

# The Island

The Garden  
of the East

BY THE EDITOR



THERE are many islands in various parts of the world but there is one which, in the opinion of its inhabitants, has a special claim to be called "The Island," for it is scarcely ever referred to in any other way. Its full name, however, is "Prince Edward Island," located about 30 miles off the coast of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, from which it is separated by Northumberland Straits. It is about 200 miles long and from 10 to 40 miles wide; in its natural features rather closely resembling Central Ontario. Nearly all of the Island consists of fairly good agricultural country, there being very little swampy or stony land. The soil has not the richness of the western prairies, but by being well cultivated is capable of producing very good crops, and the farmers seem to be prosperous. Nearly all the houses in country places are whitewashed, and present a very pretty appearance, surrounded as they are by orchards. Large quantities of potatoes are shipped from the Island, and recently the people are giving attention to raising fruit.

#### WEALTH OF THE SEA.

There is a considerable source of wealth, too, in the sea, which the Islander is not slow to recognize. The Bedouque and Richmond Bay oysters are said to be the finest in the



PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT BUILDING,  
Charlottetown, P. E. I.

world, and I can easily believe it, judging from the delicious specimens sampled at Summerside during a recent visit. Great quantities of lobsters are also caught in deep water, and the lobster packing houses are a profitable enterprise. Almost all kinds of salt water fish are obtained on the shores, and it is said that if a family could bring themselves to live on fish and potatoes, their table might be supplied at very small cost. The most toothsome fish are the mackerel and the salmon, the former being particularly fine.

#### POPULATION.

The population of Prince Edward Island is about 210,000, the majority of whom are Roman Catholics. The Presbyterians are the strongest Protestant body, the early settlers being largely Scotch. The Methodists have about sixty churches and good work is being done. We are particularly strong in Charlottetown, the capital city, where there is a Methodist Church almost as large as the Centenary Church, Hamilton, which it closely resembles.

The people of Prince Edward Island are noted for their attachment to their Province. It would be a serious task to undertake to prove to any of them that there is more

attractive spot on earth than their own home. Many of them go abroad, of course, to live permanently, but very frequently express a desire that when death comes they shall be carried back and laid to rest in the "dear old Island." Coffins are often seen in the baggage cars, coming from all parts of the continent.

#### ISLAND HOSPITALITY.

The Islanders are exceedingly hospitable people, and the stranger can count upon being "taken in," in the best sense of the term. A commercial traveller became ill last winter in Charlottetown, and was detained in the hospital for over three months. He informed me that he could not possibly have received greater attention among his own friends. Flowers, jellies, and various delicacies were sent to his room every day by people whom he had never seen, and every effort was made to relieve the monotony of hospital life. Personally I have had several opportunities of knowing how warm-hearted and kind the people of the Island are, and my experience can be expressed in the line:

"I have been there, and still would go."

#### THE CAPITAL CITY.

Charlottetown, the capital city, is a place of about 12,000 inhabitants, and is a very pretty place. There are some fine public buildings, and although the population of the Province is not as large as that of the city of Toronto, there is the whole paraphernalia of Provincial Government, including Legislative Assembly, Parliament Building, Lieutenant-Governor, etc. The military department is under the efficient management of Lieutenant-Colonel Moore, whose guest I was while in the city. A number of Islanders were in the South African campaign, and Colonel Otter said that they were among the very best men under his command, bearing fatigue more readily and being more amenable to discipline. (104)

#### HOW TO GET THERE.

There are two ways of reaching "The Island," one by steamer from Pictou to Charlottetown, a trip of fifty miles, and the other from Point du Chene to Summerside, thirty-five miles. When the water is smooth it is a most delightful trip, but occasionally it is about three hours of concentrated wretchedness. In winter more or less difficulty is experienced in maintaining communication across the straits, which are sometimes completely blocked with ice. Last winter the steamer *Stanley* was frozen in for five or six weeks, drifting up and down in the most helpless fashion. When the steamers are stopped, small boats make the trip, which are dragged over the ice for part of the way, and occasionally launched in the water. A seat in one of these boats costs \$4, but if the passenger is willing to take a strap and help pull the boat, he is only charged \$2. Those who have crossed in this way declare that it is a most unique and interesting experience, but even the most enthusiastic of them are not anxious to have it repeated very often.

#### A SUMMER RESORT.

During recent years Prince Edward Island has become quite a summer resort. Its cool and pleasant climate, the bracing sea air, the fine bathing, together with the excellent fish, lobsters and oysters that can be obtained, make it a most attractive spot for the tourist. The more its charms become known the greater will be the number who will delight in its shores.