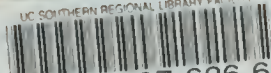


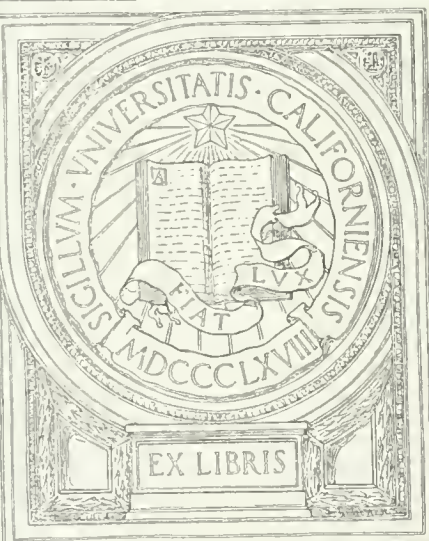
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THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

THE EARL OF BUTE.

MY LORD,

I Have the Honour to present to your LORDSHIP a Translation of the History of MEXICO, written by a Native of that Country. The Obligation I am under to your LORDSHIP for an Acquaintance with the Original, and the Relation which every Effort to disseminate pleasing and instructive Knowledge, bears to your Lordship's Life and Manners, have dictated this Address. I chearfully lent my

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DEDICATION.

Industry to assist an Advocate in the Cause of Truth, who saw her Interests abandoned, and felt for her Oppression. Though the Task might easily have fallen into abler Hands, I dare freely appeal to your LORDSHIP for the Fidelity of my Labours.

I have the Honour to be, with the utmost Respect,

MY LORD,

Your LORDSHIP's much obliged,

And most obedient humble Servant,

CHARLES CULLEN.

TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

THE discovery of America constitutes one of the most remarkable æras of the world; and the history of it a subject not only curious but universally interesting, from its various connections with almost every other part of the globe. The Spanish historians of the two preceding centuries have done little towards elucidating this point. Partiality, prejudice, ignorance, and credulity, have occasioned them all to blend so many absurdities and improbabilities with their accounts, that it has not been merely difficult, but altogether impossible, to ascertain the truth. To collect from their scattered materials whatever wore the face of probability, that was naturally curious, or politically interesting, so as to form one uniform consistent relation of the whole, was a task in which, for a long time, no modern writer dared to engage. Dr. Robertson at last undertook, and executed it with the applause due to his beauty of style, his industry, and his judgment.

But notwithstanding the assiduity of his researches, and the pains he has taken to extricate facts from the confusion of different authors, as what is true does not always appear possible, and what appears probable is not always true, he has not entirely succeeded, though he has done all that

TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

could be expected. The want of many essential documents, which are preserved in archives of the new world, and other disadvantages attending the situation of a writer at a distance from that continent, unacquainted with its languages, productions, or people, perhaps, have made him diffident of entering into very minute details, or of dwelling upon grounds where he was uncertain of being accurate, and induced him, rather than offer conjectures which might not have reached the truth respecting that country and its inhabitants, to adhere to records more authentic concerning the discoverers of it.

This conduct, however prudent, has left the American side of the picture still greatly in the dark. The Abbé Raynal and M. de Paw have not contributed much to remedy this defect. The history of Mexico, by the Abbé Clavigero, a native of Vera Cruz, who resided near forty years in the provinces of New Spain, examined its natural produce, acquired the language of the Mexicans and other nations, gathered many of their traditions, studied their historical paintings, and other monuments of antiquity, it is presumed, has supplied their deficiencies. The translator, therefore, hopes the present work which contains all the valuable matter of other authors, besides many important particulars never before published, will prove acceptable to the public.

P R E F A C E.

THE history of Mexico, undertaken in order to avoid the pain and reproach of idleness to which I found my life condemned, to serve to the utmost of my power my native country, and to restore to their full light truths obscured by an incredible number of modern writers on America, has been a task equally laborious, difficult, and expensive. Exclusive of the great expences occasioned by procuring from Cadiz, Madrid, and other cities of Europe, the books which were necessary to my purpose, I have read and examined every publication which has appeared hitherto on the subject: I have compared the accounts of authors, and critically weighed their authority; I have studied many historical paintings of the Mexicans; I have profited from their manuscripts, which I read formerly in Mexico; and consulted with many persons well acquainted with these countries. In addition to such diligence I might add, to give credit to my labours, that I resided thirty-six years in that extensive kingdom; acquired the Mexican language, and for several years conversed with the Mexicans, whose history I write. I do not, however, flatter myself with having been able to give a perfect work; since, besides finding myself unpossessed of those endowments of genius, judgment, and eloquence, which are the requisites of a good historian, the loss of the greatest part of the Mexican paintings, and the want of many valuable manuscripts which are preserved in different libraries of Mexico, and required repeated consultation, are insuperable obstacles to any one who undertakes such a history, particularly at a considerable distance from these countries. Nevertheless, I hope my work will be acceptable; not on account of the elegance of
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the style, the beauty of the descriptions, the magnitude of the events, or the weight of the opinions delivered in it ; but from the diligence of my researches, the integrity of my relation, and the service done to the learned, who are desirous of being made acquainted with the history of Mexico.

At the persuasion of some persons of learning, I wrote the Essay on the Natural History of Mexico, contained in the first book, which I had not before judged necessary ; and it may, in the opinion of many, be considered as foreign to the purpose : but not to deviate from my subject, I have connected the account of natural productions with the general history, by mentioning the use which the Mexicans made of them. On the other hand, to those who are attached to the study of Natural History, this essay will appear, what in truth it is, too confined and superficial ; but to satisfy the curious on that subject, it would be necessary to write a work very different from that which I have undertaken. At the same time, I should have spared myself a great deal of trouble, if I had not been obliged to comply with the solicitations of my friends ; as in writing that sketch of Natural History, I found it necessary to study the works of Pliny, Dioscorides, Laet, Hernandez, Ulloa, Buffon, Bomare, and other naturalists ; not content with what I had seen myself, or the information I had received from intelligent people to whom those countries were well known.

In this history, nothing has been more anxiously studied than fidelity ; I might have abridged my labours, and, perhaps, rendered my work more acceptable to many, if all the diligence which I used to investigate facts, had been employed to strew the relation with philosophical and political reflexions, or fictions of capricious invention, after the example of many authors in this boasted age ; but to me, as to those who are the sworn enemies of deceit, falsehood, or affectation, truth appears a beauty whose charms increase in proportion to her simplicity of dress. In recounting the events of the conquest made by the Spaniards, I have equally abstained from the panegyric of Solis, or the
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invectives of Las Casas (*a*) ; being unwilling either to flatter or calumniate my countrymen. I have left facts in the same degree of certainty, or probability, in which I found them ; wherever I could not ascertain an event on account of the disagreement among authors, as for example, the death of Montezuma, I have faithfully reported their different opinions, without having omitted, however, such additional conjectures as reflexion on the subject has suggested. In short, I have always had before my eyes the two sacred laws of history ; not to dare to speak what is false ; nor to fear to speak what is true : and I flatter myself I have violated neither.

I do not doubt there may be readers too nice and refined to bear with the harshness of so many Mexican names as are scattered through this history ; but it is an evil which I have not been able to remedy, without hazarding another defect less tolerable, though sufficiently common in almost all the Europeans who have written on America, that is, the altering of names, for the purpose of softening them, until they are rendered unintelligible. Who would be capable of divining that De Solis speaks of Quauhnhuac, when he says *Quatlabaca* ; of Huejotlipan, where he substitutes *Gualipar* ; or of Cuitalpitoc, where he writes *Pilpatoc* ? I have therefore thought it most safe to imitate the example of those modern writers, who, whenever they introduce into their works the names of persons, places, or rivers, of any particular country of Europe, write them in the language of its respective nation ; and in the writings of these authors there are names taken from the German, and other tongues, fully harsher to the ear, from the greater concurrence of rough consonants, than any of the words I have made use of. I do not, however, reject names that have been formerly altered, by which there is no danger of being deceived, as they are generally known.

With respect to the geography of Anahuac, I have used every endeavour to render it correct ; availing myself of the knowledge which I

(*a*) I do not mean to charge Solis with flattery, nor Las Casas with calumny : all I wish to be understood is, that I could not adopt the sentiments of Solis, who was ambitious of aggrandizing his hero ; nor of Las Casas, who was fired with pious zeal in behalf of the Indians, without accusing myself of both.

gained in many excursions through that country, as well as the information and writings of others ; after all, I have not entirely succeeded ; for, in spite of my most earnest attempts, I have not been able to procure the few incomplete astronomical observations which have been made on these places. The situation, therefore, and distances mentioned in the body of the history, as well as in the chart, are not to be considered as being ascertained with that precision and accuracy which are required from a geographer ; but according to such computation as could be made by an attentive surveyor who judged by the eye. I have in my hands innumerable ancient and modern charts of Mexico, of which it would have been easy to have copied the most correct ; but among these I have not found even one that is not full of errors, as well in regard to the latitude and longitude of places, as in respect to the division of provinces, the course of rivers, and the direction of the coasts.

To make known what dependence may be placed on any of the charts hitherto published, it will be sufficient to mention the difference between them concerning the longitude of the capital, notwithstanding it ought to have been better ascertained than any other city of Mexico. This difference is not less than fourteen degrees, as by some geographers the city of Mexico is placed in two hundred and sixty-four degrees of longitude from the island of Ferro ; by others, in two hundred and sixty-five ; by others, in two hundred and sixty-six, and even in two hundred and seventy-eight, or rather more.

To give some ornament, however, to my history, as well as to facilitate the understanding of many things described in it, I have added twenty plates. The Mexican characters, the representations of the cities, of the kings, of the armour, of the dresses, of the shields, of the century, of the year, and of the deluge, have been copied from different Mexican paintings. The figure of the greater temple was taken from that of the Anonymous Conqueror, his dimensions of it, however, being corrected, and additions made to it according to the description of other ancient authors. The figure of the other temple is a copy of that which Valades published in his *Christian Rhetoric*.

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The portrait of Montezuma was taken from a copy which Gemelli published of the original, in the possession of Siguenza. The portraits of the conquerors are copies of those which are found in the Decades of Herrera. All the other figures are designs from what we have seen ourselves, and the descriptions of ancient historians.

Besides these, I have thought proper to prefix to my narration a short account of the writers on the ancient history of Mexico, to shew the ground-work of my labours; also to do honour to the memory of some illustrious Americans, whose writings are entirely unknown in Europe. It will serve likewise to point out the sources from whence others may obtain the history of Mexico, who may be hereafter inclined to complete this imperfect work.

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A N C I E N T H I S T O R Y O F M E X I C O .

In the Sixteenth Century.

Ferdinand Cortes. The four very long letters written by this famous conqueror to his sovereign, Charles the Fifth, containing an account of the Conquest, and many valuable particulars respecting Mexico, and the Mexicans, were published in Spanish, in Latin, in the Tuscan, and other languages; the first of these letters was printed in Seville in 1522; they are all well written, and discover both modesty and sincerity in the relation; as he has neither made a boast of his own actions, nor thrown obscurity on those of others. If he had had the rashness to deceive his king, his enemies who presented so many complaints at court against him, would not have failed to reproach him with such a crime.

Bernal Diaz del Castillo, a soldier and conqueror; *A True History of the Conquest of New Spain*, written by him, was printed in Madrid in 1632, in one volume, folio. Notwithstanding the miscarriage of his undertaking, and the coarseness of the style, this history has been much esteemed for the simplicity and sincerity of its author, which is every where discoverable. He was an eye-witness of all that he relates; but, from being illiterate, he was unqualified for the task he undertook; and frequently shews himself forgetful of facts, by having written many years after the conquest.

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ACCOUNT OF THE WRITERS ON THE

Alfonso de Mata, and Alfonso d'Ojeda, both conquerors, and writers of commentaries on the conquest of Mexico, which Herrera and Torquemada have made use of. Those of Ojeda are the fullest and the most esteemed. He was more acquainted with the Indians, being the person appointed to attend to the auxiliary troops of the Spaniards.

The Anonymous Conqueror. This is the name given to the author of a short, but very curious, and esteemed relation which is found in the collection of Ramusio, under the title of *The Relation of a Gentleman who attended Ferdinand Cortes*. I have not been able to conjecture who this gentleman may have been, as no author makes mention of him; but, whoever he was, he is candid, accurate, and curious. Without troubling himself with the events of the conquest, he relates what he observed in Mexico concerning the houses, the sepulchres, the arms, the dresses, the manner of eating and drinking, &c. of the Mexicans, and describes the form of their temples. If his work had not been so much confined, there would have been no one comparable to it respecting the antiquities of Mexico.

Francisco Lopez de Gomara. The history of New Spain, written by this learned Spaniard agreeable to information received from the mouths of the conquerors, and the writings of the first religious missionaries who were employed in the conversion of the Mexicans, and printed in Saragossa in 1554, is curious and well drawn up. He was the first who published the festivals, rites, laws, and the method by which the Mexicans computed time: but there are many inaccuracies in it on account of these first informations which he obtained not having been altogether exact. The translation of this work in the Tuscan language, printed at Venice in 1599, is so full of errors it cannot be read without disgust.

Toribio de Benavente. A most celebrated Spaniard of the order of St. Francis, and one of the twelve first preachers who announced the gospel to the Mexicans, known commonly from his evangelical poverty, by the Mexican name of *Motolinia*, wrote, among his apostolical works, *The History of the Indians of New Spain*, divided into three parts. In the first, he explains the rites of their ancient religion; in

the second, their conversion to the Christian faith, and their life when Christians; and in the third, he discourses of their genius, their arts, and their customs. Of this history, which is completed in one volume, folio, there are some copies to be found in Spain. He wrote also a work on the Mexican Calendar (the original of which is preserved in Mexico), and others not less useful to the Spaniards than the Indians.

Andrea d' Olmos. A Franciscan Spaniard, of holy memory. This indefatigable preacher acquired the Mexican, Totonacan, and Huastecan languages, and composed a Grammar and Dictionary of all three. Besides other works written by him for the use of the Spaniards and the Indians, he wrote in Spanish a Treatise on Mexican Antiquities; and in the Mexican language, the exhortations which the ancient Mexicans used to their children, of which there is a specimen in the seventh book of this history.

Bernardo Sahagun, a laborious Franciscan Spaniard. Having been more than sixty years employed in instructing the Mexicans, he made great proficiency in their language and the knowledge of their history. Besides several works written by him, both in Mexican and in Spanish, he composed in twelve great volumes in folio, a Universal Dictionary of the Mexican Language, containing all that belonged to the geography, the religion, and the political and natural history of the Mexicans. This work, of immense erudition and labour, was sent to the royal historiographer of America, resident at Madrid, by the marquis of Villamanrique, viceroy of Mexico; and we do not doubt, but it is still preserved in some library of Spain. He wrote also the General History of New Spain, in four volumes, which were preserved in manuscript in the library of the convent of Franciscans in Tolosa de Navarra, according to the affirmation of Juan de S. Antonio, in his *Bibliotheca Franciscana*.

Alonso Zurita, a Spanish lawyer and judge of Mexico. After having, by order of king Philip II. made diligent researches into the civil government of the Mexicans, he wrote in Spanish *A compendious Relation of the Lords there were in Mexico, and their Difference:*

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of the Laws, Usages, and Customs of the Mexicans : of the Tributes which they paid, &c. The original manuscript in folio, is preserved in the library of the college of St. Peter and St. Paul, of the Jesuits of Mexico. From this work, which is well written, some considerable part of what we have said on the same subject is extracted.

Juan de Tobar, a most noble Jesuit of Mexico. He wrote on the ancient history of the kingdoms of Mexico, of Acolhuacan, and of Tlacopan, after having made diligent enquiries, by order of the viceroy of Mexico, D. Martino Enriquez. By these manuscripts, P. Acosta was principally directed in what he wrote concerning Mexican antiquities, as he himself acknowledges.

Joseph D'Acosta, a most celebrated Spanish Jesuit, well known in the literary world by his writings. This great man, after having resided some years in both the Americas, and informed himself, from experienced people, of the customs of those nations, wrote in Spanish the *Natural and Moral History of the Indians*, which was printed first in Seville, in 1589, reprinted afterwards in Barcelona in 1591, and from thence circulated into various languages of Europe. This work is well written, particularly in regard to the physical observations on the climate of America; but, it is too confined, defective in many articles, and there are some mistakes concerning ancient history.

Fernando Pimentel Ixtlilxochitl, son of *Coanacotzin*, last king of Acolhuacan, and Antonio de Tobar Cano Motezuma Ixtlilxochitl, a descendant of the two royal houses of Mexico and Acolhuacan. These two nobles, at the request of the count of Benavente, and the viceroy of Mexico D. Luis de Velasco, wrote letters on the genealogy of the kings of Acolhuacan, and other points relative to the ancient history of that kingdom, which are preserved in the above mentioned college of the Jesuits.

Antonio Pimentel Ixtlilxochitl, son of D. Fernando Pimentel. He wrote Historical Memoirs of the Kingdom of Acolhuacan, by which Torquemada was assisted; and from it we have taken the calculation

lation mentioned in the fourth book of our history, of the annual expences incurred in the palace of the famous king Nezahualcojotl, great-great-grandfather of that author.

Taddeo de Niza, a noble Indian of Tlascala. He wrote in the year 1548, by order of the viceroy of Mexico, the History of the Conquest, which was subscribed by thirty other nobles of Tlascala.

Gabriel d' Ayala, a noble Indian of Tezcucan. He wrote in the Mexican language Historical Commentaries; containing an account of all the affairs of the Mexicans from the year 1243 of the vulgar æra, unto 1562.

Juan Ventura Zapata e Mendoza, a noble of Tlascala. He wrote in the Mexican language the Chronicle of Tlascala; containing all the events of that nation, from their arrival in the country of Anahuac, to the year 1589.

Pedro Ponce, a noble Indian, rector of Tzompahuacan. He wrote in Spanish, An Account of the Gods and the Rites of Mexican Paganism.

The chiefs of Colhuacan. They wrote the Annals of the Kingdom of Colhuacan. A copy of this work was in the above mentioned library of the Jesuits.

Christoval del Castillo, a Mexican Mestee. He wrote the History of the Travels of the Aztecas, or Mexicans, to the country of Anahuac; which manuscript was preserved in the library of the college of Jesuits of Tepozotlan.

Diego Mugnoz Camargo, a noble Mestee of Tlascala. He wrote in Spanish the History of the City and Republic of Tlascala. Torquemada made use of this work, and there are copies of it both in Spain and Mexico.

Fernando d'Alba Ixtlilxochitl, a Tezcucan, and descendant, in a right line from the kings of Acolhuacan. This noble Indian ex-

tremely conversant with the antiquities of his nation, wrote, at the request of the viceroy of Mexico, several very learned and valuable works; 1. The History of New Spain; 2. The History of the Chechemecan Lords; 3. An Epitome of the History of the Kingdom of Tezcuco; 4. Historical Memoirs of the Toltecas, and other nations of Anahuac. All these works, written in Spanish, were preserved in the library of St. Peter and St. Paul of the Jesuits of Mexico, and from them we have extracted some materials for this history. The author was so cautious in writing, that, in order to remove any grounds for suspicion of fiction, he made his accounts conform exactly with the historical paintings, which he inherited from his illustrious ancestors.

Juan Batista Pomar, of Tezcuco, or Cholula, a descendant from a bastard of the royal house of Tezcuco. He wrote Historical Memoirs of that Kingdom, which Torquemada has made use of.

Domingo de San Anton Muñon Chimalpain, a noble Indian of Mexico. He wrote in the Mexican language four works, much esteemed by the intelligent: 1. American Chronicle, containing all the Events of that Nation, from the Year 1068, to the Year 1597 of the vulgar era. 2. The History of the Conquest of Mexico by the Spaniards. 3. *Original* Accounts of the Kingdoms of Acolhuacan, of Mexico, and of other provinces. 4. Historical Commentaries from the year 1064 to 1521. These works, which I most ardently wished for, were preserved in the library of the college of St. Peter and St. Paul of Mexico. Boturini had copies of them, as well as of almost all the works of the Indians, which I have mentioned; there was a copy of the Chronicle also in the library of the college of St. Gregory of the Jesuits of Mexico.

Fernando d' Alvarado Tezozomoc, an Indian of Mexico. He wrote in Spanish a Mexican Chronicle, about the year 1598, which was preserved in the above mentioned library of St. Peter and St. Paul.

Bartolomè de Las Casas, a famous Dominican Spaniard, first bishop of Chiapa, and highly worthy of memory among the Indians. The
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bitter memorials presented by this venerable prelate to king Charles V. and Philip II. in favour of the Indians, and against the Spanish conquerors, printed in Seville, and afterwards translated and reprinted, in odium to the Spaniards, in various languages of Europe; contains some particulars of the ancient history of the Mexicans, but so altered and exaggerated, we cannot rely on the authority of the author, however otherwise respectable. The excessive fire of his zeal sent forth light and smoke together, that is, he mixed truth with falsehood, not because he studied an opportunity of deceiving his king and the world, as a suspicion of such guilt in him would be offering wrong to that virtue which his enemies acknowledged and revered; but because, not having been present at what he relates concerning Mexico, he trusted too much to information from others, which will be made to appear in some parts of this history. We should have, probably, been much more assisted by two great works of the same prelate never published, the one, A History of the Climate and Soil of the Countries of America; and the Genius and Manners, &c. of the Americans under Subjection to the Catholic King. This manuscript, consisting of 830 pages, was preserved in the library of the Dominicans of Valladolid, in Spain, where it was put by Remesal, as he makes us credit in his Chronicle of the Dominicans of Chiapa and Guatemala. The other, A General History of America, in three volumes, folio; a copy of which was in the library of the count of Villumbrosa, in Madrid, where Pinelo saw it, as he affirms, in his *Bibliotheca Occidentali*: two volumes of this history the above mentioned author saw in the celebrated archives of Simancas, which have been the sepulchre of many precious manuscripts on America. Two volumes also were in the library of J. Kricio, at Amsterdam.

Agustino Davila, and Padillo, a noble and ingenious Dominican of Mexico, preacher to king Philip III. royal historiographer of America, and archbishop of the island of St. Domingo. Besides the Chronicle of the Dominicans of Mexico, printed in Madrid, in 1596, and the History of New Spain and Florida, printed in Valladolid, in 1632, he wrote the Ancient History of the Mexicans, employing materials already collected by Fernando Duran, a Dominican of Tezcuco; but this work has not been found.

ACCOUNT OF THE WRITERS OF THE

Doctor Cervantes, dean of the metropolitan church of Mexico. Herrera, the Chronicle-writer, praises the Historical Memoirs of Mexico, written by this author ; but we have no other intelligence of him.

Antonio de Saavedra Guzman, a noble Mexican, during his voyage to Spain, wrote in twenty cantos, the History of the Conquest of Mexico, and printed it in Madrid, under the Spanish title of *El Peregrino Indiano*, in 1599. This work ought to be reckoned amongst the histories of Mexico ; for it has nothing of poetry but the measure.

Pedro Gutierrez de S. Chiara. Betancourt made use of the manuscripts of this author in his History of Mexico ; but we know nothing of the title or quality of the work, nor of the country of the author, although we suspect he was an Indian.

In the Seventeenth Century.

Antonio de Herrera, royal historiographer for the Indies. This candid and judicious author wrote in four volumes in folio, Eight Decades of the History of America, beginning from the year 1492, together with a Geographical Description of the Spanish Colonies ; which work was printed for the first time in Madrid, at the beginning of the last century, and afterwards reprinted in 1730 ; also translated and published in other languages of Europe. Although the principal design of the author was to relate the actions of the Spaniards, he does not, however, omit the Ancient History of the Americans ; but in what relates to the Mexicans, he copies for the most part the accounts of Acosta and Gomara. His method, however, like that of all rigid annalists, is disagreeable to the lovers of history, because at every step the narration of facts is interrupted with the account of other unconnected occurrences.

Arigo Martinez, a foreign author, although of Spanish surname. After having travelled through the greatest part of Europe, and resided many years in Mexico, where he made himself most useful by his great skill in mathematics, he wrote the History of New Spain,

which was printed in Mexico in 1606. In the Ancient History, he treads for the most part in the footsteps of Acoſta; but there are astronomical and phyſical obſervations in it of importance to the geography and natural hiſtory of theſe countries.

Gregorio Garcia, a Dominican Spaniard. His famous treatiſe on the Origin of the Americans, printed in quarto, at Valentia, in 1607, afterwards enlarged and reprinted in Madrid, in 1729, in folio, is a work of vaſt erudition, but almoſt totally uſeleſs, as it gives little or no aſſiſtance in diſcovering truth; the foundation for the opinions which he maintains concerning the origin of the Americans, are, for the moſt part, weak conjectures founded on the reſemblance between ſome of their cuſtoms and words, and thoſe of other nations.

Juan de Torquemada, a Franciſcan Spaniard. The Hiſtory of Mexico, written by him under the title of the Indian Monarchy, printed in Madrid about 1614, in three great volumes in folio, is, without queſtion, the moſt complete in reſpect to the antiquity of Mexico of any hitherto published. The author reſided in Mexico from his youth to his death; knew the Mexican language well, converſed with the Mexicans for upwards of fifty years, collected a great number of ancient pictures and excellent manuſcripts, and laboured at his work more than twenty years; but in ſpite of his diligence, and ſuch advantages, he frequently betrays want of memory, of critical ſkill, and good taſte; and in his hiſtory there appear many groſs contradictions, particularly in chronology, ſeveral childiſh recitals, and a great deal of ſuperfluous learning, on which account it requires conſiderable patience to read it; nevertheless, there being many things of curioſity and value in it, which would be ſought for in vain in other authors, I was under the neceſſity to do with this hiſtory what Virgil did with the works of Ennius, to ſearch for the gems amongſt the rubbiſh.

Arrias Villalobos, a Spaniard. His Hiſtory of Mexico carried on from the foundation of the capital, to the year 1623, written in verſe, and printed there in the above year, is a work of little value.

Chriſtoval

Christoval Chaves Castillejo, a Spaniard. He wrote, about the year 1632, a volume in folio, on the Origin of the Indians, and their first Colonies in the Country of Anahuac.

Carlos de Sigüenza e Góngora, a celebrated Mexican professor of mathematics in the university of his native country. This author has been one of the most comprehensive writers on the History of Mexico, as he made, at a great expence, a large and choice collection of ancient pictures and manuscripts, and applied himself with the greatest diligence and assiduity to illustrate the antiquity of that kingdom. Besides many mathematical, critical, historical, and poetical works composed by him, some of them manuscripts, some of them printed in Mexico from the year 1680 to 1693, he wrote in Spanish, 1. *The Mexican Cyclography*, a work of great labour, in which, by calculating eclipses and comets, marked in the historical pictures of the Mexicans, he adjusted their epochs with ours, and by availing himself of good instruction, explained the method they used to count centuries, years, and months. 2. *The History of the Cbechemecan Empire*, in which he explains what he found in Mexican manuscripts and paintings concerning the first colonies which passed from Asia to America, and the events of the most ancient nations established in Anahuac. 3. A long and learned Dissertation on the Announcing of the Gospel in Anahuac; which was done there, as he believed, by the apostle St. Thomas, supporting his opinion on traditions of the Indians, crosses found, and formerly worshipped in Mexico, and other monuments. 4. The Genealogy of the Mexican Kings; in which he traced their ascending line as far back as the seventh century of the Christian æra. 5. Critical Annotations on the Works of Torquemada and Bernal Diaz; all these most learned manuscripts which would have afforded considerable aid to this history, were lost through the negligence of the heirs of that learned author; and there now remain only some fragments of them preserved in the works of other contemporary writers, namely, of Gemelli, Betancourt, and Florencia.

Agustino de Betancourt, a Franciscan of Mexico: his Ancient and Modern History of Mexico, printed in that capital, in 1698, in one volume

volume in folio, under the title of *The Mexican Theatre*, is nothing else in respect to ancient history, but an abridgment of Torquemada done in haste, and written with little accuracy.

Antonio de Solis, royal historiographer of America. The History of the Conquest of New Spain, written by this polished and ingenious Spaniard, is more a panegyric than a history. His diction is pure and elegant, but his manner is rather affected; the sentences are too much laboured, and the public speeches are the work of his own fancy; like one less studious of truth than embellishment, he frequently contradicts authors the most worthy of credit, and even Cortes himself, whose panegyric he undertook. In the last books of this history, we shall take notice of some of the mistakes of this famous writer.

In the Eighteenth Century.

Pedro Fernandez del Pulgar, a learned Spaniard, successor to Solis in the office of historiographer. *The true History of the Conquest of New Spain*, written by him, is found cited in the Preface of the modern edition of Herrera, but we have not seen it. It is to be believed, that he set about writing it for the purpose of correcting the errors of his predecessor.

Lorenzo Boturini Benaducci, of Milan. This curious and learned gentleman arrived in Mexico in 1736; and, desirous of writing the history of that kingdom, he made, during eight years he remained there, the most diligent researches into its antiquity; acquired a considerable mastery of the Mexican language, entered into friendship with the Indians to obtain their ancient pictures from them, and procured copies of many valuable manuscripts which were in the libraries of the monasteries. The museum which he formed of paintings and ancient manuscripts, was the most numerous and select ever seen in that kingdom, excepting that of the celebrated Siguenza; but before he put a hand to his work, the excessive jealousy of the Spanish government stripped him of all his literary estate, and sent him into Spain, where,
being

being entirely cleared from every suspicion against his loyalty and honour, but without recovering his manuscripts, he published in Madrid, in 1746, in one volume in quarto, a sketch of the great history he was meditating. It was found to contain much important knowledge, never before published; but there were also some errors in it. The historical system which he had formed to himself, was too magnificent for execution, and therefore fantastical.

Besides these and other Spanish and Indian writers, there are some anonymous writers whose works are worthy of being recorded on account of the importance of their subject; such as, 1. Certain Annals of the Toltecan nation, painted on paper, and written in the Mexican language, in which there is an account given of the pilgrimage and wars of the Toltecas, of their king, of the founding of Tollan, their metropolis, and other occurrences until the year 1547 of the vulgar æra. 2. Certain Historical Commentaries in the Mexican Language on the Events of the Aztecan, or Mexican Nation, from the year 1066 to 1316; and others also in the Mexican language from the year 1367 to 1509. 3. A Mexican History in the Mexican language, carried back as far as the year 1406. In this history, the arrival of the Mexicans at the city of Tollan, is fixed at 1196, agreeable to what we report in our history. All these manuscripts were in the valuable museum of Boturini.

We shall not here mention those authors who wrote on the antiquity of Michuacan, of Yucatan, of Guatemala, and of New Mexico; because, although many at present believe all these provinces were comprehended in Mexico, they did not belong to the Mexican empire, the history of which we write. We have mentioned the writers on the ancient history of the kingdom of Acolhuacan, and the republic of Tlascala, because their events are for the most part connected with those of the Mexicans.

If in enumerating the writers on Mexico, we meant to display our erudition, we could add a long catalogue of French, English, Italian, Dutch, Flemish, and German writers, who have written either designedly, or accidentally, on the ancient history of that kingdom; but after having read many of them, to obtain assistance to this work, I found none who were of service except the two Italians, Gemelli and

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Boturini, who having been in Mexico, and procured from the Mexicans many of their paintings, and particular intelligence concerning their antiquity, have contributed in some measure to illustrate their history. All the others have either repeated what was already written by Spanish authors mentioned by us, or have altered facts, at their own discretion, to inveigh the more strongly against the Spaniards, as has lately been done by M. de Paw, in his Philosophical Enquiries concerning the Americans, and Marmontel in his Romance of *The Incas*.

Amongst the foreign historians of Mexico, none is more celebrated by them than the English writer, Thomas Gage, whom I observe many have quoted as an oracle, and yet there is no writer on America more addicted to falsehood. Some, under the influence of the passions of hatred, love, or vanity, have been induced to mix fables with their writings; but Gage appears to have delighted in the invention of falsehoods. What motive or interest could occasion this author to say, that the Capuchins had a beautiful convent in Tacubaja, that in Xalapa there was a bishop's palace erected in his time, with an income of ten thousand ducats; that from Xalapa, he went to Rinconada, and from thence in one day to Tepeaca; that there is in this city a great abundance of *anonas* and of *chicozapotes*, that this fruit has a kernel larger than a pear; that the wilderness of the Carmelites stands to the north-west of the capital; that the Spaniards burnt the city Tinguetz, in Quivira; that having rebuilt it, they inhabited it at the time he was there; that the Jesuits had a college in it; and a thousand other ridiculous lies, which appear in every page, and excite in readers who are acquainted with these countries both laughter and contempt?

Amongst modern writers on American affairs, the most famous and esteemed are the Abbé Raynal and Dr. Robertson. The Abbé, besides several gross delusions, into which he has fallen respecting the present state of New Spain, doubts of every thing which is said concerning the founding of Mexico, and the ancient history of the Mexicans. "Nothing," says he, "are we permitted to affirm, except that the Mexican empire was governed by Montezuma, at the time that the Spaniards landed on the Mexican coast." This is the manner of speaking of a philosopher of the eighteenth century. Nothing more

can we be permitted to affirm? And why not doubt also of the existence of Montezuma? If we are permitted to affirm this, as it is ascertained by the testimony of the Spaniards who saw that king, we find the attestation of the same Spaniards to a vast many other things belonging to the ancient history of Mexico which were seen by them, and further confirmed by the depositions of the Indians themselves. Such particulars therefore may be affirmed, as positively as the existence of Montezuma, or we ought also to entertain a doubt of it. If there is reason, however, to doubt of all the ancient history of the Mexicans, the antiquity of most other nations in the world will come equally in question; for it is not easy to find another history, the events of which have been confirmed by a greater number of historians than those of the Mexicans; nor do we know that any people ever published so severe a law against false historians as that of the *Acolhuas* mentioned in our eighth book.

Dr. Robertson, though more moderate than Raynal, in his distrust of their history, and furnished with more Spanish books and manuscripts, has fallen into more errors and contradictions while he endeavoured to penetrate further into the knowledge of America and the Americans. To make us despair of being able to obtain any tolerable knowledge of the institutions and customs of the Mexicans, he exaggerates the negligence of the conquerors, and the destruction made of the historical monuments of that nation by the superstition of the first missionaries. "In consequence," says he, "of this fanatical zeal of the monks, we have totally lost every intelligence of the most remote events contained in these rude monuments, and there does not remain a *single* trace of the policy and ancient revolutions of the empire, excepting those which are derived from tradition, or from some fragments of their historical pictures which escaped the barbarous search of Zumaraga. It appears evident from the experience of all nations, that the memory of past events cannot be long preserved, nor transmitted with fidelity by tradition. The Mexican pictures, which are supposed to have served as annals of their empire, are few in number, and of ambiguous meaning. Thus from the uncertainty of the one, and the obscurity of the others, we are obliged to avail ourselves of such intelligence as can be gleaned from the

"imper-

“imperfect materials which are found scattered in the Spanish writers.” But in these assertions this author is grievously deceived; for, 1. The materials which we find in Spanish historians are not so imperfect, but we may form from them a probable, though not altogether an authentic history of the Mexicans; which will appear evident to any one who impartially consults them; all that is necessary is to make a selection. 2. Nor in the writing such a history is it necessary to use the materials of the Spanish writers, while there are so many histories and memoirs written by the Indians themselves, of which Robertson had no knowledge. 3. Nor are the historical pictures so few in number, which escaped the search of the first missionaries, unless we compare those which remain with the incredible quantity that formerly existed; as may easily be understood from this history, Torquemada, and other writers. 4. Neither are such pictures of ambiguous meaning, except to Robertson and those who do not understand the characters and figures of the Mexicans, nor know the method they used to represent things. Our writings are of doubtful signification to those who have not learned to read them. At the time the missionaries made that unfortunate burning of the pictures, many Acolhuan, Mexican, Tepanecan, Tlascalan, and other historians were living, and employed themselves to repair the loss of these monuments. This they in part accomplished by painting new pictures, or making use of our characters which they had learned, and instructing, by word of mouth, their preachers in their antiquity, that it might be preserved in their writings, which Motolinia, Olmos, and Sahagun have done. It is therefore absolutely false, that every knowledge of the most remote events has been totally lost. It is false, besides, that there is not a single trace remaining of the political government, and ancient revolutions of the empire, excepting what is derived from tradition, &c. In this history, and chiefly in the dissertations, we shall detect some of the many misrepresentations which occur in the history of the above mentioned author, and in the works of other foreign writers, which we might swell into large volumes. Some authors not contented with introducing errors, trifles, and lies, into the history of Mexico, have confounded it with false images and figures, such as those of the famous Theodore Bry. In Gage’s work, in

the general history of the travels of Prevost, and others, is represented a beautiful road made over the Mexican lake, from Mexico to Tezcucó, which is certainly the greatest absurdity imaginable. The great work, entitled, *La Galerie agreable du Mond*, says that ambassadors were sent in former times to the court of Mexico, mounted on elephants. Such fictions belong to romance not history.

O F P A I N T I N G S.

WE do not pretend here to give a register of all the Mexican pictures saved from the burning of the first missionaries, or executed afterwards by the Indian historians of the sixteenth century, of which some Spanish writers have availed themselves, as such an enumeration would not be less useless than tedious to our readers; but will only mention some collections, the knowledge of which may be of service to any one inclined to write the history of that kingdom.

I. The collection of Mendoza. Thus we call the collection of sixty-three Mexican paintings made by the first bishop of Mexico, D. Antonio Mendoza, to which he caused to be added skilful interpretations in the Mexican and Spanish languages, for the purpose of sending them to the emperor Charles V. The vessel in which they were sent was taken by a French corsair, and carried into France. The paintings fell into the hands of Thevenot, geographer to his most Christian majesty, of whose heirs they were purchased at a high price by Hakluyt, then chaplain to the English ambassador at the court of France. Being from thence carried into England, the Spanish interpretations were translated into English by Locke, but not the famous metaphysician, by order of sir Walter Raleigh; and lastly, at the request of the learned sir Henry Spelman, published by Samuel Purchas in the third volume of his Collection. In 1692, they were afresh printed in Paris, with a French interpretation by Thevenot, in the second volume of his work, entitled, *Relation de divers Voyages Curieux*. The pictures as

we

we have mentioned before, were sixty-three in number; the twelve first containing the history of the foundation of Mexico, the years and conquests of the Mexican kings; the thirty-six following, representing the tributary cities of that crown, and the quantity and species of their tributes; and the remaining fifteen, explained a part of the education of their youth, and their civil government. But it is necessary to observe, that the edition by Thevenot is imperfect; for in the copies of the eleventh and twelfth pictures, the figures of the years are changed; the figures which belong to the reign of Montezuma, being applied to the reign of Ahuitzotl; and on the contrary: the copies of the twenty-first and twenty-second pictures are entirely wanting, and also in great part the figures of the tributary cities. Kirker republished a copy of the first painting from that of Purchas, in his work, entitled, *Oedipus Ægyptiacus*. This collection of Mendoza we have diligently studied, and obtained much assistance to our history from it.

II. The collection of the Vatican. Acoſta makes mention of some painted Mexican annals which were in his time in the library of the Vatican. We have no doubt but they are still there; considering the laudable curiosity and great attention of the Italian gentlemen to preserve such monuments of antiquity; but we had not any opportunity of applying there to consult them.

III. The collection of Vienna. Eight Mexican paintings are preserved in the library of this court. "From a note," says Dr. Robertson, "to this Mexican code, it appears, that it was made a present by Emanuel, king of Portugal, to pope Clement VII. After having passed through the hands of several illustrious proprietors, it came into the possession of the cardinal of Saxe Eisenach, who presented it to the emperor Leopold." The same author, in his History of America, gives a copy of one of these paintings, the first part of which represents a king, who makes war upon a city after having sent an embassy to it. The figures of temples, and of some years and days appear in it; but as it is a single copy without colours, or those marks in the human figures, which, in other Mexican paintings, enable

able us to distinguish persons, it is not simply difficult, but totally impossible to comprehend its signification. If Dr. Robertson, had along with it published the other seven copies sent him from Vienna, probably the meaning of them all might have been understood.

IV. The collection of Siguenza. This very learned Mexican having been extremely attached to the study of antiquity, collected a large number of select ancient paintings, part of which he purchased at a great expence, and part were left him in legacy by the very noble Indian D. Juan d'Alba Ixtlixochitl, who inherited them from the kings of Tezcucuo, his ancestors. Those representations of the Mexican century, and the migration of the Aztecas; and those portraits of the Mexican kings, which Gemelli published in his *Tour of the World*, are copies of the paintings belonging to Siguenza, who was living in Mexico when Gemelli landed there (a). The figure of the century, and the Mexican year, is the same in effect with that published a century before in Italy by Valades, in his *Christian Rhetorick*. Siguenza, after having made use of the above mentioned paintings in his learned works, left them at his death to the college of St. Peter and St. Paul of the Jesuits of Mexico; together with his select library, and excellent mathematical instruments; where we saw and consulted in the year 1759, some volumes of such paintings, containing chiefly the penal laws of the Mexicans.

(a) Dr. Robertson says, that the painting of the migration of the Mexicans, or Aztecas, was given to Gemelli by D. Christoval Guadalaxara; but in that he contradicts Gemelli himself, who professes he was indebted to Siguenza for all the Mexican antiquities that are copied in his relation. From Guadalaxara he had only the chart of the Mexican lake. "But as now," adds Robertson, "it appears to be a generally received opinion, supported on I know not what evidence, that Carreri never went out of Italy, and that his famous *Tour of the World* was the narrative of fictitious travels, I have been unwilling to make any mention of these pictures." If we did not live in the eighteenth century, in which the most extravagant sentiments have been adopted, I should be astonished that such an opinion was generally received. Who can possibly imagine, that any man who was never at Mexico should have been capable of giving the most circumstantial account of the most minute events of that time, of the persons then living, of their rank and employments, of all the monasteries of Mexico and other cities, of the number of their religious, of the altars of every church; and other particulars never before published? On the contrary, we must declare, in justice to the merit of this Italian, that we have found no traveller more accurate and exact in relating all that he saw himself, or learned by information from others.

V. The

V. The collection of Boturini. This valuable collection of Mexican antiquities, seized upon formerly, and taken from that learned and industrious gentleman by the jealous government of Mexico, was preserved chiefly in the archives of the viceroy. We saw some of these paintings, representing some events of the conquest, and some fine portraits of the kings of Mexico. In 1770, were published in Mexico, along with the letters of Cortes, the figure of the Mexican year, and thirty-two copies of paintings of tributes, which were paid by different cities to the crown of Mexico, taken from the museum of Boturini. Those of the tributes are the same with Mendosa's, published by Purchas and Thevenot, but they are better executed, and have the figures of the tributary cities, which are entirely wanting in those of Purchas and Thevenot; but still six copies of those representing the tributes are wanting, and there are a thousand blunders in the interpretations, arising from total ignorance of antiquity, and the Mexican language. So much is necessary to be observed, that they who see that work published in Mexico, under a respectable name, may not be led into errors.

A D V E R T I S E M E N T.

W Herever we have occasion to make mention of perches, feet, or inches, without any specification, they are to be understood, according to the measures of Paris; which, as they are more generally known, will, therefore, not be so apt to cause ambiguity to the reader. The perch of Paris (*toise*) is equal to six royal feet (*pie du roi*). Every foot is equal to twelve inches, or thumbs (*pouces*), and every inch to twelve lines. A line is supposed to consist of ten parts, or points, in order to be able the more easily to express the proportion which this foot bears to others. The Toledan, or Spanish foot, which is the third part of a Castilian *vara* (yard), is to the royal foot as 1240 to 1440; that is, of the 1440 parts, of which the royal foot is considered to be composed, the Toledan foot has 1240; wherefore seven Toledan feet make about six royal feet, or a Parisian perch.

In the chart of the Mexican empire, we have thought it sufficient to mark the provinces, and some few places; omitting a great many, even considerable cities, as their names are so long, the insertion of them would not have left room for the names of the provinces.

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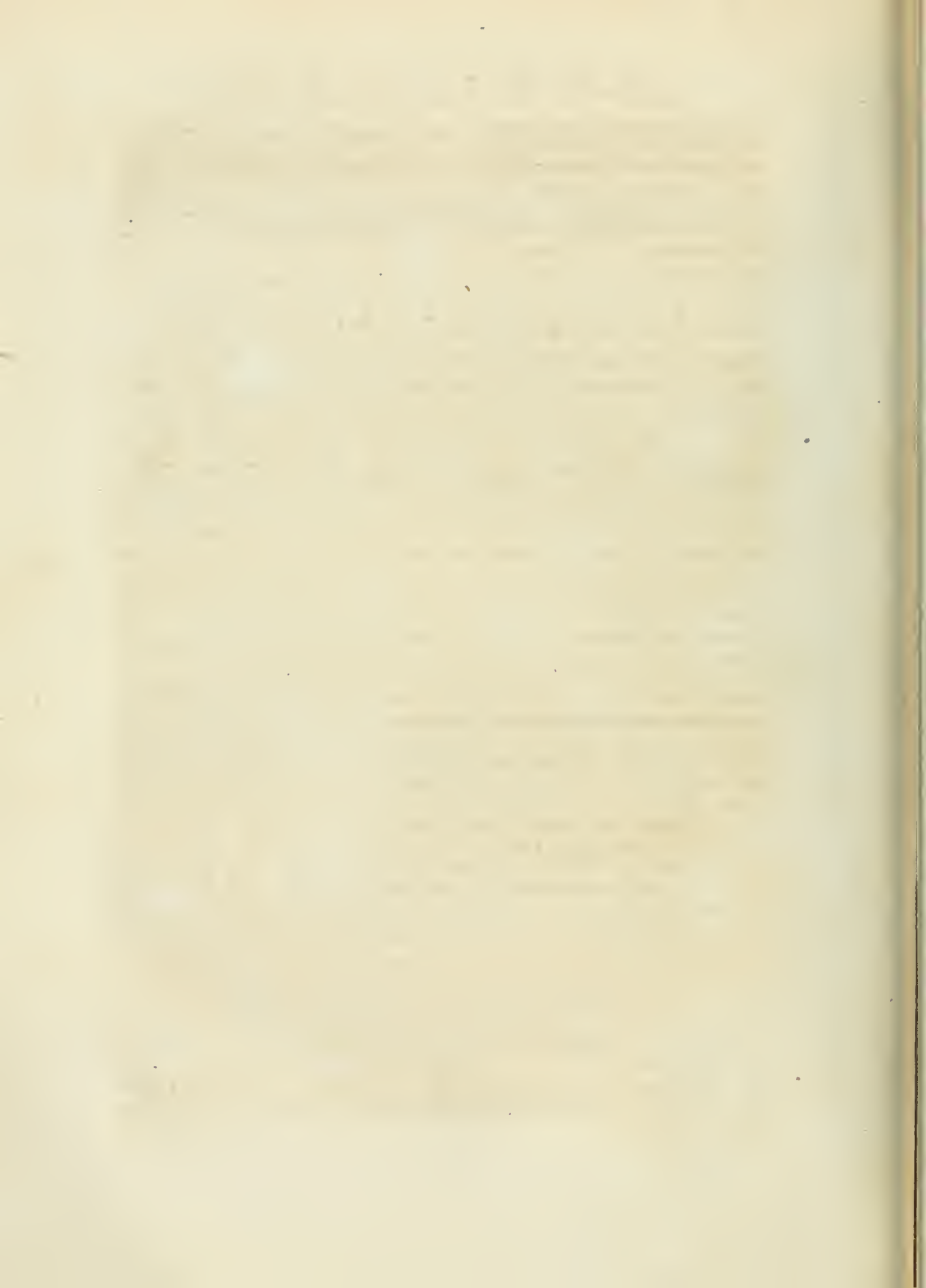
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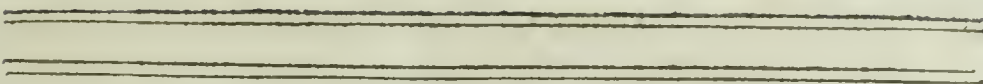
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T H E
H I S T O R Y
O F
M E X I C O.

B O O K I.
*Description of the Country of Anahuac, or a short Account of the Soil,
Climate, Mountains, Rivers, Lakes, Minerals, Plants, Animals,
and People of the Kingdom of Mexico.*

THE name of *Anahuac*, which was originally given to the Vale of Mexico only, from its principal cities having been situated on little islands, and upon the borders of two lakes, taking afterwards a more extensive signification, was used to denominate almost all that tract of land, which is known at present by the Name of *New Spain* (a).

BOOK I.
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This vast country was then divided into the kingdoms of Mexico, *Acolhuacan*, *Tlacopan*, and *Michuacan*; into the republics of *Tlaxcallan*, *Cholollan*, and *Huexotzinco*, and several other distinct states.

SECT. I.  
Division of  
the country  
of Anahuac.

The kingdom of *Michuacan*, the most westerly of the whole, was bounded on the east and south by the Mexican dominions, on the

(a) *Anahuac* signifies *near to the water*, and from thence appears to be derived the name of *Anahuatlaca*, or *Nahuatlaca*, by which the polished nations occupying the banks of the Mexican lake have been known.

## BOOK I.

north by the country of the Chichemecas, and other more barbarous nations, and on the west by the lake of Chapallan, and some independent states. The capital *Tzintzuntzan*, called by the Mexicans *Huitzitzilla*, was situated on the eastern shore of the beautiful lake of *Paxcuaro*. Besides these two cities, there were others very considerable; namely, *Tiripitio*, *Zacapu*, and *Tarecuato*. All this country was pleasant, rich, and well inhabited.

The kingdom of Tlacopan, situated between Mexico and Michuacan, was of so small extent, that, excepting the capital of that name, it comprehended but a few cities of the Tepaneca nation, and the villages of the Mazahui, situated in the mountains to the west of the vale of Mexico.

The court of Tlacopan was on the western border of the lake of Tezcucó, four miles westward from that of Mexico (*b*).

The kingdom of Acolhuacan, the most ancient, and in former times the most extensive, was afterwards reduced to more narrow limits by the acquisitions of the Mexicans. It was bounded on the east by the republic of Tlaxcallan; on the south, by the province of Chalco, belonging to the kingdom of Mexico; on the north, by the country of the Huastecas; and in the west, it was also bounded by different states of Mexico, and terminated in the lake of Tezcucó. Its length from south to north was little more than two hundred miles, and its greatest breadth did not exceed sixty; but in this small district there were large cities, and a numerous population. The court of Tezcucó, situated upon the eastern bank of the lake of the same name, fifteen miles to the eastward of that of Mexico, was justly celebrated not less for its antiquity and grandeur than for the polish and civilization of its inhabitants. The three cities of *Huexotla*, *Coatlichan*, and *Atenco*, were so near adjacent, they appeared like its suburbs. *Otompan* was also a considerable city, and likewise *Acolman*, and *Tepepolco*.

The celebrated republic of Tlaxcallan or Tlascala, was bounded on the west by the kingdom of Acolhuacan, on the south by the repub-

(*b*) The Spaniards have altered the Mexican names, and adapted them to their own language, saying Tacuba, Oculma, Otumaba, Guaxuta, Tepeaca, Guatemala, Churabuseo, &c. in place of Tlacopan, Acolman, Otompan, Huexotla, Tepejacac, Quauhquemallan, and Huitzilopochco, whose example we shall imitate, as far as it is convenient, to avoid giving our readers trouble in pronouncing them.



lies of Cholollan and Huexotzinco, and by the state of *Tepejacac*, belonging to the crown of Mexico, on the north by the state of *Zacatlan*, and on the east by other states under subjection to the same crown. Its length did not reach fifty miles, nor its breadth more than thirty. Tlascala, from whence the republic took its name, was situated on the side of the great mountain *Mattalcueye*, towards the north-west, and about seventy miles to the eastward of the court of Mexico.

The kingdom of Mexico, although the most modern, was far more extensive than all the other mentioned kingdoms and republics, taken together. It extended towards the south-west and south, as far as the Pacific Ocean; towards the south-east, as far as the neighbourhood of *Quaubtemallan*; towards the east, exclusive of the districts of the three republics, and a small part of the kingdom of Acolhuacan, as far as the Gulf of Mexico; towards the north, to the country of the Huastecas; towards the north-west, it bordered on the barbarous Chichemecas; and the dominions of Tlacopan and Michuacan, were its boundaries towards the east. The whole of the Mexican kingdom was comprehended between the 14th and 21st degrees of north latitude, and between 271 and 283 degrees of longitude, taken from the meridian of the island of Ferro (*c*).

The finest district of this country, in respect to advantage of situation, as well as population, was the vale itself of Mexico, crowned by beautiful and verdant mountains, whose circumference, measured at their base, exceeded a hundred and twenty miles. A great part of the vale is occupied by two lakes, the upper one of sweet water, the lower one brackish, which communicate together by a canal. In the lower lake, on account of its lying in the very bottom of the valley, all the water running from the mountains collected; from thence, when extraordinary abundance of rains raised the water of the lake over its bed, it easily overflowed the city of Mexico, which was situated in the lake; which accident happened not less frequently under the Mexican monarchy than in the time of the Spaniards. These two lakes the circumference of which is not less than ninety miles, represented

(*c*) De Solis, and other Spanish, French, and English writers, allow still more extent to the kingdom of Mexico; and Dr. Robertson says, that the territories belonging to the chiefs of Tezcuc and Tacuba, scarcely yielded in extent to those of the sovereign of Mexico; but how far these authors are distant from the truth, will appear from our dissertations.

## BOOK I.

in some degree, the figure of a camel, the head and neck of which were formed by the lake of sweet water, or *Chalco*, the body by the lake of brackish water, called the lake of *Tezcucó*, and the legs and feet were represented by the rivulets, and torrents, which ran from the mountains into the lake. Between the two lakes there is the little peninsula of *Itztapalapan*, which divides them. Besides the three courts of Mexico, Acolhuacan, and Tlacopan, there were forty eminent cities, in this delightful vale, and innumerable villages and hamlets. The cities most noted next to these courts were *Xochimilco*, *Chalco*, *Itztapalapan*, and *Quaubtitlan*, which now, however, scarcely retain a twentieth part of their former greatness (*d*).

Mexico, the most renowned of all the cities of the new world, and capital of the empire (the description of which we shall give in another place) was, like Venice, built on several little islands in the lake of Tezcucó, in 19 deg. and 26 min. of north latitude, and in 276 deg. and 34 min. of longitude, between the two courts of Tezcucó, and Tlacopan, 15 miles to the west of the one, and four to the east of the other. Some of its provinces were inland, others maritime.

SECT. II.  
Provinces of  
the kingdom  
of Mexico.

The principal inland provinces to the northward were, the Otomies; to the southwest, the Matlatzincas and the Cuiclatecas; to the south, the Tlahuicas and the Coahuixcas; to the south-east, after the states of *Itzocan*, *Jauhtepec*, *Quaubquechollan*, *Atlixco*, *Tebuacan*, and others, were the great provinces of the Mixtecas, the Zapotecas, and lastly, the Chiapanecas. Towards the east were the provinces of Tepeyacac, the Popolocas, and the Totonacas. The maritime provinces of the Mexican gulf were those of *Coatzacualco* and *Cuetlachtlán*, which the Spaniards call Cotastra. The provinces on the Pacific Ocean were those of *Coliman*, *Zacatlán*, *Tototepec*, *Tecuanatepec*, and *Xocconochco*.

The province of the Otomies commenced in the northern part of the Vale of Mexico, and extended through those mountains to the

(a) The other respectable cities of the Vale of Mexico were, *Mizquic*, *Cuiclahuac*, *Azcapotzalco*, *Tenayocan*, *Otompan*, *Colhuacan*, *Mexicaltzinco*, *Huitzilopochco*, *Coyohuacan*, *Arenco*, *Coatlíchan*, *Huexotla*, *Chiautla*, *Acolman*, *Teotihuacan*, *Itztapalaccan*, *Tepeilaoztoc*, *Tepepolco*, *Tizayoccan*, *Citlaltepec*, *Coyotepec*, *Tzompanco*, *Toltilán*, *Xaltocan*, *Tetepanco*, *Ebecatepec*, *Tequizquiac*, *Huipochilan*, *Tepotzotlan*, *Tehuillojoacan*, *Huehuetoca*, *Atlacuibuyan*, &c. See our Sixth Dissertation.

north,

north, the distance of 90 miles from the capital. The ancient and famous city of *Tollun*, now *Tula*, distinguished itself over all the inhabited places, of which there were many; also *Xilotpec*, which after the conquest made by the Spaniards, was the metropolis of the Otomies. Beyond the settlements of this nation towards the north and north-west, there were no other places inhabited as far as New Mexico. All this great track of land of more than a thousand miles in length, was occupied by barbarous nations, who had no fixed residence, nor paid obedience to any sovereign.

The province of the Matlatzincas, comprehended besides the valley of Toloacan, all that space from thence to *Tlaximaloyan* (now *Taximaroa*), the frontier of the kingdom of Michuacan. The fertile valley of Toloacan from the south-east to the north-west is upwards of forty miles long, and thirty in breadth where it is broadest. Toloacan, which was the principal city of the Matlatzincas, from whence the valley took its name, was, as it still is, situated at the foot of a high mountain perpetually covered with snow, thirty miles distant from Mexico. All the other places of the valley were inhabited partly by the Matlatzincas, partly by the Otomies. In the neighbouring mountains there were the states of *Xalatlahco*, *Tzompabuacan*, and *Malinalco*; at no great distance to the eastward of the valley the state of Ocuil-lan, and to the westward those of *Toxantla* and *Zoltepec*.

The Cuitlatecas inhabited a country which extended more than two hundred miles from the north-west to the south-east, from the kingdom of Michuacan, as far as the Pacific Ocean. Their capital was the great and populous city of Mexcaltepec upon the coast, the ruins of which are now scarcely visible.

The capital of the Tlahuicas was the pleasant and strong city of Quauhnhuac, called by the Spaniards Cuernabaca, about forty miles from Mexico towards the south. Their province, which commenced from the southern mountains of the vale of Mexico, extended almost sixty miles southward.

The great province of the Coahuixcas was bounded on the north by the Matlatzincas, and Tlahuicas, on the west by the Cuitlatecas, on the east by the Jopi and Mixtecas, and to the southward it extended itself as far as the Pacific Ocean, through that part where at present

the



**BOOK I.** the port and city of Acapulco lie. This province was divided into several distinct states, namely, *Tzompanco*, *Chilapan*, *Tlapan*, and *Teoitztla*, now *Tijflla*, a country for the most part too hot, and unhealthy. Tlachco, a place celebrated for its silver mines, either belonged to the above mentioned province, or bordered upon it.

Mixtecapan, or the province of the Mixtecas, extended itself from *Acatlan*, a place distant an hundred and twenty miles from the court, towards the south-east, as far as the Pacific Ocean, and contained several cities and villages, well inhabited, and of considerable trade. To the east of the Mixtecas, were the Zapotecas, so called from their capital Teotzapotlan. The valley of *Huaxyacac* was in their district, called by the Spaniards *Oaxaca*, or *Guaxaca*. The city of Huaxyacac, was afterwards constituted a bishoprick, and the valley a marquisate in favour of the conqueror D. Ferdinand Cortes (*e*).

To the northward of the Mixtecas was the province of *Mazatlan*, and to the northward and the eastward of the Zapotecas was *Chimantla*, with their capitals of the same name, from whence their inhabitants were called Mazatecas, and Chinantecas. The provinces of the Chiapanecas, Zoqui, and Queleni were the last of the Mexican empire towards the south-east. The principal cities of the Chiapanecas were *Tochiapan* (called by the Spaniards Chiapa de Indios), *Tochtla*, *Chamolla*, and *Tziuacantla*, of the Zoqui, *Tecpanitla*, and of the Queleni, *Teopixca*. Upon the side and around the famous mountain *Popocatepec*, which is thirty-three miles distant towards the south-east from the court, were the great states *Amaquemecan*, *Tepoztlan*, *Jauhtepec*, *Huaxtepec*, *Chietlan*, *Itzocan*, *Acapetlayocan*, *Quaubquechollan*, *Atlixco*, *Cholollan*, and *Huexotzinco*; these two last, which were the most considerable, having, with the assistance of their neighbours the Tlascalans, shaken off the Mexican yoke, re-established their former aristocratical government. Cholollan, or Cholula, and

(*e*) Some believe, that anciently there was nothing in the place called Huaxyacac, but a mere garrison of the Mexicans, and that that city was founded by the Spaniards; but besides that it appears by the tribute-roll, that Huaxyacac was one of the tributary cities to the crown of Mexico, we know that the Mexicans were not accustomed to establish any garrison, except in the most populous places of their conquered provinces. The Spaniards were said to found a city whenever they gave a Spanish name to an Indian settlement, and gave it Spanish magistrates; *Antequera* in *Huaxjacac*, and *Segura della Frontera*, in *Tepejacac* were no otherwise founded.



Huexotzinco were the largest and most populous cities of all that land. The Cholulans possessed a small hamlet called Cuitláxcoapan, in the very place where afterwards the Spaniards founded the city of Angelopolis, which is the second of New Spain (*f*).

To the east of Cholula there was the respectable state of Tepeyacac; and beyond that, the Popolocas, whose principal cities were *Tecamachalco* and *Quecholac*. To the southward of the Popolocas there was the state of *Tehuacan*, bordering upon the country of the Mixtecas; to the east the maritime province of *Cuethlactlan*, and to the north the Totonacas. This great province, which was the last in that part of the empire, extended a hundred and fifty miles, beginning from the frontier of *Zacatlan*, a state belonging to the crown of Mexico, about eighty miles distant from the court, and terminating in the Gulf of Mexico. Besides the capital *Mixquibucan*, fifteen miles to the eastward of *Zacatlan*, there was the beautiful city of *Chempoallan* upon the coast of the Gulf, which was the first city of the empire entered by the Spaniards, and where, as will hereafter appear, their success began. These were the principal inland provinces of the Mexican empire; omitting the mention, at present, of several other lesser states, which might render our description tedious.

Among the maritime provinces of the Pacific Ocean, the most northern was Coliman; whose capital so called, lay in 19 deg. of latitude, and in 272 deg. of longitude. Pursuing the same coast, towards the south-east was the province of *Zacatlan*, with its capital of the same name; then the coast of the *Cuitlatecas*; and after it that of the *Cohuixcas*, in which district was *Acapulco*, at present a celebrated port for commerce with the Philippine Islands, in 16 deg. 40 min. of latitude, and 276 of longitude.

Adjoining to the coast of the *Cohuixcas*, were the *Jopi*; and adjoining to that, the *Mixtecas*, known in our time by the name of *Xicayan*. Then followed the great province of *Tecuatepec*; and lastly, that of *Xocconochco*. The city of *Tecuatepec*, from which the state derived its name, was situated on a beautiful little island,

(*f*) The Spaniards say *Tusila*, *Mecameca*, *Izucar*, *Arisco* and *Quechula* in place of *Tochlan*, *Ariaquemacan*, *Izccan*, *Arlinco*, and *Quecholac*.

## BOOK I.

formed by a river two miles from the sea. The province of Xoconochco, which was the last and most southerly of the empire, was bounded on the east and south-east by the country of *Xochitepec*, which did not belong to the crown of Mexico; on the west, by that of *Tecuatepec*; and on the south terminated in the ocean. Its capital, called also *Xoconochco*, was situated between two rivers, in 14 deg. of latitude, and in 283 of longitude. Upon the Mexican Gulf there were, besides the coast of the Totonacas, the provinces of *Cuetlachtlan* and *Coatzacualco*; this last was bounded on the east by the vast country of *Onohualco*, under which name the Mexicans comprehended the states of *Tabasco*, and the peninsula of *Yucatan*, which were not subject to their dominion. Besides the capital, called also *Coatzacualco*, founded upon the borders of a great river, there were other well-peopled places amongst which *Painalla* merits particular mention by having been the place of the nativity of the famous *Malintzin*, one of the most powerful instruments of the conquest of Mexico. The province of *Cuetlachtlan* which had a capital so called, comprehended all that coast which is between the river *Alvarado*, where the province of *Coatzacualco* terminates, and the river *Antigua* (g), where the province of the Totonacas began. On that part of the coast which the Mexicans called *Chalchicuecan*, lie at present the city and port of *Vera Cruz*, the most renowned of all New Spain.

All the country of *Anahuac*, generally speaking, was well peopled. In the history and in the dissertations we shall have occasion to mention several particular cities, and to give some idea of the multitude of their inhabitants. Almost all the inhabited settlements with their ancient names, are now still existing, though much altered; but all the ancient cities excepting those of *Mexico* or *Orizaba* and some others, appear so reduced, they hardly contain the fourth part of the number of buildings and inhabitants which they formerly possessed; there are many which have preserved but a tenth part, and others hardly the twentieth part of their ancient greatness.

To speak in general of the Indians, and comparing the state of their population, reported by the first Spanish historians, and their

(g) We give this river the Spanish name, by which it is known at present; as we are ignorant of its Mexican name.

native writers, with what we have seen ourselves, we can affirm that at present there hardly remains one-tenth part of the ancient inhabitants; the miserable consequence of the calamities they have undergone.

BOOK I.

The land is in great part abrupt and mountainous, covered with thick woods, and watered by large rivers; though not to be compared with those of South America: some of these run into the Gulf of Mexico, and others into the Pacific Ocean. Amongst the first, those of *Papaloapan*, *Coatzacualco*, and *Chiapan* are the greatest. The river Papaloapan, which the Spaniards call *Alvarado*, from the name of the first Spanish captain who sailed into it, has its principal source in the mountains of the Zapotecas, and after making a circuit through the province of Mazatlan, and receiving other smaller rivers and streams, is discharged into the Gulf by three navigable mouths, at thirty miles distance from Vera Cruz. The river Coatzacualco, which is also navigable, comes down from the mountains of the *Mixes*, and crossing the province of which it takes the name, empties itself into the ocean nigh to the country of Onohualco. The river Chiapan begins its course from the mountains called *Cuchumataneo*, which separate the diocese of Chiapan from that of Guatemala, crosses the province of its own name, and afterwards that of Onohualco, where it runs into the sea. The Spaniards call it *Tabasco*, which they also called that tract of land which unites the peninsula of Yucatan to the Mexican continent. They called it also the river *Grihalva*, from the commander of the first Spanish fleet who discovered it.

SECT. III.  
Rivers, lakes,  
and fountains.

Amongst the rivers which run into the Pacific Ocean *Tololotlan* is the most celebrated, called by the Spaniards *Guadalaxara*, or *great river*. It takes its rise in the mountains of the valley of Toloacan, crosses the kingdom of Michuacan and the lake of Chapallan, from thence it waters the country of *Tonollan*, where at present the city of Guadalaxara, the capital of New Galicia, stands; and after running a course of more than six hundred miles, discharges itself into the ocean, in the latitude of 22 degrees. The river Tecuantepec springs in the mountains of the Mixes, and after a short course empties itself into the ocean in the latitude of  $15\frac{1}{2}$  degrees.



## BOOK I.

The river of the Jopi waters the country of that nation, and flows out fifteen miles to the eastward of the port of Acapulco; forming in that quarter the dividing line between the dioceses of Mexico and Angelopoli.

There were besides, and still are, several lakes, which did not less embellish the country than give convenience to the commerce of those people. The lake of Nicaragua, of Chapallan, and Pazquaro, which were the most considerable, did not belong to the Mexican empire. Amongst the others, the most important to our history, are those two in the vale of Mexico, which we have already spoken of. The lake of Chalco extended twelve miles from east to west, as far as the city of Xochimilco, and from thence taking, for as many miles, a northerly direction, incorporated itself by means of a canal, with the lake of Tetzcuco; but its breadth did not exceed six miles.

The lake of Tetzcuco extended fifteen miles, or rather seventeen from east to west, and something more from south to north; but at present its extent is much less, for the Spaniards have diverted into new channels many rivers which formerly ran into it. All the water which assembles there is at first sweet, and becomes salt afterwards, from the nitrous bed of the lake where it is received (*b*). Besides these two great lakes, there were in the same vale of Mexico, and to the north of the coast, two smaller ones, named after the cities of Tzompanco, and Xaltocan. The lake of Tochtlan, in the province of Coatzacualco, makes a sweet prospect, and its banks a most delightful dwelling. With respect to fountains, there are so many in that land, and so different in quality, they would deserve a separate history, especially if we had to enumerate those of the kingdom of Michuacan. There are an infinity of nitrous, sulphureous, vitriolic, and alluminous mineral waters, some of which

(*b*) M. de Bomare says, in his Dictionary of Natural History, that the salt of the Mexican lake may proceed from the waters of the ocean in the north being filtered through the earth; and to corroborate his opinion he quotes *Le Journal des Savans*, of the year 1676. But this is truly a gross error, because that lake is one hundred and eighty miles distant from the ocean; besides, the bed of this lake is so elevated, that it has at least one mile of perpendicular height above the level of the sea. The anonymous author of the work intitled, *Observations curieuses sur le Lac de Mexique*, (the work expressly from which the journalists of Paris have made their extracts,) is very far from adopting the error of M. de Bomare.



spring out so hot, that in a few moments any kind of fruit or animal food is boiled in them. There are also petrifying waters, namely those of Tehuacan, a city about one hundred and twenty miles distant from Mexico towards the south-east, those of the spring of Pucuario in the states of the Conte di Miravalles, in the kingdom of Michuacan, and that of a river in the province of the Queleni. With the water of Pucuario they make little white smooth stones, not displeasing to the taste; scrapings from which taken in broth, or in Atolli (*i*) are most powerful diaphoretics, and are used with remarkable success in various kinds of fevers (*k*). The citizens of Mexico during the time of their kings, supplied themselves with water from the great spring of Chapoltepec, which was conveyed to the city by an aqueduct, of which, we shall speak hereafter. In mentioning the waters of that kingdom, if the plan of our history would permit, we might describe the stupendous falls or cascades of several rivers (*l*), and the bridges which nature has formed over others, particularly the *Ponte di Dio*: thus they call in that country a vast volume of earth thrown across the deep river Atoyacue, close to the village of Molcaxac, about one hundred miles to the south-east from Mexico, along which, coaches and carriages conveniently pass. It is probable, it has been a fragment of a neighbouring mountain, thrown from it by some former earthquake.

The climate of the countries of Anahuac varies according to their situation. The maritime countries are hot, and for the most part moist and unhealthy. Their heat, which occasions sweat even in January, is owing to the perfect flatness of the coasts compared with the inland country; or from the mountains of sand that gather upon the shore, which is the case with Vera Cruz my native country. The moisture proceeds not less from the sea than from the abundance of waters descending from the mountains which

SECT. IV.  
Climate of  
Anahuac.

(*i*) Atolli is the name given by the Mexicans, to a gruel made of maize or Indian corn; of which we shall speak in another place.

(*k*) The little stones of Pucuario have been known but a short time. I have myself been an eye witness of their wonderful effect, in the epidemic of 1762. The dose prescribed for one who is easily brought to sweat is one drachm of the scrapings.

(*l*) Amongst the cascades there is one famous, made by the great river Guadalaxara, in a place called Tempizque, fifteen miles to the southward of that city.

## BOOK I.

command the coast. In hot countries there is never any white frost, and most inhabitants of such regions have no other idea of snow than that which they receive from the reading of books, or the accounts of strangers. Lands which are very high, or very near to very high mountains which are perpetually covered with snow, are cold; and I have been upon a mountain not more than twenty-five miles, removed from the capital, where there has been white frost and ice even in the dog-days. All the other inland countries, where the greatest population prevailed, enjoy a climate so mild and benign, they neither feel the rigour of winter, nor the heats of summer. It is true, in many of these countries there is frequently white frost in the three months of December, January, and February, and sometimes even it snows; but the small inconvenience which such cold occasions, continues only till the rising sun: no other fire than his rays, is necessary to give warmth in winter; no other relief is wanted in the season of heat, but the shade; the same clothing which covers men in the dog-days, defends them in January; and the animals sleep all the year under the open sky.

This mildness and agreeableness of climate under the torrid zone, is the effect of several natural causes, entirely unknown to the ancients, who believed it uninhabitable; and not well understood by some moderns, by whom it is esteemed unfavourable to those who live in it. The purity of the atmosphere, the smaller obliquity of the solar rays, and the longer stay of this luminary upon the horizon in winter, in comparison of other regions farther removed from the equator, concur to lessen the cold, and to prevent all that horror which disfigures the face of nature in other climes. During that season, a serene sky and the natural delights of the country, are enjoyed; whereas under the frigid, and even for the most part under the temperate zones, the clouds rob man of the prospect of heaven, and the snow buries the beautiful productions of the earth. No less causes, combine to temper the heat of summer. The plentiful showers which frequently water the earth after mid-day, from April or May, to September or October; the high mountains continually loaded with snow, scattered here and there through the country of Anahuac; the cool winds which breathe from them in that season; and

and the shorter stay of the sun upon the horizon, compared with the circumstances of the temperate zone, transform the summer of those happy countries into a cool and chearful spring.

But the agreeableness of the climate is counterbalanced by thunder storms, which are frequent in summer, particularly in the vicinity of Matlalcueje or the mountain of Tlascala, and by earthquakes which at all times are felt, although with less danger than terror. These first and last effects are occasioned by the sulphur and other combustible materials, deposited in great abundance in the bowels of the earth. Storms of hail are neither more frequent nor more severe than in Europe.

The fire kindled in the bowels of the earth by the sulphureous and bituminous materials, has made vents for itself in some of the mountains or volcanos, from whence flames are often seen to issue, and ashes and smoke. There are five mountains in the district of the Mexican empire, where at different times this dreadful phenomenon has been observed. *Pojaubtecatl*, called by the Spaniard, *Volcan d'Orizaba*, began to send forth smoke, in the year 1545, and continued to do so for twenty years: but after that, for the space of more than two centuries, there has not been observed the smallest sign of burning. This celebrated mountain, which is of a conical figure, is indisputably the highest land of all Anahuac; and on account of its height, is the first land descried by seamen who are steering that way, at the distance of fifty leagues (*m*). Its top is always covered with snow, and its border adorned with large cedar, pine, and other trees of valuable wood, which make the prospect of it every way beautiful. It is distant from the capital upwards of ninety miles to the eastward.

SECT. V.  
Mountains,  
Stones, and  
Minerals.

The *Popocatepec* and *Iztaccibuatl*, which lay near each other, but thirty-three miles distant from Mexico towards the south-east, are also of a surprising height. *Popocatepec*, for which they have substituted

(*m*) *Pojaubtecatl* is higher than Taide or the Peak of Teneriffe, according to P. Tallandier the Jesuit, who made observations on them both: *vide Lettres Edifiantes*, &c. Thomas Gage says of the *Popocatepec*, it is as high as the highest Alps: he might have added, something higher, if he had calculated the elevated station on which this celebrated mountain rises.



## BOOK I.

the name *Volcan*, has a mouth or vent more than half a mile wide, from which, in the time of the Mexican kings, it frequently emitted flames; and in the last century many times threw out great quantities of ashes upon the places adjacent; but in this century, hardly any smoke has been observed. *Iztaccibuatl*, known by the Spaniards under the name of Sierra Nevada, threw out also at sometimes smoke and ashes. Both mountains have their tops always covered with snow in so great quantities, as to supply with what precipitates on the neighbouring rocks, the cities of Mexico, Gelopoli, Cholula, and other adjoining places, to the distance of forty miles from these mountains, where an incredible quantity is yearly consumed in cooling and congealing liquors (*n*).

The mountains of Coliman and Tochtlan, considerably distant from the capital, and still more so from each other, have emitted fire at different periods, in our time (*o*).

Besides these mountains there are likewise others, which, though not burning mountains, are yet of great celebrity for their height; namely, Matlalcueye, or the mountain of Tlascala; *Nappateuili*, called by the Spaniards, from its figure, *Cofre* or trunk; *Tentzon*,

(*n*) The impost or duty upon ice or congealed snow consumed in the capital, amounted in 1746, to 15,522 Mexican crowns; some years after, it rose to 20,000, and at present we may believe it is a great deal more.

(*o*) A few years ago an account was published in Italy, concerning the mountains of Tochtlan or Iustia, full of curious, but too ridiculous lies; in which there was a description of rivers of fire, of frightful elephants, &c. We do not mention among the burning mountains, neither *Juruyo*, nor *Mamotombo*, of Nicaragua; nor that of *Guatemala*; because neither of these three was comprehended under the Mexican dominions. That of *Guatemala*, laid in ruins with earthquakes, that great and beautiful city, the 29th of July, 1773. With respect to *Juruyo*, situated in the valley of Urecho, in the kingdom of Michuacan, before the year 1760, there was nothing of it but a small hill where there was a sugar plantation. But on the 29th of September, 1760, it burst with furious shocks, and entirely ruined the sugar work, and the neighbouring village of *Guacana*; and from that time has continued to emit fire and burning rocks, which have formed themselves into three high mountains, whose circumference was nearly six miles, in 1766, according to the account communicated to me, by Don Emmanuelle di Bustamante, governor of that province, and an eye-witness of the fact. The ashes at the eruption, were forced as far as the city of Queretaro, one hundred and fifty miles distant from *Juruyo*, a matter almost incredible, but public and notorious in that city; where a gentleman shewed me, in a paper, the ashes which he had gathered. In the city of Valladolid, sixty miles distant, it rained ashes in such abundance they were obliged to sweep the yards of the houses two or three times during the day.



near to the village of Moacaxac, Tolocean, and others, which, being of no importance to the subject, I intentionally omit. Every one knows that the famous chain of the Andes, or Alps of South America, are continued through the isthmus of Panama, and through all New Spain till they lose themselves in the unknown countries of the North. The most considerable part of this chain is known in that kingdom under the name of *Sierra Madre*, particularly in Cinaloa, and Tarahumara, provinces twelve hundred miles distant from the capital.

The mountains of Anahuac abound in ores of every kind of metal, and an infinite variety of other fossils. The Mexicans found gold in the countries of the Coahuixcas, the Mixtecas, the Zapotecas, and in several others. They gathered this precious metal chiefly in grains amongst the sand of the rivers, and the above mentioned people paid a certain quantity in tribute to the crown of Mexico. Silver was dug out of the mines of Tlachco, Tzompanco, and others; but it was not so much prized by them as it is by other nations. Since the conquest, so many silver mines have been discovered in that country, especially in the provinces which are to the north-west of the capital, it is quite impossible to enumerate them. Of copper they had two sorts, one hard, which they used instead of iron to make axes, hatchets, mattocks, and other instruments of war and agriculture; the other flexible, for making of basons, pots, and other vessels. This metal abounded formerly more than elsewhere in the provinces of Zacatollan, and the Coahuixchas; at present it abounds in the kingdom of Michuacan.

They dug tin from the mines of Tlachco, and lead from the mines of *Ixmiquilpan*, a place in the country of the Otomies. Of tin they made money, as we shall observe in its place, and we know of lead that it was sold at market, but we are entirely ignorant of the use it was put to; there were likewise mines of iron in Tlascala, in Tlachco, and other places; but they either did not find out these mines, or at least did not know how to benefit themselves by the discovery. There were also in Chilapan mines of quicksilver, and in many places mines of sulphur, alum, vitriol, cinnabar, ochre, and a white earth strongly resembling white lead. Of quicksilver and vitriol we do not know the use which they made; the other minerals were employed in painting and dying. Of amber and asphaltum, or bitumen of Judea, there was

## BOOK I.

was and still is great abundance on both coasts, and they were both paid in tribute to the king of Mexico from many places of the empire. Amber they used to set in gold for ornament; asphaltum was employed in certain incense offerings, as we shall find hereafter.

With respect to precious stones there were, and still are, diamonds, though few in number; amethysts, cats-eyes, turquoises, cornelians, and some green stones resembling emeralds, and not much inferior to them; and of all these stones, the Mixtecas, the Zapotecas, and Cohuixcas, in whose mountains they were found, paid a tribute to the king. Of their plenty and estimation with the Mexicans, and the manner in which they wrought them, we shall speak more properly in another place. The mountains which lay on the coast of the gulf of Mexico, between the port of Vera Cruz and the river Coatzacoalco, namely, those of Chinantla, and the province of Mixtecas, furnished them with crystal; and the cities of 'Tochtepec, Cuatlachtlan, Cozamaloapan, and others, were obliged to contribute annually to the luxury of the court.

These mountains did not less abound in various kinds of stone, valuable in architecture, sculpture, and other arts. There are quarries of jasper, and marble of different colours in the mountains of Calpolalpan to the east of Mexico; in those which separate the two vallies of Mexico and Toloacan, now called *Monte de los Cruces*, and in those of the Zapotecas: of alabaster in Tecalco (at present *Tecale*), a place in the neighbourhood of the province of Tepeyacac, and in the country of the Mixtecas: of Tezontli, in the vale itself of Mexico, and in many other places of the empire. The stone Tetzontli is generally of a dark red colour, pretty hard, porous, and light, unites most firmly with lime and sand, and is therefore more in demand than any other for the buildings of the capital, where the foundation is marshy and unsolid. There are besides entire mountains of loadstone, and among others one very considerable between Teoitztlan and Chilapan, in the country of the Cohuixcas. Of *Quetzalitztl* commonly known by the name of the nephritic stone, the Mexicans formed various and curious figures, some of which are preserved in different museums of Europe. *Chimaltizatli*, which is a kind of talc, is a transparent white stone, dividing easily into thin leaves;

on calcination gives a fine plaister, which the ancient Mexicans used to whiten their paintings. There are besides infinite quantities of plaister and talc ; but respecting this last we do not know what use it was put to. The *Mezcuitlatl*, that is, moon's-dung, belongs to that class of stones which, on account of their resistance to the action of fire, are called by chemists *lapides refractarii*. It is transparent and of a reddish gold colour. But no stone was more common with the Mexicans than the *itztli*, of which there is great abundance in many places of Mexico. It is semitransparent, of a glassy substance, and generally black, but it is found also white and blue ; they made looking-glasses of this stone, knives, lancets, razors, and spears, as we shall mention when we treat of their militia ; and after the introduction of the gospel they made sacred stones of it which were much valued (*p*).

However plentiful and rich the mineral kingdom of Mexico may be, the vegetable kingdom is still more various and abundant. The celebrated Dr. Hernandez, the Pliny of New Spain, describes in his Natural History, about twelve hundred plants, natives of that country ; but his description, although large, being confined to medicinal plants, has hardly comprised one part of what provident nature has produced there for the benefit of mortals. Of the medicinal plants we should give but an imperfect account if we applied to the medicine of the Mexicans. With regard to the other classes of vegetables, some are esteemed for their flowers, some for their fruit, some for their leaves, some for their root, some for their trunk or their wood, and others for their gum, resin, oil, or juice (*q*). Among the many flowers which embellish the meads and adorn the gardens of the Mexicans, there are some worthy to be mentioned, either from the singular beauty of their colours, the exquisite fragrance which they exhale, or the extraordinariness of their form.

Sect. VI.  
Plants esteemed  
for their  
flowers.

The *Floripundio* which, on account of its size, merits the first mention, is a beautiful white odoriferous flower, monopetalous, or consist-

(*p*) *Itztli* is known in South America by the name of the *Pietra del Galinazzo*. The celebrated Mr. Caylus proves, in a manuscript Dissertation, which Mr. Bomare has cited, that the *obsidiana*, of which the ancients made their *vafi murini*, which were so much esteemed, was entirely similar to this stone.

(*q*) We have adopted this though imperfect division of plants, as it appears the most suitable and adapted to the plan of our history.



## BOOK I.

ing of one leaf, but so large, in length it is full more than eight inches, and its diameter in the upper part three or four. Many hang together from the branches like bells, but not entirely round as their corolla (*r*), has five or six angles equidistant from each other. These flowers are produced by a pretty little tree, the branches of which form a round top like a dome. Its trunk is tender, its leaves large, angular, and of a pale green colour. The flowers are followed by round fruit as large as oranges, which contain an almond.

The Jollocxochitl (*s*), or flower of the heart, is also large, and not less estimable for its beauty than for its odour, which is so powerful, that a single flower is sufficient to fill a whole house with the most pleasing fragrance. It has many petals, which are glutinous, externally white, internally reddish or yellowish, and disposed in such a manner, that when the flower is open and its petals expanded, it has the appearance of a star, but when shut it resembles in some measure a heart, from whence its name arose. The tree which bears it is tolerably large, and its leaves long and rough.

The Coatzontecoxochitl, or flower with the viper's head, is of incomparable beauty (*t*). It is composed of five petals or leaves, purple in the innermost part, white in the middle, the rest red but elegantly stained with yellow and white spots. The plant which bears it has leaves resembling those of the iris, but longer and larger, its trunk is small and slim; this flower was one of the most esteemed amongst the Mexicans.

The Oceloxochitl, or tyger-flower, is large, composed of three pointed petals, and red, but towards the middle of a mixed white and yellow, representing in some degree the spots of that wild animal from which it takes its name. The plant has leaves also resembling those of the iris, and a bulbous root.

(*r*) The coloured leaves of which the flower is composed are called *petals* by Fabio Colonna, and *corolla* by Linnæus, to distinguish them from the real leaves.

(*s*) There is another Jollocxochitl also exceedingly fragrant, but different in form.

(*t*) Flos forma spectabilis, et quam vix quispiam possit verbis exprimere, aut peneillo prodiguitate imitari, a principibus Indorum ut naturæ miraculum valde expetitus, et in magno habitus pretio. Hernandez Hist. Nat. N. Hispaniæ, lib. viii. c. 8. The Linean Academicians of Rome, who commented on and published this History of Hernandez in 1651, and saw the paintings of this flower, with its colours, executed in Mexico, conceived such an idea of its beauty that they adopted it as the emblem of their very learned academy, denominating it *Fior di Lince*.



*Sollerochill*



*Coatzenoerochill*



*Xilerochill*



*Ocelerochill*



*Macpacherochill*





The *Cacaloxochitl*, or raven-flower is small, but very fragrant, and coloured white, red, and yellow. The tree which produces these flowers appears covered all over with them, forming at the end of the branches natural bunches not less pleasing to the sight than grateful to the sense. In hot countries there is nothing more common than these flowers; the Indians adorn their altars with them; and the Spaniards make excellent preserves of them (*u*).

The *Izquixochitl* is a small white flower, resembling in figure the cynorrhodo, or wood-rose, and in flavour the garden-rose, but much superior to it in fragrance. It grows to a great tree.

The *Chempoalochitl*, or *Chempascubil*, as the Spaniards say, is that flower transplanted to Europe which the French call Oeillet d'Inde, or Indian carnation. It is exceedingly common in Mexico, where they call it also Flower of the Dead; and there are several kinds differing in size, in figure, and in the number of petals of which they are composed.

The flower which the Mexicans call *Xiloxochitl*, and the Miztecas, *Tiata*, is entirely composed of thin, equal, and strait threads, but pliant and about six inches long, springing from a round cup something resembling an acorn, but different in size, in colour, and substance. Some of these beautiful flowers are entirely red, others all white, and the tree which bears them is most beautiful.

The *Macphalxochitl*, or flower of the hand, is like a tulip, but its pistillum represents the form of a bird's foot, or rather that of an ape, with six fingers terminated with as many nails. The vulgar Spaniards of that kingdom call the tree which bears these curious flowers *Arbol de Manitas*.

Besides these and innumerable other flowers, natives of that country, which the Mexicans delighted to cultivate, the land of Mexico has been enriched with all those which could be transported from Asia and Europe, such as lilies, jessamines, carnations of different kinds, and others in great numbers, which at present in the gardens of Mexico rival the flowers of America.

With regard to fruits, the country of Anahuac is partly indebted to the Canary Islands, partly to Spain, for water melons, apples, peaches,

SECT. VII.  
Plants valued  
for their fruit.

(*u*) It is probable that this tree is the same which Bomare describes under the name of *Frangipanier*.

## BOOK I.

quinces, apricots, pears, pomegranates, figs, black-cherries, walnuts, almonds, olives, chefnuts, and grapes; although these last were not altogether wanting in the country (*x*). In Mizteca there are two kinds of wild vine original in the country: the one in the shoots and figure of the leaves similar to the common vine, produces red grapes, large, and covered with a hard skin, but of a sweet and grateful taste, which would certainly improve from culture. The grape of the other vine is hard, large, and of a very harsh taste, but they make an excellent conserve of it.

With respect to the cocoa-tree, the plaintain, the citron, orange, and lemon, I am persuaded, from the testimony of Oviedo, Hernandez, and Bernal Dias, that they had the cocoa from the Philippine Islands, and the rest from the Canaries (*y*); but as I know there are many of another opinion, I decline engaging myself in any dispute; because, besides its being a matter of no importance to me, it would force me to deviate from the line of my history. It is certain, that these trees, and all others which have been imported there from elsewhere, have successfully taken root, and multiplied as much as in their native soil. All the maritime countries abound with cocoa-nut trees. Of oranges, there are seven different kinds, and of lemons only four. There are as many of the plaintain, or *platano*, as the Spaniards call it (*z*). The largest, which is the zapalot, is from  
fifteen

(*x*) The places named *Parras* and *Parral* in the diocese of New Biscaglia, had these names from the abundance of vines which were found there, of which they made many vineyards, which at this day produce good wine.

(*y*) Oviedo, in his Natural History, attests, that F. J. Bulangas, a Dominican, was the first who brought the Musa from the Canaries to Hispaniola, in 1516; and from thence it was transplanted to the continent of America. Hernandez, in the third book, chap. 40. of his Natural History, speaks thus of the cocoa: *Nascitur passim apud Orientales et jam quoque apud Occidentales Indos*. B. Dias in his History of the Conquest, chap. 17. says, he sowed in the country of Coatzacualco, seven or eight orange seeds; and these, he adds, were the first oranges ever planted in New Spain. With regard to the musa, of the four species which there are of it, it is probable, one of them only is foreign, which is called *Guineo*.

(*z*) The musa was not altogether unknown to the ancients. Pliny, in citing the account which the soldiers of Alexander the Great gave of all that they saw in India, gives this description of it: *Major et alia (arbor) pomo et suavitate præcellentior, quo sapientes Indorum æquævent. Folium avium alas imitatur, longitudine cubitorum trium, latitudine duum. Fructum cortice emittit admirabilem succi dulcedine, ut uno quatuorcos satiet. Arbori nomen palæ, pomo anienæ*. Hist. Nat. lib. xii. cap. 6. Besides these specific characters of the musa he subjoins further, that the name *Palan*, which was given to the musa in those remote times, is still preserved in Malabar, as Garzia dell' Orto, a learned Portuguese physician, bears witness, who resided there many years. It is to be suspected whether *Platano* or plantain has been derived from the word

*Palan*




fifteen to twenty inches in length, and about three in diameter. It is hard and little esteemed, and is only eat when roasted or boiled. The *Platanus largo*, that is *long*, is eight inches at the most in length, and one and a half in diameter. The skin at first is green, then yellow, and when perfectly ripe, black or blackish. It is a relishing and wholesome fruit, whether boiled or raw. The *Guinco* is smaller than the other, but richer, softer, more delicious, and less wholesome. The fibres which cover the pulp are flatulent. This species of plantain has been cultivated in the public garden of Bologna, and we have tasted it, but found it so unripe and unpalatable on account of the climate, that it might have been supposed to be a quite different species. The *Dominico* is the smallest and likewise the most delicate. The tree also is smaller than the others. In that country there are whole woods of large extent not only of the plantain, but also of oranges and lemons; and in Michuacan there is a considerable commerce with the dried plantains, which are preferable to raisins or figs.

The fruits which are unquestionably original in that country are the pine-apple, which from being at first view like to the pine-tree, was called by the Spaniards *Piña*. The Mamei, Chirimoya (*a*), Anona, Cabeza di Negro, black Zapote, Chicozapote, white Zapote, yellow Zapote, Zapote di S. Dominico, Ahuacate, Guayaba, Capulino, Guava, or Cuaxinicuil, Pitahaya, Papaya, Guanabana, Noce Encarcelado, Plums, Dates, Chajoti, Tilapo, Obo or Hobo, Nance, Cacahuate, and many others unimportant to be known by the reader. Most of these fruits are described in the works of Oviedo, Acosta, Hernandez, Laet, Nieremberg, Marcgrave, Pison, Barrere; Sloane,

*Palan.* The name Bananas, which the French give it, is the same as it bears in Guinea, and the name Musa, which the Italians give it, is taken from the Arabic. By some it has been called the Fruit of Paradise, and even some are persuaded it is the very fruit which made our first parents transgress.

(*a*) Several European writers on the affairs of America, confound the Chirimoya with the Areona and Guanabana: but they are three distinct species of fruits; although the two first are somewhat resembling each other. It is necessary also to guard against confounding the pine-apple with the Anona, which are more different from each other than the cucumber and melon. Bomare, however, makes two distinct fruits of the Chirimoya and Cherimolia, whereas Cherimolia is only the corruption of the first and original name of the fruit. The Ate likewise, which some judge a fruit different from the Cherimolia, is only a variety of the same species.

BOOK I.  Ximenes, Ulloa, and many other naturalists; we shall therefore only take notice of those which are the least known in Europe.

All the fruits comprehended by the Mexicans under the generic name of Tzapotl, are round or approach to roundness; and all have a hard stone (*b*). The black Zapote, has a green, light, smooth, tender bark; a black, soft, and most exceeding savoury pulp, which at first sight looks like the Cassia (*c*). Within the pulp, it has flat, blackish stones, not longer than a finger. It is perfectly round, and its diameter from one and a half, to four or five inches. The tree is of a moderate size and thickness, with small leaves. Ice of the pulp of this fruit, seasoned with sugar and cinnamon, is of a most delicate taste.

The white Zapote, which from its narcotic virtue, was called by the Mexicans Cochitzapotl, is something similar to the black, in size, figure, and colour of the bark; although in the white the green is more clear; but in other respects they are greatly different. Its stone, which is believed to be poisonous, is large, round, hard, and white. The tree is thick, and larger than the black; and its leaves also are larger. Besides, the black is peculiar to a warm climate; but the white, on the contrary, belongs to the cold and temperate climates.

The Chicozapote, (in Mexican, *Chicitzapotl*) is of a spherical shape, or approaching thereto; and is one and a half, or two inches in diameter. Its skin is grey, the pulp white, and the stones black, hard, and pointed. From this fruit, when it is still green, they draw a glutinous milk, which easily condenses, called by the Mexicans, *Chicelli*; and by the Spaniards, *Chicle*: the boys and girls chew it; and in Colima they form it into small statues, and other fanciful little figures (*d*).

(*b*) The fruits comprehended by the Mexicans under the name of Tzapotl, are the Mamanci *Tetzontzapotl*, the Chirimoya *Matzapotl*, the Anona *Quaubtzapotl*, the black Zapotl *Tilitzapotl*, &c.

(*c*) Gemelli says, the black Zapotl has also the taste of the Cassia: but this is very far from being true, which all who have tasted it must know. He says also, that this fruit when crude, is poison to fish, but it is wonderful that such a fact should be known only to Gemelli, who was not more than ten months in Mexico.

(*d*) Gemelli is persuaded that chicle was a composition made on purpose: but he is deceived, for it is nothing else than the mere milk of the unripe fruit condensed by the air. — Tom. 6. lib. ii. cap. 1c.

The Chicozapote, fully ripe, is one of the most delicious fruits; and by many Europeans reckoned superior to any fruit in Europe. The tree is moderately large, its wood fit for being wrought, and its leaves are round, in colour and consistence like those of the orange. It springs without culture in hot countries; and in Mixteca, Huasteca, and Michuacan, there are woods of such trees twelve and fifteen miles long (*e*).

The Capollino or Capulin, as the Spaniards call it, is the cherry of Mexico. The tree is little different from the cherry tree of Europe; and the fruit is like it in size, colour, and stone, but not in taste.

The Nance is a small, round fruit; yellow, aromatic, and flavoury, with extremely small seeds, which grow into trees peculiar to warm climates.

The Chayoti is a round fruit, similar in the husk, with which it is covered, to the chestnut, but four or five times larger, and of a much deeper green colour. Its kernel is of a greenish white, and has a large stone in the middle, which is white, and like it in substance. It is boiled, and the stone eat with it. This fruit is produced by a twining perennial plant, the root of which is also good to eat.

The imprisoned nut, commonly so called, because its kernel is closely shut up within an exceeding hard stone. It is smaller than the common nut; and its figure resembles the nutmeg. Its stone is smooth, and its kernel less, and not so well tasted as the common one. This (*f*) transported from Europe, has multiplied and become as common as in Europe itself.

The *Tlakacahuatl*, or Cacahuate as the Spaniards call it, is one of the most scarce plants which grow there. It is an herb, but very thick, and strongly supplied with roots. Its leaves are something

(*e*) Amongst the ridiculous lies told by Thomas Gage, is the following, that in the garden of S. Giacinto, (the hospital of the Dominicans of the Mission from the Philippine Isles, in the suburbs of Mexico where he lodged several months,) there were Chicozapoti. This fruit could never be raised either in the vale of Mexico or any other country subject to white frost.

(*f*) We only speak of the imprisoned nut of the Mexican empire, as the one of New Mexico is larger and better tasted than the common one of Europe, as I have been informed from respectable authority. Probably this of New Mexico is the same with that of Louisiana, called *Pacana*, or *Pacaria*.

BOOK I. like purslain, but not so gross. Its flowerets are white, which bring no fruit. Its fruit are not borne on the branches or stem as in other plants, but attached to the junction of the roots, within a white, greyish, long, roundish, wrinkled sheath, and as rough as we have represented it in our third figure of fruits and flowers. Every sheath has two or three Cacahuati, which are in figure like pine-seeds, but larger and grosser; and each is composed, like other seeds, of two *lobi*; and has its germinating point. It is fit for eating, and well tasted when not raw but only a little toasted. If they are much toasted, they acquire a smell and taste so like coffee, any one may be deceived by it. Oil is made from the Cacahuati, which is not ill tasted; but it is believed to be unwholesome because it is very hot. It makes a beautiful light, but is easily extinguished. This plant would thrive, with certainty, in Italy. It is sown in March or April, and the fruit is gathered in October or November.

Among many other fruits, which I pass over to shorten my account, I cannot dispense with the mention of the cocoa, the cocoa nut, vainilla, chia, chilli or great pepper, Tomati, the pepper of Tabasco, coton, grain, and leguminous plants which are most common with the Mexicans.

Of the Cocoa nuts, (a name taken from the Mexican word *Cacahuatl*,) Hernandez enumerates four species; but the *Tlalcacahuatl*, the smallest of the whole, was the one most used by the Mexicans in their chocolate and other daily drink; the other species served more as money to traffic with in the market, than aliment. The Cocoa nut was one of the plants most cultivated in the warm countries of that empire; and many provinces paid it in tribute to the crown of Mexico; and amongst others the province of Xoconochco, whose Cocoa-nut is excellent and better than that of Maddalena. The description of this celebrated plant, and its culture, is to be found in many authors of every polished nation in Europe.

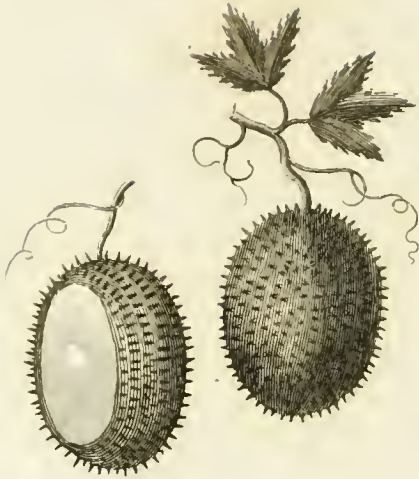
The Vainilla or Vainiglia, so-well known and much used in Europe, grows without culture, in warm countries. The ancient Mexicans made use of it in their chocolate and other drinks which they made of the cocoa.

The





*Chajotli*



*Tiltzapott*



*Talcacahuatl*



*Nopalxochquetzalli*



The Chia is the small seed of a beautiful plant, whose stem is strait and quadrangular; the branches extended in four directions, and symmetrically placed opposite each other, with blue flowerets. There are two species of it, the one black and small, from which there is an oil drawn admirable for painting; the other white and larger, of which they make a cooling beverage. Both were used by the Mexicans for these and other purposes, which we shall mention hereafter.

Of Chilli or great Pepper (*g*), which was as much in use with the Mexicans as salt in Europe, there are at least eleven species, different in their size, figure and sharpness. The Quauhchilli, which is the fruit of a shrub, and Chiltecpin are the smallest, but also the most sharp. Of the Tomate there are six species, distinguished by their size, colour, and taste. The largest, which is the Xiçtomatl or Xitomate, as the Spaniards of Mexico call it, is now very common in Europe, in Spain, and France, under the name of *Tomate*; and in Italy, under the name of Pomo-d'oro. The Miltomatl is smaller, green, and perfectly round. How much both were used by the Mexicans at their meals, shall be mentioned when we treat of their diet.

The Xocoxochitl, vulgarly known by the name of Pepe di Tabasco, from its abounding in that province, is larger than the pepper of Malabar. It grows on a large tree, whose leaves have the colour and lustre of those of the orange; and the flowers are of a beautiful red, and similar in figure to those of the pomegranate, and of a most penetrating and pleasing scent, of which the branches also partake. The fruit is round and borne in clusters which at first are green, afterwards become almost black. This pepper, used formerly by the ancient Mexicans, may supply the want of that of Malabar.

Cotton, from its utility, was one of the most valuable productions of that country, as it served instead of flax (although this plant was not wanting to them), and the inhabitants of Anahuac were generally clothed in it (*b*). There is white and tawny-coloured cotton,  
vulgarly

(*g*) In other countries of America the Chilli is called Axi; in Spain, Pimiento; in France, Poivre de Guinée, and by other names.

(*b*) Michuacan, New Mexico, and Quivira produced flax in great abundance and of the best quality; but we are ignorant if these nations cultivated or made use of it. The Court of Spain,

**BOOK I.** vulgarly called *Coyote*. It is a plant common in warm countries, but more cultivated by the ancients, than the moderns.

The *Achiote*, called by the French *Rocou*, served the Mexicans in dying, as it now does the Europeans. Of the bark they made cordage, and the wood was used to produce fire by friction, after the mode of the ancient shepherds of Europe. This tree is well described in the dictionary of Bomare.

With regard to corn and leguminous plants, that country had from Europe, wheat, barley, rice, pease, beans, lentils, and others; all of which rooted themselves successfully in soils suited to their nature, and multiplied accordingly as we shall shew in our dissertations (i).

Of grain, the chief, the most useful, and most common was the maize, called by the Mexicans, *Thualli*; of which there are several species, differing in size, colour, weight, and taste. There is the large and the small sort, the white, the yellow, the blue, the purple, the red, and the black. The Mexicans made bread of maize, and other meats, of which we shall treat hereafter. Maize was carried from America to Spain, and from Spain into the other countries of Europe, to the great advantage of the poor; though an author of the present day, would make America indebted to Europe for it; an opinion the most extravagant and improbable which ever entered a human brain (k).

Spain, being made acquainted of the lands of Mexico being fit for the culture of flax and hemp, sent, in the year 1778, twelve country families from Vega di Granata, to be employed in that kind of agriculture.

(i) Dr. Hernandez, in his Natural History of Mexico, describes the species of wheat found in Michuacan, and boasts its prodigious fecundity: but the ancients either did not know, or did not incline to use it, but gave preference then, as they still do, to their own maize. The first person who sowed European wheat in that country was, a Moorish slave belonging to Cortez, having discovered a few grains of it in a bag of rice, which he carried for provision, to the Spanish soldiers.

(k) Here follow the words of Bomare, in his Dictionary of Nat. Hist. *vide Blé de Turquie*—*On donnoit à cette plante curieuse & utile, le nom de Blé d'Inde; parce qu'elle tire son origine des Indes; d'où elle fut apporté en Turquie, & de là dans toutes les autres parties de l'Europe, de l'Afrique, & de l'Amerique.* The name of Grano di Turchia, by which it is at present known in Italy, must certainly have been the only reason of Bomare's adopting an error, so contrary to the testimony of all writers on America, and the universal belief of nations. The wheat is called by the Spaniards of Europe and America, *Maize*, taken from the Haitiana language, which was spoken in the island now called Hispaniola, or St. Domingo.



The chief pulse of the Mexicans, was the French bean, of which the species are more numerous and more varied than those of maize. The largest species is the *Ayacotli*, which is the size of a common bean, and comes from a beautiful red flower; but the most esteemed is the small black heavy French bean. This pulse, which in Italy is of no value, because it is not good there, is so excellent in Mexico, that it not only serves as sustenance to the poor class of people, but is also esteemed a luxury by the Spanish nobility.

Of plants which were valuable for their root, their leaves, their trunk, or their wood, the Mexicans had many which served them for food, namely, the *Xicama*, *Camote*, *Huacamote*, *Cacomite*, and others; or which furnished them with thread for their cloaths, or cordage, namely the *Iczotl*, and several species of *Maguel*; or gave them wood for buildings and other works, as the cedar, pine, cypress, fir, and ebony, &c.

SECT. VIII.  
Plants valuable for their root, for their leaves, for their trunk, or for their wood.

The *Xicama*, called by the Mexicans *Catzotl*, is a root the figure and size of an onion; quite white, solid, fresh, juicy, and relishing, and always eat raw.

The *Camote* is another root, extremely common in that country, of which there are three species, one white, one yellow, and another purple. When boiled they taste well, especially those of Queretaro, which are justly prized over all the kingdom (*l*).

The *Cacomite* is the esculent root of the plant which bears the beautiful tyger-flower, already described.

The *Huacamote* is the sweet root of a species of *Jucca* (*m*), which is also eat boiled. The *papa* which is a root transplanted into Europe, and greatly valued in Ireland, was also brought from South America, its native country, into Mexico, as many other roots and salads were from Spain and the Canaries, namely, turnips, radishes, carrots, garlic, lettuces, and asparagus, cabbages, &c. Onions were sold in the markets of Mexico, as Cortez mentions in his letters to Charles Vth. so that there was no necessity for importing

(*l*) Many call the *Camoti*, *Batate* or *Patate*; but I have avoided this name because it is equivocal, and indifferently used by authors to signify *Camoti* and *Pape* which are totally different roots.

(*m*) The *Jucca* is that plant of whose root they make *Cañtara* bread, in several countries of America.

## BOOK I.

them from Europe. Besides the name Xonacatl which is given to the onion, and that of Xonocapetec, by which name a certain place has been known since the time of the Mexican kings; they let us understand that this plant was very ancient in that country, and never transplanted there from Europe.

The Magnei called by the Mexicans, *Metl*; by the Spaniards, *Pita*; and by many authors, the American aloe, from its being very similar to the real aloe, is one of the most common and most useful plants of Mexico. Hernandez describes nineteen species, still more different in their interior substance than in their external form and colour of leaves. In the seventh book of our history we shall have occasion to explain the great advantages the Mexicans derived from these plants, and the incredible profit the Spaniards now make of them.

The Iczotl is a species of mountain palm, pretty lofty, and generally with a double trunk. Its branches form the figure of a fan, and its leaves a spear. Its flowers are white and odorous, which the Spaniards preserve; and its fruit, at first sight, resembles the musa, but is altogether useless. Of its leaves they did formerly and still make fine mats; and the Mexicans got thread from it for their manufactures.

This is not the only palm of that country. Besides the *Royal Palm*, superior to all others in the beauty of its branches, the cocoa-palm, and the date-palms (*n*), there are other species worthy to be mentioned.

The Quauhcojolli, is a palm of middle size, whose trunk is inaccessible to quadrupeds, from being armed round with long, hard, and very sharp thorns. Its branches have the figure of an elegant feather, between which its fruit hangs in clusters, being round, large as the common walnut, and like it consisting of four parts, that is a skin at first green and afterwards blackish, a yellow pulp strongly adhering to the stone, a round and very hard stone, and within the stone a kernel or white substance.

The Ixhuatl is smaller and has not more than six or seven branches, for as soon as a new one buds, one of the old one's withers. Of

(*n*) Besides the Date palm proper to that country, there is also the Barbary date-palm. Dates are sold in the month of June, in the markets of Mexico, Angelopoli, and other cities; but notwithstanding their sweetness they are little in demand.

its leaves they made baskets and mats, and at present they make hats, and other conveniences of them. The bark to the depth of three fingers, is nothing but a mass of membranes, about a foot long, thin and flexible, but also strong; of a number of which joined together, the poor people make mattresses.

The palm *Teocizotl* is also small. The substance of the trunk which is soft, is surrounded with leaves of a particular substance, round, gross, white, smooth, and shining, which appears like so many shells heaped upon each other, with which, formerly the Indians, as they do now, adorned the arches of leaves which they made for their festivals.

There is another palm, which bears cocoas or nuts of oil, so called, (termed by the Spaniards *Cocos de Aceite*;) because they obtain a good oil from it. The cocoa of oil, is a nut in figure and in size like the nutmeg; within which there is a white, oily, eatable kernel, covered by a thin purple pellicle. The oil has a sweet scent, but is too easily condensed, and then becomes a white mass, soft, and white as snow.

For the excellence, variety, and plenty of its timber, that country is equal to any in the world; as there is no sort of climate wanting in it, every one produces its peculiar wood. Besides oaks, firs, pines, cypresses, beeches, ashes, hazels, poplars, and many others common in Europe, there are entire woods of cedars and ebonies, the two species most valued by the ancients: there is an abundance of *Agalloco* or wood of aloe, in *Mixteca*; of *Tapiuzecan*, in *Michuacan*; *Caoba*, in *Chiapan* *Palo Gateado*; which we might call *creeping wood*, in *Zoncolihcan*, (now *Zongolica*); *Camote* in the mountains of *Tezcoco*; *Granadillo* or red ebony, in *Mixteca* and elsewhere; *Mizquitl* or real *Acacia*, *Tepehuaxin*, *Copti*, *Jabin*, *Guayacan* or holy wood, *Ayaquahuitl*, *Oyametl*, the wood of *Zopilote*, and innumerable other woods valuable for their durability, their hardness, and weight (*o*), their pliability or easiness of being cut, the elegance of

(o) Pliny, in his *Natural History*, lib. xvi. cap. 4. mentions no other woods of great specific weight, in water, than these four, ebony, box, larch, and barked cork; but in Mexico there are many trees, whose wood does not float in water, as the *Guayacan*, *Tapiuzeran*, *Jabin*, *Quilbrahacha*, &c. The *Quilbrahacha*, which means break-axe, is so called because in cutting it the axe is frequently broke by the hardness of the wood.

their

## BOOK

their colours, or the agreeableness of their odour. The Camote is of a most beautiful purple; and the Granadillo, a dark-red colour; but the *Palo gateado*, Caoba, and Tzopiloquahuatl or wood of Zopilot, are still more admirable. The hardness of the Guayacan is well known in Europe; the Jabin has the same property in no less a degree. The aloe-wood of Mixteca, although different from the true Agalloco of the East, according to the description given of it by Garzia dell'Orto (*p*) and other authors, is however, not less to be esteemed for its delightful odour, especially when it is fresh cut. There is also in that country, a tree whose wood is precious, but its nature is so malignant as to occasion a swelling in the scrotum of any one who manages it indiscreetly when fresh cut. The name which the Michuacans give it (which I do not at present remember) expresses distinctly that noxious effect. I have never been a witness of this fact, nor have I seen the tree; but I learnt it when I was in Michuacan, from respectable authority.

Hernandez, in his Natural History, describes about one hundred species of trees; but having, as we before mentioned, consecrated his study to the medicinal plants, he omits the greater part of those which that fertile soil produces, and in particular those which are most considerable for their size, and valued for their wood. There are also trees, in height and largeness so prodigious, they are not at all inferior to those which Pliny boasts to be the miracles of nature.

Acosta makes mention of a cedar, which was in Atlacuechahuayan, a place nine miles distant from Antequera or Oaxaca, the circumference of whose trunk was sixteen fathoms, that is more than eighty-two feet of Paris; and I have seen in a house in the country a beam, one hundred and twenty Castilian feet, or one hundred and seven Parisian feet long. In the capital, and other cities there are very large tables of cedar to be seen, consisting of one single piece. In the valley of Atlixo there is still existing a very ancient fir-tree (*q*), so large, that into a cavity of its trunk which was occasioned by

(*p*) Storia dei Semplici, Aromati, &c. della India Orientale.

(*q*) The Mexican name of this tree is, Ahuehuatl; and the common Spaniard of that country calls it, Ahuehuate; but those who would speak in Castilian call it Sabino, that is Savin, in which they are deceived; for the Ahuehuatl, though very like to Savin, is not one, but a fir, as Hernandez demonstrates, in lib. iii. cap. 66, of his Nat. Hist. I saw the fir of Atlixo in my way through that city, in 1756, but not near enough to form a just idea of its bigness.

lightning,



lightning, fourteen men on horseback could conveniently enter. We are given a still stronger idea of its capacity from a testimony even so respectable as his Excellency D. F. Lorenzana, formerly Archbishop of Mexico, now of Toledo. This Prelate, in the annotations which he made on the letters of Cortez, to Charles Vth. and printed in Mexico, in 1770, attests that having gone himself, in company with the Archbishop of Guatemala and the Bishop of Angelopoli, to view that celebrated tree, he made one hundred young lads enter its trunk.

The Ceibas, which I saw in the maritime province of Xicayan, may be compared with this famous fir. The largeness of these trees is proportioned to their prodigious elevation, and they afford a most delightful prospect at the time they are adorned with new leaves and loaded with fruit, in which there is inclosed a particular species of white, fine, and most delicate cotton. This might be, and actually has been made into webs as soft and delicate, and perhaps more so, than silk (*r*); but it is toilsome to spin, on account of the smallness of the threads, and the profit does not requite the labour, the web not being lasting. Some use it for pillows and mattresses which have the singular property of swelling enormously when exposed to the sun.

Amongst the great many trees worthy of notice for their peculiarities, which I am however obliged to look over, I cannot omit a certain species of wood-fig, which grows in the country of the Coahuixcas and in other places of the kingdom. It is a lofty, gross, thick tree, similar in leaves and fruit to the common fig. From its branches, which extend horizontally, spring certain filaments which taking their direction towards the earth, increase and grow till they reach it; strike root and form so many new trunks, that from one single fig, a whole wood may be generated. The fruit of this tree is altogether useless, but its timber is good (*s*).

In

(*r*) De Bomare says, that the Africans make of the thread of the Ceiba, the vegetable taffety, which is so scarce, and so much esteemed in Europe. I do not wonder at the scarcity of such cloth, considering the difficulty of making it. The name Ceiba is taken, like many others, from the language which was spoke in the island Haiti, or San Domingo. The Mexicans call it, Pochotl; and many Spaniards Pochote. In Africa it has the name of Benten. The Ceiba, says the above author, is higher than all the trees hitherto known.

(*s*) A. Perez de Ribas makes mention of this singular fig, in his History of the Millions, from Cinaboa; and Bomare in his Dictionary, under the names of Figuier des Indes, Grande Figuier,

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SECT. IX.  
Plants, of use  
for their re-  
fins, gums,  
oils, and  
juices.

With respect lastly to plants which yield profitable resins, gums, oils, or juices, the country of Anahuac is most singularly fertile, as Acosta in his Natural History acknowledges.

The Huitziloxitl, from which a balsam distils, is a tree of moderate height. Its leaves are something similar to those of the almond tree, but larger; its wood is reddish and odorous, and its bark grey, but covered with a reddish pellicle. Its flowers, which are pale, spring from the extremity of the branches. Its seed is small, white, and crooked; and likewise comes from the extremity of a thin shell about a finger long. In whatever part an incision is made, especially after rains, that excellent resin distils which is so much valued in Europe, and nowise inferior to the celebrated balsam of Meccha (*t*). Our balsam is of a reddish black, or a yellowish white, as from an incision it runs of both colours, of a sharp and bitter taste, and an intense but most grateful odour. The balsam tree is common in the provinces of Panuco and Chiapan, and in other warm countries. The kings of Mexico caused it to be transplanted into the celebrated garden of Huaxtepec, where it rooted successfully, and multiplied considerably in all those mountains. Some of the Indians, to extract a greater quantity of balsam, after making an incision in the tree, have burnt the branches. The abundance of these valuable trees make them regardless of the loss of numbers; by which means they are not obliged to wait the slowness of the distillation. The ancient Mexicans not only collected the opobalsam, or drop distilled from the trunk, but also extracted the xylobalsam from the branches by means of decoction (*u*). From the Huaconex and Maripenda (*x*), they extracted an oil equivalent to the balsam. The Huaconex is a tree of moderate height, and

Figuier, & Figuier admirable. The historians of East India describe another tree, similar to this, which is found there.

(*t*) The first balsam brought from Mexico to Rome was sold at one hundred ducats, by the ounce, as Monardes attests in his History of the medicinal Simples of America, and was declared by the Apostolic See, matter fit for chrism, although it is different from that of Meccha, as Acosta and other writers on America observe.

(*u*) There is an oil also drawn from the fruit of the Huitziloxitl, similar in smell and taste to that of the bitter almond, but more acrimonious and intense, which is found highly useful in medicine.

(*x*) The names Huaconex and Maripenda are not Mexican, but adopted by the authors who write of these trees.

of

of an aromatic and hard wood which keeps fresh for years though buried under the earth. Its leaves are small and yellow, its flowers likewise small and white, and its fruit similar to that of the laurel. They distilled oil from the bark of the tree; after breaking it, keeping it three days in spring water, and then drying it in the sun. They likewise extracted an oil from the leaves, of a pleasing odour. The Maripenda is a shrub, whose leaves are like the iron of a lance; and the fruit is similar to the grape, and grows in clusters which are first green, afterwards red. They extracted the oil, by a decoction of the branches, with a mixture of some of the fruit.

The Xochiocotzotl, commonly liquid amber, is the liquid Storax of the Mexicans. It is a great tree (not a shrub, as Pluche makes it); its leaves are similar to those of the maple tree indented, white in one part, and dark in the other; and disposed in threes. The fruit is thorny and round but polygonous, with the surface and the angles yellow. The bark of the tree is in part green, part tawny. By incision in the trunk, they extract that precious resin called by the Spaniards, *liquidambar*; and the oil of the same name, which is still more odorous and estimable. They also obtain liquid amber from a decoction of the branches, but it is inferior to that which distils from the trunk.

The Mexican name Copalli, is generic, and common to all the resins; but especially signifies those which were made use of for incense. There are ten species of trees which yield these sorts of resin, and differ not only in their name, but in foliage and fruit, and in the quality of the resin. That simply called Copal, as being the principal, is a white transparent resin, which distils from a large tree, whose leaves resemble those of the oak, but are larger, and the fruit is round and reddish. This resin is well known in Europe by the name of gum *Copal*, and also the use which is made of it in medicine and varnishes. The ancient Mexicans used it chiefly in burnt offerings which they made for the worship of their idols; or to pay respect to ambassadors, and other persons of the first rank. At present they consume a great quantity in the worship of the true God, and his saints. The *Tecopalli* or *Tepecopalli*, is a resin similar in colour, odour, and taste to the incense of



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Arabia; which distils from a tree of moderate size that grows in mountains, the fruit of which is like an acorn, containing the nut enveloped in a mucilage, within which there is a small kernel, that is useful in medicine. Not only these two trees but all the others of this class, which we cannot here describe, are peculiar to warm climates.

The *Caragna*, and the *Tecamaca*, resins well known in the apothecaries shops of Europe, distil from two Mexican trees of rather large size. The trunk of the Caragna (*y*), is tawny, smooth, shining, and odorous; and its leaves, though round, not dissimilar to those of the olive. The tree of the Tecamaca has large indented leaves, and red, round, and small fruit, hanging from the end of the branches.

The *Mizquitl* or Mezquite, as the Spaniards call it, is a species of true Acacia; and the gum which distils from it is the true gum arabic, as Hernandez and other learned naturalists testify. The Mezquite is a thorny shrub, whose branches are most irregularly disposed; and its leaves small, thin, and pinnated. Its flowers are like those of the birch tree. Its fruits are sweet, eatable shells, containing a seed, of which anciently the barbarous Cicimecas made a paste, which served them for bread. Its wood is exceedingly hard and heavy. These trees are as common in Mexico as oaks in Europe, particularly on hills in temperate countries (*z*).

Lac, or Gomma Laca (as it is called by the Spaniards), runs in such abundance from a tree like the Mezquite, the branches are covered with it (*a*). This tree, which is of moderate size, has a red-

(*y*) The Mexicans gave the Caragna tree, the name of *Trabuelilocaquabuilt*, that is, tree of malignity, not Haheliloca, as De Bomare writes it; because they superstitiously believed it to be feared by evil spirits, and a powerful preservative against sorcery. The name Tecamaca is taken from the Tecomac Ihiyac of the Mexicans.

(*z*) There is in Michuacan a species of Mezquite or Acacia, without the least thorn, and with finer leaves; but in every thing else like the other.

(*a*) Garzia dell'Orto, in his history of the simples of India, maintains, from the accounts of some persons experienced in these countries, that Lac is produced by ants. This opinion has been adopted by many authors; and Bomare does him the honour to believe the fact fully demonstrated; but let us examine how far this is from truth. First, These boasted demonstrations are but equivocal proofs and fallacious conjectures, which any one will be convinced of, who reads the above authors. Second, Of all the naturalists who write of Lac, no one has ever seen it on the tree, but Hernandez; and this learned and sincere author affirms, without the smallest diffidence, that the Lac is a gum distilled from the tree



red-coloured trunk, and is very common in the provinces of the Coahuixcas and Tlahuica.

Dragon's blood runs from a large tree whose leaves are broad and angular. It grows in the mountains of Quauhchinanco, and in those of the Coahuixca's (*b*).

The *Elastic Gum*, called by the Mexicans *Olin* or *Olli*, and by the Spaniards of that kingdom, *Ule*, distils from the Olquahuatl, which is a tree of moderate size; the trunk of which is smooth and yellowish, the leaves pretty large, the flowers white, and the fruit yellow and rather round, but angular; within which there are kernels as large as filberds, and white, but covered with a yellowish pellicle. The kernel has a bitter taste, and the fruit always grows attached to the bark of the tree. When the trunk is cut, the Ule which distils from it is white, liquid, and viscous; then it becomes yellow, and lastly of a leaden colour though rather blacker, which it always retains. Those who gather it can model it to any form according to the use they put it to.

The Mexicans made their foot-balls of this gum, which, though heavy, rebound more than those filled with air. At present, besides other uses to which they apply it, they varnish their hats, their boots, cloaks, and great coats with it, in the same way as wax is used in Europe, which makes them all water proof: from Ule, when rendered liquid by fire, they extract a medicinal oil. This tree grows in hot countries such as Ihualapan and Mecatlan, and is common in the kingdom of Guatemala (*c*). The Quauhxiotl, is a

tree which the Mexicans call, Tzinacancuitle-quahuatl, and confutes the other opinion. Thirdly, The country where Lac abounds, is the fertile province of the Tlahuixcas, where all the fruits prosper surprisingly; and are thence carried in great quantities to the capital. But such a quantity of fruit could not be gathered if there were so many millions of ants in that land as would be necessary to produce such an excessive quantity of Lac, the trees being very numerous, and almost all of them full of it. Fourthly, If the Lac is the labour of ants, why do they produce it only in these trees, and not in any other species? &c. Lac was called by the Mexicans, Bat's Dung, from some analogy which they discovered between them.

(*b*) The Mexicans call dragon's blood *Expàtli*, which signifies blood-coloured medication; and the tree *Exquahuatl*, that is blood-coloured tree. There is another tree of the same name in the mountains of Quauhnahuac, which is something similar, but its leaves are round and rough, its bark thick, and its root odorous.

(*c*) In Michuacan there is a tree, called by the Tarascas *Tarantagna*, of the same species as the Olquahuatl; but its leaves are different.

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midling tree, the leaves of which are round, and the bark reddish. There are two inferior species of it, the one yields a white gum, which, when put in water, gives it a milk colour. The other drops a reddish gum; they are both very serviceable in dysenteries.

In this class of plants we ought to give a place to the fir, the *Higuera* (which resembles the fig), and the Ocote, a certain species of pine that is very aromatic, on account of the oils which they yield; and Brasil wood, logwood, indigo, and many others, on account of their juices; but several of these plants are already known in Europe, and the others we shall have occasion to treat of elsewhere.

The small part of the vegetable kingdom of Anahuac which we have here communicated, revives our regret that the accurate knowledge, which the ancient Mexicans acquired of natural history, has almost totally disappeared. We know its woods, mountains, and valleys are scattered with innumerable plants, valuable and useful, yet hardly one naturalist has ever fixed his attention on them. Who can help lamenting, that of the immense treasures which the period of two centuries and a half has discovered in its rich mines, no part should have been destined to the foundation of an academy of Naturalists, who might have pursued the steps of the celebrated Hernandez, and imparted to society the knowledge of these precious gifts which the Creator has there so liberally dispensed!

SECT. X.  
Quadrupeds  
of the king-  
dom of Ana-  
huac.

The animal kingdom of Anahuac is not better known, although it was attended to with equal diligence by Doctor Hernandez. The difficulty of distinguishing the species, and the impropriety of appellations taken from analogy, have rendered the history of animals perplexed and indistinct. The first Spaniards who gave them names, were more skilful in the art of war than in the study of nature. Instead of retaining the terms which the Mexicans used, which would have been the most proper, they denominated many animals, tygers, wolves, bears, dogs, squirrels, &c. although they were very different in kind, merely from some resemblance in the colour of their skin, or figure, or some similarity in their habits and disposition. I do not pretend to correct their errors, and still less to illustrate the natural history of that vast kingdom; but only to give my readers some slight idea of the quadrupeds, birds, reptiles, fishes, and insects, which inhabit the land and waters of Anahuac.

Of the quadrupeds some are ancient, some modern. We call those modern which were transported from the Canaries and Europe into that country in the sixteenth century. Such are horses, asses, bulls, sheep, goats, hogs, dogs, and cats, which have all successfully multiplied. In our fourth dissertation we shall evince this truth in confutation of some philosophers of the age, who have endeavoured to persuade us that all quadrupeds degenerate in the new world.

Of the ancient quadrupeds, by which we mean those that have from time immemorial been in that country, some were common to both the continents of Europe and America, some peculiar to the new world, in common however to Mexico and other countries of North or South America, others were natives only of the kingdom of Mexico.

The ancient quadrupeds common to Mexico and the old continent are, lions, tygers, wild cats, bears, wolves, foxes, the common stags, and white stags (*d*), bucks, wild goats, badgers, polecats, weazles, martens, squirrels, *Polatucas*, rabbits, hares, otters, and rats. I am well aware that Mr. Buffon will not allow a native lion, tyger, or rabbit, to America: but as in our dissertations we have combated this opinion, which rests chiefly on the slight foundation of the imagined impossibility of animals, which are peculiar to warm countries of the old world, finding a passage to the new continent; it is not necessary here to interrupt the course of our history with confuting it.

The *Mixtli* of the Mexicans, is certainly no other than the lion without hair mentioned by Pliny (*c*), and totally distinct from the African lion; and the *Ocelotl* is no way different from the African tyger, according to the testimony of Hernandez, who knew both the latter and the former. The *Tochtli* of Mexico is exactly the rabbit of the old continent, and at least as ancient as the Mexican calendar, in which the figure of the rabbit was the first symbolical cha-

(*d*) The white stag, whether it is of the same or a different species from the other stag, is unquestionably common to both continents. It was known to the Greeks and Romans. The Mexicans called it king of the Stags. Mr. Buffon is delirious of persuading us that the white colour of stags is the effect of their being in captivity; but as in the mountains of New Spain, the white stag is found, which was never made captive by man, such an idea can no longer be entertained.

(*c*) Pliny, in lib. viii. cap. 16. distinguishes the two species of lions, with and without hair, and ascertains the number of each species which Pompey presented at the Roman spectacles.

rafter



## BOOK I.

rafter of their years. The wild cats, in size much larger than the domestic cats, are fierce and dangerous. The bears are all black, and more corpulent than those which are brought from the Alps into Italy. The hares are distinguished from those of Europe by their longer ears, and the wolves by a grosser head. Both species are plentiful in that country. According to M. Buffon, we give the name *Polatuca* to the *Quimickpatlan*, or flying rat of the Mexicans. We call it rat, because it resembles it in the head, though it is much larger; and *flying*, because in its natural state the skin of its sides is loose and wrinkled, which it distends and expands together with its feet like wings when it makes any considerable leap from tree to tree. The vulgar Spaniard confounds this quadruped with the common squirrel from their likeness, but they are undoubtedly different. Mice were brought to Mexico in European ships; the rat was not so, but always known in Mexico by the name of *Quimichin*, which term they used metaphorically to their spies.

The quadrupeds which are common to Mexico and other regions of the new world, are the *Cojametl*, *Epatl*, several species of apes, comprehended by the Spaniards under the generic name of *Monos*, the *Ajotochtli*, *Aztacojotl*, *Tlacuatzin*, *Tecbichi*, *Telalmototli*, *Techallotl*, *Amiztli*, *Mapach*, and the *Danta* (*f*).

The *Cojametl*, to which, from its resemblance to the wild boar, the Spaniards gave the name of *Javali*, or wild hog, is called in other countries of America *Pecar*, *Saino*, and *Tayassu*. The gland it has in the cavity of its back from which a plentiful wheyish stinking liquid distils, led the first historians of the country, and since them many others into the mistaken belief that it produced hogs with their navels on their backs; and many still credit the absurdity, although upwards of two centuries are elapsed since anatomists have evinced the

(*f*) Many authors include the *Paco*, or Peruvian ram, the *Huanaco*, the Vicogna, taruga, and the sloth, amongst the animals of Mexico; but all these quadrupeds are peculiar to South and none of them to North America. It is true, Hernandez makes mention of the *Paco* amongst the quadrupeds of New Spain, gives a drawing of it, and makes use of the Mexican name *Pelonicheatl*; but it was on account of a few individuals which were brought there from Peru, which the Mexicans called by that name; in the same manner as he describes several animals of the Philippine Isles, not that therefore they had ever been bred in Mexico, or found in any country of North America, unless it was some individual carried there as a curiosity as they are carried into Europe.



error by dissection of the animal. Such is the difficulty of rooting out popular prejudices ! The flesh of the *Cojamatl* is agreeable to eat, provided it is quickly killed, the gland cut out, and all the stinking liquid cleaned from it; otherwise the whole meat becomes infected.

The *Epatl*, by the Spaniards called *Zorrillo*, small fox, is less known in Europe by the beauty of its skin than the intolerable stink it leaves behind when huntsmen are in close pursuit of it (*g*).

The *Tlacuatzin*, which in other countries bears the names of *Chincha*, *Sarigua*, and *Opossum*, has been described by many writers, and is much celebrated on account of the double skin to the belly in the female, which reaches from the beginning of the stomach to the orifice of the womb, covering its teats, has an opening in the middle to admit its young, where they are guarded and suckled. In creeping, or climbing over the walls of houses, it keeps the skin distended, with the entrance shut, so that its young cannot drop out; but when it wishes to send them abroad to begin to provide food for themselves, or to let them re-enter either to be suckled or secured from danger, it opens the entrance by relaxing the skin, disguising her burden while she carries them, and her delivery every time she lets them out. This curious quadruped is the destroyer of all poultry.

The *Ajotochtli*, called by the Spaniards *Armadillo*, or *Encobertado*, and by others *Tatu*, is well known to Europeans by the bony scales which cover its back, resembling the ancient armour of horses. The Mexicans gave it the name of *Ajotochtli*, from an imperfect likeness it has to the rabbit, when it puts out its head and throws it back upon its neck, while it shrinks under its scales or shell (*b*).

(*g*) Mr. Buffon enumerates four species of the *Epatl* under the generic name of *Mouffetes*. He observes afterwards, that the two first which he names *Coajó* and *Conipata*, are from North America, and the *Chincho* and *Zorrillo*, which are the two others, are from South America. We find no grounds to believe these four different species, but only four varieties of the same species. The name *Coajó*, or *Squash* taken from Dampier the navigator, who affirms the term to be common in New Spain, was never heard of in all that country. The Indians of Yucatan, where that navigator was, call that quadruped *Pai*.

(*b*) *Ajotochtli* is a word compounded of *Ajotli*, the back part of the head, and *Tochtli*, rabbit. Buffon numbers eight species of them under the name of *Tatous*, estimating their difference from the number of scales and moveable substances which cover them. I cannot exactly say how many species there may be in Mexico, having but a few individuals; as I did not think at the time of writing on this subject, I was not curious to count their scales, nor do I know of any body who ever attended to such a strange kind of distinction.

But

But it resembles no animal more than the turtle, although many parts of its form are totally dissimilar. We might give it the name of the testaceous quadruped. When this animal happens to be chased on level ground, it has no means of escaping from the hands of its pursuers; but as it chiefly inhabits the mountains, when it meets with any declivity it coils itself up in the form of a globe, and by rolling itself down the descent fools the hunter.

The *Techichi*, which had elsewhere the name of *Alco*, was a quadruped of Mexico, and other countries of America, which from its resemblance to a little dog was called by the Spaniards *Perro*, which signifies *dog*. It was of a melancholy aspect and perfectly dumb, from whence the fabulous account propagated by many authors still living arose, of dogs becoming mute when transported from the old to the new world. The flesh of the *Techichi* was eat by the Mexicans, and if we may credit the Spaniards who eat it, was agreeable and nourishing food. After the conquest of Mexico, the Spaniards having neither large cattle, nor sheep, provided their markets with this quadruped; by which means the species was soon extinct, although it had been very numerous.

The *Tlalmototli*, or land-squirrel, called by Buffon *Sviszero*, is like the real squirrel in the eyes, in the tail, in swiftness, and in all its movements; but very different in colour, in size, in its habitation, and some of its qualities. The hair of its belly is quite white, and the rest of it is white mixed with grey. Its size is double that of the squirrel, and it does not dwell in trees, but in small holes which it digs in the earth, or amongst the stones of ramparts which enclose fields, where it does considerable damage by the grain which it carries off. It bites most furiously any one who approaches it, and cannot be tamed, but has great elegance of form, and is graceful in its movement. This species is a very numerous one, particularly in the kingdom of Michuacan. The *Techallotl* is no way different from the preceding animal, except in having a smaller and less hairy tail.

The *Amyxtli*, or sea-lion, is an amphibious quadruped which inhabits the shores of the Pacific Ocean, and some rivers of that kingdom. Its body is three feet in length, its tail two. Its snout is  
long

long, its legs short, the nails crooked. Its skin is valuable on account of the length and softness of its hair (*i*).

The Mapach of the Mexicans is, agreeable to the opinion of Buffon, the same quadruped which is known in Jamaica by the name of *Ratton*, rattoon, or West-Indian fox. The Mexican one is of the size of a badger, with a black head, a long sharp snout like a greyhound, small ears, round body, hair mixed with black and white, a long and hairy tail, and five toes to every foot. It has a white streak over each eye, and like the squirrel makes use of its paws to convey any thing to its mouth which it is going to eat. It feeds indifferently on grain, fruits, insects, lizards, and pullet's blood. It is easily tamed, and entertaining with its play, but perfidious like the squirrel, and apt to bite its master.

The *Danta*, or *Anta*, or *Beori*, or *Tapir*, as it is differently named in different countries, is the largest quadruped of the kingdom of Mexico (*k*), and approaches most to the sea-horse, not however in size, but in some of its shapes and qualities. The danta is about the size of a middling mule. Its body is a little arched like that of a hog, its head gross and long with an appendage to the skin of the upper lip, which it extends or contracts at pleasure; its eyes are small, its ears little and round, its legs short, its fore feet have four nails, the hind feet three, its tail short and pyramidical, its skin pretty thick and covered with thick hair, which at an advanced age is brown; its set of teeth, which are composed of twenty maxillary, and as many incisors, is so strong and sharp, and it makes such terrible bites with them that it has been seen, according to the testimony of Oviedo the historian, and an eye-witness, to tear off at one bite two or three handbreadths of skin from a hound, and at another a whole leg and thigh. Its flesh is eatable (*l*), and its skin valuable, from its being so stout as to resist not only arrows, but even musket-balls.

(i) We reckon the *Aniztli* among the quadrupeds which are common to other countries of America, as it appears to be the same animal which Buffon describes under the name of *Sarcovienne*.

(k) The *Danta* is much less than the *Tlacavotl* described by Hernandez; but we do not know of this great quadruped ever having been in the kingdom of Mexico. The same may be said of the flags of New Mexico, and of the *Cibolle*, or *Bifonte*, which are also larger than the *Danta*. See our IVth Dissertation.

(l) Oviedo says, that the legs of the *Danta* are pretty good and relishing food, provided they remain twenty-four hours continually at the fire.



BOOK I. This quadruped inhabits the solitary woods of warm countries near to some river or lake, as it lives not less in the water than on the land.

All the species of monkies in that kingdom, are known by the Mexicans under the general name of *Ozomatli*, and by the Spaniards under that of *Monos*. They are of different sizes and figure, some small and uncommonly diverting; some middling, of the size of a badger; and others large, stout, fierce, and bearded, which are called by some *Zambos*. These when they stand upright, which they do upon two legs, often equal the stature of a man. Amongst the middling kind there are those which from having a dogs-head, belong to the class of the cynocephali, although they are all furnished with a tail (*m*).

With respect to the ant-killers, that is, those quadrupeds which are so singular for the enormous length of their snout, the narrowness of their throat, and immoderate tongue, with which they draw the ants out of their ant-hills, and from whence they have got their name; I have never seen any in that kingdom, nor do I know that there are any there; but I believe it is no other than the *aztacojotl*, that is, *cojote*, ant-killer, mentioned, but not described by Hernandez (*n*).

The quadrupeds which peculiarly belong to the land of Anahuac, whose species I do not know to have been found in South America, or in other countries of North America, exempt from the dominion of Spain, are the *Cojotl*, the *Tlalcojotl*, *Xoloitzcuintli*, *Tepeitzcuintli*, *Itzcuintepotzotli*, *Ocotochtli*, *Cojopollin*, *Tuxa*, *Abuitzotl*, *Huitztlacuatzin*, and perhaps others which we have not known.

The *Cojotl*, or Coyoto, as the Spaniards call it, is a wild beast voracious like the wolf, cunning like the fox, in form like a dog, and in some qualities like the *Adive* and the *Chacal*: from whence several

(*m*) The Cynocephalos of the ancient continent has no tail as every one knows. Their having been monkies found in the New World, which have the head of a dog, and are furnished with tails, Brisson, in his class of apes, justly applies to them of this class the name of Cinocephali Cercopitechi, and divides them into two species. Buffon, amongst the many species of monkies which he describes, omits this one.

(*n*) We call those quadrupeds, ant-killers, which the Spaniards term *Hormigueros*, and the French *Fourmillier*; but the bear, ant-killers, described by Oviedo, are certainly different from the Fourmilliers of Buffon; for although they agree in the eating of ants, and in their enormous tongue and snout, they are nevertheless remarkably distinguished from each other as to tail, for those of Buffon have an immense tail, but Oviedo's none at all. The description which Oviedo gives of their way of hunting the ants is most singular and curious.



historians have at one time judged it of one species, at another time of another species; but it is unquestionably different from all those, as we shall demonstrate in our Dissertations. It is less than the wolf, and about the size of a mastiff, but slenderer. It has yellow sparkling eyes, small ears pointed and erect, a blackish snout, strong limbs, and its feet armed with large crooked nails. Its tail thick and hairy, and its skin a mixture of black, brown, and white. Its voice hath both the howl of the wolf and the bark of the dog. The Coyoto is one of the most common quadrupeds of Mexico (*o*), and the most destructive to the flocks. It invades a sheepfold, and when it cannot find a lamb to carry off, it seizes a sheep by the neck with its teeth, and coupling with it, and beating it on the rump with its tail, conducts it where it pleases. It pursues the deer, and sometimes attacks even men. In flight it does nothing in general but trot; but its trot is so lively and swift, that a horse at the gallop can hardly overtake it. The *Cuetlachcojotl* appears to us to be a quadruped of the same species with the Coyoto, as it differs in nothing from it but being thicker in the neck, and having hair like the wolf.

The *Tlalcojotl*, or *Tlalcoyoto*, is of the size of a middling dog, but grosser in make, and, in our opinion, the largest quadruped of those which live under the earth. In the head it is something like the cat, and in colour and length of hair like the lion. It has a long thick tail, and feeds on poultry, and other little animals, which it hunts after in the obscurity of the night.

The *Itzcuintepotzotli*, and *Tepuitzcuintli*, and *Xolbitzcuintli*, are three species of quadrupeds similar to dogs. The *Itzcuintapolzotli*, or hunch-backed dog, is as large as a Maltesan dog, the skin of which is varied with white, tawny, and black. Its head is small in proportion to its body, and appears to be joined directly to it on account of the shortness and greatness of its neck; its eyes are pleasing, its ears loose, its nose has a considerable prominence in the middle, and its tail so small, that it hardly reaches half way down its leg; but the characteristic of it is a great hunch which it bears from its neck to its

(*o*) Neither Buffon nor Bomare make mention of the Coyoto, although the species is one of the most common and most numerous of Mexico, and amply described by Hernandez, whose Natural History they frequently quote.

rump. The place where this quadruped most abounds is the kingdom of Michuacan, where it is called *Abora*. The *Tepeitzcuintli*, that is, the mountain-dog, is a wild beast so small, that it appears a little dog, but it is so daring that it attacks deer, and sometimes kills them. Its hair and tail are long, its body black, but its head, neck, and breast are white (*p*). The *Xoloitzcuintli* is larger than the two preceding; there being some of them, whose bodies are even four feet long. Its face is like a dog, but its tusks like the wolf, its ears erect, its neck gross, and tail long. The greatest singularity about this animal is its being totally destitute of hair, except upon its snout, where it has some thick crooked bristles. Its whole body is covered with a smooth, soft, ash-coloured skin, but spotted in part with black and tawny. These three species are almost totally extinct, or at least very few of them remain (*q*).

The *Ocotochtli* appears agreeable to the description given of it by Hernandez, to belong to the class of wild cats; but the author adds some circumstances to it which have much the air of a fable; not that he has been desirous of deceiving, but that he has trusted too much to the informations of others (*r*).

The Cojopollin is a quadruped of the size of a common mouse; but the tail is grosser which it uses as a hand. Its snout and ears are similar to those of a pig: its ears are transparent, its legs and feet are white, and its belly is of a whitish yellow. It lives and brings up its young in trees. When its young fear any thing, they cling closely to their mother.

(*p*) Buffon believes the *Tepeitzcuintli* to be the glutton; but we contradict this opinion in our Dissertations.

