

are also evidently of less age than many of those in the neighbouring woods, while those on the higher mounds are old and magnificent trees. This state of things seems to indicate a progressive decay of arts and power, during a long period, among the people by whom the mounds were raised.

In the state of Ohio, ancient fortifications are numerous. At Cincinnati there is a circular wall or embankment 800 feet across; the bank is thirty feet thick at the base, and from three to six high; there are several others of smaller dimensions, besides four mounds, one of which is twenty-seven feet high, and 440 across. On the summit of an elevated hill, two miles below Hamilton, the walls of an ancient fortification enclose eighty acres of ground. In Highland County, two miles west of Chillicothe, there is a wall of stone from twelve to fifteen feet high, and four or five thick, which encloses upwards of 100 acres. Near Piqua, in Miami County, there is one which encloses about seventeen acres, in a circular form; the walls all round are built of stone, carried from the river 600 yards distant. A wall from four to seven feet high extends seven miles from the Great to the Little Scioto River. The trees growing on the walls of these ruins are all as large as any in the surrounding forests, and cannot be less than 400 years old. There are remains of the same kind all the way from Ohio, south and south-west, to the Floridas.

They are found also in Michigan to the north. On the river Huron, in that district, is a fortress with walls of earth, quite the same as those of Ohio and Kentucky; another is seen three miles and a quarter below Detroit, enclosing several acres, in the midst of an extensive marsh, with a breastwork three or four feet high. On the west of Lake Michigan is found perhaps the most singular of these curious relics; it stands on a level plain below Lake Pepin; it is covered with grass; but Carver, the traveller who describes it, mentions that he could plainly trace a breastwork of a circular form, with its flanks reaching to the river, which covered its rear; the ruin was about four feet high, extending nearly a mile, and capable of protecting 5000 men. The outline of the work had been traced in angles for the facility of defence, quite on the same principle as those of modern fortifications.

In Missouri, in the country of the Sioux Indians, there are many mounds and fortifications; they are also found on the Osage and Platte rivers. So far Mr. Warden. Besides the indications given by these monuments, there are other proofs that the continent of North America has been at some former period occupied by a people considerably advanced in knowledge of the arts. In the gold mines which are now wrought in the western parts of Carolina and Georgia, there have been found crucibles of excellent workmanship, and which were preferred by the miners to the best which can be purchased at the present day. Unluckily, none of them have been preserved; but the evidence which they afforded, that these mines have been wrought during some very remote period, and by a people not at all deficient in a knowledge of the arts, is full and unquestionable.

All these appearances are of course utterly unintelligible to the present tribes of Indians; and being accompanied by nothing in the shape of letters, hieroglyphics, or other marks, which literary diligence might have traced some thread of discovery, they are equally obscure to the learned.

The history of the western continent does not, however, leave us altogether without some facts which throw a glimmer of light on these singular remains, and the people to whom they belonged.

The Mexicans, who inhabited the narrow neck of mountain-land which joins the two continents of North and South America, were, when first discovered by the Spaniards, in a state of civilization approaching to that of some European nations. The body of the people were, indeed, in a state of weakness and savagism little superior to that of the tribes by whom they were surrounded; but there was an educated

and informed class among them, to whom this mass of ignorance was content to be subject. The educated portion was distributed among the uneducated, in such a manner that the benefits of their knowledge could be every where felt, and gave them influence. Works of great extent and ingenuity were executed by the conjoined skill and labour which could by these two classes be brought to bear on them. It is known, however, from the traditions of this people, and from certain hieroglyphical documents which they had preserved relating to their own history, that Mexico was not the place in which their tribe was originally situated. They had migrated, according to their own account, from regions far to the northward, and had once been a large and powerful nation, whose strength and numbers were reduced almost to nothing, in various desertions, changes, and hostile attacks, during their long migration from their original seat, called Aztlan. The imperfect records which they have preserved, intimate obscurely the time occupied in this period of wandering, as well as the stages at which they halted on their way. Some of these latter have been traced; and by the remains found on the spot, combined with the indications of Mexican hieroglyphics, there is reason to think that they can still be identified. The ruins of a great city were discovered in 1773, near the head of the Gulf of California, and corresponding with one of the stations. They were situated in the midst of a vast and beautiful plain, and occupied a space of three square leagues. The Spaniards gave them the name of *Las Casas Grandes*, or the "Magnificent Buildings;" and the whole plain is filled with fragments of stoneware, resembling the Mexican, beautifully painted in red, white and blue. It is remarkable also, that, to the north of this region, in a district never occupied, and hardly ever seen by Europeans, the native Indians have advanced considerably in civilization. A missionary, who visited the Mocquis in 1773, was astonished to find here an Indian town, with two large squares, houses of several stories, streets well laid out, and parallel to each other. The people assemble at evening on the terraced roofs of their houses; and the region every where presents traces of civilization, resembling that of the ancient Mexicans. These people speak a language quite different from the Mexican; but it is well known to some of the learned of America, that two parts of the same tribe, removed from each other, and placed under different circumstances, with different pursuits and a different aspect of country, will in time so completely change, each from the common language, that their origin can no longer be traced by that means. Still farther north, there are found people who indulge a taste for some of the peculiar arts of the same nation, without having preserved any thing of their domestic refinement. Between Nootka Sound and Cook's River, under the 57th degree of N. lat., the natives have a strong predilection for hieroglyphical paintings, such as were found among the Mexicans; and they execute carvings in wood, imitations of the human features and of animals, with great spirit and fidelity. Their buildings of wood showed also design, and the efforts of combined labour.

As we follow these traces of Mexican civilization, we are led, it will be observed, towards the northern part of the American continent, where the ancient remains which first excited our wonder are situated. These are more frequent towards the western districts, and vanish altogether on approaching the Atlantic; that is, their numbers increase as they approach the line of ancient Mexican civilization, and disappear as they leave it. The connection which this circumstance points out between the mysterious monuments of the Ohio, Mississippi, and Missouri, and the historical civilization of the races of the south and west cannot be overlooked. The chain of connection is at present broken and feeble, but investigation may supply the deficient links, and introduce certainty, where as yet there are only probability and surmises.