THE ORIGINS OF AMERICAN MAN

BY LEWIS SPENCE

THE question of human origins presents a perennial interest, but at no time, perhaps, has it been the subject of so much popular curiosity and debate as at the present. Africa, with its recently found anthropoid skull and early simian crania, may hold the anthropological stage for the moment. But, sooner or later, America, the ethnological history of which has aroused the keenest controversy since the Discovery, must once more reappear as one of the great central issues in the age-long discussion of man's provenance and distribution. Few topics, indeed, connected with the science of man possess a romance so permanent and enthralling, for if American Ethnology has no immediate connection with the origin and evolution of our species, it cannot but illuminate our still darkling notions of human development and upward progress when isolated and cut off from the region of its inception.

The majority of American official anthropologists—though markedly disinclined to pronounce conclusively on a question so bewildering—now seem disposed to accept the theory of an Asiatic affinity for the Red Man. But it is not disputed that in the course of ages immigrants from other sources may have landed on American soil. According to the more conservative view, America furnishes no tangible evidence of an antiquity so great as to support the theory of an independent origin for the Red race, nor has it so far afforded satisfactory evidence of human arrivals on its shores in remote geologic times. All American aboriginal culture, indeed, is now classed by trustworthy authorities as Neolithic, and the protagonists of its Old Stone Age origins are in a rather discredited minority.

Assuming a place of origin for man in some part of the Old
World, America would naturally be the last of the great areas to be reached. If man arrived in the American continent by way of Bering Strait, it must have been at a comparatively recent period, geologically speaking, for the ice-sheet persisted in these regions until an epoch which is variously estimated at from seven to twenty thousand years ago, and, indeed, still persists there. Man's arrival in North-Western America may perhaps be referred to one of the recurring intervals of climatic mildness which intervened during the long and rigorous conditions imposed by the Ice Age. Tribes acclimatised in Siberia would readily adapt themselves to the conditions of life in the Yukon Valley, but ice, mountain ranges, and other intervening obstacles must have made it difficult for them to find their way to the valley of the Columbia or the banks of the St. Lawrence for many centuries. But migration southward would present no such difficulties, and their spread over the Mississippi Valley to the south would be quickly accomplished, nor would the passage from North to South America present any insuperable obstacles.

In all probability the first settlement of America did not begin until the peoples of Northern Asia had acquired a degree of cultural development somewhat analogous to the more primitive hunting, fishing, and fire-using tribes of the Far North in recent times. Arriving in small groups, the movement would be hesitating and slow. The pioneers would camp along the ocean shores and river courses, and only after a considerable lapse of time would they negotiate the mountain ranges and ice-clad areas. The culture of those who went southward would alter insensibly according to needs and environment, and in time far-reaching changes would be initiated.

After carefully weighing the evidence collected by him in Alaska, Mr. W. H. Dall reached the conclusion that the earliest shell-midden deposits on the Aleutian Islands, by which route man may have entered America, are probably about three thousand years old. Indeed, the testimony of racial and cultural phenomena, when studied apart from geological evidence, does not seem to indicate clearly an antiquity for the presence of man in America beyond a few thousand years. On the other hand, the geological evidence of his presence there would seem to point to occupation towards the close of the last glacial period in Middle North America. This geological evidence
is extensive, but by no means satisfactory, and in the present state of knowledge it is impossible to accept it as final. Everything points, then, to the conclusion that in all probability America was first peopled by way of Bering Strait at an epoch not less than seven thousand and not more than twenty thousand years ago.

