

EUPHONY.

In the combination of letters and the formation of words, strict attention is paid to the agreeableness of sound. This is one of the peculiar characteristics of the language. In the formation of compound words, when two syllables come together, which in combination will produce a harsh sound, one of the syllables is elided, as: omûqkîmî = big, nîna = a chief. When combined, the *mî* of the simple adjective is rejected and it becomes omûqkînîna = a big chief. Nîokskûm = three, otasîks = horses (his), nîokskotasîks = three horses.

When two simple words in combination possess several harsh-sounding consonants, two or more of the syllables are elided, as: sîksînûm = black, oqkotokî = stone, sîkoqkotokî = black stone, *i.e.*, coal. When two or more vowels come together in word-forming, and the sound resulting from their union is not harmonious, a consonant is inserted to secure the euphony. This is particularly noticeable in the verb, with its article, pronoun or pronominal prefix, as: nîstoa = I, awan = root of verb, î = verbal termination. When combined we have: nî-t-awan-î = I say, kî-t-awan-î = thou sayest, awan-îo = he says. The letter *t* is inserted to secure harmony of sound.

Sometimes a vowel is changed in combination, as: omûqkîmî = big, kaio = bear. From these we have: omûqkokaio = big bear. Here the last syllable of the adjective is elided, and the last vowel remaining, namely î, is changed to o. Sometimes a vowel is rejected in combination, as: ponoka = deer, imîta = dog. Combined, we have ponokamîta = deer-dog, *i.e.*, a horse.

All the parts of speech are found in the language except the article. The numeral adjective nîtukskûm = one, and the demonstrative pronouns amo = this, and oma = that, are used to supply the place of the articles as, nîtukskûm ponokamîta = one horse, or a horse, amakio = this woman, amakekwân = this girl, or the girl, omakekwân = that girl, or the girl. They do not strictly supply the place of the articles, but they are used for that purpose.

The Blackfoot, Cree and Ojibway languages belong to the Algonkin family of languages, and in order to show the relation existing between them, there is subjoined a list of words in these three languages. The Blackfoot, Blood and Piegan tribes speak dialects of the Blackfoot, but as the changes made are slight, except in the coining of new words, it would not be expedient to spend time in tracing these differences. The lists of the three related languages are as follows:—