

passed beyond the rude hunter state; and was entering on a settled life, with all possibilities of progress in the future: when the fierce nomads of the north—the Iroquois, as later incidents of Indian history suggest;—swept down on the populous valley, and left it a desolate waste. If so, it was but a type of the whole native history of the continent.

From all that can be gleaned, alike from archaeological chronicles, Indian tradition, and the actual facts of history in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the condition of the whole population of the Northern continent has ever been the same. It might not inaptly be compared to an ever recurring spring-tide, followed by frosts that nipped the young germ, and rendered the promised fruitage abortive. Throughout the whole period of French and English colonial history, the influence of one or two savage but warlike tribes is traceable from the St. Lawrence to the gulf of Mexico; and the rival nations were exposed to such constant warfare that it is more than doubtful if the natural increase of population was latterly equal to the waste of war. Almost the sole memorials of vanished nations are the names of some of their mountain ranges and rivers. It is now surmised, not without considerable probability, that the Allighewi, or Tallegwi, to whom the name common to the Alleghany Mountains and River is traced, were the actual Mound-builders; \* and it is also assumed as not improbable that the Natchez, who claimed that in their more prosperous days they had five hundred villages, and their borders stretched to the Ohio, were a remnant of the same ancient race. † If so, the history of their overthrow is not wholly a matter of surmise. The traditions of the Delawares told that the Allighewi, or Alleghans, were a powerful nation reaching to the eastern shores of the Mississippi, where their palisaded towns occupied all the choicest sites in the Ohio valley; but the Wyandots, or Iroquois, including perhaps the Eries, who had established themselves on the head waters of the chief rivers that rise immediately to the south of the great lakes, combined with the Delawares, or Lenapé nation, to crush that ancient people; and the decimated Alleghans were driven down the Mississippi, and dispersed, if not exterminated. Some surviving remnant, such as even a war of extermination spares, may have been absorbed into the conquering nation, after the fashion systematically pursued by the Huron-Iroquois in the 17th and 18th centuries. Nor is this a mere conjecture. Mr. Horatio Hale, recognizing the evident traces in the Cherokee language of a grammar mainly Huron-Iroquois, while the vocabulary is largely recruited from some foreign source: thinks it not improbable that the origin of the Cherokee nation may have been due to a union of the survivors of the old Mound-builder stock with some branch of the conquering race; just as in 1649 a fugitive remnant of the Hurons from Georgian Bay were adopted into the Seneca nation; ‡ and a few years later such of the captive Eries as escaped torture and the stake, were admitted into affiliation with their conquerors. §

The whole region to the east of the Mississippi, from the fifty-second to the thirty-sixth degree of north latitude, appears to have been occupied by the two great Indian stocks, the Algonquin-Lenapé and the Iroquois. But Gallatin, who directed special attention to the determination of the elements of philological affinity between them, recognized to the south of their region the existence of at least three essentially distinct languages of exten-

\* Indian Migrations as evidence of Language. Horatio Hale, p. 21.

† The Mound Builders. W. F. Force, p. 77.

‡ Indian Migrations, p. 22.

§ Relations des Jésuites, 1660, p. 7. Quebec ed.

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