

tended to by the husbandmen of Western Asia, while in Southern Europe it is well known to be a prolific source of national revenue, of lucrative commerce, and of private emolument; a small patch of olive ground being to many families their only support. The olive oil is extensively used as an article of food in Greece, Italy, Spain, and France; and it is also used in medicine and the arts.

Olive oil furnishes the most valuable export of the Ionian Isles and various places in the Levant, and we have only to refer to the large importation of this article to England to prove that a vast field of wealth might be made available for the benefit of our own colonies. It appears from the Parliamentary Papers that the importation of olive oil for the year ending the 5th of January, 1841, was no less than 2,213,474 gallons, varying in value from 5s. to 7s. 6d. per gallon. The duty hitherto payable upon olive oil has been 4l. 4s. per tun, if imported in British shipping, and 6l. 6s. per tun imported in a ship belonging to any of the subjects of the King of the Two Sicilies; and upon the olive as a fruit, two shillings per gallon. The rates, however, proposed by Sir Robert Peel in his new Tariff are, upon olive oil imported from foreign countries, 2l. per tun; upon the produce of and from British possessions, 1l. per tun; and upon olives from foreign countries, one shilling per gallon; and the produce of and from British possessions, sixpence per gallon. Thus affording a greater inducement for the cultivation of this plant in our colonies, particularly in Australia.

New South Wales was years ago pronounced by British horticulturists to be a country in all respects congenial to the culture of the olive, and some of the most scientific members of their body have gone so far as to predict that the olive tree will eventually contribute as much to the advancement of Australian wealth as wool hitherto has done. In the year 1821 the Society for the Encouragement of Arts and Manufactures offered premiums for the encouragement of Australian enterprise, and olive oil has been more than once in its list of articles for competition. This induced several gentlemen in New South Wales to turn their attention to the subject, and in 1825 Mr Fraser introduced some rooted cuttings into the government garden at Sydney, where they thrived most astonishingly. In the report of the Horticultural and Agricultural Society of New South Wales for the year 1829 the progress of these plants is mentioned as follows:—

“The government garden is at present enriched with sixteen varieties of the most improved European olive trees. Some young

plants which the Hon. Alexander M'Leay brought out with him a little more than three years ago, are now upwards of 20 feet high, bearing fruit. Such unparalleled rapidity of growth and early bearing seems to establish the fact, how admirably our soil and climate correspond in promoting such luxuriant growth and fruitfulness. The olive tree is easily cultivated, it likes light soil, mild, equable climate, is regardless of exposure, seldom wants manure, unless by sowing lupines underneath and digging them in; in all other countries it is remarkably slow in growth; it requires but little pruning, and lives many hundred years. The usual distance of planting trees is fifteen feet apart. If the quantity and quality of its fruit keep pace with the promising growth of the tree, its introduction and cultivation must soon become a blessing to the colony. Through the politic and extensive supplies of young plants, layers, and seed, so liberally offered to the public from the government garden, its more general cultivation may be expected. Had the first settlers in this colony been brought up in the climates where the grape vine and olive tree are cultivated, we should years ago have been exporters of wine, olives, and oil. Our British population must neglect some of their native agricultural pursuits, and turn their attention to those best suited for the quality of soil and temperature of climate."

In reflecting on the amazing rapidity of growth of the olive tree in Australia, two circumstances should be taken into consideration, tending materially to heighten the singularity of the fact—one is, that it is well known in horticulture that no general crop can be expected from a tree in the first year of its flowering; but in Australia this rule is completely reversed, for the olive trees under the management of Mr Fraser, in the very first year of their flowering, were full of fruit. The other is, that in Italy it is a common custom to plant a grove of olives at the birth of an heir, and it reaches maturity about the period of his coming to the age of manhood; but in New South Wales, the very identical species of olive which in Italy consumes twenty-one years in the tardy process of maturation, arrives at luxuriant bearing in its third or fourth year, and during the period of its arriving at this age other crops may be cultivated between the rows in which this tree is planted, and rather benefits than injures the tree. It is also a little remarkable that the olive tree is not affected by drought, neither does it require any particular soil, as it flourishes in situations where few others of the vegetable world would grow, and indeed prefers a sandy to a rich alluvial soil, so that there is scarcely an estate in Australia where this tree might not be successfully cultivated.

