

insomuch, that most of those who have visited the country have been struck by the extraordinary contrast between the neat and clean appearance of their fields, in which the plants rise in even rows, and not a weed is to be seen, and the universal air of rudeness, slovenliness, and discomfort which their huts present.

But we must remember that in the latter case we see merely a few of the personal accommodations of the savage, his neglect of which occasions him but very slight and temporary inconvenience; whereas in the former it is the very sustenance of his life which is concerned, his inattention to which might expose him to all the miseries of famine. The same care and neatness in the management of their fields has been remarked as characteristics of the North American Indians; and both they and the New Zealanders celebrate the seasons of planting and gathering in their harvests with festivities and religious observances, practices which have, indeed, prevailed in almost every nation, and may be regarded as among the most beautiful and becoming of the rites of natural religion.

The commencement of the *coomera* harvest in New Zealand is the signal for the suspension of all other occupations except that of gathering in the crop. First, the priest pronounces a blessing upon the unbroken ground; and then, when all its produce has been gathered in, he "taboos" or makes sacred, the public storehouse in which it is deposited.