commands. Where mankind are in the ſtate of hun­ters and fiſhers, where the means of ſubſiſtence are precariouſly acquired, and prudent foreſight does not prompt to accumulate much proviſion for the future, no individual can acquire comparative wealth. As ſoon as the ſon is grown up, he ceaſes to be dependent on his father, as well as on the ſociety in general. Diffe­rence of experience therefore constitutes the only diſtinction between the young and the old ; and if the old have experience, the young have ſtrength and acti­vity. Here, then, neither age nor property can give riſe to any ſtriking diſtinction of ranks. All who have attained to manhood, and are not diſabled by unuſual deficiency of ſtrength or agility, or by the infirmities of old age, are on an equal footing ; or if any one posseſs a pre-eminence over the reſt, he owes it to ſuperior addreſs or fortitude. The whole tribe deliberate ; the old give their advice ; each individual of the aſſembly re­ceives or rejects it at his pleaſure (for the whole body think not of exerciſing any compulſatory power over the will of individuals) ; and the warrior who is moſt diſtinguiſhed for ſtrength, addreſs, and valour, leads out the youth of the tribe to the chace or againſt the ene­my. War, which in the former ſtage did not prevail, as they who were ſtrangers to social ſentiments were, at the ſame time, ſcarce capable of being enemies, now firſt begins to depopulate the thinly inhabited regions where thoſe hunters and fiſhers purſue their prey. They are ſcattered, poſſibly in ſcanty and ſeparate tribes, over an immenſe tract of country ; but they know no me­dium between the affection which brethren of the ſame tribe bear to each other and the hatred of enemies. Though thinly ſcattered over the earth, yet the hunt­ing parties of different tribes will ſometimes meet as they range the foreſts ; and when they meet, they will naturally view each other with a jealous eye ; for the ſucceſs of the one party in the chace may cauſe the other to be unſucceſsful ; and while the one ſnatches the prey, the other muſt return home to all the pangs of famine. Inveterate hoſtility will therefore long pre­vail among neighbouring tribes in the hunting ſtate.

If we find them not incapable of social order, we may naturally expect that their conduct will be influ­enced by ſome ſentiments of religion. They have at this period ideas of ſuperior beings. They alio practiſe certain ceremonies to recommend them to thoſe be­ings ; but both their ſentiments and ceremonies are ſuperſtitious and abſurd.

We have elſewhere ſhown (ſee Polytheism) how ſavage tribes have probably degenerated from the pure worſhip of the one true God to the adoration of a multitude of imaginary divinities in heaven, earth, and hell. We have traced this idolatrous worſhip from that of the heavenly bodies, through all the gradations of daemon-worſhip, hero-worſhip, and ſtatue-worſhip, to that wonderful inſtance of abſurd ſuperſtition which in­duced the inhabitants of some countries to fall proſtrate in adoration before the vileſt reptiles. But though we are convinced that the heavenly bodies have by all ido­laters been conſidered as their firſt and greateſt gods, we pretend not that the progreſs through the other ſtages of polytheiſm has been everywhere in the very ſame order. It is indeed impoſſible to exhibit under one general view an account of arts, manners, and reli­gious ſentiments, which may apply to ſome certain pe­

riod in the hiſtory oſ every nation, The characters and circumſtances of nations are ſcarce leſs various and ano­malous than thoſe of individuals. Among many of the American tribes among the ancient inhabitants of the foreſts of Germany, whoſe manners have been ſo ac­curately delineated by the maſterly pen of Tacitus, and in ſome of the iſlands ſcattered over the ſouthern ocean, religion, arts, and government, have been found in that ſtate which we have deſcribed as characterizing the ſe­cond ſtage of focial life. But neither can we pretend that all thoſe simple and rude societies have been de­ſcribed by hiſtorians and travellers as agreeing preciſely in their arts, manners, and religious ſentiments ; or that the difference of circumſtances always enables us to ac­count in a ſatisfactory manner for the diſtinction of their characters. There is a variety of acts in the hiſtory of the early periods of ſociety, which no ingenuity, no induſtry however painful, can reduce under general heads. Here, as well as when we attempt to philosophize on the phenomena of the material world, we find reaſon to confeſs that our powers are weak, and our obſervation confined within a narrow ſphere.

But we may now carry our views a little forward, and ſurvey human liſe as approaching ſomewhat nearer to a civilized and enlightened ſtate. As property is ac­quired, inequality and ſubordination of ranks neceſſarily follow : and when men are no longer equal, the many are ſoon subjected to the will of the few. But what gives riſe to theſe new phenomena is, that after having often ſuffered from the precariouſneſs of the hunting and fiſhing ſtate, men begin to extend their cares be­yond the preſent moment, and to think of providing ſome ſupply for future wants. When they are enabled to provide ſuch a ſupply, either by purſuing tire chace with new eagerneſs and perſeverance, by gathering the ſpontaneous fruits of the earth, or by breeding tame animals—theſe acquiſitions are at firſt the property of the whole ſociety, and diſtributed from a common ſtore to each individual according to his wants : But as va­rious reasons will ſoon concur to convince the commu­nity, that by this mode of diſtribution, induſtry and ac­tivity are treated with injuſtice, while negligence and indolence receive more than their due, each individual will in a ſhort time become his own ſteward, and a community of goods will be aboliſhed. As ſoon as di­ſtinct ideas of property are formed, it muſt be unequal­ly diſtributed ; and as ſoon as property is unequally di­ſtributed, there ariſes an inequality of ranks. Here we have the origin oſ the depreſſion oſ the female ſex in rude ages, of the tyrannical authority exerciſed by pa­rents over their children, and perhaps of slavery, The women cannot diſplay the ſame perſeverance, or activi­ty, or addreſs, as the men in pursuing the chace. They are therefore left at home ; and from that moment are no longer equals, but ſlaves and dependants, who muſt ſubſiſt by the bounty of the males, and muſt therefore ſubmit with implicit obedience to all their capricious commands. Even before the era of property, the fe­male ſex were viewed as inferiors ; but till that period they were not reduced to a ſtate of abject slavery,

In this period of ſociety new notions are formed of the relative duties. Men now become citizens, maſters, and ſervants ; husbands, parents, &c. It is impoſſible to enumerate all the various modes of government which take place among the tribes who have advanced