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Sitka Chiu (USA) Sept 29/1911

Dear Sir and coworker

Your card at hand suggesting that I publish a little book of my language ideas and mail it to the Academy. For this both means and time are lacking. I thought that was the province of "Discussiones": It is difficult for one person to build up a philosophic language, to analyze and classify all ideas and form new root words. I have been working over seven years at it now and am getting old. What I wanted was the opportunity to get the criticisms and suggestions of fellow members of the Academy. But to tell me first to complete the work in its details is to assign me a task ~~task~~ that in its magnitude transcends my powers. But I can give the idea and I can state it in a single page of

Discussiones. For example:

h = pronomina  
ha - Nominativus  
he - Genitivus  
hi - Dativus  
ho - Accusativus  
hu - Ablativus  
hab = I, ego  
heb = my, meus, mei  
hib = to me, mihi  
hob = me  
huc = by me (ablativus)  
habz = we, nos  
hae = thou, tu  
had = he, is  
hae = she, ea  
hag = it, id  
haj = any  
hak = this, hic  
hakz = these  
hal = that  
ham = each  
han = none, nil  
hap = a, an  
het = of a  
hik = to a

haq = the same  
hanag = other  
har = such  
hat = the (articulo definito)  
het = of the  
hit = to the  
hav = relative pronoun  
haw = interrogative pronoun  
hw = Latin qu - <sup>As</sup> hura  
Engl. what - <sup>hura</sup> kwact  
hwa = what (nom)  
hwe = of what? gen  
hwi = to what? dat  
hwo = what? (acc)  
hwe = by what? (abl)  
hay = some  
haz = every  
d = place  
hid = anywhere  
hikad = here  
hikad = there  
hinad = nowhere  
hivad = where  
shwid? = where?  
hivad

hiyad = somewhere  
hizad = everywhere  
a = copula, verb to be, esse  
at = tense sign (t = time, tempus)  
atak = was (past)  
atal = is (present)  
atam = will be (future)  
atik = did (transitiv)  
atit = does, acts upon,  
atim = will do,  
atok = was done (passiv)  
atol = is done  
atom = will be acted upon.  
atakak = had been (pluperf)  
atalak = has been (perf)  
atalam = is about to be  
atamak = will have been

hae atik hid hwo?  
you did to him what?  
han atok hid hub.  
nothing was done to him by me.  
hov had atik hib hab atim hid.  
what he did to me, I will do to him  
hae ar hwo heg?  
you think what of it?

In a former letter you mention the plan of Leibnitz for expressing numbers. I presume it is that mentioned in Couturat's "Histoire de la Langue Universelle" p. 24 where he says "Par exemple, le nombre 81,374 s'écrit et se prononcera Mubodilefa." He says also that the same number might be written Bodifaleme.

That method would be excellent for a numerical language but the expression of numbers is but a small part of a practical language. Leibnitz would be compelled to use those same syllables to express other ideas than those of number, or he would run short of syllables. But the use of the same or similar syllables in different connections and to express different significations is the chief fault, the fundamental weakness of all our ordinary languages. That fault was unavoidable in our national languages, as they were necessarily of unphilosophic origin and construction. But in a language constructed on strictly scientific principles such a fault will not appear. The scientific method of procedure in classification is to begin with the genus or general concept and subdivide until the infima species or individual is reached. That means, in language that the first letter of a word must indicate the part of speech or the general signification of the word, and the succeeding letters must subdivide or specialize. That is the reverse of the inductive method. If the scholarship of today is incompetent to create such a language, the scholarship of the future will undertake it, and succeed, for the world will demand something better than our present clumsy barbarian-inherited languages.