

pulsory misery, forced migration, or rigour of climate, obliterate even the traces of civilization? If everything connected with the primitive state of man, and the first population of a continent, could from its nature belong to the domain of history, we might appeal to the traditions of India. According to the opinion frequently expressed in the laws of Menou and in the Ramajan, savages were regarded as tribes banished from civilized society, and driven into the forests. The word *barbarian*, which we have borrowed from the Greeks and Romans, was possibly merely the proper name of one of those rude hordes.

In the New World, at the beginning of the conquest, the natives were collected into large societies only on the ridge of the Cordilleras and the coasts opposite to Asia. The plains, covered with forests, and intersected by rivers; the immense savannahs, extending eastward, and bounding the horizon; were inhabited by wandering hordes, separated by differences of language and manners, and scattered like the remnants of a vast wreck. In the absence of all other monuments, we may endeavour, from the analogy of languages, and the study of the physical constitution of man, to group the different tribes, to follow the traces of their distant emigrations, and to discover some of those family features by which the ancient unity of our species is manifested.

In the mountainous regions which we have just traversed,—in the two provinces of Cumana and New Barcelona, the natives, or primitive inhabitants, still constitute about one-half of the scanty population. Their number may be reckoned at sixty thousand; of which twenty-four thousand inhabit New Andalusia. This number is very considerable, when compared with that of the hunting nations of North America; but it appears small, when we consider those parts of New Spain in which agriculture has existed more than eight centuries: for instance, the Intendencia of Oaxaca, which includes the Mixteca and the Tzapoteca of the old Mexican empire. This Intendencia is one-third smaller than the two provinces of Cumana and Barcelona; yet it contains more than four hundred thousand natives of pure copper-coloured race. The Indians of Cumana do not all live within the Missions. Some are dispersed in the neighbourhood of the towns, along the coasts,