

ly; but to please at the sacrifice of knowledge or virtue, is what can never be practiced but by the vicious, and abandoned. The fashionable manners, however, whatever they be, exercise great influence over the literature of the age, and greatly contribute to form the character for which it is remarkable.

If we consider the nature, or search into the propensities of the mind, as it is affected under various circumstances? or compare its powers in different periods, there will appear little reason to wonder at occasional darkness, or eventual decay: or if we explore the influence of the passions, through their natural mazes, and acquired modes, we shall find that all the preceding causes powerfully affect the mind; and that wherever they widely operate, or partially obtain, there will always exist some tendency to literary depravation. The circumstances alleged to be productive of decay, rest on the same foundation, and work with the same efficacy, as the causes of intellectual improvement. They are in reality, only the opposites, perversions, or extremes, of the same causes, and must therefore beget effects correspondent to their inverse nature. The blasts of December cannot produce the full blown flowers of June; nor the clime of Greenland give life to the delicious fruits of the East!

Could authority settle the present subject, our inquiry would be needless; for opinions might readily be cited too formidable for opposition. It is an observation of Mr. Hume, "That when the arts and sciences come to perfection in any State, from that moment they naturally, or rather necessarily decline, and seldom, or never revive in that nation, where they formerly flourished." Would not this however, still leave a point in dispute? For who should determine the zenith of perfection? Without concurring, however, in the universal extension of this principle, I shall merely remark, that the causes of literary decay before alleged to exist, receive abundant corroboration from this position of one of the most illustrious of modern philosophers. Yet it is certain, that a false taste, a vicious refinement, and a full blown excellence, are as inimical to improvement, as the mildew to the harvest, the blast to the season, or the deluge to the soil!

LITERARY.

Having presented our readers with as many remarks on the work and travels of Dr. Clarke, as will enable them to decide upon the merits of the narrative, it may not be amiss to close the communication by inserting the farewell observations of our author.

Ed.

From the American Review.

Observations on the 1st. volume of Dr. Clarke's travels in Russia, Tartary and Turkey.

BY A RUSSIAN.

We here terminate our remarks, on the observations which a residence of four weeks at Moscow, had enabled Dr. Clarke to make. In noticing the misrepresentations which abound in every chapter of his book, we have selected those which were particularly injurious to the moral character of our country.—It would have been impossible to refute every charge, without entering into a tedious train of repetitions;—but we indulge the hope, that what has been said will suffice to determine the opinions of our readers, with respect both to his competency and credibility as a witness. In the remainder of the book we have found nothing new relative to the morals of the Russians, whom he had already anathematized in his preface.—His observations are marked throughout with the same deep tinge of prejudice. The geographical and statistical details which he has given, are to be found in all the elementary treatises on Russian geography;—It is such very easy to procure that marine chart of the coast of the Crimea, which he has presented as a treasure precious and rare, to the British admiralty.

The absurdities advanced by Dr. Clarke on the origin of the Don Cossacks, and his exaggerations of the conduct of our countrymen in the Crimea, are ably refuted in the Quarterly Review, c. 8. vol. 4. to which we refer the reader; we will add on this subject but a few general reflections, which shall close the irksome task we have undertaken.

To the praises of the Don Cossacks we cordially subscribe. In spite of the efforts of our traveller to represent them as a distinct nation, we see in them only brothers and fellow countrymen. They speak the same language, profess the same religion and practise the same customs. We rejoice at finding them, an exception to the general reprobation he bestows on Russia. But we cannot as readily admit the moral superiority attributed to them. Hitherto no Cossack has ever distinguished himself in the sciences or the arts, or even in mechanic pursuits. In whatever has been done in these respects, throughout the empire, the Cossacks have had no share whatever. Dr. Clarke has consequently com-

mitted an error, in exalting them over their fellow-subjects, as to the qualities of mind, and is equally incorrect with regard to the pretended enmity existing between them. To the Cossacks is confided the guard of the frontiers on every side;—the advanced posts are always theirs in the Russian armies. How has it happened that this confidence has never been betrayed; that vengeance has never been exercised upon their oppressors?

