

ted to them when they are considered as mere accessories. This arbitrary change of value joined to the fact that these modifying signs sometimes precede, sometimes follow, the main character must unavoidably confuse the mind of the beginner and render the acquisition of reading unnecessarily difficult.

IV.— In our system, all the small signs (except *o* which, as its form indicates, is *zero* when alone) are consonants without vowel, and in *no* instance is any of them used in another capacity. They have always the same value, and the method and logic which we have noticed in the formation of the main or syllabic signs have also presided to the composition of those which are merely consonantal. Thus the non-syllabic gutturals are expressed by vertical lines (\vee \vee); the nasals by semicircles (\circ \circ \sim), &c. Note also the transformation of *s* into *sh*; *z* into *zh* or *j*, etc. through the insertion of the *h* or modifying *h* of the large characters. —The old Alphabet not only lacks this method and resulting simplicity, but it would seem as if its inventor had purposely contrived to render its acquisition unduly difficult to the white student by giving to *s* the value of *l*, to *z* that of *g*, to *h* that of *f*, etc.

V.— The new Syllabary is complete, while it is universally conceded that the Cree Alphabet lacks about half a dozen sets of syllabic signs which are indispensable in such delicate languages as the Dene. Those who know the numberless and most ridiculous *contresens* this scarcity leads to need no other reason to reject the whole system as practically worthless. Besides, in connection with *none* of its signs is there any provision for such important vowel sounds as those of *a* (French *e muet*) and *u* (*oo*, Fr. *ou*). Yet in several dialects *a* characterizes the present tense and *e* the past, while the distinction between *o* and *u* is no less essential.

VI.— Lastly, we claim for our Syllabary a greater synthesis which renders the writing shorter and, by avoiding the accumulation of non-syllabic signs, makes the reading easier. For instance, the Chippewyan word *intān-chare*, "leaf" which with the old syllabics cannot be written without *three* consecutive small signs (Δ \vee \circ \sim ε ε) is simply $\triangleright \triangleright \sim \mathfrak{E} \triangleright$ with the new system.

In conclusion, we may be permitted to state as illustrative of the practical worth of the new Syllabary that through it Indians of common intelligence have learnt to read in one week's leisurely study before they had any Primer or printed matter of any kind to help them on. We even know of a young man who performed the feat in the space of two evenings.

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