

of the former, whose terminology moreover is formed according to an identical process and whose grammar is remarkable for the similarity of its rules.

But to fully appreciate this radical homogeneity the student must become imbued with the fact that, though the consonants contain the quintessence of the Déné idioms, to the exclusion of the vowels, which vary as a matter of course from tribe to tribe, there are some among the former that are interchangeable throughout the entire family to the extent of being utterly undifferentiated by the natives, while others are invariable within the dialect they characterize but may change according to the various tribes.

To the first class belong the correlated sonant and surd *b* and *p*, *d* and *t*, *g* and *k*, as well as the exploded *t't* and *k'k*. Thus the Déné ear can detect absolutely no difference between, for instance, *bés*, knife, and *pés*; *déné* man, and *téné*; *go*, worm, and *ko*; *t'ta*, posterior, and *k'ka*. Question any Déné on the difference in the meaning of, say, the words *debe*, mountain sheep, and *tepe*, and he will assert that you are uttering exactly the same sound in both instances.

To the second class belong the consonants, single or double, such as *p* (or *b*) and *m* (or *v* in the far north); *c* (*sh*) and *fiv*; *'t* and *'q*; *ts* and *tc*, *k'w* or *k'fiv*; *t's* and *'k'w*, sometimes *t'q* or simply *'t*.<sup>1</sup> While these remain invariable within a given tribe, they are mutually convertible from dialect to dialect, to the extent of becoming safe gauges in determining the sept or band to which the speaker belongs. The transmutability of these particular consonants is noticeable especially in the north. A few examples will illustrate my meaning:

lake	<i>piñ</i>	(Chilcotin)	<i>mæn</i>	(Sékanais)	<i>væn</i>	(Loucheux)
snare	<i>pił</i>	"	<i>mił</i>	"	<i>vía</i>	"
his, her	<i>pæ-</i>	"	<i>mæ-</i>	"	<i>væ-</i>	"
leggings	<i>cæł</i>	(Chippewayan)	<i>fivé</i>	(Hare)		
long time	<i>ca</i>	"	<i>fwa</i>	"		
vainly	<i>cun</i>	"	<i>fwin</i>	"		

<sup>1</sup> In these and all aboriginal words quoted throughout this paper the apostrophe (') represents the click; an inverted period (·) stands for the hiatus; *q* (except in Navaho terms reproduced from the writings of Navaho scholars, who assign to it the value of a strong aspiration) is identical with *cu* in the English *cure*; *t* is a peculiar sibilant *t*; *æ* is the *æ* of the French *je, te*, etc.; *s* and *z* are intermediary between *s* and *c* and *z* and *j* respectively.