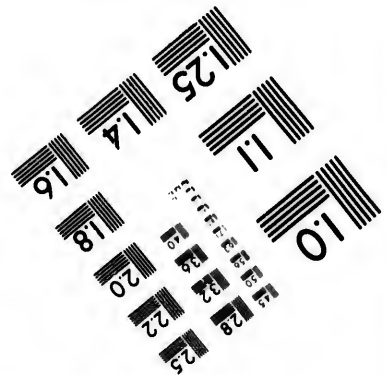
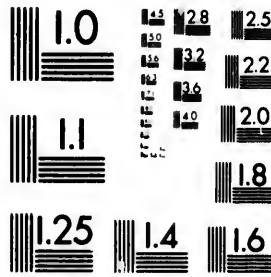


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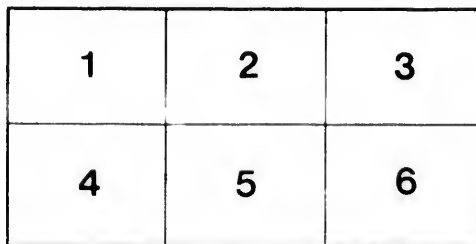
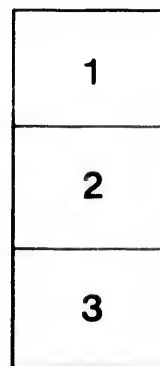
