

## CHAPTER II

### THE START

New Orleans was cheering the first Mardi Gras parade of the year 1925 when the steamer Copan on the 19th of February went down the river carrying the writer and the greater part of the First Tulane Expedition's equipment on board. By dawn on Sunday morning we steamed into the mouth of the Tamesi River followed by eight huge oil tankers, (fig. 1) lying high on the water, as they were empty. We were all heading for the oil city, Tampico. Tankers steadily come and go there. They come to be filled with crude oil, lubricating oil, and gasoline, and leave for all ports of the world.

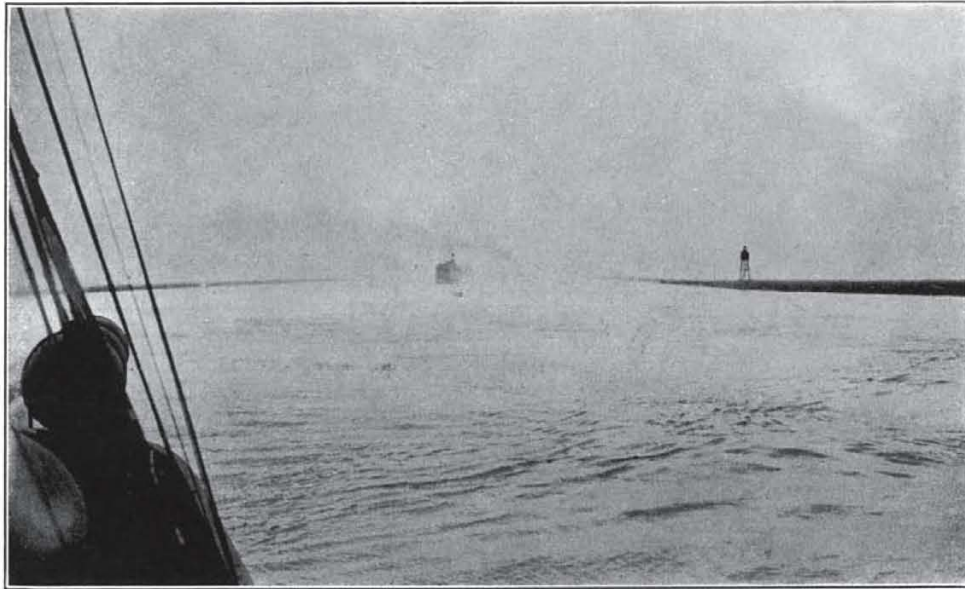


FIG. 1—Tampico. Oil Tankers Entering Tamesi River.

Tampico is the heart of the oil region running along the Mexican Gulf towards Vera Cruz. The river bank is crowded with refineries. Everything is oil—large islands of it float on the river, even the air is saturated with its stench.

We anchored in the mouth of the river to undergo a superficial medical inspection, after which we proceeded to the city. A town grown up around oil camps is never attractive, and though millions and millions of dollars have gone into Tampico's municipal treasury,

the town is still without paved streets and very dirty. Only where the foreign oil companies have built their quarters does one see well kept houses and gardens.

On a large field close to the Gorgas Hospital are several ancient Indian mounds through some of which new roads have been cut, and all of them have been dug into by treasure hunters (fig. 2). Only a few pot sherds were found, and these did not give any indication as to the authors of the mounds. The cross sections made in the mounds by the road builders show successive layers of cement floors about a foot apart. The mortar in the floors has been made from burnt oyster shells, and chiefly consists of a conglomerate of oyster shells with a thin smooth surface. As many as sixteen layers of mortar were counted in one mound.

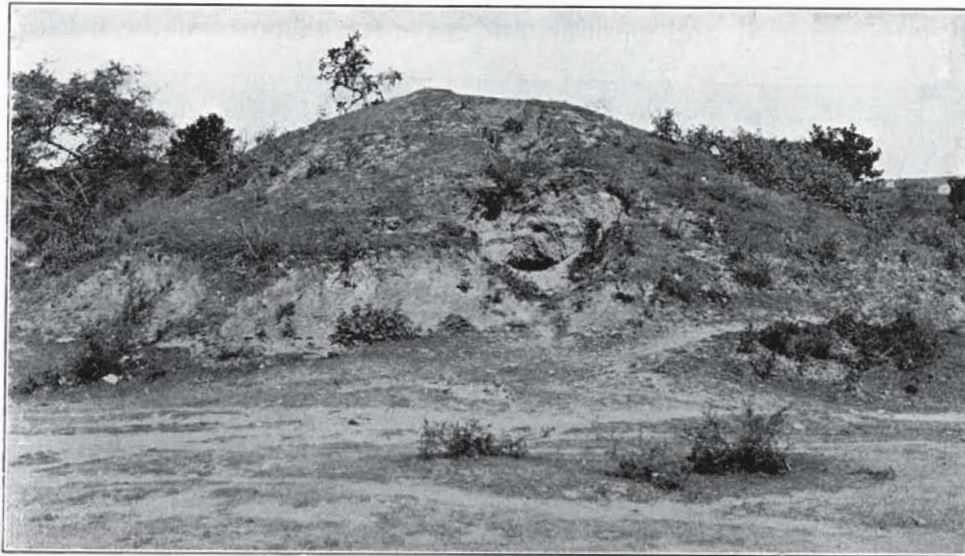


FIG. 2.—Tampico. Mounds by the Gorgas Hospital.

A visit was made to the famous old pot hunter, Professor William Niven. He has changed his residence from Mexico City to Tampico and here continues his eager search for antiquities. In his rooms he had a collection of small clay figurines, all females and of quite primitive character (fig. 3). Several of them had black paint on their head-dresses. Mr. Niven reported them to have been found near a station called Paso Vera Cruz on the railroad.

It was carnival time in Tampico, and during the afternoon crowds were circulating through the streets in decorated cars, and the pavements were littered with paper streamers and confetti. On the main plaza sat the Public Scribes, unaffected by the gayness around them, typewriting love letters for illiterate Mexican swains (fig. 4).