(*q*) Giovanni Fabri, a Lincean academieian, published at Rome a long and learned dissertation, in which he endeavoured to prove, that the *xoloitzcuintli* is the same with the wolf of Mexico; having without doubt been deceived by the original drawing of the *xoloitzcuintli* which was sent to Rome with other pictures of Hernandez; but if he had read the description which this eminent naturalist gives of that animal in the book of the Quadrupeds of New Spain, he would have spared himself the labour of writing that Dissertation and the expences of publishing it.

(*r*) Dr. Hernandez says, that when the *Ocotochtli* makes any prey it covers it with leaves, and mounting after on some neighbouring tree, it begins howling to invite other animals to eat its prey; and itself is always the last to eat; because the poison of its tongue is so strong, that if it eat first the prey would be infected, and other animals who eat of it would die. This fable is still in the mouths of the vulgar.

The *Tozan*, or Tuza, is a quadruped of the bigness of an European mole, but very different otherwise. Its body which is well made is seven or eight inches long. Its snout is like that of a mouse, its ears small and round, and tail short. Its mouth is armed with very strong teeth, and its paws are furnished with strong crooked nails, with which it digs into the earth and makes little holes, where it inhabits. The Tuza is most destructive to the fields by stealing the corn, and to the highways by the number of holes and hollows which it makes in them; for when it cannot, on account of its little sight, find its first hole, it makes another, multiplying by such means the inconveniences and dangers to those who travel on horseback. It digs the earth with its claws, and with two dogs-teeth which it has in the upper jaw, larger than its others; in digging it puts the earth into two membranes like purses which are under its ear, which are furnished with muscles necessary for contraction or distension. When the membranes are full, it empties them by striking the bottom of the membranes with its paws, and then goes on to dig again in the same manner, using its dogs-teeth and claws as a mattock, and its two membranes as a little sack or basket. The species of the Tuza is very numerous; but we do not recollect to have ever seen them in the places where the land-squirrels inhabit.

The *Abuitzotl* is an amphibious quadruped, which for the most part dwells in the rivers of warm countries. Its body is a foot long, its snout long and sharp, and its tail large. Its skin is of a mixed black and brown colour.

The *Huitztlacuatzin* is the hedge-hog or porcupine of Mexico. It is as large as a midling dog, which it resembles in the face, although its muzzle is flat; its feet and legs are rather gross, and its tail in proportion with its body. The whole of its body, except the belly, the hinder part of the tail, and inside of the legs, is armed with quills or spines, which are empty, sharp, and a span long. On its snout and forehead it has long strait bristles, which rise upon its head like a plume. All its skin, even between the spines is covered with a soft black hair. It feeds only on the fruits of the earth (s).

(s) Buffon would make the *Huitztlacuatzin* the *Coendù* of Guiana, but the *Coendù* is carnivorous, whereas the *Huitztlacuatzin* feeds on fruits.



## BOOK I.

The *Cacomiztle* is a quadruped, exceedingly like the martin in its way of life. It is of the size and form of a common cat; but its body is larger, its hair longer, its legs shorter, and its aspect more wild and fierce. Its voice is a sharp cry, and its food is poultry and other little animals. It inhabits, and brings up its young in places less frequented than houses. By day it sees little, and does not come out of its hiding-place but at night, to search for food. The *Tlacuatzin*, as well as the *Cacomiztle*, are to be seen in some of the houses of the capital (*t*).

Besides these quadrupeds, there were others in the Mexican empire, which I know not whether to consider as peculiar to that country, or as common to other parts of America; such as the *Itzcuintcuarl* or dog-eater; the *Tlalocelotl* or little lion; and the *Tlalmiztli* or little tiger. Of those, which although not belonging to the kingdom of Mexico are to be found in other parts of North America subject to the Spaniards, we shall take notice in our Dissertations.

SECT. XI.  
Birds of  
Mexico.

We should find the birds a more difficult task than the quadrupeds, if we should attempt to give an enumeration of their different species, with a description of their forms and manners. Their prodigious numbers, their variety, and many valuable qualities, have occasioned some authors to observe that, as Africa is the country of beasts, so Mexico is the country of birds. Hernandez, in his Natural History, describes above two hundred species peculiar to that kingdom, and yet passes over many that deserve notice, such as the *Quitlacochi*, the *Zacua*, and the *Madrugador*. We shall content ourselves with running over some classes of them, and point out any peculiarities, here and there, as they occur. Among the birds of prey there are kestrels, goshawks, and several species of eagles, falcons, and sparrow-hawks. The naturalist already mentioned, allows the birds of this class a superiority over those of Europe; and the excellence of the Mexican falcons was so remarkable, that

(*t*) I do not know the true Mexican name of the *Cacomiztle*, and have therefore used the name which the Spaniards in that kingdom, gave it. Hernandez does not mention this quadruped. It is true he describes one, under the name of *Cacamiztli*, but this is evidently an error of the press.



by the desire of Philip the Second, a hundred were every year sent to Spain. The largest, the most beautiful, and the most valuable among the eagles is that named by the Mexicans, *Itzquaubtli*, which not only pursues the larger birds and hares, but will even attack men and beasts. There are two kinds of kestrel; the one called *Cenotzqui* is particularly beautiful.

The Ravens of Mexico, called by the Mexicans *Cacalotl*, do not, as in other countries, clear the fields of carrion, but are only employed in stealing the ears of corn. The business of clearing the fields there, is reserved principally for the *Zopilots*, known in South America by the name of *Gallinazzi*; in other places, by that of *Aure*; and in some places, though very improperly, by that of ravens (*u*). There are two very different species of these birds; the one, the *Zopilote* properly so called, the other called the *Coscaquaubtli*: they are both bigger than the raven. These two species resemble each other in their hooked bill and crooked claws, and by having upon their head instead of feathers, a wrinkled membrane with some curling hairs. They fly so high, that although they are pretty large, they are lost to the sight; and especially before a hail storm they will be seen wheeling, in vast numbers, under the loftiest clouds, till they entirely disappear. They feed upon carrion, which they discover by the acuteness of their sight and smell, from the greatest height, and descend upon it with a majestic flight, in a great spiral course. They are both almost mute. The two species are distinguishable, however, by their size, their colour, their numbers, and some other peculiarities. The *Zopilots*, properly so called, have black feathers, with a brown head, bill, and feet; they go often in flocks, and roost together upon trees (*x*). This species is very numerous, and is to be found in all the different climates; while on

(*u*) Hernandez has, without any hesitation, made the *Zopilote* a species of raven; but they are, certainly, very different birds, not only in their size, but in the shape of the head; in their flight, and in their voice. Bomare says, that the *Aura* is the *Cesquanth* of New Spain, and the *Tropilot* of the Indians; so that the *Coscaquaubtli*, as well as the *Tzopilotl*, are Mexican names used by the Indians, to denote not one bird only, but two different kinds. Some give the one species the name of *Aura*, and the other that of *Zopilote*, or *Gallinazzo*.

(*x*) The *Zopilots* contradict the general rule, laid down by Pliny, lib. ix. cap. 19. *Uncos unguis habentia omnino non congregantur, & sibi quæque prædantur*. The rule can only apply strictly to real birds of prey, such as eagles, vultures, falcons, sparrow-hawks, &c.

the

BOOK I. the contrary, the *Cozcaquauhtli* is far from numerous, and is peculiar to the warmer climates alone. The latter bird is larger than the *Zopilot*, has a red head and feet with a beak of a deep red colour, except towards its extremity which is white. Its feathers are brown except upon the neck and parts about the breast, which are of a reddish black. The wings are of an ash colour upon the inside, and upon the outside are variegated with black and tawny.

The *Cozcaquauhtli* is called by the Mexicans, *king of the Zopilots* (*y*); and they say, that when these two species happen to meet together about the same carrion, the *Zopilot* never begins to eat till the *Cozcaquauhtli* has tasted it. The *Zopilot* is a most useful bird to that country, for they not only clear the fields, but attend the crocodiles and destroy the eggs which the females of those dreadful amphibious animals leave in the sand to be hatched by the heat of the sun. The destruction of such a bird ought to be prohibited under severe penalties.

Among the night birds, are several kinds of owls, to which we may add the bats, although they do not properly belong to the class of birds. There are great numbers of bats in the warm and woody countries; some of them will draw blood, with dreadful bites, from horses and other animals. In some of the very hot countries bats are found of a prodigious size, but not so large as those of the Philippine Isles, and other parts of the East.

Under the title of aquatic birds I shall comprehend, not only the *Palmipedes* which swim and live generally in the water, but the *Himantopodes* also; with other fishing birds which live chiefly upon the sea shore, upon the sides of lakes and rivers, and seek their food

(*y*) The bird which now goes by the name of *King of the Zopilots*, in New Spain, seems different from the one we are now describing. This modern king of the *Zopilots* is a strong bird, of the size of a common eagle; with a stately air; strong claws; fine, piercing eyes; and a beautiful black, white, and tawny plumage. It is remarkable, particularly, for a certain scarlet coloured, fleshy substance, which surrounds its neck like a collar, and comes over its head in the form of a little crown. I have had this description of it from a person of knowledge and veracity, who assures me that he has seen three different individuals of this species, and particularly that one which was sent from Mexico, in 1750, to the catholic king, Ferdinand VI. He farther informs me, that there was a genuine drawing of this bird, published in a work called, the *American Gazetteer*. The Mexican name *Cozcaquauhtli*, which means Ring Eagle, is certainly more applicable to this bird than to the other. The figure exhibited in our plate, is copied from that of the *American Gazetteer*.

in the water. Of birds of this kind there is a prodigious number of geese, at least twenty species of ducks, several kinds of herons and egrets, with vast numbers of swans, gulls, water-rails, divers, king's fishers, pelicans, and others. The multitude of ducks is sometimes so great as quite to cover the fields, and to appear, at a distance, like flocks of sheep. Among the herons and egrets, some are ash-coloured, some perfectly white; and others of which the plumage of the body is white, while the neck, with the tips and upper part of the wings, and a part of the tail, are enlivened with a bright scarlet, or a beautiful blue. The Pelican, or Onocrontalus, known to the Spaniards of Mexico by the name of *Alcatraz*, is sufficiently known by that great pouch or *venter*, as Pliny calls it, which is under its bill. There are two species of this bird in Mexico; the one having a smooth bill, the other a notched one. Although the Europeans are acquainted with this bird, I do not know whether they are equally well acquainted with the singular circumstance of its assisting the sick or hurt of its own species; a circumstance which the Americans sometimes take advantage of, to procure fish without trouble. They take a live pelican, break its wing, and after tying it to a tree, conceal themselves in the neighbourhood; there they watch the coming of the other pelicans with their provisions, and as soon as they see these throw up the fish from their pouch, run in, and after leaving a little for the captive bird, they carry off the rest.

But if the Pelican is admirable for its attention to the others of its species, the *Yoaquachilli*, is no less wonderful on account of the arms with which the Creator has provided it for its defence. This is a small aquatic bird; with a long, narrow neck, a small head; a long, yellow bill, long legs, feet, and claws, and a short tail. The legs and feet are ash-coloured; the body is black, with some yellow feathers about the belly. Upon its head is a little circle or coronet, of a horny substance, which is divided into three very sharp points; and it has two others upon the forepart of the wings (z).

In the other classes of birds some are valuable upon account of their flesh, some for their plumage, and some for their song;

(z) In Brasil, also, there is an aquatic bird with weapons of this kind; but which, in other respects, is a very different bird.



BOOK I. while others engage our attention by their extraordinary instinct, or some other remarkable quality.

Of the birds which afford a wholesome and agreeable food, I have counted more than seventy species. Besides the common fowls, which were brought from the Canary Isles to the Antilles, and from these to Mexico, there were, and still are fowls peculiar to that country; which as they partly resemble the common fowl, and partly the peacock, were called *Gallipavos*\* by the Spaniards, and *Huexolotl* and *Totolin* by the Mexicans. These birds being carried to Europe in return for the common fowls, have multiplied very fast; and especially in Italy, where, on account of their manners and their size, they gave them the name of *Gallinacci* (a); but the European fowl has increased greatly more in Mexico. There are likewise wild fowls in great plenty, exactly like the tame, but larger, and in many places of a much sweeter flesh. There are partridges, quails, pheasants, cranes, turtle-doves, pigeons, and a great variety of others, that are esteemed in Europe. The reader will form some idea of the immense number of quails when we shall come to speak of the ancient sacrifices. The pheasants are different from the pheasants of Europe, and are of three kinds (b). The *Coxolitli* and *Tepetototl*, which are both the size of a goose, with a crest upon their heads, which they can raise and depress at pleasure, are distinguishable by their colour, and some particular qualities. The *Coxolitli*, called by the Spaniards, Royal Pheasant, has a tawney-coloured plumage; and its flesh is more delicate than that of the other. The *Tepetototl* will sometimes be so tame as to pick from its master's hand; to run to meet him, with signs of joy, when he comes home; to learn to shut the door with its bill; and in every thing show greater docility than could be expected in a bird which is properly an inhabitant of the woods. I have seen one of these pheasants which, after being some time in a poultry yard, had learnt to fight in the manner of cocks, and would fight with them, erecting

(a) In Bologna, they are called *Tocchi* and *Tocchini*, and in other places, *Galli d'India*. The French call them *Dindes*, *Dindons*, and *Cogs d'Inde*.

(b) Bômare reckons the *Huatzin* among the pheasants; but for what reason, I do not know, as the *Huatzin* belongs with crows, zopilots and others, to the second class; the birds of prey.

\* In English, the Turkey.



the feathers of his crest, as the cocks do those of the neck. Its feathers are of a shining black, and its legs and feet ash-coloured. The pheasants of the third species, called by the Spaniards, *Gritones*, that is, screamers, are smaller than the other two; with a brown body, and a black tail and wings. The *Chachalaca*, the flesh of which is very good eating, is about the size of the common fowl. The upper part of the body is of a brown colour, the under part whitish, and the bill and feet blueish. It is inconceivable what a noise these birds make in the woods, with their cries; which, although they somewhat resemble the cackling of fowls, are much louder, more constant, and more disagreeable. There are several species of turtle-doves, and pigeons, some common to Europe, others peculiar to those countries.

The birds valuable for their plumage are so many and so beautiful, that we should afford a greater pleasure to our readers, if we could bring them before their eyes, with all the colours which adorn them. I have reckoned five and thirty species of Mexican birds, that are superlatively beautiful; of some of which I must take particular notice.

The *Huitzitzilin* is that wonderful little bird so often celebrated by the historians of America, for its smallness, its activity, the singular beauty of its plumage, the thinness of its food, and the length of its sleep in the winter. That sleep, or rather state of immobility, occasioned by the numbness or torpor of its limbs, has been often required to be proved in legal form, in order to convince some incredulous Europeans; an incredulity arising from ignorance alone, as the same kind of torpor takes place in many parts of Europe, in dormice, hedge-hogs, swallows, bats, and other animals whose blood is of the same temperature; although perhaps it does not continue so long in any of them as in the *Huitzitzilin*, which in some countries remains without motion from October to April. There are nine species of *Huitzitzilin*, differing in size and colour (c).

The

(c) The Spaniards of Mexico call this bird *Chupamirto*, because it sucks chiefly the flowers of a plant known there, though very improperly, by the name of a Myrtle. In other

## BOOK I.

The *Tlaubquechol* is an aquatic bird of some size, with feathers of a beautiful scarlet colour, or a reddish-white, except those of the neck, which are black. It lives upon the sea-shores, and by the sides of rivers; and lives only upon live fish, never touching any thing that is dead.

The *Nepapantotl*, is a wild duck which frequents the lake of Mexico, and seems to have all the colours together assembled in its plumage.

The *Tlacuiloltotl*, or painted bird, justly deserves its name; for its beautiful feathers are variegated with red, blue, purple, green, and black. Its eyes are black, with a yellow iris; and the feet ash-coloured.

The *Txinizcan* is of the size of a pigeon, with a small, crooked, yellow bill. The head and neck are like those of a pigeon, but adorned with shining green feathers; the breast and belly are white except near the tail, which is variegated with white and blue; the tail is green upon the upper side, and black underneath; the wings are partly black, and partly white; and the eyes are black, with reddish yellow irides. This bird lives upon the sea-coasts.

The *Mexcanaubtli*, is a wild duck, about as large as a domestic fowl, but of singular beauty. Its bill is pretty long and broad, azure above, and black upon the under-side; the feathers of the body are white, and marked with numerous black spots. The wings are white and brown on the under-side, and upon the upper-side variegated with black, white, blue, green, and tawny-colour. Its feet are of a yellowish red; its head brown, and tawny-coloured, and partly purple, with a beautiful white spot betwixt the eyes and bill: the eyes are black; and the tail is blue above, brown below, and white at its extremity.

The *Tlaubtotl* is extremely like the *Tlacuiloltotl* in its colours, but is smaller. The Huacamaye and the Cardinals, so much prized by the Europeans, upon account of their fine colours, are very common in this country.

All these beautiful birds and others peculiar to Mexico, besides some which have been brought thither from the countries adjacent,

other parts of America, it is called *Chupastor*, *Picastor*, *Tominejo*, *Colibre*, &c. Among the numerous authors who describe this precious little bird, no one gives a better idea of the beauty of its plumage than Acofta.

are

are of great value to the Mexicans, in their singular works of Mosaic, which we shall mention in another place. Peacocks have been carried there from the old continent, but they have not been attended to; and have, therefore, propagated very slowly.

Many authors, who allow to the birds of Mexico a superiority in the beauty of their plumage, have denied them that of song: but we can with perfect confidence affirm, that that opinion has not been formed upon real observation, but has proceeded from ignorance, as it is more difficult for Europeans to hear the Mexican birds than to see them.

There are in Mexico, as well as in Europe, gold-finches and nightingales, and at least two-and-twenty species besides, of singing birds, which are little or nothing inferior to these; but all that we are acquainted with are surpassed by the very famous *Centzontli*, so named by the Mexicans to express the wonderful variety of its notes (*d*). It is impossible to give any idea of the sweetness and mellowness of its song, of the harmony and variety of its tones, or of the facility with which it learns to imitate whatever it hears. It counterfeits naturally, not only the notes of other birds, but even the different noises of quadrupeds. It is of the size of a common thrush. Its body is white upon the under-side, and grey above; with some white feathers, especially about the head and tail. It eats any thing, but delights chiefly in flies, which it will pick from one's finger with signs of pleasure. The *Centzontli* is to be found every where in great numbers; yet they are so much esteemed, that I have seen five-and-twenty crowns paid for one. Attempts have often been made to bring it to Europe, but I do not know if they ever succeeded: and I am persuaded that, although it could be brought to Europe alive, yet it could not be, without injuring its voice and other qualifications, by a change of climate and the hardships of a voyage.

(*d*) *Centzontlatotli*, (for that is the real name, and *Centzontli* is but an abbreviation) means the many-voiced. The Mexicans use the word *Centzontli* (four hundred) as the Latins did *mille & sexcenti*, to express an indefinite and innumerable multitude. The Greek name of *Polyglotta*, which some modern Ornithologists apply to it, corresponds to the Mexican name. See further what we say of *Centzontli*, in our dissertations.



## BOOK I.

The birds called Cardinals, are not less delightful to the ear, from the sweetness of their song, than to the sight, by the beauty of their scarlet plumage, and crest. The Mexican Calandra sings very sweetly also, and its song resembles that of the nightingale. Its feathers are varied with white, yellow, and grey. It weaves its nest in a wonderful manner, with hairs pasted together with some kind of viscid substance, and suspending like a little bag, from the bough of a tree. The *Tigrillo*, or little Tiger, which is likewise of some value upon account of its music, is so named from its feathers being spotted like the skin of a tiger. The *Quitlaccochi* resembles the Centzontli, in the excellence of its song, as well as in size and colour, as the *Coxtototl* exactly does the Canary bird, brought thither from the Canaries. The Mexican Sparrows, called *Gorriones* by the Spaniards, are nothing like the real sparrows, except in their size, their manner of hopping, and in making their nests in the holes of walls. Their body is white upon the under-side, and grey upon the upper; but at a certain age, the heads of some become red, and others yellow (e). Their flight is laborious, from the smallness of their wings, or the weakness of their feathers. Their song is most delightful and various. There are great numbers of these singing birds in the capital, and the other cities and villages of Mexico.

The talking birds too, or those which imitate the human voice, are to be found in equal abundance, in the country of Anahuac. Even among the singing birds there are some which learn a few words; such as the celebrated Centzontli, and the *Acolchichi*, or bird with the red back, which from that mark the Spaniards have called the *Commendador*. The *Cebuan*, which is bigger than a common thrush, counterfeits the human voice, but in a tone that appears burlesqued; and will follow travellers a great way. The *Tzanabuei* resembles the magpie in size, but is of a different colour. It learns to speak, steals cunningly whatever it can get, and in every respect shows a kind of instinct superior to what we generally observe in other birds. But of all the speaking birds, the parrots hold the first place; of which they reckon, in Mexico, four principal

(e) I have heard it said, that the *Gorriones* with red heads are the males; and those with yellow heads, the females.



species, namely, the *Huacamaya*, the *Toznenetl*, the *Cochotl*, and the *Quiltototl* (f).

The *Huacamaya*, the largest of all the parrots, is more valuable for its beautiful feathers than for its speaking. It articulates words indistinctly, and its voice is harsh and disagreeable. The *Toznenetl*, which is the best of them all, is about the size of a pigeon; its feathers are of a green colour, except upon the head, and fore-part of the wings, which in some of them are red, and in others yellow. It learns any words or tune, and imitates them faithfully. It naturally imitates the laugh of a man, or other ridiculous sound, the cries of children, and the various noises of different animals. There are three species of the *Cochotl* differing from each other in size and plumage, which in them all is beautiful; and the prevailing colour is green. The largest of the *Cochotls* is nearly as large as the *Toznenetl*: the two other species, called by the Spaniards, *Catherine*, are smaller. They all learn to talk, though not so perfectly as the *Toznenetl*. The *Quiltototl*, is the smallest kind of parrot, and the least valuable for speaking. These small parrots whose plumage is of the most beautiful green, fly always in large flocks, sometimes making a great noise in the air; and at other times committing havoc among the grain. When perched upon the trees they can hardly be distinguished, by their colour from the leaves. All the other parrots go generally in pairs, a male and female.

The *Madrugadores* (g), which we shall call the *Awakeners*, or *Twilight* birds, and which are called by the Mexicans *Tzacua*, although they are not so remarkable for beauty or song, deserve particular notice for some other qualities. These birds are the last among the day birds to go to roost at night, and the first to leave it in the morning, and to announce the return of the sun. They never cease to sing and frolic, till an hour after sun-set; begin again long before the dawn, and never seem so happy as during the morning

(f) The *Toznenetl* and *Cochotl*, are called by the Mexican Spaniards, *Pericos* and *Loros*. The word *Huacamaya* is from the Haitinian language which was spoken in Hispaniola. *Loro*, is from the Quichuan or Incan, and *Toznenetl*, *Cochotl*, and *Quiltototl* from the Mexican.

(g) *Madrugador*, in Spanish means *early riser*; but as there is no word in Italian that answers to it; the Author has employed that of *Delettore* or *Awakener*. He seems to think, however, that the name of *Uccello crepuscolare* or *Twilight* bird, would be more applicable.

BOOK I. and evening twilight. About an hour before the break of day, one of them begins from the bough of a tree where he has passed the night along with many others of his species, to call them, with a shrill, clear note, which he continually repeats with a tone of gladness, till some of his companions hear and answer him. When they are all awake, they make a very chearful noise, which may be heard at a great distance. In the journies I have made through the kingdom of Michuacan, where they abound, they were of some use to me, as they always roused me in time, to allow me to set out by the break of day. These birds are about as large as sparrows.

The Tzacua, a bird which resembles the above mentioned Calandra in size, in colour, and in the form of its nest is still more surprising. These birds live in society; and every tree is to them a village, composed of a great number of nests, all hanging from the boughs. One of them which does the office of the head or the guard of the village, resides in the middle of the tree; from which it flies about from one nest to another, visiting them all, and after singing a little while, returns to its place; while the rest remain perfectly silent. If any bird of a different species approaches the tree, he flies to it, and endeavours, with his bill and wings, to drive it off; but if a man, or any other large animal comes near, he flies screaming to another tree, and if at that time any *Tzacuas* belonging to the same village happen to be returning from the fields, he meets them, and changing his note, obliges them to retire again: as soon as he perceives the danger over, he returns happy to his wonted round of visiting the nests. These observations upon the Tzacua, made by a man of penetration, learning, and veracity (*b*), should make us expect to find some things still more extraordinary in these birds, if the observations were repeated; but we must now leave these pleasant objects, and turn our eyes upon some that are of the most disagreeable kind.

SECT. XII.  
Reptiles of  
Mexico.

The reptiles of Mexico may be reduced to two orders or classes; namely, the four-footed, and the *apodes* or those without feet (*i*). In

(*b*) The Abbé D. Giuseppe Rafaele Campoi.

(*i*) I am perfectly aware of the variety of opinions entertained by different authors, with respect to the animals which ought to be classed among the reptiles: but as I do not undertake to give an exact arrangement, but merely to present them in some order to the reader, I take the term of *Reptile*, in the same sense in which it was commonly understood of old.

the

the first class are crocodiles, lizards, frogs and toads: in the second all kinds of serpents.

The Mexican crocodiles resemble the African in size, form, voracity, way of living, and in all the other peculiarities of their character. They abound in many of the lakes and rivers in the hot countries, and destroy men and other animals. It would be altogether superfluous to give any description of these terrible animals, when so much has been written about them in other books.

Among the greater lizards we reckon the *Acaltetepan*, and the *Iguana*. The *Acaltetepan*, known to the Spaniards by the very improper name of *Scorpions*, are two lizards which resemble each other in colour and in form, but very different in their size and tails. The smallest is about fifteen inches, with a long tail, short legs, a red, broad, cloven tongue, a grey rough skin covered with white warts like pearls, a sluggish pace, and a fierce aspect. From the muscles of the hind-legs to the extremity of the tail, its skin is crossed with yellow lines in the form of rings. The bite of this animal is painful, but not mortal as some have imagined. It is peculiar to the warmer climates. The other lizard is an inhabitant of the same climate, but twice as large, being, according to the report of some who have seen it, about two feet and a half long, and more than a foot thick round the back and belly. It has a short tail, with a thick head and legs. This lizard is the scourge of rabbits.

The Iguana is a harmless lizard, sufficiently known in Europe from the accounts of American historians. They abound in the warm countries, and are of two kinds, the one a land animal, and the other amphibious. Some of them have been found as long as three feet. They run with great speed, and are very nimble in climbing trees. Their eggs and flesh are eatable, and praised by some authors, but their flesh is hurtful to those labouring under the French disease.

Of the smaller lizards there are a great many species, differing in size, colour, and other circumstances; of which some are poisonous, and others harmless. Among the latter the first place is due to the cameleon, called by the Mexicans *Quatapalcatl*. This resembles the common cameleon almost in every respect, but differs in having no crest, and in having large, round, open ears. Among the other lizards



BOOK I. of the harmless kind, there is none worth notice but the *Tapayaxin* (*k*), which is remarkable for its shape and some other peculiarities. It is perfectly round, cartilaginous, and feels very cold to the touch: the diameter of its body is six inches. Its head is very hard, and spotted with various colours. It is so lazy and sluggish, that it does not move even although it is shaken. When its head is struck, or its eyes pressed, it darts out from them, to about two or three paces distance, a few drops of blood; but is in every thing else an inoffensive animal, and seems to take pleasure in being handled. It would seem as if, being of so cold a constitution, it received some comfort from the heat of the hand.

Among the poisonous lizards, the worst seems to be that one which, from its being uncommon, got the name of *Tetzaubqui* with the Mexicans. It is very small, of a grey colour, which is of a yellowish hue upon the body, and blueish upon the tail. There are some others reckoned venomous, and known by the Spaniards by the name of *Salamanquesas*, or that of *Scorpions* (for this name is applied to many reptiles by the vulgar): but I am certain, from many observations, that those lizards are either entirely void of poison, or at least, if they have any, it is not so active as is generally imagined. We may make the same remark with respect to toads, as we have never seen or heard of any bad effects occasioned by their venom, although in many warm and humid places the earth is entirely covered with them. In those places there are some toads of eight inches diameter.

In the lake of Chalco there are three very numerous species of frogs, of three very different sizes and colours, and very common at the tables in the capital. Those of Huasteca are excellent, and will sometimes weigh a Spanish pound: but I never saw or heard in that country the tree frogs, which are so common in Italy and other parts of Europe.

The serpents are of much greater variety than the reptiles already mentioned, there being many of different sizes and colours, some poisonous and others innocent.

The most considerable in point of size seems to have been one called *Canaubcatl* by the Mexicans. It was about three Parisian perches

(k) See this lizard in our plate.

long,



long, and of the thickness of a middle sized man. One of the *Til-coas*, or black serpents, which Hernandez saw in the mountains of Tepoztlan, was not quite so large; which, although it was not equal in thickness, yet was ten Spanish cubits, or more than sixteen Parisian feet long. Such monstrous serpents are seldom to be found now adays, unless in some solitary wood, at a distance from the capital.

The most remarkable of the poisonous serpents are the *Abueyaelli*, the *Cuicuicoatl*, the *Teixminani*, the *Cenocoatl*, and the *Teotlacozaubqui*.

The *Teotlacozaubqui*, of which there are several species, is the famous rattle-snake. Its colour and size are various, but it is commonly three or four feet long. The rattle may be considered as an appendix to the vertebræ, and consists of rings of a horny substance, moveable, and connected with each other by means of articulations or joints, every one being composed of three small bones (*l*). The rattle sounds whenever the snakes moves, and particularly when he is in motion to bite. This snake moves with great rapidity, and upon that account it likewise obtained among the Mexicans the name of *Ebecacoatl*, or aerial serpent. Its bite is attended with certain death, unless remedies are speedily applied, among which the most effectual is thought to be the holding of the wounded part some time in the earth. It bites with two teeth placed in the upper jaw, which as in the viper and other species of serpents, are moveable, hollow, and pierced at the extremity. The poison, which is a yellowish crystallizable liquor, is contained in some glands which lie over the roots of those two teeth. These glands being compressed in the action of biting, dart through the hollow of the teeth the fatal liquid, and pour it by the apertures into the wound and the mass of blood. We should have been glad to communicate to the public several other observations which we have made upon this subject, if the nature of this history should have permitted it (*m*).

The *Abueyaelli* is not very different from the snake just described, except in having no rattle. This snake, as we are told by Hernandez,

(*l*) Hernandez says, that a new ring is added every year, and that the number of the rings correspond with the years of the snake's age: but we do not know whether this is founded upon his own observations or the reports of others.

(*m*) Father Inamma, a Jesuit missionary of California, has made many experiments upon snakes, which serve to confirm those made by Mead upon vipers.

## BOOK I.

communicates that kind of poison called by the ancients *Hemorrhoids*, which occasions the blood to burst from the mouth, nose, and eyes of the person who has received it. There are certain antidotes, however, which prevent these virulent effects.

The *Cuicuilcoatl*, so named from the variety of its colours, is not quite eight inches long, and of the thickness of the little finger; but its poison is as active as that of the *Teotlacoauhqui*.

The *Teixminani* is that kind of serpent which Pliny calls *Jaculum*. It is of a long slender form, with a grey-coloured back and a purple belly. It moves always in a straight line, and never coils, but springs from the trees upon passengers, and has thence derived its name (*n*). These snakes are to be found in the mountains of Quauhnhuac, and in other hot countries; but I never knew any instance of such a thing happening to any traveller, although I lived so many years in that kingdom; and I can say the same thing of the terrible effects ascribed to the *Ahueyaclli*.

The *Cencoatl* (*o*), which is also a poisonous snake, is about five feet long, and eight inches round at the thickest part. The most remarkable quality of this snake is its shining in the dark. Thus does the provident Author of nature, by various impressions on our senses, at one time upon our ears by the noise of a rattle, at another time upon our eyes by the impressions of light, awake our attention to guard against approaching danger.

Among the harmless snakes, of which there are several kinds, we cannot pass over the *Tzicatlinan*, and the *Maquizcoatl*. The *Tzicatlinan* is very beautiful, about a foot in length, and of the thickness of the little finger. It lives always in ant-hills; and it takes so much pleasure in being among ants, that it will accompany these insects upon their expeditions, and return with them to their usual nest. The Mexican name *Tzicatlinan*, signifies *mother of ants*, and that is the name given it by the Spaniards; but I suspect that all the attachment which this little snake shews to ant-hills, proceeds only from its living upon the ants themselves.

(*n*) The Mexicans give this snake the name also of *Micoatl*; the Spaniards that of *Serilla*, both signifying the same thing with the *Jaculum* of the Latins.

(*o*) There are some other species of snakes which having the same colours with the *Cencoatl*, go by the same name, but they are all of a harmless nature.

The *Maquizcoatl* is about the same size but of a shining silvery hue. The tail is thicker than the head, and this snake can move progressively with either extremity at pleasure. It is called by the Greeks *Amphibeæna* (*p*); it is a very rare species, and has never been seen as far as I know, in any other place than the valley of Toluca.

Of all the variety of snakes which are found in the unfrequented woods of that kingdom, I believe that no viviparous species has been discovered, except the *acoatl* or water-snake, which too is only supposed, but not certainly known, to be viviparous. That snake is about twenty inches long and one thick: its teeth are exceeding small, the upper part of the head is black, the sides of it are blue, and the under part yellow. The back is striped with blue and black, the belly is entirely blue.

The ancient Mexicans who took delight in rearing all kinds of animals, and who by long familiarity lost that horror which such animals naturally inspire, used to catch in the fields a little green harmless snake, which being brought up at home, and well fed, would sometimes grow to the size of a man. It was generally kept in a tub, which it never left but to receive its food from its master's hand; which it would take, either mounted upon his shoulder or coiled about his legs.

If from the land we now turn our eyes to the rivers, lakes, and seas of Anahuac, we shall find in them a much greater variety of creatures. Even the known species of their fish are innumerable; for of those only which serve for the nourishment of man, I have counted upwards of a hundred species, without reckoning the turtle, crab, lobster, or any other testaceous or crustaceous animal. Of the fish, some are common to both the seas; some are peculiar to the Mexican gulf alone, others to the Pacific Ocean; and some are to be found only in the lakes and rivers.

The fish common to both the seas are whales, dolphins, sword-fish, saw-fish, tiburones, manatis, mantas, porpoises, bonitas, cod, mullets,

(*p*) Pliny, in lib. viii. cap. 23, gives the *Amphibeæna* two heads; but the Greek name means nothing more than the double motion. The two-headed serpent of Pliny has been seen in Europe, and some have asserted that it is to be met with in Mexico, but I do not know that that any one has seen it. If it has been found in that country, it cannot be considered as a natural species, but rather as a monster, like the two-headed eagle found a few years since in Oaaca, and sent to the Catholic king.

SECT. XIII.  
The fish of  
the seas, ri-  
vers, and  
lakes of A-  
nahuac.



BOOK I. thornbacks, barbels, flying-fish, shad, lobsters, soles, and a great many others, together with several species of tortoises, polypus, crabs, sponges, &c.

The Mexican gulf, besides those already mentioned, affords sturgeons, pike, congers, turbot, lampreys, cuttle-fish, anchovies, carp, eels, nautiluses, &c.

In the Pacific Ocean, besides those common to the two seas, there are salmon, tunnies, sea scorpions, herrings, and others.

In the lakes and rivers, are three or four kinds of white fish, carp, mullet, trout, barbels, eels, and many others.

As the particular description of these fish would be foreign to the object of our history, and of little use to the European reader, we shall only take notice of a few of the more remarkable circumstances with respect to them.

The *Tiburón* belongs to that class of sea-animals called by the ancients *Caniculæ*. Its great voracity, its size, strength, and swiftness, are well known. It has two, three, and sometimes more rows of sharp strong teeth, and swallows whatever is thrown to it whether eatable or not. A whole sheep's skin, and even a large butcher's knife, has been found in its belly. This fish frequently accompanies vessels, and by Oviedo's account there have been Tiburones, which have kept up with a vessel in full sail with a fair wind, for five hundred miles, and often swimming round the ship to catch any filth that was thrown from it.

The *Manati* or *Lamentin*, as it is called by some, is a larger fish than the *Tiburón*, and of a very different disposition. Oviedo says, that *Manatis* have been caught of such a size as to require a cart, with two pair of oxen to draw them. It is like the *Tiburón* viviparous, but the female brings only one young one at a time, which, however, is of a great size (*r*). The flesh of this animal is delicate, and something like

(*r*) Buffon agrees with Hernandez in saying that the *Manati* brings but one young one at a time; but other persons affirm that she brings two. Perhaps the same thing takes place with the *Manati* as with the human species; which is commonly to have only one, but sometimes to have two or more. Hernandez describes the copulation of these animals in these words; *Humano more coit, femina supina fere tota in litore procumbente, et celeritate quadam superveniente mare.* We do not wish some modern naturalists rank the *Manati* among quadrupeds,



like veal. Some authors place the Manati in the class of amphibious animals, but improperly, as it is never upon land; but only raises its head, and a part of its body, out of the water, to brouse upon the herbage which grows along the banks of the rivers (*s*).

The *Manta* is that flat fish mentioned by Ulloa and others, which is so hurtful to the pearl-fishers, and which I have no doubt is the same with that which Pliny has described, though he seems not to have been very well acquainted with it, under the name of *Nubes* or *Nebula* (*t*). It is not improbable, that this fish has made its way into these seas from those of the old world in the same manner as some others appear to have done. The strength of this fish is so great that it will not only strangle a man whom it embraces or winds itself about, but it has even been seen to take the cable of an anchor and move it from the place where it had been cast. It has been called *Manta*, because when it lies stretched upon the sea, as it frequently does, it seems like a fleece of wool floating upon the water.

The sword-fish of these seas is quite different from that of Greenland. The sword is larger, and in its figure more nearly resembling a real sword; and is not placed in the same manner with that of the Greenland fish upon the hinder part, but upon the fore part of the

peds, although it is viviparous; because every one by the name of quadruped understands an animal with four feet, but the Manati has only two, and these imperfectly formed.

(*r*) Mr. de la Condamine confirms our observation with respect to the Manati's living constantly in water, and the same thing had been said two centuries before by two eye-witnesses Oviedo and Hernandez. It is true, that Hernandez does seem to say the contrary; but this is owing merely to a typographical error, which is obvious to every reader. I should mention likewise, that the Manati, although properly a sea-animal, is frequently to be found in rivers.

(*t*) *Ipsi ferunt (Urinatores) et nubem quandam crassissimam super capita, planorum piscium similem, prementem eos, arcuatumque a reciprocando et ob id filios preacutos uncis annexos habere se; quia in si perfosse ita, non recedant, caliginis et pavoris, ut arbitror, opere. Nubem enim sive nebulam (cujus nomine id malum appellant) inter animalia haud ullam reperit quisquam.* Plin. Hist. Nat. lib. ix. cap. 46. The account given of this *cloud* by those divers is much the same with that which the divers in the American seas give of themanta, and the name of the *cloud* is perfectly applicable to it, as it really seems to be a cloud to those who are in the water below it; our swimmers likewise carry long knives, or sharp sticks, for the purpose of dispersing this animal. This observation which has escaped all the interpreters of Pliny, was made by my countryman and friend the Abbé D. Jos. Raf. Campoi, a man not less distinguished by his manners and integrity, than by his eloquence and erudition, particularly in the Latin language, in History, in Criticism, and in Geography. His death upon the 29th of December, 1777, prevented his finishing several very useful works which he had begun.

body,

## BOOK I.

body, like the saw-fish. It moves this sword at pleasure, with great force, and employs it as an offensive weapon.

Of the two species of saw-fish to be found in those seas, the one is that common one known to Pliny, and described by so many naturalists. The other, which is about a foot in length, has a row of teeth or prickles like a saw, upon its back, which has obtained it the name of *Tlateconi*, from the Mexicans, and from the Spaniards that of *Sierra*.

The Roballo is one of the most numerous species, and affords the most delicate food, especially the kind peculiar to rivers. Hernandez took this fish to be the same with the *Lupus* of the ancients, and Campoi imagined it to be the *Afellus Minor*; but this must have been altogether conjecture, for the descriptions of those fish left us by the ancients are so imperfect, that it is impossible to ascertain their identity.

The Gobbo (called by the Spaniards *Corcoboda*), was so called from a rising or prominence reaching from the neck to the mouth, which latter part is exceedingly small. The Sfrena had likewise the name of *Picuda* (which we might translate long-snout), from the lower jaw being longer than the upper.

The Rospo is a very disagreeable fish to look at; of a perfectly round shape, three or four inches in diameter, and without scales. It affords a pleasant wholesome food.

Among the eels there is one called *Huitzitzilmichin* by the Mexicans, which is about three feet long and very slender. Its body is covered with a sort of small plates, instead of scales. The snout is about eight inches in length, with the upper jaw longer than the lower, in which it differs from all other eels, which this species likewise surpasses, as well in the delicacy of its flesh as in the size of its body.

The Bobo, is a very fine fish, about two feet long, and four or six inches broad at the broadest part; and is in high esteem as an excellent food. The river Barbel, known by the name of Bagre, is of the same size with the Bobo, and of exquisite flavour, but unwholesome till it is cleansed with lemon juice, or some other acid, from a certain kind of froth or viscid liquor which adheres to it.

The

The Bobos, I believe are got only in the rivers which fall into the Mexican gulf, and the Barbels in those which discharge themselves into lakes, or into the Pacific Ocean. The flesh of these two kinds, although very delicate, does not equal that of the Pampano, and the Colombella, which are deservedly esteemed superior to all others.

The Curvina is about a foot and a half long, of a slender, round shape, and of a blackish purple colour. In the head of this fish are found, two small, white stones like alabaster, each an inch and a half long, and about four lines broad, of which three grains taken in water, are thought to be useful in a stoppage of urine.

The Botetto is a small fish, not more than eight inches in length, but excessively thick. This fish, while it lies alive upon the beach, immediately swells, whenever it is touched, to an enormous size; and boys often take pleasure in making it burst with a kick. The liver is so poisonous as to kill with strong convulsions in half an hour after it is eaten.

The Occhione (*u*), is a flat, round fish of eight or ten inches diameter. The underpart of the body is perfectly flat, but the upper is convex; and in the center, which is the highest part, it has a single eye as large as that of an ox, and furnished with its necessary eye-lids. The eye remains open even after it is dead, which sometimes creates a degree of horror to a spectator (*x*).

The *Iztacmichin*, or white fish, has always been in great repute in Mexico, and is now as common at the Spanish tables as it used to be anciently at those of the Mexicans. There are three or four species. The *Amilotl*, which is the largest and the most esteemed, is more than a foot in length, and has two fins upon the back, two at the sides, and one under the belly. The *Xalmichin* seems to be of the same kind with the former, but not quite so large. The *Jacapitzabuac*, which is the smallest kind, is not more than eight

(*u*) This fish, which is only found in California, either has no name, or we, at least, are not acquainted with it; for which reason we have given it one, we think, sufficiently applicable, namely, that of Occhione.

(*x*) Campoi was persuaded that the Occhione is the *Uranoscopus*, or *Callionymus* of Pliny: but Pliny has not left any description of that fish. The name of *Uranoscopus*, which was the only foundation of Campoi's opinion, is equally applicable to all those fish which, having eyes upon the head, look upwards to the sky, such as skates, and other flat fish.



BOOK I. inches long, and one inch and a half broad. All these kinds have scales, are a very delicate and wholesome food, and are to be found in great plenty in the lakes of Chalco, Pazcuaro, and Chapalla. The fourth kind is the *Xalmichin* of Quauhnahuac, which has no scales, but is covered with a tender white skin.

The *Axolotl* or Axolote (*y*), is a great water-lizard of the Mexican lake. Its figure and appearance are ridiculous and disagreeable. It is commonly about eight inches long, but is sometimes to be found of twice that length. The skin is soft and black, the head and tail long, the mouth large, and the tongue broad, thin, and cartilaginous. The body gradually diminishes in size, from the middle to the extremity of the tail. It swims with its four feet which resemble those of a frog. But the most remarkable circumstance with respect to this animal, which has been established by many observations, and confirmed by the opinion of Hernandez, is the uterus, and a periodical evacuation of blood to which it is subject; in both which it is said to resemble the human species (*z*). The Axolotl is wholesome to eat, and is of much the same taste with an eel. It is thought to be particularly useful in cases of consumption.

There are many other kinds of small fish, in the lake of Mexico, but they scarcely deserve our notice.

As to shells, they are found in prodigious numbers, and of great variety; and some of them of extraordinary beauty, especially those of the Pacific Ocean. Pearls also have been fished, at different times, along all the coasts of that sea. The Mexicans got them upon the coasts of Tototepec, and of the Cuitlatecans, where we now get the tortoise-shell. Among the Sea-stars is one which has five rays, and

(*y*) Mr. Bomare could not light upon the name of this fish. He calls it *Azalotl*, *Axolotl*, *Azoloti*, and *Axoloti*; and says that the Spaniards call it *Juguete del' agua*: yet the Mexicans call it *Axolotl*; and the Spaniards give it no other name but the *Axolote*.

(*z*) Bomare has some hesitation in believing what is said of the *Axolote*; but while we may rest secure upon the testimony of those persons, who have had these animals actually under their own inspection, we need not pay much regard to the doubts of a Frenchman, who, however versed in Natural History, never saw the Axolotis, and is even ignorant of their name: more especially, when we reflect that the periodical evacuation of blood is not confined to women alone, but has been observed, likewise, in apes; for, as Mr. Bomare says, *Les femelles des singes ont pour la plupart des menstres comme les femmes.*







one eye in each. Of Sponges, and Lithophyts, there are many rare and singular species. Hernandez gives us a print of a sponge, sent to him from the Pacific Ocean, which was of the shape of a man's hand, but with ten or more fingers; of a clay colour, with black points and red streaks, and was harder than the common sponges.

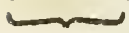
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Descending, at length, to the smaller creatures, in which the power and wisdom of the Creator especially appear; we shall divide the innumerable multitude of Mexican insects into three classes, the flying, the terrestrial, and the aquatic; although there are land and water insects which afterwards become flying insects, and might be considered as belonging to different classes, at different times.

SECT. XIV.  
The Insects  
of Mexico.

Among the flying insects are, beetles, bees, wasps, flies, gnats, butterflies, and grasshoppers. The beetles are of several kinds, and mostly harmless. Some of them are of a green colour, and called by the Mexicans, *Majatl*; which, by the great noise they make in flying, afford amusement to children. There are others black, of a disagreeable smell and irregular form, which are called *Pinacatl*.

The *Cucujo* or shining beetle, which best deserves our notice, has been mentioned by many authors, but not hitherto, as far as I know, described by any one. It is more than an inch in length; and, like other flying beetles, is furnished with double wings. Upon the head, is a small, moveable horn, which is of great use to it; for if at any time it happens to be turned over and laid upon its back, it is by means of this horn, by thrusting and pressing it into a membrane somewhat like a bag, which it has upon the belly, that this insect recovers its natural position. Near the eyes are two small membranes, and upon the belly one somewhat larger, of a thin, transparent substance, which are full of luminous matter, affording a light strong enough to read by, and to shew the way to those who travel at night. It shews most light when it flies; but none at all while it sleeps, as it is then covered with the other opaque membranes. The luminous matter is a white, mealy, viscid substance, which preserves its luminous quality after it has been taken from the body of the *Cucujo*, and one may draw shining characters with it, upon a hat. There are great numbers of these flying phosphori upon the sea-coasts, and which form upon the neigh-

**BOOK I.**  bouring hills, at night, a very beautiful and brilliant spectacle. The boys easily catch them by waving a light in the evening, and the beetles, drawn by the light, come into their hands. Some authors have confounded this wonderful insect with the glow-worm, but the latter is much smaller, and much less luminous; is pretty frequent in Europe, and perfectly common in Mexico.

The appearance of the shining beetle is not more pleasing than that of the *Temolin* is disagreeable. This is a large beetle of a reddish chestnut colour, with six hairy feet, and four toes upon each. There are two species of the *Temolin*: the one having one horn, in the forepart of the head; and the other, two.

There are, at least, six different kinds of bees. The first is the same with the common bee of Europe, with which it agrees, not only in size, shape, and colour, but also in its disposition and manners, and in the qualities of its honey and wax. The second species, which differs from the first only in having no sting, is the bee of Yucatan and Chiapa, which makes the fine, clear honey of *Eftabentùn*, of an aromatic flavour, superior to that of all the other kinds of honey with which we are acquainted. The honey is taken from them six times a year, that is, once in every other month; but the best is that which is got in November, being made from a fragrant white flower like Jessamine, which blows in September, called in that country *Eftabentùn*, from which the honey has derived its name (z). The third species resembles in its form, the winged ants, but is smaller than the common bee, and without a sting. This insect, which is peculiar to warm and temperate climates, forms nests, in size and shape resembling sugar-loaves, and even sometimes greatly exceeding these in size, which are suspended from rocks, or from trees, and particularly from the oak. The populousness of these hives are much greater than of those of the common bee. The nymphs of this bee, which are eatable, are white and round, like a pearl. The honey is of a greyish colour, but of a fine flavour. The fourth species is a yellow bee, smaller than the common one, but,

(z) The honey of *Eftabentùn*, is in high estimation with the English and French, who touch at the ports of Yucatan; and I have known the French of *Guarico* buy it sometimes for the purpose of sending it as a present to the king,



like it, furnished with a sting. Its honey is not equal to those already mentioned. The fifth, is a small bee without a sting, which constructs hives of an orbicular form, in subterraneous cavities; and the honey is sour, and somewhat bitter. The *Tlalpipiulli*, which is the sixth species, is black and yellow, of the size of the common bee, but has no sting.

Of wasps there are at least four kinds. The *Quetzalimiabuatl* is the common wasp of Europe. The *Tetlatoca* or wandering wasp, is so called from its frequent change of habitation; and is always found employed in collecting materials to build it. This wasp has a sting, but makes no honey or wax. The *Xicotli* or Xicote, is a thick, black wasp, with a yellow belly; which makes a very sweet honey, in holes made by it in walls. It is provided with a strong sting, which gives a very painful wound. The *Cuicalmiabuatl*, has likewise a sting; but whether it makes honey or not, we do not know.

The *Quaubxicotli*, is a black hornet, with a red tail, whose sting is so large and strong, as not only to go through a sugar cane, but even to pierce into the trunk of a tree.

Among the flies, besides the common fly which is neither so troublesome, nor in such numbers as in Italy during summer (*a*), there are some luminous as the glow-worm. The *Axayacatl* is a marsh-fly, of the Mexican lake, the eggs of which being deposited in immense quantities, upon the rushes and corn-flags of the lake, form large masses, which are taken up by fishermen and carried to market for sale. This caviare called *Abuaubtli*, which has much the same taste with the caviare of fish, used to be eat by the Mexicans, and is now a common dish among the Spaniards. The Mexicans eat not only the eggs, but the flies themselves made up together into a mass, and prepared with saltpetre.

Gnats, which are so common in Europe, and especially in Italy, abound in the maritime parts of Mexico, and in all places where heat,

(a) The same observation has been made before by Oviedo; "In the islands," said he, "and in terra firma, there are very few flies; and in comparison of their numbers in Europe, one might almost say there are none." Nat. Hist. Ind. cap. 81. In Mexico, certainly there are not so few as Oviedo says, but, generally speaking, they are neither so numerous nor so troublesome as in Europe.

BOOK I. standing water, and shrubs, encourage their propagation. They are in immense numbers in the lake of Chalco; but the capital, although near to that lake, is entirely free of that nuisance.

In the hot countries there is likewise a kind of small flies, which make no buz in flying, but raise a violent itching by their puncture, and an open wound is very ready to be made, if the part is scratched.

In those hot countries also, but particularly in those next the sea, *Cucarachas* are found in great numbers. This is a large winged, filthy, pernicious insect, which spoils all eatables, particularly any thing sweet; but in some other respects is of great use in clearing houses of bugs. It has been remarked, that the ships which come from Europe full of bugs, return from New Spain quite freed of these stinking insects, by means of the *Cucarachas* (*b*).

The Butterflies of Mexico, are much more numerous, and of greater variety, than in Europe. It is impossible to give any idea of their variety and beauty, and the finest pencil is unable to imitate the exquisite colouring and design, which the Author of Nature has displayed in the embellishment of their wings. Many respectable Authors have celebrated them in their writings; and Hernandez has made some be drawn, in order to give Europeans an idea of their beauty.

But the butterflies although numerous, are not to be compared in that respect, with the locusts, which, sometimes darkening the air like thick clouds, fall upon the sea coasts, and lay waste all the vegetation of the country; as I have myself witnessed, in the year 1738, or 1739, upon the coasts of Xicayan. From this cause a great famine was lately occasioned in the Peninsula of Yucatan: but no country has been visited by this dreadful scourge so often as the wretched California (*c*). Among the land-insects, besides the common ones, about which nothing occurs to me worthy to be mentioned, there

(*b*) This insect is likewise an enemy of the studious, preying upon the ink, in the night-time, unless it is carefully covered up. The Spaniards call it *Cucaracha*, others call it *Kakerlaques*, and others *Dermestes*, &c.

(*c*) In the history of California, which will be published in a few months, will be found a great many observations with respect to locusts, made by the Abbé D. Mich. del Barco, who lived upwards of thirty years in that country, a country not more famous than underserving of the fame it has acquired.

are worms of several kinds, scolopendræ, scorpions, spiders, ants, nigua chegoes or jiggers, and the cochineal.

Of the worms, some are useful, and others pernicious; some served as food to the ancient Mexicans, and others in the way of medicine, as the *Axin* and the *Pollin*, which we shall speak of in another place. The *Tleocuilin* or burning worm, has the same qualities with the *Cantharides*: its head is red, the breast green, and the rest of the body is of a tawny-colour. The *Temahuani*, is a worm covered with yellow, venomous prickles. The *Temictli* resembles the silk-worm, both in its operations and its metamorphoses. The silk-worm was brought from Europe, and was propagated with success. Great plenty of good silk was made, especially in Mizteca (*d*), where it became a great article of trade; but the Miztecans being afterwards, from political causes, forced to abandon it, the rearing of the worms was likewise neglected; and at this time very few are employed in that business. Besides that common silk, there is another excellent kind, very white, soft, and strong, which is often to be found upon trees, in several woods upon the sea coasts, particularly in those years when there is little rain. But, unless by some poor people, this silk is not turned to any use, partly from inattention, to their interests, but chiefly from the obstructions which would be certainly thrown in the way of any one who should attempt a trade of that kind. We know from Cortes's letters to Charles Vth, that silk used to be sold in the markets of Mexico; and some pictures are still preserved, done by the ancient Mexicans upon a paper made of silk.

The Scolopendras are sometimes seen in the temperate parts, but more frequently in the warm and moist. Hernandez says, that he has seen some of them of the length of two feet, and two inches thick: but such monstrous insects can only have been seen in the wettest and most uncultivated place; for we who have been in a great many places, through every variety of climate, never met with any one of such extraordinary size.

Scorpions are common throughout the whole kingdom, but in the cold and temperate countries they are not numerous, nor very hurtful.

(*d*) Some places in Mizteca still preserve the name which they obtained formerly, upon account of that trade; as *silk St. Francis*, *silk Tepexc*.



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They abound in the hot parts, or where the air is very dry although the heat is but moderate; and their poison is so active as to kill children, and occasion terrible pain to adults. It has been remarked, that the poison of the small, yellowish scorpion is more powerful than that of the large brown one, and that their sting is the most dangerous during those hours of the day when the sun gives most heat.

Among the great variety of spiders, we cannot pass over the *Tarantola* and *Casampulga* (e). The name of *Tarantola* is given very improperly, in that country, to a very large spider, the back and legs of which are covered with a fine, soft, blackish down, like that upon young chickens. This spider is peculiar to the hot countries, and is found in houses as well as in the fields. It is supposed to be poisonous, and it is generally believed that if a horse tramples upon one, he very soon loses his hoof; but I have never known a single instance of this happening, although I was for five years in a very hot country where those spiders were in great numbers. The *Casampulga* is a small spider of the size of a chick pea, with short legs, and a red belly. This spider is venomous, and common in the diocess of Chiapa, and elsewhere. It seems to answer to the description of what is called the *Ragno capullino* in other countries, but I do not know whether it is the same.

The most common ants of that country are of three kinds: first, the small black ants the same with those of Europe; next, the large red ants called by the Spaniards *bravas*, or fierce, which give very painful wounds with their stings: and lastly, the large brown ants, called by the Spaniards *barrieras*, or carriers, because they are continually employed in carrying grain for their provision, and for that reason they are much more hurtful to the country than the common ants. These carrier ants have been suffered by the carelessness of the inhabitants in some places to multiply to excess; and in the province of Xicayan black lines are seen upon the earth for several miles, which consist of nothing but of those ants going and coming.

(e) I suspect that the original name of this spider has been *Cazapulga* or flea-killer, corrupted in a manner common to the vulgar, into *Casampulga*.



Besides the three species already mentioned, there is a singular kind of ant in Michuacan which, perhaps, is to be met with in other provinces. It is larger than the common ant, with a greyish-coloured body and a black head. Upon its hinder parts it carries a little bag, full of a very sweet liquor, which the children are very fond of, and imagine it is a honey made by the ant like that made by the bee, but I rather take it to be eggs. Mr. de la Barrere, in his Natural History of Equinoctial France, takes notice of such ants being found in Cayenne; but those are winged ants, and ours are without wings.

The Nigua or Chegoe, called in other countries *Pique*, is an exceeding small insect, not very unlike a flea, which, in some hot countries is bred in the dust. It fixes upon the feet, and breaking insensibly the cuticle, it nestles betwixt that and the true skin, which also, unless it is immediately taken out, it breaks, and pierces at last to the flesh, multiplying with a rapidity almost incredible. It is seldom discovered until it pierces the true skin, when it causes an intolerable itching. These insects with their astonishing multiplication would soon dispeople those countries, were it less easy to avoid them, or were the inhabitants less dextrous in getting them out before they begin to spread. On the other hand, nature, in order to lessen the evil, has not only denied them wings, but even that conformation of the legs, and those strong muscles which he has given to the flea for leaping. The poor however, who are in some measure doomed to live in the dust, and to a habitual neglect of their persons, suffer these insects sometimes to multiply so far as to make large holes in their flesh, and even to occasion dangerous wounds.

What the Niguas or Chegoes do in houses, is done in the fields by the ticks, of which there are two species or rather classes. The first are common in the new, as well as the old world, which fix in the skins of sheep, horses, and other quadrupeds, and get into their ears, and sometimes into those of men.

The other abounds in the grass of the hot countries, from which it readily gets upon the cloaths, and from these to the skin, upon which it fixes with such force from the particular shape of its feet, that it is very difficult to detach it, and if it is not speedily removed makes a wound like that made by the Nigua or Chegoe. At first it seems

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nothing more than a small black speck: but afterwards enlarges so quickly, and to such a degree from the blood which it sucks, that in a very short time it becomes as large as a bean, and then takes the colour of lead (*f*).

The celebrated cochineal of Mexico, so well known and so highly esteemed over all the world, for the beauty of the colour which it affords, is an insect peculiar to that country, and the most useful of all that the land of Anahuac produces. There particular pains have always been taken to rear it from the times of the Mexican kings (*g*); but the country in which it thrives the best is that of Mizteca, where it is the principal branch of commerce of that place (*b*). In the sixteenth century they used to rear it also in Tlascala, Huexotzinco, and other places, and it was a considerable article of trade; but the Indians (who have always been the persons employed in that business), oppressed by the avaricious tyranny of some Spanish governors, were forced to abandon that employment which, of its own nature besides, was always very troublesome and tedious. The cochineal at its utmost growth, in size and figure resembles a bug. The female is ill proportioned and sluggish. The eyes, mouth, antennæ, and feet, are so concealed among the wrinkles of its skin, that they cannot be discovered without the assistance of a microscope: and it is owing to that circumstance, that some Europeans have been so positive in affirming it to be a kind of seed and not an animal, in opposition to the testimony of the Indians who reared it, and of Hernandez who examined it as a

(*f*) Oviedo says, that the best and safest method of separating it speedily, is to anoint the part with oil, and then to scrape it with a knife.

(*g*) The historian Herrera, in the Dec. IV. lib. viii. cap. 8. says, that although the Indians had the cochineal, yet they knew nothing of its virtues till they were instructed by the Spaniards. But what did the Spaniards teach them? To rear the cochineal? How were they fitted to teach what they were ignorant of themselves, while they took that to be a seed which is in reality an insect. They taught the Indians perhaps, to use it as a dye; but unless the Indians used it as a dye, to what purpose did they take so much pains in rearing it? Why were Huaxyacac, Coyolopan, and several other places obliged to pay twenty bags of cochineal yearly to the king of Mexico, as appears by the register of taxes? Is it possible to imagine, that a people so given to painting even as they were, and who were besides well acquainted with the use of the Achiote, the indigo, and of a great many mineral earths and stones, should be ignorant of the use of the cochineal?

(*b*) Several authors have reckoned that more than 2,500 bags of cochineal are sent every year from Mizteca to Spain. The trade in that article carried on by the city of Oaxaca, brings in 200,000 crowns a-year. Bomare says, there is a kind of cochineal called *Misfecan*, because it is got in Metequé, in the province of Honduras: but this is a mistake, for it comes from Misleca, a province farther from Honduras than Rome is from Paris.

naturalist.

naturalist. The males are not so numerous, and one serves for three hundred females: they are likewise smaller and thinner than the females, but more brisk and active. Upon the heads of this insect are two articulated antennæ, in each articulation of which are four small bristles regularly disposed. It has six feet, each consisting of three parts. From the hinder part of the body grow out two hairs, which are two or three times as large as the whole insect. The male has two large wings, which are wanting in the female. These wings are strengthened by two muscles; one external, extending along the circumference of the wing; the other internal, which runs parallel to the former. The internal colour of this insect is a deep red, but darker in the female; and the external colour a pale red. In the wild cochineal the internal colour is still darker, and the external whitish or ash-coloured. The cochineal is reared upon a species of *Nopal*, or *Opuntia*, or Indian fig, which grows to the height of about eight feet, and bears a fruit like the figs of other *Opuntias*, but not eatable. It feeds upon the leaves of that tree, by sucking the juice with a trunk situated in the thorax betwixt the two fore feet: there it passes through all the stages of its growth, and at length produces a numerous offspring. The manner of multiplying peculiar to these valuable insects, the management of the Indians in rearing them, together with the means employed to defend them from rain, which is so hurtful to them, and from many enemies which persecute them, shall be explained when we come to speak of the agriculture of the Mexicans (*i*).

Among the water insects, the *Atetepitz* is a marsh beetle resembling in shape and size the beetles that fly. It has four feet, and is covered with a hard shell. The *Atopinan* is a marsh grasshopper, of a dark colour, about six inches long and two broad. The *Abuibuitla* is a worm of the Mexican lake, four inches long, and of the thickness

(*i*) D. Ant. Ulloa says, that the *Nopal*, upon which the cochineal is reared, has no prickles; but in Misceca, where I was for five years, I always saw it upon prickly nopals. Mr. de Raynal imagines, that the colour of the cochineal is to be ascribed to the red fig upon which it lives; but that author has been misinformed; for neither does the cochineal feed upon the fruit, but only upon the leaf, which is perfectly green; nor does that nopal bear red but white figs. It is true, it may be reared upon the species with a red fig, but that is not the proper plant of the cochineal.



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of a goose-quill; of a tawny colour upon the upper part of the body, and white upon the under part. It stings with its tail, which is hard and poisonous. The *Ocuiliztac* is a black marsh-worm, which becomes white on being roasted. All these insects were eaten by the ancient Mexicans.

Lastly, to omit other insects the very names of which would fill an immense catalogue, I shall conclude this account with a kind of zoophytes, or animal plants, which I saw in the year 1751, in a house in the country, about ten miles from Angelopoli, towards the south-east. These were three or four inches long, and had four very slender feet, and two antennæ; but their body was nothing more than the fibres of the leaves, of the same shape, size, and colour with those of the other leaves of the trees upon which these insects were found. Hernandez mentions them by the name of *Quauhmecatl*; and Gemelli describes another somewhat similar which was found in the neighbourhood of Manila (*k*).

The slight account we have already given of the natural history of Anahuac, may serve to shew the differences that take place in the hot, the cold, and the temperate countries, of which that vast kingdom is composed. Nature in the hot countries is more profuse, and in the cold and temperate, more mild. In the former, the hills abound more in minerals and springs, the valleys are more delightful, and the woods are thicker. There we meet with plants more useful for the support of life (*l*). Trees of larger growth, more valuable woods, more beautiful flowers, more delicious fruits, and more aromatic gums. There too the animals are more numerous and of greater variety, and the individuals of the different species of greater beauty and size; the birds have a finer plumage and a sweeter song: but all these advan-

(*k*) I am aware that modern naturalists seldom apply the name of *zoophytes*, unless to certain marine bodies, which, with the appearance of vegetables, are really of the nature of animals; but I give it to those terrestrial insects, because it seems with as much, if not more propriety applicable to them than to the marine bodies. In my *Natural Philosophy*, I think I have given a very probable explanation of the operation of nature in the production of such insects.

(*l*) It is true, that generally neither corn grows there, nor many of the European fruits, such as apples, peaches, pears, &c. yet what signifies the want of a few of those vegetables, compared with the unspeakable profusion and variety of plants serving both for food and medicine, which are to be found in those countries?



tages are counterbalanced by equal inconveniencies; for there the beasts of prey are more terrible, the reptiles more poisonous, and the insects more pernicious. The earth there never feels the effects of winter, nor is the atmosphere subjected to a hurtful vicissitude of seasons. A perpetual spring reigns upon the earth, and a perpetual summer in the air. The inhabitants are used to that excessive heat, but from the constant sweating which it occasions, together with the use of those exquisite fruits which the bountiful earth presents to them in such abundance, they are often affected with disorders unknown in other climates. The cold countries are neither so fruitful nor so beautiful, but on the other hand they are more favourable to health, and the animals are less hurtful to man. In the temperate countries (at least in many of them, and particularly in the vale of Mexico), are enjoyed the advantages of the cold, and many of the pleasures of the hot climates without the inconveniencies of either. The most common diseases of the hot countries are intermittent fevers, spasms, and consumptions; and in the port of Vera Cruz, within these few years, the black vomiting (*m*): in other parts, catarrhs, fluxes, pleurifies, and acute fevers; and in the capital, the diarrhœa. Besides these more frequent diseases, certain epidemical disorders arise at times, which seem in some degree periodical, although not with much exactness or regularity, such as those which appeared in 1546, 1576, 1736, and 1762. The small-pox brought thither by the Spanish conquerors, is not seen so frequently in that country as in Europe; but generally appears after an interval of a certain number of years, and then attacking all those who had not been affected by it before, it makes as much havoc at one time as it does successively in Europe.

The nations which possessed those countries before the Spaniards, although differing in language, and partly also in manners, were yet nearly of the same character. The moral and physical qualities of the Mexicans, their tempers and dispositions were the same with those of the Acolhuicans, the Tepanceans, the Tlascallans, and other nations, with no other difference than what arose from their different mode of education; so that what we shall say of the one, we should wish to

SECT. XV.  
Characters  
of the Mexi-  
cans and o-  
ther nations  
of Anahuac

(*m*) Ulloa, and other historians of America, describe the spasms and the Black vomiting. The latter disease was not known in that country before the year 1736.

## BOOK I.

be understood as equally applicable to the rest. Several authors, ancient as well as modern, have undertaken a description of these people, but I have not met with any one which is, in every respect, faithful and correct. The passions and prejudices of some, and the imperfect information, or the weak understandings of others, have prevented their representing them in their genuine colours. What we shall say upon the subject, is derived from a serious and long study of the history of these nations, from a familiar intercourse for many years with the natives, and from the most minute observations with respect to their present state, made both by ourselves and by other impartial persons. I certainly have no bias upon my own mind which should make me lean to one side more than to the other; as neither the feelings of a fellow-countryman can sway my opinion in their favour, nor can I be interested to condemn them from a love of my nation, or zeal for the honour of my countrymen: so that I shall speak frankly and plainly the good and the bad, which I have discovered in them.

The Mexicans are of a good stature, generally rather exceeding than falling short of the middle size, and well proportioned in all their limbs: they have good complexions, narrow foreheads, black eyes, clean, firm, regular white teeth, thick, black, coarse, glossy hair, thin beards, and generally no hair upon their legs, thighs, and arms. Their skin is of an olive colour.

There is scarcely a nation, perhaps, upon earth in which there are fewer persons deformed, and it would be more difficult to find a single hump-backed, lame, or squint-eyed man amongst a thousand Mexicans, than among any hundred of any other nation. The unpleasantness of their colour, the smallness of their forehead, the thinness of their beard, and the coarseness of their hair, are so far compensated by the regularity and fine proportions of their limbs, that they can neither be called very beautiful, nor the contrary, but seem to hold a middle-place between the extremes. Their appearance neither engages nor disgusts; but among the young women of Mexico, there are many very beautiful and fair; whose beauty is at the same time rendered more winning by the sweetness of their manner of speaking, and by the pleasantness and natural modesty of their whole behaviour.

Their senses are very acute, especially that of sight, which they enjoy unimpaired to the greatest age. Their constitutions are sound, and their health robust. They are entirely free of many disorders which are common among the Spaniards, but of the epidemical diseases to which their country is occasionally subject, they are the principal victims; with them these diseases begin, and with them they end. One never perceives in a Mexican that stinking breath which is occasioned in other people by the corruption of the humours or indigestion. Their constitutions are phlegmatic; but the pituitous evacuations from their heads are very scanty, and they seldom spit. They become grey-headed and bald earlier than the Spaniards, and although most of them die of acute diseases, it is not very uncommon among them to attain the age of a hundred.

They are now, and have ever been very moderate in eating, but their passion for strong liquors is carried to the greatest excess. Formerly they were kept within bounds by the severity of the laws; but now that these liquors are grown so common, and drunkenness is unpunished, one half of the people seem to have lost their senses; and this, together with the poor manner in which they live, exposed to all the baneful impressions of disease, and destitute of the means of correcting them, is undoubtedly the principal cause of the havoc which is made among them by epidemical disorders.

Their minds are at bottom in every respect like those of the other children of Adam, and endued with the same powers; nor did the Europeans ever do less credit to their own reason than when they doubted of the rationality of the Americans. The state of civilization among the Mexicans, when they were first known to the Spaniards, which was much superior to that of the Spaniards themselves, when they were first known to the Phœnicians, that of the Gauls when first known to the Greeks, or that of the Germans and Britons when first known to the Romans (*n*), should of itself have been fully sufficient

to

(*n*) D. Bernardo Aldrete, in his book upon the Origin of the Spanish Tongue, would have us to believe that the Spaniards were less rude at the arrival of the Phœnicians, than the Mexicans were at the time of the arrival of the Spaniards; but this paradox has been sufficiently refuted by the learned authors of the Literary History of Spain. It is true, that the Spaniards in those remote ages were not so barbarous as the Chichimecans, the Californians, and some other savage nations of America; but neither their government was so regular, nor their

BOOK I. to correct such an error of man's mind, if it had not been the interest of the inhuman avarice of some ruffians to encourage it (*o*). Their understandings are fitted for every kind of science, as experience has actually shewn (*p*). Of the Mexicans who have had an opportunity of engaging in the pursuits of learning, which is but a small number, as the greatest part of the people are always employed in the public or private works, we have known some good mathematicians, excellent architects, and learned divines.

Many persons allow the Mexicans to possess a great talent of imitation, but deny them the praise of invention: a vulgar error, which is contradicted by the ancient history of that people.

Their minds are affected by the same variety of passions with those of other nations, but not to an equal degree. The Mexicans seldom exhibit those transports of anger, or those frenzies of love which are so common in other countries.

They are slow in their motions, and shew a wonderful tenacity and steadiness in those works which require time and long continued attention. They are most patient of injury and hardship; and where they suspect no evil intention, are most grateful for any kindness shewn; but some Spaniards, who cannot distinguish patience from insensibility, nor distrust from ingratitude, say proverbially, that the Indians are alike insensible to injuries and to benefits (*q*). That habitual distrust which they entertain of all who are not of their own nation, prompts them often to lie and betray; so that good faith certainly has not been so much respected among them as it deserves.

arts so much improved, nor, as far as we can judge, had they made so much progress in the knowledge of nature, as the Mexicans at the beginning of the sixteenth century.

(*o*) Upon this subject I must refer the reader to the bitter complaints made by the bishop Garcès, in his letter to pope Paul III. and by the bishop of las Casas, in his Memorials to the Catholic kings Charles V. and Philip II. but especially to the very humane laws made by those most Christian monarchs, in favour of the Indians.

(*p*) We shall, in the Dissertations, produce the opinions of D. Giulian Garcès, first bishop of Tlascalla; of D. John di Zumarraga, first bishop of Mexico, and of D. Bartholomew de las Casas, first bishop of Chiapa, with respect to the capacities, understandings, and other good qualities of the Mexicans. The testimony of those virtuous and learned prelates, who had so much intercourse with the Indians, weighs much more than that of any historian whatever.

(*q*) Experience has proved the grateful dispositions of the Mexicans, wherever they were assured of the good-will and sincerity of their benefactors. Their gratitude has been often manifested by open and loud demonstrations of joy, which publicly declare the falshood of the Spanish proverb.

They



They are by nature taciturn, serious, and austere, and shew more anxiety to punish crimes than to reward virtues.

Generosity and perfect disinterestedness are the principal features of their character. Gold with the Mexicans has not that value which it enjoys elsewhere (*r*). They seem to give without reluctance what has cost them the utmost labour to acquire. The neglect of selfish interests, together with the dislike which they bear to their rulers, and consequently their aversion to the tasks imposed by them, seem to have been the only grounds of that much exaggerated indolence with which the Americans have been charged (*s*); and after all, there is no set of people in that country who labour more, nor whose labours are more useful or more necessary (*t*).

The respect paid by children to their parents, and by the young to the old, among those people, seem to be feelings that are born with them. Parents are very fond of their children; but the affection which husbands bear to their wives, is certainly less than that borne by the wives to their husbands; and it is very common for the men to love their neighbours wives better than their own.

Courage and cowardice seem alternately so to affect their minds, that it is often difficult to determine whether the one or the other predominates. They meet dangers with intrepidity when they proceed from natural causes, but they are easily terrified by the stern look of a Spaniard. That stupid indifference about death and eternity, which many authors have thought inherent in the character of every American, is peculiar only to those who are yet so rude and uninformed as to have no idea of a future state.

Their singular attachment to the external ceremonies of religion is very apt to degenerate into superstition, as happens with the ignorant of all nations of the world; but their proneness to idolatry is nothing

(*r*) I do not speak of those Mexicans, who, by a constant intercourse with covetous nations, have been infected by their avarice; although, at the same time, even those appear to be less selfish than the generality of persons of that disposition.

(*s*) What we observe upon the subject of American indolence is not meant to apply to the savage nations in other parts of the new world.

(*t*) In our Dissertations we shall give an account of the works in which the Mexicans are employed. Monsign. Palafox used to say, that if ever the Indians failed them, the Spaniards would find the Indios fail also.

## BOOK I.

more than a chimera formed in the absurd imaginations of misinformed persons. The instances of a few mountaineers are not sufficient to justify a general aspersión upon the whole people (*u*).

To conclude, the character of the Mexicans, like that of every other nation, is a mixture of good and bad; but the bad is easy to be corrected by a proper education, as has been frequently demonstrated by experience (*x*). It would be difficult to find, any where, a youth more docile than the present, or a body of people more ready than their ancestors were to receive the lights of religion.

I must add, that the modern Mexicans are not in all respects similar to the ancient; as the Greeks of these days have little resemblance of those who lived in the times of Plato and of Pericles. The ancient Mexicans shewed more fire, and were more sensible to the impressions of honour. They were more intrepid, more nimble, more active, more industrious; but they were, at the same time, more superstitious and cruel.

(*u*) The few examples that are to be found of idolatry are not altogether inexcusable, when we consider how naturally rude and unenlightened men may confound the idolatrous worship of some unshapely figure of stone or wood, with that which is due to the sacred images alone. And our own prejudices against them have often been the cause of our treating as idols what were really the images, though rude ones, of the saints. In the year 1754, I saw some little images which had been found in a cave in a mountain, and were considered as idols, but which I had no doubt were actually images representing the mystery of the sacred nativity.

(*x*) To be sensible of the influence of education upon the Mexicans, we need only to be made acquainted with the wonderful life led by the Mexican women of the Royal College of Guadalupe in Mexico, and those of the monasteries of Capuchins in the same capital, and Valladolid in Michuacan.

## B O O K II.

*Of the Toltecas, Chechemecas, Acolhuas, Olmecas, and other Nations that inhabited the Country of Anahuac before the Mexicans. The Expedition of the Aztecas, or Mexicans, from their Native Country of Aztlan. The Events of their Journey into the Country of Anahuac; and their Settlements in Chapultepec and Colhuacan. The Foundation of Mexico and Tlaltelolco. Inhuman Sacrifice of a Colhuan Girl.*

THE history of the first peopling of Anahuac is so involved in fable, like that of other nations, that it is not merely difficult but altogether impossible to discover the truth. It is certain, however, both from the testimony of the sacred writings, and from the constant and universal tradition of those nations, that the inhabitants of Anahuac are descended of those few mortals whom the Divine Providence saved from the waters of the deluge, in order to preserve the race of man, upon earth. At the same time there cannot be a doubt, that the men who first peopled that country, came originally from the more northern parts of America, where their ancestors had been settled for many ages. All the historians, Toltecan, Chechemecan, Acolhuan, Mexican, and Tlascalan, are agreed upon these two points: but who those first inhabitants were, the time of their emigration, the events of their journey, and their first establishments, are entirely unknown. Several authors have endeavoured to pierce that chaos; but trusting to slight conjectures, fanciful combinations, and certain pictures of very ambiguous authenticity; and having recourse in their difficulties, to puerile and romantic narrations, have utterly lost themselves in the thick darkness of antiquity.

There have been writers, who, building upon the tradition of the natives, and upon the discovery of bones, sculls, and entire skeletons of prodigious size, which have been dug up, at different times,

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SECT. I.  
Of the Toltecal.

## BOOK II.

in many parts of New Spain (*a*), have imagined that the first inhabitants of that country were Giants. I, for my own part, have no doubt of their existence there, as well as in other parts of the New World (*b*); but we can neither form any conjecture as to the time in which they lived, although we have reason to believe they must be very ancient; nor can we be persuaded that there has ever been, as those writers imagined, a whole nation of Giants, but only single individuals of the nations which we now know, or of some others more ancient and unknown (*c*).

The Toltecas are the oldest nation of which we have any knowledge, and that is very imperfect. Being banished, as they tell us, from their own country *Huebuetapallan*, which we take to have been in the kingdom of *Tollan* (*d*), from which they derived their name, and situated to the north-west of Mexico, they began their journey in the year 1. *Tecpatl*, that is in the 596 of our era. In every place to which they came, they remained no longer than they liked

(*a*) The places where gigantic skeletons have been found, are *Atlancatepec*, a village in the province of Tlascala, *Texcuco*, *Toluca*, *Quauhxicimalpan*; and in our days, upon a hill in California, not far from Kadi-Kaaman.

(*b*) I am well aware that many European philosophers, who laugh at the belief of giants, will be ready to ridicule me, or at least to pity my credulity; but I will not betray the truth to avoid censure. I know that among the civilized nations of America, it was a current tradition, that a race of men had existed, in former times, of extraordinary height and bulk; but I cannot remember an instance among any American nation, of there having ever been any elephants, hippopotamuses, or other quadrupeds of uncommon size. I know from the testimony of innumerable writers, and particularly of two eye-witnesses, of unquestionable credit, Hernandez, and D'Acosta, who were men of learning, correctness, and veracity, that human skulls have been found, and even whole skeletons, of astonishing size; but I do not know, that in any of the vast number of openings which have been made in the earth in New Spain, any skeleton of a hippopotamus has been found, or even a single tooth of an elephant. I know, lastly, that some of the great bones above mentioned, have been found in tombs, which appear evidently to have been made on purpose; but I am yet to learn of tombs ever having been constructed for sea-horses and elephants. All this and more ought to be weighed, before we presume to determine with some authors who have asserted it, without the least hesitation, that all the large bones discovered in America, belonged to those, or some other such great animals.

(*c*) Many historians of Mexico say, that the giants were betrayed, and put to death by the Tlascalans; but this idea, which has no foundation but in some poems of the Tlascalans, is inconsistent with the chronology adopted by those historians themselves; making the giants much too ancient, and the Tlascalans too modern, in the country of Anahuac.

(*d*) *Toltecotl*, in Mexican signifies a native of Tollan, as *Tlaxcaltecatl* does a native of Tlascala, &c.

it,



it, or were easily accommodated with provisions. When they determined to make a longer stay, they erected houses, and sowed the land with corn, cotton, and other plants, the seeds of which they had carried along with them to supply their necessities. In this wandering manner did they travel, always southward, for the space of one hundred and four years, till they arrived at a place, to which they gave the name of *Tollantzinco*, about fifty miles to the east of that spot where, some centuries after, was founded the famous city of Mexico. They were led and commanded, upon the whole journey, by certain captains or lords, who were reduced to seven, by the time they arrived at *Tollantzinco* (e). They did not chuse, however, to settle in that country, although the climate is mild, and the soil fruitful; but in less than twenty years after, they went about forty miles towards the west, where, along the banks of a river, they founded the city of *Tollan* or *Tula*, after the name of their native country. That city, the oldest, as far as we know, in *Anahuac*, is one of the most celebrated in the history of Mexico, and was the capital of the *Toltecan* kingdom, and the court of their kings. Their monarchy began in the year 8. *Acatl*, that is in the year 607 of the Christian era, and lasted three hundred and eighty-four years. I have subjoined the series of their kings with the year of the Christian era in which they began to reign (f).

|                             |        |       |
|-----------------------------|--------|-------|
| <i>Chalchiutlanetzin</i> ,  | in the | 667   |
| <i>Ixtlilcuecabuac</i> ,    | in the | 719   |
| <i>Huetzin</i> ,            | in the | 771   |
| <i>Totepueb</i> ,           | in the | 823   |
| <i>Nacaxoc</i> ,            | in the | 875   |
| <i>Mitl</i> ,               | in the | 927   |
| <i>Xiutzaltzin</i> , Queen, | in the | 979   |
| <i>Topiltzin</i> ,          | in the | 1031. |

It might appear extraordinary that just eight monarchs should reign in the course of four centuries, if it were not explained by a singular

(e) The seven *Toltecan* leaders were, *Zacatl*, *Chalkatzin*, *Ebecatzin*, *Cobuatzon*, *Tzihuacoatl*, *Metzotzin*, and *Tlapalmetzotzin*.

(f) We have pointed out the year in which the *Toltecan* monarchs began their reigns, by taking for granted the epoch of their leaving *Huchuetlapallan*, which however, is very uncertain.

## BOOK II.

law of that people, according to which, no king was suffered to reign either longer or shorter than a Toltecan age; which, as we shall mention in another place, consisted of fifty-two years. If a king completed the age, upon the throne, he immediately resigned the government, and another was put in his place: and if the king happened to die before the age was expired, the nobles assumed the administration, and, in the name of the deceased king, governed the kingdom for the remaining years of the age. This was the case with the Queen Xiutzaltzin, after whose death in the fifth year of her reign, the nobles held the government for the forty-eight years which succeeded.

SECT. II.  
The great civilization of the Toltecas.

The Toltecas were the most celebrated people of Anahuac, for their superior civilization, and skill in the arts; whence, in after ages, it has been common to distinguish the most remarkable artists, in an honourable manner, by the appellation of Toltecas. They always lived in society, collected into cities, under the government of kings, and regular laws. They were not very warlike, and less turned to the exercise of arms than to the cultivation of the arts. The nations that have succeeded them, have acknowledged themselves indebted to the Toltecas for their knowledge of the culture of grain, cotton, pepper, and other most useful fruits. Nor did they only practise those arts which are dictated by necessity, but those also which minister to luxury. They had the art of casting gold and silver, and melting them in whatever forms they pleased, and acquired the greatest reputation from the cutting of all kinds of gems: but nothing, to us, raises their character so high as their having been the inventors, or at least the reformers of that system of the arrangement of time, which was adopted by all the civilized nations of Anahuac; and which, as we shall see afterwards, implies numerous observations, and a wonderfully correct astronomy.

Cav. Boturini (g), upon the faith of the ancient histories of the Toltecas, says, that observing in their own country of *Huebuethapallan*, how the solar year exceeded the civil one by which they

(g) In a work of his, printed at Madrid, in 1746, under the title of, *Sketch of a general History of New Spain, founded upon a great Number of Figures, Symbols, Characters, Hieroglyphics, Hymns, and Manuscripts of Indian Authors, lately discovered.*

reckoned,

reckoned, about six hours, they regulated it by interpoling the intercalary day once in the four years; which they did, more than one hundred years before the Christian era. He says besides, that in the year 660, under the reign of *Ixtlalcuecchahuac*, in Tula, a celebrated astronomer called *Huematzin*, assembled, by the king's consent, all the wise men of the nation; and with them painted that famous book called *Tesamoxtli* or Divine Book, in which were represented, in very plain figures, the origin of the Indians, their dispersion after the confusion of tongues at Babel, their journey in Asia, their first settlements upon the Continent of America, the founding of the kingdom of Tula, and their progress till that time. There were described the heavens, the planets, the constellations, the Toltecan calendar with its cycles, the mythological transformations, in which were included their moral philosophy, and the mysteries of their deities concealed by hieroglyphics from common understandings, together with all that appertained to their religion and manners. The above mentioned author adds, that that eclipse of the sun which happened at the death of our Saviour, was marked in their paintings, in the year 7. *Tecbtli* (b); and that some learned Spaniards, well acquainted with the history and the paintings of the Toltecas, having compared their chronology with ours, found that they reckoned from the creation of the world to the birth of Christ, five thousand one hundred and ninety-nine years, which is exactly the computation of the Roman calendar.

Whatever may be in these things mentioned by Boturini, upon which I leave the prudent reader to form his own judgment, there cannot be a doubt, with those who have studied the history of that people, that the Toltecas had a clear and distinct knowledge of the universal deluge, of the confusion of tongues, and of the dispersion of the people; and even pretended to give the names of their first ancestors who were divided from the rest of the families upon that

(b) All those who have studied carefully the history of the nations of Anahuac, know very well that those people were accustomed to mark eclipses, comets, and other phenomena of the heavens, in their paintings. Upon reading Boturini I set about comparing the Toltecan years with ours, and I found the 34th year of Christ, or 30th of our era, to be the 7. *Tecbtli*: but I did this merely to satisfy my own curiosity, and I do not mean either to confirm or give credit to the things told us by that author.

## BOOK II.

universal dispersion. It is equally certain, as we shall shew in another place, however incredible it may appear to the critics of Europe, who are accustomed to look upon the Americans as all equally barbarous, that the Mexicans and all the other civilized nations of Anahuac regulated their civil year according to the solar, by means of the intercalary days, in the same manner as the Romans did after the Julian arrangement; and that this accuracy was owing to the skill of the Toltecas. Their religion was idolatrous, and they appear by their history to have been the inventors of the greatest part of the mythology of the Mexicans, but we do not know that they practised those barbarous and bloody sacrifices which became afterwards so common among the other nations.

The Tezcucan historians believed the Toltecas the authors of that famous idol, representing the god of water, placed on mount *Tlaloc*, of which we shall speak hereafter. It is certain that they built in honour of their beloved god *Quetzalcoatl*, the highest pyramid of Cholula, and probably also these famous ones of Teotihuacan in honour of the sun and moon, which are still in existence, though much disfigured (*i*). Boturini believed the Toltecas built the pyramid of Cholula, to counterfeit the tower of Babel; but the painting on which his error is supported (sufficiently common with the vulgar of New Spain), is the work of a modern and ignorant Cholan, the whole of it being a heap of absurdities (*k*).

(*i*) Betancourt says these pyramids were built by the Mexicans; this is certainly false, and contrary to the opinion of all other authors, American as well as Spanish. Dr. Seguenza appears to think they were the work of the Olmecas; but as we have no other remains of the architecture of that nation, by which we might judge; and besides, these pyramids being made after the model of that of Cholula, we are therefore induced to think that the Toltecas were the architects of them all, as Torquemada and other authors relate.

(*k*) The painting alluded to by Boturini, represented the pyramid of Cholula, with this Mexican inscription, *Toltecatl Chalchihuatl onaxia Ehecatzotl*; which he thus interprets: *A monument, or precious stone of the Toltec nation, whose neck searches into the region of the air*: but independent of the incorrectness of the writing, and the barbarism Chalchihuatl, whoever is in the least instructed in the Mexican language, will immediately perceive there could not be a more whimsical interpretation. At the foot of the picture, says Boturini, the author put a note, in which, addressing himself to his countrymen, he admonished them as follows: Nobles, and gentlemen, behold your scriptures, the image of your antiquity, and the history of your ancestors; who, moved by fear from the deluge, built this asylum, for a ready retreat, in case of being again visited by such a calamity. But to speak the truth, the Toltecas must have been utterly deprived of understanding, if from the fear of the deluge



During the four centuries which the monarchy of the Toltecas lasted, they multiplied considerably, extending their population every way in numerous and large cities; but the direful calamities which happened to them in the first years of the reign of Topiltzin, gave a fatal shock to their prosperity and power. For several years heaven denied them the necessary showers to their fields, and the earth the fruits which supported them. The air, infected with mortal contagion, filled daily the graves with the dead, and the minds of those surviving with consternation, at the destruction of their countrymen. A great part of the nation died by famine and sickness. Topiltzin departed life in the second year *Tecpatl*, the twentieth of his reign, which was probably the year 1052 of the vulgar era, and with him the Toltecan monarchy concluded. The wretched remains of the nation, willing to save themselves from the common calamity, sought timely relief to their misfortunes, in other countries. Some directed their course to Onohualco or Yucatan, some to Guatemala, while some families stopped in the kingdom of Tula, and scattered themselves in the great vale where Mexico was afterwards founded; some in Cholula, Tlaximoloyan, and other places; and amongst these were the two princes sons of king Topiltzin, whose descendants, in course of time, intermarried with the royal families of Mexico, Tezcucó, and Colhuacan.

These imperfect accounts of the Toltecas are all that we think proper to be told here, omitting many fabulous relations introduced

deluge they had undertaken, at so much expence and labour, the building of that ominous pyramid, while in the highest mountains, a little distant from Cholula, they had a much more secure asylum from inundations, with less danger of perishing by want. In the same work, Boturini says, was represented the baptism of Ilamateuſtli, Queen of Cholula, conferred upon her by Deacon Aguilar, the 2d of August, 1521, together with the apparition of the Virgin to a certain religious Franciscan, who was living at Rome, ordering him to depart for Mexico; where he was to place on a mountain built by art (that is, the pyramid of Cholula), her image. But this is no more than a string of dreams and lies; for in Cholula there never were either kings, nor could such baptism, of which no author says a word, have been celebrated on the 6th of August, 1521; as at that time Aguilar, with the other Spaniards, was in the heat of the siege of the capital, which was to render itself up, seven days after, to the conquerors. Of the pretended apparition of the mother of God, there is no memory among the Franciscan historians, who never omitted any thing of this kind in their chronicles. We have demonstrated the falsity of this relation, to caution those, with regard to modern pictures, who may in future undertake the history of Mexico.

BOOK II. by other historians (*l*). We would require to have the *Divine Book*, cited by Boturini, and by Sig. D. Ferdinand d'Alba Ixtlilxohitl in his most valuable manuscripts to throw greater light on the history of this celebrated nation.

After the destruction of the Toltecas, for the space of one century, the land of Anahuac remained solitary, and almost entirely depopulated, until the arrival of the Chechemecas (*m*).

The Chechemecas, like the Toltecas who preceded them, and other nations which came after them, were originally from the northern countries, as we may call the North of America, like the North of Europe, the seminary of the human race. From both, in swarms, have issued numerous nations to people the countries in the South. their native country, of the situation of which we are ignorant, was called *Amaquemecan*, where, according to their account, different monarchs ruled their nation for many years (*n*). The character of the Chechemecas, as is shewn by their history, was very singular, as a certain degree of civilization was blended with many traits of barbarism. They lived under the command of a sovereign, and the chiefs and governors deputed by him, with as much submission as is usual among the most cultivated nations. There were distinctions between the nobility and commonalty, and the plebeians were accustomed to reverence those whose birth, merit, or favour with the

(*l*) Torquemada says, that at a certain festival-ball made by the Toltecas, the sad-looking devil appeared to them in a gigantic size, with immense arms, and in the midst of the entertainment he embraced and suffocated them; that then he appeared in the figure of a child with a putrid head, and brought the plague; and finally, at the persuasion of the same devil they abandoned the country of Tula. But this good author understood these symbolical figures literally; whereas they were meant only to represent the famine and pestilence which had befallen them, at the time when they were in the height of their prosperity.

(*m*) In our second dissertation, we differ from Torquemada, who does not allow more than eleven years of interval between the destruction of the Toltecas and the arrival of the Chechemecas.

(*n*) Torquemada names these Chechemecan kings of Amaquemecan, and to the first he gives one hundred and eighty years of reign; to the second, one hundred and fifty-six; and to the third, one hundred and thirty-three. See our second dissertation on the absurd chronology of this author. He also confidently affirms, that Amaquemecan was six hundred miles distant from the spot where the city of Guadalupe is at present, but in more than one thousand two hundred miles of inhabited country beyond that city, there is not the least trace or memory of the kingdom of Amaquemecan; from whence we believe it to be a country still undiscovered, and greatly farther to the northward than Torquemada imagined.

princ

prince raised them above the other ranks. They dwelt in communities together, in places composed, as we may imagine, of poor huts (*o*); but they neither practised agriculture, nor those arts which accompany civil life. They lived only on game, and fruits, and roots which the earth spontaneously produced. Their clothing was the rough skins of the wild beasts they took in prey, and their arms no other than the bow and arrow. Their religion was reduced to the simple worship of the sun, to which pretended divinity they offered herbs and flowers which they found springing in the fields. With respect to their customs, they were certainly less displeasing and less rude than those to which the genius of a nation of hunters gives birth.

Their motive for leaving their native country, is uncertain; as likewise the etymology of the word *Chechemecatl* (*o*). The last king whom they had in Amaquemecan, left his government divided between his two sons Achcauhtli and Xolotl; the latter either not brooking, as frequently happens, the division of regal authority, was willing to prove whether fortune destined him other territories, where he could govern without a rival; or perceiving that the mountains of his kingdom were not sufficient to provide support for the then probably increased number of inhabitants, determined to ease necessity by a timely departure. Having taken, therefore, such resolution from the one or other motive, and having first got intelligence, by his emissaries of a good situation in the southern countries, he set out from his native land, with a large army of his subjects, who were disposed, from affection or interest, to accompany him. In their travels they encountered with the ruins of the Toltecan settlements, and in particular of the great city of Tula, where they arrived at the end of eighteen months. From this they proceeded towards Chem-

SECT. IV.  
Xolotl, first  
king of the  
Chechemecas, in Amaquemecan.

(*o*) Torquemada says, that the Chechemecas had no houses, but dwelt in the caverns of mountains; but in the same chapter where he says this, he affirms that *the capital city* of their kingdom was called Amaquemecan.

(*o*) Several authors have laboured to guess at the etymology of the word *Chechemecatl*. Torquemada says, that this name is derived from *Techichinar*, which signifies *sucking*, because the Chechemecas sucked the blood of the animals which they hunted. But this is a forced etymology, particularly among those nations, who did not alter derivative names in such a manner. Betancourt believed it to be derived from *Chilimi*, that is, *dogs beans*. They were so called by other nations, in contempt; but had this been the case, they would not have boasted, as they did, of the name Chechemecatl.



BOOK II. poalla and Tepepolco, forty miles distant, towards the north, from the site of Mexico. From thence Xolotl sent the prince Nopaltzin, his son, to survey the country. The prince crossed the borders of the lakes, the mountains which surround the delightful vale of Mexico, and having marked the whole country, from the top of a lofty mountain, he shot four arrows to the four winds in token of taking possession, in the name of his father, of all that country. Xolotl being made acquainted with the quality of the country, resolved to establish himself in Tenayuca, a place six miles distant from the site of Mexico towards the north, and distributed his people among the neighbouring lands : but the greater population being towards the north, and north-west, that tract of land had since the name of Chechemecatllalli, that is, the land of the Chechemecas. Historians relate, that in Tenayuca there was a review of the people taken, and therefore it was likewise given the name of *Nepobualco*, which means, the place of enumeration ; but what Torquemada adds, is entirely incredible, that there were more than a million of Chechemecas found at this review, and there remained even until his time, twelve piles of the stones which they continued to throw during the review. Besides, neither is it probable that so large an army should set out on so long an expedition ; or does it appear possible that so small a district could support a million of hunters.

The king being settled in Tenayuca, which he destined for the place of his court, and having given proper orders for the forming of other towns and villages, he commanded one of his captains, named Achitomatl, to go and trace the source of certain rivers which the prince had observed in his expedition. Achitomatl found in Chalpoltepec, in Cojohuacan, and in other places, several Toltecan families, from whom he learned the cause and time of their desolation. The Chechemecas, not only avoided to disturb those miserable relics of that celebrated nation, but formed alliances with them, many of the nobles marrying with the women of Tolteca ; and among others, prince Nopaltzin married Azcaxochitl, a virgin descended from Pochotl, one of the two princes of the royal family of Tolteca, who survived the destruction of their nation. This humanity brought its recompence to the Chechemecas ; for from their commerce with  
that



that industrious nation, they began to taste corn, and other fruits of industry ; were taught agriculture, the manner of digging metals, and the art of casting them ; also to cut stones, to spin and weave cotton, and other things, by which they improved their means of living, their clothing, their habitations, and manners.

Nor did the arrival of other civilized nations contribute less to the refinement of the Chechemecas. Eight years were scarcely elapsed from the time that Xolotl had established himself in Tenayuca, when there arrived in that country six respectable persons, with a considerable retinue of people. They were from a northern country, neighbouring to the kingdom of Amaquemecan, or a little distant from it, the name of which is not mentioned by historians ; but we have reason to believe that it was the country of *Aztlan*, the native country of the Mexicans, and that these new colonies were the six famous tribes of Nahuatlachi, of which all the historians of Mexico make mention, and we shall shortly treat of. It is probable that Xolotl sent advice to his native country, of the advantages of the situation where he was established ; and that such information, spread among the adjoining nations, incited many families to follow his steps, and partake his good fortune. It is also to be imagined, that some famine or scarcity having happened to the northern countries, so many people were obliged to seek relief in lands to the southward. However it was, the six persons arrived in Tenayuca from the North, were graciously received by the Chechemecan king ; and when he learned the purpose of their travel, and their desire to stay in that country, he assigned them a district which they might inhabit with their people.

A few years after, there arrived three other princes, with a great army of the Acolhuan nation, natives of Teoacoluacan, a country neighbouring to, and not far distant from the kingdom of Amaquemecan. These princes were named *Acolhuatzin*, *Chiconquauhtli*, and *Tzontecomatl*, and were of the most noble house of *Citin*. It was the most cultivated and most civilized of all the nations which were in that country since the Toltecas. It may be easily supposed, how great a rumour was occasioned by such a novelty, in that kingdom, and what disquiet so great a multitude of unknown people raised

## BOOK II.

among the Chechemecas; nor does it seem probable, that they would have been permitted to enter the kingdom, without having previously given information of their condition, and the motives of their visit. The king was at this time in Tezcuco, where he had removed his court, either being tired of Tenayuca, or allured by the advantageous situation of that new place. Here the three princes arrived, and being presented to the king, after a profound bow, and that ceremony of respect so familiar to these nations of kissing the hand after having touched the earth with it, they addressed him in words to this purpose. "We are come, mighty king, from the kingdom of Teoacoluacan, a little distance only from your native country: we are all three brothers, and sons of a great lord; but being acquainted with the happiness which the Chechemecas enjoy under the rule of a prince so humane, we have preferred to the advantages which we had in our native country, the honour of becoming your subjects. We pray you, therefore, to give us place in your happy land, where we may live dependent on your authority and subject to your command." The Chechemecan sovereign was pleased with the lordly air and courtly manners of these noble youths, but still more with the flattering vanity of seeing humbled, in his presence, three princes allured from such distant countries by the fame of his clemency and his power. He replied with complaisance to their address, and offered to comply with their desires; but while he was deliberating in what manner he should do it, he ordered his son to lodge them, and take care of their entertainment.

The king had two daughters who were marriageable, whom, from the first he had thought of marrying with the two eldest princes; but he was unwilling to discover this intention, until he should be acquainted with their disposition, and should be sure of the consent of his subjects. When he was satisfied in mind of both these points, he called the princes to him, who remained anxious about their fate, and opened his resolution to them, not only to grant them establishments in his kingdom, but also to marry two of them with his daughters, lamenting that he had no other, to avoid leaving any one excluded from the new alliance. The princes thanked him with warm expressions of gratitude, and proffered to serve him with the utmost fidelity.

When

When the day appointed for the nuptials arrived, such a concourse of people flocked to Tenayuca, the place destined for the solemnization, the city being unable to receive them, many remained in the country. Acolhuatzin married the eldest of the princesses, named Cuetlaxochitl, and Chiconquautli the other. The third prince had *Coatctli*, a virgin born in Chalco of most noble parents, in whom the Toltecan and Chechemecan blood were both mixed. The public rejoicings lasted sixty days, and the entertainments consisted of wrestling, running, and combats with wild beasts, exercises which were agreeable to the genius of the Chechemecas, and in all of them the prince Nopaltzin distinguished himself. After the example of their royal personages, the two nations continued to increase their alliance by inter-marriages until they became one, which taking its name from the most noble party, was called Acolhua, and the kingdom Acolhuacan; the name of Chechemecas being left to those who, preferring the exercise of the chase to the toil of agriculture, or grown impatient of subordination, went off to the mountains, which are towards the north and the north-west of the vale of Mexico, where yielding themselves up to the impulse of their barbarous liberty, without a chief, without laws, without a fixed dwelling, or the other advantages of society, they employed the day in pursuit of animals for prey, and when fatigued sunk down to sleep wherever night overtook them. These barbarians mingled with the Otomies, a nation which was attached to the same course of life, occupied a tract of more than three hundred miles of country, and the Spaniards were harassed by their descendants for many years after the conquest of Mexico.

When the nuptial festivities were at an end, Xolotl divided his kingdom into several distinct states, and assigned the possession of them to his sons in law, and the other nobles of each nation. He granted to prince Acolhuatzin the state of Azcapozalco, eighteen miles to the west of Tezcucó, and from him descended the kings under whose government the Mexicans continued more than fifty years. On Chiconquauhli he conferred the state of Xaltocan; and on Tzontecomatl, that of Coatlichan.

SECT. VII.  
Division of  
the states, and  
rebellions.

The population daily increased, and with it the civilization of the people; but at the same time ambition and other passions which had  
lain



## BOOK II.

lain dormant from the want of ideas, in times of a savage life, began to awaken in their minds. Xolotl, who, during the greatest period of his reign, had exercised great clemency in his government, had found himself, in the last years of his life, constrained to use severe measures to check the restless disposition of some rebels, occasionally depriving them of their offices, or punishing the most criminal with death. These just chastisements, instead of intimidating, exasperated them so much, that they formed the atrocious design of taking the king's life, for the execution of which an occasion speedily presented itself. A little time previous to this the king had expressed a wish to increase the waters of his gardens where he was accustomed to take recreation, and frequently also relieved his burden of years with sleep, to which he was invited by the coolness and charms of the place. Being acquainted with this, the rebels dammed up the little river which crossed the city, and opened a ditch to conduct the waters to the gardens; waited the time at which the king was accustomed to go to sleep, then raising the dam let all the water at once into the gardens, and suddenly overflowed them. They flattered themselves that their vicious aim would never be detected; as the disaster of the king might be imputed to an accident, or to ill conducted measures by his subjects, who sincerely desired to serve their sovereign: but they deceived themselves, and their attempt proved abortive; as the king had secret intelligence of their conspiracy; but dissembling his knowledge of it, he retired at his usual time into the garden, and went to sleep on an elevated spot, where he was exposed to no danger. When he afterwards saw the water enter, although the treason was now apparent, he continued his dissimulation to ridicule his enemies: "I," he then said, "was persuaded that my subjects loved me, but now I see they love me still more than I believed. I was desirous of increasing the water of my garden, and behold my subjects have done it without any expence: it is proper therefore to rejoice at my happiness." He then ordered there should be rejoicings in the court, and when they were concluded, he departed full of anguish and disdain for Tenayuca, resolved to inflict exemplary punishment on the conspirators; but there he was seized with a mortal distemper which moderated his passion.

Being



Being now sensible of an approaching death, he called prince Nopaltzin to him, his daughters, and Acolhuatzin his son-in-law, the other princes being now dead, and recommended to them concord among themselves, the care of the people committed to their charge, the protection of the nobility, and clemency to all their subjects; after which, a few hours, in the midst of the tears and complaints of his children, he ended his life in a very advanced age, having reigned in that country, as appears, more than forty years. He was a robust and courageous man, but of a most affectionate heart to his children, and mild to his people. His reign would have been more happy had its duration been more short (*q*).

The news of the death of the king immediately spread over the whole kingdom, and speedy advice of it was given to the principal lords, that they might attend at the funeral. They adorned the royal corpse with various little figures of gold and silver, which the Chechemecas, having been instructed by the Toltecas, had begun now to work, and placed it in a chair made of gum copal and other aromatic substances; and thus it remained five days, while the lords summoned to the funeral arrived. After they were all assembled, the corpse was burnt, according to the custom of the Chechemecas, and the ashes gathered in an urn of the hardest stone. This urn was kept exposed for forty days in a hall of the royal mansion, where daily the nobility thronged to pay their homage of tears to their deceased sovereign, and the urn was afterwards carried to a cave in the neighbourhood of the city with similar demonstrations of grief.

As soon as the funeral of Xolotl was concluded, they celebrated the ascension of prince Nopaltzin to the throne with acclamations and rejoicings for other forty days. When the lords took leave of their new king to return to their respective states, one of them made this short harangue: "Great king and lord, as your subjects and servants, we go in obedience to your commands, to govern the people you have committed to our charge, bearing in our hearts the pleasure of having seen you on the throne, not less due to your virtue than your birth. We acknowledge the good fortune unequalled which we

BOOK II.

SECT. VIII.

Death and  
funeral of  
Xolotl.

SECT. IX.

Nopaltzin  
II. king of  
the Chechemecas.

(*q*) Torquemada gives Xolotl one hundred and thirteen years of reign, and more than two hundred years of life. On this see our Dissertation.

BOOK II. “ have in serving so illustrious and powerful a lord ; and we request  
 “ you to regard us with the eyes of a real father, and to protect us  
 “ with your might, that we may rest secure under your shade. You  
 “ are as well the water which restores, as the fire which destroys, and  
 “ in your hands hold equally our life and our death.”

The lords having taken leave, the king remained in Tenayuca, with his sister the widow of the prince Chiconquauhtli. He was then, as far as we can conjecture, about sixty years of age, and had sons and grandsons. His lawful children by the Toltecan queen were Tlotzin, Quauhtequihua, and Apopozoc. On Tlotzin, who was the first born, he conferred the government of Tezcucó, that he might begin to learn the difficult art of governing men ; and the other two were placed over the states of Zacatlan and Tenamitic (*r*).

The king passed one year in the court of Tenayuca, arranging the affairs of the state, which were not so settled as they had been at first. From thence he went to Tezcucó, to treat with his son about the most convenient measures to be taken to restore the former tranquillity of his kingdom. While he was there he went one day into the royal gardens with his son, and some other lords of the court, and as they were in conversation, he burst suddenly into a flood of tears ; being requested to explain the cause, “ Two causes,” said he, “ produce  
 “ my tears, the one the memory of my late father, which is revived  
 “ by the sight of this place where he used to take recreation ; the  
 “ other is the comparison which I make of these happy days with the  
 “ present bitter moments. When my father planted these gardens,  
 “ he had quiet subjects, who served him with sincerity, and received  
 “ the offices which he conferred upon them, with humility and  
 “ gratitude ; but at present ambition and discord are every where pre-  
 “ vailing. It troubles me to be obliged to use the subjects as ene-  
 “ mies, whom I once in this place treated as friends and brothers.  
 “ Do you, my son,” addressing Tlotzin, “ keep constantly in your

(*r*) If we are to adopt the chronology of Torquemada, we must give Nopaltzin when he mounted the throne one hundred and thirty years of age ; as when he arrived with his father in the country of Anahuac, he was at least eighteen or twenty years, which added to the one hundred and thirteen years, which, according to Torquemada, Xolotl reigned in that country, make one hundred and thirty-one, or one hundred and thirty-three. On this see our Second Dissertation.

“ eyes the image of your grandfather, and strive to imitate the examples of prudence and justice which he left us. Strengthen your heart with every virtue which you will have occasion for, to govern your subjects.” After condoling some time with his son, the king departed for his court of Tenayuca.

The prince Acolhuatzin, who was still living, thinking the boundaries of his state of Azcapozalco too narrow, resolved to take possession of Tepetzotlan, and in fact took it by force, in spite of the resistance made by Chalchiuhcua, lord of that state. It is to be believed, that Acolhuatzin would not have done so violent an act without the express consent of the king, who was, probably, willing to revenge himself in that manner of some offence he had received from Chalchiuhcua.

The contest was a good deal more bloody which arose a little after from interests of a very different nature. Huetzin, lord of Coatlichan, son of the late prince Tzontecomatl (s), was desirous of marrying Atotoztli, a noble and beautiful virgin, and grand-daughter of the queen. Jacazozotl, lord of Tepetlaoztoc, made similar pretensions; but either being more strongly enamoured, or more violent in temper, not content with having demanded her of her father, he was willing to render himself master of his beauty by arms; and for this purpose collected a small army of his subjects, which was joined by Tochinteuçtli, who had been lord of Quahuacan, but was dispossessed on account of his misdeeds, and banished to Tepetlaoztoc. Huetzin, apprized of this intent, went to meet him with a greater number of troops, and gave him battle in the neighbourhood of Tezcucó, in which some of Jacazozotl's people were slain along with himself, and the rest of the army routed. Tochinteuçtli saved himself by flight, sheltering himself in the city of Huexotzinco, on the other side of the mountains. Huetzin, having got rid of his rival, with the con-

(s) Torquemada makes Huetzin, son of Itzmitl, and him son of Tzontecomatl in the thirteenth chapter of book the first; but in chapter 40, he says, that Itzmitl was one of those who came with Xolotl from Amaquemecan, so that he makes him born before his father Tzontecomatl, as he was a young man only when he came to Anahuac; and he did not come before the 47th year of the reign of Xolotl, as the same author affirms. Besides in one place, he makes Itzmitl a pure Chichimecan; and in another place the son of an Acolhuan. But who is capable of marking all the contradictions and anachronisms of Torquemada?



**BOOK II.** sent of the king took possession of the maid and the state of Tepetlaoztoc.

After these small wars of the feudatory princes, one more considerable arose between the crown and the province of Tollantzinco, which was in rebellion. The king himself took the field in person with a large army; but as the rebels were numerous in force and well disciplined, the royal army was worsted during nineteen days which the war lasted, until being reinforced by new troops, under the command of Tlotzin, he defeated the rebels, and punished the heads of the rebellion in the most rigorous manner. Their evil example, when imitated by other lords, met with the same fate.

Nopaltzin had just restored tranquillity to his kingdom, when the famous prince Acolhuatzin, first lord of Azcapozalco, died, leaving the state to his son Tezozomoc. His funeral was celebrated with great magnificence, the king and the nobility of both the nations of Acolhua and Chechemeca attending.

SECT. X.  
Tlotzin III.  
king of the  
Chechemeca.

The king himself did not long survive, having reigned thirty-two years, and declared Tlotzin, his first born, successor to his crown. The funeral rites were performed at the same court, and with the same form and ceremonies as that of Xolotl, to whom he was similar not less in disposition than in robustness and courage.

Among the lords who were present at the accession of the new king to the throne, were his two brothers Quauhtiquehua and Apopozoc, whom he entertained for one year in his palace. Tlotzin was of so benevolent and affectionate a disposition, he was the whole delight of his vassals. All the nobles sought pretences to visit him, and enjoy the pleasure and charms of his conversation. Notwithstanding his natural disposition to peace, he took great care of the affairs of war, making his subjects frequently exercise in arms, and he himself was fond of the chase; but we know no particular acts or events of his reign, during thirty-six years which he occupied the throne of Acolhuacan. He died afflicted with the most severe pains in Tenayuca. His ashes were deposited in an urn of costly stone, which was for forty days exposed to the sight of the people under a pavilion.

SECT. XI.  
Quinaltzin  
IV. king of

Tlotzin was succeeded in the kingdom by his son Quinaltzin, had by Quauhcihuatzin, daughter of the lord of Huexotla. His exaltation

to



to the throne was celebrated with greater solemnity than that of his predecessors; not at Tenayuca, but at Tezcucó, where he established his court, and from that time until the conquest of the Spaniards, that city continued the capital of the kingdom of Acolhuacan. In his passage from the new to the old court, he made himself be transported in a portable chair or open litter, borne on the shoulders of four principal lords, and under an umbrella which was carried by four others. Until that time all the sovereigns had used to walk on foot. This king was the first to whom vanity suggested such a kind of pomp, and his example was imitated by all the kings and nobles of that country, who strove to surpass each other in ostentatious grandeur. An emulation not less pernicious to states than to princes themselves.

The commencement of his government was very tranquil; but the states of Meztitlan and Tototepéc, which are situated in the mountains lying to the north of that capital, soon rose in rebellion. The moment the king received the advice, he marched with a great army, and sent to tell the heads of the rebellion, that if their courage was equal to their perfidy, they should descend within two days to the plain of Tlaximalco, where their fate would be decided by battle; if not, he was resolved to put flames to their city, without pardon to women or children. The rebels, as they were already well prepared, came down before the time appointed to the plain, to shew their courage. The signal for battle being given, the attack became furious and obstinate on both sides until night separated the armies, leaving the victory undecided. They continued for forty days frequently engaging, the rebels being no way discouraged by the advantages which the royal troops daily gained; but perceiving at length, by the slaughter and diminution of their forces, that their ruin was inevitable, they surrendered to their sovereign, who, after rigorous punishment of the ringleaders of the rebellion, pardoned the crime of the people. The same conduct was observed with Tepepolco, which had also rebelled.

This spirit of rebellion spread like contagion over all the kingdom; and Tepepolco was scarcely subdued when Huchuitoca, Mizquic, Totolapa, and four other cities, declared a revolt. The king chose to go in person with a strong body of troops against Totolapa, and sent against the other six cities as many detachments under command of brave and faithful generals; his success was such, that in a very short space  
of

## BOOK II.

of time, and without any considerable loss, he brought all the seven cities again under his obedience. These victories were celebrated with great rejoicings during eight days in the court, and rewards given to the officers and soldiers who had distinguished themselves. As the evil example of some states had excited others to rebellion, so did the unsuccessful issue serve in future as a caution not to form new conspiracies against the loyalty due to their sovereign; from whence, during the rest of his government, which, according to historians, lasted sixty years, Quinatzin enjoyed the utmost tranquillity.

When he died they observed ceremonies to him which had never been practised with his ancestors; they opened his body, took out his bowels, and prepared it with different aromatic substances, to keep it some time free from corruption. They afterwards placed it in a great chair, clothed in royal habits, and armed with a bow and arrow, and put at his feet a wooden eagle, and behind him a tyger, to signify his bravery and intrepidity. In this state it was exposed for forty days; and after the usual mourning, burnt, and the ashes buried in a cave of the mountains neighbouring to Tezcuco.

Quinatzin was succeeded on the throne by his son Techotlalla; but the events of this and the following Chechemecan kings reigns being connected with those of the Mexicans, who had at this period (in the fourteenth century of the vulgar era), founded their famous capital, we reserve the relation of them to another place, judging it sufficient at present to lay before the reader the series of all the kings, annexing, as far as is known, the year of the vulgar era in which they began their reigns, that we may afterwards make some mention of the nations which arrived before the Mexicans in that country.

## Chechemecan Kings.

|                           |                                     |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <i>Xolotl</i> ,           | began to reign in the 12th century. |
| <i>Nopaltzin</i> ,        | in the 13th century.                |
| <i>Tlotzin</i> ,          | in the 14th century.                |
| <i>Quinatzin</i> ,        | in the 14th century.                |
| <i>Techotlalla</i> ,      | in the 14th century.                |
| <i>Ixtlilxochitl</i> (t), | in the 1406.                        |

Be-

(t) We do not reckon Ixtlilxochitl among the Chechemecan kings, because he was only created governor of Tezcuco by the Spaniards. It is therefore to be doubted, if Cuicuilzcatzin

Between this and the following kings reign, the tyrants Tezozomoc and Maxtla occupied the throne of Acolhuacan.

|                        |                   |
|------------------------|-------------------|
| <i>Nezahualcoyotl,</i> | in the year 1426. |
| <i>Nezahualpilli,</i>  | in the year 1470. |
| <i>Cacamatzin,</i>     | in the year 1516. |
| <i>Cuicuitzcaztin,</i> | in the year 1520. |
| <i>Coanacotzin,</i>    | in the year 1520. |

We cannot fix the year in which the five first kings began to reign, because we do not know how long Xolotl and Techotlalla reigned; we, however, think it probable, that the Chechemecan monarchy had a beginning in Anahuac about the end of the twelfth century, and lasted 330 years, until about 1521, at which time it ceased with the kingdom of Mexico. At least eleven lawful kings, and two tyrants occupied the throne.

The Acolhui arrived in the country of Anahuac after the beginning of the 13th century. With regard to other nations, there is an incredible difference of opinion and confusion in historians respecting their origin, their number, and the time in which they settled in Anahuac. The great study which I have made to trace truth has served only to increase my uncertainty, and to make me despair of ever knowing hereafter what is hitherto unknown. Leaving aside, therefore, all fables, we shall adhere to what is certain, or at least probable.

The Olmecas and the Xicallancas, whether one nation, or two distinct nations, but constantly allied and connected together, were so ancient in the country of Anahuac, that many authors account them prior to the Toltecas (*u*). Of their origin we know nothing, nor do the ancient pictures tell us more than that they inhabited the country circumjacent to the great mountain Matlalcueje, and that being driven

SECT. XII.  
The Olmecas and the Otomies.

caztin is to be numbered among these kings; as in spite of, and contrary to the right of Coanacotzin, he was intruded on the kingdom of Acolhuacan by Montezuma, through the intrigues of Cortes.

(*u*) Some authors, and among them the celebrated D. Siguenza, have wrote that the Olmecas passed from the Atlantic isles, and that they alone came to Anahuac from the quarter of the East, all the other nations having come from the region of the North: but we know no foundation for this opinion.



BOOK I. from thence by the Teochechemecas, or Tlascalans, they transported themselves to the coast of the gulf of Mexico (x).

The Otomies, who formed one of the most numerous nations, were probably one of the most ancient in that country; but they continued for many ages in barbarism, living scattered in the caverns of the mountains, and supporting themselves by the chase, in which they were most dextrous. They occupied a tract of more than three hundred miles of land, from the mountains of Izmiquilpan towards the north-west, bordering in the east and west on other nations equally savage. In the fifteenth century, either being compelled by force, or stimulated by the example of other nations, they began to live in society, under subjection to the crown of Acolhuacan. In the country of Anahuac, and likewise in the vale of Mexico, they settled an infinite number of places; the greater, and especially the most considerable of them, such as those of Xilotepec and Huitzapan, were in the vicinage of the country which they occupied before; the others were scattered among the Matlatzincas and Tlascalans, and in other provinces of the kingdom, preserving even down to our times, their primitive language in the insular colonies, though surrounded by other nations. We are not, however, to conclude, that the whole nation was then brought to a state of civil life, as a great part, and possibly the most numerous, were still left together with the Chechemecas in the condition of savages. The barbarians of both nations, which were confounded together by the Spaniards, under the name of Chechemecas, made themselves famous by their invasions, and were not finally subdued by the Spaniards until the seventeenth century. The Otomies have always been reputed the most rude nation of Anahuac, not more from the difficulty every body finds in understanding their language than their servile state of life; as even in the time of the Mexican kings they were treated as slaves. Their language is very difficult and full of aspirations, which they make partly in the throat, partly in the nose; but otherwise it is sufficiently copious and expressive. Anciently they were renowned for their dexterity in the chase; at present they traffick in coarse cloths for the dress of the other Indians.

(x) Boturini conjectures, that the Olmecas, when driven from their country, went to the Antilles, or Caribbee Islands, and South America. This is no more than conjecture.



The nation of the Tarascas occupied the vast, rich, and pleasant country of Michuacan, where they multiplied considerably, and settled many cities and an infinite number of villages. Their kings were rivals of the Mexicans, and had frequent wars with them. Their artists excelled, or vied with those of other nations; at least after the conquest of Mexico: the best Mosaic works were made in Michuacan, and there only this valuable art was preserved unto our time. The Tarascas were idolatrous, but not so cruel as the Mexicans in their worship. Their language is copious, sweet, and sonorous. They make frequent use of the soft R; their syllables, for the most part, consist of a single consonant, and a single vowel. Besides the natural advantage of their country, the Tarascas had the good fortune to have D. Vasca di Quiroga for their first bishop, one of the most distinguished prelates Spain has produced, worthy of being compared with the ancient fathers of the church, and whose memory was preserved fresh unto our time, and will last perpetually among these people. The country of Michuacan, which is one of the finest of the New World, was annexed to the crown of Spain by the free and spontaneous act of its lawful sovereign, without costing the Spaniards a drop of blood, although it is probable that the recent example of the ruin of the Mexican empire, intimidated and impelled that monarch to such a concession (y).

The Mazahuas were once a part of the nation of the Otomies, as the languages of both nations are but different dialects of the same tongue; but this diversity between two nations so jealous of preserving their idioms uncorrupted, is a clear argument of the great anti-

(y) Boturini says, that the Mexicans finding themselves besieged by the Spaniards, sent an embassy to the king of Michuacan, to procure his alliance; that he assembled an hundred thousand Tarascas, and as many Teochechemecas, in the province of Avalos; but that, being intimidated by certain visions which his sister had, who was once dead but returned to life again, he discharged the army, and abandoned the undertaking of succouring the Mexicans, as he had intended. But all this account is a string of fables. As far as we know, no author of that age makes mention of such an event. Whence came these hundred thousand Teochechemecas, who were so quickly assembled? Why was the army collected in the province most distant from Mexico? Who has ever seen the king of France order his troops to be assembled in Flanders, to succour some city of Spain? The resurrection of the princess is a fable founded on the memorable occurrence, respecting the sister of Montezuma, of which we shall speak hereafter.

BOOK II. quity of their separation. The principal places which they inhabited were on the western mountains of the vale of Mexico, and formed the province of Mazahuacan, belonging to the crown of Tacuba.

The Matlatzincas made a considerable state in the fertile vale of Toluca; and, however great, anciently, their reputation was for bravery, they were, notwithstanding, subjected to the crown of Mexico, by king Axayacatl.

The Miztecas and Zapotecas peopled the vast countries of their name, to the south-east of Tezcucó. The numerous states into which these two countries were divided, continued a long time under several lords or rulers of the same nations, until they were subdued by the Mexicans. Those nations were civilized and industrious; they had their laws, exercised the arts of the Mexicans, and made use of the same method to compute time, and the same paintings to perpetuate the memory of events, in which they represented the creation of the world, the universal deluge, the confusion of tongues; although the whole was intermixed with various fables (z). Since the conquest, the Miztecas and Zapotecas have been the most industrious people of New Spain. While the commerce of silk lasted, they were the feeders of the worms; and to their labours is owing all the cochineal, which for many years, until the present time, has been imported from Mexico into Europe.

The Chiapanese have been the first peoplers of the New World, if we give credit to their traditions. They say that Votan, the grandson of that respectable old man who built the great ark to save himself and family from the deluge, and one of those who undertook the building of that lofty edifice which was to reach heaven, went, by express command of the Lord, to people that land. They say also that the first peoplers came from the quarter of the North, and that when they arrived at Soconusco, they separated, some going to inhabit the country of Nicaragua, and others remaining in Chiapan. This country, as historians say, was not governed by a king, but by two military chiefs, elected by priests. Thus they remained until they were subjected by

(z) See the work of Fra Gregorio Garzia Dominicano, entitled, the *Origin of the Indians*, in book v. chap. 4. concerning the mythology of the Miztecas,

the last kings of Mexico to that crown. They made the same use of paintings as the Mexicans, and had the same method of computing time; but the figures with which they represented days, years, and months, were totally different.

Of the Coahuixcas, the Cuitlatecas, the Jopas, the Mazatecas, the Popolocas, the Chinantecas, and the Totonacas, we know nothing of the origin, nor the time when they arrived in Anahuac. We shall say something of their particular customs when ever it will illustrate the history of the Mexicans.

But of all the nations which peopled the region of Anahuac, the most renowned and the most signalized in the history of Mexico, were those vulgarly called the Nahuatlacas. This name, the etymology of which we have explained, in the beginning of this history, was principally given to those seven nations, or rather those seven tribes of the same nation, who arrived in that country after the Chechemecas, and peopled the little islands, banks, and boundaries of the Mexican lakes. These tribes were the Sochimilcas, the Chalchese, the Tapanecas, the Colhuas, the Tlahuicas, the Tlascalans, and the Mexicans. The origin of all these tribes was the province of Aztlan, from whence came the Mexicans, or from some other contiguous to it, and peopled with the same nation. All historians represent them as originally of one and the same country: all of them spoke the same language. The different names by which they have been known, were taken from the places which they settled, or from those in which they established themselves.

SECT. XV.  
The Nahuatlacas.

The Sochimilcas derived their name from the great city *Xochimilco* which they founded on the southern shore of the lake of sweet water or Chalco; the Chalchese, from the city of Chalco, upon the eastern shore of the same lake; the Colhuas, from Colhuacan; the Mexicans, from Mexico; the Tlascalans, from Tlascala; and the Tlahuicas, from the land where they established themselves; which, from its abounding in cinnabar, was called *Tlahuican* (*a*). The Tepanecas possibly had

(g) *Tlahuith*, is the Mexican name of cinnabar: and *Tlahuican* means the place or country of Cinnabar. Some authors call them *Tlahuicas*, and derive the name from a place of that land called *Tlahuic*; but besides that we never heard of such a place, the name does not appear conforming with the language.



## BOOK II.

their name from a place called Tepan (*b*), where they had been before they settled their famous city Azcapozalco.

It is beyond a doubt that these tribes did not arrive together in that country, but at different times, and in the order we have mentioned; but there is a great difference among historians respecting the precise time of their arrival in Anahuac. We are persuaded, for the reasons set forth in our dissertations, that the first six tribes arrived under conduct of the six lords who made their appearance immediately after the Chechemecas, and there was not so great an interval as Acosta supposes, between their arrival and that of the Mexicans.

The Colhuas, whom in general the Spanish historians confound with the Acolhuas, from the affinity of their names, founded the small monarchy of Colhuacan, which was annexed afterwards to the crown of Mexico, by the marriage of a princess, heiress of that state, with a king of Mexico.

The Tepanecas had also their petty kings, among whom the first was prince Acolhuatzin, after having married the daughter of Xolotl. His descendants usurped, as we shall relate, the kingdom of Acolhuacan, and governed all that country, until the arms of the Mexicans, joined with those of the true heir of Acolhuacan, destroyed both the tyrant and monarchy of Tepaneca.

SECT. XVI.  
The Tlascalans.

The Tlascalans, whom Torquemada and other authors call Teochechemecas, and consider as a tribe of the (*n*) Chechemecan nation, established

(*c*) Several authors call them *Tepanecas*; both are Mexican. *Tepanecatl* means *the inhabitant of the palace*; *Tepanecatl*, *inhabitant of a stony place*. Others give it a very violent etymology.

(*c*) Torquemada, not only says that the Tlascalans were Teochechemecas, but likewise affirms, in lib. iii. cap. 1c. that these *Teochechemecas*, were *Otomies*. If the Tlascalans were Otomies, why did they not speak the language of the Otomies? And if they ever did speak it, why did they give it up for the Mexican! Where is there an instance of a free nation abandoning its own native language, to adopt that of its enemies? Nor is it less incredible that the Chechemecas were Otomies, as the above author supposes, although in lib. i. cap. 2. he affirms the contrary. Who forced the Chechemecas to give up their primitive language? He only who was unacquainted with the character of these nations, and knew not how constant they were in retaining their national language, could be capable of persuading us that the Chechemecas, by their communication and alliance with the Acolhuas, abandoned the language of the Otomies for the Mexican. If the true Otomies have not, during so many ages, altered their idiom, neither under the dominion of the Mexicans, nor under that of the Spaniards, how is it credible that the Chechemecas should entirely change their



## HISTORY OF MEXICO.

BOOK II.

established themselves, originally, in *Poyaubtlan*, a place situated on the eastern shore of the lake of Tezcuco, between the court and the village of Chemalhuacan. There they lived for some time in great misery, supporting themselves solely by the chase, on account of the want of arable soil ; but being multiplied in their numbers, and desirous of extending the boundaries of their territory, they drew upon themselves the hatred of the surrounding nations. The Sochimilcas, the Colhuas, the Tepanecas, and probably also the Chalchese, who, by being borderers on them, were most exposed to injury, made a league together, and equipped a considerable army to drive such dangerous settlers from the vale of Mexico. The Tlascalans, whom the consciousness of their usurpations, kept always vigilant, came well arrayed for an encounter. The battle was one of the most bloody and memorable which appears in the history of Mexico. The Tlascalans, though inferior in number, made such a slaughter of the enemy, that they left the field covered with carcases, and a part of the lake on the border of which they had engaged, tinged with blood. Notwithstanding they came off so gloriously in this battle, they determined to abandon that quarter, being well persuaded that while they remained there they would be daily harraßed by their neighbours ; for which reason having reviewed the whole country by means of their emissaries, and finding no situation where they could jointly establish themselves, they agreed to separate, one part of them going towards the South, the other to the North. The latter, after a short journey, settled themselves, with the permission of the Chechemecan king, in Tollantzincó, and in Quauh-

their language, being masters of that country, and occupying the throne of Acolhuacan from the time of Xolotl the founder of that kingdom, until the conquest of Mexico. I do not doubt, however, that the proper language of the ancient Chechemecas was the same with that of the Acolhuas and Nahuatlacas, that is, the Mexican. I am of the same opinion respecting the Toltecas, whatever other authors may say ; nor can I, after the most diligent study of history, alter my sentiments. We know that the names of the places from whence the Toltecas and Chechemecas came, and of those which they settled in Anahuac, of the persons of both nations, and of the years which they used, were Mexican. We know that the Toltecas and Chechemecas, the Chechemecas and Acolhuas, from the first had communication with each other, and understood each other reciprocally without an interpreter. The Mexican language having spread as far as Nicaragua, is not to be ascribed to any thing else than the dispersion of the Toltecas who spoke it ; as it is known that the Nahuatlacas ever went beyond Chiapan. In short, we find nothing to support the contrary opinion, although it is so common among our historians.

chinanco

BOOK II. chinanco. The former travelling round the great volcano Popocatepec, through Tetella and Tochimilco, founded the city of Quauhquechollan, in the neighbourhood of Atrisco; and some, proceeding still farther, founded Amaliuhcan, and other villages; and thus extended themselves as far as *Poyaubtecatl* or the mountain Orizaba, to which they probably gave such a name in memory of the place in the vale of Mexico which they had quitted.

But the most numerous and respectable part of the tribe, directed their way by Cholula to the borders of the great mountain Matlalucueye, from whence they drove the Olmecas and Xicallancas, the ancient inhabitants of that country, and slew their king Colopechtli. Here they established themselves under a chief, named *Colhuatateuctli*, contriving to fortify themselves also, to be the more able to resist the neighbouring people if they should incline to attack them. In fact it was not long before the Huexozincas and other people, who knew of the bravery and number of their new neighbours, fearing they would, in time, become troublesome, levied a great army to expel them wholly from the country. The attack was so sudden, that the Tlascalans were forced to retreat to the top of that great mountain: finding themselves there in the greatest perplexity, they sent ambassadors to implore the protection of the Chechemecan king, and obtained from him a large body of troops. The Huexozincas not having forces sufficient to contend with the royal army, applied for assistance to the Tepanecas, who they believed would not let pass so fair an opportunity of revenging themselves; but the tragic event of Posahtlan was still in their memories, and although they sent troops, these were enjoined not to do hurt to the Tlascalans; and the Tlascalans themselves were advised not to esteem them as enemies, but to rest confident that that nation was not sent for any other purpose than to deceive the Huexozincas, and not to disturb the harmony which subsisted between them and the Tepanecas. By the aid of the Tezcucans, and the perfidious inaction of the Tepanecas, the Huexozincas were defeated, and obliged to return to their state in disgrace. The Tlascalans being freed from so great a danger, and having made peace with their neighbours, returned to their first establishment, to continue their settlement and population.

Such

Such was the origin of the famous city and republic of Tlascala, the perpetual rival of the Mexicans, and occasion of their ruin. At first they all obeyed one chief; but afterwards when their population was considerably advanced, the city was parted into four divisions, called *Tepeticpac*, *Ocotelolco*, *Quibuiztlan*, and *Tizatlan*. Every division had its lord, to whom all the places dependent on such division were likewise subject; so that the whole state was composed of four small monarchies; but these four lords, together with other nobles of the first rank, formed a kind of aristocracy for the general state. This diet or senate was the umpire of war and peace. It prescribed the number of troops which were to be raised, and the generals who were to command them. In the state, although it was circumscribed, there were many cities and large villages, in which, in 1520, there were more than one hundred and fifty thousand houses, and more than five hundred thousand inhabitants. The district of the republic was fortified on the western quarter with ditches and entrenchments, and on the east with a wall six miles in length; towards the south it was, by nature, defended by the mountain Matlalcueye, and by other mountains, on the north.

The Tlascalans were warlike, courageous, and jealous of their honour and their liberty. They preserved, for a long time, the splendor of their republic, in spite of the opposition they suffered from their enemies; until at length, being in confederacy with the Spaniards against their ancient rivals the Mexicans, they were involved in the common ruin. They were idolatrous, and as superstitious and cruel in their form of worship as the Mexicans. Their favourite deity was *Camaxtle*, the same which was worshipped by the Mexicans, under the name of *Huitzilopochtli*. Their arts were the same as those of other neighbouring nations. Their commerce consisted principally in maize and cochineal. From the abundance of maize the name of *Tlascallan* was given to the capital, which means the place of bread. Their cochineal was esteemed above any other, and, after the conquest, brought yearly to the capital a revenue of two hundred thousand crowns; but they entirely abandoned this commerce, for reasons we shall mention elsewhere.

The



## BOOK II.

## SECT. XVII.

Migration of  
the Mexicans  
to the coun-  
try of Ana-  
huac.

The Aztecas or Mexicans, who were the last people who settled in Anahuac, and are the chief subject of our history, lived until about the year 1160 of the vulgar era, in Aztlan, a country situated to the north of the gulf of California, according to what appears from the route they pursued in their migration, and the conclusions made by the Spaniards in their travels towards these countries (*d*). The cause of abandoning their native country may have been the same which other nations had. But whatever it was, it will not be altogether useless to leave to the free judgment of the reader that which the Mexican historians themselves relate of the birth of such a resolution.

There was, say they, among the Aztecas, a person of great authority called *Huitziton*, to whose opinion all paid great deference. This person exerted himself, though it is not known for what reason, to persuade his countrymen to change their country, and while he was meditating on his purpose, he heard once, by accident, a little bird singing on the branches of a tree, whose notes imitated the Mexican word *Tihui*, which means, *let us go*. This appeared a favourable opportunity to obtain his wish of his countrymen. Taking, therefore, another respectable person with him, he conducted him to that tree where the little bird used to sing, and thus addressed him: “Do you  
“ not attend, my friend *Tecpaltzin*, to what this little bird says,  
“ *Tihui Tihui*, which it repeats every moment to us; what can it  
“ mean, but that we must leave this country and find ourselves an-  
“ other? Without doubt, it is the warning of some secret divinity who  
“ watches over our welfare: let us obey, therefore, his voice, and  
“ not draw his anger upon us by a refusal.” *Tecpaltzin* gave full assent to this interpretation, either from his opinion of the wisdom of *Huitziton*, or because he was likewise prepossessed with the same de-

(*d*) In our dissertations we speak of these travels from New Mexico towards the North. *Betancourt* makes mention of them in part ii. tratt. i. cap. 10. of his *Teatro Mexicano*. This author makes Aztlan two thousand seven hundred miles distant from Mexico. *Boturini* says, Aztlan was a province of Asia. But I do not know what reasons he had for so singular an opinion. In several charts, published in the sixteenth century, this province appears situated to the north of the gulf of California, and I do not doubt that it is to be found in that quarter, though at a distance from the gulf, as the distance mentioned by *Betancourt* seems very probable.



fire. Two persons, so respectable having agreed in sentiment, they were not long in drawing the body of the nation over to their party.

Although we do not give credit to such an account, it does not, however, appear altogether improbable; as it is not difficult for a person who is reputed wise, to persuade an ignorant and a superstitious people, through motives of religion, to whatever he pleases. It would be a much harder task to persuade us of what the Spanish historians generally report, that the Mexicans set out on their migration, by express command of the demon. The good historians of the sixteenth century, and those who have copied them, suppose it altogether unquestionable that the demon had continual and familiar commerce with all the idolatrous nations of the New World; and scarcely recount an event of history, of which they do not make him the author. *But however certain they may be, that the malignity of those spirits impell them to do all the hurt they can to man, and that they have shewn themselves sometimes in visible forms to seduce them, especially to those who have not, by regeneration, entered into the bosom of the church;* it is not, however, to be imagined that such apparitions were so very frequent, or that their intercourse was so familiar with the above mentioned nations as these historians believe; the Supreme Power who watches, with benign providence, over all his creatures, commits to any such enemies of the human race no powers to hurt it. Our readers, therefore, who may have read of like events in other authors, ought not to wonder if they do not find us equally credulous. We are not disposed to ascribe any effect to the demon, on the bare testimony of some Mexican historians, as they may easily have fallen into errors, from the superstitious ideas with which their minds were darkened, or the impositions of priests that are common among idolatrous nations.

The migration of the Aztecas, however, which is certain, whatever might have been their motive for undertaking it, happened, as near as we can conjecture, about the year 1160 of the vulgar era. Torquemada says he has observed an arm of the sea (c), or a great river, represented

(c) I believe this pretended arm of the sea is no other than the representation of the universal deluge, painted in the Mexican pictures before the beginning of their migration, as appears from the copy, published by Gemelli, of a picture shewn to him by the celebrated Dorr.

## BOOK II.

mented in all the ancient paintings of this migration. If any river was ever represented in such paintings, it must have been the *Colorado* or Red River, which discharges itself into the gulf of California, in latitude  $32\frac{1}{2}$ , as this is the most considerable river of those which lie in the route they travelled. Having passed, therefore, the Red River from beyond the latitude of 35, they proceeded towards the south-east, as far as the river *Gila*, where they stopped for some time; for at present there are still remains to be seen of the great edifices built by them on the borders of that river. From thence having resumed their course towards the S. S. E. they stopped in about 29 degrees of latitude, at a place which is more than two hundred and fifty miles distant from the city of Chihuahua, towards the N. N. W. This place is known by the name of *Café grandi*, on account of an immense edifice still existing, which, agreeable to the universal tradition of these people, was built by the Mexicans in their peregrination. This edifice is constructed on the plan of those of New Mexico, that is, consisting of three floors with a terrace above them, and without any entrance to the under floor. The door for entrance to the building is on the second floor, so that a scaling ladder is necessary; and the inhabitants of New Mexico build in this manner, in order to be less exposed to the attack of their enemies; putting out the scaling ladder only for those to whom they give admission into their house. No doubt the Aztecas had the same motive for raising their edifice on this plan, as every mark of a fortress is to be observed about it, being defended on one side by a lofty mountain, and the rest of it being surrounded by a wall about seven feet thick, the foundations of which are still existing. In this fortress there are stones as large as mill-stones to be seen; the beams of the roof are of pine, and well finished. In the centre of this vast fabric is a little mount made on purpose, by what appears, to keep guard on, and observe the enemy. There have been some ditches formed in this place, and several kitchen utensils have been found,

Siguenza. Boturini alleges this arm of the sea to be the gulf of California, as he is persuaded that the Mexicans passed from Aztlan to California, and from thence crossing the gulf transported themselves to Culiacan: but there being remains found of the buildings constructed by the Mexicans in their migration, on the river Gila, and in Pimeria, and not in California, there is no reason to believe that they crossed the sea, but came by land to Culiacan.

such

such as earthen pots, dishes, and jars, and little looking-glasses of the stone Itztli (*f*).

From hence, traversing the steep mountains of Tarahumara, and directing their course towards the south, they reached Huiecolhuacan, at present called Culiacan, a place situated on the gulf of California, in  $24\frac{1}{2}$  deg. of latitude, where they stopped three years (*g*). Here it is probable, that they built houses and cottages to dwell in, and sowed such seeds for their food as they carried with them, and usually did in every place where they stayed any considerable time. There they formed a statue of wood representing Huitzilopochtli the tutelar deity of the nation, that he might accompany them in their travel, and made a chair of reeds and rushes to transport it which they called *Teoicpalli*, or chair of God. They chose priests who were to carry him on their shoulders, four at a time, to whom they gave the name of *Teotlamacazqu*, or servants of God, and the act itself of carrying him was called *Teomama*, that is to carry God on one's back.

From Huiecolhuacan journeying for many days towards the east, they came to Chicomoztoc, where they stopped. Hitherto all the seven tribes had travelled in a body together: but here they separated, and the Xochimilcas, the Tepanecas, the Chalchese, the Tlahuicas, and the Tlascalans proceeding onwards, left the Mexicans there with their idol. Those nations say the separation was made by express command of their God. There is little doubt that some disagreement among themselves was the occasion of it. The situation of Chicomoztoc, where the Mexicans sojourned nine years, is not known; but it appears to be that place twenty miles distant from the city of Zacatecas towards the south where there are still some remains of an immense edifice, which, according to the tradition of the Zacatecas, the ancient inhabitants of that country, was the work of the Aztecas in their

(*f*) These are the reports I received from two persons who had seen the Caste grandi. We should wish to have a plan of their form and dimensions; but now it would be very difficult to be obtained, the whole of that country being depopulated by the furious incursions of the Apaches and other barbarous nations.

