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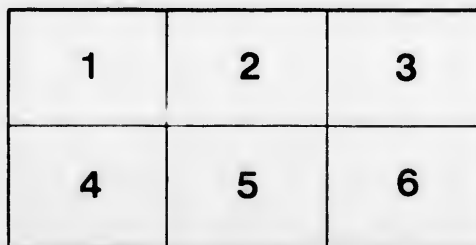
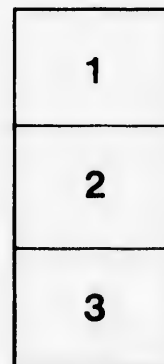
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NEWFOUNDLAND;

OR,

A LETTER

ADDRESSED TO A FRIEND IN IRELAND IN RELATION  
TO THE CONDITION AND CIRCUMSTANCES OF  
THE ISLAND OF NEWFOUNDLAND,

With an Especial View to Emigration.

BY

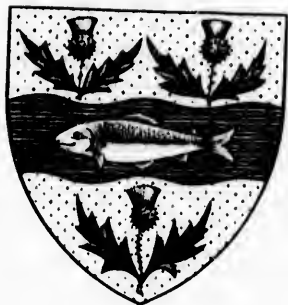
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London :

SAMPSON LOW, MARSTON, SEARLE, & RIVINGTON,  
CROWN BUILDINGS, 188, FLEET STREET.

1882.

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## NEWFOUNDLAND.

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LONDON, *August*, 1882.

MY DEAR SIR,—I do not know that I could adopt a better plan for the purpose of conveying to you and others interested in the subject of emigration a clearer and fuller view of the prospects which Newfoundland presents in that respect, than by following the course of my own experiences in that island for the last forty-five years. In this way the various subjects of interest will present themselves to my view as I go along; and thus I shall be enabled to give you an adequate idea of the nature and condition of the country; and afford you the means of judging for yourself. In the course of my long period of residence in the colony I have filled almost every position of importance in it, besides taking a prominent part in the promotion of the various measures tending to its improvement during that time.

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### I.

MY ARRIVAL IN ST. JOHN'S, THE CAPITAL OF NEWFOUNDLAND—  
THE APPEARANCE OF THE TOWN—ITS POPULATION AND  
BUSINESS.

I LEFT Ireland on the 24th day of April, 1837,—thus making my first plunge into the active world,—and arrived in St. John's on the same date of the following month. It was a pleasant voyage, and not of unusual length: a voyage of thirty days to Newfoundland in a small sailing vessel being regarded by those engaged in the trade of the colony as a fair achievement. It sometimes took as much as three months, though not often, to accomplish it. There were no steamers then plying across the Atlantic, at least not to Newfoundland; nor for more than thirty years afterwards. It was a beautiful day when the coast-line, outside St. John's, first rose to our view. The sky looked blue and lofty; the atmosphere was clear; and the sea was

smooth and glassy as a lake, though we had a fresh breeze. As the morning advanced the coast-line, which rose nearly due west of us, looked like the wall of a rampart, bold, sombre, and massive. It struck me that the vessel would run against it, and be shattered to pieces; as she ran right for it, and there appeared no opening in any part of the line of wall through which she could escape. As we approached nearer, however, I observed a thin slit in the wall a little to our left, which gradually widened as we approached, until at length we glided into a passage of deep still water between lofty perpendicular hills, one on either side. This is the entrance to the port of St. John's, and is called "The Narrows." Just as we entered it a soldier, standing on a shelving rock or platform on the side of the hill on our right, challenged us through a speaking-trumpet inquiring the "name of our vessel, where from, and the number of days out." We passed on through this narrow passage for a few minutes; then turned a little to the left, that is, westerly,—the passage or opening apparently closing behind us;—and in less than half an hour we dropped anchor in a spacious landlocked basin which ran to the westward, or left of the Narrows, to the distance of a mile or so.

The town rose before us to the northward, covering the side of a rather steep hill which sprang upward from the water's edge to a point near the summit which appeared flat and bare. The houses presented a rough, sombre aspect, thrown together in irregular clusters without order or arrangement of any kind. I stayed in the town about a week, and visited whatever was worth seeing, and what was not worth seeing. In fact, it was little more than a large fishing village; its fish-flakes and stages ranged along on either side of the harbour or port, some of them occupying even portions of the principal streets, plainly indicated this much. There were some good shops and stores in the line of street along the water's edge, and some few detached private residences as well as churches here and there along the side of the hill, which somewhat relieved the repulsive aspect of the whole. The streets, which were not called streets then but *paths*, were dirty, narrow, and crooked. They ran in a zigzag line from east to west with the harbour, and were three in number, namely, Water Street, then called the Lower Path; Duckworth Street, called the Middle Path; and Gower Street, called the Upper Path. And truly, those names were appropriate enough, for they were really little more than paths, and very nasty, ugly paths too, with poor, dirty, miserable wooden houses lining them on either side. These were crossed by narrow lanes running at every angle. The houses were all wooden then;

I cannot remember one that was of stone or brick, except the Government House, which is a really fine building, situated at the top of the hill above the town, and surrounded by very beautiful and picturesque grounds; that is, beautiful and picturesque *now*, but not *then*; for they were then without vegetation of any kind, and presented an aspect barren and dreary. There were no roads worthy of the name leading from the town to the suburbs and outlying villages; there were paths merely,—narrow, rough, and dirty; and even these did not extend two miles in any direction in an unbroken line, with the exception of the road to Portugal Cove, a village about nine miles distant from St. John's. This road had been but recently made, and was, according to the common phraseology, called a path: it passed over a half-barren shrubby region that had been denuded of its wood, and now bore an undergrowth of stunted fir and shaggy spruce. This was also a wretched road or path,—narrow, dirty and rough, with the roots of trees and large stones imbedded in its mud. I passed over this road on my way to Harbourgrace about a week after my arrival at St. John's; and although it is but nine miles in length it took me four hours to walk it. In Ireland I would walk that distance in less than half the time as a morning exercise.

Towards the close of the fifteenth century, the year 1497, and on the 24th day of June in that year, Sebastian Cabot is said to have entered this port of St. John's, and taken possession of the island in the name of Henry VII. This day was the festival of St. John the Baptist, and hence the name of the town—St. John's.

The entrance to the port—the narrow passage to which I have referred, and which bears the name of the Narrows—was at the time of my arrival strongly protected by batteries placed on the two hills on either side. These hills were literally bristling with batteries, especially that on the right of the entrance, or "Signal Hill." There was also a large iron chain, extending from one side to the other of the entrance, which would present an impassable barrier, when drawn up, to any hostile ship attempting to enter. But these batteries are all dismantled now, and the chain has been removed. The barracks on Signal Hill are also unoccupied, and falling to decay; but in the event of war and of a hostile invasion, these defences could easily be re-established.

The town of St. John's is a very different place now to what it was when it first presented itself to me over forty-five years ago. It is now scarcely inferior to any town or city in British North America, either in appearance or in

any of those attributes which are appropriate to an advanced civilization. Its streets are broad, clean, and well-built; the principal or chief business street, Water Street, which runs along the water's edge and is more than a mile in length, is built of brick and stone on either side, and contains shops and stores of the most imposing character. The next street—Duckworth Street—which runs parallel with this, and is of nearly the same extent, is also lined with good substantial buildings, of stone and brick entirely on one side, and partially on the other. Then comes Gower Street, running parallel with the other two, and nearly, too, of the same extent. This is chiefly built of wood, but the houses are good, substantial, and comfortable, and in many instances ornamental and imposing. There are many other shorter streets running in various directions up along the front of the hill, but the next most important and beautiful line of street is that called the Military Road, which runs along the summit of the hill, between Government House and the barracks of Fort Townsend, now occupied by the constabulary. This street is principally occupied by private houses, and runs nearly parallel to the lower streets already mentioned. The Roman Catholic cathedral—one of the finest ecclesiastical buildings in British America—stands on one side of this street, surrounded by a group of other buildings of a high and costly style of architecture, in connexion with the cathedral. This group consists of nine separate buildings, including the cathedral, namely, the Episcopal Palace, the Sisters of Mercy Convent, the school-house adjoining the same, the Presentation Convent with its school-house, the Roman Catholic College, the Christian Brothers' Residence and their school-house, called St. Patrick's Hall. The English Protestant cathedral lies below this group and below the Military Road on the slope of the hill. This is also a very costly and imposing structure. The various churches of the other religious denominations are also substantial and handsome buildings.

There is also a great variety of private houses, the residences of merchants and others, scattered about in every direction in the suburbs of the town, which, in their appointments and surroundings, present a very graceful and pleasing aspect. The halls connected with public institutions, such as those of the several temperance societies, and of the Merchants', Fishermen's, Mechanics', and other societies, are also excellent structures. But by far the most imposing, costly, and ornamental among this class of erections is the Athenæum, which is situated in the middle of the town, and is devoted principally to lectures on the arts and sciences, and on subjects of general literature. Con-

certs are also held in this hall, as is also the annual exhibition of drawings and paintings. It has a large and varied library also, as well as a well-furnished reading-room, containing nearly all the important reviews, magazines, and newspapers published in the United Kingdom and in America.

From the summit of the hill along which lies the Military Road, or street passing between Government House and Fortownsend, an extensive view is presented of the valley of Quidi Vidi, extending several miles northward and westward. It is a well-cultivated and blooming region, interspersed with handsome and substantial farmhouses, as well as the more pretentious abodes of the wealthier classes. Here are lawns, groves, ponds, and gardens in every variety, with meadows, sheepwalks, cornfields, and pastures, on which the eye may rest with the utmost gratification.

The population of St. John's, at the time I first landed there, including the suburbs and outlying villages, did not probably exceed 15,000; and these were composed chiefly, indeed nearly wholly, of fishermen and merchants; the mechanics, small shopkeepers, and the professional people, together with the farmers, formed but a very small proportion of the whole. Their sole business, it may be said, was the prosecution of the fisheries. There was then, as there is now, a very large amount of capital invested in this business; and there have been some large fortunes made out of it. Those fortunes, however, have been for the most part expended in the Old Country, as the United Kingdom is called there. The successful merchants have retired home from time to time, leaving behind them their sons, or the younger members of the firms, to conduct the business. This formed a great obstruction to the prosperity of the colony, and in a great measure militated against the cultivation of the soil, as well as against the extension of other industrial pursuits. A country that continues from age to age to be drained of its wealth, must necessarily become torpid and inactive, and thus incapable of supporting an increasing population. And such has been the fate of Newfoundland. Recently, however, there has been a great change in this respect: not that the periodical retirement of the merchants does not still continue, but its recurrence is less frequent; and an infusion of capital from other quarters for other industrial objects than the fisheries—mining, and manufacturing, for instance—contributes in some measure to redeem the disadvantages accruing from this occasional retirement of the wealthy commercial men.

The population of St. John's at the present time—that is, including, as I have said before, the outlying villages—is

over 30,000, that is, more than double its number forty-five years ago. And these are not altogether living by the fisheries now. Some of them—though these are not numerous—draw their support from farming, mining, and manufacturing pursuits.

## II.

### HARBOURGRACE—ITS POPULATION—THE DISTRICT OF CONCEPTION BAY.

AFTER remaining nearly a week in St. John's, I left it for Harbourgrace, to join my father, who was then residing on his farm there, after having retired from the business of the fisheries. The distance from St. John's to Harbourgrace by land is about one hundred miles, and by land and water scarcely a third of that. At that time it would be almost an herculean labour to travel the distance by land; so broken, and rugged, and every way wretched were the roads or paths; and therefore it was scarcely ever attempted except in the winter season, when the postman, or other pedestrian whose living required it, scrambled his way over frozen water and snow-clad barren lands, when he had no other means of travel. Horse and carriage travel was out of the question, for there was neither horse nor carriage to be had; and, even if so, there were no roads for them to go over.

We left St. John's about eight o'clock in the morning, and walked to Portugal Cove, along the rude road which I have already mentioned. This road, which is about nine miles long, it took us about four hours to walk. We arrived at the end of it a little before twelve o'clock. Portugal Cove (which has its name from the circumstance, as tradition has it, of some Portuguese sailors having at one time settled or wandered there in the early history of the country) is a small fishing village. With respect to its name, I may observe that the Spaniards and Portuguese visited the coasts of Newfoundland in their ships for the purposes of the cod-fishery, at an early period after the discovery of the island.

After rambling about this village for about an hour, we embarked in a small sail-boat, called the packet-boat, which was employed by the Government for the conveyance of the mails between St. John's and Carbonear. Carbonear is a small town in Conception Bay, within three miles of Harbourgrace, and the second town in size and importance after St. John's, Harbourgrace being the first. The distance from Portugal Cove to Carbonear is about twenty miles.



After the sails had been shaken out, we went along for a few minutes on a wind well enough ; but suddenly a squall sprung up, and we were driven back towards a reef of very ugly looking rocks. There arose great confusion and excitement on board ; the two small sails were immediately hauled down, and oars were put out to try to keep the boat off the rocks. It was a fearful scene ; the rocks could be almost touched by the oars as the boat rose upon the swell and seemed about to plunge upon the black, ragged, and pointed mass. She escaped them, however, by the merest chance, and got upon the wind again.

I thought at the time, as well as often since, how near I was to end my days—and in the morning of my life too—by an inglorious death amid the waves and rocks of a little fishing village in the island of Newfoundland ; and that, too, after braving the billows and tempests of an Atlantic voyage.

It was a miserable passage, these twenty miles across Conception Bay ; for though we left at one o'clock in the day, it was near five the next morning before we arrived at Carbonear. It looked a lonely, dreary place at five o'clock of a June morning ; not a soul was astir in the town ; and a dull, gloomy atmosphere hung about everywhere. We set off at once for Harbourgrace over a road that was scarcely better, if better at all, than the road from St. John's to Portugal Cove. It began by passing over a long winding beach covered with round rumbling stones and seasand, the sea sweeping up half-way upon it,—it then wound up a zigzag hill, broken by small streams and boulder rocks, and at last merged into a sort of car or waggon track that twisted itself up along the breast of a steep, rugged hill, lined on either side by fir-trees, and one or two wretched houses (wooden shanties) that shrank back tattered and naked amid stumps of trees and decaying brushwood. Having got to the top of this hill our descent became easy enough, though the path was still rocky and broken, until we reached the valley or glen below. This hill which we had passed over is called Saddle Hill, a place of some notoriety in the annals of Conception Bay. The road now became smooth enough, though it wound up another hill, which presented a rather picturesque view on either side. There was no cultivated land to be seen, except a small potato or cabbage garden here and there ; but there were some rather good stretches of forest land, with winding glens, and fir-crowned hills swelling to the size of diminutive mountains. We reached Harbourgrace at about half-past six o'clock. Throughout this walk of three miles between the hours of five and half-past six o'clock on a June morning we never met a single soul, though we walked over a road that con-

nected the two largest and most important towns in the island outside of St. John's. This is accounted for by the fact that all the men, as well as some of the women too, were at the fishery; and none were at home except the very old and very young.

What I have said of the appearance of St. John's applies equally to Harbourgrace; it is a fishing-town, but of much smaller dimensions than the capital. It is called a capital too, the capital of Conception Bay. It consists of one long street lying along the water's edge, about a mile in length, and occupied in great part by fish-flakes and stages. It has some stores and shops of considerable size and pretensions on the water side, with small dingy shops and private houses on the opposite side. Behind this principal street, and disposed in small blocks irregularly placed, are small, ill-shaped houses occupied by fishermen and other labourers, with small gardens around them, and a graveyard behind. These houses are connected with the main street by narrow lanes, through which a cart and horse can barely pass. The town stands on a flat, and at some little distance in the rear a hill rises somewhat abruptly to the distance of about a mile, where it terminates in a level ridge crowned with a forest of dark fir-trees. Along the slope of this hill are private residences surrounded with gardens and fields, and shaded by groups of trees of different kinds—spruce, ash, willow, birch, &c. These are the residences of some of the more comfortable classes, wealthy planters, professional men, and others. The situation of Harbourgrace is much better and commodious than that of St. John's; it is perfectly level, and suitable for a town of ten times the size of that which now occupies it. As in the case of St. John's the one street here is called (or rather was called at the time I am referring to) a path; and the lanes leading from this to the clumps and rows of houses in the rear went by the names of persons residing in or near them, as Perkin's Lane, Pitt's Lane, &c. The roads leading from the town in different directions were rough, rude, and ill-constructed, scarcely passable for a horse and waggon; and in no direction did they, such as they were, extend beyond three or four miles from the town; beyond that distance they merged into smaller and worse paths. The land all round the town and in the immediate vicinity was rough and scraggy, and badly cultivated, with the exception of a few farms which appeared to have been carefully attended to. But all this has been very much altered since; and the town of Harbourgrace with its surroundings and the various approaches to it present at the present time an attractive and rather imposing aspect. It has some large and elegant houses, public and private. The

Roman Catholic cathedral is a very chaste and beautiful edifice; and surrounded by the Episcopal Residence, and that of the Presentation Nuns, it presents a striking effect. The churches of the other Christian denominations are also very good. The buildings devoted to the several public institutions, such as the Temperance Hall, the Court House, and the Academic buildings are worthy of admiration.

