

and in the south and south-west, the Quichua, the Guarano, the Omagua, and the Araucan. By appropriating to themselves these languages, the grammatical forms of which are very regular, and almost as fixed as those of the Greek and Sanscrit, the missionaries would place themselves in more intimate connection with the natives whom they govern. The numberless difficulties which occur in the system of a Mission consisting of Indians of ten or a dozen different nations would disappear with the confusion of idioms. Those which are little diffused would become dead languages; but the Indian, in preserving an American idiom, would retain his individuality—his national character. Thus by peaceful means might be effected what the Incas began to establish by force of arms.

How indeed can we be surprised at the little progress made by the Chaymas, the Caribbees, the Salives, or the Otomacs, in the knowledge of the Spanish language, when we recollect that one white man, one single missionary, finds himself alone amidst five or six hundred Indians? and that it is difficult for him to establish among them a governador, an alcalde, or a fiscal, who may serve him as an interpreter? If, instead of the missionary system, some other means of civilization were substituted, if, instead of keeping the whites at a distance, they could be mingled with the natives recently united in villages, the American idioms would soon be superseded by the languages of Europe, and the natives would receive in those languages the great mass of new ideas which are the fruit of civilization. Then the introduction of general tongues, such as that of the Incas, or the Guaranos, without doubt would become useless. But after having lived so long in the Missions of South America, after having so closely observed the advantages and the abuses of the system of the missionaries, I may be permitted to doubt whether that system could be easily abandoned, though it is doubtless very capable of being improved, and rendered more conformable with our ideas of civil liberty. To this it may be answered, that the Romans* succeeded in rapidly

* For the reason of this rapid introduction of Latin among the Gauls, I believe we must look into the character of the natives and the state of their civilization, and not into the structure of their language. The brown-haired Celtic nations were certainly different from the race of