Probable origin of the American Indians, with particular reference to that of the Caribs : a paper read before the Ethnological Society, the 15th March 1854, and printed at their special request / by James Kennedy.

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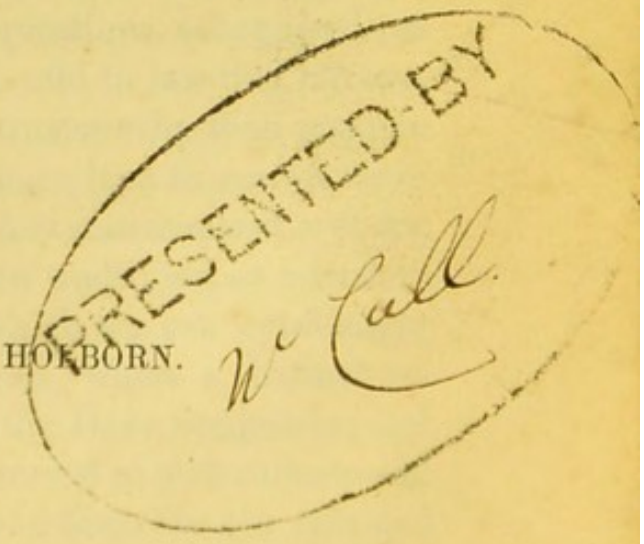
BY JAMES KENNEDY, ESQ., LL.B.

LATE HER BRITANNIC MAJESTY'S JUDGE IN THE MIXED COURT AT HAVANA.



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1854.

ON THE

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BY JAMES KENNEDY, Esq.,

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Read before the Ethnological Society the 15th March 1854.

Baron Von Humboldt, in his first work on New Spain (Book II. ch. 6.), has expressed an opinion, which I believe he has never since either retracted or modified, that "the general question of the first origin of the inhabitants of a continent is beyond the limits prescribed to history, and is not perhaps even a philosophical question." To this latter declaration, made by one so justly eminent in literature, I think it becomes our duty to demur, as members of a Society devoted to the study of that new and important science of Ethnology, which takes for its ground of philosophical investigation the origin and relationship of the inhabitants of every portion of the globe. In the pursuit of the inquiries we have in this study to institute, we certainly have often to proceed beyond the limits of history, and often to act independently of it, without, however, at any time conceding our claim to have those questions recognised as philosophical questions: for as we are told in law that circumstantial evidence is sometimes more trustworthy than positive testimony, so our inquiries may sometimes lead to results more satisfactory and convincing than the direct statements of authors, founded, as they often are, on uncertain traditions, or mistaken information. The only history on which we can confidently rely for the correctness of its statements, where a distinct record is given, is that one contained in the Holy Scriptures; and as the fullest investigations have only served to authenticate and verify their statements, the more we take them for our rule and

guidance, the more certain we may feel of our travelling in the right paths.

I venture to make these observations here primarily; 1st, as leading me directly to the arguments which I have to adduce in support of my theories; and 2dly, because the learned Baron, in another part of the same work,* and again in his last publication, "Cosmos," seems to countenance the ideas of some others, who have held that there were originally various distinct creations of beings of the human race, contrary to our faith that "God hath made of one blood all the nations upon earth." In the same chapter he says "Perhaps this race of copper-coloured men, comprehended under the general name of American Indians, is a mixture of Asiatic tribes, and the aborigines of this vast continent;" as if the two races were essentially distinct from each other, and as if the copper-coloured men, comprehended under the general name of American Indians, with all their mixtures, could not all of them have been only different migrations of Asiatic tribes, earlier or later arrived on the new continent.

In his last work, "Cosmos," Baron Von Humboldt expressly acknowledges the unity of the human species, but he seems at the same time to qualify this admission, by quoting approvingly a passage in the works of John Müller thus, "Whether the existing races of men are descended from one or from several primitive men is a question not determined by experience."

Supposing that the translations from which these quotations are taken have been correctly rendered, it is not clear what these writers require for experience on such matters, or for philosophy itself; but whatever may be their views on these points, I proceed at once to the position I assume, that all the experience we possess, and all the conclusions we can in reasoning deduce from it, only tend to prove the correctness of the account given us in the Mosaic history, taken merely as history.

From this history we learn that the world, after the flood, was peopled from one stock, diverging into three families,

* See Prichard's Origin of the Celtic Nations, page 2.

evidently typifying the three varieties into which we see mankind divided, of which families some one or more of the branches might naturally be expected to carry out their distinguishing characteristics more decidedly than the others, according to circumstances, and yet, at the same time, only form connecting links in a graduated chain which united them in one universal relationship. As the different branches of each family diverged proportionately from each other, they might thus be expected to extend further their peculiar characteristics, until at length the extremes of each would become necessarily the apparent opposites of the others. As in every day's experience in private families we see children of the same parents of very different complexions, so each of them might transmit the different shades to their descendants, until, in the great family of nations, we might expect to find one very fair, another extremely dark, and a third brown or copper-coloured, consistently with the fact of their common origin. In the three continents of Europe, Africa, and Asia, we find three great families of mankind so distinguishable, as white, black, and copper-coloured, with a variety of intermediate gradations, sometimes dependent upon local circumstances, sometimes consequent upon intermarriages, and yet, according to our hypothesis, all arising from natural causes. There are other writers however, who, taking up these differences as radically existing, contend that there are primarily five, or seven, or various greater numbers of races of man, which numbers indeed, if we allowed any real foundation for their suppositions, might be extended to the utmost limit. For thus they might, upon their assumptions, be entitled to divide, not only the dark, but also the white-complexioned people into different races, distinguished by the colour of their hair and eyes, and shades of complexion, which are variations as decided as those they point out among the darker-coloured branches of the human family, though we have become so familiar with those differences amongst ourselves, as to consider them of only minor importance, or of a cognate character.

When, however, we thus find writers of the greatest talents, who have made the human frame their peculiar study, not agreeing amongst themselves as to the conclusions to be drawn respect-

ing the physical history of our species, it may be fairly allowed to those who have not entered professionally into that study to assume, that if there is no certainty attainable in it from their speculations, then the origin of nations becomes a question more peculiarly for philologists to discuss. It is as a philologist therefore alone that I profess to enter upon it, following the course adopted by one of the most eminent in those inquires, our late respected President, Dr. Prichard, in the belief that it is to the study of languages, after all, that we are to look for the most satisfactory elucidation of the question. It is by this means we may best hope to ascertain the affinities of nations, and, tracing the several families of mankind back to their sources, where the branches diverged from their parent stem, may obtain a full confirmation of the belief of their original unity.

In taking for consideration the subject of the probable origin of the American Indians, I trust that these preliminary observations may not be judged inapposite, when so many writers—as Professor Agassiz, Dr. Morton and others—directly, and so many—as Malte Brun, Humboldt, and others—indirectly, have advocated the doctrine of distinct races having been created, like the lower animals, suited peculiarly to particular climates and localities, and have, upon this assumption, assigned for those whom they call the aborigines of America a different origin and creation from the other branches of the human species. Treating of the subject historically, it would certainly have been a great omission to have passed by those theories without a notice, especially when it is the direct object of my arguments to shew the futility of such speculations by the evidence of facts.

But besides those theories founded upon scepticism under the guise of philosophy, there are others accounting for the origin of the American Indians, which can neither be passed over unnoticed, though we may assign no value to them to require any lengthened remark. The first to which I allude is, that the Indians of America were descendants of antediluvian inhabitants of the world, who were not comprehended in the general destruction of the deluge: the second, that there probably was, in some early period after the deluge,

some great convulsion of nature, as in the days of Peleg, when some writers suppose the earth was divided into its present proportions, previously to which there were direct communications by land over the whole extent of the globe, either on the Atlantic or the Pacific side of the American continent, or both; so that the first ancestors of the American Indians could have reached those shores without any obstacle intervening of an ocean to be crossed over.

The first of these theories may scarcely be thought requiring an answer, though it may receive one as involved in that which the second certainly has reason to claim. To this second theory, then, of the American continent having been, at some early period, joined to the other continents by lands, over which animals as well as men had originally passed, it is alone that I direct a reply. That the world has been, at different periods, subjected to convulsions of sufficient extent to break up any connecting lands that might have formerly existed between Europe and America, or America and Asia, is indubitable from what we have recorded in history, as well as from geological deductions. With the exception, however, of Plato's myth respecting the island Atlantis—on which, notwithstanding the authorities that may be cited in its favour, I do not think any reliance can be placed, as it appears to me to admit of other satisfactory explanations—there is no record or tradition in any part of the world of such changes having been made since the deluge in those particular parts where the connecting lands can be supposed to have existed. If they ever did occur, it must have been at a very early period, which, indeed, is the supposition of those who advocate this theory, to account for the numerous population found by the Spaniards in America, divided into so many distinct nations, speaking entirely distinct languages. If we could not account for this state of the population in America by other more probable means consistent with the habits of man as a migratory being, then we might feel bound to assent to that theory, notwithstanding the absence of all historical authority in its favour. But when we can find facts of constant frequent recurrence, of men seeking voluntarily, or driven violently into new abodes, I think it would be extremely unwise to strain after a

fanciful solution of a question, which is of itself so easy of explanation otherwise.

