AS PRACTICED BY MESSRS. STEPHENS AND CATHERWOOD.



An Era in American Literature-Central America and its Magnificent Ruins,

lustrated with sixty-six fine plates engraved by Gimber, Dick, Halpin, &c. after beautiful drawings by Catherwood, have just been published by the Messrs. ever published in any part of this country.

images, and historical monuments of all descriptions, still to be found in a comparatively perfect state in the centre of this great Continent, awful memorials, but of whom we know not, the mind is lost in wonder and adoration, and the heart involuntarily exclaims that the History of the world has yet to be written !

Mr. Stephens wassent out to Central America with a special mission from our Government, Oct. 3, 1839, and returned to New York, July 31, 1840, being absent ten months. The work in question has been in preparation about nine months, over two hundred persons have been employed upon it during that time, and \$13,000 have been expended in getting it up.

In the present notice therefore we shall do little more than place before our readers numerous extracts and illustrations thereof, which we have prepared at a very heavy expense.

It is a new subject. The Mighty Ruins and Antiquities of the New World. And we, therefore, devote more than ordinary space and expense in noticing this valuable work.

! And here we advise all who read the work or this notice to commence by placing before them a map of Central America. Messrs. Stephens & Cather. wood, for they were fellow travellers, reached Balize in the Bay of Honduras on the 29th day after the leaving New York.

From Balize they successively visited Puenta Gordo, the Carlo Indians, Rio Dolice, Moiagua River, River, Village of Copan, Equipulas, Quezaltapeque Mountain, San Jacinto, San Rosalie, Chimalapa, Gustatoqua, El Puente, Guatemala, Mexico, La Artigua, St. Pablo, Volcano de Agua, Ciudad Vieja, Alotenango, Escuintla, Masagua, Port of Istapa, the Pacific Ocean, back to Guatemala, Lake of Amatitan, Overo, Port of Acajutla, Zonzanate, Volcano of Izalco, Gulf of Nicoya, Calderalharbor, Mountain of on at different times, and all had been ornamented with Indian. Aguacate, La Garita Alihuela, Heredia, Rio Segondo, Cartago, thence back to Guatemala, by Esparza, Costa Rica, River Lagartos, Santa Rosa, Bagases, Guancaste Harbor of San Juan, Nicaragua, surveyed the route of the proposed Atlantic and Pacific Canal, thence to Tierra Caliente, Masaya, village, lake, and volcano, Nindiri, Managua, Mateares, Nagarotes, to Leon. Then to Chinandaga, Realejo, Nagoscola, San Salvador, to Guatemala. Thence to the ruins of Quiryna, and back to Guatemala. Then to the ruins of Quiche. Thence to the City of Quezakenango; on to Comitan, thus entering Mexico; thence to Ocosingo, and at last to the far famed ruinous City of Palenque. Thence they went to Sisal and the ruins of Axmal in Yucatan; and embarked at Signifor home on the 24th of June, 1840; having If the idol was gigantic and hollow, it was usual to introbeen in the country about seven months and twenty-

well known, nevertheless we must give a few extracts | had belonged, and caraied to his house to be dressed and | nets for fish, wild and primitive as in the first ages of descriptive of his adventures.

four days.

On landing at the Balize, he thus describes the

By this time I had twice passed the whole length of the principal street, and the town seemed in the entire possession of blacks. The bridge, the market place, the streets and stores were thronged with them, and might have fancied myself in the capital of a negro republic. They were a fine-looking race, tall, straight, and athletic, with skins black, smooth, and glossy as mountain scenery. The ceremonies of the Holy velvet, and well dressed, the men in white cotton shirts and trousers, with straw hats, and the women in white frocks, with short sleeves and broad red borders, and | terest. adorned with large red earrings and necklaces; and could not help remarking that the frock was their only article of dress, and that it was the fashion of these sable der, and to carry the skirt in the left hand, and raise it to any height necessary for crossing puddles.

What "height necessary" it may be for a sable lady to raise her petticouts to cross a gutter in Balize, we know not, but we believe Mr. S. might have seen the same custom practised by white ladies in Broadway on a wet day.

By the following account he must have been repaid for all his troubles, when from the summit of the Volcano of Cartago he had a

VIEW OF THE ATLANTIC AND PACIFIC OCEANS AT THE

SAME MOMENT.

