

longed at first to any person who took possession; and from this inconvenience, a source of frequent discord arose. The property of that part of the coast, of which he made choice, was at length, by the interference of government, secured to each fisherman. By this judicious arrangement, expeditions thither were multiplied so greatly, that in 1615, vessels from the British dominions, equal in all to fifteen thousand tons, were employed in the fishery. The value of this island soon became apparent, not only as a source of national wealth, arising from the exchange of fish for the various productions and luxuries, which the southern parts of Europe afford, but what is still of greater importance, as a principal nursery for the navy.

The property of this island was, by the peace of Utrecht, confirmed to Great Britain; and the subjects of France preserved only the right of fishing from Cape Bonavista northwards, to Cape Rich on the opposite side. This line of demarcation was afterwards altered, and placed at Cape Ray, on the western side of the island.

The floating masses of ice, which pass in the vicinity of the eastern coast, and sometimes enter the straits of Belisle, in the summer months, exhibit to mariners an awful and singular spectacle. These enormous mounds, the accumulated operation of cold for a series of years, in the arctic regions, are detached from the coasts near Hudson's Bay, and Davis's Straits, by storms, and other causes. They sometimes exceed an hundred and forty feet in altitude; and their basis beneath the sea, usually doubles those dimensions. Rivulets of fresh water, produced by their gradual dissolution, distil from their summits. We had an opportunity of viewing three of these stupendous piles by the light of the moon, whose rays, reflected in various directions, from their glassy surface, produced an effect no less pleasing than novel. They become either stranded in shallow water, until they are melted down, or grow so porous, that they subside under the surface of the ocean. In fogs, and even in the gloom of night, they are discoverable at some distance, by the cold which they emit, and by their whiteness and effulgence.

ST. PETER'S, MIQUELON, AND CAPE BRETON.

The islands of Saint Peter's and of Miquelon are nothing else than barren rocks, not far from the southern coast of Newfoundland. They were ceded to the French by the treaty of 1763, on condition that no fortifications should be erected, nor more than fifty soldiers kept on them to enforce the police. The former possesses an harbour, capable of containing thirty small vessels. They were inhabited, in times of peace, by a few Frenchmen, for the purpose of carrying on the fishery.

The geographical position of Cape Breton was, many years ago,

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