

Catholic and other churches, that they consist of unmeaning and nonsensical ceremonies. There is much yet to be learned from the wild and apparently simple son of the forest, and the most which remains to be learned is to be derived from their religious beliefs.

In the Me-da-we rite is incorporated most that is ancient amongst them—songs and traditions that have descended, not orally, but in hieroglyphics, for at least a long line of generations. In this rite is also perpetuated the purest and most ancient idioms of their language, which differs somewhat from that of the common every-day use. And if comparisons are to be made between the language of the Ojibways and the other languages, it must be with their religious idiom.

The writer has learned enough of the religion of the Ojibways to strengthen his belief of the analogy with the Hebrews. They assert that the Me-da-we rite was granted them by the Great Spirit in a time of trouble and death, through the intercession of Man-ab-osho, the universal uncle of the An-ish-in-aub-ag. Certain rules to guide their course in life were given them at the same time, and are represented in hieroglyphics. These great rules of life, which the writer has often heard inculcated by the Me-da-we initiators in their secret teachings to their novices, bear a strong likeness to the ten commandments revealed by the Almighty to the children of Israel, amidst the awful lightning and thunder of Mount Sinai.

They have a tradition telling of a great pestilence, which suddenly cut off many while encamped in one great village. They were saved by one of their number, to whom a spirit in the shape of a serpent discovered a certain root, which to this day they name the Ke-na-big-wushk or snakeroot. The songs and rites of this medicine are incorporated in the Me-da-we. The above circumstance is told to have happened when the "earth was new,"