

of the subject, and to a more particular investigation of the accusations boldly preferred by the Quarterly. These we shall proceed to meet and confute.

The tenure, by which the primitive inhabitants of this continent held their land, is a question of metaphysical speculation, rather than one of practical right. All will agree, that they were entitled to as much as would supply them with subsistence, in the mode to which they were accustomed. And there will probably be an assent, little less general, to the proposition, that whatever was not thus wanted and employed might be appropriated by others to their own use. The new race of men, who landed upon these shores, found that their predecessors had affixed few distinctive marks of property in the forests where they roamed. There were none of those permanent improvements, which elsewhere by universal assent become the evidence and the security of individual appropriation. From Hudson's Bay to Cape Horn, the various nations of Europe have formed settlements, and have gradually by force or purchase reduced the aboriginal inhabitants to a state of vassallage, or driven them into the interior. European sovereigns have divided this immense country, by their charters or their treaties, into many colonies and provinces, and have assumed a general jurisdiction over them, without the slightest regard to the primitive occupants. And the hoisting of the first flag, and the burying of the first bottle, are important incidents, which have occasioned many a perplexing discussion to grave diplomatists.

Almost all the country, now composing the Atlantic portion of the United States, was thus acquired by England. Our colonial records contain the history of many of these negotiations and purchases, but time has swept away almost every vestige of the consideration paid to the Indians. Since the establishment of their independence, the United States have adopted the system of acquiring the aboriginal title by peaceable purchase, but they have adopted it with an important change, consolatory to all, who look with sympathy upon this falling race. The plan of *permanent annuities* guaranties to the Indians a never failing resource against want, and its beneficial effects are apparent in the improved condition of the Wyandots, the Shawnese, and the Miamies. But one instance in the history of the United States can be found, where they have acquired any title to the unappropriated country by force ;