

to go to Michillimackinac, where they would have an opportunity of trading, and of hearing the accounts I had entertained them with of my countrymen confirmed; at the same time I had furnished them with a recommendation to the governor, and given them every direction necessary for their voyage.

In consequence of this, one of the principal chiefs, and twenty-five of an inferior rank, agreed to go the ensuing summer. This they took an opportunity of doing when they came with the rest of their band to attend the grand council at the mouth of the river St. Pierre. Being obliged, on account of the disappointment I had just been informed of, to return so far down the Mississippi, I could from thence the more easily set them on their journey.

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MISCELLANY.

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FOR THE GAZETTE.

*Of the first peopling of America.*

NUMBER IV.

AS there can be no rational doubts but that the greater part of the interior and southern parts of Africa had not yet appeared, and that America was long posterior in the date of her existence, no philosopher will pretend to dispute. Nature, as I before observed, was equal and progressive in all her operations; therefore we must infallibly conclude, that the same power was brought into exercise for the production of inhabitants of the burning zone of Africa, as that which was experienced by the prior continent of Asia, as it is delivered to us by the sacred writings.

For a variety of reasons we find an undeniable inferiority in this second national creation, which to enumerate, the attentive reader will immediately see, must exceed my bounds. America as it came forward in the due order of time, experienced also the divine attention in the same miraculous manner. The inhabitants of those islands, and perhaps both extremities of America, whose progress in refinement, and knowledge in naval affairs, will not admit their being peopled from the primary stock, must fall back and bring their original from the same source with the first American creation; and thus, as other islands may yet emerge, from the immense aqueous parts of the globe, their vegetable, animal, and intellectual furniture will in due order of time be bestowed.

Now we have not only stocked America with inhabitants, but doctrinally accounted for the colour and features of the African, and also that of the copper-hued American—I say we have accounted for these things in the same manner in which we can account for the colour and features of Noah and his children, from whom we allow ourselves to be descended—that is, because they were made so.

I would now call the reader's attention, for a few moments, to two or three considerations in aid of the principles I have went upon.

First. That nature is unerring and progressive in all her operations, both great and small. This position must govern through the whole; hence the corollary that America was long posterior to Asia, or even Africa. Again—Mankind have naturally assented to this truth, by bestowing the epithet of the New World, or America. Furthermore, experience every where tells us, that the prior rational creation prevails over the secondary ones—hence the fitness that the primary should be the superior, as it was in the due order of time to administer the necessary discipline and knowledge to the inferior creations. The least portion of historical knowledge will verify this. As I wish to have my principles exalted, if possible, beyond the reach of controversy, let us for a moment delineate the absurdity of a contrary supposition. To suppose America coeval with Asia, and to suppose but one rational creation in Asia, and which must be communicated to America by secondary causes, would be virtually saying, that great part of the operations of nature have been in vain by creating a great continent without inhabitants, and depending upon the knowledge and enterprise of the first stock to find out this continent, which would take thousands of years; for we know assuredly, that event did not turn up until late in the fifteenth century, when we know as assuredly that America, with all her dependencies, was then filled with inhabitants. This predication of America will be equally successful, when applied to any other discovery with which history furnishes us. Witness the exterminated Canaanites and Philistines in all their discoveries and settlements down the Mediterranean. They had to acquire every inch of territorial acquisition in the same manner the Israelitish regulators, after forty years disciplining in the wilderness had dispossessed them.—Witness the discovery and conquest of the Gauls, a people bold and warlike,

and which were not known in the Roman empire, until the unbounded ambition of Julius Cæsar found them out.—Witness the island and inhabitants of Great-Britain, who were brought to knowledge from the same cause and person. Witness the first entry of the Portuguese into the torrid zone in the fifteenth century, when the negroes were first brought to knowledge to the astonishment both of the Asiatic and European philosopher, when there was not the least trace, or even visionary tradition, in all the learned world, of such a race of beings. Witness the discoveries made by that renowned, though unfortunate navigator, Capt. Cook, that on the inhabitants in a number of the islands, there were the undeniable criterions of a recent original, so as to extort the assent of that sagacious seaman and philosopher: and lastly, witness a rational race in the Pelew islands, the knowledge of whose existence is but the event of yesterday. Were those islands made at the same time with the garden of Eden, and to depend upon the infinitely remote operation of contingent and secondary causes for inhabitants? Impossible! Does not the whole governing economy in the natural and moral world, the whole stream of historical knowledge and universal experience countenance and own the principles upon which this hypothesis is built? The philosopher must answer in the affirmative. The divine also must at least be silent, when he reflects that the authority of the sacred writings remain unimpeached.

Thus I have arrived at the end of a disquisition, rendered curious by the doubts and difficulties with which it has hitherto struggled, and the various attempts for its rescue. That it should now cease to continue a subject of philosophical controversy, either through what I have said, or what may be delivered, even for ages to come, I have no idea.

The candid reader will be pleased to remember (as a farewell request) that from the extent and complicated nature of the subject, an elementary mode of discussion became inevitable, and that the elegance of composition and lustre of language were necessarily excluded. He will farther observe, that where an investigation is intricate and obscure, satisfactory conclusions are then placed beyond human reach; but at the same time there may remain some degree of merit in pointing out those that are probable.

A MODERN PHILOSOPHER.

Stateville, Iredell county,  
September 13, 1790.