

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND.

A HISTORICAL SKETCH BY A. B. WARBURTON, B. A., D. C. L., K. C.

The noble Gulf of St. Lawrence bore an unwonted burthen on its fair bosom the afternoon of 30th June, A. D. 1534, the day when Prince Edward Island smiled her welcome to Jacques Cartier, first of white men to scan her shores. This was the great Breton's earliest voyage to the New World, and, until that summer afternoon, save the bark canoes of the Indians, his two small vessels, of some sixty tons each, were the first craft to plough the waters in the bight of Prince Edward Island.

Jacques Cartier was the earliest of the great French explorers of Canada, and the first European to ascend the St. Lawrence river, which he did on his second and third voyages, but with these expeditions this sketch has nothing to do. He was a man of courage and resource, as well as of great force of character, qualities essential to one of his adventurous calling. With these he combined the skill of an experienced sailor and a practical knowledge of navigation, not

surpassed by any of the seafaring men of his time.

In almost every walk of life, the closing years of the fifteenth century, and the whole of the sixteenth were rich in great and enterprising men. In the earlier part of this long period it may almost be said that, in no field of activity, were there to be found more far-seeing and adventurous men than were those great navigators and explorers, whose discoveries changed the known face of the globe and resulted in an absolute revolution in the conditions of the civilized world. And this extraordinary class was not confined to any one nationality. It almost seemed as if nature had bidden the different European peoples, regardless of racial differences, to bring forth men whom she could send forth to explore the unknown places of the earth, and make them known to civilized man. They hailed from no single country. Portugal, Spain, the Italian coast cities, France, England—all could boast of members of this