

2 GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS ON THE RED RACE.

more or less unsuccessful attempts to do so. No wonder the Athenians, who acknowledged no kinship to barbarians, who looked dubiously at the doctrine of innate ideas, and were divided in opinion as to whether their mythology was a shrewd device of legislators to keep the populace in subjection, a veiled natural philosophy, or the celestial reflex of their own history, mocked at such a babbler and went their ways. The generations of philosophers that followed them partook of their doubts and approved their opinions, quite down to our own times. But now, after weighing the question maturely, we are compelled to admit that the Apostle was not so wide of the mark after all—that, in fact, the latest and best authorities, with no bias in his favor, support his position and may almost be said to paraphrase his words. For according to a writer who ranks second to none in the science of ethnology, the severest and most recent investigations show that “not only do acknowledged facts permit the assumption of the unity of the human species, but this opinion is attended with fewer discrepancies, and has greater inner consistency than the opposite one of specific diversity.”¹ And as to the religions of heathendom, the view of Saint Paul is but expressed with a more poetic turn by a distinguished living author when he calls them “not fables, but truths, though clothed in a garb woven by fancy, wherein the web is the notion of God, the ideal of reason in the soul of man, the thought of the Infinite.”²

¹ Waitz, *Anthropologie der Naturvoelker*, i. p. 256.

² Carriere, *Die Kunst im Zusammenhang der Culturentwicklung*, i. p. 66.