

and wood genii, and of ghosts, witches, and sorcerers—now in the enjoyment of plenty in feasts—now pale and weak with abstinence in fasts; now transforming beasts and birds, or plants and trees into men, or men into beasts by necromancy; it is impossible not to perceive what he perpetually thinks, believes, and feels. The very language of the man is employed, and his vocabulary is not enlarged by words and phrases foreign to it. Other sources of information depict his exterior habits and outer garb and deportment; but in these legends and myths, we perceive the interior man, and are made cognizant of the secret workings of his mind, and heart, and soul.

To make these collections, of which the portions now submitted are but a part, the leisure hours of many seasons, passed in an official capacity in the solitude of the wilderness far away from society, have been employed, with the study of the languages, and with the very best interpreters. They have been carefully translated, written, and rewritten, to obtain their true spirit and meaning, expunging passages, where it was necessary to avoid tediousness of narration, triviality of circumstance, tautologies, gross incongruities, and vulgarities; but adding no incident and drawing no conclusion, which the verbal narration did not