

# Some Traditions of Newfoundland.

Handed Down From the Garnered Stories of the Forefathers of the Race. Tales of Daring and Prowess on Land and Sea. Some Glimpses of the Fishery as Carried on Two Hundred Years Ago in Burin, Trinity, Tilton Harbor and Fogo. A Just Tribute to His Grace the Late Archbishop Howley and Rev. Canon Smith Who Accomplished so Much in Gathering up the Traditions of Their Native Land.

H. F. SHORTIS.

In a country like Newfoundland, all thoughtful men will admit that tradition must play a most important part in its contribution to its history. If we are to depend upon documentary evidence alone, we should find the History of Newfoundland sadly wanting in completeness. Our people, especially those in the outports, have been remarkable for treasuring traditions, and their accuracy in handing them down from generation to generation. From their peculiar environments and mode of life, this love for the retrospective has been fostered by them from time immemorial. It was their only source of passing the time during the long winter months of enforced idleness, and it has grown and developed in them to the extent that the patriarch of a village or hamlet was looked upon as the historian of the place, and he was perpetuating what was told him by his great grand-father; and by these means deeds and adventures of the very first settlers were kept fresh in the memory of every generation. The people of Newfoundland are remarkable for the accuracy with which they hand down the traditions of their forefathers. They have an intense love for relating what was told them of their country by their ancestors. This has been almost forced upon them by their circumstances and environments. The Newfoundland story-teller is not satisfied in relating facts—he is careful to discuss details, which seem irrelevant, but on careful examination it is frequently found that what appeared at first to be side issues, and having no connection with facts themselves, are strongly corroborative of the facts related.

THE KEYNOTE OF RESEARCH.

I am of opinion that no man who

undertakes to investigate past events can afford to cast aside tradition. Tradition in such matters is the keynote of research. It is a mistake to think that history is independent of tradition. Was Herodotus an eye-witness to all the events of which he wrote? Had he documentary proofs for every statement he made? Decidedly no! I venture to assert that Gibbon's "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire" was not wholly based on documentary evidence. Men of broadest views and greatest intellect have held tradition in the greatest veneration. The earliest Fathers of the Church respected tradition, and surely few will be bold enough to deny that they knew what they were about. Let us look at the Irish race. Where will you find a people who are so wedded to tradition as those of Irish descent? The people of Ireland are, so to speak, enveloped in a halo of tradition. Everywhere you look, on Irish soil, you will find evidence of tradition, and I, for one, do not place less faith in the story of their virtues and their heroism on that account. The same may be said of Newfoundland. It has been my pleasure, in my spare moments all through life, to delve into the musty past, and preserve whatever was worth preserving of the deeds of my fellow-countrymen whilst in pursuit of their dangerous avocations, either on the ice-fields or the storm-tossed coast of Labrador. The deeds of warriors are emblazoned in fame, and handed down as heirlooms to posterity, whilst the risks and dangers encountered by Newfoundlanders in pursuit of their everyday calling are allowed to remain in oblivion, and be entirely forgotten. I fearlessly say that our fellow-countrymen are of a race as courageous as any to be found in any part of the world. This has been amply proven by our immortal Newfoundland Regiment and our Newfoundlanders in Britain's Navy during the Great War. They are nurtured in a familiarity with dangers so great as to make them rather court than avoid them. Yet nothing is said in contemporary history of their risks and prowess. While they have written in glowing terms of the material and social advantages of the Island, very little is said of the hardy natives by whom it is peopled. The old and worn-out heroes of the ice-fields are slumbering peacefully in the church-yard, and

some rest beneath the ocean on which they fought and gained their hard-won victories. Even the implements of their prowess and energy have disappeared. The historic flint lock gun and the artistically carved powder horn no longer take the place of honor on the kitchen rack. They are now relegated to some out-house or unfrequented place, and, with the passing away of these, the last vestige of our illustrious forbears will have gone forever. The following poetic tribute to the outport planter is appropriate here:—

"He's gon' with kany and coatin' pants; with Hamburg boots and ne'er a collar;  
He's gon' wid cook-room, pork and duff; gon' wid the good, old pillar dollar;  
Gon' wid his chare at Christmas time; gon' wid his rum in the red canteen;  
His cheerful vice and bresny song are bur'd low wid the outport planter."

But when 'counts be squar'd at the final day, and into the Ledger the Lord is sarchin' He'll say, "I find you cussed a sight, and once in a while you stuck the marchan';  
But you clood the naked, the hungry fed; so go up first with the harps and chanter;  
The place reserved for all good men, and honest, squar' outharbor planters."