Since geologic observations were first set on foot, a vast body of testimony has been collected regarding the early presence of man in the Western continent, and here it is only possible to summarize this rather scantily. South America claims to furnish the most primitive data, and Señor Ameghino and other authorities have sought to push man’s antiquity on that sub-continent back to the early Tertiary period of the Eocene, a time when as yet even the anthropoids were probably not developed. An exhaustive review of the claims of the South American School, by Dr. Ales Hrdlička of the United States National Museum and Dr. Bailey Willis of the United States Geological Survey, left little doubt as to the true character of is assumptions, which were found to be based on ‘very imperfect and incorrectly interpreted data, and in many cases of false premises.’ The geologic determinations, no less than the faulty consideration of the circumstances relating to the human remains discovered in South America, particularly as to the possibility of their accidental introduction into older strata, and the lack of anatomical knowledge displayed by the finders, made it clear that even the best authenticated of their discoveries must be classed as ‘doubtful.’ As Mr. W. H. Holmes of the United States Bureau of Ethnology remarks, ‘There appears to be no very cogent reason for assigning any of the cultural traces to sources other than tribes occupying the region in comparatively recent times.’

In North America, from 1830 onwards, a most imposing body of evidence was gathered to substantiate the claim for the presence of Tertiary Man, especially in California, where mining operations resulted in numerous discoveries. But practically the same disabilities attach to it as to the South American data. Most of the discoveries in question were made by inexpert observers, and it has been demonstrated that the antiquity claimed for them ‘required a human race older by at least one-half than the *Pithecanthropus erectus* of Java.’ Moreover, they were associated with artifacts which could certainly not be assigned to the Tertiary Period, and the knowledge that the western half of the North American coast has been completely re-
modelled, geologically speaking, twice or three times since that period, at once disabuses such claims of all authenticity. Still, as Holmes admits, "certain portions of the deep gravels appear to have yielded traces of human occupancy of the region during the formation of these deposits." This partial admission does not, however, extend to such imagined relics of the Tertiary Period as the famous Calaveras skull, the Lansing skull, or the Nampa image, a terracotta figurine in human form taken from early Quaternary deposits in Idaho. The crania in question exhibit such striking analogies with those of the historic Indians as to render their ethnological association with these a matter of no dubiety.

The greater number of observations relating to the geological antiquity of man in America are associated with the closing stages of the Glacial Period in the northern United States. This period in America did not come to an end until the retreat of the main body of the ice-sheet beyond the Arctic shores. That retreat was necessarily gradual, so that the terms 'Glacial' and 'Post-glacial' apply to different epochs in different American localities. Thus the former nomenclature may be applied to a period in the Ohio or Delaware Valleys estimated at some twenty thousand years ago, whilst in the region of the Great Lakes it refers to an antiquity only half as extensive. The confused and unconsolidated nature of Post-glacial deposits in North America adds enormously to the difficulties attending an estimate of their age. Human and animal disturbance and the forces of nature have been continuously active in altering the superficial strata, nor can the geological chronology of the Old World be accepted as a trustworthy guide in any estimate of American geology. In the case of the Tertiary gravels in the Delaware Valley it was proved that the Leni Lenape Indians had worked certain sites as lately as 1700 A.D. This notwithstanding, there can be no question that men have dwelt in the region probably from the closing period of the American Ice Age, but the collection of evidence of their presence there is sadly hampered by the recent existence of the Stone Age in America.

"Thus far," remarks Holmes, "the testimony brought forward is scattered, disconnected and contradictory, and tells no consistent story." He adds that in his view man did not reach American soil "until after the first retreat of the glacial ice from middle North America." So far, no definite evidence has been gathered which
seriously militates against the conclusion, and until archaeological data of a trustworthy nature are forthcoming, it must serve as a basis for all estimates of the first presence of man in America. These views have naturally been combated by the less conservative school of Americanists, especially by Mr. Franz Boas, who formulated the dissenting opinion that man reached the American North-West during one of the inter-glacial periods of the Ice Age rather than at the close of that epoch. The ten or twenty thousand years which Holmes permits appeared to him sufficient for the growth of American aboriginal culture, but he pointed out that the ice retreated very gradually from the connecting bridge across the Bering Sea. In fact, it still lingers there, so that a much more recent date must be found for the opening of communication by that route. This leaves a very narrow margin for the development of aboriginal culture, and Boas and his supporters assume that the peopling of the New World was contemporaneous with that of Western Europe, and that the subsequent return of the ice practically isolated the two hemispheres, leaving each to develop as it might. They point to a certain parallelism between Western Europe and Eastern North America, and to the fact that the Crô-Magnon type of man, an Old Stone Age man, who entered Europe about twenty thousand years ago, had a strong skeletal and facial resemblance to the American Red Man.

