

PREFACE.

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Two or three subjects have, it is true, tempted me into occasional commenting. The manifest, I may say the undeniable, affinity between the myths and legends of the Northeastern Indians and those of the Eskimo could hardly be passed over, nor at the same time the identity of the latter and of the Shaman religion with those of the Finns, Laplanders, and Samoyedes. I believe that I have contributed material not devoid of value to those who are interested in the study of the relations of the aborigines of America with the Mongoloid races of the Old World. This is a subject which has been very little studied through the relations of these Wabanaki with the Eskimo.

A far more hazardous venture has been the indicating points of similarity between the myths or tales of the Algonquins and those of the Norsemen, as set forth in the Eddas, the Sagas, and popular tales of Scandinavia. When we, however, remember that the Eskimo once ranged as far south as Massachusetts, that they did not reach Greenland till the fourteenth century, that they had for three centuries intimate relations with Scandinavians, that they were very fond of legends, and that the Wabanaki even now mingle with them, the marvel would be that the Norsemen had not left among them traces of their tales or of their religion. But I do not say that this was positively the case; I simply set forth in this book a great number of curious coincidences, from which others may draw their own conclusions. I confess that I cannot account for these resemblances