

to that of any of the other Indians. They have no villages nor houses, nor hold any intercourse with the rest of mankind. Their weapons are bows and arrows, with which they kill a great number of boars, stags, and other animals; they never dress their meat, but sweeten it with honey, which they possess in great abundance. We are strangers to the origin of this tribe, which is far from being numerous, and of which every family lives separate. It appears that the Bedas of Ceylon, as well as the Chacrelas of Java, who are both fair and few in number, are of European extraction. It is possible that some European men and women might have formerly been deserted in these islands, or thrown upon them by shipwreck, and that for fear of being maltreated by the natives, they and their descendants have remained in the woods, and in the mountainous parts of the country, where, habituated to a savage life, they might at length consider it as preferable.

It is supposed that the natives of the Maldivia islands are descended from those of Ceylon, yet they bear no resemblance, the latter being black and badly formed; the former shapely, and, their olive colour excepted, little different  
from