

approximately assigned to American palæolithic man is recent indeed, geologically speaking. But on any assumption of a common pedigree for the modern Eskimos and the Cave-men of Europe's palæolithic age, it is entirely consistent to place the post-glacial man of America in what may be accepted as an intermediate epoch. But so recent and specific a date as the assigned interval of ten thousand years implies, suggests a very partial appreciation of all the phenomena, including the enormous physical changes, involved; or of the estimated interval which geologists have deduced as separating us from glacial times. "The last glimpse," says Professor Geikie, "we obtain of palæolithic man is in Southern France, where the reindeer and its alpine and northern congeners were his companions; the first glimpse we get of his Neolithic successor is in Middle Europe, from which the northern fauna and flora had already taken their departure."* The changes in climate, fauna and flora, implied in the contrast which is seen between the contents revealed to the explorers of the caves inhabited by the palæolithic hunters, and those of the kitchen middens of Denmark, and the lake dwellings of Switzerland, furnish evidence of a new geological epoch not less definite than the changes which separate the pleiocene and pleistocene into well-defined periods. The phenomena which a study of the geology of Europe's Palæolithic period reveals, can only be accounted for on the assumption of a vast lapse of time between the advent and the disappearance of palæolithic man. Between that and the true Neolithic period, another considerable interval of time must have transpired. Sir Charles Lyell, when aiming at some approximate estimate of the age of the glacial period of Europe, names an interval of 800,000 years as that which divides us from its climax of extreme cold. Dr. John Evans, without attempting to gauge the interval by years or centuries, contents himself with an appeal to the imagination of the intelligent observer, as he stands on the edge of a lofty cliff, such as that at Bournemouth, and, taking in at one view the wide expanse of bay between the Needles and the Ballard Down Foreland, he invites him to estimate the immensely remote epoch when what is now that vast bay was dry land, and a range of chalk downs, 600 feet above the present sea, bounded the horizon. Yet, he says, "this must have been the sight that met the eyes of those primeval men who frequented the beaches of that ancient river, which buried their handiworks in gravels that now cap the cliffs, and of the course of which so strange but indubitable a memorial subsists in what has now become the Solent Sea."†

But the fancy of an Eskimo pedigree for Europe's palæolithic man chimes in with an old idea of the American antiquary that the *Skrælings* referred to in the Eric Saga were Eskimos, as is far from improbable, though the assumption rests on no definite evidence. Dr. Abbott accordingly reproduces the statement of Professor Dawkins, in confirmation of the revived belief. "We are without a clue to the ethnology of the river-drift man, who most probably is as completely extinct at the present time as the woolly rhinoceros or the cave-bear; but the discoveries of the last twenty years have tended to confirm the identification of the cave-man with the Eskimo." Such a fanciful hypothesis once accepted as fact, its application to American ethnology is easy; and so Dr. Abbott proceeds to appeal unhesitatingly to evidence sufficient "to warrant the assertion that the palæolithic man

* Prehistoric Europe, p. 380.

† Ancient Stone Implements of Gr. Britain, p. 621.