

THE TURQUOISE PLAQUES

At the foot of the stairway near the present entrance ~~to~~
~~in~~ this buried temple, another important discovery was made -
two beautiful plaques made of wood and inlaid with turquoise.
These are at present ^{safely preserved} ~~encased~~ in the Museo Nacional de Antropología
e Historia de México. ~~The significance of~~
Just ~~what~~ these plaques ~~signified~~ and
how they were used in religious ceremony is not known, but that
they were highly prized is evident from the manner in which they
had been encased and ^{concealed.} ~~kept in a secreted place.~~ Turquoise seems
always to be of great value to the Indian, both in North and
Central America. The stones used in these plaques probably came
from somewhere in central México. Gold, silver, and copper
appeared about three hundred years prior to the Spanish Conquest,
the gold and silver coming from an area between Costa Rica and
Panamá, and copper from the Mexican state of Oaxaca.