"More than once," says Mr. Clark Wissler, the Curator of Anthropology in the American Museum of Natural History, "attention has been called to certain vague similarities between certain Palaeolthic races and the Eskimo, and in the New World certain old skulls from the remoter parts of South America are not far removed from this same Eskimo type. Incidentally, we may note that the Chancelade skeleton in Western Europe, belonging to Magdalenian time, is quite similar to the modern Eskimo. The earlier races appearing in Europe tend to be long-headed, and we have noted a less marked but still noticeable tendency for the long-heads in the New World to cluster in the extreme margins. That this is rather fundamental appears when we regard mammals as a whole."

If we regard the parallel series of European and North American life-forms where these are sufficiently complete, they appear to have been periodically recruited by more progressive stages, apparently from a common centre of dispersal. The relations are like those of
one side and the other of a branching tree whose trunk-region is unknown to us.

Still other writers and searchers believe that future archaeological research in Asia will provide grounds for the assumption that Cro-Magnon Man and contemporaneous New World peoples were collateral branches springing from a Central Asian type. Mr. Wissler sums up by inferring that: "suggestive parallels between earlier types of Western Europe and America arise in a much earlier period of man's history. That the New World native is a direct descendant of the Asiatic Mongolian is not to be inferred, for the differentiation is evidently remote; what is implied, is that somewhere in the distant past the Asiatic wing of the generalised type diverged into strains, one of which we know as Mongolian and another as American."

On the other hand, some of the younger American anthropologists have sought to treat the whole matter independently and de novo. Mr. N. B. Nelson, working in the Mammoth Cave district of Kentucky, found two cultures, the earlier of which is without pottery, and with very little polished stone. Mr. Leslie Spier, making an independent study of conditions at Trenton, New Jersey, found conclusive evidence of the existence of an earlier culture, also without pottery or polished stone. Both of these sites are east of the Mississippi River, and it may therefore be concluded that the existence of two cultural periods in the Eastern United States is extremely probable.

According to Holmes, archaeological evidence for early European penetration is not lacking. In New England and farther North is found a highly specialised form of the stone adze known as the gouge, which is abundant in the region mentioned, but disappears as we approach the Carolinas and the Ohio Valley. It is to be found in Northern Europe where the Atlantic is narrowest and most nearly bridged by the intervening islands. Within the same area in North-East America, and thinning out, as does the gouge, is to be found an object of rare and highly specialised form, an axe-like implement known as the hammer-stone, with a perforation for hafting, and wing-like blades. In Northern Europe is found a drilled axe of similar type. It is, says Mr. Sven Nilsson, exactly like the axe which the Amazons of classical mythology are represented as carrying in many friezes and statues, and resembles the
Amazonia securis of Horace, which is also mentioned by Xenophon in the 'Anabasis.' Its American homologue, says Holmes, had no other than sacred and ceremonial functions.

"It may not be amiss to suggest," he remarks, "that possibly in prehistoric times examples of that type of implement were carried by some voyager across the intervening seas. . . . Who will venture to say that these greatly varied, beautifully finished, and widely distributed objects may not have come into existence among the tribes during the 620 years separating the discovery of Vineland and the arrival of the English Pilgrims?"

Holmes also ventures to indicate Mediterranean cultural affinities in America.

