

Thine the dread task, O Cortez, here to shew
 What unknown crimes can heighten human woe,
 On these fair fields the blood of realms to pour,
 Tread sceptres down and print thy steps in gore,
 With gold and carnage swell thy fateless mind,
 And live and die the blackest of mankind.

Now see, from yon fair isle, his murdering band
 Stream o'er the wave and mount the fated strand ;
 On the wild shore behold his fortress rise,
 The fleet in flames ascends the darken'd skies.
 The march begins ; the nations, from afar,
 Quake in his sight, and wage the fruitless war ;
 O'er the rich provinces he bends his way,
 Kings in his chain, and kingdoms for his prey ;
 While, robed in peace, great Montezuma stands,
 And crowns and treasures sparkle in his hands,
 Proffers the empire, yields the sceptred sway,
 Bids vassal'd millions tremble and obey ;
 And plies the victor, with incessant prayer,
 Thro' ravaged realms the harmless race to spare.
 But prayers and tears and sceptres plead in vain,
 Nor threats can move him, nor a world restrain ;
 While blest religion's prostituted name,
 And monkish fury guides the sacred flame :
 O'er fanes and altars, fires unhallow'd bend,
 Climb o'er the walls and up the towers ascend,
 Pour, round the lowering skies, the smoky flood,
 And whelm the fields, and quench their rage in blood.

The hero heard ; and, with a heaving sigh,
 Dropped the full tear that started in his eye,
 Oh hapless day ! his trembling voice reply'd,
 That saw my wandering streamer mount the tide !
 Oh ! had the lamp of heaven, to that bold fail,
 Ne'er mark'd the passage nor awaked the gale,
 Taught eastern worlds these beauteous climes to find,
 Nor led those tygers forth to curse mankind.
 Then had the tribes, beneath these bounteous skies,
 Seen their walls widen and their spires arise ;
 Down the long tracts of time their glory shone,
 Broad as the day and lasting as the sun :
 The growing realms, beneath thy shield that rest,
 O hapless monarch, still thy power had blest,
 Enjoy'd the pleasures that surround thy throne,
 Survey'd thy virtues and sublimed their own.
 Forgive me, prince ; this impious arm hath led
 The unseen storm that blackens o'er thy head ;
 Taught the dark sons of slaughter where to roam,
 To seize thy crown and seal thy nation's doom.
 Arm, sleeping empire, meet the daring band,
 Drive back the terrors, save the sinking land—
 Yet vain the strife ! behold the sweeping flood !
 Forgive me nature, and forgive me God.

Thus, from his heart, while speaking sorrows roll,
 The Power, reproving, sooth'd his tender soul.
 Father of this new world, thy tears give o'er,
 Let virtue grieve and Heaven be blamed no more.

Enough for man, with persevering mind,
To act his part and strive to bless his kind ;
Enough for thee, o'er thy dark age to rise,
With genius warm'd, and favour'd of the skies.
For this my guardian care thy youth inspired,
To virtue raised thee, and with glory fired,
Bade in thy plan each distant world unite,
And wing'd thy streamer for the adventurous flight.

Nor think no blessings shall thy toils attend,
Or these fell tyrants can defeat their end.
Such impious deeds, in Heaven's all-ruling plan,
Lead in disguise the noblest bliss of man.
Long have thy race, to narrow shores confined,
Trod the same round that cramp'd the roving mind ;
Now, borne on bolder wings, with happier flight,
The world's broad bounds unfolding to the sight,
The mind shall soar ; the nations catch the flame,
Enlarge their counsels and extend their fame ;
While mutual ties the social joys enhance,
And the last stage of civil rule advance.

Tho' impious ruffians spread their crimes abroad,
And o'er these empires pour the purple flood ;
Tis thus religious rage, its own dire bane,
Shall fall at last, with all its millions slain,
And buried gold, drawn bounteous from the mine,
Give wings to commerce and the world refine.

Now to yon southern walls extend thy view,
And mark the rival seats of rich Peru.

There Quito's airy plains, exalted high,
With loftier temples rise along the sky ;
And elder Cusco's richer roofs unfold,
Flame on the day and shed their suns of gold.

Another range, in these delightful climes,
Spreads a broad theatre for unborn crimes.
Another Cortez shall the treasures view,
The rage rekindle and the guilt renew ;
His treason, fraud, and every dire decree,
O curst Pizarro, shall revive in thee.

There reigns a prince, whose hand the sceptre claims,
Thro' a long lineage of imperial names ;
Where the brave roll of following Incas trace
The distant father of their realm and race,
Immortal Capac. He in youthful pride,
With fair Oella, his illustrious bride,
In virtuous guile, proclaim'd their birth begun,
From the pure splendors of their God, the sun ;
With power and dignity a throne to found,
Fix the mild sway and spread their arts around ;
Crush the dire Gods that human victims claim,
And point all worship to a nobler name ;
With cheerful rites, the due devotions pay
To the bright beam, that gives the changing day.

