

CHAPTER II.

TOTEMIC DIVISION OF THE O-JIB-WAYS.

A description of the Totemic System—Tradition of its origin—List of the different Totemic badges—The A-waus-e or "Great Fish" clan—Its subdivisions—Physical characteristics—Tradition of the Awause—Present position and numbers of this clan among the O-jib-ways—Bus-in-as-e, or Crane Totem clan—Their position in the tribe—Physical characteristics—Names of their most noted chiefs—Ah-awh-wauk or Loon Totem clan—Position and claims—Their principal chiefs—Noka, or Bear Totem—Their numbers and position in the tribe—Physical characteristics—Their war chiefs—The Wolf Totem—Its position and origin—Chiefs—Monsoneeg, or Moose and Marten Totem—Their origin, and names of most noted men—Tradition accounting for their coalition—Addik, or Reindeer Totem—Totemic system deserving of more research.

THERE is nothing so worthy of observation and study, in the peculiar customs and usages of the Algie type of the American aborigines, as their well-defined partition into several grand clans or families.

This stock comprises a large group of tribes, distinct from each other, not only in name and locality, but also in the manner of uttering their common generic language. Yet this division, though an important one and strongly defined, is but a sub-division, which has been caused by domestic quarrels, necessity, or caprice, and perpetuated by long and wide separations and non-intercourse. These causes are related in their traditions, even where the greatest variance is found to exist between tribes. The separation does not date many centuries back. The first grand division is that of blood and kindred, which has been perpetuated amongst the different tribes by what they call the Totemic System, and dates back to the time "when the Earth was new."