the depths where we wallowed in the sea. And we saw no method short of flight which could raise us to their level.

I expected M., my artist friend, who is timid in the face of high places, to look worried over the situation; but no, she was as serene as a May morning. The wharf was picturesque, hence so commonplace an emotion as fear was no luxury here, and she left the responsibility of landing to the English government while she enjoyed the novel scene to the utmost.

High wharves have their own secrets, we were to learn, as the boat with much puffing and snorting and rope-pulling finally swung about and we discovered ourselves close to a landing within the pier. Beneath one side of



Digby

Digby

it a wedge had been cut out, the narrow end on shore, and the wide one out in the water under the wharf. The opening thus formed was heavily planked within, and we crossed the gangway into a cavern slimy and strange.

The floor upon which we stepped was damp, barnacles encrusted the beams at the sides and overhead, while green, brown, and yellow seaweeds hung on the walls, and a large starfish with his arms wrapped about a stone appeared to be gazing knowingly at us out of one round cyclopean eye, which, alas! was no eye at all, and we knew that in spite of his wise look he was as blind as a mole.

There was a strong clean odour of the sea in this strange cavern, and we heard some one near say that at high tide the place upon which we stood would be thirty feet under water. So this giant wharf was a tribute to the tides of Fundy!

We had a sudden wish to get out; we imagined the tide coming in—swiftly, surely; concealing the existence of this hole in the side of the pier; the surface of the water sparkling in the sunlight twenty feet higher than the roof of the dark cavern.

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Strong horses, drawing low-swung trucks, came tramping down the incline. There was a crowd of people making their way toward the oblong space of light at the top. We joined the throng, and as we reached the top turned and looked back.

Above us were great jointed timbers forming a rude arch; within was the half-lighted cavern with its sea-painted walls. It was a strange sight and one that often afterward drew us to the wharf when the tide was low at the hour of landing. Up out of the sea-cavern poured a stream of people; dim in the background was a pool of water where the blind starfish clasped its stone and waited for the incoming tide.

The people seemed to be coming up out of this water, and they should have been streaming with seaweed and clad in scales.

We were not disappointed in Digby. It is not the dream city that we saw from the boat, but it is good. Its houses are commonplace and uninteresting. Still, we found it good to be in Digby. Its location, the buildings standing on one long street under a hillside, reminds one of Provincetown, but the sand-hills of that

Digby

fishy place of delight are lacking here ; this hillside is sodded with the most brilliant green, and groups of trees grow upon it.

At present life is simple in Digby. The "Americans," as they call us of the United States, have not yet invaded it enough to spoil its simplicity. But it is only a question of time when fair Digby will belong to the summer tourist. Now it is in possession of the codfish. Everywhere through the village, which straggles in a way to make compensation in part for its crimes in architecture, are to be seen rows upon rows of "flakes," covered in fair weather with the triumphant form of the cod, with reinforcements of the less-esteemed haddock, hake, and pollock.

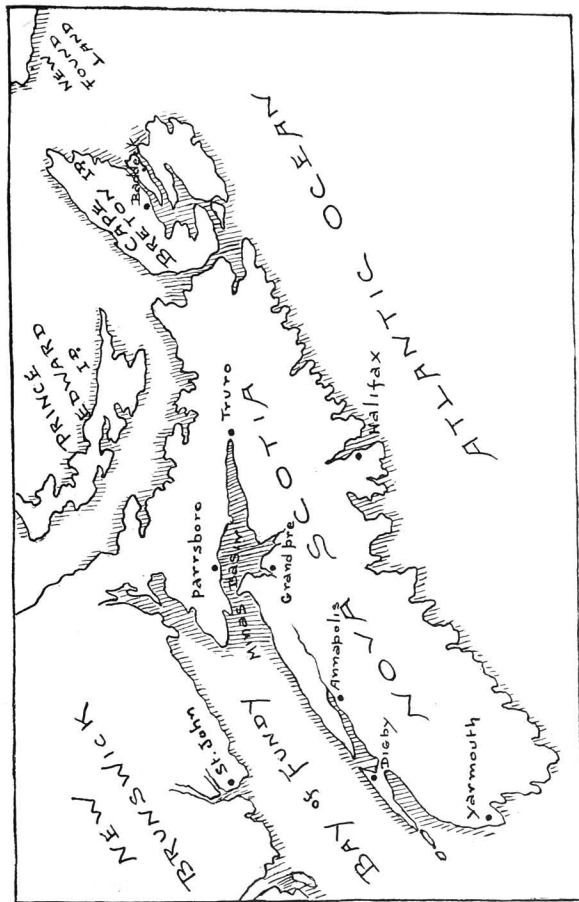
The codfish flakes are the same here as on Cape Cod, the same gray skeletons built of slats laid across long side-pieces, like wide, close-runged ladders placed parallel to the earth and supported two feet or so above it.

One likes codfish flakes, just as one does old houses and old-fashioned posy-beds. They give character to a place, and they always select the most picturesque corners and fields in which to exhibit themselves. They cling to the

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shores, pre-empt all unoccupied places about the wharves, and cluster about the cottages of the poor. They are seldom level, but pursue a wavy, uncertain course, as though, gray and decrepit, they were about to give up mortal strife and settle in peace to the earth beneath. And then the odour of them! Anyone who does not love the faint fragrance that clings to the gray old flakes has no kinship with the ocean.

During the summer months upon the flakes lies the wealth of Digby. Here the codfish is spread out to dry. The time of greatest ignominy as well as of greatest picturesqueness for a codfish is during its season of drying upon the flakes. It may then be sat upon or stood upon and otherwise misused. It loses its identity completely, and nobody feels the slightest obligation to show it respect. It has lost its fishly and elegant proportions; it is flat, shrunken, saturated with salt, and lies, acres of it, spread out on its flakes to render to the strong sea-breezes and the heat of the sun the last remnant of water in its withered form. It gives a quaint colouring to the landscape and fills the air with its own



NOVA SCOTIA

Digby

inimitable fragrance, — the fragrance that lingers about the flakes when its form is no longer there. It sends forth a clean appetising odour very different from the fishy incense that pervades Provincetown, that mingled odour of fresh, stale, and salt fish with a flavouring of tar and bilge-water, the memory of which pursues the stranger, but does not fill him with emotions of delight.

The memory of the fragrant Digby fish-flakes is a pleasure. Digby is so exquisitely clean, the air from Fundy is so abundant and clear, that the only rivals to the odour of the drying cod are the salt smell of the seaweeds at low tide and the fragrance from the surrounding flower-gardens.

Whether the sailor men like it or not, they are obliged to keep ship and wharf clean when in Digby. The law gives them a sharp prod in the form of a fine if they grow negligent.

The great winds are a wholesome purifier of both ship and town, but even so, the cleanliness of the fishing-schooners as they come in loaded is something of a surprise. It is something of a surprise too to see the cod put through his phases, from the shining fish that comes

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in on the schooners to the dull triangular form that appears on the flakes.

One thinks of the pitchfork as an implement of the farm; it bears upon its prongs suggestions of new-mown hay and golden straw, but here at Digby its real meaning is apparent. It is Neptune's trident with one of the prongs lost in the vortex of time. It is used, of course, in its proper field, — to pitch codfish. Out of the ship's hold the shining forms are tossed as a farmer's boy tosses a sheaf of grain.

They have already, while on shipboard, gone through their first sad experiences, and now, headless, heartless, and saturated with salt, though still with shining skins, they are pitchforked from the hold to the deck. Another trident-bearer then pitchforks them to the wharf. Here they are pitchforked to the wooden cradle in which they are weighed. From the cradle they are once more pitchforked into a great quivering heap on the wharf. Thence they are pitchforked into wheelbarrows and wheeled to the store-room, where they are pitchforked into vats and resalted.

As the cod receives his last pitchforking you examine him, expecting to find him riddled

Digby

with holes and as ragged as Rip Van Winkle's old coat at the end of his twenty years' sleep on the mountain. But here is matter for reflection. Try your best you cannot find a hole in him. He bears a charmed anatomy. He must certainly have been constructed with special reference to being pitchforked.

There is a fiction about his getting a scrubbing when he reaches land. This is a treatment which, to the observer, he appears to need several times before he is finally considered "cured." But he gets it only once, one scrubbing, like a plenary indulgence, evidently being thought sufficient to wipe away future as well as present stains. There are reasons for conjecturing that the scrubbing is sometimes omitted altogether, and that he is introduced to his flakes with the manifold marks of his captivity upon him.

He rests awhile in the vats of salt into which he was finally pitchforked, then is taken out and "press-piled" for a few days. This is not as bad as being pitchforked. It is merely being piled up, tail in and shoulders out, into a round mound by the fish-flakes. These mounds of penitent cod are a part of the

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picturesqueness of the actual life of the flakes. There is now no more pitchforking; that ordeal at least is over.

The fish are spread upon the flakes by hand, and the operator becomes very expert in shying a dried cod into exactly the right spot. An expert will shy cod half the length of a long flake and never make a miss.

Here they lie in the sun to be blown upon by the kindly winds, and if these winds prove unkindly and blow upon the patient cod dust from the road and soot from the chimneys, that is but a slight vicissitude in the life of a dried codfish which nobody minds.

When night comes the cod are gathered up into piles on the flakes and covered over. In the morning they are spread out again. This is repeated every fair day until they are dry enough, when they are put into the picturesque press-piles again to await transportation to distant markets. Such is the history attached to the fragrant flakes, and such is the occupation of Digby.

Nothing looks less likely to produce a large income than a pile of dried codfish, perhaps with an old coat hung over it, that being the

Digby

handiest way of disposing of the garment until needed. Yet these thin, gray, misshapen spectres have an incredible amount of good meat packed under their shrivelled skins, and they bring in many thousands of dollars to the industrious fisher-folk.

Nor, while we are upon the subject, is dried fish the sailor's only revenue from the prodigal cod. Upon the decks of the ships are great odorous vats full of livers from which the sun's rays are economically extracting the oil.

Fish oil once encountered is very lasting, and is not readily forgotten—or forgiven. The cod-liver oil of the apothecary is a fragrant delicacy compared to the contents of the vats as they come frothing in from the fishing grounds.

Then there are the “sounds,” as the sailors call the swim-bladders. They too are saved, and having been dried in the sun go to the manufacturer to come forth as gelatin, or perchance as glue. “Fried fresh sounds and cods' tongues” form a delicacy highly prized by the fisher-folk and not to be scorned by the discriminating stranger.

The sounds are sent to the United States,

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mostly to Boston, and the oil too is sent to the United States, to heal her consumptives and grease her machinery, but the cod himself takes his last sea-voyage from Digby to the West Indies.

The West Indians must have an unappeasable appetite for dried codfish, judging from the quantities reputed to be sent there. Every week-day Digby prepares codfish for the West Indians, but not on Sunday. Those who think it a sin for cod to dry on Sunday have raised a bulwark about weak humanity that might be tempted, by imposing a fine upon the public appearance of the cod on the Lord's day.

This information was given M. by an owner of cod-flakes who was out one Sunday morning in quest of his cow. The good man was in his work-a-day clothes, which made him feel ashamed. He apologised for not being dressed up as became a respectable man on Sunday, saying he did not expect to meet with ladies.

This little incident well illustrates the condition of the people here, and the feeling of self-respect that seems to animate every one.

While the cod may not appear upon Sunday without causing disgrace to his owner, still,



SOUNDS DRYING

Digby

there are exceptions to all rules, M.'s apologetic Sabbath-breaker owned, and she thereupon learned that the limit of Digby's piety is the condition of her codfish, for if there should be a week of bad weather, and the fish in danger of spoiling, they may sun themselves of a Sunday without injury to the souls of their owners.

M.'s informant was himself a member of the Church of England, because, as he explained, the "English" were not as strict as the Baptists and Methodists. He did not think it was wicked to sketch on Sunday, a statement which comforted M. greatly, as she was engaged at the time in that sinful Sunday occupation.

II

CANNON FIELD

IN Digby the temptation to sketch is constant, M. says. One wants to be at it all the time. There are a few, a very few picturesque houses, but it is the coast itself, the queer high wharves, the fish-flakes, the storehouses, the old apple-trees on Cannon Field, and the numberless views on every hand outside the village that appeal to one most.

Cannon Field is a place easy to be discovered without help, but it does not detract from its merits to have it enthusiastically pointed out by a small boy whose peculiar anatomy is explained when he proceeds to unload from blouse and pockets several quarts of live snails which he deposits at your feet that he may the better instruct you upon the topography of Digby and criticise your sketch of a neighbouring wharf. The small boy is always present when one sits down to paint, and often he is not unwelcome, particularly if he informs his hearers, as this one did, with a pride quite justi-

Cannon Field

fiable, if the statement were correct, that his father owned the Baptist Church of Boston.

Cannon Field is to the right upon coming up from the wharf. It is at the top of a bluff whose base is washed by the sea at high tide. It is but an open grassy field, containing a group of large willows, a few gnarled old apple and cherry trees, half-a-dozen defunct cannon with their noses in the ground, and two living ones with their noses suspiciously sniffing the air of the quiet Basin.

But there is a charm about it that makes one go again and again, go and lie on the grass in the warmth of the sun or the shade of the willows, and look off over the beautiful Annapolis Basin with its one narrow, high-walled entrance at Digby Gut.

Perhaps, as you lie thus, the scattered fishermen's houses on the other shore fade from sight and the vessels in the Basin melt away, leaving rock and water and dark evergreen forest in possession. Then, perhaps, two small ships, which are not fishing schooners nor any craft that sail these waters to-day, come sailing through the Digby Gut. The men on their decks are wary and eager. Where Digby lies

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they see no town, only the scarred rock that holds back the mighty tides, the long grass-grown terrace where a town will one day lie, — a town of aliens, — the hill behind grown thick with firs; these are all that greet their eager eyes, and their two little ships sail on into the lovely land-locked Basin.

You know them well. They are the French, who scarcely three hundred years ago ventured across the broad Atlantic in those little ships of theirs. Through Digby Gut they came one fair spring morning, the first white men whose eyes had rested on those shores. In they came, the advance guard of civilisation to a new piece of the world.

The little ships sail up the Basin and out of sight behind a wooded island.

So much for the dream on Cannon Field. You rub your eyes and look about you. The Basin is dotted over with boats; the town of Digby lies on the slopes behind you. British guns point down the Basin in the direction the two little ships have gone. But they are safe. They sailed behind that island almost three hundred years ago. The British guns cannot touch them nor can aught destroy them: they

Cannon Field

are immortal, preserved in the history of three great nations.

Perhaps the tall old apple-trees on Cannon Field were placed there long ago by French hands. They are very un-American apple-trees indeed, and one is inclined to question their title to be called apple-trees at all, until among their scattered leaves are discovered unequivocal if not tempting apples.

At the foot of the bluff is the deep sea basin where the water rises and falls from twenty-eight to thirty feet, twice each day. But one does not realise the magnitude of the tides at this point. One does not realise it at all at first. The flowing of the tide is fast but gradual: the mighty basin fills, fills, until the tall pier is an ordinary wharf, with no hint of a hole in its side, and a broad sheet of water smiles and sparkles in the sun.

Through the Gut the tides come racing with frightful velocity, making the smaller boats watchful about entering, but once inside, the waters spread without much commotion and fill the great Basin to its brim.

Swiftly but gradually the waters subside, the pier grows tall, long points of shining gravel

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reach out into the water. With its seaweed-painted rocks, its purple shining sands, its bared weirs, the coast is much more picturesque, though less impressive, at low tide.

Cannon Field is a place to dream in. Romance and history have woven their bright fabrics before its very eyes. A remnant of those Indians who fill our histories in that confusing chapter known as the French and Indian Wars have their tents to the right as one faces the village, at the end of a little green lane that borders on Cannon Field. They are not there for scalps this bright summer day, but for bits of the white man's magic silver, which they hope to get in exchange for the baskets and moccasins they have woven and worked upon through the long winter.

There is a pappoose in one of the tents which the "American" ladies, with a unanimity in humour which one hopes is not national, all inquire the price of.

Digby houses are as ugly as two-story wooden cottages, with narrow façades and steep roofs, must be, and they also possess the inartistic virtues of cleanliness and new paint. Few Digby houses go to ruin for lack

Cannon Field

of paint ; consequently the town has a very new look, and presents a thrifty and well-to-do appearance as exasperating to the artist as it is doubtless gratifying to the inhabitant. But these objectionable dwellings are in part redeemed by their flower-gardens.

Fish-flakes and flowers can do much for a place, be it never so ugly, and in Digby there are flowers everywhere. The people have a pretty way of putting them wherever there is a place to hold them. One sees pots of blooming plants in the cellar windows on the main street, where the houses add to their other crimes against good taste that of opening directly upon the sidewalk. Flower-pots stand on brackets on the side of the house and often bank up two sides of the little extended entry-way.

It is pleasant to enter a house between walls of flowers, and it is pleasant to stop before the yards and interview the tangles of poppies and pinks and all sorts of bright and spicy flower-folk that do congregate in those places.

Digby flowers appear to grow for the mere joy of it, they are so bright and spicy, and crowd out the weeds with such vigour, some-

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times overflowing the garden and straggling out to the roadside. They remind one of Celia Thaxter's flowers at the light-house on the Isles of Shoals, seeming to have the same qualities of brilliancy and fragrance.

A house without flowers is the rare exception in Digby. They give character to the place and rob the cheap frame buildings of half their ugliness, and occasionally they make one charming. There is a delightful old garden almost surrounding a tiny house, facing Cannon Field. The house itself is covered with vines which are vastly more becoming than paint, and into the garden seem to have come all the sweet old-fashioned posies from long ago to now.

It is a pleasure to saunter over from Cannon Field and lean on the low fence, behind which is such profusion of bloom. The back yard, too, is a flower-garden, sharing the precious soil with the plum-trees and gooseberry bushes.

If fruits and vegetables were to flourish in Digby soil as the flowers do, the cod would have a formidable rival, but the stern earth yields its juices freely to only the coaxing root-

Cannon Field

lets of its favourites, the flowers, and the people have to send elsewhere for their cabbages. We thank the earth for this: fish-flakes and flowers belong to Digby; cabbages belong to anybody.

Digby has cherries, however. The place is full of gnarled old trees, and there are orchards of them in the country round about.

If Digby had picturesque houses, it would be almost too charming a spot for the visitor. It has two or three. They are to be found on the Racquet, an inlet running in along one side of the town. They are little gray, wide-roofed, old fisherman's houses, guiltless of paint and very much the worse for wear. Digby no doubt is ashamed of them, and they must be very uncomfortable to live in, but with their tall hollyhocks, their clustering fish-flakes, the background of water, and the distant mountain-top, they make distracting pictures.

Behind them are the wharves where the fishing-schooners come in to leave their burdens of cod. The ships sail up the Racquet in gallant style. It is a pretty sheet of water, with its curving shore-line and its background of Beaman's Mountain; and one never would sus-

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pect, after watching the laden vessels enter, that the haven they have sought is there for but a few hours at a time, by the grace of Neptune.

The Racquet, like many another bay along this coast, is a gift of the giant tides of Fundy. When the tide goes out, the ships lie on their keels in the gravel, and the hard bed of the Racquet becomes an excellent roadway for teams that wish to reach the other shore.

In the morning one may cross the Racquet dry-shod; in the afternoon laden vessels will sail over his footprints.

There are no weirs in the Racquet; but if one desire those fantastic forms, let him walk to the farther end of the town through its one long street, and there he will come upon the broad and winding Joggin. It is another tidal basin, but the receding waters do not lay it bare. Into it the fish come in shoals with the coming of the water, but at the going out of the water they remain, for the weirs have their long arms about them.

These weirs are distinguished among their kind by their simplicity. The fisherman does not lavish costly nets upon them, as is the case

Cannon Field

along the New England shore. He simply drives poles close together into the mud at low tide, about them weaves the pliant branches of trees in and out into a rude network, and to the top of the poles ties brushwood to mark the place of the weirs at high tide.

These primitive fish-snares seem to have no definite form, but straggle about here, there, and everywhere; and the Joggin, with its purple sands and grassy banks and its weirs trailing reflections in the water, is a place one loves to recall.

It is a gratification to be able to chronicle the fact that in addition to her other virtues simple Digby is still in the ox-cart period. And this, despite the "Flying Bluenose" that daily goes shrieking over the rails that have been laid in her streets. It is oxen that unload the vessels and do the hard work on the roads, and oxen that bring the country people to town.

Oxen exhale a pastoral something that affects all their neighbourhood. Go gee-hawing down Broadway with a yoke of oxen attached to a broad-tired cart, and New York herself would remember the days of her childhood,

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when Canal Street deserved its name even more than at present, when the buxom milkmaid filled her foaming pail in the Bowery. Digby is a clean, wind-blown, beflowered, and beflaked little fishing village, but when along her streets the ox-carts go rumbling and shambling, she becomes something more: she has a part in the fields and the grassy lanes as well as in the salt sea.

Digby oxen have none of the coyness and head-turnings common to their "American" kindred. They are apparently as unconcerned and stolid at the approach of a stranger as was the blind starfish in the cavern under the wharf. They turn their heads neither to the right nor to the left when in the yoke, but face front as unswervingly as if on military parade. Their eyes, which roll in the direction of the one approaching, alone betray the curiosity natural to their race. They have an un-oxlike dignity and precision of movement, which is rather impressive, and which is not wholly owing to the superior character of Nova Scotia cattle, for their ingenious masters have placed the yoke upon their heads instead of about their necks.

Cannon Field

A broad bar of wood lies across the necks just behind the horns about which it fits closely. It is held in place by strong leather straps bound tightly across the foreheads just below the horns. When oxen are thus yoked, their heads are almost as immovable as if held in a vise. The tongue of the cart, which is attached to the bar between the oxen, is held very high, on a level with or even higher than the eyes. It is amusing to see this head-gear adjusted. In order sufficiently to tighten the straps, the man must have some point of resistance, and this he finds in the face of the ox himself. He braces his knee against the broad and kindly front of his comrade and lies back on the strap with all his weight. The ox blinks calmly on and says not a word. In spite of his queer head-gear the Nova Scotia ox answers to the same lingo as does his "American" brother, and the familiar "gee, haw, back, g' long," may be heard mingling with the tinkle of his bell any hour of the day in Digby.

For each ox has his bell. It is an agreeable bell with a pleasant tinkle-tankle, and rather an expensive luxury, a pair of bells and their

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straps costing three dollars and a half, so the owner of an ox told us.

The Digby ox has not quite "bells on his fingers and rings on his toes, by which he makes music wherever he goes," as was the case with the young person in the nursery rhyme, but he has a bell on his neck and a little metal shoe on each of his toes, by which he makes as good music wandering about the stony byways in his hours of freedom as one frequently hears from more elaborate instruments. At least, it is never out of time or out of tune.

One need not fear meeting our friend, for he is the gentlest ox in the world; much handling has made him that. He has lost the tradition of horns as weapons, and looks upon them only as a convenience for moving heavy loads for other people.

Besides the ox-teams there are the horses drawing their low-swung trucks. If the Nova Scotian has invented his head yoke, he has certainly borrowed his truck from his brother the "American," or is it *vice versa*? for it is the same convenient means of transportation the Cape Cod man employs. The bottom of



OX WITH HEAD YOKE

Cannon Field

the cart is so swung from the hubs that it is only four or five inches from the ground, saving a great deal of strength, one should think, in loading and unloading. One wonders why the Yankee has not made more use of this idea, and why one does not see it in the flat prairie towns of the West.

What is the law that decrees certain implements and customs to be retained within certain limits? Why does the farmer in one Rhode Island county rake his hay as his forefathers were wont, and in three adjoining ones gather it speedily by means of a long rope? Why does the low-swung truck, local to Cape Cod, crop out again in Nova Scotia?

There is a tremendous *vis inertiae* in human affairs that preserves the individuality of places in spite of the levelling power of the "new civilisation." Blessings on it! Long may it preserve Digby's dusty fish-flakes and her military oxen with their tinkling bells!

It would not do to leave Digby without making the acquaintance of the famous "Digby chickens." These are not feathered bipeds, but good red herrings. They are large and oily, and their smoked skins are a beautiful golden

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bronze, played over by bright, iridescent hues. To give an idea of these when properly "kippered" would excite useless envy in the hearts of all who grasped the idea. These favoured fish are called "Digby angels" in other towns of Nova Scotia, but it is to be feared this is due to a spirit of mockery engendered by jealousy.

Reluctantly we prepared to leave Digby, and one morning found ourselves on the "Flying Bluenose," and speeding along the Annapolis Basin in the direction the two little ships had sailed so long ago.

"Bluenose" in Nova Scotia is equivalent to "Yankee" in New England. The derivation of "Yankee" is uncertain,—nobody knows exactly where it came from, nor who invented and first applied it; consequently there is a pleasant mystery about it which enables us to forget its plebeian sound and even to feel proud of any claim to the title.

But there is no reclaiming haze of mystery about the meaning of "Bluenose," though the Bluenoses themselves are frequently unable, or possibly ashamed, to explain it. One old woman told us it came from the "Flying

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Bluenose." But her daughter explained, looking askance at us, as though to make sure we were serious in our desire for information, "You ought to see us in November!"

It seems there is a "Flying Yankee" train on the "American" side; and Nova Scotia, not to be outdone by "them Yanks," started the "Flying Bluenose" on her side, which was not strictly original, though it is considered commendable, as the "Flying Bluenose" is a very good express train, running all the way from Yarmouth, on the western point of Nova Scotia, to Halifax, a couple of hundred miles away as the road runs.

Next to originality is the power to know a good thing when it is seen, and then to imitate it.

The "Flying Bluenose" crossed the high bridge just out of Digby and bore us toward one of the most interesting historic spots in North America.

It is the spot where the two French ships came to anchor, bringing the first white settlers to a new world. The place is called Annapolis now, though at its founding in 1605 it bore the name of Port Royal, and is, as every one

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knows, next to St. Augustine the oldest European settlement in North America. It seemed a pity to go hurrying by it when we saw the lovely meadows sloping to the town, their yellows, greens, browns, and reds mingling in a half summer, half autumn mood.

The grass-grown earthworks were inviting, too, and the old gray stone magazine standing in the centre gave an air of antiquity to the place. The water was out, and the red and brown sands on the shores of the Annapolis Basin lay exposed, adding their charm of colour to the scene.

But we were to see no more of Annapolis than the glimpse from the train. M. was afraid to. She wished to preserve the romance and mystery with which her imagination had enveloped it; and having recently lost the life-long mystery of the Bay of Fundy by too great familiarity with that cheery and in no way mysterious body of water, she felt that she could not afford the risk of depleting the storehouse of her imagination any farther at present.

So we went on, imagining Port Royal as it was when in possession of the French, smoking

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their lobster-claw pipes; and in spite of their precarious tenure of home and life in a country of savages, revelling through that winter of long ago and instituting the Order of the Good Time. They had their fun, but it did not last, for enemies in the mother country as well as from abroad quickly shifted the actors from one scene to another; and out of the confusion of the times there stands clearly but one poetic form, that of a woman, Madame La Tour. Perhaps she does not belong specially to Port Royal, but she does belong to the history of that time; and by her heroic deeds has earned a place in the memory of man, — a place which will be recognised when her poet arises to sing her into fame. She stands waiting, a dim figure, for the Longfellow who shall take her by the hand and place her glowing in the eyes and the hearts of the people.

The Annapolis River, which enters the head of the Basin, owes the greater part of its volume to the tide-water. Its channel is deep and gullied, as seen at low tide, and its banks are composed of sleek, shining mud that, half the time uncovered, yet never has time to dry. As we follow its course we see the ships lying

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high up on the mud banks, miles from water enough to float them.

One dropping suddenly down upon this strange sight might well wonder if the days of magic were gone, or if this withdrawal of the waters was a freak of some revengeful gnome. A few hours, however, redeems the river. Incredible as it seems, the water comes hastening in, up the long miles, until the deep gullies are full rivers and the ships are afloat and able to sail wherever they choose.

As one follows up the Annapolis Valley, North Mountain stretches its long low range against the sky at the left, while South Mountain runs parallel to it, but lower and more broken, at the right.

The Annapolis Basin lies long and narrow between the two low mountain ranges, and at its head receives the Annapolis River, which flows through the northern part of the valley, its course extending in the same general direction as that of the Basin, making the latter seem like a sudden expansion of the river.

As we finally left the river we passed over the low water-shed that separates the Annapolis from the Cornwallis Valley. The Annapolis

Cannon Field

River flows to the southwest, the rivers of the Cornwallis Valley to the northeast.

As we crossed the water-shed we entered a new world of history and romance. The confused events that cluster about Port Royal gave way to the simple peace of the Acadians, — that sense of peace which even their sad expulsion cannot quite drive from our hearts.

As we crossed that little rise of ground we neared the dike-lands of the Acadians and the home of Evangeline.

III

ACADIA

ACADIA is the original French name for Nova Scotia. It is said to come from the Indian *cadie* or *kadi*, which means "abounding in," and is often found as an affix in the names of places, as, for instance, Shubenacadie, "abounding in ground-nuts," and the euphonious and simple Apchechkumoochwakadi, "abounding in black ducks."

While "Acadia" was in a general way applied to the whole of Nova Scotia, to most minds it now has a more restricted meaning.

We think of it as that Utopia where Longfellow's Evangeline lived and loved, and whence her people were driven forth. It is a land of poetry, reclaimed from the sea by the dikes of the old Acadian farmers, and by the traveller is looked for in what is known as the Cornwallis Valley.

Poetry often vanishes in the presence of the reality, and one's first thought upon entering

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the Cornwallis Valley is very likely of the improved appearance of the apples, for along the line of the railroad they are small and uninviting, until the obscure line of water-shed that separates the Annapolis and Cornwallis Valleys has been crossed, when a notable change for the better comes over the orchards.

It was a pleasant, pastoral land through which the "Flying Bluenose" hurried us, but for some distance there was nothing remarkable about it, for we noticed no dikes until we changed cars at Kentville and were bounced along the little branch road that leads to Kingsport, which is situated on Minas Basin.

We did not go as far as Kingsport at this time, however, but stopped a mile short of there at Canning, a small village with its one long street lined on the river-side by straggling shops of a moribund aspect. Large trees and ample dooryards give Canning a pleasant and home-like look, and at the rear of the shops the Habitant River rolls restlessly back and forth.

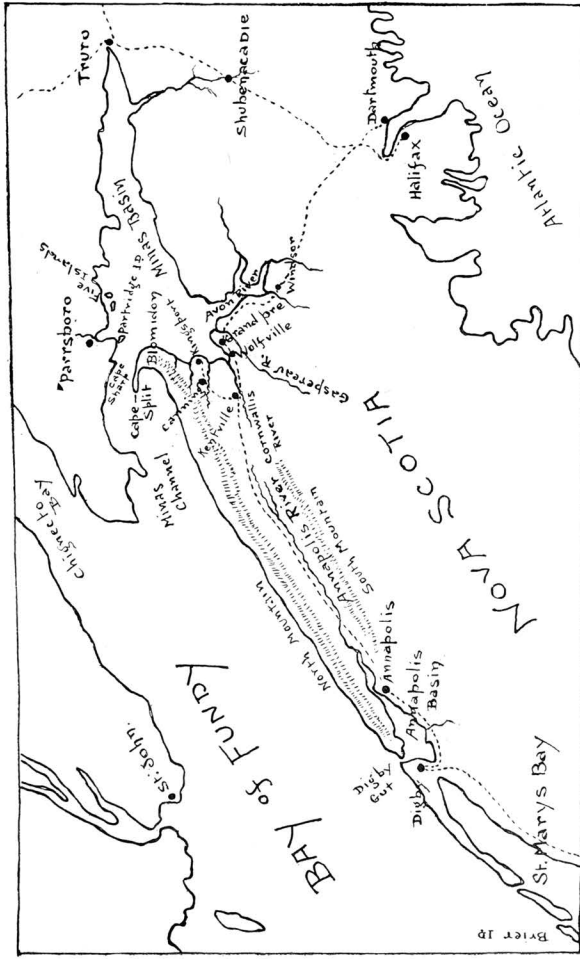
The Habitant is a tidal stream, all that is left of a once mighty flood that brought large ships to Canning's wharves. Where once the

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waters spread are level plains of great fertility, for the spade of the dike-maker has been at work, and the chastened Habitant is now a narrow stream, its winding course bordered by a narrow green embankment that in the distance looks like a line of raised embroidery traversing some gigantic pattern. Beyond the Habitant lie the reclaimed meadow-lands now dotted with haystacks.

Beyond the meadows is a lovely stretch of highlands, the termination of South Mountain. This was our first view of the dike-lands, and it took some time to realise the magnitude of what has been accomplished. In fact, it cannot be understood at this point.

The Habitant is a deep gully of red and shining mud as we saw it at low tide. Two or three small sail-boats were lying up high and dry on its rim. There was but a thread of muddy water stealing seaward, along the bottom of the gully, soon to be met and turned back by the incoming tide of Minas Basin, that twice every day fills the doomed Habitant, at its departure leaving another layer of the red ooze which is slowly but surely obliterating the channel of the river.



CORNWALLIS VALLEY

Acadia

Four miles from Canning, on a commanding spur of North Mountain, is an open space called Look Off. This is one of the best points from which to view the dike-lands, and thither we went one fair day.

North Mountain nowhere attains an altitude of more than six hundred feet, which scarcely entitles it to the name of mountain. Yet the view from Look Off is more impressive than many a scene beheld from a higher point.