On this fair plan, the children of the skies
Bade, in the wild, a growing empire rise ;
Beneath their hand, and sacred to their fame,
Rose yon fair walls, that meet the solar flame

Succeeding sovereigns spread their bounds afar,
By arts of peace and temper'd force of war ;
Till these surrounding realms the sceptre own,
And grateful millions hail the genial sun.

Behold, in yon fair lake, a beauteous isle,
Where fruits and flowers, in rich profusion smile ;
High in the midst a sacred temple rise,
Seat of the sun, and pillar of the skies.
The roofs of burnish'd gold, the blazing spires
Light the glad heavens and lose their upward fires ;
Fix'd in the flaming front, with living ray,
A diamond circlet gives the rival day ;
In whose bright face forever looks abroad
The radiant image of the beaming God.
Round the wide courts, and in the solemn dome,
A white-robed train of holy virgins bloom ;
Their pious hands the sacred rites require,
To grace the offerings, and preserve the fire.
On this blest isle, with flowery garlands crown'd,
That ancient pair, in charms of youth, were found,
Whose union'd souls the mighty plan design'd,
To bless the nations* and reform mankind.

* From the traditions of Capac and Oella, mentioned by the Spanish historians, they appear to have been very great and distinguished characters. About three centuries previous to the discovery of that country by the Spaniards, the natives of Peru were as rude savages as any in America. They had no fixed habitations, no ideas of permanent property ; they wandered naked like the beasts, and, like them, depended on the events of each day for a precarious subsistence. At this period, Manco Capac and his wife Mama Oella appeared on a small island in the lake Titicaca ; near which the city of Cusco was afterwards erected. These persons, in

The hero heard, and thus the Power besought ;
What arts unknown the wonderous blessings wrought ?
What human skill, in that benighted age,
In savage souls could quell the barbarous rage ?
With leagues of peace combine the wide domain ?
And teach the virtues in their laws to reign ?

order to establish a belief of their divinity, in the minds of the people, were clothed in white garments of cotton ; and declared themselves descended from the Sun, who was their father and the God of that country. They affirmed that he was offended at their cruel and perpetual wars, their barbarous modes of worship, and their neglecting to make the best use of the blessings he was constantly bestowing, in fertilizing the earth and producing vegetation ; that he pitied their wretched state, and had sent his own children to instruct them, and to establish a number of wise regulations, by which they might be rendered happy.

By some extraordinary method of persuasion, these persons drew together a number of the savage tribes, laid the foundations of the city of Cusco, and established what was called the kingdom of the Sun, or the Peruvian empire. In the reign of Manco Capac, the dominion was extended about eight leagues from the city ; and at the end of three centuries, it was established fifteen hundred miles on the coast of the Pacific ocean ; and from that ocean to the mountains of the Andes. During this period, through a succession of twelve monarchs, the original constitution, established by the first Inca, remained unaltered ; and was at last overturned by an accident, which no human wisdom could foresee or prevent.

For a more particular disquisition on the character and institutions of this great Legislator, the Reader is referred to a dissertation prefixed to the third Book.

Mama Oella is said to have invented many of the domestic arts, particularly that of making garments of cotton and other vegetable substances.

In the passage preceding this reference, I have alluded to most of the traditions, relating to the manner of their introducing themselves, and establishing their dominion. In the remainder of the second, and through the whole of the third Book, I have given what may be supposed a probable narrative of their real origin and conduct. I have thrown the episode into an epic form, and given it so considerable a place in the Poem, for the purpose of exhibiting in action the characters, manners and sentiments of the different tribes of savages, that inhabit the mountains of South-America.

Long is their story, said the Power divine,
The labours great and glorious the design ;
And tho' to earthly minds, their actions rest,
By years obscured, in flowery fiction dreft,
Yet my glad voice shall wake their honour'd name,
And give their virtues to immortal fame.

Led by his father's wars, in early prime,
Young Capac wander'd from a northern clime ;
Along these shores, with livelier verdure gay,
Thro' fertile vales, the adventurous armies stray.
He saw the tribes unnumber'd range the plain,
And rival chiefs, by rage and slaughter, reign ;

In reviewing this part of my subject, I have to lament, that so extraordinary and meritorious a Poem, as the Araucana of don Alonso de Ercilla, of the sixteenth century, has never yet appeared in our language. The account given of that work by Voltaire excited my curiosity at an early day ; as I conceived the manners and characters of the mountain savages of Chile, as described by that heroic Spaniard, must have opened a new field of Poetry, rich with uncommon ornaments.

That elegant and concise sketch of it lately given to the public by Mr. Hayley, has come into my hands, since I have been writing these notes, and but a few days previous to the Poem's being put to the press. Yet it gives me reason to hope, with every friend of literature, that the whole of that great work will ere long be presented to the English Reader by the same hand.

