

(From the Proceedings of the Canadian Institute).

ASIATIC TRIBES IN NORTH AMERICA.

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In a former paper on the Algonquins I directed attention to the difference between the grammatical forms of that people and those of the nations by which they are surrounded, or whose territory borders on the Algonquin area. I also indicated that the Algonquin dialects exhibit traces of Turanian influence, which I referred to the proximity of tribes speaking languages whose structure is largely Turanian. This Asiatic influence appears, even more strikingly, in the arts and exercises, dress, manners and customs of the Algonquins. The birch-bark canoe and wigwam, the modes of warfare and hunting, the skin dress and lodge, the snowshoe, ornamentation with porcupine quills, the calumet, are not in any sense Polynesian. Neither are they aboriginal, or adaptations made first upon this continent to the necessities of the country. They existed, as in a measure they still exist, in northern Europe and Asia, before the time of Herodotus, when the Scythian took the scalp of his slain enemy. The Malay Algonquin adopted the implements, dress and customs of the people who occupied the country at the period of his immigration; but retained his soft, liquid speech, with much of his oceanic construction of language, and most of the traits of the Polynesian character. His quiet reserve is as unlike the manners of the rude, boisterous and fun-loving Athabaskan as is the silent dignity of the Malay compared with the noisy childish ways of the Papuan. By nature indolent and caring little for power obtained by bloodshed, he fell before the restless and warlike Iroquois. That the Algonquins held their own, and did not become incorporated with tribes of Asiatic origin, is doubtless owing to the large numbers that at one period must have established themselves upon this continent. This adaptation of an oceanic population to continental modes of life, with all the differences of climate and productions, and the preservation of their identity for many ages, is one of the most remarkable phenomena known to ethnological science.