The olive grows readily in our own country by cuttings, or it may be grafted on the privet; and with protection during frost (says Mr Loudon), it may be maintained against a wall in the latitude of London, and some trees have stood the winter in Devonshire for many years, though without ripening their fruit.

“The fruit is a smooth oval plum, about three quarters of an inch in length, and half an inch in diameter, of a deep violet colour when ripe, whitish and fleshy within, bitter and nauseous, but replete with a bland oil, covering an oblong, pointed, rough nut. Olives intended for preservation are gathered before they are ripe. In pickling, the object is to remove their bitterness, and to preserve them green by impregnating them with a brine of aromatised sea salt; for this purpose various methods are employed. The wood of the olive tree is beautifully veined, and has an agreeable smell. It is in great esteem with cabinet makers, on account of the fine polish of which it is susceptible.”*

Virgil, in describing the various ways which nature has ordained for the propagation of trees, says that olives are increased by truncheons, that is, by cutting or sawing the trunk or thick branches into pieces of a foot or a foot and a half long, and planting them, whence a root, and soon after a tree, is formed. He says also, that these trees, unlike vines, when once they have taken root and braved the winds, require neither pruning hooks nor rakes; the land itself, after being ploughed, affords sufficient nourishment, and so productive are the plants, that it would almost seem as if the fruit, in full maturity, were really turned up by the ploughshare. But little alteration has taken place in its culture, as it is still propagated by grafts, or by suckers and truncheons, and it is still the custom to deposit stones in the trenches for encouraging moisture about the roots.

It must be observed that the olive trees are very productive every other year. The harvest of oil on the Isle of Zante has been reckoned at 4,500 barrels, and that of Corfu at 100,000 barrels. Olive trees sometimes attain a great age. There is an olive tree in the environs of Villa Franca, near Nice, the lowest extremity of the trunk measuring about 38 feet, and 3 feet and a half above the surface 19 feet in circumference; one of its main branches is 6 feet and a half in circumference. The celebrated olive tree at Pescio, which has hitherto been considered the most ancient in Italy, and

* See M'Culloch's 'Dictionary of Commerce.'

is stated by Maschettini to be 700 years old, is much younger than the one at Nice. There are records now extant which show that, as far back as the year 1516, the latter was accounted the oldest in those parts; in 1818 it bore upwards of 2 cwt. of oil, and in earlier days it produced more than 350. To prepare the olive oil the fruit is gathered when it is at its utmost maturity, as it begins to redden; being put under the mill as soon as gathered, care is taken that the mill stones are set at such a distance that they may not crush the nut of the olive. The fleshy pulp covering the nut or stone, and containing the oil in its cells, is then put into bags made of rushes, and moderately pressed, and thus is obtained a considerable quantity of a greenish coloured oil, which, from its superior excellence, is called virgin oil. The mass remaining after the first pressure is broken to pieces, moistened with water, and returned to the press; it then gives out a quantity of oil mixed with water, which, being left undisturbed, soon separates, and although inferior to the first, is still fit for the table. The process is again repeated, and an inferior kind is extracted, which is valuable to the soap boiler and other manufacturers.

The following is a recent account of the olive mills at Athens.

“About half a mile from the port on the skirts of the great olive grove are a row of low cottages, built of mud, but not ill-looking, in which may be seen the rude machinery which constitutes their olive mills.

“They commence work about the beginning of November. Some of the fruit falls of itself before the season commences, and is either trodden under foot or washed away by the rains; but when there is a sufficient quantity ripe, the trees are well beaten, and the olives are picked up from the grass by women and children, and collected into small sacks; these sacks or bags are balanced on each side of an ass or mule, and carried at once to the proprietor of the mill, with whom the fruit is bartered for a certain quantity of oil. The proportion of fruit for oil depends upon the abundance of the harvest, and the period of the season; the fruit that is first gathered being dry and unproductive, compared with that gathered later in the season, which swells even till it bursts, and lets the oil run away. At the period when this account was written (1835), 28 occas of fruit were exchanged for $5\frac{1}{2}$ occas of oil,* or nearly 3 gallons, but later in the season, 24 occas, or even less, were given for the same quantity. The weighing of the little sacks as they come in, is not the least curious part of the ceremony; the countryman, not placing implicit confidence in the

