

The lives of the first people are described in creation myths, and presented as models upon which faithful Indians are to fashion their lives at all times and places. All institutions of primitive man in America were patterned upon those of "the first people." Every act of an Indian in peace or in war, as an individual or as a member of a tribe, had its only sanction in the world of the first people, the American divinities.

There was not on this continent one institution, observance, right, or custom which was not god-given, theoretically. The Indians of America always acted in a prescribed manner on a given occasion, because the gods of the world which preceded this had acted in the same manner in similar conditions and circumstances.

No people could be more religious than those of this continent, for there was no act of any kind in life during which they were free of religious direction. The source of this religion is in the myths, and in the explanations concerning them given by wise men, — in other words, by sorcerers.

What shall we say of this Indian system, and what is its value?

The first to be said is that it is complete, and for every Indian believer well-founded and symmetrically developed. In the primitive religion of America there is no speculation, all is simple statement; there are no abstractions, qualities are always connected with persons.

Indians believe that the whole immense body of