The population of Harbourgrace at the time I arrived there was probably 8000; this includes the suburbs and outlying villages, constituting what is now called the electoral district of the town. It is now, however, over 14,000. These are nearly all fishermen, as in the case of St. John's, and indeed of every town and village of the island. There must be, of course, excluded from this number the proportion of merchants, traders, mechanics, clergymen, and professional men of every kind, which exists more or less everywhere throughout the country. But this proportion is very small, especially outside St. John's and Harbourgrace.

The soil in and around Harbourgrace is good, much better than that of St. John's, though not so carefully and extensively cultivated. The crops it produces are various and abundant, and the people generally are well-to-do. Those who cultivate the soil here, and everywhere in Newfoundland, are not exactly what you call farmers in Ireland; they are proprietors. Every man owns the land he cultivates, paying neither rent nor tax for it. It was either made by himself, that is, reclaimed by him from the forest, he having first obtained a grant of it from the crown at a cost of from one shilling to two shillings and sixpence an acre (seldom, if ever, more); or it came to him from his ancestors who had obtained it in the way stated; or he obtained it by purchase from those who had reclaimed it. Farmers, as they are called in Ireland, that is, tenant farmers, are very few in Newfoundland. With the exception of a few in the neighbourhood of St. John's I know none. I knew one there many years ago, an Englishman, who held a farm of about eighty acres under lease at a rental of 120*l.* a year, within a mile of the town. It was land of fair quality, but not very rich; it produced the usual crops of hay, vegetables, and corn, except wheat. It was capable of producing wheat, for I have seen some fine crops of wheat upon it, but wheat was not considered a profitable crop. He kept a large dairy stock, and sent his produce of farm and dairy to the St. John's market. He lived well, and was a respectable and independent man. His lease was for twenty-one years, and at the expiry of that term he retired from the farm with a clear saving of 5000*l.* At the commencement of his lease he had not sufficient to stock the farm—he had to

borrow money for that purpose. But this was almost an exceptional case. I have known only one or two other instances of that kind; and all these were in the immediate vicinity of the capital, where they had a good and ready market.

The people who cultivate the soil here about Harbourgrace—and what applies to Harbourgrace applies equally to the whole island, with but slight exception—are owners of the soil; and moreover they do not, save in very rare instances, live solely by the produce of their farms. There are a few merchants, officials, and gentlemen of private means who farm their own land; and those are the persons who carry the cultivation of the soil to the highest pitch, and who have the handsomest and most productive farms. The other cultivators of the soil are the planters. These are the men who conduct the fisheries, having ships and boats of various kinds, and other necessary equipments for that purpose. They combine farming with the fisheries, but their farming is of a rather slovenly kind. They employ their fishing crews in spring and autumn to put in and take out the crops; leaving it to their families, that is, the very old and very young members of them, with perhaps an old servant or two, to look after the crops during the summer. Hence their farms present for the most part an untidy and unpolished aspect. But then they are not dependent on their farms for support; the farm constitutes an auxiliary merely to the income from the fisheries. And thus it happens when all goes well, that is, when the fishing season proves prosperous, there is no class of men on the island so well off, so comfortable, and so independent as this planter class. They are the backbone and main strength of the colony. The merchant class lives by these; for it is by their labour and enterprise they (the merchants) make their profits and realize their fortunes. The fishermen too obtain their living from these, for it is by them the fishermen are employed generally. When, therefore, the planters are successful and prosperous, everything goes well; all classes—merchants, traders, mechanics, professional men—thrive and flourish. But, on the other hand, whenever the planters fail, whenever an unsuccessful fishery disappoints and cripples them, the whole social fabric comes toppling down. This is almost literally the case.

Harbourgrace is peculiarly situated in this respect; it is the very centre of the planter interest. It is the capital of Conception Bay, which is one of the largest bays in the island, and has by far the largest fishing population. The population of this bay, with that of St. John's, which is much smaller, constitutes nearly half the entire population

of the island. The shore line of this bay extends more than one hundred miles.

I was early struck with the peculiarity of the climate of Newfoundland. I was scarcely a fortnight residing at Harbourgrace, when one morning I rose from bed, and looking out of my window, I saw the surrounding country covered with a mantle of snow. This was about the middle of June. You can imagine what a thrill of gloomy disappointment came over me when this evidence of a rigorous Arctic climate presented itself to me. The snow lay about four inches deep on the level; but in some places, along the fences and the sides of the houses, it was as many feet deep. However, the sun had not set that day before every vestige of this white pall had been swept away, and the landscape had been looking fresh and blooming. It rarely happens that such a fall of snow occurs in the month of June; and whenever it does it passes quickly away, without causing the least inconvenience.

### III.

#### MY FIRST SUMMER AND WINTER IN NEWFOUNDLAND—AGRICULTURE—THE FISHERIES—SCHOOLS.

I PASSED the summer and autumn months of this my first year in Newfoundland in a way that afforded me much agreeable interest and occupation. My attention was pretty equally divided between the labours of the land and of the sea. The work of agriculture in the summer season is left entirely in the hands of a few old people, the main body of the population being engaged in the fisheries on the coast of Labradore, a distance of some 300 miles from their homes. This was the case then, and is so still; though in the early days of the fisheries the various populations along the coast of the island found ample employment near their own doors, from the abundance of fish that frequented the shores. But latterly, and at the time I refer to, the shore fishery had greatly declined, and the coast of Labradore became the general resort of the fishermen from all parts of the island. Few, save old and young, remained behind; and these attended to the labours of the field, as well as to the catching and curing of fish upon the coast of the island. The farms required but little attention during the summer months as the crops had all been sown, the fences repaired, and every necessary provision for the safe conduct of the farm business made before the planters and their crews had left for the northern fishery, which was generally towards the end of May. At their return, which took place in September, they gathered in the crops,

and made everything secure for the winter. However, during the summer I had an opportunity of examining the various crops in the neighbourhood of the town, and of observing the different soils and the quality and quantity of their products. The farms are all small, and the soil is for the most part thin and sandy, with here and there spots of deep rich loam which are capable of large production. But on the whole the crops that are usually produced, such as hay, potatoes, turnips, oats, and barley, are as fine and abundant as I have generally noticed them in Ireland. I am writing now of Harbourgrace and its neighbourhood; but my observations have equal application to all parts of Conception Bay, and I may say, with very little exception, to all parts of the island. The agriculture of the island is limited to the sea-shore, and is for the most part, as I have said, an auxiliary merely to the fisheries. There is no distinct agricultural interest, as you understand it in Ireland. The interior land, that is all land inside a line of four or five miles from the sea-coast, is literally untouched. No husbandry has taken place upon the island except along the margin of the water in the great bays where the various populations—fishing populations—are settled; and these populations occupy a belt of coast all round, not exceeding in breadth, as I have said, four or five miles. Upon this belt they live in small towns and villages, and carry on their fishing operations either in their own neighbourhood or, as is generally the case in these latter years, on the coast of Labradore. It may appear strange to you, as surely it did to me at the time when I first observed it, that a whole country should have remained uninhabited and uncultivated, except a belt of four or five miles broad along its coast. But the fact is it is the greatest fishing country in the world; and the people who resorted there from the beginning found fishing the most profitable business in which they could engage. For the merchant it was a mine of wealth, for the planter it was little less so, and for the common labourer (the fisherman) it was unequalled by any field of industry to which he could devote his time and strength, in the wages which it brought him.

Little wonder then that the soil was neglected, except so far as it contributed, as an auxiliary, to the convenience and comfort of the persons engaged in the fisheries. But besides this it was long forbidden the fishermen to settle upon the soil, or even to remain on the island after the fishing season was over. It is only within the present century, or not much earlier, that they were permitted to settle permanently upon it. Before that time they were compelled under a penalty to return to their homes, in England and Ireland, as soon as the fishing season was over in each year. This was in obedience

to the laws then regulating the fisheries ; and those laws were called into existence at the instance of the British merchants who carried on the fisheries, and who, with a view solely to their own profits, kept the fishermen under their control, and forbade them to attend to anything else than the procuring of fish and oil to load their ships and amass their fortunes. All this will explain to you why Newfoundland has been kept a desert up to the present time—a desert except the strip of sea-shore which I have already mentioned.

I used sometimes to go out in the bay in the fishing-boats during the summer, and try the lines. The weather was generally very fine, and the sea and sky were redolent of enjoyment. I always had two fishermen in the boat with me ; and after three or four hours' fishing we would return, when successful, with two or more quintals of fish (codfish, which is the only fish they catch along the shore for the purpose of profit). Indeed very little fish of any other kind, except a small fish called *caplin*, which is taken for bait for the cod, is taken along this part of the coast. A quintal means a hundredweight of cured fish ; about one hundred and twenty fishes of fair size go to make up a hundredweight of dry or cured fish. The value of this catch of two quintals, if sold fresh in the market, was about forty shillings ; but if salted, dried, and cured, it brought only about twenty-four shillings. The prices, however, have greatly increased since then, for a quintal of cured codfish at the present time sells at from twenty to twenty-five shillings. I mean, of course, merchantable fish, that is, fish of the best quality.

The summer was very fine and beautiful, and between the diversions of farming and fishing the time passed agreeably enough with me. What at first struck me as very remarkable was the absence of population ; I often passed along the whole line of the chief street or path, which was about a mile in length, without meeting a dozen persons, and these chiefly very old and very young persons. This was owing to the fact of the fishing population, that is, the planters and the fishermen, with most of the members of their families, being absent at the Labradore in the prosecution of the cod, salmon, and herring fisheries. This was, and still is, the case with respect to most parts of the country ; but especially so as regards Conception Bay. They leave generally towards the end of May, and return at the middle or end of September. During that time the towns and villages of this bay, as well as of most of the other bays, are partially deserted, and look as if they were stricken by a plague. One gets used to this, however, after a short time, and becomes easily reconciled to it. When the fishing population returns in the autumn the scene becomes changed, and a



universal buzz of animation and excitement pervades town and farm. The cargoes of fish and oil brought from the Labradore are deposited in the merchants' stores, wages are paid, the shops are crowded, the streets full of bustle, and every one is filled with a renewed life. The fields are also filled with busy and noisy groups of labourers gathering in the harvest, and nothing seems wanted to the satisfied air of plenty and enjoyment reigning around. The months of October and November were not at all unpleasant. I had been led to believe before leaving Ireland that the whole year, with the exception of two or three months—June, July, and August—was chained in ice and snow. But this I found to be a wretched exaggeration, for I did not see a speck of snow, except that brilliant mantle which I saw in the middle of June, and which disappeared before the day was out; and which I have since discovered to have been a rare exception to the general arrangement of the weather. I say I did not see a speck of snow until towards the last of November, and then only mere feathery particles floating in the air. The winter did not set in until late in December, or about Christmas. This, however, is not always the case; but I can say this much, that the winter in Newfoundland, speaking generally, does not extend beyond five months; and the greater portion of that time cannot be fairly set down as winter weather, except as regards the fact that the snow does not altogether disappear during that time. These months are December, and the first four months of the year. There is very little interruption to outdoor industry during that time; and as for the sun, it is sometimes as bright and warm in the worst months of the year, that is, January and February, as I remember having sometimes seen it in Ireland in those months, or even in the months of March and April.

In December, when the winter began to set in, I began to feel somewhat lonely; and having no occupation to interest me, I invited a class of young men, the sons of planters in the neighbourhood, to my father's house, to take lessons from me in such branches of the mathematics as I thought would be useful to them in their peculiar avocations—such as trigonometry, euclid, and navigation—and also in the use of the instruments appertaining to these branches. I found these young lads (they were as old, some perhaps older, than myself) very intelligent, and quick to learn. They were generous and manly too, and full of enterprise and spirit. In this way, with occasional visits to the trout ponds, and drives upon sleighs or sledges, as those vehicles are called which are driven over the snow without wheels, I contrived to pass a sufficiently agreeable winter. These young men had received but a poor education; they could



merely read, write, and cipher; but beyond that they knew but little in the way of book-learning. They were well acquainted, however, with everything connected with the fisheries and trade of the colony; and on these subjects I derived a good deal of information from them.

The schools in Newfoundland at that time were the humblest and least efficient that could well be imagined. I visited some of them in the town and neighbourhood during the winter, and found nothing taught in them beyond the merest elements of education. They were nearly all Government schools, that is schools supported by small annual grants from the Government and Legislature. They were badly taught, badly furnished, and badly paid. The teachers were for the most part old or crippled fishermen, and broken-down or discharged commercial clerks. Such was the character of those schools throughout the island; that is wherever they chanced to be located, for such as they were they were even scarce. There were a few schools—very few—scattered up and down the bay, of a somewhat better description; but even these were poor, both as regarded teaching and school appliances. The public school system has been since very much improved in both those respects. There were but few private schools, and these principally in the capital, and in Harbourgrace. The teaching in these was somewhat better than in the Government schools. It included some of the higher mathematical branches and bookkeeping; but in all other respects little could be said in favour of them. There was no classical school in the whole island, with the exception of one in the capital, which was taught by a gentleman who had been brought out from some part of England or Scotland by a few official gentlemen and merchants who had guaranteed him a certain income before he left home. The school, I think, was limited to the sons of the subscribers, and consisted only of some dozen or so of boys. On the whole the state of education throughout the island was in as low a condition as it is possible to conceive. Early in my after-life in the colony I devoted much of my attention to this subject, with the view of raising the status of its educational system, and of giving an upward impulse to the aspirations of its young men.

#### IV.

##### THE ICE-FIELDS AND THE SEAL-FISHERY—ANNUAL PRODUCE OF THIS INDUSTRY.

THE month of February had not yet passed over when preparations were commenced by the merchants and planters

for the sealing voyage, which was to be carried out on the great ice-fields. The scene became very busy and animating. The young men who had been visiting me for instruction during the previous months of the winter began now to give their attention to their father's ships, and to prepare for the voyage. I soon caught the general contagion, and made up my mind to visit the ice-fields, and see how the seal was hunted and captured on its breeding-ground. The seals deliver their young only on the ice-pans. The work of preparation went on during the month of February; the crews were shipped, the vessels examined and fitted out, and provisions put on board. Everything was ready by the 1st of March, and on that day and the few days immediately following all the seal-hunters (as the ships on this voyage are called) were cleaving the waters eastward and northward of the island. The number of vessels of all sizes which had left the island on this expedition was between two and three hundred. Their tonnage varied from fifty to two hundred tons and over. The vessel in which I took my berth was something over one hundred tons, and was commanded by an active and intelligent young Englishman. Our crew numbered about thirty men. We were well-found in everything, and our hopes of success were pretty high. We sailed northward along the eastern coast, keeping about from twenty to fifty miles out to sea, and passing by the Bays of Trinity and Bonavista. We left port in the forenoon of one day and struck the ice on the following morning at some distance, probably twenty miles from the mouth of Bonavista Bay, in a north-easterly direction.

A few seals (white coats) lay scattered about on the ice, which some of the crew immediately captured and took on board. These were skinned (the skin, and fat adhering to the skin, taken off), and some of the flesh was cooked for dinner. A delicious meal! We pushed on through the thin ice, and at length, on the next day, got into the thick and heavy ice-field. There were some indications of seals lying away at some distance from us, and the crew prepared for action. They set out in twos and threes (a man rarely ventures out at this business by himself) furnished each with a gaff, hauling rope, and clasp-knife. The gaff is a long thin pole with an iron spear and hook at the end, for the double purpose of killing the young seals and helping the bearer of it over the detached ice-pans. The knife is for skulping, that is, detaching the skin and fat from the body, and the rope is used for lacing two or more of these skulps or skins, and hauling them along the ice to the vessel. They went out early, and scampered over the ice in various directions to the distance of some two or three miles. They

did not return until two or three o'clock in the afternoon, when they came alongside with their *turns*, as they call the skulps which they haul with their ropes. These *turns* happened to be small, only one or two skulps in each. Some had none.