North Mountain rises abruptly from the plain, so that the wide vista of the Cornwallis Valley lay a vast, fair scene before us. We looked down upon the far-reaching dike-lands of the old Acadian farmers, the scene of the tragedy and romance of their lives, the fair meadows they had stolen bit by bit from the sea an imperishable memorial of their labors.

Minas Basin, like the beautiful Annapolis Basin, is an inlet from the Bay of Fundy. It forms the northern boundary to the Cornwallis Valley; and as the tides come in, higher even than those in the Annapolis Basin, they flood the low lands and race up the river channels for many miles.

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Three tidal rivers traverse the length of the Cornwallis Valley, — the Habitant, which was the nearest to us, and was seen here and there like a ribbon of silver ; the Canard, of which we could catch glimpses ; and the Cornwallis, farthest away and largest of all, from which the whole valley gets its name.

These rivers empty into a wide bay or lagoon that encroaches upon the northern border of the Cornwallis Valley. At high tide this bay is a sheet of water ; at low tide the red sands are bare half-way to Minas, and are interspersed with blue pools and interrupted by the shining mouths of the three rivers that wind down to the sea.

The channels of the rivers are deep and narrow, and wherever they go through the fertile valley the patient dikes accompany them, winding and turning with the winding and turning of the rivers, unbroken banks of green grass, frail enough to look at when one thinks of their mission, yet trusted sentinels to keep back the water until even Fundy's mighty rush has been conquered, and the diked rivers are slowly being silted full and themselves help to form a barrier against the incoming tides.

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Much of the northern part of the Cornwallis Valley, which for many miles is mostly low-land, and was originally salt marsh, has been reclaimed from the sea, and in many places the farm-land still lies below high-water mark.

The reclaimed land has not been the work of a moment nor of a generation. The valley we see to-day is not the valley the Acadians first looked upon, nor yet the valley from which they were finally expelled. Their successors have as steadily plied the diking spade as they did themselves, and the work of reclaiming new land is still going on wherever opportunity offers. The breaking of a dike means inundation and devastation to the land with a loss of two or three years' crops, as it takes the earth that long to recover from the taste of the salt water.

Standing on Look Off we saw the general outlines of the valley as it is to-day, and saw, too, in a large way, the method of its emergence from the bottom of the sea. For winding here and there were gently rounded gullies down which now ran streams of trees and bushes, but which once were water-courses where the retreating tides drained back to

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Minas. Little by little the dikes encroached upon the sea, cutting off first one, then another of these tidal streams, until only their forms are now left to tell the story of what they once were.

The Cornwallis Valley was aglow with colour the day we saw it from Look Off, — yellow stubble of oats and barley mingled with patches of bright red and of vivid green where vegetables were growing, while apple orchards everywhere lent their dark green, and clumps of firs added their black to the scene.

Scattered about were villages nearly hidden by trees, while detached houses looked like toys in the fields. Canning's spires showed over her tree-tops, and Kingsport lay in full view on the shore of Minas Basin.

In the distance, beyond the shine of the Cornwallis River, lay Grand Pré, the scene of the Great Expulsion, the home of Evangeline, the central point of interest for all that region. We looked at the blur on the distant hillside which we were told was Grand Pré, with a rush of emotion. For a moment the poetry and romance of the past replaced the prose of the present. But our thoughts soon returned to

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the actual scene before us: the opening of the five rivers was a fairy picture, so dainty was the blue and green of the water against the faint red sands.

For the three tidal rivers are not all the rivers we see from our high place. From behind a long point of land in the distance over by Grand Pré shines the silvery mouth of the Gaspereaux, which flows through a valley of the same name behind the highland that far away looks so blue, and the broad mouth of the Avon makes up like a wide bay into the distant land.

At our very feet is the valley of the Pereau. But where is the river Pereau? It is where the Habitant and the Canard will one day be; for where once a tidal river guided the waters back to the sea are now green meadows.

The Pereau has been diked down to within an inch of its life and within a mile of the sea. This broad little mile-long river has a pretty curved dike across its head. It cannot reach above the dike, and it can hardly reach to it, for this stern dike has not only cut off all advance, but is the cause of the filling in of what little of the river is left. And one day

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they will build a dike yet lower, and then another and another, until the Perea River, like the Acadians themselves, will be but a name. It is very pretty at the mouth of the Perea. Red cliffs stand out in the water free from the mainland, and what banks the river has left are steep and red.

The shores of Minas are steep, and are evidently the source from which the dike-lands have received their fertile soil. The red rocks of the coast have been reduced by the irresistible force of the water to the red mud of the fields. The tide for ages has swept in, turbid with particles of the rocks it has ground to powder, and as its waters drained slowly back to the sea, red mud has been left on the plains and in the rivers.

There is talk of building a monster dike across the mouth of the lagoon into which the three tidal rivers empty, thus reclaiming a vast tract of land at one effort. If this is done, good-bye to the Habitant, the Canard, and the Cornwallis. They would be in worse plight than the Perea is now, for there would not be so much as a trace of their turbid tide-waters left. It would be a pity to obliterate

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these rivers. Queer gashes in the soil with their streams constantly turned by the goddess who rules the tides, Acadia would not be Acadia without them.

Think of having to consult the almanac or look out of the window to see whether the river that flows through your town happens to be running up stream or down, or not at all! Yet this is what the dweller in Acadia must do when he wishes to float his boat.

Fortunately for the Habitant, the Canard, and the Cornwallis, there is a good deal of red tape involved in building a new dike, so they may breathe freely for yet a time. May they long continue to run uphill, then run down, then run dry, in their present agreeable fashion! Not all of them run dry, however; some have a fresh-water stream of their own; and where this is the case they can never be diked wholly out of existence.

We had noticed very little wild life of any kind in Nova Scotia. Birds there may be in the spring, but at this time their forms were seldom seen. The most noticeable creatures were small grasshoppers with large ideas of the value of noise. Each appeared to be pos-

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essed of an indestructible pair of clappers upon which it played a resounding rat-tat-tat at short intervals. They started from under our feet at Digby and fled from before us at Look Off.

It was some time before we could really believe the loud and regular rattle came from such tiny performers. We should have liked to see them working their clappers, but could not catch them at it, nor catch them at all, they were so overloaded with suspicion, and when we were yet far away scurried off rat-tatting to yet safer distances.

It was on sunny Look Off that we made our first and only acquaintance with Nova Scotia bees. While lying on the ground we had noticed a distinct odour of honey, for which we could not account, as there were no flowers near.

At first too full of the beauties of the Cornwallis Valley to see anything else, we finally noticed numbers of tiny gray gauzy-winged bees flying about and hovering over the ground near us. The ground was perforated in all directions with round holes into which here and there a bee disappeared, her hindmost legs laden with

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balls of bright yellow pollen. It soon dawned upon us that we were lying at our ease upon a colony of bees' nests,—a position more novel than assuring. The bees did not offer to sting us, although we were sadly interfering with their domestic duties by covering up their holes.

As soon as we realised the state of affairs, we departed in as orderly a manner as was compatible with extreme haste. Curiosity, however, compelled us to dig out one of the holes. The little hole went down for some distance in a straight line and then turned and for an inch or two ran parallel to the surface, then went down for a short distance in a slanting direction. About half-way down the long gallery, we dug out Madam Bee, very much flustered, and overwhelmed with grief and indignation.

At the termination to the gallery we found a mass of pollen about as large as a white bean and enclosed in a glistening case, looking like a very delicate pupa case, and made, no doubt, from a secretion from the bee's mouth. This little object when crushed had a strong odour of honey and also a slight odour of cheese. Into this mass of nutriment the bee had doubtless deposited her egg. It must have taken a long

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time and a vast amount of hard work to dig that long gallery through the hard earth and collect that mass of pollen and honey bit by bit from distant flowers.

As we looked at the ruins of a once happy home, we felt the self-satisfied regret of the conqueror at the discomfiture of the conquered. The self-control of the bees was remarkable. They flew about us in great excitement, but their anger was not of that stinging nature which makes one so anxious to respect the privacy of bees. One flew at M. and administered a sharp admonitory rap on the cheek, but used no more pointed argument.

The Christian fortitude of these bees might have made us uncomfortably ashamed of our part in the adventure, had it not occurred to us in time that possibly the reason for their forbearance was not because they were good, but because they were stingless.

This thought recalled the picture of Humboldt sitting on the mountain-side above Caracas, where small hairy stingless bees crawled over his hands. These bees were called "Angelitos" by the natives; and we on North Mountain also met our Angelitos.

IV

ACADIA'S CROPS

THE people say, with as much modesty as the statement allows, that the land reclaimed from the sea is the most fertile in the world. One goes there, expecting he scarcely knows what in the way of luxuriant vegetation, and is astonished to find this remarkable fertility and endless boasting devoted to — hay!

Hay is no doubt a very good thing — in its way. Still, one does not expect to find it the main crop of “the richest soil on earth,” when, too, that favoured soil is decidedly limited in quantity. We were heretofore accustomed to think of hay as an agricultural product obtained from the dooryards and fence corners and a few hay-fields here and there where the land was not needed for more important crops.

There are no wheat-fields in the Cornwallis Valley; the people say they can raise wheat, but are full of excuses for not doing it. The

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truth is, wheat does not thrive as well as hay. Every effort was made to impress upon us the marvellous fertility of the soil — expressed in terms of hay. They told us they cut three tons to the acre. But they might as well have said thirty, such was our ignorance concerning Nova Scotia's favourite crop, and we neither looked nor were the least astonished. Our indifference troubled them, and from the questions they asked we suspect they feared we knew of a place in "America" where more was cut.

Before we left the Cornwallis Valley, the mists of our ignorance had been penetrated by the light of knowledge. In spite of ourselves we finally acquired a certain reverence for hay and a proper appreciation of three tons to the acre. M. was quickly reconciled to it because the stacks were so pretty, and the shorn meadow-land was lovely in the autumn landscape. It is not probable the people themselves consume hay; but what do they do with it? For there are no flocks or herds to be seen. And what else can they consume, when their broad and fertile lands are broad and fertile hay-fields? Hay and apples!

Acadia's Crops

Acadia's crop was a fragrant one at least, and if we could not at once appreciate three tons of hay to the acre, we were able to grasp the meaning of a hundred barrels of apples to the acre, which netted the farmer two dollars a barrel. That was better than raising oranges in Florida. We happened to know something about the latter occupation, and for a moment coveted Nova Scotia's orchards in exchange for certain groves whose golden hopes had never blossomed into realities.

It was something of a comfort to know the Cornwallis Valley apple-trees require almost as much petting as Florida oranges, — that they are subject to disease and parasite and have to be scrubbed and scraped, and, for all we know to the contrary, sprayed occasionally.

It had always seemed to us as though apple-trees *happened*, as though they grew by some special law of their own and asked nothing of man but room to stand in. But this is not so. If man wants fair apples, he must needs look to his trees.

The apple-trees of Acadia are not the gnarled and delightful friends of our New England childhood. They have regular rounded crowns,

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and, in spite of some wilful turnings of tough limbs, are on the whole rather conventional and strait-laced apple-trees.

The orchards have something of the regularity which so displeases at one's first sight of an orange grove. But the orchards are more picturesque than the groves, because an apple-tree, no matter how well bred, never can escape a touch of wilfulness.

Usually apple-trees growing near the sea depart very decidedly from the inland form. On the more exposed parts of Cape Cod, for instance, where they can be persuaded to grow at all, they act in a most grotesque manner. As if afraid to raise their heads for fear of having them blown off, they branch out close to the ground, and sometimes have a crown as broad as an ordinary full-grown tree and a trunk only a few inches in height.

Others, as if trying to get above the winds, or as if their fibres had been drawn out by them, grow tall and narrow with a crown that often leans away from the prevailing winds. These are the sort that make certain parts of Rhode Island so picturesque.

But the Nova Scotia apple-trees keep to

Acadia's Crops

their ancestral form as a rule, though we did see some orchards not far from Minas, where the crowns had turned over in defiance of law and order, until the branches on the lower side touched the ground. It gave them a rakish air, as though they had their hats cocked on one side, and made them look very jolly.

Apples were not ripe when we were among the orchards, but they were nearly grown, and showed what they would become. Either it pays as well to care for apple-trees as for anything else, or Nova Scotia apples are, if not, as their owners modestly claim, the very best apples in the world, yet very fine apples indeed. For, as we noticed when first seeing them, they are fair, well formed, and uniform in size. One almost never sees a gnarled or spotted apple on these trees.

The apples themselves are hard and crisp, as though they knew a thing or two, and felt the responsibility of preparing themselves for a trip to London, or to the West Indies, where they find their market. They retain their crispness when ripe, and are juicy and good in flavour, as we had opportunity to dis-

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cover later. They command higher prices at home than abroad ; at least we bought them in Baddeck at the rate of six dollars a barrel.

The Nova Scotians complain that they cannot get good apples because the best are sent to England. Discrimination against home consumers and in favour of foreign markets is not peculiar to Nova Scotia, however. One hears the same story the world over wherever the commodities of a place are exported.

We recall the apology of a Florida Cracker from whom we tried to buy some early vegetables: "We have none that are fit to eat. We shipped all the best. All that we could n't ship we fed to the pigs, and what the pigs would n't eat we ate ourselves."

London pays well where apples are good, but does not take her fruit upon faith even from her loyal provinces, as a certain farmer learned to his cost. The story goes that he shipped his apples as they grew, best and poorest together, but by some chance the best were on top. In London each barrel was tested, *lear to the bottom*, and all of his were rejected. Thus he lost his whole crop *plus* the cost of transportation, a calamity which ruined him

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past recovery. We were very sorry to hear such a story of an Acadian farmer.

Kingsport is only one mile from Canning. It is on Minas Basin and is the port whence many of the Cornwallis Valley apples are shipped.

Potatoes are also shipped from here in large quantities, and the Cornwallis Valley farmer, we were told, is the aristocrat of the Lower Provinces. His neighbours accuse him of having grown lazy under prosperity, and pretend to look scornfully upon his sloth, though one suspects this attitude is but the cloak to a secret envy.

Apples and potatoes do come easy in the Cornwallis Valley, and the necessity for work is the cause of work the world over, still, we have seen lazier people in our travels than the Cornwallis Valley farmers.

Naturally the people in this part of the country do not look with favour upon annexation. They say, "Look at the American farmer, then look at us!" One does not like to look at the American farmer and then look at them.

The farmer here is *the* man of the com-

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munity, he is rich, — in a mild way, — and he is sure of a comfortable living from his well-tilled acres. He feeds the rest of the world, and in return is allowed enough to eat himself.

In the towns, we are told, it is different. The struggle there is severe, and the people do not look with disfavour upon annexation. They have a sort of undefined feeling that annexation would somehow turn the stream of the farmer's prosperity into the coffers of the townspeople. It is very likely it would.

Kingsport is a convenient place from which to visit Parrsboro, on the other shore of Minas, as a boat runs between the two places.

It is a pity to cut the Acadian country in two by interpolating Parrsboro between the region about Canning and the Grand Pré portion, but it is very much the easier way. As the narrator, however, is not, like the traveller, influenced by considerations of time or of cost, Parrsboro shall wait its turn, and Grand Pré stand where it belongs geographically and historically.

V

GRAND PRÉ

WAS it an accident, or the kindly guidance of the Spirit of Romance that led us to enter Grand Pré on the fifth of September, the very date of the expulsion of the Acadians?

Grand Pré lies on a hillside overlooking the Cornwallis Valley, but on the opposite side of the valley from North Mountain and the Look Off. From it one sees Canning and Kentville in the distance, where they lie in their meadows between it and North Mountain.

It is a small and quiet village as one sees it to-day, its houses still stretching down one long street, as was probably the fashion of times gone by, when Grand Pré was the home of the Acadians and the thatched roofs of the farmhouses straggled from the Grand Pré of to-day to Horton's Landing on Minas' shore, a mile or more away.

The houses now are less picturesque than the Acadian homes, for their roofs are not thatched, and they do not depart often enough

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from the prim and painted Digby type to make the village as attractive as it might be. Still, the houses here are, on the whole, better than any we have yet seen, and there is many a charming sketch to be found in this, the most famous spot in the Lower Provinces, or for that matter in all Canada, for nowhere else in British America have history and poetry combined in so wonderful a manner to romanticise a place.

On a high hill at the edge of the village is a comfortable inn, once a charming old house with a quaint doorway, but now obscured and vulgarised by a new addition which has nothing to recommend it but its internal comfort and the unparalleled views from its many windows.

From this hill-top the Cornwallis Valley is seen stretching into the far distance, a vision of beauty, as it lies with the changing light on its distant meadows and its salt marshes glowing with rich colour. For not all the marshland has been reclaimed; there still are broad reaches of exquisite beauty, to delight the eye and tempt the farmer of the future to new reclamations.

Grand Pré

At one's feet lie those broad meadows of Grand Pré, for from these *prairies* the place derived its name. Far away shine the spires of the village churches.

Beyond the valley and the villages is the wall of North Mountain, stopping abruptly at Minas' deep waters, its bold front of Blomidon defying the rushing tides.

Minas Basin with its surging waters lies blue in the distance, deceptively smiling and peaceful seeming, on a fair day, like a calm spirit that nothing could perturb. Beyond Minas rise the low mountains of the Cobequid range.

Not only the Cornwallis Valley lies revealed from this favoured spot, but wide reaches of country are seen in all directions, the highlands across the Gaspereaux vying in loveliness with the beautiful valley.

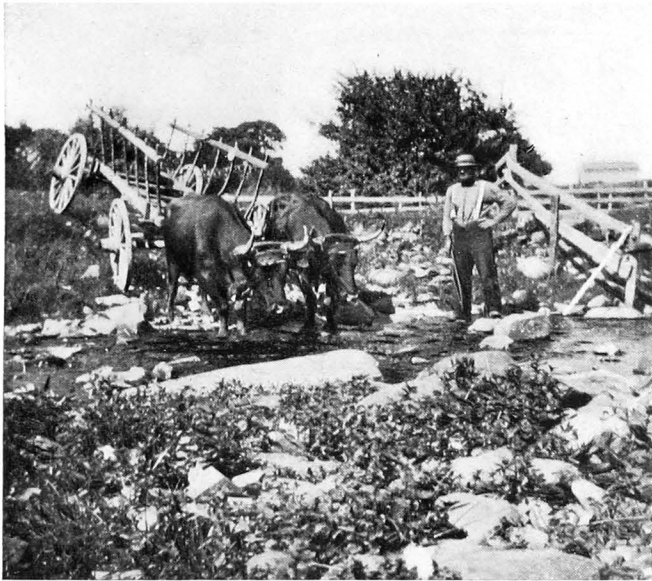
Meadow-land and orchard, barley and oat fields, smile before the doors of Grand Pré much as they did in the old times. Only then there were wheat and flax fields ; and flocks of sheep and herds of horses and cattle were also far more numerous, if the stories of those old times are true. To-day the people get their

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wheat and linen elsewhere, and the flocks and herds for the most part find pasture in more distant and less fertile places.

Many of the houses of Grand Pré are shingled to the ground, and some are moss-grown and gray as well, and the village has a certain distinction from the tall columns of Lombardy poplars that stand about. These poplars were brought by the French from their home across the sea; and wherever in Nova Scotia one sees these tall straight trees, he may be sure that they mark the site of what was once an Acadian village.

At Grand Pré, too, are the Acadian willows, not only picturesque in themselves, but wearing an air of romance and poetry that enriches the whole scene. It is hard to believe we live in the things of to-day in the presence of the willows of Grand Pré. There are a few very old and very decrepit ones on the road leading from the railway station toward the town. They can be regarded with unstinted emotion and unbridled imagination, for there can be no doubt that they were really put there by French hands as much as a hundred and fifty years ago, and have witnessed the tragic scenes that make



AT THE END OF THE DAY

Grand Pré

the history of this part of the country so memorable.

But it is in a meadow upon which the railway station faces that the interest of to-day chiefly centres. Across a wide field is to be seen a row of willows, and near them is an old French well, of course called Evangeline's well. There is no question about the antiquity of the well. It is as genuine as the willows, and if the pilgrim wishes to touch its sacred water with his finger-tips one does not see how harm could follow. But the stranger who gazes into the depths of the well will think twice before he follows the advice of certain sentimental guide-books and drinks from the sparkling waters that once had kissed Evangeline's lovely lips.

Either the water has changed since the well was dug — at this period of time it may need cleaning — or else it was used to water the cattle. It is not a large well nor a deep one, and the walls are of stone. When we saw it, it had no cover, two or three boards being laid crosswise to prevent the unwary from tumbling in, or, it may be, to mark its site for the curious and eager pilgrim.

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Not far from the well are what are supposed to be the foundations of buildings, one of which is said to be the site of the very chapel in which the Acadian men were imprisoned.

Not long since some blacksmith's tools were dug up near here, which of course fired the imaginations of all who heard of it, and it was at once averred the site of the village smithy had been discovered, doubtless the very spot where Basil the blacksmith wrought.

Some one in Grand Pré, we were told, has a collection of old French relics which he is willing to show to any one interested.

The field in which lies the well is traversed by foot-paths worn by the coming and going of visitors. In some parts of the world this field would be enclosed and an entrance fee charged; but so simple a means of amassing wealth has not occurred to the "lazy" Cornwallis Valley farmer who owns it. He simply works the land the sight-seer has not tramped down too hard to be worked, and leaves this field to the fate it has brought upon itself.

There is another clump of very large willows in the well-meadow, near the fence by the

Grand Pré

station. They are veterans indeed of the most fantastic forms and positions, some of them having literally lain down in order to endure the press of years a little longer.

But the finest willows in Grand Pré border an old roadway, which now runs through the middle of a farm, and which is fenced in with barbed wire. This roadway is near the field of the well, and the owner of it cordially pointed it out and invited us to walk through it, instructing us concerning a hole in the fence through which we could enter without difficulty.

This way of the willows was charming. They were mighty willows, hollow and twisted. The limbs were as large as the trunks in some cases, and they were pervaded with a flower-like fragrance which we had never noticed in willows before, unless perhaps in blooming-time in the spring. This odour came from the leaves, and we wondered if it might be the exhalations of poetry.

The old roadway is broad and in some places seems to have been elevated. There are piles of stones near it which are doubtless the remains of the foundations of old French houses. There is a pervading sense of peace

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about the quiet fields and these worn old trees, which harmonises with our conceptions of Acadian life.

From Grand Pré to Horton's Landing is a pleasant walk of about a mile, but pleasanter than Horton's Landing itself is a grassy lane near there, which ends at a stile upon which one can sit and look at the broad marshes and meadow-lands where the Gaspereaux winds through red mud at low tide to empty into the near waters of Minas, and at high tide is lost in the sea that covers the sands.

The lowlands near the mouth of the Gaspereaux formed a combination of meadow and marsh lands which we could not understand. There were dikes, but they seemed incomplete and ineffectual, and later we learned how a great storm had broken through and let in the sea, and how these dikes, whose cost of repair so close to turbulent Minas had made them a questionable blessing, had not been rebuilt. Remnants of them are seen, but the triumphant tides have it all their own way, and once more the yellow marsh grass decorates the rich red soil.

Wherever accessible, the marsh grass is cut

Grand Pré

and preserved, and picturesque haycocks stand on stilts over the marshes, but the value of the salt hay is little compared to the opulence of the meadow-land when protected from the sting of the brine.

Situated as Grand Pré is, on a ridge at the extreme eastern edge of the Cornwallis Valley, the views everywhere about are fine.

Wolfville, the largest town of that region, is only three miles away on the same ridge. It is a college town, containing several institutions for training the mental and spiritual man and woman, being blessed as well with a Young Ladies' Seminary. It is rather an attractive-looking place with its many shade-trees, and from it may be obtained a fine view of the Cornwallis Valley.

Being plentifully supplied with boarding-houses and accommodation of all sorts for the summer tourist, it is the general stopping-place, Grand Pré being a Mecca to which the tourists pour in crowds, to gaze, perchance to worship, at Evangeline's shrine, to shed a tear, and go their way.

The drive between Wolfville and Grand Pré is beautiful enough to entice the pleasure-

Down North and Up Along

seeker, even if there were no such goal as Grand Pré at the end. There are two roads between Grand Pré and Wolfville, — one at the foot of the ridge, and the other along its crest. The drive over the upper road is one to remember.

Up hill and down we went, past farm-houses and through avenues of fragrant firs and spruces, as wild a woods road as heart could wish, and then of a sudden we found ourselves looking down into the Valley of the Gaspereaux. It is not a broad, calm expanse like the Cornwallis Valley, but a sweet sun-filled vale with the river sparkling and winding through the middle.

The Gaspereaux is not a mighty flood, and it has no dignity to speak of. It babbles and prattles over its stones like a summer brook, is crossed here and there by a red-and-white bridge; and near its mouth it is disturbed and discoloured by the intruding tides of Fundy, that come prying as far as they can into the affairs of the Gaspereaux, and cause dikes to be built to shut their fatal salt embrace away from its lower marshes.

Groups of willows are scattered through the

Grand Pré

valley, and farms on gentle slopes lie basking in the quiet sunshine. Apples are ripening everywhere. All is bright, sweet, and peaceful, and we drive on with a feeling of calm pleasure until the fairy valley is left behind, and on the other side of us once more spread the splendid reaches of the Cornwallis Valley.

Once more, and from another point of view, we see our old friends, Canning and Kentville and Kingsport, while close at hand lies Wolfville.

We see again the far-off wall of North Mountain standing sentinel over the fertile valley, and holding back the fogs of Fundy, that roll up from the Bay and look over the mountain into the valley, but dare not venture down to blight its vegetation with their cold and damp presence.

Port Williams is a tiny settlement not far from Wolfville, and we see it lying near the mouth of the Cornwallis River, its wharves and vessels telling of its maritime life, for up to its wharves come schooners at flood-tide to bear away the apples and potatoes of the region round about. At low tide the schooners comport themselves with what dignity they may with their keels in

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the mud and their high sides uncovered to the gaze of the curious.

There are little groves of plum-trees all about Wolfville and the surrounding country. There are plums at Grand Pré and in the Gasperaux Valley, but not so many as at Wolfville. The orchards there were blue with ripening fruit. The trees were bending and almost breaking under the burden. Blue plums were dominant, but there were also red and white ones.

The farmhouses looked neat, and were often picturesque or pretty, and everywhere were orchards of ripening apples and little groves of dark blue plums.

We missed the flowers that made Digby so charming. Flowers were not abundant here, and where they did occur they were meagre and commonplace, and in no way characteristic of Acadia.

To Digby belong her fish-flakes and her flowers; Acadia has her dike-lands, her orchards, and her romance.

VI

EVANGELINE

THERE are two villages of Grand Pré. One lies on the slopes beyond the Cornwallis with the broad valley smiling before her doors. The other was founded by Longfellow and lies in the hearts of his readers and within the glowing lines of poetry, enveloped by the mists of romance.

It is difficult to separate the two; and the Grand Pré of reality is pervaded by a charm not her own from association with the Grand Pré of the poet. Lying on the hill-top above Grand Pré and looking over the peaceful meadow-lands on a summer day, we cease to behold the present scene, and the poet's fancy rises to take its place.

We read the page before us, and the forest primeval occupies the neighbouring hills in spite of the fact that not a forest tree is now on them; and we listen gratefully to the murmuring pines and the hemlocks, although there are not enough pine-trees in all Nova Scotia to

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murmur effectively, and it is a question as to whether they ever flourished near Grand Pré. Still, in our imagination they are there, and we shall no doubt learn that the image we have so long held of them is far more enduring than are our memories of Grand Pré as we saw it in reality.

As we read on out of the poet's book we live in a strange dream-world, where ever and anon the modern English houses are blotted out and along the single street of Grand Pré straggle the poet's houses with their overhanging thatched roofs, their dormer windows, and their quaint doorways.

In spite of the stones lying prone in the meadow by the well, we see the chapel with its uplifted cross, not on the lowlands, but on the side of the ridge, where in our imagination the quaint and comfortable houses stand. We know exactly what mound it occupied and how the houses were grouped about it. In spite of the coffins recently exhumed from the meadow below, we know the burying-ground of our Grand Pré lies by the wall of our chapel.

The broad-eaved barns, low-thatched and bursting with the harvest, cluster like separate

Evangeline

villages each about its farmhouse, as the poet has shown them to us.

Down toward Horton's Landing — apart, as the poet has set it, and as it should be — is the peaceful and charming home of *Evangeline*. There in the broad-beamed house she lives with her father. We see her as distinctly as we see the young girl of to-day passing along the street, far more distinctly, for we shall forget the young girl, but *Evangeline's* face and form will linger in our minds for ever.

We know her as well as we know the members of our household, and here in Grand Pré she seems very near to us. We know she is sitting at her spinning-wheel down there by Horton's Landing, in the home of her father with its oaken beams. She is fair, and bright with the sparkle of French vivacity that plays in her black eyes, which flash and soften with succeeding emotions.

She is clad in the picturesque attire of her country people; and in the corner near her is the great loom where she sits through the winter, weaving cloth for the family and laying up piles of linen against a day that is nearing, and about which she is dreaming.

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We too dream as we read. We see her not only in her home but abroad on Sunday, wending her way to the chapel, clad in her blue kirtle and wearing her Norman cap and ancestral ornaments. We see her townspeople in bright colours about her, but she is not of them; she stands alone, something rare in this world, precious to us in a deep and primal sense.

Whether the poet meant it or not, in *Evangeline* he has given us not an individual, but a type. She does not belong to any time or to any place; she is the great, patient, suffering type of womanhood which shall outlive nations and races. We follow her with reverence, not because she is a village maiden, fair and gentle, but because of her awful mission, because of her triumph over circumstance and failure, and because in *Evangeline's* hand-to-hand struggle with the adverse forces of this world, we each discern our own battle.

We linger in imagination with *Evangeline* in her youth. We lovingly watch her as she moves about and is greeted by the villagers with the same reverence we ourselves feel for her. They do not know why they feel thus to this young girl; but we know, for they too

Evangeline

are the creatures of our imagination, and over them all we have cast the spell of *Evangeline's* future. They too go forth and suffer, but we do not think of that; we follow only the figure the poet has shown us and the one life he has illumined.

We see Gabriel, *Evangeline's* lover, but he is less well defined. Perhaps more clearly stands out Gabriel's father, Basil the blacksmith, and *Evangeline's* own sunny-hearted and well-loved sire. These people are all, to our imagination, of superior clay; they are the well beloved of the poet, they and all their neighbours.

It is from the first pages of Longfellow's "*Evangeline*" we get that sense of peace and blessedness which has confused Acadia with Arcadia in the minds of so many.

From our place on the hillside, the magic book in our hand, we watch the peaceful days glide by, we see the coming home of the herds at night, and listen to the love-song of *Evangeline* as she awaits the coming of her lover Gabriel. We witness the betrothal and attend the feast, and listen lightly to the ominous rumours of hostile import.

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We know what is to come, yet the poet's magic chains us to the joyful present. We think only of Evangeline and Gabriel, — she filled with deep and holy joy at the approaching perfection of her womanhood, and he filled with love and ambition for her. We know their hopes will never be realised, yet we rejoice as they do, as though we were, like them, oblivious of the future.

While we are still lying on our hillside, a change comes over the face of Grand Pré. It is the fall of the year, and the deep peace of the happy valley is broken by the noise of drums and the wailing of women and children. Evangeline's father, Basil the blacksmith, Gabriel, and all the men of the village are imprisoned in the chapel, where they had been summoned to hear the will of their masters; and the fiat has gone forth that the French Acadians shall be driven away as exiles, their homes and their property confiscated to the English Crown.

There is something so cruelly inhuman in this decree and in the scenes that follow, as the poet has portrayed them, that we forget the facts of history and are carried away by the

Evangeline

same rushing tide of feeling that overwhelmed the victims. Our indignation blazes with theirs and our tears flow with them, as we go from house to house and see the misery that has in a moment overtaken our Acadia, our Isles of the Blessed.

We execrate the terrible decree in spite of the excuses history presents, for here we are not in the realm of history. We are in the poet's land of Acadia, and these cherished people are being wantonly scattered and destroyed, driven forth without cause and without right of appeal.

Over there, where we can see the shining mouth of the Gaspereaux, the English ships are waiting. Cruel hands guard the men in the chapel while the women bear their household goods to the shore.

And now *Evangeline* begins the fulfilment of that sacred promise of her future. She does not wait to weep, nor does she fall in despair. Over her seventeen summers of gracious youth is suddenly dropped the mantle of life's tragedy, which she never more will cast aside.

The past held a delusion, although she does not know it yet ; her womanhood must be per-

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fect, not through the fulfilment of her dearest hope, but through abnegation of all she most desires; and she applies herself to the care of her neighbours, comforting and helping them, and thus in a measure stilling her own pain.

The tragedy of Grand Pré hastens to a conclusion. The prisoners are marched under guard to the ships. We see the long line of them, the young men first, their faces set and grim, and their powerful muscles strained but helpless to serve them against the oppressor.

For a moment Evangeline flashes before our eyes; she is in the arms of Gabriel. Our hearts are oppressed with the doom which we know has fallen, but hers, in spite of the horrible situation, is sustained by the hope of sharing her exile with her beloved.

She cannot remain with him now, for later in the procession is a bent old form, her once joyous-hearted father, whom she now scarcely recognises, so frightfully have the hours of misery told upon him, and to whose side she hastens.

