

INTRODUCTION.

WHEN America was discovered by the Europeans about three hundred years ago, it was peopled by very numerous tribes of Indians who called themselves Red men. They lived by hunting and fishing, their mode of life varying according to their situation; those who resided where game was plentiful lived entirely on the produce of the chase; whilst others in the neighbourhood of lakes and rivers, derived their support principally from fishing; many tribes raised small quantities of Indian corn* and tobacco.

The use of metals was unknown to them, so that their huts or wigwams, as they are called, were of very rude construction, being generally made with poles covered with skins, bark, or earth. They also made canoes out of the trunks of trees, which with vast labour they hollowed with fire, and by the aid of sharp flints. They made pottery and dried it in the sun; and fashioned tobacco pipes out of clay or stone; they dressed the skins of animals in a manner quite peculiar to themselves, so that they remained pliable; and with these skins they made pouches, leggins, and mocassins, which they ornamented very ingeniously with the small flexible quills of the American porcupine, dyed with several brilliant colours.

From the introduction of intoxicating spirits, and from the ravages of the small-pox, neither of which was known in North America till the Europeans carried them there, many tribes of Red men have been entirely

* In Europe called maize.