It is usually presumed, that every Author must have read all that have gone before him, at least on subjects similar to what he attempts ; yet the Lusiad of Camoens, a Poem of great merit on the expedition of Gama, I had sought for in vain in different parts of America, and even sent to Europe without being able to obtain it ; till, a few days since, it came to hand in the majestic and spirited translation of Mr. Mickle. The extensive and sublime objects opened to our view in a work which celebrates the discovery of one part of the globe, may well be thought worthy the contemplation of a writer, who endeavours to trace the consequences of a similar event in another. Of this I was before sensible ; but these are not the only disadvantages that an Author, in a new country, and in moderate circumstances, must have to encounter.

He saw the fires their dreadful Gods adore,
Their altars staining with their children's gore ;
Yet mark'd their reverence for the Sun, whose beam
Proclaims his bounties and his power supreme ;
Who sails in happier skies, diffusing good,
Demands no victim and receives no blood.

In peace returning with his conquering fire,
Fair glory's charms his youthful soul inspire ;
With virtue warm'd, he fix'd the generous plan,
To build his greatness on the bliss of man.

By nature formed to daring deeds of fame,
Tall, bold and beauteous rose his stately frame ;
Strong moved his limbs, a mild majestic grace
Beam'd from his eyes and open'd in his face ;
O'er the dark world his mind superior shone,
And, soaring, seem'd the semblance of the sun.
Now fame's prophetic visions lift his eyes,
And future empires from his labours rise ;
Yet softer fires his daring views controul,
Sway the warm wish and fill the changing soul.
Shall the bright genius, kindled from above,
Bend to the milder, gentler voice of love ;
That bounds his glories, and forbids to part
From that calm bower, that held his glowing heart ?
Or shall the toils, imperial heroes claim,
Fire his bold bosom with a patriot flame ?
Bid sceptres wait him on the distant shore ?
And blest Oella meet his eyes no more ?

Retiring pensive, near the wonted shade,
 His unseen steps approach the beauteous maid.
 Her raven-locks roll on her heaving breast,
 And wave luxuriant round her slender waist,
 Gay wreaths of flowers her lovely brows adorn,
 And her white raiment mocks the pride of morn.
 Her busy hand sustains a bending bough,
 Where woolly clusters spread their robes of snow,
 From opening pods, unbinds the fleecy store,
 And culls her labours for the evening bower.
 Her sprightly soul, by deep invention led,
 Had found the skill to turn the twisting thread,
 To spread the woof, the shuttle to command,
 Till various garments graced her forming hand.
 Here, while her thoughts with her own Capac rove,
 O'er former scenes of innocence and love,
 Through many a field his fancied dangers share,
 And wait him glorious from the distant war ;
 Blest with the ardent wish, her glowing mind
 A snowy vesture for the prince design'd ;
 She seeks the purest wool, to web the fleece,
 The sacred emblem of returning peace.
 Sudden his near approach her breast alarms ;
 He flew enraptured to her yielding arms,
 And lost, dissolving in a softer flame,
 The distant empire and the fire of fame.
 At length, retiring o'er the homeward field,
 Their mutual minds to happy converse yield,

O'er various scenes of blissful life they ran,
 When thus the warrior to the fair began.

Joy of my life, thou know'st my roving mind,
 With these grim tribes, in dark abodes, confined,
 With grief hath mark'd what vengeful passions sway
 The bickering bands, and sweep the race away.
 Where late my distant steps the war pursued,
 The fertile plains grew boundless as I view'd ;
 Increasing nations trod the waving wild,
 And joyous nature more delightful smiled.
 No changing seasons there the flowers deform,
 No dread volcano, and no mountain storm ;
 Rains ne'er invade, nor livid lightnings play,
 Nor clouds obscure the radiant Power of day.
 But, while the God, in ceaseless glory bright,
 Rolls o'er the day and fires his stars by night,
 Unbounded fulness flows beneath his reign,
 Seas yield their treasures, fruits adorn the plain ;
 Warm'd by his beam, their mountains pour the flood,
 And the cool breezes wake beneath the God.
 My anxious thoughts indulge the great design,
 To form those nations to a sway divine ;
 Destroy the rights of every dreadful Power,
 Whose crimson altars glow with human gore ;
 To laws and mildness teach the realms to yield,
 And nobler fruits to grace the cultured field.

But great, my charmer, is the task of fame,
 The countless tribes to temper and to tame.

Full many a spacious wild my soul must see,
Spread dreary bounds between my joys and me ;
And yon bright Godhead circle many a year ;
Each lonely evening number'd with a tear.
Long robes of white* my shoulders must embrace,
To speak my lineage of ethereal race ;
That wondering tribes may tremble, and obey
The radiant offspring of the Power of day. [crease,

And when thro' cultured fields their bowers en-
And streams and plains survey the works of peace,
When these glad hands the rod of nations claim,
And happy millions bless thy Capac's name,
Then shall he feign a journey to the Sun,
To bring the partner of the peaceful throne ;
So shall descending kings the line sustain,
And unborn ages bloom beneath their reign.

