

not now and possibly never will be competent to decide between them. If she is unable to decide fully as to the origin of the Indian's language, how can she be expected to solve the infinitely more complex problem which concerns the ultimate origin of the peoples who spoke them? She certainly has no solution for this problem now. When she considers the number of linguistic families and the vast length of time it must have taken to develop their languages and dialects she finds herself confronted by a problem beyond her present powers. And yet the case is not hopeless. Linguistic science is still in its infancy, and its future may contain possibilities far exceeding the dream of the most sanguine. As science has revolutionized the world's processes and has made the impossibilities of a hundred years ago the common-places of to-day, so like wonders may be achieved in the domain of thought, and the science of language, with the assistance of her sister sciences, may yet answer the unanswerable questions of the present.

When interrogated as to the origin of the Indian, all that she can now say is that whether the Indian originated on this continent, where he was found, or elsewhere, it was in bygone ages—ages so far removed from our own time that the interval is to be reckoned, not by the years of chronology, but by the epochs of geologic time; with such problems she affirms that at present she cannot deal.

I have presented the subject to you to-day, not to answer it, but to aid you in comprehending the tremendous difficulties that enshroud the problem. Much time and ingenuity has been expended in the past in attempting to force an answer to a question which cannot even yet be answered. The question, however, that really concerns the ethnologist of to-day is not *who* are the American Indians, but *what* are they and what have they accomplished in working out the problems of life, which, ever since his birth, man has grappled with.

In reading the history of mankind we are too apt to be blinded by the achievements of our own Aryan race. As the old Greeks classed as barbarians all who did not speak their own tongue, so we are prone to think that most of the good that has come to humanity has come through and by means of our race. In truth, there are valuable lessons to be learned from races less high in civilization than our own. Though many and diverse are the roads that lead man to the higher life, they all pursue about the same