

the year 1735, to determine the figure of the earth. M. Bouguer d'Antonio Ulloa, and D. George Juan, resided long among the natives of the least civilized provinces in Peru. M. de la Condamine had not only this opportunity for observation, but, in his voyage down the Maragnon, he had access to inspect the state of the various nations seated on its banks, in its vast course across the continent of South America. There is a wonderful resemblance in their representation of the character of the Americans. "They are all extremely indolent," says M. Bouguer, "they are stupid, they pass whole days sitting in the same place, without moving, or speaking a single word. It is not easy to describe the degree of their indifference for wealth, and all its advantages. One does not well know what motive to propose to them, when one would persuade them to perform any service. It is vain to offer them money; they answer, that they are not hungry." *Voyage au Perou*, p. 102. If one considers them as men, the narrowness of their understanding seems to be incompatible with the excellence of the soul. Their imbecillity is so visible, that one can hardly form an idea of them different from what one has of the brutes. Nothing disturbs the tranquillity of their souls, equally insensible to disasters and to prosperity. Though half-naked, they are as contented as a monarch in his most splendid array. Riches do not attract them in the smallest degree, and the authority or dignities to which they may aspire, are so little the objects of their ambition, that an Indian will receive with the same indifference the office of a judge (Alcalde) or that of a hangman, if deprived of the former and appointed to the latter. Nothing can move or change them. Interest has no power over them, and they often refuse to perform a small service, though certain of a great recompence. Fear makes no impression upon them, and respects as little. Their disposition is so singular, that there is no method of influencing them, no means of rousing them from that indifference, which is proof against all the endeavours of the wisest persons; no expedient that can induce them to abandon that gross ignorance, or lay aside that careless negligence, which disconcert the prudence and disappoint the care of such