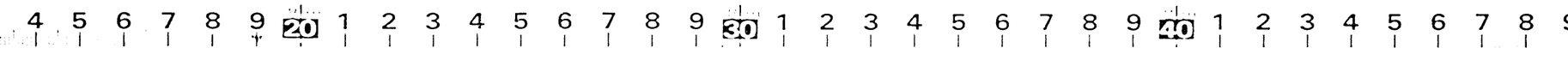
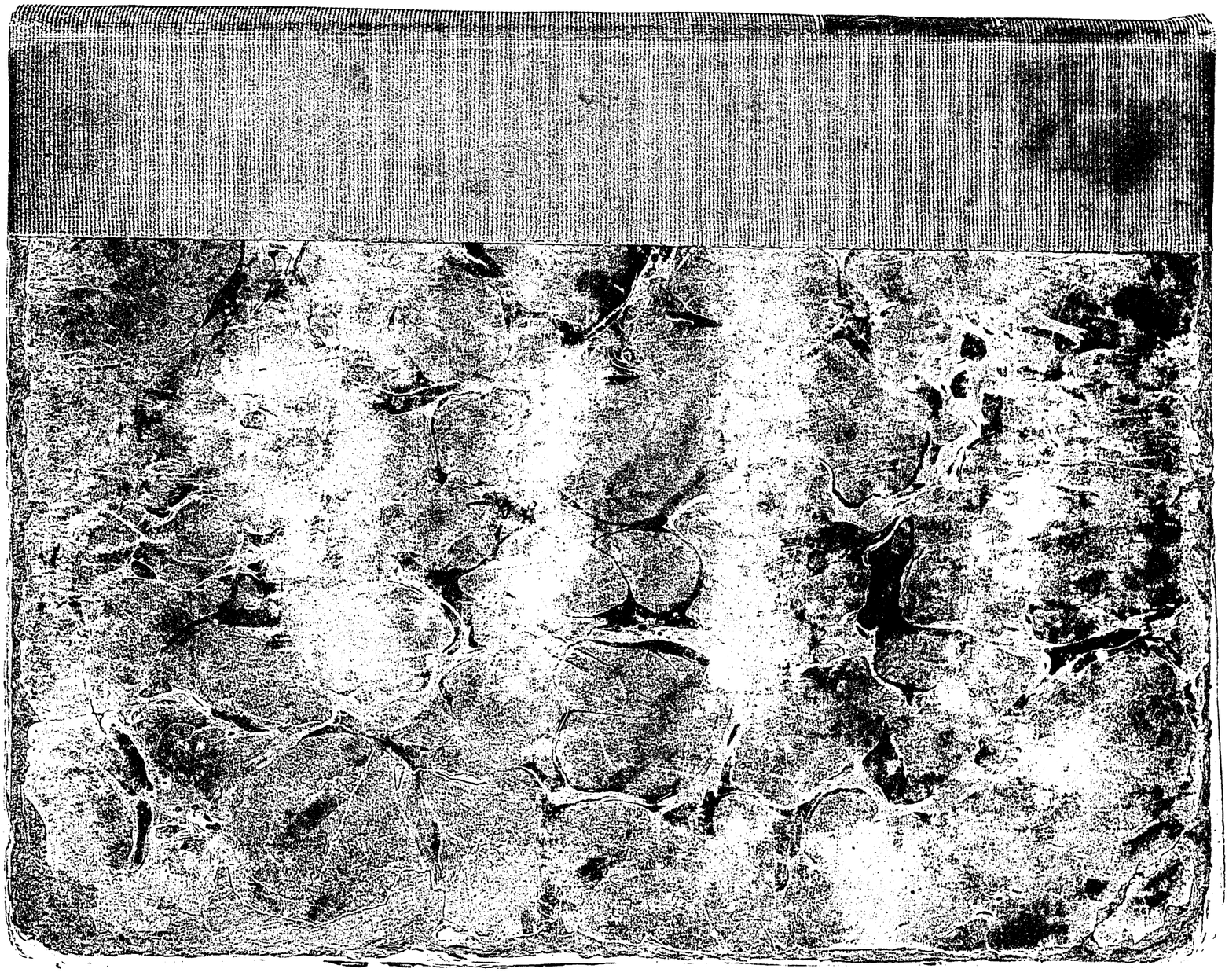
An essay on the principle of population, or, a view of its past and present effects on human happiness

Malthus, Thomas Robert 1803





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AN ESSAY

ON THE

PRINCIPLE OF POPULATION;

OR,

A VIEW OF ITS PAST AND PRESENT EFFECTS

ON

HUMAN HAPPINESS;

WITH AN INQUIRY INTO OUR PROSPECTS RESPECTING THE FUTURE REMOVAL OR MITIGATION OF THE EVILS WHICH IT OCCASIONS.

A NEW EDITION, VERY MUCH ENLARGED.

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PREFACE.

THE Eſſay on the Principle of Population, which I publiſhed in 1798, was ſuggeſted, as is expreſſed in the preface, by a paper in Mr. Godwin's Inquirer. It was written on the ſpur of the occaſion, and from the few materials which were within my reach in a country ſituation. The only authors from whoſe writings I had deduced the principle, which formed the main argument of the eſſay, were Hume, Wallace, Dr. Adam Smith, and Dr. Price; and my object was to apply it to try the truth of thoſe ſpeculations on the perfectibility of man and ſociety, which at that time excited a conſiderable portion of the publick attention.

In the courſe of the diſcuſſion, I was naturally led into ſome examination of the effects of this principle on the exiſting ſtate of ſociety. It appeared to account for much of that poverty and miſery obſervable among the lower claſſes of people in every nation, and for thoſe reiterated failures in the efforts of the higher claſſes to relieve them. The more I conſidered the ſubject in this point of view, the more importance it ſeemed to acquire; and this conſideration, joined to the degree of publick attention which the eſſay excited, determined me to turn my leiſure reading

towards an hiſtorical examination of the effects of the principle of population on the paſt and preſent ſtate of ſociety; that, by illuſtrating the ſubject more generally, and drawing thoſe inferences from it, in application to the actual ſtate of things which experience ſeemed to warrant, I might give it a more practical and permanent intereſt.

In the courſe of this inquiry, I found that much more had been done, than I had been aware of, when I firſt published the eſſay. The poverty and miſery ariſing from a too rapid increaſe of population, had been diſtinctly ſeen, and the moſt violent remedies propoſed, ſo long ago as the times of Plato and Ariſtotle. And of late years, the ſubject had been treated in ſuch a manner, by ſome of the French Economiſts, occaſionally by Monteſquieu, and, among our own writers, by Dr. Franklin, Sir James Steuart, Mr. Arthur Young, and Mr. Townſend, as to create a natural ſurpriſe, that it had not excited more of the publick attention.

Much, however, remained yet to be done. Independently of the compariſon between the increaſe of population and food, which had not perhaps been ſtated with ſufficient force and preciſion; ſome of the moſt curious and intereſting parts of the ſubject had been either wholly omitted or treated very ſlightly. Though it had been ſtated diſtinctly, that population muſt always be kept down to the level of the means of ſubſiſtence; yet few inquiries had been made into the various modes by which this level is effected; and

and the principle had never been ſufficiently purſued to its conſequences, and thoſe practical inferences drawn from it, which a ſtrict examination of its effects on ſociety appears to ſuggeſt.

Theſe are therefore the points which I have treated moſt in detail in the following eſſay. In its preſent shape, it may be conſidered as a new work, and I ſhould probably have publiſhed it as ſuch, omitting the few parts of the former which I have retained, but that I wiſhed it to form a whole of itſelf, and not to need a continual reference to the other. On this account, I truſt that no apology is neceſſary to the purchaſers of the firſt edition. I ſhould hope that there are ſome parts of it, not reprinted in this, which may ſtill have their uſe; as they were rejected, not becauſe I thought them all of leſs value than what has been inſerted, but becauſe they did not ſuit the different plan of treating the ſubject which I had adopted.

To thoſe who either underſtood the ſubject before, or ſaw it diſtinctly on the peruſal of the firſt edition, I am fearful that I ſhall appear to have treated ſome parts of it too much in detail, and to have been guilty of unneceſſary repetitions. Theſe faults have ariſen partly from want of ſkill, and partly from intention. In drawing ſimilar inferences from the ſtate of ſociety in a number of different countries, I found it very difficult to avoid ſome repetitions; and in thoſe parts of the inquiry which led to concluſions

ſions different from our uſual habits of thinking, it appeared to me, that, with the ſlighteſt hope of producing conviction, it was neceſſary to preſent them to the reader's mind at different times, and on different occaſions. I was willing to ſacrifice all pretenſions to merit of compoſition, to the chance of making an impreſſion on a larger claſs of readers.

The main principle advanced is ſo incontrovertible, that, if I had confined myſelf merely to general views, I could have entrenched myſelf in an impregnable fortreſs; and the work, in this form, would probably have had a much more maſterly air. But ſuch general views, though they may advance the cauſe of abſtract truth, rarely tend to promote any practical good; and I thought that I ſhould not do juſtice to the ſubject, and bring it fairly under diſcuſſion, if I refuſed to conſider any of the conſequences which appeared neceſſarily to flow from it, whatever theſe conſequences might be. By purſuing this plan, however, I am aware that I have opened a door to many objections; and, probably, to much ſeverity of criticiſm: but I conſole myſelf with the reflection, that even the errors into which I may have fallen, by affording a handle to argument, and an additional excitement to examination, may be ſubſervient to the important end, of bringing a ſubject ſo nearly connected with the happineſs of ſociety into more general notice.

Throughout

Throughout the whole of the preſent work, I have ſo far differed in principle from the former, as to ſuppoſe another check to population poſſible, which does not ſtrictly come under the head either of vice or miſery; and, in the latter part, I have endeavoured to ſoften ſome of the harſheſt concluſions of the firſt eſſay. In doing this, I hope that I have not violated the principles of juſt reaſoning; nor expreſſed any opinion reſpecting the probable improvement of ſociety, in which I am not borne out by the experience of the paſt. To thoſe who ſhall ſtill think that any check to population whatever, would be worſe than the evils which it would relieve, the concluſions of the former eſſay will remain in full force; and if we adopt this opinion, we ſhall be compelled to acknowledge that the poverty and miſery which prevail among the lower claſſes of ſociety are abſolutely irremediable.

I have taken as much pains as I could to avoid any errors in the facts and calculations which have been produced in the courſe of the work. Should any of them nevertheleſs turn out to be falſe, the reader will ſee, that they will not materially affect the general tenour of the reaſoning.

From the crowd of materials which preſented themſelves in illuſtration of the firſt branch of the ſubject, I dare not flatter myſelf that I have ſelected the beſt, or arranged them in the moſt perſpicuous method. To thoſe who take an

an intereſt in moral and political queſtions, I hope that the novelty and importance of the ſubject will compenſate the imperfections of its execution.

LONDON, June 8, 1803.

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ESSAY, &c.

BOOK I.

OF THE CHECKS TO POPULATION IN THE LESS CIVILIZED PARTS OF THE WORLD, AND IN PAST TIMES.

CHAP. I.

Statement of the Subject. Ratios of the Increaſe of Population and Food.

In an inquiry concerning the future improvement of ſociety, the mode of conducting the ſubject which naturally preſents itſelf, is

1. An inveſtigation of the cauſes that have hitherto impeded the progreſs of mankind towards happineſs; and

2. An examination into the probability of the total or partial removal of theſe cauſes in future.

To enter fully into this queſtion, and to enumerate all the cauſes that have hitherto influenced human improvement, would be much beyond the power of an individual. The principal object of the preſent eſſay is to examine the effects of one great cauſe intimately united with the very nature of man, which, though it has been conſtantly and powerfully operating ſince the commencement of

ſociety, has been little noticed by the writers who have treated this ſubject. The facts which eſtabliſh the exiſtence of this cauſe have, indeed, been repeatedly ſtated and acknowledged; but its natural and neceſſary effects have been almoſt totally overlooked; though probably among theſe effects may be reckoned a very conſiderable portion of that vice and miſery, and of that unequal diſtribution of the bounties of nature, which it has been the unceaſing object of the enlightened philanthropiſt in all ages to correct.

The cauſe to which I allude, is the conſtant tendency in all animated life to increaſe beyond the nouriſhment prepared for it.

It is obſerved by Dr. Franklin, that there is no bound to the prolific nature of plants or animals, but what is made by their crowding and interfering with each others means of ſubſiſtence. Were the face of the earth, he ſays, vacant of other plants, it might be gradually ſowed and overſpread with one kind only; as, for inſtance, with fennel: and were it empty of other inhabitants, it might in a few ages be repleniſhed from one nation only; as, for inſtance, with Engliſhmen [a].

This is incontrovertibly true. Through the animal and vegetable kingdoms Nature has ſcattered the ſeeds of life abroad with the moſt profuſe and liberal hand; but has been comparatively ſparing in the room and the nouriſhment neceſſary to rear them. The germs of exiſtence contained in this ſpot of earth, with ample food, and ample room to expand in, would fill millions of worlds in the courſe of a few thouſand years. Neceſſity, that imperious all-pervading law of nature, reſtrains them within the preſcribed bounds. The race of plants and the race of animals ſhrink under this great reſtrictive law; and the race of man cannot by any efforts of reaſon eſcape from it.

In plants and animals the view of the ſubject is ſimple. They are all impelled by a powerful inſtinct to the increaſe of their ſpecies;

[a] Franklin's Miſcell. p. 9.

and

and this inſtinct is interrupted by no reaſoning or doubts about providing for their offspring. Wherever, therefore, there is liberty, the power of increaſe is exerted; and the ſuperabundant effects are repreſſed afterwards by want of room and nouriſhment, which is common to plants and animals; and among animals, by their becoming the prey of each other.

The effects of this check on man are more complicated. Impelled to the increaſe of his ſpecies by an equally powerful inſtinct, reaſon interrupts his career, and aſks him whether he may not bring beings into the world, for whom he cannot provide the means of ſupport. If he attend to this natural ſuggeſtion, the reſtriction too frequently produces vice. If he hear it not, the human race will be conſtantly endeavouring to increaſe beyond the means of ſubſiſtence. But as by that law of our nature which makes food neceſſary to the life of man, population can never actually increaſe beyond the loweſt nouriſhment capable of ſupporting it; a ſtrong check on population, from the difficulty of acquiring food, muſt be conſtantly in operation. This difficulty muſt fall ſomewhere; and muſt neceſſarily be ſeverely felt in ſome or other of the various forms of miſery, or the fear of miſery, by a large portion of mankind.

That population has this conſtant tendency to increaſe beyond the means of ſubſiſtence, and that it is kept to its neceſſary level by theſe cauſes, will ſufficiently appear from a review of the different ſtates of ſociety in which man has exiſted. But before we proceed to this review, the ſubject will perhaps be ſeen in a clearer light, if we endeavour to aſcertain, what would be the natural increaſe of population if left to exert itſelf with perfect freedom; and what might be expected to be the rate of increaſe in the productions of the earth, under the moſt favourable circumſtances of human induſtry. A compariſon of theſe two rates of increaſe will enable us to judge of the force of that tendency in population to increaſe beyond the means of ſubſiſtence, which has been ſtated to exiſt.

It will be allowed, that no country has hitherto been known, where

the manners were ſo pure and ſimple, and the means of ſubſiſtence ſo abundant, that no check whatever has exiſted to early marriages from the difficulty of providing for a family; and no waſte of the human ſpecies has been occaſioned afterwards by vicious cuſtoms, by towns, by unhealthy occupations, or too ſevere labour. Conſequently in no ſtate that we have yet known, has the power of population been left to exert itſelf with perfect freedom.

Whether the law of marriage be inſtituted, or not, the dictate of nature and virtue ſeems to be an early attachment to one woman; and where there were no impediments of any kind in the way of an union to which ſuch an attachment would lead, and no cauſes of depopulation afterwards, the increaſe of the human ſpecies would be evidently much greater than any increaſe which has been hitherto known.

In the northern ſtates of America, where the means of ſubſiſtence have been more ample, the manners of the people more pure, and the checks to early marriages fewer, than in any of the modern ſtates of Europe, the population was found to double itſelf for ſome ſucceſſive periods every twenty-five years. Yet even during theſe periods, in ſome of the towns, the deaths exceeded the births [a]; and they conſequently required a continued ſupply from the country to ſupport their population.

In the back ſettlements, where the ſole employment was agriculture, and vicious cuſtoms and unwholeſome occupations were unknown, the population was found to double itſelf in fifteen years [b]. Even this extraordinary rate of increaſe is probably ſhort of the utmoſt power of population. Very ſevere labour is requiſite to clear a freſh country; ſuch ſituations are not in general conſidered as particularly healthy; and the inhabitants were probably occaſionally ſubject to the incurſions of the Indians, which might deſtroy ſome lives, or at any rate diminiſh the fruits of their induſtry.

[a] Price's Obſerv. on Reverſ. Pay. vol. i. p. 274. [b] Id. p. 282.

According

According to a table of Euler, calculated on a mortality of 1 in 36, if the births be to the deaths in the proportion of 3 to 1, the period of doubling will be only 12 $\frac{4}{5}$ years [a]. And theſe proportions are not only poſſible ſuppoſitions, but have actually occurred for ſhort periods in more countries than one.

Sir William Petty ſuppoſes a doubling poſſible in ſo ſhort a time as ten years [b].

But to be perfectly ſure that we are far within the truth, we will take the ſloweſt of theſe rates of increaſe; a rate, in which all concurring teſtimonies agree, and which has been repeatedly aſcertained to be from procreation only.

It may ſafely be pronounced therefore, that population when unchecked goes on doubling itſelf every twenty-five years, or increaſes in a geometrical ratio.

The rate according to which the productions of the earth may be ſuppoſed to increaſe, it will not be ſo eaſy to determine. Of this, however, we may be perfectly certain, that the ratio of their increaſe muſt be totally of a different nature from the ratio of the increaſe of population. A thouſand millions are juſt as eaſily doubled every twenty-five years by the power of population as a thouſand. But the food to ſupport the increaſe from the greater number will by no means be obtained with the ſame facility. Man is neceſſarily confined in room. When acre has been added to acre till all the fertile land is occupied, the yearly increaſe of food muſt depend upon the amelioration of the land already in poſſeſſion. This is a ſtream, which, from the nature of all ſoils, inſtead of increaſing, muſt be gradually diminiſhing. But population, could it be ſupplied with food, would go on with unexhauſted vigour; and the increaſe of one period would furniſh the power of a greater increaſe the next, and this, without any limit.

From the accounts we have of China and Japan, it may be

[a] See this table at the end of chap. iv. book ii. [b] Polit. Arith. p. 14.

fairly

fairly doubted, whether the beſt directed efforts of human induſtry could double the produce of theſe countries even once in any number of years. There are many parts of the globe, indeed, hitherto uncultivated, and almoſt unoccupied; but the right of exterminating, or driving into a corner where they muſt ſtarve, even the inhabitants of theſe thinly peopled regions, will be queſtioned in a moral view. The proceſs of improving their minds and directing their induſtry, would neceſſarily be ſlow; and during this time, as population would regularly keep pace with the increaſing produce, it would rarely happen that a great degree of knowledge and induſtry would have to operate at once upon rich unappropriated ſoil. Even where this might take place, as it does ſometimes in new colonies, a geometrical ratio increaſes with ſuch extraordinary rapidity, that the advantage could not laſt long. If America continue increaſing, which ſhe certainly will do, though not with the ſame rapidity as formerly, the Indians will be driven further and further back into the country, till the whole race is ultimately exterminated.

Theſe obſervations are, in a degree, applicable to all the parts of the earth, where the ſoil is imperfectly cultivated. To exterminate the inhabitants of the greateſt part of Aſia and Africa, is a thought that could not be admitted for a moment. To civilize and direct the induſtry of the various tribes of Tartars, and Negroes, would certainly be a work of conſiderable time, and of variable and uncertain ſucceſs.

Europe is by no means ſo fully peopled as it might be. In Europe, there is the faireſt chance that human induſtry may receive its beſt direction. The ſcience of agriculture has been much ſtudied in England and Scotland; and there is ſtill a great portion of uncultivated land in theſe countries. Let us conſider, at what rate the produce of this iſland might be ſuppoſed to increaſe under circumſtances the moſt favourable to improvement.

If it be allowed, that by the beſt poſſible policy, and great encouragements

couragements to agriculture, the average produce of the iſland could be doubled in the firſt twenty-five years, it will be allowing probably a greater increaſe than could with reaſon be expected.

In the next twenty-five years, it is impoſſible to ſuppoſe that the produce could be quadrupled. It would be contrary to all our knowledge of the properties of land. The improvement of the barren parts would be a work of time and labour; and it muſt be evident to thoſe who have the ſlighteſt acquaintance with agricultural ſubjects, that in proportion as cultivation extended, the additions that could yearly be made to the former average produce, muſt be gradually and regularly diminiſhing. That we may be the better able to compare the increaſe of population and food, let us make a ſuppoſition, which, without pretending to accuracy, is clearly more favourable to the power of production in the earth, than any experience that we have had of its qualities will warrant.

Let us ſuppoſe that the yearly additions which might be made to the former average produce, inſtead of decreaſing, which they certainly would do, were to remain the ſame; and that the produce of this iſland might be increaſed every twenty-five years, by a quantity equal to what it at preſent produces: the moſt enthuſiaſtic ſpeculator cannot ſuppoſe a greater increaſe than this. In a few centuries it would make every acre of land in the iſland like a garden.

If this ſuppoſition be applied to the whole earth, and if it be allowed that the ſubſiſtence for man which the earth affords, might be increaſed every twenty-five years by a quantity equal to what it at preſent produces, this will be ſuppoſing a rate of increaſe much greater than we can imagine that any poſſible exertions of mankind could make it.

It may be fairly pronounced therefore, that, conſidering the preſent average ſtate of the earth, the means of ſubſiſtence, under circumſtances the moſt favourable to human induſtry, could not poſſibly be made to increaſe faſter than in an arithmetical ratio.

The

The neceſſary effects of theſe two different rates of increaſe, when brought together, will be very ſtriking. Let us call the population of this iſland eleven millions; and ſuppoſe the preſent produce equal to the eaſy ſupport of ſuch a number. In the firſt twenty-five years the population would be twenty-two millions, and the food being alſo doubled, the means of ſubſiſtence would be equal to this increaſe. In the next twenty-five years, the population would be forty-four millions, and the means of ſubſiſtence only equal to the ſupport of thirty-three millions. In the next period the population would be eighty-eight millions, and the means of ſubſiſtence juſt equal to the ſupport of half of that number. And at the concluſion of the firſt century, the population would be a hundred and ſeventy-ſix millions, and the means of ſubſiſtence only equal to the ſupport of fifty-five millions; leaving a population of a hundred and twenty-one millions totally unprovided for.

Taking the whole earth inſtead of this iſland, emigration would of courſe be excluded; and ſuppoſing the preſent population equal to a thouſand millions, the human ſpecies would increaſe as the numbers 1, 2, 4, 8, 16, 32, 64, 128, 256, and ſubſiſtence as 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. In two centuries the population would be to the means of ſubſiſtence as 256 to 9; in three centuries as 4096 to 13, and in two thouſand years the difference would be almoſt incalculable.

In this ſuppoſition no limits whatever are placed to the produce of the earth. It may increaſe for ever, and be greater than any aſſignable quantity; yet ſtill the power of population being in every period ſo much ſuperior, the increaſe of the human ſpecies can only be kept down to the level of the means of ſubſiſtence by the conſtant operation of the ſtrong law of neceſſity acting as a check upon the greater power.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Of the general Checks to Population, and the Mode of their Operation.

THE checks to population, which are conſtantly operating with more or leſs force in every ſociety, and keep down the number to the level of the means of ſubſiſtence, may be claſſed under two general heads; the preventive, and the poſitive checks.

The preventive check, is peculiar to man, and ariſes from that diſtinctive ſuperiority in his reaſoning faculties, which enables him to calculate diſtant conſequences. Plants and animals have apparently no doubts about the future ſupport of their offspring. The checks to their indefinite increaſe, therefore, are all poſitive. But man cannot look around him, and ſee the diſtreſs which frequently preſſes upon thoſe who have large families; he cannot contemplate his preſent poſſeſſions or earnings, which he now nearly conſumes himſelf, and calculate the amount of each ſhare, when with very little addition they muſt be divided, perhaps, among ſeven or eight, without feeling a doubt, whether if he follow the bent of his inclinations, he may be able to ſupport the offspring which he will probably bring into the world. In a ſtate of equality, if ſuch can exiſt, this would be the ſimple queſtion. In the preſent ſtate of ſociety other conſiderations occur. Will he not lower his rank in life, and be obliged to give up in great meaſure his former ſociety? Does any mode of employment preſent itſelf by which he may reaſonably hope to maintain a family? Will he not at any rate ſubject himſelf to greater difficulties, and more ſevere labour than in his ſingle ſtate? Will he not be unable to tranſmit to his children the ſame advantages of education and im-

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provement that he had himſelf poſſeſſed? Does he even feel ſecure that, ſhould he have a large family, his utmoſt exertions can ſave them from rags, and ſqualid poverty, and their conſequent degradation in the community? And may he not be reduced to the grating neceſſity of forfeiting his independence, and of being obliged to the ſparing hand of charity for ſupport?

Theſe conſiderations are calculated to prevent, and certainly do prevent, a great number of perſons in all civilized nations from purſuing the dictate of nature in an early attachment to one woman.

If this reſtraint do not produce vice, as in many inſtances is the caſe, and very generally ſo among the middle and higher claſſes of women, it is undoubtedly the leaſt evil that can ariſe from the principle of population. Conſidered as a reſtraint on an inclination, otherwiſe innocent, and always natural, it muſt be allowed to produce a certain degree of temporary unhappineſs; but evidently ſlight, compared with the evils which reſult from any of the other checks to population.

When this reſtraint produces vice, as it does moſt frequently among men, and among a numerous claſs of females, the evils which follow are but too conſpicuous. A promiſcuous intercourſe to ſuch a degree as to prevent the birth of children, ſeems to lower in the moſt marked manner the dignity of human nature. It cannot be without its effect on men, and nothing can be more obvious than its tendency to degrade the female character, and to deſtroy all its moſt amiable and diſtinguiſhing characteriſtics. Add to which, that among thoſe unfortunate females with which all great towns abound, more real diſtreſs and aggravated miſery are perhaps to be found, than in any other department of human life.

When a general corruption of morals, with regard to the ſex, pervades all the claſſes of ſociety, its effects muſt neceſſarily be, to poiſon the ſprings of domeſtic happineſs, to weaken conjugal and parental affection, and to leſſen the united exertions and ardour of parents in the care and education of their children; effects, which cannot take place

place without a decided diminution of the general happineſs and virtue of the ſociety; particularly, as the neceſſity of art in the accompliſhment and conduct of intrigues, and in the concealment of their conſequences, neceſſarily leads to many other vices.

The poſitive checks to population are extremely various, and include every cauſe, whether ariſing from vice or miſery, which in any degree contributes to ſhorten the natural duration of human life. Under this head therefore may be enumerated, all unwholeſome occupations, ſevere labour and expoſure to the ſeaſons, extreme poverty, bad nurſing of children, great towns, exceſſes of all kinds, the whole train of common diſeaſes and epidemics, wars, peſtilence, plague, and famine.

On examining theſe obſtacles to the increaſe of population which I have claſſed under the heads of preventive, and poſitive checks, it will appear that they are all reſolvable into moral reſtraint, vice, and miſery.

Of the preventive checks, that which is not followed by irregular gratifications, may properly be termed moral reſtraint.

Promiſcuous intercourſe, unnatural paſſions, violations of the marriage bed, and improper arts to conceal the conſequences of irregular connexions, clearly come under the head of vice.

Of the poſitive checks, thoſe which appear to ariſe unavoidably from the laws of nature may be called excluſively miſery; and thoſe which we obviouſly bring upon ourſelves, ſuch as wars, exceſſes, and many others which it would be in our power to avoid, are of a mixed nature. They are brought upon us by vice, and their conſequences are miſery [a].

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[a] As the general conſequence of vice is miſery, and as this conſequence is the preciſe reaſon why an action is termed vicious, it may appear that the term miſery alone would be here ſufficient, and that it is ſuperfluous to uſe both. But the rejection of the term vice would introduce a conſiderable confuſion into our language and ideas. We want it particularly to diſtinguiſh that claſs of actions, the general tendency of which is to produce miſery, but which, in their immediate or individual effects, may produce perhaps exactly

In every country, ſome of theſe checks are, with more or leſs force, in conſtant operation; yet notwithſtanding their general prevalence, there are few ſtates in which there is not a conſtant effort in the population to increaſe beyond the means of ſubſiſtence. This conſtant effort as conſtantly tends to ſubject the lower claſſes of ſociety to diſtreſs, and to prevent any great permanent amelioration of their condition.

Theſe effects, in the preſent ſtate of ſociety, ſeem to be produced in the following manner. We will ſuppoſe the means of ſubſiſtence in any country juſt equal to the eaſy ſupport of its inhabitants. The conſtant effort towards population, which is found to act even in the moſt vicious ſocieties, increaſes the number of people before the means of ſubſiſtence are increaſed. The food therefore which before ſupported eleven millions, muſt now be divided among eleven millions and a half. The poor conſequently muſt live much worſe, and many of them be reduced to ſevere diſtreſs. The number of labourers alſo being above the proportion of work in the market, the price of labour muſt tend to fall; while the price of proviſions would at the ſame time tend to riſe. The labourer therefore muſt do more work, to earn the ſame as he did before. During this ſeaſon of diſtreſs, the diſcouragements to marriage, and the difficulty of rearing a family are ſo great, that population is nearly at a ſtand. In the mean time, the cheapneſs of labour, the plenty of labourers, and the neceſſity of an increaſed induſtry among them, encourage cultivators to employ more labour upon their land; to turn up freſh ſoil, and to manure

the contrary. The gratification of all our paſſions in its immediate effect is happineſs, not miſery; and in individual inſtances even the remote conſequences (at leaſt in this life) come under the ſame denomination. I have little doubt that there have been ſome irregular connexions with women, which have added to the happineſs of both parties, and have injured no one. Theſe individual actions therefore cannot come under the head of miſery. But they are ſtill evidently vicious, becauſe an action is ſo denominated, the general tendency of which is to produce miſery, whatever may be its individual effect; and no perſon can doubt the general tendency of an illicit intercourſe between the ſexes, to injure the happineſs of ſociety.

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and improve more completely what is already in tillage; till ultimately the means of ſubſiſtence may become in the ſame proportion to the population, as at the period from which we ſet out. The ſituation of the labourer being then again tolerably comfortable, the reſtraints to population are in ſome degree looſened; and, after a ſhort period, the ſame retrograde and progreſſive movements, with reſpect to happineſs, are repeated.

This ſort of oſcillation will not probably be obvious to common view; and it may be difficult even for the moſt attentive obſerver to calculate its periods. Yet that, in the generality of old ſtates, ſome ſuch vibration does exiſt, though in a much leſs marked, and in a much more irregular manner, than I have deſcribed it, no reflecting man who conſiders the ſubject deeply can well doubt.

One principal reaſon why this oſcillation has been leſs remarked, and leſs decidedly confirmed by experience than might naturally be expected, is, that the hiſtories of mankind which we poſſeſs, are, in general, hiſtories only of the higher claſſes. We have not many accounts, that can be depended upon, of the manners and cuſtoms of that part of mankind where theſe retrograde and progreſſive movements chiefly take place. A ſatisfactory hiſtory of this kind, of one people and of one period, would require the conſtant and minute attention of many obſerving minds in local and general remarks on the ſtate of the lower claſſes of ſociety, and the cauſes that influenced it; and to draw accurate inferences upon this ſubject, a ſucceſſion of ſuch hiſtorians for ſome centuries would be neceſſary. This branch of ſtatiſtical knowledge has of late years been attended to in ſome countries [a], and we may promiſe ourſelves a clearer inſight into the inter-

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[a] The judicious queſtions which Sir John Sinclair circulated in Scotland, and the very valuable accounts which he has collected in that part of the iſland, do him the higheſt honour; and theſe accounts will ever remain an extraordinary monument of the learning, good ſenſe, and general information of the clergy of Scotland. It is to be regretted that the adjoining pariſhes are not put together in the work, which would have aſſiſted the memory both in attaining and recollecting the ſtate of particular diſtricts. The repetitions

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nal ſtructure of human ſociety from the progreſs of theſe inquiries. But the ſcience may be ſaid yet to be in its infancy, and many of the objects, on which it would be deſirable to have information, have been either omitted or not ſtated with ſufficient accuracy. Among theſe perhaps may be reckoned, the proportion of the number of adults to the number of marriages; the extent to which vicious cuſtoms have prevailed in conſequence of the reſtraints upon matrimony; the comparative mortality among the children of the moſt diſtreſſed part of the community, and of thoſe who live rather more at their eaſe; the variations in the real price of labour; the obſervable differences in the ſtate of the lower claſſes of ſociety with reſpect to eaſe and happineſs, at different times during a certain period; and very accurate regiſters of births, deaths, and marriages, which are of the utmoſt importance in this ſubject.

A faithful hiſtory, including ſuch particulars, would tend greatly to elucidate the manner in which the conſtant check upon population acts; and would probably prove the exiſtence of the retrograde and progreſſive movements that have been mentioned; though the times of their vibration muſt neceſſarily be rendered irregular from the operation of many interrupting cauſes; ſuch as, the introduction of or failure of certain manufactures, a greater or leſs prevalent ſpirit of agricultural enterprize; years of plenty, or years of ſcarcity; wars, ſickly ſeaſons, poor laws, emigration, and other cauſes of a ſimilar nature.