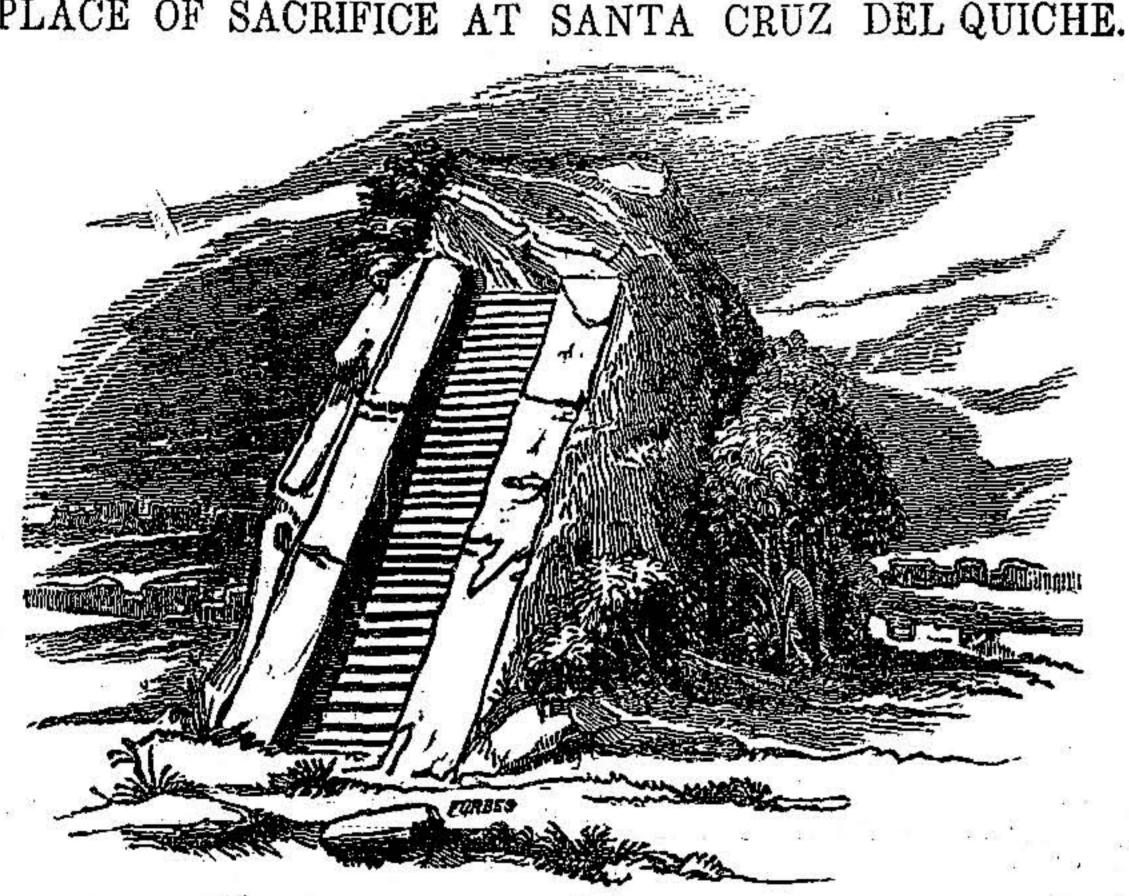
The lofty point on which we stood was perfectly clear, the atmosphere was of transparent purity, and looking beyond the region of desolution, below us, at a distance of perhaps two thousand feet, the whole country was covered with clouds, and the city at the foot of the volcano was invisible. By degrees the more distant clouds were lifted, and over the immense bed we saw at the same moment the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. This was the grand spectacle we had hoped, but scarcely expected to behold. My companions had ascended the volcano several times, but on account of the clouds had only seen the two seas once before. The points at which they were visible were the Gulf of Nicoya and the harbor of San Juan, not directly opposite, but nearly at right anthe body. In a right line over the tops of the mountains neither was more than twenty miles distant, and from the great height at which we stood they seemed almost at our feet. It is the only point in the world which commands a view of the two seas; and I ranked the sight and from Mount Hor I saw the Dead Sea.

Hezoo's mode of kissing all the girls at SanJose and Stephen's little love scene with the belle of Guanacasta is worth reading, especially where he speaks

ested on the pink muslin pillow of her bed. It's well ; wearing their breeches adopted by the boatmen, was the author has no wife. After leaving this young lady | quite novel. Two splendid volumes with the above title, writ- early one morning, he starts to survey the canal line ten by Mr. Stephens, the celebrated traveller, and il- across the Isthmus of Nicaragua, with a valuable ac- chapter ten of the second volume, where the author

count of which he closes the first volume. commencement of the second volume is exceedingly tant view of the celebrated encampment of the an-Harpers, Brothers. And it is just praise that this is graphic, and the book is worth purchasing if it were cient Britons on the Herefordshire Beacon. The the most valuable work, in every sense of the word, only to read that piece. The mode of sleeping in account of the Kings of Quiche and Kachiguel, who, the same room adopted by the males and females in On reading it, and inspecting the numerous beau- | Nicaragua, appears to be as promiscuous as in any tiful and faithful engravings it contains of ruins, of part of the world. The account of the Volcano of The most important part of these ruins now left is palaces, towers, altars, idols, monuments, obelisks, Cosaguina is very interesting; and the mode of here represented, and is called PLACE OF SACRIFICE AT

We are compelled to pass on from this part to approaches the ruins of Santa Cruz del Quiche. The The description of the volcano of Ninderi at the distant view of the ruins precisely resembles the disaccording to Fuentes, the chronicler of Guatemala were descended from the Tottecan Indians, should be read with great care. It is highly interesting.



