

# The Buried City . . . of Honduras.

EVIDENCES of an Ancient Civilization in Central America—Gorgeous Terraces, Palaces and Pyramids Found in the Forest.

In the current number of the Century Magazine, George Byron Gordon writes of his discoveries on the site of an ancient buried city in Honduras. From this interesting article we quote:

From the valley of Mexico, the center of its power and influence, the Aztec civilization at the time of the conquest had spread itself to the Gulf of Mexico and to the Pacific ocean, to the river Panuco on the north and to the Gulf of Tehuantepec on the south, with small outlying colonies still farther south.

The broad plains of Yucatan and the fertile valleys of Central America comprise the theater where the much older Maya civilization had its rise, culmination and decline—the unrecorded acts in a very imposing drama played long ago by actors whose names have been forgotten. Yes; long before the dream of western empire began to fill the minds of Europeans, firing the ambition of kings, and inciting the adventurous spirits of the time, full of the romantic daring of the age of chivalry, and thirsting for conquest, to seek fortune and fame at all hazards in the golden regions of the west—centuries before the kingdom of the Montezumas, whose evil destiny it was to fall a prey to these avaricious and unprincipled men, had risen to power and glory in the beautiful valley of Mexico—the curtain had already fallen on the last and scene that closed another empire's career. On the arrival of the Spaniards the scepter of the Mayas had already passed away, and their ruined cities were the conqueror's spoil.

It is true that at the time of the conquest there was a remnant of a population on the peninsula of Yucatan—a number of tribes who still hunted the vicinity of the deserted cities—and these are generally believed to have been the descendants of the builders, though this is by no means certain. They called themselves Maya people; their language, they said, was Mayathan, the Mayation means the Maya capital.

Not only did traditions exist in the minds of the people, but many of the old Indian families still preserved their books, the remnants of once extensive libraries, in which the history, traditions and customs of the people were recorded. All these books that the Spanish priests could lay their hands upon were burned. Four only have come down to us—priceless relics that in some unknown manner found their way into European libraries, where they lay hidden until unearthed by scholars of recent years. The books of the Mayas consisted of long strips of paper made from maguey fiber, and folded after the manner of a screen so as to form pages about nine by five inches; these were covered with hieroglyphic characters, very neatly drawn by hand, in brilliant colors. Boards were fastened on the outside pages, and the completed book looked like a neat volume of large octavo size. The characters in which they are written are the same as those found upon the stone tablets and monuments in the ruined cities of Palenque and Copan. This system of writing, which is entirely distinct from the picture writing of the Aztecs, was the exclusive possession of the Mayas. It was a highly developed system, and, as investigations have shown, embraced a number of phonetic elements. Although nothing has yet been found that will enable any living man to decipher a single inscription

the results obtained by the labor of a number of eminent scholars here and abroad give ground for the hope that future investigations will bear more fruitful results.

Hidden away among the mountains of Honduras, in a beautiful valley which, even in that little traveled country, where remoteness is a characteristic attribute of places, is unusually secluded, is Copan, one of the greatest mysteries of the ages. Whatever the origin of its people, this old city is distinctly American—the growth of American soil and environment. The area comprised within the limits of the old city consists of a level plain seven or eight miles long and two miles wide at the greatest. This plain is covered with the remains of stone houses, doubtless the habitations of the wealthy. The streets, squares and courtyards were paved with stone, or with white cement made from lime and powdered rock, and the drainage was accomplished by means of covered canals and underground sewers built of stone and cement. On the stones of the mountains, too, are found numerous ruins, and even on the highest peaks fallen columns and ruined structures may be seen.

On the right bank of the Copan river in the midst of the city stands the principal group of structures—the temples, palaces and buildings of a public character. These form part of what has been called—for want of a better name, the Main Structure—a vast, irregular pile rising from the plain in steps and terraces of masonry, and terminating in several great pyramidal elevations, each topped by the remains of a temple. Its sides face the four cardinal points; its greatest length from north to south is about eight hundred feet, and from east to west it measured originally nearly as much, but a part of the eastern structure has been carried away by the swift current of the river which flows directly against it. The interior of the structure is thus exposed in the form of a cliff one hundred feet high, presenting a complicated system of buried walls and floors down to the water's edge—doubtless the remains of the older buildings, occupied for a time, and abandoned to serve as foundations for more elaborate structures. Excavations have also been brought to light beneath the foundations of buildings now occupying the surface, not only the filled chambers and broken walls of older structures, but sculptured monuments as well.

Within the main structure, at an elevation of sixty feet, is a court one hundred and twenty feet square, which, with its surrounding architecture, must have presented a magnificent spectacle when it was entire. It was entered from the south through a passage thirty feet in width, between two high pyramidal foundations, each supporting a temple.

