

Through the Midland Country to the Land of Evangeline

The situation of Truro reminds one of Guelph, Ont., an impression further borne out by the presence of the N. S. Agricultural College, whence a delightful prospect is obtained of the town in the valley, just across the winding river that ripples past the farm. Like the O. A. C., this juvenile sister light is set on a hill—an eminence that affords a commanding sweep of fertile farming country around, with low, blue-distant hills defining the horizon all about.

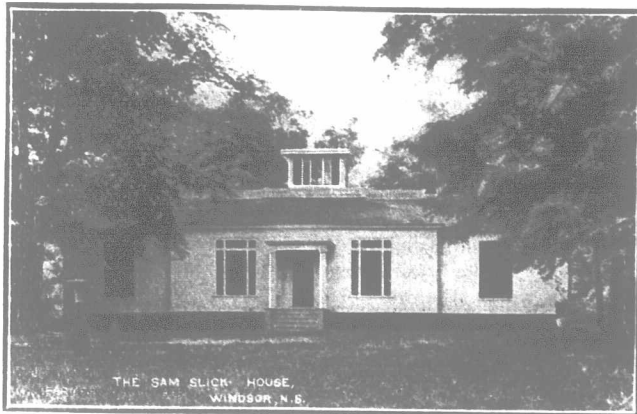
We shall not pause to describe the College. That we reserve for special treatment later on. Suffice, for comment, that we found farm and stock in such thrifty condition as we are accustomed to expect under the efficient management of F. L. Fuller, who had charge of the property for several years while it was being run simply as a Provincial farm. The stables contained some very choice additions to the breeding stud, which did credit to the judgment of Prof. Cumming, who personally selected the animals in the Old Country. The College had a successful year in 1905-1906, and prospects were bright for the reopening this fall, on October 31st.

We compared Truro to Guelph, in point of situation and scenery. The similarity does not hold in other respects. Guelph is hilly; Truro is level. Guelph is a city of limestone; Truro's residences are nearly all frame. In fact, this latter feature is characteristic of the Maritime Provinces, both rural and urban, for lumber is cheaper than in "The West." As a rule, east of Montreal, only business blocks and important public buildings are of masonry. Out in the country you often find houses with sides shingled as well as the roof. It makes a warm wall, but looks odd to a stranger's eyes. But if the houses are frame, their owners do not forget a coat of paint. Any who cannot afford paint use whitewash. The prevailing color of the houses is white, and a shabby, weather-worn, unpainted one is rare.

Truro's population is in the neighborhood of 6,000. The center of one of the best farming districts in the Province, it is also one of the prettiest of towns, and the girls are as pretty as the town. It is the seat of the Provincial Normal School, but its widest fame seems likely to depend upon the N. S. Agricultural College, which the citizens of the town seem to regard with becoming respect. Agricultural students here require no Macdonald Institute to add gaiety to college life.

At Truro the Intercolonial was left for a detour into Western Nova Scotia. Here the reader had better consult a good map, for the geography of this region is very perplexing. It is hard to realize that the Bay of Fundy is projected eastward into the lap of Nova Scotia, and that the shore of the Bay nearest to the Atlantic follows the parallel rather than the meridian. Yet such is the case, and Wolfville, seventy-six miles away (by railroad), in the heart of the orchard country, is not over ten or fifteen miles south of Truro. It is reached from the latter town by way of the Midland Division of the Dominion Atlantic Railway to Windsor, thence by the main line westward along the southern shore of Minas Basin.

The Midland Railway was built some few years ago by an independent company, and since sold to the D. A. R. It traverses a 58-mile stretch of country, which, until its advent, had no railroad facilities short of the two termini, Truro and Windsor. A trip over it rouses one's philosophy. Here may be seen in aggravated degree the effect on a neighborhood of the lack of facilities which other communities enjoy. Some of this country is quite fertile, and great orchard areas will be developed, but at present it is decidedly backward. Two years ago, on this road, a country lass pointed out to the writer an old lady, who lived midway along the line, and hard by the Kennetcook station at that, yet here she was taking her first car ride; it was the first time she had ever been as far from home as Truro! Strange to say, she was well dressed, and evidently a woman of some refinement. But then these are characteristics of the Bluenoses in general. Without casting aspersions upon any other Province, the writer is bound to admit that for intellectuality and culture the Nova Scotian stands almost in a class by himself. The crudest home in the most backward district shows signs of it. Whatever the farm and barns may be, and how-



Sam Slick's House, Windsor, N. S.

ever humble the dwellings, there will be hallmarks of refinement in the home, ascribable to the touch of mother and daughters.

But a country cannot prosper by culture alone. On this continent of great areas, and in this age of abounding opportunities, no community can afford not to progress. Failing, its young men and women, the very choicest of its lifeblood, will commence, sooner or later, to leave. They cannot be kept in ignorance of lands abroad, nor can they be kept at home without hope of a substantial chance of bettering their condition. The law of progress, implanted in all our natures, impels them to the scene of the wider opportunities and the fuller life. It has been so in Nova Scotia.

