

with additions and unimportant modifications, even to the Déné idioms.

I do not feel competent to criticize its adaptation to the Eskimo languages; but as to the Dénés, I can state without the least hesitation that, even in its amended shape such as used east of the Rockies, it is far from faultless and appropriate.

When, in the course of 1885, circumstances first brought me to Stuart's Lake Mission, in the very heart of the western Dénés' territory, I learned that a feeble attempt had been made by one of my predecessors to introduce that modified Cree Syllabary, but that this had resulted in such a failure that no Indian could then be found who remembered any two signs thereof.

Feeling keenly the necessity of an easy and accurate graphic system for the use of the natives to whose spiritual needs I had to attend, I devised, in my first year of residence here, the now well known "Déné Syllabary" which was at once granted the warmest reception. A short lesson on five or six days in the four most important villages was all the teaching imparted to the present generation of Carriers, most of whom mastered the whole syllabary and set upon reading and writing with ease and correction ere any Primer had been printed for their benefit. They now correspond by letters, keep private accounts of their debts and of their dues, learn in the absence of their priest any hymn, prayer or lesson of the catechism they may be directed to acquire, and post or scribble on the trees of the forest records of their deeds or wants to be read by incoming parties likely to succour them.

Not only the Carriers; but the Babines and even the Sékainais who speak different dialects and who—the latter, at least—are noted for their intellectual shortcomings, readily took in the new syllabics, which they learned without receiving a single lesson from its inventor.

These facts might suffice to demonstrate the suitability of that graphic system which, in all points but the convertibility of its signs' positions, differs from the Cree syllabary. Yet I must be allowed to enter into a few details and, after having reproduced our own syllabics, to serve the reader with an account of the reasons that militate in favor of their superiority over the