Whether the deluge took place only at the period at which the common computations assign it, or from one to two thousand years earlier, as Dr. Hales and Bishop Russell have more correctly shewn it to have been, it appears to me clear, from all we can judge of the state in which the American Indians were found at the beginning of the sixteenth century, that they were then only of comparatively recent immigration, and neither from their numbers, nor from their political condition, likely to have been descendants of tribes or persons who had proceeded thither so long time back as before, or even some centuries after, the deluge. This is also the opinion of one of the best of the earlier writers on America, shortly after the conquest, Joseph Acosta, who visited the New World about fifty years after the discovery, and whose work was first published in 1586. He says, "Qua etiam ex re magis adducor ut putem hunc novum orbem occidentalem non multis ab hinc annorum millibus habitatum." This his commentator, De Laet, understood to mean, that he did not think America had been then inhabited from more than one to two thousand years. "Si recte mentem Acostæ capio, vult haud supra mille aut ad summum duo millia annorum Americam habitari cæpisse." To this opinion, however, De Laet dissents, on the ground of the vast population which America shewed at the time of the Spanish invasion, and of the great number of languages and nations into which that population was divided. But the amount of the population at that time was evidently exaggerated; and even if not exaggerated, was not inconsistent with a date of two thousand years back; while the variety of languages, traceable, as they no doubt might have been, into a few groups, as in the other continents, might have been fully explained by other causes into which we have hereafter to enter. Horn, and other writers on the origin of the American Indians, have been less opposed to the view of Acosta, which we should remember is the more worthy of admission, as he had passed so many years in the New World, and that so soon after the Spanish conquests as to give him decided advantages over the others. That his opinions were well founded we may feel

warranted in asserting, from every later consideration beyond the learned Jesuit's individual impressions. Since his time, many writers, and especially those who were natives of America, have looked on the remains of former inhabitants of that continent, found there, as if they were of incalculable antiquity, and the works of what they are pleased to call "mysterious races." Later researches have dispelled much of this illusion. Of the two semi-civilized empires of Mexico and Peru it was too evident, from their own traditions, given with a particularity which almost amounted to history, that they had no pretensions to an antiquity of more than a few centuries preceding the conquest. But there were other remains to which the authors to whom I refer loved to assign an immeasurable antiquity; 1st. The mound-like works on the eastern coasts of North America; 2dly, The larger mounds of the west, or the valley of the Mississippi; and, 3dly, The ruined cities of stone found in Yucatan and Central America. With regard to the first, Mr. Squier,* in his late excellent work on the "Antiquities of the State of New York" (Buffalo 1851), expressly says, "None of the ancient works of this State, of which traces remain displaying any considerable degree of regularity, can lay claim to high antiquity. All of them may be referred with certainty to the period succeeding the commencement of European intercourse" (p. 9). This fact he proves from the later investigations having uniformly found in them articles of European manufacture, which, being seldomer, or very rarely, found in the mounds of the west, he seems to consider a proof of their greater antiquity. But as the works only vary in size, and not in character, the conclusion seems more reasonable, that the difference might be ascribed only to the circumstance of the one locality being more in communication with Europeans than the other. That the mounds of the west could not be of much greater antiquity than their cognate works of the State of New York may be deduced from another fact which Mr. Squier has

* Whose authority I feel great pleasure, from personal knowledge of the Author, in acknowledging as deserving of our entire acceptance.

pointed out with regard to them, though without perceiving the argument which may be deduced from it. At p. 302 of the same volume he says, "To understand clearly the nature of the works last mentioned, it should be remembered that the banks of the western rivers are always steep, and, where these works are located, invariably high. The banks of the various terraces are also steep, ranging from ten to thirty and more feet in height. *The rivers are constantly shifting their channels*, and frequently cut their way through all the intermediate up to the earliest-formed or highest terrace, presenting bold banks, inaccessibly steep, and from fifty to one hundred feet high. At such points, from which the river has in some instances receded to the distance of half a mile or more, works of this description are oftenest found." He goes on to say, "It is a fact of much importance, and worthy of special note, that within the scope of a pretty extended observation no work of any kind has been found occupying the latest-formed terrace. *This terrace alone, except at periods of extraordinary freshets, is subject to overflow.* The formation of each terrace constitutes a sort of semi-geological era in the history of the valley, and the fact that none of the works occur upon the lowest or latest-formed of these, while they are found indiscriminately upon all the others, bears directly upon the question of their antiquity."

From this clear statement of a fact of such important bearing on the question, it seems to me that a conclusion quite different from what the talented author would maintain is inevitable. The latest-formed terrace alone being subject to overflow would be a sufficient reason for the builders of those remarkable mounds to avoid erecting their works on them, whether erected for habitations or other purposes: therefore, if still found erected in their vicinity, and out of the reach of places subject to overflow, while the rivers are constantly shifting their channels, it is clear that they have been all erected while the country had the same general character as at present. They shew evidences of skilful design in the choice of places selected for erection; and the latest-formed terrace, therefore, must have existed when they were built, so that no great variation in the course of the rivers can be sup-

posed to have occurred since, though they are so constantly shifting their channels.

As to the character of the mounds themselves, of which we shall have occasion to speak hereafter, it may be as well here at once to declare, that as there is nothing in them peculiar to America, so neither is there any type in them of antiquity. Dr. Beck, in his "Gazetteer of the States of Illinois and Missouri (p. 308), says, "One of the largest mounds in this country has been thrown up on this stream (the Wabash), within the last thirty or forty years, by the Osages, near the great Osage village, in honour of one of their deceased chiefs. This fact," he says, "proves conclusively the original object of these mounds, and refutes the theory that they must necessarily have been erected by a race of men more civilized than the present tribes of Indians. Were it necessary, numerous other facts might be adduced to prove that these mounds are no other than the tombs of their great men." Without assenting entirely to this last assertion, as Mr. Squier has satisfactorily shewn that some of the mounds must have been erected for other purposes, yet one such fact, recorded by so respectable an authority as the above, will be sufficient to dispel the idea of any mysteriousness hanging over their origin, or of that origin being of any very remote antiquity beyond that of their fellow mounds of the State of New York. Of the stone structures in Mexico, Yucatan, and Central America, neither can we predicate any very considerable antiquity. The buildings in course of erection at Mexico when the Spaniards first arrived there proved the date of all others of the same class in the country to be not far removed from that period; and though the Mexican traditions pointed to an earlier people, the Toltecs, yet they shew that these were only a cognate people, speaking the same language, possessing the same religious rites and civic characteristics, and only preceding them a short time in their migration. Even if the Mexican histories, therefore, are to be relied on, and the same remark applies to the Peruvian also, the era of their civilization, or pretensions to civilization, can only be referred, at the utmost, to a few centuries before the arrival of the Spaniards. The ruins in Yucatan and Central America I feel empowered to say, from

personal examination of some of them, may be ascribable to an earlier age and civilization than the Mexican; but at the same time I feel confident that they cannot be considered of higher antiquity than the remains we possess of Greek and Roman art, at the very utmost. Mr. Stephen, in his "Incidents of Travel," seems to have considered it a rare discovery that he had found a lintel of a door of wood, in a sound state, at Uxmal, to prove it of comparatively recent date; but I am able to say that it is of no rare occurrence, as I found not only wooden beams, but also laths, in a yet sound state, in several places, of different ruins in Yucatan.

On the whole, judging that the civilization to which these ruins in Yucatan and Central America owed their origin was a distinct one from that of the Mexicans and Peruvians, whose semi-civilization again was equally distinct from the state of society of the Indians to the north and south of their respective empires, it seems to me still equally certain that the various tribes found on the American continent had all arrived there many centuries after the other continents had been peopled, and only when those other continents had become fully peopled. The next question, then, for consideration of the subject I have undertaken, is, to ascertain whence those various tribes of American Indians had proceeded.

Before more fully entering on this inquiry, fearing I might be thought by some guilty of an omission if I were not to refer to an opinion held by a great number of writers, that the Indians were descendants of what they call the lost tribes of Israel, I feel compelled to notice it also. The number of writers who have maintained this opinion, or who have allowed it as probable, is so great as to be really astonishing. If they have any readers in the present day relying on their lucubrations as worthy of an answer, I will, in deference to them, go so far as to be observe, 1st. That the ten tribes, as they are called, were never lost at all; and next, that if they were lost, as alleged, there cannot be any the slightest recognisable analogy shewn between the Jews and the Indians, in respect of either language, religious rites, political institutions, or physical characteristics. The absurdity is almost as great as that of another suggestion made on the subject,—that the

inhabitants and animals found in the New World had perhaps been carried over by angels, — so extraordinary are the devices to which some persons will have recourse to make marvels of very obvious and natural occurrences.

It would be an almost endless task to detail the various opinions which have been maintained, even by writers of acknowledged judgment and ability, respecting the peopling of America, with any attempt to canvass them minutely. I proceed to examine them as succinctly as the time during which I may trespass on the attention of the Society will admit.

