

English and Indians. It builds its nest in trees, exactly like that of the blackbird and thrush; lays four blue eggs, but seldom brings more than three young ones.

Wood-
pecker.

I know of only one sort of WOOD-PECKER that frequents the remote Northern parts of Hudson's Bay; and this is distinguished by Mr. Pennant by the name of the Golden Winged Bird; but to the South West that beautiful species of Wood-pecker with a scarlet crown is very frequent. The manner of life of this species is nearly alike, always building their nests in holes in trees, and feeding on worms and insects. They generally have from four to six young at a time. They are said to be very destructive to fruit-trees that are raised in gardens in the more Southern parts of America; but the want of those luxuries in Hudson's Bay renders them very harmless and inoffensive birds. The red feathers of the larger sort, which frequent the interior and Southern parts of the Bay, are much valued by some of the Indians, who ornament their pipe-stems with them, and at times use them as ornaments to their children's clothing. Neither of the two species here mentioned ever migrate, but are constant inhabitants of the different climates in which they are found.

Grouse.

There are several species of GROUSE in the different parts of Hudson's Bay; but two of the largest, and one of them the most beautiful, never reach so far North

as

as the latitude 59°: but as I have seen them in great plenty near Cumberland House, I shall take the liberty to describe them.

The **RUFFED GROUSE**. This is the most beautiful of all that are classed under that name. They are of a delicate brown, prettily variegated with black and white: tail large and long, like that of a hawk, which is usually of an orange-colour, beautifully barred with black, chocolate, and white; and the tail is frequently expanded like a fan. To add to their beauty, they have a ruff of glossy black feathers, richly tinged with purple round the neck, which they can erect at pleasure: this they frequently do, but more particularly so when they spread their long tail, which gives them a noble appearance. In size they exceed a partridge, but are inferior to a pheasant. In Winter they are usually found perched on the branches of the pine-trees; and in that season are so tame as to be easily approached, and of course readily shot.

The Ruffed Grouse.

They always make their nests on the ground, generally at the root of a tree, and lay to the number of twelve or fourteen eggs. In some of the Southern parts of America several attempts have been made to tame those beautiful birds, by taking their eggs and hatching them under domestic hens, but it was never crowned with success; for when but a few days old, they always make their escape into the woods, where they probably pick up a subsistence. Their flesh is delicately white and firm, and
though

though they are seldom fat, they are always good eating, and are generally esteemed best when larded and roasted, or nicely boiled with a bit of bacon.

There is something very remarkable in those birds, and I believe peculiar to themselves, which is that of clapping their wings with such a force, that at half a mile distance it resembles thunder. I have frequently heard them make that noise near Cumberland House in the month of May, but it was always before Sun-rise, and a little after Sun-set. It is said by Mr. Barton and Le Hontan, that they never clap in this manner but in the Spring and Fall, and I must acknowledge that I never heard them in Winter, though I have killed many of them in that season. The Indians informed me they never make that noise but when feeding, which is very probable; for it is notoriously known that all the species of Grouse feed very early in the mornings, and late in the afternoons. This species is called by some of the Indians bordering on Hudson's Bay, Pus-pus-kee, and by others Pus-pus-cue.

Sharp-tailed
Grouse.

SHARP-TAILED GROUSE, or, as they are called in Hudson's Bay, Pheasant. Those birds are always found in the Southern parts of the Bay, are very plentiful in the interior parts of the country, and in some Winters a few of them are shot at York Fort, but never reach so far North as Churchill. In colour they are not very unlike that of the English hen pheasant; but the tail is short and pointed, like that of the common duck; and there is no perceivable

able difference in plumage between the male and female. When full-grown, and in good condition, they frequently weigh two pounds, and though the flesh is dark, yet it is juicy, and always esteemed good eating, particularly when larded and roasted. In Summer they feed on berries, and in Winter on the tops of the dwarf birch and the buds of the poplar. In the Fall they are tolerably tame, but in the severe cold more shy; frequently perch on the tops of the highest poplars, out of moderate gun-shot, and will not suffer a near approach. They sometimes, when disturbed in this situation, dive into the snow; but the sportsman is equally baulked in his expectations, as they force their way so fast under it as to raise flight many yards distant from the place they entered, and very frequently in a different direction to that from which the sportsman expects *. They, like the other species of grouse, make their nests on the ground, and lay from ten to thirteen eggs. Like the Ruffed Grouse, they are not to be tamed, as many trials have been made at York Fort, but without success; for though they never made their escape, yet they always died, probably for the want of proper food; for the hens that hatched them were equally fond of them, as they could possibly have been had they been the produce of their own eggs. This species of Grouse is called by the Southern Indians Aw-kis-cow.

This I assert from my own experience when at Cumberland House.

Wood Par-
tridge.

THE WOOD PARTRIDGES have acquired that name in Hudson's Bay from their always frequenting the forests of pines and fir; and in Winter feeding on the brush of those trees, though they are fondest of the latter. This species of Grouse is inferior in size and beauty to the Ruffed, yet may be called a handsome bird; the plumage being of a handsome brown, elegantly spotted with white and black. The tail is long, and tipped with orange; and the legs are warmly covered with short feathers, but the feet are naked. They are generally in the extreme with respect to shyness; sometimes not suffering a man to come within two gun-shots, and at others so tame that the sportsman may kill five or six out of one tree without shifting his station. They are seen in some years in considerable numbers near York Fort. They are very scarce at Churchill, though numerous in the interior parts, particularly on the borders of the Athapuscow Indians country, where I have seen my Indian companions kill many of them with blunt-headed arrows. In Winter their flesh is black, hard, and bitter, probably owing to the resinous quality of their food during that season; but this is not observed in the rabbits, though they feed exactly in the same manner in Winter; on the contrary, their flesh is esteemed more delicate than that of the English rabbit. The Southern Indians call this species of Partridge, Mistick-a-pethow; and the Northern Indians call it, Day.

The

Willow
Partridge.

The WILLOW PARTRIDGES have a strong black bill, with scarlet eye-brows, very large and beautiful in the male, but less conspicuous in the female. In Summer they are brown, elegantly barred and mottled with orange, white, and black; and at that season the males are very proud and handsome, but the females are less beautiful, being of one universal brown. As the Fall advances they change to a delicate white, except fourteen black feathers in the tail, which are also tipped with white; and their legs and feet, quite down to the nails, are warmly covered with feathers. In the latter end of September and beginning of October they gather in flocks of some hundreds, and proceed from the open plains and barren grounds, (where they usually breed,) to the woods and brush-willows, where they hold together in a state of society, till dispersed by their common enemies, the hawks, or hunters. They are by far the most numerous of any of the Grouse species that are found in Hudson's Bay; and in some places, when permitted to remain undisturbed for a considerable time, their number is frequently so great, as almost to exceed credibility. I shall by no means exceed truth, if I assert that I have seen upward of four hundred in one flock near Churchill River; but the greatest number I ever saw was on the North side of Port Nelson River, when returning with a packet in March one thousand seven hundred and sixty-eight: at that time I saw thousands flying to the North, and the whole surface of the snow seemed to be in motion by those that were feeding on the tops of the short willows. Sir