Again we see her, momentarily overcome by the death of her father, who, broken-hearted,

Evangeline

is laid to rest on the shore of Minas by the loving hands of the stricken neighbours.

Night falls, and we watch the people by their fires on the shore ; it is their last night, and they sit in dumb misery. In a moment a thrill of anguish and horror passes over our own nerves as it did over theirs, for along the straggling street of Grand Pré an ominous light shines.

The cruel flame-storm spreads and rages, its passion fed by the thatched roofs of the Acadian homes. This is the last drop, and the voices of the people are raised in shrieks and groans of utter despair.

Again we see *Evangeline*, no longer a care-free girl but a full-dowered woman, accepting her womanhood and perfecting it in the fire of her great affliction. It is her voice that comforts and her hand that sustains, and young and old turn to her in appealing reverence, knowing now the cause of their joy in her.

In that miserable camp on the shore stands not *Evangeline*, but *Womanhood*.

Lying on the sunny bank, we watch those ships of the land of romance sail away from the mouth of the Gaspereaux. We scarce see the

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silver river more plainly than the imagined ships, and crowded on their insufficient decks are the once happy Acadians.

Evangeline is there, alone in the world. Her father lies by the sea, her lover is on another ship, for in the confusion of embarking, the cruel haste and the urging, they were separated.

We watch the ships sail down Minas Basin toward Blomidon. We watch them disappear around the bold front of the rocky bluff; and we know that Evangeline's and Gabriel's ships took different courses, and that these two wandered over the earth the rest of their lives in search of each other, not despairing and not staying the hand because the heart ached. They laboured for others while struggling ever onward toward the goal they both sought.

We put down the oft-read poem with dim eyes. Our hearts go out, not to Evangeline, but to the whole world of suffering humanity, whose representative she is. Longfellow seized upon an event in history but to give living form to a universal truth.

We know the Grand Pré before us is not the imagined scene of his beautiful poem, yet

Evangeline

we cannot see the old willows and the straight poplars planted by the hands of the early French settlers without emotion.

We cannot gaze upon the broad meadows before the door of Grand Pré without remembering the hands that first held back the sea. Nor would we if we could.

Suppose the real Acadians were not the folk of the poet's fancy; suppose the emotion expended upon their sad history does not wholly belong to them, — still, even had it been deserved, their fate was terrible, and their sufferings were such as will ever appeal to the heart of humanity.

Their history was at least the rough material out of which a divine form was fashioned by the poet.

VII

THE ACADIANS

IF we have listened with exaltation to the Muse of Poetry, let us now turn to a graver Muse, that of History, and hear what she has to tell us of the Acadians and their exile.

There must be in history excuse for the atrocities represented in the story of the poet. In order to understand events, it is necessary first to make allowance for the theory, now, perhaps, beginning to be disbelieved, that a king or a government can own and control distant lands never seen or in any way improved by them ; and that those who till the soil of these lands and who make their homes in them are the creatures of these distant powers.

The story, briefly told, is this. After the great continent of North America was discovered, it was, as all know, eagerly settled by colonies from France and England.

Instead of allowing the new world to belong to those who settled it, its resources to be by

The Acadians

them developed and controlled, and the new society governed by its members, France and England both assumed to be the owners, and each tried to drive the other away and gain the sole control. The consequence was innumerable difficulties and much bloodshed.

Acadia, being one of the principal doors to the new world, was a favourite bone of contention, unfortunately for the poor creatures who had settled there.

In 1713 the treaty of Utrecht was signed between France and England, and among other provisions Acadia was ceded to Great Britain. Acadia then meant not only Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, but also some adjacent country, and did not include Cape Breton and Prince Edward Island, which France looked upon as her own.

In the treaty of Utrecht it was agreed that the French settlers in Acadia should be allowed to remain on their lands if they chose, and should be free to practise the Roman Catholic faith. If they preferred to move, they were to be allowed to do so any time within a year.

Few moved, and at the end of the year those remaining were requested to take the oath of

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allegiance to King George. At once there was trouble, for the Acadians, although they had been transferred to English jurisdiction by the great treaty of Utrecht, had not thereby been changed from Frenchmen into Englishmen; that was something the treaty was not able to accomplish, and they declined to take the oath of allegiance to England.

The French had built a strong fort at Louisbourg, on the eastern coast of Cape Breton, and were not at all unwilling that the Acadians should rebel against English authority — quite the contrary. Having given up Acadia, there was nothing, we may well suppose, they so much wanted as to get it back again, and that the Acadians should help them to do this.

We have seen the Acadians in the transforming light of poetry, and they were a very agreeable people; now we must look upon them in the prosaic light of history, which does not soften the angles or enrich the colours; if anything, it intensifies the external hardness of appearances.

Parkman, in the first volume of his “Montcalm and Wolfe,” gives us this picture of them: —

The Acadians

“ They were a simple and very ignorant peasantry, industrious and frugal till evil days came to discourage them ; living aloof from the world with little of that spirit of adventure which an easy access to the vast fur-bearing interior had developed in their Canadian kindred ; having few wants and those of the rudest ; fishing a little, and hunting in winter, but chiefly employed in cultivating the meadows along the river Annapolis, or rich marshes reclaimed by dikes from the tides of the Bay of Fundy. The British Government left them entirely free of taxation. They made clothing of flax and wool of their own raising, hats of similar materials, and shoes or moccasins of moose and seal skin. They had cattle, sheep, hogs, and horses in abundance, and the Valley of the Annapolis, then as now, was known for the profusion and excellence of its apples.

“ For drink they had cider or brewed spruce-beer.

“ French officials describe their dwellings as wretched wooden boxes, without ornaments or conveniences, and scarcely supplied with the most necessary furniture. Two or more families often occupied the same house ; and their way of life, though simple and virtuous, was by no means remarkable for cleanliness. Such as it was, contentment reigned among them, undisturbed by what modern America calls progress.

“ Marriages were early, and population grew apace.”

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Here we have a new and very different picture of our Grand Pré. It is difficult indeed to transfer the people described by Parkman to the scene we look upon from our hillside and which has so recently been the theatre of Evangeline's drama. Yet let us once more dream a dream. Along the one street of Grand Pré straggle the homes of the French peasantry. They are rude wooden structures, picturesque enough, no doubt, with their heavy thatched roofs, but devoid of the refinements of life and not over-clean.

It is a community of ignorant peasants, unable even to write their names, we are told elsewhere. Brought as emigrants from the mother-country, they have settled here and industriously worked the soil and reclaimed part of the marsh that still spreads before their doors.

Being ignorant and industrious, these people had neither ability nor time to make a study of the art of diplomacy; being superstitious, they fell an easy prey to those who were skilled in that noble art. They loved their homes and were content, and very likely, had they been left to themselves, would not have

The Acadians

known whether England or France owned Acadia, or might even have supposed they owned it themselves.

Not being left to themselves, however, they were instructed on the one hand to take the oath of allegiance to England, which in all probability they would have done quite willingly, only that, on the other hand, their priests told them not to. Very naturally, they obeyed their priests. What was the command of a distant and unseen power to them, compared to the actual words and personal presence of their spiritual advisers?

Their spiritual advisers should have known better than to involve this innocent and ignorant peasantry in so absurdly unequal a contest as a war with the English Government. But pawns were needed in the great Game of Governments, and the Acadians made very good ones.

The chief figure of these unfortunate times is the unenviable one of Louis Joseph Le Loutre, vicar-general of Acadia and missionary to the Micmac Indians. He flourished in the middle of the eighteenth century and was to an extent the cause of the expulsion of the

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Acadians. Taking advantage of the ignorance and superstition of the people, we are told he taught them that allegiance to Louis of France was inseparable from fidelity to God, and that to swear allegiance to the Crown of England was to bring them eternal damnation.

The word of the priest was the only law to the simple peasantry, and they refused the oath. When they did take it, they were instructed that it was no sin to break it.

The treaty of Utrecht was signed in 1713, and the expulsion of the Acadians did not take place until 1755, so for nearly half a century England bore with what she looked upon as treasonable conduct with a forbearance unparalleled in history.

During this long period of time, this forty-two years, the Acadians, notwithstanding their unfriendly behaviour, were not taxed, they were allowed the practice of their own religion and the ministrations of their own priests.

We are informed that from the beginning the priests were the secret enemies of England, and when Le Loutre's power began the Acadians were incited to every sort of violence.

They were not asked by England to take

The Acadians

up arms against their countrymen nor against the Indians, who were the friends of the French, but they were enjoined to remain neutral. They persisted in refusing to take the oath of allegiance excepting with such modifications as made it meaningless. More than this, in time of war they withheld supplies from the English, refusing to sell except at exorbitant prices, and secretly sent their stores to their own countrymen.

Le Loutre, when he came upon the scene, stirred up the Micmacs to constant raids upon the English, whom they mercilessly killed; and the more reckless among the Acadians, disguising themselves as Indians, are said to have joined the raiders.

Within what she considered her own territory, England was nourishing an enemy that threatened at any favourable moment to destroy her.

This state of affairs could not go on for ever. Matters were nearing a climax; New England demanded the suppression of the Acadians, declaring her own safety depended upon it; and England would not turn a deaf ear to New England's cries, though there are those

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who claim that her forbearance with the Acadians was not wholly philanthropic. Her American child was none too submissive; and she may well have feared that if the distractions of war were removed, the too-fast-growing infant might undertake to break away from its mother's apron-strings.

So it is a New England man whom we see coming to execute sentence upon the Acadians. The weighers of events tell us that matters grew worse and worse, that the Acadians became more and more insolent and insubordinate under the guidance of their priests and actuated by belief in the final triumph of the French.

Finally the Acadians were sternly commanded to take the oath of allegiance without alteration, as other British subjects took it, and they refused. They were given time to consider, but the power to consider did not lie with them. Le Loutre considered for them, and threatened to turn his Indians upon them if they complied. They knew this would be no vain threat, for his cruel hand had already been felt in different parts of the country. Moreover, to comply was to lose their souls.



A LEAFY TENT OF THE MICMACS

The Acadians

So they refused, trusting, no doubt, to England's past clemency to overlook their conduct once more.

But this was not to be. Hard pressed by the French in different directions and doubtless fearful of losing Acadia,—and all that that implied,—England determined finally to rid herself very effectually of the troublesome peasants.

It was John Winslow, a descendant of the early governors of Plymouth Colony, who sailed from Boston one day with a shipful of New England volunteers to undertake the reduction of the unruly Acadians. The Acadians themselves had no suspicion of what was pending. They were the victims alike of friend and foe, for two thousand of them had already been cajoled or driven from their homes across the frontier to French lands, and this had not been done by the English, but by their own countrymen, the French, who wanted their services. Thus removed from their Acadian homes, all domestic ties broken, they were far more willing openly to fight the English.

Winslow helped to reduce the French fort at the head of the Cumberland Basin, which

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commanded the entrance by land into the Peninsula of Nova Scotia, and was then commissioned to remove those Acadians whose headquarters were at Grand Pré. Other officers were sent to perform a similar duty in other Acadian centres, but it is of Grand Pré, where the plan was most fully carried out, that we always hear. It is believed that three thousand or more French settlers were removed from Acadia, and that over two thousand were taken from Grand Pré and vicinity.

It was a thankless task to Winslow, and to his credit be it said he did it reluctantly and as humanely as possible. It was decided that the people could not be turned adrift on the borders of Acadia to join the enemy, who would be only too glad to receive and make use of them, and so they were put on board ships and sent away, scattered all along the English colonies on the Atlantic coast, some of them even finding their way to Louisiana, where their descendants may be found to-day, in better condition if report be true, than were their ancestors in the apple lands of Acadia.

The same military reason which caused their dispersal over distant shores also caused their

The Acadians

homes to be burned, so that the stragglers, for many escaped, might not return.

Pains were taken, the historian is careful to say, not to separate families or neighbours, and few such events are believed to have occurred. Yet, whatever precautions were taken, the exile was pitiful enough, and even the grave historian cannot refrain from expressing the universal sentiment as he nears the tragic moment. He tells us how Winslow sailed down Chignecto Channel to the Bay of Fundy.

“ Borne on the rushing flood, they soon drifted through the inlet, glided under the rival promontory of Cape Blomidon, passed the red sandstone cliffs of Lyon’s Cove, and descried the mouth of the rivers Canard and Des Habitants, where fertile marshes, diked against the tide, sustained a numerous and thriving population. Before them spread the boundless meadows of Grand Pré, waving with harvests or alive with grazing cattle; the green slopes behind were dotted with the simple dwellings of the Acadian farmers, and the spire of the village church rose against a background of woody hills. It was a peaceful rural scene, soon to become one of the most wretched spots on earth. Winslow did not land for the present, but held his course to the

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estuary of the river Pisiquid, since called the Avon. Here, where the town of Windsor now stands, there was a stockade called Fort Edward, where a garrison of regulars under Captain Alexander Murray kept watch over the surrounding settlements. 'The New England men pitched their tents on the shore, while the sloops that had brought them slept on the soft bed of tawny mud left by the fallen tide.'

Soon after this Winslow and his men landed at Grand Pré and were stationed in the village church, from which the historian is careful to inform us, he had the elders remove the sacred things, to prevent their being defiled by heretics.

Winslow, using the church as a storehouse and place of arms, took his own station in the priests' house until all should be ready. The people did not know why he was there, though his presence could not have been reassuring.

On Friday, the fifth of September, 1755, at three o'clock in the afternoon, the little church, in obedience to orders, was filled with the men and boys of Grand Pré,—an expectant and anxious throng waiting to hear the will of their superiors.

The decree was read ; the blow had fallen.

The Acadians

Once again we see the crowd assembled on the shore. The men are shut in the church ; the women carry the household goods to the ships. It is not the assembly we saw a while ago, however, in poetry and imagination, but a crowd of poor hunted peasants, the victims of their own ignorance and the playthings of greed and cruelty. Their own people have betrayed them, and the foreign nation which has so long tolerated them on the lands they themselves have snatched from the sea and cultivated now casts them forth.

The flames leap up from the miserable thatched hovels they call their homes, and the cry of despair breaks forth, for, poor though they are, those hovels are their homes ; they love them and they love the fields they have tilled. They are cast miserably forth, outcasts indeed, and no matter how poor in intellect or in spirit they may have been, their cry resounds through time. It is their great sorrow, their tragic fate, which appeals to every heart and makes the expulsion of the Acadians as it really occurred but a shade less pathetic than the tragedy the poet recited.

VIII

BLOMIDON

KINGSFORT lies on the edge of a bluff below which the mighty tides surge in and out. It is a little wind-blown village unadorned by fish-flakes, for fishing is not carried on in Minas Basin. Its wharf is less imposing than that at Digby, though the tides here rise to a height of over fifty feet; but the shore is shelving, and when the tide is out the red sands are bare about the wharf, and the vessels lie aground.

The Annapolis Basin is a serene expanse of water where one, as it were, feels the lift of the tides, while Minas Basin is a maelstrom where one feels their rush.

Once Kingsport carried on an important ship-building industry, but her ship-yards are now no more. From her pier, however, vessels sail for London bearing the apples and potatoes of the interior.

From Kingsport one gets a clear view of the peculiar outline of Blomidon. A vertical wall

Blomidon

of dark gray basaltic trap drops some two or three hundred feet from the top, from which the fir-trees look over. Below the trap is a wide sloping terrace of lighter gray amygdaloid, and below that the steep slope to the sea is of dark red sandstone, the same sandstone of which the cliffs along the shore are formed, and of which the rich red mud that makes the Cornwallis dike-lands so famous is largely composed.

Blomidon's stern aspect is chiefly due to the vertical wall of rock that caps it, and the impression it creates is not lessened when one thinks of the stupendous catastrophe that placed it there.

The North Mountain ridge extends from Blomidon to Digby Gut, and from Digby Gut southward to Brier Island, where it ends. The underlying sandstone of the ridge was no doubt formed by the action of water at the level of the sea, and was at a later period elevated. But the bed of trap that covers the sandstone the whole length of the ridge was once a vast river of molten rock, poured out from some great volcanic crater, — or more probably series of craters.

Just where these outlets were, no one knows;

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but somewhere along the extent of North Mountain the great mouths yawned, to be finally choked full and concealed by succeeding geological phenomena.

Then came the Ice Age, when Nova Scotia with her mountains was buried deep under a frozen mantle, and when the irresistible, slow-moving glaciers emulated the power of fire and tore away the softer rock, scooping out the Cornwallis and Annapolis valleys, and carrying boulders and pebbles of trap across from North Mountain, to deposit them at the foot of South Mountain's slaty mass.

Thus fire and ice have wrought in ages past with tremendous power; but a gentler and equally potent spirit has been at work for centuries, filling the heart of the mountain with exquisite crystals.

When the volcanic fires first burst forth, they scattered cinders and particles of old lava, which formed a deep layer of more porous material, before the final pouring forth of the main stream of molten rock. This layer is the amygdaloid belt, which, being of lighter colour, one can plainly see crossing Blomidon's great front.

Blomidon

As time passed and the trap above assumed its present hard state, the porous belt below was permeated by the rain-water that insinuated itself into all the crevices, slowly, as the centuries passed, dissolving the silica and its compounds from the rock traversed, and depositing them in the cavities of the amygdaloid layer. Here these materials arranged themselves into crystals, those mysterious and lovely blossoms in the hearts of rocks, and filled the hollows, large and small, with the most delicate and exquisitely beautiful forms.

North Mountain is an exhaustless treasure-house, before whose marvels even Sindbad's wondrous cave grows poor. Within it exquisitely beautiful forms lie waiting to flash or glow whenever the rays of the sun shall penetrate the blackness of their prison cells. Here lie blue amethysts, agates of winsome colours, and dark red jasper, besides many another gem of lovely hue. Nor are these treasures held fast in the heart of the mountain inaccessible to man.

In some places the hard trap has overflowed the whole side of the mountain and piled up in a solid mass, in others it is less impregnable. Often where the cliff rises sheer, as at Blomi-

Down North and Up Along

don and at points along North Mountain facing the Bay of Fundy, the tricky frost gnomes have been at work loosening and splitting away fragments of rock and even separating large masses which the rain washes down the mountain side, or which fall in the form of land-slides, sometimes of considerable extent.

These displaced masses are chiefly composed of the more friable amygdaloid. Down comes the shattered cliff, in its fall exposing its caverns of flashing crystals, while geodes and nodules of various sizes roll over the sands at the foot of the mountain, all to be finally washed away by the hungry tides, and those of Blomidon ground against the hard rock that forms the bottom of the sea basin, until in course of time the lovely crystals no doubt help to form the mud that makes the dike-lands fertile, and the Cornwallis farmers raise their hay and oats from jewels.

But not all of Blomidon's jewels meet this fate. At low tide the sands at the foot of the headland are bare, and then come the treasure-hunters from Kingsport and Canning and all the neighbouring towns, and eagerly employ the time the tide allows them in gathering what

Blomidon

their hands can find; very beautiful as well as rare crystals often reward their search.

There is one place particularly rich in the mineral deposits that fall from above, and its name, Amethyst Cove, sufficiently explains what is most eagerly sought for there. The best time to hunt for Blomidon's treasures is in the early summer, after the frosts of winter and the rains of spring have loosened and washed down the rocks above, and before the summer tourist has appeared in force to deplete the store, although at any time of year when the beach is accessible the seeker need not go away empty-handed.

Perhaps no part of Blomidon's treasures has so great a fascination as the geodes. What fresher delight is given to mortals than to break a geode, a rough rounded stone, often with no beauty of form or colour, and discover within a central cavity lined with glowing crystals or entirely filled with clustering jewels!

No wonder Blomidon is said to have been the abode of Glooscap, the Hiawatha of the Micmac Indians, whose wigwams once stood on these shores and who peopled forest and headland with supernatural beings of their own

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creation, chief among whom was the mighty Glooscap, friend of man.

There is a legend telling of a mystic stone which at night is sometimes seen blazing on the brow of the mountain. This is the "eye of Glooscap" or the "diamond of Cape Blomidon."

Although Blomidon is willing that mortals should see this jewel of "miraculous radiance" and even allow its whereabouts to be discovered at times, woe to the unlucky finder who should presume to remove it. Terrible misfortune would be his portion, and in the end the gem, by its own miraculous powers, would find its way back to Blomidon's brow.

There is another story to the effect that among the crown jewels of France has blazed for over a century a great amethyst from the treasure-house of Blomidon; and it has been suggested that the unstable fortunes of France may be due to her possession of this very eye of Glooscap. Certain it is this token has not of late been observed on Blomidon's front.

Although one can see Blomidon clearly outlined from Kingsport one must get close to

Blomidon

examine it, and this can be done at any time by crossing the Bay to Parrsboro. The boat from Kingsport to Parrsboro leaves and lands by the grace of Neptune. It alternately lies on the sand some thirty feet or more below the top of the pier, and rides triumphantly with its deck on a level with that structure.

One fair afternoon we sat aloft and waited for the boat to ascend to us.

The captain cheerily announced that we could get aboard in a few minutes. It certainly did not look so as we gazed down upon the far away "Evangeline," but the captain's faith in Fundy was not unrequited, and soon the smoke-stack began to appear above the edge of the wharf.

Soon after we were able to reach the top of the cabin which formed the "Evangeline's" only deck. Our descent was certainly a little steep, but not so much so as that of a four-footed fellow-passenger.

A derrick stood on the "Evangeline's" bow and was used in lowering baggage and other bulky articles when the captain wanted to get under way before the full of the tide.

This day a man wished to cross with his

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horse, — an undertaking in which the horse did not appear to sympathise.

A narrow bridge with a railing on either side was run out from the pier, one end resting on the pier itself, the other suspended in mid-air by ropes attached to the useful derrick. Upon this unstable structure the horse was finally persuaded to place himself, his master standing on the bridge at his head, a position which no one envied him. The derrick of a sudden began to lower away, to the astonishment and consternation of the horse, who, whatever he may have suspected, certainly could not have looked for any such perfidy as this. He made a desperate effort to back off once and for all, but it was too late. His front feet rapidly descended while his hind ones remained aloft, until he stood at an angle which no horse could be expected to maintain, when down he slid, dragging his master with him, both landing in a heap in the bottom of the boat. Fortunately neither was hurt, and no harm done except to the feelings and heels of the horse, the latter being skinned and the former damaged to the extent of making him desire to jump overboard as soon as he found himself fairly on

Blomidon

his abused legs. But he was dissuaded from so rash a measure, and his wounds comforted with tar.

We learned that this was the usual method of putting horses aboard the "Evangeline."

We left Kingsport and followed the land toward Blomidon; as we neared the headland the boat went closer to shore. A loon off the port side eyed us anxiously and finally with an unearthly wail disappeared under the water. "Poor thing!" said M., "it is crying for Glooscap;" and if the Indian legend is true, no doubt it was, for according to that the loons were Glooscap's huntsmen, and he had taught them their strange cry, promising that whenever he heard it he would come to their succour. When he left the world of men the loons were disconsolate, and now they go wandering up and down the earth calling for Glooscap. Glooscap seems to have spent much of his time in the neighbourhood of Minas Basin and there to have performed his most remarkable feats.

The legendary accounts of the formation of the Cornwallis Valley may not be quite as true as the geological story, but they are at least as entertaining. According to them, Minas Basin

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was once a great lake with a wall of rock extending across the end from Blomidon to Partridge Island. It was the home of the beavers, and the Great Beaver threatened to flood the country with his monster dam. The people appealed to Glooscap, and he and the beaver had a conflict, in which Glooscap won, and swinging the end of the dam about made an outlet for the waters of Minas, the same outlet through which the tides surge in and out to-day. Up to that time the Cornwallis Valley was a part of the lake and was connected with another lake that occupied what is now the Annapolis Valley; but after the opening of the dam at Blomidon and the gap at Digby Gut, both of which Glooscap achieved, the water drained away and left the valleys as we find them to-day.

“If you do not believe it, you will when we pass Blomidon,” M. assured me, “for then you can see the dam.”

As we neared Blomidon, its great wall became more and more impressive. The iron front of basalt frowned aloft, a stupendous cliff, resting on the rock below in fine turrets. Beneath it we saw in detail the terrace of amyg-

Blomidon

daloid, fragments from it strewing the sandstone beneath, in places quite concealing it, and forming streams down the gullies where the young trees grew. These fragments we knew were scattered full of crystal treasures of great beauty and no small value, jewels for the roots of the young trees to twine about.

According to the Micmac legends these jewels were placed on the mountain by Glooscap. It seems that the great chief had an old woman for a housekeeper and a beautiful boy for a page. He never married, but devoted his life to the service of man, teaching him the arts of hunting and fishing and curing the game. He also taught him the names of the stars and the constellations and what little he needed to know of agriculture. But there were times when the Great Spirit's magnanimity extended to his old housekeeper and then he caused her to assume the beautiful form of youth, and lavished precious jewels upon her. It was during such a time that he sprinkled the whole mountain in his prodigal generosity.

From our near view we saw the red sandstone of Blomidon to be crossed at times by seams of lighter rock and blotched and spotted

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with dull green. Although Blomidon as seen in profile from the Cornwallis Valley appears to be a narrow bluff, its real form is apparent when one passes along its front, which is not narrow but forms a long wall of rock broken at intervals. The headland grew more interesting and more majestic as we went on, so that for a time we almost forgot the water surging about us. But this was not for long; we were nearing the opening to the great trough, where the water rushes through with a velocity of six or seven miles an hour.

This trough is about four miles wide from Blomidon to Partridge Island, and is about eight miles long, opening at the lower end into Minas Channel, which is itself a mighty trough leading into the Bay of Fundy.

The Atlantic tides enter Fundy at its broad end, which lies so as to receive them without diminution of their force; but Fundy narrows like a funnel, and the pent up waters, continuing with the impetus with which they entered, not able to spread out, pile up.

At Minas Channel the same thing is repeated on a smaller scale. The already abnormally high tide, rushing through the channel, finds

Blomidon

only the narrow outlet into Minas Basin, through which it propels itself with terrific force.

When wind and tide are in conflict, the strife is terrible and no boat can venture into the maelstrom. Even on a calm day the water can readily be seen pouring through on the flow of the tide, like a strong, swift river, the current being distinguishable for some distance in the calmer waters of the Basin. It rushes along in eddies and whirlpools and white-capped waves, which give one a vivid realisation of what it is capable of under provocation of the wind.

Blomidon's stern front defies the storm-winds and holds them back from the fertile valley, but glancing from the rock they strike the water, causing terrible commotion.

Even when the day is calm the "Evangeline" cannot keep her head steadily to her destination as she crosses the channel, for an incoming swirl of water will often strike her and turn her several points from her course.

The sea bottom at the foot of Blomidon is smooth and solid rock, where no boat can anchor, so when a storm is imminent the

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boats flee through the dangerous channel to the safe waters of West Bay.

As soon as we were fairly past Blomidon, we could look down the inlet to Cape Split, which forms the farther edge of the trough on the south side, while Cape Sharp is seen extending into the water from the opposite shore.

Cape Split is a curious-looking object. At its extreme point a great cliff of solid rock seems to have been cleft or split from the mainland by a blow from some mighty sword. It stands alone, towering aloft, the home of countless sea-birds that build their nests upon its unscalable summit. Their white forms can always be seen in clouds about it.

While Blomidon's front extends almost due north and south, only the southeastern corner being visible from the Cornwallis Valley, the ridge of rock which terminates in Cape Split lies nearly at right angles to it, extending east and west.

This ridge is a narrow spit of solid rock ; and a glance at the map will show how, if it were swung about until Cape Split touched the Cumberland shore, Minas Basin would indeed be a lake.

Blomidon

Of this M. reminded me as soon as we came in sight of the queer-looking cape, and it could no longer be doubted that if Glooscap was able to swing this dam of rock he had really done so.

M. said it was no harder to believe he swung it than to believe he sailed on Minas' troubled waters in a stone canoe, which, according to the Indian legend, was his usual method of progression excepting when he preferred to ride a whale. These feats indeed are no more remarkable than that performed by Saint Patrick, who, as every one knows, is said to have floated ashore on an iron door when shipwrecked off the east coast of Ireland.

In front of us as we crossed the channel was the bold front of Partridge Island, while down the channel, on the same side of the coast, stood out the rocky headland of Cape Sharp.

To the right of Partridge Island, and some distance away, were the picturesque forms of the Five Islands, for whose existence Glooscap was also credited by the Indians as being responsible, he having thrown them at the Great Beaver at the time of the conflict.

IX

PARTRIDGE ISLAND

PARRSBORO is not on the shore of the bay, but lies a mile or more up the Parrsboro River. The "Evangeline" goes there if the tide is high, otherwise she lands at a pier on the Minas shore near Partridge Island.

Parrsboro is not attractive. The best thing about it is its tidal river with tall piers backing up against the village.

Partridge Island — as all that portion on the shore near the pier is called — is far more interesting. The pier there is a variation of the one at Digby. It is smaller, though perhaps more picturesque, being short and very high, and its black, dripping sides, heavily draped with seaweeds, contain openings into the lower landing which look like caves. It is heavily buttressed on the side away from the incoming tide, by a structure filled in with large stones. This was necessary in order to keep it from being pushed bodily away by the spring tides.

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The pier was built several times before it could be made to stay there. It was Sir Charles Tupper who persevered, and when worsted by wind and water tried again and again until he got it anchored firm and fast. It cost a great deal of money, and in memory of Sir Charles's many defeats, the pier up to the present day is called Tupper's Snag, though it would seem only fair now to re-christen it Tupper's Triumph.

It was a disappointment to learn that the pier at Partridge Island was only thirty-five feet high. We had come there for the purpose of being amazed at the sight of a sixty-foot tide, but how could this happen in the presence of a pier with a paltry height of thirty-five feet?

We had heard wonderful accounts of the performances of Fundy's tides, but wherever we went the highest tides, the rips and bores, those wonderful cross-currents and wave-like rushings in of the water, were somewhere else. We went to Partridge Island, fondly hoping for the tides we had been promised, only to find a thirty-five-foot pier!

Still, we could not complain of the scale upon which the tides were planned there; and

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had it not been for that pier we should have believed the tide was coming in sixty feet high before our eyes.

The harbour-master made a helpless gesture when we put some questions to him. Said he, "Don't ask me about the tides of Fundy. I don't know anything about them. Nobody does. When, nor how, nor why. I know only this, that in summer the high tides come on the full moon, while the winter high tides are on the new moon. But I don't know why."

In fact, nobody seemed to know anything about the matter. The tide-table in the almanac did not coincide with the "Evangeline's" schedule for leaving one pier or the other, or for starting at one time or another. "When does the boat start to-morrow?" is the question the traveller must ask when planning to depart from Partridge Island. Happy is he if he finds the hour not unseemly and not out of all proximity to the starting time of the Kingsport train. Having found out the "Evangeline's" intentions, he will do well to take his station at the wharf a good half-hour earlier than advertised, for the boat frequently leaves ahead of time.

Partridge Island.

From the queer-looking pier on the shore with its theatrical setting of promontories and great sea basin one looks across at Partridge Island, which is not an island, but is connected by a broad curved beach with the mainland. It is a rocky headland rising straight out of the sea, its iron cliffs holding to their channel the wild tides that rush through between it and Blomidon.

Beyond it across the water we saw Blomidon, its stern aspect softened by the distance and the sea-fogs, and beyond Blomidon stood out the distant form of Split. Through the opening between Partridge Island and the mainland we got a charming view of Cape Sharp, which is by no means as forbidding as its name, while away down the channel below Sharp lay Cape d'Or though why its golden name we did not discover.

A tall-masted ship was anchored off the point of Cape Sharp when we first saw it from Partridge Island, giving just the needed touch to the composition of the picture.

West Bay, which lay between us and Sharp, is the harbour sought by the boats of Minas when foul weather is expected. It is also the

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anchoring ground for the large vessels that carry coal and wood from the back country, for Parrsboro is the outlet for the Springhill coal which comes to it from the mines by rail.

Standing near the centre of the amphitheatre made by the curving beach that connects Partridge Island with the mainland, and looking down into the sea basin at low water, one gets perhaps the most vivid realisation of the great Fundy tides.

It is like looking down the slanting sides of a colossal reservoir; and the beach instead of sand is composed of large pebbles, quite in keeping with the scale upon which this mighty bowl is formed. The water kisses the upper rim and then swiftly falls, leaving bare the sides of the bowl and for a long distance the bottom as well. Then back it comes, rushing up in small, curling breakers, up, up, until it threatens to overflow the land. But this it never does; try as it will, it can but fill the bowl and then sink back as though exhausted with the effort.

By perseverance we finally found our high tide and found it before our eyes at Partridge Island. We had watched it come and go several

Partridge Island

days with tempered emotion, for we could not forget the thirty-five-foot pier, which, to our ignorance, betokened a thirty-five-foot tide.

Then we began to consider and also somebody told us, and we fell to, and wept in vexation that we had looked upon and had not been amazed at the wonder we were seeking.

We did not see the tide rise sixty feet, but we did see it reach the creditable height of fifty feet or over, a very giant of a tide when we understood. The sloping sea bottom, which is bare some distance out at low tide, is bare for a hundred feet at the lowest tides, and at the highest spring-tides the obnoxious thirty-five-foot pier is swallowed completely — as it deserves to be.

