

# DOWN EAST

We have in a distant corner of Nova Scotia a literary man of decidedly original gifts, who, feeling that too much attention was being given to certain uninteresting parts of the earth just because they were called the North and South Poles, <sup>and no one could get near them (this was before the romantic days of Dr. Cook)</sup> decided that this was a simple matter to rectify, and determined to rectify it himself; and he has perpetrated a map of the world with four poles, having added an East and a West pole. One of these he named after himself, and the other Gates pole after the man who enabled him to put his <sup>brilliant</sup> ~~original~~ ideas on paper. Now he would not have been far

off in his estimate if he had put his Gates pole at Nova Scotia, and surrounded it with: Accordingly I for a while thought of giving my talk the title of "the unfound East Pole, or some of the properties of unknownness that we usually associate with the poles. ^ For the "unfound Gates Pole"

in the first place this easternmost part of Canada at Halifax is literally its gates, and the great natural port of the East.

I believe that Montreal, at the end of a long water alley, has put forward some modest claims to being a sort of port, when the weather is fine and warm, what you might call a sally-port, perhaps a sally-in-our-alley port <sup>birds begin to sing and the Eastern</sup>

port. In the second place, like the North and South poles, this East pole is really terra incognita to most Canadians, including ourselves. A new breed of Peary's and Amundsen's is needed, and perhaps if they are of the capitalistic class, and are required to stay <sup>at the East Pole</sup> ~~there~~ after discovering it, not three days like Amundsen, but three months, it may become the best known part of Canada. Unlike the other poles it is easy of access, and that may account for the fact that explorers have passed over and over it, without actually finding it.

Now the obvious first question is, have we anything to offer when found, and have we advertized it?

We certainly have not been too modest about some of our accomplishments. <sup>tried to make others believe us when we say that we have a</sup> We have ~~told you of our~~ great wealth in <sup>our brains</sup> intellectual foreheads; how we have to keep an overstock supply of College professors for the rest of the Continent. <sup>Also</sup> you have no doubt heard us speak of the Archibald's, <sup>the Johnstone's,</sup> the Young's, the Howe's and the Tupper's, who fought the battle for responsible government; and I suppose we have even claimed that through

through us you enjoy the political and legislative liberty you possess. *Again* we have not been silent about the ~~part~~ the spirit of those actors on our little stage played in the laying of the foundations of confederation. And in this connection you have helped in the erection of a memorial tower on the banks of the beautiful North West Arm at Halifax, to be dedicated by His Excellency this summer to commemorate the starting of the first colonial self-government of the units of the Empire in the province of Nova Scotia.

Again, we have let you know that the originator of the conception of this tower, Sir Sanford Flemming, along with that master-Canadian, George M. Grant, who with prescient eye saw the brown, barren, frozen North West of his contemporaries peopled with countless settlers and glowing with the golden gleam of its wheaten ocean, *crossed the Continent and* that these two discovered the Western pole, and added it as a sort of *Country-Club* ~~summer-house~~ to the purlieus of Nova Scotia. There to mark our ownership Dalhousie University has scattered with *liberal* ~~lavish~~ hand Premiers, Attorney-Generals, Superintendents of Education, Judges, lawyers, teachers, preachers, members of parliaments, etc. Again,

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Again, we boast, if such a thing were possible by us, of our native literary magazines, our authors and printing-presses when Western Canada was immersed in the primer.

We've even got into that state down there, worse luck for us, where some of them boast of the number of our Colleges; with a population of half a million we have as many degree-conferring institutions as Quebec and Ontario put together with their *five* millions. No wonder we are lost.

We can justly claim the most moral, law-abiding, god-fearing population outside of French Quebec; where religious and philanthropic and charitable institutions flourish, and crime and real want are rare.

This is the way we have blown our own horn about ~~one~~ side of our picture.

*what do we claim*  
Now for the part that nature has done for this breed. We have made  
*rich and varied*

no concerted effort to be silent concerning our native material resources. We have  
*tried to make you understand*  
~~let you know~~ that we have the most pleasant and healthful and bracing summer, fall and

winter climate in America, neither too hot, nor too cool, - just right. (We have said

little

Le Bon Dieu it will be good for us to have everything.

(5.)

little about the fact that we have the most confounded slow-paced three months of imitation-Spring of any place that has yet been heard from that boasts of <sup>pretends to</sup> ~~its~~ <sup>having a</sup> climate.)