"Along the middle Atlantic shores of America," he says, "certain forms of artifact are found which resemble more closely the corresponding fabrications of the Mediterranean region than do those of other parts of America. The round-sectioned, petaloid polished celt is found in highest perfection in Western Europe, and in the West Indies and neighbouring American areas. It is absent or rare on the opposite shores of the Pacific. In the Isthmian region we find works in gold and silver and their alloys which display technical skill of exceptional, even remarkable, kind, and it is noteworthy that the method of manufacture employed, as well as some of the forms produced, suggest strongly the wonderful metal-craft of the Nigerian tribes of Old Benin; and, as possibly bearing on this occurrence, we observe that the trade winds and currents of the Atlantic are ever ready to carry voyagers from the African shores in the direction of the Caribbean Sea."

Again, the close resemblance between the architectural and sculptural remains of Middle America and South-Eastern Asia invites comparison. In both regions the salient structures are pyramids ascended by four steep stairways of stone, bordered by serpent balustrades, and surmounted by temples. The walls of temples are embellished with a profusion of ornaments, and surmounted by roof-combs of a very similar design, and the caryatid is common to both environments. It does not seem impossible that the energetic builders of Cambodia and Java of two thousand years ago should have had sea-going craft capable of the voyage to America. That they had in the sixth century of our era we know. But by that time Central American civilization was already on the wane.
After more than four centuries we are still much in the dark concerning the wonderful civilization of the Maya Indian tribes of Guatemala, Chiapas, and Yucatan. The United States Bureau of Ethnology has heroically striven to achieve results in Central American archaeology comparable with those arrived at by workers in the lore of the ancient East. But although the effort has been admirably organised, it has been, to some extent, devoid of imagination, and the gaps in our knowledge of the Maya and Mexican past are still so great as to arouse the feeling that as yet we are only at the beginning of a quest of extraordinary difficulty and complexity. For example, although the symbols employed in Maya arithmetical computation and dating have been unriddled, the hieroglyphs accompanying them, which probably relate to the details of religious festivals, still baffle the ingenuity of investigators. Again, the several epochs in the history of the Maya race can only be estimated broadly by a comparative study of the development of their art-forms. But one arresting fact emerges from the welter of evidence and theory. The earliest known forms of Maya art and carven inscription differ so slightly from the latest examples as to induce the belief that this civilization did not develop upon American soil, but had its inception elsewhere.

Authorities are slightly at variance regarding the best method of collating Maya chronology, as expressed in the dates sculptured on the walls of the temples of Guatemala, with our own system of reckoning time. But there is a general agreement that the earliest of these nearly coincide with the beginning of the Christian era. If this be granted, and we lean toward the notion of an Asiatic origin for an art and architecture which first appear on American soil as almost fully developed, we must look for signs of their introduction at some time shortly before the commencement of our present chronological era—in a word, at a period when Buddhist missionary enterprise was in its hey-day.

As is well known, evidence of a kind is not wanting that Buddhist monks from Kabul reached America at some time in the fifth century of our era. This is contained in certain Chinese annals, the antiquity and reliability of which is doubtful. After a close examination of this evidence, the present writer is of the opinion that the theory that these missionaries reached America is 'not proven.' The
most satisfactory proof of the early Asiatic penetration of America must surely be sought for on American soil.

It is, perhaps, in the worship of the god known in Mexico as Quetzalcoatl, and in Central America as Gucumatz and Kukulkan (all of which mean 'Feathered Snake'), that perhaps the strongest proof of psychological contact with Asia is to be found. At the period of the Conquest he had developed into a god connected with the trade wind, and therefore with the fertilization of the crops, but in an earlier day he possessed a very different significance. There are several versions of his myth, some of which state that he came from the East, while others give the impression that he entered the country by the way of the west coast. However that may be, he is, in his earlier forms, decidedly Buddhistic in aspect and insignia, as well as in the traditions which relate to him. His was a religion of pious contemplation and penance. His priests rose several times in the watches of the night to indulge in prayer and penance, they drew blood from their ears, noses, and thighs by means of sharp thorns; they bathed in the early watches of the dawn. They had their religious adepts and recluses, precisely as among the Buddhist fraternities, and the personal piety of Quetzalcoatl himself and his strenuous passive resistance to the horrid rites of human sacrifice, of which the lower Aztec religion was so prolific, lend colour to the theory of his Buddhist origin.