We were told that the highest of Fundy's tides, those that rise seventy feet in the geographies and geologies, must be sought in Cumberland Basin. But we did not seek them there. We had come to Parrsboro for them, and, lo! they were in Cumberland Basin. If we pursued them to Cumberland Basin, they no doubt would flee away to some yet more distant spot, and we did not wish to put them to the trouble.

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We had the same difficulty with the bores and rips; wherever we went they were somewhere else. So we never once saw the tide coming in, in a solid wall five feet high, though our faith that it does so is still unshaken. We were told that at the right time of year — of course this was the wrong time — we could see a very creditable display of tidal fury at the foot of Partridge Island. But though we did not see the most pronounced of Fundy's phenomena, we had the best and grandest always with us, the swift filling and emptying of the mighty sea basins, the wet and dripping sides of the tall piers close-grown with seaweed, and the shining red chasms of the tidal rivers.

Partridge Island has the same formation as Blomidon, though it is less than half as high. From the sea on the east rises a turreted cliff of basalt, the lower part of which is amygdaloid; while on the western side the basalt forms only a thin covering to the cliff of amygdaloid. Underneath the whole can here and there be seen cropping out the underlying red sandstone.

So Partridge Island has, too, its belt of

Partridge Island

jewels, a broader belt in proportion to its size than even Blomidon wears, and its treasures are much more accessible, being indeed within easy reach of the hammer of the collector at low tide.

Amethyst, agate, chalcedony, carnelian, jasper, and opal belong to Partridge Island, and it has besides crystals all its own, while of those it shares with Blomidon and the rocks back of Digby, some are here found in their finest forms.

Partridge Island stands alone, a turret of crystals on a foreign shore, for the rock composing the coast back of it belongs to the lower carboniferous sandstones and shales. The great bed of trap which was expelled when Blomidon and all North Mountain received their gifts of jewelled belt and iron crown ends in isolated bluffs along this carboniferous coast. What has become of the intervening portion, that lay where Minas Basin now gives hospitable entertainment to the fleeing tides of Fundy?

Partridge Island was one of Glooscap's resorts, — he crossing to it in his great stone canoe, though when he had long distances to go he called up a whale.

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Glooscap's whales appear to have been deficient in power to see the land as they neared it, and depended upon their august rider to tell them in time to prevent bumping their noses against the shore. But this Glooscap never did. Wishing to land dry-shod, he urged the poor whale to its utmost speed, when it landed itself high and dry, greatly to its chagrin. But Glooscap was not ungrateful, and putting the end of his bow against the whale, with a slight motion of his arm he slid it back into the water. His whales had a great fondness for smoking and sometimes asked Glooscap for a pipe at parting. This he willingly supplied, when the whale went its way, smoking, to sea.

Glooscap is said to have had a famous revel on Partridge Island which the Micmacs speak of with awe to this day. It was upon the occasion of a visit from a young magician bearing the name Kĩtpooseägūnow. Glooscap invited the guest of the distinguished name to go fishing with him by torchlight, and got in readiness his monster canoe built of granite rock and supplied with paddles and spear of stone. According to the legend, the youth caught up the boat as though it had been a birch-bark canoe

Partridge Island

and tossed it into the water. The game they caught was a large whale, which the youth landed as though it were a herring. They carried their booty back to Partridge Island, whence they had embarked, and finished the night by cooking and eating the whole whale.

Glooscap's power over cold and heat reminds us of the season legends of other peoples. He had contests with his rivals in which each tried to overcome the other with cold. When it was Glooscap's turn to resist he built a mighty fire of whale oil, but toward morning invariably succumbed and allowed his friends to be frozen, but never forgot to restore them when the contest was over. Then he took his turn at congealing his opponent's train and succeeded in time, though the opponent was possessed of the same power to restore his frozen followers.

Glooscap finally disappeared at the encroachments of the white man, driven away by the wickedness of the people. When he was with them all the animals lived in accord and understood one another, but at his departure there was a confusion of tongues, and the wolf could no longer understand the words of the bear, nor any animal the speech of another species.

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The great snowy owls went deep into the forests, to return no more until the coming of Glooscap. They may at times be heard crying, "Koo Koo Skoos! Koo Koo Skoos!" — Oh, I am sorry! Oh, I am sorry!

The children are always pleased to know that Glooscap had two little dogs no larger than mice which he carried in his pocket, or up his sleeve, but which could suddenly increase to the size and form of the largest and swiftest and fiercest of their kind when he needed their services. He had a way of turning things into stone, and by looking down the channel toward Cape d'Or, one can see Spencer's Island, which is not an island at all, but merely Glooscap's kettle turned upside down. He put it there after using it, to wait for his return, and there it remains to this day. If one passing that way notices large boulders or rocks sticking out of the water, they are the scraps left after he had tried out his oil.

Down that way somewhere, too, he once turned into stone a moose that tried to escape by swimming; and the two dogs that were chasing it still sit on the shore with their ears pricked forward watching it, — both solid

Partridge Island

rock. Many, many other marvels did the mighty Glooscap, friend of man, perform.

The Indians are gone. They are no longer to be seen as of old on Minas' shore. They are almost as mythical at Parrsboro as is Glooscap himself; only their legends still linger about the rocks and coast they loved in days gone by.

Once upon a time, and not so very long ago, Parrsboro was an important boat-building centre. At that time the town, what there was of it, was down by the shore where the Parrsboro House now stands.

The pine-trees are gone, and Parrsboro's ship-yards have lost their prestige. Lumber still comes from the back country, and, such as it is, makes the wealth of the region, in conjunction with that other timber which has been preserved in the depths of the earth and altered to form the valuable coal-beds of Springhill and neighbouring localities.

"When the town was on the shore," was the halcyon period of Parrsboro.

There is a hill a little back from the shore, and between this and the beach the old town stood. The terrace above the deep sea bowl

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was aglow with flowers of such brightness and profusion that they are still remembered.

We should have liked to see the village in its flower-garden age. In its nook back of the great sea basin, with its setting of impressive bluffs that make Minas at this point so splendidly picturesque, and with ample flower-gardens brightening the stern coast, it must have been well worth a visit.

In spite of the pebbly shore whose stones roll under the feet, the visitor will not be long in finding his way across to Partridge Island, which is as delightful as a mountain of crystals ought to be. On the land side it is thickly wooded with rather small "hard wood" trees, as the people here call all but the conifers; and we wandered along a grassy winding path, quite away from the outer world, into a wild-wood seclusion.

Presently we came to firs and spruces covered with sage-green moss, and then to a hollow where the trees were dead, standing in close ranks with gray, interlaced limbs, heavily mantled with sage-green moss that hung like beards from the lower branches. It was a fit dwelling-place for the gnomes, its deep recesses

Partridge Island

dark at midday, and we felt that lost spirits might be wandering there in the twilight.

Beyond it the living trees were scarcely less mossy; and we were met by a small red squirrel that said not a word but stared at us in a silent and un-squirrel-like manner, and fled wildly into the depths of the forest, as though death were at his heels.

The squirrels here were a strange breed: whether the spell of the dead forest was over them I cannot say, but they were a speechless race, peering out from behind a tree-trunk and then dashing away without challenge or word of welcome. Perhaps they were Glooscap's squirrels, and held us responsible for driving him away.

As we went on, the trees grew larger and more apart, and finally we had the surprise and delight of coming suddenly to the edge of the cliff that stands upon the bay side. It took steady nerves to stand on the brink and look down the stern wall of rock to the tides below. The cliff was broken and terraced on one side, and the incoming tide was impatiently raging against its hard front. It was an awesome sight, and we there got nearest to the tides

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where they thunder against the walls of rock that hold them unrelentingly to their channel. From the top of the cliff we got a fine view down the channel,—of West Bay with its rocky sentinel of Cape Sharp in the foreground; of Cape Split in the distance with its isolated peak encircled by the white-winged birds that continually fly about it; and far away the distant headland of Cape d'Or, with Spencer's Island to remind us of Glooscap. Here and there on the water we saw sudden flashes of light that we could not account for, until we remembered the peeps we had seen on another part of Minas' shore, and then we knew the little silver-breasted birds were here also performing their marvellous evolutions.

The headlands of this strange shore have all a peculiar interest. Blomidon and Partridge Island have the romance of their jewels. Cape Sharp and the distant Cape d'Or share with them in this, for they, too, like Partridge Island, stand in their majesty of red sandstone and crystal-bearing trap, on the edge of the carboniferous coast. They have the same formation as Blomidon, and yield their treasures to the seeker.

Partridge Island

The Five Islands are also portions of the same volcanic formation, and have their crystals.

But Split has no jewels. The trap here overflowed and piled up so that the strange-looking cape is made of the iron-hard trap only. Devoid of vegetation, devoid of beauty, Cape Split is yet the chosen home of the soft-breasted birds that continually caress it.

The most charming place of all at Partridge Island was the hill back of the Parrsboro House. Up its sides ranked the ever-present spruce and fir trees, but the top was open, with only an occasional stretch of alders or a symmetrical young fir.

Uncut grass, now a soft, silvery yellow, the colour of a sheep's back, rippled as the wind passed over, while great patches of the bluest of low-growing blueberries, bright red bunchberries, and deep crimson cranberries made a joyous medley of bright colours. There were two kinds of cranberries there,—one that looked like those we know so well in our fall markets, and the small upland berry, deep red and with a pleasant sub-acid flavour all its own.

Never saw we such prolific blueberries. They grew close to the earth, which was one

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solid blue expanse wherever they appeared. In short, never had we seen such a merry, berry-bedecked hillside. The bunchberries laughed in scarlet glee all down one side of it, while the cranberries did their best to outshine them in extensive patches here and there. Fair as it was under foot, there was in addition a splendid view from this breezy, berry-distracted hill-top.

On one side shimmered the picturesque channel, with its bird-silvered Split, its Cape Sharp and the rest, while jewel-belted Blomidon and Partridge Island guarded the entrance to the Basin. On the other side lay the shining Basin and the Cumberland coast, with the uprising Five Islands, and nearer the Two Brothers, small but jewelled islands like the others, where one goes when in need of extra beautiful moss agates. Shining in the sunlight was Silver Crag, which is not jewelled and is only silver by courtesy of the sun, that causes its gypsum cliffs thus to shine forth. Far beyond is Economy Point, the other side of which Minas Basin grows narrow, and is called Cobequid Bay.

The hill-top from which we get this most

Partridge Island

extended of all views is so pleasant a place one loves to linger there and to come again and again. Its outlook is not so dramatic as the one on the steep cliff of Partridge Island, but it is more charming. For every-day living one prefers the merry bunchberries, the blueberries, the cranberries, and the grass the colour of a sheep's back, to the terrifying cliff with its sombre surroundings of rock and dark-green fir-trees.

The picturesque new red sandstone elevations with their overlying trap give to the west end of Minas Basin its chief attraction, but there is much to be said for the twisted and contorted carboniferous beds that predominate in Cumberland County. They contain the valuable coal deposits that crop out at Springhill and about upon the shore of Cumberland Basin, and they are the source whence come the grindstones that gladden the farmers' hearts, but not the backs of their boys, all over the United States.

At Joggins on Cumberland Basin the carboniferous strata are broken off short, as North Mountain is on Minas; and there can be studied, as almost nowhere else in the world, these

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interesting and oftentimes beautiful formations. We heard of fossil trees standing upright on the shore, and of fossils as various and valuable to the geologist as the gems of Blomidon and its neighbours are to the collectors of beautiful stones.

The "back country" is extremely rocky and rugged with rolling hills and intervening valleys, more or less fertile. The woods are exquisitely mossy and the brooks the most distracting of their kind, as clear as crystal and as wild as the rocky land through which they find their sparkling way. Their pools are not untenanted, as one can discover by sprinkling crumbled leaves on the surface when the inquisitive trout put up their noses and display their colours.

The lumbermen set up their portable saw-mills back in the woods; and the "deals," as they call the unplanned spruce boards, cannot float down the turbulent and meandering brooks, nor yet be drawn by waggons or sleds through the rocky wilderness, so sluices are built, sometimes many miles in length, which carry the water of the turbulent brooks in a steady flow down the hills. Down hills and across valleys the wooden troughs float the deals,

Partridge Island

and we passed under one that spanned the valley eighty feet above our heads, held up on a trestle with slender spider-like legs. These sluices leak freely; besides, the water washes over the sides whenever a deal comes along forming cascades more interesting to observe than to pass under. The deals sometimes go overboard, and we saw them strewing the ground along the course of the high sluice and breathed a sigh of relief when safely past the spot where a deal might have dropped down some eighty feet on our heads.

One day we bade farewell to Parrsboro and trusted ourselves to the mercy of the "Evangeline" at break of day. A light fog partly obscured the surrounding headlands that looked out at us dim and mysterious.

X

HALIFAX

GO to Halifax! is a command many have received, but few obeyed. To most of those thus apostrophised in early youth "Halifax" had no concrete existence, but was an undesirable and unlocatable place, to "go to" when one had been troublesome.

Not to have gone to Halifax cannot be regarded as a serious deprivation, for the way there across the country is not enchanting, nor is the city itself uncommonly attractive.

But if, being at Grand Pré, one does go to Halifax and on the way passes Windsor at low tide, he will be rewarded by beholding the ruddy bed of the Avon during the temporary absence of the river, that tidal stream having taken itself off and left the ships in its channel to lean ingloriously against the wharves with their keels in the mud, waiting as best they may for the unnatural river to come back and restore them to their wonted dignity. It must be

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humiliating to a ship to lie in a river that goes out from under it twice a day.

Besides possessing the bed of the inconstant Avon, Windsor is distinguished as the birth-place of Judge Thomas C. Haliburton, the humorist, historian, and man of affairs who was born in 1796 and became known to fame as "Sam Slick," the prototype of the conventional Yankee of caricature, of the stage, and now of popular fancy, who is amusing the world under the newer name of "Uncle Sam." Windsor also has the oldest college in Canada, King's College, which was opened in 1789.

Outside of the town, on Minas Basin and on the shores of the St. Croix River, white gypsum crops out in sepulchral-looking cliffs. It is called "plaster" by the Nova Scotians, and is mined in large quantities and sent to the United States, where, having been calcined, it is sold as plaster of Paris, or merely ground fine as a fertiliser.

The mineral called terra alba is found north of Windsor on Cobequid Bay. We did not see terra alba nor feel special interest in it until we discovered with what pride its possession was regarded by the people. Then we

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bestirred ourselves and found out that it is a silicate of aluminium, or, in common speech, just ordinary pipe clay, which is immorally used for adulterating candies and paint, but otherwise for whitening the sails of yachts and making irresistible the boot-tops, sword-belts, and scabbards of the brave soldier on parade day.

After a time one begins to have a feeling that if he travels long enough in Nova Scotia he will find out where everything comes from without recourse to the encyclopædias. It brings grindstones, plaster of Paris, and pipe-clay nearer to one's daily life, as it were, to behold with the mortal eye the rocks whence they come. Such things, like apples to the city-bred child, had always seemed to us to be the product of barrels and boxes in the back recesses of the city shops.

Aside from gypsum, there is very little to interest one between Windsor and Halifax. The country is stony and overgrown with stunted evergreens.

As one nears Halifax, Bedford Basin appears all the prettier for contrast with the wilderness. It is a long arm of the Atlantic that reaches

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up into the land apparently for the purpose of affording pleasant sites on its hilly shores for the homes of the more prosperous "Haligonians."

Close to Halifax, where the Basin contracts into "the narrows," by which it joins the bay, is a picturesque negro settlement, looking very much out of place in this cold northern land; and we wondered how these children of the tropics found their way here, until we recalled—but not with pride—the slavery epoch in our own history.

Halifax has the site for a splendid city. It lies on a peninsula clasped in bright arms of the sea, and from the centre rises a beautiful hill two hundred and fifty feet high, that looks in all directions over sea and land. Upon this hill stands the citadel, for Halifax has the distinction of being the most important naval station of the British Empire in the Western Hemisphere, and in order to support this heavy responsibility it is armed to the teeth.

It began its career as a fort, long ago, when the Acadians and Indians were misbehaving, and when its name was Chebucto. Its fortifications have grown with its growth, rather faster indeed; for with a population of less

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than 40,000, it has forts in every direction, — on the islands in the bay, on the rim of the town, at the navy yard, and, most conspicuous of all, in the centre of the town is the citadel. One could not throw a stone in Halifax without hitting a fort. All roads lead to forts, and every walk terminates in a fort.

The United States needs only to look at her sister sitting serene among her forts to feel how excellent is peace.

Halifax itself is a disappointment, — one might even say a shock. After having been advised to “go there” all one’s life, one finally goes, to find this city of great expectations neither beautiful nor picturesque, in short, nothing better than commonplace, a mere huddle of narrow gloomy streets and cheap buildings; and it is dirty, too, being addicted to the intemperate use of soft coal, — a pernicious habit which spoils so many towns in the United States which might be charming but for it.

One feels resentment, too, toward Halifax for being a mean city when nature has been so lavish with her sparkling waters, her picturesque hills, and her enchanting outlooks. Halifax, set as she is, ought to be a gem, a

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delight to the eye. She ought to be ashamed of being less than that.

But she is not a gem, and she is not ashamed. She is puffed up with pride. She is proud of her soldiers and of her forts, of her parks, and of her public buildings, and of her harbour. She has red-coated soldiers, and many of them. They are more numerous even than the forts, and they are always on the streets, where they lend a certain appearance of festivity to the otherwise dull town. Their presence is decorative, but individually these soldiers are not very impressive. Many of them are certainly round-shouldered; and with their bright red coats and tiny round caps perched on an angle of the head and held in place by straps under the chin, they look so irresistibly like the long-tailed gentleman who sits on the hand-organ and doffs his cap for pennies, that it is difficult to contemplate them with the respect due to their glorious calling. They are gathered in from the remote districts of the mother country, and present the appearance of having been gathered recently and before they were quite ripe.

As to the forts, if a city wishes to glory in

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the appliances of war, Halifax undoubtedly has cause. Naturally one's first visit is to the citadel rising from the heart of the town.

Until recently strangers were not allowed to enter it, but now any one is welcome to walk about the ramparts and look down into the moat; but no stranger may go inside the fort nor make any drawings of any part of it, nor use the reprehensible kodak, as a wicked "American" was caught doing some years ago, to the confusion of the British Government and the betrayal of the mighty citadel of Halifax. He probably wanted the pictures for his album, but his innocent thirst for photographic distinction resulted in closing the citadel to his countrymen for several years.

There is a fine view from the citadel, and the town lies spread at one's feet with all its sins upon it. But, after all, there is a certain quaint flavour about the place, and the water-front is in part really picturesque, with the ships from all ports of the world lying at anchor or unloading at the wharves.

Whatever may or may not be said for the city of Halifax itself, there is no fault to be found with its very beautiful harbour. The

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people say it is one of the finest harbours in the whole world, and notwithstanding their interested statement one can easily believe it.

Halifax has its Public Gardens within the town; and just outside is Point Pleasant Park, a large tract of land for the most part in a state of nature, and very charming nature, with its forest trees and outcropping rocks and its outlooks over land and water. At one point a little patch of Scotch heather is growing. How it came there we did not learn, whether by accident or design, and how long it will remain we cannot predict, as visitors are allowed to gather it without restraint.

Unfortunately, Halifax yields to the weakness of boasting of her public buildings; and it is only after the "Government House," the "Parliament House," and the new freestone post-office have been fairly faced and found wanting according to non-provincial standards of beauty and magnificence, that the disappointment in Halifax as a city is complete.

There is a tradition to the effect that woollen and leather goods are very cheap and of unusual excellence in this highly fortified town, but like other traditions this has but a slight

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foundation in fact, with the exception of the English travelling rugs.

These were a delight to the eye and a menace to the purse, as it was impossible to refrain from buying more than we needed, — an act of extravagance which we basely excused by casting the blame upon Cape Breton. For thither we were bound ; and we hope any one will agree with us that it would not be safe to enter that frigid region without several English travelling rugs of fine texture and pleasing colours.

Halifax still keeps market-day. Its observance is not as important as formerly, when on that day only could the citizens get their garden supplies. Now there are shops where fresh vegetables are sold as in other cities, and the old market-days — Wednesday and Saturday — have lessened in importance and no doubt in pomp. Their chief patrons now are the poorer class of housekeepers, yet one being in Halifax on market-day should certainly visit the market. Its scene of action is the sidewalks and streets around the post-office square. Here at an early hour the country folk with their loads begin to congregate.

The visitor would do well to go rather early

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in the morning before the crowd of buyers has assembled, else, jostled by the throng, he will find himself in a position analogous to that of the hero in "Yankee Doodle" who "could not see the town there were so many houses."

One cannot see the market there are so many people. When seen in the autumn it consists of many waggons bearing loads of bloomy cabbages, yellow shining pumpkins, brown-skinned potatoes, red beets, yellow carrots, and other cheery-looking vegetables, backed up against the curbstone.

What is there about newly gathered vegetables that makes one always want to stop and look? It is something besides their bright colours and their picturesque effect. It is faint memories of happy childhood hours spent on the farm, and beyond that it is the love — latent or active — in every heart, for mother earth, from whose bosom come these gifts.

The waggons and their loads were the best part of the show. Far outnumbering them were the men, women, and boys, chiefly women, who stood or sat on the curbstones surrounded by baskets of things to sell — or there might

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be but one small basket containing the week's gleanings from the home-patch.

Eggs were so plenty that we were in danger of literally "walking on eggs," and we picked our way in fear and trembling. Baskets containing little deep-red, upland cranberries or dark blue huckleberries gaily called our attention from the all-absorbing eggs, and one little old grandmother had come with two or three pints of belated red raspberries.

Near by a woman had a plucked fowl and a handful of parsley.

A boy sat listlessly beside a pail of snails, unconscious that they were seizing the opportunity to crawl over the sides of their prison and away from culinary distinction, down the crowded sidewalk in a vain search for the sea.

A man near by had a leg of lamb in his basket, and another had three large eels that acted as if they would like to follow the example set by the snails, but their keeper was alert and their hopes defeated by circumstances over which they had no control.

One corner was bright with the flower-venders, who presented large trays of mignonne, sweet peas, and many old-fashioned

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garden posies to the passer-by, while near them the herb-woman held enormous bouquets of gray-looking herbs that exhaled a savour of coming turkey-dressing and seed-cakes. Not far from the flower-women were gathered together some "Preston Negroes" with their contributions of eggs and onions. They were the basket-makers for this whole camp, for everything was displayed in baskets, most of them after one pattern, and all made by the negroes of Preston. They were pretty baskets, strong and of unique design.

Of course there were Indians. What would an open-air market in the north amount to without them? They were across the street and by themselves, and truth compels one to confess they were not interesting. They had, as it were, fallen between the races, and possessed neither the charm of the savage nor the advantages of the civilised state. Most of them were half-breeds, and all of them were dressed in the cast-off clothing of the white people. They had toy bows and arrows for sale and tawdry ornaments such as can be bought by the quantity in any city of the United States. But they added some pictur-

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esqueness to the scene, as in colour and features they were still Indian.

Fruit was a luxury in Halifax. The open-air market was bright with vegetables and flowers, but with the exception of cranberries, huckleberries, and small sour plums there was no native fruit to gladden the eye or refresh the palate. So we had concluded, when suddenly our glance fell upon a booth as bright as the flower-trays with its assortment of beautiful peaches, pears, and plums. Surely this was remarkable fruit to be matured in a northern climate, but to our amusement the vender pointed to his wares and with misplaced pride uttered the disillusioning word — California!

The negro in Halifax is an anomaly. He is hardly seen elsewhere in Nova Scotia, but here there are so many that one keeps questioning the latitude. Surely one has made a mistake and gone "down South" instead of "down North." But a glance at the early history of Halifax makes the mystery clear. From its beginning this town seems to have been a place for the reception of outcasts of various sorts.

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Thither came the fugitive negroes from the cotton States of the South, and thither were sent the insurgent Maroons from the island of Jamaica. The history of the Maroons is not the least romantic episode connected with the history of Halifax.

It seems that upon the conquest of Jamaica by the English in 1655 the Spaniards possessed a large number of African slaves. These people, called Maroons, refused to submit to English rule, but fled to the mountains, where they exercised their ingenuity in harassing the English. After a long-continued and desperate resistance they were finally subdued, and some six hundred of them sent to Halifax.

His Royal Highness, Prince Edward, then commander-in-chief at Halifax, being greatly impressed with the orderly and handsome appearance of these people, set them to work at the fortifications on Citadel Hill, paying them the same amount that other labourers were paid. We were told that the "Maroon bastion" remains as a monument of their industry.

All went well until cold weather came and the negroes were removed to Preston—a few

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miles from Halifax and across the harbour—to spend the winter. Then the people from Jamaica, half frozen and half starved, wanted to go home, refused to do any more work, then or afterwards, and became generally riotous. Finally, the well disposed were removed to a place near the harbour of Halifax, where they probably formed the nucleus to the picturesque settlement which we passed upon our approach to that city.

In 1800 the troublesome Maroons at Preston were sent to Sierra Leone, having cost both Jamaica and the British Government a very large sum of money.

Other importations and exportations of the coloured race followed, Preston being always one of the centres of their settlement; and the pretty brown-skinned girls who sit on the curbstone every market day with their berries and eggs are descendants of those insurgents from sunny Jamaica or of the fugitives from the cotton fields of the United States. It is said the negroes are not yet reconciled to the climate of Nova Scotia—small wonder that they are not!—and though many of them were born there, they sigh for the palms of the

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traditional land of their ancestors and have little zest for the fir-trees of the North.

One wonders whether it was the custom of sending disaffected people to Halifax that originated the historic advice, perhaps less common now than formerly, to "go to Halifax."

To go there, however, is not wholly a punishment, and there is no reason why it might not become a very agreeable place to "go to" in the summer-time. One misses the tides of Fundy here, and there is no doubt that their sudden loss has upon the mind of the traveller the effect of belittling the charming coast about Halifax. All other shores seem tame for a long time after one has known the mighty rise and fall of the waters of the Bay of Fundy.

XI

TOWARD CAPE BRETON

TO turn our backs upon Halifax was to turn our faces toward Cape Breton Island, that unknown land of hoped-for adventure that lay farther away "down north."

We went by rail as far as Truro, through a desolate region of stunted fir-trees and loose rocks like that with which the journey to Halifax had made us familiar. Yet, after all, this depressing country may be about to yield up some mineral treasure that will make it blossom like the rose in the mind's eye of its owner. For in this strange land valuable minerals are ever being discovered in unexpected places. Indeed, not far from this very region that we have scorned, gold mines have been found hidden among the hills.

The gnomes of the rocks seem to have selected Nova Scotia as their own particular work-shop, where they have fitted together their strange mosaics of multiform geological

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formations, their rocks marvellous, and their minerals and metals precious or curious. Fine gold, coal, iron, and gypsum have made Nova Scotia famous the world over, and to these the queer rocky mineral-packed peninsula adds marketable amounts of silver, tin, zinc, copper, manganese, plumbago, pottery clay, terra alba, salt, granite, marble, slate, limestone, and grindstones. Doubtless this is but a tithe of what she could do an she would, and of what she will render up in the future.

Although we did not as tourists take pleasure in the scrubby country around Halifax, nor care for the commercial value of its products, we are persuaded that the geologist would find it of surpassing interest.

Shubenacadie is one of the early stops after leaving Halifax. Naturally one looks forward with anticipation to meeting a place with such a name. But what is in a name? Certainly nothing so far as the actual village of that distinguished appellation is concerned.

Shubenacadie! "abounding in ground-nuts" — and also in Micmac Indians. The Shubenacadie of our imaginations continued to abound in these things; but Shubenacadie the actual,

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alas! contained its whole stock of romance in its name. If it had ground-nuts, it did not show them to us, nor did it bring forth any Indians.

Truro was as disappointing as Shubenacadie, for the maps placed it at the head of Cobequid Bay, the extreme eastern end of Minas Basin, and it was but natural that we should expect to see the waters of Fundy there once more. Not so. Truro is two miles from the bay, a bustling, manufacturing town of no attractions, but with a great deal of smoke and noise.

A few miles away, however, is Maitland, near the mouth of the Shubenacadie River, — a famous spot, we were assured, for the highest of high tides, rips, and bores. This might be so, — we hoped it was, — but we did not go to see. We had pursued rips and bores to the limits of human endurance, and if they were at Maitland — well, we sincerely hoped they would stay there.

Out of Truro we left the desolate waste of stunted firs and loose stones and went speeding along the shores of a river with bright red banks, where maples, oaks, and birches mingled

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with the dark evergreens. The way grew wilder, and we had the exhilarating feeling that at last we were getting away from the beaten track of the tourist.

Great beds of tilted and folded rock strata rose above the train; all sorts of geological formations thrust themselves into our notice. The rocks here are not concealed and covered jealously from the inquisitive eye, as they are on most of the surface of the earth, but they stand forth to be looked at.

Even in the swift passing of the train we saw enough to make us bow before the mighty forces of fire and ice that so wonderfully had rolled up the rocks like scrolls to be read, bent the strata of stone as though they had been of parchment, and opened the secret places, scooping out valleys here and burying mountains there.

Then about us the hills rose, — hills of stone, also the work of the colossal forces that yet slumber in the heart of the earth. Time had covered these hills with soil and verdure, however; and they stood above and about one another in fine groupings, their noble slopes exquisitely coloured with golden-rod and pearly

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everlasting, and where uncut they were overgrown with silvery, tawny grass.

One expected to see sheep scampering over the near hills as the train approached and unconcernedly nibbling on the distant ones, but this was not the case. Only here and there a woolly brother or two or three were to be seen upon these exquisite flower-painted heights.

Acres of fireweed had taken possession of the burned tracts along the side of the railroad, mercifully covering the naked and scarred earth, as is their habit, their long pods curling open in a charming tracery of brown lines and freeing glistening clouds of silky white plumed seeds, to fly on the wind and find out other sore spots that needed their redeeming presence. The earth was not greatly harassed by cultivation; grass grew freely, making now a tawny background to the coloured patterns of golden-rod, asters, and everlasting.

The little village of Hopewell lies among the hills in the happiest manner, in apparent realisation of the wish expressed in its name. Its houses are vine-covered, as hope-well houses ought to be, and there are flowers to profusion in the dooryards, — real Digby flowers.

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We had undoubtedly entered a new world. The depressing sense of commonplaceness had disappeared ; life began to be again original and beautiful. The houses were picturesque, and so were the well-sweeps that stood against the sky.

There appeared distant blue highlands beyond the foreground of tawny hillsides. Autumn tints were beginning to soften the woods on all sides ; and a long irregular lake sparkled down below us, with curving shores and fairy-like islands on its blue bosom, the whole enveloped in a haze like that which comes in Indian summer.

The country began to look unfamiliar and a little foreign. The brakeman's name was Sandy, and when he called out *West Bemigo-mish*, with the accent on the last syllable, and with a Scotch flavour difficult to transmit, we knew we had passed beyond the petty cares of a vapid civilisation and were indeed nearing those dangerous mountain passes, those marshes and Scotch highlands of which we had heard and long had dreamed.

We sped past more rounded hills, often shaven and shorn of their hay, and often lovely

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with their fleecy uncut grass exquisitely intermingled with golden-rod, aster, and everlasting.

“*Merigomish!*” Sandy’s pleasant, sonorous voice announced the getting-off place for the village which is not in sight, but which we hope is as attractive as its name, lying as it does at the mouth of the deep-blue bay that comes close enough for us to admire.

Merigomish! One should hear Sandy announce this, to get an idea of what the word can contain of joyousness and jollity. It rings out the merriest of any towns’ names I ever heard; and if *Merigomish* is half as agreeable as the sound of its name as delivered by Sandy the brakeman, I for one should like to live there.

Beyond *Merigomish* the mountains rise close at hand. They are not grand or terrifying, but they ascend with an ample serenity that is restful. They are wooded for the most part with spruces and firs, lightened, however, by expanses of bright-green deciduous trees. One needs evergreens to bring out the quality of the lighter greens, and also by their severity of form to give character to the nearer hills. In

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the distance their shapes are lost, and their dark green makes black masses like deep shadows in the midst of the lighter foliage.

We left the mountains only to find them again a little farther on. The near farmhouses looked pretty and comfortable, and there was an occasional apple-tree bearing very small apples, as though it knew what was expected of it, and would fulfil its duty as best it could, though its hard-borne fruit was "apple" in form only.

And then, beyond the mountains, up against the sky, lay distant blue highlands like a dream in their loveliness.

Nearer to the mountain sped the train, until we found ourselves climbing the side of it and looking across the mist-filled valleys of another mountain, its sides all sheep-coloured or clothed with fir-trees.

We hastened through a continually changing hill country that raised high our hopes of Cape Breton, for the landscape grew more interesting as we went on.

We left the mountains, and the country settled into a rounded hilliness, always agreeable and always covered with the soft green

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plush of shorn meadows or the silvery, tawny grass.

At one place we passed a village lying in the stony bed of an ancient water-course, the little silver stream purling adown its spine being the only remnant of a once mighty torrent that had carved out the valley. Instead of the flood of long ago elm-trees now occupy the dry river-bed. They stood about the houses, fair, foreign forms in this stern land of fir-trees.

Antigonish! the accent of all these names ending in *nish* or *mish* is on the last syllable. Sandy sings it out powerfully, but it does not dance like the light-hearted Merigomish.

