

sides, although the labors of Fathers Petitot and Morice have done much to fill up gaps on the American side. Writers on Siberia have, unfortunately, acted after the fashion of former describers of the American Indian, by confounding the Tungus with the Tchuktchis and Yakuts, the Koriaks and the Kamtchadales. Apart from Father Morice, and the comparative vocabularies of the Déné dialects taken from the collections of Petitot, Bancroft, Dawson, Tolmie and others, my authorities are rather ancient, but their antiquity is really in their favor, as it represents the two stocks in a native state, unaffected by external influences. For the Tungus, I am indebted to Santini, Martin Sauer, Adelung, Klaproth, and Malte-Brun, and for the Dénés, to Mackenzie and Hearne. I shall have occasion, in making the argument cumulative, to repeat some facts stated by me in a paper entitled "Asiatic Tribes in North America," which was published in the Proceedings of the Institute of 1881, New Series, Vol. 1, Part 2, p. 171.

#### THE DÉNÉ TRADITION.

Sir Alexander Mackenzie says, concerning the Chipewyans or Chipewyans, who are now called Athapascans and Montagnais: "They have also a tradition amongst them, that they originally came from another country, inhabited by very wicked people, and had traversed a great lake which was narrow, shallow, and full of islands, where they had suffered great misery, it being always winter, with ice and deep snow. At the Coppermine River, where they made the first land, the ground was covered with copper, over which a body of earth had since been collected to the depth of a man's height." Father Petitot has a larger version. "In 1863, the Dénés of Great Slave Lake, whom I questioned as to the place of their origin, told me, 'This is what we know: In the beginning, there lived a great giant named *Jakke-elt-ini* (he whose head sweeps the sky), who barred our entrance to this desert and yet uninhabited land. The men (Dénés), pursued him and killed him. His dead body fell across the two continents, became petrified, and served as a bridge over which reindeer have passed and repassed until our days, from one shore to the other. The feet of the giant rest on the west shore, and his head reaches to Cold Lake." Who does not recognize, under the allegorical form, the narrative of the arrival of the Dénés in America, and the struggles they had to endure there against the barrenness of the soil, and the harshness of the climate? For proof in support, the Dénés call the long Cordillera of the Rocky Mountains, *Ti-honan-kkwene* (the back-bone of the earth), which they observe to run down the length of the continent, and which they regard as the back of the giant that has served as a bridge to these

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