

paid apes, but by all but the lowest families of the *Primates*, to regard man as a recent intruder on the American continent. But in this, as in the archaeologist's deductions, the term "recent" is a relative one. To whatever source American man may be referred, his relations to the old-world races are sufficiently remote to preclude any theory of geographical distribution within the historic period.

It is not, therefore, adequate time that is wanting for the growth of a native American civilization. The only satisfactory evidence of the affiliation of the American races to those of Asia or Europe, or of Africa, must be sought for in their languages. But any trace of this kind, thus far observed, is at best obscure and remote. The resemblance in physical traits points to affinity with the Asiatic Mongol; and the agglutinate characteristics common to many languages of the continent, otherwise essentially dissimilar, is in harmony with this. But Asiatic affinities are only traceable remotely, not demonstrable on any definite line of descent, and all the evidence that language supplies points to a greatly prolonged period of isolation. The number of languages spoken throughout the whole of North and South America has been estimated to considerably exceed twelve hundred; and on the northern continent alone, more than five hundred distinct languages are spoken, which admit of classification among seventy-five ethnical groups: each with essential linguistic distinctions, pointing to its own parent stock. Some of those languages are merely well marked dialects, with fully developed vocabularies. Others have more recently acquired a dialectic character in the breaking up and scattering of dismembered tribes, and present a very limited range of vocabulary, suited to the intellectual requirements of a small tribe, or band of nomads. The prevailing condition of life throughout the whole North American continent was peculiarly favourable to the multiplication of such dialects, and their growth into new languages, owing to the constant breaking up and scattering of tribes, and the frequent adoption into their numbers of the refugees from other fugitive broken tribes, leading to an intermingling of vocabularies and fresh modifications of speech.

But, by whatever means we may seek to account for the great diversity of speech among the communities of the New World, it is manifest that language furnishes no evidence of recent intrusion, or of contact for many generations with Asiatic or other races. On any theory of origin either of race or language, a greatly prolonged period is indispensable to account for the actual condition of things which presents such a tempting field for the study of the ethnologist. Among the various races brought under our notice, the Huron-Iroquois of Canada and the neighbouring States most fitly represent the North American race east of the Rocky Mountains. Their language, subdivided into many dialects, furnishes indications of migrations throughout the greater portion of that area eastward between the Mississippi and the Atlantic seaboard, and its affinities have been sought for beyond the American continent. One experienced philologist, Mr. Horatio Hale, in his "Indian Migrations, as evidenced by language," after remarking that there is nothing in the language of the American Indians to favour the conjecture of an origin from Eastern Asia, thus proceeds:—"But in Western Europe one community is known to exist, speaking a language which in its general structure manifests a near likeness to the Indian tongues. Alone of all the races of the old continent the Basques or Euskarians, of northern Spain and south-western France have a speech of that highly complex and polysynthetic character which distinguishes the American languages." But to this he has to add the