

## CHAPTER I.

### INTRODUCTORY.

WHILE the early inhabitants of the continent of North America are collectively known as "Indians," it has been long ascertained that they present distinctions which widely separate them, and possibly point to several and diverse origins. A study, therefore, of the handiwork in stone, bone and clay, of the former occupants of any one portion of the country is not, of itself, sufficient to give an accurate knowledge of the wonderful variety of forms, and skill exhibited, in fashioning the articles which their needs demanded. Such, however, is the similarity existing among the objects generally known as "Indian relics," wheresoever found, that we are led to conclude that, to a limited extent, through a system of barter or the vicissitudes of warfare, the distinctive weapons and implements of one people became mingled with the home productions of their neighbors. It is evident, therefore, that, in treating of the implements, weapons and ornaments found in any one locality, we cannot be, at all times, positive that any given specimen is the production of the tribe of Indians known to have inhabited the country where it was found. The influence of the introduction of objects of European manufacture must also be taken into consideration, as in the century or more that elapsed between the visits of the first explorers and the arrival of the colonists at Plymouth and at Jamestown, and later, at Philadelphia, the introduction of a few foreign trinkets and metal cooking vessels greatly influenced the home productions of the various Indian nations. Many of the later articles made by them were doubtlessly modelled from similar objects of European origin. From this relinquishment of the customs established by them, during their happy ignorance of European civilization, may be