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Eleven years ago ethnographic research among North American Indians was commenced by myself and my assistants while making explorations on the Colorado River and its tributaries. From that time to the present such investigations have been in progress.

During this time the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution placed in my hands a large amount of material collected by its collaborators relating to Indian languages and other matters, to be used, in conjunction with the materials collected under my direction, in the preparation of a series of publications on North American Ethnology. In pursuing this work two volumes have already been published, a third is in press, and a number of others are in course of preparation.

The work originally begun as an incident to a geographical and geological survey has steadily grown in proportions until a large number of assistants and collaborators are engaged in the collection of materials and the preparation of memoirs on a variety of subjects relating to the North American Indians. The subject under investigation is of great magnitude. More than five hundred languages, belonging to about seventy distinct stocks or families, are spoken by these Indians; and in all other branches of this ethnic research a like variety of subject-matter exists. It will thus be seen that the materials for a systematic and comprehensive treatment of this subject can only be obtained by the combined labor of many men. My experience has demonstrated that a deep interest in Anthropology is widely spread among the educated people of the country, as from every hand assistance is tendered, and thus valuable material is steadily accumulating; but experience has also demonstrated that much effort is lost for want of a