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## WEEK-END NOTES.

CHAPTER XXIX.  
(C. C. MORRIS.)

### THE SPANISH VESSELS.

The shipping in the harbour during the sixties was very varied from what it is today; and there was a larger representation of European Nations than we now have, or have had for a long while. At present our commerce is confined principally to the ships which sail under the British flag, with a few from Norway and Sweden. At the time of which we write there was a very large business done with Spain, and because of that there was annually a fleet of Spanish ships visiting Newfoundland. A few of these ships went to Har-  
bour Grace, but the greater number came here to St. John's. These ships were mostly brigantines, with an occasional brig; and now and then a bark. Amongst the barks we remember one which impressed us as being the most beautiful ship that we had, to that date, been on board of. The bark was called the *Coloinda*, and was modelled on very graceful lines, and was lavishly mounted with brass work, and car-

The Spanish ships began to arrive at St. John's late in June, and the rest of the fleet usually reached port about July, and remained until the first autumn; but by the end of Oc-

tober the most of them would have taken their departure. On arrival in port they made anchorage in the stream at the discretion of the captain, or the advice of the pilot, as at that time there was not any harbour master—the late Capt. Robinson being the first harbour master. But as a rule the ships were anchored as near as possible to the premises at which they intended to buy their fish; but most of the Spanish vessels dealt directly with the firm of C. F. Bennett & Co., and their cargoes consisted of salt from Cadiz and Trapani. The ships usually brought a large quantity of cocoa nuts. The cocoa nuts, of course, were a great attraction for the boys at that time, there not being any fruit shops in St. John's, and it was quite customary to go down to the wharves and buy a six-penny cocoa nut from one of the Spanish ships.

The custom on board those ships was quite worthy of admiration from a social, as well as from a common sense, standpoint. First they made a good anchorage, as they would be in the stream probably eight or ten weeks; then all their sails were un-  
bent, and stowed below, and also the running rigging. The topmasts were housed and all the upper yards low-

ered. In addition to these they would rig in their flying jibboom, which was a very commendable custom, especially at that time, as there was so much shipping in the harbour. With the sails unbent, and the topmasts housed, the next procedure was the setting up of the awnings, which was another excellent practice, because not only did the awnings save the ship's deck, but they afforded shelter to the crew, and especially those who were engaged making and repairing sails, and painting, or otherwise refitting the ship.

The crew of an average Spanish brigantine of about one hundred and fifty tons, usually numbered eight men, in addition to which there was generally a supercargo, or a purchasing agent, who usually brought with him his wife, and the captain, also very often had their wives with them. There seemed to be a leisure in the lives of those people, which we ourselves either never had, or if we had it, we have lost it. They evidently had discovered a great deal of the joyful side of life, hence it was, that during the time they were in port, especially while hauled in at the wharves, they would sit on deck and indulge in pleasant conversation; and in the meantime they slipped their wine, and played their guitars. The scene was very typical of Spanish life. The custom at that time was to buy for ready cash, as banking and finance were not then developed to that high degree of exchange, which we have to-day, and there being little or no communication with the outside world, there was a greater necessity for ready cash. Thus it was, that the buyers, or the agents, brought with them gold and silver, so that at any time, the Spanish dollar, known as the doubloon, was very largely circulated here in the city.

There was a refinement and a dignity about those Spanish captains, and the agents who came with them, and about their wives, which indicated strict training and marked politeness. Certain it is that respect for others was exercised to a large degree. We seem to-day to have lost some of this, and to have broken too far from the deportment and politeness of former days. The Spanish ships were usually painted in bright and attractive colors. Some were pale blue, many were flesh color, and a few were white, or rather a cream color. They were all copper bottomed with rich yellow copper, and they provided excellent accommodation



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for the crew, and especially for the captain and his officers; and instead of the cramped quarters which we have too often seen in our own British ships, there were spacious apartments, well furnished with rich draperies, and therefore very comfortable. Many of the ships had houses on deck; but whether on deck or below deck, the builders and the owners remembered the crews, and deemed them worthy sufficient space to live in with some degree of comfort; and therefore they did not commercialise the whole ship—a thing that has been too often done.

There has been a marked improvement in British ships during the last half century. I have boarded hundreds of ships, and have been surprised at the dingy and dark fore-castles in which sailors have had to live, and the cramped cabin in which captains have had to sleep, and at the same time this was done under the registry of the British Shipping Act. About the time of which we write, Samuel Pilsoll came to the front in England, and by his efforts he gained great reforms in the life of the British sailor, and in the loading of British ships; and to-day his name is remembered by the mark known as Pilsoll's. Strange to say Newfoundland has almost entirely lost her trade with Spain, but it is pleasing to note that of late there is a revival in this direction. There was at that date the Spanish Consul, amongst whom was our respected friend Capt. Perez, also Mr. Stingala and Mr. Mendez. Our Spanish buyers of whom we have written, were very cautious in their dealings, and they were very exact in their purchases of fish, and paid strict attention to its quality. It would seem that fish fifty years ago, when landed at St. John's, was a better article of food than it is to-day. Of course at that time we had shore crews in addition to the fishing crews, and these crews paid more attention to the cleaning and making of the fish, than seems to be possible to-day. However, the Spaniards always sought a good article, and they loaded their vessels carefully and cautiously, and then battered their hatches well, lashed their boats, removed their awnings, set up their topmasts, out-rigged their jibbooms, and set up their lanyards, and in many cases waited for the new moon, before setting sail for home. Truly most of them had much leisure which apparently was expensive, but they seemed to have made it pay, and they got through without loss or accident. There was, however, one fatal accident which occurred in the summer of 1876, by which a Spanish brigantine was lost in the vicinity of Black Head. At that time a forest fire swept the Southside Hills, and a dense smoke enveloped the bay for several days. It was during those eventful days the ship reached the offing, and amid the density of the smoke, got on the shoals, and being towards evening, with no assistance at hand, the good ship went down, and with her also went her brave captain, his beautiful wife and their little daughter. Early next day their bodies were recovered, and they were given Christian burial at Beldvedere. They returned not to sunny Spain, but having made the voyage in safety, and almost seeing the city to which they were coming, they missed the port. Such is part of human life; such is the tragedy of the sea; such has been the story of all maritime peoples, and such will it be, while men go down to the sea in ships, and do business in the great waters.

