

ically from south to north for no reason more cogent than that of convenience. From the same motive, much more weighty however in this case, I follow the same order in my comparisons between remains in different parts of the continent, comparing invariably each ruin with others farther south and consequently familiar to the reader, rather than with more northern structures to be described later. It is claimed by some writers that the term antiquities is properly used only to designate the works of a people extinct or only traditionally known. This restriction of the term would exclude most of the monumental remains of the Pacific States, since a large majority of the objects described in the following pages are known to have been the work of the peoples found by Europeans in possession of the country, or of their immediate ancestors. I employ the term, however, in its more common application, including in it all the works of aboriginal hands presumably executed before native intercourse with Europeans, at dates varying consequently with that of the discovery of different localities.

Monumental archæology, as distinguished from written and traditional archæology, owes its interest largely to its reality and tangibility. The teachings of material relics, so far as they go, are irrefutable. Real in themselves they impart an air of reality to the study of the past. They stand before us as the actual work of human hands, affording no foothold for scepticism; they are the balance-wheels of tradition, resting-places for the mind wearied with the study of aboriginal fable, stepping-stones on which to cross the miry sloughs of mythic history. The ruins of a great city represent and recall vividly its original state and the populace that once thronged its streets; the towering mound or pyramid brings before the observer's mind toiling bands of slaves driven to their unwelcome task by strong progressive masters; temples and idols are but remnants of religious systems, native fear, superstition,