OF THE ANCIENT TYPE.

ARE THE CAPE BRETON FOLK FROM THE TWELVE TRIBES?

They Have Many and Singular Virtues—Good Qualities of Head and Heart—The Story of a Bible Agent and His Adventures on His Travels.

Looking at the communities of Cape Breton socially and from association with many of them individually, I have come to the conclusion that there is in Cape Breton, entirely surrounded by the ocean and very much cut off from intercourse with the world, a remarkable race of people who are going to turn the destinies of the Canadian nation. The minds of these people are extremely keen and their reasoning powers unmistakably profound. They are an unostentiously religious people and in many respects are identical with the tribes who so determinedly marched round and round the walls of Jericho until the pagan towers fell down. These patient pedestrians, as is well known, were the founders of the twelve Israelitish republics later absorbed into the monarchy of King Saul, the fame of which spread all through Asia in the days of Babylon and Nineveh. After a study of their character and a comparison of such with the people of Cape Breton I am convinced that there are many points of resemblance, and steadily, if slowly, the belief has taken hold of me that the people who make up the mining communities of Cape Breton will be a future "power" in the new Canadian nation. During the American civil war some of the most fearless warriors and most rapidly promoted officers in the regiments of the North were Cape Bretoners and I have now before me a letter from an army surgeon dated Pottsville, Pennsylvania, February 21, 1894, speaking in glowing terms of the men of Cape Breton whose blood stained American soil thirty years ago. To the shame of the American government be it written that for years they have thrown every obstacle in the way of granting pensions to these Cape Breton warriors, although some of them to my knowledge, are still suffering from the wounds received in the subjugation of the South. I have taken the matter up, and wrote every Cape Bretoner (and Canadian) who has not obtained justice from Washington to communicate with me at Halifax.

The physiognomy of the people of Cape Breton is thoroughly noble. More classic countenances cannot be found in any section of the British Empire than one can see any day in the Sydney district. The long oval countenance is there,—denoting noble ancestry— and chaste features, exquisite foreheads, and magnificent eyes and sculptured throats. In station they are often an elegant and at times an unsurpassable race, with easy gait and herculean limbs. Their sports are full of fun; their ambition at times is sublime. When once these isolated races shake off the fetters and spring into prominence, if only they keep together and do not drift apart, the country to use a figurative expression will quiver. In that rapidly approaching day, a race of writers, thinkers, singers, jurists, enquirers and legislators will emerge from the shadows of the Ile Royale and preserving all their intense devotion for the faith and tradition of their faith will take hold of the destinies of Canada and lift the Dominion further and further towards its rightful place as the dominant power of the New World. We have seen what Nova Scotia can do in an Edison. Edison's father was a Nova Scotia man, and there are plenty of the grit of Edison left

The home life of the people of Cape Breton is simple and interesting. Hearts are very warm up there among the colleries, and the clannish element links them together very loyally. Woe to him who dares to do different from his fellow and especially woe to the stranger who goes into the village and keeps aloof from these simple hearted people. You must visit them, and if you do a heartier welcome awaits you than one ever tastes in the salons of the wealthy. It is also a terrible thing if that stranger neglects to go to church. A bible agent once told me that if he did not attend church he could not sell more than two or three bibles in Cape Breton. In his earlier days he had apparently neglected the precaution, but at the time of my visits he had become quite a diplomatist and the sale of gorgeous copies of the scriptures, bound in red morocco and brass positively astounded me. This agent took thousands of dollars out of the colliers in this line alone, and many a house today all through the coal fields has its magnificent copy of Holy Writ carefully laid upon a little table, as a lamp for the family footsteps all through the adroitness of that artful book agent.