Will then my fair, in that delightful hour,
Forsake these wilds and hail a happier bower ?
And now consenting, with approving smiles,
Bid the young warrior tempt the daring toils ?
And, sweetly patient, wait the flight of days,
That crown our labours with immortal praise ?

Silent the fair one heard ; her moistening eye
Spoke the full soul, nor could her voice reply ;

* As the art of spinning is said to have been invented by Oella ; it is no improbable fiction, to suppose they first assumed these white garments of cotton, as an emblem of the sun ; in order to inspire that reverence for their persons which was necessary to their success ; and that such a dress should be continued in the family, as a badge of royalty.

Till softer accents sooth'd her listening ear,
Composed her tumult and allay'd her fear.
Think not, enchanting maid, my steps would part,
While silent sorrows heave that tender heart :
More dear to me are blest Oella's joys,
Than all the lands that bound the bending skies ;
Nor thou, bright Sun, should'st bribe my soul to rest,
And leave one struggle in her lovely breast.
Yet think in those vast climes, my gentle fair,
What hapless millions claim our guardian care ;
How age to age leads on the dreadful gloom,
And rage and slaughter croud the untimely tomb ;
No social joys their wayward passions prove,
Nor peace nor pleasure treads the savage grove ;
Mid thousand heroes and a thousand fair,
No fond Oella meets her Capac there.
Yet, taught by thee each nobler joy to prize,
With softer charms the virgin race shall rise,
Awake new virtues, every grace improve,
And form their minds for happiness and love.

Behold, where future years, in pomp, descend,
How worlds and ages on thy voice depend !
And, like the Sun, whose all-delighting ray
O'er those mild borders sheds serenest day,
Diffuse thy bounties, give my steps to rove,
A few short months the noble task to prove,
And, swift return'd from glorious toils, declare
What realms submissive wait our fostering care.

And will my prince, my Capac, borne away,
Thro' thosse dark wilds, in quest of empire, stray ?
Where tygers fierce command the howling wood,
And men like tygers thirst for human blood.
Think'st thou no dangerous deed the course attends ?
Alone, unaided by thy fire and friends ?
Even chains and death may meet my rover there,
Nor his last groan could reach Oella's ear.
But chains, nor death, nor groans shall Capac prove,
Unknown to her, while she has power to rove.
Close by thy side where'er thy wanderings stray,
My equal steps shall measure all the way ;
With borrow'd soul each dire event I'll dare,
Thy toils to lessen and thy dangers share.

Command, blest chief, since virtue bids thee go
To rule the realms and banish human woe,
Command these hands two snowy robes to weave,
The Sun to mimic and the tribes deceive ;
Then let us range, and spread the peaceful sway,
The radiant children of the Power of day.

The lovely counsel pleased. The smiling chief
Approved her courage and dispel'd her grief ;
Then to the distant bower in haste they move,
Begin their labours and prepare to rove.
Soon grow the robes beneath her forming care,
And the fond parents wed the noble pair ;
But, whelm'd in grief, beheld, the approaching dawn,
Their joys all vanish'd, and their children gone.

Nine changing days, thro' southern wilds, they stray'd,
Now wrapp'd in glooms, now gleaming thro' the
Till the tenth morning, with an orient smile, [glade,
Beheld them blooming in the happy isle.
The toil begins ; to every neighbouring band,
They speak the message and their faith demand ;
With various art superior powers display,
To prove their lineage and confirm their sway.
The astonish'd tribes behold with glad surprize,
The Gods descended from the favouring skies ;
Adore their persons, robed in shining white,
Receive their laws and leave each horrid rite ;
Build with assiting toil, the golden throne,
And hail and bless the sceptre of the Sun.

A DISSERTATION

ON THE GENIUS AND INSTITUTIONS OF
MANCO CAPAC.

ALTHOUGH the original inhabitants of America in general deserve to be classed among the most unimproved savages that have ever been discovered; yet the Mexican and Peruvian governments exhibit remarkable instances of order and regularity. In the difference of national character between these two empires, we may discern the influence of political systems on the human mind; and infer the importance of the task which a legislator undertakes, in attempting to reduce a barbarous people under the controul of government and laws. The Mexican constitution was formed to render its subjects brave and powerful; but, while it succeeded in this object, it tended to remove them farther from the real blessings of society, than they were, while in the rudest state of nature. The history of the world affords no instance of men whose manners were equally ferocious, and whose superstition was more bloody and unrelenting. On the contrary, the establishments of Manco Capac carry the marks of a most benevolent and pacific system; they tended to humanize the world and render his people happy; while his ideas of the Deity were so perfect, as to bear a comparison with the enlightened doctrines of Socrates or Plato.

