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THE

EDINBURGH REVIEW,

OCTOBER, 1876.

No. CCXCVI.

ART. I.—*The Native Races of the Pacific States of North America.* By HUBERT HOWE BANCROFT. 5 vols. 8vo. London: 1875-76.

THERE is no field of inquiry more fascinating to the student of human progress than that offered by the great continent of America, in which the native races, shut off from contact with the old-world civilisation for an untold number of centuries, have found room for development in various directions. In it the theories of civilisation, as propounded by Mr. Buckle and others, may be brought to a practical test, for it presents us with peoples in each of the different stages which connect the rude savage with the culture of Mexico and Central America. Man may be studied as a hunter, fisherman, farmer, as a rude and unlettered worshipper of fetishes, or as the possessor of an elaborate literature, burdened with as complex a ritual as that of the Egyptians, and bound fast by strict rules and observances in every phase of social life. In that vast continent, at the time of the Spanish Conquest, there was represented every phase of progress through which man in Europe has passed, in emerging from a condition of the rudest savagery to the comparatively high culture exemplified in the bronze age of the Etruscans. The subject has excited the imagination of many writers, and many have been the speculations regarding the derivation of the native tribes and of the American civilisations, in which, for the most part, each writer has accommodated his facts to his prejudices. It has been reserved for Mr. Bancroft to collect together for the first time, in the five bulky volumes before us, the facts necessary for a preliminary inquiry into these questions. His work is a most laborious encyclopædia of all that is known up to to-day of

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the native races of the Pacific States, and it embraces all the inhabitants of the region to the west of the Mississippi from the Arctic Sea to the Isthmus of Panama. His aim, as he tells us in his preface, is not so much to write history as to provide materials out of which it may be eventually written by others. With infinite trouble he has brought the ore to the surface, and piled it up in full faith that it will undergo eventually those processes by which the dross is purged away, and pass current as the bright metal of history. His aim is modest, and implies true nobility of mind.

The book is remarkable in many ways. Its author, a bookseller in San Francisco, when he set himself to his work in 1859, found that the necessary books and manuscripts existed in no library in the world, and he therefore began with characteristic energy to secure everything within his reach in America. He then spent two years in obtaining all available materials in Europe, being singularly favoured by fortune in his enterprise. On the dispersal of the library of the unfortunate Emperor Maximilian, he obtained three thousand volumes; in 1869 his library had developed into sixteen thousand books, manuscripts, and pamphlets, irrespective of maps and newspapers, in English, French, German, Spanish, Latin, and Mexican; and he soon discovered that the materials for history which he sought 'were so copiously diluted with trash, 'that it would be impossible to follow his different subjects in 'the manner in which he proposed with but one lifetime to 'devote to the work.' In this emergency he devised a system of indexing the facts in such a manner that all the authorities could be brought to bear on any given point. This was done by employing a large staff of assistants to read the books and write down references on little cards labelled according to the subject. When we visited him in San Francisco, in 1875, we saw the work in full operation, and were struck with astonishment at the 'fact-catalogue' of the library, which consisted of packs of cards, each under its own heading, and each giving a bird's eye view of the whole subject with the necessary references. In this manner Mr. Bancroft has collected materials which would have taken one man, so he tells us, about sixty years to bring together, and these he has used in the books before us, which are remarkable not merely for the vast number of facts which are recorded, but for the singular manner in which they have been collected together by the indomitable perseverance of one man. From his method of work it was impossible that dross should not be mingled with the ore, but this can easily be removed by the hot fire of

criticism. Indeed, he purposely records not merely those facts which are indisputably true, but the larger class of facts which have not been proved to be untrue.

It is scarcely necessary for us to call attention to the opportuneness of this work. The red man is swiftly passing away before the face of the white, and every day destroys some trace of the former. The westward advance of the frontier of the Eastern States is estimated by Professor Wilson to average nine miles per annum; * and the trapper and woodsman, the advance guard of European civilisation, are steadily marching onwards to the setting sun, followed closely by the ranchero and tiller of the soil. The Pacific coast affords another base for the approach of the Europeans from the east. From 'the Golden 'Gate' and other places which have sprung up as it were by magic, the banners of civilisation have steadily passed forward to the east, until the lands of the red man, from the British possessions in latitude 40° down to the frontiers of Mexico, are to be found mainly between the Sierra Nevada and the Mississippi; beyond these boundaries, if he exist at all, it is as a servant, and even in this tract the lines of railway, which may aptly be termed the iron bonds of civilisation, are bases of attack. The vast mineral wealth of Nevada, Utah, Colorado, and California offer irresistible allurements to the gold and silver miner; the buffalo—the great staff of life—is rapidly perishing under the rifles of the trapper and English sportsmen, and consequently the red hunter, listless and incapable of adapting himself to the changing conditions of life, has the choice of dying of starvation, of living by plunder and being eventually shot down, or of submitting to the charity of the white man, exposed to the unutterable evils which flow from the contact of civilised with uncivilised peoples. Their history must be seized now, or it will be lost for ever. 'To us,' says our author, 'the savage 'nations of America have neither past nor future, only a brief 'present, from which we may judge somewhat of their past' (ii. 81). The stone implements, tumuli, and rude rock sculptures are rapidly becoming as non-historic as similar relics of barbarism in Europe, and in many regions the memory of the ancient inhabitants is preserved only in the names of the mountains and of the rivers. At this time, therefore, such a work as this, done by a man living in the great metropolis of the West, and personally conversant with many of the rude tribes about which he writes, is singularly opportune. Its subject-matter, indeed, is not accurately expressed in its title, for it embraces

* Prehistoric Man, ii. 302.

not merely the native races of the Pacific States, but also the Eskimos of the Arctic Sea, and the inhabitants of the British territories. It includes, as well, the history of Mexico and Central America.

The interest which Mr. Bancroft's book has for us does not lay so much with the rapidly vanishing savage tribes as with the evidence as to the origin of the American peoples, and of that extraordinary civilisation which was crushed in Mexico, Central America, and Peru under the heel of the ignorant and bigoted Spaniard. In discussing these points we shall use the materials collected together by Professor Wilson in his last edition of 'Prehistoric Man;' an admirable work, in which the history of the American tribes and civilisation lies hidden under a misleading title.

The first point which offers itself for examination is the vexed question of the origin of the American peoples:—

> 'The problem' (writes Mr. Bancroft) 'of the origin of the American aborigines is, in my opinion, enveloped in as much obscurity now as it ever was; and when I consider the close proximity of the north-western and north-eastern extremities of America to Asia and Europe; the unthought-of and fortuitous circumstances that may at any time have cast any people upon the American coasts; the mighty convulsions that may have changed the whole face of the earth during the uncounted years that man may have dwelt upon its surface; and lastly, the uncertainty, perhaps I might say improbability, of the descent of mankind from one pair; when I think of all these things it seems to me that the peopling of America may have been accomplished in so many ways that no more hopeless task could be conceived than the endeavour to discover the one particular manner of it.' (Vol. v. p. 6.)

We agree with Mr. Bancroft that it would be hopeless to ascertain the precise manner in which man first arrived in America, but we believe that the evidence as to the ancestry of the present tribes is as clear as such evidence could possibly be under the circumstances. In discussing this question, Mr. Bancroft is influenced by the view that man was created in several regions, and that America was one of the primeval centres of creation—a view which has met with greater favour in America than among the naturalists of Europe. The unity of the human race, that all mankind sprang from one pair, is to our mind as indisputable as the fact that all horses and cows sprang from a single pair; and when we consider that the main features traceable in the American races, the Eskimo excepted, are those of the Polynesians, of the Japanese, Chinese, and Samoides, the conclusion that they are of Asiatic extraction, held by Humboldt, Prescott, Tschudi, and Wilson,

seems altogether satisfactory. Mr. Bancroft points out that the north-eastern districts have been peopled at least in part from Asia. Since 1782, according to Mr. Brookes, there have been forty-one wrecks of Japanese vessels on the American coast, twenty-eight of which date from 1850. Only twelve of these were deserted, and the survivors of the rest remained in the district where they were landed. These vessels are merely those which happen to have been recorded. They have been swept across the Pacific by the great current, which brings them from the Japanese seas at the rate of twelve miles an hour. We are therefore justified in the belief that during the untold centuries in which this current has been setting towards America, it has borne upon its bosom a constant supply of emigrants from Asia, either willingly or unwillingly. Traces of the Japanese language are to be found in the dialect of the Chinooks. The population round the region of Behring's Straits is indisputably Mongoloid (v. 38).