Thomas Button mentions, that when he wintered in Port Nelson River in one thousand six hundred and twelve, his crew killed eighteen hundred dozen of those birds, which I have no reason to doubt; and Mr. Jeremie, formerly Governor at York Fort, when that place was in the possession of the French, and then called Fort Bourbon, asserts, that he and seventy-nine others eat no less than ninety thousand partridges and twenty-five thousand hares in the course of one Winter; which, considering the quantity of venison, geese, ducks, &c. enumerated in his account, that were killed that year, makes the number so great, that it is scarcely possible to conceive what eighty men could do with them; for on calculation, ninety thousand partridges and twenty-five thousand hares divided by eighty, amounts to no less than one thousand one hundred and twenty-five partridges, and three hundred and twelve hares per man. This is by far too great a quantity, particularly when it is considered that neither partridges nor hares are in season, or can be procured in any numbers, more than seven months in the year. Forty thousand partridges and five thousand hares would, I think, be much nearer the truth, and will be found, on calculation, to be ample provision for eighty men for seven months, exclusive of any change. The common weight of those birds is from eighteen to twenty-two ounces when first killed; there are some few that are nearly that weight when fit for the spit, but they are so scarce as by no means to serve as a standard; and as they always hord with the com-
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mon size, there is no room to suspect them of another species. As all those over-grown partridges are notoriously known to be males, it is more than probable that they are imperfect, and grow large and fat like capons; and every one that has had an opportunity of tasting those large partridges, will readily allow that they excel the common sort as much in flavour as they do in size. It is remarked in those birds, as well as the Rock Partridge, that they are provided with additional clothing, as it may be called; for every feather, from the largest to the smallest, except the quills and tail, are all double. The under-feather is soft and downy, shooting from the shaft of the larger; and is wonderfully adapted to their situation, as they not only brave the coldest Winters, but the species now under consideration always burrow under the snow at nights, and at day-light come forth to feed. In Winter they are always found to frequent the banks of rivers and creeks, the sides of lakes and ponds, and the plains which abound with dwarf willows; for it is on the buds and tops of that tree they always feed during the Winter. In Summer they eat berries and small herbage. Their food in Winter being so dry and harsh, makes it necessary for them to swallow a considerable quantity of gravel to promote digestion; but the great depth of snow renders it very scarce during that season. The Indians having considered this point, invented the method now in use among the English, of catching them in nets by means of that simple allurements, a heap of gravel. The nets for this purpose are from eight
to

A JOURNEY TO THE

to twelve feet square, and are stretched in a frame of wood, and usually set on the ice of rivers, creeks, ponds, and lakes, about one hundred yards from the willows, but in some situations not half that distance. Under the center of the net a heap of snow is thrown up to the size of one or two bushels, and when well packed is covered with gravel. To set the nets, when thus prepared, requires no other trouble than lifting up one side of the frame, and supporting it with two small props, about four feet long: a line is fastened to those props, and the other end being conveyed to the neighbouring willows, is always so contrived that a man can get to it without being seen by the birds under the net. When every thing is thus prepared, the hunters have nothing to do but go into the adjacent willows and woods, and when they start game, endeavour to drive them into the net, which at times is no hard task, as they frequently run before them like chickens; and sometimes require no driving, for as soon as they see the black heap of gravel on the white snow they fly straight towards it. The hunter then goes to the end of the line to watch their motions, and when he sees there are as many about the gravel as the net can cover, or as many as are likely to go under at that time, with a sudden pull he hauls down the stakes, and the net falls horizontally on the snow, and encloses the greatest part of the birds that are under it. The hunter then runs to the net as soon as possible, and kills all the birds by biting them at the back of the head. He then sets up the net,
takes

takes away all the dead game, and repeats the operation as often as he pleases, or as long as the birds are in good humour. By this simple contrivance I have known upwards of three hundred partridges caught in one morning by three persons; and a much greater number might have been procured had it been thought necessary. Early in the morning, just at break of day, and early in the afternoon, is the best time for this sport. It is common to get from thirty to seventy at one haul; and in the Winter of one thousand seven hundred and eighty-six, Mr. Prince, then Master of a sloop at Churchill River, actually caught two hundred and four at two hauls. They are by no means equally plentiful every year; for in some Winters I have known them so scarce, that it was impossible to catch any in nets, and all that could be procured with the gun would hardly afford one day's allowance per week to the men during the season; but in the Winter one thousand seven hundred and eighty-five, they were so plentiful near Churchill, and such numbers were brought to the Factory, that I gave upward of two thousand to the hogs. In the latter end of March, or the beginning of April, those birds begin to change from white to their beautiful Summer plumage, and the first brown feathers make their appearance on the neck *, and by degrees spread

Mr. Dragge observes, in his North West Passage, that when the partridges begin to change colour, the first brown feathers appear in the rump; but this is so far from being a general rule, that an experienced Hudsonian must smile at the idea. That Mr. Dragge never saw an instance of this kind I will not say, but when Nature deviates so far from its usual course, it is undoubtedly

spread over the whole body; but their Summer dress is seldom complete till July. The feathers of these birds make excellent beds, and as they are the perquisite of the hunters, are usually sold to the Captains and Mates of the Company's ships, at the easy rate of three pence per pound.

Rock Partridges.

ROCK PARTRIDGES. This species of Grouse are in Winter of the same colour as the former, but inferior in size; being in general not more than two-thirds of the weight. They have a black line from the bill to the eye, and differ in nature and manner from the Willow Partridge. They never frequent the woods or willows, but brave the severest cold on the open plains. They always feed on the buds and tops of the dwarf birch, and after this repast, generally sit on the high ridges of snow, with their heads to windward. They are never caught in nets, like the Willow Partridge; for when in want of gravel, their bills are of such an amazing strength, that they pick a sufficient quantity out of the rocks. Beside, being so much inferior in size to the former species, their flesh is by no means so good, being black, hard, and bitter. They are in general, like the Wood Partridge, either exceeding wild or very tame; and when in the latter humour, I have

undoubtedly owing to some accident; and nothing is more likely than that the feathers of the bird Mr. Dragge had examined, had been struck off by a hawk; and as the usual season for changing their plumage was near, the Summer feathers supplied their place, for out of the many hundreds of thousands that I have seen killed, I never saw or heard of a similar instance.

known

known one man kill one hundred and twenty in a few hours; for as they usually keep in large flocks, the sportsmen can frequently kill six or eight at a shot. These, like the Willow Partridge, change their plumage in Summer to a beautiful speckled brown; and at that season are so hardy, that, unless shot in the head or vitals, they will fly away with the greatest quantity of shot of any bird I know. They discover great fondness for their young; for during the time of incubation, they will frequently suffer themselves to be taken by hand off their eggs*. Pigeons of a small size, not larger than a thrush, are in some Summers found as far North as Churchill River. The bill is of a flesh-colour, legs red, and the greatest part of the plumage of a light lilac or blush. In the interior parts of the country they fly in large flocks, and perch on the poplar trees in such numbers that I have seen twelve of them killed at one shot. They usually feed on

* Besides the birds already mentioned, which form a constant dish at our tables in Hudson's Bay, during their respective seasons, Mr. Jerome asserts, that during the time he was Governor at York Fort, the bustard was common. But since that Fort was delivered up to the English at the peace of Utrecht in 1713, none of the Company's servants have ever seen one of those birds: nor does it appear by all the Journals now in the possession of the Hudson's Bay Company, that any such bird was ever seen in the most Southern parts of the Bay, much less at York Fort, which is in the latitude 57° North; so that a capital error, or a wilful design to mislead, must have taken place. Indeed, his account of the country immediately where he resided, and the productions of it, are so erroneously stated as to deserve no notice. His colleague, De le Poteries, asserts the existence of the bustard in those parts, and with an equal regard to truth.

poplar buds, and are good eating, though seldom fat. They build their nests in trees, the same as the Wood Pigeons do; never lay but two eggs, and are very scarce near the sea-coast in the Northern parts of Hudson's Bay.

Red-breasted Thrush.

The RED-BREASTED THRUSHES, commonly called in Hudson's Bay the Red Birds, but by some the Black Birds, on account of their note, and by others the American Fieldfares usually make their appearance at Churchill River about the middle of May, build their nests of mud, like the English Thrush, and lay four beautiful blue eggs. They have a very loud and pleasing note, which they generally exercise most in the mornings and evenings, when perched on some lofty tree near their nest; but when the young can fly they are silent, and migrate to the South early in the Fall. They are by no means numerous, and are generally seen in pairs; they are never sought after as an article of food, but when killed by the Indian boys, are esteemed good eating, though they always feed on worms and insects.

