Ancient Grave Mounds Are Being Dug Over for Golden Gods

(By Frank G. Carpenter.)

Punta Arenas, Costa Rica.

COSTA Rica has one of the fabled treasure islands of the world. This is Cocos, which lies southwest of here in latitude 5 degrees 32 minutes and in latitude 5 degrees, 32 minutes and longitude 87 degrees 2 minutes. It is claimed that on the island is buried gold to the amount of millions of dollars. One of the treasures was carried there in 1720 at the time of the revolution in Peru, when the people of Lima and Callao chartered the little vessel lying at the wharves and escaped to Cocos with their plate, bullion and other valuables. They were chased by a Peruvian man-of-war, but outran it in the darkness. They landed eleven boatloads of treasure at Cocos amounting in value, it is said, all the way from fifty to one hundred millions of dollars. Among the objects was a life sized statue of the Holy Virgin, made of solid gold, and there were smaller golden statues of St. Joseph, St. Peter and others. There was a great quantity of silver plate, and, in all, a vast treasure.

After burying this, the vessel started back to Peru, but on its way it met one of he revolutionary men-of-war and was bombarded. As a result every Peruvian on board was killed, and only two men, an Englishman and an American, were saved. The American afterward disappeared. His name was Thompson. This left the Englishman, a resident of Newfoundland named Keating, as the sole owner of the secret. Keating went home and a short time later started out two expeditions to get the reasure. In one of these his vessel was wrecked and in the other he and his crew were arrested at Panama and sent back home. He left his charts, however, to his descendants, and some years ago they were still in the hands of one of them, a Mrs. Young, who was then living in Boston.

Hoards of the Buccaneers.

Another treasure buried on Cocos is said to have been left there by William Dampier, who blockaded Panama in 1684 and took during the years following a big treasure ship which was coming north from Peru, intending to send its silver and gold on horses across the Isthmus to Porto Bello and thence to Spain. Dampier, it is alleged, buried six boatloads of silver on Cocos and made several trips there after that with similar freight.

There is a third story which says that in 1821, during the revolution when the Central American colonies broke away from Spain, the native Spaniards living here in Costa Rica loaded a schooner with gold jems and silver plate and sent it to Cocos to be kept there until the troubles were over. They gave the treasures over into the hands of six men, each of whom had a chart of the exact place where the stuff was buried. One of these men was killed during the revolution, and two others died from natural causes before it was over. When peace was restored the remaining three started for Cocos to bring back the wealth, but their boat was driven on the rocks of the island and all on board perished. That was about 1830.

Hunting the Treasure.

These facts have long been current in this part of the world, and many people believe that the above-named treasures still exist there. The government of Costa Rica has given a number of permits to parties to hunt for them, and not long ago a squad of soldiers and a scientist in charge of the Costa Rican government survey went to Cocos accompanied by a Colorado man, who claimed that he could hold a stick in his hand and that it would turn over and point down when he passed over gold. I have seen men looking for water in the mountains of Virginia using the forked limb of a peach or apple tree in much the same woy. Well, the Colorado man's charm did not work on Cocos. I don't know what was the matter. He went there, but claimed he had not a fair trial.

Another set of treasure hunters came here about five years ago from England. I was at Panama at the time their boat was in the harbor. That expedition was headed by Earl Fitzwilliam, who is said to have an income of $1,000,000 a year and to own 100,000 acres of land in Ireland. He had bought a yacht named the Veronique and had come out wth Admiral Palliser, who at one time was the commander of the British fleet on the Pacific. The admiral had been sent to Cocos by the government some years before to investigate the claims of a man named Hartford, an Englishman, who had a concession from Costa Rica to hunt for this treasure. He was on the imperieuse at the time, and he and his sailors did some digging and then went away. Palliser, however, was confident that the treasure existed, and he got the earl to put up $300,000 to purchase this yacht and equipment. They had a full corps of men, including sailors and diggers. They came around through the Strait of Magellan and made the island all right. In looking for the treasure, however, they used dynamite, and in the explosion which followed the earl and the admiral were so badly injured by rocks that, to make a long story short, they went back to Panama with nothing but disgust for their pains.

