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February.

otherwise the Governor would have saluted me at my departure, as before; but as those honours could not possibly be of any service to my expedition, I readily relinquished every thing of the kind; and in lieu of it, the Governor, officers, and people, insisted on giving me three cheers.

After leaving the Factory, we continued our course in much the same direction as in my former journey, till we arrived at Seal River; when, instead of crossing it, and walking on the barren grounds as before, we followed the course of the river, except in two particular places, where the bends tended so much to the South, that by crossing two necks of land not more than five or six miles wide, we saved the walking of near twenty miles each time, and still came to the main river again.

The weather had been so remarkably boisterous and changeable, that we were frequently obliged to continue two or three nights in the same place. To make up for this inconveniency, deer were so plentiful for the first eight or ten days, that the Indians killed as many as was necessary; but we were all so heavy laden that we could not possibly take much of the meat with us. This I soon perceived to be a great evil, which exposed us to such frequent inconveniences, that in case of not killing any thing for three or four days together, we were in great want of provisions; we seldom, however, went to bed entirely supperless till

till the eighth of March ; when though we had only walked about eight miles that morning, and expended all the remainder of the day in hunting, we could not produce a single thing at night, not even a partridge ! nor had we discerned the track of any thing that day, which was likely to afford us hopes of better success in the morning. This being the case, we prepared some hooks and lines ready to angle for fish, as our tent was then by the side of a lake belonging to Seal River, which seemed by its situation to afford some prospect of success.

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8th.

Early in the morning we took down our tent, and moved about five miles to the West by South, to a part of the lake that seemed more commodious for fishing than that where we had been the night before. As soon as we arrived at this place, some were immediately employed cutting holes in the ice, while others pitched the tent, got firewood, &c. ; after which, for it was early in the morning, those who pitched the tent went a hunting, and at night one of them returned with a porcupine, while those who were angling caught several fine trout, which afforded us a plentiful supper, and we had some trifle left for breakfast.

9th.

Angling for fish under the ice in winter requires no other process, than cutting round holes in the ice from one to two feet diameter, and letting down a baited hook, which is always kept in motion, not only to prevent

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prevent the water from freezing so soon as it would do if suffered to remain quite still, but because it is found at the same time to be a great means of alluring the fish to the hole; for it is always observed that the fish in those parts will take a bait which is in motion, much sooner than one that is at rest.

19th.

Early in the morning we again pursued our angling, and all the forenoon being expended without any success, we took down our tent and pitched it again about eight miles farther to the Westward, on the same lake, where we cut more holes in the ice for angling, and that

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night caught several fine pike. The next day we moved about five miles to the South West, down a small river, where we pitched our tent; and having set four fishing nets, in the course of the day we caught many fine fish, particularly pike, trout, tittymeg, and a coarse kind of fish known in Hudson's Bay by the name of Methy*

To set a net under the ice, it is first necessary to ascertain its exact length, by stretching it out upon the ice near the part proposed for setting it. This being done, a number of round holes are cut in the ice, at ten or twelve feet distance from each other, and as many in number as will be sufficient to stretch the net at its full length. A line is then passed under the ice, by means

* The Methy are generally caught with a hook; and the best time for that sport is in the night; and if the night be dark, the better.

of a long light pole, which is first introduced at one of the end holes, and, by means of two forked sticks, this pole is easily conducted, or passed from one hole to another, under the ice, till it arrives at the last. The pole is then taken out, and both ends of the line being properly secured, is always ready for use. The net is made fast to one end of the line by one person, and hauled under the ice by a second; a large stone is tied to each of the lower corners, which serves to keep the net expanded, and prevents it rising from the bottom with every waft of the current. The Europeans settled in Hudson's Bay proceed much in the same manner, though they in general take much more pains; but the above method is found quite sufficient by the Indians.

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In order to search a net thus set, the two end holes only are opened; the line is veered away by one person, and the net hauled from under the ice by another; after all the fish are taken out, the net is easily hauled back to its former station, and there secured as before.

As this place seemed likely to afford us a constant supply of fish, my guide proposed to stay here till the geese began to fly, which in those Northern parts is seldom before the middle of May. His reasons for so doing seemed well founded: "The weather, he said, " is at this time too cold to walk on the barren " grounds, and the woods from this part lead so much

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“ to the Westward, that were we to continue travelling
 “ in any tolerable shelter, our course would not be
 “ better than West South West, which would only be
 “ going out of our way ; whereas, if we should remain
 “ here till the weather permit us to walk due North,
 “ over the barren grounds, we shall then in one month
 “ get farther advanced on our journey, than if we
 “ were to continue travelling all the remainder of the
 “ winter in the sweep of the woods.”

These reasons appeared to me very judicious, and as the plan seemed likely to be attended with little trouble, it met with my entire approbation. That being the case, we took additional pains in building our tent, and made it as commodious as the materials and situation would admit.

To pitch an Indian's tent in winter, it is first necessary to search for a level piece of dry ground ; which cannot be ascertained but by thrusting a stick through the snow down to the ground, all over the proposed part. When a convenient spot is found, the snow is then cleared away in a circular form to the very moss ; and when it is proposed to remain more than a night or two in one place, the moss is also cut up and removed, as it is very liable when dry to take fire, and occasion much trouble to the inhabitants. A quantity of poles are then procured, which are generally proportioned both in number and length to the

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size of the tent cloth, and the number of persons it is intended to contain. If one of the poles should not happen to be forked, two of them are tied together near the top, then raised erect, and their butts or lower ends extended as wide as the proposed diameter of the tent; the other poles are then set round at equal distances from each other, and in such order, that their lower ends form a complete circle, which gives boundaries to the tent on all sides: the tent cloth is then fastened to a light pole, which is always raised up and put round the poles from the weather side, so that the two edges that lap over and form the door are always to the leeward. It must be understood that this method is only in use when the Indians are moving from place to place every day; for when they intend to continue any time in one place, they always make the door of their tent to face the South.

The tent cloth is usually of thin Moose leather, dressed and made by the Indians, and in shape it nearly resembles a fan-mount inverted; so that when the largest curve incloses the bottom of the poles, the smaller one is always sufficient to cover the top; except a hole, which is designedly left open to serve the double purpose of chimney and window.

The fire is always made on the ground in the center, and the remainder of the floor, or bottom of the tent, is covered all over with small branches of the pine tree,
which

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which serve both for seats and beds. A quantity of pine tops and branches are laid round the bottom of the poles on the outside, over which the eves of the tent is staked down; a quantity of snow is then packed over all, which excludes great part of the external air, and contributes greatly to the warmth within. The tent here described is such as is made use of by the Southern Indians, and the same with which I was furnished at the Factory; for that made use of by the Northern Indians is made of different materials, and is of a quite different shape, as shall be described hereafter.

The situation of our tent at this time was truly pleasant, particularly for a spring residence; being on a small elevated point, which commanded an extensive prospect over a large lake, the shores of which abounded with wood of different kinds, such as pine, larch, birch, and poplar; and in many places was beautifully contrasted with a variety of high hills, that shewed their snowy summits above the tallest woods. About two hundred yards from the tent was a fall, or rapid, which the swiftness of the current prevents from freezing in the coldest winters. At the bottom of this fall, which empties itself into the above lake, was a fine sheet of open water near a mile in length, and at least half a mile in breadth; by the margin of which we had our fishing nets set, all in open view from the tent.

The

The remaining part of this month passed on without any interruption, or material occurrence, to disturb our repose, worth relating; our fishing nets provided us with daily food, and the Indians had too much philosophy about them to give themselves much additional trouble; for during the whole time not one of them offered to look for a partridge, or any thing else which could yield a change of diet.

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As the time may now be supposed to have lain heavy on my hands, it may not be improper to inform the reader how I employed it. In the first place, I embraced every favourable opportunity of observing the latitude of the place, the mean of which was $58^{\circ} 46' 30''$ North; and the longitude by account was $5^{\circ} 57'$ West, from Prince of Wales's Fort. I then corrected my reckoning from my last observation; brought up my journal, and filled up my chart, to the place of our residence. I built also some traps, and caught a few martins; and by way of saving my ammunition, set some snares for partridges. The former is performed by means of a few logs, so arranged that when the martin attempts to take away the bait laid for him, he with very little struggle pulls down a small post that supports the whole weight of the trap; when, if the animal be not killed by the weight of the logs, he is confined till he be frozen to death, or killed by the hunter going his rounds.

