

in nature an adequate explanation of it. The woodpecker (*intzi*) is fire-coloured; therefore to it must be ascribed the cause of the raging flames. Its congener, the *tsel'kan*, is fond of crying for rain: *tcen! tcen!* Who else then could have been instrumental in extinguishing the fire? This is what is called fiction; it widely differs from the part of the tradition above commented on.

But, a reader may object, if such a characteristically Jewish tradition has found its way even into far-off America, must not the aborigines who now relate it be assigned a similarly Jewish origin? Now, has not this theory been exploded long ago? To which I beg to answer:—

To conclude from this single fact to a Jewish or simply Semitic origin for our Indians, would be to outreach the premises. On the other hand, to pretend that their ancestors have had no intercourse, direct or indirect, even possibly by intermarriages, with a population of Semitic descent is, I think, more than could consistently be done. I am not here to discuss the origin of the Dénés, a question on which, I repeat, I have no fixed convictions; but I may be permitted to remark that several peculiarities of their mode of life, their customs, their language, and even some of their mythological allusions¹ would assign them a mixed origin. As the question at present stands, they cannot be considered as autochthonous on the American continent; several of the traditions of the Eastern Dénés point to a western region as the place of the tribes' birth. Now, west of their present territory you are confronted by the North-Pacific Coast. If the aboriginal hordes crossed from Asia to America, a journey entailing but very little difficulty, what would prevent their having been in contact with populations initiated into the theogony of the Jews and the principal points of their wonderful history? It is well known that the world-wide dispersion of that nation does not date from the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans. Clannish as they are, the Jews have, from time immemorial, been more or less cosmopolitan. Even before the famous Babylonish captivity, they were to be found throughout the larger part of the Asiatic continent. In 719 B.C., Salmanassar, king of the Assyrians, had transported the inhabitants of Samaria into the most remote village of Media. In 676 B.C. Assaharaddon distributed the remnant of the kingdoms of Syria and Israel over Persia, Media and the distant provinces of the East. Dispersed after the captivity of Babylon over the whole of the then known Asia, the Israelites of the ten tribes proceeded in numerous caravans to Persia, India, Thibet and even China. Their first migration into the latter country appears to have taken place over 2000 years ago under the dynasty of the Khars. They numbered

¹ See first part of third legend.