

for study by every enlightened government of the Old World. Irresistible arguments prove that the ancestors of the most civilized races were at one time savages, whose manners and customs can only be understood by a comparative study of the lives of similar races now existing in different parts of the world. *Comparative ethnology forms the basis of pre-historic science.* Its dates exhibit many gaps to be filled, and it will be a matter of deep regret in time to come if the record of a fast disappearing race be lost for want of gathering on our part while yet there is time. The Smithsonian Institution at Washington is fortunate in being in possession of a collection of facts and paintings, together with Indian articles of every-day life, collected by the great Indian explorer, George Catlin—a collection unequalled elsewhere. The Philadelphia *Press* commenting on it says, it is an intelligent and profound exposition of all that characterizes the savage in mind, in memory and in manners; it is a revelation of his passions, his religious impressions, and the traditions which have given them their hue. Of the tribes represented some have already, since the collection was begun, been entirely swept away, and it is plain that others who escape their fate, will, as they are more nearly approached by the whites, lose much that is distinctive in their character and habits; and in a few, probably a very few, years the only memorial of the bravery, the sufferings, toils, sports, customs, dresses and decorations of the Indians, will be to be found in this national collection.

VARIOUS theories have been advanced as to the origin of the American Indians, the race which was found on the first discovery of this continent, inhabiting every part of it in large numbers; and ethnologists and geographers have indicated Behrings Straits as the probable point of arrival from the Old World, the Aleutian islands having been the stepping-stones of approach. That there is to-day, and always has been, a mutual crossing of Behrings Straits in canoes is a fact plain as fact can be; and there is, to a certain extent, a mutual adoption of words in the languages on both sides of the point of separation; but in physiological traits there is a total absence of resemblance. The use of the bow and arrow, such as were