A circumſtance which has perhaps more than any other contributed to conceal this oſcillation from common view, is, the differ-

and contradictory opinions which occur are not in my opinion ſo objectionable, as, to the reſult of ſuch teſtimony, more faith may be given than we could poſſibly give to the teſtimony of any individual. Even were this reſult drawn for us by ſome maſter hand, though much valuable time would undoubtedly be ſaved, the information would not be ſo ſatisfactory. If, with a few ſubordinate improvements, this work had contained accurate and complete regiſters for the laſt 150 years, it would have been ineſtimable, and would have exhibited a better picture of the internal ſtate of a country, than has yet been preſented to the world. But this laſt moſt eſſential improvement no diligence could have effected.

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ence between the nominal and real price of labour. It very rarely happens that the nominal price of labour univerſally falls; but we well know that it frequently remains the ſame, while the nominal price of proviſions has been gradually riſing. This is, in effect, a real fall in the price of labour; and, during this period, the condition of the lower claſſes of the community muſt be gradually growing worſe. But the farmers and capitaliſts are growing rich from the real cheapneſs of labour. Their increaſing capitals enable them to employ a greater number of men; and, as the population had probably ſuffered ſome check from the greater difficulty of ſupporting a family, the demand for labour, after a certain period, would be great in proportion to the ſupply, and its price would of courſe riſe, if left to find its natural level; and thus the wages of labour, and conſequently the condition of the lower claſſes of ſociety, might have progreſſive and retrograde movements, though the price of labour might never nominally fall.

In ſavage life, where there is no regular price of labour, it is little to be doubted that ſimilar oſcillations take place. When population has increaſed nearly to the utmoſt limits of the food, all the preventive and the poſitive checks will naturally operate with increaſed force. Vicious habits with reſpect to the ſex will be more general, the expoſing of children more frequent, and both the probability, and fatality, of wars and epidemicks, will be conſiderably greater; and theſe cauſes will probably continue their operation till the population is ſunk below the level of the food; and then the return to comparative plenty will again produce an increaſe, and, after a certain period, its further progreſs will again be checked by the ſame cauſes [a].

[a] Sir James Steuart very juſtly compares the generative faculty to a ſpring loaded with a variable weight, (Polit. Econ. vol i. b. i. c. 4. p. 20.) which would of courſe produce exactly that kind of oſcillation which has been mentioned. In the firſt book of his Political Economy, he has explained many parts of the ſubject of population very ably.

But without attempting to eſtabliſh in all caſes theſe progreſſive and retrograde movements in different countries, which would evidently require more minute hiſtories than we poſſeſs, the following propoſitions are propoſed to be proved:

1. Population is neceſſarily limited by the means of ſubſiſtence.

2. Population invariably increaſes, where the means of ſubſiſtence increaſe, unleſs prevented by ſome very powerful and obvious checks.

3. Theſe checks, and the checks which repreſs the ſuperior power of population, and keep its effects on a level with the means of ſubſiſtence, are all reſolvable into moral reſtraint, vice, and miſery.

The firſt of theſe propoſitions ſcarcely needs illuſtration. The ſecond and third will be ſufficiently eſtabliſhed by a review of the paſt and preſent ſtate of ſociety.

This review will be the ſubject of the following chapters.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

Of the Checks to Population in the loweſt Stage of Human Society.

THE wretched inhabitants of Terra del Fuego have been placed by the general conſent of voyagers at the bottom of the ſcale of human beings[a]. Of their domeſtic habits and manners, however, we have few accounts. Their barren country, and the miſerable ſtate in which they live, have prevented any intercourſe with them that might give ſuch information; but we cannot be at a loſs to conceive the checks to population among a race of ſavages, whoſe very appearance indicates them to be half ſtarved, and who, ſhivering with cold, and covered with filth and vermin, live in one of the moſt inhoſpitable climates in the world, without having ſagacity enough to provide themſelves with ſuch conveniences as might mitigate its ſeverities, and render life in ſome meaſure more comfortable[b].

Next to theſe, and almoſt as low in genius and reſources, have been placed, the natives of Van Dieman's land[c]; but ſome late accounts have repreſented the iſlands of Andaman in the eaſt, as inhabited by a race of ſavages ſtill lower in wretchedneſs even than theſe. Every thing that voyagers have related of ſavage life, is ſaid to fall ſhort of the barbariſm of this people. Their whole time is ſpent in ſearch of food; and as their woods yield them few or no ſupplies of animals, and but little vegetable diet, their principal occupation is that of climbing the rocks, or roving along the margin of the ſea, in ſearch of a precarious meal of fiſh, which, during the tempeſtuous ſeaſon,

[a] Cook's Firſt Voy. vol. ii. p. 59. [b] Second Voy. vol. ii. p. 187.
[c] Vancouver's Voy. vol. ii. b. iii. c. i. p. 13.

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they often ſeek for in vain. Their ſtature ſeldom exceeds five feet; their bellies are protuberant, with high ſhoulders, large heads, and limbs diſproportionably ſlender. Their countenances exhibit the extreme of wretchedneſs, a horrid mixture of famine and ferocity; and their extenuated and diſeaſed figures plainly indicate the want of wholeſome nouriſhment. Some of theſe unhappy beings have been found on the ſhores in the laſt ſtage of famine [a].

In the next ſcale of human beings perhaps we may place the inhabitants of New Holland, of a part of whom we have ſome accounts that may be depended upon, from a perſon who reſided a conſiderable time at Port Jackſon, and had frequent opportunities of being a witneſs to their habits and manners. The narrator of Captain Cook's firſt voyage having mentioned the very ſmall number of inhabitants that was ſeen on the eaſtern coaſt of New Holland, and the apparent inability of the country, from its deſolate ſtate, to ſupport many more, obſerves, "By what means the inhabitants of this country are reduced "to ſuch a number as it can ſubſiſt, is not perhaps very eaſy to gueſs; "whether, like the inhabitants of New Zealand, they are deſtroyed "by the hands of each other in conteſts for food, whether they are "ſwept off by accidental famine, or whether there is any cauſe that "prevents the increaſe of the ſpecies, muſt be left for future adven-"turers to determine [b]."

The account which Mr. Collins has given of theſe ſavages will, I hope, afford in ſome degree a ſatisfactory anſwer. They are deſcribed as, in general, neither tall nor well made. Their arms, legs, and thighs, are thin, which is aſcribed to the poorneſs of their mode of living. Thoſe who inhabit the ſea-coaſt depend almoſt entirely on fiſh for their ſuſtenance, relieved occaſionally by a repaſt on ſome large grubs which are found in the body of the dwarf gum tree. The very ſcanty ſtock of animals in the woods, and the very great labour

[a] Syme's Embaſſy to Ava, ch. i. p. 129. and Aſiatic Reſearches, vol. iv. p. 401.
[b] Cook's Firſt Voy. vol. iii. p. 240.

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neceſſary to take them, keep the inland natives in as poor a condition as their brethren on the coaſt. They are compelled to climb the talleſt trees after honey, and the ſmaller animals, ſuch as the flying ſquirrel and the opoſſum. When the ſtems are of great height, and without branches, which is generally the caſe, in thick foreſts, this is a proceſs of great labour, and is effected by cutting a notch with their ſtone hatchets for each foot ſucceſſively, while their left arm embraces the tree. Trees were obſerved notched in this manner to the height of eighty feet before the firſt branch, where the hungry ſavage could hope to meet with any reward for ſo much toil [a].

The woods, excluſive of the animals occaſionally found in them, afford but little ſuſtenance. A few berries, the yam, the fern root, and the flowers of the different bankſia, make up the whole of the vegetable catalogue [b].

A native with his child, ſurpriſed on the banks of the Hawkſbury river by ſome of our coloniſts, launched his canoe in a hurry, and left behind him a ſpecimen of his food, and of the delicacy of his ſtomach. From a piece of water-ſoken wood, full of holes, he had been extracting and eating a large worm. The ſmell both of the worm and its habitation was in the higheſt degree offenſive. Theſe worms, in the language of the country, are called cah-bro; and a tribe of natives dwelling inland, from the circumſtance of eating theſe loathſome worms, is named Cah-brogal. The wood natives alſo make a paſte formed of the fern root, and the large and ſmall ants bruiſed together, and, in the ſeaſon, add the eggs of this inſect [c].

In a country, the inhabitants of which are driven to ſuch reſources for ſubſiſtence, where the ſupply of animal and vegetable food is ſo extremely ſcanty, and the labour neceſſary to procure it is ſo ſevere, it is evident, that the population muſt be very thinly ſcattered in proportion to the territory. Its utmoſt bounds muſt be very narrow.

[a] Collins's Account of New South Wales, Appendix, p. 549. 4to.
[b] Id. Appen. p. 557. [c] Id. Appen. p. 558.

But when we advert to the ſtrange and barbarous cuſtoms of theſe people, the cruel treatment of their women, and the difficulty of rearing children; inſtead of being ſurpriſed that it does not more frequently preſs to paſs theſe bounds, we ſhall be rather inclined to conſider even theſe ſcanty reſources as more than ſufficient to ſupport all the population that could grow up under ſuch circumſtances.

The prelude to love in this country is violence, and of the moſt brutal nature. The ſavage ſelects his intended wife from the women of a different tribe, generally one at enmity with his own. He ſteals upon her in the abſence of her protectors, and having firſt ſtupified her with blows of a club, or wooden ſword, on the head, back, and ſhoulders, every one of which is followed by a ſtream of blood, he drags her through the woods by one arm, regardleſs of the ſtones and broken pieces of trees that may lie in his route, and anxious only to convey his prize in ſafety to his own party, where a moſt brutal ſcene enſues. The woman thus raviſhed becomes his wife, and is incorporated into the tribe to which he belongs, and but ſeldom quits him for another. The outrage is not reſented by the relations of the female, who only retaliate by a ſimilar outrage when it is in their power[a].

The union of the ſexes takes place at an early age, and inſtances were known to our coloniſts of very young girls having been much and ſhamefully abuſed by the males[b].

The conduct of the huſband to his wife, or wives, ſeems to be nearly in character with this ſtrange and barbarous mode of courtſhip. The females bear on their heads the traces of the ſuperiority of the males, which is exerciſed almoſt as ſoon as they find ſtrength in their arms to inflict a blow. Some of theſe unfortunate beings have been obſerved with more ſcars on their ſhorn heads cut in every direction, than could well be counted. Mr. Collins feelingly ſays, "The condition of theſe women is ſo wretched, that I have often, on

[a] Collins's N. S. Wales, Appen. p. 559. [b] Appen. p. 563.

"ſeeing a female child borne on its mothers ſhoulders, anticipated the "miſeries to which it was born, and thought it would be a mercy "to deſtroy it[a]." In another place, ſpeaking of Bennilong's wife being delivered of a child, he ſays, "I here find in my papers a note "that for ſome offence Bennilong had ſeverely beaten this woman "in the morning, a ſhort time before ſhe was delivered[b]."

Women treated in this brutal manner muſt neceſſarily be ſubject to frequent miſcarriages, and it is probable that the abuſe of very young girls, mentioned above as common, and the too early union of the ſexes in general, would tend to prevent the females from being prolifick. Inſtances of a plurality of wives were found more frequent than of a ſingle wife; but what is extraordinary, Mr. Collins did not recollect ever to have noticed children by more than one. He had heard from ſome of the natives, that the firſt wife claimed an excluſive right to the conjugal embrace, while the ſecond was merely the ſlave and drudge of both[c].

An abſolutely excluſive right in the firſt wife to the conjugal embrace ſeems to be hardly probable; but it is poſſible that the ſecond wife might not be allowed to rear her offſpring. At any rate, if the obſervation be generally true, it proves that a great part of the women are without children, which can only be accounted for from the very ſevere hardſhips which they undergo, or from ſome particular cuſtoms which may not have come to the knowledge of Mr. Collins.

If the mother of a ſucking child die, the helpleſs infant is buried alive in the ſame grave with its mother. The father himſelf places his living child on the body of his dead wife, and having thrown a large ſtone upon it, the grave is inſtantly filled by the other natives. This dreadful act was performed by Co-le-be, a native well known to our coloniſts, and who, on being talked to on the ſubject, juſtified the proceeding by declaring that no woman could be found who would undertake to nurſe the child, and that therefore it muſt have

[a] Collins's N. S. Wales, Appen. p. 583. [b] Appen. note p. 562. [c] Appen. p. 560.

died

died a much worſe death than that which he had given it. Mr. Collins had reaſon to believe that this cuſtom was generally prevalent, and obſerves, that it may in ſome meaſure account for the thinneſs of the population [a].

Such a cuſtom, though in itſelf perhaps it might not much affect the population of a country, places in a ſtrong point of view the difficulty of rearing children in ſavage life. Women, obliged by their habits of living to a conſtant change of place, and compelled to an unremitting drudgery for their huſbands, appear to be abſolutely incapable of bringing up two or three children nearly of the ſame age. If another child be born before the one above it can ſhift for itſelf, and follow its mother on foot, one of the two muſt almoſt neceſſarily periſh for want of care. The taſk of rearing even one infant, in ſuch a wandering and laborious life, muſt be ſo troubleſome and painful, that we are not to be ſurpriſed that no woman can be found to undertake it, who is not prompted by the powerful feelings of a mother.

To theſe cauſes, which forcibly repreſs the riſing generation, muſt be added thoſe which contribute ſubſequently to deſtroy it; ſuch as the frequent wars of theſe ſavages with different tribes, and their perpetual conteſts with each other; their ſtrange ſpirit of retaliation and revenge which prompts the midnight murder, and the frequent ſhedding of innocent blood; the ſmoke and filth of their miſerable habitations, and their poor mode of living, productive of loathſome cutaneous diſorders, and above all, a dreadful epidemic like the ſmall-pox, which ſweeps off great numbers [b].

In the year 1789 they were viſited by this epidemic which raged among them with all the appearance and virulence of the ſmall-pox. The deſolation that it occaſioned was almoſt incredible. Not a living perſon was to be found in the bays and harbours that were

[a] Collins's N.S. Wales, Appendix, p. 607.

[b] See generally, the Appendix to Collins's Account of the Engliſh Colony in New South Wales.

before

before the moſt frequented. Not a veſtige of a human foot was to be traced on the ſands. They had left the dead to bury the dead. The excavations in the rocks were filled with putrid bodies, and in many places the paths were covered with ſkeletons [a].

Mr. Collins was informed, that the tribe of Co-le-be, the native mentioned before, had been reduced by the effects of this dreadful diſorder to three perſons; who found themſelves obliged to unite with ſome other tribe to prevent their utter extinction [b].

Under ſuch powerful cauſes of depopulation, we ſhould naturally be inclined to ſuppoſe that the animal and vegetable produce of the country would be increaſing upon the thinly ſcattered inhabitants, and, added to the ſupply of fiſh from their ſhores, would be more than ſufficient for their conſumption; yet, it appears upon the whole, that the population is in general ſo nearly on a level with the average ſupply of food, that every little deficiency from unfavourable weather, or other cauſes, occaſions diſtreſs. Particular times, when the inhabitants ſeemed to be in great want, are mentioned as not uncommon, and at theſe periods, ſome of the natives were found reduced to ſkeletons, and almoſt ſtarved to death [c].

[a] Collins's N. S. Wales, Appendix, p. 597. [b] Id. Appendix, p. 598.
[c] Id. c. iii. p. 34. and Appendix, p. 551

CHAP. IV.

Of the Checks to Population among the American Indians.

We may next turn our view to the vaſt continent of America, the greateſt part of which was found to be inhabited by ſmall independent tribes of ſavages, ſubſiſting nearly in a ſimilar manner to the natives of New Holland on the productions of unaſſiſted nature. The ſoil was covered by an almoſt univerſal foreſt, and preſented few of thoſe fruits and eſculent vegetables which grow in ſuch profuſion in the iſlands of the South Sea. The produce of a moſt rude and imperfect agriculture, known to ſome of the tribes of hunters, was ſo trifling as to be conſidered only as a feeble aid to the ſubſiſtence acquired by the chace. The inhabitants of this new world, therefore, might be conſidered as living principally by hunting and fiſhing [a]; and the narrow limits to this mode of ſubſiſtence are obvious. The ſupplies derived from fiſhing could extend only to thoſe who were within a certain diſtance of the lakes, the rivers, or the ſea-ſhore; and the ignorance and indolence of the improvident ſavage would frequently prevent him from extending the benefits of theſe ſupplies much beyond the time when they were actually obtained. The great extent of territory required for the ſupport of the hunter has been repeatedly ſtated and acknowledged [b]. The number of wild animals within his reach, combined with the facility with which they might be either killed or enſnared, muſt

[a] Robertſon's Hiſtory of America, vol. ii. b. iv. p. 127. et ſeq. octavo edit. 1780.
[b] Franklin's Miſcell. p. 2.

neceſſarily

neceſſarily limit the number of his ſociety. Tribes of hunters, like beaſts of prey, whom they reſemble in their mode of ſubſiſtence, will conſequently be thinly ſcattered over the ſurface of the earth. Like beaſts of prey, they muſt either drive away, or fly from, every rival, and be engaged in perpetual conteſts with each other [a].

Under ſuch circumſtances, that America ſhould be very thinly peopled in proportion to its extent of territory, is merely an exemplification of the obvious truth, that population cannot increaſe without the food to ſupport it. But the intereſting part of the inquiry, that part, to which I would wiſh particularly to draw the attention of the reader, is, the mode by which the population is kept down to the level of this ſcanty ſupply. It cannot eſcape obſervation, that an inſufficient ſupply of food to any people, does not ſhew itſelf merely in the ſhape of famine, but in other more permanent forms of diſtreſs, and in generating certain cuſtoms, which operate ſometimes with greater force in the ſuppreſſion of a riſing population, than in its ſubſequent deſtruction.

It was generally remarked, that the American women were far from being prolific, their marriages ſeldom producing above two or three children [b]. This unfruitfulneſs has been attributed by ſome to a want of ardour in the men towards their women; a feature of character, which has been conſidered as peculiar to the American ſavage. It is not however peculiar to this race; but probably exiſts in a great degree among all barbarous nations, whoſe food is poor and inſufficient, and who live in a conſtant apprehenſion of being preſſed by famine, or by an enemy. Bruce frequently takes notice of it, particularly, in reference to the Galla and Shangalla, ſa-

[a] Robertſon, b. iv. p. 129.
[b] Robertſon, b. iv. p. 106. Burke's America, vol. i. p. 187. Charlevoix, Hiſt. de la Nouvelle France, tom. iii. p. 304. Lafitau, Mœurs des Sauvages, tom. i. p. 590. In the courſe of this chapter I often give the ſame references as Robertſon; but never, without having examined and verified them myſelf. Where I have not had an opportunity of doing this, I refer to Robertſon alone.

vage nations on the borders of Abyſſinia[a]; and Le Vaillant mentions the phlegmatic temperament of the Hottentots as the chief reaſon of their thin population[b]. It ſeems to be generated by the hardſhips and dangers of ſavage life, which take off the attention from the ſexual paſſion. And that theſe are the principal cauſes of it among the Americans, rather than any abſolute conſtitutional defect, appears probable, from its diminiſhing, nearly in proportion to the degree in which theſe cauſes are mitigated, or removed. In thoſe countries of America, where, from peculiar ſituation or further advantages in improvement, the hardſhips of ſavage life are leſs ſeverely felt, the paſſion between the ſexes becomes more ardent. Among ſome of the tribes ſeated on the banks of rivers well ſtored with fiſh, or others that inhabit a territory greatly abounding in game or much improved in agriculture, the women are more valued and admired; and as hardly any reſtraint is impoſed on the gratification of deſire, the diſſolution of their manners is ſometimes exceſſive[c].

If we do not then conſider this apathy of the Americans as a natural defect in the bodily frame, but merely as a general coldneſs, and an infrequency of the calls of the ſexual appetite, we ſhall not be inclined to give much weight to it as affecting the number of children to a marriage; but ſhall be diſpoſed to look for the cauſe of this unfruitfulneſs in the condition and cuſtoms of the women in a ſavage ſtate. And here we ſhall find reaſons amply ſufficient to account for the fact in queſtion.

It is finely obſerved by Dr. Robertſon, that "Whether man "has been improved by the progreſs of arts and civilization, is a

[a] Travels to diſcover the Source of the Nile, vol. ii. p. 223. 559.

[b] Voyage dans l'Interieur de l'Afrique, tom. i. p. 12, 13.

[c] Robertſon, b. iv. p. 71. Lettres Edif. & Curieuſes, tom vi. p. 48. 322, 330. tom. vii. p. 20. 12mo. edit. 1780. Charlevoix, tom. iii. p. 303, 423. Hennepin, Mœurs des Sauvages, p. 37.

"queſtion, which in the wantonneſs of diſputation has been agitated "among philoſophers. That women are indebted to the refine-"ment of poliſhed manners for a happy change in their ſtate, "is a point, which can admit of no doubt[a]." In every part of the world, one of the moſt general characteriſtics of the ſavage is to deſpiſe and degrade the female ſex[b]. Among moſt of the tribes in America their condition is ſo peculiarly grievous, that ſervitude is a name too mild to deſcribe their wretched ſtate. A wife is no better than a beaſt of burthen. While the man paſſes his days in idleneſs or amuſement, the woman is condemned to inceſſant toil. Taſks are impoſed upon her without mercy, and ſervices are received without complacence or gratitude[c]. There are ſome diſtricts in America where this ſtate of degradation has been ſo ſeverely felt, that mothers have deſtroyed their female infants, to deliver them at once from a life in which they were doomed to ſuch a miſerable ſlavery[d].

This ſtate of depreſſion and conſtant labour added to the unavoidable hardſhips of ſavage life muſt be very unfavourable to the office of child-bearing[e]; and the libertinage which generally prevails among the women before marriage, with the habit of procuring abortions, in which they rarely fail, muſt neceſſarily render them more unfit for bearing children afterwards[f]. One of the miſſionaries ſpeaking of the common practice among the Natchez of changing their wives, adds, unleſs they have children by them, a

[a] Robertſon, b. iv. p. 103.

[b] Robertſon, b. iv. p. 103. Lettres Edif. paſſim. Charlevoix Hiſt. Nouv. Fr. tom. iii. p. 287. Voy. de Perouſe, c. ix. p. 402. 4to. London.

[c] Robertſon, b. iv. p. 105. Lettres Edif. tom. vi. p. 329. Major Roger's North America, p. 211. Creuxii Hiſt. Canad. p. 57.

[d] Robertſon, b. iv. p. 106. Raynal, Hiſt. des Indes, tom. iv. c. vii. p. 110. 8vo. 10 vol. 1795.

[e] Robertſon, b. iv. p. 106. Creuxii Hiſt. Canad. p. 57. Laſitau, tom. i. p. 590.

[f] Robertſon, b. iv. p. 72. Ellis's Voyage, p. 198. Burke's America, vol. i. p. 187.

proof, that theſe marriages were in general unfruitful, which may be accounted for from the libertine lives of the women before wedlock, which he had previouſly noticed [a].

The cauſes, that Charlevoix aſſigns, of the ſterility of the American women, are, the ſuckling their children for ſeveral years, during which time they do not cohabit with their huſbands; the exceſſive labour to which they are always condemned in whatever ſituation they may be; and the cuſtom eſtabliſhed in many places of permitting the young women to proſtitute themſelves before marriage. Added to this, he ſays, the extreme miſery to which theſe people are ſometimes reduced, takes from them all deſire of having children [b]. Among ſome of the ruder tribes it is a maxim not to burden themſelves with rearing more than two of their offspring [c]. When twins are born, one of them is commonly abandoned, as the mother cannot rear them both; and when a mother dies during the period of ſuckling her child, no chance of preſerving its life remains, and, as in New Holland, it is buried in the ſame grave with the breaſt that nouriſhed it [d].

As the parents are frequently expoſed to want themſelves, the difficulty of ſupporting their children becomes at times ſo great, that they are reduced to the neceſſity of abandoning or deſtroying them [e]. Deformed children are very generally expoſed; and among ſome of the tribes in South America, the children of mothers who do not bear their labours well, experience a ſimilar fate, from a fear that the offſpring may inherit the weakneſs of its parent [f].

To cauſes of this nature we muſt aſcribe the remarkable exemption of the Americans from deformities of make. Even when a mother endeavours to rear all her children without diſtinction, ſo great

[a] Lettres Edif. tom. vii. p. 20. 22. [b] Charlevoix, N. Fr. tom. iii. p. 304. [c] Robertſon, b. iv. p. 107. Lettres Edif. tom. ix. p. 140. [d] Robertſon, b. iv. p. 107. Lettres Edif. tom. viii. p. 86. [e] Robertſon, b. iv. p. 108. [f] Laſitau, Mœurs des Sauv. tom. i. p. 592.

a proportion

a proportion of the whole number periſhes under the rigorous treatment that muſt be their lot in the ſavage ſtate, that probably none of thoſe who labour under any original weakneſs or infirmity can attain the age of manhood. If they be not cut off as ſoon as they are born, they cannot long protract their lives under the ſevere diſcipline that awaits them [a]. In the Spaniſh provinces, where the Indians do not live ſo laborious a life, and are prevented from deſtroying their children, great numbers of them are deformed, dwarfiſh, mutilated, blind, and deaf [b].

Polygamy ſeems to have been generally allowed among the Americans, but the privilege was ſeldom uſed, except by the Caciques and chiefs, and now and then by others in ſome of the fertile provinces of the South, where ſubſiſtence was more eaſily procured. The difficulty of ſupporting a family confined the maſs of the people to one wife [c]; and this difficulty was ſo generally known and acknowledged, that fathers, before they conſented to give their daughters in marriage, required unequivocal proofs in the ſuitor of his ſkill in hunting, and his conſequent ability to ſupport a wife and children [d]. The women, it is ſaid, do not marry early [e]; and this ſeems to be confirmed by the libertinage among them before marriage, ſo frequently taken notice of by the miſſionaries and other writers [f].

The cuſtoms above enumerated, which appear to have been generated principally by the experience of the difficulties attending the rearing of a family, combined with the great proportion of children that muſt neceſſarily periſh under the hardſhips of ſavage life, in ſpite

[a] Charlevoix, tom. iii. p. 303. Raynal, Hiſt. des Indes, tom. viii. l. xv. p. 22. [b] Robertſon, b. iv. p. 73. Voyage d'Ulloa, tom. i. p. 232. [c] Robertſon, b. iv. p. 102. Lettres Edif. tom. viii. p. 87. [d] Lettres Edif. tom. ix. p. 364. Robertſon, b. iv. p. 115. [e] Robertſon, b. iv. p. 107. [f] Lettres Edif. paſſim. Voyage d'Ulloa, tom. i. p. 343. Burke's America, vol. i. p. 187. Charlevoix, tom. iii. p. 303, 304.

of

of the beſt efforts of their parents to ſave them [a], muſt, without doubt, moſt powerfully repreſs the riſing generation.

When the young ſavage, by a fortunate train of circumſtances, has paſſed ſafely through the perils of his childhood, other dangers ſcarcely leſs formidable await him on his approach to manhood. The diſeaſes to which man is ſubject in the ſavage ſtate, though fewer in number, are more violent and fatal than thoſe which prevail in civilized ſociety. As ſavages are wonderfully improvident, and their means of ſubſiſtence always precarious, they often paſs from the extreme of want to exuberant plenty, according to the viciſſitudes of fortune in the chace, or to the variety in the productions of the ſeaſons [b]. Their inconſiderate gluttony in the one caſe, and their ſevere abſtinence in the other, are equally prejudicial to the human conſtitution; and their vigour is accordingly at ſome ſeaſons impaired by want, and at others by a ſuperfluity of groſs aliment, and the diſorders ariſing from indigeſtions [c]. Theſe, which may be conſidered as the unavoidable conſequence of their mode of living, cut off conſiderable numbers in the prime of life. They are likewiſe extremely ſubject to conſumptions, to pleuretic, aſthmatic, and paralytic diſorders, brought on by the immoderate hardſhips and fatigues which they endure in hunting and war, and by the inclemency of the ſeaſons to which they are continually expoſed [d].

The miſſionaries ſpeak of the Indians in South America as ſubject to perpetual diſeaſes for which they know no remedy [e]. Ignorant of the uſe of the moſt ſimple herbs, or of any change in their groſs diet, they die of theſe diſeaſes in great numbers. The

[a] Creuxius ſays, that ſcarcely one in thirty reach manhood. (Hiſt. Canad. p. 57); but this muſt be a great exaggeration. [b] Robertſon, b. iv. p. 85. [c] Charlevoix, tom. iii. p. 302, 303. [d] Robertſon, b. iv. p. 86. Charlevoix, tom. iii. p. 364. Lafitau, tom. ii. p. 360, 361. [e] Lettres Edif. tom. viii. p. 83.

jeſuit

jeſuit Fauque ſays, that, in all the different excurſions which he had made, he ſcarcely found a ſingle individual of an advanced age [a]. Robertſon determines the period of human life to be ſhorter among ſavages than in well-regulated and induſtrious communities [b]. Raynal, notwithſtanding his frequent declarations in favour of ſavage life, ſays of the Indians of Canada, that few are ſo long lived as our people, whoſe manner of living is more uniform and tranquil [c]. And Cook and Perouſe confirm theſe opinions in the remarks which they make on ſome of the inhabitants of the northweſt coaſt of America [d].

In the vaſt plains of South America, a burning ſun operating on the extenſive ſwamps and the inundations that ſucceed the rainy ſeaſon, ſometimes generates dreadful epidemics. The miſſionaries ſpeak of contagious diſtempers as frequent among the Indians, and occaſioning at times a great mortality in their villages [e]. The ſmall-pox every where makes great ravages, as, from want of care, and from confined habitations, very few that are attacked recover from it [f]. The Indians of Paraguay are ſaid to be extremely ſubject to contagious diſtempers, notwithſtanding the care and attentions of the Jeſuits. The ſmall-pox and malignant fevers, which, from the ravages they make, are called plagues, frequently deſolate theſe flouriſhing miſſions, and, according to Ulloa, are the cauſe that they had not increaſed in proportion to the time of their eſtabliſhment, and the profound peace which they had enjoyed [g].

Theſe epidemics are not confined to the ſouth. They are mentioned as if they were not uncommon among the more northern nations [h]; and, in a late voyage to the northweſt coaſt of America, captain Vancouver gives an account of a moſt extraordinary

[a] Lettres Edif. tom. vii. p. 317. et ſeq. [b] b. iv. p. 86. [c] Raynal, b. xv. p. 23. [d] Cook, third Voy. vol. iii. ch. ii. p. 520. Voy. de Perouſe, ch. ix. [e] Lettres Edif. tom. viii. p. 79. 339. tom. ix. p. 125. [f] Voyage d'Ulloa, tom. i. p. 349. [g] Id. tom. i. p. 549. [h] Lettres Edif. tom. vi. p. 335.

deſolation

deſolation apparently produced by ſome diſtemper of this kind. From New Dungeneſs he traverſed a hundred and fifty miles of the coaſt without ſeeing the ſame number of inhabitants. Deſerted villages were frequent, each of which was large enough to contain all the ſcattered ſavages that had been obſerved in that extent of country. In the different excurſions which he made, particularly about Port Diſcovery, the ſkulls, limbs, ribs, and backbones, or ſome other veſtiges of the human body, were ſcattered promiſcuouſly in great numbers; and, as no warlike ſcars were obſerved on the bodies of the remaining Indians, and no particular ſigns of fear and ſuſpicion, the moſt probable conjecture ſeems to be, that this depopulation muſt have been occaſioned by peſtilential diſeaſe [a]. The ſmall-pox appears to be common and fatal among the Indians on this coaſt. Its indelible marks were obſerved on many, and ſeveral had loſt the ſight of one eye from it [b].

In general, it may be remarked of ſavages, that, from their extreme ignorance, the dirt of their perſons, and the cloſeneſs and filth of their cabins [c], they loſe the advantage which uſually attends a thinly peopled country, that, of being more exempt from peſtilential diſeaſes, than thoſe which are fully inhabited. In ſome parts of America the houſes are built for the reception of many different families, and fourſcore or a hundred people are crowded together under the ſame roof. When the families live ſeparately, the huts are extremely ſmall, cloſe, and wretched, without windows, and with the doors ſo low, that it is neceſſary to creep on the hands and knees to enter them [d]. On the northweſt coaſt of America, the houſes are in general of the large kind; and Meares deſcribes one of moſt extraordinary dimenſions belonging to a chief near Nootka

[a] Vancouver's Voy. vol. i. b. ii. c. v. p. 256. [b] Id. c. iv. p. 242.

[c] Charlevoix ſpeaks in the ſtrongeſt terms of the extreme filth and ſtench of the American cabins, "On ne peut entrer dans leur cabanes qu'on ne ſoit impeſté;" and the dirt of their meals, he ſays, "vous feroit horreur." Vol. iii. p. 338.

[d] Robertſon, b. iv. p. 182. Voyage d' Ulloa, tom. i. p. 340.

Sound,

Sound, in which eight hundred perſons eat, ſat, and ſlept [a]. All voyagers agree with reſpect to the filth of the habitations, and the perſonal naſtineſs of the people on this coaſt [b]. Captain Cook deſcribes them as ſwarming with vermin, which they pick off and eat [c]; and the naſtineſs and ſtench of their houſes, he ſays, is equal to their confuſion [d]. Perouſe declares that their cabins have a naſtineſs and ſtench, to which the den of no known animal in the world can be compared [e].

