

## PREFACE.

A NEW edition of Vater's "*Linguarum totius orbis index*," after Professor Jülg's revision of 1847, requires no apology. The science of Philology has made great progress within the last few years. Exotic languages are no longer considered as mere matters of curiosity, but are looked upon as interesting parts of the natural history of man, and as such receive their share of the brilliant light which modern critical studies have shed upon the natural sciences in general.

Ethnologists now understand how to appreciate the high importance of language as one of the most interesting links of the great chain of national affinities; and the reciprocity existing between man, the soil he lives upon, and the language he speaks, will become better understood the more our knowledge of these interesting topics is extended.

Comparative philology has begun to be established upon solid scientific foundations; and the recent endeavours to establish finally a uniform system of linguistic orthography will, when generally received, give a new and important impetus to that study, which must lead to most interesting results. In such a state of progress, new literary guides are constantly required; and one of them, embracing the aboriginal languages of our great western continent, is hereby offered to those who take an interest in American linguistics.