

# ANCIENT ABORIGINAL TRADE IN NORTH AMERICA.

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The following essay was published in German, Vol. V of the *Archiv für Anthropologie* (Braunschweig, 1872); but as the subject is purely North American in character, the author has deemed it proper to prepare a version in the language of the country to which it refers. The present reproduction, however, is enlarged and improved.

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## INTRODUCTION.

Indications are not wanting that a kind of trade or traffic of some extent existed among the prehistoric inhabitants of Europe, even at a time when they stood comparatively low in the scale of human development. The same practice prevailed in North America, before that part of the new world was settled by Europeans; and as the the subject of primitive commerce is of particular interest, because it sheds additional light on the conditions of life among by-gone races, I have collected a number of data bearing on the trade-relations of the former inhabitants of North America. The fact that such a trade was carried on is proved, beyond any doubt, by the frequent occurrence of Indian manufactures consisting of materials which were evidently obtained from far distant localities. In many cases, however, these manufactures may have been brought as booty, and not by trade, to the places where they are found in our days. The modern Indians, it is well known, sometimes undertook expeditions of a thousand or twelve hundred miles, in order to attack their enemies. The warlike Iroquois, for example, who inhabited the present State of New York, frequently followed the war-path as far as the Mississippi river. Thus, in the year 1680, six hundred warriors of the Seneca tribe invaded the territory of the Illinois, among whom La Salle sojourned just at that time, preparing to descend the Mississippi to the Gulf of Mexico.\* More than a hundred years ago, the traveler

\* Morgan, *League of the Iroquois*, Rochester, 1851, p. 13. More precise information concerning this memorable expedition is to be found in the writings of Hennepin, Membré, Lahontan, and others.