There are without doubt, a few peculiar men running "lines of books" through Cape Breton. The most I ever saw was a Bible agent from St. John, New Brunswick, who spent several weeks last summer in the Sydney district. Although a Bible agent his features were most debased. His conduct was worse. He got in as far as Glace Bay and fell a wine-bibbing. For something like two weeks he kept steady at it, the holy books being of course very much neglected; and when he exhausted both money and credit, a solemn procession escorted him over to Cow Bay. Cow Bay, be it known, is a temperate place, although some of the residents keep mouth washes, for use after a drink of the Cuss of England. Still it is without doubt a temperate place, for if at dusk, others of the residents are seen skulking around the doors of an illicit drinking den, with jugs and cans, this need not ruin the character of a very temperate little town, where the righteous undoubtedly flourish like a green bay tree. The bible agent duly arrived in charge of two other book agents with very watery eyes, and straightway the temperate inhabitants resolved themselves into a committee of ways and means for his redemption. The sinner was put to bed, dosed with hot tea, and let down gently from his evil habits on hop beer and other non-intoxicants. In a day or two he was able to sit up straight, and he was led with almost maternal care to the veranda of his temporary refuge, to sit in the sun! By and by he did positively make up his mind to repent and the glowing satisfaction which took possession of the good hearted rescuers, positively reminded one of that passage in the book agent's Bible, about the joy among the angels which is greater over one sinner that repents than over ninety and nine just men who need no repentance. Still all these small Cape Breton philanthropists stood looking at their protege there was—may I be pardoned for writing it—just the faintest trace in those kindly countenances of the expression which we associate with the worshippers in the temple, who stood aloof from the poor publican and said, "I thank thee I am not as other men are, or even as the publican—a sinner." Well, to proceed, the Bible Agent, hurried off to Glace Bay and was presently brought back, wet inside and out, by her Majesty's sheriff of the Peace, who resigned him with a sigh of relief to the good ladies of the place. They struggled on with him as best they could, those tender hearts growing sadder as the days rolled by. But at length the hotel-keeper lost patience, and after listening one day to the Bible agent's maudlin assertion that he must walk to Halifax that night, and that he must, he gently ejected him from his hospitable roof. Simultaneous with the eviction came a voice from St. John, dismissing the fellow and the curtain fell with tragic solemnity.

USES OF THE SIGN LANGUAGE.

The Citizens of Naples Seem to Have Reduced It to a Science.

Such admirable mimics are the Neapolitans that they can even dispense with the use of proper names. A twist of the features, a strut, or other peculiarity of manner, and they have indicated an acquaintance without using his patronymic.

Two men on opposite sides of the street in Naples have been known to hold a protracted conversation by means of signs alone.

Number One pulls a face descriptive of some common acquaintance and makes an interrogative motion.

Number Two crosses his fingers like bars before his face and winks significantly.

Number One signals, "Why?"

Number Two closes his fingers, with a peculiar motion of the hand, laughs and proceeds on his way. This being translated, reads: "Where is So-and-So?"

"In prison."

"What has he been doing?"

"Stealing."

Familiarity with the language of signs save a great deal of time and effort. For example, if in any other city you wish to invite a passing acquaintance to dinner you must stop him and go through a quantity of courteous formality.

In Naples you may simply rap your mouth and intimate the hour by holding up the requisite number of fingers. A motion on his part informs you whether your friend will accept your hospitality. The following are some of the most common signs and gestures in use:

An outward wave of the hand signifies "adieu"; an inward, "come": a downward, "stop." The thumb pointed backward says, "look." Put to the lips with a slight toss of the head it means drinking. Passing across the forehead as though wiping away perspiration, fatigue.

The index finger drawn across the mouth denotes anger; across the clenched teeth, defiance; rapping the closed fingers against the lips, eating; passing the extended index and thumb in front of the mouth, hunger; twisting the end of the moustache, Isn't it good to eat?" A backward wave of the hand beneath the chin and a simultaneous toss of the head, "Not at any price!"

A Popular Soprano.

The London Morning Leader of a recent date said Miss Alice Esty, of Boston, Mass, is one of the most popular sopranos of the Carl Rosa Opera company. It is now three years since she first came to England, and after singing at one of Madame Patti's concerts in the Albert hall she was at once offered an engagement by the Carl Rosa company. Her principal successes have been achieved as Santuzza in the "Cavalleria" (a part she has sung some seventy-five times) as Marguerite in Gounod's "Faust," as Jullet, and as Elsa. She has been as successful in the concert-room as on the operatic stage, and has sung with Mr. Henschel's and Sir Charles Halle,s orchestra, as well as at the Richter and Crystal Palace concerts. She hails from the "Hub," and, like most Bostonians is very proud of her Yankee home, where, by the way, she received her entire education. In private life she is Mrs. Alec Marsh; her husband is, of course, the popular baritone. They have a charming home in South Hampstead.

His Feeling for the Baby.

Mrs. Watts—I believe Mr. Oldbatch's detestation of babies is all affection. He sat by one in the car yesterday that cried for half an hour, and actually seemed to enjoy it.

Mrs. Potts—Of course he enjoyed it! He hates them so that he is delighted to see one in misery.

AN INTERRUPTED SKETCH.

(Prominent Prize Competition.)

"What a delightful spot this is Nell, and what an enchanting glimpse of the river through the trees; look! do look! at the hills on the other side, I think I will sit down on this bank and sketch this lovely scene." "Oh Kathleen; how you can rapsodise over a bit of scenery. I wonder how it is I cannot appreciate the beauties of nature as you do, the artistic soul seems to be asleep in me." "Dem so hot, I think I will not try to read but seek some shady and secluded nook where I can court repose; while you reproduce some of the glorified scenery presented to the artistic vision you are the undoubted possessor of."

