

were very scarce; and also that there was a great want of bait, as the caplin had not yet appeared on the coast. I observed many large boats on shore, which had not been launched; and the fishermen told me that in consequence of the weather having been so stormy and cold, that more hands were required in their fishing-boats; consequently fewer boats were employed: also that the fish had been very scarce, and they did not expect them to strike in now till the arrival of the caplin. Last season, St. Pierre and Miquelon were visited by the caplin in great abundance, but the French were not prepared to take them: however, this season they have provided themselves with proper nets for the purpose.

I was prevented by the weather from leaving St. Pierre until the morning of 10th June, and I arrived at the Burgeo Islands on the forenoon of the 11th, and found there two English brigs loading with fish, one for Oporto, the other for Jersey. The two great mercantile establishments of Newman and Co. of London, and Nicolle of Jersey, carry on an extensive trade in fish here, and as far west (I am told) as Cape Raye; but this season they have met with some opposition from a Mr. Furneux, who has set up a small business on his own account; and I was informed by the fishermen that he has reduced the price of flour from 43s. to 38s. per barrel. The agents of the two houses here complain of the fishermen along the coast to the westward, breaking faith with them, and selling their fish to Nova Scotia traders. These two houses exported last year about 30,000 quintals of cod, 200 quintals of salmon, and about 5000 of herring. The population of these islands has decreased; many families, I was informed, have gone further west, and carry on a trade for themselves. The herring fishery was very abundant this spring, and many cargoes were taken to St. Pierre, at which place the supply far exceeded the demand, and whole cargoes were thrown overboard, the boats returning to the islands for fresh herrings for the same market; each of these boats brings back supplies, brandy, &c., upon which no duties are paid. The country and the islands appear to be entirely bog; there is a wooden path laid from Newman's establishment to the nearest fishing-hut, about five feet wide, passing the church; and one of stone from Nicolle's house to it; without these two paths it would be impossible for the people to attend church in the summer; there is also a school-house, but to get at it one must travel about five yards through a bog. I observed little children were over their ankles in going from the path to the school-house, which appeared to be very much out of repair. The clergyman was not in the neighbourhood during my stay. The scurvy appeared to be the prevailing disease here, caused by their diet being entirely of fish; and the nearest medical man resides at a distance of forty miles to the westward. Several men and women were suffering so severely from this disease that the doctor had to visit them in their own houses.

There is very little ground in cultivation, a few small garden patches around some of the houses, cabbage and turnips being the only vegetables which they seem to cultivate, and these in very small quantities; the men seem too lazy to do anything but fish. There is no magistrate here, or collector of customs, but duties are paid in a certain way by the two houses of Newman & Co. and Nicolle, and I was informed that no allowance is made of any kind from the Colonial Treasury for the improvement of this settlement.

The French had not been on this coast this spring, either fishing or digging for bait. All payments to the fishermen are made in truck, and the fish are valued at the average price of the St. John's market at the end of the season, consequently the poor fisherman never can know how his account stands with these agents. It is expected the catch of fish this season will fall short at least one-third of last year, owing to the stormy winter and spring. I was detained at these islands by the fogs until the 16th, when I sailed for Harbour Briton, and anchored there on the 19th. This is a safe anchorage on the north-west side of Fortune Bay, opposite to which is Jersey Harbour, a bar across which permits only small vessels to enter. The house of Newman & Co. has a large establishment in Harbour Briton, they were loading two brigs with fish for the Brazil and Oporto markets, and they employ about 75 men in their business; the Jersey house, in Jersey Harbour, employs about 50 men. There is a collector of customs here, Mr. Gaden, who informed me that the export of last year from the district of Fortune Bay, was 47,651 quintals of cod, 300 barrels of salmon, 4,777 barrels of herrings, 79 tons of whale-oil and blubber, and 23 cwt. of fins.

The French had been seen fishing early in the season in the bay, and I am told the English fishermen encourage them to do so, for the sake of barter. There is a very large quantity of herring taken from here to St. Pierre in the season, and goods brought back, for which no duty is paid; the collector not being allowed a boat, cannot in any way prevent the smuggling which is carried on all along this coast to a great extent. The take of fish this season is expected to fall short of last season at least one-third; small punts, with one man and a boy, are employed for the fishing at the entrance of the harbour.

There is an episcopal church here, and two clergymen, one medical man, and a population of about 300 in all; about twenty acres of ground is in cultivation, chiefly in gardens.

Fogs preventing my leaving this harbour until the 23rd, when I sailed for Lamelin, and anchored there on the morning of 27th; immediately landed for the purpose of obtaining lodgings for an officer and boat's crew, but could obtain no house whatever. The stipendiary magistrate had gone to St. John's, and the sub-collector informed me that the duty on caplin had expired last session, that these fish had set in abundantly on the coast, and several cargoes had been taken over to St. Pierre and Miquelon, consequently the