The physical barriers imposed by the wide stretch of ocean, or by the severity of winter in the northern latitudes, are certainly not greater than those which have been overcome by the Mongoloid races in finding their way to New Zealand, or to the Society or the Sandwich Islands. We are in a position to say, after coming fresh from the first two of these places into contact with the Piutes of Nevada, that there are no differences between the two which cannot be explained by the fact of the one living in a maritime and insular region, while the other lives merely by hunting. The distribution of the Mongoloid type of mankind as defined by Professor Huxley is in harmony with the distribution of other types of mankind, and we may add, with that of some of the wild animals also. On the north-east it touches the Baltic, and sweeps on uninterruptedly through Asia to Behring's Straits, and to the south and east it is met with in most of the islands of the Pacific; and if identity of physique be of any value in classification, and man be treated simply as a wild animal would be treated, the two Americas must be added to the enormous area over which the Mongolians have wandered. Professor Wilson has proved that the so-called American type is altogether mythic, and that among the native tribes there are diversities of complexion, hair, feature, skull-form, and physique decidedly analogous to those of Asia.

The spreading eastward of the Mongolian peoples from Asia may have been largely aided by geographical conditions which no longer exist. The elks, reindeer, foxes, wolves, bears, and other animals common to Euro-Asia and North America, pro-

bably crossed over from one region to the other on a bridge of land. The researches of Mr. Darwin into the coral reefs prove that there are large areas in the Pacific which are now gradually sinking, and the clusters of islands are merely the higher parts of a submerged continent. America may have been peopled, and probably was, in three different ways, successively or possibly simultaneously; the most obvious route being that by way of Behring's Straits; another is offered by the Japanese current; and lastly, the same kind of enterprise which led the Sandwich Islanders to find their way to Tahiti, would surely lead some of the bold sailors of the Pacific to the shores of the New World. The idea of any people whatever being autochthones, in our opinion must be given up, in the face of the continual migrations and drifting to and fro of peoples revealed by the modern school of ethnology. The Mongoloid origin of the American peoples is proved by an appeal solely to natural history, without reference to the relics of the civilisation of Mexico and Central America, which we shall discuss in another place.

Man must have inhabited America for a very long period to allow of the observed diversities in language.

> 'On any theory of human origin' (writes Professor Wilson), 'the blended gradations of America's widely diversified indigenous races demand a lengthened period for their development; and equally, on any theory of the origin of languages, must time be prolonged to admit of the multiplication of mutually unintelligible dialects and tongues in the New World. It is estimated that there are nearly six hundred languages, and dialects matured into independent tongues, in Europe. The known origin and growth of some of these may supply a standard whereby to gauge the time indicated by such a multiplication of tongues. But the languages of the American continents have been estimated to exceed twelve hundred and sixty, including agglutinate languages of peculiarly elaborate structure, and inflectional forms of complex development.' (*Prehistoric Man*, vol. i. p. 12.)

To pass over the idle speculations of American colonies of Egyptians, Phœnicians, Hebrews, and Welsh—we think that our author might have omitted the book of Mormon from among his authorities—the evidence that the Scandinavians found their way to the New World in pre-Columbian times seems to us conclusive. It has, however, been disputed by no less authorities than George Bancroft, the historian of American colonisation, and Washington Irving, who have summarily disposed of their claims to the discovery of America, without any critical analysis of the historical value of the Icelandic Sagas, on which they are based. These Sagas are known as

the Codex Flatoiensis, a manuscript dating from the close of the fourteenth century, supposed to have been lost for many years, eventually found in the library of the island of Flatöe, and now preserved in the archives of Copenhagen. The antiquity of this work has never been seriously disputed, and the story of the voyages of the Northmen to America is proved not to have been an interpolation in an old work, by the fact that they form the framework of the narrative, which would be utterly destroyed by their omission. They cannot therefore be viewed as post-Columbian interpolations into a record of pre-Columbian events. They are a plain straightforward account of the doings of certain adventurers, who set forth, not for purposes of discovery, but for purposes of gain; and there is not the least intimation that the writers had any idea of the magnitude of the discoveries which they relate. Had these been mere echoes of the discoveries of Columbus, it seems to us impossible that the narrative would have been so artless and simple as we find it. Their style, we may add, is distinctly that of the heroic age of Scandinavian enterprise, such as the Heimskringla, or the Orkneyinga Saga. It would have been impossible for a writer of the sixteenth century to have imitated successfully the older Sagas without being detected by his contemporaries, or betraying himself by the insertion of some detail belonging to his own time. We therefore believe that the Codex is genuine, and accept the narrative to be as truly historic as the pages of Froissart, or the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle. We are quite aware that there is a prejudice against the historic value of these Sagas among some modern critics, the grounds for which we have never been able to discover. It is very generally urged against their credibility that the statements of the wintering in Greenland, and of the fruits of Vinland are not consistent with the present climate in those regions. To our mind they give the stamp of genuineness and antiquity to the narrative, because now we have evidence from other quarters that the climate of Greenland, and consequently that also of the adjoining coast of America, has become more severe than it was when the deserted Danish settlements were founded. A similar change has also taken place in the climate of Iceland. The story of the discovery of America by the Northmen is not generally known to English readers, and we will therefore give it in some little detail.

Eric the Red emigrated from Iceland to Greenland in the spring of 986, along with Heriulf Bardson. In the autumn Biarne, a son of the latter, set sail from Iceland to join his father, and after having been driven out of his way by fogs and winds into

unknown seas, found himself in sight of shore, which was left to larboard. After two days' sail he again sighted land, and once more, after standing out to sea for three days, saw land again, which proved to be an island. From this he bore away, and reached Greenland after four days' sail. The island has been identified with Newfoundland, which is distant from Heriulfsness (Ikigeit), in Greenland, about 150 miles; so that these distances fairly agree with the ship's log. The next voyage from Greenland to America was made by Leif, a son of Eric the Red, about the year 1000, who set sail, with a crew of thirty men, to verify Biarne's discoveries. The first land they sighted was the island, which they named Helluland. They then came to another land which they named Markland (probably Nova Scotia), and passing westward they went on shore at a point where a river issued from a lake and fell into the sea. They brought their vessel up into the lake, and finding vines in the country, termed it Vinland (New England). In the spring they returned to Greenland. Two years after this voyage, Thorwald, Leif's brother, borrowed the ship which had made the voyage, and set sail for Vinland, where he perished in a fray with the natives. The news of his death reached Greenland in 1005, and Thorstein, accompanied by his wife Gudrida, set sail to obtain the body, but after tossing about for the whole of the summer, they landed again on the coast of Greenland, where he died. His widow married Thornfinn Karlsefne, who was the most successful of the Norse adventurers in America.

In 1007 he set sail, accompanied by his bride, and Biarne Grimolfson and Thorhall Gamlason joined him with a ship, as also did Thorward and Thorhall 'the hunter.' These three ships first made Helluland, following the old track, and thence to Markland. From this they sailed to Kialarnes (Kiel Cape = Cape Cod); they then passed some deserts and reaches of sand, and some inlets. There they put on shore two swift-footed Scots, named Hake and Hekia, who returned in three days with some grapes and ears of wild wheat. They then continued their voyage until they came to a place where a fjord (Vineyard Sound) penetrated the coast, with an island at its entrance (Egg Island), so covered with the nests of the eider ducks that they could scarcely walk without treading on the eggs. The country which they explored was extremely beautiful. Here Thorhall the hunter left them with eight men and a ship, and set sail northwards, and was driven by westerly winds to the coast of Ireland, where according to the accounts of some traders they were enslaved. Karlsefne, however, proceeded

with the rest of the expedition, numbering 151 (131) men, to the south-west, to a place where a river fell into the sea from a large lake, into which they steered and wintered. Here they fell in with the natives (Skraelings), 'who had large eyes and 'broad cheeks.' No snow fell, and the cattle which they had with them found their food in the open country. In the spring of 1008 the Skraelings returned in their canoes, and a barter sprang up of cloth, food, and milk for peltries, which was interrupted by the bellowing of a bull, which terrified the Skraelings to such a degree that they sailed away. It is important to note the fact that we have cattle mentioned in this expedition, for it is one of the few cases where we have historical evidence of their putting cattle on shipboard. We have already mentioned in the pages of this review the fact that the larger breeds of cattle make their appearance in this country simultaneously with the arrival of the Angles and Saxons; here we have proof that the Northmen had in this expedition all the elements necessary for introducing their breeds of cattle into America. The idea, however, of establishing themselves was rudely dispelled by the hostility of the Skraelings, who returned in great force in the following winter, and were defeated after a most desperate fight, which resulted in the break-up of the expedition. Karlsefne took one of the two remaining ships, and sailed in quest of Thorhall to Vinland and Markland, and thence to Greenland, where he arrived about the year 1011. He brought with him two natives whom he taught the Norse language. Biarne Grimolfson with the other ship was driven into the Irish Ocean, where his ship was destroyed by the ship-worm, some of the crew being saved in a boat. The rest of the voyages of the Northmen are not sufficiently important to be mentioned in this place.