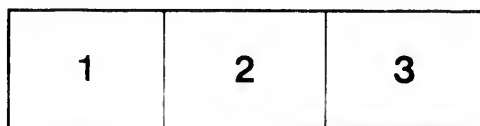
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LABRADOR:  
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POETICAL EPISTLE;

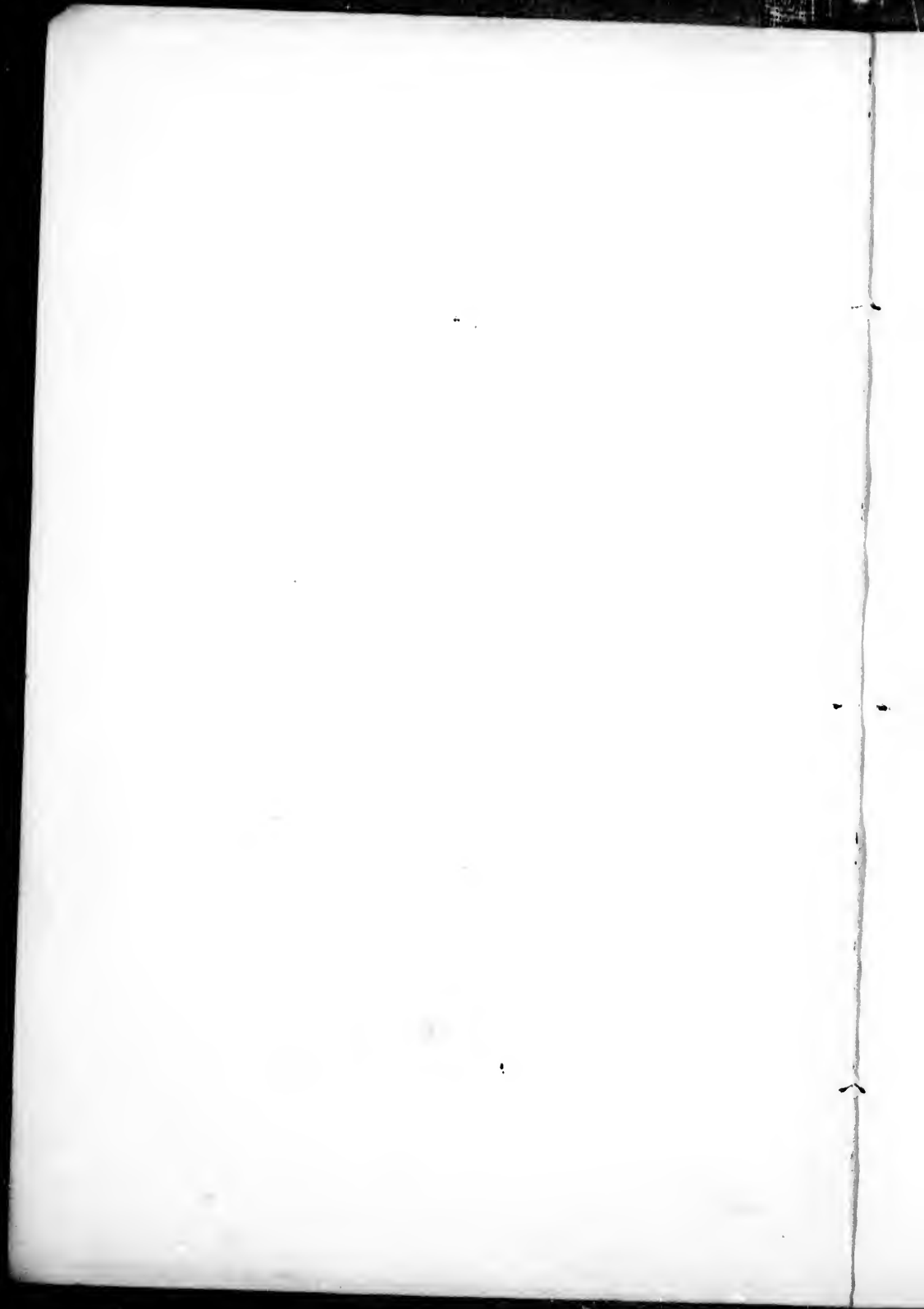
BY  
GEORGE CARTWRIGHT, ESQ.,  
1788.

