

Extracts from a letter, written by Mr. John Ledyard to Dr. Ledyard of Queens County, Long-Island.

IT may be necessary to inform the reader, that Mr. John Ledyard was one who accompanied Capt. Cook in his last voyage round the world. After his return, he formed a design of travelling round the world by land. By the influence of the French minister Count Vergennes, he obtained the countenance of the Empress of Russia, thro whose dominions he purposed to pass. He had actually traversed the vast regions of the north, thro Russia, Siberia and almost to the Pacific ocean; when thro the jealousy of the Russian court, he was arrested by an officer dispatched for the purpose, hurried back thro a country of six thousand miles extent, to the borders of Poland and banished the Russian empire. He arrived in London, the last summer, where he was introduced to a company of nobility and gentlemen, who wished to find a person willing to undertake to explore the interior parts of Africa. Mr. Ledyard immediately engaged in the hazardous enterprize, the society have advanced a sum of money to defray the expences, and this bold traveller is now on his way thro France to Alexandria, Grand Cairo, the banks of the Red Sea, and thence southward thro the heart of Africa.

While this gentlemen was in London, he wrote to his friend, giving some account of his travels, from which are extracted the following particulars.

“The two following observati-

ons are the result of extensive and assiduous enquiry. First, that the difference of color in the human species, as the observation respects all but the Negroes whom I have not yet visited, *originates from natural causes.*

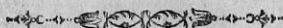
“The second is, that all the Asiatic Indians, called *Tartars*, and all the Tartars that have formed the later armies of Zingis Chan, together with the Chinese, are the same people, and that the American “Tartar” (so he calls the natives) “is also of the same family: the most ancient and numerous people on earth, and what is very singular, the *most uniformly alike.*”

“You have no idea of the excessive cold in the region of Siberia. By experiments I made at Yakutsk,* I found on the 19th of Nov. the mercury in my thermometer froze. In Dec. I found by repeated observations, that 2 oz. of clear quick-silver openly exposed, froze hard in 15 minutes by a watch. In strong Coniac brandy, coagulated by a thermometer graduated by Reaumer, and filled with rectified spirits of wine, I had 39 1-2 degrees. On the borders of the frozen ocean, a Capt. Billings had the winter before last 43 1-2 degrees by the same thermometer. I observed that in these severe frosts, the air was condensed, as is with you in a thick fog—the atmosphere is frozen—respiration is fatiguing—all exercise must be as moderate as possible—ones confidence is placed on the fur dress alone. It is a happy law of nature that in such intense cold, there is seldom any wind—when there is,

* On the banks of the Great River Lena, which falls into the frozen ocean.

it is dangerous to be abroad : Those who happen to be, lie down on the snow and thus secure themselves. In these seasons, there is no chase—the animals submit themselves to hunger and security, and so does man. There are no wells at Yakutsk, for it is found by experiment, that the water freezes at 60 feet depth. People of these regions therefore are obliged to use ice and snow. They have also ice-windows—glass is of no use to the few who have it : the difference

in the state of the air, within and without, is so great, that the glass is covered on the inside with several inches of ice, and in that situation, it is less luminous than ice. The timber of the houses splits and opens with loud cracks—the rivers thunder and open with broad fissures—all nature groans beneath the rigorous winter. Just at the turning of this cold season, I travelled last winter 2600 versts, about 1800 English miles, on the river Lena.”



MONTHLY MISCELLANY.

For the AMERICAN MAGAZINE.

PERHAPS nothing would have a greater tendency to disengage our hearts from the things of this world, and cause us to place our affections on the other, than a realizing view of death: to this end, it hath been frequently recommended, and often attained. The illustrious CHARLES V, took a most unusual method to obtain this. Having resigned his kingdoms to his son PHILIP, and this too not in an advanced state of life, he retired, for the more free enjoyment of the exercise of religion, to the monastery of St. Justus, near Plazencia, in Spain, and soon after resolved to celebrate his own obsequies before his death.—“ He ordered his tomb to be erected in the chapel of the monastery. His domestics went thither in funeral procession, with black tapers in their hands. He himself followed in his shroud. He was laid in his coffin with much solemnity. The service for the dead was chaunted, and he joined in the prayers which were offered

up for the rest of his soul, mingling his tears with those shed by his attendants. The ceremony was closed with sprinkling holy water on the coffin, in the usual form, and all the assistants having retired, the doors of the chapel were shut. He then arose out of the coffin and withdrew to his apartment, full of those serious sentiments which such a solemnity was calculated to inspire.”—*Robertson's history of Charles V.* CLERICUS.

Sept. 24, 1788.

ANCDOTE of the late Sir WILLIAM JOHNSON.

SOON after Sir William had been appointed superintendant of Indian affairs in America, he wrote to England for some suits of clothes, richly laced. When they arrived, HENDRICK, King of the Mohawk Nation, was present, and particularly admired them. In a few succeeding days, Hendrick called on Sir William, and acquainted him that he had had a dream. On Sir William's

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