

family by family. Their life is sad and their morose character is favorable to reflection.

The Dènè-Dindjiè have no idea, or else have false ideas of what we call beauty, goodness, order, time, quantity, quality, love, gratitude, &c. They never consider beauty when they marry, and the goodness of a wife does not in their eyes depend on the purity of life she may have led before marriage. Let her be submissive, able to work and laborious, fruitful, fat and well, the rest is of little consequence.

A boy and girl, however ugly they may be, will always find a partner, if they are fit to work and to bring up a family. It may be a more judicious plan than we imagine.

Our Indians do not know their age, and after three or four years they lose count of that of their children. They believe it is of more consequence for them to remember how much the clerk at the nearest trading-post owes them; and I can safely say that they never lose count of that. The hand serves them as a standard for calculation and gives the measure of its extent. When they have counted the five fingers on the one hand, they begin on the other till the ten fingers are finished. Do not ask them further. Their ideas of numbers are so limited, and such is their habit of exaggeration and falsehood, that when they see five or six persons arrive, they exclaim that a great multitude is coming; and when a tribe of three or four hundred souls is assembled, they swell with pride, declaring that the number of their brethren equals that of the mosquitoes who hum beneath the trees. But when led by interest, they can equally diminish numbers. If they are called, for instance, to give an account of their fishing or hunting, be assured that they have taken a score of fish when they say they have caught none, or that there are hundreds when they venture to say that they have caught a few.

They recognize in beings no qualities but those cognizable by the senses, such as color, dimensions, weight, strength, etc. They are incapable of appreciating the beauty of a work of art. Present to them a wonderfully executed work, they will lift it and if it be large and heavy, they will cry, "Oh! oh! it is no small thing; it is very heavy, it is very big." But if it be light and pretty, it does not deserve admiration. At other times they try to scratch or chip it, and if not successful they cry again, "Oh! oh! it is very hard." Hope for nothing else. We have often said to one another that a haunch of reindeer, clearly represented by the painter, would make more impression on them than the most artistic picture.

Their measure of time does not exceed the lapse of a year. They know a great many seasons, which they characterize by the different conditions of the snow or the earth, and they divide the year into twelve months, or moons, each having its name. This cycle of moons belongs equally, according to travellers, to the Calmucks, Eastern Tartars, Mongols, Finns and Japanese. The Esquimaux and Algonquins are also acquainted with it, and give the months nearly the same names as our Dènè-Dindjiè. Several of them have the names of animals, such as the eagle, the frog, the goose, the antelope, the fish, the rein deer, &c.

It is a singular fact that the word month, which is translated as frequently by *sa* (moon) as by *ni* or *nan* (earth, condition of the earth) in Montagnais and in Loucheux, is called *mén* among the Hare Indians. This word is a simple root, of which a preposition may be made by placing the indefinite particle *ko* before it; *komen* meaning during, whilst; as *mén* means duration, period. Now this word is identical with the same French substantive *mois* (in Greek *μήν*) and has close connection with the English word moon, which comes, Müller says, from the