

and Europe ; but no one of these latter has a more neat, regular, and simple system of numeration, than the Quichua and the Aztec, which were spoken in the great empires of Cuzco and Anahuac. It is a mistake to suppose that those languages do not admit of counting beyond four, because in villages where they are spoken by the poor labourers of Peruvian and Mexican race, individuals are found, who cannot count beyond that number. The singular opinion, that so many American nations reckon only as far as five, ten, or twenty, has been propagated by travellers, who have not reflected, that, according to the genius of different idioms, men of all nations stop at groups of five, ten, or twenty units (that is, the number of the fingers of one hand, or of both hands, or of the fingers and toes together) ; and that six, thirteen, or twenty are differently expressed, by five-one, ten-three, and feet-ten.* Can it be said that the numbers of the Europeans do not extend beyond ten, because we stop after having formed a group of ten units ?

The construction of the languages of America is so opposite to that of the languages derived from the Latin, that the Jesuits, who had thoroughly examined everything that could contribute to extend their establishments, introduced among their neophytes, instead of the Spanish, some Indian tongues, remarkable for their regularity and copiousness, such as the Quichua and the Guarani. They endeavoured to substitute these languages for others which were poorer and more irregular in their syntax. This substitution was found easy : the Indians of the different tribes adopted it with docility, and thenceforward those American languages generalized became a ready medium of communication between the missionaries and the neophytes. It would be a mistake to suppose, that the preference given to the language of the Incas over the Spanish tongue had no other aim than that of isolating the Missions, and withdrawing them from the influence of two rival powers, the bishops and civil governors. The Jesuits had other motives, independently of their policy, for wishing to generalize certain Indian tongues. They found in those languages a common

* Savages, to express great numbers with more facility, are in the habit of forming groups of five, ten, or twenty grains of maize, according as they reckon in their language by fives, tens, or twenties.