Of the earliest writers on the subject, the greater number held that the progenitors of the American Indians had come over the snowy regions of the northern parts of the world, from Scythia or Tartary, which theory Grotius thought he had triumphantly overset, by remarking that the Scythians were preeminently a pastoral people, and had horses and herds of cattle, of which the Americans had no knowledge; whereupon he supposes that they had come over originally partly from Norway, and partly from Abyssinia. The latter supposition is such an extraordinary one, as to make us doubt what could be his meaning. If he intended all Africa, we cannot altogether admit the correctness of the opinion, nor yet of their having come from Norway, even if, under this name, we suppose him to intend all the north-western parts of Europe. That there were circumstances inducing numbers of the Scandinavians to seek new habitations in Iceland and elsewhere we admit; but we have neither authority nor reason to believe that any people analogous to the red or copper-coloured Indians ever inhabited that part of Europe. There might possibly have been some nations formerly inhabiting Scandinavia distinct from those settled there within historical memory, of whom we have no record or tradition; but we have trustworthy accounts of the first peopling of Iceland by its present race of inhabitants, and at that period we know it was a desert island, from which, therefore, there were no such tribes to be driven away. Grotius seems to have fixed on Norway and Abyssinia as the two nearest countries to the American continent from which men, possessed of seafaring knowledge could have passed over, without, however, entering into any inquiries to judge of their

ethnological affinities. But in so doing, he forgot that the same arguments might be brought against his suppositions, which he considered so conclusive against the others. For if the American Indians could not have come from Tartary because they had no knowledge of horses or cattle, neither could they have come from Norway or Abyssinia without a knowledge or possession of the animals found in those countries. But we cannot admit his argument to be a valid one. If some of the American tribes had originally proceeded from Scythia or Tartary, having been possessors there of horses and cattle, those who came to America may well be presumed to have come, not of free will over the inhospitable regions of the north, but as wanderers and fugitives. Some might have come as hunters, and some from the restlessness of spirit characterizing uncivilized people; but the greater part we may presume came over the ice and snows of the north as weaker bands driven away from their former habitations by stronger parties in their native communities. If, then, we suppose they had thus to traverse those vast icy regions in hasty flight and fear of pursuit, where no subsistence could be found for their horses and cattle, and scarcely any for themselves, it is all but certain that they must soon have lost, or have had to kill, the animals they had brought with them, and their descendants in a very few generations—and we can give them centuries in the interval—could not fail to lose every knowledge or tradition of their existence.

Our great historian, Dr. Robertson, after the full consideration he gave the subject, came to the conclusion that the American Indians came originally from the north-east of Asia, and he has in this opinion been followed by the great majority of modern writers. He says, "The vicinity of the two continents of Asia and America renders it highly probable that the human race first passed that way from Asia. In latitude 66° N. the two coasts are only thirteen leagues asunder, and about midway between them lie two islands, the distance from which to either shore is short of twenty miles. At this place the natives of Asia could find no difficulty in passing over to the opposite coast, which is in sight of their own. They might have also travelled across on sledges or on foot; for we have reason to

believe, from the accounts of Capt. Cook and his officers, that the Strait is entirely frozen over in the winter, so that the continents during that season, with respect to the communication between them, may be considered as one land."—"We may therefore conclude," he adds, "that the Asiatics, having settled in those parts of America where have been discovered those approximations of the two continents, spread gradually over its various regions." He concludes that the progenitors of all the American nations from Cape Horn to the south limits of Labrador, from the similarity of their aspect, colour, &c., migrated from the north-east parts of Asia, and that the nations which inhabit Labrador, Esquimaux, and parts adjacent, from their unlikeness to the American nations, and their resemblance to the northern Europeans, came over from the north-west parts of Europe.

Whatever degree of respect we may think justly due to the opinion of so eminent a writer, I feel compelled to say that this one does not seem to me free from objections. The latitude indicated, 66° North, is that of Behring's Straits, where, and 10° still further south, the cold is so intense as to affect even spirits of wine; and though undoubtedly the Strait is entirely frozen over the greater part of the year, and people can go over in sledges and on foot, the natives who do so now are the Esquimaux, the present inhabitants of those regions, and who, as he acknowledges, bear no resemblance to the other nations of America, but a strong one to some of the northern Europeans. With regard to them, therefore, the learned historian has to suggest another origin,—that they are descendants of Norwegians and Icelanders, adopting the theory of Grotius, but applying it to another people. If, however, this theory is at all admissible, it must be on the supposition of the progenitors of the Esquimaux having been inhabitants of Norway and the north of Europe prior to the Scandinavians, by whom they had been driven to the extreme north. The peopling of Iceland, as before observed, comes within the limits of history, and we know that when first inhabited by the Scandinavians they found it a desert. It cannot be intended that the Esquimaux were to be supposed of the same family as the Scandinavians, considering the vast difference in their language,

manners, and physical appearance; though we may admit that the first tides of emigration might have carried to the north the people from whom the Esquimaux are descended, and that they had been driven there at a very early period, so as to have made them at length become inured to the climate, and the mode of life it necessitated. Such a people, so inured to the climate, were the Esquimaux when the Norwegians first reached their shores, and, in their surprise at seeing them so different from themselves, called them Scrælings, or dwarfs, shewing that there was no affinity whatever, at that time, between them. It could be only long years of privations and endurings of hardships that could enable the Esquimaux to traverse over those icy regions with the facilities they have learned to practise; but they are very different people from the other almost numberless nations of America, in its vast extent from Cape Horn to the south limits of Labrador, who cannot be supposed, therefore, to be derived from their stock. These nations, it should be remembered, had also a great variety of languages, and, though bearing a general resemblance among themselves, yet nevertheless had still among themselves a number of strong distinguishing characteristics. It is scarcely possible, therefore, to suppose, under these circumstances, that they all came across the snows of Behring's Straits, and to have had the means of subsistence for that purpose, or the necessary defences against the inclemency of the climate, so as all to have been the same, or cognate people from the same quarter, and divided after their arrival in America, as they were found to be divided. Before any people would expose themselves to the severe climates of the north, and to a passage over a frozen ocean, the opposite shores of Asia must be supposed further to have become densely populated, to make it necessary for any portion of them to go away on any hazardous journey. But even in the present day we cannot find that the extreme north-east shores of Asia are at all so densely populated; and the conclusion altogether, therefore, seems inevitable, that although some portion, and even a large portion, of the American nations might have come across by those straits, yet they were not the ancestors of all the American nations, nor yet of the greater part of them.

The same remarks apply in a great measure to the opinions of the latest writer of eminence on the subject in our day, Dr. Latham, who observes, "I believe that if the Pacific coast of America had been the one first discovered and fullest described, so that Russian America, New Caledonia, Queen Charlotte's Archipelago, and Nutka Sound had been as well known as we know Canada and New Brunswick, there would never have been any doubts or difficulties as to the origin of the so-called Red Indians of the New World, and no one would ever have speculated about Africans finding their way to Brazil, or Polynesians to California. The common sense *primâ facie* view would have been admitted at once, instead of being partially refined or partially abandoned. North-Eastern Asia would have passed for the fatherland to North-Western America; and instead of Chinese and Japanese characteristics creating wonder when discovered in Mexico and Peru, the only wonder would have been in the rarity of the occurrence. But geographical discovery came from another quarter; and as it was the Indians of the Atlantic whose history first served as food for speculation, the most natural view of the origin of the American population was the last to be adopted,—perhaps it has still to be recognised." ("Man and his Migrations," p. 122.)

From this it appears that the learned writer, giving in his adhesion to the supposition of one only means of arrival of the so-called Red Indians into America equally with Dr. Robertson, would, however, give them a lower range of places of transit of from 10° to 15° further south, even if he does not also allot for them China and Japan as their "fatherland."

On the other hand, another late writer, Dr. Lang, in his "Origin and Migrations of the Polynesians," while falling into the same exclusiveness of ascribing one only source of origin for the American Indians, deduces their migration from another direction. He says "there is abundant reason to believe that America was originally peopled from Asia, not, as is generally believed, by way of the Aleutian islands at the entrance of Behring's Straits, but by way of the South-Sea islands and across the widest part of the Pacific Ocean" (p. 86). All these writers, I venture to suggest, are correct to a certain degree in their suppositions as to the localities from which migrations

actually took place, but mistaken in supposing any one of them to have been so exclusively of the others.

