

circumstances which generally precede, attend, and follow the destruction of some families who adventure to the western frontiers for a settlement, among which, from the manner of my capture, I suppose mine to have been; and as some of my readers may not be acquainted with them, a few remarks here on these subjects may prove interesting, and will not, I am persuaded, be deemed irrelative to the plan I have proposed to follow.

Inheriting certain districts of country from their ancestors, the limits to which are prescribed either by treaties with the several tribes, or are traditionary and mutually respected, the Indians are accustomed to roam with unrestrained freedom through their forests in search of game, or to cultivate so much of the soil as they may deem necessary to supply their wants and comforts. Every encroachment made upon their territory, whether with or without their consent, is, sooner or later, regarded as an infringement of their natural rights, and has frequently given rise to long, cruel, and exterminating wars, not only between different tribes, but between the Indians and the whites. They regard the latter with much the most scrupulous jealousy; because experience has taught them that every settlement on their part, within their boundaries, is a precursor to their farther recess, which, they most sensibly feel, will only terminate with their final expulsion, extermination, or incorporation with those they esteem their natural and most bitter enemies. With such feelings and views in regard to their neighbours, and their highest ambition being to excel in war, to improve themselves in