

No one can dispute the ambiguity of the following: "The chief spoke to the thief in his house." Such indefiniteness has no place in Cree. If the chief's house is meant the sentence is, "Okenow ke weche pekiskwamāo okimotiwa weki'k"; if the thief's house is meant, the last word has the relative (relating to another) ending "yi'k" added, making "wekeyi'k."

Suppose that a man wishes to take a horse home. The form of verb he employs indicates whose horse. If his own horse he says, "Ne kī kewā'tahow," "I will take him home." If another's, "Ne kī kewā'tāhimowā," "I will take his (horse) home."

SYNTHESIS.

A few examples will give some idea of the constructive peculiarity of this language.

The root "wā" signifies "light" or "white colour." By a system, the Cree has added to this root endings that are significant and unique: "Wapeo," "he sees"; "wāpewin," "sight"; "wāpamun," "mirror"; "wāpātum," "he sees it"; wāpamāo, "he sees him"; "wāpēhāo," "he causes him to see."

Again, upon the root "pim," "coursing" or "going," is built another set of words: "Pimō'tāo," "he walks"; "pimō'tāwin," "walking," i.e., the noun; "pimō'tahāo," "he causes him to walk," or go; "pimī'yow," "he flies"; "pimiskow," "he paddles"; "pimāsiw," "he sails or goes with the wind"; "pimipā'tow," "he runs"; "pimipā'towin," "running"; "pimipayiw," "he passes running"; "pimipayiwīn," the noun "running" in passing by.

II.—THE NOUN.

There is a disposition on the part of some to underestimate the importance of the noun in Cree. It is difficult to see the reason of this when it is considered that the language abounds in names of all kinds conceivable, and possesses the genius or ability of naming everything that civilization presents as new. It is true that many nouns are formed from verbs by prefixes and modified endings, but this fact is no argument (as will be seen) that the noun is not a prominent part of speech or that it does not naturally occur in the language.

1. Names are given "directly" to objects—kēsik, sky; atim, dog; asinee, stone; nipē, water; nāpāo, man; kōna, snow; pimē, oil, grease; mūstis, a cattle beast; mūsua, moose; muskwā, bear; minahik, pine; askē, earth, a country; pē'kō, ashes; mē'kō, blood. In the last two words the "rough breathing" of the Greek is used, to secure the *h* sound in English, after *ē* in each word. The force of the breathing is exactly the same as that in the name Lochaber, a district of Inverness.

2. Names are given "indirectly"—that is, they are suggested or derived:

(a) Of these the verb originates many nouns by the prefix *ō*, as kistekāo, he farms; ōkistekāo, farmer; āyamchow, he prays; ōtāyamchow, one who prays, a Christian. The *t* is here inserted between two vowels for easy utterance, or euphony. Mēyosoo, she (mas. or fem.) beautiful; ōmēyosoo, the beauty. Kēyāskēw, he lies; ōkēyāskēw, a liar.

(b) The verb originates other nouns by an affix, or by both prefix and affix, to the third person, singular, present tense. Nikumoo, he sings; nikumoowin, singing. Chēkiēkāo, he chops; chēkiēkāwin, chopping. Tipahumākāo, he pays; tipahumākāwin, payment. Nipā'takāo, he commits murder (mas. or fem.); ōnipā'tākāsk, a murderer. Āyumēhā'kasoo, he pretends to pray; ōtāyumēhā'kasusk, a hypocrite. The last three examples show that nouns may be formed by a prefix and the affix *sk* to a modified ending.