

Ojebway *Keche-munedoo*, or *Kezha-munedoo*, made the Indians, and placed them on this continent. They consider that every nation speaking a different language is a separate creation; but that all were made by the same Supreme Being. How they were created they know not. They say that when the Great Spirit made the different nations of the earth, He gave them different languages, complexions, and religions, divers customs, manners, and modes of living. When He gave the Ojebways their religion, He told them how they were to act, and with this knowledge they think it would be wrong, and give great offence to their Creator, to forsake the old ways of their forefathers.

The different tribes of the Ojebway nation who now inhabit the shores of the Lakes, were called *Nahdoways*,* or *Hurons*, whom the Ojebways dispossessed of their country by conquest; after this the Nahdoways, acknowledging that they were conquered, freely gave up their country, at the same time entering into a treaty with the Ojebways, and agreeing ever after to call each other brethren, which treaty is still observed between the two nations.

Some tribes believe that a great man, endued with the spirit of the gods, by the name of *Nanabozho*, (the meaning of which is now lost,) made the world, and the Indians in America, soon after the flood; the tradition of which is preserved by the Ojebways.

After all that can be gathered from the wise old Indians and their traditions on this subject, it appears that their notions as to their origin are nothing but a mass of confusion; many of their traditions are founded on dreams, which will account for the numerous ridiculous stories current amongst them.

Much has of late years been said and written on the supposition of the North American Indians having descended from the *ten lost tribes of Israel*. There are many things to favour this opinion, and many against it. When I read the book called "The Star in the West," and "Smith's view of the Hebrews," I was strongly inclined to favour the theory; because many of the customs and sacrifices of the Indians, resemble very much those of the Chil-

dren of Israel, such as observing days of purification, offering the first fruits of the earth, burnt sacrifices, and reckoning time by moons. But on the other hand, they have no Sabbaths, no circumcision, no altars erected, and no distinction between clean and unclean animals.—It would seem almost impossible for the descendants of the Israelites ever to have lost the recollection of their sabbath-days, and the rite of circumcision, both of which were so solemnly enjoined upon them. The above-mentioned works give an account of circumcision existing amongst some tribes in the west: but I have enquired of several old Indian men whether they had ever heard of such a practice being observed by our forefathers previous to the landing of Europeans on the shores of America, and they have always expressed themselves quite ignorant on the subject.

From all I have heard and read on it, I am more inclined to favour the opinion that they are descendants of the Asiatic Tartars, as there appears to me, from the information I have on the subject, a more striking similarity in features, customs, and manners, between them and my countrymen than to any other nation.

THEIR HEATHEN RELIGION.

The various tribes of the Ojebway nation scattered along the shores of the great Lakes, universally believe in the existence of one great Supreme Being, whom they call *Keche-munedoo*, which literally means *The Great Spirit*, or *Kezha-munedoo*, the *Benevolent* or *Merciful Spirit*. Believing him to abound in love and mercy towards his creatures, they suppose him too great to concern himself with the follies of poor earthly beings, whose existence only lasts as it were for a day, his chief care being that of supplying their daily wants. *Munedoo* means a *spirit*, either good or bad. In order to designate the character or nature of the spirit they use the prefixes, as in the words above mentioned.

They also believe in the being of an evil spirit, whom they call *Mahje-munedoo*; this spirit they imagine possesses great power to injure any who dare to offend him, and in order to keep in friendship with him, and appease his anger, some have been known to offer sacrifices to this infernal spirit, so that he might not bring upon them death, illness, or bad luck in hunting. They moreover believe that there

* This word is also applied to the *Six Nations* of Indians.