

CHAPTER III.

ORIGIN OF THE OJIBWAYS.

Preliminary remarks—Belief of the Ojibways respecting their origin—Belief in, and causes of a deluge—A code of religion given to them by the Great Spirit—Analysis of their name as a people—Their original beliefs have become mixed with the teaching of the old Jesuit missionaries—Difficulty of obtaining their pure beliefs—Tales which they relate to the whites, not genuine—Non-unity of the human race—Effects of disbelieving the Bible—Differences between the American aborigines—Between the Ojibways and Dakotas—Surmise of their different origin—Belief of the Ojibways in a Great Spirit—Their extreme veneration—Sacrifice—Visions of the Great Spirit—Mode of obtaining guardian or dream Spirits—Fasts and dreams—Sacrificial feasts—Grand rite of the Me-da-we-win—It is not yet understood by the whites—Misrepresented by missionaries and writers—It contains their most ancient hieroglyphics, and the most ancient idiom of their language—Rules of the Me-da-we-win—Tradition of the snake-root—Ojibway medicine sack—Custom among the Blackfeet bearing a resemblance to the ark and the High Priesthood of the Hebrews—Totemic division into families—Their traditions bear a similitude to Bible history—Antagonistical position between the Ojibways and Dakotas—Belief of the Ojibways in a future state—Important facts deduced therefrom.

I AM fully aware that many learned and able writers have given to the world their opinions respecting the origin of the aboriginal inhabitants of the American Continent, and the manner in which they first obtained a footing and populated this important section of the earth, which, for so many thousand years, remained unknown to the major portion of mankind inhabiting the Old World.

It is, however, still a matter of doubt and perplexity; it is a book sealed to the eyes of man, for the time has not yet come when the Great Ruler of all things, in His wisdom, shall make answer through his inscrutable ways to the question which has puzzled, and still puzzles the minds of the learned civilized world. How came America to be