A good turn consists of from three to five seals, or skulps. They never carry the carcasses to the ship, except a few occasionally for cooking. It was a bad day's work, for the seals were evidently scarce. Our object then was to take up some other position in the ice where the seals might be more abundant and more approachable. The crew began then to break the ice with hatchets and spikes for the purpose of opening a way for the vessel and enabling her to move on—the direction of her movement depending, of course, on the direction of the wind. But we soon found that all movement was impossible; we became firmly bound in the solid ice. We were some fifty miles from the coast now, amid a scene of the most remarkable character. We were stationed in the centre of a plain of ice terminated only by the horizon all round. Rising here and there over this bright and glittering plain appeared crystal structures of the most curious and striking character. These were icebergs—some resembling castles, some cathedrals, and some appeared as shapeless masses of marble, or crystal struck down from some lightning-riven palace. Domes, towers, spires, esplanades, galleries shone out from these crystallized frozen masses on every side. It was a wonderful scene, with the sun glistening over the whole field, and reflected in burning radiance from the various structures. We always avoided coming too near to those masses of ice; for when the ice opens and the sea begins to heave they are sometimes apt to roll over, and engulf any vessel within their reach. I passed over the ice to one of them on a fine day. It lay about half a mile from our vessel, and appeared to be a splendid specimen of the Greenland berg (they are formed on the coast of Greenland). It had a tower, a dome, and several spires. It was not a very large one; not more than two hundred yards long, and about half that in breadth: it was a glorious mass though, there sparkling under a bright blue sky and a glowing sun. I walked up the sloping gangway that led from the ice-floor to the first gallery; then passed along the gallery and up a winding passage that opened on a wide platform flanked by a lofty tower. Here I lay down under a brilliant sun and in a luxurious atmosphere, fancying myself transported far away into some nameless fairyland, where all was peace and joy and endless bliss. The vessel lay off beneath me stuck in the ice, like a small boat, and the crew jumping and wrestling around

her like children at play. I next took some turns through the various galleries, arches, and passages that lay along the bases of the towers and turrets of this remarkable edifice, and then descended and returned to the vessel. I visited several of these bergs during the season, but this was the finest and most diversified of them all. All icebergs are represented as having beneath the water nine times the bulk and weight of the part over water; I have seen small icebergs grounded in what was represented to me as thirty fathoms of water.

After a day or two more the ice opened, and the wind freshened; and we sailed away in a south-easterly direction until we reached the strain or parallel of Cape Bollard, near Cape Race, the most southern point of the island. I had taken a quadrant and a chart of the island with me, for the purpose of taking observations of the sun, and ascertaining from time to time the position of the vessel. I remained generally on board with the captain, at his request, and seldom went more than a mile or so away on the ice. One day, however, I rigged myself up in canvas frock and trousers, with gaff, hauling rope, and clasp-knife, and took with me a little steady man who had been used to seal-hunting, and whom I regarded as a safe guide. The whole crew paired off, and I followed accompanied by Devereux (such was his name). The ice was close-packed and strong. We went along, probably two miles before we halted, meeting nothing in our way. By this time nothing appeared along the horizon, neither vessel nor man. We lay down on the ice and rested a short time, when we heard a peculiar cry, not unlike that of a baby; and Devereux at once cried, "White coats!" (the young seals are so called, at least one species of them, for the white or whitish colour of their furs). We jumped up at once, and saw three only, one large and dark in colour—this was the mother—the others small and white. The young ones, though small, were as large as small-sized plump sheep; their legs, or rather claws—for the short thick substance to which the claws were attached could be scarcely called legs—carried them along very slowly, and we reached them in a few minutes. The old one had escaped through a hole in the ice, and the young ones lay resting on their foreclaws, or flappers as they are called, with their heads raised, and helplessly, and, as it appeared to me, piteously eyeing us. Their eyes were round, full, and black, and really seemed moist with tears. It is said that they do shed tears when about being captured. They looked very pretty and very innocent, and I could not bring myself to strike them. I prevented Devereux also from striking them, for which he appeared to regard me

with small respect. We left them to the care of their mother, who no doubt returned to them after we had gone. We wandered about for some time in search of what Devereux called the main jam or body, that is, one of those multitudinous groups of seals lying in large fields of ice, where the old ones, assembled in large numbers, have delivered their young. Here they, young and old, lie about in thousands, filling the air with their low murmuring cries. I was not so fortunate as to meet with any of those fields. Towards evening the sky began to darken, and a movement began to be felt along the ice all around us. Devereux saw a change coming, and said that we had no time to lose—that we must hasten back to the vessel as fast as we could. The air became darker and darker every moment, and the horizon seemed to close in upon us. But this was not the worst; the ice, which was all day one smooth, unbroken plain covered with its carpet of snow, began now to heave and break. We were at this time fully two miles from the vessel. No one appeared in sight anywhere. Not a sound was heard, except a low rumbling noise running through the ice-field. We hurried on, returning as closely as possible along the path we had made in our exit in the morning. I felt a little excited, but not alarmed. Devereux was a poor walker, and a worse leaper. When the ice began to crack and open our path became interrupted with chasms, more or less wide, between the ice-pans. Across these we had to spring; but as soon as they became wide enough to require a good leap to clear them, Devereux was at fault; he could not accomplish it, but went round to an easier crossing, which compelled me to wait for him, or go around to meet him and help him along. We frequently bent down our heads to the ice for the sound of a gun to direct our way (it is the practice to fire guns at dark, or in a fog, to attract to the vessels such of the crew as should happen to be out then), but not a sound reached us. Still we felt pretty confident that we were advancing in the right direction, unless the vessel, by reason of the movement in the ice, had altered her position. This certainly gave us some uneasiness. Our progress, however, was becoming slower, in consequence of the still wider and more frequent openings in the ice; for, to go around, as Devereux required, began to be a very tedious process, and was also calculated to put us out of our course. At one particular point in our way, where there was an opening or chasm of some five or six feet wide, I jumped across, and told Devereux to go a little to the right, where the chasm seemed narrower, and that I should meet him and assist him across. We both used our gaffs to narrow the opening,

by breaking round pieces of ice and throwing them into the opening between the pans. I then told him to spring on lightly to one of these lumps, and then on towards me. He hesitated, and trembled, and looked frightened; at last, finding there was no back door, he stepped on to a small floating piece, and went down. I extended him my gaff, and hauled him near enough to be able to catch him by the collar, when I jerked him up to the pan on which I stood. I never saw a man so deplorably cast down after that. I had to hold him by the arm the remainder of the way until we reached the vessel, which we had the good fortune of doing before the night was much advanced—a night of storm and ice-heaving, and sea-roaring of a fearful character.

We had an open sea next day, and got under way, taking a north-easterly course. The ice soon disappeared altogether for a day and a night. During nearly the whole of this night I remained on deck, watching the strange and varied aspects of the sky and ocean. It looked as if we were sailing between hills and forests and groves of rich dark foliage. There seemed to be no sky, no stars, no ocean, but a calm pleasant lake and whispering zephyrs, and, far away, reflections of light from houses and villages on the land; but we were then at least a hundred miles from any land. It was long after midnight when we came into contact with another vessel—a seal-hunter, like our own—and then ensued a state of confusion and rushing and threatening, mixed with unsavoury oaths, in the efforts to separate the vessels, that was frightful to witness. Guns were even handled in the excitement, but no violence took place. The collision occurred in consequence of the lights of both vessels having been shut out from view by the intervention of the sails. They soon, however, got disengaged, both vessels having suffered some slight damage in torn sails and ruptured rigging. For a day or two we passed in and out through skirts of ice, picking up scattered seals as we passed along, until at length we got into a large plain of loose ice, interspersed with lakes of clear blue water. Here the old seals began to show themselves here and there in the open spaces, and the gunners began to prepare their weapons for action. A certain proportion of every sealing crew are shipped as gunners, whose business it is to shoot and capture the old seals (the hoods, as they are called). For this purpose they take to the small boats, which are carried on deck especially for their use. These gunners are trained and experienced men in their department, and use their weapons with great skill and precision. The guns are long, rough, heavy weapons—a long barrel and large bore—and

carrying a heavy charge of powder and shot. The first time the old seals began to show themselves, popping their heads above water, and diving again upon hearing the least noise, I fired at one from the deck; but though I lodged the charge at the very spot where his head appeared, it did not seem to have had any effect, so sudden was his disappearance below. The boats were now launched, and each boat was manned by two rowers and a gunner. I took my place in one of them, and after some shots had been delivered by the gunner, without any apparent effect, he handed me the gun. I stood in the stern, while one of the rowers sat at the bow (he is technically called the bow-oar). I kept looking ahead, while the boat moved slowly along. At length a huge seal threw up his big black head above the water, and I fired. At the moment of firing, the bow of the boat rose suddenly upwards with the swell of the sea, and the whole charge fell into the water about five yards from the bow, barely passing over the head of the bow-oar. I felt a sudden thrill of horror pass through my heart, fancying I must have struck him; but he laughed, and did not look in the least frightened. It was enough for me, however, and, laying down the gun, I had the boat rowed back to the vessel. I then went on board, resolving never again to handle one of those weapons. I saw the gunners sometimes stagger back three feet or more after firing, so great was the rebound from the heavy charge; and I also saw the flesh of the right shoulder of a gunner turned blue and black after a day's firing. Those weapons have been much improved since.

After some five weeks of absence we returned home, having less than 1000 seals, young and old. A successful voyage ought to have secured us 3000 young seals, or 2000 old and young.

This branch of the fisheries has been of comparatively recent origin, not having attained to any considerable importance before the commencement of the present century, and the mode of conducting it has been greatly altered within the last twenty years. It is now conducted chiefly by steamers—about twenty in number—and partially by small craft, numbering from twenty to thirty, and varying in size from ten to seventy tons. The produce of the voyage, however, is about the same now as at the time to which I have been referring, and the number of men employed in its prosecution is also nearly the same, that is, about 5000. It is, however, not so profitable to the crews now as then. The crew then received one-half the whole catch of seals, now they only receive one-third in the steamers. The average annual catch is about 400,000 seals, large and



small; and the average value of these is between 200,000*l.* and 300,000*l.*, including the price of the skins. Thus it may be seen that an industry which employs only about 5000 men, and is pursued only about six weeks in the year—from about the middle of March to the last of April—turns in a value of over 200,000*l.*, or nearly a quarter of a million pounds. The value of the seal oil and seal skins shipped from Newfoundland last year was about \$1,200,000, that is, 240,000*l.*

## V.

## THE LABRADORE--THE COD-FISHERY UPON THAT COAST--THE ANNUAL VALUE OF THE NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADORE COD-FISHERY.

THE seal-fishery being over, the work of preparing the land for the summer's crops commenced, and felling, ploughing, and seed-sowing went rapidly forward. The planters shipped their crews for the approaching Labradore fishery, and had them partly occupied in the fields, and partly about the schooners or vessels to be engaged in the voyage. It was then a busy scene, activity and bustle reigned on every side. I made up my mind to visit the Labradore, and spend the summer upon its coasts. I accordingly took a berth in one of the planter's vessels, this planter being an acquaintance and friend of mine. The vessel contained the principal portion of his own family, including his wife and two or three of his sons, smart, active young fellows; these, with his fishing crew of seven or eight men, constituted his portion of the passengers. But there was another planter with his crew on board, so that the whole number of passengers amounted to twenty-five or twenty-six. Some planters not having a vessel of their own take passage in the vessels of other planters, who, according to agreement, carry them, with their crews and stores and other necessaries for the fishery, to the coast of Labradore and back again, with their summer's produce of fish and oil, at the close of the fishing season.

We left about the latter end of May on a fine bright morning, and sailed in a north-easterly direction out of the bay (Conception Bay), and then northerly along the eastern coast—the same course that had been taken by the vessel in which I had gone to the seal-fishery a few weeks before. We kept generally pretty close to the shore. The weather was fair enough, though the winds were unfavourable for the greater part of the passage. In about ten days we arrived at the Straits of Belleisle, the northern boundary of Newfoundland, which they separate from the Labradore



coast. It thus took us ten days to sail a distance of about 300 miles. We passed by Belleisle, and sailed down close by the coast of Labradore. The weather was squally as we passed on, and the vessel had to be closely watched—some of her sails being reefed, and some furled—to avoid accident. The coast presented a varied appearance, it was a mixture of the wild, grand, and romantic. There were deep curving ravines clothed up their steep sides with a luxuriance of dark fir, and from these came occasional squalls which threatened to upset the vessel. Then succeeded bold, lofty cliffs crowned with fir, and then came sloping down from the distant hills a series of open fields or plains covered with long waving grass, until they dipped into the sea, and were lost there. These were natural, not cultivated sweeps of land. There is no cultivation of the soil on the Labradore coast, at least not to any extent worth mentioning.

After sailing about half the day or more along the coast we bore up for an opening which appeared to lead into a small bay. We passed in here; and then after a few hours we wheeled into a small channel between two high fir-crowned rocks, and entered a small well-sheltered harbour, and anchored. Here was the fishing-room of my friend. The other planter's room was also situated at one side of this little harbour. My friend's room or premises consisted of a stage and a couple of flakes adjoining one another, and a dwellinghouse for the use of his family and crew, placed on a somewhat elevated flat opposite to the stage and flakes, at some fifty yards' distance. The whole of the premises looked in a dilapidated state after the winter, and evidently required considerable repairs. Accordingly the crew were immediately told off for this purpose, after having landed from the schooner some stores and necessaries for immediate use. The stage is a long, low erection constructed of round sticks and boughs—the sides and roof being of the same material. Here the fish is first brought from the fishing-boats, and split and salted. The flake is a flat erection made of long sticks fixed upright in the ground, and crossed horizontally by similar sticks or poles, and then covered with spruce boughs, or, in some instances, rough boards. Here the fish is spread out to dry, after having been taken from the stage and washed in a large square wooden vessel or tub called the waterhorse. It is finally made into piles or stacks, like small stacks of corn, and covered with dry rinds—barks of trees cut into lengths of from four to six feet—and there left until it is shipped on board the vessel or schooner for home at the close of the season. The dwellinghouse of the planter at the Labradore is not very different from the fish-stage, except that it is closer and

firmer in construction. It is composed of rough round sticks—in sides and roof—placed closely together, and lined with spruce or fir boughs. The roof has sometimes rinds beneath the boughs, and sometimes long sods of turf; and all are fastened together by strips of board running either vertically or horizontally along it. Sometimes old pieces of canvas or boats' sails are laid over the roof for its greater protection against rain and storm. It has a door, and one or two windows—square holes covered with sliding boards. It contains a goodly sized apartment for cooking, and two or three small bed-rooms for the family. A continuation of this structure, and separated from it by a rough partition, forms the sleeping-room of the crew—four or five beds being ranged around the walls. This part of the building has a door, but no windows. This description applies to what I saw at the time to which I am referring; but I believe that some improvement in point of accommodation and comfort has taken place since then.

After the dwellinghouse and the stage and flakes had been repaired and put in order, and a small cabbage-garden adjoining the dwelling had been dug up and sown with seed, the fishing-boats were ordered out, and the summer's operations commenced. There were three or four boats on my friend's fishing-room, and these were manned by two men each. There were four or five persons, including one or two women, kept about the house and stage; these were called the shore crew, whose business it was to receive the fish at the stage-head from the boats, and put it through its various stages of splitting, salting, washing, drying, and stacking as the fishing progressed.

I refrained from going out in the boats for the first week; and contented myself with rambling about the neighbourhood, examining the other fishing-rooms—of which there were some half-dozen not far distant—and strolling through the glens, and over the hills that lay in romantic confusion around. It was a rough, irregular region; a succession of narrow valleys and low hills, covered with the never-failing fir and spruce. There was no cultivation at all, except the little cabbage-gardens around the houses of the planters. It was, nevertheless, an interesting scene. One fine morning, at the first streak of dawn, I joined the fishermen who were hastening to their boats to commence the day's fishing. I took my place with two stout, hardy fellows who promised me a turn at their lines if I felt so disposed. Each of the two fishermen in a boat usually worked two lines, and sometimes three when a good spurt occurred; in either case the work was no holiday amusement. We all rowed out through the narrow entrance of the little harbour, and into

the wide bay amid the numerous little islands that skirted its shores. After less than an hour's rowing we got on good fishing-ground, when my two companions immediately baited, and threw out their lines, each on either side the boat. There was no straining of the lines for some time; but at last there came a strain upon one, then upon another; these were rapidly hauled in, hand over hand; the fishes were quickly unhooked and cast into the pounds—square spaces in the boat set apart for their reception; the hooks were baited afresh, and the lines cast out again; and thus the work went on without cessation for nearly an hour, the men all the time eagerly and silently plying their lines. In about an hour the spurt was over. I stood merely looking on, for it was too precious a time to be wasted by the experimental essays of a youngster. But after the rapid spell or spurt was over I had permission to try my hand. I took a line, and after a little watching I hauled up and jerked in a fine codfish. I took some time to unhook it—this requires practice and dexterity—and then I baited my hook again, and threw over my line. Thus I continued until I caught some half-dozen of fine fishes. After some further time, in which other spurts of quick fishing occurred, we hauled up, and returned home with over four quintals of fine plump fish. This was considered a good morning's work. The fishes were pitched up singly on the stage-head, and the men then went to breakfast, where they were joined by the other fishermen, who had also made a fair morning's work.

