

MOUND-BUILDERS.

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When the early settlers began to pioneer the unbroken forests of North America, they considered the various Indian tribes to be the true Aborigines of this continent. But long before the red man, even long before the growth of the present forests, there lived an ancient race, whose origin and fate are surrounded with impenetrable darkness. The remains of their habitations, temples and tombs, are the only voices that tell us of their existence. Over broad areas, in the most fertile valleys, and along the numerous tributaries of the great rivers of the central and western portions of the United States, are to be found these wonderful remains, of the existence and origin of which, even the oldest red man could give no history.

Following in the track of these ancient tumuli, which have been raised with some degree of order and sagacity, we are bound to believe that they were constructed by a very intelligent and somewhat civilized race, who during long periods enjoyed the blessings of peace, but like most nations of the earth, at times were plunged in the horrors of war. We cannot tell by what name these strange people were known during their existence. But archæologists, to