

distinguished from one another by a common observer. No inference can be surely drawn, however, without a wide range of comparison. That hitherto made has been chiefly founded on specimens from the barbarous tribes.⁶⁹ Perhaps a closer comparison with the more civilized may supply still stronger evidence of affinity.⁷⁰

In seeking for analogies with the Old World, we should not pass by in silence the *architectural remains* of the country, which, indeed, from their resemblance

⁶⁹ Dr. Morton's splendid work on American crania has gone far to supply the requisite information. Out of about one hundred and fifty specimens of skulls, of which he has ascertained the dimensions with admirable precision, one-third belong to the semi-civilized races; and of them thirteen are Mexican. The number of these last is too small to found any general conclusions upon, considering the great diversity found in individuals of the same nation, not to say kindred.—Blumënbach's observations on American skulls were chiefly made, according to Prichard (*Physical History*, vol. i. pp. 183, 184), from specimens of the Carib tribes, as unfavorable, perhaps, as any on the continent.

⁷⁰ Yet these specimens are not so easy to be obtained. With uncommon advantages for procuring these myself in Mexico, I have not succeeded in obtaining any specimens of the genuine Aztec skull. The difficulty of this may be readily comprehended by any one who considers the length of time that has elapsed since the Conquest, and that the burial-places of the ancient Mexicans have continued to be used by their descendants. Dr. Morton more than once refers to his specimens as those of the "genuine Toltec skull, from cemeteries in Mexico, older than the Conquest." (*Crania Americana*, pp. 152, 155, 231, et alibi.) But how does he know that the heads are Toltec? That nation is reported to have left the country about the middle of the eleventh century, nearly eight hundred years ago,—according to Ixtlilxochitl, indeed, a century earlier; and it seems much more probable that the specimens now found in these burial-places should belong to some of the races who have since occupied the country, than to one so far removed. The presumption is manifestly too feeble to authorize any positive inference.

to the pyramidal structures of the East, have suggested to more than one antiquary the idea of a common origin.⁷¹ The Spanish invaders, it is true, assailed the Indian buildings, especially those of a religious character, with all the fury of fanaticism. The same spirit survived in the generations which succeeded. The war has never ceased against the monuments of the country; and the few that fanaticism has spared have been nearly all demolished to serve the purposes of utility. Of all the stately edifices, so much extolled by the Spaniards who first visited the country, there are scarcely more vestiges at the present day than are to be found in some of those regions of Europe and Asia which once swarmed with populous cities, the great marts of luxury and commerce.⁷² Yet some of these remains, like the temple of Xochicalco,⁷³ the

⁷¹ The tower of Belus, with its retreating stories, described by Herodotus (*Clio*, sec. 181), has been selected as the model of the *teocalli*; which leads Vater somewhat shrewdly to remark that it is strange no evidence of this should appear in the erection of similar structures by the Aztecs in the whole course of their journey to Anahuac. (*Mithridates*, Theil iii. Abtheil. 3. pp. 74, 75.) The learned Niebuhr finds the elements of the Mexican temple in the mythic tomb of Porsenna. (*Roman History*, Eng. trans. (London, 1827), vol. i. p. 88.) The resemblance to the accumulated pyramids composing this monument is not very obvious. Comp. Pliny (*Hist. Nat.*, lib. 36, sec. 19). Indeed, the antiquarian may be thought to encroach on the poet's province when he finds in Etruscan *fable*—"cum omnia excedat fabulositas," as Pliny characterizes this—the origin of Aztec science.

⁷² See the powerful description of Lucan, *Pharsalia*, lib. 9, v. 966.—The Latin bard has been surpassed by the Italian, in the beautiful stanza beginning *Giace l'alta Cartago* (*Gierusalemme Liberata*, c. 15, s. 20), which may be said to have been expanded by Lord Byron into a canto,—the fourth of *Childe Harold*.

⁷³ The most remarkable remains on the proper Mexican soil are the

palaces of Tezcotzinco,⁷⁴ the colossal calendar-stone in the capital, are of sufficient magnitude, and wrought with sufficient skill, to attest mechanical powers in the Aztecs not unworthy to be compared with those of the ancient Egyptians.