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To snare partridges requires no other process than making a few little hedges across a creek, or a few short hedges projecting at right angles from the side of an island of willows, which those birds are found to frequent. Several openings must be left in each hedge, to admit the birds to pass through, and in each of them a snare must be set; so that when the partridges are hopping along the edge of the willows to feed, which is their usual custom, some of them soon get into the snares, where they are confined till they are taken out. I have caught from three to ten partridges in a day by this simple contrivance; which requires no farther attendance than going round them night and morning.

I have already observed that nothing material happened to disturb our repose till the first of April, when to our great surprise the fishing nets did not afford us a single fish. Though some of the preceding days had been pretty successful, yet my companions, like true Indians, seldom went to sleep till they had cleared the tent of every article of provision. As nothing was to be caught in the nets, we all went out to angle; but in this we were equally unsuccessful, as we could not procure one fish the whole day. This sudden change of circumstances alarmed one of my companions so much, that he began to think of resuming the use of his gun, after having laid it by for near a month.

Early

Early in the morning we arose ; when my guide Con-ne-e-quefe went a hunting, and the rest attended the nets and hooks near home ; but all with such bad success, that we could not procure enough in one day to serve two men for a supper. This, instead of awakening the rest of my companions, sent them to sleep ; and scarcely any of them had the prudence to look at the fishing nets, though they were not more than two or three hundred yards from the tent door.

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My guide, who was a steady man, and an excellent hunter, having for many years been accustomed to provide for a large family, seemed by far the most industrious of all my crew ; he closely pursued his hunting for several days, and seldom returned to the tent till after dark, while those at the tent passed most of their time in smoking and sleeping.

Several days passed without any signs of relief, till the 10th, when my guide continued out longer than ordinary, which made us conjecture that he had met with strangers, or seen some deer, or other game, which occasioned his delay. We all therefore lay down to sleep, having had but little refreshment for the three preceding days, except a pipe of tobacco and a draught of water ; even partridges had become so scarce that not one was to be got ; the heavy thaws had driven them all out towards the barren grounds. About midnight, to our
great

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great joy, our hunter arrived, and brought with him the blood and fragments of two deer that he had killed. This unexpected success soon roused the sleepers, who, in an instant, were busily employed in cooking a large kettle of broth, made with the blood, and some fat and scraps of meat shred small, boiled in it. This might be reckoned a dainty dish at any time, but was more particularly so in our present almost famished condition.

11th.

After partaking of this refreshment, we resumed our rest, and early in the morning set out in a body for the place where the deer were lying. As we intended to make our stay but short, we left our tent standing, containing all our baggage. On our arrival at the place of destination, some were immediately employed in making a hut or barrocado with young pine trees; while one man skinned the deer, the remainder went a hunting, and in the afternoon returned to the hut, after having killed two deer.

Several days were now spent in feasting and gluttony; during which the Indians killed five more deer and three fine beavers; finding at last, however, that there was little prospect of procuring either more deer or beavers, we determined to return to our tent, with the remains of what we had already obtained.

The flesh of these deer, though none of the largest, might with frugality have served our small number, (being only

only six) for some time; but my companions, like other Indians, feasted day and night while it lasted; and were so indolent and unthinking, as not to attend properly to the fishing-nets; so that many fine fish, which had been entangled in the nets, were entirely spoiled, and in about twelve or fourteen days we were nearly in as great distress for provisions as ever.

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April.
22d.

During the course of our long inactivity, Saw-sop-okishac, commonly called Sossop, my principal Southern Indian, as he was cutting some birch for spoons, dishes, and other necessary household furniture, had the misfortune to cut his leg in such a manner as to be incapable of walking; and the other Southern Indian, though a much younger man, was so indolent as not to be of any service to me, except hauling part of our luggage, and eating up part of the provisions which had been provided by the more industrious part of my companions.

On the twenty-fourth, early in the day, a great body of Indians was seen to the South West, on the large lake by the side of which our tent stood. On their arrival at our tent we discovered them to be the wives and families of the Northern Indian goose-hunters, who were gone to Prince of Wales's Fort to attend the season. They were bound toward the barren ground, there to wait the return of their husbands and relations from the Fort, after the termination of the goose-season.

24th.

My

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April
27th.

My guide having for some days past determined to move toward the barren ground, this morning we took down our tent, packed up our luggage, and proceeded to the Eastward in the same track we came; but Sossop being so lame as to be obliged to be hauled on a sledge, I easily prevailed on two of the Indians who had joined us on the 24th, and who were pursuing the same road, to perform this service for him.

29th.

May
13th.

After two days good walking in our old track, we arrived at a part of Seal River called She-than-nee, where we pitched our tent and set both our fishing-nets, intending to stay there till the geese began to fly. Though we had seen several swans and some geese flying to the Northward, it was the thirteenth of May before we could procure any. On that day the Indians killed two swans and three geese. This in some measure alleviated our distress, which at that time was very great; having had no other subsistence for five or six days, than a few cranberries; that we gathered from the dry ridges where the snow was thawed away in spots; for though we set our fishing-nets in the best judged places, and angled at every part that was likely to afford success, we only caught three small fish during the whole time. Many of the Northern Indians, who had joined us on the 24th of April, remained in our company for some time; and though I well knew they had had a plentiful winter, and had then good stocks of dried meat by them, and
were

were also acquainted with our distresses, they never gave me or my Southern companions the least supply, although they had in secret amply provided for our Northern guides.

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May.

By the nineteenth, the geese, swans, ducks, gulls, and other birds of passage, were so plentiful, that we killed every day as many as were sufficient for our support; and having stopped a few days to recruit our spirits after so long a fast, on the twenty-third we began once more to proceed toward the barren ground. Sossop having now perfectly recovered from his late misfortune, every thing seemed to have a favourable appearance; especially as my crew had been augmented to twelve persons, by the addition of one of my guide's wives, and five others, whom I had engaged to assist in carrying our luggage; and I well knew, from the season of the year, that hauling would soon be at an end for the summer.

19th.

23d.

The thaws having been by this time so great as to render travelling in the woods almost impracticable, we continued our course to the East on Seal River, about sixteen miles farther, when we came to a small river, and a string of lakes connected with it, that tended to the North.

The weather for some time was remarkably fine and pleasant. Game of all kinds was exceedingly plentiful,

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1st.

and we continued our course to the Northward on the above river and lakes till the first of June, when we arrived at a place called Beralzone. In our way thither, beside killing more geese than was necessary, we shot two deer. One of my companions had now the misfortune to shatter his hand very much by the bursting of a gun; but as no bones were broken, I bound up the wound, and with the assistance of some of Turlington's drops, yellow basilicon, &c. which I had with me, soon restored the use of his hand; so that in a very short time he seemed to be out of all danger.

4th.

After stopping a few days at Beralzone, to dry a little venison and a few geese, we again proceeded to the Northward on the barren ground; for on our leaving this place we soon got clear of all the woods.

5th.

The snow was by this time so soft as to render walking in snow-shoes very laborious; and though the ground was bare in many places, yet at times, and in particular places, the snow-drifts were so deep, that we could not possibly

6th.

do without them. By the sixth, however, the thaws were so general, and the snows so much melted, that as our snow-shoes were attended with more trouble than service,

10th.

we all consented to throw them away. Till the tenth, our sledges proved serviceable, particularly in crossing lakes and ponds on the ice; but that mode of travelling now growing dangerous on account of the great thaws, we determined

determined to throw away our sledges, and every one to take a load on his back.

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This I found to be much harder work than the winter carriage, as my part of the luggage consisted of the following articles, viz. the quadrant and its stand, a trunk containing books, papers, &c. a land-compass, and a large bag containing all my wearing apparel; also a hatchet, knives, files, &c. beside several small articles, intended for presents to the natives. The awkwardness of my load, added to its great weight, which was upward of sixty pounds, and the excessive heat of the weather, rendered walking the most laborious task I had ever encountered; and what considerably increased the hardship, was the badness of the road, and the coarseness of our lodging, being, on account of the want of proper tents, exposed to the utmost severity of the weather. The tent we had with us was not only too large, and unfit for barren ground service, where no poles were to be got, but we had been obliged to cut it up for shoes, and each person carried his own share. Indeed my guide behaved both negligently and ungenerously on this occasion; as he never made me, or my Southern Indians, acquainted with the nature of pitching tents on the barren ground; which had he done, we could easily have procured a set of poles before we left the woods. He took care, however, to procure a set for himself and his wife; and when the tent was divided, though he made shift to get a piece large enough to serve him for
a com-

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a complete little tent, he never asked me or my Southern Indians to put our heads into it.

