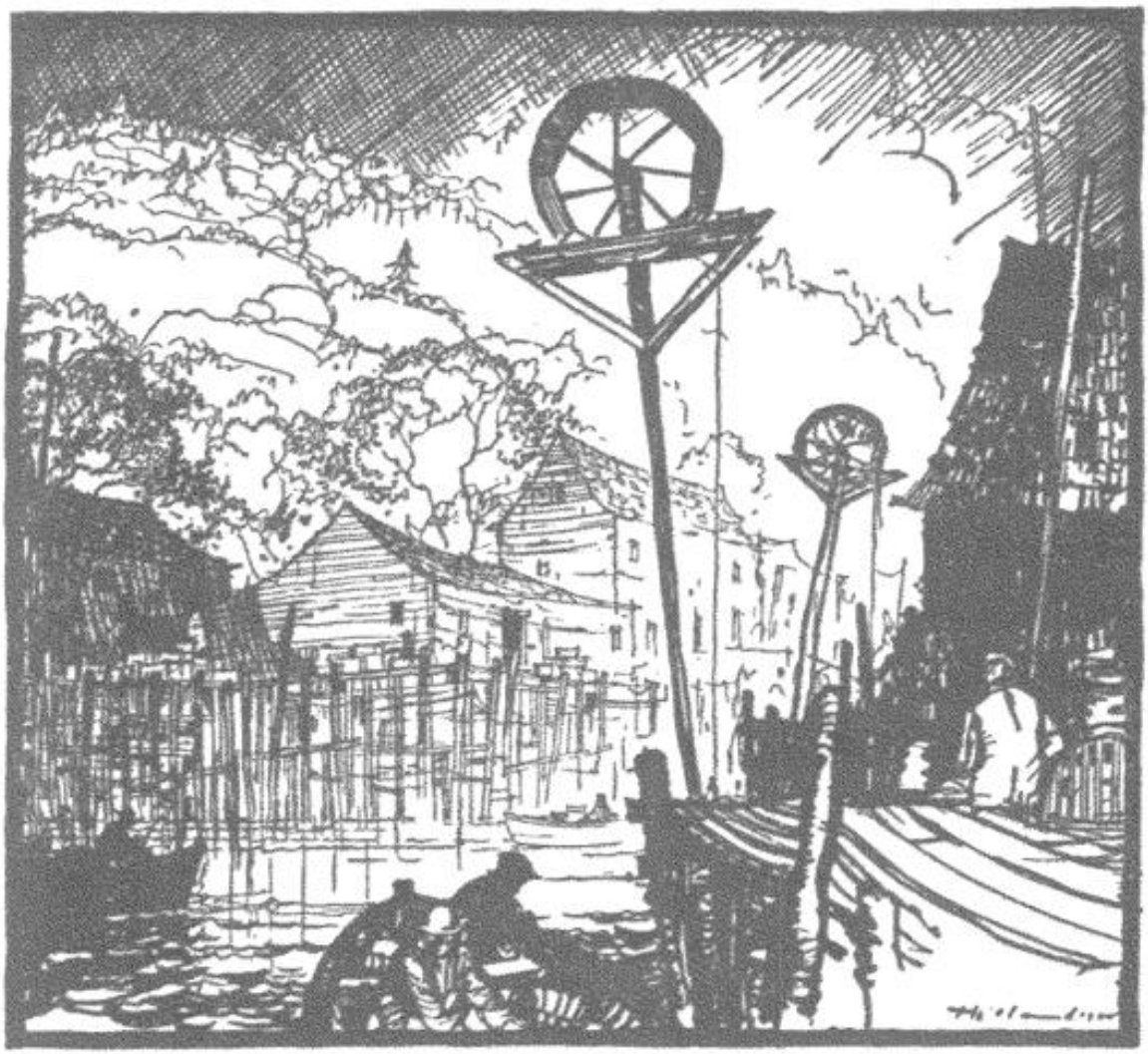
AMBLING
THROUGH ACADIA



Little River—on St. Mary's Bay
You will see plenty of fishermen's huts

AMBLING THROUGH ACADIA

BY

CHARLES HANSON TOWNE

WITH DRAWINGS BY
W. EMERTON HEITLAND

New York & London
THE CENTURY CO.
1923

PRINTED IN U. S. A.

To

HERBERT AND GERTRUDE SHONK

the Best of Friends

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THE TRAMP THAT WALKED LIKE A KING

As we rode through Acadia upon a golden day,
(Oh, white were all the apple-blooms, and blue the sky of spring!)
We spied a figure far ahead, say fifty rods away,
With head erect and shoulders broad—yes, every inch a king.
A tall, majestic man he was, though shabby brown his suit,
A ruler of the open road, a monarch of the land;
And something of the old lost world made farmer-lads salute
This wonderful and regal form, with a scepter in his hand.

A scepter that was but a stick!—and yet he waved it there,
As if proclaiming fields and streams his opulent domain.
He wore no crown upon his brow—his noble head was bare;
He needed no accoutrement, nor any lordly train.
For he was every inch a king, and stately was his tread.
(Oh, white were all the apple-trees, and blue the world's wide room!)
"He dreams of gorgeous palace halls, and princesses," we said.
(The whole earth was his castle, filled with marvelous perfume.)

I never saw a man who seemed more dignified than he;
(Oh, thrones might crumble far away—but he remained a king!)
And, as we passed him, we cried out, "Good day, your Majesty!"
Whereat he turned and said, "What ho! What message do ye bring?"
We could not smile. His regal mien caused us to envy him—
A freeman if one ever lived, a monarch of the spring.
We thought of strutting sales-clerks in the cities gray and dim,
And wished that they might see this tramp who wandered like a king.

It was not pride—the false, cheap pride the little people wear;
It was the gracious elegance that high-born courtiers know.
He had the manners of the French—yet English blood was there;
His pace was somewhat ponderous, and beautifully slow.
Beyond us was a sunlit town—this was the king's highway.
"And may we give your Majesty a friendly lift?" we said.
"I much prefer my garden walk. Dear commoners, good day!"
He answered like the king he was—and bowed his kingly head.

We never saw that royal form in any later ride;
No doubt he loitered far behind, on roadways of his own.
We loved his walk, but even more we loved his simple pride—
In some remote and vanished time he sat upon a throne.
But now—oh, happier far his lot!—the freedom of the earth,
And not the petty politics of some declining land.
I think of him when spring comes back—this man of happy birth,
Who walks that road in Acadie, with a scepter in his hand!

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CHAPTER I

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AMBLING THROUGH ACADIA

CHAPTER I

FOLLOWING THE SPRING NORTH

IT was the apple-blossoms that started me. I had heard of them from many travelers, read of them, seen pictures of them, and finally I began to dream of them. Always my joy had been vicarious. And then the day came when I said to myself that I must see them with my own eyes.

Those apple-blossoms in the rich orchards of Nova Scotia, I mean; those miles on miles of miraculous trees in the Annapolis valley. One would have thought, with a glorious memory of the apple-orchards on Long Island and in Connecticut when May came dancing into the world, that I had had enough of them for one season.

But the glimpses I had of these white earthly cloud-drifts as I motored around New York with generous friends only caused me to be more determined than ever to follow the spring north, to reverse the usual habit of the swallows at the end of summer and fly in the opposite direction at a much earlier date, so that I might taste, for once, the glamour and wonder of a long, long spring.

I remember a friend saying to me long ago: "Just think! even if we live the allotted span there can be but a few Aprils for us, at best. So we ought to keep our eyes open when the leaves begin to come, and miss no moment of the rapture and rustle of spring."

Sometimes it seems to me that I can hardly wait for that time each year when grass ascends and the first warmth begins to flood the world; when in meadows lately covered with snow the violets and primroses show their tiny faces, and the boughs of all the trees seem suddenly to be touched with a magic wand and break into green, exultant life. But a little later, in the full tide

of May, when our apple-orchards, drenched by sun and rain, put on their vestments of white splendor, I think the world is a place of clean perfection, and I confess that the sense of earth's loveliness almost breaks my heart.

I have some friends on Long Island who have transplanted two apple-trees to the terrace of their house, so that guests, from their upper windows on white May mornings, may look out and actually touch those gleaming boughs and drink in the fragrance of them. When the petals finally fall, while one is having tea on that same terrace, it is as though a Danaë shower of silver were dropping, instead of gold, and the light rain makes a fairy carpet that one scarcely dares to tread.

Now, having had a plethora of these magical boughs, I craved, even as a drunkard craves, one more full cup of joy—as though a prohibition of apple-blossoms were about to go into effect; as indeed it may, if our stupid lawmakers do not call a halt. And I say this in all seriousness; for, since cider is made from apples, the fanatics wishing to rid the world of a few roustabouts,

you and I may one day be deprived of a portion of the beauty of the earth! It is an appalling thought; yet how are we to have complete prohibition so long as Nature, in her infinite wisdom, goes on allowing apples to ripen and mellow on lavish branches!

I have often wondered, when we in the United States plan our holidays, why it is that we do not consider more that heavenly and limitless district which lies directly north of us. There are supreme advantages in a trip to Canada. One finds himself, almost in the twinkling of an eye, in an entirely different country, yet among a people who speak the same language, who do not require silly passports of us, and who, though they insist, logically enough, upon engraving the King of England's portrait upon their bills, follow our monetary system and banking methods. Our legal tender is interchangeable, and there is no bother about exchange, and travelers' checks, and learning to count anew on one's fingers, trying to reconcile pence and shillings and pounds with static American dollars. It is a great relief

to one who, like myself, loathes mathematics and the necessary bother of money. Then, too, the Canadians possess an abundant supply of large leisure. They have time to be polite, to say good morning and good evening, to direct the stranger on his way, to try to make him comfortable and happy and at home. I had a conductor assist me with my bags in a little town, as I struggled into the parlor-car of his train. Would that ever happen in my own country? I cannot recall such an experience.

But more to be taken into consideration is the fact that the climate of Canada is matchless in summer. If one is going westward, to the wonderful country around the much-advertised Banff and Lake Louise, it would be well to break the long continental trip by train—that is, if one is starting from our eastern coast—with a few days and nights on the Great Lakes. The boats are excellent, the food is all that could be desired, and the service could scarcely be improved upon. There could be a day's stop-over at a city like Winnipeg, again to break the journey

through flat prairie territory, and then the plunge into the Canadian Rockies, where Nature seems to have made a startling and supreme gesture, and finally set the seal of her complete approval.

I used to imagine, as a child, that there was some physical barrier to be crossed when one went from one's own country into another, just as I fancied the north pole was actually a pole, standing on the very top of the world. I did not think one could just melt, as it were, into another land. I always have a feeling of awe when I am told, on a railway train, that we are now passing into another State, or even into another county. For me, a sense of adventure is in this unexciting process—I cannot say why. I positively expect the landscape to take on a new aspect, the soil to be of a different color, the very trees and bushes to be of another kind. Yet they remain strangely the same, until one considers border lines and boundaries, and wonders why it is that such a fuss and furor are made over them—why, indeed, people go to war about them.

We slipped into Canada by the sea, when we made up our minds to discover the *Evangeline*-haunted districts of Nova Scotia; and that is the best way to go anywhere. Traveling thus, boundary lines are indeed invisible; their names are writ in water, and give one no concern. You awaken the next morning or the day after and find yourself looking at another flag, breathing other air, and realize that you are a vigorous pilgrim, being so thrillingly far from home.

The way to go from New York, I should advise, is to take the night boat to Boston. There, the following afternoon at two, one may board a small steamer at the very next wharf, for Yarmouth. And let me pause to be specific here, to aid those who may follow me on this delectable journey. No luncheon is served on the Yarmouth vessel on the day one sails. Therefore, have a box made up in Boston and enjoy your sandwiches and your thermos bottle on the deck as you steam out of that lovely harbor.

The exit from New York forever thrills me. I love dipping under our massive highways of the

air, Brooklyn, Manhattan, Williamsburg, and Queensboro bridges. Their roaring traffic, their ceaseless clamor, their energy, their solid permanence—I love them. These are the exposed arteries of the monster Manhattan, and living tides sweep through them. In a late May evening, at sunset, when the workers who dwell in Brooklyn begin to pour homeward, these veins are filled with blood; and as the Artist, the Guide, and I passed along the river we were glad of an escape from the great city that had clutched us too long, held us closely on her heart of stone and steel.

The World Building looked like a golden beehive melting among a garden of giant skyscrapers, strange flowers of agate, unmoved by storms, rejoicing alike in the beat of the rain or the smiting rays of the sun. This May evening, the beehive glistened and gleamed, and I thought of the time, not so many years ago, when it was the proudest turret of them all. Now it was but a pygmy in this hard and terrible garden. And then I thought of all the bees huddled be-

neath this hive, trying to make honey out of—what? Later, I knew, the whole city would be a vast honeycomb of light, when the electric bulbs danced at the tiers of windows, and aspiring domes shot, rocket-like, to the darkness of the sky. A returning American recently said that the Woolworth tower was as wonderful as any cathedral spire he had seen abroad. I quite agree with him. There is a stern loveliness about these commercial buildings, a hard, compelling beauty that cannot be denied, and I have always pitied those who fail to read the wonder of blundering, groping cities, with their message of human endeavor and dream. Their lack of vision is worse than blindness, for it is nothing short of a spiritual shutting of the eyes.

It is curious how the bridges erected since Brooklyn Bridge simply magnify the beauty of the latter, just as the old, shingled, weather-beaten farm-houses on Long Island and in New England gain in impressiveness through the years, and serve to "show up" the nouveau-rich architecture crowding around them. They built

better in the old days, when artisans were really artists, with a personal pride in their work. And there were more robust dreamers a quarter of a century ago. I have always resented the conflict of Manhattan Bridge with the beautiful lines of the older structure. Looking at Brooklyn Bridge from the harbor, one feels that a hideous back drop has been placed in the near distance, almost ruining the perfect symmetry of what Roebling did. Yet the perfection of Brooklyn Bridge remains, despite contiguous upstarts, a stretch of magnificence in the air, an iron rainbow linking two enormous boroughs.

I like those dark warehouses along the wharves of New York and Brooklyn as one sails up the East River, and the glimpses one catches of shadowy, mysterious streets leading to the radiant heart of the vast, tumultuous city. Now and then a human figure skulks along in the dusk, just visible from one's upper deck; and the tugboats whistle, and the seeming confusion works itself somehow into a plausible pattern, as ship passes ship, and helpless trains of cars are propelled

The East River
"The radiant heart of the vast, tumultuous city"

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on a thick raft to some port where they may work out their destiny. It strikes one as ignoble that a massive train must thus be commandeered and escorted by a tiny tug, just as there is something ludicrous in the spectacle of a broken-down limousine being dragged through a city street by a little taxicab. But even giants grow weary and worn sometimes, and then it is that the Lilliputians of the earth come into their own. Every one loves a tug, puffing in its pride, helping some larger vessel to find its way to its pier. These are the only craft that I can never think of as feminine, they are so altogether sturdy and strong.

Disarmament is robbing the Brooklyn Navy-Yard of its old-time pomp and glory. Now only a battle-ship or two may be seen where once a score or more lay silent as watch-dogs, and a network of iron and steel proclaims where a part of our valiant navy made its quarters once upon a time.

Farther along, tall black chimneys rise like monster organ-pipes, chanting forever the glory

and wonder of the town. A gasometer stands sharply silhouetted against the imperishable sky; and, in contrast to its heavy beauty, the white clouds drift in a blue spring sea of glory. We were going to a wilderness, to the land of "the forest primeval." But was not this a greater wilderness? This tangle of dwellings, this madness that man had created, what was it but an endless forest, in which the soul might lose its way? What did it all mean? Why had it risen out of the sea, and why did it chain us so, and grimly make us its very slaves? Some old lines by Marrion Wilcox came singing into my head, as our boat pressed on:

A poisonous forest of houses far as the eye can see,
And in their shade
All crime is made—
Now God love you and me.

The ugly-beautiful city! I would leave it; but also I knew I would come back to it gladly, as I always did—as every one of us does.

But I was not out of it yet. Just as, when you attempt to motor from New York, it seems

The Lighthouse on Blackwell's Island

impossible to get to the last house on the last street, so, in gliding up the East River, the dwellings never end; and the windows of houses along the shore seem to stare at you, follow you, as the eyes in a portrait do.

When we came to Blackwell's Island, I noticed the lighthouse on the northern end of it; and for the first time, though I have lived in New York all my life, I heard a priest near me on the deck telling another a legend concerning it. I do not know whether it is authentic or not, but the story as I overheard it interested me.

"A man suffering from melancholia built that little stone edifice with his own hands," the priest was saying to his companion. "He was a master builder, 'way back in the sixties, and when he fell ill he asked permission to go over to the island and erect that lighthouse we see. And as he worked, day by day, quite alone there, piling stone on stone, he sent out a message, asking the prayers of all passers-by for his recovery. And every tugboat captain, every sailor on every craft, prayed for him."

"A lovely story," the younger priest said, at the conclusion of the tale. "I only hope the poor man recovered. That would make the thing complete."

"Ah, that I do not know," answered the other. "And perhaps it is just as well not to know the end of the story. At any rate, there the lighthouse is."

Out in the sound, the city is gone. A sense of freedom sweeps over one with the first evening breeze. Definitely, one has escaped from the trap that tears the heart as well as the body. And

when the sunset is vividly painted on the western sky, and reflected in the deep blue of the water, there comes an hour of calm that leaves one speechless and breathless. One sees the long stretch of Long Island shore, separated more and more from Connecticut as the boat pushes on, away from the flaming sun; and soon there will be the wide, open sea; and in the morning the first lap of one's journey will be over.

We are following the spring north, free as those birds that swing through the air; and always there come the thought and dream of the white orchards that await us, up there in the rich Annapolis valley.

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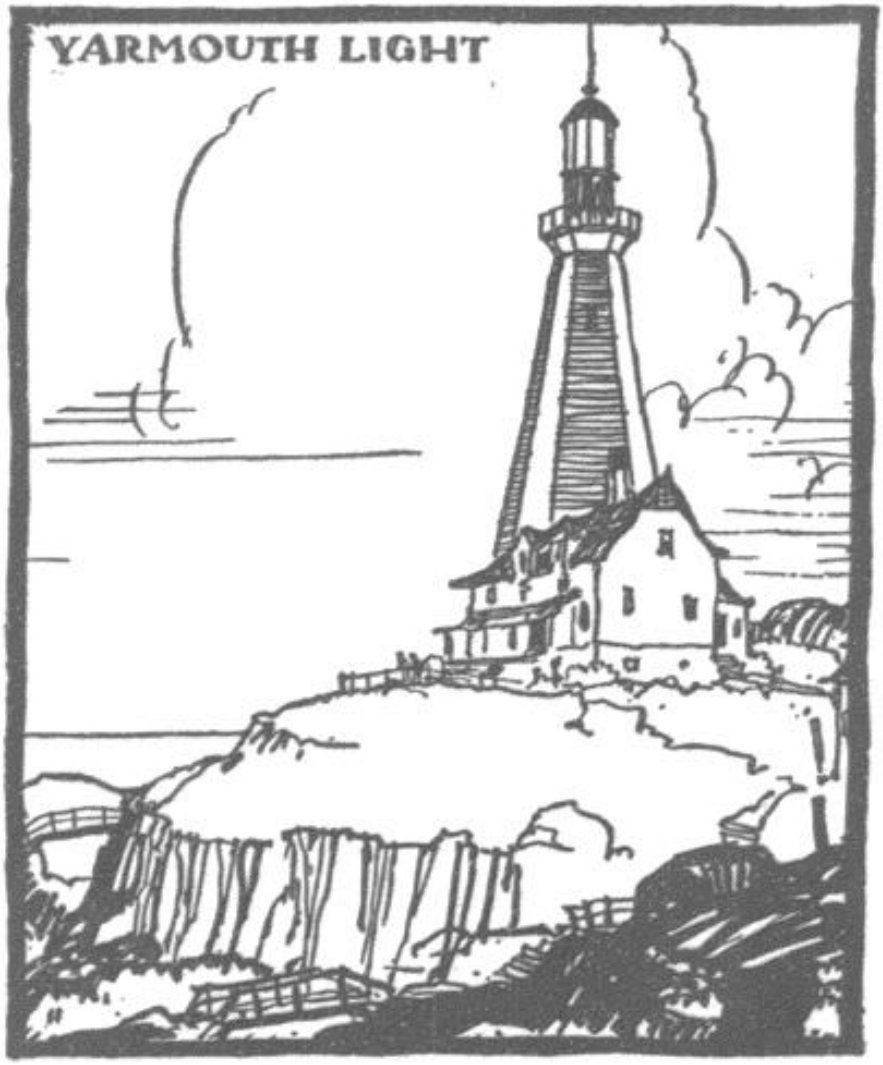

CHAPTER III

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CHAPTER II

FROM YARMOUTH ON

I DON'T like buying railway tickets—indeed, tickets of any kind; and so, when the Guide, a good friend who strangely and happily is of an opposite turn of mind, said he could make his vacation plans fit in with the Artist's and my own, I was delighted.

He it was who engaged our passage everywhere; and he is clever with maps, and has all sorts of ideas about where not to go, which, when you come to think of it, is quite as important as to decide just where to go. He has a way with him when it comes to porters and waitresses, conductors and hotel clerks—a sort of genius for making friends with any and everybody; and through his kindly offices one's luggage miraculously appears at the right moment, and he has counted it up at a glance, and simply orders one to "come

on." One goes, confident that all is well. If Cook could but get hold of him, he would make his fortune as a cicerone in foreign parts; but he hides his light under a bushel; and so, though I had known him for some time, I had not dreamed that he had these wonderful talents as a tourist. He was a revelation to me, just as I must have been to him in another way; for I am one of those who insist upon getting to a station a full half-hour before it is time for one's train to go, and I am likely to speak of it if others are not equally prompt. Often, to save myself the fret and worry of a too-late arrival, I have bundled up with bag and baggage, getting to my destination, say, forty minutes beforehand, only to be hustled through the gate in the greatest discomfort, finding myself on the train ahead. It is humiliating, to say the least, and one's plans are so definitely upset at the other end of the journey. I am always telegraphing to friends that I am arriving earlier than they had expected me, which is quite as thoughtless and rude as to arrive late.

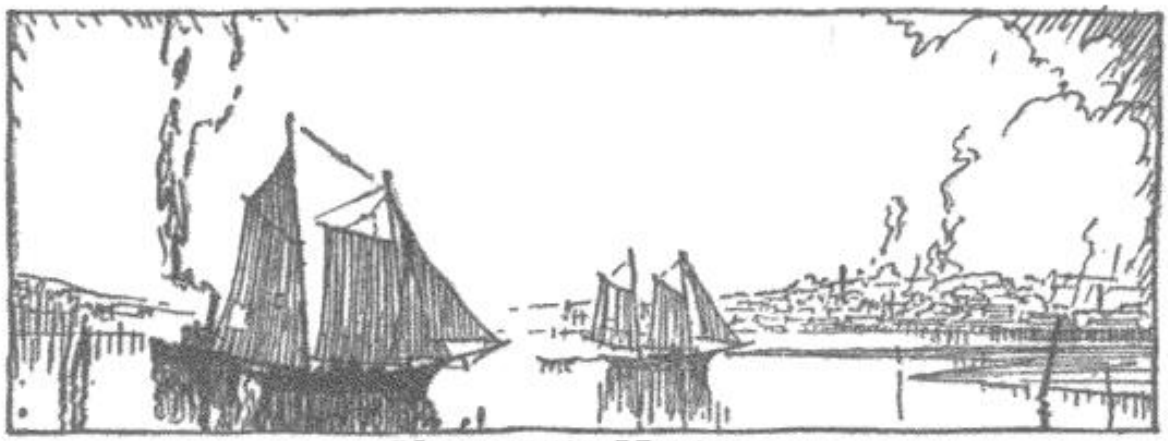
My friend the Guide has cured me of much

of my impetuous desire to take a taxi thirty minutes before it is necessary. He has shown me the wisdom, as the Italians put it, of making haste slowly; and he has about convinced me that rural trains are seldom on time, and that boats rarely run according to schedule. I never missed anything if I but meekly followed him; and, thanks to his kindness, I never had to consult one of those cryptic little folders known to civilized man as time-tables. Asterisks always annoy me; and time-tables are so full of them that I wonder the printers do not run out of those necessary signs. "Saturdays only" forever confronts me on a Tuesday, say, when I make up my mind to take a journey. "Stops only on signal" is the train I am always hopelessly running after at some remote junction. "No baggage" is the bane of my existence; whereas "Will not run on Sundays" is always the very train I want, weary of some small town on a Sabbath morning.

The Guide had a way with him with time-tables, too; and he told me that if I would but leave matters to him he would see to it that we

never took the wrong train. Moreover, there was not to be much travel by rail, we agreed. We would board an express—if there was such a practical thing in such a romantic country—only as a means of getting rapidly through some dull territory. The rest of the time we would hire a motor or bicycles, and explore the land round about our hotel. In this way we would get off the beaten routes of the average tourist as much as possible, take those little side journeys that sometimes prove to be the most delightful of all, and do just about as we pleased, regardless of time.

