

people are Asiatics, and that they crossed over originally to this continent by way of Behring Straits or the Aleutian Islands is a theory that is now pretty well exploded. The most careful investigators have traced their migrations not from the north-west in a southerly direction, but from Central America and New Mexico in the south, up towards the north and west; but how they first came into existence, how they first became possessors of any part of this American continent is still an unravelled mystery.

It has often seemed to me that an Indian would have been far more at home in the days of Abram, Isaac and Jacob, when the people dwelt in tents and had their flocks and their herds, and lived in a quiet contented manner, than he is amid the bustle and rush of this 19th century.

The Indians that we see now and whom we are so apt to despise and to spurn from us because of their slow, idle, loafing sort of ways, are representatives of a great nation of the past. They have been buried out of sight from us for perhaps 4,000 years, and now, in this later age of the world's history, they have, as it were, risen from the dust. Four hundred years ago children at school were taught that the world consisted of three continents, Europe, Africa and Asia. There was no continent of America in those days; it was scarcely even conceived of. But Christopher Columbus crossed the Atlantic Ocean, and he discovered a new country and a new people—a people whose existence before that date had not even been dreamed of—a people differing in almost every respect from any other nation in existence. Thus these Indians—these representatives of a remote antiquity, representatives, we may almost say, of the stone age—came suddenly to light; they rose, as it were, from the dust. No wonder then that we cannot understand them, or they us. No wonder that the poor Indian shrouds his face with a fold of his blanket and gazes wonderingly upon these people of the east, who, on their first arrival, he believed to be gods from the land of the gods, but has found since, to his bitter cost, are but human beings, selfishly intent on ousting him from his ancient possessions.

I think in our dealings with the Indians we ought to take into consideration, not only that we owe them a debt for having deprived them of their ancient domains, but also that they are

A GREAT PEOPLE OF A PAST AGE,

they are a people of noble mien, of a proud, defiant nature and splendid physical development, of great capability, I believe also, as regards mental culture, if only their brains, which have so long lain dormant, be cultivated and brought into action.

Poor indeed would be the pages of romance and adventure