Nor is this weakened by the sculptured and other representations of Quetzalcoatl which have come down to us. In these he is shown, not as squatting with knees drawn up to chin, as in the native manner, but as sitting cross-legged, often in a shrine, in the most approved manner of the Buddhist saint, wearing necklaces of beads and other hierophantic insignia, and a head-dress which recalls those of numerous Buddhist personages. But there are other and still more disconcerting evidences of contact with Asia. At Copan is a stela of considerable proportions, which exhibits two strange supporters resembling elephants. These animals have coiled and elongated trunks, but are without tusks. The authorities of the United States Bureau of Ethnology are of the opinion that these are exaggerated representations of the macaw bird. But Prof. Elliot Smith of London University, who has experience in mythology and symbolism as well as in comparative anatomy and zoology, assures us that these sculptures represent "undoubted elephants,"
a statement which he clinches by saying that the auditory meatus observable is not that of the macaw, but of the elephant. Commenting on this theory, Mr. Clark Wissler observes: "In this case we may doubt the reality of the similarity between these figures and southern Asiatic drawings of elephants, because those who have studied the Maya sculptures themselves, instead of the pencil sketches made by earlier observers, find proof that another creature was in the artist's mind. In cases of this kind when we are dealing with the conventionalised drawings of the New World and the Old, it can scarcely be expected that the mere objective similarity between a few of these drawings is to be taken as proof of their identity in origin. Other check data must be appealed to before even a useful working hypothesis can be formulated." The whole question of Asiatic influence in America can scarcely be taken seriously until reinforced by a much larger body of evidence than is at present forthcoming.

That American civilization owed its inception to or received impetus from Polynesian immigration is a theory which recommends itself to a growing number of adherents. Perhaps its most direct advocate is Prof. J. Macmillan Brown, Principal of Christchurch University, New Zealand, who sees in the architectural and other manifestations of the Incan culture of Peru a close resemblance to the megalithic culture of Easter Island, and this, again, he connects with Polynesia, seeing in the hermit isle of the Pacific a stepping-stone by way of which Polynesian arts and beliefs were introduced to American soil. He indicates that the Cyclopean work of some of the burial platforms in Easter Island is precisely the same in character as that to be found at Cuzco in Peru. On the brick-building civilization of the ancient Andeans of Peru, Prof. Brown believes, a stone-building culture borrowed from the Pacific was superimposed by the Incas, who improved and refined upon it. He shows that certain plants which had been acclimatised in Polynesia, the banana and the plantain, the leaves of which are found in old Peruvian graves flourished in South America, and from the presence of the sweet potato he assumed Polynesian influence on the Pacific coast of South America, where the tuber flourished exceedingly.

In certain South American customs and forms of artistic endeavour, too, Professor Brown discerns evidences of Polynesian
influence. The *tiputa* or *poncho*, the mantle with a single hole for the head, which is so generally worn from Mexico to the Argentine, he believes to be of western insular origin. The salivary ferments common to both areas, *chicha* and *kava*, he compares as having a unity of origin in Polynesian practice, and the chewing of the Areca coca with lime he likens to the practice of masticating the areca nut, which, in the Pacific, is also chewed with lime. Moreover, the Peruvian quipus, or system of knotted cords, the purpose of which was to serve as a mnemonic register for facts and numbers, and even to supply the first words of songs and chants, he compares with the mnemonic sticks in use in Tahiti and among the Maori, who also possessed knotted cords somewhat resembling those in use in Peru. The *umu* or earth-oven of the Pacific, associated with the cult of cannibalism, also penetrated South America by way of the west coast, and the stone axe or adze of the western insular area was also adopted in the Pacific regions of South America.

