

and over-shadow their tops by their numbers. The abundance of their eggs affords to the inhabitants of the neighbouring coast, a material supply of food.

A vast inlet, penetrating into the country for a great many leagues to the westward, is called the bay of chaleurs, which being advantageously situated for carrying on fisheries, has, on its borders, a considerable number of inhabitants. Jacques Cartier, in 1534, sailed into this bay, and from the heat which he there experienced in the middle of summer, gave it the name which it still retains. Notwithstanding the more northerly situation of this bay, the cold is not so intense here as at Quebec, being moderated by the sea air. The depth of snow in the woods, during the winter season, is from six to eight feet; but varying according to the different situations, and the degrees of severity in the weather. It is not before the beginning of May, that the influence of the sun upon vegetation is here materially felt; nor is it before that time, that the woods are entirely cleared of snow.

It may be observed as a curious circumstance, that for six, eight, and ten leagues from the shores of this bay, in proceeding into the woods, travellers and huntsmen frequently meet with spots of about two or three acres in surface, entirely bare, and yet surrounded with seven or eight feet depth of snow, which, in times of bad weather, melts as it falls, both on those situations, and on the trees, to which they afford growth. Those spots, in their relative position to the head of the bay, extend from east to west, being usually found in that direction; and their denundation of snow may probably be occasioned by subterraneous heat, which approaching nearer to the surface of the ground, produces the effect which has been described.

Neither minerals, nor mineral waters, have yet been discovered in this district. The timber which grows here consists of spruce fir, white and black birch, beech, elm, and oak, which being porous, is of little value.

The island of Bonaventure, is about a league from the north shore of the entrance into the bay, and a small number of persons winter on it, for no other purpose than to retain possession of their fisheries. About twenty-one leagues up the bay, there is a parish of the same name with the island.

Cod-fish, salmon, and herrings, are the only productions of commerce derived from the bays of Gaspé and Chaleurs. Ship-building has of late years been here tried with success; but whether or not it will answer in time of peace, is uncertain. There are about three hundred families settled all along the coast of the district of Gaspé, who are chiefly of the Roman Catholic religion, and whose sole occupation is fishing. The produce of their in-