

**AMERICAN ARCHAEOLOGICAL
RESEARCHES, NO. 1. THE SERPENT
SYMBOL AND THE WORSHIP OF
THE RECIPROCAL PRINCIPLES OF
NATURE IN AMERICA**

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American Archaeological Researches, No. 1. The Serpent Symbol and the Worship of the Reciprocal Principles of Nature in America by E. G. Squier

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AMERICAN ARCHÆOLOGICAL RESEARCHES, NO. I.

THE

SERPENT SYMBOL,

AND THE WORSHIP OF THE

RECIPROCAL PRINCIPLES OF NATURE

IN

AMERICA.

BY ENG. SQUIER, A. M.

FOREIGN MEMBER OF THE EUROPEAN ARCHÆOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION; MEMBER OF THE AMERICAN ETHNOLOGICAL SOCIETY
THE PHILADELPHIA ACADEMY OF NATURAL SCIENCES; THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT
OF SCIENCE; THE ETHNOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF NEW YORK; THE ETHNOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF MASSACHU-
SETTS; THE ETHNOLOGICAL AND AMERICAN SOCIETY, ETC., ETC., ETC.



"If the human mind can ever flatter itself with having been successful in discovering the truth, it is when many facts, and those facts of different kinds, unite in producing the same result."—HARRIS' CAUSÆ DEUS.

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TO THE

Chevalier Sumard,

MEMBER OF THE INSTITUTE OF FRANCE,

AND

President of the Geographical Society of Paris,

THIS MEMOIR

IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED BY

THE AUTHOR.

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P R E F A C E.

I HAVE been for some years engaged upon a work of comprehensive design, in which I propose to bring together, under a single view, all such leading and well authenticated facts as may be accessible, relating to the aboriginal monuments of the American continent, which shall serve to illustrate not only their character and origin, but also the ancient and as yet unwritten history of the New World, and the relation which its aboriginal inhabitants sustained to the great primitive families of the other Continent. A work of this scope and magnitude, it can readily be understood by every one at all acquainted with the subject, must require many years to its completion, especially when, as in my own case, it can only be prosecuted in the intervals of other and more practical duties. Pending, therefore, the submission of this work to the public judgment, I have thought it not improbable that service might be done to the cause of science, by the publication of some of its parts,—if not by adding directly to the stock of new facts and demonstrated results, at least by directing the attention of investigators to subjects hitherto but little considered, but possessed of high interest, and having an important bearing on the grand Archæological and Ethnological problems connected with the his-

tory of man in America. In separating these parts from their original connections, where they sustained an intimate relation to other and mutually illustrative chapters, they have necessarily assumed a somewhat fragmentary character, with frequent abrupt transitions, some repetitions, and numerous references to foregoing facts and deductions. Circumstances have prevented me from reconstructing them,—the only mode in which these defects might be remedied,—and in these respects I must crave the indulgence of the critical reader.

The points which I have attempted in some degree to illustrate in the following pages, are the essential identity of some of the elementary religious conceptions of the primitive nations of the Old and New Worlds, and the similarity in their modes of expressing them, or rather the similarity in their symbolical systems, of which I regard the machinery of creation, the multiplication of gods, and the investing of them with attributes, as parts. Upon some of these points the aboriginal monuments of the continent are eminently suggestive; and, as illustrated by the recorded conceptions, known doctrines and rites, and transmitted traditions of the ancient inhabitants, in many respects, conclusive. Upon these unimpeachable witnesses I have for the most part relied, in arriving at the hypothetical conclusions put forward in these chapters.

It has been remarked by the illustrious Humboldt, that in investigating these subjects, “we shall be surprised to find, towards the end of the fifteenth century, in a world which we call new, those ancient institutions, those religious notions, and that style of building which seem in Asia to indicate the dawn of civilization.”*

* *Researches*, vol. I., (*Introduction*), p. 2.