It seems to us impossible to condemn such narratives as these, which are mere records of facts, to be non-historic and mere idle tales. Their truth is proved not merely by their style, but also by the exact correspondence of the places mentioned with the distances which they record. If a settlement were once founded in Greenland, the bold seamen who found their way thither from Iceland would meet with little difficulty in exploring the unknown seas which separated Greenland from America. The traces left behind by the Northmen in Greenland, such as the famous Runic inscription on a slab of stone found in an island in Baffin's Bay, and now in Copenhagen,* lend independent testimony that the ancient Northmen had penetrated

* Wilson, *Prehistoric Man*, ii. 88.

into that region before the arrival of the modern Danish colonists. Nevertheless, although the honour of the first discovery of the New World must be given to the Northmen, those wanderers in every sea, it would be absurd to attribute to them any share in the peopling of North America, since their physique differs so completely from that of the Red Indian. Mr. Bancroft forgets this point when he draws a parallel between the so-called 'Tartar theory' and the Scandinavian. There is no proof, historical or otherwise, that any of these settlements were permanent; as the record stands they were destroyed by the natives, or by internal dissensions.*

Mr. Bancroft's first volume is devoted to a history of the wild tribes, which are divided, without any attempt at ethnological classification, into seven geographical and artificial groups, beginning with the far north. In treating of the first, or Hyperborean group, whose territory lies north of the fifty-fifth parallel, his account of the burial customs of the Eskimos requires some modification. He tells us that the corpse is doubled up and put into a plank box, being sometimes elevated on a platform, and covered with planks and trunks of trees. This applies merely to the western Eskimos, for in the eastern regions round Baffin's Bay, Melville Sound, and Banks' Land, the dying and the dead are often left walled up in a snow hut, after being plundered of everything worth taking, without any precautions against the attacks of the gluttons, wolves, foxes, and bears. To this singular want of reverence for the dead may be referred, as we have pointed out in a former article,† the absence of human skeletons in the caverns and river deposits of Europe, in association with the extinct animals of the Pleistocene age. Mr. Bancroft considers that the Aleuts, as well as the Koniagas, are more closely allied to the Eskimos than to the North American proper. The Tlinkeetes, however, inhabiting the coast from Mount St. Elias to the river Nass, he classifies with the latter. All these are seafaring peoples equally at home on sea or land, and all of them are remarkable for cleverness in carving, none of them are acquainted with the potter's art. Of the Tinneh, which constitute the last division of the Hyperborean group, ranging from Hudson's Bay through the great Lone Land to the Pacific, we would merely remark that one of their tribes, the Kutchins, has a peculiar division into castes; there are three castes, and no man is allowed to marry into his own. The mother gives

* Bancroft, v. 113.
† 'Edinburgh Review,' October 1870, p. 454.

caste to the children, and consequently there can never be intertribal war without ranging fathers and sons against each other. When a child is named the father receives his name from the child, and not the child from the father.* All these people lived by hunting and fishing before they were influenced by contact with Europeans; the only evidence of a rudimentary knowledge of agriculture among them are the few small plots of tobacco, observed by Vancouver among the Tlinkeetes.

The Tinneh, which have passed under British dominion, are escaping to some extent the fate of the native races of the United States; the hunters and trappers of the fur companies having found it more profitable to employ them in obtaining peltries than to destroy them. The Scotch and French adventurers have very generally married Indian wives, and the number of half-breeds is rapidly increasing, with the practical result of the native races being absorbed into the mass of civilised whites. We would remark that the colonisation of the British possessions in America differs from that of the United States in this particular. In the inhospitable climate of the Great Lone Land and Hudson's Bay the European has come mainly as a hunter, competing with the natives for the same animals, and often living the same kind of life. As a rule the hunter is unmarried when he arrives, and gradually becomes fascinated with the wild life which he leads, and ends by marrying a native woman. In the more genial regions of the United States, the settler has generally come with his wife and family, and relies more particularly on agriculture. He drives away the wild animals, which are the staff of life to the Indian, who has the choice of three alternatives—either to migrate to regions as yet unpenetrated by white men, which are already occupied by tribes for the most part hostile to him; or to starve on the Indian reservations, defrauded of his just rights by the Indian agents;† or to subsist by the plunder of the settlers. While these pages are passing through the press the news has arrived of the terrible slaughter of General Custer and his whole command in the Black Mountains by the Sioux, and of the preparations for vengeance by General Sheridan. In that

* I. 117.

† On this point we would call attention to the 'Statement of Affairs 'at Red Cloud Agency, made to the President of the United States by 'Professor O. C. Marsh, July 1875,' and to the evidence brought before a Committee of the Senate in the autumn of the same year.

region at least the bloody drama will soon be over; for the Indians are determined to die arms in hand, as the writer was informed by the General who has been among the first to fall. In any case it is impossible for him to escape ultimate extermination. It thus happens that the native races are rapidly perishing in the United States, while in the British dominion the Indian blood is to be recognised in the veins of some of the leading inhabitants. Neither Mr. Bancroft, who writes from the point of view offered by the United States, nor Professor Wilson, from that offered by his Canadian experiences, take into account this important distinction in treating of the future of the wild tribes of America.

The Pueblos, or townspeople, including under that head the Moquis, Pimas, and other cognate tribes which inhabit Arizona and New Mexico, are the first peoples which we meet with, in passing from North to South, living in villages and by agriculture. They are possessed of a civilisation and social order which is by no means despicable. The towns of the Pueblos are well built, sometimes they are planted on elevations almost inaccessible and reached only by steps cut in the solid rock; sometimes they consist of one or more squares, each enclosed by three or four buildings, from three to four hundred feet in length, about a hundred and fifty feet wide at the base, with from two to seven stories, each eight or nine feet high. These stories are built in a series of steps, so that the roof of the story below forms a terrace for that above. Sometimes these terraces are on both sides of the building, at others they face to the outside or inside only. The only means of communication between the terraces is by ladders which stand at convenient distances and can be drawn up at pleasure. The terrace is divided into a suite of rooms, each of which is inhabited by a family, while some are set apart for cooking, others for grinding corn and preserving winter supplies. In all these towns there is the estufa, a large room, half buried in the earth, which is at once bath house, town house, council chamber, club room, and church, and in which aromatic plants are constantly kept burning. We may remark in this place that the estufa, in some form or another, is to be traced among all the North American tribes with the exception of the Eskimos. It seems to us to be one of those habits brought by the Mongolians into the New World, just as they brought it into Europe. The stove of the Russian peasant is the representative of the estufa of the Americans. These towns are built of dried mud, or 'adobe,' or of cut stone, and are obviously intended for defence against the nomad tribes to

whose incursions they are exposed, such as the Comanches, Appaches, Navajos, and the like.

The farming operations of these people are carried on with considerable skill, the land being irrigated by common conduits or ditches which convey water to the property of the community. Cotton, corn, wheat, beans, many kinds of fruit, such as peaches and melons, are grown; all the farming utensils are made of wood; their pottery is well made, and ornamented with paintings or enamel, and their baskets of willow twigs are woven so tightly as to contain water. The estufas are sometimes ornamented with well-painted figures of birds and animals. In the seven confederate pueblos of the Moquis the office of chief governor is hereditary; it is not, however, necessarily given to the nearest heir, as the people have the power to elect any member of the dominant family, like that exercised by Teutonic nations in Europe in early times. Among some of the Pueblo tribes the usual order of courtship is reversed. When a girl is disposed to marry she selects a young man to her own liking, and consults her father, who visits the parents of the youth, and tells them his daughter's wishes; the father of the bridegroom has to pay the parents of the bride for the loss of their daughter. Altogether the Pueblos present a marked contrast in civilisation to the surrounding tribes, and may lay claim to rank with the civilised rather than with the wild peoples with which they are classified by Mr. Bancroft.

The recent exploration of Utah and southern Arizona, published last March by the Geological and Geographical Survey of the United States, has revealed that the Pueblos formerly inhabited an area considerably to the north of their present habitation. Their houses, and especially those which have been built into the cliffs which border the cañons of the Rio San Juan and La Plata, are the same in plan as those which we have just described, variously modified to suit the varying requirements of the site. The pottery is of the same kind, and the corn and implements and weapons imply the same mode of life as the Pueblos. These cliff-houses are obviously built for defence, and according to the legends connected with them for defence against the tribes now in possession of the country. One structure, described by Mr. Holmes,* built on the edge of a cañon of the San Juan resembles the round towers explored by Mr. Laing in Caithness. It forms part of a group of buildings which extend into the caves below, and present us with the

* Bulletin of the Geological and Geographical Survey of the Territories, Vol. ii. No. 1, p. 9, pl. 3.

most advanced forms of cave-habitation which have yet been discovered in any part of the world. They are met with in arid districts, while they are not found in others that are fertile; from which we may infer that the hydrography of this region has changed since the time it had sheltered a dense agricultural population. The fragments of pottery, coloured red and black, imply a considerable artistic skill, the ornaments being generally in right lines; among which may be observed the step pattern, considered by Dr. Wiberg to be characteristic of Phœnician art in Europe, as well as various modifications of the key pattern, which are quite classical in their general application. These designs have been obviously handed down to the present Moquis, who use pottery of the same kind though of inferior workmanship. Some of the larger vessels for storage have been built up of coils of clay moulded by the hand, which has resulted in the surface being corrugated. None of the pottery has been turned in the lathe.

Mr. Bancroft devotes the whole of his second, and the greater part of his third, fourth, and fifth volumes to the history of the civilised nations, and begins by attempting a definition of the term civilisation as distinct from 'savagism.'

