

Preface.

THE lofty mountains, mighty forests, rivers and valleys of the West, many portions of which have never been explored, furnish abundant resources for the gratification of the Naturalist, the Lapidary, and the Antiquarian. It is with the view of directing attention to these sources of information, that the author has grouped together in this little work, many startling incidents in prairie life, and alluded to relics of antiquity, bearing unmistakable indications of a high order of civilization and science, in regard to which subsequent discoveries have proved the hypothesis he assumes correct. That this country has been peopled by a civilized race of sentient beings anterior to the existence of the present tribes of Indians or their ancestors, is no longer a matter of uncertainty; for everywhere throughout the West, and in many places East of the Mississippi Valley, incontrovertible evidences attest the high antiquity of monuments and relics of a people, whose race, name and customs have been lost in the deep gloom that hangs over the mighty past. In order