

keel of his Brigantine, the *Griffin*, at Navy Island, just above the Falls of Niagara. His vessel built, launched, and provisioned, he set forth, with Father Hennepin as chaplain, to coast along Lake Erie, to build forts at successive intervals, and to claim the territory for the King.

After incredible toil and disaster, including the loss of his vessel in Lake Huron, La Salle eventually found his way to the mouth of the Mississippi, and crowned his achievements by the annexation of the whole country for Louis and France. Some years afterwards, as is well known, in referring to the scene of his exploratory triumphs, he fell by the shot of a mutineer in Texas.

WITH CHARLEVOIX'S VOYAGE

along the shores of Lake Erie, in the summer of 1721, and with the erection of Forts Gratiot (Pt. Edward), Ponchartrain (Detroit) and Michillimackinac, the scene of Pontiac's dire treachery, which earned for the dusky chief of the Ottawas Parkman's title of "the Satan of the Forest Paradise," we have no space at present to speak. The curtain of French occupation of the West, we cannot but regret, descends on a scene of humiliation enacted at Detroit in 1769, when the fort capitulated to Major Rogers and his Rangers, in obedience to the orders of the Marquis de Vaudreuil, which bitterly emphasized the close of French rule on the continent of the New World, and the fall of Quebec.

Full of disaster as was the rule of the French colony at Quebec, there was a time when hope beamed on the fruits of French exploration and settlement in the West. The daring and ambition of the young French noblesse nothing could daunt; and their enterprises laid the foundations, of that trade which led to the partial opening up of the Province, though it was ever and anon retarded by the rivalry of the English of the seaboard. In pursuit of

THE FUR TRADE,

that great source of wealth to the people of both nations, these trails to the west became avenues of commerce which it was important for the French to hold, and for the English to obstruct, or strive to obtain. To conserve the trade for the French Crown, as we have seen, a number of forts were early established in the West, which had Frontenac (Kingston) as their base of supply. As trade expanded, and rivalry grew keener, Fort Rouille (Toronto) was erected in 1749, to guard the passage by the River Humber.

On the south side of Lake Ontario the French had already a fort at Niagara; while the English had established a rival post at Chouegen, now Oswego. The Hudson and the St. Lawrence were then, as now, in direct antagonism in the matter of trade. Commerce sought the most advantageous market, and the restrictive imports of the French at Quebec, and the high price here of commodities offered in exchange for the products of the chase, threw much of the traffic of the Indians, by the valley of the Mohawk, into the hands of the English. This naturally embittered the feelings of the French for their hereditary enemies of the seaboard, and gave local zest to the contest, which was long waged between England and France. But the end of the strife between the two nations was at hand, and though the rival routes of trade were still to be fought over, French dominion in the New World was to pass into the hands of the English, and the Lillies of France were to give way to the Cross of St. George. But just before this happened, calamity overtook the four trading posts on Lake Ontario.

In 1756 Chouegen fell before the daring of Montcalm, and three years afterwards Col-

onel Bradstreet levelled Fort Frontenac with the dust. In the same year, after a short siege, Fort Niagara surrendered; while the French stockade at Toronto, to prevent its falling into the hands of the victorious English, was destroyed by order of M. de Vaudreuil, the Governor.

Of the importance of the trading-post which guarded "the pass by Toronto," and which now historically disappears, there is on record the statement of Sir Wm. Johnson, embodied in a despatch on Indian affairs, to the Earl of Shelburne, that for the monopoly of a season's trade with the Indians at Fort Rouille, could the post be restored, traders would be willing to give as much as a thousand pounds!

Such was the value attached in 1767 to the trade of "the Pass by Toronto," a value which its location and other advantages were increasingly to heighten, and a quarter of a century afterwards was to be turned to fresh account.

THE BAHAMAS.—No. 2.

BY REV. WM. ENGLISH.

In our utilitarian age, *cui bono* is being continually asked; and unless a marketable value is the reply, but little attention is apt to be given to it. There may be other considerations that are important in themselves and beyond all value as they affect health and morals, but unless we can show that there are cash values in our descriptions or representations, they generally fall upon inattentive ears. "The Charmer" charms uselessly, charm he ever so wisely. Now, against this earthy and worldly spirit we strongly and solemnly protest. It makes us too grovelling. It prevents the entrance of ideas which are accompanied with pleasures affording higher enjoyment than money can purchase. Nor can we bring ourselves to believe that these brief articles on the Bahamas in TRUTH are influenced by these considerations, but rather will welcome ideas of an æsthetic and spiritual nature.

We proceed, therefore, in our description of these Islands. They are important, and deserve to be more extensively known and more highly valued in a sanitary point of view. Free from those dense forests, impervious jungles and broad morasses which often in the West Indies proper, and in Demerara particularly, engender malaria, fever, and death, and which render those places deleterious to European constitutions. Constantly fanned by the breath of Old Ocean, which in the months of January and February is richly perfumed with the fragrance of thousands of wild flowers and the odor of shaddock and orange blossoms, and moderately supplied with the necessaries and conveniences of life, the Bahama Islands are some of the most healthy in the world, and the climate the most delightful imaginable. The summers there are rarely oppressive, while winter—if we may use the term where frost is unknown and sleep only occasional—brings with it a change sufficient to make its beneficial effect felt upon the constitution. We have been often glad to put on a light cloth overcoat, but generally felt the winter bracing and exhilarating in the extreme. Nothing can be more pleasant than a sailing excursion among the Bahama Islands. The water is as clear as crystal, so shallow that the white, chalky bottom is generally visible, disclosing its sea corals of exquisite beauty, its conches, sponges or fish, changing its hue with the passing clouds that sit across its surface—now tinged with deepest green, now shaded with brightest gold, and, if gently moved by the winds, flashing as though paved with

myriads of diamonds. At night the wake of the boat may be discerned by a stream of light for a hundred yards or more, caused by the infinitely small and numerous phosphorescent animals or insects abounding in the seas. The scenes are lovely; the region constitutes an earthly paradise, and we have known the most astonishing cures effected upon invalids by the magic influence of its climate.

