

Green-Gate-Hill Barrow, near Pickering. The following abstract of this communication is made from a copy transmitted by Mr. Davis to the Editor, and some portions of it will not be without value in relation to our own Canadian ethnological investigations and deductions. An observant eye, he remarks, is able to discriminate between natives of the different provinces of the same country, therefore a more comprehensive investigation of the bones of the face and head will lead to reliable conclusions respecting their specific forms. By extended observation, by keeping close to the teachings of the physical phenomena, and by regarding the information to be derived from history, philology and antiquities, more as illustrative and accessory, we may hope to obtain more definite and conclusive knowledge. In explanation of the uncertainty in which the subject is at present involved, he remarks:—1. *Data have been inadequate*, and from this scarcity of authentic data, observations have been disconnected and immature. 2. *Study has been too much separated from that of human skulls in general*. Taken up more as an antiquarian than anatomical or ethnological inquiry. 3. *Little attention has been paid to discrimination of sexes and ages*. Some archæologists of great learning have entirely passed these over, yet the cranium undergoes important modifications in the course of development and growth, not ceasing even in old age. These changes render it necessary to select examples from the middle and mature season of life. Attention to sex is even of greater moment, as, if disregarded, errors may be induced extending to an entire class. The skulls of women seldom exhibit the normal and characteristic ethnic features markedly, and should be employed sparingly. 4. *A prolific source of error consists in overlooking the great diversities of form which present themselves regularly in every family of the European races*, and assuming that we shall find the cranial character more stereotyped as we ascend to primitive times. This assumption has probably led men of great distinction, upon slender evidence for the difference of antiquity of certain skulls, to refer them to a succession of races. 5. *More definite views that prevail on primæval antiquities have dissipated certain preconceptions* concerning cromlechs and kistvaens, and the rites to which they were destined; have proved that cremation and inhumation were practised contemporaneously from the earliest periods; and that the doctrine of the ages of Stone, Bronze and Iron, if not received too exactly and employed too readily in solving difficult problems, is in the main true. Probably until these advances had been made in archæology, the study of ancient crania could not have been profitably undertaken.

From these impediments it must not be inferred there are no fixed principles in the investigation. For,—1. Although it must be admitted there is considerable diversity of form amongst the crania of even one people, *extensive observation enables us to perceive the general characteristic marks which appertain to them*. 2. Whether the origin of the human race is regarded as one of the arcana of nature enshrouded in primæval obscurity, wholly impenetrable, or not, we are constrained to admit that *marked dissimilarities have existed from the most remote periods*. 3. Another, equally essential, is *the law of permanence of ethnic forms*; that the characters impressed upon races are not transmutable, but constant. This law has been the subject of much controversy, but the facts adduced against it appear too dubious, unimportant, and few, to shake its stability; a stability uniform with that observed in all the other divisions of nature, and not to be successfully assailed by the hypothesis of development.

The best course to be pursued in the study of the ancient British skull is to de-