

ANCIENT AMERICA.

I.

THE MOUND-BUILDERS.

ONE of the most learned writers on American antiquities, a Frenchman, speaking of discoveries in Peru, exclaims, "America is to be again discovered! We must remove the veil in which Spanish politics has sought to bury its ancient civilization!" In this case, quite as much is due to the ignorance, indifference, unscrupulous greed, and religious fanaticism of the Spaniards, as to Spanish politics. The gold-hunting marauders who subjugated Mexico and Peru could be robbers and destroyers, but they were not qualified in any respect to become intelligent students of American antiquity. What a select company of investigators, such as could be organized in our time, might have done in Mexico and Central America, for instance, three hundred and fifty years ago, is easily understood. In what they did, and in what they failed to do, the Spaniards who went there acted in strict accordance with such character as they had; and yet we