

their young ones as they can, without so much a-do as in these parts. They have also ducks, but because they go heavily they eat none of them, saying that they would hinder them from running swiftly. *Item*, a kind of pheasants which they call

jacous; other fowls which they name *mouton*, as big as peacocks; some kinds of partridges as big as geese, called *mo-cacolia*; parrots of sundry sorts, and many other kinds altogether unlike unto ours.

C H A P. XXIII.

Of their fishing.

Comparison between hunting, hawking, and fishing.

OPPIAN in the book that he hath made upon this subject, saith, that in the hunting of beasts and of birds, besides the facility, there is more contentment and delight than in fishing, because that a man hath many retreats: one may get himself into the shadow, one may meet with brooks to quench his thirst, one may lie down on the grass, one may take his repast under some shelter. As for birds one may take them in the nest and with bird-lime, yea of themselves very often they fall into the nets. But poor fisher-men cast their bait upon an uncertainty; yea, double uncertainty, as well because they know not what adventure shall happen unto them, as because they are upon an unconstant and untamable element, whose very sight only is fearful. They are always wandering from place to place, subject to tempests, and beaten with storms and winds. But yet in the end he concludeth that they are not destitute of all pleasure, but rather that they have enough, when they are in a ship well built, well tight, well closed, and swift in sailing. Then cutting the waves they go to sea, where the great skulls of devouring fishes are, and casting into the sea a line well twisted, the weight of it is no sooner in the bottom, but that as soon the bait is snatched up, and suddenly the fish is drawn up with great pleasure. And in this exercise did *Mark Antony*, the son of the emperor *Severus* delight himself very much; notwithstanding *Plato's* reason, who forming his common-wealth hath forbidden his citizens the exercise of fishing, as ignoble, and illiberal, and fosterer of idleness, wherein he did grossly equivocate, specially when he chargeth fishermen with idleness, which is so evident that I will not vouchsafe to refute him. But I marvel not of that which he saith of fishing, seeing that with the same he also rejecteth hawking, upon the same reasons. *Plutarch* saith that it is more laudable to take either a hart, a roebuck, or a hare, than to buy them; but he wadeth not so far as the

other. Howsoever it be, the church, which is the first order in human society, whose priesthood is called royal by the great apostle *St. Peter*, hath permitted fishing to church-men, and forbidden hunting and hawking. And indeed, to say that which is most probable, the food of fish is the best and soundest of all, for as much (as *Aristotle* saith) that it is not subject to any sickness; from whence cometh the common proverb, *Sounder than a fish*. So that in the ancient hieroglyphics a fish is the symbol of health. Which notwithstanding I would mean, eaten whilst it is new; for otherwise (as *Plantus* saith) *Piscis nisi recens nequam est*, it is nothing worth.

Now our savages do eat it new enough, as long as it lasteth; which I believe to be one of the best instruments of their health and long life. When winter cometh, all fish are astonished, and shun the storms and tempests, every one where he may; some do hide themselves in the sand of the sea, others under the rocks, others do seek a milder country where they may be better at rest. But as soon as the mildness of the spring-time doth return, and the sea doth calm it self, as after a long siege of a town, truce being made, the people being before a prisoner, issueth forth by troops to go and take the air of the fields and to rejoice themselves; so those citizens of the sea, after the gusts and furious storms be past, they come to enlarge themselves through the salted fields, they skip, they trample, they make love, they approach to the shore and come to seek the refreshing of fresh water. And then our said savages that know the rendezvous of every one, and the time of their return, go to wait for them in good devotion to bid them welcome. The smelt is the first fish of all that presenteth himself in the spring; and to the end we go no further to seek out examples than at our *Port Royal*, there be certain brooks where such skulls of these smelts do come, that for the space of five or six weeks one might take of them sufficient to feed a whole

The fish rendezvous.

Smelts in great quantity.