

position of the objects associated with them. The data obtained give only a very general idea of the mode of sepulture practised in this region. The objects and utensils were probably placed beside the dead or thrown in the grave as it was being filled up. The fact that no tomb was built and no stones were placed about the body, shows that the people were less careful of the preservation of the dead than most of the peoples of Central America. The almost total disappearance of the skeletons is not more than is to be expected in a region of excessive moisture and in the absence of protection. Even in the well-built graves of Chiriqui, according to various testimonies, human remains are almost entirely absent. The cemeteries were probably located in the vicinity of towns or villages, but absolutely no trace of dwellings was discovered. The houses were constructed of perishable material, such as wood or adobes.

The second inquiry has reference to the historical significance of the art relics. There is no evidence here of different periods of culture or separate epochs marked by advancement of the arts or by radical changes of any description. What we find is evidence pointing to an extended period of constant culture during which certain arts which flourished in this region manifest a development equal to that attained by the highest civilizations of Central America. There is no evidence of the use of metals, and architectural remains are entirely wanting. So far as we are able to judge from their remains, it is in the potter's art—the manipulation of clay—that the people of this region excelled, and it was this art that was most assiduously cultivated. In drawing any such conclusion as this, however, it must be borne in mind that the class of objects dealt with has the advantage of outlasting all the other products of human skill. What degree of perfection was possessed in the manufacture of textile fabrics we have no means of knowing. In certain forms of stone-cutting, the traces, although meagre, show considerable proficiency, while in the matter of color decorations there is abundant evidence of a skill equal to that attained by the people of any of the neighboring provinces. The great body of art relics are in clay; and while in some respects they are closely related to the art of neighboring provinces, in other respects they possess a distinct individuality. It is surprising to find in a region of such small extent such a variety of forms and types as is exhibited by these relics from the Uloa valley. The vases alone represent a wide range both in form and in decorative motives. This great variety of character looks towards an admixture of races, or at least a diversity of external influence; but whatever combination of minor elements may have entered into the composition of society in this region, or whatever external agencies may have contributed to the production of the objects in question as representing its art and industry, it is evident that the dominating influence was Maya. If not a branch of the Mayas, the people, with whose remains on the Uloa River we

are now brought in contact, were in close relations with some portion of that race, whose customs they adopted and by whose culture they were enriched. They were, in fact, subject to the Maya civilization, and the surviving products of their art and industry pertain largely to that civilization. The absence of architectural remains, the most familiar and remarkable feature of Maya culture in other regions, does not of necessity militate against the proposition just put forward, for in any given region the presence of suitable material in an accessible form is a necessary condition to the development of sculpture or the production of enduring monuments of architecture such as are found at Copan and in the ruined cities of Yucatan and Chiapas. But for the proximity of trachyte beds furnishing a convenient workable material, the elaborate architecture of Copan could never have been developed. In the valley of the Uloa there is no available supply of stone that could be manipulated in accordance with the requirements of an architecture like that of Copan, by a people with no better tools than flint chisels. Whatever the inhabitants of the region may have accomplished in the art of building, the material used was less durable than stone, and probably consisted of adobe and wood.

Art in clay, which in the ancient centres of Maya culture occupies a subordinate position, in this region takes the place of art in stone almost entirely, and accordingly the former is given a wider application than elsewhere. Although here, as elsewhere, the vessel represents the first idea and the leading feature of ceramic art, images, musical instruments, seals, and articles of personal adornment occupy a very important place, and there is a conspicuous ambition to model life forms—natural or mythological—apart from objects of utility. The attempt to model the human form is worthy of especial mention, and is more meritorious than any similar attempt of which traces have survived in the neighboring provinces.

