

be for angels ; but is far too refined, even for sages and philosophers.

Proceeding to deviations from the genuine worship required by our Maker, and gross deviations there have been, I begin with that sort of worship which is influenced by fear, and which for that reason is universal among savages. The American savages believe, that there are inferior deities without end, most of them prone to mischief : they neglect the supreme Deity because he is good ; and direct their worship to soothe the malevolent inferior deities from doing harm. The inhabitants of the Molucca islands, who believe the existence of malevolent invisable beings subordinate to the supreme benevolent Being, confine their worship to the former, in order to avert their wrath ; and one branch of their worship is, to set meat before them, hoping that when the belly is full, there will be less inclination to mischief. The worship of the inhabitants of Java is much the same. The negroes of Benin worship the devil, as Dapper expresses it, and sacrifice to him both men and beasts. They acknowledge indeed a supreme Being, who created the universe, and governs it by his Providence : but they regard him not ; “ for,” say they, “ it is needless, if not impertinent, to invoke a being, who, good and gracious, is incapable of injuring or molesting us.”

The austerities and penances that are practised in almost all religions, spring from the same root. One way to please invisable malignant powers, is to make ourselves as miserable as possible. Hence the horrid penances of the Faquirs in Hindostan, who outdo in mortification whatever is reported of the ancient Christian anchorites. Some of these Faquirs continue for life in one posture : some never lie down : some have always their arms raised above their head : and some mangle their bodies with knives and scourges. The town of Jagrenate in Hindostan is frequented by pilgrims, some of them from the distance of 300 leagues, which they