(*g*) The stay of the Aztecas in Huiecolhuacan, is agreeable to the testimony of all historians, as well as their separation at Chicomoztoc. There is a tradition among the northern people of their passage through Tarahumara. Near to Nayarit there are trenches found which were made by the Cori, to defend themselves from the Mexicans in their route from Huiecolhuacan to Chicomoztoc.



BOOK II. migration; and it certainly cannot be ascribed to any other people; the Zapatecas themselves being so barbarous as neither to live in houses nor to know how to build them. Their being reduced to a smaller number by the dismemberment of the other tribes, may probably have been the reason that the Mexicans undertook no other buildings of that kind in their peregrination. Proceeding from the country of the Zacatecas towards the south, through Amica, Cocula, and Zayula, they descended into the maritime province of Colima, and from thence to Zacatula; where turning to the eastward, they ascended to Malinalco, a place situated in the mountains which surround the valley of Toluca (*b*), and afterwards taking their course towards the north, in the year 1196 they arrived at the celebrated city of Tula (*i*).

In their journey from Chicomoztoc to Tula, they stopped a while in Coatlicomac, where the tribe was divided into two factions, which became perpetual rivals, and alternately persecuted each other. This discord was occasioned, as they say, by two bundles which miraculously appeared in the midst of their camp. Some of them advancing to the first bundle to examine it, found in it a precious stone, on which a great contest arose, each claiming to possess it as a present from their god. Going afterwards to open the other bundle they found nothing but two pieces of wood. At first sight they undervalued them as things which were useless, but being made acquainted, by the wise Huitziton, of the service they could be of in producing fire, they prized them more than the precious stone. They who appropriated to themselves the gem were those, who, after the foundation of Mexico called themselves Tlatelolcas, from the place which they settled near to that city; they who took the pieces of wood were those who in future bore the name of Mexicans, or *Tenochcas*. This account however cannot be considered in any other light than as a moral fable, to

(*b*) It is evident from the manuscripts of P. Giovanni Tobar, a Jesuit exceedingly versed in the antiquities of those nations, that the Mexicans passed through Michuacan, and this could only be by Colima and Zacatula, which probably then belonged to the kingdom, as they now belong to the ecclesiastical dioceses of Michuacan; because if they had performed their journey any other way to Tula, they would not have touched at Malinalco.

(*i*) The epoch of the arrival of the Mexicans at Tula in 1196, is confirmed by a manuscript history in Mexican, cited by Boturini, and in this point of chronology other authors agree.



teach that in all things the useful is preferable to the beautiful. Notwithstanding this dissention both parties travelled always together for their imaginary interest in the protection of their god (*k*).

It ought not to excite wonder that the Aztecas made so great a circuit, and journeyed upwards of a thousand miles more than was necessary, to reach Anahuac: as they had no limits prescribed to their travel, and were in quest of a country where they might enjoy all the conveniences of life: neither is it surprising that in some places they erected large fabrics, as it is probable, they considered every place where they stopped the boundary of their peregrination. Several situations appeared to them at first, proper for their establishment, which they afterwards abandoned, from experience of inconveniences they had not foreseen. Wherever they stopped they raised an altar to their God, and at their departure left all their sick behind; and, probably, some others, who were to take care of them, and perhaps also, some who might be tired of such long pilgrimages, and unwilling to encounter fresh fatigues.

In Tula they stopped nine years, and afterwards eleven years in other places not far distant, until, in 1216, they arrived at Zumpanco, a considerable city in the vale of Mexico. Tochpanecatli, lord of this city, received them with singular humanity, and not contenting himself with granting them commodious dwellings, and regaling them plentifully; but becoming attached to them from long and familiar intercourse, he demanded from the chiefs of the nation, some noble virgin for a wife to his son Ilhuicatl. The Mexicans obliged by such proofs of regard presented Tlacapantzin to him, who was soon after married to that illustrious youth; and from them, as will appear, the Mexican kings descended.

After remaining seven years in Zumpanco, they went together with the youth Ilhuicatl to Tizayocan, a city a little distant from it, where Tlacapantzin bore a son, named after *Huitzilicuitl*, and at the same time they gave away another virgin to *Xochiatzin*, lord of Quauhtitlan. From Tizayecan they passed to Tolpetlac and Tepeyacac, where, at present,

(*k*) It is not to be doubted that the story of the packets is merely a fable; as the Aztecas knew, some centuries before, how to produce fire from two pieces of wood, by friction.

## BOOK II.

lies the village and renowned sanctuary of the Holy Virgin of Guadalupe, places all situated on the borders of the lake of Tezcucó, and near the site of Mexico, in which they continued for twenty-two years.

As soon as the Mexicans appeared in that country, they were reviewed by order of Xolotl then reigning; who, having nothing to fear, permitted them to establish themselves wherever they could: but those in Tepeyacac finding themselves harassed by *Tenancacaltzin*, a Chechemecan lord, they were forced, in 1245, to retire to Chapultepec, a mountain situated on the western border of the lake, hardly two miles distant from the site of Mexico, in the reign of Nopaltzin, and not of Quinatzin, as Torquemada and Boturini imagine (1).

The persecutions which they suffered in this place from some lords, and particularly from the lord of Xaltocan, made them, at the end of seventeen years, abandon it, to seek a more secure asylum in *Acocolco*, which consists of a number of small islands at the southern extremity of the lake. There for the space of fifty-two years they led the most miserable life; they subsisted on fish, and all sorts of insects, and the roots of the marshes, and covered themselves with the leaves of the *amoxtli* which grows plentifully in that lake, having wore out all their garments, and finding no means there of supplying themselves with others. Their habitations were wretched huts, made of the reeds and rushes which the lake produced. It would be totally incredible that for so many years they were able to keep in existence in a place so disadvantageous, where they were so stinted in the necessities of life, was it not verified by their historians and succeeding events.

## SECT.

## XVIII.

Slavery of the  
Mexicans in  
Colhuacan.

But in the midst of their miseries they were free, and liberty alleviated in some degree their distresses. In 1314, however, slavery was added to their other distresses. Historians differ in opinion concerning this event. Some say, that the petty king of Colhuacan, a city not far distant from Acocolco, not willing to suffer the Mexicans to maintain themselves in his territories without paying him tribute, made open war upon them, and having subdued, enslaved them.

(1) Quinatzin supposing to have been reigning at that time, the reign of him and his successor must have comprehended a space of an hundred and sixty-one years and upwards; if the chronology of Torquemada is adopted, who supposes Quinatzin reigning until the time at which the Mexicans entered the vale of Mexico. See our Dissertations,

Others

Others affirm, that this petty king sent an embassy to them, to inform them that having compassion for the miserable life which they led in those islands, he was willing to grant them a better place where they might live more comfortably; and that the Mexicans, who wished for nothing more ardently, accepted instantly the favour, and gladly quitted their disagreeable situation; but they had scarcely set out when they were attacked by the Colhuas and taken prisoners. Which ever way it was, it is certain, that the Mexicans were carried slaves to Tizapan, a place belonging to the state of Colhuacan.

After some years slavery, a war arose between the Colhuas and Xochimilcas their neighbours, with such disadvantage to the former, that they were worsted in every engagement. The Colhuas, being afflicted with these repeated losses, were forced to employ their prisoners whom they ordered to prepare for war; but they did not provide them with the necessary arms, either because these had been exhausted in preceding battles, or because they left them at liberty to accoutre themselves as they chose. The Mexicans being persuaded that this was a favourable occasion to win the favour of their lord, resolved to exert every effort of their bravery. They armed themselves with long stout staves, the points of which they hardened in the fire, not only to be used against the enemy, but to assist them in leaping from one bush to another if it should prove necessary, as, in fact, they had to combat in the water. They made themselves knives of *itzli*, and targets or shields of reeds wove together. It was agreed among them, that they were not to employ themselves as it was usual in making prisoners, but to content themselves with cutting off an ear, and leaving the enemy without further hurt. With this disposition they went out to battle, and while the Colhuas and Xochimilcas were engaged, either by land on the borders of the lake, or by water in their ships, the Mexicans rushed furiously on the enemy, assisted by their staves in the water; cut off the ears of those whom they encountered, and put them in a basket which they carried for that purpose; but when they could not effect this from the struggles of the enemy, they killed them. By the assistance of the Mexicans, the Colhuas obtained so complete a victory that the Xochimilcas not only abandoned the field,  
but



BOOK II. but afraid even to remain in their city, they took refuge in the mountains.

This action having ended with so much glory, according to the custom of those nations, the soldiers of the Colhuas presented themselves with their prisoners before their general; as the bravery of the soldiers was not estimated by the number of enemies which were left dead on the field, but of those who were made prisoners alive, and shewn to the general. It cannot be doubted, that this was a rational sentiment, and a practice conformable to humanity. If the prince can vindicate his rights, and repel force without killing his enemies, humanity demands that life should be preserved. If we are to take utility into our consideration, a slain enemy cannot hurt, neither can he serve us, but from a prisoner we may derive much advantage without receiving any harm. If we consider glory, it requires a greater effort to deprive an enemy solely of his liberty, than to wrest his life from him in the heat of contest. The Mexicans were likewise called upon to make the shew of their prisoners; but not having a single one to present, as the only four which they had taken were kept concealed for a particular purpose; they were reproached as a cowardly race by the general and the soldiers of the Colhuas. Then the Mexicans holding out their baskets full of ears, said, "Behold from the number of ears which we present, you may judge of the number of prisoners we might have brought if we had inclined; but we were unwilling to lose time in binding them that we might accelerate your victory." The Colhuas remained awed and abashed, and began to conceive apprehensions from the prudence as well as from the courage of their slaves.

The Mexicans having returned to the place of their residence which, as appears, was at that time Huitzolopochco, they erected an altar to their tutelary god; but being desirous at the dedication of it to make an offering of something precious they demanded something of their lord for that purpose. He sent them in disdain, in a dirty rag of coarse cloth, a vile dead bird, with certain filth about it, which was carried by the priests of the Colhuas, who having laid it upon the altar without any salutation, retired. Whatever indignation the Mexicans felt from so unworthy an insult, reserving their revenge for another occasion, instead of such filth they placed



placed upon the altar a knife of itzli, and an odoriferous herb. The day of consecration being arrived, the petty king of Colhua, and his nobility, failed not to be present, not to do honour to the festival, but to make a mockery of his slaves. The Mexicans began this function with a solemn dance, in which they appeared in their best garments, and while the bystanders were most fixed in attention, they brought out the four Xochimilca prisoners, whom they had till then kept concealed, and after having made them dance a little, they sacrificed them upon a stone, breaking their breast with the knife of itzli, and tearing out their heart, which, whilst yet warm and beating, they offered to their god.

This human sacrifice, the first of the kind which we know to have been made in that country, excited such horror in the Colhuas, that having returned instantly to Colhuacan, they determined to dismiss slaves who were so cruel, and might in future become destructive to the state; on which *Coxcox*, so was the petty king named, sent orders to them to depart immediately out of that district, and go wherever they might be most inclined. The Mexicans willingly accepted their discharge from slavery, and directing their course towards the north, came to *Acatzitzintlan*, a place situated between two lakes, named afterwards *Mexicaltzinco*, which name is almost the same with that of *Mexico*, and was given to it without doubt from the same motive, as we shall see shortly, which made them give it to their capital; but not finding in that situation the conveniencies they desired, or being inclined to remove farther from the Colhuas, they proceeded to *Iztacalco*, approaching still nearer to the site of Mexico. In *Iztacalco* they made a little mountain of paper, by which they probably represented Colhuacan (*m*), and spent a whole night in dancing around it, singing their victory over the Xochimilcas, and returning thanks to their god for having freed them from the yoke of the Colhuas.

After having sojourned two years in *Iztacalco*, they came at last to that situation on the lake where they were to found their city. There they found a nopal, or opuntia, growing in a stone, and over it

(*m*) The Mexicans represented Colhuacan in their pictures by the figure of a hunchbacked mountain, and the name has exactly that signification.

BOOK II. the foot of an eagle. On this account, they gave to the place, and afterwards to their city, the name of Tenochtitlan (*n*). All, or at least all the historians of Mexico, say, this was the precise mark given them by their oracle for the foundation of their city, and relate various events concerning it, which as they appear out of the course of nature, we have omitted as being fabulous, or at least uncertain.

SECT. XIX.  
Foundation  
of Mexico.

As soon as the Mexicans took possession of that place, they erected a temple for their god Huitzilopochtli. The consecration of that sanctuary, although miserable, was not made without the effusion of human blood; for a daring Mexican having gone out in quest of some animal for a sacrifice, he encountered with a Colhuan named Xomimitl; after a few words, the feelings of national enmity, excited them to blows; the Mexican was victor, and having bound his enemy carried him to his countrymen, who sacrificed him immediately, and with great jubilee presented his heart torn from his breast on the altar, exercising such cruelty not more for the bloody worship of that false divinity, than the gratification of their revenge upon the Colhuas. Around the sanctuary they began to build their wretched huts of reeds and rushes, being destitute at that time of other materials. Such was the beginning of the city of Tenochtitlan, which in future times was to become the court of a great empire, and the largest and most beautiful city of the new world. It was likewise called Mexico, the name that afterwards prevailed, which denomination being taken from the name of its tutelar god, signifies place of *Mexitli*, or *Huitzilopochtli*, as he had both these names (*o*).

The

(*n*) Several authors, both Spanish and of other nations, from ignorance of the Mexican language have altered this name; and in their books it is read Tenoxtitlan, Temilitan, Temihitlan, &c.

(*o*) There is a great difference of opinion among authors respecting the etymology of the word Mexico. Some derive it from *Metzli*, *Moon*; because they saw the moon represented in that lake as the oracle had predicted. Other say, that *Mexico* means *upon the fountain*, from having found one of good water in that spot; but these two etymologies are too violent, and the first besides is ridiculous. I was once of opinion, that the name was *Mexicco*, which means *in the center of Maquei*, or trees of the Mexican aloe; but from the study of the history I have been undeceived, and am now positive that *Mexico* signifies the place of *Mexitli*, or *Huitzilopochtli*, that is, the Mars of the Mexicans, on account of the sanctuary there erected to him; so that *Mexico* with the Mexicans is entirely equivalent to *Fanum Martis* of the Romans; the Mexicans take away the final syllable *tl*, in the compounding of words of this kind. The *co* added

The foundation of Mexico happened in the year 2. *Calli*, corresponding with the year 1325 of the vulgar era, when Quinatzin, the Chechemeca, was reigning in that country: but by changing their situation, the Mexicans did not suddenly better their fortune; for being insulated in the middle of a lake, without lands to cultivate, or garments to cover them, and living in constant distrust of their neighbours, they led a life as miserable as it was in other places, where they had supported themselves solely on the animal and vegetable produce of the lake. But when urged by necessity, of what is not human industry capable? The greatest want which the Mexicans experienced was that of ground for their habitations, as the little island of Tenochtitlan was not sufficient for all its inhabitants. This they remedied a little by making palisades in those places where the water was shallowest, which they terraced with stones and turf, uniting to their principal island several other smaller ones at a little distance. To procure to themselves afterwards stone, wood, bread, and every thing necessary for their habitations, their clothing, and food, they applied themselves with the utmost assiduity to fishing, not only of white fish, of which we have already spoken, but also of other little fish and insects of the marshes which they made eatable, and to the catching of innumerable kinds of birds which flocked there to feed in the water. By instituting a traffick with this game in the other places situated on the borders of the lake, they obtained all they wanted.

But the gardens floating on the water which they made of the bushes and mud of the lake, the structure and form of which we shall elsewhere explain, discovered the greatest exertion of their industry; on these they sowed maize, pepper, chia, French beans, and gourds.

Thus the Mexicans passed the first thirteen years, giving as much order and form to their settlement as possible, and relieving their distresses by dint of industry: until this period, the whole tribe had continued united, notwithstanding the disagreement of the two factions which had formed themselves during their migration. This discord, which was transmitted from father to son, at last burst violently out in

added to it is the preposition *in*. The word *Mexicaltzinco*, means the place of the house or temple of the god *Mexitli*; so that Huitzilopochtli, *Mexicaltzinco* and *Mexico*, the names of the three places successively inhabited by the Mexicans, mean the same thing in substance.



BOOK II. 1338. One of the factions not being longer able to endure the other, resolved to separate themselves; but not having it in their power to remove so far as their rage suggested, they went towards the North to reside on a little island at a small distance, which they named *Xaltitlco*, from finding a great heap of sand there, and afterwards, from a terrace which they made, *Tlatelolco*, a name which it still preserves (*p*). Those who established themselves on that small island, which was afterwards united to that of *Tenochtitlan*, had, at that time, the name of *Tlatelolcas*, and those who remained in the first situation called themselves *Tenochcas*; but we shall call them Mexicans, as all historians do.

A little before, or a little after this event, the Mexicans divided their miserable city into four quarters, assigning to each its tutelar god, besides the protecting god of the whole nation. This division subsists at present under the names of St. Paul, St. Sebastian, St. John, and St. Mary (*q*). In the centre of these quarters was the sanctuary of *Huitzilopochtli*, to whom they daily performed acts of adoration.

SECT. XXI.  
Another human sacrifice.

In honour of that false divinity at this period they made an abominable sacrifice which is not to be thought of without horror. They sent an embassy to the petty king of Colhuacan, requesting him to give them one of his daughters, that she might be consecrated mother of their protecting god, signifying that it was an express command of a god to exalt her to so high a dignity. The petty king enticed and infatuated by the glory which he would receive from the deification of his daughter, or intimidated by the disasters which might await him, if he refused the demand of a god, granted quickly all that was requested, especially as he could not well suspect what was to happen. The Mexicans conducted the noble damsel with great triumph to their city; but were scarcely arrived, as historians relate, when the demon commanded that she should be made a sacrifice, and after her death to be flayed; and that one of the bravest youths of the nation

(*p*) The ancients represented *Tlatelolco* in their pictures by the figure of a heap of sand. If this had been known by those who undertook the interpretation of the Mexican pictures, which were published with the letters of Cortes at Mexico, in 1770, they would not have called this place *Tlatilolco*, which name they have interpreted *oven*.

(*q*) The quarter of St. Paul was called by the Mexicans *Tecopan* and *Xochimilca*; that of Sebastian, *Atzacualco*; that of St. John, *Moyotla*; and that of St. Mary, *Cuepopan* and *Tlaquichin-cha*.

should

should be cloathed with her skin. Whether it was an order of the demon, or, what is more probable, a cruel pretence of the barbarous priests, all was punctally executed. The petty king, invited by the Mexicans to be present at the apotheosis of his daughter, went to be a spectator of that solemnity, and one of the worshippers of the new divinity. He was led into the sanctuary, where the youth stood upright by the side of the idol, clothed in the bloody skin of the victim; but the obscurity of the place did not permit him to discern what was before him. They gave him a censer in his hand, and a little copal to begin his worship; but having discovered, by the light of the flame which the copal made, the horrible spectacle, his anguish affected his whole frame, and being transported with the violent effects of it, he ran out crying with distraction, and ordered his people to take revenge of so barbarous a deed; but they dared not to undertake it, as they must instantly have been oppressed by the multitude; upon which the father returned inconsolable to his residence to bewail his disaster the remainder of his life. His unfortunate daughter was created goddess and honorary mother, not only of Huitzilopochtli, but of all their gods; which is the exact meaning of *Teteoinan*, by which name she was afterwards known and worshipped. Such were the specimens in this new city of that barbarous system of religion, which we shall hereafter explain.

## B O O K III.

*Foundation of the Mexican Monarchy: Events of the Mexicans under their four first Kings, until the Defeat of the Tepanecas and the Conquest of Azcapozalco. The Bravery and illustrious Actions of Montezuma Ilhuicamina. The Government and Death of Techotlalla, the fifth Chechemecan King. Revolutions in the Kingdom of Acolhuacan. Death of King Ixtlilxochitl, and the Tyrants Tezozomoc and Maxtlaton.*

## BOOK III.

SECT. I.  
Acamapitzin, first king  
of Mexico.

UNTIL the year 1352, the Mexican government was aristocratical, the whole nation paying obedience to a certain body, composed of persons the most respectable for their nobility and wisdom. The number of those who governed at the foundation of Mexico was twenty (*r*); among whom the chief in authority was *Tenoch*, as appears from their paintings. The very humble state in which they felt themselves, the inconveniencies they suffered from their neighbours, and the example of the Chechemecas, the Tepanecas, and the Colhuas, incited them to erect their little state into a monarchy, not doubting, that the royal authority would throw some splendor on the whole body of the nation; and flattering themselves that in their new chief they would have a father who would watch over the state, and a good general who would defend them from the insults of their enemies. The election fell, by common consent, on *Acamapitzin*, either from the acclamations of the people, or the votes of some electors, to whose judgment all were submissive; as was their mode afterwards.

Acamapitzin was one of the most famous and prudent persons then living amongst them. He was the son of *Opochtli*, a very noble Az-

(*r*) The twenty lords who then governed the nation were named *Tenoch*, *Atzin*, *Acacitli*, *Abucxotl* or *Abuciotl*, *Ocelopan*, *Xemimiltl*, *Xinhuac*, *Axolobua*, *Nanacatzin*, *Quentzin*, *Tlalala*, *Tzonitlayaub*, *Cozcail*, *Tezcail Tochpan*, *Mimich*, *Tetepan*, *Tezacatl*, *Acobatl*, and *Abetomecatl*.



teca (s), and Atozotli, a princess of the royal family of Colhuacan (t). On the father's side, he took his descent from Tochpanecatli, that lord of Zumpanco, who so kindly received the Mexicans when they arrived at that city. He was yet unmarried; on which account they soon determined to demand a virgin of one of the first families of Anahuac, and for that purpose sent successive embassies to the lord of Tacuba, and the king of Azcapozalco; but by both their pretensions were rejected with disdain. Without despairing from so disgraceful a refusal, they made the same demand from *Acolmiztli*, lord of *Coatlican*, and a descendant of one of the three Acolhuan princes, requesting him to give them one of his daughters for their queen. Acolmiztli complied with their request, and gave them his daughter Ilancueitl, whom the Mexicans conducted triumphantly away and celebrated the nuptials with the utmost rejoicings.

The Tlatelolcos who, from being neighbours and rivals, were constantly observing what was done in Tenochtitlan, that they might vie with it in glory, and prevent their being in future oppressed by that power, also created themselves a king: but not esteeming it advantageous that he should be one of their own nation, they demanded of Azcapozalco, king of the Tepaneca nation, to which lord the site of Tlatelolco, as well as Mexico was subject, one of his sons, that he might rule over them as their monarch, and that they might obey him as vassals. The king gave them his son *Quaquauh-pitzahuac*, who was immediately crowned first king of Tlatelolco in 1353.

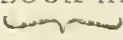
SECT. II.  
Quaquauh-  
pitzahuac I.  
king of Tla-  
telolco.

It is to be suspected that the Tlatelolcos, when they made such a demand from that king, had, with a view to flatter and incense him against their rivals, exaggerated the insolence of the Mexicans in creating a king without his permission; as in a few days after Azcapozalco assem-

(s) Some historians report, that Acamapitzin whom they suppose to have been born while in slavery at Colhuacan, was the son of old Huitzilihuitl; but this is not probable, as Huitzilihuitl, born while the Mexicans were in Tizayuca, was not less than ninety years of age when the Mexicans were made slaves; wherefore, Huitzilihuitl was not father, but certainly grandfather of Acamapitzin. Torquemada makes this king son of Cohuatzonitli; but we adhere to the opinion of Siguenza, who has investigated the genealogy of the Mexican kings with more criticism and diligence than Torquemada.

(t) It is much to be wondered at that Opochtli should marry a virgin so illustrious, at a time when his nation was so reduced and degraded by slavery; but this marriage is ascertained by the pictures of the Mexicans and Colhuas, seen by the learned Siguenza.

bled

BOOK III.  bled his counsellors, and spoke to them in the following words :  
 “ What is your judgment, nobles of Tepaneca, of this act of the  
 “ Mexicans? They have introduced themselves into our dominions,  
 “ and continue to increase very considerably their city and their com-  
 “ merce, and what is worse have had the audacity to create one of their  
 “ own nation a king, without waiting for our consent. If they pro-  
 “ ceed thus in the beginning of their establishment, what is to be ima-  
 “ gined they will do hereafter when they have increased their numbers  
 “ and added to their strength? Is it not to be apprehended that in fu-  
 “ ture, instead of paying us the tribute which we have imposed on  
 “ them, they will pretend that we should pay it to them, and that the  
 “ petty king of the Mexicans will aim also at being monarch of the  
 “ Tepanecas? I therefore consider it necessary to multiply their bur-  
 “ dens so much, that in labouring to discharge them they may be  
 “ worn out, or on failure of paying us, that we harass them with other  
 “ evils, and at last constrain them to abandon their state.”

SECT. III.  
 Taxes im-  
 posed on the  
 Mexicans.

All applauded the resolution; nor was it otherwise to be expected; as the prince who in council discovers his wish, rather looks for panegyrist to second his inclination, than counsellors to enlighten his understanding: the king then sent to inform the Mexicans, that the tribute which they had paid hitherto being too small, it was his pleasure that they should double it in future; that they were besides to carry so many thousands of willow and fir-plants to be set in the roads and gardens of Azcapozalco, and to transport to the court a great kitchen garden, where all the vegetables known in Anahuac were sown and growing.

The Mexicans, who, until that time had paid no other tribute than a certain quantity of fish, and a certain number of water-birds, were greatly distressed with these new grievances, fearing that they might constantly be increasing: but they performed all that was enjoined them, carrying at the appointed time along with their fish and fowl, the willows and floating garden. Whoever has not seen these most beautiful gardens, which in our time were cultivated in the middle of the water, and transported with ease wherever they desired, will not without difficulty be persuaded of the truth of such an event: but whoever has seen them as we have, and all who have sailed upon that lake, where  
 the

the senses receive the most delightful recreation, will have no reason to doubt of the authenticity of this history. Having obtained this tribute from them, the king ordered them to bring him the next year another garden, with a duck and a swan in it, both sitting on their eggs; but so, as that on their arrival at Azcapozalco, the brood might be ready to hatch. The Mexicans obeyed, and took their measures so well, that the foolish prince had the pleasure of seeing the chickens come out of the eggs. They were ordered the succeeding year to bring, besides a garden of this kind, a live stag: this new order was the more difficult to execute, as it was necessary to go to the mountains on the continent to hunt the stag, where they were in danger of engaging with their enemies; it was, however, accomplished, that they might escape from wrongs more oppressive. This hard subjection of the Mexicans lasted not less than fifty years. The historians of Mexico affirm, that the Mexicans in all their afflictions implored the protection of their god, who rendered the execution of such orders easy to them: but we are of a different opinion.

The poor king Acamapitzin, in addition to these disgusts, experienced the sterility of his queen Ilancueitl, and therefore married *Tescatlamiahuatl*, daughter of the lord of Tetepanci, by whom he had several sons, and among others Huitzilihuitl and Chimalpopoca, successors to him in the crown. He took this second wife without abandoning the first; they both lived in such harmony together that Ilancueitl charged herself with the education of Huitzilihuitl. He had other wives, although not honoured with the rank of queens; and among the rest, a slave, who bore *Itzcoatl*, one of the best and most renowned among the kings of Anahuac. Acamapitzin governed his city in peace, for thirty-seven years; his city, at that time, comprehending the whole of his kingdom. In his time population increased, buildings of stone were erected, and those canals which served as well for the ornament of the city as for the convenience of the citizens, were begun. The interpreter of Mendoza's collection ascribes to this king, the conquest of Mizquic, Cintlahuac, Quauhnahuac, and Xochimilco: but is it possible to believe that the Mexicans would undertake the conquest of four such great cities, at a time when they had difficulty to preserve their own territory. The picture, therefore, in that collection,



BOOK III. representing those four cities subdued by the Mexicans, must be understood to apply to the Mexicans, only as they were auxiliaries to other states, in the same manner, as a short time afterwards they served the king of Tezcuco against the Xaltocanese.


A little before his death, Acamapitzin called together the great men of the city; when after exhorting them to maintain their zeal for the public good, recommending to them the care of his wives and children; and declaring the pain it gave him at his death, to think of leaving his people tributary to the Tepanecas, he said, that, having received the crown from their hands, he put it into their hands again, in order that they might bestow it upon him who they thought would do the state most service. His death, which happened in the year 1389, was greatly lamented by the Mexicans, and his funeral was celebrated with as much magnificence as the poverty of the nation would admit.

From the death of Acamapitzin, until the election of a new king, as we are informed by Siguenza, an interregnum took place, of four months; a circumstance which never happened again, as from that time forward the new king was always chosen a very few days after the death of the preceding. Perhaps the election, at this time, might be retarded, by the nobles being employed in regulating the number of the electors, and in settling the ceremony of the coronation which was then beginning to be observed.

The electors then, chosen by the nobles, being assembled together, the oldest man among them addressed them in this manner. “ My age  
 “ emboldens me to speak first. The misfortune, O Mexican nobles,  
 “ which we have suffered by the death of our king, is very great; and  
 “ none ought to feel it more than we who were the feathers of his  
 “ wings, and the eye-lids of his eyes. Such a misfortune is still in-  
 “ creased, by the unhappy condition of dependence upon the power of  
 “ the Tepanecas, under which we live, to the reproach of the Mexi-  
 “ can name. Do you, then, whom it so much concerns to find a re-  
 “ medy for our present distresses, do you resolve to choose a king who  
 “ shall be zealous for the honour of our mighty god Huitzilopochtli,  
 “ who shall avenge, with his arm, the injuries done to our nation;  
 “ and who shall take the aged, the widow, and the orphan under the  
 “ shade

“shade of his clemency.” At the conclusion of this speech the electors gave their votes, and their choice fell upon Huitzilohuitl, son of the deceased king Acamapitzin. Then they proceeded, in regular order, to the house of the elected person, whom they placed in the middle of them, and conducted to the *Tlatocapalli*, that is the royal seat or throne; upon which they seated him; and after anointing him in the manner we shall describe in another place, they then placed upon his head the *Copilli* or crown, and made him their submissions one by one. Then one of the most considerable persons raised his voice, and thus addressed the king. “Be not discouraged, excellent youth, at receiving that new employment, to which you are called, of reigning over a nation which is inclosed among the reeds and rushes of this lake. It is, indeed, unfortunate to possess so small a kingdom within another’s territory, and to be the chief of a people, who, originally free, have now become tributary to the Tepanecas; but be comforted, and remember that we are under the protection of the great god Huitzilopochtli, whose image you are, and whose place you fill. The dignity to which you have been raised by him, should serve, not as an excuse for indolence and effeminacy, but as a spur to exertion. Have ever before your eyes the illustrious example of your great father, who spared no labour in the service of the public. We should wish, sir, to make you presents worthy of your station; but since our situation will not admit of it, be pleased to accept our promises of the most inviolable attachment and fidelity.”

Huitzilohuitl was not yet married when he ascended the throne: but it was thought proper that he should take a wife, and the nobles wished for a daughter of the king of Azcapozalco. To avoid, however, so ignominious a denial as they met with in the time of Acamapitzin, they resolved to make the request, upon this occasion, with the greatest demonstrations of humility and respect. Some of the nobles, therefore, went to Azcapozalco, and falling on their knees, when they were presented to the king, they declared their wishes, in the following words, “Behold, great lord, the poor Mexicans at your feet, humbly expecting from your goodness, a favour which is greatly beyond their merit; but to whom ought we to have recourse, except to you, who are our father and our lord. Behold us hanging upon your

BOOK III.  “ lips, and waiting only your signals to obey. We beseech you, with  
 “ the most profound respect, to take compassion upon our master and  
 “ your servant Huitzilihuitl, confined among the thick rushes of the  
 “ lake. He is without a wife, and we without a queen. Vouchsafe,  
 “ sir, to part with one of your jewels, or most precious feathers.  
 “ Give us one of your daughters, who may come to reign over us in  
 “ a country which belongs to you.”

These expressions, which are peculiarly elegant in the Mexican language, so softened the mind of *Texozomoc* (for that was the king's name), that he instantly granted his daughter *Ajaubcibuatl*, to the great joy of the Mexicans, who conducted her in triumph to Mexico, where the much wished-for marriage was celebrated, with the usual ceremony of tying together the skirts of the garments of the husband and wife. By this princess the king had a son the first year, who was named *Acolnahuacatl*; but being desirous to strengthen his kingdom by new alliances, he fought and obtained from the prince of Quauhnahuac, one of his daughters called *Miabuaxochitl*, by whom he had Motezuma *Ilhuicamina*, the most celebrated of the Mexican kings.

SECT. V.  
 Techotlala,  
 king of Acol-  
 huacan.

At that time, in Acolhuacan, reigned *Techotlala*, son of king Quimat-zin. The first thirty years of his reign were peaceful; but afterwards *Tzompan*, prince of Xaltocan, revolted, and finding his own force insufficient to oppose his sovereign, he called to his assistance the states of Otompan, Meztitlan, Quahuacan, Tecomic, Quauhtitlan, and Tepozotlan. The king promised him pardon, provided he would lay down his arms and submit; which clemency probably proceeded from respect to the noble extraction of the rebel, who was the last descendant of Chiconquauhtli, one of the three Acolhuan princes. But *Tzompan* confiding in the number of his troops, rejected the offer with contempt; when the king sent an army against him, which was joined by the Mexicans and Tepanecas, whose service he had demanded. The war was obstinate, and lasted for two months: but at length, victory declaring for the king, *Tzompan*, with all the chiefs of the revolted cities, was put to death, and in him was extinguished the illustrious race of Chiconquauhtli. This war, in which the Mexicans served as auxiliaries to the king of Acolhuacan against Xaltocan and the other confederated states, is represented in the third picture of Mendoza's collec-



tion : but the interpreter of those pictures was mistaken when he imagined that those cities were subjected to the Mexican crown.

After the end of the war the Mexicans returned to their city with glory ; and Techotlala, in order to prevent other rebellions in future, divided his kingdom into seventy-five states, giving each a chief to govern them in subordination to the crown. In each of them he likewise placed a certain number of the inhabitants of some other state ; expecting that the natives would be more easily kept in subjection by means of strangers who depended upon a foreign power ; a policy which might, indeed, be useful in preventing rebellion, but which was very oppressive to the innocent subjects, and created much trouble to the chiefs who were entrusted with the government. At the same time, he conferred honourable offices upon many of the nobles. He made *Tetlatō* general of his armies, *Tōlqui* entertainer and introducer of ambassadors, *Tlami* major-domo of the royal palace, *Amechichi* overseer of the cleaning of the royal houses, and *Cobuatl* director of the gold workers of Ocolco. No person worked in gold or silver, for the use of the king, except the directors own children, who had learnt the art for that purpose. The entertainer of ambassadors had many Colhuan officers under him ; the major-domo had a certain number of Chechemecas ; and the superintendant of the cleaning of the houses, an equal number of Tepanecas. By such regulations he increased the splendor of his court, and strengthened the throne of Acolhuacan ; although he could not hinder those revolutions which we shall soon have occasion to mention. These and other such instances of wise policy, which will appear in the sequel of this history, evidently shew the injustice done to the Americans by those who have considered them as animals of a different species, or as incapable of civilization or improvement.

The new alliance formed by the king of Mexico with the king of Azcapozalco, and the glory acquired by his subjects in the war of Xaltocan, served both to strengthen their little state and to make themselves more respectable in the eyes of their neighbours. Being enabled, therefore, to extend their trade and carry it on with greater freedom, they began, now, to wear cloaths made of cotton, which they had been entirely without, in their former state of indigence, when they had nothing but coarse stuffs made of the threads of the wild palm. But they

## BOOK III.

SECT. VI.  
 Limits of  
 Maxtlaton  
 to the Mexi-  
 cans.

they had scarcely time to breathe, when a new enemy and bloody persecutor started up, in the same royal family of Azcapozalco.

*Maxtlaton* prince of Coyoacan, and son of the king of Azcapozalco, a cruel, turbulent, ambitious man, and who was feared even by his father upon that account, had been displeased at the marriage of his sister *Ayauhcihuatl* with the king of Mexico. He concealed his displeasure, for some time, out of respect to his father; but in the tenth year of the reign of *Huitzilihuatl*, he went to Azcapozalco, and assembled the nobility, in order to lay before them his complaints against the Mexicans and their king. He represented the increase of the population of Mexico; enlarged upon the pride and arrogance of that people, and upon the fatal effects which were to be feared from their present dispositions; and especially complained of the great affront done to him by the Mexican king, in depriving him of his wife. It is necessary to observe, that *Maxtlaton* and *Ayauhcihuatl*; although both children of *Tezozomoc*, were yet born of different mothers; and perhaps such marriages were in those times, permitted among the *Tepanecas*. Whether he ever actually intended to marry his sister, or only made that a pretext to cover his cruel designs, is uncertain; but, in the assembly of the nobles, it was determined to summon *Huitzilihuatl*, to answer to the pretended charge. The Mexican king went to Azcapozalco; nor will this appear extraordinary, when we consider that it was no uncommon thing, at that time, for princes to visit one another; and that, besides, it was the duty of *Huitzilihuatl*, as a feudatory of that crown; for, although from the birth of *Acolnahuacatl*, the queen of Mexico had prevailed upon her father *Tezozomac* to relieve the Mexicans from the oppressions to which they had been subjected for so many years before, yet Mexico still continued in the nature of a fief of Azcapozalco, and the Mexicans owed the *Tepanecan* king an annual present of a couple of ducks by way of acknowledgement of his superiority.

*Maxtlaton* received *Huitzilihuatl* in a hall of the palace, and after having dined with him in the presence of the courtiers who flattered all his schemes, he charged *Huitzilihuatl* in the severest terms, with the pretended outrage done to him by the marriage of *Ayauhcihuatl*. The Mexican king with the greatest respect asserted his innocence, and said, that he certainly would never have solicited the princess, nor her father

father have given her away to him, if she had been betrothed to another. But in spite of the truth of his justification and the weight of his reasons, Maxtlaton angrily replied, "I might now, without hearing more, put you to instant death, and so punish your boldness and avenge my own honour; but I would not have it said that a Tepanecan prince killed his enemy in a treacherous manner. Depart in peace; and time will give me an opportunity of taking a more honourable revenge."

The Mexican went from him, filled with rage and vexation, and was not long without feeling the effects of his cruel kinsman's displeasure. The true cause of Maxtlaton's enmity arose from his fear of the crown of the Tepanecas one day coming to his nephew Acolnahuacatl, by which event his nation would become subject to the Mexicans. To remove the cause of his fear, he formed the barbarous resolution of putting his nephew to death, who was accordingly murdered a short time after by some persons who hoped, by that act of cruelty, to gain the favour of their master; no prince ever wanting, about him, mercenary men, who are ready to serve his passions (s). Tezozomoc gave no consent to the perpetration of this crime, but we do not know that he shewed any disapprobation of it. In the sequel of this history we shall see that the haughtiness, the ambition, and the cruelty of Maxtlaton rather encouraged than connived at by his indulgent father, brought ruin upon himself and his kingdom. Huitzilihuitl could ill brook such a barbarous injury; but he yet wanted sufficient power to take revenge.

In the same year with this tragical event (1399) died at Tlatelolco, the first king, Quaquauh-pitzahuac, leaving his subjects much more civilized, and the city greatly enlarged by handsome buildings and gardens. He was succeeded by *Tlacatcotl*, of whose origin historians differ widely in their relations; some imagining he was a Tepanecan as well as his predecessor, while others take him to have been an Acol-

SECT. VII.  
Tlacatcotl,  
second king  
of Tlatelol-  
co.

(s) There is no author who gives any account of the circumstances of this murder; and it is hardly to be conceived how the Tepanecas should be able to execute such a deed in Mexico; but we cannot doubt of the fact, as it is confirmed by all the national historians; but father Acoila has committed a mistake in confounding the murder of this young prince Acolnahuacatl, with the death of Chimalpopoca the third king of Mexico.



BOOK III. huan, appointed by the king of Acolhuacan. The rivalry which subsisted between the Mexicans and Tlatelolcas contributed greatly to the aggrandizement of their respective cities. The Mexicans had formed so many alliances, by marriage, with the neighbouring nations; had so greatly improved their agriculture, and increased the number of their floating gardens upon the lake; and had built so many more vessels to supply their extended commerce and fishing, that they were enabled to celebrate their secular year 1. *Tochtli*, which answers to the year 1402 of our era, with greater magnificence than any of the four which had elapsed since their first leaving of the country of Aztlan.

At this time Techotlala, far advanced in years, still reigned in Acolhuacan; who perceiving his end approach, called to him his son and successor Ixtlilxochitl, and, among many instructions, particularly recommended to him the conciliating of the minds of his feudatory lords; lest the crafty and ambitious Tezozomoc, who, till that time, had only been restrained by the uncertainty of success, should attempt any thing against the empire. Nor were the fears of Techotlala without foundation, as will appear from the sequel. He died, at last, in the year 1406, after a very long reign, though not quite so long as some authors have imagined (*t*).

SECT. VIII.  
Ixtlilxochitl,  
king of Acol-  
huacan.

After the funeral rites were performed with the usual solemnity, and the attendance of the princes and lords, the feudatories of the crown, they proceeded to celebrate the accession of Ixtlilxochitl. Among the princes was the king of Azcapozalco; who, by his conduct, soon justified the suspicions entertained of him by the deceased Techotlala; as, without making the usual submissions to the new king, he set out for his own state with an intention to stir up the other feudatories to rebellion against the empire. He called together the kings of Mexico and Tlatelolco, and told them, that Techotlala, who had so long tyrannized over that country, being dead, his purpose was to procure freedom to the princes, so that each might rule his own state with entire independence upon the king of Acolhuacan: but in order to ob-

(*t*) Torquemada and Betancourt give one hundred and four years to the reign of Techotlala; and although it is not impossible that a prince should reign so long, yet it is extremely improbable, and would require the strongest evidence to authenticate it; especially if we consider the general absurdity of their chronology. But see our Dissertations.

tain so glorious an object, he needed their assistance; and, upon their spirit, so well known among all the nations, he relied for their taking part with him in the great enterprize. He added, that in order to strike their blow with the greater security, he would undertake to unite in their confederacy some other princes whom he knew to be animated with the same designs. The two kings, either through fear of the great power of Tezozomoc, or to increase the reputation of their arms, engaged to assist him with their troops, as did also the other chiefs whom he solicited.

In the mean time Ixtlixochitl was employed in putting the affairs of his court into order, and in gaining the minds of his subjects; but he soon discovered, to his great disappointment, that already many had withdrawn themselves from their obedience to him, in order to place themselves under the command of the perfidious Tezozomoc. To oppose the progress of the enemy, he commanded the princes of Coatlichan, Huexotla, and some other neighbouring states, to arm all the troops they could without delay. The king himself wished to lead his army in person, but he was dissuaded from it by some of his courtiers, who represented the necessity of his presence at the court, lest in the distraction of affairs, some concealed enemy, or friend of wavering fidelity should be tempted, by the opportunity of his absence, to make himself master of the capital, and drive the king from his throne. *Tochintecuhtli*, son of the prince of Coatlichan, was made general of the army, and in case of his death, or any other accident, *Quaubxilotl*, prince of Iztapalcoan was appointed to succeed him. The plain of Quauh- titlan, fifteen miles north of Azcapozalco, was chosen for the theatre of the war. The troops of the rebels were more numerous, but those of the king better disciplined. The royal army, before it set out for Quauh- titlan, ravaged six of the revolted states, in order both to weaken the enemy, and to leave behind them none who should be able to do them much injury. The war was supported with great obstinacy; the superior discipline of the Tezcucans being counteracted by the superiority of numbers on the side of the Tepanecas, who would certainly have been quickly overcome if they had not been constantly supplied with fresh troops. The allies of the rebels frequently sent out large bodies to make incursions in the loyal states, where they met with little

## BOOK III.

resistance as the greatest part of the Tezcucan force was collected at Quauhtitlan. Among the various disasters which they occasioned, the lord of Iztapallocan Quauhxiolotl was slain, who died with glory in defence of his city after his return from the field of Quauhtitlan. The king of Acolhuacan saw himself obliged, now, to divide his forces, and appointed a considerable part of the people, who came from many distant places to his assistance, for the garrison of the cities. Tezozomoc perceiving in place of the advantages which he had promised himself, that his troops daily diminished, and that his people were become impatient of the fatigues and dangers of war after three years of continued action, demanded peace, designing to finish, by secret treachery, what he had begun by open violence. The king of Acolhuacan, although he could not rely on the faith of the Tepanecan prince, nevertheless, consented without insisting on any conditions which might give him security for the future, as his troops were as much broken with fatigue as those of his enemy.

SECT. IX.  
Chimalpopo-  
ca third king  
of Mexico.

Just as the war was concluded, or a little before its termination, after a reign of twenty years, in 1409, Huitzilihuitl died, having published some laws useful to the state, and leaving the nobility in possession of their right to chuse a successor. Chimalpopoca, who was his brother, was accordingly chosen, and by what appears, from thence it became the established law to make the election of one of the brothers of the deceased king, and on failure of brothers, of one of his grandsons. This law was constantly observed until the fall of the Mexican empire.

While Chimalpopoca found means to fix himself securely on the throne of Mexico, Ixtlixochitl begun to totter on that of Acolhuacan. The peace which Tezozomoc had demanded was a mere artifice to lull suspicion while he was more effectually pursuing his negotiations. The number of his party was daily observed to increase, while that of the Tezcucan diminished. This unfortunate king found himself reduced to such extremity, that thinking himself insecure in his own court, he went wandering through the neighbouring mountains escorted by a small army, and accompanied by the lords of Huexotla and Coatlichan, who were always faithful to him. The Tepanecas, that they might distress him to the utmost, intercepted the provisions which were carrying to his camp; by which his necessities became so great that he was compelled



compelled at last to beg provisions of his enemies. So easy is it to fall from the height of human felicity to the lowest state of misery.

He sent one of his grandsons named *Cehuacuecuenotzin*, to Otompan, one of the rebel states, to request the citizens of it to supply their king with the provisions he stood in need of, and to admonish them to abandon the party of the rebels, and to call to their minds the loyalty they had sworn. *Cehuacuecuenotzin*, well knew the danger of the undertaking; but fear being overcome by the generosity of his sentiments, his fortitude of mind, and fidelity to his sovereign, he shewed himself ready to obey: "I go my lord," he said, "to execute your commands, and to sacrifice my life to the obedience which I owe you. You cannot be insensible how much the Otompanese are alienated from you by espousing the part of your enemy. The whole country is occupied by the Tepanecas, and every where dangerous; my return is uncertain. But should I perish in your service, and if the sacrifice which I make you of my life is worthy of any recompence, I pray you to protect the two young children I leave behind." These words, which were accompanied with strong marks of feeling, touched the king's heart, who, in taking leave of him, said, "May our God accompany and return you safe. Alas! perhaps at your return, you may find what you fear for yourself, will have happened to me, the enemies being so numerous who conspire against my life." *Cihuacuecuenotzin* proceeded without delay to Otompan, but before he entered he knew that there were, at that time, Tepanecas in the city, who were sent by Tezozomoc, to publish a proclamation; he was not, however, discouraged, but went intrepidly to the public place where the Tepanecas had assembled the people to hear the proclamation, and after having saluted them all graciously, he freely communicated his embassy.

The Otompanese made a jest of him and his demand, but none of them dared to proceed farther, until a mean person among them threw a stone at him, exciting others at the same time to put him to death. The Tepanecas, who continued still and silent, to observe what resolution the Otompanese would take, perceiving now that they openly declared against the king of Acolhuacan, and his ambassador, cried out, Kill, kill, the traitor! accompanying their cries with throwing of stones.

BOOK III. Cihuacucuenotzin, at first, faced his enemies, but seeing himself overpowered by numbers, and endeavouring to save himself by flight, was killed by a shower of stones. A character intitled to a better fate! an example of fidelity most worthy to be recorded, which had the hero been Grecian or Roman, in place of American, would have been the subject of praise of both historians and poets.

The Tepanecas became vain-glorious, of an act equally contrary to humanity and the rights of nations; and protested to the multitude the great pleasure they would have in being able to inform their chief, from being eye-witnesses, of the inviolable fidelity of the Otompanese. They also declared, they had been sent expressly to intimate an order not to give assistance to the king of Tezcucó, under pain of proscription, and to exhort them to take arms against that king, and in defence of their liberty. The lord of Otompan, and the heads of the nobility replied, they would willingly obey the order of the king of Azcapotzalco, and offered to do every thing in their power to second his intentions.

They gave speedy intelligence of this event to the lord of Acolman, who was the son of Tezozomoc, and communicated it to his father: he believing it now time to put his designs in execution, sent for the lords of Otompan and Chalco, on whose fidelity he chiefly relied, and whose states were most conveniently situated for his purpose, and charged them to levy, with all possible secrecy, a sufficient army, and lay themselves in ambuscade in a mountain near to the camp of the Tescucan king; that from thence they should send two of the most brave and able captains to the royal camp, who, under pretence of imparting some very important secret to the king, should artfully lead him to as great a distance as possible from his people, and then without delay or hesitation to murder him. Every thing happened as the wicked prince had designed. The king then chanced to be in the neighbourhood of Tlascala, and entertaining no suspicion of the two captains who came to him, fell unwarily into the snare. The deed was done at some little distance, but yet in sight of the royal army. They ran up immediately to chastise the temerity of those two desperate captains, but the army of the conspirators advancing, which was more numerous, they were quickly defeated. The royal corpse was with difficulty saved, to pay  
it

it funeral honours, and the heir of the crown, who was a witness of the tragic end of his father, was obliged to hide himself in the bushes to escape the fury of his enemies. Thus did the unfortunate king Ixtlilxochitl end his life in 1410, after a reign of seven years.

He left several sons, and among them *Nezahualcojotl*, heir to the throne, whom he had by *Matlalcihuatzin*, daughter of Acamapitzin, king of Mexico (*t*). This prince was endued with a great genius, and an unparalleled magnanimity, and pre-eminently deserving of the throne of Acolhuacan; but he was not able from the superiority of Tezozomoc, to put himself in possession of the throne which was due to him by so many titles, until many years had elapsed, and many dangers and obstacles to it were surmounted.

The perfidious Tezozomoc had prepared great bodies of troops, that when the premeditated blow on the person of the king should succeed, they might pour down upon the cities of Tezcuco, Huexotla, Coatlichan, Coatepec, and Iztapallocan, which had been the most faithful to their lord, and reduce them to ashes. The inhabitants of those cities who were able to save themselves by flight, took shelter on the other side of the mountains, among the Huexotzincas and Tlascalans; all the rest died in defence of their country; but they sold their lives dearly, as the infinite blood spilt on both sides attested. If we should be disposed to trace the source of so many calamities, we should discover no other than the ambition of a prince. Heaven grant the sacrifices to the passions were more infrequent in the world and less violent! How calamitous is it that the avarice or ambition of a prince or his minister is sufficient to cover the plains with human blood, to destroy cities, to overturn kingdoms, and spread confusion over this globe!

The cruelty of the tyrant being appeased by the oppression of his enemies, the king of Acolhuacan was made to take an oath in the city of Tezcuco, to grant to all those who had taken up arms against him, general pardon, and liberty to return to their habitations. The city of

(*t*) Torquimada makes Matlalcihuatzin, daughter of Huitzilahuatl; but how? He says, that this king when he mounted the throne, was only seventeen years of age, nor yet married: and that he reigned twenty-two, or at most twenty-six years. On the other hand, he represents Nezahualcojotl, at the death of his pretended grandfather, of an age able to go to war, and make negotiations to secure himself the crown: from whence he would make out that Huitzilahuatl, before he was twenty-six years married, had grandsons at least twenty years old.



## BOOK III.

Tezcuco was given in fief to Chimalpopoca, king of Mexico, and that of Huexotla to Tlacatcotl, king of Tlatelolco, as a reward for the services which they had rendered during the war. He placed faithful governors in other places, and proclaimed Azcapozalco the royal residence and capital of all the kingdom of Acolhuacan.

At this solemnity were present, though in disguise, several persons of distinction, enemies of the tyrant, and amongst these the prince Nezahualcojotl. The grief and rage which filled him aided by the ardour of youth, was like to have urged him to a rash action against his enemies, if a confidential friend, who accompanied him, had not withheld him, by representing the fatal consequences of such temerity, and making him sensible how much more prudent it would be to wait till time presented him a fitter opportunity for the recovery of his crown, and revenge of his enemies; that the tyrant was already worn out with age, and that his death, which could not be very distant, would entirely change the state of affairs; that the people themselves would come willingly to submit themselves to their lawful sovereign, from a sense of the injustice and cruelty of the usurper. Upon this same occasion, a Mexican officer of respect, (probably Itzcoatl, the brother of the king, and general of the Mexican forces), either of his own accord, or by order of the king Chimalpopoca, ascended the temple, which the Toltecas had at that court, and addressed the multitude around him, "Hear, Chechemecas, hear Acolhuas, and all ye who are present. Let no one dare to offer any hurt to our son Nezahuacotl, nor permit others to hurt him, if he is not willing to subject himself to severe chastisement." This proclamation contributed much to the prince's security, no body wishing to draw upon himself the anger of a nation which began now to make itself respected.

A little time after, many of those nobles who had taken refuge in Huexotzinco and Tlascala, to avoid the fury of the Tepanecan troops, assembled at *Papalotla*, a place near to Tezcuco, to deliberate on the conduct they should pursue in the present circumstances; and they all agreed to submit themselves to the new lords whom the usurper had appointed to their cities, that they might be free from farther hostilities, and attend in peace to the care of their families and habitations.

After

After having satisfied his ambition with the usurpation of the kingdom of Acolhuacan, and his cruelty with the slaughter he had committed, the tyrant was desirous of gratifying his avarice by laying new taxes on his subjects. Besides the tribute which they had hitherto paid their king of provisions, and a robe to array him, he enjoined them to pay him another tribute of gold and precious stones, without advert- ing how much such burdens would tend to exasperate the minds of his subjects, which he should rather have endeavoured to gain by moderation and lenity, to give himself more security in the possession of a throne founded on cruelty and injustice. The Toltecan and Chechemecan nobles answered the proclamation by desiring to present themselves in person before the king, to be heard on the subject. The arrogance of the tyrant appeared to them unbounded, and his conduct widely different from the moderation of the ancient kings of whom he was descended. They agreed to send to him two eloquent deputies the most learned among them, one a Tolteca, the other a Chechemeca, that each in the name of his nation might remonstrate with energy and force. They both went to Azcapozalco, when being admitted to an audience of the tyrant, the Toltecan orator in respect to the greater antiquity of his nation in that country began first, and represented to him the humble beginning of the Toltecas, the necessities they endured before they rose to that splendour and glory which they had for some time enjoyed, and the misery to which they were reduced since their revolution; he described the deplorable dispersion in which they were found by Xolotl, when he first arrived in that country, and taking a review of the two last centuries, he made a pathetic enumeration of the hardships they had suffered, to move the tyrant to compassion, and get his nation exempted from the new grievances.

The Tolteca had hardly finished his harangue when the Chechemeca began his: "I, my lord, may speak to you with greater confidence  
"and liberty; as I am a Chechemeca, and address myself to a prince  
"of my own nation, who is a descendant of the great kings Xolotl,  
"Nopaltzin, and Tlotzin. You are not ignorant that those divine  
"Chechemecas, your ancestors, set no value on gold or precious stones.  
"They wore no other crown on their heads than a garland of herbs  
"and flowers of the field, nor adorned themselves with any other brace-

"less

BOOK III.  
SECT. XII.  
New Taxes  
imposed by  
the tyrant.

BOOK III. “lets than the stiff leather against which beat the string of their bow  
“in shooting. Their food at first was confined to raw flesh, and plain  
“herbs, and their dress was the skin of the stags and wild beasts which  
“they themselves hunted. When they were taught agriculture by the  
“Toltecas, their kings themselves cultivated the land to encourage by  
“their example their subjects to fatigue. The wealth and glory to  
“which fortune afterwards raised them, did not make them more  
“proud. As kings they certainly made use of their subjects, but as  
“fathers they loved them, and were contented to be requited by them  
“with the simple gifts of the earth. I do not call to your memory  
“these illustrious examples of your ancestors, for any other reason than  
“that I may most humbly entreat you not to demand more from us  
“now than they did from our predecessors.” The tyrant listened to  
 each harangue, and although the comparison drawn between him and  
 the ancient kings was odious, he dissimulated his disgust, and contented  
 himself with giving licence to the orators to confirm the order published  
 respecting the new tax.

In the mean time, Nezahualcojotl went anxiously through many cities,  
 to gain their affection, that he might replace himself on the throne. But  
 although his subjects loved him, and were desirous of seeing him in  
 possession of the kingdom, they durst not openly favour his party from  
 their fear of the tyrant. Among the subjects who were the nearest  
 related to him, and had abandoned him, were the lord of *Chimalpan*  
 his uncle, and *Tecpanecatl* the brother of his second wife *Nezahualxochitl*,  
 of the royal line of Mexico. Persevering in such negotiations, he arrived  
 one evening at a village of the province of Chalco, belonging to a lady  
 and widow named *Tziltomiaub*. He observed that there was a plantation  
 of aloes, from which the widow extracted wine, not only for the use of  
 her family, but also for sale, which was strictly forbid by the Chechemecan  
 code. He was so fired with zeal for the laws of his fathers, that he felt  
 no restraint from the adversity of his fortune, nor any other consideration,  
 but with his own hand put the delinquent to death. An action most  
 inconsiderate and reprehensible, in which prudence had a far less share  
 than the intemperate ardour of youth. This deed raised a great rumour  
 in that province, and the lord of Chalco, who was his enemy, and had  
 been an accomplice in the death




death of his father, used the utmost diligence to have him in his power; but the prince, who foresaw the consequences of his act, had already placed himself in security.

Eight years were now elapsed, during which Tezozomoc had possessed in peace the kingdom of Acolhuacan, claimed in vain by Nezahualcojotl, when fatal dreams threw the tyrant into extreme perturbation. He dreamed that Nezahualcojotl transformed into an eagle, opened his breast and eat his heart; and at another time, changed into a lion, licked his body, and sucked his blood. He was so intimidated with these ominous visions, which were formed by the consciousness of his own injustice and tyranny, that he called together his three sons *Tajatzin*, *Teuētzintli*, and *Maxlaton*, imparted to them his dreams, and charged them to put Nezahualcojotl to death as speedily as possible, provided they could do it so secretly that no person should suspect the author of it. He hardly survived his dreams a year. He was now become so old, he was no more able to keep himself in necessary warmth, nor erect in a chair, but was obliged to be wholly covered up in cotton, in a great basket made of willows in the form of a cradle; but from this cradle, or rather sepulchre, he tyrannised over the kingdom of Acolhuacan, and delivered oracles of injustice. A little before his death, he declared his son *Tajatzin* his successor in the kingdom, and repeated his command respecting the death of Nezahualcojotl, preserving to his expiring moments his malicious designs. In 1422, this monster of ambition, treachery, and injustice, ended his life, after having tyrannised over the kingdom of Acolhuacan for nine years, and possessed for a considerable period the state of Azcapozalco (α).

SECT. XIII.  
Death of the  
tyrant Tezo-  
zomoc.

Although the giving proper orders for the funeral of his father belonged to *Tajatzin*, as successor to the crown, nevertheless his brother

(α) Torquemada makes Tezozomoc an immediate descendant of the first Acolhuan prince; by which he makes his reign one hundred and sixty, or one hundred and eighty years: but from the harangue made by the Chechemecan orator, it is evident, that Tezozomoc was descended of *Xolotl Nopaltzin* and *Tlotzin*. The sister of *Nopaltzin* married the prince *Acolhuatzin*, whence their children were cousins of *Tlotzin*, the son of *Nopaltzin*. In all this Torquemada agrees with us. Whoever then could be called the descendant of his cousin? Whoever reads the genealogy of the Chechemecan kings in the works of Torquemada, will instantly perceive the mistakes made by this author. There may have been two or three lords of Azcapozalco named *Tezozomoc*, but the tyrant of Acolhuacan was at most great-grandson of prince *Acolhuatzin*.

BOOK III.  Maxtlaton, being more forward and active, arrogated the right to himself, and began to command with as much authority as if he had been already in possession of the kingdom at which he aspired, imagining it would be easy to oppress his brother, who was a man of no abilities, and unskilled in the art of government. He sent information to the kings of Mexico and Tlatelolco, and other lords, that they might honour with their presence and their tears the funeral of their common lord. Nezahuacojotl, though not summoned, was willing to be present, as may easily be imagined, to observe with his own eyes the disposition of the court. He was accompanied by a confidential friend and a small retinue; having entered the hall of the royal palace where the corpse lay exposed, he found the kings of Mexico and Tlatelolco, the three princes, sons of the late tyrant, and some other lords. He saluted them all one after another, according to the order in which they sat, beginning with the king of Mexico, and presented them bunches of flowers, according to the custom of that country. Having paid his compliments he sat down by the side of king Chimalpopoca, his brother-in-law, to accompany him in condolence. Teuctzintli, one of the sons of Tezozomoc, who inherited his cruelty, conceiving this a good occasion to execute the iniquitous charge of his father on Nezahualcojotl, proposed it to his brother Maxtlaton. He, however, though of no less inhuman a heart, had more understanding and judgment. "Banish," he replied, "banish from your mind such a thought. "What would men say of us if they should see us plotting against the "life of another while we ought to be employed in mourning for our "father? They would say, that the grief was not deep which gave "way to ambition and revenge. Time will present us with an occasion more favourable for the accomplishment of our father's purpose, "without incurring the odium of our subjects. Nezahualcojotl is not "invisible; unless he hides himself in fire, in water, or in the bowels "of the earth, he will inevitably fall into our hands." This happened on the fourth day after the death of the tyrant, when the corpse was burnt, and his ashes buried with unusual pomp and solemnity.

The next day the kings of Mexico and Tlatelolco returned to their cities, and Maxtlaton began soon by less dissimulation to discover his ambi-

ambitious design of making himself master of the kingdom, shewing by his arrogance and daring temper, that where his arts would not be sufficient, he would employ force. Tajatzin had not courage to oppose him, knowing the bold and violent disposition of his brother, and the advantage he had in having subjects accustomed to obey him. On so difficult a point, he took therefore the resolution of resorting to Mexico to consult with king Chimalpopoca, to whom he had been chiefly recommended by his father. This king received him with particular marks of esteem, and, after the usual compliments, Chimalpopoca addressed him. "What are you doing, prince. Is not the kingdom yours? Did not your father leave it to you? Why do you not exert yourself to recover it, if you are unjustly robbed of it?" "Because my rights avail but little, if my subjects do not assist me. My brother has made himself master of the kingdom, and no person seems to give him opposition: it would be rashness to oppose him with no other power or forces than my desires, and the justice of my cause." "What is not to be done by force may be supplied by industry," replied Chimalpopoca, "I will point out to you a method to get rid of your brother, and restore yourself without danger to the possession of the throne. Excuse yourself for not inhabiting the palace of your deceased father, under pretence that your grief is revived by the remembrance of his actions, and the love which he bore you, and that therefore you are willing to build yourself another palace for your residence. When it is finished, make a splendid entertainment, and invite your brother to it, and there, in the midst of the rejoicings, it will be easy to free your kingdom of a tyrant, and yourself of a rival so dangerous and unjust; and that you may more certainly succeed, I shall attend to assist you in person, with all the forces of my nation." To such counsel Tajatzin made no reply, but looks of dark melancholy, occasioned by the love he had to blood, or the baseness of the act suggested to him.

To all this discourse a servant of Tajatzin was privy, who had concealed himself where he could easily overhear them, and hoping to make his fortune by betraying them, he departed secretly at night for Azcapozalco, went directly to the palace, where having obtained an audience, he revealed to Maxtlaton all he had heard. His mind was sud-



**BOOK III.** denly seized with anger, fear, and vexation, which the relation had excited; but being politic, and practised in dissembling his sentiments, he affected to despise the whole, and severely reprimanded the reporter for his hardness and temerity in calumniating such respectable personages, called him drunkard, and dismissed him to digest his wine at home. The remainder of the night he passed in deliberation what measure he should pursue, and determined at last to anticipate his brother, and catch him in his own snare.

SECT. XIV.  
Maxtlaton,  
tyrant of A-  
colhuacan.

The morning of the ensuing day he assembled the people of Azcapozalco, and told them, that having no right to remain any longer in his father's palace, as it belonged to prince Tajatzin, and having besides occasion for a house at that court where he might be lodged when ever any business required him to come from his state of Cojohuacan, he desired they would shew the love they bore him by the most speedy construction of such a residence. Such was the diligence of the Azcapozalchefe, and so great the multitude of workmen who were collected, that Tajatzin, who only continued three days in Mexico, found on his return the edifice already begun. He was struck with wonder at this novelty, and enquiring the cause at Maxtlaton, was answered by him, that finding it his duty to leave the royal mansion, in justice to Tajatzin's rights, he was erecting another where he might reside when he should come to court. The good Tajatzin remained satisfied with this answer, and easily persuaded himself that Maxtlaton thought no more of usurping the crown. A little time after the building being finished, Maxtlaton invited his brothers the kings of Mexico and Tlatelolco, and other lords to an entertainment. Tajatzin being totally ignorant of the treachery of his servant, did not suspect the snare which was laid for him: but Chimalpopoca, who was more discerning and cautious, certainly was suspicious of some treachery, and politely excused himself from attendance. The day appointed for the festival being arrived, the guests resorted to the new mansion, and at the time they were most engaged in jollity and mirth, and probably also heated with wine, which is the most favourable time for deeds of this nature, suddenly people in arms entered, and poured with such violence on the unfortunate Tajatzin, that he had scarcely lifted his eyes to behold his murderers, when they were closed in death. So unexpected

pected a tragedy disturbed, and shocked the whole meeting; but Maxtlaton quieted them by explaining the treason which was designed against him; and protesting, that what he had done, was only to prevent the blow which threatened himself. By these and similar discourses, he so far altered their minds, that in place of revenging the death of their lawful lord, they proclaimed the treacherous tyrant, king; but, although injustice raised him to the throne, it was only to precipitate him from a greater height.

His indignation against the king of Mexico was still greater; but it did not appear prudent to make any attempt against his life until he should feel himself firmly seated on the throne. In the mean while he vented his rage by doing injuries to his person, and offering outrages to his dignity. A little time after his intrusion on the kingdom, the present which it was usual to make, as a mark of acknowledgement of the high power of the king of Azcapozalco, was sent to him by the king of Mexico. This present, which consisted of three baskets of white-fish, craw-fish, frogs, and some pulse, was carried by respectable persons from the court of Chimalpopoca, with a polite address, and particular expressions of submission and respect. Maxtlaton shewed himself pleased; but as it was proper, according to the custom of those nations, to return some gift, and being desirous, at the same time, of gratifying his pique, after consulting with his confidants, he caused to be delivered to the Mexican ambassadors for their king a *Cueitl*, that is a woman's gown, and a *Huepilli*, which is a woman's shift, intimating by these that he esteemed their king an effeminate coward: an insult the most gross to those nations, as nothing was so much in estimation with them as the boast of being courageous. Chimalpopoca felt sufficiently on the occasion, and would have revenged the outrage; but he was unable.

SECT. XV.  
Maxtlaton,  
tyrant of A-  
colhuacan.

This disdainful act was soon succeeded by a most heinous offence to his honour. The tyrant knew that among the wives of the king of Mexico, there was one singularly beautiful: being inflamed by this occasion with wicked desires, he determined to sacrifice both honour and justice to his passion. To obtain his purpose he employed some ladies of Tepaneca, and enjoined them when they visited, as they were accustomed to do, that Mexican lady, to invite her to spend some days  
of

## BOOK III.

of pleasure with them at Azcapozalco. Such visits being frequent among persons of the first rank, of different nations, it was not difficult for the abandoned prince to gain the opportunity he so much longed for, to satisfy his criminal passion; neither the tears nor efforts made by that virtuous Mexican in defence of her honour, were sufficient to restrain him: she returned to Mexico with ignominy, and pierced with the most affecting anguish to mourn with her husband. The unfortunate king, either that he might not survive his dishonour, or that he might not die in the hands of the tyrant, resolved to put an end to his wretched life, by dying a sacrifice in honour of his God, Huitzilopochtli, as many pretended heroes of his nation had done, believing such a death would cancel his dishonour, at least save him from some ignominious exit, which he dreaded from his enemy. He communicated this resolution to his courtiers, who applauded it, from the extravagant ideas they entertained in matters of religion, and some of them even were willing to partake of the glory of so barbarous a sacrifice.

SECT. XVI.  
Imprisonment and  
death of king  
Chimalpopoca.

The day appointed for this religious tragic scene being come, the king appeared dressed in the manner they usually represented their God Huitzilopochtli, and all those who were to accompany him were dressed also in their best habits. This religious ceremony began with a solemn ball; and while it lasted the priests sacrificed the unhappy victims one after another, reserving the king to the last. It was hardly possible such a transaction could remain unknown to the tyrant; he knew it by anticipation, and that he might prevent his enemy escaping from his revenge by voluntary death, he sent a body of troops to take him before he was sacrificed. They arrived when there hardly remained two victims, after whom the king himself was to follow. This unhappy prince was seized by the Tepanecas, and conducted instantly to Azcapozalco, where he was put into a strong cage of wood, which was the prison used by these nations, as we shall mention hereafter, under custody of strong guards. In this event many circumstances appear difficult to be credited: but we relate it as we find it told by the historians of Mexico. It is certainly much to be wondered at, that the Tepanecas should have dared to enter into that city and attempt so dangerous an act; and that the Mexicans should not have armed themselves



selves in defence of their king ; but the power of the tyrant may have, of itself, been sufficient to encourage the Tepanecas and intimidate the Mexicans.

The taking of Chimalpopoca prisoner, excited fresh desire in the mind of Maxtlaton to get the prince Nezahualcojotl also into his power ; to effect this more easily he sent for him under pretence of being willing to come to an agreement with him, respecting the crown of Acolhuacan. The discerning prince immediately penetrated the malevolent intention of the tyrant ; but the ardour of youth, the courage and confidence of his soul, made him present himself intrepidly before the sternest dangers. In passing through Tlatelolco, he payed a visit to one of his confidants, named *Chichincatl*, by whom he was informed, that the tyrant was not only plotting against his life and the king of Tlatelolco, but, were it possible, desired to annihilate the whole Acolhuan nation. Notwithstanding this, in the evening the prince set out fearless for Azcapozalco, and went directly to the house of one of his friends. Early in the morning he waited on *Chachaton*, a great favourite of the tyrant, and by whom the prince himself was beloved, and recommended to him to dissuade Maxtlaton from any design against his person. They went together to the palace ; when Chachaton preceded to acquaint his lord of the arrival of the prince, and to speak in his favour. The prince entered after, and when he had paid his obeisance, thus spoke : “ I know, my lord, that you have imprisoned the king of Mexico, but I am ignorant whether you have made him suffer death, or if he still lives in prison. I have heard, also, that it is your wish to take away my life. If this is true, behold me before you ; kill me with your own hands, and gratify the malice which you bear to a prince not less innocent than unfortunate.” While he spoke these words, the memory of his misfortunes forced tears from his eyes. “ What is your opinion ?” said Maxtlaton, then to his favourite, “ Is it not strange that a youth, who has hardly begun to enjoy life, should seek death so daringly ?” Turning to the prince, he assured him, that he was forming no design against his life, that the king of Mexico was not dead, nor would be put to death by him ; and endeavoured to justify the imprisonment of that unfortunate king. He then gave orders that the prince should be properly entertained.

## BOOK III.

Chimalpopoca being acquainted of the arrival of the prince who was his cousin, at court, sent to request a visit from him in prison. The prince having first obtained the permission of Mextlaton, went to him, and upon his entering the prison, embraced him, and both of them shewed much tenderness in their looks and expressions. Chimalpopoca related to him the series of insults and wrongs which he had suffered, and convinced him of the malevolent designs of the tyrant against them both, and entreated him not to return again to the court; as their cruel enemy would infallibly contrive his death, and the Acolhuan nation would be utterly abandoned. At last he said, "As my death is inevitable, I beseech you most earnestly take care of my poor Mexicans, be to them a true friend and father. In token of the love which I bear you, accept of this pendant which I had from my brother Huitzili-huitl;" upon which he took a pendant of gold from his lip, and presented it with ear-rings and some other jewels which he had preserved in prison; and to a servant of the prince he gave a few other things. They then affectionately took leave of each other, that they might not excite suspicion by a longer conference. Nezahualcojotl, using the advice which was given him, left the court without delay, and never after presented himself before the tyrant. He went to Tlatelolco, where he took a vessel with good rowers, and got speedily to Tezcuco.

Chimalpopoca remained in comfortless solitude brooding over his misfortunes. Imprisonment became daily more insupportable to him; he had not the smallest hope of recovering his liberty, nor of being of any service to his nation during the little time he had to live. "If at last," he said, "I am to die here, will it not be preferable, and more glorious to die by my own than by the hands of a cruel and perfidious tyrant? If I can have no other revenge, I shall at least deprive him of the pleasure which he would take in appointing the time and mode of death which must finish my unhappy days. I shall be the disposer of my own life, chuse the time and manner of my death, as it will be attended with so much the less ignominy, the less the will of my enemy shall influence and direct it (x)." In this resolution, which was entirely conformable to the ideas of those nations, he hanged him-

(x) These last words of Chimalpopoca, handed down by the historians of Mexico, were known from the depositions of the guards who surrounded the cage or prison.

self upon a small beam of the cage or prison, making use, most probably, of his girdle for that purpose.

Thus tragic an end had the unfortunate life of the third king of Mexico. We have no more particular accounts of his character, or the progress the nation made during his reign, which lasted about thirteen years, being concluded in 1423, about a year after the death of Tezozomoc. We know only that in the eleventh year of his reign, he ordered a great stone to be brought to Mexico, to serve as an altar for the ordinary sacrifice of prisoners, and a larger round one, for gladiatorial sacrifices, of which we shall speak hereafter. In the fourth painting of Mendoza's collection, are represented the different victories which the Mexicans obtained during the reign of Chimalpopoca, the cities of Chalco, and Tequizquiac, and the naval engagement which they had with the Chalchese, with the loss of their people, and the vessels over-set by the enemy. The interpreter of that collection adds, that Chimalpopoca left many children whom he had by his concubines.

As soon as Maxtlaton knew of the death of his noble prisoner, he rose in wrath at the disappointment of his projects; and lest that Nezahualcojotl might also elude his revenge, he determined to anticipate death to him by whatever means he could, which he would have done before, could he have accomplished it in the manner enjoined by his father, or had he not been intimidated, as some historians affirm, by certain auguries of the priests; but his passion now surmounted all restraints of religion; he ordered four of his most able captains to go in quest of the prince, and take his life, without remission, wherever they should find him. The Tepanecan captains set out with a small party only, that rumour might not prevent their coming up with their spoil, and proceeded directly to Tezcuco, where, as they arrived, Nezahualcojotl was diverting himself at foot-ball with one of his familiars, named Ocelotl. Wherever the prince went to gain adherents to his party, he spent great part of his time at balls, games, and other amusements, that the governors of those places, who watched his conduct by order of the tyrant, and observed all his steps, seeing him taken up with pastimes, might be persuaded that he had dropt all thoughts of the crown, and gradually neglect to attend to him. By these means he carried on his negotiations without creating the slightest suspicion. On

SECT. XVI.  
Imprisonment and death of Chimalpopoca.



## BOOK III.

this occasion, before the captains entered his house, he knew that they were Tepanecas, and that they came armed : this made him apprehend what they might intend, upon which he left off play, and retired to his innermost apartment. Being informed, afterwards, by his porter, that the Tepanecas enquired for him, he ordered Ocelotl to receive them, and to acquaint them that he would attend them as soon as they had reposed and refreshed themselves. The Tepanecas did not imagine that by delaying they would lose the opportunity of striking their blow, and possibly also durst not execute their commission, as they were uncertain whether there were not attendants in the house sufficient to oppose them ; after some repose, therefore, they sat down to table, and while they were refreshing, the prince fled by a secret door, and travelled something more than a mile to Coatitlan, a small settlement of weavers, the people of which were all faithful and affectionate to him, and there concealed himself (y). The Tepanecas having waited a considerable time without the prince or his domestic making their appearance, they searched over the whole house, but no person could give any account of him. At length being persuaded of his flight, they set out instantly in search of him, and being informed by a countryman, in the road to Coatitlan, that he had taken refuge in that place, they entered there with their arms in their hands, threatening the inhabitants with death if they did not discover the fugitive prince ; but no person was found who would make this discovery ; and so uncommon was their example of fidelity, some were put to death for the refusal. Amongst those who made sacrifices of their lives to preserve their prince, were *Tochmantzin* the superintendant of all the looms of Coatitlan, and *Matlalintzin*, a woman of noble rank. The Tepanecas not being able, notwithstanding the utmost diligence in their search, and the cruelty they exercised against the inhabitants, to find out the prince, went in quest of him through the country. Nezahualcojotl set out also another way, and took a directly contrary route to his adversaries ; but as they fought

(y) Terquemada says the prince went out of his house by a kind of labyrinth, through which no person unacquainted with it could find his way. The prince and some of his most particular confidants only knew the secret of it. It is not at all incredible that he should have designed such a maze, as his genius was superior and himself distinguished above all his countrymen, in talents and penetration.

for him every where, he was in great hazard of falling into their hands, had he not been hid by some countrymen, under a heap of the herb chia, which was lying upon a threshing floor.

The prince finding himself safe from this danger, went to pass the night at Tezcotzinco, a pleasant villa formed by his ancestors for recreation. There he was waited for by six lords, who had left their states, and were traversing through the different cities of the kingdom. There they held a secret counsel that night, and resolved to solicit the assistance of the Chalchefe, although they had been accomplices in the death of king Ixtlilixochitl. The next morning early, he proceeded to Matlallan and other places, intimating to those of his party to be prepared with arms by the time of his return. Two days were employed in these negotiations, and on the evening of the second he was met at Apan by the ambassadors of the Cholulans, who offered to assist him in war against the tyrant. Here he was joined also by two lords of his party, who communicated to him the unfortunate intelligence of the death of his favourite Huitzilihuitl, who was put to the torture by the tyrant, that he might reveal some secrets; but being too loyal to his master to discover them, he died a martyr to his fidelity. Full of this disgust he passed from Apan to Huexotzinco, the lord of which was his relation, and received him with infinite affection and kindness, and promised to assist him also with all his forces. From thence he went to Tlascala, where he was most nobly treated, and in that city the time and place was agreed upon at which the troops of Cholula, Huexotzinco, and Tlascala were to be assembled. When he departed from this last city to go to Capollalpan, a place situated about half way between Tlascala and Tezcucó, so many nobles accompanied him, he appeared more like a king who was going to take pleasure with his court, than a fugitive prince who was endeavouring to render himself master of the crown which was usurped from him. In Capollalpan, he received the answer of the Chalchefe, in which they declared themselves ready to assist and serve their lawful lord against the iniquitous usurper. It is probable the cruelty and insolence of the tyrant alienated many from him; the Chalchefe, besides, were very inconstant and apt to attach themselves sometimes to the one, and sometimes to the other party; as will appear in the course of our history.

SECT. XVII.  
Negociations  
of Nezahual-  
cojotl to ob-  
tain the  
crown.

## BOOK III.

## SECT. XVIII

Itzcoatl  
fourth king  
of Mexico.

While Nezahualcojotl continued rousing the nations to war, the Mexicans finding themselves without a king, and harrassed by the Tepanecas, resolved to appoint a chief to their nation, who would be capable of checking the insolence of the tyrant, and revenging the many wrongs they had suffered. Having assembled, therefore, to elect a new king, a respectable veteran thus addressed the other electors. “ By the death  
“ of your last king, O noble Mexicans, the light of your eyes has failed  
“ you; but you have still those of reason left to chuse a fit successor.  
“ The nobility of Mexico is not extinct with Chimalpopoca; his bro-  
“ thers are still remaining, who are most excellent princes, among  
“ whom you may chuse a lord to govern you, and a father to protect  
“ you. Imagine that for a little time the sun is eclipsed, and that the  
“ earth is darkened, but that light will return again with the new king.  
“ It is of the greatest importance that, without long conferences, we  
“ elect a prince who may re-establish the honour of our nation, may  
“ vindicate the wrongs done to it, and restore to it its ancient liberty.”  
They proceeded quickly to the election, and chose by unanimous consent prince Itzcoatl, brother, by the father’s side, to the two preceding kings, and natural son of Acamapitzin by a slave. Whatever the low condition of his mother took from his claim, the nobility and reputation of his father, and, still more, his own virtues, supplied; of these he gave many proofs in the post of general of the Mexican armies, which he had filled for more than thirty years. He was allowed to be the most prudent, just, and brave person of all the Mexican nation. Being placed on the *Tlatocaicpalli*, or royal seat, he was saluted as king by all the nobles, with loud acclamations. One of their orators then held a discourse on the duties of a sovereign, in which, among other things, he said, “ All, O great king and lord, all now feel themselves dependent  
“ on you. On your shoulders must the orphans, the widows, and the  
“ aged be supported. Will you be capable of laying down and aban-  
“ doning this burden? Will you permit the infants who are yet walking  
“ on their four feet, to perish by the hands of our enemies? Courage,  
“ great lord, begin and spread your mantle that you may carry the poor  
“ Mexicans on your back, who flatter themselves they will live secure  
“ under the fresh shade of your benignity.” The ceremony being con-  
cluded, they celebrated the accession of the new monarch, with balls

and



and public diversions. Nezahualcojotl and all his party did not give less applause, as no one doubted of the new king being the faithful ally of the prince his relation; and hoped to reap great advantages from his superior military skill and bravery; but the election was not a little displeasing to the Tepanecas and their allies, and especially to the tyrant.

Itzcoatl, who was zealously bent on relieving the distresses which his nation suffered from the oppressive dominion of the Tepanecas, sent an ambassador to the prince Nezahualcojotl, to acquaint him of his exaltation to the throne, and to give him assurances of his determination to unite all his forces with the prince against the tyrant Maxtlaton. This embassy, which was carried by a grandson of the king, was received by Nezahualcojotl, after he had departed from Capollalpan; upon which he returned congratulations to his cousin, and gratefully accepted the aid which he promised.

The whole time which the prince remained in Capollalpan was employed in preparations for war. When it appeared to him to be time to put all his designs in execution, he set out with his people and the auxiliary troops of Tlascala and Huexotzinco, having resolved to take the city of Tezcucó by assault, and punish its inhabitants for their infidelity to him during his adversity. He made a halt with his whole army in sight of the city, at a place called Oztopolco. There he passed the night ordering his troops, and making the necessary dispositions for the attack, and in the morning marched towards the city; but before he reached it, the inhabitants, from apprehensions of the severe chastisement which threatened them, came submissively to meet him; to soften his resentment they presented their aged sick, their pregnant women, and mothers with infants in their arms, who, in the midst of tears and other tokens of distress, thus addressed him: "Have pity, O most merciful prince, " on these your afflicted servants, who tremble for their fate. In what " have they offended, who are feeble with age, or these poor women " and these helpless children? Do not mix in ruin with the guilty " those who had no part in the offences which you would revenge." The prince, who was moved at the sight of so many objects of compassion, immediately granted a pardon to the city; but at the same time detached a party of troops, and commanded their officers to enter it and put the governor and other servants who had been established there  
by

BOOK III. by the tyrant, and every Tepaneca they should meet with, to death. Whilst this severe punishment was passing at Tezcuco, the troops of the Tlascalans and Huexotzincas, which had been detached from the main army, made a furious attack on the city of Acolman; they made a general slaughter of all whom they met, until they advanced to the house of the lord of that city, who was a brother of the tyrant; he having no forces sufficient to defend himself, was slain among the rest of their enemies. On the same day the Chalchese, who were also auxiliaries of the prince, fell upon the city of Coatlichan, took it without opposition, and put its governor to death, who had taken refuge in the greater temple; thus, in one single day, the capital and two other considerable cities of the kingdom of Acolhuacan, were reduced under obedience to the prince.

SECT. XIX.  
Occurrences  
to Montezuma  
Ilhuicamina.

The king of Mexico being acquainted with the successes of his cousin, sent another embassy to congratulate him and confirm their alliance. He entrusted this embassy to one of his grandsons, a son of king Huitzilihuitl, called *Monteuczoma*, or *Montezuma*, a youth of great strength of body and invincible courage, whose immortal actions obtained him the name of *Tlacaete*, or Man of great Heart, and that of *Ilhuicamina*, or Archer of Heaven; and to distinguish him in the ancient paintings, they represented over his head, the heavens pierced with an arrow, as appears in the seventh and eighth pictures of Mendoza's Collection, and as we shall shew among the figures of the kings of Mexico. This is the same hero of Mexico, whom Acosta has so much celebrated under the name of *Tlacaetel*, or rather Tobar, from whom the other took his character, although mistaken in many actions which he attributes to him (z). The king as well as his grandson, saw the danger of the enterprize; as the tyrant, to obstruct the progress of his rival, and his communication with the Mexicans, had made himself master of the roads; but the king for this neither delayed to send the embassy, nor did Montezuma discover the least cowardly

(z) Acosta, or Tobar rather, is not only mistaken in many actions which he attributes to this hero, but also in regard to his identity; as he considers Tlacaetel to be a different person from Montezuma, who was called by two, and even three different names. He also makes Tlacaetel grandson of Itzcoatl, and at the same time uncle of Montezuma; which is evidently absurd; as it is known that Montezuma was son of Huitzilihuitl, brother of Itzcoatl; of course he could not be the grandson of the grandson of Itzcoatl.

apprehensions ; on the contrary, that he might execute the orders of his sovereign more speedily, when he left the king he avoided returning to his house to equip himself with necessaries for his journey, but set out immediately on his way, giving in charge to another noble, who was to accompany him, the carrying of such cloaths as were necessary to present himself before the prince.

Having safely delivered his embassy, he took leave of the prince to return to Mexico, but in the way fell into an ambuscade laid by his enemies, was taken prisoner with all his attendants, conducted to Chalco, and presented to *Toteotzin*, lord of that city, and an inveterate enemy of the Mexicans. Here he was immediately shut up in a close prison, under the care of *Quateotzin*, a very respectable person, who was ordered to provide no sustenance for the prisoners but what his lord prescribed, until the mode of death was determined, by which their days were to be concluded. *Quateotzin* revolting at the inhumanity of such orders, supplied them liberally at his own expence. But the cruel *Toteotzin*, thinking to pay a piece of flattering homage to the *Huexotzincas*, sent his prisoners to them, that, if they judged proper, they might be sacrificed in *Huexotzinco* with the assistance of the *Chalchese*, or in *Chalco* with the assistance of the *Huexotzincas*. The *Huexotzincas*, who were always more humane than the *Chalchese*, rejected the proposal with disdain. “ Why should we deprive men of their lives “ who have committed no crime, unless that of acting as faithful messengers to their lord ; and if they merited to die, we can derive no “ honour from putting prisoners to death which do not belong to us. “ Return in peace, and inform your lord that the nobility of *Huexotzinco* will not render themselves infamous by acts so unworthy of “ them.”

The *Chalchese* returned with the prisoners and this answer to *Toteotzin*, who being determined to procure himself friends by means of his prisoners, gave information of them to *Maxtlaton* ; leaving it to him to decide their fate, and trusting, by this respectful adulation, to calm the anger and indignation which his treachery and inconstancy in abandoning the party of the *Tepanecas*, for the prince *Nezahualcojotl*, must have excited in the tyrant. While he waited the answer of *Maxtlaton*, he ordered the prisoners to be shut up again in the same prison,



## BOOK III.

and under custody of the same Quateotzin. He compassionating the destiny of a youth so illustrious and brave, in the evening preceding the day on which the answer from Azcapozalco was expected, called one of his servants to him, whose fidelity he could trust, and ordered him to set the prisoners at liberty that evening, and to acquaint Montezuma from him, that he had come to the resolution of saving his life, although at the visible risk of losing his own; that if he should die for it, which he had reason to fear would be his fate, Montezuma, he hoped, would not fail to shew his gratitude, by protecting the children whom he left behind him; lastly, he advised him not to return by land to Mexico, otherwise he would again be taken by the guards which were posted in the way, but to go through Iztapallocan to Chimalhuacan, and from thence to embark for his own city.

The faithful servant executed the order, and Montezuma followed the advice of Quateotzin. They went out of prison that night, and cautiously took the road to Chimalhuacan, where they remained concealed all the next day, living on raw vegetables for want of other food; at night they embarked, and transported themselves swiftly to Mexico, where, as it was supposed, they had already met with death from the enemy, they were received with singular welcome and joy.

As soon as the barbarous Toteotzin was informed that the prisoners were escaped, he was transported with passion, and as he did not in the least doubt that Quateotzin had been the author of their liberty, he ordered instant death to him, and his body to be quartered; sparing neither his wife nor even his children; only one son and one daughter were saved. She took shelter in Mexico, where she was greatly respected on account of her father, who, by the generous forfeiture of his life, had rendered so important a service to the Mexican nation.

Toteotzin experienced another galling disappointment from the answer of Maxtlaton. He being enraged against the Chalchese for the assistance they gave to Nezahualcojotl, and the slaughter they committed in Coatlichan, sent a severe reprimand to Toteotzin, calling him a double-minded traitor, and ordering him to set the prisoners at liberty without delay. Such returns must perfidious flatterers expect. Maxtlaton did not adopt this resolution with intent to favour the Mexicans  
whom

whom he hated in the utmost degree, but solely to shew his contempt for the homage of Toteotzin, and to thwart his inclination. So far was he from a wish to favour the Mexican nation, that he was never so much bent on effecting their ruin as at this time, and had already collected troops to pour a decisive blow on Mexico, that from thence he might proceed to regain all that Nezahualcojotl had taken from him. This prince knowing such designs of Maxtlaton, went to Mexico to consult with its prudent king on the conduct of the war, and the measures that should be taken to baffle the intentions of the tyrant, and agreed to unite the Tezcucan troops, with those of Mexico, in defence of that city, on the fortune of which the success of the war seemed to depend.

The rumour of the approaching war spread infinite consternation among the Mexican populace; conceiving themselves incapable of resisting the power of the Tepanecas, whom they had till now acknowledged their superiors, they went in crowds to the king, dissuading him with tears and intreaties from undertaking so dangerous a war, which would infallibly occasion the downfall of their city and nation. "What can be done then," said the king, "to free us from these impending calamities." "Demand peace," replied the populace, "from the king of Azcapozalco, and make offers of service to him; and to move him to clemency, let our god be borne on the shoulders of the priests into his presence." So great was their clamour, accompanied with threats, that the prudent king who feared a sedition amongst the people which might prove more fatal in its consequences than the war with the enemy, was obliged, contrary to his wishes, to yield to their request. Montezuma who was present, and could not bear that a nation, which boasted so much of its honour, should pursue so ignoble a course, spoke thus to the people. "O ye Mexicans, what would ye do? Have ye lost all judgment? How has such cowardice stole into your hearts? Have you forgot possibly that you are Mexicans, and descendants of those heroes who founded this city, and of those brave men who have protected it in spite of all our enemies? Change your opinions then, or renounce the glory you inherit from your ancestors." Turning afterwards to the king; "How, sir, will you permit such ignominy to stain the character of your people? Speak to  
VOL. I.
" them

BOOK III. "them again, and tell them, that there is another step to be taken  
 "before we so weakly and dishonourably put ourselves into the hands  
 "of our enemies."

The king, who wished for nothing more ardently, addressed the populace, recommending the counsel of Montezuma, which was at last favourably received. The king, then addressing the nobility, said, "Which of ye, who are the flower of the nation, will be fearless enough to carry an embassy to the lord of the Tepanecas?" They all looked at each other, but no one durst offer to encounter the danger; until Montezuma, whom youthful intrepidity inspired, presented himself, saying, "I will carry the embassy; as death must one time or other be met with, it is of little moment whether to-day or to-morrow; no better opportunity can present itself of dying with honour than the sacrificing my life for the welfare of my nation? Behold me, sir, ready to execute your commands: order, and I obey." The king, much pleased with his courage, ordered him to go and propose peace to the tyrant, but to accept of no dishonourable conditions. The valiant youth set out instantly, and meeting with the Tepanecan guards, persuaded them to let him pass with an embassy of the utmost importance to their lord. Having presented himself before the tyrant, in the name of his king and his nation, he demanded peace on honourable terms. The tyrant answered, that it was necessary to deliberate with his counsellors, but on the day following he would return a decisive answer. Montezuma having asked him for protection and security during his stay, could obtain no other than his own caution might procure him; upon which he went back immediately to Mexico, promising to return the day after. The little confidence he had in that court, and the shortness of the journey, which did not exceed four miles, must unquestionably have been his motive for not staying for the final answer of the tyrant. He returned, therefore, to Azcapotzalco the next day as he had promised, and having heard from the mouth of Maxtlaton his resolution for war, he performed the ceremonies commonly practised by two lords who challenge each other, namely, presenting certain defensive arms to him, anointing his head, and fixing feathers upon it in the same manner as is done with dead persons; and lastly, protesting in the name of his king, that as he  
 would



would not accept the peace which was offered to him, he, and all the Tepanecas would inevitably be ruined. The tyrant, without manifesting any displeasure at such ceremonies, or at the threats used to him, gave Montezuma also arms to present to the king of Mexico, and directed him, for the security of his person, to return in disguise through a small outlet from his palace. He would not have observed so strictly at this time the rights of nations, if he could have foreseen that this ambassador, of whose life he was so careful, was to prove the chief instrument of his downfall. Montezuma profited by his advice; but as soon as he saw himself out of danger he began to insult the guards, reproaching them for their negligence, and threatening them with their speedy destruction. The guards rushed violently upon him to kill him; but he so bravely defended himself, that he killed one or two of them, and on the approach of others he retreated precipitately to Mexico, bearing the news that war was declared, and that the chiefs of the two nations had challenged each other.

With this intelligence the populace were again thrown into consternation, and repaired to the king to request his permission to abandon their city; believing their ruin was certain. The king comforted and encouraged them with hopes of victory. "But if we are conquered," said the populace, "what will become of us?" "If that happens," answered the king, "we are that moment bound to deliver ourselves into your hands to be made sacrifices at your pleasure." "So be it," replied the populace, "if we are conquered: but if we obtain the victory, we, and our descendants are bound to be tributary to you, to cultivate your lands, and those of the nobles, to build your houses, and to carry for you, when you go to war, your arms and your baggage." This contract being made between the nobles and the people, and the command of the Mexican troops being given to the brave Montezuma, the king conveyed speedy advice to Nezahualcojotl, to repair with his army immediately to Mexico, which he did a day before the battle.

SECT. XXI.  
War against  
the tyrant.

It cannot be doubted, that the Mexicans had before this time constructed the roads which served for a more easy communication to the city with the continent; as otherwise the movement and skirmishes of the two armies are not to be comprehended: we know from history,

BOOK III. that such roads were intersected by ditches, with drawbridges over them, but no historian mentions the time of their construction (*a*). It is not a little wonderful, that the Mexicans, during a life of so many hardships, should have had the spirit to undertake and constancy to execute a work of such magnitude and difficulty.

The following day, upon the arrival of the prince Nezahualcojotl at Mexico, the Tepanecan army appeared in the field in great numbers and brilliancy, being adorned with plates of gold, and wearing beautiful plumes of feathers on their heads, to add to the appearance of their stature. As they marched they made frequent shouts, in boastful anticipation of victory. Their army was commanded by a famous general called *Mazatl*. The tyrant Maxtlaton, although he had accepted the challenge, did not think proper to leave his palace, either because he believed he would degrade himself by going to combat with the king of Mexico, or, which is more probable, because he dreaded the event of the war. As soon as the Mexicans were informed of the motions of the Tepanecas, they went out well ordered to meet them, and the signal for engagement being given by king Itzcoatl, by the sound of a little drum which he carried on his shoulder, the armies attacked each other with incredible fury, each being firmly persuaded that the issue of the battle would determine their fate. During the greatest part of the day it was not to be discerned to which side victory inclined, the Tepanecas losing in one place what they gained in another. But a little before the setting sun, the Mexican populace observing the enemy continually increased by new reinforcements, began to be dismayed, and to complain of their chiefs, saying to each other, "What are we about, O Mexicans, shall we do well in sacrificing our lives to the ambition of our king and our general? How much more prudent will it be to surrender ourselves, humbly acknowledging our rashness, that we may obtain pardon and the favour of our lives?"

The king, who heard these words with much vexation, and perceived his troops still more discouraged by them, called a council of the prince and general, to take their advice what should be done to dissipate the

(*a*) I believe the Mexicans had before this time constructed the roads of Tacuba and Tepeyacac, but not that of Iztapallapan, which is larger than those, and where the lake is deeper.

fears of the people. "What?" answered Montezuma; "To fight till death. If we die with our arms in our hands, defending our liberty, we will do our duty. If we survive our defeat, we will remain covered with eternal confusion. Let us go then, let us fight till we die." The cries of the Mexicans began already to prevail as if they had been conquered, some of them being even so mean-spirited as to call out to their enemies, "O ye brave Tepanecas, lords of the continent, calm your indignation; for now we surrender. Here before your eyes we will sacrifice our chiefs, to gain your pardon to our rashness which their ambition has occasioned." The king, the prince, the general, and nobles, were so enraged at these speeches, that they would instantly have punished the cowards with death, had not the fear of giving victory to the enemy restrained them. Dissembling their displeasure, they exclaimed with one voice, "Let us die with glory," and rushed with such vigour upon the enemy, that they repulsed them from a ditch which they had gained, and made them retreat. Seeing this advantage, the king began to encourage his people, and the prince and general continued to perform signal acts of bravery. In the utmost heat of the engagement Montezuma encountered with the Tepanecan general, as he was advancing full of pride from the terror his troops struck to the Mexicans, and gave him so furious a blow on the head, that he fell down lifeless at his feet. The report of the victory spread immediately through the whole field, and inspired the Mexicans with fresh courage: but the Tepanecas were so disconcerted by the death of their brave general Mazatl, that they soon went into confusion. Night coming on prevented the Mexicans from pursuing their success: upon which both the armies withdrew to their cities, the Mexicans full of courage, and impatient at not being able, from the darkness of the night, to complete their victory; the Tepanecas downcast and dejected, though not altogether void of hope to be revenged the following day.

Maxtlaton, afflicted at the death of his general, and the defeat of his troops, passed that night the last of his life, in encouraging his captains, and representing to them on the one hand the glory of triumphing over their enemies, and on the other the misfortunes which must ensue if they were vanquished; as the Mexicans, who had hitherto  
been



## BOOK III.

SECT. XXII.  
Conquest of  
Azcapozalco, and death  
of the tyrant Maxtlaton.

been tributary to the Tepanecas, if they remained victors, would compel the Tepanecas to pay a tribute to them (*b*).

The day at length arrived which was to decide the fate of three kings. Both armies took the field, and began battle with uncommon fury, which continued with much fierceness and heat till mid-day. The Mexicans being emboldened from the advantages obtained the preceding day, as well as from a firm belief which possessed them of coming off victorious, made such havock of the enemy, that they strewed the field with dead bodies, defeated them, put them to flight, and pursued them into the city of Azcapozalco, spreading death and terror in every quarter. The Tepanecas, perceiving that even in their houses they could not escape from the fury of the victors, fled to the mountains, which lie from ten to twelve miles distance from Azcapozalco. The proud Maxtlaton, who, until that day, had looked with contempt upon his enemies, and conceived himself superior to all strokes of fortune, seeing the Mexicans had entered his court, and hearing the cries of the vanquished, unable to make any resistance, and fearing to be overtaken if he attempted to fly, hid himself in a *temazcalli*, or cistern; but as the conquerors sought for him every where, they at last found him: no prayers nor tears with which he implored their mercy could prevail; they beat him to death with sticks and stones, and threw his body out into the fields to feed the birds of prey. Such was the tragic end of Maxtlaton before he had completed three years of his tyranny. Thus did they put a stop to his injustice, his cruelty, his ambition, and treachery, and the heavy wrongs done by him to the lawful heir of the kingdom of Acolhuacan, to his brother Tajatzin, and to the kings of Mexico. His memory is odious and execrable among the annals of those nations.

This memorable event which totally altered the system of those kingdoms, signalized the year 1425, of the vulgar era, precisely one century after the foundation of Mexico.

(*b*) From these expressions of the tyrant it is to be inferred, that when he made himself master of the crown of Azcapozalco, by the assassination of his brother Tajatzin, he resumed the imposition of that tribute on the Mexicans, which had been remitted them by his father Tezozomoc.

The next night the victors were employed in sacking the city, in destroying the houses, and burning the temples, leaving that once so celebrated court in a state of desolation not to be repaired in many years. While the Mexicans and Acolhuas were gathering the fruits of their victory, the detachment of Tlascalans and Huexotzencas took the ancient court of Tenajuca by assault, and the day after joined the army to take the city of *Cuetlachtepec*.

The fugitive Tepanecas, finding themselves reduced to the utmost distress in the mountains, and afraid of being persecuted even there by the victors, at last thought of surrendering themselves and imploring mercy; and that they might be more certain of obtaining it, sent off an illustrious personage, in company with other nobles of the Tepanecan nation, to the king of Mexico. This ambassador humbly demanded pardon of the king in the name of his countrymen, offered obedience to him, and promised that all the Tepanecas would acknowledge him as their lawful lord, and would serve him as vassals. He congratulated them on their good fortune in the midst of the terrible shock which their nation had suffered of being subjected to so amiable a prince, who was endued with so many excellent qualities, and at last concluded his address with an earnest prayer, that they might be granted the favour of life, and liberty to return to their habitations. Itzcoatl received them with the utmost complacency, granted them all they asked, professed himself ready to receive them, not only as his subjects but as his children, and to discharge all the offices of a true father to them; but at the same time threatened them with total extirpation if they violated the fidelity which they swore to him. Their demand being granted, the fugitives returned to rebuild their habitations and attend to their families; and from that time continued always subject to the king of Mexico, affording in their disaster another example of those changes and vicissitudes common to all human affairs. But the whole of the Tepanecan nation was not reduced under obedience to the conqueror: Cojohuacan, a considerable state and city of that people, continued for some time refractory in their conduct as will afterwards appear.

The king Itzcoatl, after this famous conquest, ordered a ratification of the compact entered into between the nobility and the populace; by which the last were bound to perpetual services, which they rendered

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dered regularly in future ; but those who by their clamours and complaints had been the cause of discouraging others during battle, were dismembered from the body of the nation and the state of Mexico, and banished for their meanness and cowardice for ever. To Montezuma, and others, who had distinguished themselves in the war, he gave a part of the conquered lands, and assigned a portion also to the priests for their support ; and after having given proper orders for the security and establishment of his dominion, he returned with his army to Mexico, to celebrate the success of his arms with public rejoicings, and to offer thanks to the gods for their supposed protection.



## B O O K IV.

*Re-establishment of the Royal Family of the Chechemecas upon the Throne of Acolhuacan. Foundation of the Monarchy of Tacuba. The Triple Alliance of the Kings of Mexico, Acolhuacan, and Tacuba. Conquests and Death of King Itzcoatl. Conquests and Events of the Mexicans under their Kings Montezuma I. and Axajacatl. War between the Mexicans and Tlatchucas. Conquest of Tlatchuco, and Death of the King Moquibui. Government, Death, and Eulogium of Nezahualcojotl, and Accession of his Son Nezahualpilli.*

AS soon as Itzcoatl found himself firm upon his throne, and in quiet possession of Azcapotzalco, that he might make a return to the prince Nezahualcojotl for the assistance he gave in the defence of Mexico, and the conquest of the Tepanecas, he determined to aid him in person in the recovery of the kingdom of Acolhuacan. If the king of Mexico had been willing to listen to ambition rather than the calls of honour and justice, he would not have failed to find pretences to make himself master also of that kingdom. Chimalpopoca had been put in possession of Tezcuco, by the tyrant Tezozomoc, and had commanded as lord of that court. Itzcoatl, who had entered into all the rights of his predecessor, might well have considered that state to have been incorporated for some years past with the crown of Mexico. On the other hand he had lawfully acquired Azcapotzalco, and subjected the Tepanecas, and appeared to have a title to all the rights of the conquered; which were thought to have been sufficiently established by twelve years possession, and the general acquiescence of the people. But availing himself of no such pretences, he sincerely desired to place Nezahualcojotl on the throne which by lawful succession was due to him, and which he had been deprived of for so many years by the usurpation of the Tepanecas.

## BOOK IV.

SECT. I.  
Re-establishment of the royal family of the Chechemecas on the throne of Acolhuacan.

## BOOK IV.

After the defeat of the Tepanecas there were several cities in the kingdom which were unwilling to submit to the prince, from apprehensions of the chastisement they merited. Huexotla was one of this number, in the neighbourhood of Tezcucó, the lord of which, *Huetznahuatl*(a), continued obstinately rebellious. The confederate troops left Mexico, and directing their course through the plains, which at present go by the name of *Santa Marta*, made a halt in Chimalhuacan, from whence the king and prince sent an offer of pardon to those citizens if they would surrender, and threatening to set fire to their city if they persisted in rebellion; but the rebels, instead of accepting the terms offered them, went out in order of battle against the royal army. The conflict was not lasting; the lord of that city being taken by the invincible Montezuma, the rebel force was put to flight, and afterwards came humbly to ask pardon, presenting according to custom, their pregnant women, their children, and old people to the conqueror, to move him to mercy. At length the way to the throne of Acolhuacan being laid open, and the prince being placed there, the auxiliary troops of Huexotzinco and Tlascala were dismissed with many marks of gratitude and a considerable share of the plunder of Axcapozalco.

SECT. II.  
Conquest of  
Cojohuacan  
and other  
places.

From thence the army of the Mexicans and Acolhuas moved against the rebels of Cojohuacan, Atlacuihuajan, and Huitzilipochco. The Cojoacanese had endeavoured to excite all the other Tepanecas to shake off the Mexican yoke. The above mentioned cities, and some neighbouring places, had complied with their solicitations; but others, intimidated by the destruction of Axcapozalco, were afraid of exposing themselves to new dangers. Before they declared their rebellion they began to ill-treat the Mexican women who went to their market, and also any of the men who happened occasionally to call at that city. Upon this Itzcoatl ordered that no Mexican should go to Cojohuacan until the insolence of these rebels was properly punished. Having finished the expedition to Huexotla, he went against them. In the three first battles which were fought, he gained scarcely any other advantage than making them retreat a little; but in the fourth whilst the two armies were fiercely engaged, Montezuma with a set of brave troops which

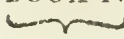
(a) The city of Huexotla had been given by Tezozomoc to the king of Tlatelolco, from whom it is probable, therefore, Maxtlaton took it to give to Huitznahuatl.

he had placed in ambuscade, fell with such fury on the rear-guard of the rebels that he soon disordered and forced them to abandon the field and fly to the city. He pursued them, and observing their intention to fortify themselves in the greater temple, he prevented them by taking possession of it, and burnt the turret of that sanctuary. This blow threw the rebels into such consternation, that, quitting their city, they fled to the mountains which lie to the south of Cojohuacan; but even there they were overtaken by the royal troops, and chased for more than thirty miles, until they reached a mountain to the southward of Quauh-nahuac, where the fugitives exhausted with fatigue, and, without any hopes of escape, threw down their arms in token of surrender, and delivered themselves up to the mercy of the conquerors.

This victory made Itzcoatl master of all the states of the Tepanecas, and crowned Montezuma with glory. It is not a little wonderful, say historians, that the greater part of the prisoners taken in that war with Cojohuacan belonged to Montezuma and three brave Acolhuan officers; for all the four, in imitation of the ancient Mexicans in the war against the Xochimilcas, had agreed to cut off a lock of hair from every one they took, and most of the prisoners were found with this mark upon them. Having thus happily closed this expedition, and regulated the affairs of Cojohuacan, and the other subject cities, both the kings returned to Mexico. It was judged proper by the king Itzcoatl to place one of the family of their ancient lords over the Tepanecas, that they might live more peaceably and with less reluctance under the Mexican yoke. This dignity he conferred on *Totoquibuatzin*, son of a son of the tyrant Tezozomoc. It had not appeared that this prince had taken any part in the war against the Mexicans, owing either to some secret attachment which he had to them, or his aversion to his uncle Maxtlaton. Itzcoatl sent for him to Mexico, and created him king of Tlacopan, or rather Tacuba, a considerable city of the Tepanecas, and of all the places to the westward, including also the country of Mazahuacan; but Cojohuacan, Azcapozalco, Mixcoac, and other cities of the Tepanecas, remained immediately subject to the king of Mexico. That crown was given to Totoquihuatzin, on condition of his serving the king of Mexico with all his troops whenever required, for which he was to receive a fifth part of the spoils which they should take from the enemy. Ne-

SECT. III.  
Monarchy of  
Tacuba, and  
alliance of  
the three  
kings.



BOOK IV.  zahualcojotl likewise was put in possession of the throne of Acolhuacan, on condition of his giving assistance to the Mexicans in war, for which he was assigned a third part of the plunder, after deducting the share of the king of Tacuba, the other two thirds to be reserved for the king of Mexico. (b) Besides this, both the kings were created honorary electors of the kings of Mexico; which honour was simply confined to the ratifying the election made by four Mexican nobles, who were the real electors. The king of Mexico was reciprocally bound to afford succour to each of the two kings wherever occasion demanded. This alliance of the three kings which remained firm and inviolate for the space of a century, was the cause of the rapid conquests which the Mexicans made hereafter. But this was not the only masterly stroke in politics of the king Itzcoatl; he munificently rewarded all those who had distinguished themselves in the wars, not paying so much regard to their birth or the stations which they occupied, as to the courage which they shewed and the services they performed. Thus it was the hope of reward animated them to the most heroic enterprises, being convinced, that the glory and the advantages to be derived from them would not depend on any accidents of fortune, but on the merit of their actions themselves. By succeeding kings the same policy was practised with infinite service to the state. Having formed this important alliance Itzcoatl set out with the king Nezahualcojotl for Tezcuco, to crown him with his own hand. This ceremony was performed with all possible solemnity in 1426. From thence the king of Mexico returned to his residence, while the other began with the utmost diligence to make reformatations in the court of Tezcuco.

SECT IV.  
Judicious re-  
gulations of  
king Neza-  
hualcojotl.

The kingdom of Acolhuacan was not then in such good order and regulation as Techoatlala had left it. The dominion of the Tepanecas, and the revolutions which had happened in the last twenty years had changed the government of the people, weakened the force of the laws, and caused a number of their customs to fall into disuse. Nezahualcojotl, who, besides the attachment which he had to his nation was gifted with uncommon prudence, made such regulations and changes

(b) Several Historians have believed that the kings of Tezcuco and Tacuba were real electors, but the contrary appears evident from history; no occasion ever occurred where they interfered or were present at an election, as we shall shew hereafter.

in

in the state, that in a little time it became more flourishing than it had ever been under any of his predecessors. He gave a new form to the councils which had been established by his grandfather. He conferred offices on persons the fittest for them. One council determined causes purely civil, in which, among others, five lords who had proved constantly faithful to him in his adversity, assisted. Another council judged of criminal causes, at which the two princes his brothers, men of high integrity, presided. The council of war was composed of the most distinguished military characters, among whom Icotihuacan, son-in-law to the king and also one of the thirteen nobles of the kingdom, had the first rank. The treasury-board consisted of the king's majordomos, and the first merchants of the court. The principal majordomos who took charge of the tributes and other parts of the royal income, were three in number. Societies similar to academies were instituted for poetry, astronomy, music, painting, history, and the art of divination, and he invited the most celebrated professors of his kingdom to his court, who met on certain days to communicate their discoveries and inventions; and for each of these arts and sciences, although little advanced, schools were appropriated. To accommodate the mechanic branches, he divided the city of Tezcucó into thirty odd divisions, and to every branch assigned a district; so that the goldsmiths inhabited one division, the sculptors another, the weavers another, &c. To cherish religion he raised new temples, created ministers for the worship of their gods, gave them houses, and appointed them revenues for their support, and the expences which were necessary at festivals and sacrifices. To augment the splendor of his court he constructed noble edifices both within and without the city, and planted new gardens and woods, which were in preservation many years after the conquest, and shew still some traces of former magnificence.

While the king of Acolhuacan was occupied in new regulations of his court, the Xochimilcas, afraid lest the Mexicans in future might be desirous of making themselves also masters of their state, as well as of the Tepanecas, assembled a council to deliberate on the measures they should take to prevent such a disgrace. Some were of opinion they should voluntarily submit themselves to the dominion of the Mexicans, as at all events in time they would be obliged to succumb to that power :

the

SECT. V.  
Conquest of  
Xochimilco,  
of Cuiclahuac,  
and other  
cities.

BOOK IV. the judgment of others however prevailed, who thought it would be better to declare war against them before new conquests rendered them more formidable. The king of Mexico no sooner heard of their resolution than he set out a large army, under command of the celebrated Montezuma, and sent advice to the king of Tacuba to join with his troops. The battle was fought on the confines of Xochimilco. Although the number of the Xochimilcas was great, they did not however engage with such good order as the Mexicans, by which means they were quickly defeated, and retreated to their city. The Mexicans having pursued them, entered it, and set fire to the turrets of the temples and other edifices. The citizens not being able to resist their attack, fled to the mountains; but being even there besieged by the Mexicans, they at last surrendered. Montezuma was received by the Xochimilchan priests with the music of flutes and drums; and the whole expedition completed in about eleven days. The king of Mexico went immediately to take possession of that city, which, as we have before mentioned, next to the royal residence, was the most considerable in the vale of Mexico, where he was acknowledged and proclaimed king, received the obedience of these new subjects, and promised to love them as a father, and watch in future over their welfare.

The bad success of the Xochimilcas was not sufficient to intimidate those of Cuitlahuac; on the contrary, the advantageous situation of their city, which was built on a little island in the lake of Chalco, encouraged them to provoke the Mexicans to war. Itzcoatl was for pouring upon them with all the forces of Mexico; but Montezuma undertook to humble their pride with a smaller body; for which purpose he raised some companies of youths, particularly those who had been bred in the seminaries of Mexico; and after having exercised them in arms, and instructed them in the order and mode which they were to follow in that war, he prepared a suitable number of vessels, and set out with this armament against the Cuitlahuachese. We are totally ignorant of the particulars of this expedition; but we know that in seven days the city was taken and reduced under the obedience of the king of Mexico, and that the youths returned loaded with spoils, and brought with them a number of prisoners to be sacrificed to the god of war. We do not know the year either in which this war happened,

nor



nor the time of that of Quauhnhuac, but it appears to have been towards the end of the reign of Itzcoatl.

The lord of Xiuhtepec, a city of the country of the Tlahuicas, more than thirty miles to the southward of Mexico, had requested of his neighbour, the lord of Quauhnhuac, one of his daughters to wife, which demand was granted. The lord of Tlaltexcal made afterwards the same pretensions, to whom she was immediately given, notwithstanding the promises made to the first, either on account of some offence which he had done to the father, or some other reason of which we are ignorant. The lord of Xiuhtepec being highly offended at such an insult, desired to be revenged; but being unable for this himself, on account of his inferiority in forces, he implored the assistance of the king of Mexico, promising to be his constant friend and ally, and to serve him whenever he should require it with his person and his people. Itzcoatl esteeming the war just, and the occasion fit for the extension of his dominions, armed his subjects, and called upon those of Acolhuacan and Tacuba. So great an army was certainly necessary, the lord of Quauhnhuac being very powerful, and his city very strong, as the Spaniards afterwards experienced when they besieged it. Itzcoatl commanded that the whole army should attack the city at once, the Mexicans by Ocuilla on the west side, the Tepanecas by Tlatzacapulco on the north, and the Tezcucans together with the Xiuhtepechesé by Tlalquitenanco on the east and south. The Quauhnhuachese trusting to the natural strength of the city, were willing to stand the attack. The first who began it were the Tepanecas, who were vigorously repulsed; but all the other troops immediately advancing, the citizens were forced to surrender and subject themselves to the king of Mexico, to whom they paid annually, from that time forward, a tribute in cotton, pepper, and other commodities, which we shall mention hereafter. By the conquest of that large, pleasant, and strong city, which was the capital of the Tlahuicas, a great part of that country fell under the dominion of the Mexican king; a little after to these conquests were added Quantititlan and Toltitlan, considerable cities fifteen miles to the northward of Mexico; but any other particulars we know not.

In this manner a city, which some short time before was tributary to the Tepanecas, and not much esteemed by other nations, in less than

BOOK IV. twelve years found itself enabled to command those who had ruled over it and the people who thought themselves greatly superior. Of such importance to the prosperity of a nation is the wisdom and bravery of its chief. At length in the year 1436 of the vulgar era, in a very advanced age, after a reign full of glory, the great Itzcoatl died: a king justly celebrated by the Mexicans for his singular endowments, and the unequalled services he rendered them. He served the nation upwards of thirty years as general, and governed thirteen as their sovereign. Besides rescuing them from the subjection of the Tepanecas, extending their dominions, replacing the royal family of the Chechemecas on the throne of Acolhuacan, enriching his court with the plunder of conquered nations, and having laid, in the triple alliance which he formed, the foundation of their future greatness, he added to the nobleness and splendor of the nation by many new edifices. After the conquest of Cuitlahuac he built, among others, a temple to the goddess *Cihuacoatl*, and some time afterwards another to *Huitzilopochtli*. His funeral was attended with unusual pomp and the greatest demonstrations of grief, and his ashes reposed in the same sepulchre with his ancestors.

SECT. VI.  
Montezuma I. fifth  
king of  
Mexico.

The four electors did not long deliberate on the choice of a new king; there being no surviving brother of the late sovereign, the election consequently fell on one of his grandsons; and no one appeared more deserving than Montezuma Ilhuicamina, son of Huitziluhuitl, not less on account of his personal virtues than the important services he had done the nation. He was elected with general applause, advice of which being given to the two allied kings, they not only confirmed the election, but passed many praises on the elected, and sent him presents worthy of his rank and their esteem. After the usual ceremonies and the congratulatory speeches of the priests, the nobles, and the military, much rejoicing took place, with entertainments, balls, and illuminations. Before his coronation, either from an established law of the country, or his own particular desire, he went to war with his enemies to make prisoners for a sacrifice on the occasion. He resolved that these should be of the Chalchese nation, to revenge the insults and the injurious treatment he had received from them when returning from Tezcucó, in the character of ambassador, he had been taken and carried to the prison

prison of Chalco. He went against them therefore in person, defeated them, and made many prisoners ; but did not then subject the whole of that state to the crown of Mexico, that he might not retard his coronation. On the day appointed for that solemnity the tributes and presents which were sent to him from conquered places, were brought into Mexico. The king's major-domos and the receivers of the royal revenues preceded, after whom came those who carried the presents, who were divided into as many companies as there were people who sent them, and so regular and orderly in their procession as to afford infinite pleasure to the spectators. They brought gold, silver, beautiful feathers, wearing apparel, great variety of game, and a vast quantity of provisions. It is more than probable, although historians do not mention it, that the other two allied kings and many other strangers of distinction were present, besides a great concourse of people from all the places in the vale of Mexico.

As soon as Montezuma found himself on the throne, his first care was to erect a great temple in that part of the city which they called *Huitznahuac*. The allied kings, whom he requested to assist him, furnished him with such plenty of materials and workmen, that in a short time the building was finished and consecrated. During the time of its construction the new war against Chalco appears to have happened. The Chalchese besides the injuries which they had already done to Montezuma, provoked his indignation afresh by a cruel and barbarous act, deserving the execration of all posterity. Two of the royal princes of Tezcuco having gone a hunting on the mountains which overlook the plains of Chalco, while employed in the chase and separated from their retinue with only three Mexican lords, fell in with a troop of Chalchese soldiers, who thinking they would please the cruel passions of their master, made them prisoners and carried them to Chalco. The savage lord of that city, who was probably the same Toteotzin by whom Montezuma had been so ill treated, paying no regard to the noble rank of the prisoners, nor dreading the fatal consequences of his inhuman resolution, put all the five instantly to death ; and that he might always be able to gratify his sight with a spectacle in which his cruelty delighted, he caused their bodies to be salted and dried ; and when they were thus sufficiently prepared, he placed them in a hall of his house,

SECT. VII.  
Atrocious act  
of the Chal-  
chese.



## BOOK IV.

to serve as supporters of the pine torches which were burned to give light in the evening.

The report of so horrid an act spread immediately over all the country. The king of Tezcucó, whose heart was pierced with the intelligence, demanded the aid of the allied kings to revenge the death of his sons. Montezuma determined that the Tezcucan army should attack the city of Chalco by land, whilst he and the king of Tacuba with their troops made an attack on it by water; for which purpose he collected an infinite number of vessels to transport his people, and commanded the armament in person. The Chalchefe notwithstanding the number of the enemy, made a vigorous resistance; for besides being themselves warriors, on this occasion desperation heightened their courage. The lord of that state himself, although so old that he could not walk, caused himself to be carried in a litter to animate his subjects with his presence and voice. They were however totally defeated, the city was sacked, and the lord of it punished in a most exemplary manner for his many atrocious crimes. The spoils, according to the agreement made in the time of king Itzcoatl, were divided among the three kings, but the city and the whole of the state remained from that time subject to the king of Mexico. This victory, as historians relate, was owing chiefly to the bravery of the youth Axoquentzin, a son of Nezahualcojotl.

This famous king, although he had in early life several wives and many children by them, had not yet conferred on any of them the dignity of queen, as they had been all slaves or daughters of his subjects (*c*). Judging it now necessary to take a wife worthy of being raised to this high rank, and who might bear a successor to him in the crown of Acolhuacan, he married Matlalcihuatzin daughter of the king of Tacuba, a beautiful and modest virgin, who was conducted to Tezcucó by her father and the king of Mexico. On occasion of the nuptials there were rejoicings for eighty days, and a year after a son was born of this marriage, who was named Nezahualpilli, and succeeded, as will appear hereafter, to that crown. A little time after, equally great

SECT. VIII.  
Marriage of  
Nezahualco-  
jotl with a  
princess of  
Tacuba.

(*c*) Nezahualcojotl married in his youth Nezahualxochitl, as we have already mentioned, who, being of the royal family of Mexico, was entitled to the honour of being queen; but she died before the prince recovered his crown from the usurper.

rejoicings

rejoicings took place, on occasion of the building of the *Hueitecpan* or great palace being completed, of whose magnificence the Spaniards were witnesses. These festivals, at which the two allied kings were present, were concluded with a most sumptuous entertainment to which the nobility of the three courts were invited. At this entertainment Nezahualcojotl made his musicians sing to the accompaniment of instruments, an ode which he had composed himself, which began thus; "*Xochitl mamani in abuehuetitlan*," the subject of which was a comparison of the shortness of life and of its pleasures, with the fleeting bloom of a flower. The pathetic touches of the song drew tears from the audience; in whom, according to their love of life, the anticipation of death made proportionate ideas of melancholy spring in the mind.

Montezuma having returned to his court, found himself obliged to crush an enemy, whose neighbourhood and almost domestic situation might make him prove the more dangerous to the state. *Quauhtlatoa*, the third king of Tlatelolco, instigated by ambition to extend his dominions, or from envy of the happiness of his neighbour and rival, had formerly been desirous of taking away the life of king Itzcoatl, and that he might prove successful, having no sufficient forces of his own, had entered into a confederacy with other neighbouring lords; but all his attempts were vain, as Itzcoatl was apprised of his intentions, prepared in time for defence, and damped his courage. From that time, such a distrust and enmity sprung up between the Mexicans and Tlatelolcos, that they continued for years without any intercourse, except among some of the common people, who stole off occasionally to the markets. Under the reign of Montezuma, Quauhtlatoa resumed his hostile intentions; but they were not again left unpunished; Montezuma having got advice of them, prevented the blow by a vigorous attack on Tlatelolco, in which the petty king was killed, although the city was not then made subject to the government of Mexico. The Tlatelolcos elected the brave *Moquibux* king, in the choice of whom the king of Mexico himself must have had considerable influence.

SECT. IX.  
Death of  
Quauhtlator  
king of Tla-  
telolco.

Montezuma having rid himself of this dangerous neighbour, set out for the province of the *Cohuixcas*, which lies to the southward of Mexi-

SECT. X.  
Conquest of  
Montezuma.

## BOOK IV.

co, in order to revenge the loss of some Mexicans who had been put to death by that people. This glorious expedition added to his crown the states of Huaxtepec, Jauhtepec, Tepoztlan, Jacapichtla, Totolapan, Tlalcocauhtitlan, Chilapan, which were more than a hundred and fifty miles distant from the court, Coixco, Oztomantla, Tlachmallac, and many others; then turning to the west, he conquered Tzompahuacan, bringing under subjection to the crown of Mexico both the great country of the Coahuixcas, who had been the authors of the deaths above-mentioned, and many other neighbouring states which had provoked his resentment probably by similar insults. Upon his return to his court he enlarged the temple of Huitzilopochtli, and adorned it with the spoils of those nations. These conquests were made in the nine first years of his reign.

SECT. XI.  
The inundation of Mexico.

In the tenth year, which was the 1446 of the vulgar era, a great inundation happened in Mexico, occasioned by excessive rains, which swelled the waters of the lake till they overflowed and laid the city so much under water as to destroy many houses; and the streets becoming impassable, boats were made use of in every quarter. Montezuma much distressed by the accident, had recourse to the king of Tezcuco, hoping his penetration might suggest some remedy to this calamity. That discerning king advised a great dyke to be made to keep out the water, and laid down a plan of it, and pointed out the place where it should be made. His counsel was approved by Montezuma, who commanded it to be followed with instant execution. He ordered the subjects of Azcapozalco, Cojohuacan, and Xochimilco, to provide so many thousand large flakes, and the people of other parts to furnish the necessary stones. He summoned also to this work the inhabitants of Tacuba, Iztapalapan, Colhuacan, and Tenajuca, and the lords and the kings themselves, engaged themselves first in the fatigue; from their example, their subjects were animated to such activity, that in a short time the work was perfectly completed which must otherwise have been many years in accomplishing. The dyke was nine miles in length, and eleven cubits in breadth, and was composed of two parallel palisades, the space between which was entirely filled up with stone and sand. The greatest difficulty which occurred, was in being obliged occasionally to work within the lake, especially in some places where it was of a considerable



siderable depth ; but this was overcome by the skill of the conductor, and the perseverance of the labourers. This dyke was certainly of great use to the city, although it did not entirely protect it from inundations ; that, however, is not wonderful, as the Spaniards, although they employed European engineers, were not able to effect its security from them, after labouring two centuries and a half upon it, and expending many millions of sequins. Whilst this work was going on, the Chalchefe rebelled, but were quickly brought under obedience again, although not without the loss of some Mexican officers.

The accident of the inundation was soon followed by a famine ; which arose from the harvest of maize, in the years 1448 and 1449, being exceedingly stinted ; the frost having attacked the ears while they were young and tender. In the year 1450, the crop was totally lost from the want of water. In 1451, besides having unfavourable seasons, there was a scarcity of grain for feed, so much of it being consumed on account of the scarcity of preceding harvests ; from which in 1452, the necessities of the people became so great, that as the liberality of their king and the nobles was not sufficient to relieve them, although they opened their granaries to assist them, they were obliged to purchase the necessities of life, with the price of their liberty. Montezuma being unable to relieve his subjects from their distress, permitted them to go to other countries to procure their support ; but knowing that some of them made slaves of themselves for two or three days sustenance only, he published a proclamation, in which he commanded that no woman should sell herself for less than four hundred ears of maize, and no man for less than five hundred. But nothing could stop the destructive consequences of famine. Of those who went to seek relief in other countries some died of hunger on their way. Others who sold themselves for food, never returned to their native country. The greater part of the Mexican populace supported themselves like their ancestors, on the water-fowl, the herbs growing in the marshes, and the insects and small fish which they caught in the lake. The following year was not so unfavourable, and at length, in 1454, which was a secular year, there was a most plentiful harvest of maize, and likewise of pulse, and every sort of fruit.

SECT. XII.  
Famine in  
Mexico.

But

## BOOK IV.

SECT. XIII.  
New con-  
quests and  
death of  
Montezuma.

But the Mexicans were not permitted to enjoy the season of plenty in quietness, being obliged to go to war against Atonaltzin, lord of the city and state of Coaixtlahuacan, in the country of the Mixtecas. This was a powerful lord, who, for some reasons unknown, would not allow to any Mexican a passage through his lands, and whenever they happened to come there shewed them the worst treatment he could. Montezuma being highly offended with such hostility, sent an embassy to him, to know the motive of his conduct, and threatened him with war if he did not make a proper apology. Atonaltzin received the embassy with scorn, and ordering some of his riches to be set before the ambassadors, "Bear," said he, "this present to your king, and tell him, from it he may know how much my subjects give me, and how great the love is which they have for me; that I willingly accept of war, by which it shall be decided whether my subjects are to pay tribute to the king of Mexico, or the Mexicans to me." Montezuma immediately informed the two allied kings of this insolent answer, and sent a considerable army against that lord, who was well prepared, and met them on the frontiers of his state. As soon as the armies came in sight of each other, they engaged; but the Mixtecas rushed with such fury on the Mexicans, that they were thrown into disorder, and forced to abandon their enterprize.

The pride of Atonaltzin increased with the victory, but foreseeing that the Mexicans would return with a more numerous force, he demanded assistance from the Huexotzincas and the Tlascalans, who readily, granted it, rejoicing in having an opportunity of interrupting the success of the Mexican arms. Montezuma, who was much troubled at the unhappy issue of the war, meditated the re-establishment of the honour of his crown, for which purpose he speedily collected a numerous and formidable army, resolving to command it himself, together with his two royal allies; but before they set out on their march, he received intelligence that the Tlascalans and Huexotzincas had attacked Tlachquiahco, a place in Mixteca, had killed all the Mexican garrison there, and deprived some of the citizens of their lives, and others of their liberty. Montezuma, now warm with indignation, marched towards Mixteca. Neither his own power, nor the assistance which he received from his friends, were of any avail to Atonaltzin.

In the very first conflict his army was totally defeated, many of his soldiers were killed, and almost all his confederates; the few who escaped the fury of the Mexicans fell by the hands of the Mixtecas, in revenge for the unfortunate issue of the battle. Atonaltzin surrendered to Montezuma, who not only remained in possession of the city, and the state of Coaixtlahuacan, but proceeding farther made himself master of Tochtepec, Tzapotlan, Tototlan, and Chinantla, and in the two following years of Cozamaloapan, and Quauhtochto. The cause of these last wars was the same with many others, namely, the inhabitants of these places having in time of peace put some merchants and couriers of Mexico to death.

The expedition undertaken in 1457 against *Cuethachtlan*, or Cotaſta, proved far more difficult, and more celebrated. This province situated as we mentioned before on the coast of the Mexican gulf, and founded, or at least inhabited, by the Olmecas, who were driven out by the Tlaſcalans, was extremely populous. We are ignorant of the occasion of the war; we know, however, that the Cotaſteſe foreſeeing the ſtorm which threatened them, called the Huexotzincas and Tlaſcalans to their aſſiſtance. The two laſt feeling high reſentment for the loſs of Coaixtlahuacan, and thiſtling for revenge, not only agreed to aſſiſt the other, but perſuaded the Cholulans alſo to enter into the confederacy. Theſe three republics ſent numerous forces to Cotaſta to wait for the enemy. Montezuma, on his part, raiſed a great and brilliant army, in which the flower of the nobility of Mexico, Acolhua, Tlatelolco, and Tepaneca enliſted. Among other perſons of diſtinction in this army were *Axajacatl*, the general, *Tixoc*, and *Abuitzotl*, all three brothers, and of the royal family of Mexico, who ſucceſſively filled the throne after Montezuma their couſin. There were alſo the lords of Colhuacan and Tenaycuca; but the moſt reſpectable character was Moquihuix, king of Tlatelolco, ſucceſſor to the unfortunate Quauh-tloa. When the army left Mexico, intelligence had not arrived of the confederacy of the three republics with the Cotaſteſe; as ſoon as Montezuma knew it, he ſent meſſengers to his generals not to proceed, but to return inſtantly to his court. The generals entered into a conſultation: ſome were of opinion that they ought to obey the order of their ſovereign without heſitation; others thought they were  
not



BOOK IV. not under obligation to submit to an order, which would throw such reflection on their honour, as the nobles must be disgraced and degraded if they shunned engaging upon an occasion which was so fit to shew their bravery. The first opinion prevailed, as being the most safe; but in setting out on their march to return to Mexico, Moquihuix the king, addressed them: "Let those return, whose spirit can suffer them  
 "to turn their backs upon the enemy, whilst I with my people of  
 "Tlatelolco alone bear off the honour of the victory." This resolute determination of Moquihuix, so roused and fired the other generals, that they all resolved to meet the danger. At length they joined battle with the enemy, in which the Cotaltepec although they fought courageously, were nevertheless vanquished, with all their allies: of these last, the greater part were left on the field; of both, six thousand two hundred were made prisoners, who were soon after sacrificed at the festival of the consecration of the *Quaxicalco*, or the religious edifice appropriated for the preservation of the skulls of the victims. The whole of that province remained subject to the king of Mexico, who established a garrison there, to keep that people in obedience to the crown. This great victory was principally owing to the bravery of Moquihuix; and even until our day, a Mexican song or ode has been preserved, which was at that time composed in his praise (*e*). Montezuma more pleased with the happy fortune of the war, than offended at the disobedience to his orders, rewarded the king of Tlatelolco by giving him one of his cousins to wife, who was the sister of the above mentioned princes, Axayacatl, Tizoc, and Ahuitzotl.

In the mean while the Chalchefe were daily rendering themselves more deserving of chastisement, not solely by rebellion, but also by the commission of other new offences. At this time they had the audacity to take the brother of the king Montezuma himself, who was, according to what we can learn, lord of Ehecatepec, with some other Mexicans, prisoners. A crime of this nature committed on a person so nearly related in blood to their sovereign, appears to have been a measure contrived by them to get rid of the power of the Mexicans, and make the city of Chalco the rival of Mexico; as they were desirous of making that

(*e*) Boturini makes mention of this ode, which he had, among other manuscripts and paintings, in his very valuable museum.

lord, king of Chalco; and frequently, though in vain, proposed it to him. He perceiving them fixed in their resolution, told them he would accept the crown they offered; but, that the act of his exaltation might be the more solemn, he desired they would plant in the market-place, one of the highest trees, and place a scaffold upon it, from which he might be viewed by all. Every thing was done as he requested: having assembled the Mexicans around the tree, he ascended the scaffold with a bunch of flowers in his hand; then from the height, in the view of an immense concourse of people, he thus addressed his own people: "Ye know well, my brave Mexicans, that the Chalchese wish "to make me their king; but it is not agreeable to our God that I "should betray our native country, I chuse rather to teach you by my "example, to place higher value on fidelity to it, than upon life itself." Having spoke thus, he threw himself headlong from the scaffold. This act, though barbarous, was agreeable to the ideas which the ancients entertained of magnanimity, and was so much less censurable than that of Cato and others, celebrated by antiquity, as the motive was nobler and the courage of the Mexican greater. The Chalchese were so enraged at the deed, that they fell instantly on the other Mexicans and killed them with their darts. The next evening they heard by chance the melancholy screaming of an owl, which, as they were extremely addicted to superstition, was interpreted, a fatal omen of their approaching ruin. They were not deceived in the anticipation of their disasters; for Montezuma, highly provoked by their rebellion and their enormous offences, immediately declared war, and caused fires to be kindled on the tops of the mountains, as a signal of the punishment to which he condemned the rebels. He then marched with his army against that province, and made such havock of the enemy as to leave it almost depopulated. Immense numbers were slaughtered, and those who escaped with life, fled into the caves of the mountains which rise above the plains of Chalco; some, to remove themselves still further from danger, passing to the other side of the mountains, took refuge in Huexotzinco and Atlixco. The city of Chalco was sacked and plundered. The fury of revenge was succeeded in Montezuma, as is usual to noble minds, by feelings of compassion for the unfortunate. He proclaimed a general pardon to all the fugitives, particularly for the relief of the

## BOOK IV.

aged, the women, and the children, inviting them to return without fear to their native country; nor content with that only, he ordered his troops to traverse the mountains, to call back the wanderers who had fled from man to find shelter among the wild beasts, and woods. Many returned, who were distributed in Amaquemecan, Tlalmanalco, and other places; but many resigned themselves to their fate in the mountains, from distrust of the pardon, or the excess of their despair. One part of the country of Chalco was divided by Montezuma among the officers who had the most distinguished themselves in the war.

After this expedition the Mexicans conquered Tamazollan, Piaztlan, Xilotepec, Acatlan, and other places. By such rapid conquests Montezuma so enlarged his dominions, that in the east he extended them as far as the gulf of Mexico; in the south-east, to the centre of the country of the Mixtecas; in the south, as far as Chilapan and something beyond it; in the west, to the valley of Toluca; in the north-west, to the centre of the country of the Otomies; and in the north, as far as the termination of the vale of Mexico.

But while so attentive to war, this famous king neglected not what concerned internal polity and religion. He published new laws, added to the splendor of his court, and introduced there many ceremonials not known to his predecessors. He erected a large temple to the god of war, ordained many new religious rites, and increased the number of the priests. The interpreter of Mendoza's collection adds, that Montezuma was himself sober, and remarkably rigorous in punishing drunkenness; and that by his justice and prudence, and the propriety of his actions, he made his subjects fear and love him. At last, after a very glorious reign of twenty-eight years and some months, in 1464 he died, universally regretted. His funeral was celebrated with more than ordinary solemnity, in proportion to the increased magnificence of the court, and the power of the nation.

SECT. XIV.  
Axajacatl,  
sixth king of  
Mexico.

Before his death he assembled the chief nobility of his court, and exhorted them to agree among themselves, and prayed of the electors that they would, after his death, chuse Axayacatl, whom he thought the fittest person to promote the glory of the Mexicans. Whether it was from deference to the opinion of a king who had gained so much desert from his nation, or because they knew the merit of Axayacatl, the



the electors chose him in preference to his elder brother. He was the son of Tezozomoc, who had been the brother of the three kings who preceded Montezuma, and a son, as well as they, of king Acamapitzin.

After the festival of the election, the new king, after the example of his predecessors, went to war, to collect victims for a sacrifice at his coronation. He made his expedition against the province of Tecuantepec, situated on the coast of the Pacific Ocean, four hundred miles to the south-east, from Mexico. The people of Tecuantepec were well prepared, and in confederacy with their neighbours, to oppose the attempts of the Mexicans. In the keen battle which took place, Axayacatl, who commanded as general, pretended flight, to lead the enemy into an ambuscade. They pursued the Mexicans, triumphing in their victory, when suddenly they found themselves attacked behind by one part of the Mexican army which came from their ambush, and attacked in front by those who were flying and had now faced about upon them; harrassed thus on both sides, they were soon totally defeated. The enemy, who were able to save themselves by flight, were pursued by the Mexicans as far as the city of Tecuantepec, to which they set fire, and taking advantage of the confusion and consternation of the people, they extended their conquests as far as Coatulco, a maritime place, the port of which was much frequented by the vessels of the Spaniards, in the next century. From this expedition Axayacatl returned enriched with spoils, and was crowned with the greatest pomp, there being a procession of the tribute-bearers, and a sacrifice made of the prisoners. In the first years of his reign, following the steps of his predecessor, he applied himself to the extension of his conquests. In 1467 he re-conquered Cotaça and Tochtepec. In 1468, he obtained a complete victory over the Huexotzincas and Atlixcas; and on his return to Mexico, he undertook the building of a temple, which he called *Coatlan*. The Tlatelolcos erected another in rivalry, which they called *Coaxlotl*; by which the discord between these two kings was revived, which turned out, as we shall see hereafter, fatal to the Tlatelolcos. In 1469, Totoquihuatzin, the first king of Tacuba, died, who, for upwards of forty years, while he held that small kingdom, was constantly faithful to the king of Mexico, and served him in almost all the wars which he undertook against the enemies of the state. He was succeed-

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## SECT. XV.

Death, and  
eulogium of  
king Neza-  
hualcojotl.

ed in the throne by his son Chimalpopoca, who resembled him no less in his bravery than his fidelity.

The loss which the Mexicans suffered, in 1470, by the death of the great Nezahualcojotl king of Acolhuacan, was far more afflicting. This king was one of the most renowned heroes of ancient America. His courage, which in his youth was rather fool-hardiness, however great it appeared, was still one of the less noble faculties of his soul. His fortitude and constancy during the thirteen years which he continued deprived of the crown and persecuted by the usurper, were truly wonderful. His integrity in the administration of justice was inflexible. To make his nation more civilized, and to correct the disorders introduced into the kingdom in the time of the tyrant, he published eighty laws, which were afterwards compiled by his celebrated descendant D. Ferdinando D'Alba *Ixtlilxochitl* in his manuscript, entitled, *Storia de' Signori Cicimechi*. He ordained that no suit, civil or criminal, should be prolonged more than eighty days, or four Mexican months. Every eighty days there was a great assembly in the royal palace, at which the judges and delinquents attended. Whatever causes had been left undecided in the four preceding months, were infallibly determined on that day; and those who were convicted of any crime, immediately and without any remission, received punishment proportioned to their offence, in presence of the whole assembly. To different crimes, different punishments belonged; some were punished with the utmost rigour, particularly adultery, sodomy, theft, homicide, drunkenness, and treason to the state. If we are to credit the Tezcucan historians, he put four of his own sons to death, for committing incest with their mother-in-law.

