

at length the coast of America, and give a beginning to population in that continent.

"Though it be possible that America may have received its first inhabitants from our continent, either by the north-west of Europe, or the north-east of Asia, there seems to be good reason for supposing that the progenitors of all the American nations from Cape Horn to the southern confines of Labrador, migrated from the latter rather than the former. The Esquimaux are the only people in America, who in their aspect or character, bear any resemblance to the northern Europeans. They are manifestly a race of men distinct from all the nations of the American continent, in language, in disposition, and habits of life. Their original, then, may warrantably be traced up to that source which I have pointed out. But among all the other inhabitants of America, there is such a striking similitude in the form of their bodies and the qualities of their minds, that notwithstanding the diversities occasioned by the influences of climate or unequal progress in improvement, we must pronounce them to be descended from one source. There may be a variety in the shades, but we can every where trace the same original colour. Each tribe has something peculiar which distinguishes it, but in all of them we discern certain features common to the whole race. It is remarkable, that in every peculiarity, whether in their persons or dispositions, which characterize the Americans, they have some resemblance to the rude tribes scattered over the north-east of Asia, but almost none to the nations settled in the northern extremities of Europe. We may, therefore, refer them to the former origin, and conclude that their Asiatic progenitors, having settled in those parts of America where the Russians have discovered the proximity of the two continents, spread gradually over its various regions. This account of the progress of population in America coincides with the traditions of the Mexicans concerning their own origin, which, imperfect as they are, were preserved with more accuracy, and merit