

“ the general practice of his Lordship and those who were
 “ employed by him in the planting of the said Province, ra-
 “ ther to purchase the natives’ interest (who will readily agree
 “ for the same at easy rates) than to take from them by force
 “ that which they seem to call their right and inheritance, to
 “ the end all disputes might be removed touching the forcible
 “ encroachment upon others, against the Law of nature or
 “ nations.” How far the practice of Colonization in Coun-
 tries not free from prior occupation is in fact reconcilable
 with the Laws here spoken of is a question which I shall not
 pretend to examine ; but in order to give some general idea
 of the manner in which this subject is viewed by those who
 have considered it, I shall here extract from Chalmers’s Poli-
 tical Annals some reflections containing at least a very plausi-
 ble defence of a system, which, since it has been long conse-
 crated by the general usage of nations and is the foundation
 of our own political existence, we must be inclined to believe
 is not so deep an infringement of natural rights as the violen-
 ces sometimes attending it have on such occasions caused it
 to be represented.

“ Those voyages having been thus accomplished, and those
 “ researches made, by virtue of Commissions under the great
 “ seal ; the Sovereigns of England acquired by the equity of
 “ first discovery and prior possession, a title, in right of the
 “ Crown, to a great part of the North American Continent.
 “ When the earth was the general property of mankind, mere
 “ occupancy conferred on the possessor such an interest as it
 “ would have been unjust, because contrary to the Law of
 “ Nature, to take from him without his consent : and this
 “ state has been aptly compared to a theatre, common to all ;
 “ but the individual, having appropriated a place, acquires a
 “ privilege of which he cannot be dispossessed without injus-
 “ tice. Yet, man having a right to the world from the gift of
 “ the beneficent creator, must possess and use the general es-
 “ tate according to the grant, which commanded them to mul-
 “ tiply and subsist by labour ; and little would the earth have
 “ been peopled or cultivated had men continued to live by
 “ hunting, or fishing, or the mere productions of nature. The
 “ roving of the erratic tribes over wide extended deserts does
 “ not form a possession which excludes the subsequent occu-
 “ pancy of emigrants from countries overstocked with inhabit-
 “ ants. The paucity of their numbers, and their mode of
 “ life, render them unable to fulfil the great purposes of
 “ the grant. Consistent, therefore, with the great Charter to
 “ mankind, they may be confined within certain limits. Their
 “ rights to the privileges of men nevertheless continue the
 “ same : and the Colonists who conciliated the affections of
 “ the aborigines, and gave a consideration for their territory.