

# TERRA PRIMUM VISTA

The following article reprinted from the "Canadian Churchman" compiled from the written journal of Rev. Robert Dyer by Mrs. W. E. Hallam, B. A., Saskatoon.

The journal is now in the possession of his grand-daughter Miss M. Dyer, Alberton.

SOME interesting glimpses of nineteenth century Church life in Newfoundland and Prince Edward Island are seen in the journal of the Rev. Robert Dyer, who was sent from England under the Colonial and Continental Church Society in 1839 to teach school at Greenspond, Nfld., also to perform the offices of a lay reader, later being ordained. His journals, which extend over a period of 42 years, reveal, here and there, touches of humour and pathos, but there is never any bitterness, nor even complaining. Through long years which brought sickness, separations and sorrows, Mr. and Mrs. Dyer laboured far away from the home land, for their much-loved Master, grateful for the privilege and opportunity of serving.

In a history of Newfoundland (which was the first British colony), by the Rev. Philip Tooke, a clergyman of the Church of England and a native of Newfoundland, it is stated that as early as 1703, the S. P. G. (founded in 1701) was beginning to send spiritual help to that country. The first clergyman was the Rev. J. Jackson, at St. John's, where there was a settlement of mariners and fishermen. Other settlements also petitioned for clergymen. By 1763, in spite of the British Government discouraging colonization of the island, there were 13,112 people settled there, with congregations at Bonavista, St. John's, Trinity Bay, Placentia Bay, Church schools were established in six or seven stations. In 1763, a church was begun at St. John's by the Rev. Edward Langman, a graduate of Bristol College, Oxford, who laboured there until his death, in 1799.

Until 1728 Newfoundland was under the nominal government of Nova Scotia. After that date she became a separate colony. The church was also under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Nova Scotia until 1839, when Bermuda and Newfoundland were formed into a separate diocese.

In 1787, there were enough English inhabitants at Placentia Bay to lay a memorial before the S. P. G., stating their willingness to contribute to the support of a clergyman in their settlement. "His R. H. Prince William (afterwards William IV.), then in command of a ship of war on the station, contributed handsomely towards the erection of the church and presented a set of communion plate to them." In 1846, his widow Queen Adelaide, contributed towards the rebuilding of this church.

When Bishop Inglis (the third Bishop of Nova Scotia) visited Newfoundland in 1827 (the first episcopal visit) he found on the island 600 communicants, 23 school masters, and 10 clergymen.

Bishop Spencer was consecrated Bishop of Newfoundland in 1839, and worked in this diocese until 1845, leaving 27 missionaries, 96 churches, 53 teachers, 1,491 communicants, 30,054 baptized church members and nearly 6,000 day and Sunday school pupils. Of his first visit to Greenspond, in 1841, Mr. Dyer writes:

"On the 11th of August His Lordship the Bishop arrived in his yacht from Pogo. His Lordship and his Chaplain visited the school, the children present. He came into the school with his robes on, questioned them on the Catechism and Collects, and then said: 'Mr. Dyer, you have an excellent school, the second largest on the island. His Lordship preached twice and confirmed 195 persons. He left this morning for St. John's with a fair wind.'"

A Sailcloth for a Quilt  
There was much distress among the people when the cold came on, although the attendance at school was good. "Visited a poor man, very ill himself and his three children. The father was lying beside a little fire and the three children in bed, covered with an old sailcloth. Oh! miserable!"

The work of the schoolmaster and clergyman at Greenspond extended to all the island along the north-east coast. This meant travelling by punt, or canoe, and walking over swampy marshes in summer, and in winter travelling over the ice on foot, or sometimes by dogsleds.

By March the sealers began to leave the harbor for the seal fishery, and Mr. Dyer did a very important work among these men in distributing tracts sent by the Society at home. Thousands were given out on the vessels and to the men while in port. "Supplied 24 vessels with 300 tracts. As usual the young men who have been in school came back to beg the loan of books to take with them on their voyage, and they all agreed, should it please God to bring them back safe from the voyage, to give some return to the Society."

One sailor came for tracts, a Bible, an evangelical work on theology and a volume of sermons to take with him on the ice. He had service on Sunday on board, and Mr. Dyer said: "I am in hopes that a reformation is taking place among our sealers. Thank God for it. To Him be all the praise!" One vessel came in with 6,375 seals, with a return of £4,000.

Walking on Heaving Ice  
Mr. Dyer would start early in the morning and walk many miles over the ice to different islands. He describes the sensation of walking over the sea: "It may suddenly arise and smash the ice into a thousand pieces. If you stoop down and look along the surface of the ice towards the wide ocean you may perceive the ice heave up and down with the swell of the sea. Still we venture on it to bear the glad tidings of salvation to our dear people on those desolate islands, and the Lord mercifully protects us from all accidents!"