His clemency to the unfortunate was also remarkable. It was forbidden, under pain of death, throughout the kingdom, to take any thing from another's field; and so strict was this law, that the stealing of seven ears of maize was sufficient to incur the penalty. In order to provide, in some measure, for necessitous travellers, without breach of this law, Nezahualcojotl commanded that both sides of the principal highways should be sown with maize and other seeds, with the fruits of which those who were in want might supply themselves. A great part of his revenue was spent in relief of the poor, particularly those who

who were aged, sick, and in widowhood. To prevent the consumption of the woods, he prescribed limits to those who cut wood, and forbid trespasses on them, under severe penalties. Being desirous of knowing if this prohibition was strictly observed, he went out one day in disguise, with one of his brothers, and took the way to the foot of the neighbouring mountains, where the boundaries prescribed, commenced. There he found a youth employed in gathering the small chips which remained of some wood that had been cut, and asked him why he did not go into the woods to cut fuel. Because the king, said the lad, has forbid the trespassing on these limits, and if we do not obey him he will punish us severely. Neither importunity nor promises which the king made, were sufficient to make him willing to transgress. The compassion excited in him by this poor youth, moved him to enlarge the former limits he had fixed.

He was particularly zealous in his attention to the faithful administration of justice, and that none from their necessities might plead an excuse for being corrupted by any of the contending parties, he ordered the support of all his ministers and judges, their clothing, and every necessary according to the rank and quality of the person, to be supplied out of the royal treasury. So much was expended annually in his household, in the support of his ministers and magistrates, and in relief of the poor, it would be totally incredible, nor should we be bold enough to write it, were it not certified by the original paintings, seen and examined by the first religious missionaries, who were employed in the conversion of these people, and confirmed by the testimony of a third grandson of this same king, who being converted to christianity was baptized by the name of Don Antonio Pimentel (*f*). The annual expenditure made by Nezahualcojotl reduced to Castilian measure, was therefore as follows:

|                                       |   |   |   |                                 |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|---|---------------------------------|
| Of Maize,                             | - | - | - | 4,900,300 Fanegas ( <i>g</i> ). |
| Of Cocoa nuts,                        | - | - | - | 2,744,000 Fan.                  |
| Of Chili or common pepper and Tomate, |   |   |   | 3,200 Fan.                      |
| Of Chiltecpin, or small pepper,       | - |   |   | 240 Fan.                        |

(*f*) Torquemada the historian, had these paintings in his hands, by his own testimony.

(*g*) The Fanega is a Spanish measure for dry goods, containing about a hundred Spanish pounds, or one hundred and thirty Roman pounds.



|          |             |   |   |   |   |                      |
|----------|-------------|---|---|---|---|----------------------|
| BOOK IV. | Of salt,    | - | - | - | - | 1,300 large baskets. |
|          | Of Turkeys, | - | - | - | - | 8,000.               |

The quantity consumed of Chia, French beans, and other leguminous plants; of deer also, and ducks, quails, and other birds, was infinite and numberless. Every person will easily comprehend how great the extent of population must have been to amass such a vast quantity of maize and cocoas; particularly as it was necessary to procure this last by commerce with warm countries, there being no soil in all the kingdom of Acolhuacan fit for the culture of this plant. During one half of the year or nine Mexican months, fourteen cities furnished such provisions, and fifteen other cities supplied them during the other half year. Young men were employed to carry on their backs the fuel which was consumed in the royal palace, in amazing quantities (*g*).

The progress made by this celebrated king, in the arts and sciences, was such as is to be expected from a great genius who is without books to study, or masters to instruct him. He excelled in the poetry of these nations, and produced many compositions which met with universal applause. In the sixteenth century, his sixty hymns, composed in honour of the Creator of Heaven, were celebrated even among the Spaniards. Two of his odes or songs, translated into Spanish verse by his descendant Don Ferdinando d'Alba Ixtlilxochitl, have been preserved unto our time (*b*). One of these was wrote some time after the ruin of Azcapozalco. The subject of it was similar to the other which we already mentioned; it lamented the inconstancy of human greatness, in the person of the tyrant Tezozomoc, whom he compared to a large and stately tree which had extended its roots through many countries, and spread the shade of its green branches over all the lands of the empire; but at last, worm-eaten and wasted, fell to the earth, never to resume its youthful verdure.

(*g*) The fourteen cities charged with furnishing provisions for the first half year were Tezcuc, Huexotla, Coatlican, Atenco, Chiauhitla, Tezonjocan, Papalotla, Tepetlaoztoc, Acolman, Tepechpan, Xaltocan, Chimalhuacan, Iztapalocan, and Coatepec. The other fifteen were Otompan, Aztaquemecan, Teotihuacan, Cempoallan, Axapochco, Tlalanapan, Tepopolco, Tizajocan, Ahuatepec, Oztotiepac, Quauhtlatzinco, Cojoac, Oztotlatlauhean, Achichillacachocan, and Tetliztacac.

(*b*) Cav. Boturini had two odes composed by Nezahualcojotl; we wished much for them to publish them in this history.

Nothing, however, gave so much delight to Nezahualcojotl, as the study of nature. He acquired some ideas of astronomy, by the frequent observations which he made of the course of the stars. He applied himself besides, to the knowledge of plants and animals; but finding he could not keep the natives of other climes alive at his court, he caused paintings to be made from the life, of all the plants and animals of the country of Anahuac; to which paintings the celebrated Hernandez bears testimony, who saw and made use of them: paintings more useful and more worthy of a royal palace than those which represent the dark mythology of the Grecians. He was a curious enquirer into the causes of the effects by which nature excited his admiration, and frequent observation in that way, led him to discover the weakness of idolatry. To his sons, he said privately, that although in conformity with the people they paid external adoration to the idols, they should, yet, in their hearts detest the worship which was so deserving of mockery, as it was directed to lifeless forms; that he acknowledged no other God than the Creator of Heaven, and he did not forbid idolatry in his kingdom, though inclined to do so, that he might not be blamed for contradicting the doctrines of his ancestors. He prohibited the sacrifice of human victims; but perceiving afterwards how difficult it was to make a nation change its ancient and long-rooted ideas in matters of religion, he again permitted them, but commanded, under severe penalties, that these should be none but prisoners of war. He erected in honour of the Creator of Heaven, a high tower, consisting of nine floors. The last floor was dark and vaulted, painted within of a blue colour, and ornamented with cornices of gold. In this tower resided constantly some men whose office was to strike, at certain hours of the day, plates of the finest metal, at which signal the king kneeled down to pray to the Creator of Heaven. In honour likewise of this God, at a certain time of the year he always observed a fast (*k*).

The elevated genius of this king, actuated by the great love he had to his people, produced so enlightened his capital, that in future times it was considered as the nursery of the arts and the centre of

(*k*) All the above mentioned anecdotes are extracted from the valuable manuscripts of Don Ferdinando d'Alba; he being fourth grandson of that king, received, probably, many traditions from his fathers and grand-fathers.

BOOK IV. cultivation. Tezcuco was the city where the Mexican language was spoken in the greatest purity and perfection, where the best artists were found, and where poets, orators, and historians most abounded (1). The Mexicans and other nations adopted many of their laws; and if we may be allowed the application, Tezcuco was the Athens, and Nezahualcojotl the Solon of Anahuac.

In his last illness, having called all his sons into his presence, he declared Nezahualpilli his heir and successor in the kingdom of Acolhuacan, who, though the youngest of them all, was preferred to the rest, on account of his having been born of the queen Matlalcihuatzin, as well as of his singular rectitude and great talents. He enjoined his first born son Acapipiltzin to assist the new king with his counsel, until he should learn the difficult art of government. He warmly recommended to Nezahualpilli the love of his brothers, the care of his subjects, and a zeal for justice. At last, to prevent any disorder which the news of his death might occasion, he commanded them to conceal it as much as possible from the people until Nezahualpilli should be fixed in quiet possession of the crown. The princes received with tears the last advice of their father, and having left him, and come into the hall of audience where the nobility expected them, Nezahualpilli was proclaimed king of Acolhuacan, Acapipiltzin declaring it to be the last will of their father, who having a long journey to make, chose first to nominate his successor. All paid obedience to the new king, and in the morning after, Nezahualcojotl died, in the forty-fourth year of his reign, and about the eightieth year of his age. His sons concealed his death, and hid his body, burning it secretly, as is probable; and instead of rendering funeral honours to it, they celebrated the coronation of the new king with uncommon festivity and rejoicing. But in spite of their cautious secrecy the news of his death spread suddenly through all the land, and many lords came to the court to condole with the princes. Nevertheless the vulgar remained persuaded that their great king was translated to the company of the gods in reward of his virtues.

SECT. XVI.  
Conquest of  
Tlatelolco,  
and death of  
king Mo-  
quihuix.

Some little time after the exaltation of Nezahualpilli to the throne, the memorable war happened between the Mexicans and their neigh-

(1) In the list which we have given of the historians of that kingdom, it appears many were of the royal family of Tezcuco,



bours and rivals, the Tlatelolcos. Moquihuix king of Tlatelolco, being unable to endure the dazzling glory of the Mexican monarch, used all his arts to darken it. He had married, as we have already mentioned, a sister of king Axayacatl, given him by Montezuma in reward for the famous victory he obtained over the Cotahtesc. On this unfortunate queen he frequently vented his malice against his cousin; nor contented with that he clandestinely formed leagues with other states, which like himself bore unwillingly the Mexican yoke. These were Chalco, Xilotepec, Toltitlan, Tenajucan, Mexicatzinco, Huitzilopochco, Xochimilco, Cuiclahuac, and Mizquic, which agreed to attack the Mexicans in their rear, after the Tlatelolcos should begin battle with them. The Quaupanchese also, the Huexotzincas, and Matlatzincas, whose aid had been requested, were to join their troops with those of Tlatelolco in defence of the city. The queen knew of these negotiations, and either from the hatred she bore to her husband, or from her love to her brother and her native country, she revealed them to Axayacatl, that he might ward off a blow which would have shaken his throne.

Moquihuix being assured of the aid of his confederates assembled the nobles of his court to encourage them to the undertaking. An old and venerable priest raised his voice in the assembly, and in the name of them all declared himself willing to fight to the last against the enemies of his country; then to animate them still more he washed the altar of the sacrifices, and presented the water purple with human blood to the king to drink, and afterwards to all his officers; by which they imagined their courage would be increased, and doubtless it hardened them to the exercise of cruelty upon their foes. In the mean while the queen grew impatient of the ill treatment she suffered, and being alarmed at the dangers of war, forsook her husband and came to Mexico with four sons, to throw herself under the protection of her brother. This it was easy for her to do from the very close neighbourhood of the two cities. An incident of this uncommon nature increased the mutual enmity and disgust of the Mexicans and Tlatelolcos to such a degree, that whenever they met, they abused, fought, and murdered each other.

The time of commencing the war drawing near, Moquihuix with his officers and many of his confederates, made a solemn sacrifice on the mountain which was the nearest to the city, to obtain the protection

## BOOK IV.

of their gods; and there they fixed the day on which they were to declare war against the Mexicans. A few days after, he sent notice to his allies, to be well prepared to succour him whenever he should begin the attack. Xiloman lord of Colhuacan, was to make the first onset, and afterwards to pretend flight, to induce the Mexicans to pursue him, when the Tlatelolcos were to fall upon their rear. The day after these embassies were sent, Moquihuix performed the ceremony of arming his troops, and then went to the temple of Huitzilopochtli to implore the aid of that god, where the same horrible draft was again taken which Pojahuitl had given them at the first congress, and all the soldiers passed before the idol, with a salutation of profound reverence. This ceremony was hardly finished when a troop of daring Mexicans entered the market-place, killing every one they met; but the troops of the Tlatelolcos coming suddenly up, repulsed them and took some of them prisoners, who were sacrificed without respite, in a temple called Tlillan. That same day, about sun-set, some women of Tlatelolco had the boldness to advance into the streets of Mexico, and to set fire to the birch trees at the doors of the houses, casting, at the same time, impudent reproaches upon the Mexicans, and threatening them with approaching ruin; but they met with the contempt they deserved.

That night the Tlatelolcos armed themselves, and in the morning at break of day they began the attack on Mexico. They were in the heat of the battle when Xiloman arrived with the Colhuas; but perceiving that the king of Tlatelolco had commenced the engagement without waiting for his aid or caring for his counsel, that lord retired in disgust; but desirous of doing some mischief to the Mexicans, he caused several canals to be shut up, to prevent their receiving any assistance by water; these however were soon opened again by order of Axayacatl. The whole of the day the combat lasted with the utmost fury on both sides, until night forced the Tlatelolcos to retire. The Mexicans burnt the houses of the city which were the nearest to Tlatelolco, perhaps on account of their standing too much in the way in the time of engagement; but in setting fire to them, twenty were made prisoners and instantly sacrificed.

Axayacatl that night distributed his army in all the roads which led to Tlatelolco, and at the dawn of day began to march from every quarter  
towards

towards the market-place, which was to be the point where they were to meet. The Tlatelolcos finding themselves attacked on all sides, retreated to the public market-place to collect there all their force, and make the better resistance; but when they reached it, they found themselves still more incommoded and embarrassed by their numbers. The words and cries with which Moquihuix endeavoured, from the top of the great temple, to encourage his troops, were of no avail. The Tlatelolcos were beat down and killed, while those who fell, vented their rage in reproaches against the king: "Descend from thence, you coward," they said, "and take arms; it is not the part of a brave man, to stand calmly looking at those who are fighting and falling in the defence of their country." But these complaints, occasioned by the smarting of their wounds and the agonies of death, were altogether unjust, as Moquihuix neither failed in the duties of a general nor of a king. It was proper for him not to expose his life so much as the soldiers did themselves, as he could be more useful to them by his counsel, and could encourage them by his presence. In the mean time the Mexicans advanced to the steps of the temple, ascended them, and came to the upper balcony where Moquihuix was calling out to his people, and made a desperate defence of himself; but a Mexican captain, named Quetzalhual, with a thrust pushed him backwards down the steps (*m*), when some soldiers took up his body in their arms, and presented it to Axayacatl, who opened his breast, and tore out his heart. An act certainly horrid, but done without the feelings of horror, from its being so frequent at their sacrifices!

Thus fell the brave Moquihuix, and thus was the petty monarchy of the Tlatelolcos, which had been governed by four kings in the space of about one hundred and eighteen years, dissolved. The Tlatelolcos, after the death of their king, soon fell into disorder, and attempted to save themselves by flight, by passing across their enemies; but four hundred and sixty remained dead on the market-place, among whom were some officers of distinction. After this defeat the city of Tlatelolco was united with the city of Mexico, and was no longer considered as a distinct

(*m*) The interpreter of Mendoza's collection says, that after the loss of the battle, Moquihuix fled to the top of the temple, and threw himself head-long from it, being unable to endure the reproaches of one of the priests; but the account of other historians appears to us more consistent with the character of this king.



## BOOK IV.

city, but as a part, or rather as the suburbs of Mexico, which it is at present. The king of Mexico constantly maintained a governor there, and the Tlatelolcos, besides the tribute which they annually paid of maize, robes, arms, and armour, were obliged to repair the temple of Huitznahuac as often as it became necessary.

We are ignorant whether the Quauhpanchese, the Huexotzincas, and the Matlatzincas, who were the confederates of the Tlatelolcos, did actually assist in this war. Of their other allies, historians say, that having come to the succour of the Tlatelolcos, after the king Moquihuix was killed and the conflict over, they returned without action. The moment that Axayacatl found himself victorious, he condemned Pojahuitl, and Ehecatzitzimilt, both of them Tlatelolcos, to the last punishment, for having been the persons who most keenly excited the citizens against the Mexicans, and also put the lords of Xochimilco, Cuitlahuac, Colhuacan, Huitzilopochco and others, to death, for entering into a confederacy with his enemies.

SECT. XVII.  
New conquests and death of Axayacatl.

To take revenge of the Matlatzincas, a numerous and powerful nation, established in the valley of Toluca, and still unsubjected to the Mexicans, Axayacatl declared war against them, and marching with the two allied kings he took in his passage, Atlapolco, and Xalatlahuco; and afterwards he conquered in the same valley, Toluca, Tetenanco, Metepec, Tzinacantepec, Calimaja, and other places in the south division of the valley, which continued, from that time forward, tributary to the crown of Mexico. Some time after, he returned into the same province, to subdue, likewise, the north part of the valley, at present called *Valle d'Ixtlahuacan*, and in particular Xiquipilco, a considerable city and state of the Otomies, whose lord, called Tlilcuezpalin was famous for his bravery. Axayacatl, who likewise boasted of his courage, was anxious to engage him in single combat during the battle, which took place; but the event proved disastrous to Axayacatl himself; he received a violent wound on the thigh, and two captains of the Otomies advancing, brought him, with a few strokes more, to the ground, and would have made him prisoner, if some young Mexicans had not, when they saw their king in such danger, resolutely defended his liberty and his life. Notwithstanding this misfortune and disgrace, the Mexicans obtained a complete victory, and, according to what historians say, made eleven thousand and sixty prisoners, among whom were Tlilcuezpalin and the two captains who had

had attacked the king. By this glorious victory Axayacatl added Xiquipilco, Xocoutlan, Atlacomaleco, and all the other places comprehended in the valley which were not before subdued, to the crown of Mexico.

As soon as Axayacatl had recovered of his wound, which made him halt in one leg during the rest of his life, he gave a great entertainment to the allied kings, at which he put Tlilcuezpalin and the two other captains to death. The execution of such a punishment did not appear to those people unreasonable, amidst the festivity of an entertainment; from being used to shed human blood, the horror naturally arising from it, changed into recreation. So strong is the force of custom, and so easy is it to familiarize our minds to the most horrible objects.

In the last years of his reign, the bounds of his empire appearing rather too confined towards the west, he again took the field; and passing through the valley of Toluca, and crossing the mountains, he conquered Tochpan and Tlaximalojan, which was afterwards the frontier of the kingdom of Michuacan. From thence returning towards the east he made himself master of Ocuilla and Malacatepec. The progress of his conquests and victories were now interrupted by his death, which happened in the thirteenth year of his reign, or the 1477 of the vulgar era. He had a genius for war, and was rigorous in punishing the transgressors of the laws which his predecessor had established. He left a numerous offspring by his different wives, among which was the celebrated Montezuma of whom we shall shortly have occasion to speak.

In the room of Axayacatl, Tizoc was elected, who was his elder brother and had served in the post of general of the army (*n*). We do not find where he made his first expedition to procure the victims necessary at the ceremony of his coronation. His reign was short and obscure. In the tenth painting, however, of Mendoza's collection there is a representation of fourteen cities subdued by him, among which are Toluca and Tecaxic, which having rebelled against the crown, occasioned the necessity of re-conquering them; also Chillan, Jancuitlan, in the coun-

SECT. XVIII  
Tizoc, seventh king of Mexico.

(*n*) Acosta makes Tizoc son of Montezuma I. and the interpreter of Mendoza's collection, makes him son of Axayacatl; but both are demonstrated to be wrong, by other historians. Acosta was wrong also in the order of the kings, as he placed Tizoc's reign before Axayacatl. See our Dissertations on this head.

BOOK III. try of the Mixtecas, Mazatlan, Tlapan, and Tamapachco. Torquemada makes mention of a victory which he obtained over Tlacotepec.

SECT. XIX.  
War between  
the Tezcucans and the  
Huexotzincas.

It was in the time of this king, that the war between the Tezcucan nation and the Huexotzincas happened. This war took its rise from the ambition of the princes the brothers of king Nezahualpilli. Although they shewed no discontent, in the beginning, at the exaltation of their younger brother, yet as the memory of their late father began to die away, they felt themselves unable to endure the controul of one whom, in point of age, they had a right to command; and formed a secret conspiracy against him. To help them in their wicked designs they applied first to the Chalchefe, who were always the fittest and readiest for such undertakings; but failing in all the means employed by them, they made solicitations to the Huexotzincas for the same purpose. Nezahualpilli being apprised of their conspiracy, raised speedily a strong army, and marched against the Huexotzincas. The general of that state had procured intelligence of the marks of Nezahualpilli's person, that he might direct all his blows against him, and had promised rewards to any person who should produce the king to him alive, or dead. There were not wanting others, who intimated all this to the king; upon which, before he entered into battle he changed garments with one of his captains. This unfortunate officer, being taken for the king, was quickly set upon by the multitude, and killed. As the enemy were giving to vent their fury on him, Nezahualpilli made his attack on the Huexotzincan general, and killed him, though not without the greatest risk of being cut to pieces by the soldiers who flew to the defence of their general. The Tezcucan people, who fell into the same mistake with those of Huexotzinco, by not knowing the exchange of dress which had been made, began to be dispirited; but suddenly again recognizing the king, they ran up eagerly to rescue him; and after defeating the enemy, they sacked the city of Huexotzinco, and returned triumphant with spoils to Tezcuco. Historians are silent respecting the fate of the princes who were the authors of this conspiracy. It is probable they were either slain in the battle, or escaped by flight from the chastisement they deserved. Nezahualpilli, who, a little before had built himself a new palace, desirous of leaving a perpetual monument of this victory, ordered likewise the construction of a wall, which should



inclose exactly so much space of ground as was occupied by the Huexotzincas when they came up to the defence of their general, and gave the place the name of that day on which he had obtained the victory. Thus did those, who are thought by many to have no views of futurity, seek to immortalize their name and the glory of their actions.

The king of Tezcuco had already several wives, who were descended of noble houses; but he had not declared any of them his queen, having reserved that honour for one whom he was to take of the royal family of Mexico. He demanded her of king Tizoc, who gave him one of his grand-daughters, and daughter of *Tzotzocatzin*. The nuptials were solemnized in Tezcuco, a great concourse of the nobility of both courts being present. This lady had a sister possessed of singular beauty, who was named *Xocotzin*. They loved each other so much, that not being able to endure a separation, the new queen obtained permission from her father, to take her sister along with her to Tezcuco. By frequently viewing and conversing with his beautiful cousin, the king became so enamoured, that he resolved to wed her also, and raise her to the dignity of queen. These second nuptials, according to the account given by historians, were the most solemn and magnificent which were ever celebrated in that country. A short time after, the king had by his first queen, a son named *Cacamatzin*, who succeeded him in the crown, and being afterwards made prisoner by the Spaniards, died unhappily. By the second he had *Huexotzincatzin* (o), of whom we shall speak presently, *Coanacotzin*, who was also king of Acolhuacan, and, some time after the conquest by the Spaniards, ordered to be hanged by the conqueror Cortes, and *Ixtlilxochitl*, who became a confederate of the Spaniards against the Mexicans, and was converted to christianity, and baptized by the name and surname of that conqueror.

Whilst Nezahualpilli continued to multiply his descendants, enjoying great peace and tranquillity in his kingdom, the death of the king of Mexico was plotted by some of his feudatory subjects. Techotlalla, lord of Iztapalapan, either in resentment of some affront he had received, or grown impatient of subordination to Tizoc, conceived the guilty purpose of attempting the king's life, but discovered it to those only whom

SECT. XX.  
Marriage of  
king Neza-  
hualpilli with  
two noble la-  
dies of Mexi-  
co.

SECT. XXI.  
Tragic death  
of king  
Tizoc.

(o) The name Huexotzincatl given to that prince, was certainly on account of his victory over the Huexotzincas.

BOOK IV. he thought capable of putting it in execution. He and Maxtlaton lord of Tlachco, agreed upon the manner in which they were to accomplish the dangerous deed. Historians are not of one opinion on this head. Some of them relate that they employed forcereffes, who, by means of their arts, took his life from him; but this is evidently a popular fable. Others affirm that they administered poison to him. Which ever was his mode of death, it is certain that their machinations were successful. Tizoc died in the fifth year of his reign, the 1482d of the vulgar era. He was a person of a circumspect, serious, character; and rigorous, like his predecessors and successors, in punishing delinquents. During his time the power and wealth of the crown had arrived to such a height, that he undertook to construct a temple to the tutelary god of the nation, which was to have surpassed in grandeur and magnificence, all the temples of that country; he had prepared a vast quantity of materials for that purpose, and had begun the structure when death interrupted his projects.

SECT. XXII.  
Ahuitzotl,  
eighth king  
of Mexico.

The Mexicans, well knowing their king had not fallen by any natural death, sought revenge before they proceeded to a new election. They were so diligent in their inquiries and search, that they soon detected the perpetrators of the act, and executed sentence upon them in the greater public place of the city of Mexico, in presence of the two allied kings, and of all the Tezcucan and Mexican nobility. The electors being assembled to appoint a new king, they chose Ahuitzotl, the brother of their two preceding kings, who was already general of the army; for, from the time of Chimalpopoca the custom had prevailed of exalting no one to the throne who had not first occupied that post, it being judged highly requisite that he who was to become the chief of so warlike a nation, should first give proofs of his bravery, and that while he commanded the army, he might learn the art of governing the kingdom.

SECT.  
XXIII.  
Dedication  
of the greater  
temple of  
Mexico.

The first object to which the new king paid attention, was the finishing of that magnificent temple, which had been designed and begun by his predecessor. It was resumed with the utmost spirit and activity, an incredible number of workmen being assembled, and was completed in four years. While the building was constructing, the king went frequently to war, and all the prisoners which were taken from  
the

the enemy, were reserved for the festival of its consecration. The wars of these four years were carried on against the Mazahuas, a few miles distant towards the west, who had rebelled against the crown of Tacuba; against the Zapotecas, three hundred miles distant in the south-east; and against several other nations. When the fabric was completed, the king invited the two allied kings, and all the nobility of both kingdoms, to its dedication. The concourse of people was by far the most numerous ever seen in Mexico (*q*); as this famous solemnity drew spectators from the most distant places. The festival lasted four days, during which they sacrificed, in the upper porch of the temple, all the prisoners which they had made in the four preceding years. Historians are not agreed concerning the number of the victims. Torquemada says, that they amounted to seventy-two thousand three hundred and forty-four. Others affirm they were sixty-four thousand and sixty in number. To make these horrible sacrifices with more shew and parade, they ranged the prisoners in two files, each a mile and a half in length, which began in the roads of Tacuba and Iztapalapan, and terminated at the temple (*r*), where, as soon as the victims arrived, they were sacrificed. After the festival the king made presents to all whom he had invited, which must certainly have been attended with an enormous expence. This event happened in 1486.

In that same year, Mozauhqui lord of Xalatlauchco, in imitation of his king to whom he bore much affection, dedicated another temple, which had been built a little before, and sacrificed likewise a great number of prisoners. So much slaughter and blood did the cruel and barbarous superstition of these nations occasion.

The year 1487 was no way memorable, except on account of a violent earthquake, and the death of Chimalpopoca king of Tacuba, who was succeeded by Totoquihuatzin the Second.

(*q*) Some authors affirm, that the number of persons at this festival amounted to six millions. Although it appears exaggerated, yet it does not seem altogether improbable, considering the populousness of that country, the grandeur and novelty of the festival, and the ease with which those people moved from place to place, being accustomed to travel on foot without the hindrance of baggage or equipage.

(*r*) Betancourt says that the file of prisoners ranged on the road of Iztapalapan, began at the place which is now called *La Candelaria Malcuitlapilco*, and was given this name on that account, as the word Malcuitlapilco signifies the tail, point, or the extremity of the prisoners. This conjecture is pretty probable; neither is it easy to trace a better origin of the name.



## BOOK IV.

## SECT.

## XXIV.

Conquests of  
king Ahuit-  
zotl.

Ahuitzotl, whose warlike genius did not permit him to enjoy peace, went again to war against Cozcaquauhtenanco, and obtained a complete victory; but having met with an obstinate resistance, he treated them with great severity. Afterwards he subdued Quapilollan, and passed from thence to make war on Quetzalcuitlapillan, a large province peopled with a warlike nation (*s*); and lastly turned his arms against *Quaubtla*, a place situate on the coast of the gulf of Mexico, in which war Montezuma, the son of Axayacatl, and the successor of Ahuitzotl in the kingdom distinguished himself. A little time after, the Mexicans together with the Tezcucans, went against the Huexotzincas, in which war Tezcatzin, the brother of the above mentioned Montezuma, and Tliltototl, a noble Mexican officer, who afterwards became general of the army, gained great renown. We do not find in historians either the cause or particulars of this war. The expedition against the Huexotzincas being concluded, Ahuitzotl celebrated the dedication of a new temple called *Tlacatecco*, at which the prisoners made in the preceeding wars were sacrificed; but the rejoicings of this festival were disturbed by the burning of the temple of *Tlillan*.

Thus this king continued in constant wars until 1496, in which the war of Atlixco happened. The entry of the Mexican army into this valley was so unexpected, that the first intimation which the Atlixchese nation had of it was the sight of them when they entered. They took up arms immediately in their defence; but finding they had not forces sufficient to resist any length of time, they applied to the Huexotzincas, their neighbours, for assistance. When the Atlixchese ambassadors arrived at Heuxotzinco, they found a famous captain named *Toltecatl* playing at football, whose great courage was still less remarkable than the extraordinary strength of his arm. As soon as he was informed concerning the Mexican army, he quitted play to repair with auxiliary troops to Atlixco, and entering into the battle unarmed to shew his bravery, and the contempt he entertained of his enemies, he knocked down the first Mexican he met with his fist, and took his arms from him, with which he began to make great slaughter. The Mexicans being

(s) Torquemada says, that Ahuitzotl having frequently attempted the conquest of Quetzalcuitlapillan, did never yet succeed; but among the conquests of this king in the eleventh painting of Mendoza's Collection, this province is represented.

unable to overcome the resistance of their enemies, abandoned the field and returned to Mexico covered with ignominy. The Huexotzincas, in reward of the singular bravery of Toltecatl, made him the chief of their republic. This state however was afterwards subjected to the dominion of the Mexicans whom they again provoked by fresh insults; but as the conquered nations only bore the yoke while they could not shake it off, whenever the Huexotzincas found themselves able to resist, they rebelled; and the greater part of the provinces subdued by the Mexican arms did the same, which forced the Mexican army to keep in continual motion, to regain what their king occasionally lost in this way. Toltecatl accepted the dignity and post conferred upon him; but a year had hardly elapsed when he was constrained to abandon not only his charge but his country. The priests and other ministers of the temples making an abuse of their authority, entered into private houses and took away the maize and turkeys which they found in them, and committed other excesses unbecoming their dignity. Toltecatl endeavoured to put a stop to such injustice; but the priests rose in arms. The populace supported them; another party opposed their violence, and a war kindled between the two factions, which, like all other civil wars, brought on the greatest evils. Toltecatl weary of governing a people so untractable, or afraid of perishing in the storm, removed from the city with some other nobles, and passing the mountains arrived at Tlalamanalco. The governor of that city gave speedy advice of them to the king of Mexico, who instantly put all the fugitives to death in punishment of their rebellion, and sent their dead bodies to Huexotzinco to intimidate the rebels.

In the year 1498, it appearing to the king of Mexico, that the navigation of the lake was become difficult from the scarcity of water, he was desirous of increasing it from the fountain of Huitzilopochco which supplied the Cojoacanese, and called on Tzotzomatzin, lord of Cojoacan, to give his orders for that purpose. Tzotzomatzin represented to him that that spring was not constant; that sometimes it was dry, and at other times ran in such abundance, that it might cause some disaster to his court. Ahuitzotl imagining that these reasons were mere pretences to be excused from doing what he was commanded, repeated his first order, but hearing the difficulty first mentioned insisted on, dismissed

SECT. XXV.  
New inundation of Mexico.

## BOOK IV.

him in anger, and made him be put to death. Such is too often the recompence of good counsel when princes are obstinate in their caprices, and neglect to attend to the sincere remonstrances of their faithful subjects. Ahuitzotl being unwilling on any account to abandon his projects, caused a large and spacious aqueduct to be formed (t) from Cojoacan to Mexico, by which the water was conveyed with many superstitious ceremonies; some of the priests offering incense, others sacrificing quails, and anointing the lip or border of the aqueduct with the blood; others sounding musical instruments, and otherwise solemnizing the arrival of the water. The high-priest wore the same habit with which they represented *Chalchibuitlicue*, goddess of the water (u).

With such congratulations the water was received at Mexico; but the prevailing joy was not long of being changed into lamentations: as the rains of that year were so plentiful, the waters of the lake rose and overflowed the city; the streets were filled with sailing vessels, and some houses washed away. The king happening to be one day in the lower chambers of his palace, the water entered suddenly in such abundance, that as he hastened to get out at the door, which was low, he received a violent contusion on his head, which some time after occasioned his death. Distressed equally with the accident of the inundation, and the clamours of his people, he called the king of Acolhuacan to his assistance, who, without delay, ordered the dyke to be repaired, which had been built by the advice of his father in the reign of Montezuma.

The Mexicans were scarcely delivered from the calamity of the inundation, when a year after, the superabundance of water having rotted all their maize, they were afflicted with a scarcity of corn; but in this year they had the fortune to discover a quarry of tetzontli in the vale of Mexico, which proved so useful for the buildings of that city. The king immediately made use of this kind of stone for temples; and after his example, private individuals built their houses of it. He or-

(t) This aqueduct was entirely destroyed by Ahuitzotl himself, or his successor, for on the arrival of the Spaniards nothing remained of it.

(u) Acosta testifies that the conveyance of the water of Huitzilopochco to Mexico, and the ceremonies performed by the priests were represented in a Mexican painting, which in his time was, and may be still, in the library of the Vatican.



dered all ruinous edifices to be pulled down and rebuilt in a better form ; adding much to the beauty and magnificence of his court.

He passed the last years of his life in constant wars, namely, those of Izquixochitlan, Amatlan, Tlacuilollan, Xaltepec, Tecuantepec, and Huexotla in Huasteca. Tliltototl, the Mexican general, having finished the war of Izquixochitlan, carried his victorious arms as far as Quahatemallan, or Guatemala, more than nine hundred miles to the south-east from the court, in which campaigns, according to the historians, he performed prodigies of valour, but none of them relate the particular actions of this renowned general ; nor do we know whether that great tract of country remained subject to the crown of Mexico.

At length in the year 1502, after a reign of about twenty years, Ahuitzotl died of an illness occasioned by the abovementioned contusion on his head. He was a very warlike king, and one of those who extended most considerably the dominions of the crown. At the time of his death, the Mexicans were in possession of all which they had at the arrival of the Spaniards. Besides courage, he had two other royal virtues, which made him celebrated among his countrymen ; these were magnificence and liberality. He embellished Mexico with so many new and magnificent buildings, that it was already become the first city of the new world. When he received the provincial tributes he assembled the people in a certain square of the city, and personally distributed provisions and cloathing to the necessitous. He rewarded his captains and soldiers who distinguished themselves in war, and the ministers and officers of the crown who served him with fidelity, with gold, silver, jewels, and precious feathers. These virtues were put to the foil by some vices, as he was capricious, vindictive, and sometimes cruel, and so inclined to war, that he appeared to hate peace ; from which the name Ahuitzotl was used proverbially by the Spaniards of that kingdom to signify a man whose troublesome vexatious temper would not permit another to live (x). But he was in other respects good humoured, and delighted so much in music, that he never wanted, neither by night nor day this amusement in his palace ; but it must have been prejudicial to the public good, as it robbed him of a great part of that time which should

SECT.  
XXVI.  
New conquests and death of Ahuitzotl.

(x) The Spaniards say, N. es mio Ahuitzote ; Questi è l'Ahitzote di N. a niuno manca il suo Ahuitzote, &c.

have

BOOK IV. have been dedicated to the important concerns of his kingdom. He was not less attached to the company of women. His predecessors had many wives, from an opinion that their authority and grandeur would be heightened in proportion to the number of persons who contributed to their pleasures. Ahuitzotl having so much extended his dominions, and increased the power of the crown, was desirous also of shewing the superiority of his grandeur over that of his ancestors, in the excessive number of his wives. In this state was the court of Mexico at the beginning of the sixteenth century ; of that century so fruitful in great events, during which that kingdom was to put on a quite different aspect, and the whole order and system of the new world was to be reversed.







*Moctezuma Cocomotzin.*

## B O O K V.

*Events under Montezuma II. the ninth King of Mexico, until the Year 1519. Particulars of his Life, his Government, and the Magnificence of his Palaces, Gardens, and Woods. The War of Tlascala, and some Account of Tlahuicole, a Tlascalan Captain. Death and Eulogium of Nezahualpilli, King of Acolhuacan, and new Revolutions in that Kingdom. Prejages of the Arrival of the Spaniards.*

**A** Huitzotl being dead, and his funeral celebrated with extraordinary magnificence, they proceeded to the election of a new sovereign. No brother of the preceding kings survived; on which account, according to the law of the kingdom, one of the grandsons of the last king, who were sons of his predecessors, had the right of succession; of these there were many; for of the sons of Axayacatl, Montezuma, Cuitlahuac, Matlatzincatl, Pinahuitzin, Cecepatzincatl, were still living, and of those of king Tizoc, Inactlacuijatzin, Tepehuatzin, and others, whose names we do not know. Montezuma, who was called by the name of *Xocojotzin*, to distinguish him from the other king of that name, was elected in preference to all the others (*a*).

(*z*) Besides the bravery which he had displayed in several battles, in which he held the post of general, he was likewise a priest, and much revered for his gravity, his circumspection, and religion. He was a man of a taciturn temper, extremely deliberate, not only in words, but also in his actions; and whenever he spoke in the royal council, of which he was a member, he was listened to with respect.

(*a*) The author of the Annotations to Cortes's Letters, printed in Mexico in the year 1770 says, that Montezuma II. was son of Montezuma I. This is a gross mistake, as we know from all the historians, both Mexican and Spanish, that he was the son of Axayacatl. See Torquemada, Bernal Diaz, the interpreter of Mendoza's Collection, &c.

The first Montezuma was called by the Mexicans *Huehue Motuzoma*, and the second *Motuzoma Xocojotzin*, names which are equivalent to the *senior* and *junior* of the Latins.

BOOK V.

SECT. I.  
Montezuma,  
the ninth  
king of Mex-  
ico.

Notice

## BOOK V.

Notice of the election being sent to the two allied kings, they repaired instantly to the court to pay their compliments. Montezuma, being apprized of it, also retired to the temple, appearing to think himself unworthy of so much honour. The nobility went there to acquaint him with his being elected, and found him sweeping the pavement of the temple. He was conducted by a numerous attendance to the palace, where the electors, with due solemnity, intimated the election had fallen on him as the fittest person to fill the throne of Mexico. From thence he returned to the temple to perform the usual ceremonies, and as soon as they were finished he received on the throne the homage of the nobility, and heard the congratulatory harangues of the orators. The first speech was made by Nezahualpilli, king of Acolhuacan, which we present to our readers such as it is preserved to us by the Mexicans.

“ The great good fortune,” he said, “ of the Mexican monarchy is  
 “ made manifest from the unanimity in your election, and the uncommon  
 “ applause with which it is celebrated by all. All have in truth rea-  
 “ son to celebrate it, for the kingdom of Mexico is arrived at such  
 “ greatness, no less fortitude than your invincible heart possesses, no  
 “ less wisdom than that which in you we admire, would be suffi-  
 “ cient to support so great a load. It is most evident, how strong  
 “ the love is which the omnipotent God bears to this nation; as  
 “ he has enlightened it, that it may discern and chuse that which can  
 “ be most beneficial to it. Who is able to persuade himself that he,  
 “ who, as a private individual, has searched into the mysteries of hea-  
 “ ven (*a*), will not now, when king, know the things of this earth,  
 “ which will preserve the happiness of his subjects? That he who on so  
 “ many occasions has displayed the greatness of his soul, will not now re-  
 “ tain it when it is become most necessary to him? Who can believe,  
 “ that where there is so much courage, and so much wisdom, the widow  
 “ or the orphan will ever apply without relief? The Mexican empire  
 “ has unquestionably attained the height of its power, as the Creator of  
 “ heaven has invested you with so much authority as to inspire all those  
 “ who behold you with awe and respect. Rejoice, therefore, O happy

(*a*) This saying of Nezahualpilli appears to imply that Montezuma was engaged in the study of astronomy.



“ land, that you are destined to have a prince who will not only be thy  
 “ support, but will by his clemency prove a father and brother to his sub-  
 “ jects. Thou hast, indeed, a king who will not seize the occasion of his  
 “ exaltation to give himself up to luxury, and lie sluggishly in bed, aban-  
 “ doned to pastimes and effeminate pleasures ; his anxiety for thee rather  
 “ will wake and agitate his bosom in the softest hour of repose, nor  
 “ will he be able to taste food, or relish the most delicious morsel, while  
 “ thy interests are oppressed or neglected. And do you, noble prince and  
 “ most powerful lord, be confident, and trust that the Creator of hea-  
 “ ven, who has raised you to so high a dignity, will give you strength  
 “ to discharge all the obligations which are annexed to it. He who  
 “ has hitherto been so liberal to you, will not now be niggardly of his  
 “ precious gifts, having himself raised you to the throne on which I  
 “ wish you many years of happiness.”

Montezuma heard this harangue with much attention, and was so  
 greatly affected by it, that he attempted three times to answer it, but  
 could not, from the interruption of the tears, which the secret pleasure  
 he felt produced, and gave him the appearance of much humility ;  
 but, at last after checking his emotions, he replied in few words, declar-  
 ing himself unworthy of the station to which he was exalted, and  
 returning thanks to that king for the praises which he bestowed on  
 him ; and after hearing the other addresses on this occasion, he returned  
 to the temple to keep fast for four days, at the end of which he was  
 re-conducted with great state to the royal palace.

He thought now of going to war to procure victims to be sacri-  
 ficed at his coronation. This disaster fell upon the Atlixchese, who  
 some time before had rebelled against the crown. The king, accordingly,  
 set out from the court, with the flower of the nobility, his brothers  
 and cousins being amongst the number. In this war the Mexicans  
 lost some brave officers ; but, notwithstanding, they reduced the rebels  
 under their former yoke, and Montezuma returned victorious, bring-  
 ing along with him the prisoners which he required at his corona-  
 tion. On this occasion was displayed so much pomp of games, dances,  
 theatrical representations and illuminations, and with such va-  
 riety and richness of tributes sent from the different provinces of the  
 kingdom, that foreigners never known before in Mexico, came to see

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it, and even the enemies of the Mexicans; namely, the Tlascalans and Michuacanese were present in disguise at the spectacle; but Montezuma having intelligence of this, with a generosity becoming a king, ordered them to be properly lodged and entertained, and caused several scaffolds to be erected where they might with ease and convenience view the whole of the solemnity.

SECT. II.  
 Deportment  
 and ceremon-  
 ials of king  
 Montezuma.

The first act of this king was to reward a renowned captain, named *Tlilxochitl*, with the state of Tlachaucho, for the great services he had rendered his ancestors during several wars: a truly happy commencement of a reign, had his succeeding conduct been correspondent to it. But he had scarce begun to exercise his authority when he discovered the pride which had hitherto lain concealed under an exterior of seeming humility. All his predecessors had been accustomed to confer offices on persons of merit, and those who appeared the most able to discharge them, honouring, without partiality, the nobility or those of the class of plebeians occasionally, notwithstanding the solemn agreement entered into by the nobility and plebeians in the reign of Itzcoatl. Montezuma as soon as he seized the reins of government shewed quite different sentiments, and disapproved of the conduct of his predecessors, under pretence that the plebeians should be employed according to their rank, for that in all their actions the baseness of their birth, and the meanness of their education were apparent. Being biased by this maxim, he stripped the plebeians of those offices which they held either in his royal mansion, or about the court, and declared them incapable of holding any such in future. A prudent old man, who had been his tutor, represented to him that this resolution would alienate the minds of the people from him; but no remonstrances were sufficient to divert him from his purpose.

All the servants of his palace consisted of persons of rank. Besides those who constantly lived in it, every morning six hundred feudatory lords and nobles came to pay court to him. They passed the whole day in the anti-chamber, where none of their servants were permitted to enter, conversing in a low voice, and waiting the orders of their sovereign. The servants who accompanied those lords, were so numerous as to occupy three small courts of the palace, and many waited in the streets. The women about the court were not less in number, including those of rank,

servants, and slaves. All this numerous female tribe, lived shut up in a kind of seraglio, under the care of some noble matrons, who watched over their conduct; as these kings were extremely jealous, and every piece of misconduct which happened in the palace, however slight, was severely punished. Of these women the king retained those who pleased him (*d*); the others he gave away, as a recompence for the services of his vassals. All the feudatories of the crown were obliged to reside for some months of the year, at the court; and at their return to their states, to leave their sons or brothers behind them, as hostages, which the king demanded as a security for their fidelity; on which account they required to keep houses in Mexico.

The forms and ceremonials introduced at court, were another effect of the despotism of Montezuma. No one could enter the palace, either to serve the king, or to confer with him on any business, without pulling off his shoes and stockings at the gate. No person was allowed to appear before the king in any pompous dress, as it was deemed a want of respect to majesty; consequently the greatest lords, excepting the nearest relations of the king, stripped themselves of the rich dress which they wore, or at least covered it with one more ordinary, to shew their humility before him. All persons on entering the hall of audience, and before speaking to the king, made three bows, saying at the first, lord; at the second, my lord; and at the third, great lord (*e*). They spoke low, and with the head inclined, and received the answer which the king gave them by means of his secretaries, as attentively and humbly as if it had been the voice of an oracle. In taking leave, no person ever turned his back upon the throne.

The audience hall served also for his dining room. The table was a large pillow, and his seat a low chair. The table cloth, napkins, and towels were of cotton, but very fine, white, and always perfectly clean. The kitchen utensils were of the earthen ware of Cholula; but none of these things ever served him more than once, as immediately after he gave them to one of his nobles. The cups in which they prepared his

(*d*) Some historians affirm that Montezuma had a hundred and fifty of his wives pregnant at once; but it is certainly not very credible.

(*e*) The Mexican words are, *Tlateani*, lord; *Notlatecatzin*, my lord; and *Huitlatoni*, great lord.



## BOOK V.

chocolate, and other drinks of the cocoa, were of gold, or some beautiful sea-shell, or naturally formed vessels curiously varnished, of which we shall speak hereafter. He had gold plate, but it was used only on certain festivals, in the temple. The number, and variety of dishes at his table amazed the Spaniards who saw them. The conqueror Cortez, says, that they covered the floor of a great hall, and that there were dishes of every kind of game, fish, fruit, and herbs of that country. Three or four hundred noble youths carried this dinner in form; presented it as soon as the king sat down to table, and immediately retired; and that it might not grow cold, every dish was accompanied with its chafing-dish. The king marked with a rod, which he had in his hand, the meats which he chose, and the rest were distributed among the nobles who were in the anti-chamber. Before he sat down, four of the most beautiful women of his seraglio, presented water to him to wash his hands, and continued standing all the time of his dinner, together with six of his principal ministers, and his carver.

As soon as the king sat down to table, the carver shut the door of the hall, that none of the other nobles might see him eat. The ministers stood at a distance, and kept a profound silence, unless when they made answer to what the king said. The carver and the four women served the dishes to him, besides two others who brought him bread made of maize baked with eggs. He frequently heard music, during the time of his meal, and was entertained with the humorous sayings of some deformed men whom he kept out of mere state. He shewed much satisfaction in hearing them, and observed that amongst their jests, they frequently pronounced some important truth. When his dinner was over he took tobacco mixed with liquid amber, in a pipe, or reed beautifully varnished, and with the smoke of it put himself to sleep.

After having slept a little, upon the same low chair he gave audience, and listened attentively to all that was communicated to him; encouraged those who, from embarrassment, were unable to speak to him, and answered every one by his ministers or secretaries. After giving audience, he was entertained with music, being much delighted with hearing the glorious actions of his ancestors sung. At other times he amused himself with seeing various games played, of which we shall speak hereafter. When he went abroad, he was carried on the shoulders

shoulders of the nobles in a litter covered with a rich canopy, attended by a numerous retinue of courtiers; and wherever he passed, every person stopped with their eyes shut, as if they feared to be dazzled with the splendor of majesty. When he alighted from the litter to walk on foot, they spread carpets, that he might not touch the earth with his feet.

The grandeur and magnificence of his palaces, houses of pleasure, woods, and gardens, were correspondent to this majesty. The palace of his usual residence was a vast edifice of stone and lime, which had twenty doors to the public square and streets; three great courts, in one of which was a beautiful fountain, several halls, and more than a hundred chambers. Some of the apartments had walls of marble and other valuable kinds of stone. The beams were of cedar, cypress, and other excellent woods, well finished and carved. Among the halls there was one so large, that, according to the testimony of an eye-witness of veracity (*f*), it could contain three thousand people. Besides this palace, he had others, both within and without the capital. In Mexico, besides the seraglio for his wives, there was lodging for all his ministers and counsellors, and all the officers of his household and court; and also accommodation for foreign lords who arrived there, and particularly for the two allied kings.

SECT III  
Magnificence  
of the palaces  
and royal  
houses.

Two houses in Mexico he appropriated to animals; the one for birds, which did not live by prey; the other for those of prey, quadrupeds, and reptiles. There were several chambers belonging to the first, and galleries supported on pillars of marble, all of one piece. These galleries looked towards a garden, where, in the midst of some shrubbery, ten fish-ponds were formed, some of them of fresh water for the aquatic birds of rivers, and others of salt-water for those of the sea. In other parts of the house were all sorts of birds, in such number and variety, as to strike the Spaniards with wonder, who could not believe there was any species in the world wanting to the collection. They were supplied with the same food which they fed upon while they enjoyed their liberty, whether seeds, fruits, or insects. For those birds

(*f*) The anonymous conqueror, in his valuable relation or narrative. He says also, that he went four different times into that great palace, and ranged over it till he was fatigued, but could not see it all.

## BOOK V.

who lived on fish only, the daily consumption was ten Castilian *pesos* of fish, (according to the testimony of the conqueror Cortez, in his letters to Charles V.) which is more than three hundred Roman pounds. Three hundred men, says Cortez, were employed to take care of those birds, besides their physicians, who observed their distempers, and applied timely remedies to them. Of those three hundred men, some procured them their food, others distributed it, others took care of their eggs at the time of their incubation, and others picked their plumage at certain seasons of the year; for, besides the pleasure which the king took in seeing so great a multitude of animals collected together, he was principally careful of their feathers, not less for the sake of the famous Mosaic images, of which we shall speak hereafter, than of the other works which were made of them. The halls and chambers of those houses, were so many in number, as the conqueror above mentioned attests, that they could have accommodated two great princes with all their retinue. This celebrated house was situated in the place where, at present, the great convent of St. Francis stands.

The other house appropriated to the wild animals, had a large and handsome court, with a chequered pavement, and was divided into various apartments. One of them contained all the birds of prey, from the royal eagle to the kestrel, and many individuals of every species. These birds were distributed, according to their species, in various subterraneous chambers, which were more than seven feet deep, and upwards of seventeen in length and breadth. The half of every chamber was covered with flat stones; and stakes were fixed in the wall, on which they might sleep, and be defended from rain. The other half of the chamber was only covered with a lattice, through which they enjoyed the light of the sun. For the support of these birds, were killed, daily, near five hundred turkeys. In the same house were many low halls filled with a great number of strong wooden cages, in which, lions, tygers, wolves, coyotoo, and wild cats were confined, and all other kinds of wild beasts, which were fed upon deer, rabbits, hares, techichis, and other animals, and the intestines of human sacrifices.

The king of Mexico not only kept all the species of animals, which other princes do for state, but likewise such as by nature seemed exempted



empted from slavery, namely, crocodiles, and serpents. The serpents were kept in large casks or vessels; the crocodiles in ponds, which were walled round. There were also, various ponds for fish, two of which, that are remaining and still beautiful, we have seen in the palace of Chapoltepec, two miles from Mexico.

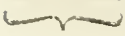
Montezuma, who was not satisfied with having every sort of animal in his palace, also collected there all irregularly formed men, who either from the colour of their hair, or of their skin, or some other deformity in their persons, were oddities of their species. A humour this, however, not unattended with beneficial consequences, as it gave maintenance to a number of miserable objects, and delivered them from the inhuman insults of their other fellow-creatures.

All his palaces were surrounded with beautiful gardens, where there was every kind of beautiful flower, odoriferous herb, and medicinal plant. He had, likewise, woods inclosed with walls, and furnished with variety of game, in which he frequently sported. One of those woods was upon an island in the lake, known at present, among the Spaniards, by the name of *Pinon*.

Of all these palaces, gardens, and woods, there is now remaining the wood of Chapoltepec only, which the Spanish viceroys have preserved for their pleasure. All the others were destroyed by the conquerors. They laid in ruins the most magnificent buildings of antiquity, sometimes from an indiscreet zeal for religion, sometimes in revenge, or to make use of the materials. They neglected the cultivation of the royal gardens, cut down the woods, and reduced that country to such a state, the magnificence of its former kings could not now find belief, were it not confirmed by the testimony of those who were the causes of its annihilation.

Not only the palaces, but all the other places of pleasure, were kept in exquisite order and neatness, even those which were seldom or never visited; as there was nothing in which he took more pride than the cleanliness of his own person, and of every thing else which was his. He bathed regularly every day, and had baths, therefore, in all his palaces. Every day he wore four dresses; and that which he once put off, he never after used again: these were reserved as largesses for the nobles who served him, and the soldiers who behaved gallantly in war. Every morning,

SECT. IV.  
The good  
and bad of  
Montezuma,

BOOK V.  


morning, according to the accounts given by some historians, upwards of a thousand men were employed by him in sweeping and watering the streets of the city.

In one of the royal buildings was an armory filled with all kind of offensive and defensive arms, which were made use of by those nations, with military ornaments, and ensigns. He kept a surprising number of artificers at work, in manufacturing these and other things. He had numerous artists constantly busied likewise, namely, goldsmiths, Mosaic work-men, sculptors, painters, and others. One whole district consisted solely of dancing-masters, who were trained up to entertain him.

His zeal for religion was not less conspicuous than his magnificence. He built several temples to his gods, and made frequent sacrifices to them, observing with great punctuality the established rites and ceremonies. He was extremely careful that all the temples, and in particular the greater temple of Mexico, should be well kept, and exquisitely clean; but his vain fear of the auguries and pretended oracles of those false divinities totally debased his mind.

He was anxiously attentive to the execution of his orders, and the laws of the kingdom, and was inexorable in punishing transgressors. He tried, frequently, by secret presents, the integrity of his magistrates, and whenever he found any of them guilty, he punished them without remission, even if they were of the first rank of the nobility.

He was an implacable enemy to idleness, and, in order to banish it as much as possible from his dominions, he kept his subjects perpetually employed; the military, in constant warlike exercises; the others, in the culture of the fields, and in the construction of new edifices, and other public works; and even beggars, that they might not be totally idle, were enjoined to contribute a certain quantity of those filthy insects which are the breed of nastiness and adherents of wretchedness.

The oppression which he made his vassals feel, the heavy burdens he imposed on them, his own arrogance and pride, and excessive severity in punishments, disgusted his people; but, on the other hand, he gained their love by his liberality in supplying the necessities of individuals, as well as rewarding his generals and ministers. Amongst other things worthy to be recorded with the highest praises, and to be imitated by all princes,

princes, he allotted the city of Colhuacan as an hospital for all invalids, who, after having done faithful service to the crown, either in military or civil employments, required a provision for their age or infirmities. They were there maintained, and attended to at the expence of the king. Such were the good and bad qualities of the celebrated Montezuma; which we have thought proper to lay before the reader here, before we go on to detail the events of his reign.

In the beginning of his government, he put to death Malinalli, lord of Tlachquiauhco, for rebellion against the crown of Mexico; he reduced the state again under his obedience, and conquered, also, that of *Achiothlan*. A little time after, another war broke out more serious and dangerous, in which he was not so successful.

Amongst the many provinces which either voluntarily subjected themselves to the Mexicans from fear of their power, or were conquered by force of arms, the republic of Tlascala remained always unsubdued, having never bowed to the Mexican yoke, although so little distant from the capital of that empire. The Huexotzincas, Cholulans, and other neighbouring states, who were formerly allied with the republic, growing jealous afterwards of its prosperity, exasperated the Mexicans against it, by insinuating that the Tlascalans were desirous of making themselves masters of the maritime provinces on the Mexican gulf, and that by their commerce with those provinces, they were daily increasing their power and their wealth, and were gaining the minds of the people with whom they had traffick. The commerce of the Tlascalans, of which the Huexotzincas complained, was both justifiable and necessary; because, besides that the greater part of the people of these coasts were originally of Tlascala, and considered each other as kindred and relations; the Tlascalans were under the necessity of providing themselves from thence, with what cocoas, cotton, and salt they wanted. Nevertheless the representations of the Huexotzincas had such influence on the Mexicans, that since the time of Montezuma I. all the kings of Mexico had treated the Tlascalans as the greatest enemies of the empire, and had always maintained strong garrisons on the frontiers of Tlascala, to obstruct their commerce with the maritime parts.

SECT. V.  
War of Tlascala.

The Tlascalans finding themselves deprived of their freedom of commerce, and consequently of the means of obtaining some of the necessities



BOOK IV. of life, resolved to send an embassy to the Mexican nobility, (probably in the time of king Axayacatl) complaining of the wrong done them through the false insinuations of their rivals. The Mexicans who were become insolent from prosperity, replied, that the king of Mexico was lord of all the world, and all mortals were his vassals; and that as such, the Tlascalans should render him due obedience, and acknowledge him by tribute, after the example of other nations; but if they refused subjection, they must perish without remedy, their city would be sacked, and their country given to be inhabited by another race of people. To so arrogant and weak an answer, the ambassador returned those spirited words: "Most powerful lords, Tlascala owes you no subscription, nor have the Tlascalans ever acknowledged any prince with tributes since their ancestors left the countries in the North, to inhabit this land. They have always preserved their liberty, and being unaccustomed to the slavery to which you pretend to subject them, rather than submit to your power, they will shed more blood than their fathers shed in the famous battle of Pojauhtlan."

The Tlascalans alarmed at the arrogant and ambitious pretensions of the Mexicans, and despairing of being able to bring them to any amicable agreement, resolved at last to fortify their frontiers to prevent an invasion. They had already inclosed the lands of the republic with intrenchments, and established good garrisons on their frontiers: the threats of the Mexicans made them increase their fortifications, and strengthen their garrisons, and construct that famous wall six miles in length, which prevented the enemy from entering in the quarter of the west, where danger was chiefly to be apprehended. They were frequently attacked by the Huexotzincas, the Cholulans, the Itzocanese, the Tecamachalchese, and other states which were neighbouring, or but little distant from Mexico; but they never could wrest a foot of land from the republic, owing to the watchful attention of the Tlascalans, and the bravery with which they resisted their invaders.

A great many subjects of the crown of Mexico had taken refuge in the country of Tlascala, particularly some of the Chalchese nation, and the Otomies of Xaltocan who fled from the ruin of their native countries, in the wars above-mentioned. They bore an inveterate hatred to the Mexicans, from the evils which they had suffered, and appeared, there-

therefore, to the Tlascalans, to be the fittest people to give vigorous opposition to their enemies ; in this they were not deceived ; for the Mexicans found no resistance more powerful than that which they met with from these exiles, especially the Otomies composing the frontier garrisons, who served the republic with great fidelity, and were rewarded with the highest honours and employments.

All the time that Axayacatl and his successors reigned, the Tlascalans continued to be obstructed in their commerce with the maritime provinces, by which means the common people were so much in want of salt, that they grew accustomed to eat their food without that seasoning, and did not return to the use of it for many years after the conquest ; but the nobles, or at least some of them, had secret correspondence with some Mexican lords, and got a supply of what was necessary, without the populace of either country having any knowledge of it. Every person knows that in all general calamities, the poor are those who suffer the greatest hardships, while those of better circumstances escape, or at least find means by their wealth to soften and relieve them.

Montezuma being unable to endure a refusal of obedience and homage from the little republic of Tlascala, while so many nations, even the most distant, were tributary to him, ordered in the beginning of his reign, the states in its neighbourhood to muster their troops, and attack the republic on every side. The Huexotzincas, in confederacy with the Cholulans, quickly raised their forces, under command of Tecajahuatzin, the chief of the state of Huexotzinco ; but confiding more in their arts than their strength, they tried to draw over to their party, by bribes and promises, the inhabitants of Huejotlipan, a city of the republic, situated on the frontiers of the kingdom of Acolhuacan, and the Otomies, who guarded the other frontiers ; but neither would be prevailed upon : on the contrary, they declared they were resolved to die in defence of the republic. Upon which the Huexotzincas, being obliged to make use of their strength, entered with such fury into the boundaries of Tlascala, that the frontier garrison was not able to withstand them : they committed great slaughter, and advanced as far as *Xiloxochitla*, which was only three miles distant from the capital. There they met with a stout resistance from *Texatlacatzin*, a celebrated Tlascalan captain, who fell at last however, being

## BOOK V.

overcome by the multitude of his enemies. Finding themselves so near the capital, they conceived such a dread of the vengeance of the Tlascalans, that they retreated precipitately to their own territories. Such was the commencement of the continual battles and the hostilities which subsisted between the two states until the arrival of the Spaniards. We are uninformed by history whether the other states in the neighbourhood of Tlascala were engaged in the war: perhaps, the Huexotzincas and Cholulans were unwilling to let any other have a share in their glory.

The Tlascalans were now so enraged against the Huexotzincas, that they did not confine themselves any longer to the defence of their state; but frequently sallied out upon the enemy. At one time they attacked them at the foot of the mountains, which lie to the west of Huexotzinco, and reduced them to such difficulties, that finding themselves unable for resistance, they demanded assistance from Montezuma, who immediately ordered an army under the command of his first-born son to their relief. This army marched across the southern border of the mountain and volcano Popocatepec, where it was increased with the troops of Chietlan and Itzocan, and from thence it entered by Quauhquechollan into the valley of Atlixco. The Tlascalans having intelligence of this route, posted themselves in the way to fall upon the Mexicans before they could join the Huexotzincas. The attack was so sudden and unexpected on the Mexicans that they were defeated, and the Tlascalans taking advantage of their disorder, made a considerable havoc of them. Amongst others who were slain, the prince the general was one, on whom so important a post had been conferred probably more from an intention to add this honour to the nobleness of his birth than from respect to his skill in the art of war. The rest of the army was put to flight, and the conquerors returned to Tlascala loaded with spoils. It is much to be wondered at that they did not pour immediately upon the city of Huexotzinco, as they might have expected it would have easily surrendered; but, perhaps, the victory was not so complete, but that many of their people fell in the battle, and that they thought it more prudent to enjoy the immediate fruits of victory, and return afterwards with more forces to the war. They quickly returned, but they were repulsed by the Huexotzincas, who were



were now fortified, so that they retreated to Tlascala without any other advantage than laying waste the fields of the Huexotzincas and Cholulans; by which these people were so reduced as to be forced to seek provision in Mexico and other places.

Montezuma was deeply affected with the death of his first-born son, and the defeat of his army: upon which he commanded another army to be raised in the provinces surrounding Tlascala, to block up the whole republic; but the Tlascalans foreseeing the hostility of the Mexicans, had made extraordinary fortifications, and strengthened all their garrisons. The contest became vigorous on both sides; but at last the royal troops were repulsed, leaving no small share of riches in the hands of their enemies. The Tlascalans celebrated this victory with great rejoicings, and rewarded the Otomies, to whom it was chiefly owing, by advancing the most respectable among them to the dignity of *Texetli*, which was in the greatest esteem among them, and giving daughters of the most noble Tlascalans in marriage to the heads of that nation.

It is not to be doubted that if the king of Mexico had been seriously bent on the reduction of the Tlascalans, he would in the end have subjected them to his crown; because although the strength of the republic was considerable, its troops warlike, and its places strong, they were still inferior to the Mexicans in resources and power. From which it appears probable, as historians affirm, that the kings of Mexico, although they had conquered the most distant provinces, designedly let the republic of Tlascala exist, which is scarcely sixty miles distant from that capital; not only that they might have an enemy at hand against whom they might exercise their troops; but likewise that they might always be able to procure with ease victims for their sacrifices. The frequent attacks which they made on the different places of Tlascala, served for both these purposes.

Among the Tlascalan victims in the history of Mexico, a very famous general, named *Tlahuicol*, is extremely worthy of memory (g). His courage, and the uncommon strength of his arms, were unequalled and wonderful. The *maquahuatl*, or Mexican sword, with which he

SECT. VI.  
Tlahuicol, a  
celebrated  
general of  
the Tlascalans.

(g) The event respecting this officer happened in the last years of Montezuma's reign; but on account of its connection with the war of Tlascala we have thought proper to introduce it here.

fought

## BOOK IV.

fought, was so weighty, that a man of ordinary strength could hardly raise it from the ground. His name was a terror to the enemies of the republic, and wherever he appeared in arms, they fled before him. In an assault which the Huexotzincas made upon a garrison of the Ottomies, he got inadvertently, during the heat of the engagement, into a marsh, where not being able to move with sufficient agility, he was made prisoner, confined in a strong cage, carried to Mexico, and presented to Montezuma. The king, who could esteem merit even in his enemies, instead of putting him to death, graciously granted him liberty to return to his native country; but the proud Tlascalan would not accept the favour, pretending that as he had been made prisoner, he had not confidence to present himself after such dishonour before his countrymen. He said he desired to die like the other prisoners, in honour of their god. Montezuma observing his aversion to return to his country, and at the same time being unwilling to deprive the world of a man who was so renowned, continued to entertain him at his court, in hopes of making him a friend to the Mexicans, and gaining his services to the crown. In the mean time a war broke out with the Michuacanese, the reasons and particulars of which we know not, when Montezuma committed the command of the army which he sent to Tlaximalojan, the frontier as we have already mentioned of Michuacan, to Tlahuicol. Tlahuicol corresponded faithfully with the trust reposed in him; for although he could not dislodge the enemy from the place where they were fortified, yet he made many prisoners, and brought off a great quantity of gold and silver. Montezuma was sensible of his services, and again made him offers of liberty; but this being refused as formerly, he was offered the honourable post of *Tlacatecatl*, general of the Mexican arms. To this the Tlascalan nobly answered, that he would never be a traitor to his country, that he desired positively to die, provided it might be in the gladiatorial sacrifice, which as it was reserved for the most respectable prisoners, would therefore be more honourable to him. This celebrated general passed three years in Mexico with one of his wives, who came there from Tlascala to live with him. It is probable, that the Mexicans brought her to him that he might leave them some posterity, to ennoble with his virtues the court and kingdom of Mexico. The king perceiving at last the obstinacy with which he re-

refused every offer which was made him, yielded to his barbarous inclination, and appointed the day of the sacrifice. Eight days before the arrival of that day, they began to celebrate the occasion with entertainments of dancing; after which, they, in presence of the king, the nobility, and an immense croud of people, put the Tlascalan prisoner, tied by one foot, upon the *Temalacatl*, or the large round stone on which such sacrifices were made. Several brave men came on, one at a time, to fight with him, of whom, according to report, he killed eight and wounded twenty, until at last falling almost dead from a severe blow which he received on the head, they carried him before the idol of Huitzilopochtli, where the priests opened his breast and took out his heart, and threw the body down the stair of the temple according to the established rites. Thus fell this famous general, whose courage and fidelity to his country, had he lived in more enlightened times, would have raised him high in the rank of heroes.

During the time in which war was carrying on against the Tlascalans, some provinces of the empire were distressed with a famine, occasioned by two years of dry weather. All the grain which individuals possessed being consumed, the king had an opportunity of shewing his liberality; he opened all his granaries, and distributed among his subjects all the maize which was in them; but this not being sufficient to relieve their necessities, in imitation of Montezuma I. he permitted them to go to other countries to procure their subsistence. The following year, 1505, having had an abundant harvest, the Mexicans went to war against Guatemala, a province upwards of nine hundred miles distant from Mexico in the south-east. During the continuance of this war, occasioned probably by some hostilities offered to some of the subjects of the crown, the building of a temple, erected in honour of the goddess *Centiotl*, was finished at Mexico, the consecration of which was celebrated with the sacrifice of the prisoners made in that war.

They had, during this season also, enlarged the road upon the lake from Chapoltepec to Mexico, and repaired the aqueduct which was upon that road, but the rejoicings which the conclusion of such a labour excited were interrupted by the turret of another temple, called *Zomolli*, being set on fire by lightning. The inhabitants of that part

SECT. VII.  
Famine in the  
provinces of  
the empire,  
and public  
works in the  
capital.



## BOOK V.

of the city which was most distant from the temple, and especially the Tlatelolcos, having perceived no lightning, were persuaded that the burning was caused by enemies come unexpectedly into the city, upon which they immediately rose in arms to defend it, and ran in troops towards the temple. Montezuma being suspicious that it was a mere pretence of the Tlatelolcos to raise a sedition, as he was always diffident of them, was so provoked at their disturbance, that he deprived them of all the public offices which they held, and even forbade their appearance at court, neither protestations of their innocence, nor prayers with which they implored the royal mercy, having sufficient weight to make him alter his resolution; but as soon as the first heat of his passion was over, they were reinstated in their employments and his favour.

SECT. VIII.  
Rebellion of  
the Mixtecas  
and Zapotecas.

In the mean while the Mixtecas and Zapotecas rebelled against the crown. The principal leaders of the rebellion, in which all the lords of each nation had engaged, were *Cetecpatl*, lord of Coaxtlahuacan, and *Mocheuixochitl*, lord of Tzotzollan. First of all they treacherously murdered all the Mexicans in the garrisons of Huayjacac and other places. As soon as Montezuma had information of the rebellion, he sent a large army against them, composed of Mexicans, Tezcucans, and Tepanecas, under the command of prince Cuiclahuac, his brother and successor in the crown. The rebels were totally defeated, a great many of them taken prisoners with their chiefs, and their cities sacked. The army returned to Mexico loaded with spoils, the prisoners were sacrificed, and the state of Tzotzollan was given to *Coscaquauhtli*, the brother of Nahuixochitl, for his fidelity to the crown, preferring the duties of a subject to the ties of blood; but *Cetecpatl* was not sacrificed, as he had not yet discovered all his accomplices in the rebellion, and the designs of the rebels.

SECT. IX.  
Contest between the  
Huexotzincas and Cholulans.

Some little time after this expedition, a dispute and quarrel arose between the Huexotzincas and the Cholulans their friends and neighbours, which as it was left to be decided by arms, occasioned a pitched battle to be fought. The Cholulans being more versed in the forms of religion, in commerce, and the arts than skilled in the science of war, were soon defeated, and forced to retreat to their city, where their enemies pursued them, killed some of their people, and burned some of their houses. The Huexotzincas had hardly gained the victory when they found cause to repent

repent it, on account of the chastisement which they apprehended would follow it; that they might prevent this, they sent two respectable persons to king Montezuma, whose names were *Tolimpanecatl*, and *Tzoncoztli*, who were to justify them, and lay the blame on the Cholulans. These ambassadors, either with a design to magnify the courage of their citizens, or from some other motive, exaggerated the slaughter made of the Cholulans to such a degree, that the king believed they were all cut to pieces, or that the few whose lives had been saved had abandoned the city. On hearing this account Montezuma was extremely afflicted, and dreaded the revenge of the god *Quelzalcoatl*, whose sanctuary, which was one of the most celebrated and most honoured of all that land, he conceived to have been profaned by the Huexotzincas. Having consulted, therefore, with the two allied kings, he sent some persons from his court to Cholula, to gain just information of this transaction; and having found it very different from the representation given by the Huexotzincas, he was so enraged at their deceit to him, that he suddenly dispatched an army, with orders to his general, to punish them severely if they did not make a suitable apology and submission. The Huexotzincas, foreseeing the storm which was likely to pour upon them, went out in order of battle to meet the Mexicans; but the Mexican general advanced towards them to explain his commission in the following words: “ Our lord  
 “ Montezuma, who has his court in the middle of the water, Neza-  
 “ hualpilli, who commands upon the borders of the lake, and Toto-  
 “ quihuatzli who reigns at the foot of the mountains, have ordered us  
 “ to tell you, that having learned from your ambassadors that you have  
 “ ruined Cholula and killed its inhabitants, they feel the utmost af-  
 “ fliction, and are under an obligation to revenge the violent outrage  
 “ which has been offered to the venerable sanctuary of *Quelzalcoatl*.”  
 The Huexotzincas protested that the account given by their ambassadors was extravagant and false, and that a body of men so respectable as the citizens of Huexotzinco, could not be the authors of it, and declared themselves ready to satisfy all the three kings by punishment of the guilty. Upon which having summoned their ambassadors, and cut off their ears and noses, that being the punishment destined for those who told falsehoods pernicious to the state, they delivered them up to the general. Thus they escaped the evils of war, which otherwise would have been inevitable.

## BOOK V.

SECT. X.  
Expedition  
against At-  
lixco and  
other places.

The Atlixcheſe, who had rebelled againſt the crown, met with a very different fate; they were defeated by the Mexicans, and many of them made priſoners. This happened preciſely in the month of February, 1506, when, on account of the termination of the century, the great feſtival of the renewal of the fire was celebrated with ſtill greater pomp and ſolemnity than under the reign of Montezuma I. or in other ſecular years. This, which was the moſt ſolemn, was alſo the laſt feſtival of the kind celebrated by the Mexicans. A great number of priſoners were ſacrificed at it; a great many alſo were reſerved for the feſtival of the dedication of *Tzompantli*, which, as we have obſerved above, was an edifice cloſe to the greater temple, where the ſkulls of the victims were ſtrung together and preſerved.

SECT. XI.  
Prefages of  
the war with  
the Spani-  
ards.

This ſecular year appears to have paſt without war; but in 1507, the Mexicans made an expedition againſt Tzollan and Miſtlan, two ſtates of the Mixtecas, whoſe inhabitants fled to the mountains, and left the Mexicans no other advantage than that of making a few priſoners of thoſe who remained in their houſes. From thence they proceeded to ſubdue Quauhquechollan which was in rebellion, in which war the prince Cuitlahuac the general of the army, made a diſplay of his courage. Some brave Mexican officers fell in this expedition; but the rebels were reduced under the yoke, and three thouſand two hundred taken priſoners, who were ſacrificed, one part of them at the feſtival *Tlacaxipehualiztli*, which took place in the ſecond Mexican month; and another part of them at the dedication of the ſanctuary Zomolli, which was rebuilt after the burning of it before mentioned, with greater magnificence than it was at firſt.

In the year following the royal army of the Mexicans, Tezcucans, and Tepanecas, ſet out againſt the diſtant province of Amatla. On their march, which lay over a very lofty mountain, they were attacked by a furious north wind, accompanied with ſnow, which made great havoc in the army, as ſome of them who were accuſtomed to a mild climate, and travelling almoſt without cloathing, perished with cold, and others were beat down by the trees which were rooted up by the wind. Of the remainder of the army which continued their journey but feebly, to Amatla, the greater part died in battle.

Theſe and other calamities together with the appearance of a comet at that time, threw all the princes of Anahuac into the utmoſt conſternation.



tion. Montezuma, who was too superstitious to look with indifference on so uncommon a phenomenon, consulted his astrologers upon it; but they being unable to divine its meaning, applied to the king of Acolhuacan, who was reputed able in astrology, and in the art of divination. These kings, although they were related to, and perpetual allies of, each other, did not live in much harmony together, the king of Acolhuacan having put to death his son *Huexotzincatzin*, as we shall see presently, paying no regard to the prayers of Montezuma, who, as the uncle of that prince, had interfered in his behalf. For a long time past they had neither met with their usual frequency, nor confidence; but on this occasion the mysterious dread which seized the mind of Montezuma incited him to profit by the knowledge of the king Nezahualpilli, for which reason he intreated him to come to Mexico to consult with him upon an event which appeared equally to concern them both. Nezahualpilli went, and after having conferred, at length, with Montezuma, was of opinion, according to the account of historians, that the comet predicted the future disasters of those kingdoms, by the arrival of a new people. This interpretation, however, being unsatisfactory to Montezuma, Nezahualpilli challenged him at the game of foot-ball, which was frequently played at even by those kings themselves; and it was agreed between them that if the king of Mexico gained the party, the king of Acolhuacan should renounce his interpretation, adjudging it to be false; but if Nezahualpilli came off victor, Montezuma should acknowledge and admit it to be true: a folly though truly ridiculous in those men, to believe the truth of a prediction could depend on the dexterity of the player, or the fortune of the game; but less pernicious, however than that of the ancient Europeans, who decided on truth, innocence, and honour, by a barbarous duel and the fortune of arms. Nezahualpilli remained victor in the game, and Montezuma disconsolate at the loss and the confirmation of so fatal a prognostic: he was willing, however, to try other methods, hoping to find some more favourable interpretation which might counterbalance that of the king of Acolhuacan, and the disgrace he had suffered at play: he consulted therefore a very famous astrologer who was much versed in the superstitious art of divination, by which he had rendered his name so celebrated in that land, and acquired so great a respect, that without ever stirring abroad from his house he was considered and consulted by the kings

BOOK V. themselves as an oracle. He knowing, without doubt, what had happened between the two kings, instead of returning a propitious answer to his sovereign, or at least one which was equivocal, as such prognosticators generally do, confirmed the fatal prophecy of the Tezcucan. Montezuma was so enraged at the answer, that in return he made his house be pulled to pieces, leaving the unhappy diviner buried amidst the ruins of his sanctuary.

These and other similar presages of the fall of that empire appear represented in the paintings of the Americans, and are related in the histories of the Spaniards. We are far from thinking that all that which has been wrote on this subject is deserving of credit; but neither can we doubt of the tradition which prevailed among the Americans, that a new people totally different from the native inhabitants, were to arrive at that kingdom and make themselves masters of that country. There has not been in the country of Anahuac any nation more or less polished which has not confirmed this tradition either by verbal testimony or their own histories.

It is impossible to guess at the origin of a tradition so universal as this; but the event which I am going to relate, is said to have been public, and to have made a considerable noise; to have happened also in the presence of the two kings and the Mexican nobility. It is represented in some of the paintings of those nations, and a legal attestation of it even was sent to the court of Madrid (*b*). Though in compliance with the duty of a historian, we give a place to many of the memorable traditions of those nations; on these, however, we leave our readers to form their own judgment and comments.

SECT. XII.  
Memorable  
event of a  
Mexican  
princess.

*Papantzin*, a Mexican princess, and sister of Montezuma, was married to the governor of Tlatelolco, and after his death lived in his palace until the year 1509, when she likewise died of old age. Her funeral was celebrated with magnificence suitable to her exalted birth, the king her brother, and all the nobility of Mexico and Tlatelolco being present. Her body was buried in a subterraneous cavern, in the garden of the same palace, near to a fountain where she had used to bathe, and the mouth of the cave was shut with a stone. The day following, a child of five or six years of age happened to pass from her mother's apartment to that of the major-domo of the deceased princess, which

(*b*) See Torquemada, lib. ii. cap. 91, and Betencourt, Part iii. Trat. i. cap. 8.

was on the other side of the garden ; and in passing saw the princess sitting upon the steps of the fountain, and heard herself called by her by the word *Cocoton* (*i*), which is a word of tenderness used to children. The little child not being capable, on account of its age, of reflecting on the death of the princess, and thinking that she was going to bathe as usual, approached without fear, upon which she sent the child to call the wife of her major-domo ; the child went to call her, but the woman smiling and caressing her, told her, “ My little girl, Papantzin is dead, “ and was buried yesterday ; ” but as the child insisted, and pulled her by her gown, she, more to please, than from belief of what was told her, followed her ; but was hardly come in sight of the princess, when she was seized with such horror that she fell fainting to the earth. The little girl ran to acquaint her mother, who, with two other companions came out to give assistance ; but on seeing the princess they were so affected with fear, that they would have swooned away if the princess herself had not endeavoured to comfort them, assuring them she was still alive. She made them call her major-domo, and charged him to go and bear the news to the king her brother ; but he durst not undertake it, as he dreaded that the king would consider the account as a fable, and would punish him with his usual severity for being a liar, without examining into the matter. Go then to Tezcuco, said the princess, and intreat the king Nezahualpilli, in my name, to come here and see me. The major-domo obeyed, and the king having received the information, set out immediately for Tlatelolco. When he arrived there, the princess was in a chamber of the palace ; though full of astonishment, the king saluted her, when she requested him to go to Mexico, to tell the king her brother that she was alive, and had occasion to see him, to communicate some things to him of the utmost importance. The king set out for Mexico to execute her commission ; but Montezuma would hardly give credit to what was told him. However, that he might not do injustice to so respectable an ambassador, he went along with him, and many of the Mexican nobility to Tlatelolco, and having entered the hall where the princess was, he demanded of her if she was his sister. “ I am, indeed, sir,” answered the princess, “ your sister Papantzin, whom you buried yesterday ; I am truly alive,

(.) *Cocoton* means little girl, only that it is an expression of more tenderness.



## BOOK V.

“ and wish to relate to you what I have seen, as it deeply concerns you.” Upon this the two kings sat down, while all the other nobles continued standing full of admiration at what they saw.

The princess then began to speak as follows: “ After I was dead  
 “ or if you will not believe that I have been dead, after I remained be-  
 “ rest of motion and of sense, I found myself suddenly placed upon  
 “ an extensive plain, to which there appeared no boundaries. In the  
 “ middle of it I observed a road which I afterwards saw was divided  
 “ into a variety of paths, and on one side ran a great river whose wa-  
 “ ters made a frightful noise. As I was going to throw myself into the  
 “ river to swim to the opposite bank, I saw before me a beautiful youth  
 “ of handsome stature, clothed in a long habit, white as snow, and  
 “ dazzling like the sun; he had wings of beautiful feathers, and upon  
 “ his forehead, this mark,” (in saying this the princess made the sign  
 of the cross with her two fore fingers, “ and laying hold of my hand,  
 “ said to me, *Stop, for it is not yet time to pass this river. God loves thee,*  
 “ *though thou knowest it not.* He then led me along by the river-side,  
 “ upon the borders of which I saw a great number of human skulls  
 “ and bones, and heard most lamentable groans that waked my utmost  
 “ pity. Turning my eyes afterwards upon the river, I saw some large  
 “ vessels upon it filled with men of a complexion and dress quite dif-  
 “ ferent from ours. They were fair and bearded, and carried stand-  
 “ ards in their hands, and helmets on their heads. The youth then  
 “ said to me, *It is the will of God that thou shalt live to be a witness*  
 “ *of the revolutions which are to happen to these kingdoms. The groans*  
 “ *which thou hast heard among these bones, are from the souls of your*  
 “ *ancestors, which are ever and will be tormented for their crimes.*  
 “ *The men whom you see coming in these vessels, are those who by*  
 “ *their arms will make themselves masters of all these kingdoms, and*  
 “ *with them will be introduced the knowledge of the true God, the creator*  
 “ *of heaven and earth. As soon as the war shall be at an end, and the*  
 “ *bath published and made known which will wash away sin, be thou the*  
 “ *first to receive it, and guide by thy example the natives of thy country.*  
 “ Having spoke this the youth disappeared, and I found myself re-  
 [“ called to life; I rose from the place where I lay, raised up the stone  
 “ of

“ of my sepulchre, and came out to the garden where I was found by  
 “ my domestics.”

BOOK V.

Montezuma was struck with astonishment at the recital of so strange an adventure, and feeling his mind distracted with a variety of apprehensions, rose and retired to one of his palaces which was destined for occasions of grief, without taking leave of his sister, the king of Tacuba, or any one of those who accompanied him, although some of his flatterers, in order to console him, endeavoured to persuade him that the illness which the princess had suffered, had turned her brain. He avoided for ever after returning to see her, that he might not again hear the melancholy presages of the ruin of his empire. The princess, it is said, lived many years in great retirement and abstinence. She was the first who, in the year 1524, received the sacred baptism in Tlatelolco, and was called from that time, *Donna Maria Papantzin*.

Among the memorable events, in 1510, there happened without any apparent cause, a sudden and furious burning of the turrets of the greater temple of Mexico, in a calm, serene night; and in the succeeding year, so violent and extraordinary an agitation of the waters of the lake, that many houses of the city were destroyed, there being at the same time no wind, earthquake, nor any other natural cause to which the accident could be ascribed. It is said also, that in 1511, the figures of armed men appeared in the air, who fought and slew each other. These and other similar phenomena, recounted by Acofta, Torquemada and others, are found very exactly described in the Mexican and Acolhuan histories.

SECT. XII.  
 Uncommon  
 occurrences.

The consternation which these sad omens raised in the mind of Montezuma did not, however, turn aside his thoughts from war. His armies made numerous expeditions in 1508, particularly against the Tlascalans and Huexotzincas, the Atlixchese, Icpatepec, and Malinaltepec, in which they made five thousand prisoners, which were afterwards sacrificed. In 1509, the war against Xochitepec happened, that state having rebelled. In the year following, Montezuma thinking the altar for the sacrifices too small, and unproportioned to the magnificence of the temple, he caused a proper stone of excessive size, to be sought for, which was found near to Cojoacan. After ordering it to be polished and cut, he commanded it to be brought in due form to Mexico. A

SECT. XIII.  
 Erection of a  
 new altar for  
 the sacrifices,  
 and new ex-  
 peditions of  
 the Mexicans.

vast

## BOOK V.

vast number of people went to drag it along, but in passing a wooden bridge over a canal, in the entry to the city, the stone by its enormous weight, broke through the bridge and fell into the canal, drawing some men after it, and among the rest, the high priest, who was accompanying it, and scattering incense. The king and the people were a good deal disconcerted by this misfortune; but without giving up the undertaking, they drew the stone, with prodigious labour and fatigue, out of the water, and brought it to the temple, where it was consecrated with the sacrifice of all the prisoners that had been reserved for this great festival, which was one of the most solemn ever celebrated by the Mexicans. The king invited the principal nobility of all his kingdom to it, and expended a great deal of his treasure in presents which he made to the nobles and populace. In this same year the consecration of the temple *Tlamatzinco* was celebrated, and also that of *Quaxicalco*, of which we shall speak elsewhere. The victims sacrificed at the consecration of these two edifices, and the altar of the sacrifices, were, according to the account of historians, twelve thousand two hundred and ten, in number.

To have been able to furnish such a number of victims, they must have been continually at war. In 1511, the Jopas rebelled, and designed to kill all the Mexican garrison in Tlacotepec; but their intentions being seasonably discovered, they were punished accordingly, and two hundred of them carried prisoners to Mexico. In 1512, an army of the Mexicans marched towards the north, against the Quitzalapanese, and with the loss only of ninety-five men, they made one thousand and three hundred prisoners, which were also carried to Mexico. By these and other conquests made in the three following years, the Mexican empire was extended to its utmost limits, five or six years previous to its fall, to which the very great rapidity of its conquests contributed. Every province, and place which was conquered, created a new enemy to the conquerors, who became impatient of the yoke to which they were not accustomed, and irritated by injuries, only waited for an opportunity of being revenged, and restoring themselves to their wonted liberty. It would appear that the happiness of a kingdom consists not in the extension of its dominions, nor in the number of its vassals; but on the contrary, that it approaches at no time nearer to its final period, than  
when



when on account of its vast and unbounded extent, it can no longer maintain the necessary union among its parts, nor that vigour which is requisite to withstand the multitude of its enemies.

BOOK V.

The revolutions which happened at this time, in the kingdom of Acolhuacan, occasioned by the death of king Nezahualpilli, did not less contribute to the ruin of the Mexican empire. This celebrated king after having possessed the throne for forty-five years, either wearied of governing, or troubled with melancholy, from the fatal phenomena he had witnessed, left the reins of government in the hands of two of the royal princes, and retired to his palace of pleasure in Tezcotzinco, carrying with him his favourite Xocotzin and a few servants, leaving orders to his sons not to leave the court, but to wait there for his farther commands. During the six months of his retirement, he amused himself frequently with the exercise of the chace, and at night used to employ himself in observing the heavens, and for that purpose had constructed, on the terrace of his palace, a little observatory, which was preserved for a century after, and was seen by some Spanish historians who mention it. He there not only studied the motion and course of the stars, but conversed with those who were intelligent in astronomy: that science having always been in esteem among them, they applied still more to it when excited by the examples of the great Nezahualcojotl, and his son and successor.

SECT. XIV.  
Death and  
eulogium of  
king Neza-  
hualpilli.

After living six months in this private manner, he returned to his court, ordered his beloved Xocotzin to retire with her children into the palace of *Tecpilpan*, and shut himself up in the palace of his usual residence, without letting himself be seen by any person but one of his confidants, designing to conceal his death in imitation of his father. Accordingly, neither the time nor the circumstances of his death have ever been known. All that is certain is, that he died in 1516, and that before his death he commanded his confidants who were about him to burn his body secretly. From hence it happened that many of the vulgar, and even several of the nobles, were persuaded that he was not dead; but had returned to the kingdom of Amaquemecan where his ancestors sprung, as he had frequently resolved to do.

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In matters of religion he was of the same opinion with his great father Nezahualcojotl. He secretly despised the worship of the idols, although he appeared to conform to it with the people. He resembled his father also in his great zeal for the laws, and in the rigorous administration of justice, of which he afforded a striking example in the last years of his reign. There was a law which forbid, on pain of death, the speaking of indecent words in the royal palace. One of the prince's sons, who was named Huexotzincalzon, to whom he bore more affection than to any of the rest, not less on account of his disposition, and the virtues which shone out even in his youth, than of his having been the first born of his sons by his favourite Xocotzin, violated this law; but the words made use of by the prince were rather the effect of youthful indiscretion than of any culpable intention. The king was informed of it by one of his mistresses to whom the words had been addressed. He enquired of her if they had been spoke before any other persons, and finding that the prince's tutors had been present, he retired to an apartment of his palace, destined for occasions of mourning and grief. There he sent for the tutors to examine them. They being afraid of meeting with severe punishment if they concealed the truth, confessed it openly, but at the same time endeavoured to exculpate the prince, by saying, that he neither knew the person to whom he spoke, nor that the words were obscene. But notwithstanding their representations, he ordered the prince to be immediately arrested, and the same day pronounced sentence of death upon him. The whole court was astonished at so rigorous a judgment, the nobles pleaded with prayers and tears in his behalf, and the mother of the prince herself, relying on the king's particular affection for her, presented herself as a plaintiff before him, and in order to move him to compassion, led all her children along with her. But neither reasoning, prayers, nor tears, could bend the king. "My son," he said, "has violated the law. If I pardon him, it will be said, the laws are not binding upon every one. I will let my subjects know that no one will be pardoned a transgression, as I do not even pardon the son whom I dearly love." The queen pierced with the most lively grief, and despairing of being able to shake the constancy of the king, told him, "Since you have banished from your heart all the affections of a  
 " father

“ father and a husband for so slight a cause, why do you hesitate to put me to death and these young princes whom I have borne to you ?” The king then with a grave aspect commanded her to retire, as the case was without a remedy. The disappointed queen retreated to her apartment, and there, in company with some of her attendants who went to console her, abandoned herself to grief. In the mean while, those who were charged with the punishment of the prince, continued to delay it, that time might soften the rigour of justice, and give opportunity for the return of parental affection and mercy ; but the king perceiving their intention, commanded that they should immediately do their duty, which accordingly followed, to the general displeasure of the kingdom, and the utmost disgust to Montezuma, not only on account of the relation between himself and the prince, but likewise of the interference which he made in the prince’s favour, having been unsuccessful in procuring a repeal of the sentence. After the punishment was executed, the king shut himself up for forty days in a hall, without letting himself be seen by any one, while he secretly vented his grief, and made the door of his son’s apartment be closed up with a wall, to hide from his sight any remembrancer of his sorrows.

His severity in punishing transgressors was compensated by the compassion which he shewed for the accidental distresses of any of his subjects. There was a window in his palace which looked towards the market-place, covered with blinds, from which he used to observe, without being seen, the people that assembled there ; and whenever he saw any ill clothed woman he made her be called, and after informing himself of her life and condition, he supplied her with what was necessary for herself and family if she had any. Every day at his palace alms were given to the sick and to orphans. There was an hospital at Tezcuco for all those who had lost their eyesight in war, or had become from any other cause unfit for service, where they were supported at the royal expence, according to their stations, and frequently visited by the king himself. In such beneficent acts a great part of his revenues was expended.

The genius and talents of this king have been highly extolled by the historians of that kingdom. He endeavoured to imitate, both in his studies and in the conduct of his life, the example of his father, and



BOOK V. his resemblance to him was remarkable. The glory of the Chechemecan kings may be said to have ended with him, as the discord which took place among his children, diminished the splendour of the court, weakened the force of the state, and tended to bring on its final ruin. Nezahualpilli did not declare who was to be his successor in the crown, which all his ancestors had done. We are ignorant, however, of the motive that caused this omission, and which proved so prejudicial to the kingdom of Acolhuacan.

SECT. XV.  
Revolutions  
in the king-  
dom of Acol-  
huacan.

As soon as the supreme council of the deceased king were certain of his death, they considered it necessary to elect a successor to him in imitation of the Mexicans. They assembled therefore in order to deliberate on a point of such importance, and the oldest and most respectable person among them taking the lead in the assembly, represented the great disasters which might accrue to the state of Acolhuacan, if the election was retarded: he was of opinion, that the crown fell to the prince Cacamatzin; since, besides his prudence and his courage, he was the first-born of the first Mexican princess whom the late king married. All the other counsellors concurred in this opinion, which was in itself so just and came from a person of such authority. The princes who waited in a hall adjoining for the resolution of the council, were desired to enter there to hear it. When they were all introduced, the principal seat was given to Cacamatzin, who was a youth of twenty-two years, and his brothers Coanocotzin, who was twenty, and Ixtlilxochitl who was eighteen, were placed on each side of him. The same aged counsellor, who had first addressed the assembly, then rose, and declared that the resolution of the council, which included also that of the kingdom, was to give the crown to Cacamatzin, on account of the right of primogeniture. Ixtlilxochitl, who was an ambitious and enterprising youth, opposed it, by saying, that if the king was really dead, he would certainly have named his successor; that his not having done it was a clear evidence of his life, and while the lawful sovereign was living it was criminal in his subjects to name a successor. The council who knew the disposition of Ixtlilxochitl, durst not openly contradict him, but desired Coanocotzin to deliver his opinion. This prince approved and confirmed the determination of the council, and pointed out the inconveniencies which would ensue if the execution of

it was delayed. He was contradicted, and taxed with being light and inconsiderate by Ixtlilxochitl, and that he could not perceive while he embraced such an opinion that he was favouring the designs of Montezuma, who was much inclined to Cacamatzin, and used his endeavours to put him on the throne, because he trusted he would find in him a king of wax, to whom he might give what form he pleased. "It is by no means reasonable, dear brother," replied Coanocotzin, "to oppose a resolution which is so prudent and so just; are you not aware that if Cacamatzin was not to be king, the crown would belong not to you but to me." "It is true," said Ixtlilxochitl, "if the right of succession is to be determined by age only, the crown is due to Cacamatzin, and in failure of him to you; but if regard is paid, as it ought to be, to courage, to me it belongs." The counsellors perceiving that the princes were growing gradually more vehement and warm in their altercation, imposed silence on them both, and dismissed the assembly.

The two princes went to their mother the queen Xocotzin to continue their cavil, while Cacamatzin accompanied by many of the nobility, set out immediately for Mexico to inform Montezuma of what had happened, and to demand his assistance. Montezuma, who, besides the attachment he had to the prince, saw the justice of his claim, and the consent of the nation to it, advised him in the first place to secure the royal treasures, and promised to settle the dispute with his brother, and to employ the Mexican arms in his behalf if negotiations for that purpose should not prove sufficient.

Ixtlilxochitl, as soon as he knew of the departure of Cacamatzin, and foresaw the consequences of his application to Montezuma, set out from court with all his partizans, and went to the states which belonged to his tutors in the mountains of Mezquitlan. Coanocotzin sent immediate advice to Cacamatzin to return without delay to Tezcucó, and make use of that favourable opportunity for being crowned. Cacamatzin availed himself of this wise counsel, and came to the court accompanied by Cuitlahuazin the brother of Montezuma, and lord of Izta-palapan, and many of the Mexican nobility. Cuitlahuazin, without losing any time, assembled the Tezcucan nobility in the *Hueiſtecpán*, or the great palace of the king of Acolhuacan, and presented prince Caca-

Cacamatzin to be acknowledged by them as their lawful sovereign. He was received as such by them all, and the day for the ceremony of the coronation was fixed; but this was interrupted by intelligence arriving at court, that the prince Ixtlilzochitl was descending from the mountains of Meztitlan at the head of a great army.

This turbulent youth as soon as he arrived at Meztitlan, assembled all the lords of the places situated in those great mountains, and made them acquainted with his design of opposing his brother Cacamatzin, pretending that it was his zeal for the honour and liberty of the Chechemecan and Acolhuan nations which moved him; that it would be disgraceful, and even dangerous, to pay obedience to a king, so pliant to the will of the monarch of Mexico; that the Mexicans had forgot what they owed to the Acolhuan nation, and were desirous of increasing their unjust usurpations with the kingdom of Acolhuacan; that he for his part was resolved to exert all the courage which God had given him, to defend and save his country from the tyranny of Montezuma. With these arguments, which were probably suggested to him by his tutors, he so fired the minds of those lords, that they all professed themselves willing to serve him with all their forces, and raised so many troops that when the prince descended from the mountains his army it is said amounted to upwards of one hundred thousand men; whether it was from the dread of his power, or from an inclination to favour his pretensions, he was well received in all the places through which he passed. He sent an embassy from Tepepolco to the Otompanese, commanding them to do obedience to him as their proper king; but they replied, that as Nezahualpilli was dead, they would acknowledge no other sovereign than Cacamatzin, who had been peaceably accepted at court, and was already in possession of the throne of Acolhuacan. This answer so exasperated the prince, that he went in great wrath against their city. The Otompanese met him in order of battle; but although they for some time resisted the army of their enemy, they were at last vanquished, and their city was taken by the prince. The lord himself of Otompan fell among the slain, which accident soon accelerated the victory.

This event threw Cacamatzin and all his court into the utmost uneasiness, fearing the enemy might even besiege the capital; he prepared fortifi-



fortifications against them ; but the prince being contented with seeing himself respected and feared, did not move from Otompan ; but placed guards on the roads, with orders, however, to hurt no person, to hinder no individuals from passing from the court to any other place, and to show respect and civility to all passengers of rank. Cacamatzin, knowing the forces, and the resolutions of his brother, and considering it would be better for him to sacrifice even a great part of his kingdom than to lose it altogether, with the consent of his brother Coanacotzin, dispatched an embassy to treat of an accommodation with him. He sent to tell him, that he might, if he chose, retain all the dominions in the mountains, as he was contented with the court and the territory of the plain ; that he was willing also to share the revenues of his kingdom with his brother Coanacotzin ; but at the same time he requested him to drop every other pretension, and not to disturb the public tranquillity. The prince answered, that his brothers might act as they thought proper ; that he was pleased that Cacamatzin was in possession of the kingdom of Acolhuacan, that he had no designs against him nor against the state ; that he had no other view in maintaining his army than to oppose the ambitious designs of the Mexicans, who had given grounds for the greatest disgust and suspicions to his father Nezahualpilli ; that if at that time the kingdom was divided for the common interest of the nation, he hoped to see it again united ; that above all things it was necessary to guard against falling into the snares of the crafty Montezuma. Ixtlilxochitl was not deceived in his diffidence of Montezuma, as this king was the very person who, as we shall find hereafter, gave the unfortunate Cacamatzin into the hands of the Spaniards, in spite of the attachment he pretended to him.

This agreement being made with his brother, Cacamatzin remained in peaceable possession of the crown of Acolhuacan ; but with greatly diminished dominions, as he had ceded a very considerable part of the kingdom. Ixtlilxochitl kept his troops constantly in motion, and frequently appeared with his army in the environs of Mexico, daring Montezuma to a single combat with him. But this king was no longer in a state fit to accept such a challenge. The fire which he had in his youth had already begun to die away with age, and domestic luxury had enervated his mind ; nor would it have been prudent to have  
exposed

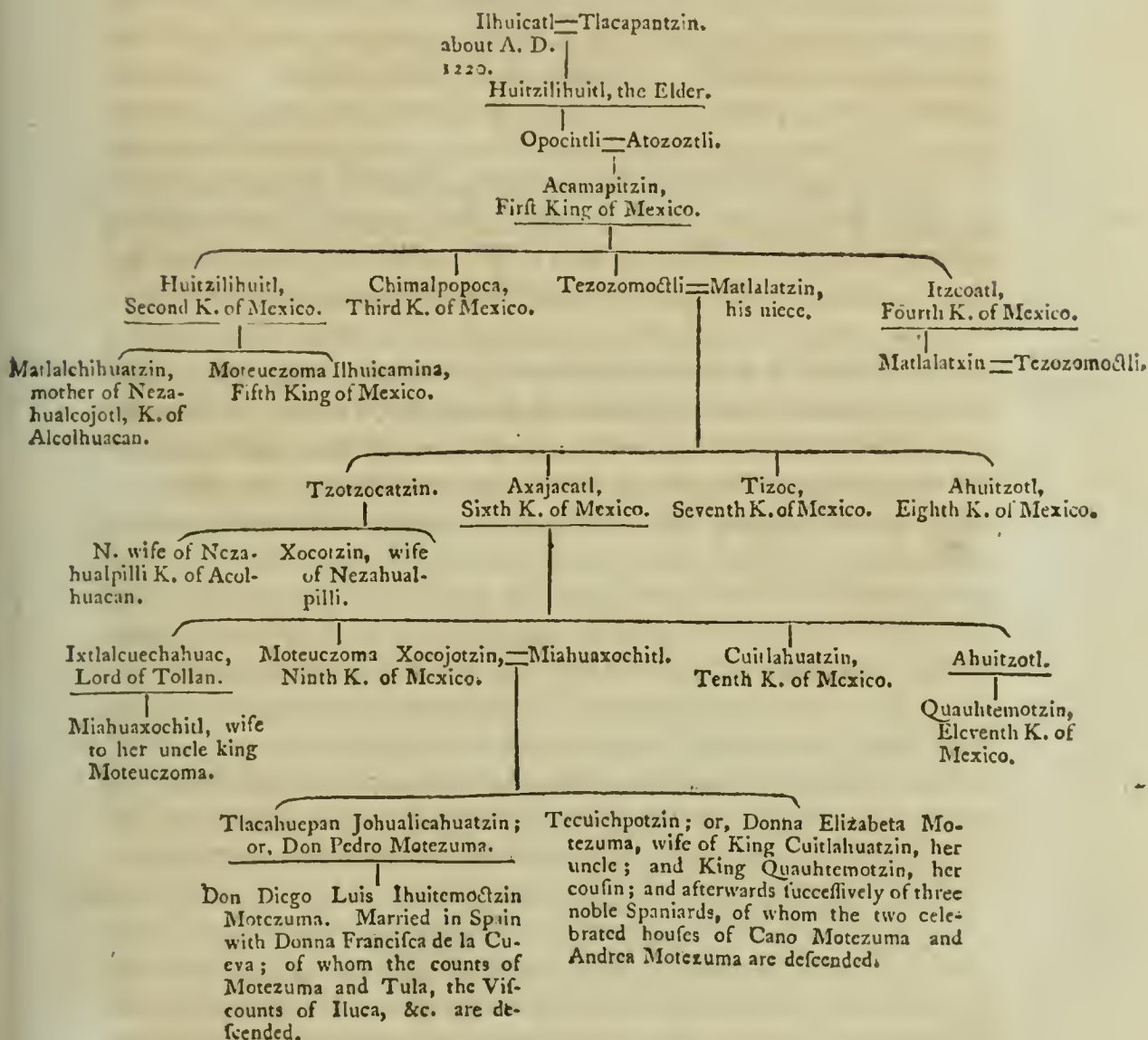
## BOOK V.

exposed himself to a rencounter of this kind with so adventurous a youth who had already, by secret negotiations, drawn over a great part of the Mexican provinces to his interest. The Mexicans, however, frequently engaged with that army, being sometimes vanquished, and at other times victorious. In one of those battles a relation of the king of Mexico was taken prisoner, who had gone out to the war with an express resolution to make a prisoner of the prince, and to carry him bound to Mexico according to a promise which he had made to Montezuma. Ixtlilxochitl knew of this boastful promise, and in order to be fully revenged, commanded him to be bound and covered with dry reeds, and burned alive in the sight of the whole army.

In the course of our history it will appear how much this turbulent prince contributed to the success of the Spaniards, who began about this time to make their appearance on the coast of the Gulf of Mexico : but before we undertake the relation of a war which totally reversed the order of those kingdoms, it will be necessary to give some account of the religion, the government, the arts, and manners of the Mexicans.

# GENEALOGY of the MEXICAN KINGS.

Deduced from the Beginning of the Thirteenth Century.



(To face Page 140, Vol. I.)



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## B O O K VI.

*The Religion of the Mexicans : namely, their Gods, Temples, Priests, Sacrifices, and Offerings : their Fasts and Austerities, their Chronology, Calendar, and Festivals ; their Ceremonies upon the Birth of Children, at Marriages, and Funerals.*

**T**HE religion, government, and œconomy of a state are the three BOOK VI.  
things which chiefly form the character of a nation, and without being acquainted with these, it is impossible to have a perfect idea of the genius, dispositions, and knowledge of any people whatever. The religion of the Mexicans, of which we are to give an account in this book, was a heap of errors, of superstitions, and cruel rites. Such weaknesses of the human mind, of which we have had but too many examples even in the most enlightened nations of antiquity, are inseparable from every religion that takes its source in the fantastical imaginations and fears of mankind. If we compare, as we shall do in another place, the religion of the Greeks and Romans with that of the Mexicans, we shall find the former more superstitious and ridiculous, the latter more cruel. These celebrated nations of ancient Europe, from the unfavourable opinion which they entertained of the power of their gods, multiplied their number to excess, confined their influence within narrow bounds, imputed to them the most atrocious crimes, and stained their worship with the most scandalous impurities ; for which they have been justly reproached by the advocates of Christianity. The Mexicans imagined their gods more perfect, and in their worship, however superstitious it might be, there was nothing repugnant to decency.

The Mexicans had some idea, though a very imperfect one, of a supreme, absolute, and independent Being, to whom they acknowledged to owe fear and adoration. They represented him in no external form,

## BOOK VI.

form, because they believed him to be invifible; and named him only by the common appellation of God, in their language *Teotl*, a word refembling ftill more in its meaning than in its pronunciation the *Theos* of the Greeks: but they applied to him certain epithets which were highly expreffive of the grandeur and power which they conceived him to poffefs. They called him *Ipalnemoani*, that is, He by whom we live; and *Tlòque Nabuàque*, He who has all in himfelf. But their knowledge and worfhip of this fupreme Being was obfcured and in a manner loft in the crowd of deities invented by their fuperftition.

They believed in an evil fpirit, the enemy of mankind, which they called *Tlacatecolotl*, or Rational Owl, and faid that he often appeared to men for the purpofe of terrifying or doing them an injury.

With refpect to the foul, the barbarous *Otomies*, as they tell us, believed that it died together with the body: while the Mexicans, with all the other polifhed nations of Anahuac, confidered it as immortal; allowing, at the fame time, that bleffing of immortality to the fouls of brutes, and not reftaining it to rational beings alone (*a*).

They diftinguifhed three places for the fouls when feparated from the body. Thofe of foldiers who died in battle or in captivity among their enemies, and thofe of women who died in labour, went to the houfe of the fun, whom they confidered as the Prince of Glory, where they led a life of endlefs delight; where, every day, at the firft appearance of the fun's rays they hailed his birth with rejoicings; and with dancing, and the mufic of inftruments and of voices, attended him to his meridian; there they met the fouls of the women, and with the fame feftivity accompanied him to his fetting. If religion is intended only to ferve the purpofes of government, as has been imagined by moft of the free-thinkers of our times, furely thofe nations could not forge a fyftem of belief better calculated to infpire their foldiers with courage than one which promifed fo high a reward after their death. They next fupposed that thefe fpirits after four years of that glorious life, went to animate clouds, and birds of beautiful feathers and of fweet fong; but always at liberty to rife again to heaven,

(*a*) The ideas here afcribed to the Mexicans, with refpect to the fouls of brutes, will appear more fully when we fhall come to fpeak of their funeral rites.



or to descend upon the earth to warble and suck the flowers. The people of Tlascala believed that the souls of persons of rank went, after their death, to inhabit the bodies of beautiful and sweet singing birds, and those of the nobler quadrupeds; while the souls of inferior persons were supposed to pass into weazles, beetles, and such other meaner animals. Whence we see that the absurd system of the Pythagorean transmigration, which has been so firmly settled, and so widely propagated throughout the countries of the East, has not wanted its advocates in those of the West (*b*). The souls of those that were drowned, or struck by lightning, of those who died by dropsy, tumors, wounds, and other such diseases, went, as the Mexicans believed, along with the souls of children, at least of those which were sacrificed to *Tlaloc* the god of water, to a cool and delightful place, called *Tlalocan*, where that god resided, and where they were to enjoy the most delicious repasts, with every other kind of pleasure. In the inner part of the greater temple of Mexico there was a particular place where they supposed that on a certain day of the year all the children which had been sacrificed to *Tlaloc*, came, and invisibly assisted at the ceremony. The *Mixtecas* had a persuasion, that a great cavern in a lofty mountain, in their province, was the entrance into paradise; and their nobles and great men, therefore, always took care to be buried near the cavern, in order to be nearer that place of delight. Lastly, the third place allotted for the souls of those who suffered any other kind of death, was the *Mictlan*, or hell, which they conceived to be a place of utter darkness, in which reigned a god, called *Mictlantecotli* (lord of hell), and a goddess named *Mictlancibuatl*. I am of opinion that they believed hell to be a place in the centre of the earth (*c*); but they did not imagine that the souls underwent any other punishment there than what they suffered from the darkness of their abode.

(*b*) Who would believe that a system so preposterous and improbable as that of the Pythagorean transmigration, should be supported by a philosopher of the enlightened eighteenth century. Yet it has been seriously maintained, lately, by a Frenchman, in a book printed at Paris, under the title of "The Year Two thousand four hundred and forty."

(*c*) Dr. Siguenza was of opinion, that the Mexicans placed hell in the northern part of the earth; as the same word *Mictlampa*, signified *towards the North*, and *towards Hell*. But, I rather think they placed it in the center, for that is the meaning of the name of *Tlalxico*, which they gave to the temple of the god of hell. After all it is possible that the Mexicans themselves might hold different opinions upon the subject.

## BOOK VI.

The Mexicans, with all other civilized nations, had a clear tradition, though somewhat corrupted by fable, of the creation of the world, of the universal deluge, of the confusion of tongues, and of the dispersion of the people; and had actually all these events represented in their pictures (*d*). They said, that when mankind were overwhelmed with the deluge, none were preserved but a man called *Coxcox* (to whom others give the name of *Teocipaelli*), and a woman called *Xochiquetzal*, who saved themselves in a little bark, and having afterwards got to land upon a mountain called by them *Colhuacan*, had there a great many children: that these children were all born dumb, until a dove from a lofty tree imparted to them languages, but differing so much that they could not understand one another. The Tlascalans pretended that the men who survived the deluge were transformed into apes, but recovered speech and reason by degrees (*e*).

SECT. II.  
The gods of  
Providence  
and of Hea-  
ven.

Among all the deities worshipped by the Mexicans, and which were very numerous, although not near so much so as those of the Romans, there were *thirteen* principal and greater gods, in honour of whom they consecrated that number. We shall give an account of what we have found in the Mexican mythology with respect to these and the other gods, without regard to the pompous conjectures and absurd system of Cav. Boturini.

*Texcatlipoca*. This was the greatest god adored in these countries, after the invisible God, or supreme Being, whom we have already mentioned. His name means *Shining Mirror*, from one that was affixed to his image. He was the god of providence, the soul of the world, the creator of heaven and earth, and master of all things. They represented him always young, to denote that no length of years ever diminished his power; they believed that he rewarded with various benefits the just, and punished the wicked with diseases and other afflictions. They placed stone seats in the corners of the streets, for that god to rest upon when he chose it, and upon which no person was ever allowed to sit down. Some said, that he had descended from

(*d*) Their idea of the deluge appears from the representation in the plate annexed, which is copied from an original painting of the Mexican.

(*e*) For an account of the opinions of the Miztecas and other nations of America, with respect to the creation of the world, I must refer the reader to Father Gregorio Garcia, a Dominican, in his work entitled, *The Origin of the Indians*.

heaven by a rope made of spiders webs, and had persecuted and driven from these countries, the grand priest of Tula *Quetzalcoatl*, who was afterwards consecrated as a god.

His principal image was of *teotetl* (divine stone) which is a black shining stone like black marble, and was richly dressed. It had golden ear-rings, and from the under lip hung a crystal tube, within which was a green feather, or a turquoise stone, which at first sight appeared to be a gem. His hair was tied with a golden string, from the end of which hung an ear of the same metal, with the appearance of ascending smoke painted on it, by which they intended to represent the prayers of the distressed. The whole breast was covered with massy gold. He had bracelets of gold upon both his arms, an emerald in the navel, and in his left hand a golden fan, set round with beautiful feathers, and polished like a mirror, in which they imagined he saw every thing that happened in the world. At other times to denote his justice, they represented him sitting on a bench covered with a red cloth, upon which were drawn the figures of skulls, and other bones of the dead: upon his left arm a shield with four arrows, and his right lifted in the attitude of throwing a spear: his body dyed black, and his head crowned with quail-feathers.

*Ometeulli* and *Omecibuatl* (*f*). The former was a god, and the latter a goddess, who they pretended dwelt in a magnificent city in heaven, abounding with delights, and there watched over the world, and gave to mortals their wishes: *Ometeulli* to men, and *Omecibuatl* to women. They had a tradition that this goddess having had many children in heaven, was delivered of a knife of flint; upon which her children in a rage threw it to the earth, from which when it fell, sprung sixteen hundred heroes, who, knowing their high origin, and having no servants, all mankind having perished in a general calamity, (*g*) agreed to send an embassy to their mother, to intreat her to grant them power to create men to serve them. The mother answered, that if they had had more exalted sentiments, they would have made them-

(*f*) They likewise gave these gods the names of *Citlaltotnac*, and *Citlalieu*, upon account of the stars.

(*g*) These people, as we shall mention in another place, believed that the earth had suffered three great universal calamities by which all mankind had been destroyed.



## BOOK VI.

selves worthy to live with her eternally in heaven : but since they chose to abide upon the earth, she desired them to go to *Micllanteuelli*, god of hell, and ask of him one of the bones of the men that had died ; to sprinkle this with their own blood, and from it they would have a man and a woman who would afterwards multiply. At the same time she warned them to be upon their guard against *Micllanteuelli*, who after giving the bone might suddenly repent. With these instructions from his mother, *Xolotl*, one of the heroes, went to hell, and after obtaining what he sought, began to run towards the upper surface of the earth : upon which *Micllanteuelli* enraged pursued him, but being unable to come up with him, returned to hell. *Xolotl* in his precipitate flight stumbled, and falling broke the bone into unequal pieces. Gathering them up again, he continued his course till he arrived at the place where his brothers awaited him ; when they put the fragments into a vessel, and sprinkled them with their blood which they drew from different parts of their bodies. Upon the fourth day they beheld a boy, and continuing to sprinkle with blood for three days more, a girl was likewise formed. They were both consigned to the care of *Xolotl* to be brought up, who fed them with the milk of the thistle. In that way, they believed the recovery of mankind was effected at that time. Thence took its rise, as they affirmed, the practice of drawing blood from different parts of the body, which as we shall see was so common among these nations : and they believed the differences in the stature of men to have been occasioned by the inequality of the pieces of the bone.

*Cibuacobuatl* (woman serpent) called likewise *Quilaztli*. This they believed to have been the first woman that had children in the world ; and she had always twins. She was esteemed a great goddess, and they said that she would frequently shew herself, carrying a child in a cradle upon her back.

SECT. III.  
Deification  
of the sun  
and moon.

*Tonatrici* and *Mextli*, names of the sun and moon, both deified by these nations. They said, that after the recovery and multiplication of mankind, each of the above mentioned heroes or demigods, had among the men, his servants and adherents : and that there being no sun, the one that had been, having come to an end, the heroes assembled in *Tontibucan* around a great fire, and said to the men that the first

first of them that should throw himself into the fire would have the glory to become a sun. Forthwith one of the men, more intrepid than the rest, called *Nanahuaztin*, threw himself into the flames, and descended to hell. In the interval while they all remained expecting the event, the heroes made wagers with the quails, locusts, and other animals, about the place of the sky where the sun would first appear; and the animals being mistaken in their conjectures were immediately sacrificed. At length the sun arose in that quarter which from that time forward has been called the *Levant*; but he had scarcely risen above the horizon when he stopped; which the heroes perceiving, sent to desire him to continue his course. The sun replied, that he would not, until he should see them all put to death. The heroes were no less enraged than terrified by that answer: upon which one of them named *Citli*, taking his bow and three arrows, shot one at the sun; but the sun saved himself by stooping. *Citli* aimed two other arrows, but in vain. The sun enraged turned back the last arrow, and fixed it in the forehead of *Citli*, who instantly expired. The rest intimidated by the fate of their brother, and unable to cope with the sun, resolved to die by the hands of *Xolotl*, who after killing all his brothers, put an end to his own life. The heroes before they died left their cloaths to their servants; and since the conquest of these countries by the Spaniards, certain ancient garments have been found, which were preserved by the Indians with extraordinary veneration, under a belief that they had them by inheritance from those ancient heroes. The men were affected with great melancholy upon losing their masters; but *Texcatlipoca* commanded one of them to go to the house of the sun, and from thence to bring music to celebrate his festival: he told him that for his journey which was to be by sea, he would prepare a bridge of whales and tortoises, and desired him to sing always as he went, a song which he gave him. This the Mexicans said, was the origin of the music and dancing with which they celebrated the festivals of their gods. They ascribed the daily sacrifice which they made of quails to the sun, to that which the heroes made of those birds; and the barbarous sacrifices of human victims, so common afterwards in these countries, they ascribed to the example of *Xolotl* with his brethren.

They

## BOOK VI.

They told a similar fable of the origin of the moon. *Texcociztecal*, another of those men who assembled in *Teotihuacan*, following the example of *Nanahuatzin*, threw himself into the fire: but the flames being somewhat less fierce, he turned out less bright, and was transformed into the moon. To these two deities they consecrated those two famous temples erected in the plain of *Teotihuacan*, of which we shall give an account in another place.

SECT. IV.  
The god of  
air.

*Quetzalcoatl*. (Feathered serpent.) This was among the Mexicans, and all the other nations of *Anahuac*, the god of the air. He was said to have once been high-priest of *Tula*. They figured him tall, big, and of a fair complexion, with an open forehead, large eyes, long black hair, and a thick beard. From a love of decency, he wore always a long robe; he was so rich that he had palaces of silver and precious stones; he was thought to possess the greatest industry, and to have invented the art of melting metals and cutting gems. He was supposed to have had the most profound wisdom, which he displayed in the laws which he left to mankind; and above all to have had the most rigid and exemplary manners. Whenever he intended to promulgate a law in his kingdom, he ordered a crier to the top of the mountain *Tzatzitepec* (the hill of shouting) near the city of *Tula*, whose voice was heard at the distance of three hundred miles. In his time, the corn grew so strong that a single ear was a load for a man: gourds were as long as a man's body: it was unnecessary to dye cotton, for it grew naturally of all colours: and all other fruits and seeds were in the same abundance and of extraordinary size. Then too there was an incredible number of beautiful and sweet singing birds. All his subjects were rich, and to sum up all in one word, the Mexicans imagined as much happiness under the priesthood of *Quetzalcoatl*, as the Greeks did under the reign of Saturn, whom this Mexican god likewise resembled in the exile which he suffered. Amidst all this prosperity, *Texcatlipoca*, I know not for what reason, wishing to drive him from that country, appeared to him in the form of an old man, and told him that it was the will of the gods that he should be taken to the kingdom of *Tlapalla*. At the same time he offered him a beverage, which *Quetzalcoatl* readily accepted, in hopes of obtaining that immortality after which he aspired. He had no sooner drank it than he felt him-  
self



self so strongly inclined to go to *Tlapalla*, that he set out immediately, accompanied by many of his subjects, who, on the way, entertained him with music. Near the city of *Quaubtitlan* he felled a tree with stones, which remained fixed in the trunk; and near *Tlalnepantla* he laid his hand upon a stone and left an impression, which the Mexicans shewed the Spaniards after the conquest. Upon his arrival at *Cholula*, the citizens detained him, and made him take upon him the government of their city. Besides the decency and sweetness of his manners, the aversion he shewed to all kinds of cruelty, insomuch that he could not bear to hear the very mention of war, added much to the affection entertained for him by the inhabitants of Cholula. To him they said they owed their knowledge of melting metals, their laws by which they were ever afterwards governed, the rites and ceremonies of their religion, and even, as some affirmed, the arrangement of their seasons and calendar.

After being twenty years in *Cholula*, he resolved to pursue his journey to the imaginary kingdom of *Tlapalla*, carrying along with him four noble and virtuous youths. In the maritime province of *Coatzacoalco*, he dismissed them, and desired them to assure the *Cholulans* that he would return to comfort and direct them. The *Cholulans* out of respect to their beloved *Quetzalcoatl*, put the reins of government into the hands of those young men. Some people said that he suddenly disappeared, others that he died upon that coast; but, however it might be, *Quetzalcoatl* was consecrated as a god by the *Toltecas* of *Cholulan*, and made chief guardian of their city, in the center of which, in honour of him, they raised a great eminence and built a sanctuary upon it. Another eminence with a temple, was afterwards erected to him in *Tula*. From Cholula his worship was propagated over all that country, where he was adored as the god of the air. He had temples in Mexico, and elsewhere; and some nations, even enemies of the *Cholulans*, had, in the city of Cholula, temples and priests dedicated to his worship; and people came from all countries thither, to pay their devotions and to fulfil their vows. The *Cholulans* preserved with the highest veneration some small green stones, very well cut, which they said had belonged to him. The people of Yucatan boasted that their nobles were descended from him:

## BOOK IV.

Barren women offered up their prayers to him in order to become fruitful. His festivals were great and extraordinary, especially in Cholula, in the *Teoxihuitl*, or divine year; and were preceded by a severe fast of eighty days, and by dreadful austerities practised by the priests consecrated to his worship. Quetzalcoatl, they said, cleared the way for the god of water; because in these countries rain is generally preceded by wind.

Dr. Siguenza imagined that the *Quetzalcoatl*, deified by those people, was no other than the apostle St. Thomas, who announced to them the Gospel. He supported that opinion with great learning, in a work (*b*), which, with many other of his inestimable writings, has been unfortunately lost by the neglect of his heirs. In that work he instituted a comparison betwixt the names of *Didymos* and *Quetzalcoatl* (*i*), their dress, their doctrine, and their prophecies; and examined the places through which they went, the traces which they left, and the miracles which their respective disciples related. As we have never seen the manuscript above mentioned, we shall avoid criticising an opinion to which we cannot subscribe, notwithstanding the respect which we bear for the great genius and extensive learning of the author.

Some Mexican writers are persuaded that the Gospel had been preached in America some centuries before the arrival of the Spaniards. The grounds of that opinion are some crosses (*k*) which have been found

(*b*) This work of Siguenza is mentioned by Betancourt, in his *Mexican Theatre*; and by Dr. Eguiera, in his *Mexican Bibliotheca*.

(*i*) Betancourt observes, when he is comparing together the names of *Didymos* and *Quetzalcoatl*, that the latter is composed of *Coatl* a twin, and *Quetzalli* a gem; and that it signifies a Precious Twin. But Torquemada, who perfectly understood the Mexican language, and had those names interpreted to him by the ancient people, says that *Quetzalcoatl* means, serpent furnished with feathers. In fact, *Coatl* does perfectly signify *serpent*, and *Quetzalli*, *green-feather*, and have been applied to *twin* and *gem*, only metaphorically.

(*k*) The crosses the most celebrated are those of Yucatan, of Mizteca, Queretaro, Tepique, and Tianquiztepec. Those of Yucatan are mentioned by Father Cogolludo, a Franciscan, in his *History*, book ii. chap 12. The cross of Mizteca is taken notice of by Boturini in his work, and in the chronicle of Father Burgoa, a Dominican. There is an account of the cross of Queretaro, written by a Franciscan of the college of *Propaganda* in that city; and of that of Tepique by the learned Jesuit Sigismund Tarabal, whose manuscripts are preserved in the Jesuit college of Guadalajara. That of Tianquiztepec was discovered by Boturini, and is mentioned in his work. The crosses of Yucatan were worshipped by the Yucatanese, in obedience, as they said, to the instructions of their great prophet *Chilam-Cambal*, who desired that when a certain race of men with beards should arrive in that country from the East, and should

found at different times, which seem to have been made before the arrival of the Spaniards: the fast of forty days observed by the people of the new world (*l*), the tradition of the future arrival of a strange people, with beards, and the prints of human feet impressed upon some stones, which are supposed to be the footsteps of the apostle St. Thomas (*n*). We never could reconcile ourselves to this opinion; but the examination of such monuments and remains, would require a work of a very different kind from that which we have undertaken.

*Tlaloc*, otherwise *Tlalocateuēlli* (master of paradise), was the god of water. They called him fertilizer of the earth, and protector of their temporal goods. They believed he resided upon the highest mountains, where the clouds are generally formed, such as those of *Tlaloc*, *Tlafcala*, and *Toluca*; whither they often went to implore his protection.

The native historians relate, that the *Acolhuas* having arrived in that country in the time of *Xolotl*, the first Chechemecan king, found at the top of the mountain of *Tlaloc*, an image of that god, made of a white and very light stone, in the shape of a man sitting upon a square stone, with a vessel before him, in which was some elastic gum, and a variety of seeds. This was their yearly offering, by way of rendering up their thanks after having had a favourable harvest. That image was reckoned the oldest in that country; for it had been placed upon that hill by the ancient *Toltecas*, and remained till the end of the XVth or beginning of the XVIth century, when *Nezahualpilli*, king of *Acolhuacan*, in order to gain the favour of his subjects, carried it away, and placed another in its stead, of a very hard black stone. The new image, however, being defaced by lightning, and the priests declaring it to be a punishment from heaven, the ancient statue was restored, and there

SECT. V.  
The gods of  
mountains,  
water, fire,  
earth, night,  
and hell.

should be seen to adore that sign, they should embrace the doctrine of those strangers. We shall have an opportunity of speaking more particularly concerning these monuments, in the *Ecclesiastical History of Mexico*, if Heaven vouchsafe to favour our design.

(*l*) The fast of forty days proves nothing, as those nations likewise observed fasts of three, four, five, twenty, eighty, a hundred and sixty days, and even of four years; nor was that of forty days, by any means the most common.

(*n*) Not only the marks of human feet have been found printed or rather cut out in stones, but those likewise of animals have been found, without our being able to form any conjecture of the purpose had in view by those who have taken the trouble to cut them.



BOOK VI. continued to be preserved and worshipped, until the promulgation of the Gospel, when it was thrown down and broken by the order of the first bishop of Mexico.

The ancients also believed that in all the high mountains there resided other gods, subaltern to Tlaloc. They all went under the same name, and were revered, not only as gods of water, but also as the gods of mountains. The image of *Tlaloc* was painted blue and green, to express the different colours that are observed in water. He held in his hand a rod of gold, of an undulated and pointed form, by which they intended to denote the lightning. He had a temple in Mexico, within the inclosure of the greater temple, and the Mexicans celebrated several festivals in honour to him every year.

Chalchiuhcueje, otherwise *Chalchibuitlicue*, the goddess of water, and companion of Tlaloc. She was known by some other very expressive names (*o*), which either signify the effects which water produces, or the different appearances and colours which it assumes in motion. The Tlascalans called her *Matlalcueje*, that is, clothed in a green robe; and they gave the same name to the highest mountain of Tlascala, on whose summit are formed those stormy clouds which generally burst over the city of Angelopoli. To that summit the Tlascalans ascended to perform their sacrifices, and offer up their prayers. This is the very same goddess of water, to which Torquemada gives the name of *Xochiquetzal*, and the Cav. Boturini that of *Macuilxochiquetzalli*.

Xiuhteuctli (master of the year and of the grains), was among these nations the god of fire, to whom they likewise gave the name of *Ixcouzaubqui*, which expresses the colour of fire. This god was greatly revered in the Mexican empire. At their dinner they made an offering to him of the first morsel of their food, and the first draught of their beverage, by throwing both into the fire; and burned incense to him at certain times of the day. In honour of him they held two fixed festivals of the most solemn kind, one in the tenth, and another in the eighteenth month; and one moveable feast at which they created the

(\*) *Apozonallotl* and *Acuecuejotl* express the swelling and fluctuation of water: *Atlacamani*, storms excited on it: *Ahuic* and *Aiaub*, its motions sometimes to one side and sometimes to another: *Xixiquipilibui*, the alternate rising and falling of the waves, &c.

usual magistrates, and renewed the ceremony of the investiture of the fiefs of the kingdom. He had a temple in Mexico, and some other palaces.

Centeotl, goddess of the earth and of corn, called likewise, *Tona-cajobua* (*p*), that is, she who supports us. She had five temples in Mexico, and three festivals were held on her account, in the third, eighth, and eleventh months: she was particularly revered and honoured by the Totonacas, who esteemed her to be their chief protectress; and erected to her, upon the top of a high mountain, a temple, where she was served by a great number of priests solely devoted to her worship, and adored by the whole nation. They had an extraordinary love for her, being persuaded that she did not require human victims, but was contented with the sacrifice of doves, quails, leverets, and such animals, which they offered up to her in great numbers. They expected she was at last to deliver them from the cruel slavery they were under to the other gods, who constrained them to sacrifice so many human creatures. The Mexicans entertained very different sentiments of her shedding a great deal of human blood at her festivals. In the above mentioned temple of the Totonacas, was one of the most renowned oracles of the country.

Mictlanteuctli, the god of hell, and *Mictlancibuatl* his female companion, were much honoured by the Mexicans. These deities were imagined to dwell in a place of great darkness in the bowels of the earth. They had a temple in Mexico, in which they held a festival in the eighteenth month. Sacrifices and offerings were made to them by night, and the chief minister of their worship was a priest called *Tlil-lantlenamacac*, who was always died of a black colour, in order to perform the functions of his priesthood.

Joalteuctli, the god of night, who seems to us to have been the same with *Meztli* or the moon. Some think him the same with *Tonatiuh*, or the sun, while others imagine him to have been quite a distinct deity. They recommended their children to this god, to give them sleep.

(*p*) They gave her likewise the names of *Tzintcotl* (original goddess), *Xilonen*, *Iztacacuecotl* and *Tlatlaubquicentcotl*, changing her name according to the different states of the grain in the progress of its growth.

## BOOK VI.

Joalticiti (nightly physician), goddesses of cradles; to whom they likewise recommended their children to be taken care of, particularly in the night time.

SECT. VI.  
The gods  
of war.

Huitzilopochtli, or Mexitli, was the god of war; the deity the most honoured by the Mexicans, and their chief protector (*q*). Of this god some said he was a pure spirit, others that he was born of a woman, but without the assistance of a man, and described his birth in the following manner. There lived, said they, in Coatepec, a place near to the ancient city of Tula, a woman called *Coatlicue*, mother of the *Ceutzonhuiznabuis*, who was extremely devoted to the worship of the gods. One day as she was employed, according to her usual custom, in walking in the temple, she beheld descending in the air, a ball made of various feathers. She seized it and kept it in her bosom, intending afterwards to employ the feathers in decoration of the altar; but when she wanted it after her walk was at an end, she could not find it, at which she was extremely surprised, and her wonder was very greatly increased when she began to perceive from that moment that she was pregnant. Her pregnancy advanced till it was discovered by her children, who, although they could not themselves suspect their mother's virtue, yet fearing the disgrace she would suffer upon her delivery, determined to prevent it by putting her to death. They could not take their resolution so secretly as to conceal it from their mother, who while she was in deep affliction at the thoughts of dying by the hands of her own children, heard an unexpected voice issue from her womb, saying, "Be not afraid mother, for I shall save you with the greatest honour to yourself, and glory to me." Her hard-hearted sons, guided and encouraged by their sister *Cojoxaubqui*, who had been the most keenly bent upon the deed, were now just upon the point of executing their purpose, when Huitzilopochtli was born, with a shield in his

(*q*) *Huitzilopochtli* is a compound of two words, viz. *Huitzilin*, the humming bird, and *Opochtli*, left. It was so called from his image having the feathers of the little bird upon its left foot. Boturini knowing little of the Mexican language, derives the name from *Huitziton* the leader of the Mexicans in their pilgrimage, and takes this leader and the god to have been the same person. Besides that such an etymology is over-strained, that pretended identity is quite unknown to the Mexicans themselves, who when they began their pilgrimage under the conduct of Huitziton, had long before, from time immemorial, worshipped the god of war: the Spaniards being unable to pronounce the word, called him *Huicbilobos*.



left hand, a spear in his right, and a crest of green feathers on his head ; his left leg adorned with feathers, and his face, arms, and thighs streaked with blue lines. As soon as he came into the world he displayed a twisted pine, and commanded one of his soldiers called *Tochancalqui*, to fell with it *Cojolxauhqui*, as the one who had been the most guilty ; and he himself attacked the rest with so much fury that, in spite of their efforts, their arms, or their intreaties, he killed them all, plundered their houses, and presented the spoils to his mother. Mankind were so terrified by this event, that from that time they called him *Tetzabuitl*, terror, and *Tetzauhteotl*, terrible god.

This was the god who, as they said, becoming the protector of the Mexicans, conducted them for so many years in their pilgrimage, and at length settled them where they afterwards founded the great city of Mexico. There they raised to him that superb temple so much celebrated even by the Spaniards, in which were annually holden three solemn festivals in the fifth, ninth, and fifteenth months ; besides those kept every four years, every thirteen years, and at the beginning of every century. His statue was of gigantic size, in the posture of a man seated on a blue-coloured bench, from the four corners of which issued four huge snakes. His forehead was blue, but his face was covered with a golden mask, while another of the same kind covered the back of his head. Upon his head he carried a beautiful crest, shaped like the beak of a bird ; upon his neck a collar consisting of ten figures of the human heart ; in his right hand, a large, blue, twisted club ; in his left, a shield, on which appeared five balls of feathers disposed in the form of a cross, and from the upper part of the shield rose a golden flag with four arrows, which the Mexicans pretended to have been sent to them from heaven to perform those glorious actions which we have seen in their history. His body was girt with a large golden snake, and adorned with various lesser figures of animals made of gold and precious stones, which ornaments and insignia had each their peculiar meaning. They never deliberated upon making war without imploring the protection of this god, with prayers and sacrifices ; and offered up a greater number of human victims to him than to any other of the gods.

Tlaca-

## BOOK VI.

Tlacahuepancuxcotzin, likewise a god of war, the younger brother and companion of Huitzilopochtli. His image was worshipped along with his brother's, in the chief sanctuary of Mexico; but no where with greater devotion than at the court of Tezcucó.

Painalton (swift or hurried), a god of war, and lieutenant of Huitzilopochtli. As they invoked the latter in those wars which were undertaken after serious deliberation, so they called upon Painalton upon sudden occasions, such as an unexpected attack of the enemy. Then the priests ran about the city with the image of the god, which was worshipped together with those of the other gods of war, calling upon him with loud cries, and making sacrifices to him of quails, and other animals. All the men of war were then obliged to run to arms.

SECT. VII.  
The gods of  
commerce,  
hunting, fish-  
ing, &c.

Jacateuctli (the lord who guides), the god of commerce (*r*), for whom the merchants celebrated two great annual festivals in his temple at Mexico; one in the ninth, and another in the seventeenth month, with many sacrifices of human victims, and superb repasts.

Mixcoatli, the goddess of hunting, and the principal deity of the Otomies, who, living among the mountains, were for the most part hunters. The Matlatzincas likewise worshipped her with peculiar reverence. She had two temples in Mexico, and in one of them called *Teotlalpan*, was held a great festival with numerous sacrifices of the wild animals, in the fourteenth month.

Opochtli, the god of fishing. He was believed to be the inventor of nets and other instruments of fishing, whence he was particularly revered by fishermen, as their protector. In Cuitlahuac, a city upon a little island in the lake of Chalco, there was a god of fishing highly honoured, named *Amimitl*, who probably differed from Opochtli no otherwise than in name.

Huixtocihuatl, the goddess of salt, was worshipped by the Mexicans upon account of the salt works which they had at a little distance from the capital. A feast was celebrated to her in the seventh month.

Tzapotlatenan, the goddess of physic. She was supposed to have been the inventress of the oil called *Oxitl*, and other most useful drugs. She was yearly honoured with the sacrifice of human victims, and with particular hymns composed in her praise.

(*r*) Jacateuctli was also called *Xiacateuctli* and *Jacacolinhuqui*.

Texcatzoncatl, the god of wine; known likewise by other names (*s*), from the effects produced by wine. He had a temple in Mexico, in which four hundred priests were consecrated to his worship, and where for him, and the other gods his companions, a yearly feast was held in the thirteenth month.

Ixtlilton (the black-faced) seems to have been a god of physic; for they used to bring sick children to his temple, to be cured. Their fathers brought them, and dictating to them the prayers with which they were to ask for health, made them dance before the image; and then gave them a water to drink which had been blessed by the priests consecrated to the god.

Coatlucue, or *Coatlantona*, was the goddess of flowers. She had a temple in Mexico called *Jopico*, where a festival was celebrated to her by the *Xochimanqui*, or composers of nosegays of flowers, in the third month which falls in spring. They presented her among other things with beautiful braids of flowers. We do not know whether this goddess was the same with the mother of Huitzilopochtli.

Tlazolteotl was the god whom the Mexicans invoked to obtain pardon of their sins, and to be freed from the disgrace to which the guilty are exposed. The principal devotees of this false deity were lustful men, who courted his protection with sacrifices and with offerings (*t*).

Xipe is the name given by historians to the god of the goldsmiths, (*u*) who was greatly revered among the Mexicans. They were persuaded that all those who neglected his worship, would be punished with diseases, particularly with the itch, boils, and severe pains in the eyes and the head. They took care, therefore, to distinguish themselves by the cruelty of their sacrifices, which were made at a festival usually celebrated in the second month.

Nappateuctli (four times lord) was the god of the mat-weavers. He was said to be a benign god, easy to pardon injuries, and generous

(*s*) Such as *Tequehmecaniani* the strangler, and *Teatlabuiani* the drowner.

(*t*) Boturini asserts, that Tlazolteotl was the immodest and Hebeian goddess; and *Macuil-xochiquetzalli*, the Venus *Pronuba*. But the Mexicans never attributed to their gods those shameful irregularities, which the Greeks and Romans imputed to theirs.

(*u*) *Xipe* has no meaning; so that I imagine the Spanish writers not knowing the Mexican name of this god, applied to him the two first syllables of the name of his feast *Xipehualitzli*.



BOOK VI. towards all. He had two temples in Mexico, where a festival was held in the thirteenth month.

Omacatl was the god of mirth. Upon occasion of any public rejoicing, or any great feast of the Mexican lords, they imagined they would certainly meet with some disaster if they neglected to bring the image of this god from the temple and set it up at the feast.

Tonantzin (our mother) I take to be the same with the goddess Centeotl, whom we have mentioned before. She had a temple upon a mountain, about three miles from Mexico towards the north, whither the nations came in crowds to worship her, with a wonderful number of sacrifices. At the foot of that hill is now the most famous sanctuary in the new world, dedicated to the true God; where people from the most remote countries assemble to worship the celebrated and truly miraculous image of the most Holy Lady of *Guadaloupe*; thus converting a place of abomination into a mercy-seat, where religion has distributed its favours, for the benefit of those nations, in the place that has been stained with the blood of so many of their ancestors.

Teteoinan was the mother of the gods, which the word itself signifies. As the Mexicans called themselves the children of the gods, they gave to this goddess the name likewise of *Tocitzin*, that is, our grand-mother. I have already spoken of the origin and deification of this pretended mother of the gods in the second book, where I gave an account of the tragical death of the princess of Colhuacan. This goddess had a temple in Mexico, where a most solemn feast was held in the eleventh month. She was particularly adored by the Tlascalans; and midwives worshipped her as their protectress. Almost all the Spanish writers confound her with Tonantzin, but they are certainly different.

Ilamateuctli, for whom the Mexicans had a feast upon the third day of the seventeenth month, seems to have been the goddess of age. Her name means nothing more than Old Lady.

Tepitoton (little ones), was the name given by the Mexicans to their penates, or household gods, and the images that represented them. Of these little images, the kings and great lords had always six in their houses, the nobles four, and the lower people two. They were to be seen every where in the public streets.

Besides

Besides these gods which were the most considerable, and some others which we omit, that we may not tire the reader, there were two hundred and sixty, to which as many days were consecrated. Those days take their names from them, and are those we find in the first thirteen months of their calendar.

The Mexican gods were generally the same with those of the other nations of Anahuac; differing only in their greater or less celebrity, in some of their rites, and sometimes in their names. The god the most celebrated in Mexico was *Huitzilopochtli*; in Cholula and Huexotzinco, *Quetzalcoatl*; among the Totonacas, *Centeotl*; and among the Otomies, *Mixcoatl*. The Tlascalans, although the constant enemies of the Mexicans, adored the same gods; and even their most favoured deity was the very Huitzilopochtli of the Mexicans, but under the name of *Camaxtle*. The people of Tezcuco, as allies, friends, and neighbours, conformed almost entirely with the Mexicans.

The number of the images by which those false gods were represented, and worshipped in the temples, the houses, the streets, and the woods, were infinite. Zumarraga, first bishop of Mexico, affirms, that the Franciscans had, in the course of eight years, broken more than twenty thousand idols; but that number is trifling compared to those of the capital only. They were generally made of clay, and certain kinds of stone and wood; but sometimes too of gold and other metals: and there were some of gems. In a high mountain of Achiauhtla, in Mizteca, Benedict Fernandez, a celebrated Dominican missionary, found a little idol called by the Miztecas the *heart of the people*. It was a very precious emerald, four inches long and two inches broad, upon which was engraved the figure of a bird, and round it that of a little snake. The Spaniards offered fifteen hundred sequins for it; but the zealous missionary before all the people, and with great solemnity reduced it to powder. The most extraordinary idol of the Mexicans was that of Huitzilopochtli, which was made of certain seeds pasted together with human blood. Almost all their idols were coarse and hideous from the fantastical parts of which they were composed in order to represent their attributes and employments.

SECT. VIII.  
Their idols  
and the man-  
ner of wor-  
shipping their  
gods.

