

SECTION VII.

General Account of the Sandwich Islands continued.—Of the Inhabitants.—Their Origin.—Persons.—Pernicious Effects of the Ava.—Numbers.—Disposition and Manners.—Reasons for supposing them not Cannibals.—Dress and Ornaments.—Villages and Houses.—Food.—Occupations and Amusements.—Addicted to Gaming.—Their extraordinary Dexterity in Swimming.—Arts and Manufactures.—Curious Specimens of their Sculpture.—Kipparee, or Method of Painting Cloth.—Mats.—Fishing Hooks.—Cordage.—Salt Pans.—Warlike Instruments.

THE inhabitants of the Sandwich Islands are undoubtedly of the same race with those of New Zealand, the Society and Friendly Islands, Easter Island, and the Marquesas; a race that possesses, without any intermixture, all the known lands between the latitudes of 47° S. and 20° N., and between the longitudes of 184° and 260° E. This fact, which, extraordinary as it is, might be thought sufficiently proved by the striking similarity of their manners and customs, and the general resemblance of their persons, is established, beyond all controversy, by the absolute identity of their language.

From what continent they originally emigrated, and by what steps they have spread through so vast a space, those who are curious in disquisitions of this nature, may perhaps not find it very difficult to conjecture. It has been already observed, that they bear strong marks of affinity to some of the Indian tribes that inhabit the Ladrões and Caroline islands; and the same affinity may again be traced amongst the Battas and Malays. When these events happened, is not so easy to ascertain; it was probably not very lately, as they are extremely populous, and have no tradition of their own origin, but what is perfectly fabulous; whilst, on the other hand, the unadulterated state of their general language, and the similarity which still prevails in their customs and manners, seem to indicate that it could not have been at any very distant period.²

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² The nice and highly interesting subject now adverted to, it is evident,