

## LOUISBOURG IN 1900.

By H. N. SHAW, B.A.

Lying upon the grass behind the beautiful main building of Toronto University some few days ago, I saw two old, rusty, cannon. Something about them seemed familiar, and when I paused for a longer look at the curious relics of a by-gone day, there flashed across my mind the memory of a bright, rare day in July, when, standing upon the deck of a diver's vessel, I saw these same cannon drawn up from beneath the placid waters of the beautiful Harbor of Louisbourg.

Of the many historic spots of this Canada of ours, probably not one contains so much of interest to the student of history or would so repay a thoughtful, somewhat prolonged visit, as the little fishing hamlet—once the wealthy and almost impregnable town of Louisbourg. It was my happy lot during the summer to spend a week here, and it was one which will ever remain with me as being well spent in creating material for the development of artistic imagination by means of association with the remains of historic fact.

The traveler who would visit this famous spot must take train at Sydney on the Sydney and Louisbourg Railroad. A quick ride through most beautiful, satisfying sea and lake scenery will bring him to New Louisbourg, where, if he values his digestion and good temper, he will not remain long. He finds an irregularly built, commonplace town, destitute of anything more than an apology for an hotel, and containing nothing of interest to the traveler. If he is wise, he will walk the three miles round the harbor, by the pretty Roman Catholic chapel, so suggestive of the earnest religious feeling of the former inhabitants of this part of Cape Breton, across the fields to the beach, where suddenly bursts full upon his view in the distance two large stone arches—the ruins of part of the casements, where, during the siege, the hapless women and children sought shelter. On, he walks, passing over the narrow roadway between the harbor front and the Dauphin's Bastion, into all that now remains, ruin and desolation, of that town, which, in years gone by, cost the French such a vast sum of money to fortify, and which, by its strength, natural as well as man-made fortifications, threatened to annihilate the commercial interests of the English colonies. The line of the fortifications is still preserved. One can easily trace the positions of the Dauphin's, King's, Queen's and other bastions. The immense heaps of stone, brought, some of them from Normandy, and some from New England, and the remains of the five casements, three of which are almost intact, reveal the vast labor which must have been devoted to fortifying the town, but also how thoroughly the English sappers did their work in the destruction of it. The few fishermen's cottages are uninteresting, but one can plainly trace the plan of the town from the old French streets, the foundation walls of the hospital, the old church, barracks and other buildings, while down by the sea, outside the south of the town, are many mounds, still perfect in shape, where sleep those who once lived, loved, and perhaps gave their lives in defence of home and friends.

The harbor is one of the most beautiful on the Atlantic coast. At its mouth is an island, where once frowned the Island Battery, rugged and grim; it stands as though, even yet, it would shield the remains of past life and wealth. When one stands upon its rocky

heights and watches the narrow passage through which the ships must sail into the harbor, it ceases to be a matter of wonder that in the siege of 1745 the English fleet found it so difficult to enter, and the French fleet remained so secure.

Did time and space permit, I should like to write of the traditions and interesting details told me by the pilot stationed upon this island, and also by the hardy fishermen, whose thoughtful courtesy and kindness to the traveler made the week pass so pleasantly and profitably. I should like, also, to speak of the underground passage, discovered not long ago, and of the pleasant day which I, with another traveler, spent in digging to the bottom of an old French well, and of the interesting souvenirs and relics found in the debris; but I must pass on to the day when it was my pleasure to first see the cannon which have called forth these recollections.

Sitting in a row boat, and under the guidance of old Patrick Kennedy, who discovered the location of the wreck of the "Prudence," we rowed a short distance from the land; and as the tide was low, we could distinctly see the beams of the old French war vessel. A few hours later we stood upon the deck of the diver's vessel, when, at a given signal, the lifting engine placed upon the deck began to work. But it had no mean task to perform. Slowly, the chain tightened, and slowly, very slowly, did it wind, until there gradually appeared above the surface of the water, an immense cannon, covered with mud, mussels, slimy and creeping sea-life, broken pieces of cannon ball and sea-weed—the accumulation of one hundred and fifty years of inactivity at the bottom of the harbor. Slowly it rose—its immense weight causing the vessel, upon which we stood, to lean heavily to the side as if to meet it and welcome it back to the light of day. Then all hands put to work to draw it over, and at last it was safely lowered and rested upon the deck. Then, again, the diver donned his suit, and made his way down out of sight to adjust the chains about the comrade of the iron monster, and when once securely fastened, it also was drawn up to rejoin its fellow.

What a wealth of imagery such a picture called forth! I wish it were in my power to express all that I saw and felt that day! But suffice it to say, that although the historic spots of Europe have, in days gone by, afforded me enjoyment and profit, I am convinced that the student of history will find, as I have found, that our own country, and especially the place of which I write, supplies ample opportunity for thoughtful study and historic investigation.

## FRESHMEN.

Figures ascertained from Mr. Brebner show an increase in the number of First Year students over that of last year. Especially is this so in Medicine, where it is, indeed, the banner year since 1887. The increase is also marked in S.P.S. In Arts it is not so striking, but here it must be remembered that every year an increasing number of students enter the Second Year for the first year of their course, thus reducing the number in the First Year at Varsity. The authorities are recognizing the importance of this tendency, which, if it continues, will practically result in a three years' University course instead of four.