It is a greaterngular stone structure, sixty-six feet on | Pedro. Fortunately, however, nearly the whole village 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, gray from long that there were different layers of stucco, doubtless put painted figures. In one place we made out part of the body of a leopard, well drawn and colored.

The top of the Sacrificatorio is broken and ruined, but there is no doubt that it once supported an altar for those iards with horror. It was barely large enough for the article:altar and officiating priests, and the idol to whom the sacrifice was offered. The whole was in full view of the

The barbarous ministers carried up the victim entirely naked, pointed out the Idol to which the sacrifice was made, that the people might pay their adoratoins, and then extended him upon the altar. This had a convex surface, and the body of the victim lay arched, with the | wood as to be impenetrable, and the branches were trimtrunk elevated and the head and fect depressed. Four firm with a wooden instrument made in the form of a coiled serpent, so that he was prevented from making dismount. In some places, for a great distance around, story. I am slow to disbelieve, and would rather sustain offered to the sun, and then three it at the feet of the idol. | was made in the San Pedro papers. taken up by the officer or soldier to whom the prisoner served up as an entertainment for his friends. It he was | savage life. not a prisoner of war, but a slave purchased for the sacthe spot had been the theatre, it seemed a righteous race of its ministers destroyed.

is a fine Moorish looking city, in the heart of wild Week are thrilling. The whole place was full of in-

sil remains of a large mastodon. He then went to ladies to drop this considerably from off the right shoul- visit the ruins here called las cuevas, the caves .-They were about one and a half miles from the city, in the midst of a fine plain. There were also tion at being carried on a man's shoulders. At that time | which escaped their observation, just as those who come | tablets on each side; and within the doorway is seen the | races of Indians speaking many different languages, and several mounds round about here, supposed to be sepulchres of the ancients. Here he again met which for any of us was sure evidence of being in a bad was our wish and intention to make a thorough explo-Pawling, and they opened a mound, and got out the following

VASES FOUND AT GUAGUETENANGO.



In the afternoon we opened one of the mounds. interior was a rough coat of stones and lime, and after an hour's digging we came to fragments of bones and the two lower vases in the plate opposite. The first of the and a blow, always painful to my cars, but which I never der the immediate pressure of famine, were all busy two was entire when we discovered it, but, unfortunately, was broken in getting it out, though we obtained all the pieces. It is graceful in design, the surface is polishgles to each other, so that we saw them without turning ed, and the workmanship very good. The last was already broken, and though more complicated, the surface is not polished. The tripod at the top of the engraving is a copy of the vase before referred to, found in the tomb. which I procured from the owner of the land. It is twelve inches in diameter, and the surface is polished. with those most interesting occasions, when from the top We discovered no treasure, but our day's work was most of Mount Sing Plooked out upon the Desert of Arabia, interesting, and we only regretted that we had not time to explore more thoroughly.

From here the traveller went on to San Pedro, of after a particularly careful movement, brought both feet | we wanted, we were obliged to teach the same to others; which he says:

ed. From the bacienda of Padre Solis to Tumbala, eve- seemed giving away. The precipice was awful, and the ther I shall do so now or not is uncertain; but I am anx. of kissing her across the table—and the cheeks that | ry one we met cautioned us against the Indians of San slightest irregular movement on my part might bring us ious that it should be understood that the accounts which

each side at the base, and rising in a pyramidal form to | had gone to the fete at Tumbala. There was no alcal-Gualan, Zacapa, Chiquimula, St. Stephanos, Copan | the height, in its present condition, of thirty-three feet. | de, no alguazils; a few Indians were lying about in a On three sides there is a range of steps in the middle, state of utter nudity, and when we looked into the huts step seventeen inches high on the upper surface, which | the women ran away, probably alarmed at seeing men Here it was customary for those who intented to cross

the mountains to take hammacas or sillas: the former being a cushioned chair, with a long pole at each end, to be borne by four Indians before and behind, the traveller sitting with his face to the side, and, as the justitia exposure. By breaking a little at the corners we saw told us, only used by very heavy men and padres; and the latter an arm chair, to be carried on the back of an Mode of Traveiling.

