

presence was barely tolerated; and we can fancy to what side their prejudices would lean when any dispute arose regarding fishery rights, or when their own interests were concerned. The result of inquiries, instituted afterwards, shows that the most frightful abuses were perpetrated, and the most tyrannical practices were universal under this system. Meantime, the neighbouring colonies were growing into power and greatness, with natural advantages by no means superior to those of Newfoundland, but under just laws and the fostering care of the Mother Country. Interested parties spread the most unfounded statements regarding the climate and soil of Newfoundland in order to deter emigrants from choosing it as their home; and the country was systematically represented as utterly unfit for cultivation and as only a barren rock on which fish might be dried.

THE DAWN OF BETTER DAYS.

Under all discouragements, the population continued slowly to increase. The people would not be driven away. In spite of the strictest regulations, some remained behind at the close of each fishing season, and so added to the natural increase of the resident population. In 1728 a new era dawned on Newfoundland. Lord Vere Beauclerk, who then commanded the naval force on the station, was clear-sighted enough to discover the causes of the prevailing abuses and honest enough to make effectual representations to the Government at home. The result was the appointment of Captain Henry Osborne as first Governor of Newfoundland, with a commission to nominate justices of the peace, and establish some form of civil government. Thus the great boon, long asked for in vain, was at length granted, and Newfoundland at last rose into the rank of a British Colony. The germ of local civil government was thus obtained, and gradually, though slowly, it expanded. But, for many years, the Governors found themselves almost powerless in consequence of the statute of William 3rd already referred to, and the determination of the fishing Admirals not to recognize the newly-created authority, or to abate the exercise of their unlimited powers. For a series of years there was an increasing conflict between these two authorities, the rival functionaries constantly sending home complaints to the home government, and the merchants and ship-owners strenuously opposing the new order of things. In 1750 the powers of local government received an important augmentation in the appointment of *Commissioners of Oyer and Terminer*, before whom felons could be tried within the limits of the island. The fall of Quebec, in 1759, gave the death-blow to the French power in America. Three years later, however, they renewed their attempts on Newfoundland. In June, 1762, a French expedition arrived in the Bay of Bulls, twenty miles from St. John's, and landed a force which marched overland, and surprised the feeble garrison of the capital. Their triumph, however, was short-lived. A British force was speedily collected and landed at Torbay, seven miles north of St. John's. The troops marched on the capital, which, after a sharp struggle, was carried by assault, and the French