The divinity of those false gods were acknowledged by prayers, kneeling and prostrations, with vows, fasts, and other austerities,

## BOOK VI.

with sacrifices and offerings, and various rites, some common to other nations, and others peculiar to the Mexican religion alone. They prayed generally upon their knees, with their faces turned towards the east, and therefore made their sanctuaries with the door to the west. They made vows for their children as well as for themselves, and frequently dedicated them to the service of their gods in some temple or monastery. Those who happened to be in danger from stumbling or slipping, upon a journey, made vows to visit the temple of the god Omacatl, and to offer up incense and paper. They made frequent use of the name of God to confirm the truth; and their oaths were in this form; *Cuix à mo nechitta in Tototzin?* Does not our god see me now? Then naming the principal god, or any other they particularly revered, they kissed their hand, after having touched the earth with it. Great faith was put in oaths of this kind by way of purgation when any one was accused of a crime; for they thought no man could be so rash as to venture to abuse the name of God, at the evident risk of being most severely punished by heaven.

SECT. IX.  
Their transformations.

Metamorphoses, or transformations, were not wanting to the mythology of the Mexicans. Among others they related one of a man named *Jappan*, who having undertaken to do penance upon a mountain, yielded to the temptations of a woman, and fell into the sin of adultery. He was immediately beheaded by *Jaotl*, to whom the gods had given the charge of watching over his conduct, and by the gods themselves was transformed into a black scorpion. *Jaotl*, not satisfied with that punishment, executed it likewise upon *Tlabuitzin*, the wife of *Jappan*, who was transformed into a white scorpion, while *Jaotl* himself, for having exceeded the bounds of his commission, was turned into a locust. They said it was from the shame of that crime that scorpions shun the light, and hide themselves under stones.

SECT. X.  
The greater temple of Mexico.

The Mexicans, and other nations of Anahuac, like all civilized nations, had temples or places allotted for the purposes of religion, where the people assembled to worship their gods, and implore their protection. They called the temple *Tecalli*, that is, the house of god, and *Teopan*, the place of God; which names they applied with greater propriety to the temples erected in honour of the true God, after they embraced Christianity.

The



The city and kingdom of Mexico began with the building of the sanctuary of Huitzilopochtli or *Mexitli*, whence it has derived its name. That edifice was then a miserable hut. Itzcoatl, the first king and conqueror of that nation, after the taking of Azcapozalco, enlarged it. Montezuma I. his successor, built a new temple, which had some shew of magnificence; and, at length Ahuitzotl raised and dedicated that immense temple which his predecessor Tizoc had planned. This was the temple which the Spaniards celebrated so highly after they had destroyed it. It were to be wished that their accuracy in describing its dimensions had been but equal to their zeal in destroying that superb monument of superstition: but such is the variety of their accounts, that, after having laboured to reconcile them, I have found it impossible to ascertain its proportions; nor should I ever have been able to form an idea of the architecture of that temple without the figure presented to us by the Anonymous Conqueror; a copy of which I have here subjoined, although I have paid less regard in it to his delineation than his description. I shall mention therefore all that I think may be depended upon, after a very tedious comparison of the descriptions given by four eye-witnesses, and neglect what I have been unable to extricate from the confusion of different authors (x).

(x) The four eye-witnesses whose descriptions we have connected together are the conqueror Cortes, Bernal Diaz, the Anonymous Conqueror, and Sahagun. The three first lived for several months in the palace of king Axajacatl, near the temple, and therefore saw it every day. Sahagun, although he never saw it entire, yet saw some part of it, and could discover what ground it had occupied. Gomara, who did not himself see the temple, nor ever was in Mexico, received the different accounts of it from the conquerors themselves who saw it. Acosta, whose description has been copied by Herrera and Solis, instead of the great temple describes one perfectly different. This author, although in other respects deserving of credit, was not in Mexico till sixty years after the conquest, when there were no remains of the temple.

In a Dutch edition of Solis, was given an incorrect print of the great temple, which was afterwards given by the authors of the *General History of Voyages*, and is still to be met with in an edition of the conqueror Cortes's Letters, published at Mexico in 1701: but the carelessness of the editors of that edition will appear from comparing the print in it with Cortes's own description. He says, in his first letter, though somewhat hyperbolically, that the great temple of Mexico was higher than the tower of the cathedral church of Seville, while in the print mentioned it scarcely appears to be seven or eight perches or toises. Cortes declares that five hundred Mexican nobles fortified themselves in the upper area, whereas that space as represented in the print could not contain more than seventy or eighty men. Lastly, omitting many other contradictions, Cortes says, that the temple consisted of three or four bodies, and that each body had, as he describes it, its corridors or balconies; yet in the print it is represented as consisting of one body only, without any of those corridors at all.

This

## BOOK VI.

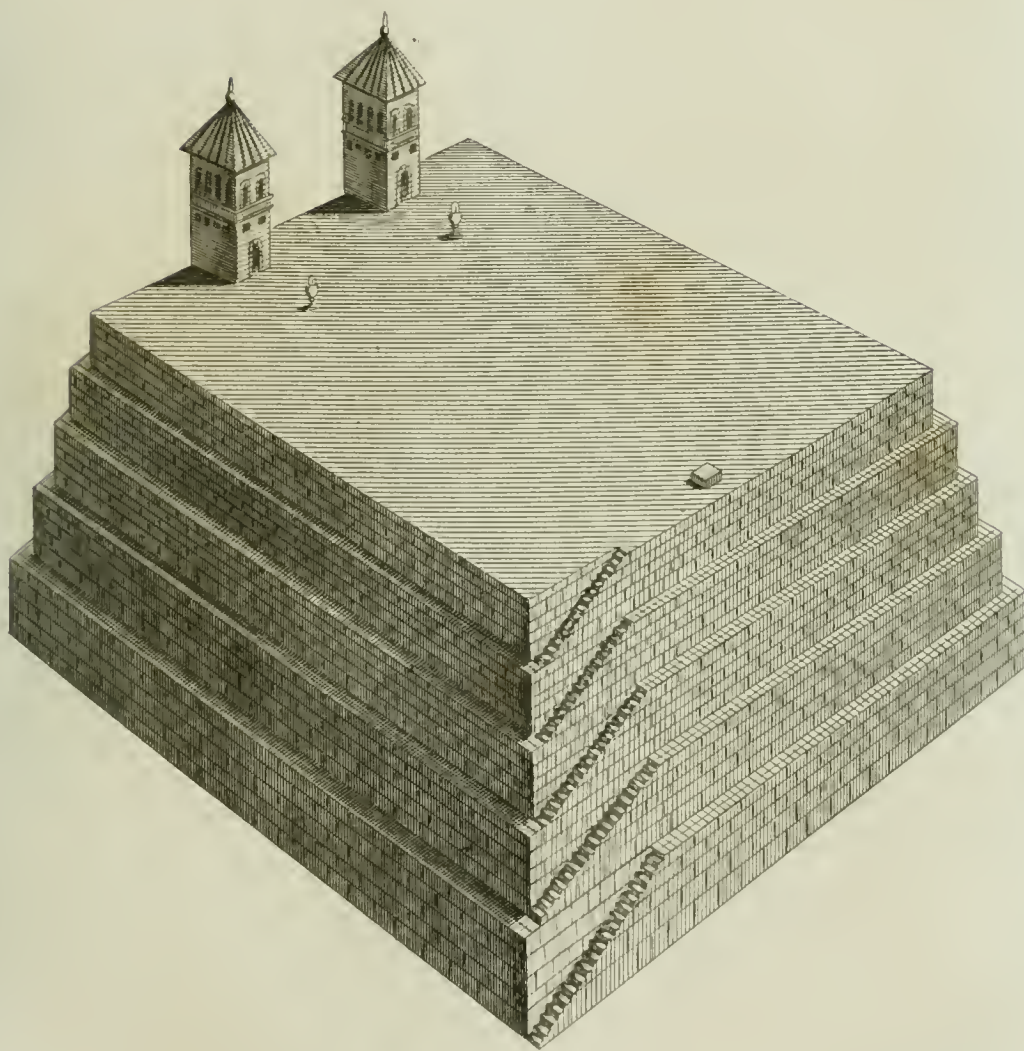
This great temple occupied the centre of the city, and, together with the other temples and buildings annexed to it, comprehended all that space upon which the great cathedral church now stands, part of the greater market-place, and part likewise of the streets and buildings around. Within the inclosure of the wall which encompassed it in a square form, the conqueror Cortes affirms that a town of five hundred houses might have stood (*y*). The wall, built of stone and lime, was very thick, eight feet high, crowned with battlements, in the form of niches, and ornamented with many stone figures in the shape of serpents, whence it obtained the name of *Coatepantli*, or the wall of serpents. It had four gates to the four cardinal points: the eastern gate looked to a broad street which led to the lake of Tezcuco: the rest corresponded to the three principal streets of the city, the broadest and the straightest, which formed a continuation with those built upon the lake that led to Iztapalapan, to Tacuba, and to Tepejacac. Over each of the four gates was an arsenal filled with a vast quantity of offensive and defensive weapons, where the troops went when it was necessary, to be supplied with arms. The space within the walls was curiously paved with such smooth and polished stones that the horses of the Spaniards could not move upon them without slipping and tumbling down. In the middle was raised an immense solid building of greater length than breadth (*z*), covered with square equal pieces of pavement. The building consisted of five bodies nearly equal in height, but differing in length and breadth; the highest being narrowest. The first body, or basis of the building, was more than fifty perches long from east to west, and about forty-three in breadth, from north to south (*a*). The second

(*y*) The Anonymous Conqueror says, that what was within the wall was like a city. Gomara affirms, that the wall was a very long bowshot in length upon every side. Torquemada, although agreeing with Gomara in book viii. chap. 2. says afterwards in ch. xix. that the circumference of the wall was above three thousand paces, which is plainly a mistake. Dr. Hernandez, in his prolix description of the temple, preserved in manuscript in the library of the Escurial, and which Father Nieremberg has made use of in his Natural History, allows to the wall, of every side, two hundred Toledan cubits, which is about eighty-six perches.

(*z*) Sahagun makes the temple perfectly square, but the Anonymous Conqueror, both in the description and in the figure which he has left us, represents it to have been of greater length than breadth, like those of Teotihuacan which served as models for all the rest.

(*a*) Sahagun gives to the first body upon every side three hundred and sixty Toledan feet, and that is the measure of its length. Gomara gives it fifty *bravas*, which is the measure of its breadth. Three hundred and sixty Toledan feet make three hundred and eight Parisian, or  
a lit-

*The greater Temple of Mexico.*







second body was about a perch less in length and breadth than the first; the third as much less than the second; and the rest in proportion, so that upon each body there remained a free space or plain which would allow three, or even four men abreast to walk round the next body.

The stairs, which were upon the south-side, were made of large well formed stones, and consisted of a hundred and fourteen steps, each a foot high. They were not, however, one single stair-case continued all the way, as they have been represented by the authors of the General History of Travels, and the Publishers of Cortes's Letters, in Mexico; but were divided into as many separate stair-cases as there were bodies of the building in the manner shewn in our plate; so that after getting to the top of the first stair-case, one could not mount the second, without going along the first plain round the second; nor the third, without going along the second plain, and so of the rest. This will be better understood by consulting the plate, which is copied from that of the Anonymous Conqueror (*b*), but corrected as to the dimensions, from that author's own description, and other historians.

Upon the fifth body was a plain, which we shall call the upper area, which was about forty three perches long (*c*), and thirty-four broad, and was as well paved as the great area below. At the eastern extremity of this plain were raised two towers to the height of fifty-six feet, or nearly nine perches. Each was divided into three bodies, of which the lower was of stone and lime, and the other two of wood very well wrought and painted. The inferior body or basis of each were properly the sanctuaries, where, upon an altar of stone, five feet high, were placed their tutelary idols. One of these two sanctuaries was conse-

a little more than fifty perches. Fifty *brazas*, or *elstados* make two hundred and fifty-seven Parisian feet, or about forty-two perches.

(*b*) A copy of the drawing of the temple made by the Anonymous Conqueror, is to be found in the collection of Jo. Ramusio; and another in Father Kircher's work, entitled, *Oedipus Aegyptiacus*.

(*c*) Sahagun, whose measures have been adopted by Torquemada, allows no more than seventy Toledan feet square, which is about ten perches, to the upper area; but it is impossible that five hundred Mexican nobles, as Cortes asserts, could have stood to fight against the Spaniards, in such a narrow space; especially if we believe Bernard Diaz, who says, that four thousand Mexicans fortified themselves in that temple, and that numbers had got up before the nobles ascended.

crated

## BOOK IV.

crated to Huitzilopochtli, and the gods of war; and the other to Tezcatlipoca. The other bodies were destined to the keeping of some things belonging to the worship, and the ashes of some kings and lords who, through particular devotion, desired that to be done. The doors of both sanctuaries were towards the west, and both the towers terminated in a very beautiful wooden cupola. There is no author who has described the internal disposition and ornaments of the sanctuaries; nor indeed the size of the towers; so that what is represented in our plate is only delineated from conjecture. I believe, however, we may venture to say without danger of mistake, that the height of the building without the towers, was not less than nineteen perches, and with the towers exceeded twenty-eight. From that height one might see the lake, the cities around, and a great part of the valley; and it has been affirmed by eye-witnesses to be the finest prospect in the world.

In the upper area was the altar for the common sacrifices, and in the lower that for the gladiatorial. Before the two sanctuaries were two stone stoves of the height of a man, and of the shape of our holy pyx, in which they preserved a constant fire, night and day, with the utmost care; fearing that if ever it went out, they should suffer the most dreadful punishment from heaven. In the other temples and religious buildings comprised within the inclosure of the great wall, there were six hundred stoves, of the same size and figure, which in the night time, when they used all to be burning, presented a very pleasing sight.

SECT. XI.  
Buildings annexed to the great temple.

In the space betwixt the wall and the great temple, there were, besides a place for their religious dances, upwards of forty lesser temples, consecrated to the other gods, several colleges of priests, some seminaries for youth and children of both sexes, and many other buildings scattered about, of which, for their singularity, it will be necessary to give some account.

The most remarkable were the temples of Tezcatlipoca, Tlaloc, and Quetzalcoatl. They all resembled one another in form, but were of different sizes, and all fronted the great temple; while the other temples without this area were built with the front towards the west. The temple of Quetzalcoatl alone differed from the rest in form; it being round, the others all quadrangular. The door of  
this



this sanctuary was the mouth of an enormous serpent of stone, armed with fangs. Some Spaniards tempted by curiosity to go into that diabolical temple, afterwards confessed the horror which they felt upon entering it. Among other temples there was one called *Ilhuicatlitan*, dedicated to the planet Venus, in which was a great pillar with the figure of that star painted or engraved upon it; near which, at the time of her appearance, they sacrificed prisoners.

The colleges of priests, and the seminaries were various; but we particularly know only of five colleges or monasteries of priests, and three seminaries of youth, although there must certainly have been more, from the prodigious number of persons that were found there consecrated to the worship of the gods.

Among the remarkable buildings within this area, besides the four arsenals over the four gates, there was another near the temple *Tezcalli* (house of mirrors), so called from its walls being covered with mirrors on the inside. There was another small temple called *Tecucalli*, all adorned with shells which had a house annexed to it, into which, at certain times, the king of Mexico retired for the purposes of fasting and prayer. The high-priest had likewise a house of retirement called *Pojaubtlan*, and there were several others for other persons. There was also a great house of entertainment to accommodate strangers of distinction who came upon a devout visit to the temple, or from curiosity to see the grandeurs of the court. There were ponds in which the priests bathed; and fountains, the water of which they drank. In the pond called *Tezcapan*, many bathed in obedience to a particular vow made to the gods. The water of one of the fountains called *Toxpalatl* was esteemed holy: it was drank only at the most solemn feasts, and no person was allowed to taste it at any other time (*d*). There were places allotted to the bringing up of birds for the sacrifices, gardens in which flowers and odoriferous herbs were raised for the decoration of the altars; and even a little wood in which were artificially

(*d*) The fountain *Toxpalatl*, the water of which was excellent, was stopped up, at the time when the Spaniards destroyed the temple; it was opened again in 1582, in the little square of the Marquis (which at present is called *el Empedradillo*), near to the cathedral; but for some reason or other, of which we are ignorant, it was a second time stopped up.

BOOK VI. represented hills, rocks, and precipices, and from which they issued to that general chace which we shall describe in another part of this work.

Particular apartments were destined for the keeping of the idols, the ornaments, and all the furniture of their temples ; and among them were three halls so large, that the Spaniards were astonished upon seeing them. Among the buildings most striking from their singularity, was a great prison like a cage, in which they kept the idols of the conquered nations as if imprisoned. In some other buildings of this kind they preserved the heads of those who had been sacrificed, some of which were nothing but heaps of bones piled upon one another. In others the heads were arranged in regular order upon poles, or fixed against the walls, forming, by the variety of their disposition, a spectacle not less curious than horrid. The greatest of these buildings called *Huitzompan*, although not within the great wall, was but a little way from it, over against the principal gate. This was a prodigious rampart of earth, longer than it was broad, in the form of a half pyramid. In the lowest part it was one hundred and fifty-four feet long. The ascent to the plain upon the top of it was by a stair-case of thirty steps. Upon that plain were erected about four feet asunder, more than seventy very long beams, bored from top to bottom. By these holes, sticks were passed across from one beam to another, and upon each of them a certain number of heads were strung by the temples. Upon the steps also of the stair-case there was a head betwixt every stone ; and at each end of the same edifice was a tower which appeared to have been made only of skulls and lime. As soon as a head began to crumble with age, the priests supplied its place with a fresh one from the bone-heaps in order to preserve the due number and arrangement. The skulls of ordinary victims were stripped of the scalp ; but those of men of rank, and great warriors, they endeavoured to preserve with the skin and beard and hair entire, which served only to render more frightful those trophies of their barbarous superstition. The number of heads preserved in this and such other buildings is so great, that some of the Spanish conquerors took the trouble of reckoning up those  
upon

upon the steps of this building, and upon the files betwixt the beams, and found them amount to one hundred thirty-six thousand (e). They who wish for a more minute detail of the buildings within the wall of the great temple, may read the relation of Sahagun in Torquemada, and the description of the seventy-eight edifices there by Dr. Hernandez, in the Natural History of Nieremberg.

Besides these temples there were others scattered in different quarters of the city. Some authors make the number of temples in that capital (comprehending, as may be imagined, even the smallest) amount to two thousand; and that of the towers to three hundred and sixty, but we do not know that any one ever actually counted them. There can be no doubt, however, that they were very numerous, and among them seven or eight distinguishable for their size; but that of Tlatelolco, consecrated likewise to Huitzilopochtli, rose above them all.

SECT. XII.  
Other temples.

Out of the capital, the most celebrated were those of Tezcuco, Cholula, and Teotihuacan. Bernal Diaz, who had the curiosity to number the steps of their stairs, says, that the temple of Tezcuco had one hundred and seventeen, and that of Cholula one hundred and twenty. We do not know whether that famous temple of Tezcuco was the same with Tezcuztzinco, so celebrated by Valadès in his *Christian Rhetoric*, or the same with that renowned tower of nine bodies, erected by the king Nezahualcojotl, to the Creator of heaven. The great temple of Cholula, like many others of that city, was dedicated to their protector Quetzalcoatl. All the old historians speak with wonder of the number of the temples in Cholula. Cortes wrote to the emperor Charles V. that from the top of one temple he had counted more than four hundred towers of others (f). The lofty pyramid raised by the Toltecas remains to this day, in that place where there was

(e) Andrea de Tapia, an officer belonging to Cortes, and one of them who counted the skulls, gave this information to Gomara the historian, according to his own testimony in cap. lxxxii. of his History of Mexico.

(f) "Certifico a vuestra Alteza que yo contè desder una mezquita quatrocientas y tantas torres en la dicha ciudad (de Cholula) y todas son de mezquitas." Letter to Charles V. Oct. 30, 1520. The anonymous conqueror affirms, that he counted one hundred and ninety towers of the temples and palaces. Bernal Diaz says, that they exceeded a hundred; but it is probable, that the two authors counted those only which were remarkable for their height. Some later authors have said that these towers were as many in number as the days of the year.



BOOK VI. formerly a temple consecrated to that false deity, and now a holy sanctuary of the mother of the true God; but the pyramid from its great antiquity is so covered with earth and bushes, that it seems more like a natural eminence than an edifice. We are ignorant, indeed, of its dimensions, but its circumference in the lower part is not less than half a mile (*g.*) One may ascend to the top by a path made in a spiral direction round the pyramid, and I went up on horseback in 1744. This is that famous hill about which so many fables have been feigned, and which Boturini believed to have been raised by the Toltecas as a place of refuge in the event of another deluge like Noah's.

The famous edifices of Teotihuacan, about three miles south from that place, and more than twenty from Mexico, towards Greco, still subsist: those immense buildings which served as a model for the temples of that country, were two temples consecrated the one to the sun and the other to the moon, represented by two idols of monstrous bulk, made of stone and covered with gold. That of the sun had a great concavity in the breast, and an image of that planet of the purest gold fixed in it. The conquerors possessed themselves of the gold, the idols were broken by order of the first bishop of Mexico, and the fragments remained in that place till the end of the last century, and may, perhaps be there still. The base, or inferior body of the temple of the sun, is twenty-eight perches long, and eighty-six broad, and the height of the whole building is in proportion (*b*). That of the moon is eighty-six perches long in the base, and sixty-three broad. Each of these temples is divided into four bodies, and as many stair-cases, which are arranged in the same manner with those of the great temple of Mexico; but cannot now be traced, partly from their ruinous condition, and partly from the great quantity of earth with which they are every where covered. Round these edifices are scattered several little hills, which are supposed to have been as many lesser temples, dedicated to the other

(*g*) Betancourt says, that the height of the pyramid of Cholula was upwards of forty *estados*, that is, more than two hundred and five Parisian feet; but this author has been too sparing in his measure, as that height unquestionable exceeds five hundred feet.

(*b*) Gemelli measured the length and breadth of those temples, but had no instrument to measure their height. Cav. Boturini measured their height, but when he wrote his work he had not the measure by him, yet he thinks he found the temple of the sun to have been two hundred Castilian cubits high, that is, eighty-six perches.

planets and stars; and from this place being so full of religious buildings, antiquity gave it the name of *Teotihuacan*.

The number of temples throughout the whole Mexican empire was very great. Torquemada thought there might be above forty thousand; but I am persuaded they would far exceed that number, if we should take the lesser ones into the account; for there is not an inhabited place without one temple, nor any place of any extent without a considerable number.

The architecture of the great temples was for the most part the same with that of the great temple of Mexico; but there were many likewise of a different structure. Many consisted of a single body in the form of a pyramid, with a stair-case; others of ordinary bodies, with similar stair-cases, as appears in the subjoined plate, which is copied from one published by Didaco Valadès in his *Christian Rhetoric* (1).

The superstition of those people not contented with such a great number of temples in their cities, villages, and hamlets, erected many altars upon the tops of the hills, in the woods, and in the streets, not only for the purpose of encouraging the idolatrous worship of travellers, but for the celebration of certain sacrifices to the gods of mountains and other rustic deities.

The revenues of the great temple of Mexico, like those of the other temples of the court and the empire, were very large. Each temple had its own lands and possessions, and even its own peasants to cultivate them. Thence was drawn all that was necessary for the maintenance of the priests, together with the wood which was consumed in great quantities in the temples.

The priests that were the stewards of the temples frequently visited their possessions, and those who cultivated them, thought themselves happy in contributing by their labour to the worship of the gods and the support of their ministers. In the kingdom of Acolhuacan, those nine and twenty cities which provided necessaries for the royal palace,

SECT. XIII.  
Revenues of  
the temples.

(1) Didaco Valadès Franciscano, after having been employed many years in the conversion of the Mexicans, came to Rome, where he was made procurator-general of his order. A little time after he published his learned and valuable work in Latin, intitled, *Rhetorica Christiana*, dedicated to pope Gregory the XIIIth, adorned with many representations of Mexican antiquities.

BOOK VI. were likewise obliged to provide for the temples. There is reason to believe that that tract of country, which went under the name of *Teotlalpan* (land of the gods), was so named from being among the possessions of the temples. There were besides great numbers daily of free-offerings, from the devout of every kind, of provisions and first fruits, which were presented in returning thanks for seasonable rains and other blessings of heaven. Near the temples were the granaries where all the grain and other provisions, necessary for the maintenance of the priests, were kept; and the overplus was annually distributed to the poor, for whom also there were hospitals in the larger towns.

SECT. XIV.  
Number and  
different  
ranks of the  
priests.

The number of the priests among the Mexicans corresponded with the multitude of gods and temples; nor was the homage which they paid to the deities themselves much greater than the veneration in which they held their ministers. We may form some conjecture of the immense number of priests in the Mexican empire, from the number within the area of the great temple, which some ancient historians tell us, amounted to five thousand. Nor will that calculation appear surprising, when we consider that in that place there were four hundred priests consecrated to the service of the god *Tezcatzoncatl* alone. Every temple, indeed, had a considerable number, so that I should not think it rash to affirm, that there could not be less than a million of priests throughout the empire. Their number could not fail to be increased from the great respect paid to the priesthood, and the high opinion they conceived of the office of serving in the worship of the gods. The great men even vied with one another in consecrating their children for some time to the service of the temples; while the inferior nobility employed theirs in works without, such as carrying wood, feeding and keeping up the fire of the stoves, and other things of that kind; all considering the honour of serving in the worship of the gods as the greatest to which they could aspire.

There were several different orders and degrees among the priests. The chief of all were the two high priests, to whom they gave the names of *Teotēcilli* (divine lord), and *Hueiteopixqui* (great priest). That eminent dignity was never conferred but upon such as were distinguished for their birth, their probity, and their great knowledge of every thing connected with the ceremonies of their religion. The high-



high-priests were the oracles whom the kings consulted in all the most important affairs of the state, and no war was ever undertaken without their approbation. It belonged to them to anoint the king after his election, and to open the breast, and tear out the hearts of the human victims, at the most solemn sacrifices. The high-priest in the kingdom of Acolhuacan was, according to some historians, always the second son of the king. Among the Totonacas he was anointed with the elastic gum mixed with children's blood, and this they called the *divine unction* (*i*). Some authors say the same of the high-priest of Mexico.

From what is said it appears, that the high-priests of Mexico were the heads of their religion only among the Mexicans, and not with respect to the other conquered nations : these, even after being subjected to the crown of Mexico, still maintaining their priesthood independent.

The high-priesthood was conferred by election ; but we are ignorant whether the electors were of the priestly order, or the same with those who chose the political head of the empire. The high-priests of Mexico were distinguished by a tuft of cotton which hung from their breast ; and at the principal feasts they were dressed in splendid habits, upon which were represented the insignia of the god whose feast they celebrated. On solemn festivals, the high-priest of the Mixtecas was clothed in a short coat, on which the principal events of their mythology was represented ; above that he had a surplice, and over all a large capuchin ; on his head he wore plumes of green feathers, curiously interwoven with small figures of their gods ; at his shoulder hung one tassiel of cotton, and another hung at his arm.

Next to this supreme dignity of the priesthood, the most respectable charge was that of the *Mexicoteohuatzin*, which was conferred by the high-priests. The employment of this officer was to attend to the due observance of the rites and ceremonies, and to watch over the conduct of those priests who had the charge of seminaries, and to punish them when guilty of a misdemeanor. In order to enable him to discharge all the

(*k*) Acosta confounds the divine unction of the high-priest with that of the king ; but it was totally different ; the king did not anoint himself with elastic gum, but with a particular sort of ink.

**BOOK VI.** duties of so extensive an appointment, he was allowed two curates or deputies, the one named the *Huitznabuateobuatzin*, the other the *Tepauzobuatzin*. The *Mexicoteobuatzin* was the superior-general of all the seminaries; his chief badge of distinction was a little bag of copal, which he always carried along with him.

The *Flatquimilteuctli* managed the œconomy of the sanctuaries, the *Ometochtli* was the chief composer of the hymns which were sung at festivals; the *Epoacuiltzin* (1), the master of the ceremonies; the *Tlapixcatzin* the master of the chapel, who not only appointed the music, but superintended the singing and corrected the singers. Others, whose names we omit, to avoid growing tedious to our readers, were the immediate superiors of the colleges of the priests which were consecrated to different gods (*m*). The name *Teopinqui* was also given to the priests, which means the guard or minister of God.

To every division of the capital, and probably, of every other great city, belonged a priest of superior rank, who acted in the quality of rector to that district, and appointed every act of religion which was to be performed within the bounds of his jurisdiction. All these rectors were subject to the authority of the *Mexicoteobuatzin*.

**SECT. XV.**  
The employ-  
ments, drefs,  
and life of  
the priests.

All the offices of religion were divided among the priests. Some were the sacrificers, others the diviners; some were the composers of hymns, others those who sung. Amongst the singers some sung at certain hours of the day, others sung at certain hours of the night. Some priests had the charge of keeping the temple clean, some took care of the ornaments of the altars; to others belonged the instructing of youth, the correcting of the calendar, the ordering of festivals, and the care of the mythological paintings.

Four times a day they offered incense to the idols, namely, at day-break, at mid-day, at sun-set, and at mid-night. The last offering was made by the priest whose turn it was to do so, and the most respectable officers of the temple attended at it. To the sun they made daily new offerings, four times during the day, and five times during

(1) Torquemada calls this priest *Epqualiztli*, and Hernandez *Epoaquacuiliztli*; but both of them are mistaken.

(*m*) Whoever is desirous of knowing the other offices and names of the priests, may consult the 8th book of Torquemada, and the account given by Hernandez, which Nieremberg inserted in his Natural History.

the night. For incense they generally made use of copal, or some other aromatic gum; but on certain festivals they employed *Chapopotli*, or bitumen of Judea. The censers were commonly made of clay; but they had also censers of gold. Every day the priests, or at least some of them, dyed their whole bodies with ink made of the foot of the *Ocotl*, which is a species of pine very aromatic, and over the ink they painted themselves with ochre or cinnabar, and every evening they bathed in ponds which were within the inclosure of the temple.

The dress of the Mexican priests was no way different from the dress of the common people, except a black cotton mantle, which they wore in the manner of a veil upon their heads; but those who in their monasteries professed a greater austerity of life, went always clothed in black, like the common priests of other nations of the empire. They never shaved, by which means the hair of many of them grew so long as to reach to their legs. It was twisted with thick cotton cords, and bedaubed with ink, forming a weighty mass not less inconvenient to be carried about with them than disgusting and even horrid to view.

Besides the usual unction with ink, another extraordinary and more abominable one was practised every time they went to make sacrifices on the tops of the mountains, or in the dark caverns of the earth. They took a large quantity of poisonous insects, such as scorpions, spiders, and worms, and sometimes even small serpents, burned them over some stove of the temple, and beat their ashes in a mortar together with the foot of the *Ocotl*, tobacco, the herb *Ololiubqui*, and some live insects. They presented this diabolical mixture in small vessels to their gods, and afterwards rubbed their bodies with it. When thus anointed, they became fearless to every danger, being persuaded they were rendered incapable of receiving any hurt from the most noxious reptiles of the earth, or the wildest beasts of the woods. They called it *Teopatli*, or divine medicament, and imagined it to be a powerful remedy for several disorders; on which account those who were sick, and the young children, went frequently to the priests to be anointed with it. The young lads who were trained up in the seminaries were charged with the collecting of such kind of little animals; and by being accustomed at an early age to that kind of employment, they soon lost



BOOK VI. the horror which attends the first familiarity with such reptiles. The priests not only made use of this unction, but had likewise a ridiculous superstitious practice of blowing with their breath over the sick, and made them drink water which they had blessed after their manner. The priests of the god *Ixtlilton*, were remarkable for this custom.

The priests observed many fasts and great austerity of life ; they never were intoxicated with drinking ; and seldom even tasted wine. The priests of Tezcatzoncatl as soon as the daily singing in praise of their god was over, laid a heap of three hundred and three canes on the ground, corresponding to the number of fingers, of which heap only one was bored ; every person lifted one, and he who happened to take up the cane which was bored, was the only person who tasted the wine. All the time that they were employed in the service of the temple, they abstained from all other women but their wives ; they even affected so much modesty and reserve, that when they met a woman, they fixed their eyes on the ground that they might not see her. Any incontinence amongst the priests was severely punished. The priest who, at Teohuacan, was convicted of having violated his chastity, was delivered up by the priests to the people, who at night killed him by the bastinado. In Ichcatlan, the high-priest was obliged to live constantly within the temple, and to abstain from commerce with any woman whatsoever ; and if he unluckily failed in any of his duties, he was certain of being torn in pieces, and his bloody limbs were presented as an example to his successor. They poured boiling water on the head of those who, from laziness, did not rise to the nocturnal duties of the temple, or bored their lips and ears, and if they did not correct that, or any other such fault, they were ducked in the lake and banished from the temple during the festival, which was made to the god of water in the sixth month. The priests in general lived together in communities, subject to superiors who watched over their conduct.

SECT. XVI.  
The priest-  
esses.

The office and character of a priest among the Mexicans was not in its nature perpetual. There were certainly some who dedicated their whole lives to the service of the altars ; but others engaged in it only for a certain time, to fulfil some vow made by their fathers, or as a particular act of devotion. Nor was the priesthood confined to the male sex, some women being employed in the immediate service of the temples. They offered

offered incense to the idols, tended the sacred fire, swept the area, BOOK VI.  
prepared the daily offering of provisions, and presented it with their hands to the idols; but they were entirely excluded from the office of sacrificing, and the higher dignities of the priesthood. Among the priestesses, some were destined by their parents from their infancy to the service of the temples; others on account of some particular vow which they had made during sickness, or that they might ensure from their gods a good marriage, or the prosperity of their families, entered upon such offices for one or two years.

The consecration of the first was made in the following manner. As soon as the girl was born, the parents offered her to some god, and informed the rector of that district of it; he gave notice to the Tepanteohuatzin, who, as we have already mentioned, was the superior general of the seminaries. Two months after they carried her to the temple, and put a small broom, and a small censor of clay in her little hands, with a little copal in it, to shew her destination. Every month they repeated the visit to the temple and the offering, together with the bark of some trees for the sacred fire. When the child attained her fifth year, the parents consigned her to the Tepanteohuatzin, who lodged her in a female seminary, where children were instructed in religion, and the proper duties and employments of their sex. The first thing done to those who entered into the service on account of some private vow, was the cutting off their hair. Both the latter and the former lived in great purity of manners, silence, and retirement, under their superiors, without having any communication with men. Some of them rose about two hours before midnight, others at midnight, and others at day-break, to stir up and keep the fire burning, and to offer incense to the idols; and although in this function they assembled with the priests, they were separated from each other, the men forming one wing and the women another, both under the view of their superiors, who prevented any disorder from happening. Every morning they prepared the offering of provisions which was presented to the idols, and swept the lower area of the temple, and the time which was not occupied in these, or other religious duties, was employed in spinning and weaving beautiful cloths for the dresses of the idols, and the decoration of the sanctuaries. Nothing was more

**BOOK VI.** zealously attended to than the chastity of these virgins. Any trespass of this nature was unpardonable; if it remained an entire secret, the female culprit endeavoured to appease the anger of the gods by fasting and austerity of life; for she dreaded that in punishment of her crime her flesh would rot. When a virgin, destined from her infancy to the worship of the gods, arrived at the age of sixteen or eighteen, at which years they were usually married, her parents sought for a husband to her, and after they found one, presented to the Tepanteohuatzin a certain number of quails in plates curiously varnished, and a certain quantity of copal, of flowers and provisions, accompanied with a studied address, in which they thanked him for the care and attention he had shewn in the education of their daughter, and demanded his permission to settle her in marriage. The Tepanteohuatzin granted the request, in a reply to the address, exhorting his pupil to a perseverance in virtue, and the fulfillment of all the duties of the married state.

**SECT. XVII.**  
Different religious orders.

Amongst the different orders or congregations both of men and women, who dedicated themselves to the worship of some particular gods, that of Quetzalcoatl is worthy to be mentioned. The life led in the colleges or monasteries of either sex, which were devoted to this imaginary god, was uncommonly rigid and austere. The dress of the order was extremely decent; they bathed regularly at midnight, and watched until about two hours before day, singing hymns to their god, and observing many rules of an austere life. They were at liberty to go to the mountains at any hour of the day or night, to spill their blood; this was permitted them from a respect to the virtue which they were all thought to possess. The superiors of the monasteries bore also the name of Quetzalcoatl, and were persons of such high authority, that they visited none but the king when it was necessary. The members of this religious order were destined to it from their infancy. The parents of the child invited the superior to an entertainment, who usually deputed one of his subjects. The deputy brought the child to him, upon which he took the boy in his arms, and offered him with a prayer to Quetzalcoatl, and put a collar about his neck, which was to be worn until he was seven years old. When the boy completed his second year, the superior made a small incision in his breast, which, like the collar, was another mark of his destination. As soon



soon as the boy attained his seventh year, he entered into the monastery, having first heard a long discourse from his parents, in which they advertised him of the vow which they had made to Quetzalcoatl, and exhorted him to fulfil it, to behave well, to submit himself to his prelate, and to pray to the gods for his parents and the whole nation. This order was called *Tlamacazcajtli*, and the members of it *Tlamacazque*.

Another order which was called *Telpochtlixthi*, or the youths, on account of its being composed of youths and boys, was consecrated to Tezcatlipoca. This was also a destination from infancy, attended with almost the same ceremonies as that of Quetzalcoatl; however, they did not live together in one community, but each individual had his own home. In every district of the city they had a superior, who governed them, and a house where they assembled at sun-set to dance and sing the praises of their god. Both sexes met at this dance, but without committing the smallest disorder, owing to the vigilance of the superiors, and the rigour with which all misdemeanors were punished.

Among the Totonacas was an order of monks devoted to their goddess Centeotl. They lived in great retirement and austerity, and their life, excepting their superstition and vanity, was perfectly unimpeachable. None but men above sixty years of age who were widowers, estranged from all commerce with women, and of virtuous life, were admitted into this monastery. Their number was fixed, and when any one died another was received in his stead. These monks were so much esteemed, that they were not only consulted by the common people, but likewise by the first nobility and the high-priest. They listened to consultations sitting upon their heels, with their eyes fixed upon the ground, and their answers were received like oracles even by the kings of Mexico. They were employed in making historical paintings, which they gave to the high-priest that he might exhibit them to the people.

But the most important duty of the priesthood, and the chief ceremony of the religion of the Mexicans, consisted in the sacrifices which they made occasionally to obtain any favour from heaven, or in gratitude for those favours which they had already received. This is a subject which we would willingly pass over, if the laws of history permitted,

SECT.  
XVIII.  
Common sacrifice of human victims.

## BOOK VI.

mitted, to prevent the disgust which the description of such abominable acts of cruelty must cause to our readers; for although there has hardly been a nation which has not practised similar sacrifices, it would be difficult to find one which has carried them to so great an excess as the Mexicans appear to have done.

We are ignorant what sort of sacrifices may have been practised by the ancient Toltecas. The Chechemecas continued long without using them, having at first neither idols, temples, nor priests, nor offering any thing to their gods, the Sun and Moon, but herbs, flowers, fruits, and copal. Those nations never thought of sacrificing human victims, until the example of the Mexicans banished the first impressions of nature from their minds. What they report touching the origin of such barbarous sacrifices we have already explained; namely, that which appears in their history concerning the first sacrifice of the four Xochimilcan prisoners which they made when in Colhuacan. It is probable, that at the time when the Mexicans were insulated in the lake, and particularly while they remained subject to the dominion of the Tepanecas, the sacrifice of human victims must have happened very seldom, as they neither had prisoners, nor could purchase slaves for sacrifices. But when they had enlarged their dominions, and multiplied their victories, sacrifices became frequent and on some festivals the victims were numerous.

The sacrifices varied with respect to the number, place, and mode, according to the circumstances of the festival. In general the victims suffered death by having their breasts opened; but others were drowned in the lake, others died of hunger shut up in caverns of the mountains, and lastly, some fell in the gladiatorial sacrifice. The customary place was the temple, in the upper area of which stood the altar destined for ordinary sacrifices. The altar of the greater temple of Mexico was a green stone (probably jasper) convex above, and about three feet high, and as many broad, and more than five feet long. The usual ministers of the sacrifice were six priests, the chief of whom was the *Topiltzin*, whose dignity was pre-eminent and hereditary; but at every sacrifice he assumed the name of that god to whom it was made. For the performance of this function, he was clothed in a red habit, similar in make to the scapulary of the moderns, fringed with

with cotton; on his head he wore a crown of green and yellow feathers, at his ears hung golden ear-rings and green jewels, (perhaps emeralds), and at his under-lip a pendant of turquoise. The other five ministers were dressed in white habits of the same make, but embroidered with black; their hair was wrapped up, their heads were bound with leathern thongs, their foreheads armed with little shields of paper painted of various colours, and their bodies dyed all over black. These barbarous ministers carried the victim entirely naked to the upper area of the temple, and after having pointed out to the bystanders the idol to whom the sacrifice was made, that they might pay their adoration to it, extended him upon the altar; four priests held his legs and arms, and another kept his head firm with a wooden instrument made in form of a coiled serpent, which was put about his neck; and on account of the altar being convex, the body of the victim lay arched, the breast and belly being raised up and totally prevented from the least movement. The inhuman Topiltzin then approached, and with a cutting knife made of flint, dexterously opened his breast and tore out his heart, which, while yet palpitating, he offered to the sun, and afterwards threw it at the feet of the idol; then taking it up again he offered it to the idol itself, and afterwards burned it, preserving the ashes with the utmost veneration. If the idol was gigantic and hollow, it was usual to introduce the heart of the victim into its mouth with a golden spoon. It was customary also to anoint the lips of the idol and the cornices of the door of the sanctuary with the victim's blood. If he was a prisoner of war, as soon as he was sacrificed they cut off his head to preserve the skull, and threw the body down the stairs to the lower area, where it was taken up by the officer or soldier to whom the prisoner had belonged, and carried to his house to be boiled and dressed as an entertainment for his friends. If he was not a prisoner of war, but a slave purchased for a sacrifice, the proprietor carried off the carcase from the altar for the same purpose. They eat only the legs, thighs, and arms, and burned the rest, or preserved it for food to the wild beasts or birds of prey which were kept in the royal palaces. The Otomies, after having killed the victim, tore the body in pieces, which they sold at market. The Zapotecas sacrificed men to their  
their



## BOOK VI.

their gods, women to their goddesses, and children to some other diminutive deities.

This was the most common mode of sacrifice, but often attended with some circumstances of still greater cruelty, as we shall see hereafter; other kinds of sacrifices which they used were much less frequent. At the festival of *Tetcoinan*, the woman who represented this goddess was beheaded on the shoulders of another woman. At the festival of the arrival of the gods, they put the victims to death by fire. At one of the festivals made in honour of *Tlaloc*, they sacrificed two children of both sexes by drowning them in a certain place of the lake. At another festival of the same god, they purchased three little boys of six or seven years of age, shut them up inhumanly in a cavern, and left them to die of fear and hunger.

SEC. XIX.  
The gladiatorian sacrifice.

The most celebrated sacrifice among the Mexicans was that called by the Spaniards with much propriety *the gladiatorian*. This was a very honourable death, and only prisoners who were renowned for their bravery were permitted to die by it. Near to the greater temple of large cities, in an open space of ground sufficient to contain an immense croud of people, was a round terrace, eight feet high, upon which was placed a large round stone, resembling a mill-stone in figure, but greatly larger, and almost three feet high, well polished, with figures cut upon it (*n*). On this stone, which was called the *Temalacatl*, the prisoner was placed, armed with a shield and a short sword, and tied by one foot. A Mexican officer or soldier, better accoutred in arms, mounted to combat with him. Every one will be able to imagine the efforts made by the desperate victim to defend his life, and also those of the Mexican to save his honour and reputation, before the multitude of people that assembled at such a spectacle. If the prisoner remained vanquished, immediately a priest named *Chalchiubtepehua*, carried him dead or alive to the altar of the common sacrifices, opened his breast, and took out his heart, while the victor was applauded by the assembly, and rewarded by the king with some military honour. But if the prisoner

(*n*) The form of the edifices represented in the plate of the gladiatorian sacrifice is a mere caprice of the designer; there never was any thing else than the terrace and the battlements.

conquered six different combatants, who came successively to fight with him, agreeable to the account given by the conqueror Cortes, he was granted his life, his liberty, and all that had been taken from him, and returned with glory to his native country (*o*). The same author relates, that in a battle between the Cholulans and Huexotzincas, the principal lord of Cholula grew so warm in the contest, that having inadvertently removed to a great distance from his own people he was made prisoner in spite of his bravery, and conducted to Huexotzinco, where being put upon the gladiatorian stone, he conquered seven combatants which were opposed to him, and gained his liberty; but the Huexotzincas foreseeing, that on account of his singular courage he would become the cause of many disasters to them if they granted him his liberty, put him to death contrary to universal custom; by which act they rendered themselves eternally infamous among those nations.

With respect to the number of the victims which were annually sacrificed we can affirm nothing; the opinions of historians on that head being extremely different (*p*). The number of twenty thousand, which is conjectured to approach the nearest to truth, does not appear to us improbable, if we include in it all the victims which were sacrificed throughout the whole empire; but if that number comprehends, as some historians assert, the infants only, or the victims which were sacrificed on the mountain Tepeyacac, or in the capital, we think it altogether incredible. It is certain, that the number of sacrifices was

SECT. XX.  
The number  
of sacrifices  
uncertain.

(*o*) Several historians say, that when the first combatant was overcome the prisoner became free; but we are rather inclined to credit the Conqueror; for it is not probable, that they would liberate a prisoner for so small a risk who might still prove destructive to them, or that they would deprive their gods of a victim so acceptable to their cruelty.

(*p*) Zumarraga, the first bishop of Mexico, says, in a letter of the 12th of June, 1531, addressed to the general chapter of his order, that in that capital alone twenty thousand human victims were annually sacrificed. Some authors, quoted by Gomara, affirm, that the number of the sacrificed amounted to fifty thousand. Acosta writes, that there was a certain day of the year on which five thousand were sacrificed in different places of the empire; and another day on which they sacrificed twenty thousand. Some authors believe, that on the mountain Tepeyacac alone, twenty thousand were sacrificed to the goddess Tonantzin. Torquemada, in quoting, though unfaithfully, the letter of Zumarraga, says, that there were twenty thousand infants annually sacrificed. But on the contrary, Las Casas, in his refutation of the bloody book, wrote by Dr. Sepulveda, reduces the sacrifices to so small a number, that we are left to believe, they amounted not to fifty, or at most not to a hundred. We are strongly of opinion, that all these authors have erred in the number, Las Casas by diminution, the rest by exaggeration of the truth.

BOOK VI. not limited, but always proportioned either to the number of prisoners which were made in war, to the necessities of the state, or the nature of the festivals, as appears from the dedication of the greater temple of Mexico, on which occasion the cruelty of the Mexicans exceeded all bounds of belief. It is not, however, to be doubted, that the sacrifices were very numerous; the conquests of the Mexicans having been extremely rapid, and as their aim in war was not so much to kill as to make prisoners of the enemy for this purpose. If to these victims we add the slaves which were purchased for the same end, and many criminals who were condemned to expiate their crimes by the sacrifice of their lives, we shall find the number greatly exceed that computed by Las Casas, who was too anxious to exculpate the Americans of all the excesses of which they were accused by the Spaniards (q). The sacrifices multiplied in *Divine* years, and still more in *Secular* years.

The Mexicans were accustomed at their festivals to clothe the victim in the same dress and badges in which they dressed that god to whom the sacrifice was made; thus habited, the victim went round the city demanding alms for the temple, accompanied with a guard of soldiers. If any one accidentally made his escape, the corporal of the guard was substituted in his stead as a punishment for his carelessness. They used also to feed and fatten the victims, as they did several animals for the table.

The religion of the Mexicans was not confined to these sacrifices; offerings were made of various kinds of animals. They sacrificed quails and falcons to their god Huitzilopochtli, and hares, rabbits, deer, and coyotos to their god Mixcoatl. They daily made an offering of quails to the sun. Every day as the sun was about to rise, several priests, standing on the upper area of the temple, with their faces towards the east, each with a quail in his hand, saluted that luminary's appearance with music, and made an offering of the quails after cutting off their heads. This sacrifice was succeeded by the burning of incense, with a loud accompaniment of musical instruments.

(q) We cannot account why Las Casas, who, in his writings makes use of the testimony of Zumarraga, and other churchmen, against the conquerors, should afterwards so openly contradict them respecting the number of the sacrifices.



In acknowledgment of the power of their gods, they also made offerings of various kinds of plants, flowers, jewels, gums, and other inanimate substances. To their gods Tlaloc and Coatlicue they offered the first-blown flowers; and to Centeotl, the first maize of every year. They made oblations of bread, various pastes, and ready dressed victuals in such abundance, as to be sufficient to supply all the ministers of the temple. Every morning were seen at the foot of the altars innumerable dishes and porringers of boiling food, that the steams arising from them might reach the nostrils of the idols, and nourish their immortal gods.

The most frequent oblation, however, was that of copal. All daily burned incense to their idols; no house was without censers. The priests in the temple, fathers of families in their houses, and judges in their tribunals, whenever they pronounced sentence in an important cause, whether civil or criminal, offered incense to the four principal winds. But incense-offering among the Mexicans, and other nations of Anahuac, was not only an act of religion towards their gods, but also a piece of civil courtesy to lords and ambassadors.

The superstition and cruelties of the Mexicans were imitated by all the nations which they conquered, or that were contiguous to the empire, without any difference, except that the number of sacrifices amongst those nations was less, and that particular circumstances sometimes attended them. The Tlascalans, at one of their festivals, fixed a prisoner to a high cross, and shot arrows at him; and upon another occasion, they tied a prisoner to a low cross, and killed him by the bastinado.

The sacrifices celebrated every fourth year by the Quauhtitlans in honour of the god of fire, were inhuman and dreadful. A day before the festival, they planted six very lofty trees in the under area of the temple, sacrificed two slaves, stripped their skins off, and took out the bones of their thighs. The next day two eminent priests, clothed themselves in the bloody skins, took the bones in their hands, and descended with solemn steps and dismal howlings, down the stairs of the temple. The people who were assembled in crouds below, called out in a loud voice, "Behold there come our gods." As soon as they reached the lower area, they began a dance to the sound of musical instruments, which lasted the greatest part of the day. In the meanwhile, the people sacrificed an incredible quantity of quails, the num-

SECT. XXI.  
Inhuman sacrifices in  
Quauhtitlan.

## BOOK VI.

ber of them being never less than eight thousand. When these sacrifices were over, the priests carried six prisoners to the tops of the trees, and after tying them there, descended; but they had hardly time to reach the ground, before the unhappy victims were pierced with a multitude of arrows. The priests mounted again to cut down the dead bodies, and let them drop from the height; immediately their breasts were opened, and their hearts torn out, according to the custom of those people. The victims as well as the quails were shared among the priests and nobles of that city, for the banquets which crowned their barbarous and detestable festival.

SECT. XXII.  
Austerities  
and fasting of  
the Mexi-  
cans.

While they were thus cruel to others, it is not wonderful that they likewise practised inhumanity towards themselves. Being accustomed to bloody sacrifices of their prisoners, they also failed not to shed abundance of their own blood, conceiving the streams which flowed from their victims insufficient to quench the diabolical thirst of their gods. It makes one shudder to read the austerities which they exercised upon themselves, either in atonement of their transgressions, or in preparation for their festivals. They mangled their flesh as if it had been insensible, and let their blood run in such profusion, that it appeared to be a superfluous fluid of the body.

The effusion of blood was frequent and daily with some of the priests, to which practice they gave the name of *Thumacazqui*. They pierced themselves with the sharpest spines of the aloe, and bored several parts of their bodies, particularly their ears, lips, tongue, and the fat of their arms and legs. Through the holes which they made with these spines, they introduced pieces of cane, the first of which were small pieces, but every time this penitential suffering was repeated, a thicker piece was used. The blood which flowed from them was carefully collected in leaves of the plant *acxojatl* (r). They fixed the bloody spines in little balls of hay, which they exposed upon the battlements of the walls of the temple, to testify the penance which they did for the people. Those who exercised such severities upon themselves within the inclosure of the greater temple of Mexico,

(r) *Acxojatl* is a tree of several upright stems, with long leaves, which are strong and symmetrically disposed. They made formerly and still make excellent brooms of this plant.

bathed themselves in a pond that was formed there, which from being always tinged with blood was called *Ezapan*. There was a certain fixed number of canes to be made use of on this occasion, which, after being once used were preserved as attestations of their penitence. Besides those and other austere practices of which we shall treat shortly, watching and fasting was very frequent amongst the Mexicans. A festival hardly occurred for which they did not prepare themselves with fasting for some days, more or less, according to the prescriptions of their ritual. From all that is to be inferred from their history, their fasting consisted in abstaining from flesh and wine, and in eating but once a day; this some did at mid-day, others after that time, and some tasted nothing till evening. Fasting was generally accompanied with watching and the effusion of blood, and then no person was permitted to have commerce with any woman, not even with his own wife.

Some fasts were general and observed by the whole people; namely, the fast of five days before the festival of Mixcoatl, which was observed even by children; the fast of four days before the festival of Tezcatlipoca, and also, as we suspect, that which was made previous to the festival of the sun (s). During this fast the king retired into a certain place of the temple, where he watched and shed blood, according to the custom of his nation. Any other fasts bound only particular individuals, such as that which was observed by the proprietors of victims the day before a sacrifice. The proprietors of prisoners which were sacrificed to the god Xipe, fasted twenty days. The nobles as well as the king had a house within the precincts of the temple, containing numerous chambers, where they occasionally retired to do penance. On one of the festivals, all those persons who exercised public offices, after their daily duty was over, retired there at evening for this purpose. In the third month the Tlamacazqui, or penance-doers watched every night; and in the fourth month they were attended in their duty by the nobility.

In Mixteca, where there were many monasteries, the first-born sons of lords, before they took possession of their estates, were subjected to a

(s) The fast which was held in honour of the sun was called *Netonatiubzabualo*, or *Netonatiubzabualitzli*. Dr. Hernandez says, it was held every two hundred, or three hundred days. We suspect that it was kept on the day I *Olin*, which occurred every two hundred and sixty days.



## BOOK VI.

rigorous penance during a whole year. They conducted the heir with a numerous attendance to a monastery, where they stripped off his garments, and clothed him in rags daubed over with *olli*, or elastic gum, rubbed his face, belly, and back, with stinking herbs, and delivered a small lance of *itzli* to him, that he might draw his own blood. They restricted him to a very abstemious diet, subjected him to the hardest labours, and punished him severely for any failure in duty. At the end of the year, after being washed and cleansed by four girls, with sweet scented water, he was reconducted to his house with great pomp and music.

In the principal temple of Teohuacan, four priests constantly resided, who were famous for the austerity of their lives. Their dress was the same with that of the common people; their diet was limited to a loaf of maize of about two ounces in weight, and a cup of *atolli*, or gruel, made of the same grain. Every night two of them kept watch, employing their time in singing hymns to their gods, in offering incense, which they did four times during the night, and in shedding their blood upon the stones of the temple. Their fasting was continual during the four years which they persevered in that life, except upon days of festival, one of which happened every month, when they were at liberty to eat as much as they pleased; but in preparation for every festival, they practised the usual austere rules, boring their ears with the spines of the aloe, and passing little pieces of cane through the holes to the number of sixty, all of which differed in thickness in the manner above mentioned. At the end of four years, other four priests were introduced to lead the same kind of life; and if before the completion of that term any one of them happened to die, another was substituted in his place, that the number might never be incomplete. These priests were so high in respect and esteem as to be held in veneration even by the kings of Mexico: but woe unto him who violated his chastity; for, if after a strict examination the crime was proved, he was killed by *bastinados*, his body was burned, and his ashes scattered to the winds.

Upon occasion of any public calamity, the Mexican high-priest always observed a most extraordinary fast. For this purpose he retired to a wood, where he constructed a hut for himself, covered with  
branches,

branches, which were always fresh and green; as whenever the first became dry, new ones were spread in their place. Shut up in this hut he passed nine or ten months in constant prayer and frequent effusions of blood, deprived of all communication with men, and without any other food than raw maize and water. This fast was not indispensable, nor did all the high-priests observe it; nor did those who attempted it ever do it more than once in their lives; and certainly it is not probable, that those who survived so rigorous and long an abstinence, were ever able to repeat it.

The fast observed by the Tlascalans every divine year, at which period they made a most solemn festival in honour of their god *Camaxtli*, was likewise very singular. When the time of commencing it was arrived, all the *Tlamacazquis* were assembled by their chief *Arbcaubtli*, who made them a serious and grave exhortation to penitence, and forewarned them if any one of them should find that he was incapable of performing it, that he should declare so within five days; for that if, after that space of time was elapsed, and the fast was once begun, he should happen to fail and renounce the attempt, he would be deemed unworthy of the company of the gods, his priesthood would be taken from him, and his estate sequestered. At the expiration of the five days, which was allowed for the purpose of deliberation, the chief, attended by all those who had courage to attempt this penitential duty, the number of whom used to exceed two hundred, ascended the very lofty mountain Matlal-cueje, on the top of which was a sanctuary, consecrated to the goddesses of water. The *Arbcaubtli* mounted to the top to make his oblation of gems, precious feathers, and copal, while the others waited in the middle of the ascent, praying their goddesses to give them strength and courage to go through their penance. They afterwards descended from the mountain, and caused a number of little knives of itzli, and a great quantity of small rods of different thickneses to be made. The labourers upon those instruments fasted five days before they began their work, and if any little knife or rod happened to break, it was accounted a bad omen, and the workman was considered to have broke the fast. The *Tlamacazqui* then began their fast, which did not last less than one hundred and sixty days. The first day they bored holes in their tongues, through which they drew the little rods, and notwith-

S E C T.  
XXIII.  
Remarkable  
acts of peni-  
tence of the  
Tlascalans.

## BOOK VI.

standing the excessive pain and loss of blood which they suffered, they were obliged all the while to sing aloud songs to their god, and every twenty days this cruel operation was repeated. When the first eighty days of the fast of the priests were elapsed, a general fast, from which even the heads of the republic were not exempted, began with the people, and continued an equally long time. During this period, no person was allowed to bathe, nor to eat pepper, which was the usual seasoning of all their dishes. To such excesses and cruelty did fanaticism carry those nations.

## S E C T.

## XXIV.

The age, century and year of the Mexicans.

All that we have hitherto related does not so much make known the religion of the Mexicans, and the extravagance of their horrible superstition, as the number of their festivals, and the rites which were observed at them; but before we enter more deeply into this subject, it is necessary to give some account of their mode of dividing time, and the method which they adopted to measure days, months, years, and centuries. What we have to communicate on this head has been carefully investigated and certified by intelligent men, who are worthy of the utmost credit, who have applied with the utmost assiduity to this study, and who have diligently examined the ancient paintings, and obtained information from the best instructed persons among the Mexicans and Acolhuans. We are particularly indebted to the religious missionaries Motolinia and Sahagun, from whose writings Torquemada has taken all that is valuable in his work, and to the very learned Mexican D. Carlo Seguenza, whose opinions we have found to be just and accurate by the examination which we have made of several Mexican paintings, in which months, years, and centuries, are distinctly represented by their proper figures.

The Mexicans, the Acolhuans, and all the other nations of Anahuac, distinguished four ages of time by as many suns. The first named *Atonatiuh*, that is the sun, or the age of water, commenced with the creation of the world, and continued until the time at which all mankind almost perished in a general inundation, along with the first sun. The second *Tlaltónatiuh*, the age of earth, lasted from the time of the general inundation until the ruin of the giants, and the great earthquakes, which concluded in like manner the second sun. The third, *Ehècatónatiuh*, the age of air, lasted from the destruction

of



of the giants until the great whirlwinds, in which all mankind perished along with the third sun. The fourth *Tletonatiuh*, the age of fire, began at the last restoration of the human race, and was to continue as we have already mentioned in their mythology, until the fourth sun, and the earth were destroyed by fire. This age it was supposed would end at the conclusion of one of their centuries; and thus we may account for these noisy festivals in honour of the god of fire, which were celebrated at the beginning of every century, as a thanksgiving for his restraining his voracity, and deferring the termination of the world.

The Mexicans, and the other polished nations of Anahuac, used the same method to compute centuries, years, and months, as the ancient Toltecas. Their century consisted of fifty-two years, which were subdivided into four periods of thirteen years each, and two centuries formed an age, which was called by them *Huebuetiliztli*, that is, old age, of a hundred and four years (*t*). They gave to the end of the century the name of *Toxiuhmolpia*, which signifies, the tying of our years; because by it the two centuries were joined together to form an age. Their years had four names, which were *Tochtli*, rabbit; *Acatl*, cane or reed; *Tecpatl*, flint; and *Calli*, house; and of these with different numbers their century was composed. The first year of the century was 1. *Tochtli*, the second, 2. *Acatl*, the third, 3. *Tecpatl*, the fourth, 4. *Calli*, the fifth, 5. *Tochtli*, and so on to the thirteenth year, which was 13. *Tochtli*, and terminated the first period. They began the second period with 1. *Acatl*, which was succeeded by 2. *Tecpatl*, 3. *Calli*, 4. *Tochtli*, until it was completed by 13. *Acatl*. In like manner the third period began with 1. *Tecpatl*, and finished with 13. *Tecpatl*; and the fourth commenced with 1. *Calli*, and terminated together with the century in 13. *Calli*; so that there being four names and thirteen numbers, no one year could be confounded with another (*u*). All

(*t*) Though some authors have given the name of century to their age, and that of half century to their century, it is of little consequence, as their matter of computing years and distributing time is not in the least altered by it.

(*u*) Boturini affirms, in contradiction to the general opinion of authors, that they did not begin all their centuries with 1. *Tochtli*, but sometimes with 1. *Acatl*; 1. *Tecpatl*, or 1. *Calli*. He is mistaken, however, for it appears both from the best informed ancient authors, and the paintings examined by ourselves, that the Mexican century began always with 1. *Tochtli*. This author says also, that in the course of four centuries the same name or character was ne-

BOOK VI. All this will be more clearly understood in the table of the century, which we shall afterwards subjoin.

The Mexican year consisted like ours, of three hundred and sixty-five days; for although it was composed of eighteen months, each of which contained twenty days, which make up only three hundred and sixty, they added after the last month five days, which they called *Nemontemi*, or useless; because in these days they did nothing but receive and return visits. The year 1 Tochtli, the first of their century, began upon the twenty-sixth day of February (x); but every four years the Mexican century anticipated one day, on account of the odd day of our bissextile, or leap-year; from whence in the last years of the Mexican century, the year began on the fourteenth of February, on account of the thirteen days which intervene in the course of fifty-two years. But at the expiration of the century, the commencement of the year returned to the twenty-sixth of February.

The names which they gave their months were taken both from the employments and festivals which occurred in them, and also from the accidents of the season which attended them. These names appear differently arranged among authors; because, in fact their arrangement was not only different among different nations, but even among the the Mexicans themselves it varied. The following was the most common:

- |                                |  |                            |
|--------------------------------|--|----------------------------|
| 1. <i>Atlacabualco</i> (y).    |  | 4. <i>Hucitozotli</i> .    |
| 2. <i>Tlacaxipehualiztli</i> . |  | 5. <i>Toxcatl</i> .        |
| 3. <i>Tozoztontli</i> .        |  | 6. <i>Etzalcualiztli</i> . |

ver repeated with the same number; but how is it possible, that this could happen in the period of two hundred and eight years, while the characters were only four and the numbers used but thirteen, as he himself allows.

(x) Authors differ in opinion respecting the day on which the Mexican year commenced. The reason of this was unquestionably the difference which is occasioned by our leap years, to which probably those authors did not advert. It may also have been the case, that some of them spoke of the astronomical year of the Mexicans, and not of the religious, of which we treat.

(y) Gomara, Valadès, and other authors make *Tlacaxipehualiztli*, the first month of the Mexican year, which in our table is the second. The authors of the edition of the Letters of Cortes, published at Mexico in 1780, make *Atemoztli* the first, which is the 16th in our table. But Motolinia, whose authority has most weight, has put, as we do, *Atlacabualco* for the first month; and Torquemada, Betancourt, and Martino di Leon, a Dominican, thinks as he does. To avoid troubling our readers, we omit the strong reasons which have induced us to adopt our present opinion.

- |                            |                             |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 7. <i>Tecuilbuitontli.</i> | 13. <i>Tepeilbuitl.</i>     |
| 8. <i>Hueitecuilbuitl.</i> | 14. <i>Quechbolli.</i>      |
| 9. <i>Tlaxochimaco.</i>    | 15. <i>Panquetzalitzli.</i> |
| 10. <i>Xocobuetzi.</i>     | 16. <i>Atemoztli.</i>       |
| 11. <i>Ochpaniztli.</i>    | 17. <i>Tititl.</i>          |
| 12. <i>Teotleco.</i>       | 18. <i>Izcalli.</i>         |

Their month consisted as we have already mentioned of twenty days, the names of which are these: SECT. XXV.  
The Mexican  
month.

- |                        |                               |
|------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. <i>Cipaētl.</i>     | 11. <i>Ozomatli.</i>          |
| 2. <i>Ehēcatl.</i>     | 12. <i>Malinalli.</i>         |
| 3. <i>Calli.</i>       | 13. <i>Acatl.</i>             |
| 4. <i>Cucizpalin.</i>  | 14. <i>Ocelotl.</i>           |
| 5. <i>Coatl.</i>       | 15. <i>Quauhtli.</i>          |
| 6. <i>Miquitzli.</i>   | 16. <i>Cozcaquauhtli (z).</i> |
| 7. <i>Mazatl.</i>      | 17. <i>Olin tonatiuh.</i>     |
| 8. <i>Techtl.</i>      | 18. <i>Tecpatl.</i>           |
| 9. <i>Atl.</i>         | 19. <i>Quiauhutli.</i>        |
| 10. <i>Itzcuintli.</i> | 20. <i>Xochitl.</i>           |

Although the signs or characters, which are signified by these names, should be distributed among the twenty days, according to the order above, nevertheless in their mode of reckoning, no regard was paid to the division of months, nor that of years, but to periods of thirteen days (similar to those of thirteen years in the century), which run on without interruption from the end of a month or year. The first day of the century was 1. *Cipaētl*; the second, 2. *Ehēcatl*, or wind; the third; 3. *Calli*, or house; and so on to thirteen, which was 13. *Acatl*, or reed. The 14th day began another period, reckoning 1. *Ocelotl* (tyger), 2. *Quauhtli* (eagle), &c. until the completion of the month 7. *Xochitl* (flower), and in the next month they continued to count 8. *Cipaētl*, 9. *Ehēcatl*, &c. Twenty of these periods made in thirteen months a cycle of two hundred and sixty days, and during the whole of this time, the same sign or character was not repeated

(z) Cozcaquauhtli is the name of a bird which we described in our first book. Cav. Boturini puts instead of it *Temetlatl*, or the stone used to grind maize or coacas.



**BOOK VI.** with the same number, as will appear from the calendar which we shall give hereafter. On the first day of the fourteenth month, another cycle commenced in the same order of the characters, and of the same number of periods, as the first. If the year had not, besides the eighteen months, had the five days called *Nemontemi*, or if the periods had not been continued in these days, the first day of the second year of the century would have been the same with that of the preceding, 1. *Cipaçtli*; and in like manner, the last day of every year would always have been *Xochitl*; but as the period of thirteen days was continued through the days called *Nemontemi*, on that account the signs or characters changed place, and the sign *Miquiztli*, which occupied in all the months of the first year the sixth place, occupies the first in the second year; and on the other hand, the sign *Cipaçtli*, which in the first year had occupied the first place, has the sixteenth in the second year. To know what ought to be the sign of the first day of any year, there is the following general rule. Every year *Tochtli* begins with *Cipaçtli*, every year *Acatl* with *Miquiztli*, every year *Tecpatl* with *Ozomatli*, and every year *Calli* with *Cozcaquauhtli*, adding always the number of the year to the sign of the day; as for example, the year 1. *Tochtli* has for the first day 1. *Cipaçtli*; so the 2. *Acatl* has 2. *Miquiztli*; The 3. *Tepaçtl* has 3. *Ozomatli*, and 4. *Calli* has 4. *Cozcaquauhtli*, &c. (a).

From what we have already said it will appear, that the number thirteen was held in high estimation by the Mexicans. The four periods of which the century consisted, were each of thirteen years; thirteen months formed their cycle of two hundred and sixty days; and thirteen days their smaller periods, which we have already mentioned. The origin of their esteem for this number was, according to what Siguenza has said, that thirteen was the number of their greater gods. The number four seems to have been no less esteemed amongst them. As they reckoned four periods of thirteen years each to their century, they also reckoned thirteen periods, of four years each, at the expiration of

(a) Cav. Boturini says, that the year of the Rabbit began uniformly with the day of the Rabbit, the year of the Cane with the day of the Cane, &c. and never with the days which we have mentioned; but we ought to give more faith to Siguenza, who was certainly better informed in Mexican antiquity. The system of this gentleman is fantastical and full of contradictions.

each of which they made extraordinary festivals. We have already mentioned both the fast of four months, and the Nappapohuallatolli, or general audience which was given every four months.

In respect to civil government, they divided the month into four periods of five days, and on a certain fixed day of each period their fair or great market was held; but being governed even in political matters by principles of religion in the capital, this fair was kept on the days of the Rabbet, the Cane, the Flint, and the House, which were their favourite signs.

The Mexican year consisted of seventy-three periods of thirteen days, and the century of seventy-three periods of thirteen months, or cycles of two hundred and sixty days.

It is certainly not to be doubted, that the Mexican, or Toltecan system of the distribution of time was extremely well digested, though at first view it appears rather intricate and perplexed; hence we may infer with confidence, it was not the work of a rude or unpolished people. That however which is most surprising in their mode of computing time, and which will certainly appear improbable to readers who are but little informed with respect to Mexican antiquity, is, that having discovered the excess of a few hours in the solar above the civil year, they made use of intercalary days to bring them to an equality; but with this difference in regard to the method established by Julius Cæsar in the Roman calendar, that they did not interpose a day every four years, but thirteen days, (making use here even of this favourite number) every fifty-two years; which produces the same regulation of time. At the expiration of the century they broke, as we shall mention hereafter, all their kitchen utensils, fearing that then also the fourth age, the sun and all the world were to be ended, and the last night they performed the famous ceremony of the new fire. As soon as they were assured by the new fire, that a new century, according to their belief, was granted to them by the gods, they employed the thirteen following days, in supplying their kitchen utensils, in furnishing new garments, in repairing their temples and houses, and in making every preparation for the grand festivals of the new century. These thirteen days were the intercalary days represented in their paintings by blue points; they were not included in the century just expired, nor

SECT.  
XXVI.  
Intercalary  
days.

BOOK VI. in that which was just commencing, nor did they continue in them their periods of days which they always reckoned from the first day to the last day of the century. When the intercalary days were elapsed, they began the new century with the year 1. Tochtli, and the day 1. Cipaçtli, upon the 26th day of our February, as they did at the beginning of the preceding century. We would not venture to relate these particulars, if we were not supported by the testimony of Dr. Siguenza, who, in addition to his great learning, his critical skill and sincerity, was the person who most diligently exerted himself to illustrate these points, and consulted both the best instructed Mexicans and Tezcucans, and studied their histories and paintings.

Boturini affirms, that a hundred and more years before the Christian era, the Toltecas adjusted their calendar, by adding one day every four years, and that they continued to do so for several centuries, until the Mexicans established the method we have mentioned: that the cause of the new method was, that two festivals concurred upon the same day; the one the moveable festival of Tezcatlipoca, the other that of Huitzilopochtli, which was fixed; and that the Colhuan nation had celebrated the latter, and passed over the former; upon which Tezcatlipoca in anger predicted, that the monarchy of Colhuacan would soon be dissolved; that the worship of the ancient gods of the nation would cease, and that it would remain confined to the worship of one sole divinity, which was never seen nor understood, and subjected to the power of certain strangers who would arrive from distant countries; that the kings of Mexico being made acquainted with this prediction, ordered, that whenever two festivals concurred upon the same day, the principal festival was to be celebrated on such day, and the other on the day after; and that the day which was usually added every four years, should be omitted; and that at the end of the century, the thirteen days should be added instead of them. But we are not willing to give credit to this account.

Two things must appear truly strange in the Mexican system, the one is, that they did not regulate their months by the changes of the moon; the other that they used no particular character to distinguish one century from another. But with respect to the first, we do not mean that their astronomical months did not accord with the lunar periods;



periods; because we know that their year was justly regulated by the sun, and because they used the same name, which was *Metztli*, indifferently for month or moon. The month now mentioned by us is their religious month, according to which they observed the celebration of festivals, and practised divination; not their astronomical month, of which we know nothing unless that it was divided into two periods, that is, into the period of the *watching*, and into that of the *sleep* of the moon. We are however persuaded, that they must have made use of some characters to distinguish one century from another, as this distinction was so very easy and necessary; but we have not been able to ascertain this upon the authority of any historian.

The distribution of the signs or characters, both of days and years, served the Mexicans as superstitious prognostics, according to which they predicted the good or bad fortune of infants from the sign under which they were born; and the happiness or misfortune of marriages, the success of wars, and of every other thing from the day on which they were undertaken or put in execution; and on this account also they considered not only the peculiar character of every day and year, but likewise the ruling character of every period of days or years; for the first sign or character of every period, was the ruling sign through the whole of it. Of merchants we find, that whenever they wished to undertake any journey, they endeavoured to begin it on some day of that period, during which the sign *Coatl* (serpent) ruled, and then they promised themselves much success in their commerce. Those persons who were born under the sign *Quaubtli* (eagle), were suspected to prove mockers and slanderers, if they were males; if females, loquacious and impudent. The concurrence of the year with the day of the Rabbet was esteemed the most fortunate season.

To represent a month they painted a circle or wheel, divided into twenty figures signifying twenty days, as appears in the plate we have given, which is a copy from one published by Valadès, in his *Rettorica Cristiana*, and the only one hitherto published. To represent the year they painted another, which they divided into eighteen figures of the eighteen months, and frequently painted within the wheel the image of the moon. The representation which we have given of this image, was taken from that published by Gemelli, which was a copy from an ancient

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Divination.

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XXVIII.  
Figures of  
the century,  
the year, and  
month.

**BOOK VI.** ancient painting in the possession of Dr. Sigüenza (*b*). The century was represented by a wheel divided into fifty-two figures, or rather by four figures which were thirteen times designed. They used to paint a serpent twisted about the wheel, which pointed out by four twists of its body the four principal winds, and the beginnings of the four periods of thirteen years. The wheel which we here present, is a copy of two others, one of which was published by Valadès, and the other by Gemelli, within which we have represented the sun, as was generally done by the Mexicans. In another place we shall explain the figures of these wheels in order to satisfy our curious readers.

SECT.  
XXIX.  
Years and  
months of  
the Chiapanese.

The method adopted by the Mexicans to compute months, years, and centuries, was, as we have already mentioned, common to all the polished nations of Anahuac, without any variation among them except in the names and figures (*c*). The Chiapanese, who, among the tributaries to the crown of Mexico, were the most distant from the capital; instead of the names and the figures of the Rabbet, the Cane, Flint, and House, made use of the names *Votan*, *Lambat*, *Been*, and *Chinan*, and instead of the names of the Mexican days, they adopted the names of twenty illustrious men among their ancestors, among which the four names above mentioned, occupied the same place that the names Rabbet, Cane, Flint, and House, held amongst the Mexican days. The Chiapanese names of the twenty days of the month were the following:

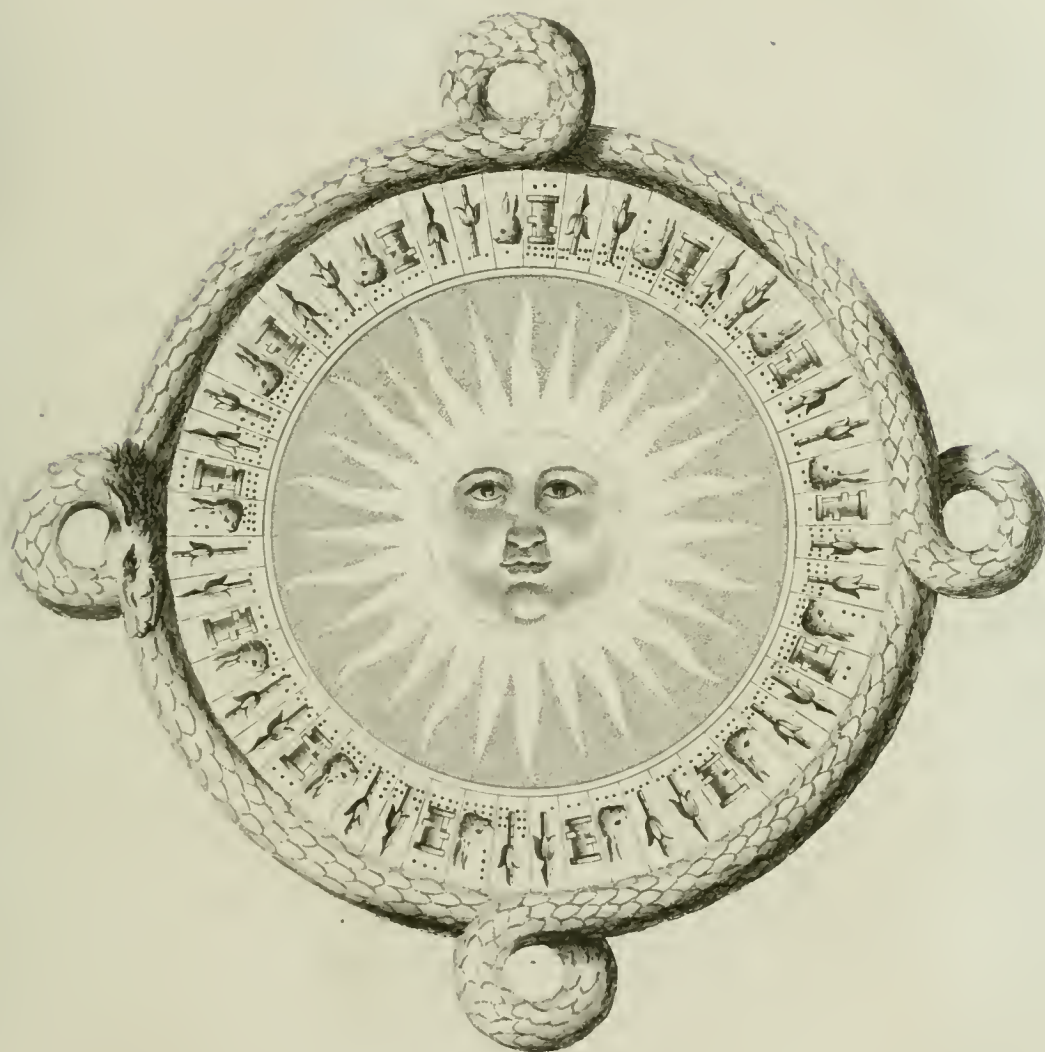
- |                   |                         |
|-------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. <i>Mox.</i>    | 7. <i>Moxic.</i>        |
| 2. <i>Igb.</i>    | 8. <i>LAMBAT.</i>       |
| 3. <i>VOTAN.</i>  | 9. <i>Mòb, or Mùlu.</i> |
| 4. <i>Ghanan.</i> | 10. <i>Elab.</i>        |
| 5. <i>Abagh.</i>  | 11. <i>Batz.</i>        |
| 6. <i>Tox.</i>    | 12. <i>Enob.</i>        |

(*b*) Three copies of the Mexican year have been published. The first that of Valadès, the second that of Sigüenza, published by Gemelli, and the third that of Boturini, published at Mexico, in 1770. In that of Sigüenza, within the wheel of the century, appears that of the year; and in that of Valadès, within both wheels, that of the month is represented. We have separated them to make them more intelligible.

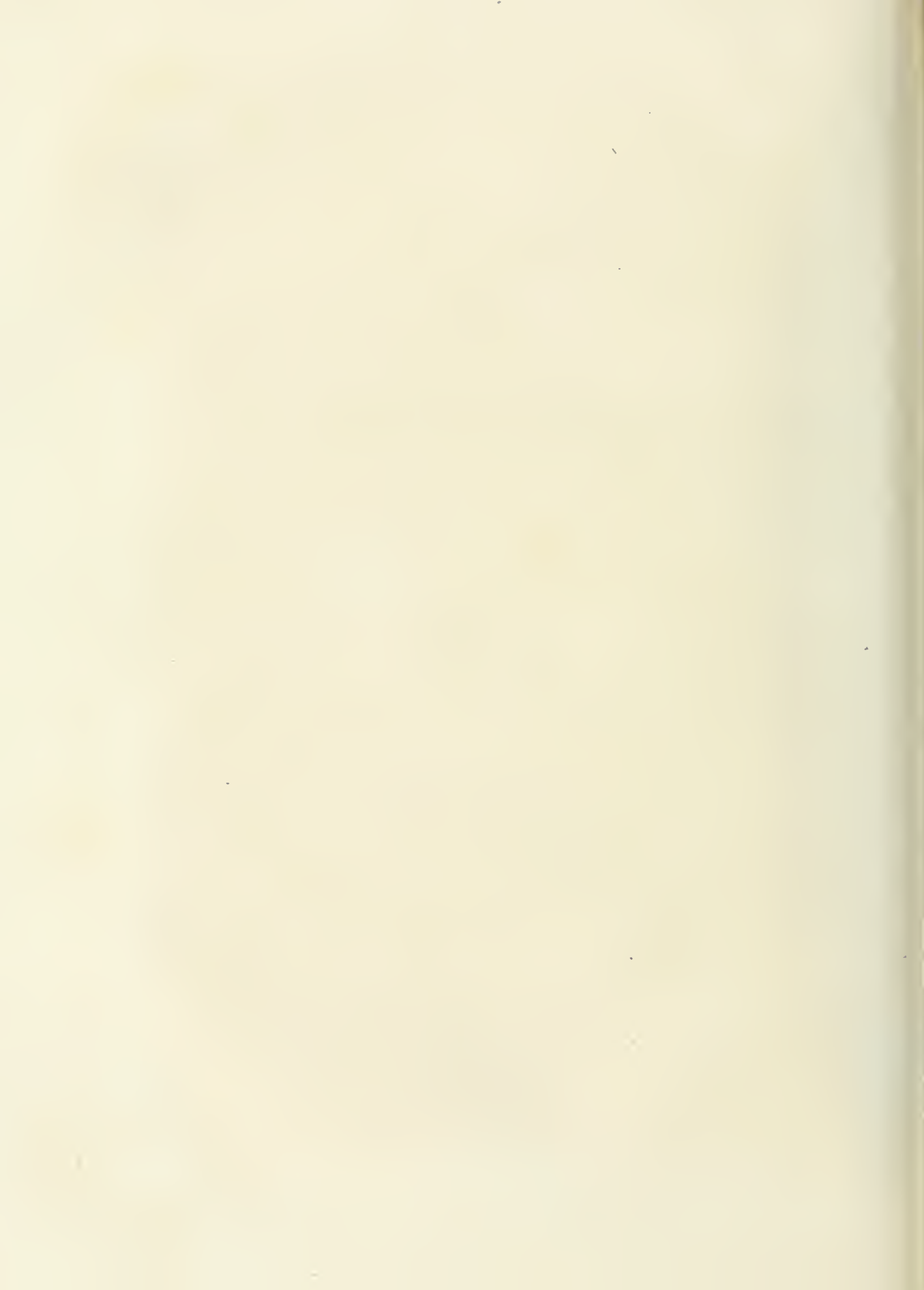
(*c*) Boturini says, that the Indians of the diocese of Guaxaca made their year consist of thirteen months; but it must have been their astronomical or civil year, and not their religious year.

13. *BEEN.*

*Mexican Century.*







13. *BEEN.*14. *Hix.*15. *Tziquin.*16. *Chabin*17. *Cbix.*18. *CHINAX.*19. *Cabogh.*20. *Agbual.*

There was no month in which the Mexicans did not celebrate some festival or other, which was either fixed and established to be held on a certain day of the month, or moveable, from being annexed to some signs which did not correspond with the same days in every year. The principal moveable festivals, according to Boturini, were sixteen in number, among which the fourth was that of the god of wine, and the thirteenth, that of the god of fire. With respect to those festivals which were fixed, we shall mention as concisely as possible, as much as we judge will be sufficient to convey a competent idea of the religion and the superstitious disposition of the Mexicans.

On the second day of the first month, they made a great festival to Tlaloc, accompanied with sacrifices of children, which were purchased for that purpose, and a gladiatorian sacrifice; these children, which were purchased, were not sacrificed all at once, but successively so, in the course of three months, which corresponded to those of March and April, to obtain from this god the rains which were necessary for their maize.

SECT. XXX.  
Festivals of  
the four first  
months.

On the first day of the second month, which, in the first year of their century, corresponded to the 18th of March (*d*), they made a most solemn festival to the god Xipe, the sacrifices offered at which were extremely cruel. They dragged the victims by their hair to the upper area of the temple, where, after they were sacrificed in the usual manner, they skinned them, and the priests clothed themselves in their skins, and appeared for some days in these bloody coverings. The owners of prisoners that were sacrificed, were bound to fast for twenty days, after which they made great banquets, at which they dressed the flesh of the victims. The stealers of gold or silver were sacrificed along with prisoners, the law of the kingdom having ordained that punishment for them. The circumstance of skinning the

(*d*) Whenever we mention the correspondence of the Mexican months with ours, it is to be understood of those of the first year of their century.

BOOK VI. victims, obtained to this month the name of *Tlacaxipebualiztli*, or the skinning of men. At this festival, the military went through several exercises of arms and practices of war, and the nobles celebrated with songs the glorious actions of their ancestors. In Tlascala, the nobles, as well as the plebeians had dances, at which they were all dressed in skins of animals, and embroidery of gold and silver. On account of these dances, which were common to all ranks of people, they gave the festival as well as the month the name of *Coailhuatl*, or the general festival.

In the third month, which began on the 7th of April, the second festival of Tlaloc was celebrated with the sacrifice of some children. The skins of the victims, which were sacrificed to the god Xipe, in the preceding month, were carried in procession to a temple called *Yopico*, which was within the inclosure of the greater temple, and there deposited in a cave. In this same month the *Xochimanqui*, or those who traded in flowers, celebrated the festival of their goddess Coatlicue, and presented her garlands of flowers curiously woven. But before this offering was made, no person was allowed to smell these flowers. The ministers of the temples watched every night of this month, and on that account made great fires; hence the month took the name of *Toxoztonli*, or little watch.

The fourth month was called *Hueitoxostli*, or great watch; because, during this month, not only the priests, but also the nobility and populace, kept watch. They drew blood from their ears, eyebrows, nose, tongue, arms, and thighs, to expiate the faults committed by their senses, and exposed at their doors leaves of the sword-grass, coloured with blood, but with no other intention, probably, than to make ostentation of their penance. In this manner they prepared themselves for the festival of the goddess Centeotl, which was celebrated with sacrifices of human victims and animals, particularly of quails, and with many warlike exercises, which they performed before the temple of this goddess. Little girls carried ears of maize to the temple, and after offering them to that false divinity, carried them to granaries, in order that these ears, thus hallowed, might preserve all the rest of the grain from any destructive insect. This month commenced on the 27th of April.

The



The fifth month, which began upon the 17th of May, was almost wholly festival. The first, which was one of the four principal festivals of the Mexicans, was that which they made in honour of their great god Tezcatlipoca. Ten days before it a priest dressed himself in the same habit and badges which distinguished that god, and went out of the temple with a bunch of flowers in his hands, and a little flute of clay which made a very shrill sound. Turning his face first towards the east, and afterwards to the other three principal winds, he sounded the flute loudly, and then taking up a little dust from the earth with his finger, he put it to his mouth and swallowed it. Upon hearing the sound of the flute, all kneeled down; criminals were thrown into the utmost terror and consternation, and with tears implored that god to grant a pardon to their transgressions, and hinder them from being discovered and detected; warriors prayed to him for courage and strength against the enemies of the nation, successful victories, and a multitude of prisoners for sacrifices; and all the rest of the people, using the same ceremony of taking up and eating the dust, supplicated with fervour the clemency of the gods. The sound of the little flute was repeated every day until the festival. One day before it, the lords carried a new habit to the idol, which the priests immediately put upon it, and kept the old one as a relique in some repository of the temple; they adorned the idol with particular ensigns of gold and beautiful feathers, and raised up the tapestry, which always covered the entrance of the sanctuary, that the image of their god might be seen and adored by the multitude. When the day of the festival arrived, the people flocked to the lower area of the temple. Some priests painted black, and dressed in a similar habit with the idol, carried it aloft upon a litter, which the youths and virgins of the temple, bound with thick cords of wreaths of crisp maize, and put one of these wreaths round the neck, and a garland on the head of the idol. This cord, the emblem of drought, which they desired to prevent, was called *Toxcatl*, which name was likewise given to the month on account of this ceremony. All the youths and virgins of the temple, as well as the nobles of the court, carried similar wreaths about their necks and in their hands. Then followed a procession through the lower area of the temple, where flowers and odoriferous herbs were

BOOK VI.

SECT.

XXXI.

Grand festival of the god Tezcatlipoca.

BOOK IV. scattered; two priests offered incense to the idol, which two others carried upon their shoulders. In the mean while the people kept kneeling, striking their backs with thick knotted cords. When the procession finished, and also their discipline, they carried back the idol to the altar, and made abundant offerings to it of gold, gems, flowers, feathers, animals, and provisions, which were prepared by the virgins and other women, who, on account of some particular vow, assisted for that day in the service of the temple. These provisions were carried in procession by the same virgins, who were led by a respectable priest, dressed in a strange fantastical habit, and lastly the youths carried them to the habitations of the priests for whom they had been prepared.

Afterwards they made the sacrifice of the victim representing the god Tezcatlipoca. This victim was the handsomest and best shaped youth of all the prisoners. They selected him a year before the festival, and during that whole time he was always dressed in a similar habit with the idol; he was permitted to go round the city, but always accompanied by a strong guard, and was adored every where, as the living image of that supreme divinity. Twenty days before the festival, this youth married four beautiful girls, and on the five days preceding the festival, they gave him sumptuous entertainments, and allowed him all the pleasures of life. On the day of the festival, they led him with a numerous attendance to the temple of Tezcatlipoca, but before they came there they disinified his wives. He accompanied the idol in the procession, and when the hour of sacrifice was come, they stretched him upon the altar, and the high priest with great reverence opened his breast and pulled out his heart. His body was not, like the bodies of other victims, thrown down the stairs, but carried in the arms of the priests and beheaded at the bottom of the temple. His head was strung up in the *Txompantli*, among the rest of the skulls of the victims which were sacrificed to Tezcatlipoca, and his legs and arms were dressed and prepared for the tables of the lords. After the sacrifice, a grand dance took place of the collegiate youths and nobles who were present at the festival. At sun-set, the virgins of the temple made a new offering of bread baked with honey. This bread, with some other things unknown to us, was put before the altar of Tezcatlipoca, and

and was destined to be the reward of the youths who should be the victors in the race which they made down the stairs of the temple; they were also rewarded with a garment, and received the praise and applause of the priests as well as the people who were spectators. The festival was concluded by dismissing from the seminaries all the youths and virgins who were arrived at an age fit for marriage. The youths who remained, mocked the others with satirical and humorous raillery, and threw at them handfuls of rushes and other things, upbraiding them with leaving the service of god for the pleasures of matrimony; the priests always granting them indulgence in this emanation of youthful vivacity.

SECT.  
XXXII.  
The grand  
festival of  
Huitzilopochtli.

In this same fifth month, the first festival of Huitzilopochtli was celebrated. The priests made a statue of this god of the regular stature of a man; they made the flesh of a heap of *Tzobualli*, which is a certain eatable plant, and the bones of the wood *Mizquitl*. They dressed it in cotton with a mantle of feathers; put on its head a small parasol of paper, adorned with beautiful feathers, and above that a bloody little knife of flint-stone, upon its breast a plate of gold, and on its garment were several figures representing bones of the dead, and the image of a man torn in pieces; by which they intended to signify either the power of this god in battle, or the terrible revenge, which, according to their mythology, he took against those who conspired against the honour and life of his mother. They put this statue in a litter made on four wooden serpents, which four principal officers of the Mexican army bore from the place where the statue was formed, into the altar where it was placed. Several youths forming a circle, and joining themselves together by means of arrows, which they laid hold of with their hands, the one by the head, the other by the point, carried before the litter a piece of paper more than fifteen perches long, on which, probably, the glorious actions of that false divinity were represented, and which they sung to the sound of musical instruments.

When the day of the festival was arrived, in the morning they made a great sacrifice of quails, which after their heads were twisted off, they threw at the foot of the altar. The first who made this sacrifice was the king, after him the priests, and lastly, the people. Of this great profusion



## BOOK VI.

fusion of quails, one part was dressed for the king's table, and those of the priests, and the remainder was reserved for another occasion. Every person who was present at the festival, carried a clay censer, and a quantity of bitumen of Judea, to burn in offering to their god, and all the coal which was made use of was afterwards collected in a large stove called *Tlexiēlli*. On account of this ceremony they called this festival the *incensing of Huitzilopochtli*. Immediately after followed the dance of the virgins and priests. The virgins dyed their faces, their arms were adorned with red feathers, on their heads they wore garlands of crisp leaves of maize, and in their hands they bore canes which were cleft, with little flags of cotton or paper in them. The faces of the priests were dyed black, their foreheads bound with little shields of paper, and their lips daubed with honey, they covered their natural parts with paper, and each held a sceptre, at the extremity of which was a flower made of feathers, and above that another tuft of feathers. Upon the edge of the stove two men danced, bearing on their backs certain cages of pine. The priests in the course of their dancing, from time to time, touched the earth with the extremity of their sceptres, as if they rested themselves upon them. All these ceremonies had their particular signification, and the dance on account of the festival at which it took place was called *Toxachocholla*. In another separate place, the court and military people danced. The musical instruments, which in some dances were placed in the centre, on this occasion were kept without and hid, so that the sound of them was heard but the musicians were unseen.

One year before this festival, the prisoner who was to be sacrificed to Huitzilopochtli, to which prisoner they gave the name of *Iteocale*, which signifies, *Wife Lord of Heaven*, was selected along with the victim for Tezcatlipoca. Both of them rambled about the whole year; with this difference however, that the victim of Tezcatlipoca was adored, but not that of Huitzilopochtli. When the day of the festival was arrived, they dressed the prisoner in a curious habit of painted paper, and put on his head a mitre made of the feathers of an eagle, with a plume upon the top of it. He carried upon his back a small net, and over it a little bag, and in this dress he mingled himself in the dance of the courtiers. The most singular thing respecting this prisoner

was,

was, that although he was doomed to die on that day, yet he had the liberty of fixing the hour of the sacrifice himself. Whenever he chose he presented himself to the priests, in whose arms, and not upon the altar, the sacrificer broke his breast, and pulled out his heart. When the sacrifice was ended, the priests began a great dance, which continued all the remainder of the day, excepting some intervals, which they employed to repeat the incense-offerings. At this same festival, the priests made a slight cut on the breast and on the belly of all the children of both sexes which were born within one preceding year. This was the sign or character, by which the Mexican nation specially acknowledged itself consecrated to the worship of its protecting god; and this is also the reason why several authors have believed, that the rite of circumcision was established among the Mexicans (*e*). But if possibly the people of Yucatan and the Toton-

nacas

(*e*) F. Acosta says, that “i Messicani sacrificavano ne’ lor fanciulli e l’orechie e il membro genitale nel che in qualche maniera contra facevano la circoncisione de’ Giudei.” But if this author speaks of the true Mexicans, that is, the descendants of the ancient Aztecas who founded the city of Mexico, whose history we write, his assertion is absolutely false; for after the most diligent search and enquiry, there is not the smallest vestige of such a rite to be found among them. If he speaks of the Totonacas, who, by having been subjects of the king of Mexico, are, by several authors, called Mexicans, it is true, that they made such an incision on children.

The indecent and lying author of the work, entitled, “*Recherches Philosophiques sur les Americains*,” adopts the account given by Acosta, and makes a long discourse on the origin of circumcision, which he believes to have been invented by the Egyptians, or the Ethiopians, to preserve themselves, as he says, from worms, which trouble inhabitants of the torrid zone who are not circumcised. He asserts, that the Hebrews learned it from the Egyptians, and that at first it was a mere physical remedy, but was afterwards by fanaticism constituted a religious ceremony: that the heat of the torrid zone is the cause of this disorder, and that the Mexicans, and other nations of America, in order to free themselves from it, adopted circumcision. But leaving aside the falseness of his principles, and his fondness to discuss minutely every subject which has any connexion with obscene pleasures, that we may attend to that only which concerns our history, we assert that no traces of the practice of circumcision have ever been found among the Mexicans, or among the nations subjected by them, except the Totonacas; nor did we ever hear of any such distemper of worms in these countries, though they are all situated under the torrid zone, and we visited for thirteen years all kinds of sick persons. Besides, if heat is the cause of such a distemper, it ought to have been more frequent in the native country of that author than in the inland provinces of Mexico, where the climate is more temperate. M. Maller, who is quoted by the same author, made no less a mistake; in his Discourse on Circumcision, inserted in the Encyclopedia, he, from not having understood the expressions of Acosta, believed that they cut the ears and the parts of generation, of all the Mexican children entirely off; in wonder at which he asks, if it was possible that many of them could remain alive after so cruel an operation? But if we had believed what M. Maller believed, we would rather have asked how there came to be any Mexi-

BOOK VI. nacas used this rite, it was never practised by the Mexicans, or any other nation of the empire.

SECT.  
XXVIII.  
The festivals  
of the sixth,  
seventh,  
eighth, and  
ninth  
months.

In the sixth month, which began upon the sixth of June, the third festival of the god Tlaloc was celebrated. They strewed the temple in a curious manner with rushes from the lake of Citlaltepec. The priests who went to fetch them, committed various hostilities upon all passengers whom they met in their way, plundering them of every thing they had about them, and sometimes even stripping them quite naked, and beating them if they made any resistance. With such impunity were these priests, turned assassins, favoured, that they not only robbed the common people, but even carried off the royal tributes from the collectors of them, if they chanced to meet with them, no private persons being allowed to make complaint against them, nor the king to punish them for such enormities. On the day of the festival, they all eat a certain kind of gruel which they called *Etsalli*, from which the month took the name of *Etsalqualistli*. They carried to the temple a vast quantity of painted paper and elastic gum, with which they besmeared the paper and the cheeks of the idol. After this ridiculous ceremony, they sacrificed several prisoners who were clothed in habits the same with that of the god Tlaloc, and his companions, and in order to complete the scene of their cruelty, the priests, attended by a great croud of people, went in vessels to a certain place of the lake, where in former times there was a whirlpool, and there sacrificed two children of both sexes, by drowning them, along with the hearts of the prisoners who had been sacrificed at this festival, in order to obtain from their gods the necessary rains for their fields. Upon this occasion, those ministers of the temple, who, in the course of that year, had either been negligent in office, or convicted of some high misdemeanor which was not, however, deserving of capital punishment, were stripped of their priesthood, and received a chastisement similar to the trick which is practised on seamen the first time they pass the

cans at all in the world? That no future mistakes may be committed by those who read the ancient Spanish historians of America, it is necessary to be observed, that when these historians say that the Mexicans, or other nations *sacrificed* the tongue, the ears, or any other member of the body, all they mean by it is, that they made some slight incision in these members, and drew some blood from them.



line, but more severe, as by being repeatedly ducked in the water they were at last so exhausted, it became necessary to carry them home to their houses to be recovered.

In the seventh month, which began upon the 26th of June, the festival of Huixtocihuatl, the goddess of salt, was celebrated. A day before the festival there was a great dance of women, who danced in a circle, joined to each other by strings or cords of different flowers, and wearing garlands of wormwood on their heads. A female prisoner, clothed in the habit of the idol of that goddess, was placed in the centre of the circle. The dancing was accompanied with singing, in both of which two old respectable priests took the lead. This dance continued the whole night, and in the morning after, the dance of the priests began, and lasted the whole day, without any other interruption than the sacrifice of prisoners. The priests wore decent garments, and held in their hands those beautiful yellow flowers which the Mexicans called *Cempoalxochitl*, and many Europeans *Indian Carnations*; at sun-set they made the sacrifice of the female prisoner, and concluded the festival with sumptuous banquets.

During the whole of this month the Mexicans made great rejoicings. They wore their best dresses; dances and amusements in their gardens were frequent; the poems which they sang were all on love, or some other equally pleasing subject. The populace went a hunting in the mountains, and the nobles used warlike exercises in the field, and sometimes in vessels upon the lake. These rejoicings of the nobility procured to this month the name of *Tecuilbuitl*, the festival of the lords, or of *Tecuilbuitontli*, the small festival of the lords, as it was truly so, in comparison of the festival of the following month.

In the eighth month, which began upon the 16th day of July, they made a solemn festival to the goddess *Centeotl*, under the name of *Xilonen*; for as we have already mentioned, they changed the name according to the state of the maize. On this festival they called her *Xilonen*; because the ear of maize, while the grain was still tender, was called *Xilotl*. The festival continued eight days, during which there was constant dancing in the temple of that goddess. On such days, the king and the nobles gave away meat and drink to the populace, both of which were placed in rows in the under area of the temple, and there

BOOK VI. *the Chhiampinolli*, which was one of their most common drinks; was given, and also the *Tamalli*, which was paste of maize, made into small rolls, and also other provisions, of which we shall treat hereafter. Presents were made to the priests, and the nobles invited each other reciprocally to entertainments, and presented each other with gold, silver, beautiful feathers, and curious animals. They sung the glorious actions of their ancestors, and boasted of the nobleness and antiquity of their families. At sun-set, when the feasting of the populace was ended, the priests had their dance which continued four hours, and on that account there was a splendid illumination in the temple. The last day was celebrated with the dance of the nobility and the military, among whom danced also a female prisoner, who represented that goddess, and was sacrificed after the dance along with the other prisoners. Thus the festival, as well as the month, had the name of *Hueitecuilibuitl*, that is, the great festival of the lords.

In the ninth month, which began on the 5th of August, the second festival of Huitzilopochtli was kept; on which, besides the usual ceremonies, they adorned all the idols with flowers; not only those which were worshipped in the temples, but likewise those which they had for private devotion in their houses; from whence the month was called *Flaxochimaco*. The night preceding the festival was employed in preparing the meats which they eat next day with the greatest jubilee. The nobles of both sexes danced together, the arms of the one resting on the shoulders of the other. This dance, which lasted until the evening, finished with the sacrifice of some prisoners. In this month also the festival of Jacateuctli, the god of commerce, was held, accompanied with sacrifices.

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XXXIV.  
Festivals of  
the tenth, eleventh,  
twelfth, and  
thirteenth  
months.

In the tenth month, the beginning of which was on the 25th of August, they kept the festival of *Xiuhtecuētlī*, god of fire. In the preceding months, the priests brought out of the woods a large tree, which they fixed in the under area of the temple. The day before the festival they stripped off its branches and bark, and adorned it with painted paper, and from that time it was revered as the image of *Xiuhtecuētlī*. The owners of the prisoners which were to be sacrificed on this occasion, dyed their bodies with red ochre, to resemble in some measure the colour of fire, and were dressed in their best garments.

They

They went to the temple, accompanied by their prisoners, and passed the whole night in singing and dancing with them. The day of the festival being arrived, and also the hour of the sacrifice, they tied the hands and feet of the victims, and sprinkled the powder of *Jaubtli* (f) in their faces, in order to deaden their senses, that their torments might be less painful. Then they began the dance, each with his victim upon his back, and one after the other threw them into a large fire kindled in the area, from which they soon after drew them with hooks of wood, to complete the sacrifice upon the altar in the ordinary way. The Mexicans gave to this month the name of *Xocobuetzi*, which signifies the maturity of the fruits. The Tlascalans called the ninth month *Miccailbuitl*, or the festival of the dead; because in it they made oblations for the souls of the deceased; and the tenth month *Hueimiccailbuitl*, or the grand festival of the dead; because in that they wore mourning, and made lamentation for the death of their ancestors.

Five days before the commencement of the eleventh month, which began on the 14th of September, all festivals ceased. During the first eight days of the month, was a dance, but without music or singing; every one directing his movements according to his own pleasure. After this period was elapsed, they clothed a female prisoner in the habit of Teteoinan, or the mother of the gods, whose festival was celebrating; the prisoner was attended by many women, and particularly by the midwives, who for four whole days employed themselves to amuse and comfort her. When the principal day of the festival was arrived, they led this woman to the upper area of the temple of that goddess, where they sacrificed her; but this was not performed in the usual mode, nor upon the common altar where other victims were sacrificed, for they beheaded her upon the shoulders of another woman, and stripped her skin off, which a youth, with a numerous attendance, carried to present to the idol of Huitzilopochtli, in memory of the inhuman sacrifice which their ancestors had made of the princess

(f) The *Jaubtli* is a plant whose stem is about a cubit long, its leaves are similar to those of the willow, but indented, its flowers are yellow and the roots thin. The flowers, as well as the other parts of the plant, have the same smell and taste as those of the anise. It is very useful in medicine, and the Mexican physicians applied it in different dilempers; it was also made use of for many superstitious ends.



of Colhuacan ; but before it was presented, they sacrificed in the usual mode four prisoners, in memory, as is probable, of the four Xochimilcan prisoners which they had sacrificed during their captivity in Colhuacan. In this month they made a review of their troops, and enlisted those youths who were destined to the profession of arms, and who, in future were to serve in war when there should be occasion. All the nobles and the populace swept the temples, on which account this month took the name of *Ochpaniztli*, which signifies, *a sweeping*. They cleaned and mended the streets, and repaired the aqueducts and their houses, all which labours were attended with many superstitious rites.

In the twelfth month, which began upon the 4th of October, they celebrated the festival of the arrival of the gods, which they expressed by the word *Teotleco*, which name also they gave to both the month and the festival. On the 16th day of this month, they covered all the temples, and the corner stones of the streets of the city with green branches. On the 18th, the gods, according to their accounts, began to arrive, the first of whom was the great god Tezcatlipoca. They spread before the door of the sanctuary of this god a mat made of the palm-tree, and sprinkled upon it some powder of maize. The high-priest stood in watch all the preceding night, and went frequently to look at the mat, and as soon as he discovered any footsteps upon the powder, which had been trod upon, no doubt, by some other deceitful priest, he began to cry out, “ *Our great god is now arrived.*” All the other priests, with a great croud of people, repaired there to adore him, and celebrate his arrival with hymns and dances, which were repeated all the rest of the night. On the two days following, other gods successively arrived, and on the twentieth and last day, when they believed that all their gods were come, a number of youths dressed in the form of various monsters, danced around a large fire, into which, from time to time, they threw prisoners, who were there consumed as burnt sacrifices. At sun-set they made great entertainments, at which they drank more than usual, imagining, that the wine with which they filled their bellies, would serve to wash the feet of their gods. To such excesses did the barbarous superstition of those people lead ! Nor was the ceremony which they practised, in order to preserve their children

children from the evil which they dreaded from one of their gods, less extravagant : this was the custom of sticking a number of feathers on their shoulders, their arms, and legs, by means of turpentine.

In the thirteenth month, which began on the 24th of October, the festival of the gods of water and the mountains, was celebrated. The name *Tepcilbuitl*, which was given to this month, signified only the festival of the mountains. They made little mountains of paper, on which they placed some little serpents made of wood, or of roots of trees, and certain small idols called *Ehecatotontin*, covered with a particular paste. They put both upon the altars and worshipped them, as the images of the gods of the mountains, sung hymns to them, and presented copal and meats to them. The prisoners who were sacrificed at this festival were five in number, one man and four women ; to each of which a particular name was given, alluding, probably, to some mystery of which we are ignorant. They clothed them in painted paper, which was besmeared with elastic gum, and carried them in procession in litters, after which they sacrificed them in the usual manner.

In the fourteenth month, which commenced on the 13th of November, was the festival of Mixcoatl, goddess of the chace. It was preceded by four days of rigid and general fasting, accompanied with the effusion of blood, during which time they made arrows and darts for the supply of their arsenals, and also certain small arrows which they placed together with pieces of pine, and some meats, upon the tombs of their relations, and after one day burned them. When the fast was over, the inhabitants of Mexico and Tlatelolco went out to a general chace in one of the neighbouring mountains, and all the animals which they caught were brought, with great rejoicings to Mexico, where they were sacrificed to Mixcoatl ; the king himself was present not only at the sacrifice, but likewise at the chace. They gave to this month the name of *Quechilli*, because at this season the beautiful bird which went amongst them by that name, and by many called *flamingo*, made its appearance on the banks of the Mexican lake.

SECT.  
XXXV.  
The festivals  
of the five last  
months.

In the fifteenth month, the beginning of which was on the 3d day of December, the third and principal festival of Huitzilopochtli and his brother, was celebrated. On the first day of the month, the priests formed two statues of those two gods, of different seeds pasted together,

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ther, with the blood of children that had been sacrificed, in which in the place of bones they substituted pieces of the wood of acacia. They placed these statues upon the principal altar of the temple, and during the whole of that night the priests kept watch. The day following, they gave their benediction to the statues, and also to a small quantity of water which was preserved in the temple for the purpose of being sprinkled on the face of any new king of Mexico, and of the general of their armies after their election; but the general, besides being besprinkled, was required to drink it. As soon as the statues were consecrated by this benediction, the dance of both sexes began, and continued all the month for three or four hours every day. During the whole of the month a great deal of blood was shed; and four days before the festival, the masters of the prisoners which were to be sacrificed, and which were selected for the occasion, observed a fast, and had their bodies painted of various colours. In the morning of the twentieth day, on which the festival was held, a grand and solemn procession was made. A priest bearing a serpent of wood, which he raised high up in his hands, called *Ezpamitl*, and which was the badge of the gods of war, went first, with another priest bearing a standard, such as they used in their armies. After them came a third priest, who carried the statue of the god Painalton, the vicar of Huitzilopochtli. Then came the victims after the other priests, and lastly, the people. The procession set out from the greater temple, towards the district of *Teotlachco*, where it stopped, while two prisoners of war, and some purchased slaves, were sacrificed; they proceeded next to Tlatelolco, Popotla, and Chapoltepec, from whence they returned to the city, and after having passed through other districts, re-entered the temple.

This circuit of nine or ten miles, which they performed, consumed the greatest part of the day, and at all the places where they stopped, they sacrificed quails, and, probably, some prisoners also. When they arrived at the temple, they placed the statue of Painalton, and the standard, upon the altar of Huitzilopochtli; the king offered incense to the two statues of seeds, and then ordered another procession to be made round the temple, at the conclusion of which they sacrificed the rest of the prisoners and slaves. These sacrifices were made at the close of day. That night the priests kept watch, and the next morning they carried



carried the statue in paste of Huitzilopochtli to a great hall, which was within the precincts of the temple, and there in the presence only of the king, four principal priests, and four superiors of the seminaries, the priest Quetzalcoatl, who was the chief of the Tlamacazqui, or penance-doers, threw a dart at the statue, which pierced it through and through. They then said, that their god was dead. One of the principal priests cut out the heart of the statue, and gave it to the king to eat. The body was divided in two parts; one of which was given to the people of Tlatelolco, and the other to the Mexicans. The share was again divided into four parts, for the four quarters of the city, and each of these four parts into as many minute particles as there were men in each quarter. This ceremony they expressed by the word *Teocualo*, which signifies, the god to be eat. The women never tasted this sacred paste, probably, because they had no concern with the profession of arms. We are ignorant, whether or not they made the same use of the statue of Tlacahuepan. The Mexicans gave to this month the name of *Panquetzalixtli*, which signifies, the raising of the standard, alluding to the one which they carried in the above procession. In this month they employed themselves in renewing the boundaries, and repairing the inclosures of their fields.

In the sixteenth month, which began upon the 23d of December, the fifth and last festival of the gods of water, and the mountains, took place. They prepared for it with the usual austerities, by making oblations of copal and other aromatic gums. They formed little figures of the mountains, which they consecrated to those gods, and certain little idols made of the paste of various eatable seeds, of which when they had worshipped them, they opened the breasts, and cut out the hearts, with a weaver's shuttle, and afterwards cut off their heads, in imitation of the rites of the sacrifices. The body was divided by the heads of families amongst their domestics, in order that by eating them they might be preserved from certain distempers, to which those persons who were negligent of worship to those deities conceived themselves to be subject. They burned the habits in which they had dressed the small idols, and preserved the ashes with the utmost care in their oratories, and also the vessels in which the images had been formed. Besides these rites, which were usually observed in private houses, they  
made

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made some sacrifices of human victims in the temple. For four days preceding the festival, a strict fast was observed, accompanied with the effusion of blood. This month was called *Atemoztli*, which signifies the descent of the water, for a reason which we will immediately mention (*g*).

In the seventeenth month, which began upon the 12th of January, they celebrated the festival of the goddess *Ilamateuctli*. A female prisoner was selected to represent her, and was clothed in the habit of her idol. They made her dance alone to a tune which some old priests sung to her, and she was permitted to express her affliction at her approaching death, which, however, was esteemed a bad omen from other victims. At sun-set, on the day of the festival, the priests adorned with the ensigns of various gods, sacrificed her in the usual manner, and afterwards cut off her head, when one of the priests, taking it in his hand, began a dance, in which he was joined by the rest. The priests, during this festival, made a race down the stairs of the temple; and the following day the populace entertained themselves with a game similar to the Lupercalia of the Romans; for running through the streets, they beat all the women they met with little bags of hay. In this same month they kept the festival of *Micltlanteuctli*, god of hell, on which they made a nocturnal sacrifice of a prisoner, and also the second festival of *Jacateuctli*, god of the merchants. The name *Tititl*, which they gave to this month, signifies the constringent power of the season which the cold occasions (*b*).

In the eighteenth and last month, which began on the first of February, the second festival of the god of fire was held. On the 10th day of this month, the whole of the Mexican youth went out to the chase, not only of wild beasts in the woods, but also to catch the birds of the lake. On the sixteenth, the fire of the temple and private houses was extinguished, and they kindled it anew before the idol of that

(*g*) Martino di Leone, a Dominican, makes *Atemoztli* signify, the altar of the gods; but the name of the altar is *Tecomoztli*, not *Atemoztli*. Boturini pretends that the name is a contraction of *Atecomoztli*, but such contractions obtained not among the Mexicans; besides the figure of this month which represents water falling obliquely upon the steps of an edifice, expresses exactly the descent of water signified by the word *Atemoztli*.

(*b*) The above author says, that *Tititl* signifies our belly; but all those who understand the Mexican language know that such a name would be a solecism.

god, which they adorned on the occasion, with gems and beautiful feathers. The hunters presented all their spoils to the priests, one part of which was consumed in burnt-offerings to their gods, and the other was sacrificed, and afterwards dressed for the tables of the nobility and priests. The women made oblations of *Tamalli*, which they afterwards distributed among the hunters. One of the ceremonies observed upon this occasion was that of boring the ears of all the children of each sex, and putting ear-rings in them. But the greatest singularity attending this festival was that not a single human victim was sacrificed at it.

They celebrated likewise in this month the second festival of the mother of the gods, respecting which, however, we know nothing except the ridiculous custom of lifting up the children by the ears into the air, from a belief that they would thereby become higher in stature. With regard to the name *Izcalli*, which they gave to this month, we are unable to give any explanation (*i*).

After the eighteen months of the Mexican year were completed on the 20th of February, upon the 21st the five days called *Nemontemi* commenced, during which days no festival was celebrated, nor any enterprise undertaken, because they were reckoned *dies infaufti*, or unlucky days. The child that happened to be born on any of these days, if it was a boy, got the name of *Nemoquichtli*, useless man; if she was a girl, received the name of *Nencibuatl*, useless woman.

Among the festivals annually celebrated, the most solemn were those of *Teoxibuitl*, or divine years, of which kind were all those years which had the rabbit for their denominative character. The sacrifices were on such occasions more numerous, the oblations more abundant, and the dances more solemn, especially in Tlascala, in Huexotzinco, and Cholula. In like manner, the festivals at the beginning of every period of thirteen years, were attended with more pomp and gravity; that is, in the years 1 *Tochtli*, 1 *Acatl*, 1 *Tecpatl*, and 1 *Calli*.

But the festival which was celebrated every fifty-two years, was by far the most splendid and most solemn, not only among the Mexicans, but

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Secular festival.

(*i*) *Izcalli* signifies, Behold the house. The interpretations given by Torquemada and Leone are too violent.



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likewise among all the nations of that empire, or who were neighbouring to it. On the last night of their century, they extinguished the fire of all the temples and houses, and broke their vessels, earthen pots, and all other kitchen utensils, preparing themselves in this manner for the end of the world, which at the termination of each century they expected with terror. The priests, clothed in various dresses and ensigns of their gods, and accompanied by a vast croud of people, issued from the temple out of the city, directing their way towards the mountain *Huixachtla*, near to the city of Iztapalapan, upwards of six miles distant from the capital. They regulated their journey in some measure by observation of the stars, in order that they might arrive at the mountain a little before midnight, on the top of which the new fire was to be kindled. In the mean while, the people remained in the utmost suspense and solicitude, hoping on the one hand to find from the new fire a new century granted to mankind, and fearing on the other hand, the total destruction of mankind, if the fire, by divine interference, should not be permitted to kindle. Husbands covered the faces of their pregnant wives with the leaves of the aloe, and shut them up in granaries; because they were afraid that they would be converted into wild beasts and would devour them. They also covered the faces of children in that way, and did not allow them to sleep, to prevent their being transformed into mice. All those who did not go out with the priests, mounted upon terraces, to observe from thence the event of the ceremony. The office of kindling the fire on this occasion belonged exclusively to a priest of *Copolco*, one of the districts of the city. The instruments for this purpose were, as we have already mentioned, two pieces of wood, and the place on which the fire was produced from them, was the breast of some brave prisoner whom they sacrificed. As soon as the fire was kindled, they all at once exclaimed with joy; and a great fire was made on the mountain that it might be seen from afar, in which they afterwards burned the victim whom they had sacrificed. Immediately they took up portions of the sacred fire, and strove with each other who should carry it most speedily to their houses. The priests carried it to the greater temple of Mexico, from whence all the inhabitants of that capital were supplied with it. During the thirteen days which followed the renewal of the fire,

which

which were the intercalary days, interposed between the past and ensuing century to adjust the year with the course of the sun, they employed themselves in repairing and whitening the public and private buildings, and in furnishing themselves with new dresses and domestic utensils, in order that every thing might be new, or at least appear to be so, upon the commencement of the new century. On the first day of that year, and of that century, which as we have already mentioned, corresponded to the 26th of February, for no person was it lawful to taste water before mid-day. At that hour the sacrifices began, the number of which was suited to the grandeur of the festival. Every place resounded with the voice of gladness and mutual congratulations on account of the new century which heaven had granted to them. The illuminations made during the first nights were extremely magnificent; their ornaments of dress, their entertainments, dances, and public games, were superiorly solemn. Amongst the last, amidst an immense concourse of people, and the most lively demonstrations of joy, the game of the flyers, which we shall describe in another place, was exhibited; in which the number of flyers were four, and the number of turns which each made in his flight, thirteen, which signified the four periods of thirteen years, of which the century was composed.

What we have hitherto related concerning the festivals of the Mexicans, clearly evinces their superstitious character; but it will appear still more evident from the account we are now to give of the rites which they observed upon the birth of children, at their marriages, and at funerals.

As soon as a child was born, the midwife, after cutting the navel-string, and burying the secundine, bathed it, saying these words; *Receive the water; for the goddess Chalchiuhcucje is thy mother. May this bath cleanse the spots which thou bearest from the womb of thy mother, purify thy heart and give thee a good and perfect life.* Then addressing her prayer to that goddess, she demanded in similar words the same favour from her; and taking up the water again with her right hand, she blew upon it, and wet the mouth, head, and breast of the child with it, and after bathing the whole of its body, she said: *May the invisible God descend upon this water, and cleanse thee of every sin*

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Rites observed upon the birth of children.

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*and impurity, and free thee from evil fortune: and then turning to the child, she spoke to it thus: Lovely child, the gods Ometeuctli and Omecihuatl have created thee in the highest place of heaven, in order to send thee into the world; but know that the life on which thou art entering is sad, painful, and full of uneasiness and miseries: nor will thou be able to eat thy bread without labour: May God assist thee in the many adversities which await thee.* This ceremony was concluded with congratulations to the parents and relations of the child. If it was the son of the king, or of any great lord, the chief of his subjects came to congratulate the father, and to wish the highest prosperity to his child (k).

When the first bathing was done, the diviners were consulted concerning the fortune of the child, for which purpose they were informed of the day and hour of its birth. They considered the nature of the sign of that day, and the ruling sign of that period of thirteen days to which it belonged, and if it was born at midnight, two signs concurred, that is, the sign of the day which was just concluding, and that of the day which was just beginning. After having made their observations, they pronounced the good or bad fortune of the child. If it was bad, and if the fifth day after its birth-day, on which the second bathing was usually performed, was one of the *dies infausti*, the ceremony was postponed until a more favourable occasion. To the second bathing, which was a more solemn rite, all the relations and friends, and some young boys were invited; and if the parents were in good circumstances, they gave great entertainments, and made presents of apparel to all the guests. If the father of the child was a military person, he prepared for this ceremony a little bow, four arrows, and a little habit, resembling in make that which the child, when grown up, would wear. If he was a countryman, or an artist,

(k) In Guatemala, and other surrounding provinces, the births of male children were celebrated with much solemnity and superstition. As soon as the son was born a turkey was sacrificed. The bathing was performed in some fountain, or river, where they made oblations of copal, and sacrifices of parrots. The navel string was cut upon an ear of maize, and with a new knife, which was immediately after cast into the river. They sowed the seeds of that ear, and attended to its growth with the utmost care, as if it had been a sacred thing. What was reaped from this seed was divided into three parts; one of which was given to the diviner; of another part they made pap for the child, and the rest was preserved until the same child should be old enough to be able to sow it.



he prepared some instruments belonging to his art, proportioned in size to the infancy of the child. If the child was a girl, they furnished a little habit, suitable to her sex, a small spindle, and some other little instruments for weaving. They lighted a great number of torches, and the midwife taking up the child, carried it through all the yard of the house, and placed it upon a heap of the leaves of sword grass, close by a basin of water, which was prepared in the middle of the yard, and then undressing it, said: *My child, the gods Omemeteuctli and Omecihuatl, lords of heaven, have sent thee to this dismal and calamitous world. Receive this water which is to give thee life.* And after wetting its mouth, head, and breast, with forms similar to those of the first bathing, she bathed its whole body, and rubbing every one of its limbs, said, *Where art thou ill Fortune? In what limb art thou hid? Go far from this child.* Having spoke this, she raised up the child to offer it to the gods, praying them to adorn it with every virtue. The first prayer was offered to the two gods before named, the second to the goddess of water, the third to all the gods together, and the fourth to the sun and the earth. *You sun, she said, father of all things that live upon the earth, our mother, receive this child, and protect him as your own son; and since he is born for war (if his father belonged to the army), may he die in it, defending the honour of the gods; so may he enjoy in heaven the delights which are prepared for all those who sacrifice their lives in so good a cause.* She then put in his little hands the instruments of that art which he was to exercise, with a prayer addressed to the protecting god of the same. The instruments of the military art were buried in some fields, where, in future, it was imagined the boy would fight in battle, and the female instruments were buried in the house itself, under the stone for grinding maize. On this same occasion, if we are to credit Boturini, they observed the ceremony of passing the boy four times through the fire.

Before they put the instruments of any art into the hands of the child, the midwife requested the young boys who had been invited, to give him a name, which was generally such a name as had been suggested to them by the father. The midwife then clothed him, and laid him in the *cozelli*, or cradle, praying Joalticil, the goddess of cradles, to

warm

BOOK VI. warm him and guard him in her bosom, and Joalteuctli, god of the night, to make him sleep.

The name which was given to boys, was generally taken from the sign of the day on which they were born (a rule particularly practised among the Mixtecas), as *Nahuixochitl*, or IV Flower, *Macuilcoatl*, or V Serpent, and *Omecalli*, or II House. At other times the name was taken from circumstances attending the birth; as for instance, one of the four chiefs who governed the republic of Tlascala, at the time of the arrival of the Spaniards, received the name of *Citlilpopoca*, smoking star; because he was born at the time of a comet's appearance in the heavens. The child born on the day of the renewal of the fire, had the name of *Molpilli*, if it was a male; if a female she was called *Xiubnenetl*, alluding in both names to circumstances attending the festival. Men had in general the names of animals; women those of flowers; in giving which, it is probable, they paid regard both to the dream of the parents, and the counsel of diviners. For the most part they gave but one name to boys; afterwards it was usual for them to acquire a surname from their actions, as Montezuma I. on account of his bravery was given the surnames of *Ilhuacamina* and *Tlacaeli*.

When the religious ceremony of bathing was over, an entertainment was given, the quality and honours of which corresponded with the rank of the giver. At such seasons of rejoicing, a little excess in drinking was permitted, as the disorderliness of drunken persons extended not beyond private houses. The torches were kept burning till they were totally consumed, and particular care was taken to keep up the fire all the four days, which intervened between the first and second ceremony of bathing, as they were persuaded that an omission of such a nature would ruin the fortune of the child. These rejoicings were repeated when they weaned the child, which they commonly did at three years of age (*l*).

SECT.  
XXXVIII.  
Nuptial  
rites,

With respect to the marriages of the Mexicans, although in them, as well as in all their customs, superstition had a great share, nothing, however, attended them which was repugnant to decency or honour. Any marriage between persons related in the first degree of consan-

(*l*) In Guatemala it was usual to make rejoicings as soon as the child began to walk, and for seven years they continued to celebrate the anniversary of its birth.

guinity or alliance, was strictly forbid, not only by the laws of Mexico, but also by the laws of Michuacan, unless it was between cousins (*m*). The parents were the persons who settled all marriages, and none were ever executed without their consent. When a son arrived at an age capable of bearing the charges of that state, which in men was from the age of twenty to twenty-two years, and in women from sixteen to eighteen, a suitable and proper wife was singled out for him; but before the union was concluded on, the diviners were consulted, who, after having considered the birth-day of the youth, and of the young girl intended for his bride, decided on the happiness or unhappiness of the match. If from the combination of signs attending their births, they pronounced the alliance unpropitious, that young maid was abandoned, and another sought. If, on the contrary, they predicted happiness to the couple, the young girl was demanded of her parents by certain women amongst them called *Cibuatlanque*, or solicitors, who were the most elderly and respectable amongst the kindred of the youth. These women went the first time at midnight to the house of the damsel, carried a present to her parents, and demanded her of them in a humble and respectful style. The first demand, was, according to the custom of that nation, infallibly refused, however advantageous and eligible the marriage might appear to the parents, who gave some plausible reasons for their refusal. After a few days were past, those women returned to repeat their demand, using prayers and arguments also, in order to obtain their request, giving an account of the rank and fortune of the youth, and of what he would make the dowry of his wife, and also gaining information of that which she could bring to the match on her part. The parents replied to this second request,

(*m*) In the ixth book, tit. 2. of the third provincial council of Mexico, it is supposed that the Gentiles of that new world married with their sisters; but it ought to be understood, that the zeal of those fathers was not confined in its exertions to the nations of the Mexican empire, amongst whom such marriages were not suffered, but extended to the barbarous Chechenecas, the Panuchese, and to other nations, which were extremely uncivilized in their customs. There is not a doubt, that the council alluded to those barbarians, who were then (in 1585), in the progress of their conversion to Christianity, and not to the Mexicans and the nations under subjection to them, who many years before the council were already converted. Besides, in the interval of four years, between the conquest of the Spaniards and the promulgation of the gospel, many abusive practices had been introduced among those nations never before tolerated under their kings, as the religious missionaries employed in their conversion were.



## BOOK VI.

that it was necessary to consult their relations and connections, and to find out the inclinations of their daughter, before they could come to any resolution. These female solicitors returned no more; as the parents themselves conveyed, by means of other women of their kindred, a decisive answer to the party.

A favourable answer being at last obtained, and a day appointed for the nuptials, the parents, after exhorting their daughter to fidelity and obedience to her husband, and to such a conduct in life as would do honour to her family, conducted her with a numerous company and music, to the house of her father-in-law; if noble, she was carried in a litter. The bridegroom, and the father and mother-in-law, received her at the gate of the house, with four torches borne by four women. At meeting, the bride and bridegroom reciprocally offered incense to each other; then the bridegroom taking the bride by the hand, led her into the hall, or chamber which was prepared for the nuptials. They both sat down upon a new and curiously wrought mat, which was spread in the middle of the chamber, and close to the fire which was kept lighted. Then a priest tied a point of the *buepilli*, or gown of the bride, with the *tilmatli*, or mantle of the bridegroom, and in this ceremony the matrimonial contract chiefly consisted. The wife now made some turns round the fire, and then returning to her mat, she, along with her husband, offered copal to their gods, and exchanged presents with each other. The repast followed next. The married pair eat upon the mat, giving mouthfuls to each other alternately and to the guests in their places. When those who had been invited were become exhilarated with wine, which was freely drank on such occasions, they went out to dance in the yard of the house, while the married pair remained in the chamber, from which, during four days, they never stirred, except to obey the calls of nature, or to go to the oratory at midnight to burn incense to the idols, and to make oblations of eatables. They passed these four days in prayer and fasting, dressed in new habits, and adorned with certain ensigns of the gods of their devotion, without proceeding to any act of less decency, fearing that otherwise the punishment of heaven would fall upon them. Their beds on these nights were two mats of rushes, covered with small sheets, with certain feathers, and a gem of *Chalchibuitl* in the middle  
of

of them. At the four corners of the bed green canes and spines of the aloe were laid, with which they were to draw blood from their tongues and their ears in honour of their gods. The priests were the persons who adjusted the bed to sanctify the marriage; but we know nothing of the mystery of the canes, the feathers, and the gem. Until the fourth night the marriage was not consummated; they believed it would have proved unlucky, if they had anticipated the period of consummation. The morning after they bathed themselves and put on new dresses, and those who had been invited, adorned their heads with white, and their hands and feet with red feathers. The ceremony was concluded by making presents of dresses to the guests, which were proportioned to the circumstances of the married pair; and on that same day they carried to the temple the mats, sheets, canes, and the eatables which had been presented to the idols.

The forms which we have described, in the marriages of the Mexicans were not so universal through the empire, but that some provinces observed other peculiarities. In Ichcatlan, whoever was desirous of marrying presented himself to the priests, by whom he was conducted to the temple, where they cut off a part of his hair before the idol which was worshipped there, and then pointing him out to the people, they began to exclaim, saying, *this man wishes to take a wife*. Then they made him descend, and take the first free woman he met, as the one whom heaven destined to him. Any woman who did not like to have him for a husband, avoided coming near to the temple at that time, that she might not subject herself to the necessity of marrying him: this marriage was only singular therefore in the mode of seeking for a wife.

Among the Otomies, it was lawful to use any free woman before they married her. When any person was about to take a wife, if on the first night he found any thing about his wife which was disagreeable to him, he was permitted to divorce her the next day; but if he shewed himself all that day content with having her, he could not afterwards abandon her. The contract being thus ratified, the pair retired to do penance for past offences twenty or thirty days, during which period they abstained from most of the pleasures of the senses, drew blood from themselves, and frequently bathed.

## BOOK VI.

Among the Miztecas, besides the ceremony of tying the married pair together by the end of their garments, they cut off a part of their hair, and the husband carried his wife for a little time upon his back.

They permitted polygamy in the Mexican empire. The kings and lords had numerous wives; but it is probable, that they observed all the ceremonies with their principal wives only, and that with the rest the essential rite of tying their garments together was sufficient.

The Spanish theologists and canonists, who went to Mexico immediately after the conquest, being unacquainted with the customs of those people, raised doubts about their marriages; but when they had learnt the language, and properly examined that and other points of importance, they acknowledged such marriages to be just and lawful. Pope Paul III. and the provincial council of Mexico, ordered, in conformity to the sacred canons, and the usage of the church, that all those who were willing to embrace Christianity, should keep no other wife but the one whom they had first married.

SECT.  
XXXIX.  
Funeral rites.

However superstitious the Mexicans were in other matters, in the rites which they observed at funerals they exceeded themselves. As soon as any person died, certain masters of funeral ceremonies were called, who were generally men advanced in years. They cut a number of pieces of paper, with which they dressed the dead body, and took a glass of water with which they sprinkled the head, saying, that that was the water used in the time of their life. They then dressed it in a habit suitable to the rank, the wealth, and the circumstances attending the death of the party. If the deceased had been a warrior, they clothed him in the habit of Huitzilopochtli; if a merchant, in that of Jacatuetli; if an artist, in that of the protecting god of his art or trade: one who had been drowned was dressed in the habit of Tlaloc; one who had been executed for adultery, in that of Tlazolteotl; and a drunkard in the habit of Tezcatzoncatl, god of wine. In short, as Gomara has well observed, they wore more garments after they were dead than while they were living.

With the habit they gave the dead a jug of water, which was to serve on the journey to the other world, and also at successive different times, different pieces of paper, mentioning the use of each. On consigning the first piece to the dead, they said: *By means of this you will*  
*pass*



*pass without danger between the two mountains which fight against each other.* With the second they said: *By means of this you will walk without obstruction along the road which is defended by the great serpent.* With the third: *By this you will go securely through the place, where there is the crocodile Xochitonal.* The fourth was a safe passport through the eight deserts; the fifth through the eight hills; and the sixth was given in order to pass without hurt through the sharp wind; for they pretended that it was necessary to pass a place called *Itzbecajan*, where a wind blew so violently as to tear up rocks, and so sharp that it cut like a knife; on which account they burned all the habits which the deceased had worn during life, their arms, and some household goods, in order that the heat of this fire might defend them from the cold of that terrible wind.

One of the chief and most ridiculous ceremonies at funerals was the killing a *techichi*, a domestic quadruped, which we have already mentioned, resembling a little dog, to accompany the deceased in their journey to the other world. They fixed a string about its neck, believing that necessary to enable it to pass the deep river of *Chiubnabuan*, or New Waters. They buried the *techichi*, or burned it along with the body of its master, according to the kind of death of which he died. While the masters of the ceremonies were lighting up the fire in which the body was to be burned, the other priests kept singing in a melancholy strain. After burning the body, they gathered the ashes in an earthen pot, amongst which, according to the circumstances of the deceased, they put a gem of more or less value; which they said would serve him in place of a heart in the other world. They buried this earthen pot in a deep ditch, and fourscore days after made oblations of bread and wine over it.

Such were the funeral rites of the common people; but at the death of kings, and that of lords, or persons of high rank, some peculiar forms were observed that are worthy to be mentioned. When the king fell sick, says Gomara, they put a mask on the idol of *Huitzilopochtli*, and also one on the idol of *Tēzcatlipoca*, which they never took off until the king was either dead or recovered; but it is certain, that the idol of *Huitzilopochtli* had always two masks, not one. As soon as a king of Mexico happened to die, his death was published in great

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form, and all the lords who resided at court, and also those who were but a little distant from it were informed of the event, in order that they might be present at the funeral. In the mean time they laid the royal corpse upon beautiful curiously wrought mats, which was attended and watched by his domestics. Upon the fourth or fifth day after, when the lords were arrived, who brought with them rich dresses, beautiful feathers, and slaves to be presented, to add to the pomp of the funeral, they clothed the corpse in fifteen, or more, very fine habits of cotton of various colours, ornamented it with gold, silver, and gems, hung an emerald at the under lip, which was to serve in place of a heart, covered the face with a mask, and over the habits were placed the ensigns of that god, in whose temple or area the ashes were to be buried. They cut off some of the hair, which, together with some more which had been cut off in the infancy of the king, they preserved in a little box, in order to perpetuate, as they said, the memory of the deceased. Upon the box they laid an image of the deceased, made of wood, or of stone. Then they killed the slave who was his chaplain, who had had the care of his oratory, and all that belonged to the private worship of his gods, in order that he might serve him in the same office in the other world.

The funeral procession came next, accompanied by all the relations of the deceased, the whole of the nobility, and the wives of the late king, who testified their sorrow by tears and other demonstrations of grief. The nobles carried a great standard of paper, and the royal arms and ensigns. The priests continued singing, but without any musical instrument. Upon their arrival at the lower area of the temple, the high-priest, together with their servants, came out to meet the royal corpse, which, without delay, they placed upon the funeral pile, which was prepared there for that purpose of odoriferous resinous woods, together with a large quantity of copal, and other aromatic substances. While the royal corpse, and all its habits, the arms and ensigns were burning, they sacrificed at the bottom of the stairs of the temple a great number of slaves of those which belonged to the deceased, and also of those which had been presented by the lords. Along with the slaves, they likewise sacrificed some of the irregularly formed men, whom the king had collected in his palaces for his entertainment, in order that

that they might give him the same pleasure in the other world; and for the same reason they used also to sacrifice some of his wives (*n*). The number of the victims was proportioned to the grandeur of the funeral, and amounted sometimes, as several historians affirm, to two hundred. Among the other sacrifices the *techichi* was not omitted; they were firmly persuaded, that without such a guide it would be impossible to get through some dangerous ways which led to the other world.

The day following the ashes were gathered, and the teeth which remained entire; they fought carefully for the emerald which had been hung to the under lip, and the whole were put into the box with the hair, and they deposited the box in the place destined for his sepulchre. The four following days they made oblations of eatables over the sepulchre; on the fifth, they sacrificed some slaves, and also some others on the twentieth, fortieth, sixtieth, and eightieth day after. From that time forward, they sacrificed no more human victims; but every year they celebrated the day of the funeral with sacrifices of rabbits, butterflies, quails, and other birds, and with oblations of bread, wine, copal flowers, and certain little reeds filled with aromatic substances, which they called *acajetl*. This anniversary was held for four years.

The bodies of the dead were in general burned; they buried the bodies entire of those only who had been drowned, or had died of dropsy, and some other diseases; but what was the reason of these exceptions we know not.

There was no fixed place for burials. Many ordered their ashes to be buried near to some temple or altar, some in the fields, and others in those sacred places of the mountains where sacrifices used to be made. The ashes of the kings and lords, were, for the most part, deposited in the towers of the temples (*o*), especially in those of the

SECT. XL.  
Their sepulchres.

(*n*) Acosta says (lib. v. cap. 8.) that at the funerals of lords, all the members of his family were sacrificed. But this is grossly false and in itself incredible; for had this been the case, the nobles of Mexico would have soon been exterminated. There is no record in the History of Mexico, that at the death of the king of Mexico, any of his brothers were sacrificed, as this author would intimate. How is it possible they could practise such cruelty when the new king was usually elected from among the brothers of the deceased.

(*o*) Solís, in his History of the Conquest of Mexico, affirms, that the ashes of the kings were deposited in Chapultepec; but this is false, and contradicts the report of the conqueror Cortés, whose panegyric he wrote, of Bernal Díaz, and other eye-witnesses of the contrary.

greater



## BOOK VI.

greater temple. Close to Teotihuacan, where there were many temples, there were also innumerable sepulchres. The tombs of those whose bodies had been buried entire, agreeable to the testimony of the anonymous conqueror who saw them, were deep ditches, formed with stone and lime, within which they placed the bodies in a sitting posture upon *icpalli*, or low seats, together with the instruments of their art or profession. If it was the sepulchre of any military person, they laid a shield and sword by him; if of a woman, a spindle, a weaver's shuttle, and a *xicalli*, which was a certain naturally formed vessel, of which we shall say more hereafter. In the tombs of the rich they put gold and jewels, but all were provided with eatables for the long journey which they had to make. The Spanish conquerors, knowing of the gold which was buried with the Mexican lords in their tombs, dug up several, and found considerable quantities of that precious metal. Cortes say in his letters, that at one entry which he made into the capital, when it was besieged by his army, his soldiers found fifteen hundred *Castellanos* (*p*), that is, two hundred and forty ounces of gold, in one sepulchre, which was in the tower of a temple. The anonymous conqueror says also, that he was present at the digging up of another sepulchre, from which they took about three thousand *Castellanos*.

The caves of the mountains were the sepulchres of the ancient Chechemecas; but, as they grew more civilized, they adopted in this and other rites, the customs of the Acolhuan nation, which were nearly the same with those of the Mexicans.

The Miztecas retained in part the ancient usage of the Chechemecas, but in some things they were singular in their customs. When any of their lords fell sick, they offered prayers, vows, and sacrifices for the recovery of his health. If it was restored, they made great rejoicings. If he died, they continued to speak of him as if he was still alive, and conducted one of his slaves to the corpse, dressed him in the habits of his master, put a mask upon his face, and for one whole day, paid him all the honours which they had used to render to

(*p*) The Spanish goldsmiths divide the pound weight of gold into two *Marchi*, or into sixteen ounces, or a hundred *Castellanos*; consequently, an ounce contains  $6\frac{1}{2}$  *Castellanos*.

the deceased. At midnight, four priests carried the corpse to be buried in a wood, or in some cavern, particularly in that one where they believed the gate of paradise was, and at their return they sacrificed the slave, and laid him, with all the ornaments of his transitory dignity, in a ditch; but without covering him with earth.

Every year they held a festival in honour of their last lord, on which they celebrated his birth, not his death, for of it they never spoke.

The Zapotecas, their neighbours embalmed the body of the principal lord of their nation. Even from the time of the first Chechemecan kings aromatic preparations were in use among those nations to preserve dead bodies from speedy corruption; but we do not know that these were very frequent.

We have now communicated all that we know concerning the religion of the Mexicans. The weakness of their worship, the superstition of their rites, the cruelty of their sacrifices, and the rigour of their austerities, will the more forcibly manifest to their descendants, the advantages which are derived from a mild, chaste, and pure religion, and will dispose them to thank eternally the Providence which has enlightened them, while their ancestors were left to perish in darkness and error.

## B O O K VII.

*The political and military Government of the Mexicans, that is, the Kings, Lords, Electors, Ambassadors, Dignities, and Magistrates; the Judges, Laws, and Punishments; the Military Force; Agriculture, Chace, Fishing, and Commerce; the Games; the Dress, Food, and Household Furniture; the Language, Poetry, Music, and Dancing; Medicine, History, and Painting; Sculpture, Mosaic Works, and Casting of Metals; Architecture, and other Arts of that Nation.*

## BOOK VII.

IN the public as well as private œconomy of the Mexicans, the traces which remain of their political discernment, of their zeal for justice, and love of the public good, would meet with little credit, were they not confirmed both by the evidence of their paintings, and the attestations of many faithful and impartial authors, who were eye-witnesses of a great part of that which they have written. Those who are weak enough to imagine they can know the ancient Mexicans in their descendants, or from the nations of Canada and Louisiana, will be apt to consider the account we are to give of their refinement, their laws, and their arts, as fables invented by the Spaniards. But that we may not violate the laws of history, nor the fidelity due to the public, we shall candidly set forth all that which we have found to be authentic, without any apprehension of censure.

