

the geologist who realizes all that is implied in the slow retreat of this palæolithic race over submerging continents, and through changing eras of glacial and sub-glacial range, to such a home within our own arctic circle, the oldest historical dates of this New World must seem indeed but of yesterday. The assumption, however, was a hasty one, based on a correspondence in arts easily accountable in races in many respects dissimilar, but placed under all the narrow limitations of the hunter stage in an arctic or semi-arctic climate. In reality the crania of the Perigord draftsmen and carvers present no ethnical correspondence to those of the Esquimaux, while in point of artistic ability their carvings and etchings exhibit a degree of skill and manual dexterity altogether surpassing the highest achievements of Esquimaux art. Yet in their imitative design and artistic skill the aborigines of this continent present striking elements of contrast to many of the races of the Old World in corresponding stages of development. Not only do the Esquimaux carve their bone and ivory into ingenious representations of the fauna of their inhospitable clime; and draw, in well-etched outline, on the handles of their weapons and implements of the chase, spirited representations of the incidents of their hunter-life: but also the rude tribes of our North-West and those of the Pacific coast and islands of British Columbia not only copy the familiar animal and vegetable forms surrounding them, but represent with no less ingenious verisimilitude the novel objects of European art brought under their notice. This imitative faculty shows itself in many ways: in plaited and woven grass and quill work, decorated with pictorial devices, wrought as patterns with colored grasses and dyed porcupine quills, in the process of plating or weaving. Again it is seen in

pottery ornamented with floral patterns or modelled into human and animal forms. Not less curious are the arts and architecture of the Haidas of the Queen Charlotte Islands, with their elaborately carved monumental posts, and the decorative ornamentation of their village lodges. The analogies which those present to some of the most characteristic sculptures of the ruined cities of Yucatan, as already noted, are replete with interest, marking for us traces of a long-extinct civilization, and surviving, like half-obliterated foot-prints, confirming other indications derived from customs and language, of ancient routes of migration, and of early intercourse; if not of a common relationship, between savage tribes of our Canadian North-West and Pacific coasts, and the ancient civilized nations of Central America and the Mexican plateau.

It is sad, surely, to realize the fact that the glimpse we thus catch of those artistic Haidas of the Queen Charlotte Islands, with all their peculiar aptitude in carving and constructive skill, is that of a vanishing race. Yet it cannot be said of the Haida that "he dies, and gives no sign." On the contrary, his ingenious arts embody far-reaching glimpses of a remote past, the full significance of which has yet to be determined. They help us, moreover, in the interpretation of other records of a like kind, such as those of the long-vanished Mound Builders, by whom the fertile valleys of the Ohio and the Mississippi were occupied in America's prehistoric times. With the aid of their carvings and pottery we learn much regarding their physical aspect, the range of their geographical experience, their intercourse with remote regions, and probably with diverse tribes, extending from the rich copper regions of Lake Superior to the Gulf of Mexico. We have material also