

EARLY HISTORY OF MANKIND.

THE human race is known to consist of numerous nations, displaying considerable differences of external form and colour, and speaking in general different languages. This has been the case since the commencement of written record. It is also ascertained that the external peculiarities of particular nations do not rapidly change. There is rather a tendency to a persistency of type in all lines of descent, insomuch that a subordinate admixture of various type is usually obliterated in a few generations. Numerous as the varieties are, they have all been found classifiable under five leading ones:—1. The Caucasian, or Indo-European, which extends from India into Europe and Northern Africa; 2. The Mongolian, which occupies Northern and Eastern Asia; 3. The

Malayan, which extends from the Ultra-Gangetic Peninsula into the numerous islands of the South Sea and Pacific; 4. The Negro, chiefly confined to Africa; 5. The aboriginal American. Each of these is distinguished by certain general features of so marked a kind, as to give rise to a supposition that they have had distinct or independent origins. Of these peculiarities, colour is the most conspicuous: the Caucasians are generally white, the Mongolians yellow, the Negroes black, and the Americans red. The opposition of two of these in particular, white and black, is so striking, that of them, at least, it seems almost necessary to suppose separate origins. Of late years, however, the whole of this question has been subjected to a rigorous investigation, and it has been successfully shewn that the human race might have had one origin, for anything that can be inferred from external peculiarities.

It appears from this inquiry,* that colour and other physiological characters are of a more superficial and accidental nature than was at one time supposed. One fact is at the very first extremely startling, that there are nations, such as the inha-

* See Dr. Prichard's *Researches into the Physical History of Man*.

bitants of Hindostan, known to be one in descent, which nevertheless contain groups of people of almost all shades of colour, and likewise discrepant in other of those important features on which much stress has been laid. Some other facts, which I may state in brief terms, are scarcely less remarkable. In Africa, there are Negro nations,—that is, nations of intensely black complexion, as the Jolofs, Mandingoes, and Kafirs, whose features and limbs are as elegant as those of the best European nations. While we have no proof of Negro races becoming white in the course of generations, the converse may be held as established, for there are Arab and Jewish families of ancient settlement in Northern Africa, who have become as black as the other inhabitants. There are also facts which seem to shew the possibility of a natural transition by generation from the black to the white complexion, and from the white to the black. True whites (apart from Albinos) are not unfrequently born among the Negroes, and the tendency to this singularity is transmitted in families. There is, at least, one authentic instance of a set of perfectly black children being born to an Arab couple, in whose ancestry no such blood had intermingled. This occurred in

the valley of the Jordan, where it is remarkable that the Arab population in general have flatter features, darker skins, and coarser hair, than any other tribes of the same nation.*

The style of living is ascertained to have a powerful effect in modifying the human figure in the course of generations, and this even in its osseous structure. About two hundred years ago, a number of people were driven by a barbarous policy from the counties of Antrim and Down, in Ireland, towards the sea-coast, where they have ever since been settled, but in unusually miserable circumstances, even for Ireland; and the consequence is, that they exhibit peculiar features of the most repulsive kind, projecting jaws with large open mouths, depressed noses, high cheek bones, and bow legs, together with an extremely diminutive stature. These, with an abnormal slenderness of the limbs, are the outward marks of a low and barbarous condition all over the world; it is particularly seen in the Australian aborigines. On the other hand, the beauty of the higher ranks in England is very remarkable, being, in the main,

* Buckingham's Travels among the Arabs. This fact is the more valuable to the argument, as having been set down with no regard to any kind of hypothesis.

as clearly a result of good external conditions. "Coarse, unwholesome, and ill-prepared food," says Buffon, "makes the human race degenerate. All those people who live miserably are ugly and ill-made. Even in France, the country people are not so beautiful as those who live in towns; and I have often remarked that in those villages where the people are richer and better fed than in others, the men are likewise more handsome, and have better countenances." He might have added, that elegant and commodious dwellings, cleanly habits, comfortable clothing, and being exposed to the open air only as much as health requires, cooperate with food in increasing the elegance of a race of human beings.

Subject only to these modifying agencies, there is, as has been said, a remarkable persistency in national features and forms, insomuch that a single individual thrown into a family different from himself is absorbed in it, and all trace of him lost after a few generations. But while there is such a persistency to ordinary observation, it would also appear that nature has a power of producing new varieties, though this is only done rarely. Such novelties of type abound in the vegetable world, are seen more rarely in the animal circle, and

perhaps are least frequent of occurrence in our own race. There is a noted instance in the production, on a New England farm, of a variety of sheep with unusually short legs, which was kept up by breeding, on account of the convenience in that country of having sheep which are unable to jump over low fences. The starting and maintaining a *breed* of cattle, that is, a variety marked by some desirable peculiarity, are familiar to a large class of persons. It appears only necessary, when a variety has been thus produced, that a union should take place between individuals similarly characterized, in order to establish it. Early in the last century, a man named Lambert, was born in Suffolk, with semi-horny excrescences of about half an inch long, thickly growing all over his body. The peculiarity was transmitted to his children, and was last heard of in a third generation. The peculiarity of six fingers on the hand and six toes on the feet, appears in like manner in families which have no record or tradition of such a peculiarity having affected them at any former period, and it is then sometimes seen to descend through several generations. It was Mr. Lawrence's opinion, that a pair, in which both parties were so distinguished, might be the progenitors of

a new variety of the race who would be thus marked in all future time. It is not easy to surmise the causes which operate in producing such varieties. Perhaps they are simply types in nature, *possible to be realized under certain appropriate conditions*, but which conditions are such as altogether to elude notice. I might cite as examples of such possible types, the rise of whites amongst the Negroes, the occurrence of the family of black children in the valley of the Jordan, and the comparatively frequent birth of red-haired children amongst not only the Mongolian and Malayan families, but amongst the Negroes. We are ignorant of the laws of variety-production; but we see it going on as a principle in nature, and it is obviously favourable to the supposition that all the great families of men are of one stock.

