

are not wholly without obligation to some of the more intelligent Spaniards connected with the Conquest.

There are existing monuments of an American ancient history which invite study, and most of which might, doubtless, have been studied more successfully in the first part of the sixteenth century, before nearly all the old books of Central America had been destroyed by Spanish fanaticism, than at present. Remains of ancient civilizations, differing to some extent in degree and character, are found in three great sections of the American continent: the west side of South America, between Chili and the first or second degree of north latitude; Central America and Mexico; and the valleys of the Mississippi and the Ohio. These regions have all been explored to some extent—not completely, but sufficiently to show the significance and importance of their archaeological remains, most of which were already mysterious antiquities when the continent was discovered by Columbus. I propose to give some account of these antiquities, not for the edification of those already learned in American archæology, but for general readers who have not made the subject a study. My sketches will begin with the Mississippi Valley and the regions connected with it.

THE MOUND-BUILDERS—THEIR WORKS.

An ancient and unknown people left remains of settled life, and of a certain degree of civilization, in the valleys of the Mississippi and its tributaries. We have no authentic name for them either as a nation or a race;