

where, excepting in the cases of a surgical museum. Another abominable practice is, or very recently has been general in this country, that of binding tightly the tender limbs and delicate body of the child just born; another most obvious means of producing deformity in after life. How far the changes of form and feature which we have now enumerated, by transmission from parent to child, may have become permanent, remains to be considered; but, in the mean time, it may be laid down as an axiom, that if we wish to give the body a graceful form, we should encourage its natural and healthy development, and allow all its muscles full freedom of action.

VARIETIES OF MANKIND.

Notwithstanding the differences of stature, complexion, and general habits exhibited by different nations, the whole human race, multiplied and dispersed as it is through all parts of the world, constitute but one species; the apparent varieties of which, occasioned by the influence of climate and other external circumstances, pass so insensibly, and by so many shades, into one another, that it is impossible to separate them by any definite boundary. But, notwithstanding this, philosophers have attempted to establish certain varieties of mankind, as if, indeed, there had been original and specific differences between those races of men which appear somewhat different in appearance from one another. It generally happens in science, that if one man start into a new path, and announce the discovery of facts before unknown, the majority of those who succeed him content themselves with reiterating his statements, and founding on them the inferences they wish to establish. Hence the learned Malte Brun, the ingenious Lawrence, and all who have written on the history of man, follow, with little or no variation, the classification proposed by the celebrated Blumenbach, who reduces the human race to five varieties: the Caucasian, the Mongolian, the Ethiopian, the American, and the Malay.

But the truth is, that this and all other divisions are perfectly arbitrary, and we doubt much whether they should be received. The differences so established depend principally on the different configurations of the skull; but the truth is, that there is almost as much difference between the skull of an Irishman and that of a Scotchman, as there is between the skull of a Circassian and that of a Mongolian; nay, not only in the same country, and among the same inhabitants, but even in the same families, the most remarkable differences, in the form of the head and features of the face, are observable; yet we do not dream of classifying them into any definite order of varieties. Indeed it is very questionable, notwithstanding the greatness of his authority, how far the accounts given by Blumenbach, of the different skulls of nations, should be admitted; his observations were, for the most part, founded on individual skulls, which can never be relied on as representing correctly those of the bulk of any nation.

We hold, therefore, that excepting as a matter of fancy, it is not right to speak of the varieties of mankind at all; for instead of reducing them to five, we may make fifty or a hundred, in fact as many as our ingenuity or pleasure may choose to suggest. The method most agreeable to nature, perhaps, would be to describe the organization of man only in reference to the latitude or climate in which he lives, proceeding from the equator to the poles; but owing to the free communications between nations, and the continual intermarriages that occur, every step we proceed is beset with difficulty. If we wished a specimen of the form of a Scotchman, we should not rest contented with taking an individual who

happened to have been born in Scotland, even from Scotch parents, but we should inquire how far his lineage had been exposed to corruption, or gradation of form, by intermarriage with the natives of other countries; yet it is sufficient for many, esteeming themselves observers of nature, to place as specimens on the shelves of museums, skulls labelled Chinese, German, Hindoo, simply because these skulls happened to be picked up in those countries, or belonged, perhaps, to individuals whose genealogy could never be ascertained. We know well, that, owing to the effects of climate, and many causes, some of which have been already referred to, the inhabitants of different parts of the globe present us with varieties of stature, feature, shape of head, proportion of limbs, &c.; but it would be indeed highly absurd for any person to pretend to establish distinction of permanent varieties, by referring only to the differences observable in the form of the head, which is a part only of the human system, the whole of which should be brought into evidence. Here, therefore, we shall deviate from the arrangement usually adopted, and notice only some of those nations or tribes of people whose general physiognomy and habits seem to establish for them a prominent position in the History of Man.

(To be continued.)

AGRICULTURAL.

TIMBER TREES.—(Concluded.)

