

into that region before the arrival of the modern Danish colonists. Nevertheless, although the honour of the first discovery of the New World must be given to the Northmen, those wanderers in every sea, it would be absurd to attribute to them any share in the peopling of North America, since their physique differs so completely from that of the Red Indian. Mr. Bancroft forgets this point when he draws a parallel between the so-called 'Tartar theory' and the Scandinavian. There is no proof, historical or otherwise, that any of these settlements were permanent; as the record stands they were destroyed by the natives, or by internal dissensions.\*

Mr. Bancroft's first volume is devoted to a history of the wild tribes, which are divided, without any attempt at ethnological classification, into seven geographical and artificial groups, beginning with the far north. In treating of the first, or Hyperborean group, whose territory lies north of the fifty-fifth parallel, his account of the burial customs of the Eskimos requires some modification. He tells us that the corpse is doubled up and put into a plank box, being sometimes elevated on a platform, and covered with planks and trunks of trees. This applies merely to the western Eskimos, for in the eastern regions round Baffin's Bay, Melville Sound, and Banks' Land, the dying and the dead are often left walled up in a snow hut, after being plundered of everything worth taking, without any precautions against the attacks of the gluttons, wolves, foxes, and bears. To this singular want of reverence for the dead may be referred, as we have pointed out in a former article,† the absence of human skeletons in the caverns and river deposits of Europe, in association with the extinct animals of the Pleistocene age. Mr. Bancroft considers that the Aleuts, as well as the Koniagas, are more closely allied to the Eskimos than to the North American proper. The Tlinkeetes, however, inhabiting the coast from Mount St. Elias to the river Nass, he classifies with the latter. All these are seafaring peoples equally at home on sea or land, and all of them are remarkable for cleverness in carving, none of them are acquainted with the potter's art. Of the Tinneh, which constitute the last division of the Hyperborean group, ranging from Hudson's Bay through the great Lone Land to the Pacific, we would merely remark that one of their tribes, the Kutchins, has a peculiar division into castes; there are three castes, and no man is allowed to marry into his own. The mother gives

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\* Bancroft, v. 113.

† 'Edinburgh Review,' October 1870, p. 454.