

Middle and West Rivers have small runs of trout, but, taken as a whole, the rivers in this vicinity have been pretty well "fished out." Fine trout are, however, taken at times in Maple and McQuanie's Lakes. Mr. Prichard, of New Glasgow, is fishery overseer, and will be able to "post" visitors as to the best places. Some good sport may be found in fishing for mackerel, cod, etc., on the coast.

The country to the southward of Pictou has an abundance of moose. Let one take a trip, with guides, from West River, through Gengarry, Stewiacke, Nelson's and Sundy Brae, and over to Caledonia, or Guysboro, and he is pretty sure to have fair luck. Caribou are found at times, but moose is the chief game to be relied on. Bears are plenty, and so are partridge. Along the shore, snipe, plover, curlew, geese and all kinds of ducks are found in large numbers.

ANNO MURIUM.

Somewhere around this part of Nova Scotia the stranger may be fortunate enough to find one of the very oldest inhabitants who was an eye-witness to those most extraordinary events which happened in the Year of the Mice. The younger generation appear to know little about it, though it was a memorable epoch in the history of the country. It was, in fact, a plague of mice, which visited Pictou, Colechester and Antigonish, as well as Prince Edward Island. As long ago as 1699, Dierville wrote that the latter place had a plague either of mice or locusts every seven years, but in more modern times the phenomenon has been witnessed but once. That once was enough.

It was in the year 1815 that the mice took a "Grand Farewell Benefit," in the presence of a large but far from admiring audience. They began to show themselves at that period in the year when the Spring Poet warbles and the sap runs from the maples. By planting time their numbers had augmented to an extent which struck terror to the hearts of the people; and the cry was, "Still they come!" They were not little field mice, such as Burns has immortalized, but were more nearly of the size of rats. If Burns had been there he would not have stopped to write poetry, but would have got out a field roller and crushed them by the thousand. They ate everything that mice can eat, and nearly ate up the people, for when molested they sat on their haunches and squealed defiance with their glistening teeth laid bare. As with the rats at Hamelin Town in Brunswick:

They fought the dogs and killed the cats,
Made nests inside men's Sunday hats,
And even spoiled the women's chat,
By shrieking and squeaking
In fifty different sharps and flats."

It took a brave dog to face a mob of them, and ordinary cats proved that good generalship is often shown by a timely and skilful retreat. Dr. Patterson, in his History of Pictou, is authority for the statement a farmer attempted to sow oats at Merigonish, and was disgusted to find that the mice ate them as fast as he sowed. Finding that his labor simply amounted to feeding part of a hungry horde, he finally got out of patience, threw all his oats at them and went home in intense disgust. Spreading over the country as the season advanced, they devoured all before them. Acres were stripped of growing crops, and still the mice grew and their appetites increased apace. Trenches were dug, and all sorts of expedients resorted to, but in vain. The mice question became an absorbing one, when all at once the intruders made up their minds to get up and get. But, like the army of Napoleon in Russia, and the followers of De Soto to the Mississippi, death marched in their midst. Thousands of those that had achieved such brilliant conquests lay down and died. Thousands more reached the sea-shore, but only to die. All along the coast their bodies lay piled up in masses like lines of sea-weed, and for many weeks the fish caught in the bays were found to have their maws filled with the remains of the annihilated army of mice.

For many years after this remarkable visitation, it was the custom of many of the people to reckon births, marriages, deaths, etc., as being such and such a time after the year of the mice. *Anno Murium* took the place of *Anno Domini*; but as succeeding generations grew up, this system of chronology became obsolete; and it has long since ceased to be known, save to the ones who "were there and helped kill 'em."

ANTIGONISH.

If you want to find able-bodied men, take the H. & C. B. Railway and go to Antigonish. Here you will find the descendants of Highlanders who look able for all comers. Six feet and odd inches tall are they, and stout in proportion.

Antigonish is called the prettiest village in Eastern Nova Scotia. Its neat, tidy dwellings stand amid beautiful shade trees on low ground, while the hills rise in graceful cones near at