



PREFACE.

IF late years a great deal of interest has been taken in the folklore of uncivilized tribes by those who have made it their business to study mankind. It has been found that a knowledge of the traditional tales of a people is a key to their ideas and a standard of their powers of thought. These stories display their imaginative faculties; they are guides to the nature of the religious belief, of the form of government, of the marriage customs, in short, of much that relates to both the inner and the outer life of those by whom they are told.