

## NEWFOUNDLAND CORRESPONDENCE.

ST. JOHN'S, Nfld., June 28, 1872.

## TRAITS AND STORIES OF THE NEWFOUNDLAND FISHERMEN.

The sea-faring habits of the great bulk of our population give rise to various peculiarities of character, thought and speech which are often interesting to an observant mind and at times highly amusing. The intermittent character of the employment furnished by the fisheries, which are prosecuted only during five or six months in the year, and allow long intervals of entire idleness, indisposes the people to steady, continuous work. They will toil tremendously for a time, or as they say for a "spell," and then they must have a rest. Hence a thorough-bred fisherman detests the plodding industry of the farm, and rarely are the two pursuits combined with success. The fisherman who can go to the spring seal-fishery and earn in a month or six weeks from £20 to £40, despises the slowly-earned gains obtained by delving with the spade, and is only thoroughly active and energetic when battling with the ice-floes, and when engaged in the excitements of the seal-hunt. On his return he loves to take his ease for four or five weeks in his own chimney-corner, or walking about the streets. The cod-fisher who rises with the dawn and returns by noon with two or three quintals of cod in his boat, has no relish for "grubbing" the soil and reclaiming wild land. His farm is the sea and to it he sticks. He believes in "luck" and is fond of "chancing it;" so that he has little forethought, and in his calculations is little troubled for the future. To the grim ocean, half friendly and half scowling and defiant, he looks for his bread. The supplying merchant furnishes his gear and gives him advances in food, and for the rest he trusts to the "luck" that the season may bring.

## SEA PHRASES.

The speech of the fisherman is full of phrases derived from his everyday employments. To make an engagement for a term of service is "to ship" with Mr. So-and-so. Even servant girls are said to "ship for six months," when they engage with a mistress; a young man "ships" a sweetheart when they are affianced; and a church is said to have "shipped" a new parson,—or perhaps he is called the "skipper" of the church. The master of the house is invariably the "skipper," and the mistress is the "woman." "How's the woman?" is the usual way in which a man is asked regarding the health of his wife. Gaining an advantage over a man is called "getting to windward of him." "Mr. Blank is a terrible knowin' man—there's no gottin' to windward of him." Is a man prosperous?—he is said to be "making headway;" if the reverse, he is "going to leeward." To initiate any undertaking is described as "getting it under way;" and to live meanly and parsimoniously is "to go very near the wind." There is a world of meaning in the Newfoundland proverb,—the big fish eat the little ones." Thus curtly and pithily and with a sort of mournful cynicism, do they at times describe their own forlorn condition at the end of a fishing season, when in payment of their debts the whole proceeds of their toil go to the stores of the wealthy merchant, while they are half starving during winter. Of profitless talk it is said, in reproach, "words fill no nets." A dull plodding man, who succeeds in spite of natural deficiency by honest industry, is said to get on "by dint of stupidity and hard work"—a most expressive description.

## FLAGS IN BURROW AND JOY.

Another peculiarity of our population, derived from their sea-faring habits, is inordinate fondness for flags. Every merchant has his flag flying on his storehouse or wharf, as though a state of active warfare existed; while at the principal harbours the approach of each vessel is signalled by a flag, be it schooner, brig, brigantine or ship. On Signal Hill, overlooking St. John's harbour, three masts are erected, and at times, when a number of vessels are approaching the port, these, with their yards, look like a draper's shop, with the various flags streaming in the wind. To master the code of this mode of telegraphing is no easy task; but the street gamins are perfect adepts in it. Flags, however, are utilised in other ways. When an important personage has "crossed the bourne from whence no traveller returns" the flags are hoisted half-mast; when a wedding takes place all the bunting in the place floats in the breeze. Big sealing guns, whose report is like that of a small cannon, are brought out and fired continuously and evidently afford the greatest delight on these joyous occasions; and in the "outports," as all places but St. John's are named, it is usual to catch the happy couple in a net, as they emerge from the church—a symbolic act perhaps, indicating that both are netted for life. In these outports too church-bells are few and far between, and the time for each service is indicated by hoisting on a pole a flag on which is emblazoned the mitre or the cross. Each school-house too has its flag-staff, and when the flag is hoisted the urchins are seen along the paths "creeping like snails unwillingly to school."

