

derous polysyntheses into more convenient forms. Shortening of words by the elimination of vowels is a common feature in the Hëillsuk division of the Kwakiutl, indeed it constitutes the chief difference to be found in the dialects of this stock, as for example *qk'um* from *qak'um*; *k'ks* from *kayoks*, which again is a contraction from *kalo-kish*. But elimination is not confined to vowels alone. We find *tl'eqsioala* contracted into *tlësela*; *matlmatem* into *patlem*; *goakelaioq* into *qo-anālaq*. Again, if we take the phrase *ek-i-g-ki-kamē* which signifies in English "he is a good chief" and subject it to a close analysis we find that syncope has been severely at work here also. "Ek"=good, "i" is the remnant of a primitive verb of being whose full form is lost, "g" stands for the demonstrative pronoun "this" whose uncontracted form is "*giāda*," "ki" is a contraction of a phrase meaning "best among all" and is now employed as the sign of the superlative of adjectives. Another word is *Nakaztli* the present Déné name for the village at Stuart's Lake. This is a contraction from the following expression: *Atna ka poetl tiztli*, and signifies in English "the river was covered with floating arrows of the Atna or dwarfs," and has reference to an old legend. Other examples are *sa*= "for me" from two primitively independent and distinct parts of speech, pronoun and preposition, viz.: *s-oep-a*; *na*= "for thee" from *n-oemp-a*; *hwotl*= "with him" from *nwo-poe-tl*. I have already shown how the Ntlakapamuk contracted *qtlak't*, *shupa*= "broad," "tail" into *qk-ōpa*= "beaver," and numerous other instances might be cited if it were necessary.

Yet one other source of trouble to the investigator who would institute comparisons between different vocabularies remains to be mentioned.

Many of our Indian tongues—the Salish is one—form the plural of many of their intransitive verbs from a totally different stem from that from which the singular is derived; and frequently when a comparison of the singular shows no affinity whatever it is readily discovered in the plural; but when but one of these has been recorded, as is frequently the case, it is easy to see that the comparative philologist will be embarrassed and perhaps led astray.

It is commonly claimed by classic philologists that the numerals of a tongue are amongst the most constant elements of a language and constitute with the pronominal one of the best and surest tests of affinity. This is an idea derived from a comparison of the speech of a group of related tongues like the Aryan family, the members of which had long lived together and unified their language before separation took place. It does not hold good even of such closely related stocks as the Malayo-Polynesian in which only the first five numerals are common to each division, and the pronominal elements as diverse as they well can be. And in such uncultivated tongues as the American where such latitude in name formation is permissible ought we to expect to find much similarity? Even within the same stock the numerals are often wholly dissimilar in