Another party started out to look for this treasure was headed by a Newfoundland woman, the widow of a ship chandler. She went over to the Pacific and outfitted a ship from Victoria. Her captain was a man named Fred Hackett, and she had with her a transfer from Hartford of his permission from the Costa Rican government to search for treasure on Cocos, the understanding being that the latter was to have half of the find. When she came to Cocos the island was inhabited by a castaway who was dressed like Robinson Crusoe. He had nothing on but skins of beasts, and he looked crazy. At first he could not speak, but after they had given him some whiskey he told in broken language his story. He said he and others had had a concession from Costa Rica to search for this treasure, but that the others had become disgusted and left. He could not say how long he had been on the island. At first he had kept tally of the days by notching a stick, but he lost the stick, and he had about given up in despair when the schooner arrived.

In the meantime other parties, including some of our canal employes, have been planning to excavate Cocos, but so far no one has discovered either the buccaneer hoard or the Madonna of gold. I am told that concessions can be gotten from the Costa Rican government if any one cares to search.

The Hidden Gold of Central America.

There is no doubt that there are great treasures hidden on the islands and also on the continental part of Central America. On Mona Island $200,000 worth of silver is buried. This is not far from Porto Rico.

I have myself seen here and at Panama at least a half peck of solid gold images which have been taken from the old grave mounds of Central America. No one knows who buried them, and some suppose that they date back for hundreds and even thousands of years. I saw a quart of these images in the bank of Ehrman & Co. in Panama City, and I am told that Minor C. Keith has a collection of them in New York which is said to be worth several hundred thousand dollars.

I took a photograph of the images in the Panama bank. They are of all sizes, from that of a man's thumb nail to the palm of your hand. Some are quite heavy, and the gold in them must be worth several hundred dollars. Some represent frogs, others birds and some are women with a hawk head of Hathor, or what looks very much like it. Indeed, the most of the images have an Egyptian cast, and they remind one of the treasures found in the pyramids. The most of these came from the Chiriqui province, in the northern part of the Panama republic, where it joins Costa Rica.

I am told that a large part of the Keith collection came from Costa Rica, and that they are now finding some about the Gulf of Agua Dulce. At San Jose there is a jeweler who has some of these images for sale, and down here at Punta Arenas I have been offered two very fine ones for $50 and $60 apiece. I should judge that this equals just about half the value of the gold in them. Dr. Spencer Franklin, who has them for sale for a native, says that they are probably 1,000 or 2,000 years old.

The workmanship on these images is exquisite. Some of them are beautifully carved and some are lifelike in feature. Among the treasures of Mr. Ehrman are a great many breastplates of solid gold. These are round disks with a nipple in the centre ranging in diameter from two to six inches. The gold is a thin plate and is unalloyed. He has also a bracelet which would fit around the biceps of a prize fighter and which is about four inches wide. This is also of solid gold.

I understand that many such images are being discovered and that in all cases they come from these grave mounds of the past.

Gold Buried in Lakes.

Some of the lakes of the Central American highlands are said to contain treasures put there by the Indians at the time they were persecuted by the Spaniards. There is one on the top of a mountain in Colombia, not far from Panama, out of which images like those I have described have been taken. The most of them have been found near the shore, and it is said that a party of Englishmen are now planning to drain the lake and mine the bed for the treasures. They are making a tunnel to let off the water.

I heard of similar treasure hoards in this same region of South America. There is one in Ecuador said to contain the treasures of the Incas, and another in Peru where it is claimed that something like $16,000,000 worth of gold was thrown at the time Pizarro broke faith with Atahualpa and caused his death.