RE-PRINTED FOR  
W. H. WHITELEY, ESQ.,  
1882.

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ST. JOHN'S, Nfld:  
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## PREFACE.

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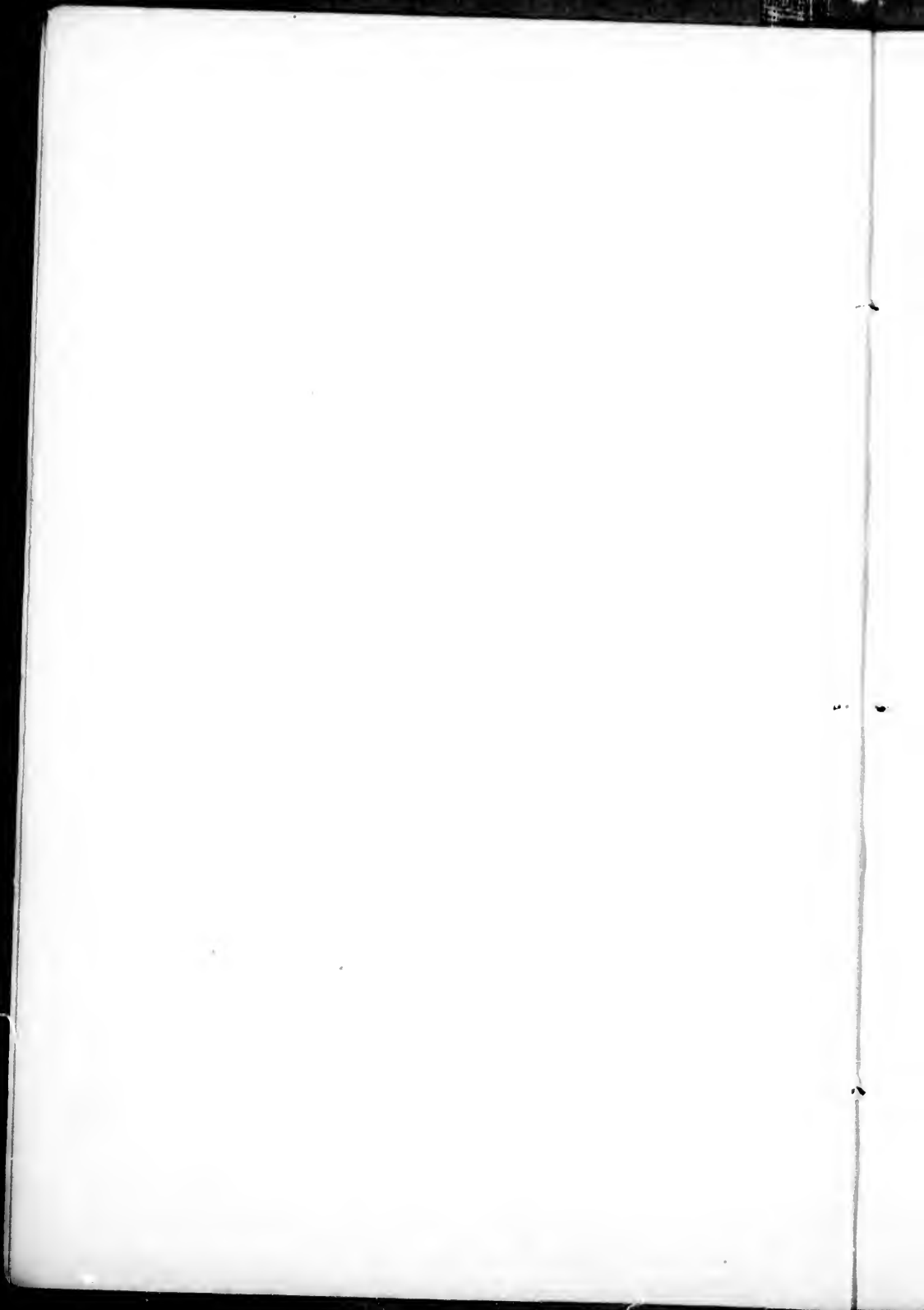
"LABRADOR" has been re-printed from a Copy of "*A Journal of Transactions and Events during a residence of Nineteen years on the Coast of Labrador,*" by GEORGE CARTWRIGHT, Esq., (Newark, 1792,) now in the possession of Hon. STEPHEN RENDELL.

This work being now out of print, I thought that "LABRADOR," in its present form, might prove acceptable to you, for the sake of old associations connected with the Coast.

W. H. W.

ST. JOHN'S, NEWFOUNDLAND, }  
1st January, 1882. }





# LABRADOR.

---

## A POETICAL EPISTLE.

---

WELL may you, Charles, astonishment express  
To see my letter in poetic dress.  
How can he, you will say, in Nature's spite,  
Who ne'er found time to read, attempt to write?  
Write verses too! and words to measure cut!  
Unskill'd in cutting, save at Loin or Butt.\*  
No matter how; a project 's in my head,  
To write more verses than I've ever read.  
The whim has seiz'd me: now you know my scheme;  
And my lov'd LABRADOR shall be my Theme.

The Winter o'er, the Birds their voices tune,  
To welcome in the genial month of June.  
Love crowds with feather'd tribes each little Isle,  
And all around kind Nature seems to smile.  
Now Geese and Ducks and nameless numbers more,  
In social flocks, are found on ev'ry shore.

---

\* In his younger days, the Author had a remarkable good appetite.

Their eggs to seek, we rove from Isle to Isle,  
Eager to find, and bear away the spoil :  
These in abundance every hand picks up,  
And when our toil is o'er, on these we sup.

