

Apparently they had a non-official Rotary Club in St. John's in those days. It is quite evident that Gilbert and his companions had a very jovial time in St. John's—then, as now, famous for its hospitality. Hayes, speaking of St. John's in 1583, refers to it as "a place very populous and much frequented."

As our Newfoundland poet, Michael Harrington, says in his poem *St. John's, the City Maritime*:

I am the city Maritime,
I am your mother and your father too;
Your god, your first love, your unshaken faith;
And sorrow in an old brown wound congealed,
Upon the sandstone hillside of my heart;
For though your blood is sluggish now and cool,
It will go hot yet in young veins unborn,
For I the unconquerable spirit of your thoughts,
I shall abide when bones are dust and still.

Shortly after Cabot's discovery of Newfoundland in 1497, the cry went forth that the waters surrounding its coasts were teeming with fish, a diet then largely used by Europeans. Immediately there was a rush by the maritime nations of Europe to the New Isle, in search of a share in the wealth which was sure to be obtained from such a promising sea-harvest, and Newfoundland suddenly burst forth into the limelight of publicity as the Klondyke of the period.

Mindful of the immense quantities of fish seen about our island by Cabot on his first trip, other masters also came out the next year, under his guidance, provided with fishing gear and fishermen. The number of English fishermen taking part in the Newfoundland fisheries had so increased by 1504 that His Majesty bethought him that he was somewhat responsible for their spiritual welfare, and we find that the sum of two pounds was paid by His Majesty for a priest to perform religious services in the New Isle. This is the first record that we have of the establishment of religion in the island.

The English began fishing in Newfoundland, as we have seen, in 1498; the Portuguese made their first trip in 1501, and the French took up the trade in 1504. The Spanish came later, in 1543. In 1577, out of about 400 ships employed in the fishery, there were 100 Spanish and 50 Portuguese ships; but they rapidly diminished in numbers, and in a short time withdrew almost entirely. The Spanish and Portuguese soon turned to South America, and thus the Newfoundland fisheries were left to the English and French, and from them both nations drew enormous wealth, and so increased their nations' greatness.

The attention of England, as well as that of France, was first drawn to North America by the discovery of the fishery of Newfoundland. France and England early engaged in the prosecution of the cod-fisheries on the Banks and around the shores of Newfoundland. The

English and French fishermen employed in these fisheries supplied the navies and the mercantile marine of both nations with bold and skilful sailors, and thus developed their power at sea. Both nations found here the best nurseries for seamen. Both were thus drawn to the region of the St. Lawrence, and were led to plant colonies, originally, with a view to carrying on the fisheries, and the rivalry between the two powers to obtain the sovereignty of the soil arose in connection with the fisheries. The long wars between France and England were avowedly for the fisheries and the territories around them. Thus the fisheries of Newfoundland really laid the foundation of the empire which England at length acquired in America, when her supremacy was established after a long contest with France.

Hon. Mr. Duff: Hear, hear.

Hon. Mr. Burke: These fisheries were far more influential in bringing about the settlement of North America than all the gold of Mexico and Peru accomplished in Southern America.

The Reverend Dr. Harvey said:

The humble, industrious fishermen, who plied their hard labour along the shores and on the Banks of Newfoundland and in the neighbouring seas, were the pioneers of the great host from the Old World who, in due time, built up the United States and overspread Canada. They have done an honourable stroke of work in the great business of the world. England owes much to them. Until these fisheries drew her seamen from their narrow seas, and taught them to brave the storms of the Atlantic, her merchant marine was of small account, and her navy had scarcely an existence. In prosecuting these fisheries England learned how to become Mistress of the Seas. It was in Newfoundland too, that the great Mother of Colonies made her first attempt at colonization. Here her flag first waved over her possessions in the western hemisphere. Newfoundland is her oldest colony.

Hon. Mr. Duff: Hear, hear.

Hon. Mr. Burke: The repulse of the Spanish Armada was one of the greatest events in history; and it is interesting to recall that Newfoundland fishing ships, Newfoundland crews and Newfoundland captains took part in that historic fight. Captain Richard Whitbourne, a planter of Trinity for many years, was there with Drake and Hawkins, in command of his own large ship and two small ones, all of which he fitted out at his own expense. It was probably in great measure as a reward for his services on this occasion that he was knighted. One historian says there is no doubt there were hundreds of Newfoundland sailors present on that occasion—that is men who had served in the Newfoundland fishing fleet.

Some time before this, Sir Walter Raleigh said better care must be given by the British Government to the Newfoundland fishing fleet,