



Manners and Customs of the Indians.

By THOMAS MORTON.

AN EXTRACT FROM HIS "NEW ENGLISH CANAAN," 1637.

Of their Houses and Habitations.

THE Natives of New England are accustomed to build them houses much like the wild Irish; they gather Poles in the woods and put the great end of them in the ground, placing them in forme of a circle or circumference, and, bendinge the topps of them in forme of an Arch, they bind them together with the Barke of Walnut trees, which is wondrous tuffe, so that they make the same round on the Topp for the smooke of their fire to assend and passe through; these they cover with matts, some made of reeds and some of longe flagges, or sedge, finely fowed together with needles made of the splinter bones of a Cranes legge, with threeds made of their Indian hemme, which their groueth naturally, leaving severall places for doores, which are covered with mats, which may be rowled up and let downe againe at their pleasures, making use of the severall doores, according as the winde fitts. The fire is alwayes made in the midst of the house, with winde fals commonly: yet some times they fell a tree that groweth neere the house, and, by drawing in the end thereof, maintaine the fire on both sides, burning the tree by Degrees shorter and shorter, untill it be all consumed; for it burneth night and day. Their lodging is made in three places of the house about the fire; they lye upon planks, commonly about a foote or 18. inches about the ground, raised upon railles that are borne up upon forks; they lay mats under them, and Coats of Deares skinnes, otters, beavers, Racownes, and