The Furrier now the Fox and Mart gives o'er,  
To trap the Otter, rubbing on the shore.  
The Rein-deer Stag, now lean and timid grown,  
In dark recesses, silent feeds alone.  
The Willow's tender leaf, and various plants,  
He fails to find not in those dreary haunts.  
His fearful Hind, now shuns the Wolf's dire wiles,  
And seeks her safety on the neighb'ring Isles ;  
Whether in Lakes, or near the Ocean's shore,  
Cleaving the liquid wave, she ventures o'er.  
Now pond'rous grown, she Nature's law obeys,  
And on the ground her tender nursling lays.  
O'er this she watches with maternal care,  
Nor danger dreads, unless fell man comes there ;  
(Him, beast of prey, or Rock, or Wave ne'er stops,)  
For, mark'd by him, to him a prey she drops.  
Fond in the Summer, on young twigs to browse,  
The social Beavers quit their Winter's house.  
Around the Lake they cruise, nor fear mishap,  
And sport unheedful of the Furrier's trap.

The Salmon now no more in Ocean play,  
But up fresh Rivers take their silent way.

For them, with nicest art, we fix the net ;  
For them, the stream is carefully beset ;  
Few Fish escape : We toil both night and day,  
The Season's short, and Time flies swift away.

The Esquimaux from Ice and Snow now free,  
In Shallops and in Whale-boats go to Sea ;  
In Peace they rove along this pleasant shore,  
In plenty live ; nor do they wish for more.  
Thrice happy Race ! Strong Drink nor gold they know ;  
What in their Hearts they think, their Faces shew.  
Of manners gentle, in their dealings just,  
Their plighted promise, safely you may trust.  
Mind you deceive them not, for well they know  
The Friend sincere, from the designing Foe.  
They once were deem'd a People fierce and rude ;  
Their savage hands in Human blood imbru'd ;  
But by my care (for I must claim the merit)  
The world now owns that virtue they inherit.  
Not a more honest, or more gen'rous Race  
Can bless a Sov'reign, or a Nation grace.  
With these I frequent pass the social day :  
No Broils, nor Feuds, but all is sport and play.  
My will 's their Law, and Justice is my Will,  
Thus Friends we always were, and Friends are still.  
Not so the Mountaineers, a treach'rous Race ;  
In stature tall, but meagre in the Face.

To Europeans long have they been known,  
 And all their Vices, these have made their own.  
 Not theirs the friendly visit ; nor the feast  
 Of social intercourse ; but like brute beast,  
 They greedily devour the reeking meal :  
 And then get drunk and quarrel, lie, and steal.

The Codfish now in shoals come on the coast,  
 (A Fish'ry this, our Nation's chiefest boast)  
 Now numerous Caplin crowd along the Shore ;  
 Tho' great their numbers, yet their Foes seem more ;  
 Whilst Birds of rapine hover o'er their Heads,  
 Voracious Fish in myriads throng their Beds.  
 With these our Hooks we artfully disguise,  
 And soon the glutton Cod becomes our Prize.  
 Not one stands idle ; each Man knows his post,  
 Nor Day, nor Night, a moment must be lost.  
 The western Wind of low Ice clears the Sea,  
 And leaves to welcome Ships a passage free.  
 Yet huge large Isles of wond'rous bulk remain,  
 (To drive off which, the Wind still blows in vain)  
 In size, surpassing far thy bulk, O Paul ! \*  
 Immeasurably wide, and deep, and tall.  
 To Seaward oft' we cast an anxious eye,  
 At length th' expected Ship with pleasure spy.  
 Impatient Joy then seizes ev'ry Breast,  
 And till we've boarded her Adieu to rest.

---

\* St. Paul's, London.

Eager the News to learn, from Friends to hear ;  
The long seal'd Letter hastily we tear.—  
The Cargo landed, and the Ship laid by,  
To Fishing straight, the jolly Sailors hie.

If you love Sporting, go to LABRADOR :  
Of Game of various sorts, no land has more.  
There you may suit your Taste, as you're inclin'd,  
From the fierce White-bear to the timid Hind.  
Of Fishing too, you there may have your fill,  
Or in the Sea, or in the purling Rill.  
Of feather'd Game, variety you'll find,  
And plenty you may kill, if you're not blind.