As to the conquest of Crimea and the deeds of violence which followed, we certainly will not undertake to justify them on the principles of rigid morality; but we think at the same time, that of all the acts of a similar nature which history records, there is none more excusable on the ground of political necessity, than the one in question. The Tartars, whose fate excited so much of Dr. Clarke's commiseration, were nothing more than the remnant of those innumerable barbarians, who after having twice ravaged Russia with sword and fire, held her, during two hundred years, in the most oppressive subjection. After their yoke was shaken off, by the conquest of Casan and Astrachan in the sixteenth century, these Tartars, driven back upon the Crimea and the adjacent provinces, retained their pristine and mortal enmity to the Russians.—They were always the faithful allies of the Turks, and their precursors in all the wars, which took place between the two empires, until the peace of Kainardji in 1774, gave a decisive ascendancy to Russia in those countries. Even this ascendancy was insufficient to protect altogether the Southern provinces of the empire, from the incursions of the Tartars, who from a conformity of religion and ancient habits, retained a marked partiality for the Ottomans. The possession of the Crimea became therefore indispensable, if it be true that security is the supreme law of nations;—and we find in it, politically speaking, nothing reprehensible but the circumstances which accompanied the conquest. When these are said to surpass in atrocity, the horrors which have lately desolated Spain and Switzerland—we must observe, that no treaty of alliance offensive and defensive, united the Russians and Tartars previously to the occupation of the peninsula;—that the latter, far from being the faithful allies of Russia, had in every instance, been prodigal of their blood and their treasures, in the cause of her enemies;—and consequently that there exists a most material difference between the objects of comparison.

Here again we are struck with the contradictions of our author. After informing us that the Russians "laid waste the country—cut down the trees—pulled down the houses," &c. (p. 380) he tells us, that in his visit to the Karaites he was "highly entertained—by the singularity of having found one Jewish settlement, perhaps the only one upon earth, where that people exist secluded from the rest of mankind, in the free exercise of their ancient customs and peculiarities." (p. 388.) And further (p. 322.) "Soon after the capture of the Crimea, precisely at the time of terrible earthquakes in Hungary and Transylvania, a large portion of the immense cliff above the village of Katchuckoy fell down and buried it. The late Empress caused the place to be restored at her own expense, indemnifying the inhabitants at the same time, for the losses they had sustained."

As Dr. Clarke has undertaken to explain on several occasions the meaning of Russian words, and to determine their pronunciation and orthography, we think ourselves obliged to correct some of his errors in order to show the degree of confidence he ought to inspire as a linguist.

The Russian sandals are not called *tabaks*, but *topki*. The word *Cela* or *Selo* (p. 140) does not signify a church, but a village in which there is a church. Speaking of the capital of the Don Cossacks which he calls *Tsherkaskoy* instead of *Tsherkask*, its true name, he with great gravity, announces that "the terminating syllable *koi* signifies a town," whereas it is simply the inversion by means of which, the substantive is declined in the genitive case; for instance *Tsherkaskoy gitele*, inhabitant of Tsherkask. The word town is, without exception, rendered by *Gorod*. But enough on this subject, which we might greatly extend, if we chose to animadvert on all the mistakes of a similar description.

Our traveller takes great pains to inspire a belief, that he was exposed to numberless persecutions, from the police officers in Russia. We have noted all the incidents which have given occasion for his complaints. Having attentively marked his progress from St. Petersburg to Odessa, where he embarks for Constantinople, we ascertain from his own statements, that all the molestations endured by this martyr to despotism, may be reduced to the following occurrences.—1st. Being conducted before the commandant of Moscow to exhibit his passport.—2d. His quarrel with the post-master, between Moscow and Soula, who insisted on the doctor's taking off his hat before Emperor's picture, (p. 142).—3d. The us-

