

commodious. These habitations are partly built upon piles on the banks of the river, and have two openings, one for the purpose of land, and the other for water excursions; they are either round or oval, and are of various sizes, from four to eight or ten feet in diameter; some of them consist of three or four stories, and their walls are about two feet thick, raised upon planks, which serve at once for foundations and floors. When they consist of but one story, the walls are only a few feet perpendicular, and then raised in a curve, which terminates in a dome or vault, and serves as a covering. They are constructed with such solidity as to be impenetrable to the heaviest rains, to defy the most impetuous winds, and are plastered with excessive neatness, both within and without, as much so as if they were actually done by the hand of man; yet they use no other instrument for the preparation of this mortar than their feet, or for its application than their tails. They chiefly use wood, stone, sandy earth, and such materials as are not easily dissolved with water; for the wooden work they take such trees as grow on the banks of rivers, which are more easily cut down, stripped of their bark, and carried, than solid timber, all which they are sure to accomplish
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