

As Bering Strait has so frequently been made use of in order to explain how America could receive its original inhabitants from Asia, and as the American side of this sound does not show any trace of having been inhabited by other people than the Eskimo, this race seems to deserve particular attention with regard to all questions touching the prehistoric population of America. If their kinship to other nations has to be judged from their customs and manner of life, they seem to form a natural continuation of their Indian neighbours on the western coast of America. It has been assumed, that the latter aborigines have come from the interior of the continent following the river courses unto the sea. The same may as well be suggested with regard to the Eskimo, only with the addition, that having reached the ocean they spread along the coasts to the north and the east as far as the same natural conditions and the lack of opposition by earlier inhabitants admitted, occupying in this way regions of enormous extent. In proposing this hypothesis we may leave wholly out of consideration the question, whether in a still earlier period the ancestors of both the Indians and the Eskimo migrated from Asia or not. But certainly we will have still to examine another hypothesis which, if even less probable, can not be rejected on the plea that it infers an impossibility, namely that the Eskimo came across Bering Strait, proceeded to the east and the south where then they met with the Indians and in settling finally adopted some