

extent of country, from the Cañon de Chaco on the north, to the Casas Grandes in Chihuahua, on the south, the Abbé says:—

“These vast monuments of New Mexico and Arizona are known to but few travellers; consequently, but few writers have speculated about their origin. Certain it is that all the pueblos of this wilderness are of an incontestable, homogeneous character; they are the work of a great people, of an intelligent nation, whose civilization was far superior to that of the actual tribes. But the question is, what became of this vast population who have left the land covered with such numerous and wonderful constructions?

“It is known that all agglomerations of men and families, on settling in a new land, build their dwellings in wooded parts, or near streams, in order to ensure these indispensable elements. Many of this population were suddenly deprived of wood and water.

“Perpetual droughts followed the clearing of the woods, compelling the inhabitants of high plateaus to emigrate into the plains; when rain failed, the wells and cisterns dried up, and the horrors of thirst drove the people from their abodes. Both rivers and their sources dried up. I have known a multitude of rivers in both Texas and Arizona which have ceased to flow; some for centuries, others only within a few years, and the banks formerly gay with verdure, plants, flowers, and trees, have now disappeared under heaps of sand,