

A LAST WORD.

I had long been aware that an expedition under the auspices of a Mr. Jesup was studying scientifically the modern aborigines of north-eastern Asia, with a view to comparing them with the natives of northern America, but had never seen any mention of the results of its researches, which I am even now told are still in course of publication. However, my attention was lately called to an estimate or *résumé* of the conclusions which can legitimately be drawn from its labours and what was previously known of the question, and I feel it my duty to share this with my readers. Dr. Alexander Chamberlain, then, wrote some time ago:

"Summing up the evidence on this question, it may be said with certainty, so far as all data hitherto presented are concerned, that no satisfactory proof whatever has been put forward to induce us to believe that any single American Indian tongue or any group of tongues has been derived from any Old World form of speech now existing or known to have existed in the past.

"In whatever way the multiplicity of American Indian languages and dialects may have arisen, one can be reasonably sure that the differentiation and divergence have developed here in America, and are in no sense due to the occasional intrusion of Old World tongues individually or *en masse*. It may be said here that the American languages are younger than the American Indians, and that, while the latter may have reached the New World in very remote times *via* Bering Strait, the former show no evidence of either recent or remote Asiatic (still less European) *provenance*.

"There is absolutely no satisfactory evidence, from a linguistic standpoint, of the ultimate Asiatic derivation of the American aborigines; nor is there any of such a character as to argue seriously against such a view, which seems on the whole both reasonable and probable.

"Certain real relationships between the American Indians and the peoples of northeastern Asia, known as 'Paleo-Asiatics', have, however, been revealed as the results of the extensive investigations of the Jesup North Pacific Expedition, which have been concerned with the somatology, ethnology, mythology, folk-lore, linguistics, etc., of the peoples on both sides of the Pacific, from Columbia river to Bering Strait, and from the Amur to the extreme point of northeastern Asia".¹

¹"American Anthropologist", Vol. XIV, p. 55.