Under ſuch circumſtances, it may be eaſily imagined what a dreadful havoc an epidemic muſt make, when once it appears among them; and it does not ſeem improbable, that the degree of filth deſcribed ſhould generate diſtempers of this nature, as the air of their houſes cannot be much purer than the atmoſphere of the moſt crowded cities.

Thoſe who eſcape the dangers of infancy and of diſeaſe are conſtantly expoſed to the chances of war; and notwithſtanding the extreme caution of the Americans in conducting their military operations, yet as they ſeldom enjoy any interval of peace, the waſte of their numbers in war is conſiderable [f]. The rudeſt of the American nations are well acquainted with the rights of each community to its own domains [g]. And as it is of the utmoſt conſequence to prevent others from deſtroying the game in their hunting grounds, they guard this national property with a jealous attention. Innumerable ſubjects of diſpute neceſſarily ariſe. The neighbouring nations live in a perpetual ſtate of hoſtility with each other [h]. The very act of increaſing in one tribe, muſt be an act of aggreſſion on its neighbours, as a larger range of territory will be neceſſary to ſupport its increaſed numbers.

[a] Meares's Voyage, ch. xii. p. 138. [b] Id. ch. xxiii. p. 252. Vancouver's Voy. vol. iii. b. vi. c. i. p. 313. [c] Cook's 3d Voyage, vol. ii. p. 305. [d] c. iii. p. 316.

[e] Voy. de Perouſe, ch. ix. p. 403. [f] Charlevoix, Hiſt. N. Fr. tom. iii. 202, 203, 429. [g] Robertſon, b. iv. p. 147. [h] Ibid. Lettres Edif. tom. viii. p. 40, 26, & paſſim. Cook's 3d Voy. vol. ii. p. 324. Meares's Voy. ch. xxiv. p. 267.

The conteſt will in this caſe naturally continue, either till the equilibrium is reſtored by mutual loſſes, or till the weaker party is exterminated, or driven from its country. When the irruption of an enemy deſolates their cultivated lands, or drives them from their hunting grounds, as they have ſeldom any portable ſtores, they are generally reduced to extreme want. All the people of the diſtrict invaded are frequently forced to take refuge in woods or mountains which can afford them no ſubſiſtence, and where many of them periſh [a]. In ſuch a flight each conſults alone his individual ſafety. Children deſert their parents, and parents conſider their children as ſtrangers. The ties of nature are no longer binding. A father will ſell his ſon for a knife or a hatchet [b]. Famine, and diſtreſſes of every kind, complete the deſtruction of thoſe whom the ſword had ſpared; and in this manner whole tribes are frequently extinguiſhed [c].

Such a ſtate of things has powerfully contributed to generate that ferocious ſpirit of warfare obſervable among ſavages in general, and moſt particularly among the Americans. Their object in battle is not conqueſt, but deſtruction [d]. The life of the victor depends on the death of his enemy; and, in the rancour and fell ſpirit of revenge with which he purſues him, he ſeems conſtantly to bear in mind the diſtreſſes that would be conſequent on defeat. Among the Iroquois, the phraſe by which they expreſs their reſolution of making war againſt an enemy, is, "Let us go and eat that nation." If they ſolicit the aid of a neighbouring tribe, they invite it to eat broth made of the fleſh of their enemies [e]. Among the Abnakis, when a body of their warriors enters an enemy's territory, it is generally divided into different parties of thirty or forty; and the chief ſays to each, to you is given ſuch a hamlet to eat, to you ſuch a village [f], &c. Theſe expreſſions

[a] Robertſon, b. iv. p. 172. Charlevoix, N. Fr. tom. iii. p. 203. [b] Lettres Edif. tom. viii. p. 346. [c] Robertſon, b. iv. p. 172. Account of N. America, by Major Rogers, p. 250. [d] Robertſon, b. iv. p. 150. [e] Id. p. 164.
[f] Lettres Edif. tom. vi. p. 205.

preſſions remain in the language of ſome of the tribes, in which the cuſtom of eating their priſoners taken in war no longer exiſts. Cannibaliſm, however, undoubtedly prevailed in many parts of the new world [a]; and, contrary to the opinion of Dr. Robertſon, I cannot but think that it muſt have had its origin in extreme want, though the cuſtom might afterwards be continued from other motives. It ſeems to be a worſe compliment to human nature, and to the ſavage ſtate, to attribute this horrid repaſt to malignant paſſions, without the goad of neceſſity, rather than to the great law of ſelf-preſervation, which has, at times, overcome every other feeling even among the moſt humane and civilized people. When once it had prevailed, though only occaſionally, from this cauſe, the fear that a ſavage might feel of becoming a repaſt to his enemies, might eaſily raiſe the paſſion of rancour and revenge to ſo high a pitch, as to urge him to treat his priſoners in this way, though not prompted at the time by hunger.

The miſſionaries ſpeak of ſeveral nations, which appeared to uſe human fleſh whenever they could obtain it, as they would the fleſh of any of the rarer animals [b]. Theſe accounts may perhaps be exaggerated, though they ſeem to be confirmed, in a great degree, by the late voyages to the northweſt coaſt of America, and by Captain Cook's deſcription of the ſtate of ſociety in the ſouthern iſland of New Zealand [c]. The people of Nootka Sound appear to be cannibals [d], and the chief of the diſtrict Maquinna is ſaid to be ſo addicted to this horrid banquet, that, in cold blood, he kills a ſlave every moon to gratify his unnatural appetite [e].

The predominant principle of ſelf-preſervation, connected in the breaſt of the ſavage, moſt intimately, with the ſafety and power of

[a] Robertſon, b. iv. p. 164. [b] Lettres Edif. tom. viii. p. 105, 271. tom. vi. p. 266.
[c] Cautious as Captain Cook always is, he ſays of the New Zealanders, "it was but "too evident that they have a great liking for this kind of food." Second Voy. vol. i. p. 246. And in the laſt voyage, ſpeaking of their perpetual hoſtilities, he ſays, "and per-"haps the deſire of a good meal may be no ſmall incitement." Vol. i. p. 137.
[d] Cook's Third Voy. vol. ii. p. 271. [e] Meares's Voy. ch. xxiii. p. 255.

the community to which he belongs, prevents the admiſſion of any of thoſe ideas of honour and gallantry in war, which prevail among more civilized nations. To fly from an adverſary that is on his guard, and to avoid a conteſt where he cannot contend without riſk to his own perſon, and conſequently to his community, is the point of honour with the American. The odds of ten to one are neceſſary to warrant an attack on a perſon who is armed and prepared to reſiſt, and even then, each is afraid of being the firſt to advance [a]. The great object of the moſt renowned warrior, is, by every art of cunning and deceit, by every mode of ſtratagem and ſurprize, that his invention can ſuggeſt, to weaken and deſtroy the tribes of his enemies with the leaſt poſſible loſs to his own. To meet an enemy on equal terms is regarded as extreme folly. To fall in battle, inſtead of being reckoned an honourable death [b], is a misfortune, which ſubjects the memory of a warrior to the imputation of raſhneſs and imprudence. But to lie in wait day after day, till he can ruſh upon his prey, when moſt ſecure, and leaſt able to reſiſt him; to ſteal in the dead of night upon his enemies, ſet fire to their huts, and maſſacre the inhabitants, as they fly naked and defenceleſs from the flames [c], are deeds of glory, which will be of deathleſs memory in the breaſts of his grateful countrymen.

This mode of warfare is evidently generated by a conſciouſneſs of the difficulties attending the rearing of new citizens under the hardſhips and dangers of ſavage life. And theſe powerful cauſes of deſtruction may, in ſome inſtances, be ſo great, as to keep down the population even conſiderably below the means of ſubſiſtence; but the fear that the Americans betray of any diminution of their ſociety, and their apparent wiſh to increaſe it, are no proofs that this is generally the caſe. The country could not probably ſupport the addition that is coveted in each ſociety; but an acceſſion of

[a] Lettres Edif. tom. vi. p. 360. [b] Charlevoix, N. Fr. tom. iii. p. 376.
[c] Robertſon, b. iv. p. 155. Lettres Edif. tom. vi. p. 182, 360.

ſtrength

ſtrength to one tribe, opens to it new ſources of ſubſiſtence in the comparative weakneſs of its adverſaries; and, on the contrary, a diminution of its numbers, ſo far from giving greater plenty to the remaining members, ſubjects them to extirpation or famine from the irruptions of their ſtronger neighbours.

The Chiriguanes, originally only a ſmall part of the tribe of Guaranis, left their native country in Paraguay, and ſettled in the mountains towards Peru. They found ſufficient ſubſiſtence in their new country, increaſed rapidly, attacked their neighbours, and, by ſuperior valour, or ſuperior fortune, gradually exterminated them, and took poſſeſſion of their lands, occupying a great extent of country; and having increaſed, in the courſe of ſome years, from three or four thouſand, to thirty thouſand [a], while the tribes of their weaker neighbours were daily thinned by famine and the ſword.

Such inſtances prove the rapid increaſe, even of the Americans, under favourable circumſtances, and ſufficiently account for the fear in every tribe of diminiſhing its numbers, and the frequent wiſh to increaſe them [b], without ſuppoſing a ſuperabundance of food in the territory actually poſſeſſed.

That the increaſe of the Americans is regulated more by the means of ſubſiſtence, than by any of the other cauſes that have been mentioned as affecting their population; or rather, perhaps, I ſhould ſay, that theſe cauſes themſelves are principally regulated by the plenty or ſcarcity of ſubſiſtence, is ſufficiently evinced, from the greater frequency of the tribes, and the greater numbers in each, throughout all thoſe parts of the country, where, from the vicinity of lakes or rivers, the ſuperior fertility of the ſoil, or further advances in improvement, food becomes more abundant. In the interior of the provinces bordering on the Oronoco, ſeveral hundred miles may be traverſed in

[a] Lettres Edif. tom. viii. p. 243. Les Chiriguanes multiplierent prodigieuſement, et en aſſez peu d'années leur nombre monta a trente mille ames.
[b] Laſitau, tom. ii. p. 163.

different

different directions, without finding a ſingle hut, or obſerving the footſteps of a ſingle creature. In ſome parts of North America, where the climate is more rigorous, and the ſoil leſs fertile, the deſolation is ſtill greater. Vaſt tracts of ſome hundred leagues have been croſſed through uninhabited plains and foreſts[a]. The miſſionaries ſpeak of journies of twelve days without meeting with a ſingle ſoul[b], and of immenſe tracts of country, in which ſcarcely three or four ſcattered villages were to be found[c]. Some of theſe deſerts did not furniſh game[d], and were therefore entirely deſolate; others, which were to a certain degree ſtocked with it, were traverſed in the hunting ſeaſons, by parties, who encamped, and remained in different ſpots, according to the ſucceſs they met with, and were therefore really inhabited in proportion to the quantity of ſubſiſtence which they yielded[e].

Other diſtricts of America are deſcribed as comparatively fully peopled; ſuch as the borders of the great northern lakes, the ſhores of the Miſſiſippi, Louiſiana, and many provinces in South America. The villages here were large, and near each other, in proportion to the ſuperior fruitfulneſs of the territory in game and fiſh, and the advances made by the inhabitants in agriculture[f]. The Indians of the great and populous empires of Mexico and Peru, ſprung undoubtedly from the ſame ſtock, and originally poſſeſſed the ſame cuſtoms, as their ruder brethren; but the moment that, by a fortunate train of circumſtances, they were led to improve and extend their agriculture, a conſiderable population rapidly followed, in ſpite of the apathy of the men, or the deſtructive habits of the women. Theſe habits would, indeed, in a great meaſure yield to the change of circumſtances; and the ſubſtitution of a more quiet and ſedentary life, for a life of per-

[a] Robertſon, b. iv. p. 129, 130. [b] Lettres Edif. tom. vi. p. 357.
[c] Lettres Edif. tom. vi. p. 321. [d] Lettres Edif. tom. ix. p. 145.
[e] Lettres Edif. tom. vi. p. 66, 81, 345. tom. ix. p. 145. [f] Lettres Edif. tom. ix. p. 90, 142. Robertſon, b. iv. p. 141.

petual

petual wandering and hardſhip, would immediately render the women more fruitful, and enable them at the ſame time to attend to the wants of a larger family.

In a general view of the American continent, as deſcribed by hiſtorians, the population ſeems to have been ſpread over the ſurface very nearly in proportion to the quantity of food, which the inhabitants of the different parts, in the actual ſtate of their induſtry and improvement, could obtain; and that, with few exceptions, it preſſed hard againſt this limit, rather than fell ſhort of it, appears, from the frequent recurrence of diſtreſs for want of food in all parts of America.

Remarkable inſtances occur, according to Dr. Robertſon, of the calamities which rude nations ſuffer by famine. As one of them, he mentions an account given by Alvar Nugnez Cabeca de Vaca, one of the Spaniſh adventurers, who reſided almoſt nine years among the ſavages of Florida. He deſcribes them as unacquainted with every ſpecies of agriculture, and living chiefly upon the roots of different plants, which they procure with great difficulty, wandering from place to place in ſearch of them. Sometimes they kill game, ſometimes they catch fiſh, but in ſuch ſmall quantities, that their hunger is ſo extreme, as to compel them to eat ſpiders, the eggs of ants, worms, lizards, ſerpents, a kind of unctuous earth, and, I am perſuaded, he ſays, that, if in this country there were any ſtones, they would ſwallow them. They preſerve the bones of fiſhes and ſerpents, which they grind into powder and eat. The only ſeaſon when they do not ſuffer much from famine, is when a certain fruit like the opuntia, or prickly-pear, is ripe; but they are ſometimes obliged to travel far from their uſual place of reſidence in order to find it. In another place, he obſerves, that they are frequently reduced to paſs two or three days without food[a].

Ellis, in his voyage to Hudſon's Bay, feelingly deſcribes the ſuffer-

[a] Robertſon, note 28. to p. 117. b. iv.

ings

ings of the Indians in that neighbourhood from extreme want. Having mentioned the ſeverity of the climate, he ſays, "Great as theſe "hardſhips are which reſult from the rigour of the cold, yet it may "juſtly be affirmed, that they are much inferior to thoſe which they "feel from the ſcarcity of proviſions, and the difficulty they are "under of procuring them. A ſtory which is related at the facto-"ries, and known to be true, will ſufficiently prove this, and give the "compaſſionate reader a juſt idea of the miſeries to which theſe un-"happy people are expoſed." He then gives an account of a poor Indian and his wife, who, on the failure of game, having eat up all the ſkins which they wore as clothing, were reduced to the dreadful extremity of ſupporting themſelves on the fleſh of two of their children [a]. In another place he ſays, "It has ſometimes happened, that "the Indians who come in ſummer to trade at the factories, miſſing "the ſuccours they expected, have been obliged to ſinge off the hair "from thouſands of beaver ſkins in order to feed upon the leather [b]."

The Abbé Raynal, who is continually reaſoning moſt inconſiſtently in his compariſons of ſavage and civilized life, though in one place he ſpeaks of the ſavage as morally ſure of a competent ſubſiſtence, yet in his account of the nations of Canada, he ſays, that though they lived in a country abounding in game and fiſh, yet in ſome ſeaſons, and ſometimes for whole years, this reſource failed them; and famine then occaſioned a great deſtruction among a people who were at too great a diſtance to aſſiſt each other [c].

Charlevoix, ſpeaking of the inconveniences and diſtreſſes to which the miſſionaries were ſubject, obſerves, that not unfrequently the evils which he had been deſcribing are effaced by a greater, in compariſon of which all the others are nothing. This is famine. It is true, ſays he, that the ſavages can bear hunger with as much patience, as they ſhew careleſneſs in providing againſt it; but they

[a] p. 196. [b] p. 194. [c] Raynal, Hiſt. des Indes, tom. viii. l. xv. p. 22.

are ſometimes reduced to extremities beyond their power to ſupport [a].

It is the general cuſtom among moſt of the American nations, even thoſe which have made ſome progreſs in agriculture, to diſperſe themſelves in the woods at certain ſeaſons of the year, and to ſubſiſt for ſome months on the produce of the chace, as a principal part of their annual ſupplies [b]. To remain in their villages, expoſes them to certain famine [c]; and in the woods they are not always ſure to eſcape it. The moſt able hunters ſometimes fail of ſucceſs, even where there is no deficiency of game [d]; and in their foreſts, on the failure of this reſource, the hunter or the traveller is expoſed to the moſt cruel want [e]. The Indians, in their hunting excurſions, are ſometimes reduced to paſs three or four days without food [f]; and a miſſionary relates an account of ſome Iroquois who, on one of theſe occaſions, having ſupported themſelves as long as they could, by eating the ſkins which they had with them, their ſhoes, and the bark of trees, at length, in deſpair, ſacrificed ſome of the party to ſupport the reſt. Out of eleven, five only returned alive [g].

The Indians, in many parts of South America, live in extreme want [h], and are ſometimes deſtroyed by abſolute famines [i]. The iſlands, rich as they appeared to be, were peopled fully up to the level of their produce. If a few Spaniards ſettled in any diſtrict, ſuch a ſmall addition of ſupernumerary mouths ſoon occaſioned a ſevere dearth of proviſions [k]. The flouriſhing Mexican empire was in the ſame ſtate in this reſpect; and Cortez often found the greateſt difficulty in procuring ſubſiſtence for his ſmall body of ſoldiers [l]. Even the Miſſions of Paraguay, with all the care and foreſight of the Je-

[a] Hiſt. N. Fr. tom. iii. p. 338. [b] Lettres Edif. tom. vi. p. 66, 81, 345. ix. 145. [c] Lettres Edif. tom. vi. 82, 196, 197, 215. ix. 151. [d] Charlevoix, N. Fr. tom. iii. p. 201. Henneſſin, Mœurs des Sauv. p. 78. [e] Lettres Edif. tom. vi. p. 167, 220. [f] Id. tom. vi. p. 33. [g] Id. tom. vi. p. 71. [h] Id. tom. vii. p. 383. ix. 140. [i] Id. tom. viii. p. 79. [k] Robertſon, b. iv. p. 121. Burke's America, vol. i. p. 30. [l] Robertſon, b. viii. p. 212.

ſuits, and notwithſtanding that their population was kept down by frequent epidemicks, were by no means totally exempt from the preſſure of want. The Indians of the Miſſion of St. Michael are mentioned as having at one time increaſed ſo much, that the lands, capable of cultivation in their neighbourhood, produced only half of the grain neceſſary for their ſupport[a]. Long droughts often deſtroyed their cattle[b], and occaſioned a failure of their crops; and on theſe occaſions ſome of the Miſſions were reduced to the moſt extreme indigence, and would have periſhed from famine, but for the aſſiſtance of their neighbours[c].

The late voyages to the northweſt coaſt of America, confirm theſe accounts of the frequent preſſure of want in ſavage life, and ſhew the uncertainty of the reſource of fiſhing, which ſeems to afford, in general, the moſt plentiful harveſt of food that is furniſhed by unaſſiſted nature. The ſea on the coaſt near Nootka Sound is ſeldom or never ſo much frozen as to prevent the inhabitants from having acceſs to it. Yet from the very great precautions they uſe in laying up ſtores for the winter, and their attention to prepare and preſerve whatever food is capable of it, for the colder ſeaſons, it is evident that the ſea at theſe times yields no fiſh; and it appears, that they often undergo very great hardſhips from want of proviſions in the cold months[d]. During a Mr. Maccay's ſtay at Nootka Sound, from 1786 to 1787, the length and ſeverity of the winter occaſioned a famine. The ſtock of dried fiſh was expended, and no freſh ſupplies of any kind were to be caught, ſo that the natives were obliged to ſubmit to a fixed allowance, and the chiefs brought every day to our countrymen the ſtated meal of ſeven dried herrings' heads. Mr. Meares ſays, that the peruſal of this gentleman's journal would ſhock any mind tinctured with humanity[e].

Captain Vancouver mentions ſome of the people to the north of

[a] Lettres Edif. tom. ix. p. 381. [b] Id. tom. ix. p. 191. [c] Id. tom. ix. p. 206, 380. [d] Meares's Voy. ch. xxiv. p. 266. [e] Id. ch. xi. p. 132.

Nootka

Nootka Sound, as living very miſerably on a paſte made of the inner bark of the pine tree, and cockles[a]. In one of the boat excurſions, a party of Indians was met with who had ſome halibut, but, though very high prices were offered, they could not be induced to part with any. This, as Captain Vancouver obſerves, was ſingular, and indicated a very ſcanty ſupply[b]. At Nootka Sound in the year 1794, fiſh had become very ſcarce, and bore an exorbitant price; as, either from the badneſs of the ſeaſon, or from neglect, the inhabitants had experienced the greateſt diſtreſs for want of proviſions during the winter[c].

Perouſe deſcribes the Indians in the neighbourhood of Port Francois, as living during the ſummer in the greateſt abundance by fiſhing, but expoſed in the winter to periſh from want[d].

It is not, therefore, as Lord Kaimes imagines, that the American tribes have never increaſed ſufficiently to render the paſtoral or agricultural ſtate neceſſary to them[e]; but, from ſome cauſe or other, they have not adopted in any great degree theſe more plentiful modes of procuring ſubſiſtence, and therefore, cannot have increaſed ſo as to become populous. If hunger alone could have prompted the ſavage tribes of America to ſuch a change in their habits, I do not conceive that there would have been a ſingle nation of hunters and fiſhers remaining; but it is evident, that ſome fortunate train of circumſtances, in addition to this ſtimulus, is neceſſary for this purpoſe; and it is undoubtedly probable, that theſe arts of obtaining food, will be firſt invented and improved in thoſe ſpots that are beſt ſuited to them, and where the natural fertility of the ſituation, by allowing a greater number of people to ſubſiſt together, would give the faireſt chance to the inventive powers of the human mind.

Among moſt of the American tribes that we have been conſidering, ſo great a degree of equality prevailed, that all the members of

[a] Vancouver's Voy. vol. ii. b. ii. c. ii. p. 273. [b] Id. p. 282.
[c] Id. vol. iii. b. vi. c. i. p. 304. [d] Voy. de Perouſe, ch. ix. p. 400.
[e] Sketches of the Hiſt. of Man. vol. i. p. 99, 105. 8vo. 2d edit.

each community would be nearly equal ſharers in the general hardſhips of ſavage life, and in the preſſure of occaſional famines. But in many of the more ſouthern nations, as in Bagota [a], and among the Natchez [b], and particularly in Mexico and Peru, where a great diſtinction of ranks prevailed, and the lower claſſes were in a ſtate of abſolute ſervitude [c], it is evident that, on occaſion of any failure of ſubſiſtence, theſe would be the principal ſufferers, and the poſitive checks to population would act almoſt excluſively on this part of the community.

The very extraordinary depopulation that has taken place among the American Indians, may appear to ſome to contradict the theory which is intended to be eſtabliſhed; but it will be found that the cauſes of this rapid diminution may all be reſolved into the three great checks to population that have been ſtated; and it is not aſſerted, that theſe checks, operating from particular circumſtances with unuſual force, may not in ſome inſtances be more powerful even than the principle of increaſe.

The inſatiable fondneſs of the Indians for ſpirituous liquors [d], which, according to Charlevoix, is a rage that paſſes all expreſſion [e], by producing among them perpetual quarrels and conteſts, which often terminate fatally, by expoſing them to a new train of diſorders which their mode of life, unfits them to contend with, and, by deadening and deſtroying the generative faculty in its very ſource, may alone be conſidered as a vice adequate to produce the preſent depopulation. In addition to this, it ſhould be obſerved, that almoſt every where the connexion of the Indians with Europeans, has tended to break their ſpirit, to weaken or to give a wrong direction to their induſtry, and in conſequence to diminiſh the ſources of ſubſiſtence. In St. Domingo, the Indians neglected purpoſely to cultivate their lands in order to ſtarve out their cruel oppreſ-

[a] Robertſon, b. iv. p. 141. [b] Lettres Edif. tom. vii. p. 21. Robertſon, b. iv. p. 139. [c] Robertſon, b. vii. p. 190, 242. [d] Major Rogers's Account of North America, p. 210. [e] Charlevoix, tom. iii. p. 302.

ſors.

ſors [a]. In Peru and Chili, the forced induſtry of the natives was fatally directed to the digging into the bowels of the earth, inſtead of cultivating its ſurface; and among the northern nations, the extreme deſire to purchaſe European ſpirits, directed the induſtry of the greateſt part of them, almoſt excluſively, to the procuring of peltry for the purpoſe of this exchange [b], which would prevent their attention to the more fruitful ſources of ſubſiſtence, and at the ſame time tend rapidly to deſtroy the produce of the chace. The number of wild animals, in all the known parts of America, is probably even more diminiſhed than the number of people [c]. The attention to agriculture has every where ſlackened, rather than increaſed, as might at firſt have been expected, from European connexion. In no part of America, either North or South, do we hear of any of the Indian nations living in great plenty, in conſequence of their diminiſhed numbers. It may not, therefore, be very far from the truth, to ſay, that even now, in ſpite of all the powerful cauſes of deſtruction that have been mentioned, the average population of the American nations is, with few exceptions, on a level with the average quantity of food, which in the preſent ſtate of their induſtry they can obtain.

[a] Robertſon, b. ii. p. 185. Burke's America, vol. i. p. 300. [b] Charlevoix, N. Fr. tom. iii. p. 260. [c] The general introduction of fire-arms among the Indians, has probably greatly contributed to the diminution of the wild animals.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Of the Checks to Population in the Iſlands of the South Sea.

THE Abbé Raynal ſpeaking of the ancient ſtate of the Britiſh iſles, and of iſlanders in general, ſays of them: "It is among theſe "people that we trace the origin of that multitude of ſingular in- "ſtitutions that retard the progreſs of population. Anthropophagy, "the caſtration of males, the infibulation of females, late mar- "riages, the conſecration of virginity, the approbation of celibacy, "the puniſhments exerciſed againſt girls who become mothers at "too early an age[a]," &c. Theſe cuſtoms, cauſed by a ſuperabundance of population in iſlands, have been carried, he ſays, to the continents, where philoſophers of our days are ſtill employed to inveſtigate the reaſon of them. The Abbé does not ſeem to be aware, that a ſavage tribe in America, ſurrounded by enemies, or a civilized and populous nation, hemmed in by others in the ſame ſtate, is in many reſpects in a ſimilar ſituation. Though the barriers to a further increaſe of population be not ſo well defined, and ſo open to common obſervation, on continents, as on iſlands, yet they ſtill preſent obſtacles that are nearly as inſurmountable: and the emigrant, impatient of the diſtreſſes which he felt in his own country, is by no means ſecure of finding relief in another. There is probably no iſland yet known, the produce of which could not be further increaſed. This is all that can be ſaid of the whole earth. Both are peopled up to their actual produce. And the whole earth is in this reſpect like an iſland. But as the bounds to the

[a] Raynal, Hiſt. des Indes, vol. ii. liv. iii. p. 3. 10 vols. 8vo. 1795.

number

number of people on iſlands, particularly when they are of ſmall extent, are ſo narrow, and ſo diſtinctly marked, that every perſon muſt ſee and acknowlege them, an inquiry into the checks to population on thoſe of which we have the moſt authentic accounts may perhaps tend conſiderably to illuſtrate the preſent ſubject. The queſtion that is aſked in captain Cook's firſt voyage, with reſpect to the thinly ſcattered ſavages of New Holland, "By what means "the inhabitants of this country are reduced to ſuch a number as it "can ſubſiſt[a]?" may be aſked with equal propriety of the moſt populous iſlands in the South Sea, or of the beſt peopled countries in Europe and Aſia. The queſtion, applied generally, appears to me to be highly curious, and to lead to the elucidation of ſome of the moſt obſcure, yet important points, in the hiſtory of human ſociety. I cannot ſo clearly and conciſely deſcribe the preciſe aim of the firſt part of the preſent work, as by ſaying, that it is an endeavour to anſwer this queſtion ſo applied.

Of the large iſlands of New Guinea, New Britain, New Caledonia, and the New Hebrides, little is known with certainty. The ſtate of ſociety in them is probably very ſimilar to that which prevails among many of the ſavage nations of America. They appear to be inhabited by a number of different tribes who are engaged in frequent hoſtilities with each other. The chiefs have little authority; and private property being in conſequence inſecure, proviſions have been rarely found on them in abundance[b]. With the large iſland of New Zealand we are better acquainted; but not in a manner to give us a favourable impreſſion of the ſtate of ſociety among its inhabitants. The picture of it drawn by captain Cook in his three different voyages, contains ſome of the darkeſt ſhades that are any where to be met with in the hiſtory of human nature.

[a] Cook's Firſt Voyage, vol. iii. p. 240. 4to.

[b] See the different accounts of New Guinea and New Britain, in the *Hiſtoire des Navigations aux terres Auſtrales*; and of New Caledonia and the New Hebrides in Cook's Second Voyage, vol. ii. b. iii.

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The ſtate of perpetual hoſtility in which the different tribes of theſe people live with each other, ſeems to be even more ſtriking than among the ſavages of any part of America[a]; and their cuſtom of eating human fleſh, and even their reliſh for that kind of food, are eſtabliſhed beyond a poſſibility of doubt[b]. Captain Cook, who is by no means inclined to exaggerate the vices of ſavage life, ſays of the natives in the neighbourhood of Queen Charlotte's Sound, "If I "had followed the advice of all our pretended friends, I might "have extirpated the whole race; for the people of each hamlet "or village, by turns, applied to me to deſtroy the other. One "would have thought it almoſt impoſſible that ſo ſtriking a proof "of the divided ſtate in which theſe miſerable people live, could "have been aſſigned[c]." And in the ſame chapter further on, he ſays, "From my own obſervations, and the information of Tawei-"harooa, it appears to me, that the New Zealanders muſt live "under perpetual apprehenſions of being deſtroyed by each other; "there being few of their tribes that have not, as they think, "ſuſtained wrongs from ſome other tribes, which they are con-"tinually upon the watch to revenge. And perhaps the deſire of "a good meal may be no ſmall incitement.****Their method of "executing their horrible deſigns, is by ſtealing upon the ad-"verſe party in the night; and if they find them unguarded "(which, however, I believe is very ſeldom the caſe) they kill "every one indiſcriminately, not even ſparing the women and "children. When the maſſacre is completed, they either feaſt "and gorge themſelves on the ſpot, or carry off as many of the "dead bodies as they can, and devour them at home with acts of "brutality too ſhocking to be deſcribed.****To give quarter, or to "take priſoners, makes no part of the military law, ſo that the van-

[a] Cook's Firſt Voyage, vol. ii. p. 345. Second Voyage, vol i. p. 101. Third Voyage, vol. i. p. 161, &c. [b] Second Voyage, vol. i. p. 246. [c] Third Voyage, vol. i. p. 124.

"quiſhed can only ſave their lives by flight. This perpetual ſtate "of war, and deſtructive method of conducting it, operates ſo "ſtrongly in producing habitual circumſpection, that one hardly "ever finds a New Zealander off his guard, either by night or by "day[a]."

As theſe obſervations occur in the laſt voyage, in which, the errors of former accounts would have been corrected, and as a conſtant ſtate of warfare is here repreſented as prevailing to ſuch a degree, that it may be conſidered as the principal check to the population of New Zealand, little need be added on this ſubject. We are not informed whether any cuſtoms are practiſed by the women unfavourable to population. If ſuch be known, they are probably never reſorted to, except in times of great diſtreſs; as each tribe will naturally wiſh to increaſe the number of its members, in order to give itſelf greater power of attack and defence. But the vagabond life which the women of the ſouthern iſland lead, and the conſtant ſtate of alarm in which they live, being obliged to travel and work with arms in their hands[b], muſt undoubtedly be very unfavourable to geſtation, and tend greatly to prevent large families.

Yet, powerful as theſe checks to population are, it appears, from the recurrence of ſeaſons of ſcarcity, that they ſeldom repreſs the number of people below the average means of ſubſiſtence. "That "ſuch ſeaſons there are (Captain Cook ſays) our obſervations leave "us no room to doubt[c]." Fiſh is a principal part of their food, which, being only to be procured on the ſea coaſt, and at certain times[d], muſt always be conſidered as a precarious reſource. It muſt be extremely difficult to dry and preſerve any conſiderable ſtores in a ſtate of ſociety ſubject to ſuch conſtant alarms; particularly, as we may ſuppoſe, that the bays and creeks moſt abounding in fiſh would moſt frequently be the ſubject of obſtinate conteſt, to

[a] Cook's Third Voy. vol. i. p. 137. [b] Id. Second Voy. vol. i. p. 127. [c] Id. Firſt Voy. vol. iii. p. 66. [d] Id. p. 43.

people who were wandering in ſearch of food [a]. The vegetable productions are, the fern root, yams, clams, and potatoes [b]. The three laſt are raiſed by cultivation, and are ſeldom found on the ſouthern iſland, where agriculture is but little known [c]. On the occaſional failure of theſe ſcanty reſources from unfavourable ſeaſons, it may be imagined that the diſtreſs muſt be dreadful. At ſuch periods it does not ſeem improbable, that the deſire of a good meal ſhould give additional force to the deſire of revenge, and that they ſhould be "perpetually deſtroying each other by violence, as the only alter-"native of periſhing by hunger [d]."