Grosbeak.

GROSBEAK. These gay birds visit Churchill River in some years so early as the latter end of March, but are by no means plentiful; they are always seen in pairs, and generally feed on the buds of the poplar and willow. The male is in most parts of its plumage of a beautiful crimson, but the female of a dull dirty green. In form they much resemble the English bullfinch, but are near
double

double their size. They build their nests in trees, sometimes not far from the ground; lay four white eggs, and always hatch them in June. They are said to have a pleasing note in Spring, though I never heard it, and are known to retire to the South early in the Fall. The English residing in Hudson's Bay generally call this bird the American Red Bird.

SNOW BUNTINGS, universally known in Hudson's Bay by the name of the Snow Birds, and in the Isles of Orkney by the name of Snow Flakes, from their visiting those parts in such numbers as to devour the grain as soon as sown, in some years are so destructive as to oblige the farmer to sow his fields a second, and occasionally a third time. These birds make their appearance at the Northern settlements in the Bay about the latter end of May, or beginning of April; when they are very fat, and not inferior in flavour to an ortolan. On their first arrival they generally feed on grass-seeds, and are fond of frequenting dunghills. At that time they are easily caught in great numbers under a net baited with groats or oatmeal; but as the Summer advances, they feed much on worms, and are then not so much esteemed. They sometimes fly in such large flocks, that I have killed upwards of twenty at one shot, and have known others who have killed double that number. In the Spring their plumage is prettily variegated, black and white; but their Summer dress may be called elegant, though not gay. They live

Snow
Bunting.

long in confinement, have naturally a pleasing note, and when in company with Canary birds soon imitate their song. I have kept many of them in cages in the same room with Canary birds, and always found they sung in Winter as well as in Summer; but even in confinement they change their plumage according to the season, the same as in a wild state. This species of bird seem fond of the coldest regions, for as the Spring advances they fly so far North that their breeding-places are not known to the inhabitants of Hudson's Bay. In Autumn they return to the South in large flocks, and are frequently shot in considerable numbers merely as a delicacy; at that season, however, they are by no means so good as when they first make their appearance in Spring.

White-
crowned
Bunting.

WHITE-CROWNED BUNTING. This species is inferior in size to the former, and seldom make their appearance till June. They breed in most parts of the Bay, always make their nests on the ground, at the root of a dwarf willow or a gooseberry-bush. During the time their young are in a callow state they have a delightful note, but as soon as they are fledged they become silent, and retire to the South early in September.

Lapland
Finch.

LAPLAND FINCH. This bird is common on Hudson's Bay, and never migrates Southward in the coldest Winters. During that season it generally frequents the juniper plains, and feeds on the small buds of that tree, also on grass-
feeds;

feeds but at the approach of Summer it flies still farther North to breed. A variety of this bird is also common, and is beautifully marked with a red forehead and breast. It is most common in the Spring, and frequently caught in nets set for the Snow Bunting; and when kept in cages has a pleasing note, but seldom lives long in confinement, though it generally dies very fat.

LARKS of a pretty variegated colour frequent those parts in Summer, and always make their appearance in May; build their nests on the ground, usually by the side of a stone at the root of a small bush, lay four speckled eggs, and bring forth their young in June. At their first arrival, and till the young can fly, the male is in full song; and, like the sky-lark, soars to a great height, and generally descends in a perpendicular direction near their nest. Their note is loud and agreeable, but consists of little variety, and as soon as the young can fly they become silent, and retire to the Southward early in the Fall. They are impatient of confinement, never sing in that state, and seldom live long.

The TITMOUSE is usually called in Hudson's Bay, Black-cap. This diminutive bird braves the coldest Winter, and during that season feeds on the seeds of long rye-grass, but in Summer on insects and berries. The Southern Indians call this bird Kifs-kifs-heshis, from a twittering noise they make, which much resembles that word in sound.

SWALLOWS

Swallows.

SWALLOWS visit these parts in considerable numbers in Summer, and are very domestic; building their nests in necessaries, stables, and other out-offices that are much frequented. They seldom make their appearance at Churchill River till June, and retire South early in August. They, like the European Swallow, gather in large flocks on the day of their departure, make several revolutions round the breeding-places, and then take their leave till the next year. I do not recollect to have seen any of those birds to the North of Seal River.

Martins.

MARTINS also visit Hudson's Bay in great numbers, but seldom so far North as Churchill River. They usually make their nests in holes formed in the steep banks of rivers; and, like the Swallow, lay four or five speckled eggs; and retire Southward in August. At the Northern settlements they are, by no means so domestic as the Swallow.

Hooping
Crane.

HOOPING CRANE. This bird visits Hudson's Bay in the Spring, though not in great numbers. They are generally seen only in pairs, and that not very often. It is a bird of considerable size, often equal to that of a good turkey, and the great length of the bill, neck, and legs, makes it measure, from the bill to the toes, near six feet in common, and some much more. Its plumage is of a pure white, except the quill-feathers, which are black; the crown is covered with a red skin, thinly

thinly beset with black bristles, and the legs are large and black. It usually frequents open swamps, the sides of rivers, and the margins of lakes and ponds, feeds on frogs and small fish, and esteemed good eating. The wing-bones of this bird are so long and large, that I have known them made into flutes with tolerable success. It seldom has more than two young, and retires Southward early in the Fall.

The BROWN CRANE. This species is far inferior in size to the former, being seldom three feet and a half in length, and on an average not weighing seven pounds. Their haunts and manner of life are nearly the same as that of the Hooping Crane, and they never have more than two young, and those seldom fly till September. They are found farther North than the former, for I have killed several of them on Marble Island, and have seen them on the Continent as high as the latitude 65°. They are generally esteemed good eating, and, from the form of the body when fit for the spit, they acquire the name of the North West Turkey. There is a circumstance respecting this bird that is very peculiar; which is, that the gizzard is larger than that of a swan, and remarkably so in the young birds. The Brown Cranes are frequently seen in hot calm days to soar to an amazing height, always flying in circles, till by degrees they are almost out of sight, yet their note is so loud, that the sportsman, before he sees their situation, often fancies they are very near him. They visit
Hudson's

Brown
Crane.

Hudson's Bay in far greater numbers than the former, and are very good eating.

Bitterns.

BITTERNS are common at York Fort in Summer, but are seldom found so far North as Churchill River. I have seen two species of this bird; some having ash-coloured legs, others with beautiful grass-green legs, and very gay plumage. They always frequent marshes and swamps, also the banks of rivers that abound with reeds and long grass. They generally feed on insects that are bred in the water, and probably on small frogs; and though seldom fat, they are generally good eating. They are by no means numerous even at York Fort, nor in fact in the most Southern parts of the Bay that I have visited.

Curlew.

CURLEWS. There are two species of this bird which frequent the coasts of Hudson's Bay in great numbers during Summer, and breed in all parts of it as far North as the latitude 72°; the largest of this species is distinguished by that great Naturalist Mr. Pennant, by the name of the Esquimaux Curlew. They always keep near the sea coast; attend the ebbing of the tide, and are frequently found at low-water-mark in great numbers, where they feed on marine insects, which they find by the sides of stones in great plenty; but at high-water they retire to the dry ridges and wait the receding of the tide. They fly as steady as a woodcock, answer to a whistle that resembles their note; lay long on their wings, and are a most

most excellent shot, and at times are delicious eating. The other species of Curlew are in colour and shape exactly like the former, though inferior in size, and differ in their manner of life, as they never frequent the water's-edge, but always keep among the rocks and dry ridges, and feed on berries and small insects. The flesh of this bird is generally more esteemed than that of the former, but they are by no means so numerous. This species of Curlew are seldom found farther North than Egg River.