Some cargo was unloaded and then we proceeded to Vera Cruz, where the S. S. Copan was to load bananas. Again we went through a cursory medical and customs inspection. Once outside the customs station, one is attacked by a swarm of carriers, all crying at the top of their voices and offering to carry your luggage to the hotel. Woe to the poor traveler who does not drive a careful bargain in advance! He invariably will be overcharged, and when he makes a row about it, the carrier will call in a policeman, who will force the traveler to pay up, and then the two of them, carrier and policeman, will go out in the street and split the dividend.



FIG. 3—Tampico. Clay Figurine. ( $\frac{1}{2}$  Size).

In Vera Cruz also it was carnival time. Sunshine and flowers, bright colors and gay crowds—everybody seemed to enjoy the peace that now prevails in the country. Indians were dancing in the streets, and decorated cars and floats moved slowly up and down. A shot was heard. A man disengaged himself from the crowd and limped over the Plaza towards a Red Cross station. Blood was dripping in his trail. He



FIG. 4—Tampico. Public Scribes on the Principal Square.

was shot through the foot. Nobody seemed to take any notice, and the carnival went on.

In Mexico City it was necessary to acquire government permits for the work of the expedition, and various letters of introduction.

Every department of the government with which we came in touch offered the University whole-hearted co-operation, and furnished the Expedition with letters to the State Governments, as well as to the Military and Civil authorities.

Oliver La Farge joined me in Mexico City, and together we visited various ruins in and round the capital.

Guided by Mrs. Zelia Nuttall, a trip was made to the ruins of Huexotla, where some very interesting ancient walls and foundations for buildings are found (fig 5). This is a large group of ruins. The top of one mound has been excavated. No walls of buildings are on this mound, but a series of platforms, and Mrs. Nuttall suggested that it might have been used as a market place. The side of the mound has been washed out and shows several successive layers of floors with stone rubble and dirt between (fig. 6). On one of the largest mounds stands a beautiful old Spanish church, and in front of this is the fragment of an idol. The whole group of ruins lies along a deep baranca and along the edge of this a retention wall was built in ancient times. Now the baranca is crossed by a very picturesque old Spanish stone bridge\* (fig. 7).

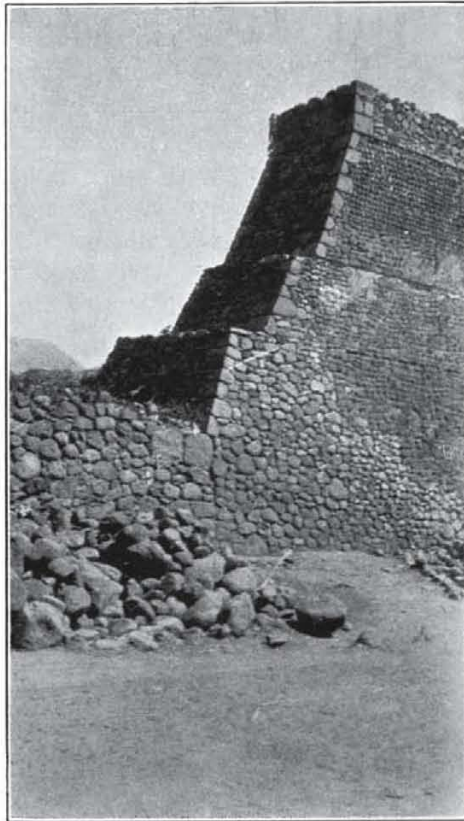


FIG. 5.—Huexotla, D. F. End View of Ancient Wall.

On the same trip we visited a mound near the large town of Texcoco. This mound is built entirely of adobe brick covered with plaster (fig. 8).

Mrs. Nuttall is widely known as an expert on the ancient history of Mexico, and her beautiful old Spanish home in Coyoacan is a meeting place for all prominent people visiting Mexico. Many are those who think of the garden of Casa Alvarado as one of the outstanding places of beauty in the Valley of Mexico, and many are

\*L. Batres. 1904.



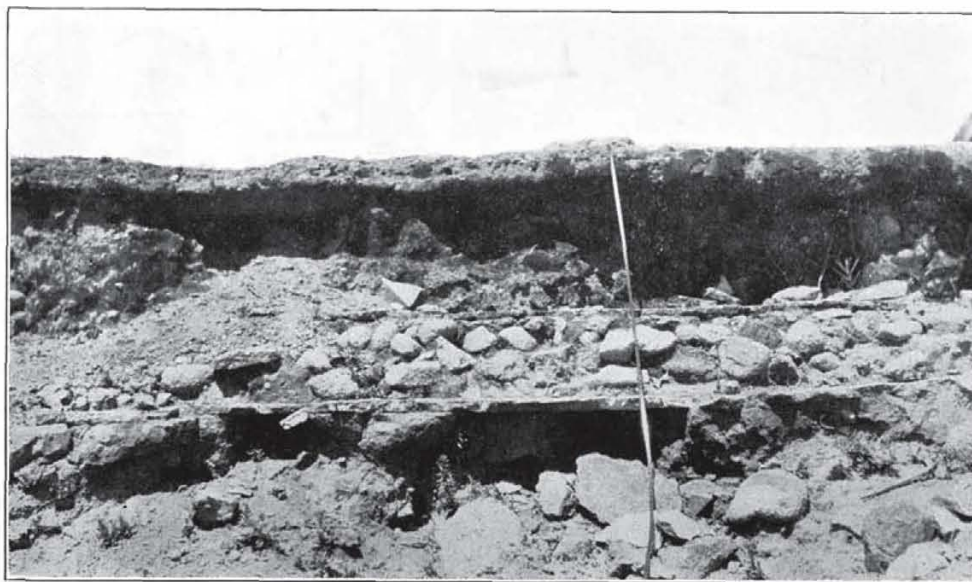


FIG. 6—Huexotla, D. F. Section of Mound Showing Various Floor Levels.

those who have enjoyed Mrs. Nuttall's charming hospitality. The garden is rich with beautiful flowers, and here and there among the flowers stand Aztec stone idols. One of the paths in the garden is lined on both sides with such idols and has wittily been christened, "Avenida de los Hombres Ilustres," The Avenue of the Famous Men (fig. 9).