## FIRING RO KS.

Newfoundland is a rocky region for the most part, the surface of the ground being everywhere covered with stones of all sizes. The word "stones" however, is never used—the smallest pebble and the largest boulder being called a rock. Boys invariably speak of "firing rocks," but never of throwing stones. A servant was asked how she had been spending her time lately. Her reply was "why, I has been heavin' rocks out of them raisins for the best

part of an hour," so that stoning fruit is "heavin' rocks" in Newfoundland. So abundant are the rocks in some places and so scanty the soil, that suitable ground for the burial of the dead cannot be found, and amid huge boulders the graves are made by soil brought from a distance; or, where this is not possible, the coffin is laid upon the rock, above ground, and then walled in and covered. It is not very uncommon for a grave to be dug less in depth than the coffin. Of course this is true only of certain localities.

## SCRIPTURE NAMES.

Among the primitive population of the "outports" there is a wonderful passion for choosing names for their children, taken from the Old Testament, and these at times the oddest and most uncommon they can select. Isaacs, Reubens, Daniels, Azariahs, and Isaiahs are plentiful as "rocks;" but it is rather startling to be introduced to Miss Lo-Ruhamah Tucker, or Miss Lo-Ammi Squires, or to be told that the little flaxen-headed girl you are trying to make friends with rejoices in the name borne by one of the daughters of the patriarch Job, Keren-Happuch, or that the baby's name is Jerusha. To those not quite familiar with Scripture names it may be well to say that the first two are to be found in Hosea I, 69 and 90. It is on record that one child was baptised Beer-sheba; entered in the marriage register in due time as Bath-sheba, but always called Bertha by her neighbours. A clergyman was once requested to baptize a child and to give it the name of Idgnia, and on investigation he found that Eugenia was intended. The same clergyman relates in a little book he published that once in beginning a service, in a private house, in one of the outports, a woman near him, intending no offensive familiarity, lifted up a corner of his surplice, and after examining it with finger and thumb, pronounced it aloud "a beautiful piece of stuff." Under similar circumstances he was startled on another occasion, in the middle of his sermon, by an old woman in the chimney corner calling out to some young ones, "My gracious, girls, I've forgot the loaf. Julia, go out to the next house and hang on the bake-pot." It must be understood that these events occurred in some of the primitive, outlying settlements, far from the centres of civilization, where the people seldom see a clergyman and are quite unaccustomed to the solemnities of religious assemblies. They welcome eagerly the rare visits of clergymen in these scattered hamlets. So cold is the weather in winter, and so wretched their houses that in order to keep the loaf from freezing at nights, it is the practice to wrap it in the blankets and take it to bed when retiring.

## WEST COUNTRY PHRASES.

Our population is a mixed one, nearly half being descendants of Irish settlers, the rest English, most of them originally from Devonshire, Dorsetshire and Hampshire. The descendants of the latter retain many of the peculiarities of speech which still distinguish the peasants of Devonshire. They say "I's took no notice to she," that is, notice of her; "did 'ee want any thing wi' I?" They speak of their "handses" and "posteses," and their cows being "abossed," and their bread "amade." They will say "Mebbe I's gown home." The parson is "parson;" and they ask him to "bide a spurt" with them. A "spell" is either a short continuance at labour or a time of rest. Short distances are, in common speech, measured as "spells;" thus two "shoulder-spells" is the distance a man would ordinarily carry a burden on his shoulders, resting once in the midst. The word "obedience" is sometimes used for "obedience." Thus children are directed to "make their obediences," that is to bow or courtesy. The inhabitants of a settlement are called "liviers;" and if any district be uninhabited, there are said to be no "liviers" in it. An expressive phrase is used for indicating a fall in the temperature—"to-day is a jacket colder than yesterday." "How do times govern in St. John's?" is a common question which is answered by recounting the prices of fish, oil and provisions. "Praise the fair day at even" is a Scotch proverb which has its counterpart here, "Praise the bridge that carries you over." The folly of lazy shiftless expedients is well expressed by saying "he sits in one end of the tilt and burns the other." When admiration of a benevolent man is expressed he is described as "a terrible kind man;" or the weather is commended by saying "it's a shocking fine day." "Clever" with us means strong or large; "a clever man" is a large stout man; a "clever baby" is a hearty big baby. A singular use of the word "accommodation" is common. A person of bad repute is said to have a "very bad accommodation;" probably a corruption of "recommendation."

