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RESEARCHES

INTO THE

EARLY HISTORY OF MANKIND

AND THE

DEVELOPMENT OF CIVILIZATION.

By EDWARD B. TYLOR,

D.C.L., LL.D., F.R.S.

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# RESEARCHES

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## EARLY HISTORY OF MANKIND.

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### CHAPTER I.

#### INTRODUCTION.

IN studying the phenomena of knowledge and art, religion and mythology, law and custom, and the rest of the complex whole which we call Civilization, it is not enough to have in view the more advanced races, and to know their history so far as direct records have preserved it for us. The explanation of the state of things in which we live has often to be sought in the condition of rude and early tribes ; and without a knowledge of this to guide us, we may miss the meaning even of familiar thoughts and practices. To take a trivial instance, the statement is true enough as it stands, that the women of modern Europe mutilate their ears to hang jewels in them, but the reason of their doing so is not to be fully found in the circumstances among which we are living now. The student who takes a wider view thinks of the rings and bones and feathers thrust through the cartilage of the nose ; the weights that pull the slit ears in long nooses to the shoulder ; the ivory studs let in at the corners of the mouth ; the wooden plugs as big as table-spoons put through slits in the under lip ; the teeth of animals stuck point outwards through holes in the cheeks ; all familiar things among the lower races up and down in the world. The modern earring of the higher nations stands not as a product of our own times, but as a relic of a ruder mental condition, one of the many cases in which the