If we turn our eyes from the thinly ſcattered inhabitants of New Zealand, to the crowded ſhores of Otaheite and the Society Iſlands, a different ſcene opens to our view. All apprehenſion of dearth ſeems at firſt ſight to be baniſhed from a country that is deſcribed to be fruitful as the garden of the Heſperides [e]. But this firſt impreſſion would be immediately corrected by a moment's reflection. Happineſs and plenty have always been conſidered as the moſt powerful cauſes of increaſe. In a delightful climate, where few diſeaſes are known, and the women are condemned to no ſevere fatigues, why ſhould not theſe cauſes operate with a force unparalleled in leſs favourable regions? Yet, if they did, where could the population find room and food in ſuch circumſcribed limits? If the numbers in Otaheite, not 40 leagues in circuit, ſurpriſed Captain Cook, when he calculated them at two hundred and four thouſand [f], where could they be diſpoſed of in a ſingle century, when they would amount to above three millions, ſuppoſing them to double their numbers every twenty-five years [g]. Each iſland of the

[a] Cook's Third Voy. vol. i. p. 157. [b] Id. Firſt Voy. vol. iii. p. 43.
[c] Id. Firſt Voy. vol. ii. p. 405. [d] Id. Firſt Voy. vol. iii. p. 45.
[e] Miſſionary Voy. Appendix, p. 347. [f] Cook's Second Voy. vol. i. p. 349.
[g] I feel very little doubt that this rate of increaſe is much ſlower than would really take place, ſuppoſing every check to be removed. If Otaheite, with its preſent produce,

the group would be in a ſimilar ſituation. The removal from one to another, would be a change of place, but not a change of the ſpecies of diſtreſs. Effectual emigration, or effectual importation, would be utterly excluded, from the ſituation of the iſlands, and the ſtate of navigation among their inhabitants.

The difficulty, here, is reduced to ſo narrow a compaſs, is ſo clear, preciſe, and forcible, that we cannot eſcape from it. It cannot be anſwered in the uſual vague and inconſiderate manner, by talking of emigration, and further cultivation. In the preſent inſtance we cannot but acknowledge, that the one is impoſſible, and the other glaringly inadequate. The fulleſt conviction muſt ſtare us in the face, that the people on this group of iſlands could not continue to double their numbers every twenty-five years; and before we proceed to inquire into the ſtate of ſociety on them, we muſt be perfectly certain, that, unleſs a perpetual miracle render the women barren, we ſhall be able to trace ſome very powerful checks to population in the habits of the people.

The ſucceſſive accounts that we have received of Otaheite and the neighbouring iſlands, leave us no room to doubt the exiſtence of the Earreoie ſocieties [a] which have juſtly occaſioned ſo much ſurpriſe among civilized nations. They have been ſo often deſcribed, that little more need be ſaid of them here, than that promiſcuous intercourſe and infanticide appear to be their fundamental laws. They conſiſt excluſively of the higher claſſes; "and (according to "Mr. Anderſon [b]) ſo agreeable is this licentious plan of life to their "diſpoſition,

duce, were peopled only with an hundred perſons, the two ſexes in equal numbers, and each man conſtant to one woman, I cannot but think, that for five or ſix ſucceſſive periods, the increaſe would be more rapid than in any inſtance hitherto known, and that they would probably double their numbers in leſs than fifteen years.

[a] Cook's Firſt Voy. vol. ii. p. 207. & ſeq. Second Voy. vol. i. p. 352. Third Voy. vol. ii. p. 157. & ſeq. Miſſionary Voy. Appendix, p. 346. 4to.

[b] Mr. Anderſon acted in the capacity of naturaliſt and ſurgeon in Cook's laſt voyage. Captain Cook and all the officers of the expedition ſeem to have had a very high opinion

" diſpoſition, that the moſt beautiful of both ſexes thus commonly " ſpend their youthful days, habituated to the practice of enormities " that would diſgrace the moſt ſavage tribes.****When an Eareeoic " woman is delivered of a child, a piece of cloth dipped in water " is applied to the mouth and noſe which ſuffocates it [a]." Captain Cook obſerves, " It is certain, that theſe ſocieties greatly prevent " the increaſe of the ſuperior claſſes of people of which they are " compoſed [b]." Of the truth of this obſervation there can be no doubt.

Though no particular inſtitutions of the ſame nature have been found among the lower claſſes; yet the vices which form their moſt prominent features are but too generally ſpread. Infanticide is not confined to the Eareeoics. It is permitted to all; and as its prevalence, among the higher claſſes of the people, has removed from it all odium, or imputation of poverty, it is probably often adopted, rather as a faſhion, than a reſort of neceſſity, and appears to be practiſed familiarly and without reſerve.

It is a very juſt obſervation of Hume, that the permiſſion of infanticide generally contributes to increaſe the population of a country [c]. By removing the fears of too numerous a family, it encourages marriage, and the powerful yearnings of nature prevent parents from reſorting to ſo cruel an expedient, except in extreme caſes. The faſhion of the Eareeoic ſocieties in Otaheite and its neighbouring iſlands, may have made them an exception to this obſervation, and the cuſtom has probably here a contrary tendency.

The debauchery and promiſcuous intercourſe which prevail among the lower claſſes of people, though in ſome inſtances they may have been exaggerated, are eſtabliſhed to a great extent, on unqueſtionable authority. Captain Cook, in a profeſſed endeavour to reſcue

of his talents and accuracy of obſervation. His accounts therefore may be looked upon as of the firſt authority.

[a] Cook's Third Voy. vol. ii. p. 158, 159. [b] Id. Second Voy. vol. i. p. 352.
[c] Hume's Eſſays, vol. i. eſſay xi. p. 431. 8vo. 1764.

the women of Otaheite from a too general imputation of licentiouſneſs, acknowledges that there are more of this character here, than in other countries, making at the ſame time a remark of a moſt deciſive nature, by obſerving, that the women who thus conduct themſelves, do not in any reſpect lower their rank in ſociety, but mix indiſcriminately with thoſe of the moſt virtuous character [a].

The common marriages in Otaheite are without any other ceremony than a preſent, from the man to the parents of the girl. And this ſeems to be rather a bargain with them for permiſſion to try their daughter, than an abſolute contract for a wife. If the father ſhould think that he has not been ſufficiently paid for his daughter, he makes no ſcruple of forcing her to leave her friend, and to cohabit with another perſon who may be more liberal. The man is always at liberty to make a new choice. Should his conſort become pregnant, he may kill the child, and after that continue his connexion with the mother, or leave her, according to his pleaſure. It is only when he has adopted a child, and ſuffered it to live, that the parties are conſidered as in the marriage ſtate. A younger wife, however, may afterwards be joined to the firſt; but the changing of connexions is much more general than this plan, and is a thing ſo common, that they ſpeak of it with great indifference [b]. Libertinage before marriage, ſeems to be no objection to a union of this kind ultimately.

The checks to population from ſuch a ſtate of ſociety would alone appear ſufficient to counteract the effects of the moſt delightful climate and the moſt exuberant plenty. Yet theſe are not all. The wars between the inhabitants of the different iſlands, and their civil contentions among themſelves, are frequent, and ſometimes carried on in a very deſtructive manner [c]. Beſides the waſte of human life

[a] Cook's Second Voy. vol. i. p. 187. [b] Id. Third Voy. vol. ii. p. 157.
[c] Bouganville, Voy. autour du Monde, ch. iii. p. 217. Cook's Firſt Voy. vol. ii. p. 244. Miſſionary Voy. p. 224.

in the field of battle, the conquerors generally ravage the enemy's territory, kill or carry off the hogs and poultry, and reduce as much as poſſible the means of future ſubſiſtence. The iſland of Otaheite which, in the years 1767 and 1768, ſwarmed with hogs and fowls, was, in 1773, ſo ill ſupplied with theſe animals, that hardly any thing could induce the owners to part with them. This was attributed by Captain Cook principally to the wars which had taken place during that interval [a]. On Captain Vancouver's viſit to Otaheite in 1791, he found that moſt of his friends that he had left in 1777, were dead; that there had been many wars ſince that time, in ſome of which, the chiefs of the weſtern diſtricts of Otaheite had joined the enemy; and that the king had been for a conſiderable time completely worſted, and his own diſtricts entirely laid waſte. Moſt of the animals, plants, and herbs, which Captain Cook had left, had been deſtroyed by the ravages of war [b].

The human ſacrifices which are frequent in Otaheite, though alone ſufficient ſtrongly to fix the ſtain of barbariſm on the character of the natives, do not probably occur in ſuch conſiderable numbers as materially to affect the population of the country; and the diſeaſes, though they have been dreadfully increaſed by European contact, were before peculiarly lenient; and even for ſome time afterwards, were not marked by any extraordinary fatality [c].

The great checks to increaſe, appear to be the vices of promiſcuous intercourſe, infanticide, and war, each of theſe operating with very conſiderable force. Yet powerful in the prevention and deſtruction of life as theſe cauſes muſt be, they have not always kept down the population to the level of the means of ſubſiſtence. According to Mr. Anderſon, "Notwithſtanding the extreme fertility of the iſland, a famine frequently happens in which it is ſaid many periſh. Whether this be owing to the failure of ſome

[a] Cook's Second Voy. vol. i. p. 182, 183. [b] Vancouver's Voy. vol. i. b. i. c. 6. p. 98. 4to. [c] Cook's Third Voy. vol. ii. p. 148.

"ſeaſons,

"ſeaſons, to over-population, which muſt ſometimes almoſt neceſſarily happen, or wars, I have not been able to determine; though the truth of the fact may fairly be inferred from the great economy that they obſerve with reſpect to their food, even when there is plenty [a]." After a dinner with a chief at Ulietea, Captain Cook obſerved, that, when the company roſe, many of the common people ruſhed in, to pick up the crumbs which had fallen, and for which they ſearched the leaves very narrowly. Several people daily attended the ſhips, and aſſiſted the butchers for the ſake of the entrails of the hogs which were killed. In general, little ſeemed to fall to their ſhare except offals. "It muſt, however, be owned," Captain Cook ſays, "that they are exceedingly careful of every kind of proviſion, and waſte nothing that can be eaten by man, fleſh and fiſh eſpecially [b]."

From Mr. Anderſon's account, it appears, that a very ſmall portion of animal food falls to the lot of the lower claſs of people, and then, it is either fiſh, ſea-eggs, or other marine productions; for they ſeldom or never eat pork. The king or principal chief, is alone able to furniſh this luxury every day; and the inferior chiefs, according to their riches, once a week, fortnight, or month [c]. When the hogs and fowls have been diminiſhed by wars, or too great conſumption, a prohibition is laid upon theſe articles of food, which continues in force ſometimes for ſeveral months, or even for a year or two, during which time, of courſe, they multiply very faſt, and become again plentiful [d]. The common diet even of the Earecoies, who are among the principal people of the iſlands, is, according to Mr. Anderſon, made up of at leaſt nine tenths of vegetable food [e]. And, as a diſtinction of ranks is ſo ſtrongly marked, and the lives and property of the lower claſſes of people appear to depend abſolutely on the will of their chiefs, we may well imagine

[a] Cook's Third Voy. vol. ii. p. 153, 154. [b] Id. Second Voy. vol. i. p. 176. [c] Id. Third Voy. vol. ii. p. 154. [d] Id. p. 155. [e] Id. p. 148.

that

that theſe chiefs will often live in plenty while their vaſſals and ſervants are pinched with want.

From the late accounts of Otaheite, in the Miſſionary Voyage, it would appear, that the depopulating cauſes above enumerated, have operated with moſt extraordinary force ſince Captain Cook's laſt viſit. A rapid ſucceſſion of deſtructive wars, during a part of that interval, is taken notice of in the intermediate viſit of Captain Vancouver[a]; and, from the ſmall proportion of women remarked by the Miſſionaries[b], we may infer that a greater number of female infants had been deſtroyed than formerly. This ſcarcity of women would naturally increaſe the vice of promiſcuous intercourſe, and, aided by the ravages of European diſeaſes, ſtrike moſt effectually at the root of population[c].

It is probable that Captain Cook, from the data on which he founded his calculation, may have overrated the population of Otaheite, and perhaps the Miſſionaries have rated it too low[d]; but I have no doubt that the population has very conſiderably decreaſed ſince Captain Cook's viſit, from the different accounts that are given of the habits of the people, with regard to economy, at the different periods. Captain Cook and Mr. Anderſon agree in deſcribing their extreme carefulneſs of every kind of food; and Mr. Anderſon, apparently after a very attentive inveſtigation of the ſubject, mentions the frequent recurrence of famines. The Miſſionaries, on the contrary, though they ſtrongly notice the diſtreſs from this cauſe in the Friendly Iſlands and the Marqueſas, ſpeak of the productions of Otaheite as being in the greateſt profuſion; and obſerve, that, notwithſtanding the horrible waſte committed at feaſtings, and by the Eareeoie ſociety, want is ſeldom known[e].

It would appear from theſe accounts, that the population of Otaheite is at preſent repreſſed conſiderably below the average means of

[a] Vancouver's Voy. vol. i. b. i. c. 7. p. 137. p. 192, & 385.
[b] Miſſionary Voyage, p. 195. Appen. p. 385.
[c] Id. Appen. p. 347.
[d] Id. ch. xiii. p. 212.

ſubſiſtence,

ſubſiſtence, but it would be premature to conclude that it will continue long ſo. The variations in the ſtate of the iſland which were obſerved by Captain Cook, in his different viſits, appear to prove that there are marked oſcillations in its proſperity and population[a]. And this is exactly what we ſhould ſuppoſe from theory. We cannot imagine that the population of any of theſe iſlands has, for ages paſt, remained ſtationary at a fixed number, or that it can have been regularly increaſing, according to any rate, however ſlow. Great fluctuations muſt neceſſarily have taken place. Overpopulouſneſs would at all times increaſe the natural propenſity of ſavages to war; and the enmities occaſioned by aggreſſions of this kind, would continue to ſpread devaſtation, long after the original inconvenience, which might have prompted them, had ceaſed to be felt[b]. The diſtreſſes experienced from one or two unfavourable ſeaſons, operating on a crowded population, which was before living with the greateſt economy, and preſſing hard againſt the limits of its food, would, in ſuch a ſtate of ſociety, occaſion the more general prevalence of infanticide and promiſcuous intercourſe[c]; and theſe depopulating cauſes would, in the ſame manner, continue to act with increaſed force, for ſome time after the occaſion which had aggravated them was at an end. A change of habits to a certain degree, gradually produced by a change of circumſtances, would ſoon reſtore the population, which could not long be kept below its natural level, without the moſt extreme violence. How far European contact may operate in Otaheite with this extreme violence, and prevent it from recovering its former population, is a point which experience only can determine. But ſhould this be the caſe, I have no doubt that on tracing the cauſes of it, we ſhould find them to be aggravated vice and miſery.

[a] Cook's Second Voy. vol. i. p. 182, & ſeq. & 346.
[b] Miſſionary Voy. p. 225.
[c] I hope I may never be miſunderſtood with regard to ſome of theſe preventive cauſes of overpopulation, and be ſuppoſed to imply the ſlighteſt approbation of them, merely becauſe I relate their effects. A cauſe which may prevent any particular evil may be beyond all compariſon worſe than the evil itſelf.

Of the other islands in the Pacific Ocean we have a less intimate knowledge than of Otaheite; but our information is sufficient to assure us, that the state of society in all the principal groups of these islands is, in most respects, extremely similar. Among the Friendly and Sandwich islanders, the same feudal system, and feudal turbulence, the same extraordinary power of the chiefs, and degraded state of the lower orders of society, and nearly the same promiscuous intercourse among a great part of the people, have been found to prevail, as at Otaheite.

In the Friendly Islands, though the power of the king was said to be unlimited, and the life and property of the subject at his disposal; yet it appeared, that some of the other chiefs acted like petty sovereigns, and frequently thwarted his measures, of which he often complained. "But however independent (Captain Cook says) on "the despotic power of the king the great men may be, we saw in- "stances enough to prove, that the lower orders of people have no "property nor safety for their persons, but at the will of the chiefs, "to whom they respectively belong[a]." The chiefs often beat the inferior people most unmercifully[b], and when any of them were caught in a theft on board the ships, their masters, far from interceding for them, would often advise the killing of them[c], which, as the chiefs themselves appeared to have no great horror of the crime of theft, could only arise from their considering the lives of these poor people as absolutely of no value.

Captain Cook, in his first visit to the Sandwich Islands, had reason to think that external wars, and internal commotions, were extremely frequent among the natives[d]. And Captain Vancouver, in his later account, strongly notices the dreadful devastations in many of the islands from these causes. Incessant contentions had occasioned alterations in the different governments since Captain Cook's visit.

[a] Cook's Third Voy. vol. i. p. 406. [b] p. 232. [c] p. 233.
[d] Id. vol. ii. p. 247.

Only

Only one chief of all that were known at that time was living; and, on inquiry, it appeared that few had died a natural death, most of them having been killed in these unhappy contests[a]. The power of the chiefs over the inferior classes of the people in the Sandwich Islands appears to be absolute. The people, on the other hand, pay them the most implicit obedience; and this state of servility has manifestly a great effect in debasing both their minds and bodies[b]. The gradations of rank seem to be even more strongly marked here, than in the other islands, as the chiefs of higher rank behave to those who are lower in this scale in the most haughty and oppressive manner[c].

It is not known that, either in the Friendly, or Sandwich Islands, infanticide is practised, or that any institutions are established similar to the Earecoie societies in Otaheite; but it seems to be stated on unquestionable authority, that prostitution is extensively diffused, and prevails to a great degree among the lower classes of women[d], which must always operate as a most powerful check to population. It seems highly probable, that the toutous, or servants, who spend the greatest part of their time in attendance upon the chiefs[e], do not often marry; and it is evident that the polygamy allowed to the superior people, must tend greatly to encourage and aggravate the vice of promiscuous intercourse among the inferior classes.

Were it an established fact, that in the more fertile islands of the Pacific Ocean, very little, or nothing, was suffered from poverty and want of food; as we could not expect to find among savages in such climates any great degree of virtuous restraint, the theory on the subject would naturally lead us to conclude, that vice, including war, was the principal check to their population. The accounts which we have of these islands strongly confirm this conclusion. In the

[a] Vancouver, vol. i. b. ii. c. ii. p. 187, 188. [b] Cook's Third Voyage, vol. iii. p. 157. [c] Ibid. [d] Cook's Third Voy. vol. i. p. 401. Vol. ii. p. 543. Vol. iii. p. 130. Missionary Voy. p. 270. [e] Cook's Third Voy. vol. i. p. 394.

three great groups of iſlands which have been noticed, vice appears to be a moſt prominent feature. In Eaſter Iſland, from the great diſproportion of the males to the females [a], it can ſcarcely be doubted that infanticide prevails, though the fact may not have come to the knowledge of any of our navigators. Perouſe ſeemed to think that the women in each diſtrict were common property to the men of that diſtrict [b], though the numbers of children which he ſaw [c], would rather tend to contradict this opinion. The fluctuations in the population of Eaſter Iſland appear to have been very conſiderable, ſince its firſt diſcovery by Roggewein in 1722, though it cannot have been much affected by European intercourſe. From the deſcription of Perouſe, it appeared, at the time of his viſit, to be recovering its population, which had been in a very low ſtate, probably either from drought, civil diſſenſions, or the prevalence in an extreme degree of infanticide, and promiſcuous intercourſe. When Captain Cook viſited it in his ſecond voyage, he calculated the population at ſix or ſeven hundred [d], Perouſe at two thouſand [e]; and, from the number of children which he obſerved, and the number of new houſes that were building, he conceived that the population was on the increaſe [f].

In the Marianne Iſlands, according to Pere Gobien, a very great number [g] of the young men remained unmarried, lived like the members of the Eareeoie ſociety in Otaheite, and were diſtinguiſhed by a ſimilar name [h]. In the iſland of Formoſa, it is ſaid, that the women were not allowed to bring children into the world before the age of thirty-five. If they were with child prior to that period, an abortion was effected by the prieſteſs, and till the huſband was forty

[a] Cook's Second Voy. vol. i. p. 289. Voyage de Perouſe, c. iv. p. 323. c. v. p. 336. 4to. 1794. [b] Perouſe, c. iv. p. 326. c. v. p. 336.
[c] Perouſe, c. v. p. 336. [d] Cook's Second Voy. vol. i. p. 289.
[e] Perouſe, c. v. p. 336. [f] Ibid. [g] Une infinité de jeunes gens. Hiſt. des Navigations aux terres Auſtrales, vol. ii. p. 507. [h] Cook's Third Voyage, vol. ii. p. 158. note of the Editor.

years

years of age, the wife continued to live in her father's houſe, and was only ſeen by ſtealth [a].

The tranſient viſits that have been made to ſome other iſlands, and the imperfect accounts that we have of them, do not enable us to enter into any particular detail of their cuſtoms; but, from the general ſimilarity of theſe cuſtoms, as far as has been obſerved, we have reaſon to think, that, though they may not be marked by ſome of the more atrocious peculiarities which have been mentioned, vicious habits with reſpect to women, and wars, are the principal checks to their population.

Theſe, however, are not all. On the ſubject of the happy ſtate of plenty in which the natives of the South Sea iſlands have been ſaid to live, I am inclined to think, that our imaginations have been carried beyond the truth, by the exuberant deſcriptions which have ſometimes been given of theſe delightful ſpots. The not unfrequent preſſure of want, even in Otaheite, mentioned in Captain Cook's laſt voyage, has undeceived us with regard to the moſt fertile of all theſe iſlands; and from the Miſſionary Voyage it appears, that at certain times of the year, when the bread fruit is out of ſeaſon, all ſuffer a temporary ſcarcity. At Oheitahoo, one of the Marqueſas, it amounted to hunger, and the very animals were pinched for want of food. At Tongataboo, the principal of the Friendly Iſlands, the chiefs, to ſe-

[a] Harris's Collection of Voyages, 2 vols. folio. edit. 1744. vol. i. p. 794. This relation is given by John Albert de Mandeſloe, a German traveller of ſome reputation for fidelity, though I believe, in this inſtance; he takes his account from the Dutch writers quoted by Monteſquieu, (Eſprit des Loix, liv. 23. ch. 17.) The authority is not perhaps ſufficient to eſtabliſh the exiſtence of ſo ſtrange a cuſtom, though I confeſs that it does not appear to me wholly improbable. In the ſame account, it is mentioned, that there is no difference of condition among theſe people, and that their wars are ſo bloodleſs, that the death of a ſingle perſon generally decides them. In a very healthy climate, where the habits of the people were favourable to population, and a community of goods was eſtabliſhed, as no individual would have reaſon to fear *particular poverty* from a large family, the government would be in a manner compelled to take upon itſelf the ſuppreſſion of the population by law; and as this would be the greateſt violation of every natural feeling, there cannot be a more forcible argument againſt a community of goods.

cure

cure plenty, changed their abodes to other iſlands[a], and at times many of the natives ſuffered much from want[b]. In the Sandwich Iſlands, long droughts ſometimes occur[c]; hogs and yams are often very ſcarce[d], and viſitors are received with an unwelcome auſterity very different from the profuſe benevolence of Otaheite. In New Caledonia, the inhabitants feed upon ſpiders[e], and are ſometimes reduced to eat great pieces of ſteatite to appeaſe the cravings of their hunger[f].

Theſe facts ſtrongly prove, that in whatever abundance the productions of theſe iſlands may be found at certain periods, or however they may be checked by ignorance, wars, and other cauſes, the average population, generally ſpeaking, preſſes hard againſt the limits of the average food. In a ſtate of ſociety, where the lives of the inferior orders of the people ſeem to be conſidered by their ſuperiors as abſolutely of no value, it is evident that we are very liable to be deceived with regard to the appearances of abundance; and we may eaſily conceive, that hogs and vegetables might be exchanged in great profuſion for European commodities by the principal proprietors, while their vaſſals and ſlaves were ſuffering ſeverely from want.

I cannot conclude this general review of that department of human ſociety, which has been claſſed under the name of ſavage life, without obſerving, that the only advantage in it above civilized life that I can diſcover, is the poſſeſſion of a greater degree of leiſure by the maſs of the people. There is leſs work to be done, and conſequently there is leſs labour. When we conſider the inceſſant toil to which the lower claſſes of ſociety in civilized life are condemned, this cannot but appear to us a ſtriking advantage; but it is probably overbalanced by greater diſadvantages. In all thoſe countries where proviſions are procured with facility, a moſt tyrannical diſtinction of

[a] Miſſionary Voy. Appen. p. 385. [b] Id. p. 270. [c] Vancouver's Voy. vol. ii. b. iii. c. viii. p. 230. [d] Id. c. vii. and viii. [e] Voyage in ſearch of Peroufe, ch. xiii. p. 420. Eng. tranſl. 4to. [f] Id. ch. xiii. p. 400.

rank

rank prevails. Blows, and violations of property, ſeem to be matters of courſe; and the lower claſſes of the people are in a ſtate of comparative degradation much below what is known in civilized nations.

In that part of ſavage life where a great degree of equality obtains, the difficulty of procuring food, and the hardſhips of inceſſant war, create a degree of labour not inferior to that which is exerted by the lower claſſes of the people in civilized ſociety, though much more unequally divided. But though we may compare the labour of theſe two claſſes of human ſociety, their privations and ſufferings will admit of no compariſon. Nothing appears to me to place this in ſo ſtriking a point of view, as the whole tenor of education among the ruder tribes of ſavages in America. Every thing that can contribute to teach the moſt unmoved patience under the ſevereſt pains and misfortunes, every thing that tends to harden the heart, and narrow all the ſources of ſympathy, is moſt ſeduloufly inculcated in the ſavage. The civilized man, on the contrary, though he may be adviſed to bear evil with patience when it comes, is not inſtructed to be always expecting it. Other virtues are to be called into action beſides fortitude. He is taught to feel for his neighbour, or even his enemy in diſtreſs; to encourage and expand his ſocial affections; and in general, to enlarge the ſphere of pleaſurable emotions. The obvious inference from theſe two different modes of education is, that the civilized man hopes to enjoy, the ſavage expects only to ſuffer.

The prepoſterous ſyſtem of Spartan diſcipline, and that unnatural abſorption of every private feeling in concern for the public, which has ſometimes been ſo abſurdly admired, could never have exiſted but among a people, expoſed to perpetual hardſhips and privations from inceſſant war, and in a ſtate, under the conſtant fear of dreadful reverſes of fortune. Inſtead of conſidering theſe phenomena as indicating any peculiar tendency to fortitude and patriotiſm in the diſpoſition of the Spartans, I ſhould merely conſider them as a ſtrong

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indication of the miſerable and almoſt ſavage ſtate of Sparta, and of Greece in general at that time. Like the commodities in a market, thoſe virtues will be produced in the greateſt quantity for which there is the greateſt demand; and where patience, under pain and privations, and extravagant patriotic ſacrifices, are the moſt called for, it is a melancholy indication of the miſery of the people, and the inſecurity of the ſtate.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

Of the Checks to Population among the ancient Inhabitants of the North of Europe.

A HISTORY of the early migrations and ſettlements of mankind, with the motives which prompted them, would illuſtrate in a ſtriking manner the conſtant tendency in the human race to increaſe beyond the means of ſubſiſtence. Without ſome general law of this nature, it would ſeem as if the world could never have been peopled. A ſtate of ſloth, and not of reſtleſſneſs and activity, ſeems evidently to be the natural ſtate of man; and this latter diſpoſition could not have been generated but by the ſtrong goad of neceſſity, though it might afterwards be continued by habit, and the new aſſociations that were formed from it, the ſpirit of enterprize, and the thirſt of martial glory.

We are told, that Abram and Lot had ſo great ſubſtance in cattle, that the land would not bear them both, that they might dwell together. There was ſtrife between their herdſmen. And Abram propoſed to Lot to ſeparate, and ſaid, "Is not the whole "land before thee? If thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go "to the right; if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to "the left[a]."

This ſimple obſervation and propoſal is a ſtriking illuſtration of that great ſpring of action which overſpread the whole earth with people, and in the progreſs of time, drove ſome of the leſs fortunate

[a] Geneſis, ch. xiii.

inhabitants of the globe, yielding to irreſiſtible preſſure, to ſeek a ſcanty ſubſiſtence in the burning deſerts of Aſia and Africa, and the frozen regions of Siberia and North America. The firſt migrations would naturally find no other obſtacles than the nature of the country; but when a conſiderable part of the earth had been peopled, though but thinly, the poſſeſſors of theſe diſtricts would not yield them to others without a ſtruggle; and the redundant inhabitants of any of the more central ſpots, could not find room for themſelves without expelling their neareſt neighbours, or at leaſt paſſing through their territories, which would neceſſarily give occaſion to frequent conteſts.

The middle latitudes of Europe and Aſia, ſeem to have been occupied at an early period of hiſtory, by nations of ſhepherds. Thucydides gave it as his opinion, that the civilized ſtates of Europe and Aſia, in his time, could not reſiſt the Scythians united. Yet a country in paſture cannot poſſibly ſupport ſo many inhabitants as a country in tillage; but what renders nations of ſhepherds ſo formidable, is the power which they poſſeſs of moving altogether, and the neceſſity they frequently feel of exerting this power in ſearch of freſh paſture for their herds. A tribe that is rich in cattle has an immediate plenty of food. Even the parent ſtock may be devoured in caſe of abſolute neceſſity. The women live in greater eaſe than among nations of hunters, and are conſequently more prolific. The men, bold in their united ſtrength, and confiding in their power of procuring paſture for their cattle by change of place, feel probably but few fears about providing for a family. Theſe combined cauſes ſoon produce their natural and invariable effect, an extended population. A more frequent and rapid change of place then becomes neceſſary. A wider and more extenſive territory is ſucceſſively occupied. A broader deſolation extends all around them. Want pinches the leſs fortunate members of the ſociety; and at length the impoſſibility of ſupporting ſuch a number together, becomes too evident to be reſiſted. Young ſcions are then puſhed out from the parent ſtock, and

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inſtructed to explore freſh regions, and to gain happier ſeats for themſelves by their ſwords.

"The world is all before them where to chuſe."

Reſtleſs from preſent diſtreſs, flushed with the hope of fairer proſpects, and animated with the ſpirit of hardy enterprize, theſe daring adventurers are likely to become formidable adverſaries to all who oppoſe them. The inhabitants of countries long ſettled, engaged in the peaceful occupations of trade and agriculture, would not often be able to reſiſt the energy of men acting under ſuch powerful motives of exertion. And the frequent conteſts with tribes in the ſame circumſtances with themſelves, would be ſo many ſtruggles for exiſtence, and would be fought with a deſperate courage, inſpired by the reflection, that death would be the puniſhment of defeat, and life the prize of victory.

In theſe ſavage conteſts, many tribes muſt have been utterly exterminated. Many probably periſhed by hardſhips and famine. Others, whoſe leading ſtar had given them a happier direction, became great and powerful tribes, and in their turn ſent off freſh adventurers in ſearch of other ſeats. Theſe would at firſt owe allegiance to their parent tribe; but in a ſhort time the ties that bound them would be little felt, and they would remain friends, or become enemies, according as their power, their ambition, or their convenience, might dictate.

The prodigious waſte of human life occaſioned by this perpetual ſtruggle for room and food, would be more than ſupplied by the mighty power of population, acting in ſome degree unſhackled from the conſtant habit of migration. A prevailing hope of bettering their condition by change of place, a conſtant expectation of plunder, a power, even, if diſtreſſed, of ſelling their children as ſlaves, added to the natural careleſneſs of the Barbaric character, would all conſpire to raiſe a population which would remain to be repreſſed afterwards by famine, or war.

The tribes that poſſeſſed themſelves of the more fruitful regions, though they might win them and maintain them by continual battles, rapidly increaſed in number and power, from the increaſed means of ſubſiſtence; till at length the whole territory, from the confines of China to the ſhores of the Baltic, was peopled by a various race of barbarians, brave, robuſt, and enterpriſing, enured to hardſhips, and delighting in war [a]. While the different fixed governments of Europe and Aſia, by ſuperior population and ſuperior ſkill, were able to oppoſe an impenetrable barrier to their deſtroying hordes, they waſted their ſuperfluous numbers in conteſts with each other; but the moment that the weakneſs of the ſettled governments, or the caſual union of many of theſe wandering tribes, gave them the aſcendant in power, the ſtorm diſcharged itſelf on the faireſt provinces of the earth; and China, Perſia, Egypt, and Italy, were overwhelmed at different periods in this flood of barbariſm. Theſe remarks are ſtrongly exemplified in the fall of the Roman empire. The ſhepherds of the north of Europe were long held in check by the vigour of the Roman arms, and the terror of the Roman name. The formidable irruption of the Cimbri in ſearch of new ſettlements, though ſignalized by the deſtruction of five conſular armies, was at length arreſted in its victorious career by Marius; and the barbarians were taught to repent their raſhneſs by the almoſt complete extermination of this powerful colony [b]. The names of Julius Cæſar, of Druſus, Tiberius, and Germanicus, impreſſed on their minds by the ſlaughter of their countrymen, continued to inſpire them with a fear of encroaching on the Roman territory.

[a] The various branchings, diviſions, and conteſts, of the great Tartar nation are curiouſly deſcribed in the genealogical hiſtory of the Tartars by the Khan Abul Ghazi; (tranſlated into Engliſh from the French, with additions, in 2 vols. 8vo.) but the misfortune of all hiſtory is, that while the motives of a few princes and leaders, in their various projects of ambition, are ſometimes detailed with accuracy, the motives which often crowd their ſtandards with willing followers, are totally overlooked.

[b] Tacitus de Moribus Germanorum, f. 37.