### Church Music to be Enriched by German Discovery.

Church music is expected to be greatly enriched as a result of the discovery of a key to the abbreviations made by the musicians of the periods preceding the use of modern musical notes. The interpretation is the work of Dr. Oscar Fleischer, the Berlin professor.

There are many ancient manuscripts in Germany, over which modern scholars have pored for years, endeavouring to correctly interpret them. Dr. Fleischer's discoveries and interpretations, it is said, promise to revolutionise modern music and melodies lost for many centuries may again be brought into common use.

### After Thirty-Seven Years.

THE EXILE'S RETURN.  
(H. F. SHORTIS.)

He sought the old scenes with eager feet.  
The scenes he had known as a boy;  
Oh! for a draught of those fountains sweet,  
And a taste of that vanished joy!

He roamed the fields, he mused by the streams,  
He threaded the paths and lanes;  
On the hills he sought his youthful dreams,  
In the woods he forgot his pains.

Oh! sad, and hills, Oh! cold, cold heart!  
In sorrow he learned the truth—  
One may go back to the land of his birth—  
He cannot go back to his youth.

In almost every state of the United States the Newfoundlanders is to be found; and in almost every instance he has rendered a good account of himself, in whatever position of life he may occupy. But whilst he possesses all the comforts that may be enjoyed in this life—he ever casts a longing eye towards that land he loves so well—the shores of dear old Terra Nova. The thought is ever in his mind as to the day when he will once more visit the scenes of his childhood, and once more associate with the companions of his youth, visit well remembered scenes, and talk over the events of the past. Such scenes as the Annual Regatta on historic Quidi Vidi are never effaced from his memory, and the soulstirring strains of our National melody, "The Banks of Newfoundland," as played by our city bands will make the blood course through his veins. It is with this object in view that one of our patriotic Newfoundlanders, Mr. Thomas J. Myler, has returned to his native land by the S.S. Rosalind for a brief period, to once more view the scenes of his childhood, and receive a hearty welcome from his old friends and associates of former years.

Mr. Myler left St. John's in the year 1886 (thirty-seven years ago) and has since resided in the city of Chicago, U.S.A. During all this period (being a cooper by trade) he has held a prominent position in the great firm of the Armour Packing Co., of the above city. It is needless to say that Mr. Myler must be most proficient in his work, otherwise he would not have retained his position in such a world-renowned firm for such a lengthy period.

During his younger days in his native city of St. John's he was one of the best known cricketers, and for several years was a member of the Mechanics Club, of which Charlie Ryan, Tot Wallace, McFarlane, John Ryan, printer, John Murphy, Pat Blundon, Will Goudie and many others were members. They fought many a hard battle on the field with success. After some years several of the members emigrated to the United States, and those who were left such as Charlie Ryan, Pat Wallace, etc., joined up with the famous Shamrock Club, who were for many years invincible on the field. Who amongst the older generation does not remember the terrific howling of Professor Johnny Bennett and Jerry Savage, the splendid wicket-keeping of Charlie Ryan, and above all the "drives of Tom Bates or Pleasantville." Then there were such famous batsmen as Keating, Wallace, Berrigan and several others who are still in the flesh. In those days Tom Myler was known as the "doc" amongst the boys. I don't know why, except that he may have possessed some medical skill in binding up the wounds of his comrades, received through the terrific bowling of Bennett and Savage. I heard one of the officers of the commodore ship in port one summer remark: "I would sooner face a cannon ball than the bowling of that man Bennett."

In our Annual Regatta forty years ago Mr. Myler also took a prominent part, and one year in the eighties he rowed in the race boat Rosetta, owned by the West End Club, and came in first in the juvenile race, which was the only one for the day that she showed up. The crew on that occasion was composed of Will Goudie, John Mallam, Harry Simms, Nix Chislett, Scott and Tom Myler himself.

And now after having spent the greater portion of his life far from his native land, he is once more amongst us to visit the old scenes of his conquests and defeats, and I feel assured all his old friends will extend to him a hearty and sincere Newfoundland welcome, and that speaks volumes. Mr. Myler is a brother of

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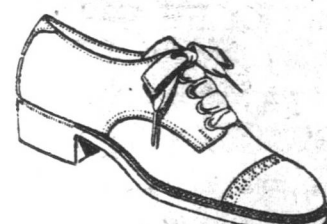
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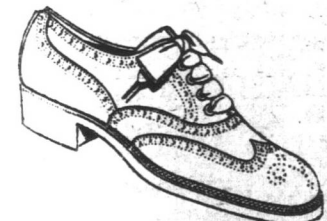
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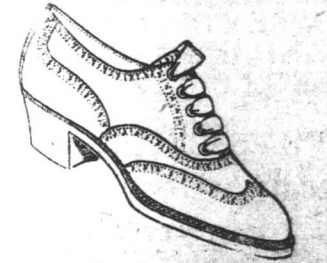
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