This was two days journey from Palenque. They slept here, and he thus describes the mode of trasacrifices of human victims which struck even the Span- | velling, as represented in the plate at the head of this

Early the next morning the party started, with silla

and men, altogether our party swelled to twenty ladi-

was as wild as before the Spanish conquest, and without a habitation until we reached Palenque. The road was written articles in our own country they have been set through a forest so overgrown with brush and undermed barely high enough to admit a man's travelling un- ring to our expedition, which represents this city, discopriests held the legs and arms, and another kept his head | der them on foot, so that on the backs of our mules we | vered by us, as having been three times as large as Lonwere constantly obliged to bend our bodies, and even to | don! It is not in my nature to discredit any marvellous

duce the keart of the victim into its mouth with a gol- | naked except a small piece of cotton cloth around the den spoon. If the victim was a prisoner of war, as soon | loins and passing between the legs, one of them, young, of my own, and with many thanks to my friends of the as it was sacrificed they cut off the head to preserve the tall, and of admirable symmetry of form, looking the free-Mr. Stephens' pleasant style of telling a story is scull, and threw the body down the steps, when it was born gentleman of the woods. Shortly afterward we passed a stream, where naked Indians were setting rude

> At twenty minutes past ten we commenced ascending rifice, the proprietor carried off the body for the same | the mountain. It was very hot, and I can give no idea of purpose. In recurring to the barbarous scenes of which | the toil of ascending these mountains. Our mules could barely clamber up with their saddles only. We disenpings; in fact, came down to shirt and pantaloons, and After this our authorgoes to Quezaltenango, which as near the condition of the Indians as we could. Our covering one of them. procession would have been a spectacle in Broadway .-First were four Indians, each with a rough oxide box, | means at command, states in his report, that in the exesecured by an iron chain and large padlock, on his back; then Juan, with only a bat and pair of thin cotton cotton drawers, driving two spare mules, and carrying a double-barrelled gun over his naked shoulders; then our-Near Gunguetenango Mr. S. discovered the fos selves, each one driving before him or leading his own mule; then an Indian carrying the silla, with relief car- | sources such a commission would give, did not discover riers, and several boys bearing small bags of provisions, any more buildings than those mentioned by Del Rio, the Indians of the silla being much surprised at our not and we saw only the same; but, having the benefit of the reader may understand it in all its details, the plate

secure before he brought up the other, and by degrees, and just as one set began to understand precisely what a fearful whistle and blow. I rose and fell with every cheap, was dear in reference to the work done. If a bad name could kill a place, San Pedro was damn. breath, felt his body trembling under me, and his knees At that time I expected to return to Palenque; whe-

both down together. I would have given him a release in full for the rest of the journey to be off bis back; but he started again, and with the same care ascended several steps, so close to the edge that even on the back of a mule it would have been very uncomfortable. My fear lest he should break down or stumble was excessive—
To my extreme relie, the path turned away; but I had hardly congratulated myself upon my escape before he descended a few steps. This was much worse than ascending; if he fell, nothing could keep me from going over his head; but I remained till he put me down of his own accord. The poor fellow was we with perspiration, and trembled in every limb. Another stood ready to take me up, but I had enough. Pawling tried it. but only for a short time. It was bad enough to see an indian tolling with a dead weight on his back; but tofeel him trempling under one's own body, here his hard breathing, see the sweat rolling down him, and feel the finsecurity of the position, made this a mode of travelling which nothing but constitutional laziness and insensibility could endure. Walking, or rather climbing, stopping very often to rest, and riding when it was at all practicable, we reached a thatched shed, where we wished to stop for the night, but there was no water. It was a start of the otype of the night, but there was no water. It was a start of the otype of the night, but there was no water. It was a start of the otype of the night, but there was no water. It was a start of the otype of the night, but there was no water. It was here we wished to stop for the night, but there was no water. It was here the night, but there was no water. It was here the night, but there was no water. It was here the night, but there was no water. It was here the night, but there was no water. It was here the night, but there was no water. It was here the night, but there was no water. It was here the night, but there was no water. It was here the night, but there was no water. It was here the night, but there was no wa The next night they reached Palenque in safety,

and he thus describes the last part of his journey:-The road was level, but the woods were still as thick

The road was level, but the woods were still as thick as on the mountain. At a quarter before eleven we reached a path which led to the ruins, or somewhere else. We had abandoned the intention of going directly to the ruins; for, besides that we were in a shattered condition, we could not communicate at all with our Indians, and probably they did not know where the ruins were. At length we came out upon an open plain, and looked back at the range we had crossed, running off to Peten and the country of unbaptised Indians.

