

long, and often a good part of the night. But this application [24] did not prevent my being commonly the object of their contempt and the butt of their jokes; for, however much I exerted myself, I accomplished nothing in comparison with them, their bodies being large and strong, and perfectly adapted to such labors. The slight esteem in which they held me caused them to steal from me every article of my wardrobe that they could; and I had much difficulty in retaining my hat, the wide rim of which seemed to them peculiarly fitted for defense against the excessive heat of the Sun. And when evening came, as my Pilot took away a bit of blanket that I had, to serve him as a pillow, he forced me to pass the night without any covering but the foliage of some tree.

“When hunger is added to these [25] discomforts, it is a severe hardship, but one that soon teaches a man to find a relish in the bitterest roots and the most putrid meat. God was pleased to make me suffer from hunger, on Fridays especially, for which I heartily thank him.

“We were forced to accustom ourselves to eat a certain moss growing upon the rocks. It is a sort of shell-shaped leaf which is always covered with caterpillars and spiders; and which, on being boiled, furnishes an insipid soup, black and viscous, that rather serves to ward off death than to impart life.

“One morning, we found a stag that had been dead four or five days. It was a lucky accident for poor starvelings. I was [26] given a piece of it, and although its offensive odor deterred some from eating any, hunger made me take my share; but my mouth had a putrid taste, in consequence, until the next day.