

appeared to me of less interest, as not being connected with the original, and, I may say, only object of our journey, an Exploration of the Ruined Cities of Central America, the appointment of Mr. Stephens as Special Confidential Agent from the United States to Central America, having taken place but a very short time previous to our leaving, and after all our arrangements were completed.

Should this volume be favourably received, it will be followed by a continuation of our travels in Yucatan in the years 1841, 1842.

F. CATHERWOOD.

LONDON, *Feb.* 1854.

## BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICE.

A SHORT biographical notice of my late fellow-traveller may not be uninteresting to the readers of the present volume. Mr. John Lloyd Stephens, the second son of Mr. Benjamin Stephens, was born at Shrewsbury in the State of New Jersey, in the United States of America, in the year 1805. Until the age of thirteen, Mr. Stephens studied at the school of Mr. Nelson, who, although blind, is described as an admirable teacher of the classics. For four years Mr. Stephens pursued his studies at Columbia College, New York, afterwards entered a law school, and when of age was admitted to the practice of the legal profession.

In the year 1834, the state of Mr. Stephens's health rendering it necessary for him to travel abroad, he visited many of the countries of Europe, extending his tour to Egypt and Syria. On his return to New York, he published "Incidents of Travel in Egypt, Arabia, Petraea, and the Holy Land," followed very shortly by "Incidents of Travel in Greece, Turkey, Russia, and Poland."

These works were received with great favour, and were very extensively read in the United States; and in this country have been several times reprinted, establishing Mr. Stephens's reputation as an excellent and agreeable writer of Travel and Narrative.

In 1839 Mr. Stephens and myself made arrangements for a tour in Central America, with a view to the examination of the remains of ancient art said to exist in the dense forests of those tropical regions.

Our preparations were scarcely completed, when Mr. Leggett, who was on the point of setting out as United States Minister for that country, died very suddenly, and upon application for it, Mr. Stephens immediately received the appointment. We had some misgivings lest it should interfere with our antiquarian pursuits, but Mr. Stephens contrived, as the reader will find, to combine the chase after a Government with a successful hunt for ruined cities. Our journey occupied about seven or eight months of the years 1839 and 1840.



The results of our researches were published in 1841. In the autumn of that year, we resumed our travels, and explored the Peninsula of Yucatan, and in 1843 a second work was brought out. After our last visit to Yucatan, we were urged to pursue the researches so successfully carried on in Central America by a journey to Peru, and Mr. Prescott, the admirable historian of that country, was of opinion that much useful information would thereby have been elicited. Mr. Stephens was, however, disinclined to undertake so distant an expedition, and was confirmed in this resolve by my being obliged to absent myself for several years on a professional engagement in the West Indies; he therefore remained in New York, and undertook the formation of the first American Ocean Steam Navigation Company, which in the end has proved highly successful. He next visited the Isthmus of Panama, with the view of forming a Railway across the narrow but difficult neck of land that separates the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans.

A Company was formed, of which he subsequently became the President, and a concession for the line was obtained from the Government of New Grenada. The necessary surveys were made, and the works began in 1850.\* Having completed my engagement in the West Indies, I rejoined Mr. Stephens to assist in his great enterprise of spanning the Isthmus with a road of iron, and took charge of the works while he made a second journey to Santa Fé de Bogotá, the capital of New Grenada. We expected to meet in a few months, but Mr. Stephens's health, already much shattered by exposure in tropical regions, and mine still more so by a seven months' residence in one of the most unhealthy climates in the world, separated us for nearly two years; Mr. Stephens going to New York to recruit his strength, and I to California for the same object. Subsequently Mr. Stephens returned to the Isthmus, and by long and incautious exposure in that deadly climate in forwarding the interests of the Railway Company, brought on a disease which terminated fatally in the autumn of 1852.

As his fellow-traveller and intimate friend, I may be permitted to bear testimony to his kindly disposition, and the many excellent qualities of head and heart which endeared him to a large circle of friends and connexions.

F. CATHERWOOD.

\* It is confidently expected that the Panama railway will be completed by the end of 1855, and will become the favourite route to Australia, as well as to California.

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