FIRE AND THE SUN

the flesh must have been separated from the bones. In no other way can we explain the confusion in which the human  
remains lay when they were discovered. Pigorini things this is a proof that primitive races worshipped their dead, and held  
their bodies is veneration. Perhaps the even carried them about in their migrations. However that may be, the custom of  
separating the flesh from the bones was continued until cremation became general. This would explain the huge ossuaries  
found in regions so widely separated. Although, however, the mode of sepulture we have just described was practiced for a  
long time in certain places, we cannot admit it to have been general. In certain megalithic tombs we find dispositions similar  
to those described in speaking of the gendron cave. Excavations beneath the port blanc dolmen morbihan brought to light a  
rough pavement on which lay numbers of skeletons, closely packed one against another, which skeletons were probably those  
of man who had been held in honor, and to commemorate whom the dolmen was set up. Separated from them by a layer of  
stones and earth rested another series of skeletons, not so closely packed as the first. The new comers had respected their  
predecessors, and no one had violated the sanctuary of the dead. Similar facts were noted at grand compans, near luzarches,  
and it is evident that successive inhumations beneath dolmens often took place, and instances might, if necessary, be  
multiplied. Another singular funeral rite was practiced in remote antiquity. Many of the bones found in the various caves of  
mentone were colored with red hematite. As this was only the case with the bones of adults, those of children retaining their  
natural whiteness, it evidently had some special significance. In the opening of a cave of the stone age in the district of   
anagni, a short distance from rome, brought to light the facial portion of a human cranium, colored bright red with cinnabar.  
Nor are these by any means exceptional cases, for similar coloration was noticed on bones picked up at finalmarina and  
several other places in Liguria and sicily. The custom had therefore become general in the neolithic period in the whole of the  
italian peninsula. We also meet with it in other countries; at the prehistoric congress, when in session at Lisbon, dolgado  
added to what was said about the discoveries in Italy the fact that the cave men of furninha practised a similar rite. In the  
kurganes of the department of kiev crania were found colored with a mineral substance, fragments of which were found  
implements made of flint and reindeer horn, mixed with the bones of rodents long since extinct in that district. A similar  
practice is met with in the tombs of Poland, many bones being covered with a coating of red color, in some instances one fifth  
of an inch thick. Excavations in the kitor valley province of Irkutsk, siberia have brought to light several tombs which  
appear to date from the sauce period as the kurganes of kiew. The dead were buried with the weapons and ornaments they  
would like to use in the new life which had begun for them. The tomb was then filled in with sand, with which care was  
taken to mix plenty of red ochre. It is difficult not to conclude that this was a relic of a rite fallen into desuetude. At the  
present day certain tribes of north america expose their dead on the tops of trees, and before burying the bones, when  
stripped of their flesh, cover them with a coating of a bright red color. In the island of espiritu santo many human bones  
have also been picked up painted with an oxide of argillaceous iron. These customs, strange as they may appear, were  
evidently practised in honor of ancestors; atavism is as clearly shown in customs and traditions as in physical structure. At   
solutre is a sepulcher formed of unhewn slabs of stone. The body of the dead rested on a thick bed of the broken and crushed  
bones of horses. The remains of reindeer were mixed with the human bones. Were these too relics of funeral rites, and were  
the animal bones those of the horses and reindeer that had belonged to their hunter it is impossible to say. Solutre, situated  
as it was on an admirable site on a hill overlooking the valley of the seine, protected from the north winds and close to a  
plentiful stream, has also been a favorite resort of man. In the tombs all ages are mixed together, and if some do indeed date  
from neolithic times, others are roman, burgundian, Merovingian. There may be among them a certain number dating from the  
reindeer period; that is about all we can assert with any certainty in the present state of our knowledge. The abbe ducrost,  
however, in an important essay asserts that he has found incontrovertible proofs of the interment of solutreens on the   
hearths of their homes in palaeolithic times. If this be so, the custom is one of frequent occurrence, and has been continued   
for centuries; for colanges, in his fine work on ancient cities, shows that at rome the earliest tombs were on the hearth itself  
of the dwelling. Mortillet, on the other hand, dwells very earnestly on the mode of inhumation at solutre, and sees in the   
juxtaposition of human remains and the debris of hearths but the result of displacement, and of the regular turning upside  
down of which the hill of solutre has been the scene. To this reinach replied, to the effect that, whereas a few years ago  
mortillet’s authority led many archaeologists to suppose that the men of the reindeer period did not bury their dead, facts,   
ever more important than theories, have now proved beyond a doubt that this very decided opinion is a mistake. Not only did

CHAPTER 3290