It is a pleasant enough place, but one might pass it unheeded, did one not know that here dwells the Bishop of Arichat, that here is the St. Francis Xavier College, and here the Cathedral of St. Ninian, one of the finest in Canada. Here, too, are large cheese-factories that minister to the temporal needs of the people. Here, moreover, the people are descendants of the Scotch Highlanders who settled these shores in the early part of the century, and here the wild Gaelic speech may yet be heard, the cathe-



SPINNING

Toward Cape Breton

dral services being part of the time conducted in that tongue. Considering all this, it is not surprising that Antigonish is a large settlement. It is said to draw a large part of its revenue from its foggy Newfoundland brethren whom it supplies with cheese and other provisions — at a good profit.

We stayed only a moment at Antigonish, but sped away and away and past a blue lake at the foot of blue hills. The haymakers were busy on its marshy shores with the last cutting of the season, women with turned-up petticoats and bright handkerchiefs over their heads, and men plying the decadent scythe.

Marshy lakes and low-lying hills, beautiful in the light of a poetic day, made charming this part of the journey, and then of a sudden the sea came into view, deep blue in the hazy atmosphere with distant shores of heavenly colouring.

Straight poplars and venerable willows greeted us as we entered the Acadian village of Tracadie. Seen in this light, with the enchanting blues of the distant sea and the near inlets, with the fair shores and the picturesque group of gray-shingled buildings, the monastery

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of the Trappist Brothers, Tracadie seemed the fairest of all the fair sights we had seen that day or in many a day.

It is wonderful what loveliness a certain light can give to the scene upon which it falls. That day of days, with a golden haze in the air that obscured nothing, but lent glow and colour to everything, the hills and towns were enchanting, and Tracadie, as we came upon it bathed in the afternoon light, might have been a vision of the Elysian Fields.

Later the same country was traversed on a dull, dead day when everything looked real, when the landscape lay flat and no golden light and atmospheric life made ethereal the hills and valleys, and Tracadie the beautiful had vanished; we could scarcely believe the evidence of the time-table, the name of the station, and Sandy's confirmatory announcement, when we saw Tracadie bereft of her halo. Beautiful delusion of the atmosphere, could one but always travel when sun and air were in loving dalliance.

The events of individual human life are not very noticeable from the window of a railway train, but one little drama we saw enacted by

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the wayside. A tiny cottage stood on a hill-top near the track; and in the dooryard sat an old man and an old woman, at work upon something, we could not see what. As the train swept past, the old man stood erect and, raising both arms above his head, waved frantically. The engine responded with a shrill salute, whereupon the old man bent himself in a profound courtesy almost to the earth. We flew on wondering, and presently Sandy announced "Harbour au Bouche" with a queer Scotch accent to the French name. We were less interested in Harbour au Bouche than in Cape Porcupine, a bold headland higher than Blomidon, and, one should think, worthy of a more dignified title, for while one is willing to allow picturesqueness to a porcupine, no one would think of claiming dignity for that spiny act of nature. Cape Porcupine was outlined against the blue sea, and in a few moments we reached that sea, and also Port Mulgrave, the end of the road.

We stood upon Canso's shore gazing across at Cape Breton, the goal of our desire. The Gut of Canso it is that makes an island of Cape Breton.

XII

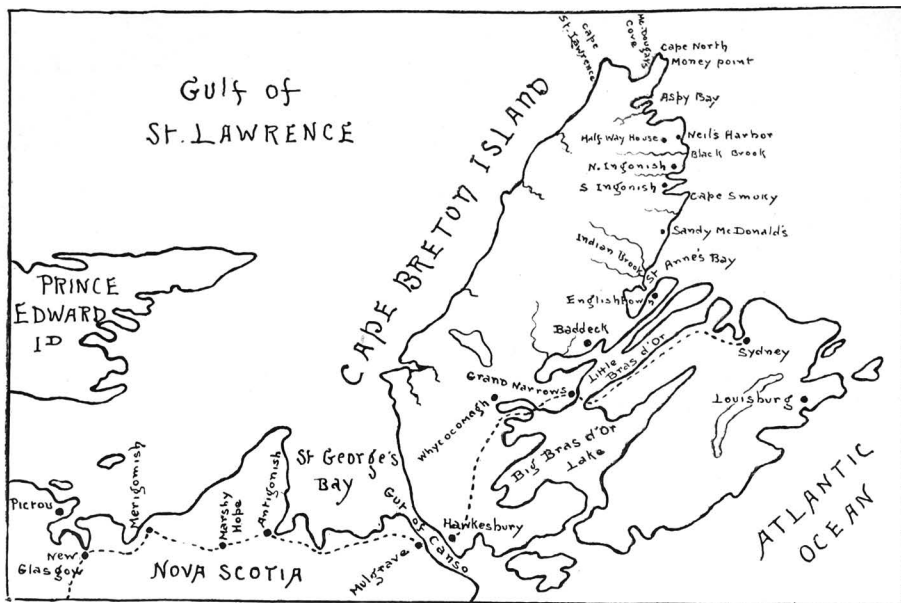
B A D D E C K

CAPE BRETON ISLAND is the wild and rocky portion of northern Nova Scotia, which seems intended for a bulwark against the northeast storms that come down past Newfoundland, which lies a few miles away from its northern point.

The island is cleft nearly in two by the sea. Its central portion is a deep valley filled with salt water and affording safe anchorage to ships that come in through the Great Bras d'Or Channel, a narrow arm of the sea making down from the northeast. Parallel to this is another channel, the Little Bras d'Or, through which only the smaller vessels pass.

Many bays and inlets are given off from the central basin, the southernmost and broadest portion of which is called the Great Bras d'Or Lake, while north of that and partly separated from it by a point of land is the Little Bras d'Or Lake.

The Bras d'Or lakes and their branches almost cut Cape Breton in two, for St. Peter's



CAPE BRETON ISLAND

Baddeck

Inlet at the southeast corner of the Great Bras d'Or Lake comes within half a mile of breaking through the land into the sea at the south.

What nature did not quite accomplish, man did ; and a ship canal, cut through the isthmus, has divided Cape Breton into two main islands, besides converting the Bras d'Or lakes into a safe water-way for vessels wishing to pass between the north and the south coasts.

The country of the easternmost island thus formed has a very broken coast and is by far the best known. On its northern coast is Sydney Harbour, said to be one of the finest in the world, only that it is blocked by ice for several months in the year. Near the mouth of the harbour are the coal mines that have made this part of the country profitable and have drawn to it a comparatively large population. At the head of the harbour is the flourishing town of Sydney, and southeast of that on the coast is the site of the famous town of Louisburg that played so important a part in the wars between France and England.

Louisburg was built by the French shortly after the Treaty of Utrecht, its location on a point of land to the south of a fine harbour

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being admirable for fortification. Stone walls thirty feet high, on which were parapets and towers, and around which was a moat eighty feet wide, protected the town on the land side. On the side toward the sea it was guarded by forts in the harbour.

This "Dunkirk of America" was a constant menace to the English, and after twice passing into their hands it was finally levelled to the ground by them in 1760, thus relieving them of the expense of maintaining it, and making it impossible for it to become again a rallying point for the enemy. All that now remains of the once proud French capital are a few grass-covered mounds. A little fishing village occupies its site, and Louisburg is but a name and a memory of the past.

The western coast of Cape Breton has no harbours, and the country is very rugged and mountainous, particularly the northern part. To the west of the Bras d'Or lakes lies the "Margaree country," famous for its salmon-fishing. This side of the island is but thinly populated, particularly the peninsula to the north, which is a plateau surrounded by mountains.

Baddeck

This plateau, which is about eighty miles long, is known to the people of the locality as Cape North, although the Cape North of the maps is a bold headland that stands with its base in the sea at the extreme northern point of the plateau.

Few people visit this very interesting peninsula. It is not easy to visit, and its attractions as a rule are unknown to the traveller. It is peopled by Scotch Highlanders, and although it is traversed by that highest achievement of civilisation, the telegraph, it has not been "civilised" to any great extent.

Steam-mills and manufactories in the busy world outside have won the people from grinding their own oats to buying ready-made oatmeal, and from spinning and weaving all of their own cloth to using more or less of the cheap stuffs sent to them from Halifax; but on the whole they live very much as they did before steam and electricity metamorphosed life for so much of the world.

He who enters Cape Breton by way of Port Hawkesbury, across the Gut of Canso, will very likely be disappointed. He certainly will if he expects to step at once into a

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region of wild mountains and picturesque Highlanders.

There are no such things at Port Hawkesbury; on the contrary, the country is scrubby and uninteresting, and the Gut of Canso, as one crosses it in a wheezy little steamer, is a disappointing Gut to the tourist, not at all worthy of its uncommon and confident name. Its principal virtue is its depth, — a wholly commercial virtue.

That it is a deep Gut, however, and has always — since the coming of the white man — been the principal passage for ships sailing between the Atlantic Ocean and the Gulf of St. Lawrence, did not commend it to us.

Three miles down the coast toward the Gulf of St. Lawrence is Port Hastings, equally uninteresting until one discovers that it possesses a historic importance out of all proportion to its looks, for here the first Atlantic cable crossed the Gut of Canso. The first transatlantic cable was laid from the coast of Ireland to the east coast of Newfoundland, over the “telegraphic plateau” that providentially crosses the ocean for its support, and in 1858 the first message successfully crossed

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the sea. This message was transmitted by telegraph and cable from Newfoundland to Aspy Bay on the northern part of Cape Breton Island, and from there telegraphed to Port Hastings.

Cape Breton Island lies in the line of the shortest distance by sea between Europe and America; and so, remote as it is from the great cities, it was one of the first places to be traversed by telegraph-wires, in order to transfer the cable messages received at Aspy Bay.

From Port Hawkesbury to Sydney there is a railroad which crosses the water at the head of the Great Bras d'Or Lake, where the channel is contracted, and where is situated a small hamlet called Grand Narrows.

The country between Port Hawkesbury and Grand Narrows is rough and dreary-looking, with much gypsum cropping out white and ghostly in the wilderness. As we approached Grand Narrows, we got cheering glimpses of the blue Bras d'Or, and at the hamlet itself uprising hills and blue water revived our spirits.

We left the train to continue its course to

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Sydney, for we were not bound that way. Others might go on to prosperous Sydney and historical Louisburg; but as for us, we preferred to step aboard the little steamer ready to puff its way through the shining Bras d'Or waters to Baddeck.

There is little tide in the Bras d'Or lakes. Their entrance does not receive the waters freely enough to cause them to pile up, as is the case in the Bay of Fundy; on the contrary, the force of the rising tide is dissipated before the water gets into this inland sea which lies in its land-bound basin, calm and peaceful.

The Bras d'Or lakes are pleasant sheets of water with pretty wooded shores, though on the whole the scenery is not remarkable. It is very peaceful and pleasing, however, and there are many lovely coves and points of land along the shore. And there is always the invigorating northern air to fill one with its refreshing life.

Baddeck lies on the shores of an inlet behind a point of land that separates it from the Little Bras d'Or Lake. We found it the simple sleepy hamlet we had hoped for. Its

Baddeck

one street was unpaved, and its shops wore a submissive air of having done no business for several generations — with one exception. There is one store of general merchandise of such modern aspect and such activity as to seem wholly out of place in Baddeck.

But on the whole the village preserved the same Sunday-like serenity that so puzzled the genial author of “Baddeck and that Sort of Thing,” since whose visit years enough have passed to revolutionise “American” politics and see the rise and fall of more than one large “American” city, yet there sits Baddeck on the shore of her Bras d’Or, just as she sat then, excepting that the old jail has made way for a new one. It was explained to us that the last prisoners put in the old one had dug holes in the wall and got out; to further inquiry our informant answered apologetically that he did n’t think there were any prisoners in the jail now, but added, as though to vindicate the honour of the town, that they sometimes had one.

Baddeck is just as good and just as quiet to-day as it ever was, with the exception of its one flourishing store; and that no doubt is

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the result of "American" influence, for there is a large house on the point known as Red Head, across the water, and from a tall flag-staff near it floats the stars and stripes. It is the residence of Mr. Alexander G. Bell, the inventor of the Bell telephone; and some two miles or more up the road to the north are two or three other houses from whose tall flag-staffs floats the emblem of our kind of freedom. In one lives Mr. George Kennan, not beloved by the Czar of Russia, and every summer a greater or less number of citizens from the United States find their way to the cool breezes of Baddeck.

Yes, there is one other "improvement" at Baddeck, a brick custom-house and post-office that we at first mistook for the jail.

There is a curious sense of disjointedness about Baddeck and its surroundings. The houses seem set around anywhere, and the Bras d'Or shares the general sense of confusion.

The water-view ought to be beautiful, with points of land reaching into the lake, islands in the channel, and between the points of land a broad opening across the main body of water. But there is lacking that necessary something

Baddeck

we call "composition;" things are not placed quite right with respect to one another, and the proportions are not good. Such is the impression one gets from the village itself, but on the higher land back of the village there are points of view from which Baddeck on the water's edge, with its diversified water-view in the background, is charming indeed.

Whether Baddeck is old or young depends upon the point of view. In 1793 it had ten white inhabitants, which is ten more than Chicago had at the same time. But Chicago had something of an agaric nature which in little more than half a century has caused it to spring to the ungainly size of over a million, while Baddeck has had a slow and solid growth of nine hundred within a century.

Baddeck's first inhabitants were disbanded soldiers, and her people now are largely composed of the Scotch who have moved to this part of Cape Breton. The names over her shop doors are Rory McLeod, Sandy McLane, Murdoch McPherson, or similar Scotch cognomens. The place is largely Presbyterian, though a little building still gathers the people of the Church of England under its wing.

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The Presbyterian Church, large and barn-like, stands on the hill behind the town, and there is still observed the custom of repeating the services in Gaelic, — for the back-country people have not forgotten their mother-tongue; in fact, many of the old people know no other.

The difference between Sunday and other days at Baddeck is not observable in the increased stillness of the place, — that is not necessary even for Sunday, — but that one can then go to church. One can go to the Presbyterian church and listen to a Gaelic service, which is what every stranger does.

Sometimes an English service precedes the Gaelic, which makes the meeting rather long, but sometimes proceedings begin — and end — with a Gaelic prayer-meeting, which was the case the day we went.

The congregation, composed mainly of elderly and unlettered back-country folk, contained few young people and fewer children. The leader, who was not unlettered and who had a fine voice, opened the meeting by reading in Gaelic. Then gaunt men rose and prayed, standing perfectly still and betraying no emotion in voice or by gesture. They spoke in

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low mumbling tones that to us soon became a monotonous drone of unfamiliar sounds.

One by one they got up and prayed and sat down, until we began to weary exceedingly from sitting still so long on the hard wooden seats, and were inconsistently thankful for the law which excludes women from also taking part in public services. Fortunately the praying was interspersed by singing, which caused us for the time to forget weariness and to become lost in wonder, if not in admiration.

The leader sang metrical Psalms in a voice that was not without dignity and music; the melody was entirely unknown to us, and at a curious up-slide at the end of each phrase, the congregation joined in a chorus difficult to describe. There came a deep crash and burr of male voices, embroidered, so to speak, by the most astonishing and unrelated high soprano embellishments from the women. It was amazing, unexpectedly and finely barbaric, retaining a strong flavour of vanished centuries when all the wild northern hordes struggled for supremacy, and when the inspiration to their music was the crashing of waves on the

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wild coast, the shrieking of the tempest, and the cries of war. We both thought of wind and water surging about a rocky coast as we listened, and there was also a suggestion of the droning of bagpipes in the male voices.

When the services finally ended, the collection was taken, and it amounted to only a few large copper pennies.

There were Indians at Baddeck. They come in the summer as to a watering-place, for change and recreation and to glean an occasional penny from the "American" visitors, and to sell baskets of their own manufacture to whoever is in need of baskets. Their encampment was on a steep hillside on the edge of the village. It consisted of half-a-dozen wigwams covered with birch-bark and shaped very much like the pointed firs that surrounded them.

Thin columns of blue smoke were rising from two or three camp-fires one morning as we drew near, and we saw an iron pot hung over each fire by a cord from two sticks set up cross-wise. Here was genuine Indian at last! but not unmarred by contact with the dominant race, after all, — for they were unbecomingly

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clad in the cast-off clothing of their white neighbours.

The romance of Micmac Indian life is very greatly enhanced by distance. They live almost as simply as wild animals, but they are not nearly as clean. Why is it one never sees a dirty squirrel and never a clean Indian? Unless, indeed, both have the misfortune to be captured by civilised man, when the method of their lives may become reversed, and the squirrel through vile captivity grows dirty, while the Indian becomes clean through enforced scrubbing by the Government.

There was a white child in this camp, a little girl of seven or eight, and the wildest-eyed child we ever had seen. She was dirty like the rest, and at our approach fled as though the bad spirit were after her. We saw her later caressing a fat squaw, who vigorously elbowed her away. We learned her story, which was not a pleasant one, her own mother having given her to the Indians. Poor baby, with her bright yellow hair, and her skin gleaming white in spite of the dirt, what is to be her fate, brought up like a little animal in the midst of a race whose every impulse is opposed to her own?

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Besides a number of Indian children, there were little dogs about the camp, as miserable-looking as starved little dogs could be, and there was a kitten with a woolly coat like a sheep. It was a desperate-looking kitten, and who can tell whether its woolly coat was due to the vermin that certainly infested it, or to some un-catlike, and ghoulish foreknowledge such as is said to be possessed by potato-skins, corn-husks, and gophers, of a hard winter which must be prepared for.

As we receded from the camp, the pointed wigwams shining white and tawny with their covering of birch-bark, the blue lines of smoke wavering up to the sky, the moving forms of children, made a picture pleasant to look upon.

XIII

ENGLISHTOWN

WE did not go to Baddeck wholly for Baddeck's sake, but as well to make it a starting-point for the plateau to the north which we meant to traverse, roads permitting, all the way to the bold headland that fronts the icy sea and ends the land in this direction.

The people there are Scotch Highlanders of good repute, they having succeeded an older population of bad fame and piratical habits.

Cape North and its Highland fisher-folk had been recommended to us at Parrsboro by Mr. Gibbons, a unique and beautiful character, pastor of the Church of England, and lovingly called by his people "Parson Gibbons." He is the only person of Esquimaux blood, so far as we know, who has made a name for himself.

He wore an expression of great sweetness and earnestness, and was a man of so much education and culture that it was a pleasure to listen to him. His indomitable courage had

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enabled him to surmount all obstacles and take his place in the field of work he had chosen and in the society that his education had fitted him for.

He had ministered for a number of years to the people of Cape North, as no one had done before, and as no one has done since. He loved them, that we could see, as in his sympathetic way he told us of them, of their hard lives, their idiosyncrasies and their virtues, and although he had a quick sense of humour there was ever love shining back of his laughter. He mapped out the route for us from Baddeck to the extreme end of Cape North, and told us where and with whom to stay along the road.

At Baddeck, we learned much of Parson Gibbons' work, how he had gone once a month the whole length of Cape North, often walking the distance of one hundred miles over mountains and through swamps. More than once he had stumbled into a friend's house, on his return from the north, quite exhausted and with blood-stained shoes.

No other name is so well known and so loved on that rude coast, as we were soon to

Englishtown

learn, for even the faces of the children that had been born since he left lighted when we spoke of him. His memory is handed down to the younger generations; and all, old and young alike, when we were there, fondly believed that he would some day return to them. But that he will not do, for since this book was begun the brave and gentle spirit has passed from its mortal toil. His death was the result of injuries received when stopping a pair of runaway horses, saving the lives of those in the carriage.

At one end of the village of Baddeck stands a little church of unique appearance, which is one of eight in different parts of Cape Breton and Nova Scotia which the great courage and perseverance of Parson Gibbons had built, some of them in places where another would have seen no possibility of erecting so much as a shed.

We were obliged to remain in Baddeck for several days, partly on account of the weather, and partly to make the necessary preparations for the peculiar journey we had undertaken.

One cannot start into the wilderness without forethought, and we had received such contra-

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dictory information concerning the resources for travellers "down north" that we determined to take with us the necessaries of life. In other words, we were to become a pair of gypsies for a couple of weeks.

Of course we had to drive, and for this a horse and waggon were necessary. A waggon in which one must take a long journey is good or bad according to the nature of its seat. Only those who have tried know how few vehicles have seats that are not a mortification to the spirit of man after he has sat upon them for three consecutive hours. Now, to select a waggon solely for the comfort of its seat may produce peculiar results. It did in our case. We desired to present as respectable an appearance upon this somewhat Quixotic journey as circumstances permitted, but circumstances did not permit of anything better than a small and topless vehicle very much the worse for wear, and with what paint still remained worn to a dull and ashy gray. But it was strong and had a comfortable seat.

It had to be built up in the back to accommodate our load; and as the addition was made with new boards which there was no time to

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have painted, the result was not quite what we should have been willing to exhibit to some of our — happily distant — friends and relatives. But the people of Cape Breton are not critical; and as a good many of them do their own walking, our outfit was regarded beyond the town with envy and as an indication of very great wealth and pride.

Quite as important as the waggon was the horse; and Mr. A., genial landlord of the new Bras d'Or hotel, introduced Dan to us as the one horse in all Baddeck or in all the world suited to our needs.

Dan was a rather small chestnut with a white star in his forehead; he had a straight neck, a tender mouth, a somewhat mincing gait, and he was a little stiff in the legs upon first starting out. He hated to back and he had a nervous fear of the whip. But to offset all this he had a large kind eye and as true a heart as ever beat in the breast of a horse.

Appearances were certainly against the dear old fellow, and we remember with regret that we rejected him after a short trial drive. But Mr. A. assured us so impressively that Dan was willing to cross ferries that fortunately for us

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we finally took him, though we did it under protest. We could not then understand why willingness to cross ferries should count so mightily in his favour. Our very narrow-minded idea of a "ferry," based upon those by which one enters or leaves New York City, was to become broadened to an extent we did not dream of then.

"Down North" is applicable to any journey northward from the southernmost point of Nova Scotia. "Up along," like the same term on Cape Cod, is used of travelling along the edge of the land, that long strip by the sea which in both Cape Cod and Cape North is the portion most generally inhabited. So when we left Baddeck — or perhaps better, left Englishtown — we might technically be said to be going "up along."

A clear, cool morning dawned about the middle of September. The waggon was ready; and Dan, shining from a most unusual polishing, the last grooming he was likely to get until he returned to his own stable, with a strong harness on his back and new shoes on his feet, waited our pleasure.

Into the back of the waggon were packed a

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few necessary personal effects and also sundry culinary articles of iron or tin and a quantity of provisions. A white canvas cloth, attached to the seat, was drawn tightly over the load at the back, steadying and holding it in place, and incidentally giving it the effect of a peddler's pack or an emigrant's outfit. Mr. A. generously tied his own fishing-rod to the back of the seat with our umbrellas, over which were thrown the bright new Halifax rugs that must have felt a little indignant at the figure they were made to cut. M.'s sketching materials stood against the dashboard, and under our feet, to her dismay, was a tin can of worms which the stable boy at the last moment contributed for bait, also a wrench, and a bottle of oil to grease the wheels.

As there was no room for it inside, Mr. A. had dexterously with a long rope tied a bushel of oats and "cut feed" in a bag to the back springs, not improving their action thereby, but adding materially to the general emigrant effect.

We finally started, moving down the main street of Baddeck with what dignity circumstances permitted, while the Sandys, Rorays, and Murdochs stood at the doors of the moribund

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shops with their hands in their pockets, and looked on, speechless, smileless, and respectful.

In a few moments we were out of town, facing expectantly toward Cape North, that mysterious headland a hundred miles away, the road to which was said to be wild and lonely, obstructed by mountains and marshes, and traversed by an occasional Highlander. Between us and these perils we had only Dan, with his new shoes, his strong harness, and his kind eye.

We jogged along the road to the northwest, following an arm of the Bras d'Or that makes up there and is known as Baddeck Bay.

We passed the cottages of the stars and stripes and bade adieu to them as though they had been our friends.

Miles of wild fir forest succeeded to the blue shine of the bay. Moss bearded the trees and carpeted the banks; pretty snowberry vines strayed over the moss. Innumerable bridges intercepted our way, and they were all out of repair. Under some scurried brooks, while others seemed their own excuse for being, as there was no water under them and no sign that there ever had been.

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It was at these bridges that Dan's virtues as a highland traveller began to shine forth. If his foot went through a hole, he pulled it out and like a philosopher scorned to notice trifles. He had a way of smelling of suspicious bridges ; and if they exhaled no odour of security, he gathered himself together and jumped over them, the waggon and its occupants following, not as they would, but as they must.

Besides the many little bridges that Dan could jump, there were longer ones that no horse could have jumped, and beneath them and along the side of the road through reaches of fir-trees dashed and tumbled and glided the wildest, loveliest brooks we ever had dreamed of.

We went slowly along, enjoying the lovely road and the bewitching brooks until we found ourselves hungry. Then we stopped and had our first gypsy meal by the roadside. We built a fire of dry twigs on a pile of stones near a brook in a meadow where the fence was down, and felt very wild and gypsy-like. True gypsies would have done better, however. The smoke blew all ways at once, and the kettle insisted upon lying upon its side and pouring the water into the fire.

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We took Dan from the waggon ; and since we had forgotten to bring a halter we led him into the field and bribed him by a pile of oats and cut feed to stand still. He stood and ate the feed, the grass beneath it, and the earth beneath that, while we returned to the unequal contest with the fire and forgot all about him until a peculiar shuffling noise brought our heads out of the smoke and fastened our startled gaze upon him, not as we had left him, but upside-down, his new shoes sparkling to the sky and his harness writhing about him.

He was without doubt the happiest horse in Cape Breton at that moment, but at our indignant approach he righted himself in haste and looked deprecatingly at us out of his large kind eyes.

Dinner was forgotten in the puzzling occupation of getting him to rights, and he was bribed with another supply of feed to stand up. It was the middle of the afternoon before we sat down to our hard-earned meal, and all we succeeded in cooking after a long and bitter fight with our first camp fire was a pot of coffee. Still, it paid, as any gypsy will understand.

Having attached Dan to the waggon with an

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optimistic trust in the goodness of misplaced traps, we went on through another stretch of fir woods smothered in brittle sage-green moss. Then a clearing appeared, and we passed somebody's potato patch where large crows were pompously stealing potatoes. They cawed in loud tones as we drew nearer, and went on coolly digging up their neighbour's tubers. They poked their stout beaks into a hill and hauled forth a potato with an unerring aim that suggested previous practice.

Besides the crows the woods were full of robins. Such wild robins! They were in flocks and screamed at us and showed none of the amiable characteristics of the red-breasts of civilisation.

There were squirrels along the lovely highway, — tiny fellows with rusty red coats and bushy tails, that scolded us roundly, though we were not conscious of deserving it.

We climbed a long, circuitous, fir-covered, brook-bordered hill, at the top of which a noble view of St. Anne's Bay burst upon us. From a calm sheet of blue water, mountains rose in brooding beauty, stretching away and away along the sea-coast to the distant blue

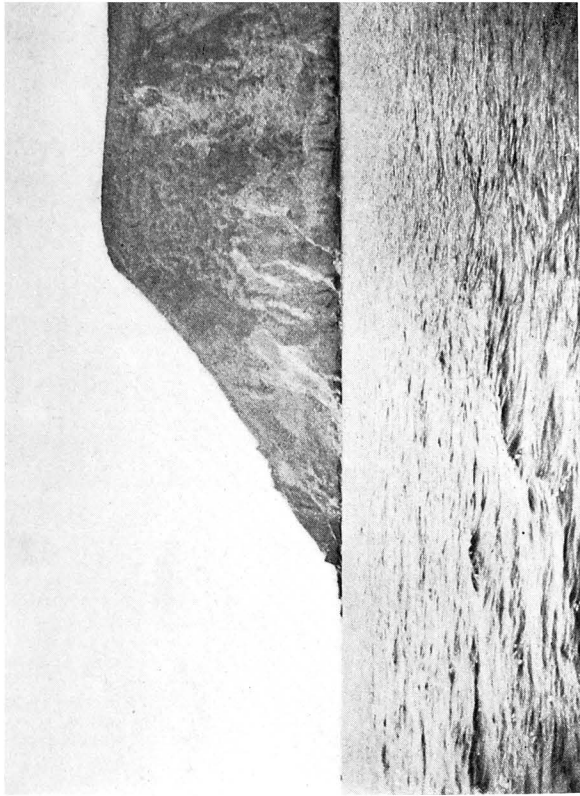
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headland which was far-famed Smoky, or Cape Enfumé, as the French called it long ago, because of the crown of mist it usually wears.

The contour of the mountains opposite Englishtown is peculiarly beautiful, the lines of the spurs as they overlap each other are fine, and the ever-changing yet eternal mountains of beauty are repeated in reflections on the water below.

We know no lovelier spot than Englishtown, lying on the lower swells of elevations that rise almost as high as do the mountains across the bay.

Englishtown is enveloped in a mantle of romance besides that of her beautiful mountains and bay. One is astonished to know how old the place is, and that St. Anne Bay was an important and stirring fishing port contended for by both French and English when New York City was still a quiet Dutch burg. Indeed, the first settlements there antedate the founding of Port Royal. But St. Anne's history is full of vicissitudes; and though repeatedly settled by the French and English alternately, no permanent village of any size or importance has as yet been founded there.



CAPE SMOKY, CAPE BRETON

Englishtown

In 1597 the English ship "Chancewell" came to grief in the usually safe harbour and was wickedly pillaged by the French fishermen settled along the coast. Captain Leigh, commander of the "Chancewell," tells us that "there came aboard many shallops with great store of Frenchmen, who robbed and spoiled all they could lay their hands on, pillaging the poor men even to their very shirts, and using them in savage manner; whereas they should rather as Christians have aided them in their distress."

In 1629, two armed ships of France, the "Great St. Andrew" and the "Marguerite," occupied the harbour, and their crews, aided by their English prisoners, built a fort to command the entrance. This fort was armed with eight cannon, 1800 pounds of powder, pikes, and muskets, and was garrisoned by forty men. The arms of France and of Cardinal Richelieu were raised over its walls, and a chapel was erected. But before the close of the winter, disaster thinned the ranks of the garrison; more than a third of the troops died of scurvy, and to add to the confusion the commandant assassinated his lieutenant on the parade-ground. Later, an Indian mission was

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founded here by French Jesuits, but prosperity did not attend these efforts, and soon both garrison and mission were removed.

In a French book, written by Thomas Pinchon and translated into English in 1760, we get a very good description of St. Anne, or Port Dauphin, as it was then called.

“Port Dauphin is a very fine harbour, two leagues in circumference. It is almost entirely shut up by a neck of land, which leaves only a passage for one vessel at a time. The ships can hardly perceive the least motion of the winds, the grounds, that surround it on all sides, being of so great a height; besides, they approach the shore as near as they please without danger, and the harbour is capable of admitting vessels even of four hundred ton. The bay is capacious enough to contain a thousand [vessels]. Before it is the great Bay of St. Anne, covered to the southeast by the two islands of Ciboux and Cape Dauphin. . . . The strand of Port Dauphin is of greater extent than that of any other harbour in the island; and notwithstanding that there is plenty of codfish, yet this is not the only advantage of the place; the neighbourhood of Labrador [the Bras d’Or lakes were then called Labrador] and Niganiche [Ingonish] renders it easy for the inhabitants and the savages to assemble upon necessary occasions.

Englishtown

“The vessels employed in the fishery at Niganiche are obliged by the king’s ordinance to retire to Port Dauphin toward the fifteenth of August, because of the storms that rage in that season. When they have got into those harbours, they expose the cod-fish on shore, where nature seems to have made a bed for that purpose. Sometimes you see a hundred and fifty boats employed in this business.”

It seems that the French were for some time undecided as to whether the citadel of Louisburg should be built at Port Dauphin or on “English Harbour,” as Louisburg harbour was then called. Port Dauphin was more impregnable but less convenient, and was finally rejected.

St. Anne Bay is another inlet like those two long “arms of gold” that give entrance to the Bras d’Or lakes. It lies nearly parallel with them, but does not reach more than ten or twelve miles into the land, because of the watershed which keeps it from forming another arm to the Bras d’Or lakes.

It was an easy matter to sail from the eastern harbours around to St. Anne; and when there was any fighting going on, St. Anne seems never to have been left out.

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In 1754 the English came around in one of their war-ships, a part of Commodore Warren's fleet then blockading Louisburg, and destroyed all the French settlements on St. Anne's Bay.

Toward the end of the eighteenth century there was a remarkable influx of Scotch Highlanders to Cape Breton and at the beginning of the nineteenth century ship-load after ship-load was landed on that island. It is estimated that between 1802 and 1828 some 25,000 of these people poured into Cape Breton. They were turned out of their homes in Scotland to make way for sheep-raising, that having been found more profitable than the rents of the miserable tenantry. The refugees sought the new highlands of a more friendly world, where landlords were not, and thus St. Anne and the whole of Cape North came to have its present industrious and temperate population.

On the end of the narrow spit of land that closes the harbour to the storms and allows only one ship at a time to pass, a light-house now stands, and another shines over the sea from one of the Ciboux Islands.

Englishtown, too, is the proud birthplace of

Englishtown

a great man, for here first saw the light Angus McCaskell, the giant, concerning whose life we know only what has been told us by the genial and learned author of "Baddeck and that Sort of Thing," who ends his description of the great man with the exclamation, "Alas! he has passed away, leaving little influence except a good example of growth, and a grave which is a new promontory on that ragged coast swept by the winds of the untamed Atlantic."