In England, as in this country, the management of forest trees and wood lots is left wholly to the discretion of their respective owners, with this exception, that in England the Government claim a right to certain large timber for purposes of naval architecture. In France, the whole forests of the kingdom, whether royal domains or private property, are under the direction of commissioners of the forests, and no individual can cut down an acre of his wood without permission of government. Such is the character of the laws, and the rigid system of inspection, that it is calculated the forests of France, and the supplies of wood from them, will never diminish, and that there will always be sufficient for domestic consumption, for fuel as well as for civil and naval architecture. Even during the revolution, when life, property, and the dearest rights of man were disregarded and involved in one general ruin, when havoc and plunder sought every thing which time and habit had rendered valuable, her great and extensive forests were sacredly preserved. England is abundantly supplied with mineral coal for domestic purposes, and for her extensive manufactures, while in France, wood is used almost exclusively. It is, therefore, highly important that she should have laws, and those strictly enforced for preserving her forests and woods.—Nor is it less important in our own country. I could wish all our forests and wood lots under the control of commissioners like those of France, although it might operate severely upon private rights. But, as in many other cases, these private rights might be yielded up for the public good. I would require every public highway in the commonwealth to be lined, on each side, at the distance of two or three rods, with the elm, button-wood, maple, ash, oak, or some other forest tree. This would not only afford a delightful shade for the traveller, but it would produce a highly valuable growth of wood. I have often felt a surprise that our farmers should not more generally cultivate trees, about their houses, for shade and ornament. This might be done with no expense, but a few hours of labour, and it would render their habitations more pleasant and give to them a great additional value, should they have occasion to sell; or should

the estate descend to their heirs, these trees would be a living monument to their memories, while that raised by the hand of affection may have crumbled to the dust. With what feelings of veneration do we often see the majestic elm, spreading its mighty branches, and throwing its cooling shade around the humble mansion of some former personage. Such trees carry with them lessons of instruction to generations which never heard the voice of them who planted them.

Perhaps no country in the world is so highly favoured in the beauty, variety, and utility of her forest trees as the United States; or perhaps I should say North America. Monsieur Michaux, a French gentleman, of much science and a distinguished botanist, made a voyage to this country in 1802 for the purpose of examining our forests, and in 1808 he was employed by the French Government to undertake another voyage under the orders of the Administration of French forests. He devoted several years to obtain a knowledge of the properties, variety and utility of various sorts, as applied to the arts. He states, that the number of American forest trees, whose growth amounts to 30 feet at least, and of which he has given a description, amounts to 137, of which 92 are employed in the arts. In France there are only 37 which grow to that size, of which 18 only are found in their forests, and 7 only of these are employed in civil and marine architecture.

There is one subject, connected with forest trees, upon which there appears to be a diversity of opinion, and which I wish to present to consideration, that you may compare it with your own experience. It is as to the best time to fell timber with a view to its durability. To me, it is a matter of surprise, that the opinions of practical men are not uniform and settled upon this subject—a subject so important to almost every man in society, and particularly to those who have any interest in civil or naval architecture. The subject appears to be as unsettled in Europe as in this country, or rather the prevailing opinion in both countries is probably erroneous. It appears to be the more general opinion in Europe and in this country, and the practice has conformed to this opinion, to fell timber in the winter, or when the sap is down; or to be more precisely accurate, in the month of February in the old of the moon. In France, by a royal ordinance of the year 1669, the time of felling naval timber was fixed from the first of October to the fifteenth of April, in the wane of the moon. Napoleon, having adopted the opinion that ships built of timber felled at the moment of vegetation, must be liable to rapid decay, and require immediate repairs, from the effect of the fermentation of the sap, in those pieces which have not been felled in proper season, issued a circular order to the commissioners of the forests, that the time for felling naval timber should be abridged, and that it should be in the decline of the moon, from the first of November to the fifteenth of March. Commodore Porter, of the American Navy, in a communication which appeared in the American Farmer, gives it as his opinion, that the most proper season for felling timber, with a view to its durability, is in the winter, when the sap has ceased to circulate. He is of opinion that the moon has a powerful influence upon timber, as well as upon many other things.

Notwithstanding this powerful array of authority for felling timber in the winter, while the sap is down, to increase its durability, many experiments have been made which seem to establish the fact that timber cut when the sap is in most active circulation, is most durable. Mr. Benjamin Poor, the owner or occupant of Indian Hill Farm, in this county, in a communication to Gorham Parsons, Esq. published in the Massachusetts Agricultural Repository,