

which, though it has a frightful appearance, is of great use in keeping off the musketoes, which are here exceedingly troublesome. Indeed the hair hanging over their faces somewhat obstructs their sight, but it is easily removed with their hands; and, was it not for this defence, these insects would be insupportable. Hence their children wear them, while hanging at their mother's backs; and as, thus dressed, they make a most dismal figure, it is apt to raise a shocking idea of the barbarity of these harmless and inoffensive people. Their manner of kindling a fire appears very extraordinary, but is nearly the same in all countries where they have not the advantage of flints and steel: they prepare two pieces of dry wood, and making a small hole in each, fit to them a little cylindrical piece of wood, round which a thong is put; then by pulling the ends of the thong, they whirl the cylindrical piece about with such velocity, that the motion sets the wood on fire; when lighting a little dry moss, which serves for tinder, they make as large a fire as they please: but as the little timber they have towards the north of Hudson's-bay, is only what is driven on shore, this fails them in winter, and they are obliged, like the Greenlanders, to make use of their lamps, for the supply of their family occasions.

These simple people were so far from being jealous of their wives, that they offered them to the English sailors, from an opinion that the children they had by them would be in every respect as much superior to those of their nation: as they took the English to be; for they imagine, says our author, that in the most literal sense every man begets his like, and that the son of a captain must infallibly be a captain.

On their going to sea, in order to catch fish, they usually take in their boats a bladder filled with train-oil, as our people do a dram-bottle, and seem to drink the contents with the same relish; and when their stock is out, they have been seen to draw the bladder through their teeth with much seeming satisfaction. They are probably convinced by experience of the salutary effects of this coarse kind of oil in this rigorous climate, which renders them fond of it. They also use it for their lamps, which are made of stone, hollowed out with as much art as can well be expected, considering their tools.

We shall now leave Hudson's-bay, which, considering its great extent, may as well be called a sea as the Baltic, and several others that bear that name; and shall only observe, that in sailing to the northward from York-fort every thing dwindles, the men become lower in stature, and in the latitude of sixty-one degrees the very trees shrink into brushwood.

S E C T. IV.

OF NEWFOUNDLAND.

In Situation, Extent, Climate, Soil, and Produce; with a particular Account of the Manner of preparing the Cod in that Island.

NEWFOUNDLAND received its name from Cabot, who discovered it in 1497. It is of a triangular form, and situated to the east of the gulph of St. Lawrence, between the forty-sixth degree forty minutes and the forty-second degree seven minutes north latitude, and between the forty-first degree fifty-two minutes and the fifty-seventh degree forty minutes west longitude; it being bounded to the eastward and southward by the Atlantic ocean, on the north by the freights of Belleisle, and on the west by the gulph of St. Lawrence.

The coasts are extremely subject to fogs, occasioned by the vapours exhaled from the lakes, swamps, and bogs, with which the island abounds; yet the air is salubrious, and agreeable to most constitutions. The winters are severe, attended with almost continual storms of snow and sleet, the sky being usually overcast.

The soil is generally supposed to be barren, except only the banks of the rivers, which are tolerably fertile. There are however woods of different kinds throughout

almost all the country for several miles from the coast, which contain abundance of timber fit for ship and boat building, as well as for croeting staves for curing and drying fish; and beyond these woods, where the lands are cleared, are in many places good pasture. The inland parts of the country rise into high hills, and sink into bogs and swamps; where such parts as are not covered with water, afford only shrubs, spruce, and white moss. It however contains many fine rivers, lakes, and rivulets, which abound with beaver, otters, and the like, and afford great plenty of Salmon and other fish. The forests are stored with deer, moose, bears, wolves, and foxes in great plenty; but here are few cattle, sheep, or horses; instead of the latter, the inhabitants make use of dogs for drawing of wood and other necessaries. These they manage with great dexterity, fixing them in leather collars, and yoking together what number they please. There are here great plenty of wild fowl, but the staple commodity of the island is cod-fish, which are here large, and in greater abundance than in any part of the world yet discovered; and a considerable part of Europe is at present chiefly supplied with this article from hence.

Great Britain and North America, at the lowest computation, annually employ upwards of three thousand sail in this fishery; on board of which, and on shore, to cure and pack the fish, are not less than ten thousand hands; so that it is at the same time, not only a very profitable branch of trade to the merchant, but a source of livelihood to so many thousands of poor people, and a most excellent nursery to the royal navy, which is hence supplied with a great number of able seamen: it might still be greatly enlarged; for notwithstanding the great trade carried on by the English here, the French are said to have by far the best part.

On these coasts are also taken a great number of whales, seals, porpoises, &c. whence above five thousand barrels of oil, besides a great quantity of whalebone, seal-skins, &c. are annually exported from hence to different parts of the world; all which sufficiently shew the importance of the island, notwithstanding the severity of the climate, and the roughness and barrenness of the soil.

The number of English inhabitants on the island, is uncertain and fluctuating. They are indeed very inconsiderable, if compared with its extent, but there are not half the number in winter that there are in summer. The capital of the island, which is seated on the southern point, contains no more than between three and four-score houses.

As fishing is the staple commodity of Newfoundland and the adjacent islands, it will not, perhaps, be disagreeable to our readers, if we here give a concise account of the method of curing the cod, and preparing it for the market.

The vessels employed in this business are small shallops, which come to shore every day, where the fishermen throw the cod they have taken upon a stage prepared for that purpose. One of them, who is called the cut-throat, opens the fish with a two-edged knife, and cuts off his head; a second hands the fish to the carver, who stands opposite to him at a table erected upon the stage, who with a single-edged knife, six or eight inches long, and very thick on the back, to encrease its weight, splits the fish open; when it is conveyed to the filter, who places it with the skin underneath in a barrel, and then very slightly covers it with salt, laying the fish regularly one upon another.

After leaving the cod in salt three or four days, and sometimes twice as long, according to the season, they put it into a tub, wash it well, make it up in piles, and, in fair weather, spread it out with the skin underneath, on a kind of stage raised with wattles about two feet from the ground; before night they turn the skin uppermost, which they also do whenever it rains. When the fish becomes a little dry, it is raised into larger piles, where it rests a day or two; after which it is again exposted to the air, and turned according as there is occasion, before they again raise it into larger piles, where, after this is done, it sometimes remains fifteen days with-