Much time was spent in the National Museum studying the magnificent collections of Mexican antiquities. Unfortunately, this collection is very badly catalogued and the origin of many of the specimens is totally unknown. For example, a Maya stela carved in the style of the Usumacinta Valley stands in the patio of the Museum, and nobody knows from which ancient city it came (fig. 10).

A fragment of another stela carries a much weathered in-



FIG. 7—Huexotla, D. F. Old Spanish Bridge.



FIG. 8—Texcoco, D. F. Section of Mound Built of Adobe Brick.

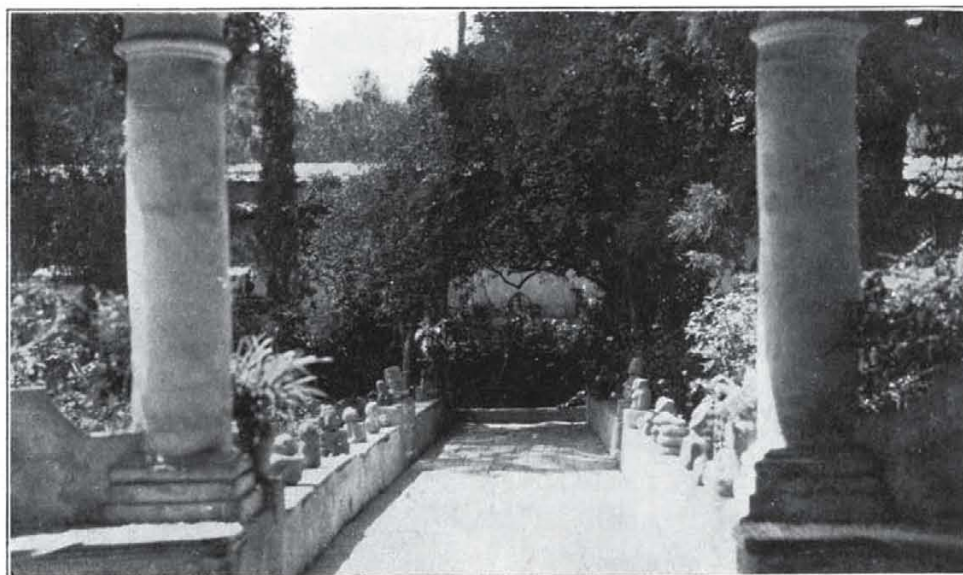
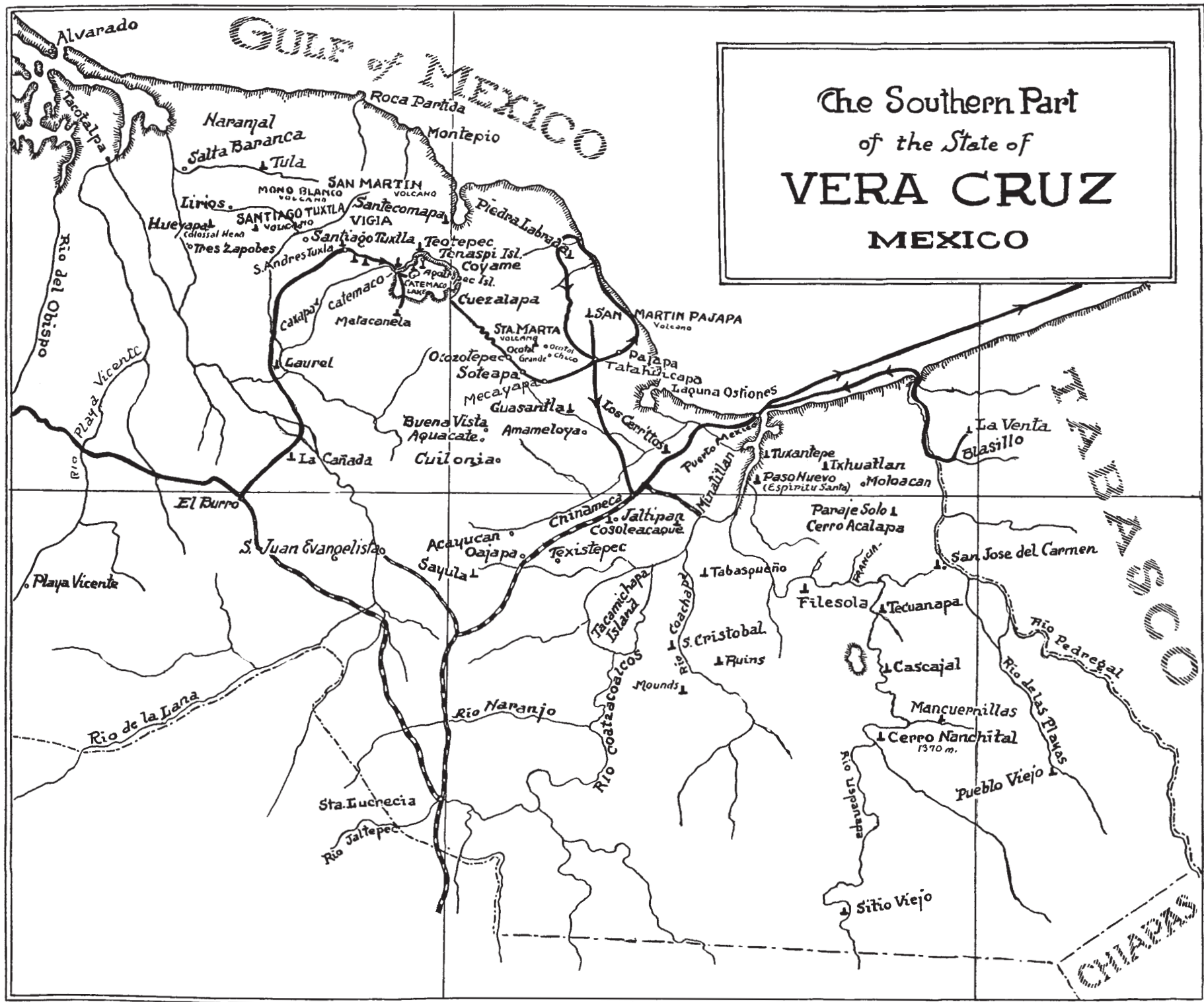


FIG. 9—Coyoacan, D. F. The Avenue of Famous Men in the Garden of Casa Alvarado.



