

But, in order that we may successfully penetrate into this unexplored region of languages as barbarous and foreign to our modes of thinking, as the manners of the uncivilized people who use them, it is indispensable that we should adopt every practicable expedient to render our progress easy and pleasant. Now nothing is more clearly necessary at the very beginning, than some *common and systematic method of writing them*; whether our object is, to enable the learned of other countries and our own to study and compare the numerous varieties of human speech with all that exactness, which is essential to accurate and useful results, or whether we confine ourselves to the more practical purpose of possessing the means of communication with the various tribes on our borders, either with a view to the common concerns of life or the diffusion of the principles of our religion among them; and any investigation, which is so intimately connected as this with results of such importance, will not be thought unworthy of the attention of our countrymen. Nor will they, I trust, need further incitement to prosecute any inquiries whatever, minute as they may at first view appear, to which men of so much distinction in the literary world, as Count Volney among the French and the incomparable Sir William Jones among the English, have given importance and dignity by their laborious and learned researches.\*

\* Count Volney's elaborate work, entitled *L'Alphabet Européen appliqué aux Langues Asiatiques*, 8vo. pp. 223 (for the use of which I have been indebted to Mr. Du Ponceau since this paper was first communicated to the Academy) was published at Paris in 1819. The Dissertation of Sir William Jones, which I have already quoted, is well known to every scholar.