

white settlement could be noticed. Not having observed the gradual process—my mind being occupied with other matters—I seemed all at once to perceive that a few, young, sharp-witted natives had become what I could only call, offensively European, and that the mass of the Indians no longer visited the settlement in their former free independent way, but lived listlessly in the villages, brooding seemingly over heavy thoughts. Their gradual shrinking from association with us, when first observed, caused a little alarm, but I found on inquiry that it did not arise from ill will. The fact was that the curiosity of the savage had been satisfied; his mind was confused, and his faculties surprised and stunned by the sight of machinery, steam-vessels, and the active labour of civilised man; he distrusted himself, his old habits and traditions, and shrank away despondent and discouraged. Always suspicious, it now became the business of his life to scrutinise the actions of the whites, and to speculate apprehensively as to their probable intentions. He began soon to disregard his old pursuits and tribal practices and ceremonies. By and bye it was noticed that more than the usual amount of sickness existed among the Indians, and particularly among the Indians who lived nearest to the white settlement, and we could not attribute the increased ill-health to any cause, unless it were to the change in diet consequent on our arrival. It certainly was not produced by whiskey, syphilis, or any of the other destructive agencies which are loosely and erroneously described as being peculiar to civilisation.

I may repeat that the increased death-rate of the Indians, even after our arrival, did not result from ill-usage nor from the excessive use of ardent spirits—as I was able almost totally to exclude intoxicating drinks—nor from debauchery, but from other causes, among the chief of which, according to my observation, I would name—the effect of a change of food, and the despondency and discouragement produced in the minds of the Indians by the presence of a superior race. What are we to make of all this? It seems that savages must disappear. Are they, in thus shrinking away, obeying a natural and general law by which the purposes of the Almighty are being carried out in their removal?

---