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# THE CHARLOTTETOWN GUARDIAN

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Devoted to the Literature, History, Folk-lore and best Interests of the Province of Prince Edward Island.

## THE MAGAZINE GUARDIAN

Succeeding *The PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND MAGAZINE* Issued Every Saturday Morning.

### THE WAYS OF THE CARIBOU

THE great caribou herds of Newfoundland migrate semi-annually, and no one but an actual witness of these migrations can form any adequate conception of the marvelous number of deer which the island contains.

It is estimated that the number which crossed the Exploits River at one point during ten days in the autumn of last year exceeded 4,000. This crossing ground is only one of scores of similar trails.

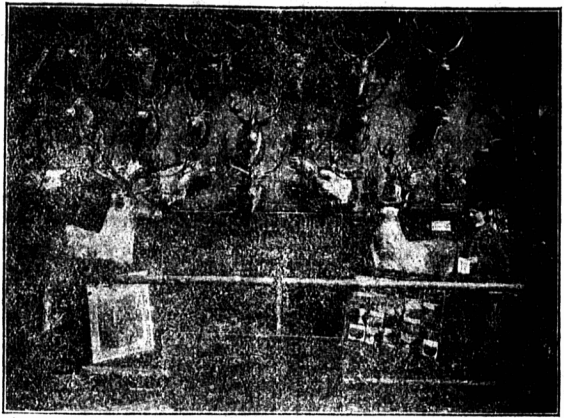
Somewhere about the middle of September the migratory tide sets southward, the hinds with fawns forming the vanguard of the long procession. The lazy stags hang on the rear until some storm more severe than ordinary gives an unmistakable earnest of the approach of winter.

Then all alike hurry toward the sheltered districts in the south, taking a straight course, over boulder-strewn mountain heights, through tangled and obdurate masses of timber, across mountain torrents and immense lakes.

During winters of unusual severity the animals often draw quite near to the settlements on the south coast; whereupon the settlers, armed with fearsome firearms, such as sealers used some fifty years ago, straightway proceed to decimate the herds with volleys of buckshot. The price of caribou venison at such times in the city of St. John's has been known to drop to two cents a pound.

The foes of the caribou other than man are not numerous. Although the big gray wolf is still reported on the northern plains in considerable numbers, it is now seldom encountered in the interior. Having formerly existed in large packs, it is supposed that migration must have occurred across the winter ice floes of the Belle Isle Strait to the coast of Labrador.

Even such a redoubtable beast of prey as the gray wolf could at no time make certain of a successful foray upon an animal endowed with such great speed and endurance as a well-grown caribou. A trustworthy old Newfoundland trapper says that he once witnessed an exciting



Display of Caribou Heads.

chase by wolves of a couple of prickets, or two-year-old caribou stags.

Both sides doubtless were going at the utmost pace. He measured the bounds of the caribou and found them eighteen feet, while the wolves only cleared fourteen, so that the caribou easily gained on them when close pressed.

So much ahead were the caribou at times that they rolled over on their backs in the snow to cool their panting and heaving sides and seemed to gather new strength and refreshments from the act.

Another enemy to the caribou fawns has of late years quietly replaced the wolf, the stealthy and bloodthirsty lynx canadensis. The island at this date fairly swarms with these fierce cats.

Antlers are common to both sexes of the caribou. There are rare occasional stags with short legs and compact bodies, which never carry antlers and show no rudimentary growth, and there also are some few does devoid of horns. A Newfoundland guide tells of seeing a dozen mature caribou in company, and only one, a nearly white stag, carried antlers.

The caribou is a strong and gallant swimmer. Each limb is like a paddle, the

extended hoofs answering to the blade. In the winter the frog of these enormous hoofs becomes completely absorbed, so that its shape grows concave, while very sharp, shell like edges grow well out on the margins, assisting the animal immensely in crossing frozen lakes and scaling the steep sides of slippery rock precipices.

It is an interesting sight to watch the herds taking water with as much unconcern as wild fowl. The enormous thickness of their dense coats of hair doubtless helps to float their bodies high above the surface, giving a buoyancy almost equal to that of a cork jacket.

While swimming they rest their under-jaws on the water with nostrils slightly elevated, and carry their white scuffs erect. Should they suddenly catch a whiff of wind from the hunter they give evidence of their excitement by bounding twice or thrice almost entirely clear of the water, causing a tremendous commotion.

In their migration they are usually seen to travel on the leads (deer paths) in single file, the stags, as a rule, bringing up the rear. The most forward and alert

### THE LITTLE MAN.

All tony, but sweet, is the old straw hat, As it hangs on the rack in the hall. There's mud from home on the two little shoes,

Where he played in the hills last Fall; There's dust on the kilt, and the little slick horse—

Stands still as ever he can, Listening, perhaps, in the corner there For the voice of the brave little man.

There's never a song of bird, nor bloom Of rose that blows in the Spring, Nor shout of boy nor gleam of sun.

But where some tears will cling, There's never a flash of the evening star, On the lenth stone's freside

Of Winter night, but will bring some tears, For the brave little man that died.