Beside the inconvenience of being exposed to the open air, night and day, in all weathers, we experienced real distress from the want of victuals. When provisions were procured, it often happened that we could not make a fire, so that we were obliged to eat the meat quite raw; which at first, in the article of fish particularly, was as little relished by my Southern companions as myself.

Notwithstanding these accumulated and complicated hardships, we continued in perfect health and good spirits; and my guide, though a perfect niggard of his provisions, especially in times of scarcity, gave us the strongest assurance of soon arriving at a plentiful country, which would not only afford us a certain supply of provisions, but where we should meet with other Indians, who probably would be willing to carry part of our luggage. This news naturally gave us great consolation; for at that time the weight of our constant loads was so great, that when Providence threw any thing in our way, we could not carry above two days provisions with us, which indeed was the chief reason of our being so frequently in want.

From the twentieth to the twenty-third we walked every day near twenty miles, without any other subsistence than

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June.

than a pipe of tobacco, and a drink of water when we pleased: even partridges and gulls, which some time before were in great plenty, and easily procured, were now so scarce and shy, that we could rarely get one; and as to geese, ducks, &c. they had all flown to the Northward to breed and molt.

Early in the morning of the twenty-third, we set out as usual, but had not walked above seven or eight miles before we saw three musk-oxen grazing by the side of a small lake. The Indians immediately went in pursuit of them; and as some of them were expert hunters, they soon killed the whole of them. This was no doubt very fortunate; but, to our great mortification, before we could get one of them skinned, such a fall of rain came on, as to put it quite out of our power to make a fire; which, even in the finest weather, could only be made of moss, as we were near an hundred miles from any woods. This was poor comfort for people who had not broke their fast for four or five days. Necessity, however, has no law; and having been before initiated into the method of eating raw meat, we were the better prepared for this repast: but this was by no means so well relished, either by me or the Southern Indians, as either raw venison or raw fish had been: for the flesh of the musk-ox is not only coarse and tough, but smells and tastes so strong of musk as to make it very disagreeable when raw, though it is tolerable eating when properly cooked. The weather continued so
remark-

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remarkably bad, accompanied with constant heavy rain, snow, and sleet, and our necessities were so great by the time the weather permitted us to make a fire, that we had nearly eat to the amount of one buffalo quite raw.

Notwithstanding I mustered up all my philosophy on this occasion, yet I must confess that my spirits began to fail me. Indeed our other misfortunes were greatly aggravated by the inclemency of the weather, which was not only cold, but so very wet that for near three days and nights I had not one dry thread about me. When the fine weather returned, we made a fire, though it was only of moss, as I have already observed; and having got my cloaths dry, all things seemed likely to go on in the old channel, though that was indifferent enough; but I endeavoured, like a sailor after a storm, to forget past misfortunes.

None of our natural wants, if we except thirst, are so distressing, or hard to endure, as hunger; and in wandering situations, like that which I now experienced, the hardship is greatly aggravated by the uncertainty with respect to its duration, and the means most proper to be used to remove it, as well as by the labour and fatigue we must necessarily undergo for that purpose, and the disappointments which too frequently frustrate our best concerted plans and most strenuous exertions: it not only enfeebles the body, but depresses the spirits, in spite of every

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June.

every effort to prevent it. Besides, for want of action, the stomach so far loses its digestive powers, that after long fasting it resumes its office with pain and reluctance. During this journey I have too frequently experienced the dreadful effects of this calamity, and more than once been reduced to so low a state by hunger and fatigue, that when Providence threw any thing in my way, my stomach has scarcely been able to retain more than two or three ounces, without producing the most oppressive pain. Another disagreeable circumstance of long fasting is, the extreme difficulty and pain attending the natural evacuations for the first time; and which is so dreadful, that of it none but those who have experienced can have an adequate idea.

To record in detail each day's fare since the commencement of this journey, would be little more than a dull repetition of the same occurrences. A sufficient idea of it may be given in a few words, by observing that it may justly be said to have been either all feasting, or all famine: sometimes we had too much, seldom just enough, frequently too little, and often none at all. It will be only necessary to say that we have fasted many times two whole days and nights; twice upwards of three days; and once, while at She-than-nee, near seven days, during which we tasted not a mouthful of any thing, except a few cranberries, water, scraps of old leather, and burnt bones. On those pressing occasions I have frequently seen the Indians examine their wardrobe, which

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which consisted chiefly of skin-clothing, and consider what part could best be spared; sometimes a piece of an old, half-rotten deer skin, and at others a pair of old shoes, were sacrificed to alleviate extreme hunger. The relation of such uncommon hardships may perhaps gain little credit in Europe; while those who are conversant with the history of Hudson's Bay, and who are thoroughly acquainted with the distress which the natives of the country about it frequently endure, may consider them as no more than the common occurrences of an Indian life, in which they are frequently driven to the necessity of eating one another

Knowing

* It is the general opinion of the Southern Indians, that when any of their tribe have been driven to the necessity of eating human flesh, they become so fond of it, that no person is safe in their company. And though it is well known they are never guilty of making this horrid repast but when driven to it by necessity, yet those who have made it are not only shunned, but so universally detested by all who know them, that no Indians will tent with them, and they are frequently murdered sily. I have seen several of those poor wretches who, unfortunately for them, have come under the above description, and though they were persons much esteemed before hunger had driven them to this act, were afterward so universally despised and neglected, that a smile never graced their countenances: deep melancholy has been seated on their brows, while the eye most expressively spoke the dictates of the heart, and seemed to say, "Why do you despise me for my misfortunes? the period" is probably not far distant, when you may be driven to the like necessity!"

In the Spring of the year 1775, when I was building Cumberland House, an Indian, whose name was Wapoos, came to the settlement, at a time when fifteen tents of Indians were on the plantations: they examined him very minutely, and found he had come a considerable way by himself, without a gun, or ammunition. This made many of them conjecture he had met with, and killed, some person by the way; and this was the more easily credited, from

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June.

26th.

30th.

Knowing that our constant loads would not permit us to carry much provisions with us, we agreed to continue a day or two to refresh ourselves, and to dry a little meat in the sun, as it thereby not only becomes more portable, but is always ready for use. On the twenty-sixth, all that remained of the musk-ox flesh being properly dried and fit for carriage, we began to proceed on our journey Northward, and on the thirtieth of June arrived at a small river, called Cathawhachaga, which empties itself into a large lake called Yath-kyed-whoie, or White Snow Lake. Here we found several tents of Northern Indians, who had been some time employed spearing deer in their canoes, as they crossed the above mentioned little river. Here also we met a Northern Indian Leader, or Captain, called Keelshies, and a small party of his crew, who were bound to Prince of Wales's Fort, with furs

from the care he took to conceal a bag of provisions, which he had brought with him, in a lofty pine-tree near the house.

Being a stranger, I invited him in, though I saw he had nothing for trade; and during that interview, some of the Indian women examined his bag, and gave it as their opinion that the meat it contained was human flesh: in consequence, it was not without the interference of some principal Indians, whose liberality of sentiment was more extensive than that in the others, the poor creature saved his life. Many of the men cleaned and loaded their guns; others had their bows and arrows ready; and even the women took possession of the hatchets, to kill this poor inoffensive wretch, for no crime but that of travelling about two hundred miles by himself, unassisted by fire-arms for support in his journey.

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July.

and other commodities for trade. When Keelsbies was made acquainted with the intent of my journey, he readily offered his service to bring me any thing from the Factory that we were likely to stand in need of; and though we were then in latitude $63^{\circ} 4'$ North, and longitude $7^{\circ} 12'$ West from Churchill, yet he promised to join us again, at a place appointed by my guide, by the setting in of the Winter. In consequence of this offer, I looked over our ammunition and other articles; and finding that a little powder, shot, tobacco, and a few knives, were likely to be of service before the journey could be completed, I determined to send a letter to the governor of Prince of Wales's Fort, to advise him of my situation, and to desire him to send by the bearer a certain quantity of the above articles; on which Keelsbies and his crew proceeded on their journey for the Factory the same day.

Cathawhachaga was the only river we had seen since the breaking up of the ice that we could not ford; and as we had not any canoes with us, we were obliged to get ferried across by the strange Indians. When we arrived on the North side of this river, where the Indians resided, my guide proposed to stop some time, to dry and pound some meat to take with us; to which I readily consented. We also set our fishing-nets, and caught a considerable quantity of very fine fish; such as titemeg, barble, &c.