THE most distinguished characters in history, who have been considered as legislators among bar-

barous nations, are Moses, Lycurgus, Solon, Numa, Mahomet and Peter of Russia. Of these, only the two former and the two latter appear really to deserve that character. Solon and Numa possessed not the means nor the opportunity of shewing their talents in the business of original legislation. Athens and Rome were considerably advanced in civilization, before these characters arose. The most they could do was to correct and amend constitutions already formed. Solon, in particular, may be considered as a wise politician; but by no means as the founder of a nation. The Athenians were too far advanced in society to admit any radical alteration in their form of government; if indeed any form can be said to exist, where every thing is left to the controul of a capricious multitude. The institutions of Numa were more effective and durable; his religious ceremonies were, for many ages, the most powerful check upon the licentious and turbulent Romans. By inculcating a remarkable reverence for the Gods, and making it necessary to consult the Auspices, when any thing important was to be transacted, he rendered the popular superstition subservient to the views of policy, and gave the senate a steady check upon the extravagance of the plebeians. But the constitutions of Rome and Athens, however the subject of so much injudicious applause, were never fixed upon any permanent principles; though the wisdom of some of their rulers, and the spirit of liberty that inspired the people, justly demand our admiration.

EACH of the other legislators above mentioned deserves a particular consideration; as acting in stations somewhat similar to that of the Peruvian lawgiver. Three objects are to be attended to, by the legislator of a barbarous people. *First*, that his system be such as is capable of reducing the greatest number of men under one jurisdiction. *Secondly*, that it apply to such

principles in human nature for its support, as are universal and permanent; in order to ensure the duration of the government. *Thirdly*, that it admit of improvements correspondent to any advancement in knowledge or variation of circumstances, that may happen to its subjects; without endangering the principle of government, by such innovations. So far therefore as the systems of those legislators agree with these fundamental principles, they are worthy of respect; and so far as they deviate, they may be considered as defective and imperfect.

To begin with Moses and Lycurgus; it is necessary in the first place to observe, that, in order to judge of the merit of any institutions, we must take into view the peculiar character of the people for whom they were framed. For want of this attention, many of the laws of Moses have been ridiculed by ignorant sceptics, and many establishments of Lycurgus censured by as ignorant politicians. The Jews, who were led by Moses out of Egypt, were not only uncivilized, but, having just risen to independence from a state of servitude, they united the manners of servants and savages; and their national character is a composition of servility and contumacy, ignorance, superstition, filthiness and cruelty. Of their cruelty as a people we need no other proof than the account of their avengers of blood, and the readiness with which the whole congregation turned executioners and stoned to death the devoted offenders. The Leprosy, a disease now wholly unknown, was undoubtedly produced by their total want of cleanliness, continued for successive generations. In this view the frequent ablutions, the peculiar modes of trial, and many other institutions may be wholly vindicated from ridicule, and proved to be not only wise, but even necessary regulations.

THE Spartan lawgiver has been equally censured

for the toleration of theft and adultery. Among that race of Barbarians, these crimes were too general to admit of total prevention or universal punishment. By vesting all property in the community, instead of encouraging theft, he removed the possibility of the crime ; and, in a nation where licentiousness was generally indulged, it was a great step towards introducing a purity of manners, to punish adultery in all cases, wherein the crime was not committed by the free consent of all parties injured or interested.

THOSE constitutions of government are best calculated for immediate energy and duration, which are interwoven with some religious system. The legislator, who appears in the character of an inspired person, renders his political institutions sacred, and interests, the conscience as well as the judgement in their support. The Jewish lawgiver had this advantage over the Spartan. He appeared not in the character of a mere earthly governor, but as an interpreter of the divine will. By injoining a religious observance of certain rites, he formed his people to habitual obedience ; by directing their cruelty against the breakers of the laws, he at least mitigated the rancour of private hatred ; by forbidding usury, and directing that real property should return to the original families in the year of Jubilee, he prevented too great an inequality of property ; and by selecting a particular tribe, to be the guardians and interpreters of religion, he prevented its mysteries from being the subject of profane and vulgar investigation. To secure the permanency of his institutions, he prohibited any intercourse with foreigners, by severe restrictions ; and formed his people to habits and a character disagreeable to other nations ; by which means any foreign intercourse was prevented, from the mutual hatred of both parties.

To these institutions the laws of Lycurgus bear a

most striking resemblance. The features of his constitution were severe and forbidding ; it was however calculated to inspire the most enthusiastic love of liberty and martial honour. In no country was the patriotic passion more energetic than in Sparta ; no laws ever excluded the idea of separate property in an equal degree, or inspired a more thorough contempt for the manners of other nations. The utter prohibition of money, commerce and almost every thing desirable to effeminate nations, entirely excluded foreigners from Sparta ; and, while it inspired the people with contempt for others, it rendered them agreeable to each other. By these means, Lycurgus rendered the nation powerful and warlike ; and to insure the duration of his government he endeavoured to interest the consciences of his people, by the aid of oracles, and the oath he is said to have exacted from them, to obey his laws till his return ; when he went into a voluntary and perpetual exile.

