

NEWFOUNDLAND

FROM SHIP AND RAIL CAR.

BY THE REV. DR. CARMAN.

I.

ALL public works in Newfoundland, great and small, are constructed, maintained, controlled and generally owned by the Government of the colony. There are no city, county, town or township councils, and municipal government is yet a thing of the future. St. Johns, the capital, with a population of 36,000, does not regulate its own sewerage, construct its own waterworks, pave its own streets or repair its own sidewalks. And, by the way, there is not much call for sewerage or sidewalks when the city is largely built on a straight up and down hillside, when the streets are like ladders and staircases and the houses are terraced into the cliffs. Harbour Grace, with some 13,000, Carbonear with its 6,000, and other outports nearly as large, are no better off as to the advantages of civic management of local affairs; that is to say, there is not what we call a chartered town or corporation in the country except the general Government, which is one corporation in all and over all. And as this, of course, has its seat in St. Johns, and the main political, commercial and ecclesiastical forces are there concentrated, it would not be wonderful if the capital received more than its share of the common revenue, or that at least the outports should suspect it did, and that this consideration should become, as it is, an element of the party contentions, and a maker and shaper of planks in the political platform.

So the ordinary highways of the country as well as the city streets are laid out and built by the Government; which also virtually built the one railway of the colony, though it is worked by a company. Their politics has the railway bone stiff and stout as ours and fully as big in proportion. Their coasting, mail and passenger service is also under direction of the Government, and comes and goes at its own bidding. It is not that the Government hires or pays lines of steamers or of railways already existing; but it must establish them or they