

their so-called religion. Areskouï, or the god of battle, is viewed as the great god of the Indians. Him they invoke before they go into the field, and success is expected in proportion to the favour found in his sight. Some numerous and powerful tribes worship the sun and moon: among others, divers traditions are received, relative to the creation of the world; to account for which an endless variety of schemes and dates are in store, including also a copious history of their gods. In these vagaries, there is little difference in kind;—all are absurd;—only that in degree some outvie the others. It is also clear, that religion, properly understood, has little to do with the prevailing conduct of the Indians. Like ungodly men in other parts of the world, who seldom look to heaven, except when the enemy thunders at the gate, or mildew consumes the corn, these Indians seldom appeal to the gods, or offer them any sort of worship, except when overtaken with temporal calamity, and in need of a little assistance. Their devotion is made up chiefly of superstitious practices, formed on no solid basis, subject to no permanent rule, and leading to no uniform or common end, except that of creating blind presumption, which, in the day of battle, is to preserve them harmless and destroy their enemies. They believe in the existence of a number of good and bad genii, or spirits, who interfere in the affairs of mortals, and produce all their happiness or