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A GLIMPSE AT GUATEMALA

And Some Notes on the Ancient Monuments of Central America

Anne Cary Maudslay
Alfred Percival Maudslay



Cambridge

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Title: A Glimpse at Guatemala

Author: Anne Cary Maudslay
Alfred Percival Maudslay

Release date: December 17, 2014 [eBook #47693]
Most recently updated: October 24, 2024

Language: English

Other information and formats: www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/47693

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A GLIMPSE AT GUATEMALA,

AND SOME NOTES ON THE

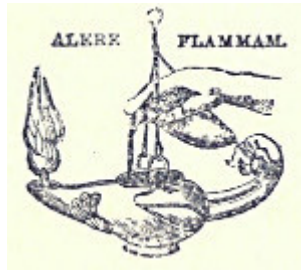
ANCIENT MONUMENTS OF CENTRAL AMERICA.

By ANNE CARY MAUDSLAY
AND
ALFRED PERCIVAL MAUDSLAY

With Maps, Plans, Photographs, and other Illustrations

LONDON:
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET.

1899.



PRINTED BY TAYLOR AND FRANCIS,
RED LION COURT, FLEET STREET.

DEDICATED
TO
FREDERICK DUCANE GODMAN, D.C.L., F.R.S.,
AND TO THE MEMORY OF
OSBERT SALVIN, F.R.S.

TRANSCRIBER'S NOTE: The errata have been corrected as part of the process of producing this e-text. Spelling, hyphenation, punctuation etc have also been standardised.

On page 264, "(marked with a dashed border)" read "(marked with a circle)" in the original; it was not possible to represent the circle in this e-text.

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PREFACE.

The Archæological results of my seven expeditions to Central America are in course of publication in the 'Biologia Centrali-Americana,' and eight parts containing about 200 plates have already been issued to the public; this is necessarily a costly work which is not likely to find its way into many private libraries. It has therefore frequently been suggested to me that I should publish a less ambitious and less expensive volume giving a general account of my travels as well as some description of the ruins visited; but, alas! I have to confess a hopeless inability to keep a regular journal, and my note-books are for the most part full of measurements and compass and sextant observations, and would furnish but a poor basis of a book of travels. When, in 1894, my wife accompanied me to Central America, a

splendid opportunity offered of avoiding all responsibility in the matter. She should keep a diary and write the book, and I would add some archæological notes! It was to be a small book with a few illustrations, and was of course to be published within six months of our return home. However, when we did get back to England there were other matters which called for our attention, and the notes had perforce to be laid aside. During the following winter a fair start was made, and some experimental illustrations were prepared; but each of us discovered in the other a deeply-rooted objection to process-blocks and shiny paper, so we began to dabble in photogravure and typo-etching. Then the archæological notes began to expand, and as we had then no publisher to put a proper curb on our whims and fancies, the book continued to grow on a soil of hand-made paper and to blossom with coloured plans, chromolithographs, and photogravures. It may fairly be described as a growth, for the pages and illustrations were printed off as they were finished, a few at a time, and the text broken up. If the errors and repetitions are numerous they may in charity be ascribed to this unorthodox procedure, and such errors would have doubtless been altogether avoided if we could have submitted the proofs in their entirety to any of the numerous friends who have from time to time given us advice and assistance. From Sir Clements Markham and Dr. Keltie of the Royal Geographical Society wise counsel and kindly help to travellers seems to flow in a perennial stream; and in this connection I would gladly pay my tribute to the memory of one who was beloved by all travellers, the late Secretary of the Society, Henry Bates, who, after my return from my earlier journeys, was almost alone in offering encouragement,

pointing out to me the importance of the work which seemed to have fallen to my lot to undertake. My friend, Mr. Francis Sarg, for many years Imperial German Consul at Guatemala City, to whose ready help and never-failing hospitality the success of my earlier journeys was largely due, has added to the long list of his thoughtful acts of kindness by making many valuable suggestions and by saving us from many errors, especially in our descriptions of the Indians and their customs. Of my obligation to Mr. F. DuCane Godman, the editor of the 'Biologia Centrali-Americana,' it is not easy for me to speak in measured terms; and as he would be the first to deprecate the only expressions by means of which adequate thanks could be tendered to him, I must here content myself with assuring him of my gratitude for allowing me to reproduce the reduced copies of certain maps, plans, photographs, and drawings which have already appeared, or are about to be issued, in the Archæological section of the 'Biologia.'

The greatest pleasure which the completion of this volume could have afforded to my wife and myself has, alas! been denied to us: we cannot place a copy of it in the hands of Osbert Salvin. What loss science has suffered by his death it is not for me to say; but how great the loss is to his friends I have good reason to know, for to his enduring patience, his never-failing sympathy, his sound advice, and affectionate friendship I owe more than I can here express. In the preparation of this volume, about the land he knew so well and with which his name must ever be associated, he took such a kindly and helpful interest that his connection with it will always remain amongst the happiest of our memories.

I cannot close this preface without offering my sincere thanks to Miss Annie Hunter and her sisters, and to all those who have been concerned in the preparation of the drawings and the reproduction of the illustrations, for the interest they have taken in the work entrusted to them and the carefulness with which it has been carried out. In conclusion, I am glad to express my acknowledgments for the good services rendered to me by the companions in my travels, the men of the Lopez family, and especially my friend Gorgonio, whose gentle manners and sweet disposition helped to smooth over many a bad half-hour during my earlier expeditions, and whose ceaseless vigilance over the welfare of my wife during our last journey did so much to lessen for her the discomforts of camp-life.

A. P. M.

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CHAPTER I. THE VOYAGE.

We left England early in October, 1893, and on the 13th November found ourselves in San Francisco. Our passages were taken in a steamer advertised to sail from that Port on the 18th of the month for San José de Guatemala, but no sooner had we set foot in the Palace Hotel, than the Influenza fiend seized us both; so we were obliged to give up our cabins in the steamer, and, as soon as we were well enough to travel, were ordered by the doctor to leave San Francisco and its cold winds for the more agreeable climate of Monterey. The railroad took us in four hours through the fruitful plain of San Joaquin, and landed us almost at the door of the Hotel del Monte, a huge low wooden building standing in the midst of a grove of magnificent evergreen oak trees, and surrounded by beautiful flower-gardens and exquisite green grass. The many porticos and verandahs were bowers of roses and heliotrope and every variety of creeper, and the garden beds were brilliant with magnificent dahlias and chrysanthemums and numberless smaller flowers.

Chinese gardeners could be seen in all directions tending the plants, and watering the lawn-grass to keep it fresh and green, in striking contrast to the yellow stubble which during the dry season covers the face of the surrounding country.

The Hotel del Monte is a favourite winter resort of people from the Eastern States as well as from California, and it would be difficult to imagine a more attractive place in which to seek health, warmth, or pleasure. Everything possible seems to be provided for the amusement and comfort of the guests; but in the late autumn it is almost deserted, and the dozen of us who sat down to dinner were lost in the huge dining-room built to accommodate

nearly two thousand guests. We found many attractive walks in the neighbourhood, either across the great sand-dunes down to the fine hard sea-beach, or up amongst the beautiful groves of immense live-oaks and cedars with which the place abounds.

One morning on coming down to breakfast we were told that we were wanted at the telephone, and found that an old friend, Professor Holden, was speaking to us from the top of Mount Hamilton and bidding us to visit him at the great Lick Observatory, of which he has the charge. It was with regret that we left the enchanting land of flowers and green grass; but our time was short and the prospect of seeing the stars through the biggest telescope in the world was too attractive to be missed. So, following the directions conveyed by telephone, we took the train to the town of San José, where we passed the night, and on the following morning, in a pouring rain, packed away in a two-horse wagon with a high top and heavy leather curtains buttoned down to keep out the wet, we began the six hours' journey up the mountain.

There was nothing to be seen but fog and smoking horses, and although, as usual, we were assured that the weather was most exceptional, no one attempted to predict anything better; and, indeed, it grew worse and worse until our arrival at the top of the mountain, when it was difficult to see more than a few yards around us, and we seemed to be standing on a small point of rock while the world below was filled with cold whirling mist, which penetrated to the marrow of our bones.

During our three days' visit, once only, for a brief hour, did the clouds break and show us to the east

the great mountains rising to the height of the Sierra Nevada, and to the west the broad plain we had crossed, which, protected by a low range of hills from the cold sea winds, yields that abundance of fruits which, fresh or preserved, yearly finds its way to foreign markets. Towards the north we could see the smoke of San Francisco, and even in the partial clearness make out the ships lying in the harbour.

Despite the bad weather our visit was made most enjoyable, but it was a real disappointment not to get so much as a peep through the great telescope. However, we could not afford to miss another steamer, as that would have meant losing too much of the dry season in Guatemala. So reluctantly bidding our host good-bye we went to San Francisco, still followed by clouds and fog, which not only detained the steamer for twenty hours in the harbour, but clung to us tenaciously until we had been at sea five days and had run over a thousand miles.

Our ship, the ‘San Juan,’ belongs to the Pacific Mail Steamship Company, and runs between San Francisco and Panama in connection with the steamers sailing from Colon to New York. The accommodation was fairly good, but she carried too much deck cargo for comfort or safety, and one felt that she might labour dangerously in a heavy sea. Since our return the news has reached us of the wreck of the steamship ’Colima’ of the same line, occasioned by the shifting of the deck cargo, and we feel thankful to have been spared the dreadful fate which befell her passengers.

Our fellow voyagers in the ‘San Juan’ were mostly men, Americans and Spanish Americans, and they were distinctly dull. Indeed life on board was

monotonous enough to all of us. The Spaniards took their boredom quietly, but it became well nigh intolerable to one Western American, whose talk was of twenty-storied houses and other boasted signs of progress at his own home, and who was now bound for Guatemala, where he apparently hoped to make a rapid fortune by running trolley-cars on the streets of the capital and generally electrifying the city.

The first few days of the voyage were certainly dull enough to tax anyone's spirits; but when we were about 200 miles north of Cape St. Lucas the dark pall of clouds broke away, and the sun burst out in all his glory, changing the sea from a leaden grey to a wonderful blue; awnings were stretched over the decks, and we lay languidly in our chairs watching the changing shadows, while the great rollers of the Pacific gently rocked the ship, and soft warm winds blew over us. So soothing and delicious a motion I had never before experienced at sea, and in spite of my rooted objection to a ship I fell a victim to the lazy charm that seemed to hold sea and vessel in a sort of magic spell, and for the first time in my life I thoroughly enjoyed a sea voyage.

Soon we came in sight of the black-looking foothills of the Mexican coast. As we slowly sailed into the tropics, they lost their bareness, and became clothed with a rich vegetation, and then fringed with bananas and cocoanut-palms. Gradually rising higher, the hills grew into mountainous masses broken by volcanic peaks, and from one lofty cone a wreath of smoke drifted languidly on the breeze.

As the temperature of air and water grew warmer the sea became alive with flying-fish, and shoals of dolphins, four or five hundred together, played round our bows or dashed across our course, leaping

and throwing up the water in fountains of spray. Large turtles floated past lying asleep on the surface of the water, their shining backs catching the sunlight and reflecting it like mirrors. The sea-birds regarded them as convenient resting-places, and almost every sleeping turtle carried on his back a dozing bird which flapped lazily away, apparently shocked at the behaviour of the turtle when the approach of our ship caused him to take a sudden dive below.

All day the sea and its inhabitants yielded us endless amusement; the evenings were gorgeous with tropical sunsets and the nights revealed a brilliancy and glory in moon and stars that surpassed all my imaginings. We sat up late watching the north star sinking lower and lower, and marking the rise of strange constellations towards the south.

It must be remembered that I am a very bad sailor, that my experience of sea voyages had been confined to many rough and wintry passages across the North Atlantic, and that all the softness and colour and beauty of a tropical ocean broke on me like a revelation.

Our first port was San Blas, on the Mexican side of the Gulf of California. It boasts no harbour, so that we dropped anchor in the open roadstead, and lay as near shore as safety permitted, rocked by the big rollers of the restless Pacific as they passed to break on the sandy beaches and rugged cliffs of the coast. A few thatched cottages were clustered round the Custom House, and others were dotted along the beach half-hidden amongst cocoanut-palms and bananas and a tangle of tropical vegetation, whilst behind them rose a fine mass of mountains clothed in the softest imaginable shades of green with lovely

blue distances stretching for miles into the interior. Big picturesque boats, rowed by Mexicans in huge broad hats and clean white shirts and trousers, came to deliver and take back cargo, and to supply us with fruits and vegetables. With our glasses we watched the great dexterity with which the boats were handled and guided safely through the heavy surf.

It was rather late in the day when we weighed anchor, and sailing close in shore we could entertain ourselves until dark marking the varied play of light and shade on the rocky shore as the sun sank, and watching the pelicans perched on every point and ledge of rock, some idly sunning themselves out of reach of the spray, but the majority choosing to stand where the surging waves could just wash over their feet, whilst others wheeled overhead in slow heavy flight searching for their food. It was an exciting moment when a great bird high up in the air would suddenly fold his wings together and fall with a splash on the water, whilst his long neck and beak were shot out to catch an unwary fish just under the surface; then having secured his supper he would fly away to enjoy it in a safe retreat amongst the rocks.

Sailing under cloudless skies and lovely stars through another night, we arrived at Manzanillo, the port of Colima, proud in the possession of a railway and a weekly train from the port to the city. Here we landed, to enjoy an hour's walk through the little town, and resting under the trees of the Alameda I had my first glimpse of a tropical garden.

Whilst waiting for the boat to carry us back to the ship we enjoyed the excitement of watching the natives trying to spear a great skate, or devil-fish, as the sailors call it. As soon as the harpoon struck, the cord was attached to a boat, and the fish swam

rapidly away towing the boat after him with the greatest ease. The struggle must have already lasted half an hour when we sailed out of the bay and the fish was not yet vanquished. Later in the day we saw one of these monsters jump right out of the sea and with a great flop strike the water again, spreading out his flat proportions like a table, and making a sound like the report of a cannon.

On the evening of December 7th we arrived at the Port of Acapulco, and sailed into the beautiful bay, through a tortuous channel between high cliffs, guided by a feeble light perched on the rocks above us. The sea was a marvel of beauty, glowing with phosphorus, and alive with illuminated fish and dolphins darting about and leaving long streams of light behind them. Through this molten silver sea we glided to our anchorage near the town. As we neared the shore long narrow dug-out canoes lighted by great flaring pitch-pine torches carried by mahogany-coloured boys swarmed out of the darkness, and before the anchor was cast the ship was surrounded by a fringe of bum-boats, filled with fruit, vegetables, and pottery, and presided over by swarthy Mexican men and women.

It was a pretty and amusing scene, and as the bum-boat women and their smuggling propensities were well known to the ship's crew, a lively fire of chaff and bargaining in a strange jargon of Spanish-English immediately began, and continued, as far as I know, all night. It certainly was a noisy night, and was rendered doubly unpleasant by the arrival of huge coal-barges manned by picturesque little black devils in dirty white garments, carrying flaring torches, who passed the night supplying us with coal and smothering us with dust.

When the sun rose on the next morning the heat was excessive, and as the town itself looked unattractive, and the surrounding country, although beautiful to look at, suggested malaria, we did not attempt to land, but contented ourselves watching the vendors of fruits, who when the day broke were still actively engaged in bargaining. On leaving the harbour before noon we hugged the coast even closer than before; so that besides the entertainment afforded by the ocean and its varied and interesting population, we could rest our eyes on the refreshing green vegetation covering the mountains, which pile themselves up, range after range, and on the rocky headlands and shining sand-beaches of the coast-line.



ACAPULCO: A SNAPSHOT OVER THE BULWARKS.

Sailors fight shy of the heavy seas in the Gulf of Tehuantepec caused by the northerly winds which rush across the isthmus from the Atlantic; and during

the winter months, in spite of the increased distance to be travelled, they gain all the shelter they can by hugging the shore. On this occasion there was no exception to the rule. The weather had been hot, cloudless, and calm, but as soon as we entered the gulf we felt a quick fall in temperature and a distinct increase in the motion. When about halfway round the gulf, we dimly discerned on the horizon the beginnings of the long line of mountains and volcanoes which follow the coast almost from Tehuantepec to Panama. Gradually as we sailed nearer individual volcanic peaks rose above the broken mass: first Tacaná and Tajumulco, the highest of them all, and then the crests of Santa Maria and Atitlan, and last of all we could recognize the soft outlines of Agua and Fuego, shaded by fleecy wrappings of cloud, and knew that our voyage was near its end.

In full view of this grand panorama of mountains we cast anchor at the port of Champerico, where for many long hot hours we lay rolling in the heavy ground-swell of the open roadstead, while discharging and taking in cargo and waiting for the passengers to come on board. The town was *en fiesta* on account of the visit of General Barrios, President of Guatemala, and his staff, who were to be our fellow-passengers to the port of San José. Several ships lying in the roadstead were dressed with flags, and even our dirty old steamer did her best in the way of bunting to do honour to so distinguished a guest. We tried to be duly impressed by the festivities and rejoicings, but the grand blaze of blue lights and showers of rockets which followed us out to sea hardly compensated for loss of time and the general discomfort of an overcrowded ship. The President's party took entire possession of

everything; they sprawled all over the decks, went to sleep in our two deck chairs, and succeeded in breaking both of them. Fortunately, a short night's sail brought us to the port of San José, and also to the end of our pleasant voyage.

Again we anchored in the open sea, and when the time came to go ashore we were each in turn swung over the ship's side in a chair and deposited with a bump on the top of the other passengers and piles of baggage in a large lighter which swayed alongside. This operation was reversed when we neared the shore, and a cage was lowered from the iron pier which loomed prodigiously and alarmingly high above us, and we were swung up in safety. Thank goodness there was no sea running, only the long undulations of the swell which beats ceaselessly on the coast. Even so, landing was an unpleasant experience, and what it must be on a rough day my mind refuses to contemplate; but one must remember that even the terror of seizing the right moment to scramble from a surging lighter into a heavy iron cage, which at one moment strikes against the bottom of the boat and the next moment hangs threateningly overhead, is preferable to that of the older method when the lighter was dragged through the surf, and the unfortunate passengers landed, soaked and terrified, even if they were lucky enough to escape a capsize and the teeth of hungry sharks.



A long glistening hot sand beach facing south, a background of palm-trees and bananas, a few houses, and an illimitable ocean describes the port of San José. There is not a decent inn in the place, and our condition on seeing the only train for Guatemala leave without us (owing to the delay in getting our belongings past the custom-house) would have been pitiable, but for the kind hospitality of Colonel Stuart, the agent for the steamship line, who took us into his house on the beach and made us most comfortable for the night.

The next morning we took the train for the capital, distant about 70 miles. Our way lay through a thick

growth of wild vegetation, varied by banana-plantations and groves of cocoanut-trees laden with fruit. Every small tree supported a wealth of flowering “morning glories” and other creepers, while big patches of sunflowers filled in the open spaces.

The railway soon began to ascend, and making innumerable turns among the mountains opened up charming views of the tropical forest, and gave us glimpses of the sea and the shining sand beach stretching for miles along the coast. Not the least interesting features in the journey were the endless variety of strange fruits offered us for sale, and the glimpses of native life which we caught at the wayside stations. Through ever-changing scenes, always climbing and winding through the mountains, we reached the pretty lake of Amatitlan, at an elevation of about 4000 feet above the sea, and, rising still another 1000 feet, we arrived late in the afternoon at the city of Guatemala, standing on a level plateau seamed with great ravines, or barrancas as they are here called. Two of these big ravines nearly encircle the city, and as they slowly but surely eat their way backwards threaten to curtail its growth.

CHAPTER II. THE CITY.



CITY OF GUATEMALA, FROM THE CERRO DEL CARMEN.

The city of Guatemala occupies a beautiful position in the middle of a broad plain, surrounded on all sides by mountains and volcanoes. Hill after hill rises to the north until the view is shut in by the distant Sierra Madre range. To the south-east is a volcanic group crowned by the peaks of Pacaya, and above the nearer hills to the south rise the giant cone of Agua and the triple craters of Fuego.

The streets of the city are laid out at right angles, and they gain an appearance of breadth from the lowness of the houses. Two-storied houses are as scarce as earthquakes are frequent, and the long low lines of buildings are broken only by the stumpy bell-towers and squat cupolas of the churches.

Churches and houses alike are white-washed, and the general effect is cheerful and even dazzling in the bright sunlight of the tropics. Street tramways, telegraph and telephone wires, and electric lights are there to keep us up to date; but in spite of their intrusion, it is Old Spain—the Spain of the Moors—which comes uppermost in one's mind when wandering about the city. The deep-set windows, barred with the heavy iron "reja," and the broad "zaguan" or porch, through which one catches a glimpse of the arches of a colonnade round a patio bright with flowers or chequered with the grateful shade of trees, take one back at once to the sunny plains of Andalusia. Nothing in the whole city was so

attractive to both of us as the great market-place, and there we spent many hours. Every morning the broad streets leading to it were thronged with gaily-dressed ladinos (half-castes) and Indians, and we were even driven by frequent collisions to quit the narrow side-walk for the rough cobble-stones of the street.

The Indians are for the most part carriers of vegetables and other produce from the neighbouring villages, or merchants from a distance, who bring all their merchandise on their backs packed in light wooden crates called “cacastes.” The Indian women from the nearer hamlets also come burdened with large bundles of clean linen which has been washed for the townsfolk, or support baskets on their heads full of cakes and “pan dulce” for sale in the market-place, and many carry an additional burden slung in a shawl over the back, from which peeps out the quaint little face of an Indian baby. To judge from the expression of their faces one would say that the Indians are a dull and solemn race; but this impression vanishes when one hears their lively chatter as they trot along under their burdens, for none but the most heavily laden condescend to the slowness of a walk.

The ladino housekeepers and maid-servants with their bright striped aprons and rebosos add to the crowd, and give it a distinct charm when they poise their large flat baskets on their heads and show their shapely bare arms and pretty hands to advantage. One is not long in the city before hearing the wails of the mistresses at the length of time spent by their servants in buying a few vegetables or a dozen eggs, for, indeed, these handmaidens dearly love the loitering and chatter of the market-place.

The market-place itself is divided into two large patios surrounded and crossed by corridors. Small recesses in the walls are used as shops, like those in an eastern bazaar. Here the vendors of the durable articles ply their trade, offering for sale hardware and saddlery and all the innumerable sacks, bags, ropes, and girths needed for the trains of pack-mules; whilst others deck out their stalls with the bright-coloured dress fabrics so much loved by the natives. Towards the middle of the market-place, where the light fell strongest, colour reigned supreme in the rainbow hues of the women's dresses and the brilliant tints of the tropical fruits. Here are heaped up mountains of golden oranges, red, yellow, and green bananas, cocoanuts, pine-apples, aguacates, anonas, and tomatoes large and small, jocotes, pimientos, limes, and sweet lemons, great bunches of flowers, endless bundles of green vegetables, and baskets piled high with fresh eggs; in fact the produce of every clime, from potatoes grown on the cold slopes of Agua to the sugar-cane from the hot plains of the Pacific coast.

At Christmas time another market is held in the arcades which surround the great Plaza de Armas, where the women display their handiwork in the manufacture of toys, most of them tiny dolls dressed in the Indian costumes and illustrating the occupations and customs of the race. Some of these little groups of figures are so extremely minute that one almost needs a magnifying-glass to examine them, and attest the clearness of vision and neatness of hand of the makers.

The shops and stores of the principal merchants are numerous, and, I suppose, under the circumstances, may be said to be fairly good, but to one coming

from Europe or the United States the articles displayed are not very enticing. Most of the foreign goods are of a class which must, I think, be manufactured only for export to a semicivilized country. They do not, however, possess the merit of cheapness, for the exorbitant duties levied at the Custom House would alone more than double their original price. My efforts to buy a good silk veil to wear when travelling, as a protection against the dust, were not crowned with success; and the French modiste from whom I finally purchased a very second-rate article amused me greatly by her description of the difficulties she met with in satisfying the taste of her clients in a country where duties are levied on bonnets and hats by weight, and the boxes and paper in which they are packed are also weighed and charged for at the same rate.

Three-quarters of the foreign trade is in German hands, and many Germans have been wise enough to settle on the rich coffee-lands of the Costa Grande and Costa Cuca on the Pacific slope, and in the province of the Vera Paz, and have made a splendid success of their plantations. Next to the Germans the North Americans are most in evidence, but the English are not to be found.

When the capital was moved to its present site in the year 1774, priests and monks were still a power in the land and the finest buildings in the city were raised by the monastic orders. Now not a monk or friar is to be found in the country, and even the secular clergy are forbidden to wear any distinctive dress. From the time of the rupture with Spain ecclesiastical influence began to decline; it rose again for a time under the rule of the Dictator Carrera, an Indian of pure blood, whom the priests found it

worth while to support; but during the wars which followed Carrera's death it again waned, and in 1872 the last of the great Orders was expelled and its property seized by the government and turned to secular use. The Post Office and Custom House are now lodged in the monastery of San Francisco; the "Instituto Nacional," a great public school, is well housed in what was once the Jesuit College; the military school is in the Recoletos. The monastery of Santo Domingo harbours the "Direccion general de Licores," the Capuchinos is utilized for a second theatre, and some of the less important religious houses serve as "mesones" or caravanserais for the muleteers and ladino travellers.

The churches are still left to the secular clergy, and they are as uninteresting as Spanish-American churches are wont to be. Had the conquest occurred but a century earlier America might have been covered with churches worthy of the traditions handed down by the builders of Burgos, Toledo, and Seville, for the supply of labourers was for some time unlimited, the Indians were good craftsmen, and the great monuments of Copan and Quirigua show that curved and drooping feathers may afford a motive for decoration as graceful and beautiful as Gothic foliations; but such art as the Spaniards brought with them was a degraded form of the renaissance, and the innumerable churches which they built are without any architectural merit but mass, the interiors great bare halls, and the façades overloaded with stumpy twisted columns, wavy stucco cornices, and such-like abominations. Not even the ruin into which so many of them have fallen can add a grace to the masses of stucco and rubble. It is only in the villages that they gain a picturesqueness of their

own, and that owing more to their surroundings than to any merit in design. However, in their favour it must be said that they are neither dirty nor bad-smelling, partly because they are so little used and partly because in this equable climate doors and windows can be left open all day long.

A few days before Christmas we happened to enter the church of La Merced and chanced upon a vesper service for the Hijas de Maria, sung by a choir of girls and children to the strains of a wheezy harmonium, whilst all did their best to increase the noise by blowing penny whistles, shaking bells and tambourines, and striking triangles. After playing with their penny toys until they were tired, the choir broke into a quaint chant, to which the rest of the congregation responded. During this performance the "Daughters of Mary," veiled and dressed in white, and each carrying a lighted candle in her hand, knelt at the altar rails, whilst the "Sons of Mary," with large white ribbon bows tied on their arms, sat in the seats near the choir. This was almost the only ladino church-function which we saw during our stay in the country. In all the other towns and villages the churches seemed to be given over almost exclusively to the Indians.

In our rambles through the suburbs we often found our path barred by the great barrancas which almost surround the town. These big fissures are very beautiful, and we spent many idle and pleasant hours watching the shadows chasing each other across their open green mouths, and enjoying the delicious June temperature which comes to this favoured land at Christmas time. Trees and shrubs loaded with festoons of creeping plants cling to the precipitous sides of these rifts, and now and then one caught a

bright gleam where the sunlight struck the rivulet that bubbles through the luxuriant tropical vegetation in the depths. The great Zopilote vulture which seems to haunt every barranca would swoop with a whirr of his outstretched wings close above our heads and sail on over the chasm with hardly a quiver in his wings, but with his ugly black head and restless eyes always in eager movement, whilst from below now and again would well up the strong sweet notes of the “guarda barranca,” a small brown bird, who makes his home in the most inaccessible cliffs and deepest tree-clad gorges.



The usual evening stroll of the Guatemaltecos is to the Cerro del Carmen, a small turf-covered hill rising to the north-east of the city, where stands an old church and the remains of a monastery, perhaps the oldest in the Republic. From this hill the view of the city with its large white churches and conventual buildings, surrounded by walled gardens full of trees and flowers, is very beautiful at any hour of the day, but at sunset the sight is one not easily forgotten. It is difficult to describe the beauty of the amphitheatre of mountains all aglow in the sunset light, or of the majesty of the clouds as they float up from the distant sea, wreathing themselves round Agua and Fuego, filling up the valleys with mists of every possible hue, which take on a deeper colour as they drift away from the setting sun and fill the vault of the heavens. Then the east takes up what light the

clouds have left behind and shoots up to the zenith splendid rays of colour, which meet those of the setting sun as it sinks behind the mountain peaks. Too soon the short twilight ends and the volcanoes clothe themselves in a bloom of dark blue, and receding into the night seem to sleep quietly under the brilliant tropical stars.



It was a lovely scene, which we always left reluctantly for the comfortless hotel and a bad dinner. But not even our dusty room nor the dark stuffy “comedor,” where we took our meals, could obliterate the vision of that brilliant pageant of marching clouds and magnificent colouring which had surrounded us on the Cerro del Carmen. The less said about Guatemala hotels the better; those in the capital are pretentious and bad. The Grand Hotel, where we put up, is a good-sized house, with patios and broad corridors and good rooms, but the furnishings are old, dirty, and disagreeably stuffy. In the dining-room, which was always overcrowded, we were not permitted to engage one of the many small tables, and had to take our chance of companions and table-cloths; the former not always agreeable and the latter often unbearable. Good food might have done much to soothe our troubled feelings, but it never came, and this was all the more aggravating as the market was full of good things to eat. The bedroom service, carried on by a very dirty man, was uncomfortable beyond expression, and a large part of

my day was always passed cleaning and tidying the single room which was all the accommodation we could secure. Appeals to the landlord, a German, who, thanks to the cook whom he had married, had grown rich and proportionately proud, and who was also the owner of the large store attached to the hotel, resulted in nothing but a polite bow, a hand pointing the while to a pile of telegrams, and a suggestion that if the Señora proposed making different arrangements others were more than willing to engage her room. However, we were most fortunate in finding the kindest of friends at the British Legation and amongst the foreign residents, who rescued us from bad dinners and smelling oil-lamps, entertaining us so hospitably as to make us forget the distance from home at Christmas time; and although the atmosphere would have afforded no clue to the season as we know it in the north, there was no mistaking its kindly greetings and its roast turkeys and plum puddings.

CHAPTER III. THE START.



STONE IDOLS ON THE ROAD TO MIXCO.

At the end of three weeks all our outfit for the journey, including numerous cases of provisions, had, by the kindness of the Government, been passed through the Custom House free of duty, and we at once set to work sorting the provisions and repacking them in smaller boxes—some to be carried with us, others to be sent on to various points on the road to await our arrival.

We had already purchased seven cargo-mules and one horse, none of them in very good condition, for sound and well-conditioned animals were not only very expensive, but exceedingly scarce, and we were forced to take what we could find.

No trained riding-mule could be found for me, so I had to make my choice of a steed from amongst the pack-mules, and picked out the smallest, principally because she had a pretty head and held her ears well forward. No doubt these are not all the points I

should have attended to; but no choice could have proved more fortunate, and it would have been difficult to find in the whole country a gentler or more sure-footed creature. Her feet were unshod and her power of holding on to slippery rocks was positively astounding. I soon learnt to leave her reins loose and let her pick her own way, which she did with the greatest care, whether scrambling up the rough hillsides, or, with her hind feet kept well together, sliding down perilously steep and slippery mountain-paths. Her temper was above reproach, but it required much prodding to get her out of the steady walk to which her life in a pack-train had accustomed her; however, when once fairly started, she paced easily and comfortably. I cannot say too much in praise of my mule, for she solved the one great question which weighed on my mind: how was I, who had never ridden before, to traverse the difficult country which lay in front of us? Trusting to her superior knowledge and good sense, I was carried in safety for more than five hundred miles, in daylight and in dark, over mountains and across rivers, from the Pacific to the shores of the Atlantic, without a stumble and without even the feeling of fear; and when at last I had to part with her at Yzabal, it was with real regret, and the feeling that I was saying good-bye to an old and valued friend.

Our party at the start numbered five—our two selves, Gorgonio Lopes (my husband's faithful companion during many earlier expeditions), his son Caralampio, and Santos the arriero; our train was made up of the six cargo-mules, three saddle-mules, and a horse, and to this must be added four or five Indian cargadores, bearing loads which could not be conveniently carried on pack-saddles.

My husband rode the horse, which, although not a very magnificent-looking animal, gave a certain air of respectability to the train. Gorgonio's mule was a wise old beast with a rough and varied experience of life, who seemed to have been brought more out of sentiment than for use, for Gorgonio persistently walked up and down all the hills, and sometimes on the flat, so as to lighten her labours. He had strange stories to tell of her adventures. Once, when on a journey in Honduras, she was stolen from him and he had to return home to Coban and give up all hope of seeing her again; it was not until long afterwards that he learnt that the thief was the Juez de paz (the local Judge). At the end of a year the Governor of the Province, having heard of the shortcomings of his subordinate, took possession of the mule, but, somehow or other, forgot to give any information to her real owner, and had her sent away to a distant rancho; there possibly her existence might have been forgotten and her brand have changed its shape, had it not been that, by the merest chance, a doctor, who was an old friend of Gorgonio, recognized the mule and gave him the information which led to her recovery. Caralampio's mule was like Mr. Kipling's Battery mule—a mule; and mine was the excellent creature I have described.

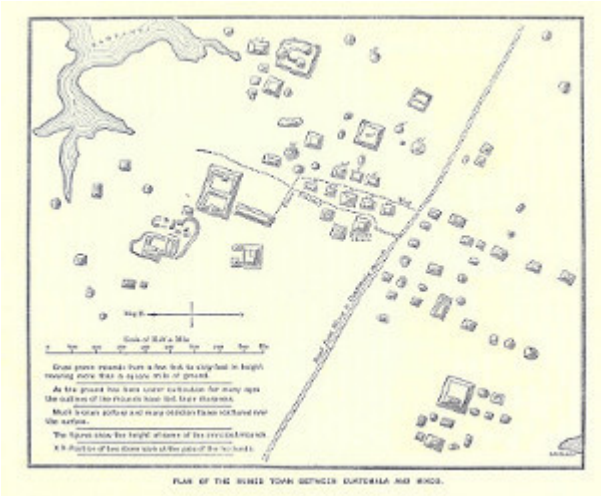
On the 2nd of January we left the capital, mounting our mules just outside the main streets of the town, as a concession to my feelings of bashfulness; for I had no wish to shock the sensibilities of the fashionable society of the capital by riding through the streets in a short walking-dress, or to expose my bad horsemanship to their criticism. We passed to the right of the fort or Castle of San José, which commands the city, and then for about a mile followed the road bordered by straggling houses to

the Guarda viejo. On passing through the gate we turned to the right across a narrow strip of land between deep barrancas, and then found ourselves fairly in the country.

On the plain through which our road lay there must have stood in olden times a fair-sized town, if one can judge from the large number of grass-grown mounds scattered over its surface; but it is now the mere ghost of a town, without history and without name, and the two squat figures carved in a hard stone which stand by the roadside at the gate of a small hacienda are all that remains to show the art of the builders, although careful investigation would no doubt reveal much more of interest. The sketch-plan on the next page was made by my husband some years ago.

We had set out late in the afternoon, and our first journey was purposely a short one of eight miles,—just enough to settle down men and mules to their work,—to the small town of Mixco, the home of arrieros, mules, washerwomen, and bakers and purveyors in general to the capital. The short twilight faded away as we crossed the plain, and it was dark before we entered the deep barranca which had to be crossed before the town could be reached. I must confess that my heart was in my mouth as I felt rather than saw the steep rough road that lay before me—for be it remembered that I knew nothing as yet of the surefootedness of my mule,—but I soon felt that she was more at home crawling down the side of a barranca than when shuffling along the dusty high road; then I grew very brave, gave her my full confidence, and never after repented of the gift. My first barranca successfully passed, we clambered into the deserted street, crossed the plaza, and, guided by

Gorgonio, groped our way in the pitchy darkness down another paved street, which seemed to be as steep as the roof of a house, and found ourselves in the courtyard of a straggling one-storied building dignified by the name of hotel.



PLAN OF THE RUINED TOWN BETWEEN GUATEMALA AND MIXCO.

After many fruitless efforts to attract some attention, a woman appeared with a candle and led us to a sort of outhouse which had been engaged for us by Caralampio, who had preceded us with the pack animals and cargadores. This apartment was not prepossessing; its furniture consisted of two miserable beds, a table, two infirm chairs, a wooden bench, and a sewing-machine, and in one corner our servants had piled up indiscriminately provision-boxes, mule-trunks, tents, beds, and pack-saddles, so that confusion was added to discomfort.



A STREET IN MIXCO.

My husband and Gorgonio were particularly assiduous in their attentions to me and in their efforts to improve matters, each in his way rather alarmed as to what effect this sudden plunge into semi-civilization might produce on a novice. They were lavish in the use of candles from our store, and Gorgonio went off to forage for supper, whilst the other men were set to work to put the baggage into something like order. Before long the usual food of the country—fried eggs, frijoles (black beans), and tortillas (thin round cakes of Indian corn)—was brought to us, and to this fare we added a tin of good chicken-broth, cooked on our own spirit-lamp. Bread, which I afterwards found to be usually the first thing placed on the table of a Central-American inn, was on this occasion lacking; and we learnt that a company of soldiers, on their way to a distant station, had passed through the town in the morning and eaten up all the bread, so nothing was left for us but a little stale ‘pan dulce.’ However, we made a good supper, and even enjoyed the stale ‘pan dulce’

with the help of a cup of delicious coffee, a luxury which the traveller in Guatemala may usually count on finding even in the poorest posada.

As soon as we were comfortable Gorgonio left us to assure himself that the arriero had attended to the wants of the beasts, and found them safely tied up in the yard outside our door, each with a bundle of "sacate de milpa" (the leaves and stems of the maize-plant) for his supper. In my opinion Gorgonio holds a unique position amongst his countrymen on account of his sympathy with dumb animals, and it is well for the mule-train which falls under his management. The kind soul never thought of refreshing himself until the mules had been attended to, and no beautiful scenery or convenient camping-ground had any charms for him if there was a scarcity of food "para las pobres mulas." His horror lest the animals should suffer stood out in striking contrast to the callousness and brutality which one noticed every day amongst the half-caste muleteers.

Supper disposed of we turned our attention to the bed question, and after examining those provided for us, determined to open our own camp-cots. But, alas! neither persuasion nor force would induce the swollen plugs to fit into their sockets, and we were obliged to sleep on the beds belonging to the hotel. A message came from the patrona to the effect that clean sheets were to be had if they were needed, and when these arrived we carefully wrapped the suspected mattresses up in them, and rolling ourselves in our blankets, knew nothing more until the sunlight streaming into the room awakened us to a lovely morning.

As we looked from the window across the plain we had traversed the evening before, the scene was an

enchanting one. Soft mists coloured by the sunlight, and pierced here and there by dome and tower, hung over the city, and billowy sunlit clouds wreathed themselves round the distant mountains. Even our immediate surroundings, which appeared so squalid the night before, became transformed under the brilliant sunlight: the old courtyard looked quite picturesque with the bustle of preparation for our journey; gaily-dressed washerwomen laden with bundles of clean linen trotted past the open door, and we could watch them and the line of pack-mules and Indian carriers winding down the sides of the barranca on their way to the morning market in the capital. The air was filled with the perfume of flowers, and the atmosphere was soft and delicious.



A MIXCO WASHERWOMAN.

To the native traveller there is not much difficulty in making an early start, for he seems, as a rule, to confine his equipment for the road to a rug rolled up and strapped on the back of his saddle, a Turkish bath towel thrown over his shoulders, and such small articles as he can stow away in his “arganas,” or plaited grass saddle-bags. Possibly he may be followed by a small boy on a second mule, who carries his master’s clothes in front of him wrapped up in a petate or mat. But with us the case was very different, for what with tents, tent-furniture, beds, bedding, photographic cameras and other apparatus, a large store of provisions, a cooking-canteen, and water-tins, as well as our own personal belongings, our baggage-train was a long one, much time was occupied in getting under weigh, and our progress was necessarily slow. We had found it impossible in the city to engage Indian carriers by the month or even by the week, so we had to depend on the village alcaldes to supply us with mozos to carry loads from town to town.



I soon learnt that the alcaldes never hurry themselves to find the mozos, and that the mozos are never in a hurry to come; and when at last they are all assembled, much time is lost in fussing over the size, weight, and general make-up of the cargos. Even when the mules were all saddled and loaded, and we were making a start, one of the mozos was sure to find that the tent-poles were too long, or the camera-legs inconvenient to adjust. This discovery was followed by a demand for more pay, and we had to wait whilst Gorgonio smoothed the ruffled feelings of the mozos to whose lots these awkward burdens had fallen, with the promise of an extra medio apiece

if each of them travelled well. As the Indians speak little, if any, Spanish, and our Ladinos, who spoke the Indian dialect, “la lengua” as they called it, of the Alta Vera Paz, could not understand the speech of the Indians of the Altos and the Lake region, we usually found it best to leave to the Alcalde all arrangements with the Indians, and cheerfully ran the risk of an overcharge in order to avoid delay and ensure the proper carriage of cargos.



Our start from Mixco was in no wise different from what experience afterwards showed me to be the rule, and it was rather late before we were under weigh for Antigua; but as we had only twenty miles

to travel along one of the best high roads in the country, and were to find an hotel at the end of our journey, the delay was not a matter of much consequence.

The air was fresh and invigorating, and as we wound round the hills along the edge of a great barranca we caught charming glimpses of the capital, with its shining white churches lying in the plain beneath us, and of distant mountains and valleys changing from sunlight to shadow under the passing clouds. The roadside was edged with wild flowers, among them large scarlet salvias, beautiful purple single dahlias, growing to a great height, elder-trees in full bloom, and Wigandia with its magnificent leaves and fine sprays of purple flowers, royal in effect. Besides these were brilliant patches of small sunflowers, and delicate little blossoms of many sorts and colours peeping out between the moss and maidenhair ferns which clothed the rocks and turned the green roadsides into charming rock-gardens.

About midday we arrived at the little hamlet of San Rafael, high up in the hills, but even at an altitude where frost is by no means unknown it was impossible to realize that we were in the midst of winter, for in the well-kept garden of the inn standard roses, banksias, heliotrope, and various other garden plants were blooming, as if it were June and not January. Here we came up with the soldiers, infantry and artillery, who had eaten up all the bread at Mixco, and who were now resting and cooking their food by the roadside, whilst their officers took possession of the hotel. It was rather disquieting to have to follow in the wake of this hungry army, but the innkeeper dispelled our fears and gave us an abundant and well-cooked breakfast.

Soon after leaving San Rafael, a turn in the road revealed the two great volcanoes, Agua and Fuego, towering dark and mysterious above us, and seeming to bar our way. Soft billowy white clouds hovered over and around their summits, now hiding them from view, and now revealing the sharp edges of a crater, then sinking lower and wreathing their slopes in a clinging drapery of mist, sometimes silvery and glowing in the sunlight, then fading to a cold chalky whiteness. Where the afternoon sun touched the beautiful sloping sides of the mountains one could see the great deep furrows ploughed by the rains of centuries, and here and there a yellow patch of maize and the solitary hut of a mountain Indian.

The road led us down through passes wilder than we had seen before, with rugged hillsides covered with forest trees and a cheerful stream bubbling along the bottom of the narrow gully. We passed long mule-trains toiling over the hills on their way to the capital, and then the silence of the valleys was broken and the rocks echoed with the loud harsh voices of the arrieros calling to their beasts by every name in the calendar, with a refrain of “Macho, Mula arré, anda pues”—a useless expenditure of breath and energy, which never seems to affect the pace of the mule-train in the slightest degree, but which is an unfailing and annoying habit of every Spanish-American muleteer. The prettiest party we met on the road was a company of young girls clad in embroidered huipils and bright-coloured enaguas (their upper and lower garments), each with a big flat basket on her head, and a bare well-shaped brown arm raised to support it. They fluttered up the hill towards us laughing and chattering, their well-poised erect figures swaying with a fine freedom of motion. Surely no prettier sight was ever seen, with

its sylvan surroundings and the sunlight glistening through the trees.

On nearing Antigua the valley opened out, and we passed some coffee-plantations, the trees loaded with berries in various stages of ripening, and the beautiful leaves shining in the sunlight. Alternating with the rows of coffee-bushes were rows of plantains and bananas, their straight unbending stems supporting a wealth of mellowing fruit and their glorious crowns of leaves giving the grateful shade which the young coffee-tree requires. The open road then merged into a roughly-paved street bordered by walls covered with flowering creepers, and overtopped here and there by flaming heads of poinsettia, which here grows almost a tree in size. Just before entering the half-ruined city we passed a group of women filling their great earthen “tinajas” with water at a picturesque old fountain, and lingering in the sweet evening light to gossip with their neighbours and stare at us as we passed.

Gorgonio led us to our hotel through long streets paved with cobble-stones, and between high walls, which, of old, enclosed well-kept convent gardens, now in ruins and unkempt, but still sweet with the scent of orange-blossom and other flowers. Sometimes through a gateway one caught a glimpse of palm-trees and bananas, bowers of yellow and white roses, peach-trees in full bloom, great bunches of crimson hibiscus, and over all a tangle of yellow jasmine and bignonia. I must own that a great longing came over me to rest here in this dilapidated old town, with its balmy delicious climate and lovely skies, its exquisite views and charming wildernesses of gardens, and here, far from the noise and bustle of steamships and railways, to live the life of Arcady!

CHAPTER IV. ANTIGUA.

My dreams faded away for a time when we reached the Hotel Rojas, which had been recommended to us as the best in Antigua. Probably it is the best, but it certainly is very bad. The rooms are small and ill-kept, and the dreadfully dirty maids seemed to consider their duty done when they had swept the dust from our room into the corridor on which all the bedrooms opened, and thrown the bath-water across the corridor into the courtyard beyond.

The table was provided with an abundance of beef, poultry, fresh eggs, vegetables, and fruits; but it was untidy beyond description, and almost all the food was ruined in the cooking by a too free use of greasy lard. However, it was evidently the style of cooking most appreciated in Antigua, for numbers of townspeople as well as travellers took their meals at the hotel, the “comedor” was seldom deserted, and the dirty attendants were kept at work from before six in the morning until after ten o’clock at night. Our tempers were not improved by being obliged to eat with, or after, so many people, whose methods of feeding were not the nicest. However, the Hotel Rojas, with all its drawbacks, was the best we came across during our travels in the Republic.

When once outside the house, the charm of the surroundings banished all thoughts of discomfort from our minds. The climate seemed to be absolutely perfect, and the brilliant blue sky, the bright sun, shaded now and again by the fleecy clouds one associates with a trade wind, the temperature never

too hot or too cold, and the delicious freshness in the air stirred by gentle breezes, all together produced in me a feeling of exhilaration I never thought to experience in a tropical country. It all sounds too good to be true, but it is no exaggerated description of the climate as we found it. The situation of the city, too, is beautiful. It stands over 5000 feet above the sea-level on the north side of a plain surrounded by bold hills and towering volcanoes, and there appears to the eye to be only one gap in this circle of hills, where the slopes of Agua and Fuego overlap, and through this gap the road passes down to the Pacific coast. A few miles distant along this road are the remains of the Ciudad Vieja, once the capital of the country, for the city of Santiago, as the capital of Guatemala has always been named, has passed through many vicissitudes and changes of location.



ANTIGUA AND THE VOLCAN DE AGUA.

Early in the year 1524 Pedro de Alvarado entered the country from Mexico, and after subduing the Quichés

and other powerful Indian tribes, led his conquering army of Spaniards and Mexican auxiliaries to Patinamit or Iximché, the stronghold of the Cachiquels; and here, on St. James's day, 25th July, 1524, the solemn ceremony of founding a city and dedicating it to Santiago, the patron saint of Spain, took place, and the first municipal officers were nominated.

On this first site, however, the city can hardly be said to have had any real existence, for Alvarado and his captains were too much occupied with expeditions against Indian tribes in distant parts of the country to be able to give any attention to the building of a city, and the Cachiquels themselves rose again and again in revolt.

In the year 1527 the Cabildo, or Municipality of Santiago, met in the plain of Almolonga to decide on a permanent location for the city, and chose a site on the edge of the plain at the foot of the south-west slope of the Volcan de Agua. During the following year this new Santiago (now the Ciudad Vieja) was declared to be the capital of the province, and began rapidly to rise in importance.

Meanwhile the restless Alvarado had journeyed to Mexico and Spain, and the government of the province was left to others. In 1530 he returned to Guatemala with the full powers and title of Adelantado, and again took the direction of affairs; but the government of an already-conquered province did not satisfy his ambition, and with his mind bent on new and greater exploits he built a fleet with the intention of setting sail for the Spice Islands. From this project he was turned by the news of the marvellous successes of Pizarro in the south, and in 1534 he sailed on his ill-fated expedition to

Peru. Within a year he was back again in Guatemala, and then, after another visit to Spain, he finally met his death on the 4th July, 1541, through an accident, whilst endeavouring to quell a local revolt in Mexico.

When the news of his death reached Guatemala (at the end of August) mourning was universal, and his widow Doña Beatriz de la Cueva was beside herself with grief. At the meeting of the Cabildo, the unusual step was taken of electing Doña Beatriz as governor in her late husband's place, and the unfortunate lady signed her name in the books of the Cabildo on Friday the 9th September, with the prophetic additions of "la sin ventura," the hapless one. It had been an unusually wet season, and from Thursday the 8th the rain fell without ceasing, and the gale was violent until Saturday the 10th, when soon after dark a flood of water and liquid mud, carrying with it huge boulders and uprooted trees, rushed down the mountain side and overwhelmed the town. The hapless one and her maidens were buried under the ruins of the chapel where they had taken refuge, and thirty or forty Spaniards and some hundreds of Indians shared a like fate.

The cause of this catastrophe is usually said to have been the bursting of the side of a lake which had been formed in the crater of the extinct Volcan de Agua; but an examination of the crater shows this explanation to be improbable, as the break in the crater-wall is in an opposite direction, and no water flowing from it could have reached the town. Moreover, there is no evidence to show that the deeper portion of the crater, which is still intact, has held water since the reported outbreak. Indeed, an accumulation of water during the exceptionally heavy rain, through some temporary obstruction in

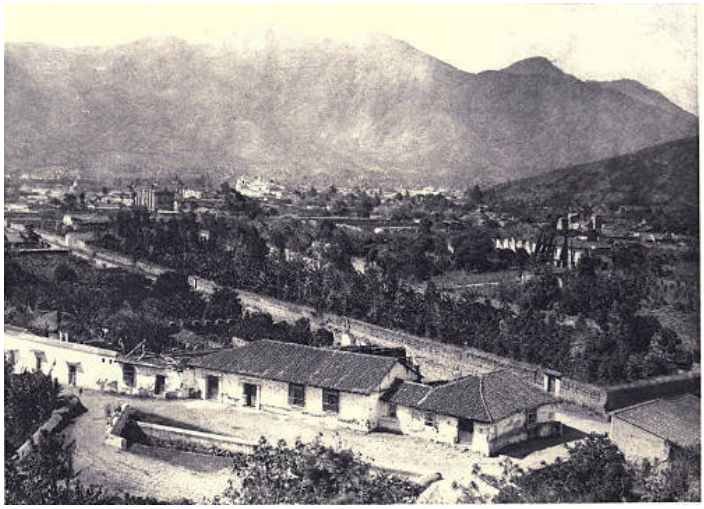
one of the deep worn gullies which indent the beautiful slope of that great mountain, and a subsequent landslip would probably account for the damage done without the aid of either an eruption of water from the crater or the supernatural appearances which are duly noted by the old chroniclers.

Again the Cabildo of the Ciudad de Santiago had to meet and decide on a more suitable position for their city, and the choice fell on the site of the present city of Antigua, on the other side of the plain and a few miles distant from the base of the treacherous mountain. There the town grew and flourished, and the half-ruined churches, convents, and public buildings still attest its former magnificence.

In this volcanic region a year seldom or never passes without the shocks of earthquake being felt, and eruptions are not of rare occurrence, but in the beginning of the eighteenth century the great peak of Fuego, which forms such a beautiful feature in the view from the city, was more than usually active. Eruptions and earthquakes followed in quick succession, and in the year 1717 the continual shocks laid the city in ruins. However, the damage was repaired again, and the city increased in prosperity; but from 1751 to 1773 earthquakes again wrought terrible havoc, and in July of the last year the Cathedral was shattered and every church and house in the city damaged or destroyed.

Then in 1774 the Cabildo finally moved its home to the present site of the city of Guatemala. This last change was not altogether a popular measure, and the Archbishop and the clergy strongly opposed the removal; but the principal laymen were in its favour, partly influenced, so says tradition, by the heavy

liens which the numerous ecclesiastical bodies held on their property in the old city. The poorer people, when they had once recovered from their fright, were content to stay until oppressive laws were enacted to compel them to leave their old homes. Backed by official influence the new city rose in dignity and wealth; but Antigua, as the old town is now called, was never altogether deserted, and although now not more than half alive, is increasing somewhat both in wealth and importance. Religious services continue to be held in the one or two churches which have escaped the wreck, but the greater number of churches and nearly all the monastic buildings are roofless and crumbling into ruin. Others which still afford some shelter are used as cartsheds or blacksmiths' shops, and one has been converted into a large furniture factory.



ANTIGUA.

The destruction which began by the convulsions of nature is being completed by her slower processes.

Trees are growing inside the buildings, and smaller plants find foothold in every crack and cranny, whilst into the surfaces of the rubble and adobe walls innumerable bees bore holes in which to deposit their eggs and thus prepare the way for further destruction from the heavy rains. The best place to see the bees at work is on the sunny side of one of the high “tapias” or mud walls which enclose the gardens and coffee fincas, where they may be sometimes seen poising on their rapidly moving wings and darting in and out of their holes in such numbers as to give the appearance of a mist over the surface of the wall.

These walls, I am told, were of greater use formerly than they are now, for it is only of late years that coffee has been cultivated on this plain; in earlier times the preparation of cochineal was the chief industry, and where coffee-trees are now growing there formerly stood rows of nopal cactus on which the cochineal insect lived. This white fluffy-looking creature, which exudes a drop of crimson fluid when crushed, could not survive the wet season without protection, so a framework of rough sticks, divided into many compartments like a plate-rack, was arranged under shelter all along the garden walls, and in each of these compartments one of the flat branches of the nopal cactus was lodged before the rains began, bearing a number of cochineal insects sufficient to repopulate the whole plant as soon as the dry weather came round again. The value of this crop disappeared with the introduction of aniline dyes and the successful cultivation of cochineal in the Canary Islands, and the coffee-plant then took the place of the cactus and has again brought some measure of prosperity to the planters. But even now the situation is not altogether satisfactory, for the

trees on the plain have more than once been cut down to the roots by frost, although, curiously enough, those planted on the hillsides have escaped damage.

There is little to remind one of the modern world in Antigua, it is in all respects a charming old-world place, with long narrow streets, low white houses, charming patios, and a fine plaza. The view across the plaza with its background of mountains is always attractive, and during market-time on Saturday it is brilliant and picturesque.

We were fortunately in the town during the celebration of the "fiesta de Reyes," which commemorates the visit of the three kings from the East to the cradle at Bethlehem. We saw nothing of any function in the churches, although such no doubt took place, but contented ourselves by watching the streams of people in the streets and the great market in the plaza, which was crowded with Indians and ladinos. The Indian women were seated on the ground shaded by big square umbrellas made of matting tilted at every angle, and their wares were heaped up in big baskets or spread on mats around them.

Pottery, mats, fruits, and vegetables of wonderful variety and colour, in fact everything that is made or grows in the land was offered for sale. New arrivals continually added to the store of produce, and heavily burdened Indians picked their way through the crowd until they could find a clear space where to deposit their loads of black charcoal and golden maize; whilst in the stalls at one end of the plaza the ladinos offered for sale cutlery, saddlery, and dress materials, both native and imported. To this festival all the Indians in the neighbourhood come dressed in

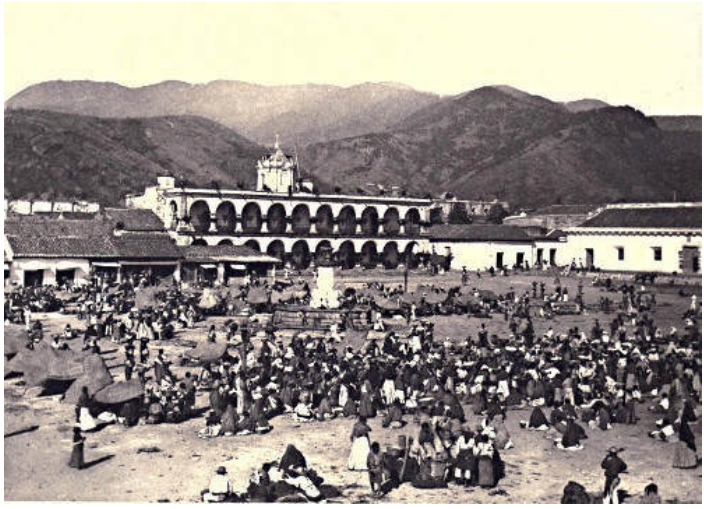
the costume peculiar to their village or clan, and each village sends a deputation, headed by a very solemn-looking alcalde, to offer prayers at some favourite shrine and to pay a visit of ceremony to the Jefe Político, or Chief Magistrate.

The Alcaldes were dressed in white trousers and round jackets of coarse coloured home-spun cloth, and they wore white or more often black straw hats with black velvet bands adorned with small black spangles.



AN ALCALDE.

The costumes of the different villages varied considerably. Those who came from the slopes of Agua wore the smallest amount of clothing, consisting only of a loose cotton shirt and drawers of black woollen cloth reaching halfway down the thigh, whilst the men from the Lake region were quite elaborately dressed, with the bands of their black straw hats sparkling with spangles—always, I believe, a sign of wealth and importance—and beneath their hats they wore red and white cotton handkerchiefs wound round their heads. Their black or striped woollen jackets were woven or embroidered down the front in pretty designs, a striped cotton belt or sash was wound round the waist, and the short black woollen trousers, which reached just below the knee, were embroidered on the seams with coloured threads, and left open halfway up the sides to show the white cotton drawers beneath. All, of course, wore leather sandals.



THE PLAZA, ANTIGUA.

The “huipils,” or loose cotton blouses worn by the Indian women, were much more richly embroidered than any we had seen at the Capital, and with their bright-coloured “enaguas” make up an effective costume. This enagua or skirt is usually a cotton cloth about a yard in width wrapped round the body and reaching from the waist to below the knee, but its simplicity has given way in some Indian villages to a more Europeanized form of skirt pleated at the top.

The ladino women of the poorer class were dressed in full skirts of printed cotton or coarse muslin, which just cleared the ground, aprons woven in the country, with stripes of brilliant colour, white bodices cut low in the neck and leaving their pretty brown arms bare, and most of them carried a long striped shawl, also a native product, thrown over the head or flung loosely round the shoulders. The ladino women higher in the social scale add nothing to the picturesqueness of the groups, for they affect trailing skirts, ill-cut bodices, or any other bad imitations of the fashion of the day.

An Indian baby slung in a shawl over its mother’s back is a delightfully grotesque mite; but what charmed me most were the little girls about eighteen inches high, just able to toddle by their mothers’ sides, who were miniature copies of their mothers in dress and appearance. They seemed to be contented little things, and we never saw a child roughly treated throughout our journey.

The more I saw of Antigua the greater the longing grew to settle there, and to surround myself with a garden. The picturesque ruin of the buildings and garden walls already garlanded with flowers and ferns fascinated me, and in imagination I revelled in

the glories of bower and blossom which taste and care might achieve, and the thought of dreaming away one's days in such a perfect climate surrounded by so much loveliness was strangely enticing. The rides and walks immediately around the city are delightful, no barrancas bar the way, and the two great volcanoes with their ever-changing colour and fleecy mantles of shifting cloud are a constant source of delight. Alas! we had but little time to spare for sauntering rides and woodland rambles, for with true northern energy we had set our hearts on making the ascent of Agua, and sleeping a night in the crater.

CHAPTER V. THE VOLCANOES.



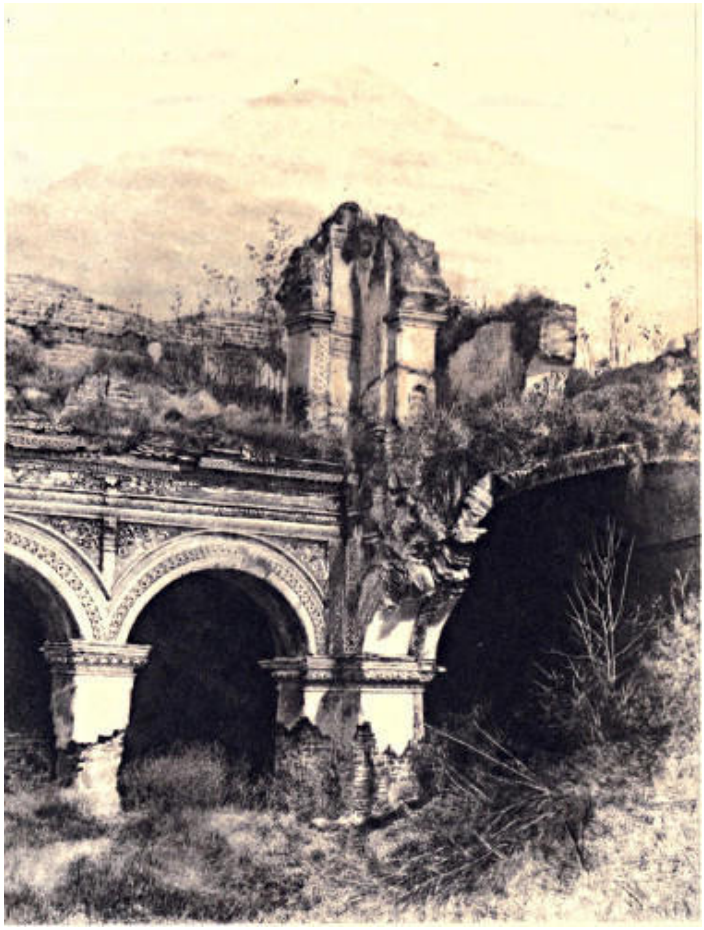
AGUA FROM SANTA MARIA.

On the afternoon of the 8th of January we started with all our men and mules, carrying bed, tent,

canteen, and provisions, for the Indian village of Santa Maria, about three leagues distant on the slope of the volcano.

Our road lay through the streets of the old town, past ruined churches and half-neglected convent-gardens, then through an alameda with a beautiful avenue of ficus trees whose branches met overhead, to a picturesque old fountain at the southern outskirts of the town, where the country people were resting and watering their beasts. Here we, too, came to a halt, more to gratify the social instincts of our mules than for any other reason.

After leaving the fountain we began the very gradual ascent of the lower slope of the mountain, and at each turn in the road our eyes were charmed by lovely glimpses over coffee fincas and gardens full of flowers and flowering trees to the white walls and church towers of the old town below us slightly veiled in a summer mist.



ANTIGUA. A RUINED CHURCH.

We passed a village with a massive white church and stone-flagged plaza, and then on again through Indian gardens of coffee-trees and bananas and great spreading Jocote trees, bare of leaves, but laden with the yellow and crimson fruit with which the Indian flavours his favourite intoxicating chicha.

As we slowly rode into Santa Maria the shadows of

evening were falling, and out of the great stillness the sound of bells ringing the “oracion” rose from the distant villages of the plain, bringing with it that indescribably peaceful mood which penetrates the soul of the wanderer in whatever clime, when the labour of the day is done and he hears the call of the faithful to prayer. Passing through a miserably dirty village street, we entered by a pretentious gate into the great bare plaza. A huge ugly church faced us, and to the left stretched the long low cabildo. The other two sides of the plaza were intended to be closed in by high walls, and by the gateway through which we had entered; but these were additions which the Indian mind clearly deemed superfluous, for the gateway was without a gate, half the west wall had fallen down, and the south wall had not been built. Outside this great square the town was almost wholly composed of thatch-roofed native huts.

The life of the village centered round the fountain which stood in the middle of the plaza. Here party after party of women with babies slung on their backs or astride on their hips, and strings of children running at their heels, came to fill their “tinajas” and carry home the water for the night’s consumption. The habit of carrying heavy burdens on their heads gives them a good bearing and a free gait, which is the only attraction they possess, for a dirtier or more hideously ugly female population it would be difficult to find. There is, however, this to be said for them, that they were sober and could attend to their household duties, whilst the men almost without exception were drunk with chicha; and my husband and Gorgonio, both of whom had been here several times before, assured me that they had always found them in the same condition.

The Alcalde at Antigua had kindly recommended us by letter to the ladino “Secretario” of the village (the official appointed by the government to keep the Indian Alcalde and his subordinates in the straight path), who showed us every possible attention, placed the Sala Municipal entirely at our disposal, and, most important of all, promised us that Indian carriers should be ready to accompany us on the morrow.

The Cabildo was really a sound good building, and the apartment allotted to us was sumptuously furnished with two or three large tables, a cupboard containing the Municipal papers, several chairs of doubtful strength, and a strong box holding the public monies. We considered ourselves vastly well accommodated, with plenty of room to stretch out our beds, and a table upon which to eat the supper which our men were preparing for us over a fire they had made in the plaza.

The only person who looked unhappy was the old Indian who had charge of the public treasure; he glanced at us askance and every few minutes would enter the room and walk up to the chest to see that it was all right, until finally he spread his mat right across the doorway, so that no one could enter, and lay down to sleep. We were glad to turn in ourselves and to close the windows and doors, which shielded us from the unpleasantly close proximity of a party of travelling Indian merchants who had taken up their quarters for the night in the verandah.

It was in the early glimmer of dawn when we were awakened by the movements of our neighbours, who shouldered their cacastes and set out thus betimes on their journey. So, following their good example, we folded up our beds and prepared for an early start,

hoping to reach the summit of Agua by noon. But, as usual, the cargadores who had been summoned by the public crier the night before failed to appear—some sent excuses, some arrived late, and others did not come at all, and nearly all the precious cool hours of the morning had slipped away before the Secretario had caught the truants, who were already half drunk, and the burdens had been arranged to suit their tastes. The tent-poles were vehemently protested against by the man selected to carry them, and I must own that my sympathies were with him, for he was a diminutive specimen of a race short in stature, and the tent-poles were five feet long. I longed to be able to sketch our cargadores as they shouldered their loads and trotted off up the mountain, each with his head tied up in a dirty red handkerchief, his long knife or machete in hand, and a packet of tortillas and a gourd full of chicha made fast to his cargo.

It is a long gradual ascent of about 5000 feet to the summit. The path has been well made and nowhere are the grades uncomfortably steep. The day was lovely, in the open places a cool breeze fanned us, and in the shelter of the woods no breeze was needed for the temperature was perfect.

At first our path lay through scrubby woods of recent growth, and then through cornfields and through peach-orchards with the trees in full bloom, and higher still we rode through patches of potatoes planted beneath the shade of the forest trees. Elder bushes full of powdery white blossoms reminded us of home; on either side of the way the banks were bordered by masses of flowers and ferns and charming green things of various kinds. There were great natural plantations of sunflowers and scarlet

salvias, wild geraniums, fuchsias, and cranes' bills, and other innumerable small and bright blossoms nestled away amongst the ferns and foliage.

The many windings of the path brought us continually in sight of charming bits of scenery. Sometimes the mass of Fuego loomed up in front of us, framed by branches of trees and exhibiting the usual display of varying cloud effects, then again the eye rested on the glistening white houses of Antigua, and as we rose higher other and more distant towns and villages came into view.

The path would have indeed been good but for the activity of the "taltusas" or gophers (*Geomys hispidius*), who had so undermined it as to make it positively dangerous. Into the numerous hidden pitfalls horse and mules continually floundered with much discomfort and some danger to the riders. Twice I saw our boy Caralampio pitched right over his mule's head, the mule losing both his fore legs in a burrow, but luckily both boy and mule escaped unhurt. My mule, with singular cleverness and care, avoided every hole and suspicious-looking place, whilst the horse, with equally exceptional stupidity, floundered into them all. On one occasion, choosing for the performance the steepest and narrowest place in the path, right on the edge of a precipice, he managed, first to lose his fore legs in a burrow, and nearly to crush his rider's leg against a projecting rock, then in struggling out to lose both his hind legs in another burrow, and to finish up by falling over backwards. My mule, who was following close behind, seeing horse and rider rolling down the hill together, whipped suddenly round, and started off at a more lively pace than I was accustomed to. Luckily Gorgonio, ever on the alert, caught at her bridle as

she passed him, and no more damage was done beyond the breaking of the bit. My husband was soon on his feet again unhurt, and so was the horse, and we were all heartily thankful to have escaped what might so easily have been a serious accident.

We next passed through a belt of large velvety-leaved trees (*Cheirostemon platanoides*); when we were rather more than halfway to the summit, deciduous trees and flowering shrubs came to an end, and we found ourselves amongst rough grass and pine-trees in the region of frost. Here, along the shady side of the path, one could see small cave-like recesses cut in the hillside, which have a curious origin. The sloping surface of the soil is saturated with moisture slowly draining down the mountain-side, continually renewed by the clouds and mist which are ever gathering round the summit; every night this moisture is congealed into myriads of minute elongated crystals, which are so closely mixed with the disintegrated surface of the soil, that they almost escape notice. This mixture of earth and ice the Indians scoop out of these shady nooks and make into packages weighing about 170 lbs. each, neatly wrapped up in the coarse mountain grass, and one of these heavy packages an Indian will carry on his back for sale in Antigua or Escuintla; but now the manufacture of artificial ice is putting an end to his trade, and in another generation it will be extinct. In order to collect a sufficient quantity of this ice the Indians have to begin their work before sunrise, for although the sun does not actually shine on these hidden beds of crystals, the warmth of the day considerably diminishes the supply.

Our road zigzagged up the N.E. side of the mountain, and shortly after entering this region of frost we

were enveloped in a cloud of mist, which shrouded us until the sun set. All the beauty went out of the evening; the air grew cold and damp, and as we neared the top, the altitude took effect on my lungs. Although I would have preferred to trust to my own feet on the difficult and almost dangerous path, I was wholly unable to do so, and had to sit my panting mule until we reached the lip of the crater, where I was obliged to dismount and scramble down on foot to the level ground at the bottom. With the exception of the one break in the rim through which we had clambered, the rugged and precipitous sides of the crater rose to a height of 300 feet all around us, and it would be difficult to imagine a gloomier or more inhospitable scene than this great dreary grass-grown bowl presented to our eyes in the waning light.

The Indians soon heaped together a good supply of pine logs and lighted large fires. The tent was hastily put up, and we worked hard to make ourselves comfortable before dark. The task was, however, only half-completed when the sun set, and the great black pall of night covered us, bringing a darkness that could be felt, which the fires seemed only to intensify. However, half an hour later the mist cleared away, and one by one the stars came out, clear and sparkling in the blue-black sky. Venus and a young crescent moon hung for a brief moment very near together on the edge of the crater and then left the black abyss colder and darker than before.

Hoping to divert my thoughts from this heavy darkness, which oppressed me almost to the point of physical pain, I turned my attention to the fire and my duties as cook. But here I met with an unexpected difficulty, for owing to the altitude everything boiled at a ridiculously low temperature,

and the curried fowl I put on to cook spluttered and frizzled long before it was half-heated through; and although I put it back time after time, owing to the rapidity with which it boiled on the underside and cooled down on the upperside, we got no more than a comfortless and half-cold supper after all. Supper over, there was nothing left to do but to go to bed, and wrapping ourselves in all the rugs and coats we possessed, we tried to forget the cold and general discomfort in sleep, but our efforts were in vain. The temperature fell lower and lower, icy gusts of wind flew shuddering past the tent, shaking the canvas and stretching every rope, leaving an oppressive stillness behind almost more alarming than the blasts themselves. At such moments one's nerves, already at full tension, became unmanageable, and one's mind conjured up fantastical pictures and forebodings of danger from the treacherous nature of the mountain to whose mercies we had confided ourselves: a mountain which I knew well enough, in the daytime, had not been in eruption within the memory of man. But perhaps the most uncomfortable feeling of all was the difficulty in breathing, and the unusual gasping sensation following the least change of position.

The Indians' habit of early rising was on this occasion a source of joy to me, and long before daylight the terrible freezing monotony of the night was broken by the sound of voices and the heaping together of the smouldering logs; it was a moment of joy when Gorgonio appeared with hot coffee and bread.

We were anxious to lose none of the beauty of the sunrise, and as soon as possible we began to climb the rough sides of the crater, a task involving many

pauses and great expenditure of breath; indeed so painful was the effort to expand one's lungs, that at times one felt inclined to give up all further exertion. Gradually, however, the strain relaxed, and by the time we had reached the ridge we breathed normally, inhaling refreshing draughts of the purest and most invigorating air, and feeling fit for any further amount of scrambling.

Arduous as was the task of ascending to the rim of the crater it was as nothing compared with the difficulty now before me of attempting to describe the beauty of the scene on which we gazed. The world lay still asleep, but just stirring to shake off the blue-grey robe of night which had thrown its soft misty folds over lakes and valleys. A magnificent panorama of mountain-peaks floated out of the mist, east and west and north, whilst to the south a grey hazy plain stretched away until it was lost in the mists of the ocean. Following the line of the coast the great bulwark of volcanic cones stood shoulder to shoulder, and in the far east we could just catch the faint red light from the active crater of Izalco in Salvador reflected on the morning sky. One by one the lofty peaks caught a pink glow from the coming sun, and as the mists rolled away we could see the pretty lake of Amatitlan nestled amongst the hills and the sleeping hamlets dotted over the plains. Very near to us on the west towered the beautiful volcano of Fuego, still clothed in the softest blue mist. As the sun rose clear and bright we beheld a sight so interesting and beautiful that it alone would have repaid us for the miseries of the night, for at that moment a ghost-like shadowy dark blue mountain rose high above all the others, and as we gazed wondering what this spectral visitor might mean, we saw that it was the shadow of Agua itself projected

on the atmosphere, which moved as the sun rose higher and gradually sank until it lay a clear-cut black triangle against the slopes of Fuego. It was an entrancingly beautiful sight, and strange as it was beautiful. As the sun rose higher in the heavens and warmed the air we lay resting and basking in its light on soft beds of grass, marvelling in careless fashion over the wonderful changes we had witnessed, the contrast between the profoundly dark and tragic night and the laughing merry day, and we rejoiced that we had come to see the varying moods of nature at such an altitude.

Then we had a glorious scramble right round the edge of the crater, the highest point of which, as measured by Dr. Sapper, is 12,140 feet above sea-level; at last, regretfully tearing ourselves away from scenes of so much loveliness, we plunged down again to where our tent stood in the sunless crater in the middle of a grassy plain about one hundred and fifty yards across. Here we found Gorgonio occupied in thawing the coffee, which had frozen solid in the bottle since our early breakfast time. We were soon *en route* for Santa Maria, and I noticed a certain readiness amongst the Indians as well as our own men to escape from the crater, where we had passed so gloomy a night. Mindful of the holes and pitfalls in the path, we preferred to risk nothing, and walk the six miles to the village. On our way down we passed some of the Indian ice-gatherers staggering under their heavy burdens. It was past noon when we arrived at Santa Maria, and after a few hours' rest we mounted our mules and rode on in the cool of the afternoon, and reached Antigua before dark.



