

and religious freedom, and with the sudden enlargement of the knowledge of the earth and the heavens? Such an age owes a very inconsiderable portion of its greatness to the distance at which we contemplate it, or to the circumstance of its appearing before us amid the records of history, and free from the disturbing reality of the present. But here too, as in all earthly things, the brilliancy of greatness is dimmed by the association of emotions of profound sorrow. The advance of cosmical knowledge was bought at the price of the violence and revolting horrors which conquerors—the so-called civilizers of the earth—spread around them. But it were irrational and rashly bold to decide dogmatically on the balance of blessings and evils in the interrupted history of the development of mankind. It becomes not man to pronounce judgment on the great events of the world's history, which, slowly developed in the womb of time, belong but partially to the age in which we place them.

The first discovery of the central and southern portions of the United States of America by the Northmen coincides very nearly with the mysterious appearance of Manco Capac in the elevated plateaux of Peru, and is almost two hundred years prior to the arrival of the Aztecs in the Valley of Mexico. The foundation of the principal city (Tenochtitlan) occurred fully three hundred and twenty-five years later. If these Scandinavian colonizations had been attended by permanent results, if they had been maintained and protected by a powerful mother country, the advancing Germanic races would still have found many unsettled hordes of hunters in those regions where the Spanish conquerors met with only peacefully-settled agriculturists.*

* The American race, which was the same from 65° north latitude to 55° south latitude, passed directly from the life of hunters to that of cultivators of the soil, without undergoing the intermediate gradation of a pastoral life. This circumstance is so much the more remarkable, because the bison, which is met with in enormous herds, is susceptible of domestication, and yields an abundant supply of milk. Little attention has been paid to an account given in Gomara (*Hist. Gen. de las Indias*, cap. 214), according to which it would appear that in the sixteenth century there was a race of men living in the northwest of Mexico, in about 40° north latitude, whose greatest riches consisted in herds of tamed bisons (*bueyes con una giba*). From these animals the natives obtained materials for clothing, food, and drink, which was probably the blood (Prescott, *Conquest of Mexico*, vol. iii., p. 416), for the dislike to milk, or, at least, its non-employment, appears, before the arrival of Europeans, to have been common to all the natives of the New Continent, as well as to the inhabitants of China and Cochin China. There were certainly, from the earliest times, herds of domesticated llamas in