

X.—*Oceanic Origin of the Kwakiutl-Nootka and Salish Stocks of British Columbia and Fundamental Unity of Same, with Additional Notes on the Déné.*

BY CHARLES HILL-TOUT.

Buckland College, Vancouver, B.C.

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The classification of the aboriginal tribes of this continent on linguistic lines has resulted in giving us, according to Dr. Brinton, some 160. more or less, distinct stocks or families. Fifty-eight of these, according to Major Powell are found north of Mexico, of which no less extraordinary number than 39 are found clustered along the western littoral between Alaska and Lower California. That is to say, that more than two-thirds of all the linguistic stocks in North America are found in the comparatively restricted portion of land lying between the Rockies and the Coast. Various theories have been offered by ethnologists to account for this singular bunching of stocks in this limited territory, the most plausible of which is that put forward by the late Horatio Hale. This, briefly, supposes these isolated idioms to have had their origin in the natural language-making faculty of young children; that is to say, the author thinks that in former days when the country was less densely populated than at present, and families and settlements were separated by wider intervals from one another, that cases would occur where two or more young children of different sexes, left by the death of their parents to grow up secluded from all other society, would be compelled to frame a language of their own, which language would in course of time become the mother-tongue of a new linguistic stock. But while this view, coming as it does from such a veteran as Mr. Hale, deserves the most careful consideration at our hands, and while it may very possibly account for the origin of some of these diverse stocks, it has, I think, been felt by most students of American origins that it does not adequately account for the origin of all. For while the genial climate and the spontaneous fruitfulness of the soil in California render it possible for isolated groups of orphans to grow into strong and extensive stocks, a more rigorous climate and a less bountiful nature such as are found north of this favoured region scarcely permit of such origin for the stocks which lie beyond the 40th or 45th parallel of latitude. Ten years' residence in British Columbia leads me to believe that such a solution of the problem is wholly inadmis-

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