

were under the yoke of feudal government. Among the Guanches, this institution, which facilitates and renders a state of warfare perpetual, was sanctioned by religion. The priests declared to the people: "The great Spirit, Achaman, created first the nobles, the *achimenceys*, to whom he distributed all the goats that exist on the face of the earth. After the nobles, Achaman created the plebeians, *achicaxnas*. This younger race had the boldness to petition also for goats; but the supreme Spirit answered, that this race was destined to serve the nobles, and that they had need of no property." This tradition was made, no doubt, to please the rich vassals of the shepherd-kings. The *faycan*, or high priest, also exercised the right of conferring nobility; and the law of the Guanches expressed that every achimencey who degraded himself by milking a goat with his own hands, lost his claim to nobility. This law does not remind us of the simplicity of the Homeric age. We are astonished to see the useful labours of agriculture, and of pastoral life, exposed to contempt at the very dawn of civilization.

The Guanches, famed for their tall stature, were the Patagonians of the old world. Historians exaggerated the muscular strength of the Guanches, as, previous to the voyage of Bougainville and Cordoba, colossal proportions were attributed to the tribe that inhabited the southern extremity of America. I never saw Guanche mummies but in the cabinets of Europe. At the time I visited the Canaries they were very scarce; a considerable number, however, might be found if miners were employed to open the sepulchral caverns which are cut in the rock on the eastern slope of the Peak, between Arico and Guimar. These mummies are in a state of desiccation so singular, that whole bodies, with their integuments, frequently do not weigh above six or seven pounds; or a third less than the skeleton of an individual of the same size, recently stripped of the muscular flesh. The conformation of the skull has some slight resemblance to that of the white race of the ancient Egyptians; and the incisive teeth of the Guanches are blunted, like those of the mummies found on the banks of the Nile. But this form of the teeth is the result of art; and on examining more carefully the physiognomy of the ancient Canarians, Blumenbach and other able anatomists have recognized in the cheek bones and the lower jaw perceptible differences from the Egyptian