As we advanced we came into a region of fine pasture grounds, and saw herds of cattle. The grass showed the effect of early rains, and the picturesque appearance of the country reminded me of many a scene at home; but there was a tree of singular beauty that was a stranger, having a high, naked trunk and spreading top, with leaves of vivid green, covered with yellow flowers.—Continuing carelessly, and stopping from time to time to enjoy the smiling view around, and realise our escape from the dark mountains behind, we rose upon a slight table of land and saw the village before us, consisting of one gress grown struct, unbroken even by a mule path, with a few straggling white houses on each side, on a with a few straggling white houses on each side, on a slight elevation at the farther end a thatched church, with a rude cross and belfry before it. A boy could roll on the grass from the church door out of the village. In fact, it was the most dead and-alive place I ever saw; but, coming from villages thronged with wild Indians its air of repose was most grateful to us,

Our limits will now only allow us to notice, briefly,

RUINS OF PALENQUE. As the ruins of Palenque are the first which awakened attention to the existence of ancient and unknown cities in America, and as, on that account, they are perhaps

more interesting to the public, it may not be amiss to state the circumstances of their first discovery. The account is, that in the year 1750, a party of Spaniards in the interior of Mexico penetrated to the lands north of the district of Carmen, in the province of Chiapas, when all at once they found in the midst of a vas solitude ancient stone buildings, the remains of a city. still embracing from eighteen to twenty-four miles in extent, known to the Indians by the name of Casas de Pie

The existence of such a city was entirely unknown there is no mention of it in any book, and no tradition that it had ever been. To this day it is not known by what name it was called, and the only appellation given to it is that of Palenque, after the village near which the

The news of the discovery passed from mouth to mouth was repeated in some cities of the province, and reached the seat of government; but little attention was paid

It was not till 1786, thirty pears subsequent to the discovery, that the King of Spain ordered an explanation; on the third of May, 1787. Captain Antonio del Kio arrived at the village, under a commission from the government of Guatemala, and on the fifth he proceeded to the site of the ruined city. In his official report he says, on making his first essay, owing to the thickness of the woods, and a fog so dense that it was impossible for the men to distinguish each other at five paces' distance, the principal building was completely concealed from their view. He returned to the village, and after concerting measures with the deputy of the district, an order was issued to the inhabitants of Tumbala, requiring two hundred Indians with axes and billhooks. On the 17th seventynine arrived, furnished with twenty-eight axes, after which twenty more were obtained in the village; and with these he again moved forward, and immediately commenced felling trees, which was followed by a general conflagration. The report of Captain Del Rio, with the commentary of

Doctor Paul Felix Cabrera of New Guatimala, deducing an Egyptian origin for the people, through either the supineness or the jealousy of the Spanish government was locked up in the archives of Guatimala until the time of the Revolution, when, by the operation of liberal principles, the original manuscripts came into the hands of an English gentleman long resident in that country and an English translation was published at London in 1932. This was the first notice in Europe of the discovery of these ruins; and, instead of electrifying the pub lic mind, either from want of interest in the subject, distrust, or some other cause, so little notice was taken of it, that n 1931 the Literary Gazette, a paper of great circulation in London, announced it as a new discovery made by Colonel Galindo, whose unfortunate fate has been before referred to. If a like discovery had been made in Italy, Greece, Egypt, or Asia, within the reach of European travel, it would have created an interest not inferior to the discovery of Herculancum, or Pompeii, or the ruins of Pæstum.

While the report and drawings of Del Rio slept in the archives of Guatemala, Charles the Fourth of Spain ordered another expedition, at the head of which was placed Captain Dupaix, with a secretary and draughtsman, and a detachment of dragocons. His expeditions were made in 1805, 1806, and 1807, the last of which was to Pa-

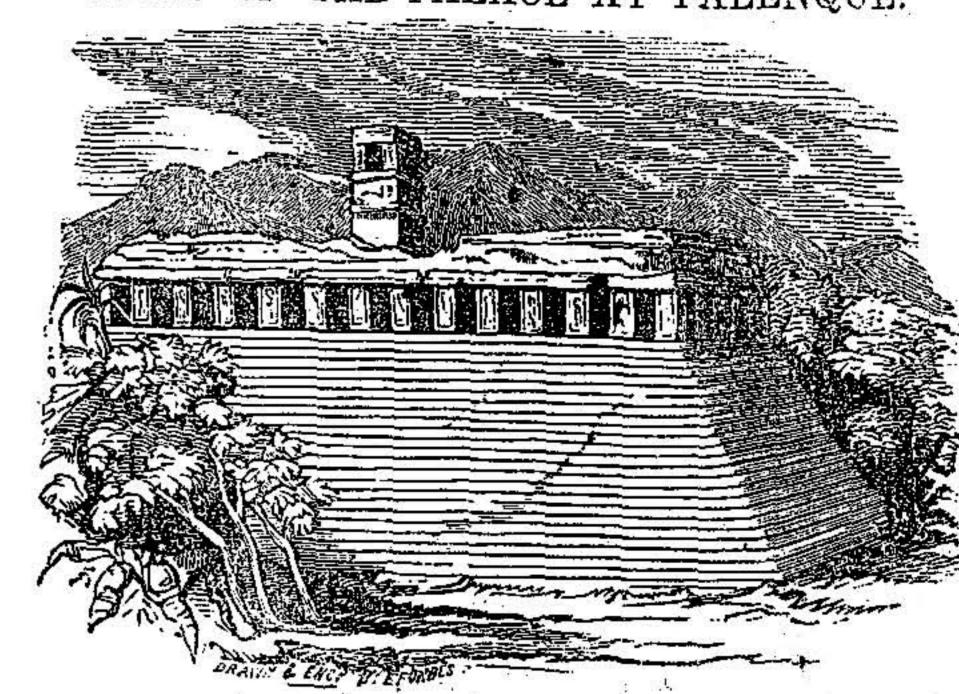
The manuscripts of Dupaix, and the designs of his draughtsman Castenda, were about to be sent to Madrid. which was then occupied by the French army, when the revolution broke out in Mexico; they then became an object of secondary importance, and remained during the wars of independence under the control of Castenada, who deposited them in the Cabinet of Natural History in Mexico. In 1838 M. Baradere disentembed them from the cartons of the museum. where, but for this accident, they might still have remained, and the knowledge of the existence of this city again been lost.

