

IX.—SIMILARITIES IN ARTS.

To attempt in a short address to elucidate the whole subject of similarities in arts along the two shores would consume too much time.¹ The speaker will sufficiently orient himself in the minds of his readers by saying that there was scarcely an original fundamental idea developed upon the Western Hemisphere. Every one of the industrial and æsthetic arts here can be matched by one from Asia or Oceania. The differences are varietal, regional, tribal, special, natural. Many American arts also tally with those of prehistoric Europe, but these also came from that common ancestral source that supplied both Europe and Asia and America.

There is nothing unnatural or improbable in the supposition that the original migrants to a country should lay aside an art on the way and pick it up again in succeeding generations. Tribal memories do not die because demands cease or resources temporarily fail. This does not controvert Tylor's proposition, that a people that has acquired an art never loses it. I am now speaking of a stream of migration starting out from the equator and passing northward out of one culture area of mineral, vegetal, and animal supply, and of aerial, marine, and terrestrial conditions, and moving northward into and through a series of different supplies and conditions as far as there is a motive, and then repeating the process southward on another continent. This would require centuries. In one region a peculiar exigency evokes the art of working in hard stone; in a series of regions beyond, the absence of material, or of the proper tools, or of a demand for the product, interrupts or converts this art into something else. By and by the descendants of this people come upon new quarries, demands, and appliances. The art or folklore breaks forth again in such striking similarity to the old as to raise the inquiry among ethnologists whether some unfortunate castaway may not have been thrust ashore here and taught all the people a foreign art. This is highly improbable. The naturalists have no difficulty of accounting for such occurrences in nature, and they call them atavism. Technical atavism, or the revival of an industry that has lived in tradition,² then may and does account for the recurrence of some ancient Asiatic arts in America and of the same art in America in regions wide apart.

X.—THE WITNESS OF ARCHÆOLOGY.

Archæology has begun to bear testimony upon these possible migrations. Morse discovered shell heaps in Japan, and his researches were followed up by Kanda upon the stone implements. The ancient

¹ The author is preparing for publication an illustrated paper on the arts of the two sides of the Pacific, in which the matter will be minutely discussed.

² This is excellently illustrated by Rae, in *Jour. Anthropol. Inst.*, Lond., 1878, Vol. VII, pp. 130, 131, with reference to the Eskimo house.