

of this region is similar to that of East Asiatic tribes—a fact which was observed by R. Virchow, who examined a number of Bilqula who visited Berlin in the winter of 1885-86. This similarity is very marked among the Tlingits Haida, Tsimshian, Kwakiutl and Bilqula, to a less extent among the Nootka, while the coast Salish and the Salish of the interior [generally speaking] show a different type."¹ Father Morice remarks also in his notes on "Déné Roots": "The facial similarities of the Mongolians and some American natives are so striking that I know of persons who mistook in my presence British Columbia Indians for Chinese."² It is extremely interesting to learn that linguistic investigation fully bears out these remarks. The Salish approximate more nearly both physically and linguistically to the Malayo-Polynesians; the Nootka more so than their congeners the Kwakiutl, who with the Bilqula, Tsimshian and Haida-Tlingit show unmistakable evidence of Asian contact both in habitus and speech. I know of no other instance in the whole field of ethnology where linguistic and physical data so clearly coincide, as in this case. I shall have occasion in the course of my paper to refer to this again.

In offering the evidence I have gathered of the fundamental unity of the stocks here considered, heretofore regarded as distinct, and of their relationship to the Malayo-Polynesian, I cannot do better than make, in the first place, a few introductory remarks upon what has, in the course of my studies, appeared to me to be some of the leading causes of the wide differences found in the morphology and still more in the lexicography of the languages of this region, and which have not always been taken into account by investigators when comparing the languages of native stocks among themselves or with those of *extra*-American families.

Comparisons of vocabularies *qua* vocabularies furnish little or no reliable proof of a common origin for the terms found in them; they can at best yield but presumptive evidence of affinity; and that for the obvious reason that the vocables of our aboriginal tongues are rarely comparable with those of other linguistic families. They are very largely polysynthetic in form and unless the investigator is able to resolve these syntheses into their components and discover the radicals he will invariably be led astray. On the other hand comparisons instituted on lines strictly morphological, as demanded by some of our leading philologists, will in a great number of cases yield but little better results on account of the repeated admixture of stocks which has taken place in this country and the consequent break-up and remodelling of language. Cases are not wanting where the vocabulary shows affinity with one stock and the grammatical structure with another. The Kwakiutl-Nootka is an instance in point. Its vocabulary for the most part is, like the Salish, of Malayo-Polynesian

¹ Fifth Report of the Committee of the British Association on the Northwestern tribes of Canada, 1889, pp. 11 and 12.

² Trans. Canadian Institute. Vol. III., p. 147. 1889