NOTE (by A. P. M.).—I had made two ascents of Agua previous to the expedition just described by my wife. The first was in January 1881, when I walked from Santa Maria to the crater and back in the day (for the mule-path had not yet been made), arriving at the summit at about 10 o'clock; on the way up I had passed through a belt of cloud which thickened and spread until the whole country seemed to be covered up with it. The sun was shining in a brilliantly blue sky overhead, and the top of the mountain stood out perfectly clear, like an island in a silver sea. It was an exquisitely beautiful sight looking down on the great mass of sunlit billows stretching to the horizon, but it was not what I had come to see, so after waiting for four hours I packed up my camera and compass and marched down again.

On New Year's day, 1882, I climbed up Agua again, and as it was fortunately a clear day I took a round of angles and some photographs.

During the next few days I made the acquaintance of Dr. Otto Stoll, who was then practicing medicine in

Antigua, and collecting the valuable notes on the Indian languages which he has since published, and, to my great delight, I learnt that he wished to make the ascent of Fuego; so we arranged to start the very next day for the village of Alotenango. On the 7th January we left that village about 7 o'clock in the morning with seven Mozos, carrying food, clothing, and my camp-bed, and rode for an hour towards the mountains, when we dismounted and sent back our mules. The first two hours' climb was not so very steep, but it was tiring work walking over the loose mould and dry leaves under the thick forest. At 10 A.M. we stopped an hour for breakfast. Dr. Stoll was in very bad training, as he had been suffering from fever, and it needed all his pluck to face the hill at all. Then we recommenced our climb under shadow of the forest by a steep path cut through the undergrowth. At the height of about 9500 feet we, for the first time since starting, got a sight of the peak rising on the other side of a deep ravine. The whole of the slope on which we looked was bare of vegetation, and presented to the eye nothing but desolate slopes of ashes and scoriæ broken higher up with patches of burnt rock; we scrambled on through the thick undergrowth, often with loose earth under foot, and by degrees the vegetation changed and we got amongst the pine-trees. At about 11,200 feet we came to a spot where the earth had been levelled for a few yards by the Indians, and there we determined to pass the night. I put up my bed, and the Mozos arranged a fence of pine-boughs to break the force of the wind, and collected wood for a fire. As we were all snug by about half-past four, I scrambled up a little higher to see what sort of view I could get of the Meseta and cone for a photograph, and then returned and watched the reflection of the sunset

over the more distant peaks and against the perfect cone of Agua. It was a most beautiful sight, but the cold which followed the sunset soon took all our attention, and when I had turned into bed I had on three jerseys, two flannel shirts, and a loose knitted waistcoat under my cloth clothes, and my rug double all over; yet I felt the cold intensely, and poor Stoll, who was even better wrapped up than I was, was shivering, so we pulled down the waterproof sheet which we had rigged overhead and put it over both of us; still I was frequently awakened by the cold, and Stoll got, I fear, no sleep at all. The Mozos rolled up in their ponchos, with their toes to the fire, seemed to endure the cold much better than we did. We turned out of our shelter at about half-past four in the morning, and felt all the better after drinking hot coffee; we then sat for an hour watching a most beautiful dawn and sunrise. At the opposite side of the valley rose the Volcano of Agua, sloping on one side to the plain of Antigua, and on the other in a long unbroken sweep to the sea, more than forty miles away. Peak after peak stood out against the red light into the far distance, and on the right the low coast-line and the sea showed up very clearly.

As soon as the sun was up we started for the summit. I stopped on the way to get a photograph of the cone, which lay to the left of us as we ascended; but the clouds came over just as I was ready, and I had to give it up. A little over 12,000 feet we left the scraggy pine-trees and arrived at the northern end of a cinder ridge, called the Meseta, which is at the summit of the slope we had been climbing. To the north of us, on the other side of a deep rift, rose the distant cone of Acatenango, the highest of the three peaks of the mountain, covered with sparsely scattered pine-trees almost to the top; to the south,

half a mile distant at the other end of the Meseta, rose the active cone of Fuego.



THE FIRE PEAK AND MESETA.

West from the Meseta was a most lovely view over a wooded valley, broken by cultivation, and dotted with villages to the slopes of Atitlan, the nearest to us of the long line of volcanoes which follows the coast-line and sweep in long wooded stretches to the sea. On the land side the slope of Atitlan dipped into the great lake which sparkled below us in the sunlight. Beyond the lake ridge after ridge rose abruptly in the distance. The wind came bitterly cold over us as we stopped to look at the view, and every now and again the clouds shut everything from our sight; the Mozos huddled together under tufts of coarse grass, and, as we had been warned, refused to go any further. So we set out along the cinder ridge of the Meseta alone; it was just broad enough to walk along in safety, but a fall on the east side would have sent one headlong down a precipice, or on the west side sliding down steep cinder slopes, broken by smoking holes like half-formed craters, into the black forest-covered gullies below.





PEAK OF ACATENANGO, FROM THE MESETA.

In a very high wind it would be impassable; as it was I only lost first one and then the other of my (double) Terai felt hats, whirled off my head by the sudden gusts. At the end of this ridge we came to the actual cone, more than 400 feet high, formed of small loose cinders and scoriæ, as steep as the roof of a house. It was a terribly hard pull up. With the help of a strong stick, and often by using my hands and with many rests on the way, I at last reached some lava rocks where there was good foothold. Stoll was so weak from his fever that two or three times he told me that he must give up, but when he saw me getting on in front of him he plucked up courage and came on again. I had thought the ridge of rocks was round the crater itself, but after scrambling up them I found that there was still 40 or 50 feet above me of steep cinder slope, which luckily proved to be harder and gave better foothold than what we had already passed. Up this I climbed, and at the very top of the peak looked over into the crater on the sea-side. It was a hole about a hundred feet deep, almost surrounded by broken jagged and smoking rocks covered with sulphurous deposit and falling away on the further side to greater depths which projecting walls of rock hid from my view. I went back down to

the ridge of rocks I had passed and shouted encouragement to Stoll, who was pluckily struggling on. Fortunately for me I suffered from none of the headache and heart-beating which had troubled me on the top of Agua the week before. Perhaps the most curious thing about the mountain is the fact that it rises quite regularly and gradually to a sharp point, on which the two of us could sit and get an uninterrupted view all round.

Once at the top Stoll was more venturesome than I, and induced me to follow him round the smoking edge of the crater to a projecting rock, a few yards to the left, but we did not greatly improve our view. The fumes from the crater were not very pleasant, but luckily the wind was in our favour. After a short rest on the summit we returned to the Meseta, shooting down the cinder slope as if it were snow, somewhat to the damage of our boots.

We got back to our camping-place about 11 o'clock, and after a good breakfast, started for the descent, and reached Alotenango between 4 and 5 o'clock in the afternoon.

CHAPTER VI. THE ROAD TO GODINES.

We left Antigua on the morning of the 12th January. Just as we were ready to ride out of the Patio our landlord approached me, carrying in his hand a hideous toy parrot, sitting in a swing, with staring red eyes and scanty green feathers glued on its back.

This he solemnly presented to me with many bows and wishes for a “buen viaje.” I felt bound to show my appreciation by hanging the thing to my saddle, sincerely hoping that it would soon be jolted off; but no such luck attended me, and there the bird hung dangling against the mule as we rode through the town. As soon as we were well out of sight I offered my prize to a group of children playing by the roadside; but they all fled away, and it was some time before I met a child who could be tempted to rid me of the gift.

After riding a mile or two along a road bordered by cottages bosomed in fruit trees we rose to a bleak tableland. It was one of the very few days of unpleasant weather which we experienced during the whole of our journey; a fierce wind raised clouds of dust and rustled through the ugly dry “rastrojos,” or stubbles of Indian corn, which covered the plain. We passed through the little Indian town of Zaragoza, chiefly noted for the manufacture of “aparejos,” the native pack-saddles. I have been told that the Indians here have such a liking for dried alligator meat as a lenten fare that the vendors of that highly-perfumed delicacy have to be locked up in the “cárcel” for protection and sell the meat through the prison bars. The streets were full of gaily-dressed people assembled for a fiesta, and dancing was going on in a shed, to the monotonous sound of a marimba. We were not tempted to loiter for long, and rode on again over the dull plain to the ugly and uninteresting town of Chimaltenango, where we proposed to spend the night. The hotel was dirty and the bedrooms so unpleasant that we would have none of them, and sent Gorgonio to hunt for an empty room in which we could put up our own beds. This he found in a “meson,” or caravanserai,

attached to the hotel, where there was a good-sized room and a rough kitchen opening on a patio in which we could turn the beasts loose for the night. A sprinkling with water, a good sweeping, and a free use of Keating's powder, soon made the room habitable. The supper at the hotel was, however, far above the average, and the only thing to complain of was the poor forage supplied to the mules.

The weather next morning was lovely, and we made an early start. A ride of about five leagues first across the same high tableland, then through the lovely valley of La Sierra, brought us to Patzun, a town of some importance, well placed and rather picturesque. The day had been so charming that we had been tempted to dawdle much on the way in lazy enjoyment of the beauty of the woodland slopes and the views of the volcanoes, so that it was about 4 o'clock when we rode up to the inn. The accommodation offered to us was not attractive, for the bedrooms were like cupboards, airless and dark, and we were about to search in the town for an empty room, when the patrona, after much hesitation, agreed to allow us the use of the "Sala" as a bedroom; so leaving Gorgonio and the boys to clean the room out, and to try and get rid of some of the too numerous fleas, we wandered off to see the sights of the town. Our steps of course gravitated towards the Plaza, which, however, was not in itself attractive; but the groups of Indian wayfarers seated around fires, cooking their suppers or settling themselves for the night, were exceedingly picturesque. The people here are far better looking than those we had seen at Antigua and Santa Maria, and they appear to belong to a finer and stronger race, with faces less grotesque and costumes much more attractive.



The dress of the men is rather Eastern in effect, and consists of a long loose sleeveless garment woven from the undyed wool of the black sheep. It is open at the sides, is longer in the back than in front, and is usually drawn in round the waist with a belt. Loose trousers of the same material reach to the knee, and below them appear the embroidered edges of the loose white cotton drawers.

The huipils of the women are woven in stripes and brightly coloured with native dyes, and the home-made enagua of blue and white striped cotton is fastened round the waist over the huipil by a beautifully embroidered belt with hanging ends.

Every woman carries over her arm a small striped cotton shawl to throw over her bare neck and arms in the cool of the evening, and both men and women wear coloured handkerchiefs knotted round their heads. We made many efforts to buy some of the good huipils, but without success, and the women quite frightened Gorgonio by the vehemence of their indignation at being asked to sell their garments. This is hardly to be wondered at, for we learnt that their stock of clothes usually included only one huipil in the wearing and one in the loom, and it must take a long time to work the elaborate patterns in cross-stitch with which they are embroidered.



SPECIMENS OF NATIVE TEXTILES AND EMBROIDERY (No. 1)



SPECIMENS OF NATIVE TEXTILES AND EMBROIDERY (No. 2)

Whilst we were watching the groups in the Plaza our

attention was attracted by the sound of music, and three shabby-looking fat ladinos came in sight, playing violin, trombone, and drum, and heralding a procession of gaily-dressed Indians. Some of the men wearing long gowns trimmed with red, with turbans wound round their heads, bore on their shoulders a platform supporting the image of a Saint, which was being carried round the town on its way to the church, there to be deposited for the night in readiness for the fiesta on the morrow. Then followed others who may have been priests or were perhaps only officials of a “cofradia” or brotherhood, for their costumes were not orthodox priestly garments, and then a number of women dressed in clean huipils and enaguas, and wearing long white veils, with the part covering the head thickly embroidered in white silk. Each woman carried a lighted candle in her hand, wrapped round with a green canna-leaf to shade it from the wind. We followed the procession through the streets to the church, where the image was deposited, and the women (still candle in hand, but each with the canna-leaf placed on the top of her shawl, neatly folded by her side) knelt in a circle and sang a hymn before the procession dispersed.



We returned to find our room swept but hardly clean, and after a very bad supper were not sorry to turn into our comfortable camp-beds.



A BARRANCA.

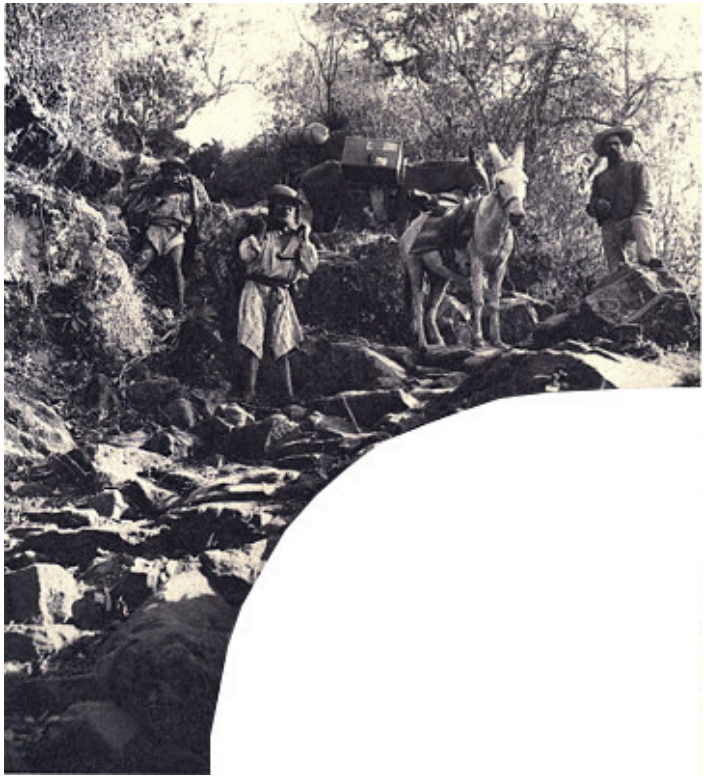
Early next morning we went on our way to Godines, and soon began the descent of a great barranca, where the path was so exceedingly steep and bad that we were glad to dismount and scramble down on foot. It was a beautiful walk, winding down through thick woods, but, alas! nearly all the trees by the roadside, within reach, had had their trunks burnt or scorched by camp-fires or been otherwise maltreated, and many of them had fallen and lay rotting where they fell. Here and there a general clearing, or “roza,” which spares nothing, was in progress, preparatory to planting corn, and it seems as though within a few years all the fine timber will have disappeared from the lake region unless some better mode of cultivation is introduced. At present the Indians merely scratch the surface of the ground with a hoe, or, on the level plains, with a primitive wooden plough, and they abandon a plantation after a few crops have been taken off of it. In the Altos, where the population is large, the cultivators have to return to their fallows after a short interval, but wherever there is woodland near at hand they attack

it recklessly, sacrificing all the timber trees without scruple. This system of shifting their cornfields has received the sanction of immemorial usage; and although I am told that the Government has repeatedly attempted to prohibit the wasteful "rozas," the local authorities are too indifferent or too partial to enforce its commands; and the conservative Indians fail to see that whilst in olden times the forest was protected by the enormous amount of labour which had to be expended in felling a tree with a stone axe, nowadays, with cheap machetes and American axes, the growth of ages disappears in a few hours.



We were three hours riding and walking through this beautiful green barranca, including a halt for breakfast, beside a charmingly clear stream, from which we gathered the freshest and crispest of watercress. Then the path made great sweeping turns up the steep side of the valley, revealing to us as we rose new and lovely views with Agua and Fuego in the distance; and early in the afternoon we arrived at Godines, where we were met by Mr. Audley Gosling, the son of the British Minister, who had ridden from Guatemala to spend a few days with us at the lake.

The village consists of a small cabildo and half-a-dozen Indian huts, and stands about two thousand feet above the lake of Atitlan; but as the rising ground to the west cuts off the view of the lake, it did not suit us as a camping-ground, so after consultation with the alcalde, we rode on in search of a more favoured spot by the roadside, where he assured us there was a good supply of water. On turning the hill the sight of the lake burst suddenly upon us, and, stopping by a wayside cross around which the Indians had strewed sweet-smelling pine-needles and floral offerings, we drank in the marvellous beauty of the view, which later on we saw in so many changing moods and learned to love so well. A further climb up the steep path brought us to a small level patch of ground, where there was room enough to pitch our tent beside a spring of water slowly oozing up into a natural basin about two feet across.



A HIGH ROAD.

The land fell away in front of us in steep slopes and precipices to the edge of the lake between two and three thousand feet below, and the view over this beautiful sheet of water, about twenty-two miles long and twelve miles broad, with its background of grand volcanoes, was one of surpassing loveliness. The conical peak of San Pedro, wooded to its summit, rose opposite to us on the far side of the lake, and to the left stood the double cones of Atitlan, the lower peak rounded and forest covered, and the higher rising above the vegetation in a perfect cinder cone. Almost all round the lake the

hills rise steeply, but here and there by the water's edge the Indians have found room for their villages, and have planted their "milpas" wherever corn will grow, often on hillsides as steep as the roof of a house. We rather reluctantly turned our backs on this lovely scene, and gave our attention to pitching the tents and sweeping and clearing the ground round the camp. The tiny pool was half full of dead leaves, rubbish, and mud, and had to be thoroughly cleaned out, when it soon filled again with an abundance of good clear water. Then the site for the kitchen was chosen, tables were unfolded, the canteen opened, and before long a kettle of soup was boiling merrily, and we enjoyed a good supper sitting out in the clear moonlight. Mr. Gosling slept in the small tent on the other side of the roadway, and the men made themselves quite comfortable behind a wall of pack-saddles and boxes, a covering of waterproof sheets, and a good supply of blankets: for at nearly eight thousand feet above the sea the nights are cold and the mornings frosty.



LAKE AND VOLCANO OF ATITLAN.

Next day we set to work to build a rough roof over the kitchen as a shade from the midday sun, to put up tables and shelves made of straight sticks bound together, and generally to make ourselves comfortable for a week's stay; and never have I enjoyed a week more thoroughly.

CHAPTER VII. THE LAKE OF ATITLAN.

Our tent was pitched so close to the precipice that even from my bed I had a grand view over the lake, and could watch the black masses of the volcanoes looming clear cut and solemn in the moonlight, or changing from black to grey in the early dawn; then a rosy flush would touch the peak of Atitlan and the light creep down its side, revealing for a brief half-hour every detail of cinder ridge and chasm on its scarred and wounded slopes, until with a sudden burst of glory the sun rose above the eastern hills to strike the mirror-like surface of the lake and flood the world with warmth and dazzling light. Every peak and mountain-ridge now stood out clear and sharp against the morning sky, and only in the shadow of the hills would a fleecy mist hang over the surface of the lake far beneath us; then, almost before the sun had power to drink up these lees of the night, from the deep gap between the hills to the south a finger of white cloud, borne up from the seaward slope, would creep round the peak of Atitlan

only to be dissipated in the cooler air; but finger followed finger, and the mysterious hand never lost its grasp until, about noon, great billowy clouds rolled up through the gap and the outpost was fairly captured, although the crater itself often stood out clear above the cloudy belt. It was not, however, until the sun began to lose its power that the real attack commenced, and the second column deployed through the gap on the southern flank of San Pedro, and then from 5 o'clock until dark there followed a scene which no pen and no brush could adequately portray. The clouds seemed to be bewitched: they came down on us in alternate black and sunlit masses, terrible in their majesty; then rolled aside to show us all the beauty of a sunset sky, tints of violet that shaded into pink, and pink that melted into the clearest blue, whilst far away beyond the mountains seaward rolled vast billowy masses, first red and yellow, and then pink, fading to the softest green. Again and again would the clouds roll down upon us, the mist at times so thick that we could not see beyond a hundred yards; then just as quickly it would roll away and reveal a completely new phase of this ever-shifting scene of beauty. It is a poor simile, but I can compare it to nothing but the falling and rising gauzes of a Christmas transformation scene, with a wealth of colour and effect that Covent Garden may despair of ever attaining. As the sun sank behind San Pedro, all turned again to dark and angry purple, with contrasts and reflections like the sheen of a shot silk. Slowly the mists melted away with the fading daylight, Venus hung for a while like a splendid jewel in the air, and the mountains turned again to shadowy masses outlined against a crystal sky.

The saucy blue jays had ceased to chatter before the

sun went down; but we were not left in silence, for as the moon, then at its full, rose above the eastern hills the whip-poor-will began its plaintive cry, the crickets chirped, bats swooped down on us, fireflies hovered among the trees, and dozens of frogs emerging from their hiding-places took possession of our pool with loud croaks of satisfaction.

Our days were spent in rides and rambles in the neighbourhood; but we always tried to get home early, so as to finish our dinner comfortably and take our seats in good time for a view of the never-failing cloud display. The air was fresh and exhilarating, although the heat at noon was that of an August day at home; but as evening came on we were always glad of extra wraps, and at night we slept under our heaviest blankets.



SUNSET, THE LAKE OF ATITLAN.

All day long travellers would pass along the road, which ran within a few feet of our tent. Sometimes it would be a party of Indian traders or carriers, their

cacastes heavily laden with earthen cooking-pots or other merchandise, or carrying on their backs bulky bundles of rugs or mats. A mozo laden with a freight of “Tinajas” (as the large-sized water-jars are called) is indeed a curious sight, for the tinajas are not heavy, and he manages to carry an extraordinary number of them skilfully tied on to the outside of his cacaste, so that a back view shows only a mountain of crockery supported by two small mahogany coloured legs, and suggests a sort of human caddis-worm. Then a party of Ladinos would come by on mule-back, the women, who were almost always smoking cigarettes, sitting on the offside of their mules and wearing long flowing riding-skirts and men’s straw hats tied under the chin with a pocket-handkerchief, the men as often as not dressed in dilapidated uniforms with the inevitable bath-towel thrown over the shoulders. Often they would call out to me to know what I could give them for breakfast, or what we had to sell, for it never entered their heads that we were camping-out for amusement, and our answers were received with visible want of faith. Once a party of men passed by carrying on their backs, or slung on poles between them, the whole paraphernalia of a village fiesta—images, wooden trestles, platforms, and arches studded with tin candle-sockets and adorned with tawdry decorations and fringed edges of coloured paper which fluttered in the wind.

The Indians would put down their loads and stop to rest under the shade of the trees and ask permission to fill their water-jars from the little pool as civilly as though we were its lawful possessors. Then they would light their fires by the roadside to heat their coffee and toast tortillas in the ashes. Sometimes they would pass the night close by our camp,

smoking and chatting for awhile after the evening meal, and then roll themselves in their blankets to enjoy a well-earned sleep.



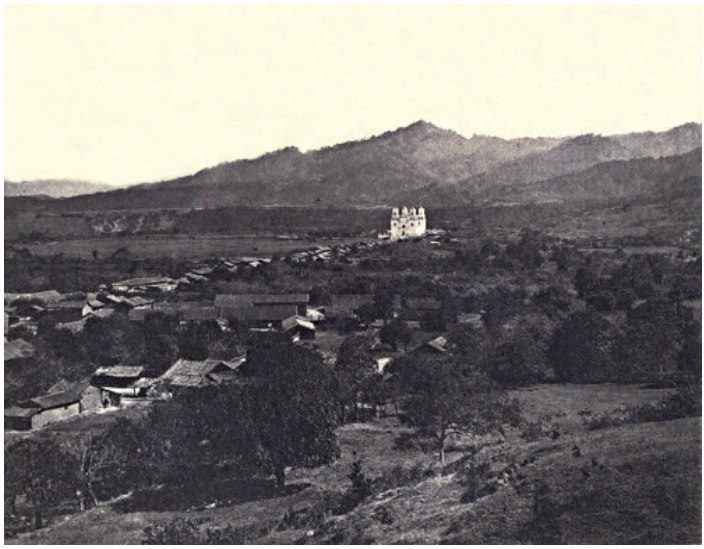
NOONDAY REST.

We made many attempts to photograph the picturesque groups, but seldom with much success, as the sitters were so restless and shy under the ordeal that they would hide their faces or move away as soon as the camera was in position, and they could only be captured by a chance snapshot. But here, as everywhere, there were exceptions to a rule, for two of our Indian visitors were so far advanced in civilization that as soon as they caught sight of the camera they promptly demanded a “medio” apiece for the privilege of taking their portraits, and insisted on payment in advance; but they seemed almost as quickly to repent of their bargain, and could only be induced to sit uneasily for a moment, and hastily made off before a second plate could be exposed. The Indians’ objection to photography is due to the fear

of “brujeria,” or witchcraft, in which they are firm believers; and after all a medio was small pay for the risk they ran of being looked at naked through their clothes or having their insides filled full of snakes.

Sometimes we were awakened before dawn by the distant sound of a boy’s shrill voice chanting a few bars of a melody, which was caught up by a chorus of men’s voices a fifth lower, and repeated again and again as the sound rapidly approached our tent, and then died away in the distance. It was the morning hymn of a company of Indian pilgrims returning from the shrine of the Black Christ at Esquipulas, which lies distant many days’ journey towards the frontier of Honduras. The great festival of the year is held in January, and then for a week or more the usually half-deserted little town of Esquipulas swarms with pilgrims. In old days its fame was so great that it attracted worshippers all the way from Mexico and Panama, and the fair which was carried on at the same time was the great commercial event of the year. Thither the English merchants from Belize brought their wares and carried on what was practically the whole of the foreign business of Honduras, Salvador, and Guatemala, taking in exchange the native-grown indigo. For some years the working of the neighbouring mines of Alotepeque helped to keep up business, but now steamships and railways have so changed the course of trade that the fair is of not more than local importance. The custom-loving Indian will, however, still cheerfully make a month’s journey, cacaste on back, to pay his adoration to the Black Christ, and the huge church is still kept in good repair, although not many years ago it was despoiled of its rich treasure of gold and silver votive offerings by a troop of Guatemala cavalry which had been sent to defend the frontier

against an attack from Salvador, and repaid itself for its patriotic services by looting one of its own churches on the way home. The Ladino troopers rode back into the capital with handkerchiefs full of little golden arms and legs tied to their saddle-bows, and freely distributed the spoil amongst their friends and admirers, who thronged the streets to give them a welcome home.



ESQUIPULAS.

During this and the following week we met many companies of pilgrims returning from Esquipulas to their villages laden with the goods they had purchased, and with a bundle of rockets tied to each man's cacaste, to be fired off in celebration of his safe return home. The pilgrims will often stop to deck the roadside crosses with flowers, branches, and green leaves, and to strew the ground around them with fresh pine-needles, and every man will pluck a green branch from a tree and strike his leg sharply

with it, so as to ensure good health on his journey. Sometimes the hill Indians when journeying down to the plains will tie a small bundle of sticks together and deposit them by the roadside, if possible near a hot spring, as a charm against fevers; and every man on leaving his home will place a marked stone in a certain position, or put one stone above another, as a test of his wife's fidelity during his absence. If the stones are untouched on his return he is satisfied; but many a poor woman must get an undeserved thrashing, as the mischievous Ladino boys delight in moving the stones when they can find them, thus ensuring a family squabble.



VOLCANO OF ATITLAN.

On Sunday, the 21st January, to my regret, we broke up our camp. Mr. Gosling said good-bye to us the night before, and started on his return journey to Guatemala before daylight; and we afterwards learned that he rode and walked the whole sixty miles of rough road in a day, arriving at the legation

about 10 o'clock in the evening, neither he nor his mule any the worse for the long journey.

We sent on our pack-mules and luggage to the town of Panajachél to await our arrival, and set out ourselves to visit the small village of San Antonio, which lay three thousand feet below us on the border of the lake. The shortest way to the village is by a precipitous path down the cliff, used daily by the Indians, but altogether impossible for mules; so we packed what we needed for the night on the backs of some Indians and sent them off by this route. We rode back ourselves through Godines, and then took the road which leads through the great gap towards the sea-coast. It was a beautiful morning, and we thoroughly enjoyed our ride through pine woods and past fields of maize and flowering aniseed. The clouds had not yet rolled up, and we had a splendid view through the gap to the rich lowlands of the Costa Grande. About six miles from Godines we left the high road and turning sharply to the right came in full view of the lake again. A solitary black storm-cloud had gathered over the surface of the water and threatened us with a drenching should it come over our way; but luckily we escaped it, and its changing tints only added to the beauty of the scene.

The narrow path zigzagged down the hill, and was so steep that we preferred to dismount and lead our mules until we reached the water's edge; then a ride of a few miles over a path scraped out of the hillside brought us in view of the little Indian town.

The walls of the queer-looking square houses are built of rough stones held together by a framework of undressed sticks, and a grass thatch covers the roof. Each house stands within a small enclosure formed by a rough stone wall or a reed-fence, and

some attempt has here and there been made to plant these enclosures with flowers; but usually the hard surface of the earth is swept bare. There are only two or three trees in all the village, and as none of the Indian houses are plastered or white-washed, the prevailing colour is a dusky brown of earth, rock, and thatch, which renders all the more striking the striped huipils of the women and the red-and-white handkerchiefs bound round the men's heads.



SAN ANTONIO.

We climbed up through the steep narrow lanes to the Cabildo, where we proposed to pass the night, and found the verandah in front of the building closely packed with Indian travellers and their cargoes. There were only two rooms—one used as a prison, which was overcrowded with delinquents, who stretched out their hands through the heavy barred door and begged for alms; the other used as a "Sala Municipal," which was both small and dirty: however, we were ready to make the best of it as a

lodging, when we were informed that, as the Secretario was away, no one could give us leave to make use of it. Somewhat discouraged, we wandered on, in search of a resting-place, past the church, roofless from the shocks of many earthquakes, and arrived at the foot of a high flight of steps, crooked and picturesque, at the top of which stood the school-house. Here was our chance: we hunted up the Ladino schoolmaster; Gorgonio and he were soon fast friends, and the room used as a girl's school was placed entirely at our disposal. The room had a mud floor and was furnished with a blackboard—very useful to hang clothes on,—a table, and a few wooden benches. There were no windows, and the door had to be kept wide open to admit light and air, greatly to the delight of a few urchins who lingered about the steps and furtively watched our movements.



SAN ANTONIO.

The Ladino inhabitants of San Antonio are the schoolmaster, his wife and children, the Secretario, and two women who keep the estanco or grog-shop; otherwise the town is purely Indian and governed by an Indian municipality. Until quite lately it was difficult of access by land and almost isolated, but since the track along the lake-shore has been improved it is found to be a convenient short cut from the Altos to the coffee-fincas on the Costa Grande, and the sight of strangers is no longer a novelty. Nevertheless we found the women and girls so extremely shy that they ran away from us and from the camera, as though the evil eye were on them.

After arranging our camp-beds and ordering our supper from the estanco we strolled about the town to see the sights. Whilst we were enjoying the lovely view and watching the changing lights upon the water, a procession of Indians clad in their black sack-like garments came towards us. It was headed by the alcalde with his staff of office, who was followed by his alguacils and mayores, each carrying a long white stick. They stopped at house after house, apparently giving some directions to the inmates, and as they passed us the alcalde civilly wished us “buenas noches”; then a little further on they halted and an alguacil clambering up a wall stood on the top and in a loud clear voice, which seemed to travel up the hillsides, called out the instructions for the work to be put in hand on the morrow, and repeated the Municipal orders for the week. After a moment’s pause he was answered by a voice far away in the distance, then by another in an opposite quarter of the town, and when all was quiet again the Indians ceremoniously bade one another good night and the procession dispersed. This, we

learnt, is the usual custom on a Sunday night, and in the stillness of the fading daylight it was a curious and impressive ceremony.

Next morning we were awakened by the arrival of the school-boys, whose class-room was next door: each little fellow trotted up the steps with a little bundle of wood faggots on his back, which he deposited outside the door, and then took his seat on the wooden bench within. They were the quaintest little creatures imaginable, dressed just like their fathers; but their strange black garments were in indifferent repair, and the red-and-white handkerchiefs round their heads looked as though they might have been handed down from father to son. There they sat on the bench as still as mice, with their thin black legs dangling down, each one with a yellow-covered dog-eared school-book in his hand, in which he buried his face when overcome with bashfulness at the sight of us. About 7 o'clock the schoolmaster came in to call the roll, and as each boy answered his name he shouldered his bundle of faggots and demurely trotted off with it to the schoolmaster's house and deposited it in the kitchen. Thus having done their duty and given the schoolmaster his week's supply of firewood, they seated themselves on the bench again, buried their faces in the yellow-covered books, and never stirred for three whole hours! during which time the schoolmaster sat outside the school-room and chatted to Gorgonio and Santos. Perhaps after all the master's absence or presence did not make much difference, for he owned to us that he could not speak the Indian language, and his pupils knew no Spanish.

As we were in occupation of their school-room the

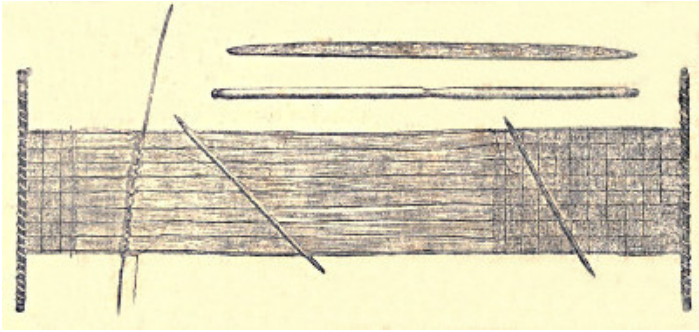
girls were given a holiday, and we saw them only at a distance, for they always took to their heels on our approach.

There is a school-house in every village, and the Government really seems to do its best to give the Indians some education, but the difficulties are great. Sometimes it is the Indian parents who refuse to send their children to school, fearing that if they learn to read and write and speak Spanish they will be employed by the Cabildo at a starvation salary and never find time to plant their milpas; at other times it is the difficulty of finding competent and trustworthy teachers. Indeed, I heard of one case in which it was not until the schoolmaster had been some years in office that the Jefe Político discovered that the man could neither read nor write. The Jefe was for instant dismissal, but the Indian parents begged that the schoolmaster might be allowed to retain his office, because he kept the children so quiet all the morning, and their mothers could make the tortillas in peace.



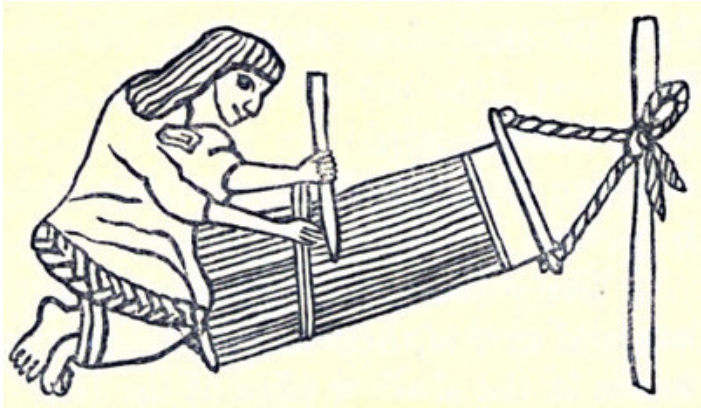
BOYS IN SCHOOL.

The women of the town are very clean and tidy in their dress, and take especial care of their hair: we saw numbers of them almost standing on their heads in the shallow edge of the lake in their efforts to give their hair a good washing, after which they dried and combed and oiled it and braided it into long tails. It took much coaxing to induce the group of mayores and alguacils on the next page to stand to the camera; however, they at last consented. But when we tried to take a separate portrait of the young man who is standing lowest on the step, really a good-looking and graceful fellow, he blushed and wriggled and hid his face like a shy school-girl, so, after spoiling a plate or two, the attempt had to be abandoned.



AN INDIAN LOOM.

All the garments worn both by men and women are of native manufacture, and some, if not all, of them are woven in the town. The looms on which the handkerchiefs and shawls are made are primitive in their simplicity, and are just the same as those pictured in the aboriginal Mexican manuscripts. My husband managed, after much discussion and bargaining, to buy one with the still unfinished fabric on it, which is now in the Museum of Archæology at Cambridge. A sketch of it is given on this page as well as a copy of the drawing from the ancient Mexican Codex. One end of the loom is usually tied to the post of the house, and the other end steadied by a band round the woman's body. Custom demands that the hollow reed or stick to which the warp is attached should contain several round seeds or beads, which rattle up and down as it is moved for the shuttle to pass. Whatever the origin of the custom may be, one result of it is that you can always tell by the noise when the women are busy at work.



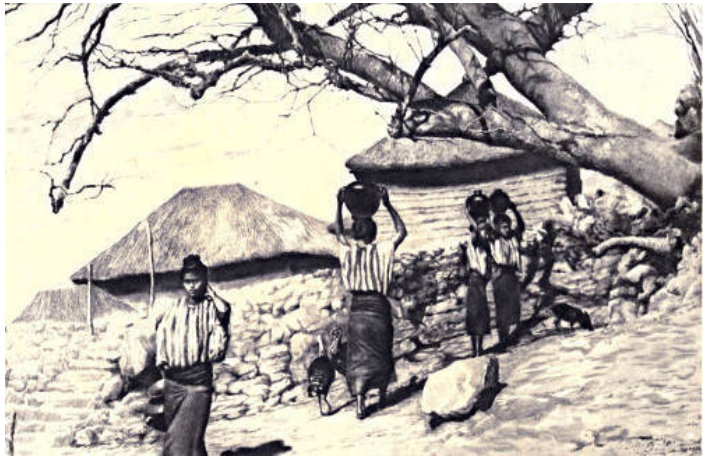
A WOMAN WEAVING. (From the Codex Mendoza.)

About noon we left the village and followed the rough path along the border of the lake, sometimes scrambling over the steep headlands, at others passing along the margin of the little sheltered bays, where numberless coots and some few duck swam out at our approach from amongst the scanty reeds and sought refuge in deep water. We passed on our way the little village of Santa Catarina; but, to judge from the canoes we saw drawn up on beach, water must be an accident in the life of these Indians and not a natural element as it is with the red men of the North.



INDIANS AT SAN ANTONIO.

The canoes are roughly hollowed logs without shape or beauty, the sides raised in height by planks fastened to the gunwale. The sterns are cut off square, two solid projections from the original log being left as handles by which the amorphous craft may be pushed off the shore. There are two sorts of fish found in the lake—one a “mojarra” (*Heros nigrofasciatus*) about the size of a sardine, and the other the “triponcito” or “pepesca” (*Fundulus pachycephalus*), which is peculiar to this lake, and does not exceed two and a half inches in length. I was told that an attempt has been made to introduce a larger fish, but so far it has not met with any success. The conditions may be adverse to fish life, for the water is very cold and at only a short distance from the shore it is said to be profoundly deep.



WATER CARRIERS, SAN ANTONIO.

A ride of three leagues brought us to Panajachél, a little town standing on a rich alluvial plain formed by a swift stream which issues from a narrow cleft in the hills, and has spread out the earth in the shape of an open fan until it forms a mile of frontage to the lake.

The stream is now somewhat diverted from its bed and is led away through many channels to irrigate the vegetable gardens, orchards, and coffee-plantations which cover the delta. But even with so many outlets there are times during the wet season when the sudden increase in the volume of water threatens the safety of the town, and we were told that not many years ago an inundation caused great damage, washing away some of the houses, and cutting off the townspeople from all outside communication. There is nothing especially interesting in the town itself; but its surroundings of lake and mountain, garden and orchard, are charming, and the bright green of the trees seemed all the more brilliant in contrast with the bareness of

the surrounding hills, on which so much of the timber has been ruthlessly destroyed.

As we found the Inn to be sufficiently comfortable we stayed for several days to develop the photographs taken near Godines, and to enjoy the fresh greenness of this sheltered nook, where the oranges were in blossom and in fruit, the coffee was in full bearing, and the branches of the jocote trees, although bare of leaves, were weighed down with fruit which glistened red and yellow in the sunlight.

Outside the orchards beautiful flowering creepers and long streamers of what looked to me like a feathery grey moss, called by the natives “barbas de viejo”—which, I am told, is a “bromelia” and not a moss at all,—almost smothered the forest trees, which here and there reared their heads from the thickets; whilst orchids of many colours, and other epiphytes with clusters of green-red leaves and splendid red and purple flower-spikes, clung to every available branch.

The aguacates, or alligator-pears, grown here are celebrated throughout the Republic, but the creamy delicacy of the flesh is beyond my powers of description; and I can only say that I felt myself to be at last in the land of the Swiss family Robinson, when I found a most delicious salad with a perfect mayonnaise dressing slightly flavoured with pistachio-nut hanging ready mixed in the form of a pear-shaped fruit from the branches of a fair-sized tree. However, to the Indian the chief glory of Panajachél is not its aguacates, but its onions, which grow in luxuriant profusion, and which he carries in his cacaste to all the markets of the Altos.

I was constantly regretting my inability to speak with the Indians and learn more of their daily life. To an

onlooker that of the women seems hopelessly monotonous and devoid of any recreation or pleasure, and one could only silently sympathize with them in the patient labour of grinding maize for tortillas, and the never-ending task of washing clothes at the fountain or at the river's edge.



PANAJACHÉL AND THE LAKE OF ATITLAN.

Whilst we were at Panajachél a matter of especial interest presented itself to us in the curious ceremonies of the Indian pilgrims returning from Esquipulas. Our room looked out on the Plaza, which in the morning always afforded a few picturesque groups of market-women, but was almost deserted by noon; then, as evening approached, little companies of pilgrims, bending under their burdens, filed into the town, and as night fell the Plaza was lit up by numerous small fires, around which the pilgrims gathered for their supper. This important meal ended, they began their religious functions by laying down petates (mats) in front of the cacastes, which

had already been arranged in a line across the Plaza. Then each man produced from his cargo a small wooden box, usually glazed on one side, containing the image of a saint, and these were arranged in a row against the cacastes, between lighted candles, the place of honour in the middle being assigned to a box containing a figure of the Black Christ. When these arrangements were completed, the Indians, who were dressed in long black woollen garments, with long white veils fastened to their black straw hats, prostrated themselves in turn before each shrine, and crawled along from one to the other on hands and knees, laying the forehead in the dust, offering up their prayers to each saint and kissing the box which contained its image. These acts of devotion were several times repeated, and then grouping themselves on their knees before the shrine of the Black Christ, and led by one of their number, who seemed to have some sort of authority over them, they all chanted the quaint hymn we had so often heard in the early watches of the morning. After singing for nearly half an hour they withdrew to their fires, rolled themselves in their blankets, and were soon fast asleep.

Luckily for us on one occasion this ceremony took place just before dusk, and a hastily snatched-up camera secured the picture given below.

During the whole of our journey I saw no Indian ceremony more picturesquely interesting than this which I have attempted to describe, and none which more strongly impressed me with the feeling, which I cannot attempt to explain, that I was witnessing a Pagan and not a Christian ceremony. It has often been a matter of doubt, even to the priests who have lived among them for many years, whether the

Indians really understand Christian doctrine; but they are ceremonious by nature, and formality is congenial to them, so that the ritual and functions of the Church of Rome (however little they may understand their actual meaning) have now become as much a part of their daily life as the carrying of burdens or cultivation of milpas.



PILGRIMS AT EVENING PRAYER.

CHAPTER VIII. THE QUICHÉS AND CACHIQUELS. (BY A. P. M.)



ON THE STEPS OF THE CABILDO, ATITLAN.

It will be as well now to give a slight sketch of the history of the Indians whose country we were passing through. At the time of Alvarado's entry into Guatemala in February 1524, the tableland round about the modern towns of Santa Cruz del Quiché and Quezaltenango was occupied by the Quiché Indians, who had their capital at Utatlan, close to Santa Cruz. The Cachiquels held the land to the east of the Quichés, and their capital, Patinamit or Iximché, stood near the modern town of Tecpan Guatemala, and is called by Alvarado the "City of Guatemala." The Tzutuhils, a less powerful tribe, appear to have held the land on the east and south shores of the lake of Atitlan, and probably had their headquarters on the site of the present Indian village of Atitlan. All three tribes spoke languages of (what is now known as) the Maya-Quiché stock, a family of languages which extends over the whole peninsula of Yucatan, through the greater part of Guatemala, and

parts of Tabasco and Chiapas. The confederation of these three tribes or nations—Quichés, Cachiquels, and Tzutuhils—is sometimes spoken of as the Quiché-Cachiquel Empire; but whether it was ever a united empire, as we understand the term, is somewhat doubtful, while it is quite certain that at the time of the Spanish invasion all three tribes were at enmity with one another.

It is sometimes assumed that these people had attained a high degree of civilization, and were especially advanced in the art of building; but this assumption I believe to be mainly due to the grossly exaggerated descriptions of their towns given by the early Spanish historians, and unfortunately there are no other written records to which we can refer on these points.

Of the three aboriginal MSS. still extant, not one (so far as I know) has been attributed to the Quichés or Cachiquels, and no carved inscriptions have been found amongst the ruins of their towns; but a few glyphs painted on pottery which is ascribed to them would lead one to suppose that they made use of the Maya script. Of late years two documents have been discovered which have gained for these people some literary reputation—the 'Popul-Vuh,' or sacred book of the Quichés, and the 'Chronicles' of the Cachiquels: the fact that they are written in Roman characters shows that the transcription at least is of recent date; but whilst they are of undoubted interest with regard to mythology and traditional history, they afford no guide to the then prevailing state of civilization.

After making due allowance for the inaccuracies of the available descriptions, it may undoubtedly be conceded that at the time of the Spanish conquest

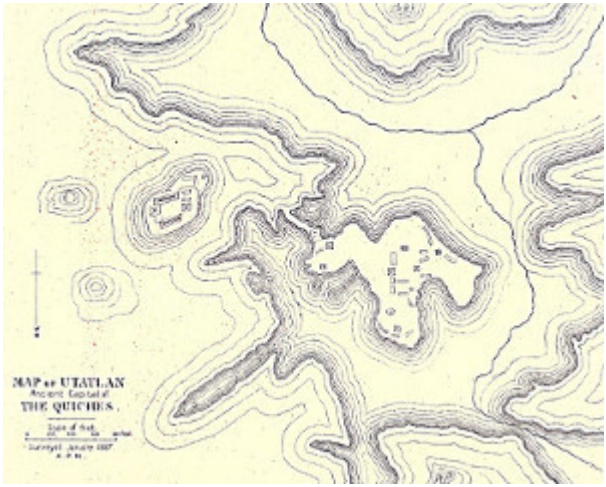
the Quichés and Cachiquels lived in organized communities and that they were fairly proficient in the arts, without attempting to exalt their culture to the same level with that of the builders of Palenque or Copan, or the great towns in Yucatan. For their history since the Spanish invasion we must turn to the earliest accounts of them left to us by their conquerors.



THE PLAZA, ATITLAN.

Alvarado left Mexico in December 1523, with an army of 120 horsemen, and 40 led horses, 300 infantry, of whom 130 were crossbowmen and arquebusiers, four pieces of artillery, and some thousands of picked Indian warriors. He passed over the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, and marched on through the province of Soconusco, fighting a battle near Tonalá, and on the 11th April he addressed a despatch from Utatlan to his great Captain Hernando Cortés, who was then in Mexico, as follows:—

"Señor, from Soconusco I wrote to your Highness all that had happened to me as far as that place, and said something of what I looked to find ahead of me. And after I had sent my messengers to this country to inform the people that I was coming to conquer and pacify certain provinces which were unwilling to place themselves under the dominion of his Majesty, I begged help and assistance from them as vassals (for as such they had offered themselves to your Highness begging favour and aid for their country) and said that if they gave their assistance in the way they ought to do as good and loyal vassals of his Majesty, they should be well treated by me and the Spaniards in my company; and if not, I would make war on them as against traitors rebelling and fighting against the dominion of our Lord the Emperor, and as such they would be treated, and in addition to this, that we would make slaves of all taken alive in the war. And having done all this and despatched the messengers, who were men of their own people, I reviewed all my people, both foot and horse, and the next day, on the morning of Saturday, I set out in search of their land, and after marching for three days through uninhabited forest, we pitched our camp, and the scouts whom I had sent out captured three spies from a town in this land named Zapotitlán. I asked them what they came for, and they told me that they were collecting honey, but it was notorious that they were spies...."



MAP OF UTATLAN. Ancient Capital of THE QUICHÉS.

Alvarado had so far been marching through the tropical forest on the Pacific slope; now that he wished to turn inland and reach the plateau he found the path barred by a great host of Indians. A battle was fought at Zapotitlán, and the victorious Spaniards rested for two days in that town. Then Alvarado led his army up the Cuesta de Santa Maria to the high land, and at the top of the pass, near the town of Xelahú or Quezaltenango, another great battle was fought with the Quiché warriors. Again the Indians were defeated, and Alvarado entered the deserted town. In a short time his army was again on the march, and for a third and last time the despairing Indians offered battle; but, as usual, the Spaniards carried all before them, and the carnage amongst the Indians is described as fearful. The victorious army continued its march towards Utatlan, the capital of the Quichés; but Alvarado shall tell the tale in his own words:—

"And when the chiefs of this town found that their people were defeated they took counsel with all the land and called many other provinces to them and gave tribute to their enemies and induced them to join them, so that all might come together and kill us. And they agreed to send and tell us that they had wished to be friends, and that again they gave obedience to our Lord the Emperor, so that I should enter the city of Utatlan, where they afterwards brought me, thinking that I would camp there, and that when thus encamped, they would set fire to the town in the night and burn us all in it, without the possibility of resistance. And in truth their evil plan would have come to pass but that God our Lord did not see good that these infidels should be victorious over us, for this city is very strong, and there are only two ways of entering it, one over thirty steep stone steps, and the other by a causeway made by hand, some part of which was already cut away, so that that night they might finish cutting it, and no horse could then have escaped into the country. As the city is very closely built and the streets very narrow we could not have escaped suffocation or falling down headlong in fleeing from the fire. And as we rode up, and I could see how large the fort was, and that within it one could not avail oneself of the horsemen because the streets were so narrow and walled in, I determined at once to clear out of it on to the plain, although the chiefs of the town asked me not to do so, and invited me to seat myself and eat before I departed, so as to gain time to carry out their plans. But I knew the danger in which we were, and sent some men ahead of me to take possession of the causeway and bridge, so that I could get out on to the plain, and the causeway was already in such a condition that one could hardly get over it on

horseback, and outside the city were many warriors, and as they saw me pass out on to the plain, they retreated somewhat, so that I did not receive much harm from them. Then I concealed my real intentions so that I might capture the chiefs who were taking to flight, and by the cunning with which I approached them, and through the present which I gave them the better to carry out my plan, I took them captive and held them prisoners in my camp. But, nevertheless, their people did not cease fighting against me in the neighbourhood and killed and wounded many Indians who had gone out to cut grass. And one Spaniard who was cutting grass a gunshot from the camp was slain by a stone rolled down the hill. This land is very full of gulleys, there are gulleys two hundred fathoms in depth, and on account of them one cannot carry on war and punish these people as they deserve. And seeing that by fire and sword I might bring these people to the service of his Majesty, I determined to burn the chiefs, and they themselves said at the time that they wished to be burnt, as appears in their confessions (where they say that they were those who had declared and made the war against me and wished to burn me in the city; and it was with this intention that they brought me to the city, and that they had ordered their vassals not to come and give obedience to our Lord the Emperor, nor help us nor do anything else that was right). And as I knew them to have such a bad disposition towards the service of his Majesty, and to insure the good and peace of this land, I burnt them and sent to burn the town and to destroy it, for it is a very strong and dangerous place, that more resembles a robbers' stronghold than a city. And to enable me to hunt out these people I sent to the city of Guatemala, which is ten leagues distant from this

place, and ordered them on the part of his Majesty to send me some warriors (and this I did so that I could find out what their disposition was, as well as to strike terror into the land), and they were well disposed towards me and agreed to do so, and sent me four thousand men, and with these men and those that were already with me, I made an expedition and overran the whole of the country. And seeing the damages which they had suffered they sent me messengers to tell me that now they wished to be good, and that if they had erred it had been at the order of their chiefs, and that whilst their chiefs had been living they dared not do otherwise, but as now their chiefs were dead they prayed me to pardon them, and I spared their lives, and ordered them to return to their houses and live as they had done formerly; and this they did, and at the present time I have them in the same condition as they were formerly, but at the service of his Majesty. And for greater security I chose out two sons of the chiefs, whom I placed in their fathers' position, and I believe that they will carry out faithfully all that tends to the service of his Majesty and the good of his lands. And as far as touches the war I have nothing more at present to relate, but that all the prisoners of war were branded and made slaves, of whom I gave his Majesty's fifth part to the treasurer Baltasar de Mendoza, which he sold by public auction, so that the payment to his Majesty should be secure.

"I would wish your Excellency to know that the country is healthy and the climate temperate, that there are many strong towns, and that this city is well built and wonderfully strong, and has much cornland and many people subject to it, the which, with all the subject towns and neighbourhoods, I

have placed under the yoke and in the service of the royal crown of his Majesty.

“In this country there is a mountain range of alum, another of copperas, and another of sulphur, the best which I have yet seen, and with a piece of it which they brought me without refining or any such process, I made half an arroba of very good gun-powder; but as I wish to send off Argueta without delay, I do not send to your Excellency 50 charges of it, but whenever there should be a messenger there will be time for it. On Monday, April 11th, I started for Guatemala, where I mean to halt for a short time, because the town which is situated on the water called Atitlan is at war with me, and has killed four of my messengers, and I think with the aid of our Lord soon to subdue it to the service of his Majesty.”

Alvarado then marched to Iximché, or Guatemala, as he calls it, and was received in a most friendly manner by the Cachiquels: “we could not have been better treated in our fathers’ houses,” he writes to Cortés. After a few days’ rest he joined his hosts in an expedition against the Tzutuhils; but he shall continue to tell the story in his own words:—

“I left this town (Iximché) to go against them with seventy horsemen and a hundred and fifty foot, in company with the chieftains and people of this land, and we marched so far that we arrived in the enemy’s land on the same day. And no one came out to receive me in peace or otherwise, and when I was aware of this I started with thirty horsemen along the edge of the lagoon, and when we came to an inhabited rock, which stood out in the water, we saw a company of men very near us, and I attacked them with the horsemen that were with me, and as we followed in pursuit they got on to a narrow causeway

which led to the rock where we could not follow on horseback, so I and my companions dismounted, and almost carried along with the Indians we reached the rock along with them on foot, so that they had no time to break down the bridges, for had they done so we could not have reached them.

“In the meantime many of my men, who had been marching behind me, came up to us, and we gained possession of the rock, which was thickly inhabited, but all the people threw themselves into the water to swim to another island. And many of them escaped, because my allies, who were bringing three hundred canoes across the lake, did not arrive soon enough. And that afternoon I left the rock with all my men and we camped in a maize field, where we passed the night.

“And the next day we commended ourselves to God, and set out for the town on ahead of us, which was very strong on account of the many rocks and Palisades about it, and we found it deserted; and as they had lost the fortress which they had in the lake they did not dare to face us on land, although a few of them waited for us at the end of the town, but owing to the roughness of the ground, which I have already mentioned, no more people were killed. And then we encamped about midday, and commenced to overrun the country, and we captured some of the native Indians, and I sent off three of them as messengers to their chiefs, advising them that they should come and render obedience to his Majesty and submit themselves to the Imperial crown, and to me in his Majesty’s name, or otherwise I should still carry on the war, and follow them and seek them in the mountains. These chiefs replied to me that hitherto their land had never been broken into nor

entered by force of arms, and that since I had forced an entrance they would be glad to serve his Majesty in any way I might direct them, and soon afterwards they came to place themselves at my orders."

Alvarado had now subdued two of the strong tribes of the country, and was in alliance with the third, so was free to continue his march; and after a most arduous journey and frequent collisions with other and less important Indian tribes he succeeded in reaching Cuzcatlán, a town in what is now the Republic of Salvador. By the month of July he was back again in Iximché, and the ceremony which then took place of founding there the city of Santiago and the subsequent changes of locality which the city underwent have been described in an earlier chapter.

Interesting as Alvarado's letters are in showing us his method of procedure in dealing with the Indians and the nature of the resistance he met with, they give us very little information about the natives themselves, the way in which they lived, or the culture to which they had attained. For these particulars it has been usual to rely upon later writings, and especially on the 'History of Guatemala,' written between 1808 and 1818 by Domingo Juarros, who, in his turn, relies for much of his information on the 'Recordacion Florida,' a manuscript account of the kingdom of Guatemala written, in 1690, by Francisco Antonio Fuentes y Guzman, and still preserved in the city of Guatemala.

The following description of Utatlan is taken from Baily's translation of Juarros:—

"The history of this place is singular, as it was once the large and opulent city of Utatlan, the court of the native kings of Quiché, and indubitably the most

sumptuous that was discovered by the Spaniards in this country. That indefatigable writer Francisco de Fuentes, the historian, who went to Quiché for the purpose of collecting information, partly from the antiquities of the place, and partly from manuscripts, has given a tolerably good description of this capital. It stood nearly in the situation that Santa Cruz now occupies, and it is presumable that the latter was one of its suburbs; it was surrounded by a deep ravine that formed a natural fosse, leaving only two very narrow roads as entrances to the city, both of which were so well defended by the castle of *Resguardo*, as to render it impregnable. The centre of the city was occupied by the royal palace, which was surrounded by the houses of the nobility; the extremities were inhabited by the plebeians. The streets were very narrow, but the place was so populous as to enable the king to draw from it alone no less than 72,000 combatants, to oppose the progress of the Spaniards. It contained many very sumptuous edifices, the most superb of them was a seminary, where between 5000 and 6000 children were educated; they were all maintained and provided for at the charge of the royal treasury; their instruction was superintended by 70 masters and professors. The castle of the Atalaya was a remarkable structure, which being raised four stories high, was capable of furnishing quarters for a very strong garrison. The castle of Resguardo was not inferior to the other; it extended 188 paces in front, 230 in depth, and was 5 stories high. The grand alcazar, or palace of the kings of Quiché, surpassed every other edifice, and, in the opinion of Torquemada, it could compete in opulence with that of Moctesuma in Mexico, or that of the Incas in Cuzco. The front of this building extended from east to west 376 geometrical paces,

and in depth 728; it was constructed of hewn stone of different colours; its form was elegant, and altogether most magnificent: there were 6 principal divisions, the first contained lodgings for a numerous troop of lancers, archers, and other well-disciplined troops, constituting the royal body-guard; the second was destined to the accommodation of the princes and relations of the king, who dwelt in it and were served with regal splendour, as long as they remained unmarried; the third was appropriated to the use of the king, and contained distinct suites of apartments, for the mornings, evenings, and nights. In one of the saloons stood the throne, under four canopies of plumage, the ascent to it was by several steps; in this part of the palace were, the treasury, the tribunals of the judges, the armory, the gardens, aviaries, and menageries, with all the requisite offices appending to each department. The 4th and 5th divisions were occupied by the queens and royal concubines; they were necessarily of great extent, from the immense number of apartments requisite for the accommodation of so many females, who were all maintained in a style of sumptuous magnificence; gardens for their recreation, baths, and proper places for breeding geese, that were kept for the sole purpose of furnishing feathers, with which hangings, coverings, and other similar ornamental articles, were made. Contiguous to this division was the sixth and last; this was the residence of the king's daughters and other females of the blood royal, where they were educated, and attended in a manner suitable to their rank. The nation of the Quichés, or Tultecas, extended its empire over the greatest portion of the present kingdom of Guatemala; and, on the authority of the manuscripts mentioned above (which were composed by some of the Caciques, who

first acquired the art of writing), it is related that from Tanuh, who commanded them, and conducted them from the old to the new continent, down to Tecum Umam, who reigned at the period when the Spaniards arrived, there was a line of 20 monarchs."

To show how far these statements can be relied on, it will now be worth while to pass in review the remains of Utatlan as it can be seen at the present day. I visited both Utatlan and Iximché in January 1887, and made surveys of the sites. Utatlan lies about two miles to the W.S.W. of the modern town of Santa Cruz del Quiché. On the left of the track from the town, just before reaching the great barranca, there is a natural mound, the sides of which have been terraced, and on the top is a more or less level space measuring 200 by 150 feet. Within this space are several mounds surrounding a level plaza. A reference to the plan will show that two of the mounds are nearly square at the base, and these probably supported small "cués" or temples; the other two mounds are longer, and may have supported long houses. If these houses were built of stone with stone roofs they probably contained two parallel corridors or rooms not more than 9 feet wide and 200 feet long, divided off by transverse partitions into smaller chambers. If the lower part only were built of stone and the upper part of the walls and the roof were of wood and thatch, then the breadth of the houses may have been 20 to 25 feet, as no longitudinal partition-wall would have been needed. At the present time no traces of house or temple walls are to be seen, and the stone facings have even been stripped off the foundation mounds, for the whole group of ruined buildings has long been treated as a quarry by the people of Santa Cruz. There can be no doubt that this group of mounds

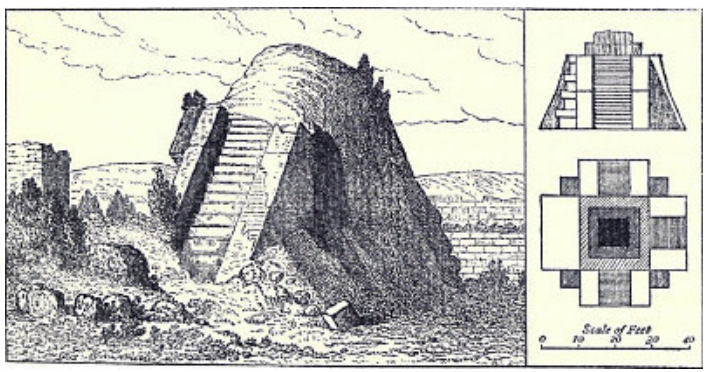
represents the guard-house or Castle of Resguardo; but it is quite clear from the plan that the buildings were of the same nature as those found throughout the country, and they stand grouped together in the usual manner. The position they occupy is a naturally strong one, and would offer great facilities for defence, but there is nothing especially characteristic of a fortress about the buildings themselves.

After leaving this hill a walk of about two hundred yards brings one to the edge of the barranca and to the narrow natural causeway by which alone the city or stronghold of Utatlan could be approached. On crossing this narrow bridge one finds oneself on a fairly level space of ground about eighteen acres in extent, with almost precipitous sides, over which one can look down to the bottom of the barranca four hundred feet below.

Nearly the whole area affords some trace of ruined buildings, but almost all the stonework has been stripped from the foundations, and the buildings which stood on them have altogether disappeared. Stephens, who visited the ruins in 1840, gives the following account of the principal temple:—"The most important part remaining of these ruins is that which appears in the engraving, and which is called 'El Sacrificatorio,' or the place of sacrifice. It is a quadrangular stone structure, sixty-six feet on each side at the base, and rising in a pyramidal form to a height, in its present condition, of thirty-three feet. On three sides there is a range of steps in the middle, each step seventeen inches high, and but eight inches on the upper surface, which makes the range so steep that in descending some caution is necessary. At the corners are four buttresses of cut stone, diminishing

in size from the line of the square, and apparently intended to support the structure. On the side facing the west there are no steps, but the surface is smooth and covered with stucco, grey from long exposure. By breaking a little at the corners, we saw that there were different layers of stucco, doubtless put on at different times, and all had been ornamented with painted figures. In one place we made out the body of a leopard, well drawn and coloured.

"The top of the Sacrificatorio is broken and ruined, but there is no doubt that it once supported an altar.... It was barely large enough for the altar and officiating priests and the Idol to whom the sacrifice was offered."



I have reproduced Catherwood's sketch and plan which accompanies this description; the scale given on the plan does not agree with the description, and unfortunately I did not take any detailed measurements of the mound in its present ruined condition; but in any case it is clear that the building was a small one. The sides of the long mounds, which are just indicated in my plan, are perpendicular, and these foundations may have supported stone-roofed buildings, in which case we know that the chambers could not have been more

than nine feet wide, and even on the larger mounds there would not have been room for more than two of such chambers side by side. The small fragment of a stone-vaulted roof in the remains of a half-buried chamber shows that the Quichés understood the art of building stone roofs. But, to judge from Alvarado's statement that it was the intention of the Indians to set fire to the town and burn or smother him and his followers, there can be little doubt that some of the houses must have been built of inflammable material, probably of wood and thatch. But amongst these small and distinct foundation mounds where is the Palace to be found?

The absurdity of Fuentes's oft-copied description at once becomes evident. According to the measurements he gives, the Palace alone would occupy nearly three times the whole space available for building, and with the seminary, the gardens, and the aquatic fowl must be relegated to a dreamland suffused with the afterglow of Oriental splendour from which the Spanish chronicler was so ready to seek inspiration.

It is hardly worth while to compare the account of Iximché given by Fuentes and Juarros with the facts revealed by an examination of the ruins; it would be to a great extent a repetition of what has already been said with regard to Utatlan. The sites were similar; both were peninsulas almost surrounded by deep barrancas, and approachable only by a single neck of land, and each was guarded on the outer edge of the barranca by a girdle of "atalayas" or watch-towers, which were most probably small truncated pyramids supporting a cue or shrine which served for the religious use of the outlying population.

All the tribes or nations whom the Spaniards encountered in the subjugation of Guatemala and its neighbourhood appear to have had as their headquarters such strongholds as Utatlan and Iximché, or towns built on rocky islands in the lakes. Such was the stronghold in the lake of the Lacandones and the island town of Puchutla, described in the pages of Remesal, which was conquered in the year 1559. Such, too, was the island of Tayasal in the Lake of Peten, the headquarters of the Itzas, captured in 1697, of which some account will be given in a later chapter; and with these may be classed the ruins on the hill-top at Uspantan and the curious groups of temples and houses which crown the ridges of the hills round the valley of Rabinal. None of them appear to have possessed walls and bastions such as we are accustomed to associate with fortresses; but all were placed in naturally strong positions, and were easily defensible, and their existence tends to the conclusion that the condition of society was one of continual intertribal warfare.

None of the sites of these strongholds have yielded any examples of the carved hieroglyphic inscriptions, highly ornamented stone buildings, or elaborately-sculptured monolithic monuments which are to be found at Copan, Quirigua, or Palenque; and it cannot be too strongly insisted on that between the civilization revealed to us by those great ruins and the culture of the Indian tribes conquered by the Spaniards there is a great gap which at present we have no means of bridging.

CHAPTER IX. ACROSS THE ALTOS.

Our journey began again on the 25th January, along the road by the lake shore and round a bluff headland which divides the delta of Panajachél from a much smaller plain of the same formation. Then the track rose rapidly and we gained a view over the lake, and glimpses of little Indian towns nestling beneath the lofty headlands and at the foot of the distant volcanoes. The beauty of this view under a canopy of the deepest blue flecked with billowy clouds, the charm of leafy lands through which we passed, and the pleasant sound of the little mountain rivulets leaping over the rocks and then hiding themselves with a sullen murmur in impenetrable thickets, have together left on my mind an impression of grandeur and charm not easily to be effaced. As we rose higher, more mountains came in sight, and in all their magnificence our old friends Agua and Fuego stood out upon the horizon. From one point in the road I could distinctly see the peaks of five of the great volcanoes which tower over the distant coast-line. We continued to rise until we reached the town of Sololá, 2000 feet above the lake and 7000 feet above the sea, and the temperature at that altitude was delicious.

Naturally our steps turned towards the plaza, but we found it uninteresting and almost deserted. After some questioning we were directed to a small posada, or inn, in a back street, where a good breakfast was served to us in a sort of outhouse, on a dirty cloth covering a table standing on stilts. As the legs of the chairs were as short in proportion as the legs of the table were long (and I afterwards learnt

from experience that the ratio was nearly constant throughout the country), the distance between the food and one's mouth was short. However, the little garden of the inn was pretty enough to compensate for all inconveniences, and I was allowed to take as many violets and roses as it pleased me to gather.

Sololá is a centre of the weaving industry, and is also famed for the fine embroidery with which the women decorate their garments. We had been fairly fortunate at Panajachél in securing samples of the fabrics woven there, as the women were willing to sell when a good price was offered them; but here we met with no success whatever. Gorgonio, who had gone out in search of "trapos" for us, returned almost blushing after having been exposed to a fire of invective from the women whom he had approached on the subject; they not only refused to sell him anything, but scorned his offers of money, and finally ran him out of the plaza. We then tried the "estancos," where native garments are almost always to be found left as pledges in payment for liquor, which the estanquero can sell if not redeemed within a stated time; but here again we failed, as the municipality of Sololá had very properly put a stop to this miserable practice and forbidden the estanqueros to receive pledges of any kind.

The "patron" of the posada had become interested in our search, and did his best to induce an Indian girl who was sitting in his patio to sell us the beautifully embroidered huipil which she was wearing; but she stoutly refused the money he offered her, and was evidently so unwilling to part with her garment that we told him not to trouble her further. However, his blood was up for a bargain, he evidently despised our scruples, and paying no attention to them went

on pestering the girl until she held her head down and blushingly owned that the garment she was wearing was the only one she possessed.

In the afternoon we rode on over the hills to the northward until we reached Los Encuentros, a station on the diligence-road between the cities of Guatemala and Quezaltenango. This road here runs at an altitude of 10,000 feet above the sea along the ridge of the range of hills which divides the plains of Chimaltenango and Patzun from the valley of the Motagua River. Here we halted for the night at the rest-house and in company with five other hungry travellers sat down to a meagre supper. I forget what the first course was, but it was not attractive, and the "pièce de résistance" was a very diminutive chicken. I watched that chicken, as it was brought in, with hungry eyes; but, alas! it was handed to our native companions first, and the free use of their unwashed knives and forks in its dissection took all my appetite away. Two of our companions were Englishmen, old acquaintances of my husband's, so we made ourselves as comfortable as was possible in the verandah, had a cosy cup of tea together, and satisfied our appetites on strawberry-jam and "pan dulce."

The next morning we made an early start. Our way for about three leagues lay in a more open country on the downward slope towards the Rio Motagua, through maize-stubbles, and dried-up pastures, where a few miserable black-and-white sheep were being herded by wild-looking Indian urchins. About midday we caught sight of a group of red-tiled roofs in front of us, and soon afterwards rode into the large Indian town of Santo Tomas Chichicastenango —a brown, dusty-looking place, lacking even the

relief to the eye one might have expected from the presence of the chichicaste or tree-nettle, from which the town takes its name. The chichicaste is a tree with which we had already become familiar, as it is so commonly used for fencing round the Indian dwellings, and is one of the most picturesque features of the Indian villages. This is not perhaps the view taken by the native children, as a whipping with chichicaste-leaves is very commonly threatened by Indian mothers when their little ones are unruly. It had occurred to us that the comparative antiquity of the sites of the villages might almost be judged from the condition of the chichicaste-hedges alone. In their youth the stems stand apart, forming an ordinary-looking live fence, and although in the course of their growth they are pollarded and hacked about without mercy, yet as time goes on they build themselves up into a continuous wall, broken here and there by the still more solid stems of gigantic Yuccas, which branch above into a dozen spiky heads. In extreme old age decay eats holes through these living walls, and the breach is as often as not patched up with rough stones, or even in some cases with masonry and cement; but nothing seems to kill the trees altogether, and the hacked and patched stems often present an appearance of hoary antiquity.

Santo Tomas boasts of no inn, but we found something to eat at a dirty little house, where we were attended to by an old crone, who spoke no language intelligible to us. After breakfast we strolled into the picturesque plaza, bright with the gala costumes of the Indians. The women wore heavy chains of beads and coins round their necks, and were clothed in the most elaborately embroidered huipils we had as yet seen. Almost every man carried

a blue-or brown-striped rug on his shoulder, and some queerly-dressed old men wandered amongst the crowd, with distaff in hand, spinning woollen thread. A grand fiesta was in progress in the church—probably a preparation for "Candelaria," which falls on 2nd February—to which, as usual, the Ladinos appeared to be supremely indifferent; indeed, they never seem to trouble themselves about the customs of the race so nearly allied to them, and look down on the Indians as inferiors, only fit to be human beasts of burden. It is useless to ask them what an Indian ceremony may mean: the only answer one gets is, "No se, Señora, es costumbre de los Indios." Even Gorgonio, whom I delight to look upon as an exception to the rule, on this occasion showed no desire to enlighten my curiosity, so we mounted the steps and entered the great bare church to learn as much as we could for ourselves.

At the top of the stone steps in front of the open church-door a large pile of wood-ashes smouldered and flickered faintly in the sunlight; the man who tended this fire every now and then threw on the embers small pieces of copal, which scented the air with its heavy perfumed smoke, whilst around the fire groups of women knelt to pray before entering the building. We found the interior to be charmingly decorated with flowers. The floor had first been strewn with fragrant pine-needles, and on this carpet the flowers were arranged in the shape of a huge cross, extending almost the whole length of the church. In some parts the lines were traced in green and coloured leaves, and filled up with scattered rose-petals; in others with clusters of all the flowers that could be found in bloom, edged with little groups of lighted candles. Picturesquely dressed Indians, singly or in couples, were dragging

themselves on their knees the whole length of the cross, stopping at intervals to repeat prayers. No priest officiated, and none but Indians were in the least interested in the service, if such it could be called. As we were leaving the church, we stopped to watch a funeral procession coming across the plaza. The men ascended the church steps, carrying the ugly black catafalque on their shoulders, but to our surprise, instead of entering the church with their burden, they turned the catafalque round three times in front of the fire where the copal was burning, fired off a rocket, and then went away again. While this ceremony was being rapidly performed the friends and relations of the dead man stood some distance away in the plaza crying and weeping loudly.

To anyone not already used to the ways of the Spanish peasantry one of the first things that strikes one as curious in Central America is this constant firing of rockets in the daytime. No ceremony is complete until the swish and report of a rocket have been heard. The pilgrim when he reaches his native village fires a rocket to announce his arrival. It is the expression of joy at a fiesta, and it is the last rite necessary for the repose of the dead. A story is told of an Indian cacique who was taken to Spain to the Court of Charles V. As the emperor passed through the corridor after the morning levée, he caught sight of the cacique and addressed him with a few words of welcome, and then added: “Tell me, my friend, what would your countrymen be doing at your own home at this hour in the morning.” Now, it had been most strongly impressed upon the cacique that should the Emperor ask him any questions he should say nothing in reply which was not strictly and accurately true. This oft-repeated counsel had sunk deep into his mind, so after a pause he raised his

head and said, “Señor, mis paisanos estan tirando cohetes” (“at this hour my countrymen are firing rockets”). The Emperor smiled and passed on, but meeting the cacique again at midday he repeated the question and received the same answer. Again in the evening he called the Indian to him and said, “Now that the sun has set and the work of the day is done, how are your countrymen amusing themselves?” “Señor,” replied the cacique, “my countrymen are still firing rockets.”

