

Although the mode in which evidence is generally taken by Committees of the House of Commons is not favourable to the statements offered being so interesting and attractive as they might be made, were they accompanied by all the advantages of the description of collateral circumstances and connected and minute details, yet the extensive range which the Report takes in, and the variety of testimony of an authentic character which the volumes of evidence offer, concur, with the station of those by whom the enquiry was instituted, to give to the information elicited a high degree of importance, which entitles it to the most serious attention.

The most striking fact to be deduced from the great body of evidence which has been collected is lamentable and awful. It appears that in almost every instance in which our countrymen have come in contact with the uncivilized Aborigines, in any part of the globe, they have exerted an influence which has tended powerfully to reduce the numbers and greatly to degrade the moral and physical character of the natives. In some instances absolute extinction of the natives has already taken place—in others the work is nearly completed—whilst in most of the remainder, it is proceeding with a dreadful and accelerating rapidity.

It has been said, that in these cases the natives become extinct rather than that they are exterminated; but it must be a voluntary self-delusion which can make us contented with this mode of stating the case. A numerous population cannot be cut off from the soil upon which their forefathers lived and multiplied, and upon which an exotic race of recent introduction now proves remarkably prolific, without the operation of some great and highly pernicious influence. Whether we can at once perceive it or not, its existence is incontrovertible, and it becomes the duty of Christian philanthropists, possessing the means, to seek it out, and to labour to apply if possible a prompt and efficient remedy.

For centuries the slave-trade had brought thousands of the sons of Africa to an untimely death, and devoted many thousands more to all the horrors of slavery; but whilst Africa