

the great discoverer of the West Indies first revealed his design, he was regarded as a madman, or ridiculed as a fool ; but when he had actually accomplished what he proposed, envy and malice, with their thousand tongues, were eager to lessen his reputation, and rob him of that fame which was so eminently his due. The claims of the celebrated Columbus ; as the first who ever returned from the western world, are universally allowed. Strong and general must have been the interest excited by his departure, for even his enemies could not have refrained from admiring the steady perseverance and heroic fortitude of the daring seaman, who, despising danger, difficulty, or distress, boldly turned from the shores of his home, to wrestle with the tempest, and to brave the billows, in search of unknown lands. What were his own feelings upon the occasion we can but faintly enter into, nor the delight, the joy, which must have almost overpowered his mind, when, according to his predictions, *land* first appeared to the toil-worn, fainting cheerless mariners. Nor was it a bleak and inhospitable coast ; but, from our own experience it must have appeared to them a terrestrial paradise. The beautiful clearness of the sky, the brilliancy of the two celestial hemispheres glowing with light, and the constant verdure of the earth, must have filled them with astonishment and admiration ; nor is it surprising, that, on their return to Spain, the narrative of such a voyage should be highly exaggerated ; yet on the whole, the celebrated Peter Martyr may be considered as having given a faithful relation, derived from living sources—the discoverers themselves.

“ Many different opinions have been formed with respect to the first inhabitants of the West India islands ; it appears, however, most reasona-

ble to suppose that the mild and peaceable natives, found by Columbus in Hispaniola and the adjacent islands, were the original founders, and that the more warlike and destructive Caribes (or Caribbees as it is now spelt,) emigrating from the southern continent, and finding that delightful spot of never-ceasing verdure attacked the other Indians, and carried them away as slaves. The contrast between the two people is very striking and remarkable. The first (the Caribbees) were bold, daring, and undaunted, preferred death to the loss of liberty, and looked upon martial enterprise as the principal concern of life.

“ They viewed all the rest of mankind as their lawful prey, yet among themselves were friendly, affectionate and faithful. The latter (the Indians) were, generally, found to be submissive, kind, and patient—submissive to their subjugators—kind to their enemies, and patient under the cruel hand of their remorseless oppressors. But very few descendants of either party now exist, and these are so mingled as to afford only a faint representation of the habits and manners of their forefathers.

“ In his first voyage, Columbus had left several of the crew at Hispaniola, but, on his return, not one remained alive ; they had been murdered by the natives for their rapacity and cruelty. The first settlement of the Spaniards was at Hispaniola, but the admiral visited other islands, Jamaica, Cuba, &c. and expressed himself highly delighted with their beauty, but, in Jamaica, they discovered no gold to induce them to remain there. The natives, finding the Spaniards about to continue their residence among them, and smarting under the yoke which was imposed upon them, took up arms, but European science overcame the superiority of numbers, and finally prevailed.”