For about two leagues beyond Santo Tomas the country was much the same as that through which we had passed in the morning. Then came a gradual descent through a forest of small trees, followed by a steep dip into the barranca through which the Motagua flows. It is here only a shallow swift-flowing rivulet, easily fordable, and giving little promise of the great volume of water which, after a further course of about 250 miles, it pours into the Gulf of Honduras. We scrambled up the other side of the barranca and soon reached a small tableland on which stands the village of Chiché. Just before arriving at the village we passed through a group of artificial mounds which mark the site of what must in old times have been a town of considerable importance. The original stone-facing of the foundations was probably carried off to serve as building-stone when the Spaniards first occupied Chiché, and the mounds, some of which are 20 to 30 feet in height, are somewhat indefinite in outline owing to the many times they have been worked over by the Indian cultivators of the soil when planting their milpas.

Gorgonio examined the mounds the next day and brought us some fragments of obsidian knives and

stone implements which he had picked up, and he told us that on the summits of the higher mounds the Indians had placed rough stone crosses, or heaped together a few stones to form a sort of shrine in which to burn candles or offerings of copal. When in order to examine the surface of the mounds Gorgonio used his machete to cut away some of the scrubby bushes growing on the summits the Indians were almost ready to go for him—so valuable has anything which can be used as firewood become in this dried-up neighbourhood.

The village itself is an uninteresting collection of houses built of adobes and roofed with tiles. The cabildo was under repair and roofless, and there was no school-house; but we found shelter in a room in a new half-finished house, where, after removing the remains of the building-materials, we made ourselves fairly comfortable. Gorgonio lighted a fire outside in the village street and, gazed at by an admiring crowd of children, I cooked the supper. Luckily there was plenty of good bread to be bought, and a neighbour supplied us with excellent coffee.

We were now going altogether out of the beaten track and should have to take our chance of shelter for the night in cabildo, convento, or school-house, and when these failed we could take refuge in our tent (which last proved to be the most comfortable lodging of them all), but it was to be used only as a last resource, so as to avoid the trouble of setting it up at night, when wearied with a long day's ride, and the extra packing which would delay the start in the morning. Our plan was to travel a short distance to the northward and crossing the Rio Negro to reach Uspantan, an ancient stronghold of the Quichés, then to recross the river lower down and make our way to

Cubulco and the Rabinal valley. It was all new ground to my husband, but Gorgonio had been through the country before and had long been anxious that his “patron” should visit and examine the sites of old towns with which it abounds. As the road was known to be a very rough one, we sent the heavier part of our baggage direct to Rabinal to await our arrival, and only carried sufficient food for ourselves and half rations for the men should tortillas and frijoles perchance fail us.

We tarried at Chiché for a day whilst our arrangements were being made, and on Sunday morning rode out on our way to Uspantan. For the first league we travelled up hill through bare and uninteresting country and then dropped down to Chinic, a village of much the same type as Chiché, but having the advantage of shelter and a good supply of water, which enabled its inhabitants to turn the land round about into a garden of bananas and oranges. After breakfasting in the verandah of the cabildo we set out again, our saddle-bags filled with fresh fruit from the market, which we devoured on the way with an enjoyment only to be felt during a long and dusty ride under a tropical sun.

Our road lay over the range of hills which bounds the Motagua valley on the north side. It was a steep rise and we finally attained a height of 7000 feet, about 2000 feet lower than the pass which we crossed at Los Encuentros on the southern side of the valley. On the hill-tops we passed through some groves of the beautiful small-leaved oaks which are usually met with at this altitude on the Pacific slope, but we could not find any of the yellow calceolarias which my husband had once seen in bloom when he crossed this same range further to the east. Looking

down from the hill-tops one is able to appreciate the great extent of the river valley. It is a level-looking plain, thinly covered with pine-trees and seamed by steep-sided barrancas cut by the Motagua and its affluents. The hills on either side were cultivated in patches to their summits, and above the southern range we could still see the peaks of Agua, Fuego, and Atitlan. The day was so enchantingly lovely that we lingered to enjoy the views, to pick the abundant wild-flowers, to rest in the grateful shade of the woods, and generally to drink in the charm of our surroundings, and forgot to fulfil that never-ending task of hurrying up the loitering cargadores, who knew the length of the journey before them much better than we did, but who were more than willing to take advantage of a halt, as they had only partly recovered from the effects of the aguardiente imbibed during a fiesta the day before. When at last we began to urge them on they baulked us at every turn in the track, and were always halting on one excuse or another, so that during two hours we hardly made any progress at all; then about four in the afternoon, when we had hardly commenced the descent on the north side of the range, our Indians went on strike altogether and refused to go any further that day. Neither persuasion nor threats moved them from their purpose, and down they sat by the roadside and settled themselves for the night. We were still three or four leagues from our destination, and as the mules with our camp kit had pushed on ahead we could not possibly pass the night on the mountain. So making the best of a bad business, and trying to avoid the futility of losing one's temper with an obstinate Indian, we abandoned dressing-bags and the other useful things which they were carrying, and pushed on as fast as

our animals would travel in hope of reaching San Andrés Sacabajá before dark. Lofty mountains fenced us round, and the little river which ran down a narrow valley towards San Andrés was fully 3000 feet below us. The descent was without a break and the track which zigzagged down the spur of the hill was rough beyond description. Before we were halfway down the sun had set, the short tropical twilight faded, and night overtook us whilst we were groping our way through a thick wood. Gorgonio on his clever old mule led the way, I came next, and my husband, whose iron-shod horse was never too sure-footed even in the day, brought up the rear. It soon became so dark that I could not see my own mule's head, but I felt sure that she was walking along the edges of precipices and I could feel that she was picking her way amidst boulders and stepping in and out of holes; sometimes she would stop, draw her feet together, and slide down the smooth surface of the rock. This sounds like a perilous feat, but it was all done with such extreme care and such perfect knowledge of what she was about, that although anxious I felt little real fear. The horse floundered about terribly; several times his rider dismounted and tried to grope his way on foot, but found the track so difficult and dangerous in the pitchy darkness that each time he was unwillingly obliged to mount again and trust to the guidance of his horse, whose stumbles continually startled me.

About halfway down the mountain, the lights of San Andrés appeared, as we thought, just below us; but never were lights more deceptive and illusive, for even after reaching the level of the valley we rode for at least two hours, crossing and recrossing the broad but shallow river several times. The night continued very dark, no stars came out, and only the

light of glow-worms cheered us along the path, while the flashing sparks of the fireflies frequently deluded us into thinking that we were near to houses, and the air resounded with the harsh humming song of innumerable cicadas, broken now and again by the cry of some night-feeding bird.

It was nine o'clock when we arrived at the cabildo of San Andrés de Sacabajá, tired and hungry and with but small prospect of any supper, as our food-boxes and canteen were left behind with the mozos. The villagers were nearly all asleep, and we were told that there was no water to be obtained without scrambling down in the dark to the river 200 feet below us. However, Gorgonio was sent on a foraging expedition, and after a prolonged search returned in triumph with bread, eggs, and half a kettle full of water, so we made our coffee and ate our supper on the verandah surrounded by a pack of half-starved dogs.

Supper over we looked about for a room to sleep in. The cabildo was under repair and the only habitable room in it was occupied by the half-caste "secretario," who most politely offered to share his bedroom with us! On our refusal to put him to such inconvenience he suggested a visit to the convento on the other side of the plaza; so we all marched across to examine it by the light of a single candle. After passing in a ghostly procession through the huge empty rat-infested close-smelling rooms, we declined that lodging also, and finally put up our beds in an unfinished room in the cabildo, which was half-full of scaffolding, where the floor was inches deep in sand, the door refused to shut, and bats flitted in and out at their own sweet will; but even these discomforts and the howls of a drunken Indian

locked up in the prison next door could not keep off sleep after our long day's ride.

I was awakened the next morning by a brilliant sunshine, and lay for some minutes staring up into the newly thatched roof which stretched like a great umbrella over the cabildo, and was really an attractive piece of work, so skilfully are the great beams adjusted and tied together by lianes, those ready-made ropes which abound in tropical forests. The rooms were divided from one another by partitions, but all were open to the roof, so that, with the advantage of a current of fresh air, one has to put up with the free passage of sound from the neighbouring rooms and the visits of birds by day and bats by night.

The hills around San Andrés were brown with sun-scorched grass, and the village itself was not saved by the sparkling atmosphere and brilliant sunshine from an appearance of hopeless desolation. There was not a green thing to be seen, saving one huge Ceiba tree standing solitary in the middle of a great wind-swept plaza. We were told that the foolishness of a former Jefe Político had created this dreary waste by ordering all the trees in the village to be cut down, because in his enlightened opinion trees near houses were unhealthy. As far as we could see, there was only one redeeming feature in the view, and that was the old dead stump of a tree, whose solitary branch stretching out like a withered arm supported a cluster of orchids covered with the most splendid purple blossoms. No one cared for this lovely plant and we were sorely tempted to carry it away branch and all, but the thought of its great weight and our troubles with the cargadores made us abandon the idea.

The Indians whom we had left behind on the road came in while we were sitting on the verandah drinking our early coffee and surrounded as before by scores of half-starved pigs and dogs, who rejoiced over the capture of a piece of greasy paper, and poked their noses into the hot ashes of the fire in search of scraps of discarded food. It is impossible to appreciate the ravenous hunger of these animals until one sees them licking an empty sardine tin for the twentieth time, long after every drop of oil has disappeared, and apparently almost ready to devour the tin itself.

Before we were ready to start a high wind arose, sweeping every movable thing before it and carrying the blinding dust into every hole and corner, so we could not help reviling the memory of the Jefe Político who had divested the village of its natural shelter of trees.



QUEZALTENANGO.

CHAPTER X. USPANTAN AND THE RIO NEGRO.

We had ridden on our way for about five miles over a fairly level plain covered with rastrojos and dried-up grass, relieved here and there by a few straggling ocote pines and mimosa shrubs, when we caught sight of some artificial mounds on the far side of a gully to the right of the track. Tying up our mules we climbed down to the banks of a small rushing rivulet, crossed the stream, and scrambling up on the other side found ourselves on a detached bare plain surrounded on all sides by barrancas. At one end of this plain the mounds were symmetrically arranged. There was a clearly defined plaza about fifty yards across with low mounds on three sides of it, and on the fourth side a mound about forty feet high, which showed some slight signs of having formerly supported a small stone-roofed temple; on its summit a few stones had been heaped together by the neighbouring Indians to form a little cave or grotto in which to burn incense. In the plaza in front of the temple mound was a small mound which may have been used as an altar. From the other end of the plaza mounds extended in fairly regular order for a considerable distance.

Two of the largest of the foundation-mounds had been dug into by a German priest, Father Heyde, who was formerly cura of Joyabaj, one of the neighbouring towns. These excavations showed us that the mounds themselves were formed of cores of earth covered over with a coating of rough stones, imbedded in mud, about 5 feet in thickness, and this again was faced with masonry of roughly squared stones and a thick coating of plaster. Patches of the

outer casing of squared stones with the plaster facing still adhering to it could be seen where the surface had been left undisturbed. On the summit of one of the temple mounds we were able to trace, at the inner angle of the wall, the plaster flooring of the cue, or sanctuary, which showed us that the whole chamber measured only about five feet by seven.

Lying on the ground were two blocks of stone shaped into serpents' heads with human faces between their open jaws, undoubtedly of the same style and marked with the same conventional curves as those found at Copan and other more ancient ruins in Central America. Both of these carved stones had tenons about two feet long, by which they could be fixed into the masonry, and they had probably fallen from the balustrade of a stairway in front of the principal temple. We found one other carved stone of much the same character, with a tenon over three feet long. Whilst walking about the mounds we picked up numerous fragments of broken pottery and some chaya or obsidian flakes.

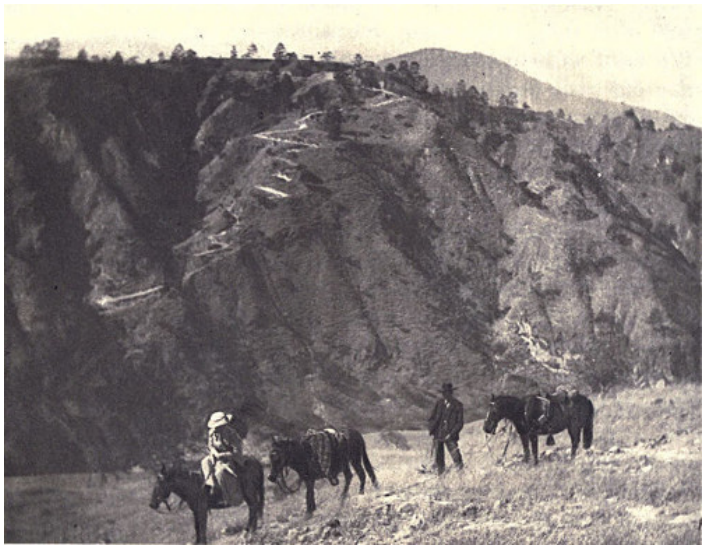
Beyond the mounds, which probably mark the site of the public or ecclesiastical buildings, the plain extends for some distance, and here may have stood the more lightly constructed houses of a considerable population. The deep barrancas surrounding the whole site formed a natural moat and made the position easily defensible.

We spent an hour rambling amongst these ruins, and then rode on to overtake our pack-mules, which, as the country was open, we could still distinguish some miles ahead of us by the little cloud of dust that marked their progress. About four o'clock we came to the edge of the gorge of the Rio Negro and began a steep descent of twelve or thirteen hundred feet to

the bridge over the river. The views which opened before us as we descended were very fine and of a peculiar character. Abrupt granite rocks jut out from the steep slopes, which are themselves curiously rounded in outline, and are covered with a coating of thick rough grass, giving them the appearance of being clothed in green velvet shot with gold. On the far side of the river and to the north of us the sierras rose to a great height, the more distant ranges covered with a dense forest. The stream at the bottom of this gorge is swift and deep, and the water is of a beautiful greenish colour. It is not more than thirty yards wide, and we crossed it on a bridge of large roughly-squared logs, laid side by side without any attempt to fasten them or bind them together, and supported by four lofty and stoutly-built stone piers.

A short distance below the bridge the river is stopped in its course by a high hill, which stands squarely across the gorge and forces the stream to take a sharp bend to the right. As we crossed the bridge a heavy rain-cloud hovered over this mountain and presently a draught of air drove it our way and it broke over us in a sharp shower, which lasted but a moment, and was followed by a rainbow of wonderful brilliancy which spanned the gorge. It was the expiring effort of the northern wind, which can carry the moisture from the Atlantic no further, and the last glittering drops of moisture seemed almost to hang in the air, and, refusing to moisten the slopes facing south, were blown across the gorge to strike on the northern face of the hills, keeping the grass green on that side only. When the rain-cloud dispersed, flocks of brilliant green parrots flew screaming over our heads, and after much chattering finally settled to roost in the neighbouring trees.

On the further side of the river we camped for the night, pitching our tent on the only level spot which we could find large enough to hold it. The mozos were tired, and no bribe would induce them to return across the bridge and climb up the slopes to cut the green grass, so we were obliged to turn our mules loose to pick up the best supper they could find on the sun-baked hills around us.



LOOKING BACK ACROSS THE RIO NEGRO.

We had descended to the bridge by a track which might claim to have been made for the passage of men and animals, but the ascent next morning on the northern side of the valley could boast of no such mark of civilization. The tracks, if such they could be called, were numerous and confused, and had been formed by mules, cattle, and Indians wandering about in all directions seeking a firm foothold amongst the loose stones and slippery rocks. Our animals were suffering from want of food, and we

left them to scramble up by themselves; the unshod mules, although they made many halts, easily distanced the horse, whose iron shoes clattered in uneasy jerks over the loose stones. We ourselves were not inclined to hurry, as the ascent on foot was very tedious, and we were glad of the halts, which gave us time to enjoy the beautiful views across the gorge and to watch the breeze ripple along the velvety slopes on the far side of the river, and turn the grass from green to gold and gold to green again. This ever-changing background seemed only to intensify the blue-green of the isolated pine-trees which clung to the steep slopes and helped to make up a landscape as quaint and delicate in colour as it was beautiful in outline.

We clambered up about 3000 feet, and then mounting our animals rode over the ridge and found ourselves amongst rolling hills almost bare of grass, but supporting here and there rugged-looking ocote pines, and in every sheltered nook a frangipani-tree with its bare fleshy branches tipped with glorious bunches of yellow and white blossoms. After riding for an hour or more through this desert we stopped for breakfast by the edge of a ravine where the Indians knew of a spring hidden away in a scrubby thicket. Then we continued our gradual ascent, and the oaks and pines increased in number until they formed patches of woodland. Great bunches of mistletoe of various sorts—green and orange and brown—were conspicuous amongst the oak-leaves, and the branches of the trees were laden with clusters of orchids and tillandsias. My companions gathered for me beautiful sprays of orchid blossom and gorgeous crowns of crimson leaves which surround the flowering spikes of the tillandsias, and these, added to the bunches of frangipani we had

plucked on the arid hillsides and fresh green sprigs of lycopodium, overflowed the mouths of my saddle-bags and formed a decoration to my saddle that would have been the envy of Covent Garden.

As we rode on, the marked difference in colour between the north and south sides of the hills began to disappear; a green tinge was spread over the whole. Then a turn in the track showed the main range in front of us covered with dark forest to the summit and dotted here and there with bright green patches where the Indians had made their plantations. Heavy clouds hung over the mountain-tops, marking the edge of the rainfall which deluges the country to the north up to the end of February. A short descent brought us to the bank of a brilliantly clear stream, an affluent of the Rio Negro, and half an hour later we rode into the straggling village of San Miguel Uspantan, lying at the foot of the forest-clad sierra. The Alcalde allotted us a room in the convento, which had been swept and garnished with a fresh carpet of pine-needles in expectation of the arrival of the Jefe Político of the Department of Quiché.

At Uspantan we were on the borders of the unknown, for to the north of us the map shows nothing but uninhabited mountains and forests, and rivers whose courses have only recently been traced flowing towards the land of the untamed Lacandones. In the 16th and 17th centuries both military and missionary expeditions penetrated these forests, but the memory of them has faded away, and to learn their history one has to hunt through the monkish chronicles or dive into the mountains of manuscript stored in the archives at Seville. The recent additions to the map are due to the interminable boundary disputes with

Mexico, and are the result of much hard work on the part of survey expeditions led by Professor Rockstroh and Mr. Miles Rock, which were attended by much suffering and loss of life.

Our room in the convento was only a monk's cell, windowless, and infested with rats and mice. It opened into a long gallery, with a kitchen at one end and at the other a door leading into the church. The monks had of course long ago disappeared from the scene, and at the present time there is not even a cura resident in the village. One of the cells was used as a school for girls who were taught by a Ladino woman. There was much interest taken in us by these queer-looking scholars, clad in white huipils and blue enaguas, who fluttered about us like frightened birds, we being probably the first of our kind they had ever seen.

The little village was in no way pretty, but the climate was exceedingly pleasant, the blossoms on the orange-trees in the plaza filled the air with perfume, the green hills round us were refreshing to look at, and our tired animals fared sumptuously. Our housekeeping was of the usual primitive kind; we set up our dining-table in the gallery, and cooked our food at a fire on the ground just outside. The kitchen of the convento was closed and we were refused the use of it, but on the third day of our stay several bustling Ladino women took possession of it, kindled big fires, put on huge pots to boil, and set to work to pluck and prepare numberless fowls, all in anticipation of the Jefe's visit. Whilst these matters were in progress down swooped an angry company of Indian "mayores," the town councillors of the Indian Municipality, who for some minutes stood at the kitchen door and pelted the cooks with hard-

sounding words, which in their monosyllabic language seemed literally to fly from their mouths like peas from a boy's pea-shooter. It was a question of firewood: someone had clearly stolen somebody else's firewood, but who stole whose and how the matter was settled we never knew; however, the cooks seemed to have the best of it, for, after the charge was made, all talked at once for the space of ten minutes at the top of their voices, and then the "mayores" retired, looking more important and superior than when they arrived.

The preparations for the Jefe and his party seemed to exhaust the food-supply of the village, and nothing more could be bought; but luckily we had bespoken a turkey on the day we arrived, and a magnificent bird he looked, when just as we were starting on a ramble, we met him being led home in triumph by our boys, Caralampio having hold of the extreme end of one outstretched wing, and Santos of the other, whilst the turkey paced solemnly between them. When we returned from our walk we found our household with their heads together in deep consultation; the turkey had been killed and plucked, but there was no pot big enough in which to cook him. Cooked he must be that night, so he was set up on end in the largest pot we possessed and one end of him was cooked first, then he was turned over and we cooked the other end. After that he was cut up and grilled over the embers, and very excellent he proved to be.

As soon as we had settled down in our headquarters we began to make diligent enquiry about the existence and position of ruined Indian buildings. All sorts of answers had been given to our questions. Some said that there were ruins five leagues distant,

others that they were just over the hill, and others that they were to be found in all directions; and the latter were probably right. However, it was settled to look first of all for those said to be close by, so my husband and Gorgonio left me alone at the convento and started off one morning along the spur of the hill which runs out into the valley to the west. They walked about a mile and a half without seeing any trace of mounds and were nearly giving up the search in that direction, as the end of the ridge appeared to be so near, when they noticed that the shrubs in front of them covered an artificial mound, and that there was a dip in the ground between them and it. This dip proved to be a ditch, which may originally have been twenty feet deep, cut across the narrow neck of the ridge, and a long steep-sided mound barred the passage on the other side. Beyond this mound the top of the hill broadened out again into an extent of ground nearly the same as that of the site of Utatlan, and almost the whole of it was covered with foundation mounds. There was a small plaza with a temple mound at the east side of it, and an altar mound in front of the temple. In some cases the foundations retained part of their casing of well-dressed stone and cement facing. In position and arrangement the ruins differed little from those at Iximché and Utatlan, and the town, surrounded as it is by deep valleys with precipitous sides, must have been almost impregnable.

On another day, accompanied by Gorgonio and a Ladino guide, we went to look at some other ruins to the north-east of the village. It was a most charming ride through a well-watered park-like grass valley, the hills on either side covered with well-grown oaks and pines, and bounded to the north by the high forest-clad sierra. We passed out of this valley

through a gap in the sierra in a northerly direction and rode through pretty little valleys cleared for cultivation. The timber improved the higher we mounted, until the ocote pine gave way to white pines and cypresses and the forest on the hills around us was a close growth of magnificent trees. A ride of about an hour and a half brought us to the valley where the ruins stood. The soil was covered with tuft grass sometimes shoulder high, and it was not easy to make out the plan of the foundations, but as usual we found a well-defined plaza. The mound at the end of it was long and low and did not differ from the others in the neighbourhood, and could not have supported a stone-roofed building. Inside the plaza, where the altar mounds usually stand, we could just with difficulty trace the remains of two small oratories, which did not measure more than 3-1/2 by 7 feet. A small temple mound stood apart towards the west, and there were traces of building on the edges of the valley; but the entire group of ruins was small and of no great importance and we were led to believe that similar small groups abound in the country around.

Gorgonio told us that a feeling had sprung up against us amongst the villagers owing to reports that we had come to spy out the land with a view to starting cattle ranches, and hunting for treasure amongst the ruins, and it required some powers of persuasion to convince them that we were travelling for pleasure and had no intention either of buying up their lands or digging for an imaginary treasure. The ordinances issued from time to time by the Government prohibiting excavations and the removal of sculptures and pottery have confirmed both Indians and Ladinos in the belief that the mounds contain hidden treasure, and the result may easily be

disastrous, for it is as likely as not that the Indians may themselves begin rummaging amongst the ruins in search of treasure which does not exist, and will destroy in the process much that, although it is valueless to them, is of the highest importance to the archæologist.

We had now had a good rest and were prepared to continue our journey. When I came out of my cell on the morning of the 3rd February, ready for the start, I found the villagers assembled in front of the convento, erecting triumphal arches decorated with pine-boughs and strips of blue and white paper, the colours of the State. Fresh pine-needles were being strewn on the floor of the gallery, and the kitchen department was in a very excited condition, for the Jefe Político was reported to be close at hand. It was clearly time for us to be off, as no offer of payment would buy us a chicken for luncheon; so wishing the great man a good appetite for the very substantial breakfast which was being prepared for him, we rode on our way.

Our next halting-place was to be Belehú, said to be about seven and a half leagues distant. The track passed through groves of pine and oak, opening now and again on beautiful grassy valleys, where cattle were peacefully grazing. There was something wonderfully exhilarating in these early morning rides. The cool freshness of the sparkling air, the brilliant blue of the skies flecked with fleecy clouds chasing one another in endless succession, the beauty of the wayside flowers, the various notes of the strange birds, all raised one's spirits until one felt inclined to shout with delight. This may read like a fanciful exaggeration, but it is an actual fact, which repeated itself on every morning's ride through the

Altos. But to go on with our journey. We stopped for breakfast at the little village of Santa Cruz, and were there detained for two hours waiting for the cargadores who, as usual, lagged behind. However, we were fortunate in falling in with a party of Coban Indians who were returning to their homes by way of Belehú, and were able to engage their assistance as carriers and thus make sure of our dressing-bags and comforts for the night.

After breakfast we began an ascent through groves of oak and pine trees adorned with blossoming orchids and great bunches of green and orange-coloured mistletoe. We were now on the high ridge of hills which runs eastward into the great bend of the Rio Negro. After sweeping round this promontory the river flows almost due west to Chixoy, and then takes another sharp bend to the north, disappearing from view in a great black gorge of the mountains. The scenery was magnificent: the bold sierra to the north was wooded to its summit, and three thousand feet below us the river wound like some huge green serpent stealing through the grass. On the lofty ridge we were traversing the air reached us cleared and purified by the stormy winds of the Mexican Gulf, and was fresh and cool both in the morning and afternoon; but it had parted with its last drops of moisture on the opposite hills, so that one drawback to our journey through this enchanting country was the lack of water. The beds of the little mountain streams were all dried up, and we found only one spring at which the animals could drink throughout the whole day's ride.

We were still riding along the ridge, uncertain how far we might be from our destination, when night came upon us. Both my mule and I were tired, and

we had already exceeded the distance I expected to travel; but we had still to wander on along what seemed to me an interminable winding path. Again and again I thought we were at our journey's end, but the lights ahead of us proved to be fireflies which flitted off at our approach. At last we caught sight of a dim flicker of light which did not elude us, and proved to be that of a solitary tallow dip burning before the altar in the Cabildo of Belehú. We found the village to consist of a thatched roof cabildo, an outhouse, and two or three Indian huts. The Cabildo had but one room, which served both as town hall and chapel. Some Indians, who were praying before the shrine when we rode up, received us hospitably and at once set off for the Alcalde, who came and placed the room at our disposal, and kindled a fire for us in the outhouse. The little room was clean and sweet-smelling, with a carpet of fresh pine-needles, and pine-boughs hung around the walls, again in anticipation of a visit from the Jefe. At one end stood the altar decorated with artificial flowers and coloured papers, and edged with a row of extinct candle-stumps. On a small table covered with a white cloth reposed the silver-headed stick of the Alcalde, and on the altar itself lay the wands of office of the Alguacils and Mayores.

My weariness disappeared before the hope of hot coffee and a wash; but in part I was doomed to disappointment, for just as we were making ourselves comfortable and setting up our beds, Gorgonio came in with a long face to tell us that there was no water to be got within a league and a half, and that the supply brought in the morning for the needs of the villagers was exhausted! After some hunting about we managed to secure half a kettle full of the precious liquid for the coffee; but the poor

mules had to go waterless, and content themselves with the fresh green grass, of which luckily there was a good supply, and our baths had to be put off until the morning.

We were destined to receive that night yet another shock, for while preparing supper and chatting with the Indians round the fire in the outhouse, we learnt that there was no road out of the village practicable for mules except that by which we had arrived. The road we had been told of as leading south across the river to Cubulco was a myth: it was a mere track hardly passable for Indians carrying loads, and altogether impossible for animals. Here was a dilemma! We were caught in the great bend of the river with no way to get out of it without retracing our steps, which we were most unwilling to do, and the only bridge over the river down stream was at Chixoy, to reach which we should have to return at least as far as Santa Cruz before descending into the valley, and when we had crossed it we should be as far as before from Rabinal. After many questionings and much interpretation, we learnt that the track used by the Indians going to Coban followed the crest of the hill for some five or six miles to the eastward, and then made a rapid descent to the river at Agua Blanca. The track along the high ground was said to be good, but the descent impossible for loaded mules; however, so loth were we to turn back, that we determined to try it, and the Alcalde was told to engage some Indians to relieve the mules of their loads during the steep descent.

We were up early the next morning, but not early enough for the Indians, who, the day being Sunday, arrived at dawn to say their prayers before the altar; and I was obliged to barricade the door against one

devout person, who tried to force his way in before I was dressed. As soon as possible I opened the door for them, and in they came, and, quite regardless of us or our doings, lighted their candles and knelt before the altar at their devotions. There was no leader and no regular service; each man said his prayers out loud, and from one who prayed in Spanish we caught now and then a few sentences recounting the story of his pilgrimages and naming the offerings he had given at various shrines. In a few minutes their prayers were over, and devoutly crossing themselves they left the room.

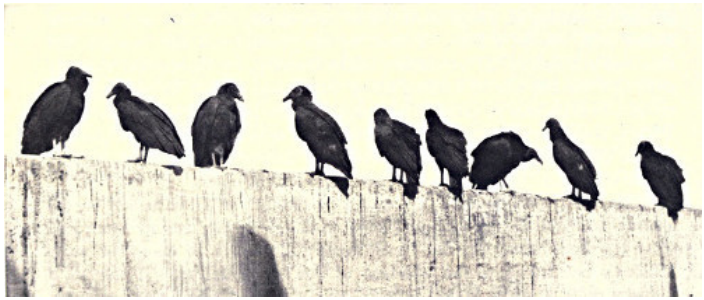
By the time we had finished our coffee the mozos were ready to start, and we rode for about two leagues on a fair track, now through woodland and now through milpas and bright green patches of sugar-cane, enjoying charming views of the wooded ridge we were leaving behind us and of the lofty mountains on the far side of the valley. At a distance of about five miles from the village we came to a rivulet, where the animals were at last able to quench their thirst, and two miles further on the steep descent of nearly four thousand feet began. Here we halted to unload the mules and give over their burdens to the care of the Indian carriers. We did not unsaddle the animals, but were careful to remove stirrups and stirrup-leathers, and to see that all straps and girths were secure. My husband and I led the way, keeping well ahead of the mules, lest one of them should roll over us. It was an exceedingly rough and difficult walk, and we were more than three hours accomplishing it. Two of the mules fell, and the horse rolled over; but none of them were hurt, and we all arrived safely at the river.

In answer to our shouts a man emerged from a house on the opposite bank and came over to us on a very small raft which he brought across the stream by hauling on a rope made fast to both banks. On this craft we were ferried over, two at a time. I dare say the passage was safe enough, but that was not exactly my impression whilst crossing, for the current was very swift and the raft almost entirely under water, and we had to curl ourselves up on a ricketty seat in order to keep dry. At our landing-place, called Agua Blanca, there were only two houses, and these were inhabited by Cobaneros, friends of Gorgonio, who gave us food and shelter for the night, treated our tired animals most hospitably, and refused all payment.

Alas! we had now left the beautiful climate of the Altos behind us, the air was hot and muggy and swarming with insect life, and we were glad when the dawn came and we could mount our mules to climb the steep hillside which led up to the tableland of the Alta Vera Paz. It was not a pleasant day's journey, as our animals were very tired and a thick mist cut us off from the enjoyment of the landscape. About midday rain began to fall, the first we had felt since leaving the city of Guatemala, and the first break in our sunlit journey. About one o'clock we rode into the little town of San Cristóbal, which lies buried in fruit-trees on the edge of a pretty little lake. The coffee-plants here are not closely-clipped bushes but veritable trees laden with ripe red berries, and we found the whole Indian population busily engaged gathering in the crop and singing and chatting cheerfully over the task.

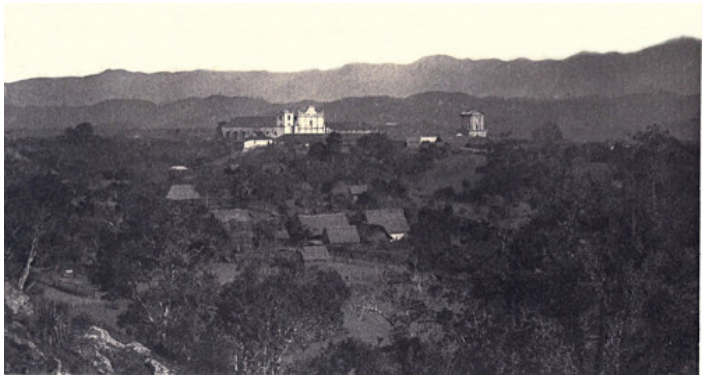
We passed through the plaza with its picturesque church, catching only a glimpse of the lake, as the

mist still hung low, and the hills were veiled in clouds, and then rode on through lanes which were continuous bowers of the richest greenery and brilliant with flowers and fruit. A few miles further on we reached the village of Santa Cruz, and struck the main road to Coban; then the travelling became very bad, for the rainy season was not over and the long lines of ox-carts which carry the coffee down to the Port of Panzos had cut the soft road-bed into rough ruts and deep holes. We had still four leagues to ride, and night came on before we reached our destination. My mule floundered into the great holes full of half-dried mud, and it was all I could do to keep my seat. Outside the town we were met by Mr. Thomae, to whom we had telegraphed from San Cristóbal, and who had ridden out to meet us and escort us to his home, where his wife gave us the kindliest welcome. A clean bedroom, white sheets, and plenty of towels offered a refreshing change after camps, conventos, and cabildos, and an ever-thoughtful hospitality induced us to stay on for a whole pleasant week in our comfortable quarters.



ZOPILOTES.

CHAPTER XI. COBAN AND THE VERA PAZ.



COBAN.

A pleasant air of prosperity pervades the settlement of Coban. Fortunately the touch of modern European influence has in no way lessened the attractiveness of the native surroundings, and for the first time we

found comfort united with picturesqueness under the lovely skies of these tropical highlands.

The cottages of the natives stand apart from one another in gardens of flowering shrubs, fruit-trees, and rose-bushes, many of them half-buried in the thick foliage of coffee-trees, and they form a pleasant setting for the central group of public buildings and the substantial, comfortable, and characteristically southern houses of the well-to-do planters and merchants. Although the Indian cottages are mostly of the wattle-and-thatch order, there are not wanting stone-built and red-tiled dwelling-houses amongst them; and there is also an intermediate form of house peculiar to the neighbourhood of Coban in which the walls are made of "chute," the roughly-squared trunks of tree-ferns, set close together in the ground and slightly tapering towards the top. Unlike timber, these fern-posts are entirely unaffected by moisture, so that, although the butt-end of the post is embedded in the ever-damp soil, it will last for centuries, and chutes from an old house will sell just as well as new ones.

The more imposing houses afford shelter both to the head of a family and the family saint—for every well-to-do Indian affords himself a saint, whether in the form of a framed print or a sculptured effigy made in Europe or imitated in the country by the clever native carvers in orange-wood. The decoration of the saint's altar on festal occasions is attended to by the women of the family and their female friends, and they often display wonderful if eccentric taste, using chiefly flowers—and amongst these the gorgeous spikes of *Bromelias* and *Musæ* play a prominent part—or fruits, either singly or strung in garlands. They shape curious figures in soft clay and

clothe them with variegated petals, or build stiff porches of cane and cover them with green and purple *Canna*-leaves. If the occasion is one of especial rejoicing money will be spent, some going to the priest to pay for masses, but far the larger amount finding its way to the aguardiente shop. Such private celebrations are, however, not of frequent occurrence, and more generally the functions are limited to keeping the "novena," or nine-days' vigil, before the saint's day, which may be described as a daily prayer-meeting, where if refreshments are offered by the hosts they include only "atol" and "batido" and such-like harmless preparations to the exclusion of stronger drinks.

The history of a family settlement is usually somewhat as follows:—A married Indian will build for himself a rancho of wattle, chute, or stone, according to his wealth or position, and as his family and needs increase will add to it not additional rooms, but separate ranchos one after the other, until, in patriarchal fashion, he lives surrounded by his married sons (rarely more than two in number) and their children, who work and care for him with a devotion that, if filial, is certainly utterly undemonstrative. The parent couple always keep the best house and share it with the favoured saint. When death has at last removed both the old people the heir takes possession of the property and very speedily gets rid of his brothers and their belongings, who then have to find new houses for themselves.



THE CHURCH.

The township of Coban is divided into eleven "barrios" or wards, each named after a different saint; and in the old days, when the Indians were still under priestly management, each "barrio" had its religious community, the membership of which conferred a certain distinction and was confined to Indians of wealth and family. These communities were called "cofradias," and became of great local importance; they owned lands, built houses dedicated to the saint whose name they bore, and in course of time accumulated small funds of money, which they loaned out to members at the trifling interest of about fifty per cent. It was looked on as an honour to hold one of these loans, because the interest went towards defraying the expenses on the festal day of the saint; and as each Cofradia thought its own saint far superior to all others, it naturally regarded its feast day as the most important day in the whole year. The ceremonies began with early mass in the Great Church, where the worshippers had hung the walls with numerous cages containing pet mocking-birds and pito-reales, who joined their voices to the hymns of praise which rose through an

atmosphere dim and heavy with the smoke of many candles and the mixed fragrance of liquidambar incense and pine-needles. When the service was over, a pompous and solemn procession was formed to conduct the saint from the church (which was his usual place of abode) to the gorgeously adorned cofradia-house, where the whole day was spent in rites that strongly smacked of ante-Christian times. The saint's house was transformed into a gay palace by the erection of "Sarabandas," high framework affairs, brilliant with decorations of leaves and fruits. There would be music, not only by the strolling marimba player, who inevitably turns up at all fairs and festivals, but by an orchestra of harp, violin, guitar, and guitarilla, for the Indians of the Vera Paz are a musical people, and they played original Indian tunes to which the traditional dances, the "deer and hounds," the "monkey-dance," "death-dance," or the "Moros and Christianos," were performed with becoming gravity by untiring young bucks, whilst inside the house, before the saint, the "zon" would be solemnly gone through by the elders.

My informant on these points had often been present at such meetings, and tells me that the courteous invitation to walk in and join the revels was always extended to a passing foreigner. The proceedings are described as characteristically Indian, crowded in the first place, and smelly; then, as the spirits of the partakers rose with the effects of frequent nips of aguardiente and abundant food cooked to their taste with liberal seasonings of garlic, onions, achiote, and chili, they would gradually grow more and more noisy and uproarious; but however lively they might get in the course of the day they would never turn quarrelsome, and, if anything, the tipsy Indian would be more amiable and more communicative than the

same man when sober.



A COBANERA.

After the revolution of 1870 and the fall of the ecclesiastical party from power the newly constituted Government decreed the suppression of all religious societies (excepting the Sisters of Charity), and the last of the monks and nuns were driven out of the country; but it was not until three years later that the cofradias were interfered with and the saints deprived of their yearly visits to their own houses. Not long after this the Government offered the vacant houses for sale; but I am delighted to say that

the scheme was for many years a failure, partly on account of a lingering belief that the Church party might return to power, and partly because no Indian or Ladino could be found sufficiently bold to risk a midnight encounter with an angry saint who might tire of his residence in the church and come back to look after his own property. At last, saints' houses fell so low in the market that some of the less superstitious were attracted by the bargains offered. Gorgonio was one of the first to take advantage of this state of affairs, and managed to secure a well-built house, but not until he had many earnest consultations with my husband as to his prospects of receiving unsolicited visits from another world.

Amongst other results of the suppression of the cofradias is the gradual decadence of the curious Indian dances, some of which have been named; most of them are merely pantomimic, but the Moros and Christianos—in which the persons represented are Cortés, Montezuma, the King of Jerusalem, and the King of Spain—is half-dance and half-drama, like the performances of Christmas "mummers" in England, and has partly the same origin, for there seems to be no doubt that the native Indian dances were modified and altered on the lines of mediæval mystery-plays by the missionary monks of the fifteenth century, much in the same way as the heathen revels of Yuletide had been changed to meet a Christian cult.

Nothing in this garden portion of Coban where the Indians live suggests the bare plaza, half the day bustling with noisy marketing and half the day a dreary waste, which is the chief characteristic of a Central-American town; and it came quite as a surprise to me when, on passing through an arched

tower at the end of a straggling street, I suddenly found myself in a great square with all the usual accompaniments of church, cabildo, and cárcel—nothing omitted—not, even in this arcadia, the sad-eyed prisoner with hands stretched through the bars begging an alms of the passer-by. Although I was loth thus suddenly to exchange the atmosphere of a quiet country village for the bustle of a market-town, I must own that the scene which met my view ranks high for brilliancy and animation even in this country of colour-loving southrons. The weekly market was at its height and the great space was thronged with gaily-dressed women presiding over baskets of fruits, vegetables, and flowers, and stalls hung with bright-coloured fabrics, and the impression left on my mind is as of a maze of sunlight, colour, movement, and thriving abundance.

At the end of the plaza stands the great church with the Convento attached to it. Although this church was not built until some years later, it was the direct outcome of the missionary efforts of Bartolomé Las Casas, the "Apostle of the Indies," whose unframed portrait still hangs on its walls, and of his devoted companions of the brotherhood of St. Dominic, which began in the year 1537. At that time Las Casas was a member of the Dominican convent at Santiago, and had lately published his celebrated pamphlet, 'De Unico Vocationis modo,' in which he denounced the warfare carried on against the Indians, dwelt on the horrors and wrongs inflicted on them, and contended that their conversion should be effected by persuasion alone. Such doctrines raised a storm of angry disapproval from the Spaniards, for although the power of the Quichés had been broken by the destruction of Utatlan and Uspantan, the position of the settlers was not altogether secure, and one

expedition after another had been driven back from Tuzulutlan, which had earned the ill-omened name of “la tierra de guerra,” the land of war. In scornful answer to his appeal the monk was told to try the experiment himself, and Tuzulutlan was jeeringly suggested as a good field for his operations. Las Casas was quick to see his chance, and promptly accepting the challenge which had been flung at him in derision asked only a fair field and no favour for his enterprise. These conditions were granted, and the acting Governor, Alonzo Maldonado, wrote to him promising that if he would convert the Indians of the land of war to the true faith, and induce them to acknowledge the lordship of the Spanish crown and pay a moderate tribute to his majesty, none of the townships or people of that province should be given in “encomienda” to a Spaniard, and that no Spaniard should be allowed to enter the land of the converts or in any way interfere with them for the space of five years.



THE PLAZA, COBAN.

The method adopted by the Dominican missionaries to overcome the hostility and suspicion of the fierce inhabitants of Tuzulutlan, and to gain touch of their chiefs, was simple and ingenious. Las Casas and his three brethren, Rodrigo de Ladrada, Pedro de Angulo, and Luis Cancer, had all acquired a knowledge of the Quiché language, dialects of which were spoken both in Guatemala and Tuzulutlan, and in this language they composed verses embodying the story of the fall of man and his redemption and the other tenets of the Christian faith. They then sought out four Indian traders who were accustomed to make journeys to Sacapulas and Tuzulutlan to sell their goods, and to these men, who had already become Christians, the Padres taught the verses they had composed, so that they might chant them to the accompaniment of native instruments and the tinkling of little Spanish bells. Small articles of European manufacture for presents to the chiefs were added to the traders' packs, and they set out for Sacapulas, where they were well received by its cacique, who was then by far the most influential man in that part of the country. When the trading was over for the day, and whilst the chief persons of the neighbourhood were still assembled in the house of the cacique, the traders begged the loan of some musical instruments and then tinkling the "cascabeles," which they had brought with them from Guatemala, they commenced their chant. The novel form of the music and the wonderful story which the verses told had the wished-for effect on the hearers, so that the chant had to be repeated time after time and day after day to increasing crowds of eager listeners. When, however, the cacique enquired more closely into the meaning of the words of the song, the traders told him that they

themselves were unable to give him any further explanation, as that could be given by the Padres alone. “And who, then, are these Padres?” asked the cacique, “for I have never seen nor heard of them.” The traders replied that they were men clad in black and white garments, who wore their hair cut in the form of a wreath, who ate no meat, and who desired neither gold nor cloaks, nor feathers nor cacao, who were not married yet lived chaste lives, who sang the praises of God both day and night, and possessed beautiful images, before which they knelt in prayer, and that these men alone could explain the meaning of the verses; but that such good men were they, and so ready to impart their knowledge to all, that should the cacique send for them they would most willingly come to instruct him. The cacique pondered over the words of the traders, and finally agreed that his younger brother, a youth of twenty-two years, should accompany the traders on their return journey to Guatemala. He privately instructed the youth to seize every opportunity to learn if it were really true that the padres possessed neither gold nor silver, and did not beg for it nor hunt for it, as all other Christians did, and whether it were true that they neither had women in their houses nor treated with them elsewhere. It is needless to say that the young Indian chieftain was well received at Guatemala by Las Casas and his companions, and that he returned to his country well pleased, in company with Luis Cancer, who successfully commenced the conversion of the people.

In October 1537 Las Casas himself set out for Sacapulas, and was soon to have proof given him of the influence of the missionary teaching. The cacique, who was known to the Spaniards by the name of Don Juan, had made arrangements for the

marriage of his brother, the youth who had accompanied the traders to Guatemala, to the daughter of the Cacique of Coban, and had prepared great festivities wherewith to celebrate the wedding. On such occasions it was an old custom to perform certain ceremonies when visitors from Coban crossed the river which divided the two jurisdictions; but in this instance before the members of the bridal party had arrived at the river banks, the cacique Don Juan sent a messenger to them to say that the festivities, dances, and feasts which he had prepared in their honour would afford ample proof of the great contentment with which he awaited their coming. He, however, begged of them to leave behind the turkeys and other birds and animals which they were bringing with them to sacrifice on the passage of the river, for, time-honoured as was that custom, he was no longer prepared to take his part in it, having learned to look on such customs as naught but vanity and deceit with which the Devil had blinded his eyes, and that the Padres had taught him to pay adoration to the one true and only God. Such a request caused consternation amongst the chiefs from Coban, and their first impulse was to return with the bride to her home and declare war on Don Juan, for they feared that his acceptance of Christian teaching would entail the subjection of his country to the rule of the Spaniards, and that it would be their own turn next to be conquered and despoiled by the hated foreigners. When, however, they learnt that the territory of Don Juan had been left in peace and that no armed Spaniard had entered it, they reconsidered their decision, and both fearing to lose such a powerful alliance and confident that they could secure a good augury for the bride by offering even richer sacrifices to their own gods on their

return home, they sent a message to Don Juan granting his request that the customary sacrifices at the passage of the river should be omitted, and adding that in this and all other matters it was their desire to please him.

About this time Las Casas himself arrived at Don Juan's house and received a warm welcome from the cacique, although there was some grumbling amongst the people at the desertion of their old gods, and the first Christian church was burnt to the ground almost as soon as it was built—rumour said by some of the followers of the chieftains from Coban who were incensed at the omission of the customary sacrifices. However, the battle was now half won, for the Dominicans had gained a hold on Tuzulutlan, and had got into touch with Coban. That same year Las Casas and Pedro de Angulo made a journey through the former province, and, thanks to the friendship and care of Don Juan, were everywhere well received. There were, however, many difficulties to be met and overcome, and the first to make itself felt was an administrative difficulty which arose from the habit of the Indians of living "in small scattered communities of not more than six houses together and these a musket-shot apart." How was it possible with such a small staff of missionaries to teach the people and keep control of them when not more than three or four households could be got together at a time and these could only be revisited at long intervals? To meet this difficulty Las Casas sought to induce the Indians to dwell together in towns, and the township of Rabinal was founded about a league distant from its present site. This step, no doubt, ensured the more rapid conversion of the natives and secured the more efficient supervision by the priests, but it met with

great opposition from the Indians, for, as the chronicler says, “each one hated to leave the hut and the hill, valley, or barranca in which he was born.” And later experience has proved the inexpediency of a measure which increased the danger of contagion in the cases of European disease amongst persons whose constitutions were already upset by a change in the manner of life. However, this was not a result likely to be foreseen at the time, and we may acquit a man who showed such breadth of mind and keen sympathy with suffering as did Las Casas of the error only too prevalent at the time—that of believing that as long as an Indian’s soul was saved by the rite of baptism it did not much matter what happened to his body.

So good an impression had the Padres made in a short time on these hitherto hostile people that by the end of the year Luis Cancer had succeeded in penetrating the Province of Coban without any opposition from its inhabitants; and in the year following—after a journey to Guatemala in company with the cacique Don Juan—Las Casas himself visited Coban, and bears witness in his writings to the good order and arrangement of the native government and excellence of its laws, and states that he found the people more religious by nature and less given to abominable sacrifices than any other people in the whole of the Indies.

I must not follow any further the fortunes of the Dominican Fathers who had changed the name of the much-dreaded land of war into that it now bears of the “Vera Paz,” or True Peace—not that incidents of interest are lacking, such as the martyrdom of Padre Vico at the hands of the Acalaes and Lacandones, which tempt one to wander on.

It is, indeed, a sad fall from the heroic figures of Las Casas and his faithful companions, who, whatever their failings in judgment, feared neither hardship nor death, and for years carried their lives in their hands and toiled unceasingly without hope of earthly reward, to the easy-going half-caste cura of this century as he is depicted in the pages of modern travellers. The celibacy of the clergy must, indeed, have been a more patent fact in those days than it is now, for about the year 1558 it made such an impression on the Indians of the Vera Paz that they formally represented to the authorities that as the padres did not marry, and they could see no little padres running about, they feared the race would die out!

There is a larger proportion of foreigners in Coban than in any other town in the Republic: they are almost exclusively Germans engaged in coffee-planting, and some few of them in cattle-ranching and other industries; although complaints of isolation and of housekeeping and labour troubles are not unheard of amongst them, they seemed to me to be fortunate from a business point of view in the high reputation that the Vera Paz coffee holds in the market, and the very considerable commercial importance which their industry and foresight has brought to the district; and, from a personal point of view, in the enjoyment of a delicious climate in which their rosy-cheeked children can be reared in health and strength, and in all the comforts which pertain to a life half European and half tropical. Hotels or fondas appear to be scarce; but the hospitality of the foreign residents is proverbial; and it was to old friends of my husband's that we were indebted for a charming week passed in comfort and ease, especially grateful to me, somewhat wearied as

I had become with the cares and difficulties of camp housekeeping and the toil of the road. I took my pleasure by sitting all day in the cool gallery which enclosed the patio—so suggestive of southern Spain—watching the clouds chase one another across the blue sky, and listening to the breeze gently swaying the branches of a fine Norfolk Island pine. The air was perfumed with the scent of violets and roses, and the silence only broken by the voices of workers on the far side of the court where the business of the house was carried on, and where the native women, seated before little tables, sorted the coffee-berries for market, and chatted loudly in their harsh-sounding language.



THE CALVARIO.

CHAPTER XII. RUINS AT RABINAL. (BY A. P. M.)



A TEMPLE NEAR RABINAL.

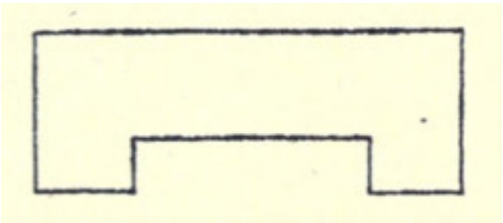
We had already changed our plans once, when the failure to find a road from Belehú to Rabinal diverted our steps to the Alta Vera Paz and Coban, and now news reached us that, through some blunder, the cases of instruments and boxes of provisions which were to have been forwarded to Salamá for our use at Rabinal had never left Guatemala, so that again we had to alter our plans, and all thoughts of exploring the ruins near Rabinal had finally to be abandoned. I regretted this the more as I had already caught a glimpse of these ruins when on a journey from Santa Cruz Quiché to Coban in 1887, and was much impressed with what I then saw; but as I was then only able to spend five hours examining one of the sites, my notes taken on that occasion are very

scanty: however, I will give them here in the hope of attracting the attention of some other traveller, whom I have no doubt will be amply repaid for the trouble of examining the ruins more thoroughly.

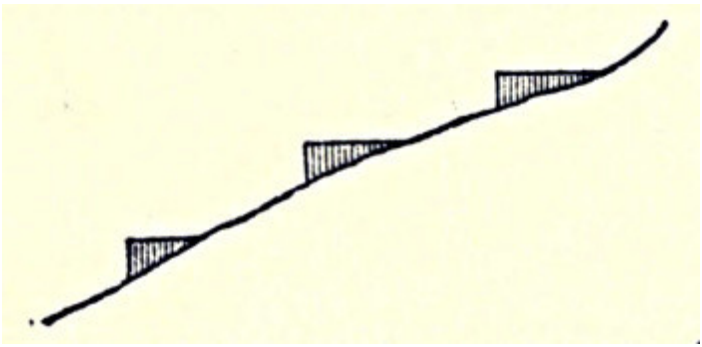
The two towns of Cubulco and Rabinal are situated about twelve miles apart at either end of a plain surrounded by high ranges of hills. Lower hills run out into the plain from north and south, and almost divide it in two near the middle, and spurs of the high range and partly detached hills jut out into the plain from all sides. Many of these lower hill-tops are the sites of ancient Indian buildings, and on one of them, to the north of the town of Rabinal, the ruins are visible from the town itself; but as the foundations of the buildings of this group are said to be much destroyed, I chose as the object of my excursion another site further to the west and almost equidistant from Rabinal and Cubulco.

A spur of the bare rocky foothills, rising to over one thousand feet in height, here juts out into the plain from the main northern range, and for about three quarters of a mile along its top ridge stands the ruins of an Indian town. At the narrow neck where the spur leaves the main range there are the remains of two curved walls about fifty yards apart, which were no doubt used for defensive purposes. Outside these walls towards the main range there is one group of buildings. On leaving this group and crossing the walls to follow the ridge towards the south, the top and slopes of the hill, for about one hundred feet down on either side, are seen to be covered with the small terraced foundations which may have supported very small houses built of some perishable material, or may possibly be the sites of burial-places. These terraces are sometimes oblong,

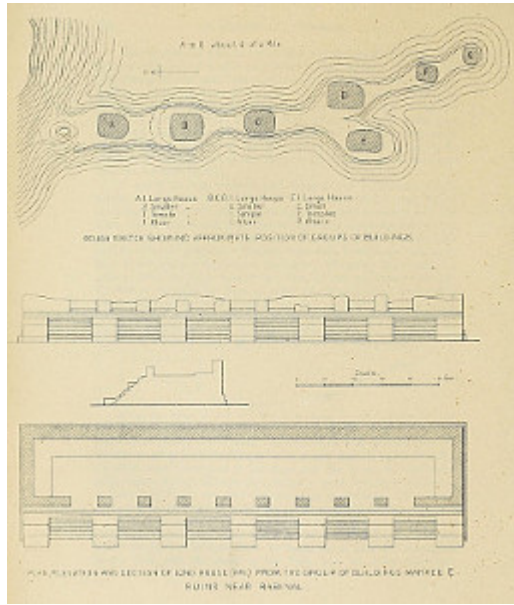
measuring 20-30 feet in length by 6-7 feet in width; but more often they are of this shape:—



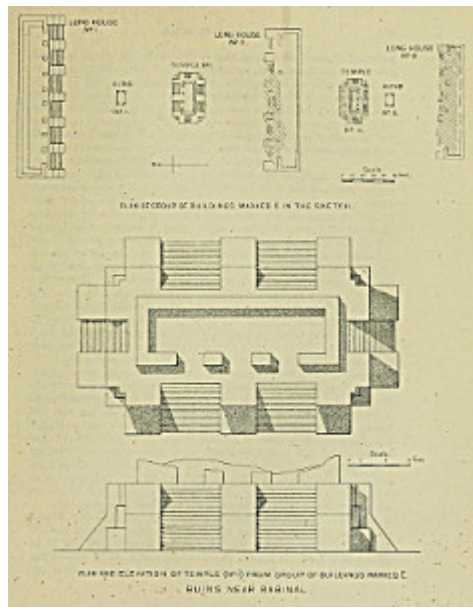
and they stand out from the hill thus:—



Along the ridge of the hill there are seven separate groups of what must have been public buildings, each group arranged on nearly the same plan so as to enclose a level plaza. It seems to me most probable that here we have an example of the villages “of not more than six houses, standing a gunshot apart,” mentioned by Las Casas, and that it was the inhabitants of the houses on these hill-tops whom he had so much difficulty in persuading to leave their homes and form the settlement at Rabinal. The relative position of the seven groups of buildings is shown on the sketch plan.



RUINS NEAR RABINAL.



RUINS NEAR RABINAL.

The general arrangement of the buildings in each group is as follows:—One large house extends right across the hill-top bounding the northern side of the Plaza: this house faces the south, and as there are no openings in the back wall, the access to the Plaza from the north must have been just on the fall of the hill at each end of the house. Numerous doorways opened on to a flight of stone steps on the south side. A house similar in plan, but somewhat smaller, stood on the southern side of the Plaza and faced north, and there were usually the remains of some smaller houses facing inwards on the east and west sides of the Plazas. Almost equidistant between the north and south houses, in the centre of each Plaza, stood what I take to be the remains of a temple, facing northwards, and between this and the northern house stood an altar which was apparently a copy in miniature of the foundation of the temple.

I took some measurements of the buildings in the Plaza on the top of the western spur. The arrangement differed somewhat from that of the other groups, the Plaza being, so to speak, double and having no houses along the sides, or it may be that the houses were small and had left no trace of their previous existence. The house No. 1 (see plan, Group E) was by far the largest, measuring 156 feet 7 inches in length and 21 feet 6 inches in breadth. It was approached by a flight of steps divided into six divisions by projecting buttresses. Eight masonry piers supported the roof in front, the wall being continuous at the sides and back of the house. The wall is still standing in some parts to the height of 6 feet. A raised bench 6 feet 6 inches in width runs along the back and sides of the house. Such a

building must necessarily have been roofed with wood; and I may add that nowhere did I find any traces of stones which could have been used for purposes of roofing.

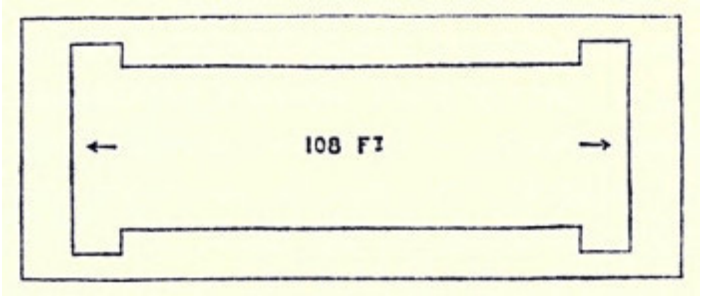
A ground-plan and elevation of the building, which I take to be a temple, is also given in the Plate. Two stairways with very narrow steps rise between buttresses on both north and south sides of the building and a single stairway on the east and west; but the approach is from the north side only, and the platform round the temple on the other three sides is little more than a foot wide. The height of this platform from the ground is 10 feet 10 inches. The temple has three doorways on the north side, and the walls are still standing to the height of 5 feet. The temple marked No. 2 in Group E faced towards the south. All the other temples are built on the same plan, but differ in size, some being considerably larger than that shown in the plan.

The altars were apparently miniature copies of the foundations of the temples, with steps only 3 or 4 inches in height and width; but no trace of a miniature house could be seen on the top of them. The masonry is all of the same description: irregular flat stones 2 to 5 inches thick and straight at one edge, placed over one another and faced with plaster. The stones may have been found already apart from one another, or may have been flaked off from the rock with little trouble, and have needed little dressing. The thick plaster coating is in some places still perfectly preserved.

From the position chosen, and from the fact that the buildings face inwards, it seems probable that each group may have formed a sort of fortress.

In one of the plazas I found the remains of a

building, of which a rough ground-plan is here given: —



It is an oblong enclosure with walls 10 feet thick, with recesses at the four corners. The walls are in some parts perfect to the height of 7 feet. I could not find that there had been originally any doorway to this enclosure, but two entrances have been forced in where the walls are narrowest. It agrees in plan and dimensions with the building figured in Bancroft's 'Native Races of the Pacific States,' as a type of the Tlachtli courts of Mexico, where a game (which is described by Herrera and others) was played with an india-rubber ball.

There were numbers of Chaya (obsidian) flakes lying about on the surface of the ground, and I found one chipped arrow-head, one stone axe, and several pieces of stone axes and of mealing-stones.

Nothing beyond these few dry statements can be squeezed out of my note-book, and what little else is known can be gathered from the photographs and plans. An examination of the ruins on the neighbouring hill-tops would doubtless add much to our knowledge, and there still remains as a field for enquiry the whole of the forest-covered range of the Sierra de las Minas, which has not as yet been touched by the archæologist, and must almost

certainly contain interesting ruins. The assertion is not mere guesswork, but is based on the fact that similar ruins are known to exist on the hills above San Gerónimo, and that I believe I gained touch of the same style of building at the ruins of Chacujál on the south side of the valley of the Polochic, which was a flourishing town when Cortés visited it in the year 1526; it is not probable that the country between these sites was left uninhabited.

CHAPTER XIII. THE ROAD TO ZACAPA AND COPAN.

We would gladly have lingered on in the enjoyment of such pleasant lazy days at Coban; but there were many miles to be traversed before we could reach the ruins of Copan, a place so like in name and so different in nature, the goal to which my eyes now turned longingly. Moreover, the season was advancing, and the fervid rays of the sun at midday proclaimed that summer was upon us.

Two days were passed in hunting up mozos to carry our baggage, and it was only owing to the fear of the wrath of the Alcalde and the terrors of the cárcel that they consented to make the journey. The Indians seem to be in absolute servitude to the Alcalde, who orders them to go when and where he pleases, and in our better moments we had pangs of conscience at being accomplices in such slave-driving; but such is the force of custom, that we often found ourselves fretting and fuming because the mozos failed to

make their appearance, and their dilatoriness even drew down denunciation on their heads from the mouth of the ever-patient Gorgonio. At length five or six sulky Indians arrived, shouldered our luggage, and started off on the road to Santa Cruz; after bidding our kind host farewell, we rode after them, and on our well-fed and rested mules actually traversed the four leagues to Santa Cruz in three hours. Beyond Santa Cruz the road ran high above the windings of the Coban River, whose steep banks are richly clothed with tree-ferns and flowering creepers. Towards evening we reached the ugly little wind-swept hamlet of Tactic, the usual resting-place for travellers between Coban and the port of Panzos. Travellers must often fare badly, for one small inn, containing a single bedroom, was all the accommodation the village appeared to afford; and but for Mr. Thomae's forethought in telegraphing to secure this room for us, we might have had to share the verandah for the night with native travellers, arrieros, and dogs, and probably have gone supperless to bed.

At Tactic we left the cart-road leading to Panzos, which, after surmounting the divide, strikes the source of the Rio Polochic, and follows its banks to the eastward. Our course lay along a mule-track which crosses the hills to the southward and connects Coban with the capital. During our morning ride we passed along river-bottoms and good grass land, where well-fed cattle gazed peacefully at us, instead of running after us and glaring with hungry eyes as their less fortunate brethren had done in the dry lands of the Altos. Leaving these pleasant pastures of El Patál, famous for keeping green and fresh throughout the dry season, we mounted a considerable hill and arrived at the small desolate

rancho of Santa Rosa. Here we breakfasted in the state apartment of the house, a small windowless mud-floored chamber which served its owners as dining-room, sleeping-room, and oratory, where a dissipated-looking muscovy duck, three minute puppies, and numerous flea-infested, half-starved dogs shared our meal of tortillas and frijoles. After breakfast we clambered over more broken hills to the summit of the range, the cumbre de Cachil; and here again we passed suddenly beyond the limit of the Atlantic rainfall which keeps the Alta Vera Paz so rich and green, and entered a gloomy and desert-looking land. There was no relief to the monotony of the sun-baked mountain-sides, saving the presence here and there in the deeper hollows of a few trees, which in this dry season had dropped their leaves and clothed themselves with a wealth of brilliant blossom—yellow and white frangipani, the madre de cacao, with its soft pink bloom, and another tree unknown to me with feathery white racemes like an acacia.

From the southern edge of the range we saw the hot dried-up plain of Salamá stretching before us, and the white-walled houses of the town glistening in the afternoon sun. Although the road was here well graded and in fair condition, it was a wearisome journey over the last of the hills and down the long descent to the little rivulet which flows along the edge of the plain. The banks of the stream were covered with flowering shrubs and trees, which here near the water's edge were clothed in green leaves, and we preferred to seek a lodging in a wayside house, under their grateful shade, to riding on over the dusty plain to the hot streets of the little town. Here we were destined to remain for two whole days, refreshed by the last drops of an occasional

shower blown to us over the mountains, and solaced by the sweet song of the sensontes, or mocking-birds, which abound in the neighbourhood, whilst the country round was being searched for mozos and mules to carry on our baggage. We were obliged to despatch Caralampio to Rabinal to fetch the boxes which were to have been sent there from Chiché; and, as we afterwards learnt, he had to extend his journey to Chiché itself in order to retrieve them from the Alcalde, in whose hands they had been left, and who had been faithless to his promises to forward them; Caralampio did not overtake us until we had reached Zacapa. The difficulty in engaging mules would have led to a longer delay had not Mr. Harris, the owner of the Hacienda of San Gerónimo, come to our rescue and also invited us to visit him. On our way to the hacienda we passed through Salamá, a pretty little town with a bright stream running through it, and a Plaza planted with cocoanut-palms; and then we rode on across the dried-up plain, which, as we approached the hacienda, lost its sun-baked aspect and became green with cane-fields and coffee-plantations, the result of careful irrigation. At our journey's end we received a cordial welcome from Mr. Harris and Mr. Burnes.

The Hacienda of San Gerónimo has an interesting history, and has been the cause of endless troubles and litigation. Originally it was a convent of Dominican monks, and their fine enduring work can be seen in the solid building of the house and the church attached to it, and in the extensive irrigation works with tunnels and aqueducts almost worthy of the Romans. Both situation and climate are delightful. It stands about 3000 feet above the sea-level at the edge of the plain, with well-wooded hills at the back of it, which run to join the lofty range of

the Sierra de las Minas. The thin burnt-up grass and cracked earth, so characteristic of the plain of Salamá, disappear before the skilfully devised irrigation, and one's eyes rest gratefully on fields of waving green sugar-cane. Surely the monks had learnt the art of choosing pleasant places and adding to their natural charms, and it must have been a cruel wrench when they were compelled to leave their home, their church, and their vineyards—for here alone in Guatemala they had succeeded in cultivating the vine and producing a wine which was acceptable to their countrymen. After the withdrawal of the Dominicans in about the year 1845 the estate was bought by an Englishman of the name of Bennett, whose representatives now own it; and although the vine has given way to the sugar-cane, and the reputation of its wine is a thing of the past, the "Puro de San Gerónimo," as the aguardiente now made here is called, is famed throughout the length and breadth of the Republic.

The forty-six thousand acres over which the property extends contains mountain, forest, and plain, and a splendid supply of running-water. A little town of Indian and Negro labourers and attendants near the convent walls was doubtless governed on the paternal system so dear to the monks, who in the old days brooked little interference from the secular arm. Probably the English proprietor reaped the benefit from this state of affairs, and for some years he had obedient workmen and the estate yielded large profits. Then followed disputes amongst his heirs, changes of management, and law-suits. Meanwhile the serfs of the monkish rule were beginning to learn and to abuse their independence; squabbles arose between town and hacienda, and a feud gradually sprang up which has never died out. But quite lately

the crisis became acute; Indians and half-castes had squatted in the outlying portions of the property and played havoc with timber and game, incendiary fires were of constant occurrence, irrigation ditches were damaged and cattle mutilated; finally, a mob from the town wantonly burned down the sugar-mill and attacked the overseer in charge. When matters reached this stage the proprietors placed their case in the hands of the English Minister at Guatemala, and after some negotiation the Government (who knew that its own officials in the town had aided and abetted in the attacks) was induced to settle the question by turning the squatters out of the land and paying an indemnity of $14,000 to the owners, and by purchasing from them a part of the estate on which to settle some of the townspeople; whilst the owners on their part, for certain considerations, ceded to the townspeople the church—one of the possessions mostly fought over, although its use for religious services had never been interfered with—and all town land and houses. During the riots one of the managers of the estate lost a finger, and a townsman who was caught in the act of mutilating cattle was shot dead.

We were assigned a monk's rooms opening into a gallery in that part of the convent said to be haunted by ghosts; but no unearthly visitors molested us. The room was windowless, and light was admitted by opening the upper half of the door, when we gained a lovely view over the plain and the rolling hills to the distant purple mountains. In the foreground were waving green cornfields, coffee-bushes, and bananas, and immediately below us was a garden filled with orange-trees laden with fruit and blossom. The softest of summer breezes wafted up to us the scent of the flowers, and the tinkle of the fountain filled

the air with a gentle murmur. Next morning we wandered round the small town and visited some of the distilleries for which it is famous; for at the hacienda itself no distillation is done, only a "panela" or low-grade sugar is made, which is sold to the owners of the small distilleries, and from this panela it is that the Puro de San Gerónimo is made. As we passed through the streets we could not help observing what a strong strain of Negro blood there was amongst the people; and it is possibly this mixture of races which has made the townspeople so difficult to deal with, for in all the disputes between town and hacienda there seems to have been an assertion and initiative on the part of the people unlike the usual passive stubbornness of the pure-blooded Indian.

Our haste to reach Copan obliged us to decline the pressing invitation of our hosts to prolong our stay, but rather to accept with gratitude their offer of mules and an arriero for the journey to Zacapa, about sixty-three miles distant. We set out next day in the fresh coolness of the early morning, and after a charming ride up a wooded mountain-side we descended some two thousand feet to a hot valley, where we halted for lunch. Indeed, this day our elevations changed rapidly, for in the afternoon we again rose to a height of over four thousand five hundred feet, and by nightfall had descended again a thousand feet to the little town of Tocoy or Morazan (as it is now called), with its palm-leaf roofed houses, cocoanut-trees, and tropical climate. The most agreeable shelter to be found in this part of the country is in the village school-house, and the reception under its roof depends on the goodwill of the schoolmaster whose house it is. The school-houses are all much alike, with walls of adobe, a roof

of thatch or coarse red tiles, and a mud floor; and the inventory of furniture includes a few rough wooden benches, a table, a blackboard, and sometimes a rickety chair.

The schoolmaster at Morazan most kindly put the large room at our disposal, reserving for himself an inner apartment with no exit to the outside. As the pleasures of privacy are but feebly appreciated by a Guatemalteco, the idea of my objecting to his passing at any hour through what had become my bedroom never occurred to him until Gorgonio, with blandest voice and most courtly manner, suggested that the señora was “muy distinguida,” and might be “muy molestada” by the intrusion. Kindly taking the hint, the pedagogue closed the door between the rooms, and made his own exits and entrances by climbing through a window. As the sun set, a splendid full moon rose over the town, hiding all its defects and beautifying our surroundings with the magic of its light. A warm breeze stirred the feathery leaves of the cocoanut-palms, gently wafting them together in a clinging embrace; and, tired as we were, we lingered late in the plaza enjoying the beauty of the tropical night—a beauty which no words of mine can describe.

We were up next morning at dawn, and had to hurry through our packing to make way for the school-children, who thronged in almost as soon as the sun rose. Our day’s journey lay across dry sandy plains and a gently undulating country, where nature had conspicuously adapted the vegetation to its environment, for not even the hungriest animal would have dared to face the armour of pines and prickles which both on shrubs and trees guarded the precious green leaves. The stunted acacias, now

leafless from the drought, bristled with huge hollow thorns, affording secure houses for the ants; and almost every one of these thorns which I examined was bored at the base with a small round hole, through which the ants ran in and out. Amongst these thorn-protected branches the wasps, too, build their delicate paper nests, safe from the attack of any insect-feeding bird. There was one tree with pale green leaves and apple-like fruit which was particularly noticeable, as the hard spines, some of them over 2 inches long, were arranged symmetrically in rosettes over both trunk and branches. As a rule the trees were but sparsely scattered over the plain, forming only here and there clumps and small thickets, where perchance the yellow and red bottle-brush flowers or the purple masses of a flowering creeper would catch the eye.

The redeeming feature in the landscape was the beauty of the lignum-vitæ trees, covered even in this dry season with green leaves and with clusters of purple blossom. But if the vegetation was for the most part stunted and unattractive, both interest and colour were supplied by the birds, for we were riding through a veritable aviary, and small bright-plumaged birds were so numerous that at times the bare branches appeared flushed into flowering sprays. The sensontes poured forth volumes of liquid sound from every thicket; sweet-voiced orioles arranged themselves into golden bunches; saucy blue jays, and their still more impudent cousins, the crested grey jays, circled noisily around us and perched on branches almost within reach of our hands, and chattered at one another as though they were discussing the propriety of allowing us to pass. Green and yellow flycatchers flew from their perches, and made erratic sweeps in the air in chase

of unwary insects. Now and again one caught sight of a stupid-looking mot-mot with lovely blue and green plumage, swinging his queer tail-feathers from side to side in uneasy movement. Tiny iridescent humming-birds flitted across our path, hovered for a moment over a flower, and then darted out of sight, and numerous wrens not much larger than the humming-birds could be seen slipping and sliding through the thorny hedges and fences. Large flocks of the friendly blackbirds, with unmanageably long tails, whose gregarious movements we had so often watched in the plazas and patios, gossiped together vociferously, and red-headed woodpeckers tapped loudly against the tree-trunks. The pretty little ground-doves, whose plaintive cooing notes contrasted pleasantly with the strident screams of the parrots and the incessant chatter of the jays, ran along the path in search of food, and would not take to flight until our mules were almost over them.

I was told to keep a sharp look out for the ground-cuckoos, and can conscientiously say that I saw one; but as he leapt out of one low bush, raced across the path and disappeared like a flash of lightning in the next shelter of undergrowth, and as all the others we met with on our journey behaved in precisely the same way, I have only a very sketchy idea of their appearance. I should like to be able to describe in words the beauty of the flight of the flocks of parrots and parroquets as they swept overhead, their brilliant plumage dashing like emeralds in the sunlight, or the stately sailing far up in the soft blue sky of the eager-eyed zopilote, and the fine downward swoop which he makes to secure his prey; however, words cannot do justice to the charms of tropical bird-life, which must be seen to be fully appreciated, but a ride in such an aviary as we

passed through this day is an experience not easily forgotten.

Late in the afternoon we again approached the banks of the Motagua, no longer the babbling brook we had crossed near its source, but a swiftly flowing river which, shrunken as it was by the summer drought, was not less than 150 yards in width, and a formidable stream for our laden mules to ford. However, cross it we must, so the faithful Gorgonio led the way and the baggage-mules followed, their loads only just clearing the water, which swirled up alarmingly near to them at every step. We brought up the rear, our beasts splashing in and struggling to keep up against the current, which threatened to carry my little mule off her feet. In midstream I was forced to curl up on my saddle, risking the chance of a serious fall, in my efforts to keep dry; and I was glad enough to feel the water shallowing again and to reach the opposite bank without mishap.