In regard to the extent of these ruins. Even in this practical age the imagination of a man delights in won-The country through which we were now travelling | ders. The Indians and the people of Palenque say that they cover a space of sixty miles; in a series of welldown as ten times larger than New York; and lately have seen an article in some of the newspapers, refer-

the least movement The head priest then approached, the woods seemed killed by the heat, the foliage wither all such inventions, but it has been my unhappy lot to and with a knife made of flint cut an aperture in the ed, the leaves dry and crisp, as if burned by the sun; and find marvels fade away as I approached them : even the breast, and tore out the heart, which, yet palpitating, he a tornado had swicht the country, of which no mention | Dead Sea lost its mysterious charm; and besides, as a traveller and "writer of a book," I know that if I go We met three Indians carrying clubs in their hands, | wrong, those who come after me will not fail to set me right. Under these considerations, not from any wish press, I am obliged to say that the Indians and people of Palenque really know nothing of the ruins personally, and the other accounts do not rest upon any sufficient foundation. The whole country for miles around is covered by a dense forest of gigantic trees, with a growth of brush and underwood unknown in the wooded deserts of our own country, and impenetrable in any direction, except by cutting a way with a machete. What lies buried in that forest it is impossible to say of my award that the bloody altar was hurled down, and the cumbered ourselves of sword, spurs, and all useless trap- own knowledge; without a guide, we might have gone within a hundred feet of all the buildings without dis-

