

as dangerous even in thick weather. The land of Breton Island is very high, and though fogs are about it frequently, it is seldom so much obscured as not to be seen in time. On entering the Gulf, the Magdalen and Bird Islands will be seen, as they lay in the direct course from Cape North to the River of St. Lawrence.

There is, in clear weather, a safe passage between the Bird Islands and the Magdalens; but, in thick weather, it is advisable to keep either to the southward or northward of both, as the wind may permit.

In Pleasant Bay, on the S.E. side of the Magdalen Islands, there is clear and good anchorage, very near the shore; and it is a very safe place for vessels to ride in, with a westerly wind, and infinitely preferable to beating about in the Gulf with a foul wind. There is a safe passage into it between Amherst Island and Entry Island.

As the weather to the southward of these islands, between them and Prince Edward Island, is generally much clearer than on the North, the passage that way is preferable, particularly after the early part of the year, when S.W. winds mostly prevail.

II. *The* ISLAND and BANKS of NEWFOUNDLAND.

GENERAL REMARKS.—NEWFOUNDLAND is, in general, a hilly and rugged country, variegated with extensive woods of birch, small pine, and fir. The interior is covered with snow about five months in the year, and the coasts are involved, for a still longer period, in thick fogs, accompanied with sleet.

Its chief towns are, St. John's, in the S.E., situate on an excellent harbour, which will presently be described, and Placentia in the South, on the bay of that name.

The BANKS, which are, in their fisheries, the source of all the opulence in the island, are vast submarine elevations, of various depths and very unequal figure, as shown by the Chart. The depths on the Great Bank vary from 15 to 80 fathoms. The bottom, which is generally of sand or gravel, is covered in many places with shells, and abounds with different sorts of fish; but more particularly with cod, which is inconceivably numerous: for, although from 200 to 400 vessels have been annually freighted with this article of commerce for nearly two centuries, there appears to be no sensible decrease of the former plenty. A great swell and thick fog usually indicate the place of the bank.

The cod are usually most abundant where the bottom is sandy; and the least so where it is muddy. The best depth for them is between 30 and 40 fathoms, or less water. In the months of February and April, the fish, which in the winter retire to the deepest water, come on the banks, and fatten quickly.

The great fishery generally commences on the banks about the 10th of May, and continues until the end of September.

The admiral or commodore of the squadron sent out annually to protect the fisheries and settlements, is, *pro tempore*, governor of the island; and there are two lieutenant-governors, one at St. John's, and the other at Placentia.*

* By the Treaty of Utrecht, 1713, the FRENCH retained the liberty of fishing off the coasts, and of drying their nets on the shores, of Newfoundland, within certain limits; and, by the treaty of 1763, they may, also, fish in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, but not within the distance of three leagues from any of the coasts belonging to Great Britain.

By the treaty of 1763, it was defined that, the subjects of France were to enjoy, under the restrictions of the previous treaties, the fisheries on the eastern, northern, and western, coasts of Newfoundland, from Cape St. John to Cape Ray; and this concession was confirmed by the treaty of 1814.

By Convention with the UNITED STATES, of the 20th of October, 1818, the people of the said States, renouncing previous claims, have, for ever, in common with British subjects, the liberty of taking fish on the southern coast, between Cape Ray and the Ramea Isles, and on the western and northern coasts, from Cape Ray to the Quirpon Isles; also on the shores of the Magdalen Islands, and on the coasts, bays, harbours, and creeks, of Labrador, from Mount Joli through the Strait of Belle-Isle, and thence northward, indefinitely, along the coast, but without prejudice to the exclusive rights of the Hudson's Bay Company: and the fishermen of the United States have liberty, for ever, to dry and cure fish in any of the *unsettled* bays, harbours, or creeks, of the southern parts of Newfoundland, above described, and of the coast of Labrador, but so long as unsettled only, without previous agreement with the inhabitants, &c.—See, farther, the large Map of the Canadas, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, &c., under the title of CABOTIA, published by the proprietor of this Work.

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