

THE CATHOLOGRAPHER.

INTRODUCTION.

THE PROSPECTS OF A UNIVERSAL LANGUAGE.

We are informed by the sacred historian, Moses, that "The whole earth was of one language, and of one speech." We are also informed by the same historian, of the origin of the diversity of languages. That this diversity has, in some respects, been beneficial to mankind, especially with regard to ages past, there can be no question; but that, in other respects, it is attended with great disadvantages, and is the source of numerous and grievous evils, is our daily experience.

In the absence of any attempt to enumerate the evils arising from the diversity of tongues, it may not be thought irrelevant to our purpose to give place to the following extract, wherein a few of those evils are graphically described by a modern writer.—

"There is much reason to believe that, on the whole, considerable advantage would have resulted to the human family, if the primitive language had been preserved intact, and had prevailed in its unity from age to age, as successive generations multiplied and extended themselves over the surface of the earth. It would have proved a bond of universal brotherhood, to cement society in its various and dissimilar parts.

"It is evident that the division of tongues has created mournfully strong and lasting prejudices and antipathies amongst men. Nations have been alienated from each other as much by difference of speech as by diversities of politics, or of religion. There is a mental, if not a moral, deformity, falsely enough attached by many persons to those who are unable to speak the language of our country. The man who cannot do it is an alien to us, and we are instantly alienated from him. A strong dislike to a foreigner may frequently be detected in children, and in the unlettered rustic who knows no other language than his own, and who has never visited a land in which other languages are spoken. Unreasonable jealousies, as a consequence, are engendered, and strong national prejudices have been thrown up and perpetuated. These have

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