'That which we commonly call civilisation is not an adjunct nor an acquirement of man; it is neither a creed nor a polity, neither science, nor philosophy, nor industry; it is rather the measure of progressional force implanted in man, the general fund of the nation's wealth, learning and refinement, the storehouse of accumulated results, the essence of all best worth preserving from the distillations of good and the distillations of evil. It is a something between men, no less than a something within them; for neither an isolated man nor an association of brutes can by any possibility become civilised.

'Further than this, civilisation is not only the measure of aggregate human experiences, but it is a living working principle. It is a social transition; a moving forward rather than an end attained; a developing vitality rather than a fixed entity; it is the effort or aim at refinement rather than refinement itself; it is labour with a view to improvement, and not improvement consummated, although it may be and is the metre of such improvement.' (Vol. ii. p. 4, 5.)

The progress of civilisation is not the effect of volition any more than the growth of plants or animals. Societies, like individuals, come to maturity, grow old and die; 'they may 'pause in their progress and become diseased, but they never 'turn round and grow backwards, or ungrow.' The good which they have accumulated is handed on to their successors, so that nothing is lost to civilisation in general. It is not our intention to follow Mr. Bancroft in his wanderings through the maze of this philosophical inquiry. We think

that with regard to the special question in point, the American civilisation before the arrival of the Spaniard, he has demonstrated the absurdity of Mr. Buckle's view that man's development is wholly dependent upon his physical surroundings, and that heat and moisture inevitably engender civilisation. 'In 'America,' writes Mr. Buckle, 'as in Asia and Africa, all the 'original civilisations were seated in hot countries, the whole 'of Peru proper being within the southern tropic, the whole of 'Mexico and Central America within the northern tropic.' Cuzco, the capital of the Incas, is 11,000 feet above the sea, and enjoys a cold and dry climate, while the Aztecs dwelt on an elevated table-land in a cool and dry atmosphere about 7,000 feet above the sea. Mr. Buckle's generalisation is founded upon an ignorance of the physical geography of the Americas which is very remarkable. He actually speaks of the sandy plains of California as being 'scorched into sterility,' and therefore offering obstacles to civilisation in that direction, while, as a matter of fact, it is fertile as the garden of Eden, well-watered, and enjoying every condition favourable to the well-being of civilised man.

The home of American civilisation in historic or traditionary times is to be found between latitudes 11° and 22°, between Honduras and Tamaulipas on the Atlantic, between Nicaragua and Colima on the Pacific. Within its boundaries the singular conformation of the country offers every variation of climate, from the extreme of cold to the intensity of tropical heat. On the borders of the ocean, and rising up to a height of about 1,500 feet, is the Tierra caliente, in which the climate is deadly to Europeans, and the vegetation of the densest tropical growth, and the birds and insects of the most brilliant and gorgeous hues. Above this a series of slopes, to a height of from 3,000 to 5,000 feet, constitute the Tierra templada, in which luxuriant tropical vegetation is strangely mingled with that more usually found in a temperate region. The great central plateau towers above all to a height of from 6,000 to 7,000 feet; the Tierra fria, from which rise lofty volcanic peaks crowned with everlasting snow. It supports a growth of oak and pine, while wheat, barley, and all European serials flourish side by side with the maize, maguey, and cactus. In the centre of this table-land a wall of volcanic cliffs and peaks surrounds the famous valley of Anahuac, about 160 miles in circumference, enclosing a lake, on the shores of which rose the capitals of the three confederate states of Mexico, Tezcuco, and Tlacopan, whose armies extended the common domain to the shores of either ocean. Of these the first, or the Aztec,

was by far the most prominent at the time of the Conquest, in the extent of its domain and the magnificence of its buildings, and the desperate resistance that it offered to Cortes. Hence Mexico became to Europeans the representative of the civilisation of Anahuac. In this work Mr. Bancroft uses the term Mexican to include all the inhabitants of the valley and their dependencies.

The numerous nations inhabiting Mexico and Central America at the time of the Conquest fall naturally into two groups, differing from each other in language, art, traditions, and many other points which indicate 'either a separate culture from the beginning, or a progress in different paths for a long series of ages; the one, the Mayas of Central America, the other, the Nahuas, represented chiefly by the Aztecs and the cognate dwellers in Mexico.' In treating of these two races Mr. Bancroft keeps the traditions, language, and general culture separate from the history, to which he devotes his fifth volume. It seems to us that the materials for the history of these peoples prior to the Conquest are singularly scanty; up to this time the hieroglyphics of the Mayas defy interpretation. It is undoubtedly true that numerous records exist of the Nahuas, but the question for us is whether these satisfy the requirements of modern criticism. There is no evidence that one of the original picture-writings of the Mexicans, written before the Conquest, is now extant. When Cortes invaded the country there were numerous records stored up in the archives, and especially in the great centre of culture Tezcuco, which to the ignorant fanaticism of Spanish priests and soldiers seemed magic scrolls, and the symbols of a pestilent superstition to be stamped out at once. They were collected from every quarter by the first Archbishop of Mexico, Don Juan de Zumarraga, a name to be remembered with that of the Caliph Omar, and piled up into a mountain heap, in the flames of which the ancient history of the Nahuas was lost to the world for ever. The events recorded in the destroyed picture-writings are supposed by Mr. Bancroft to have been kept in the memories of the educated classes until they ultimately reached the writers of history under Spanish rule through 'the talk of the old men.' Such information orally handed down cannot be considered exact or valuable, so far as relates to details. The general outlines of the ancient history may be fairly represented, but even these have been coloured by non-contemporaneous writers, consciously or unconsciously, by the promptings of fanaticism or the pride of family.

The conditions under which Spanish writers published their

works in Mexico may be gathered from the history of Sahagun, and the fate of his manuscripts. Bernadino Sahagun, one of the missionaries who arrived in Mexico in 1529, after mastering the Aztec language, spared no pains to get materials for his history from the natives by whom he was surrounded. He will relate his story in his own words, iii. p. 231–2 :—

'I made in the Spanish language a minute or memorandum of all the matters that I had to treat of, which matters are what is written in these twelve books . . . . which were begun in the pueblo of Tepeopulco, which is in the province of Culhuacán or Tezcuco. The work was done in the following way. In the aforesaid pueblo, I got together all the principal men, together with the lord of the place, who was called Don Diego de Mendoza, of great distinction and ability, well experienced in things ecclesiastic, military, political, and even relating to idolatry. They being come together, I set before them what I proposed to do, and prayed them to appoint me able and experienced people with whom I might converse and come to an understanding on such questions as I might propose. They answered me that they would talk the matter over and give me their answer on another day; and with this they took their departure. So on another day the lord and his principal men came, and having conferred together with great solemnity, as they were accustomed at that time to do, they chose out ten or twelve of the principal old men, and told me that with these I might communicate, and that these would instruct me in any matters I should inquire of. Of these there were as many as four instructed in Latin, to whom I, some few years before, had myself taught grammar in the college of Santa Cruz, in Tlaltelolco. With these appointed principal men, including the four instructed in grammar, I talked many days during about two years, following the order of the minute I had already made out. On all the subjects on which we conferred they gave me pictures—which were the writings anciently in use among them—and these the grammarians interpreted to me in their language, writing the interpretation at the foot of the picture. Even to this day I hold the originals of these. . . . When I went to the chapter with which was ended the seven years' term of Fray Francisco Toral—he that had imposed the charge of this work upon me—I was removed from Tepeopulco, carrying all my writings. I went to reside at Sant Tagodel Tlaltelolco. There I brought together the principal men, set before them the matter of my writings, and asked them to appoint me some able principal men, with whom I might examine and talk over the writings I had brought from Tepeopulco. The governor, with the alcades, appointed me as many as eight or ten principal men, selected from all the most able in their language, and in the things of their antiquities. With these and with four or five collegians, all trilinguists, and living for the space of a year or more secluded in the college, all that had been brought written from Tepeopulco was clearly emended and added to, and the whole was re-written in small letters, for it was written with much haste . . . . (iii. p. 232). The clear

copy being fully made out, by the favour of the fathers above mentioned, and the expenditure of hard cash on the scribes, the author thereof asked of the delegate, Father Francisco de Rivera, that the work be submitted to three or four religious, so that they might give an opinion on it, and that in the provincial chapter, which was close at hand, they might attend and report on the matter to the assembly, speaking as the thing might appear to them. And these reported in the assembly that the writings were of much value and deserved such support as was necessary towards their completion. But to some of the assembly it seemed that it was contrary to their vows of poverty to spend money in copying these writings; so they commanded the author to dismiss his scribes, and that he alone with his own hand should do what copying he wanted done; but as he was more than seventy years old, and for the trembling of his hand not able to write anything, nor able to procure a dispensation from this mandate, there was nothing done with the writings for more than five years.'