JACK SNIPES. Those birds visit Hudson's Bay in Summer in considerable numbers, but are seldom seen to the North of Whale Cove. They do not arrive till the ice of the rivers is broke up, and they retire to the South early in the Fall. During their stay, they always frequent marshes near the sea coast, and the shores of great rivers. In manner and flight they exactly resemble the European Jack Snipe; and when on the wing, fly at such a distance from each other, that it is but seldom the best sportsman can get more than one or two at a shot. Their flesh is by no means so delicate as that of the English Snipe.

Jack Snipes.

RED GODWAITS, usually called at the Northern settlements in Hudson's Bay, Plovers. Those birds visit the shores of that part in very large flocks, and usually frequent the marshes and the margins of ponds. They also frequently attend the tide, like the Esquimaux Curlews; fly down to low-water-mark, and feed on a small fish,

Red God-
wait.

not much unlike a shrimp; but as the tide flows, they retire to the marshes. They fly in such large flocks, and so close to each other, that I have often killed upwards of twelve at one shot; and Mr. Atkinson, long resident at York Fort, actually killed seventy-two at one shot; but that was when the birds were sitting. Near Churchill River they are seldom fat, though tolerably fleshy, and are generally good eating. They usually weigh from ten to thirteen ounces; the female is always larger than the male, and differs in colour, being of a much lighter brown. They retire to the South long before the frost commences; yet I have seen this bird as far North as the latitude $71^{\circ} 50'$.

Spotted
Godwait.

SPOTTED GODWAIT, known in Hudson's Bay by the name of Yellow Legs. This bird also visits that country in considerable numbers, but more so in the interior parts; and usually frequents the flat muddy banks of rivers. In Summer it is generally very poor, but late in the Fall is, as it may be called, one lump of fat. This bird, with many others of the migratory tribe, I saw in considerable numbers as far North as the latitude $71^{\circ} 54'$; and at York Fort I have known them shot so late as the latter end of October: at which time they are in the greatest perfection, and most delicious eating, more particularly so when put into a bit of paste, and boiled like an apple-dumpling; for in fact they are generally too fat at that season to be eaten either roasted or boiled.

HEBRIDAL

HEBRIDAL SANDPIPERS, but more commonly known in Hudson's Bay by the Name of Whale Birds, on account of ~~their~~ feeding on the carcases of those animals which frequently lie on the shores, also on maggots that are produced in them by fly-blows. These birds frequent those parts in considerable numbers, and always keep near the margin of the sea. They may, in fact, be called beautiful birds, though not gay in their plumage; they are usually very fat, but even when first killed they smell and taste so much like train-oil as to render them by no means pleasing to the palate, yet they are frequently eaten by the Company's servants. As the Summer advances they fly so far North of Churchill River, that their breeding-places are not known, though they remain at that part till the beginning of July, and return early in the Fall. They are by no means large birds, as they seldom weigh four ounces. The bill is black, plumage prettily variegated black and white, and the legs and feet are of a beautiful orange colour *

Hebridal
Sandpipers.

PLOVERS, commonly called Hawk's Eyes, from their watchfulness to prevent a near approach when sitting. When these birds are on the wing, they fly very swift and irregular, particularly when single or in small flocks. At Churchill River they are by no means numerous, but I have seen them in such large flocks at York Fort in the Fall of one

Plover.

* They exactly correspond with the bird described by Mr. Pennant, except that they are much longer.

thousand seven hundred and seventy-three, that Mr. Ferdinand Jacobs then Governor, Mr. Robert Body Surgeon, and myself, killed in one afternoon as many as two men could conveniently carry. They generally feed on insects, and are at all times good eating, but late in the Fall are most excellent. They are by no means equally plentiful in all years; and at the Northern settlements in the Bay they are not classed with those species of game that add to the general stock of provisions, being only killed as a luxury; but I am informed that at Albany Fort, several barrels of them are annually salted for Winter use, and are esteemed good eating. This bird during Summer resorts to the remotest Northern parts; for I have seen them at the Copper River, though in those dreary regions only in pairs. The young of these birds always leave their nests as soon as hatched, and when but a few days old run very fast; at night, or in rainy weather, the old ones call them together, and cover them with their wings, in the same manner as a hen does her chickens.

Black Gul-
lemots.

BLACK GULLEMOTS, known in Hudson's Bay by the name of Sea Pigeons. Those birds frequent the shores of Hudson's Bay and Straits in considerable numbers; but more particularly the Northern parts, where they fly in large flocks; to the Southward they are only seen in pairs. They are of a fine black, but not glossy, with scarlet legs and feet; and the coverets of the wings are marked with white. They are in weight equal to a Widgeon, though

though to appearance not so large. They usually make their nests in the holes of rocks, and lay two white eggs, which are delicate eating, but not proportionably large for the size of the bird. My friend Mr. Pennant says, they brave the coldest Winters in those parts, by keeping at the edge of the ice near the open water; but as the sea at that season is frozen over for several miles from the shore, I believe no one's curiosity ever tempted him to confirm the truth of this; and it is well known they never make their appearance near the land after the frost becomes severe.

NORTHERN DIVERS. These birds, though common in Hudson's Bay, are by no means plentiful; they are seldom found near the sea coast, but more frequently in fresh water lakes, and usually in pairs. They build their nests at the edge of small islands, or the margins of lakes or ponds; they lay only two eggs, and it is very common to find only one pair and their young in one sheet of water; a great proof of their aversion to society. They are known in Hudson's Bay by the name of Loons. They differ in species from the Black and Red throated Divers, having a large black bill near four inches long; plumage on the back of a glossy black, elegantly barred with white; the belly of a silver white; and they are so large as at times to weigh fifteen or sixteen pounds. Their flesh is always black, hard, and fishy, yet it is generally eaten by the Indians.

Northern
Divers.

Black-throated
Divers.

BLACK-THROATED DIVERS. This species are more beautiful than the former; having a long white bill, plumage on the back and wings black, elegantly tinged with purple and green, and prettily marked with white spots. In size they are equal to the former; but are so watchful as to dive at the flash of a gun, and of course are seldom killed but when on the wing. Their flesh is equally black and fishy with the former, but it is always eaten by the Indians. The skins of those birds are very thick and strong, and they are frequently dressed with the feathers on, and made into caps for the Indian men. The skins of the Eagle and Raven, with their plumage complete, are also applied to that use, and are far from being an unbecoming head-dress for a savage.

Red-throated
Divers.

RED-THROATED DIVERS. This species are also called Loons in Hudson's Bay; but they are so far inferior to the two former, that they seldom weigh more than three or four pounds. They, like the other species of Loon, are excellent divers; they always feed on fish, and when in pursuit of their prey, are frequently entangled in fishing-nets, set at the mouths of creeks and small rivers. They are more numerous than either of the former, as they frequently fly in flocks; but like them make their nests at the edge of the water, and only lay two eggs, which, though very rank and fishy, are always eaten by Indians and English. The legs of those three species of Loon are placed so near the

the rump as to be of no service to them on the land, as they are perfectly incapable of walking; and when found in that situation (which is but seldom) they are easily taken, though they make a strong resistance with their bill, which is very hard and sharp.

WHITE GULLS. These birds visit Hudson's Bay in great numbers, both on the sea coasts and in the interior parts, and probably extend quite across the continent of America. They generally make their appearance at Churchill River about the middle of May; build their nests on the islands in lakes and rivers; lay two speckled eggs, and bring forth their young in June. Their eggs are generally esteemed good eating, as well as the flesh of those in the interior parts of the country, though they feed on fish and carrion. They make their stay on Hudson's Bay as long in the Fall as the frost will permit them to procure a livelihood. White Gulls.

GREY GULLS. These birds, though common, are by no means plentiful; and I never knew their breeding-places, as they seldom make their appearance at Churchill River till the Fall of the year, and remain there only till the ice begins to be formed about the shores. They seldom frequent the interior parts of the country. They are not inferior in size to the former, and in the Fall of the year are generally fat. The flesh is white and very good eating; and, like most Grey Gulls.

most other Gulls, they are a most excellent shot when on the wing.

