

happily wide-spread in Britain, reached Newfoundland, and was expressed in acts of oppression directed against the adherents of the Roman Catholic faith, on which, as Protestants, we now look back with shame and sorrow. For many years previous to this date, emigrants from Ireland had been annually arriving in considerable numbers. They were attracted, in part, by the news of good wages to be earned in the fisheries, and partly by the hope of escaping from the operation of persecuting laws at home. But as their numbers increased they found themselves a proscribed sect—interdicted in the exercise of their modes of worship and subjected to civil disabilities for the crime of being Roman Catholics. The celebration of mass was forbidden, and in cases where it was discovered that the owner of a house or store had permitted its celebration, he was heavily fined and the building was burnt down or otherwise destroyed. Still, in spite of these persecuting enactments and in the teeth of proclamations issued to restrict immigration from Ireland, great numbers continued to seek a happier home in Newfoundland; and priests, in disguise, risked all dangers to follow the adherents of their faith with the consolations of their religion, in the land to which they had removed. And yet one would imagine there was then little to invite an emigrant to choose the island for a home. The laws prohibited all proprietorship in the soil, and only allowed persons employed in the fishery to occupy such a portion of the shore as was necessary in carrying on their occupation. Inch by inch, however, the people managed to get possession of small portions of land and enclose them. In some cases the special license of the Governor was obtained for such a step, and in others, the royal prerogative was ignored, and occupation of a scrap of land for the site of a house or as a garden, was secured on the "squatting" principle. Gradually too the power of the fishing admirals fell into abeyance, and the administration of justice, in such cases as came within their jurisdiction, was transferred to the commanders of the King's ships, who came to the island in the summer season. "These commanders received from the Governor the title of *Surrogate*, a name well known in Newfoundland as designating a person deputed by the Governor to act in his stead in the outports." (Pedley's History.) In 1785, the population of St. John's had increased to 1,600, and that of the whole island did not exceed 10,000. The houses in the capital were, for the most part, of the poorest and meanest description, huddled together on narrow strips of ground, the precarious tenure of which had been reluctantly granted by some Governor; or perhaps they were hastily run up by stealth in the winter season, during the absence of the Governor, for as yet no Governor condescended to spend the winter in the country, each taking his departure in November and returning in July or August, the people being left without any administrator of justice during the interval. At length, in 1792, an Act of the British Parliament instituted a Supreme Court of Judicature for the Island, and Chief Justice Reeves, a very able man, received the first appointment from His Majesty, to preside over this Court. Thus slowly and reluctantly was the Government of Great Britain induced to extend to Newfoundland the privi-