themſelves with thoſe neceſſaries and conveniences pro­cured by their intercourse with other nations, and con­ceiving themſelves neglected by the mother country, have ſeldom troubled her with their applications.

There are, few countries that have gone by more names than theſe iſlands; they were called in Islandic, *Hialtlandia,* from *hialt,* the “ hilt of a ſword ;” the might be poſſibly corrupted into *Hetland, Hitland,* or *Hethland,* though ſome tell us this ſignifies a “ high land.” They have been likewiſe, and are ſtill in ſome maps, called *Zetland* and *Zealand,* in reference, as has been ſuppoſed, to their ſituation. By the Danes, and by the natives, they are ſtyled *Tealtaland ;* and not- withſtanding the oddneſs of the orthography, this dif­fers very little, if at all, from their manner of pronoun­cing Zetland, out of which pronunciation grew the mo­dern names of *Shetland* and *Shotland.*

The iſlands of *Shetland,* as we commonly call them, are well ſituated for trade. The neareſt continent to them is Norway ; the port of Bergen lying 44 leagues eaſt, whereas they lie 46 leagues north north-eaſt from Buchanneſs ; eaſt north-eaſt from Sanda, one of the Orkneys, about 16 or 18 leagues ; six or ſeven leagues north-eaſt from Fair Iſle ; 58 leagues eaſt from the Ferroe iſles ; and at nearly the same diſtance north-eaſt from Lewis. The ſouthern promontory of the main land, called *Sumburgh Head, lies* in 59 degrees and 59 minutes of north latitude ; and the northern extremity of Unſt, the most remote of them all, in the latitude of 61 de­grees 15 minutes. The meridian of London paſſes through this laſt iſland, which lies about 2 degrees 30 minutes west from Paris, and about 5 degrees 15 mi­nutes eaſt from the meridian of Cape Lizard. Accord­ing to Gifford’s “ Hiſtorical Deſcription pf Zetland,” the inhabited iſlands are 33, of which the principal is ſtyled *Main Land,* and extends in length from north to ſouth about 60 miles, and is in ſome places 20 broad, though in others not more than two.

It is impoſſible to ſpeak with preciſion ; but, accord­ing to the beſt computation which we have been able to form, the Shetland iſles contain near three times as much land as the Orkneys : they are conſidered alſo as equal in ſize to the iſland of Madeira ; and not inferior to the provinces of Utrecht, Zealand, and all the reſt of the Dutch iſlands taken together ; but of climate and soil they have not much to boaſt. The longeſt day in the iſland of Unſt is 19 hours 15 mi­nutes, and of conſequence the ſhorteſt day 4 hours and 45 minutes. The ſpring is very late, the ſummer very ſhort ; the autumn alſo is of no long duration, dark, foggy, and rainy ; the winter ſets in about November, and laſts till April, and ſometimes till May. They have frequently in that ſeaſon ſtorms of thunder, much rain, but little froſt or ſnow. High winds are indeed very frequent and very troubleſome, yet they ſeldom produce any terrible effects. The aurora borealis is as common here as in any of the northern countries. In the winter ſeaſon the ſea ſwells and rages in ſuch a manner, that for five or six months their ports are inacceſſible, and of courſe the people during that ſpace have no correſpondence with the reſt of the world.

The soil in the interior part of the main land, for the moſt part, is mountainous, mooriſh, and boggy, yet not to ſuch a degree as to render the country utterly impaſſable ; for many of the roads here, and in ſome of the northern iſles, are as good as any other natural roads, and the people travel them frequently on all occasions. Near the coaſt there are ſometimes for milestogether flat pleaſant ſpots, very fertile both in paſture and corn. The mountains produce large crops of very nutritive grass in the ſummer ; and they cut conſiderable quantities of hay, with which they feed their cattle in the winter. They might with a little attention bring more of their country into cultivation : but the people are ſo much addicted to their fiſhery, and feel ſo little neceſſity of having recourſe to this method for ſubſiſtence, that they are content, how ſtrange ſoever that may ſeem to us, to let four parts in five of their land remain in a ſtate of nature.

They want not considerable quantities of marle in different iſlands, though they uſe but little ; hitherto there has Been no chalk found ; limeſtone and freeſtone there are in the ſouthern parts of the main land in great quantities, and alſo in the neighbouring iſlands, parti­cularly Fetlar ; and considerable quantities of ſlate, very good in its kind. No mines have been hitherto wrought, though there are in many places visible appearances of ſeveral kinds of metal. Some ſolid pieces of ſilver, it is said, have been turned up by the plough. In ſome of the ſmaller iſles there are ſtrong appearances of iron ; but, through the want of proper experiments being made, there is, in this reſpect at leaſt, hitherto nothing certain. Their meadows are incloſed with dikes, and produce very good graſs. The little corn they grow is chiefly barley, with ſome oats ; though even in the northern extremity of Unſt the little land which they have is remarkable for its fertility. The hills abound with medicinal herbs ; and their kitchen-gar­dens thrive as well, and produce as good greens and roots, as any in Britain. Of late years, and since this has been attended to, ſome gentlemen have had even greater ſucceſs than they expected in the cultivating of tulips, roſes, and many other flowers. They have no trees, and hardly any ſhrubs except juniper, yet they have a tra­dition that their country was formerly overgrown with woods ; and it ſeems to be a confirmation of this, that the roots of timber-trees have been, and are ſtill, dug up at a great depth ; and that in ſome, and thoſe too inacceſſible, places, the mountain aſh is ſtill found grow­ing wild. That this defect, *viz.* the want of wood at preſent, does not ariſe entirely from the soil or climate, appears from ſeveral late experiments ; ſome gentlemen having raiſed aſh, maple, horſecheſnuts, &c. in their gardens. Though the inhabitants are without either wood or coals, they are very well ſupplied with fuel, having great plenty of heath and peat. The black cattle in this country are in general of a larger fort than in Orkney, which is owing to their having more extensive paſtures ; a clear proof that ſtill farther im­provements might be made in reſpect to ſize. Their horſes are ſmall, but ſtrong, ſtout, and well ſhaped, live very hardy, and to a great age. They have likewiſe a breed of ſmall ſwine, the fleſh of which, when fat, is eſteemed very delicious. They have no goats, hares, or foxes ; and in general no wild or venomous creatures of any kind except rats in ſome few iſlands. They have no moor-fowl, which is the more remarkable, as there are everywhere immenſe quantities of heath ; but there are many forts of wild and water fowl, particular­ly the dunter-gooſe, clack-gooſe, solan-gooſe, ſwans,