A thick wall, pierced in the center by a gateway, now stripped of its adornments and in ruins, guarded this passage to the south. The court itself is inclosed by ranges of steps or seats ranging to a height of twenty feet, as in an amphitheater; they are built of great blocks of stone, neatly cut, and regularly laid without mortar. In the center of the western side is a stairway projecting a few feet into the court and leading to a broad terrace above the range of seats on that side. The upper steps of this stairway are divided in the midst by the head of a huge

dragon facing the court, and holding in its distended jaws a grotesque human head of colossal proportions.

To the north of the court stood the two magnificent temples, 21 and 22, the massive ruins create a feeling that they were the work of giants.

Temple 22, in many ways the most interesting yet explored, furnishes a typical example of this class of building. From the stone paved terrace above the western side of the court, a great stairway, with massive steps, leads up to a platform which runs the whole length of the way two graceful wing stones, extending across the platform, guard the approach to the first entrance, which gives access to the building, and is carried out at each end upon solid piers to the line of beginning of the steps. From the head of the stairway to the outer chambers this stairway is nine feet wide and was covered with a vaulted roof, now fallen. Directly opposite it, in the interior, is a second doorway, leading to the inner chambers. In front of the second entrance is a step two feet high, ornamented on the face by hieroglyphs and skulls carved in relief, a pedestal for a

sculptor. The sides of the monuments not occupied by human figures are covered with hieroglyphic inscriptions. In front of each of the figures, at a distance of a few feet, is a smaller sculpture, called an altar. These measure sometimes seven feet across and from two to four feet in height. The design sometimes represents a grotesque monster with curious adornments; but a common form of altar is a flat disk seven or eight feet in diameter, with a row of hieroglyphs around the edge.

But there is nothing in all the sculptures at Copan to suggest the sacrifice of humans or any other victims; nothing to recall the revolting traffic in human blood that was common in Mexico down to the time of the conquest; no trace of analogy with the frightful orgies that marred the history of the Aztecs, pervading every phase of their national life, finding constant expression in their decorative art, and filling their picture-written annals with scenes of blood. The most extraordinary feature that



THE JAGUAR STAIRWAY.

crouching figure supporting the head of a dragon, the body of which is turned upward and is lost among the scrollwork and figures of a cornice that runs above the doorway. All the interior walls were covered by a thin coat of stucco, on which figures and scenes were painted in various colors; and the cornices were adorned with stucco masks and other ornaments, likewise painted. The roofs, with the massive towers which they supported, had fallen and filled the chambers completely. The horizontal arch formed by overlapping stones was always used in the construction of roofs—a type that is common to all the Maya cities. The outside of the building, profusely ornamented with grotesques at every line, bears witness to the ambitious prodigality of the architect, his love of adornment, and his aversion to plain surfaces—a characteristic that is manifested on all the monuments and carvings at Copan.

Climbing the steep flight of steps at the north side of the court, and standing among the ruins of temple 11, we command a view of what must have been one of the finest sights in this marvelous city, where, it would seem, the geni who attended on King Solomon had been at work. To our right are the ruins of another lofty temple (26), from the entrance of which the hieroglyphic stairway, to be described later, descended to the pavement one hundred feet below. Right in front of us the northern slope of the main structure goes down abruptly, in a broad, steep flight of steps, to the floor of the plaza, which stretches away to the north, and terminates in an amphitheater about three hundred feet square, enclosed in the eastern, northern, and western sides by ranges of seats twenty feet high. The southern side is open, except that its center is occupied by a pyramid that rose almost to a point, leaving a square platform on top. In the plaza stood the principal group of obelisks, monoliths or stelae, as they are variously designated, to which Copan owes its principal fame. There are fifteen in all scattered over the plaza, some overthrown and others still erect. Although affording infinite variety in detail, in general design and treatment these monuments are all the same.

No verbal description can convey any idea of their appearance. They average about twelve feet in height and three feet square, and are carved over the entire surface. On one side, and sometimes on two opposite sides, stands a human figure in high relief, always looking toward one of the cardinal points. Upon these personages is displayed such a wealth of ornament and insignia that the figures look overburdened and encumbered, giving the idea that the chief object of the artist was the display of such adornment. While nearly all these human figures are disproportionately short, the accurate drawing and excellent designs surrounding the principal char-

acters show that this is not owing to deficient perception on the part of the sculptor. The sides of the monuments not occupied by human figures are covered with hieroglyphic inscriptions. In front of each of the figures, at a distance of a few feet, is a smaller sculpture, called an altar. These measure sometimes seven feet across and from two to four feet in height. The design sometimes represents a grotesque monster with curious adornments; but a common form of altar is a flat disk seven or eight feet in diameter, with a row of hieroglyphs around the edge.