The tendency of the modern study of the languages of nations is to the same point. The last fifty years have seen this study elevated to the character of a science, and the light which it throws upon the history of mankind is of a most remarkable nature.

Following a natural analogy, philologists have thrown the earth's languages into a kind of classification: a number bearing a considerable resem-

blance to each other, and in general geographically near, are styled a *group* or *sub-family*; several groups, again, are associated as a *family*, with regard to more general features of resemblance. Six families are spoken of.

The Indo-European family nearly coincides in geographical limits with those which have been assigned to that variety of mankind which generally shews a fair complexion, called the Caucasian variety. It may be said to commence in India, and thence to stretch through Persia into Europe, the whole of which it occupies, excepting Hungary, the Basque provinces of Spain, and Finland. Its sub-families are the Sanskrit, or ancient language of India, the Persian, the Slavonic, Celtic, Gothic, and Pelasgian. The Slavonic includes the modern languages of Russia and Poland. Under the Gothic, are (1) the Scandinavian tongues, the Norske, Swedish, and Danish; and (2) the Teutonic, to which belong the modern German, the Dutch, and our own Anglo-Saxon. I give the name of Pelasgian to the group scattered along the north shores of the Mediterranean, the Greek and Latin, including the modifications of the latter under the names of Italian, Spanish, &c. The Celtic was from two to three thousand years

ago, the speech of a considerable tribe dwelling in Western Europe; but these have since been driven before superior nations into a few corners, and are now only to be found in the highlands of Scotland, Ireland, Wales, Cornwall, and certain parts of France. The Gaelic of Scotland, Erse of Ireland, and the Welsh, are the only living branches of this sub-family of languages.

The resemblances amongst languages are of two kinds,—identity of words, and identity of grammatical forms; the latter being now generally considered as the most important towards the argument. When we inquire into the first kind of affinity among the languages of the Indo-European family, we are surprised at the great number of common terms which exist amongst them, and these referring to such primary ideas, as to leave no doubt of their having all been derived from a common source. Colonel Vans Kennedy presents nine hundred words common to the Sanskrit and other languages of the same family. In the Sanskrit and Persian, we find several which require no sort of translation to an English reader, as *pader*, *mader*, *sunu*, *dokhter*, *brader*, *mand*, *vidhava*; likewise *asthi*, a bone, (Greek, *ostoun*;) *denta*, a tooth, (Latin, *dens*, *dentis*;) *eyeumen*, the eye; *brouwa*,

the eye-brow, (German, *braue*;) *nasa*, the nose; *karu*, the hand, (Gr. *cheir*;) *genu*, the knee, (Lat. *genu*;) *ped*, the foot, (Lat. *pes*, *pedis*;) *hrti*, the heart; *jecur*, the liver, (Lat. *jecur*;) *stara*, a star; *gela*, cold, (Lat. *gelu*, ice;) *aghni*, fire, (Lat. *ignis*;) *dhara*, the earth, (Lat. *terra*, Gaelic, *tir*;) *arrivi*, a river; *nau*, a ship, (Gr. *naus*, Lat. *navis*;) *ghau*, a cow; *sarpam*, a serpent.

The inferences from these verbal coincidences were confirmed in a striking manner when Bopp and others investigated the grammatical structure of this family of languages. Dr. Wiseman pronounces that the great philologist just named, "by a minute and sagacious analysis of the Sanskrit verb, compared with the conjugational system of the other members of this family, left no doubt of their intimate and positive affinity." It was now discovered that the peculiar terminations or inflections by which persons are expressed throughout the verbs of nearly the whole of these languages, have their foundations in pronouns; the pronoun was simply placed at the end, and thus became an inflexion. "By an analysis of the Sanskrit pronouns, the elements of those existing in all the other languages were cleared of their anomalies; the verb substantive, which in Latin is composed

of fragments referable to two distinct roots, here found both existing in regular form; the Greek conjugations, with all their complicated machinery of middle voice, augments, and reduplications, were here found and illustrated in a variety of ways, which a few years ago would have appeared chimerical. Even our own language may sometimes receive light from the study of distant members of our family. Where, for instance, are we to seek for the root of our comparative *better*? Certainly not in its positive, good, nor in the Teutonic dialects in which the same anomaly exists. But in the Persian we have precisely the same comparative, *behter*, with exactly the same signification, regularly formed from its positive *beh*, good.*

* Wiseman's Lectures on the Connexion between Science and Revealed Religion, i. 44. The Celtic has been established as a member or group of the Indo-European family, by the work of Dr. Prichard, *on the Eastern Origin of the Celtic Nations*. "First," says Dr. Wiseman, "he has examined the lexical resemblances, and shewn that the primary and most simple words are the same in both, as well as the numerals and elementary verbal roots. Then follows a minute analysis of the verb, directed to shew its analogies with other languages, and they are such as manifest no casual coincidence, but an internal structure radically the same. The verb substantive, which is minutely analysed, presents more striking analogies to the Persian verb than perhaps any other language of the family. But Celtic is not thus become a mere