You may remember part of the story. Pizarro had conquered Peru and was taking away the silver by the shipload. That metal was so common that the Spaniards had their horses shod with it. It was at this time that Pizarro, the Spanish general, had captured the Inca King, Atahualpa, who was also a sort of a prophet and high priest of the people. He offered to ransom the latter if the Indians would fill the room in which the King was imprisoned with gold.

The room was seventeen feet wide, twenty feet long and nine feet high. The gold was brought in in great quantities. It comprised gold plates torn from the Temple of the Sun at Cusco, gold vases wonderfully carved, immense gold basins and hundreds of drinking cups and dishes of various kinds. There was so much of it that it took the Indian goldsmith a whole month, working day and night, to cast it into ingots, and so much that it filled the room, as Pizarro demanded. After Pizarro got the gold he treacherously killed the King, and it is said that the Indians then gathered together such gold as they had left and buried it in that unknown lake.

There are said to be gold hoards at the bottom of Lake Titicaca, but that can never be drained. There are other gold hoards in the nitrate fields farther south, and indeed no one knows just where the greatest treasures of the past lie. It is very probable that there is some on the Isthmus of Panama, and the excavation of old Panama City, which is about to begin when the new road there is completed, will unearth some which were hidden at the time that Morgan took and destroyed the city. Morgan is said to have taken away 175 horseloads of jewels, silver and gold, and he tortured the people to make them confess where the money was hidden.

The Pearl Islands of the Western Pacific.

If treasures are found at old Panama it is not improbable that jewels and pearls may be found among them. The waters adjoining Panama and other parts of Central America has long been noted for their magnificent pearls. Some of those in the crown of Spain came from here, and in the cathedrals in Seville and Toledo are strings and clusters of pearls which the early explorers took from the Indians. Columbus met natives wearing ropes of pearls while he was in this part of the world, and he took one pearl weighing 300 grains home to the Queen. Cortez found black pearls which came from the waters of Lower California, while Ferdinand De Soto is said to have robbed one of the Indian queens of a great string of fine pearls.

There are pearl fisheries just outside Panama Bay, and the diving is going on now. I find pearls for sale here in Punta Arenas, and the waiters at the hotel tables will untie knots in their handkerchiefs and ask you to buy them between bites. Some of the pearls are only seeds, but others are as big as a pea. In the stores you will see little bottles of pearls which can be bought by the lot for all sorts of prices, but as a rule the pearls are either very small or not perfectly round. I was told that one was taken out a few years ago which weighed fifty carats, and I have heard of another which a twelve-year-old boy found in an oyster and sold for $4,000. It was taken to Panama, and there sold to a banker, and in time it reached Paris, where it was valued at $10,000. Not long ago some pearls were found near our canal sanatorium on Taboga Island, and one of them brought $2,000.

The most of the pearls, however, come from the Pearl Islands, which lie on the west side of Panama Bay, about thirty miles from the islands on which we are now building the fortifications which command the western end of the Panama Canal. There are sixteen of these islands, the most of them small. They are populated chiefly by the Indians, who are engaged in pearl diving. The men use diving suits, and they bring up the pearl oysters in the shell. After the shells are on board the boats they are opened and the oysters are searched over for pearls, the shells being cleaned and sold to make buttons, knife handles and other such things in which mother of pearl is employed. I am told that the shells found are worth about as much as the pearls, and that they are the sure part of the profit. The divers may work for days without finding a pearl, but the shells always sell, and it is on that account that the business is profitable.

In talking with one of the [illegible] here I asked him whether it [illegible] that pearls could be made by [illegible] a grain of sand inside an [illegible] that it irritated its flesh and [illegible] secrete the solution which [illegible] the pearl. He replied that he [illegible] faith in the theory, and that [illegible] found pearls of considerable [illegible] very young oysters, and that there [illegible] no rule as to just where the [illegible] said he:

"A pearl is like an onion. It [illegible] of a series of coats, and you can [illegible] off the outside one to find them [illegible] intact. As a rule the pearls now [illegible] are small and not of great value [illegible] though there is no telling what [illegible] ones may be discovered."

