

taining the current theory. But resolving to go deeper, he found in a still lower stratum well-wrought implements and weapons of bronze, also pottery of fine quality and execution, all indicating a high degree of civilization anterior to the rude stone age. It may be possible to explain such a strange fact by the supposition that the two stages represent different populations altogether, and that the earliest, more advanced, had become extinct before the site of their city was occupied by some wandering horde of barbarians. But it is equally open to us to suppose that owing to changed circumstances leading to the impoverishment of the people the earlier skill had been lost, or at any rate disused. A subsequent revival of prosperity restoring the old conditions, would enable them to regain their lost arts or replace them by others of a more desirable character. Indeed, the condition of material prosperity or otherwise has a great deal more to do with the permanent products of civilization than the inquirers into this subject have generally been willing to allow. In the great early centres of population, where the climate was propitious and the soil fertile, so ensuring prosperity, such as Egypt and Babylonia, all the investigations hitherto conducted show that there was a considerable amount of skill and culture back as far as anything can be traced at all. Those who for any reason were driven out from these fertile regions to less favoured situations could not always take skilled artisans with them or were cut off from the sources whence the necessary raw materials were drawn. Thus they lost the arts they once had practised and dropped to a lower grade of civilization. As each successive wave of overflowing population from the great centres drove these farther and farther afield, they continued to degenerate until at length they reached the savage state in which modern travellers find them.

This tendency to degeneration under unfavourable conditions is something the advocates of an evolutionary sociology have been very unwilling to allow. They assume that every change must be a change for the better. And yet the very