One day in the forenoon the bait-skiff was ordered out in search of bait (caplin); she had a crew of three or four men provided with nets, and provisions sufficient to last for a day or two, as it was necessary to go to some distance for this purpose. I joined in this expedition, which promised to be interesting, as it varied the monotony of the hook-and-line performance. The boat carried a mainsail, foresail, and jib: but the oars were more frequently used as our course was continually varying, and the wind was consequently not always favourable. We passed out into the bay, and in and out between the little islands that studded its margin, until we arrived at the entrance of an arm of the sea, which ran up some twenty miles into the land. We rowed in by the side of a large perpendicular wall of grey rock, overshadowed by tall dark trees, which threw a shade over the narrow entrance. It was a picturesque scene. The lake (for it seemed a lake) widened as we advanced within the entrance, until it expanded into a width of four or five miles. The water was clear and motionless, reposing in a basin whose edges, raised apparently only a few yards above it, were covered with lofty trees, which extended like an amphitheatre up the gradually

sloping elevation on every side, tier upon tier, until they disappeared in the distance along the line of the horizon. It was a strange combination of the sublime and the beautiful. The distant line of dark forest trees mingling with the light fleecy clouds that seemed floating from them like banners; the unruffled and shining water palpitating with the sun's rays that lay in long lines along its bosom; the bright and glowing atmosphere; the deep silence; and the dreamy feeling that came like a spell in the presence of this panorama,—all, the whole view, the sky, the wood, the water, formed a scene so bewitching, so overpowering, that it was impossible to witness it without the deepest emotion. I do not know whether my companions felt as I did, but at least I fancied I saw them look more calm, more grave, more solemn, than was their wont. How curious are the works and the ways of Nature. Here, in the centre of what is commonly known and spoken of as the bleak, inhospitable Labradore—an Arctic region, as it is called—uncultivated, uninhabited, save by the savage, wandering Esquimaux, and forest beasts scarce more savage than they,—here are presented to us scenes of nature, bright, rich, and glorious as any in the most favoured regions of the earth, scenes as adapted to stir the loftiest, the most spiritual emotions of man as any that have sprung from the plastic hand of the divine Architect of the world, the inscrutable Lord and Master of the universe; and yet it is not permitted to man to avail himself of these, by reason of climatic rigour and obstruction, to the full extent of the human advantage and benefit of which they are inherently capable.

We met with no bait that day, and we encamped on the margin of the lake (or bay, or arm, whichever it may be called) for the night. We drew up our boat on the strand of a small cove; and the crew went to work to cut wood, to make a fire on the level ground above the cove, and to prepare supper. A large fire was soon blazing up into the evening air, dispelling the cloud of mosquitoes which floated around us; and soon after our bowls were filled with steaming tea from the large boiling tea-kettle—the tea and molasses were boiled together. We spread the butter on our sea-biscuit with our clasp-knives, and we thus enjoyed our supper in comfort. It was a simple meal, but to us it was a luxury, so much did we enjoy it after our day's rowing. After we had finished our supper, and listened to a song or two from one of our comrades who was gifted with a rich and melodious voice, we wrapped ourselves up in our oil-coats and jackets, and lay on the moss-covered earth around the fire. We were soon asleep. Occasionally through the night one or other of us would get up and replenish the fire, so as to drive off the mosquitoes, as well as the wild beasts of the forest. I

cannot boast of my sleep that night, for it was fitful and restless ; though all the others seemed to have slept well. But I soon became accustomed to this sort of thing, having passed some other nights in the same sort of dormitory before the season was over. We were all up at the dawn of day (it was easy to be up, for we had but to stand on our legs—no toilet to make), and having breakfasted, that is, repeated the meal of the night before, we put to sea again.

We returned home the next evening, having in the meantime secured a sufficient supply of bait.

Shortly after this I visited two Indian wigwams. The first I visited was occupied by an old woman named Jenny. She lived on the flat top of a high bluff, or ledge of rock, on one of the small islands. Her house, or wigwam, was shaped like a bee-hive, having for entrance a square hole intended for a door. She was a small, withered-looking old woman, with a flat brown face covered with wrinkles. We brought her some biscuits, and butter, and tea ; but she wished to know if we had any rum (*miuluck* she called it). We had none ; and she looked disappointed. She spoke a little English, mixed with her own language, and helped both out with signs. When asked if she knew God, she blessed herself, and raised her eyes and hands towards heaven. The wigwam contained but one apartment, in which was a bed, covered with blankets and skins of wild animals. She had lived alone for many years, since her daughter and son-in-law, the last members of her family, had gone away from her, to live farther down the coast. While she was youthful and strong, she worked for the Newfoundland planters in the fishing season, and received food and clothing from them ; but since she became old and feeble, she had to remain at home ; and was supplied by them with what necessities she required throughout the year. She lived principally on blubber, and the carcasses of seals, and dried fish. Some of these latter articles were lying about on the rocks near the wigwam, drying and hardening in the sun. When we rowed away, she crept out after us ; and was the last object we observed as she stood on the margin of the cliff, with her head raised, and her arms stretched out to us. This was her manner of wishing us farewell. The next visit of this kind I made was some weeks afterwards, at a place called Indian Tickle, farther down the shore. The wigwam in this instance was situated on a level, amid low brushwood and stumps of trees—a sort of clearing for the purpose of cultivation. This wigwam was larger and better constructed than the other. It was a sort of wooden cabin, with a broken door, and something in the shape of a window. It belonged to a married couple with a

young family ; the father being an Englishman who worked on a mercantile room, or establishment, in the neighbourhood. When we approached the cabin, we were assailed by a half-dozen of furious, ragged, half-starved-looking dogs, of a reddish colour ; in shape like a greyhound, but larger and stouter. After flinging some stones at them, and threatening them with our brandished sticks, they slunk away, keeping their blazing eyes still turned back upon us. These are the Labradore Indian dogs. Two or three half-naked children, hearing the unusual noise, ran around from the rear of the cabin, and casting a frightened glance at us, rushed into the open doorway, and closed it behind them. We knocked at the door, being unwilling to shove it in, when a tall, well-shaped, muscular woman opened it, and admitted us. This was the Indian mistress of the domicile. She was loosely clad in cotton stuff, with her black hair, which was very abundant, loosely streaming down her shoulders. Her colour was the usual tawny, or dirty, greasy yellow ; her features were strong, and not very repulsive. She held a baby in her arms, which she began to fondle with sportive affection as we passed in with her. There were apparently two apartments in this wigwam ; for the one we entered had a fire-place near the centre of the floor, in the hollow of which a few wooden brands were smouldering ; and there was no bed : but there was a sort of canvas partition, or wall, at one side, which concealed some other kind of room behind it. There were four children besides the baby, of various sizes ; the eldest not more than seven or eight years old, all of whom kept close to her side. She did not seem to understand a word we said to her, but always answered with the word *no*, pronounced in a very soft accent. We took out a cigar or two, and made signs that we wished to light them, when she spoke rapidly to one of the children, who ran to the hole or fire-place in the floor, and took up a small lighted brand, which he presented to us at his arm's length, and then retired to his mother's side. In the meantime she kept fondling the child, and looking quite pleased ; but we could not get a word from her except *no*. There was a gun resting on a sort of rack, by the wall, which I took down and began to examine ; when she suddenly handed the baby to one of the other children, and stepped up to me with great majesty, and drawn up to her full height. She took the gun gently from me, placed it quickly to her shoulder, and threw her eyes along the barrel, talking rapidly, in jerking accents, all the time. She then handed it to me ; and, after having done as she had done, I laid it on the rack. She still kept talking, and making signs with her hands ; the meaning of it all being, as I took it, that the

gun was a well-fashioned and excellent weapon. We then wished her good-bye, and passed out. She followed us to the door with the baby in her arms, and the other children holding by her dress ; and seemed very much gratified. She was altogether different from Jenny, being, I think, of the mountaineer tribe of Indians. These and the Esquimaux tribe differ considerably in form and features ; and are hostile to each other. The mountaineers are the real Labradore Indians, the Esquimaux being only intruders from the neighbouring shores. The Newfoundland Indian, called the Red Indian, is an extinct tribe. Not one of them is to be found, either in Newfoundland or the Labradore. They were, I regret to say, most cruelly and barbarously treated by the early settlers in Newfoundland. In fact, they were shot down like wild beasts ; no attempt whatever having been made to reconcile them to civilization.

I visited many harbours and settlements along the coast during the summer, and observed the same activity and bustle prevailing everywhere in the prosecution of the summer's industry. Besides the cod-fishery, there were the salmon and herring fisheries also carried on along the coast ; but these were very limited in extent. Latterly, however, they have assumed a greater degree of importance ; but even yet they are not pursued to the extent which they are capable of as economic industries. There were a few small mercantile establishments scattered along the coast, belonging chiefly to merchants resident in Newfoundland ; but the agents and clerks returned home at the close of the summer's fishery, leaving only a few men in charge during the winter. There was, properly speaking, no resident population on the Labradore then, and consequently nothing in the shape of an organized society. But at present it is somewhat different, as there is a stationary population there now, though very limited ; and some schools have been established there, supported by grants of money from the Newfoundland exchequer. Clergymen, also, of different denominations visit it every year, as also do justices of the peace, sent by the Newfoundland Government ; so that there is hope that it may advance gradually on the line of civilization. It is in great part under the government of Newfoundland.

In the first week of September the snow began to fall, and the planters commenced loading their schooners, and making preparations to return home. Towards the end of September, my friend's voyage having been concluded, and a portion of the codfish having been shipped to the European markets, we left for home, where we arrived after a four or five days' passage. The voyage, as the season's fishery is called, was a successful one, it having produced over a thousand quintals



of codfish, besides the due complement of cod-oil, and several barrels of herrings. The value of the codfish was then less than one-half its value at the present time and for many years past. At that time a quintal of codfish sold at from ten to twelve shillings; at present it sells at from twenty to twenty-five shillings. This applies, however, to the shore fishery, as the fishery in the bays and along the coast of Newfoundland is called, the fish here being of a superior quality to that taken on the coast of Labradore. The value of my friend's voyage, as it was, amounted to about 600*l.* currency. (Currency is to sterling as twenty-five is to twenty—that is, twenty-five shillings currency are about equal to twenty shillings sterling.) This left him, after deducting expenses, something about 300*l.* This was not bad in a business not occupying more than four months.

The annual produce of the cod-fishery both on the shores of Newfoundland and the coast of Labradore was, on an average, about the same then as at the present time, although the population within this period has more than doubled. Of course the local consumption of fish is much greater now than then, but the quantities exported are much the same, with this difference however, that the value of the fish now is more than double its value then. The average quantity of codfish annually exported from Newfoundland is something over one million of quintals; some years it exceeds that quantity by nearly a quarter million of quintals. The value of this, that is, the price paid for it in Newfoundland, varies from a million to a million and a quarter pounds sterling. Of course the merchant or exporter has his profits besides on the sales in the foreign markets. But codfish is not the only article of merchandise exported from Newfoundland, though it is the principal and by far the most important; it is the staple export. Besides this there are exported, in more or less quantities, salmon, herring, halibut, seal-skins, seal-oil, whale-oil, cod-oil, trout, haddock, turbot, caplin, lobsters, sounds, and tongues; and in late years, copper-ore, lead, and nickel. The value of the annual exports from Newfoundland amounts, at an average, to \$8,000,000; last year (1881) it exceeded \$9,000,000, equal to nearly 2,000,000*l.* sterling. The annual imports fall little short of this amount; they came last year to nearly \$8,000,000. These consist of nearly all the necessities and some of the luxuries of life—from flour, biscuit, and butter, to velvets, silks, and satins; together with everything appertaining to the requirements of the fisheries, and to the various demands of domestic, religious, and social life. Very little is produced in Newfoundland in comparison with the requirements of the population; though



we have been recently improving very much in this respect. The strides made on the lines of advancement in every direction, since the times I am referring to, have been of a most remarkable and certainly cheering character.

## VI.

## THE SIZE AND FORM OF THE ISLAND OF NEWFOUNDLAND—ITS GEOGRAPHICAL POSITION—TERRITORIAL AREA—GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS.

THE Island of Newfoundland is somewhat larger than Ireland; but not so compact in form. In shape it resembles an irregular triangle, the sides being very much indented by bays. The southern coast, running nearly due east and west, forms the base of the triangle, and is the greatest breadth of the island; that is, from St. John's (the capital) on the east to Cape Ray on the west. This line measures something more than 300 miles. The shortest distance from east to west is from the head of White Bay on the eastern coast to Bonne Bay on the western, a distance of about fifty or sixty miles. The apex of the triangle, which is its most northern point, rests on the Strait of Bellisle; and a straight line drawn from this to the base measures something less than 300 miles. But these lines do not exactly indicate the territorial area of the island, inasmuch as the three sides of the triangle are deeply indented or scooped out by large bays.

The territorial area is not more than from thirty-five to forty square miles. The bays on the eastern side are, with perhaps one or two exceptions, the largest; they are all lying to the northward of St. John's, beginning with Conception Bay, the largest by far in point of population, if not of shore line; and then followed by Trinity Bay, Bonavista Bay, Notre Dame Bay, White Bay, and Hare Bay;—all, except the last-mentioned, being of very large extent. The bays on the southern line, beginning from Cape Race, lying a short distance south of St. John's, and running westward to Cape Ray, are Trepassy Bay, St. Mary's Bay, Placentia Bay, Fortune Bay, and a few other smaller ones. On the western coast, that is, the line running from Cape Ray to Cape Norman, or Cape Bauld, at the apex, are the Bay of St. George, a very large sheet of water, the Bay of Islands, Bonne Bay, and three or four more of smaller size. This line, continued around the apex and on to Cape John on the eastern line, is what is called the French shore, by virtue of the privilege of fishing which the French possess

in the waters along this line, and to which I shall refer farther on. The latitude of St. John's (the capital) is about  $47\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$  N., and its longitude about  $52\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$  W. The latitude of the most southern point, however, that is, Cape Race, is about  $46\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ , and that of the most northern point, Cape Bauld,  $51\frac{1}{4}^{\circ}$ . You will observe from this that the island is placed in a more southern parallel than Ireland; that it is, in fact, in nearly the same parallel as France and some of the most favoured countries of Europe. Its position, therefore, as to climate ought to be regarded as most favourable; yet its climate is not all that its geographical position would indicate. Its relation to the Arctic seas, and to Greenland, produces the difference in point of climate between it and the more favourably situated regions of Europe. But, after all, the climate of Newfoundland is not all that it may be supposed to be from the fact of its being covered with snow for five months of the year. Though this snow continues on the ground so long, yet it is not accompanied with any extreme cold. The thermometer in St. John's rarely shows below zero, and scarcely ever more than a half-dozen degrees in an exposed position; whereas, in the neighbouring provinces of the Dominion of Canada, as well as in some of the northern towns of the United States of America, it is not an uncommon thing for the mercury to descend as low as twenty, and more, degrees below zero. There are winters—but these are not common—when the weather is so harsh as to prevent active operations either by land or water; but such weather seldom continues more than a day or two at a time; and recurs not oftener than two or three times throughout the whole course of the winter. I have seen farmers ploughing in the month of April, and sometimes in March, and even earlier, the ground being comparatively free from frost and snow. But the usual time for preparing the ground for seed is the month of May. The general work of planting and sowing goes forward; and in the month of August the fields present an aspect of beauty and promise not inferior to that which is afforded in some of the more favoured districts of Ireland.