The second great family is the *Syro-Phœnician*, comprising the Hebrew, Syro-Chaldaic, Arabic, and Gheez or Abyssinian, being localized principally in the countries to the west and south of the Mediterranean. Beyond them, again, is the African family, which, as far as research has gone, seems to be in like manner marked by common features, both verbal and grammatical. The fourth is the Polynesian family, extending from Madagascar on the west through all the Indian Archipelago, besides taking in the Malayan dialect from the continent of India, and comprehending Australia and the islands of the western portion of the Pacific. This family, however, bears such an affinity to that next to be described, that Dr. Leyden and some others do not give it a distinct place as a family of languages.

member of this confederacy, but has brought to it most important aid ; for, from it alone can be satisfactorily explained some of the conjugational endings in the other languages. For instance, the third person plural of the Latin, Persian, Greek, and Sanscrit ends in *nt*, *nd*, *ντι*, *ντο*, *nti*, or *nt*. Now, supposing, with most grammarians, that the inflexions arose from the pronouns of the respective persons, it is only in Celtic that we find a pronoun that can explain this termination ; for there, too, the same person ends in *nt*, and thus corresponds exactly, as do the others, with its pronoun, *hwynt*, or *ynt*."

The fifth family is the Chinese, embracing a large part of China, and most of the regions of Central and Northern Asia. The leading features of the Chinese are, its consisting altogether of monosyllables, and being destitute of all grammatical forms, except certain arrangements and accentuations, which vary the sense of particular words. It is also deficient in some of the consonants most conspicuous in other languages, b, d, r, v, and z; so that this people can scarcely pronounce our speech in such a way as to be intelligible: for example, the word Christus they call *Kuliss-ut-oo-suh*. The Chinese, strange to say, though they early attained to a remarkable degree of civilization, and have preceded the Europeans in many of the most important inventions, have a language which resembles that of children, or deaf and dumb people. The sentence of short, simple, unconnected words, in which an infant amongst us attempts to express some of its wants and its ideas—the equally broken and difficult terms which the deaf and dumb express by signs, as the following passage of the Lord's Prayer:—"Our Father, heaven in, wish your name respect, wish your soul's kingdom providence arrive, wish your will do heaven earth equality," &c.—these are

like the discourse of the refined people of the so-called Celestial Empire. An attempt was made by the Abbé Sicard to teach the deaf and dumb grammatical signs ; but they persisted in restricting themselves to the simple signs of ideas, leaving the structure undetermined by any but the natural order of connexion. Such is exactly the condition of the Chinese language.

Crossing the Pacific, we come to the last great family in the languages of the aboriginal Americans, which have all of them features in common, proving them to constitute a group by themselves, without any regard to the very different degrees of civilization which these nations had attained at the time of the discovery. The common resemblance is in the grammatical structure as well as in words, and the grammatical structure of this family is of a very peculiar and complicated kind. The general character in this respect has caused the term Polysynthetic to be applied to the American languages. A long many-syllabled word is used by the rude Algonquins and Delawares to express a whole sentence : for example, a woman of the latter nation, playing with a little dog or cat, would perhaps be heard saying, "*huligatschis*," meaning, "give me your pretty little paw;" the

word, on examination, is found to be made up in this manner: *k*, the second personal pronoun; *uli*, part of the word *wulet*, pretty; *gat*, part of the word *wichgat*, signifying a leg or paw; *schis*, conveying the idea of littleness. In the same tongue, a youth is called *pilape*, a word compounded from the first part of *pilsit*, innocent, and the latter part of *lenape*, a man. Thus, it will be observed, a number of parts of words are taken and thrown together, by a process which has been happily termed *agglutination*, so as to form one word, conveying a complicated idea. There is also an elaborate system of inflection; in nouns, for instance, there is one kind of inflection to express the presence or absence of vitality, and another to express number. The genius of the language has been described as accumulative: it "tends rather to add syllables or letters, making farther distinctions in objects already before the mind, than to introduce new words."* Yet it has also been shewn very distinctly, that these languages are based in words of one syllable, like those of the Chinese and Polynesian families; all the primary ideas are thus expressed: the elaborate system of inflection and agglutination is shewn to

* Schoolcraft.

be simply a farther development of the language-forming principle, as it may be called—or the Chinese system may be described as an arrestment of this principle at a particular early point. It has been fully shewn, that between the structure of the American and other families, sufficient affinities exist to make a common origin or early connexion extremely likely. The verbal affinities are also very considerable. Humboldt says, “ In eighty-three American languages examined by Messrs. Barton and Vater, one hundred and seventy words have been found, the roots of which appear to be the same ; and it is easy to perceive that this analogy is not accidental, since it does not rest merely upon imitative harmony, or on that conformity of organs which produces almost a perfect identity in the first sounds articulated by children. Of these one hundred and seventy words which have this connexion, three-fifths resemble the Manchou, the Tongouse, the Mongal, and the Samoyed ; and two-fifths, the Celtic and Tchoud, the Biscayan, the Coptic, and Congo languages. These words have been found by comparing the whole of the American languages with the whole of those of the Old World ; for hitherto we are acquainted with no American

idiom which seems to have an exclusive correspondence with any of the Asiatic, African, or European tongues.”* Humboldt and others considered these words as brought into America by recent immigrants; an idea resting on no proof, and which seems at once refuted by the common words being chiefly those which represent primary ideas; besides, we now know, what was not formerly perceived or admitted, that there are great affinities of structure also. I may here refer to a curious mathematical calculation by Dr. Thomas Young, to the effect, that if three words coincide in two different languages, it is ten to one they must be derived in both cases from some parent language, or introduced in some other manner. “Six words would give more,” he says, “than seventeen hundred to one, and eight near 100,000, so that in these cases the evidence would be little short of absolute certainty.” He instances the following words to shew a connexion between the ancient Egyptian and the Biscayan:—

	BISCAYAN.	EGYPTIAN.
<i>New</i>	Beria	Beri.
<i>A dog</i>	Ora	Whor.
<i>Little</i>	Gutchi	Kudchi.

