

SEA SKETCHES FROM NOVA SCOTIA.

THE HARBOUR LIGHTS.

All along the rock-bound coast of this little Maritime Province the beacon lights gleam brightly. On the Bay of Fundy coast the bold red sandstone headlands are crowned by white-towered buildings, whose lights flash out a cheery signal to the mariners tossed and buffeted by its turbulent tides. All told, great and small, there are one hundred and sixty-six lighthouses in Nova Scotia and Cape Breton. The majority are square, wooden buildings, with a tower and firm granite foundations. On the Atlantic coast there are a number of octagonal buildings gaily painted in stripes, and all have a very neat and ship-shape appearance. The highest lights are those of Isle Haute and Cape St. George. The Isle Haute light is on a rocky islet in the Bay of Fundy and is three hundred and sixty-five feet above tide water and visible twenty-five miles. Cape St. George is on Northumberland Strait and is three hundred and fifty feet high. But it is to the lighthouses on the Atlantic coast, that our thoughts turn—to Sambro, and Sable, and Little Hope and Ironbound—what thrilling dramas have been played out under the lamps that shine so steadily far into the darkness. Tragedies of wreck and storm and death.

In sunny summer days, when the sea is shining, clear and blue as the sky above, and the flashing wings of the gulls reflect a brightness as of polished silver—when the passing steamers leave long, straight streamers of smoke on the horizon—when the sails of the fishing smacks hang listlessly, and the bare-necked, bare-armed fishermen pull busily at the lines, for the fish have set in and the sea is full of silver gleams. In days such as these it is hard to realize that the sea can be otherwise than calm and beautiful. But we who know it so well do not forget days in the Autumn, when the screaming gull flew inland, when the great moving mass of ocean was a dull, dark purple, and each wave tipped with greenish white foam, when the sky was as dark as the sea, with gleams of uncanny white light breaking through the banks of wind-torn clouds, when the returning fishing smacks ran charily under bare poles, for the varying wind blew in great gusts, when the long wail of the automatic buoy sounded like a funeral knell to the fishermen's wives in the cove. And when the darkness settled down, the dense darkness of a stormy night on the coast, the lights along the shore flashed out their signal stars to guide and warn the weary mariner.

The harbour of Halifax is one of the finest in the world. The water deep and free from obstructions, and secure and safe when once within. But the approaches to the harbour are perilous in the extreme, owing to the inhospitable rockbound coast, which, on the western approach, is a sheer wall of granite grey, and bare and desolate. At the foot of the cliffs are jagged and sharp splintered rocks showing through the water. The currents foam and seethe around these rocks, sending up showers of spray which glisten with all the colors of the rainbow in the sunlight. Halifax occupies an important position as the chief naval station in North America. Its grand dry-dock and advantages as a coaling station, making it a port of call for many ocean steamships, especially in winter.

Sherbrook Tower, an immense round granite structure on Meagher's Beach, guards the eastern entrance to the harbour. Near this entrance is Devil's Island with two lighthouses, one on the eastern and the other on the western side of the island. There is also a lighthouse on the Imperial property of George's Island just in front of the city.

Chebucto Head light stands at the western entrance to the harbour, it is a revolving white light. There is a red light at Herring Cove, and four and-a-half miles beyond Chebucto Head on a rocky islet, Sambro Light sends its steady beams twenty-one miles far out at sea.

Besides its fine lighthouses Halifax Harbour has all the modern aids to safe navigation—buoys, fog bells, fog trumpets, automatic buoys, and on Sambro explosive bombs fired every twenty minutes.

High up on the cliffs are perched the homes of the fishermen, little hamlets with hardly a tree or shrub, only the vastness of sea and rock and sky. The stranger who visits the fishing village of Prospect is sure to be shown the spot where the White Star steamer Atlantic went down; one of the most terrible marine disasters in our century. The steamer was bound to New York with more than a thousand passengers. Coal ran short and the captain decided to put into Halifax for a fresh supply. Through some blunder the harbour's mouth was missed, and before daylight on the morning of April 1st, 1873, the steamer struck on Marr's rock, Prospect. So soon after striking did the vessel sink, that many of the passengers slept peacefully into eternity—not a woman was saved, and only one child, a little boy whose parents were drowned.

