

## ETHNOLOGY OF CANADA AND NEWFOUNDLAND.

In the following papers we have brief, general accounts of Canadian aboriginal people—something never before attempted in any thing like a methodical and scientific way by writers who have made special studies of our Indians. For the suggestion of this idea, as well as for the carrying of it out, too much credit cannot be given Dr. Franz Boas, professor of ethnology in Columbia University, New York.

It is really remarkable to find so many otherwise quite intelligent people who regard all Indians just as Indians and nothing more. It is sometimes even supposed that there is an Indian language, so that when a Mississauga meets an Iroquois, or a Blackfoot a Micmac, conversation should be easy; and any differences that exist are thought to be simply those arising from degrees of savagery, or of civilization, or because of climate and environment.

Ethnologically it is fortunate for us that our so-called "red" brothers have afforded so many opportunities to study primitive conditions of life, in various circumstances, and under different skies, for in many respects the American Indian stands head and shoulders above most other aboriginal peoples, except perhaps the Maoris, and some South Sea Islanders.

It is quite true that among all primitive races there are similarities, and, not seldom, very strong ones, as there are among those who regard themselves highly civilized, but these coincidences exist because of our common humanity. We are all subject to like desires, wishes, hopes, and fears. Food is necessary, and we must provide it in one or more of numerous ways; yet, we are not all the product of one mould physically or mentally, and in the latter respect we differ much more from one another than in the former, individually, tribally, and nationally. To account for the cause of these divergencies is not always an easy task, even when the peoples concerned are geographically far apart; it is sometimes difficult to do so when they are neighbors; and in numerous instances, no reason is forthcoming.

Perhaps we shall never be able to explain all that is now so problematical, or to understand much of what remains in doubt, but year by year we seem to overcome what hitherto have seemed insuperable obstacles. The following essays are from the pens of living writers, and cannot fail to prove of great service to readers who desire to understand the relationship that exists among British American Indians from Vancouver to Newfoundland. It will be observed that the statements of the writers are sometimes at variance in matters of detail—this is inevitable when any subject is treated independently by various hands, but as a whole, readers have reason to congratulate themselves on the present opportunity to learn at first hand what are the opinions of so many acknowledged authorities on such an extremely interesting subject.

D. B.

## I. HISTORICAL ACCOUNT.

By CYRUS THOMAS.

At the time of the first post-Columbian contact of the Indians of Canada with Europeans, the country now embraced under this name was occupied by natives of several different linguistic stocks. These