

early civilization and commerce, in letters and in art, she rose by the same bright career of independence and energy, and fell by the same luxurious corruption of private virtue, the same vicious quarrels of implacable factions. Her annals are deeply fraught with instruction and interest; and yet it is singular that, with the exception of the luminous, but rapid and therefore insufficient view which Mr. Hallam has taken of her condition in the Middle Ages, the English reader has no direct means of acquaintance with one of the most delightful and important divisions of modern history.

ART. V.—1. *Memoirs of a Captivity among the Indians of North America, from Childhood to the Age of Nineteen; with Anecdotes descriptive of their Manners and Customs, &c.* By John D. Hunter. 8vo. 1824.

2. *Sketches of the History, Manners, and Customs of the North American Indians.* By James Buchanan, Esq. His Majesty's Consul for the State of New York. 8vo. 1824.

THE present condition and character of the North American Indians may afford one of the most curious chapters in the history of man. The peculiar qualities of this ill-fated race strikingly distinguish them from other savage tribes: they have long been in collision, but never blended with the materials of organized society; and their precarious and wandering existence at this hour serves only to place the modern civilization of their country in strong contrast with the impenetrable obscurity of past ages. In the vast wilds of the North American continent, no ruins commemorative of human thought and human action strike the eye; it is nature only which addresses us: the mighty forest unites the past and the present, and its awful silence is emblematical of the gloom which hangs over the moral antiquity of the people. One monument of remote ages indeed exists, and that monument is a living ruin; for the remains of the Indian tribes are become to America what the shattered column, the broken arch, and the falling cloister are to Europe. The iron hand of time has not made deeper ravages on these, than the relentless cruelty of civilized men has inflicted upon the wretched remains of the aboriginal children of the lake and forest. For above two hundred years, the Indian nations of North America have maintained an unceasing struggle against the oppression and encroachment of the whites:—but the devotion, courage, and fortitude of their warlike tribes have been exerted in vain. Driven successively from every possession by the superior knowledge and power of the merciless usurper, they have been chased to the remotest forests; systematically debased in character, and thinned in numbers

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