

light. Now, of course, no one can surmise in what part of the huge pyramid of ruins, overgrown with trees, this table stood. We must perforce be content, therefore, with the mutilated fragment here discovered.

The table is chiselled out of the finest limestone. Its breadth is sixty-two centimetres, the length of the part found is seventy-five, the width of the band of glyphs is seven, but the general thickness of the stone is somewhat more. The incised inscription of the top formerly consisted (according to my calculation) of twenty-four squares containing glyphs in two rows of twelve each. Of the first row eight are preserved, and of the second six. The missing squares belong to the broken-off corner. The first seven glyph-squares of the outer band were preserved; then, on the same side, there were probably four more, and around the broken-off corner, on the long side, probably six more; then followed seven well-preserved squares to the edge where the missing portion of the table formerly joined.

I have taken photographs of the bands of glyphs preserved on the narrow frontal faces (Plate II), and have made a tracing of the incised inscription on the upper face (Fig. 1).

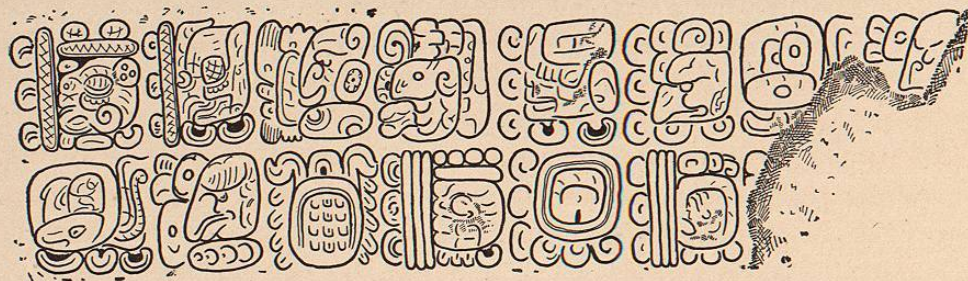


FIG. 1.—CHINIKIHÁ: PORTION OF INCISED INSCRIPTION UPON UPPER SURFACE OF STONE TABLE.

Adjoining the north side of the ruined pyramid is an extensive palace with several courts. On one side of the main court there is a row of narrow entrances, which are arched over with triangular arches flattened at the top. ( ) These entrances, I think, did not lead to actual apartments, but only to a passageway by which chambers in the rear and at the sides may have been reached, while the horizontal stone roof formed an elevated passage to adjoining terraces.

Climbing over the ruins of the fallen chambers, which lie opposite the structure with the flattened triangular arches, we came to further remains of buildings and to a covered passageway, which must have led to chambers now filled with débris. Traces of painting (red scroll work) were still visible on the plastered walls of this passageway (or anteroom), but they had become so indistinct that it was impossible for me to copy the design.

Since the principal façades of this group of edifices, especially that of the temple, must have faced the west, I carefully searched the ground in

front of it for sculptured stones, and found a small circular sacrificial table, and near it the fragments of a small stela, which had the figure of a man on one side and an inscription on the other. Unfortunately both sides of the stela were so much worn off by the rain that I could not photograph them. Whether the destruction of this stela is also to be imputed to the monteros and the fire which broke out at that time, it was useless to inquire. I will only remark that in almost all cases where a sculptured stela is dashed down by the accidental fall of a forest giant, the picture facing upward is destroyed, but the one turned downward is marvellously well-preserved. The only explanation I can give for the fact that both faces of this stela were worn off is, that some intruder out of curiosity had turned the fragments over and had then left them lying there.

This second group of edifices lies in the northeastern part of the city, and at a slight distance from it, but to the northeast there is a large truncated pyramid, which might prove of great interest to a future explorer able to undertake excavations on a more extended scale. Without wishing further to blame the honest woodcutters — who apologized to me for having meddled in archaeological matters by saying that they could not have foreseen that some time I should penetrate into these hidden corners — I must mention, however, to complete the matter, that one of the mozos found among these ruins a small sculptured stone in perfect preservation which, it is said, still showed some traces of colors, and that he had carried it off with the intention of selling it to one of the managers of La Reforma. But on the road — who knows where? — on thinking the matter over and being in doubt whether he should receive the hoped-for recompense of fifty pesos, and the stone being somewhat heavy, he hid it in the woods. At the time of my stay in La Reforma, this man was in far-off Tzendales; hence it was utterly impossible to find the stone, which may now be forever lost.

### III.

#### CHÁNCALA.

Cháncala (tsáncalá) is the name of a plant with large leaves, the seed-pods of which contain small black balls, which, when pierced with holes, are used by the Indian women for necklaces. It is the *Heliconia* of the botanists.

At the end of January, 1898, leaving the larger part of my baggage at La Reforma, I went with my men to the waterfall of the Cháncala River to investigate a ruined city in that locality. The road was extremely miry and occasioned us much trouble. We passed first through a small rancho, and were courteously received by the occupant, who had lost his right hand



while pressing sugar-cane. We crossed the Cháncala River about one league above the waterfall, where lie the crumbling huts of the abandoned montería, La Cuña. Hard by the waterfall—on the right bank—are also the huts of a former lumber-camp, El Chorro, and in the best of these we settled ourselves for the night. We were about seven leagues from La Reforma.

