

CHAPTER II.

Up to the present time, it has not been possible to determine how the Beothucks came into Newfoundland nor to give a certain account of their being previous to John Cabot's discovery. Mr. Howley says: "The real historic records of the Beothucks begin with the re-discovery of America in the latter part of the fifteenth century..... The Beothucks were found here by the Cabots on the discovery of the Island and for nearly three and a half centuries continued to occupy this oldest British Colony, living in their primitive ignorance and barbarism, under our vaunted civilization, not altogether unknown, but unheeded and uncared for."

Some are of opinion that the Beothucks were an off-shoot from the Indians who formally inhabited the country lying South of the Gulf of St. Lawrence (Nova Scotia and New Brunswick); others that they were descended from the mountaineer Indians of the Labrador Peninsula; others again believe that they sprang from the Norsemen who once inhabited Greenland and Iceland and who probably visited Newfoundland. It is possible, some people would say probable, that not one of these explanations is correct but rather that the Beothucks were a