Lastly, he infers the arrival of a considerable body of Polynesians on South American soil. Assisted by the Humboldt current, these adventurers landed on the coast near the site of Truxillo, and founded the now ruined city of Grand Chimu, where still stand three double-walled enclosures, each covering more than a hundred acres. Within that nearest to the coast are the foundations of many large edifices in front of hundreds of small cubicles, entered only from the roof. These, he believes, were barracks for the soldiery of the conquering intruders, who reserved them as a fortified retreat in the last resort. From the gateway there stretches into the sea, about a mile off, a weir, containing in the middle a dock large enough to accommodate an ocean-going craft, by the aid of which the garrison could, if necessary, make its escape. But the evidence by which he chiefly identifies the invaders as of Polynesian race is to be found in the cemetery outside the northern wall, in which not a single shard of pottery has been found—for of all the Pacific peoples, the Polynesians alone made no pottery, while the native Peruvians lavishly furnished the graves of their dead with ceramic mementoes. A tradition from Lambayeque, an ancient city farther to the north, has it that across the sea came a band of naked warriors who worshipped a god of green stone, and who ruled for a time in the neighbourhood and later disappeared.

From what part of Polynesia did these conquering immigrants
come? Professor Brown believes that the settlers in Grand Chimu were no mere haphazard adventurers, but came to Peru as the result of a definite quest for a new home. Searching for other land more or less known, they got into the track of the trade winds, and were unavoidably blown on to the Pacific coast of South America. He thinks it not improbable that these voyagers came from the Marquesas, where alone in the Pacific area is to be found the combination of megalithic work and statuary reproduced in Incan Peru.

Setting aside the indirect character of much of Professor Brown's evidence, it is obvious that such incursions as he describes could have had but a slight influence on American race and culture. The evidences of Polynesian influence in America are slender, and probably arose out of sporadic visitations, which, by reason of the very hostility of the race which made them—and the Polynesians were nowhere friendly disposed—could leave but little traces upon native art and custom. At the same time it is only fair to admit that salient striking customs and artifacts, once introduced, are usually persistent in character, and to find a highly involved and elaborate form of architectural science, such as the megalithic, in Peru, certainly justifies a respectful consideration of the assumption that it emanated from one or another of the Pacific regions where it is to be found.

The argument that America was not only peopled from Polynesia but also drew the seeds of her culture from that region is ably summarized by Mr. Clark Wissler, who says:—

"Repeated efforts have been made to show that all the higher culture complexes of the New World were brought over from the Old, particularly from China or the Pacific Islands. Most of these writings are merely speculative or may be ignored, but some of the facts we have cited for correspondences to Pacific Island culture have not been satisfactorily explained. Dixon has carefully reviewed this subject, asserting in general that among such traits as blowguns, plank canoes, lime-chewing, head-hunting cults, the man's house, and certain masked dances common to the New World and the Pacific Islands, there appears a tendency to mass upon the Pacific side of the New World. This gives these traits a semblance of continuous distribution with the Island culture. Yet it should be noted that these traits, as enumerated above, have in reality a sporadic distribution in the New World, and that there are excep-
tions. On the other hand, there is no great a priori improbability that some of these traits did reach the New World from the Pacific Islands."

The several routes possible to immigrants are the Bering approach, that by way of the Atlantic currents, setting from the African coast to the shores of South America, the Middle and South Pacific currents traversing the ocean which separates Polynesia from South America, the Japan currents setting to the North-East, and the chain of islands connecting Europe with Labrador. The majority of these are certainly not very practicable for primitive voyagers, but there are numerous instances on record of Polynesian canoes drifting for six or eight hundred miles from their point of departure. Such voyagers as there carried, however, can scarcely have affected blood and culture to any great extent in regions already occupied, though there seems to be good evidence that they did so slightly.