* Views of the Cordilleras.

	BISCAYAN.	EGYPTIAN.
<i>Bread</i>	Ognia	Oik.
<i>A wolf</i>	Otgasa	Ounsh.
<i>Seven</i>	Shashpi	Shashf.

Now, as there are, according to Humboldt, one hundred and seventy words in common between the languages of the new and old continents, and many of these are expressive of the most primitive ideas, there is, by Dr. Young's calculation, overpowering proof of the original connexion of the American and other human families.

This completes the slight outline which I have been able to give, of the evidence for the various races of men being descended from one stock. It cannot be considered as conclusive, and there are many eminent persons who deem the opposite idea the more probable; but I must say that, without the least regard to any other kind of evidence, that which physiology and philology present seems to me decidedly favourable to the idea of a single origin.

Assuming that the human race is *one*, we are next called upon to inquire in what part of the earth it may most probably be supposed to have originated. One obvious mode of approximating to a solution of this question is to trace backward

the lines in which the principal tribes appear to have migrated, and to see if these converge nearly to a point. It is very remarkable that the lines do converge, and are concentrated about the region of Hindostan. The language, religion, modes of reckoning time, and some other peculiar ideas of the Americans, are now believed to refer their origin to North-Eastern Asia. Trace them farther back in the same direction, and we come to the north of India. The history of the Celts and Teutones represents them as coming from the east, the one after the other, successive waves of a tide of population flowing towards the north-west of Europe: this line being also traced back, rests finally at the same place. So does the line of Iranian population, which has peopled the east and south shores of the Mediterranean, Syria, Arabia, and Egypt. The Malay variety, again, rests its limit in one direction on the borders of India. Standing on that point, it is easy to see how the human family, originating there, might spread out in different directions, passing into varieties of aspect and of language as they spread, the Malay variety proceeding towards the Oceanic region, the Mongolians to the east and north, and sending off the red men as a sub-variety, the European

population going off to the north-westward, and the Syrian, Arabian, and Egyptian, towards the countries which they are known to have so long occupied. The Negro alone is here unaccounted for; and of that race it may fairly be said, that it is the one most likely to have had an independent origin, seeing that it is a type so peculiar in an inveterate black colour, and so mean in development. But it is not necessary to presume such an origin for it, as much good argument might be employed to shew that it is only a deteriorated offshoot of the general stock. Our view of the probable original seat of man agrees with the ancient traditions of the race. There is one among the Hindoos which places the cradle of the human family in Thibet; another makes Ceylon the residence of the first man. Our view is also in harmony with the hypothesis detailed in the chapter before the last. According to that theory, we should expect man to have originated where the highest species of the quadrumana are to be found. Now these are unquestionably found in the Indian Archipelago.

After all, it may be regarded as still an open question, whether mankind is of one or many origins. The first human generation may have

consisted of many pairs, though situated at one place, and these may have been considerably different from each other in external characters. And we are equally bound to admit, though this does not as yet seem to have occurred to any other speculator, that there may have been different lines and sources of origination, geographically apart, but which all resulted uniformly in the production of a being, one in species, although variously marked.

It has of late years been a favourite notion with many, that the human race was at first in a highly civilized state, and that barbarism was a second condition. This idea probably took its origin in a wish to support certain interpretations of the Mosaic record, and it has never yet been propounded by any writer who seemed to have a due sense of the value of science in this class of investigations. The principal argument for it is, that we see many examples of nations falling away from civilization into barbarism, while in some regions of the earth, the history of which we do not clearly know, there are remains of works of art far superior to any which the present unenlightened inhabitants could have produced. It is to be readily admitted that such decadences are

common ; but do they necessarily prove that there has been anything like a regular and constant decline into the present state, from a state more generally refined? May not these be only instances of local failures and suppressions of the principle of civilization, where it had begun to take root amongst a people generally barbarous? It is, at least, as legitimate to draw this inference from the facts which are known. But it is also alleged that we know of no such thing as civilization being ever self-originated. It is always seen to be imparted from one people to another. Hence, of course, we must infer that civilization at the first could only have been of supernatural origin. This argument appears to be founded on false premises, for civilization does sometimes rise in a manner clearly independent amongst a horde of people generally barbarous. A striking instance is described in the laborious work of Mr. Catlin on the North-American tribes. Far placed among those which inhabit the vast region of the north-west, and quite beyond the reach of any influence from the whites, he found a small tribe living in a fortified village, where they cultivated the arts of manufacture, realized comforts and luxuries, and had attained to a remarkable refinement of man-

ners, insomuch as to be generally called the polite and friendly Mandans. They were also more than usually elegant in their persons, and of every variety of complexion between that of their compatriots and a pure white. Up to the time of Mr. Catlin's visit, these people had been able to defend themselves and their possessions against the roving bands which surrounded them on all sides; but, soon after, they were attacked by small-pox, which cut them all off except a small party, whom their enemies rushed in upon and destroyed to a man. What is this but a repetition on a small scale of phenomena with which ancient history familiarizes us—a nation rising in arts and elegances amidst barbarous neighbours, but at length overpowered by the rude majority, leaving only a Tadmor or a Luxor as a monument of itself to beautify the waste? What can we suppose the nation which built Palenque and Copan to have been but only a Mandan tribe, which chanced to have made its way farther along the path of civilization and the arts, before the barbarians broke in upon it? The flame essayed to rise in many parts of the earth; but there were always considerable chances against it, and down it accordingly went, times without number; but there was always a

vitality in it, nevertheless, and a tendency to progress, and at length it seems to have attained a strength against which the powers of barbarism can never more prevail. The state of our knowledge of uncivilized nations is very apt to make us fall into error on this subject. They are generally supposed to be all at one point in barbarism, which is far from being the case, for in the midst of every great region of uncivilized men, such as North America, there are nations partially refined. The Jolofs, Mandingoes, and Kafirs, are African examples, where a natural and independent origin for the improvement which exists is as unavoidably to be presumed as in the case of the Mandans.