* An occa measures $3\frac{1}{2}$ pints, and weighs $2\frac{1}{2}$ lbs.

master of the machines, invariably brings his own scales with him, while the latter pays the same deference to the honesty of the other, by weighing a second time with his scales, and it is not considered etiquette for the buyer to stand very near the sack, for fear he should be tempted to give it a slight lift upwards with his foot; one sack weighed $53\frac{1}{2}$ occas, and another after that $46\frac{1}{2}$ occas only. The fruit is now shot into a large square bin, like wheat in a granary, and close to this bin is a small mill for crushing the olives—being merely an upright round stone attached to a perpendicular beam in the centre of the round mill-frame, like a tub—there are two kinds of these mills, the one in most common use has only one stone attached to the beam, a horse is fastened by traces to an horizontal pole which runs through the centre of the stone; the improved machine has two smaller stones further removed from the central beam, which does not rotate with them, but is made fast to the roof of the building; this is more effective than the first one described, as it makes larger circles, but it requires a stronger moving power. The object of the mill is only to crush the olives, no oil whatever being expressed. A sufficient quantity of fruit being thrown from the bin, the horse machine is set in motion, a man going first before the horse, having a long pole armed with iron, to push the fruit under the track of the stones; after a few turns of the stones, a pail of water is poured in to assist the action, the mass then acquires the consistence of coarse paste. It is then carried in large jars to the press, when one of the men kneads it with more hot water, and as often as he fills a small shallow dish, empties it upon a square cloth, of the same material as the coarse capotes or cloaks of the country people, and of such strength as to bear the greatest power of the press without bursting. Another man then forms the paste with his hands into a square flat mass, folds up the cloth neatly, ties it with a string attached to each, and places it in the press before him, amounting to about 16 or 17 in number. The press is then screwed down by means of a hand lever, and when more power is required, a rope is carried from the lever to an upright rotary beam at some distance, which two men turn round with great rapidity; this part is very amusing, the men making it a sport rather than work, by chasing each other round the central beam with extraordinary velocity. By this the oil and water runs down the sides of the cloths, in crimson rivulets, into a trough placed before the press, which, though rudely hewn out of a single log of wood, is constructed upon the knowledge of the relative specific gravities of oil and water; it is divided into two parts by a partition that does not come to the top of the trough, but is about two inches below the level of the sides, so that when the oil and water runs into one part, it allows the oil, which is lighter than the water, and consequently floats on the surface, to flow over into the other division, while the water sinks to the bottom, and is conveyed away by a pipe carried upwards on the outside, to the level at which they wish to maintain the water within the trough. When the press is screwed

down as far as possible, it is loosened; hot water is thrown on the pile, to wash off any oil that may remain upon the cloths, which are now removed, and the paste within kneaded, but without unfolding the cloths. More boiling water is poured upon each, they are again placed in the press, to be again removed, to undergo, for a third time, the same operation, till no oil remains. The water takes up most of the colouring matter of the fruit, which flows away from the working shed like rivulets of blood, dyeing the ground a deep and beautiful crimson colour.

“The refuse of the fruit left from the press is placed in the pieces as taken from the cloths before the fire, and serve for fuel to heat the water required in the operation. The oil, which is of a beautiful light-green colour, is removed from the trough into large jars, and, after depositing any water or dirt, is then emptied into skins, having the hair upon the inside. These are weighed before being carried to the proprietor’s house, where it is poured into large earthenware jars four or five feet high, which are let into the ground, leaving only the short necks above the surface; here it remains for at least two months, till all impurities are deposited, but it still retains a greenish colour never seen in the oil consumed in England, which makes it less offensive to the prejudices of those not accustomed to its use.”

To keep a press and mill in constant work, to receive the fruit, send away the oil, and attend to the coppers for boiling the water, requires six men. These are paid in oil, so that it is one continued series of bartering fruit for oil and oil for labour, till the produce is carried into the city to be retailed.

The fresh ripe fruit, eaten with bread, is by no means unpleasant, and when preserved, by being sprinkled with salt, is almost the only food allowed to the poorer Greeks during Lent. The oil, too, enters into all their dishes; nor are they satisfied with it in the pure, in-odorous, and nearly insipid taste that we obtain it in this country, as they prefer it, especially the lower orders, after it has acquired a rank odour and rancid taste.

