

CHAP. iii.

The Situation of the Island, of Springs, Fish, Game, &c.

The Isle of Guernezey is very high on the South side, & lowe on the other side; it being still falling ground, as you goe towards the North of it. On the contrary that of Jersey is exceeding lowe on the Southeast, South & Southwest parts; and ariseth by degrees, as you goe towards the North, where it is as steepe and higher then a steecple all along that coast from Bowley bay to Gronoz point, & beyond it, & soe difficult of accesse, that Boates onely land there, and that in very fewe & dangerous Creekes, and not at all times neither. This Accliuity of Jersey & decliuity of Guernezey from south to north affoording to the first the sunne beams more direct & perpendicular, & to the second more Glauncing & oblique, should be some cause of more fruitfulnessse to the one then to the other; and is alsoe y^e cause why all the streames, (one or two excepted), though the heads of them be neuer soe neere the north coast, take their course towards the south. Those high Clifes, which wee call Falaises, haue in some places deepe hollowe dens, which the sea hath made, frequented by Cormorants & other sea fowle which harbour there; & a kind of wild pigeons, which nestle there in greate numbers. There groweth alsoe greate store of Sampire, a winter sallet, with other hearbs for physick, which are to be found in greate variety, some all along the sea shore, others in the mediterranean parts of the Island, which for quantity & goodness of Simples might haue ben consecrated to Aesculapius, if he had ben as well knowne in these parts, as he was in Greece.

In this Island, though very high & not very bigg, are soe many springs bubling out most pure & excellent water, that it is a wonder to see it; witnesse Thirty water mills, besides foure or five malt & fullers mills, which this spring water serues with the raine water to grind all y^e corne in y^e Island: there being only Three wind mills, which serue principally for su^mer: and yet there is more bread spent here, then in three times the like space in any part of England, Cittyes excepted. These springs are not onely to be found in bottomes & Vallyes, but many times on the tops of the highest hills; soe as there be fewe houses which haue not one or more; and where they are wanting, a well is at hand to supplye it.

This Island, as well as Guernezey, abounds with very good fish of all sorts: but the most ordinary kinds are Base, which are taken chiefly in the Spring about Lent & after: they come by shoales soe neere y^e shore, that Cartloades haue ben taken at a draught, some of them a yard long and more; alsoe Mulletts of two kinds, the gray and Red, which last is something of the fashion of a Perch, a very firme, & very delicate fish; the liuer whereof being very red is vsed to make the sawce of it: turbotts, soles, flounders & place of two or three sorts, whereof one sort wee call moines, that is to say monkes, from their grayfriars colour, not inferior in tast to soles; breame all the spring long of a larger size then ordinary; whitings, called heere lieus, not soe white as those in England; but the most comon & to be had all y^e yeare long is a fish called by vs Vrac, like a Carp in shape; & might be called the sea Carp; for as the forme soe the tast comes neere it: there are of them of all bignesses, as of Carps: some are red, some greene, some of a darker colour: the flesh thereof is not over firme; but the remedy is to boile it in some strong liquor mixt with water, as Vinegar, wine or Cydar: it is soe fatt, when growne to its bigness, that it makes a good broth with hearbes & spice. There are alsoe infinite store of Rays, whereof there be two or three sorts, one with priekles, called in England Thorne back, the other smooth; and all sorts of rough-coated fish, knowne by the names of Rousses, roussets, hauts & the like; all which

are sold in the market by Cart loads at very low rates. But the sea about Jersey & Guernezey may be styled y^e kingdome of Congers, which are taken there most frequently & in great quantities, & so bigg that many times they weigh thirty or forty pounds a peece, & some haue come to fifty. I need not describe the fish; for it is well knowne. You may guesse at y^e quantity that is or may be taken, by what happened when Otto de Grandison was Gouvernor of these Isles. He forced an Impost onely upō the Congers that were salted for transportation, & y^e sayd Impost amounted to foure hundred Liuers tournois in one yeare for both Islands, & yet it was but one denier per Conger about ten pounds weight. This Impost cost his widdowe deare, as shal be scene hereafter. There are alsoe all sorts of rock-fish, Crabbs of all sorts, Lobsters very bigg, besides another sort of Crab, or Lobster (for it is of a figure partaking of both) taken about Guernezey, called y^e Guernezey Crab; as big as a lobster, but that the Clawes of it are nothing soe bigg: the fish is ouer lushious & blunts the appetite.