The steamer from Boston to Yarmouth takes, literally, a bee-line course; and the afternoon we set forth was radiant with sun and beautiful with billowy clouds. Our clean little boat shot through the sea, seemingly eager to reach that port directly on the other side. Not until nightfall is one definitely out of sight of land; and in the early morning the bright little harbor of Yarmouth greets the traveler, and the Canadian air is cooler and spicier, and one drinks in long drafts of it, feeling refreshed at once.



Yarmouth Harbor

It is a pretty town. The young oiler on the boat lived there, and had sung its praises to me, though he confessed to a hankering after Boston; "It 's so big and busy," was the way he put it. But down in his heart he was true to little Yarmouth.

We had made the acquaintance of a young man and his wife on the steamer, who had brought their smart little car along, and were looking forward to a Canadian summer, touring wherever they had a mind to go. For a moment, I envied them their easy manner of getting from place to place, as they outlined the roads they would follow, and pointed out on the map this interior lake and that which they would be able to reach. "It 's the only way to travel," they

said. "Wish we had room for you-all"; they were obviously Southerners.

"Oh, we 'll do nicely," we told them as we thanked them for their thought of us. I think they were secretly pitying us our rides on trains in this bright early-summer season. They had a jaunty self-assurance, a natural pride of ownership and well-being, which, while not in the least offensive, got just a bit on my nerves after two or three hours of it. They were too satisfied with their plans, and would ask us down to look at their gleaming motor, pull off the hood to give us a peep at their authentic engine, and boast of the extra tires they carried.

"For we hear that the roads are n't quite so good as we have at home," the husband said. "Lots of rocks up here. But we believe in preparedness."

It made us humble to think of our hired motors and bicycles and unimaginative train trips. Oh, some people were blessed by the Fates; there was no doubt of that. "And it 's just great to be able to go where you want to, and not be

dependent on a chauffeur," we heard our new friend saying; and when, after breakfast on the boat, he bade us a gay good morning, and waved to us in a rather patronizing manner, we thought we envied him the easy days ahead of him and almost wished that he *had* the room to take us under his wing, as he had so generously suggested.

As he went down the gang-plank, the very back of his neck and the slant of his head on his shoulders told of his human joy in his trip *de luxe*. All the way from the South to go through Canada with his bride in his car *par excellence!* Yes, it was something to be happy over; and he did n't care who knew how rejoiced he was. There was n't another machine like his; he had told us that over and over. It would eat up the rough roads; it would whizz here and there like a yellow flame, startling the countryside; and the sound of his siren would be a cry of triumph in the night, as they sped through sleepy hamlets.

We felt shabby after his blithe departure; a

little inferiority complex, it may have been—we who had, until our meeting with him, been so contented with our simple and normal means of locomotion. I found myself half envying this boastful young Southerner, wishing that we, too, could have brought a dashing car along and made such a thrilling exit from the boat.

They have delicious clams at Yarmouth. We had been told so by the watchman on the boat. "I know, because I supply them to the hotel," he modestly said; but I must report that his clams were all he asserted them to be, for we tried them at every meal save breakfast.

I had n't yet become used to leaving everything to the Guide; so, while my baggage was going through the customs, and an importunate taxi-driver was asking us if we did n't want to hire him to take us to our inn, I inquired of him about evening trains north. "It left yesterday," was the way he put it. "Sorry."

There was only one, you see; but the Guide, having learned that long before we landed, smiled

A street in Yarmouth

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indulgently at me, as one does at an impetuous child, as though to say, "Now will you be good and leave the time-tables to me?"

I like a town such as Yarmouth, with rocking boats in its cozy harbor, its tree-lined streets and fragrant lilac-bushes, its little home-made conservatories in every other house, as though the occupants were determined to hoard away some of the golden summer against the stern, inevitable northern winter. Over the town comes the keen, cool air from the Bay of Fundy, far off; and there is plenty of good fishing, of course. They catch much mackerel and thousands of herrings here; and the lobster traps are regularly set. I have seldom seen healthier, more happy children than one sees in Canada. And evidently, judging by their parents, they will all grow to a splendid and robust manhood or womanhood; and that will cause them to require those enormous bath-tubs which delighted us in every little inn to which we wandered. What a joy to get to a country where the people are so big-boned, if for no other reason than that one

may splash to the limit in those capacious basins!

One instantly gets an impression of the ruggedness of Canada, entering it by this doorway. I can't understand why more young Americans, in search of a normal life on a farm, do not betake themselves to this enchanting country; yet they tell me everywhere that Canada's great problem is to get her youth to remain at home. Boy-like, they all wish to rush to the States, as they call our land. They crave the excitement of big cities, like Boston and New York, and they suffer from the delusion that a fortune awaits them in rich New England, just over the border. Many return, later in life, finding too late that they have been chasing rainbows, and they settle down with poor grace. Yet all this is in the economic scheme of things, and I suppose it will always be so: that the citizens of one land will forever dream of the hidden enchantment of another.

Outside Yarmouth one finds beautiful country and excellent roads. We caught glimpses, on our first motor ride, of many a wild apple-tree radiantly in bloom, a foretaste of those we were

to see later in such abundance. And tiny lakes dance in the sun, and lumbering oxen cross one's path every little while, their stolid heads fastened under the heavy, cruel-looking block of wood which must have some technical name that I never learned. The Siamese Twins were not more rigidly bound together; and I began, very early on this trip, to pity these patient beasts, particularly when I saw them eating their noonday meal without being unharnessed, their great heads moving in unison as they gathered up their hay. Sometimes one would finish before its partner, and would lie down, seemingly in the most uncomfortable position, but unmindful of its wretched state. Oxen are notoriously far from clever, and I doubt if these phlegmatic teams had any consciousness of their inglorious bondage, as they obeyed the "hee" and "haw" of their masters.

I asked a farmer one day why they employed this primitive method of hauling, and his answer was sane and sensible. "They cost less, in the beginning," he told me, "and their upkeep is

much more economical. Then, when they die, we can sell them for beef—good beef, too. A horse, now—you 'd just have to bury him, and that would be the end of it."

I love the marshland, toward the west of Yarmouth, and the iris and buttercups smiling in the meadows, and the three or four lakes,—or, as our driver modestly called them, ponds,—that stretch out for several miles, and where in winter there is fine skating. The country rolls a bit, and they told us that in late July and August the heavy fogs begin to drift in toward the town itself, and boats have difficulty in finding their way into the harbor. Some of the old fishermen along the shore are as handsome as cardinals, and quite as dignified; and all have the eyes of dreamers—that indescribable peace on their countenances which you do not see in city-bred folk. They have searched the long leagues of the sea, looked out to the far horizon, peered through fog and rain, and seem, themselves, to have become part of the very elements. They have that simplicity which seems to me the beginning of all wisdom.

Port Maitland

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They do not talk a great deal, yet they are glad when strangers speak to them, and inquire about their habits of life and their methods of catching fish. All the traps bear some individual insignia, as a means of identification; and woe betide the fisherman who attempts to steal his neighbor's haul! One has the sense that great justice burns, like a lamp, behind these bronzed and weather-beaten faces.

They are stern, silent men, yet not a few of them have fine humor, and love the latest jest from the hurrying, town-mad world—whither they seldom think of going, however. They love their little coast villages with an abiding passion and ardor, and I think that most of them resent intrusion. They are perfectly content in their dories, and time means little else to them but an indication of the turn of the tide, or the going down and coming up of the sun and moon.

It is a lovely drive along the shore to the west and north of Yarmouth, out toward Pembroke Shore, Sanford, Short Beach, and Port Maitland. It is at the last place that you will see plenty of

fishermen's huts, and smell the daily haul, and see old boats, long since abandoned, drying and withering in the sun.

Nearer to the town itself there is a lovely spot where the guides of the province, during August and September, hold aquatic sports on what they call the Three Lakes. Prizes are given, and the meet is largely attended. Over the gently rising hills, boys trail at the first touch of summer to pitch their camps along the shore, and spend weeks in the open. There is plenty of moose-hunting several miles in the back country, and the guides do a rushing business in the season. But the farms close at hand, on the outskirts of little Yarmouth, are well ordered and prosperous, and many smile at you from their checkerboard setting on the hillsides. These always made me think of some beautiful celestial game; and I can imagine the goblins or fairies at nightfall moving about where the green pattern is spread, first dancing in one square and then in another.

Nova Scotia is a country of lighthouses; and

these gray ghosts loom up everywhere along the coast. We could almost see, from some of the little twisting streets that ran down to the water, the one that proved a blessing to mariners entering Yarmouth Harbor. It was on a point of land about nine miles away— "A lovely road, not very hilly," our hotel clerk told us; and we determined to reach it by bicycle on a certain golden afternoon.

You are in the real country in a moment and find yourself speeding through scented lanes, where wild violets lift their purple faces like "fragmentary heavens," and marsh-roses greet you from a little distance, when the trees break and give you glimpses of the meadows beyond. The iris and the buttercup smile, too, and for a long way you are under a canopy of thick-leaved branches, too happy to speak. An apple-tree now and then will start you thinking of the great parade of them later on, and you begin asking every one you meet if he thinks you are too late for that white pageant in the valley. Some say that you have plenty of time; others give you no

such encouragement, but tolerantly smile at your ignorance of the seasons, and plainly observe that you have arrived far too late. It gets to be confusing, to say the least; and you almost want to start your wheel northward, or else leave it then and there and beg the Guide to find you a train that will speed you to the orchards before it is too late. But the Guide would also smile tolerantly at your ignorance of schedules, and beg you not to be impatient, to hold your horses,—forgetting you are on a wheel,—and to keep your head. Either you will be on time or you will not be on time, he would say, with splendid sanity. Enjoy the moment. You came out to-day to get a close-up of a beautiful and graceful lighthouse. For heaven's sake, be content with what you have. And so, meekly, you pedal onward; but back in your brain is the thought that you may miss the wonder of those blossoms not so far away, and you have all you can do to drink in quietly the happiness of this perfect afternoon.

A little fishing village bids you welcome, as you turn a sudden curve in the road. You come

"A little fishing village bids you welcome"

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right into a comic-opera stage-setting, with tiny houses of unpainted boards, and handsome children rollicking in the main street. An itinerant meat-merchant is selling his wares and gossiping with the mothers who come out of the wings at the sound of his bell. I suppose, in a fishing village, they become humanly weary of fish, and crave, with a craving that you and I scarcely know, a bit of steak or a chop. It would seem so, at any rate, judging by the brisk trade the vender of substantial food is doing.

It was here that a large dog, drowsing in the lazy afternoon, roused himself at our approach and took it into his canine head to follow us down the curving road.

Now, I like dogs; but I don't relish one the size of this fellow, and an utter stranger to me, tagging along so close that I can feel his hot breath. I think he is fonder of my trousers than of me, and I have visions of a sudden summer madness and a vicious snapping at my heels, as I try to pedal nonchalantly and attempt to wear that don't-give-a-hang expression when, inwardly,

I am experiencing the utmost terror. I wish he would turn back; and I endeavor to take on speed. But he is undismayed at my increased tempo, and only pants the louder, causing me further anguish. So I slow down. So does he. I know now that I am in for his society, possibly for the rest of the day. I would dismount if I dared; and then, because I know I can't, I am consumed with a desire to get off and pick buttercups. Would n't it be splendid if I could? I don't wish the Artist and the Guide, who, for all my effort, are a third of a mile ahead of me, to have an inkling of my alarm; so, as I come nearer to them, I pretend that I have cajoled the dog to follow me—or, rather, to run beside me; and they are amazed at my power over animals, at that hidden mesmeric force in me which draws strange dogs in my direction. I am pleased—and displeased. I feel important, but weak and hypocritical; and I try to urge my companions to get the dog away from me. "See if he will follow you!" I shout, in desperation. But they think I am bragging, and refuse utterly to try their per-

suasive powers on my new friend. I allow them to press forward then, hoping against hope that Nero, or Tiger, or Bruno, or whatever the beast's name is, will take kindly to *their* golf-stockings. But no; he has a mad and unaccountable passion for me, and finally, when a glimpse of his long white teeth makes me sure that he will do the worst when he gets the chance, I call out to a lad working in the fields, "Do you know this dog? Will he hurt me?" and receive the heartening word that he does know him—well, and he will *not* hurt me. When, at a brook-side, we all dismount, the dog comes up to me and licks my hand, and I pat his head—oh, very bravely now! —and again find myself receiving compliments on those attractive qualities which lure dogs, if nothing better, from their comfortable homes. "But you may keep him," observes the Guide, when I am a bit puffed up. "I see that he has a million fleas."

There are summer colonies along this pleasant road. Many people have built sturdy bungalows as Yarmouth Bar is reached, and the lilacs

blow in the gentle wind in almost every doorway, and there is a tangle of shrubs, and again a tangle of tantalizing apple-trees every now and then. We could see the village behind us, and now the lighthouse ahead, set on an eminence, yet with sufficient pasture-land around it so that cattle could move and enjoy the long blue summer days. We were crossing a bridge, and at the crest of our first real hill there was a schoolhouse, through the open windows of which we could see the children's heads and hear a singsong, as of lessons being recited. Going up this hill afoot, little did I dream how I would come down it, a few hours later.

The keeper of the lighthouse reminded me of the *Ancient Mariner.* We had climbed the hill to his abode, and the cylindrical home of the lamp seemed huge now; it had not appeared to be much more than a small, graceful turret from down below. I was amused at the fact that, though he was surrounded by water, literally, there was, as in Coleridge's poem, no drop to drink; "nor any drop to drink" runs that line,

forever misquoted. Think of having to carry water from a well more than a hundred yards away, all the while looking out on that beautiful expanse of harbor!

Yarmouth Fishermen

We rested for an hour or so, talking with an old fisherman who lived at the side of the road and loved to gossip when he was in the mood. To-day happened to be one of his happiest, for he had made an excellent haul in the morning, and he had nothing to do but whittle and whistle, and was only too glad of any company. He was a bachelor, but he told us he was never by any chance lonely. The sea was his bride, and he never understood her, which made her just as interesting as any living woman; and if he should ever wish to part

with her he could easily do so without any scandal. But he imagined he was in love with her forever —that turbulent, green-blue lady. Well, he didn't mind who knew it; he simply couldn't shake her off, and it hadn't proved such a bad match, after all. Many a fellow had done worse.

The Artist wanted to make a sketch farther along—something he had seen on the way over; so he and the active Guide rode ahead, and I dreamed along the roadside, strangely at peace, and thinking, as I always did, of the orchards we would finally reach. My wheel was anything but modern, and I had n't been on one for some years; so, in my abstraction, when I came to the schoolhouse hill, I forgot that it had been so steep when I came in the other direction, and that it would have been the better part of wisdom to dismount again. But before I knew it I was sailing down the decline on a sharp turn; and I saw, too late, a multitude of stones on one side of the road. I tried to use the brake, but, of course, in that crisis it refused to work. I knew in a second that I was doomed, that there was noth-

ing for me but a nasty plunge. Wearing glasses as I do, my first thought was to save my eyes; anything might happen to me, but I would n't risk the putting out of an eye. So, when the meeting with the hard earth came, I let all my weight go on my left elbow.

I don't recall much that happened during the next few moments. I only know now that when I came to my senses I was sure I had become blind, for I could n't see a thing ahead of me; and how my arm did ache! Soon, vaguely, I discerned two fishermen in a little dory, just over the bridge, who were waving to me, I thought. Thank heaven, I could see them plainly now, though my glasses had left my nose, and were miraculously unbroken. But all my loose change had fallen in the crevices of the rocks, and, in my nervous excitement, I could scarcely manage to pick myself up. The fishermen told me afterwards, as they came ashore, that they had seen me tumble, and thought I was a goner, and waved to make me return their salute and relieve their minds.

Two little boys from the comic-opera fishing village also came to my rescue, and were kindness itself—even before they learned that there was a treasure-chest of Canadian coins for them to find in the rocks! They may be looking for it yet, for all I know; but I remember that when I told them, in answer to their frantic inquiries, how much I had spilled, their eyes all but popped out of their heads, and their solicitude for me and my sadly wrenched arm humanly cooled a bit. Their faces perpetually left mine and turned in the direction of the Captain Kidd declivity. It was pitch-dark, the fishermen afterward informed me, when those boys went home; but they came back an hour later—bringing lanterns! How I hope their labor was not fruitless.

There is a jail in Yarmouth; and the sight of one always makes me eager to cross its threshold —as a guest, not a boarder! I have read of murderers who, afterward electrocuted at Sing Sing, told with their last breath how they once, in a spirit of fun, sat in the chair of the death-house. To such an end they came, years later.

Is my interest in prisons a portent of what will finally happen to me? I trust not; yet whenever I can I go through one; and Yarmouth lured me strangely; for I had heard of a remarkable murderess who was confined here, a clever back-country woman accused of the most heinous crime, who stood up against the quickest district attorneys and lawyers, confounding them all.

So nothing would do but that I must step into the cell she had occupied. Maybe I would absorb some of her cleverness; who could tell? But no sooner was the iron door slammed and locked than I earnestly wanted to get out again; and then it was that the gentle old keeper told me that he never locked any one in—except insistent visitors like me; he hardly believed it necessary. The murderess had walked up and down the bright, clean corridors as often as she wished; and even when night fell the door of her "room" —delightful euphemism!—was kept unlocked. The warden's quarters were in the same building, with a strong bolted door between; and the whole family felt perfectly safe with but a wall be-

tween them and prisoners who were up for all sorts of crimes. No attempts at escape had ever been made from this sensible jail. The men we saw breaking rocks in the yard were singing at their work, and there was no one standing over them with a gun.

Is n't this the best way, after all, to handle criminals? They get simple food, but plenty of it; and if one is able to afford fifty cents a week there is an apartment *de luxe* awaiting occupancy. Not such a bad place to rest up, and do one's neglected reading. If I ever commit a crime, I think I shall go to Yarmouth and rent this room, and write a play while I am awaiting trial, and take plenty of exercise in the sun-lit hallway between meals. There would be a lot of human companionship. One might make friends with that innocent-looking old fellow over there with the kindly gray eyes and the sensitive lips. Why was he here? I wanted to know.

"Oh, that one?" said the warden, following my glance. "He 's up for arson."

So Lombroso may be wrong, after all. You never can tell—in a jail.

I went out, greatly confused. I felt that I wanted a dish of ice-cream; and I found the very shop up the street— "The one bright spot in Yarmouth," read the modest legend on the window. And when I got inside I was delighted again when the charming young lady who waited upon me inquired, "About how much do you want to pay?"

A nice, casual place is lovely little Yarmouth. I wish there were more towns like it. There are, in Canada. That 's one of the best things about the country.

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CHAPTER III

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CHAPTER III

WEYMOUTH, ST. MARY'S BAY, SANDY COVE, AND LITTLE RIVER

THE Sissiboo River runs through the pleasant town of Weymouth, chopping it in two; and not far away, down the shore, is the Clare country, where some of the descendants of the exiled Acadians have settled in considerable numbers, living their own quiet lives, not mingling much with their neighbors, still speaking a curious French which would be quite unintelligible to a modern Parisian. They are poor, but happy. They seem content to do a bit of farming and fishing, and let the days run softly on. I wonder if they ever think of the tragic fate of their ancestors.

From Yarmouth to Weymouth one's train glides through thick woodlands, with a glimpse now and then of some silver lake, and bungalows

folded in the trees. I am sure that going by train is as pleasant a means of getting from one of these towns to another as I know. Yet I found myself thinking of our friend on the boat with his fine motor; and as I saw, every now and then, from the car window, some stretch of road, I pictured him as having traversed it the day before, and now miles ahead of us and our leisurely-going train. Doubtless he had "done" Weymouth in a jiffy; but we intended to stay on there a while, for there were jaunts round about which we wanted to take; and the Artist, enraptured with the place when we alighted at the station, said he would make some sketches.

How cool it was, from the veranda of our little hotel on the hill! "The thermometer never goes beyond seventy-six degrees even in the heat of summer," the innkeeper told us, "and there 's always a breeze." But who has n't heard that kind of self-advertising? The suburbanite who informs his guests that mosquitoes never reach his paradise—just as one of the wretches alights on one's hand—is known to us all. Yet in this

A Weymouth street

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instance I think the truth was spoken. Those mornings in Weymouth were like wine, and we drank them in avidly, so selfishly happy that we gave little thought to baking city streets far away.

We wanted to go down the river, first thing, in a little power-boat, and cross St. Mary's Bay to see what was on that stretch of coast beyond us. Villages were huddled on the other side, we knew by glancing at the map; and some one had said in Yarmouth that it was a pretty region over there. Yet when we got closer, and expressed our desire to a native down on the bridge, he smiled tolerantly and wanted to know why we were so anxious to see a town like Sandy Cove, for instance. "A dull little place," was the way he put it. "Nothin' doin' at all." It would have been folly to explain to him that that was the very reason we wanted to get there.

Despite its saintlike name, St. Mary's Bay can cut up capers. It is a saucy, choppy, naughty little stretch of blue water; but as we puffed across it we liked it better and better. The town behind us looked enchanting in the morning sun-

light; and all was indeed right with the world—except for my aching arm, which had kept me awake and needed fresh bandages every so often. Yet I would n't give in; and I was glad I had n't when we chugged into a tiny cove and felt somewhat as those watchers of the sky must feel when a new planet swims into their ken.

Over the lovely light green hills we could see a church spire, graceful and immaculately white; and, below it, great blocks of granite came defiantly down to the very water's edge, with trees overhanging them. Only in California had I ever seen a coast formation like this. White seagulls soared above our heads, and on our left a curving stretch of sandy beach invited us to bathe. Approaching nearer, I shall never forget my first vision of that village, snug and quiet, as if it had purposely folded itself away in those hills, aloof from the clamor of the world.

We almost hesitated to leave the boat; for no village, on a closer view, could possibly come up to our expectations. It was too wonderful to be true—finding this white, clean, sleeping little

town on a day so golden and calm. We thought of the unimaginative man who had wondered why we wanted to come here; and I all but wept for him.

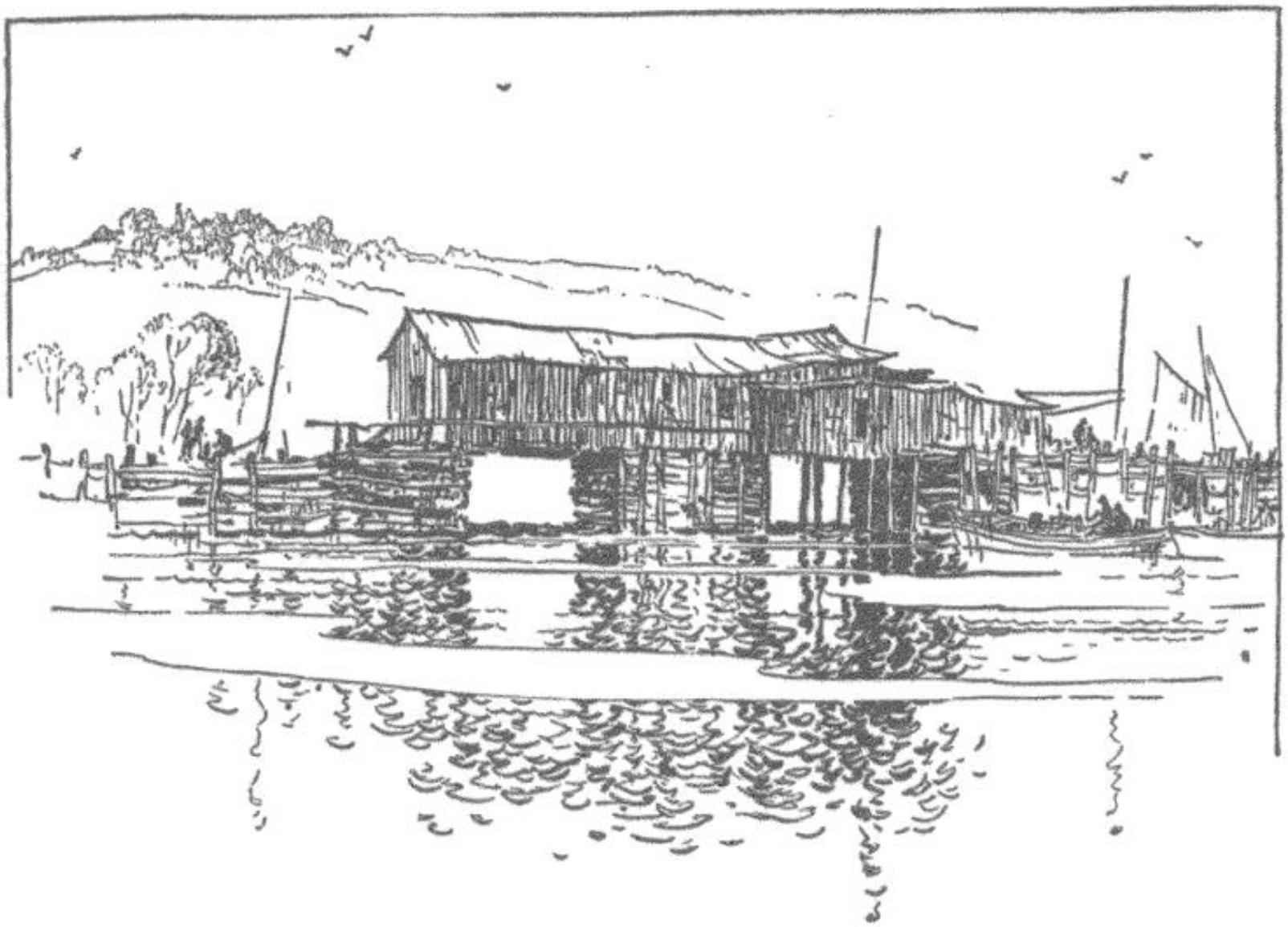
"Let 's risk getting out and walking up the hill, anyhow," the Artist said; and we did.