With all their local peculiarities and primitive superstitions and customs, our fishing population have many sterling qualities of head and heart; and all they want to put them on a level with corresponding classes in other countries, more advanced in the arts of civilised life, is education. No one could live among them without liking them. In simplicity of character, warmth of heart, kindness and hospitality they are unsurpassed.

## MASONIC CELEBRATION AT ST. JOHN, N.B.

The most imposing masonic demonstration ever witnessed in New Brunswick took place recently on the occasion of the fraternal visit of the Springfield (Mass., U. S.) Commandery of Knights Templar to their brethren of the same ancient and chivalric order encamped in the city of St. John. The Springfield fraters numbered over seventy, and were accompanied by a very efficiently and gorgeously got up band. They came via Bangor by special train, arriving at the Carleton terminus at 10 p.m. on Tuesday the 11th ult. The Commanderies in St. John, numbering about one hundred knights in full uniform, with a corps of torch bearers and the band of the 62nd Battalion, turned out to welcome them. The Americans marched in fine style, their very effective uniforms and military bearing produced quite an imposing appearance. The scene at the reception was well got up, and did credit to the managers. After the usual ceremonies were concluded, the whole party marched to the ferry-boat, crossed the harbour, and proceeded to the Victoria Hotel. The gallant Americans were then left by their companions in arms. The streets on the whole line of march were lined with spectators who cheered loudly.

On the following day at 2 p.m. the St. John and Union de Molay encampments, with band and banners, marched to the Victoria, where they were received by their foreign fraters

drawn up in line in front of that magnificent hostelry. This is the scene portrayed by our artist. All the encampments then marched to Indian Town, went on board the steamer "Rothsay" and made an excursion up the St. John river. Ladies were tolerated by the gallant knights on this occasion, and a substantial repast spread for the sustenance of the excursionists. The moon was well on her travels when the aquatic "merry making" was got through and Indian Town sighted.

The following morning at cock-crow the martial strains of the American band roused the slumberers in the vicinity of the Victoria, and before 6 a.m. the noble knights of Springfield were making for their home at 30 miles an hour.

Great credit is due to those who had the affair in charge: everything was done with precision and in good style. The uniforms appeared to be quite new and very becoming. An observer could not fail to be impressed with the respectability, earnestness, and intelligence of the body of gentlemen who had the honour to represent the encampments of either Springfield or St. John.

Our sketch represents a portion of German Street. The building with a rounding roof once did duty as No. 5 engine house. The old grammar school and portion of the German Street Wesleyan Church are visible. All these small buildings must soon give way to imposing edifices of the modern school. The increasing trade of St. John demands the change.

K. J. R.

## THE CARIBOO GOLD FIELDS.

In a former issue (Vol. V, No. 24) we gave an illustration of a scene in a miners' camp at the Eureka Silver Mines, near the town of Hope, on the Fraser River. In this number we illustrate camp life at the gold mines of Cariboo, the scene of the great rush in 1862.

The first discovery of gold in the Fraser River district was made in 1858. The metal was very fine and flaky in character, but it gradually became coarser the higher the pioneers ascended the stream. Exploration was encouraged, and the following year coarse gold was found on the Quesnelle, a tributary of the Fraser, some 300 miles inland. In 1860 and 1861 further rich deposits of coarse gold were found in Cariboo.