The Southern Part  
of the State of  
**VERA CRUZ**  
MEXICO



scription of which only a few glyphs could be drawn, but which, nevertheless, seem to record the date 9-17-15-0-0 5 Ahau 3 Muan.\*

In the Hall of Monoliths are two monuments which undoubtedly come from the ruins of Toniná in the State of Chiapas, which will be discussed when describing those ruins.

After all our letters of introduction were in order and our equipment completed, the real expedition was ready to start. By train

we returned to Vera Cruz, and there our civilized clothes were packed and shipped home to New Orleans. On the 12th of March we donned our riding clothes and high boots and boarded the small train running southward towards the Isthmus of Tehuantepec. The train bounced along on a miserable track, at first following the Gulf Coast. Out in the blue waters of the Gulf we got glimpses of the Isla de Sacrificios, where the Spanish Conquerors found abandoned temples with newly sacrificed victims lying on the altars, when they anchored off the coast in 1518.

At the station of Madereros, 55 kilometers from Vera Cruz, are several large mounds, and here also starts



FIG. 10—Mexico, D. F. Maya Limestone Stela in the Yard of the National Museum.

the road for the Cocuite Oil Camp, where many clay figurines have been found.

It is rumored that the Oil Company drilling there mistook artificial mounds for mud volcanoes, the latter said to be good oil indications in this region. The pottery from Cocuite is chiefly of To-

\*Glyph A-1 is erased, but is undoubtedly the Katun glyph. B-1 shows 0 Tun. A-2 and B-2 are 0 Uinal and 0 Kin respectively. The numeral to A-3 is not distinct; the glyph must be Ahau. B-3 may be a supplementary series glyph, and A-4 appears to be 3 Muan. In case this last reading is correct, this should give the above recorded date (fig. 11).—Morley, 1928, Page 263.



tonac character. Some pieces are painted with Chapopote, as the Indians call asphalt (fig. 12). Mr. Ibarola, Mexican Government Inspector of Oil, has in his possession a very fine Totonac figurine found here. It is one of the few specimens where one of the well-known "laughing faces" of Totonac origin is seen on a complete figure (fig. 13). The figurine has a band around its breast and a small apron on which are designs\* (fig. 14).

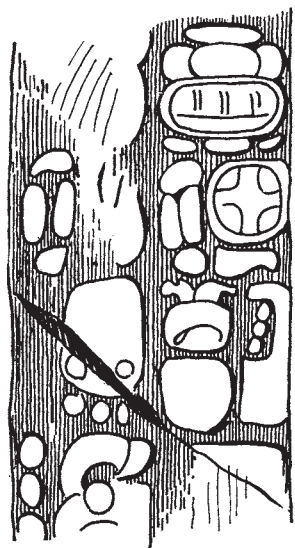


FIG. 11—Mexico, D. F. Inscription from Maya Stela in the yard of the National Museum. (1:10).

It was a long and dreary journey, with the train rattling and jumping on a wretched track and us wondering how long it was going to keep on going. The country is covered with dense bush, now and then changing into extensive savannas. In the vicinity of Tierra Blanca the Oaxaca Mountains come in sight. Whereafter the train runs parallel to them, crossing innumerable rivers. In several places we passed single mounds, or whole groups of mounds. The land is low and humid, and covered with dense tropical second growth, here and there broken by banana plantations. To pass the time we reviewed our knowledge of the route lying ahead of us.

The country we were traveling through was one of the first to be settled by the Spanish Conquerors. These rich alluvial plains had good crops, and Cortez granted himself lands here. In the rivers around Tuxtepec in the mountains, which we could see to our right, the Indians washed gold, and paid it as tribute to the rulers of Mexico, who in turn were forced to deliver it to the Spaniards.

We were headed for the volcanic mountains around San Andrés Tuxtla. Sometime around the year 1900 a small nephrite statuette was found in the Canton of the Tuxtlas. This object eventually drifted into the National Museum at Washington, D. C., and there it was discovered that the figure was covered with hieroglyphs—Maya hieroglyphs at that—which opened with the date 8-6-2-4-17 8 Kaban 0 Kankin in Maya figures, later correlated with our calendar to be the year 98 B. C. The so-



FIG. 12—Cocuite, Ver. Spindle Whorl Painted with Asphalt. (Full Size).

\*Professor Byron Cummings of the University of Arizona has recently made excavations at "El Cocuite," and states that he found burials in the sides of mud volcanoes.

called Tuxtla Statuette carried nothing less than the oldest date recorded in writing from the whole of the American Continents.\*

Since the finding of this statuette only a few scientific expeditions have entered the area. The German archaeologist, Dr. Eduard Seler, has worked at Matacanela, and the Geologist, Dr. Imanuel Friedlaender, has studied the volcanoes of the district. There was a good reason for not going into the country. Constant revolutions had made that wild mountain region a hiding place for all kinds of bandits, rebels, and political refugees. These people had imposed brutally on the Indian tribes, who considered the forests their property and, therefore, turned hostile to all strangers.