The ruined city is perhaps three kilometres to the south of these huts, but owing to the extremely dense vegetation, it was impossible to reach it by a direct route. Therefore, when we were ready the next morning, the guide whom we had obtained at La Reforma, preferred to follow the path leading down stream for a considerable distance and then, turning to the right, to go up hill by a very much overgrown wood-road. On our journey we passed several streams of water, clear as crystal, whose banks were gay with interesting flowers. Finally we came to some masonry which enclosed an artificial mound of earth, from which, however, the structures which had once surmounted it had entirely disappeared. In spite of the fact that we had successfully reached the ruined city we were seeking, the guide who had been sent with us became so discouraged, owing to the rank vegetation which obstructed all the former paths, that with all sorts of prevarications and lying pretences he cowardly forsook us and returned to La Reforma. I quietly let the rascal go, as I had very capable men with me. We at once began to explore the forest in which the ruins lay in all directions. We found a considerable number of substructures, both large and small, heaps of ruins, etc. In the southwestern part of the town we climbed a high natural hill in the hope of finding the principal temple on its top. Indeed near the summit there were remains of terrace walls, and at the very top a small ruined pyramid indicated that a temple had formerly stood there. From this hill we were able to overlook, in a measure, the surrounding country, without however gaining an advantage thereby, on account of the exceedingly tall growth of the trees. The trunks of many of the trees were of extraordinary thickness and height. An especial object of wonder to me was a ceiba—*yāxché* (*yās-tse* = green stem) as the Mayas call it—of giant proportions.

In the northwestern part of the town we were first successful in discovering a temple, in a fairly good state of preservation, which crowned a small pyramid of six terraces. To make the satisfaction of my men complete, they shot a slender variety of monkey, a *mico*, so that we had no lack of meat. The front of the temple faced the west, and my men began carefully to cut down the vegetation on that side, while I drew the plan (Fig. 2).

A broad flight of steps, now of course partially in ruins, leads up to the platform of the pyramid. The latter, which is about nine metres high, is composed of six terraces, some of which are still distinctly visible. The entrance to the interior of the temple is two hundred and fifty centimetres

wide, and formerly had wooden lintels, which were either torn out by ruthless hands or were destroyed by some other means. As a result, the corresponding pieces of the frieze and the vaulted ceiling have fallen down and the passage is obstructed. The interior of the temple is two hundred and thirty-three centimetres wide, three hundred and ninety long, and four hundred and sixty-three high, from the cemented floor to the truncation of the

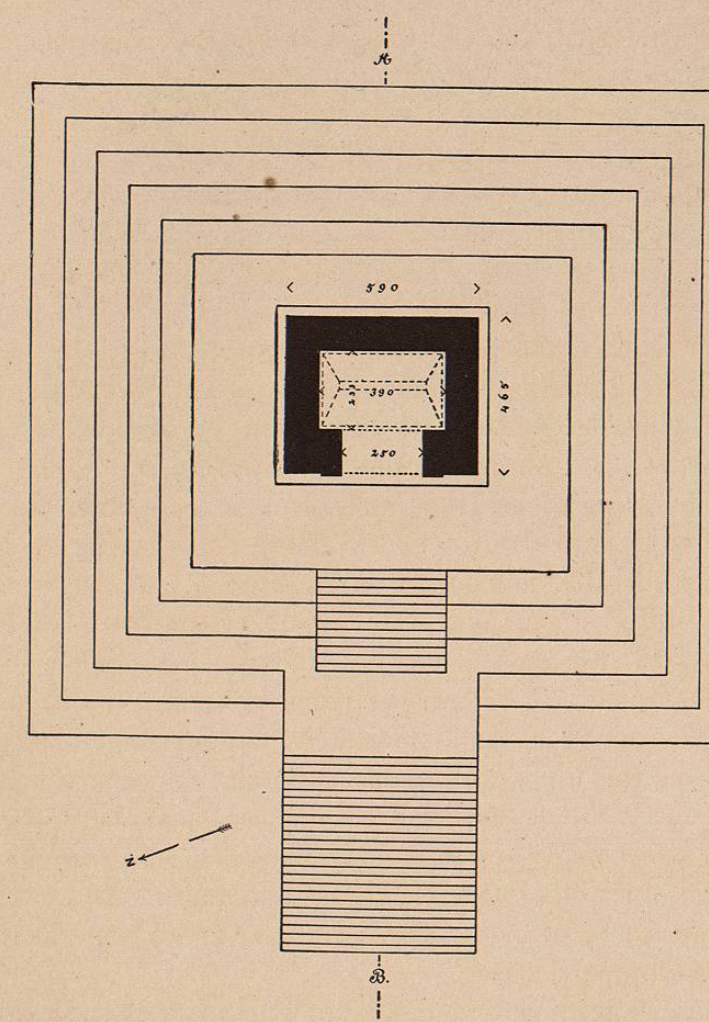


FIG. 2. — CHÁNCALA: PLAN OF TEMPLE AND SUBSTRUCTURE.

pointed arch of the vault, which at its base is separated from the face of the wall by a cornice. The walls of the room had evidently been covered over at different times with fine white stucco. Near the inner edges of the door jambs, both above and below, there is always a wall-ring hollowed out of a stone protruding from the masonry, which served to hold the wooden pegs of the mats or basket-work screens which covered the doorways.

The exterior of the temple is as follows: A stone bench, projecting about thirty centimetres, runs all around, forming a strong foundation.