Although artifacts of European character have been found in North America, and these perhaps antedate the well-ascertained settlements of the Norsemen there, no data sufficiently embrace or accurate have yet been gathered to permit us to say that early European man actually found his way to America by drift or landbridge. That numerous traditions of a Western continent existed in the British Isles from an early period is, however, now generally admitted. In some cases these were probably mere echoes of the Norse discoveries, like the Venetian tale of the discoveries of the brothers Zeno, but those of them associated with Irish and Welsh legend are now receiving a greater measure of credence than formerly. Of late years much has been done to show that many regions which our grandfathers firmly believed to be traditional were actually known to European geographers long before the date generally accepted as that of their discovery. During the 19th century the venerable legend of St. Brandan was believed to enshrine quite as much of the essence of legend as any other of the Irish sagas of seafaring. The Norse tales of discovery in America and elsewhere were credible enough, but this Celtic epic of an earthly paradise was, of course, much too rich in matter of faery to carry conviction. Perhaps its most acceptable version is that to be found in the fifteenth century Book of Lismore, compiled from much older materials, from which we learn that St. Brandan, founder of the
monastery of Clonfert, who flourished in the seventh century, prayed strenuously that a secret and hidden land might be shown to him where he could dwell in hermitage secure from men. We are told that the saint "travelled up and down the coast of Kerry, inquiring as he went for traditions of the Western continent." At first he set sail in search of it in a ship made from the hides of beasts, but later in a large wooden vessel built in Connaught, which required a crew of sixty monks to navigate her. Success crowned his quest, and he came at last to an island 'under the lee of Mount Atlas,' a balmy and delectable region, where he dwelt in peace and security for many years.

The first appearance of St. Brandan's Isle in cartography is in the Hereford map of 1275, where it occupies the latitude of the Canary group. Indeed in the Canary Isles a tradition still survives that St. Brandan and his companions spent several years in the archipelago. Even as late as the eighteenth century an expedition sailed from the Canaries in search of an island believed to be outside of those already known in the group, and to be that in which the saint had finally settled. "It appears likely," says Mr. W. H. Babcock, "that St. Brandan in the sixth century wandered widely over the seas in quest of some warm island concerning which wonderful accounts had been brought to him, and found several such isles."

But Mr. Babcock, no venturesome authority, it may be said, is of the opinion that early Irish voyagers may actually have settled in Newfoundland. He thinks that the legendary island of Brazil, once thought of as lying in the Atlantic, may have been the present Newfoundland, which seems to have been visited by Irish-speaking people. The name Brazil is probably composed of two Celtic syllables, 'breas' and 'ail,' each highly commendatory in implication, and that the geographical term Brazil or O'Brasil, is of Irish origin cannot be doubted. In all probability the Irish monks whom early Norse settlers found in Iceland formed part of a great Celtic religious and missionary 'push,' or forward movement, which was pressing northward and eastward in the latter part of the eighth century, and the Irish who reached Newfoundland may have formed its western wing. Irish vessels of that period were of a tonnage sufficiently large to negotiate such a voyage with success. Indeed, they were much better equipped for long-distance sailing than the
vessels of Columbus. It is well known that the Norse discoverers of America conferred the name of Mikla Irlant, or Great Ireland, on a region not far distant from one of the coasts where they settled. The territory which has Cape Race for its apex, and which includes Newfoundland and Cape Breton Island, occupies the precise latitude of the Island of Brazil in many of the ancient maps. The name Brazil was given to the South American country now so called in almost a haphazard manner, and in the vague belief that the legendary locality of that name had been rediscovered after the lapse of centuries.

But Wales has also a claim to traditional honours in the discovery and even in the settlement of America, which, should she care to take it seriously, is at least as strong as that of Ireland. On the death of Owen Gwynedd, Prince of North Wales, in 1170 A. D., tradition says that his sons became embroiled in civil strife, and one of them, Madoc, a man experienced in seamanship, disgusted with the unstable condition of the country, resolved to lead a colony to those Western lands of which he had heard his seafaring acquaintances speak. Accordingly he collected several hundreds of his followers, steered westwards, and eventually established a colony 'in a fertile land.' Leaving here a hundred and twenty persons, he returned to Wales, and fitted out a larger expedition of ten ships, with which he once more put to sea, this time passing completely out of human ken.

