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HILO TEACHERS' UNION DISCUSSES PHILOLOGY

An Instructive Program Presented—New Officers Elected for the Ensuing Year—Publishers Exhibit Books and Material—An Able Dissertation on Philology Delivered by W. H. Smith.

The Hilo Teachers' Union held its first quarterly meeting of the school year last Friday morning at the Union School. There were present thirty-seven members and sixteen visitors. President Levi C. Lyman presided, and Rev. C. E. Shields opened the exercises with prayer.

In response to roll call, the members gave dates of interesting events from Hawaiian history. After reading the minutes, the secretary was instructed to cast the ballot for the new officers of the Society, as recommended in the report of the nominating committee, viz. President, L. C. Lyman, vice-president, Miss Ward, secretary-treasurer, Wm. McCluskey.

The program, which proved to be a most interesting one, opened with a class exercise of free callisthenics, executed by twelve girls from the upper grades of the Union School under the direction of Principal C. O. Smith. Mrs. Tracy followed with a class of little tots, who played several language games, designed to bring into action the different human senses.

With a fifth grade class from Miss Pomeroy's room, Miss Florence Hill illustrated her method of teaching physiology. Mr. W. H. Smith read a treatise on Philology. Many of the audience thought this referred to stamp collecting, but Mr. Smith humorously refuted the statement, explaining that "philately," meant stampology, while "philology, meant the study of language. He added that the subject, like the common law of England regarding land, which was a most uncommon law, or the formulae of differential calculus, do not appeal to the popular fancy, and unless his hearers liked it, why, he did not suppose they would like it. He treated the subject first in its broadest sense, and later from the stand point of comparison, both of which were closely followed by the assembled teachers and others present. We are permitted to print in full the first part of Mr. Smith's paper, and next week will follow with his article on the inflective or derivative language.

There was an interesting exhibit of school books and material by text book publishers, which can be seen at the Union School and orders for which can be left with Wall Nichols Co., Hilo. Miss Lillioe Hapai delighted the audience with a vocal solo "Love's Sorrow" by Shelley, being accompanied on the piano by Mrs. J. T. Lewis. Several members responded to requests for vacation experiences, which proved interesting and entertaining. Explorations of craters in the vicinity of Kilauea and sun basking on the sea shore appear to have formed the principal summer amusements. The next meeting of the Teachers' Union will be held on December 2d. The program will be in charge of Wm. McCluskey, Mrs. E. N. Hitchcock and Miss Harriet Hapai.

The following is the first part of address delivered by Mr. W. H. Smith, on "Philology": Philology is a Greek word, and is compounded of two other Greek words, philos, loving or fond of, and logos, language or words. Don't suppose from this however that philology means a fondness for conversation, for so far as we know, very few of the gentler but more fluent sex have been prominent in the ranks of the philologists.

The word philology as thus derived is applied to a rather wide range of subjects; as for example to the study of language as embodied in literature, to the structure and syntax of a particular language, as embodied in grammar, and to the derivation and relationship of languages among themselves; the last being given the specific term of comparative philology, and to which the subject of this paper is intended to apply.

The incident of the Tower of Babel sets forth a truth as to the breaking up of an original language into dialects unintelligible to the speakers of another; although the process so briefly set forth in the Book of Genesis is one that must have covered hundreds if not thousands of years, and the reason given is one too characteristic of a pagan deity to appeal very convincingly to Twentieth Century conceptions of the Supreme Power.

From earliest times a common language or similarity of dialects have been the strongest sympathetic bond between nations, and dissimilarity of speech the greatest barrier, and not only a barrier, but a ground of dislike, suspicion, and contempt. It is characteristic of human nature to be suspicious of what one does not understand; and people dealing with each other through interpreters are never quite satisfied that the other fellow is not taking some advantage—an experience so common in this country that each one can supply illustrations for himself. As to the contempt mentioned above, one need but have met with almost any old New England farmer, to get an illustration of the popular provincial scorn everywhere and among every people as to "foreign lingo" and the speakers thereof; So, as I said above, community or at any rate relationship of language is one of the strongest aids, not only to intercourse, but to tolerance, a most extraordinary demonstration of which is the fact that the discovery during the latter half of the Eighteenth Century by Sir William Jones, that Sanskrit and the allied dialects of India were closely related to the English language, and that accordingly the Hindus were cousins of the Anglo-Saxons, practically revolutionized in the long run the treatment by England of her great Eastern possession, although for several years after Sir William had announced his theory many of the eminent scholars of Great Britain contended bitterly the idea, as Professor Max Muller says, that the classical languages of Greece and Rome and the tongue of the Anglo-Saxon could be related to the jargon of mere savages, as they then considered the people of India.

The monosyllabic, as the name implies, are one syllable languages. Each syllable is a word and each word a syllable. You probably are not familiar with Chinese, but you are with the language of very young children, and both belong linguistically to the same stage of development. If the child should grow to the physical and mental stature of a man and still retain his nursery style of speech he would be, philologically speaking, a Chinaman.

Nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs and prepositions, numbers (singular and plural), persons (first, second and third) would be all the same to him, and when he has uttered a string of them, their intelligibility, if they had any, to anyone but himself, would depend upon their arrangement and the imagination of the listener. Several words of Chinese may be coupled together sometimes, into one, like a train of cars, but they always retain each its own identity and can be uncoupled at will. It is the simplest form of speech.

For example, in Chinese, "sui" means "water," and "lokh," "down," "coming down" or "falling." To express the idea corresponding to the English word "rain," the Chinese say "lokh-sui," but the two do not really become one word expressing a different idea from its component parts. There remains in the mind of the speaker the distinctive ideas of "falling" and "water."

We come now to the next stage of development, the languages of the agglutinative order. As can be seen from the name, it means sticking together. One might call them the mucilaginous languages. The mental paste pot has been used on them. If Chinese had reached this stage the "lokh" and "sui" which I instanced above would have formed a marriage for life instead of living in a sort of philological South Dakota, liable to divorce at any moment. In the mind of the speaker there would no longer be the separate ideas of "down" and "water," but the single idea "lokh-sui," "rain," and as a result he would probably, after a little, have it shortened down to something like "lohsui."

We do not need to go outside of our own language (although it belongs to a different order by virtue of its predominant characteristic) to obtain further illustration of that phase of language development of which we have been speaking, viz. agglutination. e. g. "man" and "like" are two plain, simple, everyday monosyllables, democratic and unaffected enough to win the vote of a Kansas populist. When you say "man like" even a Chinaman couldn't take exception, its just like Chinese. You think of man and then you think of something like him; and the "like" could go before the "man" as well as after it; but when you say manlike you don't think of "man" and of "like" but of certain qualities expressed by the one word, and now that you have ceased to be conscious of the separate words you get sort of slipshod in your pronunciation, you favor your vocal organs and simply say "manly," a full fledged word of the agglutinative type, although a simple one. The two words are permanently united to express a certain idea which they do not express taken separately, but the origin of the two parts is pretty clear to every one and the fissure left at the point of union is distinct.

A vast number of languages express all their ideas in this way, sometimes producing compound words of almost interminable length especially among the Indian races of North America, which as well as the races of Malayo-Polynesian extraction and those of Northern and Central Asia, together with the Hungarians, Fins, Turks and Laps of Europe have reached this point in the development of grammatical forms and the cohesion of originally independent elements. Those of you who are familiar with Hawaiian can think of almost numberless instances of such word-building where a single compound expresses an idea which can only be expressed in English perhaps by a phrase, a sentence, or even an explanatory paragraph, and it is to be noticed that the component elements of these words are but very little disguised, and in general they are almost as loosely held together as are Chinese compounds.

Some of the agglutinative languages, however, like the Hungarian and Turkish, rise to a point where to the casual observer they appear to belong to the next order of speech, namely the inflective; for they have specific and well recognized terminations to express the first, second and third persons of verbs, and case and number in nouns; elements which are wanting in the simpler agglutinative languages like Hawaiian, which as you know has no conjugation of verb or declension of noun. But in the agglutinative, as Professor Muller says, we can see the process of word and form-making going on, as you might watch the building of cells in a crystal beehive, while in the inflective, to which English belongs, the different portions of a verb, for instance, in its conjugation, have become so welded together in its growth, that only the powerful microscope and delicate dissecting instruments of the trained philologist can separate the component parts and trace them to their original forms. To illustrate:—The word "sever" in Turkish means "lover" or "loving" and "sen" means "thou"; so the Turk says "s versen," "loving-thou" corresponding to "lovest" in English. Now while the two parts of "sever-sen" are quite distinguishable in form and meaning, it is only, as I said above, by labored investigation that the philologist has been able to analyze "lovest" and show that the final "st" is the survival of an original word "tva," which thousands of years ago among our ancestors on the plains of West-Central Asia, meant "thou," so that lovest means love-thou, just as severens does.

Such, then, in brief outline, are these three orders of human speech; the monosyllabic is one syllabled, where each word like man in his primitive state, lives an isolated existence, and though associated momentarily with his fellows, never becomes one with them; the agglutinative, in which words more or less permanently unite to express certain ideas, but like the nomad races of men who use them, union does not become in most cases cohesion; and lastly, the inflective, in which all elements fuse into one, leaving but traces of their distinctive origin, as have those peoples who compose what is known as the Anglo-Saxon race and whose language is the grandest modern representative of the inflective type.

In one or another of these three orders all mankind express their thoughts or struggle to express them, for, as in the body we see but as through a glass darkly, so the soul often finds the most perfect of human language but a halting and imperfect means of utterance. Every noun is in its origin but the name of some object of sense, and every verb but the expression of some physical action; so that although our thoughts like the sparks fly upward, are drawn back to earth by the gravitating force of their embodiment in material speech.

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