If in the shooting Bears, or black or white,  
If in this larger Game, you take delight,  
In summer time, to some large Stream repair,  
Yet mind no Salmon-crew inhabit there.  
This savage Tribe, averse to social joys,  
Frequent those parts, most free from Men and noise ;  
Save, where the Cataract's stupendous height,  
Stops the fleet Salmon in their sportive flight.  
Bears in abundance oft' frequent this place,  
And noble Skins your Victory will grace.  
Of the Black-bear you need not be afraid ;  
But killing White ones, is a dangerous Trade.  
In this be cool, and well direct your Lead,  
And take your Aim at either Heart or Head ;

For struck elsewhere, your Piece not level'd true,  
Not long you'll live, your erring hand to rue.  
To kill this Beast, the Rifle I like best ;  
With Elbows on my Knees my Gun I rest.  
For self-defence, the double Gun I prize,  
Loaded with Shot, directed at his Eyes.

Or would you rather a stout Rein-deer kill,  
(July now in) observe and climb some hill ;  
Environ'd by extent of open ground ;  
For there the Rein-deer at this time are found.  
Nor walk about, but from a Station watch,  
And soon his motions with your Eye you'll catch.  
Be steady now ; with cautious Eye explore  
The Wind's true quarter, or your sport is o'er.  
Nor less his Eye and Ear demand your care ;  
No Beast more quick can see, more quick can hear.  
Yet off' his curious eye invites his fate,  
And makes him see his Error when too late.  
With strict Attention all your ground survey ;  
To steal up Wind, then take your silent way.  
Shoes with fur soles, the sportsman ought to wear,  
Your lightest footsteps, else, he's sure to hear.  
If unperceiv'd you've work'd with toil and pain,  
Lie still awhile till you your Breath regain.  
A Deer in feeding looks upon the ground :  
Then to advance the surest time is found.

When broadside to you, and his head is down,  
Aim at his Heart, but, and he drops your own.  
Observe, no ball will kill these Creatures dead,  
Save such, as strike the Spine, the Heart, or Head.  
Struck in those mortal parts, Death quick comes on ;  
But wounded elsewhere, sick, he will lie down ;  
There let him lie : anon, with cautious tread,  
Steal softly up, and shoot him through the head.  
But shou'd it chance the Deer keeps open ground,  
Where, to approach him, shelter is not found,  
And, Night now near, you cannot longer wait,  
Try this device, it may draw on his fate :  
Full to his view, and motionless appear ;  
This oft excites him to approach you near.  
He then will stop, to take a careful view ;  
Be ready with you Gun, and level true.

    If the voracious Wolf shou'd please you more,  
All sandy beaches you must well explore.  
Chiefly, by Lakes, or by a River side ;  
(In Summer, in the Woods themselves they hide ;)   
Be careful not to walk along the Strand,  
But at convenient places there to land.  
His tracks discover'd, seek some snug retreat,  
And patient lie, till with your Game you meet.  
A Wolf alone, is not your only chance ;  
Perhaps a Bear, or Deer may soon advance.  
For various reasons, when the water's low,  
All Beasts along the Shore delight to go.



If safely hidden, you have naught to mind,  
But, that your Game shan't have you in the wind.

When August comes, if on the Coast you be,  
Thousands of fine Curlews, you'll daily see :  
Delicious Bird ! not one with thee can vie !  
(Not rich in plumage, but in flavour high)  
Nor Ortolan, nor Cock, with trail on toast,  
Of high-fed Epicures, the pride and boast !  
Young Geese too now, in numbers crowd the shore ;  
Such are the Dainties of our LABRADOR.

If you wou'd wish with Hares to sport awhile,  
You're sure to find them on each barren Isle :  
But shou'd you there, the sign of Foxes trace,  
Your Sport is o'er : No Hares frequent that place.  
Grouse, Ptarmigan, and various sorts of Game,  
With Birds and Beasts too tedious here to name,  
You'll find in p'enty through the Year to kill ;  
No Game-Laws there to thwart the Sportsman's Will.

