

THE ABENAKI INDIANS.

THE present spirit of inquiry into the early history of New England is bringing forth additional facts and evolving new light, by which we are every day seeing more clearly the true motive and incentives for its colonization. But whenever the student turns to investigate the history of the aboriginal tribes, who once inhabited this part of the country, he is struck, not so much with the paucity of materials, as with the complication and difficulties which our earlier and later writers have thrown around the subject, as well as the very different light with which they have viewed it.

The first explorers of our coast, whose intercourse with the Indians was limited to trading for furs and skins, seem to have had a much better opinion of them than Mather, Hubbard, and some still later writers. It is not to be supposed that while a large part of the population were smarting from the distress of almost continued Indian wars, that even the most candid could coolly investigate and impartially record the history, character, and wants of such a people. But the time has arrived, when, divesting ourselves of all prejudice, we can examine carefully their true situation, and making allowance for their condition, write their history with fairness and candor.

The present sketch is confined to a brief notice of the tribes who inhabited the territory now constituting the