

If we now pass from the articulations considered as sounds to the artificial means of expressing them, we notice two kinds of letters of very unequal linguistic importance, the consonants and the vowels. In some languages, as the Semitic, the former only are used* to express ideas, whilst, in the majority of even the other stocks, the importance of the vowels is also but secondary. Thus the English "stone," is derived from the Saxon *stan*, which is *steen* in Dutch, *stein* in German and *sten* in Swedish. "Bean" is a Saxon word the equivalent of which is *boon* in Dutch, *bohne* in German and *böna* in Swedish. Likewise *tsa* is the Carrier synonym for "beaver," which becomes *tse* and *tsi* among the Loucheux, *tso* with the Rocky Mountain tribes and *tsu* in Alaska. *T'si* (with a lingual explosion) means "canoe" in the dialect of several tribes; *t'se* has the same signification in TsiKoh'tin, and so it is with the *t'su* and the *t'so* of the Hare and other Indians.

Now the following entry appears in Dr. Campbell's lately published Déné and Tungus vocabulary:

Grass—(Déné) klo, klos, kklbh. (Tungusic): orcho, oroktø; orat.

Here evidently the basis of comparison lies entirely with the letter *o* which, being a vowel and, as such, very changeable in Déné, could not by any means afford a solid ground for assimilation. This vowel is so little immutable even in connection with the equivalents for "grass" (where it seems at first glance to be more persistent than in other words), that a portion of the Carrier tribe, while keeping the root *t'jo* as a synonym for grass, change it into *t'ja* in the compound noun *t'ja-kwət* (grass-on, i.e., prairie.)

Therefore a word of vocalic inflection totally different from that of a heterogeneous race may be identical therewith if its consonantal elements are analogous. As evidence of this proposition I need only adduce the native word for "hog," in the language of three very distinct American families, viz., the Iroquois, the Algonquin, and the Déné. The main body of the Iroquois call it by onomatopœia *kwiskwis*, and those of Sault Ste. Marie say *kweskwes*. The Algonquins of Eastern Canada have altered its name into *kokoc*, and those of the western plains, the Crees, call the animal *kukus*, while the peculiar law of the sequence of vowels proper to their language has prompted the Carriers to soften the word into *kokus*. This example makes it plain that the trans-Rockies tribe has derived its name of the hog, through a successive linguistic filiation wherein the principal consonants have remained intact, from the original

* "Were used" would perhaps be more correct since the invention of the vowel points by the doctors of Tiberias, but these additions to the consonants can hardly be considered as genuine letters.