Silence falls on the pair, Kathleen arranges her sketch-book, and is soon utterly and entirely interested in the work she is doing. Nell wanders away for a short distance but not discovering the desired haven returns, and sitting down near Kathleen, leans back with her hands clasped behind her head, making as pretty a picture as any one could wish to see, the unstudied grace of her attitude and the beautiful curves of her lithe figure would indeed delight an artist's eye. The heat seems to grow more intense and Nell closes her eyes and appears for a few minutes lost in dreams

The very slight sound made by a bicycle passing along the road does not attract the attention of either of the girls, and the rider, a handsome athletic young man, rides a few rods further down the road, and, attracted by the cool looking bank, dismounts, and leaving his wheel under a tree near the roadside, prepares to make himself comfortable on the shady moss covered bank at no great distance from the girls.

Kathleen quite unconscious of the presence of the young man pursues her sketching earnestly, and Nell opened her eyes looking lazily around is struck with a new idea, which she communicates to Kathleen in a somewhat sudden and rather startling manner. "I am going to take off my shoes and stockings and bathe my feet, there is not a soul in sight, and look at that delightful sandy bar stretching away out there. Oh! I enjoy the very thought of it, I feel cool in anticipation, I can almost imagine I am a child once more—now for pity's sake, do not advise me to refrain, as I am quite determined to go in, just think, Kathleen, how your sketch will be improved, with the introduction of my fairy form into it."

Nell calmly persevered in her determination, notwithstanding the remonstrances of her elder and more sedate sister, and in a few minutes disappeared from her sister's view. Kathleen resumed her work but glancing at the river again, her attention was attracted to Nell who presented a charming picture with her dress kilted above the ankles, and her dainty pinkish feet glimmering through the shining water.

She calls out to Kathleen and invites her to come and wade, assuring her that "the water is quite delightfully cool." Her voice had the unlooked for and totally undesired effect of arousing the sleeping bicyclist, who, gazing around in dreamy wonder, vainly endeavoured to connect the voice with his disturbed dream.

Then his eye lighted on the fascinating picture and a happy thought fairly made his eyes shine and his face beam with joyousness, and quietly yet speedily wending his way, up the bank, he detached his 'kodak' from his bicycle and returning resumed his position of vantage, filled with glee at the prize he was going to number with his 'pictures'—. He was almost as comfortably arranged as was necessary, when the magnetic influence of his admiring glances drew the attention of poor Nell to his presence, with lightning quickness of perception she grasped the idea and dropped her skirts; but, alas, they were not long enough to hide the pretty feet.

"Oh! Kathleen!" she called, as a vivid blush mantled the pretty face. Kathleen glancing up quickly, took in the situation, she also happened to include in her glance, the road and a bicycle, and quick as thought, just as the amateur photographer was going to take his "snap shot" of her sister, she called "Beg pardon, but a small boy is attempting to ride off with your bicycle."

The kodak was laid aside quickly; and Nell hurrying back to the shore was joined by Kathleen who had rapidly collected her sketching materials and they were disappearing from view ere the discomfited bicyclist realized that he had been hoaxed.

SUNBEAM.

One Thing He Feared to Do.

"Let me give you my dying advice," said Rufus Choate. "Never cross-examine a woman. It is of no use. They cannot disintegrate the story they have once told. They cannot eliminate the part that is for you from that which is against you. They can neither combine, nor shade, nor qualify. They go for the whole thing, and the moment you begin to cross-examine one of them, instead of being bitten by a single rattlesnake, you are bitten by a whole barrelful. I never, excepting in a case absolutely desperate, dared to cross-examine a woman."

An Unpromising Outlook.

Missionary—I wonder if there is any field here?

Sad Eyed Native—No, sir, there is not. There were fifteen entries, but they were nearly all scratched.

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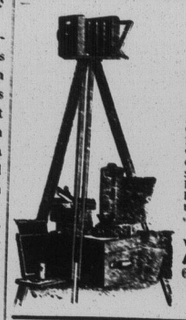

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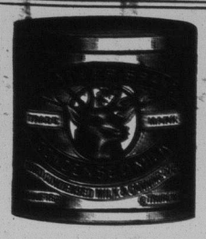

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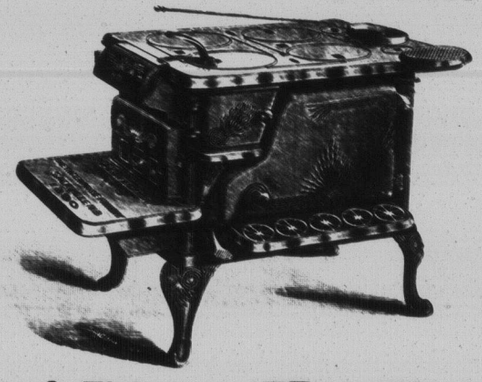

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