

II. NEWFOUNDLAND.

NEWFOUNDLAND is, as it were, a stepping-stone between the Old World and the New. At its south-western extremity it approaches within 50 miles of the island of Cape Breton, while its most eastern projection is but 1640 miles distant from Ireland. Its population in 1881 was 161,384, and its area was estimated at 42,000 square miles; but, strange as it seems, up to the present time the interior is almost unknown, while the mere existence of certain splendid fertile valleys in portions of the island has only been discovered in quite recent times. The appearance of the coast is rocky and forbidding, but there are a great number of deep bays and fiords, containing magnificent harbours, and piercing the land for 80 or 100 miles, while the sides present varied scenes of beauty, such as are rarely surpassed in the world's most favoured lands. The effect of these inlets is to give the island the enormous coast-line, compared to its area, of more than 2000 miles. The loftiest range of mountains, the Long Range, has a few summits of more than 2000 feet, but the elevations of the island rarely exceed 1500 feet. Lakes are very numerous. The mines are very valuable, and Newfoundland now ranks as the sixth copper-producing country in the world. Lead mines have also been discovered and worked. There is good reason for believing that gold and coal will yet be found.

III. POLAR ICE.

It is believed on good grounds of inference, but absolutely without positive evidence, that the south pole is covered with a great cap of ice, and some physiographers have gone so far as to assert its thickness as possibly six miles at the centre. But as to the ice of the north pole, thanks to the efforts to discover a north-west passage which showed us the breach in the wall of the polar fortress, we know very much more.

Sir Edward Belcher encountered ice 106 feet thick drifting into and grounding on the shores of Wellington Channel. It was in Banks Strait that Sir Edward Parry was finally stopped by the great undulating floes, reaching 102 feet in thickness, that he tells us he had never seen in Baffin's Sea or in the land-locked channels he had left behind him, but which filled the whole sea before him. Such floes are the edge of a pack which we may conjecture extends uninterruptedly from shore to shore of the Polar Sea.

IV. ICEBERGS.

Icebergs are masses of ice rising to a great height above the level of the sea, presenting a singular variety in form and appearance. They are masses broken off from glaciers, or from barrier lines of ice-cliff, and owe their origin to the circumstance of glaciers being in a continual state of