A ride of a few miles brought us to the town of El Jícaro, where we had intended to pass the night, but no lodging could be found as the town was in fiesta, and the Jefe of Zacapa and his staff had arrived on an official visit; so we journeyed on about a league to another settlement, where we hoped to find a hospitable school-house. But here a disappointment awaited us, for the school-house was locked up, and the schoolmaster had ridden off to do honour to the Jefe at El Jícaro and had taken the key with him. Such shelter as the verandah afforded appeared to be all the accommodation we should find that night; so we set up our beds on the undulating mud floor and were hanging up rugs and cloaks to shield them from the gaze of passers by, when a skeleton of a horse came in sight stumbling along under the load of two

riders whose bodies swayed first in one direction, then in the other, and must have been saved from a heavy fall only by the intervention of that special providence which seems to guard the movements of drunken men. In front of the school-house the poor horse stopped short and both his riders promptly fell to the ground. As soon as they had struggled to their feet again they gazed in a dazed way at us and our mountains of baggage piled up in the verandah, and one of them muttered sulkily “es mi casa,” but added more politely, as key in hand he made an erratic dive at the lock of the door, “No se molesten los señores.” There was no doubt left that this was our host, and we immediately urged on him the propriety of giving up his house to us for the night; but either our request did not penetrate his dull brain or it did not suit his views, for he remained obdurate, although he stated his intention of returning to El Jícaro to make a night of it. For half an hour my husband and Gorgonio persisted in the discouraging task of arguing with a drunken man, and I could hear Gorgonio repeating to him his favourite phrases that the Señora was “muy distinguida” and “muy delicada” and very much averse to sleeping in a verandah; but it made no impression on him, and everyone’s patience was exhausted when by some lucky stratagem my husband managed to get possession of the key, and the schoolmaster was too muddle-headed to demand it back again. It was a happy moment for us, but a sad one for the poor horse, for the two drunken men managed to scramble on his back again and set off for El Jícaro. The road was monotonously straight, and there was a brilliant moon overhead, but long after we were comfortably in bed we heard them shouting as they passed and repassed the house in their efforts to find

the right way.

The night was still and sultry and we were up at dawn and got off as soon as possible, but the morning air had no freshness in it and the sun seemed to assert its full power from the moment it showed above the horizon. Our road lay through a parched and waterless land. Here and there were dotted the wretched tumble-down cabins of the miserable, sallow-faced, fever-stricken half-castes, who must find it hard enough to make a living. Indeed, in contrast with that of these poor people, the condition of the half-caste population we had met with in other parts of the country was one of riches and thrift.

After riding for about four leagues we were thoroughly baked through and were glad to find shelter from the sun in the verandah of the only respectable-looking house in the little village of La Reforma. The people of the house were kind and attentive and gave us such food as they had, but could not accommodate us with a room, nor could Gorgonio find food enough for the mules. As soon as the sun sank low in the west we set out again to cross the waterless plain, the Llano de la Fragua, a journey best made by night, for the track is even more shadeless than that we had just traversed, and the arid ground supports little vegetation but cacti and euphorbiæ and scrubby prickly bushes, which vie with one another in ugliness. The sun set in a blaze of glory and we bid him farewell with a sense of relief. Saving the starlight the night was dark, but fortunately the road was broad and well marked by hedges of vicious-looking organ-pipe cactus. We were favoured with a breeze increasing in freshness as the night drew on, and our mules made good time

over the plain, so that by 9 o'clock we had reached the river which runs within a mile of the town. Just at this moment the moon rose and in the half-light the stream looked black and formidable, and our men hesitated and began to discuss the situation, as none of them knew the depth of the water; but the ever-ready Gorgonio pulled off some of his clothes, and soon put our doubts at rest by wading across and shouting back to us that the water was no more than breast high. My mule gave me a moment's anxiety during the crossing by floundering into a hole, but she soon pulled herself together and scrambled into shallow water.

Ten minutes' ride brought us to the town of Zacapa, and the so-called "Hotel," where we were forced to spend several days in heat, dirt, and discomfort. It was a very poor house, and one very scantily furnished room had to serve us for all purposes. Our host appeared to devote the whole of his energy to imbibing aguardiente and loafing, whilst his wife, a kindly faced mestiza, did the cooking, and always looked hot and overworked. Two of the children, Candelaria and Felicita, aged eight and ten years, did most of the housework, and took care of several younger members of the family (including an ever-crying baby), who sprawled about in the dust and dirt of the patio all day long, and at night the whole family slept side by side on the floor of the corridor. Candelaria and Felicita, in addition to their other duties, were told off to wait on us; and remarkably pleasant and bright little creatures they proved to be, but amazingly dirty. One day I remonstrated with them and delivered a lecture on cleanliness, which was greeted with loud applause and shouts of laughter, but my advice as to the use of soap and water was never followed.

As the hotel was not a bad example of a middle-class house in the country towns I will endeavour to describe it. Looked at from the street it showed a flat white-washed wall pierced by two heavily-barred windows, and a large doorway fitted with heavy double wooden doors which when thrown open would permit the passage of laden mules through the house into the patio. There were rooms opening into a verandah or corridor on two sides of the patio, the other sides being enclosed by high walls. The two front rooms were used as guest rooms, one of the side rooms was the patrona's bedroom, and the other served as a kitchen. In the back wall was a doorway leading to a mule-shed and stable-yard, also enclosed by high walls. The house was well supplied with water by a pipe, from which a thin stream continually flowed into a masonry tank or "pila" built against the back wall of the patio. When such a house is being built the first operation is to set into the ground, about twelve feet apart in the line of the projected walls, a number of roughly dressed wooden posts with forked tops; on these are laid equally rough wall-plates to which tie-beams and rafters are fixed, and the whole framework is then lashed together with natural lianes or strips of a bark called "capulin"; the tile roof, which towards the patio extends across the corridor, is then put on, and not until this is finished are the walls of adobe or talpetate (sun-dried mud) commenced and carried up to the eaves, almost imbedding the upright posts on the inside. Last of all, partitions are run up to separate the rooms, which are roughly ceiled with reeds or canes lashed across the tie-beams. The matter of brick or mud floor and the amount of plaster laid on the walls depends on the wealth of the householder; but even a poorly-built house, such

as our hotel, will show a good coat of plaster and blue or white wash to the street.

Curiously enough, it is from the plasterers that one has the best chance of buying the highly polished prehistoric stone axes, “piedras de rayo” (lightning stones), as they call them, firmly believing them to be of the nature of thunderbolts; for they collect them as useful tools with which to smooth down and give a burnished surface to the plaster.

In some of the houses there are no windows giving on the street, all the light for the rooms coming through the door opening onto the patio. When the windows do open towards the street they rise above heavy projecting sills, into which the bars of the iron reja are fixed. Here, as in old Spain,—

> “Las ventanas en las calles son muy peligrosas
> Para madres que tienen hijas hermosas,”

for it is between the bars of the reja that most of the lovemaking is carried on. All the windows are fitted with thick wooden shutters, and it is only in the larger towns that glass casements have come into use.

We were consumed with impatience to get out of the heat and dirt of Zacapa; but even after we had come to an arrangement with an arriero to carry our additional luggage he kept on finding pretexts for delay, and it was not until the 28th February that we set out for Copan, despite the well-intentioned warnings of two young Americans, newly arrived in the country, who had shared the discomforts of the hotel with us and told us alarming stories of the dangers of travelling in Honduras since the outbreak of the most recent revolution.

Indian cargadores are not an institution in this part of the country, and in consequence our pack-train had been increased to the number of twenty-five mules. Those under the charge of Santos, carrying our own pack-saddles and boxes, went well, as they had done throughout the journey; but the hirelings driven by a loud-voiced and exceedingly profane arriero, caused incessant delays. Something was always going wrong with the badly-adjusted cargos, and the clumsy native pack-saddles galled the backs of the poor beasts, which were already marked with a hundred scars; but the sight of their raw wounds failed to awaken the sympathy of the arriero, who goaded them on with a stick and yells of “arré!” “arriba!” followed by a burst of expletives, throughout the sultry uncomfortable day. The track was of the worst description. A long drought had parched all colour from the hills, and the fringe of vegetation along the banks of the Copan River was the only green thing to be seen. The path followed the winding of this stream for a long distance, often high above it, then crossing it, again rising and winding along narrow ledges, turning sharp corners and revealing fine bits of landscape which would have been beautiful in a less parched condition. Before sunset we reached our camping-ground for the night, a spot named La Laguna; but there was no lagoon there, only a clearing by the roadside, and the nearest water was half a league distant.

It was a stifling night and we hailed the dawn with pleasure and set off again as soon as the tent could be packed and the twenty-five mules loaded. A short ride brought us again to the Copan River; but as the ford was too deep for the cargo-mules we parted company, leaving them to follow a track along the right bank, whilst we rode through the stream,

barely escaping a wetting, and took a short cut by the villages of Jocotan and Comitan, which stand about a mile apart. To judge from the size of the churches, these two villages must at one time have been important towns: now they are squalid, half-deserted places, where pigs and goats alone seem to flourish, and the huge dilapidated churches would be capable of holding not only the whole of the sallow-faced, dyspeptic-looking population, but nearly all the houses as well. At Comitan, the last village before reaching the Honduras frontier, the Alcalde stopped us and demanded Gorgonio's passport. This document was produced, but he was nevertheless taken to the Cabildo, where it was copied and viséd before he, as a citizen, was allowed to leave his own country. No one being in the least interested in us we rode on, leaving Gorgonio to follow when all the formalities had been gone through.

For the rest of the day we passed through a pleasant green country, well watered and well wooded, and late in the afternoon rejoined our pack-train, and reached the little settlement of Cachapa, where, relying on the friendly shelter of the school-house, we drew up before its mud walls, and proceeded to stack our boxes in the verandah, whilst Gorgonio went off to hunt up the schoolmaster and get the key of the door. He soon came back in company with the Indian Alcalde, to tell us that the schoolmaster had gone away for a few days; and it seemed as though we were about partly to repeat our experience at the school-house at Jícaro, with the difference that this time, according to the Alcalde, it was the schoolmaster who was "muy delicado" and would greatly resent such an intrusion into his house. The schoolmaster had evidently established himself as a power in the village, for the Alcalde was immovable,

and to all our united supplications that he should give up the key merely replied that “it was more than his place was worth.” The case appeared hopeless, when, oddly enough, the situation was changed suddenly by our finding among our keys one which unlocked the padlock of the academy of Cachapa. I am afraid we crowed over the Alcalde, who looked terribly depressed, but continued to deny us admittance, and loyally obeyed the master’s orders, protesting to the last that the maestro was “muy delicado”; but victory was on our side, and I think the heart of the Alcalde was softened by the sight of my husband who lay on the ground almost speechless with headache: so a treaty of peace was made, in which we solemnly promised to make good any damage and generally to make matters straight with the schoolmaster, should he return. I may add that this well-guarded house in no way differed from other school-houses, except that the furniture consisted of two rough benches only, and the walls were guiltless of whitewash.

Our next day’s journey was through a pleasant country with long stretches of pine-wood, and it was altogether delightful. I must own that my preconceived notions of the Tropics were being a good deal upset; it had surprised me to find pine-trees growing throughout the Altos, for the pine had always been associated in my mind with Norway and California, and I had looked upon it as an essentially northern tree; to-day I learnt that it needs a tropical sun to bring out all the fragrance of its scent. Late in the afternoon we came to the edge of the hills and looked down on the little plain of Copan, which was closed in again on the far side by ranges of pine-clad hills. In the middle of the plain on the right bank of the winding stream stands a grove of tall forest trees

covering the principal part of the ruins which we had journeyed so far to see. We soon scrambled down the last mile of the rugged path and rode on into the modern village of Copan—a small collection of red-tiled dirty hovels grouped round a plaza which was glorified by the presence of a fine stone altar, covered with the fantastic carving in which the ancient Mayas excelled, and we drew rein before the hut occupied by the Niña Chica, an old friend of my husband's and the presiding genius of the village.

The arrival of our party had awakened the village from its siesta, and we were soon the centre of an admiring group of rag-clad men and women and bright-eyed and wholly unclad children. As soon as the Niña Chica emerged from her hut and recognised Don Alfredo she expressed her delight in the most flattering terms, throwing her arms round him, as he sat in the saddle, in a fond embrace. In her youth the Niña Chica must have been a beauty, and even now in her old age her wrinkled face has a fine look, and she carries herself with an imperious air, in queer contrast to the dirt of her dress and the squalor of her surroundings. She seemed determined to take complete possession of my husband, and began to pour into his ears, with the greatest volubility and wit, the gossip of the village and the history of all that had happened during the eight years that had passed since his last visit. It required some tact and skill to disengage ourselves from the attentions of this dirty but attractive old lady, and it was only achieved after many promises to visit her again soon and talk it all over.

After crossing the small stream, the laundry of Copan, we rode on for half a mile, part of the way through a plantation of sugar-cane, to a stone wall

which has lately been built round the ruins. Passing through a gateway we entered an enchanting grove of grand old trees which cast their shade over the remains of temples, monoliths, and altars. At last we had arrived and were in the actual presence of the strange stone monuments whose reproductions in plaster I knew so well. The bridle-path led over the steep side of a foundation mound into the Western Court, where I found myself face to face with an old friend, who has stood on guard for centuries at the foot of a great stairway. The stately grove of giant tropical trees was of itself strangely impressive, and the glimpses of the grim figures on the monoliths and the strange scrolls and grotesque ornament on the scattered fragments of stone, amongst which we picked our way, added a sense of unreality which was bewildering. Since passing through that little gate in the wall we seemed to have slipped back into a remote past and to be treading the Valhalla of gods and heroes whose patient followers and worshippers had raised monuments which were to outlast the ages, where the spirits of the mighty dead might still haunt the scene of their ancient glory.

It was a distinct effort to return to commonplace things, and to call to mind the fact that the afternoon was far advanced and that I had duties to perform as chief cook and housekeeper. In the middle of the plaza stood the house we were to occupy, an airy structure something like a large bird-cage, which had been built by a party of Americans who for the last two years had been at work in the ruins. The walls were made of rough sticks placed side by side, about an inch apart, and bound together with lianes; the roof was thatched with sugar-cane leaves, one large opening in the wall served as doorway, and windows were certainly not needed, as every breath of air

sighed through the gaping walls. One end of the house had been screened off and the walls thatched to the ground so as to form a dark room for photography. Our American friends had left a convenient shed and cooking-place near the house, and I soon had supper ready, and then we settled ourselves for the night.

CHAPTER XIV. COPAN.



SQUARE ALTAR, COPAN VILLAGE.

It only needed one night's experience to convince me that the cross draughts of our airy residence were not suited to our constitutions, and when on rising to make my toilet in the morning, the transparent nature of my dressing-room was borne in on me, my mind was made up, and I ordered the tent to be pitched without delay. Thenceforward we had a thoroughly comfortable bedroom. One end of the

tent was left open for ventilation, but we were well sheltered from draughts, and furnished with good thick blankets as a protection against the sharp fall of temperature in the early morning. I only wish one could always secure the same conditions of climate, temperature, and fresh air, for it seemed to me ideal.

We had come to Copan to work, and, as the early morning hours are precious in these tropical climes, dawn always found the camp astir. Fires were soon lighted. As the sun rose Gorgonio would appear at the tent-door with two big bowls of hot coffee, pan-dulce, and bananas, and by 7 o'clock all were off to work: my husband provided with note-books, tape-measures, and drawing-board, followed by the mozos with machetes and scrubbing-brushes, ready for any labour—from clearing bush to scrubbing moss and lichens from the sculptures, preparatory to the moulding-operations, which Gorgonio carried out with such skill and patience. My duties lay mostly in the camp, and were purely housewifely in character, for, as no woman could be found in the neighbourhood who had any knowledge of housework or cooking, I had to do the work myself. The cooking was, of course, the most arduous part of the performance, but the housework occupied at least an hour in the morning. First, the blankets must be hung in the sun to keep them dry and free from insects, then the tent had to be swept out and cleaned of ants and occasional scorpions. Every few days we sent mozos into the hills around to bring in huge bundles of fresh sweet-smelling pine-needles, which were spread over the floor of the house as a carpet, and every morning this carpet had to be attended to. Then came the preparation of breakfast for three hungry persons, for our party was increased by the arrival from Coban of Mr. Erwin Dieseldorff,

an enthusiastic archæologist who had come to us on a visit, and had brought with him Gorgonio's brother Carlos Lopez (an old assistant of my husband) and three Indian mozos.

The tiny kitchen and larder stood beneath the shade of a wide-spreading Ficus tree, and for convenience of serving the food, as well as to save me many steps, we placed the table close beside it. It was a charming dining-room in such a climate, for during the four weeks of our stay not a drop of rain fell to mar the comfort of our *al fresco* meals. The great Ficus gave us friendly shade from the noonday sun, and at supper-time the moon played hide-and-seek between its branches as they were gently swayed by a soft and balmy breeze.

We shared our dining-room with the birds, who came in flocks to feed on the Ficus and other fruit-bearing trees, and we were never weary of watching them at play amongst the branches overhead. At first the parrots and parroquets vastly outnumbered all the others, and appeared to have formed a settlement in the tree above our tent. These parrots were a boisterous family, who woke at dawn and began screaming and chattering whilst they performed round the branches all those gymnastic feats which I have thought were only devised in captivity to vary the monotony of cage-life; but the parroquets, who lived in the same tree, appeared to be quiet little creatures who nestled near to one another, whispering and cooing gently, until some sudden impulse would seize both parties, and they would dash off in the air, flashing circles of gold and red and green as the sun caught the glint of their plumage, and then return as suddenly to the shelter of the trees to chatter loudly over their exploits. An

hour or so after sunrise the noise of the parrots ceased, but whether they flew away or hid themselves amongst the thick foliage I could never make out; certain it is that they disappeared until evening, when they again woke the echoes with their cries before settling for the night.



COPAN. STELA B.

About a week after our arrival, as the fruit ripened

upon other trees, the birds greatly increased in numbers, and the air was filled with song and chattering throughout all but the noonday hours. The grey jays perched quite close to us when we were at work, turned their heads knowingly from side to side, and indulged in ribald remarks at our expense; and big toucans, with bright yellow breasts, flew clumsily from tree to tree, as though over-weighted by their great green-and-yellow bills. Sometimes an aurora, or yellow-breasted trogon, honoured us with a visit; less gorgeous in plumage than his relation the quetzal, he nevertheless possesses a fair share of beauty, and his dignity of deportment was imposing as for hours together he sat, almost motionless, solemnly contemplating us and our doings. Now and then the gurgling note of an oropendula rang through the grove, and this large cinnamon-coloured oriole, with yellow tail-feathers, would spend half an hour with us, flying from tree to tree and uttering his strange musical cry. The natives told me that there had been numbers of them about the ruins the previous year, as they then had a settlement close by in a tree overhanging the river, where their hanging nests had numbered over two hundred; but some ardent collector had cut off a branch with three or four nests attached to it, to carry home as a specimen, and the whole colony of birds had at once forsaken the tree and formed a new settlement some distance away. Our occasional visitor was doubtless one of the migrants who had ventured to come back to feed on the fruit-trees he had known of old.

I deeply regretted the disappearance of the colony, as it would have been delightful to watch the birds at one’s leisure. Only once during our journey did I get the chance of watching them, and that only for a short time. As a precaution against attack, the birds

always select for their home a tree with a long clean stem standing out from the surrounding vegetation, and a certain smooth red-barked tree with rather thin foliage seems to be an especial favourite. The long bag-shaped nests, with an entrance at the top, are attached to the spreading branches, and swing freely in the breeze. During the nesting-season such a tree-top is a scene of much animation. The birds are continually flying off in all directions in search of food for their mates or families and returning home with their prizes. They seldom hover round the tree, but go straight away as though each had his own well-known hunting-ground. Some few of them will perch for a while on the branches near their nests, and one old bird always stands sentinel on the topmost branch, uttering every few moments his queer musical cry; but should any sign of danger be discerned—and they seem to be of a somewhat nervous temperament—the cry at once changes to a short sharp note, which quickly brings all the birds who are out foraging back to their homes. The sentinels are relieved from time to time, and one can often tell by a slight change in the voice when a new sentry has come on guard.

Flocks of noisy blackbirds we had always with us, and the “tap, tap, tap” of the red-headed woodpecker —“carpintero,” as the Spaniards call him—could be heard through the grove almost all day long. Now and then one could espy amongst the branches a beautiful mot-mot. It was a long time before I could be brought to believe that these birds really trimmed their two long tail-feathers with their own beaks into the fashionable shape, clearing the midrib for an inch or so bare of all plumes, and leaving the characteristic spatula-shaped expanse at the end; but since my return home I have had a good look at the

interesting case in the hall of the Natural History Museum, and the untrimmed tail-feathers of the poor mot-mot who had injured his beak and could not cut his tail properly is quite convincing. How his neighbours must have laughed at him for being out of the fashion!

There was one bird whom I never caught sight of, and knew only by his sweet but unsatisfactory song. This song is charmingly musical as far as it goes, but then he never finishes it: just as it is becoming most interesting, he hesitates and stops about a third short of the keynote, waits a moment as though to consider what is wrong, then begins over again, only to stop with the same half-apologetic note, leaving one with the impression that he would like to finish his song, but has forgotten how it goes.

A pair of hoary-headed, disreputable-looking zopilotes hovered about the kitchen all day long, waiting for scraps and clamouring vociferously when a chicken lost his head. When night came the owls hooted at us from the lofty branches of the great ceiba trees, and the cry of the night-jar (or "Puhuyak," as the natives call him) sounded through the wood. According to the Indian legend, the Puhuyak is one of the birds appointed to guard the gates of Xibalba, the place of departed spirits, which is thought to be situated somewhere near the banks of the Usumacinta. His fellow guardian is his relation the Whip-poor-Will, and sometimes they watch together, and at others take turn and turn about. Oddly enough, the cry of the Puhuyak sounds exactly like "Who are you?" and, chancing to awake in the stillness of the night, one would hear this question reiterated about every half-minute, without the ghost of an answer, until I used to think that if anything

could add to the terror of finding one's self at the gate of Xibalba it would be to hear the Puhuyak ask that irritating question with his casual unsympathetic manner and harsh voice.

What strikes one most in riding or walking through a tropical forest of Central America is the mixed nature of the vegetation. Between the low fringe of sea-coast, where the mangroves have full sway, and the lofty hill-tops, where the pines and oaks abound, one can nowhere give a name to the forest from the predominance of any particular tree. There are no mahogany forests and no cedar forests, although both species have many representatives. Perhaps the lightness or feathery nature of the seeds helps in their distribution; certainly I never saw a native forest tree with a number of seedlings growing up round it, as one may see in the case of a sycamore or horse-chestnut at home. This characteristic applies even to the small grove round the ruins at Copan; and although I had learnt to identify a few of the most noticeable trees, I could only find a few examples of each amongst the many trees around us, and to my untrained eye all the remainder appeared to differ from one another. The monarchs of the grove were two giant Ceibas, to whose beauty and grandeur I can do no justice with words. A tent might be pitched between the buttresses from which the mighty shaft of such a giant springs, and a regiment might camp beneath its branches. As the month of April is the middle of the dry season many of the trees were changing their leaves, and the process was most interesting to watch, and often very rapid in accomplishment. Some of the trees which were fully clothed, and showed no sign of change when we arrived, dropped all their leaves, stood for a few days bare, and then completely

reclothed themselves during the few weeks we remained at the ruins. Others went through the process in distinct sections, and it gave a very odd appearance to a tree when some of its branches were covered with old foliage, some branches quite bare, and others bright with the fresh green or pink of newly unfolded leaves.

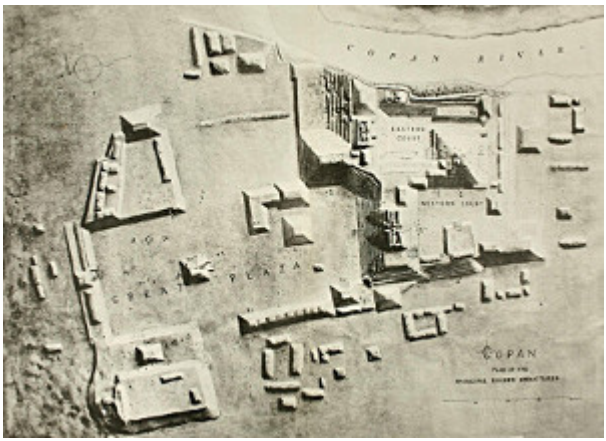
In one respect we were fortunate during our stay—there were no mosquitos; but garrapatas (ticks), coloradillos (minute harvest-bugs), fleas, and ants tried their best to spoil our tempers. The fleas in the house could be subdued by a plentiful supply of fresh pine-needles spread over the floor; garrapatas and coloradillos nothing can subdue. Personally, as a housekeeper, if I must award the palm for capacity to irritate, it shall go to the ants: they invaded every nook and corner, disputed the possession of every eatable thing, and bit or stung me violently whenever they got the chance. One night they besieged me in the tent, and attacked me so savagely that I was forced to cry for help. A “marching army,” as it is called, was making its way through the wood, and as our home lay in its path the soldiers had, in true military fashion, “occupied” it. My husband was at work developing photographs in the little dark room at the end of the house; he brushed the first few intruders away, but finally had to beat a retreat before the thousands which poured in on him, when he heard my cries and came to my assistance. Fortunately only a few stragglers and camp-followers troubled us in the tent, and as they had entered only by the guy-ropes which were made fast to the house-posts, we were able to close the path by dropping a little kerosene-oil on the cords. The main body of the army marched over and under and through the house. The dry thatch of the roof crackled and

rustled as if on fire under the feet of this mighty host of minute crawling creatures, and its approach spread consternation through the rest of the insect world, and everything fled before the invaders. Our candles burnt without a flicker in the still night air, so that standing clear of the flank of the army we were able to watch its doings without any discomfort. I saw big beetles and cockroaches so bewildered with fright that they knew not which way to turn, and, as though paralysed, made no attempt to fly, but retreated backwards to the ends of the leaves of the thatch, their eyes glaring and their antennæ stiff with horror at the fate which must overtake them. In half an hour the army had passed on and disappeared, leaving nothing eatable in the house, not even the films of the two newly developed photographs which had been left in the rack to dry. The natives, I am told, hail with joy the passage through their houses of a marching army, as it means a clean sweep of all centipedes, cockroaches, spiders, and scorpions.

Poisonous snakes are said to abound at Copan, but we were little troubled by them, as during the dry season they hide themselves away under stones and fallen trees. I saw one “tamagás” turned out of its cosy nest, which was lined with bits of dry moulding paper left by the Americans who were at work here last year. I also witnessed the death of a rattlesnake which had crossed the path just in front of me.

We saw no wild animals. Gorgonio, indeed, always insisted that there were “tigres en el monte”; and perhaps there were, but I was not likely to meet them, for my expeditions into the “monte” (more out of fear of ticks than of tigers) were limited to the paths which had been cut to the different

monuments, and, so far as I know, our camp was never invaded by any animals more formidable than our own mules, who wandered as they liked over the whole enclosure, and of a night often browsed round the tent and woke us by kicking against the tent-ropes.



COPAN, PLAN OF THE PRINCIPAL RUINED STRUCTURES.

Our arrival at the ruins caused quite a flutter of excitement amongst the Copaneros, who seemed glad to vary the monotony of their lives by a stroll through the woods, to chat with Gorgonio and Carlos, and take a peep at our occupations. So it happened that hardly a day passed without bringing us visitors. Even the more distant villages sent contingents of sightseers; but these were more formal occasions, and our visitors, headed by the Alcalde of their village, entered the house in somewhat stately fashion, and seating themselves on the floor—chairs being scarce—would make polite speeches and ask what progress Don Alfredo was making with his work. These conversations would promise to be of

interest, as our visitors always professed to know much about the monuments, and to appreciate the reason why foreigners took so much interest in them, until some stray remark showed that our minds were travelling on totally different planes of thought—theirs, I fear, being weighed down with an unmovable belief in buried treasure. Then the conversation would flag, and the pauses become longer, until we produced a brandy-bottle, when they all stood up and solemnly drank our health, and, that ceremony over, took leave of us with the same formal politeness and filed out of the door. But the greater number of our visitors were, I am sorry to say, ill and suffering persons who came seeking "remedios" for their complaints. We did what we could to help them, although most of their troubles were far beyond the reach of our simple remedies, but the belief in our skill was flattering and often really pathetic. They were genuinely grateful for the smallest relief we could afford them, and would always return to thank us, bringing gifts of chickens, eggs, or cigars. One poor woman told me that for nine years she had eagerly scanned the faces of visitors to the ruins, hoping that Don Alfredo might again be amongst them, for he had given her the only medicine which had ever done her any good. It seems that he had dosed her with calomel, which gave her temporary relief, and now, alas! we had not a grain of calomel with us. However, no remedy would have availed in her case—her malady had clearly passed beyond all hope of cure. As she was very poor, I engaged her nominally to do odd day's work in the kitchen, but really to give her the benefit of our surplus food. She was curiously ignorant, even of such a simple matter as how to clean a saucepan; but her's was such an uncomplaining gentle nature

that I grew quite fond of her, and in return she showed me every little attention in her power, and never came without a few fresh eggs or a bundle of cigarettes or some other little present which she thought would give me pleasure.

I had one patient, a Coban Indian, who had come with Mr. Dieseldorff, who rewarded my efforts on his behalf not only by getting well of a bad wound in his foot, the result of a blow from a pickaxe, but also by resisting the temptation to apply a chili-pepper to the wound, which he assured me was a splendid remedy, as you could feel its effects at once. At first he was exceedingly cynical about my treatment, and regarded the carbolic acid lotion disdainfully, but to his credit be it said that as soon as he realized that his foot was really healing, although he did not feel the remedy, he became overwhelmingly grateful. Ever afterwards I was his “nanita,” or little mother, and he expressed his willingness to leave his wife and family and follow me to the end of the world.

Some men in the village relieved the monotony of their lives and added to our list of patients by quarrelling over a local beauty, and a messenger was sent in hot haste to the ruins to implore my husband to come and extract a bullet from the body of a man, as otherwise they despaired of saving his life. He found the house closely packed with the friends and relations of the wounded man, who crowded round his rough bed and sprawled over it, weeping and wailing and passing a bottle of aguardiente from hand to hand and giving frequent doses of the fiery spirit to the sufferer himself to keep up his courage. It was no easy work to turn all the relations out of the house and get rid of the rum-bottle; but at last it was accomplished, and then an examination showed

that the bullet had passed round the ribs and lodged below the shoulder-blade, so that there was no immediate danger. My husband was able to raise the hopes of his patient, who had been driven to the depths of despair by the wailings and leave-takings of his friends, and left him for the night in charge of the Alcalde with assurances of a very speedy recovery, qualified by dire prophecies of his certain death if further recourse were had to the rum-bottle. Within a week, with the help of proper food and such care as we could ensure him, the fever and swelling had been reduced so that the position of the bullet could be easily detected, and the man was so comparatively well that he could be mounted on a quiet mule and sent off in charge of a friend to the doctor at Chiquimula, who successfully extracted the bullet. I was most thankful when the man was safely on his way, as I credited my husband with a secret desire to do a little amateur surgery.

I found the women of Copan really interesting; they are above the average in good looks, and, in spite of their want of cleanliness and their slovenly dress, their soft cooing voices and caressing manners make them personally attractive. The men look rather more tidy than the women, which is not to be wondered at, as they seem to spend most of the day lounging in hammocks, whilst the women do all the work of the village, fetch the water, and wash the clothes. The washing of clothes, indeed, goes on interminably, yet, except on a feast day, one never sees anyone in a clean garment; this is, perhaps, hardly to be wondered at when one considers the nature of their surroundings, for it must be difficult to keep one's clothes clean for five minutes amid the dust and dirt of a native house. The Copaneros, like all Central-American half-castes, have a singular

dread of bathing, although they look longingly at the cool stream running past their home; and, as general medical adviser, I was continually being asked, “Would bathing do me any harm?”

It was always a delightful moment for me when my household duties were over and I could join the workers in the great Plaza, where my husband, with a patience I never ceased to marvel at, was comparing the drawings made for the ‘Biologia’ with the original inscriptions, Mr. Dieseldorff would be clearing the debris from a stairway or tracing the line of a fallen wall, whilst Gorgonio, Carlos, and Caralampio were at work making paper moulds of the sculptured monoliths or heaping up great log-fires to dry the moulds already made.

I wish I could do justice to these imposing plazas, studded with strangely carved monuments and surrounded by lofty mounds and great stone stairways, moss-grown and hoary with age, broken by the twisted roots of giant trees, but very solemn and imposing in their decay. The huge mass of squared and faced building-stones, the profusion of sculptured ornament, boldly-carved human figures, strangely grotesque imps—half human and half animal,—elaborate scrolls, graceful and beautiful feather-work, the latter especially crisp and delicate in execution, all combined to make it difficult to believe that no metal tools were used by the ancient Indian workmen. Yet the fact remains that no implements other than stone axes and obsidian flakes have ever been found amongst the ruins, and this adds to the wonder and mystery which enshrouds them, so that one almost fears even to guess at the numbers of centuries or the thousands of busy hands and brains which, under such conditions, must have

gone to the accomplishment of the work.

I was always conscious of a longing desire to witness some great ceremony at Copan, such as one's imagination conjures up amid such surroundings, and the thought constantly recurred to me that possibly in the half-Christian, half-heathen rites of the Indian pilgrims and the strange dances they indulge in on certain festal occasions some echo might yet be caught of the ancient ceremonial.

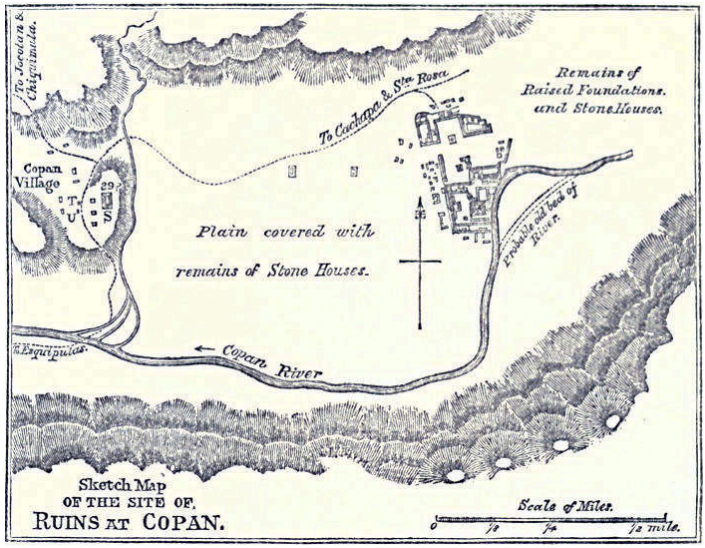
The novelist has already tried his hand both on Ancient Mexico and Yucatan, and that class of theorizer who wants as little data as possible to interfere with his pet schemes has too long occupied the field. Surely here there is scope for the more chastened scientific imagination, and the time has come for the scientific world, the folk-lorists, palæographers, and archæologists, who have done so much to recover for us the ancient civilizations of the East, to turn their attention to these wonders of the Western world.



IN THE GREAT PLAZA, COPAN.

CHAPTER XV. COPAN IN 1885. (BY A. P. M.)

I was at Copan for a few days in 1881, and returned there again in 1885, determined to make a more thorough investigation of the ruins, and the result of my work has been published at length in the pages of the 'Biologia Centrali-Americana.'



The earliest description of the ruins is found in a letter addressed by Diego Garcia de Palacio, an officer of the Audiencia of Guatemala, to King Philip II. of Spain, dated 8th of March, 1576. Palacio was an acute observer, and his description of the ruins

shows that they were in much the same condition when he visited them in 1576 as they were when I began to work at them in 1885. It is, however, not to Palacio's letter, which has only comparatively recently been unearthed from the Spanish archives, but to the charming pages of Stephens and the beautiful drawings of Catherwood that the world in general is indebted for a knowledge of the wonders of Copan. But delightful as their great book is in every other respect, it does not suffice for a detailed study of Maya art and inscriptions, and my object in returning to the ruins in 1885 was to gather together and publish such a collection of accurate copies of the monuments and inscriptions as would enable scholars to carry on their work of examination and comparison, and to solve some of the many problems of Maya civilization, whilst comfortably seated in their studies at home.

I had already gained some experience during an expedition to the ruins of Quirigua for the same purpose in the spring of 1884, and the reader of the foregoing pages will have learnt enough about the state of the roads and the means of locomotion to appreciate the difficulties met with in transporting from the Port of Yzabal to Copan the articles which I knew to be necessary to the carrying out of my plans, of which the following is a rough list: axes, machetes, pickaxes, spades, crow-bars, wheelbarrows, surveying and photographic apparatus, dry plates and chemicals, a barrel of lime, four tons of plaster of Paris and some four or five hundredweight of moulding-paper, in addition to food, personal baggage, and camp kit. The plaster of Paris was shipped from England to Livingston in tin-lined barrels; at that port it was landed and re-shipped in a small steamer which carried it up the

river and across the Golfo Dulce to Yzabal; there the barrels were opened and the plaster put into waterproof sacks, which we had brought with us from England for the purpose, and it was thence carried on mule-back over the mountains to Copan. I remember making a calculation at the time which showed me that the plaster for which I had originally paid fifty shillings a ton in Carlisle had cost £50 a ton by the time it had reached Copan.

We built a rancho among the ruins to accommodate Gorgonio Lopez and his brothers, and Mr. Giuntini, a skilled plaster-moulder, whom I had brought out from England to make plaster moulds of the monuments, whilst I took up my quarters in the village, in a small mud-walled hut which served as the cabildo. The particular attraction of this place of residence was the prison cell attached to it, measuring about 7 feet by 4 feet, which was speedily turned into a dark room for developing photographs.

Through the courtesy of the Foreign Office I had been recommended to the care of the English Minister to the Central-American States, and it happened, luckily for me, that a few weeks before my arrival in the country there had been held in the city of Guatemala a conference of the Presidents of the five Republics, and during its session the English Minister had been thrown into frequent communication with General Bogran, the President of the Republic of Honduras. It was a time of political ferment, and I strongly suspect that during the official visits and social courtesies which the conference entailed, a subject free from all the political dangers of the moment, such as my expedition to Copan, was eagerly seized upon for friendly discussion. The result was not a little to my

advantage, but as at the time I knew nothing of the cause, my astonishment may be imagined when, on arrival at Copan, I entered the village under triumphal arches, and was received by a guard of honour of barefooted soldiers, and by an ex-Minister of State and a professor from the Government College, who presented me with an official-looking document addressed to "El Sabio," which informed me that they had been appointed by the President of the Republic of Honduras as his commissioners to assist me in my labours. These gentlemen had already been awaiting my arrival for more than a week, and it was an evident relief to the villagers when, at the end of another week, I was able to impress upon them the value of the work they had accomplished, and recommend them to rest from their labours and return to their homes. Of General Bogran's good intentions and really sympathetic interest in my work I had afterwards ample proof, but pleasant and genial as were his commissioners, they were not persons altogether suited to carry out the task entrusted to them. After the departure of the commissioners it needed some tact to get on good terms with the villagers, who had learnt to look on me with suspicion; but at the end of a few weeks we became the best of friends and remained so ever afterwards.

The sketch map at the beginning of this chapter will give a fairly accurate idea of the site of the ruins. The surrounding hills are somewhat sparsely clothed with pine-trees, but the level land of the river valley has long been used as planting ground by the villagers, and, where it is not actually under cultivation, is covered with an almost impenetrable growth of scrub. Our first task was to clear away this scrub, which completely hid from view the

monuments in the Great Plaza, and the next task was to mark out and carefully measure a base-line for the proposed survey. The beautiful grove of trees which covered the principal group of mounds and terraces had been left untouched by the natives, as the ground on which it stood was totally unfit for cultivation, and we did not find it necessary to do more than remove the undergrowth and clear the surface of the ground, leaving the great trees undisturbed to afford us their grateful shade.

It must be remembered that up to the time of this expedition in 1885 no trace of any house or temple had been discovered amongst the ruins at Copan; but I found it difficult to believe that the great masses of masonry could have been built up unless they were intended to serve as foundations for temples such as I had already seen crowning the great pyramids at Tikál. As the work of clearing proceeded and we gained a better view of the great stairways and the outlines of the mounds my hope of finding some trace of temple buildings was strengthened by seeing that each of the higher mounds had usually a marked depression running across its summit, which might be accounted for by the falling in of a central doorway. Judge, then, of my delight when, on digging into the top of the mound on the north side of the eastern court, I came on unmistakable signs of the sides of a doorway and the remains of an elaborate cornice running along the top of the interior wall of a chamber. Digging on with the greatest care we finally unearthed the fine ornamental doorway between the two chambers of the temple, of which a drawing (with the fallen stones restored to their places) is here given.



After this successful beginning we set to work on other mounds, where we unearthed more interesting sculpture, and succeeded in proving, as I had hoped to do, that almost all the pyramidal mounds at Copan had been raised to support temples, probably built at different epochs, and possibly set at different angles on account of astronomical considerations.

The accompanying plan shows the remains of the principal structures as they would look denuded of their covering of vegetation and cleared of some of the debris. Those mounds on which we found the remains of temples are marked with a red cross, and the shape of the chambers is roughly shown. The river has eaten into the east side of the largest group, leaving exposed a cliff-like face of masonry and rubble, which in one place is over one hundred feet in height.



THE EAST SIDE OF THE SCULPTURED DOORWAY.

Whilst I had been busy over the excavations and the survey, Mr. Giuntini had been at work making plaster moulds of some of the carved monolithic stelæ, and Gorgonio and his brothers had been employed making paper moulds of the numerous hieroglyphic inscriptions. There are in all in the neighbourhood of the ruins about thirty carved stelæ and altars (some of which are shown in the

illustrations to this chapter), and nearly all of them bear inscriptions; but I shall defer all comment on the hieroglyphic writing to a later chapter, when more material will be available from which to select examples for explanation. In the meantime I may here give an account of my efforts to impress on the mind of a Central American the great interest attaching to the study of these carved inscriptions.

Whilst I was at Copan the village was visited by a General in the Honduras army. I am told that in the army of that Republic Generals are plentiful, and that the Government find it well to keep them harmlessly employed, lest the devil should find some mischief for their idle hands to do, in the shape of drawing up “pronunciamientos”; and this particular general was in the employment of the department of excise—that is to say, with the aid of a somewhat ragged following of soldiers, he was hunting through the country for illicit stills. Of course we paid one another formal visits and I had some very pretty speeches made to me about Progress, and Liberty, and Science, which, had they been printed with a free use of Capital letters, would have read like a leading article in a Spanish-American newspaper. The General thanked me formally for the distinguished service I was rendering his country, and accepted with effusion my offer to take him round the ruins and show him what discoveries had been made. On the next morning he appeared with note-book and pencil in hand, and we set off for the ruins, where I did my best in the capacity of showman. We examined all the excavations, and then returned to have another look at the monuments in the Great Plaza; but throughout our walk, although the General’s fingers played caressingly round his pencil, he never took a note. At

last we stood looking at the back of Stela A, which is covered with a particularly well-preserved inscription inclosed in a flat undecorated margin, on which some former visitor had rendered himself conspicuous by deeply carving his distinguished name, J. HIGGINS, in letters about three inches long. I was holding forth, in my best Spanish, about the probability of an interpretation being found to the hieroglyphics, and pointing out some glyphs which I had also met with on monuments in Chiapas and Peten, when the General opened his note-book, as I thought to make a drawing of the glyphs in question. When his pencil had been at work for a few moments I glanced at the sheet to see how proficient he might be as a draughtsman, and found that he had got down J. HIG, and was carefully printing the second G, when he turned round to me and said "Señor Don Alfredo, after all, these hieroglyphics are very much like the characters we use now!"

During the early months of 1885 the difficulty in engaging labourers to work at the ruins was even greater than usual, owing to two causes: first, an epidemic of smallpox, which devastated the neighbouring villages, although Copan itself luckily escaped its ravages, and, secondly, the war which broke out between Guatemala and Honduras on the one side, and Salvador and Nicaragua on the other. On our way to Copan we had ridden through some villages which had been so completely devastated by smallpox that every house stood empty, and the few survivors from the disease had fled, leaving the long row of mounds and hastily-made crosses by the roadside to tell their own tale. Then, when the war came, the few labourers I had been able to engage were drafted off as soldiers, and I was left with none

but cripples and those who were past the fighting age.

At one time matters really began to look serious. I had made arrangements when in the capital for a supply of silver coin to be sent me from time to time with which to pay the labourers; but at the end of a few weeks the supply suddenly ceased, and my correspondents sent a telegram to Zacapa, which was forwarded on to me, to say that owing to the disturbed state of the country it was unsafe to send a messenger with the money, that the tide of war was surging my way, and it was advisable that I should make a speedy retreat to the coast.

I walked about for an hour with that telegram in my pocket, trying to think out the chances of our being left unmolested; I knew by this time that we had won the goodwill of the villagers, and I was loth to leave the work which was daily growing more interesting, so finally I tore up the telegram and said not a word about its contents to anyone. But my silver was nearly at an end, and some of the workmen who had come from a distance, and were naturally perturbed at the rumours of war, wanted to get back to look after their own homes, and they had to be paid off. It was then that the Niña Chica came to the front. When she was boiling my kettle for me that evening I told her some of the difficulties I was in, to which she listened attentively and then left the hut without expressing any opinion. An hour or so later she returned and placed a small bag of silver on the table. It seemed that she had gone the round of the village and had borrowed every cent she could scrape together, and to this she had added her own little store of dollars, and then handed it over to me. It was done with such perfectly good grace that it

was impossible to refuse her help, but I had to explain that she had not altogether caught my meaning. I had enough silver to pay all the workmen up to date, but if I stayed on there was not enough left to pay such labourers as I might be able to engage in the weeks to come. “Don’t you trouble yourself, Don Alfredo,” she replied, “those that are left in the village will go on working for you just the same; we know well enough that you will pay us when these troubles are over.”

I went to sleep that night in a happier frame of mind, but was careful, before turning in, to bar the door and place a revolver handy, and repeated these precautions every night until the war was over. I did not think that the so-called regular troops would molest me; but in these Republics, and especially near the frontiers of the States, marauding bands are liable to crop up in war-time and exaggerated reports of my doings might lead them to think that I was worthy of their attention.

I asked the Niña Chica what chance there was of the villagers standing by me in case of a night raid; perhaps I did not express myself as though I had sufficient confidence in their courage, for the old lady’s eyes flashed and she cried “What! do you think all my boys wear petticoats? You fire a shot for warning and just see if we don’t all turn out and give the rascals a good drubbing.”

If all the villagers had been Niña Chicas no doubt any marauders would have had a bad time of it, but as it was I had some misgivings. However, their courage was never put to the test; every now and then a report would come that troops were marching our way, and then most of the villagers took to the bush with such valuables as they possessed and left

the village to the care of the Niña Chica and a few other old ladies. After a time news came that a battle had been fought about thirty miles away, and the men who had gone as soldiers began to straggle back again; but no one could tell me what had really happened, and the wildest rumours were afloat, and it was not until I sent to Yzabal and got my letters and the newspapers from New Orleans that I heard a true account of the battle and of the death of President Barrios in action.



CHAPTER XVI. COPAN IN 1885 (CONTINUED). (BY A. P. M.)

In such an out-of-the-way place as Copan the natives seem to think that every foreigner must know something about medicine, and soon after my arrival the maimed and the sick began to pay me visits and pour their tales of suffering into my ears. With the many sick children I often found that good beef-tea and condensed milk and arrowroot from my stores worked wonders, without any call on the medicine chest; but my strongest efforts went towards persuading the mothers to keep their babies clean, for they seemed to think that water was dangerous

for them. Unfortunately, I soon gained a distinguished reputation as a surgeon. I say unfortunately, as it raised the hopes of all sufferers, including every incurable cripple, for leagues around, and gave me the unpleasant task of telling them that I was powerless to help them. The case that brought me fame was that of a poor fellow, a blacksmith by trade, living some twelve or fourteen leagues away, who came into camp one morning with his eyes in the most dreadful state of inflammation. He told me that about ten days before, when working at his forge, a hot spark from the metal had flown into his eyes, and that during the following week every one in his village had tried in turn to get the speck out of his eye and that each one had failed. Then he heard of my arrival at the ruins, and had walked over to ask me to help him. It was no use my telling him that I was not a doctor, and that I might very easily destroy the sight of his eye altogether if I were to try any experiments: he only replied that he did not care whether I was or was not a doctor, and that I could not make him much blinder than he was, for he could not see at all with one eye, and very little with the other. I was at my wits' end to know what to do for him, it seemed cruel to send him away; and my hands were so hot and shaky after working with a crowbar and machete all the morning, that I could not even examine his eye satisfactorily. So I put cold bandages over his eyes, gave him some food, and a seat in the darkest corner of the rancho, and told him to rest after his long walk, whilst I thought the matter over. When the sun had fallen low, Gorgonio led the man to my house in the village, and there we put him on his back, and I examined the eye with a magnifying-glass. I could clearly see a minute, almost

transparent particle just on the outer rim of the iris, but the camel's-hair brush which I passed over it failed to move it. Then I screwed up my courage and got Gorgonio to hold the eye down whilst, looking through the magnifying-glass, I tried to remove the particle with the fine point of a knife. The first attempt failed but did no damage, and on the second trial I got the point of the knife under the particle and it came away. By the next morning the inflammation had very considerably subsided, the sight of the uninjured eye appeared to be almost normal, and that of the injured eye had to some extent recovered. The man was very grateful, and said he was unhappy at having no money to pay me, but that he had strong arms and would stay with me until he had worked off his debt. As I learnt that he had a wife and family dependent on him, I told him to rest during the glare of the day, and then make the best of his way home during the evening and in the early morning, and I have no doubt that he spread my fame abroad on the journey.

A few days later another interesting case came under treatment. I had noticed an anæmic-looking man accompanied by a woman loitering about the village in the morning, and later in the day saw the same man in earnest conversation with Gorgonio at the ruins; but as he did not come to speak to me, and as I knew he did not belong to Copan, I took him to be a traveller whose curiosity had prompted him to leave the road to see what we were doing at the ruins. However, when I returned to the village in the evening the same couple were still hanging about, and Gorgonio came with a mystified air to my hut and said: "Don Alfredo, it isn't true is it, that a man can have an animal inside him eating him up?" I expressed my doubts as to its probability, when he

said: “That is what I have been telling the man who has been about here all day, but he says that he is quite certain that he has an animal inside him eating him up, and that a brujo (witch) put it there, and he knows who the brujo is, and he wants to ask you whether he should kill the brujo, and if he does so whether the animal will go away?” This was my first case of “brujeria,” and the medical notes in ‘Hints to Travellers’ did not give any directions as to treatment, so I sent for the victim of witchcraft and got him to state the case himself. He was rather shy about it, but finally told me what I had already heard from Gorgonio, and I learnt further that the “brujo” was one of his neighbours living in the same village. Then I tried my best, with Gorgonio’s assistance, to persuade the man that he was mistaken, that no brujo could possibly put an animal inside him to eat him up, that no doubt he was out of health, but that “brujeria” had nothing to do with it. We might just as well have talked to one of the stone monuments in the plaza with the hope of making an impression on it; both the man and his wife were fully convinced that their probably harmless neighbour was the cause and origin of the mischief, and their only doubt seemed to be whether his death would ensure the death of the animal. After fruitlessly arguing for an hour, I took Gorgonio aside, and we held a private consultation; then, with as much mystery and solemnity as we could assume, I presented my patient with my far-famed “anti-brujeria pills and powders,” which looked very much like small doses of calomel and compound rhubarb pills, and were to be taken at stated intervals, at certain phases of the moon, in order to keep the animal quiet, while the patient tried by every means in his power to propitiate and live on good terms with the “brujo,”

as it was the well-known opinion of the faculty that if the patient killed the "brujo," the animal always killed the patient. I added that no fees were taken in cases of "brujeria," not even bundles of cigars or fresh eggs, and that the patient had better return to his village at once and carry out the treatment prescribed. The couple went off apparently fairly satisfied, and I heard no more of them, but I have some hope that the "brujo" escaped death.

Every evening, when I had my supper, some of the villagers would drop in for a chat, and of course I had to be shown off to every stranger who happened to pass through the village, by whom I was plied with questions such as—"Is it true that you will have to cross the sea to get back to your own country?" "The villagers tell me that you bathe every day: is it not bad for the health?" The Niña Chica was generally show-woman and she took great pride in my performances, and her remarks and comments on these occasions were always delightful.

There had been some difference of opinion amongst the villagers when I first came amongst them as to whether I was a "Christiano" or not; but the matter, I believe, was finally settled in my favour without reference to any ecclesiastical authorities. There was no church in the village, and no school, and the visits of a priest were very few and far between; certainly none came to the village during my stay, and the villagers did not appear to feel the need for one except in the matter of baptism. When a child was born it was hurried off, whatever might be the state of its strength or health or the length of the journey, to be made into a Christian by the nearest priest; after that had been done, no other rites of the Church seemed to be of much account. Each house in

the village had its saint, and every now and then the villagers would form a small procession to escort a saint on a round of visits to his neighbours. Niña Chica's saint was San Antonio, and all the gaudy labels on my tins of food, and all the shreds of coloured paper in which the things had been packed, were carefully preserved by the old lady for the decoration of the corner of her hut, where stood a very dilapidated image enshrined in a cracked glass cupboard. I asked her to tell me something of the saint's history, but she replied that she knew nothing about it. Then I told her what I knew about his story, but she would not have it that it was that San Antonio at all. "When and where did he live?" I asked. "How should I know?" she answered. "Was he ever alive at all?" "What is the use of asking an old woman like me? I don't know if he ever lived, but I know that he is a 'santo.'"

"But, Niña Chica, he is your own particular saint, and you don't know anything about him at all?"

"Yes, I do," she replied indignantly; "I know that the cockroaches have eaten the end of his nose!"

Soon after this conversation took place a greater demand than ever was made for the coloured wrappers and labels, and an old photographic tent with a yellow lining was borrowed from me, for the "Novena" of San Antonio was approaching. I had an invitation to attend the prayer meetings, but managed to excuse myself, for the Niña Chica's house was very small and it was crowded each night as tightly as it could be packed, and for half an hour the congregation shouted chants and hymns in unmelodious voices. On the last night I had watched the company arrive and had then turned into my own hut to eat my supper, and was wondering why

the singing did not begin, when I heard the sound of much loud talking, and on going out to see what was the matter, found the whole congregation outside the house discussing the situation. At that moment a messenger came running in and cried, “It is no use, Don Pedro says his toothache is so bad, he can’t possibly come!” The Niña Chica was in despair, and came over to tell me all about it, and then I learnt that Don Pedro was the only man in the village who could read, so that there was no one now to conduct the service. “You bring me the book,” I said, “and I will see what can be done.” She flew off, and soon returned with a very dirty little paper-covered book containing the services for the Novena, but on turning over the leaves I found that half the service for the last night had been torn out. I broke this gently to the Niña Chica, and expected another wail of despair, but she chirped up and said, “Never mind, Don Alfredo, you read as much as there is and then nudge my arm, for I know lots of things to sing.” I begged for a few minutes’ delay that I might first read through the service to myself, and I cannot say that I found it edifying, nor do I think that it could have conveyed much meaning to the native mind. However, I went over to the crowded hut, and there in the corner was the noseless St. Anthony in his glass-faced case, surrounded by candles and flowers and a choice selection of labels of somebody’s soup and somebody else’s salmon, and shreds of coloured paper, all arranged under the yellow-lined canopy made of my photographic tent, and I must own that the general effect was brilliant and successful.

I stood up to read the service to a most attentive congregation, and when at last I had to stop short in the middle of a sentence I jogged the Niña Chica’s

arm according to arrangement, and the old lady put up her head and positively howled out a chant, which gave me a chance of escape from the stifling atmosphere of the overcrowded hut and of finishing my supper.

A few days later I had another conversation on religious subjects, this time with a girl about fifteen years old, a niece of the Niña Chica, whom I had been doctoring for troubles which seemed to me to come solely from want of good food and consequent poorness of blood. She was a bright-eyed and sharp girl, and I knew that she had been away for some time to a neighbouring town, and might probably have received some education. However, she knew no more than her aunt about the household saint, so I asked her if she knew who Christ was. “Yes,” she replied, “He is Nuestro Señor.”

“And who was His Mother?”

She answered promptly, “La Santissima Virgen.”

At least, I said to myself, the rising generation have been taught something, so I went on with my catechism. “Who was his Father?”

“His Father? Oh! Nuestro Señor de Esquipulas.”

“But,” I said, “Our Lord of Esquipulas is the Christ too.”

“Yes,” she replied, “there are numbers of them, Nuestro Señor de Esquipulas, and Nuestro Señor of this and that,—”; and she rattled through all the names of the shrines for leagues around.

“Was He ever alive on earth?” I asked her.

“Quien sabe!” was the answer. “How should I know!”

The want of religious education did not prevent the

villagers from celebrating Easter by idling for a week and getting very drunk. On the “tres dias grandes,” from Good Friday until Monday, of course no one worked, but I had the greatest difficulty in getting anyone to work in Holy Week at all. Mr. Giuntini could not go on with his plaster moulding without some assistance, and I spent a weary hour in persuading the most intelligent of my workmen to limit his holiday to the three days. The only reason he adduced for not wishing to work was the fear of ill-luck—as he put it, “se puede machetearse,” “one might cut oneself with a machete.” However, he gave way on the promise of extra pay, and no ill effects followed.

Soon after Holy Week, I was hurriedly implored one morning to go and see an old man who was suffering from “goma.” In my ignorance I asked what “goma” might be, and was given the satisfactory answer that it was “goma” of course, and my dullness at not understanding was met with open-mouthed astonishment. Then I looked the word out in the dictionary, but failed to find it. At last, after much questioning, I learnt that it was the term used for the after-effects of drunkenness, and I refused to have anything to do with the case; but I was entreated and implored to come, as it was feared that the man was dying, so I went off to his hut and found him in a miserable condition. He seemed to have been poisoned by the vile new spirit, and had been able to take no nourishment for several days. As it was too serious a case for the Worcestershire Sauce cure, I had to take a shot at a remedy, but with the help of small doses of solution of opium and beef jelly we gradually managed to get him round.

Ignorant, lazy, dirty, and drunken as these people

undoubtedly are, I found them to be cheerful, kindly, and honest. My hut was full of things which were of value to them, and although at first I was always careful to padlock the door when I went off to the ruins and to give the key to the Niña Chica, later on it was often left open nearly all day long, yet nothing was ever touched. There was indeed one case of theft, but the villagers were not to blame. I had occasion to send Manuel, one of my workmen, to Zacapa with a few dollars to make some necessary purchases, and he returned empty-handed, saying that he had been robbed and ill-treated on the road. This was quite possible, as the country was in a disturbed state; but I had my suspicions, and talked the matter over with the Alcalde and Niña Chica. They said that they could not answer for the man as he came from another village, but that he had been living some months amongst them and they had always found him to be honest, and believed his story to be true. Next Saturday a machete was missing, and my suspicions again fell on Manuel; but there was no direct evidence against him, and he came to my hut that night with the others to receive his weekly wage. As it was Saturday, the village green was decorated with the week's wash hung out to dry. Next morning I was awakened by cries of indignation and despair—all the clean clothes had disappeared, and as few could boast of possessing more than two shirts, or, indeed, more than two of any other garment, the distress was universal. An indignation meeting was held outside my hut, and the wildest stories of raids by a licentious soldiery passed from mouth to mouth. When things had quieted down a little, I asked "Where is Manuel?" but Manuel was nowhere to be found. There was no doubt that it came as a real shock to the villagers to

find that the theft had been committed by one who had been living amongst them. Two or three men were sent at once in pursuit of the thief, but he had a good start, and they were many days tracking him from place to place before they overtook him on the frontier of Salvador, where he was brought to justice and some of the clothes recovered.

I believe that Gorgonio and his brother did real missionary work in Copan, by bathing every day in the river and affording proof to the other half-castes that cleanliness was not necessarily followed by fever. And on the day when my numerous friends and patients came to bid me good-bye and bring me little parting presents, I felt quite proud of the success of my preaching when a woman, whose child I had been doctoring, whispered, rather shyly, as she gave me a little bundle of native cigars, “Don Alfredo, I wash my baby every day!”

As soon as the war was over we had begun to send mules and carriers to Yzabal with cargoes of paper and plaster moulds. The paper moulds, after being well dried in the sun, were given a good dressing with boiled linseed oil, and then made up into packages covered first with “scrims,” a sort of loosely woven canvas, and then with an outer coat of shiny waterproof cloth. Each package was then fixed in a crate made of the long light stems of a species of Hibiscus, which we had previously cut and dried. They were unwieldy burdens, but as none of them weighed more than sixty pounds, we had no great difficulty in engaging mozos who carried them on their backs in safety to the port. The conveyance of the plaster moulds was a more difficult matter, as there were in all about fourteen hundred pieces of various shapes and sizes, which needed the greatest

care in handling and packing. Each piece was first of all wrapped in tow, which I had brought from England for the purpose, and then tied up with string in a sheet of strong brown paper. Thirty-two of these packets could, on an average, be packed into the two boxes which each mule carried. We usually managed to send off about ten cargoes at a time, with instructions that the boxes (which were those in which our stores had been brought from home) should be unpacked at the port, and returned to us empty. On his last journey but one the muleteer was told to bring back only half the empty boxes; but, alas! we had made a miscalculation, and when the mules returned for their last loads, we found that we had still on hand five muleloads of plaster moulds, and no boxes to pack them in.

It would have taken at least ten days to get the empty boxes back from the port, and to us they would have been days of idleness, as our camp was broken up and most of our luggage packed. So we looked about to see where we could procure ten rough boxes nearer at hand. We had already exhausted the resources of Zacapa, and now I learned to my dismay that there was no hope of buying any boards from which boxes could be made nearer than the port itself! Finally we had to search the native “milpas” for the stumps of the scented cedar trees which had been left in the ground when the forest was cleared and the plantations made: these we split up with our axes as nearly as possible into boards, and carried them into the village to be dressed down with an adze. No such thing as a saw could be heard of for miles around, and we had to make use of a small blunt saw about an inch in breadth which Mr. Giuntini had brought with him for cutting plaster. Even then our difficulties were not over, for we had

come to the end of our small store of nails and screws, and one messenger despatched to Zacapa, and another in the opposite direction to Santa Rosa, were between them only able to buy just enough for our purpose. At last, after all hands had been hard at work on the job for a week, ten boxes, or rather crates, sufficiently rigid to protect the moulds on their rough journey were finished, and we set out on our way to Yzabal. A week was spent at the port in making strong wooden cases out of a supply of timber which I had fortunately had the foresight to order to be sent from New Orleans, and in repacking the moulds for shipment to England. I have gone into these rather uninteresting details about packing only to show how absolutely necessary it is, when starting on an expedition of this kind, to think out every detail beforehand.

It was lucky, indeed, that the moulds were well packed and the cases strong and well made, for the vessel in which they were shipped ran on a reef off the coast of Florida, and the cargo had to be transhipped under difficulties; and when the freight came to be paid I was initiated into the mysteries of a “general average” which added largely to the cost. Throughout this expedition it seemed as though the sea had a spite against us. The vessel in which Mr. Giuntini sailed from England broke her shaft when a few days out, and had to return to Queenstown, so that he did not reach Guatemala until a month later than arranged; then the vessel which held the precious results of our work ran on shore; and, lastly, the small steamer in which Mr. Giuntini and I took passage on our way home from Livingston to New Orleans, broke her shaft when sixty miles off the north coast of Yucatan, and we lay for some days helplessly drifting into the Gulf of Mexico, until we

were able to anchor on the great Bank of Yucatan, about fifty miles from land and in about forty-five fathoms of water. The weather fortunately held fine, but it proved too hot for the preservation of the cargo of fruit, which was thrown overboard as it ripened, until a broad yellow band of floating bananas stretched out astern as far as the eye could reach. At the end of a week our signals of distress were most fortunately sighted by a small fruit steamer which had strayed somewhat out of its course; and the passengers were carried in her to New Orleans, whence tugs were sent out to rescue the disabled vessel and tow her into port.

Since the date of this expedition the ruins of Copan have undergone a considerable change. In 1896 the Directors of the Peabody Institute of Massachusetts made an arrangement with the Government of Honduras by which they acquired complete control of the ruins for a period of ten years, on certain conditions, of which one is that a certain amount of work shall be done on the spot during each year. Before I returned to Copan in 1894, two years' work had already been done and very valuable results obtained. Unfortunately, during the second year, Mr. John G. Owens, the leader of the expedition, and a young man of great promise, was attacked by a malignant fever, from which he died, and now lies buried at the foot of one of the monuments in the Great Plaza. This sad event somewhat disorganized the work of the Institute, and the Directors were not prepared to send out another expedition in 1894. It was in these circumstances that, thanks to the kindness of Mr. Charles Bowditch of Boston, and of Professor Putnam, an arrangement was made by which I held a commission from the Institute, and did the amount of work at the ruins necessary to

prevent the lapse of the concession, whilst I was able to carry on my own investigations.

One great and important piece of work done by the Americans has been the building of a substantial stone wall which encircles and protects the principal ruined structures, so that there is no longer any danger of the sculptured monuments being damaged by fire, as has so often happened before from careless burning of fallen timber when the natives have been clearing ground for plantation. The site of the ruins has been carefully resurveyed, many important excavations have been made, and many specimens of pottery and other articles have been unearthed from tombs, amongst which the skull of a peccary covered with incised ornament and hieroglyphics is not the least interesting.



CHAPTER XVII. COPAN TO QUIRIGUA.

Towards the middle of March the heat at noonday became excessive and the weather looked threatening. It was early for rain, but ominous thunderclouds had hovered about for several days, and finally, after an oppressively hot morning and afternoon, the storm burst.

We had just finished our dinner when the rain began to fall. With all speed the men dug a trench round

the tent, and drove the tent-pegs deeper into the ground, whilst we hastened to cover our possessions in the house, the roof of which leaked like a cullender, with waterproof sheets and every available macintosh and umbrella. When this was done we took refuge in the tent. It was none too soon, for the floodgates of heaven were opened on us, and the rain came down in a perfect deluge. I had grave doubts whether such a frail shelter as a canvas tent would protect us from the downpour, or resist each wild gust of wind as it swept howling and wailing through the trees, threatening destruction to everything in its path. However, the tent held out splendidly, and after an hour of wild rush and fury, with vivid flashes and mighty crashes of thunder, the tempest passed, and left us in the serenity of a still and moonlit night.

We had made our arrangements to leave for Quirigua about the 21st March, forgetting that that day fell in Holy week, when no Indian will work, so Easter Sunday found us still at Copan awaiting the pleasure of our cargadores. The day broke clear and lovely, but excessively hot, and before night a second thunder-storm, of much greater violence than the first, overtook us in the midst of our preparations for departure. This time it was no ordinary passing thunder-shower, but a complete break up of the weather; and later on we learned that during this week a fierce “Norther” had raged in the Gulf of Mexico, and that cutting frosts and heavy snow-storms had destroyed the crops all along the coasts of Texas and Mexico. The sudden fall in the temperature was so severe that we were glad to put on our warmest garments, and the thinly-clad Copaneros fell ill with chills and fevers.

On Tuesday we bade good-bye to the ruins, and started on our journey to Quirigua in a downpour of rain. It was a melancholy leave-taking, but I was less reluctant to go than I should have been had the weather shown the brilliant laughing mood which had so long entranced me. The village and its inhabitants were in a pitiable condition of wet and mud, and as we rode past the houses, shivering figures with pinched faces came to the doors to bid us farewell, and on all sides we heard complaints and groans at such unusual weather. It was indeed cold and thoroughly uncomfortable, and Gorgonio alone of all the party kept up his spirits, and assured me that the rain was “mucho mayor que el sol”! My taste favours sunshine and dry clothes, but perhaps, after all, we were lucky in accomplishing the five days’ journey under a cloudy sky instead of the grilling rays of a March sun. We were able to travel only five leagues during the first day, for the greater part of that distance retracing our steps on the Zacapa road, and at night pitching our tent in a great pine wood. The rain fell heavily all night long, and the next morning we made slow progress up and down hills by an execrable track that seemed even to tax the patience of the mules. By noon we arrived at a dirty ill-kept rancho, deserted by the responsible members of the family, and left in charge of three small children, who had locked themselves into the house and were not to be tempted out. We found a seat on a big log in the farm-yard, where the animals looked neglected and half-starved, and we ate our breakfast in the company of a “chumpipe,” better known as a turkey and her brood, the friendliest little family imaginable, which clamoured for our food, and ate indiscriminately ginger-bread nuts and oil from the sardine-box, and drank all the coffee we could spare

them. The rain now fell only in occasional showers, and during the afternoon the track improved, although it was still too rough to be pleasant, and we were not sorry to find at the end of the day's journey a well-built house at the rancho of La Ceniza. Our hostess told us, with no little pride, that we could have a room to ourselves; it proved, however, to be a passage-room, but the members of the family passed so stealthily through it on their way to bed, and were so thoughtful not to disturb us in the morning, when they again passed through before we were up, that we were hardly conscious of their presence.

At the time of our arrival the whole household was in a state of excitement over a shooting affray which had taken place just outside the enclosure, and which accounted for the unusual appearance of a man we had met on the road, whose torn and blood-stained garments had attracted our attention. The victim of the affray lay in the room next to us, groaning from the pain of a bullet-wound, and we learnt through Gorgonio that the unfortunate sufferer was ordered to appear before a neighbouring judge that same night. This seemed to be such an inhuman act that we ventured to remonstrate, and to suggest that if the case were so urgent the magistrate might come to the suffering man's bedside; but although there was a general murmur of approval, no one ventured to disobey the order which had been received, and the groaning creature was dragged from his bed and forced to walk off to the judge.

The next day we followed a rough path winding up the face of a bare hill, and from the summit gained a view over a fertile valley in front of us, and a distant glint of the white houses of the village where we were to halt for breakfast. The morning had been

pleasant, with fitful gleams of sunshine and soft cloud-shadows sweeping over the landscape. A pleasant path through a wood lay before us to the village, but before we could enjoy its sylvan charms a drenching shower overtook us, and sent us in a thoroughly bedraggled condition to the shelter of the nearest house. Later in the afternoon we rode on through a park-like country with fine trees to the village of Iguana, where a glance at the "posada" showed it to be unendurable even for one night, and, preferring damp to dirt, we pitched our tent on the grass by the roadside. A ride of three leagues through The rain brought us by noon the next day to the village of Barbasco, which straggles along the bank of the Rio Motagua. The water's edge was fringed with washerwomen, who plied their trade with great energy and small regard for the fabrics they were hammering and beating out with sticks and stones. We were ferried across the river with our luggage in a huge dug-out canoe, as the river was too deep to ford, and the mules were driven into the water to swim after us.

The weather showing signs of improvement, we determined to push on to the rancho of Quirigua, where we were sure of comfortable quarters and hoped to find our letters awaiting us. At the little village of Palmilla we came upon the first signs of the railway in course of construction from Puerto Barrios, on the Atlantic seaboard, to the capital, destined no doubt soon to absorb all the traffic of the old and much-used track connecting the capital with the ancient port of Yzabal on the Golfo Dulce, along which we were travelling. As the track wound upwards over the pine-clad hillside, we caught beautiful views across the valley to the Sierra de las Minas, whose lofty sides are richly clothed with

extensive forests, which have as yet escaped the machetes of the natives and the axes of the foreign coffee-planter. These forests are still the home of the howling monkeys (*Mycetes villosus*)—"Monos," as they are here called; and the sound of their melancholy cries reached us across the valley like the rhythmic roar of surf beating on a distant shore.



QUIRIGUA. STELA D NORTH FACE.

On reaching the summit of the hills we had been ascending, a still more striking landscape lay spread

out before us, for the great forest-covered plain stretched to the N.E., through which the Motagua winds its way to the sea. The misty outlines of the hills on the far side of the river closed the picture on the right, whilst on the left the bold outlines of the Sierra de las Minas, ending in name only at the hardly distinguishable gap through which the road passes to Yzabal, run on under the name of the Sierra del Mico, until their beautiful overlapping slopes are lost to sight where they sink in mist towards the sea. A short ride brought us to Quirigua, which a few years ago was the site of a village of twenty or thirty houses, but now contains only the comfortable homestead of the cattle rancho belonging to Don Carlos Herrera. The ruins of Quirigua, about six miles distant, are included within the limits of the estate, which since the time of our visit has passed into the hands of President Barrios, and it is to be sincerely hoped that he will take measures to guard the monuments against depredations likely to occur by occasion of their proximity to the new railway.

Next morning we set out for the ruins. Riding first through a grove of pine-trees, and then gradually descending to the plain, we followed a narrow track into an almost impenetrable forest of coroza palms, mahogany and cedar trees, and all that marvellous tangle of creepers and climbing plants which go to make up that great wonder of nature—a tropical forest. After about an hour's ride through the forest, we crossed the line of the new railway, which was as yet innocent of rails, and half an hour later we emerged on the bank of the Motagua, about a mile distant from the ruins, and were welcomed to our new camping-ground by Mr. Hugh Price, my husband's companion and assistant in an expedition to Palenque in 1891.

The great river had shrunk to its summer limits, and had left bare long stretches of sand strewn with the leavings of former floods, reminding one of the dumping ground of some great city, and no more picturesque than such a receptacle of rubbish. A little settlement of half a dozen houses had lately been formed on the river-bank, and a hundred yards beyond it Mr. Price, who had arrived a fortnight earlier, had built a rancho for us at the cost of about £2 sterling. With our tent pitched beside it for use as a bedroom we were well accommodated; but the situation was not a pleasant one. The herds of cattle roaming through the forest would draw down of an evening towards the river-bank, when rival bulls made night hideous with their bellowings, and we were forced to get up again and again to ward off attacks on the rather frail fence which protected our homestead, and to drive off those animals who came stumbling among the tent ropes and threatened to bring the canvas down on our heads. The poor beasts meant no harm to us, but they were searching wildly for something salt, and they would return again and again to lick and scrape the earth on the spot where we had thrown the small ration of salt which we daily gave to our mules. Woe to the man who left his garments overnight hanging on the fence to dry; nothing would be left of them in the morning but a chewed unrecognizable mass.

Unattractive as were our surroundings, it was no doubt preferable living near the river-bank, where the breeze could reach us and the water-supply was ample, to camping at the ruins, where the water was not fit to drink, the heat was stifling, and myriads of mosquitoes, flies, and minute bees were irritating beyond measure; but as I never would go through the forest alone, the mile of rough track between the

rancho where I had the housekeeping and cooking to attend to, and the ruins where my husband was at work, caused me to spend most of my days in solitude.



QUIRIGUA. STELA F.