But, if the remains on the Mexican soil are so scanty, they multiply as we descend the southeastern

temple or fortress of Xochicalco, not many miles from the capital. It stands on a rocky eminence, nearly a league in circumference, cut into terraces faced with stone. The building on the summit is seventy-five feet long and sixty-six broad. It is of hewn granite, put together without cement, but with great exactness. It was constructed in the usual pyramidal, terraced form, rising by a succession of stories, each smaller than that below it. The number of these is now uncertain; the lower one alone remaining entire. This is sufficient, however, to show the nice style of execution, from the sharp, salient cornices, and the hieroglyphical emblems with which it is covered, all cut in the hard stone. As the detached blocks found among the ruins are sculptured with bas-reliefs in like manner, it is probable that the whole building was covered with them. It seems probable, also, as the same pattern extends over different stones, that the work was executed after the walls were raised.—In the hill beneath, subterraneous galleries, six feet wide and high, have been cut to the length of one hundred and eighty feet, where they terminate in two halls, the vaulted ceilings of which connect by a sort of tunnel with the buildings above. These subterraneous works are also lined with hewn stone. The size of the blocks, and the hard quality of the granite of which they consist, have made the buildings of Xochicalco a choice quarry for the proprietors of a neighboring sugar-refinery, who have appropriated the upper stories of the temple to this ignoble purpose! The Barberini at least built palaces, beautiful themselves, as works of art, with the plunder of the Coliseum. See the full description of this remarkable building, both by Dupaix and Alzate. (*Antiquités Mexicaines*, tom. i. Exp. 1, pp. 15-20; tom. iii. Exp. 1, Pl. 33.) A recent investigation has been made by order of the Mexican government, the report of which differs, in some of its details, from the preceding. *Revista Mexicana*, tom. i. mem. 5.

⁷⁴ *Ante*, vol. i. pp. 183-185.

slope of the Cordilleras, traverse the rich Valley of Oaxaca, and penetrate the forests of Chiapa and Yucatan. In the midst of these lonely regions we meet with the ruins, recently discovered, of several ancient cities, Mitla, Palenque, and Itzalana or Uxmal,⁷⁵ which argue a higher civilization than anything yet found on the American continent; and, although it was not the Mexicans who built these cities, yet, as they are probably the work of cognate races, the present inquiry would be incomplete without some attempt to ascertain what light they can throw on the origin of the Indian, and consequently of the Aztec, civilization.⁷⁶

Few works of art have been found in the neighborhood of any of the ruins. Some of them, consisting of earthen or marble vases, fragments of statues, and the like, are fantastic, and even hideous; others show much grace and beauty of design, and are apparently

⁷⁵ It is impossible to look at Waldeck's finished drawings of buildings, where Time seems scarcely to have set his mark on the nicely chiselled stone, and the clear tints are hardly defaced by a weather-stain, without regarding the artist's work as a *restoration*; a picture true, it may be, of those buildings in the day of their glory, but not of their decay.—Cogolludo, who saw them in the middle of the seventeenth century, speaks of them with admiration, as works of "accomplished architects," of whom history has preserved no tradition. *Historia de Yucatan* (Madrid, 1688), lib. 4, cap. 2.

⁷⁶ In the original text is a description of some of these ruins, especially of those of Mitla and Palenque. It would have had novelty at the time in which it was written, since the only accounts of these buildings were in the colossal publications of Lord Kingsborough, and in the *Antiquités Mexicaines*, not very accessible to most readers. But it is unnecessary to repeat descriptions now familiar to every one, and so much better executed than they can be by me, in the spirited pages of Stephens.

well executed.⁷⁷ It may seem extraordinary that no iron in the buildings themselves, nor iron tools, should have been discovered, considering that the materials used are chiefly granite, very hard, and carefully hewn and polished. Red copper chisels and axes have been picked up in the midst of large blocks of granite imperfectly cut, with fragments of pillars and architraves, in the quarries near Mitla.⁷⁸ Tools of a similar kind have been discovered, also, in the quarries near Thebes; and the difficulty, nay, impossibility, of cutting such masses from the living rock with any tools which we possess, except iron, has confirmed an ingenious writer in the supposition that this metal must have been employed by the Egyptians, but that its tendency to decomposition, especially in a nitrous soil, has prevented any specimens of it from being preserved.⁷⁹ Yet iron has been found, after the lapse of some thousands of years, in the remains of antiquity; and it is certain that the Mexicans, down to the time of the Conquest, used only copper instruments, with an alloy of tin, and a silicious powder, to cut the hardest stones, some of them of enormous dimensions.⁸⁰ This fact, with the additional circumstance that only similar