\* The education of youth, which is the chief support of a state, and which best unfolds the character of every nation, was amongst the Mexicans of so judicious a nature as to be of itself sufficient to retort the supercilious contempt of certain critics upon themselves, who believe the empire of reason to be circumscribed to the boundaries of Europe. In whatever we say on this subject we shall be guided by the paintings of those nations, and their best informed historians.

SECT. I.  
Education of  
the Mexican  
youth.

Nothing, says F. Acoſta, has surprised me more, or appeared more worthy of memory and praise, than the care and method which the



Mexicans observed in the tuition of youth. It would be difficult, indeed, to find a nation that has bestowed more attention on a point so important to every state. It is true, they mixed superstition with their precepts; but the zeal they manifested for the education of their children, upbraids the negligence of our modern fathers of families; and many of the lessons which they taught to their youth might serve as instruction to ours. All the Mexican children, even those of the royal family, were suckled by their own parents. If the mother was prevented from doing this by sickness, she did not employ a nurse till she was well informed both of her condition in life, and the quality of her milk. They were accustomed from infancy to endure hunger, heat, and cold. When they attained five years of age, they were either consigned to the priests, in order that they might be brought up in the seminaries, which was the general practice with the children of nobles, and even with those of the kings themselves; or if they were to be educated at home, their parents began at that period to instruct them in the worship of their gods, and to teach them the forms by which they were to pray and implore their protection. They were led frequently to the temple, that they might become attached to religion. An abhorrence of vice, a modesty of behaviour, respect to superiors, and love of fatigue, were strongly inculcated. They were even made to sleep upon a mat; and were given no more food than the necessities of life required, nor any other clothing than that which decency demanded. When they arrived at a certain age, they were instructed in the use of arms, and if their parents belonged to the army, they were led to the wars along with them, that they might learn the military art, and to banish fear from their minds, by habituating themselves to danger. If their parents were husbandmen, or artists, they taught their children their own profession. Girls were learned to spin and weave, and obliged to bathe frequently, that they might be always healthy and cleanly, and the universal maxim was to keep the young of both sexes constantly employed.

One of the precepts most warmly inculcated to youth was, truth in their words; and whenever a lie was detected, the lip of the delinquent was pricked with the thorns of the aloe. They tied the feet of girls who were too fond of walking abroad. The son, who

## BOOK VII.

was disobedient or quarrelsome, was beat with nettles, or received punishment in some other manner proportioned, according to their judgment, with the fault he had committed.

SECT. II.  
Explanation  
of the seven  
Mexican  
paintings on  
education.

The system of education agreeable to which the Mexicans trained up their children, and the constant attention with which they watched their actions, may be traced in the seven paintings of the collection of Mendoza, included between the numbers forty-nine and fifty-seven. In these are expressed the quantity and quality of the food, which was allowed them, the employments in which they were occupied, and the punishments by which their vices were corrected. In the fiftieth painting is represented a boy of four years, who is employed by his parents in some things that are easy to do, in order to inure him to fatigue; another of five years, who accompanies his father to market, carrying a little bundle on his back; a girl of the same age who begins to learn to spin; and another boy of six years whose father employs him to pick up the ears of maize, which happen to lie on the ground in the market-place.

In the fifty-first painting are drawn a father who teaches his son of seven years of age to fish; and a mother, who teaches her daughter of the same age to spin; some boys of eight years, who are threatened with punishment if they do not do their duty; a lad of nine years, whose father pricks several parts of his body, in order to correct his indocility of temper; and a girl of the same age, whose mother only pricks her hands; a lad and a girl of ten years, whose parents beat them with a rod, because they refuse to do that which they are ordered.

The fifty-second painting represents two lads of eleven years, who, not being amended by other punishments, are made by their fathers to receive the smoke of Chilli, or great pepper up their nose; a lad of twelve years, whose father, in order to punish him for his faults, keeps him a whole day tied upon a dunghill, and a wench of the same age whose mother makes her walk, during the night, all over the house and part of the streets; a lad of thirteen years, whose father makes him guide a little vessel laden with rushes; and a wench of the same age grinding maize by order of her mother; a youth of fourteen years employed by his father in fishing, and a young woman set to weave by her mother.

In the fifty-third painting, are represented two youths of fifteen years, the one consigned by his father to a priest, to be instructed in the rites of religion; the other to the *Achcaubtli*, or officer of the militia, to be instructed in the military art. The fifty-fourth, shews the youth of the seminaries employed by their superiors in sweeping the temple, and in carrying branches of trees and herbs to adorn the sanctuaries, wood for the stoves, rushes to make seats, and stones and lime to repair the temple. In this same painting, and in the fifty-fifth, the different punishments inflicted on youth, who have committed trespasses, by their superiors, are also represented. One of them pricks a youth with the spines of the aloe for having neglected his duty: two priests throw burning firebrands on the head of another youth, for having been caught in familiar discourse with a young woman. They prick the body of another with sharp pine stakes, and another for disobedience is punished by having his hair burned. Lastly, is exhibited a youth carrying the baggage of a priest, who goes along with the army to encourage the soldiers in war, and to perform certain superstitious ceremonies.

Their children were bred to stand so much in awe of their parents, that even when grown up and married, they hardly durst speak before them. In short, the instructions and advice which they received were of such a nature, that I cannot dispense with transcribing some of the exhortations employed by them, the knowledge of which was obtained from the Mexicans themselves by the first religious missionaries who were employed in their conversion, particularly Motolinia, Olmos, and Sahagun, who acquired a perfect knowledge of the Mexican language, and made the most diligent inquiry into their manners and customs.

“ My son,” said the Mexican father, “ who art come into the light  
 “ from the womb of thy mother like the chicken from the egg, and  
 “ like it art preparing to fly through the world, we know not how  
 “ long heaven will grant to us the enjoyment of that precious gem  
 “ which we possess in thee; but, however short the period, endeavour  
 “ to live exactly, praying God continually to assist thee. He created  
 “ thee; thou art his property. He is thy Father, and loves thee still  
 “ more than I do; repose in him thy thoughts, and day and night di-

SECT. II.  
 The exhortations of a Mexican to his son.



## BOOK VI.

“ rect thy sighs to him. Reverence and salute thy elders, and hold  
 “ no one in contempt. To the poor and the distressed be not dumb,  
 “ but rather use words of comfort. Honour all persons, particularly  
 “ thy parents, to whom thou owest obedience, respect, and service.  
 “ Guard against imitating the example of those wicked sons, who, like  
 “ brutes that are deprived of reason, neither reverence their parents, lis-  
 “ ten to their instruction, nor submit to their correction ; because, who-  
 “ ever follows their steps will have an unhappy end, will die in a desperate  
 “ or sudden manner, or will be killed and devoured by wild beasts.

“ Mock not, my son, the aged or the imperfect. Scorn not him  
 “ whom you see fall into some folly or transgression, nor make him re-  
 “ proaches ; but restrain thyself, and beware lest thou fall into the  
 “ same error which offends thee in another. Go not where thou art  
 “ not called, nor interfere in that which does not concern thee. En-  
 “ deavour to manifest thy good breeding in all thy words and actions.  
 “ In conversation do not lay thy hands upon another, nor speak too  
 “ much, nor interrupt or disturb another’s discourse. If thou hearest  
 “ any one talking foolishly, and it is not thy business to correct him,  
 “ keep silence ; but if it does concern thee, consider first what thou art  
 “ to say, and do not speak arrogantly, that thy correction may be well  
 “ received.

“ When any one discourses with thee, hear him attentively, and  
 “ hold thyself in an easy attitude ; neither playing with thy feet, nor  
 “ putting thy mantle to thy mouth, nor spitting too often, nor look-  
 “ ing about you here and there, nor rising up frequently if thou art  
 “ sitting ; for such actions are indications of levity and low-breeding.

“ When thou art at table do not eat voraciously, nor shew thy dis-  
 “ pleasure if any thing displeases thee. If any one comes unexpectedly  
 “ to dinner with thee, share with him what thou hast ; and when any  
 “ person is entertained by thee, do not fix thy looks upon him.

“ In walking, look where thou goest, that thou mayst not push a-  
 “ gainst any one. If thou seest another coming thy way, go a little  
 “ aside to give him room to pass. Never step before thy elders, un-  
 “ less it be necessary, or that they order thee to do so. When thou  
 “ fittest at table with them, do not eat or drink before them, but attend  
 “ to them in a becoming manner, that thou mayst merit their favour.

“ When

“ When they give thee any thing, accept it with tokens of gratitude: if the present is great, do not become vain or fond of it. If the gift is small do not despise it, nor be provoked, nor occasion displeasure to them who favour thee. If thou becomest rich, do not grow insolent, nor scorn the poor; for those very gods who deny riches to others in order to give them to thee, offended by thy pride, will take them from thee again to give to others. Support thyself by thy own labours; for then thy food will be sweeter. I, my son, have supported thee hitherto with my sweat, and have omitted no duty of a father; I have provided thee with every thing necessary, without taking it from others. Do thou so likewise.

“ Never tell a falsehood; because a lie is a heinous sin. When it is necessary to communicate to another what has been imparted to thee, tell the simple truth without any addition. Speak ill of nobody. Do not take notice of the failings which thou observeest in others, if thou art not called upon to correct them. Be not a news-carrier, nor a sower of discord. When thou bearest any embassy, and he to whom it is borne is enraged, and speaks contemptuously of those who sent thee, do not report such an answer, but endeavour to soften him, and dissemble as much as possible that which thou heardest, that thou mayest not raise discord and spread calumny of which thou mayest afterwards repent.

“ Stay no longer than is necessary in the market-place; for in such places there is the greatest danger of contracting vices.

“ When thou art offered an employment, imagine that the proposal is made to try thee; then accept it not hastily, although thou knowest thyself more fit than others to exercise it; but excuse thyself until thou art obliged to accept it; thus thou wilt be more esteemed.

“ Be not dissolute; because thou wilt thereby incense the gods, and they will cover thee with infamy. Restrain thyself, my son, as thou art yet young, and wait until the girl, whom the gods destine for thy wife, arrive at a suitable age: leave that to their care, as they know how to order every thing properly. When the time for thy marriage is come, dare not to make it without the consent of thy parents, otherwise it will have an unhappy issue.

“ Steal not, nor give thyself up to gaming; otherwise thou wilt be a disgrace to thy parents, whom thou ought rather to honour for  
“ the

BOOK VII. “ the education they have given thee. If thou wilt be virtuous, thy  
 “ example will put the wicked to shame. No more, my son ; enough  
 “ has been said in discharge of the duties of a father. With these  
 “ counsels I wish to fortify thy mind. Refuse them not, nor act in  
 “ contradiction to them ; for on them thy life, and all thy happiness,  
 “ depend.”

SECT. IV.  
 Exhortation  
 of a Mexican  
 mother to her  
 daughter.

Such were the instructions which the Mexicans frequently inculcated to their sons. Husbandmen and merchants gave their sons other advice regarding their particular profession, which we, however, omit, not to prove tedious to our readers ; but I cannot dispense with transcribing one of the exhortations made use of by mothers to their daughters, as it illustrates their mode of education and manners.

“ My daughter,” said the mother, “ born of my substance, brought forth with my pains, and nourished with my milk, I have endeavoured to bring thee up with the greatest possible care, and thy father has wrought and polished thee like an emerald, that thou mayest appear in the eyes of men a jewel of virtue. Strive always to be good ; for otherwise who will have thee for a wife ? thou wilt be rejected by every one. Life is a thorny laborious path, and it is necessary to exert all our powers to obtain the goods which the gods are willing to yield to us ; we must not therefore be lazy or negligent, but diligent in every thing. Be orderly and take pains to manage the œconomy of thy house. Give water to thy husband for his hands, and make bread for thy family. Wherever thou goest, go with modesty and composure, without hurrying thy steps, or laughing with those whom thou meetest, neither fixing thy looks upon them, nor casting thy eyes thoughtlessly, first to one side, and then to another, that thy reputation may not be sullied ; but give a courteous answer to those who salute and put any question to thee.

“ Employ thyself diligently in spinning and weaving, in sewing and embroidering ; for by these arts thou wilt gain esteem, and all the necessaries of food and clothing. Do not give thyself too much to sleep, nor seek the shade, but go in the open air and there repose thyself ; for effeminacy brings along with it idleness and other vices.

“ In



“ In whatever thou doest, encourage not evil thoughts ; but attend solely to the service of the gods ; and the giving comfort to thy parents. If thy father or thy mother calls thee, do not stay to be called twice ; but go instantly to know their pleasure, that thou mayst not disoblige them by slowness. Return no insolent answers, nor shew any want of compliance ; but if thou canst not do what they command, make a modest excuse. If another is called and does not come quickly ; come thou, hear what is ordered, and do it well. Never offer thyself to do that which thou canst not do. Deceive no person, for the gods see all thy actions. Live in peace with every body, and love every one sincerely and honestly, that thou mayest be beloved by them in return.

“ Be not greedy of the goods which thou hast. If thou seest any thing presented to another, give way to no mean suspicions ; for the gods, to whom every good belongs, distribute every thing as they please. If thou wouldst avoid the displeasure of others, let none meet with it from thee.

“ Guard against improper familiarities with men ; nor yield to the guilty wishes of thy heart ; or thou wilt be the reproach of thy family, and will pollute thy mind as mud does water. Keep not company with dissolute, lying, or idle women ; otherwise they will infallibly infect thee by their example. Attend upon thy family, and do not go on slight occasions out of thy house, nor be seen wandering through the streets, or in the market-place ; for in such places thou wilt meet thy ruin. Remember that vice, like a poisonous herb, brings death to those who taste it ; and when it once harbours in the mind it is difficult to expel it. If in passing through the streets thou meetest with a forward youth who appears agreeable to thee, give him no correspondence, but dissemble and pass on. If he says any thing to thee, take no heed of him nor his words ; and if he follows thee, turn not your face about to look at him, lest that might inflame his passion more. If thou behavest so, he will soon turn and let thee proceed in peace.

“ Enter not, without some urgent motive, into another's house, that nothing may be either said or thought injurious to thy honour ; but if thou enterest into the house of thy relations, salute them with  
“ respect

BOOK VII. “respect and do not remain idle, but immediately take up a spindle to  
 “spin, or do any other thing that occurs.

“When thou art married, respect thy husband, obey him, and dilig-  
 “gently do what he commands thee. Avoid incurring his displeasure,  
 “nor shew thyself passionate or ill-natured ; but receive him fondly  
 “to thy arms, even if he is poor and lives at thy expence. If thy  
 “husband occasions thee any disgust, let him not know thy displeasure  
 “when he commands thee to do any thing ; but dissemble it at that  
 “time, and afterwards tell him with gentleness what vexed thee,  
 “that he may be won by thy mildness and offend thee no farther.  
 “Dishonour him not before others ; for thou also wouldst be disho-  
 “noured. If any one comes to visit thy husband, accept the visit  
 “kindly, and shew all the civility thou canst. If thy husband is  
 “foolish, be thou discreet. If he fails in the management of wealth,  
 “admonish him of his failings ; but if he is totally incapable of tak-  
 “ing care of his estate, take that charge upon thyself, attend carefully  
 “to his possessions, and never omit to pay the workmen punctually.  
 “Take care not to lose any thing through negligence.

“Embrace, my daughter, the counsel which I give thee ; I am al-  
 “ready advanced in life, and have had sufficient dealings with the  
 “world. I am thy mother, I wish that thou mayest live well. Fix  
 “my precepts in thy heart and *bowels*, for then thou wilt live happy.  
 “If, by not listening to me, or by neglecting my instructions any mis-  
 “fortunes befall thee, the fault will be thine, and the evil also. Enough,  
 “my child. May the gods prosper thee.”

SECT. V.  
 Public  
 schools and  
 seminaries.

Not contented with such instructions and domestic education, the  
 Mexicans sent their children to public schools, which were close to  
 the temples, where they were instructed for three years in religion and  
 good customs. Besides this, almost all the inhabitants, particularly  
 the nobles, took care to have their children brought up in the semi-  
 naries belonging to the temples, of which there were many in the cities  
 of the Mexican empire, for boys, youths, and young women. Those  
 of the boys and young men were governed by priests, who were solely  
 devoted to their education ; those for young women were under the  
 direction of matrons equally respectable for their age and for their  
 manners. No communication between the youth of both sexes was

permitted; on the contrary, any transgression of that nature was severely punished. There were distinct seminaries for the nobles and plebeians. The young nobles were employed in offices which were rather internal, and more immediately about the sanctuary, as in sweeping the upper area of the temple, and in stirring up and attending to the fires of the stoves which were before the sanctuary. The others were employed in carrying the wood which was required for the stoves, and the stone and lime used in repairing of sacred edifices, and in other similar tasks: both were under the direction of superiors and masters, who instructed them in religion, history, painting, music, and other arts agreeable to their rank and circumstances.

The girls swept the lower area of the temple, rose three times in the night to burn copal in the stoves, prepared the meats which were daily offered to the idols, and wove different kinds of cloth. They were taught every female duty; by which, besides banishing idleness from them which is so dangerous to the age of youth, they were habituated to domestic labours. They slept in large halls in the sight of the matrons, who governed them, and who attended to nothing more zealously than the modesty and decency of their actions. When any male or female pupil went to pay their respects to their parents, and which case happened very seldom, they were not allowed to go by themselves, but were always accompanied by other pupils and their superior. After listening for a few moments with silence and attention to the instructions and advices which their parents gave them, they returned back to the seminary. There they were detained until the time of marriage, which, as we have already mentioned, was with young men from the age of twenty to twenty-two, and with girls at eighteen or sixteen years. When this period arrived, either the young man himself requested leave of the superior to go and get himself a wife, or, what was more common, his parents demanded him for the same purpose, returning thanks first to the superior for the care he had taken of his instruction. The superior, upon the dismissal which he gave at the grand festival of Tezcatlipoca, to all the young men and women who were arrived at that age, made them a discourse, exhorting them to a perseverance in virtue, and the discharge of all the duties of the new state. The virgins educated in these seminaries were particularly sought after for wives, not only on account of their principles, but likewise of the



## BOOK VII.

skill which they acquired there in the arts belonging to their sex. The youth who when arrived at the age of twenty-two, did not marry was esteemed to have devoted himself for ever to the service of the temples, and if after such consecration of himself he repented of celibacy, and desired to marry, he became infamous for ever, and no woman would accept him for a husband. In Tlascala, those who, at the age fit for marriage, refused taking a wife were shaven, a mark of the highest dishonour with that nation.

The sons in general learned the trades of their fathers, and embraced their professions. Thus they perpetuated the arts in families to the advantage of the state. The young men who were destined to the magistracy, were conducted by their fathers to tribunals, where they heard the laws of the kingdom explained, and observed the practice and forms of judicature. In the sixtieth picture of Mendoza's collection, are represented four judges examining a cause, and behind them four young *Teteuētin*, or *Gentlemen*, who are listening to their decision. The sons of the king, and principal lords, were appointed tutors who attended to their conduct, and long before they could enter into possession of the crown, or their state, they were entrusted with the government of some city, or smaller state, that they might learn by degrees the arduous task of governing men. This was the custom as early as the time of the first Chechemecan kings; for Nopaltzin, from the time that he was crowned king of Acolhuacan, put his first-born son Tlotzin in possession of the city of Tezcuco. Cuitlahuac, the last king of Mexico, obtained the state of Ixtapalapan, and the brother of Montezuma that of Ehecatepec, before they ascended the throne of Mexico. Upon this base of education the Mexicans supported the fabric of their political system which we are now to unfold.

SECT. VI.  
The election  
of their kings.

From the time that the Mexicans, after the example of other neighbouring states, placed Acamapitzin at the head of their nation, investing him with the name, the honours, and authority of royalty, the crown of their kingdom was made elective; for which purpose they created some time after four electors, in whose judgment and decision all the suffrages of the nation were comprehended. These were four lords of the first rank of nobility, and generally of the royal blood, possessed likewise of prudence and probity adequate to the discharge of so important a function. Their office was not perpetual; their electoral power

power terminated with the first election, and new electors were immediately nominated, or the first were re-chosen by the votes of the nobility. If a deficiency happened in their number before the king died, it was supplied by a new appointment. In the time of king Itzcoatl, two other electors were added, which were the kings of Acolhuacan and Tacuba; but their title was merely honorary. They usually ratified the choice which was made by the four real electors; but we do not know that they ever interfered otherwise with the election.

That the electors might not be left too much at liberty, and in order to prevent the inconveniencies arising from parties and factions, they fixed the crown in the family of Acamapitzin; and afterwards established a law, that when the king died he should be succeeded by one of his brothers, and on failure of brothers by one of his nephews; or on failure of them by one of his cousins, leaving it in the option of the electors to chuse among the brothers, or nephews of the deceased king, the person whom they should think best qualified to govern; by means of which law, they avoided numerous inconveniencies that we have already mentioned. This law was observed from the time of their second, until the time of their last king. Huitzilihuitl, the son of Acamapitzin, was succeeded by his two brothers Chimalpopoca and Itzcoatl; Itzcoatl by his nephew Montezuma Ilhuicamina; Montezuma by his cousin Axajacatl; Axajacatl by his two brothers Tizoc and Ahuitzotl; Ahuitzotl by his nephew Montezuma II; Montezuma II. by his brother Cuitlahuatzin, to whom lastly his nephew Quauhtemotzin succeeded. This series of kings will appear more distinctly in the table of genealogy which we have subjoined.

In the election of a king no regard was paid to the right of primogeniture. At the death of Montezuma I. Axajacatl was elected in preference to his elder brothers Tizoc and Ahuitzotl.

No new king was elected until the funeral of his predecessor was celebrated with due pomp and magnificence. As soon as the election was made, advice was sent to the kings of Acolhuacan and Tacuba, in order that they might confirm it, and also to the feudatory lords who had been present at the funeral. These two kings led the new chosen sovereign to the greater temple. The feudatory lords went first, with the ensigns of their states; then the nobles of the court with the badges

SECT. VII.  
The pomp  
and ceremonies  
at the  
proclamation  
and unction  
of the king.

## BOOK VII.

of their dignity and offices; the two allied kings followed next, and behind them the king elect, stript naked, without any covering except the *maxtlatl*, the girdle, or large bandage, about his middle. He ascended the temple, resting on the arms of two nobles of the court, where one of the high-priests, accompanied by the most respectable officers of the temple, received him. He worshipped the idol of Huitzilopochtli, touching the earth with his hand, and then carrying it to his mouth. The high-priest dyed his body with a certain kind of ink, and sprinkled him four times with water which had been blessed, according to their rite, at the grand festival of Huitzilopochtli, making use for this purpose of branches of cedar and willow, and the leaves of maize. He was clothed in a mantle, on which were painted skulls and bones of the dead, and his head was covered with two other cloaks, one black, and the other blue, on which similar figures were represented. They tied a small gourd to his neck, containing a certain powder, which they esteemed a strong preservative against diseases, sorcery, and treason. Happy would that people be whose king could carry about him such a preservative. They put afterwards a censor, and a bag of copal in his hands, that he might give incense to the idol with them. When this act of religion was performed, during which the king remained on his knees, the high-priest sat down and delivered a discourse to him, in which after congratulating him on his advancement, he informed him of the obligation he owed his subjects for having raised him to the throne, and warmly recommended to him zeal for religion and justice, the protection of the poor, and the defence of his native country and kingdom. The allied kings and the nobles next addressed him to the same purpose; to which the king answered with thanks and promises to exert himself to the utmost of his power for the happiness of the state. Gomara, and other authors who have copied him, affirm, that the high-priest made him swear to maintain their ancient religion, to observe the laws of his ancestors, and to make the sun go his course, to make the clouds pour down rain, to make the rivers run, and all fruits to ripen. If it is true, that they made the king take so extravagant an oath, it is probable, that they only meant to oblige him to maintain a conduct worthy of these favours from heaven.



After hearing these addresses, the king descended with all his attendants to the lower area, where the rest of the nobility waited to make their obedience, and pay him homage in jewels and apparel. He was thence conducted to a chamber within the inclosure of the temple called *Tlacatecco*, where he was left by himself four days, during which time he was allowed to eat but once a day; but he might eat flesh or any other kind of food. He bathed twice every day, and after bathing he drew blood from his ears, which he offered together with some burnt copal to Huitzilopochtli, making all the while constant and earnest prayers to obtain that enlightenment of understanding which was requisite in order to govern his monarchy with prudence. On the fifth day, the nobility returned to the temple, conducting the new king to his palace, where the feudatory lords came to renew the investiture of their fiefs. Then followed the rejoicings of the people, entertainments, dances, and illuminations.

To prepare for the coronation it was necessary, according to the law of the kingdom, or the custom introduced by Montezuma I. that the new elected king should go out to war, to procure the victims which were necessary for the sacrifices on such an occasion. They never were without enemies on whom war might be made; either from some province of the kingdom having rebelled, or from some Mexican merchants having been unjustly put to death, or on account of some insult having been offered to the royal ambassadors, of which cases history shews many examples. The arms and ensigns which the king wore upon going to war, the parade with which his prisoners were conducted to the court, and the circumstances which attended the sacrifice of them, shall be explained when we come to treat of the military establishment of the Mexicans; but we are entirely ignorant of the particular ceremonies which were used at his coronation. The king of Acolhuacan was the person who put the crown upon his head. The crown which was called by the Mexicans *copilli*, was a sort of small mitre, the fore-part of which was raised up, and terminated in a point, and the part behind was lowered down, and hung over the neck in the same manner as is represented in the figures of the kings given in this history. It was composed of different materials, according to the pleasure of the kings; sometimes made of thin plates

SECT. VIII.  
The coronation, crown, dress; and insignia of royalty.

## BOOK VII.

plates of gold, sometimes wove with golden thread, and figured with beautiful feathers. The dress which he usually wore in the palace was the *xiubtilmatli*, which was a mantle of a blue and white mixture. When he went to the temple he put on a white habit. That which he wore to assist at councils, and other public functions, varied according to the nature and circumstances of the occasion; one was appropriated for civil causes, and another for criminal causes; one for acts of justice, and another for times of rejoicing; upon all these occasions he regularly wore his crown. Every time he went abroad, he was attended by a great retinue of nobility, and preceded by a noble, who held up three rods made of gold and odorous wood, by which he intimated to the people the presence of their sovereign.

SECT. IX.  
Rights of the  
king.

The power and authority of the kings of Mexico was different at different periods. In the beginning of the monarchy their power was much circumscribed, and their authority truly paternal, their conduct more humane, and the prerogatives which they claimed from their subjects extremely moderate. With the enlargement of their territory they gradually increased their riches, their magnificence, and pomp, and in proportion to their wealth were likewise multiplied, as generally happens, the burthens on their subjects. Their pride occasioned them to trespass upon the limits, which the consent of the nation had allowed to their authority, until they arrived at that pitch of odious despotism which appears to have marked the reign of Montezuma II. but notwithstanding their tyranny, the Mexicans always preserved the respect which was due to the royal character, except that in the last year but one of the monarchy, as will be related hereafter, when they were no longer able to endure the meanness of their king Montezuma, his excessive cowardice, and low submission to his enemies, they treated him with contempt, and wounded him with arrows and stones. The pageantry and ostentatious grandeur of the last Mexican kings may be conceived from what we have said of the reign of Montezuma, and what we shall farther say in our account of the conquest.

The kings of Mexico were rivalled in magnificence by the kings of Acolhuacan, as the latter were by the former in politics. The government of the Acolhuan nation was almost the same with that of the Mexicans; but with respect to the right of succession to the crown they

they were totally different; for in the kingdom of Acolhuacan, and the same is to be understood of Tacuba, the sons succeeded to their fathers, not according to their birth, but according to their rank; the sons which were born of the queen, or principal wife, having been always preferred to the rest. This rule was observed from the time of Xolotl, the first Chechemecan king, until the time of Cacamatzin, who was succeeded by his brother Cuicuitzaczin, through the intrigues of Montezuma and the conqueror Cortes.

The king of Mexico, as well as the king of Acolhuacan, had three supreme councils, composed of persons of the first nobility, in which they deliberated upon affairs relating to the government of the provinces, the revenues of the king, and to war, and in general the king resolved upon no measure of importance without having first heard the opinion of his counsellors. In the history of the conquest we shall find Montezuma in frequent deliberation with his council on the pretensions of the Spaniards. We do not know the number of members of each council, nor do historians furnish us with the lights necessary to illustrate such a subject. They have only preserved to us the names of some counsellors, particularly those of Montezuma II. In the sixty-first painting of the collection of Mendoza, are represented the council-halls, and some of the lords who composed them.

SECT. X.  
The royal  
council and  
officers of the  
court.

Amongst the different ministers and officers of the court there was a treasurer-general, whom they called *Hueicalpixqui*, or great major-domo, who received all the tributes which were collected by the officers of the revenue in the provinces, and kept an account of his receipts and disbursements in paintings, agreeable to the testimony of Bernal Diaz, who saw them. There was another treasurer for the gems and articles of gold, who was, at the same time, director of the artists who wrought them; and another for the works which were made of feathers, the artists of which last employment had their work-shops in the royal palace of birds. There was besides a provider-general of animals, whom they called *Huejamingui*; he had the charge of the royal woods, and took care that game was never wanting there; and that the royal palaces were never unprovided with every sort of animal. Concerning the other royal ministers and officers, we have mentioned enough when we treated of the magnificence of Montezuma.



BOOK VII. zuma II. and of the government of the kings of Acolhuacan, Te-  
 S E C T. XI. chotlala, and Nezahualcojotl.

Ambassadors.

For the office of ambassadors, they always employed persons who were both noble and eloquent. Three, four, or more persons were usually joined in this office, and, to procure respect, they wore certain badges by which they were every where known, particularly a green habit made like the scapulary, or little cloak, which some religious people wear, from which hung some locks of cotton. Their hair was twisted with beautiful feathers, from which also hung similar locks of different colours. In their right hands they carried an arrow with the point downwards; in the left a shield, and hanging at the same arm a net, in which they carried their provision. In all the places through which they passed, they were well received, and treated with that distinction which their character demanded, provided they did not leave the great road which led to the place of their destination; but if they ever deviated from it, they lost their rights and privileges as ambassadors. When they arrived at the place where they were to deliver their embassy, they stopped before they made entrance, and waited until the nobility of the city came out to meet them, and conduct them to the House of the Public, where they were lodged and well entertained. The nobles burnt incense to them, and presented nosegays of flowers, and after they had reposed, led them to the palace of the lord of that state, and introduced them into the hall of audience, where they were received by the lord himself, and his counsellors, who were all seated in their places. After having made a profound reverence to the lord, they sat down upon their heels in the middle of the hall, and without saying a word, or lifting up their eyes, they waited until a sign was made for them to speak. When the signal was given, the most respectable amongst the ambassadors, after having made another bow to the lord, delivered his embassy with a low voice, in a studied address, which was attentively heard by the lord and his counsellors, who kept their heads so much inclined, that they appeared almost to touch their knees. When the ambassadors had finished their interview, they returned to the house where they were lodged. In the mean while, the lord entered into consultation with his counsellors, and communicated his answer to the ambassadors by means of his ministers; provided them abundantly with provisions for  
 their

their journey, made them also some presents, and caused them to be escorted out of the city by the same persons who had received them upon their arrival. If the lord, to whom the embassy was sent, was a friend to the Mexicans, it was considered as a great dishonour not to accept his presents; but if he was an enemy, the ambassadors could not receive them without the express order of their master. All these ceremonies were not invariably observed in embassies, nor were all embassies sent to the lords of cities or states; for some of them, as we shall mention hereafter, were sent to the body of the nobility, or to the people.

The couriers whom the Mexicans frequently employed, made use of different ensigns according to the nature of the intelligence, or affair with which they were charged. If it was the news of the Mexicans having lost a battle, the courier wore his hair loose and disordered, and, without speaking a word to any person, went straight to the palace, where, kneeling before the king, he related what had happened. If it was the news of a victory which had been obtained by the arms of Mexico, he had his hair tied with a coloured string, and his body girt with a white cotton cloth; in his left hand a shield, and in his right a sword, which he brandished as if he had been in the act of engagement; expressing by such gestures his glad tidings, and singing the glorious actions of the ancient Mexicans, while the people, overjoyed at seeing him, led him with many congratulations to the royal palace.

SECT. XII.  
Couriers and  
polis.

In order that news might be more speedily conveyed, there were upon all the highways of the kingdom certain little towers, about six miles distant from each other, where couriers were always waiting in readiness to set out with dispatches. As soon as the first courier was sent off, he ran as swiftly as he could to the first stage, or little tower, where he communicated to another his intelligence, and delivered to him the paintings which represented the news, or the affair which was the subject of his embassy. The second courier posted without delay to the next stage, or little tower; and thus by a continued and uninterrupted speed of conveyance, intelligence was carried so rapidly from place to place, that sometimes, according to the affirmations made by several authors, it reached the distance of three hundred miles in one day. It was by this means that fresh fish were daily brought to Monte-

BOOK VII. zuma II. from the gulf of Mexico, which is at least upwards of two hundred miles distant from the capital. Those couriers were exercised in running from their childhood; and in order to encourage them in this exercise, the priests, under whose discipline they were trained, frequently bestowed rewards on those who were victors in a race.

SECT. XIII.  
The nobility  
and right of  
succession.

With respect to the nobility of Mexico and of the whole empire, it was divided into several classes, which were confounded together by the Spaniards under the general name of *caziques* (*q*). Each class had its particular privileges and wore its own badges, by which means, although their dress was extremely simple, the character of every person was immediately understood. The nobles alone were allowed to wear ornaments of gold and gems upon their cloaths, and to them exclusively belonged, from the reign of Montezuma II. all the high offices at court, in the magistracy, and the most considerable in the army.

The highest rank of nobility in Tlascala, in Huexotzinco, and in Cholula, was that of *Teuēlli*. To obtain this rank it was necessary to be of noble birth, to have given proofs in several battles of the utmost courage, to be arrived at a certain age, and to command great riches for the enormous expences which were necessary to be supported by the possessor of such a dignity. The candidate was obliged besides to undergo a year of regular penance, consisting in perpetual fasting and frequent effusions of blood, and an abstinence from all commerce whatsoever with women, and patiently enduring the insults, the reproaches, and ill-treatment, by which fortitude and constancy are put to the test. They bored the cartilage of his nose, in order to suspend from it certain grains of gold, which were the principal badge of this dignity. On the day on which he came to the possession of it, they stripped him of the dismal habit which he had worn during the time of his penance, and dressed him in most magnificent attire: they tied his hair with a leathern ribband, died of a red colour, at which hung beautiful feathers, and fixed also the grains of gold at his nose. This ceremony was performed, in the upper area of the greater temple, by a

{*q*} The name *cazique*, which signifies *lord* or *prince*, is derived from the Haitin tongue, which was spoke in the island of Hispaniola. The Mexicans called a lord *Tlatoani*, and a noble *Pilli* and *Teuēlli*.



priest, who, after having conferred the dignity, made him a congratulatory harangue. From thence he descended to the lower area, where he joined with the nobility in a grand dance that was made there, and which was succeeded by a magnificent entertainment, which was given at his expence to all the lords of the state, for whom besides the innumerable dresses which were made in presents to them, such an abundance of meats were prepared, there were consumed upon the occasion, agreeable to the accounts of some authors, from one thousand to sixteen hundred turkies, a vast number of rabbits, deer, and other animals, and an incredible quantity, of cocoas in different sorts of beverage, and of the most choice and delicate fruits of that country. The title *Teuēlli* was added in the manner of a surname to the proper name of persons advanced to this dignity, as *Chechemeca-teuēlli*, *Pil-teuēlli*, and others. The *Teuēlli* took precedency of all others in the senate, both in the order of sitting and voting, and were permitted to have a servant behind them with a seat, which was esteemed a privilege of the highest honour.

The titles of nobility amongst the Mexicans were for the most part hereditary. Even until the downfall of the empire many families that were descended of those illustrious Aztecas who founded Mexico, preserved themselves in great splendour, and several branches of those most ancient houses are still existing, though reduced by misfortunes, and obscured and confused amongst the vulgar (*r*). It is not to be doubted that it would have been more wise policy in the Spaniards, if, instead of conducting women from Europe, and slaves from Africa, to Mexico, they had endeavoured to form by marriages, between the Mexicans and themselves, one single individual nation. If the nature of this history would permit, we could here give a demonstration of the advantages which would have been derived to both nations from such an

(*r*) It is impossible to behold without regret, the state of degradation to which some illustrious families of that kingdom have been reduced. Not very long ago was executed a locksmith, who was a descendant of the ancient kings of Michuacan: we knew a poor taylor in Mexico, who was descended of a very noble house of Coyoacan, but had been deprived of the possessions which he inherited from his illustrious ancestors. Examples of this kind are not infrequent even among the royal families of Mexico, Acolhuacan, and Tacuba; the repeated orders, which the justice and clemency of the Catholic kings caused to be made in their favour, have not been sufficient to protect them from the general calamity of their nation.

## BOOK VII.

union, and the misfortunes which were occasioned by the opposite conduct.

In Mexico, and through the whole empire almost, excepting in the royal family as we have already mentioned, the sons succeeded to all the rights of their fathers; and on failure of sons the rights fell to brothers, and if these were wanting, to nephews.

SECT. XIV.  
Division of  
the lands, and  
titles of pos-  
session and  
property.

The lands of the Mexican empire were divided between the crown, the nobility, the communities, and the Temples, and there were paintings in which the property of each was distinctly represented. The lands of the crown were painted of a purple, those of the nobility of a scarlet, and those of the communities of a yellow colour. In these, at first sight, the extent and boundaries of the different estates were distinguished. After the conquest, the Spanish magistrates made use of these instruments to decide all disputes among the Indians concerning the property or possession of lands.

Of the lands of the crown, which were called by the Mexicans *Tecpantlalli*, although the property was always vested in the king, certain lords called *Tecpanpouhque*, or *Tecpantlaca*, that is, *people of the palace*, enjoyed the temporary use and profits. These lords did not pay any tribute, nor gave any thing else to the king than nosegays of flowers and different kinds of birds, which they presented to him in token of their vassalage every time that they made him a visit; but they were obliged to repair and rebuild the royal palaces whenever it was necessary, and to cultivate the gardens of the king, by assisting with their directions the populace of their district in that labour. They were obliged besides to pay court to the king, and to attend upon him every time that he appeared in public, and were therefore highly esteemed by all. When any of those lords died, his first-born son entered into possession of the lands, and into all the obligations of his father; but if he went to establish himself in another place, he lost these rights, and the king then granted them to another usufructuary; or left the choice of one to the judgment of the community in whose district the lands were situated.

The lands which they called *pillalli*, that is, lands of the nobles, were the ancient possessions of the nobles, transmitted by inheritance from father to son, or were rewards obtained from the king in recom-  
pense

pense of services done to the crown. The first and the last could for the most part alienate their possessions, but they were not allowed to give away or sell them to plebeians; we say for the most part, because amongst these lands there were some granted by the king under a condition not to alienate them, but to leave them in inheritance to their sons.

Respecting the inheritance of states, regard was paid to priority of birth; but if the first-born son was incapable of managing the possessions, the father was entirely at liberty to appoint any other son his heir, provided that he secured a provision for the rest. The daughters, at least in Tlascala, were not allowed to inherit, that the state might never fall under the government of a stranger. Even after the conquest of the Spaniards, the Tlascalans were so jealous of preserving the states in their families, that they refused to give the investiture of one of the four principalities of the republic to D. Francisco Pimentel, nephew of Coanacatzin, king of Acolhuacan (s), married with donna *Maria Maxicatzin*, niece to prince *Maxicatzin*, who, as we shall afterwards find, was the chief of the four lords that governed that republic at the arrival of the Spaniards. The fiefs commenced in that kingdom at the time that king Xolotl divided the lands of Anahuac among the Chechemecan and Acolhuan lords, under the feudal conditions, that they would preserve inviolable fidelity, acknowledge his supreme authority, and their obligation to assist their sovereign whenever it should be necessary with their persons, with their property, and their vassals. In the Mexican empire, as far as we can find, real fiefs were few in number; and if we are to speak in the strict sense of the civil law, there were none at all; for they were neither perpetual in their nature, as every year it was necessary to repeat the form of investiture, nor were the vassals of feudatories exempted from the tributes which were paid to the king by the other vassals of the crown.

The lands which were called *Altepetlalli*, that is, those of the communities of cities and villages, were divided into as many parts as there

(s) Coanacatzin, king of Acolhuacan, was the father of don Fernando Pimentel, who had don Francisco born to him by a Tlascalan lady. It is to be observed, that many of the Mexicans, particularly the nobles, upon being baptised, added to their Christian name a Spanish surname.



**BOOK VII.** were districts in a city, and every district possessed its own part entirely distinct from, and independent of the others. These lands could not be alienated by any means whatever. Some of them were allotted to furnish provisions for the army in time of war; those were called *Melchimalli*, or *Cacalomilli*, according to the kind of provisions which they supplied. The catholic kings have assigned lands to the settlements of the Mexicans (*t*), and made proper laws to secure to them the perpetuity of such possessions; but at present many villages have been deprived of them by the great power of some individuals, assisted by the iniquity of some judges.

**SECT. XV.**  
The tributes  
and taxes laid  
on the sub-  
jects of the  
crown.

All the provinces that were conquered by the Mexicans were tributary to the crown, and contributed fruits, animals, and the minerals of the country, according to the rate prescribed them; and all merchants besides paid a part of their merchandizes, and all artists a certain portion of their labours. In the capital of every province was a house allotted for a magazine to contain the corn, garments, and all the other effects, which the revenue officers collected in the circle of each district. These officers were universally odious on account of the distresses which they brought on the tributary places. Their badges of distinction were a little rod which they carried in one hand, and a fan of feathers in the other. The treasurers of the king had paintings, in which were described all the tributary places, and the quantity and quality of the tributes. In the collection made by Mendoza, there are thirty-six paintings of this kind (*u*), and in each of these are represented the principal places of one, or of many provinces of the empire. Besides an excessive number of cotton garments, and a certain quantity of corn and feathers, which were the usual taxes laid on almost all tributary places, many other different things were paid in tribute according to the produce of different countries. In order to give

(*t*) The royal laws grant to every Indian village, or settlement, the territory which surrounds them to the extent of six hundred Castilian cubits, which are equal to two hundred and fifty seven Parisian perches.

(*u*) The thirty-six paintings begin with the 13th, and end with the 48th. In the copy of them published by Thevenot, the 21st and 22d are wanting, and for the most part the figures of the tributary cities. The copy published in Mexico in 1770, is still less perfect, for it wants the 21st, 22d, 38th, 39th, and 40th of Mendoza's Collection, besides a number of errors in the interpretations; but it has the advantage over Thevenot's of having the figures of the cities, and of being all executed on plates.

our readers some idea of them, we shall mention some of the taxes BOOK VII.  
which are represented in these paintings.

The cities of *Xoconochco*, *Huebuetlan*, *Mazatlan*, and others upon the coast, paid annually to the crown, besides the dresses made of cotton, four thousand handfuls of beautiful feathers of different colours, two hundred bags of cocoas, forty tygers skins, and a hundred and sixty birds of certain particular colours. *Huaxjacac*, *Cojclapan*, *Atlacuecbabujan*, and other places belonging to the Zapotecas, paid in tribute forty plates of gold of a certain size and thickness, and twenty bags of cochineal. *Tlachquiaucho*, *Azotlan*, twenty vases of a certain measure full of gold in powder. *Tochtepec*, *Otlatitlan*, *Cozamallapan*, *Michapan*, and other places upon the coast of the Mexican gulf, besides the garments of cotton, gold, and cocoas, were obliged to contribute seventy-four thousand handfuls of feathers, of different colours and qualities, six necklaces, two of the finest emeralds, and four of those which were ordinary; twenty ear-rings of amber, adorned with gold, and as many of crystal; a hundred small cups or jugs of liquid amber, and sixteen thousand balls of *ule*, or elastic gum. *Tepejacac*, *Quecholac*, *Tecamachalco*, *Acatzinco*, and other places of those regions, furnished four thousand sacks of lime, four thousand loads of *atatli*, or solid canes, fit to be used in buildings, and as many loads of the same canes of a smaller size, fit for making darts, and eight thousand loads of *acajetl*, or little reeds, full of aromatic substances. *Malinaltepec*, *Tlalcozauhtitlan*, *Olinallan*, *Ixcatlan*, *Quialac*, and other places of southern hot countries, six hundred cups of honey, forty large basons of *tecozabuitl*, or yellow ochre, fit for painting, a hundred and sixty axes of copper, forty round plates of gold, of a certain diameter and thickness, ten small measures of fine turquoises, and one load of ordinary turquoises. *Quaubnabuac*, *Panchimalco*, *Atlacholoajan*, *Xiubtepec*, *Huitzilac*, and other places belonging to the Tlachuicas, sixteen thousand pieces, or large sheets of paper, and four thousand *xicalli* (natural vases, of which we shall treat hereafter), of different sizes. *Quaubtitlan*, *Tebuillojocan*, and other places which were neighbouring to them, eight thousand mats, and as many seats or chairs. Other places contributed fuel, stone, a certain number of beams and planks fit for buildings, and a certain quantity of copal, &c.

Some

BOOK VII. Some tributary people were obliged to send to the royal palaces and woods a certain number of birds and quadrupeds, namely, the people of *Xilotepec*, *Michmalajan*, and other places in the country of the Otomies, which last were obliged to send the king every year forty live eagles. Concerning the Matlatzincas we know that when they were brought under subjection to the crown of Mexico by king Axajacatl, besides the tribute which they are represented to have paid, in the twenty-seventh painting of the collection of Mendoza, the further burthen was imposed on them of cultivating a field about seven hundred perches long and half as broad, for the purpose of furnishing the royal army with provisions. To conclude, a part of every thing useful, which was found in the kingdom, either amongst the productions of nature or art, was paid in tribute to the king of Mexico.

These large contributions, the great presents which the governors of provinces, and the feudatory lords made to the king, together with the spoils of war, formed the great riches of his court which excited so much admiration in the Spanish conquerors, and occasioned so much misery to his unfortunate subjects. The tributes which were at first moderate and easy, became at last excessive and enormous; for the pride and pomp of the kings kept pace with their conquests. It is true, that a great part, and perhaps the greatest part of these revenues was expended for the benefit of the same subjects in the support of a great number of ministers and magistrates for the administration of justice, in the reward of those who had done services to the state, in the relief of the indigent, particularly widows and orphans, and men grown feeble with age, which were the three classes of people most compassionated by the Mexicans, and also by opening the royal granaries in times of great scarcity to the nation; but how many of those unhappy people who were unable to pay the tributes demanded from them must have sunk under the weight of their misery, while the royal beneficence did not reach them? To oppressive taxes were added the greatest rigour in collecting them. Whoever did not pay the tribute prescribed was sold for a slave, in order to purchase with his liberty what he could not gain by his industry.

For the administration of justice, the Mexicans had various tribunals and judges. At court, and in the more considerable places of the king-



kingdom, there was a supreme magistrate named *Cihuacoatl*, whose authority was so great that from the sentences pronounced by him, either in civil or criminal causes, no appeal could be made to any other tribunal, not even to majesty. He had the appointment of the inferior judges, and the receivers of the royal revenues within his district, rendered in their accounts to him. Any one who either made use of his ensigns, or usurped his authority, was punished with death.

The tribunal of the *Tlacatecatl*, though inferior to the first, was extremely respectable, and composed of three judges, namely of the *Tlacatecatl*, who was the chief, and from whom the tribunal took its name, and of two others who were called *Quaubnochtli* and *Tlanotlac*. They took cognizance of civil and criminal causes in the first and second instance, although sentence was pronounced in the name only of the *Tlacatecatl*. They met daily in a hall of the house of the public, which was called *Tlatzontecojan*, that is, the place where judgment is given, to which belonged porters and other officers of justice. There they listened with the utmost attention to litigations, diligently examined into causes, and pronounced sentence according to the laws. If a cause was purely civil, there was no appeal from that court; but if the cause was of a criminal nature, an appeal lay to the *Cihuacoatl*. The sentence was published by the *Tepojotl*, or public cryer, and was executed by the *Quaunochtli*, who, as we have already mentioned, was one of the three judges. The public cryer, as well as the executive minister of justice, was held in high esteem amongst the Mexicans, because they were considered to be the representatives of the king.

In every district of the city resided a *Teuctli*, who was deputy of the tribunal of *Tlacatecatl*, and was elected annually by the commons of that district. He took cognizance, in the first instance, of the causes within his district, and daily waited upon the *Cihuacoatl*, or the *Tlacatecatl*, to report to him every thing which occurred, and to receive his orders. Besides these *Teuctli*, there were in every district certain commissaries, elected in the same manner by the commons of the district, and named *Centeſſlapixque*; but they, from what appears to us, were not judges, but only guardians, charged to observe the conduct of a certain number of families committed to their care, and to acquaint the magistrates with every thing that passed. Next to the *Teuctli* were

BOOK VII. the *Taquitlatoque*, or the runners, who carried the notifications of the magistrates, and summoned guilty persons, and the *Topilli* or the officers who apprehended and made prisoners.

In the kingdom of Acolhuacan, the judicial power was divided amongst seven principal cities. The judges remained in their tribunals from sun-rise until evening. Their meals were brought to them in the tribunal-hall, and that they might not be taken off from their employment, by giving attendance upon their families, nor have any excuse for being corrupted, they were, agreeable to the usage in the kingdom of Mexico, assigned possessions and labourers, who cultivated their fields. Those possessions, as they belonged to the office, not to the officer, did not pass to his heirs but to his successors in that appointment. In causes of importance they durst not pronounce sentence, at least not in the capital, without giving information to the king. Every Mexican month, or every twenty days, an assembly of all the judges was held before the king, in order to determine all causes then undecided. If from their being much perplexed and intricate, they were not finished at that time, they were reserved for another general assembly of a more solemn nature, which was held every eighty days, and was therefore called *Nappapfallatolli*, that is, the Conference of Eighty, at which all causes were finally decided, and in the presence of that whole assembly, punishment was inflicted on the guilty. The king pronounced sentence by drawing a line with the point of an arrow upon the head of the guilty person, which was painted on the process.

In the tribunals of the Mexicans the contending parties made their own allegations: at least we do not know that they employed any other advocates. In criminal causes the accuser was not allowed any other proof than that of his witnesses; but an accused person could clear himself from guilt by his oath. In disputes about the boundaries of possessions, the paintings of the land were consulted as authentic writings.

All the magistrates were obliged to give judgment according to the laws of the kingdom which were represented by paintings. Of these we have seen many, and have extracted from them a part of that which we shall lay before our readers on the subject. The power of making laws in Tezcucó belonged always to the kings, who made those which  
they

they published, be rigorously observed. Amongst the Mexicans, the first laws were made, from what we can discover, by the body of the nobility; but afterwards the kings became the legislators of the nation, and while their authority was confined within moderate limits, they were zealous in the observance of those laws which they or their ancestors had promulgated. In the last years of the monarchy despotism altered, and changed them at caprice. We shall here enumerate those which were in force at the time the Spaniards entered into Mexico. In some of them much prudence and humanity and a strong attachment to good customs will be discovered; but in others an excess of rigour which degenerated into cruelty.

A traitor to the king or the state was torn in pieces, and his relations who were privy to the treason, and did not discover it, were deprived of their liberty.

SECT. XVII.  
Penal laws.

Whoever dared in war, or at any time of public rejoicing, to make use of the badges of the kings of Mexico, of Acolhuacan, or Tacuba, or of those of the Cihuacoatl, was punished with death, and his goods confiscated.

Whoever maltreated an ambassador, minister, or courier belonging to the king, suffered death; but ambassadors and couriers were forbid on their part to leave the high road, under pain of losing their privileges.

The punishment of death was inflicted also on those persons who occasioned any sedition amongst the people; on those who carried off, or changed the boundaries placed in the fields by public authority; and likewise on judges who gave a sentence that was unjust, or contrary to the laws, or made an unfaithful report of any cause to the king, or a superior magistrate, or allowed themselves to be corrupted by bribes.

He who in war committed any hostility upon the enemy without the order of his chief, or attacked them before the signal for battle was given, or abandoned the colours, or violated any proclamation published to the army, was infallibly beheaded.

He who at market altered the measures established by the magistrates, was guilty of felony, and was put to death without delay in the same place.



## BOOK VII.

A murderer forfeited his own life for his crime, even although the person murdered was but a slave.

He who killed his wife, although he caught her in adultery, suffered death; because, according to them, he usurped the authority of the magistrates, whose province it was to take cognizance of misdeeds, and punish evil-doers.

Adultery was inevitably punished with death. Adulterers were stoned to death, or their heads were bruised between two stones. This law which prescribed that adulterers should be stoned to death, is one of those which we have seen represented in the ancient paintings which were preserved in the library of the supreme college of Jesuits at Mexico. It is also represented in the last painting of the collection made by Mendoza, and is taken notice of by Gomara, Torquemada, and other authors. But they did not consider, nor did they punish as adultery, the trespass of a husband with any woman who was free, or not joined in matrimony: wherefore the husband was not bound to so much fidelity as was exacted from the wife. In all places of the empire this crime was punished, but in some places with greater severity than in others. In Ichoatlan, a woman who was accused of adultery was summoned before the judges, and if the proofs of her crime were satisfactory, she received punishment there immediately; she was torn in pieces, and her limbs divided amongst the witnesses. In Itztepec infidelity in a woman was punished according to the sentence of the magistrates by her husband, who cut off her nose and her ears. In some parts of the empire the punishment of death was inflicted on the husband, who cohabited with his wife, after it was proved that she had violated her fidelity.

No divorce was lawful without the permission of the judges. He who desired to divorce his wife, presented himself before the tribunal and explained his reasons for it. The judges exhorted him to concord, and endeavoured to dissuade him from a separation; but if he persisted in his claim, and his reasons appeared just, they told him that he might do that which he should judge most proper, without giving their authority for a divorce by a formal sentence. If after all he divorced her, he never could recover her nor be united to her again.

Those

Those who were guilty of incest with their nearest of blood, or relations, were hanged, and all marriages between persons so nearly connected were strictly forbid by law, excepting marriages between brothers and sisters-in-law; for amongst the Mexicans, as well as amongst the Hebrews, it was the custom that the brothers of the deceased husband might marry with their widowed sisters-in-law; but there was great difference in this practice of these two nations; for amongst the Hebrews such a marriage could only happen in one case, that was where the husband died without issue; amongst the Mexicans on the contrary, it was necessary that the deceased should leave children, of whose education the brother was to take charge, entering into all the rights of a father. In some places which were distant from the capital, the nobles were accustomed to marry their widowed mothers-in-law, provided their fathers had not had children by them; but in the capitals of Mexico and Tezcuco, and the places neighbouring to them, such marriages were deemed incestuous, and punished with severity.

Any person guilty of a detestable crime was hanged; if a priest, he was burnt alive. Amongst all the nations of Anahuac, excepting the Panuchese, this crime was held in abomination, and was punished by them all with rigour. Nevertheless, vicious men, in order to justify their own excesses, have defamed all the nations of America with this horrid vice; but this calumny, which several Europeans authors have too readily admitted to be just, is proved to be false by the testimony of many other authors, who are more impartial and better informed (x).

The priest, who, during the time that he was dedicated to the service of the temple, abused any free woman, was deprived of the priesthood and banished.

If any of the young men, or young women, who were educating in the seminaries, were guilty of incontinence, they were liable to a severe punishment, and even to suffer death, according to the report of some authors. But, on the other hand, there was no punishment whatever prescribed for simple fornication, although the evil tendency of an excess of this kind was not unknown to them; and fathers frequently

(x) See what we have said in our Dissertations respecting the author who has revived this atrocious calumny upon the Americans.

BOOK VII. admonished their children to beware of it: they burned the hair of a bawd in the market-place with pine torches, and smeared her head with the resin of the same wood. The more respectable the persons were to whom she served in this capacity, so much the greater was the punishment.

According to the laws, the man who dressed himself like a woman, or the woman who dressed herself like a man, was hanged.

The thief of things of small value met with no punishment, excepting that of being obliged to restore what he had stolen; if the things were of great value, he was made the slave of the person whom he had robbed. If the thing stolen did no longer exist, nor the robber had any goods by which he could repay his robbery, he was stoned to death. If he had stolen gold or gems, after being conducted through all the streets of the city, he was sacrificed at the festival which the goldsmiths held in honour of their god Xipe. He who stole a certain number of ears of maize, or pulled up from another's field a certain number of useful trees, was made a slave of the owner of that field (*y*); but every poor traveller was permitted to take of the maize, or the fruit-bearing trees, which were planted by the side of the highway, as much as was sufficient to satisfy immediate hunger.

He who robbed in the market, was immediately put to death by the *bastinado*, in the market-place.

He also was condemned to death, who in the army robbed another of his arms or badges.

Whoever upon finding a strayed child, made it a slave, and sold it to another, as if it were his own, forfeited by that crime his liberty and his goods, one half of which was appropriated to the support of the child, and the other half was paid to the purchaser that he might set the child at liberty. Whatever number of persons were concerned in the crime, all of them were liable to the same punishment.

To the same punishment of servitude, and to the loss of his goods, was every person liable who sold the possessions of another, which he only had in farm.

(x) The anonymous conqueror says, that stealing of three or four ears of maize was sufficient to incur the penalty. Torquemada adds, that the penalty was death: but this was the law in the kingdom of Acolhuacan only, not in the realm of Mexico.



Tutors who did not give a good account of the estates of their pupils, were hanged without pardon.

The same punishment was inflicted on sons who squandered their patrimony in vices; for they said it was a great crime not to set a higher value on the labours of their fathers.

He who practised sorcery was sacrificed to the gods.

Drunkenness in youth was a capital offence; young men were put to death by the bastinado in prison, and young women were stoned to death. In men advanced in years, although it was not made capital, it was punished with severity. If he was a nobleman, he was stripped of his office and his rank, and rendered infamous; if a plebeian, they shaved him (a punishment very sensibly felt by them), and demolished his house, saying, that he who could voluntarily bereave himself of his senses, was not worthy of a habitation amongst men. This law did not forbid conviviality at nuptials, or at any other times of festivity: on such occasions it being lawful, in private houses, to drink more than usual; nor did the law affect old men of seventy years, who, on account of their age, were allowed to drink as much as they pleased; which appears represented in the forty-third painting of the collection made by Mendoza.

He who told a lie to the particular prejudice of another, had a part of his lip cut off, and sometimes his ears.

Of the Mexican laws concerning slaves it is to be observed, that there were three sorts of slaves among them. The first were prisoners of war; the second were those whom they purchased for a valuable consideration; and the third were malefactors, who were deprived of their liberty in punishment of their crimes.

SECT.  
XVIII.  
Laws concerning  
slaves.

The prisoners of war were generally sacrificed to their gods. He who in war took another's prisoner from him, or set him at liberty, was punished with death.

The sale of a slave was not valid, unless it was made in the presence of four lawful witnesses. In general, they assembled in greater numbers, and celebrated contracts of that nature with great solemnity.

Among the Mexicans a slave was allowed to have cattle, to acquire property, and even to purchase slaves who served him; nor could his owner hinder him, nor have service from such slaves; for slavery was  
only

BOOK VII. only an obligation of personal service, and even that was under certain restrictions.

Nor was slavery entailed upon the descendants of slaves. All Mexicans were born free, although their mothers were slaves. If a free man impregnated another person's slave, and she died during her pregnancy, he became the slave of the owner of the female slave; but if she was happily delivered, the child as well as the father remained both free.

Necessitous parents were allowed to dispose of any one of their children, in order to relieve their poverty; and any free man might sell himself for the same purpose; but owners could not sell their slaves without their consent, unless they were slaves with a collar. Runaway, rebellious, or vicious slaves, had two or three warnings given them by their owners, which warnings they gave for their better justification in presence of some witnesses. If, in spite of these admonitions the slaves did not mend their behaviour, a wooden collar was put about their necks, and then it was lawful to sell them at market. If, after having been owned by two or three masters, they still continued intractable, they were sold for the sacrifices; but that happened very rarely. If a slave, who was collared in this manner, happened to escape from the prison where his owner confined him, and took refuge in the royal palace, he remained free; and the person who attempted to prevent his gaining this asylum, forfeited his liberty for the attempt, except it it was the owner, or one of his children, who had a right to seize him.

The persons who sold themselves were generally gamesters, who did so in order to game with the price of their liberty; or those who by laziness, or some misfortune, found themselves reduced to misery, and prostitutes, who wanted cloaths to make their appearance in public; for women of that class among the Mexicans had no interest in general in their profession, but the gratification of their passions. Slavery amongst the Mexicans was not so hard to be borne, as it was among other people; for the condition of a slave among them was by no means oppressive. Their labour was moderate, and their treatment humane; when their masters died, they generally became free. The common price of a slave was a load of cotton garments.

There

There was among the Mexicans another kind of slavery, which they called *Huebuctatlacolli*, which was, where one or two families, on account of their poverty, bound themselves to furnish some lord perpetually with a slave. They delivered up one of their sons for this purpose, and after he had served for some years they recalled him, in order to let him marry, or for some other motive, and substituted another in his place. The change was made without giving any offence to the patron; on the contrary, he generally gave some consideration for a new slave. In the year 1506, on account of a great scarcity which happened then, many families were obliged to this kind of servitude; but they were all freed from it by the king of Acolhuacan, Nezahualpilli, owing to the hardships they suffered from it; and, after his example, the same thing was done by Montezuma II. in his dominions.

The conquerors, who imagined they entered into all the rights of the ancient Mexican lords, had, at first, many slaves of those nations; but when the Catholic kings were informed of it by persons of credit who were zealous for the public good, and well acquainted with the manners and customs of those people, they declared all those slaves free, and forbid, under severe penalties, any attempt against their liberty. A law infinitely just, and worthy the humanity of those monarchs; for the first religious missionaries who were employed in the conversion of the Mexicans, amongst whom were men of much learning, declared, after diligent examination, that they had not been able to find one amongst the slaves who had been justly deprived of his natural liberty.

We have now said all that we know of the Mexican legislature. More complete information on this head, and in particular concerning their civil contracts, their tribunals, and supreme councils, might have proved extremely valuable; but the unfortunate loss of the greater part of their paintings, and of some manuscripts of the first Spaniards, has deprived us of the only lights which could have illustrated this subject.

Although the laws of the capital were generally received throughout the whole empire, yet in some of the provinces many variations from them took place; for as the Mexicans did not oblige the conquered nations to speak the language of their court, neither did they compel

SECT. XIX.  
Laws of other  
countries of  
Anahuac.



## BOOK VII.

them to adopt all their laws. The legislature of Acolhuacan was the most similar to that of Mexico; but still they differed in many particulars, and the former was far more severe than the latter.

The laws published by the celebrated king Nezahualcojotl ordained, that a thief should be dragged through the streets, and afterwards hanged. Murderers were beheaded. The agent in the crime of sodomy was suffocated in a heap of ashes; the patient had his bowels torn out, after which his belly was filled with ashes, and then he was burned. He who maliciously contrived to sow discord between two states, was tied to a tree and burned alive. He who drank till he lost his senses, if a nobleman, was immediately hanged, and his body was thrown into the lake, or into some river; if a plebeian, for the first offence, he lost his liberty, and for the second his life. And when the legislator was asked, why the law was more severe upon nobles, he answered, that the crime of drunkenness was less pardonable in them, as they were more bound in duty to set a good example.

The same king prescribed the punishment of death to historians who published any falshood in their paintings (*y*). He condemned robbers of the fields to the same punishment, and declared that the stealing seven ears of maize was sufficient to incur the penalty.

The Tlascalans adopted the greater part of the laws of Acolhuacan. Among them, sons, who were wanting in respect and duty to their parents, were put to death by order of the senate. Those persons who were authors of any public misfortune, and yet did not deserve to be punished with death, were banished. Generally speaking, among all the polished nations of Anahuac, murder, theft, lying, adultery, and other similar crimes of incontinence, were rigorously punished, and that which we have already observed, when speaking of their character, appears to be verified in every thing, namely, that they were (as they still are) naturally inclined to severity and rigour, and more vigilant to punish vice than to reward virtue.

(*y*) This law against false historians is attested by D. Fernando d' Alba Ixtlilxochitl (who was a descendant of that legislator), in his valuable manuscripts.

Among

Among the punishments prescribed by the legislators of Mexico against malefactors, that of the fork or gallows was reckoned the most ignominious. That of banishment was also thought infamous, as it supposed the guilty person possessed of an infectious vice. That of whipping is not found among their laws; nor do we know that it was ever made use of except by parents to their children, or masters to their pupils.

BOOK VII.  
SECT. XX.  
Punishments  
and prisons.

They had two sorts of prisons; one similar to modern prisons, called *Teilpilojan*, which was appropriated for debtors who refused to pay their debts, and for such persons as were guilty of crimes not deserving death; the other called *Quauhcalli*, resembling a cage, was used to confine prisoners who were to be sacrificed, and persons guilty of capital offences. Both of them were well watched and strongly guarded. Those who were to be capitally punished were fed very sparingly, in order that they might taste by anticipation the bitterness of death. The prisoners on the contrary were well nourished, in order that they might appear in good flesh at the sacrifice. If through the negligence of the guard, any prisoner escaped from the cage, the community of the district, whose duty it was to supply the prisons with guards, was obliged to pay to the owner of the fugitive, a female slave, a load of cotton garments, and a shield.

Having treated thus far of the civil, it is now become necessary to say something of the military government of the Mexicans. No profession was held in more esteem amongst them than the profession of arms. The deity of war was the most revered by them, and regarded as the chief protector of the nation. No prince was elected king, until he had, in several battles, displayed proofs of his courage and military skill, and merited the splendid post of general of the army; and no king was crowned, until he had taken, with his own hands, the victims which were to be sacrificed at the festival of his coronation.

SECT. XXI.  
Officers of  
war and mili-  
tary orders.

All the Mexican kings, from Itzcoatl the first, down to Quautemotzin, who was their last, rose from the command of the army to the government of the kingdom. Those who died for the sake of their country, with the arms in their hands, were imagined to be the happiest souls in another life. From the great esteem in which the profession of arms was held amongst them, they were at much pains to make their children courageous, and to enure them from the earliest infancy to the hardships

of war. It was this elevated notion of the glory of arms, which formed those heroes, whose illustrious actions we have already related: which made them shake off the yoke of the Tepanecas, and erect on so humble a foundation, so famous and celebrated a monarchy: and lastly, which produced the extension of their dominions from the banks of the lake to the shores of the two opposite seas.

The highest military dignity was that of general of the army; but there were four different ranks of generals, of which the most respectable was that of *Tlacochealcatl* (z), and each rank had its particular badges of distinction. We are uncertain in what degree the other three ranks were subordinate to the first; nor can we even tell their names, on account of the different opinions of authors on this head (a). Next to the generals were the captains, each of whom commanded a certain number of soldiers.

In order to reward the services of warriors, and give them every kind of encouragement, the Mexicans devised three military orders, called *Achcaubtin*, *Quaubtin*, and *Oocelo*, or Princes, Eagles, and Tygers. The persons belonging to the order of princes, who were called *Quachitlin*, were the most honoured. They wore their hair tied on the top of their heads with a red string, from which hung as many locks of cotton as they had performed meritorious actions. This honour was so much esteemed among them, that the kings themselves, as well as the generals, were proud of having it conferred upon them. Montezuma II. belonged to this order, as Acosta affirms, and also king Tizoc, as appears in the paintings of him. The Tygers were distinguished by a particular armour which they wore, it being spotted like the skins of these wild animals; but such insignia were only made use of in war: at court all the officers of the army wore a dress of mixed colours, which was called *Tlachquaubho*. No persons on the first time of their going to war, were allowed to wear any badge of dis-

(z) Some authors say that *Tlacochealcatl*, signifies prince of the darts; but unquestionably it means only, inhabitant of the arsenal, or house of the darts.

(a) The interpreter of Mendoza's Collection says, that the names of the four ranks of generals, were *Tlacochealcatl*, *Atempancatl*, *Ezhuacatecatl*, and *Tlillancalqui*. Acosta, instead of *Atempancatl*, says *Tlaccatecatl*, and instead of *Ezhuacatecatl*, *Ezhuabnacatl*; and adds, that these were the names of the four electors. Torquemada adopts the name of *Tlaccatecatl*, but sometimes he makes his rank inferior to the *Tlacochealcatl*, and at other times he confounds them together.



inction; they were dressed in a coarse white habit, of cloth made from the aloe; and this rule was so strictly observed, that it was even necessary for the princes of the royal blood to give some proofs of their courage before they could be entitled to change that plain dress for another more costly, called *Teucalimbqui*. The members of those military orders, besides the exterior marks of distinction which they wore, were allotted particular apartments in the royal palace, whenever they waited upon the king as guards. They were allowed to have furniture in their houses made of gold, to wear the finest cotton dress, and finer shoes than those of the common people; but no soldier had permission to do this until he had gained, by his bravery, some advancement in the army. A particular dress called *Tlacatzimbqui* was given as a reward to the soldier, who, by his example, encouraged a dispirited army to renew battle with vigour.

When the king went to war, he wore besides his armour, particular badges of distinction; on his legs, half boots made of thin plates of gold; on his arms, plates of the same metal, and bracelets of gems; at his under lip hung an emerald set in gold; at his ears, ear-rings of the same stone; about his neck a necklace, or chain of gold and gems, and a plume of beautiful feathers on his head; but the badge most expressive of majesty, was a work of great labour made of beautiful feathers, which reached from the head all down the back (*b*). The Mexicans were very attentive to distinguish persons, particularly in war, by different badges.

SECT. XXII.  
The military  
dress of the  
king.

The defensive and offensive arms which were made use of by the Mexicans, and the other nations of Anahuac, were of various sorts. The defensive arms common to the nobles and plebeians, to the officers and soldiers, were shields, which they called *Chimalli* (*c*), and were made of different forms and materials. Some of them were perfectly round, and others were rounded only in the under part. Some

SECT.  
XXIII.  
The arms of  
the Mexi-  
cans.

(*b*) All these royal insignia had their particular names. The boots were called *cozebuatl*, the brachials *maternacatl*, the bracelets *matzopeztli*, the emerald at the lip *tentetl*, the ear-rings *nacochtli*, the necklace *cozcapetlatl*, and the principal badge of feathers *quachihli*.

(*c*) Solis pretends, that the shield was used only by lords; but the anonymous conqueror, who frequently saw the Mexicans in arms, and was engaged in many battles against them, asserts expressly, that this armour was common to all ranks. No author has informed us more accurately than he of the Mexican armour.

were.

BOOK VII. were made of *otatli*, or solid elastic canes, interwoven with thick cotton threads, and covered with feathers; those of the nobles with thin plates of gold; others were made of large tortoise-shells, adorned with copper, silver, and gold, according to the wealth of the owner, or his rank in the army. These were of a moderate size; but others were so excessively large, that they could occasionally cover the whole body; but when it was not necessary to use them, they could compress them, and carry them under their arms like the parasols of the moderns; it is probable, they were made of the skins of animals, or cloth waxed with *ule*, or elastic gum (*d*). On the other hand, many of their shields were very small, more beautiful than strong, and adorned with fine feathers; these were not employed in war, but only at the entertainments which they made in imitation of a battle.

The defensive arms peculiar to the officers were breast-plates of cotton, one and sometimes two fingers thick, which were arrow-proof; and on this account the Spaniards themselves made use of them in the war against the Mexicans. The name *Icbcabuepilli*, which the Mexicans gave to this sort of breast-plate, was changed by the Spaniards into the word *Escapil*. Over this sort of cuirass, which only covered part of the breast, they put on another piece of armour, which, besides the chest, covered the thighs, and the half of the arms, figures of which appear in the plate representing the Mexican armour. The lords were accustomed to wear a thick upper coat of feathers, over a cuirass made of several plates of gold, or silver gilt, which rendered them invulnerable, not only by arrows, but even by darts or swords, as the anonymous conqueror affirms. Besides the armour which they wore for the defence of their chests, their arms, their thighs, and even their legs; their heads were usually cased in the heads of tygers, or serpents, made of wood, or some other substance, with the mouth open, and furnished with large teeth that they might inspire terror, and so animated in appearance, that the above mentioned author says, they seemed to be vomiting up the soldiers. All the officers and nobles wore a beautiful plume of feathers on their heads, in order to add to the appearance of their stature. The common soldiers went entirely naked,

(*d*) These large shields are mentioned by the anonymous conqueror, Didaco Godoi, and Bernal Dias, who were all present at the conquest.

except the *maxtlatl*, or girdle, which covered the private parts; but they counterfeited the drefs which they wanted by different colours, with which they painted their bodies. The European historians, who exprefs fo much wonder at this, have not obferved how common the fame practice was among the ancient nations of Europe itfelf.

The offensive arms of the Mexicans were arrows, flings, clubs, fpears, pikes, fwords, and darts. Their bows were made of a wood, which was elastic and difficult to break, and the ftring of the finews of animals, or the hair of the ftag. Some of their bows were fo large (as they are at prefent among fome nations of that continent), that they required more than five feet length of ftring. Their arrows were made of hard rods, pointed with the fharp bone of a fifh, or other animal, or a piece of flint, or *itzli*. They were extremely expert at drawing the bow, and very dextrous markfmen, being exercifed in it from childhood, and encouraged by rewards from their mafters and parents. The Tehuacanefe nation was particularly famous for their fkill in fhooting two or three arrows together. The furprifing feats of dexterity, which have been exhibited even in our time by the Tarau-marefe, the Hiaquefe, and other people of thofe regions, who ftill ufe the bow and arrow, enable us to judge of the expertnefs and excellence of the ancient Mexicans in that way (*e*). No people of the country of Anahuac ever made ufe of poisoned arrows; this was probably owing to their defire of taking their enemies alive for the purpofe of facrificing them.

The *Maquahuitl*, called by the Spaniards *Spada*, or fword, as it was the weapon among the Mexicans, which was equivalent to the fword of the old continent, was a ftout ftick three feet and a half long, and about four inches broad, armed on each fide with a fort of razors of the ftone *itzli*, extraordinarily fharp, fixed and firmly faftened to the ftick with gum lack (*f*), which were about three inches long, one or two inches

broad,

(*e*) The dexterity of thofe people in fhooting arrows would not be credible, were it not well afcertained by the depositions of a variety of eye-witneffes. It was ufual for a number of archers to afsemble together, and throw up an ear of maize into the air, at which they immediately fhut with fuch quicknefs and dexterity, that before it could reach the ground it was fhripped of every grain.

(*f*) Hernandez fays, that one ftroke of the maquahuitl was fufficient to cut a man through the middle; and the anonymous conqueror attests, that he faw in an engagement a Mexican,



## BOOK VII.

broad, and as thick as the blade of our ancient swords. This weapon was so keen, that once it entirely beheaded a horse at one stroke, according to the affirmation of Acoſta; but the first stroke only was to be feared; for the razors became soon blunt. They tied this weapon by a string to their arm, lest they might lose it in any violent conflict. The form of the maquahuitl is described by several historians, and is represented in one of the plates of this history.

The pikes of the Mexicans, instead of iron, were pointed with a large flint, but some of them also with copper. The Chinantecas, and some people of Chiapan, made use of pikes so monstrous, that they exceeded three perches, or eighteen feet in length, and the conqueror Cortes employed them against the cavalry of his rival Panfilo Navaez.

The *Tlacochtli*, or Mexican dart, was a small lance of *otatli*, or some other strong wood, the point of which was hardened by fire, or shod with copper, or *itzli*, or bone, and many of them had three points, in order to make a triple wound at every stroke.

They fixed a string to their darts (*g*), in order to pull them back again, after they had launched them at the enemy. This was the weapon which was the most dreaded by the Spanish conquerors; for they were so expert at throwing them, that they pierced the body of an enemy through and through. The soldiers were armed in general with a sword, a bow and arrows, a dart, and a sling. We do not know, whether in war, they ever made use of their axes, of which we shall shortly speak.

SECT.  
XXIV.  
Standards  
and martial  
music.

They had also standards and musical instruments proper for war. Their standards, which were more like the *Signum* of the Romans than our colours, were staves from eight to ten feet long, on which they carried the arms or ensigns of the state, made of gold, or feathers, or some other valuable materials. The armorial ensign of the Mexican empire, was an eagle in the act of darting upon a tyger; that of the republic of Tlascala, an eagle with its wings spread (*b*); but each of

with one stroke which he gave a horse in the belly, make his intestines drop out; and another, who with one stroke which he gave a horse upon the head, laid him dead at his feet.

(*g*) The Mexican dart was of that kind of darts which the Romans used to call *Hastile*, *Jaculum*, or *Telum amentatum*, and the Spanish name *Amento* or *Ameinto*, which the historians of Mexico have adopted, means the same thing as the *Amentum* of the Romans.

(*b*) Gomara says, that the armorial ensign of the republic of Tlascala was a crane; but other historians, better informed than he was, affirm that it was an eagle.

the

the four lordships which composed the republic, had its proper ensign. BOOK VII.  
 That of Ocotelolco, was a green bird upon a rock; that of Tizatlan, a heron upon a rock also; that of Tepeticpac, a fierce wolf, holding some arrows in his paws; and that of Quiahuiztlan, a parasol of green feathers. The standard which the conqueror Cortes took in the famous battle of Otompan, was a net of gold, which, in all probability, was the standard of some city situated on the lake. Besides the common and principal standard of the army, every company, consisting of two or three hundred soldiers, carried its particular standard, and was not only distinguished from others by it, but likewise by the colour of the feathers, which the officers and nobles bore upon their armour. The standard-bearer of the army, at least in the last years of the empire, was the general, and those of the companies, most probably, were borne by their commanding officers. Those standards were so firmly tied upon the backs of the officers, that it was almost impossible to detach them without cutting the standard-bearers to pieces. The Mexicans always placed their standard in the centre of their army. The Tlascalans, when they marched their troops in time of peace placed it in the van, but in the time of war, in the rear of their army.

Their martial music, in which there was more noise than harmony, consisted of drums, horns, and certain sea-shells which made an extremely shrill sound.

Previous to a declaration of war, the supreme council examined into the cause which induced them to undertake it, which was for the most part the rebellion of some city or province, the putting to death unlawfully some Mexican, Acolhuan, or Tepanecan couriers, or merchants, or some gross insult offered to their ambassadors. If the rebellion originated in some of the chiefs, and not among the people, the guilty persons were conducted to the capital and punished. But if the people were also in fault, satisfaction was demanded from them in the name of the king. If they submitted, and manifested a sincere repentance, their crime was pardoned, and they were advised to better conduct; but if, instead of submission, they answered with arrogance, and persisted in denying the satisfaction demanded, or offered any new insult to the messengers which were sent to them, the affair was discussed in the council, and if war was resolved upon, proper orders were

SECT. XXV.  
 The mode of  
 declaring and  
 carrying on  
 war.

## BOOK VII.

given to the generals. Sometimes the kings, in order to justify their conduct more fully before they made war upon any state or place, sent three different embassies; the first to the lord of the state which had given offence, requiring from him a suitable satisfaction, and also prescribing a time for the same, on pain of being treated as an enemy; the second, to the nobles, that they might persuade their lord to make a submission, and escape the punishment which threatened him; and the third to the people, in order to make them acquainted with the occasion of the war; and very often, as a certain historian asserts, the arguments made use of by the ambassadors were so powerful, and the advantages of peace, and the distresses of war, were so forcibly represented, that an accommodation took place between the parties. They used also to send along with ambassadors the idol of Huitzilopochtli, enjoining the people who were stirring up a war to give it a place among their gods. If they on the one hand found themselves strong enough to resist, they rejected the proposition, and dismissed the strange god; but if they thought themselves unable to sustain a war, they received the idol, and placed it among their provincial gods, and answered to the embassy with a large present of gold, gems, or beautiful feathers, acknowledging their subjection to the sovereign.

If war was to be commenced, previous to every thing else they sent advice of it to the enemy, that they might prepare for defence, considering nothing more mean and unworthy of brave people than to attack the unguarded: for this purpose therefore, they sent before them several shields, which were the signals of a challenge, and likewise some cotton dresses. When one king was challenged by another, they used also the ceremony of anointing, and fixing feathers upon his head, which was done by the ambassador, as happened at the challenge given by king Itzcoatl to the tyrant Maxtlaton; they next dispatched spies, who were called *Quimichtin*, or forcerers, and were to go in disguise into the country of the enemy, to observe their number and motions, and the quality of the troops which they mustered. If they were successful in this commission they were amply rewarded. Lastly, after having made some sacrifices to the god of war, and to the tutelar deities of the state or city on which the war was made, in order to merit their protection, the army marched, but not formed into wings, or ranked



in files, but divided into companies, each of which had its leader, and its standard. When the army was numerous it was reckoned by *Xiquipilli*; and each *xiquipilli* consisted of eight thousand men. It is extremely probable, that each of these bodies was commanded by a Tlacatecatl, or other general. The place where the first battle was usually fought was a field appointed for that purpose in some province, and called *Jaothalli*, or land or field of battle. They began battle (as was usual in ancient Europe, and among the Romans), with a most terrible noise of warlike instruments, shouting and whistling, which struck terror to those who were not accustomed to hear it, as the anonymous conqueror declares from his own experience. Amongst the people of Tezcuco, and likewise, most probably, amongst those of other states, the king, or the general, gave the signal for battle, by the beat of a little drum which hung at his shoulder. Their first onset was furious; but they did not all engage at once, as some authors have reported; for they were accustomed, as is manifest from their history, to keep troops in reserve, for pressing emergencies. Sometimes they began battle with shooting arrows, and sometimes with darts and flinging of stones; and when their arrows were exhausted, they made use of their pikes, clubs, and swords. They were extremely attentive to keep their troops united and firmly together, to defend the standard, and to carry off the dead and the wounded from the sight of the enemy. There were certain men of the army who had no other employment than to remove from the eyes of the enemy every object which could heighten their courage and inflame their pride. They made frequent use of ambuscades, concealing themselves in bushy places or ditches made on purpose, of which the Spaniards had often experience; and frequently also they pretended flight, in order to lead the enemy in pursuit of them into some dangerous situation, or to charge them behind with fresh troops. Their great aim in battle was not to kill, but to make prisoners of their enemies for sacrifices; nor was the bravery of a soldier estimated by the number of dead bodies which he left on the field, but by the number of prisoners which he presented to the general after the battle, and this was unquestionably the principal cause of the preservation of the Spaniards, in the midst of the dangers to which they were exposed, and

## BOOK VII.

particularly on that memorable night when they were defeated, and obliged to retreat from the capital. When an enemy, whom they had once conquered, attempted to save himself by flight, they hamstring him to prevent his escape. When the standard of the army was taken by the enemy, or their general fell, they all fled, nor was it possible then by any human art to rally or recall them.

When the battle was over, the victors celebrated the victory with great rejoicings, and rewarded the officers and soldiers who had made some prisoners. When the king of Mexico in person, took an enemy prisoner, embassies came from all the provinces of the kingdom to congratulate him upon the occasion, and to offer him some present. This prisoner was clothed with the finest habits, adorned with jewels, and carried in a litter to the capital, where the citizens came out to meet him, with music and loud acclamations. When the day of the sacrifice arrived, the king having fasted the day before, according to the custom of owners of prisoners, they carried the royal prisoner, adorned with the ensigns of the sun, to the altar for common sacrifices, where he was sacrificed by the high-priest. The priest sprinkled his blood towards the four principal winds, and sent a vessel full of the same to the king, who ordered it to be sprinkled on all the idols within the inclosure of the greater temple, as a token of thanks for the victory obtained over the enemies of the state. They hung up the head in some very lofty place, and after the skin of the body was dried, they filled it with cotton, and hung it up in the royal palace, in memory of the glorious deed; in which circumstance however, their adulation to him was conspicuous.

When any city was to be besieged, the greatest anxiety of the citizens was to secure their children, their women, and sick persons; for which purpose they sent them off, at an early opportunity, to another city, or to the mountains. Thus they saved those defenceless individuals from the fury of the enemy, and obviated an unnecessary consumption of provisions.

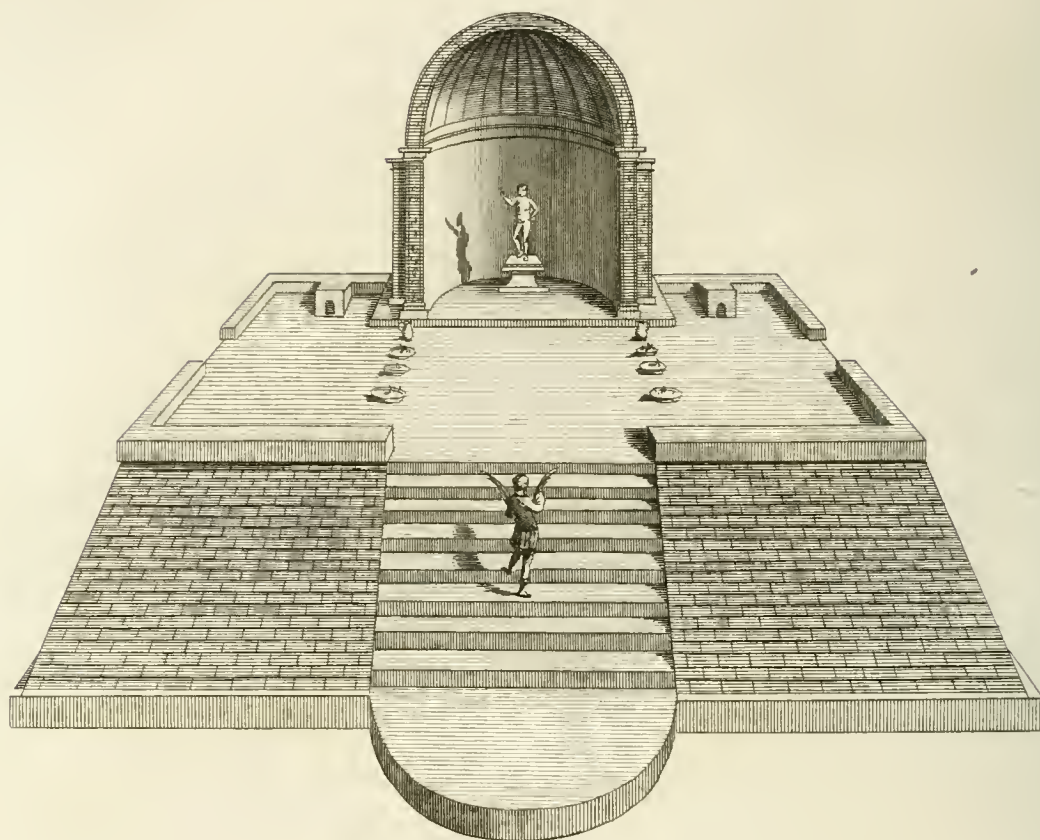
For the defence of places they made use of various kinds of fortifications, such as walls, and ramparts, with their breast-works, palisades, ditches, and intrenchments. Concerning the city of Quauhque-

chollan,

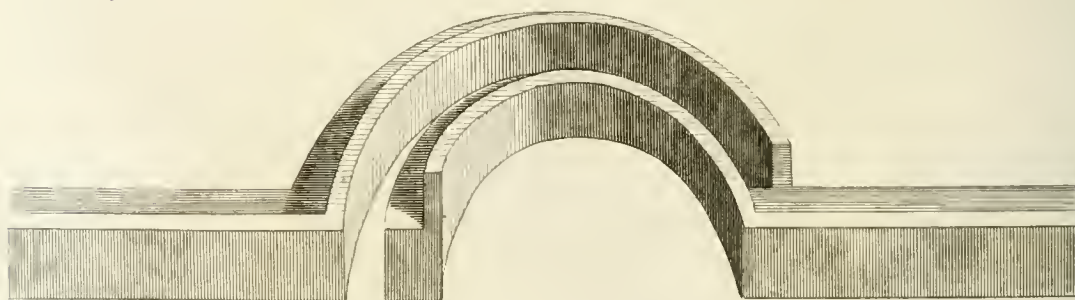




*Another form of Temple*



*Entrance of the Niascalan Territories*



chollan, we know that it was fortified by a strong stone wall, about twenty-feet high, and twelve feet in thickness (*i*).

The conquerors, who describe to us the fortifications of this city, make mention likewise of several others, among which is the celebrated wall which the Tlascalans built on the eastern boundaries of the republic, to defend themselves from the invasion of the Mexican troops, which were garrisoned in Iztaamaxtitlan, Xocotlan, and other places. This wall, which stretched from one mountain to another, was six miles in length, eight feet in height, besides the breast-work, and eighteen feet in thickness. It was made of stone, and strong fine mortar (*k*). There was but one narrow entrance of about eight feet broad, and forty paces long; this was the space between the two extremities of the wall, the one of which encircled the other, forming two semicircles, with one common centre. This will be better understood from the figure of it which we present to our readers. There are still some remains of this wall to be seen.

There are also to be seen still the remains of an ancient fortress built upon the top of a mountain, at a little distance from the village of Molcaxac, surrounded by four walls, placed at some distance from each other, from the base of the mountain unto the top. In the neighbourhood appear many small ramparts of stone and lime, and upon a hill, two miles distant from that mountain, are the remains of some ancient and populous city, of which, however, there is no memory among historians. About twenty-five miles from Cordova, towards the north, is likewise the ancient fortress of *Quaubtocho*, (now *Guatusco*), surrounded by high walls of extremely hard stone, to which there is no entrance but by ascending a number of very high and narrow steps; for in this manner the entrance to their fortresses was formed. From among the ruins of this ancient building, which is now over-run with bushes, through the negligence of those people, a Cordovan gentleman lately dug out several well-finished statues of stone,

(*i*) In the ninth book we shall give a description of the fortifications of Quauhquechollan.

(*k*) Bernal Dias says, that the Tlascalan wall was built of stone and lime, and with a bitumen so strong it was necessary to use pick-axes to undo it. Cortes, on the other hand affirms, that it was built of dry stones. We are disposed rather to give credit to Bernal Dias; because he asserts, he had attentively examined this wall, although like an illiterate person, he gives the name of bitumen to the mortar or cement made use of by those nations.

BOOK VII. for the ornament of his house. Near to the ancient court of Tezcucó, a part of the wall which surrounded the city of Coatlichan, is still preserved. We wish that our countrymen would attend to the preservation of those few remains of the military architecture of the Mexicans, particularly as they have suffered so many other valuable remains of their antiquity to go to ruin (1).

The capital of Mexico, though sufficiently fortified by its natural situation for those times, was rendered impregnable to its enemies by the industry of its inhabitants. There was no access to the city but by the roads formed upon the lake; and to make it still more difficult in time of war, they built many ramparts upon these roads, which were intersected with several deep ditches, over which they had draw-bridges, and those ditches were defended by good entrenchments. Those ditches were the graves of many Spaniards and Tlascalans, on the memorable night of the first of July, of which we shall speak hereafter; and the cause which retarded the taking of that great city, by so numerous and well equipped an army, as that which Cortes employed to besiege it; and which, had he not been assisted by the brigantines, would have delayed it much longer, and occasioned the loss of a great deal more blood. For the defence of the city by water, they had many thousand small vessels, and frequently exercised themselves in naval engagements.

But the most singular fortifications of Mexico were the temples themselves, and especially the greater temple, which resembled a citadel. The wall which surrounded the whole of the temple, the five arsenals there which were filled with every sort of offensive and defensive arms, and the architecture of the temple itself which rendered the ascent to it so difficult, gives us clearly to understand, that in such buildings, policy, as well as religion, had a share; and that they constructed them, not only from motives of superstition, but likewise for the purpose of defence. It is well known from their history, that they fortified themselves in their temples when they could not hinder the

(1) These imperfect accounts of those remains of Mexican antiquities, obtained from eye-witnesses worthy of the utmost credit, persuade us, that there are still many more of which we have no knowledge, owing to the indolence and neglect of our countrymen. See what is said in our dissertations respecting those antiquities against Sig. de P. and Dr. Robertson.




enemy from entering into the city, and from thence harrassed them with arrows, darts, and stones. In the last book of this history, will appear how long the Spaniards were in taking the greater temple, where five hundred Mexican nobles had fortified themselves.

The high esteem in which the Mexicans held every thing relating to war, did not divert their attention from the arts of peace. First, agriculture, which is one of the chief occupations of civil life, was, from time immemorial, exercised by the Mexicans, and almost all the people of Anahuac. The Toltecan nation employed themselves diligently in it, and taught it to the Chechemecan hunters. With respect to the Mexicans, we know that during the whole of their peregrination, from their native country Aztlan, unto the lake where they founded Mexico, they cultivated the earth in all those places where they made any considerable stop, and lived upon the produce of their labour. When they were brought under subjection to the Colhuan and Tepanecan nations, and confined to the miserable little islands on the lake, they ceased for some years to cultivate the land, because they had none, until necessity, and industry together, taught them to form moveable fields and gardens, which floated on the waters of the lake. The method which they pursued to make those, and which they still practise, is extremely simple.

They plait and twist willows; and roots of marsh plants, or other materials together, which are light, but capable of supporting the earth of the garden firmly united. Upon this foundation they lay the light bushes which float on the lake, and over all, the mud and dirt which they draw up from the bottom of the same lake. Their regular figure is quadrangular; their length and breadth various; but as far as we can judge, they are about eight perches long, and not more than three in breadth, and have less than a foot of elevation above the surface of the water. These were the first fields which the Mexicans owned after the foundation of Mexico; there they first cultivated the maize, great pepper, and other plants, necessary for their support. In progress of time as those fields grew numerous from the industry of those people there were among them gardens of flowers and odoriferous plants, which were employed in the worship of their gods, and served for the recreation of the nobles. At present they cultivate flowers, and every sort of garden

SECT.  
XXVII.  
Floating  
fields and  
gardens of  
the Mexican  
lake.

BOOK VII.  den herbs upon them. Every day of the year, at sun-rise, innumerable vessels loaded with various kinds of flowers and herbs, which are cultivated in those gardens are seen arriving by the canal, at the great market-place of that capital. All plants thrive there surprisingly; the mud of the lake is an extremely fertile soil, and requires no water from the clouds. In the largest gardens there is commonly a little tree, and even a little hut to shelter the cultivator, and defend him from rain, or the sun. When the owner of a garden, or the *Chinampa*, as he is usually called, wishes to change his situation, to remove from a disagreeable neighbour, or to come nearer to his own family, he gets into his little vessel, and by his own strength alone, if the garden is small, or with the assistance of others, if it is large, he tows it after him, and conducts it wherever he pleases with the little tree and hut upon it. That part of the lake where those floating gardens are, is a place of infinite recreation where the senses receive the highest possible gratification.

SECT.  
XXVIII.  
Manner of  
cultivating  
the earth.

As soon as the Mexicans had shaken of the Tepanecan yoke, and had gained by their conquests lands fit for cultivation, they applied themselves with great diligence to agriculture. Having neither ploughs, nor oxen, nor any other animals proper to be employed in the culture of the earth, they supplied the want of them by labour, and other more simple instruments. To hoe and dig the ground they made use of the *Coatl* (or *Coa*), which is an instrument made of copper, with a wooden handle, but different from a spade or mattock. They made use of an axe to cut trees, which was also made of copper, and was of the same form with those of modern times, except that we put the handle in the eye of the axe, whereas they put the axe into an eye of the handle. They had several other instruments of agriculture; but the negligence of ancient writers on this subject has not left it in our power to attempt their description.

For the refreshment of their fields they made use of the water of rivers and small torrents which came from the mountains, raising dams to collect them, and forming canals to conduct them. Lands which were high, or on the declivity of mountains, were not sown every year, but allowed to lie fallow until they were over-run with bushes, which they burned, to repair by their ashes, the salt which rains had washed away. They surrounded their fields with stone inclosures, or hedges made of the *metl*, or aloe, which make an excellent fence; and in the  
month

month Panquetzalitzli, which began, as we have already mentioned, on the third of December, they were repaired if necessary (*m*).

The method they observed in sowing of maize, and which they still practise in some places, is this. The sower makes a small hole in the earth, with a stick or drill probably, the point of which is hardened by fire; into this hole he drops one or two grains of maize from a basket which hangs from his shoulder, and covers them with a little earth by means of his foot; he then passes forward to a certain distance, which is greater or less according to the quality of the soil, opens another hole, and continues so in a strait line unto the end of the field; from thence he returns, forming another line parallel to the first. The rows of plants by these means are as strait as if a line was made use of, and at as equal distances from each other as if the spaces between were measured. This method of sowing, which is now used by a few of the Indians only, though more slow (*n*), is, however of some advantage, as they can more exactly proportion the quantity of seed to the strength of the soil; besides, that there is almost none of the seed lost which is sown. In consequence of this, the crops of the fields which are cultivated in that manner are usually more plentiful. When the maize springs up to a certain height, they cover the foot of the plant round with earth, that it may be better nourished, and more able to withstand sudden gusts of wind.

In the labours of the field the men were assisted by the women. It was the business of the men to dig and hoe the ground, to sow, to heap the earth about the plants, and to reap; to the women it belonged to strip off the leaves from the ears, and to clear the grain; to weed and to shell it was the employment of both.

They had places like farm yards, where they stripped off the leaves from the ears, and shelled them, and granaries to preserve the grain. Their granaries were built in a square form, and generally of wood. They made use of the *ojametl* for this purpose, which is a very lofty tree, with but a few slender branches, and a thin smooth bark; the wood of it is extremely pliant, and difficult to break or rot. Their

S E C T.  
XXIX.  
Threshing-  
floors and  
granaries.

(*m*) This is called a *penguin fence* in Jamaica, and the windward islands.

(*n*) This manner of sowing is not so slow as might be imagined, as the country people used to this method do it with wonderful quickness.



## BOOK VII.

granaries were formed by placing the round and equal trunks of the *ojametl* in a square, one upon the other, without any labour except that of a small notch towards their extremities, to adjust and unite them so perfectly as not to suffer any passage to the light. When the structure was raised to a sufficient height, they covered it with another set of cross-beams, and over these the roof was laid to defend the grain from rains. Those granaries had no other door or outlet than two windows, one below which was small, and another somewhat wider above. Some of them were so large as to contain five or six thousand, or sometimes more *fanegas* (o) of maize. There are some of this sort of granaries to be met with in a few places at a distance from the capital, and amongst them some so very ancient, that they appear to have been built before the conquest; and, according to the information we have had from persons of intelligence, they preserve the grain better than those which are constructed by the Europeans.

Close to fields which were sown they commonly erected a little tower of wood, branches and mats, in which a man defended from the sun and rain kept watch, and drove away the birds which came in flocks to consume the young grain. Those little towers are still made use of even in the fields of the Spaniards on account of the excessive number of birds.

SECT. XXX.  
Kitchen and  
other gardens  
and woods.

The Mexicans were also extremely well skilled in the cultivation of kitchen and other gardens, in which they planted with great regularity and taste, fruit-trees, and medicinal plants and flowers. The last of those were much in demand, not less on account of the particular pleasure taken in them, than of the custom which prevailed of presenting bunches of flowers to their kings, lords, ambassadors, and other persons of rank, besides the excessive quantity which were made use of in the temples and private oratories. Amongst the ancient gardens, of which an account has been handed down to us, the royal gardens of Mexico and Tezcuco, which we have already mentioned, and those of the lords of Iztapalapan and Huaxtepec, have been much celebrated. Among the gardens of the great palace of the lord of Iztapalapan, there was one, the extent, disposition, and beauty of which excited the

(o) A Castilian measure of dry goods, formerly mentioned by us.

admiration of the Spanish conquerors. It was laid out in four squares, and planted with every variety of trees, the sight and scent of which gave infinite pleasure to the senses; through those squares a number of roads and paths led, some formed by fruit-bearing trees, and others by espaliers of flowering shrubs and aromatic herbs. Several canals from the lake watered it, by one of which their barges could enter. In the centre of the garden was a fish-pond, the circumference of which measured sixteen hundred paces, or four hundred from side to side, where innumerable water-fowl resorted, and there were steps on every side to descend to the bottom. This garden, agreeable to the testimony of Cortes and Diaz, who saw it, was planted, or rather extended and improved by Cuiclahuatzin, the brother and successor in the kingdom to Montezuma II. He caused many foreign trees to be transplanted there, according to the account of Hernandez, who saw them.

The garden of Huaxtepec was still more extensive and celebrated than the last. It was six miles in circumference, and watered by a beautiful river which crossed it. Innumerable species of trees and plants were reared there and beautifully disposed, and at proper distances from each other different pleasure houses were erected. A great number of strange plants imported from foreign countries were collected in it. The Spaniards for many years preserved this garden, where they cultivated every kind of medicinal herb belonging to that clime, for the use of the hospital which they founded there, in which the remarkable hermit, Gregorio Lopez, served a number of years (*p*).

They paid no less attention to the preservation of the woods which supplied them with fuel to burn, timber to build, and game for the diversion of the king. We have formerly mentioned the woods of

(*p*) Cortes, in his letter to Charles V. of the 15th of May, 1522, told him, that the garden of Huaxtepec was the most extensive, the most beautiful, and most delightful which had ever been beheld. Bernal Dias, in chap. cxlii. of his history says, that the garden was most wonderful, and truly worthy of a great prince. Hernandez frequently makes mention of it in his Natural History, and names several plants which were transplanted there, and amongst others the balsam-tree. Cortes also, in his letter to Charles V. of the 30th of October, 1520, relates, that having requested king Montezuma to cause a villa to be made in Malinaltepec for that emperor, two months were hardly elapsed when there were erected at that place four good houses; sixty fanegas of maize sown, ten of French beans, two thousand feet of ground planted with ca.ao, and a vast pond, where five hundred ducks were breeding, and fifteen hundred turkies were rearing in houses.

BOOK VII. king Montezuma, and the laws of king Nezahualcojotl concerning the cutting of them. It would be of advantage to that kingdom, that those laws were still in force, or at least that there was not so much liberty granted in cutting without an obligation to plant a certain number of trees; as many people preferring their private interest and convenience to the public welfare, destroy the wood in order to enlarge their possessions (7).

SECT.  
XXXI.  
Plants most  
cultivated by  
the Mexi-  
cans.

Among the plants most cultivated by the Mexicans next to maize, the principal were those of cotton, the cacao, the *mcti*, or aloe, the chia, and great pepper, on account of the various uses which they made of them. The aloe, or maguei alone, yielded almost every thing necessary to the life of the poor. Besides making excellent hedges for their fields, its trunk served in place of beams for the roofs of their houses, and its leaves instead of tiles. From those leaves they obtained paper, thread, needles, clothing, shoes, and stockings, and cordage; and from its copious juice they made wine, honey, sugar, and vinegar. Of the trunk, and thickest part of the leaves, when well baked, they made a very tolerable dish of food. Lastly, it was a powerful medicine in several disorders, and particularly in those of the urine. It is also at present one of the plants the most valued and most profitable to the Spaniards, as we shall see hereafter.

SECT.  
XXXII.  
Animals bred  
by the Mexi-  
cans.

With respect to the breeding of animals, which is an employment associated with agriculture, although among the Mexicans there were no shepherds, they having been entirely destitute of sheep, they bred up innumerable species of animals unknown in Europe. Private persons brought up *techichis*, quadrupeds, as we have already mentioned, similar to little dogs; turkeys, quails, geese, ducks, and other kinds of fowl. In the houses of lords were bred fish, deer, rabbits, and a variety of birds; and in the royal palaces, almost all the species of quadrupeds, and winged animals of those countries, and a prodigious number of water animals and reptiles. We may say, that in this kind of magnificence Montezuma II. surpassed all the kings of the world, and that there never has been a nation equal in skill to the Mexicans in the

(7) Many places still feel the pernicious effects of the liberty to cut the woods. The city Queretaro was formerly provided with timber for building from the wood which was upon the neighbouring mountain *Cimatario*. At present it is obliged to be brought from a great distance, as the mountain is entirely stripped of its wood.



care of so many different species of animals, which had so much knowledge of their dispositions, of the food which was most proper for each, and of all the means necessary for their preservation and increase.

Among the animals reared by the Mexicans, no one is more worthy of mention than the *nochiztli*, or Mexican cochineal, described by us in our first book. This insect, so greatly valued in Europe on account of its dyes, and especially those of scarlet and crimson, being not only extremely delicate, but also persecuted by several enemies, demands a great deal more care from the breeders than is necessary for the silk-worm. Rain, cold, and strong winds destroy it. Birds, mice, and worms, persecute it furiously and devour it; hence it is necessary to keep the rows of opuntia, or nopal, where those insects are bred always clean; to attend constantly to drive away the birds which are destructive to them, to make nests of hay for them in the leaves of the opuntia, by the juice of which they are nourished, and when the season of rain approaches, to raise them from the plants together with the leaves, and guard them in houses. Before the females are delivered they cast their skin, to obtain which spoil the breeders make use of the tail of the rabbit, brushing most gently with it that they may not detach the insects from the leaves, or do them any hurt. On every leaf they make three nests, and in every nest they lay about fifteen cochineals. Every year they make three gatherings, reserving however each time a certain number for the future generation; but the last gathering is least valued, the cochineals being smaller then, and mixed with the shavings of the opuntia. They kill the cochineal most commonly with hot water. On the manner of drying it afterwards the quality of the colour which is obtained from it chiefly depends. The best is that which is dried in the sun. Some dry it in the *comalli*, or pan, in which they bake their bread of maize, and others in the *temazcalli*, a sort of oven, of which we shall speak elsewhere.

The Mexicans would not have been able to assemble so many sorts of animals, if they had not had great dexterity in the exercise of the chase. They made use of the bow and arrow, darts, nets, snares, and *Cerbottane*\*. The cerbottane which the kings and principal lords made

SECT.  
XXXII.  
Chace of the  
Mexicans.

\* *Cerbottane*, are long tubes, or pipes, through which they shoot, by blowing with the mouth little balls at birds, &c.

## BOOK VII.

use of were curiously carved and painted, and likewise adorned with gold and silver. Besides the exercise of the chace which private individuals took either for amusement, or to provide food for themselves, there were general chaces, which were either those established by custom to procure a plenty of victims for sacrifices, or others occasionally appointed by the king. For this general chace they fixed on a large wood, which was generally that of Zacatepec, not far distant from the capital; there they chose the place most adapted for setting a great number of snares and nets. With some thousands of hunters they formed a circle round the wood of six, seven, eight, or more miles, according to the number of animals they intended to take: they set fire every where to the dry grass and herbs, and made a terrible noise with drums, horns, shouting, and whistling. The animals, alarmed by the noise and the fire, fled to the centre of the wood, which was the very place where the snares were set. The hunters approached towards the same spot, and still continuing their noise, gradually contracted their circle, until they left but a very small space to the game, which they all then attacked with their arms. Some of the animals were killed, and some were taken alive in the snares, or in the hands of the hunters. The number and variety of game which they took was so great, that the first viceroy of Mexico, when he was told of it, thought it so incredible, that he desired to make experience of the method himself. For the field of the chace, he made choice of a great plain which lies in the country of the Otomies, between the villages of Xilotepec and *S. Giovanni del Rio*, and ordered the Indians to proceed in the same manner as they had been used to do in the time of their paganism. The viceroy, with a great retinue of Spaniards repaired to the plain, where accommodations were prepared for them in houses built of wood, erected there on purpose. Eleven thousand Otomies formed a circle of more than fifteen miles, and after practising all the means above mentioned, assembled such a quantity of game on the plain, that the viceroy, who was quite astonished at the sight, commanded that the greater part of them should be set at liberty, which was accordingly done; notwithstanding the number of animals taken would be altogether incredible, if the circumstance had not been publicly known and attested by many, and among others by a witness worthy of the highest credit.

credit (*r*). They killed more than six hundred deer and wild goats, upwards of a hundred cojotés, and a surprising number of hares, rabbits, and other quadrupeds. The plain still retains the Spanish name *Cazadero*, or place of the chase, which was then given it.

Besides the usual method of practising the chase, they had other particular devices for catching particular kinds of animals. In order to catch young apes, they made a small fire in the woods, and put among the burning coals a particular kind of stone which they called *Cacalotetl*, (raven, or black stone), which bursts with a loud noise when it is well heated. They covered the fire with earth, and sprinkled around it a little maize. The apes, allured by the grain, assembled about it with their young, and while they were peaceably eating, the stone burst; the old apes fled away in terror leaving their young behind them; the hunters, who were on the watch, then seized them before their dams could return to carry them off.


The method also which they had, and still use, to catch ducks, is artful and curious. The lakes of the Mexican vale, as well as others of the kingdom, are frequented by a prodigious multitude of ducks, geese, and other aquatic birds. The Mexicans left some empty gourds to float upon the water, where those birds resorted, that they might be accustomed to see and approach them without fear. The bird-catcher went into the water so deep as to hide his body, and covered his head with a gourd; the ducks came to peck at it, and then he pulled them by the feet under water, and in this manner secured as many as he pleased.

They took serpents alive either by twisting them with great dexterity, or approaching them intrepidly, they seized them with one hand by the neck, and sewed up their mouths with the other. They still take them in this way, and every day in the apothecary's shops of the capital, and other cities, may be seen live serpents which have been taken in this manner.

But nothing is more wonderful than their quickness in tracing the steps of wild beasts. Although there is not the smallest print of them to be seen from the earth being covered with herbs or dry leaves which

(*r*) P. Toribio di Benaventi, or Motolinia.



BOOK VII.  fall from the trees, they still track them, particularly if they are wounded, by observing most attentively sometimes the drops of blood which fall upon the leaves as they pass, sometimes the herbs which are broken or beat down by their feet (s).

SECT.  
XXXIV.  
Fishing.

From the situation of their capital, and its vicinity to the lake of Chalco, which abounded with fish, the Mexicans were still more invited to fishing than the chase. They employed themselves in it from the time of their arrival in that country, and their art in fishing procured them all other necessities. The instruments which they most commonly made use of in fishing were nets, but they also employed hooks, harpoons, and weals.

The fishers not only caught fish, but even took crocodiles in two different methods. One was by tying them by the neck, which, as Hernandez asserts, was very common; but this author does not explain the manner in which they performed an act so daring against so terrible a creature. The other method, which is still used by some, was that which the Egyptians formerly practised on the famous crocodiles of the Nile. The fisher presented himself before the crocodile, carrying in his hand a strong stick, well sharpened at both ends, and when the animal opened its mouth to devour him, he thrust his armed hand into its jaws, and as the crocodile shut its mouth again, it was transfixcd by the two points of the stick. The fisher waited until it grew feeble from the loss of blood, and then he killed it.

SECT.  
XXXV.  
Commerce.

Fishing, hunting, agriculture, and the arts, furnished the Mexicans several branches of commerce. Their commerce in the country of Anahuac began as soon as they were settled upon the little islands in the Tezcucan lake. The fish which they caught, and the mats which they wove of rushes which the same lake produces, was exchanged for maize, cotton, stones, lime, and the wood, which they required for their support, for their clothing, and their buildings. In proportion to the power which their arms acquired, their commerce increased; so that from having been at first confined to the environs of their own

(s) The account which we have of the Taramarese, the Opates, and other nations beyond the Tropic, when pursued by their enemies the Apacci, is still more wonderful; for by the touch and observations of the footsteps of their enemies, they can tell the time at which they passed there. The same thing we understand is reported of the people of Yucatan.

city, it extended at last to the most distant provinces. There were innumerable Mexican merchants, who incessantly travelled from one city to another to exchange their goods to advantage. In every place of the Mexican empire, and of all the extensive country of Anahuac, a market was opened every day; but every five days they held one which was more considerable and general. Cities which were near together had this market on different days, that they might not prejudice each other; but in the capital it was kept on the days of the House, the Rabbit, the Reed, and the Flint, which, in the first year of the century, were the third, the eighth, the thirteenth, and eighteenth of every month.

In order to convey some idea of those markets, or rather fairs, which have been so much celebrated by the historians of Mexico, it will be sufficient to describe that held in the capital. Until the time of king Axajacatl, it was kept in a space of ground before the royal palace; but after the conquest of Tlatelolco, it was removed to that quarter. The public place of Tlatelolco was, according to the account of the conqueror Cortes, twice as large as that of Salamanca, one of the most famous in Spain (*t*), and surrounded by porticos for the convenience of the merchants. Every sort of merchandize had a particular place allotted to it by the judges of commerce. In one station were goods of gold, and silver, and jewels; in another, manufactures of cotton; in another, those of feathers, and so forth; and no change of situation was allowed to any of them; but although the square was very large, as all the merchandizes could not be lodged in it without interrupting the transaction of business, it was ordered that all large goods, such as beams, stones, &c. should be left in the roads and canals near to the market-place. The number of merchants who daily assembled there, according to the affirmation of Cortes himself, exceeded fifty thousand (*u*). The things which were sold or exchanged there, were so

(*t*) In three editions of the letters of Cortes which we have seen, we have read, that the square of Tlatelolco *was twice as large as the city of Salamanca*, whereas it ought to read, *as that of the city of Salamanca*.

(*u*) Although Cortes affirmed that there assembled daily in the market-place of Tlatelolco fifty thousand people, it appears that it ought to be understood of the great market which was held every five days; for the anonymous conqueror, who speaks more distinctly of it, says, that at the markets there were from twenty to twenty-five thousand, but at the great markets from forty to fifty thousand.

## BOOK VII.

numerous and so various, that historians who saw them, after making a long and tedious enumeration, conclude with saying, it is impossible to express them all. Without contradicting their assertion, and to avoid prolixity, we will endeavour to comprehend them in a few words. To that square were carried to be sold or exchanged all the productions of the Mexican empire, or adjacent countries, which could serve for the necessities of life, the convenience, the luxuries, the vanity, or curiosity of man (x); innumerable species of animals, both dead and alive, every sort of eatable which was in use amongst them, all the metals and gems which were known to them, all the medicinal drugs and simples, herbs, gum, resins, and mineral earths, as well as the medicines prepared by their physicians, such as beverages, electaries, oils, plasters, ointments, &c. and every sort of manufacture and work of the thread of the metl, maguei, or aloe, of the mountain palm, of cotton, of feathers, of the hair of animals, of wood, of stone, of gold, silver, and copper. They sold there also slaves, and even whole vessels, laden with human dung, for dressing the skins of animals. In short, they sold in that square every thing which could be sold in all that city; for they had no mart elsewhere, nor was any thing sold out of the market-place except eatables. The potters and jewellers of Cholula, the goldsmiths of Azcapozalco, the painters of Tezcuco, the stone-cutters of Tenajocan, the hunters of Xilotepec, the fishers of Cuiclahuac, the fruiterers of hot countries, the mat-weavers and chair-makers of Quauhtitlan, and florists of Xochimilco, all assembled there.

SECT.  
XXXVI.  
Money.

Their commerce was not only carried on by way of exchange, as many authors report, but likewise by means of real purchase and sale. They had five kinds of real money, though it was not coined, which served them as a price to purchase whatever they wanted. The first was a certain species of cacao, different from that which they used in their daily drink, which was in constant circulation through the hands of traders, as our money is amongst us. They counted the cacao by *Xiquepilli*, (this as we have before observed, was equal to eight thousand),

(x) Whoever will take the trouble to read the description which Cortes, Bernal Diaz, and the anonymous conqueror have given of their market, will be convinced there is no exaggeration made here of the variety of their merchandizes.

and



and to save the trouble of counting them when the merchandize was of great value, they reckoned them by sacks, every sack having been reckoned to contain three *xiquipilli*, or twenty-four thousand nuts. The second kind of money was certain small cloths of cotton, which they called *patolquachtli*, as being solely destined for the purchase of merchandizes which were immediately necessary. The third species of money was gold in dust, contained in goose-quills, which, by being transparent, shewed the precious metal which filled them, and in proportion to their size were of greater or less value. The fourth, which most resembled coined money, was made of pieces of copper in the form of a T, and was employed in purchases of little value. The fifth, of which mention is made by Cortes, in his last letter to the emperor Charles. the Vth, consisted of thin pieces of tin.

They sold and exchanged merchandizes by number and measure; but we do know that they made use of weights, either because they thought them liable to frauds, as some authors have said, or because they did not find them necessary, as others have affirmed, or because if they did use them the Spaniards never knew it (*y*).

To prevent fraudulent contracts and disorder amongst the traders, there were certain commissioners who were continually traversing the market to observe what happened, and a tribunal of commerce, composed of twelve judges, residing in a house of the square, was appointed to decide all disputes between traders, and take cognizance of all trespasses committed in the market-place. Of all the goods which were brought into the market, a certain portion was paid in tribute to the king, who was on his part obliged to do justice to the merchants, and to protect their property and their persons. A theft seldom happened in the market, on account of the vigilance of the king's officers, and the severity with which it was instantly punished. But it is not the least surprising, that theft was so rigorously punished, where the smallest disorders were never pardoned. The laborious and most

SECT.  
XXXVII.  
Regulations  
of the mar-  
ket.

(*y*) Gomara believed, that the Mexicans made no use of scales or weights; because they were ignorant of such a contrivance; but it is very improbable, that a nation so industrious and commercial should not have known the manner of ascertaining the weight of goods, when among other nations of America, less acute than the Mexicans, stilyards were made use of, according to the report of the same author, to weigh gold. Of how many circumstances relative to American antiquity are we still ignorant, owing to the want of proper examination and enquiry!

## BOOK VII.

sincere F. Motolinia relates, that a quarrel having arisen once between two women in the market of Tezcuco, and one of them having gone so far as to beat the other with her hands, and occasion the loss of some blood, to the amazement of the people, who were not accustomed to see such an outrage committed there, she was immediately condemned to death for the offence. All the Spaniards who saw those markets extolled them with the highest praises, and were unable to express in words the admirable disposition, and the wonderful order which was maintained among so great a multitude of merchants and merchandizes.

The markets of Tezcuco, Tlascala, Cholula, Huexotzinco, and other large places, were ordered in the same manner as that of Mexico. At the market of Tlascala, Cortes affirms, more than thirty thousand merchants and others assembled (z). At that of Tepeyacac, which was not one of the largest cities, Motolinia above mentioned says, he has known twenty-four years after the conquest, when the commerce of those people was greatly declined, that at the market held every five days, there were not less than eight thousand European hens sold, and that as many were sold at the market of Acapitlayocan.

SECT.  
XXXVIII.  
Custom of  
the mer-  
chants in  
their jour-  
nies.

When young merchants were desirous of undertaking a long journey, they gave an entertainment to the old merchants, who were no longer able on account of their age to travel, and also to their own relations, and informed them of their design, and the motive which induced them to travel into distant countries.

Those who were invited praised their resolution, encouraged them to follow the steps of their ancestors, particularly if it was their first journey which they were going to perform, and gave several advices to them how they were to conduct themselves. In general, many of them travelled together for greater safety. Each of them carried in his hand a smooth black stick, which, as they said, was the image of their god Jacateuctli, with which they imagined themselves secure against all the dangers of the journey. As soon as they arrived at any house where they made a halt, they assembled and tied all the sticks together and worshipped them; and twice or thrice, during the night, they drew

(z) That which Cortes has said respecting the number of merchants and dealers which assembled at the market of Tlascala, ought most probably to be understood of the market of every five days, in the same manner as we have observed above respecting that of Mexico.

blood from themselves in honour of that god. All the time that a merchant was absent from home, his wife and children did not wash their heads, although they bathed, excepting once every eighty days, not only to testify their regret of his absence, but also by that species of mortification to procure the protection of their gods. When any of the merchants died on their journey, advice of his death was immediately sent to the oldest merchants of his native country, and they communicated it to his relations and kindred, who immediately formed an imperfect statue of wood to represent the deceased, to which they paid all the funeral honours which they would have done to the real dead body.

For the convenience of merchants, and other travellers, there were public roads, which were repaired every year after the rainy season. They had likewise in the mountains and uninhabited places, houses erected for the reception of travellers, and bridges, and other vessels for passing rivers. Their vessels were oblong and flat-bottomed, without keel, masts, or sails, or any other thing to guide them but oars. They were of various sizes. The smallest could hardly hold two or three people, the largest could carry upwards of thirty. Many of them were made of one single trunk of a tree. The number of those which were continually traversing the Mexican lake, exceeded, according to the account of ancient historians fifty thousand. Besides the vessels, or flats, they made use of a particular machine to pass rivers, which was called *valsa*, by the Spaniards of America. This is a square platform, of about five feet, composed of *otatli*, or solid canes, tied firmly upon large, hard, empty gourds. Four, or six passengers seated themselves upon this machine, and were conducted from one side of a river to the other by two or four swimmers, who laid hold of one corner of the machine with one of their hands, and swam with the other. This sort of machine is still used on some rivers distant from the capital, and we ourselves passed a large river on one of them in 1739. It is perfectly safe where the current of the water is equal and smooth, but dangerous in rapid and impetuous rivers.

Their bridges were built either of stone or wood, but those of stone we are of opinion were extremely few in number. The most singular kind of bridge was that to which the Spaniards gave the name of *Huimaca*. This was a number of the ropes, or natural ligatures of a tree,

more

SECT.  
XXXIX.

Roads,  
houses for  
the reception  
of travellers,  
vessels, and  
bridges.



## BOOK VII.

more pliant than the willow, but thicker and stronger, called in America *Bejucos*, twisted and wove together, the extremities of which were tied to the trees on each side of rivers, the tress or net formed by them remaining suspended in the air in the manner of a swing (*a*). There are some rivers with such bridges still. The Spaniards durst not pass them, but the Indians pass them with as much confidence and intrepidity as if they were crossing by a stone bridge, perfectly regardless of the undulatory motion of the hamaca, or the depth of the river. But it is to be observed, that the ancient Mexicans having been excellent swimmers, had no need of bridges, unless where from the rapidity of the current, or the weight of some burden, they could not swim across.

The Mexican historians tell us nothing of the maritime commerce of the Mexicans. It is probable that it was very trifling, and that their vessels, which were seen coasting on both seas, were chiefly those of fishermen. Their greatest traffick by water was carried on in the lake of Mexico. All the stone and wood for building, and for fire, the fish, the greater part of the maize, the pulse, fruit, flowers, &c. was brought by water. The commerce of the capital with Tezcuco, Xochimilco, Chalco, Cuitlahuac, and other cities situated upon the lake, was carried on by water, and occasioned that wonderful number of vessels to be employed which we have already mentioned.

SECT. XL.  
Men who  
carried bur-  
dens.

Whatever was not transported by water was carried upon men's backs, and on that account there were numbers of men who carried burdens, called *Tlamama* or *Tlameme*. They were brought up from childhood to this business, which they continued all their lives. A regular load was about sixty pounds, and the length of way they daily walked was fifteen miles; but they made also journeys of two hundred and three hundred miles, travelling frequently over rocky and steep mountains. They were subjected to this intolerable fatigue from the want of beasts of burden; and even at present, although those countries abound in animals of this sort, the Mexicans are still often seen making long journeys with burdens upon their backs. They carried cotton, maize, and other things in *petlacalli*, which were bas-

(*a*) Some bridges are so tight drawn that they have no undulatory motion, and all of them have their side support made of the same parts of the tree.

kets made of a particular kind of cane, and covered with leather, which were light and defended their goods sufficiently from the rain or the sun. These baskets are still a good deal used for journeys by the Spaniards, who corrupt their name into *petacas*. BOOK VII.

The commerce of the Mexicans was by no means embarrassed, either by the multitude or variety of languages which were spoken in those countries; for the Mexican tongue which was the most prevailing, was understood and spoken every where. It was the proper and natural language of the Acolhuas and the Aztecas (*ô*), and as we have observed elsewhere, likewise of the Chechemecan and Toltecان nations. SECT. XLI.  
Mexican language.

The Mexican language, of which we wish to give our readers some idea, is entirely destitute of the consonants B, D, F, G, R, and S, and abounds with L, X, T, Z, TL, Tz; but although the letter L is so familiar to this language, there is not a single word in it beginning with that consonant. Nor is there a word of an acute termination, except some vocatives. Almost all the words have the penult syllable long. Its aspirates are moderate and soft, and there never is occasion to make the least nasal sound in pronunciation.

Notwithstanding the want of those six consonants it is a most copious language; tolerably polished, and remarkably expressive; on which account it has been highly valued and praised by all Europeans who have learned it, so as to be esteemed by many superior to the Latin, and even to the Greek (*ε*); but although we know the particular excellencies of the Mexican language, we can never dare to compare it with the last.

Of the copiousness of this language we have an exceeding good demonstration in the Natural History of Hernandez; for in describing twelve hundred plants of the country of Anahuac, two hundred and more species of birds, and a large number of quadrupeds, reptiles, insects, and minerals, he hardly found a single animal, herb, or sub-

(b) Boturini says, that the excellence of the language which we call the *Mexican*, was the reason of its being adopted by the Chechemecan, the Mexican, and Teochechemecan nations, and of their relinquishing their native tongue; but besides this opinion being different from that of all other writers, and of the Indians themselves, there are no traces in history of the event of such a change. Where has there ever been a nation known to abandon its native idiom to adopt a better, and particularly a nation so tenacious as the Mexicans, and all the other nations of those countries of their particular language?

(c) Among the admirers of the Mexican language there have been some Frenchmen and Flemings, and many Germans, Italians, and Spaniards.

stance,

## BOOK VII.

stance, without its distinct and proper appellation. But it is not the least surprising, that it abounds in words which signify material objects, when there are hardly any wanting of those which are necessary to express spiritual ideas. The highest mysteries of our religion can be well expressed in Mexican, without any necessity of introducing foreign terms. Acoſta wonders, that the Mexicans who had an idea of a ſupreme Being, creator of heaven and earth, had not alſo in their language a word to expreſs it equivalent to *Dios* of the Spaniards, *Deus* of the Romans, *Theos* of the Grecians, *El* of the Hebrews, and *Alla* of the Arabs : on which account their preachers were obliged to make uſe of the Spaniſh term *Dios*. But if this author had had any knowledge of the Mexican language, he would have known that the *Teotl* of the Mexicans ſignifies the ſame thing as the *Theos* of the Greeks, and that there was no other reaſon for introducing the Spaniſh word *Dios*, but the exceſſive ſcruples of the firſt miſſionaries, who, as they burned the hiſtorical paintings of the Mexicans, becauſe they ſuſpected them to be full of ſuperſtitious meanings, (of which alſo Acoſta himſelf juſtly complains), likewiſe rejected the Mexican word *Teotl*, becauſe it had been uſed to expreſs the falſe gods whom they worſhipped. But it would have been better to have imitated the example of St. Paul, who, when he found that in Greece the name *Theos* was uſed to ſignify certain falſe deities, more abominable ſtill than thoſe of the Mexicans, did not compel the Greeks to adopt the *El*, or *Adonai*, of the Hebrews, but retained the uſe of the Greek term, making it be underſtood from that time, to ſignify a ſupreme, eternal, and infinitely perfect Being. However, many diſcerning men who have wrote in the Mexican language, have not ſcrupled to make uſe of the name *Teotl*, in the ſame manner as they all make uſe of the *Ipahnemoani*, of the *Tloque Nabuaque*, and other names ſignificative of the Supreme Being, which the Mexicans applied to their inviſible God. In one of our Diſſertations we ſhall give a liſt of the authors who have wrote in the Mexican language on the Chriſtian religion and morality, and alſo a liſt of terms, ſignifying metaphyſical and moral ideas, in order to expoſe the ignorance and weakneſs of an author (*d*) who has had abſurdity enough to publiſh

(*d*) The author of the work entitled, Recherches Philoſophiques ſur les Americains.



that the Mexicans had no words to count above the number three, or to express any metaphysical or moral ideas, and that on account of its harshness no Spaniard had ever learned to pronounce it. We could here give the numeral words of this language, by which the Mexicans could count up to forty-eight millions at least, and could shew how common this language was among the Spaniards, and how well those who have written in it have understood it. BOOK VII.

The Mexican language, like the Hebrew and French, wants the superlative term, and like the Hebrew, and most of the living languages of Europe, the comparative term, which are supplied by certain particles equivalent to those which are used in other such languages. It abounds more than the Tuscan in diminutives and augmentatives, and more than the English or any other language we know in verbal and abstract terms; for there is hardly a verb from which there are not many verbals formed, and scarcely a substantive or adjective from which there are not some abstracts formed. It is not less copious in verbs than in nouns; as from every single verb others are derived of different significations. *Chibua*, is *to do*, *Chichibua*, *to do with diligence*, or *often*; *Chibuilia*, *to do to another*; *Chibualtia*, *to cause to be done*; *Chibuatiuh*, *to go to do*; *Chibuaco*, *to come to do*; *Chiubtiuh*, *to be doing*, &c. We could say a great deal more on the subject, if it was permitted in the rules of history.

The style of address in Mexican varies according to the rank of the persons, with whom, or about whom, conversation is held, adding to the nouns, verbs, prepositions, and adverbs, certain particles expressive of respect: *Tatli*, means *father*; *Amota*, *your father*; *Amotatzin*, *your worthy father*. *Tleco*, is *to ascend*; if a person commands his servant to ascend a certain place, he says simply *Xitleco*; but if he asks some respectable person to do so, he will say *Ximotlicabui*; and if he wishes to use still more ceremony and respect *Maximotlicabuitzino*. This variety, which gives so much civilization to the language, does not, however, make it difficult to be spoken; because it is subjected to rules which are fixed and easy; nor do we know any language that is more regular and methodical.

The Mexicans, like the Greeks and other nations, have the advantage of making compounds of two, three, or four simple words; but

## BOOK VII.

they do it with more œconomy than the Greeks did; for the Greeks made use of the entire words in composition, whereas the Mexicans cut off syllables, or at least some letters from them. *Tlazotli*, signifies *valued* or *loved*; *Mabuitztic*, *honoured* or *revered*; *Tespixqui*, *priest*; a word itself too composed of *Teotl*, *god*; and the verb *Pia*, which signifies *to hold, guard, or keep*; *Tatli* is *father*, as we have already said. To unite those five words in one, they take away eight consonants and four vowels, and say for instance *Notlazomabuitzteopixcatlazin*, that is, *my very worthy father, or revered priest*; prefixing the *no*, which corresponds to the pronoun *my*, and adding *tsin*, which is a particle expressive of *reverence*. A word of this kind is extremely common with the Indians when they address, and particularly when they confess themselves, which although it is complex, is not, however one of the longest; for there are some compounded of so many terms as to have fifteen or sixteen syllables.

Such compounds were made use of in order to give the definition, or description, of a thing, whatever it was, in one word. This may be discovered in the names of animals and plants, which are to be found in the Natural History of Hernandez, and in the names of places which occur frequently in this history. Almost all the names which they gave to places of the Mexican empire are compounds, and signify the situation or properties of the places, and that some memorable action happened there. Many of their expressions are so strong, that the ideas of them cannot be heightened, particularly on the subject of love. In short, all those who have learned this language, and can judge of its copiousness, regularity, and beautiful modes of speech, are of opinion, that such a language cannot have been spoken by a barbarous people.

SECT. XLII.  
Eloquence  
and Poetry.

A nation possessed of so powerful a language, could not want poets and orators. Those two arts were much exercised by the Mexicans, although they were very far from knowing all their excellencies. Those who were destined to be orators, were instructed from their infancy in speaking properly, and learned to repeat by memory the most celebrated orations of their ancestors that had been handed down from father to son. Their eloquence was employed principally in delivering embassies, in councils, and congratulatory addresses, which they made to new kings.

kings. Although their most celebrated speakers are not to be compared with the orators of the polished nations of Europe, it is not to be denied that their discourses were sound, judicious, and elegant, as may be perceived from those specimens of their eloquence which are still extant. Even at present, when they are reduced to a state of great humiliation, and retain not their ancient institutions, they make harangues in their assemblies, which are so full of good sense and propriety, as to excite the admiration of all those who hear them.

The number of their public speakers was exceeded by that of their poets. In their verses they were attentive to the cadence and measure. Among the remains which we have of their poetry, are some verses in which between words that are significative, interjections, or syllables, are interposed, devoid of any meaning, and only made use of by what appears to adjust the measure; but this practice was, probably, only a vice of their bad poets. The language of their poetry was brilliant, pure, and agreeable, figurative, and embellished with frequent comparisons to the most pleasing objects in nature, such as flowers, trees, rivers, &c. It was in poetry chiefly where they made use of words in composition, which became often so very long, that a single one made a verse of the longest measure.

The subject of their poetical compositions was various. They composed hymns in praise of their gods, to obtain from them those favours they stood in need of, which were sung in the temples and at their sacred dances. Some were historical poems, reciting the events of the nation and the glorious action of their heroes, which were sung at profane dances. Some were odes, containing some moral or lesson useful in the conduct of life. Lastly, some were poems on love, or some other pleasing subject, such as the chase, which were sung at the public rejoicings of the seventh month. The priests were the chief composers of those pieces, and taught them to young boys, that they might sing them when they were grown up. We have already mentioned the celebrated compositions of king Nezahualcojotl. The esteem in which poetry was held by that king, excited his subjects to cultivate that art, and multiplied the number of poets of his court. It is related of one of those poets, that having been condemned to die for some crime, he made a composition in prison, in which he



BOOK VII. took leave of the world in so tender and pathetic a manner, that the musicians of the palace, who were his friends, advised him to sing it to the king; the king heard it, and was so much affected, that he granted the culprit a pardon. This was a singular event in the history of Acolhuacan, in which we read in general, examples of the greatest severity of government. We should be happy, if it were in our power, to produce here some fragments which we have seen of the poetry of those nations, to satisfy the curious among our readers (*e*).

СПЕКТ.  
XLIII.  
Mexican  
theatre.

Dramatic, as well as lyric poetry, was greatly in repute among the Mexicans. Their theatre, on which those kind of compositions were represented, was a square terras uncovered, raised in the market-place, or the lower area of some temple, and suitably high, that the actors might be seen and heard by all. That which was constructed in the market-place of Tlatelolco, was made of stone and lime, and, agreeable to what Cortes affirms, thirteen feet high, and thirty paces in length every way.

Cav. Boturini says, that the Mexican comedies were excellent, and that among the antiques which he had in his curious museum, were two dramatic compositions on the celebrated apparitions of the mother of God to the Mexican Neophyte Gio. Didaco, in which a particular delicacy and harmony in the expressions was discernible. We have never seen any composition of this nature, and although we do not doubt of the delicacies of the language of them, we cannot readily believe that their comedies were much according to the rules of the drama, or deserving of the excessive praise of that annalist. The description which Acoſta has left us of their theatre and representations, in which he mentions those which were made at Cholula at the great festival of the god *Quetzalcoatl*, is much more worthy of credit, and more consistent with the character of those nations: "There was," he says, "in the  
" area of the temple of this god a small theatre, thirty feet square,  
" curiously whitened, which they adorned with boughs, and fitted up  
" with the utmost neatness, surrounding it with arches made of flowers  
" and feathers, from which were suspended many birds, rabbits, and

(*e*) P. Orazio Carocci, a learned Milanese jesuit, published some elegant verses of the ancient Mexicans, in his admirable grammar of the Mexican language, printed in Mexico about the middle of the last century.

“ other pleasing objects ; where, after having dined, the whole of the  
 “ people assembled, the actors appeared, and exhibited burlesque cha-  
 “ racters, feigning themselves deaf, sick with colds, lame, blind, crip-  
 “ led, and addressing the idol for a return of health : the deaf people  
 “ answering at cross purposes, those who had colds, coughing, and  
 “ spitting, and the lame halting ; all recited their complaints and mis-  
 “ fortunes, which produced infinite mirth among the audience. Others  
 “ appeared under the names of different little animals, some in the dis-  
 “ guise of beetles, some like toads, some like lizards, and upon en-  
 “ counter each other, reciprocally explained their employments,  
 “ which was highly satisfactory to the people, as they performed  
 “ their parts with infinite ingenuity. Several little boys also belong-  
 “ ing to the temple, appeared in the disguise of butterflies, and birds  
 “ of various colours, and mounting upon the trees which were fixed  
 “ there on purpose ; the priests threw little balls of earth at them with  
 “ slings, occasioning incidents of much humour and entertainment to  
 “ the spectators. All the spectators then made a grand dance which termi-  
 “ nated the festival. This took place at their principal festivals only (*f*).”

The description which Acosta here gives, calls to our recollection the first scenes among the Greeks, and we doubt not, that if the Mexican empire had endured a century or two longer, their theatre would have been reduced to a better form, as the Grecian theatre improved itself but slowly and by degrees.

The first religious missionaries who announced the gospel to those nations, observing their attachment to music and poetry, and the superstitious notions which characterised all their native compositions as jagans, composed many songs and odes in the Mexican language in praise of the true God. The laborious Franciscan, Bernardino Sahagun, composed in pure and elegant Mexican, and printed at Mexico, three hundred and sixty-five hymns, one for each day of the year (*g*), and the Indians themselves composed many others in praise of the true God.

(*f*) Acosta Stor. Nat. a Mor. delle Indie, lib. v. cap. 29.

(*g*) Sahagun's work was printed, according to the best of our knowledge, in 1540. Dr. Eguiara complains in his *Biblioteca Mexicana*, that he was never able to find one copy of it. We saw one in a library of the college of St. Francesco Saverio of the Jesuits of Angelopoli.

BOOK VII. Boturini makes mention of the compositions of D. Francisco Placido, governor of Azcapozalco, sung by him at the sacred dances, which he, along with other Mexican nobles, made before the famous image of the Virgin of Guadalupe. Those zealous Franciscans wrote also several dramatic pieces in Mexican, relative to the mysteries of the Christian religion. Amongst others was celebrated that of the universal judgment, composed by the indefatigable missionary Andrea d' Olmos, which was represented in the church of Tlatelolco, in the presence of the first governor, and the first archbishop of Mexico, and a great assembly of the Mexican nobility and people.

SECT.  
XLIV.  
Music.

Their music was still more imperfect than their poetry. They had no stringed instruments. All their music consisted in the *Huebuetl*, the *Teponaxtli*, horns, sea-shells, and little flutes or pipes, which made a shrill sound. The *Huebuetl*, or Mexican drum, was a cylinder of wood, more than three feet high, curiously carved and painted on the outside, covered above with the skin of a deer, well dressed and stretched, which they tightened or slackened occasionally, to make the sound more sharp or deep. They struck it only with their fingers, but it required infinite dexterity in the striker. The *Teponaxtli*, which is used to this day among the Indians, is also cylindrical and hollow, but all of wood, having no skin about it, nor any opening but two slits lengthways in the middle, parallel to, and at a little distance from each other. It is sounded by beating the space between those two slits with two little sticks, similar to those which are made use of for modern drums, only that their points are covered with ule, or elastic gum, to soften the sound. The size of this instrument is various; some are so small as to be hung about the neck; some of a middling size, and others so large as to be upwards of five feet long. The sound which they yield is melancholy, and that of the largest is so loud, that it may be heard at the distance of two or three miles. To the accompaniment of these instruments, the figure of which we here present to our readers, the Mexicans sung their hymns and sacred music. Their singing was harsh and offensive to European ears; but they took so much pleasure in it themselves, that on festivals, they continued singing the whole



whole day. This was unquestionably the art in which the Mexicans were least successful.

However imperfect they were in music, their dances in which they exercised themselves from childhood, under the direction of the priests, were most graceful. They were of various kinds, and were differently named, according to the nature of the dance, or the circumstances of the festival on which they were made. They danced sometimes in a circle, and sometimes in ranks. At some dances only men, and at others, only women danced. On such occasions, the nobles put on their most pompous dresses, adorned themselves with bracelets, earrings, and various pendants of gold, jewels, and fine feathers, and carried in one hand a shield covered with the most beautiful plumes, or a fan made of feathers; and in the other an *Ajacaxthi*, which is a certain little vessel, which we shall mention hereafter, resembling a helmet, round or oval in shape, having many little holes, and containing a number of little stones which they shook together, accompanying the sound, which is not disagreeable, with their musical instruments. The populace disguised themselves, under various figures of animals, in dresses made of paper, of feathers, or skins.

The little dance, which was made in the palaces for the amusement of the lords, or in the temples, as a particular act of devotion, or in private houses, when they celebrated nuptials, or made any other domestic rejoicing, consisted of but a few dancers, who formed themselves in two parallel lines, dancing sometimes with their faces turned to the one, sometimes towards the other extremity of their lines; sometimes the person of one line faced those correspondent to them in the other, each line occasionally crossing and intermingling with the other, and sometimes one of each line detaching themselves from the rest, danced in the space between both, while the others stood still.

The great dance, which was made in large open spaces of ground, or in the area of the greater temple, differed from the other in the order, form, and number of the dancers. This dance was so numerous that some hundreds of people used to join in it. The music was placed in the middle of the area or space; near to it the lords danced, forming two, three, or more circles, according to the number of them which was present. At a little distance from them were formed other circles of dancers

BOOK VII. dancers of less rank; and, at a small interval from them, other circles proportionably larger were formed, which were composed of youths. All these circles had for their centre the *Huebuetl* and the *Tepmaztli*. The design which we have given of the order and disposition of this dance, represents it in the form of a wheel, in which the points denote the dancers, and the circles shew the figure which they described in their dance. The radii of the wheel are as many in number as there were dancers in the smallest circle nearest to the music. All the dancers described a circle in their dancing, and no person departed from the radius or line to which he belonged. Those who danced close to the music, moved with slowness and gravity, as the circle which they had to make was smaller, and on that account it was the place of the lords and nobles most advanced in age; but those who occupied the station most distant from the music, moved with the utmost velocity, that they might neither lose the direction of the line to which they belonged, nor the measure in which the lords danced.

