fiſhermen, and excellent pilots. Their women are admirable houſewives, ſpin their own wool, weave it into coarſe cloth, and knit ſtockings. They have no timber of their own growth, and not much from England; yet they have many joiners and cabinet-makers, who, out of the fine woods which they obtain from captains of ſhips who put in here, make all kinds of domeſtic furniture in a very neat manner. They are free from the land-tax, malt-tax, and exciſe; and being furniſhed with plenty of liquors from the veſſels which are driven into their roads for refreſhment, for neceſſary repairs, or to wait for a fair wind, in return for proviſions and other conveniences; this, with what little fiſh they can cure, makes the beſt part of their trade, if we except their kelp, which has been a growing manufacture for theſe fourſcore years, and produces at preſent about 500 1. per annum.

The right honourable the carl of Godolphin is ſtyled proprietor of Scilly, in virtue of letters-patent granted to the late earl, then lord Godolphin, dated the 25th of July 1698, for the term of 89 years, to be computed from the end and expiration of a term of 50 years, granted to Francis Godolphin, Eſq; by king Charles I.; that is, from the year 1709 to 1798, when his leaſe de­termines. In virtue of this royal grant, his lordſhip is the ſole owner of all lands, houſes, and tenements; claims all the tithes, not only of the fruits of the earth, but of fiſh taken at ſea and landed upon thoſe premiſes; harbour-duties paid by ſhips; and one moiety of the wrecks, the other belonging to the admiralty. There is only one eccleſiaſtical perſon upon the iſlands, who reſides at St Miry’s, and viſits the other inhabited iſlands once a-year. But divine ſervice is peformed, and ſermons read, every Sunday in the churches of thoſe iſlands, by an honeſt layman appointed for that purpoſe; and there are likewiſe church-war­dens and overſeers, regularly cholen in every pariſh. As to the civil government, it is adminiſtered by what is called the *Court oſ Twelve;* in which the com­mander in chief, the proprietor’s agent, and the chaplain, have their ſeats in virtue of their offices: the other nine are choſen by the people. Theſe decide, or ra­ther compromiſe, all differences; and puniſh ſmall of­fences by fines, whippings, and the ducking-ſtool: as to greater enormities, we many conclude they have not been hitherto known; ſince, except for the ſoldiers, there is no priſon in the iſlands. But in cafe of capital offences, the criminals may be tranſported to the county of Cornwall, and there brought to juſtice.

The great importance of theſe iſlands ariſes from their advantageous ſituation, as looking equally into St George’s Channel, which divides Great Britain from Ireland, and the Engliſh Channel, which ſeparates Bri­tain from France. For this reaſon, moſt ſhips bound from the ſouthward ſtrive to make the Scilly iſlands, in order to ſteer their courſe with greater certainty. It is very convenient alſo for veſſels to take ſhelter amongſt them; which, prevents their being driven to Milford Haven, nay ſometimes into ſome port in Ireland, if the wind is ſtrong at eaſt; or, if it blows hard at north- weſt, from being forced back into ſome of the Corniſh harbours, or even on the French coaſts. If the wind ſhould not be very high, yet if unfavourable or unſteady, as between the channels often happens, it is better to put into Scilly, than to beat about at ſea in bad weather.

The intercourſe between theſe two channels is another motive why ſhips come in here, as chooſing rather to wait in ſafety for a wind, than to run the hazard of being blown out of their courſe; and therefore a ſtrong gale at eaſt ſeldom fails of bringing tlrirty or forty veſſels, and frequently a larger number, into Scilly; not more to their own ſatisfaction than to that of the inhabitants. Ships homeward-bound from America often touch there, from the deſire of making the firſt land in their power, and for the ſake of refreſhment. Theſe reaſons have an influence on foreign ſhips, as well as our own; and afford the natives an opportunity of ſhowing their wonderful dexterity in conducting them ſafely into St Mary’s harbour, and, when the wind ſerves, through their founds. Upon firing a gun and making a waft, a boat immediately puts off from the neareſt iſland, with ſeveral pilots on board; and having with amazing activity dropped one of them into every ſhip, till only two men are left in the boat, theſe return again to land, as the wind and other circumſtances direct, in one of their little coves.

Reſpecting a current which often prevails to the weſt-ward of Scilly, Mr Rennel has publiſhed ſome obſervations of much importance. “It is a circumſtance (ſays he) well known to ſeamen, "that ſhips, in coming from the Atlantic, and fleering a courſe for the Britiſh channel, in a parallel ſomewhat to the ſouth of the Scilly iſlands, do notwithſtanding often find themſelves to the north of thoſe iſlands; or, in other words, in the mouth of St George’s or of the Briſtol channel. This ex­traordinary error has paſſed for the effects either of bad ſteerage, bad obſervations of latitude, or the indraught of the Briſtol channel: but none of theſe account for it ſatisfactorily; becauſe, admitting that at times there may be an indraught, it cannot be ſuppoſed to extend to Scilly; and the cafe has happened in weather the moſt favourable for navigating and for taking observa­tions. The conſequences of this deviation from the in­tended tract have very often been fatal; particularly in the loſs of the Nancy packet in our own times, and that of Sir Cloudeſley Shovel and others of his fleet at the beginning of the preſent century. Numbers of cafes, equally melancholy, but of leſs celebrity, have occurred; and many others, in which the danger has been immi­nent, but not fatal, have ſcarcely reached the public ear. All of theſe have been referred to accident; and there­fore no attempt ſeems to have been made to inveſtigate the cauſe of them.

“I am, however, of opinion, that, they may be im­puted to a ſpeciſic cauſe; namely, a current: and I ſhall therefore endeavour to inveſtigate both that and its ef­fects, that ſeamen may be apprized of the times when they are particularly to expect, it in any conſiderable degree of ſtrehgth; for then only it is likely to occaſion miſchief, the current that prevails at ordinary times be­ing probably too weak to produce an error in the reck­oning, equal to the difference of parallel between the ſouth part, **of** Scilly and the tract in which a comman­der, prudent in his meaſures, but unſuſpicious of a cur­rent, would chooſe to ſail.”

The original cauſe of this current is the prevalence of weſterly winds in the Atlantic, which impel the wa­ters along the north coaſt of Spain, and accumulate them in the Bay of Biſcay; whence they are projected along the coaſt of France, in a direction north-weſt by