

history of the Red Race, whose former advance in the arts, and whose semi-civilization in the equinoctial latitudes of the continent, we have been contemplating.

That these tribes are a people of great antiquity, far greater than has been assigned to them, is denoted by the considerations already mentioned. Their languages, their astronomy, their architecture and their very ancient religion and mythology, prove this. But a people who live without letters, must expect their history to perish with them. Tradition soon degenerates into fable, and fable has filled the oldest histories of the world, with childish incongruities and recitals of gross immoralities. In this respect, the Indian race have evinced less imagination than the Greeks and Romans, who have filled the world with their lewd philosophy of genealogy, but their myths are quite as rational and often better founded than those of the latter. To restore their history from the rubbish of their traditions, is a hopeless task. We must rely on other data, the nature of which has been mentioned. To seek among ruins, to decypher hieroglyphies, to unravel myths, to study ancient systems of worship and astronomy, and to investigate vocabularies and theories of language, are the chief methods before us ; and these call for the perseverance of Sysiphus and the clear inductive powers of Bacon. Who shall touch the scattered bones of aboriginal history with the spear of truth, and cause the skeleton of their ancient society to arise and live ? We may never see this ; but we may hold out incentives to the future scholar, to labor in this department.

Of their origin, it is yet premature, on the basis of ethnology, to decide. There is no evidence—not a particle, that the tribes came to the continent after the opening of the Christian era. Their religion bears far more the characteristics of Zoroaster, than of Christ. It has also much more that assimilates it to the land of Chaldea, than to the early days of the land of Palestine. The Cyclopean arch, and the form of the pyramid, point back to very ancient periods. Their language is constructed on a very antique plan of thought. Their symbolic system of picture writing