

sion of Encaramada, and at the distance of more than a hundred leagues from the Chaymas, live the Tamanacs (Tamanacu), whose language is divided into several dialects. This nation, formerly very powerful, is separated from the mountains of Caripe by the Orinoco, by the vast steppes of Caracas and of Cumana; and by a barrier far more difficult to surmount, the nations of Caribbean origin. But notwithstanding distance, and the numerous obstacles in the way of intercourse, the language of the Chayma Indians is a branch of the Tamanac tongue. The oldest missionaries of Caripe are ignorant of this curious fact, because the Capuchins of Aragon seldom visit the southern banks of the Orinoco, and scarcely know of the existence of the Tamanacs. I recognized the analogy between the idiom of this nation, and that of the Chayma Indians long after my return to Europe, in comparing the materials which I had collected with the sketch of a grammar published in Italy by an old missionary of the Orinoco. Without knowing the Chaymas, the Abbé Gili conjectured that the language of the inhabitants of Paria must have some relation to the Tamanac.*

I will prove this connection by two means which serve to show the analogy of idioms; viz., the grammatical construction, and the identity of words and roots. The following are the personal pronouns of the Chaymas, which are

* Vater has also advanced some well-founded conjectures on the connexion between the Tamanac and Caribbean tongues and those spoken on the north-east coast of South America. I may acquaint the reader, that I have written the words of the American languages according to the Spanish orthography, so that the *u* should be pronounced *oo*, the *ch* like *ch* in English, &c. Having during a great number of years spoken no other language than the Castilian, I marked down the sounds according to the orthography of that language, and now I am afraid of changing the value of these signs, by substituting others no less imperfect. It is a barbarous practice, to express, like the greater part of the nations of Europe, the most simple and distinct sounds by many vowels, or many united consonants, while they might be indicated by letters equally simple. What a chaos is exhibited by the vocabularies written according to English, German, French, or Spanish notations! A new essay, which the illustrious author of the travels in Egypt, M. Volney, is about to publish on the analysis of sounds found in different nations, and on the notation of those sounds according to a uniform system, will lead to great progress in the study of languages.