The

The number of deer which crossed Cathawhachaga, during our stay there, was by no means equal to our expectations, and no more than just sufficient to supply our present wants ; so that after waiting several days in fruitless expectation, we began to prepare for moving ; and accordingly, on the sixth of July, we set out, though we had not at that time as much victuals belonging to our company as would furnish us a supper. During our stay here, we had each day got as much fish or flesh as was sufficient for present expenditure ; but, being in hopes of better times, saved none.

1770.

July.

6th.

Before we left Cathawhachaga, I made several observations for the latitude, and found it to be $63^{\circ} 4'$ North. I also brought up my journal, and filled up my chart to that time. Every thing being now ready for our departure, my guide informed me that in a few days a canoe would be absolutely necessary, to enable us to cross some unfordable rivers which we should meet, and could not avoid. This induced me to purchase one at the easy rate of a single knife, the full value of which did not exceed one penny. It must be observed, that the man who sold the canoe had no farther occasion for it, and was glad to take what he could get ; but had he been thoroughly acquainted with our necessities, he most assuredly would have had the conscience to have asked goods to the amount of ten beaver skins at least.

This

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July.

9th.

This additional piece of luggage obliged me to engage another Indian; and we were lucky enough at that time to meet with a poor forlorn fellow, who was fond of the office, having never been in a much better state than that of a beast of burthen. Thus, provided with a canoe, and a man to carry it, we left Cathawhachaga, as has been observed, on the sixth of July, and continued our course to the North by West, and North North West; and that night put up by the side of a small bay of White Snow Lake, where we angled, and caught several fine trout, some of which weighed not less than fourteen or sixteen pounds. In the night heavy rain came on, which continued three days; but the ninth proving fine weather, and the sun displaying his beams very powerfully, we dried our clothes, and proceeded to the Northward. Toward the evening, however, it began again to rain so excessively, that it was with much difficulty we kept our powder and books dry.

17th.

On the seventeenth, we saw many musk-oxen, several of which the Indians killed; when we agreed to stay here a day or two, to dry and pound * some of the carcases to take with us. The flesh of any animal, when it is thus prepared, is not only hearty food, but is always ready for

* To prepare meat in this manner, it requires no farther operation than cutting the lean parts of the animal into thin slices, and drying it in the sun, or by a slow fire, till, after beating it between two stones, it is reduced to a coarse powder.

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use, and at the same time very portable. In most parts of Hudson's Bay it is known by the name of Thew-hagon, but amongst the Northern Indians it is called Achees.

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July.

Having prepared as much dried flesh as we could transport, we proceeded to the Northward; and at our departure left a great quantity of meat behind us, which we could neither eat nor carry away. This was not the first time we had so done; and however wasteful it may appear, it is a practice so common among all the Indian tribes, as to be thought nothing of. On the twenty-second, we met several strangers, whom we joined in pursuit of the deer, &c. which were at this time so plentiful, that we got every day a sufficient number for our support, and indeed too frequently killed several merely for the tongues, marrow, and fat.

22nd.

After we had been some time in company with those Indians, I found that my guide seemed to hesitate about proceeding any farther; and that he kept pitching his tent backward and forward, from place to place, after the deer, and the rest of the Indians. On my asking him his reason for so doing; he answered, that as the year was too far advanced to admit of our arrival at the Coppermine River that Summer, he thought it more advisable to pass the Winter with some of the Indians then in company, and alleged that there could be no fear of our arriving at that river early in the Summer of one thousand seven hundred and seventy-one. As I could not pretend

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pretend to contradict him, I was entirely reconciled to his proposal; and accordingly we kept moving to the Westward with the other Indians. In a few days, many others joined us from different quarters; so that by the thirtieth of July we had in all above seventy tents, which did not contain less than six hundred persons. Indeed our encampment at night had the appearance of a small town; and in the morning, when we began to move, the whole ground (at least for a large space all round) seemed to be alive, with men, women, children, and dogs. Though the land was entirely barren, and destitute of every kind of herbage, except wish-a-capucca* and moss, yet the deer were so numerous that the Indians not only killed as many as were sufficient for our large number, but often several merely for the skins, marrow, &c. and left the carcases to rot, or to be devoured by the wolves, foxes, and other beasts of prey.

In our way to the Westward we came to several rivers, which, though small and of no note, were so deep as not to be fordable, particularly Doo-baunt River †. On those occasions only, we had recourse to our canoe, which, though of the common size, was too small to carry more

* Wish-a-capucca is the name given by the natives to a plant which is found all over the country bordering on Hudson's Bay; and an infusion of it is used as tea by all the Europeans settled in that country.

† This river, as well as all others deserving that appellation which I crossed during this part of my journey, ran to the East and North East; and both them and the lakes were perfectly fresh, and inhabited by fish that are well known never to frequent salt water.

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than two persons; one of whom always lies down at full length for fear of making the canoe top-heavy, and the other sits on his heels and paddles. This method of ferrying over rivers, though tedious, is the most expeditious way these poor people can contrive; for they are sometimes obliged to carry their canoes one hundred and fifty, or two hundred miles, without having occasion to make use of them; yet at times they cannot do without them; and were they not very small and portable, it would be impossible for one man to carry them, which they are often obliged to do, not only the distance above mentioned, but even the whole Summer.

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Aug.

The person I engaged at Cathawhachaga to carry my canoe proving too weak for the task, another of my crew was obliged to exchange loads with him, which seemed perfectly agreeable to all parties; and as we walked but short days journies, and deer were very plentiful, all things went on very smoothly. Nothing material happened till the eighth, when we were near losing the quadrant and all our powder from the following circumstance: the fellow who had been released from carrying the canoe proving too weak, as hath been already observed, had, after the exchange, nothing to carry but my powder and his own trifles; the latter were indeed very inconsiderable, not equal in size and weight to a soldier's knapsack. As I intended to have a little sport with the deer, and knowing his load to be much lighter than mine, I gave him the quadrant

6th.

8th.

G

and

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August.

and stand to carry, which he took without the least hesitation, or seeming ill-will. Having thus eased myself for the present of a heavy and cumbersome part of my load, I set out early in the morning with some of the Indian men; and after walking about eight or nine miles, saw, from the top of a high hill, a great number of deer feeding in a neighbouring valley; on which we laid down our loads and erected a flag, as a signal for the others to pitch their tents there for the night. We then pursued our hunting, which proved very successful. At night, however, when we came to the hill where we had left our baggage, I found that only part of the Indians had arrived, and that the man who had been entrusted with my powder and quadrant, had set off another way, with a small party of Indians that had been in our company that morning. The evening being far advanced, we were obliged to defer going in search of him till the morning, and as his track could not be easily discovered in the Summer, the Southern Indians, as well as myself, were very uneasy, fearing we had lost the powder, which was to provide us with food and raiment the remainder of our journey. The very uncourteous behaviour of the Northern Indians then in company, gave me little hopes of receiving assistance from them, any longer than I had wherewithal to reward them for their trouble and expence; for during the whole time I had been with them, not one of them had offered to give me the least morsel of victuals, without asking something in exchange, which, in general, was three times the value of what

what they could have got for the same articles, had they carried them to the Factory, though several hundred miles distant.

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So inconsiderate were those people, that wherever they met me, they always expected that I had a great assortment of goods to relieve their necessities; as if I had brought the Company's warehouse with me. Some of them wanted guns; all wanted ammunition, iron-work, and tobacco; many were solicitous for medicine; and others pressed me for different articles of clothing: but when they found I had nothing to spare, except a few nick-nacks and gew-gaws, they made no scruple of pronouncing me a "poor servant, noways like the Governor at the Factory, who, they said, they never saw, but he gave them something useful." It is scarcely possible to conceive any people so void of common understanding, as to think that the sole intent of my undertaking this fatiguing journey, was to carry a large assortment of useful and heavy implements, to give to all that stood in need of them; but many of them would ask me for what they wanted with the same freedom, and apparently with the same hopes of success, as if they had been at one of the Company's Factories. Others, with an air of more generosity, offered me furs to trade with at the same standard as at the Factory; without considering how unlikely it was that I should increase the enormous weight of my load with articles which could be of no more use to me in my present situation than they were to themselves.