I fear to tell, in print, of a village like this. It is utterly unspoiled, dreaming away there through pleasant days and nights. I might be selfish and keep its charms for myself alone; for, having found Sandy Cove, I don't intend to neglect it in the summers to be. There is a certain white house on the very crest of the tallest hill, with a view that cannot be equaled, which one may rent for an unbelievably modest sum. The Artist and the Guide and I know the owner's name. But we made a compact that we would never divulge it to the world at large. Indeed, there will be competition among ourselves next year, I am sure. For the Artist insists that Sandy Cove is the best place he has ever found in which to paint; and the Guide, who knows how to loaf gracefully, swears it is the finest spot on earth for

that delectable occupation—and loafing gracefully *is* an occupation, if not an art; and I cannot think of a lovelier village in which to try to write a book. So which of us will rent that white house on the hill during some summer not far away?

School was still in session, and I cannot think of a nicer place to get one's early impressions of the world, and whatever sound knowledge it seems necessary to put into the heads of children. In Sandy Cove they have a neat white school building, which looks down on a glen that is a riot of lilac-bushes, apple-trees, and horse-chestnuts. If I were a boy again, I should want to leap into this rich loveliness, or at least roll and roll and roll down that velvet hillside, unmindful of where I landed.

I don't think there are more than three or four hundred souls in Sandy Cove; why do we always speak solemnly of "souls" when we become amateur census-takers or mention the number of folk on a vessel? But each one that we met seemed happier than any one I had seen in a long time;



Campbell's Wharf—Weymouth North

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and each had a civic pride—if one may use so august a phrase in speaking of such a simple place—which it would be difficult to duplicate.

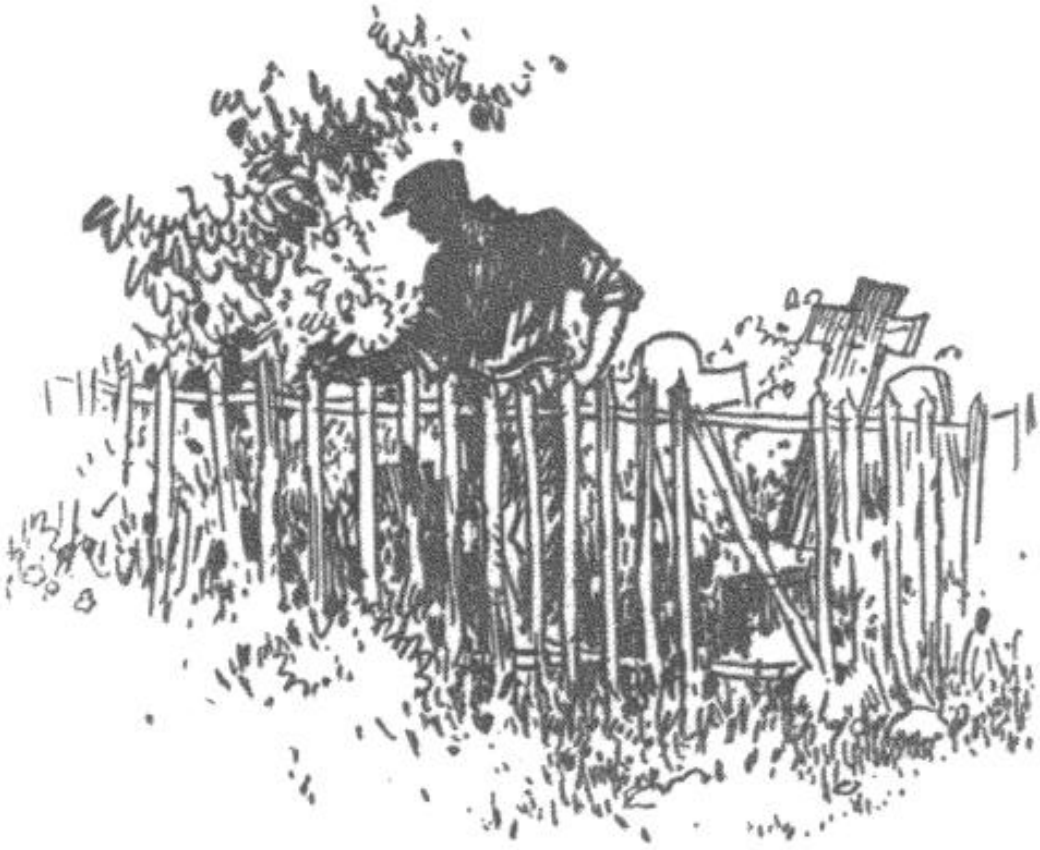
I remember a youngish man who was painting the fence around the cemetery of the Church of England—there are three churches in this tiny town, as elsewhere in Canada—and who, jubilant at our enthusiasm for his native place, said to us: "You 're right, I guess. You won't find a prettier spot in the world than right here." He said it simply, not vaingloriously. I knew he loved every inch of that brown road that was the main street of Sandy Cove—loved it with all his heart; and I liked him for feeling that way. It was n't a case of every goose being a swan to him; it was the normal, pleasant pride of one who knew that fortune favored him by setting him down in this green-white village to spend his days; and he went on brightening that picket-fence which held in a close brotherhood the silent dead who had once been as happy as he in Sandy Cove.

"What 's the principal occupation of the people here?" one of us asked; and he told us it was

farming. Two generations ago it had been fishing; husky men went out in their schooners and stayed for days; but the present generation does n't seem to take so kindly to that method of making one's living. They prefer their grassy hills, and a fine view of the water from calm door-steps.

How spick and span it was, to be sure; just like Spotless Town. On one hill we could see a tiny farm, neatly bracketed off with the inevitable white picket-fence; and from where we stood, on a higher elevation, it looked exactly like something one might buy for a child in a toy-shop. Did they "play at farming" up in this part of the world, I wondered.

No harsh noises for dear little Sandy Cove! It is still with a beautiful stillness; and the only excitement of the day seems to be the arrival and departure of a motor-bus that travels over the hills to Digby, twenty miles away. A jitney they will stand for, but no railroad, no movies, lurid and false.



"A youngish man was painting the fence"

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WEYMOUTH, ST. MARY'S BAY

The little town of Sandy Cove tucks itself away
Between the warm Canadian hills beyond St. Mary's Bay;
And there it dreams through lazy hours the whole long summer day.

The little town of Sandy Cove is beautiful and white.
No railroad thunders at its heart; no windows flame too bright;
No movies flash their garish signs, "A thrilling show —to-night!"

But quietly the little town sleeps and nods and smiles.
It lets the noisy world go by with all its ways and wiles,
Content to watch from its high hills the distant Happy Isles.

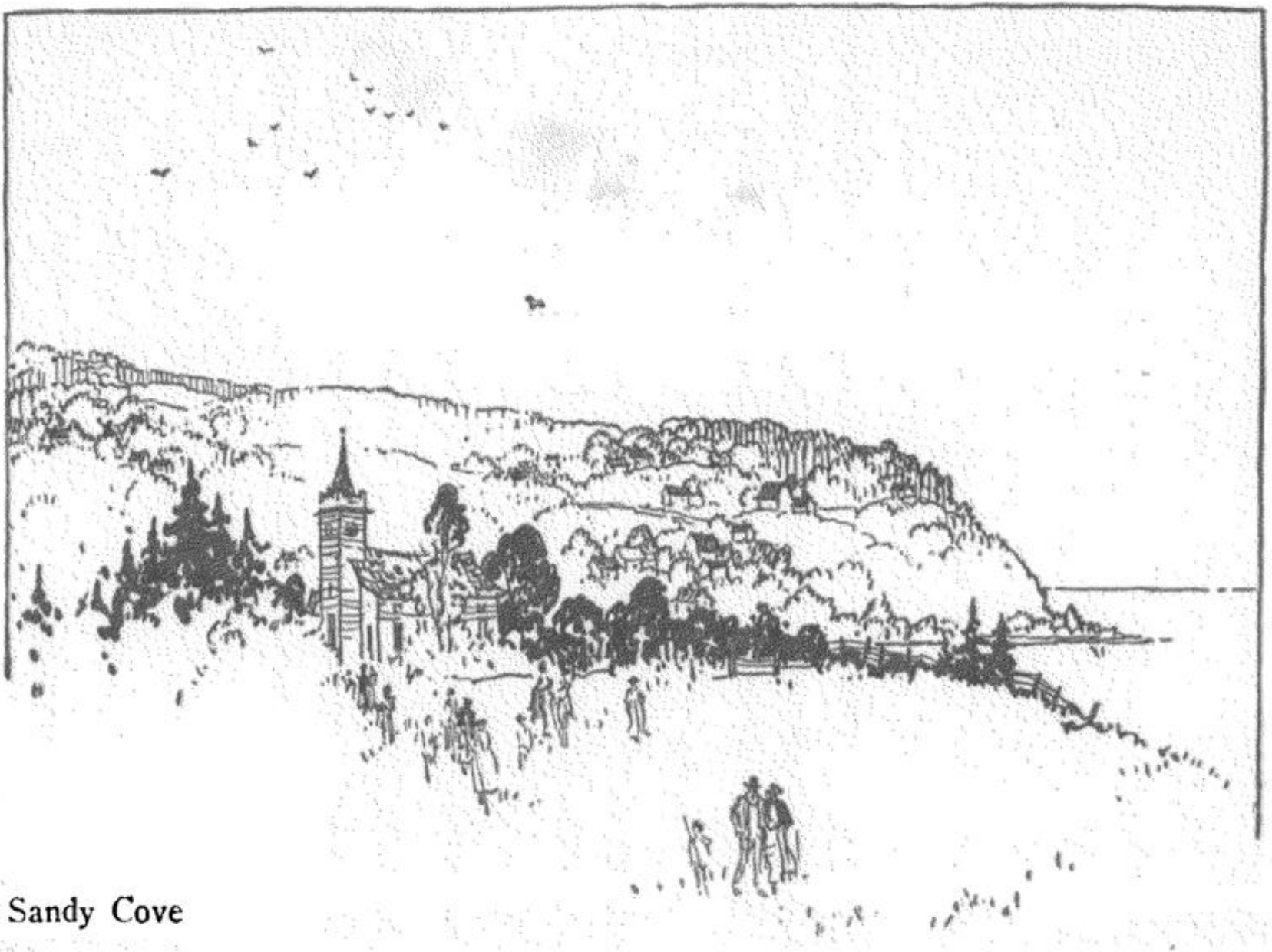
Would I might dwell in Sandy Cove in peace and calm, and say,
"Good-by, fond, foolish, clamoring town! Good-by for many a day!"
And nestle in those sheltering arms beside St. Mary's Bay.

Whenever I think of all those vast stretches around and beyond villages like this,—the un-

cultivated acres that might give such joy to men and women who would look for them and make them their own,—I think, too, of our crowded cities. What is the meaning of it all: this peace, far up here; that incessant thunder 'way down there? Why do we continue to hive in the press and pain of life, when we could be so free and untrammeled on these rolling hills or down in those blessed valleys? We have asked that question ever since man began to build huge cities; and I suppose we shall ask it until the end of time, when iron turrets are no more, and steel girders are scattered on the winds that shake the world.

Reluctantly we stepped into our little power-boat again, and puffed a bit in the cove, getting a start. It seemed a desecration thus to disturb the peace of the village above us; but finally we were off.

Bouncing on the choppy bay, we watched the thick trees on shore drift by us, and in a little while we came to another cove, not nearly so lovely as that we had left; and in the curve of its



Sandy Cove

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embrace snuggled another village, which we learned was Little River.

At first it seemed as if we had come to the fairy-tale town of the *Sleeping Beauty;* for a stillness, as of death, hung over the place, and not a human being was anywhere to be seen. But I did n't wonder, looking about me at the hideous shacks. Had I been forced to dwell here, I, too, would have hidden myself away. An ugly, forlorn spot, with fish drying on the wharves that form a border along the mouth of the river, it is the kind of place that utterly depresses me; but the Artist and the Guide went into ecstasies over what they termed its "quaintness"—a most elastic word. They love boats with a curious landlubber passion which I have seldom seen; and I suppose it was the rocking craft and the clumsy, abandoned, overturned yawls that made such a strong appeal to them.

For my own part, I failed to see the beauty in desolate hillsides that poured their sorrow literally down to the dooryards of some miserable hovels on the river's edge. I felt shut in and helpless;

and though it might be prettier farther along in the back country, as one native who finally appeared insisted that it was, I longed for the blue of St. Mary's Bay. But the Artist wanted to make a sketch. He was very firm about making a sketch, though I told him I had no intention of writing a word about such a hole.

Dear reader, as the face of the beloved, no matter how plain, is glorified to the ardent lover, I assure you that Little River to the Artist is one thing and to the world at large quite another. I do not beg you to go there to discover for yourself which is right. I would not inflict such a punishment upon a friend. But—well. . . . Little River, as even its most optimistic inhabitant would have to admit, is hardly the idealized dream-place the kindly Artist would have us believe.

CHAPTER IV

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CHAPTER IV

DIGBY AND BEAR RIVER

WE had been five days out before any of us realized that we had n't seen a newspaper in all that time. Yet what difference did it make? We were perfectly content to jog along and let the busy world hum without us. I have always contended that if something of supreme importance happens in that wild current which we call Life the event will make itself known even in the most remote quarter. A President could not be assassinated without the wilderness clairvoyantly learning of it within twenty-four hours. It was a relief to get away from trivial news. So-and-So's divorce meant nothing to us; and the rise and fall of the market seemed stupid when we knew that the tides in the Bay of Fundy went down and up as nowhere else in the world.

At Weymouth my arm hurt me so that right after dinner one evening I had to go to bed and call in a doctor. The two old fellows who had taken us in their noisy little power-boat to Sandy Cove proved to be fishermen; so the Guide and the Artist learned, somehow, above that incessantly wheezing pipe. And they had arranged to go out with them at midnight, after our return. I intended to go along, too; but after the doctor looked me over and saw the swelling he feared an infection, so much good Nova Scotia soil had penetrated beneath my skin. I was glad to rest my weary nerves; but I was happy for one thing; the pain had n't come until I had found Sandy Cove.

At breakfast the next morning I was miraculously all right once more; and when the Guide and the Artist joined me they reported a thrilling time on the dark waters of the river and out on the bay. They looked so fresh that at first I could n't believe they had made a night of it; but, sure enough, they showed me that their beds

had n't been slept in; and later I saw the fish they had caught, and heard them talking to their late companions in that happy free-masonry of language which only true fishermen know and understand. Yes, they had been out with them; there was n't a doubt of it; and afterward, all through their talk, I would catch references to that eventful night, and feel as remote from them as one who stands outside a college gate and hears the fraternity chatter of the lads within. What is this mysterious bond between fisher folk? It is like the cemented friendships that golfers know through mere little technical references now and then.

The Artist told me how one of the fishermen had complained of the heat. "The bait don't keep so well in this hot weather," he had said, getting ready for his night work. Yet as he spoke the Artist and the Guide shivered in the boat. I tell this obviously not in disparagement, but in praise, of Nova Scotia's early June climate; and the American who is not lured thence

by such an anecdote has little imagination. We needed blankets every night; and often in the daytime a coat was not to be scorned.

As we boarded our train for Digby, I noticed a rather familiar presence in one of the chairs. Where had I met that man? Then he spoke to a lady in the next seat, and I knew at once. The Southerner and his bride! But why were they here?

They nodded—rather sheepishly, I thought; or was it only my imagination?

"I thought you were *motoring* through Canada," I ventured to say, as I sat down beside them, and really not intending to accent the verb.

"Oh, we were," the bridegroom smiled. "But —you see—I 'd bragged that there was n't another car like ours in this country; and maybe a punishment came upon me for that. There is n't another car like it here; I wish to heaven there were! For when we broke down, as we did near Weymouth, we could n't get parts. How I wish we 'd brought the Ford! . . . But

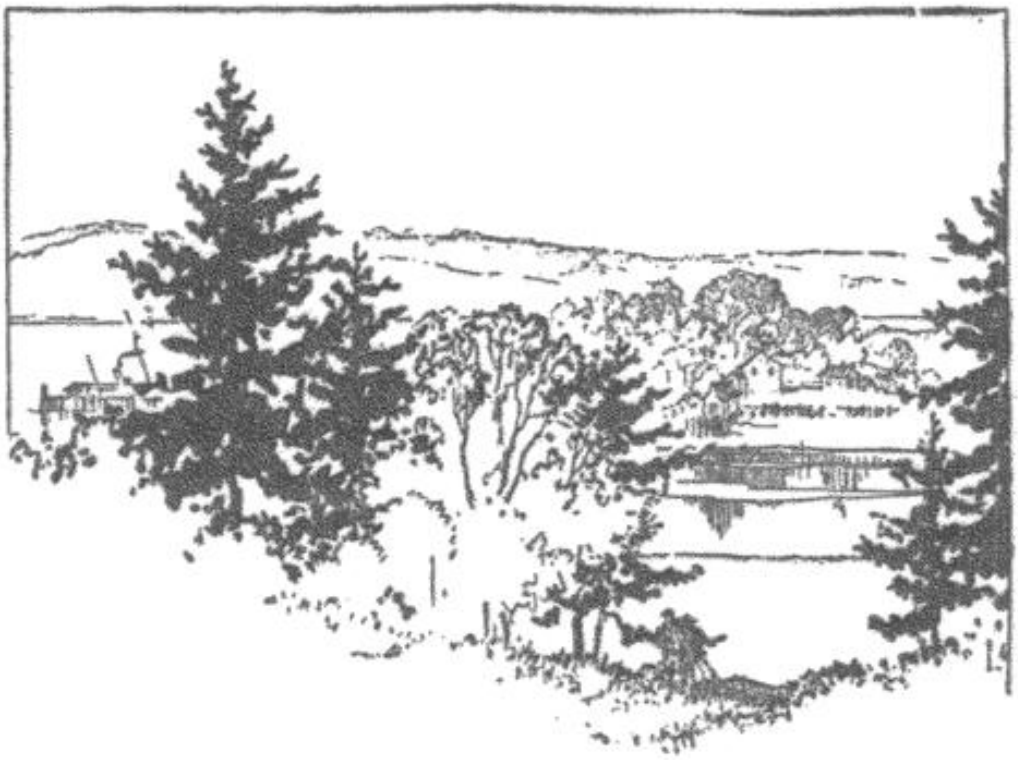
train travel is n't so bad, is it?" he added, optimistically. And I assured him that few things could be pleasanter in this leisurely land. I spoke with authority; I reveled in my bit of superior knowledge, as every traveler does, and we all became the best of friends. But I thanked my stars that *we* did n't have to worry about engine trouble.

One is well along in the Annapolis valley now, between Weymouth and Digby; but the orchards were n't in evidence yet—the orchards I was longing to see. Yet the landscape was inviting, and Digby held promises of beauty, with jaunts radiating from it in every direction.

How clean and bright the morning was when we got there, and how the agents of the various little hotels clamored for our favor! Such polite clamoring, too; not the raucous shouting of the American innkeeper, who does not hesitate to grab you literally by the lapel of your coat and fairly drag you to his waiting bus. When two or three quietly urgent fellows found that we had definitely made up our minds to go to the Pines,

and nowhere else, one of them informed us that it had not opened yet; and our hearts sank. And, when he saw our disappointment, will you believe me when I tell you that he telephoned to find out, and came back with the news that he had been mistaken! But one becomes used to such courtesies in Nova Scotia. I'll never forget that man; and one of these days I'm going back, just so that I may stop at *his* hotel. I saw it afterward, and liked the look of it—just as I liked the look of *him*.

William Dean Howells once wrote a description of a partially deserted inn at Magnolia, when, in late September, the guests fled back to town, and he told how a desultory girl tried to give a bit of life to the long "parlor" by playing a sporadic tune on the piano. He painted a rather forlorn picture. But there is a charm to me in any large hotel only half filled with guests. One feels more at home, as though one were entertaining a small house-party in his own magnificent palace, and had time and space to breathe. The Pines had but just opened for the season;



Digby—from "The Pines"

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and it was going to be fun to eat in the huge dining-room with a plethora of servants to wait upon a mere handful of us. It would give us a sense of opulence, to say the least.

The odor of pines came to us; and from the veranda of the hotel we had a fine view of Annapolis Basin, and we saw the little steamer at her wharf, ready to take passengers over to St. John, through the gut; and, beyond, the tall chimneys of a never-finished factory which marked the entrance to Bear River. From Digby, as I have said, one may take many fascinating trips. There is Mulgrave Lake, not more than ten miles off; and, twice that distance, Kedgemakooga Lake, three or four times as big—as charming a spot as one could find in a year's seeking. All about this interior country there is plenty of hunting; and in the leafy glades there is that silence which spells peace, that calm which passes understanding. If one wishes to go farther, he will strike Lake Rossignol—equally beautiful and serene; and here, too, the fish are abundant, and there is a sense of withdrawal from the world that

only the tired pilgrim from crowded cities will fully appreciate.

But on that first morning we were concerned only with Digby itself, seen from the Pines veranda. There it stretched at our feet, a neat little village; and one had a feeling of omnipotence up there on the heights, with the twinkling water below and all that velvet greenness beyond. The sharp, keen air from the Bay of Fundy definitely reached us; and, mingled with the pine scents, it was all the cocktail one needed before that first lavish luncheon in the big, still room.

The orchards were that much nearer, which added to my happiness—those orchards I had come miles to see; yet the season was marching on, and, as we inquired each day if the trees were still in bloom, we would experience moments of depression or moments of exultance, according to the answers given. It got to be a sort of joke among us; yet it was a serious joke to me. What if I should lose a glimpse? . . . But I would n't let myself think of that.

It is curious how people can live in a community all their lives and not be *au fait* as to certain important facts. This matter of the apple-blossoms seemed to me a first-page piece of news, yet we heard little of them unless we asked. I kept wondering how it was that folk could dwell in that valley and not be out every morning and afternoon looking at the trees, yet I remembered that I had met several people in Buffalo who had never taken the trouble to go to Niagara Falls. I suppose it is the consciousness that we can go any time which keeps us from making certain pilgrimages. Do New-Yorkers go to the Statue of Liberty? Do Parisians "take in" the Eiffel Tower or the Louvre? Do Londoners go to St. Paul's? Do we who live in the metropolis know which buses propel us to certain districts? No; but the well-informed visitor has the numbers of all those conveyances well in his mind, and jumps upon the one he wishes without the slightest anxiety.

We wanted to take that steamer across the Bay of Fundy, and see St. John. We knew we

would have to be gone overnight, and Digbyites glibly told us which was the best hotel in the New Brunswick city; but, as the boat returned at the unseemly hour of seven the next morning, —the tides, you see,—we did n't like the idea of rising with the lark; and no one knew one important and delightful fact which we discovered for ourselves only by accident. We found that we could hire state-rooms on the *Empress*, spend the evening in the city, and get up in the morning at any time it suited our convenience! A joyful arrangement; but, as in the case of the time when the apple-blossoms would vanish, no one who lived round about seemed to know a thing about it.

It is something of an adventure to find yourself sailing across a stretch of water like the Bay of Fundy, the romantic name of which has been in your mind since you found it on your map in your school-days. A treacherous place in winter, they will tell you; but you can scarcely believe it, placid and gentle as it looks this summer day, with the world in tune, and the sparkle of the

sun everywhere. Deck-hands have been swept overboard on these brief voyages; for the waters of this bay can roar with the ferocity of lions, and the white horses of foam can gallop and plunge as though they were mad. The winds can sweep and cry out, singing some dreadful song on those black nights of winter when the boat that faithfully carries the royal mail must make her daily trips. Fogs drift in, too; and many a sailing-vessel has been wrecked on the coast through the years, and mariners dread these waters, as well they may, when it is rough weather.

I love the sight of new cities; and the harbor of St. John is beautiful to see, wide and hospitable, clean and noble. The town rests on a hill, and as I saw it rising, silhouetted against the pink and saffron sky, I could think only of some magical little kingdom in a fairy-tale; and I fully expected a monarch to meet us at the wharf, seated on a white palfrey, his cavalcade around him. There is an Old-World flavor to the place —almost a medieval touch; but this vanishes, of

course, when one gets into the town itself, pretty as it is. Warehouses have a way of looking like citadels—from a great distance; and graceful ascending spires lose something of their charm on closer view. Yet, as we sailed in, I was grateful for even a momentary feeling of mystery, a dream far out of my own time. The name itself held glamour for me—St. John; and what if the city did not live up to its first radiant promise? I had had that tiny thrill which is beyond rubies; and surely one can ask for little more on this planet.

