

the Mahometan, an act of superiority and power. This devoutness, therefore, merely the offspring of pride and profound ignorance; is no better than fanatic superstition; and the source of innumerable disorders.

There is still another characteristic in the exterior of the Orientals, which attracts the attention of an observer: I mean their grave and phlegmatic air in every thing they do, or say. Instead of that open and cheerful countenance, which we either naturally possess or assume, their behaviour is serious, austere, and melancholy; they rarely laugh, and the gaiety of the French appears to them a fit of delirium. When they speak, it is with deliberation, without gestures, and without passion; they listen without interrupting you; they are silent for whole days together, and by no means pique themselves on supporting conversation. If they walk, it is always leisurely, and on business; they have no idea of our troublesome activity, and our walks backwards and forwards for amusement. Continually seated, they pass the whole day musing, with their legs crossed, their pipes in their mouths, and almost without changing their attitude. It should seem as if motion were a punishment to them, and that, like the Indians, they regard inaction as essential to happiness.

I have said that the Orientals in general, have a grave and phlegmatic exterior, a staid and almost listless deportment, and a serious, nay, even sad and melancholy countenance. Were the climate or the soil the radical cause of this, the effect would be the same in every individual. But that is not the case: Under this general character, there are a thousand peculiar minute varieties in different classes and individuals, arising from their situation, relative to the influence of government, which differs in its effects on these classes, and these individuals. Thus we observe that the peasants subject to the Turks are more gloomy than those of the tributary countries; that the inhabitants of the country are less gay than those of the towns; and that those on the coast are more cheerful than such as dwell at a greater distance from it; that in the same town, the professors of the law are more serious than the military, and these again more so than the people. We may even remark, that, in the great cities, the people have much of that dissipated and careless air they usually have with us; because there, as well as here, inured to suffering from habit, and devoid of reflection from ignorance, they enjoy a kind of security. Having nothing to lose, they are in no dread of being plundered. The merchant,

on the contrary, lives in a state of perpetual alarm, under the double apprehension of acquiring no more, and losing what he possesses. He trembles lest he should attract the attention of rapacious authority, which would consider an air of satisfaction as a proof of opulence, and the signal for extortion. The same dread prevails throughout the villages; where each peasant is afraid of exciting the envy of his equals, and the avarice of the Aga and his soldiers. In such a country, where the subject is perpetually watched by a despoiling government, he must assume a serious countenance for the same reason that he wears ragged clothes, and makes a parade of eating cheese and olives. The same cause, tho' it has a less influence on the lawyers, is not, however, without its effect on them; but the insolence in which they have been educated, and the pedantry of their manners, render it unnecessary to assign any other.

With respect to their indolence, it is not surprising that the inhabitants of the cities and the country, fatigued with labour, should have an inclination to repose. But it is remarkable, that when these people are once in action, they exert themselves with a vivacity and ardour almost unknown in our climates. This is more particularly observable in the sea-ports and commercial towns. An European cannot but admire with what activity the sailors, with their naked arms and legs, handle the oars, bend the sails, and perform every manœuvre; with what ardour the porters unload a boat, and carry the heaviest coffers. Always singing, and answering by couplets to one who directs their labour, they perform all their motions in cadence, and redouble their exertions by making them in time. It has been said, on this subject, that the inhabitants of hot countries have a natural propensity to music; but in what consists its analogy with the climate? Would it not be more rational to say, that the hot countries we are acquainted with, having made a considerable progress in improvement and knowledge long before our cold climate, the people have retained some traces of the fine arts which were formerly cultivated among them. Our merchants frequently reproach this people, and especially those of the country, with not labouring so often, nor so long, as they are able. But why should they labour beyond their wants, since the superfluity of their industry would procure them no additional enjoyment? In many respects, a man of the lower class of people resembles the savages; when he has expended his strength in procuring a subsistence, he takes his repose; it is only by rendering