



THE Present State of North America.

CHAP. I.

The Discoveries, Rights, and Possessions of Great-Britain.

***THE CABOTS, with other Subjects of
***The Crown of *England*, did in 1496 North Ame-
***and 1497 discover and take posses- rica first dis-
sion of, according to the Forms covered by the
used in those Times, all the *Eastern Coast* of English.
*North-America from Cape Florida to the North
Polar Circle*, for, and in the Name of, the Crown of *Eng-
land*. They had a Grant from the Crown of the Property of
all Lands they should discover and settle *Westward* of *Europe*;
but they made no Settlements in consequence of that Grant.
This Discovery of the Continent of *North-America* was prior
to that of any other *Europeans*; for COLUMBUS did not dis-
cover the *Islands* in the *Gulf of Mexico* till 1498, and it was
1504 before the *French* discovered any Part of *North-America*.

In those Days Priority of Discovery, even
without a continued Occupancy or Possession, Prior disco-
was deemed a good Claim. It is true, we did very a good
not immediately make any Settlements there, Claim.
nor did we so much as navigate the Coast for
near a Century following, *Henry* the VIIIth being too much
engaged in the Difficulties which attended the Progress of the
Reformation, to be at leisure for foreign Undertakings ;
Edward