A Pearl as Big as an Egg.

I am told that the Pearl Islands [illegible] been fished for pearls for almost [illegible] years, and that pearl fishing is [illegible] on all along this coast from San [illegible] California to Mexico. The black [illegible] of the Gulf of Lower California [illegible] been exported since the days of C[illegible] and more than 1,200 ounces [illegible] shipped to Spain in one year. [illegible] was in 1715. About two years [illegible] diver found a pearl as big as a [illegible] ridge egg, and it was sent to [illegible] where it sold for $5,000. That [illegible] was of a light steel color, but [illegible] black at the base.

On the other side of the [illegible] pearls have been found off the [illegible] of South America. It is said [illegible] Venezuela is producing something [illegible] $600,000 worth every year. It [illegible] region which is called the "[illegible] Pearls," and it was from near [illegible] on the Island of Margerita that a [illegible] of 250 carats was taken in 1879. [illegible] pearl was worth perhaps $50,000. [illegible] became the property of the King [illegible] Spain. Another gem which adorns [illegible] Spanish crown came from the [illegible] of Mexico. It weighs 400 grains.

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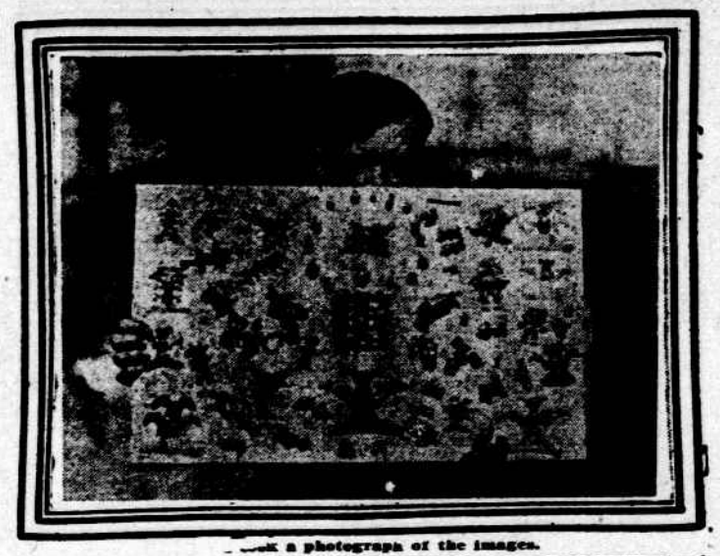
Site of Porto Bello, a treasure city which the buccaneers looted. It is now a quarry for the canal.



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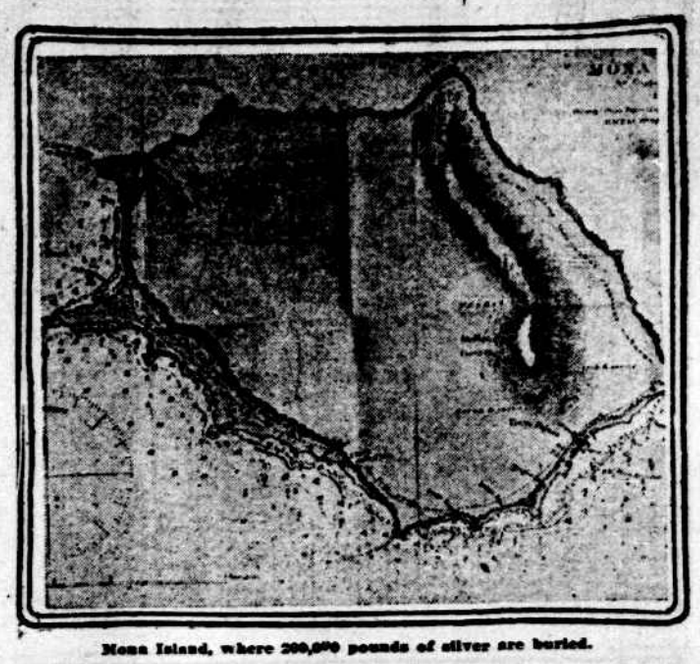

Mona Island, where 200,000 pounds of silver are buried.