The most conclusive argument against the original civilization of mankind is to be found in the fact that we do not now see civilization existing anywhere except in certain conditions altogether different from any we can suppose to have existed at the commencement of our race. To have civilization, it is necessary that a people should be numerous and closely placed; that they should be fixed in their habitations, and safe from violent external and internal disturbance; that a considerable number of them should be exempt from the necessity of drudging for immediate subsist-

ence. Feeling themselves at ease about the first necessities of their nature, including self-preservation, and daily subjected to that intellectual excitement which society produces, men begin to manifest what is called civilization; but never in rude and shelterless circumstances, or when widely scattered. Even men who have been civilized, when transferred to a wide wilderness, where each has to work hard and isolatedly for the first requisites of life, soon shew a retrogression to barbarism: witness the plains of Australia, as well as the backwoods of Canada and the prairies of Texas. Fixity of residence and thickening of population are perhaps the prime requisites for civilization, and hence it will be found that all civilizations as yet known have taken place in regions physically limited. That of Egypt arose in a narrow valley hemmed in by deserts on both sides. That of Greece took its rise in a small peninsula bounded on the only land side by mountains. Etruria and Rome were naturally limited regions. Civilizations have taken place at both the eastern and western extremities of the elder continent—China and Japan, on the one hand; Germany, Holland, Britain, France, on the other—while the great unmarked tract between contains nations decidedly

less advanced. Why is this, but because the sea, in both cases, has imposed limits to further migration, and caused the population to settle and condense—the conditions most necessary for social improvement.* Even the simple case of the Mandans affords an illustration of this principle, for Mr. Catlin expressly, though without the least regard to theory, attributes their improvement to the fact of their being a small tribe, obliged, by fear of their more numerous enemies, to *settle in a permanent village*, so fortified as to ensure their preservation. “By this means,” says he, “they have advanced farther in the arts of manufacture, and have supplied their lodges more abundantly with the comforts and even luxuries of life than any Indian nation I know of. The consequence of this,” he adds, “is that the tribe have taken many steps ahead of other tribes in *manners and refinements*.” These conditions can only be regarded as natural laws affecting civilization, and it might not be difficult, taking them into account, to

* The problem of Chinese civilization, such as it is—so puzzling when we consider that they are only, as will be presently seen, the child race of mankind—is solved when we look to geographical position producing fixity of residence and density of population.

predict of any newly settled country its social destiny. An island like Van Dieman's land might fairly be expected to go on more rapidly to good manners and sound institutions than a wide region like Australia. The United States might be expected to make no great way in civilization till they be fully peopled to the Pacific; and it might not be unreasonable to expect that, when that even has occurred, the greatest civilizations of that vast territory will be found in the peninsula of California and the narrow stripe of country beyond the Rocky Mountains. This, however, is a digression. To return: it is also necessary for a civilization that at least a portion of the community should be placed above mean and engrossing toils. Man's mind becomes subdued, like the dyer's hand, to that it works in. In rude and difficult circumstances we unavoidably become rude, because then only the inferior and harsher faculties of our nature are called into existence. When, on the contrary, there is leisure and abundance, the self-seeking and self-preserving instincts are allowed to rest, the gentler and more generous sentiments are evoked, and man becomes that courteous and chivalric being which he is found to be amongst the upper classes of almost all civilized

countries. These, then, may be said to be the chief natural laws concerned in the moral phenomenon of civilization. If I am right in so considering them, it will of course be readily admitted that the earliest families of the human race, although they might be simple and innocent, could not have been in anything like a civilized state, seeing that the conditions necessary for that state could not have then existed. Let us only for a moment consider some of the things requisite for their being civilized,—namely, a set of elegant homes ready furnished for their reception, fields ready cultivated to yield them food without labour, stores of luxurious appliances of all kinds, a complete social engineering for the securing of life and property,—and we shall turn from the whole conceit as one worthy only of the philosophers of Utopia.

Yet, as has been remarked, the earliest families might be simple and innocent, while at the same time unskilled and ignorant, and obliged to live merely upon such substances as they could readily procure. The traditions of all nations refer to such a state as that in which mankind were at first: perhaps it is not so much a tradition as an idea which the human mind naturally inclines to

form respecting the fathers of the race ; but nothing that we see of mankind absolutely forbids our entertaining this idea, while there are some considerations rather favourable to it. A few families, in a state of nature, living near each other, in a country supplying the means of livelihood abundantly, are generally simple and innocent ; their instinctive and perceptive faculties are also apt to be very active, although the higher intellect may be dormant. If we therefore presume India to have been the cradle of our race, they might at first exemplify a sort of golden age ; but it could not be of long continuance. The very first movements from the primal seat would be attended with degradation, nor could there be any tendency to true civilization till groups had settled and thickened in particular seats physically limited.

