

that the first layers of this midden could hardly have been laid down much later than the beginning of our own era. That this particular midden-pile was slowly formed through the centuries, and was not the rapid accumulations of a large body of people, is more than probable from the fact that there are on its surface, at some distance from each other, four or five crowns or eminences—due, as I have personally ascertained, not to any local elevation of the subsoil, but wholly to an increase in the midden-mass itself—which, from what we know of the mode of more recent accumulations of the kind, we may reasonably infer were old family centres. From these features, as well as from many other minor ones, such as the scarcity of relics, in comparison with other camping-grounds where large communities are known to have once dwelt, it may fairly be concluded that this midden was the refuse-heap of a few families only; and when it is remembered what an enormous mass of stuff there is in it, we are bound, on any reasonable hypothesis, to allow a very considerable time for its accumulation. And from the fact that the midden is found to overlie with a sharp line of division the clean, coarse gravel of the Drift—which, as far as I have been able to discover, shows little or no trace of vegetable matter, whereas the soil in the immediate vicinity of the midden and all along this bank is rich, dark and loamy to a depth of from a few inches to over a foot—it is pretty certain there was a settlement on this bank before the appearance of post-glacial vegetation in that district. Then the midden-mass itself bears unmistakable testimony to its extreme age, nearly everything taken from it, except the stones, being in the last stage of decay; an instance of which is the condition of the shell remains. Generally speaking, the shells when taken out whole, which happens rarely, all crumble to pieces at the touch, even when they bear no marks of fire on them. And that the clam shell, at any rate, is exceedingly durable is clear from the fact that trees of over half a millennium's growth are repeatedly found along Burrard Inlet growing over refuse-heaps and gripping with their roots whole clam shells, as perfect and firm as the day they were thrown out. I have shells in my possession that cannot be less than five centuries old, from the position in which they were found, but yet it would puzzle anybody to pick them out from a number of others of the same kind from which the fish were taken only a few years ago. There are numerous other signs besides this that speak of extreme age. It rarely happens that a skull is taken out whole; it generally falls to pieces in handling. Then again, not a particle of wood has been found in the midden so far, unless it be the rotting rootlets of the trees that penetrate the mass to a depth of several feet. Axe- and tomahawk-heads, which were undoubtedly once fastened into wooden hafts or handles, are quite common; but where they are found there is never any trace of their wooden hafts to be seen. These and sundry other unmistakable evidences all seem to the writer to speak clearly of the antiquity