

Our Contributors.

WHITE HEAD.

I have phrenologized White Head island, and I know why it is white. The Head is some two or three (perhaps more, perhaps less,) acres in extent, and is the highest point of land on the island. I do not know what the mineralogist or geologist reports concerning the formation of the huge boulder which makes the head. It is not limestone, and yet there is limestone in it, but "not in paying quantities." It is not marble, and yet it has the whiteness of the whitest marble. It is easily worked, and I imagine that some day that head will be decapitated and will be cut up and made into a palace for some future multi-millionaire, or that some future Michael Angelo will awaken the sleeping gods out of the slumbering stone.

I think that, on a clear day, the fishermen can see for many a mile at sea that head glistening white in the sunlight. Some convulsion, an earthquake, or a lightning stroke, has cleft the huge rock in twain, and one can walk through it, from sea to sea. Another fissure intersects it. The largest is wide enough for two or three people to walk abreast; it is from twenty to thirty feet in height. The narrow one is about forty feet in height, and two men cannot walk side by side through it. They are canyons, like those in the Rocky Mountains, only these are pigmies compared with their big brothers in the west.

White Head island is one of a group of small islands near Grand Manan. Duck Island, Two Islands, Cheney Island, and others evidently once belonged to Grand Manan; but there was trouble in the family some centuries ago and there was a separation, and the islands I have mentioned went off house-keeping for themselves.

The tides are so high, the currents so swift, and the rocks so firm, that many ships must have gone to their doom before light houses, fog horns and bell-buoys began their mission of mercy.

I have looked at those jagged rocks at low tide, and have asked them to tell me their story of the ships and boats they wrecked, and for whose coming hearts ached and eyes grew dim with vain watching. I know of no better place to think and rest than White Head. It is far from the "madding crowd," for the tourist has not discovered it, and I hope he never will, unless he takes his morals and his manners with him, which he does not always do, even when he has them.

The island is about five miles in circumference, and the most of it is low and marshy. There is not much tillable land, and the inhabitants, who are fishermen, do not always raise vegetables enough for their own use. For the last four years the fish have not been abundant, and some have grown disheartened waiting for their coming and have moved away. The population of the island is three hundred and one, and as I was there, and not Mr. Blue, when the count was made, the population, counting myself, was 203. (He counts very like Mr. Blue, after all.—Ed.)

There is a good schoolhouse and a good school, taught by two excellent teachers. There is a church, a neat building, with a musical bell, and a parsonage, without a parson. The island has had pastors whom the people revere. Rev. Mr. Brown was the first one, I think. Then came Rev. J. N. Barnes, Rev. F. Babcock, Rev. J. J. Barnes, and Rev. I. D. Harvey. All these men did good work.

I spent two Sabbaths on the island, and held seventeen meetings, and called on all the people. The weather was stormy, which hindered the work. If I could have remained longer more would, I believe, have been accomplished. Sometimes I think it is a mistake for a minister to commence special meetings and then leave when the interest is at its height. I would like to spend three months, at least, on the island. The people are kind and hospitable. I do not think there is a home there that would not give food and shelter to any tramp that would knock at their doors. I found a good home at Deacons Robinson and Cosseboome. I was very much interested in the children of the island; they are very bright and lovable. I was sorry I could not meet Bro. Harvey; he was at Two Islands when I left, and was holding special meetings.

I had one service at Grand Harbor. They were expecting Bro. McNinch, who has since then visited Grand Manan. Why those islands are without pastors is a conundrum to me. I know of no more desirable field for the man who is not afraid of work. They have good churches and good schools, and are people to whom it would be a pleasure to minister.

I read "The Turn of the Tide," a sketch written by a former resident of the island, caricaturing the islanders. The subject—the sea, fishermen, etc.—is one that appeals to the public. Sketches of farm life, anything that is realistic, if not badly written, will find publishers. And, so, the Harpers bought "The Turn of the Tide." It is not badly written, there are bits of poetry and pathos in it. But oh! the wretched taste of the writer, to caricature her own people, for she was born on the island, went to school and church with the children, and she could have said of them,

"I have eaten your bread and your salt,
I have drunk your water and wine,
The death ye died I have watched beside,
And the lives that ye led were mine."

One with the artist's true instinct could no more hold up to ridicule her "own people" that she could caricature her mother. The author of "The Turn of the Tide" is only one of many who show how thin is the veneer that covers the unmanly and the unwomanly.

There are reporters (for little papers) who never write of farmers without putting hayseed in their hair and a nasal twang and the wretched kind of grammar in their mouths. I was brought up among farmers, and I know something of sailors and fishermen, and I have never met one yet who talks and acts like the farmer and sailor

I sometimes meet in books. My experience is that one will find a large percentage of intelligent, well-read men among farmers and fishermen than among other classes. The farm is a good school for one who has eyes and ears, and so is the sea. The boy soon learns self-reliance and coolness and courage in the boat tossed by tides and currents. They are "mine own people," these men of the farms and sea, and it hurts when I see them misrepresented and caricatured.

C. T. PHILLIPS.

General Religious News.

—In Germany, too, the spirit of church union is moving. There is a movement to unite several Protestant organizations into a workable federation, which will eventually result in consolidation.

—Representatives of "the Gideons," the 2,600 commercial travelling men who are active Christians, recently in convention in New York, reported more than 300 conversions through their meetings in Chicago, within two years.

—The Baptists of the United States have been doing work among the Swedes in their country during the last fifty years. There are now 20,000 members in their Swedish Baptist churches.

—In a canvass of Newark, N. J., recently made, it was found that one family out of every seven in the city was without a copy of the Bible. Here is work for the home mission societies and their friends.

—In the State of Wisconsin, seventy-five hotels have discontinued their bars because the Gideons (the total abstinence organization of commercial travellers), have refused to patronize a hotel having a bar. That speaks well for the travelling men. Let the good work go on.

—In New Zealand the Church of England has 314,024; the Presbyterians number 176,603; Roman Catholics, 109,822; Methodists, 83,789. Taking all Australia the numbers are as follows: Church of England, 1,811,644; Roman Catholic, 965,622; Presbyterians, 602,576; Methodists, 587,940.

—The Reformed Presbyterian Church in the United States (German) is busily seeking out immigrants of its faith, wherever they are found, and has of late labored energetically with the Hungarians. Its mission work among Germans in Manitoba has had a large extension and great success. It was begun six and a half years ago by the Rev. Wm. Hansen, of Altona, Manitoba, and is now carried on by six ministers, with fifteen congregations and stations, centered around Winnipeg, Fort Saskatchewan, Neudorf, Altona, and Morden.

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