

peculiar agriculture and all their special forms of culture *from the south*, and perhaps another thousand years preceding 500 A.D. would have found them in the present territory of Mexico or proceeding in general from that direction. Even then we would not have touched the question of where their special forms of culture originally came to them, and they were certainly derived from the Old World and formed there, apparently partly in Africa and partly in western Asia. Some indication of the immense period of time, taken in the process will appear from the following slight examples:

The Caughnawagas are the descendants of Iroquois converts established in the latter half of the seventeenth century at the Jesuit Mission of Sault St. Louis or Caughnawaga, about ten miles from Montreal. Although Roman Catholics for so long and far advanced in the ordinary ways of civilization they still retain a number of their original ideas, somewhat as a rural community in the Highlands of Scotland retains the superstition of the second sight and the clan and chief ideas. They have only recently given up the system of a council of chiefs and of community of lands, and have a secret society of medicine-men who cure by the ancient methods. In the spring some of the women go into the woods to seek well-known medicinal roots. When they take up a root, they follow an ancient custom of dropping in the hole in the earth *some small metal button or other bright object* as a propitiation to the spirit of the plant. This of course is part of the beautiful Indian idea (and why is it not true?) that every plant and tree is a living being and has a soul. Originally an invocation was uttered to the spirit of the root, when it was extracted from the soil. Let us compare this system with one in western Asia. In the Syriac Book of Medicine, translated by the Orientalist, Dr. E. A. Wallace Budge, is a statement regarding the wonderful virtues of "the great Kahina root" "the King of all roots." The "Book of Medicine" is the encyclopædia of materia medica and medical practice which has been handed down in Syria from the most ancient times, probably starting with Egyptian science, adding Chaldean magic and astrology, and incorporating root lore, observations of disease, forms of incantation, zodiacal lore, omens, Greek ideas and other additions from age to age.

The passage on the Kahina (or sacred) root is one of these added passages, but evidently derived from very ancient origin. "Know thou that this root was the first born of all the roots which came up from the earth, and King Solomon was wont to use it. . . . When thou wishest to pull up this root cleanse thyself from impurity and eat not bread which hath been made by women. And wash thy head and array thyself in white apparel and keep fasting until thou seest the stars. And come thou to this root on the sixth day of the month Iyyar and