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But they were rather triumphed over, than vanquiſhed [a]; and though the armies, or colonies, which they ſent forth, were either cut off, or forced back into their original ſeats, the vigour of the great German nation remained unimpaired, and ready to pour forth her hardy ſons in conſtant ſucceſſion, wherever they could force an opening for themſelves by their ſwords. The feeble reigns of Decius, Gallus, Æmilianus, Valerian, and Gallienus, afforded ſuch an opening, and were in conſequence marked by a general irruption of barbarians. The Goths, who were ſuppoſed to have migrated in the courſe of ſome years from Scandinavia to the Euxine, were bribed to withdraw their victorious troops, by an annual tribute. But no ſooner was the dangerous ſecret of the wealth and weakneſs of the Roman empire thus revealed to the world, than new ſwarms of barbarians ſpread devaſtation through the frontier provinces, and terror as far as the gates of Rome [b]. The Franks, the Allemanni, the Goths, and adventurers of leſs conſiderable tribes, comprehended under theſe general appellations, poured like a torrent on different parts of the empire. Rapine and oppreſſion deſtroyed the produce of the preſent, and the hope of future harveſts. A long and general famine was followed by a waſting plague, which for fifteen years ravaged every city and province of the Roman empire; and, judging from the mortality in ſome ſpots, it was conjectured, that in a few years, war, peſtilence, and famine, had conſumed the moiety of the human ſpecies [c]. Yet the tide of emigration ſtill continued at intervals to roll impetuouſly from the north, and the ſucceſſion of martial princes, who repaired the misfortunes of their predeceſſors, and propt the falling fate of the empire, had to accompliſh the labours of Hercules in freeing the Roman territory from theſe barbarous invaders. The Goths, who, in the year 250, and the following years, ravaged the empire both by ſea and land, with various

[a] Tacitus de Moribus Germanorum, f. 37. [b] Gibbon's Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, vol. i. c. x. p. 407. et ſeq. 8vo. edit. 1783. [c] Id. vol. i. c. x. p. 455, 456.

ſucceſs,

ſucceſs, but in the end, with the almoſt total loſs of their adventurous bands [a], in the year 269, ſent out an emigration of immenſe numbers with their wives and families for the purpoſes of ſettlement [b]. This formidable body, which was ſaid to conſiſt at firſt of 320,000 barbarians [c], was ultimately deſtroyed and diſperſed by the vigour and wiſdom of the emperor Claudius. His ſucceſſor, Aurelian, encountered and vanquiſhed new hoſts of the ſame name that had quitted their ſettlements in the Ukraine; but one of the implied conditions of the peace, was, that he ſhould withdraw the Roman forces from Dacia, and relinquiſh this great province to the Goths and Vandals [d]. A new and moſt formidable invaſion of the Allemanni threatened ſoon after to ſack the miſtreſs of the world, and three great and bloody battles were fought by Aurelian before this deſtroying hoſt could be exterminated, and Italy be delivered from its ravages [e].

The ſtrength of Aurelian had cruſhed on every ſide the enemies of Rome. After his death, they ſeemed to revive with an increaſe of fury and numbers. They were again vanquiſhed on all ſides by the active vigour of Probus. The deliverance of Gaul alone from German invaders is reported to have coſt the lives of four hundred thouſand barbarians [f]. The victorious emperor purſued his ſucceſſes into Germany itſelf, and the princes of the country, aſtoniſhed at his preſence, and diſmayed and exhauſted by the ill ſucceſs of their laſt emigration, ſubmitted to any terms that the conquerors might impoſe [g]. Probus, and afterwards Diocletian [h], adopted the plan of recruiting the exhauſted provinces of the empire, by granting lands to the fugitive or captive barbarians, and diſpoſing of their ſuperfluous numbers where they might be the leaſt likely to be dangerous to the ſtate; but ſuch colonizations were an inſufficient vent for the popu-

[a] Gibbon, vol. i. c. x. p. 431. [b] Id. vol. ii. c. xi. p. 13. [c] Id. p. 11. [d] Id. p. 19. A. D. 270. [e] Id. p. 26. [f] Id. vol. ii. c. xii. p. 75. [g] Id. p. 79. A. D. 277. [h] Id. c. xiii. p. 132. A. D. 296.

lation

lation of the north, and the ardent temper of the barbarians would not always bend to the ſlow labours of agriculture [a]. During the vigorous reign of Diocletian, unable to make an effectual impreſſion on the Roman frontiers, the Goths, the Vandals, the Gepidæ, the Burgundians, and the Allemanni, waſted each other's ſtrength by mutual hoſtilities, while the ſubjects of the empire enjoyed the bloody ſpectacle, conſcious, that whoever vanquiſhed, they vanquiſhed the enemies of Rome [b].

Under the reign of Conſtantine the Goths were again formidable. Their ſtrength had been reſtored by a long peace, and a new generation had ariſen, who no longer remembered the misfortunes of ancient days [c]. In two ſucceſſive wars great numbers of them were ſlain. Vanquiſhed on every ſide, they were driven into the mountains; and, in the courſe of a ſevere campaign, above a hundred thouſand were computed to have periſhed by cold and hunger [d]. Conſtantine adopted the plan of Probus and his ſucceſſors, in granting lands to thoſe ſuppliant barbarians who were expelled from their own country. Towards the end of his reign, a competent portion in the provinces of Pannonia, Thrace, Macedonia, and Italy, was aſſigned for the habitation and ſubſiſtence of three hundred thouſand Sarmatians [e].

The warlike Julian had to encounter and vanquiſh new ſwarms of Franks and Allemanni, that, emigrating from their German foreſts during the civil wars of Conſtantine, ſettled in different parts of Gaul, and made the ſcene of their devaſtations three times more extenſive than that of their conqueſts [f]. Deſtroyed and repulſed on every ſide, they were purſued, in five expeditions, into their own country [g]; but Julian had conquered, as ſoon as he had penetrated into Germany; and in the midſt of that mighty hive which had ſent

[a] Gibbon, vol. ii. c. xii. p. 84. [b] Id. c. xiii. p. 130. [c] Id. c. xiv. p. 254. A. D. 322. [d] Id. vol. iii. c. xviii. p. 125. A. D. 332. [e] Id. p. 127. [f] Id. vol. iii. c. xix. p. 215. A. D. 356. [g] Id. p. 228. and vol. iv. c. xxii. p. 17. from A. D. 357 to 359.

out

out ſuch ſwarms of people, as to keep the Roman world in perpetual dread, the principal obſtacles to his progreſs were, almoſt impaſſable roads, and vaſt unpeopled foreſts [a].

Though thus ſubdued and proſtrated by the victorious arms of Julian, this hydra-headed monſter roſe again after a few years; and the firmneſs, vigilance, and powerful genius of Valentinian were fully called into action, in protecting his dominions from the different irruptions of the Allemanni, the Burgundians, the Saxons, the Goths, the Quadi, and Sarmatians [b].

The fate of Rome was at length determined by an irreſiſtible emigration of the Huns from the eaſt and north, which precipitated on the empire the whole body of the Goths [c]; and the continuance of this powerful preſſure on the nations of Germany, ſeemed to prompt them to the reſolution, of abandoning to the fugitives of Sarmatia their woods and moraſſes, or at leaſt, of diſcharging their ſuperfluous numbers on the provinces of the Roman empire [d]. An emigration of four hundred thouſand perſons iſſued from the ſame coaſt of the Baltic, which had poured forth the myriads of Cimbri and Teutones during the vigour of the Republic [e]. When this hoſt was deſtroyed by war and famine, other adventurers ſucceeded. The Suevi, the Vandals, the Alani, the Burgundians, paſſed the Rhine never more to retreat [f]. The conquerors who firſt ſettled, were expelled or exterminated by new invaders. Clouds of barbarians ſeemed to collect from all parts of the northern hemiſphere. Gathering freſh darkneſs and terror as they rolled on, the congregated bodies at length obſcured the ſun of Italy, and ſunk the weſtern world in night.

In two centuries from the flight of the Goths acroſs the Danube, barbarians of various names and lineage had plundered and taken

[a] Gibbon, vol. iv. c. xxii. p. 17. and vol. iii. c. xix. p. 229. [b] Id. vol. iv. c. xxv. from A. D. 364 to 375. [c] Id. vol iv. c. xxvi. p. 382. et ſeq. A. D. 376. [d] Id. vol. v. c. xxx. p. 213. [e] Id. p. 214. A. D. 406. [f] Id. p. 224.

poſſeſſion

poſſeſſion of Thrace, Pannonia, Gaul, Britain, Spain, Africa, and Italy [a]. The moſt horrible devaſtations, and an incredible deſtruction of the human ſpecies, accompanied theſe rapid conqueſts; and famine and peſtilence, which always march in the train of war, when it ravages with ſuch inconſiderate cruelty, raged in every part of Europe. The hiſtorians of the times, who beheld theſe ſcenes of deſolation, labour, and are at a loſs for expreſſions, to deſcribe them; but beyond the power of language, the numbers and the deſtructive violence of theſe barbarous invaders were evinced by the total change which took place in the ſtate of Europe [b]. Theſe tremendous effects, ſo long, and ſo deeply felt, throughout the faireſt portions of the earth, may be traced to the ſimple cauſe of the ſuperiority of the power of population to the means of ſubſiſtence.

Machiavel, in the beginning of his hiſtory of Florence, ſays, "The "people who inhabit the northern parts that lie between the Rhine "and the Danube, living in a healthful and prolific climate, often "increaſe to ſuch a degree, that vaſt numbers of them are forced "to leave their native country, and go in ſearch of new habita- "tions. When any one of thoſe provinces begins to grow too popu- "lous, and wants to diſburthen itſelf, the following method is ob- "ſerved. In the firſt place, it is divided into three parts, in each of "which, there is an equal portion of the nobility and commonalty, "the rich and the poor. After this they caſt lots, and that divi- "ſion on which the lot falls, quits the country and goes to ſeek "its fortune, leaving the other two more room and liberty to "enjoy their poſſeſſions at home. Theſe emigrations proved the "deſtruction of the Roman empire [c]." Gibbon is of opinion that Machiavel has repreſented theſe emigrations too much as regular and concerted meaſures [d]; but I think it highly probable that he has not

[a] Robertſon's Charles V. vol. i. ſect. i. p. 7. 8vo. 1782. [b] Id. p. 10, 11, 12.
[c] Iſtorie Fiorentine Machiavelli, l. i. p. 1, 2.
[d] Gibbon, vol. i. c. ix. p. 360. note. Paul Diaconus, from whom it is ſuppoſed

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not erred much in this reſpect, and that it was a foreſight of the frequent neceſſity of thus diſcharging their redundant population, which gave occaſion to that law among the Germans, taken notice of by Cæſar and Tacitus, of not permitting their cultivated lands to remain longer than a year under the ſame poſſeſſors [a]. The reaſons which Cæſar mentions as being aſſigned for this cuſtom, ſeem to be hardly adequate; but if we add to them, the proſpect of emigration, in the manner deſcribed by Machiavel, the cuſtom will appear to be highly uſeful, and a double weight will be given to one of the reaſons that Cæſar mentions, namely, leſt they ſhould be led, by being accuſtomed to one ſpot, to exchange the toils of war for the buſineſs of agriculture [b].

Gibbon very juſtly rejects, with Hume and Robertſon, the improbable ſuppoſition, that the inhabitants of the north were far more numerous formerly, than at preſent [c]; but he thinks himſelf obliged at the ſame time to deny the ſtrong tendency to increaſe in the northern nations [d], as if the two facts were neceſſarily connected. But a careful diſtinction ſhould always be made, between a redundant population, and a population actually great. The Highlands of

that Machiavel has taken this deſcription, writes thus: Septentrionalis plaga quantò magis ab æſtu ſolis remota eſt, et nivali frigore gelida, tantò ſalubrior corporibus hominum et propagandis gentibus magis coaptata. Sicut e contrario, omnis meridiana regio, quò ſolis eſt fervori vicinior eo morbis eſt abundantior, et educandis minus apta mortalibus *****. Multæque quoque ex eâ, eo quod tantas mortalium turmas germinat, quantas alere vix ſufficit, ſæpe gentes egreſſæ ſunt, quæ non ſolum partes Aſiæ, ſed etiam maxime ſibi contiguam Europam afflixere. (De geſtis Longobardorum, l. i. c. i.)

Intra hanc ergo conſtituti populi, dum in tantam multitudinem pullulaſſent, ut jam ſimul habitare non valerent, in tres (ut fertur) partes omnem catervam dividentes, quænam ex illis patriam eſſet relictura, ut novas ſedes exquirerent, ſorte diſquirunt. Igitur ea pars, cui ſors dederit genitale ſolum excedere, exteraque arva ſectari, conſtitutis ſupra ſe duobus ducibus, Ibore ſcilicet, et Agione, qui et Germani erant, et juvenili ætate floridi, ceteriſque preſtantiores, ad exquirandas quas poſſint incolere terras, ſedeſque ſtatuere, valedicentes ſuis ſimul et patriæ iter arripiunt. (c. ii.)

[a] De bello Gallico, vi. 22. De moribus Germ. ſ. xxvi.
[b] De bello Gallico vi. 22. [c] Gibbon, vol. i. c. ix. p. 361. [d] Id. p. 348.

Scotland

Scotland are probably more redundant in population than any other part of Great Britain; and though it would be admitting a palpable abſurdity, to allow that the north of Europe, covered in early ages with immenſe foreſts, and inhabited by a race of people who ſupported themſelves principally by their herds and flocks [a], was more populous in thoſe times than in its preſent ſtate; yet the facts detailed in the Decline and Fall of the Roman empire, or even the very ſlight ſketch of them that I have given, cannot rationally be accounted for, without the ſuppoſition of a moſt powerful tendency in theſe people to increaſe, and to repair their repeated loſſes by the prolific power of nature.

From the firſt irruption of the Cimbri, to the final extinction of the weſtern empire, the efforts of the German nations to colonize or plunder were unceaſing [b]. The numbers that were cut off during this period by war and famine were almoſt incalculable, and ſuch as could not poſſibly have been ſupported with undiminiſhed vigour by a country thinly peopled, unleſs the ſtream had been ſupplied by a ſpring of very extraordinary power.

Gibbon deſcribes the labours of Valentinian in ſecuring the Gallic frontier againſt the Germans, an enemy, he ſays, whoſe ſtrength was renewed by a ſtream of daring volunteers which inceſſantly flowed from the moſt diſtant tribes of the north [c]. An eaſy adoption of ſtrangers was probably a mode by which ſome of the German nations renewed their ſtrength ſo ſuddenly [d], after the moſt deſtructive defeats; but this explanation only removes the difficulty a little further off. It makes the earth reſt upon the tortoiſe; but does not tell us, on what the tortoiſe reſts. We may ſtill aſk, what northern reſervoir ſupplied this inceſſant ſtream of daring adventurers?

[a] Tacitus de moribus German. ſ. v. Cæſar de bell. Gall. vi. 22.
[b] Cæſar found in Gaul a moſt formidable colony under Arioviſtus, and a general dread prevailing that in a few years all the Germans would paſs the Rhine. De bell. Gall. i. 31.
[c] Gibbon, vol. iv. c. xxv. p. 283. [d] Ibid. note.

venturers? Monteſquieu's ſolution of the problem, will, I think, hardly be admitted. The ſwarms of barbarians which iſſued formerly from the north, appear no more, he ſays, at preſent; and the reaſon which he gives is, that the violences of the Romans had driven the people of the ſouth into the north. As long as this force continued, they remained there; but as ſoon as it was weakened, they ſpread themſelves again over every country.

The ſame phenomenon appeared after the conqueſts and tyrannies of Charlemagne, and the ſubſequent diſſolution of his empire; and if a prince, he ſays, in the preſent days were to make ſimilar ravages in Europe, the nations driven into the north, and reſting on the limits of the univerſe [a], would there make a ſtand, till the moment when they would inundate, or conquer, Europe a third time. In a note he obſerves, we ſee to what the famous queſtion is reduced—why the north is no longer ſo fully peopled as in former times?

If the famous queſtion, or rather the anſwer to it, be reduced to this, it is reduced to a miracle; for without ſome ſupernatural mode of obtaining food, how theſe collected nations could ſupport themſelves in ſuch barren regions, for ſo long a period, as during the vigour of the Roman empire, it is a little difficult to conceive; and one can hardly help ſmiling at the bold figure of theſe prodigious crowds making their laſt determined ſtand on the limits of the univerſe, and living, as we muſt ſuppoſe, with the moſt patient fortitude on air and ice for ſome hundreds of years, till they could return to their own homes, and reſume their uſual more ſubſtantial mode of ſubſiſtence.

The whole difficulty, however, is at once removed, if we apply to the German nations at that time, a fact, which is ſo generally known to have occurred in America, and ſuppoſe, that, when not

[a] Les nations adoſſées au limites de l'univers y tiendroient ferme. Grandeur et Decad. des Rom. c. xvi. p. 187.

checked

checked by wars and famine, they increaſed at a rate that would double their numbers in twenty-five or thirty years. The propriety, and even the neceſſity, of applying this rate of increaſe to the inhabitants of ancient Germany, will ſtrikingly appear from that moſt valuable picture of their manners which has been left us by Tacitus. He deſcribes them as not inhabiting cities, or even admitting of contiguous ſettlements. Every perſon ſurrounds his houſe with a vacant ſpace [a], a circumſtance, which beſides its beneficial effect as a ſecurity from fire, is ſtrongly calculated to prevent the generation, and check the ravages, of epidemics. They content themſelves almoſt univerſally with one wife. Their matrimonial bond is ſtrict and ſevere, and their manners in this reſpect deſerving of the higheſt praiſe [b]. They live in a ſtate of well-guarded chaſtity, corrupted by no ſeducing ſpectacles, or convivial incitements. Adultery is extremely rare, and no indulgence is ſhewn to a proſtitute. Neither beauty, youth, nor riches can procure her a huſband; for none there looks on vice with a ſmile, nor calls mutual ſeduction the way of the world. To limit the increaſe of children, or put to death any of the huſband's blood, is accounted infamous; and virtuous manners have there more efficacy than good laws elſewhere [c]. Every mother ſuckles her own children, and does not deliver them into the hands of ſervants and nurſes. The youths partake late of the ſexual intercourſe, and hence paſs the age of puberty unexhauſted. Nor are the virgins brought forward. The ſame maturity, the ſame full growth is required: the ſexes unite equally matched and robuſt, and the children inherit the vigour of their parents. The more numerous are a man's kinſmen and relations, the more comfortable is his old age; nor is it any advantage to be childleſs [d].

With theſe manners, and a habit of enterpriſe and emigration, which would naturally remove all fears about providing for a family,

[a] Tacitus de moribus Germ. ſ. xvi. [b] Id. ſ. xviii. [c] Id. ſ. xix.
[d] Id. ſ. xx.

it

it is difficult to conceive a ſociety with a ſtronger principle of increaſe in it; and we ſee at once that prolific ſource of ſucceſſive armies and colonies, againſt which, the force of the Roman empire ſo long ſtruggled with difficulty, and under which, it ultimately ſunk. It is not probable that for two periods together, or even for one, the population within the confines of Germany ever doubled itſelf in twenty-five years. Their perpetual wars, the rude ſtate of agriculture, and particularly the very ſtrange cuſtom adopted by moſt of the tribes, of marking their barriers by extenſive deſarts [a], would abſolutely prevent any very great actual increaſe of numbers. At no one period could the country be called well-peopled, though it was often redundant in population. They abandoned their immenſe foreſts to the exerciſe of hunting, employed in paſturage the moſt conſiderable part of their lands, beſtowed on the ſmall remainder a rude and careleſs cultivation, and when the return of famine ſeverely admoniſhed them of the inſufficiency of their ſcanty reſources, they accuſed the ſterility of a country which refuſed to ſupply the multitude of its inhabitants [b]; but inſtead of clearing their foreſts, draining their ſwamps, and rendering their ſoil fit to ſupport an extended population, they found it more congenial to their martial habits and impatient diſpoſitions, to go "in queſt of "food, of plunder, or of glory [c]," into other countries. Theſe adventurers either gained lands for themſelves by their ſwords, or were cut off by the various accidents of war; were received into the Roman armies, or diſperſed over the Roman territory; or perhaps, having relieved their country by their abſence, returned home laden with ſpoils, and ready, after having recruited their diminiſhed numbers, for freſh expeditions. The ſucceſſion of human beings appears to have been moſt rapid, and as faſt as ſome were diſpoſed of in

[a] Cæſar de bell. Gall. vi. 23.
[b] Gibbon, vol. i. c. ix. p. 360.
[c] Id. c. x. p. 417.

in colonies, or mowed down by the ſcythe of war and famine, others roſe in increaſed numbers to ſupply their place.

According to this view of the ſubject, the North could never have been exhauſted; and when Dr. Robertſon, deſcribing the calamities of theſe invaſions, ſays, that they did not ceaſe, till the North, by pouring forth ſucceſſive ſwarms, was drained of people, and could no longer furniſh inſtruments of deſtruction [a], he will appear to have fallen into the very error which he had before laboured to refute, and to ſpeak as if the northern nations were actually very populous. For they muſt have been ſo, if the number of their inhabitants at any one period, had been ſufficient, beſides the ſlaughter of war, to people in ſuch a manner Thrace, Pannonia, Gaul, Spain, Africa, Italy, and England, as in ſome parts not to leave many traces of their former inhabitants. The period of the peopling of theſe countries, however, he himſelf mentions as two hundred years [b], and in ſuch a time new generations would ariſe that would more than ſupply every vacancy.

The true cauſe which put a ſtop to the continuance of northern emigration was the impoſſibility any longer of making an impreſſion on the moſt deſirable countries of Europe. They were then inhabited by the deſcendants of the braveſt and moſt enterpriſing of the German tribes; and it was not probable, that they ſhould ſo ſoon degenerate from the valour of their anceſtors, as to ſuffer their lands to be wreſted from them by inferior numbers and inferior ſkill, though perhaps ſuperior hardihood.

Checked for a time by the bravery and poverty of their neighbours by land, the enterpriſing ſpirit and overflowing numbers of the Scandinavian nations ſoon found vent by ſea. Feared before the reign of Charlemagne, they were repelled with difficulty by the care and vigour of that great prince, but during the diſtractions of the

[a] Robertſon's Charles V. vol. i. ſ. i. p. 11.
[b] Id. vol. i. ſ. i. p. 7.

the empire under his feeble ſucceſſors, they ſpread like a devouring flame over Lower Saxony, Friezeland, Holland, Flanders, and the banks of the Rhine as far as Mentz.

After having long ravaged the coaſts, they penetrated into the heart of France, pillaged and burnt her faireſt towns, levied immenſe tributes on her monarchs, and at length obtained, by grant, one of the fineſt provinces of the kingdom. They made themſelves even dreaded in Spain, Italy, and Greece, ſpreading every where deſolation and terror. Sometimes they turned their arms againſt each other, as if bent on their own mutual deſtruction; at other times tranſported colonies to unknown or uninhabited countries, as if they were willing to repair, in one place, the horrid deſtruction of the human race occaſioned by their furious ravages, in others [a].

The mal-adminiſtration and civil wars of the Saxon kings of England produced the ſame effect as the weakneſs which followed the reign of Charlemagne in France [b], and for two hundred years the Britiſh iſles were inceſſantly ravaged, and often in part ſubdued, by theſe northern invaders. During the eighth, ninth, and tenth centuries, the ſea was covered with their veſſels from one end of Europe to the other [c], and the countries, now the moſt powerful in arts and arms, were the prey of their conſtant depredations. The growing and conſolidating ſtrength of theſe countries, at length, removed all further proſpect of ſucceſs from ſuch invaſions [d]. The nations of the north were ſlowly and reluctantly compelled to confine themſelves within their natural limits, and to exchange their paſtoral manners, and with them the peculiar facilities of plunder and emi-

[a] Mallet, Introd. a l'Hiſtoire de Dannemarc, tom. i. c. x. p. 221, 223, 224. 12mo. 1766. [b] Id. p. 226. [c] Id. p. 221. [d] Perhaps the civilized world could not be conſidered as perfectly ſecure from another northern or eaſtern inundation, till the total change in the art of war, by the introduction of gunpowder, gave to improved ſkill and knowledge the decided advantage over phyſical force.

gration

gration which they afforded, for the patient labours, and ſlow returns of trade and agriculture. But the ſlowneſs of theſe returns neceſſarily effected an important change in the manners of the people.

In ancient Scandinavia, during the time of its conſtant wars and emigrations, few or none, probably, were ever deterred from marrying by the fear of not being able to provide for a family. In modern Scandinavia, on the contrary, the frequency of the marriage union is continually checked by the moſt imperious and juſtly founded apprehenſions of this kind. This is moſt particularly the caſe in Norway, as I ſhall have occaſion to remark in another place; but the ſame fears operate in a greater or leſs degree, though every where with conſiderable force, in all parts of Europe. Happily, the more tranquil ſtate of the modern world does not demand ſuch rapid ſupplies of human beings, and the prolific powers of nature cannot therefore be ſo generally called into action.

Mallet, in the excellent account of the northern nations which he has prefixed to his hiſtory of Denmark, obſerves, that he had not been able to diſcover any proofs that their emigrations proceeded from want of room at home [a]; and one of the reaſons which he gives, is, that, after a great emigration, the countries often remained quite deſerted and unoccupied for a long time [b]. But inſtances of this kind I am inclined to think were rare, though they might occaſionally happen. With the habits of enterprize and emigration which prevailed in thoſe days, a whole people would ſometimes move in ſearch of a more fertile territory. The lands, which they before occupied, muſt of neceſſity be deſart for a time; and if there were any thing particularly inelegible in the ſoil or ſituation, which the total emigration of the people would ſeem to imply, it might be more congenial to the temper of the ſurrounding bar-

[a] Hiſt. Dan. tom. i. c. ix. p. 206. [b] Id. p. 205, 206.

barians,

barians, to provide for themſelves better by their ſwords, than to occupy immediately theſe rejected lands. Such total emigrations proved the unwillingneſs of the ſociety to divide, but by no means that they were not ſtraitened for room and food at home.

The other reaſon which Mallet gives is, that, in Saxony, as well as Scandinavia, vaſt tracts of land lay in their original uncultivated ſtate, having never been grubbed up or cleared; and that, from the deſcriptions of Denmark in thoſe times, it appeared, that the coaſts alone were peopled, but the interior parts formed one vaſt foreſt [a]. It is evident, that he here falls into the common error of confounding a ſuperfluity of inhabitants with great actual population. The paſtoral manners of the people, and their habits of war and enterprize, prevented them from clearing and cultivating their lands [b]; and then theſe very foreſts, by reſtraining the ſources of ſubſiſtence within very narrow bounds, contributed to a ſuperfluity of numbers, that is, to a population beyond what the ſcanty ſupplies of the country could ſupport.

There is another cauſe, not often attended to, why poor, cold, and thinly-peopled countries tend generally to a ſuperfluity of inhabitants, and are ſtrongly prompted to emigration. In warmer and more populous countries, particularly thoſe abounding in great towns and manufactures, an inſufficient ſupply of food can ſeldom continue long without producing epidemics, either in the ſhape of great and ravaging plagues, or of leſs violent, though more conſtant, ſickneſſes. In poor, cold, and thinly-peopled countries, on the contrary, from the antiſeptic quality of the air, the miſery ariſing from

[a] Hiſt. Dan. tom. i. c. ix. p. 207.

[b] Nec arare terram aut expectare annum tam facile perſuaſeris, quam vocare hoſtes et vulnera mereri; pigrum quinimò et iners videtur ſudore acquirere quod poſſis ſanguine parare. Tacitus de mor. Germ. Nothing, indeed, in the ſtudy of human nature, is more evident than the extreme difficulty with which habits are changed; and no argument therefore can be more fallacious than to infer, that thoſe people are not pinched with want, who do not make a proper uſe of their lands.

inſufficient

inſufficient or bad food, may continue a conſiderable time without producing theſe effects, and, conſequently, this powerful ſtimulus to emigration continues to operate for a much longer period [a].

I would by no means, however, be underſtood to ſay, that the northern nations never undertook any expeditions unleſs prompted by ſtraitened food or circumſtances at home. Mallet relates, what was probably true, that it was their common cuſtom to hold an aſſembly every ſpring, for the purpoſe of conſidering in what quarter they ſhould make war [b]; and among a people who nouriſhed ſo ſtrong a paſſion for war, and who conſidered the right of the ſtrongeſt as a right divine, occaſions for it would never be wanting. Beſides this pure and diſintereſted love of war and enterprize, civil diſſenſions, the preſſure of a victorious enemy, a wiſh for a milder climate, or other cauſes, might ſometimes prompt to emigration; but, in a general view of the ſubject, I cannot help conſidering this period of hiſtory as affording a very ſtriking illuſtration of the principle of population; a principle, which appears to me, to have given the original impulſe and ſpring of action, to have furniſhed the inexhauſtible reſources, and often prepared the immediate cauſes, of that rapid ſucceſſion of adventurous irruptions and emigrations, which occaſioned the fall of the Roman empire; and afterwards pouring from the thinly-peopled countries of Denmark and Norway, for above two hundred years ravaged and over-ran a great part of Europe. Without the ſuppoſition of a tendency to increaſe almoſt as great as among the Americans, the facts appear to me not to be accounted for [c]; and with ſuch a ſuppoſition, we cannot be at a loſs

to

[a] Epidemics have their ſeldomer or frequenter returns according to their ſundry ſoils, ſituations, air, &c. Hence, ſome have them yearly, as Egypt and Conſtantinople; others, once in four or five years, as about Tripoli and Aleppo; others, ſcarce once in ten, twelve, or thirteen years, as England; others, not in leſs than twenty years, as *Norway and the Northern iſlands.* Short, Hiſtory of Air, Seaſons, &c. vol. ii. p. 344.

[b] Hiſt. Dan. c. ix. p. 209.

[c] Gibbon, Robertſon, and Mallet, ſeem all rather

to name the checks to the actual population, when we read the diſguſting details of thoſe unceaſing wars, and of that prodigal waſte of human life, which marked theſe barbarous periods.

Inferior checks would undoubtedly concur; but we may ſafely pronounce, that among the ſhepherds of the north of Europe, war and famine, were the principal checks, that kept the population down to the level of their ſcanty means of ſubſiſtence.

to ſpeak of Jornandes's expreſſion *vagina nationum* as incorrect and exaggerated; but to me it appears exactly applicable, though the other expreſſion, officina gentium, at leaſt their tranſlation of it, *ſtorehouſe of nations*, may not be quite accurate.

Ex hac igitur Scanziâ inſulâ, quaſi officina gentium, aut certè velut vagina nationum egreſſi, &c. Jornandes de rebus Geticis, p. 83.

CHAP. VII.

Of the Checks to Population among modern Paſtoral Nations.

THE paſtoral tribes of Aſia, by living in tents and moveable huts, inſtead of fixed habitations, are ſtill leſs connected with their territory than the ſhepherds of the north of Europe. The camp, and not the ſoil, is the native country of the genuine Tartar. When the forage of a certain diſtrict is conſumed, the tribe makes a regular march to freſh paſtures. In the ſummer, it advances towards the north, in the winter returns again to the ſouth; and thus, in a time of moſt profound peace, acquires the practical and familiar knowledge of one of the moſt difficult operations of war. Such habits would ſtrongly tend to diffuſe among theſe wandering tribes the ſpirit of emigration and conqueſt. The thirſt of rapine, the fear of a too powerful neighbour, or the inconvenience of ſcanty paſtures, have in all ages been ſufficient cauſes to urge the hordes of Scythia boldly to advance into unknown countries, where they might hope to find a more plentiful ſubſiſtence, or a leſs formidable enemy [a].

In all their invaſions, but more particularly when directed againſt the civilized empires of the ſouth, the Scythian ſhepherds have been uniformly actuated by a moſt ſavage and deſtructive ſpirit. When the Moguls had ſubdued the northern provinces of China, it was propoſed, in calm and deliberate council, to exterminate all the inhabitants of that populous country, that the vacant land might be converted to the paſture of cattle. The execution of this horrid deſign

[a] Gibbon, vol. iv. c. xxvi. p. 348.

was prevented by the wiſdom and firmneſs of a Chineſe mandarin[a]; but the bare propoſal of it exhibits a ſtriking picture, not only of the inhuman manner, in which the rights of conqueſt were abuſed, but of the powerful force of habit among nations of ſhepherds, and the conſequent difficulty of the tranſition from the paſtoral to the agricultural ſtate.

To purſue, even in the moſt curſory manner, the tide of emigration and conqueſt in Aſia, the rapid increaſe of ſome tribes, and the total extinction of others, would lead much too far. During the periods of the formidable irruptions of the Huns, the wide-extended invaſions of the Moguls, the ſanguinary conqueſts of Tamerlane and Aurengzebe, and the dreadful convulſions which attended the diſſolution, as well as the formation, of their empires, the checks to population are but too obvious. In reading of the devaſtations of the human race in thoſe times, when the ſlighteſt motive of caprice or convenience, often involved a whole people in indiſcriminate maſſacre[b], inſtead of looking for the cauſes which prevented a further progreſs in population, we can only be aſtoniſhed at the force of that principle of increaſe, which could furniſh freſh harveſts of human beings for the ſcythe of each ſucceſſive conqueror. Our inquiries will be more uſefully directed to the preſent ſtate of the Tartar nations, and the ordinary checks to their increaſe, when not under the influence of theſe violent convulſions.

The immenſe country inhabited at preſent by thoſe deſcendants of the Moguls and Tartars, who retain nearly the ſame manners as their anceſtors, compriſes in it almoſt all the middle regions of Aſia, and poſſeſſes the advantage of a very fine and temperate climate. The ſoil is in general of great natural fertility. There are comparatively but few genuine deſerts. The wide-extended plains without a ſhrub, which have ſometimes received that appellation, and which the Ruſſians call ſteppes, are covered with a luxuriant graſs, admirably

[a] Gibbon, vol. vi. ch. xxxiv. p. 54. [b] Id. p. 55.

fitted

fitted for the paſture of numerous herds and flocks. The principal defect of this extenſive country is a want of water; but it is ſaid that the parts which are ſupplied with this neceſſary article, would be ſufficient for the ſupport of four times the number of its preſent inhabitants, if it were properly cultivated[a]. Every Orda, or tribe, has a particular canton belonging to it, containing both its ſummer and winter paſtures; and the population of this vaſt territory, whatever it may be, is probably diſtributed over its ſurface nearly in proportion to the degree of actual fertility in the different diſtricts.