When discovered, in 1894, this stairway was completely buried beneath the debris fallen from the temple, of which not one stone remained upon another. The upper part of the stairway itself has also been thrown from its place as if by an earthquake, and lay strewn upon the lower portion. When, at length, after months of labor, on which from fifty to one hundred men were employed, the fallen material was cleared away, an acre of ground was covered with broken sculptures, removed during the progress of the work, and the lower steps were found unharmed. In the center of the stairway, at the base, is a throne or pedestal rising to the fifth step, and projecting eight feet in front. The design upon its face is rich in sculpture and delicate in detail. It is made up in part of handsome faces, masks, death-heads, and scrolls, beautifully carved, and disposed with perfect symmetry; but the ensemble is perfectly unintelligible. On the face of each step in the stairway is a row of hieroglyphs, carved in medium relief, running the entire length. At intervals in the ascent the center is occupied by a human figure of noble and commanding appearance, arrayed in splendid attire, seated on the steps. The upper parts of all these figures were broken away, but the pieces of several were recovered and restored.

On each side was a solid balustrade two feet thick; the upper parts of these were also broken away, but by careful study and comparison enough was recovered to enable us to make out the curious and complicated design. Portrait-like busts issuing from the jaws of grotesque monsters, standing out upon these balustrades, and repeated at regular intervals, formed their principal adornment.

**Lemon Juice in the Manicure Water.**  
The best manicure acid is a teaspoonful of lemon juice in a cup of tepid water. This not only whitens and removes stains from the nails, but it loosens the cuticle much better than scissors do. A dash of lemon juice, too, in a glass of water is an admirable tooth wash after the use of onions or anything that will affect the breath.—New York Evening Post.

Why does the tallest man in a crowd always get in front?

## A POET'S ROMANCE.

STORY OF HARRIET RICHARDSON AND JAMES T. ELLIS.

Promised to Wed the Bard When He Was a College Student Flattery of Capital Society Causes Her Affections to wane.



KENTUCKY has long been noted for her romances in real life. The romance of Miss Harriet Richardson and her poet lover, James Tandy Ellis, is fully in keeping with Kentucky's history. The story dates back eight years, when the poet was a stalwart student at the Kentucky State college in Lexington. He had just attained his majority when he first met Miss Richardson at a party. She was the belle of the evening and he a splendid specimen of the young Kentuckian. It was an ease of love at first sight. Miss Richardson had been in society several years, had been petted and spoiled by the society dukes until she was tired of the insipid youngsters. It was no wonder, then, that she admired handsome young Ellis. He is probably an inch above six feet in height, as straight as an Indian and the very personification of perfect young manhood. Besides, he is highly accomplished in music and literature—in fact, he is a genius. He composes music as readily as a Mozart or a Beethoven, improvises on the piano as easily as a Liszt, and he can write poetry as easily as the average man can write prose. He has a prodigious memory and can recite all the best poems of the leading poets. He and Miss Richardson were thrown in each other's company a great deal during his last years at college and their engagement was soon known to their intimate friends. It seemed as if the course of their true love would, contrary to the old adage, run smoothly, but Miss Richardson went to visit her sister, Mrs. Forney, whose husband was an attaché of the Brooklyn navy yard. She was introduced into Brooklyn society and when her sister visited Washington and Philadelphia she went with her. In both these cities she soon became a social favorite, owing to her great beauty and many accomplishments. Naval officers, congressmen, members of legations and other society men were charmed with her beauty and vivacity and it was not long until Congressman Bennett of Brooklyn, began to pay her such marked attention that it soon became reported that they were engaged to be married. Young Ellis had wandered at the infrequency of her letters and at their brevity, and he was not surprised when the report reached him that his sweetheart was engaged to be married to the Brooklyn congressman. It was a cruel blow to the sensitive young man, but he calmly wrote Miss Richardson to the effect that he would release all claims to her hand. After writing this letter he left Kentucky and wandered aimlessly over several of the western states teaching school, writing poetry and trying to forget his love affair with the pretty Miss Richardson. He never heard from her except through the society columns of the newspapers, when her name would be mentioned in connection with some brilliant reception at Washington or Brooklyn or Philadelphia or Boston. Miss Richardson's visit ended and she returned to her home in Lexington. She had been promised by ex-Secretary Herbert the honor of christening the battleship Kentucky. The newspapers from one end of the country to the other had

she picked up a Louisville paper and read a communication criticizing her detractors. It was signed with the initials J. E. T.

