

It may be suggested, that the sufferings of the Aborigines, from the importation of foreign diseases, and the more baneful influence of spirituous liquors, more than counterbalance the benefits they receive from civilization. These objections, it must be frankly confessed, are very powerful. But it is hoped, that vigilant measures will be pursued, by a government professed to be founded on the principles of humanity and wisdom, to prohibit the introduction of spirituous liquors among them. The small-pox has raged, when little or no communication was held with them. Provisions are already made to introduce vaccine inoculation among them, which will prevent those horrid ravages that are mentioned in the course of the work.

It may be thought matter of surprise, that regions, upwards of three thousand miles in length, bordering on a country inhabited by an inquisitive and enterprising people, who could avail themselves of the benefit of a lucrative fur trade, should remain so long unexplored. Many impediments have retarded the tour, that has laid open to view a country hitherto hidden from the knowledge of the civilized American.

Attempts have been made by the great discoverer, Capt. Cook, to find a communication by water in the northern regions between the Atlantic and Pacific oceans. Whether the two great oceans are joined together in those regions remains an uncertainty; but the rigours of a frigid zone evinced, that though they joined, it was impracticable to navigate from one to the other.

To travel among the Indians, is but too often thought the road that inevitably leads the unfortunate adventurer to an untimely death. The barbarity of the Indians in war is proverbial; but in time of peace, hospitality and humanity are traits justly due to their character. It is a judicious saying of an eminent traveller among them, that "in time of peace no greater friends, in time of war no greater enemies."