The whole population of America, when discovered by Columbus, has been estimated at about forty millions. This I consider to have been a rather exaggerated estimate; but still, taking it as correct, if they had all proceeded from one only source, it appears to me almost impossible but that they must have been more intimately connected with one another by language, manners, and character, than the various divisions shewed them to have been in reality. Some writers, in the face of this difficulty, have endeavoured to maintain that the various languages of the different nations of America, though so apparently distinct, were yet all formed upon essentially the same basis; and with regard to their manners and character, as proofs of an identity of origin, have adduced a number of analogies, which, however, on examination will be found only such as are common to the whole race of mankind. To answer their purpose, they should have passed over those common analogies, and dwelt only on those found peculiarly in some families distinctly from others, constituting the real difference between them; and they should also have explained why some of the most remarkable peculiarities are found among different nations of America according to their localities, in which peculiarities the neighbouring nations do not in any way participate. In the same manner with regard to their languages: when they allege that these are all, in the American continent, of the same character and structure, they should have shewn how, in these respects, they are different from the other languages of the world. This has mainly to be taken for granted upon their statements, with the exception of a fanciful theory of what Du Ponceau called Polysyntheticism, and Humboldt and others have termed Agglutination; but the vocabularies and grammatical structures of the languages given in the valuable Essays of the American Ethnological Society, and other works published on the subject of those languages, certainly do not shew any material difference between the structure of the native languages of America and that of the rest of the world. Many of the old suppositions, in fact, arose only from an imperfect knowledge

of the languages, and were adopted from a few isolated cases to maintain an imaginative generality. The more carefully we undertake to examine the common general treatises on the grammar of the various American nations, the more certainly we shall find them as distinctly marked in groups as are the languages of the other continents, and having clearly traceable connections with the languages of the other continents, so as to have no more a peculiar identity of structure with one another, than the respective groups may evidence of Asiatic or other foreign origin.

These views are now fully admitted by the later writers of America, as Van Amringe, in his "Natural History of Man," and Professor Rafinesque, of Philadelphia, who seems to have studied more than any other the native languages. The former, while referring to Du Ponceau's edition of the "Leni Lenape Grammar," says—"The whole grammatical arrangement of language, from vowels and consonants to prosody, is arranged in the savage tones of these unlettered barbarians substantially upon the same principles as in the elaborately polished languages of Europe" (p. 532). The latter, Professor Rafinesque, says—"The theory about the common exclusive grammatical structure of all the American nations is erroneous, and based upon partial facts. (See "American Nations," Philadelphia, 1836, p. 65.) Since the time of Du Ponceau a more discriminating class of philologists has arisen in the United States, among whom we have to name Professor W. W. Turner, whose labours for the Smithsonian Institute demand our respectful attention, and Dr. Francis Hawks, the learned translator of Rivero's "Peruvian Antiquities." These writers state, directly in opposition to the fanciful theories of their predecessors, that "our materials respecting the Indian languages are as yet too scanty to justify sweeping general assertions, and that it is not true that they are all characterized by what Du Ponceau called Polysyntheticism, though it doubtless exists in many instances." (Hawks' "Rivero," New York, 1853, p. 119.) In the same work it is also stated by Rivero himself, a native of Peru, who had made the antiquities of his country his peculiar study, that "the American languages are susceptible of geographical division,

some being soft, with principally vowel terminations, and others harsh, with terminal consonants" (p. 114). In conformity with these distinctions, accordingly, we further find some writers discovering decided analogies between various American languages and those of north-eastern Asia on the one hand, and other writers shewing as decided analogies between some American and Polynesian languages on the other, all equally deserving of the fullest investigation.

From these considerations, then, it seems a natural consequence that the inhabitants of America did not all proceed from one only source, and that those opinions, therefore, are erroneous which are founded on that supposition. Other writers, as Garcia, De Laet, and Horn, who have pointed out a number of different countries and localities from which the first settlers might have come, as Horn says, rather than positively limiting them to a particular route, appear to me to hold correcter opinions.

The same kind of events that we see, even in our days, of frequent occurrence, and know to have been of frequent occurrence in history, we may reasonably conclude to have been the universal rule with regard to man in the course of his migrations. When we see that there is scarcely an island in the ocean on which inhabitants have not been found, and frequently, in comparatively small islands, that two or more distinct tribes are found speaking distinct languages, those languages, as the Polynesian with its numberless dialects, often spread over immense areas, over which it is difficult, at first sight, to discover how they could have arrived at their respective localities, we see clearly still in operation the laws of migration by which the world has been peopled from the beginning. In one of the most recent works on the subject, Mr. Pickering's, the author traces two great routes of emigration from the East Indies into the main Pacific, at the same time that he indicates other modes by which the Polynesian Islands have become inhabited. (Chap. xvii.) Agreeing with him in his observations on these points, though not concurring in others, it appears to me that he might well have extended his conclusions further than he has done, and that the wandering tribes who had been so traced to those islands could

equally well have been followed to the mainland of America. Even in our days we know of Japanese vessels being driven by storms to the shores of America, who had been engaged in commercial pursuits; and such occurrences have been reported to have occurred constantly in former times. In Ellis's "Polynesian Researches," in particular, many such cases are detailed. But besides peaceful pursuits, we may be sure that in every uncivilized stage of society the various stragglers who wandered over the ocean in search of abodes were often impelled by more numerous and more pressing motives. Uncivilized nations, whether of earlier or later ages, have always been characterized by the same barbarous treatment of their captives. When any tribe was attacked by a more powerful one, or when one party in a state, in the course of civil dissensions or personal animosities, had to succumb to their enemies, the weaker party had no other resource for safety but flight. If the seas were open to them, whatever might be the insufficiency of their means of transport, there was still for them a chance of escape from imminent destruction; and thus the same causes which have often led to the foundation of powerful states, must have often led to colonies of the savage tribes, who ventured themselves from time to time on the Indian and Pacific Oceans, to escape from enemies still more dreadful than the waves. If the small islands in those oceans, often more than a thousand miles apart, were all thus, some time or other, discovered and peopled, as proved by the affinity of languages prevailing throughout those seas, or by the physical characteristics of the inhabitants—as, for instance, Otaheite and New Zealand, which are 2000 miles apart, without any land intervening, and yet, when discovered, were found to have the same language spoken in them—we may well conclude that an immense continent like America, in the course of so many ages, could not fail to have been reached and peopled by the same kindred tribes also. The same events having been in operation for unknown centuries, even if not begun until Asia had become fully populated, there would have been ample time for the peopling of America to the extent it was peopled when discovered by Columbus, as well as for that of the remoter islands of the Pacific. But from the diversity of tribes and languages

found in the new continent, allowing for the natural increase of the immigrants in their new abodes, and considering their relative numbers, all very limited even among the most populous nations, according to the most probable computations, it appears to me clear, that no large migration had ever taken place at any one time. On the contrary, they seem to indicate that the American Indians were all descendants of small bands of fugitives, say of tens or twenties, or perhaps, at the utmost, of a few hundreds, who had succeeded in reaching those shores after being exposed to much labour and many dangers in so doing: and though numbers no doubt might and must have perished on the way, yet if only a few couples had succeeded in establishing themselves safely in localities favourable to the preservation of life, they would have been amply sufficient, in the course of, say, only 2000 years, to increase to more than double the numbers at which they were estimated when the Spaniards arrived amongst them.

Let us not, however, undervalue the means of transport possessed even by very barbarous people over those seas which they had to traverse in the more benignant climates of our globe. The accounts of our voyagers abound with notices of the vast numbers of canoes with which they were surrounded on reaching newly-discovered shores. Mr. Squier records a statement of one of the first settlers in New Hampshire, that the tribe of the Penacooks, at the time of their destruction by the Maquaas or Mohawks, had three hundred birch canoes in Little Bay, and that they had seen as many there at that time (p. 148). These three hundred canoes we may certainly calculate could have carried off a thousand persons, if the owners had chosen to fly instead of staying to encounter their enemies to their extermination, and thus they might have found refuge in some of the West-Indian islands. But some of the canoes are represented to have been of really astonishing dimensions. Without referring to the fleets of vessels, some of four hundred tons burden, mentioned by the Portuguese in the seas of Asia, with the knowledge of the mariners' compass, Ferdinand Columbus and Diaz del Castillo both state there were found some, on their first visiting the West-Indian islands, capable of holding forty or forty-five

persons each; and Peter Martyr says there was one having as many as eighty rowers. If we consider the state of discipline necessary to manage such vessels and crews, and the provision necessary to be made for their maintenance, we must acknowledge that there were sufficient means at the command of those tribes to remove themselves bodily by sea in long voyages, so that, in the comparatively smooth waters of the tropics, they might have transported themselves from very long distances to the places in which they were found by Europeans of different nations.

In this one respect, then, it appears to me that the various authors to whom I have referred are correct in supposing the Indians of America to be descendants of fugitives from very different parts of the ancient world, the far greater part of whom undoubtedly came from Asia, though from different parts of Asia to different parts of America, at many and different periods of time, and possessing different degrees of barbarism or semi-civilization. Such different bands of fugitives, if meeting at any time, and commingling either as friends, or even as conquerors and conquered, would in the course of two or three generations become a people with a language and character difficult to be traced to either line of progenitors, as few persons could be found so intimately acquainted with the original languages of either line as to be able, under perhaps a pronunciation vitiated with regard to both, to ascertain their origin.

It is too much the practice of Ethnologists to string together a number of names of the people they recount, without considering that they may all be of the same family or nation, or, at any rate, without shewing that they are really distinct. In a geographical point of view, it is no doubt correct to give the local names of the people inhabiting the several localities; but Ethnology requires that no distinction should be made where there is no specific difference. As Humboldt has well observed "to accumulate facts without generalizing an idea, is as sterile in history as it is in philosophy." The true value of such knowledge is to gather from them what is essential for the object of our researches, and so use particular data for general specifications.