We regret to say we did not visit his grave nor his shoes nor sit in his chair; we were so overcome by the unexpected beauty of bay and mountain that we forgot all about the storied dead until it was too late and we had crossed Torquil McLane's ferry not to return.

We entered Englishtown in the same leisurely way we had approached it. It consists of half a dozen or more houses placed not too close together along the road, and we were in search of a "long low house with a black roof standing on a hillside." Here lived Sandy McLeod and his family, and here we hoped to spend the night. Sandy himself was not at home, nor yet Mrs. Sandy, but bonnie Annie was. To let us in, she opened the bars that

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closed the gateway to the meadow at the farther end of which the house stood, and undertook the offices of hospitality in her mother's absence. Her mother had gone on the mountains for blueberries, which was good news to hungry travellers.

As there was no one at home but Annie and a little boy, we, with a confidence partly assumed, undertook the deliverance of Dan.

A "collar and hames" is a remarkable invention not commonly used on a single horse excepting for heavy work, but it formed a part of our strong harness. The hames is within the comprehension of the average intellect, for it unbuckles and comes off, but the collar does not; it does not open, and is smaller than the horse's head by any ordinary method of measurements. We had exhausted mathematics and the patient Dan's forbearance; the sunset flamed and waned unseen before the inspiration seized us to turn it around, then, presto! it was the shape of his head, and off it came.

Dan's tortured ears and head being finally released, to our infinite relief and his, we ministered to his comfort as well as we could in the gathering darkness, then went to the house,

Englishtown

whence proceeded an appetising odour of cooking clams. This was a sorrowful delusion, however, as it proceeded from a kettle of "rockweed" Annie was boiling for the pigs.

The mother came with a pail of fresh blueberries and bade us a cordial welcome, and we made a hearty supper of bread and milk, and blueberries sweetened with brown sugar, our appetites quickened by the day out of doors and the odour of steaming rockweed.

After a night of such sleep as comes only to those who have spent the day in the open air, we wakened to a morning of splendour.

A neighbour "tackled" Dan for us, making no comments upon the state of his rigging, untangling and putting all to rights and making our stanch little craft again seaworthy, with the deftness of a sailor.

This handy son of Neptune also mended the holes the rope had worn in the feed-bag, for a fine stream of Dan's precious provender issued from each of a number of holes at every motion, and we know not how far we had left this sign of our passing along the lonely road.

Meantime we talked to the pretty boy who is heir to the McLeod estate, and learned that

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he was six, that he did not go to school, though he earnestly assured us in the dialect of Cape North, "If I will be seven, then I might go," meaning that when he had attained that mature age he would go.

XIV

FRENCH RIVER

TORQUIL McLANE'S ferry is the notable instrument by means of which the traveller can find his way out of Englishtown to the north.

Englishtown lies opposite the narrowest part of St. Anne, which here may be about a mile wide, but that providential tongue of land must not be forgotten which separates the inner harbour from the outer bay, leaving only "a passage for one vessel at a time," and making of it a safe refuge in time of war.

Although not at present of military importance, the tongue of land still answers a very good purpose in shortening the labours of Torquil, the ferryman, who is a man of note all over Cape North, and, for that matter, much farther. For whoever writes an article or even a letter about this part of the country, never fails to adorn the same with the picturesque name of Torquil McLane, the Englishtown ferryman.

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Torquil must be pronounced "turkle," and Cape Breton on the spot must be called Cape "Britton." It is supposed by some that the island got its name from the Basque sailors who came to these shores from Cape Breton near Bayonne, in very early times. Be that as it may, the Basque sailors are no longer there to see justice done their mother tongue, and Cape "Britton" it is in the mouths of these former subjects of the British Empire.

Torquil McLane's ferry was quite as picturesque as Torquil himself, and resembled nothing so little as our narrow-minded ideas of a "ferry." To see it was to understand and sympathise with Mr. A.'s concern that we should have a horse willing to cross it!

It had no landing whatever other than the pebbly beach provided by nature. The ferry-boat resembled a retired dory, grown broad and flat-bottomed with increase of years. We reached this promising form of transportation by pitching down a stony embankment upon a stony beach.

Torquil was waiting for us, for had he not seen us enter town the night before, and did he not hope and trust that we should be cross-

French River

ing his ferry in the morning? He was a tall, spare Highlander, and he surveyed us with his shrewd Scotch eyes, and in a deep voice inquired, after the manner of his people, where we came from, where we were going, and what our names were.

We answered and looked at each other in consternation, for while we might get aboard the high-sided boat, rocking in the water, what of Dan? Could he and would he do this thing? We did not believe that he could or would.

While Torquil was taking the horse from the waggon, his daughter, aged eighteen, strongly built and rosy-cheeked, appeared upon the scene. She had come to help her father row us over the ferry, and was accompanied by a little boy and a solemn-faced baby.

Torquil and his buxom daughter laid hold upon the waggon and pulled it out into the water and aboard the boat, that vehicle going through the most alarming contortions meantime. Then it was Dan's turn, and we watched with bated breath as he waded out.

"Get in there!" said Torquil the ferryman — and Dan got in! It was a beautiful sight.

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He pawed about with his front feet until he got them over the side and in the boat, and repeated the operation with his hind ones until he was all in. Could he have known the feelings with which we regarded him upon that occasion, he would have been a proud and happy horse.

As it was, he was no sooner in than he wished himself out again, and it became necessary for one of us to stand on a seat and keep him from walking overboard, while Torquil and his daughter pushed the boat from shore and turned it toward the other side of the harbour.

The baby was stowed for safe-keeping under the seat in the bow, whence it peered out curious but silent — as became a Scotch baby. The little boy pulled at his father's oar until his face was crimson, and the strong-armed daughter kept stroke with her father. Thus we passed the perils of the sea.

As soon as the boat grated on the pebbles of the opposite shore, Dan scrambled overboard and Torquil harnessed him to the waggon. We paid the ferryman his fee and watched the clumsy craft go back across the mouth of the

French River

harbour bearing the far-famed ferryman, his strong daughter, his crimson-faced son, and his silent baby.

This long narrow reef is a curious object which, seen at a distance, looks more like an artificial breakwater than a work of nature. It is formed of large light-coloured cobblestones, and the road over them was almost invisible, so slight is the impression made upon them by wheels and footsteps. Quantities of gulls flew screaming about us, and upon the bar strange-looking conifers spread themselves out. Broad at the base, they were only three or four feet high, grotesque caricatures of the elegantly proportioned spruces and firs of the mountains. Luxuriant patches of Herb Robert with red-tinged leaves and deep pink blossoms brightened the austere bar, and the *Mertensia Maritima* was also in bloom, though we saw but one plant of it. It is as scarce as it is charming and loves to adorn just such stony places. Unfortunately for it, its pretty patches of blue-gray leaves set on long stems radiating from a centre are very noticeable among the stones, even if it were not for the showy flowers, rose-red in the bud, violet as they unfold, and finally

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when fully open a deep pure blue, and they fall victims to the passer-by.

We are distressed to recall that we took this last plant, it may be thereby exterminating the race, so far as that particular cobblestone bar is concerned. Upon realising this, we wished it back in its place among the stones, ripening its seeds. But it was too late. The delicate roots could not be returned to the crevices whence they had been torn, and we regarded the quaint and pretty blossoms that lay before us with a feeling of guilt which it is to be hoped is the fate of all vandals.

Patches of fragrant juniper covered with clusters of dusky blue berries were scattered over the bar, and the yellow August flower nodded merrily to us from its hard lot among the stones.

The August flower, as it is here called, grows all over Nova Scotia. It is a yellow composite, smaller and more delicate than a dandelion, and the most joyous of weeds, standing anywhere and everywhere that it can find room for a seed to sprout, and making the roadsides and stony places bright.

Once over the bar, the road lay along the

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narrow stretch of level country between mountains and sea. The houses by common consent in this whole country keep as far away from the road and from one another as they can. We could see them set far back toward the mountains and protected from the dangers of the highway by broad fields which lay in front of them.

For some distance the road winds its charming way in full view of the surrounding mountains and sea, and then it turns inland and crosses the steep-banked Barasois River over a new iron bridge.

Cape Breton is a remarkable place for brooks. One feels obliged to keep on saying so, for they keep on appearing, the most friendly and joyous brooks; sliding without a ripple over mossy rocks, leaping wildly down the faces of cliffs, disappearing, reappearing, murmuring, smiling, roaring, they were our constant companions, delightful beyond all reason. They are brown brooks as a rule, a deep golden brown, though sometimes they are emerald green.

Indian Brook, which we crossed soon after the Barasois, almost anywhere else would be called a river. It has a broad stony beach

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which tells a tale of flood when the glen it traverses between the mountains was filled by a wild torrent, for mountains of great beauty stand about Indian Brook. It is one of the loveliest spots in Cape North, as the people call all this northern peninsula. The mountains that enclose the glen are like those at English-town, while to the northward are seen the splendid headlands that stop at the sea, projecting their imposing individual forms in dark masses against the sky. The mouth of Indian Brook traverses a wide flat expanse that in the autumn is brilliant with the glorious colouring that distinguishes the salt marsh.

Having secured a jar of milk and half a loaf of sour bread from a wayside farmhouse set well back from the road on a hill, when the time came we had dinner by a brook-side. Cape Breton is noted and justly so for sour bread, but there are exceptions.

Cape Breton brooks might have been made for camping purposes, so admirably are they adapted to it, and the one we chose that day was perfect. It had a broad bed of dry stones with a clear cold stream in the middle and bushes and trees along grassy banks.

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On the dry stones, partly protected by a clump of trees, the camp-fire burned cheerily, and we had a royal dinner, leaving the Cape Breton bread to the discussion of the birds. Dan had several sheaves of fresh-cut oats, purchased along the way, and we were all happy.

There was not a house nor a human being in sight, only the sky, the cold brook, the splendid air, and the trees and birds for company. Had we known as much then as we did later, we might have added brook trout to our feast.

We lingered long, lying on the warm grass in the sun while Dan cropped about the bushes. The good fellow endeared himself to us quite as much through his faults as his virtues, — for his weaknesses were human like our own.

He loved the midday rest. He knew when the time came, and sometimes even selected the spot. When he had had a pleasant time of long duration, he showed his appreciation by good-naturedly putting himself between the shafts, which it is the custom in Cape Breton to hold up above the horse; but his opinion of an insufficient play spell he expressed by meanly stepping in sideways so that the shafts lay

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across his back. This he would do time and again, resisting the combined efforts of the two of us to get him in straight until he considered us sufficiently punished, when he would turn around of his own accord.

Wherever we were, the same forms went fitting ahead of us, the same uncertain colour and quick motion, only the white feathers on the sides of their outspread tails betraying the juncos and their sociable *tsip, tsip, tsip*, telling us we were not alone in the wilderness.

The approach to Sandy McDonald's is over undulating fields; it is not on the highway, no house in Cape Breton is, and it is not in view from the highway. One goes there on faith. The track worn through the fields meanders along toward the sea, and one meanders along over it, with no sign of what one is seeking until upon climbing a hill the house is suddenly in view, standing on the very edge of the sea bluff and flanked by a small barn and the roofs of a group of buildings that scarcely rise above the bank.

The house stands alone on that wild coast with the restless northern sea reaching out to the "Grand Banks," and the nearer waters

French River

yielding great store of codfish to Sandy and his fishermen.

There is a wide and slightly rolling meadow to be crossed before the house is reached, and this meadow, when we passed that way, had been given a recent top-dressing of fish-heads, which sent forth a mighty odour. As the house was approached, however, the fish-heads were left behind, and the strong, clean winds from the sea drove the stench landward, leaving about the McDonald habitation only its legitimate odours of fresh and drying fish.

Fish is the keynote to life at Sandy McDonald's. There is fish everywhere about the place; indeed, man himself seems a subordinate work of nature, created for the purpose of catching and curing fish.

The house stands on the top of the bluff and down below are fish in all stages of preparation. Down there, too, are the buildings where the fish are salted and laid in piles to await their turn on the flakes.

These dark-hued old fish-huts, with their briny odours and weather-worn aspect, give one the feeling that they have grown there like barnacles on the bank. They stand with their

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backs against the bluff, and about them are large frames roofed with poles, the flakes appropriate to the scale upon which fishing is here carried on.

Standing about are large black iron pots with signs of extinct fires still visible under them; and there are vats of livers; and everywhere fish are lying or hanging, the cod having the place of honour on the flakes, the queer-looking remnants of dogfish or skates spread out on the beach or hung up anywhere.

The huddle of huts and great flakes, the boats drawn up on the shore, are all of the same weather-worn hue; and, seen against the sombre, treeless bank with the boundless expanse of the northern sea in front, the place has a wild and remote aspect at once unique and impressive.

In the narrow path that leads along between fish huts and flakes we saw a small and shaggy-haired ox with a yoke about his neck attached to a sled that would have graced an ethnological museum, for if it was not the work of primitive man, it at least was the primitive work of man, which amounts to about the same thing, so far as looks are concerned.

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And Sandy McDonald owns the whole of this uncommon place. House, barn, store, for there is a store well stocked with fishermen's needs next the house, fish-huts, fish-flakes, shaggy ox, and primitive-looking sled,—all are his.

When we got there in the afternoon the day's work was done, the fishermen were scattered, and there only remained the evidences of their recent presence in the fresh fish that were lying about and the long, lank, newly hung strips of dogfish drying for the horses and cows. They told us that a horse fed on dried dogfish presently acquires a glossiness beautiful to behold.

French River runs over a stony bed to the north of the house. It winds its shallow way to the sea untroubled by the fact that the McDonald household has to descend the bank to its level and carry back every drop of water the family uses.

This is the romantic but extremely inconvenient habit throughout Cape Breton. Each house is built as near as possible to its own river or brook or spring. If the land in the immediate neighbourhood of water is not suit-

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able for building purposes, so much the worse for the family. The little meandering paths from house to spring are very pretty in the summer-time, and one is willing not to know them in the winter.

There must be people somewhere near Sandy McDonald's, for we saw little children on the bank above us as we walked among the remains of fish that afternoon of our arrival. The little creatures seemed to belong to some untamed branch of humanity, they were so wild in looks and behaviour, fleeing like wind-blown elves if we so much as looked in their direction. They finally flung themselves down on the top of the bank and peered down at us, only their heads visible, while they would occasionally spring up like a row of jumping-jacks, tossing their arms and gesticulating wildly. It was a strange place as the sunset glow warmed the sky and the great northern sea darkened, with the weather-worn fish-huts, the great flakes, the strong odour of drying fish about us, and above us the grim bank with the forms of the strangely behaving children outlined against the red sky.

The McDonald bread is not sour, and pretty

French River

Mrs. McDonald prepared supper, of which we partook with the family, consisting of Mr. and Mrs. McDonald and their little boy, and Mr. McDonald asked a Gaelic blessing over the meal.

In the morning we saw the real life of this remote fishing-station. By the time we had eaten breakfast, the dories were already coming back with the result of the day's catch.

Hours before we were awake the fishermen had pulled out to sea, and there in the darkness had drawn in the cods, the skates, and the dog-fish. We watched the boats come in, bobbing over the water and all making for the same point, — the shore where we stood. When a boat neared the strand, it was headed at right angles to the breakers and driven hard ashore. As it grated on the pebbles the men jumped overboard; one of them threw one of the enormous oars under the bow for a roller, and all hands laying hold upon either side of the boat with shouting and laughter drew it, load and all, up on the pebbly beach beyond high tide.

The heavy boats were laid side by side so close together as almost to touch. It was quite exciting and very picturesque, for the men were

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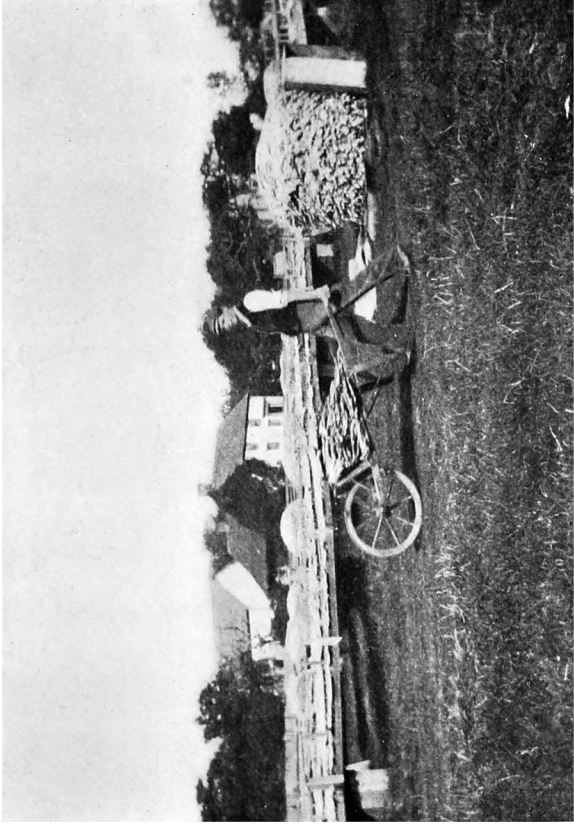
clad in tarpaulins and their speech was Gaelic. As soon as a boat was landed, all gathered about it to examine and comment upon its contents; then the tables were set up and the work of "dressing down" began.

The tables were the colour of the fish-huts, the flakes, and the sombre bank; they had criss-cross legs nailed to either end, and looked soggy on top, where the juices of innumerable fish had been spilled upon them.

The cod were mostly small the morning we saw them. We had not thought well of the personal appearance of the cod heretofore, but many of these were of a brilliant metallic brown played over by shades of red and green.

Besides the cod there were quantities of dogfish, more dogfish than cod indeed; and every boat had at least one, and some of them several enormous skates. Their semi-lunar mouths were placed underneath the front of the kite-shaped body and were horribly paved with blunt and rounded teeth that fastened unyieldingly upon anything that came within reach.

In each boat was store of squid for bait. There are no queerer creatures than these, soft, long, and cylindrical, reddish yellow in



DRYING COD.

French River

colour, with long tentacles growing out from the head end. The head end is spotted and speckled with bright colours, and up and down run lines of changing and iridescent hues, as though the blood in their transparent bodies were made of the essence of rainbows. Their conduct is as queer as their appearance, for when they are first pulled out of the water they squirt ink upon their captors, and that they are pulled out at all is entirely their own fault, for the fisherman but drops overboard a cylindrical piece of lead painted red with a row of hooks bent backward around the lower end. This object the squid embraces, wrapping his inner tentacles about it and so impaling himself. The instrument is not baited in any way, and for a squid to behave as he does toward it seems too absurd even for a squid.

As soon as the tables were set up, the work of "dressing down" began in earnest. The cod were taken first and whisked through the process with great speed and no ceremony. A boy tossed the fish from boat to table. A man caught it by the head, ran his knife around the gills, broke its neck, slit it open down the belly, and sent it sliding over the greasy table

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to another man, who tore off its head and tossed that into a barrel, tore out its insides, tossed the liver into one barrel, the "sound," if a big one, into another, the rest of the inwards into a third, and sent the rifled remains along to another man who slit it down the sides, cut out the backbone, and tossed what was left of it into a tub of sea-water, where a boy swashed it up and down and laid it aside ready to be salted.

But as long as it takes to tell of one fish, a dozen or more had gone through the process; they slipped along from hand to hand in an almost unbroken chain.

The stomachs of the largest cod were opened, to see what booty there might be therein, for as Father Charlevoix, in his *Letters to the Duchess of Lesdiguières*, published in 1763, says:

"There is perhaps no Creature, in Proportion to its Bigness, that has so wide a Mouth, or that is more voracious."

He tells us that the cod of his day ate iron and glass and pieces of broken pots, and then, feeling obliged to account for the consequences of such a rash diet, he adds:—



SPLITTING TABLES

French River

“Now we are convinced that the Cod can turn itself Inside-out like a Pocket, and that the Fish frees itself from any Thing that troubles it by this Means.”

That was certainly a very convenient habit, but one not possessed by the cod of the present time. The cod we saw opened had made no prizes excepting that three or four good-sized lobsters in an unimpaired condition were taken from one of them and laid aside. One wonders whether it is courage or callousness that enables a codfish to swallow a live lobster, claws and all, — and why the lobster allows it.

After the dressing down of the cod came the turn of the hake and pollock, then of the leathery dogfish, these little sharks being very summarily dealt with and not washed at all.

Last of all came the skates, their enormous bodies, shaped like a Chinese kite, almost covering the tables and heaving up and down as though the creatures were labouring for breath. Only a small semi-lunar section is cut out of the skate and used ; this is coarse meat, but we were told that when well cooked it is not ill flavoured.

The men laughed over their work and talked

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Gaelic, and we had a feeling that it was as well we could not understand all that was being said. They were a rude set, harmless enough, no doubt, and when at home would probably have been found in the scattered houses that stand so far from the road.

Here, at Sandy McDonald's, we saw the whole method of dealing with the cod from beginning to end, all but the catching of it, and we felt quite willing to let that rest with the imagination.

While we made our preparations to depart, all of the fishermen in their tarpaulins stood in line and looked on. They were very quiet, only uttering an occasional comment in Gaelic. They made no effort to help or to hinder, but stood there.

Probably it was many a long day since they had been blessed with so diverting a spectacle. And as for ourselves, we cannot remember a time when things proved so contrary, when so many apples escaped and rolled around for the admiration of the spectator, and when provisions, personal effects, and cooking utensils showed such perverse refusal to go where they belonged. To see us harness our horse, ren-

French River

dered our attentive audience speechless ; even Gaelic failed them.

At the brow of the hill we turned for a last look at the quaint fishing-station, and there was the group of tarpaulins, still gazing after us. We cannot shake off the feeling that they are there still, standing in line and gazing speechless toward the brow of the hill.

XV

CAPE SMOKY

CAPE NORTH is the home of the balsam fir, whose delightful fragrance fairly pours out in the heat of the sun. It is as full of sweetness as an orange-tree, every part of it, wood, leaf, bark, and root, yielding an aromatic juice.

There are blisters full of resinous sap on the trunks, old firs sometimes having quite large reservoirs of this "balsam;" and we amused ourselves by cutting into them with a penknife and seeing the clear liquid gush out. It was as clear as water with a sharp turpentine taste, and quickly dried into a sticky glue. We cut a great many balsam blisters on our way to Cape North, and we hope the trees did not suffer.

All the way from Baddeck to the rocky headland of Cape North, the houses are of the same mind with regard to the road and to one another. They are scattered far apart and farther as one goes north, and under no circum-

Cape Smoky

stances do they place themselves close to the road, which they seem to regard with so much distrust.

The fences are often as picturesque as the zigzag rail fence known as the "Virginia snake," though it belongs as much to New England as to Virginia. Cape Breton fences are sometimes made of small tree-trunks with the bark on, and these are laid together in a manner local to the place and pleasing to the eye. The gates are even prettier than the fences and are more varied in design, each section seeming to possess its own style of gate-architecture.

The gates do not open into dooryards but into wide fields, somewhere beyond which the house is safely intrenched. Sometimes there are several intervening fields, and he who would visit must open several gates before he can get to his neighbours. They are wide gates as a rule, through which loads of hay can pass. The small gate, quickly opened and quickly closed, a sort of invitation to enter, is seldom seen here.

The people often shut their doors when they saw us coming, and upon one occasion an old

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woman closed the house and made good her escape to the barn.

Shut the door on us as they would, however, we had always an open sesame in the name of Mr. Gibbons, and to some of them we bore personal messages from him. It was a beautiful sight to see the hard faces lighten, and suspicion give way to confidence at the mention of his name. They eagerly asked news of him, and sent back messages of this one and that one to whom good or bad fortune had come since his departure.

Human nature is quite as human here as elsewhere we discovered upon approaching a house set back on a hillside one day. The open kitchen door was promptly closed, as, crestfallen but not vanquished, we drew near. Presently, however, the parlour door was cautiously set part way open, and by the time we were fairly arrived the inmate was so industriously sewing that she did not observe our approach, — this notwithstanding that she had been unable to refrain from looking out a moment before to see how near we were. The woman was young, and she was working upon a bright red merino child's dress, elaborately trimmed with lace.

Cape Smoky

Such we had not seen elsewhere in Cape Breton, and promptly taking our cue we heaped upon it the wonderment and praise it merited, while the proud mother's eyes shone ; and during her detailed exhibition of it we could not help discovering that it was quite finished and the appearance of industry had been but an ingenious device to bring it upon the scene. She told us she had kept the materials ever since she came from Boston, where she had once worked.

To have worked in Boston is a mark of high distinction, and gives a girl a right to put on airs and be looked up to. She comes back from there with ideas and with all sorts of household embellishments, many of which are of a nature to make one hope they are not distinctive of the æsthetic status of Boston. To Boston the surplus youth of a family find their way, and Boston and the United States are synonymous in Cape Breton.

Boats at Halifax connect with Boston and the West Indies, and these ports are the known world to the Nova Scotian, besides Canada.

A woman at Baddeck, upon hearing us mention Chicago, so soon after its Great Fair, too,

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said, "Oh, yes, I have heard the name before; it is near Florida." It will be hard for Chicago to believe this, but it is true.

This unhappy state of affairs is doubtless due to the curious nature of the geographies used and taught in the schools. It gives one a queer feeling to open one of them and observe the great size and multi-coloured appearance of Canada, while the United States is a little neutral-coloured oblong somewhere down below.

In our geographies, which we know have been made with a great deal of care, the relative importance of the two countries is reversed, Canada appearing as a nearly blank upper border to the map, while the United States is evidently a mighty nation, resplendent in brilliant geographical colouring. Could the Nova Scotian be induced — or compelled — to use our school books, he would soon cease to be ignorant.

We made many calls along the road, having always an excuse in asking the way or buying potatoes. This last was M.'s duty, and she regularly fulfilled it by presenting the large copper cent of the country, and asking for its equivalent

Cape Smoky

in potatoes. This was a language the people understood, and the cent was always honoured by enough potatoes for a meal, — the only business transaction we had with these canny Scotch in which we felt perfectly sure they were not getting the better of us.

The houses contained four or five rooms generally, though some had an attic as well. In the best of them was always a sitting-room or parlour, its floor covered with home-made rugs, and on the table were a few books of a theological nature. Opening from the sitting-room there was often a tiny guest-chamber elaborately furnished with rugs and tidies.

There was one ornament in several of these houses which we never had seen anywhere else. This was a chocolate-coloured card, whereon were set forth the virtues of a deceased member of the family in gilt letters. These cards were lying on the centre-table in the parlour; and though they did not add to its cheerfulness we liked them better than the silver coffin-plates framed in black velvet which we had seen hanging on the walls of a Massachusetts farmhouse.

Every house has its rugs, sometimes beauti-

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ful and always interesting. They cover the otherwise bare floor of the parlour, where there is one, and make spots of warmth for the feet in kitchen and bedroom. They are made of rags "hooked" into a foundation of coarse cotton cloth.

The women save their rags and colour them charmingly from the bark of trees and from plants which they gather in the forest and steep for the purpose. With these coloured rags they work through the long winters, creating marvellous patterns of flower or bird, or merely of combinations of geometric figures, or of figures known to no science whatever. They vie with one another and willingly endure much weariness, for a large rug is a back-aching and a finger-aching task. One who has not seen these creations could hardly believe there were such possibilities in rags. They are to the women of Cape Breton what worsted work, wax flowers, and various forms of painting are to the country people of some other places. But here the occupation never changes, the craze of one season is the craze of the next. Often these rugs were more lurid than harmonious in their colours, but the most of them gave a

Cape Smoky

homely cheeriness to the bare raftered rooms that could not be dispensed with.

Besides making rugs many of the women spin and weave their own cloth ; and in a few of the houses the clumsy and picturesque loom was still standing, though for the most part the looms were not in place, weaving being winter work.

Cape North homespun is not beautiful. The warp is made of cotton and the cloth is harsh to the touch, and generally ugly in colour. But the great loom, sometimes half filling the room, is a picturesque adjunct to the cottages which we hope will not be in haste to depart.

Most of the houses had no chimneys and of course no fireplaces, a stove-pipe through a hole in the roof allowing the smoke to escape. A queer cylinder-backed stove was very common, as if some enterprising stove agent had passed that way within a recent historical period.

How the people manage to keep warm through the long winters is a mystery, for the houses seemed to us in many cases but little better suited to withstand the cold than are the cabins of Southern Florida.

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We were vividly reminded of the south, too, by seeing women washing clothes out of doors. They had the same large black iron pots for heating water over a fire on the ground. One wonders how early in the season they begin it, and how late they end it, and what happens during the long months of deep snow when no clothes can be washed out of doors.

The kitchen was the largest room and the most interesting. The dishes stood in a home-made dresser open in front, the plates and saucers upright in rows against the wall, and the cups hanging on hooks. There were wooden chests standing along the sides, that also served for seats, and odd-looking little cupboards hung on the walls, while various objects depended from the beams with picturesque effect. Sometimes a wide bed stood in one corner.

The men belonging to these houses are fishermen, and the women do the work of the fields.

The women in the barley fields were a pleasant sight as we passed along, and came upon them amongst the yellow grain in their short homespun petticoats, a gay kerchief tied

Cape Smoky

over their heads, and the bright sickle in their hands, for the barley is cut with sickles here. One in search of pictures of peasant life need not go farther than the barley fields of Cape Breton.

The men fish and the women work the farms. I asked a girl which was the harder. "Oh, the fishing," she replied; "that is much harder; the field work will be easy." She told us the men sometimes went out at four o'clock in the morning and did not get back until four in the afternoon, and all that time without food, "for they will never eat on the boats."

The people are industrious and temperate. One of them told us Cape Breton folks had to be; they had to work continually, and strong drink meant immediate ruin.

The fare is principally salt fish and potatoes, strong tea and oatmeal porridge. Each family keeps a cow and a few hens, and some have sheep. No attempt seems ever to be made to prepare the food in any but the simplest and to our minds least palatable manner. The fish is boiled, the potatoes are boiled, and the meal is served without any further trouble.

The children, brought up on a diet of oat-

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meal, salt fish, and potatoes, scorn the luxuries of an effete civilisation, as we discovered upon presenting some bananas to the youngsters of a house where we stopped. They tasted, spat violently, and ran howling to their mother, who was as much mortified as we were amused. We thereafter refrained from proffering tropical fruits to children reared so near the pole.

In the winter, it seems that those who own sheep kill one, and this gives them the only fresh meat of the year. Of course the poorer families do not have even this.

At the time of our visit the mountains were covered with blueberries, the largest and sweetest we ever tasted. These the people gathered and ate without sugar or milk, and allowed the surplus to lie and ferment, in which state they seemed to be relished just as well, though they were as sour as vinegar and half decomposed. No one took the trouble to cook them or dry them, or in any way preserve them for winter use.

We stopped at some strange places in the course of our leisurely journey, and the moment of reckoning was always a delightful one to M., who stood discreetly aloof and watched



EARLY MORNING ON THE COAST

Cape Smoky

her partner feebly struggling in unequal contest with disciplined and inherited Scotch "thrift." No matter how pleasant our intercourse with the family had been, when the time came for settling the account there was a tightening up, so to speak, of voice and visage, we were regarded with intense suspicion, and our indebtedness announced in a voice so hard and cold as to be quite terrifying. The man — for the settlement was always made with the man — knew he had charged more than value rendered, and was prepared to combat any remonstrance.

But when the matter was settled, even if we won a few points, the former friendliness returned, "business" was over, and whatever firmness we had displayed was far from having lowered us in the esteem of these canny Scotchmen. M. said they liked us all the better for it. They sometimes excused themselves by explaining that we "had money in the bank and could pay as well as not," otherwise we would not be able to "take a cruise" just for pleasure.

It was soon after leaving Sandy McDonald's that we pulled up short to keep from run-

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ning over an old man who tottered across the road under Dan's nose, and then clasped our front wheel in both bony hands as though to anchor us there. He gazed at us, and we at him, and finally we spoke to him, and he replied, "Sorr?" Thinking him deaf, we spoke louder, but he still replied, "Sorr?" Then it dawned upon us that we were talking in an unknown tongue, and we inquired if he spoke Gaelic; "garlic" they pronounce it here. He nodded in the affirmative and also assured us that he could "speak enough English," and began a friendly conversation in his native Gaelic, which we on our part kept up in well-chosen English, and thus we passed a most agreeable half-hour, each saying exactly what he thought, without danger of giving offence to the other.

To say "yes, sir, to a gentleman, and yes, ma'am, to a lady," has evidently been a part of the polite education of these regions, but "sorr" has nearly superseded "ma'am," being applied universally and regardless of sex, and we received the polite responses, "yes, sorr," and "no, sorr," the whole length of Cape North, — usually with unconscious gravity, but in the

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case of pretty Katie McPherson it was the cause of much confusion. We met Katie and several other little girls on their way home from school. They stood aside, with downcast eyes and fingers in their mouths, to let us pass, for the children here are very bashful, but when we stopped and inquired the way to a certain house, Katie rose to the emergency and said, "Sorr?" We repeated the question in a friendly and beguiling manner, punctuating our remarks with a ginger cooky apiece, for we had brought a supply of these delectable things for just such occasions; and Katie, from amidst her gratitude and blushes, was finally able to articulate, "no, sorr," then the impropriety of her remark burst upon her and she quickly amended, "no, ma'am," nearly overcome by shame and the fit of giggling that seized her.