The probability may now be assumed that the human race sprung from one stock, which was at first in a state of simplicity, if not barbarism. As yet we have not seen very distinctly how the various branches of the family, as they parted off, and took up separate ground, became marked by external features so peculiar. Why are the Africans black, and generally marked by coarse

features and ungainly forms? Why are the Mongolians generally yellow, the Americans red, the Caucasians white? Why the flat features of the Chinese, the small stature of the Laps, the soft round forms of the English, the lank features of their descendants, the Americans? All of these phenomena appear, in a word, to be explicable on the ground of *development*. We have already seen that various leading animal forms represent stages in the embryotic progress of the highest—the human being. Our brain goes through the various stages of a fish's, a reptile's, and a mammifer's brain, and finally becomes human. There is more than this, for, after completing the animal transformations, it passes through the characters in which it appears, in the Negro, Malay, American, and Mongolian nations, and finally is Caucasian. The face partakes of these alterations. “ One of the earliest points in which ossification commences is the lower jaw. This bone is consequently sooner completed than the other bones of the head, and acquires a predominance, which, as is well known, it never loses in the Negro. During the soft pliant state of the bones of the skull, the oblong form which they naturally assume, approaches nearly the permanent shape of the

Americans. At birth, the flattened face, and broad smooth forehead of the infant, the position of the eyes rather towards the side of the head, and the widened space between, represent the Mongolian form; while it is only as the child advances to maturity, that the oval face, the arched forehead, and the marked features of the true Caucasian, become perfectly developed.”* *The leading characters, in short, of the various races of mankind, are simply representations of particular stages in the development of the highest or Caucasian type.* The Negro exhibits permanently the imperfect brain, projecting lower jaw, and slender bent limbs, of a Caucasian child, some considerable time before the period of its birth. The aboriginal American represents the same child nearer birth. The Mongolian is an arrested infant newly born. And so forth. All this is as respects form; † but whence colour? This might be supposed to have depended on climatal agencies only; but it has been shewn by overpowering evidence to be

* Lord's Popular Physiology, explaining observations by M. Serres.

† Conformably to this view, the beard, that peculiar attribute of maturity, is scanty in the Mongolian, and scarcely exists in the Americans and Negroes.

independent of these. In further considering the matter, we are met by the very remarkable fact that colour is deepest in the least perfectly developed type, next in the Malay, next in the American, next in the Mongolian, the very order in which the degrees of development are ranged. *May not colour, then, depend upon development also?* We do not, indeed, see that a Caucasian foetus at the stage which the African represents is anything like black; neither is a Caucasian child yellow, like the Mongolian. There may, nevertheless, be a character of skin at a certain stage of development which is predisposed to a particular colour when it is presented as the envelope of a mature being. Development being arrested at so immature a stage in the case of the Negro, the skin may take on the colour as an unavoidable consequence of its imperfect organization. It is favourable to this view, that Negro infants are not deeply black at first, but only acquire the full colour tint after exposure for some time to the atmosphere. Another consideration in its favour is that there is a likelihood of peculiarities of form and colour, since they are so coincident, depending on one set of phenomena. If it be admitted as true, there can be no difficulty in accounting for all the varieties of

mankind. They are simply the result of so many advances and retrogressions in the developing power of the human mothers, these advances and retrogressions being, as we have formerly seen, the immediate effect of external conditions in nutrition, hardship, &c.,* and also, perhaps, to some extent, of the suitability and unsuitability of marriages, for it is found that parents too nearly related tend to produce offspring of the Mongolian type,—that is, persons who in maturity still are a kind of children. According to this view, the greater part of the human race must be considered as having lapsed or declined from the original type. In the Caucasian or Indo-European family alone has the primitive organization been improved upon. The Mongolian, Malay, American, and Negro, comprehending perhaps five-sixths of mankind, are degenerate. Strange that the great plan

* Of this we have perhaps an illustration in the peculiarities which distinguish the Arabs residing in the valley of the Jordan. They have flatter features, darker skins, and coarser hair than other tribes of their nation; and we have seen one instance of a thoroughly Negro family being born to an ordinary couple. It may be presumed that the conditions of the life of these people tend to arrest development. We thus see how an offshoot of the human family migrating at an early period into Africa, might in time, from subjection to similar influences, become Negroes.

should admit of failures and aberrations of such portentous magnitude! But pause and reflect; take time into consideration: the past history of mankind may be, to what is to come, but as a day. Look at the progress even now making over the barbaric parts of the earth by the best examples of the Caucasian type, promising not only to fill up the waste places, but to supersede the imperfect nations already existing. Who can tell what progress may be made, even in a single century, towards reversing the proportions of the perfect and imperfect types? and who can tell but that the time during which the mean types have lasted, long as it appears, may yet be thrown entirely into the shade by the time during which the best types will remain predominant?