On the other hand, it is too much the fault of travellers to dwell on generalities. Thus there has been no agreement among writers on the American Indians greater than to pronounce them all, from their alleged general resemblance, to be people of the same origin, or, as Cieza de Leon said shortly after the conquest, and Sir R. Schomburgk has repeated before this Society, to be "all children of one family." This general resemblance is certainly very great; but, as Von Humboldt has correctly observed, it has been much overstated; and those who become really conversant with different nations of America very soon become enabled to note the great differences actually discernible between them: yet still, no doubt there is also a great general resemblance among them, inasmuch as they all shew decided evidences, in their general appearance, of their origin from what is commonly called the Mongolian race, predominant in Asia. But, as in Asia itself there are many nations with very distinct characteristics, so their descendants in America—taking here for granted that they are their descendants—must also be expected to have as equally distinct characteristics, perhaps even more markedly distinct, arising from their further wanderings and comminglings in their new abodes. If, then, the theory be correct, of the American Indians being traceable to different parts of Asia, the inference may be expected of analogies existing in respect of language, and manners, and physical appearances of the various nations respectively in the two continents, which it next becomes a part of our task to point out.

I know there has latterly been a supposition of races now extinct having formerly existed in America, not only from the works and remains of ancient skill and labour, but also from the shape of the skulls sometimes found there, supposed to be of a different conformation from that of any people now existing. The former ground of opinion, founded on a supposed unascertainable antiquity of the remains of handiwork, I trust I have already sufficiently answered. The latter, arising from the different shape of skulls, appears to me susceptible of the same answer, though, as an unprofessional dissentient, I feel more hesitation in disputing the theory. Still, when I look around in vain for any well recognised bodily representatives

of Greek or Roman skulls, nay, of our own island races of more than a thousand years back, and doubting the preservation of the bones of any beyond that period without artificial means being adopted, I cannot attach any value to the deductions formed from a few crania, whose history is all founded on conjecture, and which may have been only those of some barbarous people who had some peculiar fancy for distorting the head, as many savage tribes are known to have done in later times. If any people had ever existed in America of a different conformation to the rest of mankind, within the limits of time during which their crania could have escaped the law of returning to the dust from which they were formed, we cannot suppose they could have become utterly exterminated, so as to leave no representative of their species within the limits prescribed to history, especially if they were the builders of such works as yet remain in Peru, Mexico, and Central America, or even of the mighty mounds of the valley of the Mississippi.

Turning, then, from the insubstantialities of hypothesis to the realities of facts, without attempting to enter into minute particularities, we may observe, with regard to North America, that there seem to have been two great divisions of people among the Indians inhabiting the eastern and western countries of that continent. They both bore the general colour and appearance of the Mongol, or Asiatic race, but those on the west alone had the obliquity of eye peculiar to the Mongolians, that peculiarity extending down to Mexico, Central America, and still further south, evidencing their origin from the Mongols of the north-west of Asia. In the eastern countries of North America this strongly-marked peculiarity was not found, as Dr. Morton has also stated in his great work, "Crania Americana;" while the Indians there were distinguishable by manners equally indicative of their distinct origin. With respect to these I do not wish to strain after many common analogies between similar customs of people of different countries, as painting or scarifying their bodies, because there are so many of these so obviously common to man, in every age and quarter of the world, as to be rather inherent instincts of his nature than peculiar national dis-

tinctions. But there are others of a strange and extraordinary, some even of a revolting character, which must be supposed to have originated from some peculiar idiopathy, rather than from the suggestions of our common nature or human feeling. In these respects, then, while we find the nations of the east and west sides of North America equally savage and bloodthirsty, yet those on the east had some particular customs or practices unknown to those of the west; or, if not unknown, yet not in general use among them; such as the wampum, the calumet or pipe of peace, the shaving of the head, the practice of scalping, the rite of circumcision, and the building of mounds. All these customs or practices are clearly traceable throughout what we may call Scythia or Tartary, especially that of building mounds, which, common as they are in the eastern half of North America, are still more common throughout Siberia and all Tartary, from which quarter, therefore, we may conclude that the progenitors of that family of American Indians originally came. With regard to the mounds, a late American writer has observed—"From Dr. Clarke's travels it appears ancient works exist in various parts of Asia, similar to those of North America. His description of them reads as though he was contemplating some of those mounds. Vast numbers of them have been discovered in Siberia and the deserts bordering on the empire to the south. The situation, construction, appearance, and general contents of these Asiatic tumuli and the American mounds are so nearly alike, that there can be no hesitation in ascribing them to the same race." (Priest's "American Antiquities," Albany, 1838, p. 56.) The other practices are equally identical, and that one of scalping is mentioned by Herodotus, so far back as his time, as Scythian. It is true that the American mounds are less in number and magnitude in those parts now constituting the British provinces and the northern states of the Union; but when we consider the rigour of the climate, impelling the wandering tribes to seek more genial habitations to the south, we may reasonably judge they had passed hastily through the northern provinces in their journeyings over the frozen regions; and it was only when they arrived in what they considered settled abodes that they reverted to their old national

customs. It is also in this way we are to account for the American mounds, though so many thousands in number, yet as not being so numerous, so vast, or so abounding in valuable and curious deposits as the Asiatic, because, as the works of colonists, if we may use the phrase with regard to the builders, they could not be supposed to be so numerous, so settled, or so wealthy, as the inhabitants of the country from which they sprang. Such analogies and considerations, *primâ facie*, give us considerable reason to expect that we ought to look for the origin of the various American nations in the countries to which they refer; and thus, according to the theory I maintain, the Ethnologist ought to look to Tartary, to compare the languages yet existing there throughout its whole extent with the languages of the people on the eastern shores of North America; while to trace the origin of the various tribes on the western coasts, down to Central America, he ought to compare their languages with those of the nations who inhabit the eastern parts of Asia. Were this course to be sedulously followed, I feel persuaded that very extraordinary analogies might be discovered, and the question of origin and unity of race even might be settled. To effect this object, it must be necessary, not only to accumulate vocabularies and grammars, but also to arrange them in a manner to admit of the easiest reference. For this purpose, then, I should wish to see carried out, with regard to different divisions of continents, the course adopted by our Government when they ordered a general vocabulary of the principal languages of Western and Central Africa to be compiled for the use of the Niger Expedition (London, 1841). Such general vocabularies would, I feel convinced, be found of invaluable assistance for the comparisons desired.

In the same manner, tracing the people of Central and South America, from the Polynesian Islands, from China, Japan, and other countries of Asia, as far as India, we may expect to find in their languages equal analogies. That there was considerable intercourse between the two continents from a period long anterior to Columbus, can scarcely admit of a doubt. Ranking, in his "Historical Researches," has produced some very ingenious arguments to shew that the Peru-

vian empire was founded by the remnants of a Mongol army that had been sent to conquer Japan, but which had been driven off from that island by a storm, so that none of those composing it had ever returned to their own country. Though we can by no means assent to all his conclusions, yet we must acknowledge that he has adduced strong probabilities of some connection between the Inca dynasty and the empire of the Mongols. De Guignes has shewn, from the Chinese annals, that the existence of a civilized power in America had been known in China before the time of Columbus; and Mr. Squier, in the work to which I have several times referred as the most careful and trustworthy of American works on the subject, has distinctly stated, though somewhat contrary to what seem his own predilections for the theory of an aboriginal civilization, "that in India are found the almost exact counterparts of the religious structures of Central America, analogies furnishing the strongest support of the hypothesis which places the origin of American semi-civilization in southern Asia" (p. 249). Other writers have pointed out the analogies of languages between various nations of South America and the inhabitants of Polynesia; as Dr. Barton in America, Vater in Germany, and Lang in his "Origin and Migrations of the Polynesians." The latter author, though he has also been led away too much by his theory to give it an exclusive operation, has shewn the identity of the peoples, so as to make it almost a certainty, that if we had such vocabularies as before suggested of South American and Polynesian languages carefully drawn out, we might be enabled clearly to trace the affinities of perhaps every nation on the continent. Beyond these authorities, if we compare the handiworks and manufactures of the one with those of the other people, I think there can be no doubt remaining in our minds of their being of the same origin. On this point I content myself with referring to the valuable work published at Vienna in 1851, entitled "Peruvian Antiquities," to compare the representations therein given of those remains with the articles from Polynesia in the British Museum and other museums, in corrobation of these statements.

