

divided from them by a long vista of years, interminable miles, and knows not even of their existence.

I am not possessed of sufficient general information respecting all the different groups of tribes in America, to enable me to state positively that the Algics are the only stock who have perpetuated and still recognize this division into families, nor have I even data sufficient to state that the Totemic System is as rigidly kept up among other tribes of the Algonquins, as it is among the Ojibways, Ottaways, and Potta-wat-om-ies.

From personal knowledge and inquiry, I can confidently assert that among the Dakotas the system is not known. There are a few who claim the Water Spirit or Merman as a symbol, but they are the descendants of Ojibways who have in former times of peace intermarried with them. The system among the Winnebagoes, which somewhat resembles this, they have borrowed or derived from the Ojibways during their long intercourse with them while residing about Green Bay and other portions of the present State of Wisconsin.

From these and many other facts which shall be enumerated, the writer is disposed to consider, and therefore presents, the Totemic division as more important and worthy of more consideration than has generally been accorded to it by standard authors who have studied and written respecting the Indians.

The Ojibways acknowledge in their secret beliefs, and teachings to each successive generation, five original Totems. The tradition in which this belief is embodied, is known only to their chief Medas, or priests. It is like all their ancient traditions, vague and unsatisfactory, but such as it is, I will here present it—verbatim—as I received it.

“When the Earth was new, the An-ish-in-aub-ag lived, congregated on the shores of a great salt water. From the