

in consequence of their ability to prosecute their employment throughout the year.

These inquiries were principally answered by Mr. Stephens, agent to Messrs. Newman, Hunt & Co. There was, besides this establishment, a Jersey room, belonging to Mr. Nicholl, who has another fishing station, 30 leagues east, and one at La Poile.

During my visit there were two vessels in the port; one was receiving cargo for the Levant, and the other collecting fish from the different stations along the coast.

Most of the fishermen belonging to the settlement are hired by one or other of the above-mentioned houses, and they receive 4s. 6d. for every hundred fish delivered; but, unfortunately, they are dependent upon their employers for the supply, not only of their boats, nets, clothes and other articles, but also for their food, so that by what I could ascertain, I fear that a very pernicious system of usury is prosecuted. If this should continue, the merchants may be enriched, but the settlers will certainly never improve in civilization or prosperity.

The inhabitants, with but few exceptions, are all Protestants. There are two churches, but at the time of my visit no clergyman, the Reverend Mr. Blackmore having been removed to a better living, and Mr. Cunningham, his successor, had not arrived. The magistrate is a Mr. Cox, at present in England. There is also a small school-house, to which the fishermen contribute a small annual sum for the education of their children.

The appearance of the settlement itself is without exception (considering the reputed value of the fisheries) the most disreputable and wretched I have hitherto seen. True, the ground is a bog, with granite boulders, and rocks rising from its centre, upon which the huts and cabins can alone be planted, but yet no attempt seems to be made to drain the filth and bog water away from their doors, or even to make pathways, by which to pass from house to house, without having to wade through black mire. The only causeway in the settlement is one formed of deal boards, from the church to Mr. Stephens' residence. Nevertheless, to my surprise, I must own that the people seem happy in their state of filth, and I heard no complaints of disturbance or of crime having been recently committed.

#### *Lamalin.*

June 30th.—The fish struck in early and in great quantities, but there was not a catch in proportion to the abundance at the commencement of the season, in consequence of bad weather preventing the boats going out, until the caplin struck in, when they were fully employed, catching and taking them to St. Pierre, to sell to the French bankers. There has been but little bait at St. Pierre this year, so that caplin fetch a high price. As much as £. 15 a day is made by each boat employed in this manner.

I was informed by Mr. Winter, the Custom-house officer at Lamalin, that a duty of 6s. per quintal was imposed by the colony on bait exported; but in consequence of the law officers of the Crown having given their opinion that bait caught and shipped (without being landed) could not be considered as exported, the boats adopt this method of taking away the caplin to evade the duty. At the time of my first visit the French boats had not been troublesome; none, indeed, had been seen; but on my second visit (August 26th), after their caplin had been sold, they began to complain of their encroachments. This was the latter end of August, about the time when the fish leave their coasts and small islands for our shores. After the fish have been cured, they are taken by coasters, to St. John's and Burin. There are also two schooners that trade regularly from Harbour Breton, in the employ of Newman & Co., and Nicholl & Co.

The house and boat that are kept for the use of the officer and crew, generally left at Lamalin during the fishing season, have not been put in a state of repair this summer. The boat has no oars, and looks very old, and the house has several panes of glass broken, and was not in a fit state to inhabit.

The settlement of Lamalin is not increasing. Much apathy exists among the inhabitants. No road is yet made, and only one small house has been built since last year. The population is not quite 400.

Mr. Butler, the late magistrate, died in the fall of the year, and Mr. Pack, from St. John's, is his successor. Mr. Pack is building a large house, about a quarter of a mile from the settlement, and expresses his intention of carrying agriculture to a large extent. The soil is good, and well adapted for potatoes, of which