Whenever I travel on British soil, I always drink tea. The custom of the country is the best one to follow. They simply do not know how to make coffee in Canada or in England, according to my American notions; and I would far rather have a good cup of tea—much as I dislike it for breakfast—than a poor cup of some darkish substance optimistically known as coffee.

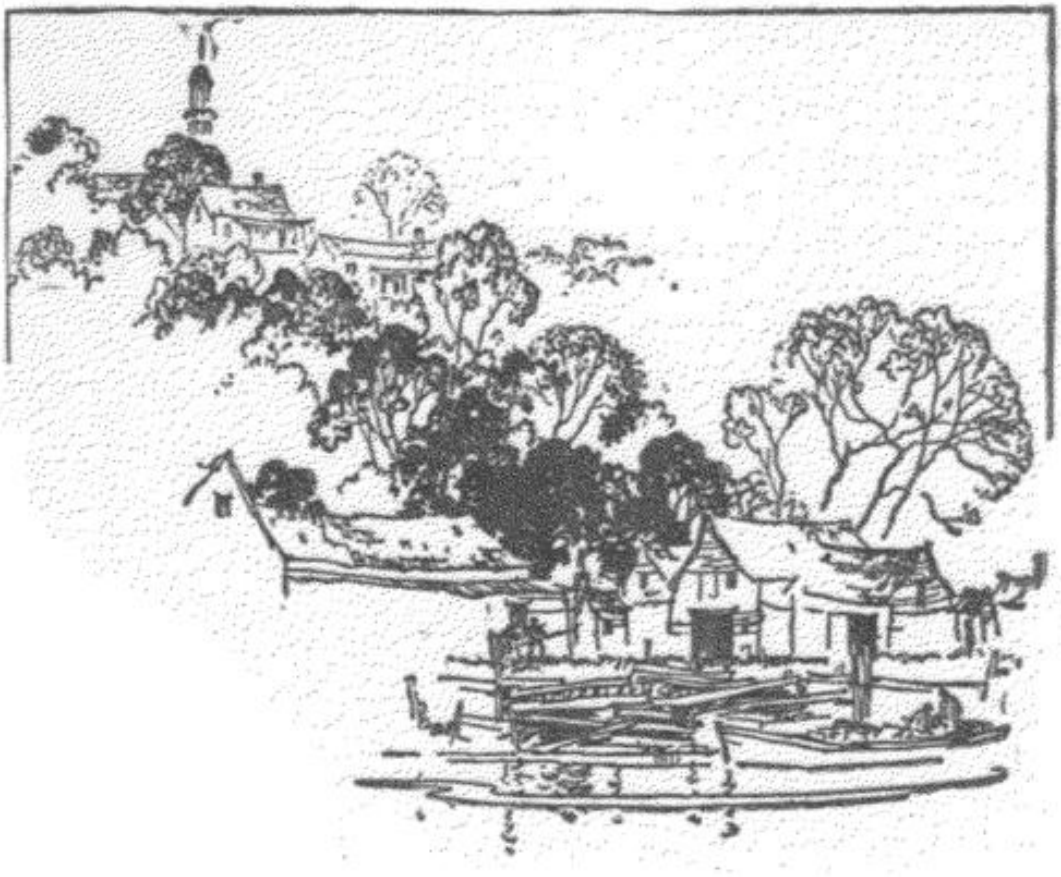
And so at dinner that evening in St. John, while we were sipping our tea in the grill and not liking it particularly, we were soon to like

it less because of the presence of a group of noisy Americans at the next table: a father, a mother, and two terrible children who kept screaming for soda-water and nut sundaes. Then—such are the fringes of horror with which prohibition has surrounded us—we noticed for the first time a soda-fountain at one end of the room; and we soon saw that people came here merely to absorb those sweetish concoctions which are enough to cause one to blush for the errors of taste of one's fellow-mortals. This room had once been a most masculine tap-room. The dark oak walls and beamed ceilings were once the right setting for imbibers of brown October ale and smokers of amber pipes. Now, alas! raucous children infested it, crying for banana splits—whatever they may be!—and a dreadful mixture known as a nut raspberry sundae with butter-scotch and marshmallow sauce. I heard the little girl, who had the oldest face in the world, giving this appalling order in a sophisticated voice; and the pretty waitress rushed to do her fearful bidding. Would you, dear reader, have enjoyed your nega-

tive tea at nine o'clock in the evening, aware that such beverages were being served all around you? We left, and went sorrowfully back to our *Empress*, crying dolefully, "O tempora, O mores!"

It is but a two-hour-and-a-half ride on the boat back to Digby; and the next afternoon we determined to head for Bear River in a motor—about ten or twelve miles away. No more bicycles for me! Some one has daringly called this spot "the Switzerland of America." Such comparisons are always dangerous, if not foolish. It is as though one called Oshkosh "the New York of the Middle West." Nothing is gained by thus labeling a place; and Bear River is sufficiently lovely to stand on its own. It needs no excuses made for it, no explanations.

The river flows into the basin, and the gut is directly opposite it, eleven miles away, as you turn up the road that threads its way by the water's side. A bridge is in the exact center of this splendid composition, beneath one's very feet, and the vista is beautiful as one turns and looks backward. All along the roadside there



Bear River

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were blackberry-bushes in full bloom; and even though, with every village we made, we were that much farther north, the deathless lilacs greeted us until we wondered if they would never cease. "When lilacs first in the dooryard bloom," we would keep saying aloud, with every vision that came to us, and rejoiced that so long the hardy spring tarried with us, followed us, or let us follow her.

It is a rugged country that one encounters in the chasm or gorge through which Bear River flows. And why is it, I have often wondered, that the other side of the valley, like the other side of the street, always seems more enchanting? The green tumbling hillside over there looked like a bank of soft velvet, where one longed to pillow his head on a day such as this; yet as we turned to scan our own side of the gorge we found, as one so often does, the unexpected charm we might have missed through too long a glance beyond. Here were tangles of gnarled orchards, gushing streams, and sequestered houses, with now and then a lonely house-

wife peering out to see the infrequent passers-by; hills of bloom and glory, and the long, long gospel of the grass, bringing its green inscriptions down to the very edge of the road.

I remember an ancient Indian—a Micmac—whom we encountered on a bridge. There he stood, a bronze statue, with a profile like a medallion, his white drooping mustache giving him the appearance of a dignified walrus. We paused to speak with him; but only a few monosyllables issued from his trembling old lips: "Squaw dead. Children all married. Eighty-six year old. Sick now." (His great hand went to his chest, and his beautiful eyes turned heavenward.) About a mile back in the country, over the hills, there is a government reservation, with good shacks, where those of his tribe who are left make a living acting as guides, hunting and fishing to their heart's content. His name was Matthew Pictou, he said. "Oh, yes; very lonely now. Me so old." He did not mind in the least being sketched, as we feared he would; but I knew that life was about over for him when

he turned away, after the picture was made, without even glancing at what the Artist had done. Perhaps the sight was fading from those dark eyes, and in his curious vanity he did not wish us to know it. We watched him vanish down the road, and once he turned and feebly waved to us; but I had the sense of his definite wish to be alone. We were aliens, after all, and had little meaning for him. I wonder what he thought of all day long, as he wandered from his people and looked down into the water. Ghosts, ghosts, he must have seen, images of the past; and we, no doubt, were less real to him than any of his memories. Perhaps he thought often of the ancient race from which he came—the Micmacs were of the Algonquin family of Indians; when the French came to Acadia they discovered that the various tribes had given a name to every basin, river, brook, headland, and mountain in the country. Perhaps he dreamed of that Great Spirit of his tribe, whose name, so tradition tells us, was Glooscap. The legend runs that once, long ago, he lived in Nova Scotia,

but where he is now, no man knows. Poor old Matthew Pictou had doubtless heard how the Great Spirit, though living as other men, through some strange alchemy never fell ill, never had age creep upon him, and never died. In his fascinating history of Grandpré, J. H. Herbin tells how Glooscap lived in a huge wigwam; and the great promontory of Blomidon bears his name, in the Micmac language, "Glooscap-week," meaning Glooscap's home. Minas Basin was his beaver-pond. The dam was at Cape Split, the extremity of the North Mountain. This he cut open, leaving a passage for the tides. Spencer's Island was his kettle, made of a stone. Two rocks near by were his dogs. All these places, Mr. Herbin tells us, have Indian names expressive of their connection with the legend. When the white man came, Glooscap was displeased with their treachery, and, turning his kettle over and changing his dogs to stone, he departed from the country. He is expected to return some day.

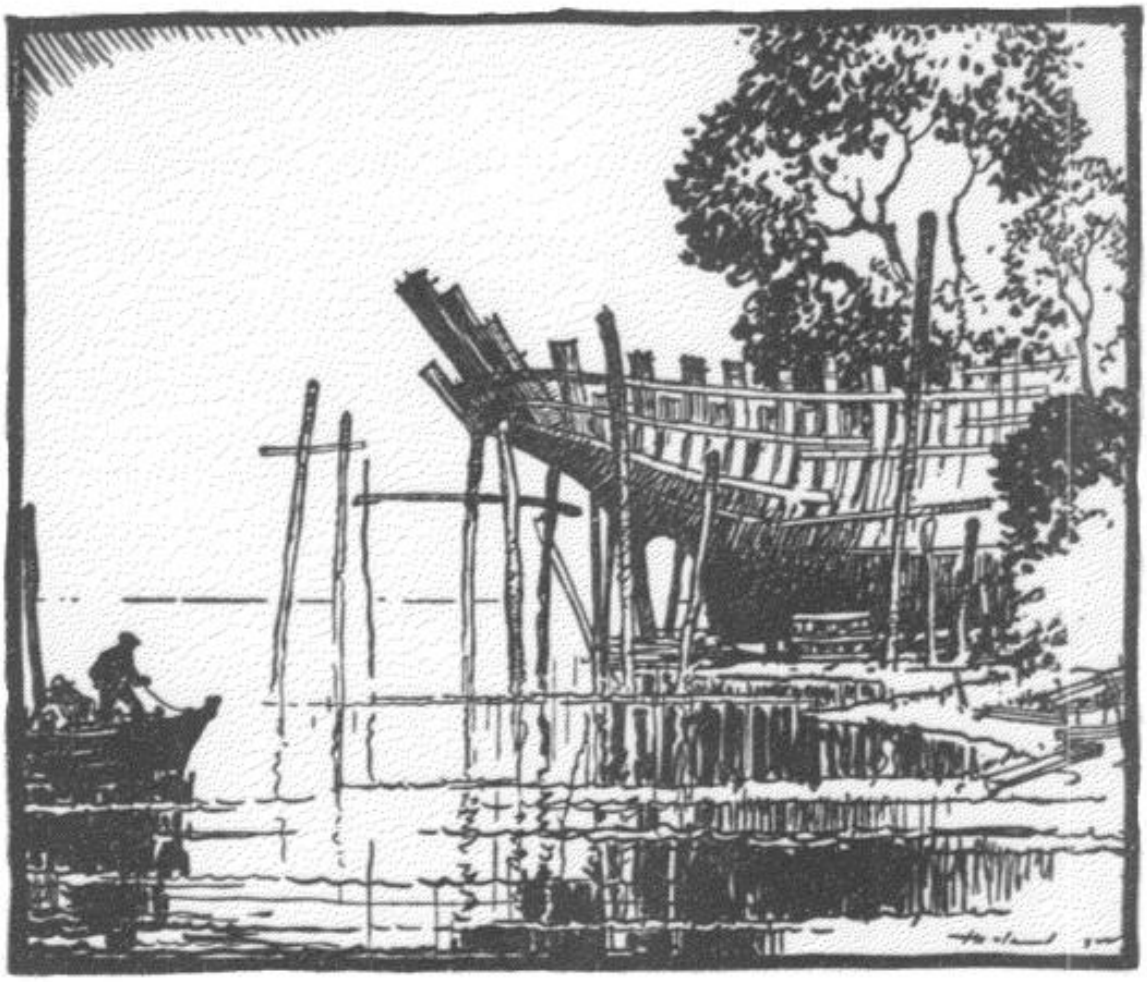
Ah, Matthew Pictou! was it of the Great Spirit's home-coming that you dreamed that

afternoon, as you walked with such dignity away from us? I wonder.

The village of Bear River gives the visitor much uphill work; for the streets twist in an ascending pattern, and the houses are set on terraces among enormous trees. Lumbermen live here; and, taking in the surrounding country, the population is more than eighteen hundred. Those who live on the coast go in for fishing; and they tell a legend of how Bear River was like to become, some years ago, an immense manufacturing center. That unfinished factory I have already spoken of is the symbol of what might have been. But the pulp-mill is idle now, after a brief interval of activity. There were backers to the extent of two million dollars and the sleepy little village hummed with excitement one day when the foundations were laid for the vast enterprise. The chimneys towered to the skies down the river; but there was some mistake made in calculating the supply of water from a lake up on the mountain a mile away, and only for about two days did it last. Then the engineers, I am

told, tried condensing the salt water of Annapolis Basin, but this proved a failure; and so the hushed factory stands a monument to a colossal undertaking, a remnant of a civic dream that never came true. But perhaps it is just as well. I cannot think of Bear River as a bustling city, with lighted windows when the night-workers would be forced to take on overtime. It seems to me a much pleasanter place as it is now, and as I hope it will always be—a sanctuary hidden in the hills. Yet during the war there was much ship-building carried on at Bear River, the ring of the carpenter's hammer; and one old skeleton of a boat still stands at the water's edge to whisper of the old activity.

They seem to start many things at Bear River which do not eventuate. One summer it was a big hotel, on the bluff at the entrance to the river, but somehow it did not pay; and now only a few boarders come there in the season, and in a few log cabins scattered along the shores there are desultory occupants who like the quiet of this region.



"One old skeleton of a boat still stands on the water's edge"

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We liked it, too; and we knew we would like the famous lemon pie that some one had told us they made at the hotel. But when I came to inquire for one of them the proprietor held up his hands. It was three o'clock, the midday dinner was long since over, and all his help had gone out for a half-holiday; and of course there was n't a crumb left in the place. We had forgotten the hour; but, stranger still, we had forgotten the day of the week—Saturday, it proved to be. That 's what Bear River—all of Nova Scotia, indeed—does for one; it causes you to pay no heed to time, which was made for slaves; and I admit that I liked the sensation of merely dawdling along, thinking of nothing but this delectable country and the orchards we hoped soon to reach.

Until we got to Digby, I confess without a blush that I never had known that finnan-haddie was merely smoked haddock. Mr. Edison and his cohorts of thrillingly bright young men would be shocked, I know; but, then, as you might guess from the preceding paragraph, I have never

cared for the type of mind that can answer, as if it were an encyclopedia, any question put to it, however suddenly. I once knew an otherwise intelligent citizen who said to an architect, when the latter brought him the blue-prints of his new mansion, "Why, how quaint these drawing are, done so neatly with white ink on this nice blue paper!" My heart goes out to him.

I had vaguely thought of finnan-haddie, of which I happen to be very fond, as a fish with large leisure, of a proud lineage of its own, swimming perhaps from the Scottish coast, and allowing itself to be caught in the harbors of Canada and New England, or wherever it suited its whim to travel. To discover that it is not known as finnan-haddie until it is half-baked, as it were, proved a terrible awakening. It was like the shattering of that dream of my childhood when I found out that the word was not "chimbley" at all, but chimney—such a thin-sounding word for a plump Santa Claus to poke his way through!

They smoke plenty of haddock at Digby; and, if we had n't chanced to pass and repass the little

huts wherein they accomplish the process, I might still remain in dense ignorance; but now I live in the hope of a questionnaire which will contain this interesting query: "What is finnan-haddie?" And maybe I will be the only person in the room—except you, dear reader!—who will be able to give a swift and intelligent answer.

But what difference does it make, after all? My delight in finnan-haddie is neither increased nor diminished upon learning just how it happens to come into this troubled world. It is good and succulent and delicious. And that is enough for me.

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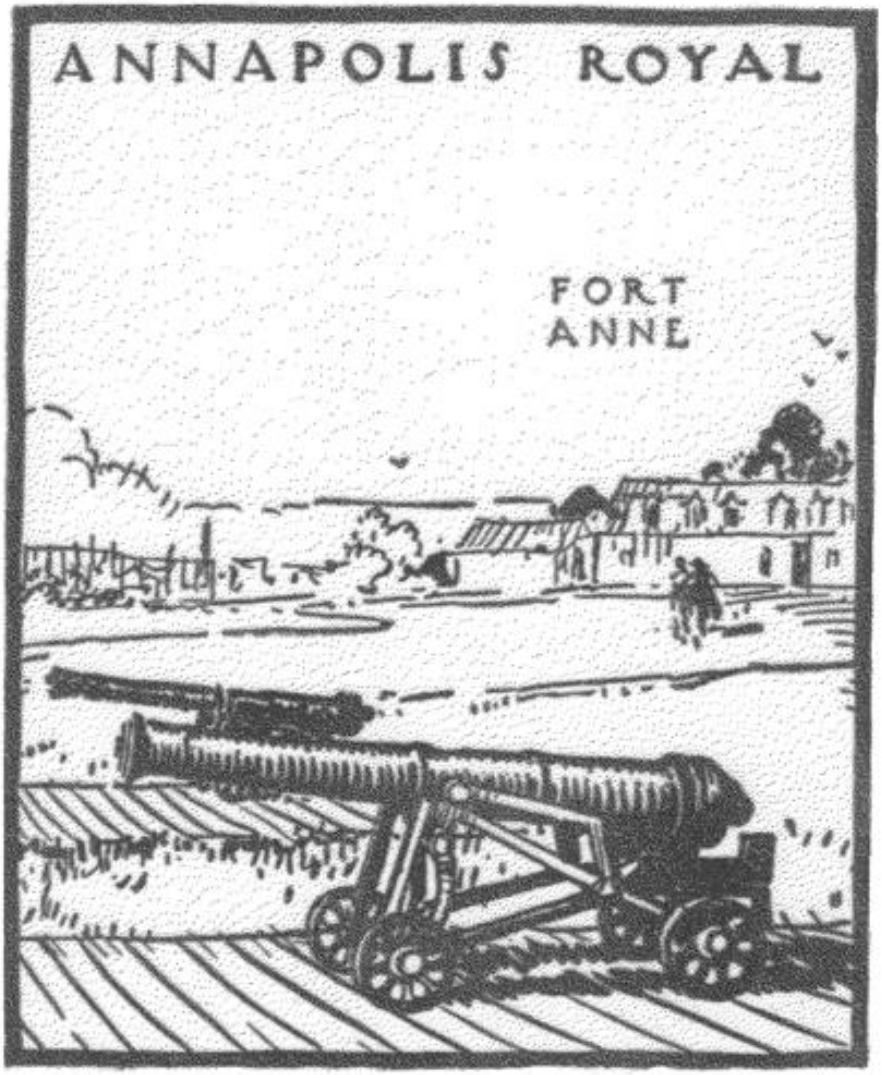

CHAPTER V

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CHAPTER V

TO OLD PORT ROYAL

WE motored from Digby to Bridgetown, and the rich Annapolis valley began to unfold for us. The basin, gleaming on one's left all the way to Annapolis Royal, makes the ride particularly lovely.

We wanted, naturally, to see the old fort in this last-named town—as ancient a place as we have on the whole continent. For while Jamestown, in Virginia, was settled in 1607, it is known that three years earlier Pierre de Guast, Sieur de Monts, a nobleman of the court of Henry IV of France, came to Canada to establish a colony. There was much fur-trading in those days, and, as a reward for his labor, the explorer was to be given a monopoly. With de Monts were Champlain, Poutrincourt, and Pontgrave; and it was through the instrumentality of these pioneers

that friendly relations sprang up in New France between the Indians and the French.

They experienced a hard winter, during which more than half their followers died of scurvy; but those who still lived, having traversed the north shore of the Bay of Fundy, at that time called Baie Française, finally reached Port Royal, now known as Annapolis Royal; and it was here that a permanent settlement was established.

Many of the records of these early French settlers have been lost, and it is not easy to trace the localities in France whence these first pilgrims came. But the Canadian Archives Department has been making vigorous efforts to collect all the historical matter relating to those young days; gradually facts are becoming known, and perhaps there will be a continuous story, with no breaks in it, in the not too distant future. We already know that it was in 1636 that the Acadians began to build dikes through this region, in order to keep out the salt tides which threatened their marshlands. They were an ingenious, energetic people; and no work seems to have been

too difficult of accomplishment. They were content to labor without ceasing; all they asked was to be let alone. Yet little warring hosts gathered about them; witness the La Tour-d'Aulnay-Charnisay distrust, which resulted in the latter's capturing Fort La Tour in 1645.

There had long been a dispute as to the boundary between Acadia and New England; and in 1654 an English force from Boston, under Major Sedgewick, took Port Royal and Fort La Tour, and in 1667 Acadia was restored to France. Three years passed, however, before an envoy from the mother-country took possession of what was now known as New France, a land governed directly from Paris. It is tragic to realize that after such frightful sacrifices the pitiful population at this time numbered only about four hundred, and most of these were at Port Royal.

But several years later this handful of people moved northward, and there began the development of the country around Grandpré, which means Great Prairie. Here it was that the picturesque story began which ended so sadly—the

story of the Acadians, asking only a little portion of the earth, that they might fulfil the dream of life, and their final expulsion from the country they had cultivated so well. Whole families separated, drifting southward, westward—anywhere; a bewildered people, speaking a strange tongue, forced to leave all that they loved and cherished most, because political despots bade them conform to British customs. They may have been over-stubborn—there is plenty of evidence that they were; but very naturally they wished to cling to their own manner of living and believing, and history shows that the British were arrogant in their dealings with these simple folk. Longfellow was touched by the tales of their wrongs, and his Puritan heart bled at the authentic story of a young girl who, separated from her Acadian lover, waited for him all her life, faithful to the end. But there are those who think he over-sentimentalized this hardy race; and, beautiful as "Evangeline" is, they contend that it is a bit of opera-bouffe poetry.

It may be interesting to tell here how Long-

Our itinerary

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fellow happened to write his famous narrative poem. I am indebted to Arthur W. H. Eaton for the story. In 1831 there came to reside in Boston, it seems, George Mordaunt Haliburton, formerly of Nova Scotia. He and his wife became parishioners of the Rev. Horace Lorenzo Conolly, rector of St. Matthew's Protestant Episcopal Church, South Boston. Later, Mr. Conolly left St. Matthew's parish and went to live at Salem, where he and Nathaniel Hawthorne became intimate friends. One evening the great writer took his clerical friend to Cambridge to dine with Longfellow at Craigie House; and it was at this dinner that Mr. Conolly told how he had been trying to urge Hawthorne to make a story of a dramatic incident which had been related to him by one of his late parishioners, Mrs. Haliburton. The story, of course, was that of the banishment of the French from Nova Scotia, and their sad wanderings thereafter. He then narrated the particular incident above alluded to —that of the young girl who lost her lover, until, years afterward, she found him in a hospital, dy-

ing. Somehow, Hawthorne never wrote the tale; and Longfellow begged him to allow him to use it as the basis of a poem. In time, he did; but it was not until 1847 that "Evangeline" was completed.

It is odd to think now that the poem we all know so well by this title might have had another. Longfellow was undecided whether to call his heroine *Gabrielle* or *Celestine*, or the name he finally selected. Somehow one foolishly thinks at this late day that much of the popularity of the poem is due to the exquisite and memorable name of the protagonist of it; and to call *Evangeline* anything but *Evangeline* would be much like asking us to think of *Mulvaney* as *Harrison*, or *Kim* as *Henry*, or *Becky Sharp* as *Lizzie Emmett*. It simply can't be done.

In 1675 a few of the original Acadians moved to Minas; and over a period of sixteen years the population doubled, and enormous progress was made in agriculture. The thrift of the Acadians became manifest at once. Their rich valleys

blossomed like Aaron's rod; but in 1689 France and England went to war once more, which, with brief intermissions, lasted until 1713. The fertile Acadian country was again captured, and the little fort at Port Royal could not hold out against the foe. It was in 1690 that Acadia was retaken, after much bloodshed. Indians were induced to fight on both sides, and they are said to have done so with all the savagery latent within them. Horrible stories have been told of these crimson days. In 1710, a garrison of fewer than three hundred men at Port Royal surrendered to forces from New England. In that moment, Acadia slipped from the control of the French for the last time. The name of Port Royal was changed to Annapolis, as a tribute to the British queen then on the throne.

