

Part First.

CHAPTER FIRST.

SITUATION AND DISCOVERY OF NEW FRANCE.

BY new France is commonly understood the space of land and water which extends from 36 degrees of latitude, which is that of Virginia, to 52, where, nearly, begins the great River of Saint Lawrence; others locate it from 32 to 54. It extends in longitude from 325 degrees to 295, as known to us,—or, to speak more properly, without any limit toward the West. It is a part of the Mainland of North America, distant from [2] Europe, in a direct course, about three thousand miles, as we have observed in various Eclipses; situated, as is seen, in one of the temperate Zones, but partaking of the quality of the two extremes,—having severe cold in Winter, very deep snows, and very hard ice; and in Summer, no less heat than that of Italy.

The first French who lived there believed that the cause of such excessive cold (which, among other things, for nearly four months renders it impossible to write, unless one ply his pen very close to the fire, to such a degree does every liquid freeze) was the endlessly vast woods which cover the whole country. But I myself believe that if the woods, dry and leafless as they are in Winter, could hinder the Sun from warming the earth and moderating the excessive cold, they would avail still more in keeping off