

gruity does not comprise that distinct and specific similarity in words and forms which is required as a proof of direct affiliation. In the present state of philological science we must, therefore, as has been said, limit our inquiries to the tribes of each distinct linguistic family, including, however, such as may possibly have been formed by the intermixture of tribes of different stocks.

The group of kindred tribes to which, in pursuing these inquiries, my attention was first directed, was that which is commonly known as the Huron-Iroquois family, but which I should be rather inclined, for reasons that will be hereafter stated, to denominate the Huron-Cherokee stock. A peculiar interest attaches to the aboriginal nations of this kinship. Surrounded as they usually were, in various parts of the continent, by tribes of different lineage,—Algonkin, Dakota, Choctaw, and others,—they maintained everywhere a certain pre-eminence, and manifested a force of will and a capacity for political organization which placed them at the head of the Indian communities in the whole region extending from Mexico to the Arctic circle. Their languages show, in their elaborate mechanism, as well as in their fulness of expression and grasp of thought, the evidence of the mental capacity of those who speak them. Scholars who admire the inflections of the Greek and Sanscrit verb, with their expressive force and clearness, will not be less impressed with the ingenious structure of the verb in Iroquois. It comprises nine tenses, three moods, the active and passive voices, and at least twenty of those forms which in the Semitic grammars are styled conjugations. The very names of these forms will suffice to give evidence of the care and minuteness with which the framers of this remarkable language have endeavored to express every shade of meaning. We have the diminutive and augmentative forms, the *cis*-locative and *trans*-locative, the duplicative, reiterative, motional, causative, progressive, attributive, frequentative, and many others. I am aware that some European and American scholars, shocked to find their own mother-tongues inferior in this respect not only to the Sanscrit and Greek, but even to the languages of some uncivilized tribes, have adopted the view that inflections are a proof of imperfection and a relic of barbarism. They apparently forget, that if they vindicate in this way a superiority for their native idiom over the Greek and the Iroquois, they reduce it at the same time, not only below the Mandchu and Polynesian tongues, but beneath even the poverty-stricken speech of the Chinese.*

*In support of the opinion expressed in the text, I may cite two very eminent authorities. Professor Max Müller, who acquired a knowledge of the Iroquois language from a Mohawk undergraduate at Oxford (now Dr. Oronhyatekha, of London, Ont.), remarks in a