

The seal of truth has been impressed upon language, and men are uttering deeper things than they know, and sometimes asserting great principles against themselves. Language has influenced opinions and beliefs and religion has influenced language. The stream of language has revealed in words, and roots of words, the arts, habits, life and religion of the prehistoric Aryan race.

As some ethnologists assert that there are no atheistic peoples, may we not also say that there are no atheistic languages? In the languages of numerous tribes there exist words for spirit, sin, sacrifice and God, the latter word not having the same meaning in all. Among the Cree Indians the word used for God is *Kitcemûnitto* = Big Spirit, and among the Blackfeet *Omûqkatos* = The Great Sun, and *Apistotoki* = the Creator. *Kinon* = our Father as a term for God is the apparent result of missionary teaching. Missionaries are apt to believe that the languages are atheistic, because they do not find a word for God, having the same definite meaning as it conveys to the Christian mind and heart, just as they might say that the tribes have no religion because it is different from the Christian religion. But there are tribes such as are found in Australia which have no word for tree, fish or bird, yet they are not ignorant of these things. Worship is given by some of our Canadian Indians to the sun, and there are gods of greater and lesser degree. The languages reveal the names of these several deities, one of which seems to occupy the chief place, and though the chief deity differs from the supreme being of the Jews and Christians, we may call these people and languages theistic in the sense of having a chief deity. As there are no tribes without some kind of religion, so there are no agnostic languages. The religious ideas may be crude and the system very imperfect, yet there is some form of religion of whose meaning we learn by a study of the native tongues.

The polytheistic languages reveal a worship of single spirits as sun, storms and lightning, mountains and rivers; and ancestral spirits, who retain some cognizance of human affairs and exercise power for good or evil over men and things, are also worshipped. Max Müller assures us that the Semitic races had a number of names for Deity, as shown in the Phœnicians and Carthaginians, and in the monotheistic creeds of Jews, Mohammedans and Christians. The worship of the Semitic nations was a worship of God in history, as God affecting the destinies of individuals, races and nations. The names of Semitic deities expressed moral qualities generally, as the Strong, the Exalted, the Lord, the King, and seldom grew into divine personalities, definite in their outward appearance. Many ancient Semitic gods had a tendency to flow