The population of Newfoundland at the time of my arrival there was considerably under 80,000, but now it is scarcely short of 180,000; and this population is supported nearly altogether by the produce of the fisheries. A small population, you will say, for a country larger than Ireland; and which is capable of giving support to some millions of people if the soil was turned to account. But it is only by slow degrees that the cultivation of the soil advances; it is advancing, however, and within the last twenty or thirty years

considerable progress has been made in this direction. The necessities of a growing population demand other means of support than those supplied by the fisheries; and unless the inhabitants of the country resolve to perish, or to seek bread elsewhere—neither of which they feel disposed to do—they must turn their attention more earnestly to the cultivation of the soil than they have hitherto done. As long as the business of the fisheries supplied them with abundance the land was neglected; but the fisheries can do this no longer, seeing that while their produce remains stationary the population is rapidly advancing. It is therefore manifest that the soil must for the future become an object of vital interest to both Government and people. In view of all this the Legislature has recently made provision for the construction of a railroad through a portion of the island; a step which, if successful, cannot fail to induce a part of the people to settle down to the cultivation of the soil. The population, as I have already stated, is scattered in small towns and villages along the margin of the various bays and headlands of the island. The far greater portion is settled along the eastern coast, from Cape Race to White Bay; this numbers about 137,000. About 32,000 occupy the southern coast, from Cape Race to Cape Ray; and the western shore, from Cape Ray to Cape Norman or Cape Bauld, and round to Cape John—along which the French possess the right of fishery—is occupied by about 9000. The inhabitants of the Labradore number about 3000.

It is difficult to give anything like an accurate idea of the soil of Newfoundland, that is, of that portion of it which lies inside the belt of four or five miles along the coast to which I have already alluded. The interior land has never been thoroughly explored, and seldom even traversed from side to side by anybody with the view of examining its soil. But the few persons who have from time to time passed across it, or partially visited its interior, have given a sufficiently fair account of it to justify the opinion that it is capable of supporting a considerable population in proportion to its area. From what I know of it, and I have examined it carefully, I believe the best portion of its soil to be inferior, except in very small patches, to the best portions of the soil of Ireland; but yet there are considerable tracts of soil, both towards the eastern and the western sides of the island, which are equal to the second-class soil of Ireland, and capable of producing as abundant crops. There are no doubt large sweeps of barren and marshy land to be seen on all sides along the coast; but such is the case on the coasts of almost every country, especially on the American side of the Atlantic. I have never seen finer vegetables than those produced in parts

of Newfoundland ; for instance, potatoes, cabbages, turnips, parsnips, carrots, marrows, cauliflowers, beets,—in short, every sort of vegetable that may be grown in field or garden.

## VII.

A NEWFOUNDLAND PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION—POLITICAL PARTIES  
—EXTRAORDINARY RIOTS—A POLITICAL BAPTISM OF VIO-  
LENCE—THE MILITARY CALLED OUT—NO RETURN.

SCARCELY had I time to get acquainted with the character of the country, and the various pursuits and interests of its inhabitants, before an opportunity presented itself of obtaining an insight into its political condition. The colony had but recently acquired the privilege of a Legislature. Only two general elections had taken place since that event ; the second only a few months before my arrival. One of the members for Conception Bay having vacated his seat by accepting the office of stipendiary magistrate at Carbonear, a writ was issued for the election of a member in his place. Two candidates presented themselves to the constituency, one a resident of Harbourgrace, the other of Carbonear ; both were Roman Catholics, and belonged to the Liberal Party. Even at this early stage of their parliamentary government the population had divided themselves into two political parties, the one called Tory or Conservative, the other Liberal. Derisively they were called respectively, the Merchants' Party and the Priests' Party. And most extraordinary parties they were. After sufficient inquiry, however, I soon found that the one party (the Merchants' or Conservative) had for their guiding principle the resistance to all innovation, a name which they gave to the promotion of any measure that had not the especial benefit of the fisheries for its sole object. Taxation of every kind was ignored by their creed ; and so of consequence was every civil institution, and every improvement that implied the expenditure of money. The other party (the Liberal or Priests' Party) steered by a principle directly opposite. Hence the unavoidable collision between the two parties. But, in justice to both, in commenting upon their ways and doings, I must say, as things appeared to me then, and as I afterwards found by personal experience, the Liberal Party were by no means remarkable for adhesion to the principle of moral force in carrying out their objects. Conception Bay at this time formed but one electoral district, having a shore line of over 100 miles, and a population of about 24,000. This population has doubled itself since.

The polling was carried on from town to town, and village to village, beginning at Harbourgrace, the chief town, and ending at Carbonear, the second town of importance in the district. Thus the polling occupied three weeks or so; and very naturally, when a sharp contest occurred, the hostile feelings of parties rose as they went along. In this particular contest, as I have said, the two candidates were of the same party—both Roman Catholics; the Liberal Party being chiefly composed of Roman Catholics, a circumstance almost unavoidable, seeing that the priests were the chiefs of the party, or at all events generally regarded as such. The Harbourgrace man, who was a more popular man, and, in a political sense, perhaps a better man, was not a favourite with the priests. He was, it might be, not plian enough, and consequently the priests opposed him, and supported the Carbonear man. The party then split, and it became a contest between Harbourgrace and Carbonear, the respective places of birth and abode of the two candidates.

The merchants of Harbourgrace, and indeed the influential classes generally in both towns, supported the Harbourgrace candidate, who consequently headed the other all along the line until they arrived at Carbonear. Here the polling was to terminate; but as the Harbourgrace man was in an immense majority at the opening of the poll here, and his success was certain, his opponents felt that nothing remained for them but to nullify the election by creating a riot. Accordingly the polling-booth was invaded by the rioters; the returning officer was knocked down, and the poll-books carried away and destroyed. Then ensued a scene of confusion and disorder not easily described. The Harbourgrace men were struck at with sticks and stones, and all sorts of weapons and missiles that came to hand. They defended themselves in vain, for their assailants were too numerous, and evidently well prepared for the occasion. They fought desperately, however, and occasionally drove back the enemy with irresistible force, inflicting a severe retaliation. Some pistol-shots were said to have been delivered during the *mêlée*, which had the effect only of increasing the fury of the combatants. The fight was continued along the Harbourgrace road, the Harbourgrace men retreating towards their home until they came within a mile or so of it, when they were met by a number of their fellow-townsmen who had come out to their assistance. Then the Carbonear men began to give way, and to retreat towards their home. Here they attacked all those belonging to Carbonear who had supported the Harbourgrace man. They set fire to one house, and broke in the windows and doors of several others. The night set in, and amid the

darkness which followed were heard all through the town the ferocious shouts of the depredators, and the shrieks of women and children running from house to house for protection. It was a fearful scene—a living pandemonium. The lofty and wide-spreading flames, and crackling sounds of the large house on fire in the midst of the little town, joined to the crashing and reverberating noises of the stones that were hurled against the windows and doors on either side of the street, with the combined roaring, shouting, and screaming of the assailants and the assailed, formed such an extraordinary scene that a stranger unacquainted with its origin, and the motives which inspired it, would have fancied that a party of savages had suddenly come out from the forests and made a raid on the inhabitants of the town for the purposes of murder and plunder. Many persons were severely injured in the course of the onslaught; among others two middle-aged gentlemen, the heads of the two principal commercial houses at Harbourgrace, were fearfully maltreated. One was confined to his room for several weeks before he recovered from the effects of his wounds and injuries; and the other though temporarily restored to health, yet never fully recovered from the effects of the injuries he had received; and died within a few years afterwards. My share in the business was simply being a Harbourgrace man, and a friend of the Harbourgrace candidate, and having been present at his nomination, and otherwise known as one who was favourable to his election. I was not a voter; nor was I in any way interested in the result. However, I did not escape in the mad affray, having barely got off with my life. How often have I thought since, as in the case of the impending shipwreck at the little fishing village of Portugal Cove, how near I was to having my life ingloriously cut off just at its threshold, in a senseless and silly affray in the little town of Carbonear. But the fury of the storm did not subside for three or four days afterwards; nor until a company or two of soldiers had been sent over from St John's by the governor. The consequence of this interruption to the polling, and of the destruction of the poll-books, was that no return was made, and consequently neither candidate was elected. Such was the manner in which I was inducted into the mystery of politics in Newfoundland. It was a baptism of violence. I was greatly astonished at the whole thing, for I had never been present at an election, not to say an election riot in Ireland; though I daresay there have been some elections there too not of the most peaceful character. In fact, so little had my attention been drawn to political elections before I left Ireland that I had no very

clear conception of what an election meant. I believe my impression was that gentlemen went to Parliament for the purpose of making speeches on Catholic emancipation, and the Repeal of the Union; and that a seat in Parliament conferred great honour upon its occupant. That was about all I knew of parliamentary elections. But much as I was enlightened by the Conception Bay election, and much as I was impressed by its folly and its violence, the time was coming when I was to learn more of Newfoundland politics and parties; and when I was to appear myself the central figure in the political arena.

## VIII.

MY RETURN TO ST. JOHN'S—THE BAR: ITS COMPOSITION AND CHARACTER—THE PRESS—THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY—THE LEGISLATIVE AND EXECUTIVE COUNCILS—SUPERIOR EDUCATION.

SHORTLY after this I went to reside in St. John's, feeling that if I should make up my mind to remain for any lengthened time in the country, the capital was the most likely place to satisfy my wishes, as being the centre of its commerce, and the seat of its Government and Legislature. I soon resolved to study for the bar, and with this view I entered the office of a lawyer. The bar had been but recently incorporated. Before this it was a sort of open bar, where any man might practice, educated or uneducated, and where the practice, as it was, was confined to two or three men who had never studied the law, but who had made its practice auxiliary to their chief business of auctioneers and brokers. These, with two or three others, regularly trained attorneys from the neighbouring province of Nova Scotia, who had subsequently joined them (it was into the office of one of these I went), constituted the then incorporated bar. I may observe that the several branches of the profession, such as attorney, solicitor, and barrister, were combined in the practice of the same person; and such is the case still, not only in Newfoundland, but also in all the other British provinces of North America, as well as in the United States of America. The bar thus consisted of some half-dozen practitioners, such as I have described. The bench, which consisted of three judges, was not much of an improvement on the bar; the chief justice, who had been appointed from the English bar, being its only redeeming feature. The two assistant judges were colonists from the neighbouring provinces, and seemed to be, if they really were not so, of the auctioneer and broker class of lawyers. If



the early bar was an extremely open one, the new incorporated bar was of an extremely stringent character. I was not a little astonished when I found that every student, in order to qualify himself for admission to it, was, under the provisions of the act of incorporation, bound to serve five years under articles to a practising attorney before being admitted to the rank of attorney, and two years more in attendance at the court, during its several sessions or terms, before being entitled to the rank of barrister. And that, moreover, no distinction could be made between students; that is to say, that a young man though brought up in an English or Irish university, and possessing honours and distinctions won by long and arduous study, was placed in no better position as to time and terms of apprenticeship than the young man who had never studied anywhere, and whose whole acquirements consisted of his knowing how to read and write and cipher. Again, I found that though the half-dozen practitioners were pretty well employed, yet their incomes were small and very precarious. If any one of them made, on an average, an income of 400*l.* sterling a year he considered himself very successful. There were no prizes; for the judges were selected either from the English or Irish bar, or from the bar of one of the neighbouring provinces; and the attorney general and solicitor general were also generally men from the other provinces, though at the particular time to which I am referring the attorney general was one of the newly-formed bar, who had been toiling before in the double capacity of broker and barrister. All these things taken together formed a prospect that was anything but encouraging. So after some nine or ten months' study (if I may call it study) in the lawyer's office, I changed my mind, and gave up the idea of going to the bar.

I then turned my attention to the press, and the House of Assembly, and commenced writing for the one, and reporting for the other. The press was not of a high order, the newspapers were about half the size of the provincial papers in Ireland, and they contained very little besides ordinary news, and some political party articles of no high character. For, recently as the Legislature had been established in the colony, the two parties, to whom I have already referred, had their newspaper supporters. There were four of these papers in the town, besides the *Royal Gazette* which was neutral in politics. There was also a paper in Harbourgrace, and one in Carbonear, in both of which I had written some articles shortly after my arrival in the colony. The House of Assembly, which was then a very small body, consisting of only fifteen members, had not had any regular reporting since its establishment,—there were no persons in the colony



capable of reporting speeches, at least in any way worthy of the name of reporting. I was the first who introduced the practice of taking down speeches in shorthand, and of reporting debates in full. The House was constituted chiefly of merchants and planters, with a lawyer or two, and a medical doctor (a Scotchman who was speaker of the House). It was a noisy and turbulent little body, having high notions of its power and privileges. It had its Liberals and Conservatives of course, and the high notions of power and privilege were entirely confined to the former, who were in the majority. The Conservatives were very indifferent to the assumption of privilege, inasmuch as they entrenched themselves behind the Legislative Council, or Upper House, who always kept the legislation of the Lower House in check. The Legislative Council was composed of but nine or ten members, chiefly the heads of the principal commercial houses of the colony, with two or three departmental office-holders. They were appointed by the Crown, and held their seats for life. But the strange feature in their character was that they combined in themselves the twofold power and privilege of members of the Upper House and members of the Cabinet or Executive Council, and held both positions for life, being removable only by the Crown. The Lower House, or representatives of the people, were therefore powerless to effect any real good, unless so far as the Upper House or Cabinet permitted them. Yet, notwithstanding this strait-laced system of government and of legislation, a considerable amount of benefit, in the way of public roads, public education, light-houses, and general improvement, was conferred upon the colony.

I began now to devote my chief attention to the subject of public education, which was in a very backward condition. The public schools, as I have already noticed, were of the most humble, elementary character, and it was manifest that if the colony was to advance at all the system of public instruction must be improved and elevated. I continued to write in the newspapers upon the subject, and then I drafted a bill providing for the establishment of two grammar schools, one at Harbourgrace and one at Carbonear. I entrusted this bill to my friend whose election had been prevented at Carbonear by the riots which I have mentioned, and who now occupied a seat in the House for the district of Conception Bay. I employed whatever influence I possessed with the members of both branches of the Legislature in order to promote the passage of the measure, and after some delays, and calm, well-conducted debates, it was passed into law. This was the first real advance, in an educational sense, and of course the highest sense, that was made in the

colony. This was followed up soon afterwards by a measure providing for the establishment of an academy at St. John's, a still higher advance in the sphere of public education. I accepted a professorship in this establishment, a position which was offered to me by the directors in a manner very complimentary, and certainly very gratifying to me. I still continued to write for the press, and report for the House of Assembly. After a few years, however, the patrons of the academy, that is, those who had been sending their sons for education there, became dissatisfied in consequence of the exclusion of all religious teaching from the school—it was established on the non-denominational principle, as were also the two grammar schools. The consequence was that the Academy Act was repealed, and another act passed for the establishment of three denominational academies, one for the Roman Catholics, one for the Church of England Protestants, and one for all the other denominations and called the General Protestant Academy. The grant to this last-named academy was afterwards divided between the Wesleyan Methodists and the Presbyterians, and so increased as to enable them to establish two separate academies. Thus there were established in St. John's four denominational academies, all of which have since been working well and satisfactorily. The general school system throughout the country was also greatly enlarged and improved.

The Roman Catholics having thus obtained the control and management of an academy for themselves, improved it by the addition of a collegiate establishment for the education of candidates for the priesthood; and the Church of England Protestants followed the same plan in the interests of their church. So that within a few years the education of the country was raised from the lowest possible condition—a condition in which the young men of the country might be said to have been brought up in almost total ignorance of every useful and practical branch of knowledge—to a level of usefulness and respectability not surpassed in any of the North American provinces. This was the first upward impulse in the path of real progress which the colony had yet received; and it was something to be justly proud of.