"I don't think," which seems to be the only form of speech expressing doubt in all Nova Scotia, is also frequently heard in Cape North. It is rather disconcerting at first to inquire whether your road takes a certain direction and be sadly informed that he whom you address "don't think." You will often have no diffi-

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culty in believing the statement, but in time will learn that it does not mean quite what it says.

All along the way are rounded hillsides covered with tawny grass and run over by large white sheep with beautiful fleeces. The sheep were never in large flocks, but in groups of half-a-dozen or so. Sometimes they would come tumbling down a bank by the roadside and run along in front of us to disappear into the first gap that took their fancy. But generally we saw them on the hillsides moving about, or bounding in graceful undulations through the tawny grass. These hillsides were often yellow with the airy August flower, which may not have been nutritious, but was lovely in company with the large soft-fleeced sheep.

It being harvest time, we constantly came upon distracting pictures of red-cheeked, short-gowned girls among the yellow barley, stooping, with one hand grasping the ripe grain, the other the sickle, and eyeing us curiously as they stopped midway in their work, or else standing erect, arms on hips and sickle still in hand, to gaze after the strangers. Sometimes we stopped and spoke to them, but seldom

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with much result. The old women were often seen in the barley patches, equally picturesque though not as pretty as the young ones; and the old, old men were sometimes there, those too old to fish.

Those were halcyon days, when we travelled toward Cape North in the sunshine, with the invigorating air about us, the barley fields yellow with ripe grain and gay with the reapers, and the sea with its white sails ever coming unexpectedly into view, while the beautiful sheep started from the fir woods at the roadside or bounded over the flowery hills.

Cape North is the artist's paradise from end to end, and it is an ideal place for camping, with its fine summer weather, its refreshing brooks at short intervals, and its beautiful mountains and sea.

On the way to Smoky, one passes Wreck Cove, its name sadly significant, for every year there are terrible shipwrecks along this iron-bound coast. Wreck Cove, however, in the summer-time and from the land side, is terrifying only in name, for about it are lovely hills that make of it a miniature Indian Brook.

As one nears Smoky, the houses and barley

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fields are left behind, the road takes a turn to the left and runs some distance into the land, following a very noisy water-course which rushes through a glen at the right and which is so far down that only the tops of the trees — maples, birches, and oaks — whose roots are at its level, reach to the road where we journey. Much of the time we cannot see it through the intervening foliage, but again we catch glimpses of bright, hurrying water.

This is one of those mossy-banked roads one remembers with such pleasure; and at a brook which crosses it we stopped one day for dinner, that we might be rested and refreshed for the difficult passing of Smoky, with its wonderful views and its terrifying precipices. Over a camp-fire such as we had now learned to make with skill, we prepared a tempting meal of broiled "American" bacon, Cape Breton potatoes stewed in milk, hard ship's biscuit, French pickles, and a cup of coffee. For dessert we had "capillaire" berries, exquisite store of which we found adorning the mossy bank near which we rested. "Capillaire" is the pretty name there given to our snowberry, the daintiest darling of our



WASHING POTATOES

Cape Smoky

northern mountains. Nothing could be devised for a mossy bank lovelier than its fairy vines tracing an embroidery of tiny leaves over the moss, or hanging in a curtain over the edge, and nothing that grows could be daintier than its snowy fruit with its peculiar and delicate flavour.

While sitting on the mossy bank beside the snowberries, we had the added pleasure of being croaked to by ravens. We had expected to make their acquaintance, if we were so fortunate as to do so at all, the other side of Smoky, for we had heard they nested near Ingonish. But surely these great black fellows were they, though probably we should not have discovered it had they kept still. The hoarse, rattling cry that revealed their identity and surprised and delighted us was never the voice of a crow.

On a firm bridge we crossed the chasm of the deep-down brook we had been following, and began to ascend a winding road. Occasional outlooks through the trees afforded enchanting glimpses of far-reaching blue sea, of bold bluffs that stood on the edge of the water and of intervening valleys. Rocky slopes near

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us were grown over by blueberry bushes with reddened leaves and lavish abundance of ripe fruit; while the round-leaved, aromatic winter-green of our childhood deeply carpeted the wayside. Heavy growths of ferns and brakes filled the hollows. We went slowly, even more slowly than the rising grade demanded, often stopping to enjoy the wildness and the sweetness of the way. As we went on, the expanding views and the greater depths into which we looked told us we were nearing the top.

No perils of the way had been encountered until of a sudden we came upon a ledge where we realised our hopes of Smoky and almost our fears. On our left rose the wall of the mountain, while between that and the deep descent to the sea was the ledge upon which the road had been built. It was a good enough road now, buttressed by heavy planks and widened by broken stone, but it was easy to see how in other times it had been a slanting and dangerous trail where the traveller might have met with disaster. The view was of the sea over the tree-tops that grew on the lower slopes. It was a lofty perch, from which the sails looked like white dots on the water.

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We passed this ledge and went on through the woods soon to turn a corner and find ourselves upon a similar ledge and facing the majestic form of Cape Smoky.

It stood across an abyss from us, a bold front of red syenite rising nearly a thousand feet up out of the sea in a very steep slope. Its vast, storm-polished front was bare and scarred except where near the top the blueberry and other bushes had painted it warm tones of red and yellow. The hard syenite had resisted the merciless dash of winter sleet and the yet more merciless action of the frost to a wonderful degree. Instead of being torn and jagged, the splendid sweep of stone was smooth and in places fairly polished.

There was no cloud about the brow of Smoky then ; the massive form lay before us in the light of a clear day, sharp-cut against the blue above and the blue below, for the sea line was high on Smoky's flank from where we stood.

Out of the blue sea the form of the ruddy headland rose in the clear northern air, while back of it, though not visible from this point, were other fire-born mountains of yet greater

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height, but all more or less softened by time and clad in vegetation.

Only Smoky's stern front remains bare to the terrific storms that in vain assail it and that cause the waves to beat with frightful but unavailing force against its iron base. Filled with a sense of its immutability and impressed by its stern grandeur, we wound along our narrow ledge and down behind the mighty headland.

XVI

INGONISH

BACK of Smoky the road winds up hill and down, through closely wooded hollows and over barren highlands. The sea is lost and the glory thereof, the impressive and beautiful headlands that abut upon the coast are not in view, the stupendous front of Smoky has vanished. We found it a road diversified by pleasing but milder aspects of nature, where the highway finally assumed the appearance of a grass-grown lane, and where the trees were oaks, maples, and birches.

Then came a roar like a great wind in the trees and a glen deep and dark opened along our right hand, a turbulent brook shouting from its depths.

We followed this glen, now on its verge, now so far away that only the voice of the brook told where it was; and finally we struck once more across barren ridges, and through hollows where the fir-tree reigned; and finally,

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a steep climb, a sudden turn, and before us lay the far-famed, the lovely Ingonish.

It was near the hour of sunset that we came upon Ingonish set in her mountains and touched by the sea. There is a glory of northern skies than which no southern splendour is ever sweeter or more tender. That glory lay upon the sea and the mountains of Ingonish as we came upon them.

A river broke through the hills to the north and found its way into a bay almost closed by a cobblestone bar similar to that of Englishtown, but on a much larger scale. Beyond the bar lay another calm bay, while mountains of exquisite beauty rose tier upon tier from the very water's edge and half encircled the Bay of Ingonish. We descended a steep hill that turned on itself in a sudden curve, and soon found ourselves on the shore facing the Ingonish ferry, which is far more formidable than the one at Englishtown. The surf ground the pebbles on the shore, and we had to be rowed over a long stretch of restless sea to the cobblestone bar. But Dan did not disappoint us; he climbed into the ferryboat at Ingonish as cleverly as he had into the one at Englishtown.

Ingonish

We were touched by the exceeding beauty of the mountains as we looked back toward the shore. To our left lay Smoky, for we now saw the opposite side of that fine headland. It swept up from the sea, but not in an unbroken line, for on this side it was buttressed by cliffs, while about its brow had collected the mist wraiths that give it its name. In front of us and to the right, mountain looked above mountain encircling the water with gracious forms of divinest colour, for over the earth the setting sun had spread a glow that made poetical the mountains, deepening the shadows in the hollows and softening the beautiful outlines. In the sky above and reflecting over land and sea was a strange and delicious harmony of dark purples, blues, and greens; while against the sky Smoky's red front caught a deeper and a softer hue.

There was a sense of great calm and unutterable peace in the scene. The world seemed too fair for strife or unrest of any kind. It was a rare moment, and the South Bay of Ingonish will always stay in our memories as one of the loveliest scenes we ever beheld. It is lovely not only at sunset or at sunrise, but

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what is more rare, even at midday. The mountains have a marvellous charm of composition, the finest view being near the shore of the mainland, though from any point it cannot fail to give pleasure.

There is an island at the mouth of the harbour which shuts it from the force of the sea, and upon which stands the inevitable lighthouse.

We crossed the ferry to the cobblestone bar, where stood some fish-huts and a boat-landing, for the boat stops here on its way from Halifax to Newfoundland.

Beyond the bar was a beautiful beach protected by a rocky point of land from the force of the sea, that otherwise would soon have covered it with cobblestones. We were told that the water here is as warm as that much farther south, and that the bathing in the summer months is delightful.

There was a tent close to the house where we stayed, and here was a doctor, who, being in need of rest and a little fishing, had been spending the summer. It was to him we owed our introduction to the art of angling.

It is true we had Mr. A.'s rod along, but it

Ingonish

was still strapped to the back of the seat, for our experience in fishing dated a long way back and had been of a very simple nature, and we had too much respect for the mysteries of the craft to trust to the memories of our childhood. But encouraged by the learned doctor, we cast our line into the waters of the bay, standing meanwhile on the loose boards of a peculiarly rickety wharf, and drew forth many smelts.

There is a curious and irresistible fascination connected with pulling fish out of the water that admits of no reasonable explanation. It ensnares the victim, regardless of sex or previous habits, and to my bewilderment it ensnared my companion, the most tender-hearted of mortals, and who up to that time had shuddered at the thought of touching a cold, wet fish.

She was standing on the wharf watching us when the doctor, ignorant of her distaste for angling, in the kindness of his heart put his rod into her hand, which she, out of politeness, held for a moment. But this moment was fatal. There came a twitch to the line that sent a strange thrill through

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her, and with glowing eyes she — landed a smelt.

The gods play strange pranks with us poor mortals, and never did they play a stranger than when they converted M. into the most inveterate disciple of Izaak Walton through the medium of one wretched little salt-water smelt.

In this case, catching the fish had the very agreeable sequence of cooking them out of doors and eating them.

Our gypsy dinners cooked at noon by the wayside were the one substantial meal of the day, breakfast and supper consisting of oatmeal porridge, sometimes without milk, and toasted bread, sour, as a rule, though if we asked for them, we could generally get an egg and some salt fish.

But those midday meals! the flavour of them, with the aroma of the wood-fire clinging about the viands, and the hunger that waited upon them! Even to think of them at this late day is enough to quicken the appetite.

Up to this time we had found that the canned or smoked meat of our native land with the addition of ship biscuit, milk from a

Ingonish

wayside cottage, and a penny's worth of Cape Breton potatoes capable of being prepared in many appetising ways completely satisfied us; but now all was changed. We entered upon an era of camp cooking that revolutionised our previous habits and converted us for all time to come into exacting epicures.

On the stones by a brook-side we cooked and ate the result of our first day's fishing, — smelts, and a few small bass. Smelts are more delicate in flavour than bass, and they possess the great advantage of being without scales. The scaling of a small bass is infinitely more entertaining to the onlooker than to the operator. The slippery little thing has to be held by its slippery little tail while one scrapes against the scales, and consequently the exasperating object is flying through the air most of the time.

The doctor did not spend much time fishing off the wharf, as certain large brook trout in his tent testified. He had preserved the largest and displayed their dried forms with exceeding great pride. He explained to us his way of curing them and considered a pound and a half a good size for a trout, though the

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best of those on his table had weighed twice and three times that much before they were cured, so he said. He thought it a great pity that trout shrink up and lose weight so when cured.

He had caught endless dozens of trout, the smaller of which he had sent to distant friends, but the largest he could not part with and kept their smoked and shining forms spread out on his table.

From this time forth our peace of mind was gone; we were the victims of the "gentle art of angling," and looked at the rushing brooks not so much to admire as to wonder about the speckled trout hiding in their pools.

There are two Ingonishes. They are both accented on the last syllable, and are separated from each other by a long neck of land known as Middlehead.

This neck cuts the broad bay, that would otherwise exist, in two, and forms the lovely South Bay and the almost equally charming North Bay. To go from one to the other, a distance of about eight miles, the road passes across the mainland end of the neck, and one loses sight of the water, though never far from it.

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Two miles from South Ingonish on the road to the north, one crosses a bridge, and just the other side of it an obscure track turns off to the left. It is stony and rough, and in one place rather alarmingly steep, but it passes along a valley, mountain-guarded and traversed by a brook. After following the track two or three miles, the brook is found quite close to it, and one comes almost under the great cliff of rock known as Franey's chimney. This appears to have been split from the mountain wall behind it, and stands forth a massive, frowning form as though on guard over the wild glen and the rugged cliffs of the mountains about.

It is a wild place down there under Franey's chimney, a lonely place where one would not be surprised to see antlers or the clumsy form of the bear that we knew frequented these mountains.

Here we camped,—that is, we gave Dan a limited freedom,—unpacked the fishing-rod, which had suddenly become an object of vital interest in our eyes, and took our way across a stretch of meadow to the brook-side. We soon came upon a series of dark pools close to

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the shore, and with little expectation of drawing forth anything so "said and sung" about as a speckled trout, with our unskilled hands, we hardened our hearts and strung upon the hook a large angleworm, distinguished by a magnificent wriggle, condoning the offence by the reflection that according to the latest word of science upon the nervous system of the worm, it does not really suffer when thus misused. This we seductively dropped into a pool, with no real expectation, for there have been many books writ upon trout-fishing, and we supposed that only an artificial fly of strange construction, thrown with secret and consummate skill, could land one of these famous creatures. And we knew ourselves for simple folk with no wiles but such as could be offered by a plain angleworm, a live one at that, with not an artificial hair on its head.

Still, no sooner had our plebeian worm entered the dark pool than there came a thrilling twitch to the line, and we flung upon the bank as pretty a red and gold speckled trout as one could ask to see, thereby dispelling forever the almost religious mystery that had heretofore enveloped trout-fishing in our minds.



CATCHING TROUT FOR DINNER

Ingonish

We then and there made the important discovery that, notwithstanding the glamour of romance in which the books have enveloped them, brook trout are mere fish, after all. They swallow a worm with a hook inside just as the "sunfish" in the mill-pond of our childhood used to swallow a bent pin under the same circumstances. We afterward wished we had tried a bent pin on the trout, to complete the confusion of those writers who have for so long a time been imposing on a too credulous public.

These thoughts did not trouble us at the moment, however, for, after all, there is a magical fascination in a brook trout, which can no more be resisted than it can be explained.

Probably no trout is ever half so beautiful as the first one caught. Our acquaintance with them heretofore had been in picture-books, or nicely browned on the table, but here lay a live one in the green grass, all speckled and coloured like a rainbow, and no wonder great Franey leaned out of the sky to see.

There was but one rod, and two of us, and we took turns and agonised between, knowing so well we could get the proverbial big one out

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of the pool, if it had only happened to be our turn. But when our turn came, we never got the big one. We caught any number of small ones, however, and lost more than we caught, for they had a way of jumping off the hook in mid-air and falling back into the water with a shake and a flirt. The largest ones invariably did this, and did it with such apparent intention and malice that we began to think there might be something in the books, after all.

They were so pretty we hated to cook them; some were dark in colour with deep-coloured spots; and some were golden-brown, almost as though saturated with light, with lighter and brighter spots, and these were the prettiest. We did cook them; and what could be daintier or more delicious than the snowy-white or salmon-pink morsels that came out of the frying-pan? We ate all we caught, and would not like to say how many that was.

Nor did this end the adventures of that day under Franey. While resting after our delectable dinner and the exciting events of the morning, we saw a small party of men and boys advancing down the glen. They were burdened with something they bore upon poles resting on

Ingonish

their shoulders, and we went to see what it was. What was our surprise to find the skins and flesh of two bears which they had just killed on the back of the mountain beneath which we were resting. They were young bears, and had been feeding for many days on the blueberries that cover the mountains; they were very fat and their flesh was good, and one of the men cut us a piece from a hind-quarter. This was the first fresh meat we had seen since leaving Baddeck, and we took it, though not without misgivings. It seemed too bad to have killed the little bears playing among the blueberries on the mountain-top; and then one hesitates to eat the flesh of a creature that can be taught to walk upright, and even to dance. Still, there was another side to it, and we no doubt had reason to be thankful that the bears had not taken a notion to hunt us, while the men on the mountains were hunting them. To an unprejudiced mind it is as fair for people to eat bears as for bears to eat people, the only question being which can catch the other.

So we took the bear-meat and also a pail of the blueberries the men had picked, for they

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had got not only the bears but the berries the bears had wanted to get. They were enormous blueberries; we never saw so large before nor since, and they were sweet and juicy. The bears know what they are about when they go to the mountains for blueberries.

We entered North Ingonish, as we had entered South Ingonish, toward the end of the afternoon. Its bay is more open to the sea, and has not the inner harbour of the South Bay. The mountains are about it, more distant, but still lovely, and before it lies a beach of exceeding beauty and grandeur. It sweeps in a long and beautiful curve half-way around the bay, lines of splendid breakers rolling in. It is a wide beach of fine sand and slopes gently to the sea, where the snowy breakers repeat the exquisite curve of the shore.

North Ingonish is very beautiful, though quite different from South Ingonish. Its more distant mountains were lovely in the evening light in which we first saw them and its circling beach and wide bay. Smoky was visible, though softened by the distance, as was also the contour of the surrounding headlands.

We were not prepared for the astonishing

Ingonish

beauty of the Ingonishes, nor did it seem possible they could lie there so lonely in their loveliness, unvisited by pleasure-seeking man.

The Ingonish people are fishermen, and are principally Irish and Scotch Catholics. Like Englishtown the place was known long ago, and was at one time a flourishing French fishing settlement, but war required victims, and the men of Ingonish were drawn away to fight instead of fish, and the place, like St. Anne, was finally wrested from the French by the English of Commodore Warren's fleet.

Traces of the period of French prosperity are said still to exist, though we did not know about them at the time, and no one volunteered information concerning the relics of the past. It seems that a large church was built here, and in 1849 a bell weighing not less than two hundred pounds was dug out of the sand of the beach. It bore a French inscription and was marked St. Malo, 1729, and was said to have had a remarkably clear tone which must have been heard far out to sea. It was carried away to Sydney, which the people of Ingonish never should have allowed.

In 1740, the records tell us, Ingonish was

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the second town of Cape Breton, and its fleet caught 13,560 quintals of fish. This is that Niganiche where the French in olden time went a-fishing, and where a paternal government ordered them away to the safe harbour of Port Dauphin, as St. Anne was called, after the fifteenth of August.

“From Port Dauphin we arrived at Niganiche,” says Pinchon, “which is only a road, where the vessels are far from being safe; but there is great plenty of codfish. Yet as it must be deserted at a certain season, and the country thereabouts is quite barren, there are hardly any dwellings upon the place. Even those few inhabitants are obliged to fetch their wood for firing from Port Dauphin.”

Ingonish may well have discouraged a people obliged to live on what they found there. But the day will come when its beauty will bring it a larger revenue than its codfish ever have brought or ever will bring.

The highlands back of Ingonish used to be noted for the large game found there. Caribou and moose are said to have once existed in almost incredible numbers. But this is not a pleasant topic, for the deer were slaughtered

Ingonish

in the most ruthless manner because their hides brought the sum of ten shillings each ; and what mattered the extermination of the noblest animals of the country compared to ten shillings in a man's pocket?

We are told that in 1729 over nine thousand moose were killed for their skins alone, and that for many years this wholesale slaughter was kept up unchecked. So great was the stench from the decaying bodies that sailors knew by that alone when they were approaching the north shore of Cape Breton.

It is needless to comment upon the result. All too late a body of troops was stationed at Ingonish to protect the moose, but there were few left to need protection, and since then the unequal contest has gone on, Indians and sportsmen combining to destroy the noble animal, until now it and the caribou are almost exterminated in the highlands about Ingonish.

We saw no quails in our travels, for we were a little too far north for them, but the Canada or spruce grouse in small companies ran along the road in front of the horse exhibiting very little fear.

Ingonish is not wholly inaccessible, nor is

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North Ingonish devoid of comforts for the visitor.

A small steamboat, the "Harlow," runs from Halifax to Newfoundland, stopping at Baddeck, Englishtown, South and North Ingonish, and north of these places at Aspy Bay and Bay St. Lawrence.

The "Harlow" carries a siren which once was the cause of great consternation along this lovely coast, for the boat and her siren came without warning, and the people one night were terrified by a wild and awful yell as of some frightful demon rushing in from the sea. They are said to have fled inland and remained in the forest trembling through the night, until daylight gave them courage to creep forth and question the source of the frightful noise. Unexpectedly to hear the "Harlow's" siren along that lonely shore might well cause a thrill to any nerves.

At Ingonish is the first public-house after leaving Baddeck,—a pleasant place on a beautiful site, with sea and mountains before the door, and very well kept.

This house is approached through a lane bordered by fish-flakes of a size intermediate

Ingonish

between those of Digby and French River, and upon them were drying the everlasting cod. The family, too, keeps the store, that opens on the lane, and doubtless the post-office is there, for the postman drives in his two-wheeled cart from Baddeck up along when the weather is fit, but in winter he carries his budget on a sledge drawn by dogs.

There are wharves for the fishing-boats at North Ingonish; and these, with the boats lying about, give it a pleasing touch of the picturesque.

Ingonish is the end of the tourists' explorations as a rule. Few find their way thither, still fewer go north of there; and as we looked toward the mysterious and yet distant Cape North, we had the pleasurable feeling that it at least was all our own.

XVII

THE HALF WAY HOUSE

FROM Ingonish to Aspy Bay is a frightful country, almost uninhabited, excepting for the settlement of Neils Harbour, which lies on the rocky coast a mile from the Half Way House.

The Half Way House is eighteen miles from Ingonish and was put in the wilderness by the government for the succour of those obliged to pass that way, for it is said that formerly people perished on the mountains or in the swamps. In bad weather it must be very difficult to cross that country; and the Half Way House with its warmth and good cheer must be a welcome sight to the weary and half-frozen traveller.

Climbing the hill out of Ingonish, we looked constantly back at the beautiful and unfolding views. The road was so stony and weather-worn that part of the time we preferred to walk, and Dan preferred that we should. We came to an occasional lonely starved little

The Half Way House

farm, where the women with their kerchiefs and gleaming sickles were at work in the yellow barley patches. We stopped each time to pass a word and see their faces lighten, as we told them Parson Gibbons had sent us to see their country and had sent messages to them. They all asked eagerly when he was coming back.

We crossed a bridge and turned into the bushes to let a waggon pass. Instead of passing, it stopped in a friendly way while we told our names, where we came from, and whither we were going. It contained Mrs. Morrison of Green Cove and Mr. Timmons, and they were on their way to Mrs. Timmons's mother's, for we, too, had learned to be polite and ask questions.

Soon there were no more barley patches and the road dwindled to a mere track where the horse waded up to his middle in grass, everlasting, and golden-rod, and finally plunged into the dismal swamp that crosses the country here. We laboured for several miles through as desolate a region as one need care to know. It was for the most part an alder-choked swamp, the road cut through a solid

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wall of gloomy green, the wheels oftentimes hub-deep in mud, while stones in the ruts constantly canted the waggon to one side or the other. This sort of enjoyment was diversified by more open places where mud and stones gave place to all stones, and where were sepulchral reaches of dead trees, their branches all fallen away, and the trunks and limbs shining ghostly white. From time to time we caught glimpses of stony and barren highlands, only to plunge hopelessly into alders and mud again. We named this charming road the Melancholy Way of the Alders, and whoever passes that way will agree that it deserves its name.

We met no one, and so we shall never know what would have happened if we had, in that narrow alley where one could scarcely have pulled out of the deep ruts even if there had been any place to pull to.

Many stories are told of this swamp; one is that whoever steps into it cannot step out again until the next day. We also heard of the traveller who, passing the gloomy road one summer night, saw a light in the swamp, and upon stopping and shouting elicited the infor-

The Half Way House

mation that it proceeded from the pipe of an old woman who, having inadvertently stepped in and knowing the legend, was philosophically biding her time and making the best of a bad matter by solacing the dreary hours with her pipe until daylight should come to break the spell and set her free.

This recalled another story that shows how good a thing superstition is in other people, if one only knows how to make use of it. It is said the Highlanders of Cape North have more or less faith in bogies and a corresponding fear of them. Somewhere along the coast is a rocky seat known as the devil's chair, and a strange light was frequently seen here at night, to the blood-curdling horror of the beholder.

The same traveller, who was not a Highlander, and who had no fear of bogies, one night shied a stone, all too well aimed, which extinguished the light and raised a frightened howl from the bogy, who doubtless thought all bogy-land was after her in earnest, for the pseudo-bogy was a poor old woman too old to work with any sort of satisfaction to herself, and whose son, being a hard man, com-

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pelled her to work for his satisfaction. So she found it convenient to become bedridden, thus shifting the responsibility of work to younger shoulders, and was only able to walk at night, when undetected she would steal forth and seat herself in the devil's chair for the comfort of a pipe. Her discoverer promised not to betray her, gave her a new pipe and a supply of tobacco, and it is to be hoped her hard son will never read these lines, at least not until the poor old soul has gone where she cannot be called forth to work at the bidding of any man.

We floundered slowly along through the Melancholy Way of the Alders, cheering each other with ghost stories, and about noon came out of it, and crossed the bridge over Black Brook ; of all the streams we had seen the most forbidding, fascinating, and rock-bound. It was far, far below us and made its way between massive and broken walls of rock. Trees closely bordered the rocks above and clung in the crevices, overleaning and shadowing the chasm below. Altogether, it was a sinister-looking brook and as black as night.

But we had a sudden inner vision of trout

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in its pools! Close to the pools at one side lay a flat table of rock, where one could stand or sit at ease, if once it could be reached. The sun shone brightly, and it was the wrong time of day for trout, as well as being too late in the season, yet there was an irresistible fascination in those black pools. If the trout were not there, where were they?

By clinging to the roots of trees and proceeding with caution, we were able to scale the rocks and reach the flat rock by the pools. We congratulated ourselves upon the possession of worms, for they certainly were a more natural food for fish than "flies" made of all sorts of indigestible things, and no doubt Cape Breton trout had not been educated up to "flies." So we cast a worm, but it had no time to enter the water, for even as it touched the surface it was caught by a trout and swallowed, hook and all. With pride unspeakable we pulled him in, struggling so that we trembled for the rod and line, for we knew not how to "land" a fish other than just to pull him out of the water with as few preliminaries as possible.

We put him in a damp cavern in the rock

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behind us, and tried again. The result was the same, except that we lost the fish. We now knew that the despised "fly" was the scientific bait for this variety of trout, and began to long for one, a multi-coloured creature not born from an egg, made of strong things that could not be swallowed nor torn off, and in whose care the hook would not come unbaited. In short, down there on the flat rock before the trout pools of Black Brook, we wished to be delivered from the ignominy of angleworms. The truth is, we were fly-fishing with worms, and our newborn fisherman's pride rebelled. As fast as we threw, the fish jumped at the hook; they scarcely seemed to know whether it was baited or not, and the smallest remnant of worm answered as well as the plumpest morsel. They were not as large as those on the show table in the doctor's tent, but they were large enough; we could not have secured them had they been any larger; we could not as it was, and lost a great many more than we caught. It was very stimulating down there surrounded by the great rocks, with the black water rushing swiftly downstream, and the still pools lying in the shadow

The Half Way House

of the rocks, while at every cast of the line the gorgeous dark-skinned trout with their flashing jewel-spots leaped at the hook and either came fluttering wildly to our hand, or to our equal regret and pleasure freed themselves in mid-air and fell flashing back into the water.

It was long before we could tear ourselves away from the spot; then we climbed the difficult cliff, and journeyed on to another deep-down brook near which was an open grassy space fit to camp in. Dan was given his oats, and we took the long rope that had tied the bag to the back of the waggon and let our tin pail down over the rail of the bridge to the far-away stream of sparkling cold water. Such water as comes down these brooks, sweet, cold, clear, full of sparkle, it seems almost living, and seems, too, to give life to him who drinks. We took a long, refreshing draught, and then prepared our meal of fresh-caught trout, blueberries we had ourselves picked from the mountains, and bear's meat. We were agreeably disappointed in this meat; it was delicate in flavour, and when cooked until tender, for it was somewhat tough, was as good as any meat.

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Being tough, it was better stewed than broiled and we still think with longing of the bear's meat stews we concocted under the fir-trees of Cape Breton with the aid of the sparkling brook water and the red-skinned potatoes M. bought each day from a wayside cottage.

While we were preparing our Black Brook trout, along came a Highlander leading a cow, and he stopped, full of curiosity. We showed him our fish and he said they did very well, that Black Brook was the place for trout, but that he had caught one measuring twenty-two inches. Then he took the rod and handled it curiously, particularly the reel. "This," he said, tapping it, "I suppose will be a reel. I have lived a good many years, but I never saw one and never expected to;" and he unwound the line and wound it up again. All this time the cow was tossing her head and trying to pull away, but he clung to the rope and the rod, from time to time requesting the cow to "sh!" At length he and the cow went on their way, no doubt with much food for meditation.

It was as usual nearing the twilight hour when we drew near our destination. Breaking



COOKING TROUT

The Half Way House

through the woods at last, we came upon the Half Way House standing on an open high place.

The Half Way House is just what such a refuge should be, warm, clean, and hospitable. The door opens into a large kitchen with a generous stove on one side and a floor that shines from much scrubbing. The McPhersons keep the place and have for many a year, though Mrs. McPherson is still bonnie and charming.

Mr. McPherson was away at the time of our visit, on his yearly trip to Halifax, to lay in provisions for the winter, of which forethought there is certainly need.

Besides Mrs. McPherson, a tall Highlander who looked after Dan's comfort, and a young woman who helped about the house, we were the only beings in that distant and lonely spot, excepting a white dog with a black head and a tortoise-shell cat with a tortoise-shell kitten, which she constantly licked and which afflicted her motherly heart by frequently flying off to an enclosure where the cows came at night, and racing around the top rail out of reach of the maternal tongue.

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The Half Way House stands on the cleared brow of a high hill with somewhat sombre though rather pleasing views of denuded highlands and interminable reaches of spruce, fir, and hemlock on three sides ; while the fourth side, toward which the house faces, overlooks the sea, whose surf is heard pounding against the rocks a mile away. Down there on the rocks by the sea can also be seen one corner of Neils Harbour. For here, in the loneliest and most dangerous part of that lonely and dangerous coast, lies the little settlement of English people who were the peculiar care of their devoted friend, Parson Gibbons. For these people came from Newfoundland, and are not, like most of the settlers of Cape Breton, Highland Scotch.

We found the air of this northern coast splendidly exhilarating. Although it was now well along in September and the air was sparkling with cold, particularly in the early morning, we never felt chilly. Its effect was to make the blood flow faster, and there was none of the sense of chill and depression one so often feels after driving for several hours in the same temperature in southern New England. The

The Half Way House

air of "Cape North" is alone worth going there for.

Mrs. McPherson cooked eggs and salt fish and potatoes for our supper and spread the table in the sunny little sitting-room that opened out of the kitchen and whose floor was carpeted with many rugs of agreeable design. We persuaded her to join us, and added blueberries, apples, and coffee from our stores.

Mrs. McPherson gave us our first lesson in Gaelic, and from her we learned to say "good-night" and to ask for bread, milk, potatoes, and oats in that unmusical tongue.

She also initiated us into the mysteries of rug-making, and told us how dogwood bark makes a gray colouring; "crackle," which is, as far as we could make out, a kind of moss, yields brown; while hemlock also makes a pretty shade of brown; and a weed which we could not make out at all from her description yields a yellow dye. We were glad to know these things, and to examine the charming rugs on the floor, made from old rags dyed so pleasantly by the juices of the grim forest, and to learn the individual history of each one.

In the evening came a crowd of berry-pickers

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with full buckets. They were young men and girls who had been out on the mountains to the blueberry barrens which are famous about here. It seemed to be a sort of annual picnic which lasted two or three days, they coming at sunset to the Half Way House and at sunrise going forth to the mountains.

They took supper at a long table in the kitchen, and we were sorry to see they did not fare as well as we, for they had only the never-failing tea and toast, rather an insufficient meal, one should think, after a long day on the mountains. But the bread at the Half Way House is at least not sour, and tea and toast is the fare to which they are accustomed, and which they would have had in their own homes no matter how hard the labour of the day.

The berry-pickers talked Gaelic at table, and after tea the girls kept silent or whispered to one another, while the men smoked their pipes and talked to one another — always in Gaelic. As they sat ranged along the sides of the kitchen on benches and chairs, they strongly recalled the poor whites or “Crackers” of the far South. They had the same starved-looking bodies, and no doubt opposite severities of

The Half Way House

climate and the same lack of proper nourishment had produced the same result. They went to bed in the attic, where the men slept on the floor, but the girls stowed themselves in a small room wherein was a wide bed.