Black Gull. BLACK GULLS, usually called in Hudson's Bay, Men of War, from their pursuing and taking the prey from a lesser species of Gull, known in that country by the name of Black-head. In size they are much inferior to the two former species; but, like them, always make their nests on islands, or at the margins of lakes or ponds; they lay only two eggs, and are found at a considerable distance from the sea coast. The length of their wings is very great in proportion to the body; the tail is uniform, and the two middle feathers are four or five inches longer than the rest. Their eggs are always eaten, both by the Indians and English; but the bird itself is generally rejected, except when other provisions are very scarce.

Black-heads. BLACK-HEADS. These are the smallest species of Gull that I know. They visit the sea coast of Hudson's Bay in such vast numbers, that they are frequently seen in flocks of several hundreds; and I have known bushels of their eggs taken on an island of very small circumference. These eggs are very delicate eating, the yolks being equal to that of a young pullet, and the whites of a semi-transparent azure, but the bird itself is always fishy. Their affection for their young is so strong, that when any person attempts to rob their nests, they fly at him, and sometimes approach

approach so near as to touch him with their pinions; and when they find their loss, will frequently follow the plunderer to a considerable distance, and express their grief by making an unusual screaming noise.

This bird may be ranked with the elegant part of the feathered creation, though it is by no means gay. The bill, legs, and feet are of a rich scarlet; crown black, and the remainder of the plumage of a light ash-colour, except the quill-feathers, which are prettily barred, and tipped with black, and the tail much forked. The flight, or extent of wing, in this bird, is very great, in proportion to the body. They are found as far North as has hitherto been visited; but retire to the South early in the Fall.

PELICANS. Those birds are numerous in the interior parts of the country, but never appear near the sea-coast. They generally frequent large lakes, and always make their nests on islands. They are so provident for their young, that great quantities of fish lie rotting near their nests, and emit such a horrid stench as to be smelt at a considerable distance. The flesh of the young Pelican is frequently eaten by the Indians; and as they are always very fat, great quantities of it is melted down, and preserved in bladders for Winter use*, to mix with pounded flesh;

* In the Fall of 1774, when I first settled at Cumberland House, the Indians imposed on me and my people very much, by selling us Pelican fat for the fat of the black bear. Our knowledge of the delicacy of the latter

flesh; but by keeping, it grows very rank. The Pelicans in those parts are about the size of a common goose; their plumage is of a delicate white, except the quill-feathers, which are black. The bill is near a foot long; and the bag, which reaches from the outer-end of the under-mandible to the breast, is capable of containing upwards of three quarts. The skins of those birds are thick and tough, and are frequently dressed by the Indians and converted into bags, but are never made into clothing, though their feathers are as hard, close, and durable, as those of a Loon.

Goosanders

GOOSANDERS, usually called in Hudson's Bay, Shell-drakes. Those birds are very common on the sea-coast, but in the interior parts fly in very large flocks. The bill is long and narrow, and toothed like a saw; and they have a tuft of feathers at the back of the head, which they can erect at pleasure. They are most excellent divers, and such great destroyers of fish, that they are frequently obliged to vomit some of them before they can take flight. Though not much larger than the Mallard Duck, they frequently swallow fish of six or seven inches

induced us to reserve this fat for particular purposes; but when we came to open the bladders, it was little superior to train oil, and was only eatable by a few of my crew, which at that time consisted only of eight Englishmen and two of the home Indians from York Fort.

Cumberland House was the first inland settlement the Company made from Hudson's Fort; and though begun on so small a scale, yet upon it and Hudson's House, which is situated beyond it, upwards of seventy men were now employed.

long

long and proportionably thick. Those that frequent the interior parts of the country prey much on crawfish, which are very numerous in some of the shallow stony rivers. In the Fall of the year they are very fat, and though they always feed on fish, yet their flesh at that season is very good; and they remain in those parts as long as the frost will permit them to procure a subsistence.

SWANS. There are two species of this bird that visit Hudson's Bay in Summer; and only differ in size, as the plumage of both are perfectly white, with black bill and legs. The smaller sort are more frequent near the sea-coast, but by no means plentiful, and are most frequently seen in pairs, but sometimes single, probably owing to their mates having been killed on their passage North. Both species usually breed on the islands which are in lakes; and the eggs of the larger species are so big, that one of them is a sufficient meal for a moderate man, without bread, or any other addition. In the interior parts of the country the larger Swan precedes every other species of water-fowl, and in some years arrive so early as the month of March, long before the ice of the rivers are broken up. At those times they always frequent the open waters of falls and rapids, where they are frequently shot by the Indians in considerable numbers. They usually weigh upwards of thirty pounds, and the lesser species from eighteen to twenty-four. The flesh of both are excellent

Swans.

eating, and when roasted, is equal in flavour to young heifer-beef, and the cygnets are very delicate.

Notwithstanding the size of this bird, they are ~~so~~ swift on the wing as to make them the most difficult to shoot of any bird I know, it being frequently necessary to take flight ten or twelve feet before their bills. This, however, is only when flying before the wind in a brisk gale, at which time they cannot fly at a less rate than an hundred miles an hour; but when flying across the wind, or against it, they make but a slow progress, and are then a noble shot. In their moulting state they are not easily taken, as their large feet, with the assistance of their wings, enables them to run on the surface of the water as fast as an Indian canoe can be paddled, and therefore they are always obliged to be shot; for by diving and other manœuvres they render it impossible to take them by hand. It has been said that the Swans whistle or sing before their death, and I have read some elegant descriptions of it in some of the poets; but I have never heard any thing of the kind, though I have been at the deaths of several. It is true, in serene evenings, after Sun-set, I have heard them make a noise not very unlike that of a French-horn, but entirely divested of every note that constituted melody, and have often been sorry to find it did not forebode their death. Mr. Lawton, who, as Mr. Pennant justly remarks, was no inaccurate observer, properly enough calls the largest species Trumpeters, and the lesser, Hoopers. Some years ago, when I built Cumberland House, the Indians killed those
birds

birds in such numbers, that the down and quills might have been procured in considerable quantities at a trifling expence ; but since the depopulation of the natives by the small-pox, which has also driven the few survivors to frequent other parts of the country, no advantage can be made of those articles, though of considerable value in England *.

GEESE. There are no less than ten different species of Geese that frequent the various parts of Hudson's Bay during Summer, and are as follow : First, The Common Grey Goose. Second, The Canada Goose. Third, The White, or Snow Goose. Fifth, The Blue Goose. Sixth, The Laughing Goose. Seventh, The Barren Goose. Eighth, The Brent Goose. Ninth, The Dunter ; and Tenth, the Bean Goose. Geese.

COMMON GREY GOOSE. This bird precedes every other species of Goose in those parts, and in some forward Springs arrives at Churchill River so early as the latter Common Grey Goose.

* Mr. Pennant, in treating of the Whistling Swan, takes notice of the formation of the Windpipe ; but on examination, the windpipes of both the species which frequent Hudson's Bay are found to be exactly alike, though their note is quite different. The breast-bone of this bird is different from any other I have seen ; for instead of being sharp and solid, like that of a goose, it is broad and hollow. Into this cavity the windpipe passes from the valve, and reaching quite down to the abdomen, returns into the chest, and joins the lungs. Neither of the species of Swan that frequent Hudson's Bay are mute ; but the note of the larger is much louder and harsher than that of the smaller.

end

end of April, but more commonly from the eleventh to the sixteenth of May; and in one year it was the twenty-sixth of May before any Geese made their appearance. At their first arrival they generally come in pairs, and are so fond of society, that they fly streight to the call that imitates their note; by which means they are easily shot. They breed in great numbers in the plains and marshes near Churchill River; and in some years the young ones can be taken in considerable numbers, and are easily tamed; but will never learn to eat corn, unless some of the old ones are taken with them, which is easily done when in a moulting state. On the ninth of August one thousand seven hundred and eighty-one, when I resided at Prince of Wales's Fort, I sent some Indians up Churchill River in canoes to procure some of those Geese, and in the afternoon they were seen coming down the river with a large flock before them; the young ones not more than half-grown, and the old ones so far in a moulting state as not to be capable of flying; so that, with the assistance of the English and the Indians then residing on the plantation, the whole flock, to the amount of forty-one, was drove within the stockade which incloses the Fort, where they were fed and fattened for Winter use. Wild Geese taken and fattened in this manner are much preferable to any tame Geese in the world. When this species of Geese are full-grown, and in good condition, they often weigh twelve pounds, but more frequently much less.