## INDIANS PROSECUTE SEALFISH-ERY.

Jacques Cartier, in his first voyage in 1534 (sent out to discover new lands by the French Government) was the first to navigate the River St. Lawrence, and found New France. He mentions meeting natives or Indians, who painted themselves red, and fished in boats made of the bark of birch trees. He met those Indians in the month of June in the Straits of Belle Isle. He says, "they take a great store of seals, and as far as we could understand, it is not their habitation, but they come from the mainland, out of a hotter country, to catch the said seals and other necessaries for a living." From an extract from a Report of Trade in Newfoundland, before a Royal Commission held in England in 1793, we get the following with regard to the export of seal skins:

From October 1st, 1788 to October 1st, 1787, 41,042 Skins.  
From October 1st, 1787 to October 1st, 1788, 37,420 Skins.  
From October 1st, 1788 to October 1st, 1789, 25,643 Skins.  
From October 1st, 1789 to October 1st, 1790, 31,910 Skins.  
From October 1st, 1790 to October 1st, 1791, 28,963 Skins.  
There was very little said about the

seal-fishery in this report, but it is mentioned in several places as being very important to Trinity and parts north of St. John's, and together with ship-building in the port of Trinity, it gave the merchants, carrying on business there, a great advantage over ports south, depending on the codfishery alone. This goes to show that there was a much larger seal-fishery carried on previous to 1805, than mentioned in any of the histories. By the merest accident I have come across an old and valuable document, dated 1824, which gives us an idea of how business was carried on in those days. It is written upon heavy parchment, nearly two feet square, and the handwriting which is in the hand of the late Mr. Thomas Hutchings, then of Gallian's employ, Trinity, and written with the obsolete grey goose quill, would put to shame an A1 graduate of Higher Education. The Mr. Hutchings referred to was an uncle of everybody's genial friend, Mr. George A. Hutchings, so long the trusted and confidential official of the time-honored firm of Messrs. Job Bros. & Co., of this city. The agreement is so venerable and quaint that I think a repetition will interest the readers of Evening Telegram. I do not think there is another such in existence, and it will give some idea as to how the business of the country was conducted in those far off days, and how a good man on a pan or with a sealing gun was appreciated by the employers. It is possible that many of the descendants of the fur crews, whose names figure on this ancient and valuable document, rescued from the dust of ages, may be still in the neighbourhood of Trinity, and, if so, I feel confident it will be perused by them with interest.

(To be Continued.)

For Colds, Grip or Influenza and as a Preventative, take LAXATIVE BROMO QUININE Tablets. Look for E. W. GROVE'S signature on the box. 30c.—Feb 12, 1919.

## In Memoriam.

1176 EX-PRIVATE WM. SKEANS.

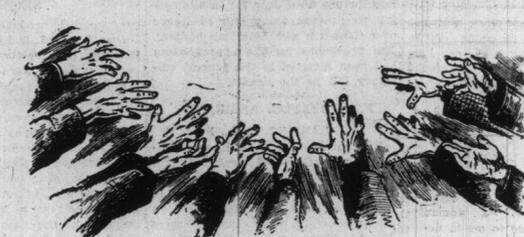
There passed peacefully away at the Jensen Camp on Friday, Feb. 20th, 1920, 1176 ex-Private William Skeans. "Billie" as he was favorably known amongst his many friends, enlisted with Ours in the early stages of the war, having left here with D. Co., on March 20th, 1915, aboard the troopship Stephano. Many of his soldier friends will remember his stalwart form, and bright sunny smile as he passed to and fro in the shadows of Edinburgh Castle. Having seen three years of active service, being once gassed, and twice wounded, last wounded during the battle of Monchy, April 14th, 1917; having contracted a heavy cold and later developing into that dreaded disease consumption, he was invalided home, arriving here on May 24th, 1918, and entered Jensen Camp with the hope that his health would be restored, he appeared at first to be getting better, but gradually his strength began to fall, and on Friday he breathed his last. Poor Will just entering in his 30th year in the prime of life and perfect manhood, it seems sad after all he suffered, just as the dawn of peace was once again settling itself on the world. That peace which he and many others, fought so valiantly for, another name shall be added to the long list of heroes, who died that others may live.

