



WATCHING RETURN FROM A SEAL HUNT.

thence these forms of life moved southward. It seems fairly well established that the human race originated in the polar regions. The place prepared by nature for the first life would naturally be the first habitation of man. The place where plant and animal life first originated would naturally be the cradle of the race. The life zone would work southward, but some of the hardier forms of animal and plant life would adjust themselves to their environment and still remain in the polar regions. The polar bear, the arctic fox, and the reindeer are nearer the original home of these animals than any other species or variety, although they must have undergone differentiation in order to keep pace with a changing environment.

Thus it is a tenable supposition that the ancestors of the race may all be buried under the snow and ice of the arctic regions, and that the man of science will be compelled to come here to dig up the missing link. However this may be, the Eskimos are an intensely interesting people, and no satisfactory explanation has yet been given for their existence in the extreme north.

Some maintain that the Eskimos are

the most considerable remnant of that nameless prehistoric race of fishers and hunters who once clung to the coasts of Europe until they were pushed away into the nooks and corners, and to the very verge and edge of the great continents by the successive bands of Arian migrations, until they found their way to the inhospitable northern regions. Some believe that they were forced thither from the coasts, both of Asia and America, by the migration of Indian and Mongolian tribes; but it is not probable that they have lived from time immemorial amid the ice. Up in these regions we still find stunted growths of the pine, the willow, and the birch, and of other growths that now attain their full development under more congenial suns. It may be that like these the Eskimos have remained in the frozen north, unable to attain any high development on account of their hard and difficult surroundings.

But certain it is that the Eskimos have worked out the problem of existence amid surroundings which would have baffled the efforts of the most civilized people. For the latter are only able to live for a year or two at a time in the arctic circle, and must depend, not upon the