In all these cases the suppositions point to an Asiatic or

Mongolian origin for the great body of the American Indians, which would account for their strong general resemblance. But it is not the less probable, in the presence of this fact, that there might still have been found on the American continent descendants of colonists from other parts of the world. The Esquimaux, as before mentioned, have been generally considered of European origin; and though later researches have tended to shew a strong probability of that people belonging rather to the north of Asia, we may coincide in the belief of their having affinities with the white race of mankind from their complexion, though they have the oblique eye, and perhaps other features, more akin to the Mongols. Whether it was these people whom Grotius and other writers supposed to have come over from Scandinavia, it seems to me a fact, as certain as any that history presents, of the Scandavians as we now know them having found their way across the Atlantic many centuries before Columbus. I am even ready to believe that they had come across more frequently, and had penetrated further even than what their records testify. We must not always rely on the silence of history to put a negative on any particular question, any more than we can rely on its assertions for an affirmative. From Norway to the American continent there is generally found a favourable wind blowing to waft a vessel across the ocean, and thus many a small vessel may have had no other resource than to go before the wind, driven over by storms against which they could not make head, and of which no remembrance has been recorded, even though some might have returned. With this persuasion in my mind, I can readily admit, as probably true, the traditions of Welsh and Irish colonies having also crossed over the Atlantic, as well as the better authenticated ones of the northmen, some of which might have soon perished from violent or natural causes, and some, in the course of a few generations, have become so swamped among the natives as to lose all knowledge of the strangers that had arrived there among their ancestors. Under the circumstances supposed, of vessels driven across the Atlantic, it is unnecessary to argue that females could not have been present in any proportionate numbers; and if the men had to form any associations with

the natives, so as to leave a mixed progeny, that progeny might have shewn their origin by a fairer complexion and greater intelligence than their neighbours, as the Mandans for instance, and other tribes both of North and South America. In such cases, even if the unfortunate castaways had been of a superior class of persons in their own country, their progeny would naturally grow up with the habits of the mothers, rather than with a knowledge of the civilization of their fathers. Nay, it is probable that these would soon forget the knowledge of civilized life themselves, and, in a new state of society, with the pressure of new wants, sink into barbarism, rather than continue superior to it. That there have been numberless cases of vessels driven or drifted across the Atlantic we have abundant instances. Even if we doubt the story, which I must say I do not doubt, of the mariner who is stated by many respectable authors to have given Columbus positive information of lands on the other side of the ocean, I think I can gather from his son's narrative that he had heard of such reports: and when he arrived at Guadaloupe, on his second voyage, he found there the poop of a vessel which had been very probably wrecked in the neighbourhood. We know, also, that, only five years after Columbus had achieved his great discovery, the Portuguese admiral, Cabral, on his way to the East Indies, was driven by strong winds on to the coast of Brazil, which casualty would thus have given the knowledge of a new continent to the civilized world, even if the energies of Columbus had not been previously directed to that object. The like circumstances have driven many vessels, in more modern times, from the old world to the new; and the same must have frequently occurred in former ages, as, indeed, we may judge from the positive statement of various authors to that effect, equally in the cases of people proficient in the art of navigation, and those possessing the most limited knowledge of it. The same events, again, before referred to with regard to the causes of migrations, must be expected to have arisen in all parts of the world; and as we have contended that the main body of the American Indians proceeded from Asia, though admitting the probability of some of them being associated with descendants of stray Europeans, we may, on the same

grounds, assent to the probability of some African nations or tribes also having found their way across the Atlantic, to mingle their race and languages with the people they might happen to meet there.

The older writers on the origin of the American nations, such as Garcia, Horn, and De Laet, have laid very great stress on the probability of the new continent being, in a considerable degree, peopled from Africa. They maintained that America was in reality, from very early times, known to the Phœnicians, or at any rate to the Carthaginians; and that the ancient inhabitants of the Canary Islands, generally designated Guanches, and other African tribes down the western coasts of Africa, had been, some of them, from time to time driven or drifted across to Brazil and other eastern coasts of South America. As before observed, these opinions may be received as probable, on the same principles which we have acknowledged to be just with regard to the other wanderers from the Old World to the New: and much as some later writers have discredited the idea of the new continent having been known to the ancients, I feel bound to say, that I feel as much assured of the fact as of any event in history. The Greeks and Romans certainly are not to be included in this supposition, and much less the Jews or Egyptians, who were not sea-going people; but we have sufficient references in classic authors to lands on the other side of the ocean, to feel assured of some indistinct rumours of such lands having reached them, and those rumours were most probably obtained from Phœnician or Carthaginian sources. It would be foreign to the purposes of this essay to enter fully upon this proof; but it will be sufficient for me here, in connection with the subject, to observe, that the hypothesis seems to me most correct, of the civilization which formerly existed in Yucatan and Central America having owed its origin to the Phœnicians, who, as being immediate neighbours to the Jews and to the Egyptians, no doubt held many of their customs in common with them, so as to account for what few Jewish or Egyptian analogies have been found in that part of the New World. Many very respectable Greek and Latin authors, it is true, whose inquiries led them directly to the subject—Pliny and Strabo, for instance—have no refe-

rence to any such knowledge, perhaps because, having no seafaring persons to consult on it respecting such extraordinary particulars, they forbore to enter on any discussion of what they could neither assert nor deny. But there are at least ten or a dozen no less respectable authors of antiquity who have given such notices of other lands, some fully, others slightly and incidentally, but not the less trustworthily, as to make it a matter of surprise that scholars should have passed over them so almost unnoticed. Modern investigations, also, seem to me to prove the fact incontestably. The ruined cities of Yucatan and Central America, existing almost entirely on the sea-coast, and decreasing sensibly as we proceed inland, shew that they owed their origin to some foreign maritime people, rather than to any indigenous civilization. If that foreign people had been Phœnicians or Carthaginians, they would no doubt have brought numbers of other African nations in their train, besides those who had found their way across, independently of them, over the comparatively smooth waters of those regions, where the smallest and worst-founded boats have only to run before the wind, and, with the current, must ere long have reached the opposite shores. These, and any other wandering tribes found in the interior, a civilized people would soon have gathered under their dominion. Many of those who came over at the same periods might have also formed independent communities, as the Guanches, whose peculiar mode of desiccating their dead may be believed traceable in the remains of some of the ancient inhabitants of America reported by different writers. The religious rites of Yucatan, as detailed by the Spanish conquerors, were very distinguishable from those of the Mexicans, and shewed a different origin. When visited by the Spaniards, the descendants of the earliest settlers had evidently much degenerated, and, shut out from all later knowledge of modern arts, could not make head against the firearms and weapons of their invaders. Their race, accordingly, was soon extirpated, even if it had not been extirpated previously, at least in effect; and the opportunity of learning their traditions having been lost, we have it now only left us to judge from the remains of their cities, as from the foot of Hercules, the proportionate extent

of their former civilization. The full consideration of this topic would require a volume much beyond the limits for which I can claim your attention; but this much may be allowed me, in discussing the subject before us, to account for what so many writers have been fancying a mysterious aboriginal civilization of an extinct race peculiar to America. Civilization, it is indubitable, flourished there in a remarkable degree; and as myself an eye-witness of its traces, and humbly venturing an opinion the result of considerable study and research, I feel no hesitation in submitting it, even thus incomplete, to your judgment, as owing to Carthaginian colonization of about eighteen hundred years date back from the time of the Spanish invasion, degenerating gradually until that time, when the few who could have explained it were extirpated unheard.

After this civilized intercourse with the New World, and before the time of Columbus, there were probably many cases of African tribes or fugitives finding their way to America, as Asiatics had done on the other coasts. When Columbus first arrived at the islands he found them generally inhabited by a timid people, who seem to have been of the same nation as those inhabiting Yucatan, from the fact of their all speaking a language dialectically different, but intelligible to one another. This fact we learn from Peter Martyr, the most intelligent and fullest of the cotemporary historians. Though he never visited America himself, yet he sought out most sedulously all the information possible from the various adventurers who returned thence, to be repeated to the Pope and other princes of Italy, for whom he seems to have been an agent in Spain. His letters, accordingly, are among the most minute and trustworthy records of the times, written in the way such important events deserved to be communicated; and as he died in 1526, having shortly before returned to his native Italy, we have from him an authentic narrative of what was observed by the first conquerors, as if written by themselves. From him, and also from the life of Columbus by his son, translated in Churchill's "Collection of Voyages," we learn that the discoverers fell in with several tribes of savages of a darker colour than the general body of Indians, and some of them actually

black. One of these tribes is described by Peter Martyr in terms expressive of their having been negroes, and, if negroes, they must be supposed to have crossed over from Africa. Whether they had any affinity to the general body of the nation or people known as the Caribs does not appear; but independently of them, as they dwelt on the main land, there was found a widely-diffused tribe of a dark colour and peculiar ferocity, throughout the islands, designated Caribs or Cannibals. These names were given them by the other Indians, the word "Carib," as Peter Martyr informs us, "in the language of all these countries signifying 'stronger than the rest,' and was never uttered by any of the other islanders without dread." This people seem to have been then but newly arrived in those islands, some of which, as the Spaniards were informed, they had lately depopulated. Peter Martyr considered their original country to have been what he and the Spaniards called Caribana, situate on the east of the Bay of Uraba, on the main land. They were, however, evidently too intractable a race to submit to any intercourse with the Spaniards, whereby any satisfactory information might have been obtained; and though the name Carib might thus have been given them extraneously, yet, as they seem to have taken it as their own, it might possibly have been also their proper name, as in Africa are found people bearing one of a similar sound, Karabàs and Carabalis. It was upwards of a century and a half after the conquest before the attention of inquiring minds was turned to their history, when two French writers gave the fullest and most interesting account of them and their language that we possess. The first was M. De Rochefort, who published in 1658 his "Histoire Morale des Antilles;" and the second, Father Raymond Le Breton, who published in 1665-66 his Carib Grammar, Dictionary, and Catechism. The latter has treated only of the language, while the former not only gave a distinct corroborative Vocabulary of it, but also endeavoured to investigate their history, so as to have at least the merit of affording valuable assistance to all future inquirers on the subject. That he might not have been altogether correct in his conjectures does not at all detract from his merits; and, canvassing them freely, we must fully acknowledge our

