

later times. From what main division the Indian languages are derived, our present knowledge will not perhaps warrant us in deciding. It has been attempted to show that a similarity exists between their language and that of the people inhabiting the northern parts of Asia : from whence the same author* supposes them to have had their origin.

There are great varieties of language used among the different tribes of Indians ; but although they are seemingly essentially different, yet possibly they may all have had one origin. There are many causes for the mutability of language. The two following, assigned, among others, by Dr. Shuckford, as reasons for the general diversity of language, will apply to the case of the Indians.

“ 1. The difference of climates will insensibly cause a variation of language, because it will occasion a difference of pronunciation. It is easy to be observed, that there is a pronunciation peculiar to almost every country in the world ; and according to the climate, the language will abound in aspirates or lenes, guttural sounds or pectorals, labials or dentals ; a circumstance which would make the very same language sound different from itself. The Ephramites, we find, could not pronounce the letter *schin*, as their neighbours did. (Judg. xii. 6.) There is a pronunciation peculiar to almost every province ; so that if we were to suppose a number of men of the same nation and language dispersed into different parts of the world ; the several climates in which their children would be born, would so affect their pronunciation, as in a few ages to make their language very different from one another.”

2. Another “ cause of the mutability of language, is the unsettled temper and disposition of mankind. The very minds and manners of men are continually

* The discovery of America and the origin of the North American Indians, by J. Mackintosh, page 43. In the 1st chapter we have shown this opinion of the origin of the people is the most probable : and could we compare the two languages, we should perhaps find as great a similarity as can be expected at this time.