⁷⁷ See, in particular, two terra-cotta busts with helmets, found in Oaxaca, which might well pass for Greek, both in the style of the heads and the casques that cover them. *Antiquités Mexicaines*, tom. iii. Exp. 2, Pl. 36.

⁷⁸ Dupaix speaks of these tools as made of pure copper. But doubtless there was some alloy mixed with it, as was practised by the Aztecs and Egyptians; otherwise their edges must have been easily turned by the hard substances on which they were employed.

⁷⁹ Wilkinson, *Ancient Egyptians*, vol. iii. pp. 246-254.

⁸⁰ *Ante*, vol. i. p. 142.

tools have been found in Central America, strengthens the conclusion that iron was neither known there nor in ancient Egypt.

But what are the nations of the Old Continent whose style of architecture bears most resemblance to that of the remarkable monuments of Chiapa and Yucatan? The points of resemblance will probably be found neither numerous nor decisive. There is, indeed, some analogy both to the Egyptian and Asiatic style of architecture in the pyramidal, terrace-formed bases on which the buildings repose, resembling also the Toltec and Mexican *teocalli*. A similar care, also, is observed in the people of both hemispheres to adjust the position of their buildings by the cardinal points. The walls in both are covered with figures and hieroglyphics, which, on the American as on the Egyptian, may be designed, perhaps, to record the laws and historical annals of the nation. These figures, as well as the buildings themselves, are found to have been stained with various dyes, principally vermilion;⁸¹ a favorite color with the Egyptians also, who painted their colossal statues and temples of granite.⁸² Notwithstanding these points of similarity, the Palenque architecture has little to remind us of the Egyptian or of the Oriental. It is, indeed, more conformable, in

⁸¹ Waldeck, *Atlas pittoresque*, p. 73.—The fortress of Xochicalco was also colored with a red paint (*Antiquités Mexicaines*, tom. i. p. 20); and a cement of the same color covered the Toltec pyramid at Teotihuacan, according to Mr. Bullock, *Six Months in Mexico*, vol. ii. p. 143.

⁸² *Description de l'Égypte*, Antiq., tom. ii. cap. 9, sec. 4.—The huge image of the Sphinx was originally colored red. (Clarke's *Travels*, vol. v. p. 202.) Indeed, many of the edifices, as well as statues, of ancient Greece, also, still exhibit traces of having been painted.

the perpendicular elevation of the walls, the moderate size of the stones, and the general arrangement of the parts, to the European. It must be admitted, however, to have a character of originality peculiar to itself.

More positive proofs of communication with the East might be looked for in their sculpture and in the conventional forms of their hieroglyphics. But the sculptures on the Palenque buildings are in relief, unlike the Egyptian, which are usually in *intaglio*. The Egyptians were not very successful in their representations of the human figure, which are on the same invariable model, always in profile, from the greater facility of execution this presents over the front view; the full eye is placed on the side of the head, while the countenance is similar in all, and perfectly destitute of expression.⁸³ The Palenque artists were equally awkward in representing the various attitudes of the body, which they delineated also in profile. But the parts are executed with much correctness, and sometimes gracefully; the costume is rich and various; and the ornamented head-dress, typical, perhaps, like the Aztec, of the name and condition of the person represented, conforms in its magnificence to the Oriental taste. The countenance is various, and often expressive. The contour of the head is, indeed, most extraordinary, describing almost a semicircle from the forehead to the tip of the nose, and contracted towards the crown,

⁸³ The various causes of the stationary condition of art in Egypt, for so many ages, are clearly exposed by the duke di Serradifalco, in his *Antichità della Sicilia* (Palermo, 1834, tom. ii. pp. 33, 34); a work in which the author, while illustrating the antiquities of a little island, has thrown a flood of light on the arts and literary culture of ancient Greece.

whether from the artificial pressure practised by many of the aborigines, or from some preposterous notion of ideal beauty.⁸⁴ But, while superior in the execution of the details, the Palenque artist was far inferior to the Egyptian in the number and variety of the objects displayed by him, which on the Theban temples comprehend animals as well as men, and almost every conceivable object of use or elegant art.