We have seen that the traces of a common origin in all languages afford a ground of presumption for the unity of the human race. They establish a still stronger probability that mankind had not yet begun to disperse before they were possessed of a means of communicating their ideas by conventional sounds—in short, speech. This is a gift so peculiar to man, and in itself so remarkable, that there is a great inclination to surmise a miraculous origin for it, although there is no proper

ground, or even support, for such an idea in Scripture, while it is clearly opposed to everything else that we know with regard to the providential arrangements for the creation of our race. Here, as in many other cases, a little observation of nature might have saved much vain discussion. The real character of language itself has not been thoroughly understood. Language, in its most comprehensive sense, is the communication of ideas by whatever means. Ideas can be communicated by looks, gestures, and signs of various other kinds, as well as by speech. The inferior animals possess some of those means of communicating ideas, and they have likewise a silent and unobservable mode of their own, the nature of which is a complete mystery to us, though we are assured of its reality by its effects. Now, as the inferior animals were all in being before man, there was language upon earth long ere the history of our race commenced. The only additional fact in the history of language, which was produced by our creation, was the rise of a new mode of expression—namely, that by *sound-signs* produced by the vocal organs. In other words, speech was the only novelty in this respect attending the creation of the human race. No doubt it was an

addition of great importance, for, in comparison with it, the other natural modes of communicating ideas sink into insignificance. Still, the main and fundamental phenomenon, language, as the communication of ideas, was no new gift of the Creator to man; and in speech itself, when we judge of it as a natural fact, we see only a result of some of those superior endowments of which so many others have fallen to our lot through the medium of an improved or advanced organization.

The first and most obvious natural endowment concerned in speech is that peculiar organization of the larynx, trachea, and mouth, which enables us to produce the various sounds required in the case. Man started at first with this organization ready for use, a constitution of the atmosphere adapted for the sounds which that organization was calculated to produce, and, lastly, but not leastly, as will afterwards be more particularly shewn, a mental power within, prompting to, and giving directions for, the expression of ideas. Such an arrangement of mutually adapted things was as likely to produce sounds as an Eolian harp placed in a draught is to produce tones. It was unavoidable that human beings so organized, and in such a relation to external nature, should utter sounds,

and also come to attach to these conventional meanings, thus forming the elements of spoken language. The great difficulty which has been felt was to account for man going in this respect beyond the inferior animals. There could have been no such difficulty if speculators in this class of subjects had looked into physiology for an account of the superior vocal organization of man, and had they possessed a true science of mind to shew man possessing a faculty for the expression of ideas which is only rudimental in the lower animals. Another difficulty has been in the consideration that, if men were at first utterly untutored and barbarous, they could scarcely be in a condition to form or employ language—an instrument which it requires the fullest powers of thought to analyse and speculate upon. But this difficulty also vanishes upon reflection—for, in the first place, we are not bound to suppose the fathers of our race early attaining to great proficiency in language, and, in the second, language itself seems to be amongst the things least difficult to be acquired, if we can form any judgment from what we see in children, most of whom have, by three years of age, while their information and judgment are still as nothing, mastered and familiarized

themselves with a quantity of words, infinitely exceeding in proportion what they acquire in the course of any subsequent similar portion of time.

Discussions as to which parts of speech were first formed, and the processes by which grammatical structure and inflections took their rise, appear in a great measure needless, after the matter has been placed in this light. The mental powers could readily connect particular arbitrary sounds with particular ideas, whether those ideas were nouns, verbs, or interjections. As the words of all languages can be traced back into roots which are monosyllables, we may presume these sounds to have all been monosyllabic accordingly. The clustering of two or more together to express a compound idea, and the formation of inflections by additional syllables expressive of pronouns and such prepositions as *of*, *by*, and *to*, are processes which would or might occur as matters of course, being simple results of a mental power called into action, and partly directed, by external necessities. This power, however, as we find it in very different degrees of endowment in individuals, so would it be in different degrees of endowment in nations, or branches of the human family. Hence we find the formation of words and the process of their

composition and grammatical arrangement, in very different stages of development in different races. The Chinese have a language composed of a limited number of monosyllables, which they multiply in use by mere variations of accent, and which they have never yet attained the power of clustering or inflecting; the language of this immense nation—the third part of the human race—may be said to be in the condition of infancy. The aboriginal Americans, so inferior in civilization, have, on the other hand, a language of the most elaborately composite kind, perhaps even exceeding, in this respect, the languages of the most refined European nations. These are but a few out of many facts tending to shew that language is in a great measure independent of civilization, as far as its advance and development are concerned. Do they not also help to prove that cultivated intellect is not necessary for the origination of language?

Facts daily presented to our observation afford equally simple reasons for the almost infinite diversification of language. It is invariably found that, wherever society is at once dense and refined, language tends to be uniform throughout the whole population, and to undergo few changes in the

course of time. Wherever, on the contrary, we have a scattered and barbarous people, we have great diversities, and comparatively rapid alterations of language. Insomuch that, while English, French, and German are each spoken with little variation by many millions, there are islands in the Indian archipelago, probably not inhabited by one million, but in which there are hundreds of languages, as diverse as are English, French, and German. It is easy to see how this should be. There are peculiarities in the vocal organization of every person, tending to produce peculiarities of pronunciation; for example, it has been stated that each child in a family of six gave the monosyllable, fly, in a different manner, (eye, fy, ly, &c.) until, when the organs were more advanced, correct example induced the proper pronunciation of this and similar words. Such departures from orthoepy are only to be checked by the power of such example; but this is a power not always present, or not always of sufficient strength. The able and self-devoted Robert Moffat, in his work on South Africa, states, without the least regard to hypothesis, that amongst the people of the towns of that great region, "the purity and harmony of language is kept up by their pitchos or public

meetings, by their festivals and ceremonies, as well as by their songs and their constant intercourse. With the isolated villages of the desert it is far otherwise. They have no such meetings; they are compelled to traverse the wilds, often to a great distance from their native village. On such occasions, fathers and mothers, and all who can bear a burden, often set out for weeks at a time, and leave their children to the care of two or three infirm old people. The infant progeny, some of whom are beginning to lisp, while others can just master a whole sentence, and those still farther advanced, romping and playing together, the children of nature, through the live-long day, *become habituated to a language of their own.* The more voluble condescend to the less precocious, and thus, from this infant Babel, proceeds a dialect composed of a host of mongrel words and phrases, joined together without rule, and *in the course of a generation the entire character of the language is changed.*"* I have been told, that in like manner the children of the Manchester factory workers, left for a great part of the day, in large assemblages, under the care of perhaps a single elderly person,