Captain Del Rio, the first explorer, with men and

cution of his commission he cut down and burned all the woods; he does not say how far, but, judging from the breaches and excavatious made in the interior of the buildings, probably for miles around. Captain Dupaix, acting under a royal commission, and with all the reusing them according to contract and the price paid - them as guides, at least of Del Rio (for at that time we of it is presented, which shows distinctly all the combi-Though toiling excessively, we felt a sense of degrada | had not seen Dupaix's work), we of course saw things | nations of the doorway, with its broken ornaments, the I was in the worst condition of the three, and the night | after us will see what escaped ours. This place, how- large tableton the back of the inner wall. The reader before had gone to bed at San Pedro without supper, ever, was the principal object of our expedition, and it | will form from it some idea of the whole, and of its ef- for the belief that the whole of this country was once ration. Respect for my official character, the special pyramidal structure, on the threshold of the door this or at least, having the same written characters. We had brought the silla with us merely as a measure | tenor of my passport, and letters from Mexican authori- scene presents itself. We could not but regard it as a of precaution, with much expectation of being obliged to ties, gave me every facility. The prefect assumed that holy place, dedicated to the gods, and consecrated by the between the lower and upper parts of this building, and use of it; but at a steep pitch, which made my head al- I was sent by my government expressly to explore the religious observances of a lost and unknown people.— the only way of reaching the latter was by climbing a most burst to think of climbing, I resorted to it for the ruins; and every person in Palenque except our friend Comparatively the hand of ruin has spared it, and the first time. It was a large, clumsy armchair, put together | the alcalde, and even he as much as the perversity of his | great tablet, surviving the wreck of elements, stands perwith wooden pins and bark strings. The Indian who disposition would permit, was disposed to assist us. Bu: fect and entire. Lonely, deserted, and without any worwas to carry me, like all the others, was small, not more | there were accidental difficulties which were insupera- | shippers at its shrine, the figures and characters are dis- from exposure to the elements, and the ascendis of trees than five feet seven, very thin, but symmetrically form. ble. First, it was the rainy season. This, under any tinct as when the people who reared it went up to pay ed. A bark strap was tied to the arms of the chair, and, | circumstances, would have made it difficult; but as the | their adorations before it. To us it was all a mystery; sitting down, he placed his back against the back of the | rains did not commence till three or four o'clock, and | silent, defying the most scrutinizing gaze and reach of chair, adjusted the length of the strings, and smooted the the weather was clear always in the morning, it alone intellect. Even our friends the padres could make nobark across his forehead with a little cushion to relieve | would not have been sufficient to prevent our attempting the pressure. An Indian on each side lifted it up, and it; but there were other difficulties, which embarrassed the carrier rose on his feet; stood still a moment, threw | us from the beginning, and continued during our whele me up once or twice to adjust me on his shoulders, and residence among the ruins. There was not an axe or set off with one man on each side. It was a great relief, | spade in the place, and, as usual, the only instrument but I could feel every movement, even to the heaving of | was the machete, which here was like a short and widehis chest. The ascent was one of the steepest on the bladed sword; and the difficulty of procuring Indians to whole road. In a few minutes he stopped and sent forth | work was greater than at any other place we had visited a sound, usual with Indian carriers, between a whistle It was the season of planting corn, and the Indians, unnever felt so disagreeably before. My face was turned | with their milpas. The price of an Indian's labor was backward; I could not see where he was going, but ob. | eighteen cents per day; but the alcalde, who had the served that the Indian on the left fell back. Not to in- direction of this branch of the business, would not let crease the labor of carrying me, I sat as still as possible : | me advance to more than twenty-five cents, and the but in a few minutes, looking overmy shoulder, saw that | most he would engage to send me was from four to six a we were approaching the edge of a precipice more than day. They would not sleep at the ruins, came late, and a thousand feet deep. Here I became very anxious to dis- went away early ; sometimes only two or three appeared, mount; but I could not speak intelligibly, and the In- and the same men rarely came twice, so that during our dians could or would not understand my signs. My car- stay we had all the Indians of the village in rotation. rier moved along carefully, with his left foot first, feeling This increased very much our labor, as it made it necesthat the stone on which he put it down was steady and sary to stand over them constantly to direct their work;



A front view of this building is given in the engraving. It stands on an artificial elevation of an oblong form, forty feet high, three hundred and ten feet in front . The tops of the doorways were all broken. They had been thrown down by the growth of trees, and its form is hardly distinguishable.

hundred and eighty feet deep. Its height is not more have been visible and prominent; and we made up our than twenty-five feet, and all around it had a broad pro- minds that these lintels were of wood. ecting cornice of stone . The front contained fourteen doorways, about nine feet wide each, and the intervening piers are between six and seven feet wide. On the left (in approaching the palace) eight of the piers have fallen down, as has also the corner on the right, and the terrace underneath is cumbered with the ruins. But six piers remain entire, and the rest of the front is open.

STUCCO BAS-RELIEF AT THE PALACE, PALENQUE.



The building was constructed of stone, with a mortar of lime and sand, and the whole front was covered with stucco, and painted. The piers were ornamented with piers have all fallen down. On the left they are still spirited figures in bas-relief, one of which is represented standing, and ornamented with stucco figures. In the in the above engraving. On the top are three hieroglyphica sunk in the stucco. It is enclosed by a richly- of the arch, are the remains of a wooden pole about a ornamented border, about ten feet high and six wide, of | foot long, which once stretched across, but the rest had which only a part now remains. The principal person. | decayed. it was the only piece of wood we found at Paage stands in an unright position and in profile, exhibit- leuque, and we did not discover this until some time af ing an extraordinary facial angle of about forty-five de- ter we had made up our minds in regard to the wooden grees. The upper part of the head seems to have been | lintels over the doors. It was much worm-eaten, and compressed and lengthened, perhaps, by the same pro- probably, in a few years, not a vestiga of it will be left.

