

Indian would avoid degradation, he must retire from the habitations of white men ; and if we wish to see him in his original character, we must follow him to his native forests.—There, surely, he is worthy of our attention. The lovers of the physical sciences, explore the woods of America, to cull her plants, and to investigate the habits of her animals. Shall not the lovers of the moral sciences, be equally ardent and industrious ? Shall man, who stands at the summit of earthly creation, be forgotten, amid the general scrutiny ?

The sources of prejudice which I have mentioned, influence the examination of every subject, connected with the Indian character : there are peculiar difficulties, with regard to that on which I have chosen to address you.

The Indians themselves are not communicative in relation to their religion ; and it requires a good deal of familiar, attentive, and I may add, unsuspected observation, to obtain any knowledge respecting it. Hence, many who have been transiently resident among them, have very confidently pronounced, that they have no religion ; an assertion, which subsequent and more accurate travellers, have shown to be entirely unfounded.*

Those, also, on whom we rely for information, have either been too little informed to know what to observe, or they have been influenced by peculiar

* See Note A.