One instance may be mentioned by us, as it will strikingly show the healthiness of these islands and their value as temporary abodes in the case of invalids. The case alluded to was that of an American gentleman, a M. D. by profession. When he came to Harbor Land, where we then dwelt, he was in a very enfeebled state of health; when he landed he seemed to be more dead than alive. He was suffering from a severe nervous affection, having his upper and lower extremities partially paralyzed. It was with the utmost difficulty he could move one foot before the other, or hold the lightest object in his hands. Now the gentleman, solely from the influence of the climate—for he used no medicine, and confined himself to fruit and vegetable diet, utterly discarding all kinds of stimulants—was so greatly benefited by a nine months' residence in the Bahamas that at the expiration of that period he was able to walk about Harbor Island with as much ease and agility as any man on the island; had nearly the perfect use of his hands, and had secured for himself the most extensive practice of any physician in the place. It was well known there that when he left at the end of nine months he took away not only his recovered health and strength, but also a nice sum of money honorably secured by his medical practice on the island.

We have met with several cases of longevity on these islands—individuals who have exceeded one hundred years—both among the white inhabitants and the black. This may be easily accounted for by the salubrity of the climate, from the temperate habits of the individual and from the industrious and cheerful way in which they spend their time.

It was a fine, clear day in March, no clouds obscured the skies. The sun shone with a brilliance peculiar to the tropics, and the light breeze bore us steadily toward the Bahamas, at the rate of eight knots an hour.

There were several passengers beside the mission family on board, all eagerly looking out for some signs of land. We had endeavoured to enliven the monotony of the voyage by reading, pacing the deck, watching the flight of sea gulls, flying fish, or an occasional game of chequers.

Suddenly one of the sailors on the look out cried: "there is a shoal of dolphins to windward." All was now excitement. A line and hook were soon procured, and with a suitable bait, an effort was made to procure one of these delicious fish for our dinner. With what eagerness we watched the bait, as it rose occasionally on the top of a wave toward our lee. Speculation was rife. Will the fish take the bait? If so, will the shark, so abundant in those waters, suffer us to land it on deck, or will it swallow it in its capacious maw?

A sudden tension of the line is observed! A jerk—a plunge to the right, and then to the left—and we knew that something had been caught. With considerable difficulty, for the fish made desperate efforts to free itself from the hook, we hauled it alongside of the good ship *Alberta*.

It proved to be a large dolphin, weighing about twenty pounds. After safely landing it on the deck, it was affecting to see its

changing hues as life gradually waned away, and the soft, plaintive look that would occasionally flash from its eyes. However, it proved a delicious morsel at our dinner, when the excitement and exertion of catching it had engendered a suitable appetite for its consumption.

After dinner we knew we were approaching our destination. The air coming from the land was heavily perfumed with the odours of orange, shaddock, and tropical blossoms. Land birds, of rich plumage, would occasionally be seen darting across our path. The sea became clear, and the seaweeds, filled with innumerable zoophytes, clung around the bows of our vessel. Occasionally a white sail belonging to those trim and swift schooners peculiar to the Bahama group of islands would appear on the horizon, or pass us with a loud and hearty cheer, given from their decks. Soon we beheld, what at first seemed a low cloud resting on the horizon to the west, then it took the form of a sand-bank, so little was it elevated above the surface of the ocean; and finally we could descry the giant palm with its tufts of feathery leaves, and the useful cocconut with its immense clusters of nuts, apparently growing out of the water. As we rapidly approached land the large residences of the merchants, the humble cottages of the labourers peeping out from between orange and sapodillo trees, with the palatial home of the Governor and the barracks of the soldiers and artillery burst upon our view. By this time we had come near the mouth of the harbour, (and, having been boarded by a pilot) had only to cross the bar which lies across its port, guarded by a light-house, when we anchored safely in Nassau Harbour in front of the town of the same name the *City of New Providence*, the metropolitan of the Bahama group of Islands.

Several Christian friends hastened on board to greet us, and bid us a hearty welcome to their beautiful city and hospitable homes. It did not take long to prepare for landing. A hasty ablution and a change of linen were welcome after a sea voyage, and then up the gang way, over the side of the ship, and into a well-manned gig and away we went to the spacious home of R. W., Esq. with whom we found royal entertainment while we remained in the city.

Our previous sojourn in some of the Caribbean Islands had somewhat prepared us for the sights which we beheld on the following days. Yet we were agreeably surprised to discover signs of intellectual and material improvement beyond our expectation. The streets on the afternoon were well patronised by white and coloured inhabitants. Many of both classes driving good substantial carriages and phaetons; with high-mounted, showy horses, occasionally a single horse, but in general a pair, with the driver seated in front, all evincing well-to-do, prosperous citizens, and indicating a disposition to enjoy the pleasures and refinements as well as the necessities of life. The majority, of course, were pedestrians but all could be well dressed, respectful and smiling. The ladies arrayed in the height of fashion among the whites, and many of the coloured not far behind them in attire, whilst the labouring portion would have a spotless white muslin dress and a macassar handkerchief tied up in the form of an inverted pyramid upon their heads—graceful in appearance and becoming the shade of their faces. We found afterwards that the drives extended to about three miles beyond the city to what was called the *turn round*, all on the brink of the ocean, shaded with evergreens, while the