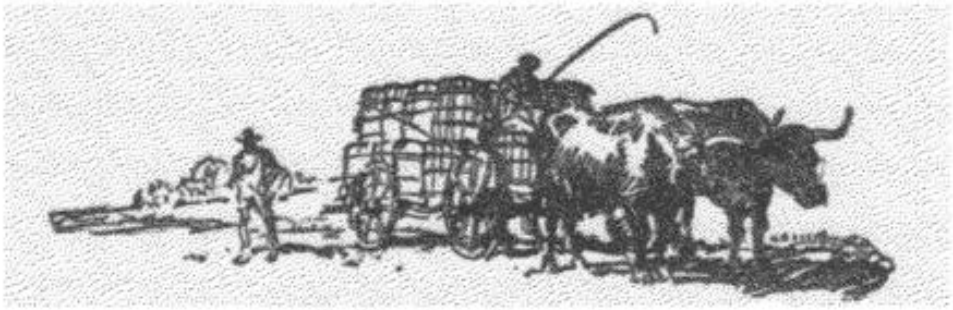
We stood before this grass-grown fort and thought of the old, lost strength of it. We thought of those brave soldiers who held out so long and valiantly, and wondered why it is always necessary for so many lives to be sacrificed

in any cause. There is a statue standing near, rather a noble figure with the romantic costume of the period, and beneath it this inscription:

To the Illustrious Memory of
Lieut.-Gen'l Timothé Pierre du Gast,
Sieur de Monts,
the Pioneer of Civilization in North America,
Who Discovered and Explored the Adjacent River,
A. D. 1604,
And Founded on Its Banks the First Settlement
of Europe as North of the Gulf of Mexico.
The Government of Canada
Reverently Dedicates
This Monument
Within Sight of
That Settlement,
A. D. 1904.
Genus immortale manet.

It is through the valley at this point, so our informative and delightful driver told us, that so many silver fox ranches used to be; but the silver fox is a shy animal, and visitors to these ranches frightened them, and made them fearful for the safety of their young. They would lit-

erally bury them alive to save them from strangers, he said. He had seen this with his own eyes, being one of the strangers, I suppose, on



A load of apples

some memorable occasion. Prince Edward Island is the real land of the silver fox, but now the industry is creeping back here; though the harvesting of apples will always be the chief concern of the happy natives of this happy valley.

For it is along here that the orchards we had been sighing for began to be seen. They were like little clouds of bloom which had become separated from the main fleet farther on. Their snowy aisles began to shine in the sun, and their white and pink petals were falling when we passed, until I could think only of a miniature snow-storm in the early part of June.

"How lovely it begins to be!" we cried out, as the valley widened, and we crossed a bridge,

and knew for a certainty that we would soon see the miracle of the trees we had so often read about.

I said to our driver how much I had liked Annapolis Royal, with its leafy main street, its graveyard. and its orchards running right up to the village roads. "Oh, yes," he replied; "but wait till you see Wolfville; now, *that's* a place for you!"

I said we were most eager to see Wolfville; but I had the type of mind that is grateful for present favors, and though I like to anticipate I always enjoy the high moment in which I dwell.

"Yes?" from the driver, who, I feared, thought me a little mad, and did n't even turn to look at me as he spoke. "That 's all right; but wait till you see Wolfville. Oh, that 's the town for me. I want to live there some day. It 's pretty, and clean, and they hustle there, too; and there 's a college, with fine buildings, and the climate 's great."

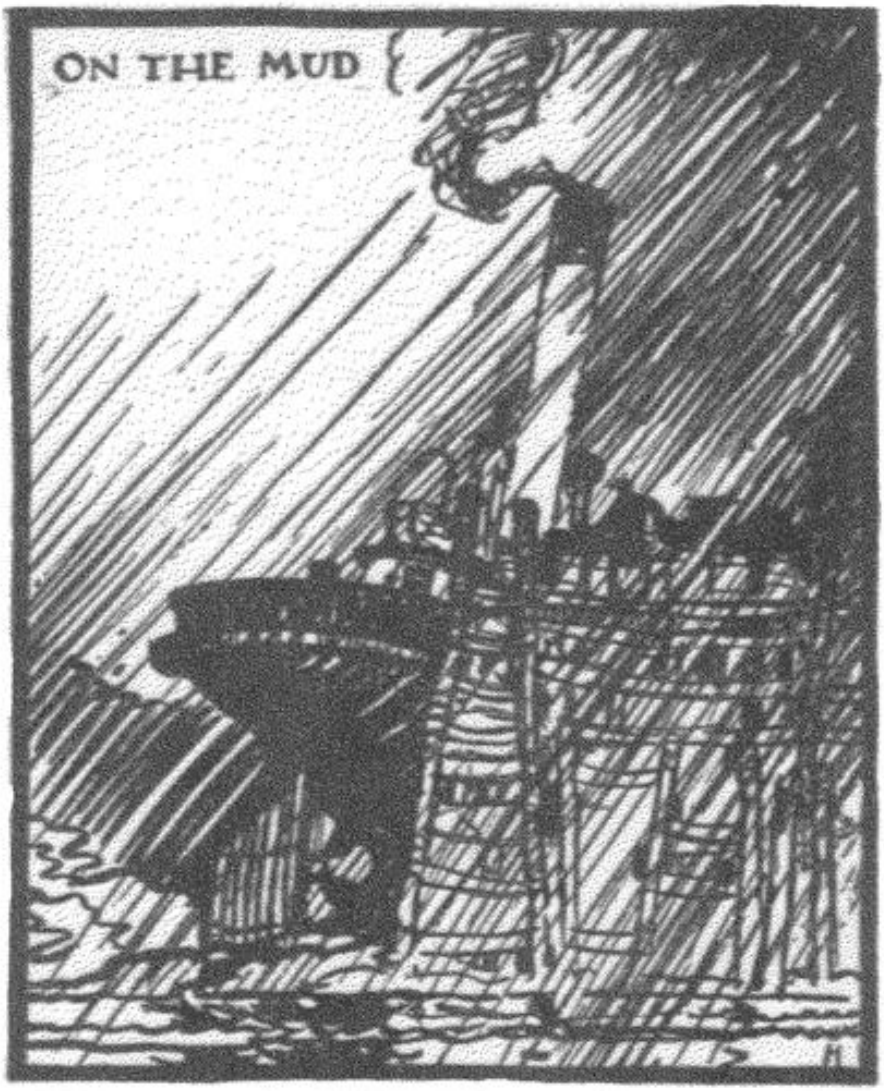
I found that he supported a father and mother and was sending a younger brother to school—

he himself was not more than twenty-eight; and if he didn't fall desperately in love he thought he could save enough out of his automobile business to buy a little home in the Wolfville he admired so ardently. He had his dream, you see; and there is nothing better for a man to have.

He never failed to have a good time in this valley, he ambled on. The farmers were the best kind of people, and many of them labored hard only two or three months of the year. The rest of the time they could sit back and enjoy themselves. They had shipped more than nine million barrels of apples in 1921, mostly to the mother-country and to Boston. There would be a bigger harvest in 1922; of that he was certain. Yes, it was a fine country; but the finest spot in it, when all was said and done, was Wolfville. We'd stop there for some time, of course? Well, that was wise. We couldn't do better. Why, everything centered around Wolfville. If we came back in a year or two, look for his name on a garage or in the telephone-book. He'd be sure to be established there by that time, if not

before. He 'd made up his mind that life would n't be worth living unless he realized his dream.

We liked our driver; but he terrified us about the town he praised so extravagantly. Nothing could live up to such encomiums. But we had one more stop before we reached that magical village. Perhaps we would forget his startling advertisement, and be perfectly calm over Wolfville.



CHAPTER VI

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CHAPTER VI

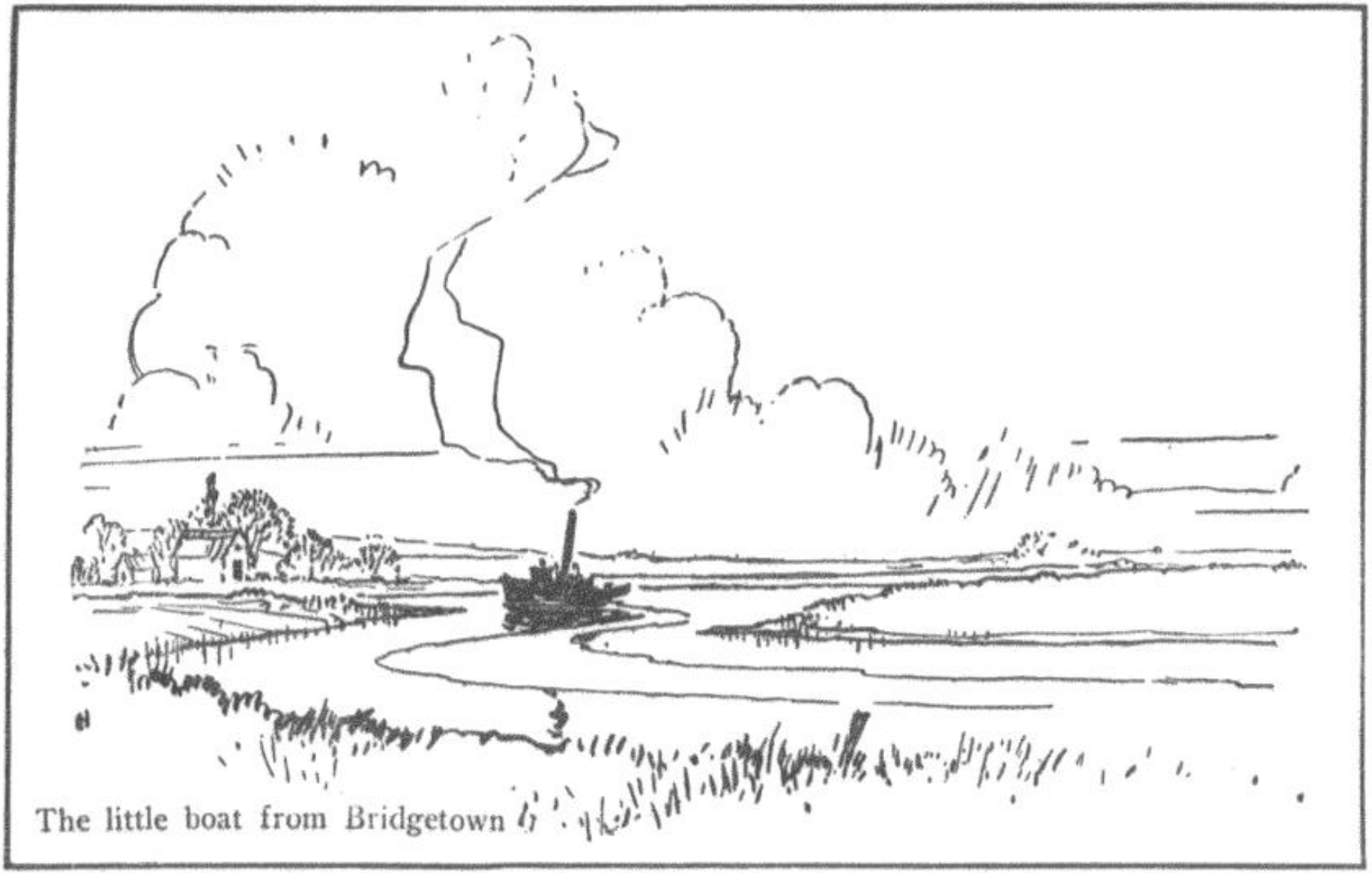
BRIDGETOWN—AND BEYOND

IT began to rain as we neared Bridgetown—the first rain we had had; and almost any American or Canadian village—they are much alike, anyhow—looks untidy and forlorn, seen through a slow, dull drizzle. The drab houses take on an even muddier tone, the sun having vanished and the screen of water hanging between one and the little doorways and windows and shingled roofs.

As it was Sunday, the streets were deserted, save where a few desultory boys and young men hung about protected corners, city fashion. Now and then we could see a face at a window-pane. In a town of this small size, the inhabitants seem glad of any chance visitor and rejoice at the sound of the blithe motor-horn. Both are events in their empty lives; and I always think

of the marvel of the movies to them—how the great outside world has come to the meanest little doors, and brought the thrilling gospel and glory of great lands. No town is too small to have its little nickelodeum, and the "Pathé News" reaches the most forlorn regions. Soon the radio will penetrate the dullest hamlets, and the whole world will be linked as it never has been. But, alas! all this has its drawbacks, too; for it sounds the death-knell of privacy; and in a few years there will be no such thing as an obscure farmer. We may see him, through some strange invention, doing his evening milking, or going forth at dawn to begin his work in the north pasture.

On the bridge, we saw that the tide was low, and our spirits sank to an equal level at the sad prospect all around us. Mud-banks, mud-banks, mud-banks! There should be a law that no visitor may enter a town when the tide is out. Here it was as if some giant hippopotamus had sunk his carcass along the entire shore of this luckless river, and his gleaming back, with its unbeautiful curves, its hillocks and sudden in-



The little boat from Bridgetown

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dentations, confronted our view, was ever present, persistently on parade. It seemed to heave and throb. Only the merest thread of water flowed sluggishly in the center of the chasm, like a silver serpent trying to find a hiding-place before darkness actually fell.

A woman who lived here, and whom we had chanced to meet at Digby, had told us that she loved Monday morning; for then, from her porch, she could see the little boat that plied its way once a week from Bridgetown to St. John rise with the tide, slowly, miraculously, and at last move down the twinkling water—no longer sluggish; but flowing and blowing in the wind—toward the blue bay not far distant. Here she knew it would fight its way, if the gale was high, like a soldier creeping across No-Man's-Land.

But on this cold and dismal afternoon the boat lay at her simple wharf, awaiting her cargo of barrels and fruit; and she was anything but beautiful, we found upon close inspection, with her rudder revealed in its entirety over those muddy flats, her curved lines, sadly needing paint, stark

in their unvarnished ugliness, her hull resting there for all the world to see—or that little portion of it which found its way through gray little Bridgetown. I could only think of those buildings in a city which, in the process of being torn down, find themselves suddenly naked, as it were, with wall-paper hanging disconsolately, and gas-jets, balustrades, and electric wiring exposed to the casual passer-by. If buildings feel—as I foolishly and fondly imagine they do—they must be aghast at such unhappy revelations of inner sanctities. As well expect a man to be jubilant in the midst of an operation. Fortunately, he knows less, while the surgeons work over him, than any building that is being razed to the ground. And I wished with all my heart that this tiny craft might be given an anesthetic so that she might be unconscious of her shame; just as I have always desired ether for breathing houses in the act of being demolished in the very center of a town.

But there she lay, open to our gaze, until I came to feel desperately sorry for her. Perhaps

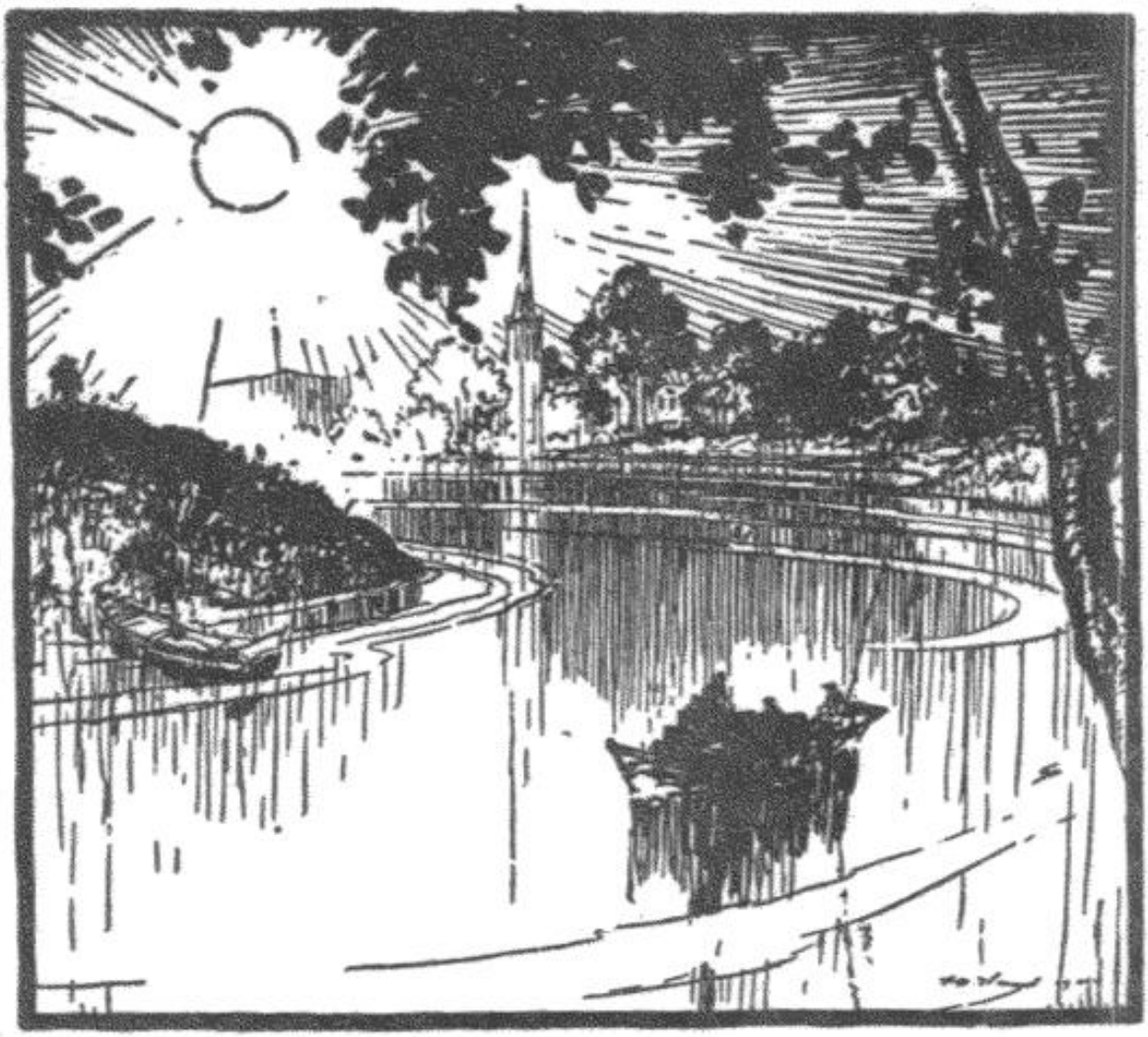
the woman who spoke to me was subconsciously of my way of thinking and, through the bond of sex, was glad when the tide finally rose and mercifully covered the hideous wounds, and made the boat, on Monday mornings, only what she was intended to be—a personable young lady, nicely dressed up, floating serenely on the water.

The main business street of Bridgetown has one virtue, at any rate—it is short, if it is not snappy; and a nice little building at one end, as you approach over the bridge, seems to step out like a traffic policeman holding up a dirty brown hand, saying, "This far you go, and no farther!"

As if one wished to disobey him! An "undertakers and embalmers" sign greeted us, cheerfully enough, on our slow, misty drive to the inn. The Artist and the Guide were positive, from the appearance of the place, and because of their fast waning spirits, that all the inhabitants had long since been, if not embalmed, at least "taken under," and I could not disagree with them. "Still, there must be some awfully nice families here," I tried to reason with them, as I saw a lilac-

bush now and then, and a graceful tree half covering some sleepy dwelling. But they were convinced that this was a dead place, and that we had been foolish to plan to spend a whole evening here.

I thought of Wolfville, more than fifty miles away, and the sadly late schedule for a train the next morning; and my heart sank, though I did not give voice to my feelings. How long it would be before we could get there! And I thought of all those shining, sun-smitten orchards behind and beyond us, and prayed that our enthusiastic driver's appraisal of his beloved town was correct; that it would "live up to specifications," as the advertising men glibly say. What if it, too, should grievously disappoint us? Yet no one had spoken of Bridgetown as a spot to entrance the eye. We had come here of our own volition. So susceptible am I to names that I had been certain it would not prove a lovely village. Wolfville, on the other hand, had a romantic ring, an engaging sound; and I knew that all around it there were flowery scenes, pros-



The Annapolis River
"The sun had appeared again"

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pects of delight; that it was in the very heart of *Evangeline's* country, and that its main hotel at least would open wide and hospitable arms.

But towns do not always live up to their names, and a few do not live down to them. I once motored through a village called Copake Iron-Works; yet it proved a heavenly spot in the hills. Similarly, a hamlet with a name like Silver River may prove nothing but a gaunt congregation of factory chimneys, with a dire "hotel" sprawling in the sun in the midst of soot and smoke.

After we had disconsolately seen to our bags, and the Guide had put on a frown as one would put on a garment, and after we had rested for an hour or so before a fire that was specially laid for us, and which felt pleasant indeed after our brisk run, and after a royal supper, there came a light through the windows of the tavern. The sun had appeared again in all his magnificence and pomp and imperial splendor.

"Now for a walk," we said at once; and in a jiffy we were off shabby little Queen Street, seek-

ing one of the side thoroughfares, overhung with oaks and elms and chestnuts, which we had caught fleeting glimpses of as we ambled along.

What a different town it was, to be sure! People were on their way to evening service, and the bells of no less than three churches were vying with one another to draw the good folk to their pulpits. Long, lingering shadows rested over every neat dooryard, and that fragrance of the earth after rain came to us like incense, and the lilacs trembled in the soft wind. The whole village, it seemed, had had its face washed. It was as if an elderly lady had bathed and put on every cosmetic she owned, and all her finery, and stepped forth in her splendor to cry, "Just look at me now!"

Spruced up a bit, almost any one looks better; and Bridgetown had certainly transformed herself magically, thrown her finest shawl over her proud shoulders, and blossomed like the lilacs on her bosom. Down by the river, the mud had completely vanished. Over that heaving hippopotamus there drifted a covering of laughing wa-

ter, and our boat now rested calmly at her pier, fit for any society. Even Wolfville, we thought, would n't and could n't be nicer than this—that comic-opera Spotless Town, with its college buildings set like jewels in its gay center; that Wolfville of which our driver had boasted so insistently, and which a few hours ago we were craving passionately.

The sun had done the trick—the kindly, generous lord of day; and we blessed his name as we strolled along, and heard, in the twilight, the doxology being sung by the whole congregation in one of the little churches. How good it sounded, with the boom of the organ, and the evening peace all about us.

We were on the outskirts of the little village now, and we could see the spire rising as though from the risen river—that river so lovely when it really showed itself to us, and now no longer just a shiny snake crawling over the glossy back of a huge hippopotamus.

It was then we learned the folly of judging towns by first impressions. We felt like apolo-

gizing to a *grande dame* for catching a sight of her with her wig off; and we decided that after all Bridgetown was n't the worst place we could have found in which to spend a crisp June Canadian night.

CHAPTER VII

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CHAPTER VII

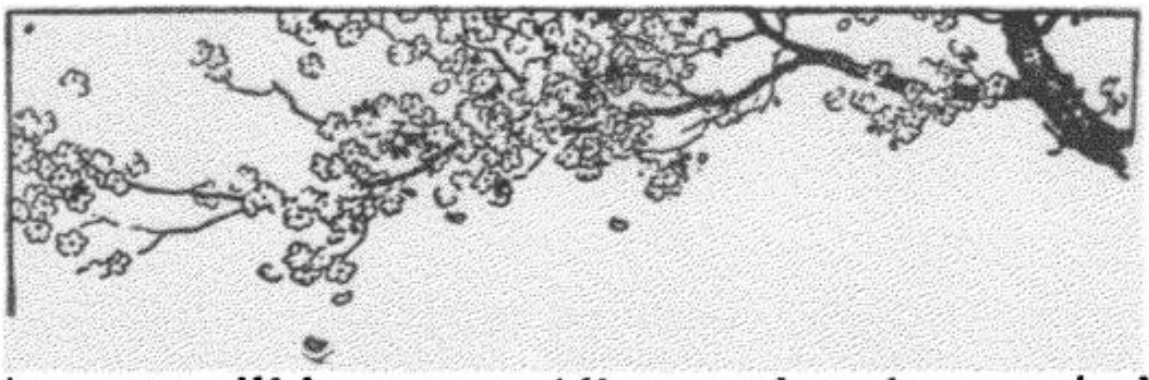
THE ORCHARDS—AT LAST!

SOME ONE had told us we should stop over at Kentville. But when I learned that it was a railway center, filled most of the time with commercial travelers, and boasted proudly of a sanatorium big enough to shelter between two hundred and fifty and three hundred tubercular patients. it did n't appeal to me much. We were more than eager to make Wolfville without further delay, to get into the land of *Evangeline* we had come to see. Moreover, a certain lithograph which had greeted us from almost every inn at which we stopped, showing Longfellow's heroine standing in the midst of a radiant orchard, got a bit on our nerves. I was weary of vicarious glimpses of the apple-trees, and I knew that if we did n't soon find them in their bright abundance we should feel cheated.

So, without stopping at bustling Kentville, we allowed our train to carry us on to the next important stop; and, sure enough, Wolfville lived up to its gilded reputation. Just as you meet some people for the first time, look into their eyes, and like them, you could n't help being charmed with this village the moment you stepped upon the station platform.

Perhaps it was the approach to the town that helped to give us so warm a feeling for it; for the apple-orchards were thick and glorious soon after we got out of Bridgetown. They may be seen from the car window; but, as luck would have it, we had a bit of engine trouble midway on the journey, and it so happened that we were stalled in the heart of the apple country.

