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there is no sign of life. Man is like a pretender on this land. Quite possibly nature has adopted him but she is doing well on her own and she will make him wait a long time before he inherits her riches. That is what one can see fairly clearly from two miles at sea. However, this landscape has charm. I don't mean that the superb weather and the balminess of the air had not contributed to this picture-very likely it had-but the admirers of Sydney, and I believe that all sailors are, affirm that the climate of Cape Breton is the best in these parts and that good weather here is not as theatrical as it is in Saint-Pierre. We continued our route while philosophising on these thoughts and admiring these beautiful shores when the sea transformed itself for us like the mouth of a gigantic river, surrounded by beaches, and through vast and majestic straits, penetrated into a verdant horizon of forests, meandering under the stillness of trees and, in a word, beautiful as the most beautiful of lakes, as the most picturesque of passages that Switzerland can offer to the eyes of its admirers. But it wasn't a lake; it was the sea, really the ocean which changed into a river, even a brook, showing itself to us, penetrating, carving the interior as if it was its own property, and inviting us to visit its domain. It is one of the most beautiful visions man can contemplate. However, impartial judges will note-perhaps this is an unexpected observation -it does not offer an impression of majesty or greatness. Vainly does it show the ocean itself stretching its enormous expanse of water into the midst of vast lands, bringing, because of its depth, the most powerful ships to the very heart of the forests, multiplying itself through several leagues along the shores in a series of internal lakes from which it escapes again to transform itself into a thousand humble rivers. It is in vain that inaccessible mountains, covered by the heavy cloak of limitless forests, and where, I am told, grey bears seek refuge, tower on the horizon. This spectacle is vast but lacks greatness. It is an idealized, gigantic English garden. One would be tempted to find this nature too pretty, too well raked and not at all rustic. All of this looks young and lacking in vigour. But we will understand this impression better when we will examine things more closely. We had entered into this vast gulf, and already we could see clearly the marshes of Sydney Mines, when we met the Tenare, a steam corvette like us, belonging to the Squadron, which was leaving the coast and was about to penetrate inland on its way to Sydney Town. Mr. G., a frigate captain commanding the Tenare, came aboard the Gassendi and offered to take me aboard his ship so that I would arrive earlier in Sydney Town. I was tempted by this excursion and, within moments, the Tenare's whaling boat took us away.... Aboard this new friend, I sailed in the direction of Sydney Town and my impressions of the landscape offered to my eyes became stronger as I came closer. On the shore, on my right, could be seen nice country cottages, gay and pleasant, surrounded by fences, looking very much like comic opera houses along a narrow highway like those we see on the shores of the Rhine, which look like alleys in a garden. On the left, a series of tree-shaded houses led to the town proper, built of wood, as clean and charming as Saint-Pierre is the Town and Harbour of Sydney, from a sketch by



Albert J. Hill, circa 1870 did, planned on straight lines in such a manner as to form streets as large as public squares; in the middle of this there are several churches and everything is arranged and confined in the taste of German toys. Finally, along the shore, there is a series of landing wharves made of boards leading to houses or stores, intermingled with trees and green lawns; the whole blends country and maritime life in the most charming manner. The full picture is rather pleasant because there is nothing exclusive, nothing absolute, nor forced and, therefore, there is nothing to surprise, to stun or to force admiration. At the end of a series of landing wharves we saw a very nice and large one which served as a terrace to a pretty one-story house, flanked by a mast from which the French flag flew. This was the house of our consular agent, Mr. Bourinot, a native of Jersey and a Member of the Nova Scotia Legislature. (John Bourinot was probably the first honorary Consular Agent in Atlantic Canada. He was born at Grouville, Jersey, and had studied in Caen, France. He settled in Cape Breton where he became a successful merchant and politician. He was one of the first Senators after Confederation.) The Tenare docked in front of this house because, let it be said once again, the depth of these waters is such that ships can go anywhere. We had arrived; by going ashore I was free to satisfy my curiosity. Naturally our first visit was for Mr. Bourinot. This excellent man is much appreciated and liked by our officers. He received us as he does regularly for all Frenchmen brought to his home for so many years by the Naval Squadron. He introduced us to Mrs. Bourinot and to his family.... Having discharged our duties, we went on a visit of the Town. From a distance it seems much larger than it really is. In fact, it is the illusion of a town rather than a real one. The streets were laid out on a plan which was not modest. The founders appear to have thought of a development on the scale of Boston or New York, although nothing indicates that this is in the offing. I did not notice new constructions, but, on the contrary, a certain number of empty buildings. Grass grows everywhere with an exuberance such as to prove sufficiently that it is trod by very few feet. Certain wards, I would go so far as to say most

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