

## SEALING IN THE NORTH ATLANTIC.

JOHN MACWILLIE, M.D., C.M.  
Ship's Surgeon on the Sealing Steamer "Algerine."

For the first time in the history of the sealing industry of Newfoundland, a record running back over a century, there was provided this year a surgeon for each of several of the vessels of the fleet.

This advance in consideration of the health of the large number of men, over 4,000 on 18 vessels, was due to the untiring efforts of the Rev. Dr. Harvey, of St. Johns, a man who has done more than any other for the welfare of Newfoundland, and the ex-Governor. The administration of carbolic acid in mistake for black draught as a climax to a long list of deaths which have happened through lack of knowledge, was an excellent lever to move the vessel owners to a fuller sense of their responsibility for the lives and well being of these hard-trying sealing men, and it is hoped that the experiment of this year will be the constant practice, and that the time of septic wounds, so frequently resulting in the loss of fingers, of blue pill and of curses as remedies for all ills, will give way to rational and scientific treatment.

The interest in a trip of this kind lies not only in the professional side, with the new conditions in which we see disease—our slums are well kept hospitals in comparison—but also in observing the ways and character of, to us, a new people, of visiting the country which is fast becoming the most popular vacation resort in America and of participating in this most exciting sport.

Our party of three left Toronto on March 5th and were joined at Sydney by the fourth. Here we rested with rising and falling hopes of soon becoming acquainted with the steamer which was to take us to that land which Burns knew of in his "Twa Dogs" as

"Some place far abroad  
Where sailors fish for cod."

But the "Brnce," a beautiful Glasgow built vessel of the Reid line, comes at last, and none too soon, for a few hours later would have given us this seventeen hundred mile journey for nothing. We arrived at St. Johns a short time before the sailing of the fleet on Saturday morning. It is Newfoundland's greatest day. At seven o'clock, as we are enjoying breakfast with our good friend Dr. Harvey, we hear a steam whistle. Then for an hour the din and noise of gongs, whistles, bells and men, make us think we are again in Toronto on Pretoria day. St. Johns is full of it—beautiful St. Johns, but we have no time now to enjoy its beauties, our boats leave at 8 o'clock and we must catch them. Time, tide or sealing vessel waits for no man this morning. We have barely time to say good-bye as we, one by one, turn from the main street to the wharves at which our respective vessels lie. Mine is the last, and on reaching it I find the "Algerine" straining at her stern line and three or four feet from the side of the wharf, for as 8 o'clock comes every cap-