CANADA GOOSE, or Pisk-a-fish, as it is called by the Indians, as well as the English in Hudson's Bay. This species do not differ in plumage from the former, but are inferior in size; the bill is much smaller in proportion, and the flesh being much whiter, of course is more esteemed. They are by no means so numerous as the former, and generally fly far North to breed; but some few of their eggs are found near Churchill River. It is seldom that either of these species lay more than four eggs; but if not robbed, they usually bring them all forth.

Canada
Goose.

WHITE OR SNOW GOOSE. These are the most numerous of all the species of birds that frequent the Northern parts of the Bay, and generally make their appearance about a week or ten days after the Common Grey Goose. In the first part of the season they come in small parties, but in the middle, and toward the latter end, they fly in such amazing flocks, that when they settle in the marshes to feed, the ground for a considerable distance appears like a field of snow. When feeding in the same marsh with the Grey Geese, they never mix. Like the Grey Geese, they fly to the call that resembles their note; and in some years are killed and salted in great numbers for Winter provision; they are almost universally thought good eating, and will, if proper care be taken in curing them, continue good for eighteen months or two years. The Indians are far more expert in killing Geese, as well as every other species of game, than any European I ever saw in Hudson's Bay;

White or
Snow Goose.

for some of them frequently kill upward of a hundred Geese in a day, whereas the most expert of the English think it a good day's work to kill thirty. Some years back it was common for an Indian to kill from a thousand to twelve hundred Geese in one season; but latterly he is reckoned a good hunter that kills three hundred. This is by no means owing to the degeneracy of the natives; for the Geese of late years do not frequent those parts in such numbers as formerly. The general breeding-place of this bird is not known to any Indian in Hudson's Bay, not even to the Esquimaux who frequent the remotest North. The general route they take in their return to the South in the Fall of the year, is equally unknown; for though such multitudes of them are seen at Churchill River in the Spring, and are frequently killed to the amount of five or six thousand; yet in the Fall of the year, seven or eight hundred is considered a good hunt. At York Fort, though only two degrees South of Churchill River, the Geese seasons fluctuate so much, that in some Springs they have salted forty hogsheds, and in others not more than one or two: and at Albany Fort, the Spring season is by no means to be depended on; but in the Fall they frequently salt sixty hogsheds of Geese, besides great quantities of Plover. The retreat of those birds in Winter is equally unknown, as that of their breeding-places. I observe in Mr. Pennant's Arctic Zoology, that about Jakutz, and other parts of Siberia, they are caught in great numbers, both in nets and by decoying them into hovels; but if
these

these are the same birds, they must at times vary as much in manner as they do in situation; for in Hudson's Bay they are the shyest and most watchful of all the species of Geese, never suffering an open approach, not even within two or three gun-shots: yet in some of the rivers near Cumberland House, and at Basquiau, the Indians frequently kill twenty at one shot; but this is only done in moon-light nights, when the Geese are sitting on the mud, and the sportsmen are perfectly concealed from their view. Though the plumage of those Geese are perfectly white, except the quill-feathers, which are black, the skin is of a dark lead-colour, and the flesh is excellent eating, either fresh or salt. They are much inferior in size to the Common Grey Geese, but equal to the Canada Geese.

BLUE GESE. This species are of the same size as the Snow Geese; and, like them, the bill and legs are of a deep flesh-colour, but the whole plumage is of a dirty blue, resembling old lead. The skin, when stripped of its feathers, is of the same colour as the Snow Goose, and they are equally good eating. This species of Geese are seldom seen to the North of Churchill River, and not very common at York Fort; but at Albany Fort they are more plentiful than the White or Snow Geese. Their breeding-places are as little known to the most accurate observer as those of the Snow Geese; for I never knew any of their eggs taken, and their Winter haunts have

Blue Geese.

hitherto been undiscovered. Those birds are frequently seen to lead a flock of the White ones; and, as they generally fly in angles, it is far from unpleasant to see a bird of a different colour leading the van. The leader is generally the object of the first sportsman who fires, which throws the whole flock into such confusion, that some of the other hunters frequently kill six or seven at a shot.

Horned
Wavey.

HORNED WAVEY. This delicate and diminutive species of the Goose is not much larger than the Mallard Duck. Its plumage is delicately white, except the quill-feathers, which are black. The bill is not more than an inch long, and at the base is studded round with little knobs about the size of peas, but more remarkably so in the males. Both the bill and feet are of the same colour with those of the Snow Goose. This species is very scarce at Churchill River, and I believe are never found at any of the Southern settlements; but about two or three hundred miles to the North West of Churchill, I have seen them in as large flocks as the Common Wavey, or Snow Goose. The flesh of this bird is exceedingly delicate; but they are so small, that when I was on my journey to the North I eat two of them one night for supper. I do not find this bird described by my worthy friend Mr. Pennant in his Arctic Zoology. Probably a specimen of it was not sent home, for the person that commanded at Prince of Wales's Fort * at

Mr. Moses Norton

the

the time the collection was making, did not pay any attention to it.

LAUGHING GOOSE. This elegant species has a white bill, and the legs and feet are of a fine yellow colour; the upper part of the plumage is brown, the breast and belly white, the former prettily blotched with black. In size they are equal to the Snow Goose, and their skins, when stripped of their feathers, are delicately white, and the flesh excellent. They visit Churchill River in very small numbers; but about two hundred miles to the North West of that river I have seen them fly in large flocks, like the Common Waveys, or Snow Geese; and near Cumberland House and Basquiau they are found in such numbers, that the Indians in moon-light nights frequently kill upwards of twenty at a shot. Like the Horned Wavey, they never fly with the lead of the coast, but are always seen to come from the Westward. Their general breeding-places are not known, though some few of their eggs are occasionally found to the North of Churchill; but I never heard any Indian say that he had seen any eggs of the Horned Wavey: it is probable they retire to North Greenland to breed; and their rout in the Fall of the year, as they return Southward, is equally unknown. They are, I believe, seldom seen on the coast of Hudson's Bay to the Southward of latitude 59° North.

Laughing
Geese.

Barren
Geese.

BARREN GEESE. These are the largest of all the species of Geese that frequent Hudson's Bay, as they frequently weigh sixteen or seventeen pounds. They differ from the Common Grey Goose in nothing but in size, and in the head and breast being tinged with a rusty brown. They never make their appearance in the Spring till the greatest part of the other species of Geese are flown Northward to breed, and many of them remain near Churchill River the whole Summer. This large species are generally found to be males, and from the exceeding smallness of their testicles, they are, I suppose, incapable of propagating their species. I believe I can with truth say, that I was the first European who made that remark, though they had always been distinguished by the name of the Barren Geese; for no other reason than that of their not being known to breed. Their flesh is by no means unpleasant, though always hard and tough; and their plumage is so thick before they begin to moult, that one bird usually produces a pound of fine feathers and down, of a surprising elasticity.

Brent
Geese.

