

by the Missouri. The opposite shore is composed of high cliffs, covered with timber, which, not only in form, but in tint and colour, remind you very much of Glover's landscapes of the mountainous parts of Scotland and Wales.

I made one or two excursions to examine the ancient mounds which are scattered all over this district, and which have excited much speculation as to their origin; some supposing them to have been fortifications, others the burial places of the Indians. That they have latterly been used by the Indians as burial places, there is no doubt; but I suspect they were not originally raised for that purpose. A Mr. Taylor has written an article in one of the periodicals,¹ stating his opinion that they were the burial places of chiefs; and to prove it, he asserts that some of them are thrown up in imitation of the figure of the animal which was the heraldic distinction of the chief whose remains they contain, such as the beaver, elk, &c. He has given drawings of some of them. That the Indians have their heraldic distinctions, their *totems*, as they call them, I know to be a fact; as I have seen the fur traders' books, containing the receipts of the chiefs, with their crests drawn by themselves, and very correctly too; but it required more imagination than I possess, to make out the form of any animal in the mounds. I should rather suppose the mounds to be the remains of tenements, sometimes fortified, sometimes not, which were formerly built of mud or earth, as is still the custom in the northern portion of the Sioux country. Desertion and time have crumbled them into these mounds, which are generally to be found in a commanding situation or in a string as if constructed for mutual defence. On Rock River there is a long line of wall, now below the surface which extends for a considerable distance, and is supposed to be the remains of a city built by a former race, probably the Mexican, who long since

¹ Stephen Taylor's "Description of Ancient Remains, Ancient Mounds, and Embankments, principally in the counties of Grant, Iowa, and Richland, in Wisconsin Territory," in *American Journal of Science and Arts*, vol. xlv, pp. 21-40.