The climate at Quirigua in April is, I am told, usually clear and dry, but we had chanced on one of those exceptional seasons which it seems to be the usual

fate of travellers to meet in all parts of the world, and the inevitable heat was made the more disagreeable by sudden deluges of rain, which, falling on the sun-baked sands, turned the air into a great vapour-bath. Two or three times, however, during our stay, a strong breeze of an evening was followed by a bright and lovely day; then I hurried through my housekeeping with all possible speed, and rode off to spend the day at the ruins. On such a day the forest was beautiful and interesting beyond description, and seemed to be laid under a spell of enchantment. Nothing could exceed the wondrous beauty of the sinuous motion of coroza palms as the breeze gently stirred their splendid leaves and waved them lazily together in a lingering embrace. The forest resounded with the calls of birds, the gurgling note of the oropendula, the cries of parrots, and the screams of brilliant macaws, to which the hoarse roar of the monos, hidden in the highest tree-tops, formed a monotonous accompaniment. The perfumed breeze shook down flowers from invisible tree-tops and showered them in the path, and the sun's rays, forcing their way through every break in the almost impenetrable canopy of vegetation, danced merrily through the forest. What a marvellous place it was! What a fearful restless struggle for existence was going on in the vegetable world before one's very eyes! Everything was fighting its way upward towards the air and sunlight; straight, slim, branchless stems shot up to an incredible height and buried their heads in the canopy above, giving one no chance of distinguishing the shape of the leaves they bore. Numberless creepers and climbers used these shafts as supports on their way upward, their flexible stems being turned around them and hanging in great cable-like

loops from the distant branches. One after another the great trees, even the forest giants with monster boles and huge buttress-shaped roots, seem to fall a prey to the insidious attacks of parasites, and what at first sight appeared to be the shaft of a mighty forest-tree, would sometimes prove to be only the interlacing stems of the Matapalo, a parasitic fig, which still held the dead and rotting trunk of some monarch of the grove within its embrace. The parasite had conquered in the struggle, but its triumph would not last long; the gale which would have failed to bend its victim's stem will send the hollow impostor crashing to the ground, and a hundred rivals will fight for its share of the sunlight.



QUIRIGUA, STELA D, EAST SIDE.

I must own that it was a very great disappointment to me never once to catch sight of a monkey; their cry was often to be heard in the surrounding forest, and they were especially noisy about sunset; but they have become shy of the neighbourhood of clearings, and I could not bear the heat and toil of a scramble through the thick and thorny undergrowth to reach a spot from which they could be seen. However, one's eyes never failed to find animals and insects well worth the watching, and, amongst them all, the

parasol-ants were perhaps the most fascinating, as they passed along their well-worn tracks, each with a piece of green leaf or coloured flower about the size of a threepenny-bit held over its head. I had read Mr. Belt's interesting description of their habits, and had learned how the leaves they so carefully cut from the trees are stored in subterranean galleries and used to form a sort of mushroom bed on which to grow the fungus which forms their principal food. We traced one of their pathways for some distance through the undergrowth until we reached their nest, a low mound three or four yards across, formed of the earth which had been thrown out when digging the galleries beneath, and a few blows on the ground with a stick soon brought out the fierce-looking hall-porters who guard the mouth of the burrows. My husband had on one occasion to place his camera on the top of one of these nests, as the only place from which a certain view could be taken. Going about his work as quietly as possible, he managed to get the focus adjusted before his presence was discovered, but whilst he was putting in the slide the ants swarmed up over him. He jumped away as soon as the plate had been exposed, and managed to brush them off his neck and hands, but fifty or sixty of the ants had fixed their strong nippers into the flannel of his shirt and trousers and refused to be shaken from their hold, and when he attempted to pull them off, the small body always came away between his thumb and finger, leaving the big head and nippers still fast to the flannel.

NOTE (by A. P. M.).—This was my fourth visit to the ruins of Quirigua. It was here that in 1881 I first

made acquaintance with American antiquities. A native from the village guided me to the site of the ruins, but the undergrowth was so dense that we had some difficulty in finding any of the monuments, and even when within touch of them, so thickly were they covered with creepers, ferns, and moss, that it was not easy to distinguish them from dead tree-trunks. When the creepers and larger plants had been cleared off, the thick growth of moss still obscured the carving, and as we had come totally unprepared to meet this difficulty, some time was occupied in improvising scrubbing-brushes from bundles of the wiry midribs of palm-leaves. The final scrubbing was done with an ivory-backed hair-brush out of my dressing-bag; and I well remember the fire of chaff I was subjected to on my return home, when the wreck of that hair-brush was pounced upon by an old servant, who wanted to know "what Mr. Alfred could have been doing with his hair whilst he was in foreign parts!"

We slept only one night in the forest, and I cannot give a better instance of the denseness of the vegetation than by saying that I cleared a space for my camp cot on the south side of the monument marked A in the plan; yet it was only by chance that late in the following afternoon I became aware of the existence of the splendid Altar (marked B) within twelve yards of my sleeping-place. It was the unexpected magnificence of the monuments which that day came into view that led me to devote so many years to securing copies of them, which, preserved in the museums of Europe and America, are likely to survive the originals. In 1882 I spent a fortnight amongst the ruins and cleared enough of the forest to enable me to take a good set of photographs of the monuments, and returned again

in 1883, accompanied by Mr. Giuntini, Mr. Charles Blockley, and the Lopez brothers, more thoroughly equipped for the work of exploration, and remained camped in the ruins for over three months. The following extract from a paper read before the Royal Geographical Society gives an account of the expedition:—

> The ruins, which are completely hidden in a thick tropical forest, stand about three-quarters of a mile from the left bank of the river Motagua, and about five miles from the miserable little village of Quirigua, from which they take their name. They consist of numerous square or oblong mounds and terraces, varying from six to forty feet in height, some standing by themselves, others clustered in irregular groups. Most of these mounds were faced with worked stone, and were ascended by flights of stone steps.
>
> The interest centres in the thirteen large carved monoliths which are arranged irregularly round what were probably the most important plazas. Six of these monuments are tall stones measuring three to five feet square, and standing 14 to 20 feet out of the ground; the other five are oblong or rounded blocks of stone shaped so as to represent huge turtles or armadilloes or some such animals. All these monuments are covered with elaborate carving; usually on both back and front of the tall monoliths there is carved a huge human figure standing full-face, and in a stiff and conventional

attitude. The sides of the monuments are covered with tables of hieroglyphs, most of them in fairly good preservation. In addition to these tables of hieroglyphs there are series of squares or cartouches of what appears to be actual picture-writing, each division measuring about 18 inches square, and containing usually two or three grotesque figures of men and animals. The design of these picture-writings shows considerable variety and freedom of treatment as compared with that of the large-sized human figures, in the execution of which the artist seems to have been bound by conventional rules.

The largest of the stone animals is perhaps the most remarkable of all the monuments; its measurement is roughly a cube of eight feet, it must weigh nearly twenty tons, and it rests on three large slabs of stone. It is shaped like a turtle, and is covered with the most elaborate and curious ornament, and with tables of hieroglyphics and cartouches of picture-writing. The greater part of the ornament throughout these carvings is formed from the grotesque representations of the human face or the faces of animals, the features frequently so greatly exaggerated that it is most difficult to recognize them, but a careful examination enables one almost invariably to trace back to this facial origin what, at first sight, appears to be merely conventional scrollwork. Forms derived from leaves or flowers are altogether absent; occasional use is made

of a plaited ribbon, and a very free use of plumes of feathers, which are often most gracefully arranged and beautifully carved. The fifteen monuments are divided into two groups; in one the figures are all those of men, in the other of women[1]. It might be rash to argue from this, that women had attained a high place in the social arrangement of the people who raised these monuments; but there is one other feature that certainly may be admitted as showing an advanced and peaceful condition of existence, and that is the entire absence of any representation of weapons of war.

The work of examining and copying the carvings at Quirigua was one of no small difficulty; it was necessary, after clearing away the thick undergrowth, to fell the forest trees, and after an interval of about ten days, to run fire through the clearing.

The earth round the monuments had to be cleared away usually to the depth of two or three feet, as, probably owing to floods from the river, the level of the ground had considerably altered since they were originally placed in position; a scaffold had then to be built round each monument and the carving subjected to a careful and thorough cleaning. This cleaning proved to be the most tedious part of the work, as the stone was always covered with thick and adhesive growths of moss and lichen. Two of the animal-shaped monoliths were almost completely

buried under huge forest trees, which had grown exactly on the top of them, and it was only by a chance notice of some carved stone appearing between the roots that I became aware of their existence. I had one of these trees felled, but found the stones so much crushed and destroyed by the pressure of the roots that nothing remained worth moulding.

All provisions and all materials for the work, including such things as photographic dry-plates, moulding-paper, lime, oil, and nearly four tons of plaster, had to be carried in small quantities, sometimes on mules, but more usually on men's backs, from the port of Yzabal, about 24 miles distant, over a range of hills, along a track which proved almost impassable in bad weather.

We commenced work early in February, which is usually the beginning of the dry season, but unluckily during that whole month the rains continued and work was carried on under the greatest difficulties; excavations were filled with water as soon as made, and no moulding could be done unless a water-tight roof was first built over the monument which was to be worked at. At one time the floods covered all but a few feet round the knoll on which we had built our palm-leaf shanty, everything in the camp turned green with mould and mildew, and snakes and scorpions were very troublesome, and mosquitoes were innumerable. Worse than

all, the sick list increased, until at last twelve Indians were ill with fever on the same day, and the sound ones all ran away home. After a long and tedious search I was able to engage other labourers, and from that time matters began to mend; the Indian labourers suffering from fever recovered, and the weather became so hot and dry, that we were able to work on steadily until the first week in May. By that time I had secured a complete set of photographs of each of the monuments; Mr. Giuntini had finished a plaster mould of the great turtle —a mould of over six hundred pieces— and he had also moulded the most interesting portions of two other monuments. In addition to this, with the aid of my half-caste companions I had taken a mould in paper of one entire monument, and of every table of hieroglyphics and picture-writing which could be found, and Mr. Blockley had made a careful survey of the site of the ruins. The work of packing and transporting the moulds to the port was one of even greater difficulty than bringing the material, for there were over a thousand pieces of plaster moulding of all shapes and sizes with delicate points and edges which had to be protected from the slightest jar, and large paper moulds, some of which measured nearly five feet square. The last loads were not over the mountains when the rains commenced again with tremendous thunderstorms,

and the mountain tracks were again an alternation of mud-holes and watercourses. A few of the paper moulds were damaged by damp on the passage home, but, on the whole, the result of the expedition has been very satisfactory.



QUIRIGUA, THE GREAT TURTLE.

Since 1883 one other fallen monument has been discovered, and we have learnt that the stone-faced mounds are the foundations of temples similar to those at Copan, but much more completely ruined. It was mainly with the purpose of more thoroughly examining these foundation-mounds and correcting the survey that we revisited the ruins in 1894. During our short stay we took a number of moulds and had finished all the clearing and made the necessary preparations for the survey, which Mr. Price was to carry out after our departure. But, alas! a very few days after we left the ruins both Mr. Price

and Gorgonio were prostrated by a very bad type of fever, and it was with much difficulty that they succeeded in reaching Yzabal, where, owing to the kind attention they received from Mr. and Mrs. Potts, to whom many a traveller owes a debt of gratitude, they recovered sufficiently to start, Gorgonio for his home at Coban, and Mr. Price for England.

The survey was necessarily left unfinished, and the plan here given is taken from Mr. Blockley's survey, amended as far as possible from Mr. Price's notes. As both Mr. Price and Gorgonio were too ill to attend to the packing of the moulds, that work was perforce left to the local carpenter at Yzabal, with the result that more than half the moulds were found to be in a hopelessly ruined condition, when, after some unexplained delay, they arrived six months later in England. I spent an unhappy day at the Museum opening the packing-cases and rescuing the less-injured moulds from the evil-smelling mass of mildewed paper, and returned home only to be sent to bed for what the doctor first of all called an attack of influenza, but on the next day declared to be undoubtedly malarial fever, whether caught from germs conveyed from the tropics in the rotting paper, who shall say?

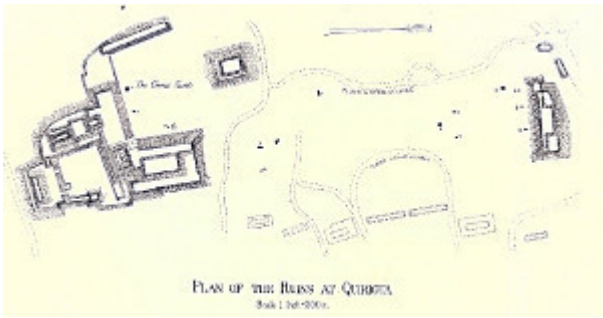
CHAPTER XVIII. ON THE WAY TO THE COAST.

Although the work which my husband had planned to do at the ruins was not nearly finished, we had

reluctantly to cut short our stay at Quirigua, as we learnt that the next steamer to leave Livingston would be the last to carry passengers to New Orleans without a long detention on account of quarantine. As far as our personal comfort was concerned I was sincerely glad of the move, for as the season advanced the heat and steamy dampness had become exceedingly trying. A few days before setting out, an exceptionally heavy shower had driven a party of women, who were passing by, to take shelter in our house; one of them carried in her dress a baby squirrel, a charming little brown creature with a long, grey, feather-like tail. I longed to possess it, and with some hesitation made an offer for it of five reals, about 1*s.* 6*d.* of our money, which was eagerly accepted, and the tiny thing became our property. I gave him a grass saddle-bag for a bed and hung him inside my mosquito curtain, where he slept through the night without disturbing me. During the day, when not cuddled up asleep in my hand, he was rushing about the house, prying into all the corners, and amusing my lonely days by his pretty ways and the grace of his movements. “Chico,” as we named him, took most kindly to his afternoon tea, a habit which has grown upon him so that he shows much impatience when it is not served at the proper time; but the first time he drank tea, the effect upon his nerves was disastrous, he could not sleep, and a long midnight run on the sand-bank was necessary before he could be quieted.

On the 14th April we were ready to leave Quirigua for the port of Yzabal, and, sad as was the thought that this was to be our last day’s ride under the lovely sky of Guatemala, I plead guilty to a feeling of relief when our house and its surroundings were out of sight and we were once more wending our way

along the forest beneath the arches of great coroza palm-leaves. Thence we rose again to the pine-woods and rode over the hills to the eastward, striking the main road from the capital to Yzabal, and, looking back, we caught lovely glimpses of the llanos of the Motagua River and the forest we had left. It was late in the afternoon when we crossed the gap in the Sierra del Mico and began the descent to the Golfo Dulce, which we could see lying tranquilly below us, and the moonlight was playing its usual tricks, lighting up the scattered palm-trees and throwing a glamour of beauty even over the white-washed houses of the village when we rode into Yzabal. It was indeed a delicious change from the stifling heat of the forest, for a refreshing breeze was blowing from the lake, and I was lulled to sleep by the cooling sound of the wavelets lapping on the beach.



Plan of the Ruins at Quirigua.

Chico's first day's journey into the great world had been rather trying to us both: from the moment I mounted my mule until our arrival at Yzabal he never ceased running up and down from my saddle to the top of the mule's head, tugging at the string which held him and trying to jump into all the overhanging branches. He was so excited and wilful that I was sorely tempted to set him free to return to

his native forests, where, however, he would probably have died of hunger or fallen a prey to some snake or carnivorous beast; but when we reached Yzabal, all trouble with him was at an end, the poor little creature had so exhausted himself that he at once crept to his saddle-bag and slept without stirring for many hours. This was indeed the only day on which he gave us any trouble during the whole of our journey to London. In our cabin on the steamer he made himself quite at home; through the bustle and noise of a railway station he always remained quietly in his bag, and although during the long railway journey to New York, he took many a scamper round our state room, he used the utmost discretion in always retreating into his bag on the approach of the guard, as though he knew the stringent rules against carrying animals in a Pullman car. Ever since his arrival in England he has been the household pet; he has the run of the house, under certain restrictions, and London life seems to suit him wonderfully well. The summer after our return he passed through what appeared to be a bad attack of distemper with severe convulsions; but it may have been only the effect of teething, for, strange to say, he has twice lost his upper incisor teeth. As soon as the teeth became loose he was very anxious to get rid of them, and when I took hold of them between my thumb and finger, he would pull hard against me and try to work them out. When he is ill he becomes pathetically affectionate and loves to be petted, and seems sincerely grateful for one's care of him. During his second summer in England, we were living on the banks of the Thames, and Chico was allowed the free run of the garden during the daytime. He never wandered far, and made a home for himself in a hole in a walnut-tree on the lawn, and spent many hours

carefully lining it with leaves. Here, if he were not caught and brought in when he came down for his five o'clock tea, he would prepare to spend the night, and the only time he ever showed temper was when he was hauled out of this favourite hole and carried off to his own bed.

One morning, as Chico was scampering about among the trees, he unluckily attracted the attention of some men who were passing in a boat, and before I could make out what they were after, one of them had landed and knocked poor Chico off the tree with an oar. When I ran towards him, the man made off and I picked up the poor little animal, who lay in my hand as I thought dying, breathing in gasps and with quivers of pain passing through his little body. A dose of brandy and ammonia partly revived him, and a careful examination showed that his forearm was broken near the elbow. Twice was he put under chloroform and attempts were made to set the tiny limb in plaster bandages, but the bandages always slipped off, and after the second attempt the veterinary surgeon, who had been called in, said he could do no more for him. During the first night after the accident, he slept by my side and became restless as soon as I removed my hand from him; the next day he at last consented to lie still in his own bed and slept for hours together, putting up his head when he awoke to be fed with milk from a spoon. By degrees he began to get about again, and at the end of a fortnight the bones seemed to be firmly knit, and although he has ever since had a stiff joint, it seems to cause him very little inconvenience, and he enjoys the most robust health. He is beautifully clean and his coat is without the smallest trace of scent of any kind, and he is fastidious in his food, delighting in a hot roll at breakfast, and cake with his tea, but

scornful of baker's bread. He likes fruit and is especially fond of cherries; but he refuses all English nuts and has to be provided with Spanish chestnuts and pecan nuts from America, and these latter he expects to have cracked for him, as he has never yet learned to open a nut himself. He is indeed as charming, gentle, and attractive a pet as one could wish for; but alas! he has no respect for the furniture, which shows only too visibly the marks of his teeth.

On the 17th April, having disposed of our mules and bidden farewell to Mr. Price and the tearful Gorgonio, who, faithful to the last, strove to make everything comfortable for our journey, we embarked on the little steamer which plies between Yzabal and Livingston, where we were to take the steamer for New Orleans. The sail down the great lake was devoid of interest until we approached the narrows which separate the Golfo Dulce from the Golfete. Here the castle of San Felipe guards the passage, a ruined seventeenth-century fort of which little remains but the crumbling bastions and a solitary cannon, but around which hangs many a legend of the bold buccaneers who infested the coast during the days of the Spanish dominion. As the steamer threaded its way between the islands which dot the placid waters of the Golfete, we were many times hailed by the occupants of heavily laden canoes, who were on the watch to deliver their cargoes of bananas for conveyance to the ocean steamer. Then the waterway narrowed, the hills closed in on us, and we entered the gorge of the Rio Dulce. The cliffs rose precipitous around us, densely clothed with vegetation wherever a root could find a hold; trailing creepers, graceful tree-ferns, and feathery bamboo gave a lightness as of lacework over the denser masses of green, and here and there the

living veil was rent by gigantic buttresses of white-veined rock. The windings of the stream are so abrupt that at times one felt that the steersman must have lost his head and was madly charging the mighty wall in front with his pigmy craft, then at the last moment a sudden turn would open up a new scene of beauty bathed in ever-changing light and colour. One longed to be drifting quietly along in a canoe instead of being hurried down the stream with the rattle and smoke of a steamer, and we seemed hardly to have time to drink in all the beauty of our surroundings before the hills opened again, and we were fast moored to the wharf at the little settlement of Livingston, within sound of the roar of the Atlantic surf.

Livingston bears the name of an American who surveyed the coast, and its most numerous inhabitants are negros, whose first western home was the Island of St. Vincent, where they are supposed to have intermarried with the Indians, and have thus come to be known as Caribs, although one can detect little trace of Indian blood by their appearance. Their language is a mixture of Spanish, French, English, and some Negro dialect, and they seem to be an exclusive people, who give one the idea of tolerating the white population of the village rather than being tolerated by them. This indifference to their white neighbours is curiously exhibited in the sale of fish. When a Carib fishing-boat comes in, it is at once surrounded by the Carib women, who, with petticoats rolled up, stand knee deep in the water round the boat, taking out, weighing, and selling fish to their fellows; but until the wants of every Carib household are supplied no white person is allowed to buy, and not infrequently the whole catch is disposed of to the Caribs and the white people get none of it.

As a port Livingston is a modern creation, and is likely to fall again into desuetude as soon as the railway connecting Puerto Barrios with the city of Guatemala is completed; even at the present time, whilst it enjoys the advantage of being the sole port of entry on the Atlantic seaboard, it can hardly be called a success. No ocean-going steamer can cross the bar, or rather the two bars which stand across the mouth of the river; and a passage in a dug-out Carib dorey from the wharf to a steamer when a strong wind is blowing may not be always a dangerous operation, for the boats sail well and are beautifully handled by the negro boatmen, but it is by no means a pleasant experience, as we found out when we had in sudden haste to catch a steamer after dark. We had refused to engage a passage in the overcrowded mail-boat, preferring to take our chance in a trading steamer, which was gathering in a cargo of fruit further down the coast and had to call at Livingston on the way home. The arrival of the steamer was signalled just as the sun was setting, and we had to cross the bar and scramble on board in the dark. However, we were fortunate in our choice of vessels; and as there were 18,000 bunches of bananas on board, the Captain was bent on getting them to market as soon as possible, so, favoured with fine weather in the Gulf, we passed the jetties of the Mississippi River about ninety-three hours after leaving Livingston. Thus ended the interesting part of our most delightful journey; but there was, unluckily, a bad time to follow, for no sooner had I landed in the United States than a “calentura” laid me low, contracted, I think, in the fever haunted forest near the banks of the Motagua.



CARIBS BUYING FISH AT LIVINGSTON.

CHAPTER XIX. CAJABON AND THE NORTHERN FORESTS. (BY A. P. M.)

I had passed the last two months of the year 1886 in an interesting journey through the Altos, examining the ruins of Indian towns which were known to have been occupied at the time of the Spanish invasion; then crossing the main range I found myself, in January 1887, in my old and comfortable quarters at Coban in the Alta Vera Paz. I had no settled plan of

work before me, but was prepared to do a little amateur map-making about the headwaters of the Rio de la Pasion, and to examine into the truth of some rather vague rumours concerning important Indian ruins which were said to exist in the Northern forests near the frontier of British Honduras. Carlos Lopez was sent ahead to the village of Cajabon to engage Indian carriers for the forest journey, and as it was still early in the season which in these parts is by courtesy called "dry," I decided to spend a fortnight in mapping the track between Coban and Cajabon, a distance of about sixty miles, and fixing the position of the latter village, which I felt sure was placed too far north on the published maps. I had already spent some days taking angles and counting my steps in the direction of Cajabon when we met Carlos Lopez returning to Coban in company with a deputation of Cajabon Indians who were going to the Jefe Político to protest against the orders they had received from him to accompany me into the forests. Carlos told me that he had met with no success whatever in his mission, and that the reason most frequently given for not accepting service with the expedition was that it was unsafe to go with me, as "Los Ingleses comen gente" (the English were cannibals!). I had never met with this objection before, and as it was urged quite seriously, I can only suggest that it is a strange survival of the stories told to the Indians by the Spanish priests and officials in the days when buccaneers infested the coasts and English smugglers were thorns in the side of Spanish authorities.

The expected dry weather would not arrive, and owing to the prolonged rains the track, which threaded its way between innumerable conical limestone hills from one to two hundred feet in

height, was almost ankle deep in mud and was often broken into great mud holes which I had no wish to fathom. Now and then we passed a solitary Indian rancho, and our nightly resting-place was in one of the sheds or "Ermitas" which are to be met with every four or five leagues, and which if not peculiar to this part of the country are certainly more noticeable here than elsewhere.

The Indians have their headquarters in straggling towns, such as Coban, San Pedro Carchá, and Cajabon, but in order to secure new ground for their plantations of beans and corn, they spread out all over the country, moving their ranchos every few years to a new clearing in the forest, or returning to some old plantation which has long lain fallow. When they are thus abroad the Ermita becomes the temporary meeting-place of the families settled round about. It usually consists of a thatch roof set upon about a dozen posts with little or nothing in the shape of wall or enclosure. At one end of it, or on one side, is a rough wooden altar supporting an open wooden box, some times protected in front by a cracked glass, which holds a crucifix or a Madonna, or the figure of the Saint after whom the Ermita is named—a figure which is sure to be tawdry and mean-looking even when one has grown used to the style of art which the Spaniard has carried with him to the West. Behind the altar usually stands a collection of wooden crosses varying in height from one to eight feet—the smaller ones the individual offerings of the pious, and the larger ones brought there by the company which assembles on the feast day of the Saint; for it is in these Ermitas that the Indians hold their fiestas, meet to transact local business, get drunk, and bury their dead. I had

several times noticed the unevenness of the hard mud floor when I was setting up my camp bed, but it was not until I was trying to get the bed level above a more than usually distinct mound, that I asked a question and found out that I was about to sleep above the last addition to the majority.

The third night out was the worst we experienced; the rain had held off during the day, and we worked on until sundown. Then, as there were no Indian houses to be seen, we cooked our supper and prepared to sleep in a little walless rancho perched on the hillside close by the path, which could hardly be dignified by the name of Ermita, for it had no altar in it, although my Indians called it by the name of a Saint. We stacked our baggage as well as we could on logs and stones, then I set up my camp-cot, Gorgonio slung his hammock between the posts, and the Indians, who for some unknown reason had brought no hammocks with them, rolled themselves up in their blankets, and fitted their bodies into the depressions in the uneven mud floor, through which protruded knobs of limestone rock, and were soon snoring. About nine o'clock down came the rain again—at first it only sprayed through the thatched roof, so that an open umbrella sufficed to protect my lamp and the book I was reading; then it began to fall in drops on the rug which covered the foot of my cot, and I had to rig up a waterproof sheet over it, which made the heat stifling; then it ran in little streams over the sloping floor, and the Indians began to shift about in hope of finding dry spots, but the rancho was very small and we were twelve in number. By midnight the streams broadened and increased until the whole floor was a watercourse. Then one by one the Indians rose solemnly from the ground and squatted on logs or stones or anything

that raised them above the flood, and covered themselves over with their leafy rain-coats. As they squatted there, looking just like a group of little haystacks, I wondered whether they were inwardly cursing their folly in not bringing their hammocks with them; if so, they certainly showed no outward signs of mental disturbance, but sat solemn and silent all the night through patiently waiting for the dawn.

To the north and west of Coban the land is fairly level, but it is dotted over with innumerable more or less conical limestone hills, usually standing apart from one another, or more rarely clustered together in groups. As we neared the village of Lanquin a high range of hills rose to the north of us, and our track lay down a narrowing valley, through the middle of which one might have looked for a fair-sized stream; however, it held no more than a small rivulet, which finally disappeared altogether. Then the track dropped down suddenly between high mountain walls and we saw the pueblo beneath us, and there to the left of it was our lost stream bursting out of a cave in the rock, a full-grown river. A large track of the porous limestone region to the north and west must be drained, sponge-fashion, to supply this swift-flowing Rio Lanquin. Just above the cave from which the stream flows out there is another stalactite cave, much talked about in the neighbourhood as one of the wonders of the world, but very seldom explored beyond the first hundred yards.

From Lanquin we rode on to Cajabon without stopping, leaving this part of the track to be surveyed at our leisure, as we intended to make Cajabon our headquarters, whilst the mozos were being collected for our journey to the north. On our way we crossed an affluent of the Cajabon river by means of a

hammock bridge, one of those wonderful structures of twisted creepers and natural ropes for which the tropical American Indian has always been famed. From Coban (which stands 4280 feet above sea-level) the track had made a continuous descent, and at Cajabon we were again in a hot country only 704 feet above the level of the sea.



A HAMMOCK BRIDGE.

The Lopez family has long been connected with Cajabon, and although my companions Gorgonio and Carlos Lopez and other brothers had wandered away and settled in Coban and Salamá, the eldest, Cornelio, still remained in his old home and held the office of “secretario” to the municipality, the officer who is appointed by the Government to counsel and guide the Indian officials, for, with the exception of the Lopezes and one other half-caste family, the community is purely Indian. As we neared the town Gorgonio told me that he did not think I should be

comfortable at his brother's house, as the house was small and his brother's family numerous, and suggested my seeking a lodging at the "Convento," where the Padre was known to be hospitable and a good fellow. So we rode on through the straggling Indian town, winding our way round the bases of many small hills on which the Indian houses are perched; and then up the side of the large central hill which is crowned by the church and the remains of an old convent of the Dominican monks. Passing through the gate into the great walled square, where stands a weather-beaten stone cross, I dismounted from my horse at the foot of the steps leading to the Convento, and was greeted with "Come in, come in! I very glad to see you. I do speek de Engleesh very well." Looking up I saw a small, sandy-haired, grey-eyed man dressed in blue-and-white-striped cotton trousers, a spotted cotton shirt, and a pair of rough brown native shoes; he ran down the steps, grasped my hand, patted me on the back, roared with laughter, and kept up a stream of greetings in the most delicious broken English. I had looked for the usual sallow-faced, half-baked ladino padre, and here, in this out-of-the-way Indian village, I chanced on, of all people in the world—a Dutchman!

"Yes, I speek de Engleesh very well. I go to school at Mill Hill: you know Mill Hill? Very good place. Cardinal Manning he my friend. Queen Victoria she one very good woman." And so he rattled on, cracked small jokes, dug me in the ribs, and laughed continuously. How often during the next week I wished that some one had been with me to enjoy him. He was perfectly delicious—always laughing; he let off innumerable little jokes and told interminable stories, and told them again and again with the same delightfully quaint phrases. His favourite

reminiscence was of the day when the Prince of Wales went to Saint Paul's to return thanks after recovery from illness. Apparently the pupils of the Roman Catholic College of Mill Hill were allowed a holiday, taken to the City to see the show and given a good dinner afterwards. But this was not quite the Padre's view of it; he never seemed to tire of telling this story, and always told it to me with much detail, as though I could not possibly be expected to know anything about the matter, and always prefaced it with "Queen Victoria she one very good woman." "Well, I will tell you her primogenito what they call him, Prince o' Wales, he very sick; the Queen tink he go die, everyone say he go die; but Queen Victoria, she one very good woman, she give plenty of money, and she say everybody must pray very hard; and dey all pray very hard, everybody; and Prince o' Wales he get well again: it one miracle sabe Usted? because dey all pray so hard. Queen Victoria, she one very good woman, she say now we make one gran fiesta; and Queen Victoria and Prince o' Wales and all de people, oh plenty people! dey all go to San Pablo, de gran Catedrál in London, and say prayers. And de Queen she say everybody have pray very hard, very hard: now everybody have good dinner, everybody, Catholic, Jew, Turk, everybody; and oh! what good dinner we had." He was always kindly, and I learnt that he was constant at his duties and at everyone's service; and the Indians had a great liking and respect for him, although they looked on him as a being altogether beyond their comprehension. When he laughed and cracked his jokes and dug them in the ribs they stood round in solemn and open-mouthed wonder. "Ah!" he turned to me one day from a group who had come to him on some business, "Indian very good people, and it one very

good ting to be parish priest. Every Indian man he marry, oh very young!—dat two dollars; den every Indian woman she get baby, want him baptize—dat one dollar. Oh it very good ting to be parish priest! Den I make Coffee Finca; Indian very good, he all come and help. Den I keep plenty cattle: when cow break into Indian plantation, Indian he make much cry out, he beat cow very hard, he say you pay money for milpa; but when Padre's cow eat milpa, Indian he say, dis Padre's cow, he lead him out very quiet. Oh it one very good ting to be parish priest!" And then he roared with laughter at his own worldly wisdom.

I asked the Padre about his past career, and learnt that he had left Holland as a young man to take a position as teacher in a college—I think in San Salvador. Soon after his arrival a revolution broke out, and during the anarchy which followed there was no money forthcoming to pay teachers, the college ceased to exist, and he found himself penniless and destitute. Then someone suggested his taking orders, which was done without loss of time and apparently without much difficulty; since then he had found it "One very good ting to be parish priest." He owned that he had not written home for years; and I fear my efforts to persuade him to write and regain touch with his friends were of no avail, for when I asked after him two years later, it was only to learn that he was dead and that the Consul who had his affairs in hand could find no trace of his family in Europe.

The Convento was a thick-walled, large-roomed building, in rather a tumble-down condition, and contained little in the way of furniture. Two or three women servants lived in an outbuilding at the back,

and cooked the Padre's food for him, brought in the water, and occasionally swept out the big room, which was all the service he needed. Having heard something of the ways of native padres, I ventured to ask one of my men if my host had any "compañera" attached to him: he said, "No, not one"; and added, with delightful simplicity, "And, you see, that is so strange, as a padre often has three or four"!

Cornelio and the Padre, as the only "gente de razon" in the place, generally spent their evenings together. I asked the Padre if they had any books to read, and he said that he had none, but added, with some pride, that Cornelio possessed a 'History of the World,' in two volumes, and that they had often read that. My offer to see if I could spare him any books did not seem to arouse much interest; apparently he had never read a novel, and hardly seemed to know what it meant. However, I looked through my boxes and found a copy of 'El Niño de la bola' and 'Pepita Jimenes,' and these I handed to him; he thanked me listlessly and put them aside. That evening I said good night to my host early, as I had some writing to do, and later on spent an hour or two shooting stars with a sextant and working out our position. It was past one o'clock when I was ready to turn in, and to my surprise I saw a light under the Padre's door and heard the sound of a voice. I called out, and hearing no reply, pushed at the big wooden door, which swung open. The feeble rays of light from one small oil-lamp were lost in the gloom of the far corners of the great bare room; but I could just make out Cornelio seated on the bench against the wall with his elbows pushed over the heavy well-worn table, his head resting on his hands, in rapt attention, whilst the Padre—a candle in one hand and a book in the other—was pacing up and down in front of the

table, reading aloud from the pages of 'Pepita Jimenes.' "Hush!" he cried, holding up the book at me and not stopping in his walk, "he is just going to do it"; and I sat quietly on the bench whilst he read page after page of that delightfully told story. Then I crept quietly off to bed—my departure unobserved by them, so absorbed were they both in the story,—and fell asleep to the distant murmur of the Padre's voice. He had taken up the book casually late in the evening and, once started, read it out loud from beginning to end.



CAJABON.

By the 18th of February the work of plotting the traverse from Lanquin to Cajabon was finished, and, after almost endless bother, the cargadores for the forest journey had been engaged and their loads arranged; so, bidding farewell to the Padre and Cornelio, with many handshakes and mutual expressions of goodwill, we set out on our way. My party consisted of Gorgonio, Carlos, José Domingo

Lopez, and about twenty Indian cargadores. We had arranged to take with us one horse and three mules, although many years had passed since anyone had attempted to take animals over the track we proposed to follow, but we knew how necessary they would be to us when the dense forest was passed and we should emerge on the savannah lands of Peten. Until we were clear of the forest neither corn nor pasture would be met with, and unluckily neither the horse nor the mules were accustomed to feed on the leaves of the Ramon tree, which is the food usually given to animals employed in forest journeys. Ramon is not a fodder which either horses or mules take to readily, and it is in some cases only after days of starvation that they will eat it at all; but having once fed on Ramon they seem to like it as well as any other food, and it keeps them in excellent condition. These trees are seldom very numerous, and when there is much traffic along a forest-path they are so systematically stripped of their branches by the muleteers that it is often difficult to find an untouched tree within a mile of the track.

The first few days of our journey are pleasanter to think over than they were to go through. Twenty unwilling overladen Indian carriers in a damp and mosquito-haunted forest would try the temper of an angel. They dawdled along and made every sort of excuse to stop and readjust their packs, and we had to keep a sharp look-out to see that none of them wandered off to their milpas and gave us the slip altogether. The loads I had given them to carry were not too heavy, and included food enough to last a fortnight; moreover, arrangements had been made for further supplies to overtake us on the road. However, the men had not been satisfied, and each one had thought it necessary to bring with him an

extra thirty or forty pounds' weight of food on his own account. As a rule, it is no doubt the better plan to let Indians cater for themselves, but then there is always the danger that at the end of a few days they will tell you that all their food is finished, and propose a halt whilst they send to their homes or hunt round for supplies; and as time is of no importance to them, the delays may be endless. On the other hand, if you undertake to cater for them they never quite believe that you mean to go on doing so, and look on your supply of food as something to be feasted on at once, and the capacity of an Indian's stomach for holding totoposte (parched corn cake) is a marvel to any white man.

Some years ago, when starting on a ten days' journey through the forest from Coban to the Lake of Peten, I took a large quantity of totoposte with me, not to be eaten on the way, as each man carried his own food for the journey, but to enable me, when I reached the lake, to push on at once to the ruins of Tikál. The loads were most carefully arranged, and I set out feeling confident that no one was overburdened; but never in all my experience was there more growling and groaning. I began to think that in some unaccountable way we must have made a mistake in the weights, and I felt obliged to pick up some more carriers on the way to ease my men of part of their burdens; nevertheless the groaning and the grumbling did not cease. After a long and wearisome march we arrived at the village of Sacluc, and set about re-arranging our cargoes for the journey to Tikál. Then only did I find out that the totoposte had been secretly taken out of the packs and eaten during our march, and that the bulky burdens under which the mozos had been groaning were half made up of sticks and dead leaves. So skilfully had the change

been made that even Gorgonio had been deceived, and there was no avoiding a delay of three or four days whilst a fresh and far more expensive supply of totoposte was being baked.

I was not going to be taken in by the same trick on this journey, and made sure that the reserve stores of totoposte should not be tampered with; but there was no doubt that the mozos had really overburdened themselves with the extra food they had chosen to bring with them, and the result was that at first we only crawled along, and the best part of each day was spent in resting and eating. One mozo in particular, named Domingo, absolutely appalled me with his prodigious appetite. I had brought him with me from Coban, because he stated that he knew of some stone idols in a cave close by the track we were to follow. His account of the discovery was that, some years previously, whilst travelling through the forest from San Luis to Cajabon, he had shot at and wounded one of a herd of wild pigs which had run across the track in front of him, and that after following the wounded animal through the bush for half an hour or more he had lost all trace of it, but found himself in front of a cave in which there stood some great idols carved out of stone. He told the story in a way that impressed one with his truthfulness, and I could not help believing that what he called a cave was the ruin of a temple, and that it would be worth while to have a good hunt for it. Domingo was more intelligent than the other mozos, and he spoke Spanish fluently. He had brought a younger brother with him, apparently to help minister to his voracious appetite, for on our way from Coban this brother was always disappearing down by-roads, only to return again an hour later laden with food.

As we were then travelling very slowly and in an open country, I let them do as they liked, but now that we were on a narrow track in the forest, and it was necessary to keep the men together, Domingo and his brother gave me great trouble with their frequent halts and everlasting meals, and they helped to demoralize the other mozos.

We had risen to a height of over two thousand feet in crossing the hills to the north of Cajabon, and on the third day we began to descend again, and crossed the headwaters of the Rio Sarstoon—here a stream which one could almost jump across. It probably flows for about thirty miles towards the north-east, and, making a short bend to the south, reaches the Falls of Gracias á Dios, whence it flows for about twenty-five miles in an easterly direction to the sea, and forms the boundary between Guatemala and the colony of British Honduras. We followed down the course of the stream for some hours, crossing and recrossing it several times, and then turned again over the limestone hills, whose rough surface I can only compare to that of a gigantic fossil bath-sponge with innumerable pits, sharp edges, and projecting points. We had frequently to use the backs of our axes to break away the points and edges of the rock before it was possible for our animals to pass, and many hours were spent in cutting away the great loops of roots and lianes which formed a dangerous entanglement across the narrow track; even the sure-footed Indians had much difficulty in picking their way, and how the horse and mules escaped accident during the first part of our journey has always been a mystery to me.

About midday on the 21st, after a slight rise and fall, the track became clearer, and we passed an

abandoned raft now high and dry, which had been used a week earlier, when the flood was higher, by two Indians whom I had met and talked with at Cajabon. We were now in the valley of the Chimuchuch, another branch of the Rio Sarstoon, and for two hours we waded through flood-water from ankle-to knee-deep. At last the water became so deep that I had to strip off my clothes and carry them on my head. The mozos managed their cargoes most skilfully, shifting them up as high as they could go on their backs, and in this way we crossed a deep backwater, walking along a sort of underwater bridge which the Indians whom I had sent on the day before had prepared for us. A few yards beyond this we had to cross the river Chimuchuch itself, which was still a deep stream, although in the middle of the dry season I am told it is a mere muddy-banked brook. The Indians, with great judgment and skill, had felled two trees from opposite sides of the stream, whose branches interlaced, and along this rough bridge the cargadores carried their loads in safety, whilst Gorgonio, Carlos, and I swam the animals across where the stream was clearer of trees and branches. We were already pretty well wet through with the wading and splashing, and we fared no better when we were across the stream and on rising ground, for the rain came down in torrents and completed our discomfort. We were intending to sleep in a small ermita not far from the river bank, but here we were met by an Indian who told us he had a rancho on a hill about a mile distant, where he begged us to come and pass the night. The rancho was small and dirty, with no partitions in it, and its human occupants were two women (one of them the wife of the Indian who had welcomed us) and a dying baby. It was in the hope that I could do

something to recover his child that the poor Indian had been so insistent on our passing the night beneath his roof; but the little I could do was of no avail, as the poor little mite was in the last state of distress and racked by a croupy cough.

The rain and the darkness had come on together, and my long train of mozos crowded in under the scanty covering of the roof and disputed with the pigs and chickens for shelter from the storm. It was all I could do by appeals and threats to keep the men tolerably quiet and prevent them hustling the poor woman who hung over the rough hide bedstead which held her dying child; almost every hour she broke out into fearful shrieks and wails as she thought it had drawn its last breath. At one time some of the mozos, who seemed absolutely indifferent to the woman's trouble, began to make the night more hideous by playing on the wretched toy instruments which they had brought with them from Cajabon; but I got up and raged at them until they really seemed scared, and then one by one they rolled themselves in their blankets and dropped off to sleep. Before dawn the poor child died, and the wretched mother sobbed and groaned until morning.

The rain was still too heavy for us to make a start, and, strange to say, our Indian hosts did not show any anxiety to get rid of us, but seemed rather pleased to have someone to talk to in their trouble. Their satisfaction was greatly increased when they found out that I had a saw with me; some rough planks were soon produced, and Gorgonio and I spent the morning making the child's coffin. In the afternoon the rain ceased, and the body was carried off to be buried in the small ermita in the forest. I did not go with the burial party, but could hear in

the distance the report of my gun, which had been borrowed to fire a last salute over the grave. The Indian told me that he and his wife belonged to Cajabon, and returned there for a week once or twice a year, but that they spent all the rest of the year in this rancho, where they kept their live stock and planted their milpa. However, they had found the situation to be very unhealthy, and this was the third child they had lost within a year of its birth.

We were obliged to spend another night in the overcrowded rancho; then, as the weather had cleared, on the 24th we went on our way, and this day crossed a small stream flowing to the westward towards the Usumacinta. This great river, which, after a course of nearly five hundred miles, eventually pours its waters into the Gulf of Mexico, rises within the frontier of British Honduras as the Rio Santa Isabel or Sepusilhá and flows for some distance in a south-westerly direction. After crossing the boundary-line of the colony it receives the water of numerous streamlets and becomes known as the Rio Cancuén, and at the end of its sweep to the south it is joined by the Rio Chajmaic, a stream which rises in the mountains to the north of Lanquin. After its junction with the Chajmaic the river is named the Rio de la Pasion; it then takes a northerly direction and is joined in its course by two considerable affluents from the east, the Machaquilá, which rises on the British frontier, and the San Juan. On reaching the latitude of 16° 40´ N. the Rio de la Pasion makes a sharp bend to the westward, and about thirty-five miles down stream is joined by the Rio Chixoy, a large river which drains the northern side of the great backbone of Guatemala mountains, and is the same stream which under the name of the Rio Negro we crossed near Uspantan in the year

1894. Below the junction of the Pasion and Chixoy the river flows in a north-westerly direction and is known as the Rio Usumacinta, and after a course of about twenty miles is joined from the south by the Rio Lacandon, which drains a considerable portion of the State of Chiapas.

Throughout the whole of its length the Rio de la Pasion must be a very sluggish stream. In its westerly course before its junction with the Chixoy there are reaches of the river where during the dry season hardly any current is perceptible, and after heavy rains the flood-waters extend for so many miles through the forest that one is almost led to think that this region from the mouth of the Chajmaic northward may at one time have formed the bed of a great lake. Where we crossed the Cancuén, at a distance of not more than forty-five miles from the Gulf of Honduras, and with four hundred miles of its course still to run, the height of the stream above sea-level did not exceed 600 feet, and it is said to fall considerably before the mouth of the Chajmaic is reached.

After its junction with the Chixoy the current of the river slightly increases and it becomes still swifter when joined by the Rio Lacandon. A few miles below the junction with the latter a low range of hills almost bars its course, and for a short distance the water with its surface slowly twisted in great oily-looking swirls, swings through a narrow pass between cliffs not more than forty feet apart. During the heavy autumn rains the flood-water rises rapidly above this narrow passage and tears through it with tremendous force. When I descended the river in a canoe from the Paso Real to the ruins of Menché Tinamit in 1884 I saw huge mahogany logs lying

stranded thirty or forty feet up the banks, and my companion Mr. Schulte (who was in the employ of a large mahogany-cutting firm) told me that during one great flood he had tied up his canoe to the posts of a deserted rancho, which, at the time we passed the night in it, stood a good fifty feet above the surface of the water. Below the barrier of hills the river broadens out again. In 1883 Mr. Rockstroh followed down its course for a few miles below Menché; beyond this it is still unmapped, but for some distance it is known to pass through a deep gorge choked with boulders, where it is broken into rapids in which no canoe could live. The gorge ends in two falls a few miles above Tenosique, whence the river is navigable by small steamers to the sea.

But I must go on with my journey. For two days we travelled on over low ground drained by small muddy-banked streamlets, affluents of the Cancuén. The only incident worth recording is that on passing a small recess in the limestone rock, measuring not more than three feet in height and depth and in no way remarkable, each one of the mozos took off his hat as he approached it, crossed himself, and deposited a small dab of copal on the rock. It was, they told me, the "Mouth of the Hill." As one may learn from old records of the journeys of the Dominican monks through this part of the country, the Indians have a curious reverence for localities, and Gorgonio tells me that in some places they will not kill snakes because they belong to "the hill," and "the hill" might do them harm in return.

On the morning of the 27th I sent some of the mozos on ahead to clear the track towards San Luis, and as we were now at a place called Chichajác, near to the spot where seven years earlier Domingo had seen the

three Idols in a cave, we determined to camp there, and have a thorough good search for them. Gorgonio and I set out along the track under Domingo's guidance, until he came to a spot which he seemed to recognize as the place where the wild pigs had crossed his path, and we turned off through the forest in the direction which he supposed the wounded pig had taken. I took a compass-bearing and then we spent hour after hour cutting our way with our machetes, making casts across and across this line without any success, for we saw no trace either of buildings or caves. After the first two hours of fruitless search Domingo came to a halt and proposed that we should make an offering, so we all three squatted down facing one another and solemnly burnt small pieces of copal so that the scented smoke might rise into the air and propitiate the spirits of the hills. This offering was made almost every hour during the rest of our search and seemed to inspire Domingo with renewed confidence, but he told us that there were times when the hills were "muy mañosos" (very cunning), and would give up nothing one desired to find. Once Gorgonio asked him why he did not pray, but he answered at once that there was no use whatever in saying prayers when one was in the forest. Possibly he thought prayer to belong to the Christian side of his faith, for use only in church and in the neighbourhood of the priest, and that propitiatory offerings alone were of avail with the ancient hill spirit. Certainly in this case the Spirit of the hills was more than usually ill-disposed; perhaps it resented the presence of a doubting stranger, for neither that day nor the next did it vouchsafe to show us those images of the ancient gods of which we were in search. On our way back to camp, quite close to the track, we came

upon some “cimientos,” rough stone foundations of ancient Indian dwellings, and Domingo at once said that the cave had stones round it just like that, so that we felt more than ever convinced that he had chanced on the ruins of an ancient temple.

It rained nearly all night and we felt the cold much more severely than I could have imagined, for the thermometer did not go below 60°. Next day I took Carlos and some of the other mozos with me to clear and examine the “cimientos” we had found the evening before, whilst Gorgonio and Domingo and all the rest were employed on a further search for idols. The search was again fruitless, and, from something in his manner, I began to think that Domingo was haunted by some superstition and was unwilling to take us to the idols even if he knew where they stood. The “cimientos” did not prove to be very interesting. Some of the stones used in the principal foundation-mound were large, but they were poorly worked and had been merely flaked off from the quarry. The front of the mound was formed into three broad steps or terraces, but I could find no trace of walls or building on the flat top. A trench dug through the mound showed it to be made of rough pieces broken off the neighbouring limestone rock, and of small stones mixed with a few shreds of coarse pottery.

Towards evening I ascended a steep limestone hill about 400 feet high, rising a quarter of a mile to the west of the camp. Gorgonio had caught sight of it the day before and mozos had been sent up to clear the top. We had a splendid view from S.W. to N.W. across the great forest-covered plain of the Rio de la Pasion and its branches, and could distinctly see on the far horizon some clear-cut hills which we took to

be the Nueve Cerros (bearing 119°-122°) on the Rio Chixoy. To the N.W. were the distant hillocks of Peten, and right across the N.N.E. a long range of abrupt hills, but all very far distant. We could not have chanced on a better point from which to get a view over the country, for we were standing on the last of the range of hills which projected into the plain from the direction in which we had been travelling.

Isolated black storm-clouds heavily charged with rain were passing over the country to the north of us, and just as I was putting away the prismatic compass, a heavy shower struck us and in a moment we were all drenched; we hastened to make the best of our way back to camp, the thinly clad mozos shivering with cold. Here bad news awaited us; the mozos who had been out with Carlos clearing the track were returning from work in single file, when one who had a load on his back put his foot out of the track into the low herbage at the side and trod upon a "tamagás," which bit him in the foot. Luckily the snake was a small one, but the two little round blue-edged marks left by his poison-fangs were not to be mistaken, and the mozo's foot and leg were already greatly swollen.

In the matter of a snake-bite, Indians are best left to their own devices; they almost always carry a supposed antidote with them or know where to look in the forest for some medicinal herb in the efficacy of which they have the firmest belief. In this case the remedy was a smooth seed like the kernel of a brazil-nut, called Cedron, which is excessively bitter and astringent and which comes, I believe, from Mexico. An infusion was made from the scrapings of this seed and given to the patient to drink, whilst the skin of

the foot around the bite was scarified with a knife and a strong infusion of the seed was rubbed into it. It is not always on drugs alone that the inhabitants of the country rely for protection against death by snake-bite; during one of my earlier journeys, whilst travelling through the forest on the way to Peten, a Ladino came into camp who had been following on our tracks for two days. After he had rested and had some supper I told Gorgonio to find out what he wanted. He was rather mysterious in his replies; but at last it came out that he had heard that I was the fortunate possessor of a unicorn's horn, and he wished me to sell him a piece of it. I was utterly mystified, for at that time I knew nothing of the virtue of unicorn's horn, and my statement that I could not possess any, as no such thing existed, was not too well received, and evidently looked upon as a dodge to raise the price. Later in the evening I talked the matter over with my men, and learnt that unicorn's horn was firmly believed in as a charm or protection against snake-bite. Next morning my visitor returned to the subject. He told me that he had long been looking out for a piece of horn, that he knew that I had some, and that he would pay me a good price for it. He added that only a few months before he had nearly succeeded in buying a piece from an old negro woman in Belize, but that at the very last she refused to part with it, as she had made up her mind to keep it for her son who was then at sea, but who would have need of it when he returned and went wood-cutting in the forest. Clearly nothing that I said to the man affected his belief in the charm, and he left me to ride home in a very ill-humour at his bad luck. This superstition cannot be of Indian origin, but must have come through European sailors, who thought there was virtue in a

narwhal's tooth. The snake-bitten mozo suffered greatly during the night, but by the next morning the swelling was somewhat reduced and the pain seemed to be lessened; however, all chance of our making a start for San Luis was out of the question, as the man could not put his foot to the ground.

All this time our mules had been without any proper food, as unluckily no Ramon trees could be found. The poor beasts had nibbled at all the green things around them, but there was nothing to satisfy their hunger. After making many experiments we found that the leaves of a certain palm were most to their liking, and with these they were liberally supplied. It had been raining during the night and the day was dull and cold, so I stayed in camp to write up my notes and compute some sextant observations, and sent off two parties of men to hunt through the forest for ruins. About five o'clock the men began to return and reported that they had met with no game and seen no ruins; before dark they were all in except Gorgonio, his brother José Domingo, and four mozos who had parted company with the others early in the afternoon. As the sun was setting I sent a mozo to fire shots from the limestone hill to the west of the camp in the hope of guiding their steps, and continued to fire occasional shots from the camp until an hour or two after dark, but no answer came to the signals. However, I knew that the men had matches and some biscuits with them, and that if they were lost for the night they were bound to strike the track when the sun rose to guide them. Before noon the next day they all turned up and owned that they had lost themselves, in spite of the compass which Gorgonio carried, and had wandered away further than they intended. They passed a cold and comfortless night in a cave, making their supper

off a monkey which they had shot by the way. We had doubtless been feeling the effects of a late "norther" in the Gulf of Mexico, for during all our stay at Chichajác the weather was dull and chilly. In the evening two Indian hunters on their way to Cajabon came into camp; this was my opportunity, and I asked them if they would accept payment to see the injured mozo back to his home, for by this time he had so far recovered as to be able to put his foot to the ground. We soon came to terms; I then called the men together round the camp fire and asked the mozo if he felt well enough to return home, and as he answered "yes," I then told him what arrangements had been made for him. "Now," I added, "we must settle about your wages; you have received payment in advance for two months and have only done ten days' work for it, the money must of course be returned to me." The man made no objection, and one of his companions brought the little pile of dollars and placed them in front of me. Then, in my best manner, I made an oration, which Gorgonio translated into Quekchi. They might have already found out, I said, that Englishmen were not man-eaters, and that the particular Englishman whom they were serving was anxious to take every care of them, and pay well for their labour, and I held up my many other shining virtues to the light of that camp fire. This man, I said, has met with an accident whilst in my service, therefore in no way that I can help shall he suffer for it. Let him come forward and take up the money again—he is thus paid for two months in which to recover his health; and to this pile of dollars will I now add another pile, so that during the time of his feebleness he may pay some neighbour to work in his milpa. The man gathered up the extra dollars without a word and

there was absolute silence in the circle. As this was not broken for some moments, I asked Gorgonio if anyone had anything to say. This was translated to them, and at last someone grumbled out, “If Pedro was fool enough to put his foot on a snake, of course we know that was not the doing of the Patron.” That was all the thanks I got, and perhaps it was all I deserved, for in truth I was only posing, and had a very shrewd idea that the man would be all right again in a week’s time; but I had a grumbling, discontented set of mozos with me and could not afford to miss a chance of showing them that I was ready to treat them liberally when an opportunity offered. However, time and fair treatment were already doing their work, and we were on much better terms than when we started and they had alluded to my probable liking for human flesh.

My chief difficulty now was with one of the mozos who had declared himself to be a “brujo,” or wizard; he told the others that he could do anything he pleased with me, and he was of course the leader in all the grumblings and insubordination. However, I knew that I was getting on well when I found that I could raise a laugh at the “brujo’s” expense, and I never missed an opportunity of chaffing him about his mysterious powers, and offered to drink any potion he might prepare for me, provided he drank half of it himself.

On the 3rd of March we left the injured man in charge of the hunters, and were all delighted to get out of our damp and gloomy camp and to make a start again. After five days of slow travelling through the forest, crossing the numerous streamlets which go to make up the Santa Isabel or Cancuén branch of the Rio de la Pasion and the muddy intervals

between them, we arrived at the deserted village of San Luis, where the horse and mules were at last able to find food more to their liking, as the clearing round the houses afforded some scanty pasture.

Nearly all the houses in the village were empty and fast falling into decay. About two years before my visit the inhabitants of San Luis, worried and wearied by the constant interference of the Government in their concerns, and especially resenting the extra tax which was levied in support of President Rufino Barrios's pet scheme of a railway from the capital to the Atlantic coast, determined to abandon their homes and seek shelter in British territory. In all about one hundred families fled across the border and founded the village of San Antonio between the frontier and Punta Gorda. The Colonial Government did not interfere with them and they lived on in taxless peace; but even so their happiness was not complete, for had they not left the sacred images of the saints behind them, and had not their own chosen Alcalde, fearing the long arm of the President, refused to accompany them? The loss was intolerable and a council was called to discuss the matter, when it was settled to make an attempt to recover their saints and their Alcalde whatever the risks might be. A number of the younger men then recrossed the frontier, seized the church bells and the images of the saints, and called to their Alcalde to follow them; but he, wise man, knew the value of forms, and refused to leave unless they would first bind him with cords. This was soon done, and then conscience being satisfied he cheerfully marched off to join his family on the other side of the frontier.

The fate of the bells of San Luis was very nearly becoming an international question, but, fortunately

for the peace of the world, after a few despatches had passed between the Governments interested, the matter was allowed to drop.

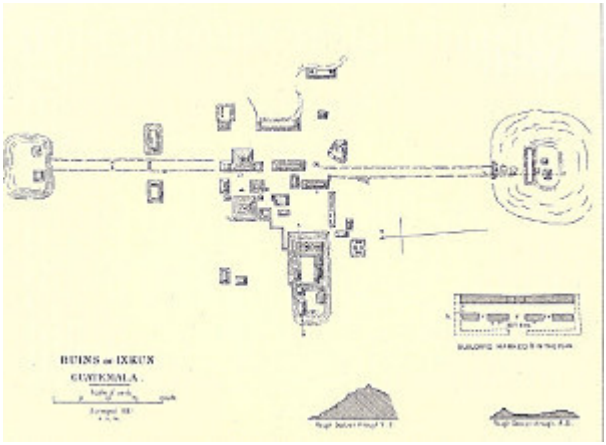
CHAPTER XX. THE RUINS OF IXKUN AND THE PINE RIDGE.

On the 9th of March we set out again and lunched at midday under the shade of the first pine-trees that we had seen since leaving the valley of the Cajabon River, and two leagues further on we left the shade of the forest for the open savannah of Poctum, a level plain covered with beautiful pasture and dotted over with conical limestone hills and clumps of pine-trees. The next day we crossed the Rio Machaquilá, a swift and sparkling stream which bounds the savannah towards the north, and then had a dreary ride along a forest-track, where the mules plunged up to their girths in mud-holes, to the village of Dolores.

For the next fortnight Dolores was our headquarters while we explored the ruins of Ixkun. I had heard of the existence of these ruins some years before from the Jefe Político of Peten, but none of the villagers in Dolores seemed to know anything about them. The Alcalde was inclined to resent our inquiries, and clearly looked on us as suspicious characters, until the perusal of my letter from the President calmed his fears; he then promised to make inquiries himself and find a “práctico” to guide us. There was really some difficulty in discovering anyone who knew the

way, but at last a “práctico” was found who was sent off next morning in company with Gorgonio and Carlos. They returned in the evening to report that the ruins had been found buried in the forest about six miles to the N.N.W. of the village; not only, they reported, were the mounds and carved monoliths completely hidden from view by the rank vegetation, but over a great part of the site the thick tangle of woody lianes was almost impenetrable. However we had a force of twenty mozos, and next day they were set to work with axes and machetes to clear away the undergrowth and smaller trees, and as several cargoes of totoposte and frijoles arrived from Cajabon in the course of the first week, there was no lack of food and the men worked fairly well.

The small plain on which the ruins stand is almost surrounded by low rough limestone hills, and although the forest is too thick to enable one to speak with anything like certainty, I do not think the buildings extend beyond the area of the plain. The plan of the ruins is given on the opposite page. It could not have been a town of very great importance, as the buildings are small and the masonry is of an inferior class, but the sculptured monoliths and hieroglyphic inscriptions show that it must have belonged to a good period.



RUINS OF IXKUN, GUATEMALA.

The foundations on which the buildings were raised vary in height from 5 to 50 feet, and are composed of rough irregular blocks and slabs of soft limestone; the interstices were probably filled up with mud, and the surface faced with cement, but the cement facing has almost entirely disappeared. The mud had been washed out by tropical rains, so that now the foundations present the appearance of rough heaps of unworked stone. At the south end of the plain is a natural hill which has been partly terraced, and was probably ascended on the north side by a stone stairway; on the top of it are two foundations supporting the remains of stone houses. From the foot of this hill a sort of roadway, with the remains of a low wall on either side, runs to the principal group of buildings, and is continued on the other side of it to a low hill on which the remains of a few other buildings were found.

I made an excavation on the summit of the mound marked **X** in the plan, that disclosed the remains of a house or temple, of which a ground-plan is given.

Only two walls could be found, but there was almost certainly an outer chamber, which is shown in dotted lines. Near the middle doorway a rough unworked slab of stone was lying, which had probably served as a lintel. The doorway in the back wall had been blocked up after the house was built. The walls still standing are about five feet high, and, from the position of the stone lintel above the blocked-up doorway, I should estimate the original height of the walls at a little over six feet. The cement floor of the house is still in fair condition, and there are traces of a cement-covered platform which ran round the outside of it. Some fragments of rough pottery were found inside the house. No roofing-stones of the type used in Copan, Tikál, and the other great ruins could be found, and I am inclined to think that the very narrow chambers were roofed with flat slabs, and some slabs which would have answered the purpose were found among the debris. There are several carved monoliths which formerly stood on the level ground in front of the buildings, but most of them are overturned and partly destroyed. The only one in a fair state of preservation is shown in the accompanying Plate; but this is one of great importance, and we made a careful mould of it, from which a plaster-cast has been made; this is now in the South Kensington Museum.

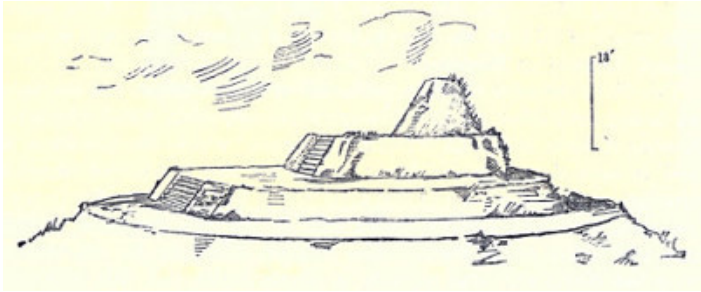
Two Maya priests or chieftains with elaborate head-dresses and ornaments stand facing each other above a hieroglyphic inscription, which commences with what I have called an “Initial Sequence,” which Mr. Goodman has proved to be a date. In the lower panels are two unadorned crouching human figures, with their necks and arms bound with ropes, evidently meant to represent prisoners trodden under foot by the two gorgeously arrayed figures who stand

above them. The marked difference in physiognomy between the Mayas and their captives is clearly shown, and this monument may celebrate the conquest of the aboriginal inhabitants of the land or the defeat of some of those barbarous invaders from the north whom some writers believe to have finally caused the overthrow of the Maya civilization. It is also worth noting that the Mayas carry only ornamented staves in their hands and make no show of weapons of war. In one of the other partly destroyed monuments a figure is represented carrying in his hand one of the “Manikin sceptres,” of which so many examples occur on the sculptures at Quirigua.

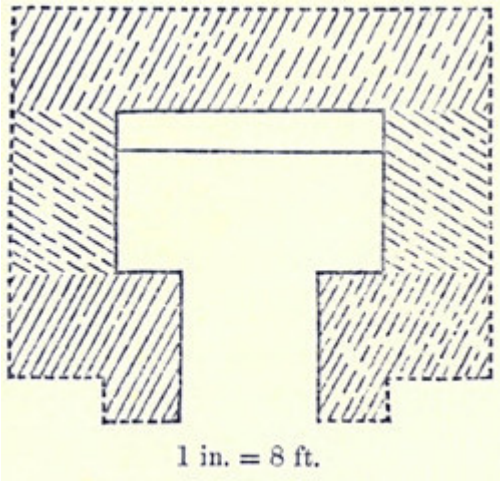


SCULPTURED MONOLITH AT IXKUN.

For the first few days after setting the men to work I made only occasional visits to the ruins, and spent most of my time in Dolores working out the observations taken on the route; but as soon as the clearing was sufficiently advanced to enable me to commence measurements, I took up my quarters in the ruins under a rough shed of palm-leaves, and remained there until our work was finished.



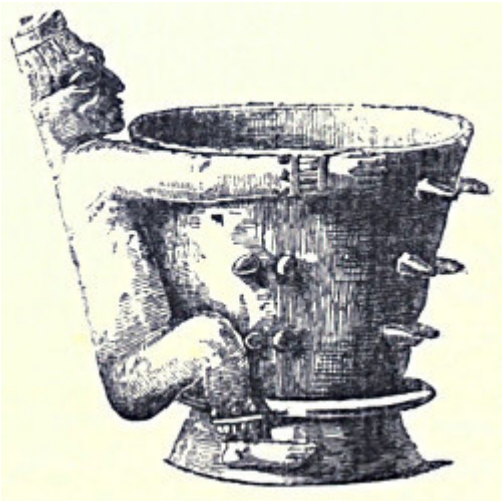
On the 24th of March we resumed our journey, and set out for Yaxché, a small village about sixteen miles to the north-west of Dolores. After travelling through forest for some hours along the divide between the Pasion and Belize Rivers, we emerged on a savannah country studded with innumerable low timber-covered hills. As we approached the village the trees became scarcer, and both plain and hills were clothed with rough grass. Here we stayed until the 5th of April, examining the ruins in the neighbourhood and sending out expeditions to hunt for others, of which reports had reached us, but our efforts at discovery were not altogether successful.



PLAN OF TEMPLE.

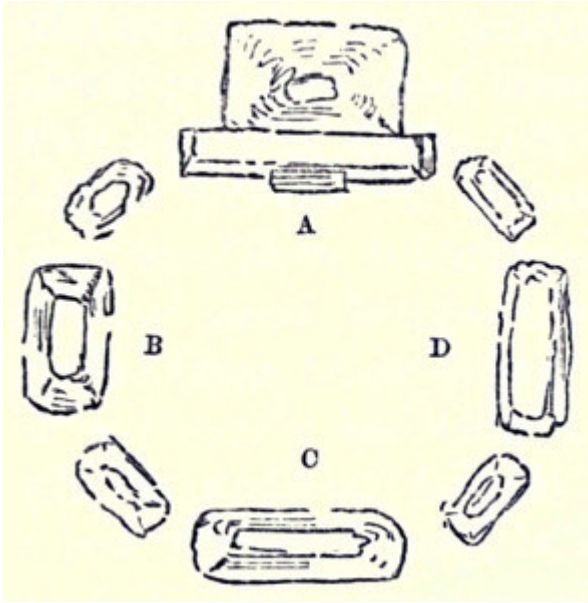
About two miles to the north-west of Yaxché, on the banks of a streamlet which runs to join the Rio San Juan, stand the remains of a town of considerable size; but, as no signs of sculptured stones could be found among the foundation mounds, we did not attempt to clear away the thick undergrowth, but turned our attention to two conical hills of natural formation standing up conspicuously about eight hundred yards apart on either side of the stream. Both hills were overgrown with grass, and each was crowned with a mound which we thought must contain the remains of a building. We set to work to dig into the mound on the summit of the southern hill, and, as we expected, unearthed the remains of a small building facing north. The walls were in some parts perfect to the height of six feet, and they appear to have been built separately (as indicated by the shading in the Plan). The entrance-passage and interior of the chamber were lined with small well-wrought blocks of stone, but the material is so soft that it could easily be cut with a knife. The floor had a covering of cement, which was in good condition, and the outside of the walls appears to have had a thick coating of the same material. A stone lintel and a few slabs, which may have been used for roofing, and some fragments of rough pottery were met with in digging out the debris. Along the back of the chamber was a raised bench about two feet high, and in the face of it was a niche about twenty inches by eighteen, which was much smoke-stained and had probably been used for burning offerings of copal. We also dug into the mound on the summit of the northern hill, and with some difficulty were able to trace the walls of a building which must have closely

resembled its companion facing it on the opposite side of the valley. On the broken floor of the chamber we discovered portions of three earthen pots and some fragments of a good-sized stucco figure. We were able to piece together two fragments of a well-modelled face, which must have been about ten inches in breadth, and to ascertain that the eyes had been made of obsidian.



Almost all round the ruined town there are numberless limestone hills between fifty and three hundred feet in height, and at the top of nearly every one of them are foundation-mounds or tumuli. In some cases these foundations are merely outlined in rough stones, in others they are flat oblong mounds, which may have supported buildings of a perishable material. A common arrangement of the remains on these hill-tops is given in the accompanying sketch. I opened one set thus arranged. The mound A had probably supported a small “cue” or shrine; a terrace ran in front of it, which was reached by a short flight of steps. The total height of the mound was about

sixteen feet, and the level space on the top of it did not measure more than six feet by four. We dug a trench right through this mound, and found traces of interments and broken pottery within a few feet of the top, and below this nothing but a mass of rough stones and earth. B, C, and D may have been the foundations of small houses, but they also served as places of sepulture, as we found in them traces of bones and broken pottery. The four smaller mounds were tombs only. The vessels buried with the bodies appear to have consisted of a flat dish and a round pot. The body was probably seated with its knees doubled up, for we found the fragments of bones all close together, and portions of the skull in the midst of them. In one instance the skull, or rather the earthen impression of it, was actually resting in the dish and the bones lying around it, as though the body had been seated in the dish, and as the skeleton had decayed the skull had sunk down through them. We found three or four chipped stone lance-heads, a good deal of unworked flint, but only two obsidian flakes. There were also a few pieces of mealing-stones and a considerable quantity of potsherds showing traces of yellow and black and red colouring. A little trickling stream at the foot of the hills had evidently formed part of the water-supply of the ancient inhabitants, for it was enclosed in a wall forming an irregular oval about twenty-five by forty feet. On the level ground between the hills we found several round holes about eighteen inches in diameter, faced with plaster or stone, forming the mouths of small underground chambers, which may have been intended for storage, or possibly were used for vapour-baths.



On the whole our excavations were unsatisfactory, and the hard work of digging was rendered all the more unpleasant by a change in the weather, which now became intensely hot and oppressive. We were tormented when at work in the open ground by myriads of small black flies, which crawled all over us and bit viciously. Great heaps of the long grass were collected and set on fire in the hope that the smoke would drive the flies away; but the smoke seemed only to attract fresh swarms, and they danced in it in great columns, following it round whenever the wind changed its direction.

We were now in the country where the Peten turkey (*Meleagris ocellata*) abounds, and, as I wished to obtain a few good skins, I sent out some of my men to shoot the birds, which can be most easily done near the time of the full moon. There was no sport in the process, which is as follows:—Setting out an hour

before sunset the hunter will post himself on the edge of one of the numerous thickets of trees and shrubs which are scattered over the savannah and listen for the cry made by the cock bird as he goes to roost; with good luck he may be able to mark two or three of the roosting-places, and then, after waiting, a prey to mosquitos and ticks, until the moon rises, he creeps round to the trees from which the sound has come and takes a pot-shot at the sleeping bird, whose body looms black against the moonlit sky. In the daytime these birds are very shy, but I have several times come upon them unexpectedly and have got a shot, and once succeeded in getting two, right and left, both young birds and very good to eat. As the hens do not call when going to roost, their skins are much more difficult to obtain. Several attempts have been made to bring these beautiful birds to England, but they have never survived the change of climate for more than a few months. They are easily tamed and cross freely with the domestic turkey, and some hybrids which have been raised by Mr. Blancaneaux in British Honduras are extremely handsome, having both the beautiful plumage of the wild bird and the conspicuous wattles of the tame one. During our stay at Yaxché my men brought in five cock birds, four of them with good skins, and we feasted sumptuously on their bodies.

Before leaving the village we had an addition made to our party; one of the Indians, when returning from work, shot a monkey, which fell from the tree dead, and was found to have a baby clinging to its breast. The poor little beast was uninjured, and was brought home to me howling piteously; for the second time I had to be nurse to an infant monkey, and I don't think any human child could have demanded more attention. My first experience of nursing had

occurred at the ruins of Quirigua, where a baby monkey had been brought to me in much the same way. It was so young that I had to feed it through a short piece of india-rubber tubing cut from a photographic drop-shutter; however it throve well, and, when not asleep in its box, it would spend hour after hour clinging on to the upper part of my left arm with a firm grip of its tail, and its little hands and feet buried in the folds of my flannel shirt; but for its occasional demands for a caress, I could go on with my work in the forest hardly conscious of its presence. At the end of three weeks I had occasion to make a long journey in search of more labourers, and I took my baby with me, intending to leave it at the village of Quirigua in charge of a friendly old negress, whose unfailing kindness to my men when they were ill had endeared her to us all, and whose love for pet birds and animals was well known. Half an hour after leaving the shelter of the forest on our way to the village, I felt the little monkey suddenly relax his hold on my arm, and only just managed to catch him as he fell. It had never occurred to me that a monkey might suffer from sunstroke, but such was evidently the case. He partly recovered consciousness before we arrived at the village, where my kindly old friend Saturnina Alvarez made a comfortable little nest for him, and he seemed to be on a fair way to recovery. Saturnina brought him to the door the next morning when I was starting on my journey; as I rode away he stretched out his thin little arms and cried for me to take him. This was the last I saw of him, for I learnt on my return that he had died within a few hours.

The new baby was a little older than my Quirigua pet, and could take its food from a spoon, but unluckily there was not much food to be had which

suited him. However, I had heard that there was a company of mahogany-cutters in the neighbourhood, and sent one of my mozos to their temporary headquarters or "Monteria," which was distant two days' journey, to try and buy a tin of condensed milk from their stores. Running after ruins and sculptured stones was a sufficiently incomprehensible proceeding to the Indian mind, but journeying for four days to buy a tin of food for a juvenile monkey must have seemed an act of sheer madness; when the order was given an expression of incredulous surprise was visible on the usually stolid faces of my mozos, and I believe that in their eyes it was the wildest eccentricity in which I was ever known to indulge. The little beast soon became devotedly fond of me, and my sympathy with mothers who have to bring up naughty and querulous children has vastly increased. My baby gave me no rest; he cried when he should have been quiet, and refused to be comforted unless I nursed him to sleep in my arms; and he woke up at unseemly hours in the night and demanded food. When we started on our journey again there was some difficulty in knowing what to do with him, and he protested strongly against the position assigned to him on the top of the Indian's pack; whenever his bearer came within sight of me during the journey the little fellow would hold out his tiny arms and clamour for me to take him. I usually had to give in to him before the day's journey was over, and then he would sit contentedly on my shoulder with his tail round my neck crooning to himself; or if he were sleepy would find his way inside my flannel shirt, as though he took me for an organ-grinder. During one night, however, we had a serious difference of opinion, and actually came to blows. He had been put to sleep in his basket as

usual, with his mosquito-curtain carefully arranged over him, but he became uncomfortably restless and awoke again and again, demanding food and attention, and tried to howl as though he were grown up and had a fully developed thyroid cartilage through which to trumpet. At last I determined to take no further notice of him, in hope that he would tire himself out; but he turned the tables on me, and finally, to ensure some sleep for myself, I had to take him into my bed. By this time he was in a towering rage, and instead of going to sleep where I placed him under the blanket, he dashed out and danced a sort of war-dance on my chest, gesticulating fiercely. Then, after the manner of nurses, I had finally to give him a good spanking, which only made him angrier than ever; but he knew that he was beaten, he gave up his war-dance and went to the bottom of the cot, covering his head with the rug; then, like a naughty child, every few minutes he would raise his head to boo-o at me, and then hide it again under the rug, until at last, tired out, he fell asleep. It was a moonlight night, and for some time longer I lay awake listening to the sound of the alligators clashing their teeth—which sounds like a traveller's tale, but it is not fiction. The river literally swarmed with these hideous creatures, and they have a queer habit of a night of opening their mouths wide and bringing their teeth together with a snapping sound which can be heard for a long distance.