This

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This unaccountable behaviour of the Indians occasioned much serious reflection on my part; as it shewed plainly how little I had to expect if I should, by any accident, be reduced to the necessity of depending upon them for support; so that, though I laid me down to rest, sleep was a stranger to me that night. The following beautiful lines of Dr. Young I repeated above an hundred times:

“ Tired Nature’s sweet restorer, balmy Sleep;
 “ He, like the world, his ready visit pays
 “ Where fortune smiles; the wretched he forsakes :
 “ Swift on his downy pinions flies from woe,
 “ And lights on lids unfully’d with a tear.” NIGHT THOUGHTS.

After passing the night in this melancholy manner, I got up at day-break, and, with the two Southern Indians, set out in quest of our deserter. Many hours elapsed in fruitless search after him, as we could not discover a single track in the direction which we were informed he had taken. The day being almost spent without the least appearance of success, I proposed repairing to the place where I had delivered the quadrant to him, in hopes of seeing some track in the moss that might lead to the way the Indians were gone whom our deserter had accompanied. On our arrival at that place, we found they had struck down toward a little river which they had crossed the morning before; and there, to our great joy, we found the quadrant and the bag of powder lying on the top of a high stone, but not a human being was to be seen. On
 examining

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August.

examining the powder, we found that the bag had been opened, and part of it taken out; but, notwithstanding our loss was very considerable, we returned with light hearts to the place at which we had been the night before, where we found our baggage safe, but all the Indians gone: they had, however, been so considerate as to set up marks to direct us what course to steer. By the time we had adjusted our bundles, the day was quite spent; seeing, however, a smoke, or rather a fire, in the direction we were ordered to steer, we bent our way towards it; and a little after ten o'clock at night came up with the main body of the Indians; when, after refreshing ourselves with a plentiful supper, the first morsel we had tasted that day, we retired to rest, which I at least enjoyed with better success than the preceding night.

rich.

In the morning of the eleventh we proceeded on to the West, and West by South; but on the twelfth did not move. This gave us an opportunity of endeavouring to ascertain the latitude by a meridian altitude, when we found the place to be in $63^{\circ} 10'$ North nearly. It proving rather cloudy about noon, though exceeding fine weather, I let the quadrant stand, in order to obtain the latitude more exactly by two altitudes; but, to my great mortification, while I was eating my dinner, a sudden gust of wind blew it down; and as the ground where it stood was very

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very stoney, the bubble, the sight-vane, and vernier, were entirely broke to pieces, which rendered the instrument useless. In consequence of this misfortune I resolved to return again to the Fort, though we were then in the latitude of $63^{\circ} 10'$ North, and about $10^{\circ} 40'$ West longitude from Churchill River.

CHAP

C H A P. III.

Transactions from the Time the Quadrant was broken,
till I arrived at the Factory.

Several strange Indians join us from the Northward.—They plundered me of all I had; but did not plunder the Southern Indians.—My guide plundered.—We begin our return to the Factory.—Meet with other Indians, who join our company.—Collect deer-skins for clothing, but could not get them dressed.—Suffer much hardship from the want of tents and warm clothing.—Most of the Indians leave us.—Meet with Matonabee.—Some account of him, and his behaviour to me and the Southern Indians.—We remain in his company some time.—His observations on my two unsuccessful attempts.—We leave him, and proceed to a place to which he directed us, in order to make snow-shoes and sledges.—Join Matonabee again, and proceed towards the Factory in his company.—Ammunition runs short.—Myself and four Indians set off post for the Factory.—Much bewildered in a snow storm; my dog is frozen to death; we lie in a bush of willows.—Proceed on our journey.—Great difficulty in crossing a jumble of rocks.—Arrive at the Fort.

THE day after I had the misfortune to break the quadrant, several Indians joined me from the Northward, some of whom plundered me and my companions of almost every useful article we had, among which was my gun; and notwithstanding we were then on the point of returning to the Factory, yet, as one of my companions' guns was a little out of order, the loss was likely to be severely

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August
13th.

1770.
August.

severely felt; but it not being in my power to recover it again, we were obliged to rest contented.

Nothing can exceed the cool deliberation of those villains; a committee of them entered my tent*. The ringleader seated himself on my left-hand. They first begged me to lend them my skipertogan † to fill a pipe of tobacco. After smoking two or three pipes, they asked me for several articles which I had not, and among others for a pack of cards; but on my answering that I had not any of the articles they mentioned, one of them put his hand on my baggage, and asked if it was mine. Before I could answer in the affirmative, he and the rest of his companions (six in number) had all my treasure spread on the ground. One took one thing, and another another, till at last nothing was left but the empty bag, which they permitted me to keep. At length, considering that, though I was going to the Factory, I should want a knife to cut my victuals, an awl to mend my shoes, and a needle to mend my other clothing, they readily gave me these articles, though not without making me understand that I ought to look upon

* This only consisted of three walking-sticks stuck into the ground, and a blanket thrown over them.

† Skipertogan is a small bag that contains a flint and steel, also a pipe and tobacco, as well as touchwood, &c. for making a fire. Some of these bags may be called truly elegant; being richly ornamented with beads, porcupine-quills, morse-hair, &c. a work always performed by the women; and they are, with much propriety, greatly esteemed by most Europeans for the neatness of their workmanship.

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it as a great favour. Finding them possessed of so much generosity, I ventured to solicit them for my razors; but thinking that one would be sufficient to shave me during my passage home, they made no scruple to keep the other; luckily they chose the worst. To complete their generosity, they permitted me to take as much soap as I thought would be sufficient to wash and shave me during the remainder of my journey to the Factory.

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August.

They were more cautious in plundering the Southern Indians, as the relation of such outrages being committed on them might occasion a war between the two nations; but they had nothing of that kind to dread from the English. However, the Northern Indians had address enough to talk my home-guard Indians out of all they had: so that before we left them, they were as clean swept as myself, excepting their guns, some ammunition, an old hatchet, an ice-chissel, and a file to sharpen them:

It may probably be thought strange that my guide, who was a Northern Indian, should permit his countrymen to commit such outrages on those under his charge; but being a man of little note, he was so far from being able to protect us, that he was obliged to submit to nearly the same outrage himself. On this occasion he assumed a great air of generosity; but the fact was, he gave freely what it was not in his power to protect.

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Early

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August.
19th.

Early in the morning of the nineteenth, I set out on my return, in company with several Northern Indians, who were bound to the Factory with furs and other commodities in trade. This morning the Indian who took my gun, returned it to me, it being of no use to him, having no ammunition. The weather for some time proved fine, and deer were very plentiful; but as the above ravagers had materially lightened my load, by taking every thing from me, except the quadrant, books, &c. this part of my journey was the easiest and most pleasant of any I had experienced since my leaving the Fort. In our way we frequently met with other Indians, so that scarcely a day passed without our seeing several smokes made by other strangers. Many of those we met joined our party, having furs and other commodities for trade.

31st.

The deer's hair being now of a proper length for clothing, it was necessary, according to the custom, to procure as many of their skins, while in season, as would make a suit of warm clothing for the Winter: and as each grown person requires the prime parts of from eight to eleven of those skins (in proportion to their size) to make a complete suit, it must naturally be supposed that this addition to my burden was very considerable. My load, however cumbersome and heavy, was yet very bearable; but, after I had carried it several weeks, it proved of no service; for we had not any women properly belonging to our company, consequently had not any person

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September.

person to dress them; and so uncivil were the other Indians, that they would neither exchange them for others of an inferior quality already dressed, nor permit their women to dress them for us, under pretence that they were always employed in the like duty for themselves and families, which was by no means the case; for many of them had sufficient time to have done every little service of that kind that we could have required of them. The truth was, they were too well informed of my poverty to do any acts of generosity, as they well knew I had it not then in my power to reward them for their trouble. I never saw a set of people that possessed so little humanity, or that could view the distresses of their fellow-creatures with so little feeling and unconcern; for though they seem to have a great affection for their wives and children, yet they will laugh at and ridicule the distress of every other person who is not immediately related to them.

This behaviour of the Indians made our situation very disagreeable; for as the fall advanced, we began to feel the cold very severely for want of proper clothing. We suffered also greatly from the inclemency of the weather, as we had no tent to shelter us. My guide was entirely exempted from all those inconveniences, having procured a good warm suit of clothing; and, as one of his wives had long before joined our party, he was provided with a tent, and every other necessary consistent

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September
15th.

with their manner of living: but the old fellow was so far from interesting himself in our behalf, that he had, for some time before, entirely withdrawn from our company; and though he then continued to carry the greatest part of our little remains of ammunition, yet he did not contribute in the smallest degree towards our support. As deer, however, were in great plenty, I felt little or no inconvenience from his neglect in this respect.

