

Prince Edward Island

AN Island ! the very appellation is beautiful, and, because of its euphony, no less than by its force in appeal the poets, who of all writers most sweetly thrill the finest fibres of our being, have ever when occasion offered, made use of the word "Isle" in their choicest and most telling productions.

What soul of Celtic race, though he may never have set eyes upon her verdant vales or caught the sunshine off her flashing waters or trod the same green turf which enshrines her patriot-Martyrs' dust, can remain unmoved aneath the cadence of Ireland's witching singers? And where would be the charm of those melodies, if devoid of their unceasing mention of fair Erin's Isle?

Had not the kingdom of Greece been composed of a group of Islands, the inimitable "Song of the Greek bard" would have missed much of its pathos; and by all familiar with history, it is conceded that the stinging sarcasm which Byron therein puts into the mouth of the singer in reference to the country's former glory and after decay, so aroused the long dormant energies of the oppressed that they summoned courage to confront, and eventually overcome the tyrant Turk and to emerge into a nation of freemen.

The native of Old England, as he sits by the camp-fire in the far Australian wilds, brings forth, along with his pipe, a dingy print of a by-gone date and regales his comrades' ears with :

" The sweetest spot—deny it who can—
Is the Island home of an Englishman."

while the broad Pacific plashes its waves on a tranquil shore to the soulful rendition of the Scotsman's—

"A song for thee, auld Scotland, the beautiful, the brave,
Where the heather blooms sae sweetly and the bonny tartans
wave,
Where every stream breathes music as it proudly rolls along,
And wafts from every tower a tale, from every isle a song."

Of all the admirable productions of the artist the on-looker's sympathy is more apt to go out to an exquisite combination of sea and shore, or of inland lake with its dots of Islands.

Especially interesting are those isles of ocean which were the scenes of great events, or the erstwhile resting places of the mighty. Of the latter are St. Helena of Bonaparte fame and, in contrast, the sacred isle of Patmos.

Well does the navigator know the value of islands as places of refuge from the rising tempest. Take, for instance, the treeless Falkland Islands, where many a good ship, after bravely fighting the "Spirit of the storm" in futile endeavours to round the Cape, or daring the treacherous Straits of Magellan, has been fain to struggle into shelter well-nigh dismasted, and battered and stripped of her canvas by the raging elements.

Montesquieu affirms, that Islands, guarded by the sea, are safe from invasion; also that islanders are more prone to liberty than dwellers on a continent. The first assertion has been proved fallacious, but, as for the second, doubtless by reason of the free and unconfined life enjoyed upon an island, the God implanted love of liberty grows with one's growth—thus, islanders are usually alert in offering their services on behalf of freedom.

Is it any wonder that, amid all the prior claims of other Islands, this little Isle of Prince Edward has, till of late been so slightly known to the outside world? It is the inhabitants who make or mar the fame of a country; and it is now when the descendants of those courageous pioneers, whose fortitude paved the way

for their successors, are enabled to accomplish what their hearts desire in the sphere of learning or of business, that opportunity is afforded for fuller intercourse with the larger world beyond its shores.

As to the advantages of residence upon P. E. Island—it has good harbors and plenty of woodland beside, with facilities for sportsmen on river, sea and land ; a summer climate equalled by few and surpassed by none, and if it possesses not the wealth of spice which yields gold to the traders of Java and Ceylon, it has other industries—notably its fish and fruit canning etc., which amply compensate ; while peerless in value is its health-inspiring ozone off the briny Deep. If it has not those heroes, who gave to Skye a deathless name, it has heroes of the same race ever ready to uphold the pillars of that freedom for which their forefathers conquered or died. If it has no mausoleums of magnificence for its dead, it has cottages of contentment for its living—with schools and churches which would well consort with a larger sphere and colleges that offer exceptional educational advantages.

Names distinguished in finance, in art, in classics, in law, in theology etc. date from this island. Of such are Macleod, Harris, Schurman, Sir L. H. Davies and the now sainted Archbishop O'Brien ; while, conspicuous for bravery are those youthful heroes, who faced the hardships of an African campaign along with the bullets of a well practised foe. Modest but dauntless heroism is also displayed in the life-saving efforts of the island fisherman such as Grady and Campbell who deserve to rank in honour with warriors of the battlefield.

That Prince Edward Island has a history, not, written in wars of extermination but founded upon labours of philanthropy and religion, may best be gleaned through perusal of the valuable works of Dr McMillan

and Major Pollard, which ought to be in every Canadian home.

With splendid steamships to convey an outside world to a restful, peaceful and prosperous land, where abundance, not only of the necessities but also of the luxuries of life, awaits them—the continual supply from fertile farm and from teeming ocean—should there not be called forth from the inhabitants of Prince Edward Island a song of thanksgiving—a hymn of praise to the Wise Giver of all Good Who has so abundantly blessed “Fair Abegweit.”