In the grey and stormy dawn, the fishermen of Prospect saw the masts and small portions of the hull of a great ship among the breakers. The wreck was crowded with human beings, and every wave that washed over it carried down some struggling, worn-out victim. A strong wind was blowing, the sea was running high, and those clinging to the wreck were covered with frozen spray. The inshore rocks were coated with ice and the high sea and bitter cold made the work of rescue very dangerous, but through the heroic exertions of Officer Brady of the Atlantic, and the Rev. Mr. Ancient, Church of England minister at Prospect, and his brave volunteers, all those who had survived the cold and sea were taken off before sundown. The homes of the fishermen were thrown open and their kindness shown in every way that was possible. In the meantime the news had been carried to Halifax. It was the first day of April, and when the rumour spread through the city "that a great steamer, bound for New York, had been wrecked at Prospect and several hundred lives lost," it was thought to be only one of the stories common to the day. When confirmation came, the city was stirred as never before. Steamers were despatched with provisions and clothing for the living, and coffins for the dead. The shore was strewn with bodies tangled amongst the rocks and seaweed. Strong, stalwart men, fair women, and little children, were laid in rows on the rocks for identification. In a few days strangers were pouring in from all parts of the United States in search of the bodies of loved ones. A deep trench was dug near the church, and the unclaimed, unknown dead were buried there to await the great day when each shall give account for himself. Other steamers have gone down near the harbour's mouth, and many lives have been lost, but at no time has the loss of life been so great as in the Atlantic disaster.

Within range of Meagher's Beach light are the dangerous Thrum Cap shoals. Here, on the 23rd of November, 1797, the fine frigate La Tribune went down, and two hundred and fifty brave men calmly met their death. The circumstances have been graphically told by Dr. McMechan in the story "At the Harbour's Mouth." The loss of La Tribune, like that of the recent terrible disaster in the Mediterranean, seems to have been a great and needless sacrifice of human life. One thing noticeable in the stories of these two great disasters is, that devotion to duty in the British sailor, is as steadfast now as it was one hundred years ago. We read of those on La Tribune—"There was no panic; the men did as they were ordered; discipline prevailed."

Accounts of the Victoria disaster tell us "That the Chaplain died trying to save the sick. The Admiral stuck to his post. All the men listened to the call of duty and did their best. There was no panic even in the face of death."

On a high bluff opposite Thrum Cap is York redoubt with its frowning battlements. Woe to the enemy within range of its cannon. It is also the Imperial signal station, and a sharp lookout is kept for passing craft. Below the fort and clinging to the steep sides of the hill is the pretty fishing village of Purcell's Cove, with its white houses, little garden patches, and here and there stunted, wind blown firs and lilac bushes, a long, winding road leads up to the Fort; and the sea view is one of the finest in America. Well up on the broad, bare hillside is a little burying ground. Here, those who have come home to die are buried. In the burial grounds of our fishing villages the graves of women and children are generally more numerous than those of men. They that go down to the sea in ships, the fathers, and brothers, and sweet-hearts, alas! how many of them go down forever. In choosing this spot there must have been a touch of nature akin to that shown in the choice of Salvation Yeo's last resting place in Bideford Churchyard. "For here can be seen the ships come in and out across the bar," and the long, green waves of the Atlantic rolling in, and at sunset the great lighthouse opposite catches up the last dying rays of light and flashes them forth with messages of hope and cheer. "Then are they glad, because they are at rest; and so he bringeth them unto the haven where they would be."

—Christina Ross Frame, in The Week.

Missionary World.

MISSION WORK IN LONDON.

The London City Mission is a society with a magnificent history. At its annual meeting held at Exeter Hall, London, in May, some stirring facts were made known in the summary of the report presented. This showed that the missionaries, numbering 483, made last year over three and a half million visits, seeing nearly three hundred thousand sick and dying, holding some sixty-nine thousand meetings, resulting in the conversion of many, the adding to the Church of 2,445 persons, the reclamation of 1,867 drunkards, and rescuing 500 fallen women. A careful survey of the report disclosed two special features of the work—first, that there was scarcely any form of vice, of sin, of error, with which the missionaries were not called on from time to time to grapple; and secondly, that when the work of any one missionary was summarized, it left on the mind the conviction that only by faithful constancy could so much have been achieved. The exact number of missionaries on the staff, on March 31st, was 485, that being thirteen less than on the same day in 1892. Financially there had been a decrease in receipts, the total for the general fund having been £50,597, a decrease of £8,975. This was partly due to a decrease of £3,792 in legacies. The expenditure was also less than in the preceding year, but had reached a total of £60,333. An important feature of the work was that of missionaries to special classes, of whom there were 113, embracing such varieties as the North London scavengers, theatrical employees, gypsies, foreign sailors, Jews, and coal-heavers. Indifference was met with everywhere and was one of the evils hardest to remove. The poverty of many was appalling, and owing to the high rentals charged, people herded together. Overcrowding was followed by immorality, disease and death. With regard to intemperance, in districts not a few a decrease in drunkenness was reported. Gambling had sadly developed, not only among men, but among women and children. Infidelity, said the report, was not so strong and "bare-faced" as it was. Socialism was active, and ministers had the full weight of the hatred of those holding anarchist views. Theosophy now presented itself as a foe to the truth. Sabbath profanation was rife, and Roman Catholicism was also mentioned as a difficulty with which the missionaries had to deal. Life in London may be worse in degree but hardly worse in kind than it is in some other great cities. The one power that must be depended on to stay the tide of evil and bring in aught of real and lasting good, is the power of the Gospel as revealed in the Word of God.