BRENT GEESE. This species certainly breed in the remotest parts of the North, and seldom make their appearance at Churchill River till late in August or September. The route they take in Spring is unknown, and their breeding-places have never been discovered by any Indian in Hudson's Bay. When they make their appearance at
Churchill

Churchill River, they always come from the North, fly near the margin of the coast, and are never seen in the interior parts of the country. In size they are larger than a Mallard Duck, but inferior to the Snow Goose; and though their flesh appears delicate to the eye, it is not much esteemed. In some years they pass the mouth of Churchill River in prodigious numbers, and many of them are killed and served to the Company's servants as provisions; but, as I have just observed, they are not much relished. When migrating to the South, they generally avail themselves of a strong North or North Westerly wind, which makes their flight so swift, that when I have killed four or five at a shot, not one of them fell less than from twenty to fifty yards from the perpendicular spot where they were killed. Like the White, or Snow Goose, when in large flocks they fly in the shape of a wedge, and make a great noise. Their flight is very irregular, sometimes being forty or fifty yards above the water, and in an instant after they skim close to the surface of it, and then rise again to a considerable height; so that they may justly be said to fly in flocks.

The DUNTER Goose, as it is called in Hudson's Bay, but which is certainly the Eider Duck. They are common at the mouth of Churchill River as soon as the ice breaks up, but generally fly far North to breed; and the few that do remain near the settlement are so scattered among small islands, and sea-girt rocks and shoals, as to render

Dunter
Goose.

render it not worth while to attempt gathering their down. Their eggs, when found, are exceeding good eating; and in the Fall of the year the flesh is by no means unpleasant, though they are notoriously known to feed on fish.

Bean Goose.

BEAN GOOSE. This species* is seldom found in any part of Hudson's Bay, as in all my travels I have only seen three that were killed. This bird never came under the inspection of Mr. Graham, or the late Mr. Hutchins, though they both contributed very largely to the collection sent home to the Royal Society

Species of Water-Fowl.

Ducks.

Ducks of various kinds are found in those parts during Summer; some only frequenting the sea-coast, while others visit the interior parts of the country in astonishing numbers. The species of this bird which is found most commonly here are, the King Duck, Black Duck, Mallard

It is, however, no less true, that the late Mr. Humphry Martin, many years Governor of Albany Fort, sent home several hundred specimens of animals and plants to complete that collection; but by some mistake, nothing of the kind was placed to the credit of his account. Even my respected friend Mr. Pennant, who with a candour that does him honour, has so generously acknowledged his obligations to all to whom he thought he was indebted for information when he was writing his *Arctic Zoology*, (see the Advertisement,) has not mentioned his name; but I am fully persuaded that it entirely proceeded from a want of knowing the person; and as Mr. Hutchins succeeded him at Albany in the year 1774, every thing that has been sent over from that part has been placed to his account.

Duck,

Duck, Long-tailed Duck, Widgeon, and Teal. The two first only visit the sea-coast, feed on fish and fish-spawn; and their flesh is by no means esteemed good, though their eggs are not disagreeable. The Mallard and Long-tailed Duck visit Hudson's Bay in great numbers, and extend from the sea-coast to the remotest Western parts, and near Cumberland House are found in vast multitudes. At their first arrival on the sea-coast, they are exceeding good eating; but when in a moulting state, though very fat, they are in general so rank that few Europeans are fond of them. At those seasons the difference in flavour is easily known by the colour of the fat; for when that is white, the flesh is most assuredly good; but when it is yellow, or of an orange colour, it is very rank and fishy. This difference is only peculiar to those that frequent and breed near the sea-coast; for in the interior parts I never knew them killed but their flesh was very good; and the young Mallard Duck before it can fly is very fat, and most delicate eating. The same may be said of the Long-tailed Duck. Neither of those species lay more than six or eight eggs in common, and frequently bring them all forth.

WIDGEON. This species of Duck is very uncommon in Hudson's Bay; usually keeping in pairs, and being seldom seen in flocks. They are by no means so numerous as the two former, and are most frequently seen in rivers and marshes near the sea-coast. Their flesh is generally esteemed; and the down of those I have examined is little inferior in elasticity to that of the Eider, though much shorter.

Widgeon.

shorter. The same may be said of several other species of Ducks that frequent those parts; but the impossibility of collecting the down in any quantity, prevents it from becoming an article of trade.

Teal.

TEAL. Like the Mallard, they are found in considerable numbers near the sea-coast; but are more plentiful in the interior parts of the country, and fly in such large flocks that I have often killed twelve or fourteen at one shot, and have seen both English and Indians kill a much greater number. At their first arrival they are but poor, though generally esteemed good eating. This diminutive Duck is by far the most prolific of any I know that resorts to Hudson's Bay; for I have often seen the old ones swimming at the head of seventeen young, when not much larger than walnuts. This bird remains in those parts as long as the season will permit; for in the year one thousand seven hundred and seventy-five, in my passage from Cumberland House to York Fort, I, as well as my Indian companions, killed them in the rivers we passed through as late as the twentieth of October. At those times they are entirely involved in fat, but delicately white, and may truly be called a great luxury.

Besides the birds already described, there is a great variety of others, both of land and water fowl, that frequent those parts in Summer; but these came not so immediately under my inspection as those I have already described.

Of

N O R T H E R N O C E A N.

Of the Vegetable Productions.

The vegetable productions of this country by no means engaged my attention so much as the animal creation; which is the less to be wondered at, as so few of them are useful for the support of man. Yet I will endeavour to enumerate as many of them as I think are worth notice.

The GOOSEBERRIES thrive best in stony and rocky ground, which lies open and much exposed to the Sun. But in those situations few of the bushes grow to any height, and spread along the ground like vines. The fruit is always most plentiful and the finest on the under-side of the branches, probably owing to the reflected heat from the stones and gravel, and from being sheltered from all cold winds and fog by the leaves. I never saw more than one species of Gooseberry in any part of Hudson's Bay, which is the red one. When green, they make excellent pies or tarts; and when ripe are very pleasant eating, though by no means so large as those produced in England.

Goose-berries.

CRANBERRIES grow in great abundance near Churchill, and are not confined to any particular situation, for they

Cranberry

are as common on open bleak plains and high rocks as among the woods. When carefully gathered in the Fall, in dry weather, and as carefully packed in casks with moist sugar, they will keep for years, and are annually sent to England in considerable quantities as presents, where they are much esteemed. When the ships have remained in the Bay so late that the Cranberries are ripe, some of the Captains have carried them home in water with great success.

Heath-
berries.

The HEATHBERRIES are in some years so plentiful near Churchill, that it is impossible to walk in many places without treading on thousands and millions of them. They grow close to the ground, and are a favourite repast of many birds that migrate to those parts in Summer, particularly the Grey Goose; on which account the Indians distinguish them by the name of Nishca-minnick, or the Grey Gooseberry. The juice of this berry makes an exceeding pleasant beverage, and the fruit itself would be more pleasing were it not for the number of small seeds it contains.

Bethago-
tominick.

BETHAGO-TOMINICK, as it is called by the Indians, or the Dewater-berry of Mr. Dragge. I have seen this berry as far North as Marble Island, and that in great abundance. It flourishes best, and is most productive, in swampy boggy ground covered with moss, and is seldom found
among

among grafs. The plant itfelf is not very unlike that of a Strawberry, but the leaves are larger. Out of the center of the plant fhoots a fingle ftalk, fometimes to the height of feven or eight inches, and each plant only produces one berry, which at fome diftance refembles a Strawberry; but on examination they have not that conical form; and many of them are only compofed of three or four lobes, while others confift of near twenty. The flavour of this berry is far from unpleafing, and it is eaten by our people in confiderable quantities during the feafon, (which is Auguft,) and, like all the other fruits in thofe parts, is fuppofed to be wholefome, and a great antifeorbutic.