## IX.

### SUSPENSION OF THE CONSTITUTION—AMALGAMATED HOUSE—RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT.

WHEN a parliamentary constitution was first granted to Newfoundland, it resembled in form, as I have already

stated, the constitution of England; that is to say, it consisted of an Upper and a Lower House, and an Executive Council or Cabinet, with a governor representing the sovereign. But the resemblance was only in form; it lacked the principle which could alone give life and spirit to the body. That principle was the responsibility of the ministry to the representatives of the people, that is, to the Lower House. But, apart from this, the institution itself was a novelty to the people; and the almost necessary consequence was that very gross errors were committed from the beginning, both by the constituencies and the members whom they had elected. Intimidation, violence, and outrage marked the early elections that took place; as I have instanced in the case of the Carbonar riots. And the conduct of the House of Assembly, the representative branch of the Legislature, was equally distinguished by an assumption of authority with which it was not at all invested; as well as by acts of gross injustice and of violence in the exercise of this authority. As an instance of this I need but mention the fact that on one occasion they had a judge, a sheriff, and a medical doctor imprisoned together, for what they called a breach of their privileges,—the breach consisting in an altercation which occurred in one of the streets of St. John's in the middle of the day, between this doctor and a member of the House, in the course of which the doctor shook his fist before the face of the member. The doctor was arrested and imprisoned by the sergeant-at-arms by order of the speaker, and pursuant to a resolution of the House: he was brought up before one of the judges of the Supreme Court under a writ of *habeas corpus*, and discharged; but was again arrested by order of the House, together with the judge who had released him and the sheriff who had had charge of him, and all three were cast into prison. Such was the view in which the House regarded its authority, and such was the kind of arrogance and violence with which it asserted that assumed authority. This sort of thing could not be tolerated—murderous riots on the one hand, and an unjustifiable and oppressive assumption of power and authority on the other. The result was unavoidable. The Imperial Government suspended the constitution, and merged the two branches, the Lower and the Upper House, into one—called the Amalgamated House. Thus fifteen representatives of the people, and nine or ten nominees of the Crown sitting in one chamber, constituted the whole legislative machine; with the governor as representative of the sovereign, either assenting to their acts or dissenting from them, according as his advisers or cabinet, that is the same nominees of the Crown who sat in the House, thought proper to direct him.

This was a curious amendment upon the first constitution—it was a cure that was worse than the disease. It had but little effect in checking the violence of the representatives, who were the majority of the House; while it was attended with the additional evil of gross political corruption, and a wretched misapplication of the public funds,—for such generally is the accompaniment of political amalgamations, when the object of them is to destroy all useful and salutary opposition. Notwithstanding all this, however, much useful legislation was effected by this House, as I have shown with respect to the advancement of education; for it was during the existence of the Amalgamated House this advancement had taken place. But yet it was too manifest that it was a system of government that could not work satisfactorily, inasmuch as it militated against the aspirations of public men to hold the highest or departmental offices of the Government, and to be able to dispense public patronage to the most deserving of their supporters. As it was, they could not remove the ministry, nor dispense any patronage. They were powerless, and the nominees of the Crown held the highest offices of Government for life. It was altogether an anomalous and a vicious system of government. It could produce nothing but venal subserviency on the part of the representatives, and political corruption on the part of the ministry. And these things it did produce in abundant crops. It was better, therefore, to return to the former constitution, bad as it was, and labour for its improvement by the infusion of the principle of responsibility into its working. The people thought this, and appealed to the Imperial Government for its restoration. Their appeal was successful.

I now devoted my attention, in the press, to the advocacy of the principle of responsibility in the Government. It was a principle that had already been conceded by the Imperial Government to the several Governments of the neighbouring colonies; and there could be no just reason why it should be withheld from the colony of Newfoundland. They were British subjects, faithful and loyal to the Crown; they had already laid the foundation of the highest order of education; they were wealthy and independent by means of their rich and abundant fisheries and a prosperous commerce; and, therefore, they were entitled to the highest privileges of British subjects. Well, all this was urged; and a general agitation succeeded. The Conservative, or Merchants' Party, resisted the movement of course; they could not bear to see their last and best fortress taken. What! the people to rule: and they, the merchants, to be governed by a ministry appointed by the people? A desperate struggle ensued.

I have said before that the policy of the merchants was to keep the attention of the people altogether fixed upon the fisheries, and to repress every movement that had a tendency to encourage agriculture, or any other pursuit which clashed with their own interests. All improvements would induce increased taxation, that is, increased duties on imports; and such increased duties would tend to a diminution of their profits, because although they charged those duties (which they themselves paid in the first instance) upon the provisions and goods supplied by them to the fishermen, yet the fishermen might not always be in a position to pay back those charges. Well, they were defeated however, and responsible Government was granted to the colony.

## X.

### A GENERAL ELECTION—RETURN OF THE LIBERAL PARTY—FORMATION OF THE NEW MINISTRY—THEIR POLICY AND CONDUCT —A NEW ELECTION—MY FIRST CANDIDATURE, AND DEFEAT.

AFTER the concession of responsible Government the House of Assembly set to work to make arrangements for the carrying out of the new system of government. They reconstructed the electoral districts, and increased the number of representatives to thirty, while the nominees of the Crown in the Legislative Council were increased to fifteen. The Executive Council, or Cabinet, was to consist of seven members, responsible of course to the Lower House. Writs were then issued for a general election. The Liberal Party left nothing undone in the way of organization to secure success; while the other party, apparently not anxious to assume the reins of government under the new order of things, but rather willing to leave the initiation of the system to those who had sought and won it, contented themselves with securing an efficient minority in order to watch and check the proceedings of their opponents. Though solicited, I refrained from offering myself to any constituency, as I preferred maintaining such a position as would enable me to think and act independently of both parties. I however exerted all my influence, in the press and on the platform, in favour of the Liberal Party. The contest was conducted with fairness and good-temper throughout the country, and the Liberal Party came out victorious. The new ministry was formed, and the Legislature met. The Conservative Party, though in a minority, presented a good front, for it contained some very intelligent and able men. The policy of the Government was such as might have been expected;

it aimed at the promotion of the interests of the industrial classes by the construction of public highways, thus facilitating the pursuit of agriculture; by the erection of light-houses for the benefit of trade and commerce; and by other works of a similar nature and tendency. This was all very well; but after some time the old spirit of arrogance and violence began to manifest itself; and the House became the scene of some very irregular and unseemly proceedings. I offered some slight criticisms from time to time in the press, on what appeared to me the arrogant and unjustifiable conduct of the ministry. This, however, seemed to have had but one effect, and that was an unfriendly if not malicious feeling on the part of the principal members of the Cabinet towards me. After a few years of what could scarcely be called successful government a dissolution took place, and a general election followed. Upon this occasion I was presented with a very respectable and influential requisition from the electors of St. John's, soliciting me to be their candidate for the capital. The signatures to the requisition were principally of the Liberal Party (the population of St. John's was and is still composed chiefly of Roman Catholics, the great majority of whom have been always of the Liberal Party, but there were some among them who generally acted with the other, or Conservative Party. I acceded to their desire this time, and presented myself as their candidate. At my first public open-air meeting I was received with unbounded and, certainly to me, most gratifying enthusiasm. I felt no doubt of a triumphant return, for opposition appeared to me to be hopeless, and quite out of the question. But in a few days after this demonstration I was not a little surprised to learn that a candidate was being brought forward by the Government to oppose me. My friends, as well as myself, had no doubt of this proceeding having been prompted by the spirit of jealousy, mixed perhaps with a little malice. A public meeting was called on the part of my opponent, and he, surrounded by members and officials of the Government, arrived on the platform at the appointed time; but no sooner had they presented themselves before the immense multitude who had assembled there, than they were met by an outburst of groans and hisses, and other indications of hostility, which resulted in their hurried retreat from the scene. The ministry, however, determined to press forward their man in the desperate resolve to defeat me. And with this view they had recourse to the priests (the priests were generally regarded as the leaders of the Liberal Party), with the view of enlisting them to carry out their object. Their reason for opposing me, they urged, was that if I was returned I would upset the Government. It was a curious

reason—one man to upset a Government which boasted of being invincible, even if he had entertained such an idea, which I certainly had not; it was too silly, and yet they absolutely succeeded in getting the priests, to a man, to support them. Well, there was no help for it; I had entered the arena, and I was not disposed to retreat. It was a most extraordinary contest. My opponent could scarcely show himself in the town throughout the canvas without being attended with one or more priests. No meeting could be held in his behalf without being presided over and attended by priests. His effigy was burnt before a window from which a priest was struggling to address a crowd in the street in his behalf. In short, it seemed as if the whole priesthood was arrayed against me in order to prevent my return. It was a strange scene. I, who had done more than any man of the Liberal Party in advocating and promoting the interests of that party, and who had been so instrumental in the establishment of the free Government under which they came into power, and without which they would never be in a position to exercise any power—I was to be made the victim of that power which I had so helped to create. Well, the contest was left to ourselves, the Conservative Party looking on, and taking no part in the extraordinary scene—bewildered, no doubt, as to what it all meant. The nomination day came round, and I was still, after the most energetic canvas day and night by the priests against me, surrounded and sustained by the great body of the electors. Two or three priests appeared on the hustings, attended by some roughs, who had been employed to prevent me from being heard when I addressed the electors. A row of course succeeded; and I attempted to speak for half an hour, in the midst of roaring and yelling and all sorts of noises, blows being freely interchanged between my opponents and supporters all the time. The opposing candidate of necessity met the same fate, the priests endeavouring in vain to obtain a hearing for him. At length all retired, the priests leading away their candidate by private streets, to prevent his being molested; while the multitude, placing me in a chair, carried me in triumph through the town, with banners and a band of music. The intervening week, between the day of nomination and the day of polling, was a very busy one with my clerical opponents (for they became now the principals, the opposing candidate being of no account). They visited almost every elector in the town, and left no resource untried in order to effect their purpose. Even the Old Palace, as it was called—that is, the former residence of the Roman Catholic bishop—was converted into a place of meeting for the



organization of the opposition that was to be put in action against me on the day of polling. But all seemed of no avail, the public enthusiasm in my favour remained still unabated. The polling day at length arrived, and the priests, attended by their supporters, beset the booths. The plan laid down was to obstruct my voters by fair or foul means. This had its effect. My voters, acting under my express directions, declined creating a riot, and retired when any violence was attempted. The result, at the closing of the poll, was a majority in favour of my opponent. The priests then hastened away with their candidate and their victory through back lanes and unfrequented streets, while I was chaired, as on the day of nomination, and carried through the town amid the enthusiasm of the populace. Thus ended my first essay for a seat in the Legislature. It was a defeat, but a defeat that told as a victory. It was a victory for my opponents, but a victory that they never could afford to repeat again.

## XI.

DISMISSAL OF THE MINISTRY—DISSOLUTION OF THE HOUSE—  
NEW ELECTIONS—RETURN OF THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY—  
MY RETURN FOR THE CAPITAL.

SCARCELY had the House met after the recent elections when an occurrence took place which caused the immediate dismissal of the ministry. One of the ministers—the premier—in the course of a speech which he was making on a measure before the House, charged the governor and his wife with being joined in a conspiracy to defeat the ministry. This was a most extraordinary charge. The governor immediately upon hearing of it communicated with his minister, the offender, demanding an explanation. The reply was as offensive as the charge: it was this, that he, the minister, had a right to use what language he pleased in the House; and was not responsible to the governor for it. The governor at once dismissed him; and the ministry resigned. In this the governor acted properly; for had he not so acted he would have been unworthy the position he occupied as the representative of the sovereign. Then the leader of the opposition formed a ministry at the governor's request; but finding himself in a minority in the House, a dissolution ensued, and new writs were issued for a general election. So it happened that this ministry, which had at the recent election in St. John's employed the priests, and used every sort of engine to defeat me, lest indeed I should upset them if I were returned, were within a few months ignominiously



dismissed by the representative of the sovereign from the position which they had disgraced.

I was now called upon again by the electors of St. John's to stand for the town. I offered myself immediately, and called a public meeting, at which I was received with, if possible, greater enthusiasm than before. This time I did not allow myself, as on the former occasion, to suppose that I would be unopposed; and therefore I was prepared to meet some attempt, at all events, at an opposition; but in this respect I was most agreeably disappointed. On the evening following my public meeting I received a visit from one of the priests, the leader of the opposition on the recent occasion, who intimated to me that he came on behalf of the bishop and priests to offer me their united support. I need not say that I felt no less gratified than surprised. But this was not all; on the following day I received a visit from the president of the Roman Catholic College of St. Bonaventure—a doctor of divinity, and a very eminent and distinguished scholar—for the purpose of offering me, with the approval and sanction of the bishop, a professorship in the college. This was also very gratifying, and I accepted the offer. A rather remarkable coincidence occurred in connexion with my return for the capital and my professorship at the college. There was no opposition, and of course I had a walk over. But on the morning of my return, and after the usual chairing and demonstrations were over, I walked up to the college, and commenced the duties of my professorship. It was a curious combination of events.

The elections resulted in an almost general defeat of the Liberal Party; so I took my seat on the opposition benches, with only seven or eight members at my side out of a House of thirty members. The Conservatives took the reins of government with a sweeping majority. Two or three of the former ministers were returned, but they were shorn of most of their influence, and I had no confidence in them.

The Conservatives applied themselves to the work of government with considerable vigour; but they failed to carry out any works of public utility worthy of the name. In fact they accomplished nothing; and yet they held on to power with terrible tenacity.

The College of St. Bonaventure was a well-conducted institution. Its staff consisted of a president and the usual professors of classics, mathematics, and the modern languages. The president had the divinity classes, and another clerical professor the philosophy classes. I had the Greek and Latin classics, with one or two of the modern languages, and the higher classes of mathematics. There were others who had some of the junior classes in the several

departments. The pupils, including the divinity students, numbered over 100; among whom were several young men of remarkable talent and ability. The building is large and imposing, constructed of granite, and five stories high. The grounds attached to it are spacious; and all the appliances of books, charts, and instruments are ample, and well adapted to its purposes. The bishop is of course its patron and principal director. It communicates with the palace through a large library, which intervenes between the two buildings. This is the finest apartment of its kind in the country, or perhaps in any part of North America; and contains one of the best and largest collections of books to be found in a private library anywhere. It belongs to the bishop,—it is his private library; but the professors of the college have free access to it.

My life in the college, which extended over ten years, was a very agreeable one, nothing being wanted that was calculated to contribute to my comfort and happiness.

My duties as a member of the House of Assembly did not at all interfere with those appertaining to my professorship. The House sat only in the evenings, and the session usually occupied from two to three months—seldom more—of the winter season.

There is no doubt that the double set of duties were onerous enough; but then they were accompanied with a sense of one's being devoted to spheres of service where the greatest amount of general public good could be accomplished; and this was enough to relieve them of much of their pressure. And I am happy to be able to say that a vast amount of public benefit has been conferred upon the country through the instrumentality of both college and Parliament since the time that I had first the honour of being intimately connected with both. This, you must understand, does not mean that I was the cause of all this good,—that is a species of egoism which I should not wish you to consider me capable of,—all I wish to say is that I have been a contributor to the best of my power and ability to this most gratifying result.

The irregularity and violence which marked the proceedings of the House of Assembly in its earlier days, and before the people and their representatives came to understand and rightly appreciate its true nature and objects, had considerable effect in retarding the advancement of the country; but afterwards, and when experience had moulded the views of political parties, and enlarged their scope of vision, a series of most important measures were adopted; and the country has advanced proportionately in the road of civilization. I do not know at this moment where the industrial

classes can live better than there. They possess every facility essential to the acquisition of such comfort and independence as is necessary for their state. Land and water alike offer them resources of living such as can rarely be found in any country I could mention. There is no part of the globe where there are such abundant fisheries thrown open to the labouring man, who has no direct tax to pay, no license to seek for the application of his industry to his means of living. Of the land again, 'he same is to be said; he (the labourer) may take as much land as he is able to cultivate, and is not charged a shilling for it, beyond the nominal purchase-money he pays, or rather is supposed to pay, to the Crown or Government. This purchase-money may not exceed a shilling an acre, and that payable by small instalments running over a number of years; but even that is in effect wiped out by the assistance which the Government affords the poor man in the way of giving him seed and implements, and helping him to put up his little house and appurtenances. Such are the facilities for living which Newfoundland offers to the poor industrious man.

## XII.

SIGNAL FAILURE OF THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY—THEIR TENACIOUS HOLD OF OFFICE—THEIR ATTEMPT TO GO INTO CONFEDERATION WITH CANADA—GENERAL ELECTION—DEFEAT OF THE GOVERNMENT.

