

It is now generally understood that savage life is or was, much "the same with a difference" in all parts of the world, and it is the study of what constitutes this difference in a given district or territory that enables us to add to the common stock of ideas concerning the history of our race. Primitive man everywhere has made use of stone—at the outset, probably, just in its natural condition, and either as a missile, or as a hammer, but, in course of time, all our early representatives discovered the advantages of sharpness and hardness, and thus they were led to the flaking process, and to the selection of silicious material as being best adapted for their purpose. But all have not performed the flaking or chipping process in the same manner. A higher step in lithurgy was the production of polished celts or axes, but here again we find differences. In Europe many of these are perforated to receive a stout handle; in North America such a weapon or tool is never seen, or is so exceedingly rare that the exceptions are not worth taking into account. Again, almost all tools of this class found in Ontario are quite plain on the sides which have a taper decreasing towards the head or pole. Further south a large proportion of the stone axes are grooved transversely for the purpose of attaching them to their handles.

Commonplace as this remark may be regarding the celts of the two continents, it is nevertheless typical of differences that are known to exist amongst many classes of aboriginal workmanship within more limited areas, and a critical examination of minor variations in form, finish or material, is often sufficient to enable a conclusion to be arrived at relative to the local or tribal origin of a given specimen. A study of the objects composing the Long and Laidlaw collections, although these are from sections of the country not far apart, reveals a number of peculiarities. This is perhaps the more noticeable in the ornamental markings of pottery from the two localities.

In course of time the number of specimens from other portions of the province may afford material for wider and more detailed comparison.

Notwithstanding the very much increased amount of outside work that was performed during the year, the character of our operations is unsatisfactory—it lacks thoroughness. Many localities demand weeks and months of examination, but the limited resources of the Institute render this impossible. The progress of time serves but to prove the futility of our attempts to grapple with the task of Ontario's archaeology otherwise than in the most superficial manner. From the Lake-of-the-Woods in the west to the Ottawa Valley in the east, our correspondence points to fields wholly untouched, or only partially touched. Even within a short radius from this city there remains much to be done. A year ago Dr. Parkman expressed the hope that we should be able to devote considerable attention to the ancient seat of the Hurons, but scarcely anything has yet been done towards the accomplishment of that important task.

While this state of the case affords matter for regret, we are not without reason to entertain hope. As already mentioned, the work of the Institute has been the means of arousing considerable interest in many places, and as a result of this the future will be marked by less disregard for what pertains to aboriginal life-history than has been the case in the past. A large number of private collectors are at work, many of whom are farmers, mechanics and members of the medical profession. A considerable proportion of these are not mere "curiosity hunters," but devote attention to the literature of archaeology generally, as well as to its scientific bearings from the points of view afforded by their own localities. It is something even to incite or foster a praiseworthy sentiment of this kind, and the Canadian Institute has the satisfaction of knowing that it has done much in that direction.

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