It was like finding oneself suddenly in a cloud of bloom. What drifts of wonder enveloped us! It is a strange and beautiful sensation to be in so deep an orchard that one cannot see where it begins or ends—something like sailing on a pink and white ocean of tenuous blossoms, with no coast-line to tell just when the



journey will be over. All around us that magical purity, that glory of color and dream. It was as if we wandered in a fairy-tale, the world well lost. What drifts of beauty, what Niagaras of wonder poured their radiance upon us! We were melted in joy, bathed in dazzling beauty. Showers of radiance surrounded us, and through the pink-white blossoms we could see shafts of sunlight falling; and now and then a flake of the loveliness fell upon us, as though a star had lightly touched us on the shoulder. Oh, those clean blossoms! To be so magically amid them, to have them over us, like clouds and drifts of snow, making a very heaven of the good earth.

There are moments too wonderful to tell of. It seemed to me that all the magic of all time dwelt in these rich orchards, that never could I wish for anything more than the marvel of

wandering through these aisles of beauty, these lanes of delight. If but this magic could last forever! If this white glory would never end, this moment abide always!

Never had I been in such opulent orchards. Never had I felt so aloof from the world—even on the wide, turbulent ocean. There were no sounds to disturb the peace of these paths. And one by one, in these late spring days of Canada, "the leaves of life were falling"; the shower of perfection would be over in a few short weeks—perhaps in less time than that. Wandering through those aisles how could one wish for greater beauty?

There are times that we never forget, when all the wonder of life seems to be packed and crowded into one bewildering instant, and the heart grows faint with what seems to be life's highest moment. Where was the train we had left? Yet why should we care?

I wished that this torrent of wonder would pour over my heart till the end of time. Heaven, I thought, could not be more filled with

radiance. Above us, beneath us, the piercing beauty shone.

All glory passes; all wonder dies. It was a prosaic train whistle that summoned us back to wicker seats; and we left our orchards silently, wistfully. We could not remain here forever. After every dream of delight there comes the awakening alarm. But while the dream lasted—oh, while the dream lasted!

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EVANGELINE

CHAPTER VIII

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CHAPTER VIII

ROUND ABOUT WOLFVILLE AND GRANDPRÉ

I HAVE a mania for waving to passers-by, and on the way to Wolfville I indulged in one of my favorite occupations. I can't see a group of children playing by the roadside without lifting my hand to them as my train or motor speeds by. The Guide had noticed me doing it several times, and once in a while gave me that indulgent look which a keeper might expend on one of the less dangerous inmates of an asylum. But when, on this brief journey, I kept motioning frantically to any one, and every one, he turned to me pityingly and said, "It 's too bad about you, is n't it?"

"Really," I answered, a question also in my voice, and signaling to several youngsters playing with their dog near the track.

"You have a permanent wave in your hand,"

he replied, and fled to the smoking-compartment.

I blamed the poor jest upon a headache of which he had complained earlier in the day; but you never can tell when the Guide is going to break out again, and so I remained alone on the back platform, watching the vanishing steel rails, thinking how lovely the country was through which we were passing, and glad of it when my frequent salutes were returned—as they generally are. I have never understood the type of person who won't signal back to a traveler he will never see again. What a grouch he must be with his family, how unpleasant as a neighbor; impossible as a companion along the road.

The principal inn at Wolfville was a comfortable, homelike place, and though, on the map, Grandpré takes on a civic importance that, happily, it does not possess, and might cause the pilgrim to imagine he would find more commodious hotels there, it is at Wolfville that one should stop. This the Guide knew through an almost uncanny intuition. It was I who insisted that Grandpré must be the larger place; and when

we went there later, and discovered that its only accommodation consisted of a boarding-house,—and that not opened yet,—the triumph of the Guide was complete. "Just leave these things to me," was the way he put it, quietly but firmly; and the Artist and I once more crept back into our shells, content to remain hereafter in our companion's beneficent hands.

Again the lilacs, and again the orchards! We did not blame our Digby-Bridgetown chauffeur for his love of Wolfville. We "fell for it" at once when we had climbed the ridge, back of the college buildings, on that first evening of our arrival, and looked around us in all directions, with Minas Basin in the near distance, the famous Gaspereau valley behind us, and the pale sky arching above us, as far as the eye could see.

They are justly proud of the ridge at Wolfville. It is from this height that one gets a sweeping panorama of the surrounding territory—gets one's bearings, as it were, and makes up one's mind as to the first jaunt to take. An embarrassment of riches confronts the spectator. The ideal

thing to do would be to start in an aëroplane from the ridge, and float into the midst of this bubble of beauty, soaring close to those saffron clouds; the sunsets are incomparable here. Far away is Blomidon; and only four miles off is the dreaming village of Grandpré, a jewel in the evening light, with the dikes and marshlands farther on.

All down the roads one may see the old willows which those early Acadians planted with love in their hearts—about the only natural beauty they have left behind them. But there they are, with the soft wind rustling their leaves, as it must have rustled them so long ago when a banished people passed by, quitting the valleys and hills they had made so beautiful. Their earthly goods and chattels are gone, of course; but these sighing trees remain, like failing torches along the winding thoroughfares that led from this farm-land to that, outside the bounds of Grandpré. It is always tragic to me to see such tender memorials of a time gone by. We mortals pass in the dusk, but what we planted in the earth somehow goes

bravely on; and sometimes a dumb tree or bush can speak with a noble eloquence long after we are silent. I seemed to hear the sighs of the Acadians, driven from this land, as I walked down these quiet roads; and I thought of *Evangeline* in those evenings long, long before the eviction.

Homeward serenely she walked with God's benediction upon her;
When she had passed, it seemed like the ceasing of exquisite music.

Haunted paths! We were in the very heart of the historic country which Longfellow has made doubly famous, and we could scarcely wait for our ride the next day over to Grandpré, where

Waste are those pleasant farms, and the farmers forever departed!
Scattered like dust and leaves, when the mighty blasts of October
Seize them, and whirl them aloft, and sprinkle them far o'er the ocean.
Naught but tradition remains of the beautiful village of Grand-Pré.

I thought of all those names which one associates with this beautiful land: Beaubassin, Beau Séjour, Gaspereau, Rivière aux Canards, Port Royal; how they sing in the heart and on the lip!

That same evening we saw the lovely college buildings at Wolfville, built around a rolling campus; and it was here, while the Artist was making some sketches, that some school-boys — not college lads, mind you—came up to where he was working. One of them, looking over his shoulder, said: "Gee! would n't it be great if he could make my maps for me! I don't get good grades on maps, and he could do it so easy!"

The Artist good-naturedly assured him that if he were going to stay on perhaps they could enter into some arrangement; but the lad looked skeptical at the offer of such generosity. And would n't it savor of cheating, after all, he wondered, with a twinge of conscience. Of course he had been only fooling, and he hoped the Artist would n't think him a bad 'un. He never could learn to draw; but he stood high in mathematics and his-

The Covenanter's Church—Grandpré

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tory, and maybe he 'd skin through in the fall, despite his wretched maps.

The college is a denominational institution, and recently there has been much talk of combining it with the colleges of two other provinces, with a central university at Halifax. If this should be done the Carnegie and Rockefeller foundations would supply the necessary funds, but, as in all such proposals, opposing groups have arisen. Each town is jealous of its prerogatives; and there is no doubt that the stimulus of a student body in any village is something not to be lightly given up. Yet the educational experts who went over the whole plan with unbiased minds—men were called in from the United States—seemed to be of the opinion that the university would prove the only logical solution of monetary difficulties. These small colleges are sorely in need of funds. Individually, how can they last? Cemented, they would work tremendous good for Canada. This is a matter for the communities themselves to decide; but the journals I read while in Nova Scotia, when the arguments pro and con were fly-

ing thick and fast, seemed to hold out hope for a sensible union of forces.

The main hall at Wolfville had been burned down recently—another reason for amalgamation, it seemed to an unprejudiced onlooker. Yet the village would lose much of its picturesqueness if the college should go; the athletic fields are particularly lovely, with a sign politely reading, "Please keep off, and give the grass a chance," and it was good to see lads playing baseball with all the gusto of American boys, instead of cricket and field hockey.

Early the next morning we began our ride to Grandpré; and down in that valley of the Gaspereau, which is not more than seven or eight miles long, and which owes its present fertility to the hard work of the first Acadians, one knew how those who had settled it years before must have wept as they were turned out. All they had done had been for naught. The edict had been read to them in that little church which no longer stands—that document which sealed their doom. For no people could live with themselves, sub-

mitting to the manifesto of the British king. All self-respect would have been lost. There was nothing to do but allow themselves to be cast from the places they had hoped to make their own for all time.

There had long been a more or less haphazard understanding between England and France as to just what territory comprised the province known as Acadia. Nova Scotia and New Brunswick and a portion of eastern Maine seemed to be accepted as a proper and generous division; but, of course, matters could not be left forever in such desultory shape. The inevitable hour came when disputes arose, and matters came to a head when in 1749 the French governor of Quebec ordered a fort erected beyond the Missiquas River. This was done, on the side of the isthmus which was in New Brunswick. It was called Beau Séjour; and when the French flag floated defiantly above it the trouble began. The English authorities at Halifax could not fail to take action in the face of this blatant challenge. Here we get back to boundaries; and here again we see two great

nations going to war over the trivial question of a few miles of land. It was Colonel Charles Lawrence who determined that Beau Séjour must fall; and William Shirley, then governor of Massachusetts, was his active ally. He sent a force of more than two thousand militia troops to capture the little fort, and in June, 1755, it surrendered to these aggressive and overpowering soldiers.

It must be remembered that the Acadians had tried to remain neutral all this time. They asked little except religious freedom, yet both Lawrence and Shirley were the type of men who constantly planned to eject forcibly from Nova Scotia these simple, God-fearing people if they persisted in following their own quiet ways. One's heart goes out to the Acadians. They were the pivot around which incessant hatreds and troubles revolved; they were made an excuse for turmoil, for the stirring up of unnecessary feuds and factions. It is sad to read that Lawrence finally sent orders to Captain Handfield, a regular officer at Annapolis, and to Captain Alexander Murray,

at Windsor, to inform the inhabitants of these districts that the powerful Government had made up its mind to cast them out. Further, Handfield and Murray were told that under no circumstances must the Acadians be allowed to escape; and they were held responsible for them. Their troops were ever to be on guard, to prevent a possible outbreak among these simple folk, who had no desire for anything save peace.

The Treaty of Utrecht meant the ceding to England of "Acadia, or Nova Scotia"; and in it the statement had been clearly made that such of the French inhabitants of Acadia "as were willing to continue in the province under British rule would be welcome to do so, but that any who chose might remove with their effects within a year." At the end of that time, however, those who stayed on would be forced to swear complete allegiance to the nation in power.

The Acadians insisted that in the event of a war between England and France they must have the privilege of remaining neutral. This request was acceded to for many years; but, as time passed,

the authorities at Halifax began to demand entire submission. It was with the coming of Cornwallis that this oath of complete allegiance to England was insisted upon. The Acadians were frantic, yet they remained firm in the stand they had taken all along. Then began the connivance of Lawrence and Shirley, the former a most unscrupulous man, with no shred of pity in his heart.

Lawrence gave orders to Winslow to go to Grandpré with all the forces he thought necessary; and, not content with this, he commanded that Minas and Rivière aux Canards and Cobequid be invaded by British troops. Five years earlier Lawrence had caused to be erected at Windsor a tiny fort known as Fort Edward; and here it was that Winslow turned his steps, to confer with Captain Murray as to the banishment of the Acadians. It was all planned with the greatest coldness and calm. The time had arrived when these French must be deported, and a hideous paper was drawn up by these two men, ordering the males of the Minas district and those around Fort Edward, both old and young, to

appear in their respective churches on the fifth of September to receive new instructions from the Government.

Four hundred and eighteen men and boys gathered in the little church of St. Charles at Grandpré; and instantly Winslow had his troops surround the building. Bear in mind that the Acadians did not speak or read the English language; and what was to happen to them they did not know. Like passive animals they awaited their doom; and finally, through an interpreter, the words of the proclamation began to seep into their simple consciousness. This is the mandate they heard, sent by the governor, who spoke, of course, with all the authority of the king. I think that for sheer brutality and hypocrisy it cannot be matched in history:

Gentlemen: I have received from His Excellency, Governor Lawrence, the King's Commission which I have in my hand, and by whose orders you are convened together, to manifest to you His Majesty's final resolution to the French inhabitants of this his Province of Nova Scotia, who for almost half a century

have had more indulgence granted them than any of his subjects in any part of his dominions; what use you have made of them you yourselves best know.

The part of duty I am now upon is what though necessary is very disagreeable to my natural make and temper, as I know it must be grievous to you who are of the same specia. But it is not my business to animadvert, but to obey such orders as I receive, and therefore, without hesitation I shall deliver you his Majesty's orders and instructions, viz:— That your lands and tenements, cattle of all kinds, and live-stock of all sorts are forfeited to the Crown with all your other effects, saving your money and household goods, and you yourselves to be moved from this his province.

Thus it is peremptorily his Majesty's orders that the whole French inhabitants of these districts be removed, and I am through his Majesty's goodness directed to allow you liberty to carry of your money and household goods as many as you can without discommoding the vessels you go in. I shall do everything in my power that all those goods be secured to you and that you are not molested in carrying of them off, and also that whole families shall go in the same vessel, and make this remove, which I am sensible must give you a great deal of trouble, as easy as his Majesty's service will admit, and hope that in whatever part of the world you

may fall you may be faithful subjects, a peaceable and happy people. I must also inform you that it is his Majesty's pleasure that you remain in security under the inspection and direction of the troops that I have the honour to command.

Can you see this handful of boys and men in that little church, staring at one another in amazement as sentence after sentence was read and translated to them? Can you picture their alarm, their horror, their grief, as the full meaning of this despicable document dawned upon them? And then to know that they were prisoners of the king!

A few of the men begged to be allowed to go back to their farms and spread the terrible news to their brethren. Also, they asked that they be permitted to see to their cattle and other live stock. Under military escort, ten were taken away, as requested, and soon the remaining population knew the tragic fate that was about to descend upon them. The women, strangely enough, were less hysterical than the men. In order that bread might be supplied, Winslow's troops saw to

it that certain of their prisoners operated the mills; but most of that first handful were kept in the church, under a strong guard, or put upon the three sloops in the basin which had transported Winslow's regiment from Fort Beau Séjour.

Winslow and Murray kept up correspondence, and on September 7 the former wrote to the latter:

Things are as well as we could expect, and the people as easy as I should be were I in their case. I have permitted the millers to attend to their usual duties, ten of the River Canard and ten of Grand Pré at a time to provide for the rest, and had come in the first day 418, if their list is right, which I am now approving, 34 heads of families sick, and this day have had 6 fresh bands come in, and on the whole believe there is very few indeed to escape.

The very next day Murray replied in this wise:

I received your favour and am extremely pleased that things are so clever at Grand Pré, and that the poor devils are so resigned. Here they are more patient than I could have expected for people in their circumstances, and which still surprises me more is the indiffer-

Evangeline's Well

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ence of the women, who really are or seem quite unconcerned. When I think of those of Annapolis, I applaud our thought of summoning them in. I am afraid there will be some lives lost before they are got together. You know our soldiers hate them, and if they can find a pretense to kill them, they will. . . . I long much to see the poor wretches embarked and our affair a little settled, and then I will do myself the pleasure of meeting you and drinking their good voyage.

We all know how the compact was not kept as to the shipping of whole families together. Indeed, it is because of the sad separations of parents and children, and the even crueler separations of lovers, that Longfellow came to write "Evangeline." The story of the poem, based as it is on fact, is a living evidence of what was done to the Acadians in this awful period of their history. The poet was touched, as I have told, by a tale of two lovers torn asunder during the eviction; and, while only the one case comes down to us, inevitably there must have been others of equal tragic import of which the world has never heard.

More than a month passed before the boats were ready which were to carry this forlorn people

to any ports the British Government decided upon. They were landed at Boston in considerable numbers; and here they were permitted to rest on the common, but certain restrictions were placed upon them. Farther south, they were also allowed to land; but always they were received with doubt, treated with distrust—a scattered, mendicant race now. And once they had been so peaceably happy! A few got to distant Louisiana, where, amid French people, they were tenderly taken care of, and certain of the lands at Attakapas and Opelousas were turned over to them that they might attempt to begin life afresh. Others, after a lapse of years, drifted back to the region round about Digby and St. Mary's Bay; and it is their descendants who now abide there.

In "Evangeline" Longfellow describes the setting forth of the Acadians with great dramatic strength:

> There disorder prevailed, and the tumult and stir of embarking.
> Busily plied the freighted boats; and in the confusion

Wives were torn from their husbands, and mothers, too late, saw their children
Left on the land, extending their arms, with wildest entreaties . . .
Farther back in the midst of the household goods and wagons,
Like to a gypsy camp, or a leaguer after a battle,
All escape cut off by the sea, and the sentinels near them,
Lay encamped for the night the houseless Acadian farmers . . .
Then, as the night descended, the herds returned from their pastures;
Sweet was the moist still air with the odor of milk from their udders;
Lowing they waited, and long, at the well-known bars of the farm-yard,—
Waited and looked in vain for the voice and the hand of the milk-maid.

But if Longfellow, all through his exquisite poem, idealized the Acadians, as his own brother intimates in his biography, he was justified in doing so; for never was there a story with more human interest than that of the separation

of these people. What if they did bicker among themselves, as Parkman states, and quarrel frequently as to boundary lines and a just division of cattle? They were but human beings, and surely none of us is so naïve as to imagine they led thoroughly godlike lives, free from those natural vices and temptations to which all of us are given. "It is very possible," says Longfellow's brother, "that the poet painted in too soft colors the rude robustness which may have characterized the peasants of Grandpré; as artists are apt to soften the features and clean the faces of the Italian peasant boys they put on their canvas. The picture of Acadian life, however, was but a part of his background. The scenery of Grandpré he painted from books, having never visited the place, but it is sufficiently accurate for his purpose."

In a splendid introduction to "Evangeline" written by Arthur W. H. Eaton, the writer has this interesting bit to say: "Longfellow's description of the landscape about Grandpré, though

attractive, can hardly be said to be strictly accurate. 'Primeval forest' there was in Nova Scotia, but it was not as near the village of Grandpré as the poet evidently supposed. The 'meadows' that he says stretched to the eastward, in reality lay chiefly to the north. Over these marsh-lands, considerable tracts of which the Acadians had dyked from the sea, the tides were never allowed to flow if the farmers could prevent their doing so, for any such inundation destroyed, or seriously injured, the hay-crops for several succeeding years. But such slight lapses in matters of detail have no power to mar the effect of the poem as its pictures and its pathetic story lie in our minds. The poem throughout has breadth and movement and fine rhythmic measure, and as long as the language lasts it cannot cease to charm."

We all seem to forget that there is such a thing as "poetic license." Longfellow, of course, made use of it, as he had a perfect right to do; only, one aches to know why he never visited Grandpré, once having decided to write his immortal poem.

It would have been such a simple matter to get, at first hand, the color for his glowing lines. And I wish that he might have seen with his own eyes those sunsets of pink and purple glory over Minas Basin, those lights that fall over the dikes and dunes just outside the tiny village where his beloved Acadians dwelt, those lingering shadows in the hushed streets of Grandpré when daylight is about to dwindle and later the thin moon sails like a shallop in the blue sea of heaven.

Another poet, Bliss Carman, has sung of the beauties of this land. In his "Low Tide on Grand Pré" we find these loveliest of lines:

The sun goes down, and over all
    These barren reaches of the tide
Such unelusive glories fall,
    I almost dream they yet will bide
    Until the coming of the tide.

And yet I know that not for us,
    By any ecstasy of dream,
He lingers to keep luminous
    A little while the grievous stream,
    Which frets, uncomforted of dream—

A grievous stream, that to and fro
Athrough the fields of Acadie
Goes wandering, as if to know
Why one beloved face should be
So long from home and Acadie. . . .

The night has fallen, and the tide . . .
Now and again comes drifting home,
Across these aching barrens wide,
A sigh like driven wind or foam:
In grief the flood is bursting home.

In Nova Scotia they are always boasting of the Annapolis valley, as well they may; and yet little Gaspereau valley looks to me infinitely more lovely, with its checker-board farms, its streams now and then, with horses or oxen drinking the cool water, the while some patient farmer sings in the twilight. The willows line the roads, courtesying as one goes by; and the sense of peace here is indescribable. Soon one comes to the Old Covenanters' Church at Grandpré, with its high pulpit in which a Presbyterian minister now holds forth. This edifice, with its sinking cemetery, was built in 1807, and the old pews and sound-

ing-board behind the dominie's desk proclaim the time of their origin. It is as quaint a church as one will see anywhere on this continent. Old slate tombstones crumble into the earth, always with Latin inscriptions, and eternally adding the solemn warning, "Memento mori."

But the descendants of the Acadians who now live in Nova Scotia are building another church out of funds which they have been gathering for two or three years. It will be of quarried stone, and on the very site of St. Charles's Church, where their ancestors were held prisoners. And near it is the ancient well found by the English settlers who followed the Acadians in 1755. Some one has put up a wooden well-sweep to show the method of drawing water in the old days. In the same restricted grounds there is a statue of *Evangeline*, designed by a sculptor whose forebears were all Acadians. His name was Philip Hébert; but he died before he had finished his work, and his son Henri completed it. It was unveiled in 1919.

Just beyond the chapel now being built there

stands a group of matchless willows, evidently planted by the oldest Acadians as a windbreak; and these trees may have heard the edict as it was read in the church on that memorable day so long ago. The Acadians always settled on treeless land, and then built dikes to keep the tides from their marshlands, and afterward sowed the seeds of their willows.

Pulpit of Grandpré Church

How soft the air is here, with limitless acres of meadows flowing out to the basin, and how contented the cattle looked, grazing in the rich pastures on the afternoon we strolled idly through this quiet

spot! Apple-blossoms were beyond us, on the hillsides, and little paths wandered like clean serpents over the marshland, which, if not protected by the dikes, would soon have a covering of eight or ten inches of water. On Long Island, just a glimpse away, is Evangeline Beach, facing Blomidon; and as one approaches it, there are fascinating vistas of water along the roadway, and on the beach itself some one has left standing the huge jaw-bone of a whale, caught in the mud-flats forty years ago. It is fifteen feet long, and makes an almost perfect arch over the sand. Pine-trees form a dark background for the beach, which is of a curious brownish tint—almost red at times.

How still Minas Basin looked—like an enlarged Lake Louise! There is a rise and fall of the tide here of fifty-four feet; and at times they told me there is surf bathing on this shore, and the summer colonists who have built bungalows come for that as well as for the soft, balmy air.

What a sky! The sun was still high in the heavens, and all around it were blue and purple

depths, spreading out into pink and amethyst ribbons of cloud, with now and then an orange tint, melting into mauve and salmon. I have seldom seen such colors, and their light was reflected in the quiet basin, a greater glory yet; and the mirror flung back the beauty as we stood there, as though to say, "See! you shall have a double share of this, for I am lavish of my gifts."

An old inhabitant told us he had been looking at this scene, and at the rich greenness of the Gaspereau valley, for sixty-five years, and they never wearied him. Why should they? For the shadows fold differently every afternoon, and the sun moves down that sky, lordly to-day, lordlier to-morrow; and the pageant along the shore changes with each hour. The delicate outlines of the opposite coast are like something in a dream, almost too tenuous to be; as if goblins or fairies had formed them, strung them up for a moment's delight, and would let them sink into the water soon. One grows speechless in the presence of such beauty. It is evanescent, fairy-like; yet at moments it takes on an iron strength which it is

difficult to describe. I felt, while here, that no lake country in the United States that I had ever seen, no stretch of shore held quite this quality of serenity and sanctity. I seemed to be spiritually a different person in the hour when I looked off at the sky and the basin, as though I were in some strange heaven on earth. Angels might have come out of those saffron clouds at any instant. There is no single word for my sensations; I was simply content to remain there and let the drift of airy loveliness glide by. How must it seem to live all the year in such a locality? There must be a daily baptism of the soul in a place like this; or does one merely come to absorb it, drink it in without thinking of it? If we saw a rainbow every afternoon I suppose we would get used even to that, though I confess it seems impossible to me.

We could see the sheep grazing contentedly behind us, a pastoral scene that never wearies me; and as the afternoon swooned into twilight, and now and then an early star appeared, and we continued to be wrapped in the stillness, life seemed to be giving me more than it ever had

before. But always I thought of a banished people, and I pitied them with all my heart. They had made this land; and the corporation which now every season amasses a small fortune from the harvest of hay and grain probably does not have time to dwell on the Acadians, seldom recalls their pitiful story. Grandpré dreams its dream, no doubt; its old houses whisper one to another under the giant trees; and, if *Basil's* blacksmith shop no longer stands, its memory remains, and perhaps—who knows?—on moonless nights its forge is lit and the ghostly anvils clang, and a young girl passes down those shabby streets, thinking of the days when she took "flagons of home-brewed ale" to the reapers.

Dear little village! I had come a long way to see you; and now I can never forget your quiet countenance, that beautiful seamed face which time has but made lovelier, and which a poet, though he had never seen you, sang of in a tender ballad which will live as long as you.