17th.

Provisions still continued very plentiful; which was a singular piece of good fortune, and the only circumstance which at this time could contribute to our happiness or safety; for notwithstanding the early season of the year, the weather was remarkably bad and severely cold, at least it appeared so to us, probably from having no kind of skin-clothing. In this forlorn state we continued our course to the South East; and, to add to the gloominess of our situation, most of the Northern Indians who had been in our company all the first part of the fall, were by this time gone a-head, as we could not keep up with them for want of snow-shoes.

20th.

In the evening of the twentieth, we were joined from the Westward by a famous Leader, called Matonabee, mentioned in my instructions; who, with his followers, or gang, was also going to Prince of Wales's Fort, with furs, and other articles for trade. This Leader, a youth, resided several years at the above Fort,

not only a perfect master of the Southern Indian language, but by being frequently with the Company's servants, had acquired several words of English, and was one of the men who brought the latest accounts of the Coppermine River; and it was on his information, added to that of one I-dot-le-ezey, (who is since dead,) that this expedition was set on foot.

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September.

The courteous behaviour of this stranger struck me very sensibly. As soon as he was acquainted with our distress, he got such skins as we had with us dressed for the Southern Indians, and furnished me with a good warm suit of otter and other skins: but, as it was not in his power to provide us with snow-shoes, being then on the barren ground, he directed us to a little river which he knew, and where there was a small range of woods, which, though none of the best, would, he said, furnish us with temporary snow-shoes and sledges, that might materially assist us during the remaining part of our journey. We spent several nights in company with this Leader, though we advanced towards the Fort at the rate of ten or twelve miles a day; and as provisions abounded, he made a grand feast for me in the Southern Indian style, where there was plenty of good eating, and the whole concluded with singing and dancing, after the Southern Indian style and manner. In this amusement my home-guard Indians bore a considerable part, as they were both men of some consequence

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October.

consequence when at home, and well known to Matonabbee: but among the other Northern Indians, to whom they were not known, they were held in no estimation; which indeed is not to be wondered at, when we consider that the value of a man among those people, is always proportioned to his abilities in hunting; and as my two Indians had not exhibited any great talents that way, the Northern Indians shewed them as much respect as they do in common to those of very moderate talents among themselves.

During my conversation with this Leader, he asked me very seriously, If I would attempt another journey for the discovery of the Copper-mines? And on my answering in the affirmative, provided I could get better guides than I had hitherto been furnished with, he said he would readily engage in that service, provided the Governor at the Fort would employ him. In answer to this, I assured him his offer would be glad'y accepted; and as I had already experienced every hardship that was likely to accompany any future trial, I was determined to complete the discovery, even at the risque of life itself. Matonabbee assured me, that by the accounts received from his own countrymen, the Southern Indians, and myself; it was very probable I might not experience so much hardship during the whole journey, as I had already felt, though scarcely advanced one third part of the journey.

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October.

He attributed all our misfortunes to the misconduct of my guides, and the very plan we pursued, by the desire of the Governor, in not taking any women with us on this journey, was, he said, the principal thing that occasioned all our wants: “for, said he, when all the men are heavy laden, they can neither hunt nor travel to any considerable distance; and in case they meet with success in hunting, who is to carry the produce of their labour? Women, added he, were made for labour; one of them can carry, or haul, as much as two men can do. They also pitch our tents, make and mend our clothing, keep us warm at night; and, in fact, there is no such thing as travelling any considerable distance, or for any length of time, in this country, without their assistance.” “Women, said he again, though they do every thing, are maintained at a trifling expence; for as they always stand cook, the very licking of their fingers in scarce times, is sufficient for their subsistence.” This, however odd it may appear, is but too true a description of the situation of women in this country: it is at least so in appearance; for the women always carry the provisions, and it is more than probable they help themselves when the men are not present.

Early in the morning of the twenty-third, I struck out of the road to the Eastward, with my two companions and two or three Northern Indians, while Matonabee and his crew continued their course to the Factory, promising
to

1770.

October,

25th.

November
1st.

to walk so slow that we might come up with them again; and in two days we arrived at the place to which we were directed. We went to work immediately in making snow-shoe frames and sledges; but notwithstanding our utmost endeavours, we could not complete them in less than four days. On the first of November we again proceeded on our journey toward the Factory; and on the sixth, came up with Matonabee and his gang: after which we proceeded on together several days; when I found my new acquaintance, on all occasions, the most sociable, kind, and sensible Indian I had ever met with. He was a man well known, and, as an Indian, of universal knowledge, and generally respected.

Deer proved pretty plentiful for some time, but to my great surprise, when I wanted to give Matonabee a little ammunition for his own use, I found that my guide, Conraquesè, who had it all under his care, had so embezzled or otherways expended it, that only ten balls and about three pounds of powder remained; so that long before we arrived at the Fort we were obliged to cut up an ice-chissel into square lumps, as a substitute for ball. It is, however, rather dangerous firing lumps of iron out of such slight barrels as are brought to this part of the world for trade. These, though light and handy, and of course well adapted for the use of both English and Indians in long journies, and of sufficient strength for leaden shot or ball, are not strong enough for

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this kind of shot; and strong fowling-pieces would not only be too heavy for the laborious ways of hunting in this country, but their bores being so much larger, would require more than double the quantity of ammunition that small ones do; which, to Indians at least, must be an object of no inconsiderable importance.

1770.
November.

I kept company with Matonabee till the twentieth, at which time the deer began to be so scarce that hardly a fresh track could be seen; and as we were then but a few days walk from the Fort, he advised me to proceed on with all speed, while he and his companions followed at leisure. Accordingly, on the twenty-first, I set out post-haste, accompanied by one of the home-guard (Southern) Tribe, and three Northern Indians. That night we lay on the South side of Egg River; but, long before day-break the next morning, the weather became so bad, with a violent gale of wind from the North West, and such a drift of snow, that we could not have a bit of fire: and as no good woods were near to afford us shelter, we agreed to proceed on our way; especially as the wind was on our backs, and though the weather was bad near the surface, we could frequently see the moon, and sometimes the stars, to direct us in our course. In this situation we continued walking the whole day, and it was not till after ten at night that we could find the smallest tuft of woods to put up in; for though we well knew we must have passed by several hummocks of shrubby woods that

20th.

21st.

1770.
November.

that might have afforded us some shelter, yet the wind blew so hard, and the snow drifted so excessively thick, that we could not see ten yards before us the whole day. Between seven and eight in the evening my dog, a valuable brute, was frozen to death; so that his sledge, which was a very heavy one, I was obliged to haul. Between nine and ten at night we arrived at a small creek, on which we walked about three quarters of a mile, when we came to a large tuft of tall willows, and two or three sets of old tent-poles. Being much jaded, we determined not to proceed any farther that night; so we went to work, and made the best defence against the weather that the situation of the place and our materials would admit. Our labour consisted only in digging a hole in the snow, and fixing a few deer-skins up to windward of us: but the most difficult task was that of making a fire. When this was once accomplished, the old tent-poles amply supplied us with fuel. By the time we had finished this business, the weather began to moderate, and the drift greatly to abate; so that the moon and the *Aurora Borealis* shone out with great splendor, and there appeared every symptom of the return of fine weather. After eating a plentiful supper of venison, therefore, of which we had a sufficient stock to last us to the Fort, we laid down and got a little sleep. The next day proving fine and clear, though excessively sharp, we proceeded on our journey early in the morning, and at night lay on the South East side of Seal River. We should have made a much longer day's jour-

ney, had we not been greatly embarrassed at setting out, by a jumble of rocks, which we could not avoid without going greatly out of our way. Here I must observe, that we were more than fortunate in not attempting to leave the little creek where we had fixed our habitation the preceding night, as the spot where we lay was not more than two or three miles distant from this dangerous place ; in which, had we fallen in with it in the night, we must unavoidably have been bewildered, if we had not all perished ; as notwithstanding the advantage of a clear day, and having used every possible precaution, it was with the utmost difficulty that we crossed it without broken limbs. Indeed it would have been next to an impossibility to have done it in the night.

1770.
November.

The twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth proved fine clear weather, though excessively cold ; and in the afternoon of the latter, we arrived at Prince of Wales's Fort, after having been absent eight months and twenty-two days, on a fruitless, or at least an unsuccessful journey.