Kind friends—they were; we kiss them for him, And lay them out of sight—

The two little shoes, the torn old hat, The little slick horse and kite; And down in his pocket a rusty nail,

A bit of chalk and string, A broken knife, an alley or two.

Oh, the birds, and the bloom and the Spring! And star of God at morn's song,

Noontime and twilight tide, One sweet little face—some tears will come,

For the brave little man that died.

sentinels of the herds are the barren does; next come the does with fawns, always prepared to give warning to their indolent consorts. All the savannas of the interior of Newfoundland are scored by well defined leads, which the herds invariably make for and follow.

[Were there caribou and moose on this island at one time? The question is often raised, and our local naturalists are divided on the question. By some it is claimed that records exist of the locked antlers of moose having been found, and the fact is referred to that moose and deer skins were exported from the island by the French at the earliest period of their occupation.]

### RELIGIOUS INSTINCT

The Reminiscence of Pioneer Days in Prince Edward Island.

AMONG the new men were a number of local preachers who seemed thoroughly versed in the scriptures and were well up in theology; one of them did not know even the alphabet, yet he could repeat a chapter from almost any part of the sacred volume without omitting a word. Religious meetings were held at different parts of the district on Sundays and during the week, before long a church was built and used for some years with unplastered walls; in winter a couple of stoves moderated the temperature slightly and people moved about continuously during the service.

Apart from the ordinary worship a special service was held quarterly which continued for several days; at the beginning of each convention some difficult passage of Scripture was given out by the chairman and one after another of the spiritual guides offered explanatory remarks, such remarks in each instance being virtually a sermon requiring perhaps an hour in delivery, the whole service lasting five to six hours. So great was the interest taken in these quarterly conventions that numbers of men and women travelled on foot more than thirty miles in order to be present.

I have a dim recollection of a comical incident that took place after one of these meetings. Our house being only a hundred yards from the church, was usually well patronized by persons who had come from afar. An old log house we had located stood near the road and opposite the sanctuary; the cellar was of unusual depth and along the back of the building the floor had been for some purpose removed. Among the worshippers was a very short-sighted man, named McD— he had come by saddle. In hunting out a good place for his horse he noticed the old building, led the beast in and fastened him on solid ground to one side of the chimney; then he brought some hay from the field. The horse in

time having finished his provender, backed a step or two and being opposite to where the floor had been raised, his hind feet slipped over the edge, and into the cellar he went. At close of the service McD— went to saddle his horse, but the beast could nowhere be found. After a careful search through the fields, he went a second time into the building and was startled by a loud neigh from the cellar right under his feet. Making his way down very cautiously he found his lost property, and there was mutual joy, but the rejoicing came to an end on finding that the horse was a prisoner. After futile attempts to get the animal out as he had got in, a number of men came to the rescue, and by means of shovels and spades a passage was dug under the sill and before night the beast and its owner went rejoicing away. I have a dim recollection of rolling over and over on the grass in paroxysms of laughter at the idea of the horse getting lost, and reporting himself from the cellar.

Sometime after the disruption in Scotland two clergymen from the Free Church, came out as evangelists or missionaries; they displayed immense zeal and used extraordinary vigor both as to language and pitch of their voice. One of them was particularly violent and wild in the pulpit. During his discourse he was alternately slapping his hands together or beating the pulpit with his fists; at close of the service the palms of both hands were frequently covered with great blisters, and the book-board was generally splintered to pieces. His language was exceedingly harsh and severe: the bottomless pit, the lake of fire and brimstone; the terrors of the final day of account were often his theme. At the close of the service he was at times too hoarse to articulate. Persons in the meeting would be pointed out if they paid indifferent attention. On a certain occasion shortly after commencing his discourse,

he noticed a young woman in front of him furtively using a hand-mirror and fixing her hair; shutting the bible with a bang, and speaking with impassioned emotion, he said that while he was offering those present eternal life and the riches of Heaven, parties sitting before him despised the offer and the gift of God's Son; he was (he said) so overwhelmed with conflicting emotions that he found it impossible to go on. He at once brought the service to a close and dismissed the meeting.

A comparison between the preaching of today and that to which I have reference would be like a comparison between a mild, gentle zephyr and a howling tornado rending great trees and reducing every wreck. I offer no opinion as to relative merit or spiritual efficiency; all my statements are as nearly as possible facts. It cannot however be denied that the men of whom I have spoken were in terrible earnest.

