

and the interesting work of his experienced and worthy fellow-labourer, the Rev. Mr. Heckewelder. These publications alone, which are too well known to need a more particular notice in this place, abundantly show, what a vast field is now opening to those who wish to search into the philosophy of language, and to study man through the medium of his noblest and peculiar faculty of speech; and, at the same time that they do honour to our country, they will be read by the scholars of Europe, especially the learned Germans, with all that avidity which the characters of their authors will naturally excite. For my own part, I acknowledge, that they have occasioned my taking a deeper interest in this apparently dry and barren subject, than I could have believed to be possible in any one, however devoted he might be to philological pursuits; and I have, in consequence, been for a time allured from old and favourite studies, to which I had intended to allot the whole of that little leisure which I could spare from the duties of my profession.

At the very commencement of my inquiries, however, I found my progress impeded by a capricious and ever varying *orthography* of the Indian languages, not only among the writers of different nations, but even among those of the same country. I have, therefore, while examining words in one Indian dialect with a view to comparing them with those of another, been obliged to employ much time in first settling the spelling of a *written* word, in order to ascertain the sound of the *spoken* word; when I ought to have found nothing more to be necessary than to make the comparison, which I happened to have in view, between words whose *sounds* should have presented themselves upon the first inspection of their *written characters*. But with the present irregular mode of writing Indian words, unless a reader is conversant with the