

PREFACE.

WHEN I began, in the summer of 1882, to collect among the Passamaquoddy Indians at Campobello, New Brunswick, their traditions and folk-lore, I expected to find very little indeed. These Indians, few in number, surrounded by white people, and thoroughly converted to Roman Catholicism, promised but scanty remains of heathenism. What was my amazement, however, at discovering, day by day, that there existed among them, entirely by oral tradition, a far grander mythology than that which has been made known to us by either the Chippewa or Iroquois Hiawatha Legends, and that this was illustrated by an incredible number of tales. I soon ascertained that these were very ancient. The old people declared that they had heard from their progenitors that all of these stories were once sung; that they themselves remembered when many of them were poems. This was fully proved by discovering manifest traces of poetry in many, and finally by receiving a long Micmac tale which had been sung by an Indian. I found that all the relaters of this lore were positive as to the antiquity of the narratives, and distinguished accurately