The journey from Yaxché to Benque Viejo took us from the 5th to the 11th of April, and was of no particular interest. We passed two ruins on the way: the first, near Salísipuede, was of the Ixkun type, but without sculptured stelæ; the second, near Takinsakún, was probably of late date, as parts of some of the stone-roofed houses were still standing,

and the plaster covering the walls was in good condition. These houses are of remarkable size—one measured 118 feet in length, and contained two long parallel chambers running the whole length of the house, each 9 feet wide and 16 feet 9 inches high.

Takinsakún is a name with a good Indian sound about it, but I have sometimes seen it written in the Colonial Reports as "Take in Second." With regard to Salísipuede (get out if you can), there is a local tradition that the name marks the site of a "Monteria," which had to be abandoned on account of the difficulty met with in floating the mahogany logs down a small streamlet to the Mopan River. But the most puzzling of all these frontier names is one within British territory; the German map gives it as Arinchuak (Ar-in-chu-ak), which sounds like a good enough Indian name, although I have not the slightest idea whether it would have any meaning in an Indian dialect. On the other hand, it is precisely the pronunciation given by the Creole negroes to "Orange Walk," a village on the Belize River, and it is possibly a repetition of that name; but whether the negro has Anglicized an Indian name or the learned German has made a good-sounding Indian name out of the negro pronunciation of Orange Walk, must be left to a philologist to decide. Benque Viejo (Old Bank: this name again is a mixture, as Banco and not Benque is the Spanish for Bank) is the frontier village on the British side, and was an insignificant place when I passed through it in 1882, but has now risen to considerable importance, owing to the influx of Ladinos and Indians from the Guatemala side of the boundary-line. Not far from the village on the left bank of the river, within the Guatemala frontier, there is an important group of ruined buildings, and several carved stelæ, but, unfortunately, all the

monuments are broken and much weather-worn. I was only able to give a few hours to the examination of these ruins, and could not attempt to make any plan of the many-chambered buildings, which I feel sure would well repay further exploration. The next day we rode into the Cayo, where I was hospitably received by Mr. Milson, the resident English magistrate.

From the Cayo I sent off Carlos and José Domingo Lopez, with five or six mozos, on an expedition to the ruins of Tikál (which lie hidden in the forest about twenty miles to the N.E. of the Lake of Peten, four or five days' march from the Cayo), with instructions to make paper-moulds of the carvings on some small stelæ, of which I possessed no plaster copies, although I had taken photographs of them during my visit to those ruins in 1881 and 1882. I myself set about making arrangements for a short journey into the unknown interior of British Honduras, through what is called the Great Southern Pine Ridge.

It was not until the 23rd of April that I was ready to start with Gorgonio and eight mozos, and accompanied by Mr. Blancaneaux, a Frenchman, who, after fighting through the German war, had come out to Belize, where he had for some time served as an inspector of the Colonial Police, and had finally settled at the Cayo, where he occupied his time in collecting natural-history specimens. Our first day's journey took us up the Makál branch of the Belize River as far as Monkey Fall, where we crossed the stream, and, leaving it on our right, walked through the forest along an old Truck-path (as the temporary roads in the forest are called along which the mahogany logs are dragged to the river-bank),

until we arrived at the little village of San Antonio, where we passed the night. The next morning, continuing our march in a S.S.E. direction for a little more than an hour, we passed from the forest into a more open country, with occasional clumps of oak and pine-trees; in front of us we could see a great stretch of undulating country clothed with coarse grass, and for the most part sparsely covered with pine-trees, which here and there formed clumps and protected a scrubby undergrowth. During this and the next day we crossed numerous clear and rapid rivulets which ran through narrow strips of forest and thickets of "Camalote" (high reeds), or, as we gradually rose to higher ground, spread over broad stony beds, where the shrunken streams were half hidden amongst great granite boulders. On the third day we reached the top of a range of hills known as the Blue Mountains, and found that, by a very gradual ascent, we had reached a height of 2600 feet. Here we found the air fresh and invigorating, and we obtained an extensive view over the Pine Ridge, which stretched away for about twenty miles to the north of us. From the southern side of the hills we could see the Cockscomb Mountains, about twenty-five miles to the S.S.E. We camped for the night on the southern slope of the hills, about two hundred feet below our highest point, and at 11 P.M. the thermometer stood at 65° Fahrenheit. The Pine Ridge came to an end at the distance of two or three miles to the south of our camp, and we could see the main branch of the Rio Makál issuing from between the forest-clad hills which bounded our view in that direction. These hills form the watersheds of the rivers San Ramon and Machaquilá, as well as of some streams flowing into the Gulf of Honduras, and are probably identical with the "Sierra de los

Pedernales," whose recesses have never been penetrated since Cortés and his army lost their way among them in 1526, on the celebrated march from Mexico to Honduras.



ON THE PINE RIDGE.

I spent the morning of the 27th taking bearings and examining the surrounding country through a field-glass. In the afternoon we set out for the river which ran below us, scrambling down the hillside, and cutting our way through patches of forest and camalote. The river proved to be about fifty yards wide, and the water slowly flowed through a succession of long pools with shallow rapids between them. It was late when we made our camp on the edge of the Pine Ridge, a few hundred yards from the stream, and a party of men was at once sent off to cut a path down to the water and bring back a supply for the night. As the men left the thicket on their return to camp, one of them, wearied with the

work of cutting his way through the camalote which grew thick by the river's edge, threw his lighted torch into the reeds and within a few moments the thicket was a mass of crackling flames. Luckily for us the wind was in our favour and the fire was carried swiftly along the river-bank to the westward. I turned into my cot and slept soundly until about 4 A.M., when I woke to find that the wind had changed and that the fire was rapidly coming down upon us. The camalote immediately to windward of us had already been burnt up, but the thin wiry grass which covered the Pine Ridge and grew to the height of one's knees was as dry as tinder, and we could see in the distance some of the pine-trees catching fire and blazing up as the long line of flames swept past them. We were soon all of us at work firing the grass just around the camp and beating it out again with green boughs torn from the trees, until we had burnt a broad band round the camp, so that no fire could reach us. It was a hot job and we all worked like niggers, and must have looked nearly as black, from the smoke and ashes, before we felt at all secure. Then as the burning edge of the grass was lost to sight in a dip of the ground, and as the dawn had not yet come, I turned into my cot again and woke later to find the sun shining and to hear that the wind had again shifted just before the fire reached us, so that the long line of flame was being carried away to the north.

During the next few days we passed the time in a way that a school-boy fresh from Robinson Crusoe would have considered almost perfect, for we attempted to make a raft and float our baggage down the stream, whilst the mozos unencumbered with loads should cut their way through the thickets that lined the banks. However, it was not a success, as the

following extracts from my scrappy journal will show:—"29th April. The Pine Ridge is still burning to the N.E. of us. Have seen many tracks of tapir and deer, but cannot catch sight of the animals themselves. Started with the raft in the afternoon. Hard work hauling it over a shallow rapid before putting the luggage on board. Rapids rather close together. At the last rapid the raft caught on a snag and the food-box went overboard: recovered with difficulty; biscuits all sodden.—30th April. Lashed more cross pieces to the raft, and then gave each mozo a small load to carry so as to lighten the cargo, but after a hard day's work only succeeded in rafting about a mile and a half, and had to unload the raft once in that short distance. Very hard work in the shallow rapids: determined to abandon the raft. Shot many large iguanas for the men to eat, and shot two large alligators, but could not get them."

We found an alligator's nest on a small island in the river and the mozos had a glorious supper off the thirty eggs we took out of it. The nest consisted of a great pile of dry sticks, leaves, grass, and sand, which the animal had scraped together to cover up the eggs, leaving the ground swept bare for some yards around. Each egg had apparently been covered up as soon as it was laid, and the last egg we took out of the nest was buried an arm's length from the top of the pile. We again came across the owner of the despoiled nest the next day, and I got a shot at her; but although two rifle-bullets seemed to be well placed she managed to get to the water and we had an exciting chase after her, but in her dying struggles she sank into the water too deep for us to fathom with our punting-poles, and we saw her no more. On the bank of the river I found some traces of an ancient Indian settlement, raised terraces, and the

foundation mounds of houses, but the houses themselves had disappeared and there were no monuments or sculptured stones to be seen.

As our provisions were running short we turned northwards again on the 1st of May. The fire, which had run for many miles over the Pine Ridge, had cleared off the high grass and made the walking easier; but we had to be careful to avoid treading on the smouldering pine-logs which here and there strewed the ground, and sometimes to give a wide berth to a half-burnt tree which was likely to come down with a crash at the first gust of wind. By the afternoon of the 4th of May we were back again at the Cayo, and there I found Carlos Lopez and his party awaiting our arrival, with a doleful story to tell me of their expedition to Tikál. They had reached Tikál safely, but had met with no water to drink during the latter part of their journey, and when they arrived at the small lagoon near the ruins which had afforded us a supply during our former visits, it was only to find that it was completely dried up. There was nothing to do but to make the best of their way back again; and their sufferings must have been severe, as for three whole days they had nothing to drink but the driblets from the water lianes which they could find along their track.

I paid off the mozos who had been to Tikál as soon as I reached the Cayo, and that same evening they set off on their long journey home. The next morning I told the remaining mozos, those who had been with me in the Pine Ridge, to go to Benque Viejo, only about four leagues distant, and bring back some baggage which we had left there, and that on their return in the evening they should receive their wages and be free to start for their homes. A considerable

sum of money was owing to them, for in addition to their back wages, by an agreement which I had made with them, they were to receive double pay for the journey into the Pine Ridge and the conveyance of the baggage from Benque Viejo. However, they had seen their companions set off for Cajabon the night before, and that sudden home-sickness to which they are subject came over them, so they told me that they must start for their homes at once. No verbal remonstrance was of any avail, so I arranged each man's wages in a little pile and said that as soon as his load had been brought to the house—which could easily be done before night—he might take his pay and go; otherwise he would forfeit his wages, as he had not fulfilled his contract. The men made little or no reply, but filed sullenly out of the room and loafed about round the house until the afternoon; then each man made a little bundle of his rug, hammock, and other belongings and started off for home, leaving his hard-earned wages behind him.

I was really in a very awkward fix, for arrangements had been made to send all my baggage from the Cayo to Belize by water, but how to get it from Benque Viejo to the Cayo was a question difficult to answer; there were no other cargadores in the neighbourhood and no mules available, and even if mules had been forthcoming the loads would have needed careful repacking before they could have been fastened on pack-saddles. However, through the kind offices of Mr. Milson, who was untiring in his efforts to help me, I did succeed in getting hold of some of the more important packages before starting for Belize, and made arrangements for the disposition of the remainder.

But to return to the mozos. I had no intention of

letting them go unpaid, and although hoping to the last that they might change their minds I had taken the precaution of posting a look-out on the road beyond the edge of the village, and there they were stopped and brought back to me, and each man was told to take the pile of dollars set out for him on the table. I don't think there had been any misapprehension on their part; the terms of the agreement had been fully explained to them and had received their assent before we started for the Pine Ridge, and they never even suggested that an injustice was being done to them; it was merely the sudden longing for home which had come over them on seeing their companions set out on the previous night which had led them to risk the forfeit of two months' wages rather than endure a day's delay.

On the 8th May I left the Cayo in a "pit-pan," a craft like an elongated Thames punt, propelled by six paddlers, who sit right in the square bow to ply their paddles, and in four days we arrived in Belize. In 1882 I made the journey from the Cayo to Belize by land, a journey which presents no difficulty to the traveller; but as in those days the path was not too clearly defined, I engaged a local guide, my other companions being Gorgonio and two Coban Indian carriers. One of our two mules broke down during the first day's march, and as we had only a short time in which to accomplish the journey we usually walked on until midnight and then rolling our rugs round us lay down in the path for a few hours' sleep. Both Gorgonio and I were in splendid condition and felt little fatigue, and had our guide known the way we should have finished the journey with time to spare, but he was always leading us astray. On the last day, at nine o'clock in the morning, we were lost in a mangrove-swamp within a few miles of the town

of Belize, hunting for the long trestle-bridge by which alone the swamp can be crossed, and conscious that the steamer for New Orleans would leave Belize that afternoon at three o'clock punctually. By good luck we at last stumbled on the bridge, and mounting the sound mule I made the best of my way to Government House. My old friend, Sir Frederick Barlee, whom I had visited on my way to Guatemala, had had faith in my determination to turn up in time for the steamer, and with a hearty welcome I found a refreshing bath and a good luncheon awaiting me, and a boat ready to take me off to the vessel. Police orderlies were sent off at once to help Gorgonio and the carriers, who luckily came in sight just as the steamer was blowing her whistle, and I carried off my luggage with me in triumph, but it was a close shave.



ON THE BELIZE RIVER.

The journey from the Cayo to Belize by the river

presents no features of interest; the scenery is monotonous and the rapids are not dangerous. Although the river is navigable for canoes and pit-pans at almost all times of the year, and supplies can thus be carried in small quantities to the mahogany-cutters and other settlers on its banks, a more satisfactory highway must be established if the colony is to advance and prosper. There would be no great difficulty in constructing a light railway from Belize to the Cayo, and I have shown, in the account of my excursion into the great Southern Pine Ridge, that a considerable elevation in an open and well-watered country could easily be reached from the Cayo by a road which could be cheaply made, and there can be no doubt that a sanatorium in such a situation would be of inestimable value to residents in the colony. It cannot be contended that Belize could ever become a pleasant place of residence; the town is commonly said to be built on a foundation of sand and mahogany chips, and the saying is almost true. A shallow sea lies in front of it, and at the back it is cut off from the more solid earth by a belt of half-drained mangrove-swamps; the streets are bordered by broad ditches or canals and the ubiquitous cat-fish is the principal scavenger, and in truth no more generally approved sanitary arrangements are possible. Yet with all these disadvantages the town is well ordered, clean, and healthy; and although it has been from time to time visited by the terrible scourge of yellow fever, this can generally be traced to some indiscretion on the part of the inhabitants, such as the recent attempt to deepen the foreshore. Creole negroes form the bulk of the population, and next in number are the so-called Caribs, who have already been mentioned in connection with Livingston. In British Honduras they

have come under the influence of the Jesuit Missions, and I believe that the whole race now profess some sort of Christianity, although it is closely mixed with much of their old heathen superstition; they still make periodic excursions to the depths of the forests, there to celebrate certain rites on which none but a Carib's eye is allowed to gaze. They are generally polygamists, and when a man has built a house and cleared sufficient ground for a plantation he leaves a wife in charge to look after its cultivation, considering himself free to visit his other wives whom he has similarly established on other parts of the coast, and to give his attention to fishing and canoe-building and other forms of man's work. Their beautifully-shaped doreys are to be seen all along the coast from Yucatan to Nicaragua, and although not such bold deep-sea sailors as the Creole negroes, they handle their canoes and doreys most skilfully and are well acquainted with every reef, island, and inlet on the coast. It is most curious to note how distinct they have kept from the Creole negroes, no Carib woman ever being known (unless a change has quite recently been made) to cohabit with a negro of another race. It has always seemed to me that the exclusiveness of the Caribs and their excellence as coasting sailors may be due to their having originally been brought to the coast of Africa as prisoners of war from the banks of some of the great lakes in the far interior, and to their thus having no kinship with the tribes from whom the slaves were usually captured, rather than to their supposed mixture with the Carib Indians of the Island of St. Vincent.

Belize as a British Colony has rather a curious history. The mouth of the Belize River was originally a haunt of buccaneers, and the very name itself is

said to be a corruption of Wallace or Wallis, one of the most formidable of those pirates. Later on, as buccaneering was abandoned, a settlement was formed there by wood-cutters, and the little colony literally fought its way into recognition. Although the Spaniards were loth to give up their claim to sovereignty in any part of the New World, the Colony of British Honduras became an established fact, and its boundaries have since been recognized by treaty with Guatemala and Mexico. The Spaniards had never effectively occupied the eastern side of the peninsula of Yucatan, and although from time to time they established stations at Bacalar and even further south, the Indians of those parts always regained their independence, and beyond the British border they have kept it up to the present day. The Yucatec newspapers never tire of writing about the "Guerra de Castas," the war of races, and inveighing against the iniquity of the English colonists who trade with the Indians, and are alleged to supply them with munitions of war. In reality these barbarous Santa Cruz Indians have been as great a nuisance to the British as to the Yucatecans, and both countries have suffered severely from their bloodthirsty raids. I cannot help thinking that in recent years it has not been the fighting strength of the Indians which has prevented the Mexicans from conquering them once for all, and putting an end to the raids and to the desultory warfare which—although there are really long intervals of rest—is supposed never to cease. There may be truth in the suggestion that the Mexican authorities found the war of races a convenient excuse for keeping Federal troops in Yucatan, with one eye turned to the frontier and the other on the Yucatecans themselves; for Yucatan has not always been a very loyal

member of the Mexican federation. However, that has all changed now, for the very good reason that the governing class in Yucatan has become rich and is not likely to risk its wealth for the sake of independence, and general improvements in communication have somewhat deprived Yucatan of the safety derived from its isolated position. Meanwhile Mexico has become better organized and infinitely more powerful, and it is to be hoped that under the enlightened government of Porfirio Diaz an end may finally be put to the “Guerra de Castas,” and the Indians be brought to submission and fair terms granted to them.

In the year 1881 I met the Santa Cruz chiefs in Belize, where they had come to make their annual purchases of foreign goods. In a conversation with them through an interpreter, I explained to them that the purpose of my visit to Central America was to study the works of art of their forefathers, and they very courteously asked me to visit them in their own country, an invitation which I greatly regretted my arrangements did not permit me to accept. When I passed through Belize again on my way to Guatemala in 1883, I asked the Governor if the Indians were still peaceably disposed, and if there was still a chance of visiting them; and thereon hangs a tale. He replied that he thought everything was favourable for such an expedition and that a very pleasant and learned ethnologist, whom I will call Dr. X, had just been to see him on the same subject, and no doubt it would be agreeable for us to travel together.

Dr. X had gone out of town for a few days, so I was not able to see him before my steamer sailed for Livingston; but I learnt that he did not intend

starting for the Santa Cruz country before April, and I promised to write to the Governor should there be a prospect of my getting through my work in Guatemala by that date, so that arrangements could be made for Dr. X and myself to travel to Santa Cruz together. However, later on, I had to write and say there was no chance of my reaching Belize until the middle of May, and the expedition to Santa Cruz must be given up. Earlier in this chapter I have told how hurried was my return to Belize, and how nearly I lost the steamer, and it was not until we were walking to the boat which was to convey me on board that I asked the Governor how Dr. X had fared in his expedition to Santa Cruz. He replied "Thank God, I have got rid of that fellow! I found out that he had been concerned in the most abominable practices." At that moment my baggage came up and I had no time to ask any further questions even had it been discreet to do so, and although I was rather mystified the matter passed out of my mind. On my return home, one of my first visits was paid to my old friend Mr. Bates, then Secretary to the Royal Geographical Society, and in the midst of his kindly greeting he stopped short and said, "By the way, did you come across Dr. X?" I said no, that he had already left Belize. "Thank God for that!" he said, and then rapidly changed the subject. But now my curiosity was fully aroused, and I wanted to know why everyone thanked God when Dr. X departed; I told Bates how mystified I had been at the Governor's last words to me and how nearly Dr. X and I were becoming travelling companions. He shook me by the hand again and said, "Well you have had a lucky escape; perhaps I had better tell you the whole story," which he did as follows:—Not long ago Dr. X came to me with good introductions,

and said he intended to visit Belize; he asked my advice and assistance, and as he seemed a very well-informed and pleasant man I gave him a note to the Governor. A few months later I had a visit from the Colonial Office clerk, who asked me if I knew anything of the whereabouts of Dr. X; and when he heard what I had to tell him, he informed me that a Foreign Embassy in London had been in correspondence with our Foreign Office regarding Dr. X's career. It appeared that he had been travelling for some years in different parts of the world, and as a cultivated and pleasant companion had been well received in South America and elsewhere, but it had been noticed that his progress was followed by most unaccountable deaths in the families or amongst the households of his hosts, and although no actual evidence was forthcoming against him, suspicion had grown so strong that he had more than once to flee the country he was visiting. No sufficient motive for crime could be adduced; for although it was said that he occasionally borrowed money, or some article of which he had need, from his newly-made friends and acquaintances, the sums were so small, and the articles so insignificant, that his need of them might easily have been the result of carelessness on his part, and could never have afforded adequate motive for a series of cold-blooded murders. The theory put forward by those who had known him was that he had discovered the secret of some subtle and insidious poison with which he took a maniacal delight in making experiments on his unfortunate companions. However, the lack of tangible evidence and insufficient motive combined prevented any proceedings being taken against him, but suspicion was so overwhelmingly strong that it was a matter of urgent necessity to watch his

movements and future career. He had been lost sight of for a time, but he was known to have expressed his intention of visiting some of the English Colonies, and the Embassy wished to put the Colonial Office on its guard. Poor Mr. Bates's feelings on learning that inadvertently he had been assisting a possible fiend may be more easily imagined than described, and he was greatly relieved at my news that Dr. X had left the Colony before any evil had been done. I heard nothing more of Dr. X and his doings until a year or two later, when the following incident occurred:—I was sitting one morning in the verandah of the house of a consular officer in Guatemala when the foreign mail came in, and my host, leaving me to read the newly-arrived newspapers, went off to look through his correspondence; presently he returned, and after some remarks about the news of the day, casually produced a photograph from amongst some papers he held in his hand, and said, "Do you know this man?" I looked at the rather indifferent photograph and said, "No, I don't think I have ever seen him; who is he?" He said it was the portrait of a foreigner who was travelling about here some time ago, and changing the subject he turned to walk away towards his room. Then with a sudden memory I called after him, "Oh! that is a portrait of Dr. X, isn't it? is he in this country?" Of course explanations followed, and I learnt that the Doctor was still on his travels, and that as there was some idea that he might visit Guatemala, directions had been sent to ensure a careful watch on his movements. From that day to this I have heard nothing of Dr. X, and can only hope that if he had been trying more interesting experiments he may have tried them successfully on himself.



CARIB WOMEN.

CHAPTER XXI. CHICHÉN ITZÁ.

The first historical notice of the Maya Indians comes to us from Columbus, who did not get in touch with the more civilized races of America until the end of his career as an explorer, and then by an unlucky chance he failed to follow up the clue. During his fourth voyage Columbus landed on Bonacca, one of the Ruatan group of islands lying about thirty miles from the northern coast of Honduras, and the story of his meeting with the Maya Indians is well told by Washington Irving:—

"The Adelantado, with two launches full of people, landed on the principal island, which was extremely verdant and fertile. The inhabitants resembled those of other islands, excepting that their foreheads were narrower. While the Adelantado was on shore, he beheld a great canoe arriving, as from a distant and important voyage. He was struck with its magnitude

and contents. It was eight feet wide, and as long as a galley, though formed of the trunk of a single tree. In the centre was a kind of awning or cabin of palm-leaves, after the manner of those in the gondolas of Venice, and sufficiently close to exclude both sun and rain. Under this sat a cacique with his wives and children. Twenty-five Indians rowed the canoe, and it was filled with all kinds of articles of the manufacture and natural production of the adjacent countries. It is supposed that this bark had come from the province of Yucatan, which is about forty leagues distant from this island.

"The Indians in the canoe appeared to have no fear of the Spaniards, and readily went alongside of the admiral's caravel. Columbus was overjoyed at thus having brought to him at once, without trouble or danger, a collection of specimens of all the important articles of this part of the New World. He examined, with great curiosity and interest, the contents of the canoe. Among various utensils and weapons similar to those already found among the natives, he perceived others of a much superior kind. There were hatchets for cutting wood, formed not of stone but copper; wooden swords, with channels on each side of the blade, in which sharp flints were firmly fixed by cords made of the intestines of fishes; being the same kind of weapon afterwards found among the Mexicans. There were copper bells, and other articles of the same metal, together with a rude kind of crucible in which to melt it; various vessels and utensils neatly formed of clay, of marble, and of hard wood; sheets and mantles of cotton, worked and dyed with various colors; great quantities of cacao, a fruit as yet unknown to the Spaniards, but which, as they soon found, the natives held in great estimation, using it both as food and money. There was a

beverage also extracted from maize or Indian corn, resembling beer. Their provisions consisted of bread made of maize, and roots of various kinds, similar to those of Hispaniola. From among these articles, Columbus collected such as were important to send as specimens to Spain, giving the natives European trinkets in exchange, with which they were highly satisfied. They appeared to manifest neither astonishment nor alarm when on board of the vessels, and surrounded by people who must have been so strange and wonderful to them. The women wore mantles, with which they wrapped themselves, like the female Moors of Granada, and the men had cloths of cotton round their loins. Both sexes appeared more particular about these coverings, and to have a quicker sense of personal modesty than any Indians Columbus had yet discovered.

"These circumstances, together with the superiority of their implements and manufactures, were held by the admiral as indications that he was approaching more civilized nations. He endeavoured to gain particular information from these Indians about the surrounding countries; but as they spoke a different language from that of his interpreters, he could understand them but imperfectly. They informed him that they had just arrived from a country, rich, cultivated, and industrious, situated to the west. They endeavoured to impress him with an idea of the wealth and magnificence of the regions, and the people in that quarter, and urged him to steer in that direction. Well would it have been for Columbus had he followed their advice. Within a day or two he would have arrived at Yucatan; the discovery of Mexico and the other opulent countries of New Spain would have necessarily followed; the Southern Ocean would have been disclosed to him, and a succession

of splendid discoveries would have shed fresh glory on his declining age, instead of its sinking amidst gloom, neglect, and disappointment."

Intent on discovering a strait by which he might gain the southern sea, Columbus ignored the advice of the Indians to travel towards the west, and thus the discovery of Yucatan and Mexico was left to others.

In the year 1517 an expedition was organized in Cuba under the command of Francisco Hernandez de Cordova, for the purpose of discovering new lands to the westward, and among the volunteers who joined the expedition was that perfect type of the Spanish "conquistador," Bernal Diaz del Castillo, who was the eye-witness of so many stirring events of those days, and whose delightful account of his adventures, dictated to his children in his old age, is one of the most valuable contributions to the history of the time. On leaving the west end of the island of Cuba the three vessels which carried the explorers were nearly lost in a severe storm, and it was not until the twenty-first day of the voyage that they made land near Cape Catoche, the north-east point of Yucatan. Here, for the first time, the Spaniards saw Indian houses built of stone; to quote Bernal Diaz, "From the ships we saw a great town about two leagues from the shore; as we had never seen in Cuba so great and populous a place we named it 'El Gran Cairo.'" The natives, who came off to the vessels in large dug-out canoes, made friendly overtures to the Spaniards and induced them to land and march towards the town, but as soon as the Spaniards got into broken ground a treacherous attack was made on them, and they were forced to retreat and take refuge in their ships. The expedition then coasted along the north and west shore of Yucatan, until it

reached the town of Campeche, when again men were landed, and this time met with a somewhat better reception from the natives. “They led us,” Bernal Diaz writes, “to some very large houses well built of stone and plaster, which were the sanctuaries of their Idols, where we saw figures of great serpents and other Idols carved and painted on the walls surrounding an altar which was drenched with blood still fresh.”

The next landing was made a little further down the coast at Champoton, where the explorers received such a rough handling from the Indians that only one of them escaped unhurt, and Hernandez de Cordova himself died of his wounds on the return voyage when within a few days’ sail of Cuba. Throughout the account of this expedition Bernal Diaz notes the bravery of the Indians, who fought the Spaniards hand to hand, and the excellence of their clothing, their arms, and their buildings. During the following year another expedition was despatched, under the command of Juan de Grijalva, who, also failing to make any headway against the natives of Yucatan, continued his voyage to the westward, discovered the coast of Mexico, and brought to light the riches of that country. The success of Grijalva’s expedition fully aroused the interest of the Spaniards, and it was immediately followed up in February 1519 by the far-famed expedition under the command of Hernan Cortés, which resulted in the conquest of Mexico. Cortés, like his predecessors, on leaving Cuba made for the coast of Yucatan, but after a stay of some days’ duration in the Island of Cozumel, he pushed on round the coast without delay to the mouth of the Tabasco River, where he fought a battle with the natives and took formal possession of the land in the name of the King of Spain. No attempt, however, was

then made at colonization, and Cortés re-embarked his soldiers and pressed on to the rich prize of Mexico. Five years later, after Mexico had been conquered, Cortés returned to the province of Tabasco, and thence crossed the base of the peninsula of Yucatan in the course of his celebrated march to Honduras.

No effort was made to subdue the Mayas of Yucatan until the year 1528, when Francisco de Montejo, who had been appointed Adelantado of Yucatan, landed on the north-east coast with four hundred Spaniards and marched towards the interior. Unfortunately no contemporary record of this expedition is in existence, and we know little more than the fact that at the end of two years the Spaniards were driven from the country. It was not until the year 1540 that any further attempt was made at conquest; in that year Francisco de Montejo, the son of the Adelantado, marched inland from Campeche, and two years later founded the town of Merida, the present capital of the country, whilst his cousin, another Francisco de Montejo, marched to the eastward and founded a settlement at Chuaca, which a few years later was moved to the present site of the town of Valladolid. From this time forward the dominion of the Spaniards over the northern and western portions of Yucatan remained undisturbed, but they never succeeded in subduing the natives in the central and eastern part of the province, and the Santa Cruz Indians maintain their independence of the Mexican Government to the present day.

The northern part of Yucatan is little better than a coral-reef raised a few feet above sea-level, covered with a thin coating of earth which supports a scrubby growth not worthy of the name of forest.

The sea around the coast is everywhere shallow, and to the northward the great Bank of Yucatan extends for more than eighty miles from the shore before the line of fifty fathoms is reached. We had drifted over the edge of this bank in a steamer with a broken shaft on my return from Guatemala in 1885, and found an anchorage in forty-five fathoms of water at a distance of over fifty miles from the land. The most curious fact about this strange country is the total absence of rivers and even of streamlets. The heavy rainfall soaks through the porous limestone rock and oozes out again along the northern coast-line. The water-supply of the inhabitants is found in deep caves or openings in the limestone, known as "'cenotes," the Spanish form of a Maya word, which the reader will nearly approach by trying to pronounce "tznot" as a monosyllable[2].

With a low coast-line, a shallow sea, and an absence of rivers, follows a lack of good harbours; at Progreso there is merely an open roadstead, where the steamers anchor two miles from the shore, and at Campeche the conditions are much the same, only small vessels finding a little shelter by lying inside a raised coral bank.

On my voyages between Livingston and New Orleans I had frequently passed along the coast of Yucatan and had twice caught sight of the small ruined temple on the Island of Mugeres; but it was not until the winter of 1888-89 that I was able to set foot in the country with the purpose of examining some of the ruins, and I then chose Chichén Itzá as the site giving promise of the best results. There were disadvantages in thus breaking new ground, not the least of which was the absence of my faithful companions Gorgonio Lopez and his brothers, and I

was well aware how greatly I should miss their assistance. Landing at Progreso on Christmas Eve I went on by rail, for a distance of about twenty-five miles, through a flat and uninteresting country to the city of Merida, and at once commenced preparations for the journey to Chichén.

I was soon to have experience of the inconvenience which may easily arise from the want of a good harbour, for the captain of the steamer carrying all my heavy baggage, encountering a heavy "norther" as he approached the port of Progreso, preferred the open sea to anchorage on a lee shore, and passed on to make the round of the gulf ports before returning to land my cargo at Progreso a fortnight later.

Merida, as described by Stephens, was a charming, old-fashioned, out-of-the-world, sleepy city, with a cultivated and hospitable upper class of Spaniards and a picturesque population of Mestizos and Indians. Merida, as I found it, was a modernized Spanish-American town in the throes of a "hemp" boom. The picturesqueness of the half-caste population remained, but there all the charm ended. There is only one product of the country which Europeans have found profit in cultivating for export, and that is the *Agave rigida*, a plant nearly related to the American aloe, which is known locally as "Henequen," and produces a fibre that has become of considerable commercial importance under the name of "Sisal hemp." It is to the increased demand for this fibre that at the time of my arrival the people of Yucatan owed a somewhat sudden access of riches. The rocky soil seems to suit the plant to perfection, the cultivation is simple and not very laborious, and cheap machinery had been devised for the extraction of the fibre from the leaves, so that for

some time past it had been possible to sell the product at two cents a pound and leave a fair margin of profit. The henequen fibre is much inferior to that extracted from the stem of the banana and known as Manila hemp, but so small has the world become that a hurricane in Manila which destroyed the banana plants at once brought wealth to Yucatan. The loss of the Manila crop was accentuated by the increased demand for twine in North America for use in the reaping and binding machines which are so largely employed in harvesting the gigantic wheat-crop of the Western States, so that during my stay in Yucatan the price of henequen rose to thirteen cents a pound!

This was not a fortunate state of affairs for me, as I had need of many hands to help in clearing the ruins, and now that every proprietor was eager to increase the size of his henequen plantation, field-labourers were in great demand; I could only hope that as Chichén Itzá lay far from the centre of commercial activity, the villages in its neighbourhood might for some time yet escape the effects of the "boom." I had been accustomed in Guatemala and Honduras to depend to a great extent on the assistance of the local officials in engaging labourers; but although, through the kindness of the English Minister, I had come with ample recommendations from the Mexican Government to the local authorities, I found that I could not look for the same favourable result in Yucatan, as the Indians are less under the control of officials than they are under that of a small number of powerful Spanish families who are all large land-holders. Although the status of slavery does not legally exist, custom is slow in dying, and the greater number of Indian labourers are still tied to the soil.

After a month of weary waiting in Merida, during which time the only pleasant episodes were a short visit to Mr. E. Thompson, the United States Consul, who was at work exploring the ruins at Labná, and a day spent at the celebrated ruins of Uxmal, I was at last able to set out to the eastward, travelling the first day by rail, and then in a springless cart, known as a "volan coche," to the town of Yzamal. This town occupies the site of an ancient Indian city, and the great pyramidal foundations which formerly supported the Maya temples are still the most prominent feature in the landscape.

At Yzamal I was most hospitably received by Dr. Gaumer, an American gentleman who has long been a collector of natural-history specimens for the Editors of the 'Biologia Centrali-Americana,' and to him and to Mrs. Gaumer I was indebted for numerous acts of kindness during my stay in the country. Thence I pushed on to the town of Valladolid, which, with the exception of Comitan in Honduras, I may safely say is the most dead-alive town it has ever been my fate to enter. Here I presented letters from the Government to the local authorities, and made the best arrangements I could effect for a supply of labourers. I then returned by the main road as far as 'Citas, and on the 6th February rode by a bush track to Pisté, a small village about two miles distant from the ruins of Chichén Itzá.

When Stephens and Catherwood visited Chichén in 1842, a flourishing hacienda had been established among the ruins, and the ground was in part kept clear for pasturing cattle. A few years later, in 1847, the untamed Indians from the south made a raid into the settled portion of Yucatan, destroyed the

hacienda at Chichén and the village of Pisté and carried their ravages, I believe, as far as Yzamal. At the time of my visit the village of Pisté had been partly re-occupied and some of the ruined houses had been rebuilt, but the large church was still roofless and the whole of the site of the ancient city, as well as the church and buildings of the Hacienda, was covered by a dense jungle.

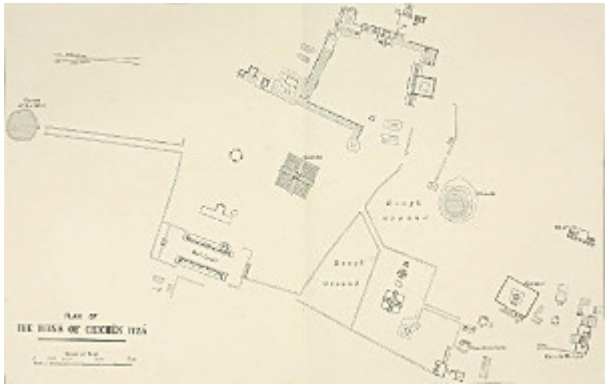
For the first few days I put up in the house of Stephen, the village judge and far the most important person in the small community. He was a young man, well-built and athletic, with frank and pleasant manners, and a certain air of command about him which became him well; altogether he was a capital specimen of a half-caste yeoman. He was perhaps a little too fond of aguardiente, but he seemed to live a happy life in a somewhat patriarchal fashion. His legal wife (for there were some others in the background) was the mother of a most delightful boy, about four years old, a child who would have attracted attention in any part of the world for his robust beauty and his charming genial manners and fearless ways. The villagers adored this boy, and in return he lorded it over them royally; he never showed any shyness of me, and we became fast friends at once; he used to prattle away to me in Maya about all that was going on, although I could not understand a word of his language. I don't think I ever met a child who attracted me so much, and it was hard to believe that he was related to the people around him, for he seemed to belong to some superior race.

I was able to engage a few men in Pisté, and set them to work at once to clear the jungle around the principal buildings; at the end of a week I took up

my quarters at the ruins themselves, in a building known as the Casa Colorada. Soon after my arrival in the country I had engaged a man named Pablo Parera as a general overseer, but he proved to be of very little use to me, and it was no great loss when, early in March, he begged a fortnight's leave of absence, saying that he had received news that his mother was dying in Merida. He was very circumstantial about the doctor's report on the lung trouble from which his mother was suffering, and at his earnest request I gave him the money for his journey and an order on my agent in Merida for a month's pay in advance, as he expressed himself most anxious to return to me. Early the next morning he set out on his journey. It so happened that the next day I had to ride into Yzamal, a distance of about forty miles, on business, where I chanced to hear that my friend Pablo had passed a cheerful evening the night before, apparently quite forgetful of his dying mother, and, moreover, that he had boasted that he well understood how to manage me, and was going on to Merida to have a good time at the Carnival. Luckily I was just in time to send a telegram to my agent in Merida, and when Pablo walked into his office the next morning he learnt that the order for his payment had been cancelled; he wisely made no protest and I never heard of him again. I then gave up all hopes of finding another overseer and chose the most intelligent amongst the workmen to take charge of the tools and act as "caporal." During the first few weeks all my labourers were men from Pisté, and as they returned to their homes before dark, I was left to sleep in the ruins alone. For a few nights I paid one of the Indians an extra "real" to stop for the night; but as he could speak no Spanish, conversation was

impossible, and the way he sat silently on the floor and followed my every movement with his eyes was worse than a nightmare, so I soon gave up the experiment, infinitely preferring the solitude of the ruins to his company.

In the beginning of March three local officials paid me a visit and stayed two days. They expressed great interest in the work I was doing and were most sympathetic over my troubles in engaging labourers; indeed, one of them, who was also editor of a newspaper, on his return home wrote a most flattering account of me. In a leading article he pointed out that my enterprise was one of national importance, in which every town and village in the neighbourhood should be proud to help. Unfortunately he failed to despatch the half-dozen soldiers whom he had been directed by his superior officer to send me from his own town; and I found that most of the alleged interest in my work and promises of assistance ended in the same way. However, by persistent application, by letter and in person, I managed for a time to worry a fair amount of assistance from the local officials, and secured the services of twenty or thirty Indian soldiers to clear bush, move the fallen stones, and dig away the earth which had accumulated round the base of the principal buildings.



PLAN OF THE RUINS OF CHICHÉN ITZÁ.

As usual, I had been laughed at by my acquaintances in Merida for bringing with me wheelbarrows and spades, being assured by them that the Indians would never be persuaded to use them. They told me that an Indian's method of digging was to scrape a little earth together with his hands and, in a leisurely way, to ladle it into a small basket of plaited leaves or into his straw hat, if a basket were not at hand, and then to saunter off and empty the contents at a few yards distance. I must own that there was some difficulty in persuading newcomers that four men were not needed to take charge of one wheelbarrow, one to fill it half-full of earth and stones, and three to look on and see that the load was not unduly heavy, and then with a united effort to lift it by the wheel and two handles and carry it off bodily. I did once see an Indian load a wheelbarrow with a few stones, and (with the help of two friends to raise it up) carry off the loaded barrow on the top of his head. However, these vagaries were never indulged in for long, and as soon as they found that the wheels went round, and that their labour was lightened by the use of them, they always took kindly to the

wheelbarrows. As the men went barefooted or wore thin sandals they could not work well with a spade, but they soon became skilful with a shovel. They are thoroughly accustomed to using hoes, and in handling a machete to clear jungle it would be difficult to find their equals.

Just before starting on my last journey to Yzamal, Stephen had come out to the ruins in a state of great distress to tell me that his boy had been ill for three or four days and that he feared that he was dying. I went in to see the poor little fellow as I passed through the village and found him in a pitiable state of fever and delirium. There was no doctor within forty miles, and there was nothing I could do for him beyond sending to my camp for a supply of beef-jelly and arrowroot in the hope of keeping up his strength; but I deeply regretted that I had not had earlier news of the child's illness, when perhaps simple remedies might have been efficacious. As I rode into the village on my return from Yzamal a few days later, my first inquiry was for the boy, and I learnt that he had never rallied and had been buried that morning. Stephen came to me, looking haggard and wretched, and asked me to put up for the night in another house in the village, as his house was being prepared for a religious service. The whole village was grief-stricken, and two of the elders called on me to say that on behalf of all the villagers they had a favour to ask of me. They said that it was a great grief to them all that they possessed no portrait of Stephen's son, and they proposed, if I was agreeable, to go at once and dig up the body so that I might take a photograph of it, and the appearance of one they loved so much would then never fade from their minds. Fortunately I could plead the excuse that I had no photographic plates ready for use, but

it needed some tact to avoid hurting their feelings and a great deal of explanation before I could induce them to withdraw their ghastly request. Their distress was touching, and utterly unlike the usual callousness of the American native; but, as I have said, the child was possessed of exceptional beauty and charm of manner, and he had won his way to all their hearts.

Before dark I went over to Stephen's house to see the unhappy mother, and found the house clean and ready for the service. The small table at which I had been accustomed to write was turned into an altar and covered with a white cloth; above this was fixed a crucifix, flanked, incongruously enough, by two glaring oleographs, one of a very *décolletée* German damsel apparently singing the praises of lager-beer, whilst her companion on the other side of the crucifix was a sprightly Spanish girl who apparently preferred white wine. The altar itself was graced by half-a-dozen old beer-bottles with gaudy labels, filled with flowers. I was not bidden to the service, which Stephen must have conducted himself, as there was no priest within many miles, so, thinking they would prefer being left to themselves, I returned to my house. Stephen was clearly heart-broken over his loss, but I am sorry to say the proximate effect on him was a drinking-bout which lasted a fortnight.

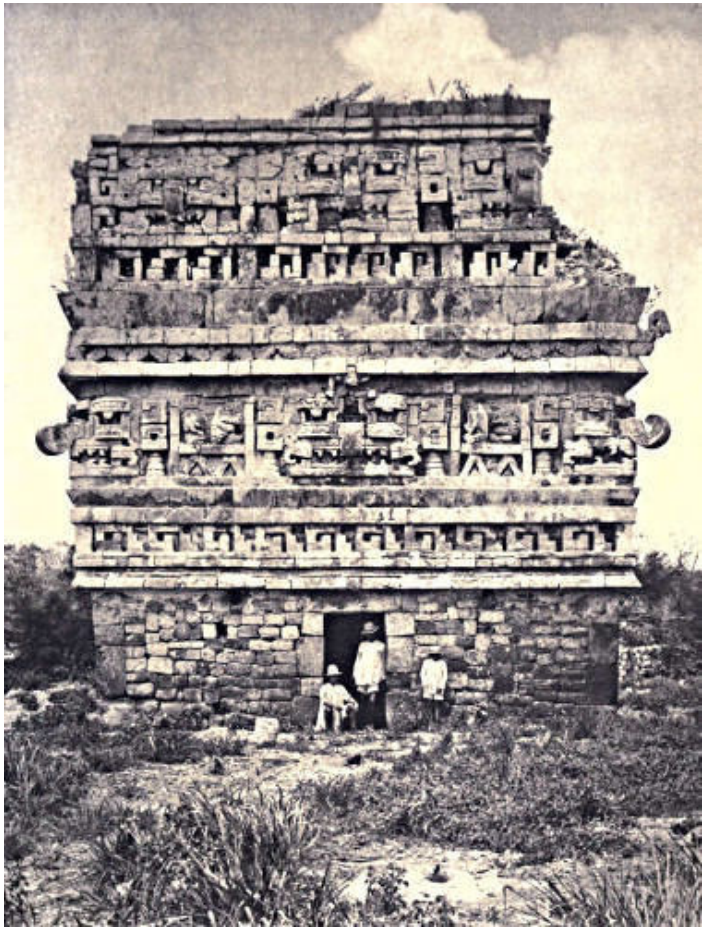
In March Mr. Thompson paid me a short visit accompanied by Mr. H. Sweet, who had been assisting him in his work at Labná. Mr. Sweet was about to return home to Boston, but he was much attracted by the work to be done at Chichén, and I exerted my powers of persuasion to the utmost to induce him to stay on with me. At last he promised that should the letters he expected to receive on his

return to Merida enable him to prolong his stay in Yucatan, he would come back to pay me another visit. Not many days later to my great delight he rode into camp, and I secured a charming companion for the remainder of my stay at the ruins.



By the time Sweet arrived a considerable amount of clearing had been done, and I had shifted my quarters from the Casa Colorada to the building known as the “Casa de Monjas,” or the Nunnery. This is a fine structure, raised on a solid basement of masonry, 165 feet in length, 89 feet wide, and 35 feet high. A magnificent broad stairway of forty-nine steps leads to the level top of this basement, on which stands a house with eight chambers. One of the chambers had been filled in and sealed up so as to form a secure foundation to an upper story which is now in ruins; but the remainder were in good condition, and made a most comfortable lodging for us. The interior wall-surfaces had formerly been coated with plaster and covered with paintings; but of this decoration only a few fragments two or three inches square remained. The broad terrace around the house was on a level with the tree-tops, and our view extended over the forest-covered plain to the far horizon. To the southward, where no clearing had yet been made, the sea of verdure spread unbroken from our feet. During the lovely tropical nights, when a gentle breeze swayed the tree-tops, and the moonlight rippled over the foliage, it seemed to be a real sea in motion below us, and one almost expected

to feel the pulsation of ocean waves against the walls. In the daytime the woods were alive with birds; the beautiful mot-mots were so tame that they flew fearlessly in and out of our rooms, and mocking-birds and scarlet cardinals poured forth a flood of melody such as I have never heard equalled.



"LA IGLESIA", CHICHÉN ITZÁ.

The east wing of the Nunnery extends towards some

detached buildings, of which one, known as “la iglesia,” is shown on the accompanying plate. Huge grotesque masks or faces with projecting snouts are the most prominent objects in the decoration of this building. On either side of the middle mask in the lower frieze is a panel holding two dilapidated figures of humanized animals: the figure on the right of the central mask is clearly intended for a turtle, and that on the left for an alligator.

Looking northwards from our high platform the ruins lay spread out before us. To the right we could see the front of the many-chambered “Ak at ’cib” (“the writing in the dark”), so called from the carved inscription on the doorway of an inner room. More immediately in front of us rose the strange circular building known as the “Caracol,” from the small winding stairway hidden in the central mass of masonry. The circular form of this building, and the curiously unsymmetrical arrangement of the terraces, steps, and doorways, suggest the idea that it may have been used as an observatory, and that the direction of the lines of the terraces and the outlook from the doorways may have reference to the rising and setting of the heavenly bodies. To the left stands the Casa Colorada and the much-ruined buildings surrounding it. Beyond this, again, rises a pyramid which once had supported a temple of which nothing now remains but the two serpent columns which formed the doorway.

About three hundred yards to the N.E. of our house lay the ’cenote from which we drew our supply of water, its rocky and precipitous banks overhung by a thick growth of trees which afforded a grateful shade. The water was about sixty feet below the level of the ground, and could only be reached at one spot

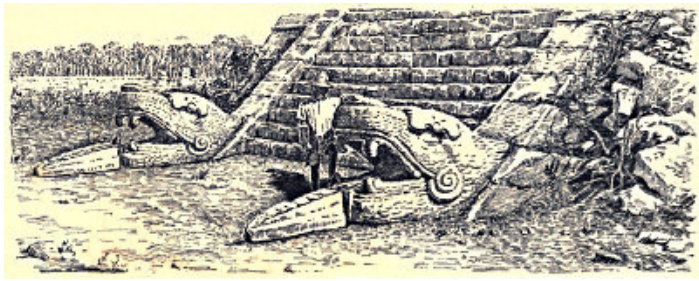
by a rough pathway, but we eased the labour of drawing water by rigging up a rope and pulley to an overhanging tree and hauling up the water in a bucket. Beyond the buildings I have already mentioned, we could see from our terrace the lofty Castillo and the top of the temple on the east wall of the Ball Court.



MY ROOM, CHICHÉN ITZÁ, 1889.

The Castillo is a stately building, even in its ruined

condition, and must have been magnificent in the days of its splendour. The great pyramidal foundation, 195 feet square at its base, is ascended on each side by a grand stairway of over ninety steps, with a low, broad, stone edging. The sides of the foundation were terraced and faced with stone, and were probably at one time ornamented with mural paintings. The temple which stands on this magnificent foundation faces N.N.E., and is not set quite true to the lines of the base of the pyramid. At the foot of the northern stairway are two huge serpents' heads, and the porch of the temple is supported by two serpent columns. Both doorways and interior columns are rich in carving, but the design and execution of the ornament is poor in comparison with that found in some of the other temples.

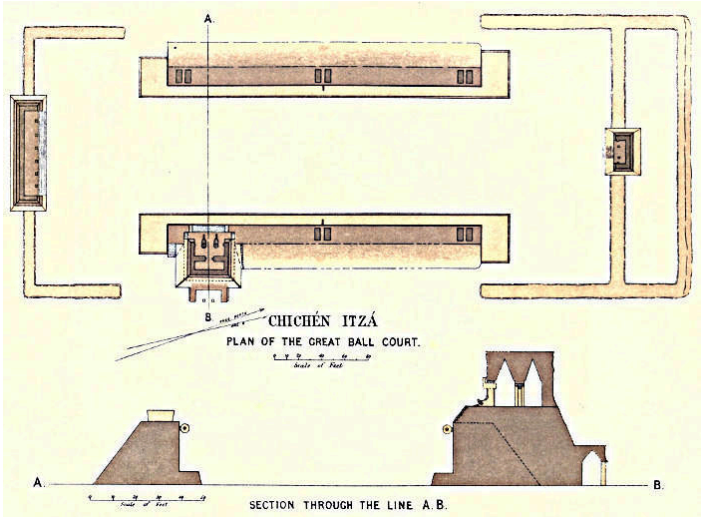


Westward of the Castillo is a complicated group of colonnades and temples which had not been previously surveyed. We were able only to make a surface survey, and such excavations as were necessary to ascertain the ground-plan of the temples; there still remains in this direction a splendid field for investigation by the next explorer.



CHICHÉN ITZÁ, THE CASTILLO.

To the north-west of the Castillo stands the Great Ball Court, which is perhaps the most interesting building at Chichén. Two parallel walls, 272 feet long and 27 feet high, standing 119 feet apart, form the side boundaries of the court, which is open at either end. A terrace, 5 feet high and 10 feet broad, projects from the base of the walls as is shown in the section. From the middle of each wall, 3 feet from the top, projected a great stone ring, measuring 4 feet in diameter and 18 inches in aperture, carved from a single block of stone 11 inches in thickness, and ornamented with a design of entwined serpents. At each end of the Court stands the ruins of a detached temple profusely ornamented with carving.



CHICHÉN ITZÁ, PLAN OF THE GREAT BALL COURT.

The game which was played in this magnificent court was, no doubt, much the same as the Mexican Tlachtli, which is thus described by Herrera:—"The game was called 'Tlachtli,' which is the same as 'Trinquete' in Spanish. The ball was made of the gum from a tree which grows in the hot country. This tree, when tapped, exudes some large white drops, which soon congeal and when mixed and kneaded become as black as pitch; of this material the balls are made, and, although heavy and hard to the hand, they bound and rebound as lightly as footballs, and are indeed better, as there is no need to inflate them. They do not play for 'chases' (al chaçar), but to make a winning stroke (al vencer), as in the game of Chueca—that is, to strike the ball against or to hit it over the wall which the opposite party defend. The ball may be struck with any part of the body, either such part as is most convenient or such as each

player is most skilful in using. Sometimes it is arranged that it should count against any player who touches the ball otherwise than with his hip, for this is considered by them to show the greatest skill, and on this account they would wear a piece of stiff raw hide over the hips, so that the ball might better rebound. The ball might be struck as long as it bounded, and it made many bounds one after the other, as though it were alive. They played in parties, so many on each side, and for such a stake as a parcel of cotton cloths (una carga de mantas), more or less, according to the wealth of the players. They also played for articles of gold and for feathers, and at times staked their own persons. The place where they played was a court on the level of the ground (sala baja), long, narrow, and high, but wider above than below, and higher at the sides than at the ends (fronteras)[3]. So that it should be better to play in, the court was well cemented, and the walls and floors made quite smooth. In the side walls were fixed two stones like millstones, with a hole pierced through the middle, through which there was just room for the ball to pass, and the player who hit the ball through the hole won the game; and as this was a rare victory, which few gained, by the ancient custom and law of the game, the victor had a right to the mantles of all the spectators; and when the ball passed through the hole it was an amusing sight to see all the onlookers take to flight with much merriment and laughter in the hope of saving their mantles, which others clutched at on behalf of the victor, who had to make certain sacrifices to the Idol of Trinquete and of the stone (ring) through which the ball had passed. To those who saw the feat performed for the first time it seemed like a miracle, and they said that a player who had such good luck

would become a thief or an adulterer, or would die soon. And the memory of such a victory lasted many days, until it was followed by another, which put it out of mind. Every Trinquete court was a temple, and at midnight on a lucky day two Idols—one of the game and one of the ball—were placed on the top of the lower walls with certain ceremonies and witchcraft; and in the middle of the floor they sang songs and performed other ceremonies; then a priest from the great temple with other holy men came to bless the court. Certain words were said, the ball was thrown four times, as in the game, and after such ceremonies the court became consecrated and fit to play in, but not before."[4]

I cannot help thinking that Tlachtli must have been a much more complicated game than that which Herrera describes. To a tennis-player the presence of the rings in the wall would suggest the use of a net to divide the court; but it is useless to speculate on the rules of the game, and our only hope is that some more detailed and accurate description of the manner in which it was played may yet come to light, possibly as the result of Señor Troncoso's researches into the manuscripts of Padre Sahagun which have recently been discovered in Florence.

On the top of the wall above the rings and at the boundaries of the court I discovered the remains of what were evidently the marker's boxes.

At the southern end of the eastern wall there is no marker's box, but its place is taken by what must have been a most beautiful little temple opening towards the court. A restoration of this temple is given on the opposite page. Unfortunately for us, the builders made use of wooden beams instead of stone lintels with which to span the porch, and, as the

wood decayed, the strangely-shaped capitals over-balanced by the heavy projections in the form of the tail of a rattlesnake, fell forward and carried the front of the building with them. The shafts and base of each column with the huge snake's head attached are still in place, and the restoration has been effected in the drawing merely by replacing the rattle-snakes' tails, which were found amongst the debris at the foot of the wall and carefully measured, and by continuing the ornament on the sides and back of the building across the front, so that no new feature is introduced.



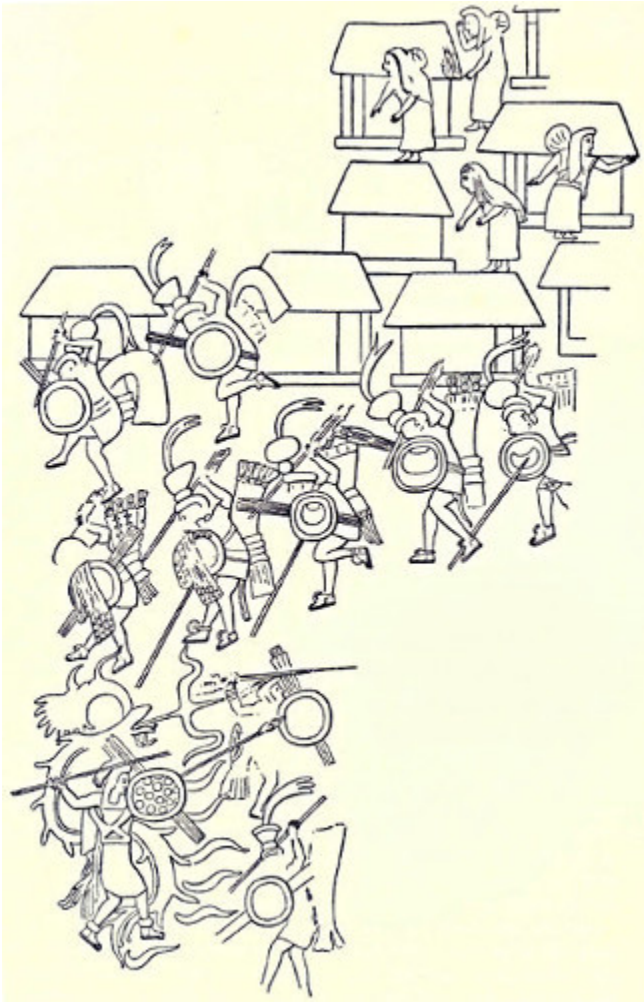
CHICHÉN ITZÁ, THE BALL COURT TEMPLE RESTORED.

The wooden beams forming the lintel above the doorway leading to the inner chamber of this building are still perfectly sound, and the lower one is beautifully carved, as are also the stone door-jambs. The walls of the inner chamber are covered with mural paintings, alas! now woefully mutilated. Unluckily I had no tracing-paper with me, but by the

use of thin sheets of letter-paper I was able to trace some of the better-preserved pictures and to transfer them to drawing-paper. Above the doorway is a picture which represents a human sacrifice. The serpent-priest stands over the body of the victim, which is stretched backwards over a sacrificial stone so as to expose the chest to the knife.



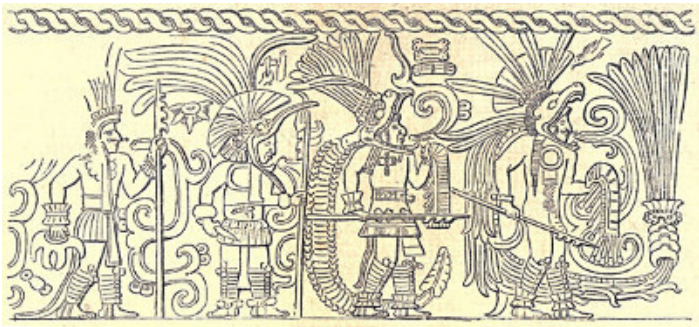
On the south side of the doorway the whole wall-surface is occupied by a battle-scene, where one party, apparently led by the serpent-priest, is attacking a town, while the women, standing on the roofs of the houses, cheer on their defenders and bewail their losses. The arms used are short spears hurled from a throwing-stick (the Mexican atlatl), and all the warriors carry shields, which in some cases are covered with feathered mantles. It is worth noting that although the use of bows and arrows is frequently mentioned by the Spanish writers, the bow is never figured on any of the Maya sculptures, and was probably a late introduction.



CHICHÉN ITZÁ, MURAL PAINTING OF A BATTLE FROM THE GREAT BALL COURT TEMPLE.

At the back of this temple, on the level of the ground, is another chamber which possesses features of great interest. The greater part of the roof had fallen in, carrying portions of the wall with it, and the floor of the chamber was closely packed with the

debris to the height of 4 feet. When this was cleared away, we were rewarded by finding intact the lower part of the columns which had supported the doorway, and lying between them a curious altar in the shape of a grotesque tiger. Then we set to work to make paper moulds of the sculptured ornament, representing processions of armed men in quaint ceremonial costumes, which cover the whole of the surface of the interior walls and the four sides of the square columns. The time at our disposal was limited, as the moulding-paper had, for some unknown reason, been delayed in Havana, and when at last it did arrive it was found to be badly damaged with salt water, so that it was difficult to manipulate. The scene of our labours was about three-quarters of a mile from our house and nearly half a mile from the 'cenote, from which all the water had to be carried on men's backs. The heat was terrific, for the ruined chamber formed a sort of shallow cave facing E.S.E., into which the June sun poured its rays until past noon, raising it to the heat of an oven. We could not begin work until three o'clock in the afternoon, and even then the wall was so hot that the damp paper refused to adhere to it, and the precious water had to be freely used to cool it down; time after time a half-finished mould would fall away from the heated surface and the labour would have to be gone through again. All moulding had to be done with our own hands, as no native could be found competent to help us; and as I was still busy on the survey, the heavier share fell to Mr. Sweet, who stuck to his task manfully until the paper was all used up; I hope some day soon to show him the fine cast of the interior of the building which is now exhibited at the South Kensington Museum.



To the east of the Great Ball Court are two structures which Diego de Landa, Bishop of Yucatan, writing in 1566, describes as “two small theatres built of stone, with four stairways, and paved with flagstones at the top, on which they say they played farces and comedies for the solace of the public.” He then goes on to describe the sacred ’cenote as follows:—

“There runs from the patio in front of these theatres a beautiful broad causeway to a pool about two stone throws off. In this pool they have had, and had at that time, the custom to throw into it live men as a sacrifice to the Gods in time of drought, and they hold that these men do not die although they are never more seen. They threw in also many things made of precious stones and other things which they prized, so that if this land has had gold in it, it would be in this pool that most of it would be, so greatly did the Indians revere it.

“This pool has a depth of fully seven fathoms to the surface of the water, and is more than a hundred feet across and is round in shape, and it is a wonder to look at, for it is clean cut rock down to the water, and the water appears to have a green colour, and I think this is caused by the trees which surround it—and it is very deep.

"There is on the top, near the opening, a small building where I found Idols made in honour of each of the principal buildings of the land, almost like the Pantheon of Rome. I do not know if this was a contrivance of the ancients or one of the people of to-day, so that they might meet with their Idols when they went to the pool with their offerings."

In the year 1579, in answer to a despatch from the Spanish Government, a report was drawn up by three of the founders of Valladolid describing the Indian towns in the neighbourhood, in which the following passage occurs:—

"Eight leagues from this town stand some buildings called Chicheniça, amongst them there is a Cu[5] made by the hand (of man) of hewn stone and masonry, and this is the principal building.

"It has over ninety steps, and the steps go all round, so as to reach to the top of it, the height of each step a little over the third of a vara high. On the summit stands a sort of tower with rooms in it.

"This Cu stands between two zenotes of deep water —one of them is called the Zenote of Sacrifice. They call the place Chicheniça, after an Indian named Alquin Itzá, who was living at the foot of the Zenote of Sacrifice.

"At this zenote the Lords and Chiefs of all the provinces of Valladolid observed this custom. After having fasted for sixty days without raising their eyes during that time even to look at their wives, nor at those who brought them food, they came to the mouth of this zenote and, at the break of day, they threw into it some Indian women, some belonging to each of the Lords, and they told the women that they should beg for a good year in all those things which

they thought fit, and thus they cast them in unbound, but as they were thrown headlong they fell into the water, giving a great blow on it; and exactly at midday she who was able to come out, cried out loud that they should throw her a rope to drag her out with, and she arrived at the top half dead, and they made great fires round her and incensed her with Copal; and when she came to herself she said that below there were many of her nation, both men and women, who received her, and that raising her head to look at some of them, they gave her heavy blows on the neck, making her put her head down, which was all under water, in which she fancied were many hollows and deeps; and in answer to the questions which the Indian girl put to them, they replied to her whether it should be a good or bad year, and whether the devil was angry with any of the Lords who had cast in the Indian girls, but these Lords already knew that if a girl did not beg to be taken out at midday it was because the devil was angry with them, and she never came out again. Then seeing that she did not come out, all the followers of that Lord and the Lord himself threw great stones into the water and with loud cries fled from the place."

I fear that this slight description of Chichén must wholly fail to convey to my readers the sensation of a ghostly grandeur and magnificence which becomes almost oppressive to one who wanders day after day amongst the ruined buildings. Although Chichén is not to be compared in picturesqueness with some of the ruined towns in Guatemala and Tabasco, there is a spaciousness about it which is strangely impressive, and the wide horizon, broken only here and there by a distant mound or lofty temple, is more suggestive

of the easy access and free movement of a large population than the narrow valley of Copan or the terraced hillsides of Palenque. It is difficult to estimate accurately the actual size of the ancient city, for we were not able to carry our clearings beyond the neighbourhood of the principal buildings still left standing, whose position is shown in the plan; but it is almost impossible to penetrate the surrounding jungle in any direction without coming across artificial mounds and terraces and other signs of human handiwork.

Had Chichén Itzá been fully peopled in the year 1528, it is almost incredible that Montejo could have held it for two years with a force which numbered only four hundred men, and during a great part of the time must have been reduced to less than half that number[6]. It seems more reasonable to suppose either that the historians were at fault in describing Chichén Itzá as the site of Montejo's camp, or that the city was in a state of decadence and had already been partly abandoned by its population. The latter supposition is strengthened by the passage quoted above from the Valladolid document, in which no mention is made of a great population, and no word occurs which would lead one to suppose that in 1542 Chichén Itzá was still a great living city, although it was undoubtedly still looked on as a sacred place where certain time-honoured ceremonies were performed.

In comparing the ruins of Chichén with those of Copan and Quirigua, one notices at Chichén the greater size of the buildings, the free use of columns, the absence of sculptured stelæ, the scarcity of hieroglyphic inscriptions, and, most important of all, the fact that every man is shown as a warrior with

atlatl and spears in his hand; the only representation of a woman depicts her watching a battle from the roof of a house in a beleagured town, whereas at Copan and Quirigua there are no representations of weapons of war, and at Copan a woman was deemed worthy of a fine statue in the Great Plaza. I am inclined to think that it must have been the stress of war that drove the peaceable inhabitants of the fertile valleys of the Motagua and Usumacinta and the highlands of the Vera Paz to the loss hospitable plains of Yucatan, where, having learnt the arts of war, they re-established their power. Then again they passed through evil times: intertribal feuds and Nahua invasions may account for the destruction or abandonment of their great cities, such as Chichén Itzá and Mayapan, and in these latter contests they may have learned the use of the bows and arrows with which they fought the Spaniards.

This view is somewhat strengthened by the result of a very careful examination of the caves and 'cenotes of Yucatan made in 1895 by Mr. Henry Mercer, who records the conclusions he has come to in the following words:—Firstly, that no earlier inhabitant had preceded the builders of the ruined cities of Yucatan; secondly, that the people revealed in the caves had reached the country in geologically recent times; thirdly, that these people, substantially the ancestors of the present Maya Indians, had not developed their culture in Yucatan, but had brought it with them from somewhere else.

It was not until the 2nd July that we left the ruins and set out for Merida, and even then we were reluctant to depart and leave unexamined so much that is of interest; but our store of food had run out and we found the greatest difficulty in getting

supplies in the neighbourhood. Moreover, the heavy showers and great heat made such work as we were engaged on almost impossible. During the month of May we had both suffered from malarious fever. Fortunately our attacks occurred on alternate days, so that we could each tend the other in turn, and we both made complete recovery. The difficulty in engaging labourers was never smoothed away, and was the occasion of much vexatious waste of time. During the time we were ill with fever we were altogether bereft of labourers for about a fortnight, and found the greatest difficulty in supplying ourselves with firewood and water. After this matters mended, and we were better served; but towards the end of our stay, I had again to depend solely on the villagers from Pisté, some of whom would condescend to do a short day's work for me at about three times the current rate of wages.

To Sweet's arrival at the most critical moment the success of my expedition was very largely due. He was keenly interested in his work, and, in spite of attacks of fever, we spent a very happy three months together. Sweet undertook all the photography, and was also of the greatest assistance in the survey; and with his ever-ready help and cheery companionship, I could make light of the numberless petty annoyances and delays which were so hard to bear when I was alone; moreover he supplied that invaluable stimulus to work which came from discussing with an intelligent companion the various problems which presented themselves for solution as the clearings widened out and the remains of the ancient city were disclosed to our view.

CHAPTER XXII. LAGUNA AND THE RIO USUMACINTA.

In December 1890 I crossed the Gulf of Mexico from Vera Cruz to Progreso in one of the Ward Line Steamers, and was then transhipped into a coasting-boat belonging to the same company, which was to take me to Frontera, at the mouth of the Tabasco river, whence I was to find my way up the stream, and inland to the ruins of Palenque. Never did I put to sea with such misgivings: it was still the season of the 'Norte,' the fierce cold wind which sweeps down the Mississippi Valley and across Texas from the frozen lands of the North, and the vessel in which I was embarked was a stern-wheel river-steamer, with seven feet of hull under the water and twenty feet of cabins and flying-deck built up above it! The captain owned to me that he had been very nearly blown over on his last voyage down the coast, and that should he be caught in really bad weather there would be no alternative but to turn the ship's head to the shore and pile her up on the beach. Of course this stern-wheeled barge was provided with all the orthodox certificates from a wise and protecting government, drawn up in beautiful official language, to the effect that she was a vessel properly fitted and equipped to trade between certain ports of the United States and the ports in the Mexican Gulf. When on the third or fourth day out we crossed the bar and anchored off the little town of Laguna, on the Isla del Carmen at the eastern edge of the Tabasco delta, the sky was so threatening, that I deemed discretion the better part of valour, and took all my traps ashore, determining to start up the river

from Laguna instead of Frontera; and the captain endorsed my view of the weather by not venturing out of port for three days.

It was now the middle of the wood-shipping season, and Laguna was at its busiest: about twenty-three sailing-vessels—English, American, Swedish, and German—were lying off the town, and one might say roughly that twenty-three mates were feeling very hot and using strong language as the mahogany logs, which had been floated down the great river, were detached from the rafts alongside and hauled on board, and that twenty-three sea-captains were on shore on the spree.

My lodging was in the main street, at the house of a Frenchman, who also kept a sort of restaurant. Here I managed to secure a room to myself; but as one door opened on to the pavement of the street and another into the sitting-room, which also opened on to the street, and everyone seemed to walk in and out just as they felt inclined, I did not secure much privacy.

It did not take long to become acquainted with the principal inhabitants of Laguna. Two or three sea-captains dropped in to dinner, drinks were freely offered, and I was soon introduced to all their friends. Three-card Monte began, as far as I could make out, about nine o'clock in the morning, but I am not sure that in some cases it was not a continuation of the game of the night before. Play went on anywhere, sometimes with a table and chairs set out in the street; but the principal resort for gambling was the club. I never found out that any election, or even introduction, was needed to enjoy the privileges of that institution. Anyone seemed to wander in, order drinks, and play. There were three or four professional gamblers, who had come for the

season, always ready to keep a bank as long as anyone had a dollar to stake; and I must add that the game seemed to be perfectly fairly conducted, with, of course, certain chances in favour of the bank, and that I never heard the slightest dispute which was not settled at once and quite amicably. Now and then a rough-looking man wandered in in his dirty shirtsleeves, and one wondered how he had become possessed of the big pile of dollars which he placed in front of him and doubled or lost with equal good temper and nonchalance. The money was probably the result of nine months' hard work on the river or at the wood-cuttings.

On three nights in the week the military band played in the plaza, which was well kept and planted with shade-trees. The band-stand was in the centre, and on the broad walk round it circled the beauty and fashion of the town, gorgeously arrayed. Two or three girls usually walked together arm in arm in front of the father and mother, or more often the mother and some lady friend, for the men, more especially the young ones, don't care much for the promenade, but prefer to sit round on the stone benches, smoke cigarettes, and criticize. It appeared to be quite contrary to custom or to fashion to talk to one's young lady friends in public—that was to be done by stealth later on at the iron 'reja.'

On the other nights of the week society was not so formal, and the Spanish lady had to give way to the apparently more attractive Mestiza. One can generally tell from the flare of torches where a fandango is going on, usually in one of the large wooden houses just off the main streets. Here the Mestiza comes out in all her glory; and very pretty she looks in her spotlessly white petticoats and low

cut camiseta, each garment very prettily embroidered along its edges. Alas! these white and coloured borderings are now machine-made and bought in the stores, and are no longer the work of her own delicate little hands. Her smooth black hair is combed straight off her forehead, and fixed at the back with a large gilded comb; she wears large gold earrings, and if she is prosperous two or three coloured bead and golden necklaces round her neck.

It always seems to me as if all the sorrows of the race had sunk into the Mestizas' eyes; even when the face breaks into a smile it is a sad smile, and in the dance it is the men who grow active and excited and echo the passionate dancing of Spain, whilst the women are graceful but slow in movement, with downcast eyes, as though to mark the Indian side of the mixed blood. Of course there is a drinking-shop attached to the dancing-room; but it is pleasanter outside in the roadway, where the old women have lit their lamps under the trees and set up their supper-tables and stalls of food and fruit, and where the light does not fall too strongly one hears a low murmur of voices and occasionally a little cry of protest. And now my friends the sea-captains are in their element: they keep the barmen hard at work opening numberless bottles of lager beer; they lead out the prettiest of the dancing girls, not always to the satisfaction of their duskier partners, and feast them to their heart's content on all the dainties which the old women's stalls afford, whilst they keep up a conversation in the most wonderful jargon of broken Spanish and scraps of every other language under the sun.

For the first three days Laguna was amusing enough; it was not a highly moral atmosphere, but the surroundings were quaint and often picturesque, and

my sailor friends were full of good stories and strange experiences: but before the end of a week I fled at the sight of a sea-captain, so as to avoid the inevitable drink which followed a meeting, and in spite of the heat of the afternoon sun I explored every road leading out of the town. Uninteresting enough they all proved to be, for after passing the suburbs which began with the white-washed adobe walls and thatched roofs of the houses of the Mestizos and ended in wattle huts bowered in shady trees and cocoanut-palms, I was always brought to a stop by the surrounding swamp. At last I settled down to a daily walk to the lighthouse on the point and a long stretch over the sandy beach, which was pleasant enough when the breeze was blowing and kept off the swarms of sand-flies; but sometimes the wind dropped, and then I wished myself back even in the stifling sun-baked streets of Laguna.