September comes, the Stag's in season now ;  
Of Ven'son, far the Richest you'll allow.  
No Long-legg'd, Ewe-neck'd, Shambling Brute ;  
In him strength, beauty, size, each other suit.  
His branching Horns, majestic to the view,  
Have points (for I have counted) seventy-two.  
But do you think, you'll all this pleasure share,  
And, when fatigu'd, to some good Inn repair ;

There on a Chop, or Steak, in comfort dine,  
And smack your Lips, o'er glass of gen'rous Wine?  
No, no; in this our Land of Liberty,  
Thousands of miles you'll walk, but no House see.  
When Night comes on, it matters not a Rush,  
Whether you sleep in that, or t'other Bush,  
If Game you've kill'd, your Supper you may eat;  
If not, to-morrow you'll be sharper set.  
Yourself, both Cook and Chamberlain must be,  
Or neither, Bed, nor Supper will you see.  
Drink you will want not, Water's near at hand;  
Nature's best Tap! and always at Command.

Now Works of various kinds, employ all hands;  
Each to his Post; for no one idle stands.  
The Salmon now we pack; the next our care,  
The Codfish for the Market, to prepare.  
Crews to their Winter-quarters now we send;  
Whilst some, the Firewood fell; Nets, others mend.  
The Furrier now, with care his Traps looks o'er,  
These he puts out in paths, along the Shore,  
For the rich Fox; although not yet in kind,  
His half-price Skin, our Labour's worth we find.  
And when the Beaver lands, young Trees to cut,  
Others he sets for his incautious foot.  
On Rubbing-places, too, with nicest care,  
Traps for the Otter, he must next prepare.  
Then Deathfalls, in the old tall Woods he makes,  
With Traps between, and the rich Sable takes.

Now cast your Eyes around, stern Winter see,  
His progress making, on each fading Tree.  
The yellow leaf, th' effect of nightly frost,  
Proclaims his Visit, to our dreary Coast.  
Fish, Fowl, and Ven'son, now our Tables grace ;  
Roast Beaver too, and e'ery Beast of chase.  
Luxurious living this ! who'd wish for more ?  
Were QUIN alive, he'd haste to LABRADOR !

Some new variety, next Month you'll find ;  
The stately Stag now seeks his much-lov'd Hind.  
Grown bold with Love, he stalks along the plains ;  
And e'en, to fly from Man now oft disdains.  
If, in your Walks, you meet this noble Brute,  
And with him with his progress to dispute ;  
Be cool, collected ; let him come quite near ;  
Then take your Aim well, and you've nought to fear.  
If struck not dead, reluctantly he flies ;  
And soon grows faint ; then trembling, falls and dies.  
But shou'd a sudden Panic seize your frame,  
And fear misguide you, in your Point and Aim,  
Your Error's fatal ; 'tis in vain you fly,  
T'evade the fury of your Enemy.

Now Eider-ducks fly South, along the shore ;  
In milder Climes, to pass the winter o'er.  
At some fit Point, there take your secret stand,  
And numbers you may kill, from off the land.

All this is pleasure ; but a Man of Sense,  
Looks to his Traps ; 'tis they bring in the Pence.  
The Otter-season's short ; and soon the frost  
Will freeze your Traps, then all your Labour's lost.  
Of Beaver too, one Week will yield you more,  
Than later, you can hope for, in a Score.  
In paths, the Foxes now, will nightly cruise ;  
But when snow'd up, no longer paths they use.

November in ; the Ships must now be gone,  
Or wait the Winter, for the Spring's return.  
The Lakes are fast ; the Rivers cease to flow ;  
Now comes the cheerles Day of Frost and Snow.  
In chains of Ice, the purling stream is bound ;  
Black Woods remain ; but Verdure is not found.  
And Here we feel, the Tyrants iron sway,  
Till a more genial Sun, returns with May.  
Seals now we take ; which, when the Frost's severe,  
In crowded Shoals, along the Coast appear.  
Hamper'd in strong-mesh'd Toils, in vain they dive ;  
Their Freedom to regain, in vain they strive ;  
Strangled they die ; and with their Skins and Oil,  
Amplly repay expense, and Time, and Toil.  
By Christmas-Day, this work is always o'er,  
And Seals and Nets, safe landed on the shore.