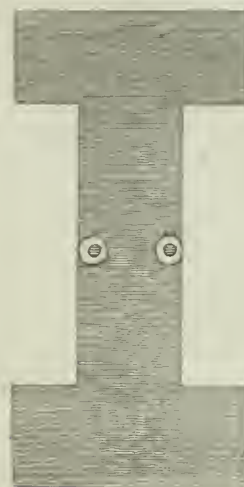
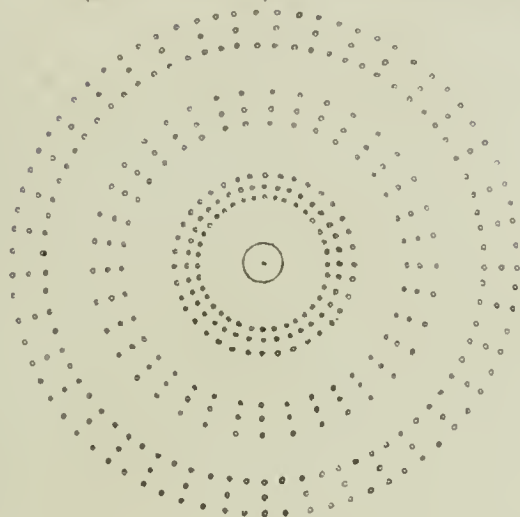
Their dances were almost always accompanied with singing; but the singing was like all the movements of the dancers, adjusted by the beating of the instruments. Two persons sung a verse, to which all the rest answered. In general the music began with a grave tone, and the singers in a low voice. The longer the dance continued, the more cheerful tone was sounded by the music, the singers raised their voices, their movements became swifter, and the subject of their song more joyful. In the space between the different lines of dancers, some buffoons danced, who counterfeited the dress of other nations, or disguised themselves like wild beasts and other animals, exciting the mirth of the people with their buffooneries. When one set of dancers was wearied, another was introduced, and thus they continued the dance for six, and sometimes eight hours.

This was the form of their ordinary dance; but they had others that were very different, in which they represented either some mystery of their religion, some event of history or war, the chase, or agriculture.

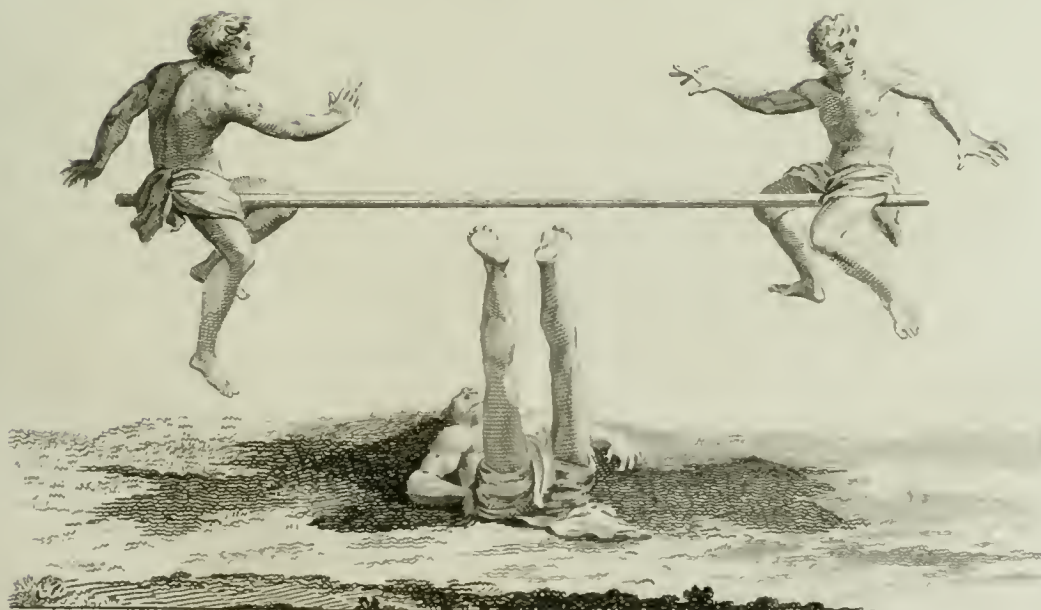
Not only the lords, the priests, and the youth of the colleges danced but likewise the kings in the temple in performance of their devotion, or for their amusement in the palaces, but on such occasions they had always a distinct place for themselves in respect to their character.

Among

*Plan of the  
Figure of the great Dance. Ground for the Game of Football.*



*Mexican feats of Activity*







Among others there was one extremely curious dance which is still kept up by the people of Yucatan. They fixed in the earth a tree, or strong post, fifteen or twenty feet high, from the top of which, according to the number of dancers, they suspended twenty or more small cords, all long and of different colours. When each dancer had taken hold of the end of his cord, they all began to dance to the sound of musical instruments, crossing each other with great dexterity until they formed a beautiful net-work of the cords round the tree, on which the colours appeared chequered in admirable order. Whenever the cords, on account of the twisting, became so short, that the dancers could hardly keep hold of them with their arms raised up, by crossing each other again, they undid and unwound them from the tree. There is likewise practised by all the Indians of Mexico an ancient dance commonly called *Tocotin*, which is so graceful, decent, and solemn, that it has become one of the sacred dances performed on certain festivals in our time.

The amusements of the Mexicans were not confined to the theatre and dancing. They had various games, not only for certain fixed seasons and public occasions, but also for the diversion and relaxation of private individuals. Amongst the public games, the race was one in which they exercised themselves from childhood. In the second month, and possibly also at other times, there were military games, among which the warriors represented to the people a pitched battle. All those sports were most useful to the state, for besides the innocent pastime which they afforded to the people, they gave agility to their limbs, and accustomed them to the fatigues of war.

SECT.  
XI.VI.  
Games.

The exhibition of the flyers which was made on certain great festivals, and particularly in secular years, was, though of less public benefit, more celebrated than all others. They sought in the woods for an extremely lofty tree, which, after stripping it of its branches and bark, they brought to the city, and fixed in the centre of some large square. They cased the point of the tree in a wooden cylinder, which, on account of some resemblance in its shape, the Spaniards called a mortar. From this cylinder hung four strong ropes, which served to support a square frame. In the space between the cylinder and the frame, they fixed four other thick ropes, which they twisted as many times round

BOOK VII. the tree as there were revolutions to be made by the fliers. These ropes were drawn through four holes, made in the middle of the four planks of which the frame consisted. The four principal flyers disguised like eagles, herons, and other birds, mounted the tree with great agility, by means of a rope which was laced about it from the ground up to the frame; from the frame they mounted one at a time successively upon the cylinder, and after having danced there a little, they tied themselves round with the ends of the ropes, which were drawn through the holes of the frame, and launching with a spring from it, began their flight with their wings expanded. The action of their bodies put the frame and the cylinder in motion; the frame by its revolutions gradually untwisted the cords by which the flyers swung; so that as the ropes lengthened, they made so much the greater circles in their flight. Whilst these four were flying, a fifth danced upon the cylinder, beating a little drum, or waving a flag, without the smallest apprehension of the danger he was in of being precipitated from such a height. The others who were upon the frame (there having been ten or twelve persons generally who mounted) as soon as they saw the flyers in their last revolution, precipitated themselves by the same ropes, in order to reach the ground at the same time amidst the acclamations of the populace. Those who precipitated themselves in this manner by the ropes, that they might make a still greater display of their agility, frequently passed from one rope to another, at that part where, on account of the little distance between them, it was possible for them to do so.

The most essential point of this performance consisted in proportioning so justly the height of the tree with the length of the ropes, that the flyers should reach the ground with thirteen revolutions, to represent by such number their century of fifty-two years, composed in the manner we have already mentioned. This celebrated diversion is still in use in that kingdom; but no particular attention is paid to the number of the revolutions, or the flyers; as the frame is commonly hexagonal, or octagonal, and the flyers six or eight in number. In some places they put a rail round the frame, to prevent accidents which were frequent after the conquest; as the Indians became much given to drinking, and used to mount the tree when intoxicated with wine or brandy, and were unable to keep their station on so great a height, which was usually sixty feet.



Amongst the private games of the Mexicans, the most common and most esteemed was one resembling football. The place where they played at it, which they called *Tlachco*, was, according to the description given us by Torquemada, a plain square space of ground, about eighteen perches in length, and proportionably broad, enclosed within four walls, which were thicker below than above, and the side walls were built higher than the others, and well whitened and polished. They were crowned all round with battlements, and on the lower wall stood two idols, which they placed there at midnight with different superstitious ceremonies, and before they ever played in it the place was blessed by the priests, with other forms of the same nature.

Thus Torquemada describes it; but in four or more paintings which we have seen, the draught of this game represents it such as we have given it in our figures, which is totally different from the description of Torquemada. It is probable, that there were varieties of the same game. The idols placed upon the walls were those of the gods of game, of whose names we are ignorant; but suspect the name of one of them to have been *Omacatl, the God of Rejoicings*. The ball was made of ule, or elastic gum, three or four inches in diameter, which, although heavier, rebounds more than those made of air. They played in parties, two against two, or three against three. The players were entirely naked except the *maxtlatl*, or large bandage, about their middle. It was an essential condition of the game not to touch the ball, unless it was with the joint of the thigh, or the arm, or elbow, and whoever touched it with his hand or foot, or any other part of the body, lost one of the game. The player who made the ball reach the opposite wall, or made it rebound from it, gained a point. Poor people played for ears of maize, or if they had nothing else they played for the price of their liberty; others staked a certain number of dresses of cotton; and rich persons played for articles of gold, precious feathers, and jewels. There were in the space between the players two large stones, resembling in figure our mill-stones, each of which had a hole in the middle, a little larger than the ball. Whoever struck the ball through this hole, which was extremely uncommon, was not only victor in the game, but according to the established law, became the

BOOK VII. proprietor of the dresses of all those who were present, and such a feat was celebrated as an immortal deed.

This game was in high estimation with the Mexicans, and the other nations of that kingdom, and much practised, as is to be concluded from the surprising number of balls which the cities of Tochtepec, Otatitlan, and other places, paid in tribute to the crown of Mexico, the number of which, as we have already mentioned, was not less than sixteen thousand. The kings themselves played and challenged each other at this game; as Montezuma II. did *Nezahualpilli*. At present it is not in use among the nations of the Mexican empire; but it is still kept up among the Najarites, the Opates, the Taraumarese, and other nations of the North. All the Spaniards who have seen this game were surprised with the uncommon agility of the players.

The Mexicans took great delight also in another game, which some writers have called *patolli* (*b*). They described upon a fine mat made of the palm-tree, a square, within which they drew two diagonal and two cross lines. Instead of dice they threw large beans, marked with small points. According to the points which their dice turned up, they put down, or took up, certain little stones from the junction of the lines, and whoever had three little stones first in a series, was victor.

Bernal Diaz makes mention of another game at which king Montezuma used to amuse himself with the conqueror Cortes, during the time of his imprisonment, which he informs us was called *Totoloque*. That king, he says, threw from a distance certain little balls of gold, at certain pieces of the same metal, which were placed as marks, and whoever made the first five hits won the jewels for which they played.

Among the Mexicans there were persons extremely dexterous at games with the hands and feet. One man laid himself upon his back on the ground, and raising up his feet, took a beam upon them, or a piece of wood, which was thick, round, and about eight feet in length. He tossed it up to a certain height, and as it fell he received and tossed it up again with his feet; taking it afterwards between his feet, he turned it rapidly round, and what is more, he did so with two

(*b*) Patolli is a generic term signifying every sort of game.

men sitting astride upon it, one upon each extremity of the beam. This feat was performed at Rome before pope Clement VII. and many Roman princes, by two Mexicans sent over there by Cortes from Mexico, to the singular satisfaction of the spectators. The exercises also which, in some countries are called the powers of Hercules, were extremely common amongst them. One man began to dance; another, placed upright on his shoulders, accompanied him in his movements; while a third, standing upright upon the head of the second, danced and displayed other instances of agility. They placed also a beam upon the shoulders of two dancers, while a third danced upon the end of it. The first Spaniards, who were witnesses of those and other exhibitions of the Mexicans, were so much astonished at their agility, that they suspected some supernatural power assisted them, forgetting to make a due allowance for the progress of the human genius when assisted by application and labour.

Though games, dances, and music, conduced less to utility than pleasure, this was not the case with History and Painting; two arts, which ought not to be separated in the history of Mexico, as they had no other historians than their painters, nor any other writings than their paintings to commemorate the events of the nation.

SECT.  
XLVII.  
Different  
kinds of Mex-  
ican paint-  
ings.

The Toltecas were the first people of the new world who employed the art of painting for the ends of history; at least we know of no other nation which did so before them. The same practice prevailed, from time immemorial, among the Acolhuas, the seven Aztecan tribes, and among all the polished nations of Anahuac. The Chechemecas and the Otomies were taught it by the Acolhuas and the Toltecas, when they deserted their savage life.

Among the paintings of the Mexicans, and all those nations, there were many which were mere portraits or images of their gods, their kings, their heroes, their animals, and their plants. With these the royal palaces of Mexico and Tezeuco both abounded. Others were historical, containing an account of particular events, such as are the first thirteen paintings of the collection of Mendoza, and that of the journey of the Aztecas, which appears in the work of the traveller Gemelli. Others were mythological, containing the mysteries of their religion. Of this kind is the volume which is preserved in the great library



BOOK VII. library of the order of Bologna. Others were codes, in which were compiled their laws, their rites, their customs, their taxes, or tributes; and such are all those of the above mentioned collection of Mendoza, from the fourteenth to the sixty-third. Others were chronological, astronomical, or astrological, in which was represented their calendar, the position of the stars, the changes of the moon, eclipses, and prognostications of the variations of the weather. This kind of painting was called by them *Tonalamatl*. Siguenza makes mention (*i*) of a painting representing such like prognostications which he inserted in his *Ciclographia Mexicana*. Acosta relates "that in the province of Yucatan, there were certain volumes, bound up according to their manner, in which the wise Indians had marked the distribution of their seasons, the knowledge of the planets, of animals, and other natural productions, and also their antiquity; things all highly curious and minutely described:" which, as the same author says, were lost by the indiscreet zeal of an ecclesiastic, who, imagining them to be full of superstitious meanings, burned them, to the great grief of the Indians, and the utmost regret of the curious amongst the Spaniards. Other paintings were topographical, or chorographical, which served not only to shew the extent and boundaries of possessions, but likewise the situation of places, the direction of the coasts, and the course of rivers. Cortes says, in his first letter to Charles V. that having made enquiries to know if there was any secure harbour for vessels in the Mexican gulf, Montezuma presented him a painting of the whole coast, from the port of *Chalchiuhcucan*, where at present Vera Cruz lies, to the river Coatzacualco. Bernal Diaz relates, that Cortes also, in a long and difficult voyage which he made to the Bay of Honduras, made use of a chart which was presented to him by the lords of Coatzacualco, in which all the places and rivers were marked from the coast of Coatzacualco to Huejacallan.

The Mexican empire abounded with all those kinds of paintings; for their painters were innumerable, and there was hardly any thing left unpainted. If those had been preserved, there would have been nothing wanting to the history of Mexico; but the first preachers of

(i) In his work entitled, *Libra Astronomica*, printed in Mexico.

the gospel, suspicious that superstition was mixed with all their paintings, made a furious destruction of them. Of all those which were to be found in Tezcucó, where the chief school of painting was, they collected such a mass, in the square of the market, it appeared like a little mountain; to this they set fire and buried in the ashes the memory of many most interesting and curious events. The loss of those monuments of antiquity was inexpressibly afflicting to the Indians, and regretted sufficiently afterwards by the authors of it, when they became sensible of their error; for they were compelled to endeavour to remedy the evil, in the first place by obtaining information from the mouths of the Indians; secondly, by collecting all the paintings which had escaped their fury, to illustrate the history of the nation; but although they recovered many, these were not sufficient; for from that time forward, the possessors of paintings became so jealous of their preservation and concealment from the Spaniards, it has proved difficult, if not impossible to make them part with one of them.

The cloth on which they painted was made of the thread of the maguei, or aloe, or the palm *Icxotl* (*k*), dressed skins, or paper. They made paper of the leaves of a certain species of aloe, steeped together like hemp, and afterwards washed, stretched, and smoothed. They made also of the palm *Icxotl*, and the thin barks of other trees, when united and prepared with a certain gum, both silk and cotton; but we are unable to explain any particulars of this manufacture. We have had in our hands several sheets of Mexican paper: it is similar in the thickness to the pasteboard of Europe, but softer, smoother, and easy for writing.

SECT.  
XLVIII.  
Cloths and  
colours.

In general they made their paper in very long sheets, which they preserved rolled up like the ancient membranes of Europe, or folded up like bed-screens. The volume of Mexican paintings, which is preserved in the library of Bologna, is a thick skin ill-dressed, composed of different pieces, painted all over, and folded up in that manner.

The beautiful colours which they employed both in their paintings and in their dyes, were obtained from wood, from leaves, and the

(*k*) The coarse cloth on which the famous image of the Virgin of Guadalupe is painted, is of the palm *Icxotl*.

## BOOK VII.

flowers of different plants, and various animals. White they obtained from the stone *Chimaltizatl*, which, on calcination, becomes like a fine plaister, or from the *Tizatlalli*, another mineral, which after being made into a paste, worked like clay, and formed into small balls, takes in the fire a white colour resembling Spanish white. Black they got from another mineral, which, on account of its stinking smell, was called *Tlalibijac*, or from the foot of the *Ocotl*, which is a certain aromatic species of pine, collected in little earthen vessels. Blue and azure colours were obtained from the flower of the *Matlaxibuitl*, and the *Xiubquilipitzabuac*, which is indigo (1), although their mode of making them was very different from the way of the moderns. They put the branches of this plant into hot, or rather lukewarm water; and after having stirred them about for a sufficient time with a stick or ladle, they passed the water when impregnated with the dye into certain pots or cups, in which they let it remain until the solid part of the dye was deposited, and then they poured off the water. This lee or sediment was dried in the sun, and afterwards it was placed between two plates near a fire, until it grew hard. The Mexicans had another plant of the same name, from which they likewise obtained an azure colour, but of an inferior quality. Red they got from the seeds of the *Achiot* or *Ruocou*, boiled in water; and purple from the *Nochiztli*, or cochineal. Yellow from the *Tecozahuatl*, or ochre; and likewise from the *Xochipalli*, a plant, the leaves of which resemble those of the *Artemisia*. The beautiful flowers of this plant, boiled in water with nitre, furnished them a fine orange-colour. In the same manner as they made use of nitre to obtain this colour, they employed alum to obtain others. After grinding and dissolving the aluminous earth in water, which they called *Tlakscotl*, they boiled it in earthen vessels;

(1) The description of the indigo plant is found in many authors, particularly in Hernandez, lib. iv. cap. 12. which is totally different from that described by Raynal, in the sixth book of his Philosophical and Political History. This author asserts, that indigo was transplanted from the East-Indies to America, and that experiments having been made of it in several countries, the culture of it was established in Carolina, Hispaniola, and Mexico. This however is one of the many mistakes of that philosopher. It is certain, from the testimony of Ferdinand Columbus, in cap. lvi. of the Life of his famous parent Christopher Columbus, that one of the plants, native to the island of Hispaniola, was the indigo. We know also from the historians of Mexico, and particularly Hernandez, that the ancient Mexicans made use of indigo.



then by distillation, they extracted the allum pure, white, and transparent, and before they hardened it entirely, they parted it in pieces to sell it in the market. To make their colours hold better together, they made use of the glutinous juice of the Tzauhtli (*m*), or the fine oil of Chian (*n*).

The figures of mountains, rivers, buildings, trees, and minerals, and, above all, those of men, which appear in the paintings still extant of the ancient Mexicans, are for the most part unproportioned and deformed; this, however, we think is not to be ascribed so much to their ignorance of the proportions of objects, or their want of abilities, as to their haste in painting, of which the Spanish conquerors were witnesses: for as they solely paid attention to make a faithful representation of things, they neglected making their images perfect, and on that account frequently contented themselves with mere sketches or outlines. However, we have seen among the ancient paintings, many portraits of the kings of Mexico, in which besides the singular beauty of the colours, the proportions were most accurately observed; but we will, notwithstanding, confess, that the Mexican painters were by no means arrived at much perfection of design, or in mixing shade and light.

The Mexicans used in painting not only to represent the simple images of objects, as some writers have reported, but also employed hieroglyphics and characters (*o*). They represented material things by their proper figures, but in order to abridge and save labour, paper, and colours, they contented themselves with representing a part of an object which was sufficient to make it be understood by the intelligent; and as we cannot understand the writings of others, until we have learnt to read them, in like manner those American authors required to have been first instructed in the Mexican manner of representing objects, in order to have been able to understand the paintings which

SECT.  
XLIX.  
The character of their paintings, and mode of representing objects.

(*m*) The *Tzauhtli* is a plant very common in that country. Its leaves are similar to those of the leek, its stem is strait and knotty, its flowers tinged with a yellowish green, its root white and fibrous. To extract its juice they broke it and dried it in the sun.

(*n*) Thinking to render a service to the Italian painters, we cultivated with great attention three plants of the Chian sprung from seed sent from Mexico; they took root successfully, and we had the pleasure of seeing them loaded with flowers in September 1777; but the frost of that year coming more early than usual, nipped them entirely.

(*o*) Such authors are effectually refuted by Dr. Eguara, in the learned preface to his *Bibliotheca Mexicana*, and by us in our *Dissertations*.

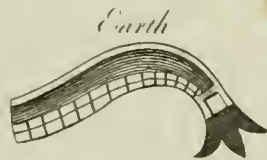
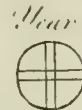
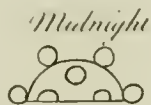
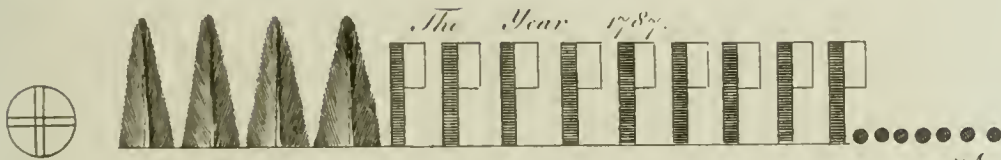
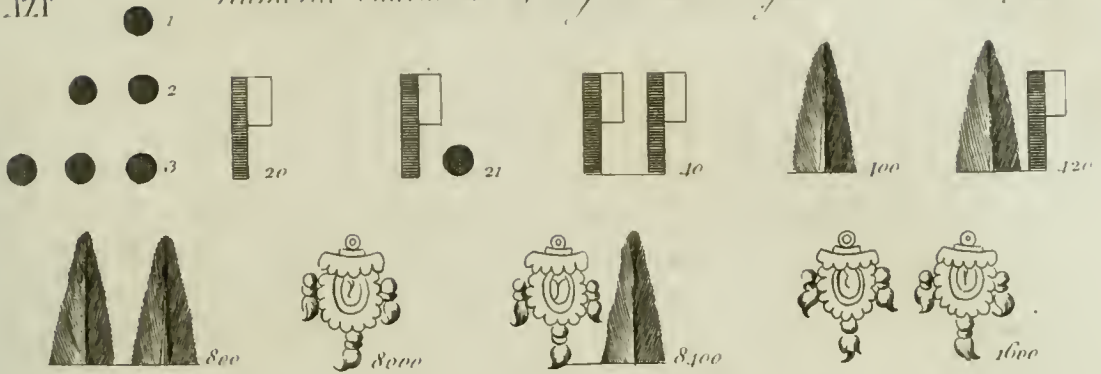
## BOOK VII.

served them in place of writings. For things which are even by nature totally devoid of figure, or were difficult of representation, they substituted certain characters; but these were not verbal, or destined to form words like our letters, but real characters immediately significative of the things, such as the characters of astronomers and algebraists. That our readers may form some idea of them, we have subjoined the Numeral characters of the Mexicans, also those of Time, the Heavens, the Earth, Water, and Air (*p*).

When they would represent any person, they painted a man, or a human head, and over it a figure expressing the meaning of his name, as appears in the figures of the Mexican kings. To express a city, or a village, they painted in the same manner a figure, which signified the same thing with its name. To form their histories or annals, they painted on the margin of the cloth or paper, the figures of the years in so many squares, and at the side of each square the event or events which occurred in that year; and if, on account of the number of years the history of which they meant to relate, they could not all be contained in one canvas, they were continued in another. With respect to the order of representing the years and events, it was at the liberty of the historian to begin at which ever angle of the piece he pleased; but at the same time constantly observing, that if the painting began at the upper angle on the right hand, he proceeded towards the left. If it began, which was most common, at the upper angle on the left hand, he proceeded straight downwards. If he painted the first year at the lower angle on the left, he continued towards the right; but if he began at the lower angle on the right, he proceeded straight upwards; so that on the upper part of his canvas he never painted from left to right, nor ever on the lower part from right to left; never advanced upwards from the left, nor downwards by the right. When this method of the Mexicans is understood, it is easy to discover at first

(*p*) Respecting the numeral characters, it is to be observed, they painted as many points as there were units unto twenty. This number has its proper character. Then they doubled it for 20 times, that is 400. This character was doubled in like manner, that is to 8000. Then they began to double the character of 8000. With those three characters, and the points, they expressed whatever number they chose, at least to twenty times 8000, or 160,000. But it is probable this number had its characters also.

fight,



The Deluge & confusion of Tongues.







sight, which is the beginning and which is the end of any historical painting.

It cannot be denied that this method of expressing things was imperfect, perplexed, and equivocal; but praise is due to the attempt of those people to perpetuate the memory of events, and to their industry in supplying, though imperfectly, the want of letters, which it is probable they would have invented, in their progress to refinement, had their empire been of longer duration; at least they would have abridged and improved their paintings by the multiplication of characters.

Their paintings ought not to be considered as a regular full history, but only as monuments and aids of tradition. We cannot express too strongly the care which parents and masters took to instruct their children and pupils in the history of the nation. They made them learn speeches and discourses, which they could not express by the pencil; they put the events of their ancestors into verse, and taught them to sing them. This tradition dispelled the doubts, and undid the ambiguity which paintings alone might have occasioned, and by the assistance of those monuments perpetuated the memory of their heroes, and of virtuous examples, their mythology, their rites, their laws, and their customs.

Nor did that people make use only of tradition, of paintings, and songs, to preserve the memory of events, but also of threads of different colours, and differently knotted, called by the Peruvians *Quipu*, and by the Mexicans *Nepobualtzitzin*. This curious method of the representation of things, however much used in Peru, does not appear to have been employed in the province of Anahuac, if not in the most early ages; for no traces of such monuments are now to be found. Boturini says, that after the most diligent search, he, with difficulty, found one in a place of Tlascala, the threads of which were already wasted and consumed by time. If those who peopled South America ever passed the country of Anahuac, they possibly might have left there this art, which was afterwards abandoned for that of painting, introduced by the Toltecas, or some other nation still more ancient.

After the Spaniards communicated the use of letters to them, several able natives of Mexico, Tezcuco, and Tlascala, wrote their histories partly in Spanish, and partly in an elegant Mexican style, which

BOOK VII. histories are still preserved in some libraries of Mexico, as we have already mentioned.

SECT. L.  
Sculpture.

The Mexicans were more successful in sculpture, in the art of casting metals and mosaic works, than in painting. They expressed the images of their heroes, and of the works of nature in stone, wood, gold, silver, and feathers, better than on paper, either because the greater difficulty of those labours stimulated greater diligence and exertions, or because the high esteem in which they were held among that people, excited genius and encouraged industry.

Sculpture was one of the arts exercised by the ancient Toltecas. Until the time of the conquest several statues of stone were preserved which had been cut by the artists of that nation; in particular the idol of Tlaloc, placed upon the mountain of the same name, which was so much revered and worshipped by the Chechemecas and Acolhuas, and the gigantic statues erected in the celebrated temples of Teotihuacan. The Mexicans had sculptors among them when they left their native country Aztlan, for we know that they had at that time formed the idol of Huitzilopochtli, which they carried along with them in their long peregrination.

The usual materials of their statues were stone and wood. They wrought the stone without iron, steel, or any other instrument than a chisel made of flint stone. Their unparalleled phlegmatic nature and constancy in labour, were both necessary to overcome the difficulty, and endure the tediousness of such labours; and they succeeded in spite of the unsuitableness of their instruments. They learned to express in their statues all the attitudes and postures of which the human body is capable; they observed the proportions exactly, and could, when necessary, execute the most delicate and minute strokes with the chisel. They not only made entire statues, but likewise cut out in stone, figures in basso relievo, of which kind are those of Montezuma II. and one of his sons, recorded with praises by Acosta. They also made statues of clay and wood, employing for these a chisel of copper. The surprising number of their statues may be imagined from that of their idols, which we mentioned in the preceding book. In this respect we have also to lament the furious zeal of the first bishop of Mexico, and the first preachers of the gospel; who, in order to remove from the sight of



of their converts all incentives to idolatry, have deprived us of many valuable monuments of the sculpture of the Mexicans. The foundation of the first church, which was built in Mexico, was laid with idols, and so many thousand statues were then broke in pieces and destroyed, that although the kingdom was most abounding in works of that kind, at present the most diligent search can hardly find any of them remaining. The conduct of those missionaries was no doubt laudable both in cause and effect, but they should have distinguished between the innocent statues of those people, and their superstitious images, that some of the former might have been kept entire in some place where no evil consequence would have attended their preservation.

The works which they executed by casting of metals were in more esteem with the Mexicans than the works of sculpture, both on account of the greater value of the materials, and the excellence of the art itself. The miracles they produced of this kind would not be credible, if besides the testimony of those who saw them, curiosities in numbers of this nature had not been sent from Mexico to Europe. The works of gold and silver sent in presents from the conqueror Cortes to Charles V. filled the goldsmiths of Europe with astonishment; who, as several authors of that period attest, declared (*q*) that they were altogether inimitable. The Mexican founders made both of gold and silver the most perfect images of natural bodies. They made a fish in this manner, which had its scales alternately one of silver and the other of gold; a parrot with a moveable head, tongue, and wings, and an ape with a moveable head and feet, having a spindle in its hand in the attitude of spinning. They set gems in gold and silver, and made most curious jewellery of great value. In short, these sort of works were so admirably finished, that even the Spanish soldiers, all stung with the same wretched thirst for gold, valued the workmanship above the materials. This wonderful art, formerly practised by the Toltecas, the invention of which they ascribed to the god Quetzalcoatl, has been entirely lost by the debasement of the Indians, and the indolent neg-

SECT. LI.  
Casting of  
metals.

(*q*) See in particular what is said of those works by the historian Gomara, who had them in his hands, and heard what the goldsmiths of Seville said upon seeing them.

## BOOK VII.

lect of the Spaniards. We are doubtful if there are any remains of those curious works; at least we apprehend, it would be more easy to find some in the cabinets of Europe than in all New Spain. Covetousness to profit by the materials must unquestionably have conquered all desire to preserve them as curiosities.

The Mexicans also wrought with the hammer, but in an inferior manner, and not at all to be compared with the goldsmiths of Europe; for they had no other instruments to beat metals than stones. However, it is well known that they wrought copper well, and that the Spaniards were much pleased with their axes and pikes. The Mexican founders and goldsmiths formed a respectable body of people. They rendered particular worship to their protecting god *Xipe*, and in honour of him held a great festival in the second month, at which human victims were sacrificed.

SECT. LII.  
Mosaic  
works.

Nothing, however, was more highly valued by the Mexicans than their mosaic works, which were made of the most delicate and beautiful feathers of birds. They raised for this purpose various species of birds of fine plumage with which that country abounds, not only in the palaces of the king, where, as we have already observed, there were all sorts of animals, but likewise in private houses, and at certain seasons they carried off their feathers to make use of them on this kind of work, or to sell them at market. They set a high value on the feathers of those wonderful little birds which they call *Huitsitzilin*, and the Spaniards *Picaflores*, on account of the smallness, the fineness, and the various colours of them. In these and other beautiful birds, nature supplied them with all the colours which art can produce, and also some which art cannot imitate. At the undertaking of every mosaic work several artists assembled; after having agreed upon a design, and taken their measures and proportions, each artist charged himself with the execution of a certain part of the image, and exerted himself so diligently in it with such patience and application, that he frequently spent a whole day in adjusting a feather; first trying one, then another, viewing it sometimes one way, then another, until he found one which gave his part that ideal perfection proposed to be attained. When the part which each artist undertook was done, they assembled again to form the entire image from them. If any part was accidentally the


least deranged, it was wrought again until it was perfectly finished. They laid hold of the feathers with small pincers, that they might not do them the least injury, and pasted them on the cloth with *Tzautli*, or some other glutinous matter; then they united all the parts upon a little table, or a plate of copper, and flattened them softly until they left the surface of the image so equal and smooth it appeared to be the work of a pencil.

These were the images so much celebrated by the Spaniards and other European nations. Whoever beheld them was at a loss whether he ought to have praised most the life and beauty of the natural colours, or the dexterity of the artist, and the ingenious disposition of art. "These images," says Acosta, "are deservedly admired; for it is wonderful how it was possible, with the feathers of birds, to execute works so fine and so equal, that they appear the performance of the pencil; and what neither the pencil nor the colours in painting can effect, they have, when viewed from a side, an appearance so beautiful, so lively, and animated, they give delight to the sight. Some Indians, who are able artists, copy whatever is painted with a pencil so perfectly with plumage, that they rival the best painters of Spain." These works of feathers were even so highly esteemed by the Mexicans as to be valued more than gold. Cortes, Bernal Diaz, Gomara, Torquemada, and all the other historians who saw them, were at a loss for expressions sufficient to praise their perfection (*r*). A little time ago was living in Pazcuaro, formerly the capital of the kingdom of Michuacan, where this art chiefly flourished since the conquest, the last surviving artist of Mosaic works, and with him possibly is now, or will be, finished this admirable art, although for those two, last centuries past, it has fallen much short of its ancient perfection. Several works of this kind are still preserved in the museums of Europe, and many in Mexico, but few we apprehend belong to the six-

(*r*) Stor. Nat. e Mor. lib. iv. c. 37.

(*s*) Gio. Lorenzo d'Anagnina, a learned Italian of the sixteenth century, treating of those images of the Mexicans, observes: "Amongst others I was greatly astonished at a San Girolamo with a crucifix and a Lion, which La Sig. Diana Loffreda shewed me, discovering so much beauty from the liveliness of the natural colours, so well and so justly placed, that I imagined I could never see an equal to it, far less a better, among the ancient or even the most eminent modern painters."



**BOOK VII.** teenth century, and none of those which we know of, were made before the conquest. The mosaic works also which they made of broken shells was extremely curious; this art is still practised in Guatemala.

In imitation of those skilful artists there were others, who formed with flowers and leaves upon mats many beautiful works made use of at festivals. After the introduction of Christianity they made these works for ornament; they were sought after most eagerly by the Spanish nobility, on account of the singular beauty of the artifice. At present there are many artists in that kingdom, who employ themselves in counterfeiting with silk the images of feathers; but their performances are by no means comparable with those of the ancients.

**SECT. LIII.**  
Domestic or  
civil archi-  
tecture of the  
Mexicans.

A nation so industrious in those arts which could only serve for curiosity and luxury, could not be wanting in those which were necessary to life. Architecture, one of those arts which the necessity of man first invents, was exercised by the inhabitants of the country of Anahuac, at least from the time of the Toltecas. Their successors the Chechemecas, the Acolhuas, and all the other nations of the kingdoms of Acolhuacan, of Mexico, and Michuacan, of the republic of Tlascala, and other provinces, except the Otomies, built houses and formed cities from time immemorial. When the Mexicans arrived in that country, they found it full of large and beautiful cities. They who before they left their native country were skilled in architecture, and used to a social life, constructed in their pilgrimage many edifices in those places where they stopped for some years; some remains of which are still existing as we have already mentioned upon the banks of the river Gila, in Pimeria, and near to the city of Zacatecas. Reduced afterwards to greater hardships upon the little islands of the Tezcucan lake, they built humble huts with reeds and mud, until by the commerce of their fish they were able to purchase better materials. In proportion as their power and riches increased, they enlarged and improved their habitations; so that when the conquerors arrived, they found no less to be admired with their eyes than to be destroyed with their hands.

The houses of the poor were built of reeds, or unburned bricks, or stone and mud, and the roofs made of a long kind of hay which  
grows

grows thick, and is common in the fields, particularly in hot countries, or of the leaves of the maguei, or aloe, placed in the manner of tiles, to which they bear some resemblance both in thickness and shape. One of the columns or supports of these houses was generally a tree of a regular growth, by means of which, besides the pleasure they took in its foliage and shade, they saved themselves some labour and expence. These houses had for the most part but one chamber, where the family and all the animals belonging to it, the fire-place, and furniture, were lodged. If the family was not very poor, there were more chambers, an *ajaubcalli*, or oratory; a *temazcalli*, or bath, and a little granary.

The houses of lords, and people of circumstances, were built of stone and lime; they consisted of two floors, having halls, large courtyards, and the chambers fitly disposed; the roofs were flat and terraced; the walls were so well whitened, polished, and shining, that they appeared to the Spaniards when at a distance to have been silver. The pavement or floor was plaister, perfectly level, plain, and smooth.

Many of these houses were crowned with battlements and turrets; and their gardens had fish-ponds, and the walks of them symmetrically laid out. The large houses of the capital had in general two entrances, the principal one to the street, the other to the canal: they had no wooden doors to their houses, perhaps, because they thought their habitations sufficiently secure without them from the severity of the laws against robbers; but to prevent the inspection of passengers, they covered the entrance with little reeds, from which they suspended a string of cocoas, or pieces of broken kitchen utensils, or some other thing fit to awake by its noise the attention of the family, when any person lifted up the reeds to enter the house. No person was permitted to enter without the consent of the owner. When necessity, or civility, or family connections did not justify the entrance of any person who came to the house, he was listened to without and immediately dismissed.

The Mexicans understood the building of arches and vaults (*t*), as appears from their baths, from the remains of the royal palaces of Tez-

(*t*) Torquemada says, that when the Spaniards took away the roof from an arch built in the first church of Mexico, the Mexicans from terror durst not enter the church, expecting

## BOOK VII.

Tezcuco, and other buildings which escaped the fury of the conquerors, and also from several paintings. Cornices, and other ornaments of architecture, were likewise in use among them. They took great delight in making ornaments of stone, which had the appearances of snails about their doors and windows, and in some buildings there was a large serpent made of stone in the act of biting his tail, after having twisted his body through all the windows of the house. The walls of their buildings were upright and perpendicular; they must have made use of the plummet, or some other instrument of its nature, although owing to the negligence of historians, we are ignorant of the tools which they employed in building, as well as many other things belonging to this and other arts. Some are of opinion, that the Mexican masons in building walls, filled them up with earth on both sides, and that as the wall was raised, they raised likewise the heaps of earth so high, that, until the building was completed, the walls remained entirely buried and unseen; on which account the masons had no occasion for planks or scaffolding. But although this mode of building may appear to have been in practice among the Miztecas, and other nations of the Mexican empire, we do not believe that the Mexicans ever adopted it, from the great expedition with which they finished their buildings. Their columns were cylindrical, or square; but we cannot say whether they had either bases or capitals. They endeavoured at nothing more anxiously than to make them of one single piece, adorning them frequently with figures in basso relievo. The foundations of the large houses of the capital were laid upon a floor of large beams of cedar fixed in the earth, on account of the want of solidity in the soil, which example the Spaniards have imitated. The roofs of such houses were made of cedar, of fir, of cypress, of pine, or of ojametl; the columns were of common stone; but in the royal palaces they were of marble, and some even of alabaster, which many Spaniards mistook for jasper. Before the reign of Ahuitzotl, the walls of houses were built of common stone; but as they discovered in the

every moment to see the arch fall. But if they were seized with any such apprehension, it was certainly not occasioned by seeing the arch, which was in use among themselves, but possibly from seeing the scaffolding taken away quickly, or some other circumstance which excited their admiration.

time



time of that king the quarries of the stone Tetzontli, upon the banks of the Mexican lake, it was afterwards preferred as the most fit for the buildings of the capital, it being hard, light, and porous like a sponge: on which account lime adheres very firmly to it. For these properties and its colour, which is a blood red, it is at present valued above any other stone for buildings. The pavements of their courts and temples were in general of the stone of Tenajocan; but some also were chequered with marble and other precious stones.

Although the Mexicans are not to be compared with the Europeans in regard to taste in architecture, yet the Spaniards were so struck with admiration and surprize on seeing the royal palaces of Mexico, that Cortes, in his first letter to Charles V. unable to find words to describe them, speaks thus: "He had," he says, speaking of Montezuma, "besides those in the city of Mexico, other such admirable houses for his habitation, that I do not believe I shall ever be able to express their excellence and grandeur; therefore I shall only say that there are no equals to them in Spain." Such expressions are made use of by Cortes in other parts of his letters; by the anonymous conqueror in his valuable relation, and by Bernal Diaz in his most faithful history, who were all three present at the conquest.

The Mexicans also constructed, for the convenience of inhabited places, several excellent aqueducts. Those of the capital for conducting the water from Chapultepec, which was two miles distant, were two in number, made of stone and cement five feet high, and two paces broad upon a road raised for that purpose upon the lake, by which the water was brought to the entrance of the city, and from thence it branched out through smaller channels to supply several fountains, and particularly those of the royal palaces. Although there were two aqueducts, the water was only brought by one at a time, as in the interval they cleared the other that they might always have the water pure. At Tezcutzinco, formerly a palace of pleasure of the kings of Tezcuco, may still be seen an aqueduct by which water was conveyed to the royal gardens.

SECT. LIV.  
Aqueducts  
and ways up-  
on the lake.

The above mentioned road of Chapultepec, as well as others made upon the lake, and frequently taken notice of in this history, are incontestible proofs of the industry of the Mexicans; but it is still

BOOK VII. more manifested in the foundation of their city; for whereas other architects have no more to do than to lay a foundation upon solid earth, to raise an edifice, the Mexicans were obliged to make the soil on which they built, uniting by terraces several little islands together. Besides this prodigious fatigue, they had to raise banks and pallisadoes to render their habitations secure. But if in these works their industry is conspicuous, in many others the Mexicans shew their taste for magnificence. Amongst the monuments of ancient architecture which are extant in the Mexican empire, the edifices of Miçlan, in Mizteca, are very celebrated; there are many things about them worthy of admiration, particularly a large hall, the roof of which is supported by various cylindrical columns of stone, eighty feet high, and about twenty in circumference, each of them consisting of one single piece.

SECT. LV.  
Remains of  
ancient edi-  
fices.

But this, or any other fabric of Mexican antiquity now remaining, cannot be compared with the famous aqueduct of Chempoallan. This large work, worthy of being ranked with the greatest in Europe, was done about the middle of the sixteenth century. The Franciscan missionary Francisco Tembleque, directed, and the Chempoallese executed it with wonderful perfection. Moved with compassion for the distress which his proselytes suffered from a scarcity of water, as all that could be gathered in trenches and ditches was consumed by the cattle of the Spaniards, that pious father undertook to relieve the necessities of his people at all events. The water was at a great distance, and the country through which it was necessary to conduct it, was mountainous and rocky; but every difficulty was overcome by his zeal and activity, aided by the industry and toil of his converts. They constructed an aqueduct of stone and lime, which, on account of the frequent turnings they were obliged to make in the mountains, was upwards of thirty miles long. The greatest difficulty consisted in crossing three great precipices which intercepted their progress; but this was got over by three bridges, the first consisting of forty-seven, the second of thirteen, and the third, which is the largest and most wonderful of all, having sixty-seven arches. The largest arch, which was in the middle, situated in the greatest depth of the precipice is one hundred and ten geometrical feet in height, and sixty-one in breadth, so that a large vessel could pass under it. The other sixty-six arches,  
situated

situated on each side of the largest, diminished gradually on each side unto the edge or top of the precipice, so as to leave the ground level with the course of the aqueduct. This large bridge is 3,178 geometrical feet, or upwards of half a mile in length. The work of it occupied the space of five years, and the whole aqueduct seventeen. We have deemed it not improper to insert the description of this superb fabrick; as although it was the undertaking of a Spaniard, after the conquest, it was executed by the Chempoallese, who survived the downfall of their empire.

The ignorant Mr. de P. denies that the Mexicans had either the knowledge, or made use of lime; but it is evident from the testimony of all the historians of Mexico, by tribute rolls, and above all from the ancient buildings still remaining, that all those nations made the same use of lime as the Europeans do. The vulgar of that kingdom believe, that the Mexicans mixed eggs with lime to render it more tenacious; but this is an error, occasioned by seeing the ancient walls of a yellowish cast. It is manifest also, from the testimony of the first historians, that burnt tiles or bricks were used by the Mexicans, and that they sold them like all other things in the market-place.

The stone-cutters, who cut and wrought stones for building, did not make use of pickaxes, nor iron chisels, but only of certain instruments of flint-stone; with these, however, they executed beautiful works and engravings. But those sort of labours without iron do not raise so much wonder as the stones of stupendous size and weight which were found in the capital and other places, transported from great distances, and placed in high situations without the aid of machines which mechanism has invented. Besides common stone they wrought marble; also jasper, alabaster, itztli, and other valuable stones. Of itztli, they made beautiful looking-glasses set with gold, and those extremely sharp razors which they fixed in their swords, and which their barbers made use of. They made those razors with such expedition, that in the space of one hour an artificer could finish more than a hundred (u).

The Mexican jewellers not only had skill in gems, but likewise understood how to polish work and cut them, and formed them into

SECT. LVI.  
Stone-cutters, engravers, jewellers, and potters.

(u) Hernandez Torquemada and Betancourt, describe the manner in which those artists made their razors of the stone itztli.



BOOK VII. whatever figures they chose. Historians affirm, that these works were done with a particular sand; but it is most certain, they could not do them without some instrument of flint, or hard copper, which is found in that country. The gems most common among the Mexicans were emeralds, amethysts, cornelians, turquoises, and some others not known in Europe. Emeralds were so common, that no lord or noble wanted them, and none of them died without having one fixed to his lip, that it might serve him as they imagined instead of a heart. An infinite number of them were sent to the court of Spain in the first years after the conquest. When Cortes returned the first time to Spain, he brought along with him, amongst other inestimable jewels, five emeralds, which, as Gomara, who was then living, bears testimony, were valued at a hundred thousand ducats, and for one of them some Genoese merchants offered him forty thousand, in order to sell it again to the grand signor (*x*); and also two emerald vases, valued, as the celebrated P. Mariana (*y*) says, at three hundred thousand ducats, which vases Cortes lost by the shipwreck which he suffered in the unfortunate expedition of Charles V. against Algiers. At present no more such gems are wrought, nor is even the place of the mines known where they were formerly dug: but there are still some enormous pieces of emerald remaining, namely, a sacred stone in the cathedral church of Angelopoli, and another in the parochial church of Quechula (unless this is the same transported from thence to Angelopoli), which the priests keep secured with chains of iron, as Betancourt says, that no one may carry it off.

The potters not only made the necessary family utensils of clay, but also other things of mere curiosity, which they embellished with

(*x*) With regard to Cortes's emeralds, the first was made in form of a rose, the second like a horn, the third like a fish, with eyes of gold; the fourth was a little bell, with a fine pearl for a clapper, and upon the lip this inscription in Spanish, *Bendito quien te creó*, that is, *Blessed be, who created thee*. The fifth, which was the most valuable, and for which the Genoese merchants would have given forty thousand ducats, was a small cup with a foot of gold, and four little chains also of gold, which united in a pearl in the form of a button. The lip of the cup was girt with a ring of gold, on which was engraved this Latin sentence, *Inter natos mulierum non superexit major*. These five emeralds, wrought by the Mexicans at the order of Cortes, were presented by him to his second wife, the daughter of the count of Aguilar; jewels, says Gomara, who saw them, better than any other woman whatsoever had in all Spain.

(*y*) Mariana in the Summary, or Supplement of the History of Spain.

various colours; but they did not understand, by what we can discover, the art of making glass. The most famous potters formerly were the Cholulcse, whose vessels were much prized by the Spaniards; at present the most reputed are the potters of Quauhhtitlan.

BOOK VII.

Their carpenters wrought several kinds of wood with instruments made of copper, of which there are still some remains of tolerable workmanship.

SECT. LVII.  
Carpenters,  
weavers, &c.

Manufactures of various kinds of cloth were common every where; it was one of those arts which almost every person learned. They had no wool, nor common silk, nor lint, nor hemp, but they supplied the want of wool with cotton, that of silk with feathers, with the hair of the rabbit and hare, and that of lint and hemp with *icxotl*, or mountain-palm, with the *quetzalichtli*, the *pati*, and other species of the maguei. Of cotton they made large webs, and as delicate and fine as those of Holland, which were with much reason highly esteemed in Europe. A few years after the conquest, a sacerdotal habit of the Mexicans was brought to Rome, which, as Boturini affirms, was uncommonly admired on account of its fineness and beauty. They wove these cloths with different figures and colours, representing different animals and flowers. Of feathers, interwoven with cotton, they made mantles and bed curtains, carpets, gowns, and other things not less soft than beautiful. We have seen some beautiful mantles of this kind which are preserved still by some lords; they wear them upon extraordinary festivals, as at those of the coronation of the Spanish kings. With cotton also they interwove the finest hair of the belly of rabbits and hares, after having dyed and spun it into thread; of these they made most beautiful cloths, and in particular winter waistcoats for the lords. From the leaves of the *Pati* and *Quetzalichtli* two species of the maguei, they obtained a fine thread, with which they made cloths equal to those made of lint; and from the leaves of other kinds of the maguei, namely, those of the mountain-palm, they drew a coarser thread, similar to hemp. The method they used to prepare those materials was the same which is practised by the Europeans for lint and hemp. They soaked the leaves in water, then cleaned them, put them in the sun, and beat them until they were fit to spin.

Of

BOOK VII. Of the same leaves of the mountain-palm, and also of those of the *ixhuatl*, another species of palm, they made extremely fine mats of different colours. They made others more coarse of the rushes which grew in abundance in the lake.

Of the thread of the maguei they made also ropes, shoes, and other things.

They dressed the skins of animals tolerably well, both of quadrupeds and birds, leaving upon some of them the hair or plumage, according to the use which they proposed to make of them.

Lastly, to convey some idea of the taste of the Mexicans in arts, we have thought proper to transcribe here the list of the first things which Cortes sent from Mexico to Charles V. a few days after he arrived in that country (z).

SECT.  
LVIII.  
List of the  
rarities sent  
by Cortes to  
Charles V.

Two wheels, ten hands in diameter, one of gold with the image of the sun, and the other of silver with the image of the moon upon it; both formed of plates of those metals, with different figures of animals and other things in basso relievo, finished with great ingenuity and art (a).

A gold necklace, composed of seven pieces, with a hundred and eighty-three small emeralds set in it, and two hundred and thirty-two gems similar to small rubies, from which hung twenty-seven little bells of gold, and some pearls.

Another necklace of four pieces of gold, with one hundred and two red gems like small rubies, one hundred and seventy-two emeralds, and ten fine pearls set in it, with twenty-six little bells of gold.

A headpiece of wood covered with gold, and adorned with gems, from which hung twenty-five little bells of gold; instead of a plume it had a green bird with eyes, beak, and feet of gold.

A bracelet of gold. A little rod like a sceptre, with two rings of gold at its extremities, set with pearls.

Four tridents, adorned with feathers of various colours, with pearl points tied with gold thread.

(z) This list is taken from the history of Gomara, then living in Spain, some things only omitted which were of little importance to be mentioned.

(a) The wheel of gold was unquestionably the figure of their century, and that of silver the figure of their year, according to what Gomara says, but he did not know it with certainty.



Several shoes of the skin of the deer, sewed with gold thread, the soles of which were made of blue and white stone of Itztli, extremely thin (*b*).

A shield of wood and leather, with little bells hanging to it, and covered with plates of gold in the middle, on which was cut the image of the god of war between four heads of a lion, a tyger, an eagle, and an owl, represented alive with their hair and feathers.

Several dressed skins of quadrupeds and birds with their plumage and hair.

Twenty-four curious and beautiful shields of gold, of feathers, and very small pearls, and other four of feathers and silver only.

Four fishes, two ducks, and some other birds of cast gold.

Two sea-shells of gold, and a large crocodile girt with threads of gold.

A large mirror adorned with gold, and many small mirrors. Several mitres and crowns of feathers and gold, ornamented with pearls and gems.

Several large plumes of beautiful feathers of various colours, fretted with gold and small pearls.

Several fans of gold and feathers mixed together; others of feathers only, of different forms and sizes, but all most rich and elegant.

A variety of cotton mantles, some all white, others chequered with white and black, or red, green, yellow, and blue; on the outside rough like a shaggy cloth, and within without colour or nap.

A number of under waistcoats, handkerchiefs, counterpanes, tapestries, and carpets of cotton.

All those articles were, according to Gomara, more valuable for the workmanship than the materials. *The colours, he says, of the cotton, were extremely fine, and those of the feathers natural. Their works of cast metal, are not to be comprehended by our goldsmiths.* This present, which was a part of that which Montezuma made to Cortes, a few days after he had disembarked at *Chalchibucuecan*, was sent by Cortes to Charles V. in July 1519, and this was the first gold and the first

(*b*) Gomara does not express that the soles were made of the stone Itztli, but it is to be understood from his account.

BOOK VII. silver which was sent from New to Old Spain; a small preface of the immense treasures it was to send in future.

Amongst other arts exercised by the Mexicans, that of medicine has been entirely overlooked by the Spanish historians, although it is certainly not the least essential part of their history. They have contented themselves with saying, that the Mexican physicians had a great knowledge of herbs, and that by means of these they performed miraculous cures; but do not mark the progress which they made in an art so beneficial to the human race. It is not to be doubted, that the same necessities which stimulated the Greeks to make a collection of experiments and observations on the nature of diseases, and the virtue of simples, would also have in time led the Mexicans to the knowledge of those two most important parts of medicine.

SECT.  
LIX.  
Knowledge  
of nature and  
use of medi-  
cinal simples.

We do not know whether they intended by their paintings, like the Greeks by their writings, to communicate their lights to posterity. Those who followed the profession of medicine instructed their sons in the nature and differences of the diseases to which the human frame is subject, and of the herbs which Providence has created for their remedy, the virtues of which had been experienced by their ancestors. They taught them the art of discerning the symptoms and progress of different distempers, and to prepare medicines and apply them. We have ample proofs of this in the natural history of Mexico, written by Dr. Hernandez (c). This learned and laborious writer had always the Mexican physicians for his guides in the study of natural history, which

(c) Hernandez who was physician to Philip II. king of Spain, and much renowned for the works he published concerning the Natural History of Pliny, was sent by that monarch to Mexico, to study the natural history of that kingdom. He employed himself there with other able learned naturalists for several years, assisted by the Mexican physicians. His work, worthy of the expence which it cost of sixty thousand ducats, consisted of twenty-four books of history, and eleven volumes of excellent figures of plants and animals; but the king thinking it too voluminous, gave orders to his physician Nardo Antonio Ricchi, a Neapolitan, to abridge it. This abridgement was published in Spanish by Francisco Ximenes, a Dominican, in 1615, and afterwards in Latin, at Rome, in 1651, by the Lincean academicians, with notes and learned dissertations, though rather long and uninteresting. The manuscripts of Hernandez were preserved in the library of the Escorial, from which Nuremberg extracted, according to his own confession, a great part of what he has written in his Natural History. F. Claude Clement, a French Jesuit, discoursing of the manuscript of Hernandez, says thus: "Qui omnes libri, & commentarii, si prout affecti sunt, ita forent perfecti, & absoluti, Philippus II. & Franciscus Hernandus haud quaquam Alexandro, & Aristoteli hac in parte concederent."

he prosecuted in that empire. They communicated to him the knowledge of twelve hundred plants, with their proper Mexican names; more than two hundred species of birds; and a large number of quadrupeds, reptiles, fishes, insects, and minerals. From this most valuable, though imperfect history, a system of practical medicine may be formed for that kingdom; as has in part been done by Dr. Farfan, in his *Book of Cures*, by Gregorio Lopez, and other eminent physicians. And if since that time the study of natural history had not been neglected, nor such a prepossession prevailed in favour of every thing which came from beyond the seas, the inhabitants of New Spain would have saved a great part of the expences they have been at in purchasing the drugs of Europe and of Asia, and reaped greater advantages from the productions of their own country. Europe has been obliged to the physicians of Mexico for tobacco, American balsam, gum copal, liquid amber, sarsaparilla, tecamaca, jalap, barley, and the purgative pine-seeds, and other simples, which have been much used in medicine: but the number of those of which she has been deprived the benefit by the ignorance and negligence of the Spaniards, is infinite.

Among the purgatives employed by the physicians of Mexico, besides jalap, pine-seed, and the small bean, the Mechoacan, so well known in Europe (*d*), was extremely common, also the *Izticpatli*, much celebrated by Hernandez, and the *Amamantla*, vulgarly called the *Rhubarb of the Brothers*.

Amongst other emetics the Mexicans made use of the *Mexochitl*, and the *Neixcotlapatli*; and among diuretics the *Axixpatli*, and the *Axixtlacotl*, which is so highly praised by Hernandez. Amongst their antidotes the famous *Contrabierba* was deservedly valued, called by them on account of its figure, *Coanepilli*, *Tongue of Serpent*, and on account of its effects *Coapatli*, or *remedy against serpents*. Amongst their emetics was the *Zozojatic*, a plant so efficacious, that it was

(*d*) The celebrated root of Mechoacan is called *Tacuache* by the Tarascas, and *Tlalantlacuitlapilli* by the Mexicans. The knowledge of it was communicated by a physician of the king of Michuacan to the first religious missionaries who went there to preach the gospel; he cured them with it of certain fevers of a putrid nature. By them it was made known to the Spaniards, and from the Spaniards to all Europe.



BOOK VII. sufficient to hold the root to the nose to produce sneezing. For intermittent fevers they generally employed the *Chatalhuic*, and in other kind of fevers the *Chiantzulli*, the *Iztacxalli*, the *Huebuetzonticomatl*, and above all the *Izticpatli*. To prevent the illness which frequently followed too much exercise at the game of the ball, they used to eat the bark of the *Apitzalpatli* soaked in water. We should never finish if we were to mention all the plants, gums, minerals, and other medicines, both simple and compound, which they employed against all the distempers which were known to them. Whoever desires to be more amply informed on this subject may consult the above mentioned work of Hernandez, and the two treatises published by Dr. Monardes, a Sevillian physician, on the medicinal articles, which used to be brought from America to Europe.

SECT. LX.  
Oils, ointments, and infusions, &c.

The Mexican physicians made use of infusions, decoctions, ointments, and oils, and all those things were sold at market, as Cortes and Bernal Diaz, both eye-witnesses, affirm. The most common oils were those of ule, or elastic gum, *Tlapatl*, a tree similar to the fig, *Chilli*, or great pepper, Chian, and *Ocotl*, a species of pine. The last they obtained by distillation, the others by decoction. That of Chian was more used by painters than physicians.

They extracted from the *Huitziloxitl*, as we have already mentioned, those two sorts of balsam described by Pliny and other ancient naturalists, that is, the *opobalsam*, or balsam distilled from the tree, and the *xylobalsam* obtained by decoction of the branches. From the bark of the *Huaconex*, soaked four days continually in water, they extracted another liquor equal to balsam. From the plant called by the Spaniards *maripenda*, (a name taken it appears from the language of the Tarascas, they obtained also a liquor equal to balsam, as much in its odour as wonderful effects, by putting the tender stones of the plant, together with the fruit, to boil in water, until the water became as thick as must. In the same manner they obtained many other valuable oils and liquors, namely, that of liquid amber, and that of the fir.

SECT. LXI.  
Bloodletting and baths.

Blood-letting, an operation which their physicians performed with great dexterity and safety with lancets of *Itztli*, was extremely common among the Mexicans, and other nations of Anahuac. The country people used to let themselves blood as they still do with the prickles of the *maguel*,

guei, without employing another person, or interrupting the labour in which they were occupied. They also used the quills of the *Huitztlacuatzin*, or Mexican porcupine, which are thick, and have a small hole at their points. BOOK VII.

Among the means which the Mexicans employed for the preservation of health, that of the bath was very frequent. They bathed themselves extremely often, even many times in the same day in the natural water of rivers, lakes, ditches, and ponds. Experience has taught the Spaniards the advantages of bathing, in that climate, and particularly in the hot countries.

The Mexicans, and other nations of Anahuac, made little less frequent use of the bath *Temazcalli*. Although in all its circumstances it is deserving of particular mention in the history of Mexico, none of the historians of that kingdom have described it, attending more frequently to descriptions and accounts of less importance, so much that if some of those baths had not been still preserved, the memory of them must have totally perished.

SECT. LXII.  
Temazcalli,  
or vapour-  
baths of the  
Mexicans.

The *Temazcalli*, or Mexican vapour-bath, is usually built of raw bricks. The form of it is similar to that of ovens for baking bread; but with this difference, that the pavement of the *Temazcalli* is a little convex, and lower than the surface of the earth, whereas that of most ovens is plain, and a little elevated for the accommodation of the baker. Its greatest diameter is about eight feet, and its greatest height six. The entrance, like the mouth of an oven, is wide enough to allow a man to creep easily in. In the place opposite to the entrance there is a furnace of stone or raw bricks, with its mouth outwards to receive the fire, and a hole above it to carry off the smoke. The part which unites the furnace to the bath, and which is about two feet and a half square, is shut with a dry stone of *Tetzontli*, or some other stone porous like it. In the upper part of the vault there is an air hole, like that to the furnace. This is the usual structure of the *Temazcalli*, of which we have subjoined a figure; but there are others that are without vault or furnace, mere little square chambers, yet well covered and defended from the air.

When any person goes to bathe, he first lays a mat (*e*) within the *temazcalli*, a pitcher of water, and a bunch of herbs, or leaves of

The Spaniards, when they bathed, made use of a mattrass for more convenience.

maize.

## BOOK VII.

maize. He then causes a fire to be made in the furnace, which is kept burning, until the stones which join the *Temazcalli* and furnace are quite hot. The person who is to use the bath enters commonly naked, and generally accompanied for the sake of convenience, or on account of infirmity, by one of his domestics. As soon as he enters, he shuts the entrance close, but leaves the air-hole at top for a little time open, to let out any smoke which may have been introduced through the chinks of the stone; when it is all out he likewise stops up the air-hole. He then throws water upon the hot stones, from which immediately arises a thick steam to the top of the *Temazcalli*. While the sick person lies upon the mat, the domestic drives the vapour downwards, and gently beats the sick person, particularly on the ailing part, with the bunch of herbs, which are dipped for a little while in the water of the pitcher, which has then become a little warm. The sick person falls immediately into a soft and copious sweat, which is increased or diminished at pleasure, according as the case requires. When the evacuation desired is obtained, the vapour is let off, the entrance is cleared, and the sick person clothes himself, or is transported on the mat to his chamber; as the entrance to the bath is usually within some chamber of his habitation.

The *Temazcalli* has been regularly used in several disorders, particularly in fevers occasioned by costiveness. The Indian women use it commonly after child-birth, and also those persons who have been stung or wounded by any poisonous animal. It is, undoubtedly, a powerful remedy for all those who have occasion to carry off gross humours, and certainly it would be most useful in Italy where the rheumatism is so frequent and afflicting. When a very copious sweat is desired, the sick person is raised up and held in the vapour; as he sweats the more, the nearer he is to it. The *Temazcalli* is so common, that in every place inhabited by the Indians there are many of them.

SECT.  
XLIII.  
Surgery.

With respect to the surgery of the Mexicans, the Spanish conquerors attest their expedition and success in dressing and curing wounds (*f*).

Besides the balsam and maripenda, they employed the milk of the

(*f*) Cortes himself being in great danger of his life from a wound he received on his head in the famous battle of Otompan, was greatly relieved, and at last perfectly cured by the Tlascalcan art of surgery.



*Itzontecpatli* (*species of thistle*), tobacco, and other herbs. For ulcers they used the *Nanabuapatli*, the *Zacatlipatli*, and the *Itzcuinpatli*; for abscesses and several swellings, the *Tlalamatl*, and the milk of the *Chilpatli*; and for fractures the *Nacazol*, or *Tolatzin*. After drying, and reducing the seed of this plant to powder, they mixed it with a certain gum, and applied it to the affected part, covered the part with feathers, and over it laid little boards to set the bones.

The physicians were in general the persons who prepared and applied medicines; but they accompanied their cures with several superstitious ceremonies, with invocations to their gods, and imprecations against distempers, in order to render their art more mysterious and estimable. The physicians held the goddess *Tzapotlatenan* in veneration, as the protectress of their art, and believed her to have been the discoverer of many medicinal secrets, and amongst others of the oil which they extracted by distillation from the *Ocotl*.

It is wonderful that the Mexicans, and especially the poor among them, were not subject to numberless diseases, considering the quality of their food. This is an article in which singular circumstances attended them; for having been, for many years after the foundation of Mexico subjected to the most miserable kind of life upon the little islands of the lake, they were constrained by necessity to feed upon whatever they could find in the waters. During that disastrous time, they learned to eat, not only the roots of the marsh plants, water serpents, which abounded there, the *Axolotl*, *Atetepiz*, *Atopinan*, and other such little animals, inhabitants of the water; but even ants, marsh flies, and the very eggs of the same flies. They fished such quantities of those flies, called by them *Axajatl*, that they eat them, fed several kinds of birds with them, and carried them to market. They pounded them together, and made little balls of them, which they rolled up in leaves of maize, and boiled in water with nitre. Some historians who have tasted this food, pronounce it not disagreeable. From the eggs, which those flies deposit in great abundance on the rushes in the lake, they extracted that singular species of caviare, which they called *Abuaubtli*.

Not contented with feeding upon living things, they eat also a certain muddy substance that floats upon the waters of the lake, which they

BOOK VII.

S E C T.  
LXIV.  
Aliment of  
the Mexi-  
cans.

BOOK VII. they dried in the sun, and preserved to make use of it as cheese, which it resembled in flavour and taste. They gave this substance the name of *Tecuitlatl*, or excrement of stones. Accustomed thus to those vile articles of food, they were unable to abandon them in the season of their greatest plenty; on which account the market was always seen full of innumerable species of raw, boiled, fried, and roasted little animals, which were sold there particularly to the poor. However, as soon as by their commerce with fish they were able to purchase better aliment, and to cultivate by the exertions of their industry the floating gardens of the lake, they entertained themselves with better provisions, and at their meals there was nothing wanting, as the conqueror says, either in respect to the plenty, variety, or nicety of their dishes (*g*).

Among the eatables, the first place is due to maize, which they called *Tlaolli*, a grain granted by Providence to that part of the world, instead of the corn of Europe, the rice of Asia, the millet of Africa, over all which it possesses some advantages; as besides its being wholesome, relishing, and more nutritive, it multiplies more, thrives equally in different climes, does not require so much culture, is not so delicate as corn, stands not in need, like rice, of a moist soil, nor is it hurtful to the health of the cultivator. They had several species of maize, differing in size, colour, and quality from each other. Of maize they made their bread, which is totally different from that of Europe in taste and appearance, and in the manner of making it, which they formerly had, and still continue to use. They put the grain to boil in water with a little lime; when it becomes soft, they rub it in their hands to strip off the skin; then pound it in the *Metlatl* (*h*), take out a little of the paste, and stretching it by beating it with both hands, they form the bread, after which they give it the last preparation in the *Comalli*. The form of the bread is round and flat, about eight inches in diameter, and one line or more in thickness; but they make their loaves or cakes still smaller and thinner, and for the nobles they make them as thin as our thickest paper. It was customary also to mix something

(*g*) See the first letter of Cortes, the history of Bernal Diaz, and the relation of the anonymous conqueror.

(*h*) The Spaniards call the *Metlatl* *metate*, the *Comalli* *comal*, of which we shall presently speak, and the *Atolli* *atele*.

else with the bread to make it still more wholesome and relishing. For persons of rank and circumstances, they used to make bread of red maize, mixing with it the beautiful flower *coatxontecoxochitl*, and several medicinal herbs, to diminish its heat to the stomach. This is the sort of bread which the Mexicans, and all the other nations of those extensive regions, have used until our time, preferring it to the best bread of wheat. Their example has been imitated by many Spaniards; but to speak impartially, this bread, although it is extremely wholesome and substantial, and when fresh made of a good taste, becomes rather disagreeable when stale. The making of bread, as well as the preparing and dressing of every kind of meat, has always among those nations been the peculiar occupation of their women. They were the persons who made it for their families, and who sold it in the market.

Besides bread, they made many other meats and drinks of maize, with different ingredients and preparations. The *atolli* is a gruel of maize, after it has been boiled, well-ground, dissolved in water, and strained. They put the strained liquor over a fire, and give it another boiling until it becomes of a certain thickness. The Spaniards think it insipid to the taste, but they give it commonly to sick persons, as a most salutary food, sweetening it with a little sugar, instead of honey, which is used by the Indians. To them it is so grateful they cannot live without it. It was formerly and still is their breakfast, and with it they bear the fatigues of agriculture, and other servile offices in which they are employed. Hernandez describes eighteen species of *atolli*, which differ both with regard to the seasoning ingredients, and the manner of preparing them.

Next to maize, the vegetables most in use were the cacao, the chia, and the French bean. Of the cacao they made several common drinks, and among others that which they called *Cibocolatl*. They ground equal quantities of the cacao and the seeds of *Pocobotl*, put them both with a proportionable quantity of water into a little pot, in which they stirred and turned them with that little indented instrument of wood, which the Italians call *frullo*, the Spaniards *molinillo*, and the English *milling-stick*; then they poured off the floating oily part into another vessel.



BOOK VII. Into the remainder they put a handful of paste of boiled maize, and boiled it for a certain time, after which they mixed it with the oily part, and took it when it was cool. This is the origin of the famous chocolate, which the cultivated nations of Europe have used in imitation of them, as well as the name and instruments for making it; although the name is a little corrupted, and the drink altered according to the language and taste of each nation. The Mexicans used to put in their chocolate, and other drinks which they made of the cacao, the *Tlilxochitl*, or vaniglia, the flower of the *Xochinacastli* (k), and the fruit of the *Mecaxochitl* (l), and sometimes also honey, as the Europeans put sugar, both to render it palatable and more wholesome.

Of the seed of the chia they made a most refreshing drink, which is still very common in that kingdom; and of this seed also, with maize, they made the *chianzotzoolatelli*, which was an exquisite drink much used by the ancients, particularly in time of war. The soldier, who carried with him a little bag of flour of maize and chia, thought himself amply provided. When necessary, he boiled the quantity he wished for, mixing a little honey of the *maguei* with it; and by means of this delicious and nourishing beverage (as Hernandez calls it), endured the ardour of the sun and the fatigues of war.

The Mexicans did not eat so much flesh as the Europeans; nevertheless, upon occasion of any banquet, and daily at the tables of the lords, different kinds of animals were served up; such as deer, rabbits, Mexican boars, *Tuze*, *Techichi*, which they fattened as the Europeans do hogs, and other animals of the land, the water, and the air, but the most common were turkeys and quails.

The fruits most used by them were the *mamei*, the *tlilzapotl*, the *cochitzapotl*, the *chietzapotl*, the ananas, the *chirionoja*, the *abuacatl*, a anona, the *pitahaja*, the *capolin*, or Mexican cherry, and different

(k) The tree of the *Xochinacastli* has long, straight, narrow leaves, of a dark green colour. Its flower consists of six petals, which are purple within, green without, and pleasingly odorous. From the resemblance of their figure to an ear, they were called by this name among the Mexicans, and by the Spaniards *orejuela*, or *little ear*. The fruit is angular, and of a bloody colour, and grows within a pod of six inches in length, and about one inch thick. It is peculiar to hot countries. The flower was greatly valued, and never wanting in the markets.

(l) The *Mecaxochitl* is a small flexible plant, whose leaves are large and thick, and the fruit resembles long pepper.

species of *Tune*, or Indian figs, which fruits well supplied the want of pears, apples, and peaches. BOOK VII.

Amongst all their plenty of foods the Mexicans were destitute of milk, and fat, as they had neither cows, sheep, goats, nor hogs. With respect to eggs, we do not know that they eat any, except those of turkeys and iguanas, the flesh of which they likewise did and still eat.

The usual seasoning to their food, besides salt, was great pepper and tomate, which have become equally common among the Spaniards of that country.

They drank also several sorts of wine, or beverages similar to them, of the maguei, the palm, of the stems of maize, and of the grain also, of which last, called *chicha*, almost all the historians of America make mention, as it is the kind most generally used in that new world. The most common with the Mexicans, and also the best was that of the maguei, called *octli* by them, and by the Spaniards *pulque* (*m*). SECT. LXV.  
Wine. The method of making it is this. When the maguei, or Mexican aloe, arrives at a certain height and maturity, they cut the stem, or rather the leaves while tender, of which the stem is formed, situated in the centre of the plant, after which there remains a certain cavity. They shave the internal surface of the large leaves which surround the cavity, and collect the sweet juice which distils from them in such abundance, that one single plant generally yields, in the space of six months, six hundred, and in the whole time of its fruitfulness more than two thousand pounds of juice (*n*).

They gather the juice from the cavity with a long narrow gourd, which serves instead of a more artificial contrivance, and pour it into a vessel until it ferments, which it usually does in less than twenty-

(*m*) *Pulque* is not a Spanish nor Mexican word, but is taken from the *Araucan* language which is spoke in Chili, in which the *Pulcu* is the general name for the beverages these Indians use to intoxicate themselves; it is difficult to say how the term has passed to Mexico.

(*n*) Betancourt says, that a maguei makes in six months twenty *arrobas* of pulque, which are more than six hundred Italian pounds. He might know this well, having been for many years a rector among the Indians. Hernandez affirms, that from one single plant are extracted fifty *anfore*. The Castilian *anfora*, which is smaller than the Roman, contains, according to the calculation of Mariana, five hundred and twelve ounces of wine, or common water. Supposing that the pulque does not weigh more than water, fifty *anfore* will be more than two thousand pounds.

BOOK VII. four hours. To assist the fermentation, and make the beverage stronger, they infuse a certain herb which they name *Ocpatl*, or remedy of wine. The colour of this wine is white, the taste a little rough, and its strength sufficient to intoxicate, though not so much as that of the grape. In other respects it is a wholesome liquor, and valuable on many accounts as it is an excellent diuretic, and a powerful remedy against the diarrhœa. The consumption made of this liquor is surprising as it is useful, for the Spaniards become rich by it. The revenue produced by that alone which is consumed in the capital amounts annually to three hundred thousand crowns; one Mexican rial only being paid for every twenty-five Castilian pounds. The quantity of pulque, which was consumed in the capital in 1774, was two millions two hundred and fourteen thousand, two hundred ninety-four and half *arrobas*, or upwards of sixty-three millions eight hundred thousand Roman pounds, exclusive of that which was smuggled in there, and that which the privileged Indians sell in the great market-place.

SECT.  
LXVI.  
Dress.

The Mexicans were less singular in their dress than in their food. Their usual habit was quite simple, consisting solely of the *maxtlatl* and *tilmatli* in the men, and of the *cueitl*, and the *bucpilli*, in the women. The *maxtlatl* was a large belt or girdle, the two ends of which hung down before and behind to cover the parts of shame. The *tilmatli* was a square mantle, about four feet long; the two ends were tied upon the breast, or upon one shoulder, as appears in our figures. The *cueitl*, or Mexican gown, was also a piece of square cloth, in which the women wrapped themselves from their waists down to the middle of the leg. The *bucpilli* was a little under vest, or waistcoat, without sleeves.

The dress of the poor people was made of the thread of the maguei, or mountain palm, or at best the cloth of coarse cotton; but those of better station wore the finest cotton, embellished with various colours, and figures of animals, or flowers, or wove with feathers, or the fine hair of the rabbit, and adorned with various little figures of gold and loose locks of cotton hanging about the girdle or *maxtlatl*. The men used to wear two or three mantles, and the women three or four vests, and as many gowns, putting the longest undermost, so as that a part of each of them might be seen. The lords wore in winter waist-coats



coats of cotton, interwoven with soft feathers, or the hair of the rabbit. Women of rank were, besides the huepilli, an upper vest, something like the surplice or gown of our ecclesiastics, but larger and with longer sleeves (2).

Their shoes were nothing but soles of leather, or coarse cloth of the maguei, tied with strings, and only covered the under part of the foot. The kings and lords adorned the strings with rich ribbands of gold and jewels.

All the Mexicans wore their hair long, and were dishonoured by being shaved, or having it clipped, except the virgins consecrated to the service of the temples. The women wore it loose, the men tied in different forms, and adorned their heads with fine plumes, both when they danced and when they went to war.

SECT.  
LXVII.  
Ornaments.

It would be difficult to find a nation which accompanied so much simplicity of dress, with so much vanity and luxury in other ornaments of their persons. Besides feathers and jewels, with which they used to adorn their cloaths, they wore ear-rings, pendants at the under-lip, and many likewise at their noses, necklaces, bracelets for the hands and arms, and also certain rings like collars about their legs. The ear-rings and pendants of the poor were shells, pieces of crystal, amber, or some other shining little stone; but the rich wore pearls, emeralds, amethysts, or other gems, set in gold.

Their household furniture was by no means correspondent to this passion for personal finery. Their beds were nothing else than one or two coarse mats of rushes, to which the rich added fine palm mats, and sheets of cotton; and the lords, linen wove with feathers. The pillow of the poor was a stone or piece of wood; that of the rich, probably of cotton. The common people did not cover themselves in bed with any thing else than the tilmatlí, or mantle, but the higher ranks and nobles made use of counterpanes of cotton and feathers. At dinner, instead of a table, they spread a mat upon the ground; and they used napkins, plates, porringers, earthen pots, jugs, and other vessels of fine clay, but not, as we can discover, either knives or forks. Their chairs were low seats of wood and rushes, or palm, or a kind

SECT.  
LXVIII.  
Domestic furniture and employments.

(2) We have spoken elsewhere of the habits of the kings, priests, and military persons.

BOOK VII. of reed called *icpalli* (*p*). No house wanted the *metlatl*, or *comalli*. The *metlatl* was the stone in which they ground their maize, and the cacao, as is represented in our figure of their mode of making bread. This instrument is still extremely common in all New Spain, and over the greatest part of America. The Europeans have also adopted it, and in Italy and elsewhere the chocolate-makers use it to grind the cacao. The *comalli* was, and still is, being as much used as the *metlatl*, a round and rather hollow pan, which is about an inch, thick and about fifteen in diameter.

The drinking vessels of the Mexicans were made of a fruit similar to gourds, which grow, in hot countries, on trees of a middling size. Some of them are large and perfectly round, which they call *Xicalli* (*q*), and others smaller and cylindrical, which they give the name of *Tecomatl*. Both these fruits are solid and heavy: their rind is hard, woody, and of a dark green colour, and the seeds are like those of gourds. The *xicalli* is about eight inches in diameter; the *tecomatl* is not so long, and about four fingers in thickness. Each fruit when divided in the middle made two equal vessels; they cut out all the seed, and gave them a varnish with a particular mineral earth, of a pleasing smell, and of different colours, particularly a fine red. At present they are frequently gilt with silver and gold.

The Mexicans made use of no candlesticks, nor wax, nor tallow candles, nor of oil to make light; for although they had many kinds of oil, they never employed it otherwise than in medicine, in painting, and in varnishes; and although they extracted a great quantity of wax from the honey-combs, they either did not know, or were not at the pains to make lights with it. In maritime countries they made use of shining beetles for that purpose; but in general they employed torches of *ocotl*, which, although they made a fine light, and yielded

(*p*) The Spaniards corrupt the word into *Equipales*.

(*q*) The Spaniards of Mexico called the *Xicalli* *Xicara*. The Spaniards of Europe adopted this word to signify the little cup for taking chocolate, and thence came the Italian *Chicchera*. Bomare makes mention of the tree *Xicalli*, under the name of *Calebassier d' Amerique*, and says, that in New Spain, it is known under the names of *Choyne*, *Cujete*, and *Hyguero*; but this is a mistake. The name *Hibuero* (not *Hyguero*) was that which the Indians of the Island of Hispaniola gave to this tree; the Spanish conquerors made use of it formerly, but no use was made of it afterwards in New Spain. None of the other trees were ever heard of by us in those countries.

an agreeable odour, smoked and soiled their habitations with soot. One of the European customs which they chiefly prized upon the arrival of the Spaniards, was that of candles; but those people had certainly little occasion for candles, as they devoted all the hours of the night to repose, after employing all those of the day in business and toil. The men laboured at their different professions, and the women baked, wove, embroidered, prepared victuals, and cleaned their houses. All daily made orisons to their gods, and burned copal in honour of them, and therefore no house, however poor the possessor, wanted idols or censers.

The method which the Mexicans and other nations practised to kindle fire, was the same which the ancient shepherds of Europe employed (r), by the friction of two pieces of wood. The Mexicans generally used the achiote, which is the *roucou* of the French. Boturini affirms, that they struck fire also from flint.

After a few hours of labour in the morning they took their breakfast, which was most commonly *atolli*, or gruel of maize, and their dinner after mid-day; but among all the historians of Mexico, we have found no mention of their supper. They ate little, but they drank frequently, either of the wine of the maguei, or maize, or of chia, or some other drink of the cacao, and sometimes plain water.

After dining, the lords used to compose themselves to sleep with the smoke of tobacco (s). This plant was greatly in use among the Mexicans. They make various plasters with it, and took it not only in smoke at the mouth, but also in snuff at the nose. In order to smoke it, they put the leaves with the gum of liquid amber, and other hot, warm, and odorous herbs, into a little pipe of wood, or reed, or some

SECT.  
LXIX.  
The use of  
tobacco.

(r) *Calidæ morus, laurus; beleræ, & omnes ex quibus igniaria sunt. Exploratorum hoc usus in castris Paſtorumque reperit; quoniam ad excutiendum ignem non ſemper lapidis eſt occaſio. Territur ergo lignum ligno, ignemque concipit attritu, excipiente materia aridi fomitis, ſanzi, vel foliorum faciliſimè conceptum.* Plinius Hiſt. Nat. lib. xvi. c. 40. The ſame thing is obſerved in the ſecond book of the *Queſtiones Naturales* of Seneca, and alſo in other ancient writers.

(s) *Tabaco* is a name taken from the *Haitine* language. The Mexicans had two ſpecies of tobacco, very different in the ſize of the plant and the leaves, in the figure of the flower and the colour of the ſeed. The ſmalleſt, which is the common one, was called by them *Picietl*, and the largeſt *Quaujetl*. This laſt becomes as high as a moderate tree. Its flower is not divided into five parts like that of the *Picietl*, but only cut into ſix or ſeven angles. Theſe plants vary much according to climate, not only in the quality of the tobacco, but alſo in the ſize of the leaves and other circumſtances, on which account ſeveral authors have multiplied the ſpecies.



BOOK VII. other more valuable substance. They received the smoke by sucking the pipe and shutting the nostrils with their fingers, so that it might pass by the breath more easily towards the lungs. Who would have believed that the use of tobacco, which necessity made those phlegmatic nations invent, would have become the vice or custom of almost all the nations of the world; and that so humble a plant, of which the Europeans wrote and spoke so unfavourably, would have made one of the greatest revenues of the kingdoms of Europe? But what ought to excite still greater wonder, is, that although the use of tobacco is now so common among those nations who formerly despised it, it is now so rare among its inventors, that there are extremely few of the Indians of New Spain who take it in smoke, and none at all who use it in snuff.

SECT.  
LXX.  
Plants used  
instead of  
soap.

As the Mexicans wanted candles to make light, they also were without soap to wash with, although there were animals from which they might have obtained it (*t*); but they supplied that deficiency by a fruit and a root. The fruit was that of the *copalxocotl*, a tree of moderate size, which is found in Michuacan, Yucatan, Mizteca, and elsewhere (*u*). The pulp, that is under the rind of the fruit, which is white, viscous, and very bitter, makes water white, raises a froth, and serves like soap to wash and clean linen. The root is that of the *amolli*, a small plant, but very common in that country, for which *Saponaria Americana* seems to be a more proper name, as it is not very dissimilar to the *Saponaria* of the old continent; but the *amolli* is more used to wash the body now, and more particularly the head, than for cloaths (*x*).

We have now given all that we think worthy of credit and public relation concerning the political œconomy of the Mexicans. Such was their government, their laws, their customs, and their arts, when the Spaniards arrived in the country of Anahuac, the war and memorable events of which make the subject of the following books.

(*t*) We have heard that an excellent soap is obtained from the *apatl*, or *Zorriglio*.

(*u*) Hernandez makes mention of it under the name of *Copalxocotl*, but says nothing of its detergent quality; Betancourt speaks of it under the name of the *soap-tree*, by which it is known among the Spaniards; and Valmont describes it under the name of *Savonnier*, and *Saponaria Americana*. The root of this tree also is used instead of soap, but it is not so good as the fruit.

(*x*) There is a species of *amolli*, the root of which dyes hair the colour of gold. We saw this singular effect produced upon the hair of an old man.

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# A P P E N D I X.

## THE MEXICAN CENTURY.

| Years.         | Years.         |
|----------------|----------------|
| I. TOCHTLI.    | I. TECPATL.    |
| II. Acatl.     | II. Calli.     |
| III. Tecpatl.  | III. Tochtli.  |
| IV. Calli.     | IV. Acatl.     |
| V. Tochtli.    | V. Tecpatl.    |
| VI. Acatl.     | VI. Calli.     |
| VII. Tecpatl.  | VII. Tochtli.  |
| VIII. Calli.   | VIII. Acatl.   |
| IX. Tochtli.   | IX. Tecpatl.   |
| X. Acatl.      | X. Calli.      |
| XI. Tecpatl.   | XI. Tochtli.   |
| XII. Calli.    | XII. Acatl.    |
| XIII. Tochtli. | XIII. Tecpatl. |
| I. ACATL.      | I. CALLI.      |
| II. Tecpatl.   | II. Tochtli.   |
| III. Calli.    | III. Acatl.    |
| IV. Tochtli.   | IV. Tecpatl.   |
| V. Acatl.      | V. Calli.      |
| VI. Tecpatl.   | VI. Tochtli.   |
| VII. Calli.    | VII. Acatl.    |
| VIII. Tochtli. | VIII. Tecpatl. |
| IX. Acatl.     | IX. Calli.     |
| X. Tecpatl.    | X. Tochtli.    |
| XI. Calli.     | XI. Acatl.     |
| XII. Tochtli.  | XII. Tecpatl.  |
| XIII. Acatl.   | XIII. Calli.   |

The years wrote with large characters are those from which the four small periods of thirteen years, of which their century was composed, began.

## M E X I C A N Y E A R S

From the Foundation to the Conquest of MEXICO, compared  
with Christian Years.

Those printed with large Characters are the first of every Period.  
Those marked with an Asterisk are secular Years.

| Mexican Years.  | Christian Years. | Mexican Years.  | Christian Years. |
|-----------------|------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| II. Calli -     | - 1325 (a)       | III. Tecpatl -  | - 1352 (c)       |
| III. Tochtli -  | - 1326           | IV. Calli -     | - 1353 (d)       |
| IV. Acatl -     | - 1327           | V. Tochtli -    | - 1354           |
| V. Tecpatl -    | - 1328           | VI. Acatl -     | - 1355           |
| VI. Calli -     | - 1329           | VII. Tecpatl -  | - 1356           |
| VII. Tochtli -  | - 1330           | VIII. Calli -   | - 1357           |
| VIII. Acatl -   | - 1331           | IX. Tochtli -   | - 1358           |
| IX. Tecpatl -   | - 1332           | X. Acatl -      | - 1359           |
| X. Calli -      | - 1333           | XI. Tecpatl -   | - 1360           |
| XI. Tochtli -   | - 1334           | XII. Calli -    | - 1361           |
| XII. Acatl -    | - 1335           | XIII. Tochtli - | - 1362           |
| XIII. Tecpatl - | - 1336           | I. ACATL -      | - 1363           |
| I. CALLI -      | - 1337           | II. Tecpatl -   | - 1364           |
| II. Tochtli -   | - 1338 (b)       | III. Calli -    | - 1365           |
| III. Acatl -    | - 1339           | IV. Tochtli -   | - 1366           |
| IV. Tecpatl -   | - 1340           | V. Acatl -      | - 1367           |
| V. Calli -      | - 1341           | VI. Tecpatl -   | - 1368           |
| VI. Tochtli -   | - 1342           | VII. Calli -    | - 1369           |
| VII. Acatl -    | - 1343           | VIII. Tochtli - | - 1370           |
| VIII. Tecpatl - | - 1344           | IX. Acatl -     | - 1371           |
| IX. Calli -     | - 1345           | X. Tecpatl -    | - 1372           |
| X. Tochtli -    | - 1347           | XI. Calli -     | - 1373           |
| XI. Acatl -     | - 1347           | XII. Tochtli -  | - 1374           |
| XII. Tecpatl -  | - 1348           | XIII. Acatl -   | - 1375           |
| XIII. Calli -   | - 1349           | I. TECPATL -    | - 1376           |
| *I. TOCHTLI -   | - 1350           | II. Calli -     | - 1377           |
| II. Acatl -     | - 1351           | III. Tochtli -  | - 1378           |

(a) Foundation of Mexico.

(b) Division of those of Tenochco and Tlatelolco.

(c) Acamapitzin, first king of Mexico.

(d) Quaquahpitzahuac, first king of Tlatelolco.

IV. Acatl



| Mexican Years.  | Christian Years.    | Mexican Years.  | Christian Years.    |
|-----------------|---------------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| IV. Acatl -     | - 1379              | XII. Calli -    | - 1413 ( <i>i</i> ) |
| V. Tecpatl -    | - 1380              | XIII. Tochtli - | - 1414              |
| VI. Calli -     | - 1381              | I. ACATL -      | - 1415              |
| VII. Tochtli -  | - 1382              | II. Tecpatl -   | - 1416              |
| VIII. Acatl -   | - 1383              | III. Calli -    | - 1417              |
| IX. Tecpatl -   | - 1384              | IV. Tochtli -   | - 1418              |
| X. Calli -      | - 1385              | V. Acatl -      | - 1419              |
| XI. Tochtli -   | - 1386              | VI. Tecpatl -   | - 1420              |
| XII. Acatl -    | - 1387              | VII. Calli -    | - 1421              |
| XIII. Tecpatl - | - 1388              | VIII. Tochtli - | - 1422 ( <i>k</i> ) |
| I. CALLI -      | - 1389 ( <i>e</i> ) | IX. Acatl -     | - 1423 ( <i>l</i> ) |
| II. Tochtli -   | - 1390              | X. Tecpatl -    | - 1424              |
| III. Acatl -    | - 1391              | XI. Calli -     | - 1425 ( <i>m</i> ) |
| IV. Tecpatl -   | - 1392              | XII. Tochtli -  | - 1426 ( <i>n</i> ) |
| V. Calli -      | - 1393              | XIII. Acatl -   | - 1427              |
| VI. Tochtli -   | - 1394              | I. TECPATL -    | - 1428              |
| VII. Acatl -    | - 1395              | II. Calli -     | - 1429              |
| VIII. Tecpatl - | - 1396              | III. Tochtli -  | - 1430              |
| IX. Calli -     | - 1397              | IV. Acatl -     | - 1431              |
| X. Tochtli -    | - 1398              | V. Tecpatl -    | - 1432              |
| XI. Acatl -     | - 1399 ( <i>f</i> ) | VI. Calli -     | - 1433              |
| XII. Tecpatl -  | - 1400              | VII. Tochtli -  | - 1434              |
| XIII. Calli -   | - 1401              | VIII. Acatl -   | - 1435              |
| *I. TOCHTLI -   | - 1402              | IX. Tecpatl -   | - 1436 ( <i>o</i> ) |
| II. Acatl -     | - 1403              | X. Calli -      | - 1437              |
| III. Tecpatl -  | - 1404              | XI. Tochtli -   | - 1438              |
| IV. Calli -     | - 1405              | XII. Acatl -    | - 1439              |
| V. Tochtli -    | - 1406 ( <i>g</i> ) | XIII. Tecpatl - | - 1440              |
| VI. Acatl -     | - 1407              | I. CALLI -      | - 1441 ( <i>p</i> ) |
| VII. Tecpatl -  | - 1408              | II. Tochtli -   | - 1442              |
| VIII. Calli -   | - 1409              | III. Acatl -    | - 1443              |
| IX. Tochtli -   | - 1410 ( <i>h</i> ) | IV. Tecpatl -   | - 1444              |
| X. Acatl -      | - 1411              | V. Calli -      | - 1445              |
| XI. Tecpatl -   | - 1412              | VI. Tochtli -   | - 1446 ( <i>q</i> ) |

(*e*) Huitzililhuhtl, second king of Mexico.

(*g*) Ixtlilxochitl, king of Acolhuacan.

(*i*) Tezozomoc, the tyrant.

(*l*) Itzcoatl, fourth king of Mexico.

(*n*) Nezahualcojotl, king of Acolhuacan, and Totoquihuatzin king of Tacuba.

(*o*) Montezuma Ilhuicamina, fifth king of Mexico.

(*q*) Inundation of Mexico.

(*f*) Tlacateotl, second king of Tlatelolco.

(*h*) Chimalpopoca, third king of Mexico.

(*k*) Maxtlaton, the tyrant.

(*m*) Conqueror of Azcapotzalco.

(*p*) Moquihuix, fourth king of Tlatelolco.

| Mexican Years.  | Christian Years.    | Mexican Years.  | Christian Years.    |
|-----------------|---------------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| VII. Acatl -    | - 1447              | II. Calli -     | - 1481              |
| VIII. Tecpatl - | - 1448              | III. Tochtli -  | - 1482 ( <i>y</i> ) |
| IX. Calli -     | - 1449              | IV. Acatl -     | - 1483              |
| X. Tochtli -    | - 1450              | V. Tecpatl -    | - 1484              |
| XI. Acatl -     | - 1451              | VI. Calli -     | - 1485              |
| XII. Tecpatl -  | - 1452              | VII. Tochtli -  | - 1486 ( <i>z</i> ) |
| XIII. Calli -   | - 1453              | VIII. Acatl -   | - 1487 ( <i>A</i> ) |
| *I. TOCHTLI -   | - 1454              | IX. Tecpatl -   | - 1488              |
| II. Acatl -     | - 1455              | X. Calli -      | - 1489              |
| III. Tecpatl -  | - 1456              | XI. Tochtli -   | - 1490              |
| IV. Calli -     | - 1457 ( <i>r</i> ) | XII. Acatl -    | - 1491              |
| V. Tochtli -    | - 1458              | XIII. Tecpatl - | - 1492              |
| VI. Acatl -     | - 1459              | I. CALLI -      | - 1493              |
| VII. Tecpatl -  | - 1460              | II. Tochtli -   | - 1494              |
| VIII. Calli -   | - 1461              | III. Acatl -    | - 1495              |
| IX. Tochtli -   | - 1462              | IV. Tecpatl -   | - 1496              |
| X. Acatl -      | - 1463              | V. Calli -      | - 1497              |
| XI. Tecpatl -   | - 1464 ( <i>s</i> ) | VI. Tochtli -   | - 1498 ( <i>B</i> ) |
| XII. Calli -    | - 1465              | VII. Acatl -    | - 1499              |
| XIII. Tochtli - | - 1466              | VIII. Tecpatl - | - 1500              |
| I. ACATL -      | - 1467              | IX. Calli -     | - 1501              |
| II. Tecpatl -   | - 1468              | X. Tochtli -    | - 1502 ( <i>C</i> ) |
| III. Calli -    | - 1469 ( <i>t</i> ) | XI. Acatl -     | - 1503              |
| IV. Tochtli -   | - 1470 ( <i>u</i> ) | XII. Tecpatl -  | - 1504              |
| V. Acatl -      | - 1471              | XIII. Calli -   | - 1505              |
| VI. Tecpatl -   | - 1472              | I. TOCHTLI -    | - 1506              |
| VII. Calli -    | - 1473              | II. Acatl -     | - 1507              |
| VIII. Tochtli - | - 1474              | III. Tecpatl -  | - 1508              |
| IX. Acatl -     | - 1475              | IV. Calli -     | - 1509 ( <i>D</i> ) |
| X. Tecpatl -    | - 1476              | V. Tochtli -    | - 1510              |
| XI. Calli -     | - 1477 ( <i>x</i> ) | VI. Acatl -     | - 1511              |
| XII. Tochtli -  | - 1478              | VII. Tecpatl -  | - 1512              |
| XIII. Acatl -   | - 1479              | VIII. Calli -   | - 1513              |
| I. TECPATL -    | - 1480              | IX. Tochtli -   | - 1514              |

(*r*) Famous war of Cuetlachtlan.

(*t*) Chimalpopoca, king of Tacuba.

(*x*) Tizoc, seventh king of Mexico.

(*z*) Dedication of the greater temple.

(*B*) New inundation of Mexico.

(*D*) Memorable event of the prince's Papantzin.

(*s*) Axajacatl, sixth king of Mexico.

(*u*) Nezahualpilli, king of Acolhuacan.

(*y*) Ahuizotl, eighth king of Mexico.

(*A*) Totiquihuarzin, second king of Tacuba.

(*C*) Montezuma Xocojotzin, ninth king of Mexico.

|               |   |   |          |             |   |   |          |
|---------------|---|---|----------|-------------|---|---|----------|
| X. Acatl      | - | - | 1515     | I. ACATL    | - | - | 1519 (F) |
| XI. Tecpatl   | - | - | 1516 (E) | II. Tecpatl | - | - | 1520 (G) |
| XII. Calli    | - | - | 1517     | III. Calli  | - | - | 1521 (H) |
| XIII. Tochtli | - | - | 1518     |             |   |   |          |

The exactness of this Table will appear from our Second Differentiation.

(E) Cacamatzin, king of Acolhuacan.

(F) Entry of the Spaniards into Mexico.

!(G) Cuitlahuatzin, tenth king, and Quauhtemotzin, eleventh king of Mexico, death of Montezuma, and defeat of the Spaniards.

(H) The taking of Mexico, and fall of

the empire.



## M E X I C A N C A L E N D A R,

From the Year I Tochtli, the first of the Century.

## A T L A C A H U A L C O First Month.

| Modern Style. | Mexican Days.      | Festivals.                                                                                                                                                              |
|---------------|--------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| February 26   | I. CIPACTLI        | The great secular festival.<br>Festival of <i>Tlalocateuctli</i> , and<br>the other gods of water, with<br>the sacrifice of infants, and<br>the gladiatorian sacrifice. |
| 27            | II. Ehècatl        |                                                                                                                                                                         |
| 28            | III. Calli         |                                                                                                                                                                         |
| March 1       | IV. Cuetzpalin     |                                                                                                                                                                         |
| 2             | V. Coatl           | Nocturnal sacrifice of fattened<br>prisoners.                                                                                                                           |
| 3             | VI. Miquiztli      |                                                                                                                                                                         |
| 4             | VII. Mazatl        |                                                                                                                                                                         |
| 5             | VIII. Tochtli      |                                                                                                                                                                         |
| 6             | IX. Atl            |                                                                                                                                                                         |
| 7             | X. Itzcuintli      |                                                                                                                                                                         |
| 8             | XI. Ozomatli       |                                                                                                                                                                         |
| 9             | XII. Malinalli     |                                                                                                                                                                         |
| 10            | XIII. Acatl        |                                                                                                                                                                         |
| 11            | I. OCELOTL         |                                                                                                                                                                         |
| 12            | II. Quauhtli       |                                                                                                                                                                         |
| 13            | III. Cozcaquauhtli |                                                                                                                                                                         |
| 14            | IV. Olin           |                                                                                                                                                                         |
| 15            | V. Tecpatl         |                                                                                                                                                                         |
| 16            | VI. Quiahuitl      |                                                                                                                                                                         |
| 17            | VII. Xochitl       |                                                                                                                                                                         |

## T L A C A X I P E H U A L I Z T L I Second Month.

|    |                 |                                                                                                                      |
|----|-----------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 18 | VIII. Cipactli  | The great festival of Xipe, god<br>of the goldsmiths, with sa-<br>crifices of prisoners and mi-<br>litary exercises. |
| 19 | IX. Ehècatl     |                                                                                                                      |
| 20 | X. Calli        | Fast of the owners of prisoners<br>for twenty days.                                                                  |
| 21 | XI. Cuetzpalin  |                                                                                                                      |
| 22 | XII. Coatl      |                                                                                                                      |
| 23 | XIII. Miquiztli |                                                                                                                      |
| 24 | I. MAZATL.      |                                                                                                                      |

The days marked in large characters are those which began the small periods of thirteen days.

March

| Modern Style. | Mexican Days.    | Festivals.                                                       |
|---------------|------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| March 25      | II. Tochtli      |                                                                  |
| 26            | III. Atl         |                                                                  |
| 27            | IV. Itzcuintli   |                                                                  |
| 28            | V. Ozomàtli      |                                                                  |
| 29            | VI. Malinalli    |                                                                  |
| 30            | VII. Acatl       | Festival of the god <i>Chicomacatl</i> .                         |
| 31            | VIII. Ocelotl    |                                                                  |
| April 1       | IX. Quauhtli     | Festival of the god <i>Tequiztlimatehuatl</i> .                  |
| 2             | X. Cozcaquauhtli |                                                                  |
| 3             | XI. Olin         |                                                                  |
| 4             | XII. Tecpatl     |                                                                  |
| 5             | XIII. Quiahuitl  | Festival of the god <i>Chancoti</i> , with nocturnal sacrifices. |
| 6             | I. XOCHITL.      |                                                                  |

## TOZOZONTLI Third Month.

|    |                   |                                                                                                  |
|----|-------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 7  | II. Cipaçtli      | Watch kept by the ministers of the temples every night of this month.                            |
| 8  | III. Ehècatl      |                                                                                                  |
| 9  | IV. Calli         |                                                                                                  |
| 10 | V. Cuetzpalin     |                                                                                                  |
| 11 | VI. Coatl         | The second festival of the gods of water, with sacrifices of children, and oblations of flowers. |
| 12 | VII. Miquitzli    |                                                                                                  |
| 13 | VIII. Mazatl      |                                                                                                  |
| 14 | IX. Tochtli       |                                                                                                  |
| 15 | X. Atl            |                                                                                                  |
| 16 | XI. Itzcuintli    |                                                                                                  |
| 17 | XII. Ozomatli     |                                                                                                  |
| 18 | XIII. Malinalli   |                                                                                                  |
| 19 | I. ACATL          | Festival of the goddess <i>Coatlincue</i> , with oblations of flowers, and a procession.         |
| 20 | II. Ocelotl       |                                                                                                  |
| 21 | III. Quauhtli     |                                                                                                  |
| 22 | IV. Cozcaquauhtli |                                                                                                  |
| 23 | V. Olin           |                                                                                                  |
| 24 | VI. Tecpatl       |                                                                                                  |
| 25 | VII. Quiahuitl    |                                                                                                  |
| 26 | VIII. Xochitl.    |                                                                                                  |

## HUEITZOZOTLI Fourth Month.

| Modern Style. | Mexican Days.     | Festivals.                                                                 |
|---------------|-------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| April 27      | IX. Cipactli      | Watch kept in the temples, and a general fast.                             |
| 28            | X. Ehécatl        |                                                                            |
| 29            | XI. Calli         |                                                                            |
| 30            | XII. Cuetzpalin   | Festival of <i>Centeotl</i> , with sacrifices of human victims and quails. |
| May 1         | XIII. Coatl       |                                                                            |
| 2             | I. MIQUIZTLI      |                                                                            |
| 3             | II. Mazatl        | Solemn convocation for the grand festival of the following month.          |
| 4             | III. Tochtli      |                                                                            |
| 5             | IV. Atl           |                                                                            |
| 6             | V. Itzcuintli     | Fast in preparation of the following festival.                             |
| 7             | VI. Ozomatli      |                                                                            |
| 8             | VII. Malinalli    |                                                                            |
| 9             | VIII. Acatl       |                                                                            |
| 10            | IX. Ocelotl       |                                                                            |
| 11            | X. Quauhtli       |                                                                            |
| 12            | XI. Cozcaquauhtli |                                                                            |
| 13            | XII. Olin         |                                                                            |
| 14            | XIII. Tecpatl     |                                                                            |
| 15            | I. QUIAHUITL      |                                                                            |
| 16            | II. Xochitl       |                                                                            |

## TOXCATL Fifth Month.

|    |                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|----|-----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 17 | III. Cipactli   | The grand festival of <i>Tezcatlipoca</i> , with a solemn penitential procession, the sacrifice of a prisoner, and dismissal of all the marriageable youth from the temple.                               |
| 18 | IV. Ehécatl     |                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 19 | V. Calli        |                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 20 | VI. Cuetzpalin  |                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 21 | VII. Coatl      |                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 22 | VIII. Miquiztli |                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 23 | IX. Mazatl      | The first festival of <i>Huitzilopochtli</i> . Sacrifices of human victims and quails. Solemn incense-offering of Chapopotli, or bitumen of Judea. Solemn dance of the king, the priests, and the people. |
| 24 | X. Tochtli      |                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 25 | XI. Atl.        |                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 26 | XII. Itzcuintli |                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 27 | XIII. Ozomatli  |                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 28 | I. MALINALLI.   |                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 29 | II. Acatl       |                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 30 | III. Ocelotl    |                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 31 | IV. Quauhtli    |                                                                                                                                                                                                           |

June



| Modern Style. | Mexican Days.    | Festivals. |
|---------------|------------------|------------|
| June 1        | V. Cozcaquauhtli |            |
| 2             | VI. Olin         |            |
| 3             | VII. Tecpatl     |            |
| 4             | VIII. Quiahuitl  |            |
| 5             | IX. Xochitl      |            |

## ETZALCUALIZTLI Sixth Month.

|    |                    |                                                                       |
|----|--------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 6  | X. Cipactli        |                                                                       |
| 7  | XI. Ehècatl        |                                                                       |
| 8  | XII. Calli         |                                                                       |
| 9  | XIII. Cuetzpalin   |                                                                       |
| 10 | I. COATL           | The third festival of the gods of water, with sacrifices and a dance. |
| 11 | II. Miquiztli      |                                                                       |
| 12 | III. Mazatl        |                                                                       |
| 13 | IV. Tochtli        |                                                                       |
| 14 | V. Atl             |                                                                       |
| 15 | VI. Itzcuintli     |                                                                       |
| 16 | VII. Ozomàtli      |                                                                       |
| 17 | VIII. Malinalli    |                                                                       |
| 18 | IX. Acatl          |                                                                       |
| 19 | X. Ocelotl         |                                                                       |
| 20 | XI. Quauhtli       | Punishments of priests negligent in the service of the temple.        |
| 21 | XII. Cozcaquauhtli |                                                                       |
| 22 | XIII. Olin         |                                                                       |
| 23 | I. TECPATL         |                                                                       |
| 24 | II. Quiahuitl      |                                                                       |
| 25 | III. Xochitl       |                                                                       |

## TECUILHUITONTLI Seventh Month.

|        |                  |                                                                                      |
|--------|------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 26     | IV. Cipactli     |                                                                                      |
| 27     | V. Ehècatl       |                                                                                      |
| 28     | VI. Calli        |                                                                                      |
| 29     | VII. Cuetzpalin  |                                                                                      |
| 30     | VIII. Coatl      |                                                                                      |
| July 1 | IX. Miquiztli    | Festival of Huixtocihuatl, with sacrifices of prisoners, and a dance of the priests. |
| 2      | X. Mazatl        |                                                                                      |
| 3      | XI. Tochtli      |                                                                                      |
| 4      | XII. Atl         |                                                                                      |
| 5      | XIII. Itzcuintli |                                                                                      |

| Modern Style. | Mexican Days.     | Festivals. |
|---------------|-------------------|------------|
| July 6        | I. OZOMATLI       |            |
| 7             | II. Malinalli     |            |
| 8             | III. Acatl        |            |
| 9             | IV. Ocelotl       |            |
| 10            | V. Quauhtli       |            |
| 11            | VI. Cozcaquauhtli |            |
| 12            | VII. Olin         |            |
| 13            | VIII. Tecpatl     |            |
| 14            | IX. Quiahuitl     |            |
| 15            | X. Xochitl        |            |

## HUEITECUILHUITL Eighth Month.

|          |                     |                                                                                                                                                 |
|----------|---------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 16       | XI. Cipaçtli        | The second festival of <i>Centeotl</i> ,<br>with the sacrifice of a female<br>slave; illumination of the<br>temple, dance, and alms-<br>giving. |
| 17       | XII. Ehècatl        |                                                                                                                                                 |
| 18       | XIII. Calli         |                                                                                                                                                 |
| 19       | I. CUETZPALIN       |                                                                                                                                                 |
| 20       | II. Coatl           |                                                                                                                                                 |
| 21       | III. Miquiztli      |                                                                                                                                                 |
| 22       | IV. Mazatl          |                                                                                                                                                 |
| 23       | V. Tochtli          | Festival of <i>Maculitocbtli</i> .                                                                                                              |
| 24       | VI. Atl             |                                                                                                                                                 |
| 25       | VII. Itzcuintli     |                                                                                                                                                 |
| 26       | VIII. Ozomatli      |                                                                                                                                                 |
| 27       | IX. Malinalli       |                                                                                                                                                 |
| 28       | X. Acatl            |                                                                                                                                                 |
| 29       | XI. Ocelotl         |                                                                                                                                                 |
| 30       | XII. Quauhtli       |                                                                                                                                                 |
| 31       | XIII. Cozcaquauhtli |                                                                                                                                                 |
| August 1 | I. OLIN             |                                                                                                                                                 |
| 2        | II. Tecpatl         |                                                                                                                                                 |
| 3        | III. Quiahuitl      |                                                                                                                                                 |
| 4        | IV. Xochitl         |                                                                                                                                                 |

## TLAXOCHIMACO Ninth Month.

|   |                  |                                     |
|---|------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 5 | V. Cipaçtli      | Festival of <i>Macuilcipaçtli</i> . |
| 6 | VI. Ehècatl      |                                     |
| 7 | VII. Calli       |                                     |
| 8 | VIII. Cuetzpalin |                                     |
| 9 | IX. Coatl        |                                     |

August

| Modern Style. | Mexican Days.      | Festivals.                                                                                                                             |
|---------------|--------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| August 10     | X. Miquiztli       | The second festival of <i>Huitzilopochtli</i> , with sacrifices of prisoners, oblations of flowers, general dance, and solemn banquet. |
| 11            | XI. Mazatl         |                                                                                                                                        |
| 12            | XII. Tochtli       |                                                                                                                                        |
| 13            | XIII. Atl          |                                                                                                                                        |
| 14            | I. ITZCUINTLI      |                                                                                                                                        |
| 15            | II. Ozomatli       | Festival of <i>Yacatecuilli</i> , god of the merchants, with sacrifices and entertainments.                                            |
| 16            | III. Malinalli     |                                                                                                                                        |
| 17            | IV. Acatl          |                                                                                                                                        |
| 18            | V. Ocelotl         |                                                                                                                                        |
| 19            | VI. Quauhtli       |                                                                                                                                        |
| 20            | VII. Cozcaquauhtli |                                                                                                                                        |
| 21            | VIII. Olin         |                                                                                                                                        |
| 22            | IX. Tecpatl        |                                                                                                                                        |
| 23            | X. Quiahuitl.      |                                                                                                                                        |
| 24            | XI. Xochitl        |                                                                                                                                        |

## XOCO H U E T Z I Tenth Month.

|           |    |                  |                                                                                                    |
|-----------|----|------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| September | 25 | XII. Cipactli    | The festival of <i>Xiubteuilli</i> , god of fire, with a solemn dance, and sacrifice of prisoners. |
|           | 26 | XIII. Ehècatl    |                                                                                                    |
|           | 27 | I. CALLI         |                                                                                                    |
|           | 28 | II. Cuetzpalin   |                                                                                                    |
|           | 29 | III. Coatl       |                                                                                                    |
|           | 30 | IV. Miquiztli    | All festivals cease during those five days.                                                        |
|           | 31 | V. Mazatl        |                                                                                                    |
|           | 1  | VI. Tochtli      |                                                                                                    |
|           | 2  | VII. Atl         |                                                                                                    |
|           | 3  | VIII. Itzcuintli |                                                                                                    |
|           | 4  | IX. Ozomatli     |                                                                                                    |
|           | 5  | X. Malinalli     |                                                                                                    |
|           | 6  | XI. Acatl        |                                                                                                    |
|           | 7  | XII. Ocelotl     |                                                                                                    |
|           | 8  | XIII. Quauhtli   |                                                                                                    |
|           | 9  | I. COZCAQUAU-TLI |                                                                                                    |
|           | 10 | II. Olin         |                                                                                                    |
|           | 11 | III. Tecpatl     |                                                                                                    |
|           | 12 | IV. Quiahuitl    |                                                                                                    |
|           | 13 | V. Xochitl       |                                                                                                    |



## O C H P A N I Z T L I    Eleventh Month.

| Modern Style. | Mexican Days:       | Festivals.                                                                                                |
|---------------|---------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| September 14  | VI. Cipactli        | Dance preparatory to the following festival.                                                              |
| 15            | VII. Ehècatl        |                                                                                                           |
| 16            | VIII. Calli         |                                                                                                           |
| 17            | IX. Cuetzpalin      | Festival of <i>Tetcoinan</i> , mother of the gods, with the sacrifice of a female slave.                  |
| 18            | X. Coatl            |                                                                                                           |
| 19            | XI. Miquiztli       |                                                                                                           |
| 20            | XII. Mazatl         |                                                                                                           |
| 21            | XIII. Tochtli       |                                                                                                           |
| 22            | I. ATL              |                                                                                                           |
| 23            | II. Itzcuintli      | The third feast of the goddess <i>Centeotl</i> in the temple Xiuhcalco, with a procession and sacrifices. |
| 24            | III. Ozomatli       |                                                                                                           |
| 25            | IV. Malinalli       |                                                                                                           |
| 26            | V. Acatl            |                                                                                                           |
| 27            | VI. Ocelotl         |                                                                                                           |
| 28            | VII. Quauhtli       |                                                                                                           |
| 29            | VIII. Cozcaquauhtli |                                                                                                           |
| 30            | IX. Olin            |                                                                                                           |
| October 1     | X. Tecpatl          |                                                                                                           |
| 2             | XI. Quiahuitl       |                                                                                                           |
| 3             | XII. Tochtli        |                                                                                                           |

## T E O T L E C O    Twelfth Month.

|    |                 |                                                                                                             |
|----|-----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 4  | XIII. Cipactli  | Festival of <i>Chincnabuitzcuintli</i> , <i>Nabualpilli</i> , and <i>Centeotl</i> , gods of the lapidaries. |
| 5  | I. EHECATL      |                                                                                                             |
| 6  | II. Calli       |                                                                                                             |
| 7  | III. Cuetzpalin |                                                                                                             |
| 8  | IV. Coatl       |                                                                                                             |
| 9  | V. Miquiztli    |                                                                                                             |
| 10 | VI. Mazatl      |                                                                                                             |
| 11 | VII. Tochtli    |                                                                                                             |
| 12 | VIII. Atl       |                                                                                                             |
| 13 | IX. Itzcuintli  |                                                                                                             |
| 14 | X. Ozomatli     |                                                                                                             |
| 15 | XI. Malinalli   |                                                                                                             |
| 16 | XII. Acatl      |                                                                                                             |
| 17 | XIII. Ocelotl   |                                                                                                             |
| 18 | I. QUAUHTLI     |                                                                                                             |

| Modern Style. | Mexican Days.     | Festivals.                                                                            |
|---------------|-------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| October 19    | II. Cozcaquauhtli | Watch kept for the following festival.                                                |
| 20            | III. Olin         |                                                                                       |
| 21            | IV. Tecpatl       | Festival of the arrival of the gods, with a great supper and sacrifices of prisoners. |
| 22            | V. Quiahuitl      |                                                                                       |
| 23            | VI. Xochitl       |                                                                                       |

## T E P E I L H U I T L Thirteenth Month.

|          |    |                   |                                                                                                                  |
|----------|----|-------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| November | 24 | VII. Cipactli     | Festival of the gods of the mountains, with the sacrifices of four female slaves and a prisoner.                 |
|          | 25 | VIII. Ehècatl     |                                                                                                                  |
|          | 26 | IX. Calli         | Festival of the god <i>Tochinco</i> , with the sacrifice of a prisoner.                                          |
|          | 27 | X. Cuetzpalin     |                                                                                                                  |
|          | 28 | XI. Coatl         | Festival of <i>Nappateuelli</i> , with the sacrifice of a prisoner.                                              |
|          | 29 | XII. Miquiztli    |                                                                                                                  |
|          | 30 | XIII. Mazatl      | Festival of <i>Centzontotochtin</i> , god of wine, with the sacrifice of three slaves of three different places. |
|          | 31 | I. TOCHTLI.       |                                                                                                                  |
|          | 1  | II. Atl           |                                                                                                                  |
|          | 2  | III. Itzcuintli   |                                                                                                                  |
|          | 3  | IV. Ozomatli      |                                                                                                                  |
|          | 4  | V. Malinalli      |                                                                                                                  |
|          | 5  | VI. Acatl         |                                                                                                                  |
|          | 6  | VII. Ocelotl      |                                                                                                                  |
|          | 7  | VIII. Quauhtli    |                                                                                                                  |
|          | 8  | IX. Cozcaquauhtli |                                                                                                                  |
|          | 9  | X. Olin           |                                                                                                                  |
|          | 10 | XI. Tecpatl       |                                                                                                                  |
|          | 11 | XII. Quiahuitl    |                                                                                                                  |
|          | 12 | XIII. Xochitl *   |                                                                                                                  |

## Q U E C H O L L I Fourteenth Month.

|    |                |                                                                                                       |
|----|----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 13 | I. CIPACTL     | The fast of four days, in preparation for the following festival.                                     |
| 14 | II. Ehècatl    |                                                                                                       |
| 15 | III. Calli     | Festival of <i>Mixcoatl</i> , god of the chase; a general chase; procession and sacrifice of animals. |
| 16 | IV. Cuetzpalin |                                                                                                       |
| 17 | V. Coatl       |                                                                                                       |
| 18 | VI. Miquiztli  |                                                                                                       |
| 19 | VII. Mazatl    |                                                                                                       |

\* Here ends the first cycle of two hundred and sixty days, or twenty periods of thirteen days.

| Modern Style. | Mexican Days.      | Festivals.                                                       |
|---------------|--------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| November 20   | VIII. Tochtli      | Festival of <i>Tlamatzincatl</i> , with sacrifices of prisoners. |
| 21            | IX. Atl.           |                                                                  |
| 22            | X. Itzcuintli      |                                                                  |
| 23            | XI. Ozomatli       |                                                                  |
| 24            | XII. Malinalli     |                                                                  |
| 25            | XIII. Acatl        |                                                                  |
| 26            | I. OCELOTL         |                                                                  |
| 27            | II. Quauhtli       |                                                                  |
| 28            | III. Cozcaquauhtli |                                                                  |
| 29            | IV. Olin           |                                                                  |
| 30            | V. Tecpatl         |                                                                  |
| December 1    | VI. Quiahuitl      |                                                                  |
| 2             | VII. Xochitl       |                                                                  |

## PANQUETZALIZTLI Fifteenth Month.

|    |                  |
|----|------------------|
| 3  | VIII. Cipaçtli   |
| 4  | IX. Ehècatl      |
| 5  | X. Calli         |
| 6  | XI. Cuetzpalin   |
| 7  | XII. Coatl       |
| 8  | XIII. Miquiztli  |
| 9  | I. MAZATL        |
| 10 | II. Tochtli      |
| 11 | III. Atl         |
| 12 | IV. Itzcuintli   |
| 13 | V. Ozomatli      |
| 14 | VI. Malinalli    |
| 15 | VII. Acatl.      |
| 16 | VIII. Ocelotl    |
| 17 | IX. Quauhtli     |
| 18 | X. Cozcaquauhtli |
| 19 | XI. Olin         |
| 20 | XII. Tecpatl     |
| 21 | XIII. Quiahuitl  |
| 22 | I. XOCHITL       |

The third and principal festival of *Huitzilopochtli* and his companions. Severe fast, solemn procession. Sacrifices of prisoners and quails, and the eating of the statue of paste of that god.



# A P P E N D I X.

## A T E M O Z T L I Sixteenth Month.

| Modern Style. | Mexican Days.     | Festivals.                                                                  |
|---------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| December 23   | II. Cipactli      |                                                                             |
| 24            | III. Ehècatl      |                                                                             |
| 25            | IV. Calli         |                                                                             |
| 26            | V. Cuetzpalin     |                                                                             |
| 27            | VI. Coatl         |                                                                             |
| 28            | VII. Miquiztli    |                                                                             |
| 29            | VIII. Mazatl      |                                                                             |
| 30            | IX. Tochtli       |                                                                             |
| 31            | X. Atl            |                                                                             |
| January 1     | XI. Itzcuintli    |                                                                             |
| 2             | XII. Ozomatli     |                                                                             |
| 3             | XIII. Malinalli   |                                                                             |
| 4             | I. ACATL          |                                                                             |
| 5             | II. Ocelotl       |                                                                             |
| 6             | III. Quauhtli     |                                                                             |
| 7             | IV. Cozcaquauhtli | Fast of four days in preparation of the following festival.                 |
| 8             | V. Olin           |                                                                             |
| 9             | VI. Tecpatl       |                                                                             |
| 10            | VII. Quiahuitl    | The fourth festival of the gods of water, with a procession and sacrifices. |
| 11            | VIII. Xochitl     |                                                                             |

## T I T I T L Seventeenth Month.

|    |                 |                                                                                                     |
|----|-----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 12 | IX. Cipactli    |                                                                                                     |
| 13 | X. Ehècatl      |                                                                                                     |
| 14 | XI. Calli       | Festival of the goddesses <i>Ilamateuētlī</i> , with a dance and sacrifice of a female slave.       |
| 15 | XII. Cuetzpalin |                                                                                                     |
| 16 | XIII. Coatl     |                                                                                                     |
| 17 | I. MIQUIZTLI    | Festival of <i>Micēllanteuētlī</i> , god of hell, with the nocturnal sacrifice of a prisoner.       |
| 18 | II. Mazatl      |                                                                                                     |
| 19 | III. Tochtli    |                                                                                                     |
| 20 | IV. Atl         |                                                                                                     |
| 21 | V. Itzcuintli   |                                                                                                     |
| 22 | VI. Ozomatli    | The second festival of <i>Jacateuētlī</i> , god of the merchants, with the sacrifice of a prisoner. |
| 23 | VII. Malinalli  |                                                                                                     |
| 24 | VIII. Acatl.    |                                                                                                     |

January

| Modern Style. | Mexican Days.     | Festivals |
|---------------|-------------------|-----------|
| January 25    | IX. Ocelotl       |           |
| 26            | X. Quauhtli       |           |
| 27            | XI. Cozcaquauhtli |           |
| 28            | XII. Olin         |           |
| 29            | XIII. Tecpatl     |           |
| 30            | I. QUIAHUITL.     |           |
| 31            | II. Xochitl       |           |

## I Z C A L L I Eighteenth Month.

|            |                  |                                                                                        |
|------------|------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| February 1 | III. Cipactli    |                                                                                        |
| 2          | IV. Ehècatl      |                                                                                        |
| 3          | V. Calli         |                                                                                        |
| 4          | VI. Cuetzpalin   |                                                                                        |
| 5          | VII. Coatl       |                                                                                        |
| 6          | VIII. Miquiztli  |                                                                                        |
| 7          | IX. Mazatl       |                                                                                        |
| 8          | X. Tochtli       |                                                                                        |
| 9          | XI. Atl          |                                                                                        |
| 10         | XII. Itzcuintli  | General chace for the sacrifices of the next festival.                                 |
| 11         | XIII. Ozomatli   |                                                                                        |
| 12         | I. MALINALLI     |                                                                                        |
| 13         | II. Acatl        |                                                                                        |
| 14         | III. Ocelotl     |                                                                                        |
| 15         | IV. Quauhtli     |                                                                                        |
| 16         | V. Cozcaquauhtli |                                                                                        |
| 17         | VI. Olin         | The second festival of <i>Xiuh-tencitli</i> , god of fire, with sacrifices of animals. |
| 18         | VII. Tecpatl     |                                                                                        |
| 19         | VIII. Quiahuitl  | Renewal of fire in the houses.                                                         |
| 20         | IX. Xochitl.     |                                                                                        |

## N E M O N T E M I, or useless Days.

|    |                  |                                          |
|----|------------------|------------------------------------------|
| 21 | X. Cipactli      | During these days there was no festival. |
| 22 | XI. Ehècatl      |                                          |
| 23 | XII. Calli       |                                          |
| 24 | XIII. Cuetzpalin |                                          |
| 25 | I. COATL         |                                          |

The following year II. Acatl, begins with II. *Miquiztli*, and continues in the same order.

E X P L A-

## EXPLANATION of the Obscure FIGURES.

I. *Of the figures of the Mexican Century.*

**I**N the wheel of the Mexican century are four figures, thirteen times repeated, to signify, as we have already mentioned, the four periods (by some authors called *indictions*), of thirteen years, of which their century consisted. The four figures are, first, the head of a rabbit, expressive of that quadruped; secondly, a reed; thirdly, a knife or the point of a lance, representing a flint stone; fourthly, a part of a building, signifying a house. The years of the century are counted by beginning at the upper twist of the serpent, and descending towards the left. The I. figure, with a small point, denotes I. rabbit; the second, with two points, signifies II. reed; the third, with three points, signifies III. flint; the fourth, with four points, IV. house; the fifth, with five points, V. rabbit; and so it continues until the twist upon the left, where the second period begins with the figure of the reed, and terminates in the lower twist; and then the third period commences.

II. *Of the figures of the year.*

The first figure is that of water, spread upon a building to denote the first month, whose name *Acabualco*, or *Atlacabualco*, signifies, the ceasing of water; because, in the month of March the winter rains cease in northern countries, where the Mexican or Toltecan calendar took its origin. They called it also *Quabuitlehua*, which signifies the budding of trees, which happens at this time in hot countries. The Tlascalans called this month *Xilomaniliztli*, or the oblation of ears of maize; because in it they offered to their gods those of the past year, to obtain prosperity to the seed, which about this time began to be sown in high grounds.

The figure of the second month, appears at first sight to be a pavilion, but we believe it is rather a human skin ill designed, to express that which is meant by the name *Tlacaxipehualitzli*, which they gave to this month, or skinning of men, on account of the barbarous rite



of skinning human victims, at the festival of the god of the goldsmiths. The Tlascalans called this month *Coailbuitl*, or general festival, and represented it by the figure of a serpent wound about a fan, and an *Ajacaxtli*. The fan and the *Ajacaxtli* denote the dances which were then made, and the coiled serpent signifies their generality.

The figure of the third month is that of a bird upon a lancet. The lancet signifies the spilling of blood, which was made during the nights of this month; but we do not know what bird it is, nor what it means.

The fourth month is represented by the figure of a small building, upon which appear some leaves of rushes, signifying the ceremony which they performed in this month of putting rushes, sword-grass, and other herbs, dipped in blood, which they shed in honour of their gods, over the doors of their houses.

The Tlascalans represented the third month by a lancet, to signify the same kind of penance; and the fourth month by a large lancet, to denote that during it they did still greater penance.

The figure of the fifth month is that of a human head, with a necklace under it, representing those chaplets or wreaths of crisp maize which they wore about their necks, and with which they adorned also the idol of Tezcatlipoca, from whence the month took the name of *Toxcatl*, as we have said above.

The sixth month is represented by an earthen pot or jug, signifying a certain gruel, which they took then called *Etzalli*, from which the month took the name of *Etzalqualiztli*.

The two figures of the seventh and eighth months, appear designed to signify the dances which they made then, and because the dances of the eighth month were the greatest, the figure also which represents it is greater. Near to these figures appear lancets, denoting the austerities practised preparatory to these festivals. The Tlascalans represented those two months by the heads of two lords, that of the month *Tecuilbuitontli*, or little festival of the lords, appears a young man, and that of the month *Hucitecuilbuitl*, or grand festival of the lords, seems an old man.

The figures of the ninth and tenth months, are evidently expressive of the mourning which they put on, and the lamentation which they made.

made for their dead, which obtained the ninth month the name of *Miccailbuitl*, or festival of the dead, and the tenth *Huemiccailbuitl*, or great festival of the dead; and because the mourning of the tenth month was the greater, the figure of it also is larger. The Tlascalans painted for each of these two months a skull with two bones, but the skull of the tenth was the larger.

The figure of the eleventh month is a broom, by which is signified the ceremony of sweeping the pavement of the temples, which was in this month performed by all; from whence the name *Ochpaniztli*. The Tlascalans painted a hand grasping a broom.

The figure of the twelfth and thirteenth months is that of a *parasite* plant, called by the Mexicans *pachtli*, which in this season twines about oaks, and from them the twelfth month took its name; because in the next month this plant is grown up, the figure of it is larger, and the month takes the name of *Hueipachtli*. These names, although more used by the Tlascalans, were also employed by the Mexicans; we have, however, adopted the names *Teotleco* and *Tepeilbuitl* in this history, as being more commonly used by the Mexicans.

The figure of the fourteenth month is very similar to that of the second; but we know nothing of its meaning.

The Tlascalans used to represent this month by the figure of that bird which some have called *Fiammingo*, and the Mexicans *Quechilli*, which name the Mexicans gave also to the month; because, at this time, these birds resorted to the Mexican lake.

The figure of the fifteenth month is a piece of a Mexican standard, signifying the one which was carried at the solemn procession of *Huitzilopochtli*, made in this month. The name *Panquetzalitzli*, by which it was called, signifies no more, as we have already said, than the mounting the standard.

The figure of the sixteenth is that of water upon a stair, signifying the descent of water, expressed by the name *Atemoztli*, which was given to this month, either because this is the season of rain in northern countries, or because at this time they held the festival of the gods of the mountains and water, to obtain the necessary showers.

The figure of the seventeenth month, is two or three pieces of wood tied with a cord, and a hand, which, pulling the cord forcibly, binds

the wood, denoting the constriction occasioned by the cold of this season, which is the meaning of the name *Tititl*. The Tlascalans painted two sticks cased, and firmly fixed in a plank.

The figure of the eighteenth month is the head of a quadruped upon an altar, signifying the sacrifices of animals which were made during this month to the god of fire. The Tlascalans represented it by the figure of a man holding up a child by the head; this makes an interpretation which some authors give of the name *Ixcalli*, very probably, as they say that word means, *risen from the dead*, or *new creation*.

The figure of the moon, which is in the centre of the wheel, or circle of the year has been copied from a Mexican painting, from which it appears, that those ancient Indians knew well that the moon has her light from the sun.

In some wheels of the Mexican year which we have seen, after the figures of the eighteen months, there followed five large points or dots denoting the five days called Nemontemi.

### III. *Of the figures of the month.*

Authors differ greatly in opinion concerning the signification of *Cipactli*, the name of the first day. According to Boturini, it signifies a serpent; with Torquemada, the sword-fish; and with Betancourt, the tiburón. In the only wheel yet published of the Mexican month, which is that by Valades, the figure representing the first day, is almost totally similar to that of a lizard, which appears in the fourth day. As we do not know the truth, we have put the head of a tiburón, according to Betancourt.

The second day is called *Ehēcatl*, or wind, and is represented by a human head blowing with the mouth.

The third day is called *Calli*, or house, represented by a small building.

The name of the fourth day is *Cuetzpālīn*, or lizard, and the figure is that animal.

The name of the fifth day is *Coatl*, or serpent, and the figure is that animal.

The



The name of the sixth month is *Miquiztli*, that is, death, represented by a skull.

The seventh day is called *Mazatl*, or stag, represented by the head of that quadruped, as the eighth day is by that of the rabbit *Tocbtli*, and so it is called.

The name of the ninth day is *Atl*, or water, and is represented by the figure of that element.

The tenth day is named *Itzcuintli*, that is, a certain Mexican quadruped, similar to a little dog, and the figure of it is that little animal.

The eleventh day was called *Ozomatli*, or ape, represented also by the figure of that animal.

The twelfth day was called *Malinalli*, the name of a certain plant of which they made brooms, and is represented by the figure of the same plant.

The thirteenth day is named *Acatl*, or reed, and is represented by a reed.

The fourteenth day is named *Ocelotl*, tyger; and the fifteenth *Quauhtli*, eagle, represented by the heads of these animals.

The sixteenth day is *Cozcaquauhtli*, the name of a Mexican bird, described in the first book of this history, and represented by the figure of it, though it is very imperfect.

The seventeenth day is *Olin tonatiuh*, or motion of the sun, represented by the figure of the same luminary.

The eighteenth day is *Tecpatl*, or flint, and the figure of it is the point of a lance, which used to be made of flint.

The nineteenth day is *Quiabuitl*, rain, and is represented by a cloud raining.

The twentieth day is *Xochitl*, flower, and the figure that of a flower.

In the centre of this wheel we have put the figure of the fifteenth month, in order to reduce it to a determined month.

#### IV. *Of the figures of cities.*

The first figure is that of an opuntia, or nopal upon a stone, the symbol of the city of *Tenochtitlan*, or Mexico. *Tenochtitlan* means the

the place where the opuntia is in the stone, alluding to what we have already said respecting the foundation of this great city.

The second figure is that by which they expressed a gem. The name *Chalco* means in or upon the gem (*y*).

The third figure is the hinder part of a man close to a rush plant, and the fourth is the same close to a flower, signifying the cities of *Tollantzinco* and *Xochitzinco*, the names of which signify, at the end of the place full of rushes, and at the end of the flowers, or flowery field: and almost all the names of places which have the termination in *tzinco*, and which are numerous, have a similar signification, and are represented by similar figures.

The fifth figure is a little branch of the tree *Huaxin* upon a nose, in order to represent the city of *Huaxjacac*, a name composed of *Huaxin* and *jacatl*, and means upon the point or extremity of the little tree *Huaxin*; because although *jacatl*, signifies properly the nose, it also is used to signify any other point. As *Tepejacac*, the name of two places means, upon the point of the mountain.

In the sixth figure appears an earthen pot upon three stones, as the Indians used to place it, and still do so, in order to keep it over fire, and in the mouth of the pot is the figure of water, to represent the city of *Atotonilco* (*x*), which name signifies, in hot water, or the place of the baths.

The seventh figure is that of water, in which appears a man with his arms opened, in token of rejoicing, representing the city of *Abuizapan*, called by the Spaniards Orizaba, the name of which means, in the water of pleasure, or in the cheerful river.

The eighth figure is also that of water in a mouth, representing the city of *Atenco* (*a*). This name is compounded of *Atl*, water, of *Tentli*, lip, or metaphorically bank, shore, edge, &c. &c. and the preposition, or article *co*, which means *in*, so that *Atenco* means upon

(*y*) Acosta says, that *Chalco* means, in the mouths, but the Mexican name signifying the mouth is *Camatl*, and when they would say, in the mouths, they express it *Camac*.

(*x*) There were, and are many places, called Atenco, but the most considerable was that which appears close to Tezcuco, in our chart of the Lakes of Mexico.

(*a*) On the 26th day of February of the above mentioned year, the year according to the meridian of Alexandria, which was built three centuries after, properly began. Q. Curt. lib. iv. c. 21. See La Lande Astronomie, n. 1597.

the bank, shore, or edge of the water; and all the places which have such a name are situated upon the bank of some lake or river.

The ninth figure is that of a Mexican mirror, to represent the city of *Tehuillojocan*, which term signifies, place of the mirrors.

The tenth figure is that of a hand in the act of counting by the fingers, to represent the village of *Nepobualco*, which word signifies, the place where they count, or the place of enumeration.

The eleventh figure is that of an arm holding a fish, representing the city of *Michmalojan*, which word signifies, place where the fish are taken, or place of fishing.

The twelfth is a piece of an edifice, with the head of an eagle within it, to represent the city of *Quaubtinchan*, which signifies, house of eagles.

The thirteenth figure is that of a mountain, such as they used to paint in their pictures, and a little above a small knife, to represent the city of *Tlacotepec*, which name signifies, the cut mountain.

The fourteenth figure is that of a flower, and beneath it five of those points by which they used to express numbers from one to twenty. With such a figure they represented the place called *Macuilxochitl*, which signifies, five flowers. This name is still used to signify a day of the year; and it is probable, that the foundation of that place having been laid on such a day it obtained such a name.

The fifteenth figure is the game of football, representing the city of *Tlachco*, called by the Spaniards *Tajco*, which name signifies the place where they played at this game. Those two small round figures in the middle are two mill-stones, pierced in the center, which were used in that game. There were at least two cities or villages of this name.

The figure of the sixteenth, represents the place of *Tecotzaubtla*, signifying the place abounding with ochre.

#### V. Of the figures of the Mexican kings.

These figures are not portraits of the kings, but symbols of their names. In all of them appears a head, crowned in the Mexican style, and each has its mark to shew the name of the king represented by it.



*Acamapitzin*, the name of the first king of Mexico, signifies, he who has reeds in his fist, which also appears in the figure.

*Huitzilibuitl*, the name of the second king signifies, feather of the little flower-sucking bird; and therefore the head of that little bird is represented, though imperfectly, with a feather in its mouth.

*Chimalpopoca*, name of the third king, means, smoking shield, which is represented in his figure.

*Itzcoatl*, name of the fourth king, means, serpent of itzli, or armed with lancets, or razors of the stone itzli, which is represented by the fourth figure.

*Ilhuicamina*, the surname of Montezuma I. the fifth king of Mexico, means, he who shoots into the sky, and therefore an arrow is represented shot at that figure, by which the Mexicans used to signify the sky.

*Axajacatl*, the name of the sixth king, means also a marsh-fly, and signifies the face or aspect of water, and therefore a face is represented, above which is the figure of water.

*Tizoc*, the name of the seventh king, signifies, pierced, and therefore he is represented by a perforated leg.

*Abuitzotl*, the name of the eighth king, is also that of an amphibious quadruped, mentioned in our first book, and is therefore represented by the figure of that quadruped; and to shew that this animal lives in the water, the figure of that element appears on its back and tail.

*Moteuczoma*, the name of the ninth king, means, angry lord; but we do not understand the figure of it.

The figures of the two last kings *Cuitlabuatzin* and *Quauhtemotzin*, are wanting; but we do not doubt but that that of *Quauhtemotzin*, signifies, a dropping eagle, as the name has that meaning.

## VI. Of the figure of the deluge, and the confusion of tongues.

The water signifies the deluge; the human head, and the bird in the water, signify the drowning of men and animals. The ship, with a man in it, denotes the vessel in which, according to their tradition,  
one

one man, and one woman, were saved to preserve the human race. The figure in one corner is that of the mountain Colhuacan, near to which, according to their account, the man and the woman who were saved disembarked from the deluge. In all the Mexican paintings, in which mention is made of that mountain, it is represented by the same figure. The bird upon the tree represents the pigeon, which, as they say, communicated speech to men, as they were all born dumb after the deluge. Those rods which issue from the mouth of the pigeon towards men, are the symbols of languages. Wherever the Mexican paintings allude either to languages or words, they employ these rods. The multitude of them in one figure, signifies the multitude of those which were thus communicated. Those fifteen men, who receive the languages from the pigeon, represent so many families separated from the rest of mankind, from whom, as they account, descended the nations of Anahuac.

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LETTER from Abbé Don LORENZO HERVAS, to the  
AUTHOR, upon the MEXICAN CALENDAR.

*Ab. Hervas, author of the work entitled, Idea of the Universe, having read this work in manuscript, and made some curious and learned observations on the Mexican Calendar, communicated them in the following letter, which we trust will prove acceptable to our readers.*

FROM the work of your Reverence I learn with infinite pain, how much the loss of those documents which assisted the celebrated Dr. Siguenza to form his *Ciclography*; and the Cav. Boturini to publish his *Idea of the General History of New Spain*, is to be regretted; and at the same time I am farther confirmed in my opinion, that the use of the solar year was contemporary, or, perhaps, anterior to the Deluge, as I attempt to prove in the eleventh volume of my work, in which is inserted The Extatic Journey to the Planetary World, wherein I propose some reflexions on the Mexican Calendar, which I shall here anticipate and submit to your censure.

VOL. I.

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The year and century have, from time immemorial, been regulated by the Mexicans with a degree of intelligence which does not at all correspond with their arts and sciences. In them they were certainly extremely inferior to the Greeks or Romans; but the discernment which appears in their Calendar, equals them to the most cultivated nations. Hence we ought to imagine, that this Calendar has not been the discovery of the Mexicans, but a communication from some more enlightened people; and as the last are not to be found in America, we must seek for them elsewhere, in Asia, or in Egypt. This supposition is confirmed by your affirmation; that the Mexicans had their Calendar from the Toltecas (originating from Asia), whose year, according to Boturini, was exactly adjusted by the course of the sun, more than a hundred years before the Christian era; and also from observing that other nations, namely, the Chiapanese, made use of the same Calendar with the Mexicans, without any difference but that of their symbols.

The Mexican year began upon the 26th of February, a day celebrated in the era of Nabonassar, which was fixed by the Egyptians 747 years before the Christian era; for the beginning of their month *Totb*, corresponded with the meridian of the same day. If those priests fixed also upon this day as an epoch, because it was celebrated in Egypt (*a*), we have there the Mexican Calendar agreeing with the Egyptian. But independent of this, it is certain, that the Mexican Calendar conformed greatly with the Egyptian.

On this subject Herodotus says (*b*), that the year was first regulated by the Egyptians, who gave to it twelve months, of thirty days, and added five days to every year, that the circle of the year might revolve regularly: that the principal gods of the Egyptians were twelve in number, and that each month was under the tutelage and protection of one of these gods. The Mexicans also added to every year, five days, which they called *Nemontemi*, or useless; because during these they did nothing. Plutarch says (*c*), that on such days the Egyptians celebrated the festival of the birth of their gods.

(*a*) On the 26th day of February, of the above mentioned year, the year according to the meridian of Alexandria, which was built three centuries after, properly began. Q. Curt. lib. iv. c. 21. See L. a Lande Astronomie, n. 1597.

(*b*) Herod. lib. ii. cap. 1. and 6.

(*c*) Plut. de Iside & Osiride.



It is certainly true, that the Mexicans divided their year into eighteen months, not into twelve like the Egyptians; but as they called the month *mistli*, or moon, as you have observed, it seems undeniable, that their ancient month had been lunar, as well as that of the Egyptians and Chinese, the Mexican month verifying that which the scriptures tell, that the month is obliged for its name to the moon. The Mexicans, it is probable, received the lunar month from their ancestors, but for certain purposes afterwards instituted another. You have affirmed in your history, upon the faith of Boturini, that the Miztecas formed their year into thirteen months, which number was sacred in the Calendar of the Mexicans, on account of their thirteen principal gods, in the same manner as the Egyptians consecrated the number twelve, on account of their twelve greater gods.