The hieroglyphics are too few on the American buildings to authorize any decisive inference. On comparing them, however, with those of the Dresden Codex, probably from this same quarter of the country,⁸⁵ with those on the monument of Xochicalco, and with the ruder picture-writing of the Aztecs, it is not easy to discern any thing which indicates a common system. Still less obvious is the resemblance to the Egyptian characters, whose refined and delicate abbreviations approach almost to the simplicity of an alphabet. Yet the Palenque writing shows an advanced

⁸⁴ "The ideal is not always the beautiful," as Winckelmann truly says, referring to the Egyptian figures. (*Histoire de l'Art chez les Anciens*, liv. 4, chap. 2, trad. Fr.) It is not impossible, however, that the portraits mentioned in the text may be copies from life. Some of the rude tribes of America distorted their infants' heads into forms quite as fantastic; and Garcilaso de la Vega speaks of a nation discovered by the Spaniards in Florida, with a formation apparently not unlike the Palenque: "*Tienen cabezas increíblemente largas, y ahussadas para arriba, que las ponen así con artificio, atándoselas desde el punto, que nascen las criaturas, hasta que son de nueve ó diez años.*" *La Florida* (Madrid, 1723), p. 190.

⁸⁵ For a notice of this remarkable codex, see *ante*, vol. i. p. 107. There is, indeed, a resemblance, in the use of straight lines and dots, between the Palenque writing and the Dresden MS. Possibly these dots denoted years, like the rounds in the Mexican system.

stage of the art, and, though somewhat clumsy, intimates, by the conventional and arbitrary forms of the hieroglyphics, that it was symbolical, and perhaps phonetic, in its character.⁸⁶ That its mysterious import will ever be deciphered is scarcely to be expected. The language of the race who employed it, the race itself, is unknown. And it is not likely that another Rosetta stone will be found, with its trilingual inscription, to supply the means of comparison, and to guide the American Champollion in the path of discovery.

It is impossible to contemplate these mysterious monuments of a lost civilization without a strong feeling of curiosity as to who were their architects and what is their probable age. The data on which to rest our conjectures of their age are not very substantial; although some find in them a warrant for an antiquity of thousands of years, coeval with the architecture of Egypt and Hindostan.⁸⁷ But the interpretation of

⁸⁶ The hieroglyphics are arranged in perpendicular lines. The heads are uniformly turned towards the right, as in the Dresden MS.

⁸⁷ "Les ruines," says the enthusiastic chevalier Le Noir, "sans nom, à qui l'on a donné celui de *Palenque*, peuvent remonter comme les plus anciennes ruines du monde à trois mille ans. Ceci n'est point mon opinion seule; c'est celle de tous les voyageurs qui ont vu les ruines dont il s'agit, de tous les archéologues qui en ont examiné les dessins ou lu les descriptions, enfin des historiens qui ont fait des recherches, et qui n'ont rien trouvé dans les annales du monde qui fasse soupçonner l'époque de la fondation de tels monuments, dont l'origine se perd dans la nuit des temps." (*Antiquités Mexicaines*, tom. ii., Examen, p. 73.) Colonel Galindo, fired with the contemplation of the American ruins, pronounces this country the true cradle of civilization, whence it passed over to China, and latterly to Europe, which, whatever "its foolish vanity" may pretend, has but just started in the march of improvement! See his Letter on Copan, ap. Trans. of Am. Ant. Soc., vol. ii.

hieroglyphics, and the apparent duration of trees, are vague and unsatisfactory.⁸⁸ And how far can we derive an argument from the discoloration and dilapidated condition of the ruins, when we find so many structures of the Middle Ages dark and mouldering with decay, while the marbles of the Acropolis and the gray stone of Pæstum still shine in their primitive splendor?

