

even to our own times. Buffon has repeated in prose what Theodectes had expressed in verse two thousand years before: "that nations wear the livery of the climate in which they live." If history had been written by black nations, they would have maintained what even Europeans have recently advanced,\* that man was originally black, or of a very tawny colour; and that mankind have become white in some races, from the effect of civilization and progressive debilitation, as animals, in a state of domestication, pass from dark to lighter colours. In plants and in animals, accidental varieties, formed under our own eyes, have become fixed, and have been propagated;† but nothing proves, that in the present state of human organization, the different races of black, yellow, copper-coloured, and white men, when they remain unmixed, deviate considerably from their primitive type, by the influence of climate, of food, and other external agents.

These opinions are founded on the authority of Ulloa.‡ That learned writer saw the Indians of Chile, of the Andes of Peru, of the burning coasts of Panama, and those of Louisiana, situated in the northern temperate zone. He had

the accounts of travellers, that in Hindostan the nations of the south were of darker colour than those of the north, near the mountains: and they supposed that they were both of the same race.

\* See the work of Mr. Prichard, abounding with curious research. "Researches into the Physical History of Man, 1813," p. 239.

† For example, the sheep with very short legs, called *ancon sheep* in Connecticut, and examined by Sir Everard Home. This variety dates only from the year 1791.

‡ "The Indians [Americans] are of a copper-colour, which by the action of the sun and the air grows darker. I must remark, that neither heat nor cold produces any sensible change in the colour, so that the Indians of the Cordilleras of Peru are easily confounded with those of the hottest plains; and those who live under the Line cannot be distinguished, by their colour, from those who inhabit the fortieth degree of north and south latitude."—Noticias Americanas. No ancient author has so clearly stated the two forms of reasoning, by which we still explain in our days the differences of colour and features among neighbouring nations, as Tacitus. He makes a just distinction between the influence of climate, and hereditary dispositions; and, like a philosopher persuaded of our profound ignorance of the origin of things, he leaves the question undecided. "Habitus corporum varii; atque ex eo argumenta, seu durante originis vi, seu procurrentibus in diversa terris, positio cœli corporibus habitum dedit."—Agricola, cap. ii.