

and we had totally mistaken the picture of a savage, although it were presented to us in its real colours, and with its natural features.

An absolute savage, such as a boy reared among bears, as mentioned by Conor, the young man found in the forest of Hanover, or the girl in the woods in France, would be a curious object to a philosopher; in observing which he might be able to ascertain the force of natural appetites; he would see the mind undisguised, and distinguish all its movements; and, possibly, he might discover in it more mildness, serenity, and peace, than in his own; he might also perceive, that virtue belongs more to the savage than to the civilized man, and that vice owes its birth to society.

But let us return to our subject. If in North America there were none but savages, in Mexico and Peru we found a polished people, subjected to laws, governed by kings, industrious, acquainted with the arts, and not destitute of religion. They lived in towns where the civil government was superintended by the sovereign. These people, who were very populous, cannot be considered as new colonies sprung from individuals who had wandered from Europe or Asia, from which they