

every one, that human bones could not have continued in them undecayed for the space of four hundred years, the acknowledged age of these tumuli. In some instances, and in positions, or under circumstances peculiarly calculated to preserve them, as by embalming, or being in dry nitrous caves, bones have been preserved for a longer period; but no case can be found on record where such preservation has been had with bones exposed to the dampness of the soil, or mixed with the earth, as those found in these tumuli are.

In some few instances slabs of stone were placed around the bones; but the rude masonry found in such cases would be no protection from dampness, while surrounded with a damp soil; and it must be admitted that this rude masonry corresponds much better with the rude state of the modern Aborigines, than with the more improved state of the builders of these ancient mounds.

And if we suppose, (which is very probable,) that the same race which built the ancient works at Aztalan, also erected these mounds, we must suppose that their masonry would have been greatly in advance of anything yet discovered of the kind; and further, the decay of the work at Aztalan shows conclusively that their antiquity is such that human bones would have long since mouldered back to their mother dust; for, if burnt bricks have so decayed as to render them scarcely distinguishable from the earth with which they are intermixed, most certainly bones would have long since entirely disappeared; and this fact, together with the known fact, that the recent Indian inhabitants of the country were in the habit of interring their dead in these mounds, and in the mode and manner in which bones have been found, shows conclusively to my mind, that the bones thus discovered are of more recent burial, than that of the builders of these tumuli.

And, further, and in confirmation of this conclusion, the fact that *metallic* substances have been found in these tumuli, which could not have been known to the natives previous to