

existence which Newfoundland led for so long a time ; and this half-and-half existence was only the effect of ideas of past centuries, into which we must think ourselves back. Modern writers often allude to these ideas wit' the condescension or contempt with which dwellers in sunlight speak of those who dwell in twilight, forgetting that twilight has a beauty and a mystery of its own. Moreover, the half-and-half existence of Newfoundland, the twilight so to speak of its history, invariably had a meaning, some reason for its being, some necessity which explained and justified it. This meaning seemed to change from time to time.

In the sixteenth century twilight brooded over all the civilized world and was the herald of that dawn which broke elsewhere but not in Newfoundland. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the dimness of the history of Newfoundland recalled that chronic mist which in poetic visions environs the shadows of those who have been or are about to be. In the Nineteenth Century philosophers complacently classed Newfoundland with obsolete and obscure survivals, and pointed to Newfoundlanders as examples of the tyranny of Custom. But there was a deeper and more permanent reason for the dubious existence of the colony as a colony.

Hunters and fishermen are always the boldest of pioneers and often the homeliest of men, when their hunting and fishing season is over. These pursuits teach their votaries to annihilate space, and then either drive them back to the very villages in which they were born, or make them converts or reverts to savagery.