

relic, has been described from personal examination by several parties, each noting some particulars by the others neglected. By a careful study and comparison of information drawn from all available sources respecting the several points, the witnesses mutually corroborating or correcting one another's statements, I expect to arrive in each case practically at the truth, and thus to compensate in a measure for that loss of interest inevitably incurred by the necessary omission of that personal experience and adventure by which antiquarian travelers are wont to impart a charm to their otherwise dry details.

Although necessarily to a great extent a compilation, this volume is none the less the result of hard and long-continued study. It embodies the researches of some five hundred travelers, stated not merely en résumé, but reproduced, so far as facts and results are concerned, in full. Very few of the many works studied are devoted exclusively or even chiefly to my subject; indeed most of them have but an occasional reference to antiquarian relics, which are described more or less fully among other objects of interest that come under the traveler's eye; hence the possibility of condensing satisfactorily the contents of so many volumes in one, and of making this one fill on the shelves of the antiquary's library the place of all, excepting, of course, the large plates of the folio works. Full references to, and quotations from, the authorities consulted are given in the notes, which thus become a complete index to all that has been written on the subject. These notes contain also bibliographical notices and historical details of the discovery and successive explorations of each ruin, and other information not without interest and value. That some few books containing archæological information may have escaped my notice, is quite possible, but none I believe of sufficient importance to seriously impair the value of the material here presented. In order to give a clear idea of the great variety of articles preserved from the past for our examination, the