Shell fish of all sorts & sizes can not bee wanting among soe many rocks; I shall name but a few. In y^e roade neere Montorgueil there is a spacious & plentifull Oistery. The people doe not greatly affect the fishing of them, by reason they haue them cheape from Cancalle. I haue not scene any to be preferred to them for bignesse, fatnesse or sweetnesse; & are easy to be drawne out with a net for y^e purpose. There is another kind of shell fish almost peculiar to this Island; wee call it Ormer by a contraction of two Latin words, "Auris Marina," soe called of its forme, which is very like y^e eare of a man, but somewhat longer. The fish within the shell is very solid; when of iust growth it is about four inches long, & neere three broad. The shell is within of y^e colour of mother of pearle, but a litle brighter, & is vsed by Joyners in carued workes. It hath not an vnder-shell, as the oister hath; but the fish clingeth against y^e rockes & y^e shell serues to couer it, which shell stickes to the belly of it. It is not found but at lowe water markes, in great spring tydes; for then the people flocke downe to y^e sea, & take great store of it.

Wee haue another shell fish w^{ch} wee call Razoir, because it resembleth a Razor shutt vp: it is neuer found but hid in y^e firme sand in an ebbe. The secret to catch it is by suddainly thrusting an Instrument made for y^e purpose iust under the fish, before he is aware, when you haue found the place where it is hid; w^{ch} appears by a vent hole aboue it, for if you be not very quicke, it will sinke itselſe soe deepe that noe spade will reach it. The pulp thereof is sweete & delicate.

I must add something of a very small fish, but very singular; & whereof y^e like hardly to be found any where else. The fish is foure or fīue Inches long of y^e colour of a Smelt, very slender, called Lançon as if one should say a little Lance, for soe is the figure thereof. It lyes hidden in mouing sandbanks, & is best taken in the night about July or August: for it glisters, & is easily scene in the darke, when y^e sand being moued with an Iron, it leapes vp. There is such plenty of it at times, that it is nothing for one person to take a Bushell of them. It is eaten bones & all, boyled or fried. It might allsoe be prepared after the manner of Anchoues with good successe, as it hath ben tryed by experience. It was wont to be a great pastime, for yong people who flocked to it, not soe much for the fish, as for diuertisement and many times for debauchery: for which cause these meetings haue ben discountenanc't & are at p̄nt lesse frequented.

I might insist upon this Lent argument, & name diuers other sorts of fish, cōmonly taken hereabouts, as Tingrells, somewhat like Rayes, but armed with very dangerous prickles, & teeth; whose liuer is very bigg & produceth excellent oyle & in great quantity. Another of a perfect blood-red colour, with a greate head & throate called Gronneur, from y^e noyse it makes like a hog. Another but not soe frequent, which our fishermen tearme Syraine, or mairmayd, hauing, as they say, (for I haue not scene it), great Teates, Loches, &c. As for fresh-water fish, wee haue placo, Carps & Eeles, of which two latter sorts S^t Ouens Poole & y^e of y^e Valle in Guernezey afford such ones as can hardly be match't in all Europe.

There is a kind of wheate very common with vs, & of Rye likewise, called Treméz, Trimestre, because it remaineth in y^e ground from sowing to reaping not pass't Three months; for it is sowed iust with y^e Barley in y^e end of March & all y^e moneth of April; whereby it happens that in forward summers it may be reaped within Sixty or Seventy days from its sowing. On the contrary oates, which in England are sowed in y^e Spring, are in Jersey, for the most part, sowed before Christmas, yea before the Wheat or Rye; & they growe much longer then in England; the stalke being commonly foure or five foot high. The manner of reaping the Corne is with the sickle dented & not smooth edg't, by hand fulls putt together very orderly, & then bound vp in sheafes, & after that stacked y^e care inward & y^e stalke without, euen the Barley & Oates, with litle losse, but somewhat more paines. The Ordinary fewell is wood, which groweth plentifully all y^e Island over, not onely in sett Rows along the High wayes, affoording shade in Summer & shelter in Winter, but alsoe vpon the fences & hedges, & is lopped once in five or Six yeares for fewell. Besides which the hedges are planted with white & blacke thorne & with willowes: & y^e barren hills affoord firzes & ferne, which serue with Sea Vraic for y^e kitchin, & without it for baking, & for brewing when Cydar slacks.