

done than merely to give a brief introduction to the subject in hand, trusting that future opportunities may be afforded to further prosecute the work. While it is my design to direct your attention mainly to the Language, it may not be amiss to give at the outset a general outline of the history of the Mohawks.

They are the head Tribe of the *Confederacy of the Six Nations*, and, like the other Indian tribes of this continent, their origin is involved in mystery.

The only source which has not been exhausted, from which we can derive any information, at present within reach, is the Indian traditions. They are, however, so mythical in their character, as touching the origin of the Indian, that but little, if any, reliance can be placed on them. I may say, however, that they all teach that the Red Man was created upon this continent; and were I to weigh the evidence given by these traditions, and that derived from the various theories of scientific writers upon the subject, I should be inclined, after making all allowances for the legendary character of Indian History, to decide in favour of the evidence of tradition. For I am disposed to attach but little weight to theories founded upon supposed similarity in manners and customs, or accidental resemblance in words of the language. I do think, however, that there is every reason to hope that we shall find, if not a solution of this difficulty, at least great assistance from the science of language.

I know that the traditions of the Mohawks assume a rational and reliable character with the formation of the Confederacy of the Five Nations by the Mohawk Chief De-ka-na-wi-dah. Yet, the Tuscaroras are completely lost sight of in all the earlier traditions of the Five Nations, and are represented to have first met the Mohawks when they joined the Confederacy at a comparatively recent date. An examination, however, of the two languages leaves no room to doubt that at some remote period these two nations were one.

Here, therefore, we have a case where we are enabled, by a knowledge of, and an examination into the languages, to pronounce judgment, with absolute certainty, upon a point which goes farther back than tradition. I should be placing a low estimate to say that the confederacy is 500 years old. Philology, therefore, immediately solves a question for us in relation to events from 600 to 1000 years old. Leaving, however, this question of our origin for discussion till we are in a position to bring the science of language to bear upon it, we will