

"devoured at their pleasure. In support of this they had opposed,
 "as we have seen, every attempt to introduce order and govern-
 "ment into that place ; it was in this spirit that they questioned
 "the King's right to appoint a civil Governor, to appoint Justices
 "of the Peace, to appoint Commissioners of Oyer and Terminer;
 "that they complained of the Custom-house, and even talked of
 "presenting it as a nuisance, because it was erected on ship's
 "rooms." To explain the causes which led Mr. Reeves to make
 these remarks, it may be necessary shortly to advert to a few facts
 connected with the history of that country : Newfoundland was
 discovered by Cabot, in the reign of Henry the Seventh, and shortly
 afterwards it engaged the attention of several Noblemen and
 others of the first distinction, who established settlements in the
 island. No long period elapsed when, in consequence of the
 great disorders committed by those who annually resorted thither
 for the purposes of the fishery, application was made by the resi-
 dent inhabitants for a governor, but the Merchants, ship-owners,
 and inhabitants of Totness, Plymouth, and Dartmouth, petitioned
 the Privy Council against such an appointment, stating it would
 be injurious to the fishery. In 1674 and 1675, further application
 was made for the same purpose, and referred to the Lords of Trade,
 who, after hearing the arguments for and against the Settlement,
 decided against the appointment of a Governor, and recommended
 that all plantations in Newfoundland should be discouraged, that
 the commanders of the convoys should be directed to oblige the
 inhabitants to depart from the island, as, by the Western Charter,
 "no planter was allowed to inhabit within six miles of the shore."
 The report of their Lordships was approved of by his Majesty,
 and orders were given to carry into effectual execution what was
 then recommended. Under the sanction of this authority, the
 most wanton acts of violence were committed, the houses of the
 inhabitants were burnt and destroyed, and every other violent
 means resorted to, to force them from the country. About this
 time the system of rapine and plunder was carried to such an ex-
 cess, that Sir John Berry, the commander of the convoy, repre-
 sented it in its true colours to Government, and strongly recom-
 mended the policy of colonization. The advice of Sir John Berry,
 supported as it was by wisdom and humanity, was not attended
 to. In 1676, one John Downing, a resident inhabitant of New-