

Moreover, it is to be noted that it is not amid the privations of an arctic winter, with its analogies so suggestive of a condition of life corresponding to that of the men of Europe's paleolithic age; but in southern latitudes, with a climate which furnishes abundant resources for savage man; that the crudest efforts at tool-making now occur. In a report of the United States Geological Survey for 1872, Professor Joseph Leidy furnishes an interesting account of numerous implements, rude as any in the Drift, observed by him while engaged on a survey at the base of the Utah Mountains in Southern Wyoming. "In some places," he remarks, "the stone implements are so numerous, and at the same time are so rudely constructed, that one is constantly in doubt when to consider them as natural or accidental, and when to view them as artificial." \* But with these others are mingled of fine finish. The Shoshones who haunt the region seem to be incapable of such skill as the latter imply; and express the belief that they were a gift of the Great Spirit to their ancestors. Yet many are fresh in appearance; though others are worn and decomposed on the surface, and may, as Professor Leidy assumes, have lain there for centuries. He also describes a stone scraper, or *teshoo*, as the Shoshones call it, employed by them in the dressing of buffalo skins; but of so simple a character that he says, "had I not observed it in actual use, and had noticed it among the materials of the buttes, or horizontal strata of indurated clays and sandstone, I would have viewed it as an accidental spawl." When illustrating the characteristics of a like class of stone implements and weapons of Great Britain, Dr Evans figures and describes an axe, or war-club, procured from the Indians of Rio Frio, in Texas. Its blade is a piece of trachyte, so rudely chipped that it would scarcely attract attention as of artificial working, but for the club-like haft, evidently chopped into shape with stone tools, into which it is inserted. Nothing ruder has been brought to light in any drift or cave deposit. † Another modern Texas implement, in the Smithsonian collections at Washington, ‡ is a rudely fashioned flint blade, presenting considerable resemblance to a familiar class of oval implements of the river drift.

So far, therefore, as unskilled art and the mere rudeness of workmanship are concerned, it might be assumed that the aborigines of this continent are thus presented to our study in their most primitive stage. They had advanced in no degree beyond the condition of the European savage of the river-drift period, when, at the close of the 15th century, they were brought into contact with modern European culture; and nothing in their rude arts seemed to offer a clue to their origin, or any evidence of progression. For anything that could be learned from their work, they might have entered on the occupation of the northern continent, subsequent to the visits of the Northmen in the tenth century; and, indeed, American archaeologists at present generally favour the opinion that the *Skrælings*, as the Northmen designated the New England natives whom they encountered, were not Red Indians but Eskimos. But whatever may have been the local distribution of races at that date, geological evidence, which has proved so conclusive in relation to European ethnology, has at length been appealed to by American investigators, with results which seem to establish for this continent also its primeval stone-period, and remote prehistoric dawn.

The "Report of the Peabody Museum of American Archaeology and Ethnology" for

\* U. S. Geological Survey, 1872, p. 652.

† Ancient Stone Implements of Great Britain, p. 140.

‡ Vide Prehistoric Man, 3rd Ed., vol. i., p. 180. Fig. 54.

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