The main feature of the Cariboo country is the great range of mountains from 5,000 to 10,000 feet above the sea-level, whence numerous "creeks" descend into the Fraser. The gold is found both in the creeks and in the banks. The bed-rock is most irregular, sometimes appearing near the surface, often from 20 to 50 feet below it. It is usually a bluish slate, covered by a deposit of blue clay. Streaks of yellow clay are also found which are sometimes very rich. Cariboo gold is generally mixed with quartz.

The following statements respecting the Cariboo diggings, condensed from a pamphlet published with the sanction of the Government in 1864, may be found interesting.

In the early part of the season of 1861, the most important creek in Cariboo was Antler, which yielded at one time at the lowest \$10,000 a day. On one claim \$1,000 were taken out of the ditches, as the result of a day's work. Later in the season Williams Creek wholly eclipsed even Antler. One claim, Steele's, gave on one day 400 oz., the total obtained on its area of 80 feet by 25, being \$105,000. In 1861 gold was found on Williams Creek only in six claims, but now the valley is taken up for six miles, both in the creek and in the hill side. In 1861 the only mining was in surface diggings. The mining of 1862 assumed a new character, and shaft sinking, drifting, and tunnelling are now vigorously prosecuted—a system of mining which, unlike the former, can be carried on throughout the entire year. In the summer of 1862, the highest amount taken out by any company in twenty-four hours was \$9,670; this was in Cunningham's claim, which averaged nearly \$2,000 a day during the whole season. On several days 52 lbs. were taken out. The Bishop of Columbia witnessed 600 oz. taken out on a claim in one day. Adam's claim yielded to each of its three partners \$10,000 clear of expenses. In Barker's claim eight partners realized \$7,000 each. It is believed that on this creek in 1862 155 claims paid expenses, which would average \$2,000 each, making a total of \$310,000, and about an equal amount was cleared. The entire yield of the creek for the season may accordingly be estimated at \$620,000. A new part of the creek (below the canon) hitherto unprospected, was found to pay as richly as the famous claims above the canon, and \$500,000 were taken out of three claims, between October and January, 1862; in attestation of which 150 lbs. of gold were brought to Lilloet on the 21st of February. Later in the spring of 1863 Dillon's claim gave the extraordinary yield of 102 lbs. in one day, or about \$26,000.

## FASHIONS.—SUMMER HATS.

The summer hats of which illustrations are given on another page, are made, some of straw, and others of tulle. The trimming materials consist of lace, tulle bands, ribbon, feathers, and flowers. A trimming that is much admired is made of ribbon in two shades of a colour; as light and dark brown, light and dark green, &c. Another favourite style is to trim with ribbon of two different colours, as, for instance, brown and pink, brown and blue, &c. The hats numbered 5 and 6 in the illustration are made of Swiss muslin and figured batiste, and are especially intended for garden use.

Fig. 1.—Maize-Coloured Crêpe Hat. The hat has a narrow velvet piping round its outer edge. The trimming consists of a crêpe puff, with plaits of the same, maize-coloured corded ribbon, black ostrich feather and a spray of flowers.

Fig. 2 is a gray crêpe bonnet intended for the use of elderly ladies. The trimming consists of pleated strips and bows of black velvet, with a gray ostrich feather of two shades, light and dark. The hat is trimmed inside with gray crêpe ruche.

Fig. 3.—White English Straw Hat, trimmed with brown grosgrain ribbon and feather to match. Under the rim a ruche of brown ribbon.

Fig. 4.—Black Crêpe Hat with trimming of black corded silk edging, bias strips, pleated strips and rolls of black corded silk. Bridle of black corded silk; with rolls of the same, and black crêpe ruche inside the bonnet. A jet agrafe on one side.

Fig. 5.—Garden Hat in white Swiss muslin. The shape should be covered with white Swiss muslin, three strips of the material being carried round the brim in plaits, as shown