

while the toiling fishermen themselves, scattered along the wild shores of their rock-bound coast, reap but a mean subsistence, without the prospect of having their lot sensibly affected by the prosperity of their employers. Though at the present day of this colony's long and tedious history, a few larger groupings of fishermen have resulted in communities of something like numerical importance, yet the original character of the colony as a fishing station, with St. John's as its head-quarters, is unchanged by those marks of advancement and civilization which are obvious in the progress of other countries. With the multiplication of fishermen, and the extension of the line of coast occupied by them, and even the increase of little settlements, there has been no introduction of that powerful element in human society, so beneficial in many of its workings—the admixture of class. If we have aristocracy in the merchants, they are local; and their influence rarely reaches even the nearest of the dwellings of their poor operatives; while the want of any variety of resource in the country calls no middle class into existence; and the prevailing poverty of the fishermen seems to forbid the hope of seeing more than one in a hundred rise from their ranks to supply the want. Tradesmen there are but few out of the capital, and of shopkeepers, in the English sense of the word, still fewer; the population getting not only 'provisions' in food, but most of the necessary manufactured articles, from the stores of the mercantiles against their account in fish. Shopkeepers, as a respectable class, are only now gaining ground in St. John's; while almost the only attempt elsewhere takes the form of a petty barter trade, carried on between the more successful fishermen and his poorer neighbours, in which the illicit sale of ardent spirits forms the strong characteristic. Farmers and gardeners are at still greater premium—perhaps I should not exaggerate if I were to say—not more than five-and-twenty families in a circuit of ten miles round St. John's and not more than fifty or sixty in the whole island, being supported solely by agriculture. Add to these features of Newfoundland society a few more of the peculiarities of the trade of catching and curing fish, and of the winter life of the fishermen, and a type of British colonists, at once solitary in its kind, and alone in its isolation from the surrounding progress, is the result.

"Of such are the people of the settlement of this mission, numbering over eight hundred church members, not so many Roman Catholics, and a few Wesleyans.

"They and their children are engaged in an unceasing struggle with poverty, living in the most miserable and uncomfortable of homes—too often most uncleanly, also—in the severest of climates, and following the trade of fishing, not as upon the English coast and elsewhere, where the occupation is more or less permanent through a long season, but where the fish is migratory, and very unequal in its abundance in different years, and always varying in its locality of chief abundance: the period of its visit being at best but a short season. This leads to most irregular and desolatory habits throughout the settlements.

"When, added to such unfavourable circumstances the extent of the mission, with its island appendage, is considered, the divided labours of one man can aspire but to humble success. And an expedient, which seems here to have every thing in its justification, and, under God, would prove a blessing to the people, and a great help and comfort to the minister—I mean the appointment of lay readers—is at present, on several accounts, out of our reach.

"In the meantime, it shall be my constant endeavour to supply, in some measure, the lack

of these usual and useful appliances, by diligent intercourse from house to house, by public catechising, by as full and uninterrupted a course of ministrations as the separated state of my flock will allow; by doing what I can, under the circumstances, to improve the day-schools, and by persevering in the case of an adult evening-school in the chief settlement, which, with moderate success, has been proceeding since November."

TRINITY.—Extracts from the reports of the Rev. B. Smith have already appeared in the *Mission Field*, October, 1860, Vol. V. p. 238. In a later report, Mr. Smith gives an account of the progress of his church:—

"On the 22nd of November, exactly three months from the commencement of the church, the rough covering in was finished.

"The hired labourers had completed their term of engagement on the 22nd of the previous month, and still some 2,000 more of pine board remained to be planed and nailed on the roof. For this I determined to trust to the people themselves. The weather of November was wet and rough, but I requested two or three of them to be on the look out for a fine day, now and then, and call volunteers together, which they did, without my taking any further trouble about it. All this time many were absent, or had but just returned, before the finish, from their Labrador voyage; and it was not before the middle of December that all were at home again, after completing their cruises for firewood up the bay.

