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ART. I.—*The Native Races of the Pacific States of North America*. By HUBERT HOWE BANCROFT. 5 vols. 8vo. London: 1875-76.

THERE is no field of inquiry more fascinating to the student of human progress than that offered by the great continent of America, in which the native races, shut off from contact with the old-world civilisation for an untold number of centuries, have found room for development in various directions. In it the theories of civilisation, as propounded by Mr. Buckle and others, may be brought to a practical test, for it presents us with peoples in each of the different stages which connect the rude savage with the culture of Mexico and Central America. Man may be studied as a hunter, fisherman, farmer, as a rude and unlettered worshipper of fetishes, or as the possessor of an elaborate literature, burdened with as complex a ritual as that of the Egyptians, and bound fast by strict rules and observances in every phase of social life. In that vast continent, at the time of the Spanish Conquest, there was represented every phase of progress through which man in Europe has passed, in emerging from a condition of the rudest savagery to the comparatively high culture exemplified in the bronze age of the Etruscans. The subject has excited the imagination of many writers, and many have been the speculations regarding the derivation of the native tribes and of the American civilisations, in which, for the most part, each writer has accommodated his facts to his prejudices. It has been reserved for Mr. Bancroft to collect together for the first time, in the five bulky volumes before us, the facts necessary for a preliminary inquiry into these questions. His work is a most laborious encyclopædia of all that is known up to to-day of

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