

LETTER X.

MR. HECKEWELDER TO MR. DUPONCEAU.

BETHLEHEM, 20th June, 1816.

DEAR SIR.—Your favors of the 10th and 13th inst. have been duly received. I shall now endeavour to answer the first. The second shall in a few days be attended to.

I am glad to find that you are so much pleased with the forms of our Indian languages. You will be still more so as you become more familiar with the beautiful idiom of the Lenni Lenape. It is certain that many of those forms are not to be found either in the German or English; how it is with the other languages of Europe, Asia, and Africa, I cannot say, not being acquainted with them, and never having made philology my particular study. I concur with you in the opinion that there must be in the world many different ways of connecting ideas together in the form of words, or what we call *parts of speech*, and that much philosophical information is to be obtained by the study of those varieties. What you observe with regard to the verbs being inflected in lieu of affixing a case or termination to the noun is very correct, but the ground or principle on which it is done, is not perhaps known to you. The verbs in the Indian languages are susceptible of a variety of forms, which are not to be found in any other language that I know. I do not mean to speak here of the positive, negative, causative, and a variety of other forms, but of those which Mr. Zeisberger calls *personal*, in which the two pronouns, governing and governed, are by means of affixes, suffixes, terminations, and inflections, included in the same word. Of this I shall give you an instance from the Delaware language. I take the verb *ahoalan*, to love, belonging to the fifth of the eight conjugations, into which Mr. Zeisberger has very properly divided this part of speech.

INDICATIVE, PRESENT, POSITIVE.

<i>Singular.</i>	<i>Plural.</i>
N'dahoala, <i>I love,</i>	n'dahoalaneen, <i>we love,</i>
k'dahoala, <i>thou —</i>	k'dahoalohhimo, <i>you —</i>
w'dahoala, } <i>he —</i>	ahoalewak, <i>they —</i>
or ahoaleu }	

Now for the personal forms in the same tense.

FIRST PERSONAL FORM.

I.

<i>Singular.</i>	<i>Plural.</i>
K'dahoatell, <i>I love thee,</i>	K'dahoalohhumo, <i>I love you,</i>
n'dahoala, <i>I love him or her.</i>	n'dahoalawak, <i>— them.</i>

SECOND PERSONAL FORM.

THOU.

<i>Singular.</i>	<i>Plural.</i>
K'dahoali, <i>thou lovest me,</i>	k'dahoalineen, <i>thou lovest us,</i>
k'dahoala, <i>— him or her.</i>	k'dahoalawak, <i>— them.</i>

THIRD PERSONAL FORM.

HE, (or SHE.)

<i>Singular.</i>	<i>Plural.</i>
N'dahoaluk, <i>he loves me,</i>	w'dahoalguna, <i>he loves us,</i>
k'dahoaluk, <i>— thee,</i>	w'dahoalguwa, <i>— you,</i>
w'dahoalawall <i>— him.</i>	w'dahoalawak, <i>— them.</i>

FOURTH PERSONAL FORM.

WE.

<i>Singular.</i>	<i>Plural.</i>
K'dahoalenneen, <i>we love thee,</i>	k'dahoalohummena, <i>we love you,</i>
n'dahoalawuna, <i>— him.</i>	n'dahoalowawuna, <i>— them.</i>

FIFTH PERSONAL FORM.

YOU.

<i>Singular.</i>	<i>Plural.</i>
K'dahoalihhimo, <i>you love me,</i>	k'dahoalihhena, <i>you love us.</i>
k'dahoalanewo, <i>— him.</i>	k'dahoalawawak, <i>— them.</i>

SIXTH PERSONAL FORM.

THEY.

<i>Singular.</i>	<i>Plural.</i>
N'dahoalgenewo, <i>they love me,</i>	n'dahoalgehhena, <i>they love us.</i>
k'dahoalgenewo, <i>— thee,</i>	k'dahoalgehhimo, <i>— you.</i>
w'dahoalanewo, <i>— him.</i>	w'dahoalawawak, <i>— them.</i>

In this manner verbs are conjugated through all their moods and tenses, and through all their negative, causative, and various other forms, with fewer irregularities than any other language that I know of.

These conjugations, no doubt, you have found, or will find in Mr. Zeisberger's grammar, but the few examples that I have above put together, are necessary to understand the explanation which I am about to give.

The words you quote are: "*getannitowit n'quitayala*," *I fear God*, or rather, according to the Indian inversion, *God I fear*. Your observation is that the inflection or case of the noun substantive *God*, is carried to the verb. This is true; but if you enquire for the reason or the manner in which it takes place, you will find that *ala* is the inflection of the second or last person of the verb, in the first personal form; thus as you have seen that *n'dahoala* means *I love him*, so *n'quitayala*, in the same form and person means *I fear him*; it is therefore the same as if you said *God I fear him*. This is not meant in the least to doubt or dispute the correctness of your position, but to shew in what manner the combination of ideas is formed that has led to this result. You have now, I believe, a wider field for your metaphysical disquisitions.

