

ON THE BASIN OF MINAS.

BY THOMAS CROSS, OTTAWA.

LEAVING the pretty and thriving Village of Parrsboro', in Nova Scotia, a drive of some two miles in a south-westerly direction brings the traveller to an eminence commanding a scene of extraordinary beauty.

Down below, the broad expanse of the Basin of Minas. To the right, a few hundred yards away, the bold promontory of Partridge Island gives to the landscape a foreground of such striking grandeur as at once to rivet the eye. To the left, the pictured rocks of the New Red Sandstone (the Bunter Sandstein, or *gay sandstone* of German geologists) trend far away to the eastward, forming, with the rich verdure of the overlying country, a combination of colour rare and striking. In front, placed in fine perspective by the nearer features of the scene, and at a distance just sufficing to bring out all its grandeur, towers Blomidon, noblest of American headlands, nearly six hundred feet above the waters; its steep base of bright red sandstone partially covered by bright green bushes, and surmounted by two hundred feet of perpendicular basaltic cliffs, crowned by the 'forests old,' upon which the eyes of Evangeline once looked from across the Basin.

At the foot of the hill is a solitary and quiet hostelry, known as the 'Ottawa House,' where we propose to take up our quarters for a few weeks, sure of clean rooms, unfailing kindness on the part of the household, and perfect freedom.

People who go to the sea-side in summer for the purpose of meeting

the same people they meet in winter, and doing the same things they do in winter, and bearing the same fashionable yoke they bear in winter, of course know where to go; but people in quest of a thorough change of life, as well as of air and scene, and craving a respite from those eternal and unchanging 'amusements' without which it has been well said that life would be tolerable, these people cannot always hear of a place abounding in all things they seek, and free from all things they would escape from; and to them I would speak of the Basin of Minas.

When we turn up Principal Dawson's 'Acadian Geology,' and find that the rocks of these shores consist of 'New Red,' carboniferous and trap, we are in some degree prepared for the learned author's statement, that 'for grandeur and beauty of coast scenery, this part of the Minas Basin and the Minas Channel are not surpassed by any part of the eastern coast of North America.' For the trap will give us bold and peaky headlands like Partridge Island and Cape Sharp, enclosing deep quiet bays with pretty wooded islets. Or else it will rise, as at Blomidon, in a seawall of columnar basalt of overpowering majesty. The 'gay sandstone' will furnish those broad bands of bright colour which from afar call for 'three cheers for the red, white and blue.' Nature herself stamped the British colours on these coasts. The rich verdure combines well with the painted rocks below; and if we leave the coast the inland scenery