

7. *On the Formula of Alfred R. Wallace in its relations to Characters and Alphabets.* By HYDE CLARKE, V.P.A.I.

Mr. Wallace (*Nature*, xxiv. p. 244, 1881) called attention to words for *mouth* in many languages being labials; for *teeth*, dentals; and for *nose*, nasals. This observation Mr. Clarke extended by means of the list he had published of old Chinese round characters which he had supposed to be derived from the eye. Taking the mouth as the pivot, then, O (□ in modern Chinese) was the character for mouth, eye, ear, head, face, sun, moon, mother, woman, egg, flower, field or enclosure, doorway, ring, blood, pot, white, four. In Chinese several of these are still labials in M, and so they are in English. Mr. Clarke had shown that in many languages these words are allied in sound, and are labials—characters include O (◊). Where, however, the idea of eating, &c. is introduced, a dental may displace a labial in the word for mouth; and so other words are liable to be displaced by other ideas and sounds. The nasal roots Mr. Clarke found to belong to the series he had already demonstrated in Chinese as the + series. As the labials are female, so are the nasals male; and the characters appertaining include + + τ ∙ ÷ N, &c. Mr. Clarke has found that the dental series embraces such ideas as tooth, hill, island, door, drum, arrowhead, with the characters Λ, Δ, ΔΔΔ. The result is that speech-language was founded on the ideas of gesture- or sign-language, and that characters, according to the observations of Colonel Mallery and Mr. Clarke, are applicable not only to speech-language but to gesture-language. Mr. Clarke therefore considers that characters were more ancient than speech, and that speech was propagated in the Old and New World by a race of high culture, most probably white. The consequence is that all languages in the world are found to be connected, and to have many resemblances of sound; but the general connection is psychological, a connection of ideas and not of sounds. In this sense, all language is of common origin, but no one primeval language ever existed. The community of sound depends on the application of labials, nasals, and dentals to associated ideas, but differentiability begins with the selection of the labial, &c. As selection took place of the various ideas, so did the substitution of other sounds take place. On applying the test of the primary characters to ancient characters, syllabaries, and alphabets, it was shown that as a general law those which should be labials were of the labial form, and so of the others. Thus Korean was found strictly to correspond, although apparently artificial, and Vei, supposed to be of modern invention, proved to be ancient in its elements. Mr. Clarke considered that the trine law in grammar may have been developed on the system of 3 sounds, as 3 parts of speech; 3 divisions of each; 3 numbers, 3 cases, 3 degrees, 3 persons, 3 forms of verbs, 3 moods, 3 tenses, 3 positions of adverbs, &c.