The late private Skeans in speaking to a friend at the Camp in the early part of last summer, said he was feeling fine, and spoke about "going to work, having several positions offered him, when he would be fully recovered. Again at a later date speaking to the same friend, he said he knew he was not getting better, (and one could see at a glance the poor fellow was fighting a losing battle, and the dread disease was making inroads on his once robust constitution) and his only wish was to die so as he could be buried on Sunday at his Kilbride, his native home. In this his wish was fully granted. His remains were conveyed to Kilbride on Saturday, and his funeral took place on Sunday from his uncle's residence, and was largely attended, many prominent men from the city attending. In his passing, Kilbride loses one of its best residents, and many a heart will feel sad to hear of his death. During his illness, poor Skeans was never known to complain, but always bore up bravely forgetting his own ills for the comfort of those around him. At the grave side prayers for the dead were recited by the Rev. J. Flynn, P.P., when all that was mortal, of a good man, a true soldier, and a sincere friend was given back to mother earth, there to await the final call.—R.I.P.

Dearest loved one, kind friends have laid thee, In the lonely graves embrace, To await the dawn of Resurrection, When again we'll meet thee face to face.—Inscribed by F. H.

## From Cape Race.

Special to Evening Telegram—CAPE RACE, To-day, Wind S. W., light; sea her, foggy and rainy. The steamer Fortia, Kyle and a three masted schooner passed in yesterday. Nothing sighted to-day. Bar. 29.60; Ther. 46.



Insist on having British Colonel The "Utmost" in Plug Smoking

Imperial Tobacco Co.

# Meitz & Weiss Oil Engines!

We can give immediate delivery on 2 75-Horsepower Meitz & Weiss Crude Oil Engines, complete. A number of our foreign going vessels are fitted with Meitz and Weiss Engines and are giving every satisfaction. The Meitz and Weiss is a powerful, reliable and economical engine and can always be depended on in an emergency. Prices and specifications gladly furnished to anyone interested.

JOB'S Stores, Ltd.

## Martyrs to Modesty.

One night, not long ago, though the thermometer registered 10 deg. of frost, snow was falling steadily, and an icy wind from the north swept the city, six men stood in their shirts on the roof of a building in Brooklyn, the child Long Island suburb of New

York, and refused to descend. Two storeys beneath them flames and smoke revealed the presence of a fierce blaze which was quickly consuming the entire structure. The iron fire escape offered an avenue of escape, but although the women shouted to them to hurry, the shivering six refused to budge. The reason was to be found in the courtyard below, on which opened the emergency exits of the assembly rooms on the ground floor, where a dance had been in progress.

In the courtyard were 100 women and girls who had been hastily sent out into the yard when the fire broke out, and the ordeal of descending the fire escape in the face of dozens of upturned feminine eyes was too much for the chilled but truly modest occupants of the roof.

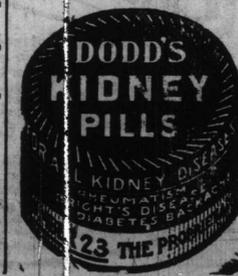
They were not health cranks, but candidates for admission to the Ridgewood Lodge of Masons. They had been ordered to strip to their shirts for the initiation and were awaiting a summons to the presence of members of the lodge when the

fire alarm was given. Forgetting both ceremony and clothes the six rushed to the roof to escape the flames. Their predicament ended when a plank was pushed across to them from the next building. Over this they escaped with complete decorum.—London Daily Mail.

## Essex Motors.

Remember the ESSEX is the World's Finest Lightest Car. At moderate first cost it gives you all the luxury heretofore to be found in heavy and much more costly cars. But it possesses the additional advantage of being one of the most economical cars built to operate. Its quick getaway and nimbleness, the result of its sturdy strength and lightness, enables the ESSEX to make its way through crowded traffic with the utmost ease.

G. G. PHILLIPS, Distributor. Phone 507. c/o E. Collishaw's Office Feb 23, 19.



Preserve the original charm of your furniture

Make your floors Gleam like New

THERE is no need to let a single piece of furniture lose its new-like appearance—frequent treatment with O-Cedar Polish will preserve the finish. A Polish that cleans as it polishes—first, by removing all dust, grime and dirt—then imparting a high, dry, lasting lustre that reveals the grain beauty of the wood.

Use as directed—with water. Use it on all wood-work—painted, varnished or enameled. Also on all floors—by means of the O-Cedar Polish Mop, which gives the unequalled O-Cedar result on hard wood, painted, oiled or stained soft wood, oilcloth or linoleum.

BOTH AT YOUR HARDWARE OR GROCERY SHOP.

CHANNELL CHEMICAL COMPANY, LIMITED TORONTO

# O-Cedar Polish