

as appear more immediately applicable to the attempts made in the present day to effect their civil and religious advancement. If, by pointing out the errors of former times, it can at all serve as a beacon in future attempts at Indian civilization or conversion, one important step towards success is likely to be attained. These errors are obvious from an examination of the works of the earliest writers, as well as those of later periods, who had much communication with the Indians. Travellers, who from curiosity — traders, who from views of commercial enterprise — military officers, who in the call of their professional duty — and the missionaries, who from religious motives, were led to explore the interior of that continent, have furnished ample materials for reflection on this subject; and by laying before the reader extracts from their works, it will no doubt enable him, by reference to the most authentic sources, to judge of the real nature of those endeavours which were made during the course of two centuries — and made in vain — to ameliorate the condition of the Indians of North America.

It may be satisfactory, in this place, to notice the recorded opinions of some of those writers, most of whom had long resided in that country; and to describe, in their own words, the favourable sentiments which their experience had taught them to entertain respecting the Indian character. These opinions, indeed, are directly opposite to what has