

apartness of Newfoundland from the rest of British America has persisted for a long time, and its history has for many centuries contrasted with the history of other colonies in two or three essential characteristics, each of which, strange to say, alternately daunts and fascinates the student.

In the first place there is an immobility in the history of Newfoundland, and a fixity of character in the Newfoundlander, which is unique in colonial history. Somersetshire, Devonshire, and Irish peasants are there and have been there from the first or almost from the first, preserving their ancient types, partly it is true by constant movements between their old and new homes, but partly also from other causes. These things presage monotony. On the other hand, Newfoundland has lived a continuous life and has kept its identity inviolate for more than 300 years. Its earliest years were surrounded by the thrilling incidents of the heroic age of European history, its middle years were disturbed by the din of the three Anglo-French duels, and even its latest years enshrine bygone prejudices, which it requires some historical imagination to reconstruct. There is always interest in a long life; and the long life which is a doubtful and a threatened life, and over which swords hang by threads, is doubly interesting. The uncertainty of its fate is the second characteristic which distinguishes the history of Newfoundland from that of other colonies.

For three hundred years, that is to say, during the whole of its colonial life, the colony has been menaced with complete or partial extinction; not by force but