We have coal <sup>that</sup> ~~such as~~ is told about in the story-books, in abundance, on the water's edge, and both under the water as well as the land; and not in one section only, but in many.

Then we have iron, and we have lime, fairly leaning up against the coal, so that the chance dropping of a match might almost make <sup>the whole country</sup> a great steel-works. We

have, and especially have had, a wonderful forest wealth, and wonderfully arranged for quick, easy marketing, since no part of the province is over thirty miles from the sea, and rivers and streams and lakes are as plentiful as lands. We stick out

into the centre of the most valuable and extensive deep-sea fishing grounds in the

world, almost like a fishing-stand on a millionaire club's preserved waters. <sup>And the shore</sup> ~~fisheriss~~ <sup>are</sup> ~~equally~~ <sup>equally</sup> ~~valuable~~ <sup>valuable</sup>.

We have, what is equally important for such an industry, the sea-faring men, the instinct for ship-building and the wood to do it with, the bait, and the ice, - everything to give us the advantage over any competitor - and yet we are not happy!

Again, it is impossible

impossible you have not heard us talk in our sleep about our orchards and the Annapolis Valley; how we had 1,500,000 barrels of apples to give away this year. And at times we may even have spoken of other riches; but I have mentioned enough.

*in Kipling's words* We say we are all this, and have all this, and yet we have not found ourselves, nor have others discovered us. With an intelligent population such as must be granted us, and with <sup>great</sup> natural resources such as all authorities credit us with, we have not grown in numbers nor in wealth in any such way as might have been expected. I do not for a moment admit that these are <sup>only or the</sup> the best criteria of progress of a country; <sup>and I shall refer to this again;</sup> but they are ~~the~~ commonly accepted ones, and failure to meet them requires explanation. It would be rash to offer <sup>complete</sup> ~~a~~ explanation of such a complicated problem; but I am going <sup>a guess as to</sup> to hazard <sup>a</sup> some factors of it.

In the first place I would like to deal with the fact that we have not found ourselves. <sup>our nation's author</sup> If you read T. C. Haliburton's "Sam Slick the Clockmaker", written in 1835, you find him accuse the Blue-noses of shiftlessness, and dullness, of a lack

of enterprise and spirit, and of wasting their time on <sup>fruitless discussions of</sup> political and religious differences.

You know we never like a fellow to talk out of school, but ~~it is~~ Well, I think you can easily find still the class he had in mind, and there ~~is~~ is a

measure of truth in it all; but it is not a general explanation, nor a true picture of present or past conditions, though like all good caricatures it has too many near-truths to be comfortable.

Haliburton picked out failings and faults in his countrymen in order by exaggeration to have them rid themselves of them. But his preachings bring out

<sup>some</sup> peculiarities of our people which are quite distinctive. There is no doubt we are a

most conservative people - not in the political sense; for there we are Conservative or Liberal as Ottawa is Conservative or Liberal.

Now don't take this in a wrong sense, for I do not mean we are a toady<sup>ing</sup> or sycophantic people; but simply this, that when we send you

<sup>John S.D.</sup> a Tupper or a Thompson, then Ottawa is conservative; if it is a Fielding, then Ottawa is liberal; or if a Borden, then Ottawa is again conservative. But we are a very conservative

people, though a most wandering one. As our country grows older and more settled, our

young people have gone West to do for that country what their sires did for this. Instead

of changing to a different style of activity in their own land, their instinct seems to <sup>lead them</sup> ~~to~~  
to carve out the same life even if they must go to a new country to find the ideal

conditions for it. <sup>(8.)</sup> We almost seem to lack adaptability. *And many have gone to the United States, and justified much of what Sam Slick said of those that did not. This loss is great and irremediable, and we shall feel it for many a day.*