That night, back in Wolfville, we wandered up the hill again, and this time turned to the

right, after we passed through the college grounds. The houses of the professors were silent, it being the close of the term; but innumerable birds were singing in the thick trees, and down many a slope the apple-orchards went wandering. We came upon a big frame dwelling which we afterward learned was the Westwood Hospital; and I can't think of a finer location for invalids. I can understand a convalescent purposely postponing his release, the view is so lovely. Behind the hospital, on the crest of the hill, was a small observatory, built by the class of 1912; and somehow one does feel close to the stars up here, particularly when such a soft, soothing wind was blowing—close to those "forget-me-nots of the angels," as Longfellow so beautifully called them. Below us was Wolfville, with stars in every window, and far to the west, over the Cornwallis River, was the tiny town of Port Williams.

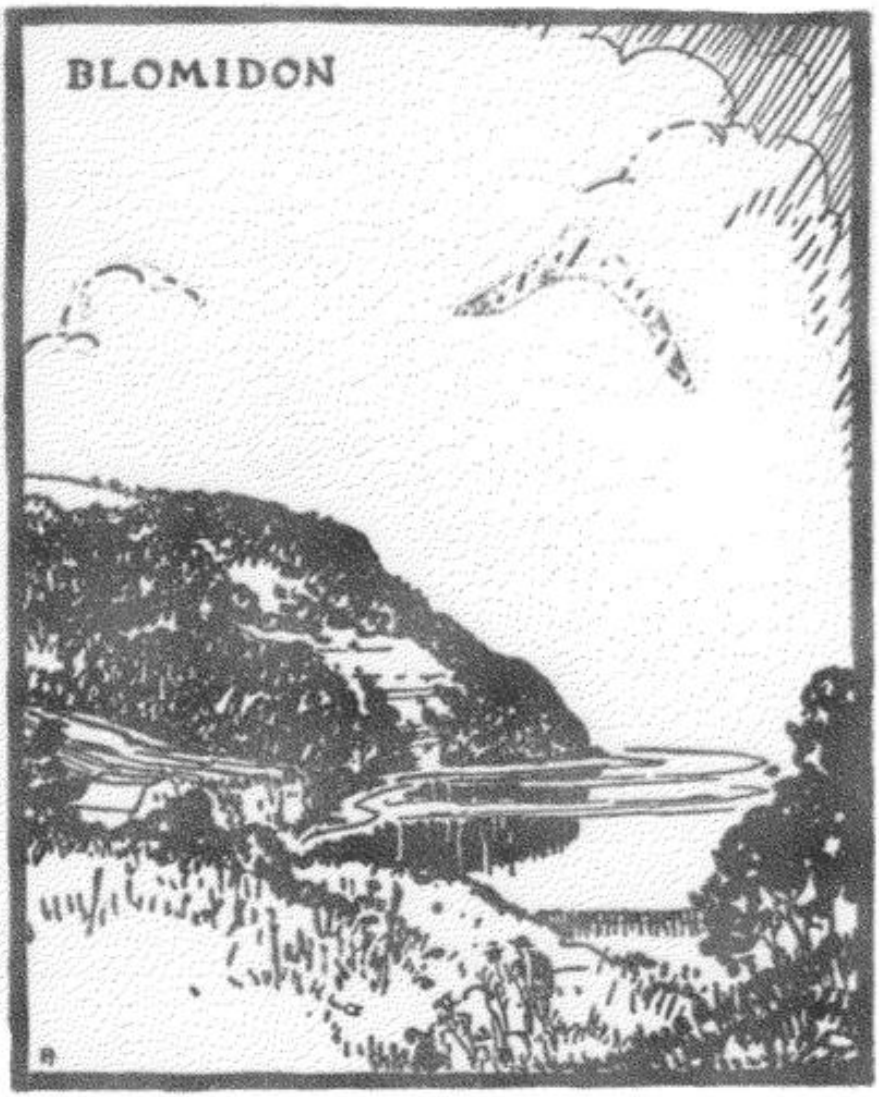
The moon came up; and I think we must have stayed on that slope for several hours, afraid to break the spell, not daring to speak, having, indeed, nothing to say "in such a night." And

suddenly I saw the shafts of moonlight strike the apple-trees with a new radiance. It seemed too good to be true. They had been wonderful before daylight died, but now—it was sheer magic below us, nothing less.

When I went home, I could not rest until I had tried to say in a rhyme, what I could not say up there amid the stars. But how futile words are at such a time! However, here is the halting song I made:

I saw the blossoms shining in many a Wolfville lane;
Along the road to Grandpré I watched the orchards gleam.
I saw them in the sunlight and through the rustling rain—
Long regiments of fairy stuff, and endless drift of dream.
Orchards, orchards, apple-orchards snow-white even in June;
But oh! how wonderful they looked beneath the ghostly moon!
I saw these pale battalions on many a stretch of shore,
Whitening the pale-brown coast where *Gabriel* once passed

To meet the sweet *Evangeline* of legendary lore;
I saw them standing as of old, their petals falling fast.
Orchards, orchards, apple-orchards, fragrant still in June;
But oh! I think I loved them most beneath the ghostly moon!



CHAPTER IX

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CHAPTER IX

CORNWALLIS VALLEY FROM LOOKOUT MOUNTAIN; SUNSET ON MINAS BASIN

WE had seen the village of Port Williams from the ridge; the next day we were to motor into it, crossing the Cornwallis valley in all its opulence, passing through the town of Canning, which was something of a shipbuilding center during the war. Now its chief industry is the unromantic manufacture of axes and hatchets.

I have never set eyes upon such a rich agricultural valley, broadening out in unbelievable glory as it reaches Minas Basin. But, if I loved it while I was trailing along on its floor, how much more was I to revel in its beauty, seen later from Lookout Mountain, a few miles away.

We ascended the hill slowly. Indeed, so

gradually did we work our way upward that there were times when I was not aware we were climbing a mountain, once we had left the center of the valley. It spreads out here to a distance, I should say, of twenty miles; and for seventy-five miles one may look backward, seeing its green fertility, its peace and tranquillity.

Our road curved, of course; and an excellent road it was, with new vistas every now and then, surprises to delight us, and a glimpse of the four little rivers that flow into the basin: the Avon, Cornwallis, Canning, and Canard. We could see a tiny graveyard,—or was it tiny only because we were getting so far above it?—and the tombstones resembled white toothpicks set primly in a square dish. No velvet golf-course was ever so green and soft as were the acres of that shining valley.

I looked behind us. A light shower was threading its silver way in our direction; but ahead, on the calm basin,—that same basin where the Acadians had been transported,—the sunlight glimmered and glittered until the whole

expanse of water looked like a pink and violet cushion on which pearls and diamonds had been thrown. How the jewels danced! Here was a riot of light and color, and, a few miles behind us, that curtain of rain swinging rapidly now up the beautiful valley, the while our motor chugged away to beat it if it could.

Finally we reached the summit of the mountain, where the road ran flat for many a rod. Some backwoods people had their home here, and they had been canny enough to erect a makeshift tower above it; a crude flight of stairs transported one to a greater height, and for the sum of ten cents (binoculars thrown in for good measure) one could drink in the view from this eminence. We were high, but we yearned to go higher. Every visitor feels that way; and, though thirty steps or so may seem little to ascend, the advantage gained always strikes one as worth while.

I looked at these simple folk who lived here the year round. Deep woods were behind them, and outside their window that magnificent sweep of wonder. And I asked them the inevitable

question, "Do you ever weary of it?" They said they did n't; and I tried to imagine how it would be to live *here*, as I had imagined how it would be to live near Grandpré. To one who is pent in a city, this sudden feeling of freedom, this luxurious "looking-off," makes for a bit of fright, rather than for instant happiness. Men coming out of prison must be equally confused, after years in narrow cells. It took me a long while to get used to the vast panorama; these folk saw it every day of their lives and still viewed it with enthusiasm, and I was sure my own sense of the greatness and majesty of it would never wear off if I stayed here a century.

But it was a shock to observe the rows of ginger-pop bottles on a counter when we went to offer our dimes for a clearer view. There they stood, long regiments of them; and pop-corn and greasy cocoanut-balls, and root-beer and sarsaparilla, as though this was a circus tent. I fully expected a "barker" to emerge from a door and shout of the "attractions" within. Why is Na-

ture thus insulted, when her Grand Cañons and snow-capped peaks are about to be revealed to us mortals? I find it hard to concentrate on the perfection of some lake, with peanut whistles sending forth their sharp sounds behind me. I would have given much not to be reminded of somebody's sterling chewing-gum in the presence of the Cornwallis valley. But, no! invariably, it seems, we must be brought back to earth the moment we have spiritually, and almost literally, left it; just as the ugly signs that infest our country-side perpetually remind us of Turkish baths and two-dollar rooms in city hotels. We never quite escape from the fret of the town, however high we climb; and I begin to be doubtful of our complete release from this world after death. Some radio will inform me, I am certain, of the planet I have left when finally I take my way among the stars. But perhaps I am pessimistic. Death could hardly be so cruel.

But I determined that nothing should spoil my enjoyment. We could not get away from

those bottles and candies, which we straightway did. And then, in all its transcending beauty, the valley lay beneath us.

Corot must have found his magic browns in some such land. I have never seen a lovelier stretch of earth; it was what one dreams the earth should be. Where should we look first? Surely those were Persian rugs spread out on that acre of land just beyond the neatest of apple-orchards. And those new furrows which a farmer was turning, how could anything be so perfect? Abruptly they ended, as the squares on a checker-board mark a given distance; and the light gold tones of one field would suddenly become the rich gray tones of another, and the purple tints crowning a certain ridge merge swiftly into the salmon coloring of a field near by. What variety for the eye! We hardly knew which way to turn, it was all so bewilderingly good to look down upon. There they were again, ranks of apple-trees, white and pink, as though we were floating over them in an aëroplane. They seemed like snowbanks from here

—snowbanks that some celestial worker had piled up with deft precision, never to melt or move. And those billowy waves of turf, green as the grass in Ireland, lifting and falling, exactly as the water lifts and falls far out at sea —petrified waves, there forever.

And the quiet! A few sheep, like snowballs rolling over the downs, and haphazard cattle grazing wherever it suited their whim.

Quiet? Yes, until there came a curious sound, as of the rustle of silk, and then the far, ominous rolling of thunder. The shower had turned into a storm; and in the west the sky darkened, and we could see sheets of heavy rain that hid the distant hills, an advancing host that must have dreamed of crushing out the sun over Minas Basin. How long would it take for that army to arrive? Serene, the sun awaited the gathering platoons. He was like a king who feared no enemy. What were purple lines of warriors to him? He ruled the heavens over that shining sheet of water, and he would not give way.

It was wonderful to see the contrast in the

sky. How dark down the valley, how glowing with light over the water! The world is a beautiful place when traceries of lightning spot the black heavens and day swiftly turns to night. But to see this valley from our vantage-point as two distinct scenes, omnipotently looking on while the stage was hurriedly reset, was something we could never forget. We were going down to Kingsport to catch the boat for Parrsboro. Could we beat the approaching storm? It was worth trying, and there is nothing I like better than racing with the rain.

But just as we started to go down the mountain two old men, who looked like something out of a page of German folk-lore, came up the road. Obviously they were brothers, though one was much older than the other, and wore a white beard. They were smiling from ear to ear, and paid no heed to the oncoming storm, never looked in the direction of the basin, where the royal sun still held his own. With their pickaxes and little bags in their hands, I wondered what work they had been doing 'way up here. But soon I

"The Old Men of the Amethysts"

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was to know. They were greeted loudly by those who dwelt in the house and who had now come out on the porch to welcome them.

"Any luck to-day?" the master of the house inquired, rising.

"Oh, yes," the older fellow replied, and forthwith opened his bag, and we saw shining amethysts fall in a cascade on the floor. It seems that there are quarries back in the hills—secret places where these old brothers frequently go; and they dig and pick all day, bringing home their wealth at evening, selling for a trifle what they have chanced to find. The master, who owns the "mines," in turn sells the semi-precious stones to visitors like ourselves, as trophies to take back to the cities, shining remembrances of a trip to Lookout Mountain. "The Old Men of the Amethysts," we named them, as we hurried to our waiting motor, and began that exhilarating race with the storm.

We had to go cautiously down the mountain, for to skid here would have indeed been dangerous. And all the time the hurrying blue army

of the rain was marching, marching toward us, its silver bayonets gleaming on a million shoulders.

"Perhaps," our driver said, when he became aware that we would have a hard time of it beating that oncoming host, "it would be better to stop at a little hotel I know, and get supper. In an hour or so I 'm sure this flurry 'll be over, and you 'll have plenty of time to catch your boat."

And so we rushed for the inn, as the sky grew darker and darker, yet with always that magical, unearthly light over the basin. Just as we made the porch of our little hostelry, the jealous rain tapped us on the shoulder, and the storm burst in fury over our heads.

How good the interior of the inn seemed to us, though it was anything but a thing of beauty. Now the cavalry of heaven could beat on our roof all it wished; its iron horses could pound their heavy hoofs above us, and little would we care. We were safe from that wild, ragged host, as it rushed with shining helmets above us; and we loved the anger of the wind, as we pressed

our faces against the windows and saw the torrent descend in deadly earnest. We were safe in the nest of the valley—part of the scene we had observed from the high mountain; as snug as bugs in a rug, as we used to say when we were children.

"'T won't last very long," our bucolic driver told us; and these countrymen always know. As weather-prophets they cannot be matched. Yet to us it seemed as if the storm would never pass, and we did n't much care. It would be great to be out in it, on the basin, with a rocking craft, after our hot country supper.

But, sure enough, the veil magically lifted in half an hour; and when we started in earnest for our wharf at Kingsport the sun had come out once more, drenching the earth with jeweled light.

And how pretty the roadways were that led to Kingsport! They turned and twisted, and the lilac-bushes, still wet with the storm, bowed happily to us, sent us many a sweet odor on the soft evening wind; and whole families came out

to watch the glowing sky, to drink in that fragrance which comes in the country after rain. Trees glistened with the raindrops still clinging to their branches; and every now and again one of those orchards we had seen from our eminence smiled at us as we passed. Always these apple-trees! They run through this record of mine like a Rossetti refrain; I can't seem to get away from them. Shall I stop mentioning them, and let you, dear patient reader, take them beautifully for granted? And may I hope that some day you will see them with your own eyes?

There is a curious sienna sand on the beach at Kingsport. Its tones are matchless; it is darker and richer than salmon-pink. And as we went down to our wharf, where our bark, the *Prince Albert*, awaited us, against the marsh-grass, or salt hay as they call it in this part of the world, a sail-boat leaned like a tired child after a long day at play. The cattle love this marsh-grass mixed with meadow hay, because of its salty flavor.

Minas Basin, on close view, was even lovelier

than from up above. It looked to me like a great pearl dropped down from heaven among these hills. A spiritual calm seems to rest above it. And always, when I see such beauty, I think of the years consumed in its making, the beauty behind all actual loveliness, the deep mystery of it. In an exquisite poem, "Flos Ævorum," Richard Le Gallienne has expressed this very thought, in considering the wonder of one girl's face. With equal force his exalted lines might have reference to anything perfect in Nature; and as I looked upon Minas Basin that summer evening I kept saying to myself:

"The moonlight of forgotten seas
  Dwells in your eyes, and on your tongue
The honey of a million bees,
  And all the sorrows of all song:
You are the ending of all these,
  The world grew old to make you young.

"All time hath traveled to this rose:
  To the strange meeting of this face
Came agonies of fires and snows;

And Death and April, nights and days
Unnumbered, unimagined throes,
Find in this flower their meeting place."

Our little boat had room for only two motors; so we bade our driver good-by on the shore, and stepped aboard. The curving beach was soon left behind, the bungalows on the bluff, the white little village of Kingsport. The sky, like the earth, had been blown clean by the storm, and a few desultory clouds were all that sailed on the ocean of blue above us. The opposite shore was lost to our sight, and we seemed to be traveling on a stretch of water as calm as that on which Christ once walked. I remember a picture of Him, as He performed His miracle; and in a circle about Him the anger of the waves had disappeared. But the peace of the waters here seemed endless; as far as we could see there was no ripple, even, and the mystical light fell on the basin as they say it does on every clear evening, making it ineffably beautiful.

I wanted to see Blomidon in this melting eve-

ning light. Almost directly ahead of us it stood, like something made of thunder and stern iron, five hundred and sixty feet high, strangely wrought; for, contrary to most capes, it rises out of the water, the first three hundred feet of its massiveness soft and green, the upper part of it heavy rock, as though it were overturned. One never really sees the point of Blomidon. Its sharp profile is always either ahead of you or behind you; for there are no less than six points of this terrific promontory, and, masculine as it is in its physical aspect, it is as elusive as a woman. A light mist descended suddenly; these fogs come so swiftly that often the prow of one's boat will be shot with sunlight while the stern is lost in a gray veil, or vice versa.

On a clear day one may see four counties from the center of the basin; but this evening even Blomidon crept momentarily out of sight, and though we sailed close to her rocky ledge we could see her only vaguely. Yet soon the fog was to lift, and in the twilight glow the clouds sailed over us like airy castles of dream, lifting

their turrets in the northeast. We were in the midst of a fairy-tale, as we had been in those orchards near Kentville. The magic of this land is that one seems literally to be a part of the beauty, poured into it—the fly, as it were, in the amber of loveliness. If I had been riding on a rainbow I could not have felt more definitely in the scheme of this surpassing glory. To be tangled in such radiance; it almost made one afraid; it seemed like the coming true of one's childhood dream that one might float on a cloud.

A wild black duck went crashing down on the soft water, making a scar on the face of the basin, breaking the pearl-gray spell. If we could only float here everlastingly! No other craft marred the scene. Always that sense of aloneness, a few of us together in a rose-leaf, drifting toward the sun.

And in a moment a great coin, minted centuries ago, shot from behind the hills and sent its luster for miles. A few tiny islands, off the main shore, were still enveloped by the mist, girdled with white sashes; but the sun soon

washed these away. And, around another bend, a three-masted schooner rose out of the fog, fragile as a cobweb. Soon it became heavy and ponderous, a thing of power; for the mist fled as quickly as it had fallen. And the long summer twilight lasted until we saw the town of Parrsboro, with its lighthouse in the cove, and, as we approached, happy faces smiling at us—crowds come down for the evening arrival of the boat. For in these little places the daily mail is an event, and every stranger is welcome.

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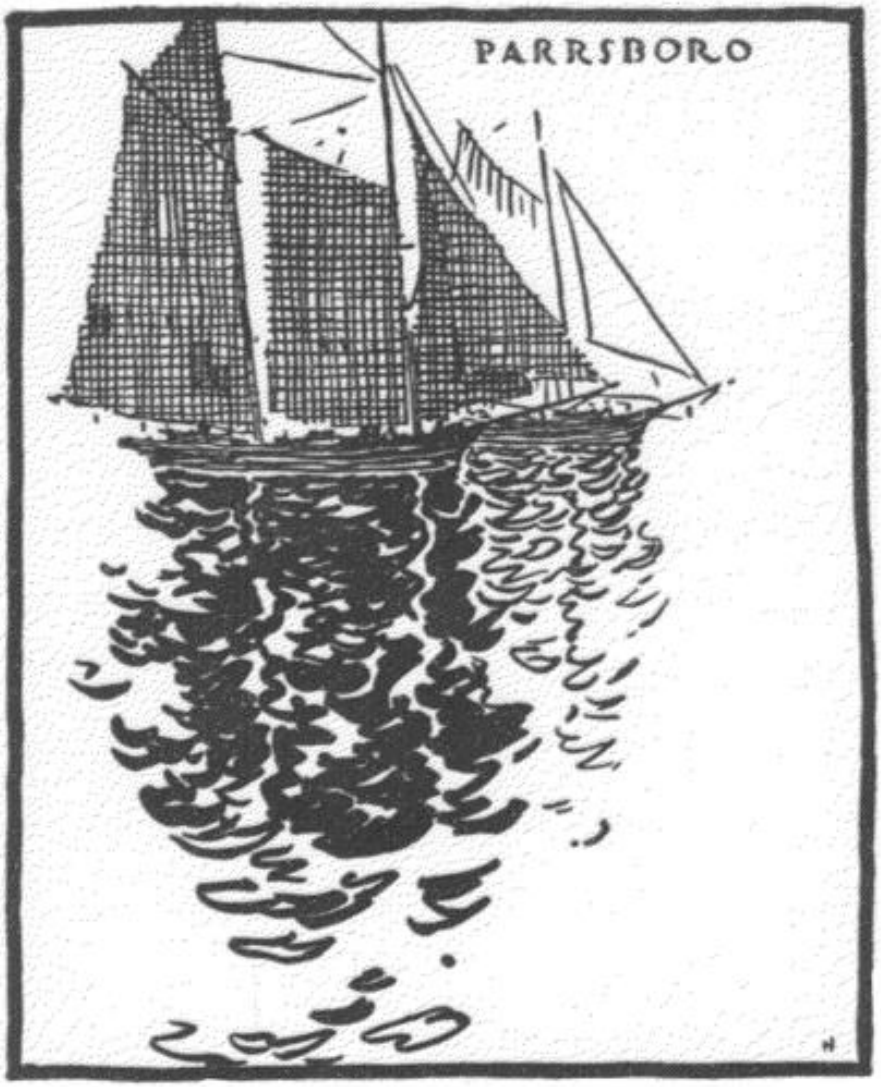

CHAPTER X

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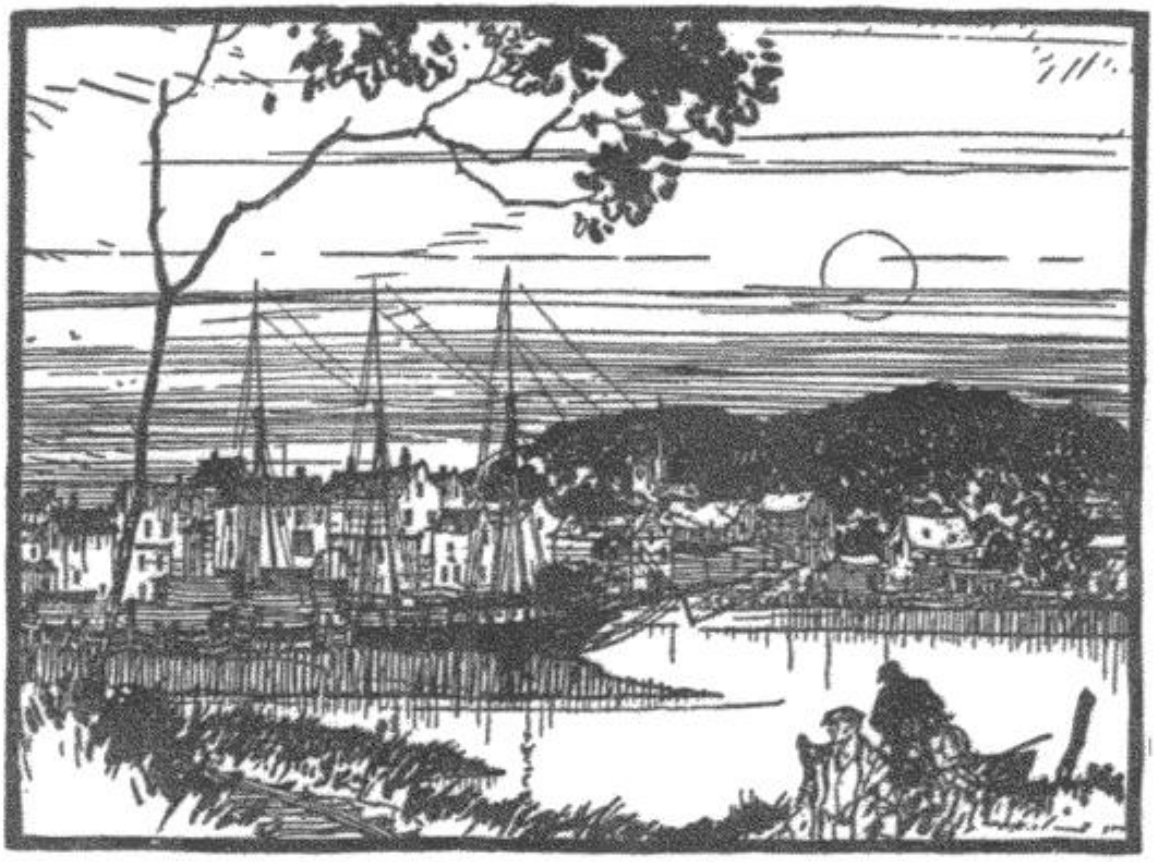
CHAPTER X

PARRSBORO AND FIVE ISLANDS

AS one gets into the back country of Canada or the United States, one strikes a phenomenon which has always puzzled me, and which I somehow imagined was peculiar only to the Middle West. I refer to the round, or square, shaven hair-cut, where the neck of a man has been diligently and closely shaved by the barber, until there is n't even the vestige of a hair upon it. It is as ugly as that strange fashion of low-buttoned, bulldog-toed shoes beneath an expanse of white socks; and, oddly enough,—or perhaps naturally enough,—they go together. I suppose, once having had the neck scraped, one goes on permitting it to be done. Habits are hard to break; but do not these country barbers observe the more delicate hair-cuts of visitors, and see the difference? Yet one might as well expect

better pictures in rural hotels. Those ghastly chromos on the walls of one's room—who puts them there, who selects them with such infinite care, thinking they are beautiful? A grand ball-room scene in the days of Louis XIV, or some vividly colored martyr being led out to the lions —ah! how they make my heart ache for their ugliness, fly-specked, though sometimes carefully covered with a soiled white netting. If their frames could be less lavish, perhaps they would lose some of their horror; yet I doubt it. They leap from a hideous figured wall-paper, adding insult to injury; and one's chambermaid meticulously dusts them, preserving them for the next occupant of the room, if not for future generations.