* Missionary Scenes and Labours in South Africa.

and spending the time in amusements, are found to make a great deal of new language. I have seen children in other circumstances amuse themselves by concocting and throwing into the family circulation entirely new words; and I believe I am running little risk of contradiction when I say that there is scarcely a family, even amongst the middle classes of this country, who have not some peculiarities of pronunciation and syntax, which have originated amongst themselves, it is hardly possible to say how. All these things being considered, it is easy to understand how mankind have come at length to possess between three and four thousand languages, all different at least as much as French, German, and English, though, as has been shewn, the traces of a common origin are observable in them all.

What has been said on the question whether mankind were originally barbarous or civilized, will have prepared the reader for understanding how the arts and sciences, and the rudiments of civilization itself, took their rise amongst men. The only source of fallacious views on this subject is the so frequent observation of arts, sciences, and social modes, forms, and ideas, being not indigenous where we see them now flourishing, but

known to have been derived elsewhere: thus Rome borrowed from Greece, Greece from Egypt, and Egypt itself, lost in the mists of historic antiquity, is now supposed to have obtained the light of knowledge from some still earlier scene of intellectual culture. This has caused to many a great difficulty in supposing a natural or spontaneous origin for civilization and the attendant arts. But, in the first place, several stages of derivation are no conclusive argument against there having been an originality at some earlier stage. In the second, such observers have not looked far enough, for, if they had, they could have seen various instances of civilizations which it is impossible, with any plausibility, to trace back to a common origin with others; such are those of China and America. They would also have seen civilization springing up, as it were, like oases amongst the arid plains of barbarism, as in the case of the Mandans. A still more attentive study of the subject would have shewn, amongst living men, the very psychological procedure on which the origination of civilization and the arts and sciences depended.

These things, like language, are simply the effects of the spontaneous working of certain mental faculties, each in relation to the things of

the external world on which it was intended by creative Providence to be exercised. The monkeys themselves, without instruction from any quarter, learn to use sticks in fighting, and some build houses — an act which cannot in their case be considered as one of instinct, but of intelligence. Such being the case, there is no necessary difficulty in supposing how man, with his superior mental organization, (a brain five times heavier,) was able, in his primitive state, without instruction, to turn many things in nature to his use, and commence, in short, the circle of the domestic arts. He appears, in the most unfavourable circumstances, to be able to provide himself with some sort of dwelling, to make weapons, and to practise some simple kind of cookery. But, granting, it will be said, that he can go thus far, how does he ever proceed farther unprompted, seeing that many nations remain fixed for ever at this point, and seem unable to take one step in advance? It is perfectly true that there is such a fixation in many nations; but, on the other hand, all nations are not alike in mental organization, and another point has been established, that only when some favourable circumstances have settled a people in one place, do arts and social arrangements get leave to

flourish. If we were to limit our view to humbly endowed nations, or the common class of minds in those called civilized, we should see absolutely no conceivable power for the origination of new ideas and devices. But let us look at the inventive class of minds which stand out amongst their fellows—the men who, with little prompting or none, conceive new ideas in science, arts, morals—and we can be at no loss to understand how and whence have arisen the elements of that civilization which history traces from country to country throughout the course of centuries. See a Pascal, reproducing the Alexandrian's problems at fifteen ; a Ferguson, making clocks from the suggestions of his own brain, while tending cattle on a Morayshire heath ; a boy Lawrence, in an inn on the Bath road, producing, without a master, drawings which the educated could not but admire ; or look at Solon and Confucius, devising sage laws, and breathing the accents of all but divine wisdom, for their barbarous fellow-countrymen, three thousand years ago—and the whole mystery is solved at once. Amongst the arrangements of Providence is one for the production of original, inventive, and aspiring minds, which, when circumstances are not decidedly unfavourable, strike out new

ideas for the benefit of their fellow-creatures, or put upon them a lasting impress of their own superior sentiments. Nations, improved by these means, become in turn *foci* for the diffusion of light over the adjacent regions of barbarism—their very passions helping to this end, for nothing can be more clear than that ambitious aggression has led to the civilization of many countries. Such is the process which seems to form the destined means for bringing mankind from the darkness of barbarism to the day of knowledge and mechanical and social improvement. Even the noble art of letters is but, as Dr. Adam Fergusson has remarked, “a natural produce of the human mind, which will rise spontaneously, wherever men are happily placed;” original alike amongst the ancient Egyptians and the dimly monumented Toltecans of Yucatan. “Banish,” says Dr. Gall, “music, poetry, painting, sculpture, architecture, all the arts and sciences, and let your Homers, Raphaels, Michael Angelos, Glucks, and Canovas, be forgotten, yet let men of genius of every description spring up, and poetry, music, painting, architecture, sculpture, and all the arts and sciences will again shine out in all their glory. Twice within the records of history has the human race traversed

the great circle of its entire destiny, and twice has the rudeness of barbarism been followed by a higher degree of refinement. It is a great mistake to suppose one people to have proceeded from another on account of their conformity of manners, customs, and arts. The swallow of Paris builds its nest like the swallow of Vienna, but does it thence follow that the former sprung from the latter? With the same causes we have the same effects; with the same organization we have the manifestation of the same powers.”