

eton, it is advisable for the explorer, where he can do it, without great inconvenience, to pursue the final process of laying it bare, by proceeding from the feet towards the head. No parts of an ancient uncoffined skeleton are so difficult to recover perfect and complete as the bones of the hands and feet; but these are frequently portions of considerable moment. The small size of the hands has been noted by Mr. Stephens as characteristic of the ancient temple builders of Yucatan, and the same feature has been observed in reference both to the hands and the feet, in various primitive races. In seeking to exhume these, as well as the larger bones, they ought not to be moved from the inclosing soil when they indicate the slightest fragility, until the earth has been cautiously removed all round them so as to admit of their being lifted out. Where the skull has been fractured, or any of the bones of the face are displaced by the pressure of the earth, every fragment should be carefully collected; and if the soil has been damp, or the bones are rendered soft by moisture, they should be exposed to the sun, before being wrapped up in paper.

Care must also be taken to note all the circumstances attendant on the discovery, which are likely to throw any light on the characteristics of the race, their mode of sepulture, their arts, or customs; due discrimination being made between the contents of the different sepulchral deposits, when more than one has been explored. Nothing should be trusted to memory, but all the facts noted at the moment and on the spot. Some of the most important facts to be observed are: the position of the body: whether lying at full length, on the back or side, or with the knees bent or drawn up; also, the direction of the body, and the position of the head in relation to the points of the compass.

The nature and relative position of any relics, such as urns, implements, weapons, &c., should next be carefully noted; and among such, particular attention is to be paid to animal remains, such as the bones and skulls, horns or teeth, of beasts, birds, and fishes, and marine or fresh-water shells. It is a common fashion among savage tribes to hold a burial feast over the grave of the dead, and such relics may tend to throw considerable light on the habits of the people, as well as on the period to which they belong.

In transmitting ancient skulls, they should be first wrapped up in paper—an old newspaper will be found the most suitable for the purpose. Where there are detached pieces, each should be put in a separate wrapper. The whole may then be placed in a box with hay, which furnishes an inclosure sufficiently elastic to protect the most fragile bones from injury during carriage.