obligations to him for the information given us. Were all travellers to adopt the like plan of writing the "moral history" of the people they visit, and in advisable cases to favour us with like vocabularies, they would enhance the value of their works by enabling future philologists to trace the changes of languages, and perhaps even the origin of the people. M. Rochefort's work was translated into English by Mr. Davies, of Kidwally, printed in London in 1666, who, however, did not name his author, as he ought to have done, though acknowledging his own to have been translated from the French, so that the subject of which he treated became known to the literature of England as well as of France. Other writers had also referred to the Caribs, though not so fully. Rochefort refers to one whom I have not seen as an authority for some of his statements, as well as to a friend, an Englishman named Brigstock, of whom he speaks highly, as having lived much among the Indians, and acquired great knowledge of their customs and languages. From the latter he obtained a theory of the Caribs having proceeded originally from Florida, which, though evidently contrary to his own judgment, which assigned their origin to South America, he gives at great length, and with more particularity and respect than was due to it. Besides these, there were afterwards some other writers of lesser note, to one only of whom I think it necessary to refer here, Père Labat, who published, in 1724, an account of his residence among the Caribs. These writers all dwell on the certainly remarkable fact, that among the people the men spoke a language distinct from that spoken by the women. In all ages, and in a variety of different countries, we find, or trace, the circumstance of a chief's, or court language, existing, distinct from that spoken by the people, as in China in the present day, and as in England under the Normans. In some other instances, also, we learn of distinctive words in a nation as used by each sex respectively; in America particularly, as noticed by Mr. Gallatin, and among the Basques in our immediate neighbourhood, as mentioned by Lecluse. But I am not aware of any nation being so distinctly marked out in this respect as the Caribs, whose history, therefore, seems to me deserving of particular attention. We can readily conceive

the fact as necessarily ensuing from the kind of warfare ever carried on by barbarous nations, when the men who were overcome by an invading enemy were mercilessly slain, and the women alone preserved for the victors. If the women, then, possessed a different language, the progeny would naturally grow up speaking a mixture of both languages, as the English has grown up a combination of Saxon and Norman French. The main ingredient in such a case would probably be the language of the mothers, as that which is earliest learned on the mother's knee may be supposed to leave the deepest impression on the mind. This would form the staple and framework of the new language, for instance, the form of the verbs; as we find in the English language a vast majority of the verbs are derived from the Saxon, while the nouns may be perhaps mainly taken from the French or Latin. The terminations, however, of the nouns would be altered, in one case or the other, according to the speakers, and thus the grammarians would be enabled to designate them as masculine or feminine. It would depend much on the relative numbers of the conquerors and conquered as to what proportion of their respective languages should be retained, but they must soon be expected to amalgamate; and if they did not, as in the case of the Caribs, amalgamate for upwards of two hundred years, it was probably, in their case, owing to their peculiar ferocity of manners. The earliest writers inform us that there were several islands inhabited only by women, whom the men used to visit at stated times, having, it seems, devoured the men. On those visits they took away the boys as they grew up along with them, leaving the girls with their mothers. Besides these, we are told that the men treated the women they had with them with singular contempt, as if on account of their being of a different race, not allowing them to eat with them or to sit even in their presence. They were, in fact, their slaves, forming a society of their own among themselves; and if, as was probably the case, the boys were brought up with the fathers and the girls with their mothers, the two original languages might be kept distinct for an indefinite period. Though an extraordinary and curious circumstance, we may thus account for this distinct peculiarity continuing

among the Caribs for so long a time as we have shewn—for upward of 200 years, until the time of Labat. That it arose from a band of foreign invaders having come, killing the men and enslaving the women, is very evident. It has been already suggested that this occurred not long before the arrival of the Spaniards, as they were already there when Columbus reached the islands, which they were devastating, driving the more peaceful Indians into the interior of the larger islands for safety. Between their arrival, therefore, and the time of Le Breton and Rochefort about 200 years might have elapsed; and notwithstanding the distinction of languages existing, it will be difficult to suppose that they continued entirely unaltered. It is not improbable that, in the course of those 200 years, the transition natural in such cases would have been begun, of two distinct languages amalgamating to form a third, and thus that the verbs might be mainly derived from the language of the mothers, and the nouns from the language of the fathers. Since Le Breton's work of 1666, I am not aware of any investigation made of the Carib language, until the translation into it of St. Matthew's Gospel by the Rev. Mr. Henderson, of Belize, Honduras, in 1847. I had the pleasure of forming the acquaintance of this estimable clergyman in 1851, at Belize, and he then shewed me a vocabulary of the Carib language as now spoken, which he led me to hope would have been printed before now. Finding this has not been accomplished, I have been obliged to confine my inquiries into the present state of the language to that translation of St. Matthew, and from it obtain a full confirmation of my suppositions. My only surprise is, that even now, after the lapse of about 400 years, so much proof still remains of the origin of this people. It is to their probable origin, therefore, that I have now to ask your attention.

Respecting this, Rochefort seems not to have had a very clear opinion. He acknowledges that their own traditions generally referred to what he supposes to have been South America, but he had learned, from his friend Mr. Brigstock, a confused history of their having been a people driven from a northern country, which he concluded to have been Florida, by some Indians whom he calls Apalachians. That there might

have been some such outcasts from Florida we have no reason to dispute; but neither have we any good ground to conclude they afterwards became the people known as the Caribs. Robertson, and other writers, have followed P. Martyr in ascribing their origin to South America, where many powerful tribes of their nation certainly were found the whole extent from the Orinoco to Essequibo, and throughout the whole province of Surinam to Brazil. If they had been driven away from Florida by a stronger people they could scarcely have settled down in South America and the islands in such numbers as they were, and there was no nation found in Florida that could be supposed to have been strong enough to have driven them away. But further, if they had been driven away from Florida, it is most natural to suppose that they would have been found on the islands near Florida and to the north of Cuba and Hispaniola. But in the Bahamas none except the most timid race of Indians were found, and it was on the islands of the south where the Caribs actually were settled, and it was the southern shores of Cuba and Hispaniola which they infested. On these grounds, Bryan Edwards dissents very justly from this hypothesis; and observing that the Caribs seemed to him to be an entirely distinct race from the other Indians, widely differing from them in physical appearance and manners, he framed an opinion that they were in reality of African descent, and that their ancestors had come across the Atlantic. Before referring to Bryan Edwards, I had come to the same conclusion, from what had come under my observation of this people. Their general appearance and features, notwithstanding their straight shining hair, gave me the idea more of the African than the American Indian; and the fact of their having come from Africa was not, even according to Rochefort's account, inconsistent with their traditions, as these merely stated that they had come by sea from a far country, without distinctly shewing whether it was from the east or the west. But in his very candid account of their condition, notwithstanding it militates against his own hypothesis, Rochefort mentions one very curious fact, which seems to me to negative completely the supposition of their having come from South America. Having stated the circumstance of the Caribs

in the islands having two distinct languages, one for males and another for females, he tells us that the Caribs on the mainland of South America had only one language both for males and females, and that this was the same language as that spoken by the females on the islands. It seems clear from this that they could not have come from South America, because, if they had, how could they have lost their language and adopted another? On the other hand, if some of their nation, on coming to those regions, had settled on the continent, being fewer in number to the original inhabitants, they might very easily, in the course of time between Columbus and Rochefort, have forgotten it, and adopted that of the women, which the people on the islands had not done, on account of their different position, and their proportionate numbers to the women. Bryan Edwards observes, that even to the end of the last century an insensibility or contemptuous disregard to the females was a feature peculiar to the Caribs; and he notices, among other African customs among them, that they disfigured their cheeks with deep incisions and hideous scars, different from the other American Indians in their neighbourhood; that they had a habit of chewing what they called betele, as mentioned by P. Martyr; and that their women wore a sort of buskin, or half-boot, made of cotton, which surrounded the small part of the leg, as worn by the women of various nations of Africa, but not by any other of America. He might also have noticed their use of the tom-tom, or African drum, mentioned by Rochefort, formed from the hollow trunk of a tree, and covered only at one end, like our kettle-drums, and other African musical instruments, such as gourds filled with pebbles or small peas for rattles, and one made of gourds, on which they placed a cord formed of the string of a reed, which they called Pite, together with the inordinate love of dancing characteristic of Africans beyond the customary dances of the other Americans.

