

INTRODUCTION.



HE discovery, history, system of Government and resources of this, the oldest of England's Colonies, have been so fully dealt with elsewhere that the reader must be referred to such well-known works as those of the late Dr. Moses Harvey, His Grace Archbishop Howley, Judge Prowse, and others, and to the numerous Government and other publications which deal with Geological and Statistical matters, for such detailed information as would not legitimately come within the scope of this volume.

The discovery of Newfoundland dates from 1497, when John Cabot landed from the small ship *Matthew* of Bristol, at Bonavista as is said by some, or on the Labrador coast, or at Cape Breton, as is claimed by others.

Formally annexed by England in 1583, its natural riches, which then, as now, consisted mainly of its cod fisheries, were shared by various nations until gradually England and France were left alone in the struggle for supremacy.

After passing through various forms of Government, during which its progress has been repeatedly checked by unfortunate legislation, it is now, in 1905, enjoying a period of prosperity which bids fair to be permanent, and is freed from many restrictions which the unfortunate French Treaty had previously imposed.

Newfoundland is neither a Crown Colony nor does it form part of the Dominion of Canada. It was granted Representative Government in 1822, and in 1855 became a self-governing Colony.

Owing to the manner in which it has been colonized, the Island possesses a very mixed population, and the combination of English, Scotch, and Irish, has resulted in the formation of an intelligent, industrious, and intensely loyal race, whose fine physique and hardy upbringing, and whose constant experience of difficulty and danger in their seafaring occupations, has justly gained for them a high reputation as seamen. The isolation of many of the outposts, especially in the past, has increased their self-reliance, so that in addition to being "all there" as regards the fisheries, they are usually capable of erecting their own dwellings and even of building fishing vessels, which, for resisting the ice pressure and for general sea-going qualities, cannot be surpassed.

So well is their value recognised, that Newfoundland fishermen are eagerly welcomed in the Navy, and the band of Naval Volunteers which has been recently enrolled should form an important adjunct to Britain's defences.

The original inhabitants of Newfoundland were a tribe of Indians, known as Beothiks, and their extermination forms a painful chapter in the history of our Colony. Although harmless, and at first friendly to the whites, they were ruthlessly shot down by the trappers and squatters, and in 1828, when an expedition was fitted out to find the remnant of the tribe, who were supposed to have retired to Red Indian Lake, and whom it was desired to conciliate, only their graves and a few relics were to be found. Many of these relics may be seen in the Museum of St. John's, where many other objects of interest may be observed by the tourist, but the only Indians who can now be found in the Island are the few Mic-Macs who have come over from Nova Scotia and form efficient guides for those who visit the interior of the Island.

Although possessing only a small population, 220,000 in all, Newfoundland has shown sufficient confidence in her resources to face a heavy public debt for the development of the country; and the citizens have individually shown great enterprise in the improvement of their buildings since the great fire at St. John's in 1892, which, with the Bank crash of the following year, appears to have been almost a blessing in disguise, and has resulted in all round improvements in business and particularly in methods of finance.