

With open arms and generous hospitality they welcomed the first white men to their land; and were ever faithful in their friendship, till years of wrong and robbery, and want and insult, drove them to desperation and to war. They were barbarians, and their warfare was barbarous, but not more barbarous than the warfare of our Saxon and Celtic ancestors. They were ignorant and superstitious, but their condition closely resembled the condition of our British forefathers at the beginning of the Christian era. Macaulay says of Britain, "Her inhabitants, when first they became known to the Tyrian mariners, were little superior to the natives of the Sandwich Islands." And again, "While the German princes who reigned at Paris, Toledo, Arles and Ravenna listened with reverence to the instructions of Bishops, adored the relics of martyrs, and took part eagerly in disputes touching the Nicene theology, the rulers of Wessex and Mercia were still performing savage rites in the temples of Thor and Woden."

The day of the Dakotas is done. The degenerate remnants of that once powerful and warlike people still linger around the forts and agencies of the Northwest, or chase the caribou and the bison on the banks of the Saskatchewan, but the Dakotas of old are no more. The brilliant defeat of Custer, by Sitting Bull and his braves, was their last grand rally against the resistless march of the sons of the Saxons and the Celts. The plow-shares of a superior race are fast leveling the sacred mounds of their dead. But yesterday, the shores of our lakes, and our rivers, were dotted with their teepees. Their light canoes glided over our waters, and their hunters chased the deer and the buffalo on the sites of our cities. To-day, they are not. Let us do justice to their memory, for there was much that was noble in their natures.

In the following Dakota Legends I have endeavored to faithfully represent many of the customs and superstitions, and some of the traditions, of that people. I have taken very little "poetic license" with their traditions; none, whatever, with their customs and superstitions. In my studies for