

A Glance at a Northumberland Fishing Village.

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PERHAPS few of our readers, except those who belong to the far North of England, have heard of Cullercoats. It is not surprising that they should not have done so, for it is a retired spot on the Northumberland coast. Though it is not far from the great town of Newcastle, with its extensive trade, yet it is, perhaps, one of the most simple and primitive fishing villages in England, and we venture to commend it to the notice of over-worked townsmen, who require the strong tonic of a northern air to recruit their broken energies. The sea is fine, the rocks are bold, the sands are good, and the air is bracing. One particular group of rocks, known as 'the Fairy Rocks,' from the fantastic shapes which they have assumed, are particularly well worth a visit. Tynemouth Priory, with its picturesque ruins, is close at hand, and for those who like an occasional whiff of coal-smoke, and an occasional peep at town life, Newcastle is within available distance.

However, the visitor to Cullercoats need not go very far to seek amusement. He can readily find it in an investigation into the habits and ways of the dwellers in the little village in which he is for the time making his abode. It is a pretty sight to see the fishing-boats go out to sea in fine weather, and to watch the brawny limos and well-knit figures of the Northern fishermen, as they man their crafts. It is no less pleasing sometimes to fall into chance conversation with one of these men, as he smokes his evening pipe close by 'the Beacon,' which does duty at Cullercoats for a lighthouse. The honest freedom and simplicity of these men, and the broad tones of their Northumberland dialect, at once arrest the interest and sympathy of strangers, and much more of those to whom that language is as their mother-tongue. Many a story might be told of these brave fellows venturing their lives to save their companions, and deeds of heroism and self-sacrifice have been performed on that rough rocky coast, which might not be unworthy of a place in the annals of our country.

The fisherman generally has an help-mate in the shape of a wife, often scarcely inferior in muscular development to himself. The dress of the Cullercoats fish-women, which is almost unique, is represented in the foregoing woodcut. Of late years considerable innovations have found their way into their toilet, but in their earlier and simpler days shoes and stockings were regarded in the light of unnecessary and cumbersome luxuries. As it is, the majority of the 'fisher children' run about bare-foot, and this, judging from their appearance, does not interfere with their health or strength.

The fish-woman acts as the sale-woman of the fish caught by her father, husband or brother, as the case may be. Each morning these women may be seen making their way across the 'Long Sands,' with their fish-kreels strapped upon their broad shoulders, and soon in the streets of Tynemouth and Newcastle is heard the cry of 'fresh herrings, caller-herrings' and other similarly tempting announcements, delivered with the strong intonation of their northern dialect. When the women are not employed in this way, you may see them sitting at their doors mending the crab-nets,