The great Maya cultural centers lay east of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec. An outlying branch of Indians speaking a dialect of the Maya language is still found in the Huasteca, south of Tampico. Little is known about the link between these two, and it has long been desirable to investigate the region between the Maya proper and the Huasteca. The lack of information on the area between these two groups of the same language, and the existence of the Tuxtla Statuette was enough to warrant an expedition to the Tuxtla Mountains. To add to this, a photograph of a monolith had recently been received at Tulane University—a stone monument carved with figures that looked somewhat like Maya glyphs. This photograph was sent by a Mexican engineer, Sr. Rafael de la Cerda, of Mexico City, who had made some explorations in the region in question in search of petroleum. At a place called Piedra Labrada he had seen some other stone monuments.

Now we sat in the train speculating on what we would find in these fascinating mountains. Would we find Indians speaking a



FIG. 13—Cocuite, Ver. Totonac Clay Idol of the Laughing Face Type. (24 cm. high).

\*Throughout this report the correlation between Maya and Christian Chronology established by Dr. H. J. Spinden in his book, "Reduction of Mayan Dates," 1924, will be used.



Maya dialect? Would we find that the figures on the monuments were Maya? Were there any hopes of discovering a date still older than the one on the Tuxtla Statuette — and what about the rebels and the hostile Indians? To be frank, they occupied our minds much less than the prospects of some archaeological discovery.

The train stopped for a while. Something had gone wrong with the engine. After about an hour's waiting we started off again, and finally limped into the station of El Burro, where we had to stop over for the night. The train, though, was scheduled to go on to Santa Lucrezia, but as the engine was out of order, it did not resume its tedious progress until about 2 o'clock in the morning. We were glad that we could get a room and beds, and that we did not have to spend the night in the mosquito-infested cars.



FIG. 14—Cocuite, Ver. Design on Idol.  
FIG. 13.

The small wooden shack hotel, run by a Chinaman, was not bad, and quite clean. At table we were seated with Mexican cowboys, a German and a Chinese trader, a few passengers and all the crew from the train. From now on we would certainly be in very picturesque company.

The following morning we boarded a small branch line train. A remodeled box car serving as first class compartment, we christened the "Cattle Pullman." The jolting was not as bad as the day before, but we moved more slowly. Right and left on the track we saw mounds and at "Kilometer 17" beside the station La Cañada, there was quite a large group

of mounds arranged around a court. Again at El Laurel we saw a mound of average size, and here it is undoubtedly that Mr. Seler had seen one of his stone idols.

As we crossed the Cuautotolapán River the Tuxtla mountains became visible ahead of us. The nearer we got to the mountains, the more hilly became the country, and the more the track wound in and out among the hills. Progress was very slow, and La Farge amused himself picking flowers from the car windows.

About noon we finally reached our destination, San Andrés Tuxtla. At the bottom of a picturesque kettle-shaped valley formed by high volcanoes, lies a group of white houses with red tiled roofs and large clusters of bouainvillea hanging over the garden walls.

The town is the proud owner of one Ford and a truck, has its own electric light plant, and a telegraph line. It has its old church, a nice Plaza, a market place, and all the rest of the paraphernalia belonging to a good-sized Mexican town—including an army of about a hundred men, and a General.

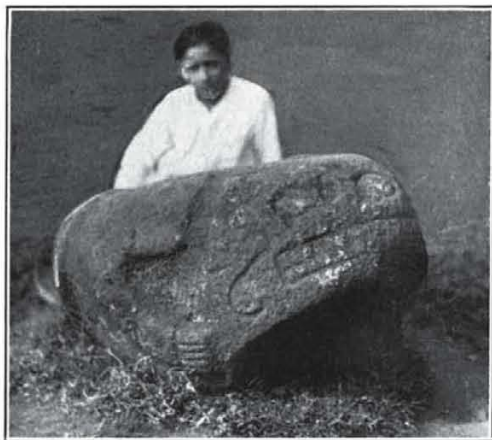


FIG. 15—San Andres Tuxtla, Ver. Stone Idol Representing Frog.

As a circus was expected in town the good citizens at once decided that we were part of the show, and all the village youngsters crowded around us as we worked our way to the only "Hotel," a combination boarding house and cigar factory.

Shortly after our arrival we went in search of antiquities. Willing village youngsters led

us up to the church and showed us a stone figure representing a frog crudely carved in volcanic rock\* (fig. 15).

We soon found that we were the great sensation of the town. Men and children crowded around us and it required a struggle to get room enough to take photographs. The crowd was, however, not without its uses—everybody showed himself eager to tell us about idols and caves. Soon we were the center of a procession walking towards the cemetery. Here we were shown three stone heads representing rabbits (fig. 16). The name of the Canton is Tuxtla, a Spanish corruption for the Aztec Toxtli, which means rabbit, and undoubtedly these rabbit heads represent some kind of coat of arms (fig. 17). Friedlaender states that these rabbit heads, as well as the frog, all of Olivine Lava, have been brought from the ruins reported on the southern side of the Santiago volcano.†

It is always a good plan to pay official visits to the town authorities and the chief of the garrison, so this was done, and we were assured of all



FIG. 16—San Andres Tuxtla, Ver. Three Rabbit Heads of Stone. (40 cm. high).

\*C. Seler, 1922. Page 544, Plate 5, 2.

†Friedlaender, 1923. Page 155.



support. Then we visited an old German school teacher, Don Federico Sandrock, a pleasant old gentleman who knew much about the surrounding country. He showed us some huge fossil bones found by an Indian at Xanasca near the town. His Mexican wife told us of imprints of the feet of a man, a child, and a dog on a lava block near San Juan los Reyes. These imprints, may well be of recent origin as the last eruption of the San Martín volcano began with underground thundering on March 2, 1793, and a serious eruption occurred on May 22nd. Previous eruptions had occurred in 1664 and fumaroles were reported as late as 1829.\*

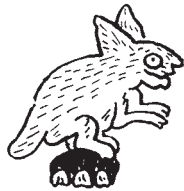


FIG. 17—The Aztec Hieroglyph for Tuxtla.

All the volcanoes in the Tuxtla region are now extinct, and covered with vegetation.

