

sticklers for nicety of expression; for clear and well turned periods; for vivid and accurate description; for flowing and sonorous sentences. As a rule, their languages lend themselves readily to these demands. It is a singular error, due wholly to ignorance of the subject, to maintain that the American tongues are cramped in their vocabularies, or that their syntax does not permit them to define the more delicate relationships of ideas. Nor is it less a mistake to assert, as has been done repeatedly, and even by authorities of eminence in our own day, that they are not capable of supplying the expressions of abstract reasonings. Although pure abstractions were rarely objects of interest to these children of nature, many, if not most, of their tongues favor the formation of expressions which are as thoroughly transcendental as any to be found in the *Kritik der Reinen Vernunft*.¹

¹ That these assertions are not merely my own, but those of the most profound students of these tongues, will be seen from the following extracts, which could easily be added to:—

"This language [the Cree] will be found to be adequate, not only to the mere expression of their wants, but to that of every circumstance or sentiment that can, in any way, interest or affect uncultivated minds."—Joseph Howse, *A Grammar of the Cree Language*, p. 12. (London, 1865.)

"J'ai affirmé que nos deux grandes langues du Nouveau Monde [the Iroquois and the Algonkin] étaient très claires, très précises, exprimant avec facilité non seulement les relations extérieures des idées, mais encore leur relations métaphysiques. C'est ce qu'ont commencé de démontrer mes premiers chapitres de grammaire, et ce qu'achèvera de faire voir ce que je vais dire sur les verbes."—Rev. M. Cuoq, *Jugement Erroné de M. Ernest Rénan sur les Langues Sauvages*. p. 32 (2d Ed. Montreal, 1869.)

"Affermo che non è facile di trovare una lingua più atta della Messicana a trattar le materie metafisiche; poiche è difficile di trovarne un'altra, che tanto abbondi, quanto quella, di nomi astratte."—Clavigero, *Storia Antica del Messico*, Tomo IV, p. 244. (Cesena, 1781.)

"Todos los bellisimos sentimientos que se albergan en los nobles corazonas en ninguna otra de aquellas lenguas (Europeas) pueden encontrar una expresion tan viva tan patética y enérgica como la que tienen en Mexicano. ¿ En cual otra se habla con tanto acatamiento, con veneracion tan profunda, de los altisimos misterios de ineffable amor que nos muestra