24th.

25th.

A JOURNEY TO THE

C H A P. IV.

Transactions during our Stay at Prince of Wales's Fort, and the former Part of our third Expedition, till our Arrival at Clowey, where we built Canoes, in May 1771.

Preparations for our departure.—Refuse to take any of the home-guard Indians with me.—By so doing, I offend the Governor.—Leave the Fort a third time.—My instructions on this expedition.—Provisions of all kinds very scarce.—Arrive at the woods, where we kill some deer.—Arrive at Island Lake.—Matonabee taken ill.—Some remarks thereon.—Join the remainder of the Indians' families.—Leave Island Lake.—Description thereof.—Deer plentiful.—Meet a strange Indian.—Alter our course from West North West to West by South.—Cross Cathawbachaga River, Coffed Lake, Snow-Bird Lake, and Pike Lake.—Arrive at a tent of strangers, who are employed in snaring deer in a pound.—Description of the pound.—Method of proceeding.—Remarks thereon.—Proceed on our journey.—Meet with several parties of Indians; by one of whom I sent a Letter to the Governor at Prince of Wales's Fort.—Arrive at Tbleweyazayeth.—Employment there.—Proceed to the North North West and North.—Arrive at Clowey.—One of the Indian's wives taken in labour.—Remarks thereon.—Customs observed by the Northern Indians on those occasions.

1770.
November
28th.

ON my arrival at the Fort, I informed the Governor, of Matonabee's being so near. On the twenty-eighth of November he arrived. Notwithstanding the many difficulties and hardships which I had undergone during my two unsuccessful attempts, I was so far from being

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solicited on this occasion to undertake a third excursion, that I willingly offered my service ; which was readily accepted, as my abilities and approved courage, in persevering under difficulties, were thought noways inferior to the task.

1770.
November.

I then determined to engage Matonabee to be my guide ; to which he readily consented, and with a freedom of speech and correctness of language not commonly met with among Indians, not only pointed out the reasons which had occasioned all our misfortunes in my two former attempts, but described the plan he intended to pursue ; which at the same time that it was highly satisfactory to me, did honour to his penetration and judgment ; as it proved him to be a man of extensive observation with respect to times, seasons, and places ; and well qualified to explain every thing that could contribute either to facilitate or retard the ease or progress of travelling in those dreary parts of the world,

Having engaged Matonabee, therefore, as my guide, I began to make preparations for our departure ; but Mr. Norton, the Governor, having been very fully occupied in trading with a large body of Indians, it was the seventh of December before I could obtain from him my dispatches. It may not be improper to observe, that he again wanted to force some of the home-guard Indians (who were his

December
7th.

1770.
December.

his own relations *) into our company, merely with a view that they might engross all the credit of taking care of
me

* Mr. Norton was an Indian; he was born at Prince of Wales's Fort, but had been in England nine years, and considering the small sum which was expended in his education, had made some progress in literature. At his return to Hudson's Bay he entered into all the abominable vices of his countrymen. He kept for his own use five or six of the finest Indian girls which he could select; and notwithstanding his own uncommon propensity to the fair sex, took every means in his power to prevent any European from having intercourse with the women of the country; for which purpose he proceeded to the most ridiculous length. To his own friends and country he was so partial, that he set more value on, and shewed more respect to one of their favourite dogs, than he ever did to his first officer. Among his miserable and ignorant countrymen he passed for a proficient in physic, and always kept a box of poison, to administer to those who refused him their wives or daughters.

With all these bad qualities, no man took more pains to inculcate virtue, morality, and continence on others; always painting, in the most odious colours, the jealous and revengeful disposition of the Indians, when any attempt was made to violate the chastity of their wives or daughters. Lectures of this kind from a man of established virtue might have had some effect; but when they came from one who was known to live in open defiance of every law, human and divine, they were always heard with indignation, and considered as the hypocritical cant of a selfish debauchee, who wished to engross every woman in the country to himself.

His apartments were not only convenient but elegant, and always crowded with favourite Indians: at night he locked the doors, and put the keys under his pillow; so that in the morning his dining-room was generally, for the want of necessary conveniencies, worse than a hog-stye. As he advanced in years his jealousy increased, and he actually poisoned two of his women because he thought them partial to other objects more suitable to their ages. He was a most notorious smuggler; but though he put many thousands into the pockets of the Captains, he seldom put a shilling into his own.

An

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December.

me during the journey : but I had found them of so little use in my two former attempts, that I absolutely refused them ; and by so doing, offended Mr. Norton to such a degree, that neither time nor absence could ever afterwards eradicate his dislike of me ; so that at my return he used every means in his power to treat me ill, and to render my life unhappy. However, to deal with candour on this occasion, it must be acknowledged to his honour, that whatever our private animosities might have been, he did not suffer them to interfere with public business ; and I was fitted out with ammunition, and every other article which Matonabee thought could be wanted. I was also furnished, as before, with a small assortment of light trading goods, as presents to the far distant Indians.

At last I succeeded in obtaining my instructions, which were as follows :

An inflammation in his bowels occasioned his death on the 29th of December 1773 ; and though he died in the most excruciating pain, he retained his jealousy to the last ; for a few minutes before he expired, happening to see an officer laying hold of the hand of one of his women who was standing by the fire, he bellowed out, in as loud a voice as his situation would admit, " God d—n you for a b——h, if I live I'll knock out your brains." A few minutes after making this elegant apostrophe, he expired in the greatest agonies that can possibly be conceived.

I declare to be the real character and manner of life of the late Mr. Norton.

“ ORDERS

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“ ORDERS *and* INSTRUCTIONS for Mr. SAMUEL
“ HEARNE, going on his third Expedition to the
“ North of Churchill River, in quest of a North
“ West Passage, Copper Mines, or any other thing
“ that may be serviceable to the British Nation in
“ general, or the Hudson's Bay Company in par-
“ ticular ; in the year 1770.

“ MR. SAMUEL HEARNE,

“ SIR,

“ As you have offered your service a third time to go
“ in search of the Copper Mine River, &c. and as Ma-
“ tonabbee, a leading Indian, who has been at those
“ parts, is willing to be your guide, we have accordingly
“ engaged him for that service; but having no other
“ instrument on the same construction with the quadrant
“ you had the misfortune to break, we have furnished
“ you with an Elton's quadrant, being the most proper
“ instrument we can now procure for making observa-
“ tions on the land.

“ The above Leader, Matonabbee, and a few of his
“ best men, which he has selected for that purpose, are
“ to provide for you, assist you in all things, and con-
“ duct you to the Copper Mine River; where you must
“ be

“ be careful to observe the latitude and longitude, also
 “ the course of the river, the depth of the water, the
 “ situation of the Copper Mines, &c. but your first in-
 “ structions, of November sixth, one thousand seven hun-
 “ dred and sixty-nine, being sufficiently full, we refer
 “ you to every part thereof for the better regulation of
 “ your conduct during this journey.

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“ As you and your Indian companions are fitted out
 “ with every thing that we think is necessary, (or at least
 “ as many useful articles as the nature of travelling in
 “ those parts will admit of,) you are hereby desired to
 “ proceed on your journey as soon as possible; and your
 “ present guide has promised to take great care of you,
 “ and conduct you out and home with all convenient
 “ speed.

“ I conclude with my best wishes for your health and
 “ happiness, together with a successful journey, and a
 “ quick return in safety. Amen.

“ (Signed) MOSES NORTON, Governor.

“ Dated at Prince of Wales's Fort,

“ 7th December, 1770.”

On the seventh of December I set out on my third journey; and the weather, considering the season of the year, was for some days pretty mild. One of Matonab-bee's wives being ill, occasioned us to walk so slow, that

7th.

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December.

it was the thirteenth before we arrived at Seal River; at which time two men and their wives left us, whose loads, when added to those of the remainder of my crew, made a very material difference, especially as Matonabee's wife was so ill as to be obliged to be hauled on a sledge.

16th.