During the last part of the two weary weeks I had to pass in the town, much of my time was passed in the Custom House. Orders had come from Mexico to pass all my stores free of duty; but this did not prevent the Custom House officers opening every case and weighing the contents, and making out endless lists with gross and net weight and much unnecessary detail, to ensure, as I was told, the unquestioned passage of the goods into the State of Chiapas, but to a great extent, as I believe, to satisfy their own curiosity as to what the cases contained, and to give employment to the superabundant clerks who draw salaries and tumble over one another in all Spanish-American ports. At last my preparations were finished: Mr. Price, who had volunteered to come out from England and assist as a surveyor, had joined me, and I had secured a small steamer belonging to Messrs. Jamet y Sastre, a firm engaged in the

mahogany trade, to take us up the river. In Laguna I had made the acquaintance of M. Chambon, a young Frenchman who was travelling through Mexico, and asked him to accompany us, as he wished to make his way to Tenosique, in hope of being able to pay a visit to the ruins of Menché.

As usual there was some delay in starting, and after we had crossed the big lagoon and passed through the narrow passage into the smaller one our troubles began. We had missed the top of the tide and found it running out strongly against us and we stuck on one sand-bank after another; at last we reached the mouth of the river, where huge alligators lay sunning themselves on the sand-spits, and here, where the stream was at its narrowest, we stuck fast; there was no chance of getting off until the tide rose on the morrow. Then began a night of torment. The mosquitos were monsters and they came off to us in myriads: we had no nets to protect us against their attacks, and the only thing to be done was to roll one's self up in a rug in a beddingless bunk and swelter until morning. Soon after sunrise we were afloat again and entered the broad stream of the river. The land was still low and there was not a hill in sight, but gradually the banks grew firmer and lost their swampy appearance. A short distance above the village of Palisada, which we passed before dark, the river divides in its downward course, the other half of the stream flowing to the west and reaching the sea below Frontera. Above this fork the Usumacinta is a fine broad stream, sometimes more than half a mile from bank to bank. On the third day we reached the little village of Monte Cristo, which was to be our starting-place for the ruins of Palenque; and here we parted from M. Chambon, who continued his voyage in the steamer to Tenosique.

At Monte Cristo we fell into good hands: Don Carlos Majares, who kept the largest of the two or three village stores, gave us a big shed in which to house our baggage and hang up our hammocks, and he and Don Adolfo Erezuma did their best to help us on our way, but the difficulties could not be overcome in a hurry. The ruins of Palenque lay buried in the forest forty miles away, and as pack-mules and carriers were equally scarce nearly a fortnight passed before we had succeeded in despatching the most necessary part of our stores to Santo Domingo, a village six miles distant from the ruins. Although we had much repacking and arrangement to occupy us, the time hung heavy on our hands. The climate was an improvement on that of Laguna, and although we could see the storm-clouds still hanging over the country inland, the rain seldom reached us. The river which rolled by us in magnificent volume of water stretching from bank to bank began to show slight signs of decrease, and the muddy channels joining it to the numerous lagoons which received its overflow in the rainy season were already drying up. The pleasantest time of the day was the hour before sunset, when I used often to stroll quietly along the bank of the river or edge of the lagoons and swamps, wherever the country was sufficiently open, carrying with me a strong field-glass, through which to watch the innumerable aquatic birds feeding or at play. White and slate-coloured egrets would perch in the branches of the trees near to the shore of the lagoon, beautiful little parras ran with their long toes spread out over the water-weeds, raising their wings as they moved just enough to show the brilliant yellow colour underneath against their cinnamon-coloured bodies; a few ducks, teal, and divers would be swimming in the open water, and great crane-like

birds stalked about looking for their food; but most beautiful of all were the great flocks of rose-coloured "chocoloteras," spoon-billed wading-birds as big as cranes and more brilliant than flamingos. They were not very quick to take fright, and now and then I could so manage that a flight would pass in long line close overhead, and I could watch them until they faded from sight in a sunset sky.

One day we hired a dug-out canoe from a man who was also the possessor of a casting-net, and set off at dawn on a fishing-expedition. After paddling and poling up the river for about a league, we came to the mouth of a small stream with muddy banks half hidden in giant reeds. A few hundred yards from its mouth the stream broadened out into a pool about eighty yards long and forty wide, and here I counted sixteen alligators, some sunning themselves on the bank, others basking on the top of the water. Our canoe-man kept straight on, as though alligators were of no account, and the great brutes on the bank slid down into the water as we approached, while those floating gradually and silently sank out of sight —first the bulk of their bodies disappeared, leaving above the water what looked like a long row of black spines along the back and tail, then one by one these went down, the last to go under being the nostrils and wicked-looking eyes. We were not so kind to the alligators as they had been to us, for as soon as we were across the pool we landed in the mud and forced our way through the reeds to get a shot at them as they rose; but after a few shots we gave it up, as those that were hit made a great splash and sank, and the water was so muddy there was little chance of recovering their bodies. Paddling up the stream a short distance, we came to a fence of logs and reeds, through which we made a hole large

enough to push the canoe and then closed it up after us. These fences are intended to keep the fish which swarm up into the lagoons during the rains from passing back into the river. By the end of March both stream and lagoon would be dried up into a number of rapidly dwindling pools and the fish would be easily captured. Above the fish-fence the stream was only a few yards wide, and here our canoe-man began to cast his net: in a quarter of an hour we had about two hundred mountain mullet, weighing from a quarter to half a pound each, in the bottom of the canoe, well covered over with reeds to keep them from the sun. As we knew that the lagoon could not be far off, we made an effort to reach it, but the waterway was so narrow that it was not easy to work the canoe; the banks were high and muddy and overshadowed by trees, and at almost every turn in the stream a startled alligator rolled off the bank with a splash and dived down under us. At last the water shallowed and we stuck fast; so leaving the canoe we scrambled through a narrow belt of scrub and gained a view over the broad sheet of shallow water, whence great flocks of wading-birds disturbed at their morning meal rose with discordant cries into the air.

At last the day came that we were able to make a start for Palenque: Don Adolfo had lent us horses for ourselves, and four or five wretched pack-mules carried part of the baggage. Luckily for us some half-dozen Indians from the Sierra had just paid their yearly visit to Monte Cristo to sell their cargos of wild cacao and buy machetes and a supply of salt, and, as their return loads were not heavy, after much persuasion they agreed to carry some of our things, and it was to their care that we had to confide our surveying instruments and such articles as could not

safely be put on a mule's back. As the Indians had all been hopelessly drunk the night before, we did not get off very early, although our efforts to start commenced before dawn, and what with bad mules, sulky muleteers, and half-drunken Indians we had a hard day of it. The track was in a bad state from recent rains, and a long detour had to be made in order to avoid some deep mud-holes. Towards evening we found ourselves in a large savannah far away from Palenque, with the pack-mules dead-beat and the Indians stopping and putting down their loads whenever one's back was turned. At last we could get them no further, and had to leave them to camp by themselves while we pushed on in the moonlight, trusting that the path we were following would lead us to the cattle-rancho which we believed to be on ahead of us. Cattle-tracks ran in all directions, and we never knew if we were on the right one. At about nine o'clock we saw the glimmer of a light and riding towards it were civilly received at the rancho by some wild-looking vaqueros, half negro, half Indian, who quieted their evil-looking dogs, and carried their hospitality so far as to offer us a share of the big log bench covered with bullock-skins, on which some of their companions were lying asleep; luckily we had our hammocks with us, and, after making some soup, turned in utterly tired out.

About noon the next day we arrived at Santo Domingo, and with some difficulty managed to hire an empty hut—it was hardly worthy of the name of house—as a lodging-place. This sleepy little village of twenty houses lies so far out of the world that it was strange to find the two inhabitants of most importance to be one the son of a Frenchman, the other the son of a Swiss doctor, and the latest addition to the society to be a Corsican, who,

although his poverty forced him to live the life of the poorer class of native, had not yet lost all his energy and was wildly excited about some minerals which had been found in the sierra, on which he was building golden hopes of a return in riches to his own country. Alas! the specimens with which he loaded my boxes on my return home proved to be nothing but valueless pyrites, and I fear the sandalled feet of the cheery fellow still tread the grass-grown street of Santo Domingo.

As the track to the ruins was, we were told, entirely overgrown, our first business was to get it cleared, so I made play with a letter from the Minister of Foreign Affairs in Mexico, which recommended me to the attention of all local officers; by this means I managed to secure a few labourers until arrangements could be made with the higher authorities for a regular supply of workmen. My letter to the Governor had already been despatched from Laguna, but as he lived at San Cristóbal, a week's journey distant, it would be still a few days before his answer would reach me; meanwhile a messenger was despatched to the Jefe Político, who lived nearer and could be reached in three days.

As soon as this matter had been seen to, we made a prospecting journey to the ruins on foot; the distance was about six miles, and for the first half of it the track ran through woodland which from time to time had been cleared for plantations, then we crossed two small savannahs and entered on a heavier forest which envelops the ruins and clothes the sierras above. Half a mile before reaching the ruins we began the ascent of the broken limestone cliffs and slopes which form the scarp of the plateau, or rather the series of terraces, on which the buildings are

raised, and we were soon scrambling over mounds of broken masonry, so thickly covered with vegetation that it was with difficulty they could be distinguished from the rocky ground around us. As yet, no buildings had been in sight, when all of a sudden we were brought to a standstill by the lofty basement of the so-called Palace. We spent the rest of the day in cutting our way through the tangled growth which surrounds the buildings, and returned to the village in the evening well satisfied with what we had seen. Before the end of a week the track to the ruins had been cleared, and Mr. Price had engineered log-bridges over the muddy-banked streamlets which crossed the path, so that pack-mules could pass in safety, and we prepared to leave the village and take up our quarters in the Palace. Just as we were ready to make a start M. Chambon turned up from Menché, and we all set off for the ruins together. The road was in fairly good order, although somewhat muddy. On arriving at the ruins we tied up our mules at the foot of the Palace mound and set to work to carry up the baggage and arrange our beds and camp-furniture in the house on the west side of the Eastern Court, which was chosen as the driest place to be found.

The mozos had already done something towards clearing the house of rubbish and cutting away with their knives the rank vegetation immediately around it. When I used the word ‘driest’ it was only as a term of comparison, for the house was anything but dry. The great forest around us hung heavy with wet, the roof above us was dripping water like a slow and heavy rainfall, and the walls were glistening and running with moisture, so that it took us some time to select places for our beds, where the drip was lightest, and then to protect them with waterproof

coverings. An hour before sunset the mozos set out on their return to the village, taking the mules with them, and we three were left to make the best shift we could in our damp abode.

Day by day, as the vegetation was cleared away and the sunlight let in on it, our house became drier and some of the discomfort disappeared; then there came the repetition of the old old trouble, which has haunted me since my expeditions began—a message was sent from the village that no mozos could come to work for some days on account of a fiesta. There was no help for it, so I determined to use the time in a journey to Monte Cristo, to arrange for the transport of the rest of my baggage which was still stored there, and I started off with M. Chambon, who was continuing his travels through Mexico. We slept the first night at Santo Domingo, where we engaged a muleteer and some pack-mules, and set out the next morning very lightly loaded and hoped to arrive early at Monte Cristo; but before many hours were passed we had completely lost patience with the continual stoppages and delays on the part of the surliest and most ill-mannered arriero it has ever been my fate to encounter, and a friend whom he had picked up on the way. At last we could stand them no longer and rode on by ourselves, preferring our somewhat doubtful chance of finding the shorter road to Monte Cristo, along which we intended to travel; however, it turned out all right, and a little after dark we rode into the village, where Don Carlos gave us a most kindly welcome and offered us the use of our old quarters.

In front of Don Carlos's house an awning had been stretched across the grass-grown street, and a wooden floor laid down to form a ball-room for the

villagers, for the morrow was Shrove Tuesday, and we learnt that in Monte Cristo the Carnival is a matter of no small importance. All was quiet when we arrived, but we were told that dancing had been kept up the night before from dusk to dawn, and we had hardly finished our supper when the company began to flock in to resume the revels. The wooden steps of the house formed seats on one side of the floor, chairs and benches were set round on the others, and every seat was soon occupied, whilst a happy crowd—smoking, chatting, and laughing—filled up the street. Then the band of six musicians, three of them performers on the most strident of brass instruments, struck up a Zapateado, and dancing began. Zapateado followed Zapateado with scarcely an attempt at any other dance, and I seem in writing of it to hear the monotonous rhythmic clatter of the dancers' feet still in my ears. How can a Zapateado be described? It is something like a prolonged Scotch reel with all the flings left out, but, indeed, any part of a Scotch reel is too cheerful to compare it with. However, if the dancing was dull the scene in itself was bright enough, for all were dressed in their best, and the women had decked themselves freely with streamers of bright-coloured ribbons; but, alas! they had spoilt costumes which were otherwise picturesque by the addition of hats covered with tawdry artificial flowers imported from abroad, and disfigured the one beauty which a half-caste woman can always boast—her abundant and glossy hair.

The "Capitana," a handsome woman who had been elected to lead the revels, soon spied us out and came with her attendants to ask for a contribution to the expenses. By eleven o'clock both Chambon and I had seen enough of the dancing, and our forty-mile

ride, made doubly tedious by our futile efforts to drive the pack-mules, and our squabbles with the arriero, had so tired us out that not even the brazen strains of the band or the constant patter of the dancers' feet twenty yards from our door could keep us from a sound night's sleep.

I woke up at dawn just as the ball was breaking up, and turned over in my hammock for another nap, confident that no business arrangements would be attended to on that day. Indeed all day long the streets were deserted and the village hushed in a more than Sabbath calm. For two nights the dance had been kept up all night through, and one more night would finish it. It is the one great excitement of the year, and I was told that the women would pledge their labour as servants for months ahead in order to raise a few dollars with which to buy ribbons and artificial flowers—so as to enjoy three days of butterfly-life, to be inevitably followed by month after month of the monotonous labour of grinding corn and toasting tortillas, until the three happy days came round again. Towards evening the village began to wake up again, but the weather was threatening and a shower delayed the arrival of the company until about eight o'clock; then the same monotonous dance and the same terribly strident music began again. Escape was impossible, for there was absolutely nowhere to go to, so we strolled about, smoked cigarettes, and chatted with our acquaintances on the steps of Don Carlos's house until midnight, when we turned into our hammocks; but the braying of the brass, the ceaseless repetition of the same tunes over and over again, and the interminable patter of heel and toe on the hollow board floor made sleep impossible. A little after four o'clock I fell into a doze only to be aroused again by

the arriero hammering at the door and asking for the loads for his mules. He was as impudent and surly as ever, and had evidently joined in the festivities as far as the drink was concerned; but I gave him his cargoes and told him to load up and go on ahead, as I had still some matters to arrange before I could start for the ruins. The dance was still going on although the dawn was breaking and the music of the band was getting woefully unsteady.

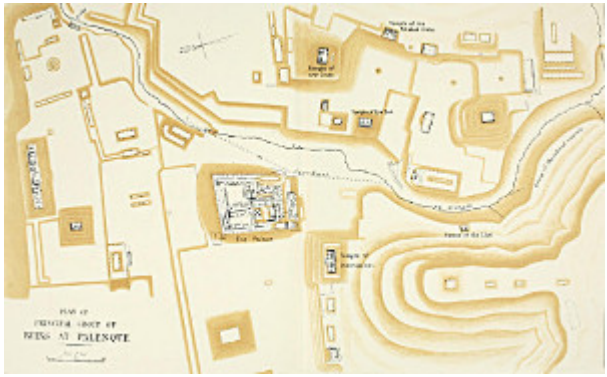
Chambon and I turned out of our hammocks about six o'clock, and were only half-dressed when the music ceased, and there came a thundering knock at the door. As soon as I opened it three or four of the dancers pushed their way in, and their spokesman told me, in a most polite and measured tone, that they had been appointed as a deputation to wait on me and inform me that a resolution had been unanimously carried to the effect that the Carnival could not be finished until Don Alfredo had danced a Zapateado.

Meanwhile laughing faces were thrust through the crack of the door, which almost before we knew it was pushed open and the dancers and their friends flocked in and ranged themselves round the walls of our great barn-like chamber. The band took up its position at the far end and with much gravity and a low bow the spokesman led out the "Capitana" in front of me where I was standing with a sponge in one hand and a towel in the other; another damsel was led up to Chambon, who had his night garments hanging over his arm; the band struck up and we had to dance our first Zapateado amidst a chorus of hand-clapping and 'bravos.' It was all as orderly and good-tempered a frolic as possible, and when the dance was over we were overwhelmed with kindly

and pretty speeches; then the whole company formed up in couples, with the band leading, and marched round the village, each man leaving his partner at her own door.

An hour or so later I strolled up the village street, and much to my disgust found the loaded pack-mules wandering about in different directions, and the arriero, who should have been well on his way to Palenque, quietly sitting on a doorstep smoking a cigarette. In spite of his grumbles and growls I soon had his mules together again and hustled him off; but just as he was passing the Comandante's house, at the edge of the village, he fired a parting speech over his shoulder at me, the exact words of which I did not catch, but it was certainly not complimentary. However, I took no notice of it and was congratulating myself that the mules were well under weigh, and that I should see nothing of them or the surly muleteer until I should overtake them in the evening; but I reckoned without the Comandante, who had overheard the speech from his house, and before I could understand what was up, had darted out, caught the arriero by his collar, pulled him off his mule, and called to two of his men to carry him off to prison. As soon as the torrent of words with which he overwhelmed his prisoner was at an end, he turned to me and offered a thousand apologies for the insult I had received from a savage, a bushman, who did not know how to treat a gentleman, or how to conduct himself with decency when he left his native wilds and entered into a civilized town, but the lesson must be learnt and an example should be made of him. Of course I expressed my profound thanks and then dashed off to catch one of the pack-mules who was attempting to scrape off his pack against the overhanging bough of a tree, whilst the

Comandante, having vindicated the civilization of Monte Cristo, returned to his hammock to finish his broken sleep. All hope of making a start for Palenque was at an end, so I collected the straying mules together and drove them back along the silent street. Luckily Don Adolfo, the only man in the village who had not been to the Carnival ball, was up and about, and he kindly helped me to unload the mules, and then asked me to stay and share his breakfast. In the afternoon the villagers began to wake up again, and there was a preliminary interchange of courteous messages between myself and the Comandante; later on I ventured to call on him, and after many polite speeches, in which we deplored the wanton ways of ignorant and savage men who were not "gente de razon," at last in deference to my urgent request (which I was assured showed the goodness of my heart even when dealing with an unworthy subject), and in order that I should personally suffer no inconvenience, the Comandante said that he would on this one occasion overlook the arriero's offence and order his immediate release. As soon as the fellow was free I made him load up his mules and bundled him out of the village, as I knew that there was a wayside rancho a few miles distant which he could reach before nightfall.



PLAN OF PRINCIPAL GROUP OF RUINS AT PALENQUE.

I accepted Don Adolfo's hospitality for the night, and was ready to set off early the next morning on a good horse he had lent me; but Don Carlos and Don Adolfo had put their heads together and agreed that it was out of the question that I should ride the forty miles to Santo Domingo alone, saying that I was sure to lose my way amongst the numerous cattle-tracks; they had been so uniformly kind and courteous to me, that, although I was fairly certain I could find the path, I felt obliged to give way to their wishes, and endure a further delay whilst a guide was being found for me. At last all was arranged and by eight o'clock we set off, and as we journeyed over the first few miles of the track, where the roots of the trees were thick and progress necessarily slow, I chatted with my guide and heard all the stories of the Carnival; then, as the track became clearer, I pushed my horse to a gentle canter and shouted to the guide to keep up with me. Time after time I had to wait for him, and each time he seemed to lag further and further behind, so about midday I left him and pushed on to the only place in the track where water

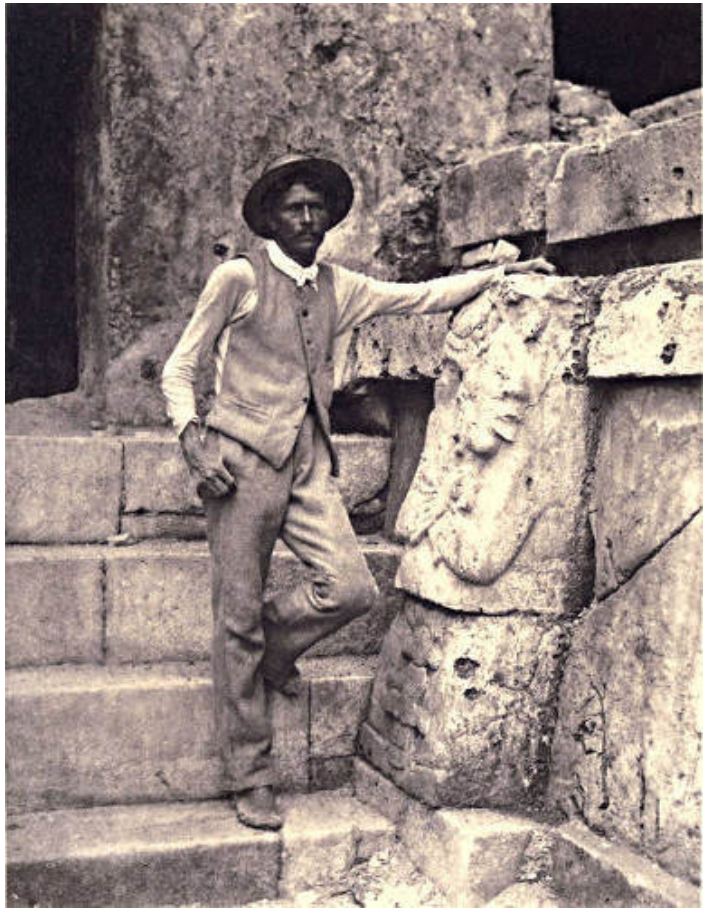
was to be found and there stopped to eat my breakfast. I rested nearly an hour and still no guide made his appearance; at last, fearing he had met with some accident, I rode back along the track for about two miles, when I found him seated on the ground in the middle of the track and his mule quietly grazing close by. Nothing seemed to be the matter with him, and when I asked him why he did not come on to the water, he replied that he needed his breakfast, and, as far as I could find out, had made it solely off a large bottle of aguardiente, which was now quite empty.

With some difficulty I got him on his mule again, whilst he kept muttering "Galope, galope! con los Ingleses es siempre así, galope, galope!" and for the remaining twenty miles, with the aid of a long stick, I kept his mule in front of me at a 'galope,' or rather at a sort of shuffling canter which was all she was equal to. The guide swayed fearfully in his saddle, and at times I thought that he must come off, but somehow or other he always managed to save himself just in the nick of time; by degrees he got better, and, much to my astonishment, when he dismounted at Santo Domingo he was as sober as a judge. There we parted on the best of terms, and as I learnt that the arriero had also arrived safely with the pack-mules, I mounted my horse again and rode on to join Mr. Price at the ruins.

CHAPTER XXIII. PALENQUE.

On the 20th February, Gorgonio, José Domingo, and

Caralampio Lopez arrived at Palenque, having ridden overland from Guatemala, and we at once set to work making paper moulds of the inscriptions; by the end of three weeks a large number of moulds had been dried and stored in one of the temples, and others in process of making were still adhering to the sculptured slabs, when, late one evening, a heavy rain-storm unexpectedly burst upon us. It was impossible in the dark to reach the temple where the moulds were stored, as the whole of the intervening space was covered with felled trees, and even in the daytime it was a severe gymnastic exercise to get from one building to another. When daylight came and we were able to reach the temple, we found that the waterproof sheets with which the moulds were covered had not sufficed to keep out the driving rain, and that half of the moulds had been reduced to a pulpy mass, and those in process of making had been almost washed away. The rain continued to fall all day long, the rooms where we were living were partly flooded, the walls were running with water, and the drip came through the roof in all directions. It was not until the next day that the remnant of the moulds could be carried out to dry in the returning sunshine, and then we made certain that the greater part of the work would have to be done over again.



GORGONIO LOPEZ, PALENQUE, 1891.

I will not weary my readers with any further account of the troubles in engaging labourers, it was the old story of effusive offers of help and broken promises over and over again; at one time, for a few days, we actually had as many as fifty men at work, and during the next week we were left without a single one. For many days our only connection with the village was kept up by the two small boys who

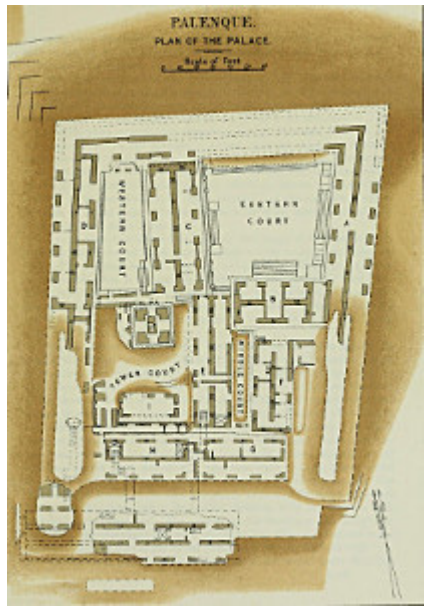
brought over the supply of tortillas for which a contract had been made. These plucky little fellows walked the twelve miles through the forest alone, although they were so small that on arriving at the ruins they had to help one another up and down the rather steep steps which led in and out of the Courts. Perhaps the chocolate and sweet biscuits with which they were rewarded had something to do with the persistence with which they stuck to their task.

The forest which surrounds the ruins is as heavy as any I have seen in Central America, and we were not able to clear away the undergrowth and fell the timber over more than three quarters of the area included in the plan, but this was sufficient to bring to light all the principal buildings. A fortnight of sunshine is needed to dry up the leaves after the trees are felled, and it is of course of the greatest importance to burn off the whole clearing at the same time, as the dried leaves easily catch fire and the great heat ensures the destruction of all the twigs and smaller branches; but unluckily we were denied a continuous fortnight of dry weather, and each succeeding rain-storm beat the dried leaves off of the branches and reduced the amount of easily inflammable material. It was not until the 15th April that we were able to run fire through the clearing, and as the result was not very satisfactory, a good deal of our time was afterwards taken up in heaping together the unburnt branches and starting secondary fires. The trunks and larger limbs were of course left unconsumed, although some of the drier logs would go on smouldering for many days.

In the following short account of the principal buildings I shall keep to the old but somewhat misleading names by which they are known to the

villagers of Santo Domingo. There is no evidence that the so-called Palace, of which a separate plan is given on the following page, was used as the dwelling of a great chief, and I am inclined to look on it as a collection of buildings raised at different periods of time and devoted to religious purposes. All trace of a stairway has disappeared from the outer slopes of the foundation mound, which are covered with stones and rubble fallen from the buildings above. In structure the separate houses which form the palace group do not differ materially from those found at Chichén and Copan; they usually consist of two narrow chambers side by side, roofed with high-pitched stone vaults. The outer piers of house A are decorated with human figures moulded in a hard stucco and surrounded with an ornamental border. The western piers of houses C and D are decorated in the same manner, and there are many other traces of similar ornament on other buildings, usually too much destroyed for the design to be made out. In some instances these decorations have been preserved in a very curious way: the water continually dripping on them from above has passed through the dense mass of decaying vegetation which covers the roofs of the buildings, and become charged with carbonic acid in the process; it has then filtered through the slabs of which the roof and cornice are built, dissolving some of the limestone on its way, and re-depositing it in a stalactitic formation on the face of the piers. Mr. Price and I worked for some weeks at clearing the carvings of this incrustation, which varied from a hardly perceptible film to five or even six inches in thickness. The thinner parts were the more difficult to deal with, as they were exceedingly hard; where the thickness exceeded two inches a few taps with a hammer

would sometimes bring away pieces two or three inches square, and we were fortunate in some instances in finding the colours on the surface of the stucco ornament underneath still fresh and bright. An example of this colouring is given on the outside cover of this volume.



PALENQUE. PLAN OF THE PALACE.

The Eastern court, after being cleared of vegetation, was found to be so choked up with debris from the half-ruined buildings which surrounded it, that it was necessary to dig it out in some places to the depth of four feet, a task which we found to be very laborious. Some idea of the appearance of the court when the digging was finished can be formed from the photograph on the following page, which was taken from the front of House C looking south-east on the last day of our stay in the ruins, and shows some of the men setting out with their loads. The

house on the north side of the court was completely ruined and much of the masonry had fallen over the northern slope of the foundation mound—a destruction which was very likely due to an earthquake, as a distinct rift can be traced right across the northern end of the mound. By standing on the broken masonry, a fine view is gained over the forest-covered plain which stretches northward to the Gulf of Mexico.



PALENQUE, THE EASTERN COURT.

The house marked C is the best-preserved building in the Palace group, and it was in its eastern corridor that Mr. Price and I took up our abode, the western corridor serving as kitchen and store-room. The terrace on the western side of the house marked D was our favourite resort of an evening, as here we caught the breath of the night wind and escaped to some extent from the attacks of the myriads of mosquitos which rose to plague us as soon as the sun

had set. On a moonlight night the view from this terrace of the Temple of Inscriptions with its background of giant forest was exquisite beyond description. The Tower, which is shown in the view of the western court, is a most curious and interesting building. It rises in three stories above a solid foundation, around which are clustered a number of small and now half-ruined chambers. The outer wall is pierced on all four sides by large openings, and encloses a central rectangular shaft of masonry which contains the stairway giving access to the different floors. Between the first and second floors is an intermediate story containing three minute chambers and a narrow passage connecting them without any exterior openings. The top story is half destroyed, and the whole structure was in great danger of being overthrown in a heavy gale from the weight of the huge trees which were growing out of it. At considerable risk of accident my men succeeded in felling all but one of these trees, and I hope that the safety of the tower is now secured for some years to come. It was perilous work, as the foothold was uncertain, and there was great danger of the trees tearing away the loose masonry in their fall. One tree alone was left standing, as its fall must inevitably have damaged the roof of a neighbouring building, so a ring of bark was stripped from its trunk, in the hope that it will cause it to die slowly and fall piecemeal.

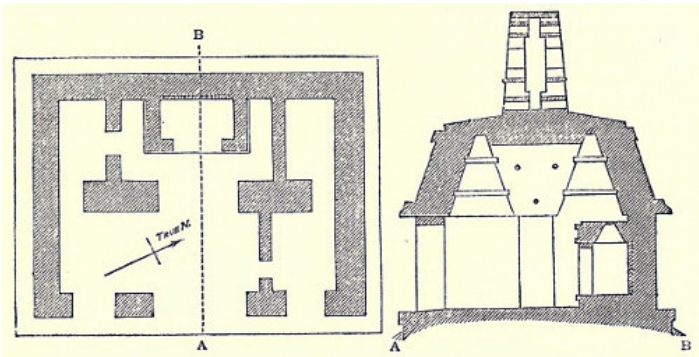


PALENQUE, THE WESTERN COURT & TOWER.

The other buildings of the Palace group do not here need separate notice; some of them contain fragments of stucco or painted decoration, and one (E) has a finely-carved stone medallion let into the wall. The most curious feature of the southern half of the group is the existence of three subterranean passages leading to three long parallel chambers, of which two are enclosed within the foundation mound, and the third has doorways opening onto the southern slope. The entrances to two of the passages had been purposely blocked up, and part of one of the chambers had been walled up and filled in, probably with a view to affording a secure foundation for a building to be erected above it. Both passages and chambers are shown in the plan in dotted lines, but a part of the walls of the latter (surrounded by a wavy line) are shown in tint.

To the south-west of the Palace stands the Temple of

Inscriptions, built on a foundation mound which backs against a spur running out from the hills. The building itself is a fine one, and has been elaborately decorated on the outside, but it is especially interesting on account of the three stone panels which it contains, two of them let into the middle wall and one into the back wall of the building, on which is carved an inscription numbering six hundred glyphs, the longest continuous inscription of all those as yet discovered in Central America.



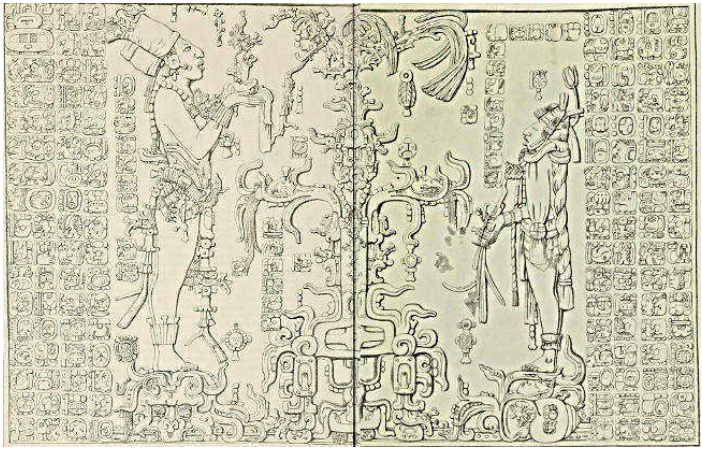
To the east of the Temple of Inscriptions, on the other side of the stream, three other temples will be found, marked on the plan as the Temple of the Cross, the Foliated Cross, and the Sun. They are all three built on much the same plan. The Temple of the Sun, which is the best preserved of the three, is shown on the Plate facing page 228, and a ground-plan and section is also given. The whole of the frieze and the piers of the façade were elaborately decorated with figures and inscriptions in stucco, of which little now remains. On the roof, above the wall which divides the two corridors, stood an ornamental superstructure (a feature common to all buildings of this class) formed of a light framework of stone, which served to support a number of figures

and other ornaments moulded in stucco. The inner corridor of each of the three temples is divided by transverse walls into three small chambers; and in the middle chamber, built out from the back wall, stands the Sanctuary. The exterior of the Sanctuary was richly decorated with stone carving and stucco moulding, but the only ornament in the interior now to be seen is the carved stone panel let into the back wall.



PALENQUE, THE TEMPLE OF THE SUN & THE PALACE.

On the next page is given a drawing of the carved panel from the Temple of the Foliated Cross, in which the beautifully-cut glyphs of the inscription are only lightly sketched, so as to give prominence to the central design.



The carved panels in the sanctuaries of the Temples of the Foliated Cross and of the Sun are still intact in their original positions; but the panel from the Temple of the Cross, which has perhaps received more attention from archæologists than any other monument of Maya art, has not been so fortunate. The slab to the left of the spectator only is in its place; the centre slab, after being torn from its position, broken in two, and exposed to the weather for many years, has at last found a resting-place in the Museum of the City of Mexico, and the right-hand slab, after being broken into fragments, has been carefully and skilfully pieced together, and is now exhibited in the National Museum at Washington.

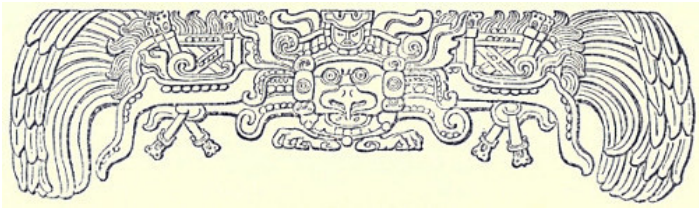
The “aqueduct” marked in the plan is a stone-roofed tunnel intended to receive the water of the small stream which runs through the ruins. Unfortunately the upper end of the tunnel has become partly blocked up, and some of the water finds its way over the surface and floods the plaza after heavy rain.

As is the case with Copan and Quirigua, so with

Palenque—we have absolutely no knowledge of it as a living town. The existence of the ruins first became known to the Spaniards in the middle of the eighteenth century, and before the end of the century they had more than once been examined and reported on at the instance of the Colonial Government. That such examinations were somewhat ruthlessly conducted, and may account for some of the damage from which the buildings have suffered, is shown by the following quotation from the report signed by Antonio del Rio:—"I was convinced that in order to form some idea of the first inhabitants and of the antiquities connected with their establishments it would be indispensably necessary to make several excavations.... By dint of perseverance I effected all that was necessary to be done, so that ultimately there remained neither a window nor a doorway blocked up, a partition that was not thrown down, nor a room, corridor, court, tower, nor subterranean passage in which excavations were not effected from two to three yards in depth."

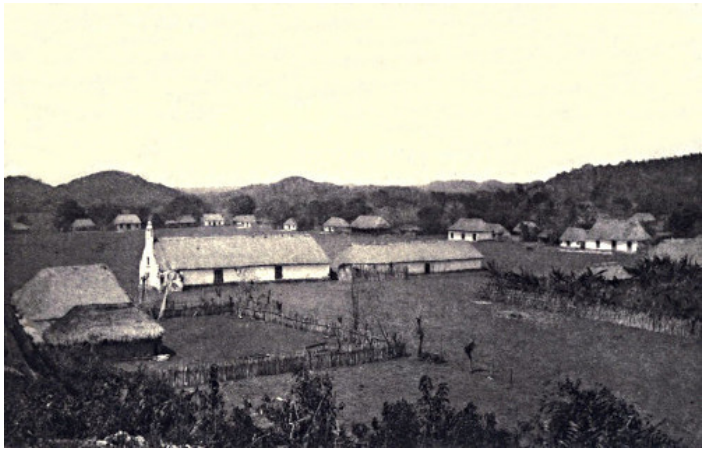
During the present century travellers have frequently visited the ruins, and many descriptions of them have been published; amongst the best known are those of Dupaix, Waldeck, Stephens and Catherwood, Morelet and Charnay. There still remains, however, much work to be done—none of the foundation mounds have yet been cleared of the debris which covers their slopes, and very little attention has been paid to the tombs and burial mounds, which I know to be very numerous and believe will prove most interesting. Now that the heavier timber around the principal buildings has been felled, the work of examination will be somewhat easier, but the very rapid growth of vegetation will always entail on the

visitor a considerable amount of clearing before he can obtain a satisfactory view of the buildings. Mr. W. H. Holmes, of the Field Columbian Museum of Chicago, who visited the ruins in 1895, only four years after I had cleared them, wrote to me to say that he had to use a plan and compass and cut his way from building to building, as a dense-growth of over twenty feet in height completely obscured them from view.



THE SERPENT BIRD, TIKÁL.

CHAPTER XXIV. TIKÁL AND MENCHÉ.



SACLUC (LA LIBERTAD).

Before closing the notes on my wanderings a few words must be said about two other ruins, Tikál, which I visited both in 1881 and 1882, and Menché, which I visited in the latter year only. On both occasions I started from Coban and travelled northward for ten days through the then almost uninhabited forest to the Paso Real on the Rio de la Pasion, where the Government maintains a ferryman and serviceable canoes for the passage of the river, and thence to Sacluc, a village standing in the savannah land about fifteen miles north of the river.

Sacluc, which had risen into notice as the headquarters of the mahogany-cutters, had only recently become the residence of the Jefe Político of the department of Peten, and had been euphemistically renamed “La Libertad,” possibly to hide the fact that a condition not very far removed from slavery was more noticeable there than in other parts of the Republic. All labourers’ wages are paid in advance, and as the wood-cutters are a thriftless folk, any cash they may receive is soon dissipated,

and then before returning to work an additional charge must be incurred for tools and the necessary stores for sustenance during many months' absence in the forest. In theory the long score against a workman in the patron's books will be wiped out by the product of a season's work, but in practice it only increases until the debt has reached the limit of value which is placed on the man's services. Then, if the patron is in luck, he may find a purchaser for his workman; that is to say, he may sell the debt to another employer and the man's services pass with it, for the law compels him to serve his new master until the debt is paid. Of course it is vastly immoral, but the system does not seem to work so badly after all; for if the patrones are too harsh, which did not seem to be the case, the frontiers of Mexico and British Honduras are not far distant, and a man could always take a few days' walk through the forest and leave his debts behind him. Such migrations are not at all uncommon, and many Mexicans from Tabasco, Campeche, and Yucatan, as well as some runaway negroes from the British West India regiments, were numbered in the population of Sacluc. As a last resort, if a man has made Mexico, Guatemala, and Belize all too hot to hold him there is yet left a refuge in the no-man's land held by the Santa Cruz Indians, and he may add to the mongrel and turbulent population of Xaxe Venic or some of the other frontier villages. Naturally such a mixed community as that which inhabits the isolated province of Peten would be likely sometimes to give trouble to the officials sent to rule over it; the last Jefe Político had paid with his life for some effort to enforce the orders of the Central Government, and a custom-house officer had been murdered shortly before my arrival and his murderer was confined in

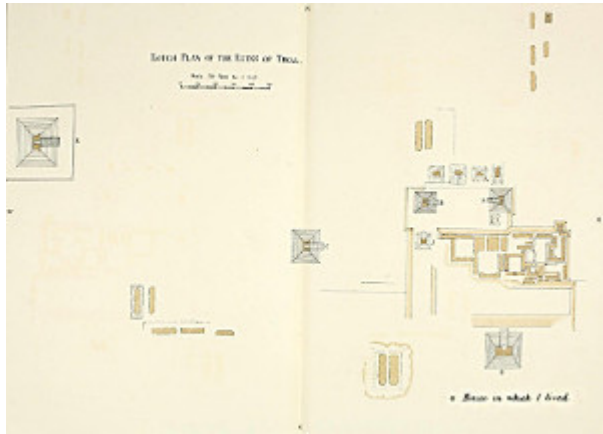
the room next to that in which I slept. But although the Peteneros resent too much interference on the part of Government officials, and have a natural prejudice against a high customs tariff, I don't think they can be called a disorderly people, and I have never heard of them causing any annoyance to travellers.

A woodcutter is indeed to be pitied who has to seek recreation in such a hot, dull, dreary place as Sacluc; the condition of the water alone would justify his preference for aguardiente, as all the drinking water for the supply of the village is brought from small shallow unfenced ponds in the savannah, in which the women wash clothes, and where horses, cattle, and pigs wallow in the mud.

Soon after my arrival I received a visit from an elderly Englishman, who told me he resided there "because the climate suited him"; he was an eccentric waif who had at one time served with the British army, in what capacity I could not discover, although he gave me many unavailing hints that it was as a commissioned officer, and he was fond of talking about his "little place" in Somersetshire. The poor fellow earned an occasional dollar by taking very imperfect photographs, and his visit to me was in order to learn my intentions, as he had heard that I also was a "retratista" and was sadly afraid I would cut him out of his business. He told me that some years earlier when on the road to Peten he had lost his way in the forest and nearly died of starvation, and that some Peteneros who found him had carried him to their village and treated him with the greatest kindness during the illness which followed from the hardships he had gone through, although they knew he had nothing with which to repay them. His long

residence in Peten had not enabled him to speak Spanish; but this did not interfere with his efforts to increase his income by giving lessons in English, and I greatly regret that I have lost the copy of a notice to that effect which he had written in Spanish and nailed on his door; it was certainly a masterpiece of "Spanish as she is spoke." As he put it to me "Spanish is a very curious language; you may know lots of words, but somehow or other they won't go together." I met the poor old fellow another year when he was in broken health and almost penniless, and was able to help him on his way to Guatemala, where the foreign residents got him into the Infirmary and he passed quietly away.

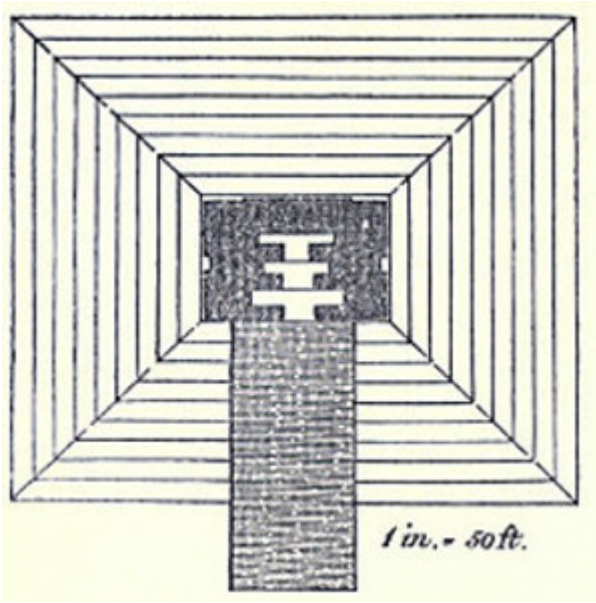
A day's ride to the north-east of Sacluc brings one to the lake of Peten-Itzá with its island town of Flores, known in ancient times as Tayasal[7]. Flores is a small island not more than a third of a mile across, lying close to the southern shore of the lake, and its population (probably including some hamlets on the neighbouring mainland) is said to number twelve hundred. After a day passed in hunting up a crew, we spent the night, when the wind usually falls light, in paddling up to El Remate, at the other end of the lake, whence a walk of about thirty miles through the forest brought us to the ruins of Tikál.



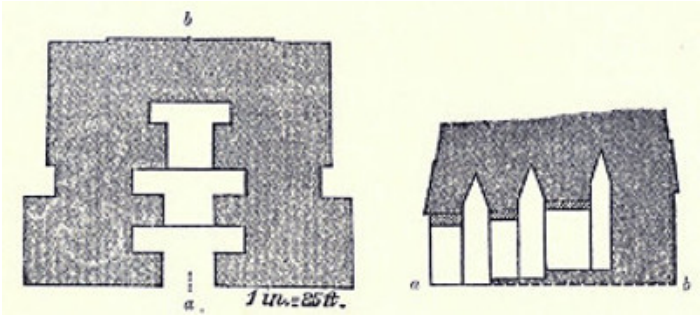
Rough Plan of the Ruins of Tikál.

The whole site of the ancient town was so completely covered over with forest that it took us some time to discover the position of the more important buildings and clear away the trees which covered them. As neither of my visits was over a week in length the plan of the ruins here given is very imperfect; it merely indicates the shape and size of the principal group of stone buildings near the house in which I took up my quarters, and gives approximately the position of the five great pyramidal temple mounds. The lintels over the doorways of the houses had apparently in all cases been formed of three or four squared beams of hard wood, probably the wood of the chico-sapote tree, and some of them are still in a perfectly sound condition; the greater number, however, have slowly rotted away, and buildings can be seen in every state of decay, many of them reduced to shapeless masses of hewn stone. The lofty foundation mounds of the principal temples are terraced and faced with well-wrought stone arranged in panels, somewhat in the same manner as that shown in the photograph of the Castillo at Chichén

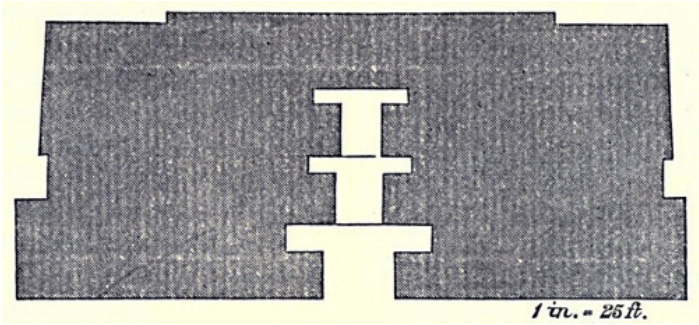
Itzá. At Tikál, however, access to the temple is gained by a single stairway only, instead of by four stairways, one on each side of the mound, as is usual at Chichén. The accompanying woodcuts show the plan of the mound and Temple marked A (of which a photograph is also given on the following page), and a ground-plan and section of Temple B. The Temple marked C on the plan is somewhat larger than A or B, the base of the oblong foundation mound measuring 184 feet by 168 feet, and the stairway is 38 feet across. The height of the front slope (measured on the slope, which is very steep) is 112 feet. The base of the temple itself measures roughly 41 feet by 28 feet, and the height must be over 50 feet, but I was not able to measure it. The temples are all built on much the same plan; the thickness of the walls is very remarkable, as is also the method by which the length of axis is secured, by cutting across the parallel stone vaulted chambers and connecting them by square-headed doorways with wooden lintels, the thickness of the walls through which the doorways pass far exceeding the width of the vaulted chambers. Of the Temple D I took no measurements and have merely guessed at the size. Temple E is by far the largest, the foundation mound measuring 280 feet in length and 160 feet on the slope from the door of the temple to the ground, and the extraordinary thickness of the walls is shown in the woodcut. One might almost suppose that the people had originally worshipped in caves in the natural hills, and had in process of time learnt how to build their caves in artificial hills, but, unfortunately for any such theory, no Maya cave temples are known to have existed.



Plan of the Foundation-mound and Temple A



Plan and section of Temple B



Plan of Temple D

There is, however, no other group of temples in Central America which offers such support to the theory that the position and form of the buildings is due to astronomical considerations. The lofty elevation so as to secure a clear view, the evident desire to gain length of axis, and the fact that all the temples may be roughly said to face the cardinal points favour this theory, and it may be that we can trace the sequence of the structures by their position. For instance, the temples B, C, and E, facing the rising sun, would follow one another in order of time, C would have been built when the erection of A had impeded the fairway of B, and E would have been built when the fairway of C had been obscured by the large group of buildings to the east of it; and it will be observed that this sequence follows the order of size, C being larger than B, and E than C. The fairway of A, which faces the setting sun, is still unimpeded, and there is therefore no larger temple facing in that direction. Unfortunately at the time of my visits to these ruins I did not pay any particular attention to the orientation of the temples beyond what was sufficient to fix their positions in the general sketch-plan; indeed I was not provided with instruments for an accurate survey, even if I had had

time to use them. I now especially regret that I did not more carefully examine the smaller mounds in the neighbourhood of A and B, for I am inclined to think that we might trace an earlier northern temple in the mound marked *f*, which, when its fairway was interrupted, was superseded by the large temple D, whose foundation mound stands on higher ground and still commands a clear view.



TIKÁL, VIEW FROM THE GREAT TEMPLE.

Tikál is not rich in carved stone monuments; there are a few small monoliths and circular altars in the plaza between temples A and B ornamented with figures and inscriptions, but they are all much weather-worn. The most important inscriptions, and they are amongst the best examples of Maya art, were found in the carved wooden beams which spanned the doorways of the temples. Many of these beams have decayed, but the best specimens were removed at the instance of Dr. Bernoulli, who visited the ruins about 1877, and are now preserved in the museum at Basle, and two small fragments are to be seen in the British Museum.



A TEMPLE AT TIKÁL. (Marked A on the Plan.)

The greatest discomfort in exploring the ruins of Tikál is due to the want of a good supply of water. Every drop of water we used had to be brought the distance of a mile and a half from an overgrown muddy lagoon not more than 150 yards wide, and it was so thick and dirty that I never dared to drink it until it had first been boiled and then filtered, and my Indian workmen who refused to take any

precautions suffered considerably from fever. The Indians seldom drink cold water when they are at work, and during a journey they will make frequent halts by the roadside to light fires and prepare warm drinks; but notwithstanding this prevalent habit, when we were encamped in places where the water was indubitably bad, I was never able to persuade my mozos that any advantage would be gained by actually bringing the water to the boil and then allowing it to stand and cool.



CAMP IN THE FOREST, TIKÁL.

A few years before the date of my visit to Tikál a party of Indians from the borders of the lake had attempted to form a settlement in the neighbourhood of the ruins. The solitary survivor of this party accompanied me as a guide, all the others having died of fever. This man told me that the small lagoon was the only source of water-supply, and that the nearest running stream was a branch of the Rio Hondo some miles distant. The ancient inhabitants

probably stored water in “chaltunes,” the underground cisterns which are found in such large numbers amongst the ruins in the north of Yucatan; I discovered two such cisterns beneath the floor of the plaza, but had not time to clear them out.

I must now ask my reader to return with me, by way of Flores and Sacluc, to the Paso Real, on the Rio de la Pasion, whence, on the 14th of March, 1882, I started, in company with Mr. Schulte, the manager of Jamet & Sastre’s mahogany cuttings, on an expedition down the river, my object being to explore the ruins of Menché. I had heard of these ruins from Professor Rockstroh, of the Instituto Nacional in Guatemala, who had visited them the year before, and was, I believe, the first European to write any description of them. At the Paso Real I was fortunately able to secure as guide one of the canoemen who had accompanied Prof. Rockstroh on his expedition.

Three days later I parted company with Mr. Schulte near the mouth of the Rio Lacandon, where he was about to establish a new “Monteria.” The banks of the river here begin to lose their monotonous appearance, and for the first time since leaving the Paso Real we caught sight of some hills in the distance. At midday we entered a gorge about a league in length, where the river flows between high rocky and wooded banks and in some places the stream narrowed to a width of forty feet. The current was not very swift, but the surface of the water moved in great oily-looking swirls which seemed to indicate a great depth. Below the narrows the river widens very considerably and the current becomes much more rapid, and great care had to be taken in guiding the canoes so as to avoid the numerous rocks

and snags. This day we travelled about thirty miles below the Boca del Cerro and then camped for the night. Several times during the day we had seen traces of the Lacandones, “Jicaques” or “Caribes” as my men called them (the untamed Indians who inhabit the forests between Chiapas and Peten), and while stopping to examine one of their canoes, which we found hauled up on a sand-spit, its owner, accompanied by a woman and child, came out of the forest to meet us. The man was an uncouth-looking fellow, with sturdy limbs, long black hair, very strongly-marked features, prominent nose, thick lips, and complexion about the tint of that of my half-caste canoemen. He was clothed in a single long brown garment of roughly-woven material, which looked like sacking, splashed over with blots of some red dye. The man showed no signs of fear and readily entered into conversation with one of my men who spoke the Maya language; but the woman kept at a distance, and I could not get a good look at her.



LACANDONES.

Later in the day we landed to visit a "caribal," or Indian village, which my guide told me stood somewhere near the river-bank. There was no trace of it, however, near the river, so we followed a narrow path into the forest marked by two jaguars' skulls stuck on poles, and here and there by some sticks laid across the track, over which the Indians had probably dragged their small canoes. About two miles distant from the river we found three houses standing in a clearing near the bank of a small stream. A woman came out to meet us, and received us most courteously, asking us to rest in a small shed. Her dress was a single sack-like garment similar to that worn by the man whom we had met earlier in the day; her straight black hair fell loose over her shoulders, and round her neck hung strings of brown seeds interspersed with beads and silver coins, dollars and half-dollars, which she said were obtained in Tabasco. Two other women came out of their houses to greet us, and they told us that all the men were away hunting for wild cacao in the forest and would not return for five days. The walls of the houses were very low, but in other respects they resembled the ordinary ranchos of the civilized Indians. I asked if I might look into one of them, but my mozos strongly advised me not to make the attempt, as the numerous howling dogs shut up inside were very savage, and were sure to attack me.

The clearing round the houses was planted with maize, plantains, chillies, tobacco, gourds, tomatoes, calabash-trees, and cotton. We exchanged a little salt for some plantains, yams, and tomatoes without any haggling, and the women agreed to make me some totoposte, which I was to send for in a few days, and

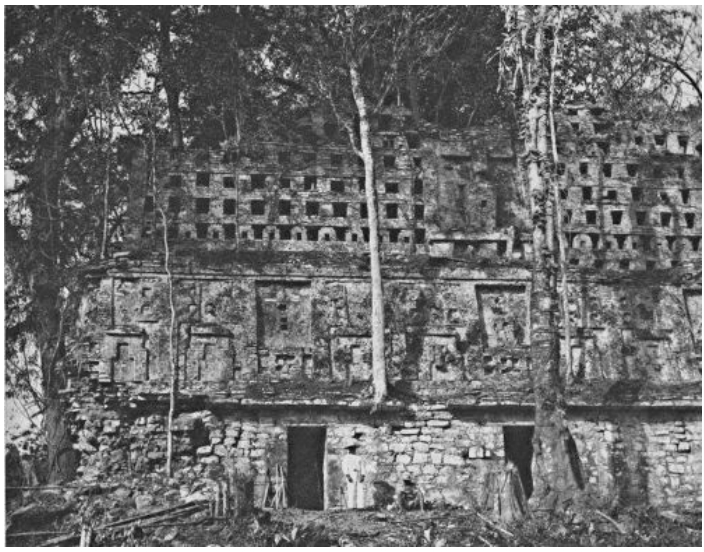
one of them, pointing to a silver dollar on her necklace, said that they wanted a coin like that in payment. I was surprised to find the women so pleasant-mannered and free from the dull shyness which characterizes the civilized Indians. On my return up the river some days later I again visited this "caribal," and was received with equal courtesy by the men, who had then returned from the forest, to whom I repeated my request to see the inside of one of their houses; however, a very rapid glance was sufficient to satisfy my curiosity, for as soon as I showed myself at the half-open door seven or eight dogs tied to the wall-posts nearly brought down the house in their efforts to get at me, and two of them were with difficulty prevented by the women from breaking the cords which held them. Some especial significance must attach to the wearing of the brown-seed necklaces, for no offers which I could make would induce either man or woman to part with one of them. I was much impressed by the striking likeness which the features of the elder man, who appeared to be the leader of the village, bore to those carved in stone at Palenque and Menché. The extremely sloping forehead was not quite so noticeable in the younger men, and it may be that the custom of binding back the forehead in infancy, which undoubtedly obtained amongst the ancients, is being now abandoned. These people still use bows and stone-tipped arrows, which they carry with them wrapped in a sheet of bark.



THE RIO USUMACINTA AT MENCHÉ.

To return to my journey to Menché. After visiting the "caribal" we continued our course down-stream and camped for the night on the right bank of the river; the next morning an hour's paddle with the very rapid current brought us in sight of a mound of stones piled up on the left bank of the river, which we had been told marked the site of the ruins. On the 18th March, the day of my arrival, the water in the river was so low that the mound stood high and dry; but from the colour and marks on the stones it appears as though the average height of the water were two or three feet from the top of the mound. We soon scrambled up the rough river-bank, and began to cut our way through the undergrowth in search of the ancient buildings, which we found to be raised on a succession of terraces to a height of over 250 feet, with slopes faced with well-laid masonry or formed into flights of steps. Those buildings marked in the plan with definite outlines

are still in a fair state of preservation, but where the outlines are left indefinite the houses have fallen and become mere heaps of broken masonry. The plan must not be regarded as more than a rough sketch, as I had no instrument with me for measuring vertical angles, and the distances were judged by pacing, and checked by the occasional use of a tape measure.



MENCHÉ, TEMPLE A.

The house or temple which I chose for a dwelling-place (marked A on the plan) is a long narrow structure, measuring on the outside 73 feet long by 17 feet broad. There are three doorways giving access to the single chamber, which is divided up into a number of recesses by interior buttress-walls. In the middle recess we found a cross-legged figure of heroic size, reminding me of the seated figure on the great Turtle of Quirigua; the head with its headdress of grotesque masks and feather-work was broken off and lying beside it. There appears to have

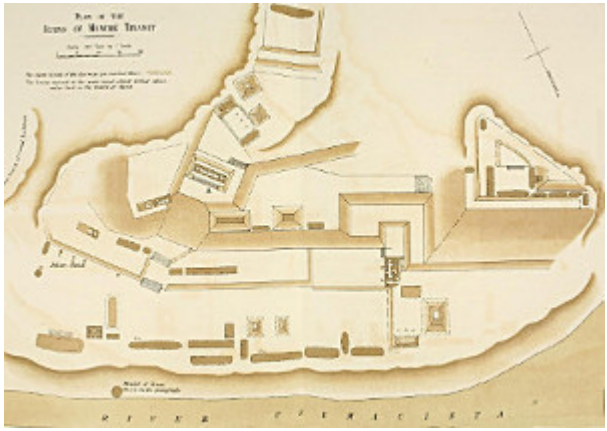
been some sort of canopy of ornamental plaster-work above the recess, which had fallen down and lay in a confused heap of dust and fragments around the figure. When I first entered the house there must have been over a hundred pieces of rough pottery, similar to those here figured, strewn on the floor and clustered around the stone figure. Many of these pots contained half-burnt copal, and from the positions in which we found them it is evident that they must have been placed in the house within recent years, probably by the Lacandones, who still, I am told, hold the place in reverence. In this house, and in most of the other buildings still standing, stone lintels span the doorways, many of them elaborately carved on the underside.



On the outside of the house the lower wall surface is flat, and it seems probable that it had formerly been decorated in colours, as slight traces of colour can still be found where the plaster coating has adhered to the underside of the lower cornice. Between the lower and upper cornice is a broad frieze marked with three large and eight small niches; these niches have held seated figures and other ornaments modelled in stucco, of which only a few small

fragments now remain in position. Above the upper cornice rises a light stone superstructure similar to that on the Temple of the Cross at Palenque, but here also all the ornament which it was built to support has fallen away. However, in the middle is a large niche in which a sort of skeleton of a seated figure of giant proportions can still be traced. The bulk of the body, the bench on which it was seated, and one long stone representing a leg can be made out in the photograph, and a close inspection enables one to trace the outline of the head and to note the prominent stone which marks the position of the nose; but the stucco which clothed this skeleton and made it a work of art has been pierced with the thousand roots of the clinging vegetation and washed away with hundreds of years of tropical rains.

Many if not all of the other houses and temples had been similarly decorated, and, although the area covered by them is not of great extent, there can be little doubt the groups of highly ornamented and richly-coloured buildings raised above the rushing waters of the river on gleaming slopes of stucco-covered masonry must have formed a picture both beautiful and strikingly impressive.



Plan of the Ruins of Menché Tinamit.

When we had been some days at work at the ruins I sent three of my men in a canoe up-stream to the "caribal" to get the supply of totoposte I had ordered from the Lacandones; they returned the next day without much food, but handed me something they had brought with them, carefully wrapped up in paper, which, much to my surprise, proved to be a card from M. Desiré Charnay, the head of a Franco-American scientific exploring expedition, who for two years had been at work examining the antiquities of Mexico and Yucatan. M. Charnay had come up the Usumacinta from Frontera to the head of the navigable water at Tenosique, and had thence ridden through the forest to a spot on the river-bank within a short distance of the "caribal" described earlier in this chapter, known to the canoemen as the Paso de Yalchilan. Having no canoes in which to convey his party down the river he had been brought to a halt and was making arrangements for the passage of himself and his secretary in two small cayucos borrowed from the Lacandones, when to his great surprise my canoe appeared on the scene. The

next day I sent my canoes back for him, and leaving his men camped at Yalchilan, he arrived with his secretary at the ruins and occupied a house which had been cleared for him, and he very kindly added his ample supply of provisions to my somewhat meagre stock.

M. Charnay has published an interesting account of his journeys in a book entitled 'Les Anciennes Villes du Nouveau Monde,' and the collection of casts made from moulds taken during his two years' wanderings, which is now exhibited at the Trocadero Museum in Paris, and in other museums in Europe and America, has formed the basis of much modern research.

In one of the half-ruined buildings we found a beautifully carved lintel, fallen from its place and resting face downwards against the side of the doorway. This excellent example of Maya art I determined to carry home with me, and at once set my men to work to reduce the weight of the stone, which must have exceeded half a ton, by cutting off the undecorated ends of the slab and reducing it in thickness. This was no easy matter, as we had not come provided with tools for such work, but shift was made with the end of a broken pickaxe and some carpenter's chisels; by keeping mozos at work at it, three at a time, in continual rotation, at the end of a week the weight of the stone had been reduced by half, and we were able to move it to the river-bank and pack it in the bottom of our largest canoe.

On the 26th March we struck our camp and all started up the river together, and on the following day, at the Paso de Yalchilan, I lost the pleasant companionship of M. Charnay, who here rejoined his men and returned direct to Tenosique. It was very hard work hauling the canoe, heavily laden with the

stone lintel, against the swift current of the river, and we were four days getting as far as the mouth of the Rio Lacandon. On the 30th March we reached the first inhabited rancho at Santa Rosa, and next day I met Mr. Schulte at the mouth of the Rio Salinas and accepted a passage in his canoe to the Paso Real, leaving the mozos and my heavily-laden canoes to follow more slowly. On the way up-stream we landed on the left bank of the river not far from the mouth of the Rio Salinas, and passed a few hours in examining the ruins of a town of considerable extent. I could find no stone houses standing, but there were several fragments of sculptured stones bearing hieroglyphic inscriptions lying amongst the numerous foundation mounds, and the whole site would probably repay careful exploration.

From the Paso Real the stone lintel was carried by Indians to Sacluc, where I purchased a saw from one of the wood-cutters and was again able slightly to reduce the weight of the stone. From Sacluc it was hauled across the savannah to the neighbourhood of Flores on a solid-wheeled ox-cart, the solitary wheeled vehicle then existing in the province of Peten; then it was again slung on a strong pole and carried by sixteen Indian mozos through the forest to the British frontier village of El Cayo, where it was again packed in the bottom of a canoe and sent down the river to Belize; it now rests at Bloomsbury in the British Museum.



MENCHÉ, FRAGMENT OF A STONE LINTEL.

At the time of my visit Menché was supposed to lie within the Guatemalan frontier, and a few years later leave was obtained for me from the Government of that Republic to remove some other carved lintels from the ruins. Gorgonio Lopez and his brothers were sent down the river for this purpose, and after making careful moulds of all the carved lintels still in position in the houses, they removed some others from those houses which had fallen into ruin; these they packed in the canoes and hauled up the Usumacinta to the mouth of the Rio Salinas. That stream was then ascended to a point above the Nueve Cerros where canoe-navigation ceases, and the stones were thence carried overland to Coban, where they were carefully packed and sent in carts to the port of Panzos, on the Rio Polichic, for shipment to England. I presented these sculptures also to the National Collection, and they are now to be seen at the British Museum. By a recent treaty Menché and the valley of the Lacandon River have passed into the

possession of Mexico. Since the date of my visit a party of mahogany-cutters formed a camp on the site of the ruins, but at the end of two years the "monteria" was abandoned, and the ancient city is again left in the solitude of the forest.



FLORES.

CHAPTER XXV. CONCLUSIONS (?).

In the foregoing pages a slight sketch has been given of the principal groups of ruins visited during my eight winters' wanderings in Central America, and I will now attempt to formulate some results of my observations. The first point that is noticeable is the marked limitation in range of the hieroglyphic

inscriptions. I have never heard of any Maya inscriptions being found beyond the area marked on the map which accompanies this volume. The geographical features of this area have probably had a very considerable influence on the evolution of Maya civilization, for when once the Mayas were settled on the high land to the north of the great volcanic range which follows the trend of the Pacific coast, and on the peninsula of which this range forms the base, they were in an exceptionally strong position for defence and may have existed there for many centuries, slowly developing their civilization undisturbed by later migrating tribes from Mexico, which would have passed along the natural roadway of the Pacific slope. This idea gains strength when we note that although tribes of distinctly Nahuatl origin are found in Nicaragua, only one small tribe of that stock, the Pipiles, is to be found within the area marked as that of Maya inscriptions, and this tribe is located on the Pacific seaboard.

It seems probable that the Mayas and the so-called Toltecs were originally the same people, but whether the migration from Mexico to the valleys of the Usumacinta and Motagua was merely owing to the natural expansion of the race or to expulsion by force there is no evidence to show. It is usually assumed as most probable that the general movement of population has been from Mexico to Central America, but all we know is that there are to be seen in Mexico remains, such as those at Teotihuacan, which bear more resemblance to the work of the Mayas than to that of the Nahuas, and these ruins are believed to be pre-Aztec. However, the true Maya area is apparently to be distinguished by the existence in it of Maya hieroglyphic inscriptions, and, judging from the evidence at present available,

it seems clear that a distinctly progressive movement, marked by the development of this hieroglyphic writing, must have taken place after the Mayas had left Mexico and settled to the east of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec. With what other races the Mayas may have been brought in contact in their eastern home we do not know, but they were almost certainly people of lower culture, and it seems probable that we may possess specimens of their art in the rude images found near Guatemala city, which are shown on page 15, and that we may judge of their appearance from the figures of the prisoners carved on the Stela at Ixkun[8]. After a period of time, which must have included the age during which the race reached the highest point of its development, the centres of population were abandoned and the Mayas disappeared from the southern part of the Maya area, their places being taken by the races whom the Spaniards found in occupation of the country—races speaking languages derived from the Maya stock, and possibly allied to the Mayas by blood, but certainly behind them in the arts of peace and probably inferior in social organization. When and why the valleys of the Usumacinta and Motagua were deserted by the Mayas there is no evidence to show; there are not even vague traditions such as those which have been handed down regarding the disappearance of the Toltecs from Mexico. Famine and pestilence, civil strife, and the attacks of warlike neighbours have all been suggested as the causes, and all may have contributed to the result, but there is some reason for giving preference to the last. Mr. Mercer and other investigators have shown us that in Northern Yucatan the Mayas were the original inhabitants of the country and that they brought their culture with

them from elsewhere, and there seems little reason to doubt that they brought it from the southern part of the Maya area. Judging from the sculptures and mural paintings at Chichén Itzá, this change from south to north seems also to have been a change from a peaceful to a warlike condition, and it therefore appears likely that the peopling of Yucatan may have taken place after the Mayas had been driven by force from their peaceful southern homes, and had been compelled to cultivate the arts of war in order to save their race from extinction.



THE ISLAND OF FLORES.

It is true that we do not possess, and are never likely to find, an account of the abandonment or destruction of Palenque or Tikál, and it cannot be actually proved that at the time of the Spanish conquest they had ceased to exist as living cities, but it can be shown that the absence of all mention of these cities in the Spanish accounts of the invasion and conquest of the country is incompatible with the theory of their existence at that time.

In Chapter XXI. we followed the earlier expeditions which coasted along the shores of Yucatan until finally, in April 1519, Hernando Cortés landed in Mexico on the site of the modern city of Vera Cruz. During the next few years the conquest of Mexico

absorbed the attention of the Spanish adventurers and the land of the Mayas was neglected, but on the 12th of October, 1524, Cortés left Mexico city behind him and started on his celebrated march to Honduras, a march which occupied him for nearly two years, and carried him through regions where some of the most magnificent of the Maya ruins are still to be found. Although we have an account of this expedition both from Cortés's own pen and from that of his stout-hearted follower Bernal Diaz, it is by no means an easy matter to trace the exact course of the march and to identify the places named. The task has, however, been made easier by the researches of my friend Dr. Sebastian Marimon, who, a few years before his death, discovered, in the Lonja at Seville, a map of the Province of Tabasco drawn in the year 1579 by Melchor de Santa Cruz, which contains some place-names which have disappeared in later maps.

The earlier part of Cortés's march from the city of Mexico to the town of Guacacualcos, on the northern side of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, does not now concern us. On leaving Guacacualcos he entered the province of Tabasco and crossed the low-lying and swampy plain seamed by the intricate network of streams which flow towards the Gulf of Mexico. There was no road to follow, for the good reason that no roads were in existence, the natives passing from place to place in their canoes; yet across this difficult country Cortés, with wonderful persistency, led his troops, wading through swamps, cutting his way through dense jungle, and building innumerable bridges across the streams, bridges of such dimensions that Bernal Diaz wrote, in his old age, "people to this day speak of the bridges of Cortés as they speak of the Pillars of Hercules." We can trace

the line of march with something like accuracy through the province of Copilco to Zaguatan, where the Rio Grijalva was crossed, and thence on to Chilapa and Tepititan on the Rio Tulija. From Tepititan to Ciguatecpan on the Usumacinta the actual route is obscure, as Cortés and his followers were for some days lost in the forest, but there can be little doubt that Ciguatecpan (a name which is not to be found on the maps) was a town on the banks of the Rio Usumacinta in the near neighbourhood of Tenosique. A line drawn from Tepititan to Tenosique is between fifty and sixty miles in length, and in passing from one place to the other, Cortés must have passed within twenty miles of Palenque, yet, although he and his men were half starved, and were eagerly seeking for any trace of a track which would lead them to an Indian settlement, nothing was seen of Palenque and no track was crossed which might have led to it. Arrived at Ciguatecpan, Cortés asked the Indians to direct him to Acalá, which was probably the next place of importance marked on his map of the country drawn on a cloth, with which he had been furnished by the natives of Guacacualcos; and on this request a great discussion arose, some saying that his best way lay through the villages up the river, others saying that that route was by far the longest and passed through difficult and uninhabited country, and that the nearest way was to cross the River Usumacinta at Ciguatecpan and follow a small track to Acalá much used by pedlars. This last counsel was followed, and it was probably the better of the two. Had Cortés continued his journey up the course of the river he must have passed Piedras Negras and Menché, both the sites of important ruins, which could hardly have been living cities at that time without some report of their existence

having come to his ears or those of his numerous Indian followers. The position of the chief town of the Province of Acalá has never been determined, but it may with some confidence be placed on the upper waters of the Rio San Pedro. Cortés says that the whole province was thickly peopled and of considerable commercial importance; the historian Villagutierre tells us that a few years later the province was brought into subjection by an expedition from Merida under the leadership of Don Francisco Tamayo Pacheco, but that the Spaniards were soon driven out again by the Lacandones and other wild forest tribes. No account of Pacheco's expedition has come to light and Acalá is no more mentioned. From Acalá Cortés marched through a thinly peopled country to the Lake of Peten and visited the island of Tayasal, the modern Flores, which was then the chief town of the warlike Itzáes, where he was well received by the chief and people. In his letter to Philip II. of Spain, Cortés says: "At this village, or rather at the plantations that were close to the lake, I was obliged to leave one of my horses, owing to his having got a splinter in his foot. The chief promised to take care of the animal and cure him, but I do not know if he will succeed or what he will do with him."

From the Lake of Peten Cortés continued his march into what is now British Honduras, and after crossing the River Sarstoon, arrived at the mouth of the Rio Dulce, near where Livingston now stands. Before we follow him through this latter part of his arduous task, let us return to Tayasal and the Itzáes and see how far our knowledge of the people and country can be brought to bear on the question of the existence of Tikál as a living city. Fortunately we know something of the subsequent history of the

Itzáes, for Tayasal was visited by missionaries from Yucatan in 1618, 1619, and 1623, and in the year 1697 an expedition from Yucatan reached the lake, defeated the Itzáes, and captured Tayasal itself.

In 1618, when the Padres Bartolomé de Fuensalida and Juan de Orbita set out from Merida on their missionary expedition to Peten, the extreme Spanish outpost in Yucatan was at Tipu, on the upper waters of the Rio Hondo, near the present frontier of British Honduras, and within a few days' march of the Lake of Peten. On reaching Tayasal the missionaries were well received by the chief of the Itzáes, and on the day after their arrival they were conducted round the town. "The padres estimated the number of houses at about two hundred; these stood along the shore of the lagoon, at a little distance one from the other, and in each one of them dwelt parents and sons with their families. On the higher ground in the middle of the island stood the cués, or oratories, where they kept their idols. They (the padres) went to see them and found twelve or more temples equal in size and capacity to any of the churches in this province of Yucatan, and according to their account each one could hold more than a thousand persons. In the middle of one of these temples there was a great idol in the form of a horse, made of stone and cement (cal y canto). It was seated on the floor of the temple on its haunches with its hind legs bent under it, raising itself on its fore legs. It was worshipped as the God of Thunder and called Tzimin Chac, which means the horse of thunder or the thunderbolt. The reason why they possessed this idol was that when Don Fernando Cortés passed through this land on his way to Honduras, he left behind him a horse which could travel no further. As the horse died the Indians, terrified at the thought of not being able to give it up

alive, should Cortés by chance return that way and ask them for it, had a statue made of the horse and began to hold it in veneration, so that it might be clear (coligiessen) that they were not to blame for its death. Believing the horse to be an intelligent being (animal de razon), they gave it to eat chickens and other meat and offered it garlands of flowers as they were wont to do to their own chieftains. All these honours, for such they were in their sight, helped to bring about the death of the poor horse, for he died of hunger. It was given its name (the god of the thunderbolt) because they had seen some of the Spaniards discharging their arquebuses or guns when on horseback hunting the deer, and they believed that the horses were the cause of the noise, which appeared to them like thunder, and the flash from the muzzle of the gun and the smoke of the powder they mistook for lightning. Upon this the Devil took advantage of the blindness of their superstition so to increase the veneration in which the statue was held that, by the time the missionaries arrived, this idol had become the principal object of their adoration.

