

friendship and intimate confidence, has given me, and yet I frankly acknowledge that I stand as yet, as it were, on the threshold of the Me-da-we lodge. I believe, however, that I have obtained full as much and more general and true information on this matter than any other person who has written on the subject, not excepting a great and standard author, who, to the surprise of many who know the Ojibways well, has boldly asserted in one of his works that he has been regularly initiated into the mysteries of this rite, and is a member of the Me-da-we Society. This is certainly an assertion hard to believe in the Indian country; and when the old initiators or Indian priests are told of it, they shake their heads in incredulity that a white man should ever have been allowed *in truth* to become a member of their Me-da-we lodge.

An entrance into the lodge itself, while the ceremonies are being enacted, has sometimes been granted through courtesy; but this does not initiate a person into the mysteries of the creed, nor does it make him a member of the society.

Amongst the Ojibways, the secrets of this grand rite are as sacredly kept as the secrets of the Masonic Lodge among the whites. Fear of threatened and certain death, either by poison or violence, seals the lips of the Me-da-we initiate, and this is the potent reason why it is still a secret to the white man, and why it is not more generally understood.

Missionaries, travellers, and transient sojourners amongst the Ojibways, who have witnessed the performance of the grand Me-da-we ceremonies, have represented and published that it is composed of foolish and unmeaning ceremonies. The writer begs leave to say that these superficial observers labor under a great mistake. The Indian has equal right, and may with equal truth (but in his utter ignorance is more excusable), to say, on viewing the rites of the