

*ful*, and consequently the *safest* from foreign danger. Hence arose a competition for territory; the great parent of numbers, wealth and power, and constant object of their wars.

Towards the end of the 15th century, the powers of Europe were, in general, poor. They contented themselves with the necessaries, without the luxuries of life. Their resources were small. Their countries produced no gold or silver, and their trade was too limited to afford any considerable supply. Commerce was monopolized by the *Genoese* and *Venetians*. They had, moreover, for a long succession of years, harassed each other in their contests for dominion, without gaining any important superiority. The discovery of a new world beyond the Atlantic, uncultivated, almost uninhabited, and altogether defenceless, gave to their policy a different pursuit, while it retained the same objects in view. They saw that by colonising they could extend their dominions, and obtain an increase of subjects, commerce, and