Her industries used to be fishing, mining, lumbering and wooden shipbuilding, with a little agriculture on the side. Fishing is not an occupation that tends to progressive improvement of individual conditions, nor is it an expanding industry, though it brings in an annual income of \$8,000,000. Lumbering cannot, in the nature of the case, be a growing business, although it will continue to rank important because the price of lumber is rising, and, fortunately, there are large areas of forest in southern Nova Scotia that reproduce fast enough to be cut every thirty years.

But lumbering has had a bad effect on agriculture, because too many farmers dabbled in it, preferring its ready dollar to the slower return resulting from improvement of the homestead. Sole reliance is the stern condition that, more than anything else, makes for improvement of agriculture. The Nova Scotia farmers did not get down to earnest study of their business, because they didn't have to, and, besides, the light soil prevailing (except in the marsh areas), held out scant encouragement. Worse than all was the lack of good agricultural periodicals and the distance from good agricultural regions from which they might learn. They never got well grounded in agriculture.



Cape Blomidon.

The Province is rich in mineral resources, but for many years their exploitation proceeded indifferently. Markets were precarious and capital timorous. As for shipbuilding, that was knocked in the head by introduction of steel in vessel construction, and those who had been depending on it found their occupation was gone. Like fish out of water, they gave up the ghost and settled down to live on the interest of their money. Halifax, Yarmouth and other places are full of such men and their descendants, most of whom are still comfortably well off. In fact, the Province is not only rich in resources, but in actual cash. But the cash has been held in a death-grip, and is only recently beginning to loosen up. The Province remained prac-

tically at a standstill for lack of confident enterprise by those who might have set the wheels of industry moving.

Where a country, a Province or a community lags, the individual is fettered. No one drop of blood can start much of a circulation, but where a volume is coursing through the arteries of commerce, each drop can play its part. In Nova Scotia there was general business pessimism, hence any courageous ones who may have essayed to wake things up, found their enterprise clogged by inactivity of the rest. So the eddies subsided and chronic stagnation ensued. Nothing was doing, no alluring future was held out to the young. What could they do but leave? They did leave in a despairing stream, until the country was bled almost white. The finest of bone and brawn, the greatest of intellects found their way to the New England cities and beyond, while home industry languished, and agriculture, which should have been their stay, was all but neglected. Boston was handy, and Boston held out inducements of wages and bustling life to the muscle and brains of the Maritime Provinces. Similar exodus took place from Ontario to the Central and Western States, but it was never quite so exhausting, and was checked ten years ago, while down here the outpouring has been only recently stemmed. Indeed, there is still an outward movement, but it is being diverted to the Canadian West, and is not so much deplored. For at last Nova Scotians have come to regard themselves as Canadians, and to feel a pride in the general development of our magnificent Dominion. This vitalizing patriotism, this broadening outlook, is one of the less conspicuous but potent influences helping to gird their loins, quicken their pulse and arouse them to an appreciative sense of their splendid Province as an integral part thereof. Results are already evident. Capital awakes from its lethargic slumber, investors look about, things are commencing to move, and the Maritime Provinces are plainly entering upon a belated era of development.

It is a wonderful country when you size it up, Nova Scotia especially. Immense deposits of iron and coal, to say nothing of all sorts of other minerals, in many cases almost contiguous, and all easily assembled by water carriage about its indented peninsular coast; great forests of timber, that grows as it can grow in a moist coast country; every facility requisite to extensive manufacturing for world markets, which are cheaply accessible by water routes from its numerous harbors; the most wonderful apple district in America; an unexcelled country for sheep husbandry; good climate and pastures for dairying; a sufficiency of soil, when more thriftily utilized, to provide the agricultural needs of several times its present population; and, best of all, a healthful, tonic, briny air, that fills the lungs and has helped to nurture a race of people renowned over a continent. With all this catalogue of advantages, what can prevent Nova Scotia from becoming a great and

prosperous Province? What it has lacked was united courage and push—the pull-all-together-my-hearties kind of spirit—and it is being aroused.

As lucrative opportunities multiply, and the pick of the people remain at home, while other bright brains are attracted by one special line or another, the chronic process of adverse selection will cease. If Nova Scotia, handicapped as she has been by perpetual drain of her best blood, has continued to rear and send forth such splendid specimens of manhood and womanhood, what will she not do when she has a chance to breed from the best, and then develop the progeny, as it can be developed only in a flourishing country of abounding individual opportunities. Why have many young Canadians developed so remarkably in a few years in the

United States? They were good to begin with, and then breadth of opportunities educated their faculties and developed their powers. There are three natural essentials in rearing a great race of men: (1) Good foundation stock; (2) selection of the best, and (3) conditions that will develop the progeny into its potential excellence. Nova Scotia, and, indeed, all Canada, have lacked in part the latter two factors, but they are now about to be supplied. Nova Scotia is well named; her people will in future, even more than now, be counted the salt of the New World, as old Scotia's are of Europe.

It will take time, however, and just now it must be