

and the Dénés, to whom I should add the Tlingets, whose habitat is the narrow strip of land known as Southern Alaska, which geographically belongs to Canada.

Seven stocks west of the Rockies to three east thereof, in a region which, if the normal proportions were observed, should contain no less than forty-five of them!

Why this extraordinary disparity? Has it never struck any ethnologist as being significant? In my humble opinion, only one answer can satisfy the unbiassed enquirer: most of the Canadian Indians are but pieces of wreckage brought from the neighbouring continent, descendants of stray representatives of the native Asiatics thrown by accidents on the Pacific coast, which became the dumping ground of western adventurers—by this I mean the maritime tribes of British Columbia—or brought to their present homes through the northwest corner of the continent or the Aleutian Islands by means of voluntary or forced migrations: in these we have the Dénés of the Northwest.

In the same way, therefore, as the general sparseness of the American native population excludes the possibility of autochthonousness, unless we choose to believe in principles the falsity of which has been demonstrated, even so the significant fact that most of the races into which this population is divided have their habitat on the Pacific slope points to the Asiatic continent as the supply house of the same.

V.

Let us now restrict the field of our enquiry and question the Dénés of Canada on their origin. They generally seem to know little on this point; but whenever they will vouchsafe any answer at all, it will be to the effect that those east of the Rocky Mountains originally came from the west or the northwest, while those of British Columbia unconsciously stand for a migration from the north.

Practically all have a more or less confused tradition of having crossed, in the dim past, a body of water strewn with islands. The very fact that they believe their country to be an island would seem to confirm this. According to Sir John Franklin, the Dog-Ribs do so call the earth,¹ and this fact is fully corroborated by Petitot.²

Sir Alexander Mackenzie tells us that the Chippewayans "have a tradition among them that they originally came from another country,

¹ "Narrative of a Journey to the Shores of the Polar Sea", Vol. II, p. 295; London 1823.

² *Essai sur l'Origine des Déné-Dindjé* (prefixed to his polyglot dictionary), p. XXVII; Paris, 1875.