

the quality of the air. In elevated countries there are commonly found more old people than in low. The mountains in Scotland and Wales, of Auvergne and Switzerland, have furnished more instances of extreme longevity than the plains of Holland, Flanders, Germany, or Poland. In general, however, the period of human existence may be said to be the same in every country. If not cut off by accidental diseases man is found to live to the years of 90 or an 100. Beyond that date our ancestors did not live, nor has it, in any degree varied since the time of David.

Should it be asked, why, in the early ages, men lived to 900, 930, and even 960 years? it may, with great probability of reason, be answered, that the productions of the earth might then be of a different nature; as, at the creation, the surface of the globe must have been far less solid and compact than it afterwards became, so it is possible that the productions of Nature, and even the human body itself, being more ductile and more susceptible of extension, their growth was not so soon accomplished as at present. Every kind of nourishment being in itself more soft and more

VOL. IV. P ductile,