

Carver learned from the Winnebagoes (in the present State of Wisconsin) that they sometimes made war-excursions to the southwestern parts inhabited by Spaniards (New Mexico), and that it required months to arrive there.* Similar excursions and migrations, of course, took place during the early unknown periods of North American history. In the course of such enterprises the property of the vanquished naturally fell into the hands of the victors, who appropriated everything that appeared useful or desirable to them. The consequence was an exchange by force—if I may call it so—which caused many of the manufactures and commodities of the various tribes to be scattered over the face of the country. This having been the case, it is, of course, impossible to draw a line between peaceable barter and appropriation by right of war, and, therefore, while employing hereafter frequently the terms “trade” or “exchange,” I interpose that reservation which is necessitated by the circumstances just mentioned.

Of the Indian commerce that has sprung up since the arrival of the Europeans I shall say but little, considering that this subject has sufficiently been treated in ethnological and other works on North America; and I shall likewise omit to draw within the sphere of my observations that interesting trade which was, and still is, carried on between the tribes inhabiting the high north of Asia and America, where Behring's Strait separates the two continents. My attention is chiefly directed to the more ancient manufactures occurring in Indian mounds and elsewhere; and the distribution of these relics over distant parts of the country, in connection with the known or presumed localities which furnished the materials composing them, forms the basis of my deductions. Thus, my essay will assume an *archæological* character, and for this reason I shall confine my remarks to that part of the United States concerning whose antiquities we possess the most detailed information, namely, the area which is bounded by the Mississippi valley (in an extended sense), by the Great Lakes, the Atlantic coast, and the Gulf of Mexico.

A number of archæologists make a distinction between the builders of the extensive mural earthworks and tumuli of North America and the tribes whom the whites found in possession of the country, and consequently separate the relics of the so-called mound-builders from those of the later inhabitants. Such a line of demarcation certainly must appear totally obliterated with regard to the relations which I am about to discuss, for which reason I shall by no means adhere to this vague division in my essay, but shall only advert to the former Indian population in general.

In the following sections I have first treated of a number of materials which formed objects of trade, either in an unwrought state or in the shape of implements and ornaments; and subsequently, in conclusion, I have made some observations tending to add more completeness to my preceding statements.

* Carver, Travels, &c., Harper's reprint, New York, 1838, p. 42.