Again, our people as a rule, except in the wooden ship-building industry, which seems to have taken their fancy, have not developed an instinct for the highly specialized, multiphased currents of modern industrial activity. They stayed so long in the West India mercantile and shipbuilding and shipping business, that when this dwindled they realized that their whole mode of life had gone out of fashion, and they were not ripe for change. Of course, the excuse is sometimes made for them that

they had not capital; there is no doubt a measure of truth in this, but I doubt if it is a valid excuse. I am inclined to believe that the decline of their favourite and familiar line of trading, combined with the new political changes introduced by Confederation, and the consequent derangement of trade channels, produced by it, <sup>for the moment</sup> depressed the spirit of self-reliance and venturesomeness among our merchants, and brought on an attack



of over-cautiousness, which accounts for much that followed. Such waves of feeling are not uncommon in the history of communities, any more than are the waves of violent and unreasoning speculation that often follow them. As a consequence what capital was free remained idle, or was salted away in banks, nearly as great a folly. They awaked in a few years to find that their trade had been largely taken away from under their very noses by their more venturesome Yankee neighbours. Gloucester became rich and prosperous in a business that Halifax and Lunenburg should have been doing, and even Europeans found it a lucrative business from a base 3000 miles away. The retaking of this fishing business, <sup>theirs</sup> by right of proximity, has been a slow undertaking for our merchants; but it has been a sure one, and they are now almost masters of their own again. A somewhat similar story might be told of other industries; but I want to draw a picture, not relate a history.

Another factor in determining the course of the career of Nova Scotia is the type of her early settlers. Two classes of people stand out very prominently in her

her population, and have exerted a very powerful influence in moulding the characteristics of the Bluenose. In the first place there was the strong infusion of the Scotch<sup>ish</sup> Highlander, who, according to the commonly expressed version of all that is Scottish, is put down as a natural money-maker, because not given to lavishness. He truly was not a spendthrift, because he never had that which he could scatter. Sixpences were too rare to allow him<sup>self</sup> the pleasure of hearing one go bang<sup>for nothing</sup>. Thrift with him was a necessity for life itself, and money a rarity not to be spent as freely as even life itself. His ambitions were far different from the accumulation of wealth, and their rural descendants, at least, in our Province retain that peculiarity. A Highland mother would far rather see her boy in the pulpit or the Professor's Chair with seedy clothes and pinched cheek, though some of us could perhaps not see where all the glory came in, than a comfortable money-making business man. No sacrifice was too great, no self-effacement too bitter, in order that the sons might be educated for professional life, and the daughters brought up to be fit for ministers' wives; but you would travel far to find that same spirit animate them to save enough money to set the boy up in a business office. The influence of this breed must never

never be neglected in any estimate of the ~~value~~<sup>gift</sup> of Nova Scotia to the common country.

It is an interesting fact that these Highland settlers, though among the earliest, marched by the fertile and easily-tilled intervale and bottom lands, and drawn by instinct to the hills, made their homes in the most inaccessible places, where the difficulties of clearing the land were greatest, and the soil less rich, and where consequently a fair subsistence had fairly to be forced from nature, and much had to be sacrificed that their children might receive that education they had themselves not been fortunate enough to get. An education so won was not to be lightly partaken, and the youth put his whole energy into it; and as a consequence, we have had that steady stream of ministers, lawyers, doctors, and statesmen, which has come from the humble Scotch farm from Pictou to Sydney, to take high rank in the intellectual life of their native Province, and even of the whole Dominion, and they form no inconspicuous element in the neighbouring Republic.

The other element of its early population I will mention is the large  
military

military and civil administrative class, of a distinctively well-educated and refined type, but rather given to routine, and to dependence on the Mother country, than to the strenuous self-dependent exertions of the ordinary pioneer. They brought with them, however, an eagerness to reproduce in their new home their old cultivated modes of life and thought, and the things which appealed to their cultured tastes. Closely allied to the influence they exerted was the long existence of Halifax as a large military, garrison and naval city, which caused it to become a victualling and refitting port rather than a centre of trade and commerce.

From ~~important~~ elements such as these <sup>have mentioned</sup> did not make for the Commercial Communities, and were at least factors not to be overlooked in trying to understand the lines along which Nova Scotia peculiarities developed.

BOOKS READ

*the question why,*

Coming to the fact that the outsider has not discovered our resources, and <sup>*the outsider*</sup> since ~~we~~ we have not properly developed them ourselves, <sup>*ought to*</sup> has not stepped in and developed them for us, or for himself, according to the view taken of it, the answer is not obvious. If there is really any good thing there, Capital ~~would~~ <sup>*ought to*</sup> know it; ~~and~~ there is nothing so open to engagement as Capital, or so easy of approach by what offers itself as an attractive partner for life.

I need scarcely say that in ~~this~~ <sup>*this*</sup> city of wealth, nor ~~to~~ say that much of your capital is already behind our mines and our furnaces, etc. But it does not flow in at a pace proportionate to what is said of <sup>*country's*</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>*the*</sup> possibilities; perhaps these are far over-rated.