FROM this view of the Jewish and Spartan institutions, applied to the principles above stated, they appear, in the two first articles, considerably imperfect, and in the last, totally defective. Neither of them was calculated to bring any considerable territory or number of men under one jurisdiction ; from this circumstance alone, they could not be rendered permanent, as they must be constantly exposed to their more powerful neighbours. But the third object of legislation, that of providing for the future progress of society, which, as it regards the happiness of mankind, is the most important of the three, was in both instances entirely neglected. These systems appear to have been formed with an express design to prevent all future improvement in knowledge, or enlargement of the human mind ; and to fix those nations forever in a state of ignorance, superstition and barbarism. To

vindicate the Spartan from an imputation of weakness or inattention in this particular, it may be urged that he was surrounded by nations more powerful than his own; it was therefore impossible for him to commence an establishment upon any other plan. And Moses must be vindicated upon this idea, that the divine moral law, which was designed, at a future period, to regulate and harmonize the whole human race, must be preserved in that nation, which was to give birth to the Saviour of mankind. If we allow him to have had a prophetic knowledge of these events, his institutions may be pronounced unexceptionable in every part.

THE institutions of Mahomet, are next to be considered. The first object of legislation appears to have been better understood by the Arabian Prophet, than by either of the preceding sages; his jurisdiction was capable of being enlarged to any extent of territory, and governing any number of nations, that might be subjugated by his powerful and enthusiastic armies; and to obtain this object his system of religion was admirably calculated. Like Moses, he convinced his people that he acted as the vicegerent of Heaven; but with this capital advantage, adapting his religion to the natural feelings and propensities of mankind, he multiplied his followers, by the allurements of pleasure and the promise of a sensual paradise. These circumstances were likewise sure to render his constitution permanent. His religious system was so easy to be understood, so splendid and so inviting, there could be no danger that the people would lose sight of its principles, and no necessity of future prophets, to explain the doctrines, or reform the nation. To these advantages if we add the exact and rigid military discipline, the splendor and sacredness of the monarch, and that total ignorance of the people, which such a system will produce and perpetuate, the

establishment must be evidently well calculated for extent and duration. But the last and most important end of government, that of mental improvement and social happiness, was deplorably lost in the institution. And there was probably more learning and real genius in Arabia, in the days of this extraordinary character, than can now be found in all the Turkish dominions.

ON the contrary, the enterprising genius of the Russian monarch appears to have been wholly bent on the arts of civilization, and the improvement of society among his subjects. Happy in a legal title to a throne which already commanded a prodigious extent of country, he found that the first object of government was already secured; and by applying himself with great sagacity and perseverance, to the third object, he was sure that the second would be a necessary and invariable consequence. He effected his purposes, important as they were, merely by the introduction of the arts, and the encouragement of politer manners. The greatness of his genius appears not so much in his institutions, which he copied from other nations, as in the extraordinary measures he followed to introduce them, the judgement he showed in selecting and adapting them to the genius of his subjects, and his surprising assiduity and success, by which he raised a savage people to a dignified rank among European nations. All his plans were formed to encourage the future progress of society; and their duration was ensured by their obvious value and importance. His successors have followed his political measures, with great attention to the same objects; and the present reigning empress has rendered herself not unworthy of so high and honourable a descent.

To the genius and operation of the several forms of government above mentioned, we will compare

that of the Peruvian Lawgiver. It is probable that the savages of Peru, before the time of Capac, among other objects of adoration, paid homage to the Sun. By availing himself of this popular sentiment, he appeared, like Moles and Mahomet, in the character of a divine legislator, endowed with supernatural powers. After impressing these ideas strongly on the minds of the people, drawing together a number of the tribes and rendering them subservient to his benevolent purposes, he applied himself to forming the outlines of a plan of policy, capable of founding and regulating an extensive empire; wisely calculated for perpetual duration; and expressly designed to improve the knowledge, peace and happiness of a considerable portion of mankind. In the apportionment of the lands, and the assignment of real property, he invented a mode somewhat resembling the Feudal System of Europe: yet this system was wisely checked in its operation, by a law similar to that of Moses, which regulated landed possessions in the year of Jubilee. He divided the lands into three parts; the first was consecrated to the uses of religion, the second set apart for the Inca and his family, to enable him to defray the expences of government and to appear in the style of a monarch, the third, and much the largest portion, was allotted to the people; and this allotment was repeated every year, and varied according to the number and exigencies of each family.