Now blows December with a keener blast ;  
And Ocean's self, in Icy Chains birds fast.

Ascend yon Mountain's top ; extend your view  
O'er Neptune's trackless Empire ; nor will you,  
In all his vast Domain, an Opening have,  
Where foams the Billow, or where heaves the Wave.  
A dreary Desert all, of Ice and Snow,  
Which forming Hills, fast into Mountains grow.  
So cutting cold, now blust'ring Boreas blows,  
None can with naked Face, his blasts oppose.  
But well wrapp'd up, we travel out secure,  
And find Health's blessings, in an Air so pure.

Now to his Cave the Black-bear hies his way,  
Where, lock'd in Sleep, he spends both Night and Day ;  
Nor, till a milder Sun revives his Blood,  
Wakes from his Dreams, to prowls abroad for food.  
Not so the White one ; ever on the stray  
In quest of Seals, his present only prey.  
This monster fierce and strong, you need not fear,  
If that your Dog attack him in the rear.  
There teas'd, he wields about his pond'rous Frame,  
And gives the Sportsman time to take his Aim.  
But shou'd your untaught Cur attack before,  
Both Dog and Master soon will be no more.

To barren ground, the Fox-traps now we shift,  
Where they can stand secure, and free from Drift ;  
Bait well your Trap ; observe too how it lies ;  
And soon, a Fox, or Wolf, will be your prize :

For Wolves, in plenty, on such ground appear,  
Compell'd by Hunger, there to seek for Deer.  
Oft have I seen this Animal display,  
Much artful skill, in hunting down his prey.  
The Herd descried, he slyly creeps up near ;  
Then, rushing forward, singles out his Deer.  
Greedy of Blood, and with keen Hunger press'd,  
This he pursues, regardless of the rest.  
With well strung Sinews, both maintain the Strife,  
The one for Food—the other runs for Life.  
If light the Snow, the Deer evades the Chase ;  
If drifted hard, the Wolf supports his pace.  
Then, bold with fear, he turns upon his Foe,  
And oft'times deals him a most fatal blow.  
But oft'ner falls a victim in the fray,  
And to his ruthless Jaws becomes a prey.

We'll shift the Scene, and to the Woods repair,  
And see what various Works are doing there.  
In yonder Birchen grove, there lives a Crew,  
Employ'd in mending Casks, and making new.  
This wood of Spruce, which rises to the sky,  
The Fishery's future Shipping will supply.  
Some fell the Trees, and some saw out the Stock,  
Whilst others form the Vessel in the Dock.  
In these Employments, Winter's pass'd away ;  
No change is found, till near the approach of May.

Returning small Birds then the Country fill,  
And Cock-grouse chatter on each barren Hill.  
The Ice parts from the Shore, and now the Ducks  
Their Northward course beat back in num'rous flocks.  
Deer in small Herds the same route bend their way,  
Affording pastime for your Gun each day.  
All Animals their Winter-quarters leave,  
And Ocean, now awake, begins to heave.  
Ice, rotten grown, in ev'ry Lake you'll see,  
And swelling Rivers, from their Bonds set free.  
The Woodmen now with Sledges, on the Snow,  
Their Winter's Work draw out and homeward go.  
What's yet to do, must instantly be done,  
For other Work must shortly be begun.  
Shallops now launched, the crews no longer stay,  
But in their Boats, bring all their Work away.  
In such like Toils and Sports, the Year goes round,  
And for each day, some Work or Pleasure's found.  
And now to finish this long task of mine,  
For each day in the year behold a line.



