

occurred nearly forty years ago and the party whose history the other is revealing has been dead thirty years at least.

THE SCENE.

Forty years ago it was not difficult for a young clergyman to find an entirely new field for his enterprise. The mission selected by the present writer was in the then vast diocese of Nova Scotia : and it happened to be at one of the far ends of it, viz., in the northern part of Newfoundland. The old inhabitants of the place had one and all come from Dorsetshire in England. The population of the district was about eighteen hundred ; and except in the case of a few hired men every soul belonged to the Church of England. Hence it may be inferred that none there had been baptized but those who had emigrated from Dorsetshire ; and therefore immediate arrangements had to be made for the administration of that sacrament on an unusual scale. The Missionary's plan was readily agreed too, that except in some urgent cases the baptisms to the amount of some hundreds should be postponed until the Easter Sunday in the following year. In the interim preparation was to be made by catechizing the young each Sunday afternoon in the presence of the congregation, and by occasional lectures.

INTRODUCTION OF GEORGE PARSONS.

After a tap at the study door, and the usual "come in," a very grey head was thrust in, and from the lips under the grey hairs the following words proceeded.

"Parson, may I ask you why you do not call me up to say my catechism?"

*Missionary.*—Let me first ask your name, and then I will tell you ; for I have begun to feel a liking for you already." The name given, the Missionary observed that he felt reluctant to call up so old a man because it frequently occurred that the memory of old people was impaired, so that what a man might know well, he could not suddenly call to mind. "Just try me, parson." And putting his arms strait down he went through the catechism without one single halt, some of the words not in common use, probably having been pronounced as they had rarely (if ever) been pronounced before. Of course, the Missionary felt astonishment ; and on seeking information the explanation given was as follows. His parents lived in a parish near Poole, and the good Rector had not neglected the godly custom of catechizing the children on Sunday afternoons. George Parsons had learned to read as well as to say his catechism. But one day while he was at a wrestling match a press-gang made a successful descent upon the party, and several were at once marched off to a man-of-war. On his way the party was met by a merchant of Poole, who having some knowledge of him stopped to speak to him. The merchant had a vessel waiting for hands to sail for Newfoundland : and while a press-gang was in the neighbourhood it was almost impossible to man a merchant vessel. By this merchant Parsons sent a message to his friends ; and was told to look out sharp for an opportunity to escape that should be put in his way. The same evening a bumb-boat woman came alongside, and put into his hands a basket to hand up, which contained under some cabbages a gown and a bonnet. Those articles were soon put on, and the gown and bonnet with what they contained were passed down into the boat, and the boat put off—not, however to the shore, but to the vessel that wanted a hand, of which the anchor was soon up, and the voyage begun. In due time he arrived in Newfoundland, and was sent off far away up one of the bays with another man to conduct a salmon fishery. Neither of them possessed a book, and Parsons soon forgot his reading. But as he had said his catechism every Sunday in England, he resolved to continue the practice, as the only religious service he had it in his power to perform. In time he picked up a wife, and took her to that retired spot. Still continuing his peculiar Sunday services, his wife thus learned the catechism—several children also acquired it exactly as the patriarch taught it, and the whole