Finding deer and all other game very scarce, and not knowing how long it might be before we could reach any place where they were in greater plenty, the Indians walked as far each day as their loads and other circumstances would conveniently permit. On the sixteenth, we arrived at Egg River, where Matonabee and the rest of my crew had laid up some provisions and other necessaries, when on their journey to the Fort. On going to the place where they thought the provisions had been carefully secured from all kinds of wild beasts, they had the mortification to find that some of their countrymen, with whom the Governor had first traded and dispatched from the Fort, had robbed the store of every article, as well as of some of their most useful implements. This loss was more severely felt, as there was a total want of every kind of game; and the Indians, not expecting to meet with so great a disappointment, had not used that œconomy in the expenditure of the oatmeal and other provisions which they had received at the Fort, as they probably would have done, had they not relied firmly on finding a supply at this place. This disappointment and loss was borne by the Indians with the greatest fortitude; and I did not hear
one

1770.
December.

one of them breathe the least hint of revenge in case they should ever discover the offenders: the only effect it had on them was, that of making them put the best foot foremost. This was thought so necessary, that for some time we walked every day from morning till night. The days, however, being short, our sledges heavy, and some of the road very bad, our progress seldom exceeded sixteen or eighteen miles a day, and some days we did not travel so much.

On the eighteenth, as we were continuing our course to the North West, up a small creek that empties itself into Egg River, we saw the tracks of many deer which had crossed that part a few days before; at that time there was not a fresh track to be seen: some of the Indians, however, who had lately passed that way, had killed more than they had occasion for, so that several joints of good meat were found in their old tent-places; which, though only sufficient for one good meal, were very acceptable, as we had been in exceeding straitened circumstances for many days.

18th.

On the nineteenth, we pursued our course in the North West quarter; and, after leaving the above-mentioned creek, traversed nothing but entire barren ground, with empty bellies, till the twenty-seventh; for though we arrived at some woods on the twenty-sixth, and saw a few deer, four of which the Indians killed, they were

19th.

27th.

1770.
December.

at so great a distance from the place on which we lay, that it was the twenty-seventh before the meat was brought to the tents. Here the Indians proposed to continue one day, under pretence of repairing their sledges and snow shoes; but from the little attention they paid to those repairs, I was led to think that the want of food was the chief thing that detained them, as they never ceased eating the whole day. Indeed for many days before we had been in great want, and for the last three days had not tasted a morsel of any thing, except a pipe of tobacco and a drink of snow water; and as we walked daily from morning till night, and were all heavy laden, our strength began to fail. I must confess that I never spent so dull a Christmas; and when I recollected the merry season which was then passing, and reflected on the immense quantities, and great variety of delicacies which were then expending in every part of Christendom, and that with a profusion bordering on waste, I could not refrain from wishing myself again in Europe, if it had been only to have had an opportunity of alleviating the extreme hunger which I suffered with the refuse of the table of any one of my acquaintance. My Indians, however, still kept in good spirits; and as we were then across all the barren ground, and saw a few fresh tracks of deer, they began to think that the worst of the road was over for that winter, and flattered me with the expectation of soon meeting with deer and other game in greater plenty than we had done since our departure from the Fort.

Early

Early in the morning of the twenty-eighth, we again set out, and directed our course to the Westward, through thick shrubby woods, consisting chiefly of ill-shaped stunted pines, with small dwarf junipers, intermixed here and there, particularly round the margins of ponds and swamps, with dwarf willow bushes; and among the rocks and sides of the hills were also some small poplars.

1770.
December
28th.

On the thirtieth, we arrived at the East side of Island Lake, where the Indians killed two large buck deer; but the rutting season was so lately over, that their flesh was only eatable by those who could not procure better food. In the evening, Matonabee was taken very ill; and from the nature of his complaint, I judged his illness to have proceeded from the enormous quantity of meat that he had eat on the twenty-seventh, as he had been indisposed ever since that time. Nothing is more common with those Indians, after they have eat as much at a sitting as would serve six moderate men, than to find themselves out of order; but not one of them can bear to hear that it is the effect of eating too much: in defence of which they say, that the meanest of the animal creation knows when hunger is satisfied, and will leave off accordingly. This, however, is a false assertion, advanced knowingly in support of an absurd argument; for it is well known by them, as well as all the Southern Indians, that the black bear, who, for size and the delicacy of its flesh, may justly be called a respectable animal, is so far from knowing when

30th.

1770.
December.

when its hunger is satisfied, that, in the Summer, when the berries are ripe, it will gorge to such a degree, that it frequently, and even daily, vomits up great quantities of new-swallowed fruit, before it has undergone any change in the stomach, and immediately renews its repast with as much eagerness as before.

Notwithstanding the Northern Indians are at times so voracious, yet they bear hunger with a degree of fortitude which, as Mr. Ellis justly observes of the Southern Indians, “ is much easier to admire, than to imitate.” I have more than once seen the Northern Indians, at the end of three or four days fasting, as merry and jocular on the subject, as if they had voluntarily imposed it on themselves; and would ask each other in the plainest terms, and in the merriest mood, If they had any inclination for an intrigue with a strange woman? I must acknowledge that examples of this kind were of infinite service to me, as they tended to keep up my spirits on those occasions, with a degree of fortitude that would have been impossible for me to have done had the Indians behaved in a contrary manner, and expressed any apprehension of starving.

31st.

Early in the morning of the thirty-first, we continued our journey, and walked about fourteen miles to the Westward on Island Lake, where we fixed our residence; but Matonabee was at this time so ill as to be obliged to be hauled on a sledge the whole day. The

next

1771.

January
1st.

next morning, however, he so far recovered as to be capable of walking; when we proceeded on to the West and West by North, about sixteen miles farther on the same Lake, till we arrived at two tents, which contained the remainder of the wives and families of my guides, who had been waiting there for the return of their husbands from the Fort. Here we found only two men, though there were upward of twenty women and children; and as those two men had no gun or ammunition, they had no other method of supporting themselves and the women, but by catching fish, and snaring a few rabbits: the latter were scarce, but the former were easily caught in considerable numbers either with nets or hooks. The species of fish generally caught in the nets are tittemeg, pike, and barble; and the only sorts caught with hooks are trout, pike, burbut, and a small fish, erroneously called by the English tench: the Southern Indians call it the toothed tittemeg, and the Northern Indians call it *saint eab*. They are delicate eating; being nearly as firm as a perch, and generally very fat. They seldom exceed a foot in length, and in shape much resemble a gurnard, except that of having a very long broad fin on the back, like a perch, but this fin is not armed with similar spikes. The scales are large, and of a sooty brown. They are generally most esteemed when broiled or roasted with the scales on, of course the skin is not eaten.

As

1771.

January

3d.

As the Captain [Matonabbee] and one man were indisposed, we did not move on the second of January; but early in the morning of the third set out, and walked about seven miles to the North Westward, five of which were on the above mentioned Lake; when the Indians having killed two deer, we put up for the night.

Island Lake (near the center) is in latitude $60^{\circ} 45'$ North, and $102^{\circ} 25'$ West longitude, from London; and is, at the part we crossed, about thirty-five miles wide: but from the North East to the South West it is much larger, and entirely full of islands, so near to each other as to make the whole Lake resemble a jumble of serpentine rivers and creeks; and it is celebrated by the natives as abounding with great plenty of fine fish during the beginning of the Winter. At different parts of this Lake most part of the wives and families of those Northern Indians who visit Prince of Wales's Fort in October and November generally reside, and wait for their return; as there is little fear of their being in want of provisions, even without the assistance of a gun and ammunition, which is a point of real consequence to them. The Lake is plentifully supplied with water from several small rivulets and creeks which run into it at the South West end; and it empties itself by means of other small rivers which run to the North East, the principal of which is Nemace-a-seepee-a-fish, or Little Fish River. Many of the islands,

as well as the main land round this Lake, abound with dwarf woods, chiefly pines; but in some parts intermixed with larch and small birch trees. The land, like all the rest which lies to the North of Seal River, is hilly, and full of rocks; and though none of the hills are high, yet as few of the woods grow on their summits, they in general shew their snowy heads far above the woods which grow in the vallies, or those which are scattered about their sides.

1771.
January.

After leaving Island Lake, we continued our old course between the West and North West, and travelled at the easy rate of eight or nine miles a day. Provisions of all kinds were scarce till the sixteenth, when the Indians killed twelve deer. This induced us to put up, though early in the day; and finding great plenty of deer in the neighbourhood of our little encampment, it was agreed by all parties to remain a few days, in order to dry and pound some meat to make it lighter for carriage.

Having, by the twenty-second, provided a sufficient stock of provision, properly prepared, to carry with us, and repaired our sledges and snow-shoes, we again pursued our course in the North West quarter; and in the afternoon spoke with a stranger, an Indian, who had one of Matonabee's wives under his care. He did not remain in our company above an hour, as he only smoked part of a few pipes with his friends, and returned to his tent, which could not

22d.