On the way to Pool's Island, we walked on the sea on ice which had a great amount of snow on it, which made it not only hard but dangerous walking. When we had gone about six miles, and were crossing some drifted ice, I fell in between the pans of ice—fell forward on my face, but scrambled out again and reached the island in safety. Praise the Lord!"

On their return home it was necessary to crawl on their hands and knees, unable in places to avoid the thin ice which bent under them. He managed to get a pair of "rackets" from the Indians, to travel through the woods, and, in his own words, "I got along remarkably well, or as my guide said, 'first rate' I only stumbled three times on the ice and in the woods, and got home in safety."

All were not so fortunate in their missionary travels. The Bishop reports: "Poor Mr. Boland was caught in drift and frozen to death."

Mr. Dyer continues: "Left Doling Cove in a punt, accompanied by an old man and his daughter. He had an old sail, which helped us on a little, through I rowed along sixteen miles against wind and tide and felt very fatigued." After resting on the shore and eating a little lunch, which he shared with the old man, he walked seven miles to Cat Harbor. "If I had not been so fatigued I should have enjoyed the walk. The kind old man sent his two girls to carry my luggage. The scenery was beautiful—a nice pathway through the grass on the shore, with here and there a clump of trees surrounded by grassy plains through which a meandering river gilded on its course, with here and there what the girls would call a rattle, properly a cataract or a small waterfall, which gathered itself into a larger lake some distance from the sea, and passing on by a smaller

river, burst the result through the sand banks into the wide ocean." Sometimes, discouraged and downcast, Mr. Dyer always found that the Lord had blessed his labors when he least expected it.

All Kinds of Work Mr. Dyer Had to Do  
"April 22, 1857, Mr. Morston (the clergyman and Dr. Skelton left in the 'Alma' for Saint John's, leaving me in charge of the church and the parish of medicine for the people sick and administering drugs." He often helped the doctor at operations, one for cancer, one for cutting off eight fingers, another a leg, when chloroform was used. He visited the sick, buried the dead, during times of epidemic, typhus, measles, smallpox and even cholera, which swept over the country at different times, while from all over his district came calls to bury children, women and old men who had been frozen to death or drowned."

Bishop Spencer, being worn out in health, went to Jamaica in 1843. He had the will but not the physical power to do the work in Newfoundland much of which was by water in dangerous seas, fog and ice-bergs in summer, ice and snowdrifts in winter. In his own words, "A missionary in Newfoundland must have a strength of constitution to support him in a climate as vigorous as that of Iceland; a stomach insensible to the attacks of sea-sickness; pedestrian powers beyond those of an Irish gossamer, and the ability to sleep on the bed of a fisherman or the hard boards of a woodman's hut."

The new Bishop, the Right Rev. Edward Field, was consecrated at Lambeth in 1844. He was a splendid type for a missionary Bishop, a good swimmer, a good sailor, an athlete, strong and rugged, and Mr. Dyer says of his first visit: "On Tuesday we set off in the Bishop's yacht for Fair Island. Mr. Grey got very sick, vomited, I was very bad, but did not vomit. The Bishop and others were pretty well, particularly his Lordship." At another visit: "The Bishop steered the church ship. I was pilot. I was wet through—the water ran down my thighs."

This Church ship, "The Hawk," a bonnie wee thing, was given to His Lordship by a friend in England, Rector of Leigh, in Essex, afterwards Bishop of Moray, in Scotland.

In and out among the islands did this little Church ship go, bearing his Lordship on his errands of love among his people. "Little idea can be entertained of the greatness of his task, of the toil and exposure he underwent in his visitations of those rockbound coasts, confirming and baptizing and in several places consecrating churches." The Church ship reached Cow Cove, another settlement never before visited by a clergyman. At least three thousand souls were found in four places where he called.

Mr. Dyer says: "I like the Bishop. He is so kind and affable to all. His Lordship shook hands with everyone."

Vessels Wrecked  
Mr. Dyer told of many shipwrecks. As many as 27 vessels would be reported as abandoned with 600 distressed seamen, several vessels wrecked off the Cape, five on fire. Expect crew in, but very little food in the harbor. We had a service for prayer and humiliation. A change of wind has come. Thank the Lord for His deliverance."

Indeed, around the coast of Newfoundland, Bishop Field said that there were more orphans and widows from their sailor husbands being drowned than probably in any other part of the world. He established a orphan's home in St. John's.

In April, 1845, Mr. Dyer sailed for England, where he was married to Miss Elizabeth Barlett. Her father was the London agent of the British and Foreign Bible Society, whose gift to the bride was a

new house joined to the school where they lived. He tells of the boys who grew up in the school during their first years there, and now off to sea, and the fine report of them by the captain. "It is a pleasure to hear them read the Bible, and the prayers on shipboard."

Kind friends of Mrs. Dyer in England sent liberal supplies of clothing for the poor children, many of whom came to school barefooted.