Early in the morning we were wakened by the berry-pickers getting up. We wished we could understand their speech and know what it was they talked to one another about. What is there to talk about, we should like to know, where there is no daily paper, no fashions, no new books, nor opera? How can they even get material enough to make gossip about their neighbours?

The road to Neils Harbour is stony and downhill and there is not much to be seen from it. One of Cape North's never-failing brooks breaks through the mountains and tumbles into the harbour along the course of the road, though it is for the most part concealed by intervening vegetation. The harbour is but a little cove jutting into the land and making a summer haven for the fishing-fleet, but in winter it is packed full of ice, as is every cranny of this northern coast. It was over the ice of this harbour and around the ice of the

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cruel shore from Ingonish to the harbour that Parson Gibbons crept on hands and knees when the road was totally impassable, one memorable Christmas day of long ago, and all to bring the cheer of his presence to the fisher-folk of Neils Harbour. Perhaps he feared that unless the Christmas-tide could light up the world for them a little, they would not have courage to live through the winter, and one wonders how they do manage it. It is so remote and forbidding in summer that one shudders to imagine what it must be through the long icy winter.

Yet it is, perhaps, the most picturesque settlement on the whole coast. There is a narrow space of lowland near the water, with a hill rising sharply behind it.

A point of land ending in a bluff on the seaside holds back the waves and forms a cove suited to the needs of the fishing-boats; and around the shore of this cove is a picturesque jumble of low fish-huts, flakes, boats in all stages of decomposition as well as those in full vigour of usefulness, tar, chains, evidences of fish everywhere. The high grass-grown bluff that abuts out into the water beyond all this, is

The Half Way House

covered as well by many rows of flakes, and from it a fine view of the wild coast is obtainable.

The dwelling-houses of Neils Harbour were miserable shanties, many of them more like temporary shelters than permanent homes. Most of them stood on the hillside, and the upper ones were reached by a path through the dooryards of those lower down. Poor and mean as they were outside, they were yet worse inside. The rooms were painfully bare, even the hitherto never-failing rugs being absent in most of them. Compared to them, the simple cottages of the Highlanders seemed abodes of luxury. The people are so desperately poor because there is no farming land at all, and there is no work obtainable but the very uncertain labour of fishing in the sea. They get very little for the fish they catch, not even as much as they are worth, we were told; for here, as elsewhere in remote country places, the wealth of the people flows into the coffers of the local storekeeper. He sets his own price on what they bring him and too frequently pays in merchandise of his own importation, so that often the poor fisher-folk receive no money at all for their labour.

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The "wood for firing" in this bleak camp is brought from the mountains on sledges drawn by dogs.

It was a lowering day, with clouds settling and a cold wind blowing, when we visited Neils Harbour, and no doubt this is its characteristic and predominating aspect.

The coast is frightful to look upon, with its breastwork of sea-worn rock. We had not known how cruel a rock-bound coast could be until we saw those sinister and threatening forms. A vessel forced near shore by stress of weather would be broken like a toy. Almost within hand-reach of the land men's lives have been dashed out and no aid possible.

On this wild and sullen coast, on a great rock looking over the leaden sea to the north, we suddenly came upon Mr. Gibbons's little brown church standing there, an invitation and a promise. Following the track that went past the church, the road came down so close to the frightful rocks that we were almost upon them.

Beyond Neils Harbour there is an almost impassable road to New Haven farther along the coast. We did not attempt to go there, as

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we could see the place from where we were, — a few houses scattered on the shore that suggested anything but a haven.

It must be a cold and dangerous port for the poor mariners of life who have found their way there. Its pitiful old name of Hungry Cove no doubt better expresses the facts of life there than the better-sounding New Haven.

But the people here, in spite of their frightful poverty, have a frank and pleasant manner very different from the impenetrable and silent demeanour of the Scotch. We met a little boy and girl gathering bits of wood by the roadside, pretty, fragile creatures; and when we spoke to them they answered promptly and intelligently, and with a pretty eagerness to tell us what we wanted to know.

We spoke to the people we met, and it was pathetic as well as beautiful to see the worn faces lighten at the messages we bore from their beloved pastor.

One woman, upon hearing we had recently seen Mr. Gibbons, came running from her house with the tears raining down her face, blessing him at every step and begging us to

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tell him that her husband had finally become totally blind. She was not begging for sympathy nor asking for alms. All she wanted was to speak to us and receive a sympathetic touch of the hand. These people, seeing no one, expect nothing but the inexorable working out of their lives by such means as lie about them. We found that this woman and her husband had only what she could earn by the labour of her hands, and what that was can be imagined when one considers the impossibility of getting a living here even by the hard work of men's hands. We astonished her by a gift which though small must have seemed to her like succour dropped from the skies, and we went back to the Half Way House filled with a sense of the misery and courage of the people of Neils Harbour. We had there seen more smiles, more cheerfulness and cordiality, than anywhere else in our journey through Cape North.

It is a question of race temperament, and the subject is a very wonderful one when one stops to consider it.

XVIII

ASP Y BAY

THE road to the north of the Half Way House continues through the wilderness. We found it very rough, and there were no views to beguile the way other than endless woods of evergreens spread over the mountains, dismal swamps, and stony hills where ruts were deep and pitch holes were many.

In this wilderness we passed two men in a waggon. They drew into the bushes to give us way, and we saw in their faces a desire to ask us our names, where we came from, and where we were going, so we stopped and answered. One of the men then forced upon our acceptance three or four small and very hard apples of which he was proud, because they came from his own tree.

In the midst of this frightful wilderness we found a French settlement of three or four houses.

Why it was there among dead trees, let who can, answer. The miserable shanties and their

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surroundings were squalid and unsightly, without a touch of picturesqueness. We found a woman there, a gaunt woman who talked her French *patois* with the vivacity of her race. She was the mother of little children, one a young babe. It certainly looked as if the family would have to subsist upon stones during the winter. And yet she talked with vivacity. That is what it is to be French.

These people, we learned later, were descendants of the Acadians. They themselves did not know it, nor how they came to be among English-speaking people. They had lost all tradition of themselves. They only knew that they had just come from islands in the north, where life was too hard even for them, because there was no wood there.

As we went on, it looked as though all the beauty had been left behind. Ahead of us lay a straight blue wall, of which we at times caught glimpses. It appeared to cut off the way to the north; it rose up ever and anon menacing and mysterious. Did we pass beyond it? And what then? What was there to be seen in this unpeopled and ever increasingly dreary wilderness?

Aspy Bay

As on the road to the Half Way House, we travelled miles without seeing a human habitation. But finally there came a change. Barley fields and patches of oats began to appear. Houses stood discreetly back from the road with intervening meadow before the doors. The flat wall ahead broke up, and we now and again caught glimpses of a fairy world that astonished and delighted us. Mr. Gibbons had assured us that the farther north we went, the finer would be the scenery, but the long and dreary way from Ingonish had dimmed our hope a little.

Meadows appeared now at the right and now at the left; there came a gleam of blue water and a pretty lake spread out below us. Two or three houses stood near the lake, but we could discover no track that led to them.

In our turnings there came repeatedly the most bewitching glimpses of mountains, loftier than those of Ingonish, and about them were driving wraiths of mist, that filled the hollows and half obscured the projecting masses.

We crossed streams bordered by cultivated fields, and the trees began to look home-like,

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maples and birches frequently appearing. We skirted a valley that once had been a water-course ; a torrent had swept down it and left behind a plain story of its existence. Out of the middle of the valley rose an island, tree-covered and with precipitous cliffs of white gypsum, worn into queer-shaped towers and buttresses. Over our road also loomed ghostly and threatening forms of gypsum, under which we were half afraid to pass, they looked so ready to topple on our heads. And then we came fairly upon the charming valley of Aspy Bay. It was like joy after sorrow to come out of the sombre fir-filled wilderness into this blooming valley, through which flowed a broad and beautiful river. There were elm-trees singly, and in groups, with the sun behind them shining out of a misty atmosphere that made the trees look half unreal, as though they were a product of the light.

Mountains rose from across the valley in beautiful slopes, clad to the summit with trees, excepting where here and there a bare flank swept up covered only with low, bright-leaved shrubs. They were mountains with purple shadows in their hollows, their slopes blue and

Aspy Bay

green, with rainbow colours in the mist-filled openings between them,—mountains that rose from the level plain, like vast and lovely spirits.

As Smoky excels in magnitude the mountains of Englishtown, so do the mountains of Aspy Bay excel Smoky, yet they are beautiful rather than grand. More than one lovely slope was painted with prismatic colours, the varying shades of red rock being blended with exquisite tones of green, yellow, and blue, while seaward a warm rose tint, a sweet alpine glow, lay along some of the slopes.

The valley was in a state of high cultivation, and hidden behind clumps of trees were the scattered farmhouses. Evidently peace and plenty reigned here, a lovely oasis in a great wilderness. The houses were roomy and well built, and everything about them betokened prosperity. We stopped on the bridge that crossed the river, surprised and pleased, and looked and looked again.

Mountains and valley were before us, while off to the right shone the blue bay from which the place gets its name. It was as usual toward night as we thus drew near our stopping-place,

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and an Indian summer haze intensified the beauty of the waning day.

As we got closer, the mountains, without losing their marvellous colouring, became more distinctly individual, those behind being joined to those in front only by their long overlapping slopes and the colour-filled spaces between.

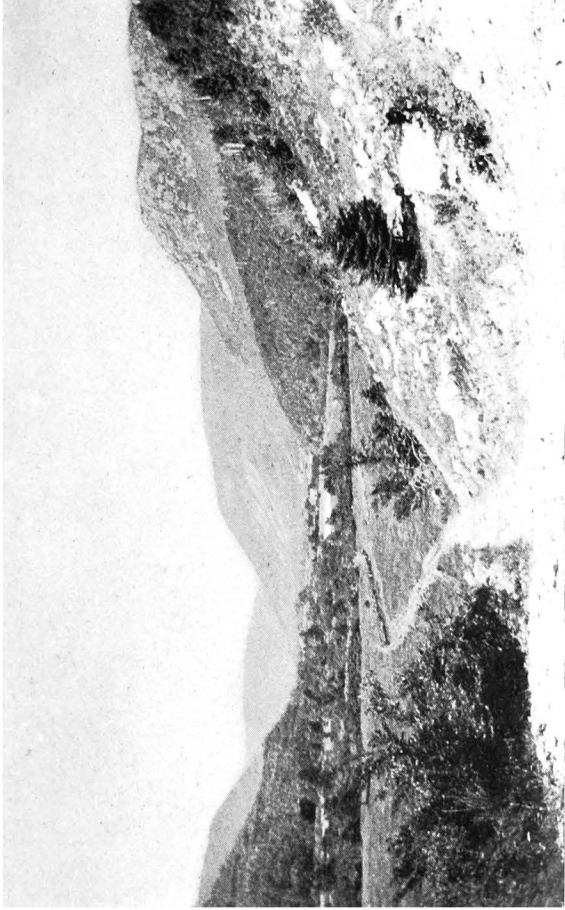
We were happy thus to find our blue barrier resolved into endless forms of beauty, mountain lying beyond mountain, while here and there a glen opened to let out a foaming brook and make windows through which we caught glimpses of exquisitely lovely mountain forms beyond.

We were on our way to Zwicker's, and in the estimation of the people of Cape North he who does not know Zwicker's does not know much.

"You will know it," the people told us; "it will be the big house." And so we did know it when at last we got there.

It stands near the road in a friendly fashion, and is half house, half store, the store occupying one wing of the building.

But inside the house is quite distinct from the store, of whose proximity there is no sign.



CLYBOURN'S BROOK

Aspy Bay

Zwicker's, or "Zwigger's," as the people call it from Baddeck to Bay St. Lawrence, was a surprise to us in more ways than one. It was kept by two brothers, gentlemen by nature and education. There were signs of foreign travel and new books and recent issues of the "American" magazines were lying about. The house was not only roomy and comfortable, very neat and well furnished, but afforded luxuries not before enjoyed by us in Nova Scotia.

There was an agreeable atmosphere about the place, as of people who were accustomed to the rational pleasures of life.

In the dining-room was a telegraphic instrument whose clickety-click reminded us of the world to which we belonged and of the marvels achieved by man in that world.

What a moment that must have been in Aspy Bay when the first transatlantic message was received! When the whole civilised world held its breath to hear the momentous word that, spoken in one continent, should leap to another, vanquishing time and space, and in that triumphant hour proclaim the conquest of civilisation over barbarism, the death of war,

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and the birth of universal peace upon earth. It takes war a long time to die and universal peace a long time to get out of its swaddling clothes, but these things will surely come to pass. The submarine cable and war cannot live together on the same planet.

We were unexpected guests at Zwicker's; and such an event as our arrival must have occasioned the greatest astonishment, if not absolute consternation, to the two men whom fate, by taking away the mother, had left to continue the home as best they could. But we were received with such courtesy, and entertained with such skilful hospitality, that we did not know, until after we had left, that the brothers constituted the whole household.

The history of Aspy Bay dates as far back as that of Englishtown and Ingonish, — at least in those days it had a name, the same it bears to-day; and the French voyager Pinchon speaks also of this place, for he did not stop his travels until he had gone the whole length of the coast.

“Leaving Niganiche, we came to the creek of Owarachouque,” — which creek was that, we should like to know, the creek at Neils Har-

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bour or our Black Brook perchance? — “and from thence successively to the harbour of Aspe, Cape North, the creek of St. Lawrence, and the cape of the same name. Cape North, or the mountain which forms it, is a peninsula joining to the island of Cape Breton by a very low neck of land. But none of these places are inhabited, or hardly at all frequented.”

So much for “Aspe” prior to 1760; and in truth it is not very densely inhabited yet, nor is it frequented to the extent its lagoons running into the land from the sea and its soulful mountains deserve.

In the early part of the century the evicted Scotch peasants seeking homes found the lovely and fertile valley, and the flourishing appearance of the settlement is testimonial enough to the character of the land, for where the land is good the people are always well-to-do and happy, if other people who do not draw the furrow or wield the sickle will let them alone.

There is a delightful lounging-place on the water's edge a field or two from Zwicker's, a warm grassy bluff where one can lie in the sunshine with the same rat-tatting grasshoppers

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scurrying about in the same panic-stricken haste that gave us such bootless chase on Beaman's Mountain, and watch the changing light on the mountains or on the blue bay.

Over the bay, among the little islands, boats with brown sails were gliding about, for the people here dye, or, as they say, tan, their sails to make them last longer, and these brown-sailed boats add much to the charm of the picture.

Aspy Bay, like the Bay of St. Anne, is almost shut up by a long cobblestone bar; and a reef of cobblestones at our left, as we sat facing the sea, was thickly grown with the *Mertensia Maritima*, now in full bloom. It was a comfort to see this and know that we had not really been guilty of pulling up the very last one in "Cape North" when we so shamefully exterminated the pretty thing on Englishtown's pebbly bar.

How long the *Mertensia Maritima* will be left to adorn the cobblestone bar of Aspy Bay is a question, for the Newfoundland steamer calls here, and it is easy to step aboard at Halifax and come straight to this beautiful and healthful spot, sure of a safe landing and a courteous reception away down north. And some day

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the work-weary and nature-hungry souls from the cities are going to find out these things; and then, Mertensia Maritima, you may say good-bye to your cobblestone bar. For these new-comers will love you, and will pull you up by the roots, and in a little while will throw you away, and that will be the end of you.

We left Zwicker's and faced again "down north," but this was the end, — one more day of delightful lingering along the wayside, enjoying sea and mountain, coming upon new and unexpected beauties of land and sea, and all would be known. There would be no more mystery, no more wondering "what next," for we should come to Bay St. Lawrence and that was the end.

For some distance beyond Zwicker's the mountains are on one side of the road and the sea on the other; and when there is no wind the mountains can be seen inverted on the water, where they are almost more lovely than standing in the air.

We passed close to Sugar Loaf, the highest mountain of all, and were tempted. The top looked so near and so inviting! But we knew that it was not near and that we could

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not get to it without first getting badly lost, for these mountains of beauty are very stern realities when one attempts to ascend them, and guides are necessary.

It is a short stage to Bay St. Lawrence, and we did not start very early nor yet hurry on the road.

From Baddeck to Zwicker's is a distance of one hundred and one miles by the road, we were pleased to learn. The guide-books make the distance much shorter, but the guide-books are wrong. Any one who has travelled the road will know that it is no less than one hundred and one miles.

The distance from Zwicker's to Bay St. Lawrence is only from five to eight miles, according to the part of Bay St. Lawrence to which one goes. We went eight miles, that is, as far as it is possible for mortal man to go in a waggon.

After Sugar Loaf is passed, the road turns away from the sea and passes in back of the mountains. As soon as one gets behind the mountains, the scenery is dreary and consists of stretches of fir and spruce trees broken only by rushing streams and an occasional valley, where

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somebody has undertaken the cultivation of barley and potatoes.

The way became so desolate and dreary for a space that we began as usual to despair of anything beyond. The only birds willing to stay in this wilderness were the juncos; and why they should go for ever flitting down north toward the icy sea, it is probable none but a junco can explain.

Where there are cone-bearing trees, there will be squirrel folk. Where bird-notes are lacking, the song of the squirrel comes not amiss. Indeed, it is pleasant even where there are birds, and one hearing it for the first time may well be excused for mistaking the varied and expressive solo for the song of some member of the feathered tribe. It usually begins as if the performer had been seized with a violent and uncontrollable ague that caused his teeth to chatter fast and furious. Chatter, chatter, faster, faster, until the sounds run together and make a pleasant musical note, the pitch of which the performer varies apparently at will and to give meaning to his song. He sings with such abandon and such long-sustained effort that he ought to drop panting at

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your feet when he finishes with a dozen staccato barks. But not he. While you are pitying his condition, he is coolly dropping scales on your head from a fir cone which he is cutting up with as much energy as if he had not sung a note within the memory of man. He is good company in the woods, as he never fails to assault you with a torrent of squirrel back talk, which is a great deal better than no talk, and then he will very likely make amends by singing to you, though, truth to tell, you never feel quite sure whether his remarkable and very energetic song would bear translating to polite ears.

Our fears for what was to come as we moved over the last stage of our journey turned out as they always did. The dreary behind-the-mountain road suddenly brought us into a new world; and as had happened each time before, as soon as the view burst upon us, we were tempted to exclaim, "This, then, is better than all the rest."

XIX

CAPE NORTH

BAY ST. LAWRENCE is different from all the rest. It is the Ultima Thule, the end of everything, the place where the land comes to a sudden stop as though saying to the sea, "You have conquered, I can push against you no farther; but see what a battlement I have reared to defy you and keep you back from my rocky vitals."

When one gets to Bay St. Lawrence he can no longer pursue his devious, half-fearful, but wholly fascinating course "down north," for as he stands on the high bluff and looks over the pitiless northern sea, he knows that at last he *is* "down north," that the half-dreaded mountains and swamps have been passed, that for days and days he has been a tramp, a gypsy, eating by the roadside and drinking from wayside streams, begging hospitality — to be well paid for — from the people along the road and revelling as he always dreamed of, but never

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expected to revel, in the free outdoor life of an untamed and beautiful land.

One can have all the delights and discomforts of pioneer life in Cape North with none of its dangers.

Bay St. Lawrence is scooped out of the stony land between stone mountains that guard it to east and west. But the settlement near the shore is also called Bay St. Lawrence and is surrounded on three sides by the mountains and on the fourth by the sea. It is on a plateau of exquisitely rolling swells, for the most part grown over by soft tawny-white grass and spacious enough to give the effect of downs. It is a clean grassy amphitheatre shut from the world by mountains and sea.

Close against the mountains that shut it from the eastern sea is McDougal's Cove, where are only three or four houses all surrounded by broad meadows, through which we could find no road but only waggon tracks going in all directions as if intending to lead the stranger astray and land him on the bank of the bridgeless brook that gurgles through these puzzling meadows.

In approaching McDougal's Cove we

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crossed a gully in the land, a deep cut, along the bottom of which flowed a tiny brook, at one time no doubt quite a masterful torrent; but its days of rampage were over,—it had waxed old, thin, and feeble, and the deep hole it had cut now formed the cosy hiding-place for two or three blacked-roofed fish-houses and a few fishing-boats. So deep was this gully that the buildings were entirely hidden until we stood fairly over their heads and looked down upon them.

Mr. and Mrs. Donald McDonald and their sons and daughters live in their tiny home near the bluff overlooking the northern sea and overshadowed by the great rock that rises a thousand feet from the water, and is twin to the bluff that is the veritable Cape North, and which stands to the eastward of this.

It is certainly a mortifying statement to have to make, but we are not sure that we really saw Cape North, after all. There was an impenetrable haziness about the people's ideas as to just exactly which bluff it was that distressed us and confused our understanding. It is probable, however, that, having gone to Bay St. Lawrence to see Cape North, we did not see

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it. We now think it lay concealed behind the splendid headland that came up out of the sea at McDougal's Cove, and which no doubt is every whit as good as Cape North. Still — ! It was a noble bluff that we saw, and it vividly recalled Smoky's red front, though this mass rises almost perpendicularly. It is followed inland by another and similar uprising of red rock, and that by another, and so on and on, all of them sending great buttresses out toward the grassy plains and finally framing in the splendid amphitheatre of rolling meadow-land.

The mountains surrounding Bay St. Lawrence are of bare rock. The fir-trees, the spruces and hemlocks, discreetly remain at their bases making a dark-green border to their bright-coloured walls. There is great beauty in the grim slopes of bare red rock ; the colour of them is amazing ; lichens and bushes, or it may be only the reflection of the afternoon light at different angles from the scarred surface, have made them beautiful beyond telling.

There is a sense of space, of peace, and almost of awe in the presence of these strong slopes with the wide grassy plain at their base, and the feeling of vastness and isolation is in-

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creased by the height of the plain above the shoreless sea that spreads before mountains and meadows.

The great bluff at McDougal's Cove rises from the sea in a solid wall around which one must pass in a boat to the outer bluff which is indeed Cape North. There is a path over the back of the mountain, however, a rough path to climb, through coniferous trees where on the sheltered side they flourish, and over bare stones where the trees fail.

Katie McDonald, blooming daughter of our new-made friends, was to go over the mountain the very afternoon of our arrival. For on the other side, accessible only by boat and this rude mountain path, is a cove where has been built a lobster factory. The factory is owned by the son of a certain Rory McLeod, known to fame as Big Rory because of his uncommon height. Money Point is over there by the lobster factory; and it is Money Point because once—a long time ago—a specie ship was wrecked, and the coin fell into the water, where for many a year it was fished out or thrown up by storms and came into the hands of eager seekers.

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The money of Money Point is still fished out of the sea, but not in the form of specie. It comes out as lobster to be later transformed into money.

Sometimes lobsters are scarce even here, and there are none to can. This happened one year when the mountains were red with wild strawberries and the canny son of Big Rory did then, so we were told, set his people to canning strawberries instead of lobsters, and reaped the reward he deserved, for these mountain strawberries, the people say, are very large and juicy and wonderfully flavoured.

We were told, too, that on the back side of one of the mountains red currants grow wild and in great profusion ; but this marvel we did not see with our own eyes, though we saw a great many strawberry vines and some of them foolishly in bloom.

Katie McDonald was going over to cook for her brothers, who were canning lobsters, and she did not seem to regard the excursion as particularly pleasant ; but when the time came she started bravely enough, and we watched her until she disappeared on the lonely mountain, as though swallowed up by it.

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We should have liked to go with Katie, but there were reasons against it, and we contented ourselves with climbing a bare spur to the top of another mountain, hoping for a view of the whole earth. As is always the case, it was farther to the top than it seemed, and it was a very steep slope upon which huge cliffs and crags jutted out, not pleasant to surmount, and perhaps not always quite safe. And at the top — nothing! He who climbs these mountains for a view of the world will find himself on the edge of a mile-wide plateau which is rough and hubbly, and across which one cannot possibly see farther than a few rods. So, after all, it does not pay very well, for the view down into McDougal's Cove from the mountain-top is not as good as the view from the cove up the mountain, and the latter can be had without any exertion.

In the McDonald home were a number of sealskins, the seals being caught near here. They are not the fur-bearing seal, but are covered with a coarse light-coloured hair, so their only value is in their leather. We did not see any seals, but Charlevoix did, and in his letters he tells certain things about them which we may believe or not as we please:—

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“The Sea Wolf, or the Seal,” says he, “takes its Name from its Cry, which is a Sort of howling; for in its shape it resembles not the Wolf, nor any land animal that we know. *Lescarbot* asserts that he has heard some cry like Screech-Owls; but these might be only young ones, whose Cry was not quite formed. They make no Hesitation here, Madam, to place it in the Rank of Fishes; though it is not mute, though it is brought forth on the Land, and lives as much on it as in the Water, and is covered with Hair: In a word, though it wants nothing to make it to be considered as an amphibious creature. The war they make with the Seals, though it is often on Land, and with the Gun, is called a Fishery.

“The Head of a Seal is something like a Bull-Dog’s: He has four Legs, very short, especially those behind: In every other Respect it is a Fish. It drags itself rather than walks upon its Feet. Its Legs before have Nails, those behind are like Fins; His Skin is hard, and covered with short Hair of divers Colours. There are some Seals all white, and they are all so when young; but some, as they grow up, become black, others tawny; many are all these Colours mixed together.”

The skins of these creatures were tanned with the bark of the spruce-tree and used for boots and all other articles made of leather.

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Their flesh was eaten, and their oil used in cooking and for lighting. We are told that as many as eight hundred young ones were sometimes killed in one day, so probably one would wait as long to see a live seal in these waters as to see a moose in the mountains back of Ingonish.

At the McDonalds' we were enlightened concerning certain pieces of furniture which occasionally were found in the fisher-folk's houses, — furniture out of all keeping with the simple cottage fittings, furniture that belonged rather to the cities or the country-houses of the well-to-do. But here we learned that these articles were the flotsam and jetsam from the many vessels wrecked on that cruel coast, and it was hinted that time was when certain of the settlers busied themselves more in becoming possessed of the spoil than in assisting the drowning.

To leave Bay St. Lawrence was to turn southward and retrace our steps over mountains and swamps. Reluctantly we turned from the cold northern sea and the fine amphitheatre with its encircling mountains of bare rock that were so wonderfully beautiful in the

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evening glow. Reluctantly we bade adieu to the McDonalds', and their cordial hospitality that rang more like English than Scotch metal. Yet the return proved about as enjoyable as the first passing. True, the uncertainty as to what next was gone; we knew what next, but that had its advantages. It was pleasant to meet again the people and to be received now like old friends. It was pleasant to carry the bits of neighbourhood gossip from station to station — like troubadours of old. And the scenery we found was quite new. For we were turned around now and looking the other way. It is impossible, moreover, to see everything in once passing, so that the return trip was fully as enjoyable as the first coming.

We did not linger going back. We did not dare, for there was a threat of rain which was not to be ignored, unless we desired to add to our other experiences that of a typical Cape Breton autumn storm. And that of all things we did not desire, for there were few places we should have cared to remain in, storm-bound, even for a day. So we pressed ahead, past Zwicker's and past Aspy Bay, lovely in the hazy atmosphere. Nor did we



A FISHING SCHOONER

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stop until we had reached the hospitable roof of the Half Way House, where we found all as we had left it, excepting that the maternal cat, having been deprived of her kitten, which a passing Highlander had begged to take with him, persisted in washing the face of the white dog with a black head. As to the dog himself, perhaps the least said the better. He was bearing it as well as he could, but the looks he cast upon the mistaken cat we feared did not augur well for her future happiness.

After a good night's rest at the Half Way House, we were off in the cold morning, leaving Mrs. McPherson with reluctance, and she, too, seemed loath to have us go. It seemed as if we had known the people of "Cape North" a very long time and were parting from old friends for ever. Before the bushes swallowed us up, we turned for a last look, and on the doorstep sat the abused dog, wondering, no doubt, how long he could stand it, while the cat, regardless of consequences, continued to wash his already too clean countenance.

Sometimes we stopped at our old camp-

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fires, where they were in particularly favourable spots, and sometimes we found new places for the noonday rest.

The people in the barley fields nodded to us and sometimes even smiled. They had had time to talk us over and compare notes, and though we might be a little "lacking" to go on such a purposeless journey, still they felt in their hearts that we were harmless.

We passed the Ingonishes without stopping until we had crossed the ferry at the foot of Smoky. We did it to save time, for often the men are away in the morning on the more important business of fishing, and the traveller is obliged to await their return. It was just at nightfall when we crossed the ferry trusting to our oft-tried and never-failing powers of persuasion to get taken in at some wayside cottage on the other side. This time we came near making a fatal mistake, for the cottages at the foot of Smoky would none of us. They were few and far between, and it is true were tiny, and no doubt it was true, as they said, that there was no room for us. At last we cast anchor in one in which we knew was a spare room and where was a small barn. They

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said they could n't; we said they must. They said it was impossible, and we pictured in graphic terms the alternative, our being obliged to spend the cold night on the mountain-side, where they would go out next day and find our frozen forms, and be obliged to bury us then and there, and be pointed to by all posterity as the cruel folk who had turned travellers from their door, to perish on the mountain. They saw the reasonableness of the argument, and we stayed, though it is not quite fair to say they allowed it, suffered it would be better; at least until all hands were well warmed up over the kitchen stove, and a supper of oatmeal porridge had lent a more genial glow to all our heart-strings. Then we fell into friendly conversation, and the woman showed us her rugs, and the man told us of the awful night when he rescued Parson Gibbons from sure death on the side of Smoky.

Many of these people are endowed with "second sight," and all believe in it. The story the man told was this: One night, bitter cold and snowing, he had a sudden knowledge that Parson Gibbons was on the

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mountain and in trouble. He prepared to go out and his wife said it was folly, for the parson was not expected to pass at that time of the month. But such terror now seized the man that he was compelled to go; and stumbling through the snow he at last found the object of his search, who, overcome by the cold, had sunk down and ceased to exert himself. If he had not been found in this strange way, he would surely have perished that night.

At Wreck Cove we opened three large gates and crossed three broad meadows in order to make our call upon Big Rory's folks. Big Rory himself was not at home; but we visited with Mrs. Rory, who, we were pleased to find, was sister to Mrs. McLeod of Englishtown.

From Big Rory's to Indian Brook, the way was lovely, for the mountains of beauty were about us, and we caught occasional glimpses of those of Englishtown across the sea.

The last night we spent at Angus McDonald's, who had a large house in the "flat lands" not far from Indian Brook. We had lingered along the way, visiting with old friends and being hailed by new ones, for our fame had gone abroad, and every one who was

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related to any one we had met—and who is not related in that part of the world?—claimed acquaintance, and it was dark before we reached our destination, and we were troubled. Just as the case began to look serious, we saw a dim form approaching. We asked it the way to Angus McDonald's, and the man replied that he was Angus McDonald himself, and was on the way home, and that we had missed the turn and must go back a little way. Providential meeting! Gladly we retraced our steps, and were soon in the warmth of the McDonald hearthstone.

It rained all night, and in the morning the sky was wet and sullen, but we decided to press on. Better a wetting than isolation in any of these cottages; so on we went, and soon the rain came down as if in a fury at having let us escape so long. We crossed the iron bridge over the Barasois River and did not turn to the left toward Torquil McLane's ferry, for the waves ran high in Englishtown Harbour and there would be no crossing there that day. So we turned to the right and went "North River way," which is longer but not complicated by ferries.

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We thought we had seen brooks before, but that day's drive convinced us that we had until then known nothing about the subject. Then, too, was explained the use of the many apparently useless bridges; under every one poured a torrent, — indeed, the road itself was often a mountain torrent up which or down which Dan waded, keeping to the road by some instinct which we had not. There came a place where we were surrounded by water, and where there was a pond at one side, we knew not how deep. The road took a turn along the edge of the pond; but what turn, which way should we go to keep on *terra firma* beneath the rushing flood? We were in despair, and finally told Dan to go his own way, which he did, and took us safely through.

Down the mountain sides rushed foaming streams that plunged straight across the road; every mountain was streaked with white lines of foam and dashing water. The world had gone brook-mad. Sometimes the rain fell so heavily as to obscure everything but the watery way in front; then it ceased, and we looked out upon the earth soaked and fresh, and covered with brooks.

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We were soon soaked to the skin, but in spite of that we were thrilled and warmed by the beauty of the rain-clad mountains. There, wonderful to relate! did the crisp moss on the trees in a moment fluff out into soft masses of delicious green; did the stringy beards on the limbs of the spruces expand and become light and graceful, and able to sway in beautiful curves; did the grim woods turn into fairy palaces with deep soft carpets of lovely moss and exquisite tapestry on every tree and rock.

The road was new and lovely and in the sunshine must be a wonder-land of splendid mountain scenery, judging from the occasional glimpses we caught through the mists.

Our dinner that day consisted of crackers and cheese and apples, which we sat in the waggon and ate, while Dan munched his oats as best he could standing in his tracks in the road.

It was a wild storm, and the road seemed endless. We struggled along from early morning until almost nightfall, finally entering Baddeck chilled to the marrow and thoroughly miserable, while Dan seemed hardly able to take another step.

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A few hours later, sitting cozily before a glowing fire, dry and warm, with that delicious drowsiness that comes under such circumstances, the pictures of our trip "down north" kept flitting before our minds; and the dearest picture of all was of the mossy rain-drenched forest road with the newborn brooks tumbling across our path. The wetting did us no harm, and the day in the rain was a fitting ending to our strange and delightful journey "down north."