

# THE CANADIAN JOURNAL.

NEW SERIES.

No. VI.—NOVEMBER, 1856.

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## SUPERSTITIONS AND TRADITIONS OF THE ABORIGINES OF AUSTRALIA.

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In a former paper communicated to the Canadian Institute, the manners and customs of the Aborigines of the western coast of Australia have been sketched from personal observation.\* I shall now endeavor to complete the picture of that singular phase of savage life which came under my own notice, while resident on the Australian continent, by depicting the psychological characteristics of the same degraded race, and narrating some of the most remarkable superstitions and traditional ideas, which a long residence among them brought to my knowledge. It has been often affirmed that there is no people so savage and ignorant as not to have some idea of a Supreme Being, or belief in a superior power, whom they worship in some form or character, and of whom they live in awe and dread. But if such is not the case with the natives of the western coast of Australia, and indeed of Australia generally, they so nearly approximate to it, that I believe it can be asserted without a doubt, that so far as religion, or any rudiment of divine worship is concerned, these savages are as ignorant as the beasts of the forest. From them no prayers ascend to propitiate good spirit or evil. They have neither temple nor idol,—neither object of worship, nor any semblance of religious rites.

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\* Vide: "The Aborigines of Australia," ante, p. 251.