lence of the procurator of the government among the Don Cossacks, who would not allow a foreigner to rifle the public archives at Tsherkask, (p. 312.)—and lastly the indiscreet loyalty of commodore Billings, (Dr. C's own countryman by the by,) who as an officer in the service of Russia, would not perjure himself by favoring criminal researches in the harbour of Sebastopol, (p. 304-5,) for which any stranger whatever would have been shot in France, and hanged in England. To these atrocities may be added the bad supper given him, by the poor commandant at Asof, during which the officers of the garrison annoyed him with their impertinent questions, while the old general Pekin endeavoured to amuse him by performing, in spite of his 73 years, the Russian national dance.

With the exception of the above mentioned instances, we find that our travellers, far from meeting with interruptions in their progress, from the officers of government, experienced a reception and assistance, from the commandants of the places they visited, which they were not entitled to expect, considering the then political relations between Russia and Great-Britain. Before leaving Moscow the British ambassador, *secretly* conveys to them, letters of recommendation, from the governor of St. Petersburg to the governor of that capital, and to general Michelson, commander in chief in the Crimea, (p. 132.) By means of these letters they purchase the long-wished for *Podorojnieja*, and in order to leave the country by the shortest route, and to get rid of the "vigilant eye" of the police, they determine to visit the territory of the Don Cossacks, Kouban, Circassia and the Crimea. They traverse the country under an escort of cavalry, which scarcely suffices to quiet their fears of banditti and highwaymen. At Oxai and at Tsherkask they rest for a few days, and partake of good dinners on services of plate. In the country of the Cossacks of the Black Sea, they meet a general Drashkowitz, who treats them with the amusing spectacle of an expedition against the *Lezgians*, (p. 293-4.)—At last they reach the Crimea—professor Pallas (who by their account was banished there for indiscreet conduct,) is not afraid of lodging them for months in his prison, which proves to be a palace. He even accompanies them in their excursions upon the coast of Sebastopol;—prince Viassensky, the governor, provides apartments for them in a palace belonging to the crown, and a gun is fired to announce to the garrison the arrival of these illustrious personages, (p. 363.)

Such is the treatment Dr. Clarke receives every where after his departure from Moscow. It must be confessed that all travellers are not thus *prosecuted*; but then too they do not all like him, take their revenge by turning spies. Fortunately for Russia the British admiral, Lord Keith, who at that time commanded in the Mediterranean, and to whom Dr. Clarke hastened to present the fruits of his illicit researches, upon the coasts of the Crimea, did not think proper to execute our traveller's brilliant military conceptions, for the conquest of the peninsula with one thousand men, (p. 443).—otherwise our countrymen would have paid dearly for the hat stolen at Moscow, and the unpleasant day passed at Apof.

Having now concluded our remarks on Dr. Clarke's Travels, so highly extolled by the Edinburgh Reviewers, we believe every unprejudiced reader will think with us, that the latter have grossly erred in their review of that work. As foreigners we pretend not to judge of the author's style;—but whatever may be the manner in which he has clothed his ideas, taste and decency are frequently offended by the comparisons he employs, and the disgusting details of his descriptions. To compare Russia to an enormous load, and its inhabitants to two-legged hogs, is assuredly not refined, and gives no exalted opinion of the habits of life and sort of society, to which the author has been accustomed.

HISTORICAL.

Caracas, or Venezuela.

We proceed with the proposed series of sketches of "Spanish America," according to the best information possessed, by giving some account of the very interesting provinces of Caracas, or Venezuela. We regret exceedingly that we have not the means of detailing the progress of the revolution, which for several years, has agitated this country, and produced the most bloody wars, for the numbers engaged in them, of modern times. The priests and Royalists began the work of extermination, and unhappily it has been too much the rule of both parties to continue it. During this period, the government has changed hands several times—it was lately royal, but *BOLIVAR*, we trust, has "restored" the republic.

No doubt, also, many changes have taken place in the state and condition of the people since the date of the work we have briefly abstracted. But, with considerable enquiry, we are unable to add much that can be relied on.—Register.

