

It is probable, then, that there is an instinctive tendency in man to meditate on the nature and properties of those material objects and phenomena which are frequently presented to his view; and subsequently to derive from this meditation the means of applying those objects and phenomena to his wants, whether of a necessary or an artificial character. Thus astronomy was originally cultivated with most success by those who lived in a climate in which

“baked them, they bruise them between two stones into a
 “paste which will keep unto the following season. The paste,
 “before it is dried, is subjected to several washings in a sieve;
 “which process, they say, deprives it of the bitter taste com-
 “mon to the acorn. We cannot but remark the great resem-
 “blance this custom bears to the method adopted by the South-
 “sea islanders to keep their bread-fruit: nor ought we to fail to
 “notice the manner in which Providence points out to different
 “tribes the same wise means of preserving their food, and pro-
 “viding against a season of scarcity.” (p. 399.) A similar re-
 flection will naturally occur to the reader with respect to
 their mode of decoying deer and ducks: their plan, in the lat-
 ter instance, differing very little from our own; in the former,
 being conducted on the principle of the stalking horse, (p. 399,
 400. See also De Bry, vol. i. pl. 25. Descript. of Florida.)

On one occasion, in alluding to the structure of the bow among uncivilized nations, Captain Beechey forcibly reminds the classical reader of a line in the first book of the Iliad: *δεινὴ δὲ κλαγγὴ γένητ' ἀργυρέοιο βιοῖο*: for, after having said that the Californians string their bows much as we do (p. 402), he states that the Esquimaux leave the string in contact with about a foot of the wood at each end; while the Californians muffle that part with fur, in order to prevent the *report*, which would betray them, when fighting in ambush. (p. 575.)