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INTRODUCTION TO VOLUME 6

THE Piegan, Cheyenne, and Arapaho belong to the western division of the Algonquian linguistic family. Geographically the Piegan are rather widely separated from the others. Each tribe of the trio has planted its name firmly in the literature and history of the northern plains.

The Piegan, with the kindred Blackfeet and Bloods, were a vigorous people, roaming over a vast territory, half in the United States and half in British America. Being noted hunters with great quantities of furs and hides for barter, their territory was an important one to traders. Those great rival corporations, the Hudson's Bay Company and the Northwest Fur Company, established posts in their midst, and in the early days the name Piegan became well known through the records of the fur traffic, while in later years they have received an unusual amount of attention from students and from popular writers. The Piegan myths and folk-tales have been so fully treated by Dr. George Bird Grinnell and by Dr. Clark Wissler that it seems hardly advisable to record them again: the space can more advantageously be employed in the consideration of their religious life. The Piegan ethnological material was collected from members of the tribe on the reservation in northern Montana, the inhabitants of which usually are erroneously termed Blackfeet. These people belong to the Blackfoot group, it is true, but their distinctness is recognized by both groups. The relationship between these three westernmost Algonquian tribes is so close that a description of the Piegan within the United States may be considered as applying also to the Blackfeet and the Bloods in Alberta, Canada.

The Cheyenne material was collected from that branch commonly known as the Northern Cheyenne, now living on Tongue river in Montana. The story of their tribal existence since coming in contact with Caucasians shows an unequalled struggle against inevitable subjection. Their activities were such that for eighteen years the reports of the Office of Indian Affairs, the army records, and the general press teemed with accounts of their hostilities.

Although speaking a dialect quite distinct from that of the Cheyenne, the Arapaho have long been so intimately associated with them that

culturally the two tribes are much alike. The published results of the researches of Dr. A.L. Kroeber and of Dr. George A. Dorsey are so complete that it is deemed best to include here only a brief outline of the Arapaho, reserving for the presentation of new material the considerable space that otherwise would have been devoted to that part of the life of this interesting people which is already a matter of record.

In gathering and preparing this material I have had the usual assistance of Mr. W.E. Myers. During the final season of collecting the ethnologic data and photographs pertaining to the Piegan the party was accompanied by Dr. A.C. Haddon of Cambridge University. Mr. A.F. Muhr's services continued in the photographic laboratory.

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