**Most great business successes had their foundation in a savings account. Capital enabled the saver to grasp his opportunity. Are you preparing for the day of opportunity? You can do so by opening a savings account to-day in**

**THE Bank of Nova Scotia**  
L. D. MURRAY, Manager  
CHARLOTTETOWN  
Branches also at: Alberton, Albany, Borden, Emerald, Kensington, Montague, O'Leary, St. Peter's, Summerside, Victoria.  
ESTABLISHED 1832  
Paid-up Capital \$16,500,000  
Reserve - 19,500,000  
Total Assets - 210,900,000

Beautiful Bible, now in the possession of their granddaughter, Mrs. Willard Waugh of Prince Edward Island. In June they started for Newfoundland on the schooner "Lara," under the guidance of Him who ruleth the raging of the sea, ran over the deck, but we had arrived in safety at St. John's. Considering it was the summer season, the passage was very rough. Not a day passed but the sea ran over the deck, but we had no reason to complain. "The captain was exceedingly kind. Nothing was wanting on his part to make us as comfortable as possible, and Mrs. Dyer, who was never at sea before, was but little sick, also in exceedingly good spirits all the passage, not the least timid, knowing, as she so often remarked: 'We are in our Heavenly Father's hands and He will without doubt take us in safety to our desire heaven. When I think of the many years the Society has been established, the many agents it has engaged, and the many times they have crossed the mighty Atlantic, the most dangerous of all seas, and that not one of them has ever met with any serious accident, I am encouraged to believe that the Lord has most especially been with us, comforted and preserved us, and been better to us than all our fears.'"

After a short stay in St. John's, where they were welcomed heartily (their coming having been announced in the papers), they took ship again for Greenspond, where they received a joyous welcome. "Many a tear was shed for joy, the parents and children flocking around us to shake hands, saying, 'How glad we are that you have come! Many many, sir, have been the wishes for you and your good lady.'"

After a short stay in St. John's, where they were welcomed heartily (their coming having been announced in the papers), they took ship again for Greenspond, where they received a joyous welcome. "Many a tear was shed for joy, the parents and children flocking around us to shake hands, saying, 'How glad we are that you have come! Many many, sir, have been the wishes for you and your good lady.'"

After a short stay in St. John's, where they were welcomed heartily (their coming having been announced in the papers), they took ship again for Greenspond, where they received a joyous welcome. "Many a tear was shed for joy, the parents and children flocking around us to shake hands, saying, 'How glad we are that you have come! Many many, sir, have been the wishes for you and your good lady.'"

After a short stay in St. John's, where they were welcomed heartily (their coming having been announced in the papers), they took ship again for Greenspond, where they received a joyous welcome. "Many a tear was shed for joy, the parents and children flocking around us to shake hands, saying, 'How glad we are that you have come! Many many, sir, have been the wishes for you and your good lady.'"



**Cuticura For Skins That Itch And Burn**  
Baths the affected part with Cuticura Soap and hot water. Dry gently and anoint with Cuticura Ointment. This treatment not only soothes but in most cases heals.  
Sole U.S. Mfrs. J. C. Ayer & Co., Lowell, Mass., U.S.A.  
Sole U.S. Mfrs. J. C. Ayer & Co., Lowell, Mass., U.S.A.  
Sole U.S. Mfrs. J. C. Ayer & Co., Lowell, Mass., U.S.A.



**GIN PILLS**  
Bare Feet in Winter Time  
"One little boy, who his mother told us, had never had a shoe on his feet, when we put the shoes and stockings on, could not walk. Whom we led up and down the

## Quart of Water Cleans Kidneys

Take a Little Salt if Your Back Hurts, or Bladder is Troubling You  
No man or woman can make a mistake by flushing the kidneys occasionally, says a well-known authority. Eating too much rich food creates acids, which excite the kidneys. They become overworked from the strain, get sluggish and fail to filter the waste and poisons from the blood. Then we get sick. Rheumatism, headaches, liver troubles, nervousness, dizziness, sleeplessness and urinary disorders often come from sluggish kidneys.  
The moment you feel dull aches in the kidneys, or your back hurts, or if the urine is cloudy, offensive, full of sediment, irregular of passage or attended by a sensation of scalding, begin drinking a quart of water each day, also get about four ounces of Epsom Salts from any pharmacy; take a tablespoonful in a glass of water before breakfast, and in a few days your kidneys may act fine.  
This famous salts is made from the acid of grapes and lemon juice, combined with litha, and has been used for years to flush and stimulate the kidneys; also to help neutralize the acids in the system, so they no longer cause irritation, thus often relieving bladder weakness.  
Epsom Salts is inexpensive; make a delightful effervescent litha-water drink which everyone should take now and then to help keep the kidneys clean and active and the blood pure, thereby often avoiding serious kidney complications. By all means have your physician examine your kidneys at least twice a year.