

conditions of existence, a single system of primitive philosophy was developed with a fulness and a wealth of illustration which could find no parallel in any other place. The result of all this is that we have in America a monument of thought which is absolutely unequalled, altogether unique in human experience. The special value of this thought lies, moreover, in the fact that it is primitive, that it is the thought of ages long anterior to those which we find recorded on the eastern hemisphere, either in sacred books, histories, or literature, whether preserved on baked brick, burnt cylinders, or papyrus.

The American system, which gives us a circumstantial account of the beginning of all things, is as far reaching as the nebular hypothesis, or as that theory which gives a common origin to man and all sentient existences.

Primitive man in America stood at every step face to face with divinity as he knew or understood it. He could never escape from the presence of those powers which had constituted the first world, and which composed all that there was in the present one. Man's chief means of sustenance in most parts were on land or in the water. Game and fish of all sorts were under direct divine supervision. Invisible powers might send forth game or withdraw it very quickly. With fish the case was similar. Connected with fishing and hunting was an elaborate ceremonial, a variety of observances and prohibitions. Every man had a great many things to observe as an indi-