

greater security; and when dams have been long undisturbed and frequently repaired, they acquire great solidity, and their power of resisting the pressure of water and ice, is greatly increased by the willow, birch, &c., occasionally taking root, and eventually growing up into something of a regular hedge. The materials used in constructing the dams, are secured solely by the resting of the branches, &c., against the bottom, and the subsequent accumulation of mud and stones, by the force of the stream, or by the industry of the beavers.

“The dwellings of the beaver are formed of the same materials as their dams, and are very rude, though strong, and adapted in size to the number of their inhabitants. There are seldom more than four old, and six or eight young ones. Double of that number have been occasionally found in one of the lodges, though it is by no means a very common occurrence.

“When building their houses, they place most of the wood cross-wise, and nearly horizontally, observing no other order than that of leaving a cavity in the middle. Branches, which project inward, are cut off with their teeth and thrown among the rest. The houses are by no means built of sticks first, and then plastered, but all the materials, sticks, mud and stones, if the latter can be procured, are mixed up together, and this composition is employed from the foundation to the summit. The mud is obtained from the adja-