plication of tenses: two Presents, four Preterites, three Futures. This multiplicity characterises the rudest American languages. Astarloa reckons, in like manner, in the grammatical system of the Biscayan, two hundred and six forms of the verb. Those languages, the principal tendency of which is inflexion, are to the common observer less interesting than those which seem formed by aggregation. In the first, the elements of which words are composed, and which are generally reduced to a few letters, are no longer recognisable: these elements, when isolated, exhibit no meaning; the whole is assimilated and mingled together. The American languages, on the contrary, are like complicated machines, the wheels of which are exposed to view. The mechanism of their construction is visible. We seem to be present at their formation, and we should pronounce them to be of very recent origin, did we not recollect that the human mind steadily follows an impulse once given; that nations enlarge, improve, and repair the grammatical edifice of their languages, according to a plan already determined; finally, that there are countries, whose languages, institutions, and arts, have remained unchanged, we might almost say stereotyped, during the lapse of ages.

The highest degree of intellectual development has been hitherto found among the nations of the Indian and Pelasgic branch. The languages formed principally by aggregation seem themselves to oppose obstacles to the improvement of the mind. They are devoid of that rapid movement, that interior life, to which the inflexion of the root is favourable, and which impart such charms to works of imagination. Let us not, however, forget, that a people celebrated in remote antiquity, a people from whom the Greeks themselves borrowed knowledge, had perhaps a language, the construction of which recals involuntarily that of the languages of America. What a structure of little monosyllabic and dissyllabic forms is added to the verb and to the substantive, in the Coptic language! The semi-barbarous Chayma and Tamanac have tolerably short abstract words to express grandeur, envy, and lightness, *cheictivate, uoite,* and *uonde;* but in Coptic, the word malice,* *metrepherpetou,*

* See, on the incontestible identity of the ancient Egyptian and Coptic, and on the particular system of synthesis of the latter language, the in-