Eventually his work was completed in 1569. It was sent over to Spain, where it lay hidden for more than two centuries, until its discovery by Signor Muñoz, in a convent library at Tolosa in Navarre. Singularly enough it was published nearly simultaneously in 1830–1, by Lord Kingsborough in England, and by Bustamante in America. A work which has been written under these conditions cannot be expected to give a true record of ancient history. Indeed Bustamante writes that the twelfth book, relating to the Conquest, has been destroyed, and a spurious account inserted 'because 'Sahagun wrote with a frankness proper to truth, and as this 'was not pleasing to the heads of the government, nor even to 'some of his brother-friars, he was despoiled of his writings.' Under circumstances such as these the sources of American history merit a most careful criticism.

Nor are the records compiled by the converts more valuable than those of the priests. Fernando di Alva Ixlilxochitl, a grandson of the last king of Tezcuco, from whom he inherited what was saved of the public archives from the flames, has left behind a narrative which is in hopeless confusion, and certainly traditional rather than historic. The third class of witnesses is, if possible, less satisfactory than the other two. Cortes Diaz del Castillo, the 'Anonymous Conqueror,' and other adventurers, wrote merely from the point of view by their contact with a people utterly strange to Europe; and their writings seem to us to offer an exaggerated and distorted picture of the country which they conquered. It was to their interest to make their victories appear as great as possible to their countrymen, who were too far away to ascertain the facts for themselves; and to that end we believe that the power, wealth,

and magnificence of the Mexicans, so graphically pictured by Prescott, have been greatly magnified. The more bloodthirsty the worship of the Mexican gods was represented to be, the less sympathy would there be excited by the ruthless manner in which the Conquest was carried out. The sturdy Spanish freebooters, fighting for gold, and ignorant of the significance of the picture-writings, could not be expected to possess any of the qualities necessary for an historian of the conquered, and their ideas of ancient Mexican history must have been obtained second-hand. We, therefore, take it that the accounts handed down to us by the priests, by their converts, and by the conquerors, are untrustworthy and to be largely discounted by anyone who wishes to get at an approximation of the truth. Mr. Prescott has not done this in his charming narrative, and Mr. Bancroft expressly tells us that his object is to lay all his sources of information before the reader, rejecting only what may be proven false and valueless rather than what may possibly be so. For our part we entirely distrust the chronology and the minor details of events which happened, say 100 years before the Conquest, and we only feel inclined to believe those portions of the records which are borne out by an appeal to relics still extant, or which would not be likely to be exaggerated by the three classes of witnesses. On the other side of the Atlantic Mr. Morgan, in the 'North American 'Review' (April 1876), goes much further than this; for he considers the elaborate accounts of the social habits of the Nahuas, the government, and the like, to be fictions based only on simple manners and customs and institutions, resembling those of the wild tribes.

The Nahuan civilisation as presented to us by the documentary evidence and that of the art and architecture, was as complicated as that of ancient Egypt. In his treatment of it Mr. Bancroft leaves the wheat and the chaff designedly together on his threshing floor, and tells the would-be historian to winnow out of it what he can. Without this preliminary it seems to us that a true idea of Mexican and Central American civilisation would be impossible. He has, in our opinion, met with scant justice at the hands of the North American reviewer, who invades Mr. Bancroft's threshing floor, and finds fault with the chaff upon it, just as if it were possible to thresh without chaff, and as if the author had professed to put the wheat into his garner. The latter course would have saved the reader a great deal of trouble, but it is not adopted by the author, who, therefore, is not to be judged in the same way as the writers of history, such as Prescott. We go a

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long way with Mr. Morgan as to the exaggerated picture usually given of Mexican civilisation, but we cannot go to the whole length of his scepticism. We fully allow that the details of Montezuma's dinner, as related by Cortes and other eye-witnesses, are obviously overdrawn, but we do not take that to be a fair example of the evidence which is offered as to Mexican civilisation in general. With the victory of the Spaniards all means of verifying their accounts of the dinner disappeared, but it is not so with the manners and customs, which were recorded by men who got them first-hand in the manner we have described in the case of Sahagun. The grandson of the last king of Tezcuco may fairly be presumed to have known something about the manners and customs of his own people, and is stated to have inherited some of the picture-writings. Mr. Morgan rejects in a wholesale fashion nearly the whole of the evidence, on the grounds that it is inconsistent with his ideal of the Red Indian. He affirms that 'there was neither a political society, nor a state, nor any 'civilisation in America when it was discovered;' and that a democracy was the only form of government possible to the Nahuas. He supports this startling conclusion by the analogies presented by the institutions of other American tribes with those of Mexico, and he assumes that the culture of the Red Indian must stop short at a confederacy of tribes without the further development into a monarchy. We cannot follow him in this. After stripping away a great deal of the Spanish setting, the story of the reigns of Montezuma and his predecessors represents to us the natural development of the kingly power from that of the war-chief of the usual Red Indian type, analogous to the development of kingship among the Germanic tribes and the Aryans generally. We believe that there was a political society and a civilisation, mainly the outgrowth of ancient tribal divisions and customs, and that the whole organisation of the body politic can be proved to have been far in advance of the Pueblos and Moquis, Creeks, or Iroquois, with which it is compared by the reviewer. We would remind Mr. Morgan, when he says that the Nahuas were merely 'a 'breech cloth people, wearing this rag of barbarism as the 'unmistakable evidence of their condition,' that the ancient Greeks and the Romans, down to the age of Augustus, were also 'breech cloth peoples.' Were Cicero or Thucydides barbarians because they wore no breeches? So far from these being any sign of culture, they are defined by Tacitus as 'tegmen barbarum,' and were not allowed to be worn in Rome by a law of the Emperors Arcadius and Honorius. Mr. Car-

lyle may be right in viewing man as to a large extent modelled on his clothes; but it is simply ridiculous to associate the idea of civilisation with the idea of breeches. All the great writers and heroes of antiquity were sans culottes. The dress of the higher classes among the Nahuas was at least as elaborate as that among ourselves.

Montezuma, the war chief of the Aztecs, appears naturally enough in the pages of the Spanish chroniclers as the imperator, the emperor, and the evidence seems to be clear that he was as absolute in Mexico as Philip II. in Spain. He was at the head of a body of chiefs of various grades, analogous to the orders of nobility in feudal Europe. The power of these chiefs in Tezcuco was curbed by a most ingenious device of Techotlalatzin, their overlord, who divided twenty-six provinces of his kingdom into sixty-five departments, governed by his own officials. He also divided the inhabitants of each province into six sections.

'They were then changed about from place to place, in number proportioned to the size and population of the territory. For example, from a division containing six thousand people, two thousand were taken and transported into the territory of another lord, from the number of whose vassals two thousand were also taken and placed upon the vacated land in the first lord's possessions; each noble, however, retained his authority over that portion of his vassals which had been removed. By this means, although the number of each lord's subjects remained the same, yet as a large portion of each territory was occupied by the vassals of another, a revolt would be difficult. Nor could two nobles unite their forces against the crown, as care was taken that the interchange of dependents should not be effected between two estates adjoining each other.' (*Bancroft*, ii. 190.)

This is recorded on the authority of Torquemada, one of the first Spanish missionaries, and as well as that of the grandson of the last king of Tezcuco. There seems to have been a very marked division between the chiefs and the common people; the former either inherited their rank or obtained it on the battle-field. There are stated to have been three military orders open to all, 'the Princes, Eagles, and Tigers.' Each soldier attained his rank according to his merits, which were measured by the number of captives he had secured. In battle they fought in divisions, each with its standards.

The priesthood formed an important class in the body politic. From the day of his birth to his death, the Aztec was obliged to observe forms and ceremonies, which in their minuteness are remarkable among the religious institutions of civilised peoples. Almost every occurrence had a tinge of that stern and dreadful superstition which led them to appease the wrath or to

obtain the favour of the gods by human sacrifices; and these were offered on what would seem to us the most trivial occasions; for example, at the feast given on the return of a successful caravan, the festivities, which sometimes extended over several days, culminated in the sacrifice of slaves and the eating of human flesh, as a religious duty, and not as a mere question of appetite. The obtaining of slaves for these sacrifices affected the whole character of the people, from the necessity which it imposed upon them for making forays in order to meet the requirements of their ritual. Even if we discount the numbers given by the prejudiced Spaniard of human victims offered on the consecration of temples or on the accession of a king, we must believe that the destruction of life purely from religious motives must have been enormous. Indeed, it was the aim of every Aztec warrior to bring home with him as many captives as possible, to be used on the altars as occasion might require, and he took his rank from the number of captives which he had made.

