

" to and from Kingston and various part of Upper Canada are
" continually arriving and departing, which always occasions a
" great deal of activity and bustle of business. The nature of
" these craft may be very shortly described : they are flatbot-
" tommed, from 35 to 40 feet in length, terminating in a point
" at each extremity, with about six feet of beam in the centre ;
" the usual freight is four or four and a half tons ; they are
" worked by oars, a mast and sail, drag-ropes for towing, and
" long poles for setting them through the strong currents or
" rapids ; four men manage them in summer, but in the fall of
" the year another is always added, one of whom acts as a guide.
" In the batteaux of the merchants the cargoes upwards are a
" general assortment of merchandise, for which they bring down
" flour, wheat, salt provisions, pot and pearlshes, and peltries.
" The time employed in the voyage to Kingston is from 10 to 12
" days ; but the return does not take more than three or four.
" They usually depart in brigades of from four to fifteen boats,
" in order that their crews may be able to afford mutual assis-
" tance in ascending the rapids : each brigade is under the direc-
" tion of one man, who is called the conductor. From Lachine
" also the canoes employed by the north west company in the fur
" trade take their departure. Of all the numerous contrivances
" for transporting heavy burthens by water these vessels are per-
" ceived so inadequate, from the slightness of their construction,
" to the purpose they are applied to, and to contend against
" the impetuous torrent of the many rapids that must be
" passed through in the course of a voyage. They seldom exceed
" thirty feet in length and six in breadth, diminishing to a sharp
" point at each end, without distinction of head or stern : the
" frame is composed of small pieces of some very light wood, it
" is then covered with the bark of the birch tree, cut into con-
" venient slips, that are rarely more than the eighth of an inch
" in thickness ; these are sewed together with threads made from
" the twisted fibres of the roots of a particular tree, and strength-
" ened where necessary by narrow strips of the same materials
" applied on the inside ; the joints in this fragile planking are
" made water tight by being covered with a species of gum that
" adheres very firmly and becomes perfectly hard. No iron-work
" of any description, not even nails, are employed in building