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softened with it. The hides themselves were used in the making of footwear, blankets, hoods and mittens. The people kept enough for their own use and sold the rest. Other Cheticampians hunted along the coast. This was a hunt for isolated seals, or those in small groups of five, six or, at most, a dozen. Rarely would more of the animals come ashore. The men still used clubs on them, but more often they used the rifle, for the expanse of ice was narrower here, the patches of water closer, and the seals could easily save themselves. This hunt, too, was very thrilling. One has to be an excellent marksman to kill a seal with a rifle. It has to be hit in the head. The other parts of the animal are too fatty, the bullets won't penetrate. In the water, the seal is difficult to kill. If it sees the flame of the gun it plunges into the water. Whale Cruises Capt. Bill Crawford, Cheticamp Boat Tours, P. O. Box 10, Grand Etang, N. S. (902)224-3376". P • PSL. THE CHOICE OF A  
NBA/GENERATION. CAPE BRETON BEVERAGES LIMITED ter so quickly that the bullet cannot hit its head. With their old muskets loaded with powder--those were the guns of the olden days--some of the men were quite famous for their marksmanship, like Jules (a Jean) Desveaux, for example. The hunters, in small groups of three or four, would move away, sometimes up to five or six miles along the coast, sometimes in the rowboat, sometimes on foot leaving the rowboat behind them. This was just as dangerous as the seal hunt from the schooners, perhaps even more so. The schooners and rowboats that were used to hunt seals were specially constructed for this purpose. The bottom of these vessels was flat. The great danger aux glaces (in the ice-fields) was to become cornered between the floes, and having boats of thirty or forty tons crack like an egg. With flat-bottomed boats, when the trenches of water would narrow and the floes touch each other, the boats, instead of being crushed, would rise up and keep their balance on the ice. However, there were some tragedies. One year, Jules (a Jean) Desveaux went to l'Île-aux-Oiseaux (Bird Island) near the Magdalen Islands. The floes gripped his boat in such a way that it couldn't lift itself. It was crushed to bits. The crew had to return on foot over the ice, dragging their rowboat and only the most necessary food behind them. This took several days, naturally. The cold was terrible. During the night each man was permitted to sleep ten minutes only, lest he freeze and die. The winds and currents sometimes carried the ice-fields far away, and the boats caught up by them were dragged along. Lubin (a Jerome) AuCoin and Clement (a "Monock") Hache were caught in this way with their boat. The wind pushed them, prisoners of the ice, at first up to Cape North; then the wind changed, and so did the ice-fields. They crossed the whole Gulf, up to near the Miramichi, along the coast of New Brunswick. There the men managed to free themselves and, with a great deal of trouble, got back to Cheticamp. Marcellin (a Jeannot) Deveau was caught in the same way. The ice carried him three times to Cape North. From there, his boat was pushed towards the Magdalen Islands, then back towards Cape Breton. While passing in front of Cheticamp, the crew could see the lights in the houses through the darkness. Some



of the coastal hunters were caught in the same predicament. On April 5, 1842, five men from Cheticamp • Luc Chiasson, Leonard ("Konock") Chiasson, Fidele Chiasson, Norbert AuCoin and Janvier- Benoit AuCoin--were returning from the hunt which had taken them about six miles along the coast. In trying to jump from one floe to another, three of the five--Fidele Chiasson, Norbert AuCoin and Janvier-Benoit AuCoin-- fell into the water and were drowned. Norbert's father, Hubert AuCoin, married to Marie, (a Regis) Bois, had previously been the victim of a still more horrible death. Hubert AuCoin was probably the captain of the schoo? ner. He and his companions left for the ice