CURRANS, both red and black, are common about Churchill River, but the latter are far more plentiful than the former, and are very large, and fine. The bufhes on which thofe currans grow, frequently exceed three feet in height, and generally thrive beft in thofe parts that are moift but not swampy. Small vallies between the rocks, at fome little diftance from the woods, are very favourable to them; and I have frequently obferved that the fruit produced in thofe fituations is larger and finer than that which is found in the woods. Thofe berries have a very great effect on fome people if eaten in any confiderable quantities, by acting as a very powerful purgative, and in fome as an emetic at the fame

time; but if mixed with Cranberries, they never have that effect.

Juniper-
berries.

JUNIPER-BERRIES are frequently found near the new settlement at Churchill River, but by no means in such plenty as in the more Southern and interior parts of the country. The bush they grow on is so similar to the creeping pine, that one half of the Company's servants residing in Hudson's Bay do not know one from the other. Like the Gooseberry bushes in those parts, the fruit is always most plentiful on the under-side of the branches. They are not much esteemed either by the Indians or English, so that the few that are made use of are generally infused in brandy, by way of making a cordial, which is far from unpleasant*.

Straw-
berries.

STRAWBERRIES †, and those of a considerable size and excellent flavour, are found as far North as Churchill River; and what is most remarkable, they are frequently known to be more plentiful in such places as have formerly been set on fire. This is not peculiar to the Strawberry, but it is well known that in the interior parts of the country, as well as at Albany and Moose Forts, that after

* The Indians call the Juniper-berry *Caw-raw-cue-minick*, or the *Crow-berry*.

† The *Oteagh-minick* of the Indians, is so called, because it in some measure resembles a heart.

the ground, or more properly the under-wood and moss, have been set on fire, that Raspberry-bushes and Hips have shot up in great numbers on spots where nothing of the kind had ever been seen before. This is a phenomenon that is not easily accounted for; but it is more than probable that Nature wanted some assistance, and the moss being all burnt away, not only admits the Sun to act with more power, but the heat of the fire must, in some measure, loosen the texture of the soil, so as to admit the plants to shoot up, after having been deep-rooted for many years without being able to force their way to the surface.

Besides the Berries already mentioned, there are three others found as far North as Churchill; namely, what the Indians call the Eye-berry, and the other two are termed Blue-berry and Partridge-berry by the English.

The EYE-BERRY grows much in the same manner as the Strawberry, and though smaller, is infinitely superior in flavour. This berry is found in various situations; but near Churchill River they are most plentiful in small hollows among the rocks, which are situated some distance from the woods; but they are never known to grow in swampy ground, and I never saw them so plentiful in any part of Hudson's Bay as about Churchill River.

Eye-berry.

The

Blue-berry.

The BLUE-BERRY is about the size of a Hurtleberry, and grows on bushes which rise to eighteen inches or two feet, but in general are much lower. They are seldom ripe till September, at which time the leaves turn to a beautiful red; and the fruit, though small, have as fine a bloom as any plum, and are much esteemed for the pleasantness of their flavour.

Partridge-berry.

The PARTRIDGE-BERRY is nearly as large as the Cranberry imported from Newfoundland, and though of a beautiful transparent red, yet has a disagreeable taste. These berries are seldom taken, either by the Indians or English, and many of the latter call them Poison-berries, but several birds are fond of them. They grow close to the ground, like the Cranberry, and the plant that produces them is not very unlike ~~sm~~ sage, either in shape or colour, but has none of its virtues.

I had nearly forgotten another species of Berry, which is found on the dry ridges at Churchill in considerable numbers. In size and colour they much resemble the Red Curran, and grow on bushes so much like the Creeping Willow, that people of little observation scarcely know the difference; particularly as all the fruit is on the under-side of the branches, and entirely hid by the leaves. I never knew this Berry eaten but by a frolicksome Indian girl; and as it had no ill effect, it is a proof it is not

not unwholesome, though exceedingly unpleasant to the palate, and not much less so to the smell.

HIPS of a small size, though but few in number, are also found on the banks of Churchill River, at some distance from the sea. But in the interior parts of the country they are frequently found in such vast quantities, that at a distance they make the spots they grow on appear perfectly red. In the interior parts of Hudson's Bay they are as large as any I ever remember to have seen, and when ripe, have a most delightful bloom; but at that season there is scarcely one in ten which has not a worm in it; and they frequently act as a strong purgative Hips.

With respect to the smaller productions of the vegetable world, I am obliged to be in a great measure silent, as the nature of my various occupations during my residence in this country gave me little leisure, and being unacquainted with botany, I viewed with inattention things that were not of immediate use: the few which follow are all that particularly engaged my attention.

The **WISH-A-CA-PUCCA**, which grows in most parts of this country, is said by some Authors to have great medical virtues, applied, either inwardly as an alterative, or outwardly dried and pulverised, to old sores and gangrenes. The truth of this I much doubt, and could never With-a-pucca.

never think it had the least medical quality. It is, however, much used by the lower class of the Company's servants as tea; and by some is thought very pleasant. But the flower is by far the most delicate, and if gathered at a proper time, and carefully dried in the shade, will retain its flavour for many years, and make a far more pleasant beverage than the leaves. There are several species of this plant, of which some of the leaves are nearly as large as that of the Creeping Willow, while others are as small and narrow as that of the Rosemary, and much resembles it in colour; but all the species have the same smell and flavour.

Jakashay-
puck.

JAKASHAY-PUCK. This herb much resembles Creeping Box; and is only used, either by the Indians or English, to mix with tobacco, which makes it smoke mild and pleasant; and would, I am persuaded, be very acceptable to many smokers in England.

Moss.

Moss of various sorts and colours is plentiful enough in most parts of this country, and is what the deer usually feed on.

Grass.

GRASS of several kinds is also found in those parts, and some of it amazingly rapid of growth, particularly that which is there called Rye-grass, and which, in our short Summer at Churchill, frequently grows to the height
of

of three feet. Another species of Grass, which is produced in marshes, and on the margins of lakes, ponds, and rivers, is particularly adapted for the support of the multitudes of the feathered creation which resort to those parts in Summer. The Marsh Grass at Churchill is of that peculiar nature, that where it is mowed one year, no crop can be procured the next Summer; whereas at York Fort, though the climate is not very different, they can get two crops, or harvests, from the same spot in one Summer. Vetches are plentiful in some parts as far North as Churchill River; and Burrage, Sorrel, and Coltsfoot, may be ranked among the useful plants. Dandelion is also plentiful at Churchill, and makes an early salad, long before any thing can be produced in the gardens.

In fact, notwithstanding the length of the Winter, the severity of the cold, and the great scarcity of vegetables at this Northern settlement, by proper attention to cleanliness, and keeping the people at reasonable exercise, I never had one man under me who had the least symptoms of the scurvy; whereas at York Fort, Albany, and Moose River, there were almost annual complaints that one half of the people were rendered incapable of duty by that dreadful disorder.

I do not wish to lay claim to any merit on this occasion, but I cannot help observing that, during ten years I had

the command at Churchill River, only two men died of that distemper, though my complement at times amounted in number to fifty-three.

Trees.

The Forest Trees that grow on this inhospitable spot are very few indeed ; Pine, Juniper, small scraggy Poplar, Creeping Birch, and Dwarf Willows, compose the whole catalogue. Farther Westward the Birch Tree is very plentiful ; and in the Athapuscow country, the Pines, Larch, Poplar, and Birch, grow to a great size ; the Alder is ^{not} found there.

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PLATE I. A North West View of PRINCE OF WALES's FORT in Hudson's Bay, North America. - - *To face Page 1*

PLATE II. Indian Implements. - - *To face P. 98*

PLATE III. Plan of the COPPER MINE RIVER. *To face P. 164*

PLATE IV. A Winter View in the ATHAPUSCOW LAKE. *To face P. 248*

PLATE V. Indian Implements. - - - *At the End.*

PLATE VI. Plan of ALBANY RIVER in Hudson's Bay. *At the End.*

PLATE VII. Plan of MOOSE RIVER in Hudson's Bay. - *At the End.*

PLATE VIII. Plan of SLUDE RIVER.