Impressed with the conviction of the Caribs being of African descent, Bryan Edwards finally turned to their language, and, as he says, by the help of a friend, collected fourteen words, or phrases to which they fancied they found their coincidents in Hebrew. Had this really been satisfactorily done he might

have reasonably set them down as Jews; but having gone carefully over the list, I cannot find more than one or two words they have selected that bear any resemblance, as they allege, and those few so slight as to deserve no further notice of the supposed analogy. His proper course would have been to compare the words given in Le Breton's Dictionary, or Rochefort's Vocabulary, with those of various African languages, so as to trace, if he could, any satisfactory resemblance between them, and shew the former to have been derived from the latter. In accordance with the theory suggested before as to the best means of shewing the descent of the various American tribes from their original abodes in Asia or Polynesia, I felt myself possessed of a great advantage for this purpose in the well arranged vocabulary compiled for the use of the Niger expedition, with the still more able and elaborate dissertation on the African languages by Dr. Latham, in the Transactions of the British Ascociation for 1847. Supposing the Caribs to have come over from Africa, as they must have done, according to this hypothesis, about 400 years since, and considering the changes which must be calculated on as taking place in all languages in such a long space of time, it is impossible for us to expect that any very extended comparisons can be made, especially in the case of savage nations subject to so many mutations. The only wonder is, that any allowable analogies at all can be pointed out after such a lapse of time, and the satisfaction will be, therefore, proportionate, if we can shew coincidences as great, and as many, as have warranted Dr. Latham in assigning the various languages of Africa to certain groups, in the way he has done. If it be objected that they are not found all of one particular African nation, it may be a sufficient answer that these languages are so nearly allied, as to convince us they are only dialectically different, and that four hundred years since they might have been less distinct from one another than they are at present. I believe I shall not have to quote any one African language which is radically different from the others, knowing that many African nations and languages are often designated by different names, when they are in reality identical. At any rate, the languages referred to are all of the western nations of Africa, taken from

the vocabulary, so often mentioned, for the African words, and from Rochefort and Le Breton for the Carib. The modern Carib has full one half of the words different from those given by the French authors two hundred years since, and I find the adoption generally of the women's language mentioned by those authors, to which are there no sufficient analogies in the African to warrant my repeating them. Those which I think will prove my suppositions are as follows, premising, that as the Carib words are taken from French authors, they must have given them a French pronunciation; and also that my means of comparison are very limited, half the words in the Carib vocabularies being wanting in the African, and, *vice versa*.

English, Man.
Carib, Ouekelli.
Kongo, Iakelā.
Ako, Okori.

English, Father.
Carib, Baba.
Ako, Baba.
Fulah, Baba.

English, Son.
Carib, Inimou.
Ako, Omò.

English, Younger Brother.
Carib, Ibiri.
Yoruba, Aburo.

English, Daughter.
Carib, Iamouiri.
Yoruba, Ommobiri.

English, Head.
Carib, Ischic.
Ibu, Ishi.
Fanti, Mitshi.

English, Head.
Carib, Boupou.
Woloff, Bop[illegible].

English, Eye.
Carib, Akou.
Ako, Oyu.

English, Hair.
Carib, Iou.
Ako, Iru.

English, Tooth.
Carib, Ari.
Ako, Ehi.

English, Skin.
Carib, Ora.
Ako, Awor.

English, Shoulder.
Carib, Echè.
Ako, Ejika.

English, Blood.
Carib, Itta.
Ako, Eja.

English, Breast.
Carib, Ouri.
Ibu, Arrah.

English, Hand.
Carib, Oucabo.
Ako, Awo.

Uhobo, } Abo.
Akuongo, }
Karaba, Uboh.

English, Foot.
Carib, Ogouti.
Karaba, Ukut.

English, Sun.
Carib, Hueyu.
Ibu, Awu, Auu.
Ashanti, Ouia.
Fanti, Euia.

English, Moon.
Carib, Nonum.
Ako, Ona.

English, Animal.
Carib, Arabou.
Ako, Erako.

English, Pig.
Carib, Bouirokou.
Ashanti, } Beraku.
Fanti, }

English, Dog.
Carib, Auli.
Sereres, Oulley.
Mandingo, Wula.

Bambarra, Wulu.

—

English, Serpent.
Carib, Hehue, Aha.
Ako, Eyo.

—

English, Dead.
Carib, Aoueeli.
Ibu, Angwale.

—

English, Asleep.
Carib, Aronca.
Ibu, Arona.

—

English, Day.
Carib, Ouarrou.
Fulah, Jurru.

—

English, Basket.
Carib, Alaouatta.
Ibu, Ukata.

—

English, Bed.
Carib, Akat.
Ako, Akète.

—

English, Bowl.
Carib, Akaë.
Ibu, Aka.

—

From these various considerations, therefore, now submitted to your notice, namely, from the personal and moral characteristics of the Caribs, from their manners and customs, and especially from the analogies of language compared with those of Africa, or rather with the dialects of the one language which I believe formerly prevailed throughout the western coasts of Africa, now broken up into the dialects of it found there under different names, I trust you will come to the same conclusion with myself, that it was from Africa they had their origin. It may, perhaps, be said, that the words which I have shewn of the same import in the various African languages might have been introduced among the Caribs by the Africans brought over by Europeans as slaves. But this cannot have been the case in fact, because, taken as the words are generally from Le Breton's Dictionary of 1665, slaves had not at that time been introduced in any large numbers into the plantations, and the few that could have escaped from the plantations to seek refuge among the Caribs cannot be supposed to have had such influence among this people as to make them give up their language for that of a few fugitives who might have so come among them. In coming from Africa they had no doubt a long voyage to undertake; but we must remember that, when once afloat, whatever might have been the impelling causes, they had only to submit themselves to the winds and waves to be carried with little difficulty to the islands on the other side. We know, from Peter Martyr and other writers, that they had no small means and skill of so transporting themselves to great distances. He says, "They sailed in fleets of canoes to hunt after men, as others go to the forests to kill deer;" and that they had sufficient energy to undergo great

enterprises was shewn from their resistance to the Spaniards, of whom, the same writer says, "they had overthrown and slain whole armies." From their appetite for human flesh, learned not improbably in Africa, they would have been able to obtain sufficient sustenance for the long voyage across; and if only acquired by the necessities of that voyage, or strengthened by it, we need not be surprised at their systematic hunting after it in their new abodes. Under the influence of a long communication with the whites, though so harshly begun, they have long since abandoned that horrible practice, and all the later accounts of them represent them now as of docile and amiable dispositions. There are a few families of them, I understand, yet surviving in the islands of St. Vincent and Trinidad; and on the mainland there are several villages, for whom, as I have already stated, the Gospel of St. Matthew has been translated into their present jargon. In this I find comparatively few words of the language of the fathers: the greater part consists of those of the mothers' race, with a number of others from the French, Spanish, and English languages, and perhaps some of other neigbouring people.

In the third volume of Hakluyt, p. 577, are fifty-seven words of a language recorded as collected by Sir Robert Dudley in Trinidad in the year 1595. Of these I can only find a small number agreeing with those given by the French writers as being Carib. I have no decided opinion to offer on this diversity, and only mention the circumstance to point it out to other inquirers for such explanation as they may be able to offer. I have compared them with the neighbouring languages, the Maya and Musquito, and find them entirely distinct. I suspect they were in reality Carib, but incorrectly written down.

In conclusion, returning to the coincidences which have been laid before you, if it has been satisfactorily shewn you that there was a widely extended nation of savages in America of manifestly African origin, this fact must be acknowledged to be a warranty for the arguments being well founded, that the other nations of America had also originally proceeded from the other continents, in the same manner, at former periods. For the lower animals we may readily assent to the

doctrine of separate creations in different countries suited to their respective climates. When the earth was ordained to bring forth each living creature after its kind, it is an inference fairly allowable that it was a law of the God of nature, perhaps to be of long-continued operation, to suit such creatures to their peculiar localities, beyond which they could not live healthily. The phrase used in the Hebrew לְמִינָהּ, in our version translated "after its kind," seems to me rather to require the interpretation "according to her kind," as referring to the earth; and this explanation renders unnecessary any question as to how the animals found on the new continent came there, or how they proved to be of different species from those of the other continents. But to man was given a constitution fitted to endure every climate, with intelligence to provide for every want wherever his wishes or his requirements might lead him. With the command given him to replenish the earth and subdue it, the power to do so was also given, and it has been extended to the savage no less than to the civilized man. I concede the question to the advocates for distinct creations of "primitive men," to account for the difference of races, that if any such distinct creation could be supposed to have taken place anywhere, the American continent, so recently opened forth to our knowledge, with its multifarious varieties of the animal and vegetable kingdoms, might have been expected to present the most satisfactory traces or evidences of the fact. But when we find this new continent not only not offering us any such evidences, but the very contrary, and when we can so clearly shew it to have been peopled from the other parts of the world, we may unhesitatingly reject this doctrine as in reality inconsistent with facts and experience, and therefore as being unphilosophical, at the same time that it is at variance with our sacred records.

Lincoln's Inn,
March 15, 1854.

W. M. Watts, Crown Court, Temple Bar.