There are, however, undoubted proofs of considerable age to be found there. Trees have shot up in the midst of the buildings, which measure, it is said, more than nine feet in diameter.⁸⁹ A still more striking fact is the accumulation of vegetable mould in one of the courts, to the depth of nine feet above the pavement.⁹⁰ This in our latitude would be decisive of a very great antiquity. But in the rich soil of Yucatan, and under the ardent sun of the tropics, vegetation bursts forth with irrepressible exuberance, and generations of plants succeed each other without intermission, leaving an accumulation of deposits that would have perished under a northern winter. Another evi-

⁸⁸ From these sources of information, and especially from the number of the concentric rings in some old trees, and the incrustation of stalactites found on the ruins of Palenque, M. Waldeck computes their age at between two and three thousand years. (*Voyage en Yucatan*, p. 78.) The criterion, as far as the trees are concerned, cannot be relied on in an advanced stage of their growth; and as to the stalactite formations, they are obviously affected by too many casual circumstances, to afford the basis of an accurate calculation.

⁸⁹ Waldeck, *Voyage en Yucatan*, ubi supra.

⁹⁰ *Antiquités Mexicaines*, Examen, p. 76.—Hardly deep enough, however, to justify Captain Dupaix's surmise of the antediluvian existence of these buildings; especially considering that the accumulation was in the sheltered position of an interior court.

dence of their age is afforded by the circumstance that in one of the courts of Uxmal the granite pavement, on which the figures of tortoises were raised in relief, is worn nearly smooth by the feet of the crowds who have passed over it;⁹¹ a curious fact, suggesting inferences both in regard to the age and population of the place. Lastly, we have authority for carrying back the date of many of these ruins to a certain period, since they were found in a deserted, and probably dilapidated, state by the first Spaniards who entered the country. Their notices, indeed, are brief and casual, for the old Conquerors had little respect for works of art;⁹² and it is fortunate for these structures that they

⁹¹ Waldeck, *Voyage en Yucatan*, p. 97.

⁹² The chaplain of Grijalva speaks with admiration of the "lofty towers of stone and lime, some of them very ancient," found in Yucatan. (*Itinerario*, MS. (1518).) Bernal Diaz, with similar expressions of wonder, refers the curious antique relics found there to the Jews. (*Hist. de la Conquista*, cap. 2, 6.) Alvarado, in a letter to Cortés, expatiates on the "maravillosos et grandes edificios" to be seen in Guatemala. (Oviedo, *Hist. de las Ind.*, MS., lib. 33, cap. 42.) According to Cogolludo, the Spaniards, who could get no tradition of their origin, referred them to the Phœnicians or Carthaginians. (*Hist. de Yucatan*, lib. 4, cap. 2.) He cites the following emphatic notice of these remains from Las Casas: "Ciertamente la tierra de Yucathan da á entender cosas mui especiales, y de mayor antigüedad, por las grandes, admirables, y excessivas maneras de edificios, y letros de ciertos caracteres, que en otra ninguna parte se hallan." (*Loc. cit.*) Even the inquisitive Martyr has collected no particulars respecting them, merely noticing the buildings of this region with general expressions of admiration. (*De Insulis nuper Inventis*, pp. 334-340.) What is quite as surprising is the silence of Cortés, who traversed the country forming the base of Yucatan, in his famous expedition to Honduras, of which he has given many details we would gladly have exchanged for a word respecting these interesting memorials. *Carta Quinta de Cortés*, MS.—I must add that some remarks in the above

had ceased to be the living temples of the gods, since no merit of architecture, probably, would have availed to save them from the general doom of the monuments of Mexico.

If we find it so difficult to settle the age of these buildings, what can we hope to know of their architects? Little can be gleaned from the rude people by whom they are surrounded. The old Tezcucan chronicler so often quoted by me, the best authority for the traditions of his country, reports that the Toltecs, on the breaking up of their empire,—which he places, earlier than most authorities, in the middle of the tenth century,—migrating from Anahuac, spread themselves over Guatemala, Tehuantepec, Campeachy, and the coasts and neighboring isles on both sides of the Isthmus.⁹³ This assertion, important, considering its source, is confirmed by the fact that several of the nations in that quarter adopted systems of astronomy and chronology, as well as sacerdotal institutions, very similar to the Aztec,⁹⁴ which, as we have seen, were

paragraph in the text would have been omitted, had I enjoyed the benefit of Mr. Stephens's researches when it was originally written. This is especially the case with the reflections on the probable condition of these structures at the time of the Conquest; when some of them would appear to have been still used for their original purposes.