Admiral Palliser on his way to hunt treasure in Cocos Island, Costa Rica. The admiral is at the wheel.

DURHAM

[Special to The Times-Dispatch.]

Durham, N. C., November 2.—Miss Gertrude Duncan entertained the members of the Junior Y. W. A. of the North Durham Baptist Church Friday evening at her home on Lynn[illegible] Street. The house was prettily decorated with flowers and autumn leaves and the Y. W. A. colors. Games and music were the amusements of the evening. Cheese sandwiches and hot chocolate were served.

Miss Sarah Harlan, after a visit to her sister, Mrs. E. R. Leyburn, has returned to her home in Richmond.

Mrs. R. B. Crawford, of Mill Creek, is the guest of Mrs. J. B. Walker.

Miss Elizabeth Collins is visiting friends in High Point.

Miss Clara Kennedy is spending a few days in the city with her aunt, Mrs. R. W. Williams. She will visit friends in Greensboro before returning to her home in Richmond.

Misses Alberta Boone and Elizabeth Cheatham are on a visit to Baltimore.

Mrs. A. J. Trogler, Sr., of Baltimore, and Mr. and Mrs. A. J. Trogler, Jr., two children, of Cincinnati, are the guests of Mrs. L. B. Markham.

Ernest Sears has returned to his home in Bay City, Texas, after a visit to his parents, Mr. and Mrs. A. J. Sears, on Morris Street.

Mrs. Joseph Graham was hostess to the Senior Bridge Club Thursday afternoon at her home on Mangum Street. Auction bridge was the game and refreshments were served in two courses. In addition to the regular members of the club, Mrs. Graham has as guests Mrs. F. L. Williams, of New York; Mrs. W. W. Olive and Mrs. W. L. Wall, of Hillsboro, a former member of the club.

The Cornelian Literary Society met in the girls' literary hall at the High School Friday afternoon and was attended by more than 100 girls. The society is composed of many of the girls of the High School, and is doing splendid work in developing the minds and talents of the members along the lines of real interest in good literature.

Miss Bessie Erwin, who has been the guest of Miss Helen Slocum, in Fayetteville, returned home Monday, and left Tuesday for Charlotte, where she is the guest of Mrs. Miles Hunter.

Mr. and Mrs. O. T. Leonard have returned to Greensboro, after visiting Rev. and Mrs. R. C. Craven in this city.

Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Lansford, of Goldsboro, who have been the guests of Mr. and Mrs. J. J. Thaxton, have returned home.

Miss Grace Johnson has returned to her home in Charlotte after a visit to Mrs. C. C. Howerton, in this city.

Health and Beauty Hints

BY MRS. MAE MARTYN

Miss B. K.: The worry and bother of wearing hair-nets and veils to make the hair stay up and conceal that dull, "stringy," unkempt appearance you speak of could be easily avoided if you would stop shampooing with soap. The "free" alkali in soap irritates the scalp, makes the hair streaked, dull, coarse and brittle. Shampoo with a teaspoonful of canthrox dissolved in a cup of hot water and your hair will always be light, fluffy and easy to do up, besides looking decidedly neat. This shampoo lathers abundantly, dries quickly, stops itching of the scalp and cleanses as no other shampoo will. The luxury of extreme cleanliness which comes from the use of this shampoo has made it so popular that many of the best hairdressers now use it exclusively. It is inexpensive and can be bought at any drug store.