### THE BETTER WAY.

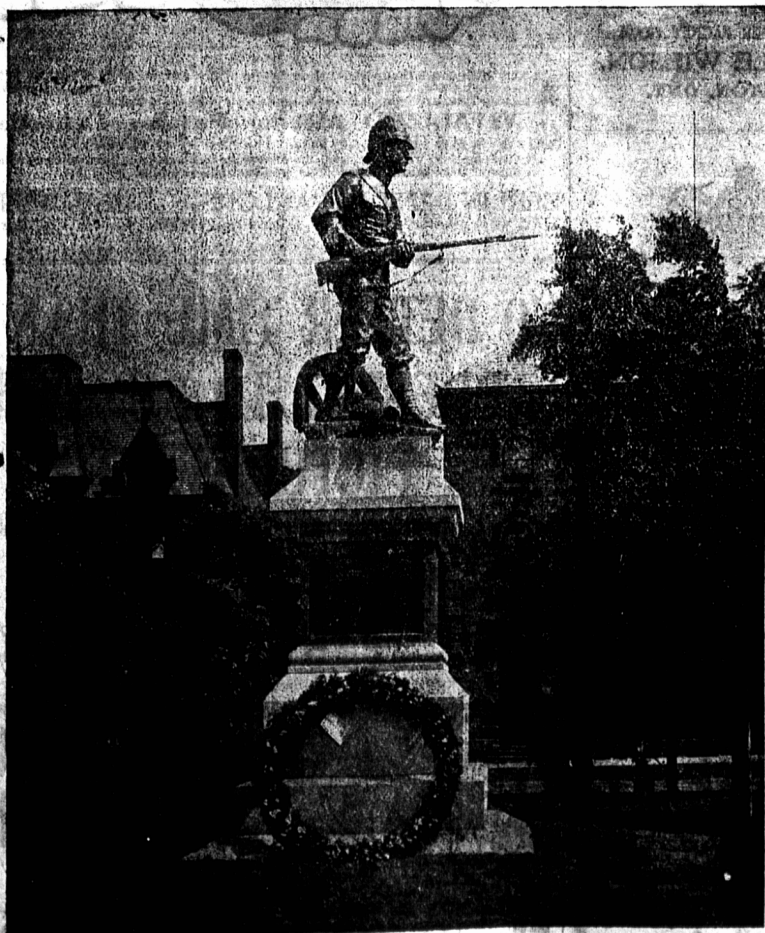
'Tis better to laugh than to cry, dear— A proverb you'll grant me is true; 'Tis best to forget to be sad, dear— The heart's ease is better than rue.

'Tis best to be glad for what is, dear, Than to sigh for the things which are not;

'Tis better to reckon the joys, dear, Than the troubles that fall to your lot. 'Tis more to be good than to be great, dear; To be happy is better than wise, You'll find it you smile at the world, dear.

The world will smile back in your eyes.

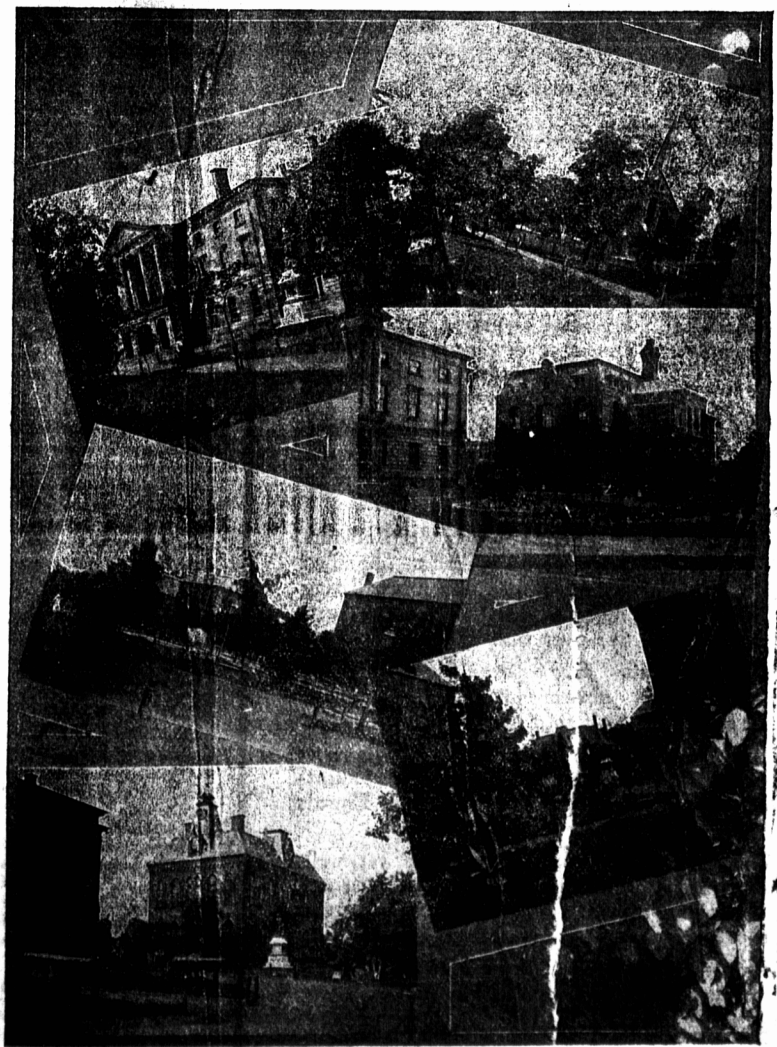
—HELEN L. TOWNE.



Monument to Islanders Killed in Boer War, Queen Square Gardens, Charlottetown.

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