I pass on to the other parts of your letter. I believe with you that Professor Vater is mistaken in his assertion that the language of the Chippeways is deficient in grammatical forms. I am not skilled in the Chippeway idiom, but while in Upper Canada, I have often met with French Canadians and English traders who understood and spoke it very well. I endeavoured to obtain information from them respecting that language, and found that it much resembled that of the Lenape. The differences that I observed were little more than some variations in sound, as *b* for *p*, and *i* for *u*. Thus, in the Delaware, *wapach-quiwian* means a *blanket*, in the Chippeway it is *wabewian*; *gischuch* is Delaware for a *star*, the Chippeways say *gischis*; *wape* in Delaware *white*; in the Chippeway, *wabe*. Both nations have the word *Mannitto* for God, or the Great Spirit, a word which is common to all the nations and tribes of the Lenape stock.

There is no doubt that the Chippeways, like the Mahicanni, Naticks, Wampanos, Nanticokes, and many other nations, are a branch of the great family of the Lenni Lenape, therefore I cannot believe that there is so great a difference in the forms of their languages from those of the mother tongue. I shall, however, write on the subject to one of our Missionaries who resides in Canada, and speaks the Chippeway idiom, and doubt not that in a short time I shall receive from him a full and satisfactory answer.

On the subject of the numerals, I have had occasion to observe that they sometimes differ very much in languages derived from the same stock. Even the Minsi, a tribe of the Lenape or Delaware nation, have not all their numerals like those of the Unami tribe, which is the principal among them. I shall give you an opportunity of comparing them.

Numerals of the Minsi.

1. Gutti.
2. Nischa.
3. Nacha
4. Newa.
5. *Nalan*, (algonk. *narau*.)
6. Guttasch.
7. *Nischoasch*, (algonk. *nissouassou*.)
8. Chaasch.
9. *Nolewi*.
10. *Wimbat*.

Numerals of the Unami.

1. N'gutti.
2. Nischa.
3. Nacha.
4. Newo.
5. Palenach.
6. Guttasch.
7. Nischasch.
8. Chasch.
9. *Peschkonk*.
10. *Tellen*.

You will easily observe that the numbers five and ten in the Minsi dialect, resemble more the Algonkin, as given by La Hontan, than the pure Delaware. I cannot give you the reason of this difference. To this you will add the numerous errors committed by those who attempt to write down the words of the Indian languages, and who either in their own have not alphabetical signs adequate to the true expression of the sounds, or want an *Indian ear* to distinguish them. I could write a volume on the subject of their ridiculous mistakes. I am, &c.

LETTER XI.

FROM MR. HECKEWELDER.

BETHLEHEM, 24th June, 1816.

DEAR SIR.— I now proceed to answer the several queries contained in your letter of the 13th inst.

1. The double consonants are used in writing the words of the Delaware language, for the sole purpose of indicating that the vowel which immediately precedes them is short, as in the German words *immer*, *nimmer*, *schimmer*, and the English *fellow*, *terrible*, *ill*, *butter*, &c. The consonant is not to be articulated twice.

2. The apostrophe which sometimes follows the letters *n* and *k*, is intended to denote the contraction of a vowel, as *n'pommauchsi*, for *ni pommauchsi*, *n'dappiwi*, for *ni dappiwi*, &c. If Mr. Zeisberger has placed the apostrophe in any case before the consonant, he must have done it through mistake.

3. There is a difference in pronunciation between *ke* and *que*; the latter is pronounced like *kue* or *kwe*. In a verb, the termination *ke* indicates the first person of the plural, and *que* the second.

4. The word *wenn*, employed in the German translation of the tenses of the conjunctive mood of the Delaware verbs, means both *when*, and *if*, and is taken in either sense according to the content of the phrase in which the word is used. Examples: *Ili gachtingetsch pommäuchsiane*, "If I live until the next year"—*Payane Philadelphia*, "WHEN I come to Philadelphia."

5. Sometimes the letters *c* or *g*, are used in writing the Delaware language instead of *k*, to shew that this consonant is not pronounced too hard; but in general *c* and *g* have been used as substitutes for *k*, because our printers had not a sufficient supply of types for that character.

6. Where words are written with *ij*, both the letters are to be articulated; the latter like the English *y* before a vowel. For this reason in writing Delaware words I often employ the *y* instead of *j*, which Mr. Zeisberger and the German Missionaries