

which have no claim whatever to antiquity. Indeed it is said that in some parts of Spanish America, Aztec, Chichimec, or Toltec relics, of any desired era since the creation, are manufactured to order by the ingenious natives and sold to the enthusiastic but unwary antiquarian. To similar imposition and like enthusiasm may be referred the long list of Roman, Greek, Scandinavian, Tyrian, and other old-world coins, medals, and inscriptions, whose discovery in the New World from time to time has been reported, and used in support of some pet origin-theory. Yet practically these counterfeit or fabulous antiquities do little harm; their falsity may in most cases be without difficulty detected, as will be apparent from several instances of the kind noted in the following pages. There are, as I have said, few ruins of any importance that have not been described by more than one competent and reliable explorer. The discovery of wonderful cities and palaces, or of movable relics which differ essentially from the well-authenticated antiquities of the same region, is not accepted by archæologists, or by the public generally, without more positive proof of genuineness than the representations of a single traveler whose reliability has not been fully proved.

The study of ancient monuments, in addition to its high degree of interest, is moreover of great practical value in the development of historical science, as a source of positive information, as a corroboration of annals otherwise recorded, and as an incentive to continued research. It contributes to actual knowledge by indicating the various arts that flourished among the peoples of antiquity, the germs of the corresponding arts of modern times. The monuments show not alone the precise degree of excellence in architecture and sculpture attained by the particular people whose work they are, but by an examination of their differences they throw much light on the origin and growth of these and other arts, while by comparison with the