Mr. Depon's work is the only one on this subject that we can resort to—we shall therefore sketch hastily the most prominent features from his full and able description.

The captain-generalship, or as it is sometimes called the province, of Caracas, consists of the provinces of Venezuela, Maracaibo, Varinas, Guine, Cumana and the isle of Margarita. It extends along the coast from 61. to 75 deg. long. west from Paris; and from 12 north lat. from the equator. It is bounded on the land side by Guiana and New Grenada, and lies between the mouths of the Orinoco and Cape de la Vela.

It is the region of the once celebrated *El Dorado*, and is the place selected by Las Casas for the trial of his scheme to civilize the Indians. Blessed by being destitute of precious metals, at the same time that it is eminently fruitful, and incomparably more salubrious than any of the neighbouring districts.

The heat is moderated by a chain of mountains which traverses the country from west to east—from the lake of Maracaibo to the isle of Trinidad. The seasons are divided into wet and dry, as in other tropical regions. The rainy season begins in May and ends in December; while it lasts there is rain three hours in a day at an average.

The productions are cocoa, which is estimated the best in the world, except that of Soconasco. Indigo which is inferior to that of Guatimalia, but 25 per cent. better than that of any other country. Cotton, coffee, sugar and tobacco. Besides, there is an immense variety of natural productions, some of which would only require the trouble of collecting them. Among those is the Vanilla, the fruit of a climbing plant like Ivy, which is worth 100 francs per lb. and the province of Venezuela itself might afford 10,000 weight annually. Wild cochineal is not attended to, except for their own use. There is more sarsaparilla than all Europe could consume, liquorice is in abundance, particularly at Truxillo, the squill in Sagunetas, storax in Cora, aloes in Carari, a species of quinquina on the mountains, and cassia almost every where.—There are above twenty kinds of exquisitely beautiful woods for cabinet work, that admit of finer polish than the best mahogany. Of these the most esteemed is the Chacarandy.

The lake of Maracaibo is 150 miles in circumference, and communicates with the sea. At its north east corner there is a very copious spring of mineral pitch; and from this there is a constant exhalation of inflammable vapors which are phosphorescent during the night, and serve as a beacon to those who navigate the lake.

Porto Cabello is the best harbour on this coast, or in America. Guayra, the harbor of Caracas, is the most frequented. In the gulph of Paria there is good anchorage.

The whole population of Caracas is estimated at 725,000 souls, of which 500,000 belong to the provinces of Venezuela and Varinas, 100,000 to Maracaibo, 80,000 to Cumana, 34,000 to Spanish Guiana, and 14,000 to the isle of Margarita: The whites form one-fifth of this population, the slaves three tenths, the free people of color two-fifths and the Indians one tenth.

There are few Europeans here, as the Spaniards are not permitted to visit their American settlements without a license from the King, which cannot be obtained unless the object of the journey is known and approved by the council of the Indies. The license is generally limited to two years, as a leave to settle is not obtained without the greatest difficulty. Even the Croiles sent to Spain for their education cannot return without a license, and a passport to one province does not authorise the bearer to go to another.

These severe but ill executed laws, were dictated in part by political fears and jealousies; but their principal source was in that spirit of monastic regulations; in those maxims of religious bigotry and austerity, which have been so long cultivated with such mischievous effects in Spain.—Instead of regarding its colonies as places of refuge for the idle, the dissolute and the dissipated, where they might learn to amend their lives and forget their errors; the Spanish court watched over their foreign settlements with the solicitude of a duenna, and regulated their government, as if they were to be inhabited by Carthians. No Spaniard could get permission to go to America without a certificate of his moral and religious character, and an attestation that none of his forefathers, for three generations back, had been condemned by the inquisition, even to carry the infamous *sambenito*.

The education of boys attracts but little attention at Caracas, but that of the girls is wholly neglected. They learn nothing but what their parents teach them, and