

Again, the inhabitants of Grand Manan are all more or less indolent, and ever ready to sacrifice their future interests to present and temporary advantages.

The most enterprising among them take the pay of Americans, where they are useful, moreover, as pilots, and their knowledge of the locality and identification with the American fishing-boats, and in a great measure with American interests, gives a colour to the encroachment of the flag of the latter nation, which is certainly gaining the ascendancy on these shores; in fact, the British ensign is hardly ever seen; from the northern to the southern head of Grand Manan, a distance of fifteen miles, there is not even so much as a flag-staff.

The islanders have, I believe, a natural dread of the law, but there seems none here to control them, physically or morally, with the exception of two magistrates (one generally of the island), a missionary of the Church of England, and one or more dissenting ministers.

Complaints against  
the Americans.

They complain of the intrusion of foreign vessels, larger and better found than themselves; but they take no pains either to put themselves on the same footing, or even to discourage these poaching visits on their shores; in fact, they rather encourage them than otherwise. They complain of their fish being carried off, and their means of gaining a livelihood thereby cut off; several take to farming a few acres of unprofitable land, rear stock, grow potatoes (the disease is said to make much greater havoc among the latter here than in Ireland); anything rather than put their shoulder to the wheel in the right way towards restoring their fisheries to their former state, and then reaping the harvest which a bountiful Providence has supplied for their wants.

During my visit to the bay, I confess I have met nothing but civility from the Americans; and although I may have heard of a few cases of their overstepping the law, none have come under my personal observation during my cruizes, either in the brig or her boats; of our own subjects I could not say as much. In fact (as I before mentioned), the scarcity of herrings on shore having been the means of removing the fishing-ground further off, the Americans have in fact no inducement to transgress the limits of three miles.

Moreover, the Americans at Eastport, to which market the Grand Manan fishermen resort with their fish, as if in return for the privileges they themselves enjoy in British waters, admit the produce of the islanders' industry free of the 20 per cent. duty which would otherwise be enacted by the strict rigour of a law so injurious to our British fisheries.

Hints on the navigation of the Bay of Fundy.

I would conclude with a few general remarks as to the navigation of the Bay of Fundy, which may perhaps be found useful for strangers.

First.—Never to leave a good anchorage, without a certain degree of security, in the way of wind and tide, of being able to reach another by nightfall.

Secondly.—Never to run for the Grand Manan in a fog, should you have no observation for twenty-four hours; not to calculate upon dead reckoning, within twenty miles.

Thirdly.—Not to start in a fog, except it be absolutely necessary, and then let there be wind enough to insure steerage-way, and a stream-anchor at the bows, for dropping in deep water, and other anchors on reserve.

Fourthly.—Never to start too close into the land, however bold it be; there are eddies in-shore which may baffle a ship in stays; a large barque, with a first-rate pilot on board, was stranded on the 8th on the bold Island of Campobello, from the above cause. More minute details on the subject of the different anchorages in the Bay are given in my remark-book.

Drifting.

A cruizer drifting about the bay can be of little service for the protection of the fisheries; fishermen within ten miles are soon made acquainted with her whereabouts, and make their arrangements accordingly; but once at anchor by detaching her boats to the coves and harbours, screened from notice, she may succeed in detecting a few law-breakers.

Cruizing in boats.

On referring to Captain Robb's report on this head, I find he partly advocates the necessity of a boat blockade, but did not adopt the plan, from the fear of desertions. I may here state that during the time of my stay at Grand Manan, on several occasions I have had as many as three boats, with thirty men, under my orders, and away for three days at a time, and that not only have I had no case of desertion on these occasions, but not a single complaint of any kind against any individual; in the night I always billeted them amongst the inhabitants at their own request, and on my being superseded by Commander Mitchell, I had not a man on the sick-list, although soon after leaving Halifax, there were as many as ten in the surgeon's hands. On the subject of desertion, so common to every ship in these parts, owing to the strong inducement of high wages in the lumber trade, and the vicinity of American crimps, I am told that I am fortunate in my loss of five; three from a watering party, and two from Campobello, not one from hence.

I have already addressed you on this subject, and am happy to state that my labours in urging the civil authorities to take steps for punishing those who harboured and aided the men in their escape, have been successful, and a few fines and penalties have been enforced, which have impressed the islanders of Grand Manan with a salutary fear of the law, for the security of the vessels who may follow me.

The smuggling into the island of the New England rum, in many cases drugged, and of itself the most pernicious of all spirituous liquors, has been the chief incentive.