Miss Richardson recognized the initials as those of her poet lover, and she immediately wrote to the newspaper which published the card asking his address. When she discovered it she wrote him a letter thanking him for his kind interest in her behalf. He answered the letter and a correspondence sprung up which resulted in a renewal of their engagement and the announcement that the wedding will take place next June.

Mr. Ellis was born in Ghent, Ky., June 18, 1868. His father, Dr. Clarkson Ellis, was a wealthy physician. Young Ellis was educated in the public schools of Carroll county and in the Kentucky State college. He studied music in the Cincinnati conservatory of music. He has written many clever verses the best of which is perhaps the "Golden Rod." He has also composed a number of catchy pieces of music. The best of these is known as "The Kentucky Colonels." At present he is engaged in newspaper work in Louisville. His family is one of the oldest and most distinguished in the state, and he traces his lineage back to King George III, in a direct line. He has two brothers, one older and one younger than himself. The former is a practicing physician in Carroll county, while the latter is studying medicine at Philadelphia college. He has no sisters.

Miss Richardson comes from one of the oldest and best families in the state. Her father, John Hall Richardson, was for many years the wealthiest short-horn breeder in this section. Her grandfather, William Hall Richardson, was a revolutionary soldier. Her mother was the noted beauty Jane Shore Stamps. Her uncle, Thomas



MISS HARRIET B. RICHARDSON, Stamps, was a soldier in the Mexican war, and when he returned from the sanguinary struggle he gained considerable notoriety by fighting a big black bear with no weapon save his hands. The fight was a draw. Miss Richardson is radiantly happy over the turn affairs have taken, and she confesses that the christening of the battleship could not afford her half the happiness that the other ceremony will bring her.

### MORE WEDDINGS THAN HUSBANDS.

Pennsylvania Enoch Arden Finds the Way is Clear for Him.

Fifteen years ago Mrs. Lemuel Woodbridge of Fairdale, near Susquehanna, Pa., sent her husband to the meat market for a pound of beefsteak for breakfast. One day last week he returned with the meat. The intervening years had been a blank to him. Following his disappearance Mrs. Woodbridge went into mourning, then got a divorce and again married. Her second husband died three years later. What was her surprise when the other day a gray haired man unceremoniously entered her home, hung his hat upon the rack and put a package upon the table. The woman did not recognize the stranger at first and the amazed children were about to drive him away when he explained that he was Lemuel Woodbridge. He said that the past, up to two weeks ago, was almost a blank to him. He remembered being in England and Australia, and knows that he sold washing machines in Manchester. He does not know under what name he has been sailing, nor how he has gained an existence. Until informed he did not know whether he had been absent a month or twenty years. He had saved some money. Coming from Liverpool to Montreal in a cattle boat it suddenly flashed upon him who he was and where he used to live. He made haste to reach Pennsylvania, and in Birmingham, N. Y., a railroad man told him that his former wife and children were still living. Riding in the railroad coach something told him to carry "home" the meat, to procure which he had left home fifteen years ago. After being convinced that Woodbridge's story was true, he was given shelter. There has since been a complete reconciliation and the wife and widow will soon be married again to the husband of her youth, thus making the curious record of three weddings to two husbands.

### Bigamy Common in Italy.

Italy is said to have more bigamists than any other European country. This is made possible because the church refuses to recognize civil marriages, and the state does not regard a church marriage as binding. The result is that unscrupulous men marry two wives—one with the sanction of the church, the other with the sanction of the law.

Some people get so tired doing nothing that they are never able to do anything else.

The still-house worm destroys more corn than the cut worm does.



JAMES T. ELLIS.

printed her picture and full accounts of how the gallant secretary had bestowed this honor upon her at a dinner party in Washington. But no word of congratulation came to her from her discarded lover. While the skies seemed bright above her he maintained silence and she really did not know whether he was alive or dead. Later on, when Secretary Long was about to wreat the honor of christening the Kentucky from Miss Richardson, and when Governor Bradley was about to appoint his own daughter sponsor for the war vessel named after this commonwealth there came a time when it seemed to Miss Richardson as if every friend had forsaken her. Even ex-Secretary of the Navy Herbert declared that he had not selected Miss Richardson to christen the Kentucky.

It was in this dark hour that her young poet lover came to her rescue, but he came without notifying her and without her knowledge. One day while the storm was raging about her, when the newspapers were full of articles on the christening of the Kentucky, when she was being criticized by editors of alleged society journals and by others,



THE HIEROGLYPHIC STAIRWAY. (Restored.)