

nooks, by their bright and vivid colors, form a charming contrast to the dark and gloomy forest that surrounds them rendering them doubly delightful.

One of the greatest attractions to an evening in the country in the summer season, are these numerous little lamps, seen dancing here and there among the green foliage of the forest or garden, or darting through the midnight air like tiny meteors. These little shining stars are the tiny light-winged fire-flies—a small nocturnal beetle, belonging to the genus *Lampyrus*.—*Journal of Science*.

### PEOPLING THE EARTH.

THE PERIOD OF INCONCEIVABLE MIGRATION  
BY OUR-HISTORIC ANCESTORS.

*Popular Science Monthly for September.*

The question arises, how has the human race been able to spread itself over the whole surface of the globe? Is it the product of different and independent origins in the several continents, or have all men sprung from a common cradle, a "mother region?" On this point students are divided, Agassiz holding that men were developed, at different centers, and Quatrefages and the theologians maintaining the unity of their origin. The fact is left that man, the same in all essential characteristics of the species, has advanced into all the habitable parts of the globe, and that not recently, and when provided with all the resources that experience and inventive genius could put at his disposal, but when still young and ignorant. It was then that, weak and almost naked, having only just got fire and a few rude arms with which to defend itself and procure food, the human race conquered the world and spread itself from within the arctic circle to Terra de! Fuego, from the Samoyed country to Van Dieman's land, from the North Cape to the Cape of Good Hope. It is the primitive exodus, as certain as it is inconceivable, accepted by science as well as by dogma, that we have to explain, or at least to make probable; and that in an age when it is only after the most wonderful discoveries, by the aid of the most powerful machinery for navigation, through the boldest and most adventurous enterprise, that civilised man has been able

to flatter himself that he has at least gone as far as infant man went in an age that is so far removed from us as to baffle all calculations.

We must insist on this point, for it brings into light an obstacle which those who have tried to trace out the connection between widely separated races and to determine the course that had been followed by tribes now separated by oceans and vast expanses, have hitherto found insurmountable; for, if man is one—to which we are ready to agree—we must assign a single point of departure for his migrations. In these migrations, man has gone wherever he could, and, at every spot he has occupied and settled, has acquired characteristics peculiar to the place, and which differentiated him from the men settling in other places. Hence the varieties in human races. Some of these spots seem to have been peculiarly favorable to his advancement, and became centres of civilization. The number of such centres is, however, very limited, and their distribution is significant.

Recent explorers of our Pacific territory of Alaska tell large stories of the great rivers of that region. Lieut. Schwatka, striking out from Fort Vancouver, Washington Territory, and travelling 2,800 miles overland reached the head waters of the Yukon river, where he constructed a raft of logs and navigated it to its mouth. His crew of Indians were afraid to shoot the rapids, but by shooting three of them he persuaded the rest, and the rapids were run. The voyage on the raft was 1,829 miles, and officer Leavitt, of the Signal Service, says he has ascended the Yukon 2,000 miles from its mouth. He describes the river as the largest in the world, discharging fifty per cent. more water than the Mississippi, and being at places, seven miles in breadth. Lieut. Storey comes home from Alaska with the report of the discovery of an immense river. He ascended it for fifty miles, where he met Indians who said they had come down on it 1,500 miles, that it went up higher than that, and in some places it is twenty miles, wide. Lieut. Storey found flowers and vegetables not hitherto discovered within the arctic circle.—*Portland Transcript*.