

therein no feeling of her wings, or any sensible resistance of air to mount herself by.

#### SECT. VIII.

*Of their opinion that seat paradise under the equinoctial : and of the pleasant habitation under those climates.*

THOSE which come nearer unto reason find paradise under the equinoctial line, as Tertullian, Bonaventure, and Durandus; judging, that thereunder might be found most pleasure, and the greatest fertility of soil: but against it Thomas Aquinas objecteth the distemperate heat, which he supposeth to be in all places so directly under the sun; but this is *non causa pro causa*; for although paradise could not be under the line, because Eden is far from it, in which paradise was; and because there is no part of Euphrates, Tigris, or Ganges under it, (Ganges being one of the four rivers, as they suppose,) yet this conceit of distemper (being but an old opinion) is found to be very untrue, though for the conjecture not to be condemned, considering the age when those fathers wrote, grounded chiefly on this: that whereas it appeared, that every country, as it lay by degrees nearer the tropic, and so toward the equinoctial, did so much the more exceed in heat; it was therefore a reasonable conjecture, that those countries which were situated directly under it, were of a distemper uninhabitable: but it seemeth that Tertullian conceived better, and so did Avicenne, for they both thought them habitable enough: and though (perchance) in those days it might be thought a fantastical opinion, (as all are which go against the vulgar;) yet we now find, that if there be any place upon the earth of that nature, beauty, and delight, that paradise had, the same must be found within that supposed uninhabitable burnt zone, or within the tropics, and nearest to the line itself. For hereof experience hath informed reason, and time hath made those things apparent which were hidden, and could not by any contemplation be discovered. Indeed it hath so pleased God to provide for all living creatures,

wherewith he hath filled the world, that such inconveniences which we contemplate afar off, are found by trial and the witness of men's travels to be so qualified, as there is no portion of the earth made in vain, or as a fruitless lump to fashion out the rest. For *God himself*, saith Isaiah, *that formed the earth and made it; he that prepared it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited.* Now we find that these hottest regions of the world seated under the equinoctial line, or near it, are so refreshed with a daily gale of easterly wind, (which the Spaniards call the *brize*,) that doth evermore blow strongest in the heat of the day, as the downright beams of the sun cannot so much master it, that there is any inconvenience or distemperate heat found thereby. Secondly, the nights are so cold, fresh, and equal, by reason of the entire interposition of the earth, as (for those places which myself have seen, near the line and under it) I know no other part of the world of better, or equal temper; only there are some tracts, which by accident of high mountains are barred from this air and fresh wind, and some few sandy parts without trees, which are not therefore so well inhabited as the rest; and such difference of soils we find also in all other parts of the world. But (for the greatest part) those regions have so many goodly rivers, fountains, and little brooks, abundance of high cedars, and other stately trees casting shade, so many sorts of delicate fruits, ever bearing, and at all times beautified with blossom and fruit, both green and ripe, as it may of all other parts be best compared to the paradise of Eden: the boughs and branches are never unclothed and left naked; their sap creepeth not under ground into the root, fearing the injury of the frost; neither doth Pomona at any times despise her withered husband Vertumnus, in his winter-quarters and old age. Therefore are these countries called *terreæ vitiosæ*, "vicious countries:" for nature being liberal to all without labour, necessity imposing no industry or travel, idleness bringeth forth no other fruits than vain