

examination of the relics of their art and calendar. Manco-capac, accompanied by his sister, appeared among the Peruvians, gave them an admirable system of laws, and then ascended to his father, the sun. The plumed serpent, the Quetzalcoatl of the Nahuas, the Cukulcan of the Mayas, is said to have introduced the calendar, and after a Saturnian reign to have passed to a distant country. These myths imply the arrival of strangers of a higher culture than the natives, and cannot fairly be taken to be wholly without foundation. Mexico and Central America certainly possessed an indigenous civilisation, the result of the experience of man for a long series of ages in those and the neighbouring regions, and this formed the basis on which the new culture was engrafted. We should attribute the differences between the Peruvian and Mexican on the one hand, and Central American civilisation on the other, by ascribing them to the arrival of different bodies of emigrants at different times.

But if this view of the Asiatic origin of a part of the Mexican and Central American civilisation be accepted, contact with Asia must have taken place in the enormously remote period of human progress which is marked by the knowledge of the art of making bronze, coupled with the ignorance of the use of iron. The emigrants must have left Asia not later than the bronze age. It is very generally assumed that the knowledge of making bronze was arrived at in the Americas without any communication with Asia. This is a mere assumption unsupported by any proof. Tinstone is not of a lustre suggestive of metal, and there are many other alloys which might have been made of copper, and which a savage would be as likely to discover. None of the ores of iron so abundant in Mexico, nor the large blocks of meteoric iron, such, for example, as at Cholula, were used before contact with the Europeans. The ignorance of native iron is very singular when we reflect that it was used by Eskimos for the manufacture of implements and weapons. From the identity of the polished stone axes of the American tribes generally, with those of the old world, it may be inferred that the principal emigration took place while the civilisation of Asia was in the Neolithic stage.

We might expect to derive light in these interesting and difficult problems from the study of language, but unfortunately the philologer has not yet arisen to collect together and collate the American dialects with sufficient completeness to allow of their being used in the inquiry; indeed, we may say the same with almost equal justice of the non-Aryan dialects of Asia.