

ARCHÆOLOGICAL REPORT.

To the President and Council of the Canadian Institute, Toronto :

GENTLEMEN,—Absence from Ontario during the whole of last summer prevented my doing anything archæologically during the year from a strictly provincial point of view, but I am pleased to be able to inform you that the work of collecting at least, has not for this reason been a total blank, as during my residence of nearly five months in the United States I was enabled to gather a considerable number of specimens, many of which differ considerably from the types found in this country, and some being totally unlike anything met with in Ontario.

Having spent all my time in Cincinnati, which may be regarded as the centre of that region which contains so many evidences of the ancient mound-builders' peculiar art, I was afforded several opportunities of gaining such knowledge as may prove serviceable in future should any similar works be discovered within our own territory.

I have especially in this connection to thank Drs. Craig and Collins, of Lawrenceburg, Indiana, for their extreme kindness and courtesy to me, both personally and as your representative. These gentlemen not only conducted me to interesting localities, but they secured for me the rare permission to open a number of mounds and to appropriate for the museum of the Institute anything of value that might be found therein. I regret to state, however, that owing to the unusual wetness of the season our digging intentions were frustrated on three or four occasions, until eventually the weather became too cold. Our gratitude is due also to Mr. Robt. Clarke, publisher, Cincinnati, for casts of the famous Cincinnati or Gest, and Waverly or Clarke "tablets," the originals of which are, in many respects, among the most interesting relics of pre-historic man that have been found in North America. Within recent years one or two writers have attempted to throw doubt upon the genuine character of the former tablet, but the weight of testimony warrants the full belief that the relic in question was actually taken from a mound near the north-east corner of Fifth and Mound Streets, Cincinnati, in November, 1841, and since that time it has remained the property of Mr. Gest, who owned a portion of the ground from which it was unearthed.

Mr. Robert Clarke, the custodian of this precious relic, in his pamphlet entitled "The Pre-historic Remains which were found on the Site of the City of Cincinnati, with a Vindication of the Cincinnati Tablet," has carefully collected all the evidence for and against the genuineness of the "find," and has succeeded in showing conclusively that there is no room for a particle of doubt regarding the authenticity of the tablet in question.

With regard to the Clarke Tablet we learn (quoting from the Journal of the Cincinnati Society of Natural History for January, 1887) that it "was discovered March 12, 1885, by Mr. J. P. MacLean in the collection of Dr. W. R. Hurst, of Piketon, Ohio, was obtained of him and disposed of to Mr. Clarke. . . . The history of the tablet, as given by Dr. Hurst to Mr. MacLean, is as follows:—'The tablet was taken from a mound on the farm of Abraham Cutlip, about one mile south of Waverly and about three and a half miles north of Piketon, about March, 1872. It was found about three feet from the bottom of the mound on the north side by Abraham Cutlip and David Allan, who were cutting away the mound. Dr. Hurst obtained it from them. The mound was on the second bottom of the river, had been fifteen to twenty feet high, but had from time to time been cut away, so that it was only about ten feet high at the time of the excavation. It was composed of clay. With the tablet were found darts, badges and human bones.'"

Another, called the Richardson Tablet, similar in design to those known as the Cincinnati and Clarke Tablets, was found "on the 31st day of January, 1879, in excavating a mound on the road leading from Wilmington, Ohio, to Harveysburg." An attempt has been made to give to all of these a phallic interpretation, and one writer professes to have discovered in the Cincinnati Tablet a system of time computation as applied to foetal life.