They are not conducive to reading in bed, one of my favorite occupations. Their fixed purpose seems to be to torment me, and finally, in desperation, I put out my light; but even then I am haunted by their garish tones, as I fall into a troubled slumber. If our reformers would only get busy on atrocities like these, instead of



The Harbor of Parrsboro

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being anxious about the personal habits of decent citizens!

Parrsboro is not a pretty town; but just outside it, facing Partridge Island, they were fitting out a heavenly Inn—a great white house, surrounded by white and purple lilacs and apple-trees—there I go again!—when we arrived. But it was not yet open to guests, much to our regret. However, there was a perfectly comfortable hotel on the main street of the village, and the food was excellent, the beds clean. We had heard, as who had n't, in Nova Scotia, of Mrs. Brodrick's boarding-house, opposite Five Islands, about twelve miles away; but it was too late, on our arrival, to motor over there, and so we put up in the town.

Directly behind the village, one strikes country as ragged and forlorn and wretched as he would care to see, smitten by the storms that so frequently strike the restless Bay of Fundy—a country of mean scrub-trees and scattered cattle, dismal bushes and neglected soil. Parrsboro is a commercial town, with a busy sawmill

or two; and there are always dozens of ships at anchor in its hospitable harbor. A fog-horn moans incessantly when the weather makes it necessary. Often, of a morning, the village wakes up to a ghost-like presence on its door-step, and then the horn is heard in the bay, sighing out its warnings to mariners.

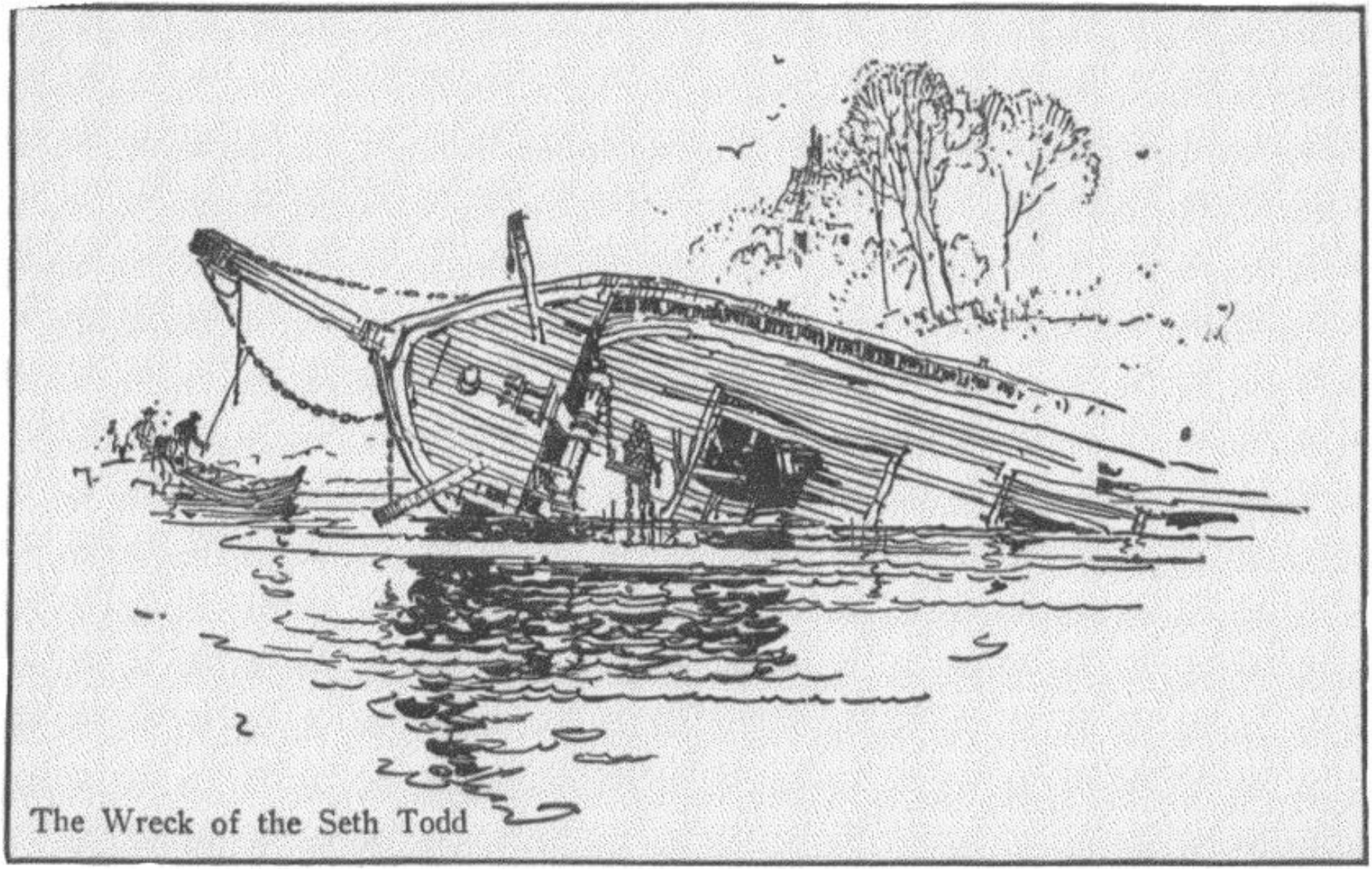
One encounters a much more ragged section on this side of the basin. It is as different from the Wolfville district as Rembrandt's "Man with Helmet" is different from a Turner sunset—a stern, iron, masculine beauty that grows upon one. As one drives toward Five Islands the roads are rough and smooth by turns, with delightful moments when a trout-stream gushes from the hills under shadowy willows. The impressive mountains look like granite, and now and then a lumber-sluice runs over one's head, transporting timber for miles from the mills to the shore, where it is loaded on waiting ships.

Mrs. Brodrick's is the kind of quiet, homelike place I dote upon—just big enough to take in a few guests, and away from the clamor and clatter

of main roads, sensibly settled down and middle-aged. Opposite the veranda one sees a field and a dusty meandering path, and, beyond these, the engaging prospect of Five Islands. At low tide one could walk out to these astonishing freaks of nature, called Moose, Diamond, Long, Egg, and Pinnacle. They stand so close together that once upon a time they must have formed one immense piece of land; and now the last one tapers off to such an extent that there is no room upon it for anything but the rock that resembles a cathedral spire. They say that agate and jasper and an odd amethyst or two may be found on these infinitesimal islands; why does n't some enterprising person come up and investigate in deadly earnest! To me, these five bunches of greenness looked like nothing so much as five fancy desserts that some giant cook might have prepared for the sea to gobble up. And one by one they may disappear, though they look permanent enough now. Just to the east of them is a lonely rock known as the Old Wife, with a single tree miraculously upon it.

Parrsboro had two wrecked schooners resting on its waters when we were there. One, known as the *Seth Todd*, had frequently been photographed in the movies, they told us; and the Guide, looking at the empty and desolate frame, said that although the keel no longer cut the tides the boat could not complain, since forever now she would move across the screen, full-rigged and radiant, as an old, worn-out actress is beautiful always in her youthful gallery of portraits.

The other was a much larger boat, the *Basaan*, built by the United States Shipping Board in Portland, Maine, and stranded in a heavy storm about a year and a half ago. She must have been a beauty in her day, worth something like one hundred and fifty thousand dollars; but after her mishap a wise man bought her for, I believe, only six thousand dollars; and the old watchman on board told us that he came to see how the repairs were getting on, in a motor that cost twice that amount. When the *Basaan* is fully renovated she will be worth a goodly sum, and her lucky owner may ride in any vehicle he chooses,



The Wreck of the Seth Todd

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on the delightful profit he will have made. How is it that business men come to learn of such bargains? Surely it takes genius to ferret them out, but even greater genius to take advantage of them.

Partridge Island looks like an old monarch, the points of the sharp spruce-trees rising like a crown on his head. And there is a dignity about this island, facing Cape Split and Cape Sharp—the dignity that goes with loneliness and bigness and strength. And on the coast here we found another wreck, a two-masted schooner which, only a week before, had been hard hit by a storm, and her hull almost completely demolished. The Government had towed her to the island to get her unwieldy frame out of the path of mariners, and, though she was a sorry wreck, I was tempted for a moment to become a thorough business man, have her "looked over" by experts, fit her up anew, and see if I could n't do what the purchaser of the *Basaan* had done so well. But the Guide and the Artist laughed at my naïve plan and were more than patient with me as I talked

it over with them. Perhaps the wine-like weather had gone to my head. I really believe that is what they thought.

For several years a certain Harvard professor has been coming to Parrsboro and Partridge Island for his summer vacation, and last year he made discoveries of strange footprints in the rocks; it looked as if some prehistoric monster had climbed the high ledges. He took away with him, in great excitement, several specimens, but others he left behind; and when I looked at them I confess that I, too, believed as he did. Certainly the worn lines in the slate had not been recently made, and the traceries were strangely different from anything I had ever seen. It was curious to stand on that desolate shore, looking up at those footprints,—if footprints they were,—and ruminate upon the great creature which might have made them centuries back. Sugarloaf Farm was now just a few miles away, and the inn that I have spoken of, soon, no doubt, to be filled with flappers and the amazing modern youth, who creep in everywhere; and the oldest

man in Parrsboro, who asserted he was a hundred and one, seemed a mere infant in the presence of these enameled tracks. There were no schooners then to be tossed on the beach, yet the same waste of water confronted that lonely monster; and I, from a thundering city, after the greatest of world wars, was standing where he had stood, and touched with my modern shoe the very stone that he had touched. And perhaps he wondered, as did I, what the ineffable beauty of the world may mean. Yet he, a monster, could climb to heights I could not reach. I could only stand there, pondering about him, asking myself where he had gone—and where I, some day, would go.

The next morning, that ghostly presence of fog was on the Parrsboro door-step; but it lifted a bit before we took our boat back to Wolfville. The whole trip, however, was taken in a light rain, and, as I love to be out in the elements, I sat on the forward lower deck, letting the pelting drops fall on my face, hearing the rush of the water as we cut through it, watching the gulls

dip and rise, seeing Blomidon again through a veil, and many a lonesome schooner at anchor along the shore, and saying over and over again to myself, "Oh, the good rain!"

CHAPTER XI

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CHAPTER XI

BRAVE LITTLE HALIFAX; CHARMING CHESTER

SO soon do we forget the world's great tragedies —for others come swiftly along to take their place—that until I actually got to Halifax I was not mindful of the fact that many of those killed on the *Titanic* had been brought here for burial. This was in 1912; and in Fairview Cemetery there are rows of graves, some with names on the headstones, others blank, since the victims could not be identified; but always the date,—April 15, 1912,—the dreadful monotony of it, the terrible significance of it sinking into one's consciousness. Halifax opened its arms to these silent visitors, and received them to her heart. It all came back to me as I stood there, and I recalled reading about the reception of these bodies, and the sad pageant of the funerals. Little did this city dream that a few years later she would ex-

perience a vaster tragedy at her very gates. The dead she received in 1912 were but a handful in comparison with those of her own citizens who were to perish in what was perhaps the greatest catastrophe of all time.

I refer, of course, to that frightful morning of December 6, 1917, when two vessels laden with T N T collided in the beautiful harbor, and sent more than two thousand souls into eternity. It was at about nine o'clock in the morning, when numerous business people were on their way to their shops and offices; and the concussion shook the city, and a whole district was wiped out, as if it had never existed, and not a speck remained to tell where whole families once happily dwelt.

It was war-time, and the legend will go down, I suppose, that the "accident" was an enemy plot; there is little doubt that it was, for the day was crisp and keen and clear, with no fog to blame for the crashing together of those boats. Had the entrance to the magnificent harbor been better guarded—ah! but what is accomplished by such reflections now? The ghastly fact is that

The Arsenal—Halifax

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the city was thrown into a state of chaos in the twinkling of an eye, and the whole world was shocked by the news of this most hideous event.

To add to the terror of the inhabitants, word came that another explosion would follow closely upon the first; and people, wounded, fled to the outskirts of the city, dragging their children with them, not having their wounds dressed, and many of them became infected, and died as a result. Others were scarred for the rest of their lives; and even to-day one may see many a man or woman walking along the streets of Halifax bearing the marks of that morning—disfigured forever.

Two thousand people were sheltered in the Majestic Theater, the hospitals and hotels and private residences being unable to take care of every one. But to-day there is scarcely a visible wound on the countenance of brave little Halifax. Cities, like mortals, have a way of recovering from unbelievable shocks; and to see how the town has girded on its spiritual armor, remade

and remolded itself, is something one does not soon forget. True, there are shacks near the Public Gardens still occupied by sufferers in the calamity; but these are being emptied and torn down as fast as possible. It takes time to redeem an entire city. I like Halifax so well that I hope somebody will tell me to go there again. (And, by the way, where did that expression originate? I have never been able to find out. "Oh, go to Halifax!" we lightly say. I am ready any time, dear enemy!)

They have the welfare of their citizens always at heart in this busy port. The Dingle,—delectable name,—where one may wander for miles by the water's edge, or along paths of quiet delight, was given to the city by Sir Sanford Fleming for a memorial tower in commemoration of the first responsible government in Nova Scotia. And the stone tower stands, with two huge granite lions at its base, a worthy monument to celebrate so great a happening. From its top one may see the surrounding country for miles; and along the walls of the stairway are innumer-

able tablets from all the British colonies and possessions, affectionately inscribed, beautifully wrought and engraved. This tower overlooks the Northwest Arm, where regattas are held in the season. The Nova Scotia Yacht Squadron has yacht races every Saturday afternoon in summer; and the club-houses, with their tennis-courts and swimming-floats, admit women as well as men to membership, and present a gay scene all through June, July, and August. The Canadians, like the English, delight in outdoor sports, and devote certain hours to healthful pastimes.

The Public Gardens are beautifully kept up, and no motorists are permitted within the gates. Band concerts are held here regularly, and the foliage all about could scarcely be surpassed. There are playgrounds for Halifax children, country lanes close to the city—the charm of these smaller towns is that one may get out of them in no time; and there is always the sense of uprightness and candor in this hustling Canadian capital. The public buildings have an an-

cient bearing; and the governor's residence, near a quiet old cemetery, is set in the midst of a small park, though it is in the heart of the city.

Beginning January 1, 1923, traffic will turn to the right in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick; and I believe they told me it would cost Halifax seventy-five thousand dollars to alter the trolley-tracks. In every other province they have been driving to the right for some time; and there are so many American visitors with motors that it seems the better part of wisdom to make the change. One more link between the two countries! But, after all, why should n't we all turn in the same manner?

I was once delayed in Southampton, England, after landing, and was forced much against my will to spend the night there. Most tourists think of these landing-places as—merely landing-places; but the circumstances which caused me to remain in the town proved to be a blessing in disguise, for that evening I took an open carriage —as I had done in Halifax—and looked the city over. I found it charming. And so the charms

of Halifax might remain hidden from the casual visitor. Why is it that we go on judging towns by their appearance around the railway station, when one of the most bromidic things we can say is that one should n't do so?

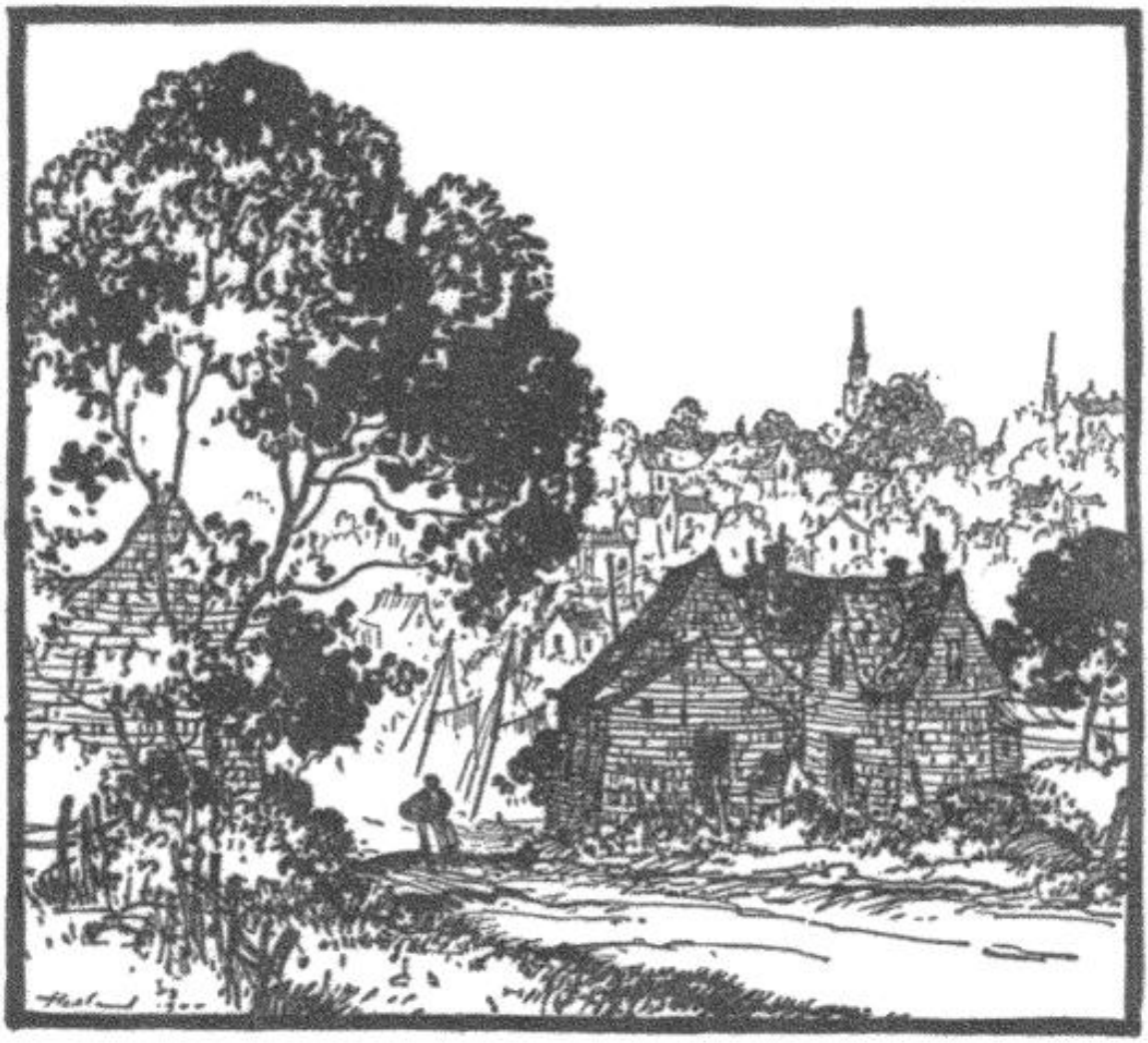
Across the harbor from Halifax is Dartmouth, where there are numerous rope-works and dry-docks—a purely commercial and practical district; and two miles out of Dartmouth, at Woodside, the Acadia Sugar Refining Plant has extensive works. Pretty names, these two towns possess, but perhaps they don't live up to them. Just as Cow Bay, a stretch of shore where people sought pleasure in bathing and boating, certainly did not live *down* to *its* name. I was told an American made the remark that it was an outrage for such a beautiful place to bear so ugly a cognomen; and a prize was forthwith offered for a substitute. Now it is called Silver Sands. Can you see the psychology of the change? Far more people go there now, no doubt lured by the alliterative phrase.

Halifax is the world's third most important

port. Here, in 1758, General Howe gathered his forces for the attack on Louisburg, and here, too, in 1914, the Canadians embarked for England to help the mother-country in the World War.

About two hours by rail from Halifax, on the eastern coast, is the enchanting little village of Chester—just the place for a quiet week-end, we had been told. The bay that protects it from the ocean gales is dotted with an island for every day of the year, they will tell you—yes, there are exactly three hundred and sixty-five of them. And one is called Oak Island; and deep down in it Captain Kidd is said to have buried his treasure. The tale persists, and almost every year some energetic tourist, lured by the legend, makes his headquarters here and may be seen diligently digging away. Buried treasure will have its fascination forever for a certain portion of mankind.

Chester is ideally situated, and on a summer day, when the bay is dotted with blowing sails, the panorama is a beautiful one. A fine golf-



The Road to the Harbor
"The enchanting little village of Chester"

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course wanders around the outskirts of the village, and there are drives in every direction over good old dirt roads, the kind I delight in, meant for the old-fashioned horse and buggy, and not, perhaps, for the flashing motorists. Yet he manages very well, down here, and can have little to complain of.

Hundreds of Americans rent charming cottages in Chester for the season, and there are two hotels that could scarcely be better. One is large, the other quite small; in the latter one finds a homelike atmosphere and a homelike table, and a hostess who is more a friend than an innkeeper. Her hospitality is proverbial, and she will take one, or direct one, to the round-about points of interest. There are many Indian legends in the neighborhood, and the little Catholic cemetery on the hill, from which there is a wonderful view, contains the grave of an old chief who died but a few years since. His widow, a Canadian woman who now lives on a lonely farm not many miles away, keeps flowers perpetually upon this little mound.

Sometimes, of a morning, the fog drifts in, like a ghost; but it disappears more swiftly than it came. Then, the curtain lifted, the vast stage-setting is seen: the magical islands in the near distance, the blowing sails of speeding yachts, the fishermen in smaller craft, the wharves filled with gaily frocked girls, the winding brown roads leading down to them, the green undulating hills, and the opulent gardens that smile in the now visible sun.

Chester is not what one would call a "smart" place, heaven forbid! It has character and grace and beauty and charm. Having these qualities, it could not be pretentious. As yet it is unspoiled; and, as in the case of Sandy Cove, I dread writing too enthusiastically of it, lest hordes infest it, and make it only one more "summer resort" instead of the delightfully quiet spot it is to-day. The best people from Halifax go down often to its peace and restfulness, either motoring or not minding at all the slow, deliberate little train that leaves once a day, returning in the afternoon.

A Chester Doorway

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From Chester we drove over to Lunenburg, where the big public school building rises on the crest of a hill to greet one, like some enormous castle. It is the first thing one sees of this town, and is rather terrifying in its impressiveness; for one does not expect such a monstrous piece of architecture in such a remote little village, filled with simple German peasants. There is a good deal of shipbuilding and fishing in Lunenburg, and the shore drive is delightful, over toward Blue Rocks and Rose Bay. Here you will find people who have never been to the big cities, content to spend their lives on these back roads, looking out on the purple tides, content with their hollyhocks, happy in their tiny shacks and sea-girt gardens.

The curving shore that leads the motorist to places like Western Shore, Martin River, and Mahone Bay is incomparably lovely. Outside Chester there is a long stretch of ragged country, some of it utterly useless to the farmer. Forest fires have ruined many of the tall trees; and once in a while one will come upon a straggling nest

of houses, where some very poor people try to make a precarious living. Then this will be left behind suddenly, and green hillsides will burst into view, neat, trim homesteads, and healthy cattle grazing in rich meadows. In some of these little coast villages they made a great deal of money during the war, supplying codfish to the troops; and now they find it hard to adjust themselves to after-war prices and smaller earnings. Yet virtually every farmer has his own motor; and many of them have become such excellent mechanics that they have opened garages, and do a prosperous business.

Bridgewater, on Lahave River, is a thriving little town, a railroad center and a shipping village. Some years ago Mahone Bay might have had the roundhouses; but certain inhabitants would not hear of it, and so it is Bridgewater that has forged ahead, in most robust fashion, leaving Mahone Bay to dream away quietly. Yet, as in the case of Bear River, I can shed no tears over the lack of civic progress of a village like Mahone Bay. It seems to me so much more

The Shore—Chester

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sensible to spend nodding afternoons on one's veranda undisturbed by the thunder of commerce

And yet—a little time is enough for me in any drowsy village street. I love their peace, but I suppose, having always lived in a big, noisy city, I am inoculated with a virus that will not let me rest for long. All through this east-coast ramble, I was subconsciously thinking of Halifax; and Halifax made me think of Boston; and Boston of New York. I can't get away from the spell of cities, much as I love the country. And the tragedy of brave little Halifax kept haunting me. I liked it so that I did n't want to think of its sufferings, even those sufferings which were things of the past.

However, I did n't intend to dwell so on the horrors of what Halifax has been through. I shall always remember Nova Scotia as a place of lilacs and apple-orchards—such opulent blooms as only this northern province could contain in the warm-cool days and nights of late May and early June. Enchantment lingers here. *Evangeline* walks here. The slow hours are filled

with magic, and when those white horses of foam leap and fret and plunge on the roaring Bay of Fundy I think of soft, sweet, quiet orchards on many a neighboring hill, and the fragrant lilacs nodding and smiling in every dreaming door-yard down the coast.

THE END