"Then I sent round notice for all the heads of families to meet me at the Board schoolroom at the north side, to hear the statement of each man's contribution in cash and labour, in order that mistakes might be rectified if any had occurred. Accordingly on the appointed day, the room was filled, and the accounts were read over seriatim, or 'overhauled,' a few mistakes rectified, and finally all was pronounced correct. There were some 120 accounts, including those of single men, which will be preserved for future reference, in a book provided for the purpose. Next I read over my own account of monies received and expended, after which the further operations during the winter were decided on. Each man agreed to furnish one stick of clapboard for the walls, and one ditto of three-quarter inch board for additional covering of the roof—the clapboard to be ready planed for putting on, and the whole to be brought to the church, and delivered over to me on the 16th February next.

"It will give an idea of the people's zeal hitherto, when I state that since last October twelvemonth, they have paid in cash nearly £100, and that the number of days of labour given besides, amounts to two years and five months' continuous work for one man, exclusive of Sundays."

LA POELE.—The Rev. G. H. Hooper says:—"Reporting the state of the mission, I think some improvement may be seen, in various ways, which is an encouragement to proceed. Still there are so many harbours to visit, that my attendance there is very unsatisfactory to myself, and must be equally so to the people. It is with a feeling of regret that I leave some of them, but the often-repeated question, and evidently an earnest one, 'When shall we see you again, please God?' is pleasing to hear, and proves, I hope, that my services, however imperfect they may be, are thankfully received. Dangers and hardships are necessarily part of a missionary's life, but they are of small account if we can but gain the end we desire. The fishermen are exposed to equal or greater danger in seeking earthly things, and why should we complain who seek for spiritual?"

"I have had a variety of adventures in my own boat, from sunken rocks and strong winds, but God has mercifully carried me through all dangers."

CHANNEL.—The Rev. W. W. Lo Gallais says:—"I have been occupied much as usual in visiting each harbour in the mission at regular intervals, and am thankful to say that the love and attachment of the people to the church seems to increase with their knowledge of her services, and experience of her care for her scattered children.

"Ascension Day has not been very well observed in Channel in years gone by, so on the Sunday previous, I took occasion to speak to the people on the subject of the neglect of Ascension Day, and had the satisfaction, when the day came round, to see the church well filled, both morning and evening, with an attentive and apparently devout congregation. The Holy Communion was administered to a comparatively large number of communicants. I think the obedience shown by the people to the commands of the church, and their constant and ready performance of all outward duties, is one of the best proofs that can be desired, that the inward progress is not neglected, though of this evidence is also cheerfully conveyed by the changed lives of many in the mission."

The church has now been completed, and Mr. Lo Gallais records the zeal displayed by the people:—

"Their services have been cheerfully rendered about the work, and many a time have they left their own work unfinished to labour about the house of God. One among many other gratifying circumstances is the deep interest manifested by all in the work—a result which it appears to me was brought about, in a great measure, by so much of the labour having been wrought by themselves. They have thus learned to regard it as their own labour, and to have that personal interest in and love for it which men commonly have for their own works.

"At the same time, it must be confessed that, much as the church's services are valued, verse as the people are even to contemplate their withdrawal, and eager as they are to exert themselves to the utmost to erect buildings for the more decent celebration of divine service—as in the case of the church in Channel, the chapel-school at Cud Key, a similar building at Burnt Islands, and again another in course of erection at Seal Cove—they yet do not seem able to understand the duty and necessity of providing for the clergy themselves. Their minds—at least, those of the people in this mission—have, at length, been disabused of the notion that possessed them for so long, that the clergy were the paid agents of the Government, but only to give place to another, that the Government, if it does not, ought to pay the clergy of so heavily taxed a people as they are. I lose no opportunity of pressing upon them the duty of supporting their own clergymen, and so relieve the venerable society that has so long and so generously ministered to their spiritual wants; but the failure of the fishery on this hitherto prosperous part of the western shore renders the prospect of the mission becoming self-supporting more distant than ever."

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