Carmen: It is a very easy matter to reduce your weight without leaving the skin wrinkled and flabby if you only know how. Here is the secret: Buy at any drug store four ounces of parmotis and put in 1½ pints of hot water. When cold strain and take a tablespoonful of the liquid before each meal. This is harmless and the pleasing way it will cut down your weight will surprise you. Avoiding rich, solid foods and taking plenty of exercise will assist greatly in getting rid of your fat quickly.

Constance: Right now is the best time to get rid of facial blemishes such as freckles, pimples, skin-roughness, wrinkles, etc. But you should not use soap on the face very often, as it makes the skin dry and harsh. I recommend the use of a good grease-less face-cream, which can be made by dissolving one ounce of almonoin (get it at any druggist's) in one-half pint cold water, and add two teaspoonfuls glycerine. Stir and let stand an hour or so. It is inexpensive and you will find its regular use will improve your skin wonderfully. It keeps the skin smooth, soft and satiny. Almonoin cream-jelly is a fine and soothing cleanser and will prevent blackheads, premature wrinkles, and when used as a massage cream will restore color to dark, sallow skins.

Nadie: To strengthen your weak eyes and rid them of that dull, overworked look, put in each eye daily two or three drops of a fine, strengthening tonic made by dissolving an ounce of crystos in a pint of water. This eye-tonic is very soothing and strengthening, and by using it regularly, in a short while it will make your eyes strong, clear and sparkling. I find it unequaled as a good eye-tonic for treating weak, inflamed, overworked eyes.

Inez G.: Don't worry; almost everybody she has the same troubles. At the approach of winter impurities in the blood usually manifest themselves and what you require to overcome the pimples, "muddy" complexion with is a good system-tonic and purifier. You can easily make it yourself at home from your druggist an ounce of [illegible] and dissolve it in one-half pint alcohol (not whiskey); then add one-half cupful [illegible] and enough hot water to make a quart of tonic. A tablespoonful taken before each meal will soon rid your system of poisonous accumulations, and make you strong and healthy, bringing the ruddy glow of perfect health to your cheeks.

Alma B.: You can rid your skin of unsightly hairs with a simple paste made by mixing enough powdered delatone with water to cover the hairs not wanted. Apply and let remain two or three minutes, then rub off, wash the skin and the hairs are gone. This method is harmless and soothing and leaves the skin free from any blemish.

Mrs. W.: Long, curly lashes lend an added touch to feminine beauty. Get from your druggist a small, original package of pyrexin and apply a little of it at the roots with thumb and forefinger. This makes them grow long and curly. The brows should have pyrexin rubbed on with finger-end and they will come in thick and glossy. Use caution not to get it where hair is not wanted.

Jessie H.: Some sage dressings are beneficial to the scalp, but I never recommend them on account of the difficulty in staining or discoloring the hair. If you want a good, dependable remedy for dandruff, itching scalp and falling hair, get an ounce of quinoin dissolved in a pint of alcohol (not whiskey) and a pint of water. This will put your scalp in a healthy condition. Apply the tonic twice a week, rubbing it in at the hair-roots. It is free from grease, makes a fine dressing for the hair, and of many, who were troubled with "hopeless" cases of dandruff and falling hair, that found this an ideal tonic.

Rose: You must not use face powder if you want a smooth, rosy, healthy complexion. Powder enters the pores, clogs them and eventually causes coarse, dry skin, then wrinkles. To have a smooth, fresh-looking complexion use a lotion. Here is a lotion that is an inexpensive one: Get from your druggist at any store four ounces of orange flower water, in a half-pint hot water dissolve and add two teaspoonfuls of borax. Apply this lotion to your face, neck and arms, rubbing gently a few minutes, and you will lend a most charming appearance. This apparent lotion [illegible] gives a clean, clear, healthy complexion, unless you have a sallow skin. If you do, after finishing complexion, wash off the lotion and rub off too much powder with a disposable "powder-rag." This lotion does not. This lotion [illegible] change, pimples and [illegible] delicate skin from [illegible] of weather.—Adv.