An unknown goddess

Some time ago, an interesting discovery was made by archaeologists on the Aegean island of Kea. An American team explored a temple which stands in an ancient city on the promontory of Ayia Irini. The city at one time must have been prosperous, for it enjoyed a high level of civilization. House – often three storeys high – were built of stone. They had large rooms with beautiful decorated walls. The city was even equipped with a drainage system, for a great many clay pipes were found beneath the narrow streets.

The temple which the archaeologists explored was used as a place of worship from the fifteenth century B.C. until Roman times. In the most sacred room of the temple, clay fragment of fifteen statues were found. Each of these represented a goddess and had, at one time, been painted. The body of one statue was found among remains dating from the fifteenth century B.C. Its missing head happened to be among remains of the fifth century B.C. This head must have been found in Classical times and carefully preserved. It was very old and precious even then. When the archaeologists reconstructed the fragments, they were amazed to find that the goddess turned out to be a very modern-looking woman. She stood three feet high and her hands rested on her hips. She was wearing a full-length skirt which swept the ground. Despite her great age, she was very graceful indeed, but, so far, the archaeologists have been unable to discover her identity.