The evidence in support of this story is that it is mentioned in early Welsh annals, and that numerous travellers have discovered traces of the Welsh tongue among the lighter coloured tribes of American Indians. Meredith, a Welsh bard, seems to have celebrated the voyage in some verses composed, according to Hakluyt, in 1477, or fifteen years before the Columbian discovery, but the original printed source of the legend is Humphrey Lloyd's 'History of Cambria, now called Wales,' which was published at London in 1584. But the 'Nieuwe en Onbekende Weereld' of Montanus, published at Amsterdam in 1671, made the story more universally familiar. It necessarily entered into the discussions of the learned men who in the seventeenth century were busying themselves with the question of the origin of the American races, and among these De Laet and Hornius gave credit to its reality.

The linguistic evidences of Madoc's settlements in the New
World, however, were not brought into prominence until after one, Morgan Jones, a Welsh missionary, had fallen among the Tuscarora Indians in 1660, and found, as he asserted, that they could understand his Welsh. He is most explicit regarding the ability of his Indian captors to speak the purest Welsh, and states that they perfectly understood those passages of Scripture which he read to them from his Welsh Bible. It is impossible to enumerate the extraordinary stream of books and papers dealing with this fascinating question which saw the light towards the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century. The renewed interest in the subject seems to have prompted Southey to the composition of his poem 'Madoc.' Meanwhile persistent reports were published of the discovery of tribes of Indians who spoke Welsh. Some years later the publication of Catlin's *American Indians* probably gave more conviction than had previously been felt as regards the actuality of the tradition because of his statements of positive linguistic correspondences in the language of the so-called white Mandans of the Missouri, the similarity of their boats to the old Welsh coracles, and other parallels of customs. The discovery, too, that there was actually a tribe of Indians in Oregon calling themselves Modocs, seemed to many to clinch the matter. "It seems hardly necessary to state," writes Mr. James Mooney of the United States Bureau of Ethnology, "that there is not a provable trace of Welsh, Gaelic, or any other European language in any native American language, excepting for a few words of recent introduction." But it is noticeable that nowhere in the publications of the Bureau are definite facts adduced for the final discomfiture of this extraordinarily vital and persistent tradition.

The anthropological evidence and the very considerable mass of tradition which has accumulated around the question of the origin of the American race seem to unite in affording proof that the New World, so far from having been populated by any one race or at any given period, received its human stock from Asia, Polynesia, and even from Europe, at intervals widely removed. Probably, also, there were many immigrations from these several sources in the course of ages. It seems, however, reasonable to infer that the most numerous contribution came from Northern Asia at a period when the eastern portions of that continent had developed only a slender degree of culture. Polynesian influence must naturally have
been of a more slight and intermittent character, and if European (other than early Norse) immigrants entered America, it must have been during some phase when communication by land or short sea passage was possible. It may yet be proved that Magdalenian men of the Upper Old Stone Age actually did drift or wander to America from the shores of Europe. But if they did, they assuredly did not leave many of their bodily remains in the Western continent, and, so far as is at present known, none of the works of their hands.

Evidence in support of the gradual development of the American race in complete isolation is adduced by many well-equipped scholars, who point to the distinctive character of American agriculture, with its cultivation of plants peculiar to the soil—tobacco, maize, manioc, and others—to the absence of draught and milk-giving animals, to the fact that the wheel and other mechanical devices were unknown in America, in support of their theory. But to maintain a thesis so confined in the face of well-founded proofs for the penetration of America by alien influences seems as unscientific as to adopt the opposite view and to refer the origin of American culture in its entirety to a handful of castaways. Moderately employed, both theories are capable of acceptance, but it is impossible to entertain either, when pushed to extremes, with seriousness. This is as much as to say that America, although it underwent no intentional or specific colonisation in pre-Columbian times by races or adventurers equipped for settlement, was, as all the evidence seems to show, reached by bands or units of seafarers carried thither by the ever-ready agency of the trade winds, who brought with them the knowledge, and perhaps the artifacts, of a distant and alien culture, which only partially affected and modified that of the older settlers from North-Eastern Asia.