Bishop Newman is profoundly impressed with the high type of spirituality among converts in South America.

Bishop Thoburn thinks that the converts in India, during the next eight years, will outnumber those of the ninety-two years.

There are 200,000,000 people in Africa who never saw a Bible, or heard a whisper of the Gospel tidings. But they see plenty of rum.

The number of Protestant Christians has increased throughout Japan, seven-fold in the past ten years, while the number of Roman Catholic adherents has not doubled.

The Presbyterian Church, South, has six missions in China, manned by thirty-six representatives, and all are located in cities standing upon the line of the Grand Canal.

A company of Chinese women listened to extracts from the autobiography of Dr. John G. Paton. A little later they brought, of their own accord, a contribution for missions in the New Hebrides,

saying: "We must think, not only of those near, but also of those afar off, for they also are our brethren."—Chinese Recorder.

It is stated that more than one-half of the ordained Wesleyan missionaries now on the mission fields, are natives, and more than one-half of the entire cost of the work, is met by gifts and contributions on the mission field.

Said Bishop Pattison of his work among the South Sea Islanders: "I do not even tell them that cannibalism and taboo are wrong. I simply teach them great positive truths, and trust to the influence of these truths to lead them to abandon their evil practices. I find that this plan answers better than any negative teaching could possibly do."—Indian Witness.

A missionary in China affirms that during January, more money was spent in propitiating evil spirits that have no existence, than all the churches in the United States give in one year to Foreign Missions. Forty-five missionaries devote themselves to the Chinese upon the Pacific Coast; and, as one result, we find this much said against class contributions, \$6,290 to the treasuries of the local missions.

Uganda.—Good, and very joyful tidings, come from Uganda, the British flag floats over the country, and all is peace. A fair division of territory has been made for the benefit of the French R. C. mission. Bishop Tucker, of the Church Missionary Society, finds the people eager to hear the Gospel, audiences numbering from 1,000 to 4,000. They buy up the Scriptures with the utmost avidity. Converts are multiplying. The good bishop was nearly three months on the weary way from the coast to the Uganda capital, but he declares it would be worth while travelling to the end of the earth to take part in the scenes he has witnessed. Probably, there has hitherto been no such flocking to hear the Gospel, and to possess the Scriptures and to learn of Christ. Bishop Tucker is a faithful preacher and teacher. He will not rest satisfied with superficial work. How Alexander Mackay would have rejoiced to see this day! But he was one of the principal agents in paving the way for the triumph that has come. A railway from the east coast will soon be built, so at least, the missionaries hope. This mission occupies an important vantage ground in East Central Africa. It borders on the Sudan. It possesses the sources of the Nile.

Missionaries express the deepest pity for the Pariahs of Southern India. They are outcasts, in the fullest sense of the word, human, yet treated with less consideration than the lowest and vilest brutes. Their persons are not protected, the temples are closed to them, the courts of justice and the rights of property holding are almost entirely out of their reach, and their intellectual and moral condition is terribly degraded, and yet, this class is said to constitute one-tenth of the population. A few months ago, a movement was made by the Government towards an improvement in their educational advantages. A special report by the Director of Public Instruction, showed, that there are 22,838 children of the Pariah and kindred classes, under instruction in 1892, excluding those who have adopted the Christian religion. An important order has just been issued by the Madras Government pointing out the necessity of special schools under public management for the training of Pariah school-masters, and a special inspecting agency for Pariah schools. This step was in accordance with the suggestions of missionaries, and is highly endorsed by them. Many of the present inspecting officers, who are Brahmmins and high-caste Hindus, consider it a pollution to enter a Pariah village, and they throw impediments in the way of missionary and private effort to educate these people.