

of the East; as *suampans*, they have been employed in the operations of manual arithmetic by the Chinese, the Tartars, and the Russians. The independent Caribs, who inhabit the little-known country situated between the sources of the Orinoco and those of the rivers Essequibo, Carony, and Parima, are divided into tribes; and, like the nations of the Missouri, of Chili, and of ancient Germany, form a political confederation. This system is most in accordance with the spirit of liberty prevailing amongst those warlike hordes who see no advantage in the ties of society but for common defence. The pride of the Caribs leads them to withdraw themselves from every other tribe; even from those to whom, by their language, they have some affinity.

They claim the same separation in the missions, which seldom prosper when any attempt is made to associate them with other mixed communities, that is, with villages where every hut is inhabited by a family belonging to another nation, and speaking another language. The authority of the chiefs of the independent Caribs is hereditary in the male line only, the children of sisters being excluded from the succession. This law of succession, which is founded on a system of mistrust, denoting no great purity of manners, prevails in India; among the Ashantees (in Africa); and among several tribes of the savages of North America.\* The young chiefs, and other youths who are desirous of marrying, are subject to the most extraordinary fasts and penances, and are required to take medicines prepared by the *marirris* or *piaches*, called in the transallegghanian countries, *war-physic*. The Carribbee *marirris* are at once priests, jugglers, and physicians; they transmit to their successors their doctrine, their artifices, and the remedies they employ. The latter are accompanied by imposition of hands, and certain gestures and mysterious practices, apparently connected with the

\* Among the Hurons (Wyandots) and the Natchez, the succession to the magistracy is continued by the women: it is not the son who succeeds, but the son of the sister, or of the nearest relation in the female line. This mode of succession is said to be the most certain, because the supreme power remains attached to the blood of the last chief; it is a practice that insures legitimacy. Ancient traces of this strange mode of succession, so common in Africa and in the East Indies, exist in the dynasty of the kings of the West India Islands.