In relating the different stories concerning them, the Indians are very anxious to impress the idea of their personality; that they were really people, at that time and were afterwards transformed, but the mixed character of their original and subsequent shapes always runs in a very amusing manner through the whole. These stories are told with excessive minuteness of detail, each circumstance being separately narrated, as for instance, each of the five times anything is said or done is particularized, and the personages all speak in dramatic form. Much of the spirit and many of the finer "points" suggestive to the Indian mind, are necessarily lost in translating, particularly as the language of narration is an imperfect one, but the recital evidently gives immense satisfaction to Indian listeners.

It is to be understood that no trace of the doctrine of metempsychosis exists in these fables. The transformation was confined to the individuals extant at the time, and in the case of animals their descendants are simply what they seem to be, wolves, jays, rattle snakes or what not, and so also of the smaller or more recent growth of trees. Yet all animals understand the Indian languages in virtue of their progenitors. An amusing instance of this notion occurred at the council grounds on the Chichatlis river. When the party arrived in camp, a blue jay interrupted in his avocation of stealing potatoes, from a field