It is among the pottery vessels that the Maya affinities are most prominent. Of the number represented, either by entire specimens or by fragments, not only do the greater part exhibit technical qualities identical with the pottery from Copan, but especially in the conventional use of certain decorative motives and in the employment of a graphic system common to that of the codices and to the sculptured monuments of Maya, these affinities are very manifest. The same relationship makes itself felt, although in a less striking manner, in the other classes of objects. It is not claimed that this relationship, however intimate, covers the whole ground, or that there is any homogeneity throughout the whole body of ceramic products, as if it were the work of a homogeneous people and represented a culture developed from within. On the contrary, there is in the tendency toward diversity of type strong evidence of an admixture of races, or of extensive importations derived from a variety of sources; but the incomplete character of the available data would make an analysis

of these mixed conditions very difficult. The affinity already spoken of is the only one that is definite and obvious. The whistles and musical instruments, while they resemble in some respects similar instruments from the graves of Chiriqui, show a much greater perfection of form and ornament, and possess a strong individuality. While to a superficial observer none of these instruments are more than whistles or mere toys, an examination shows that many of them possess powers which give them a more pretentious character. Very simple in construction, they answer within certain limits to the requirements of real musical instruments, and although the mutilated condition of these instruments prevents a satisfactory determination of their actual capacity, they serve to show that music in a crude form was cultivated among the people to whom they pertain. There is no proof of the existence of any fixed scale of intervals, but the condition of the instruments makes it impossible to speak with certainty on this point. While all these instruments are limited in musical capacity, those of the more pretentious class, if operated by skilled performers, are capable of producing pleasing melodies. Moreover there is among them a certain correspondence in construction, in the number of tones, and in the succession of intervals that indicates a tendency to conform to more or less definite standards. In the hands of modern musicians these instruments, played in unison, can be made to produce harmony, but it would be rash to say that their owners had any knowledge of this, or that they made any systematic use of their limited musical capacity. The mechanism most commonly employed is that of the modern flageolet, as shown in Fig. 20. While some of these are simple whistles, giving one or two notes only, the great majority are provided with two holes equally distant from the mouthpiece; these holes are always exactly equal in size and consequently give the same note. Three notes is the full capacity of these instruments, one with both stops closed, another with either one open, and a third with both open. In the most pretentious class the mechanism by which the sound is produced is a plain opening or passage communicating with the air-chamber, which is provided with three stops capable of producing five distinct tones. Two of these stops are always placed at equal distances from the mouthpiece, and being equal in size, when either one is alone open, the same note is produced. Plate IX., *o*, *p*, *q*, are good examples of this type.

The stamps or seals resemble very closely the well-known Mexican article, and still more closely specimens from Venezuela.

Obvious and striking as are some of the extraneous relationships, and particularly that which connects the art and culture of this region with that which distinguishes the people of the great Maya stock, not less remarkable are the traits that distinguish a considerable portion of the art relics of this region from those of all other localities and give a marked individuality to certain groups of objects. The stone vases, represented by fugitive

specimens and constituting almost the only evidence of art in stone, form a unique and interesting group, with marked individual characteristics; and the same is true of a considerable portion of the ceramic products. It is singular that tools of all sorts are almost absent, and implements of war entirely so.

With regard to the surface remains in the Uloa valley, it can only be said that they appear to have no distinct connection with the underground relics. The few objects of art that have been observed among these earth-works bear no apparent relation to the deeper and therefore older material. The carving of the one idol that came under observation is extremely crude, and has more resemblance to Nicaraguan sculptures than those of any other section with which we are familiar. Although there is no definite testimony as to age, these surface remains probably belong to the period corresponding to the earliest Spanish colonization; and whatever the origin of the people to whom they are to be attributed, they did not possess the degree of culture that distinguished their predecessors in the same region.

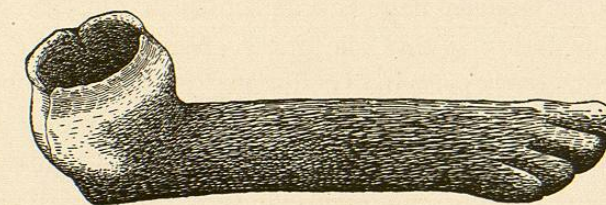


FIG. 35. — TOBACCO PIPE OF CLAY. §.