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Daniel Garrison Brinton

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The American Race

First published in 1891, this book was the earliest attempt to construct a systematic classification of all the indigenous languages of the Americas, focusing particularly on the relationship between culture and grammar and vocabulary. It addresses the various theories of the origins of the American race, and the archaeological evidence for the presence of humans in the Americas. It discusses geologists' opinions and the physical geography of the Americas in relation to Europe, and considers the physical characteristics of the Native Americans, their culture, religion, domestic habits and family organisation, providing a comprehensive anthropological and historical context for the linguistic work. Special attention is paid to the parts of the continent, mostly south of Mexico, whose ethnography was little known at the time of writing. Each chapter covers a particular region, and there is a detailed linguistic appendix.

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THE AMERICAN RACE :

A LINGUISTIC CLASSIFICATION AND ETHNOGRAPHIC
DESCRIPTION OF THE NATIVE TRIBES OF
NORTH AND SOUTH AMERICA.

BY

DANIEL G. BRINTON, A. M., M. D.,

Professor of American Archæology and Linguistics in the University of Pennsylvania, and of General Ethnology at the Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia; Vice-President of the Congrès International des Américanistes; Medallist of the Société Américaine de France; President of the Numismatic and Antiquarian Society of Philadelphia, and of the University Archæological Association of the University of Pennsylvania; Member of the Anthropological Societies of Berlin and Vienna, and of the Ethnographical Societies of Paris and Florence; of the Royal Society of Antiquaries, Copenhagen, and of the Royal Society of History, Madrid; of the American Philosophical Society, the American Antiquarian Society, etc.

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TO THE
CONGRÈS INTERNATIONAL DES AMÉRICANISTES,
AN ASSOCIATION
WHOSE BROAD SYMPATHIES AND ENLIGHTENED SPIRIT
ILLUSTRATE THE NOBLEST ASPECTS OF SCIENCE,
AND WHOSE EXCELLENT WORK IN
AMERICAN ETHNOGRAPHY, ARCHÆOLOGY, AND EARLY HISTORY
HAS CREATED A DEEP AND ABIDING INTEREST IN
THESE STUDIES THROUGHOUT EUROPE,
THIS WORK
IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED
BY THE
AUTHOR.

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PREFACE.

SO far as I know, this is the first attempt at a systematic classification of the whole American race on the basis of language. I do not overlook Dr. Latham's meritorious effort nearly forty years ago; but the deficiency of material at that time obliged him to depart from the linguistic scheme and accept other guides.

While not depreciating the value of physical data, of culture and traditional history, I have constantly placed these subordinate to relationship as indicated by grammar and lexicography. There are well-known examples in the ethnography of other races, where reliance on language alone would lead the investigator astray; but all serious students of the native American tribes are united in the opinion that with them no other clue can compare to it in general results. Consequently the Bureau of Ethnology of the United States and the similar departments in the governments of Canada and Mexico have agreed in adopting officially the linguistic classification for the aboriginal population within their several territories.

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Wherever the material permitted it, I have ranked the grammatic structure of a language superior to its lexical elements in deciding upon relationship. In this I follow the precepts and example of students of the Aryan and Semitic stocks; although their methods have been rejected by some who have written on American tongues. As for myself, I am abidingly convinced that the morphology of any language whatever is its most permanent and characteristic feature.

It has been my effort to pay especial attention to those portions of the continent whose ethnography remains obscure. The publications of official bodies, as well as those of numerous societies and individuals, have cleared up most of the difficulties in that portion of the continent north of Mexico; hence it is to the remainder that I have given greater space. The subject, however, is so vast, and the material so abundant, that I fear the reader may be disappointed by the brevity of the descriptions I have allowed to the several stocks.

The outlines of the classification and the general arrangement of the material are those which for several years I have adopted in my lecture courses before the Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia. In fact, this volume may properly be regarded as an expansion of the ninth lecture—that on “The American Race,”—in my lectures on gen-

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eral ethnography, published last year under the title "Races and Peoples."

In defining the locations of the various tribes, I have encountered many difficulties from their frequent removals. As a rule I have assigned a tribe the location where it was first encountered and identified by the white explorers; though sometimes I have preferred some later location where its activity was longest known.

The great variety of the orthography of tribal names has led me to follow the rule of selecting that which is locally the most usual. This variety has been not a little increased by what seems to me the pedantry of many learned writers, who insist on spelling every native name they mention according to some phonetic system of their own devising—thus adding to the already lamentable orthographic confusion.

I have not thought it advisable to adopt terminations to designate stocks as distinguished from tribes. The Bureau of Ethnology has adopted for stocks the termination *an*, as "Algonkian," "Siouian." This frequently gives terms of strange appearance, and is open to some other objections. It would be desirable to have this question of terminology decided by the International Congress of Americanists, on some plan applicable to French, German and Spanish, as well as English, rather

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than to have it left to a local body or a single authority.

My thanks are due Mr. H. W. Henshaw, editor of the *American Anthropologist*, for revising the list of North Pacific Coast Stocks, and various suggestions.

I regret that I have not been able to avail myself of the unpublished material in the Bureau of Ethnology at Washington; but access to this was denied me except under the condition that I should not use in any published work the information thus obtained; a proviso scarcely so liberal as I had expected.

Philadelphia, February, 1891.

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