

The Old Sealing Days

(BY JAMES MURPHY)

It is no mean venture, which I have undertaken, it has taken no small amount of research and time, as well, to locate, for my readers, if not all, at least a majority of the most-conspicuous and most-historical events in the annals of the seal-fishery. To me it is a labor of love, to collect such events, and a feeling of melancholy is on times inwoven within my soul, when I look back at the past, and I muse on the manner in which the deeds of our ancestors have been slighted. A stranger coming amongst us is capable of seeing the dearth of knowledge inculcated into the residents of this country in relation to the past, and they have not, on many an occasion omitted to speak about it, either through the columns of the press, on the platform, or in private conversation. "We are strangers in our own country" taught but little by those who should have the welfare of the fishermen, and the laborer generally at heart. You can not instill into the youth of this country a love of land, which comes next to a love of the Almighty, until you educate him in a knowledge of its past, a knowledge of his ancestry. Nations are but the reflection of individuals. A good father and mother will altho deprived of an education needed in the drawing room do more, by examples of honesty, morality, and sobriety, to educate their children to walk in the path, which leads to where "sorrow is unknown."

The people then, may be, likened to the home, let the educated men, those who vaunt their patriotism at every opportunity, thru the press or on the platform, be the ones to undertake the education of the masses, in a knowledge of Terra Nova, for I say boldly and fearlessly that it is sadly needed. Until we are taught to love the land that bore us, we will never be the solid Phalanx, which we should, until love of country is placed before love of lucre, and religious animosity is laid aside, no land can be what Nature intended it. As yet, like the toe of Pyrrhus, which was untouched by the flames, the fire of patriotism has not yet reached us, when it shall arrive, time alone can tell. I am under the impression that the "big guns," of this country are situated similarly as Handel was, when the bellows-blower said, "There we have played that tune beautifully. "We—" exclaimed Handell, "what had you got to do with it." Handell again turned to the keys and struck them, but not a note came. "Ha," said the bellows-blower. "What had I to do with it?" Now our learned friends must remember that they cannot move in that air of security and patriotism, without the love of the people, and they must in consequence be willing to give more attention to their requirements than they have been doing, or maybe some day they may awaken to the realization of their error, in this respect.