

mitza, eighty-four miles further off, but in the same direction, and having much the appearance of a sacred city, we find doorways and interior walls decorated with human figures and symbols carved in stone; we meet there, too, with colonnades, though of clumsy structure, surprising for their extent; at one place the pillars lie prostrate on the ground, which once belonged to one single edifice. On the contrary, at Usmal, a place situated between Merida and Campeche, which Mr. Waldeck has already briefly noticed, there are scarcely any ornaments to be found in the interior of the buildings; but the stone-work of the outside walls is more sumptuous and more neatly finished. Neither is there any trace whatever of any large building or portico with pillars.—I cannot here attempt a detailed description of the different objects which came within my observation, but I will endeavour to give some account of the principal characteristics which distinguish all these buildings, as it may serve for comparison with the accounts of others.—These distinguishing points are:—1. The apparently sudden erection of whole cities. 2. The accurate reference to the east in the erection of all sacred buildings. 3. The foundations consist of a sort of concrete of mortar and small stones. 4. The walls, both internally and externally, are covered with a range of solid stones cut to parallelograms of 8 and 12 inches in length and 5 to 7 in height; the interval filled up with the same concrete mass as used in the base. Nowhere is there any trace of the employment of bricks or Egyptian tiles. 5. The elevation of all the buildings, without exception, by means of one or several terraces of more or less considerable height.—The usual manner of construction was limited to one story; the shape of the buildings long and narrow, and as there were no windows, the depth was limited to two rooms, which the inner one could have no more than was obtained through the communicating door. The doorways, which are generally square, are six or seven feet high, and of equal breadth; traces are yet to be seen in a few instances of holes or stone rings, proving that the doors were so constructed that they could be shut on occasion. 7. The height of the edifices rarely exceeds twenty to thirty feet. The outside walls rise generally from the base, without break, to about half the height of the building, when there is a variable number of cornices, which, after a plain or beamed interval, close likewise the upper edge. The most important buildings exhibit in this

upper space an astonishing variety of hieroglyphics and elegant figures; even statuary was employed to increase the splendour. The constructions of an inferior order have at the same place ranges of small half columns. There are further, as well inside as outside of the buildings, long rough stones, projected from the walls, usually arranged one above the other, and increasing in size from below. 8. The ceilings of all interior spaces consist of acute arches, closed on the top with a layer of flat stones. The proportion of the walls to the sine of the arch, varies from 2: 1 to 1: 2.—Stones cut to the shape of a wedge, with oblique heads, were employed to form the sine.—9. The arch supports a flat roof, the surface of which, instead of being slated, is covered with a concrete of ground stones and marl, very consistent and thoroughly petrified. The same kind of composition covers the floors of the apartments. The roof itself is frequently bordered by a kind of raised filagree or pierced stone work. 10. The application of timber for lintels and rafters, the first of which still bear traces of the original carved characters.—11. The outside of the walls does not present any mark of rough cast or painting. The interior of some structures is, however, covered with a thin layer of a very fine stucco, on which the colours are still to be recognized; the bordering at the basis of the walls generally being sky blue, the upper part light green, the arches showing the traces of fantastical figures in varying lively colours. In regard to the carved figures in the sides of the doorways, it may be noticed that the colouring of the uncovered part of the body is of a dark yellow, the vestments green and blue, the background of a dark red. Their attitude is always directed to the entrance. 12. Vent-holes exist in every room below the cornice. They are of a square or round form, three or five inches in diameter, and more or less numerous in different buildings. There are niches also in the apartments and corridors, in some cases with symbolical signs and hieroglyphics, carved circles, hewn rings, &c.

The relief used in these representations is flattened on its surface, and besides the outlines, the background is generally chiselled out, though sometimes the artist was satisfied with carving the outlines superficially in the rock. The most common ornament on sacred buildings was a winding serpent, generally representing the rattlesnake of this country. As to the local impression of the architecture of all these buildings, I have still to add, that the re-