The priests are stated to have formed a well-disciplined ecclesiastical body, governed by a supreme pontiff, in each of the three states of the Mexican Confederation. In Mexico, however, it was united with the office of commander-in-chief, and with the temporal sovereignty. The spiritual king was consecrated with the same sacred unguent as that used in the consecration of the temporal sovereign. The supreme pontiff, or divine master, as he was termed, was 'the head of 'the church,' and had absolute authority over all priests and all colleges throughout the empire. The ministers of the various temples were obliged to take their degree at the schools to which they had been sent during their youth, and among their duties was the education of choristers who were to sing at the principal feasts, and the superintendence of studies in the schools. In Mexico and the other towns of the empire there were as many sets of priests as there were temples, each having jurisdiction in its own section, which corresponded to our parish, and the priests and their pupils lived in a school which adjoined the temple. There was a complex ritual, fixed and movable feasts, fasts also and penances, which consisted in abstinence from food, mutilation of the body, drawing of blood, and passing sticks, varying in thickness from half an inch to an inch and a half in diameter, through a hole cut in the tongue. They even discriminated their penances to such an extent as to punish the part of the body which had sinned; blood was drawn from the ears for inattention, from the tongue for bad language, and eyes, arms, and legs all suffered for any

infringement of the ecclesiastical laws. Incense was used in their worship as well as sacrifices of men and animals. The human victims were sacrificed by an incision made through the breast with a knife of obsidian, through which the throbbing heart was torn by the priest, and offered to the idol in the sight of the multitude; the blood also was offered; sometimes the victim was flayed, and the priest dressed up in the skin represented the incarnation of the god. Human sacrifice seems to have extended throughout the Nahuan peoples, but in Mexico it was far more abundant than anywhere else; as many as seventy-two thousand captives are said to have been offered up at the consecration of the great temple of the God of War. These numbers are obviously exaggerated.

The common people were oppressed by the chiefs and priests in the time of Montezuma, although they enjoyed considerable freedom under the earlier kings, as in the parallel case in the history of the development of the Roman or Greek empires. The slaves were of three classes; first, those taken in war and doomed to sacrifice; second, those that were condemned for crime to forfeit their freedom; third, children sold by their parents. They seem to have enjoyed considerable liberty, they could marry and bring up families, hold property, including other slaves to serve them, and their children were born free.

The lands were divided between the king or overlord, the chiefs, the clans or tribes of the people, and the priestly order; there was also a share set apart for the supply of food in time of war. The lands of the people belonged to the community and not to the individual. The soil was carefully irrigated, and water was conveyed to a considerable distance by aqueducts. Agriculture and horticulture flourished; paper was manufactured from the pulp of the maguey. Besides the ordinary necessaries of life such as maize, beans, cotton, and maguey,—which last supplied them with food, pulque, thatch for their houses, pins, and needles,—articles of luxury were cultivated. There were two sorts of tobacco, chilli, vanilla, and cocoa, for the enjoyment of which, as well as for turkeys, we ourselves are indebted to this singular people. On the lake of Mexico were large floating gardens.

One of the peculiar features of Nahuan civilisation was the respect which was paid to merchants in the body politic. They formed a guild, and were represented in the council of the king until they were degraded by the folly of Montezuma II. For purposes of trade they formed large caravans, perfectly armed, composed of numerous slaves, in the place of animals

of draught, which they did not possess. They were specially educated for their calling, and in many regions the highest nobles thought it no disgrace to engage in commercial pursuits. They had tribunals of their own, to which they were alone responsible in all matters relating to trade. Trade was carried on in the main by barter. In the absence of regular coined money there were several standards of value, amongst which the chief were nibs or grains of cocoa, small pieces of cotton cloth, gold dust kept in translucent quills, and small pieces of copper cut into a T shape. Tin cut in the same shape was found in circulation in some districts by Cortes. In the chief towns there were markets regulated under the direction of officials, which excited the admiration of the Spanish invaders. Broad roads, in our sense of the term, there were none, but the paths connecting one place with another were repaired every spring, and the flying bridges made of rope and twisted bines across some of the rivers were most admirably constructed, and are still in use in that region. We may remark that bridges of this kind are also to be seen in Thibet.

According to Las Casas each of the two market-places in the city of Mexico would contain two hundred thousand (?) persons, one hundred thousand being present every fifth day. Flowers were sold as well as fruit, precious stones and an infinite variety of pottery, implements, weapons, and ornaments of metal, stone, and wood. The feather-work of Mexico is famous for its beauty, and the skill with which the gold and silversmiths exercised their craft was certainly not to be surpassed in Europe at that time (ii. 476).

All the branches of art among the Nahuas were placed under the control of a council of arts, which was instituted to develope poetry, oratory, history, painting, sculpture, and working in gold, precious stones, and feathers. In Tezcuco it was known as the council of music. The emperor Nezahualcoyotl, the Tezcucan Solomon, was himself a poet of great renown, and fragments of his poetry have been preserved.

'O thou my friend, and beloved,
Enjoy the sweet flowers I bring thee;
Let us be joyful together,
And banish each care and each sorrow;
For although life's pleasures are fleeting,
Life's bitterness also must leave us.

I will strike, to help me in singing,
The instrument deep and sonorous;
Dance thou while enjoying these flowers,
Before the great lord who is mighty;

Let us grasp the sweet things of the present,
For the life of a man is soon over.

. . . . .

The fame of a race that is mighty,
And worthy a thousand fair kingdoms,
Will not in the future be heeded;
The nations will only remember
The justice with which they were governed
In the years when the kingdom was threefold.

I would that those living in friendship,
Whom the thread of strong love doth encircle,
Could see the sharp sword of the Death God.
For, verily pleasure is fleeting,
All sweetness must change in the future,
The good things of life are inconstant.'*

The poems from which these stanzas are quoted were written from memory in Aztec, with Roman letters, after the Conquest, and translated into Spanish by Ixtlilxochitl, a lineal descendant of the royal author. We believe them to be valuable fragments of the literature of a highly cultivated class among the Nahuas. Events were recorded among the Nahuas by a system of picture-writings, in which colour was employed to represent ideas as well as form, and many conventional symbols were used. They were painted in bright colours on strips of cotton cloth, prepared skins of maguey paper, either rolled up or folded like a fan into convenient books furnished with wooden covers.

The strongest proof, however, of the advanced civilisation of the Nahuas is offered by their method of computing time, which was equal in correctness to any then known. They had observed the heavenly bodies with sufficient success to become well acquainted with the movements of the sun and moon, as well as with those of some of the planets. They had divided the day into fixed periods corresponding with our hours. The year consisted of eighteen months of twenty days, or four weeks, of which every fifth day was a market or public fair. To make their reckoning correct they added five additional days to the 360, and they provided for the additional six hours by an intercalation, not every fourth year, like ourselves, but at the end of every fifty-two years, when they interposed twelve and a half days. The intercalation, indeed, of twenty-five days in every 104 years, as Mr. Prescott observes, shows a closer adjustment of solar to civil time than is presented by any European people. They also possessed a lunar calendar,

* Vol. ii. p. 494–95.

which was used by the priests for the adjustment of religious feasts and ceremonies.

We might, perhaps, have doubted these accounts of this most extraordinary people, were they not supported by evidence other than that derived from Spanish records. Their artistic skill is proved by the articles of metal and precious stones stored up in various museums, as well as by their sculptures. The organisation of the priesthood and the complexity of ritual are corroborated by the number of teocallis which still remain, and by sculptures and other works of art figured by Mr. Bancroft in the fourth volume, as, for example, the basaltic figure of a priest clad in the skin of a human victim (iv. 522). If the priests obtained such a hold over the people as these remains imply, it is in the highest degree probable that the kingship had obtained a corresponding hold. Just as the priestly caste in Mexico was higher than the medicine-man of the Red Indian to the north, so the office of kingship may reasonably be supposed to have been higher than that of war-chief. We cannot believe that so elaborate a religious system could have been devised without a corresponding organisation of the body politic in other lines, and we therefore accept the main outlines of the organisation of the civil power as handed down to us. Montezuma's palace probably was, as Mr. Morgan contends, a joint-tenement house, but there can be no doubt as to its being a magnificent structure; and, in like manner, many terms applicable to the civilisation of the old world may have been used in a slightly different sense for the strange customs and manners in the new. This, however, does not affect the credibility of the records. The possessors of an arithmetical method by which the highest numbers could be recorded, of sufficient astronomical knowledge to make sun-dials, of a literature and of a complex religious system, constitute sufficient grounds for the classification of the Nahuas amongst civilised peoples. The history of their civilisation as yet remains to be written. Mr. Prescott was carried away by his vivid imagination, and errs in excess. Mr. Morgan errs in the opposite direction. Without such preliminary work as that which has been done by Mr. Bancroft, a history would be impossible.

