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BY

W. H. MINER

Member of the American Anthropological Association

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TO
WOODROW WILSON
PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

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PREFACE

THERE are two reasons for offering this little volume on the Indians of North America, north of the Mexican border. At present there is not before the public a readable, comprehensive or authentic account of the original inhabitants of the American continent, which may in any way be termed popular. Monographs of varying excellence have appeared, covering many phases of the subject, as well as numerous extensive and learned treatises bearing upon nearly all branches of American ethnology, but, with the exception of several indifferent attempts at historical writing and one or two elementary works, there is nothing that can be referred to as desirable or satisfactory to the general reader. It is not, however, a dearth of material that confronts the student but rather a want of systematic arrangement which has heretofore been lacking; this want, it is hoped,

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may, in part at least, be supplied by this volume.

In the second place, it is readily to be remarked that interest in the study, both cultural and descriptive, of this branch of the world's family, is, particularly in America, constantly increasing. As the original data disappear, so do new generations realise the value of what has passed, and every portion of history or folklore thus preserved and studied becomes to the highest degree valuable and interesting.

Many Americans of to-day, especially those of the middle and far west, may be direct descendants of those hardy pioneers or frontiersmen who were, but a few years since, either friends or foes of the original inhabitants of the lands they now occupy. These or like instances are, for the most part, well within the memory of the living, and this interest, already well advanced, will continually develop.

Obviously, what is included within the scope of the present work can be little more than an

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introductory sketch. What has of necessity been omitted would readily fill many larger volumes. On the other hand, if it induces the reader to follow the subject at greater length, it will have achieved the aim of many efforts of a more elaborate nature.

The special work in this particular field now being carried on enthusiastically and with thoroughness by the Bureau of American Ethnology and the Carnegie Institution in Washington, the Field-Columbian Museum of Chicago, the Peabody Museum of Harvard University, the American Museum of Natural History, in New York, and many of the research and historical departments of the larger American Universities, as well as numerous American Historical Societies, is of inestimable value to the future historian of the American aborigines, and must under no circumstances be overlooked. To make acknowledgement even remotely here to those to whom I am indebted for assistance, would be quite impossible. The bibliography included as an appendix is the best possible form

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wherein to denote those who have indirectly helped.

I wish at this time especially to express my gratitude to Mr F. W. Hodge of the Bureau of American Ethnology, who has always held himself in readiness to assist, and who, as editor of that encyclopaedic work, *Handbook of North American Indians*, has done more to present a clear understanding of the first Americans than has any other among present-day ethnologists. To Dr Peter Giles, Master of Emmanuel College, Cambridge, my sincere thanks are due for careful supervision of the proof and much valuable assistance and advice.

W. H. M.

“RESTHOLME,”

CEDAR RAPIDS,

IOWA, U.S.A.

October 12, 1916.

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MAP to illustrate the linguistic stocks among
the North American Indians *facing page 20*