

Except, perhaps, in the matter of house accommodation, it might not be difficult to prove that the every-day life of the old American savage was superior to that of peasants in some civilised communities to-day. This, not so much to the credit of the Indian, as to show that modern society in at least a few of its phases, has not made all the advance it was capable of making, or that we have a right to suppose it should have done.

In the region of the æsthetic, the Indian, even of this northern latitude, occupied an immensely higher plane than the class just mentioned. He understood the effect of colour, and employed it to some purpose, both in personal decoration and on articles of manufacture; his sense of the elegant in form is well illustrated in the graceful outline given to many of his coarse clay vessels, his pipes of stone and clay, and in the great variety of beautifully fashioned objects which are known to us, for the want of a more definite name, as "ceremonial" weapons. In the adornment, too, of his clay pipes and pots he attempted to please the eye by means of depressed lines, dots and circles, to form patterns, some of which are both regular and complicated.

Morally, his code may not have been a very high one, but religiously, he may fairly be placed among the first of animists. To him, everything visible and tangible was the abode of a spirit. When he dreamt of anything he must obtain it, lest his spirit should forsake his body to fraternise with the spirit of what appeared to him in his sleep; or his dream was a visit paid to him from the soul of the subject of his dream.* According to Morgan† the Iroquois used to make a hole in the grave to facilitate the passage of the soul from and to the body, and more recently it was customary to bore one or more holes in the coffin for a similar purpose.

Sagard informs us that the soul of the dog, went to serve the soul of his owner in the Spirit-land.† Of nothing concerning the Indians are we more certain than of his pan-spiritism—all the early writers referred to this belief. Not only were natural objects thus regarded, for weapons, tools, ornaments, war-paint and all other objects, partly or wholly manufactured, were similarly possessed. Hence the custom of placing those articles in graves.

"That the purpose of such offerings is the transmission of the objects' spirit or phantom to the possession of the man's, is explicitly stated as early as 1623 by Father Lallemant: when the Indians buried kettles, furs, etc., with the dead, they said that the bodies of the things remained, but their souls went to the dead who used them. The whole idea is graphically illustrated in the following Ojibwa tradition or myth. "Gitchi Gauzini was a chief who lived on the shores of Lake Superior, and once, after a few days' illness he seemed to die. He had been a skilful hunter, and had desired that a fine gun which he possessed should be buried with him when he died. But some of his friends not thinking him really dead, his body was not buried; his widow watched him for four days, he came back to life, and told his story. After death, he said, his ghost travelled on the broad road of the dead toward the happy land, passing over great plains of luxuriant herbage, seeing beautiful groves, and hearing the songs of innumerable birds, till at last, from the summit of a hill, he caught sight of the distant city of the dead, far across an intermediate space, partly veiled in mist, and spangled with glittering lakes and streams. He came in view of herds of stately deer, and moose, and other game, which with little fear walked near his path. But he had no gun, and remembering how he had requested his friends to put his gun in his

* Nouvelle France, Charlevoix, vol. vi., p. 78.

† Iroquois—Morgan, p. 176. ‡ Histoire du Canada, Theo. Sagard p. 497.