

matism, especially when my own judgment is at stake, I cannot help thinking that had my worthy friend been aware of the wonderful uniformity in essentials of the Déné languages which it is the object of this paper to bring into relief, he would have hesitated to make this criticism. It would be much more agreeable to let it pass unchallenged; but then Philology would be the loser to the extent of its remaining unacquainted with a fact which I consider well worth a few moments' consideration.

We are confronted here, not with a question of personal right or wrong — which may well be overlooked — but with the fact that a patient investigation of some nine or ten Déné dialects during the last thirty years or so has impressed on my mind the wonderful similarity in morphology throughout that linguistic family, which I fancy entitles one who has acquired a speaking knowledge of several of its idioms to write with some degree of confidence of those he has not actually studied.¹

When the late Dr Washington Matthews published his invaluable *Mountain Chant*, two things impressed me irresistibly from a philological standpoint: the great similarity of the root words mentioned in his Navaho texts with their equivalents in the north, and the fact that this similarity would have become a perfect identity but

¹ Dr Goddard says in a late paper that "the people occupying the southern portion of the territory which lies west of the Rocky mountains have received the attention of Morice who has published extended accounts of them" (Assimilation to Environment as Illustrated by Athapaskan Peoples, in *Congrès International des Américanistes*, vol. 1, Québec, 1907). As the appositeness of my contentions such as embodied in this paper depends considerably on the extent of my Déné studies, I may be permitted to remark that the area covered by the natives of whom I have personal knowledge is much more extensive than this author seems to suspect. I have lived among the Déné who range between Teslin lake in the Yukon and the Lillooet mountains, that is between 51° and 61° N. lat., and have collected extensive dictionaries or briefer vocabularies not only of the Chilcotin, Carrier, Sékanais, and Babine idioms, but even of the Nahanaïs of the far north. Of the latter I have a grammar which I printed myself, and a vocabulary partly in print, without counting a number of texts still in manuscript. Moreover, five years ago I published in *Transactions of the Canadian Institute*, The Nahane and their Language. Now, the Nahanaïs can hardly be said to occupy "the southern portion of the territory which lies west of the Rocky mountains." Finally, I have had personal intercourse with Déné from the eastern side of that range, the Beavers, the Sarcee, and even representatives of the Mackenzie tribes. In each case their language has been the chief object of my investigations. Simple justice to the subject of these pages has brought forth these statements.