Volney juſtly deſcribes this neceſſary diſtribution in ſpeaking of the Bedoweens of Syria:—"In the barren cantons, that is, thoſe which "are ill furniſhed with plants, the tribes are feeble, and very diſtant "from each other; as in the deſert of Suez, that of the Red Sea, "and the interior part of the Great Deſert. When the ſoil is better "covered, as between Damaſcus and the Euphrates, the tribes are "ſtronger and leſs diſtant. And in the cultivable cantons, as the "Pachalic of Aleppo, the Hauran, and the country of Gaza, the in-"campments are numerous and near each other[b]." Such a diſtribution of inhabitants, according to the quantity of food which they can obtain in the actual ſtate of their induſtry and habits, may be applied to Grand Tartary, as well as to Syria and Arabia, and is, in fact, equally applicable to the whole earth, though the commerce of civilized nations prevents it from being ſo obvious, as in the more ſimple ſtages of ſociety.

The Mahometan Tartars, who inhabit the weſtern parts of Grand Tartary, cultivate ſome of their lands; but this, in ſo ſlovenly and inſufficient a manner, as not to afford a principal ſource of ſubſiſtence[c]. The ſlothful and warlike genius of the Barbarian every where prevails, and he does not eaſily reconcile himſelf to the acquiring by labour what he can hope to acquire by rapine. When the annals of

[a] Geneal. Hiſt. of Tartars, vol. ii. ſec. i. 8vo. 1730. [b] Voy. de Volney, tom. i. ch. xxiii. p. 351. 8vo. 1787. [c] Geneal. Hiſt. Tar. vol. ii. p. 382.

Tartary

Tartary are not marked by any ſignal wars and revolutions, its domeſtic peace and induſtry are conſtantly interrupted by petty conteſts, and mutual invaſions for the ſake of plunder. The Mahometan Tartars are ſaid to live almoſt entirely by robbing and preying upon their neighbours, as well in peace as in war [a].

The Uſbecks, who poſſeſs as maſters the kingdom of Chowaraſm, leave to their tributary ſubjects, the Sarts and Turkmans, the fineſt paſtures of their country, merely, becauſe their neighbours on that ſide are too poor, or too vigilant, to give them hopes of ſucceſsful plunder. Rapine is their principal reſource. They are perpetually making incurſions into the territories of the Perſians, and of the Uſbecks of Great Bucharia; and neither peace nor truce can reſtrain them; as the ſlaves, and other valuable effects, which they carry off, form the whole of their riches. The Uſbecks, and their ſubjects the Turkmans, are perpetually at variance; and their jealouſies, fomented often by the princes of the reigning houſe, keep the country in a conſtant ſtate of inteſtine commotion [b]. The Turkmans are always at war with the Curds and the Arabs, who often come and break the horns of their herds, and carry away their wives and daughters [c].

The Uſbecks of Great Bucharia are reckoned the moſt civilized of all the Mahometan Tartars, yet are not much inferior to the reſt in their ſpirit of rapine [d]. They are always at war with the Perſians, and laying waſte the fine plains of the province of Choraſan. Though the country which they poſſeſs is of the greateſt natural fertility, and ſome of the remains of the ancient inhabitants practiſe the peaceful arts of trade and agriculture; yet neither the aptitude of the ſoil, nor the example which they have before them, can induce them to change their antient habits; and they would rather pillage, rob, and

[a] Geneal. Hiſt. Tart. vol ii. p. 390. [b] Id. p. 430, 431. [c] Id. p. 426. [d] Id. p. 459.

kill, their neighbours, than apply themſelves to improve the benefits which nature ſo liberally offers them [a].

The Tartars of the Caſatſhia Orda in Turkeſtan, live in a ſtate of continual warfare with their neighbours to the north and eaſt. In the winter they make their incurſions towards the Kalmucks, who, about that time, go to ſcour the frontiers of Great Bucharia, and the parts to the ſouth of their country. On the other ſide, they perpetually incommode the Coſacks of the Yaik, the Nogai Tartars, and the Kalmuck tribes which obey Ajuka Chan. In the ſummer they croſs the mountains of Eagles, and make inroads into Siberia. And though they are often very ill treated in theſe incurſions, and the whole of their plunder is not equivalent to what they might obtain with very little labour from their lands, yet they chuſe rather to expoſe themſelves to the thouſand fatigues and dangers neceſſarily attendant on ſuch a life, than apply themſelves ſeriouſly to agriculture [b].

The mode of life among the other tribes of Mahometan Tartars, preſents the ſame uniform picture, which it would be tireſome to repeat, and for which, therefore, I refer the reader to the Genealogical Hiſtory of the Tartars, and its valuable notes. The conduct of the author of this hiſtory himſelf, a Chan of Chowaraſm, affords a curious example of the ſavage manner in which the wars, of policy, of revenge, or plunder, are carried on in theſe countries. His invaſions of Great Bucharia were frequent, and each expedition was ſignalized by the ravage of provinces, and the utter ruin and deſtruction of towns and villages. When, at any time, the number of his priſoners impeded his motions, he made no ſcruple to kill them on the ſpot. Wiſhing to reduce the power of the Turkmans who were tributary to him, he invited all the principal people to a ſolemn feaſt, and had them maſſacred to the number of two thouſand. He burnt and deſtroyed their villages with the moſt unſparing cruelty, and committed

[a] Geneal. Hiſt. Tart. vol. ii. p. 455. [b] Id. p. 573, et ſeq.

ſuch devaſtations, that the effect of them returned on their authors, and the army of the victors ſuffered ſeverely from dearth [a].

The Mahometan Tartars in general hate trade, and make it their buſineſs to ſpoil all the merchants who fall into their hands [b]. The only commerce that is countenanced is the commerce in ſlaves. Theſe form a principal part of the booty which they carry off in their predatory incurſions, and are conſidered as a chief ſource of their riches. Thoſe which they have occaſion for themſelves, either for the attendance on their herds, or as wives and concubines, they keep, and the reſt they ſell [c]. The Circaſſian and Dagheſtan Tartars, and the other tribes in the neighbourhood of Caucaſus, living in a poor and mountainous country, and, on that account, leſs ſubject to invaſion, generally overflow with inhabitants; and when they cannot obtain ſlaves in the common way, ſteal from one another, and even ſell their own wives and children [d]. This trade in ſlaves, ſo general among the Mahometan Tartars, may be one of the cauſes of their conſtant wars; as, when a proſpect of a plentiful ſupply for this kind of traffick offers itſelf, neither peace nor alliance can reſtrain them [e].

The heathen Tartars, the Kalmucks, and Moguls, do not make much uſe of ſlaves, and are ſaid, in general, to lead a much more peaceable and harmleſs life, contenting themſelves with the produce of their herds and flocks, which form their ſole riches. They rarely make war for the ſake of plunder; and ſeldom invade the territory of their neighbours, unleſs to revenge a prior attack. They are not, however, without deſtructive wars. The inroads of the Mahometan

[a] Geneal. Hiſt. Tart. vol. i. c. xii. [b] Id. vol. ii. p. 412. [c] Id. p. 413.
[d] Id. vol. ii. p. 413, 414, and ch. xii.
[e] "They juſtify it as lawful to have many wives, becauſe they ſay they bring us many "children, which we can ſell for ready money, or exchange for neceſſary conveniences; "yet when they have not wherewithal to maintain them, they hold it a piece of charity "to murder infants new born, as alſo they do ſuch as are ſick, and paſt recovery, becauſe "they ſay they free them from a great deal of miſery." Sir John Chardin's Travels. Harris's Col. b. iii. c. ii, p. 865.

metan Tartars oblige them to conſtant defence and retaliation; and feuds ſubſiſt between the kindred tribes of the Kalmucks and Moguls, which, fomented by the artful policy of the emperor of China, are carried on with ſuch animoſity, as to threaten the entire deſtruction of one or other of theſe nations [a].

The Bedoweens of Arabia and Syria do not live in greater tranquillity than the inhabitants of Grand Tartary. The very nature of the paſtoral ſtate, ſeems to furniſh perpetual occaſions for war. The paſtures which a tribe uſes at one period, form but a ſmall part of its poſſeſſions. A large range of territory is ſucceſſively occupied in the courſe of the year; and as the whole of this is abſolutely neceſſary for the annual ſubſiſtence of the tribe, and is conſidered as appropriated, every violation of it, though the tribe may be at a great diſtance, is held to be a juſt cauſe of war [b]. Alliances and kindred make theſe wars more general. When blood is ſhed, more muſt expiate it; and as ſuch accidents have multiplied in the lapſe of years, the greateſt part of the tribes have quarrels between them, and live in a ſtate of perpetual hoſtility [c]. In the times which preceded Mahomet, ſeventeen hundred battles are recorded by tradition; and a partial truce of two months, which was religiouſly kept, might be conſidered, according to a juſt remark of Gibbon, as ſtill more ſtrongly expreſſive of their general habits of anarchy and warfare [d].

The waſte of life, from ſuch habits, might alone appear ſufficient to repreſs their population; but probably their effect is ſtill greater in the fatal check which they give to every ſpecies of induſtry, and particularly to that, the object of which is to enlarge the means of

[a] Geneal. Hiſt. Tart. vol. ii. p. 545.
[b] Ils ſe diſputeront la terre inculte comme parmi nous les citoyens ſe diſputent les heritages. Ainſi ils trouveront de frequentes occaſions de guerre pour la nourriture de leur beſtiaux, &c. **** ils auront autant de choſes a regler par le droit des gens qu'ils en auront peu a decider par le droit civil. Monteſ. Eſprit des Loix, l. xviii. c. xii.
[c] Voy. de Volney, tom. i. c. xxii. p. 361, 362, 363.
[d] Gibbon, vol. ix. c. l. p. 238, 239.

ſubſiſtence. Even the conſtruction of a well, or a reſervoir of water, requires ſome funds and labour in advance; and war may deſtroy in one day, the work of many months, and the reſources of a whole year[a]. The evils ſeem mutually to produce each other. A ſcarcity of ſubſiſtence might at firſt perhaps give occaſion to the habits of war, and the habits of war in return powerfully contribute to narrow the means of ſubſiſtence.

Some tribes, from the nature of the deſerts in which they live, ſeem to be neceſſarily condemned to a paſtoral life[b]; but even thoſe which inhabit ſoils proper for agriculture, have but little temptation to practiſe this art, while ſurrounded by marauding neighbours. The peaſants of the frontier provinces of Syria, Perſia, and Siberia, expoſed as they are to the conſtant incurſions of a devaſtating enemy, do not lead a life that is to be envied by the wandering Tartar or Arab. A certain degree of ſecurity, is perhaps ſtill more neceſſary, than richneſs of ſoil, to encourage the change from the paſtoral to the agricultural ſtate; and where this cannot be attained, the ſedentary labourer is more expoſed to the viciſſitudes of fortune, than he who leads a wandering life, and carries all his property with him[c]. Under the feeble, yet oppreſſive government of the Turks, it is not uncommon for peaſants to deſert their villages and betake themſelves to a paſtoral ſtate, in which they expect to be better able to eſcape from the plunder of their Turkiſh maſters and Arab neighbours[d].

It may be ſaid, however, of the ſhepherd, as of the hunter, that if want alone could effect a change of habits, there would be few paſtoral tribes remaining. Notwithſtanding the conſtant wars of the Bedoween Arabs, and the other checks to their increaſe, from the hardſhips of their mode of life, their population preſſes ſo hard againſt the limits of their food, that they are compelled from neceſſity to a degree of abſtinence, which nothing but early and conſtant habit

[a] Voy. de Volney, tom. i. c. xxiii. p. 353. [b] Id. p. 350. [c] Id. p. 354. [d] Id. p. 350.

could

could enable the human conſtitution to ſupport. According to Volney, the lower claſſes of the Arabs live in a ſtate of habitual miſery and famine[a]. The tribes of the deſert deny that the religion of Mahomet was made for them. For how, they ſay, can we perform ablutions, when we have no water; how can we give alms, when we have no riches; or what occaſion can there be to faſt during the month of Ramadan, when we faſt all the year[b]?

The power and riches of a Chaik conſiſt in the number of his tribe. He conſiders it therefore as his intereſt to encourage population, without reflecting how it may be ſupported. His own conſequence much depends on a numerous progeny, and kindred[c]; and in a ſtate of ſociety where power generally procures ſubſiſtence, each individual family derives ſtrength and importance from its numbers. Theſe ideas act ſtrongly as a bounty upon population, and co-operating with a ſpirit of generoſity which almoſt produces a community of goods[d], contribute to puſh it to its utmoſt verge, and to depreſs the body of the people in the moſt rigid poverty.

The habits of polygamy, where there have been loſſes of men in war, tend perhaps alſo to produce the ſame effect. Niehbur obſerves that polygamy multiplies families till many of their branches ſink into the moſt wretched miſery[e]. The deſcendants of Mahomet are found in great numbers all over the eaſt, and many of them in extreme poverty. A Mahometan is in ſome degree obliged to polygamy from a principle of obedience to his prophet, who makes one of the great duties of man to conſiſt in procreating children to glorify the Creator. Fortunately, individual intereſt, corrects in ſome degree, as in many other inſtances, the abſurdity of the legiſlator, and the poor Arab is obliged to proportion his religious obedience to the ſcantineſs of his reſources. Yet ſtill the direct encouragements to population are extraordinarily great; and nothing can place, in a more ſtriking

[a] Voy. de Volney, tom. i. c. xxiii. p. 359. [b] Id. p. 380. [c] Id. p. 366. [d] Id. p. 378. [e] Niehbur's Travels, vol. ii. c. v. p. 207.

point

point of view, the futility and abſurdity of ſuch encouragements, than the preſent ſtate of theſe countries. It is univerſally agreed, that if their population be not leſs than formerly, it is indubitably not greater; and it follows as a direct conſequence, that the great increaſe of ſome families has abſolutely puſhed the others out of exiſtence. Gibbon, ſpeaking of Arabia, obſerves, that "The meaſure of population "is regulated by the means of ſubſiſtence, and the inhabitants of this "vaſt peninſula, might be out-numbered by the ſubjects of a fertile "and induſtrious province[a]." Whatever may be the encouragements to marriage, this meaſure cannot be paſſed. While the Arabs retain their preſent manners, and the country remains in its preſent ſtate of cultivation, the promiſe of Paradiſe to every man who had ten children, would but little increaſe their numbers, though it might greatly increaſe their miſery. Direct encouragements to population have no tendency whatever to change theſe manners, and promote cultivation. Perhaps, indeed, they have a contrary tendency, as the conſtant uneaſineſs from poverty and want which they occaſion, would encourage the marauding ſpirit[b] and multiply the occaſions of war.

Among the Tartars, who, from living in a more fertile ſoil, are comparatively richer in cattle, the plunder to be obtained in predatory incurſions, is greater than among the Arabs. And as the conteſts are more bloody, from the ſuperior ſtrength of the tribes, and the cuſtom of making ſlaves is general, the loſs of numbers in war will be more conſiderable. Theſe two circumſtances united, enable ſome hordes of fortunate robbers to live in a ſtate of plenty, in com-

[a] It is rather a curious circumſtance, that a truth ſo important which has been ſtated, and acknowledged, by ſo many authors, ſhould ſo rarely have been purſued to its conſequences. People are not every day dying of famine. How then is the population regulated to the meaſure of the means of ſubſiſtence?

[b] Auſſi arrive-t'il chaque jour des accidens, des enlèvements de beſtiaux; et cette guerre de maraude eſt une de celles qui occupent d'avantage les Arabes. Voy. de Volney, tom. i. c. xxiii. p. 364.

pariſon

pariſon of their leſs enterpriſing neighbours. Profeſſor Pallas gives a particular account of two wandering tribes ſubject to Ruſſia, one of which ſupports itſelf almoſt entirely by plunder, and the other lives as peacefully as the reſtleſsneſs of its neighbours will admit. It may be curious to trace the different checks to population that reſult from theſe different habits.

The Kirgiſiens, according to Pallas[a], live at their eaſe in compariſon of the other wandering tribes that are ſubject to Ruſſia. The ſpirit of liberty and independence which reigns amongſt them, joined to the facility with which they can procure a flock ſufficient for their maintenance, prevents any of them from entering into the ſervice of others. They all expect to be treated as brothers, and the rich, therefore, are obliged to uſe ſlaves. It may be aſked what are the cauſes which prevent the lower claſſes of people from increaſing till they become poor?

Pallas has not informed us how far vicious cuſtoms with reſpect to women, or the reſtraints on marriage from the fear of a family, may have contributed to this effect; but, perhaps, the deſcription which he gives of their civil conſtitution, and licentious ſpirit of rapine, may be alone almoſt ſufficient to account for it. The Chan cannot exerciſe his authority but through the medium of a council of principal perſons, choſen by the people; and even the decrees thus confirmed are continually violated with impunity[b]. Though the plunder and capture of perſons, of cattle, and of merchandize, which the Kirgiſiens exerciſe on their neighbours the Kazalpacs, the Bucharians, the Perſians, the Truchemenes, the Kalmucks, and the Ruſſians, are prohibited by their laws, yet no perſon is afraid to avow them. On the contrary, they boaſt of their ſucceſſes in this

[a] Not having been able to procure the work of Pallas on the hiſtory of the Mongol nations, I have here made uſe of a general abridgement of the works of the Ruſſian travellers, in 4 vols. oct. publiſhed at Berne and Lauſanne in 1781 and 1784, entitled, Decouvertes Ruſſes, tom. iii. p. 399.

[b] Decouv. Ruſſ. tom. iii. p. 389.

way,

way, as of the moſt honourable enterprizes. Sometimes they paſs their frontiers alone, to ſeek their fortune, ſometimes collect in troops under the command of an able chief, and pillage entire caravans. A great number of Kirgiſiens, in exerciſing this rapine, are either killed, or taken into ſlavery; but about this the nation troubles itſelf very little. When theſe ravages are committed by private adventurers, each retains what he has taken, whether cattle or women. The male ſlaves and the merchandize are ſold to the rich, or to foreign traders[a].

With theſe habits, in addition to their national wars, which, from the fickle and turbulent diſpoſition of the tribe, are extremely frequent[b], we may eaſily conceive that the checks to population from violent cauſes may be ſo powerful as nearly to preclude all others. Occaſional famines may ſometimes attack them in their wars of devaſtation[c], their fatiguing predatory incurſions, or from long droughts, and mortality of cattle; but, in the common courſe of things, the approach of poverty would be the ſignal for a new marauding expedition; and the poor Kirgiſien would either return with ſufficient to ſupport him, or loſe his life or liberty in the attempt. He who determines to be rich, or die, and does not ſcruple the means, cannot long remain poor.

The Kalmucks, who, before their migration in 1771, inhabited the fertile ſteppes of the Wolga, under the protection of Ruſſia, lived, in general, in a different manner. They were not often engaged in any very bloody wars[d]; and the power of the Chan being abſolute[e], and the civil adminiſtration better regulated than among the Kirgi-

[a] Decouv. Ruſſ. tom. iii. p. 396, 397, 398. [b] Id. p. 378.

[c] Cette multitude devaſte tout ce qui ſe trouve ſur ſon paſſage, ils emmenent avec eux tout le betail qu'ils ne conſomment pas, et reduiſent a l'eſclavage les femmes, les enfans, et les hommes, qu'ils n'ont par maſſacrés. Id. p. 390.

[d] Decouv. Ruſſ. tom. iii. p. 221. The tribe is deſcribed here under the name of the Torgots, which was their appropriate appellation. The Ruſſians called them by the more general name of Kalmucks. [e] Id. p. 327.

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ſiens, the marauding expeditions of private adventurers were checked. The Kalmuck women are extremely prolific. Barren marriages are rare, and three or four children are generally ſeen playing round every hut. From which it may naturally be concluded, Pallas obſerves, that they ought to have multiplied greatly during the hundred and fifty years that they inhabited tranquilly the ſteppe of the Wolga. The reaſons which he gives for their not having increaſed ſo much as might be expected, are, the many accidents occaſioned by falls from horſes, the frequent petty wars between their different princes, and with their different neighbours; and, particularly, the numbers among the poorer claſſes who die of hunger, of miſery, and every ſpecies of calamity, of which the children are moſt frequently the victims[a].

It appears that when this tribe firſt put itſelf under the protection of Ruſſia, it had ſeparated from the Soongares, and was by no means numerous. The poſſeſſion of the fertile ſteppe of the Wolga, and a more tranquil life, ſoon increaſed it, and in 1662 it amounted to fifty thouſand families[b]. From this period to 1771, the time of its migration, it ſeems to have increaſed very ſlowly. The extent of paſtures poſſeſſed, would not probably admit of a much greater population, as at the time of its flight from theſe quarters, the irritation of the Chan at the conduct of Ruſſia, was ſeconded by the complaints of the people, of the want of paſture for their numerous herds. At this time the tribe amounted to between 55 and 60,000 families. Its fate in this curious migration, was what has probably been the fate of many other wandering hordes, who, from ſcanty paſtures, or other cauſes of diſcontent, have attempted to ſeek for freſh ſeats. The march took place in the winter, and numbers periſhed on this painful journey from cold, famine, and miſery. A great part was

[a] Decouv. Ruſſ. tom. iii. p. 319, 320, 321.

[b] Id. p. 221. Tooke's View of Ruſſian Empire, vol. ii. b. ii. p. 30. Another inſtance of rapid increaſe preſents itſelf in a colony of baptized Kalmucks, who received from Ruſſia a fertile diſtrict to ſettle in. From 8695, which was its number in 1754, it had increaſed in 1771 to 14,000. Tooke's View of Ruſ. Em. vol. ii. b. ii. p. 32, 33.

either

either killed or taken by the Kirghiſes; and thoſe who reached their place of deſtination, though received at firſt kindly by the Chineſe, were afterwards treated with extreme ſeverity[a].

Before this migration, the lower claſſes of the Kalmucks had lived in great poverty and wretchedneſs, and had been reduced habitually to make uſe of every animal, plant, or root, from which it was poſſible to extract nouriſhment[b]. They very ſeldom killed any of their cattle that were in health, except indeed they were ſtolen, and then they were devoured immediately for fear of a diſcovery. Wounded, or worn out horſes, and beaſts that had died of any diſeaſe, except a contagious epidemic, were conſidered as moſt deſireable food. Some of the pooreſt Kalmucks would eat the moſt putrid carrion, and even the dung of their cattle[c]. A great number of children periſhed of courſe from bad nouriſhment[d]. In the winter all the lower claſſes ſuffered ſeverely from cold and hunger[e]. In general, one third of their ſheep, and often much more, died in the winter, in ſpite of all their care; and if a froſt came late in the ſeaſon after rain and ſnow, ſo that the cattle could not get at the graſs, the mortality among their herds became general, and the poorer claſſes of the Kalmucks were expoſed to inevitable famine[f].

Malignant fevers, generated principally by their putrid food and the putrid exhalations with which they were ſurrounded, and the ſmall-pox, which is dreaded like the plague, ſometimes thinned their numbers[g]; but in general, it appears, that their population preſſed ſo hard againſt the limits of their means of ſubſiſtence, that want, with the diſeaſes ariſing from it, might be conſidered as the principal check to their increaſe.

A perſon travelling in Tartary during the ſummer months, would probably ſee extenſive ſteppes unoccupied, and graſs in profuſion,

[a] Tooke's View of Ruſ. Emp. vol. ii. b. ii. p. 29, 30, 31. Decouv. Ruſ. tom. iii. p. 221. [b] Id. p. 275, 276. [c] Id. p. 272, 273, 274. [d] Id. p. 324. [e] Id. p. 310. [f] Ibid. and p. 270. [g] Id. p. 311, 312, 313.

ſpoiling

ſpoiling for want of cattle to conſume it. He would infer, perhaps, that the country could ſupport a much greater number of inhabitants, even ſuppoſing them to remain in their ſhepherd ſtate. But this might be a haſty and unwarranted concluſion. A horſe, or any other working animal, is ſaid to be ſtrong only in proportion to the ſtrength of his weakeſt part. If his legs be ſlender and feeble, the ſtrength of his body will be but of little conſequence; or if he wants power in his back and haunches, the ſtrength which he may poſſeſs in his limbs can never be called fully into action. The ſame reaſoning muſt be applied to the power of the earth to ſupport living creatures. The profuſion of nouriſhment which is poured forth in the ſeaſons of plenty, cannot all be conſumed by the ſcanty numbers that were able to ſubſiſt through the ſeaſon of ſcarcity. When human induſtry and foreſight are directed in the beſt manner, the population that the ſoil can ſupport is regulated by the average produce throughout the year; but among animals, and in the uncivilized ſtates of man, it will be much below this average. The Tartar would find it extremely difficult to collect and carry with him ſuch a quantity of hay, as would feed all his cattle well during the winter. It would impede his motions, expoſe him to the attacks of his enemies, and an unfortunate day might deprive him of the labours of a whole ſummer, as in the mutual invaſions which occur, it ſeems to be the univerſal practice to burn and deſtroy all the forage and proviſions which cannot be carried away[a]. The Tartar, therefore, provides only for the moſt valuable of his cattle during the winter, and leaves the reſt to ſupport themſelves by the ſcanty herbage which they can pick up. This poor living, combined with the ſevere cold, naturally deſtroys a conſiderable

[a] On mit le feu a toutes les meules de bled et de fourrage. **** Cent cinquante villages egalement encendiès. Memoires du Baron de Tott, tom. i. p. 272. He gives a curious deſcription of the devaſtations of a Tartar army, and of its ſufferings in a winter campaign. 'Cette journèe couta a l'armèe plus de 3,000 hommes, et 30,000 chevaux, qui perirent de froid, p. 267.

part of them [a]. The population of the tribe is meaſured by the population of its herds; and the average numbers of the Tartars, as of the horſes that run wild in the deſart, is repreſſed ſo low by the annual returns of the cold and ſcarcity of winter, that they cannot conſume all the plentiful offerings of ſummer.

Droughts and unfavourable ſeaſons have, in proportion to their frequency, the ſame effect as the winter. In Arabia [b], and a great part of Tartary [c], droughts are not uncommon; and if the periods of their return be not above ſix or eight years, the average population can never much exceed what the ſoil can ſupport during theſe unfavourable times. This is true in every ſituation; but perhaps in the ſhepherd ſtate, man is peculiarly expoſed to be affected by the ſeaſons; and a great mortality of parent ſtock is an evil more fatal and longer felt, than the failure of a crop of grain. Pallas and the other Ruſſian travellers ſpeak of epizooties, as very common in theſe parts of the world [d].

As among the Tartars, a family is always honourable, and women are reckoned very ſerviceable in the management of the cattle and the houſehold concerns, it is not probable that many are deterred from marriage, from the fear of not being able to ſupport a family [e]. At the ſame time, as all wives are bought of their parents, it muſt ſometimes be out of the power of the poorer claſſes to make the purchaſe. The monk Rubruquis, ſpeaking of this cuſtom, ſays, that as parents keep all their daughters till they can ſell them, their maids are ſometimes very ſtale before they are married [f]. Among the Mahometan Tartars female captives would ſupply the place of wives [g]; but among the pagan Tartars, who make

[a] Decouvertes Ruſſes, vol. iii. p. 261. [b] Voy. de Volney, vol. i. c. 23. p. 353. [c] Decouv. Ruſſ. tom. i. p. 467. ii. p. 10, 11, 12, &c. &c.
[d] Id. tom. i. p. 290, &c. ii. p. 11. iv. p. 304. [e] Geneal. Hiſt. Tartars, vol. ii. p. 407. [f] Travels of Wm. Rubruquis in 1253. Harris's Collection of Voy. b. i. c. ii. p. 561. [g] Decouv. Ruſſ. tom. iii. p. 413.

but little uſe of ſlaves, the inability of buying a wife, muſt frequently operate on the poorer claſſes as a check to marriage, particularly as their price would be kept up by the practice of polygamy among the rich [a].

The Kalmucks are ſaid not to be jealous [b], and, from the general prevalence of the venereal diſeaſe among them [c], we may infer that a certain degree of promiſcuous intercourſe prevails.

On the whole, therefore, it would appear, that in that department of the ſhepherd life which has been conſidered in this chapter, the principal checks which keep the population down to the level of the means of ſubſiſtence, are, reſtraint, from inability to obtain a wife, vicious cuſtoms with reſpect to women, epidemics, wars, famine, and the diſeaſes ariſing from extreme poverty. The three firſt checks and the laſt appear to have operated with much leſs force among the ſhepherds of the north of Europe.

[a] Pallas takes notice of the ſcarcity of women, or the ſuperabundance of males among the Kalmucks, notwithſtanding the more conſtant expoſure of the male ſex to every kind of accident. Decouv. Ruſſ. tom. iii. p. 320.
[b] Decouv. Ruſſ. tom. iii. p. 239. [c] Id. p. 324.

CHAP. VIII.

Of the Checks to Population in different Parts of Africa.

The parts of Africa viſited by Park, are deſcribed by him as neither well cultivated, nor well peopled. He found many extenſive and beautiful diſtricts entirely deſtitute of inhabitants; and in general, the borders of the different kingdoms were either very thinly peopled, or perfectly deſerted. The ſwampy banks of the Gambia, the Senegal, and other rivers towards the coaſt, appeared to be unfavourable to population, from being unhealthy[a]; but other parts were not of this deſcription; and it was not poſſible, he ſays, to behold the wonderful fertility of the ſoil, the vaſt herds of cattle proper both for labour and food, and reflect on the means which preſented themſelves of vaſt inland navigation, without lamenting that a country ſo abundantly gifted by nature, ſhould remain in its preſent ſavage and neglected ſtate[b].

The cauſes of this neglected ſtate clearly appear, however, in the deſcription which Park gives of the general habits of the negroe nations. In a country divided into a thouſand petty ſtates, moſtly independent and jealous of each other, it is natural to imagine, he ſays, that wars frequently originate from very frivolous provocations. The wars of Africa are of two kinds, one called killi, that which is openly avowed; and the other, tegria, plundering or ſtealing. Theſe latter are very common, particularly about the beginning of the dry ſeaſon, when the labours of harveſt are over,

[a] Park's Interior of Africa, c. xx. p. 261. 4to. [b] Id. c. xxiii. p. 312.

and proviſions are plentiful. Theſe plundering excurſions always produce ſpeedy retaliation[a].

The inſecurity of property ariſing from this conſtant expoſure to plunder, muſt neceſſarily have a moſt baneful effect on induſtry. The deſerted ſtate of all the frontier provinces, ſufficiently proves to what a degree it operates. The nature of the climate is unfavourable to the exertion of the negroe nations; and, as there are not many opportunities of turning to advantage the ſurplus produce of their labour, we cannot be ſurpriſed that they ſhould in general content themſelves with cultivating only as much ground as is neceſſary for their own ſupport[b]. Theſe cauſes appear adequately to account for the uncultivated ſtate of the country.

The waſte of life in theſe conſtant wars and predatory incurſions muſt be conſiderable; and Park agrees with Buffon in ſtating, that, independent of violent cauſes, longevity is rare among the negroes. At forty, he ſays, moſt of them became greyhaired and covered with wrinkles, and but few of them ſurvive the age of fifty-five, or ſixty[c]. Buffon attributes this ſhortneſs of life to the premature intercourſe of the ſexes, and the very early and exceſſive debauchery[d]. On this ſubject perhaps he has been led into exaggerations; but, without attributing too much to this cauſe, it ſeems agreeable to the analogy of nature to ſuppoſe, that, as the natives of hot climates arrive much earlier at maturity than the inhabitants of colder countries, they ſhould alſo periſh earlier.

According to Buffon, the negroe women are extremely prolific; but, it appears from Park, that they are in the habit of ſuckling

[a] Park's Africa, c. xxii. p. 291. & ſeq. [b] Id. c. xxi. p. 280. [c] Id. p. 274.

[d] L'uſage prematuré des femmes eſt peut-être la cauſe de la brieveté de leur vie; les enfans ſont ſi debauchés, et ſi peu contraints par les peres et meres, que des leur plus tendre jeuneſſe ils ſe livrent à tout ce que la nature leur ſuggère, rien n'eſt ſi rare que de trouver dans ce peuple quelque fille qui puiſe ſe ſouvenir du tems auquel elle a ceſſé d'etre vierge. Hiſtoire Naturelle de l'Homme, vol. vi. p. 235. 5th edit. 12mo. 31 vols.

their children two or three years, and as the husband, during this time, devotes the whole of his attention to his other wives, the family of each wife is seldom numerous[a]. Polygamy is universally allowed among the negro nations[b], and consequently without a greater superabundance of women than we have reason to suppose, many will be obliged to live unmarried. This hardship will probably fall principally on the slaves, who, according to Park, are in the proportion of three to one to the free men[c]. A master is not permitted to sell his domestic slaves, nor those born in his own house, except in case of famine, to support himself and family. We may imagine, therefore, that he will not suffer them to increase beyond the employment which he has for them. The slaves which are purchased, or the prisoners taken in war, are entirely at the disposal of their masters[d]. They are often treated with extreme severity, and in any scarcity of women arising from the polygamy of the free men, would of course be deprived of them without scruple. Few or no women, probably, remain in a state of strict celibacy; but, in proportion to the number married, the state of society does not seem to be favourable to increase.

