

able moment and pilot his little skiff through little passages of the water, amid huge clumpers, until at last, after a hard tussle and a very circuitous mode of progression, he reaches his destination. At the point where the ferry crosses, the strait is not more than a mile across, and abounds in noble scenery. Cape Porcupine, with its back bristling with stunted firs, frowns down upon the strait which is bounded throughout by tall cliffs, and forms many a pretty landlocked bay and harbour. The ice that crowds into it during the winter is generally of small size; but off Port Hood, and the coast toward Cape North, many an ice-berg, with its pinnacles and turrets, glimmers in the sunlight amid the floating fields, and now and then some monstrous pile strands on the shore, where it remains until it slowly dissolves under the influence of the penetrating summer sun. In former times large quantities of seal were caught in the gulf, and the settlements of Margarie and Cheticamp contained many intrepid hunters of this animal; but now-a-days they are rarely caught on the western coast of the island. The grandest scenery of the island—indeed of the whole province of Nova Scotia—is to be seen in the northern section of Cape Breton, for there the mountains rise to the height of a thousand feet and more, forming deep gorges, flanked by almost vertical precipices. In the winter large glaciers are formed, and their debris are to be seen well into July. Cape North, “the Watch tower of the Gulf,” is a lofty promontory reaching far into the ocean, four miles in a north-easterly direction, and having on each side a crescent-shaped bay, partly settled by fishermen and farmers. A large district of this section is still a wilderness, where the moose range in small herds, finding rich pasture in the moose-wood and young ash that plentifully abound in the valleys and on the mountain side.

The river Margarie, which has long been famous for its salmon fishery, divides into two branches about eight miles from its mouth, one of which flows from the northern hills of the interior, through woodland, glade and intervale, whilst the other descends from Lake Ainslie, the largest reservoir of fresh water in Nova Scotia, singularly placed at right angles with the course of the Gulf shore and the Bras D’Or, between which it lies. Many Acadian French are still living on the banks of the Marguërite, as well as on the coast as far as Cheticamp, where there are large fishing establishments. We met on the road women with red handkerchiefs bound round their heads and petticoats reaching to the knee, and turning towards us ruddy, smiling faces. The men wore red blouses and short corduroys or homespun, and courteously bid us “Good day, sir,” or “Bon jour, M’sieu.” No doubt, in the course of time, the Acadian tongue and names will vanish. Still, those who remain cling to their customs with all the persistence of a race, slow to adopt improvements.—Wooden ploughs, driven by oxen, still turn up the soil; the women work hard in the field; they are never so happy as when the Curé is with them, or when they are attending mass in their pretty white Chapels. Simple in their habits, easily amused, fond of finery on holidays, the Acadians of Cape Breton, like the Acadians everywhere, represent the past rather than the present.

I have not attempted to go into any lengthy details of the resources of the island, for such information is easily obtained from ordinary books