

an incipient native civilization, as the remarkable earthworks which abound in the great river valleys to the south of Lake Erie. To all appearance, through unnumbered centuries, the tide of human life has ebbed and flowed, to the north of these great lakes, and in the valley of the St. Lawrence, as unprogressively as on the great steppes of Asia, among the Bedouin tribes of the Arabian peninsula, or around the tropical lakes of equatorial Africa. Such footprints as the wanderers have left on the sands of time tell us no more than the ripples on the sea beach, and are indeed still more evanescent. Nevertheless, in all their distinctive characteristics, the tribes of our Canadian forests and prairies present much in common with those by whom the whole area of this northern continent, southward to the Gulf of Mexico, appears to have been occupied when first brought under the notice of European explorers.

It is indeed a noticeable fact in reference to the entire population of this western hemisphere, throughout areas so widely differing in climate and physical geography as are embraced within the region extending from the arctic circle to Terra del Fuego, that the ethnical diversities are slight when compared with those which pertain to what, historically speaking, are the older continents. It seems to force on us the conclusion that, however remotely we may trace our way back into unrecorded centuries, ere we reach the time when man made his first appearance here, so far as the multiplication of diverse racial varieties afford any evidence, it is recent when compared with the peopling of the ancient world. To this indeed one important exception has been suggested in the assumption of a direct affinity between the hyperborean tribes of this continent and the men of Europe's palæolithic era; and I shall accordingly refer to it in its bearings on the general conclusions to which we are thus led.

Great, however, as is the superficial resemblance which seems to pervade the diverse tribes of the American continent, some of the underlying differences were noted from the first. Columbus, with an eye quick to discern all that was peculiar in the novel scenes on which he was the first to gaze, failed not to note the marked distinction between the fair complexion of the Guanches, who were brought under his notice on his first voyage, and the reddish-olive of the ferocious Caribs. Apart from this purely physical distinction, these Guanches attracted his attention by their gentle manners and inoffensive habits. From them he learned