

whole of this Indian tradition—that is to say, such of it as the Indians regarded as most ancient—was steeped and penetrated with the old Norse spirit, and that it had above all so much that was common with the Elder Edda that it was impossible not to admit that there must at one time have been extensive intercourse between the Northmen and the Algonkins. This, if verified, would be an important discovery, since it would settle beyond question the greatly disputed matter whether America was really discovered by the Scandinavians, which it has become the fashion of late to utterly deny, it being a much easier and safer thing to discredit the discoveries of others than to make them.

There are still in existence about forty tribes, or their remnants, speaking as many greatly varied dialects, which belong to the Algonkin stock as German and English or Norse belong to the Indo-European. These are scattered from the Atlantic Ocean to the Rocky Mountains, and from frozen Labrador to the warm South.¹ Of the character of their language it is enough to say that my friend the Rev. Silas Rand, who is, I believe, the best Latin scholar in America, and who perfectly understands and writes nine European tongues and three Indian, declares that “the Mic-Mac is one of the most marvellous of all languages, ancient or modern—marvellous in its construction, in its regularity, and in its fulness.” He was the first to discover the name and

¹ [The Baron la Hontan compiled a small dictionary of the Algonquin language; Reland has also written a gloss on the same. The first is entitled *Mém. de l'Amériq. Septent. Hag.*, 1703. The second will be found in Reland's *Diss. Misc.*, p. 3, Diss. 2.—Eds.]