

care, the great majority of vowel sounds can be written down correctly.

There is one sound peculiar to the language, and very predominant in it, which has been noticed by other writers, particularly by Mr. Anderson, surgeon under Captain Cook's command, in 1778. It cannot exactly be signified by any letters of our alphabet, but has been greatly misrepresented by the use of too many letters in a vain endeavour to give its full force. The test of all such attempts is to pronounce the word so written to a native, and see if it be recognised by him. The sound—which has one or two what may be called cognate forms—may be spelt most correctly, though still inadequately, by *tl*, *tlh*, *lh*. In pronouncing, care must be taken not to introduce a vowel; and in giving the *l* sound the breath must be prolonged between the tongue and roof of the mouth, thus introducing the *h* with almost, but *not quite*, a hissing sound. Instances of these sounds are presented in the words *Moolshittl*, in which the *tl* is not to be pronounced *tel*, *Hahquatlh*, *Hissoolh*.

Another point of considerable interest is the wonderful readiness of the Indian in the invention of new words. No novelty comes under his notice but it soon gets a name, which rapidly spreads among the tribes, and is added to the national vocabulary. This, I suppose, is likely to be a feature of language in its natural and elementary state, where the roots, if not always understood, are felt, and find an unconscious expression.

The parts of speech are not very determinate or strictly defined: at the same time not a few substantives, adjectives, and verbs, as well as a few prepositions and pronouns, may be found; but a considerable body of words is only in a position, as it were, of becoming some of these, and at present in a state of transition.

While the people are so ready in forming new words, and most skilful in specifying, the language exhibits a great deficiency in the power of generalisation. For some most patent genera I have a difficulty in finding out that they have any terms at all. If they have any words for fish or beast, they are at any rate far from