

bably crossed over from one region to the other on a bridge of land. The researches of Mr. Darwin into the coral reefs prove that there are large areas in the Pacific which are now gradually sinking, and the clusters of islands are merely the higher parts of a submerged continent. America may have been peopled, and probably was, in three different ways, successively or possibly simultaneously; the most obvious route being that by way of Behring's Straits; another is offered by the Japanese current; and lastly, the same kind of enterprise which led the Sandwich Islanders to find their way to Tahiti, would surely lead some of the bold sailors of the Pacific to the shores of the New World. The idea of any people whatever being autochthones, in our opinion must be given up, in the face of the continual migrations and drifting to and fro of peoples revealed by the modern school of ethnology. The Mongoloid origin of the American peoples is proved by an appeal solely to natural history, without reference to the relics of the civilisation of Mexico and Central America, which we shall discuss in another place.

Man must have inhabited America for a very long period to allow of the observed diversities in language.

'On any theory of human origin' (writes Professor Wilson), 'the blended gradations of America's widely diversified indigenous races demand a lengthened period for their development; and equally, on any theory of the origin of languages, must time be prolonged to admit of the multiplication of mutually unintelligible dialects and tongues in the New World. It is estimated that there are nearly six hundred languages, and dialects matured into independent tongues, in Europe. The known origin and growth of some of these may supply a standard whereby to gauge the time indicated by such a multiplication of tongues. But the languages of the American continents have been estimated to exceed twelve hundred and sixty, including agglutinate languages of peculiarly elaborate structure, and inflectional forms of complex development.' (*Prehistoric Man*, vol. i. p. 12.)

To pass over the idle speculations of American colonies of Egyptians, Phœnicians, Hebrews, and Welsh—we think that our author might have omitted the book of Mormon from among his authorities—the evidence that the Scandinavians found their way to the New World in pre-Columbian times seems to us conclusive. It has, however, been disputed by no less authorities than George Bancroft, the historian of American colonisation, and Washington Irving, who have summarily disposed of their claims to the discovery of America, without any critical analysis of the historical value of the Icelandic Sagas, on which they are based. These Sagas are known as