

CHAPTER X.

RESOURCES AND PROSPECTS.

It has been already said that the sole present trade in Mackenzie River is in furs. It may be asked what other resources the country presents. The leather derived from the dressed hides of the moose and reindeer is of some value, but at present nearly the whole of the leather obtained is used in the country for shoes and clothing. The reindeer in the woods and the fish in the lakes are somewhat abundant, but no more are killed than are required for provisions used in the country. Walrus tusks for ivory, and seal skins, and oil of both whales and seals, may be traded to a limited extent from the Esquimaux on the coast, but not in large quantities. Vegetable crops might be much increased in the country, but it is unlikely that these would be exported. For resources to be consumed in the country, agricultural produce will probably in the end prove the most reliable, notwithstanding the severe climate. Animal provisions seem always diminishing, and it is surprising what a vast expenditure of animal life is required to sustain even a very small population on meat only.

When a reindeer is killed, the meat of its ribs is cut off and dried, and this is usually the only part of the animal furnished to the trading establishments for