

most important advance which Newfoundland has made during its long and singular existence as a dependency of the British Crown.

The story of Newfoundland is one of the most remarkable episodes in the history of the British Empire. It presents us at our worst and at our best. Strange instances of official tyranny blur the chronicles of the Island's rise and progress. On a smaller field Freedom has had almost as hard a battle in Newfoundland as that which was necessary to establish her supremacy at home. Not that the islanders fought and bled for the privileges they now enjoy. They did not win their liberties with pike and gun. The pomp and circumstance of war flung no halo of glory about their political achievements. Toiling and suffering, they bore their many ills with a patient loyalty to the Home Government that deserved the quick reward which it did not receive. To-day, however, no English ministry can look back upon the maladministration of the country, without a desire to redeem a past of cruelty and neglect, by a present conciliatory watchfulness over Newfoundland's future interests. The special grievances of the people, the unique position of the colony, the attempt to make it a mere fishing-station and training-ground for the Navy, the curious anomalies of the local and imperial laws under which the people labored; all these subjects are considered and illustrated in the following pages.

In the active efforts that were made, for more than a century, to suppress the colonization of Newfoundland, coercive laws were supplemented by libels on its climate and soil. The English merchants, who used it as a fishing-station, published it abroad as a land given over to sterility and fog. Officials of the Home Government encouraged these reports. When, in spite of them, infatuated emigrants found their way thither, they were forbidden either to build on the land, or to obtain any proprietary rights in the soil. Every summer the Fishing Admirals took possession of the Island, with incontestable power to use or to destroy any huts, stages, or buildings, which the inhabitants might have erected near the coast. In the autumn the fishing-fleets sailed away. On arriving in the English ports