

Section H.

*Eighth Report of the Committee, consisting of Dr. E. B. TYLOR, Mr. G. W. BLOXAM, Sir DANIEL WILSON, Dr. G. M. DAWSON, Mr. R. G. HALIBURTON, and Mr. H. HALE, appointed to investigate the physical characters, languages, and industrial and social condition of the North-Western Tribes of the Dominion of Canada.*

*Remarks on Linguistic Ethnology: Introductory to the Report of Dr. A. F. Chamberlain on the Kootenay Indians of South-Eastern British Columbia. .By Mr. HORATIO HALE.*

THE report of Dr. Chamberlain derives a special interest from the fact that it is a monograph devoted to the people of a single linguistic stock, or in other words to a people differing totally in speech from all other branches of the human race. In my 'Remarks on North American Ethnology,' prefixed to the Fifth Report of the Committee (1839)—which I venture in this connection to recall to mind—the fact was pointed out that 'in America the linguistic stock is the universally accepted unit of classification.' After explaining how, in my opinion, such stocks had originated, namely, 'in the natural language-making faculty of young children,' who in the earliest settlement of a new country had been left, orphaned and isolated from all other society, to frame a new language, and ultimately a new social system and a new religion of their own,' I added: 'From what has been said, it follows that in our studies of communities in the earliest stage we must look, not for sameness, but for almost endless diversity, alike in languages and in social organisations. Instead of one "primitive human horde," we must think of some two or three hundred primitive societies, each beginning in a single household, and expanding gradually to a people distinct from every other, alike in speech, in character, in mythology, in form of government, and in social usages.'

Since these remarks were written three publications relating to American ethnology, each of peculiar value and authority, have appeared. The earliest and in many respects the most important of these is the volume on 'The American Race,' by Dr. Daniel G. Brinton, Professor of American Archaeology and Linguistics in the University of Pennsylvania. The general scope of the work is shown by its second title: 'A Linguistic Classification and Ethnographic Description of the Native Tribes of North and South America.' The author has condensed within the limit of 400 pages an immense mass of information concerning the numbers and locations, the physical, mental, and moral traits, and the languages, religions, and social systems of the tribes of the western continent. It is the first and the only comprehensive work embracing all the septs of the new world, and will doubtless long remain the standard and indispensable authority. Of 'independent stocks or families,' we are told, 'there are about eighty in North and as many in South America. These stocks,' the author adds, 'offer us without doubt our best basis for the ethnic classification of the

<sup>1</sup> See the Presidential Address of Prof. Sayce in the *Report of the Association for 1887.*

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