As the Incan family appeared in the character of Divinities, it was necessary that a subordination of ranks should be established; in order to render the distinction between the monarch and his people more perceptible. With this view he created a band of Nobles, who were distinguished by personal and hereditary honours. These were united to the monarch by the strongest ties of interest; in peace they acted as Judges, and superintended the police of the empire,

in war they commanded in the armies. The next order of men were the respectable peasantry of the country, who composed the principal strength of the nation. Below these was a class of men, who were the servants of the public; who cultivated the public lands. They possessed no property, and their only security depended on their regular industry and peaceable demeanour. Above all these orders, were the Inca and his family. He was possessed of absolute and uncontrollable power; his mandates were regarded as the word of Heaven, and the double guilt of impiety and rebellion attended on disobedience. To impress the utmost veneration for the Incan family, it was a fundamental principle, that the royal blood should never be contaminated by any foreign alliance. The mysteries of religion were preserved sacred by the high priest of the royal family, under the controul of the king; and celebrated with rites, capable of making the deepest impression on the multitude. The annual distribution of the lands, while it provided for the varying circumstances of each family, strengthened the bands of society, by preventing the different orders from interfering with each other; the peasants could not vie with their superiors, and the Nobles could not be subjected by misfortune to a subordinate station. A constant habit of industry was inculcated upon all ranks by the surprizing force of example and emulation. The cultivation of the soil, which in most other countries is considered as one of the lowest employments, was here regarded as a divine art. Having had no idea of it before, and being taught it by the children of their God, the people viewed it as a sacred privilege, and considered it as an honour, to imitate and assist the Sun in opening the bosom of the earth and producing vegetation. That the government might be able to exercise the endearing acts of benevolence, the produce of the public lands was re-

served in magazines, to supply the wants of the unfortunate, as a deposit for the people in times of general scarcity, and as a resource in case of an invasion.

THESE are the outlines of a government, the most simple and energetic conceivable, and capable of reducing the greatest number of men under one jurisdiction; at the same time, accommodating its principle of action to every state of society, and every stage of improvement, by a singular and happy application to the passions of the human mind, it encouraged the advancement of knowledge, without being endangered by success. That such a government has a fair chance for perpetual duration is evident from this consideration, that a band of Nobles are ever the firm supporters of regal authority; unless the monarch is so limited in his power, that the Nobles despise his influence. This could not be the case in Peru; the Nobles were justly proud of their elevated station, though they could have no ambition to controul the Inca. They were sensible that their interest was connected with that of the monarch; and, supposing the influence of religion to be out of the question, they would not attempt to destroy an institution on which their happiness depended. A check equally effective was, by the constitution of human nature, imposed on the Inca. Elevated above the competition and rivalry which corrode and torment the bosoms of the great, he could have no ambition to gratify and no motive to induce him to an improper exercise of arbitrary power.

IN the traits of character which distinguish this institution, we may discern all the great strokes of each of the legislators above mentioned. The pretensions of Capac to divine authority were as artfully contrived and as effectual in their consequences, as those of Mahomet; his exploding the worship of evil

beings and objects of terror, forbidding human sacrifices, inculcating more rational ideas of the Deity, and accommodating the rites of worship to a God of justice and benevolence, produced a greater change in the national character of his people, than any of the laws of Moses: Like Peter, he provided for the future improvement of society; while his actions were never measured upon the small and contracted scale, which limited the genius of Lycurgus.

THUS far we find the political system of Capac at least equal to those of the most celebrated ancient or modern lawgivers. But in one particular his character is placed beyond all comparison; I mean for his religious institutions, and the just ideas he had formed, by the unenlightened efforts of human wisdom, of the nature and attributes of the Deity.

AND here I shall premise, that idolatrous nations have never been guilty of those glaring absurdities with which they are usually charged by the christian world. The Persian or Peruvian, when he directed his adoration to the Sun, considered it as the place of residence for the unknown Deity, whom he worshipped, and who communicated from thence the blessings of light, warmth and vegetation; the Greek, who bowed at the statue of Jupiter, supposed it animated with the presence of his God; the Egyptian Apis, Isis and Orus, the calf, the leek and the onion, though the theme of universal ridicule to other nations, were, in their first consecration, like the Jewish Cherubim, symbolical representations of the nature and attributes of their Deities. No man ever erected a stock or a stone for a real object of worship; but all ignorant nations have paid their adoration before the symbol of the Deity, in some shape or other, and directed their homage to the place of his supposed residence. Even among enlightened nations, we find many traces

