

NEWFOUNDLAND.

A CHAT ABOUT THIS FAMOUS ISLAND

Early Barbarities—A Hardy Race—The Irish Settlers and Their Traditions—The Fisheries.

Although England's oldest colonial possession, Newfoundland is in some ways a very young colony, as for upwards of two centuries stringent laws were enacted to prevent permanent settlements from being made on the island.

Some years previously the French had established a settlement on the beautiful bay of Placentia, and to this day portions of land there are held under a grant from Louis XIV., the deed with his signature being carefully treasured by a family living in the picturesque little town.

or church in the colony; those who migrated from England had never seen a clergyman since leaving their native land; those born in Newfoundland had never seen one in their lives.

and retain much of the warm-heartedness of their ancestry; but the hard life and different surroundings have somewhat modified the buoyant and "happy-go-lucky" Irish nature, and made them graver, less excitable, possibly more reliable than their brethren in the old country.

of their motherland, and it is interesting to find the superstitions of Mayo or Galway cropping up in this far-off island; such, for instance, as the "fear-gurtha," or hungry-grass, which is said to render it dangerous to traverse the hills of Erris or Tyrarley, in the west of Ireland, unless one has taken the precaution to put a cold potato or two or a piece of bread in one's pocket.

In Ireland it is considered unlucky, or, at any rate, disrespectful, to carry a corpse to the grave by the shortest road. Sometimes when the grave is dug, before being deposited in the ground the coffin is carried three times round the enclosure of the graveyard.

to the repulsive moans and mourning wailings of the city undertakers. The idea of the longest road being the one that a funeral ought to go survives in Newfoundland also. A somewhat comical instance took place not long ago.

across the Atlantic have carried the ancient custom with them, and on the eve of Midsummer's Day the hills and cliffs shutting in the picturesque harbor of St. John's are aglow with fires now kindled in honor of the Christian saint.

ashore seven or eight miles over the ice on men's backs. The centre of Newfoundland is, to a great extent, terra incognita, except to a few trappers and sportsmen and the indefatigable head of the Newfoundland geological survey.

A very beautiful, but fatal, phenomenon is not infrequently seen during winter, namely, the winter thaw. When a night of sharp frost succeeds a foggy day, the next morning every branch, each stick and stone uncovered with snow, is seen coated and sparkling with

a delicate film of ice. Should the day be sunshiny, the effect is lovely in the extreme, but fatal to the trees, whose branches are often broken by the weight of their crystal load.

SUCH WHOLESALE DESTRUCTION in some places that the Grand Duke of Tuscany, out of pity for the distress of the peasantry, remitted taxation to the amount of over six thousand pounds.

As most people have their unpleasant moods, so most countries have their unpleasant time, and in Newfoundland the spring is extremely disagreeable and trying.

How gladly the poor, frozen-in dwellers in the out-harbour must emerge from their isolation and return to their wonted occupation of fishing! Fishing is the staff of life in Newfoundland, and cod is the only denizen of the deep acknowledged as fish in the island.

PICTURESQUE SIGHT to see the shores of the various bays thronged with an eager crowd lading the glittering mass of little silver fish, about the size of sprats, into carts and baskets.

The icebergs are of all sizes, from a mile long downwards. In shape, too, they vary greatly, the very big ones resembling alabaster islands, others recalling pyramids and pyramides.

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autumn there is first-rate grouse-shooting, and cariboo deer are found in abundance in the interior. To appreciate St. John's, the capital city, it should be seen in winter, when snow is piled five feet in the streets, and icicles from six feet to six inches long hang in a glittering fringe from eaves and waterpots.

St. John's boasts two fine rinks and several large assembly halls, all built of wood. Churches are numerous. Socially, St. John's is gayest during the winter. The people are fond of music, and devote themselves to it with enthusiasm.

SOUND ADVICE.

The Duties of Catholic Papers in regard to News-Gathering.

At the recent convention of Catholic Editors at New York. Mr. O'Brien, the editor of the Catholic Mirror, Baltimore, delivered an address upon "The News Columns of the Catholic Press."

THE PRIESTS AND LOCAL NEWS.

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