But there is one view of the matter that may be overlooked. Our resources are all in a partially developed state, and have a value which is fairly specific and settled, and hence cannot offer the same inducement to that vast body of speculative capital that is so much in evidence all over this continent, as can, for instance, the forests of the Far West, where what is worth little today because of the difficulty of transport may be worth millions tomorrow, by the advent of a new railway;

or

or where the franchise of a struggling hamlet may develop into a bonanza by the chance becoming of that hamlet a centre of population. To capital of this type ~~we~~ can naturally offer nothing. But to the capital that <sup>is satisfied</sup> ~~expects~~ to get dividends from sound, legitimate, energetic, mercantile effort, there seems inducement; the climate is free from bitter winter severity or great summer heat, and the extraction of its resources is not a fight against nature. And every facility abounds for cheap transportation, since every part of it is virtually on the sea. Either the local and foreign experts who agree upon the great value of our resources are utterly mistaken, or else we offer a case of a good thing lying open and patent to the eye of the capitalist, and the capitalist has not seized it.

Perhaps there is more in fashion and example here than sounds likely at first sight. I wonder how much truth there is from a financial standpoint in Bishop Berkeley's dictum, "Westward the star of Empire takes its way," and whether it embodies a kind of physical law of nature, and whether we on the sea-coast have to wait for our  
next

next wave of material expansion and development until the stars in their courses from East to West complete their round and stand over us again. But if not a Law of nature, it is certain that the prevailing fashion is to look to the West for fields to conquer; and the fields of the East, often equally valuable, having been passed over, are almost forgotten to the gaze fixed firmly to the West.

Now I have said that we have not grown in numbers nor in wealth as might have been expected, but that I doubted whether these are the only good criteria of the progress of a country. One of our local statesmen the other day claimed that in not having opened up all our coal-mines at once we were making a wise move, and in thus preserving our native resources for the future were setting aside a great Reserve, so to speak; now I am not political economist enough to know how to weigh that argument; my mathematical sense would lead me to fear that carried to its logical conclusion it might end in present starvation. I think this is too altruistic a view to take of Conservation. But at least we can say that in most cases we have not squandered our resources.

But is not one proper test of the progress of a country the finding out whether it provides well for the population it has; is it able to give its citizens the ordinary conveniences, comforts, and even luxuries of modern life; offer proper educational and cultural facilities and means to travel; carry on the services producing law and order, and provide for its own unfortunates? Measured this way, you will find a very fortunate race down East. They really require no sympathy. There might be more of them, but some people might not thank you for that; there might be more automobiles, one a piece for everybody, at least down as far as College Presidents; more money would give us better roads, better colleges, quicker transportation, finer buildings, art treasures, and many other things we would appreciate and profit by. But I honestly think we have mighty little to grumble at.

The lack of money may be the root of all evil, but it is happily also the origin of much good, when the lack is not carried to excess, and it has produced for us a hardy, sturdy race of people, who will be of value to any country.



We think we are making a contribution to the permanent and stable advancement of our common country by training up a breed of sound, intellectual, stable, moral, conservative people, and especially in sending them to help carve on the plastic plains of the West such a series of British Broad Arrow marks, as will claim it irretrievably for all future time as dedicated to the ideals of British justice, duty, fair play and representative, responsible government and free institutions. Our Dalhousie schools of Arts, Law and Medicine, as well as our Provincial Normal School, have to stand a great deal of criticism, because we are accused of wasting our resources in training men who go off to other parts of the country, and whose services are lost to their native Province. Now it is in that very way that I feel we are doing our best work; for it makes our own work more virile and more to be desired; and in the next place the future of the West measures the future of the East, and the future of the West is not to be determined by the number of bushels of its wheat yield, but by the broadness of the foundation of its national ideals. And how can this be done better than by the men who stand in her pulpits and behind her school desks,  
and

and by those who interpret law to their heterogeneous immigrants, or get nearest to them in their times of illness and death; and where could you get men more fully imbued with the best that Britain has meant in civilization, than from those trained in the home of Colonial responsible government, or in a city like Halifax that is steeped in the traditions of British law and duty.

The country's gain may be our loss, but I think we are patriotic enough not to whimper. And if that is so, then I hope you will believe that Nova Scotia is not such a bad place after all.