THE ABORIGINES, AND THEIR TREATMENT CONSIDERED.

There are perhaps fewer things upon landing on a newly-discovered shore, that excite astonishment in the human mind more forcibly than the contemplation of the aboriginal inhabitants of the country; difference of climate, scene, or production are in themselves trifling in

the extreme, when placed in comparison with the primeval owners of the soil; the one, however dissimilar and remote from our own, we can draw a semblance to from nature's sources grafted on the mind—the other the primitive condition of man, the seedling of civilization, from whence all isolated nations, regardless of their after grandeur, have breathed life—is so infinitely low a condition in the scale of vitality, that but few indeed have power or opportunity to compass the ruling conformity of this early state. Fancy may portray an imaginary semblance to this wild, uncultured life, but cannot half unfold the vividness of truth, which traces the immeasurable distance of civilized from uncivilized existence; not that in the elementary principles much difference is found, but in the application of those constituents consists the variation. In the one state we perceive a common end, a purport for a general good, an unanimity of action brought into play by tempering the individual feeling, thus demonstrating the dominion of reason; while, on the other hand, personal benefit and individual welfare being the sole consideration, all advancement is impeded, and a general suffering entailed. In this one cause we trace the essential difference between the two existing stages of life,—the early and the advanced.

Although, however, we attribute to this divisibility of action among aboriginal nations the impotency of their general measures, we must not overlook that their functions are in every respect assimilated to our own, and require but slight disenthralment to fit them for a more enlightened and profitable sphere. To endeavour to effect this change is a duty incumbent upon civilized nations; and the method of so doing must depend greatly upon local circumstances and peculiarities. The onus is a serious responsibility, and is not magnified by terming it an extreme difficulty; indeed, when the numerous obstacles foreseen (as well as those which are hidden, and of which we can form no idea) are reflected upon, we need scarcely be surprised at the miscalculations to which many really good and kind-hearted philanthropists have been exposed without bringing to effect the purport of their missions.

It would appear from well-authenticated sources, that in order to effect this grand revolution among the children of the woods and wilds, an apparent friendly intercourse is not the only essential requisite; much more depends upon the maintenance of good faith with them, and proving while no fear or frown is developed, that no advantage will be taken of them, that confidence will be maintained

with strict integrity, and that humanity will be upheld without a pharisaical disgust at local ceremonies. By observances such as these the character of civilization impresses itself silently but surely, and needs no personal appeal even to the savage breast to render it an object of emulation. It must be admitted that these are difficulties of no ordinary character to surmount, and at the same time tend to show how nice a discrimination should be observed by those whose duty or position bring them in immediate contact with the aborigines.

Unfortunately it too frequently happens that, with their natural keen discernment, these untaught beings discover in those who should be their instructors that want of unanimity which they endeavour to argue as infallible concomitants of their doctrines: hence they very naturally become sceptical and hesitating upon the value of the acquirement proposed; and placing these alongside the native love of indolence and roving, we find a very sufficient cause for the non-adoption by the adult race of foreign views and distant customs. Again, another predominant difficulty takes place from the knowledge of their inferior standing in the race of man; they feel, and deeply, the unpromising situation of their rank, and the little power they possess of competing with their newly-formed acquaintance: this engenders not only jealousy, but fear and hate,—the more certainly so when the possessors of the superior knowledge make their untaught brethren feel the lowness of their situation.* This feeling unfortunately prevails too generally even among persons whose education and general character would lead to an inference directly reverse to their practices. “’Tis true, and pity ’tis, ’tis true,” that change of scene robs the sentimentalist, in most instances, of the power when he has the opportunity of doing good, and inclines to the practice of those acts against which the precepts of an ordinary life have inveighed. We do not wish to pass this as a general condemnation, for we know full well that some truly benign and worthy individuals have been and are engaged in maturing the offspring of the wilderness; at the same time we blush to record the fact, that the majority of the intruders upon native soils have acted directly in

* All past experience has shown that the existence of two different races in a country, one of which from any local circumstances is considered inferior to the other, is one of the greatest evils under which a nation can labour; a more striking instance of which could not be adduced than is shown in the present state of the free coloured population in America.—*Capt. Grey's Travels in North-West and Western Australia.*

opposition (when their purpose was to be answered) to every law, both human and divine.

