

INTRODUCTION.

NATIONS, like mankind, advance insensibly from infancy to youth. The scenes of puerility are forgotten or neglected in the pride of riper years. Few, indeed, feel inclined to look back on antiquity. The regions which we behold are remote. Beyond a certain line every thing disappears in shades, and the distant land in which we travel, seems to be inhabited by phantoms and strange forms. An inquiry after the origin of nations is certainly an obscure, but yet an interesting labyrinth to perambulate. Weak and unphilosophic minds may, no doubt, deem this a barren subject, which their taste or curiosity leads them not to examine with that degree of interest which its importance evidently deserves. But nothing can prove more beneficial and amusing to the studious and inquisitive mind, than a proper knowledge of the various races of men, which constitute the great human family, for it is only in this way that a man can know himself.

When we take even a superficial view of the surface of the globe which we inhabit, we evidently perceive, that, at some unknown remote periods, various revolutions have happened, which not only affected materially the superficial structure of the earth, but the state and condition of its inhabitants.