Africa has been at all times the principal mart of slaves. The drains of its population in this way have been great and constant, particularly since their introduction into the European colonies; but perhaps, as Dr. Franklin observes, it would be difficult to find the gap that has been made by a hundred years exportation of negroes which has blackened half America[e]. For, notwithstanding this con-

[a] Park's Africa, c. xx. p. 265. As the accounts of Park, and those on which Buffon has founded his observations, are probably accounts of different nations, and certainly at different periods, we cannot infer that either is incorrect because they differ from each other: but as far as Park's observations extend, they are certainly entitled to more credit than any of the travellers which preceded him.

[b] Id. c. xx. p. 267. [c] Id. c. xxii. p. 287. [d] Id 288.

[e] Franklin's Miscell. p. 9.

stant

stant emigration, the loss of numbers from incessant war, and the checks to increase from vice and other causes, it appears, that the population is continually passing beyond the means of subsistence. According to Park, scarce years and famines are frequent. Among the four principal causes of slavery in Africa, he mentions famine next to war[a]; and the express permission given to masters to sell their domestic slaves for the support of their family, which they are not allowed to do on any less urgent occasion[b], seems to imply the not infrequent recurrence of severe want. During a great scarcity, which lasted for three years in the countries of the Gambia, great numbers of people became slaves. Park was assured by Dr. Lairdly, that at that time many free-men came, and begged with great earnestness, to be put upon his slave chain to save them from perishing with hunger[c]. While Park was in Manding, a scarcity of provisions was severely felt by the poor, as the following circumstance painfully convinced him. Every evening during his stay, he observed five or six women come to the Mansa's house, and receive each of them a certain quantity of corn. "Observe that boy," said the Mansa to him, pointing to a fine child about five years of age—"his mother has sold him to me for forty days provision for herself "and the rest of her family. I have bought another boy in the "same manner[d]." In Soosceta, a small Jallonka village, Mr. Park was informed by the master, that he could furnish no provisions, as there had lately been a great scarcity in that part of the country. He assured him, that before they had gathered in their present crops, all the inhabitants of Kullo had been for twenty-nine days without tasting corn; during which time they had supported themselves entirely on the yellow powder which is found in the pods of the nitta, so called by the natives, a species of mi-

[a] Park's Africa, c. xxii. p. 295. [b] Id. p. 288. note. [c] Id. p. 295.

[d] Id. c. xix. p. 248.

mosa,

moſa, and upon the ſeeds of the bamboo cane, which, when properly pounded and dreſſed, taſte very much like rice [a].

It may be ſaid, perhaps, that as, according to Park's account, much good land remains uncultivated in Africa, the dearths may be attributed to a want of people; but if this were the caſe, we can hardly ſuppoſe that ſuch numbers would yearly be ſent out of the country. What the negroe nations really want, is, ſecurity of property, and its general concomitant, induſtry; and without theſe, an increaſe of people would only greatly aggravate their diſtreſſes. If, in order to fill up thoſe parts that appeared to be deficient in inhabitants, we were to ſuppoſe a high bounty given on children, the effects would probably be, the increaſe of wars, the increaſe of the exportation of ſlaves, and a great increaſe of miſery, but little or no real increaſe of population.

The cuſtoms of ſome nations, and the prejudices of all, operate in ſome degree like a bounty of this kind. The Shangalla negroes, according to Bruce, hemmed in on every ſide by active and powerful enemies, and leading a life of ſevere labour, and of conſtant apprehenſion, feel but little deſire for women. It is the wife and not the man, that is the cauſe of their polygamy. Though they live in ſeparate tribes or nations, yet theſe nations are again ſubdivided into families. In fighting, each family attacks and defends by itſelf, and their's is the ſpoil and plunder who take it. The mothers, therefore, ſenſible of the diſadvantages of a ſmall family, ſeek to multiply it by all the means in their power; and it is by their importunity, that the huſband ſuffers himſelf to be overcome [b]. The motives to polygamy among the Galla, are deſcribed to be the ſame, and in both nations, the firſt wife courts the alliance of a ſecond, for her huſband; and the principal argument that ſhe makes

[a] Park's Africa, c. xxv. p. 336.
[b] Bruce's Travels to diſcover the Source of the Nile, vol. ii. p. 556. 4to.

uſe of, is, that their families may be joined together and be ſtrong, and that her children, by being few in number, may not fall a prey to their enemies in the day of battle [a]. It is highly probable that this extreme deſire of having large families, defeats its own purpoſe; and that the poverty and miſery which it occaſions, cauſe fewer children to grow up to maturity than if the parents had confined their attention to the rearing of a ſmaller number.

Bruce is a great friend to polygamy, and defends it in the only way in which it is capable of being defended, by aſſerting, that, in the countries in which it principally prevails, the proportion of girls to boys born, is two or three to one. A fact ſo extraordinary, however, cannot be admitted upon the authority of thoſe vague inquiries on which he founds his opinion. That there are conſiderably more women living, than men, in theſe climates, is in the higheſt degree probable. Even in Europe, where it is known with certainty that more boys are born than girls, the women in general exceed the men in number; and we may imagine, that, in hot and unhealthy climates, and in a barbarous ſtate of ſociety, the accidents to which the men are expoſed muſt be very greatly increaſed. The women by leading a more ſedentary life, would ſuffer leſs from the effects of a ſcorching ſun and ſwampy exhalations. They would in general be more exempt from the diſorders ariſing from debauchery; but above all, they would eſcape in great meaſure the ravages of war. In a ſtate of ſociety in which hoſtilities never ceaſe, the drains of men, from this cauſe alone, muſt occaſion a great diſproportion of the ſexes, particularly where it is the cuſtom, as related of the Galla in Abyſſinia [b], to maſſacre indiſcriminately all the males, and ſave only the marriageable women from the general deſtruction. The actual diſproportion of the ſexes ariſing from theſe cauſes, probably, firſt gave riſe to the permiſſion of polygamy, and has, perhaps,

[a] Bruce's Travels to diſcover the Source of the Nile, vol. ii. p. 223.
[b] Id. vol. iv. p. 411.

contributed to make us more eaſily believe, that the proportion of male and female children, in hot climates, is very different from what we have experienced it to be, in the temperate zone.

Bruce, with the uſual prejudices on this ſubject, ſeems to think that the celibacy of a part of the women is fatal to the population of a country. He obſerves of Jidda, that, on account of the great ſcarcity of proviſions which is the reſult of an extraordinary concourſe of people to a place almoſt deſtitute of the neceſſaries of life, few of the inhabitants can avail themſelves of the privilege granted by Mahomet. They cannot, therefore, marry more than one wife; and from this cauſe ariſes, he ſays, the want of people and the large number of unmarried women [a]. But it is evident, that the want of people in this barren ſpot ariſes ſolely from the want of proviſions, and that if each man had half a dozen wives, the number of people could not be much increaſed by it.

In Arabia Felix, according to Bruce, where every ſort of proviſion is exceedingly cheap, where the fruits of the ground, the general food of man, are produced ſpontaneouſly, the ſupport of a number of wives coſts no more than that of ſo many ſlaves or ſervants; their food is the ſame, and a blue cotton ſhirt, a habit common to them all, is not more chargeable for the one than for the other. The conſequence is, he ſays, that celibacy in women is prevented, and the number of people increaſed in a fourfold ratio by polygamy, to what it is in thoſe countries that are monogamous [b]. And yet, notwithſtanding this fourfold increaſe, it does not appear that any part of Arabia is really very populous.

The effect of polygamy in increaſing the number of married women and preventing celibacy, is beyond diſpute; but how far this may tend to increaſe the actual population, is a very different conſideration. It may perhaps contribute to preſs the population harder againſt the limits of the food; but the ſqualid and hopeleſs poverty which

[a] Bruce, vol. i. c. xi. p. 280. [b] Id. vol. i. c. xi. p. 281.

this

this occaſions, is by no means favourable to induſtry; and in a climate in which there appears to be many prediſpoſing cauſes of ſickneſs, it is difficult to conceive that this ſtate of wretchedneſs does not powerfully contribute to the extraordinary mortality which has been obſerved in ſome of theſe countries.

According to Bruce, the whole coaſt of the Red Sea, from Suez to Babelmandel, is extremely unwholeſome, but more eſpecially between the tropics. Violent fevers, called there nedad, make the principal figure in this fatal liſt, and generally terminate the third day in death [a]. Fear frequently ſeizes ſtrangers upon the firſt ſight of the great mortality which they obſerve on their firſt arrival.

Jidda and all the parts of Arabia adjacent to the eaſtern coaſt of the Red Sea, are in the ſame manner very unwholeſome [b].

In Gondar, fevers perpetually reign, and the inhabitants are all the colour of a corpſe [c].

In Sirè, one of the fineſt countries in the world, putrid fevers of the very worſt kind are almoſt conſtant [d]. In the low grounds of Abyſſinia, in general, malignant tertians occaſion a great mortality [e]. And every where, the ſmall-pox makes great ravages, particularly among the nations bordering on Abyſſinia, where it ſometimes extinguiſhes whole tribes [f].

The effect of poverty, bad diet, and its almoſt conſtant concomitant want of cleanlineſs, in aggravating malignant diſtempers, is well known; and this kind of wretchedneſs ſeems generally to prevail. Of Tchagaſſa, near Gondar, Bruce obſerves, that the inhabitants, notwithſtanding their threefold harveſts, are miſerably poor [g]. At Adowa, the capital of Tigré, he makes the ſame remark, and applies it to all the Abyſſinian farmers. The land is let yearly to the higheſt bidder, and, in general, the landlord furniſhes the ſeed

[a] Bruce, vol. iii. p. 33. [b] Id. vol. i. 279. [c] Id. vol. iii. p. 178.
[d] Id. p. 153. [e] Id. vol. iv. p. 22. [f] Id. vol. iii. c. iii. p. 68. c. vii. p. 178. vol. i. c. xiii. p. 353. [g] Id. vol. iii. c. vii. p. 195.

on

on condition to receive half of the produce; but, it is ſaid, that he is a very indulgent maſter who does not take another quarter for the riſk he has run; ſo that the quantity which comes to the ſhare of the huſbandman is not more than ſufficient to afford a bare ſuſtenance to his wretched family [a]. The Agows, one of the moſt conſiderable nations of Abyſſinia in point of number, are deſcribed by Bruce as living in a ſtate of miſery and penury ſcarcely to be conceived. We ſaw a number of women, he ſays, wrinkled and ſunburnt, ſo as ſcarcely to appear human, wandering about under a burning ſun, with one and ſometimes two children upon their backs, gathering the ſeeds of bent graſs to make a kind of bread [b]. The Agow women begin to bear children at eleven years old. They marry generally about that age, and there is no ſuch thing as barrenneſs known among them [c]. In Dixan, one of the frontier towns of Abyſſinia, the only trade is that of ſelling children. Five hundred are exported annually to Arabia; and in times of ſcarcity, Bruce obſerves, four times that number [d].

In Abyſſinia, polygamy does not regularly prevail. Bruce, indeed, makes rather a ſtrange aſſertion on this ſubject, and ſays, that though we read from the Jeſuits a great deal about marriage and polygamy, yet that there is nothing which may be averred more truly, than that there is no ſuch thing as marriage in Abyſſinia [e]. But, however this may be, it appears clear, that few or no women live a life of celibacy in Abyſſinia, and that the prolific powers of nature are nearly all called into action, except as far as they are checked by promiſcuous intercourſe. This, however, from the ſtate of manners deſcribed by Bruce, muſt operate very powerfully [f].

The check to population from war, appears to be exceſſive. For the laſt four hundred years, according to Bruce, it has never ceaſed to lay deſolate this unhappy country [g]; and the ſavage manner in

[a] Bruce, vol. iii. c. v. p. 124. [b] Id. c. xix. p. 738. [c] Id. p. 739.
[d] Id. vol. iii. c. iii. p. 88. [e] Id. c. xi. p. 306. [f] Id. p. 292.
[g] Id. vol. iv. p. 119.

which

which it is carried on, ſurrounds it with tenfold deſtruction. When Bruce firſt entered Abyſſinia, he ſaw on every ſide ruined villages deſtroyed to the loweſt foundation, by Raſs Michael in his march to Gondar [a]. In the courſe of the civil wars, while Bruce was in the country, he ſays, "The rebels had begun to lay waſte "Dembea, and burnt all the villages in the plain, from ſouth to "weſt; making it like a deſert between Michael and Faſil.**** "The king often aſcended to the top of the tower of his palace, "and contemplated, with the greateſt diſpleaſure, the burning of "his rich villages in Dembea [b]." In another place, he ſays, "the "whole country of Degweſſa was totally deſtroyed; men, women, "and children, were entirely extirpated, without diſtinction of age "or ſex; the houſes raſed to the ground, and the country about it "left as deſolate as after the deluge. The villages belonging to the "king were as ſeverely treated; a univerſal cry was heard from all "parts, but no one dared to ſuggeſt any means of help [c]." In Maitſha, one of the provinces of Abyſſinia, he was told, that if ever he met an old man, he might be ſure that he was a ſtranger, as all that were natives died by the lance young [d].

If the picture of the ſtate of Abyſſinia, drawn by Bruce, be in any degree near the truth, it places, in a ſtrong point of view, the force of that principle of increaſe which preſerves a population fully up to the level of the means of ſubſiſtence, under the checks of war, peſtilential diſeaſes, and promiſcuous intercourſe, all operating in an exceſſive degree.

The nations which border on Abyſſinia are univerſally ſhort-lived. A Shangalla woman at twenty-two, is, according to Bruce, more wrinkled and deformed by age than is an European woman at ſixty [e]. It would appear therefore, that, in all theſe countries, as among the northern ſhepherds, in the times of their conſtant emigrations,

[a] Bruce, vol. iii. c. vii. p. 192. [b] Id. vol. iv. c. v. p. 112.
[c] Id. vol. iv. p. 258. [d] Id. c. i. p. 14. [e] Id. vol. ii. p. 559.

there

there is a very rapid ſucceſſion of human beings, and the difference in the two inſtances is, that our northern anceſtors died out of their own country, whereas theſe die at home. If accurate regiſters of mortality were kept among theſe nations, I have little doubt that it would appear, that, including the mortality from wars, 1 in 17 or 18 at the leaſt, die annually, inſtead of 1 in 34 or 36, as in the generality of European ſtates.

The deſcription which Bruce gives of ſome parts of the country which he paſſed through on his return home, preſents a picture more dreadful even than the ſtate of Abyſſinia, and ſhews how little population depends on the birth of children, in compariſon of the production of food, and of thoſe circumſtances of natural and political ſituation which influence this produce.

" At half paſt ſix," Bruce ſays, " we arrived at Garigana, a " village whoſe inhabitants had all periſhed with hunger the year " before; their wretched bones being all unburied, and ſcattered " upon the ſurface of the ground where the village formerly ſtood. " We encamped among the bones of the dead, no ſpace could be " found free from them [a]."

Of another town or village in his route, he obſerves, " The " ſtrength of Teawa was 25 horſe. The reſt of the inhabitants " might be 1200, naked, miſerable, and deſpicable Arabs, like the " reſt of thoſe which live in villages.****Such was the ſtate of " Teawa. Its conſequence was only to remain till the Daveina " Arabs ſhould reſolve to attack it, when its cornfields being burnt " and deſtroyed in a night, by a multitude of horſemen, the bones " of its inhabitants ſcattered upon the earth, would be all its re- " mains like thoſe of the miſerable village of Garigana [b].

" There is no water between Teawa and Beyla. Once Ingedi- " dema and a number of villages were ſupplied with water from " wells, and had large crops of Indian corn ſown about their poſ-

[a] Bruce, vol. iv. p. 349. [b] Id. p. 353.

" ſeſſions.

" ſeſſions. The curſe of that country the Arabs Daveina have de- " ſtroyed Ingedidema, and all the villages about it; filled up their " wells, burnt their crops, and expoſed all the inhabitants to die " by famine [a]."

Soon after leaving Sennaar, he ſays, " We began now to ſee " the effects of the quantity of rain having failed. There was little " corn ſown, and that ſo late, as to be ſcarcely above ground. It " ſeems the rains begin later as they paſs northward. Many people " were here employed in gathering graſs-ſeeds to make a very bad " kind of bread. Theſe people appear perfect ſkeletons, and no " wonder, as they live upon ſuch fare. Nothing increaſes the dan- " ger of travelling and prejudice againſt ſtrangers, more than the " ſcarcity of proviſions in the country through which you are " to paſs [b].

" Came to Eltic, a ſtraggling village about half a mile from the " Nile, in the north of a large bare plain; all paſture, except the " banks of the river which are covered with wood. We now no " longer ſaw any corn ſown. The people here were at the ſame " miſerable employment as thoſe we had ſeen before, that of gather- " ing graſs-ſeeds [c]."

Under ſuch circumſtances of climate and political ſituation, though a greater degree of foreſight, induſtry, and ſecurity, might conſiderably better their condition, and increaſe their population, the birth of a greater number of children without theſe concomitants, would only aggravate their miſery, and leave their population where it was.

The ſame may be ſaid of the once flouriſhing and populous country of Egypt. Its preſent depreſſed ſtate has not been cauſed by the weakening of the principle of increaſe, but by the weakening of the principle of induſtry and foreſight, from the inſecurity of property conſequent on a moſt tyrannical and oppreſſive government.

[a] Bruce, vol. iv. p. 411. [b] Id. p. 511. [c] Ibid.

The principle of increaſe in Egypt, at preſent, does all that is poſſible for it to do. It keeps the population fully up to the level of the means of ſubſiſtence; and, were its power ten times greater than it really is, it could do no more.

The remains of ancient works, the vaſt lakes, canals, and large conduits for water deſtined to keep the Nile under controul, ſerving as reſervoirs to ſupply a ſcanty year, and as drains and outlets to prevent the ſuperabundance of water in wet years, ſufficiently indicate to us, that the ancients by art and induſtry contrived to fertilize a much greater quantity of land from the overflowings of their river, than is done at preſent; and to prevent, in ſome meaſure, the diſtreſſes which are now ſo frequently experienced from a redundant or inſufficient inundation [a]. It is ſaid of the governor Petronius, that, effecting by art what was denied by nature, he cauſed abundance to prevail in Egypt under the diſadvantage of ſuch a deficient inundation, as had always before been accompanied by dearth [b]. A flood too great is as fatal to the huſbandman, as one that is deficient; and the ancients had, in conſequence, drains and outlets to ſpread the ſuperfluous waters over the thirſty ſands of Lybia, and render even the deſert habitable. Theſe works are now all out of repair, and by ill management often produce miſchief inſtead of good. The cauſes of this neglect, and conſequently of the diminiſhed means of ſubſiſtence, are obviouſly to be traced to the extreme ignorance and brutality of the government, and the wretched ſtate of the people. The Mamelukes, in whom the principal power reſides, think only of enriching themſelves, and employ for this purpoſe what appears to them to be the ſimpleſt method, that of ſeizing wealth wherever it may be found, of wreſting it by violence from the poſſeſſor, and of impoſing continually new and arbitrary contributions [c]. Their ignorance and brutality, and the conſtant ſtate of

[a] Bruce, vol. iii. c. xvii. p. 710.
[b] Voyage de Volney, tom. i. c. iii. p. 33. 8vo. [c] Id. c. xii. p. 170.

alarm

alarm in which they live, prevent them from having any views of enriching the country, the better to prepare it for their plunder. No public works therefore are to be expected from the government, and no individual proprietor dares to undertake any improvement which might imply the poſſeſſion of capital, as it would probably be the immediate ſignal of his deſtruction. Under ſuch circumſtances, we cannot be ſurpriſed, that the ancient works are neglected, that the ſoil is ill cultivated, and that the means of ſubſiſtence, and conſequently the population, are greatly reduced. But ſuch is the natural fertility of the Delta from the inundations of the Nile, that even without any capital employed upon the land, without a right of ſucceſſion, and conſequently almoſt without a right of property, it ſtill maintains a conſiderable population in proportion to its extent; ſufficient, if property were ſecure, and induſtry well directed, gradually to improve and extend the cultivation of the country, and reſtore it to its former ſtate of proſperity. It may be ſafely pronounced of Egypt, that it is not the want of population that has checked its induſtry, but the want of induſtry that has checked its population.

The cauſes which keep down the population to the level of the preſent contracted means of ſubſiſtence are but too obvious. The peaſants are allowed for their maintenance only ſufficient to keep them alive [a]. A miſerable ſort of bread made of doura without leaven or flavour, cold water, and raw onions, make up the whole of their diet. Meat and fat, of which they are paſſionately fond, never appear but on great occaſions, and among thoſe who are more at their eaſe. Their habitations are huts made of earth, where a ſtranger would be ſuffocated with the heat and ſmoke; and where the diſeaſes that are generated by want of cleanlineſs, by moiſture, and by bad nouriſhment, often viſit them and commit great ravages. To theſe phyſical evils are added, a conſtant ſtate of alarm, the

[a] Voyage de Volney, tom. i. c. xii. p. 172.

fear of the plunder of the Arabs, and the viſits of the Mamelukes, the ſpirit of revenge that is tranſmitted in families, and all the evils of a continued civil war [a].

In the year 1783 the plague was very fatal; and in 1784 and 1785, a dreadful famine reigned in Egypt, from a deficiency in the inundations of the Nile. Volney draws a frightful picture of the miſery that was ſuffered on this occaſion. The ſtreets of Cairo, which at firſt were full of beggars, were ſoon cleared of all theſe objects, who either periſhed or fled. A vaſt number of unfortunate wretches, in order to eſcape death, ſpread themſelves over all the neighbouring countries, and the towns of Syria were inundated with Egyptians. The ſtreets, and public places were crowded with extenuated and dying ſkeletons. All the moſt revolting modes of ſatisfying the cravings of hunger were reſorted to; the moſt diſguſting food was devoured with eagerneſs; and Volney mentions the having ſeen, under the walls of ancient Alexandria, two miſerable wretches ſeated on the carcaſe of a camel, and diſputing with the dogs its putrid fleſh. The depopulation of the two years was eſtimated at one ſixth of all the inhabitants [b].

[a] Volney, tom. i. c. xii. p. 173. This ſketch of the ſtate of the peaſantry in Egypt, given by Volney, ſeems to be nearly confirmed by all the other writers on the ſubject; and particularly in a valuable paper intitled, *Conſiderations generales ſur l'Agriculture de l'Egypte, par L. Reynier.* (Memoirs ſur L'Egypte, tom. iv. p. 1.)

[b] Voy. de Volney, tom. i. c. xii. ſ. ii.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

Of the Checks to Population in Siberia, Northern and Southern.

THE inhabitants of the moſt northern parts of Aſia ſubſiſt chiefly by hunting and fiſhing; and we may ſuppoſe, therefore, that the checks to their increaſe are of the ſame nature as thoſe which prevail among the American Indians; except that the check from war is conſiderably leſs, and the check from famine, perhaps, greater than in the temperate regions of America. M. de Leſſeps, who travelled from Kamtſchatka to Peterſburgh with the papers of the unfortunate Perouſe, draws a melancholy picture of the miſery that is ſometimes ſuffered in this part of the world from a ſcarcity of food. He obſerves, while at Bolcheretſk, a village of Kamtſchatka, "very heavy "rains are injurious in this country, becauſe they occaſion floods, "which drive the fiſh from the rivers. A famine, the moſt diſtreſſ- "ing to the poor Kampſchadales, is the reſult, as it happened laſt "year in all the villages along the weſtern coaſt of the peninſula. "This dreadful calamity occurs ſo frequently in this quarter, that "the inhabitants are obliged to abandon their dwellings, and repair "with their families to the borders of the Kamtſchatka river, where "they hope to find better reſources, fiſh being more plentiful in this "river. M. Kasloff (the Ruſſian officer who conducted M. de "Leſſeps) had intended to proceed along the weſtern coaſt; but "the news of this famine determined him, contrary to his wiſhes, "to return, rather than be driven to the neceſſity of ſtopping half

 "way,

" way, or periſhing with hunger [a]." Though a different route was purſued, yet in the courſe of the journey almoſt all the dogs which drew the ſledges died for want of food; and every dog, as ſoon as he failed, was immediately devoured by the others [b].

Even at Okotſk, a town of conſiderable trade, the inhabitants wait with hungry impatience for the breaking up of the river Okhota in the ſpring. When M. de Leſſeps was there, the ſtock of dried fiſh was nearly exhauſted. Meal was ſo dear, that the common people were unable to purchaſe it. On drawing the ſeine prodigious numbers of ſmall fiſh were caught, and the joy and clamour redoubled at the ſight. The moſt famiſhed were firſt ſerved. M. de Leſſeps feelingly ſays, " I could not refrain from tears on perceiving the ravenouſneſs " of theſe poor creatures;**** whole families contended for the fiſh, " which were devoured raw before my eyes [c]."

Throughout all the northern parts of Siberia, the ſmall-pox is very fatal. In Kampſchatka, according to M. de Leſſeps, it has carried off three fourths [d] of the native inhabitants.

Pallas confirms this account; and, in deſcribing the Oſtiacks on the Obi who live nearly in the ſame manner, obſerves, that this diſorder makes dreadful ravages among them, and may be conſidered as the principal check to their increaſe [e]. The extraordinary mortality of the ſmall-pox among theſe people, is very naturally accounted for, from the extreme heat, filth, and putrid air, of their underground habitations. Three or four Oſtiack families are crowded together in one yourt, and nothing can be ſo diſguſting as their mode of living. They never waſh their hands, and the putrid remains of the fiſh, and the excrements of the children, are never cleared away. From this deſcription, ſays Pallas, one may eaſily form an idea of the ſtench, the fœtid vapours, and humidity of their yourts [f]. They have ſeldom many children. It is a rare thing to ſee three or four in one family.

[a] Travels in Kamtſchatka, vol. i. p. 147. 8vo. Eng. tranſ. 1790. [b] Id. p. 264. [c] Id. vol. ii. p. 252, 253. [d] Id. vol. i. p. 128. [e] Voy. de Pallas, tom. iv. p. 68. 4to. 5 vols. 1788. Paris. [f] Id. p. 60.

The

The reaſon which Pallas gives, is, that ſo many die young on account of their bad nouriſhment [a]. To this, perhaps, ſhould be added the ſtate of miſerable and laborious ſervitude to which the women are condemned [b], which certainly prevents them from being prolific.

The Samoyedes, Pallas thinks, are not quite ſo dirty as the Oſtiacks, becauſe they are more in motion during the winter in hunting; but he deſcribes the ſtate of the women amongſt them as a ſtill more wretched and laborious ſervitude [c]; and conſequently the check to population from this cauſe would be greater.

Moſt of the natives of theſe inhoſpitable regions live nearly in the ſame miſerable manner, which it would be, therefore, mere repetition to deſcribe. From what has been ſaid, we may form an idea of the principal checks that keep the actual population down to the level of the ſcanty means of ſubſiſtence which theſe dreary countries afford.

In ſome of the ſouthern parts of Siberia, and in the diſtricts adjoining the Wolga, the Ruſſian travellers deſcribe the ſoil to be of extraordinary fertility. It conſiſts in general of a fine black mould of ſo rich a nature as not to require, or even to bear, dreſſing. Manure only makes the corn grow too luxuriantly, and ſubjects it to fall to the ground and be ſpoiled. The only mode of recruiting this kind of land which is practiſed, is, by leaving it one year out of three in fallow, and proceeding in this way, there are ſome grounds, the vigour of which is ſaid to be inexhauſtible [d]. Yet notwithſtanding the facility with which, as it would appear, the moſt plentiful ſubſiſtence might be procured, many of theſe diſtricts are thinly peopled, and in none of them, perhaps, does population increaſe in the proportion that might be expected from the nature of the ſoil.

Such countries ſeem to be under that moral impoſſibility of increaſing, which is well deſcribed by Sir James Steuart [e]. Man, though he may often be produced without a ſufficient demand for

[a] Voy. de Pallas, tom. iv. p. 72. [b] Id. p. 60. [c] Id. p. 92. [d] Id. p. 5. [e] Polit. Econ. b. i. c. v. p. 30. 4to.

him,

him, cannot really multiply and proſper unleſs his labour be wanted; and the reaſon that the population goes on ſo ſlowly in theſe countries, is, that there is very little demand for men. The mode of agriculture is deſcribed to be extremely ſimple, and to require very few labourers. In ſome places the ſeed is merely thrown on the fallow[a]. The buck-wheat is a common culture; and though it is ſown very thin, yet one ſowing will laſt five or ſix years, and produce every year twelve or fifteen times the original quantity. The ſeed which falls during the time of the harveſt is ſufficient for the next year, and it is only neceſſary to paſs a harrow once over it in the ſpring. And this is continued, till the fertility of the ſoil begins to diminiſh. It is obſerved, very juſtly, that the cultivation of no kind of grain can ſo exactly ſuit the indolent inhabitants of the plains of Siberia[b].

With ſuch a ſyſtem of agriculture, and with few or no manufactures, the demand for men muſt be very eaſily ſatisfied. Corn will undoubtedly be very cheap; but labour will be in proportion ſtill cheaper. Though the farmer may be able to provide an ample quantity of food for his own children, yet the wages of his labourer will not be ſufficient to enable him to rear up a family with eaſe.

If, from obſerving the deficiency of population, compared with the fertility of the ſoil, we were to endeavour to remedy it by giving a bounty upon children, and thus enabling the labourer to rear up a greater number; what would be the conſequence? Nobody would want the work of theſe ſupernumerary labourers that were thus brought into the market. Though the ample ſubſiſtence of a man for a day might be purchaſed for a penny, yet nobody will give theſe people a farthing for their labour. The farmer is able to do all that he wiſhes, all that he thinks neceſſary in the cultivation of the ſoil, by means of his own family, and the one or two labourers which he might have before. As theſe people, therefore, can give him nothing

[a] Voy. de Pallas, tom. i. p. 250.
[b] Decouv. Ruſſ. vol. iv. p. 329. 8vo. 4 vols. Berne.

that

that he wants, it is not to be expected that he ſhould overcome his natural indolence, and undertake a larger and more troubleſome concern, merely to provide them gratuitouſly with food. In ſuch a ſtate of things, when the very ſmall demand for manufacturing labour is ſatisfied, what are the reſt to do? They are, in fact, as completely without the means of ſubſiſtence, as if they were living upon a barren ſand. They muſt either emigrate to ſome place where their work is wanted, or periſh miſerably of poverty. Should they be prevented from ſuffering this laſt extremity by a ſcanty ſubſiſtence given to them, in conſequence of a ſcanty and only occaſional uſe of their labour, it is evident, that though they might exiſt themſelves, they would not be in a capacity to marry, and continue to increaſe the population.

It might be ſuppoſed, perhaps, that if there were much good land unuſed, the redundant population would naturally betake itſelf to the cultivation of it, and raiſe its own food. But though there are many countries where good land remains uncultivated, there are very few where it may be obtained by the firſt perſon who chuſes to occupy it. Even were this the caſe, there would be ſtill ſome obſtacles remaining. The ſupernumerary labourer whom I have deſcribed, has no funds whatever, that can enable him to build a houſe, to purchaſe ſtock and utenſils, and to ſubſiſt till he has brought his new land into proper order, and obtained an adequate return. Even the children of the farmer, when they grow up, would find it very difficult to obtain theſe neceſſary funds. In a ſtate of ſociety where the market for corn is extremely narrow, and the price very low, the cultivators are always poor; and though they may be able amply to provide for their family, in the ſimple article of food; yet they cannot realiſe a capital to divide among their children, and enable them to undertake the cultivation of freſh land. Though this neceſſary capital might be very ſmall, yet even this ſmall ſum, the farmer perhaps cannot acquire; for when he grows a greater quantity of corn than uſual, he finds no purchaſer

for it [a], and cannot convert it into any permanent article, which will enable any of his children to command an equivalent portion of ſubſiſtence or labour in future. In general, therefore, he contents himſelf with growing only what is ſufficient for the immediate demands of his family, and the narrow market to which he is accuſtomed. And if he has a large family, many of his children probably fall into the rank of labourers, and their further increaſe is checked, as in the caſe of the labourer before deſcribed, by a want of the means of ſubſiſtence.

It is not therefore a direct encouragement to the procreation and rearing of children that is wanted in theſe countries, in order to increaſe their population; but the creation of an effectual demand for the produce of the ſoil, by promoting the means of its diſtribution. This can only be effected, either by the introduction of manufactures, and by inſpiring the cultivator with a taſte for them, which muſt neceſſarily be a work of time; or by aſſiſting new coloniſts and the children of the old cultivators with capital to enable them to occupy ſucceſſively, and bring into cultivation, all the land that is fit for it.

The late Empreſs of Ruſſia adopted both theſe means of increaſing the population in her dominions. She encouraged both manufacturers and cultivators; and furniſhed to foreigners of either deſcription, capital, and funds for ſubſiſtence, free of all intereſt for a certain term of years [b]. Theſe well-directed efforts, added to what had been done by Peter I. had, as might be expected, a conſiderable effect; and the Ruſſian territories, particularly the Aſiatic part of them, which had ſlumbered for centuries, with a population nearly ſtationary, or at moſt increaſing very languidly, ſeem to have made a ſudden ſtart of late years. Though the population of the more fertile provinces of Siberia be ſtill very inadequate to the richneſs of the ſoil; yet in ſome of them, agriculture flouriſhes in no inconſiderable degree, and

[a] Il y a fort peu de debit dans le pays, parce que le plupart des habitans ſon cultivateurs et elevent eux memes des beſtiaux. Voy. de Pallas, tom. iv. p. 4.