⁹³ "Asimismo los Tultecas que escaparon se fueron por las costas del Mar del Sur y Norte, como son Huatimala, Tecuantepec, Cuauhzacualco, Campechy, Tecolotlan, y los de las Islas y Costas de una mar y otra, que despues se viniéron á multiplicar." *Ixtlilxochitl, Relaciones*, MS., No. 5.

⁹⁴ Herrera, *Hist. general*, dec. 4, lib. 16, cap. 1-4.—Cogolludo, *Hist. de Yucatan*, lib. 4, cap. 5.—Pet. Martyr, *De Insulis*, ubi supra.—M. Waldeck comes to just the opposite inference, namely, that the inhabitants of Yucatan were the true sources of the Toltec and Aztec

also probably derived from the Toltecs, their more polished predecessors in the land.

If so recent a date for the construction of the American buildings be thought incompatible with this oblivion of their origin, it should be remembered how treacherous a thing is tradition, and how easily the links of the chain are severed. The builders of the pyramids had been forgotten before the time of the earliest Greek historians.⁹⁵ The antiquary still disputes whether the frightful inclination of that architectural miracle, the tower of Pisa, standing as it does in the heart of a populous city, was the work of accident or design. And we have seen how soon the Tezcucans, dwelling amidst the ruins of their royal palaces, built just before the Conquest, had forgotten their history, while the more inquisitive traveller refers their construction to some remote period before the Aztecs.⁹⁶

The reader has now seen the principal points of coincidence insisted on between the civilization of ancient Mexico and the Eastern hemisphere. In presenting them to him, I have endeavored to confine myself to such as rest on sure historic grounds, and not so much to offer my own opinion as to enable him to form one for himself. There are some material embarrassments in the way to this, however, which must

civilization. (*Voyage en Yucatan*, p. 72.) "Doubt must be our lot in everything," exclaims the honest Captain Dupaix,—"*the true faith always excepted.*" *Antiquités Mexicaines*, tom. i. p. 21.

⁹⁵ "Inter omnes eos non constat a quibus factæ sint, justissimo casu, oblitteratis tantæ vanitatis auctoribus." Pliny, *Hist. Nat.*, lib. 36, cap. 17.

⁹⁶ *Ante*, vol. i. p. 186.

not be passed over in silence. These consist, not in explaining the fact that, while the mythic system and the science of the Aztecs afford some striking points of analogy with the Asiatic, they should differ in so many more; for the same phenomenon is found among the nations of the Old World, who seem to have borrowed from one another those ideas, only, best suited to their peculiar genius and institutions. Nor does the difficulty lie in accounting for the great dissimilarity of the American languages to those in the other hemisphere; for the difference with these is not greater than what exists among themselves; and no one will contend for a separate origin for each of the aboriginal tribes.⁹⁷ But it is scarcely possible to reconcile the knowledge of Oriental science with the total ignorance of some of the most serviceable and familiar arts, as the use of milk and iron, for example; arts so simple, yet so important to domestic comfort, that when once acquired they could hardly be lost.

The Aztecs had no useful domesticated animals. And we have seen that they employed bronze, as a substitute for iron, for all mechanical purposes. The bison, or wild cow of America, however, which ranges in countless herds over the magnificent prairies of the west, yields milk like the tame animal of the same species in Asia and Europe;⁹⁸ and iron was scattered

⁹⁷ At least, this is true of the etymology of these languages, and, as such, was adduced by Mr. Edward Everett, in his *Lectures on the Aboriginal Civilization of America*, forming part of a course delivered some years since by that acute and highly accomplished scholar.

