

husband himself; and it is often severe, as inflicted by one who is at once the party and the judge. Their marriages are not fruitful, seldom producing above two or three children, but they are brought forth with less pain than our women suffer upon such occasions, and with little consequent weakness. Probably, that severe life, which both sexes lead, is not favourable to procreation. And the habit unmarried women have of procuring abortions, in which they rarely fail, makes them more unfit for bearing children afterwards. This is one of the reasons of the depopulation of America; for whatever losses they suffer, either by epidemical diseases or by war, are repaired slowly.

Almost the sole occupation of the American is war, or such an exercise as qualifies him for it. His whole glory consists in this; and no man is at all considered until he has increased the strength of his country with a captive, or adorned his house with a scalp of one of its enemies. When the ancients resolve upon war, they do not always declare what nation it is they are determined to attack; that the enemy, upon whom they really intend to fall, may be off his guard. Nay, they even sometimes let years pass over without committing any act of hostility, that the vigilance of all may be unbent by the long continuance of the watch, and the uncertainty of the danger. In the mean time they are not idle at home. The principal captain summons the youth of the town to which he belongs; the war kettle is set on the fire; the war songs and dances commence; the hatchet is sent to all the villages of the same nation, and to all its allies; the fire catches; the war songs are heard in all parts; and the most hideous howlings continue without intermission day and night over that whole tract of country. The women add their cries to those of the men, lamenting those whom they have either lost in war or by a natural death, and demanding their places to be supplied from their enemies; stimulating the young men by a sense of shame, which women know how to excite in the strongest manner, and can take the best advantage of when excited.

When by these, and every other means, the fury of the nation is raised to the greatest height, and all long to embue their hands in blood, the war captain prepares the feast, which consists of dogs' flesh. All that partake of this feast receive little billets, which are so many

engagements which they take to be faithful to each other, and obedient to their commander. None are forced to the war; but when they have accepted this billet, they are looked upon as listed, and it is then death to recede. All the warriors in this assembly have their faces blackened with charcoal, intermixed with dashes and streaks of vermillion, which give them a most horrid appearance. Their hair is dressed up in an odd manner, with feathers of various kinds. In this assembly, which is preparatory to their military expedition, the chief begins the war song; which having continued for some time, he raises his voice to the highest pitch, and, turning off suddenly to a sort of prayer, addresses himself to the god of war, whom they call Areskoni: 'I invoke thee,' says he, 'to be favourable to my enterprise! I invoke thy care upon me and my family! I invoke ye likewise, all ye spirits and demons good and evil! All ye that are in the skies, or on the earth, or under the earth, to pour destruction upon our enemies, and to return me and my companions safely to our country.' All the warriors join him in this prayer with shouts and acclamations. The captain renews his song, strikes his club against the stakes of his cottage, and begins the war dance, accompanied with the shouts of all his companions, which continue as long as he dances.

The day appointed for their departure being arrived, they take leave of their friends; they change their clothes, or whatever moveables they have, in token of mutual friendship; their wives and female relations go out before them, and attend at some distance from the town.—The warriors march out all drest in their finest apparel and most shewy ornaments, regularly one after another, for they never march in rank. The chief walks slowly on before them, singing the death song, while the rest observe the most profound silence. When they come up to their women, they deliver up to them all their finery, put on their worst clothes, and then proceed as their commander thinks fit.

Their motives for engaging in a war are rarely those views which excite us to it. They have no other end but the glory of the victory, or the benefit of the slaves which it enables them to add to their nation, or sacrifice to their brutal fury; and it is rare that they take any pains to give their wars even a colour of justice. It is no way uncommon among them for the young