Close to San Andrés is a small crater lake called Laguna Encantada — the Enchanted Lagoon — and the popular belief is that the waters of this lagoon rise during the dry season and fall during the wet season.

The Santiago Volcano is considered sacred by the Indians and, as already mentioned, ruins are reported on the southern side. We heard of groups of mounds at Tatocapan and Tula. Mr. and Mrs. Seler saw a colossal stone head between Los Lirios and Tres Zapotes.†

At Montepio, on the Gulf Coast, some mounds are reported, and it is also said that here is a cave formerly used by the famous pirate, Lorenzillo.

The distance between San Andrés Tuxtla and Catemaco is about 15 kilometers over a fairly bad motor road. We loaded all our equipment on a truck and with a Mexican driver set out for Catemaco, the last point that could be reached with mechanical transportation. About midway we passed through the tobacco plantations of Siguápan and Natacápan, both belonging to a German company. At the first place were some small mounds, and at the latter, a group of very large mounds, some of which have been dug into by the owners of the plantation. The road was quite rough, and after many ups and downs we reached the rim of a hill range and came in sight of the Catemaco Lake. All around the lake tower volcanic mountains and odd-shaped volcanic hills are thrown, thrust, and flung into the landscape. Down below us lay the picturesque grass-roofed village on the shores of the lake and beyond the lake

\*Moziño, 1913—Robelo, *Jardín de Raíces, Aztequismos*, Page 386—Friedlaender, 1923.

†Seler, C., 1925, Plate V-1—Melgar, 1871, Page 104—Lehmann, 1922, Plate 38.

were high, forest-clad mountains (fig. 18). We began to realize that we had heavy work ahead of us. We were to cross those mountains and find hidden archaeological cities in the forest beyond.

Before noon we reached the town and found quarters in a Mexican house of the usual wood and adobe type, with chairs standing stiffly against the walls of the main room, and the walls decorated with polychrome almanacs and beer posters. Shortly we were served with a huge meal of fish from the lake and the everlasting Mexican "pollo," a flattering name for an old hen. Then we went to see Mr. Jacob Hagmaier, the German manager of several of the tobacco plantations along the lake shore. He at once placed himself at our disposal and, thanks to his kindness and help, we succeeded in getting some excellent men for our trip through the mountains. He

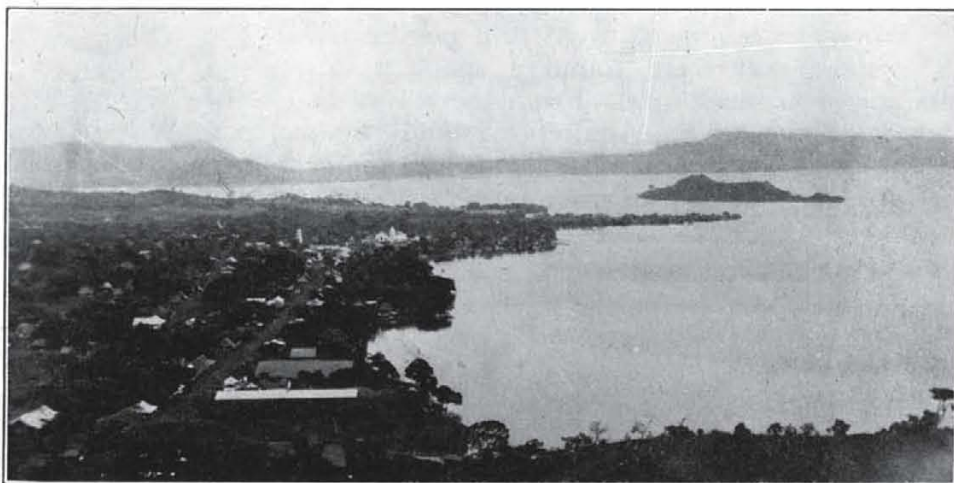


FIG. 18—Catemaco, Ver. View of Catemaco Village, the Lake and the Sacred Island Agaltepec.

took us into his warehouses, where long rows of Indian girls were sitting on straw mats and sorting tobacco leaves into first, second, and third grades. These grades are exported to Germany. The fourth grade is very poor and is used for the domestic cigarettes. It was very interesting to see the fermenting of the tobacco, which reached as much as 65 centigrades (200° F.), and the pressing of the finished leaf in bales.

The guide provided by Mr. Hagmaier took us to see a mound in the outskirts of the town, also some stone idols, one lying outside a house close to this mound (fig. 19). The idol probably represents a human figure with the head knocked off. Its lower half was roughly chipped and served as a plug. Inside the same house was a small stone head with a tenon at its back, this has grotesque fea-





FIG. 19—Catemaco, Ver. Fragment of Stone Idol.

tures with broad upturned lips, and ears perforated for ear ornaments. It undoubtedly should be ascribed to the Totonac culture (fig. 20).

Close by, in front of another house, we saw an egg-shaped boulder with a face carved on it, very well done, and giving an impression of slight Maya influence (fig. 21). This idol is reported to come from the Tenaspi Island in the northern end of the lake.

The patron saint of Catemaco is the Señora del Carmen and the Indians come from far away to worship on the day of this saint.

Towards evening we went to a point north of the village and there found a small group of mounds in an enclosure. From there was also a very good view of the Agaltepec Island (fig. 22). It appeared to us that the position of this island was so central in relation to the country surrounding the lake that some important



FIG. 20—Catemaco, Ver. Grotesque Stone Head. (18 cm. high).



FIG. 21—Catemaco, Ver. Egg-shaped Idol from Tenaspi Island. (60 cm. high).

mounds ought to be found on it, but all our inquiries in the village produced only negative answers.

Sunday morning we got a small gasoline launch and crossed the lake to Finca Victoria. It was gray and windy and the waves were

quite choppy. At La Victoria on the east shore of the lake Mr. Hagmaier had arranged for horses, and soon we were in the saddle on our way to Matacanela. The trail wound steeply up a mountain side, and the lake lay like a beautiful panorama below us. Then we crossed a small range and rode in high forests. Gradually climbing, after about half an hour's ride, we reached the small finca Matacanela, where Seler is reported to have made excavations, though we have not been able to locate a description of these.

Mrs. Seler mentions some stone figures, and we found these in front of the main house.\* They had been brought there by some captain in the rebel army and set up very nicely, where they remained until a few years later when some government troops arrived and scattered them. We found several stone boxes, also a few pieces of sculpture. Among the latter was another rabbit, or at least the fore-part of a rabbit, with the legs and part of the body complete (fig. 23). The stone boxes were decorated on all four sides, one with some excellently carved bivalve shells (Pecten) and another with a row of circles (fig. 24).

Some mounds lay close to the house, and a sculptured stone is reported to have tumbled down into a small stream close by. We tried to locate it, but with-

out success. A crude stone serpent's head lay close to a small palm hut (fig. 25) and with the stone boxes stood a circular stone altar on a base (fig. 26). All these objects have been carved out of volcanic rock, and they show unusual skill in the stone mason's art. They look very Aztec, especially the stone box with circles, but nevertheless I believe them to be connected more closely with the Totonac culture. The Aztec intrusion into this region must have been of a late date.

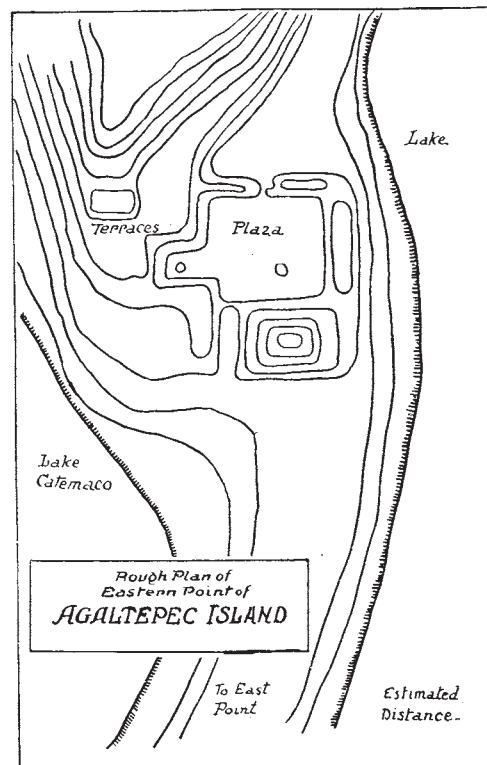


FIG. 22—Agaltepec Island. Rough Plan of the Eastern Part of the Island.

\*Seler, C., 1922. Plate V, 4.



The different German caretakers on the plantations we visited were all very helpful, and one must admire the tenacity with which they fight the exuberant vegetation and the restless social conditions which have prevailed through

so many years. At the time of our visit Mexico was calm, and it is earnestly to be hoped that peace may last, as it is a country of unlimited commercial and natural possibilities.

By one o'clock we had returned to Catemaco, and after a meal we again set out in the launch, this time to investigate if our suspicions that there were monuments on Agaltepec Island were correct. Mr. Häbele, the owner of the small launch, was most enthusiastic about the vessel. He had built the small craft himself, and



FIG. 23—Matacanela, Ver. Rabbit's Head Carved in Stone.

was very proud of its ability to stand a threatening storm. Huge black rainclouds were gathering along the eastern side of the lake, blown in from the sea through a gap in the mountains. Due to this gap the eastern side of the lake has a rainfall almost double of that on the western side.

For a short time the small craft chopped and jumped in the waves, until we got in under the island. This island is crescent shaped, and it did not take us long to judge from its profile that it had

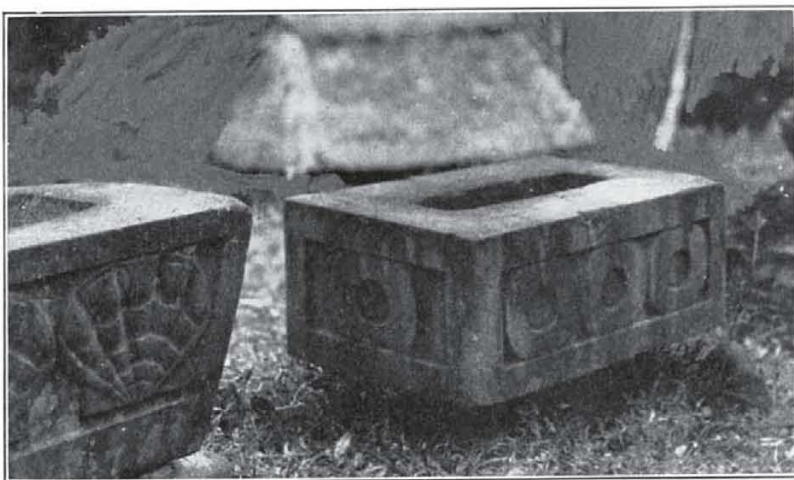


FIG. 24—Matacanela, Ver. Two Stone Boxes.

been remodeled by man. We landed at its eastern point, and soon stood on the first mound. A rapid survey showed us that every square foot of the island had been under the hand of man. On the low east and west points were mounds around courts; the high central part had been terraced, and on its top were a series of mounds.

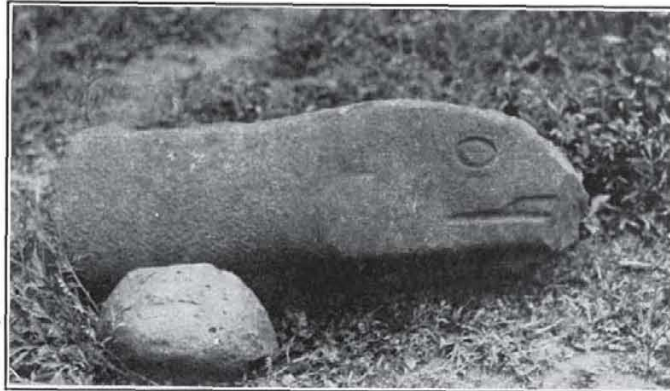


FIG. 25—Matacanela, Ver. Serpent's Head of Stone.

In vain we searched for monuments. But in several places we found walls built of a coarse-grained stone, easy to carve into square blocks, and used to this day by the inhabitants for their houses.

The court on the eastern point was the most interesting. A truncated pyramid lay to the east, and from this a raised road led to the northeastern-most point of the island, apparently a ceremonial road. To the west of the pyramid was a court in which we found one stone which may have served as a monument.

The island lies in a position where it can be seen from every mountain pass leading into the Catemaco Basin, and it is also visible from nearly every place on the lake shore. A more excellent and dominating location could hardly be found on which to build a place of worship.

In between these visits to ruins we had arranged for horses and pack animals for our trip over the mountains, and Mr. Hagmaier's help again proved valuable. He placed us in communication with a Mexican, Don Juan Brisueño, caretaker of the Cuezalapa cattle ranch. He was a tall, slow-spoken man who had gone through the



FIG. 26—Matacanela, Ver. Circular Altar.



shifting phases of many revolutions, remaining friends with federals, rebels, and Indians—just the man we needed to help us get through.

On March 16th we were at last in the saddle. Don Juan took the lead as we rode out of Catemaco (fig. 27), and we followed with saddle horses for ourselves and our chief guide, cook, and interpreter, Enrique Hernandez, several pack horses, and two Mexicans on foot. The First Tulane Expedition had reached the beginning of the trail.

We rode along the northern shore of the lake, and time after time Don Juan stopped his horse to tell us about the country. Large volcanic cones lay on our left, and we also passed two crater lakes, then we came in sight of Tenaspi Island, from which one of the

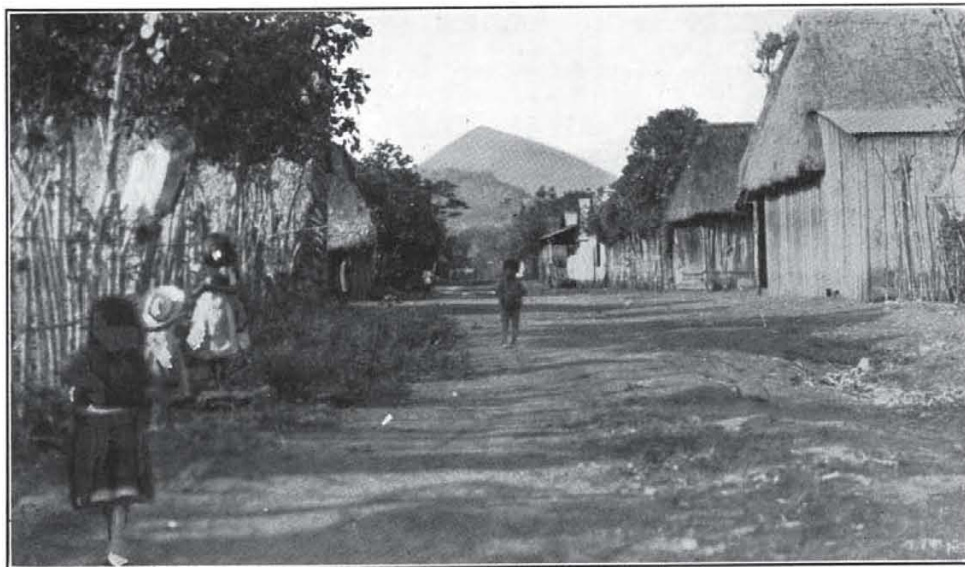


FIG. 27—Catemaco, Ver. Volcanic Cone at the End of Village Street.

idols in Catemaco is reported to come. Don Juan told us that much pottery was to be found there. Not far from Teotepec we saw a small mound with rough stone walls, and shortly afterwards Don Juan made us dismount and took us to a well of mineral water. It seems that there are several wells of this kind along the northern shore. The water bubbles slightly, and has a very pleasant mineral taste.

Then we traversed the root of a small peninsula, and again our guide had something to tell. A small enclosure of sticks marked the place where a fleeing rebel had been shot in the back by the mountain Indians.



When we reached the lake shore we found another mineral well, called Coyame, a short distance from the shore. A stone wall has been built around it and several dugouts lay alongside it, and some Indians were there filling their bottles with the water. All the inhabitants around the lake send for their drinking water to this place.

Here the trail runs along the foot of a vertical cliff, the cliff on one side and the lake on the other, a favorite place for ambushes during many revolutions.

At Tebanca we passed through the remains of a coffee plantation. There are now no signs of coffee bushes, and the houses lie in the most picturesque ruin. This plantation was situated somewhat above the lake on its eastern shore. Don Juan informed us that the peak of the snow-clad Orizaba volcano could be seen from here on a clear day.

Finally, about 2 o'clock, we reached Cuezalapa, our destination. Here ended our first day's ride and we certainly were a little stiff, but a drink of bush-cognac, concocted of very little water, some sugar and lemon, and a large amount of sugar cane rum, soon brought us to life again.

The houses of the finca were in a sad state of decay caused by time and the shifting tides of revolution. During the evening Don Juan told us of the extraordinary life he has been living at this place. The ranch was a favorite haunt for bandits and rebels. Some nights they would come and stay until dawn, and a few hours later federal troops would arrive. Sometimes fleeing men would hide here — one rebel general stayed here for months curing his wounds, alone in a little hut, hidden away in the forest. The federal troops passed by, and all the time Don Juan had to be friends with everybody. "And when they stopped coming because of peace in the country, it was quite strange and lonesome," he told us.

We were sitting by a fire outside the house when an Indian boy turned up with a bow and some iron pointed arrows. We had long before heard that the Indians we were going to visit used bows and arrows, but not until now, on the verge of entering their country, had we seen any of them. The sight was highly suggestive. The mountains lay as a black silhouette against the night sky, and we sat wondering what lay in store for us.

