

**CHAPTER
VIII.**

The town of Saint John, the capital, and indeed the only collection of houses in the island which can merit the title of a town, is seated on the eastern coast of the great south-eastern peninsula, on an excellent harbour, with a long and narrow, but safe and not difficult entrance, between rocky precipices of enormous height on the northern side, and a rugged mountain on the southern. The town, which may perhaps be in a state of improvement, has hitherto consisted of one street, narrow, mean-looking, and dirty, composed chiefly of wooden houses, and extending all along one side of the harbour. The number of its inhabitants fluctuates and is uncertain. They are numerous in summer, but few in winter. Placentia, situated on a bay of that name, is small, but next to Saint John's in size and population.* Many small islands lie around the coast of Newfoundland, of which none appear to have permanent inhabitants, nor to have been well described, except those which have been already mentioned, and probably very few can deserve a particular description. They are doubtless in general rocky, bleak, and barren.

* Chappell; Hays's Brief Relation of the Newfoundland; Whitbourne's Discourse, &c. of Newfoundland.