[b] Tooke's View of Ruſſian Empire, vol. ii. p. 242.

great

great quantities of corn are grown. In a general dearth which happened in 1769, the province of Iſetſk was able, notwithſtanding a ſcanty harveſt, to ſupply, in the uſual manner, the founderies and forges of Ural, beſides preſerving from the horrors of famine all the neighbouring provinces [a]. And in the territory of Kraſnoyarſk, on the ſhores of the Yeniſſey, in ſpite of the indolence and drunkenneſs of the inhabitants, the abundance of corn is ſo great, that no inſtance has ever been known of a general failure [b]. Pallas juſtly obſerves, if we conſider that Siberia, not two hundred years ago, was a wilderneſs utterly unknown, and, in point of population, was even far behind the almoſt deſert tracts of North America, we may juſtly be aſtoniſhed at the preſent ſtate of this part of the world, and at the multitude of its Ruſſian inhabitants, who in numbers greatly exceed the natives [c].

When Pallas was in Siberia, proviſions in theſe fertile diſtricts, particularly in the environs of Kraſnoyarſk, were moſt extraordinarily cheap. A pood, or forty pounds, of wheaten flour, was ſold for about twopence halfpenny, an ox for five or ſix ſhillings, and a cow for three or four [d]. This unnatural cheapneſs, owing to a want of vent for the products of the ſoil, was perhaps the principal check to the population. In the period which has ſince elapſed, the prices have riſen conſiderably [e]; and we may conclude, therefore, that the object principally wanted has been attained, and that the population proceeds with rapid ſtrides.

Pallas, however, complains, that the intentions of the Empreſs reſpecting the peopling of Siberia, were not always well fulfilled by her ſubordinate agents, and that the proprietors, to whoſe care this was left, often ſent off coloniſts, in every reſpect unfit for the purpoſe, in regard to age, diſeaſes, and want of induſtrious habits [f]. Even the

[a] Voy. de Pallas, tom. iii. p. 10. [b] Id. tom. iv. p. 3. [c] Id. p. 6.
[d] Id. p. 3. [e] Tooke's View of Ruſſian Empire, vol. iii. p. 239.
[f] Voy. de Pallas, tom. v. p. 5.

German ſettlers in the diſtricts near the Wolga, are, according to Pallas, deficient in this laſt point [a], and this is certainly a moſt eſſential one. It may, indeed, be ſafely aſſerted, that the importation of induſtry is of infinitely more conſequence to the population of a country, than the importation of men and women conſidered only with regard to numbers. Were it poſſible at once to change the habits of a whole people, and to direct its induſtry at pleaſure, no government would ever be reduced to the neceſſity of encouraging foreign ſettlers. But to change long-exiſting habits is of all enterprizes the moſt difficult. Many years muſt elapſe under the moſt favourable circumſtances, before the Siberian boor will poſſeſs the induſtry and activity of an Engliſh labourer. And though the Ruſſian government has been inceſſant in its endeavours, to convert the paſtoral tribes of Siberia to agriculture; yet many obſtinately perſiſt in bidding defiance to any attempts that can be made to wean them from their injurious ſloth [b].

Many obſtacles concur to prevent that rapid growth of the Ruſſian colonies which the procreative power would permit. Some of the low countries of Siberia are unhealthy, from the number of marſhes which they contain [c], and great and waſting epizooties are frequent among the cattle [d]. In the diſtricts near the Wolga, though the ſoil is naturally rich, yet droughts are ſo frequent, that there is ſeldom more than one good harveſt out of three [e]. The coloniſts of Saratof, after they had been ſettled for ſome years, were obliged to remove on this account to other diſtricts, and the whole expence of building their houſes, amounting to above a million of rubles, was remitted to them by the Empreſs [f]. For purpoſes either of ſafety or convenience, the houſes of each colony are all built contiguous, or nearly ſo, and not ſcattered about upon the different farms. A want

[a] Voy. de Pallas, tom. v. p. 253. [b] Tooke's Ruſſian Empire, vol. iii. p 313.
[c] Voy. de Pallas, tom. iii. p. 16. [d] Id. p. 17. tom. v. p. 411.
[e] Id. p. 252, et ſeq. [f] Tooke's Ruſſian Empire, vol. ii. p. 245.

of

of room is, in conſequence, ſoon felt in the immediate neighbourhood of the village, while the diſtant grounds remain in a ſtate of very imperfect cultivation. On obſerving this in the colony of Kotſchesnaia, Pallas propoſed that a certain part ſhould be removed by the Empreſs to other diſtricts, that the remainder might be left more at their eaſe [a]. This propoſal ſeems to prove that ſpontaneous diviſions of this kind did not often take place, and that the children of the coloniſts might not always find an eaſy mode of ſettling themſelves, and rearing up freſh families. In the flouriſhing colony of the Moravian brethren at Sarepta, it is ſaid, that the young people cannot marry without the conſent of their prieſts; and that their conſent is not in general granted till late [b]. It would appear, therefore, that among the obſtacles to the increaſe of population, even in theſe new colonies, the preventive check has its ſhare. Population can never increaſe with great rapidity but when the price of common labour is very high, as in America; and from the ſtate of ſociety in this part of the Ruſſian territories, and the conſequent want of a proper vent for the produce of induſtry, this effect, which uſually accompanies new colonies, and is eſſential to their rapid growth, does not take place in any conſiderable degree.

[a] Voy. de Pallas, tom. v. p. 253. [b] Id. p. 175.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

Of the Checks to Population in the Turkiſh Dominions, and Perſia.

In the Aſiatic parts of the Turkiſh dominions, it will not be difficult, from the accounts of travellers, to trace the checks to population, and the cauſes of its preſent decay; and as there is little difference in the manners of the Turks, whether they inhabit Europe or Aſia, it will not be worth while to make them the ſubject of diſtinct conſideration.

The fundamental cauſe of the low ſtate of population in Turkey, compared with its extent of territory, is undoubtedly the nature of the government. Its tyranny, its feebleneſs, its bad laws, and worſe adminiſtration of them, with the conſequent inſecurity of property, throw ſuch obſtacles in the way of agriculture, that the means of ſubſiſtence are neceſſarily decreaſing yearly, and with them, of courſe, the number of people. The miri, or general land tax, paid to the ſultan, is in itſelf moderate [a]; but by abuſes inherent in the Turkiſh government, the pachas, and their agents, have found out the means of rendering it ruinous. Though they cannot abſolutely alter the impoſt which has been eſtabliſhed by the ſultan, they have introduced a multitude of changes, which, without the name, produce all the effects of an augmentation [b]. In Syria, according to Volney, having the greateſt part of the land at their diſpoſal, they clog their conceſſions with burdenſome conditions, and exact the half, and ſometimes even two thirds, of the crop. When the harveſt is over, they

[a] Voy. de Volney, tom. ii. c. xxxvii. p. 373. (8vo. 1787.)

[b] Ibid.

cavil

cavil about loſſes, and, as they have the power in their hands, they carry off what they think proper. If the ſeaſon fail, they ſtill exact the ſame ſum, and expoſe every thing that the poor peaſant poſſeſſes to ſale. To theſe conſtant oppreſſions, are added a thouſand accidental extortions. Sometimes a whole village is laid under contribution for ſome real or imaginary offence. Arbitrary preſents are exacted on the acceſſion of each governor; graſs, barley, and ſtraw, are demanded for his horſes; and commiſſions are multiplied, that the ſoldiers who carry the orders may live upon the ſtarving peaſants, whom they treat with the moſt brutal inſolence and injuſtice [a].

The conſequence of theſe depredations is, that the poorer claſs of inhabitants, ruined, and unable any longer to pay the miri, become a burden to the village, or fly into the cities; but the miri is unalterable, and the ſum to be levied muſt be found ſomewhere. The portion of thoſe who are thus driven from their homes falls on the remaining inhabitants, whoſe burden, though at firſt light, now becomes inſupportable. If they ſhould be viſited by two years of drought and famine, the whole village is ruined and abandoned; and the tax, which it ſhould have paid, is levied on the neighbouring lands [b].

The ſame mode of proceeding takes place, with regard to the tax on the Chriſtians, which has been raiſed by theſe means from three, five, and eleven piaſtres, at which it was firſt fixed, to thirty-five and forty, which abſolutely impoveriſhes thoſe on whom it is levied, and obliges them to leave the country. It has been remarked, that theſe exactions have made a rapid progreſs during the laſt forty years, from which time are dated the decline of agriculture, the depopulation of the country, and the diminution in the quantity of ſpecie carried to Conſtantinople [c].

The peaſants are every where reduced to a little flat cake of barley, or doura, onions, lentils, and water. Not to loſe any part of their

[a] Voy. de Volney, tom. ii. c. xxxvii. [b] Id. c. xxxvii. p. 375. [c] Id. p. 376.

corn,

corn, they leave in it all ſorts of wild grain, which often produces bad conſequences. In the mountains of Lebanon and Nablous, in time of dearth, they gather the acorns from the oaks, which they eat after boiling, or roaſting them on the aſhes [a].

By a natural conſequence of this miſery, the art of cultivation is in the moſt deplorable ſtate. The huſbandman is almoſt without inſtruments, and thoſe he has, are very bad. His plough is frequently no more than the branch of a tree cut below a fork, and uſed without wheels. The ground is tilled by aſſes and cows; rarely by oxen, which would beſpeak too much riches. In the diſtricts expoſed to the Arabs, as in Paleſtine, the countryman muſt ſow with his muſket in his hand; and ſcarcely does the corn turn yellow, before it is reaped and concealed in ſubterraneous caverns. As little as poſſible is employed for ſeed corn, becauſe the peaſants ſow no more than is barely neceſſary for their ſubſiſtence. Their whole induſtry is limited to a ſupply of their immediate wants; and to procure a little bread, a few onions, a blue ſhirt, and a bit of woollen, much labour is not neceſſary. "The peaſant lives therefore in diſtreſs; but at leaſt he "does not enrich his tyrants, and the avarice of deſpotiſm is its own "puniſhment [b]."

This picture, which is drawn by Volney, in deſcribing the ſtate of the peaſants in Syria, ſeems to be confirmed by all the other travellers in theſe countries; and, according to Eton, it repreſents very nearly the condition of the peaſants in the greateſt part of the Turkiſh dominions [c]. Univerſally, the offices of every denomination are ſet up to public ſale, and in the intrigues of the ſeraglio, by which the diſpoſal of all places is regulated, every thing is done by means of bribes. The pachas, in conſequence, who are ſent into the provinces, exert to the utmoſt their power of extortion; but are always outdone by

[a] Voy. de Volney, tom. ii. c. xxxvii. p. 377. [b] Id. p. 379.
[c] Eton's Turkiſh Emp. c. viii. 2d edit. 1799.

the officers immediately below them, who, in their turn, leave room for their ſubordinate agents [a].

The pacha muſt raiſe money to pay the tribute, and alſo to indemnify himſelf for the purchaſe of his office; ſupport his dignity, and make a proviſion in caſe of accidents; and, as all power, both military and civil, centers in his perſon, from his repreſenting the ſultan, the means are at his diſcretion, and the quickeſt are invariably conſidered as the beſt [b]. Uncertain of to-morrow, he treats his province as a mere tranſient poſſeſſion, and endeavours to reap, if poſſible, in one day, the fruit of many years, without the ſmalleſt regard to his ſucceſſor, or the injury that he may do to the permanent revenue [c].

The cultivator is neceſſarily more expoſed to theſe extortions than the inhabitants of the towns. From the nature of his employment, he is fixed to one ſpot, and the productions of agriculture do not admit of being eaſily concealed. The tenure of the land and the right of ſucceſſion are beſides uncertain. When a father dies, the inheritance reverts to the ſultan, and the children can only redeem the ſucceſſion by a conſiderable ſum of money. Theſe conſiderations naturally occaſion an indifference to landed eſtates. The country is deſerted, and each perſon is deſirous of flying to the towns, where he will not only in general meet with better treatment, but may hope to acquire a ſpecies of wealth, which he can more eaſily conceal from the eyes of his rapacious maſters [d].

To complete the ruin of agriculture, a maximum is in many caſes eſtabliſhed, and the peaſants are obliged to furniſh the towns with corn at a fixed price. It is a maxim of Turkiſh policy, originating in the feebleneſs of the government, and the fear of popular tumults, to keep the price of corn low in all the conſiderable towns. In the caſe of a failure in the harveſt, every perſon who poſſeſſes any corn is

[a] Eton's Turkiſh Emp. c. ii. p. 55. [b] Voy. de Volney, tom. ii. c. xxxiii. p. 347.
[c] Id. p. 350. [d] Id. c. xxxvi. p. 369.

obliged to ſell it at the price fixed, under pain of death; and if there be none in the neighbourhood, other diſtricts are ranſacked for it[a]. When Conſtantinople is in want of proviſions, ten provinces are perhaps famiſhed for a ſupply[b]. At Damaſcus, during a ſcarcity in 1784, the people paid only one penny farthing a pound for their bread, while the peaſants in the villages were abſolutely dying with hunger[c].

The effect of ſuch a ſyſtem of government on agriculture, need not be inſiſted upon. The cauſes of the decreaſing means of ſubſiſtence are but too obvious; and the checks which keep the population down to the level of theſe decreaſing reſources, may be traced with nearly equal certainty; and will appear to include almoſt every ſpecies of vice and miſery that is known.

It is obſerved, in general, that the Chriſtian families conſiſt of a greater number of children, than the Mahometan families where polygamy prevails[d]. This is an extraordinary fact; becauſe, though polygamy, from the unequal diſtribution of women which it occaſions, be naturally unfavourable to the population of a whole country; yet the individuals who are able to ſupport a plurality of wives, ought certainly, in the natural courſe of things, to have a greater number of children, than thoſe who are confined to one. The way in which Volney principally accounts for this fact is, that, from the practice of polygamy, and very early marriages, the Turks are enervated while young, and impotence at thirty is very common[e]. Eton notices an unnatural vice, as prevailing in no inconſiderable degree among the common people, and conſiders it as one of the checks to the population[f]; but the five principal cauſes of depopulation which he enumerates, are,

1. The plague, from which the empire is never entirely free.

[a] Voy. de Volney, tom. ii. c. xxxviii. p. 38. [b] Id. c. xxxiii. p. 345.
[c] Id. c. xxxviii. p. 381. [d] Eton's Turkiſh Emp. c. vii. p. 275.
[e] Voy. de Volney, tom. ii. c. xl. p. 445. [f] Eton's Turkiſh Emp. c. vii. p. 275.

2. Thoſe

2. Thoſe terrible diſorders which almoſt always follow it, at leaſt in Aſia.

3. Epidemic and endemic maladies in Aſia, which make as dreadful ravages as the plague itſelf, and which frequently viſit that part of the empire.

4. Famine.

5. And laſtly, the ſickneſſes which always follow a famine, and which occaſion a much greater mortality[a].

He afterwards gives a more particular account of the devaſtations of the plague in different parts of the empire, and concludes by obſerving, that if the numbers of the Mahometans have decreaſed, this cauſe alone is adequate to the effect[b]; and that, things going on in their preſent train, the Turkiſh population will be extinct in another century[c]. But this inference, and the calculations which relate to it, are without doubt erroneous. The increaſe of population in the intervals of theſe periods of mortality, is probably greater than he is aware of. At the ſame time, it muſt be remarked, that in a country where the induſtry of the huſbandman is confined to the ſupply of his neceſſary wants, where he ſows only to prevent himſelf from ſtarving, and is unable to accumulate any ſurplus produce, a great loſs of people is not eaſily recovered, as the natural effects from the diminiſhed numbers cannot be felt in the ſame degree, as in countries where induſtry prevails, and property is ſecure.

According to the Perſian legiſlator, Zoroaſter, to plant a tree, to cultivate a field, to beget children, are meritorious acts; but it appears, from the account of travellers, that many among the lower claſſes of people cannot eaſily attain the latter ſpecies of merit; and in this inſtance, as in numberleſs others, the private intereſt of the individual corrects the errors of the legiſlator. Sir John Chardin ſays, that matrimony in Perſia is very expenſive, and that only men of eſtates will venture upon it, leſt it prove their ruin[d]. The Ruſſian

[a] Eton's Turkiſh Emp. c. vii. p. 264. [b] Id. p. 291. [c] Id. p. 280.
[d] Sir John Chardin's Travels. Harris's Collect. b. iii. c. ii. p. 870.

travellers ſeem to confirm this account, and obſerve, that the lower claſſes of people are obliged to defer marriage till late; and that it is only among the rich that this union takes place early [a].

The dreadful convulſions to which Perſia has been continually ſubject for many hundred years, muſt have been fatal to her agriculture. The periods of repoſe from external wars, and internal commotions, have been ſhort and few, and even during the times of profound peace, the frontier provinces have been conſtantly ſubject to the ravages of the Tartars.

The effect of this ſtate of things is ſuch as might be expected. The proportion of uncultivated, to cultivated land, in Perſia, Sir John Chardin ſtates to be, ten to one [b]; and the mode in which the officers of the Shah and private owners let out their lands to huſbandmen, is not that which is beſt calculated to reanimate induſtry. The grain in Perſia is, beſides, much ſubject to be deſtroyed by hail, drought, locuſts, and other inſects [c], which probably tends rather to diſcourage the employment of capital in the cultivation of the ſoil.

The plague does not extend to Perſia; but the ſmall-pox is mentioned by the Ruſſian travellers, as making very fatal ravages [d].

It will not be worth while to enter more minutely on the checks to population in Perſia, as they ſeem to be nearly ſimilar to thoſe which have been juſt deſcribed in the Turkiſh dominions. The ſuperior deſtruction of the plague in Turkey, is, perhaps, nearly balanced by the greater frequency of internal commotions in Perſia.

[a] Decouv. Ruſſ. tom. ii. p. 293.
[b] Chardin's Travels. Harris's Collect. b. iii. c. ii. p. 902.
[c] Ibid.
[d] Decouv. Ruſſ. tom. ii. p. 377.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

Of the Checks to Population in Indoſtan and Tibet.

In the ordinances of Menu, the Indian legiſlator, which Sir Wm. Jones has tranſlated and called the *Inſtitutes of Hindu Law*, marriage is very greatly encouraged, and a male heir is conſidered as an object of the firſt importance.

" By a ſon, a man obtains victory over all people; by a ſon's " ſon, he enjoys immortality; and afterwards, by the ſon of that " grandſon, he reaches the ſolar abode."

" Since the ſon delivers his father from the hell, named put, he " was therefore called puttra, by Brahma himſelf [a]."

Among the different nuptial rites, Menu has aſcribed particular qualities to each.

" A ſon of a *Bráhmì*, or wife, by the firſt ceremony, redeems from " ſin, if he perform virtuous acts, ten anceſtors, ten deſcendants, and " himſelf, the twenty-firſt perſon."

" A ſon born of a wife by the *Daiva* nuptials, redeems ſeven and " ſeven, in higher and lower degrees; of a wife by the *Arſha*, three " and three; of a wife by the *Prájápatya*, ſix and ſix [b]."

A houſekeeper is conſidered as of the moſt eminent order. " The " divine ſages, the manes, the gods, the ſpirits, and gueſts, pray for

[a] Sir Wm. Jones's Works, vol. iii. c. ix. p. 354. Speaking of the Indian laws, the Abbé Raynal ſays, " La population eſt un devoir primitif, un ordre de la nature ſi ſacré, " que la loi permet de tromper, de mentir, de ſe parjurer pour favoriſer un marriage." Hiſt. des Indes, tom. i. l. i. p. 81. 8vo. 10 vols. Paris 1795.
[b] Sir Wm. Jones's Works, vol. iii. c. iii. p. 124.

" benefits

" benefits to maſters of families [a]." An elder brother not married before the younger is mentioned among the perſons who are particularly to be ſhunned [b].

Such ordinances would naturally cauſe marriage to be conſidered as a religious duty; yet it ſeems to be rather a ſucceſſion of male heirs, than a very numerous progeny, that is the object ſo much deſired.

" The father having begotten a ſon, diſcharges his debt to his own " progenitors."

" That ſon alone, by whoſe birth he diſcharges the debt, and " through whom he attains immortality, was begotten from a ſenſe " of duty; all the reſt are conſidered by the wife as begotten from " love of pleaſure [c]."

A widow is, on ſome occaſions, allowed to have one ſon by the brother, or ſome appointed kinſman of the deceaſed huſband, but on no account a ſecond. " The firſt object of the appointment being " obtained, according to law, both the brother and the ſiſter muſt " live together like a father and daughter by affinity [d]."

In almoſt every part of the ordinances of Menu, ſenſuality of all kinds is ſtrongly reprobated, and chaſtity inculcated as a religious duty.

" A man by the attachment of his organs to ſenſual pleaſure incurs " certain guilt; but having wholly ſubdued them, he thence attains " heavenly bliſs."

" Whatever man may obtain all thoſe gratifications, or whatever " man may reſign them completely, the reſignation of all pleaſures " is far better than the attainment of them [e]."

It is reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that ſuch paſſages might, in ſome degree, tend to counteract thoſe encouragements to increaſe, which, have been before mentioned, and might prompt ſome religious perſons

[a] Sir Wm. Jones's Works, vol. iii. c. iii. p. 130. [b] Id. p. 141.
[c] Id. c. ix. p. 349. [d] Id. p. 343. [e] Id. c. ii. p. 96.

ſons to deſiſt from further indulgencies when they had obtained one ſon, or to remain more contented than they otherwiſe would have been, in an unmarried ſtate. Strict and abſolute chaſtity, ſeems, indeed, to ſuperſede the obligation of having deſcendants.

" Many thouſands of Brahmens having avoided ſenſuality from " their early youth, and having left no iſſue in their families, have " aſcended nevertheleſs to heaven."

" And, like thoſe abſtemious men, a virtuous wife aſcends to " heaven, though ſhe have no child, if, after the deceaſe of her lord, " ſhe devote herſelf to pious auſterity [a]."

The permiſſion to a brother, or other kinſman, to raiſe up an heir for the deceaſed huſband, which has been noticed, extends only to women of the ſervile claſs [b]. Thoſe of the higher claſſes are not even to pronounce the name of another man, but to

" Continue till death forgiving all injuries, performing harſh duties, " avoiding every ſenſual pleaſure, and cheerfully practiſing the in- " comparable rules of virtue [c]."

Beſides theſe ſtrict precepts relating to the government of the paſſions, other circumſtances would perhaps concur to prevent the full effect of the ordinances which encourage marriage.

The diviſion of the people into claſſes, and the continuance of the ſame profeſſion in the ſame family, would be the means of pointing out to each individual, in a clear and diſtinct manner, his future proſpects reſpecting a livelihood; and from the gains of his father, he would be eaſily enabled to judge whether he could ſupport a family by the ſame employment. And though, when a man cannot gain a ſubſiſtence in the employments appropriate to his claſs, it is allowable for him, under certain reſtrictions, to ſeek it in another; yet ſome kind of diſgrace ſeems to attach to this expedient, and it is not probable that many perſons would marry with the certain proſpect of being

[a] Sir Wm. Jones's Works, vol. iii. c. v. p. 221.
[b] Id. c. ix. p. 343. [c] Id. c. v. p. 221.

being obliged thus to fall from their claſs, and to lower in ſo marked a manner their condition in life.

In addition to this, the choice of a wife ſeems to be a point of conſiderable difficulty. A man might remain unmarried for ſome time, before he could find exactly ſuch a companion as the legiſlator preſcribes. Ten families of a certain deſcription, be they ever ſo great, or ever ſo rich in kine, goats, ſheep, gold, and grain, are ſtudiouſly to be avoided. Girls with too little or too much hair, who are too talkative, who have bad eyes, a diſagreeable name, or any kind of ſickneſs, who have no brother, or whoſe father is not well known, are all, with many others, excluded; and the choice will appear to be in ſome degree confined, when it muſt neceſſarily reſt upon

" A girl, whoſe form has no defect; who has an agreeable name;
" who walks gracefully, like a phenicopteros, or a young elephant;
" whoſe hair and teeth are moderate reſpectively in quantity and
" ſize; whoſe body has exquiſite ſoftneſs [a]."

It is obſerved, that a woman of the ſervile claſs is not mentioned, even in the recital of any ancient ſtory, as the wife of a Brahmen or of a Cſhatriya, though in the greateſt difficulty to find a ſuitable match; which ſeems to imply that ſuch a difficulty might ſometimes occur [b].

Another obſtacle to marriage ariſing from the Hindoo cuſtoms, is, that an elder brother who does not marry, ſeems in a manner to confine all his other brothers to the ſame ſtate; for a younger brother who marries before the elder incurs diſgrace, and is mentioned among the perſons who ought to be ſhunned [c].

The character which the legiſlator draws of the manners and diſpoſition of the women in India is moſt extremely unfavourable.

[a] Sir William Jones's Works, vol. iii. c. iii. p. 120. [b] Id. p. 121.
[c] Id. p. 141.

Among

Among many other paſſages expreſſed with equal ſeverity, he obſerves, that,

" Through their paſſion for men, their mutable temper, their
" want of ſettled affection, and their perverſe nature, (let them be
" guarded in this world ever ſo well), they ſoon become alienated
" from their huſbands [a]."

This character, if true, probably proceeded from their never being allowed the ſmalleſt degree of liberty [b], and from the ſtate of degradation to which they were reduced by the practice of polygamy; but however this may be, ſuch paſſages tend ſtrongly to ſhew, that illicit intercourſe between the ſexes was frequent notwithſtanding the laws againſt adultery. Theſe laws are noticed as not relating to the wives of public dancers or ſingers, or of ſuch baſe men as lived by the intrigues of their wives [c]; a proof that theſe characters were not uncommon, and were to a certain degree permitted. Add to this, that the practice of polygamy [d] among the rich, would ſometimes render it difficult for the lower claſſes of people to obtain wives; and this difficulty would probably fall particularly hard on thoſe who were reduced to the condition of ſlaves.

From all theſe circumſtances combined, it ſeems probable, that among the checks to population in India, the preventive check would have its ſhare; but from the prevailing habits and opinions of the people, there is reaſon to believe, that the tendency to early marriages was ſtill always predominant, and in general prompted every perſon to enter into this ſtate, who could look forward to the ſlighteſt chance of being able to maintain a family. The natural conſequence of this was, that the lower claſſes of people were reduced to extreme poverty, and were compelled to adopt the moſt frugal and ſcanty mode of ſubſiſtence. This frugality was ſtill further increaſed, and extended in ſome degree to the higher claſſes of

[a] Sir William Jones's Works, vol. iii. c. ix. p. 337. [b] Id. c. v. p. 219.
[c] Id. c. viii. p. 325. [d] Id. c. ix. p. 346, 347.

T ſociety,

ſociety, by its being conſidered as an eminent virtue[a]. The population would thus be preſſed hard againſt the limits of the means of ſubſiſtence, and the food of the country would be meted out to the major part of the people in the ſmalleſt ſhares that could ſupport life. In ſuch a ſtate of things, every failure in the crops from unfavourable ſeaſons would be felt moſt ſeverely; and India, as might be expected, has in all ages been ſubject to the moſt dreadful famines.

A part of the ordinances of Menu is expreſsly dedicated to the conſideration of times of diſtreſs, and inſtructions are given to the different claſſes reſpecting their conduct during theſe periods. Brahmens pining with hunger and want are frequently mentioned[b]; and certain ancient and virtuous characters are deſcribed, who had done impure and unlawful acts, but who were conſidered by the legiſlator as juſtified, on account of the extremities to which they were reduced.

" Ajígarta, dying with hunger, was going to deſtroy his own ſon " by ſelling him for ſome cattle; yet he was guilty of no crime, for " he only ſought a remedy againſt famiſhing."

" Vámadéva, who well knew right and wrong, was by no means " rendered impure, though deſirous, when oppreſſed by hunger, of " eating the fleſh of dogs."

" Viſwámitra too, than whom none knew better the diſtinctions " between virtue and vice, reſolved, when he was periſhing with " hunger, to eat the haunch of a dog, which he had received from " a *Chandála*[c]."

If theſe great and virtuous men of the higheſt claſs, whom all perſons were under the obligation of aſſiſting, could be reduced to ſuch extremities, we may eaſily conjecture what muſt have been the ſufferings of the loweſt claſs.

[a] Sir William Jones's Works, vol. iii. c. iii. p. 133. [b] Id. c. iv. p. 165. c. x. p. 397. [c] Id. c. x. p. 397, 398.

Such

Such paſſages clearly prove the exiſtence of ſeaſons of the moſt ſevere diſtreſs, at the early period when theſe ordinances were compoſed; and we have reaſon to think that they have occurred at irregular intervals ever ſince. One of the Jeſuits ſays, that it is impoſſible for him to deſcribe the miſery to which he was witneſs, during the two years famine in 1737 and 1738[a]; but the deſcription which he gives of it, and of the mortality which it occaſioned, is ſufficiently dreadful without further detail. Another Jeſuit, ſpeaking more generally, ſays, " Every year we baptize a thouſand children, whom " their parents can no longer feed, or who, being likely to die, are " ſold to us by their mothers in order to get rid of them[b]."

The poſitive checks to population would of courſe fall principally upon the Sudrá claſs, and thoſe ſtill more miſerable beings, who are the outcaſts of all the claſſes, and are not even ſuffered to live within the towns[c].

On this part of the population the epidemics which are the conſequences of indigence and bad nouriſhment, and the mortality among young children, would neceſſarily make great ravages; and thouſands of theſe unhappy wretches would probably be ſwept off in a period of ſcarcity, before any conſiderable degree of want had reached the middle claſſes of the ſociety. The Abbé Raynal ſays, on what authority I know not, that when the crops of rice fail, the huts of theſe poor outcaſts are ſet on fire, and the flying inhabitants ſhot by the proprietors of the grounds, that they may not conſume any part of the produce[d].

The difficulty of rearing a family, even among the middle and higher claſſes of ſociety, or the fear of ſinking from their caſt, has driven the people in ſome parts of India to adopt the moſt cruel expedients to prevent a numerous offſpring. In a tribe on the frontiers

[a] Lettres Edif. tom. xiv. p. 178. [b] Id. p. 284. [c] Sir William Jones's Works, vol. iii. c. x. p. 390. [d] Hiſt. des Indes, tom. i. liv. i. p. 97. 8vo. 10 vols. Paris, 1795.

of Junapore, a diſtrict of the province of Benares, the practice of deſtroying female infants has been fully ſubſtantiated. The mothers were compelled to ſtarve them. The reaſon that the people gave for this cruel practice, was, the great expence of procuring ſuitable matches for their daughters. One village only furniſhed an exception to this rule, and in this village ſeveral old maids were living. It would naturally occur, that the race could not be continued upon this principle; but it appeared, that the particular exceptions to the general rule, and the intermarriages with other tribes, were ſufficient for this purpoſe. Our Eaſt India Company obliged theſe people to enter into an engagement not to continue this inhuman practice[a].

On the coaſt of Malabar the Nayrs do not enter into regular marriages, and the right of inheritance and ſucceſſion reſts in the mother of the brother, or otherwiſe goes to the ſiſter's ſon, the father of the child being always conſidered as uncertain.

Among the Brahmens, when there are more brothers than one, only the elder, or eldeſt of them, marries. The brothers who thus maintain celibacy cohabit with Nayr women without marriage in the way of the Nayrs. If the eldeſt brother has not a ſon, then the next brother marries.

Among the Nayrs, it is the cuſtom for one Nayr woman to have attached to her two males, or four, or perhaps more.

The lower caſts, ſuch as carpenters, ironſmiths, and others, have fallen into the imitation of their ſuperiors, with this difference, that the joint concern in one woman is confined to brothers and male relations by blood, to the end that no alienation may take place in the courſe of the ſucceſſion[b].

Monteſquieu takes notice of this cuſtom of the Nayrs on the coaſt of Malabar, and accounts for it on the ſuppoſition that it was adopted in order to weaken the family ties of this caſt, that, as ſoldiers, they might

[a] Aſiatic Reſearches, vol. iv. p. 354. [b] Id. vol. v. p. 14.

might be more at liberty to follow the calls of their profeſſion; but I ſhould think that it originated, more probably, in a fear of the poverty ariſing from a large family, particularly, as the cuſtom ſeems to have been adopted by the other claſſes[a].

In Tibet, according to Turner's late account of it, a cuſtom of this kind prevails generally. Without pretending abſolutely to determine the queſtion of its origin, Mr. Turner leans to the ſuppoſition that it aroſe from the fear of a population too great for an unfertile country. From travelling much in the eaſt, he had probably been led to obſerve the effects neceſſarily reſulting from an overflowing population, and is in conſequence one among the very few writers who ſee theſe effects in their true light. He expreſſes himſelf very ſtrongly on this ſubject, and, in reference to the cuſtom above mentioned, ſays, "It certainly appears, that a ſuperabundant "population in an unfertile country muſt be the greateſt of all ca"lamities, and produce eternal warfare or eternal want. Either "the moſt active and the moſt able part of the community muſt be "compelled to emigrate, and to become ſoldiers of fortune, or mer"chants of chance; or elſe, if they remain at home, be liable to "fall a prey to famine, in conſequence of ſome accidental failure in "their ſcanty crops. By thus linking whole families together in the "matrimonial yoke, the too rapid increaſe of population was perhaps "checked, and an alarm prevented, capable of pervading the moſt "fertile region upon the earth, and of giving birth to the moſt in"human and unnatural practice, in the richeſt, the moſt produc"tive, and the moſt populous country in the world. I allude to "the empire of China, where a mother, not foreſeeing the means "of raiſing or providing for a numerous family, expoſes her new"born infant to periſh in the fields; a crime, however odious, by "no means, I am aſſured, unfrequent[b]."

[a] Eſprit des Loix, liv. xvi. c. 5.
[b] Turner's Embaſſy to Tibet, part ii. c. x. p. 351.