FROM the beginning it became manifest that the Conservative Party was incapable of effecting any good for the country. No measures of any importance were attempted to be introduced by them: but still they clung to office with unyielding tenacity. The public roads were permitted to go to decay; the public institutions were neglected; and destitution and disorder presented themselves on every side. It is true that for some years after their accession to power a partial failure of the fisheries occurred; but they did nothing to mitigate the evil in any practical way: they simply voted sums of money every year for the purchase of Indian meal and molasses, and other provisions to be distributed among the fishermen, who had been reduced to destitution by reason of the short fisheries; but they enterprised no public works. The consequence was that the public funds were squandered among contractors and jobbers of every kind, who were patronized and employed in this work of distributing poor relief. A general state of corruption, as must be expected under such circumstances,

prevailed. The friends and supporters of the Government availed themselves of this state of destitution and disorder to serve their own personal ends; and scarcely one-half of the amounts voted for poor relief found their way to the really destitute, but went into the coffers of dealers, planters, and persons otherwise outside the sphere of the prevailing distress. Large sums of money were borrowed from the banks on the credit of the colony, in order to keep up this lavish and anomalous expenditure. The ministry acted, or seemed to act, as if their public functions consisted solely in pandering to their supporters and adherents through the medium of the public treasury, and thereby securing to themselves an uninterrupted tenure of power. They endeavoured to justify this sort of conduct by ever keeping before the public mind, through their interested emissaries, the violent and disorderly conduct of the Liberals—their predecessors in office—and the danger of allowing them again to return to power. Thus they contrived, by means of a do-nothing policy, and a systematic misrepresentation of their opponents, to retain the reins of government for nearly ten years. Then occurred an incident which appeared to favour their personal views and interests—for it would seem as if they had disregarded the public interests altogether—and to this object they began to direct their undivided attention. It was this: the two Canadas—Upper and Lower—had been for many years in a state of turmoil and disorder—which ultimately broke out into a rebellion—in consequence of their being unable to discover any form or system of government that was capable of working for the public advantage of both sections. At length their public men agreed to unite the two sections under one Government, bringing into the confederacy the neighbouring continental provinces of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, if the assent of these latter could be obtained. After various negotiations, this arrangement was adopted, and carried into effect by the Imperial Parliament; and the confederacy was styled the Dominion of Canada. Our ministry thought they could throw in their lot with this confederacy, and thus relieve themselves of the difficulty which they felt themselves unable to cope with—the difficulty of governing the country with any hope of success. The colony became immediately aroused; for it became manifest that the interests of Newfoundland and those of the combined continental provinces were of an entirely different character. Newfoundland was free from debt, and had a trade and commerce that ran in distinct channels from the trade and commerce of the Dominion. The Dominion was over-loaded with debt, and possessed no

resources that could be made available to further the interests of Newfoundland. Newfoundland possessed an independent Government; and could not bear the idea of becoming a mere appendage to the Government of Canada. But the terms which our ministry arranged with the Dominion for the purposes of this transfer of our destinies to the confederacy were especially repugnant to the feelings of the people. We were to surrender our self-government, our customs duties, our Government House, our principal public buildings and offices—in short, everything that affected the status of a self-governing country.

The Dominion was to possess, besides, an unlimited power of taxing us, and of doing what they pleased with our lands, our mines, and our fisheries. In compensation for all this, they were to allow us something about 120,000*l.* sterling a year, to enable us to carry on the business of our local Government. Our revenue, from customs duties alone, at the time, exceeded this amount; and is now nearly twice as much. It was evident from all this, that the proposition thus made, and conditionally accepted by our ministers, was one which an independent colony could not accept, unless it became dead to every consideration of liberty. They would fain have carried the measure in the House by the adoption of a set of resolutions to that effect; but they failed, some of their own supporters declining to vote for it unless accompanied with a resolution suspending the confirmation of the measure until after a general election—which was then at hand. The resolutions were carried, with this amendment; and a dissolution ensued. Writs were issued shortly afterwards, and both parties prepared for the coming contest. The ministry, of course, had a vast advantage in the struggle, by having the treasury at their command, and their hired retainers scattered throughout the country. The Liberal leaders, however, were not idle; and everything was done that we conceived necessary for a fair trial of strength. We had the advantage, no doubt, of fighting a Government that had been tried for over nine years, and found wanting in almost every requisite that could insure a genuine popularity. The excitement became very intense throughout the country, as the time approached when both parties were to appear before the several constituencies. Every electoral district was contested—there was no walk over; and the result was a most signal victory for the Liberals. There were but six or seven Conservatives returned in all, out of thirty representatives.

The leaders of the Liberal Party were now, with but one exception, new and untried men, as far as the Cabinet was concerned; for none of the old Liberal Cabinet, except one,

had a place in the new Cabinet. Being appointed a member of this Cabinet, I resigned my professorship in St. Bonaventure's College, and accepted an appointment on its directory.

Our business in the House was comparatively easy, as we met with no opposition worthy of the name. We were therefore in a condition to carry out our policy with perfect freedom.

I can look back with unmixed pleasure and satisfaction to the substantial and lasting services which we rendered the country during our administration. We established the first direct line of steamships between the United Kingdom and Newfoundland—a line of first-class ships, calling semi-monthly, inward and outward. We also extended the road system by opening main lines between several of the districts of the island, and improving those which had been neglected before and rendered almost impassable. We enlarged and improved the system of elementary education. And we encouraged the prosecution of agriculture, by annually voting a sum of money to be distributed in rewards to such poor persons as reclaimed from the forests a certain number of acres, sufficient to afford support to themselves and their families. We erected several lighthouses where they were most needed along the coast; and constructed quays or landing-places, and breakwaters in several harbours for the accommodation and safety of the fishermen. In short, before we were two years in power the country presented a most gratifying aspect of prosperity, and destitution and pauperism were unknown throughout the land.

### XIII.

THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL—DELEGATION TO DOWNING STREET—  
WITHDRAWAL OF THE MILITARY FROM THE COLONY—THE  
FRENCH SHORE QUESTION.

IN the course of the first session of the Legislature, after our assumption of the Government, I was appointed to a seat in the Upper House or Legislative Council. The majority of this body were Conservatives, and consisted chiefly of the heads of the principal mercantile houses of the colony. Only one member of the Government held a seat there, and the duty of representing the policy of the Government devolved upon me. Notwithstanding, however, our differences of political opinion I did not find it difficult to carry our measures; and only on very rare occasions was

there manifested any marked opposition. At this time it became the policy of the Imperial Government to withdraw the military from the several colonies in which they had been stationed, and Newfoundland was of course included in this policy. We, however, entertained the hope that for certain reasons and claims which might be urged on our behalf, we should be able to retain the troops stationed in the colony by an appeal to Downing Street. With this view we decided on sending a delegation to the Colonial Minister, the Right Hon. the Earl of Kimberley, the same nobleman who now presides at the Colonial Office. Coupled with this subject was another of very grave importance to the colony, namely, the exercise of French treaty rights on our coasts. Accordingly I was appointed as a delegate for this double mission, in conjunction with one of my colleagues in the Government.

Newfoundland from an early date became a battle-ground of British and French interests, and for a long time both nations held nearly equal sway in the domain of the fisheries; but in the peace which followed the cessation of hostilities between them, the privilege of fishing on a portion of the coast of Newfoundland was by treaty conceded to the French. This treaty was made in 1713, and afterwards modified by one or two subsequent treaties and agreements. But the effect of them all was that the French were to enjoy a concurrent right of fishery along the western coast of the island, from Cape Ray to Cape Bauld, and onward to Cape John on the eastern coast—a line of coast which measures one-third or more of the whole coastal line of the island. At that time the country all along by this part of the coast was a wilderness; there were no inhabitants there, and probably none were ever expected to be there. So that the concession was but of small importance to British subjects, and no annoyance was experienced by them on that head for long years afterwards. Slight disputes occurred sometimes between the fishermen of both nations, but that was all. There was ample space for them all to fish; and they did fish, as a rule, with right kindly good feeling. But the time did come at last when British subjects turned their attention to the pursuits of regular trade and commerce, as well as to the cultivation of the soil along that line of coast, and here difficulties commenced. The French began to contend that they had a right to the use of the land as well as of the water along the coast; and that English subjects, who began to build houses and cultivate gardens there, had no right to do so, and only did so under sufferance of their French neighbours. More recently English subjects were compelled to withdraw from mining speculations on that coast in consequence of French pre-



tensions ; but this, of course, in obedience to the Imperial Government, who had wished for the present to avoid any unpleasant feeling on the part of the French Government.

A good deal of inconvenience to the colonists resulted from this state of things ; and so the objects of our delegation embraced this matter. We had some interviews with the minister, the Earl of Kimberley, at Downing Street, who entered into the subjects of our mission with much interest. With respect to the retention of the military in the colony his lordship could not hold out any hope to us ; as the policy of the Government in that matter was general, and, at present at all events, unalterable. On the other subject, however, he gave us the most gratifying assurance of his deep interest in it, and his desire to bring about a satisfactory arrangement as soon as a suitable opportunity offered for that purpose ; but at that particular time considerations of policy, as well as of delicacy, interfered to prevent immediate action—the Franco-German war had then commenced. Though our mission was not successful in every particular, yet we had reason to be gratified with the courteous and friendly manner in which we were received by his lordship, and with the warmth of interest he manifested in dealing with the more important subject of that mission—the French treaty rights. His lordship has not since then relaxed his zeal and efforts in our cause ; for upon his return to power a few years ago he at once applied himself to its consideration, and has done much towards the removal of the grievances under which the colony has been suffering ; and although the great evil still remains, the evil, namely, of French obstruction to the agricultural and mining interests of the colony, yet it is to be hoped that his lordship will be able to discover some means whereby this most injurious and anomalous state of things may be removed or mitigated.

The resident population along this line of coast numbers about 9000. The French have no resident population there : according to the treaties they can only use the shore to the extent of about half a mile during the fishing season, that is, the summer months. They cannot make any permanent erections on it. They come and go in spring and autumn, leaving when they go the care of their premises and property to some of our resident people until their return in the spring. Of course their erections, though obliged by the treaties to be removed when the fishing season is over, are left standing until they return, because there is no desire on the part of the residents to disturb or inconvenience them in any way. They all, English and French, live and work



together in a kind and neighbourly spirit, there being ample room for all in the prosecution of the fisheries. Sometimes, but very rarely, misunderstandings occur, but of so trivial a character that they are not worthy of notice. Some years ago we passed an act authorizing the inhabitants of this region to return two members to represent them in the House of Assembly, but it was not assented to by her Majesty, owing to the then unsettled state of affairs arising under the treaties to which I have referred ; but the Earl of Kimberley has recently acquainted the colony with her Majesty's assent to the act. They will therefore have their representatives in the next House of Assembly after the general election which comes off in the autumn of this year. There are stipendiary magistrates, justices of the peace, police officers, and collectors of customs, and also schools, established at several points along the coast ; some good roads have also been made there, so that the western portion of the island—the French coast, as it is familiarly called—participates in all the advantages of the other parts of the island.

The soil in some parts of this western coast is excellent, and several small farms are cultivated with marked success there. In fact some of the best land in the country lies in that region, and whenever immigration takes place the new settlers will find their best account in that portion of our territory. But on this subject I shall say more further on. After the business of my mission had been done I went over to Ireland, and you may imagine what my feelings were upon visiting the old haunts of my boyhood after so long an absence. My nearest and most intimate friends did not know me, nor did I know them, such was the change that time had made in our appearance. I refrained from acquainting them of my going home from the mere curiosity of learning whether or not we should be able to recognize one another. But, oh ! I cannot describe my feelings.

#### XIV.

##### CONSTABULARY—SHRIEVALTY—JUDICIARY—JUDICIAL DISTRICTS —CIRCUITS.

HAVING returned from our mission, we, in conjunction with our colleagues, at once turned our attention to the establishment of a sufficient body of constabulary to replace the military now about to be withdrawn. The Government having, through the Colonial Office at Downing Street,

obtained from the Royal Irish Constabulary a qualified person for the office of inspector, a constabulary corps of some sixty men was immediately enrolled; and the military barracks at Fortownsend, now vacated, were assigned them for their quarters. This body has been since increased to about one hundred, forty of them being distributed through the various towns along the coasts of the island. They are a very efficient body, and supply the necessary requirements as a peace establishment. Our opponents, the Conservatives, raised a great cry against us on this head; they said that the country was left exposed to all the terrors of a mob rule; and that life and property were all endangered: and further, that it was our fault that the military were withdrawn. These were charges, however, to which we paid no attention, knowing the spirit that dictated them. We knew the people of Newfoundland well; we knew them to be, as a community, obedient to the laws and attached to the cause of justice and order. At elections, to be sure, they sometimes gave way to their passions; but even here they were easily restrained by the voice of constituted authority. We had confidence in them; and we were not disappointed. But behind this confidence, we were prepared, in the event of any unusual disturbance, to act with effect, and to put down any attempt to overthrow the public peace and security. But nothing has since occurred to show that we had not taken ample security for the public peace; and this small corps of about one hundred men has been proved abundantly sufficient for the maintenance of the peace and good order of the whole country. This fact speaks loudly for the character of the Newfoundlanders—a people of the most noble qualities, and imbued with sentiments of the most enthusiastic loyalty to their sovereign.

After some years of administration, in which the country had arrived at a degree of prosperity which it had never experienced before; and when little was required beyond moving on steadily in the line of policy we had hitherto pursued, the governor offered me the appointment of sheriff of St. John's and of the central district of the island—this was a life appointment. After some consideration and consultation with my colleagues I accepted it. This did not necessarily imply my retirement from the ministry; but then, after some consultation between the governor, the chief justice, and myself, regarding the relationship implied between the two positions of minister of the Crown and chief executive officer of the law, I concluded that it would be better to retire. I accordingly withdrew from the Executive Council; but retained my seat in the Legislative Council, representing the Government in that branch

of the Legislature. These positions I still retain, both being life appointments.

The office of sheriff is one of great responsibility in Newfoundland, for the duties of my office are not confined to the capital and its surrounding towns and villages, called the Central District, they extend over the whole country. For although there are two other sheriffs—one for the northern district, and one for the southern—their duties chiefly consist in attending the circuits of the judges, who annually visit those districts. But these circuit visits of the judges are not much more than nominal, for very little, scarcely indeed any, business is done; and whenever there happens to be any it is of a very trivial character. In fact these visits are intended merely for a moral effect. Every case of importance that arises in any part of the country is tried and disposed of in the Supreme Court in St. John's, so that I may say in effect that the whole responsibility of the execution of the law as administered by the Supreme Court of the country devolves upon me as sheriff of the capital and of the central district. I have now held the office for the last eleven years.

The whole administration of justice in Newfoundland is in the hands of three judges, who are called the Supreme Court of the island; one is called chief justice, and the other two assistant judges. There are of course paid justices of the peace, called stipendiary magistrates, scattered everywhere through the country, who attend to the small matters incident to such offices. The Supreme Court sits continuously in St. John's, besides making the annual circuit visit I have mentioned, each judge taking his turn in such visits. There are two terms held for general business, civil and criminal, called the Spring Term and the Fall Term, and each of these lasts about a month. Then there are four terms, one in each of the months of February, March, April, and July, called Post Terms. No criminal business, or business requiring the intervention of a jury is transacted in these terms. And then for the remainder of the year one or more of the judges sit in chambers for business of a minor character. The judicial districts are, as I have said, the central, the southern, and the northern; but the most important, if not the whole of the business, is done in the central district, that is, in St. John's, the capital. All the judges reside in St. John's, as do also all the bar, except one or two who reside at Harbourgrace. The law is well administered, inasmuch as the three judges are men of high character and ability; and the bar, which is pretty numerous, contains men of education as well as of distinction in their profession.

When one of the judges goes on his circuit in summer he is usually accompanied by two or more of the junior members of the bar, who pick up some trifling fees as they go along, more, however, in the way of settling small disputed accounts between fishermen and planters than in any court business properly so called. The senior members of the bar, or those who have arrived at good practice, seldom or never go on circuit, as there is no business for them to do, at least of a nature that would pay them for their time and trouble.