Cess employed upon the heads of the Choctaw and Flat- The whole courtyard was overgrown with trees, and head Indians of our own country. The head represents | it was encumbered with ruins several feet high, so that a different species from any now existing in that region | the exact architectural arrangements could not be seen of country; and, supposing the statues to be images of Having our beds in the corridor adjoining, when we living personages, or the creations of artists, according | awoke in the morning, and when we had finished the to their ideas of perfect figures, they indicate a race of | work of the day, we had it under our eves. Every time people now lost and unknown. The head-dress is evi- we descended the steps, the grim and mysterious figures dently a plume of feathers. Over the shoulders is a stared us in the face, and it became to us one of the most short covering, decorated with stude, and a breastplate; interesting parts of the ruins. We were exceedingly part of the ornament of the girdle is broken ; the tunic is | anxious to make excavations, clear out the mass of rub is probably a leopard's skin; and the whole dress, no bish, and lay the whole platform bare; but this was imdoubt, exhibits the costume of this unknown people. He ! possible. It is probably paved with stone or cement; and holds in his hand a staff or sceptre, and opposite his hands | from the profusion of ornament in other parts, there is are the marks of three hieroglyphics, which have de- reason to believe that many curious and interesting specaved or been broken off. At his feet are too naked | cimens may be brought to light. This agreeable work figures seated cross legged, and apparently suppliants .- | is left for the future traveller, who may go there better A fertile imagination might find many explanations for provided with men and materials, and with more knowthese strange figures, but no satisfactory interpretation | ledge of what he has to encounter; and, in my opinion, presents itself to my mind. The hieroglyphics doubt- if he finds nothing new, the mere speciacle of the court less tell its history. The stucce is of admirable consis- yard entire will repay him for the labor and expense of tency, and hard as stone. It was painted, and in different | clearing it.

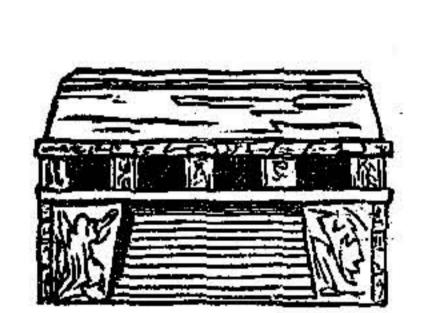
places about it we discovered the remains of rel, blue, yellow, black, and white.

and rear, and two hundred and sixty feet on each side. | evidently been square, and over every one were large This elevation was formerly faced with stone, which has | niches in the wall on each side, in which the lintels had been laid. These lintels had all fallen, and the stones above formed broken natural arches. Underneath were The building stands with its face to the east, and mea. heaps of rubbish, but there were no remains of lintels. sures two hundred and twenty-eight feet front by one | If they had been single slabs of stone, some of them must

> The builders were evidently ignorant of the principles of the arch, and the support was made by stones lap-ping over as they rose, as at Ocosingo, and among the Cy-clopean remains in Greece and Italy. Along the top was a layer of flat stone, and the sides, being plastered, pre-sented a flat surface. The long, unbroken corridors in front of the palace were probably intended for lords and gentlemen in waiting; or perhaps, in that beautiful position, which, before the forest grew up, must have com-manded an extended view of a cultivated and inhabited plain, the king himself sat in it to receive the reports of his officers, and to administer justice.

From the centre door of this corridor a range of stone steps thirty feet long leads to a rectangular courtyard, eighty feet long and seventy broad. On each side of the steps are grim and gigantic figures, carved on stone in basso-relievo, nine or ten feet high, and in a position slightly inclined backward from the end of the steps to the floor of the corridor. The engraving below represents this side of the court

EAST SIDE OF COURT-YARD OF PALACE AT PALENQUE!



When we first took possession of the palace this courtyard was encumbered with trees, so that we could hardly see across it, and it was so filled up with rubbish that we were obliged to make excavations of several feet before these figures could be drawn.

On each side of the courtyard the palace was divided into apartments, probably for sleeping. On the right the centre apartment, in one of the holes before referred to

ADORATORIO; OR, ALTAR CASA.



We considered the oratorio or altar the most interesting portion of the ruins of Palenque; and in order that | law.

description of a



The Indians call this building an escuela or school, but our friends the padres called it a tribunal of justice, L'Asiatic origin.

and these stones, they said, contained the tables of the There is one important fact to be noticed. The hieroglyphics are the same as were found at Copan and Quirigua. The intermediate country is now occupied by

Teere is no staircase or other visible communication es of which spread over the roof. The roof is inclined. and the sides are covered with stucco ornaments, which ble to draw them; but enough remained to give the impression that; when perfect and painted, they must have been rich and imposing. Along the top was a range of pillars eighteen inches high and twelve apart, made of small pieces of stone laid in mortar, and covered with In addition to the above, we give the following stucco, crowning which is a layer of flat projecting stones, having somewhat the appearance of a low open

> With these helps and the aid of the plain, the reader will be able to find his way through the ruined palace of Pelenque; he will form some idea of the profusion of its ornaments, of their unique and striking character, and of their mournful effect, shrouded by trees; and perhaps with him, as with us, fancy will present it as it was before the hand of ruin had swept over it, perfect in its amplitude and rich decorations, and occupied by the strange people whose portraits and figures now adorn its walls.

After this, the travellers discovered other ruins at Yucatan, which are also described, but which we have not room for.

All speculation is idle in regard to the origin of these ruins. They bear partial marks of Chinese, Japanese, Hindoo, Jewish and Ligyptian origin, mixed. And yet, were probably erected by a race of people, distinct from either of them, though of