The confused legends which profess to give the most ancient accounts of the Nahuas, relate that the Olmecs, one of the many primitive tribes, on their arrival in Anahuac found the Quinames, a race of giants, in possession of the land, whom they conquered. To them is assigned the building of the great pyramid of Cholula, the Nahuan Mecca; and among

them the great Quetzalcoatl, the plumed serpent, appeared from beyond seas, half divinity and half hero; a white, bearded, venerable man, just and holy; a prophet, priest, and king. According to some writers he came into Anahuac at the head of the Nahuas. He ultimately departed, predicting great calamities, and promising to return when his worshippers were to rule over the land. This prediction was regarded by Montezuma to have been fulfilled by the landing of Cortes. He is considered by most of the Spanish writers to have been St. Thomas, while Mr. Tylor looks upon him as a sun myth, the sun of to-day, born of his father Camaxtli, the sun of yesterday. Next the Toltecs appear on the scene, and the Chichimecs. According to all accounts the Toltecs were the great builders up of the Nahuan civilisation, and to them is universally assigned the raising of most of the large structures, the ruins of which still astonish the traveller in Mexico. They probably absorbed into themselves all the tribes which they found in possession. The duration of their dominion is uncertain. Of their three capitals, Tolan was the most magnificent, and Culhuacan the only one which survived the overthrow of their power. The traditional date of the overthrow of the Toltec dominion by the Chichimecs is the eleventh century. Warlike tribes, more or less barbarous, established themselves within the borders of the weakened empire, which is stated to have been rent asunder by rival religious sects and by civil war, followed by famine and pestilence. The popular account pictures the whole population as migrating southwards, but it is incredible that so fair a land would be abandoned by its possessors except under the pressure of invasion. Very probably, however, the chief men were driven into exile, and they may possibly have found a refuge in Central America, among the Maya and Quiché nations, just as in modern times the leaders of the frequent revolts and faction fights are in the habit of doing. There is, however, no proof that they were the founders of the Mayan civilisation of Central America.

The sceptre of the Toltecs passed into the hands of the Chichimecs, and with it all trace of the latter as a people disappears, from which may be inferred that the two were closely related to one another, and that the change was rather that of dynasty than of a displacement of population, analogous in some respects to those changes in names which are met with in the history of the ancient Germanic tribes. The Chichimecs seem to have absorbed the Toltecs into their mass; it is nevertheless probable that some new tribes may have entered into Mexico about this time. Under the Chichimecs Cul-

huacan recovered its old position as the centre of culture and power, and along with the city of Tezcuco, that of the Chichimecs *par excellence*, and Azcapuzalco, the capital of the Tepanecs, formed a confederation somewhat analogous to that of the Aztecs. Wars and intrigues, however, between them ended in the destruction of the first-mentioned of these cities, and the subjugation of the Tepanecs, who for a time were masters of Anahuac.

While, however, these events were taking place another of the tribes in Anahuac had gradually been gaining for themselves a place among the nations. The Aztecs, formidable for their fierce and warlike nature and bloody religious rites, had founded the city of Mexico in the marshes adjoining the great lake, after long wanderings and many reverses. It is said to have been founded in the year 1325. At the fall of Culhuacan, Mexico ranked next to Tezcuco, and the Aztecs were the most powerful of all the tribes who sprang to arms against the Tepanecs. The war resulted in the destruction of the capital of the latter, and in the establishment of an empire, or confederation, in which Mexico and Tezcuco had dominions of equal extent, while Tlacopan, belonging to the conquered Tepanecs, was admitted to the alliance with a smaller share of territory. This event is said to have happened in the early part of the fifteenth century. The terms of this confederacy seem never to have been openly violated. But just before the arrival of Cortes the Aztecs had increased so much in power that they aimed at a supremacy over the confederacy, and a desperate struggle was imminent, which was only averted by the total overthrow of the confederation by the Spaniards. It was to this jealousy of the Aztecs, and to the fear of their obtaining absolute power, that we may attribute the comparative ease with which the destruction of the Mexican empire was brought about.

The ignorant fanaticism of the Spaniard has left only a few uncertain legends as to the ancient history of the Mayas and Quichés, of Yucatan, Honduras, and Guatemala. The key to the hieroglyphs engraved on the monuments of Palenque and Copan is utterly lost. Both these cities were apparently in ruins at the time of the Conquest; others, however, according to Mr. Stephens, were conquered and destroyed by the Spaniards. They are undoubtedly the outward signs of a civilisation resembling the Nahuan, but not identical with it. The great stone idols which they worshipped were different from the snake-adorned divinities of the Mexicans, and were of a milder and higher type. In the former we find groups of

figures with their feet folded under them, a posture which is rarely observed in Mexican figures. Mr. Bancroft believes that the Mayan power was the first to be developed in Central America, and that alongside of it the Nahuan gradually rose up with its capital Tulan in Chiapas, and that ultimately the former was overthrown by the latter. This view seems to us purely mythical, for it is incredible that the centre of Nahuan greatness should have been shifted from Central America to Anahuac without adequate cause; and had the affinity between the two peoples been as great as Mr. Bancroft believes, their languages and hieroglyphs would hardly have been so distinct. Whether the analogies which exist between the institutions and monumental remains of Mexico and Central America be due to the latter region being the ancient home of the Nahuas, or whether they are the result of subsequent intercourse, seems to us doubtful. That, however, the two peoples came into close contact is proved by the legend of the plumed serpent being common to both, as well as by many common points in their architecture and sculpture.

Mr. Bancroft tells us very little of the relation of the Peruvian civilisation to the Mayan and Nahuan. The most remarkable monuments of Peru are generally considered the work of a people which preceded those found by Pizarro in possession of the country, and bearing about the same relation to them as the Toltecs to the Aztecs. The great military roads, aqueducts, and other cyclopean structures prove that they were far advanced in the engineering arts. They kindled their sacrificial fire with a concave mirror of polished metal, their records were kept by means of knotted strings or quippus and picture-writings, which were not so far advanced as those of the Nahuas, nor was their method of computing time so elaborate. The possession of the llama distinguishes them from the Mayas and Nahuas, among whom the dog was the only domesticated animal. On the whole we feel inclined to believe either that this Peruvian civilisation is distinct from the Mayan or Nahuan, or that it is derived from a common source so remote that, for all practical purposes, we may consider it to have been distinct.

We must now inquire into the relation which exists between the mound-builders of the Mississippi, and the copper-workers of Lake Superior, with the Mayas and Nahuas. Throughout the great valley of the Mississippi are numerous earthworks and mounds, and other relics of a civilisation which had disappeared before the present races of Indians had occupied the country. They centre more particularly in the State of Ohio, from which

they decrease in number and importance northwards, eastwards, and perhaps westwards. To the south the temple-mounds (teocallis) are more numerous than the rest. The embankments are generally connected with mounds, and form earthworks for defence like those on the South-downs explored by Col. Lane Fox, and have their entrances sometimes protected by overlapping works. Sometimes they enclose perfect circles or squares. One long ramp in Northern Ohio is seventeen miles long, and similar in appearance to the Wandsdyke near Avebury, or Offa's dyke on the borders of Wales, and was probably crowned with palisades for defensive purposes.

'Other enclosures are classed as sacred, or pertaining in some way to religious rites, because no other equally satisfactory explanation of their use can be given. That they were in no sense works of defence is evident from their position, almost invariably on the most level spot that could be selected, and often overlooked by neighbouring elevations. Unlike the fortifications, they are regular in form, the square and circle predominating, and generally found in conjunction, but the ellipse, rectangle, crescent, and a great variety of other forms being frequent, and several different forms usually occurring together. A square with one or more circles is a frequent combination. The angles and curves are usually, if not always, perfectly accurate, and the regular, or sacred, enclosures probably outnumber by many the irregular ones, although they are of lesser extent. Enclosed areas of one to fifty acres are common. The groups are of great extent; one at Newark, Ohio, covers an area of nearly four square miles. A remarkable coincidence was noticed by Mr. Squire in the dimensions of the square enclosures, five or six of these having been found at long distances from each other, which measured exactly ten hundred and eighty feet square. Circles are, as a rule, smaller than the squares with which they are connected, two hundred to two hundred and fifty feet being a common size. The largest of the enclosures, with an area of some six hundred acres, are those reported in the far west and northwest by early travellers, whose reports are not confirmed.' (Vol. iv. p. 757.)

The temple-mounds, which sometimes were terraced, are often ninety feet high, and cover eight acres, and probably supported wooden temples on their summit. According to Mr. Bancroft they contain no relics, which however have been found in abundance in the smaller mounds, known as altars and tumuli, with which they are intimately associated.

Another class of mounds is found in greatest abundance in the north-west, those in the shape of animals; some of which represent a human figure a hundred feet long, others birds and reptiles. One in Adam's County, Ohio, on the summit of a hill, is said to be a serpent in the act of swallowing an oval mound a hundred and sixty feet long by eighty feet wide; its

body is more than a thousand feet long. These are considered by Schoolcraft to be the totems of different tribes, but their use has not as yet been satisfactorily explained.

These people were tillers of the ground, and a dense population centred in the most fertile spots. Their pottery was of a high order, and that figured by Mr. Bancroft (iv. p. 780), is Mexican or Central American in design, like the tablet discovered in Cincinnati, figured by Professor Wilson (i. 177, fig. 1). The same may be remarked of the terra cotta figures of men. They used also elaborately carved pipes of stone, on which every indigenous bird, beast, and reptile is faithfully delineated, and among them are some creatures now only to be found within the tropics, such as the lamantin and toucan. They obtained also mica from the Alleghanies, and pearls and various marine shells from the Gulf of Mexico. Obsidian knives have also been met with, and copper in native lumps, or hammered into various implements and weapons. They were ignorant of the arts of casting, welding, and alloying, contrasting in these respects with the Mexicans. They used silver in small sheets wrapped about ornaments of copper or shell. Both these metals are native, and the natural alloy of the former points out that it was derived from the ancient copper mines of Lake Superior. Thus we are driven to believe that these people either worked the mines themselves or obtained their copper through barter from the miners. The magnitude of the operations carried on in these mines may be gathered from the fact that one block of copper, weighing upwards of six tons, was discovered in the Minnesota mine, mounted on an open frame preparatory to its being got out. We cannot accept Mr. Bancroft's view that the extreme difficulty of clearing forests and carving stone with implements of stone and soft copper, lends any weight to the supposition that the mound-builders were acquainted with the use of iron.

