

—the Abbé Petitot—attempts to establish the identity of a fabulous nation called *Tsequil* with a prehistoric race surnamed “women” by the Northern Dénés on the ground that *tsequi*, he says, means women in Déné, while the original sense of *Tsequil* appears to be “petticoated men.”* Now, the author must know just as well as I do that *tsequi* means women in no Déné dialect, and he ought to be aware that the difference between that pretended word and *tsequi*,† the real equivalent of “women,” is as great in Déné as that between, say, day and night. Hence his would-be identification falls to the ground through utter disregard for the value of consonantal articulation.

It would be harsh to call this philological bad faith; much more probably it is only blindness caused by an inordinate love of linguistic assimilations,‡ just as the sentence immediately following in his text seems to be due to misinformation. Speaking of the Déné language, he says that “il a été reconnu appartenir à la même famille que le toltèque.”§ In the first place, many well-informed Americanists speak no longer of the Toltecs who, they declare, never existed as a nation, and therefore had no distinctive language;¶ and then if by *tolteque* the author means, with some apparently mistaken ethnologists, the dialect of some ancestors of the Aztecs, he should certainly know that the idiom of the latter has no more affinity with the Déné than that of the Caribs or of the Fuegians.

In the same publication the author endeavours to identify the *tsaa*, *tsade* of some northern Dénés with the *tsau* of the Egyptians. *Omnis comparatio claudicat* is an axiom well known to the schoolmen, but which should never apply to linguistic comparisons. Yet I dare say that the above not only “hobbles,” but even cannot stand at all, for two reasons. First, *tsaa* or *tsade* should be written as it is pronounced, not as may be convenient in the interest of the thesis. Now the author knows so well that this should be *t'saa* or *ttsaa* (the apostrophe or the double t denoting the lingual explosion), that he spells it himself according to the second orthography in his published dictionary. This exploding sound is so important from a philological standpoint that, while even consonants are liable to occasionally disappear altogether through the gradual alterations customary with all living languages, this American character-

* *Six Légendes Américaines identifiées à l'histoire de Moïse, etc.*, Paris, A. Henuyor, p. 720

† The apostrophe indicates the lingual explosion proper to many American idioms.

‡ It could not be construed as due to any typographic error, as identical appreciations of similarly altered words are to be found elsewhere in the course of the work referred to.

§ *Six Légendes, etc.*, p. 720.

¶ See “The American Race,” by Dr. D. G. Briston, p. 129.