

In the vicinity of some of these mounds on Chippeway River, the writer has distinguished gardens and fields regularly laid out, in which even the rows of corn hills were still plainly discernible, clearly proving that the mounds scattered over this portion of country are not of such ancient origin as some speculative writers would have us believe.

The old men of the Ojibways affirm that nearly all the tribes of the red man who lived in an open prairie country, before the introduction of fire-arms among them, were accustomed to live in earthen wigwams as a protection and defence against the attacks of their enemies.¹

Truly may it be said of all these Indians tribes, that their hand has been against every one, and every one's hand against them. They have lived in "fear and trembling" of one another, and oft has the sudden midnight attack extinguished for ever the fires of their wigwams. And for greater security against these sudden attacks, and continual state of warfare, first originated the earthen remains, over which now the white man's plow peacefully furrows.

From human bones being occasionally discovered in these mounds, most writers have been led to suppose them as the graves or burial places of distinguished chiefs.

The Indians account for them by saying that these former

¹ Alexander Henry, a partner of the Northwest Company of Montreal, in 1806, visited the Gros Ventres at the junction of the Knife and Missouri Rivers. From a copy of his MS. Journal, owned by the writer of this note, the following is extracted. "These people, like their neighbors [Mandans], have the custom of washing morning and evening, and wallowing in the mud and clay which here answers the purpose of soap. . . . The huts are constructed as those of their neighbors, with this difference, the ground is dug out about four feet below the surface of the earth, which is much deeper than the others. . . . The inside of the huts are commonly kept clean, and day and night the young men are watching and sleeping upon the roofs. The tops of their huts are particularly level, large, and spacious, about fifty feet in circumference, and so supported by firm, stout, and principal posts which support the square pieces of timber, as to sustain the weight of fifty men."—E. D. N.