

Prehistoric Crania From Central America.*

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At the Peabody Museum, at Cambridge, there is a collection of archæological treasures, recently found in Central America, that have especial interest to the dental profession. These, consisting of crania, parts of the skeleton, a collection of teeth curiously filed and inlaid, with a fine collection of pottery and instruments which were made from bone, stone, and from a volcanic glass (obsidian), together with carvings and statues, are soon to be on public exhibition. They are being arranged in cases and around the room, while large numbers of photographs, showing the site of the excavations, are arranged within the cabinets upon the walls.

In 1890 the expedition that obtained them was sent to Central America by Harvard University under the charge of Mr. John G. Owens, a young archæologist of great promise, who died at his post of duty after the explorations were about complete. The expense of this expedition was defrayed by certain wealthy Bostonians. Most of these archæological treasures were brought from Copan, Honduras, and certain other ruins found in Yucatan. Mr. C. P. Bowditch, of Boston, who has been very much interested in the expedition, has now the charge of the collection. Mr. M. H. Saville, to whom I am much indebted, and who was with the expedition, states that the site where these things were found was covered by a growth of old trees, and it was necessary for the natives to cut these away before the excavations commenced. An ancient temple of some kind was long supposed to have existed here, from the fact that carved blocks of stone had been from time to time dug up in the locality, and the excavations proved this



Skeleton 7, Mound 36.
Filed without inlay.

supposition to be a fact. A large temple was unearthed, together with a number of the homes of the former inhabitants, and graves were found under the floors of the rooms of the houses. These graves were either stoned in or cemented, after the bodies had been partly covered with loose earth. Other graves were found in deep cemented chambers under the level of the ground, these chambers having the triangular arch commonly found in the buildings of this prehistoric people. The teeth on exhibition were obtained at Copan, Honduras. The skull, which is here shown, was taken from a grave at Labna, Yucatan, and is probably of a later date than the skeletons found at Copan, although it is undoubtedly pre-

* A Paper read before the American Academy of Dental Science, Boston.