It must be admitted that the difficulties accompanying the establishment of a connexion between savage and civilized life are numerous and weighty, from the circumstance that passions and prejudices, customs and inclinations are as much a matter of entanglement upon one side as the other; but still, when we consider the immense advantages which the members of the latter communities enjoy and are in possession of, it cannot fail to impress itself upon the conviction of those parties who reflect on the subject, that those very advantages are unprofitably used, if not turned to a mischievous purpose; indeed it would almost appear, by general usage, that settlers among a primitive community have considered themselves as totally exempt from any obligation towards the original owners of the soil whose territory they were invading, and whose race, by their practices, they were annihilating. So far, however, from being exonerated as men, their position imposes obligations on them to subvert, with the least possible force, the aborigines from their useless unprofitable lives, and to train them, by slow degrees, to the knowledge of the advantages resulting from an acquaintance with the more useful arts and sciences; likewise to make them understand the value of living under the protection of that form of government which guarantees a full protection of their persons, privileges, and properties; and lastly, an intermingling of the races by marriage should be promoted, by which process a more effectual guarantee is afforded for a reformation than by all the others combined; doubtless this recommendation may appear ludicrous to some, and impracticable to others; let such, however, reflect that while marital rites with a coloured race have been hitherto considered as derogatory to the pallid hues of other climes, sensuality has satisfied itself without dishonour, and that all the evils of a connexion unrecognized by the law have developed themselves to the disadvantage of one party and ignominy of the other. We know these to be facts of considerable moment, fraught with great evil, and resting upon prejudices equally disgraceful to the party who yields as to those who support them. It should therefore be an endeavour, at all events, to suppress a state of things alike disgraceful as dishonest, and to promote in their stead a more effectual and permanent bond of union between those whose lives are destined for the future to be passed upon the same spot. There are other duties

which Captain Grey, when speaking of the aborigines of Australia, has properly, from their non-observance, termed evils,* to which immediate attention should be directed, viz., a more constant employment, a just remuneration for services performed, and a universality of laws. A neglect of these important objects it must be manifest will inevitably entail a series of distresses, discontent, and a subversion, either by ignorance or design, of those fundamental principles of unanimity by which alone it is to be expected that an effective accomplishment will be brought into operation.

Now, when we reflect upon the almost entire neglect, until late years, of anything like a systematic principle of action for the purpose of communicating with and preserving the aborigines of Australia (we allude to them as being more directly in connexion with our publication) from aggression, there is no cause for wonder at our non-success, and there is certainly less cause for surprise at failure when we bear in mind the depraved and dissolute men and manners with which the natives of this continent became originally acquainted. The aborigines of Australia, similar to those of most other countries, are a shrewd, cunning, and determined race,

* Amongst the evils the natives suffer in their present position, one is the uncertain and irregular demand for their labour, that is to say, they may one day have plenty of means for exerting their industry afforded them by the settlers, and the next their services are not required, so that they are necessarily compelled to have recourse to their former irregular and wandering habits.

Another is the very insufficient reward for the services they render. As an example of this kind I will state the instance of a man who worked during the whole season as hard and as well as any white man in getting in the harvest for some settlers, and who only received bread, and sixpence per day, whilst the ordinary labourers would earn at least fifteen shillings. In many instances they only receive a scanty allowance of food, so much so that some settlers have told me that the natives left them because they had not enough to eat.

The evil consequence of this is, that a native finding that he can gain as much by the combined methods of hunting and begging as he can by working, naturally prefers the former and much more attractive mode of procuring subsistence to the latter one.

Many of the natives have not only a good idea of the value of money, but even hoard it up for some particular purpose. Several of them have shown me their little treasure of a few shillings, and have told me it was their intention to save more until they had enough to buy a horse, a gun, or some wished-for article; but their improvidence has always got the better of their thriftiness, and the sum has eventually been spent in treating their friends to bread and rice.

Another evil is the very extraordinary position in which they are placed with regard to two distinct sets of laws; that is, they are allowed to exercise their own laws upon one another, and are again held amenable to British laws where British subjects are concerned. Thus no protection is afforded by the British law against the violence or cruelty of one of their own race, and the law has hitherto only been known to them as the means of punishment, but never as a code from which they can claim protection or benefit.—*Capt. Grey's Narrative.*