

denominations of 'Christian,' 'reduced,' and 'civilized;' and those of 'pagan,' 'savage,' and 'independent.' The reduced Indian is often as little of a Christian as the independent Indian is of an idolater. Both, alike occupied by the wants of the moment, betray a marked indifference for religious sentiments, and a secret tendency to the worship of nature and her powers. This worship belongs to the earliest infancy of nations; it excludes idols, and recognises no other sacred places than grottoes, valleys, and woods.

If the independent Indians have nearly disappeared for a century past northward of the Orinoco and the Apure, that is, from the Snowy Mountains of Merida to the promontory of Paria, it must not thence be concluded, that there are fewer natives at present in those regions, than in the time of the bishop of Chiapa, Bartolomeo de las Casas. In my work on Mexico, I have shown that it is erroneous to regard as a general fact the destruction and diminution of the Indians in the Spanish colonies. There still exist more than six millions of the copper-coloured race, in both Americas; and, though numberless tribes and languages are either extinct, or confounded together, it is beyond a doubt that, within the tropics, in that part of the New World where civilization has penetrated only since the time of Columbus, the number of natives has considerably increased. Two of the Carib villages in the Missions of Piritu or of Carony, contain more families than four or five of the settlements on the Orinoco. The state of society among the Caribbees who have preserved their independence, at the sources of the Essequibo and to the south of the mountains of Pacaraimo, sufficiently proves how much, even among that fine race of men, the population of the Missions exceeds in number that of the free and confederate Caribbees. Besides, the state of the savages of the torrid zone is not like that of the savages of the Missouri. The latter require a vast extent of country, because they live only by hunting; whilst the Indians of Spanish Guiana employ themselves in cultivating cassava and plantains. A very little ground suffices to supply them with food. They do not dread the approach of the whites, like the savages of the United States; who, being progressively driven back behind the Alleghany mountains, the Ohio, and the Mississippi, lose their means of subsistence, in proportion as they find themselves reduced within narrow limits. Under the