

Mounds of Santos in Brazil.

I will next say a few words respecting certain human bones embedded in a solid rock at Santos in Brazil, to which I called attention in my *Travels in America* in 1842.* I then imagined the deposit containing them to be of submarine origin,—an opinion which I have long ceased to entertain. We learn from a memoir of Dr. Meigs, that the River Santos has undermined a large mound, fourteen feet in height, and about three acres in area, covered with trees, near the town of St. Paul, and has exposed to view many skeletons, all inclined at angles between 20° and 25° , and all placed in a similar east and west position.† Seeing, in the Museum of Philadelphia, fragments of the calcareous stone or tufa from this spot, containing a human skull with teeth, and in the same matrix, oysters with serpulæ attached, I at first concluded that the whole deposit had been formed beneath the waters of the sea, or at least, that it had been submerged after its origin, and again upheaved; also, that there had been time since its emergence for the growth on it of a forest of large trees. But after reading again, with more care, the original memoir of Dr. Meigs, I cannot doubt that the shells, like those of eatable kinds, so often accumulated in the mounds of the North American Indians not far from the sea, may have been brought to the place and heaped up with other materials at the time when the bodies were buried. Subsequently, the whole artificial earthwork, with its shells and skeletons, may have been bound together into a solid stone by the infiltration of carbonate of lime, and the mound may therefore be of no higher antiquity than some of those above alluded to on the Ohio, which, as we have seen, have in like manner been exposed in the course of ages to the encroachments and undermining action of rivers.

* Vol. i. p. 200.

† Meigs, *Trans. Amer. Phil. Soc.*, 1828, p. 285.