

MISSION TO MAGDALENE ISLANDS
II.

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Communication between the Magdalenes and the rest of the world is maintained by the steamer "Beaver," which leaves Pictou Landing every Monday after the arrival of the Halifax express. After calling at Georgetown and Souris it reaches the islands the next morning. More elegant boats can be found on either side of the Atlantic, but she has comfortable staterooms, and the captain, a worthy Jerseyman, is all that one could desire, either as a commander or a fellow traveler. She first calls at Amherst Island, thence crosses Pleasant Bay to Grindstone Island, thence goes to Grand Entry, where staying only to land and receive mails and freight, she returns to call again at the former places, and then sails the same evening on her return voyage.

On Tuesday 19th July, I landed at Grindstone. The same day I learned that there was a man up from Bryon Island, the most distant of the group. On meeting him he kindly offered me a passage, and it being represented that there might not be another opportunity to that quarter during my stay, I concluded to accept his offer and commence my work there. Accordingly the next forenoon we sailed from House Harbor (Havre au maison, the French call it) which is formed between Grindstone and Alright Islands. Our course lay through the Bay that I described in my last.

After a run of about five hours we landed on Grosseisle, (pr. Grozeel) at a little cove, protected on the North by sandhills, and where was going on the inevitable lobster canning and codfish curing. Thence we had to walk about a mile-and-a-half to the other side of the island, where we were again to embark for our destination.

My companions insisted that I should have tea while they were taking in their cargo, and for this purpose took me to the house of the superintendent of the telegraph system on the island, a French Canadian, living close to the shore. He is a stout man, now inclining to corpulence, but must once have been six feet high, strongly built and well proportioned. But now both his legs are off above the knees and with this is connected

ONE OF THOSE TRAGIC SCENES for which these islands have been distinguished. One night in December the

vessel in which he was, struck upon one of these islands and soon went to pieces. After this all he recollected was his clinging to what he thought the largest piece of the forepart of the ship, till he awoke on the beach with his hands and feet frozen. With great difficulty he crawled to one of the little huts, which the inhabitants have erected in which to stow the marsh grass in summer, till they can haul it away in winter. Here he tried to sustain life by eating some of this coarse hay, but came to the conclusion that it was not even fit for oxen. It was some days ere he was found. He was taken to a house and cared for, but his legs were so badly frozen that the flesh mortified and began to slough off. There was no doctor on the island to amputate them, so that he had to remain in this condition till spring, when he was taken to Quebec, where the operation was performed. Now he steps about his rooms on two wooden stumps, or travels with the aid of crutches. He received me very hospitably.

We had yet ten miles before us. As soon as I had tea, our boat's cargo being on board, we again set sail. We were now upon the Atlantic, the dark blue of its water and the long roll of its wav contrasting with the greenish shade and placid calmness of the Bay on which we had been sailing during the forenoon. Before us is Bryon Island, five miles long, lying nearly East and West. As we approach it from the South, its shores present the aspect of steep cliffs from the top of which the ground rises still higher toward the interior.

As we advance we can see to the North-east

THE BIRD ROCKS.

two small islets, distinguished as the Great Bird and the North Bird, lying about eighteen miles from Grosseisle and about twelve from Bryon. These islands derive their names from the immense multitudes of birds that frequent them. Though evening is approaching and there is a haze toward the horizon, we distinctly see the greyish white color, especially of the largest, from the large number of the birds which make their nests upon it, particularly the gannet. This bird is about three feet long, white in color, except the top of the head and the back of the neck which are tinged with yellow, and the quill feathers which are black. They possess