"As soon as the Padre Fray Juan de Orbita caught sight of the idol (says the Padre Fuensalida) it seemed as if the spirit of our Lord had descended on him, for, carried away by a fervid and courageous zeal for the glory of God, he took a great stone in his hand, climbed to the top of the statue of the horse and battered it to pieces, scattering the fragments on the ground"[9].

This act naturally roused the anger of the Indians, who, however, refrained from attacking the missionaries, but a few days later the padres, finding that their preaching was of no effect, left the island and returned to Tipu.

The following year the missionaries again visited Tayasal, but at the end of a few weeks they were driven out by the Indians, and returned to Tipu after suffering great hardship on the way.

In 1623 another attempt was made to Christianize the Itzáes. Padre Diego Delgado reached Tayasal from Tipu accompanied by a few Spanish soldiers and eighty Indians; the Spaniards were apparently received with courtesy, but as soon as they had been thrown off their guard the Itzáes turned on them and massacred the whole party.

Towards the end of the 16th century the Spaniards began to press upon the unconquered Indians from all sides. Expeditions from Chiapas and Guatemala met on the Rio Lacandon and founded the settlement of Dolores de los Lacandones, and exploring parties descended the river to its junction with the Pasion, and then ascended that stream for a considerable distance. With the exception of the small clusters of ranchos inhabited by the Lacandones, no Indian settlements were met with, but the discovery of the ruins of an ancient stone-built town of great size is incidentally mentioned in one of the reports.

About the same time missionary expeditions were pressed forward into the northern forests by way of Cajabon, but met with little success amongst the Choles, Mopanes, and other scattered tribes of forest Indians, and when at last a small advance-guard of Spanish soldiers under Captain Juan Dias de Velasco actually reached the shores of the Lake of Peten they were attacked and annihilated by the Itzáes.

Meanwhile the Governor of Yucatan had been clearing a road through the forest and was approaching Peten from the opposite direction. In

the autumn of 1695 the road was open to Chuntuchí, in lat. 17° 30´ N., and at the close of the year Padre Fray Antonio de Avendaño, accompanied by two Spanish monks and a few Indians, set out thence on an embassy to the chief of the Itzáes. After six days' rough march they reached the outlying villages of the Itzáes, whence they were conducted to Tayasal. The embassy was well received by the chief, but at the end of three or four days, as it was evident that mischief was brewing amongst the people, he advised the Spaniards to leave the island at once and return by way of Tipu, so as to avoid observation. With the help of some of his family the chief secretly conveyed the Spaniards to the mainland during the night, and entrusted them to the care of one of his dependents, who was to furnish them with guides. The guides proved faithless and soon deserted the unfortunate Spaniards, who, after wandering on for ten days in the direction of Tipu, gave up all hope of reaching that settlement and, turning to the westward, groped their way for twenty-five days through the uninhabited forest, when fortunately they struck the new road from Merida to Chuntuchí and were saved from starvation by a party of Indian cargadores who were carrying food to the road-makers.

By February 1697 the road had been carried to within two leagues of the lake, and Don Martin Ursua, the Governor of Yucatan, arrived to take command of the expedition in person. When the Lake was reached, boats were built and launched, and on the 13th March the Governor embarked in his galley to cross to the Island of Tayasal. As the galley approached the island, canoes manned by Indian warriors came out in swarms to attack it, and for a time it seemed to rain arrows, but Ursua would not

allow a shot to be fired in return, and ordered his interpreters to shout to the Indians that he came in peace. However, his words were of no avail, the patience of the Spanish soldiers was exhausted, and a shot fired by a wounded Spaniard was the signal for a general fusillade; then, as the galley touched the shore, the soldiers jumped overboard and stormed the town.

The effect of the firing from the guns was instantaneous and marvellous, the Itzáes, who had up to this time shown such a bold front, at once took to flight, jumping out of their canoes and swimming to the mainland, and the crowds of natives who lined the shores of the island and swarmed about the buildings followed the example set them, so that within a few minutes the Spaniards were in possession of a deserted town and the lake was black with Indian heads.

If we turn to such descriptions of the buildings of the Itzáes as have come down to us, we can see that a comparison of Tayasal with Tikál would be much the same as a comparison of Utatlan with Copan. There are the statements of eye-witnesses that the temples on the island were built with low stone walls into which posts were fixed to support a thatch roof, and, as I shall show later on, Cortés unconsciously confirms this statement when describing the town of Chacujál in Guatemala. There are no remains of pyramidal foundation-mounds now to be seen on the island such as support all the well-known Maya temples; and although the statement, attributed to the missionary fathers, that the temples would each have held a thousand persons was probably a gross exaggeration, it is hardly possible to imagine such a statement could have been made about any stone-

roofed building erected by American Indians. To me it appears probable that Tayasal was a stronghold of much the same character as Utatlan and Uspantan, and that it was in no way comparable to the great centres of Maya civilization; moreover, that it could never have become, as it undoubtedly had become, the most important town in that part of the country as long as Tikál was in existence.

The later history of the island is uneventful. Notwithstanding the efforts of the Spanish authorities the Itzáes could never be persuaded to return in any numbers to their old home, and they probably scattered in small settlements in the forest and on the borders of the numerous smaller lakes, where they must have rapidly diminished in numbers and importance, for little more is heard of them. Tayasal sank to the position of an insignificant village, and a few years after its conquest it passed from the rule of Yucatan to that of Guatemala.

It is only fair to assume that the missionaries who faced such great perils and suffered such hardships in their efforts to convert the Itzáes, the soldiers who led the expeditions from Yucatan and Guatemala, and the officials who subsequently took over the government of the country must all have been keenly alive to the necessity of collecting trustworthy information regarding the Itzáes and their neighbours. We know that the missionaries must have passed within twenty miles to the east of Tikál on their journeys between Tipu and Tayasal, that the Yucatan road on nearing the lake must have approached within the same distance to the south-west, and that Fray Antonio de Avendaño must have passed close by the site of the ruins when wandering through the forest from the neighbourhood of Tipu

to Chuntuchí, but not one word has reached us from Spanish sources about the existence of a large and important centre of population and culture where the ruins of Tikál now stand.

In the concluding chapters of Villagutierre's 'History,' which was published two years after the fall of Tayasal, a good deal of information is given about the Itzáes and the villages on the borders of the lake, but nothing whatever is said relating to Tikál or even to the existence of the ruins. It is, of course, possible that the existence of the ruins may have been known and passed over as not worthy of record, as the Spaniards were so frequently meeting with similar remains in Yucatan, but that the existence within a day's march of a living town or great religious centre could under the circumstances have been either overlooked or ignored is absolutely impossible.

To return to the march of Cortés from Tayasal to Honduras. It was not until he arrived at the mouth of the Rio Dulce that he got into touch with the Spaniards of whom he had come in search. The first of his countrymen whom he met with were forty men and twenty women belonging to the party under the command of Gil Gonzales de Avila. These unfortunate people were even in a more pitiable condition than his own half-starved followers. Expeditions had at once to be despatched into the surrounding country in search of food, but they proved singularly unsuccessful until Cortés himself took the matter in hand. In a "brigantine" and boats belonging to Gonzales's men he set out with a party of forty Spaniards and fifty Indians, ascended the Rio Dulce, and landed on the south side of the great lake, probably somewhere to the east of the site of Yzabal. Leaving his boats in charge of a guard, Cortés and his

followers pushed on during the next few days across the spurs of the Sierra de las Minas and crossed the innumerable streams which score the mountain sides, finding, as he says, the path so rough and steep that they had to make use of both hands and feet in climbing. Some villages were met with on the way, but at the approach of the Spaniards the natives fled to the forest, and the Spaniards found no stores of food—indeed, they barely obtained enough to supply their immediate wants.

In his letter to the King, Cortés writes:—"Having asked some of the Indian prisoners whether they knew of any other village in the vicinity where dry maize could be obtained they answered me that they knew of one called Chacujál, a very populous and ancient one, where all manner of provisions might be found in abundance."

The Spaniards reached the neighbourhood of this village at sunset, and Cortés made his arrangements to take it by surprise on the following morning. To quote his own words:—"I had laid down on some straw, in order to rest, when one of the scouts came to me, and said that by the road communicating with the village he saw a body of armed men coming down upon us; but that they marched without any order or precaution, speaking to each other, and as if they were ignorant of our being on their passage. I immediately summoned my men up, and made them arm themselves as quickly and noiselessly as they could; but as the distance between the village and the place where we had encamped was so short, before we were ready to meet them the Indians discovered the scouts, and letting fly on them a volley of their arrows began to retreat towards their village, fighting all the time with those of my men

who were foremost. In this manner we entered the village mixed up with them; but the night being dark, the Indians suddenly disappeared in the streets, and we could find no enemies. Fearing some ambush, and suspecting that the people of the village had been somehow informed of our arrival, I gave orders to my men to keep well together, and marching through the place, arrived at a great square, where they had their mosques and houses of worship; and as we saw the mosques and the buildings round them just in the manner and form of those of Culúa, we were more overawed and astonished than we had been hitherto, since nowhere since we left Aculan had we seen such signs of policy and power.... We passed that night on watch, and on the following morning sent out several parties of men to explore the village, which was well designed, the houses well built and close to each other. We found in them plenty of cotton, woven or raw, much linen of Indian manufacture and of the best kind, great quantities of dried maize, cacao, beans, peppers and salt, many fowls, and pheasants in cages, partridges, and dogs of the species they keep for eating, and which are very tasteful to the palate, and in short every variety of food in such abundance, that had our ship and boats been near at hand, we might easily have loaded enough of it to last us for many a day; but unfortunately we were twenty leagues off, had no means of carrying provisions except on the backs of men, and we were all of us in such a condition that, had we not refreshed ourselves a little at that place, and rested for some days, I doubt much whether we should have been able to return to our boats."

The Indians, however, did not return to their town, and Cortés was left in peace to build rafts on which to convey the grain he had captured, and after an

adventurous passage down the Rio Polochic he rejoined the brigantine in the Golfo Dulce and carried the much-needed supplies to his half-starved companions.

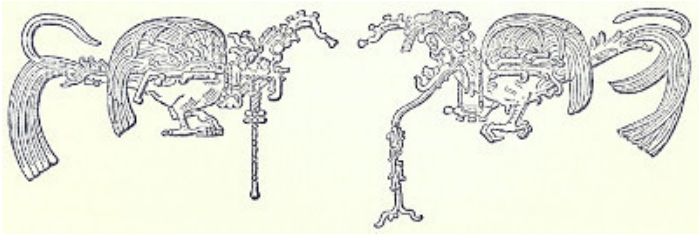
In 1882, when camped at Quirigua, I sent one of my men up the Rio Polochic to make enquiries for the ruins of Chacujál, pointing out to him the localities in which the ruins were most likely to be found. On his return he told me that he could hear nothing whatever of any place named Chacujál, but that there was a ruin known as Pueblo Viejo on the Rio Tinaja, on the south side of the Polochic a few miles from Panzos. This situation answers so exactly to the requirements of the description given by Cortés that there can be little doubt that we had found the ruins of the town called by him Chacujál. In 1884 I was able to make a hurried visit to the ruins myself, and found a number of foundations surmounted by low walls somewhat similar to those in the neighbourhood of Rabinal already described in Chapter XII., but I could find no trace of sculptured stones or inscriptions. As the whole site was covered with a dense jungle it was not possible to make any plan of the ruins during the few hours at my disposal; however, I saw quite enough to convince me that, although the plan of the town had been carefully laid out, the buildings were of no great importance and in no way comparable to those at Copan or Palenque. Yet this is the town which Cortés compares to Culúa in Mexico, and deems to be of greater importance than any town he had seen since leaving Acalá, a statement which goes far to confirm the views which have been expressed in this chapter with regard to Tayasal, and to prove that Cortés and his followers had met with none of the great centres of Maya art during their wonderful march.

I was not successful in connecting these ruins on the Rio Tinaja with the name of Chacujál, until one of my canoemen whom I was questioning on the subject, after repeating the name several times exclaimed “Chaki-jal! that is what the Indians of these parts call the ripe corn” (chaki = dry, jal = maize), and the origin of the name was at once evident.

I began this chapter with the intention of summing up in a few paragraphs the conclusions I had myself come to, but although the paragraphs have grown into pages I find that no definite statements have been made.

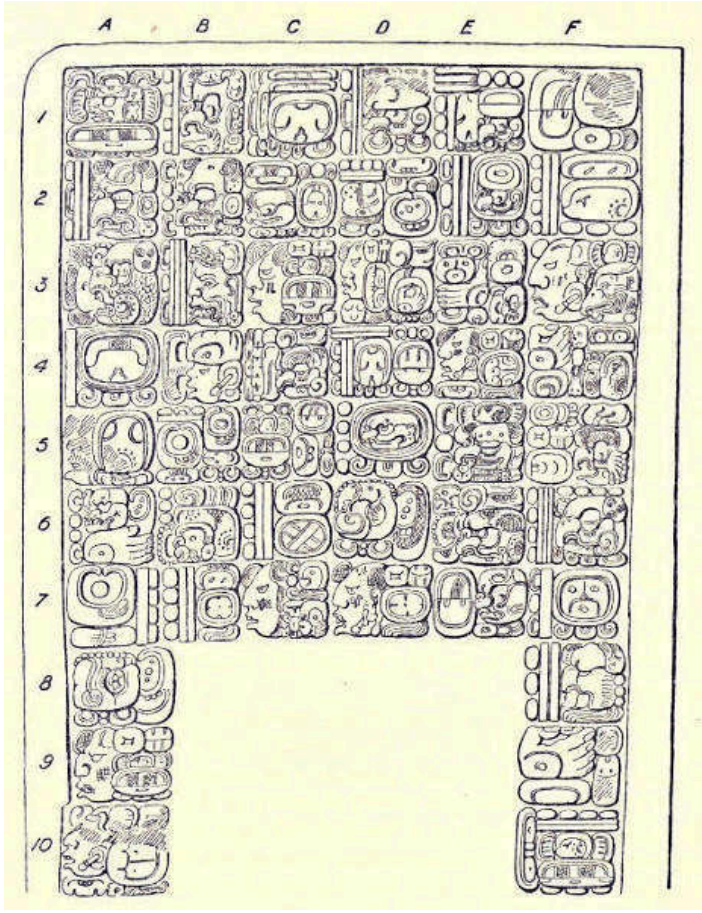
How can we assert that the Maya hieroglyphics were originated and developed within the Maya area until the ruins on the Rio Panuco, and at Teotihuacan, have been thoroughly excavated and explored, and up to the present they have only been scratched at? Did the development of Nahua culture affect that of the Mayas, and is that the reason why the art at Chichén has an indefinable Nahua flavour? We shall not know this for certain until the ruins in Tabasco, Campeche, and Peten have been thoroughly explored, and we can trace the connecting links. Amongst the many other puzzles, how are we to account for those curious mural paintings recently found by Dr. Gann in British Honduras, on the eastern limit of the Maya area, paintings essentially Nahua in style yet accompanied by a legend in Maya hieroglyphics? It is a fascinating subject for speculation, but the field offered for actual exploration is still more fascinating, and further research on the ground promises to supply facts worth more than volumes of dissertation built upon insufficient premises.

Within the Maya area there may, of course, have been many layers of culture widely removed in time which we cannot at present differentiate. Although it is not yet possible to trace the various stages which must have marked the evolution of the art which culminated in Copan and Palenque, it is not difficult to show that a great gap exists between the remains of those centres of ancient culture and the ruins of towns known to have been inhabited at the time of the Spanish invasion. I called attention to this fact when treating of the strongholds of the Quichés and Cachiquels, and have endeavoured in this chapter to show that the same gap yawns unbridged between Tayasal and Tikál. Prescott's picturesque account of the Aztec city of Mexico, and Stephens's interesting description of the ruins he visited in Honduras, Tabasco, and Yucatan, aided by Fuentes's fabulous stories of the glories of Utatlan, have engendered a popular belief that at the time of the Spanish conquest the Indians throughout Central America were living sumptuously in magnificent stone-built cities. Such beliefs die hard, indeed they lay such hold of the imagination that from time to time enterprising newspapers echo the story told to Stephens sixty years ago by the Padre of Santa Cruz Quiché, and favour us with reports of Indian cities still inhabited and flourishing, hidden from the gaze of the vulgar by a wall of impenetrable forest.



SERPENT BIRDS, PALENQUE.

CHAPTER XXVI. THE HIEROGLYPHIC INSCRIPTIONS.



MAYA INSCRIPTION FROM PIEDRAS NEGRAS. (The glyphs are read downwards in double columns from left to right.)

I have left to the last the subject of the hieroglyphic inscriptions. For those of my readers who have not previously paid any attention to the subject it is necessary to begin at the beginning and to say that there is a very considerable difference between the Mexican picture-writing and the Maya hieroglyphics, although not so very long ago they were all classed under the same head and called Mexican. The Maya writing may again be divided into two classes—the Inscriptions carved in stone or moulded in stucco, and the Codices or Manuscripts. Of these Codices there are four only known to students preserved in the museums and libraries of Paris, Dresden, and Madrid, and all four are in a more or less damaged condition. Between the glyphs of the carved inscriptions and the codices it may be stated roughly that there is not more difference than might naturally be looked for between a carved and written script.

Up to the present time more efforts have been made to interpret the codices than the carved inscriptions. It seems to be generally admitted that the former bear a hieratic character and deal for the most part with religious rites and festivals and the fixing of the times and seasons of their occurrence; but whether under a clothing of myth and fable, ceremonial observance, or cryptic puzzle, the probable object of these writings was the establishment with something like accuracy of the position of the solar year, a knowledge of which, from our very familiarity with it, we are wont to overlook as one of the first necessities of civilization. Both codices and carved inscriptions are thickly studded with numerals and signs for periods of time, and it is in dealing with these time-computations and the arrangement of the calendar that students of Maya writings have up to

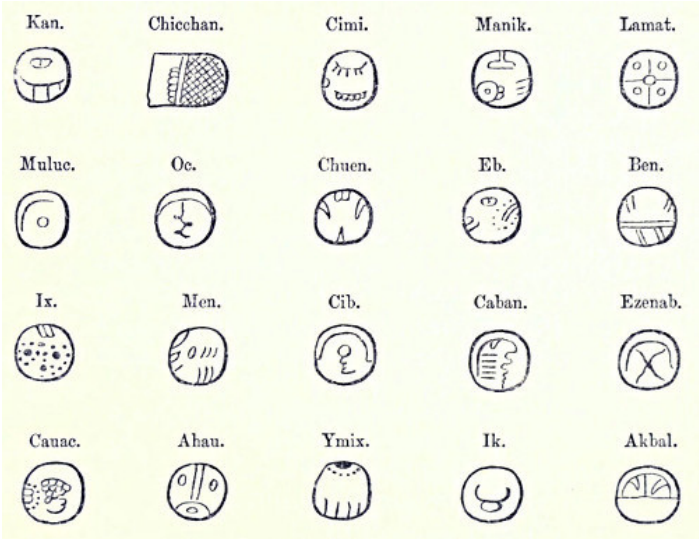
the present met with their chief success. It seems doubtful if more than a mere trace of phoneticism has as yet been established, and more than doubtful if the inscriptions when fully deciphered will yield us much direct information of a historical nature.

The principal and earliest authority for the divisions of time and the signs by which they were represented is a document preserved in the Royal Academy of History at Madrid, believed to have been written in 1566 by Diego de Landa, Bishop of Yucatan. The signs for the days and months given by Landa, although carelessly drawn, have proved of inestimable value, and a facsimile of them is here given:—

MONTH SIGNS.



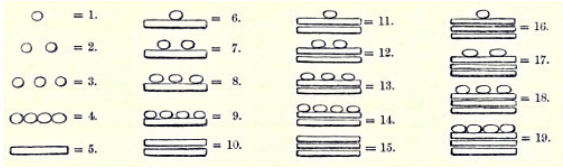
DAY SIGNS.



An attempt was also made by Landa to construct an alphabet and to give a short example of phonetic writing; but in this he was not successful, for whatever phonetic value the glyphs may possess was probably of a syllabic and not of an alphabetic character, and Landa's alphabet has proved to be to students almost as great a puzzle as the hieroglyphics themselves.

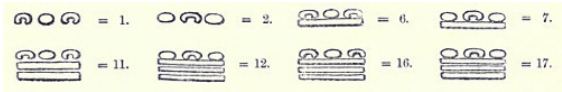
It may, however, be taken as clearly established:—

1. That the Mayas wrote their numerals from 1 to 19 in bars and dots, thus:



It was not, however, usual to leave blank spaces when carving the numerals in

stone, and the numbers 1, 2, 6, 7, 11, 12, 16, 17 were carved thus:



The sign  is possibly the sign for twenty, but it is very generally used as a sign for a "full count." (See examples on page 261.)

2. That the Mayas made use of a year of 360 days divided into 18 months of 20 days each.

3. That the Mayas also made use of a year of 365 days divided into 18 months of 20 days each, with the addition of 5 intercalated days which follow the last regular month of the year.

4. That each of the 18 months and each day of the month was named as shown in the Tables on page 255.

5. That each of the twenty days of the month was numbered, but that the numbers did not run consecutively from 1 to 20, but from 1 to 13, and then commenced again, so that a calendar for the year of 365 days may be figured thus:—

Names of the months:	Pop	Uo.	Zip	Zotz	Tzec	Xul	Yaxkin	Mol	Chen	Yax	Zac	Ceh	Mac	Kankin	Muan	Pax	Ka

Numbers of the months:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	1
Names of the days.																	
Kan	1	8	2	9	3	10	4	11	5	12	6	13	7	1	8	2	
Chicchan	2	9	3	10	4	11	5	12	6	13	7	1	8	2	9	3	1
Cimi	3	10	4	11	5	12	6	13	7	1	8	2	9	3	10	4	1
Manik	4	11	5	12	6	13	7	1	8	2	9	3	10	4	11	5	1
Lamat	5	12	6	13	7	1	8	2	9	3	10	4	11	5	12	6	1
Muluc	6	13	7	1	8	2	9	3	10	4	11	5	12	6	13	7	
Oc	7	1	8	2	9	3	10	4	11	5	12	6	13	7	1	8	
Chuen	8	2	9	3	10	4	11	5	12	6	13	7	1	8	2	9	
Eb	9	3	10	4	11	5	12	6	13	7	1	8	2	9	3	10	
Ben	10	4	11	5	12	6	13	7	1	8	2	9	3	10	4	11	
Ix	11	5	12	6	13	7	1	8	2	9	3	10	4	11	5	12	
Men	12	6	13	7	1	8	2	9	3	10	4	11	5	12	6	13	
Cib	13	7	1	8	2	9	3	10	4	11	5	12	6	13	7	1	
Caban	1	8	2	9	3	10	4	11	5	12	6	13	7	1	8	2	
Ezenab	2	9	3	10	4	11	5	12	6	13	7	1	8	2	9	3	1
Cauac	3	10	4	11	5	12	6	13	7	1	8	2	9	3	10	4	1
Ahau	4	11	5	12	6	13	7	1	8	2	9	3	10	4	11	5	1
Ymix	5	12	6	13	7	1	8	2	9	3	10	4	11	5	12	6	1
Ik	6	13	7	1	8	2	9	3	10	4	11	5	12	6	13	7	
Akbal	7	1	8	2	9	3	10	4	11	5	12	6	13	7	1	8	

Intercalated days.
Kan
Chicchan
Cimi
Manik
Lamat

If the year begins with 1 Kan, the first day of the month Pop, the last day of that month will be 7 Akbal, the twentieth day of the month Pop; and the next day following will be 8 Akbal, the first day of the month Uo, and so on. The last day of the

eighteenth month would be 9 Akbal, the twentieth day of the month Cumhu; then follow the five intercalated days, 10 Kan, 11 Chicchan, 12 Cimi, 13 Manik, 1 Lamat, so that the first day of the next year would be 2 Muluc. If the Table were drawn out in full it would be seen that the third year would commence with 3 Ix, the fourth year with 4 Cauac, the fifth year with 5 Kan, and so on through fifty-two years, and the fifty-third year would commence with 1 Kan again. From this it will be seen that the Maya year could commence on four only out of the twenty days of the month, and these four days are commonly called the "year-bearers."

In the Annual Calendar given above, which begins with 1 Kan, the first day of the month Pop, it will be noticed that after a period of thirteen months the next month again commences with 1 Kan, but in this case 1 Kan falls on the first day of the 14th month Kankin.

This period of 260 days (20×13), that is to say the period of time which must elapse before a day can recur in the same position in the month with the same day-numeral attached to it, appears to have been of special importance in the arrangement of the religious ritual, but how far this period of 260 days enters into the actual computation of time is at present difficult to determine.

It is also claimed for the Mayas by some writers that they had an almost exact knowledge of the length of the solar year, and that there was some arrangement of their calendar by which leap years could be counted.

The foregoing account of the Maya calendar has been derived from the writings of students who, after making a careful examination of the early Spanish

writers, have devoted their attention almost exclusively to the study of the codices. All mention has been avoided of Katuns and Ahaukatuns (the longer time-periods spoken of by Landa and others), about the length of which there has been much disputation, as I have wished to confine myself to statements which are generally accepted as correct.

In the concluding pages of this chapter I propose to give some examples of the inscriptions carved on the Monolithic Stelæ and on the walls of the ancient temples, and then to examine them, and to some extent explain them, with the aid of the notes and tables prepared by my friend Mr. J. T. Goodman, of California, whose essay on the subject has been published as an Appendix to the Archæological Section of the 'Biologia Centrali-Americana.'

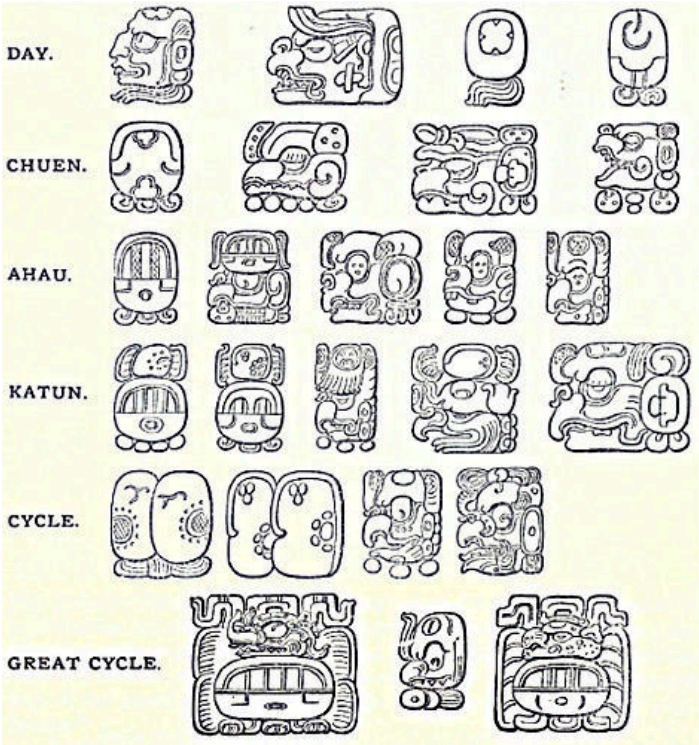
As the subject is one about which controversy is already rife, it is not likely that Mr. Goodman's methods will escape hostile criticism, and however favourable my own views may be of their merits, his method is applied here not with a view of claiming for it either priority or exclusive originality, but (as it is the method with which I am most familiar) as a means of showing to the general reader the way in which such a difficult problem has been attacked and to some extent conquered.

According to Mr. Goodman the Mayas, although understanding and using the year of 365 days, based their calendar on the Ahau of 360 days, and made all their computations in Ahaus, Katuns, &c., according to the following table:—

20	1
days	Chuen.

18 Chuens	1 Ahau[10] (360 days).
20 Ahaus	1 Katun.
20 Katuns	1 Cycle.
13 Cycles	1 Great Cycle.
72 Great Cycles	1 Grand Era.

The following signs are employed in the inscriptions to denote these periods of time:—



and it will be seen from the following tables that the signs for the days and months found on the carved stelæ do not differ materially from those given by Landa. A number of alternative signs is given for the day Ahau, and one named Uayeb is added to the list of eighteen months. This month Uayeb consists of the five intercalated days only.

DAY SIGNS.


Ik.
Akbal.
Kan.
Chicchan.
Cimi.
Manik.
Lamat.
Muluc.
Oc.
Chuen.
Eb.
Ben.
Ix.
Men.
Cib.
Caban.
Ezenab.
Canac.
Ahau.
Ymix.
Ahau.
Ahau.
Ahau.
Ahau.
Ahau.

MONTH SIGNS.



All the dates on the monuments which have as yet been examined fall within the three Great Cycles numbered, according to Mr. Goodman, the 53rd, 54th, and 55th.

Mr. Goodman has prepared and published full tables of these three Great Cycles which he calls the "Chronological Calendar," as well as a "Yearly Calendar" extending over the complete calendar round of 52 years.

FIFTY-FOURTH GREAT CYCLE.

Ninth Cycle.

Nos. of the Katuns...	*10*	*11*	*12*

No. of the Ahau.	No. of the day Ahau.	Day of the month.	Name of month.	No. of the day Ahau.	Day of the month.	Name of month.	No. of the day Ahau.	Day of the month.	Na c mo
20	**1**	8	Kayab.	**12**	8	Ceh.	**10**	8	Yax
1	**10**	3	”	**8**	3	”	**6**	3	’
2	**6**	18	Pax.	**4**	18	Zac.	**2**	18	Xu
3	**2**	13	”	**13**	13	”	**11**	13	’
4	**11**	8	”	**9**	8	”	**7**	8	’
5	**7**	3	”	**5**	3	”	**3**	3	’
6	**3**	18	Muan.	**1**	18	Yax.	**12**	18	Tz
7	**12**	13	”	**10**	13	”	**8**	13	’
8	**8**	8	”	**6**	8	”	**4**	8	’
9	**4**	3	”	**2**	3	”	**13**	3	’
10	**13**	18	Kankin.	**11**	18	Chen.	**9**	18	Zo
11	**9**	13	”	**7**	13	”	**5**	13	’
12	**5**	8	”	**3**	8	”	**1**	8	’
13	**1**	3	”	**12**	3	”	**10**	3	’
14	**10**	18	Mac.	**8**	18	Mol.	**6**	18	Zi
15	**6**	13	”	**4**	13	”	**2**	13	’
16	**2**	8	”	**13**	8	”	**11**	8	’
17	**11**	3	”	**9**	3	”	**7**	3	’
18	**7**	18	Ceh.	**5**	18	Yaxkin.	**3**	18	U
19	**3**	13	”	**1**	13	”	**12**	13	’

Archaic Annual Calendar.

1st Year.

	Names of the months	Pop	Uo.	Zip	Zotz	Tzec	Xul	Yaxkin	Mol	Chen	Yax	Zac.	Ceh	Mac	Kank	Muan	
	Names of the days.																
20	Ik	1	8	2	9	3	10	4	11	5	12	6	13	7	1	8	

1	Akbal	2	9	3	10	4	11	5	12	6	13	7	1	8	2	9
2	Kan	3	10	4	11	5	12	6	13	7	1	8	2	9	3	10
3	Chicchan	4	11	5	12	6	13	7	1	8	2	9	3	10	4	11
4	Cimi	5	12	6	13	7	1	8	2	9	3	10	4	11	5	12
5	Manik	6	13	7	1	8	2	9	3	10	4	11	5	12	6	13
6	Lamat	7	1	8	2	9	3	10	4	11	5	12	6	13	7	1
7	Muluc	8	2	9	3	10	4	11	5	12	6	13	7	1	8	2
8	Oc	9	3	10	4	11	5	12	6	13	7	1	8	2	9	3
9	Chuen	10	4	11	5	12	6	13	7	1	8	2	9	3	10	4
10	Eb	11	5	12	6	13	7	1	8	2	9	3	10	4	11	5
11	Ben	12	6	13	7	1	8	2	9	3	10	4	11	5	12	6
12	Ix	13	7	1	8	2	9	3	10	4	11	5	12	6	13	7
13	Men	1	8	2	9	3	10	4	11	5	12	6	13	7	1	8
14	Cib	2	9	3	10	4	11	5	12	6	13	7	1	8	2	9
15	Caban	3	10	4	11	5	12	6	13	7	1	8	2	9	3	10
16	Ezenab	4	11	5	12	6	13	7	1	8	2	9	3	10	4	11
17	Cauac	5	12	6	13	7	1	8	2	9	3	10	4	11	5	12
18	Ahau	**6**	**13**	**7**	**1**	**8**	**2**	**9**	**3**	**10**	**4**	**11**	**5**	**12**	**6**	**13**
19	Ymix	7	1	8	2	9	3	10	4	11	5	12	6	13	7	1

13th Year.

	Names of the months	Pop	Uo.	Zip	Zotz	Tzec	Xul	Yaxkin	Mol	Chen	Yax	Zac	Ceh	Mac	Kankin	Muan
	Names of the days.															
20	Ik	13	7	1	8	2	9	3	10	4	11	5	12	6	13	7
1	Akbal	1	8	2	9	3	10	4	11	5	12	6	13	7	1	8
2	Kan	2	9	3	10	4	11	5	12	6	13	7	1	8	2	9
3	Chicchan	3	10	4	11	5	12	6	13	7	1	8	2	9	3	10
4	Cimi	4	11	5	12	6	13	7	1	8	2	9	3	10	4	11
5	Manik	5	12	6	13	7	1	8	2	9	3	10	4	11	5	12
6	Lamat	6	13	7	1	8	2	9	3	10	4	11	5	12	6	13
7	Muluc	7	1	8	2	9	3	10	4	11	5	12	6	13	7	1
8	Oc	8	2	9	3	10	4	11	5	12	6	13	7	1	8	2
9	Chuen	9	3	10	4	11	5	12	6	13	7	1	8	2	9	3

10	Eb	10	4	11	5	12	6	13	7	1	8	2	9	3	10	4
11	Ben	11	5	12	6	13	7	1	8	2	9	3	10	4	11	5
12	Ix	12	6	13	7	1	8	2	9	3	10	4	11	5	12	6
13	Men	13	7	1	8	2	9	3	10	4	11	5	12	6	13	7
14	Cib	1	8	2	9	3	10	4	11	5	12	6	13	7	1	8
15	Caban	2	9	3	10	4	11	5	12	6	13	7	1	8	2	9
16	Ezenab	3	10	4	11	5	12	6	13	7	1	8	2	9	3	10
17	Cauac	4	11	5	12	6	13	7	1	8	2	9	3	10	4	11
18	Ahau	**5**	**12**	**6**	**13**	**7**	**1**	**8**	**2**	**9**	**3**	**10**	**4**	**11**	**5**	**12**
19	Ymix	6	13	7	1	8	2	9	3	10	4	11	5	12	6	13

35th Year.

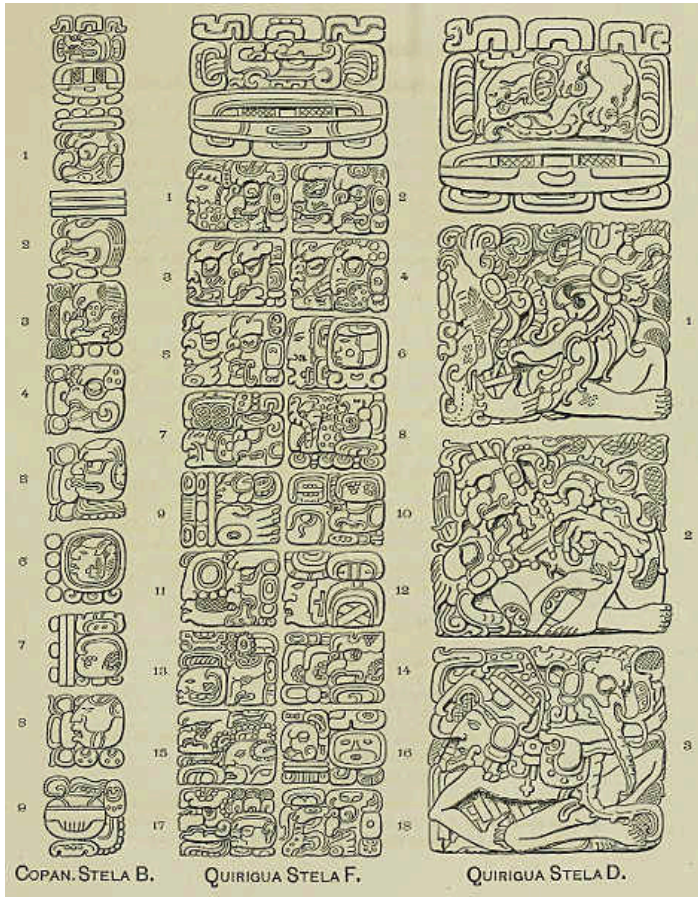
	Names of the months	Pop	Uo.	Zip	Zotz	Tzec	Xul	Yaxkin	Mol	Chen	Yax	Zac	Ceh	Mac	Kankin	Muan
	Names of the days.															
20	Eb	9	3	10	4	11	5	12	6	13	7	1	8	2	9	3
1	Ben	10	4	11	5	12	6	13	7	1	8	2	9	3	10	4
2	Ix	11	5	12	6	13	7	1	8	2	9	3	10	4	11	5
3	Men	12	6	13	7	1	8	2	9	3	10	4	11	5	12	6
4	Cib	13	7	1	8	2	9	3	10	4	11	5	12	6	13	7
5	Caban	1	8	2	9	3	10	4	11	5	12	6	13	7	1	8
6	Ezenab	2	9	3	10	4	11	5	12	6	13	7	1	8	2	9
7	Cauac	3	10	4	11	5	12	6	13	7	1	8	2	9	3	10
8	Ahau	**4**	**11**	**5**	**12**	**6**	**13**	**7**	**1**	**8**	**2**	**9**	**3**	**10**	**4**	**11**
9	Ymix	5	12	6	13	7	1	8	2	9	3	10	4	11	5	12
10	Ik	6	13	7	1	8	2	9	3	10	4	11	5	12	6	13
11	Akbal	7	1	8	2	9	3	10	4	11	5	12	6	13	7	1
12	Kan	8	2	9	3	10	4	11	5	12	6	13	7	1	8	2
13	Chicchan	9	3	10	4	11	5	12	6	13	7	1	8	2	9	3
14	Cimi	10	4	11	5	12	6	13	7	1	8	2	9	3	10	4
15	Manik	11	5	12	6	13	7	1	8	2	9	3	10	4	11	5
16	Lamat	12	6	13	7	1	8	2	9	3	10	4	11	5	12	6
17	Muluk	13	7	1	8	2	9	3	10	4	11	5	12	6	13	7
18	Oc	1	8	2	9	3	10	4	11	5	12	6	13	7	1	8

19	Chuen	2	9	3	10	4	11	5	12	6	13	7	1	8	2	9

38th Year.

	Names of the months	Pop.	Uo.	Zip	Zotz	Tzec	Xul	Yaxkin	Mol	Chen	Yax	Zac.	Ceh	Mac	Kankin	Muan
	Names of the days.															
20	Manik	12	6	13	7	1	8	2	9	3	10	4	11	5	12	6
1	Lamat	13	7	1	8	2	9	3	10	4	11	5	12	6	13	7
2	Muluc	1	8	2	9	3	10	4	11	5	12	6	13	7	1	8
3	Oc	2	9	3	10	4	11	5	12	6	13	7	1	8	2	9
4	Chuen	3	10	4	11	5	12	6	13	7	1	8	2	9	3	10
5	Eb	4	11	5	12	6	13	7	1	8	2	9	3	10	4	11
6	Ben	5	12	6	13	7	1	8	2	9	3	10	4	11	5	12
7	Ix	6	13	7	1	8	2	9	3	10	4	11	5	12	6	13
8	Men	7	1	8	2	9	3	10	4	11	5	12	6	13	7	1
9	Cib	8	2	9	3	10	4	11	5	12	6	13	7	1	8	2
10	Caban	9	3	10	4	11	5	12	6	13	7	1	8	2	9	3
11	Ezenab	10	4	11	5	12	6	13	7	1	8	2	9	3	10	4
12	Cauac	11	5	12	6	13	7	1	8	2	9	3	10	4	11	5
13	Ahau	**12**	**6**	**13**	**7**	**1**	**8**	**2**	**9**	**3**	**10**	**4**	**11**	**5**	**12**	**6**
14	Ymix	13	7	1	8	2	9	3	10	4	11	5	12	6	13	7
15	Ik	1	8	2	9	3	10	4	11	5	12	6	13	7	1	8
16	Akbal	2	9	3	10	4	11	5	12	6	13	7	1	8	2	9
17	Kan	3	10	4	11	5	12	6	13	7	1	8	2	9	3	10
18	Chicchan	4	11	5	12	6	13	7	1	8	2	9	3	10	4	11
19	Cimi	5	12	6	13	7	1	8	2	9	3	10	4	11	5	12

On the following plate is given the first half of an inscription carved on the sides of stela B from Copan[11].



The Great Cycle sign is in this instance the 54th Great Cycle.

No. 1. The Cycle sign with one bar and four dots (5 + 4 = 9) above it.

No. 2. The Katun sign with three bars (5 + 5 + 5 = 15).

No. 3. The Ahau sign with the sign for a "full count" in front of it.

No. 4. The Chuen sign with “full count.”

No. 5. The Day sign with “full count.”

No. 6. The day named Ahau with four dots.

No. 7. The month named Yax with two bars and three dots (5 + 5 + 3 = 13).

The Initial date of this inscription therefore reads as follows:—

	54th	Great Cycle.
(1)	9th	Cycle.
(2)	15th	Katun.
(3)	“Full count”	Ahaus.
(4)	“Full count”	Chuens.
(5)	“Full count”	Days.
(6)	4 Ahau (day).	
(7)	13 Yax (month).	

As a “full count” of days (twenty) is a Chuen, a “full count” of Chuens (eighteen) is an Ahau, and a “full count” of Ahaus (twenty) is a Katun. The foregoing inscription may be read thus:—

The 15th Katun of the 9th Cycle with no Ahaus, Chuens, or days added, begins with 4 Ahau 13 Yax.

A reference to Mr. Goodman’s Chronological

Calendar shows that the 15th Katun of the 9th Cycle of the 54th Great Cycle commences with the day 4 Ahau, the 13th day of the month Yax, the date which is here given in the inscription. The combination 4 Ahau 13 Yax can only occur once in a period of fifty-two years.

The second example on the plate gives the commencement of an inscription from the east side of Stela F at Quirigua.

The Great Cycle sign (54th) extends over the two columns of glyphs.

The signs for the Cycle, Katun, &c. are not in this case preceded by bar and dot numerals, but by grotesque human faces; Mr. Goodman has discovered that these faces are also numerals, and, although the whole series has not yet been satisfactorily established, the inscription may with some confidence be read as follows:—

The 54th Great Cycle.

(1) The 9th Cycle.

(2) The 16th Katun.

(3) The 10th Ahau.

(4) “Full count” Chuens.

(5) "Full count" Days.

(6) 1 Ahau (day).

The five following glyphs are not yet satisfactorily deciphered, and it is not until the 12th glyph that the month sign is arrived at.

(12) 3 Zip (month).

A reference to Mr. Goodman's Chronological Calendar would show that 1 Ahau 3 Zip is the first day of the 10th Ahau of the 16th Katun of the 9th Cycle of the 54th Great Cycle.

The third example of an inscription given on the plate shows four squares of picture-writing from Stela D at Quirigua[12]. It seems probable that in these pictures, which are found only on two monuments at Quirigua and on one at Copan[13], we have a survival of a form of writing which antedated the more conventional hieroglyphs. Both numerals and time periods are expressed by human and grotesque figures instead of by the heads alone, as in the preceding examples. The time periods in the example here figured take the form of grotesque birds.

These three squares following the Great Cycle sign denote the Cycle, Katun, and Ahau count, and may probably be written:—

(1) 9th Cycle.

(2) 16th
Katun.

(3) 15th
Ahau.

So far I have dealt only with the Initial dates on the Inscriptions. I now propose to examine a complete inscription with the help of Goodman's notes and tables, and for this purpose have selected one which was discovered by Mr. Teobert Maler amongst the ruins of Piedras Negras on the Usumacinta.

This inscription was known neither to Mr. Goodman nor myself until his essay and tables were already issuing from the press, and it therefore affords a fair field on which to test the value of his methods. The following partial explanation of the inscription is taken from a paper on the subject published in the 'Proceedings of the Royal Society'[14]:—

"The glyph A 1 is the initial glyph indicating the Great Cycle. It has more the appearance of the sign for the 53rd than for that of the 54th Great Cycle; but the signs for the different Great Cycles are still in need of elucidation, and the subsequent reckoning shows clearly that the dates fall within the table given by Mr. Goodman as that of the 54th Great Cycle.

"The next glyph B 1 is the Cycle sign with the numeral 9 in front of it (one bar =5 and four dots =4).

"A 2 is the Katun sign with the numeral 12 in front of it (two bars =10, and two dots =2; the hollow curve between the two round dots is merely used to fill up the space, and does not count).

"B 2 is the Ahau sign with the numeral 2.

"Turning to the tables of Mr. Goodman's Chronological Calendar, of which an extract showing the 10th to the 14th Katuns of the 9th Cycle is given on page 265, we find that the first day of the—

2nd Ahau,
12th Katun,
9th Cycle,
54th Great Cycle,

falls on the day 2 Ahau, the 18th day of the month Xul (which is underlined in the table).

"This is as far as the Chronological Calendar can guide us. We have next to find the position of this date in the Annual Calendar. The date can only occur once in the fifty-two years which constitute a calendar round, and an examination of the tables shows that it falls in the first year of the annual calendar (see page 266, where it is marked with a square).

"The next glyph in the inscription, A 3, is the Chuen sign with the sign which signifies a 'full count' of Chuens, in front of it. As a full count of Chuens is 18 and equals 1 Ahau, and as the number of Ahaus has already been recorded, the glyph A 3 means that no odd Chuens are to be added to the date already expressed.

"The glyph B 3 is the sign for a day (of twenty-four hours) preceded by the numeral 16.

"Turning to the first year of the annual calendar, we now add these 16 days to 2 *Ahau* 18 *Xul*, the date already arrived at, and it will be found to bring us to 5 *Cib* 14 *Yaxkin* (marked with a dashed border).

"That this reckoning is correct is shown by the inscription itself, where the result is expressed: A 4 being 5 *Cib*, and B 7 14 *Yaxkin*. The six glyphs in the inscription intermediate between the sign of the day Cib, and the sign of the month Yaxkin, have not yet been thoroughly deciphered, but there is reason to suppose that they contain a parallel reckoning differently expressed.

"The next three glyphs are undeciphered; then comes another reckoning:—

"C 1 is the Chuen sign with the numeral 10 (two bars =10) above it, and a 'full count' sign at the side. Whether the 10 applies to the Chuens or days can only be determined by experiment, and such experiment in this case shows that the reckoning intended to be expressed is 10 Chuens and a 'full count' of days, that is for practical purposes 10 Chuens only, for as in the last reckoning when the full count of Chuens was expressed in the Ahaus, so here the full count of days is expressed in the Chuens.

"The next glyph D 1 is an Ahau sign, preceded by the numeral 12.

"This gives us—

12 Ahaus (12 × 360) =	4320
10 Chuens (10 × 20) =	200
	4520
	4380
	140 d

"Adding 4520 days, or 12 years and 140 days, to the date 5 *Cib* 14 *Kankin*, it brings us to the date 1 *Cib* 14 *Kankin* in the thirteenth year of the annual calendar.

"Turning to the inscription we find at C 2 (passing over the first half of the glyph), 1 *Cib* followed by (the first half of D 2) 14 *Kankin*, the date at which we have already arrived by computation.

"Passing over the next three glyphs we arrive at another reckoning: D 4 gives 10 days, 11 Chuens, 1 Ahau; and the first half of C 5 gives 1 Katun.

1 Katun	7200 da
1 Ahau	360 "
11 Chuens (11 × 20)	220 "
10 Days	10 "
	7790 da
	7665 '
	125 day

"Adding 7790 days or 21 years and 125 days to the previous date, 1 *Cib* 14 *Kankin*, it will bring us to 4 *Cimi* 14 *Uo* in the thirty-fifth year of the annual calendar, and we find this date expressed in the inscription in the glyphs D 5 and C 6.

"Passing over the next three glyphs we arrive at another reckoning (E 1), 3 Ahaus, 8 Chuens, 15 days: —

3 Ahaus	1080 days.
8 Chuens	160 "
15 Days	15 "

1255 days.	
1095 ”	= 3 years.
160 days.	

“Adding 3 years and 160 days to the last date, 4 *Cimi* 14 *Uo*, brings us to 11 *Ymix* 14 *Yax* in the thirty-eighth year of the annual calendar; this is the date we find expressed in the glyphs E 2 and F 2 of the inscription.

“It is true that the sign in the glyph E 2 is not the sign usually employed for the day Ymix, but that it is a day-sign we know from the fact that it is included in a cartouche, and I am inclined to think that the more usual Ymix sign (something like an open hand with the fingers extended) was inclosed in the oval on the top of the grotesque head, but it is too much worn for identification.

“Passing over seven glyphs, the next reckoning occurs at F 6, which gives:—

4 Chuens	80
19 Days	19
	99

“Adding 99 days to the last date, 11 *Ymix* 14 *Yax*, brings us to 6 *Ahan* 13 *Muan* in the same year, and we find this date expressed in F 7 and F 8.

“The last glyph in the inscription is a Katun sign with the numeral 14 above it, and a sign for ‘beginning’ in front of it, and indicates that the last date is the beginning of a 14th Katun. If we turn to the Table for

the 9th Cycle of the 54th Great Cycle, from which we started, it will be seen that the 14th Katun of that cycle does commence with the date 6 *Ahan* 13 *Muan*."

It is beyond the limits of possibility that the identity of the dates and intervals found in this inscription with those shown in the Calendars is the result of chance, and we may now fairly assume that the essential features of the dates and computations of time found on the carved inscriptions have passed from the region of mystery into that of established fact. This is, indeed, only one step in the elucidation of the meaning of the inscriptions, but it is one of the greatest importance. The next step, it is to be hoped, will be the collation of the dates on the Maya monuments with those of our own system of reckoning time. And although this step is beset with many difficulties, it should not be looked upon as impossible.

I regret to say that I am frequently asked, What is the good of labouring at the collection and interpretation of inscriptions which promise to add little or nothing to our historical knowledge and have no connection with the development of our own civilization? This question seems to me to imply a narrow view both of Anthropology and History. If the study of Egyptology and Assyriology possesses an especial interest to us through its connection with our ideas of religion, philosophy, and art filtered through Palestine, Greece, and Rome, surely it has as well a more general value, which American Archæology shares with it, in showing the evolution of human intelligence. The civilizations of the East are known to have acted and reacted on one another, so that it is often difficult to trace things to their original

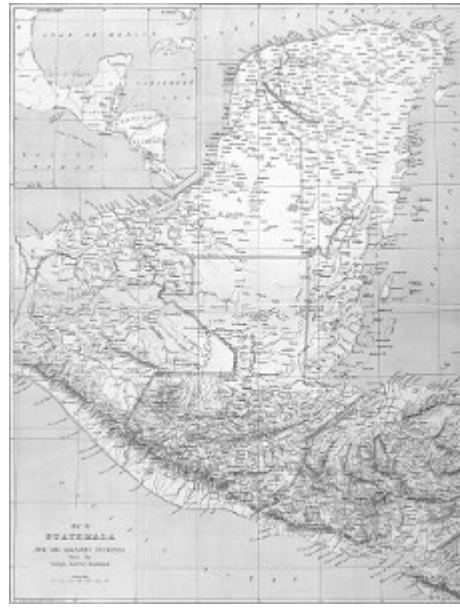
source; whereas in the civilization of America the culture must to a great extent have arisen and developed on the soil, free from extraneous influence, and on this account may furnish facts of the greatest importance which the East cannot supply. It is, indeed, possible that accidental drifts from Asia may occasionally have influenced American culture, but such drifts across a great ocean must have been few and far between, and cannot be compared to the influence exercised by one civilization on another in Asia and Africa. If, as is generally believed, the population of America came originally from the Asiatic continent, such an original migration must have taken place so early in the history of the human race that it antedated the use of bronze, iron, or domestic animals in the land from which the migrants came. Should further proof be needed to show the antiquity of the American races, it may be seen in the diversity of types amongst the races themselves, all, however, more nearly related to one another than to any types outside the American continent, and in the hundreds of distinct languages all bearing a similar relation to one another. Moreover, in the development of the maize-plant from an unknown wild stock into the numerous varieties yielding the magnificent grain which formed the staple food of the country, and has since the discovery of America become one of the most valuable food-stuffs of the world, we have evidence that the settlement of some of the American people as agriculturists must date from a remote past.

It is therefore with no regret that I look back on the years spent in the collection of materials for the study of Central-American Archæology; and I shall feel more than contented if the present volume helps

to direct attention to the stores of material already accumulated, and to lead others to continue the interesting search for relics of the past amongst surroundings which it has been our desire to show in the pages of this book are neither wanting in human interest nor natural beauty.



ADIOS!



MAP OF GUATEMALA AND THE ADJACENT COUNTRIES from the "Biologia Centrali Americana"

FOOTNOTES:

[1] This statement may need further consideration.

[2] An inverted C or 'C is frequently used in Maya to indicate the sound "tz."

[3] See plan of court with closed ends on page 104.

[4] Historia general, Dec. II. lib. vii. cap. viii.

[5] The Castillo.

[6] See Cogolludo, 'Hist. de la Provincia de Yucathan,' Lib. ii. cap. vii.

[7] See photographs on pages 241 & 243.

[8] See Plate facing page 176.

[9] Cogolludo's 'History of Yucatan,' 1688.

[10] It is unfortunate that the *ahau*, or period of 360 days, bears the same name as one of the twenty days of the Maya month, and that the *chuen*, or twenty-day period, bears the name of another day of the month.

[11] A photograph of this monument is given on the plate facing page 120.

[12] See plate facing page 148.

[13] Fragments of two other series of picture-glyphs are to be found at Copan amongst the disjointed remains of the Hieroglyphic Stairway.

[14] The principal difference in Mr. Goodman's Annual Calendar from that given on page 257, is that he commences his Calendar with the day Ik instead of Kan, and consequently the "year bearers" are the days Ik, Manik, Eb, and Caban, instead of Kan, Muluc, Ix, and Cauac. The twenty days of the month are numbered on the margin of the table 20, 1, 2, 3, &c., up to 19. In the extract from the Chronological Calendar it will be seen that the Ahaus are numbered in the same way. If we should nowadays wish to use a similar notation, we should probably number the series 0, 1, 2, &c., 19; but it seems as though the Mayas, having no sign for 0, wrote the sign for 20 or a "full count" of Ahaus in the first place.

The eighteen Chuens are in like manner numbered 18, 1, 2, 3, &c., to 17, the same sign

being used for a “full count” of Chuens as is used for a “full count” of Ahaus.

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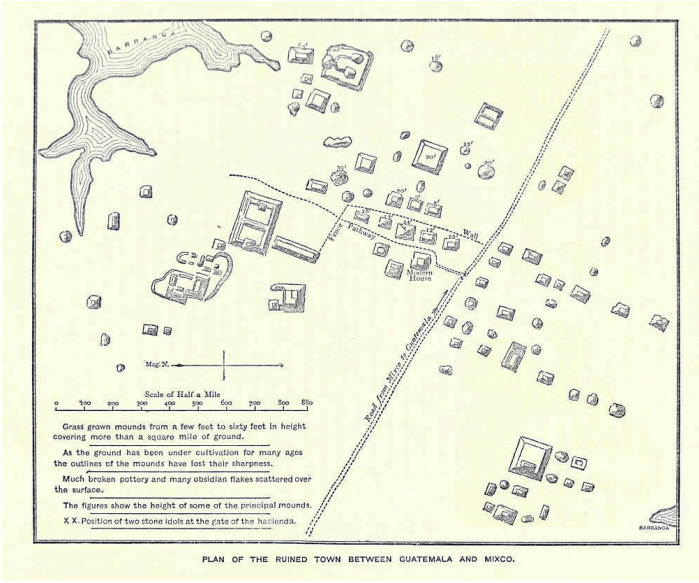
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PLAN OF THE RUINED TOWN BETWEEN GUATEMALA AND MIXCO.

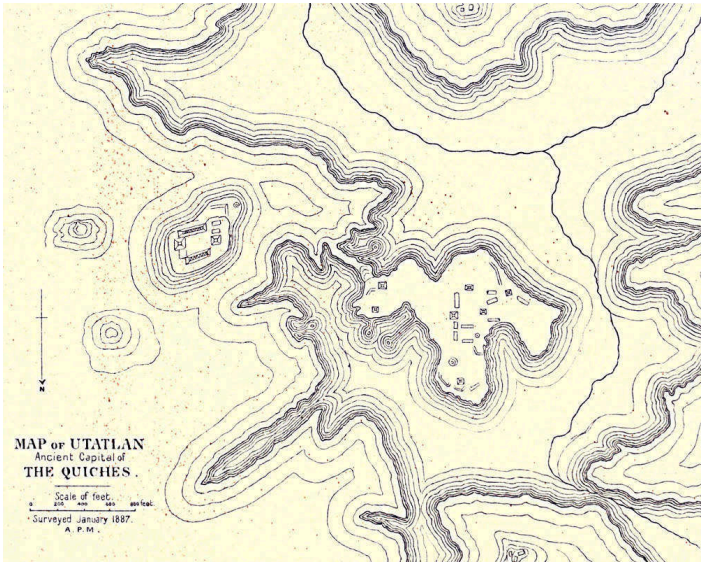
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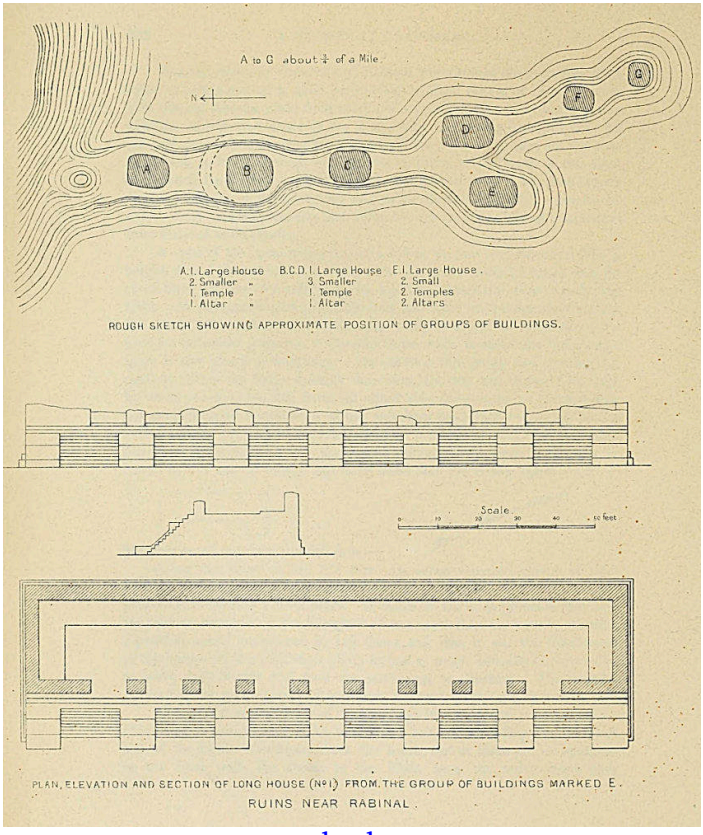
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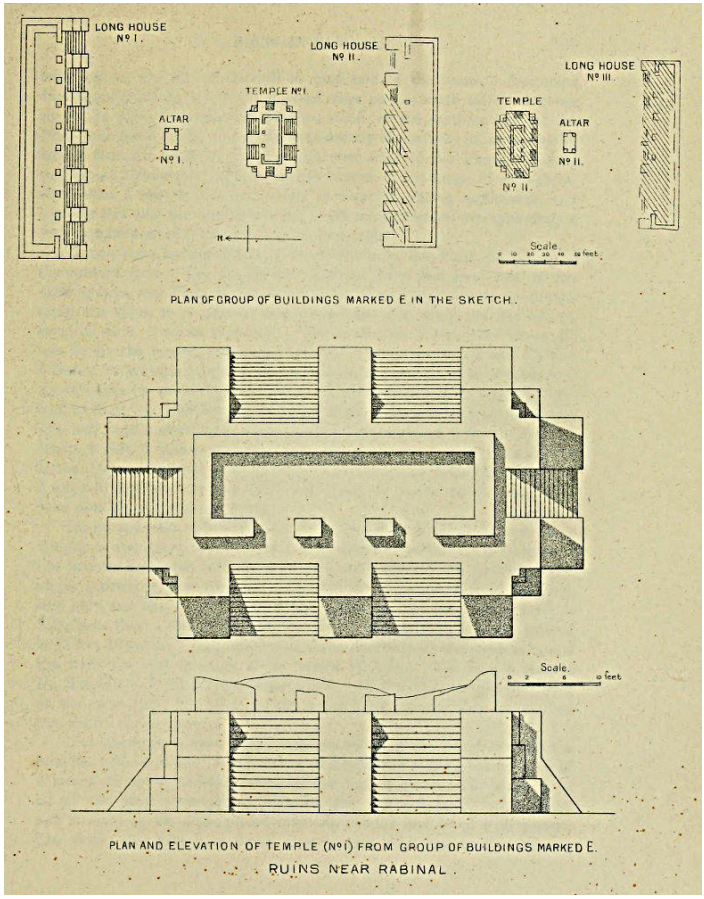
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MAP OF UTATLAN
Ancient Capital of
THE QUICHES.
Scale of feet.
Surveyed January 1887.
A. P. M.

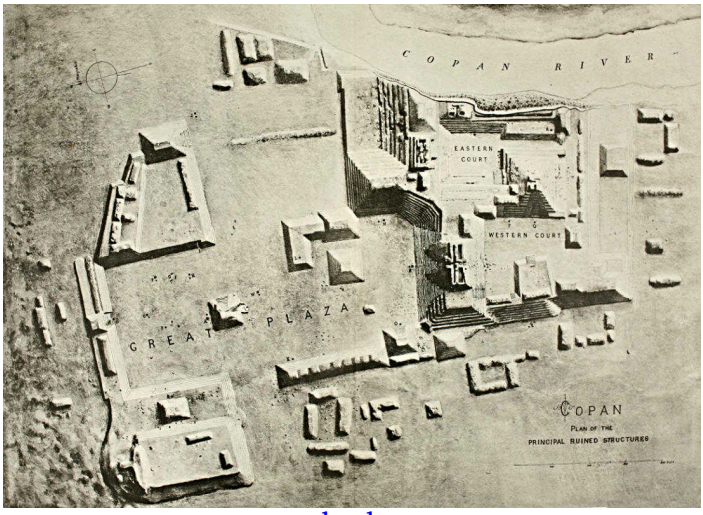
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A to G about ¾ of a Mile.
N
A
B
C
D
E
F
G
A. 1. Large House
2. Smaller "
1. Temple "
1. Altar "
B.C.D. 1. Large House
3. Smaller "
1. Temple
1. Altar
E. 1. Large House.
2. Small "
2. Temples
2. Altars
ROUGH SKETCH SHOWING APPROXIMATE POSITION OF GROUPS OF BUILDINGS.
Scale
0 10 20 30 40 50 feet
PLAN, ELEVATION AND SECTION OF LONG HOUSE (No 1) FROM THE GROUP OF BUILDINGS MARKED E.
RUINS NEAR RABINAL.

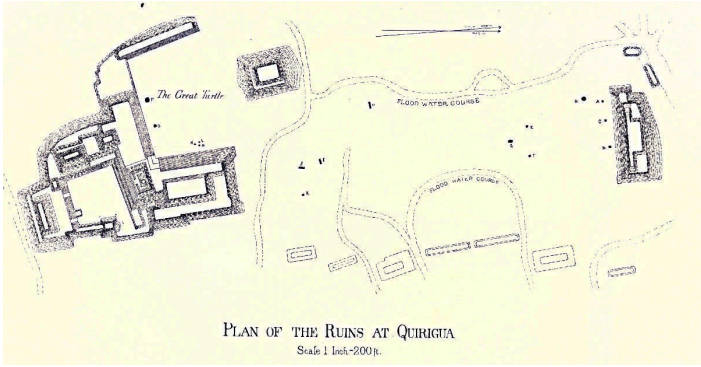
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LONG HOUSE
Nº I.
LONG HOUSE
Nº II.
LONG HOUSE
Nº III.
TEMPLE Nº I.
ALTAR
Nº I.
TEMPLE
Nº II.
ALTAR
Nº II.
N.
Scale.
feet.
PLAN OF GROUP OF BUILDINGS MARKED E IN THE SKETCH.
Scale.
feet.
PLAN AND ELEVATION OF TEMPLE (Nº I) FROM GROUP OF BUILDINGS MARKED E.
RUINS NEAR RABINAL.

back

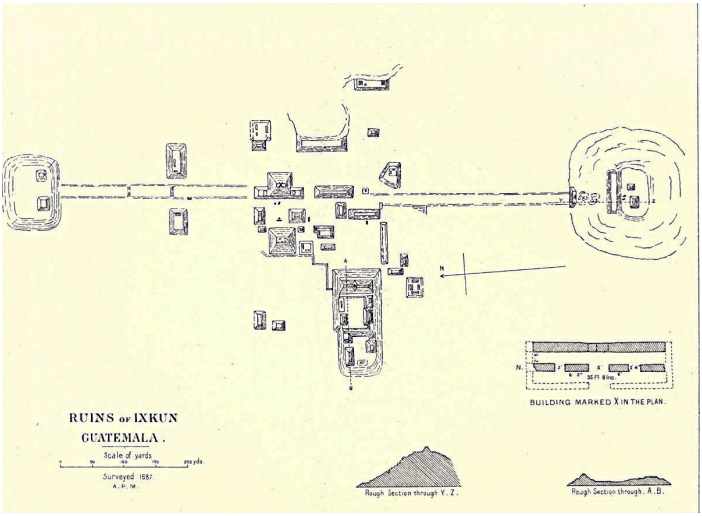

COPAN RIVER
EASTERN COURT
WESTERN COURT
GREAT PLAZA
COPAN
PLAN OF THE PRINCIPAL RUINED STRUCTURES

back

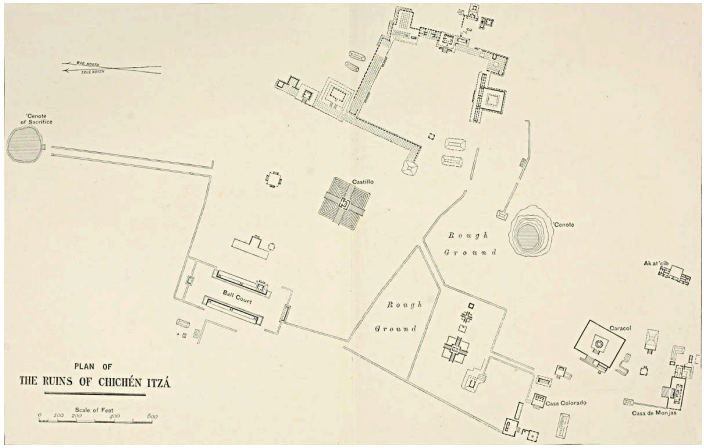


PLAN OF THE RUINS AT QUIRIGUA
Scale 1 Inch=200 ft.

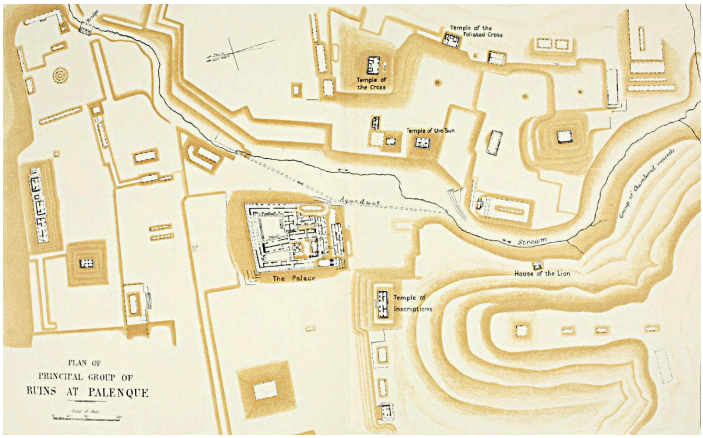
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RUINS OF IXKUN
GUATEMALA.
Scale of yards
Surveyed 1887.
A. P. M.
BUILDING MARKED X IN THE PLAN.
Rough Section through Y. Z.
Rough Section through A. B.

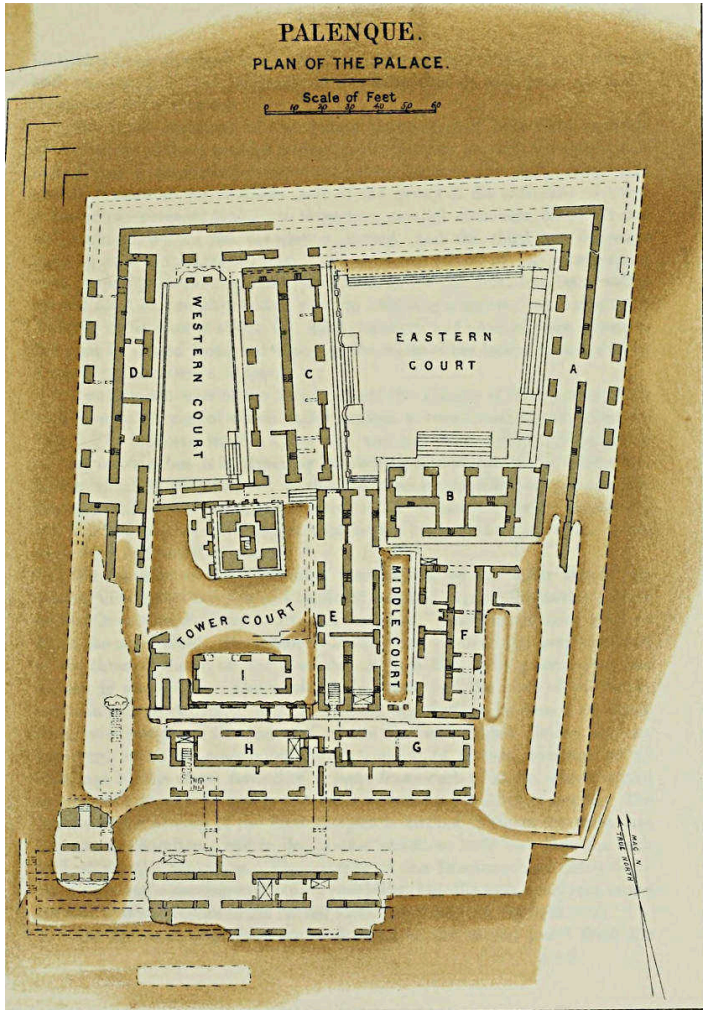
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Cenote of Sacrifice
Castillo
Rough Ground
Cenote
Ball Court
Rough Ground
Caracol
Casa Colorada
Casa de Monjas
PLAN OF
THE RUINS OF CHICHÉN ITZÁ
Scale of Feet

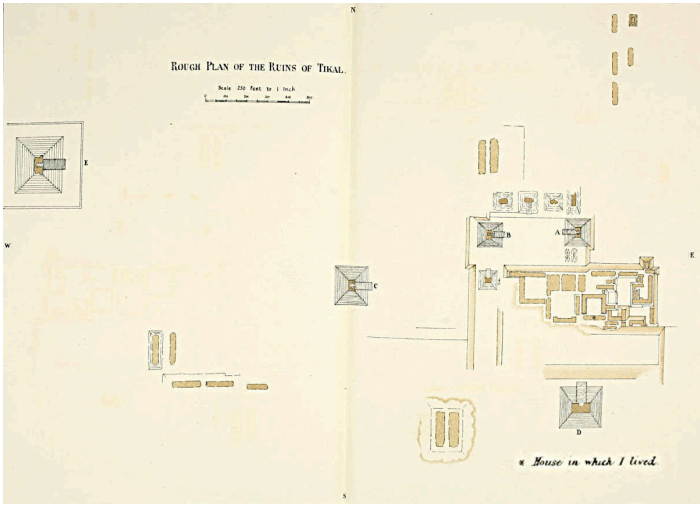
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Temple of the Foliated Cross
Temple of the Cross
Temple of the Sun
Aqueduct
Stream
The Palace
House of the Lion
Temple of Inscriptions
PLAN OF
PRINCIPAL GROUP OF
RUINS AT PALENQUE

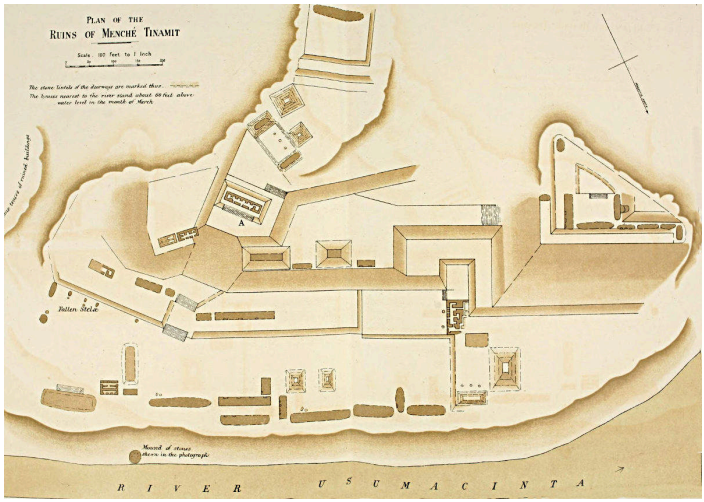
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PALENQUE.
PLAN OF THE PALACE.
Scale of Feet
0 10 20 30 40 50 60
WESTERN COURT
EASTERN COURT
TOWER COURT
MIDDLE COURT
A
B
C
D
E
F
G
H
I

back


ROUGH PLAN OF THE RUINS OF TIKAL.
N
W
E
S
A
B
C
D
* House in which I lived.

back


PLAN OF THE
RUINS OF MENCHÉ TINAMIT
Fallen Stela
R I V E R U S U M A C I N T A

back


UNITED STATES
FLORIDA
GULF OF MEXICO
MEXICO
Gulf of Campeche
CARIBBEAN SEA
GUATEMALA
HONDURAS
NICARAGUA
COSTA RICA
PACIFIC OCEAN
MAP OF
GUATEMALA
AND THE ADJACENT COUNTRIES
from the
"Biologia Centrali Americana"

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