

Such is the case with *kr* and *kr*, save that the sound of the *r* in this phonetic compound is perceptible only for the natives and those who may have made a specialty of the study of their language. *Ts* and *tʃ* have the exploding sound and their value can hardly be taught otherwise than *viva voce*.

To the foregoing should be added the hiatus (:) which has the effect of abruptly interrupting the pronunciation and slightly elevating the tone of the syllable it follows.

There is no accent in Déné.

Besides, the Déné dialects possess two genuine diphthongs: *au* and *ai* pronounced respectively as the German *au* and the English long *i* in such words as "fire, mire," etc. A peculiarity of the language is that it avoids the succession of two vocalic sounds with as much care as the Polynesian idioms do the accumulation of consonants. Thus "Leo" is pronounced "Leyo" and "Noah, Nowah" by our Indians.

Among the consonants *b* and *p*, *d* and *t*, *k* and *g* are respectively undifferentiated through the whole Déné linguistic group. They can be interchanged without in the least affecting the sense of the word, whilst *t* and *q*, *p* and *v*, *ts* and *kw* or *kfw*, *ts* and *kw* are co-affin and transmutable from dialect to dialect and particularize the tribe to which the orator belongs. The same remark applies, but in a broader sense, to the vowels, all of which admit of the possibility of being transmuted with another, no matter how great its phonetical dissimilarity. This last peculiarity will no doubt strike the comparative philologist as an important point of resemblance between the Déné and the Semitic languages. Non-transmutable consonants characterize the idiom and lexically differentiate it from other mother tongues or linguistic families, while the vowels specify the dialect and change from tribe to tribe. A few examples will illustrate my meaning:—

MAN is *kiat* in Kitikson or Abna (Skeena River idiom) and *tæne* in Carrier, the language of the Kitiksons' eastern neighbours. BEAVER is rendered by *tsæmillih*; CANOE by *mæl*; RAIN by *wish* in Kitikson, while the Carriers use the words *tsa*, *tsi*, and *chan* respectively to express the same ideas. These terms being roots in both languages, the dissimilitude of their main constituent part, the consonants, suffices to immediately arouse in the mind of the philologist a suspicion of diversity of language, which a prolonged investigation does not fail to confirm.

Let us now examine the same root words in the various Déné dialects.