

subject in the more elaborate volumes to which I refer. It has grown out of a short and hastily prepared series of papers on American Archæology, written for a newspaper, the Worcester Spy. While writing them, I took more notice than ever before of the lack of such a work as I have endeavored to make this; and the brief papers, when printed, engaged so much more attention than I expected, and brought me so many letters from different parts of the country, that I was induced to take up the subject again, with a view to supplying this want. Having at hand the necessary materials, I began anew. The result is now presented to the public.

My purpose has not allowed me to make the book larger, as I could have done easily, by introducing elaborate descriptions of all the known works of the Mound-Builders, and of all the ruins and other traces of the ancient people of Mexico, Central America, and Peru, which have been examined and described. I have sought to show accurately their character and extent, without attempting a more particular and extended description of every monument and relic of the Ancient American civilization than this purpose seemed to require. The work is a summary, a kind of hand-book with notes and comments; but I have aimed to make it comprehensive and complete. The suggestions in regard to the history of Ancient America, furnished by such old Mexican and Central American books as have been preserved, seem to