

colony, and their numbers and strength increased bravely. But presently the French came, and by their continual aggressions so disheartened Sir George that he abandoned his estate in Avalon, and settled again in Maryland, where he was more fortunate. After his departure the settlement rapidly dwindled, being quite unable to hold its own against the odds with which it had to contend. It was twice destroyed: by a Dutch fleet with one hundred and sixty guns, in 1673, and again by the French in 1694. But in the meantime settlements were forming in other parts of the country. In 1640 a company of emigrants was sent from Ireland, and fourteen years later another lot followed. By this time there were three hundred and fifty resident families on the island, with a proportionate floating population of summer fishermen.

Now was the beginning of troubles. The resident population of Newfoundland, composed mainly of that undesirable class who find it expedient to leave law-abiding countries, was here without restraint. While France looked faithfully after the well-being and good government of her western colonies; while the Puritan settlers in New England lived in severest morality; the colony of Newfoundland alone was a scene of anarchy and crime. In 1633, Charles I., complaining that "our subjects resorting thither injure one another, and use all manner of excess, to the great hindrance of the voyage and common damage of this realm," issued regulations for the government of said subjects "inhabiting Newfoundland or trafficking in its bays." These regulations provided for the arrest and the punishment in England of any man found guilty of murder or theft to the value of forty shillings, the penalty in both cases being death—a curious illustration of the value set on a life at that time;—prohibited the sale of "wine, beer, or strong waters, cyder, or tobacco, to entertain the fishermen;" and ordered "that, according to ancient custom, every ship, or fisher that first entereth a harbour in behalf of the ship, be admiral of the said harbour." Thus, after more than a hundred years of utter neglect, the only provision made for the government of Britain's oldest colony was to enforce the rough rule of the first old tar who should enter any harbour. What this rule was may well be imagined, for the morais and