

well known. The greater portion of the Huron people were exterminated, and their towns reduced to ashes. Of the survivors many were received and adopted among the conquerors. A few fled to the east and sought protection from the French, while a larger remnant retired to the northwest, and took shelter among the friendly Ojibways. The fate of the Tallegwi was doubtless similar to that which thus overtook the descendants of their Huron conquerors. So long as the conflict continued, it was a war of extermination. All the conquered were massacred, and all that was perishable in their towns was destroyed. When they finally yielded, many of the captives would be spared to recruit the thinned ranks of their conquerors. This, at least, would occur among that division of the conquering allies which belonged to the Huron-Iroquois race; for such adoption of defeated enemies is one of the ancient and cardinal principles of their well-devised political system. It is by no means unlikely that a portion of the Moundbuilders may, during the conflict, have separated from the rest and deliberately united their destiny with those of the conquering race, as the Tlascalans joined the Spaniards in their war against the Aztecs. Either in such an alliance or in the adoption of captive enemies, we may discern the origin of the great Cherokee nation, a people who were found occupying the* southeastern district of the Moundbuilders' country, having their chief council-house on the summit of a vast mound which they themselves ascribed to a people who preceded them,* and speaking a language which shows evident traces of its mixed origin,—in grammar mainly Huron-Iroquois, and in vocabulary largely recruited from some foreign source.

Another portion of the defeated race, fleeing southward "down the Mississippi," would come directly to the country of the Chahta, or Choctaws, themselves (as Dr. Brinton reminds us) a mound-building people, inferior probably in civilization to the Allighewi, but superior, it may be, in warlike energy. With these the northern conquerors would have no quarrel, and the remnant of the Allighewi would be allowed to remain in peace among their protectors, and, becoming incorporated with them, would cause that change in their language which makes the speech of the Choctaws differ as much from that of their eastern kindred, the Creeks or Muskhogees, as the speech of the Cherokees differs from that of their northern congeners, the Iroquois.

If this theory is correct, we might expect to find some similar words in the languages of the Cherokees and the Choctaws. These languages, so far as their grammar is concerned,

* Bartram's Travels, p. 367. Reports of the Peabody Museum, vol. 2, p. 76.