⁹⁸ The mixed breed, from the buffalo and the European stock, was known formerly in the northwestern counties of Virginia, says Mr. Gallatin (*Synopsis*, sec. 5); who is, however, mistaken in asserting

in large masses over the surface of the table-land. Yet there have been people considerably civilized in Eastern Asia who were almost equally strangers to the use of milk.⁹⁹ The buffalo range was not so much on the western coast as on the eastern slopes of the Rocky Mountains;¹⁰⁰ and the migratory Aztec might well doubt whether the wild, uncouth monsters whom he occasionally saw bounding with such fury over the distant plains were capable of domestication, like the meek animals which he had left grazing in the green pastures of Asia. Iron, too, though met with on the surface of the ground, was more tenacious, and harder to work, than copper, which he also found in much greater quantities on his route. It is possible, more-

that "the bison is not known to have ever been domesticated by the Indians." (Ubi supra.) Gomara speaks of a nation, dwelling about 40° north latitude, on the northwestern borders of New Spain, whose chief wealth was in droves of these cattle (*bueyes con una giba sobre la cruz*, "oxen with a hump on the shoulders"), from which they got their clothing, food, and drink, which last, however, appears to have been only the blood of the animal. *Historia de las Indias*, cap. 214, ap. Barcia, tom. ii.

⁹⁹ The people of parts of China, for example, and, above all, of Cochin China, who never milk their cows, according to Macartney, cited by Humboldt, *Essai politique*, tom. iii. p. 58, note. See, also, p. 118.

¹⁰⁰ The native regions of the buffalo were the vast prairies of the Missouri, and they wandered over the long reach of country east of the Rocky Mountains, from 55° north, to the headwaters of the streams between the Mississippi and the Rio del Norte. The Columbia plains, says Gallatin, were as naked of game as of trees. (*Synopsis*, sec. 5.) That the bison was sometimes found also on the other side of the mountains, is plain from Gomara's statement. (*Hist. de las Ind.*, loc. cit.) See, also, Laet, who traces their southern wanderings to the river Vaquimi (?), in the province of Cinaloa, on the Californian Gulf. *Novus Orbis* (Lugd. Bat., 1633), p. 286.

over, that his migration may have been previous to the time when iron was used by his nation; for we have seen more than one people in the Old World employing bronze and copper with entire ignorance, apparently, of any more serviceable metal.¹⁰¹—Such is the explanation, unsatisfactory, indeed, but the best that suggests itself, of this curious anomaly.

The consideration of these and similar difficulties has led some writers to regard the antique American civilization as purely indigenous. Whichever way we turn, the subject is full of embarrassment. It is easy, indeed, by fastening the attention on one portion of it, to come to a conclusion. In this way, while some feel little hesitation in pronouncing the American civilization original, others, no less certainly, discern in it a Hebrew, or an Egyptian, or a Chinese, or a Tartar origin, as their eyes are attracted by the light

¹⁰¹ *Ante*, vol. i. p. 142.

Thus Lucretius:

"Et prior æris erat, quam ferri cognitus usus,
Quo facilis magis est natura, et copia major.
Ære solum terræ tractabant, æreque belli
Miscabant fluctus."

DE RERUM NATURA, lib. 5.

According to Carli, the Chinese were acquainted with iron 3000 years before Christ. (*Lettres Améric.*, tom. ii. p. 63.) Sir J. G. Wilkinson, in an elaborate inquiry into its first appearance among the people of Europe and Western Asia, finds no traces of it earlier than the sixteenth century before the Christian era. (*Ancient Egyptians*, vol. iii. pp. 241-246.) The origin of the most useful arts is lost in darkness. Their very utility is one cause of this, from the rapidity with which they are diffused among distant nations. Another cause is, that in the first ages of the discovery men are more occupied with availing themselves of it than with recording its history; until time turns history into fiction. Instances are familiar to every school-boy.

of analogy too exclusively to this or the other quarter. The number of contradictory lights, of itself, perplexes the judgment and prevents us from arriving at a precise and positive inference. Indeed, the affectation of this, in so doubtful a matter, argues a most unphilosophical mind. Yet where there is most doubt there is often the most dogmatism.

The reader of the preceding pages may perhaps acquiesce in the general conclusions,—not startling by their novelty,—

First, that the coincidences are sufficiently strong to authorize a belief that the civilization of Anahuac was in some degree influenced by that of Eastern Asia.

And, secondly, that the discrepancies are such as to carry back the communication to a very remote period; so remote that this foreign influence has been too feeble to interfere materially with the growth of what may be regarded in its essential features as a peculiar and indigenous civilization.

APPENDIX.

PART II.

ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS.