

THE SCULPTURES OF SANTA LUCIA COZUMAHUALPA,
GUATEMALA, IN THE HAMBURG ETHNOLOGICAL
MUSEUM.¹

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The scientific committee of the Hamburg-America celebration, planned for 1892, had intended to hold an exhibition, and Director Bolau, Mr. L. Friedrichsen, Superintendent C. W. Lüders, Dr. Michau, and the author of the present paper were associated into a subcommittee for that purpose. As everybody knows, the cholera broke out and rendered this promising part of the programme impracticable. It thus became necessary to make some other disposition of so much of the material collected as had been either donated or purchased. It had all along been intended that our scientific institute should profit by such things, and so it happened, owing to the excellent financial management of the whole undertaking by the general committee, that our ethnological museum received the gift of a series of plaster casts whose originals are preserved in the Royal Ethnological Museum of Berlin.

Those originals came from Santa Lucia Cozumahualpa, which is a place in the province of Escuintla, in Guatemala, on the southern or Pacific slope of the Cordilleras, below the Volcano del Fuego. The locality seems to have been settled after 1850 by Cakchiquels from the high plateau, who commenced coffee plantations here. In 1860 the clearing of a piece of forest brought to light a number of sculptured blocks of stone. The commandant of the place, Mr. Pedro de Anda, considered the discovery of sufficient importance to be brought to the notice of the Guatemalan Government, and a commission of inspection was dispatched to the spot. Unfortunately, their thorough report was never published, and has since not been found in the archives. Two years later, in 1862, the Austrian traveler, Dr. Habel, in the course of his extended explorations, arrived at Santa Lucia, and made drawings and descriptions of the antiquities that had been found up to that date. These were first published at the instance of Prof. Ad. Bastian, director of the Royal Ethnological Museum of Berlin, in Vol. XXII of the Smithsonian Contributions to Knowledge, in 1878. Bastian had

¹Translated from the Annual of the Hamburg Scientific Institute, Vol. XI, 1893.

been informed by Habel, when the latter passed through Berlin, of the existence of important ruins in Guatemala, and when, in 1876, during his own American travels, his attention was called, in Guatemala, to the discovery in Santa Lucia, and he had seen it himself, he recalled what had been told him by Habel, who had meantime disappeared. Bastian, however, did not rest until he had traced him to New York and had taken the necessary steps to have his report and drawings published by the Smithsonian Institution. Before leaving Santa Lucia, Bastian, promptly recognizing the importance of the discovery, had purchased of the owner of the land for the Berlin Museum all antiquities which had been or should thereafter be discovered, an act for which Americanistic investigation must be particularly grateful to him. The most difficult part of the task still remained, however, to be performed, namely, the transportation of the treasures to the port of San José for shipment. Bastian had the happy thought of securing the cooperation of Dr. Hermann Berendt, who had been settled for some years in Guatemala, and who, being well acquainted with the country and the people, and at the same time an eminent linguistic and archaeological Americanist, was as much disposed to further the scientific research as he was competent to cope with its practical difficulties. (See my biographical notice of Berendt in the *Globus*, Vol. LIX, No. 22.) The matter was taken in hand with the aid of Engineers Napp and Au, but greater difficulties arose than had been anticipated, for it turned out that the majority of the blocks were too heavy to be drawn to the coast by oxen over the rough roads. However, since they were only sculptured on one face it was ultimately decided that the greater part of their thickness should be sawn away. For this apparatus had to be secured and labor performed, and it is not surprising that it was not until the end of the year 1880 that the material was ready for shipment and that it was only in August, 1881, that it reached the Berlin Museum in good condition. Berendt, unhappily, did not live to take satisfaction in this final result. In the year 1878 an old complaint of his was so aggravated by the exertions involved in many journeys between his home and Santa Lucia that he died in April of that year, and Americanist research thus lost one of its truest adherents. Bastian, in his paper on "The Guatemalan Sculptures" in the publications of the Royal Berlin Museum for 1882 has given extracts from Berendt's letters relating to this industrious period so trying to the patience of all parties. For further information concerning the entire archaeological find in that neighborhood, of which only a portion, though no doubt the most important portion, has been transferred to Berlin, the reader may consult the above-named works of Bastian and of Habel, as well as papers by Gustav Eisen in the memoirs of the California Academy of Sciences, Vol. II, No. 2, and of Dr. Ed. Seler in the journal *II Centenario*, No. 26, Madrid, 1892. In these works the ruins are consid-

ered collectively. Eisen's memoir treats of the materials still remaining at Santa Lucia and its environs, of which Berendt sent descriptions and drawings to Bastian, the publication of which is much to be desired. Seler gives remarkable explanations of the principal pieces found at Santa Lucia.

A part of these treasures adorning the Berlin Ethnological Museum have now become a gift to our own in the form of excellent plaster casts. They are to be found on the north side of the upper story of the museum of natural history in the prehistoric collection. The author of the present account of them has deemed it incumbent upon him to publish something concerning their significance, so that the public, by understanding them better, may be led to take more interest in them.

The discoveries at Santa Lucia are remains of an important settlement which must have been destroyed long before 1522, the date of the plundering of the country by Alvarado; for had it not been so, we should have had notices about it from the Spaniards. That this destruction must have been a forcible one is proved by the disorderly position of the remains hitherto discovered, especially such as plainly formed parts of buildings. This is shown by the plan of the site published by Bastian in the *Berlin Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, Vol. VIII, p. 322. The rank tropical vegetation had covered these remains and given them over to oblivion, until centuries later, chance brought them to light again, and thus gave us a glimpse into a civilization previously quite unknown.

To the question, what race produced these monuments, no certain answer can be given. Their type is a new one to us. Comparing them with those of the Maya civilization, we find that they present differences so fundamental that they must be of another origin. The anthropological type of the figures exhibited, at least of those which represent inhabitants of Santa Lucia, contrasts decidedly with those of the Maya sculptures, while the hieroglyphics characteristic of the latter are here wholly wanting. We are thus driven to seek their origin among the Nahoan peoples who formerly inhabited old Mexico, but of whom a part, as we learn from the remains, wandered south as far as the shores of the South Sea and into Central America, everywhere forming settlements of longer or shorter duration. Remains of these settlements have already been found. They are ascribable, with some degree of certainty, to the Nahoan civilization. It is, however, necessary to allow for the influence of the new conditions of life which the wanderers must have encountered, as well as for that of contact with foreign civilizations, in modifying original characteristics of their own and in introducing new elements—effects which must have become more marked the longer and the more undisturbedly those causes acted. Such must have been the case with the settlers of Santa Lucia, since

The magnificence of the remains discovered bespeaks of itself a long period of prosperous development. The main outlines of the Nahua civilization are preserved; but new elements, some of them attributable to Maya civilization, have been introduced and have been worked over in a peculiar way, so that a new type has been evolved. Before entering into details we may as well glance at the age of the Santa Lucia monuments. For this estimation definite data are afforded by Maya remains which narrate incursions of foreign hordes. According to these records the settlement must have taken place six or seven centuries ago—that is, in the thirteenth century of our era. It may have subsisted for a long time and may have been ultimately destroyed in contests with aboriginal Chakchiquels, Quichés, and other Maya races, which contests we likewise find recorded.¹

Taken as a whole, the monuments of Santa Lucia exhibit, both in their technique and in their artistic conception and elaboration, a higher development than the corresponding productions of old Mexico, and approach the leading works of the Maya civilization, by which they may have been stimulated and aided. The proportions of the human body and the representation of its members are more correct than in the Mexican sculptures, and the bas-relief is executed with great taste. The pieces here considered generally represent priests engaged in performing rites of worship to different divinities; and the head of the divinity is so elaborated as to constitute the main object of the sculpture. The sex of the divinity is not indicated, at any rate not to our present means of discrimination. It may be that the mode of wearing the hair or the ornaments with which the divinities are loaded indicate their sex; but not having as yet found any figures of men and women with which they can be compared we are left in the dark upon this point. The particular function of each divinity is also difficult to determine, since attributes are employed with which we have no other acquaintance; so that it is only in some particular cases that analogy affords any clue to the nature of the god or goddess. Some details of the representations may now be considered in a general way.

We several times find close to the ornaments characterizing the divinity, and invariably before the mouths of the priests, as well as here and there among lifeless things, a sign in the form of a variously curved fillet, usually like an interrogation mark, with sundry double knot-like side excrescences. This sign must be equivalent to the tap-like sign with a bent end which is common in Nahuatl representations.

¹ If the first settlement was in the thirteenth century, and if it endured long enough to develop an original type of civilization and to become rich enough to erect magnificent monuments, it could not well have been destroyed without a long struggle, and there would seem to be scant time for every vestige and memory of it to disappear before 1522. TRANSLATOR.

tations; and this latter we know certainly stands for smoke, breath, speech, or song. Whether or not in the present case any differentiation of signification is attached to the different shapes of the curve, the number of binodes, or the differences between the persons or things to which the sign is attached can not be decided at the outset. Not so clear is a shape which, starting from the front of the thick, stiff girdle of the priest, runs upward to a point and mounts in waves toward the divinity. It looks like the appearances of flames which, for example, surround the disk of the sun, and are, no doubt, meant for flames, although these latter are much smaller. It can hardly be fluttering ribbons ornamenting the girdle. Yet what a mounting flame should signify in this position, plainly connected with the stiff girdle, is more than we can guess at the outset. We further find occasional simple disks which in Nahuatl representations are undoubtedly numeral, each disk being a unit. Along with these, or alone, there are also larger disks, some of them with high rims, bearing various devices. These recall the way in which, in Nahuatl representations generally, days or periods of time, as well as names, are sometimes presented, although in the details the resemblance ceases. In the costume of the priests the following details are noticeable: Most of the body is bare; for excepting the rich and varied ornaments for head, ears, and neck the common breech clout of all old American peoples is his principal article of clothing. It is in the form of a long band going around the waist and between the legs, and forming a girdle. The ends hang down before and behind, and have tassels, or fringes. In addition to this, the priest wears a broad girdle whose contour surpasses the line of the body, and is obviously of stiff material, probably wood, since it appears to be carved. Hanging from the girdle there is also a sort of skirt, sloping away in front on both sides, where it has laces and fringes, and closed behind. There are many like this in the Codex Vindobonensis. As a leg ornament, we find below the right knee a galloon, or thong, with something hanging from it, or else a multiple rope of pearls; and both wrists seem to be adorned with strings of pearls. Upon the feet there are sandals; frequently only the left foot has a sandal, while the right is bare. One hand of the priest is uniformly covered with something like the head of a man or of a beast. Seler takes this for a mask, not for a real head; and certainly the style of representation is in favor of this interpretation, for it is entirely unlike the realistic heads which the high priest and his assistants in fig. 1 carry in their arms. The latter must be the heads cut off of the sacrificed men. Whether these masks are also to be regarded as offerings is doubtful, although the arm which carries one of them is usually raised toward the divinity, and seems to hold out something to him. But why should the sacrifice itself be shown in the one case and in the other only its mask? It

may be that the mark is the distinctive mark of the priest, and has some reference to the divinity whom he serves.

After these general explanations, short descriptions of the single pieces must suffice. Among the originals of the Berlin Museum there are eight blocks which have approximately equal dimensions. Habel, who measured them in their original condition in situ, gives the height as 12 English feet, the breadth of the sculptured surface as 3, and the thickness of the stone as 2 feet; and he remarks that the face of each is plane in the lower 3 feet, so that the sculptured part is only 9 feet high. The blocks must have stood on end, and probably, with open interspaces, formed the facade of a temple or temples. For, had they been joined together, the sculpture would, in the ornamentation or somewhere, have been continuous from block to block; while, in fact, each is a separate representation, having, in some cases, a border of its own. There is no further connection between them than that of the subjects they represent, which are all religious performances, especially the worship of different divinities. This again agrees with the hypothesis that the blocks are remains of temples.

Of these eight blocks our museum possesses casts of the sculptured faces of three only, the first three of the following enumeration:

No. 1. Upon this plinth we see in the middle a priest, characterized by the sacrificial knife in his right hand and by the cut-off head of the sacrifice in his left. This kind of sacrifice belongs to the Mayas, not to the Nahuas, who, as is well known, offered the heart of the victim; and the whole composition must be interpreted in the light of Maya customs and conceptions. Land tells us that the high priest is the representative of the sun and that his four assistants answer to the four quarters of the horizon. The four assistants occupy here the four corners of the plinth, but in order to fix their orientation we must consult Nahuatlán ideas. The north is the place whither the dead go and where the god of death abides, which corresponds best with the assistant in the right lower corner, who appears as a skeleton. It is to be noticed that Death is not commonly represented by an entire carcass, but is incarnate only in arms and legs, or even only in hands and feet. This being settled, the assistant of the lower left-hand corner should be the east, that of the upper right-hand corner the west, and that of the upper left-hand corner the south. The last has also a death's head. Before the bridge of his nose there is a hooked object. The south was also regarded as the place of dearth and hunger; so that the reference to death is suitable to it. Like the high priest himself, each of the four assistants bears in his hands the head of a victim. These five heads differ from each other and from their bearers by the ornamentation and the anthropological type. We may reasonably infer that these heads represent races hostile to the inhabitants of Santa Lucia, and may correspond to the directions in which their



FIG. 1.—PRIEST SACRIFICING A VICTIM.



FIG. 2.—SUN GOD AND PRIEST.

homes lay. In that case this composition would have not merely a ritual but also a political significance. Among the details of the design, the following may be noticed. On the headdress of the high priest there is a crab (*Taschenkrebs*), over his forehead, a symbol whose parallel is not known. Feather tufts (*Federballen*) are braided into the hair, and to it is attached an object reaching nearly to the ground, which looks like the tail end of a serpent. At the back of the wooden girdle there is a representation of a serpent's head looking backward, and in place of the breechelout we see knotted serpents passing round the body, with their heads and tails hanging down. Snakes play a great part in all these compositions. The object upon which the high priest seems to be standing is regarded by Habel as the carcass of the victim. There is certainly something wrapped round it which resembles a breechelout. But there are also three holes which are hard to interpret; and since the lower contour of the object seems to have been mutilated in the original, we can not well make out what it is. It will be noticed that to this object, as well as to the sacrificial knife that the high priest holds in his hand, the sign of discourse is attached. Above, in the middle of the plinth, there is a raised disk upon which there is a grate-like figure from which depends a hook. As already remarked, no interpretation of this sign is forthcoming; and the same may be said of the shape under the foot of the upper right-hand assistant. It is wrapped up and tied, and an arrow seems to protrude from it.

The plinth just described agrees with the other seven in size alone. Those seven all represent the same performance, namely, the invocation of different divinities. They are shown in figs. 2 to 8. Figs. 2 and 3 are from our casts; figs. 4 to 8 are enlargements of Habel's drawings.

No. 2. The divinity, who hangs from a serpent's jaw, is surrounded with flames. From its rich necklace is suspended the disk of the sun, also surrounded with flames. Its fingers have claw-tips. It is the divinity of the sun, conceived in view of its destructive effects in the tropical coast regions. The hand of the priest's raised arm is covered with a human mask. On the back of the feather mantle which falls behind can be seen, close to the priest's wrist, a human head with hair bound together in a tuft. Noteworthy are the crescent-shaped incisions on the knee of the left leg. Whether mere wrinkles of the skin are intended is questionable. This plinth is the only one into which, beside the priest, a second smaller figure is introduced, which probably has merely a symbolic significance. It is another human skeleton, Death, which, however, like the priest, wears the wooden girdle. Its left arm reaches down and its hand is covered with a mask in the form of a snake's head, while the right arm is stretched up. From the mouth of the skeleton to that of the priest extends a shape like

the sign of discourse, though not curved, but of a broken form. It very likely merely expresses the close connection of the symbolic figure with the priest. Whether the furrowed, pointed, elongated form which, starting from the priest's nose, arches backward, is equivalent to the flame-like shape which in other compositions shoots out from the girdle, must remain an open question. Over the head of the priest are two disks with raised rims, upon each of which is figured the head of a dog or some beast. According to the Mexican emblems, this would read "two dogs," which is a date, but may also be a name. Near these disks and over the skeleton we see a stand on which is placed the cut-off head of a victim, the type of which, except for a different earring, agrees exactly with that of the victim carried by the lower left-hand assistant in No. 1.

No. 3. This plinth is provided with a border. The divinity wears the hair bound up with snakes whose ends writhe upward. The necklace, too, is wound round with a snake. The bowed arms are surrounded with flames and the hands hold a peculiar object which bears a disk, from which something like feathers stick up, and from which hangs a three-cornered thing with a cross cut in it and with an excision at the end shaped like a stile between two fields. This hanging object is very much like certain feet of vessels which are frequently found upon the high plateau of Mexico; but this throws no light upon the object now considered. From the head of the divinity spring three boughs with leaves, flowers, and fruit, as well as other uninterpretable pendants, and two similar boughs proceed downward from the arms. We have here evidently an earth divinity, and, according to Seler, an early conception of such a divinity as causing drought, hunger, and earthquakes. The flames which surround the upper objects involve a reference to fires or to the sun, and justify Seler's view. In regard to the priest, it is to be noticed that the left hand is covered with a human mask. In what seems to be a mantle falling over the back, a death's head is introduced, precisely like that upon the fire basin that we shall notice below. The wooden girdle is also adorned with a death's head. The crooked incisions which we noticed on the left knee of No. 2 are here seen on both.

No. 4. The plinth has a smooth border. The divinity exceptionally wears a nose ornament in the shape of a clasp with enlarged ends. The hair appears to be intertwined with snakes, and from the ornaments of the head and neck proceed, above and below, branching boughs, exactly as in No. 3, except that here the upper part forms three teeth or rays, which lead Seler to suspect that this divinity is the goddess of night. Since other characteristics are wanting to that interpretation, such as are used in picture writings to signify the heavens of night, I can not entirely assent to it, and opine that there is only a reference to fruitfulness, and this time without the addition



FIG. 3.—GOD OF DROUGHT, THUNDER, AND EARTHQUAKES.



GODDESS OF FRUITFULNESS.



FIG. 5.—EARTH GODDESS, MOTHER OF ALL.

of flames, which show the evil qualities of the earth goddess upon No. 3. The headdress of the priest runs out into three teeth, from which proceed flames, and from his back there falls apparently the skin of a beast of prey, into whose belly a lance is sticking. Seler thinks that his interpretation of the divinity is confirmed by this feature, since the jaguar (if such it is intended to be) was, both with the Mayas and with the Nahoas, the emblem of the sun; and he is shown as stuck through with a spear, to indicate that the sun is robbed of his power. So, according to Seler, the night gains its cause. Yet it would be equally consequent to say that the destructive effect of the sun is overcome and a fruitful season, perhaps the rainy season, is brought in. Seler himself brings confirmation to this interpretation in recalling a Dresden design in which the wounded beast of prey, a puma or jaguar, lies at the feet of the rain god. The left arm of the priest is not stretched up, but the forearm is bent down, the hand being covered with the mask of a beast of prey. Another such animal is, according to Seler, depicted on the wooden girdle. If this be so, it exceptionally looks upward, as plainly appears in Habel's drawing.

No. 5. In this piece a rim surrounds the sculptured face. We have before us only an indistinct copy of a bad photograph, for Habel gives only a drawing of the lower half with the priest. The upper half was subsequently found. The whole is, however, less well executed than the other pieces. Seler, who had the originals at his disposition, says that the ornaments above the divinity agree with those which in old Mexico accompany the goddess of maize, named Seven Snakes. She is one of the forms of the older earth goddess—the mother of all that exists—having been differentiated in the course of time among different races; but in all her transformations the eagle continues to be a prominent accompaniment. The downward shooting eagle seen below, near the right leg of the priest, can be referred to this fact, and so likewise can the eagle mask which covers the priest's left hand, as well as the eagle upon the wooden girdle. The divinity itself wears upon its head a braid of snakes; and from each arm there springs a branch directed upward which seems to correspond with the sign of discourse. In the headdress of the priest there is a human mask from which depends a long feather.

No. 6. About this block, of which only the upper half has been found, there is a plain border. The divinity is surrounded by the jaws of an alligator, which led Seler to suspect that it was the goddess of water. As a confirmation of this he mentions figures of a crab and of a fish which he says are to be found among the blossoms of the branches which shoot downward from the arms of the goddess. But no such objects can be perceived in the reproduction of a photograph given by Seler, and Habel's drawing and description show only the crab and that at the fracture of the stone where the headdress of the

priest should be. This crab is, therefore, similar to that in the headdress of the high priest of No. 1. It may be added that the priest of No. 6, unlike those of Nos. 2-5, faces the left, as is shown by the sign of discourse before his mouth and by his headdress.

No. 7. In this design and that of No. 8, the priest also faces the left, so that we may infer that the blocks were so arranged in the building that the two different directions in which the priests stood came opposite each other. [The writer seems to intend to leave it undetermined whether he thinks they were in pairs, or whether all the right-facing priests were at the left of the left-facing priests.] The divinity is upon this plinth very peculiarly represented. Upon his back he wears two crooked plates, which stand opposite each other, with their points almost in contact. The headdress is formed of two entangled rattlesnakes, and the ornament of neck and breast is composed of quadrangular plates or dice, as are the bracelets. From the middle of the breast ornament hangs a symbol such as the divinity of No. 3 wears. From either side of this symbol proceed boughs, each bearing leaves and flowers, while the entire boughs have the characters of the sign of discourse. We can come to no conclusion in regard to the function of this divinity. Habel's surmise that it is the goddess of the moon was suggested merely by the crescent-shaped plates and is unsupported by any old American examples. The priest has no other headdress than long, wavy hair. His right arm is raised; the left hangs down, and its hand is covered with a human mask, ornamented with a nose clasp. The wooden¹ girdle has represented upon it a fantastic beast's head, possibly a snake's head. In front of the priest there is a remarkable shape, like a package tied up at the ends, with a banner hanging down over the middle part of it, which banner has a cross on it and a style-shaped excision at the bottom exactly like the symbol that depends from the divinity's breast ornament. Upon the package is placed a human head with the sign of discourse before the mouth, and both there and behind it sheaves of feathers seem to stick up.

No. 8. The whole design is surrounded by a rim. The face of this divinity seems more masculine and aged than the others. It is surrounded with boughs bearing leaves, flowers, and fruit, but some of them have the characters of the sign of discourse. The priest has a helm in the form of a human head, and his left hand is covered with a mask which seems to represent the skull of an ape. Upon the wooden girdle a head may be seen, though it is indistinct, while upon his thigh there is a clear representation of a human head. This last wears a high cap and probably is intended for a trophy hanging from the girdle. Noteworthy are the flame-like shapes which from the back of

¹The text has Halsgürtel, necklace. But I suppose this is a clerical error for Holzgürtel, wood girdle.—TRANSLATOR.



FIG. 6.—GODDESS OF WATER?—



FIG. 7.—DEITY OF UNKNOWN FUNCTION.



FIG. 8.—DEITY OF UNKNOWN FUNCTION.

the priest¹ shoot forward and backward. Seler calls them birds' wings; but this does not agree with Habel's drawing. No further explanation of them or of the function of the divinity can be given.

Of the following three pieces our Museum possesses casts. They differ from those already noticed not only in their dimensions, but also in respect to the subjects they represent:

No. 9. The original block is incomplete, especially in the upper part. Habel says its height is 9, its breadth 4 English feet. Upon a richly carved chair, apparently an armchair, sits a man whose rich attire shows him to be a chief. In his hand he holds a paddle-shaped object, but the upper end of it is cut off by the break of the stone. It is probably a scepter or other symbol of the dignity of its bearer, for it can hardly be meant for a weapon.

Nos. 10 and 11. Habel gives for the respective lengths of these blocks 5 feet 5 inches and 5 feet 1 inch, English measure, and for their heights 2 feet 10 inches and 3 feet. They were, at any rate, introduced into the building as cross pieces, and, judging by their designs, were pendants to one another, although No. 11 has a plain border 8 inches wide, which No. 10 has not. Upon each plinth lies a man opposite to whom stands a symbolic figure, who seems to have some sort of business with him, although the sign of discourse is absent. But what that business may be it is hard to say. It has been suggested that the reclining men are ill, and that in No. 10 it is Death; in No. 11 the medicine-man who confronts the patient. It is, however, possible that the symbolical figures, to which, in the case of No. 10, ten counters, or numerals, and under them a pair of steps with a cross, placed X-wise upon them, and in the case of No. 11 five counters and a pair of steps are attached, are names or dates. The symbolical figures Death and a stag are in old Mexico, and also with the Mayas, day-signs, which combined with numerals would make "10 Death" and "3 Stag." These combinations of the signs are favored by the circumstance that in No. 10 Death is joined to the numerals by a guiding sign.² But what the steps with the cross, and what the steps alone should mean, and whether they are, or are not, connected with the numerals, can not for the present be decided. The headdress of the recumbent man of No. 10 has some similarity with that of the head borne by the upper right-hand assistant of No. 1. Noteworthy are an amulet upon his breast and a garter with a rosette upon his right leg. The feet are bare. The stiff girdle is absent, but the breechclout is correctly shown in its form and the mode of wearing it. The skeleton, girded with a snake, is surrounded with flames, and points with its right hand to the recumbent man, or probably to the figure with the steps and cross. The recumbent bearded man of No.

¹ The text reads Gottheit, divinity.—TRANSLATOR.

² I suppose he means that Death points his finger at them.—TRANSLATOR.

It wears a cap with dependent feathers and ribbons. The stag man has the hoof of the right fore leg covered with a mask; the left is raised and holds something, it is impossible to make out what. From his under jaw proceeds a flame.

No. 12. This great and finely worked piece was called an altar by Habel; but Seler more correctly designates it as a fire basin. The whole represents a crouching ape carrying on his back the basin wrapped round with a feather cloth (*Fiedertuch*), while he seems to hold Death between his fore paws. Such, at least, is the meaning of the symbolic low relief. It was chiefly this figure of Death which induced Habel to regard the whole as a sacrificial stone, and to assume that the blood of the victim was collected in the shallow basin, without making it clear how the victim was to be put to death. Other representations show that the head of the victim was cut off, in order to offer to the divinity the most important part of the man. But with such a mode of death there would scarcely be occasion for so colossal a basin. We know, however, that upon the platforms of the temples there stood great fire basins in which fire had to be kept up day and night. Now this piece would serve such a purpose very well; and consequently Seler's interpretation is to be preferred. The symbolic elements which in the form and ornamentation of this piece appear as an ape and as Death, bear no direct relation to such a purpose; but they may have had some ritual significance, indicating, for example, the divinity to which the particular temple was dedicated. The ape and Death, alike in the myths of the Mayas and of the Nahoas, are closely connected, representing perhaps the opposition of life and death, of motion and stillness. Among both peoples we find these among the twenty day signs.

No. 13. In conclusion, I will here notice a block whose sawed-off plate in the shipment at the port of San José, unfortunately fell into the sea and was irrecoverably lost. It is, therefore, doubly gratifying to meet among Habel's drawings the highly interesting representation of this block. An enlarged copy of the drawing is to be seen in the Museum. Habel gives its height as 9½ English feet and its sculptured width as 5 feet.

The design shows us the king of the vultures (*Sarcophagus papua*) with outspread wings. The disk of the sun hangs at his neck, so that he is the sun bird. The king of the vultures is also one of the day signs among both Mayas and Nahoas, and with the latter is further the bringer of worthy old age, but these functions seem to be foreign to the present representation. The bird has half eaten a man, the upper part of whose body hangs down, and with his claw he grasps a

The Indians of central Brazil, according to von den Steinen, consider the king of the vultures to be the creator of the sun, which would answer exactly to the design of No. 13.—A. M. M.



FIG. 9.—CHIEF SEATED IN A CHAIR.

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FIG. 10.—SICK MAN, A DOCTOR.

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sphere, which may be an india rubber ball used in playing ball. The game of ball is, in the picture writings, the sign of Heaven, and the flying ball denotes the sun in its motions. The head of the bearded man agrees with that which the lower right-hand assistant of No. 1 carries. He would thus represent a race hostile to the inhabitants of Santa Lucia. From this representation, of which there is a replica, which, I believe, has been preserved, it seems to follow that there was a leading worship of the sun, and that human sacrifices were offered to it.

The material described is small in number, but in scientific interest it is an important enrichment to the still limited exhibit of our Museum in old American civilization. The sculptures of Santa Lucia are, at any rate, well adapted to bring wider recognition to a proposition long established in science that America, before it was plundered, was in part inhabited by peoples well entitled to be called civilized. It must be remembered that every people follows its own course of development, and that the forms of expression of the resulting civilization are not only the product of the peculiar genius of the race, but are also influenced in the most diverse ways by the conditions of life and the events of history. Science undertakes the task of exploring the conditions of these phenomena, so that, having arrived at a complete understanding of the nature of a civilization and its significance for the people studied, it may attain the only correct standard for its appreciation. In the present case science has not reached that degree of knowledge. Only here and there can it lift the veil which peculiar thoughts and ideas have woven around the productions of the Santa Lucia civilization. Yet even these few glimpses suffice to enable us to say that we have here to do with performances which rise far above the common level. Both conception and execution testify to extraordinary endowments, especially when we reflect that a material as hard as stone allows expression to the idea only after immense technical difficulties have been overcome. All those races, so far as we know, lacked the chief means that we possess, since the use of iron was unknown, and consequently the working of the stone in such fashion as we here see it worked must have been a fearfully wearisome and prolonged labor.