## XV.

### CHANGES IN THE APPEARANCE AND CONDITION OF ST. JOHN'S— PROGRESS OF THE COLONY—ITS PRESENT CONDITION.

WHEN I compare the present appearance and condition of St. John's with what it was, in these respects, when I first saw it, forty-five years ago, I cannot help feeling as if the wand of a magician had touched it, and converted it into an entirely different place. It was then a big, frowsy, fishing village, straggling and scrambling up the side of a broken, rugged hill, without plan or arrangement, save what Nature gave in its unrestrained vagaries of swell and hollow, rock and ravine. Its streets were paths, its lanes were muddy water-channels; and its houses were wooden sheds, ragged, dusky, and repulsive. There was not one stone or brick house that I remember, except Government House. There were some fair-sized houses and stores along the water's edge in the Lower Path, as was called the street now named Water Street, and also a few decent houses in the suburbs of the town, where the families of merchants and others resided; but that was all. The public buildings were few and mean, except the two military barracks, which stood one at each end of the town. These were presentable enough, though they had nothing to boast of. The chief erections of this kind stood on the hill that lined the entrance, or Narrows, but even they were of wood. There were three or four churches—the Roman Catholic, the English, the Wesleyan, and the Independent churches—but they were all poor, unsightly wooden structures. The Court House was a small building (wooden too, of course), and served the triple purpose of court house, gaol, and parliament house. These constituted all the public buildings, except one or two school-houses, erected and supported respectively by the Roman Catholics and Church of England Protestants, for elementary instruction. There were no factories, no hospitals, no Athenæum, or hall for literary or scientific objects of any kind. The whole place showed plainly enough what it was

intended for, and what the occupations of its inhabitants consisted of. There were fish stores, flakes, and stages enough ; but nothing else to indicate any higher aspirations than the manipulation of fish for the animal sustenance of the inhabitants. But now all this has disappeared, and a city stands before us, which possesses all the requisites, all the advantages, and all the attractions that can be afforded by any city (of its size at least) on either side of the Atlantic. Some of its public buildings are not inferior to any of the same kind on the continent of America, and the same may be said of its institutions of learning. I have already mentioned some of those buildings and institutions. I shall mention a few more of them. There is a parliament building, of a beautiful style of architecture ; an Athenæum, which, in size, and style of architecture, and ornamental appendage would do credit to any city in the world ; there are a dozen or so of churches, some of which I have already described ; there are a penitentiary, a lunatic asylum, two or three hospitals, half a dozen of factories, including one for the manufacture of woollen cloth ; and some other establishments of a minor kind. Nearly all these buildings I have named are constructed of stone or brick. Besides all these, there are two banks, very goodly and imposing structures. These are banks of discount, as well as of circulation, and are admirably adapted to meet all the wants of the trade. They hold ample funds in their vaults to afford security for the amount of paper in circulation. I am a stockholder in one of these banks. Their dividends give evidence of the extent and success of their operations : one pays out half-yearly a dividend at the rate of from eighteen to twenty per cent. per annum, and the other at the rate of from ten to twelve per cent.

With respect to the requirements for the purposes of health, and of domestic as well as general convenience, the town has an excellent supply of water, which is brought through pipes from a distance of five miles outside the town. This was a work of considerable difficulty and labour, and although it cost, from some mismanagement or ignorance on the part of those immediately entrusted with its construction, a far larger sum than it should have cost, yet an abundant supply of pure water is brought into the town for household purposes, as well as for the use of the shipping and of the fire companies. The stock of the company incorporated for this purpose has been secured or guaranteed by the Government. I am a stockholder in the company. It pays a dividend of five per cent., at which rate it is fixed in order to make the taxation as light as possible on the inhabitants. The town is also well supplied with gas.

This wonderful change which has been effected in the capital has to some extent reached the several other towns and villages of the country. Nearly all of them—particularly Harbourgrace—have advanced with remarkable strides. They all, or most of them, have their schools (and good ones), their literary institutes, their concert-rooms, and their local manufactures. Sometimes, no doubt, it goes hard with them. I mean they become straitened in their circumstances by reason of partial failure in the business of the fisheries; and the small extent to which they carry the cultivation of the soil disables them in a great measure from grappling with such reverses.

Within the last twenty years, the pursuit of mining has been added to that of the fisheries; but this business has been hitherto chiefly confined to one small section of the country, and only two mines—copper-mines—have been worked to any extent. They lie on the northern side of Notre Dame Bay, on the eastern coast, and have yielded a considerable quantity of ore of good quality. But latterly they have not been worked with any great degree of vigour, and would seem to have somewhat failed in fulfilling their early promise. The works of both have been periodically suspended. One, which has been opened only nine or ten years, has changed proprietorship once or twice, and the other, which is the first mine that has been discovered and worked in the country, is at present all but closed in consequence of a dissolution of partnership following upon a law-suit between its proprietors. The region in which these mines are situated is called the copper region, by reason of the indications which it exhibits of abounding in that mineral. But whether upon examination it may prove to be sufficiently rich to justify the investment of capital to any great extent in its working is a matter involved in doubt. On the western coast also lies a belt of territory which shows signs of containing copper-ore; but this has not been tried. In fact, there is scarcely a part of the country in which minerals of one kind or other have not been found; even gold has been discovered on the southern shore of Conception Bay. But no effort of any account has been made to realize the value of these discoveries. The export of ores in the year 1876 shows, I believe, the largest quantities of ore ever shipped from the country in any one year; and these were, of copper-ore, something over 25,000 tons, which, valued at 5*l.* a ton, would amount to over 125,000*l.*; of lead-ore, about forty tons, which, at 10*l.* a ton, gives 400*l.*; and of nickel something less than thirty tons, which, at 70*l.* a ton, would make about 2000*l.* Thus, so far, mining has not proved to be an industry of very

flattering promise. However, it may be said to be only in its first stages, and the future may bring forth something more encouraging.

Last year the Government of Newfoundland entered into a contract with a company of capitalists for the construction of a railroad through a portion of the country. This road is to pass over the copper region on the eastern coast, and close to the neighbourhood of the two mines I have mentioned. This will lead in all probability to the mineral exploration of the region, when its value as copper-containing land will be ascertained. The road is to be about 350 miles in length, including branch lines. About 200 miles of it—that is, from St. John's to Hall's Bay, at the head of Notre Dame Bay—is to run through the wilderness, and over a large extent of territory containing excellent soil, well adapted to farming purposes. This territory is in part covered with large forest trees—an indication of good soil—and the road will tap the copper region I have mentioned. The company counts a good deal upon this double advantage thus afforded them of possessing a soil which can be converted at once to farming and mining purposes. For they have obtained from the Government, in part consideration of their building and working the road, a land grant of 5000 acres a mile on either side of the road along its whole length. This will give them nearly 2,000,000 acres. But these 5000 acres a mile are given them only in alternate blocks on either side of the road, the Government retaining the other blocks; so that the Government will have the disposal of nearly 2,000,000 acres along the road. In the event of an agricultural immigration, therefore, to this region, immigrants will best consult their own interests by taking these, the Government lands, for they will be able to obtain them upon better terms than they could expect to obtain the lands of the company. But the time for an agricultural immigration to Newfoundland is not yet come, though it is close at hand. Besides these lands, the company also receives a subsidy in money to the extent of \$180,000 (36,000*l.* sterling) a year for thirty-five years; the annual payment being contingent on the road being operated. Should the company, from any cause, throw up the road and cease to operate it, the colony ceases to pay the money subsidy, and takes the road in lieu of its lands and of the money already paid. It strikes me that this will be the ultimate result of the bargain; for I cannot conceive in what possible way the company can derive a revenue from a road which has no inhabitants along 200 miles of its length, and none, save a few hundred working miners, at its northern terminus. This, however, I should regret very



much; for I do not know anything that would so much conduce to the interior colonization of Newfoundland as the success of this railroad.

There is another company which has obtained a charter this year from our Government for the construction of another road running from a port on the eastern coast to one on the western coast of the island, a distance of about 200 miles. This road will pass over and lead to some of the best land of the country. This road is intended as a portion of a short line of route between Europe and America; which is to be effected by a line of steamers running from the most western practicable port in Ireland to the most eastern practicable port in Newfoundland; then continued by rail through the island; then by steamers crossing the Gulf of St. Lawrence; and again by rail through Nova Scotia; and then on to various parts of the Canadian Dominion and the United States. This the company thinks will be a saving of time, to the extent of at least two days, as compared with all other lines of travel between Europe and America. I doubt it very much; but I doubt still more the possibility of its being a paying line. That, however, concerns the company alone; except in so far as this, that we (the Newfoundland Government) grant them, as in the case of the other company, 5000 acres a mile—which will amount to about 1,000,000 acres: this they retain, though they should fail in operating the road. But in any event they must turn the land to account; and thus the colony must be ultimately benefited.

## XVI.

### NEWFOUNDLAND CONSIDERED AS A FIELD FOR EMIGRATION— ITS ADVANTAGES AND ATTRACTIONS IN THIS RESPECT—THE DESCRIPTION OF IMMIGRANTS REQUIRED.

FROM all that I have already said it cannot be difficult for you to form a pretty correct idea and estimate of the character and resources of Newfoundland, and of its adaptation to the views and prospects of agricultural emigrants. I say agricultural emigrants, because no others would have any business there. Its fishing, commercial, manufacturing, and mining industries, are of such a character that none save those who have been brought up in the colony, or who at least have been long connected with it, could venture to invest capital in them without an almost certain prospect of failure. A few strangers, adventurous persons, have invested capital in the fisheries during my time, and have lost it. The mining industry is as yet very limited, and very



uncertain; and to invest money in it would be anything but prudent at the present time. Any other persons, such as professional men, tradesmen, and mechanics, would find no scope there for their respective occupations, except in very limited numbers. The time will come no doubt, and is perhaps not very remote, when such persons will be required there in large numbers. Agricultural emigrants therefore are the only persons who might fairly hope to succeed by casting their lot in Newfoundland. But even with regard to them the time has not exactly arrived for their proper reception and settlement. That time will have arrived only when the railroad now under construction will have been built, and in full operation, which will be, probably, in a year or two.

The advantages which present themselves to me, in view of future emigration from Ireland, in favour of Newfoundland, are these: First,—The geographical position of Newfoundland in relation to Ireland presents an attractive feature in any scheme of emigration which might be adopted by or in behalf of Irish agriculturists. It is much nearer to Ireland than any other part of America—the distance between the most eastern point on its coast to the most western point on the coast of Ireland being only about 1600 miles, a distance now traversed by our line of steamers in less than six days. In almost every passage I have made to Ireland the distance was run in five days and a half. This was of course in summer, and during favourable weather; but in returning to Newfoundland at the close of the summer, and the commencement of autumn, the passage occupied seven or eight days, sometimes more. But I shall not be surprised if, in the course of a few years, this distance should be accomplished in four days, for the tendency nowadays is towards rapid travelling by water, especially between Europe and America. Second,—The present population of Newfoundland is composed of Irish, English, and Scotch people, and their descendants, so that as regards habits, manners, and customs, Irish emigrants would feel at home there, and that is no small consideration. Third,—The climate of Newfoundland is very little different from that of Ireland—the greater length of the winter weather being the principal difference. But I have already said that this does not much interfere with the business of farming, except very rarely. Fourth,—Land can be obtained in Newfoundland at a much cheaper rate than in any other part of America that I know of. I have said before that the soil of Newfoundland, taken all in all, is not so good as that of Ireland; but there are large tracts of land in it which are as productive, at least in vegetables, hay,

and corn, even wheat, as any second-class land in Ireland, and, in some cases, as any first-class land there. I certainly have seen, in my visits to parts of the Canadian Dominion and of the United States, very many tracts of land inferior to the ordinary run of land in Newfoundland. At the same time there are disadvantages; the chief, and indeed the very worst of which is, the entire absence from Newfoundland of what in Ireland, as well as in some measure in Canada, and certainly in the United States, is called the *farming interest*, that is, there is no class of farmers, properly so called, in Newfoundland. Those who cultivate land there are fishermen—all fishermen—except a few gentlemen who farm merely for the embellishment of their properties, and for the support of their stock, and for their household necessities. These are not dependent on their farms for support. The fishermen alone cultivate the soil, and they do this in conjunction with their fishing industry, which is the main source of their support; so that Irish emigrants, or any emigrants settling down upon farms in Newfoundland would be awkwardly placed, inasmuch as they would be deprived of the sympathy of class. Emigration, therefore, should take place in numbers, that is, in families—four or five families, say, who were neighbours, should go together, and settle down in the same section of country. This, of course, will be provided for when the proper time comes; but until then—until an agent is employed in Ireland by the Newfoundland Government for the purposes of emigration, no person should think of leaving Ireland with the view of settling in Newfoundland. I have said *an agent employed by the Newfoundland Government*, because it will be more advantageous, as I have already stated, to settle on the Government or Crown lands than on those lands owned by companies and by speculators.

Now I wish to say something as to the class of farmers or agriculturists who would be suited to Newfoundland, or whose interest it would be to emigrate at all. Under the recent land law passed by Mr. Gladstone's Government, the farmers of Ireland are placed in a position which will enable them to live on their farms in Ireland with more comfort and real enjoyment of life than they could hope to have on farms in any part of America. It is an excellent law—a law in every way calculated to promote the comfort, security, and independence of the Irish farmers; and if they spurn it under any pretext whatever, they will manifest a degree of folly which I cannot believe them capable of. The farmer in Ireland who holds as much as twenty acres, or even less, of good arable land at a fair rent, and with the other advantages provided by that law, will find his

account in keeping his farm, and availing himself of the benefits which a law so just, so fair, and so admirable in every way, is calculated to confer upon him. Such a man, if he had not the sense to value his position would find himself most deplorably disappointed if he should hope to better himself by emigration. Emigration is at best an evil; and no farmer, by transferring himself to the wilderness of America, no matter what part of it he may select, and whatever his means may be, could possibly arrive during his lifetime at that state of domestic comfort and social happiness which he may find at home. The small farmers who might emigrate with advantage are either those who have lost their farms, or those whose farms are so small and unproductive that they are insufficient to support them. But this class should be helped, either by the Government or by some benevolent society, so as to be enabled to emigrate and settle down on such lands as might be assigned them, or selected for them. And then they would have to commence a life of toil, deprivation, and self-denial which could only terminate in the grave. But then they would have secured an independent provision for their children, a thing they could not have done in Ireland. This, then, is the class, and the only class, of small farmers, including persons brought up on farms and understanding the nature and business of farming, who should emigrate. It is, however, true that if a farmer of means, say of from 500*l.* to 1000*l.* and upwards, should choose to emigrate, he would not do wrong in making Newfoundland the object of his destination; for there he would be able to select the best lands, of which there is, and will be necessarily for a long time to come, a copious choice. In addition to the cultivation of the soil for domestic purposes, he might turn his attention to sheep and bullock farming with a view to the home markets; for the nearness of the island to the English markets would give him advantages which the farmers in any other portion of America do not possess. Such a person could not fail of success, and of accomplishing in Newfoundland a degree of prosperity which he could never hope for in Ireland; that is, always providing that he is an intelligent farmer, and a man of industry, energy, and enterprise. But all I have said on this head has reference to, and is dependent upon the success of the railroad system now in progress in the island. Should this fail, and I must confess I have my doubts on this point, then Newfoundland would offer no field to emigrants from Ireland or from any other place. But, as I have said, a year or two, not much more, will be sufficient to determine this; and then, if all goes well, the Newfoundland Government will, through an

agent in Ireland, proclaim the fact of the success of the railroad, and hold out full encouragement to those farmers and agriculturists of every description or class who may be desirous of changing the scenes of their labours.

I should like to give you a correct idea of the cost of reclaiming the soil in Newfoundland, but I fear I should only mislead you by affording you only my own experience in this respect, an experience necessarily confined to the sea-coast. The soil on the sea-coast is the only soil that has ever been cultivated in the island,—as I have stated before, the whole population is settled on the sea-coast. This soil, that is, the soil of the sea-coast, is in general rough and uneven, and mixed with stones; and its reclamation therefore is attended with a good deal of labour and expense. An acre of this soil, to clear it of shrub and stones, fence it round, and put it in crop, would cost you at an average from ten to fifteen pounds; some good soil, of course, not so much; and some very inferior soil a great deal more. I speak now of what it would cost a gentleman who pays out of his pocket for everything that is done on his land; but a working farmer would have his farm under way at a far less cost than I have indicated above. However, this does not afford a fair estimate of the cost of clearing land in the interior of the country where the soil is richer and freer from intermixture of shrub and stone. There the land consists of wide, level plains covered with rich natural grasses; or of glens and valleys, and hill-sides, and river banks, all covered with forest trees. There are lofty eminences scattered here and there between these,—eminences which may be called hills—none of them mountains. Now these lands have never been touched by spade or plough; nay, scarcely even trodden, save by the wild deer and wolf. It is through and along these that our railroad system is to be carried; and it is here that future immigrants are to take up their abodes. The cost per acre of clearing and utilizing a farm of fifty or a hundred acres and upwards in this part of the country, must be comparatively small, judging from the nature and quality of the soil; but what that cost may be I cannot take upon myself to say, as no farm has ever been made there. You are as competent, from the description I have given, to form an opinion upon it as I am.

I have endeavoured to touch as briefly as possible, consistently with clearness, upon the several topics of importance and interest relating to Newfoundland, upon which you are desirous of being informed; and I trust that, among other things, you will see the advantages which the island offers for emigration, under the conditions to which I have

referred; that is, to a certain class, and within certain limits,—to honest, industrious, energetic, and enterprising agriculturists of the working classes; as well as to farmers possessing some capital, who might devote their attention in part to the raising of sheep and oxen with a view to the home markets.

THE END.

*W. J.*

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