of the same ideas; the Papist bows to the Picture and the Crucifix; and the Methodist rolls up his eyes in prayer to the Sky. Perhaps unassisted wisdom can rise no higher; and the reason why idol worship was forbidden in the divine law, was not because of the erroneous ideas of the original institutors, but because the views of the vulgar, in process of time, are apt to stop short at the intermediate object, and to lose sight of the original invisible Essence. But the great crime of idolatrous nations consisted in their ascribing to the Deity the passions and attributes of the Devil, and in the horrid and murtherous rites of their worship. Mankind are more inclined to consider the Deity as a God of vengeance than a God of mercy. Even among christians most persons ascribe afflictions to the hand of Heaven and prosperity to their own merit and prudence. This principle operates in its full effect among savages. They usually form no idea of a general superintending Providence; they consider not the Deity as the author of their beings, the Creator of the world and the dispenser of the happiness they enjoy; they discern him not in the usual course of nature, in the sunshine and in the shower, the productions of the earth and the blessing of society; they find a Deity only in the storm, the earthquake and the whirlwind; or ascribe to him the evils of pestilence and famine; they consider him as interposing in wrath to change the course of nature, and exercising the attributes of rage and revenge. They adore him with rites suited to these attributes, with horror, with penance and with sacrifice; they imagine him pleased with the severity of their mortifications, with the oblations of blood and the cries of human victims; and hope to compound for greater judgements, by voluntary sufferings and horrid sacrifices, suited to the relish of his taste.

PERHAPS no single criterion can be given, which

will determine more accurately the state of society in any age or nation, than their general ideas concerning the nature and attributes of the Deity. In the most enlightened periods of antiquity, only a very few of their wisest Philosophers, a Socrates, a Tully, or a Confucius, ever formed a just idea on the subject, or described the Deity as a God of purity, justice and benevolence. Can any thing then be more astonishing than to view a savage native of the southern wilds of America, rising in an age, void of every trace of learning or refinement, and acquiring by the mere efforts of reason, a sublime and rational idea of the Parent of the universe!

HE taught the nation to consider him as the God of order and regularity; ascribing to his influence the rotation of the seasons, the productions of the earth and the blessings of health, especially attributing to his inspiration the wisdom of their laws and that happy constitution, which was the delight and veneration of the people.

THESE humane ideas of religion had a sensible operation upon the manners of the nation. They never began an offensive war with their savage neighbours; and, whenever their country was invaded, they made war, not to extirpate, but to civilize. The conquered tribes and those taken captive were adopted into the nation; and, by blending with the conquerors, forgot their former rage and ferocity.

A SYSTEM so just and benevolent, as might be expected, was attended with success. In about three hundred years, the dominions of the Incas had extended fifteen hundred miles in length, and had introduced peace and prosperity through the whole re-

gion. The arts of society had been carried to a considerable degree of improvement, and the authority of the Incan race universally acknowledged; when an event happened, that disturbed the tranquility of the empire. Huana Capac, the twelfth monarch, had reduced the powerful kingdom of Quito, and annexed it to his empire. To conciliate the affections of his new subjects, he married a daughter of the ancient king of Quito. Thus, by violating a fundamental law of the Incas, he left at his death a disputed succession to the throne. Atabalipa, the son of Huana by the heiress of Quito, being in possession of the principal force of the Peruvian armies, which was left at that place on the death of his father, gave battle to his brother Huascar, who was the elder son of Huana by a lawful wife, and legal heir to the crown. After a long and destructive civil war, the former was victorious; and thus was that flourishing and happy kingdom left a prey to civil dissensions, and to the few soldiers of Pizarro, who happened at that juncture to make a descent upon their coast. Thus he effected an easy conquest and an utter destruction of that unfortunate people. It is however extremely obvious, that this deplorable event is not to be charged on Capac, as the consequence of any defect in his institution. It is impossible that any original legislator should effectually guard against the folly of a future sovereign. Capac had not only removed every temptation that could induce a wise prince to wish for a change in the constitution, but had connected the ruin of his authority with the change; for he, who disregards any part of institutions deemed sacred, teaches his people to consider the whole as an imposture. Had he made a law ordaining that the Peruvians should be absolved from their allegiance to a prince, who should violate the laws; it would evidently have implied possible error and imperfection in those persons whom the people

were ordered to regard as Divinities: the reverence due to characters who made such high pretensions, would have been weakened; and, instead of rendering the constitution perfect, such a law would have been its greatest defect. Besides, it is probable the rupture might have been healed, and the succession settled, with as little difficulty as frequently happens with partial revolutions in other kingdoms; had not the descent of the Spaniards prevented. And this event to a man in that age and country, was totally beyond the possibility of human foresight. But viewing the concurrence of these fatal accidents, which reduced this flourishing empire to a level with many other ruined and departed kingdoms, it only proves that no human system has the privilege to be perfect.

ON the whole, it is evident, that the system of Capac is the most surprizing exertion of human genius to be found in the history of mankind. When we consider him as an individual emerging from the midst of a barbarous people, having seen no possible example of the operation of laws in any country, originating a plan of religion and policy never equalled by the sages of antiquity, civilizing an extensive empire, and rendering religion and government subservient to the general happiness of mankind, there is no danger that we grow too warm in his praise, or pronounce too high an eulogium on his character. Had such a genius appeared in Greece or Rome, he had been the subject of universal admiration; had he arisen in the favourite land of Turkey, his praises had filled a thousand pages in the diffusive writings of Voltaire.