

yet if man received no other food he would with difficulty drag on a feeble and languishing existence.

Behold the enthusiastic recluse, who abstains, from every thing that has had life, who, from religious motives, renounces the gifts of the Creator, shuns society, and shuts himself up in those consecrated walls, at the very idea of which Nature recoils. Confined in these tombs set apart for the living, he draws on for a very few years, a feeble and useless existence, and when the hour of dissolution comes, it may be said to be that in which he ceased to die. If man were reduced to abstain from flesh, at least in these climates, he could neither subsist nor multiply. Perhaps this diet might be possible in southern countries, where the fruits arrive at greater maturity, where the plants are more substantial, and the roots more succulent. The Brahmans, nevertheless, form rather a sect than a people, and their religion, though very ancient, has never extended beyond one climate. This religion, founded upon metaphysics, is a striking example of the fate of human opinions. From the scattered remains we may plainly perceive that the sciences have been cultivated from great antiquity, and carried perhaps to a greater degree of perfection than they are at this day. It was well known in
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