The mound-builders are proved to have been a numerous people by the magnitude and geographical extent of their works. They are considered by Mr. Bancroft to have been composed of tribes living under similar laws and religion, and possessed, on the whole, of the same habits of life; such variations as are observed being probably those which might be expected to be local. They lived by agriculture rather than on the chase, possessed considerable skill in the art of fortification, and sufficient mathematical knowledge to lay out perfect circles and squares. Their monuments 'imply a widespread 'religious system under a powerful priesthood. Private devo- 'tion manifests itself on a scale less magnificent, one involving

'less hard work. The altar-mounds suggest sacrifice,' and the burnt human bones may indicate human victims, but they may be the result of the custom of cremation. They were probably erected by a race that lived long in the land, and which is not represented by any of the tribes now to be found in those regions. Mr. Bancroft concludes that—

'The monuments are not sufficient in themselves to absolutely prove or disprove the truth of any one of the following theories: 1. An indigenous culture springing up among the Mississippi tribes, founded on agriculture, fostered by climate and unknown circumstances, constantly growing through long ages, driving back the surrounding walls of savagism, but afterwards weakened by unknown causes, yielding gradually to savage hordes, and finally annihilated or driven in remnants from their homes southward. 2. A colony from the southern peoples already started in the path of civilisation, growing as before in power, but at last forced to yield their homes into the possession of savages. 3. A migrating colony from the north, dwelling long in the land, gradually increasing in power and culture, constantly extending their dominion southward, and finally abandoning, voluntarily or against their will, the north for the more favoured south, where they modified or originated the southern civilisation.' (Vol. iv. p. 787.)

Of these theories Mr. Bancroft adopts the last, and holds that 'they were probably a colony of the ancient Mayas who 'settled in the north during the continuance of the great Maya 'empire of Xibalba in Central America several centuries 'before Christ.' It seems to us, however, that the absence of bronze, used by the Mayas and Nahuas for implements and weapons, among the traces left behind by the mound-builders, is fatal to that view. Had they advanced northwards they would have left behind more distinct traces of their culture. The view which suggests itself more forcibly to our minds is that the mound-builders gradually extended their borders in very remote times from north to south, and that during the long centuries of their migration they developed a civilisation of comparatively high order. It is indeed possible that the pyramid mounds may have been the prototypes of the teocallis, and the germs of the religion which was so highly organised in Mexico originated in this area; but whether this be so or not, there can be no doubt that the Nahuan or Mayan influences, as proved by works of art, occur as far north as Cincinnati. The coiled rattlesnakes, emblematic of royalty among the Mexicans, have been found in Tennessee and Ohio.

The proof that the mound-builders disappeared from this region in remote times is tolerably clear. The fertile plains of the Mississippi and its tributaries consist of three terraces, the one extending on each side of a river, and the two others

rising one above the other. None of these works stand upon the last-formed terrace, some of those on the second bear marks of having been invaded by the current, at that time flowing near their level, while most of them are on the oldest and highest of the three. We may therefore infer that they disappeared before the formation of the last terrace. The fact that some of the monuments were covered with primeval forests in the seventeenth century, and that some of the trees growing on them are from four to five hundred years old, while others were met with in all stages of decomposition at their feet and under the ground, implies that the works were abandoned about one thousand years ago; and even this estimate must be extended when we reflect that cultivated land in reverting to the condition of a forest has to support several generations of trees of different species before it returns to the condition of primeval forest, which was destroyed in the ancient clearings. It is a singular coincidence that the approximate date of the abandonment of these works, arrived at in this fashion, should agree with the date which is assigned by tradition to the arrival of the Nahuas in Anahuac. We may add that the abandonment of the copper mines of Lake Superior is proved to have happened many centuries ago by the large size of some of the trees growing on the old workings. The complete disappearance of all wooden structures from the works of the mound-builders, and the decayed human bones which Mr. Bancroft brings forward as evidence of high antiquity, do not seem to us to have any bearing upon the point, because the preservation of such remains depends upon accidental circumstances varying in each case.

If, however, we attribute any portion of the Mexican or Central American civilisation to the mound-builders, we are bound to admit, with Mr. Bancroft, that by far the greater portion cannot be traced to any particular source in America. Neither in California, nor in New Mexico, or Arizona, are there any traces of a civilisation in any degree analogous to that of Uxmal, Palenque, Copan, Tezcuco or Mexico, the structures in those districts being referable to the ancestors of the present Moquis and Pueblos. It seems therefore tolerably clear that the culture of the Mayas, Nahuas, and Peruvians was not derived from this quarter. Outside the Americas, however, in the art of the Chinese, Japanese, and other Mongolians of Asia, we find resemblances which can scarcely be accidental. The polished bronze mirrors of Peru are, as Professor Wilson observes, remarkably like those of Japan, the plumed serpents and other figures recall to mind the dragons

and other grotesques of the Chinese and Japanese; and when we find further that the Aztec calendar was constructed on the same principle as the Mongolian, the suspicion that the one was derived from the other becomes almost a certainty. 'A 'correspondence quite as extraordinary,' writes Mr. Prescott ('Conquest of Mexico,' p. 466), 'is found between the hieroglyphs 'used by the Aztecs for the signs of the days, and those zodiacal 'signs which the Eastern Asiatics employed as one of the terms 'of their series. The symbols in the Mongolian calendar are 'borrowed from animals. Four of the twelve are the same as 'the Aztec. Three others are as nearly the same as the diffe- 'rent species of animals in the two hemispheres would allow. 'The remaining five refer to no creature then found in Ana- 'huac. The resemblance went as far as it could. The 'similarity of these conventional symbols among the several 'nations of the East can hardly fail to carry conviction of a 'common origin for the system as regards them. Why should 'not a similar conclusion be applied to the Aztec calendar, 'which, although relating to days instead of years, was, like 'the Asiatic, equally appropriated to chronological uses and to 'those of divination?'

It would be absurd to suppose that two uncivilised peoples could devise such artificial and cumbrous* methods of dividing time without some intercourse with each other. Such a supposition would push Mr. Buckle's theory of civilisation to the verge of the ridiculous. It is very hard in a great many cases to define what are the results of environment, pure and simple, from those manners and customs which have been inherited; in this case, however, where a scientific method is concerned, we are driven to believe that the civilisations of Asia and America were connected in remote times. It is very improbable that this knowledge could have been introduced alone without some of the other arts having been brought along with it. We feel, therefore, inclined to hold with Humboldt that the civilisation was to some extent imported from Asia. The Japanese current, as we have already remarked, sweeps straight across the Pacific, and would easily convey vessels from the shores of Japan and China to Southern California and the shores of Mexico. To that daring race which has peopled Polynesia such a current would offer a comparatively easy highway.

The traditions of the ancient civilised peoples of America point towards the view which we have arrived at from an

* See Tylor, 'Anahuac,' 237–41.

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.

It is almost unnecessary for us to say that the Mexican, Central American, and Peruvian civilisations withered away at the contact with the fanaticism and ignorance of the Spaniard, and was replaced by one of foreign growth, which can scarcely be said to be higher. Probably its destruction would have been no less sure had it been brought into relation with any other European peoples. In dealing with it we cannot fairly compare it with any of those which have flourished within the last two thousand years in Europe. It can only be compared with the civilisation of the bronze age, which was rapidly passing away at the very dawn of history in the region of the Mediterranean; such, for example, as that revealed by the labours of Dr. Schliemann in the mound at Hisarlík.

The general impression left on our mind by the study of the problem offered by the races of the Americas is: 1. That they are, with the exception of the Eskimos, of Mongolian derivation, and that they have inhabited the new world for a sufficient length of time to develope many languages and a peculiar civilisation. 2. That from time to time fresh bodies of emigrants arrived from Asia, probably over sea, bringing with them the knowledge of arts and sciences, which were engrafted into this civilisation. 3. That there is no proof of contact of the new with the old world to be found in the civilisations of Mexico, Central America, and of Peru later than the bronze age. The absence of domestic animals, except the dog in the two first, may be accounted for by the difficulty of their being conveyed in canoes, as well as by the seafaring Mongolians, Malays, Polynesians, &c. not being addicted to pastoral habits. 4. That the migration has been on the whole from Asia to America, and the general drift of the tribes from north to south. We can confidently recommend Mr. Bancroft's book to our readers as a trustworthy and well-edited encyclopædia of all that is known of the 'Native Races of the Pacific States of North America,' and of the most important facts relating to the history, art, and architecture of the civilised peoples of Mexico and Central America.