

ton has devised a new word to express their character, which he calls ikonomatic. This distinguished philologist of the American languages confesses that not even the threshold of investigation in the solution of these enigmatical puzzles has been passed. Had the Chinese introduced or modified or even influenced in any way the method of writing as seen on the rock inscriptions of Central America, one familiar with Chinese might have found some clew, as was the case in deciphering the ancient writings of Assyria and Egypt. Grotefend's work on cuneiform inscriptions and Champollion's interpretation of Egyptian came about by the assumption of certain inclosures representing historic characters, which were revealed in one case by an inference and in another by an accompanying Greek inscription. If we examine the early Chinese characters as shown on ancient coins of the Hea dynasty (1756 to 2142 B. C.), or the characters on ancient bronze vases of the Shang dynasty 1113 to 1755 B. C.), we find most of them readily deciphered by sinologists, and coming down a few centuries later the characters are quite like those as written to-day. On some of the many inscribed stone monuments of Central America one might expect to find some traces of Chinese characters if any intercourse had taken place, whereas the Maya glypts are remotely unlike either Chinese or Egyptian writing. Some acute students of this subject are inclined to believe that these undecipherable characters have been evolved from pictographs which were primarily derived from the simple picture writing so common among the races of the New World.

It seems clearly impossible that any intercourse could have taken place between Asia and America without an interchange of certain social commodities. The "divine weed," tobacco, has been the comfort of the races of the western hemisphere north and south for unnumbered centuries: stone tobacco pipes are exhumed in various parts of the continent; cigarettes made of corn husks are found in ancient graves and caves; the metatarsals of a deer, doubly perforated, through which to inhale tobacco or its smoke in some form, are dug up on the shores of Lake Titicaca.

The question naturally arises why tobacco was not carried back to Asia by some of the returning emigrants, or why tea was not introduced into this country by those early invaders. A Buddhist priest without tea or tobacco would be an anomaly. There are many other herbs, food plants, etc., that should not have waited for the Spanish invasion on the one hand, or the Dutch and Portuguese navigator along the Chinese coast on the other.

Finally, if evidences of Asiatic contact exist, they should certainly be found in those matters most closely connected with man, such as his weapons, clothing, sandals, methods of conveyance, pot-