The symbols and periods of years, months, and days in the Mexican Calendar, are truly admirable. With respect to the periods it appears to me, that the period of five days might not improperly be termed their civil week, and that of thirteen their religious week. In the same manner, the period of twenty days might be called their civil month; that of twenty-six their religious month; and that of thirty, their lunar and astronomical month. In their century, it is probable, that the period of four years was civil, and that of thirteen religious. From the multiplication of these two periods they had their century, and from the duplication of their century, their age of one hundred and four years. In all those periods an art is discovered not less admirable than that of our indictions, cycles, &c. The period of civil weeks was contained exactly in their civil and astronomical month; the latter had six, the former four, and the year contained seventy-three complete weeks; in which particular our method is excelled by the Mexican; for our weeks are not contained exactly in the month, nor in the year. The period of religious weeks was contained twice in their religious month, and twenty-eight times in the year; but in the latter there remained a day over, as there is in our weeks. From the periods of thirteen days, multiplied by the twenty characters of the month, the cycle of two hundred and sixty days was produced, of which you have made mention; but as there remained a day over the twenty-eight religious weeks of the solar year, there arose another cycle of

two hundred and sixty days, in such a manner, that the Mexicans could, from the first day of every year, distinguish what year it was. The period of civil months, multiplied by the number of days, (that is eighteen by twenty), and the period of lunar months, multiplied by the number of days, (that is, twelve by thirty), give the same product, or the number three hundred and sixty; a number certainly not less memorable, and in use among the Mexicans than among the most ancient nations; and a number, which from time immemorial, has ruled in geometry and astronomy, and is of the utmost particularity on account of its relation to the circle, which is divided into three hundred and sixty parts, or degrees. In no nation of the world do we meet with any thing similar to this clear and distinct method of Calendar. From the small period of four years, multiplied by the above mentioned cycle of two hundred and sixty years, arose another admirable cycle of one thousand and forty years. The Mexicans combined the small period of four years with the period above named *week* of thirteen years; thence resulted their noted cycle or century of fifty-two years; and thus with the four figures, indicating the period of four years, they had, as we have from the dominical letters, a period, which, to say the truth, exceeded ours; as it is of twenty-eight years, and the Mexican of fifty-two; this was perpetual, and ours in Gregorian years is not so. So much variety and simplicity of periods of weeks, months, years, and cycles, cannot be unadmired; and the more so, as there is immediately discovered that particular relation which these periods have to many different ends, which Boturini points out by saying: "The Mexican Calendar was of four species; that is, natural, for agriculture; chronological, for history; ritual, for festivals; and astronomical, for the course of the stars; and the year was lunisolar." This year, if we do not put it at the end of three Mexican ages, after several calculations I am not able to find it.

Boturini determines by the Mexican paintings the year of the confusion of tongues, and the years of the creation of the world; which determination appears not to be difficult, because as the eclipses are noted in the Mexican paintings, there is not a doubt but the true epoch.

(d) A luna signum dici festi . . . Mensis secundum nomen ejus est. Eccl. xliii.

of chronology may be obtained from them, as P. Souciet obtains the Chinese from the solar eclipse which he fixed in the year 2155, before the Christian era. An eclipse well circumstantiated, as P. Briga (*e*) Romagnoli proves at length, may assist us to fix the epoch of chronology in the space of twenty thousand years, and although in the Mexican paintings, all the circumstances of eclipses are not described, yet the defect of them is remedied by many eclipses which are marked there. The Mexican lords therefore, who still preserve great number of paintings, might by study of them adduce many lights to chronology.

Respecting the symbols of the Mexican months and year, they discover ideas entirely conformable with those of the ancient Egyptians. The latter distinguished, as appears from their monuments, each month or part of the zodiac, where the sun stood, with characteristical figures of that which happened in every season of the year. Therefore we see the signs of Aries, Taurus, and the two young Goats (which now are Gemini), used to mark the months of the birth of those animals; the signs of Cancer, Leo, and Virgo, with the ear of corn, for those months, in which the sun goes backward like a crab; in which there is greater heat, and in which the harvests are reaped. The sign of the Scorpion (which in the Egyptian sphere occupied the space which at present is occupied by the sign of Libra), and that of Sagittarius, in the months of virulent, or contagious distempers, and the chace; and lastly, the signs of Capricorn, Aquarius, and Pisces, in those months in which the sun begins to ascend towards others; in which it rains much, and in which there is abundant fishing. These ideas at least are similar to those which the Mexicans associated with their climate. They called their first month *Acahualco*, that is, the cessation of the waters, which began on the 26th of February, and they symbolize this month by a house, with the figure of water above it; they gave also to the same month the name of *Quahuitlehua*, that is, the moving or budding of trees. The Mexicans afterwards distinguished their first month by two names, of which the first *Acahualco*, or the cessation of the waters, did not correspond with their climate where the

(*e*) *Scientia Eclipsium ex Europa in Sinas*, Pars iii. c. 2. sect. 20.



rains came in October ; but it agrees with the fields of Sennaar, and the northern climes of America, from whence their ancestors came ; and from that the origin of this name appears evidently to be very ancient. The second name, that is, Quahuitlehua, or budding of the trees, agrees much with the word *Kinath*, used by Job to signify the Pleiades (*f*), which, in his time announced the spring, when the trees begin to move. The symbol of the second Mexican month was a pavilion, which indicated the great heat prevalent in Mexico in April, before the rains of May come on. The symbol of the third month was a bird which appeared at that time. The twelfth and thirteenth month had for their symbol the plant *pacalli*, which springs up and matures in these months. The symbol of the fourteenth month was expressed by a cord, and a hand which pulled it, expressive of the binding power of the cold in that month, which is January ; and to this same circumstance the name Tititl, which they gave it alludes. The constellation *Kesil*, of which Job speaks to signify winter, signifies in the Arabic root (which is *Kesal*) *to be cold and asleep*, and in the text of Job it is read, “ Couldst thou break the cords or ties of Kesil ? ”

Leaving a-part the evident conformity which the symbols and expressions of spring and winter have with those of Job, who, in my opinion, flourished a short time after the Deluge (as I say in my eleventh volume), it ought to be noted, that these symbols, which are excellent for preserving the year invariable, demonstrate the use of the intercalary days of the Mexicans ; otherwise it would happen that in two centuries, the symbol of the month of cold would fall in the month of heat. Thus it is found, from the Mexican paintings, that in them the conquest of Mexico was marked in the ninth month called *Tlaxochimaco* ; from thence it ought to be concluded, that the intercalary days were in use. The same deduction might be made from seeing that the Mexicans, at the entry of the Spaniards, preserved that order of months, which, according to the signification of their names, agreed with the seasons of the year, and the productions of the earth. Farther, to ascertain how the Mexicans regulated their leap years, and if their year was just, an exact examination and comparison ought to

(*f*) Job, chap. ix. v. 9. and chap. xxxviii. v. 31.

be made of some event known to us, which has been marked by them. You have, for example, fixed the death of Montezuma on the 29th of June, 1520: if in the Mexican paintings this is found in the seventh day, *Cuetzpalin*, of the seventh month, we must infer their year to be just, and that the leap years were interposed every four years; if it corresponds to the fourth day *Cipaçli*, it would be a sign that their year was just, and that the leap years were added after the century; if it should correspond with the seventh, *Ozomatli*, then it must be concluded that their leap years were put after the century, and their year was as croneous as ours was at that time. The proposed example is grounded upon the Calendar, at the end of your second volume; this I did for the sake of perspicuity: but to make an exact calculation, it would be necessary to see that your Calendar corresponds with the first year of the Mexican century, and that the year 1520, was the fourteenth year of the century; whence the name of days would have taken a very different order from that which is proposed for more clearness.

Lastly, the symbol which you have put for the Mexican century, convinces me, that it is the same which the ancient Egyptians and Chaldeans had. In the Mexican symbol, we see the sun as it were eclipsed by the moon, and surrounded with a serpent, which makes four twists, and embraces the four periods of thirteen years. This very idea of the serpent with the sun has, from time immemorial in the world, signified the periodical or annual course of the sun. We know that in astronomy, the points where eclipses happen have, from time immemorial been called, (as P. Briga (*g*) Romagnoli has noted), the head and tail of a dragon. The Chinese, from false ideas, though conformable to this immemorial allusion, believe that at eclipses a dragon is in the act of devouring the sun. The Egyptians more particularly agree with the Mexicans; for to symbolize the sun they employed a circle, with one or two serpents; but still more the ancient Persians, among whom their *Mitras* (which was certainly the sun), was symbolized by a sun (*b*) and a serpent; and from P. Montfaucon (*i*), we are

(*g*) Vol. cited, p. 4. Inv. iii. c. 2.

(*b*) See Banier *Mythylogie*, vol. ii. book iv. cap. iv. vol. iii. book vii. c. xii. Pluche, *History of the Heavens*, vol. i. c. ii. sect. 1. Goguet, *Origin of Sciences*, &c. vol. i. Dissert. 2.

(*i*) Tom. i. p. 378.

given, in his Antiquities, a monument of a serpent which surrounding the signs of the Zodiac, cuts them, by rolling itself in various modes about them. In addition to these incontestible examples, the following reflexion is most convincing. There is not a doubt that the symbol of the serpent is a thing totally arbitrary to signify the sun, with which it has no physical relation; wherefore then I ask, have so many nations dispersed over the globe, and of which some have had no reciprocal intercourse, unless in the first ages after the deluge, agreed in using one same symbol so arbitrary, and chose to express by it the same object? When we find the word *sacco* in the Hebrew, Greek, Teutonic, Latin languages, &c. it obliges us to believe that it belongs to the primitive language of men after the deluge, and when we see one same arbitrary symbol, signifying the sun and his course, used by the Mexicans, the Chinese, the ancient Egyptians, and Persians, does it not prompt us to believe the real origin of it was in the time of Noah, or the first men after the deluge? this fair conclusion is strongly confirmed by the Chiapanese Calendar (which is totally Mexican), in which the Chiapanese, according to Monsig. Nugnez de la Vega, bishop of Chiapa, in his Preface to his Synodal Constitutions, put for the first symbol or name of the first year of the century a *Votan*, nephew of him who built a wall up to heaven, and gave to men the languages which they now speak. Here is a fact connected with the Mexican Calendar, relative to the building of the tower of Babel and the confusion of tongues. Many similar reflexions are suggested by the observations and remarks which occur in your history, &c. Cefena, July 31, 1780. So far the letter of Sig. Ab. Hervás. Whatever may have been the truth respecting the use of the solar year among these first men, in which dispute I do not mean to engage, I cannot be persuaded that the Mexicans, or the Toltecas, have been indebted to any nation of the old continent for their Calendar, and their method of computing time. From whom did the Toltecas learn their age of one hundred and four years, their century of fifty-two, their year of eighteen months, their months of twenty days, their periods of thirteen years and thirteen days, their cycle of two hundred and sixty days, and in particular their thirteen intercalary days, at the end of the century, to adjust the year with the course of the sun? The Egyptians



were the greatest astronomers of those remote times, but they adopted no intercalary space to adjust the year with the annual retardation of the solar course. If the Toltecas of themselves discovered that retardation, it is not to be wondered at if they discovered other things which did not require such minute and prolix astronomical observations. Boturini, of whose testimony Ab. Hervas avails himself, says expressly upon the faith of the annals of the Toltecas, which he saw, that the ancient astronomers of that nation having observed in their native country Huehuetlapallan, (a northern country of America), the excess of about six hours of the solar, over the civil year which was observed among them, corrected it by the use of intercalary days, more than one hundred years before the Christian era. With respect to the conformity between the Mexicans and Egyptians, we shall treat of it in our Dissertations.

*Animadversions of the Author on the Work entitled, LETTERE AMERICANE, or American Letters.*

Some of the observations made by Ab. Hervas have also been made by the learned author of the *American Letters*, a work full of erudition, recently published in the Literary Magazine of Florence, and come to us at the time the last sheets of this volume were printing. The author, in opposing the absurd opinions of M. de Paw, from a just though imperfect idea of the culture of the Mexicans, discourses in general very intelligently of their customs, their arts, and, above all, their astronomical knowledge, explains their calendar and their cycles, and in these points compares them with the ancient Egyptians, as was done in the last century by the learned Mexican, Siguenza, to prove their conformity and the antiquity of the population of America. In the perusal of these letters, I have had the pleasure of seeing some of my own sentiments supported and explained; although the author has committed many mistakes, and shewn more acrimony against the Spanish nation than is consistent with candour and impartiality. The alteration of the Mexican names in his work, is a trespass upon all the rules of literary propriety and accuracy with respect to etymology.

In the ninth letter of the second part, where he speaks of the Mexican year, he cites Gemelli, and accuses him, though falsely, of an error. Gemelli says, that the Mexican year at the commencement of their century, began upon the 10th of April; but that every four years it anticipated one day on account of our bissextile; so that at the end of four years it began upon the 9th of that month; at the end of eight years it began upon the 8th, and so it went on anticipating every four years, one day, unto the end of the Mexican century, where by the interposition of the thirteen intercalary days, omitted in the progress of the century, the year returned to begin upon the 10th of April. This, adds the author of the Letters, is a contradiction of fact, as the year at the end of the four years should have begun upon the 11th, and not the ninth, and thus every four years it ought to have increased a day; and in such case, the correction of thirteen days after the end of fifty-two years became superfluous, or without the retrocession of a day every four years, the difference of the solar year, at the end of the cycle should have been double, that is twenty-six days.

We wonder much that an author, who appears to be a good calculator, should err in a calculation so simple and clear. The year 1506, was a secular year among the Mexicans. Let us suppose for the sake of perspicuity, that their year began as ours on the first day of January. This first year of the Mexican century, composed like ours of 365 days, ended as ours on the 31st of December, and in like manner the second year corresponding to 1507; but in 1508, the Mexican year ought to finish a day before ours; because ours being bissextile, or leap year, had 366 days, whereas the Mexican had only 365; therefore the fourth year of the Mexican century corresponding to 1509, ought to commence a day before ours, that is on the 31st of December 1508. In the same manner, the eighth year, corresponding to 1513, ought to commence on the 30th of December, 1512, for the same reason of that year having been bissextile. The twelfth year, corresponding to 1517, ought to begin on the 29th of December 1516, and so forth, unto the year 1557, the last of the Mexican century, in which the Mexican year ought to anticipate ours as many days as there were bissextile years. Thus in the 52 years of the Mexican century, there

# POSTERITY OF KING MOTEZUMA. (441)

MOTEZUMA IX. king of Mexico, married with *Miabuauxochitl* his niece.

Don Pedro *Jebualicabuatzin* Motezuma, married Donna Caterina *Quauxochitl* his niece.

D. Diego Luis *Ibuitemotzin* Motezuma, married in Spain Donna Francisca de Cueva.

D. Pedro Tefifon Motezuma de Cueva I. Count of Motezuma, and Tula, and viscount Iluca, married Donna Jeroma Porras.

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| D. Diego Luis Motezuma and Porras II. Count of Motezuma, &c. married Donna Luisa Jofre Loaísa and Carilla, daughter of the count of Arco. | Donna Teresa Francisca Motezuma and Porras, married to D. Diego Cisneros de Guzman. |
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| Donna Maria Jeroma Motezuma Jofre de Loaísa III. countess of Motezuma, &c. married to D. Joseph Sarmiento de Valladares, who was viceroy of Mexico, and I. duke of Atresco. | Donna Jeroma de Cisneros Motezuma, married to D. Felix Nieto de Silva, I. marquis of Tenebron. |
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| Donna Faustina Sarmiento, Motezuma IV. countess of Motezuma, died without issue, in 1717, by which the estates of Motezuma reverted to Donna Teresa Nieto de Sylva, daughter of the I. marquis of Tenebron. | Donna Teresa Nieto de Sylva and Motezuma, II. marchioness of Tenebron, and VI. countess of Motezuma, married to D. Gaspar d'Oca Sarmiento and Zuniga. |
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| Donna Faustina Sarmiento, Motezuma IV. countess of Motezuma, died without issue, in 1717, by which the estates of Motezuma reverted to Donna Teresa Nieto de Sylva, daughter of the I. marquis of Tenebron. | D. Jeron d'Oca Motezuma, &c. III. marquis of Tenebron, and VII. count of Motezuma, married Donna Maria Josepha de Mendoza. |
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| Donna Faustina Sarmiento, Motezuma IV. countess of Motezuma, died without issue, in 1717, by which the estates of Motezuma reverted to Donna Teresa Nieto de Sylva, daughter of the I. marquis of Tenebron. | D. Jeron d'Oca Motezuma and Mendoza, VIII. count of Motezuma, IV. marquis of Tenebron, and grandee of Spain, now living. |
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There are other branches of this most noble line in Spain as well as Mexico.



## DESCENDANTS OF FERDINAND CORTES.

**D.** Fernando Cortez, conqueror, governor, and captain-general of Mexico, I. marquis of the valley of Oaxaca, had, in second marriage, Donna Jeroma Ramirez d' Arrellano and Zuniga, daughter of D. Carlos Ramirez d' Arrellano, II. count of Aguilar, and Donna Jeroma de Zuniga, daughter of the count of Benares, eldest son of D. Alvaro de Zuniga, I. duke of Bejar. Their son was

## I.

D. Martinez Cortez Ramirez d'Arrellano, II. marquis of the Valley, married his niece, Donna Anna Ramirez d' Arrellano. Their issue were

## II.

D. Fernando Cortez Ramirez d'Arrellano, III. marquis of the Valley, married Donna Mencia Fernandez de Cabrera and Mendoza, daughter of D. Pedro Fernandez Cabrera and Bobadilla. II. count of Chinchon, and Donna Maria de Mendoza and Cerda, sister of the prince of Melito. D. Ferdinand had but one son, who died in childhood; and was succeeded by his brother.

2. D. Pedro Cortez Ramirez d'Arrellano, IV. marquis of the Valley, married Donna Anna Pacheco de la Cerda, sister of the II. count of Montalban. Died without issue, and was therefore succeeded by his sister,

3. Donna Jeroma Cortez Ramirez d'Arrellano, V. marchioness of the Valley, married to D. Pedro Carillo de Mendoza, IX. count of Priego, assistant, and captain-general of Seville, and great major domo to queen Margaret of Austria. Their daughter was

## III.

Donna Stephania Carillo de Mendoza and Cortez. VI. marchioness of the Valley, was the wife of D. Diego of Arragon. IV. duke of Terranova, prince of Castel Vetrano, and of S. R. J. marquis of Avola and Favora, constable and admiral of Sicily, commander of Villafranca, viceroy of Sardinia, knight of the illustrious order of To-son d'Oro. Their only daughter was

## IV. Donna

## IV.

Donna Juana d'Arragon Carilla de Mendoza and Cortez, V. Dukes of Terranova, and VII. marchionesses of the Valley, great chambermaid to queen Luisa of Orleans, and afterwards to queen Mariana of Austria, married to D. Hector Pignatelli, V. duke of Montelione, prince of Noja, marquis of Cerchiara, count of Borello, Catalonia, and Santangelo, viceroy of Catalonia, grandee of Spain, &c. Their only son was

## V.

D. Andrea Fabrizio Pignatelli d'Arragon Carillo de Mendoza and Cortez IV. duke of Montelione. VI. duke of Terranova. VIII. marquis of the Valley, grandee of Spain, great chamberlain of the kingdom of Naples, knight of the order of Toson d'Oro; married Donna Teresa Pimentel and Benavides, daughter of D. Antonio Alfonso de Quinones, XI. count of Benavente, of Luna, and Majorca, grandee of Spain, &c. and Donna Elisabetta Francisca de Benavides, III. marchioness of Javalquinto, and Villareal. Their daughter was

## VI.

Donna J. Pignatelli d'Arragon Pimentel, Carillo de Mendoza and Cortez, VII. duchess of Montelione, VII. duchess of Terranova, IX. marchioness of the Valley, grandee of Spain, &c. wife of D. Nicolas Pignatelli, of the princes of Noja and Cerchiara, prince of S. R. I. knight of Toson d'Oro, &c. viceroy of Sardinia and Sicily, &c. Their son was

## VII.

D. Diego Pignatelli d'Arragon, &c. VIII. duke of Montelione, VIII. duke of Terranova, X. marquis of the Valley, great admiral and constable of Sicily, knight of Toson d'Oro, grandee of Spain, and prince of S. R. I. &c. married Donna Margarita Pignatelli, of the Dukes of Bellosguardo. Their son was

## VIII.

D. Fabrizio Pignatelli d'Arragon, &c. IX. duke of Montelione; IX. duke of Terranova, XI. marquis of the Valley, grandee of Spain, prince of S. R. I. &c. married Donna Costanza Medici, of the princes of Otajano. Their son was

IX. D. Hec-

## IX.

D. Hector Pignatelli d'Arragon, &c. X. duke of Montelione, X. duke of Terranova, XII. marquis of the Valley of Oaxaca, grandee of Spain, prince of S. R. I. living at present in Naples, and married with Donna N. Piccolomini, of the dukes of Amalfi.

Of that noble couple whom we have placed under Number VI. were born four sons, Diego, Fernando, Antonio, and Fabrizio; and as many daughters, Rosa, Maria Teresa, Stephania, and Caterina. 1. Don Diego was heir of the marquisate of the Valley, and the dukedoms of Montelione and Terranova. 2. Don Ferdinand married Donna Lucretia Pignatelli, princess of Strongoli, whose son D. Salvatore took to wife donna Julia Mastrigli, of the dukes of Marigliano. 3. D. Antonio, married in Spain, an only daughter of the count of Fuentes. Of this marriage was born D. Jerom Pignatelli d'Arragon, Moncayo, &c. count of Fuentes, marquis of Goscojuela, grandee of Spain, prince of S. R. I. knight of Toson d'Oro, of St. Jago, &c. ambassador from the court of Spain to the courts of England and France, and president of the royal council of military orders; whose son, now living, has married the only daughter and heiress of Casimiro Pignatelli, count of Egmont, duke of Bisaccia, &c. knight of Toson d'Oro, and lieutenant-general of the armies of his most Christian majesty. 4. D. Fabrizio took to wife Virginia Pignatelli, sister to the princess of Strongoli, whose son, D. Michael, is marquis of Salice and Guagnano. 5. Rosa was given in marriage to the prince of Scalea. 6. Maria Teresa, to the marquis of Westerlo, Señor Boemo. 7. Stephania, to the prince of Bisignano. 8. Caterina, to the count of Acetra.



there are thirteen bissextile; the last year of the century, therefore, ought to anticipate ours by thirteen days, and not twenty-six. Consequently, the interposition of the thirteen days to adjust the year at the end of the century with the course of the sun was not superfluous. So that Gemelli said properly as to the anticipation of the day, although he erred in saying that the Mexicans began the year upon the 10th of April, as it began as we have often repeated on the 26th of February. The author of the Letters believes, that the Mexicans began their year at the vernal equinox. We are of the same opinion as to their astronomical year; but we have not ventured to affirm it as we do not know it. The ancient Spanish historians of Mexico were not astronomers, and were less attentive to explain in their histories the progress of the Mexicans in sciences than their superstitious rites. The *Mexican Cyclography*, composed by the great astronomer Siguenza, after a diligent study of the Mexican paintings, and various calculations of the eclipses and comets marked in their paintings, has not reached us.

We cannot pardon the Author of the Letters the injustice he does this great Mexican in his third Letter of the second volume, where he speaks, on the faith of Gemelli, of the pyramids of Teotihuacan. Carlos Siguenza, says that author, *imagines these pyramids anterior to the deluge*. This is not true; how could Siguenza imagine these pyramids anterior to the deluge, if he believed the population of America posterior to the confusion of tongues, and the first settlers descendants of Nephtuim, grand nephew of Noah, as Boturini attests, who saw some of the works of Siguenza? Gemelli also, on whose testimony the author of the Letters rests, gives express contradiction to this particular in his sixth volume, second book, and eighth chapter. “*No Indian historian, says this traveller, has been able to investigate the time of the erection of the pyramids of America; but D. Carlos Siguenza imagined them very ancient, and built a little time after the Deluge.*” Nor has Gemelli properly explained the opinion of Siguenza; for Dr. Eguiara, treating in the *Biblioteca Mexicana*, of the works of Siguenza, and amongst others of that which he wrote upon the peopling of America, says, that in that work he fixed the first peopling of the new world.

*paulo.*

*paulo post Babyloniam confusionem*, that is, a little after the time which Gemelli has mentioned.

With respect to some other more important points treated of in those Letters, we shall speak of them in our Dissertations, in which we shall sometimes concur, and at other times differ in opinion with the author.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

THE  
H I S T O R Y  
OF  
M E X I C O.

COLLECTED FROM  
SPANISH and MEXICAN HISTORIANS,  
FROM  
MANUSCRIPTS, and Ancient PAINTINGS of the INDIANS.

ILLUSTRATED BY  
CHARTS, and other COPPER PLATES.

TO WHICH ARE ADDED,  
CRITICAL DISSERTATIONS  
ON THE  
LAND, the ANIMALS, and INHABITANTS of MEXICO.

By Abbé D. FRANCESCO SAVERIO CLAVIGERO.

Translated from the Original ITALIAN,  
By CHARLES CULLEN, Esq.  
IN TWO VOLUMES.

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V O L. II.

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L O N D O N,  
Printed for G. G. J. and J. ROBINSON, No. 25, Pater-noster Row.  
MDCCLXXXVII.





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T H E  
H I S T O R Y  
O F  
M E X I C O.

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B O O K VIII.

*The arrival of the Spaniards upon the Coast of Anahuac. The uneasiness, embassies, and presents of Montezuma. Confederacy of the Spaniards with the Nation of the Totonacas, their War and Alliance with the Tlascalans; their Severity to the Cholulans, and their solemn Entry into Mexico. Account of the celebrated Indian Donna Marina. Foundation of Vera Cruz, the first Colony of the Spaniards.*

THE Spaniards, who ever since the year 1492, had discovered the New World, under the conduct of the celebrated Genoeſe Christopher Columbus; and, in the ſpace of a few years, ſubjected to the crown of Caſtile the principal iſlands of the Antilles, made frequent cruizes from thence to diſcover new countries, and barter European toys for American gold. In the year 1517, amongſt other adventurers, Francisco Hernandez, of Cordova, weighed anchor from the port of Ajaruco, now called the Havanna, with one hundred and ten ſoldiers, and proceeding to the weſtward by the advice of Antonio Alaminas, one of the moſt

BOOK VIII.

SECT. I.  
First voyage  
of the Spaniards to the  
coast of Anahuac.

BOOK VIII. famous and skilful pilots of that time, and then veering to the southward, discovered, in the beginning of March, the eastern cape of the peninsula of Yucatan, which they called *Capo Catoche*. They coasted along a part of that country, admiring the beautiful edifices and lofty towers which appeared upon the coast, and the (a) different coloured habits which the Indians wore; objects never before seen in the New World. The Yucatanese, on their part, marvelled at the size, the form, and decorations of their vessels. At two places where the Spaniards landed, they had some skirmishes with the Indians, in which, and by other distresses that attended them, they lost the half of their soldiers, and their captain himself received twelve wounds, which in a few days occasioned his death. Having returned precipitately to Cuba, with the accounts of their expedition, and some gold which they had robbed from a temple and brought with them for shew, they awoke the avaricious passions of Diego de Velasquez, formerly a conqueror, and then governor of that island; upon which he next year fitted out his relation Juan de Grijalva, with four vessels, and two hundred and forty soldiers. This commander, after having discovered the island of Cozumel, a few miles distant from the eastern shore of Yucatan, coasted along all that country, which lies from thence to the river Panuco, exchanging little glass balls, and such like trifling wares, for gold, which they anxiously sought, and the provisions they required.

(a) Dr. Robertson says, in book iii. that the Spaniards landed, and advancing into the country (of Yucatan), observed, with amazement, large houses built of stone. Thus he speaks where he recounts the voyage of Hernandez. But a few pages after, speaking of the voyage of Grijalva, he writes thus: *Many villages were scattered along the shore, among which, they (the Spaniards) could discern houses of stone, which at a distance appeared white and magnificent. In the heat of their imagination, they represented to themselves that these were so many cities adorned with towers and cupolas.* Among all the historians of Mexico, we have not found one who has said, that the Spaniards imagined there were cupolas in Yucatan. This idea belongs to Robertson, not to them. They thought they saw high-towers and large houses, as, in fact, they were. The temples of Yucatan, like those of Anahuac, were built for the most part in the form of towers, and were very lofty. Bernal Diaz, an author of the utmost veracity, and an eye-witness of all that happened to the Spaniards in their first voyages to Yucatan, when he speaks of the disembarkment they made in their first voyage to the coast of Campeachy, says thus: *They, the Indians, conducted us to some houses, which were large and tolerably well built of stone and lime.* From which it appears they not only saw the buildings at a distance, but approached to them and entered them. The use of lime having been so common among those nations, it is not wonderful that the practice of whitening them also was common. See our seventh book. At any rate we cannot comprehend, how a house at a distance should seem white if it really was not so.

When

When they arrived at that little island, which they called *St. Juan de Ulua* (*b*), little more than a mile distant from the shore of Chalchihucuecan; the Mexican governors of those coasts, confounded at the sight of vessels so large, and men of so strange an aspect and figure, consulted together what they should do on the occasion, and determined to repair in person to the court to give intelligence to the king of so extraordinary an occurrence. But in order to convey to him a more perfect idea of the particulars, they caused the vessels, artillery, arms, dress, and appearance of the new people to be represented in some measure by their painters; after which, they set off without farther delay to the court, to relate what had arrived upon the coast, presenting to the king, along with the paintings, some little balls of glass, which they had got from the Spaniards. Montezuma was extremely disturbed on hearing their account; but, to avoid any rash step in an affair of such consequence and alarm, he held a council with Cacamatzin, king of Acolhuacan, his nephew, Cuitlahuatzin, lord of Iztapalapan, his brother, and other twelve personages, his ordinary counsellors. After a long conference they concluded unanimously, that he who had landed upon that shore, with so great an army, could be no other person than *Quetzalcoatl*, the god of air, who had for many years been expected in that country; for there prevailed among those nations, as we have already mentioned, an ancient tradition, that such a deity, after having, by his beneficence and innocence of life, acquired the esteem and veneration of the people in Tollan, Cholula, and Onohualco, had disappeared to them, promising to return after a certain period, to govern them in peace, and render them happy. The kings of those countries considered themselves the viceroys of that god, and trustees of the crown, which they were to cede to him whenever he made his appearance. This immemorial tradition, a variety of

(*b*) They gave to this island the name of *S. Juan*; because they arrived there on the day of *S. Precursor*, and because this was the name of the commander. They called it *Ulua* also, because they found there two human victims recently sacrificed, and upon demanding, by means of signs, the reason of such barbarity, the Indians pointing towards the country of the west, answered *Acolhua*, *Acolhua*, meaning to be understood, that they did it by order of the Mexicans; as all the inhabitants of the Mexican vale were called *Acolhuas* by the people at a distance from the capital. On this little island there is at present a good fortress to defend the entry into the port of *Vera Cruz*.



**BOOK VIII.** marks observed by them in the Spaniards conforming with those which their mythology ascribed to Quetzalcoatl, the surprising largeness of the vessels compared with their little skiffs and canoes, the loud noise and force of the artillery, resembling so strongly that of the clouds, all together awed and inspired them to believe it was the god of air who had arrived upon their coasts, with all the apparatus of thunder, lightning, and divinity. Moved by this persuasion, Montezuma ordered five persons of his court to repair immediately to Chalchiuhcuecan, to make congratulations, in the name of him and the whole kingdom, to this supposed power of the air, on his happy arrival in that land, and to offer him in homage a large present; but, before he dispatched them, he previously sent orders to the governors of the coasts, to place centinels on the high mountains of Nauhtlan, Quauhtla, Miçtlan, and Tochtlan, that they might observe the motions of the armament, and send speedy advice of every thing which happened to the court. The Mexican ambassadors were unable, in spite of their utmost expedition, to overtake the Spaniards, who, when they had finished their commerce on that coast, continued their course along shore, as far as the river of Panama, from whence they returned to Cuba with ten thousand sequins in gold, part acquired in exchange for toys, part obtained in a present made to the commander by a lord of Onohualco.

**SECT. II.**  
Characters of  
the principal  
conquerors  
of Mexico.

The governor of Cuba was much displeased that Grijalva did not plant a colony in that new country, which was represented by all to be the most rich and happy in the world. Upon this he immediately fitted out another larger armament, for the command of which several of the principal colonists of that island contended; but the governor, by the advice of his confidants, committed it to Ferdinand Cortes, a person of noble birth, and sufficiently rich to be able to support, with his own private capital, and the assistance of his friends, a considerable share of the expences of the expedition. He was born in Medellin, a small city of Estremadura, in the year 1485. By the father he was *Cortes* and *Monroi*, and by his mother *Pizarro* and *Altamirano*, uniting in himself the blood of those four lineages, which were the most renowned and ancient of that city. At the age of fourteen, he was sent by his parents to Salamanca, in order that by learning the Latin tongue, and the civil law, at that famous university, he might become

become the support of his family which was reduced to poverty ; but it was not long before his military genius diverted him from study, and led him to the New World, after the example of many illustrious youths of his nation. He accompanied Diego Velasquez, in the conquest of the island of Cuba, where he gained much wealth and acquired considerable authority. He was a man of great talents, discernment, and courage, dextrous in the use of arms, fruitful in expedients and resources to carry his projects into execution, and highly ingenious in making himself be obeyed and respected even by his equals ; great in his designs and actions, cautious in operations, modest in speech, steady in his enterprises, and patient in adversity. His zeal in religion was by no means inferior to his constant and inviolable fidelity to his sovereign ; but the splendor of those and other good qualities which placed him in the rank of heroes, was sullied and darkened by some actions unworthy of his greatness of soul. His immoderate love of the sex engaged him perpetually in criminal connections, and had formerly been attended with many difficulties and much danger. His too great ardour, or rather obstinacy, in enterprises, and the fear of frustrating his hopes of fortune, made him sometimes wanting in justice, gratitude, and humanity ; but, perhaps, there never was a general and conqueror, brought up in the school of the world, in whom the virtues were not foiled by his vices. Cortes was of a good stature and well proportioned, robust and active. His chest was rather prominent, his beard black, and his eyes sparkling and amorous. Such is the portrait of the famous conqueror of Mexico, which the first historians who knew him have left us.

As soon as he found himself honoured with the post of general of the expedition, he used the utmost diligence in preparing for the voyage, and began to assume the style of a great lord, both in his carriage and in his attendants ; fully sensible of the influence such a conduct has in dazzling the vulgar, and creating authority. He immediately erected the royal standard before his house, and published a proclamation through the island to enlist soldiers. Men, the most conspicuous of all that country, both in rank and office, were emulous to put themselves under his command, namely, Alonzo Hernandez de Porto-

BOOK VIII. Portocarrero, cousin of the count de Medellin, Juan Velásquez de Leon, a near relation to the governor, Diego Ordaz, Francisco de Montejo, Francisco de Lugo, and others, whom we shall name in the course of our history. Amongst all these, Pedro de Alvarado de Badajoz, Christoval de Olid de Baeza, in Andalusia, and Gonzales de Sandoval de Medellin, merit particular mention, as they were the first commanders of the troops employed in that conquest, and those who made the most distinguished figure: all three warriors, extremely courageous, enured to the fatigues of war, and skilled in the military art, though otherwise different in character. *Alvarado* was a young man of handsome shape, and extreme agility, fair, graceful, lively, popular, addicted to luxuries and pleasures, greedy of gold, of which he stood in need to support his love of grandeur, and, as some authors affirm, unscrupulous how he obtained it, inhumane and violent in his conduct in some expeditions. *Olid* was stout limbed, dark, and double. Both of them were very serviceable to Cortes in the conquest; but they proved ungrateful to him afterwards, and met with a tragical end. *Alvarado* died in New Galicia, killed by a horse which tumbled from a precipice. *Olid* was beheaded by his enemies in the square or market-place of Naco, in the province of Honduras. *Sandoval*, a youth of a good family, was scarcely twenty-two when he enlisted in the expedition of his countryman Cortes. He was well-shaped, manly in stature, and of a robust complexion, his hair was of a chesnut colour and curly, his voice strong and thick; a person of few words but excellent deeds. Cortes sent him on the most difficult and dangerous expeditions, in all of which he came off with success and with honour. In the war against the Mexicans, he headed a part of the Spanish army, and at the siege of the capital, he had more than thirty thousand men under his command, continually enjoying from his good conduct the favour of the general, the respect of the soldiers, and even the love of his enemies. He founded the colony of Medellin, on the coast of Chalchiuhcucan, and that of Spirito Santo, on the river Coatzacoalco. He was commander of the garrison of Vera Cruz, and some time governor of Mexico; and in all his employments his equity was conspicuous. He was constant and assiduous in labour, obedient and faithful

ful



ful to his general, kind to the soldiers, humane (c) to his enemies, and entirely free from the prevailing contagion of avarice. In short, in all the series of conquerors, we do not find a more accomplished or praiseworthy character, as there was no one among them who knew so well how to unite prudence and discretion with the ardour of youth, bravery and intrepidity with humanity, modesty with merit, and humility with success. He died in the flower of his age at a place of Andalusia, on his way to the court of Spain with Cortes.

As soon as all the preparations for the voyage were made, the governor of Cuba, from the suggestions and insinuations of the rivals of Cortes, recalled his commission, and ordered him to be imprisoned; but those who were charged with his apprehension had not courage to attempt it, from seeing so many respectable and brave men united to support the part of their new general; so that Cortes who had not only spent all his own capital in preparations, but also contracted large debts, retained his post in spite of his enemies; and having all things in order and readiness, weighed anchor from the port of Ajaruco upon the 10th of February, 1519. The armament consisted of eleven vessels, five hundred and eight soldiers, divided into eleven companies, one hundred and nine seamen, sixteen horses, ten pieces of cannon, and four falconets. They steered under the direction of the pilot Alami-

SECT. III.  
Armament  
and voyage  
of Cortes.

(c) Dr. Robinson accuses Sandoval of that horrid example of severity made of the *Panuchese*, where the Spaniards burned sixty lords and four hundred nobles, under the eyes of their children and kindred, and cites the testimony of Cortez and Gomara; but Cortes neither affirms that Sandoval executed that punishment, nor even names it. Bernal Diaz, whose authority in this point is more to be depended on than Gomara, says, that Sandoval after he had conquered the Panuchese, and taken twenty lords, and some other persons of note prisoners, wrote to Cortes to know his determination with respect to them; and Cortes, in order to make their condemnation more justifiable, submitted the process to Diego de Ocampo, judge of that province, who, after having heard their confession, sentenced them to be burned, which judgment was executed. Bernal Diaz does not express the number of those who were condemned; Cortes says, that including lords and other principal persons, four hundred were burned. Such a sentence was no doubt cruel and severe; but Robertson, who calls many reproaches on the Spaniards, ought to have evinced his impartiality by declaring the motives which they had to act so violently against the *Panuchese*. The latter having subjected themselves to the crown of Spain, renounced their obedience, and, running to arms, disturbed that whole province; they killed four hundred Spaniards, forty of whom they burned alive and eat the others. Such atrocious doings are not sufficient to excuse the Spaniards, but they certainly extenuate the severity of their conduct. Robertson read equally in Gomara of the rebellious deeds of the *Panuchese*, and the rigour of the Spaniards, but he conceals the former and exaggerates the latter.

nos,

**BOOK VIII.** nos, to the island of Cozumel, where they recovered Jerom de Aguilar, a Spanish dean, who, in going from Darien to the island of Hispaniola a few years before, had been shipwrecked on the coast of Yucatan, and was made a slave to the Indians. Hearing of the arrival of the Spaniards at Cozumel, he obtained liberty from his master, and joined the fleet. From long commerce with the Yucatanese, he had learned the Maja language which is spoken there, on which account he obtained the office of interpreter to Cortes.

**SECT. IV.**  
Victory of  
the Spaniards  
in Tabasco.

From Cozumel they proceeded along the coast of the peninsula of Yucatan to the river Chiapa, in the province of Tabasco, by which they advanced into the country, in barges and the smallest vessels, until they reached a grove of palm-trees, where they landed under pretence of wanting water and provisions, directed their course to a large village, which was not quite two miles distance, combating all the way with a croud of Indians, who annoyed their progress with arrows, darts, and other offensive weapons, and forcing through the palisadoes which they had placed for their defence. The Spaniards having made themselves masters of the village, made frequent excursions among the neighbouring places, in which they had many dangerous skirmishes, until at last there happened a decisive engagement on the 25th day of March. The battle was fought on the plains of Ceutla, a village but a little distance from the other. The army of the enemy was much superior in number; but in spite of their multitude they were entirely defeated, on account of the superior discipline of the Spaniards, the advantage of their arms, and the terror struck into the Indians by the size and fire of their horses. Eight hundred of the enemy remained dead upon the field. Of the Spaniards, one was killed, and more than sixty wounded. This victory was the beginning of the success of the Spaniards, in memory of which they founded a small city there, which they named *Madonna della Vittoria* (*d*), and was afterwards for a long time the capital of that province. They endeavoured to justify their hostilities by the repeated protestations which they made to the

(*d*) The city of Victoria was depopulated entirely about the middle of the last century, on account of the frequent invasions of the English. Another small city was afterwards founded at a greater distance from the court, which they called *Malaberm* (*fa*); but the capital of this province, where the governor resides, is *Tlacoatlalpan*.

natives before they came to any engagement, that they were not come into their country to do them any injury as enemies, but solely as navigators necessitated to procure, by the exchange of their merchandizes, the provisions which they required to continue their voyage; to which protests, the Indians answered with a shower of arrows and darts. Cortes took solemn possession of that country in the name of his sovereign, with a strange ceremony, though agreeable to the cavalier customs and ideas of that century. He put on his shield, unsheathed his sword, and gave three stabs with it to a large tree which was in the principal village, declaring, that if any person durst oppose his possession, he would defend it with that sword.

To confirm more formally the dominion of his king, he assembled the lords of that province, and persuaded them to render him obedience, and to acknowledge him as their lawful sovereign; and to impress them with an elevated idea of the power of his king, he made before them a discharge of the artillery, and by artifices imposed upon them the belief, that the neighing of the horses was a mark of their indignation at the enemies of the Spaniards. They all appeared to acquiesce in the proposals of the conqueror, and listened with wonder and pleasure to hear the first truths of the Christian religion, which Bartolomeo de Olmedo, a learned divine, and chaplain to the expedition, declared to them by the interpreter Aguilar. They presented afterwards to Cortes, in token of their submission, some little articles of gold, several garments of coarse linen, as they made use of no others in that province, and twenty female slaves, which were divided among the officers of his troops.

Among these was a young girl of noble birth, beauty, quick genius, and great spirit, a native of Painalla, a village of the Mexican province of Coatzacualco (*c*). Her father had been a feudatory of the crown

SECT. V.  
Account of  
the famous  
Indian Donna  
Marina.

(*c*) In a manuscript history, which was in the library of the college of St. Peter and St. Paul of the Jesuits of Mexico, it is said, that D. Marina was born in Huilotla, a village of Coatzacualco. Gomara, who is copied by Herrera and Torquemada, says, she was a native of Xalisco, and taken from thence by some merchants of Xicallanco, and carried to their country; but this is most probably false; as Xalisco is more than nine hundred miles distant from Xicallanco, and it is not known that there was any commerce between these two provinces so remote from each other. Bernal Diaz, who lived a long time in Coatzacualco, and knew the mother and brother of Marina, confirms the truth of our account, and avers to have heard it



BOOK VIII. crown of Mexico, and lord of several places. Her mother having been left a widow, married another noble, by whom she had a son. The love which they bore to this fruit of their marriage, induced them to pretend the death of their first-born child, that the inheritance might fall wholly to the last. To make it appear credible, they delivered her up privately to some merchants of Xicallanco, a city situated upon the borders of Tabasco, at a time when the daughter of one of their slaves had died, for whose death they made as much mourning as if it had been the death of their own. These merchants gave her away, or sold her to their neighbours of Tabasco, who, lastly, presented her to Cortes, unsuspecting that that singular slave should contribute by her speech to the conquest of all that land. Besides the native language of her own country, she understood the Maja language which was spoke in Yucatan and in Tabasco, and in a little time she learnt the Spanish. Instructed readily in the tenets of the Christian religion, she was solemnly baptised with other slaves by the name of Marina (*f*). She was always faithful to the Spaniards, and her services to them can never be over-rated; as she was not only the instrument of their negotiations with the Mexicans, the Tlascalans, and the other nations of Anahuac, but frequently saved their lives, by warning them of dangers, and pointing out the means of escaping them. She accompanied Cortes in all his expeditions, serving sometimes as an interpreter, sometimes as a counsellor, and sometimes to her misfortune as a mistress. The son which she had by that conqueror, who was called Don Martin Cortes, knight of the military order of St. Ja-go, on account of some ill-grounded suspicions of rebellion, was put to the torture in Mexico, in the year 1568; his iniquitous and barbarous judges paying no regard to the memory of the unequalled services rendered by the parents of that illustrious sufferer to the Catholic king and all the Spanish nation (*g*). After the conquest she was

from Marina herself. A tradition also, which is still preserved in Coatzacoalco, conforms to what we have said.

(*f*) The Mexicans adapt the name Marina to their language, and say *Malintzin*, whence came the name *Malinchi*, by which she is known among the Spaniards of Mexico.

(*g*) Those who gave the torture to Don Martin Cortes, and put the marquis of the Vale, his brother, in prison, were two formidable judges sent to Mexico by Philip II. The chief of those judges called *Mugnoz*, made such barbarous decisions, that the king being moved by the

was married to a respectable Spaniard, named Juan de Xaramillo. During the long and hazardous voyage which she made in company with Cortes to the province of Honduras, in 1524, she had occasion in passing through her native country to see her mother and her brother, who presented themselves before her, bathed in tears and covered with confusion, as they dreaded that from her being in power and prosperity, under the protection of the Spaniards, she would revenge the wrongs which had been done to her in her infancy; but she received and caressed them with great affection, from the naturally generous disposition of her temper, which equalled the other excellent talents she possessed. We have thought proper not to omit those incidents of a woman who was the first Christian of the Mexican empire, who makes so distinguished a figure in the history of the conquest, and whose name has been and is still so celebrated, not less among the Mexicans than the Spaniards.

Cortes having made himself secure of the tranquillity of Tabasco, and perceiving that it was not the country to yield gold, resolved to prosecute his voyage and seek for a region more rich than it; but as the festival of the palms drew near, he was desirous of giving the natives of Tabasco some idea of the solemnity of the Christian religion. That day mass was celebrated with all the possible forms of sacred duty; the branches were blessed, and a solemn procession, with martial music, was made, at all which the Indians were present, and listened with astonishment and awe.

This function being performed, and leave taken of the lords of Tabasco, the armament put to sea, and steering to the westward, after coasting along the province of Coatzacoalco, and crossing the mouth of the river Papaloapan, it entered the port of St. Juan de Ulua, on Holy Thursday, the 21st of April. They had hardly cast anchor, when they saw from the shore of Chalchiuhcuecan two large canoes rowing towards their admiral, in which were many Mexicans sent by the governor of that coast, to know who they were who had arrived in that new armament, and what they wanted, and to offer them all

the complaints of the Mexicans against him, recalled him to the court, and gave him so severe and so harsh a reprimand, that he grew melancholy and died.

BOOK VIII. the assistance which they required for the prosecution of their voyage: a piece of attention which shewed the vigilance and hospitality of that nation. Having come on board of the commander's ship, and presented themselves to Cortes in forms of civility, they explained their commission by means of Donna Marina and Aguilar, as from her not understanding the Spanish, nor he the Mexican, it was necessary at these first conferences with the Mexicans, to employ three languages and two interpreters. Donna Marina explained to Aguilar in the Maja tongue what the Mexicans said to her in their language, and Aguilar repeated it in Spanish to Cortes. This general courteously received the Mexicans, and knowing how acceptable the European toys had been to them the year before, answered, that he had come into that country for no other purpose than to traffick with them, and to treat with their king about some affairs of the utmost importance, and in order to conciliate their favour, he made them taste some Spanish wine, and presented them with some small trifles which he judged would be worthy their acknowledgment (*b*).

On the first day of Easter, after the Spaniards had landed, and disembarked their cavalry and artillery, and had, with the assistance of the Mexicans, made barracks of the branches of trees upon that sandy shore, where at present stands the city of new Vera Cruz, two Mexican governors of that coast, named Teuhtlile and Cuitlalpitoc (*i*), ar-

(*b*) Torquemada says, that Montezuma having been apprised of the new armament which his centinels, who were placed on the mountains, had observed, immediately dispatched his ambassadors to pay worship to the imagined god Quetzalcoatl; they proceeding with the utmost expedition to the port of Chalchiuhcuecan, went instantly on board of the admiral, on the very day of the arrival of the Spaniards; that Cortes, attending to their error and willing to profit by it, received them sitting upon a high throne that had hastily been formed, where he suffered himself to be adored, to be clothed in the sacerdotal habit of Quetzalcoatl, a necklace of gems to be put about his neck, and a helmet or vizor of gold, set with gems, to be put on his head, &c. but this is unquestionably false. The fleet departed from the river of Tabasco on Holy Monday, and arrived on Thursday at the port of Ulua. The mountains of Tochtlan and Mictlan, from whence the fleet could most quickly be discovered, are not less than three hundred miles distant from the capital, nor are they less than two hundred from the port of Ulua: so that had it even been possible to have descried the fleet the very day on which it left Tabasco, it was impossible for the ambassadors to have arrived there on Thursday. Besides, there is no memory of such an event in any author, it rather appears from the account of Bernal Diaz to be totally false, and that the Mexicans were now sensible of their error into which they had been led by the first fleet which had appeared there.

(*i*) Bernal Diaz writes *Tendili* instead of Teuhtlile, and *Pitalpitoqui* in place of Cuitlalpitoc. Herrera calls it *Pitalpitoc*, and Solis, and Robertson, who thought to amend it, *Pilpatoc*.  
rived



rived there with a great retinue of attendants. Ceremonies of civility and respect being exchanged on both sides, before any conference took place, Cortes, not less for the sake of prospering his future designs, than of giving that idolatrous nation some idea of the Christian religion, ordered that mass should be celebrated in their presence. On this occasion, therefore, it was sung with all possible solemnity for the first time in the dominions of Mexico.

He invited them afterwards to dine with him and his officers, in order to obtain their good will towards him by courtesies. As soon as they rose from table, he led them aside to communicate his pretensions to them. He told them that he was a subject of Don Carlos of Austria, the greatest king of the East, whose bounty, grandeur, and power, he extolled with most magnificent praises; and added, that this great monarch knowing of that land, and of the lord who reigned there, sent him to make him a visit in his name, and to communicate to him in person some affairs of great importance; and that therefore he would be glad to know when it would please their lord to hear his embassy. "You are scarcely arrived in this land," answered Teuhtlile, "and yet you desire immediately to see our king. I have listened with pleasure to what you have told me concerning the grandeur and bounty of your sovereign, but know, that our king is not less bountiful and great; I rather wonder that there should exist another in the world more powerful than he; but as you assert it, I will make it known to my sovereign, from whose goodness I trust, that he will not only have pleasure in receiving intelligence of that great prince, but will likewise do honour to his ambassador. Accept in the meantime this present which I offer you in his name." Upon which taking out from a *petlacalli*, or little basket of woven reeds, several admirable pieces of workmanship of gold, he presented them to Cortes, with various works of feathers, ten loads of garments of fine cotton, and a considerable quantity of provisions (*k*).

(*k*) Solis and Robertson make Teuhtlile general of the armies, and deprive him of the civil government of that coast, whereas we know the contrary from Bernal Diaz, Gomara, and other ancient historians. Those authors say besides, that in the beginning Teuhtlile opposed Cortes in his design of going to the court, but it appears from the testimony of ancient and better historians, he did not oppose him until he had a positive order from his king to that purpose.

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Cortes accepted the present with singular demonstrations of gratitude, and returned for them things of small value, though equally prized by them, either because they were entirely new in that country, or from the brilliancy of their appearance. Teuhtlile had brought many painters with him, in order that by dividing the objects among them of which the armament consisted, they might in a short time copy them all; and that their king might have the pleasure of beholding, with his own eyes, all the wonders which they had to relate to him. Cortes perceiving their intention, in order to furnish their painters with a subject capable of making a grander impression on the mind of their king, commanded his cavalry to muster on the beach, and go through some military evolutions, and the artillery to be discharged in a volley. Both orders were observed, and the exhibition attended to with all the stupor and amazement imaginable by the two governors, their numerous retinue, and croud of followers, which as Gomara affirms, consisted of more than four thousand Indians. Teuhtlile took notice of a gilded visor, or mask, which, from its resemblance to that belonging to one of the principal idols of Mexico, he demanded from Cortes that they might shew it to their king; and Cortes granted it, on condition of having it returned to him full of gold dust, under a pretence that he desired to see whether the gold, which was dug from the mines of Mexico, was the same as that of his native country (1).

As soon as the paintings were finished, Teuhtlile took a friendly leave of Cortes, proposing to return in a few days with the answer of his sovereign, and deputing Cuitlalpitoc in his place, that he might provide the Spaniards with every thing necessary, he departed for Cuitlactlan, the place of his usual residence; from whence he carried in person the intelligence, the paintings, and present from the Spanish general, as Bernal Dias and Torquemada affirm, or he sent them all as Solis conjectures by the posts, or couriers, who were stationed on the highways, always ready to run with dispatches.

(1) Some historians say, that Cortes in demanding the visor to be filled with gold, pretended that he and his companions suffered a certain disease of the heart, which they said, could not be cured by any other remedy than this precious metal, but that imports little as to the substance of the fact.

It is easy to imagine the uneasiness and perplexity into which Montezuma was thrown by the news of that armament, and the distinct information he had of the character of those strangers, the fire of their horses, and the destructive violence of their arms. As he was eminently superstitious, he made his gods be consulted with respect to their pretensions, and he received for answer as is reported, that he ought never to admit that new people into his court. Whether this oracle, as some authors are persuaded, came from the devil, who delivered it, in order to keep every path shut to the gospel, or as we apprehend from the priests, for the common benefit of themselves and the nation, Montezuma resolved from that time to refuse admission to the Spaniards; but that he might appear to act with propriety, and to follow the dictates of his own genius, he sent an embassy to them with a present entirely worthy of his royal magnificence. The ambassador was a great personage of the court, not a little similar in stature and shape to the Spanish general, as an eye-witness has reported (*m*). Seven days were hardly elapsed after the departure of Teuhtlile, before he returned, accompanying the ambassador, conducting also more than an hundred men of burden, who carried the present (*n*). As soon as the ambassador was come into the presence of Cortes, he touched the earth with his hand, and then lifted it to his mouth, according to the custom of those nations, offered (*o*) incense to the general and other officers who were beside him, saluted them respectfully, and sitting down

## BOOK VIII.

Uneasiness of  
Montezuma.

First embassy  
and present  
sent by him  
to Cortes.

(*m*) Bernal Diaz.

(*n*) Bernal Diaz calls this ambassador *Quintalbor*, but such a name neither is nor can be Mexican. Robertson says, that the same officers who had hitherto treated with Cortes, were charged to bear the royal answer to him, and makes no mention of the ambassador; but both Bernal Diaz, an eye-witness, and other Spanish and Indian historians affirm what we have said. Solis, in consideration of the short interval of seven days, and the distance of seventy leagues between that port and the capital, could not be persuaded that an ambassador came at that time; but having said a little before, that the Mexican posts were more diligent than the European posts, it is not wonderful that in one day, or a little more, they should have carried intelligence of the fleet to the court, and the ambassador should have come in four or five days after in a litter, borne on the shoulders of the same posts, as was the custom among those people. As the fact is not improbable, we ought rather to believe Bernal Diaz, who was an eye-witness.

(*o*) The offering of incense to the Spaniards, although it was merely a piece of civil courtesy, and the name *Tecuhtin* (lords or gentlemen), by which they are addressed, being somewhat similar to that of *Teteo* (gods), made them believe that they were imagined to be gods by the Mexicans.

upon



## BOOK VIII.

upon a seat which Cortes placed for him, pronounced his harangue, which was a congratulation to that general in the name of his king, upon his happy arrival in that country, an intimation of the pleasure he had received in knowing that men so gallant and brave had landed in his kingdom, and in hearing the news which they had brought from so great a monarch, and to express how acceptable his gift had been : upon which, in token of his royal pleasure he had sent him that present. Having said this, he made some fine mats and cotton cloths be spread upon the ground, upon which were placed in order and form the whole substance of the present. It consisted of various works of gold and silver, still more valuable on account of the wonderful workmanship than of those precious metals, among which some were gems admirably set, and others figures of lions, tygers, apes, and other animals ; of thirty loads or bales of the very finest cotton, of various colours, and in part interwoven with the most beautiful feathers ; of several excellent works of feathers, embellished with many little figures of gold, and a visor full of gold in dust, as Cortes desired, valued at fifteen hundred sequins ; but the most valuable things of the whole were two wheels, the one of gold, the other of silver ; that of gold, representing, as we have said already, the Mexican century, had the image of the sun engraved in the middle, round which were different figures in bass relief. The circumference of it was thirty palms of Toledo, and the value of it ten thousand sequins (*p*). The one of silver, in which the Mexican year was represented, was still larger, with a moon in the middle, surrounded also with figures in bass relief. The Spaniards were not less amazed than pleased with the view of such riches. “ This present,” added the ambassador, addressing himself to Cortes, “ my sovereign sends for you and your companions ; “ as for your king, he will in a short time send some jewels of inestimable value. In the mean while, you may remain upon this shore “ as long as it may be agreeable, to repose after the fatigues of so long “ a voyage, and to provide yourselves with necessaries to return to “ your native country. If you desire any other thing of this country

(*p*) There is a great difference among authors respecting the value of the plate ; but we give more faith to Bernal Diaz who knew it well, than to one who was to have his share in the present from Montezuma.

“ for your sovereign, it shall be given you immediately ; but with respect to your demand of visiting our court, I am charged to dissuade you from so difficult and hazardous a journey, as the way to it lies through uninhabited deserts, and the countries of enemies.” Cortes received the present with the most particular expressions of gratitude for the royal beneficence, and made the best returns to it in his power ; but without abandoning his request, he begged of the ambassador to represent to the king the dangers and distresses which they had suffered in their navigation, and the displeasure which his sovereign would feel when he found his hopes frustrated ; that besides, neither dangers nor fatigues were sufficient to divert the Spaniards from their undertakings. The ambassador agreed to make this report to the king, and politely took leave of Cortes along with Teutlile ; Cuitlalpiloc being left behind with a vast number of people, in a hamlet which they had formed of small huts, at a little distance from the camp of the Spaniards.

Cortes, in the midst of all that prosperity which he had hitherto met with, perceived that he could not long remain at that station ; for besides the inconvenience of heat and insects, which swarm upon that shore, he was apprehensive of some damage to his ships from the north wind, to which that harbour is exposed ; on which account he dispatched two vessels, under the command of Montejo, to coast along the shore, towards Panuco, and find another more secure port. They returned in a few days with the intelligence of having found, thirty-six miles from Uluu, a sufficient harbour, near to a city placed in a strong situation.

In the mean time, Teutlile returned to the camp of the Spaniards, and after taking Cortes aside with the interpreters, he told him, that his lord Montezuma gratefully accepted the new present which he had sent him ; and that that which he had sent on his part now was destined for the great king of Spain ; that he wished him all sort of happiness, but that he desired no more messages to be sent to him, nor to hear any farther propositions of a visit to his court. The present for the Catholic king consisted of various works of gold, which were estimated to be worth fifteen hundred sequins, ten bales of most curious robes of feathers, and of four gems, so highly valued by the Mexicans,

SECT. VIII.  
Montezuma's present  
to the Catholic king.

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that, according to what Teuhtlile himself affirmed, each was worth a load of gold. That undiscerning king flattered himself that he should induce the Spaniards by his liberality to abandon that country, and did not reflect that the love of gold is a passion which grows by what it feeds on. Cortes was mortified with the refusal of the king; but he did not give up his intention, the native constancy of his temper being strengthened by the alluring prospect of riches.

Teuhtlile, before he departed, observed, that the Spaniards on hearing the stroke of the bell for Ave Mary, kneeled down before a holy cross, and in wonder at it, asked why they adored that piece of wood. Upon this Olmedo took occasion to explain to him the first articles of the Christian religion, and represented to him the abomination of worshipping idols, and the inhumanity of their sacrifices. But his discourse was not comprehended, and the attempt proved fruitless.

The following day the Spaniards found themselves so deserted by the Mexicans, that there was not one to be seen on all the coast; this was unquestionably the effect of the order given by their king to recall all the people with the provisions destined for those strangers, if they persisted in their daring resolution. A novelty of this kind caused a sudden consternation among the Spaniards, as they dreaded every moment the whole power of that vast empire might pour down upon their miserable camp. Upon which, Cortes made their provisions be secured in the ships, and ordered his troops to be armed for their defence. It is certain that Montezuma, upon this as well as on many other occasions, might easily have totally destroyed those few strangers who were to bring so many misfortunes upon him; but providence preserved them to become the instruments of his views in that new world. We do not mean to justify the design and conduct of the conquerors, but neither can we avoid tracing in the series of the conquest the destiny which prepared the ruin of that empire.

SECT. IX.  
Embassy of  
the lord of  
Chempoalla,  
and its consequences,

On the same day, during this state of suspense of the Spaniards, two soldiers who kept guard without the camp, saw five men coming towards them, different in some degree from the Mexicans in their dress and in their ornaments, who upon being conducted to the Spanish general, said in Mexican, as their own language was not understood, that they were of the nation of the Totanacas, and sent by the lord of Chempoalla,



poalla, a city twenty-four miles distant from that place, to pay his respects to them, to know who they were and whence they came, and to request them to repair to that city, where they would be kindly received; adding, that they had not approached the camp sooner for fear of the Mexicans. The lord of Chempoalla was one of those feudatories, who lived impatient under the Mexican yoke. Having heard of the victory obtained by the Spaniards in Tabasco, and their arrival at that port, he thought the occasion the most favourable to throw off the Mexican yoke, with the assistance of such brave people. Cortes, who wished for nothing more earnestly than such an alliance, after informing himself sufficiently of the state and condition of the Totonacas, and the wrongs they suffered from the great power of the Mexicans, answered, with thanks to the Chempoallese chief for his courtesy, and a promise to visit him without delay.

He immediately published his departure for Chempoalla; but before that, it was necessary to overcome some obstacles to it, which his own soldiers threw in the way. Some adherents to the governor of Cuba, tired out with the hardships which they suffered, intimidated by the dangers which now presented themselves, and become desirous of repose, and longing for the conveniencies and comforts of their homes, most earnestly conjured the general to return to Cuba, exaggerating the scarcity of their provisions, and the rashness of so great an undertaking, as to oppose, with so small a number of soldiers, the vast power of the king of Mexico; especially, after they had lost on those sands thirty-five men, part of those by the wounds received in the battle of Tabasco, part from the unwholsomeness of the air of that shore. Cortes, by means of presents and promises, and also by means of a little severity opportunely exerted, and other arts suggested to him by his fertility of genius, so well managed his corps, that he not only pacified the discontented, and induced them to remain willingly in that country; but, proceeding farther in his negociations, brought it about that the army, in the name of the king, and without any dependance on the governor of Cuba, should confirm him in the supreme civil and military command; and that on account of the expences already, and hereafter to be laid out by him upon the armament, a fifth part of the gold which might be acquired should be assigned to him;

BOOK VIII. after the share belonging to their king was deducted. He also created magistrates, and appointed all other officers proper for a colony, which he intended to plant on that coast.

Having surmounted these difficulties, and taken suitable measures for the execution of his great designs, he began his march with the troops. His intention was not only to recruit the strength of his fatigued people, who had suffered from that unhealthy shore, and to seek new alliances, but likewise to chuse a good situation for the foundation of the colony, as Chempoalla was upon the way to Chiahuitztla (*q*), the new harbour discovered by Montejo. The little army marched with a part of the artillery towards Chempoalla in cautious order, well prepared to defend itself, if they should chance to be attacked either by the Totonacas, of whose sincerity they were not perfectly secure, or by the Mexicans whom they supposed they had offended by their resolution; a caution which no good general ever thought superfluous, and which was never neglected by Cortes in times of the greatest prosperity, always of use to maintain military discipline, and in general necessary for security. The ships proceeded along shore to the port of Chiahuitztla.

When they arrived within three miles of Chempoalla, twenty respectable Chempoallese inhabitants came out to meet the army, and presented to Cortes a refreshment of ananas, and other fruits, in the name of their lord, and made his excuse that he had not come in person to meet him, as he was prevented from doing so. They entered the city, in the order of battle, being suspicious of some treachery from the inhabitants. A light horseman having advanced as far as the greater square of the city, and seeing a bastion of the palace of that lord, which, on account of its having been fresh whitened and well polished, made a bright reflexion of the sun, he imagined it was silver, and returned full speed to acquaint the general of it. This incident is sufficient to shew, how much the mind may be deceived and deluded by the predominance of any particular passion. The Spaniards proceeded through the streets, not less delighted than amazed at seeing

(*q*) Solis and Robertson give to Chiahuitztla the name of *Quiabizlan*, which neither is nor can be Mexican.

such a city, the largest which they had seen in the New World, so full of inhabitants and beautiful gardens. Some, on account of its largeness, called it *Seville*, and others *Villaviciosa*, on account of its pleasantness (r)

When they arrived at the greater temple, the lord of that state came to receive them at the entrance; though inactive on account of his immoderate fatness, he was a person of discernment and some genius. After having saluted according to the custom of that country, and offered incense to the general, he took leave, promising to return as soon as they had reposed after the fatigues of their journey. The whole Spanish troop were lodged in large handsome buildings, within the enclosure of the temple, which were either built on purpose for the accommodation of strangers, or destined for the habitation of the ministers of the idols. Here they were well entertained, and provided with every thing they wanted at the expence of that lord, who returned to them after dinner, in a portable chair or litter, accompanied by a number of nobility. In the secret conference which he had with him, Cortes, by means of his interpreters, boasted the grandeur and power of his sovereign, by whom he was sent into that country, and charged with several commissions of the utmost importance, and amongst others, an injunction to succour and relieve oppressed innocence. "If therefore," he added, "I can serve you in any thing with my person and my troops, name it to me, I will do it cheerfully." On hearing these proposals, the Chempoallese chief fetched a deep sigh, which was followed by a bitter complaint of the misfortunes of his nation. He told him, that the state of the Totonacas had, from time immemorial, been free, and governed by lords of their own nation; but within a few years since, had been oppressed with the rigorous yoke of the Mexicans, who, on the contrary, from a humble commencement, had raised themselves to such a pitch of grandeur, by a

(r) We cannot doubt of the ancient greatness of Chempoalla, considering the testimony of authors who saw it, and the extent of its ruins. It is impossible to conclude any thing about it, from the account given by Torquemada, as in one place he makes the inhabitants amount to twenty or thirty thousand, in another place to fifty thousand one hundred and eleven, and in the Index to Vol. I. to an hundred and fifty thousand. To Chempoalla the same thing occurred which happened to all the other cities of the New World, that is, that with diseases, and the vexations of the sixteenth century, it gradually dwindled until at last it was entirely depopulated.



## BOOK VIII.

firm and steady alliance with the kings of Acolhuacan and Tlacopan; that they had rendered themselves masters of all that land; that their power was excessive, and their tyranny in proportion; that the king of Mexico engrossed to himself the gold of his subjects, and that the receivers of the tributes, besides other cruelties and oppression, demanded of the tributaries their sons for sacrifices, and their daughters for violation. Cortes appeared moved with compassion for his misfortunes, and offered to give him his assistance in every thing; deferring until another occasion to treat of the manner of doing it; as he was then pressed to go to Chiahuitzla to examine into the state of his vessels. At this visit the Chempoallese chief made him a present of some works of gold, which it is said were worth a thousand sequins.

The next day four hundred men of burden presented themselves to Cortes, being sent to him by that lord to transport his baggage; and it was then he learned from donna Marina the custom which prevailed among those nations, to furnish of their own accord, without any motive of interest, such people of burden to every respectable person who passed through their city.

SECT. X.  
Imprison-  
ment of five  
royal minis-  
ters in Chia-  
huitzla.

From Chempoalla, the Spaniards advanced to Chiahuitzla, a small city, situated upon a steep and rocky mountain, a little more than twelve miles from Chempoalla towards the north, and three from the new port. Here Cortes had another conference with the lord of that city, and the lord of Chempoalla, who, for this purpose, made himself be transported hither. At the same time that they were deliberating upon the means of releasing themselves from the Mexican yoke, there arrived at that city, with a great retinue, five noble Mexicans, the receivers of the royal tributes, who expressed the utmost indignation against the Totonacas, for having dared to receive these strangers without the royal consent, and demanded twenty human victims to sacrifice to their gods in expiation of their crime. The whole city was disturbed, and particularly the two lords, who considered themselves the most guilty. Cortes having learned from donna Marina the cause of their disquiet, found an extraordinary expedient to relieve them from their embarrassment. He suggested to the two lords the bold design of apprehending the royal receivers and putting them in prison; and though at first they refused to do so, from its appearing too rash and dangerous

dangerous an attempt, they at last yielded to his entreaties. They accordingly imprisoned those five nobles, who had entered their city with so much pride and with so much disdain for the Spaniards, that they had not even deigned to look at them as they passed by them.

The Totonacas had hardly taken this step, when, encouraged by it, they almost would have proceeded to sacrifice them that very night, had they not been dissuaded from it by Cortes, who having conciliated by that measure the love and respect of the Totonacas, intended to gain the good-will of the Mexicans by liberating the prisoners. His artful double conduct lays open his disposition; but it cannot be commended, except by those courtiers who know no other system than the art of deceit, and who, regardless of honour, pursue interest alone in their actions. Cortes gave orders therefore to his guards, to take at night two of the Mexicans out of the prison, and bring them secretly before him, so as they might not be observed by any of the inhabitants of the city. The order was obeyed, and the Mexicans found themselves so much obliged to the Spanish general, that they made him a thousand acknowledgments, and advised him not to trust to the barbarous and perfidious Totonacas. Cortes charged them to explain to their sovereign his great displeasure at the attempt of those mountaineers against his ministers; but as he had put them two at liberty, he would also set the others free. They departed immediately for the court, escorted by some Spaniards, in a vessel from thence to the borders of the province; and Cortes, the day after, pretended extreme anger at the guards through whose neglect the prisoners had escaped; and that the same accident might not happen again, he proposed to secure the others in a more close prison; and to make this be believed, he made them be conducted in chains aboard his vessels, from which he soon after set them at liberty like the first.

The report soon spread through all the mountains of the Totonacas, that they were relieved from the tribute which they paid to the King of Mexico, and that if there were any other receivers of the tributes, there they should let it be known immediately, that they might be seized. At the sound of this intelligence, the sweet hope of liberty revived in the whole nation, and several other lords came speedily to that city to thank their supposed deliverer, and deliberate upon measures

SECT. XI.  
Confederacy  
of the Totonacas with  
the Spaniards.

BOOK VIII. to secure their liberty. Some persons, who had not yet banished from their minds the fear of the Mexicans, proposed that they should ask pardon of the king for the outrage committed upon his ministers; but from the suggestions of Cortes, and the lords of Chempoalla and Chiahuitztla, the opposite sentiment prevailed: it was resolved therefore to free themselves from the tyrannical dominions of the Mexicans, with the assistance of those brave strangers, by putting a formidable army under the command of the Spanish General.

Cortes, having sufficiently assured himself of the sincerity of the Totonacas, and informed himself of their force, seized this favourable moment to bring that numerous nation under obedience to the Catholic king. This act was celebrated in the presence of the notary of the army, and with every other legal solemnity.

SECT. XII.  
Foundation  
of Vera Cruz.

This affair being happily concluded, Cortes took leave of those lords, to put another project in execution, of the greatest importance, which he had formed some time before; that was, to plant a strong colony on this coast, which should be a retreat for them in times of disaster, a fortress to hold the Totonacas to the fidelity which they had sworn to the Spaniards, a place of descent for the new troops which might arrive there either to their assistance from Spain, or the Antilles, and a magazine for the stores which might be sent to them by their countrymen, or which they might desire to send to Europe. This colony was founded therefore in the country of the Totonacas, in a plain which lies at the foot of the mountain of Chiahuitztla, twelve miles from Chempoalla towards the north, and adjoining to the new harbour (s). They called it *Villarica* (or rich city) of Vera Cruz, on account of the great appearance of riches they had seen there, and because they had disembarked them on Holy Friday; and this was the first colony of the

(s) Almost all Historians have committed a mistake concerning the founding of Vera Cruz; as they say the first colony of the Spaniards was *Antigua*, or the ancient settlement on the river of that name; and believe that there were only two places of that name, that is, ancient Vera Cruz and the new Vera Cruz, settled on the same sands where Cortes disembarked: but without doubt there have been three places of the name of Vera Cruz. The first settled in 1519, close to the port of Chiahuitztla, which retained afterwards only the name of *Villarica*; the second, the ancient Vera Cruz, settled in 1523 or 4; and the third, the New Vera Cruz, which still preserves the name of Vera Cruz, and was settled, by order of the Count of Monterus, Viceroy of Mexico, towards the end of the 16th, or the beginning of the 17th century, and had from Philip III. the title of city given it in 1615.



Spaniards on the continent of North America. Cortes was the first who put a hand to the settlement to encourage his people by his own example; and, in a short time, with the assistance of the Totonacas, they built a sufficient number of houses, and a small fortress capable of resisting the arms of the Mexicans.

In the mean time the two receivers, whom Cortes set first at liberty, had arrived at Mexico, and had informed the king of all that had happened, bestowing high praises on the Spanish general. Montezuma, who was preparing to send an army to chastise the insolence and temerity of those strangers, and drive them out of his dominions, became pacified with the intelligence, and feeling his obligations to the Spanish general for the service done to the royal ministers, sent two princes, his nephews, accompanied with a numerous retinue of nobility and others, with a present of works of gold worth upwards of a thousand sequins. They returned thanks in the name of the king to Cortes, and at the same time complained of him for having entered so far into friendship with the rebellious Totonacas, that that nation had had the insolence to refuse to pay the tribute which they owed to their sovereign. They added, that solely on account of such guests, an army had not been sent to punish the rebellion of those people, but that in the end they would not remain unchastised. Cortes, after having signified his gratitude in the most becoming expressions, endeavoured to vindicate himself from the accusation of friendship with the Totonacas, by the necessity he was under of seeking provisions for his troops, after he was abandoned by the Mexicans. He said also, that with respect to the tribute, it was impossible that a nation could serve two masters; that he hoped soon to be at court to satisfy the king more completely, and make him sensible of the sincerity of his conduct.

The two princes, after having beheld with great wonder and delight the military exercises of the Spanish cavalry, returned to the court. The lord of Chempoalla, who was extremely displeased with that embassy, in order to strengthen the alliance with the Spaniards, presented eight virgins richly dressed to Cortes, that they might marry with his officers; and amongst them was one of his nieces, which he designed for the general himself. Cortes, who had frequently discoursed with him on the subject of religion, told him, he could not accept them,

## BOOK VIII.

unless they should first renounce idolatry, and embrace Christianity, and upon this occasion explained to him anew the principles of the Christian religion, and reasoned with all his strength on the absurd worship of their false deities, and especially against the horrid cruelty of their sacrifices. To this warm expostulation the Chempoallese chief replied, that although they most highly valued his friendship, they could not however comply with his request, to abjure the worship of their gods, from whose hand they received health, plenty, and all the blessings they had, and from whose anger, when provoked by ingratitude, they must dread the severest punishment.

Breaking of  
the idols of  
Chempoalla.


The military fire of Cortes was still more inflamed by this answer; upon which, turning to his soldiers, he said to them, "Come on, soldiers; what do we wait for? How can we suffer men, who pretend to be our friends, to pay that worship to statues and base images, which is due to the only true God? Courage, soldiers; now is the time to shew that we are Spaniards, and that we have, inherited from our ancestors, an ardent zeal for our holy religion. Let us break the idols, and take from the sight of those infidels such vile incentives to their superstition. If we obtain that end, we will do our God the greatest possible service in our power. If we die in the attempt, eternal glory will recompense the sacrifice of our lives."

The Chempoallese chief, who from the countenance of Cortes, and the movements of his soldiers, clearly perceived their intention, made a sign to his people to prepare themselves for the defence of their gods. The Spaniards already began to ascend the stairs of the temple, when the Chempoallese chief, confused and enraged, cried out to them to guard against that attempt, unless they desired that the vengeance of their gods should immediately pour down upon them. Cortes, incapable of being intimidated by their threats, answered, that he had already frequently admonished them to abandon their abominable superstition; that since they had not chosen to take his counsel, which was so advantageous for them, he would no longer hold their friendship; that if the Totonacas themselves were not resolved to take away those detestable images, he and his people would break them, and that they must guard cautiously against shewing any hostility towards the Spaniards, otherwise they would immediately charge upon them with such

such fury, that they would not leave a native alive among them. To these threats Marina added another more efficacious, which was, that if they opposed the intention of those strangers, instead of being allied with the Totonacas against the Mexicans, they would join the Mexicans in alliance against the Totonacas, and then their ruin would be inevitable. This motive diverted the chief from the first dictates of his zeal, and the fear of the Mexican arms prevailing over the fear of his gods, he told Cortes he might do as he pleased, for they had not courage themselves to put a sacrilegious hand to their images. The Spaniards no sooner obtained this permission, than fifty of the soldiers mounting rapidly into the temple, took up the idols from the altars, and threw them down the stairs. The Totonacas in the mean while shed a shower of tears, and covered their eyes that they might not see the sacrilege; praying their gods at the same time, in a mournful voice, not to punish the nation for the temerity of those strangers, as they were unable to prevent it, without falling a sacrifice to the fury of the Mexicans. Nevertheless some of them, either less timid and cowardly, or more jealous of the honour of their deities, disposed themselves to take revenge of the Spaniards, and would certainly have engaged with them, if the Spaniards, by seizing the lord of Chempoalla and four principal priests, had not compelled them to restrain the fury of their people.

After this daring act, where prudence was blinded by enthusiasm, Cortes commanded the priests to bring the fragments of the idols before him, and throw them into a fire. He was immediately obeyed; upon which, being full of joy and triumph, as if, by breaking the idols, he had entirely banished idolatry and superstition from those people, he told their chief he was now willing to accept the eight virgins which had been offered him; that from that time he would consider the Totonacas as his friends and brothers, and in all their exigencies would assist them against their enemies; that as they could never more adore those detestable images of the demon their enemy, he would place in the same temple an image of the true mother of God, that they might worship and implore her protection in all their necessities. He then expatiated, in a long discourse, upon the sanctity of the Christian religion; after which he ordered the Chempoallese masons



BOOK VIII.  to cleanse the walls of the temples of those disgusting stains of human blood, which they preserved there as trophies of their religion, and to polish and whiten them. He caused an altar to be made after the mode of Christians, and placed the image of the most holy Mary there. He committed the care of this sanctuary to four Chempoallese priests, provided they should go always dressed in white, instead of that black melancholy habit which they wore in virtue of their former office. In order that they might never want lights before that sacred image, he taught them the use of wax, which the bees wrought in their mountains; and that they might not in his absence replace the idols, or otherwise profane that sanctuary, he left one of his soldiers, named Juan Torres, behind, who, on account of his age, was of little service in war. The eight virgins, as soon as they were sufficiently instructed, received holy baptism.

From Chempoalla Cortes returned to the new colony of Vera-Cruz, where he had the good fortune to recruit his little army with two other officers and ten soldiers, who had landed there from Cuba; and a little time after he was joined by six other men, who had been taken by a vessel belonging to Jamaica.

SECT. XV.  
Letters of  
Cortes and  
the armament  
to the catho-  
lick king-

Cortes, before he undertook the journey to Mexico, thought proper to transmit to his sovereign an account of all that had happened to him; and that the news might be more welcome, he sent at the same time all the gold which had been acquired by the armament, inducing all the soldiers and officers to yield up their shares for that purpose. In this letter Cortes aimed at prepossessing the king against the representations which might be made by the governor of Cuba. Two other letters were also written to the king, one subscribed by the magistrates of the new colony, the other by the principal officers of the expedition, in which they requested his acceptance and approbation of what they had done for him, and to confirm the offices of General and chief judge, already conferred by their suffrages, on Cortes, whom they recommended with the most warm praises. Those two letters, with the present of gold, were sent to Spain by the two captains Alonso Hernandez de Portocarrero and Francisco de Montejo, who set sail on the 16th of July, 1519.

The

The two commissioners above mentioned were hardly departed when Cortes, who was continually revolving some great design in his mind, put a plan in execution, which alone would have been sufficient to have proved his magnanimity of soul, and immortalised his name. In order to deprive his soldiers of every means, and consequently of every hope of return to Cuba, and to reinforce his little army with all the sailors, after punishing two soldiers with death, who had treacherously conspired to fly off in one of the vessels, and inflicted a less rigorous chastisement on three of their accomplices, he prevailed by argument and entreaty on some of his confidants, and one of the pilots, in whom he placed the utmost trust, to pierce one or two of the vessels secretly, to persuade every one that they had foundered from being worm-eaten, and to make a report to him that the others were no longer fit for service on the same account, having lain three months close in port. Cortes availed himself of this deceit that his people might not conspire against him, finding himself reduced to the hard necessity to conquer or die. Every thing was done according to his command, and with the consent of all his people, after having brought the sails, cordage, and every thing else which could be of use, on shore. "Thus," says Robertson, "by an effort of magnanimity, to which there is nothing equal in history, five hundred men agreed of their own free-will to shut themselves up in an enemy's country, full of powerful and unknown nations, deprived of every means of escape, having no other resource left than their perseverance and valour." We do not doubt, that unless Cortes had executed this design, the bold undertaking which he was then meditating would have been impossible; for the soldiers would have been led to shun the obstacles of danger which every way encountered them, by flight, and the general himself must have been compelled to follow them.

His mind being relieved from this anxiety, having ratified the alliance with the Totonacas, and given proper orders for the security and advancement of the new colony, he prepared for his journey to Mexico. He left fifty men in Vera-Cruz under the command of Juan d'Eicalante, one of the best officers of the armament, charged the Chempoallese to assist the Spaniards to complete the building of the fortrefs, and to supply them with all the provisions they required. He set out himself on the 16th of August with four hundred and fifteen Spanish infan-

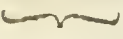
BOOK VIII.

SECT. XVI.

Celebrated  
action of  
Cortes.

SECT. XVII.

March of the  
Spaniards to  
the country  
of the Tla-  
calans.

BOOK V. II.  infantry, sixteen horses, two hundred *Tlamama*, or men of burden, to transport his baggage and artillery, and some troops of Totonacas, amongst which were forty nobles, whom Cortes carried with him as auxiliaries in war, and hostages of that nation.

He travelled through Xalapan and Texotla, and after having crossed with infinite fatigue some desert mountains, of a severe temperature of air, he arrived at Xocotla (*t*), a large city, consisting of beautiful buildings, among which arose thirteen temples, and the palace of its lord, which was built of stone and lime, and composed of a number of excellent halls and chambers, being the most complete fabrick they had as yet seen in the New World. The king of Mexico owned in this place, and the hamlets contiguous to it, twenty thousand vassals, and had five thousand Mexicans garrisoned in it. *Olintetl*, which was the name of the lord of Xocotla, came out to meet the Spaniards, and lodged them commodiously in that city; but with respect to provisions, there appeared at first some scarcity, until from the information of the Totonacas they received a high opinion of their bravery and the power of their arms, and their horses. In the conference which he had with the Spanish general, each boasted to the other of the grandeur and power of their respective Sovereigns. Cortes inconsiderately demanded of him to acknowledge obedience to the Catholic king, and to pay homage to his Sovereignty in some quantity of gold. "I have enough of gold," answered *Olintetl*, "but cannot give it without the express order of my king." "I will soon," said Cortes, make him order you to give it, and all that you have. If he shall command me, returned *Olintetl*, I will not only render up my gold, and all my estate, but even my person. But that which Cortes could not obtain by threats from this chief, he got through pure liberality from two other respectable persons of that valley, who having come on purpose to visit him, presented him some necklaces of gold, and seven or eight slaves. Cortes found himself in some perplexity here with regard to the route he should pursue to Mexico. The lord of Xocotla and the commander of the Mexican garrison advised him to proceed through Cholula; but he judged the advice more sincere which the

(*t*) Bernal Diaz and Solis call this city *Zocotlan*, which could easily occasion an error, as it would be easy to confound it with *Zacatlan*, situated at the distance of thirty miles from Tlascala, towards the north.



Totonacas gave him, to pass through Tlascala. And in fact it will appear, that if he had gone straight to Cholula, he and his whole force must have been destroyed. In order to obtain permission from the Tlascalans to pass through their country, he sent four of the Chempoalese, whom he carried with him, as messengers to their senate; but they, as appears hereafter, did not deliver their embassy in the name of the Spaniards, but of the Totonacas, either because they had been so ordered by the Spanish general, or because they themselves considered it most proper to do so.

From Xocotla the Spanish army proceeded to *Iztacmaxtitlan*, the population of which extended for ten or twelve miles in two uninterrupted lines of houses upon the two opposite banks of a small river, which runs through the bottom of that long and narrow valley; but the proper city of *Iztacmaxtitlan*, composed of good buildings, and inhabited by six thousand people, occupied the top of a lofty steep mountain, the Lord of which was one of those two persons who visited and made presents to Cortes in Xocotla. To the naturally difficult access of the place were added stout walls, with barbicans and ditches (*u*); for, on account of its being on the frontiers of the Tlascalans, it was more exposed to their invasions. There the Spaniards were well received and entertained.

In the mean while the request of their embassy was discussing in the senate of Tlascala. All that great city was in alarm at the intelligence of such strangers, and particularly at the account of which the Chempoalese gave of their aspect, their bravery, the size of their vessels, the agility and strength of their horses, and the dreadful thunder and destructive violence of their artillery. Xicotencatl Maxicatzin, General of the army of the republic, Tlekul, Xolotzin, and Citlalpocatzin, were the four lords or chiefs who at that time governed the republic. The Chempoalese messengers (*x*) were graciously received, and lodged in the house appropriated for ambassadors; and after they had reposed and dined were introduced into the senate to explain their embassy. There,

SECT. XVIII.  
Deliberation  
of the senate  
of the Tlascalans  
upon the affairs of  
the Spaniards.

(*u*) Cortes, in his second letter, compares the fortress of *Iztacmaxtitlan* to the best in Spain.

(*x*) Bernal Diaz says, that the messengers were only two in number, and that as soon as they arrived at Tlascala they were put in prison; but Cortes himself, who sent them, affirms, that they were four in number; and from the context of his letter, it appears that Bernal Diaz was ill informed of what passed in Tlascala. The account given by this writer being contrary to that of other ancient historians, both Spanish and Indian, has led many authors, and Robertson among the rest, into errors.


BOOK VIII. after having bowed most profoundly, and saluted with all the other necessary ceremonies, they delivered themselves to this purpose: “Most  
 “ great and valiant chiefs, may the gods prosper you, and grant you victory over your enemies. The lord of Chempoalla, and all the nation  
 “ of Totonacas, offer their respects to acquaint you, that from the quarter of the East there are arrived in our country in large ships certain  
 “ bold adventurous heroes, by the assistance of whom we are now freed  
 “ from the tyrannical dominion of the king of Mexico. They acknowledge themselves the subjects of a powerful monarch, in whose name  
 “ they come to visit you, to communicate intelligence to you of a true  
 “ God, and to assist you against your ancient and inveterate enemy. Our  
 “ nation, following the dictates of that strict friendship which has always  
 “ subsisted between it and this republic, counsel you to receive those  
 “ strangers as friends, who, though few in number, are equal in worth to  
 “ many.” Maxicatzin answered, in the name of the senate, that they thanked the Totonacas for their intelligence and counsel, and those brave strangers for the assistance which they offered them, but that they required some time to deliberate upon a point of such importance; that in the mean time they would be pleased to return to their abode, where they would be treated with the distinction due to their character and birth. The ambassadors having returned, the senate entered into consideration of the embassy.

Maxicatzin, who was highly esteemed among them, both for his prudence and benevolence of disposition, said, That they ought not to refuse the advice given them by friends so faithful to them, and so hostile to the greatest enemy of the republic; that those strangers, according to the marks which the Champoallese gave of them, appeared to be those heroes, who, agreeable to their tradition, were to arrive in that country; that the earthquakes which had been felt a little before, the comet which was then seen in the heavens, and several other events of those last years, were indications that the time of the fulfilment of that tradition was at hand; that if they were immortal, it would be in vain for the republic to oppose their entry. “Our refusal,” he added, “may be productive of the most  
 “ fatal misfortunes, and it would be a subject of malicious pleasure to  
 “ the king of Mexico, to see those whom the republic would not  
 “ graciously receive into their dominions, introduce themselves by force:

“ that he was therefore of opinion they should be friendly received.”— Although this opinion was listened to with great applause, it was immediately opposed by *Xicotencatl*, an old chief of great authority on account of his long experience in civil and military affairs. “ Our law,” he said, “ enjoins us to receive strangers, but not enemies, who may cause disasters to the state. Those men who demand entrance into our city, appear to be rather monsters cast up from the sea, because it could not endure them in its waters, than gods descended from heaven, as some have vainly imagined. Is it possible they can be gods, who so greedily covet gold and pleasures? And what ought we not to dread from them in a country so poor as this is, where we are even destitute of salt? He wrongs the honour of the nation who thinks it will be overcome by a handful of adventurers. If they are mortal, the arms of the Tlascalans will tell it to all the regions round; if they are immortal, there will always be time to appease their anger by homage, and to implore their mercy by repentance. Let their demand, therefore, be rejected; and if they dare to enter by force, let our arms repel their temerity.”—This contrariety of sentiment in two persons of so great respect divided the minds of the other senators. Those who were the friends of commerce, and attached to a life of peace, adhered to the opinion of Maxicatzin, while those who were of a military disposition embraced the proposal of *Xicotencatl*. *Temiloltecatl*, one of the senators, suggested a middle course, which would reconcile the two parties. He proposed that a civil and friendly answer should be sent to the chief of those strangers, granting them permission to enter; but at the same time that orders should be given to *Xicotencatl*, the son of the old *Xicotencatl*, to go out with the troops of the Otomies belonging to the republic, to oppose their passage, and to try their strength.— “ If we remain victors,” said *Temiloltecatl*, “ we will do our arms immortal honour; if we are vanquished, we will accuse the Otomies, and charge them with having undertaken the war without our orders (y).” Such resources and expedients though frequent, especially among cultivated nations, are not the less contrary to the good

(y) We have mentioned formerly, that many Otomies had taken refuge in Tlascala, from the tyranny of the Mexicans, and had served the republic faithfully.



BOOK VIII.  faith reciprocally due between men.—The senate agreed to the counsel of *Temiloltecatl*; but before the messengers were dispatched with their answer, the proposed orders were given to *Xicotencatl*. This was an intrepid youth, an enemy to peace, and enthusiastic for military glory, who eagerly accepted of the commission, as it furnished him with a most eligible opportunity to display his bravery.

Cortes, after having waited eight days for the determination of the senate, imagining that the delay was the consequence of that slowness attending the majesty of potentates, and not doubting, from what the Chempoallese had told him of being well received by the Tlascalans, left Iztacmaxtitlan with all his army, which, besides the Totonacas and Spaniards, was composed of a considerable number of *Mexican* troops of the garrison of Xocotla, and marched in regular order as usual to the great wall, which on that quarter separates the states of Tlascala from those of Mexico; the description and dimensions of which we have given in the preceding book, where we treated of the fortifications of the Mexicans. It was constructed by the Tlascalans to defend themselves from the invasions of the Mexicans on their eastern frontiers, in the same manner as they had formed ditches and entrenchments for the same purpose in the quarter of the west. The entrance of the walls, which was wont to be guarded by the Otomies, at this time when it was most necessary, upon some account or other, of which we are ignorant, was left without any garrison, by which accident the Spanish army entered without any opposition into the territory of the republic, which they could not otherwise have done without spilling a great deal of blood.

This day, which was the 31st of August, some armed Indians shewed themselves at a distance. The cavalry, which was advanced before the army, in endeavouring to come up with them to gain intelligence of the resolution of the senate, had two horses killed, and three others and two men wounded; a loss most sensibly felt in so small a troop of horse. A body then appeared, imagined to consist of about four thousand men, which was immediately charged upon by the Spaniards and allies, and in a short time defeated, with the death of fifty Otomies. A little after arrived two of the Chempoallese messengers, with some Tlascalans, who paid their compliments to Cortes in the

name of the senate, and made him acquainted with the permission which was granted him to go with his army to Tlascala, blaming the Otomies for the hostilities which they had suffered, and offering to pay him for the horses which they had killed. Cortes pretended to believe them, and declared his gratitude to the senate. The Tlascalans took their leave, and carried their dead off the field to burn them. Cortes, on his part, buried the two horses which had been killed, that the sight of them might not encourage the enemy to new hostilities.

The following day the Spanish army marched to the neighbourhood of two mountains, where there were some steep grounds and precipices. There the other two Chempoallese messengers, who had remained still in Tlascala, arrived bathed in sweat and tears, accusing the Tlascalans of treachery and cruelty; for that, regardless of the rights of nations, they had ill used, imprisoned, and destined them for sacrifices, which fate they escaped by setting each other free. This account of the Chempoallese was certainly false, as it was altogether impossible, not to say difficult, for victims to liberate themselves, not only on account of the closeness of the cage which confined them, but also the vigilance of the guards which watched them; and still more so, because there is no memory among those nations that the Tlascalans had ever failed in the respect due to the characters of ambassadors, and especially where they were so strictly connected in friendship as they were with the Totonacas. What appears more probable is, that the senate, after it had sent back the two first messengers, detained the other two to dispatch them after they had tried the strength of the Spanish troops; but that the two last, grown impatient of delay, absented secretly, and endeavoured to excuse their flight with these pretences.

The Chempoallese had hardly finished their story, when a Tlascalan squadron, consisting of about a thousand men, made their appearance; and, as they drew near the Spaniards, began to throw stones, darts, and arrows at them. Cortes, after having protested to them, before the notary royal of the army, by means of three prisoners, that he had not come to do them any hurt, and having entreated them not to treat him as an enemy, perceiving that nothing would avail, he gave orders to repulse them. The Tlascalans retreated gradually until they brought the Spaniards to the steep grounds where they could not make use of

SECT. XIX.  
War of Tlascala.

BOOK VIII. their horses, and where a large army of the enemy expected them, concerning the number of which authors have been various in their opinions (z). There a terrible contest began, in which the Spaniards thought they must have been totally destroyed. But having formed themselves afresh, in the best manner they could, and being encouraged by the example and exhortations of their general, they extricated themselves from that dangerous situation; and coming again into the plain, they made such havock of the enemy with their artillery and horses, that they forced them to retreat. Of the Tlascalans a vast number were wounded, and not a few lay dead on the field. Of the Spaniards, although fifteen were dangerously wounded, one only died the next day. On this occasion a famous duel happened between an officer of the Tlascalans and one of the Chempoallese nobles, who had been sent with the message from Cortes to the Tlascalans. They fought for some time most bravely in sight of the two armies, until at last the Chempoallese noble prevailed; and having thrown his antagonist to the ground, cut off his head, and bore it in triumph to his camp. The victory was celebrated with acclamations and martial music. The place where the battle was fought was called *Tecatzinco*, or place of the Divine Water, and is still known in that country.

That night the Spanish army fixed their camp upon a hill, where there was a tower, about eighteen miles from the capital of Tlascala. They erected barracks for the accommodation of the troops, and formed entrenchments for their defence. In this place the Spaniards remained encamped until the peace with the Tlascalans.

Cortes, in order to compel the Tlascalans, by hostilities, to accept of peace and the friendship which he offered, made an excursion on the 3d of September, with his cavalry, a hundred Spanish infantry, three hundred Chempoallas, and three hundred Mexicans of the garrison of Iztlcmaxtitlan, set fire to five or six hamlets, and made four hundred prisoners, whom, after having caressed and entertained them, he set at liberty, charging the principal persons among them to go and offer

(z) Bunal Diaz says, that the army of the Tlascalans consisted of about forty thousand men. To Cortes they appeared to exceed a hundred thousand. Other historians have said thirty thousand. It is difficult to compute the number of a large army by the eye, especially when they do not preserve the order of European troops. In order to avoid an error, we have said simply that the army was numerous.



peace, in his name, to the chiefs of that nation. They immediately went to the young Xicotencatl, who was encamped, with a large army, six miles distant from that hill. This fiery youth answered, that if the Spaniards wished to treat of peace, they might go to the capital, where they would be sacrificed as victims to their gods, and their flesh be made food for the Tlascalans; that, as to himself, he would come the next day in person, to give them a decisive answer. This resolution being communicated to the Spaniards by the same messenger, raised such an alarm among them, that they prepared themselves that night for death by the confession of the sacrament, without however omitting the necessary dispositions for their defence.

The following day, the 5th of September, the Tlascalan army appeared not less terrible, from the immense multitude of their numbers, than beautiful to view, from the infinite variety of their plumes, and other military ornaments. It was divided into ten squadrons, each of ten thousand men; every one carried its proper standard. In the rear-guard, according to the custom of that nation, was placed the common standard of the republic, which, as we have already mentioned, was a golden eagle with expanded wings. The prince Xicotencatl, in order to make it understood how little he valued the arms of the Spaniards, and that he scorned to take them by famine, but meant to conquer them by battle, sent them a refreshment of three hundred turkeys and two hundred baskets of *Tanalli*, to recruit their strength for the engagement. A little after he detached two thousand brave men to enter the camp of the Spaniards by assault. This attack was so violent and sudden, that they forced the entrenchments, entered the camp, and encountered man to man with the Spaniards. The Tlascalans might now have proved conquerors, not only from the superiority of their numbers, but also from their bravery and the nature of their arms, which were pikes, lances, swords, and darts, with double and triple points, if a discord among themselves had not rendered the victory easy to their enemies. The son of Chichimeca Teuctli, who commanded a body of troops belonging to his father, having received some insult in words from the arrogant Xicotencatl, conceived so much indignation against him, that he challenged him to a single combat, which should determine their courage and their fortune; but having  
been

BOOK VIII. been refused this satisfaction, in order to be in some measure revenged, he withdrew from the field with the troops which were under his command, and prevailed upon those of Tlehuexolotzin to follow him. In spite of this disjunction of the army, the battle was obstinate and bloody. The Spaniards after having bravely repulsed the force which had assaulted their camp, marched in order of battle against the body of the Tlascalan army. The havock made by the artillery upon the crowded multitude of the enemy, was not sufficient to put the Tlascalans to flight, nor prevent them from filling up with expedition all the vacancies left by the dead; on the contrary, by their steadiness and intrepidity, they threw the Spaniards into some confusion, notwithstanding the cries and reproaches of Cortes and his captains. At length, after some hours of engagement, the Spaniards returned victorious to their camp, although the Tlascalans did not desist from frequent assaults upon them during the whole of that day. Of the Spaniards, one man was missing, and sixty were wounded; likewise all the horses. Of the Tlascalans, great numbers were killed, but not a single dead body was to be seen by the Spaniards, owing to the diligence and activity with which they carried them off the field of battle.

Xicotencatl, disgusted at the unhappy issue of this expedition, consulted the diviners of Tlascala, who reported that those strangers being the children of the sun were invincible during the day; but, as soon as night arrived, by want of the genial heat of that luminary, they were deprived of strength to defend themselves. In consequence of this oracle, that general resolved to make another assault upon the Spanish camp during the night. In the mean while, Cortes sallied out afresh to commit hostilities in the neighbouring villages, of which he burned ten, and among those one of three thousand houses, and returned with several prisoners.

Xicotencatl, that the blow might not fail which he meditated upon the Spaniards, took pains first to gain information of the strength and disposition of their camp. He sent therefore fifty men to Cortes with a present, accompanied with many expressions of kindness and courtesy, charging them to observe every thing minutely; but they were unable to do this with dissimulation sufficient to prevent its being discovered by Teuch, one of the three principal Chempoallese, who immediately

mediately intimated his suspicion to Cortes. This general having called some of the spies aside, forced them by means of threats to reveal that Xicotencatl was preparing to attack them the following night, and that they were sent on purpose to observe, at what part of the camp they could most easily make their entry. Cortes having heard this confession (*a*), made the hands of all the fifty be cut off, and sent them back to Xicotencatl, desiring them to let him know that come when he would, by day or by night, he would always make him sensible that they were Spaniards; and the circumstances appearing to favour the battle expected before the army had made all their preparations for the assault, he set out about the close of the night with a considerable number of troops and his horses, to which he ordered little bells to be hung at the armour of their breasts, and went to meet the enemy, who were just beginning their march towards the Spanish camp. The sight of the punishment executed upon the spies, and the sound of the little bells in the silence and darkness of the night, raised such a tremor among the Tlascalans, that they suddenly started into confusion and disorder, and fled different ways, while Xicotencatl himself, deserted and alone, returned in shame to Tlascala. Upon this Maxixcatzin took occasion to inculcate his first counsel, adding to the arguments he had already used, the sad experience of so many expeditions which had ended unsuccessfully; he accordingly moved their minds to peace.

While this affair was agitating in Tlascala, the Mexicans were deliberating what course should be taken with those strangers. Montezuma having heard of the victories of the Spaniards, and apprehensive of their confederating with the Tlascalans, summoned the king of Tezcuco, his nephew, the prince Cuitlahuatzin, and his other counsellors, explained the state of affairs to them, disclosed his fears, and demanded their advice. The king of Tezcuco adhered to his former opinion; which was, that those strangers should be courteously treated in every place through which they passed; that they should be kindly welcomed at court, and their propositions heard, as well as those of any other vassal, the king still preserving his supreme authority, and exacting the decorum and respect due to the majesty of the throne;

SECT. XX.  
New embassies and presents from Montezuma to Cortes.

(*a*) Some historians say, that the fingers only of the Tlascalan spies were cut off; but Cortes himself says, that he made their hands be cut off.

that



## BOOK VIII.

that if they should design any thing against the person of the king, or the state, force and severity should then be employed against them. The prince Cuiclahuatzin repeated what he had said in the first conference, which was, that it did not seem expedient to admit those strangers into the court; that a valuable present should be sent to their chief, that he should be asked what things of that country he demanded for the great lord in whose name he came, and that he should be offered the friendship and correspondence of the Mexicans, but at the same time he should again be importuned to return to his native country. Among the rest of the counsellors, some adopted the opinion of the king of Tezcucó, some that of the lord of Iztapalapan, while others sided with Montezuma. This unfortunate king saw every where objects and motives of terror. The confederacy which he dreaded of the Tlascalans with the Spaniards kept him in the utmost uneasiness. On the other hand, he was apprehensive of the alliance of Cortes with the prince Ixtlilxochitl, his nephew and sworn enemy, who from the time that he had conspired against the king of Tezcucó his brother, had never laid down his arms, and was at this very juncture at the head of a formidable army at Otompan. Those causes of alarm were still more augmented by the rebellion of several provinces who had followed the example of the Totonacas.

He sent therefore six ambassadors to Cortes, with a thousand curious cotton dresses, and a large quantity of gold and beautiful feathers, and charged them to congratulate him in his name upon his victories, to make him offers of still more considerable presents, and to dissuade him from the journey to Mexico, by representing to him the difficulty of the way, and other obstacles not easy to be surmounted. The ambassadors immediately departed, with a retinue of more than two hundred men, and having arrived at the Spanish camp, executed with punctuality the whole of their commission. Cortes received them with all the respect due to their character, and acknowledged himself infinitely obliged to the bounty of so great a monarch; but he purposely detained the ambassadors, in hopes that in the time of their stay some occasion of engaging with the Tlascalans might present itself, by which the Mexicans might be impressed with an idea of the bravery of his troops, and the superiority of the European arms; or that if peace should be made with the republic, they might be witnesses of the severity

verity with which he intended to reprimand the Tlascalans for their obstinacy. It was not long before the occasion which he so much desired presented itself. Three divisions of the enemy came down upon the Spanish camp with terrible howls, and a tempest of darts and arrows. Cortes, although he had that day taken a purgative medicine, mounted on horseback, and went intrepidly against the Tlascalans, who were defeated without much trouble in the sight of the Mexican ambassadors.

The partizans of the old Xicotencatl being at last persuaded that the war with the Spaniards was by no means advantageous to the republic, and fearing besides that they might form an alliance with the Mexicans, unanimously resolved to make peace, and chose the same general who had fought against them to mediate between them. Xicotencatl, though at first he refused to do so, from being ashamed of the unhappy issue of the war, was at last obliged to charge himself with the commission. He was accompanied to the camp by a noble and numerous retinue, saluted Cortes in the name of the republic, excused themselves for the hostilities already shewn, from having believed him to be the ally of Montezuma, not only on account of the superb presents sent him from Mexico, but also the large troop of Mexicans who followed him; promised him a firm peace, and an eternal alliance with the Tlascalans, and presented him a little gold, and some bales of fine cotton, apologising for the scantiness of their offers, with the poverty of their country occasioned by their constant wars with the Mexicans, who prevented their commerce with other provinces. Cortes omitted no demonstration of respect towards Xicotencatl; he made an appearance of being satisfied with his excuses, but required that the peace should be sincere and permanent; for that if they ever broke it, he would take such revenge as would make an example of them to other nations.

Peace being concluded, and Xicotencatl having taken his leave, Cortes ordered mafs to be celebrated as a thanksgiving to the Almighty. Every one will be able to imagine the displeasure the Mexican ambassadors must have received in seeing such an accommodation take place. They complained of it to Cortes, and blamed his easy credulity in the promises of men so perfidious as the Tlascalans. They told him, that

SECT. XXXI.  
Peace and confederacy of the Tlascalans with the Spaniards.

## BOOK VIII.

those appearances of peace were designed for no other purpose than to inspire him with confidence to enter their capital, that they might there, without hazard, execute that which they had not been able to accomplish by arms in the field ; that it was fit he should contrast the conduct of their senate with that of the court of Mexico: the Tlascalans after having, with the semblance of peace, granted them permission to enter their country, had yet not desisted from making war upon them, until they found all their aims and opposition fruitless. From the Mexicans, on the contrary, they had suffered no hostilities, had rather met with the most different reception, the greatest respect and attention in every place of their dominions where they had passed, and from their sovereign the most distinguished proofs of benevolence and friendship. Cortes answered, that he never meant by such connexion to do wrong to the court of Mexico, to which he acknowledged himself under high obligations ; as he was desirous of peace with all parties ; that besides he did not fear any thing from the Tlascalans, if they chose to become his enemies ; that as for him and the other Spaniards, it was the same thing whether they were attacked in a city or in the country, by night or by day, as they were skilled to conquer at all times, and in all places ; that even on account of that very insinuation which they had thrown out against the Tlascalans, he was desirous of repairing to their city, to have an opportunity there of taking exemplary vengeance on their perfidy.

The Tlascalans were extremely distant from any such dissimulation as was imputed to them by the Mexicans ; for from that moment in which peace was decreed by the senate, they continued the most faithful allies of the Spaniards, as will appear in the sequel. The senate desired to have Cortes at Tlascala with all his troops, to confirm more effectually their stipulated friendship, and to treat seriously of a confederacy against the Mexicans, and had already, by means of their messengers, invited that general to accept of accommodation in their city ; professing the utmost regret at seeing such illustrious friends of the republic suffering so many inconveniences.

The alliance with the Tlascalans was not the only fruit which the Spaniards reaped from their victories. In the same camp where he had received the Tlascalan ambassador, he was favoured with two other embas-



embassies from the republic of Huexotzinco, and the prince Ixtlilxochitl. The Huexotzincas, who had formerly been vassals of the crown of Mexico, and the enemies of the Tlascalans, had delivered themselves from the dominion of the Mexicans, and confederated with the Tlascalans their neighbours, and now they imitated their example in making offers of alliance and confederacy to the Spaniards. The prince Ixtlilxochitl sent ambassadors to Cortes, to congratulate him on his victories over the Tlascalans, and to invite him to make a journey to Teotlalpan, where he proposed to unite his forces with those of the Spaniards against the king of Mexico. Cortes, as soon as he was informed of the rank, pretensions, and forces of that prince, readily accepted his alliance, and engaged to assist to place him upon the throne of Acolhuacan.

At the same time the ambassador, who was expected from Mexico, returned from that court with a present of jewels and gold, worth fifteen hundred sequins, two hundred costly habits of feathers, and new suggestions from that monarch to divert the Spanish general from his journey to Mexico, and from any friendship with the Tlascalans. Such were the vain efforts of pusillanimity in Montezuma, while the great quantity of gold he daily expended in presents to those strangers, was but so much more in purchase of the chains which were soon to fetter his liberty.

Six days had elapsed since the peace made with Tlascala, when the four lords of that republic, in order to induce the Spaniards to remove to Tlascala, made themselves be transported in portable chairs or litters, with a numerous attendance to their camp. The mutual demonstrations of joy and respect were extraordinary on both sides. That famous senate, not contented with ratifying the alliance, of their own accord acknowledged obedience to the Catholic king, which was the more acceptable to the Spaniards, the more the Tlascalans had prized their liberty, which they had enjoyed from time immemorial. They complained with much shew of affection, of the diffidence of Cortes, and prevailed upon him by their entreaties to resolve upon his departure for Tlascala the next day.

There was now a deficiency of fifty-five Spaniards of the number who had enlisted in Cuba, and those remaining were for the most part

BOOK VIII. wounded and dispirited; and such discontent and apprehensions began to seize the soldiers, that they not only spoke disrespectfully of their chief in private, but also conjured him to return to Vera Cruz; but Cortes encouraged them, and by powerful arguments touching their honour, and his own example of fortitude and firmness in dangers and fatigue, he rekindled in them fresh zeal for his undertakings. At length they all seemed to conceive hopes of success, from the confederacies they had made, to the projects of their general.

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XXIV.  
Entry of the  
Spaniards in-  
to Tlascala.

The Mexican ambassadors whom Cortes still detained with him, refused to accompany him to Tlascala; but he persuaded them to go along with him, promising them, that they should be perfectly secure under his protection. Having removed their doubts, he marched his army in good order and preparation for every event. In the cities of Te-compantzinco and Atlihuetzian, they were received with all possible courtesy, though not in a style equal to the magnificent entry they made into the capital, from which the four lords of the republic came out to meet the Spaniards with a numerous concourse of the nobility, and so great a croud of inhabitants, that some have affirmed they amounted to a hundred thousand people; a calculation, by no means improbable, considering the populousness of Tlascala, and the surprising novelty of those extraordinary strangers, who awakened the curiosity of all that extensive region. In all the streets of the city were formed, according to the usage of those nations, arches of flowers and branches, and a confused music of instruments and acclamations resounded from all sides, accompanied with such jubilee and rejoicing, that it appeared to be rather the celebration of the triumph of the republic than of that of its enemies. This day, still commemorated in Tlascala, was the 23d of September, 1519.

That city was then one of the most considerable in the country of Anahuac. Cortes, in his letters to Charles V. affirms, that in grandeur, populousness, buildings, and abundance of the necessaries of life, it exceeded Granada when that was taken from the Moors; and that at the market, of which he gives a description, there daily assembled about thirty thousand merchants and people of business. The same conqueror attests, that having obtained an order of the senate to make the houses and inhabitants be numbered which were in the city,

the

the villages, and hamlets of the republic, there were found upwards of fifty thousand houses, and more than five hundred thousand inhabitants.

The Tlascalans had prepared, for the Spaniards and all their allies, a handsome and commodious dwelling. Cortes desired that the Mexican ambassadors might be lodged in apartments near to his own, not only in respect to them, but also to banish from their minds any distrust of the Tlascalans. The chiefs of the republic, in order to give the Spaniards a new proof of the sincerity of their friendship, presented to Cortes thirty beautiful young women. Cortes refused them at first, alledging, that the Christian law forbid polygamy; but afterwards, to avoid giving offence, he accepted some of them as companions to Marina. In spite of this refusal, they presented him soon after five virgins of the first nobility, whom Cortes accepted for the sake of strengthening his friendship with the republic.

Encouraged by this successful beginning, Cortes became desirous of persuading the chiefs of the republic and the nobles, to abandon their superstitious rites, and acknowledge the only true divinity; but although his reasons were persuasive, and they confessed the power of that God whom the Spaniards adored, they could not, however, be induced to renounce their absurd deities, because they believed them dispensers of human felicity. "Our god Camaxtle," they said, "grants us victory over our enemies; our goddess Matlalcueje sends rain to our fields, and defends us from the inundation of Zahuapan (b). To each of our gods we are indebted for a part of the happiness of our lives, and their anger, if provoked, might draw down upon the state the most severe punishment." Cortes, stimulated by a zeal too ardent and violent, was desirous of treating the idols of Tlascala in the same manner as he had successfully done those of Chempoallan; but Olmedo, and other persons of respect, dissuaded him from so rash an attempt, representing to him, that such an act of violence, besides not being conducive to the promulgation of the gospel, might prove the ruin of the Spaniards in a city so populous, and attached to superstition. Nevertheless, he did not cease, during twenty days which he stopped

(b) A river of Tlascala.



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there, to reproach them with the cruelties of their sacrifices, and to inculcate the purity of his system of morality, the falseness of their deities, and the existence of a supreme Being, who governs all natural causes, and watches with most admirable providence over the preservation of his creatures. Those exhortations, made by a person of so great authority, and of whom the Tlascalans had formed a very elevated idea, although they did not produce all the effect desired, had considerable influence, and so far moved the senate, that they consented to break the cages, and set at liberty all the prisoners and slaves which were to be sacrificed to their gods on solemn festivals, or other public occasions of the state.

Thus every day the alliance with the Tlascalans was more firmly established, in spite of the repeated suggestions of the Mexican ambassadors to break it. Cortes, though well persuaded of the sincerity of the Tlascalans, had given orders to his troops to hold themselves always prepared for whatever might happen. The senate was offended at this, and complained bitterly of his diffidence, after so many manifest proofs of their good faith; but Cortes excused it, by protesting, that he did not so from any diffidence of the Tlascalans, but because it was the practice of the Spaniards: this answer satisfied the senate, and the discipline of his soldiers pleased them so much, that Maxixcatzin proposed to introduce it among the troops of the republic.

At length Cortes having procured, during the time he stayed in Tlascala, a distinct information of the city of Mexico, of the forces of that kingdom, and every other particular which could farther his projects, determined to continue his journey; but before he set out, he presented a great number of the most beautiful habits which he had received from Montezuma, to the Tlascalans. He was doubtful of the route he should pursue to that city. The Mexican ambassadors proposed that he should go by Cholula, where there was good accommodation prepared for all his people. The Tlascalans opposed that intention, by representing the perfidy of the Cholulans, and advised him to proceed by Huexotzinco, a state confederated equally with them and the Spaniards, but Cortes resolved to go by Cholula, not only to please the ambassadors, but also to shew the Tlascalans the little regard he paid to the force of his enemies.

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The Cholulans had been formerly the allies of the Tlascalans; but upon the arrival of the Spaniards were confederated with the Mexicans, and the sworn enemies of that republic. The cause of so great an enmity had been the perfidy of the Cholulans. In a battle with the Mexicans, while they were yet the allies of the Tlascalans, being in the vanguard of the army, by a sudden evolution they put themselves in the rear, and, attacking the Tlascalans behind while the Mexicans were upon their front, made a great slaughter of them. The hatred which this detestable treachery had raised in the breasts of the Tlascalans made them anxious for an opportunity of revenge, and no time had appeared more favourable than now, when they were become confederated with the Spaniards. In order to inspire Cortes with dislike to them, and induce him to make war upon that state, they acquainted him with its conduct towards him; that they had not sent any messengers with compliments to him, whereas the Huexotzincas had done so, although their state was at a much greater distance. They informed him also of the message which they said they had received from the Cholulans, reproaching them for their alliance with the Spaniards; calling them base and cowardly, and threatening them, that if they should attempt any thing against their sacred city they should all perish by being drowned; for among their other errors, they were persuaded, that whenever they chose they could, by raising the walls of the sanctuary of Quetzalcoatl, make such large rivers spring from thence, as would in a moment overflow the city; and although the Tlascalans dreaded such a catastrophe, the desire of revenge overcame their fears.

Cortes, moved by these suggestions, sent four noble Tlascalans to Cholula, to know why they had not paid the same regard which was shewn to him by the Huexotzincas. The Cholulans laid their excuse on the enmity of the Tlascalans, in whom they never could repose any confidence (*c*). This answer was brought by four common people,

(*c*) Torquemada adds, that the Cholulans retained the principal messenger of the Tlascalans, and with savage cruelty flayed his face and arms, and cut off his hands; but this account is unquestionably false, for so atrocious a proceeding could not remain unknown to the Spaniards; but neither Cortes, Bernal Diaz, nor any other of the first historians mention it. Cortes would not have omitted it in his letter to Charles V. to justify the severity of his chastisement of the Cholulans.

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XXV.

Enmity between the Tlascalans and Cholulans.

**BOOK VIII.** which was considered as a manifest demonstration of disrespect. Cortes being advertised of it by the Tlascalans sent four of the Chempoallese, to tell the Cholulans that the embassy of a monarch so great as the king of Spain, ought not to have been entrusted to such low messengers, nor were they themselves worthy to hear it; to let them know, that the Catholic king was the true lord of all that country, and that in his name he came to demand homage of those people; that those who should submit to him would be honoured, and the rebels punished according to their desert; that therefore they should make their appearance within three days in Tlascala, to give obedience to their sovereign, otherwise they would be treated as enemies. The Cholulans, although it is to be supposed they treated so arrogant an embassy with burlesque, in order to dissemble their malicious intention, presented themselves the next day to Cortes, requesting him to excuse their omission, occasioned by the enmity of the Tlascalans, declaring themselves not only the friends of the Spaniards, but also the vassals of the king of Spain.

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Spaniards into  
Cholula.

Having determined his route through Cholula, Cortes set out with all his people, and a considerable number of Tlascalan troops (*d*), all which he soon discharged, except six thousand men, whom he chose to accompany him. A little way before they arrived at Cholula, the principal lords and priests, with censers in their hands and musical instruments, came out to meet him, and after having paid the usual ceremonies of respect, they told the general, that he might enter with all his people and the Totonacas; but they could not admit their enemies the Tlascalans. To this Cortes consented through complaisance, and the Tlascalans remained encamped without the city, imitating in the disposition of their camp, the order of their centinels, and other things, the military discipline of the Spaniards. At the entry of the Spanish army into Cholula, a similar croud of people was collected, and the same ceremonies, acclamations, and respect, were observed, though not with the same sincerity, as in Tlascala.

(*d*) Cortes says, that this army of the Tlascalans consisted of more than one hundred and forty-nine thousand men. Bernal Diaz affirms, as an undoubted fact, which was well known to him, that it consisted only of fifty thousand men. This number appears the most probable.

Cholula



Cholula was then a populous city, eighteen miles distant from Tlascala towards the south, and about sixty from Mexico towards the east, and not less celebrated for the commerce of its inhabitants than its religion. It was situated, as it is at present, in a beautiful plain, and at a small distance from that group of mountains which surround the valley of Mexico towards the east. Its population at that time, as Cortes affirms, occupied about forty thousand houses, and there were as many in the circumjacent villages which were in the nature of suburbs to it. Its commerce consisted in manufactures of cotton, gems, and plates of clay, and it was much famed for its jewellers and potters. With respect to religion, it may be said, that Cholula was the Rome of Anahuac. The celebrated Quetzalcoatl having passed so many years in that city, and shewn so much affection to his subjects, was the cause that after his apotheosis, it was consecrated by the most particular worship. The surprising multitude of temples which were there, and in particular the greater temple, erected upon an artificial mountain, which is still existing, drew innumerable pilgrims, not only from the neighbouring cities, but likewise from the most distant provinces, to perform their devotions at that imagined holy spot.

Cortes was lodged, with all his troops, in some large buildings, where, during the two first days, they were abundantly supplied with provisions; but very soon they began to grow scanty, until at last there was nothing furnished by the city but wood and water. This was not the only proof of their secret machinations and intentions; for every moment they discovered new indications of the treachery which they meditated. The Champallese allies observed, that they had made holes and dug pits in the streets of the city, in which they had fixed sharp stakes, and covered them with earth, which it appeared was done for no other purpose than to wound and disable the horses. Eight men, who came from the camp of the Tlascalans, apprised them that they had seen crowds of women and children coming out of the city; a certain sign among those nations of some impending commotion. Besides, it was found out, that in some of the streets they had formed entrenchments, and collected great heaps of stones upon the tops of the houses. Lastly, a Cholulan woman of rank, who had become enamoured of the beauty, the spirit, and discretion of Marina, intreated her to save

## BOOK VIII.

herself in her house from the danger which threatened the Spaniards; upon which Marina took occasion to inform herself of the whole plan of the conspiracy, and immediately told Cortes of it. He heard from the mouth of the same person, that the Cholulans, with the assistance of twenty thousand Mexicans (*e*), who were encamped near the city, had concerted to massacre all the Spaniards. Not contented with these discoveries, he charged Marina to use all her art to bring two priests to his dwelling, who confirmed all that had been communicated to her by her female friend.

Cortes, finding himself in such hazard of utter destruction, resolved to adopt the most effectual means for his safety. He ordered the principal persons of the city into his presence, and told them, that if they had any quarrel against the Spaniards, to declare it frankly, as became men of honour, and he would give them suitable satisfaction. They replied, that they were already satisfied with his conduct, and ready to serve him; that whenever he chose to depart, he should be abundantly provided with every thing that was necessary for his journey, and also troops of war for his security. Cortes accepted their offer, and fixed the next day for his departure. The Cholulans were content, as it appeared that every thing would turn out favourable to their treacherous design; but in order to ensure that still more, they sacrificed to their gods ten children, five of each sex. Cortes called together his officers, unfolded to them the perfidious intentions of the Cholulans, and ordered them to give their sentiments. Some were of opinion that their danger should be shunned, by retreating to the city of Huexotzinco, which was hardly nine miles distant, or to Tlascala; but the majority referred themselves to the determination of the general. Cortes gave the orders which seemed to him most suited to his purpose, protesting that they could never be secure in Mexico unless they punished that deceitful city with severity. He ordered the auxiliary troops of Tlascala to storm the city at sun-rise the next day, and to cut off every citizen without pardon to any one except women and children.

SECT.  
XXVII.  
Slaughter  
made in Cholula.

The day at length arrived, which wreaked disaster on Cholula. The Spaniards prepared their horses, their artillery, their arms, and formed

(*e*) Bernal Diaz says, that the Mexican army, according to what he knew, consisted of twenty thousand men. Cortes affirms, that the lords of Cholula confessed to him, that that army was not composed of less than fifty thousand men.

them-

themselves in order, in a square of their dwelling, which was designed for the principal theatre of the approaching tragedy. The Cholulans repaired thither at break of day. The chiefs, with about forty nobles, and the baggage men entered into the halls and chambers to lift up the equipage, when suddenly guards were placed to prevent their escape. The Cholulan troops, or at least great part of them, entered into the square along with the principal lord of that city, at the request, it is probable, of Cortes himself, who, mounting on horseback, spoke to them in this manner: “Cholulans, I have endeavoured  
 “to make you my friends; I have entered peaceably into your city,  
 “and here you have received no wrong from me, nor any of my  
 “friends; but, on the contrary, that you might have no subject of  
 “complaint, I consented that the auxiliary troops of the Tlascalans  
 “should not be admitted here: besides, I have requested you to say freely,  
 “if we had done you any injury, that you might have satisfaction; but  
 “you have, with detestable perfidy, under the appearance of friend-  
 “ship, laid a scheme to betray me, and destroy me and my people. I  
 “know the whole depth of your bloody designs.” Then calling aside four or five Cholulans, he asked them what had induced them to resolve on so execrable an attempt? They replied, that the Mexican ambassador, to render an agreeable service to their sovereign, had enticed them to meditate their destruction. Cortes then, with a countenance full of indignation, thus addressed the ambassadors who were present: “Those wretches, to excuse their crimes, impute the treachery to you and your king; but I neither believe you capable of  
 “such infamy, nor can I persuade myself that the great monarch Montezuma would treat me like a cruel enemy, at the very time he is  
 “giving me the sincerest proofs of his friendship; and as he could oppose me with open force, that he would employ traitors to anticipate  
 “him! Be assured, that I will pay regard to your persons in the slaughter and blood we shall shed. To-day, those traitors shall perish,  
 “and their city shall be convulsed. I call heaven and earth to witness,  
 “that it is their perfidy which arms our hands for revenge, unnatural  
 “to our hearts.”

Having spoke this, and made the signal of attack by the discharge of a musket, the Spaniards fell with such fury upon those miserable vic-



BOOK VIII. tims, that they did not leave one alive of all those who were in the square. The streams of blood which flowed about, and the painful yells of the wounded and dying enemy, would have been sufficient to have shocked and waked pity in every breast that was not fired with the fury of revenge. Having terminated the tragic scene within, they issued out to the streets, and sheathed their swords in the bodies of all the Cholulans they met. The Tlascalans, on their part, entered the city like famished lions, their fierceness growing with the thirst of the blood of their enemies, and eagerness to please their new allies. A stroke, so keen and unexpected, put the citizens immediately into disorder; but having formed themselves into several different squadrons, they made for some time a vigorous resistance, until at last, perceiving the havoc which the artillery made, and feeling the superiority of the European arms, they went again into confusion. The greater part of them sought their safety in flight; some had recourse to the superstitious hope of razing the walls of the temple to deluge the city: but, finding that expedient totally fruitless, they endeavoured to fortify themselves in their houses and temples. But neither did this avail, for the enemy set instant fire to every house where they met with any resistance. The houses and towers of the temples were in flames; the streets discovered nothing but bloody or half-burnt carcases, and nothing was heard but the insulting menacing clamours of the confederates, the feeble groans of dying men, curses, and imprecations on the victors, and complaints to their gods why they had abandoned them in such calamities. Amongst the many who fled to the towers of the temples, there was but one which surrendered to the victors; all the rest were either burnt to ashes, or met a death less painful, by precipitating themselves from those heights.

By means of this horrid slaughter, in which upwards of six thousand Cholulans (*f*) perished, the city became depopulated. The temples and houses were plundered, the Spaniards seizing all the gems, gold, and silver, and the Tlascalans all the apparel, feathers, and salt. This tra-

(*f*) Las Cas has grossly disfigured this event of Cholula. The revenge of the Spaniards was perhaps too rigorous, but their provocations were strong. He relates it, as we find it, among the most faithful historians who were present, or were informed by the ancient Spaniards and Indians.

gedy was hardly finished, when there appeared near Cholula an army of twenty thousand men, sent by way of succour by the republic of Tlascala, under the command of general Xicotencatl. It was probable that this was owing to some dispatch having been sent the night before to the senate, by the chiefs of the Tlascalan troops, encamped without the city. Cortes returned thanks for the supply, presented to Xicotencatl and his officers a part of the booty, and requested him to return with his army to Tlascala, as it was not now necessary; but he retained the six thousand men who had assisted him in the punishment of Cholula, that they might accompany him in his journey to Mexico. Thus did the alliance of the Spaniards with the Tlascalans become gradually more firm and established.

Cortes having returned to his dwelling, where forty of the Cholulan nobility remained in a manner prisoners, he was requested by them to give way to mercy, after so much rigour, and to permit one or two of them to go and recall the women, children, and other fugitives, who were wandering in terror and dismay through the mountains. Cortes, being now moved to pity, commanded a cessation of arms, and published a general pardon. Upon the report of this proclamation, suddenly some were seen to rise from among the dead who had counterfeited death in order to escape it, and troops of fugitives coming from the mountains to the city, some bewailing the loss of a son, some a brother, and some their husbands. Cortes ordered the dead bodies to be carried off from the temples and the streets, and set the nobles who were prisoners at liberty. A few days after, that city was again so well peopled it appeared to want none of its inhabitants. Here Cortes received the compliments of the Huxetzioncas and the Tlascalans, and an oath of allegiance to the crown of Spain from the Cholulans themselves, and the Tepejacheke nation, he adjusted the differences between the two republics of Tlascala and Cholula, and re-established their ancient friendship and alliance, which continued firm ever after. At length, in order to comply with the duties of humanity and religion, he made all the cages of the temples he broke, and set all the prisoners and slaves at liberty who were destined for the sacrifices. He ordered the greater temple to be cleaned, and raised there the standard of the cross, after giving the Cholulans, as he did to all the other people among whom he stopped, some idea of the Christian religion.

SECT.  
XXVIII.  
Submission of  
the Cholulans and  
Tepejacheke  
to the crown  
of Spain.

## BOOK VIII.

## SECT. XXIX.

New embassy  
and presents  
from the king  
of Mexico.

The Spanish general, elated by his successes, or perhaps desirous of intimidating Montezuma, charged the Mexican ambassadors to tell their master, that notwithstanding he had formerly intended to enter peaceably into Mexico, on seeing and considering what had happened in Cholula, he was now determined to enter as an enemy, and to do him every evil he could. The ambassadors answered, that before he took a resolution of that kind, he ought to make a more strict enquiry into the conduct of the Cholulans, to certify himself of the good intentions of their sovereign; that, if he thought proper, one of them would go to the court, and lay his complaints before the king. Cortes consented to it, and after six days the ambassador returned, bringing a large present to the general, consisting of ten plates of gold, worth five thousand sequins; one thousand five hundred habits, and a great quantity of provisions; thanking him, in the name of his sovereign, for the punishment inflicted on the perfidious Cholulans; and protesting, that the army raised to surprise the Spaniards on their journey, consisted of the Acatzinches and Itzocanese nations, the allies of Cholula, who, although the subjects of the crown of Mexico, had taken up arms without any order from their sovereign. This was confirmed by the asseverations of the ambassadors, and Cortes made an appearance of being perfectly satisfied.

It is not an easy matter to clear up the truth in this particular, neither can we avoid blaming the forwardness of some authors in asserting so freely what they do not know. Why should the Cholulans, who were allowed by all to be a false deceitful nation, be given more credit than the Mexicans, and Montezuma himself, who from the eminence of his rank and character, was more worthy of faith? The invariably pacific disposition of that monarch towards the Spaniards, having attempted no hostile stroke on many and those favourable occasions which occurred, to oppress them; and the moderation with which he always spoke of them, which no authors deny, make the excuse made by the Cholulans improbable: but, on the other hand, it assumes an air of truth from some, though indirect proofs, of the enmity of Montezuma, and in particular from hostilities committed upon the garrison of Vera Cruz by a powerful feudatory of the crown of Mexico.

*Quauhpopoca,*



*Quauhpopoca*, lord of Nauhtlan (called by the Spaniards Almeria), a city situated upon the coast of the Mexican gulf, thirty-six miles towards the north from Vera Cruz, and close to the confines of the Mexican empire in that quarter, had orders from Montezuma to reduce the Totonacas to their wonted obedience, as soon as Cortes had retired from that coast. He, in compliance with those orders, demanded of those people with threats, the tribute which they were accustomed to pay to their sovereign. The Totonacas, rendered insolent from the favour of their new allies, answered with arrogance, that they would no longer pay homage to him who was no longer their king. *Quauhpopoca*, perceiving that his requests had no influence in bringing again under subordination men who had so much confidence in their new allies, and no respect for their sovereign, having put himself at the head of the Mexican troops which were in the garrisons of those frontiers, began to make incursions into the settlements of Totonacapan, punishing them by hostilities for their rebellion. The Totonacas made their complaints to Juan de Escalante, governor of the garrison of Vera Cruz, and intreated him to put a stop to the cruelty of the Mexicans, engaging also to assist him with a large number of troops. Escalante sent an embassy to the Mexican chief to dissuade him from hostilities, which he imagined could not be approved of by the king of Mexico, who had shewn so much desire to favour the Spaniards, the protectors of the Totonacas. *Quauhpopoca* answered, that he knew better than him whether the punishment of those rebels was or was not agreeable to the Mexican king; that if the Spaniards intended to support them, he, with his troops, would meet him on the plain of Nauhtlan, that arms might decide their contest. The governor could not brook this answer; upon which he marched immediately to the appointed place with two horses and two small pieces of cannon, fifty Spanish infantry, and about ten thousand Totonacas. Upon the first onset of the Mexicans, the Totonacas were instantly thrown into confusion, and the greater part took to flight; but to the utter shame of their cowardice, the fifty Spaniards courageously continued the battle, doing no little damage to the Mexicans. They, having never experienced the violence of the artillery and the European mode of engagement, retreated in terror to the neighbouring city of Nauhtlan. The Spaniards

**BOOK VIII.** Spaniards pursued them with fury, and set fire to some houses ; but the victory cost the Spaniards the life of the governor, who died of his wounds in three days after ; and of six or seven soldiers, and a number of Totonacas. One of these soldiers, who had a large head and fierce aspect, was taken prisoner and sent to Mexico by Quauhpopoca, but having died of his wounds in his way to that city, they only carried his head to Montezuma, the appearance of which so shocked and daunted that king, that he would not have it offered to his gods in any temple of the court.

Cortes received intelligence of these revolutions before he left Cholula (g) ; but did not think proper to mention them nor discover his uneasiness, lest it might have discouraged his soldiers.

**SECT. XXXI.**  
Journey of  
the Spaniards  
to Tlalimalco.

Having nothing more to do in Cholula, he pursued his journey to Mexico with all his Spaniards, six thousand Tlascalans, and some Huexotzincan and Cholulan troops. At Izcalpan, a village of Huexotzinco, fifteen miles distant from Cholula, the chiefs of Huexotzinco, came again to pay their respects to him, and to advertise him, that there were two ways of going to Mexico ; the one, an open and well-made road, which led to some precipices where there was reason to apprehend some ambuscades of the enemy ; the other was newly stopped up, and obstructed with trees cut down on purpose, which however was of the two the shorter and more secure route. Cortes availed himself of this intimation, and in spite of the Mexicans, made the obstacles in this way be removed, under pretence that the difficulty was rather an incitement to the courage and spirits of the Spaniards ; and continued his journey through that great wood of pines and oaks, until he ascended to the top of a high mountain, called *Itbualco*, between the two volcanos Popocatepec and Iztaccihuatl, where they found some large houses built for the accommodation of the merchants of Mexico. There they were able to judge of the bold undertaking of the captain Diego de Ordaz, who a few days before, in order to display to those people the courage of his nation, mounted, along with nine other soldiers, to the highest summit of Popocatepec, although he could not see its mouth, or the vent of that great volcano, on account of

(g) All, or nearly all historians say, that intelligence of this revolution reached Cortes when he was in Mexico ; but Cortes affirms, that he had it in Cholula.

the deep snow which lay there, and the clouds of smoke and ashes which it threw up from its bowels. (*b*)

From the top of Ithualco the Spaniards got their first view of the beautiful valley of Mexico, but with very different impressions from the prospect; some of them delighted in the sight of its lakes, its pleasant lying plains, its verdant mountains, and numerous and splendid cities, which were situated within and around those lakes; others revived their hopes of enriching themselves with the plunder of so great an extent of country as they there discovered; but the more prudent of those adventurers, on beholding so populous a territory, reflected on the temerity of encountering the perils before them, and were suddenly so checked by their apprehensions, that they would have immediately returned to Vera Cruz, had not Cortes, by making use of his authority and the reasons suggested by his fruitful genius, infused into them fresh ardour for the undertaking.

In the mean while Montezuma, in consternation at the event of Cholula, retired to the palace Tlillancalmecatli, destined for occasions of grief, and continued there eight days, fasting and observing the usual austerities, in order to obtain the protection of his gods. From this place of retirement he sent four persons of his court with a present to Cortes, and new prayers and entreaties to dissuade him from his journey; offering to pay an annual tribute to the king of Spain, and to give four loads of gold to the Spanish general (*i*), and one to each of his captains and soldiers, if they would, from that place where they might be found by his ambassadors, depart for their native country. In such apprehensions and terror did the small body of Spaniards keep this superstitious prince! He could not have made use of more diligence and arts to shun their sight, had he foreseen all the misfortunes

(*b*) Bernal Diaz, and almost all historians, say that Ordaz ascended to the top of Popocatepec, and observed the mouth of that famous mountain; but Cortes, who knew better, says not. Notwithstanding Ordaz obtained from the Catholic king a volcano to be put in his shield of arms. This great undertaking was reserved for Montagno, and others Spaniards, who, after the conquest of Mexico, not only observed the dreadful mouth of that volcano, but entered there, at the utmost risk of their lives, and got out from it a large quantity of sulphur to make powder for their fire-arms.

(*i*) The ordinary load of a Mexican having been about fifty Spanish pounds, or eight hundred ounces, we may conjecture, considering the number of the Spaniards, that what Montezuma was willing to give them to dissuade them from their journey to the court, was equal to more than three millions of sequins.



## BOOK VIII.

they were to bring upon him. The ambassadors joined Cortes at Ithualco; the present they brought him consisted of several works of gold, which were valued at fifteen hundred sequins. Cortes shewed them every possible respect and attention, and answered by returning thanks to the king for the present and his magnificent promises, to which he would be able to return good services; but at the same time declaring, that he could not return back without making himself blameable for disobedience to his sovereign, and promising not to be the means on his part of the smallest injury to the state; and that, if after having explained to his majesty the embassy which he bore, and which he could not trust with any other person, he should not approve of the longer stay of the Spaniards in his dominions, he would without delay set out on his return to his native country.

Montezuma's uneasiness was increased by the suggestions of the priests, and particularly by the account which they gave of some sayings of their false oracles, and some terrible visions which they said they had during this time. He was at last thrown into such alarm and consternation, that, without waiting for the issue of the last embassy to the Spaniards, he held a new council with the king of Tezcucó, his brother Cuitlahuatzin, and some other persons whom he used to advise with, all of whom maintained their former opinions; Cuitlahuatzin, that of not admitting the Spaniards to enter the court, and to make them by gentleness or force to quit the kingdom; while Cacamatzin was for receiving them as ambassadors, as the king had strength enough to crush them, if they should militate either against his royal person or the state. Montezuma, who had hitherto constantly adhered to the opinion of his brother, now embraced that of the king of Tezcucó, but at the same time he charged this same king to go to meet the Spaniards, and to endeavour to dissuade the general from his journey to the court; Cuitlahuatzin then turning to the king his brother, said, "The gods desire, O king, that you do not receive into your house those who will drive you from it, and that you would remedy the evil while you still have time and means to do it." "What shall we do," returned the king, "if our friends, and what is more our gods, instead of favouring us, prosper our enemies? I am resolved, and wish that all would be resolute, not to fly nor  
shew

“ shew any cowardice, happen what will—but I pity the aged and the young, who have no strength and can make no defence !”

Cortes having dismissed the Mexican ambassadors, moved with his troops from Ithualco, and proceeded through Amaquemecan and Tlalmanalco, two cities about nine miles distant from each other, and situated near the base of those mountains. Amaquemecan, with its adjacent hamlets, contained two thousand inhabitants (*k*). At those places the Spaniards were well received, and several chiefs of that province visited Cortes, and presented him gold and some slaves; they complained bitterly of the oppression they suffered from the king of Mexico and his ministers, in the same terms made use of by those of Chempoalla and Chiahuitztlā, and at the suggestion of the Chempoallese and Tlascalans, who accompanied Cortes, entered into a confederacy with the Spaniards for the recovery of their liberty. In short, the farther the Spaniards advanced into the country, the more they continued to increase their forces; like a rivulet, which, by the accession of other streams, swells in its course by degrees into a large river.

From Tlalmanalco the army marched to Ajotzinco, a village situated upon the southern bank of the lake of Chalco (*l*), where there was a harbour for the vessels of merchants who trafficked with the countries to the southward of Mexico. Curiosity to view the quarters of the Spaniards cost very dear to some of the Mexicans, for the Spanish centinels imagining them to be spies, from the apprehensions they were constantly under of some treachery, shot about fifteen of them that night. The following day, just as they were ready to march, some Mexican nobles arrived with intelligence, that the king of Tezcucō was come to visit the Spanish general in the name of the king of Mexico his uncle. It was not long before the king himself joined them, borne in a litter, adorned with fine feathers, on the shoulders of four of his domestics, and accompanied by a numerous and brilliant

S E C T.  
XXXII.  
Visit of the  
king of Tez-  
cucō to Cor-  
tes.

(*k*) Amaquemecan, called by the Spaniards Mecameca, is at present a village no otherwise noted than for having been the birth-place of the celebrated nun Joan Agnes of the Cross, a woman of wonderful genius and uncommon learning.

(*l*) Solis confounds Amaquemecan with Ajotzinco; Amaquemecan was never situated, as he says, on the border of the lake, but at twelve miles distance from it, upon the side of a mountain.

## BOOK VIII.

retinue of Mexican and Tezcucan nobility. As soon as he came in sight of the Spanish general, he alighted from the litter and began walking on foot, preceded by some of his servants, who industriously removed out of his way every thing which could either offend his feet or his sight. The Spaniards were astonished at this pomp, and from thence began to form conjectures of the parade and grandeur which must attend the king of Mexico. Cortes went to the door of his dwelling to meet him, and saluted him with a profound bow, which was returned by the king in touching the earth with his right hand and then lifting it to his mouth. He entered with an air of lordliness and majesty into one of the halls, sat himself down, congratulated the general and his officers on their happy arrival, and signified the particular pleasure his uncle the king of Mexico had in forming a friendship and correspondence with the monarch of the East, by whom they were sent into that country; but at the same time, he exaggerated the difficulties necessary to be overcome in order to go to court, and requested Cortes to change his resolution if he desired to please the king. Cortes answered, that if he returned back without delivering his embassy he would fail in his duty, and would give the utmost displeasure to his sovereign who had sent him, and particularly when he had found himself so near to the court after having surmounted the dangers of so long a journey. *If it is so, said the king, we will see each other at court;* upon which taking polite leave, after being presented with some European toys, he left behind him a part of the nobility, that they might attend Cortes on his journey.

From Ajotzinco the Spaniards marched to Cuitlahuac, a city founded upon a little island in the lake of Chalco, which, though small, was accounted by Cortes the most beautiful he had hitherto seen. This city communicated with the main land by means of two large commodious roads, constructed on the lake; the one to the south, which was two miles in length; the other to the north, which was more than two miles in length. The Spaniards passed along, delighted to see the multitude and beauty of the cities situated on the lake, the temples and towers which rose above the other buildings, the trees and shrubbery which beautified the inhabited places, the fields and floating



floating gardens of the lake, and the innumerable little vessels plying upon it; but at the same time, not a little timorous at seeing themselves surrounded by an immense crowd of people, which collected there from all places to observe them; on which account Cortes commanded his people to proceed in good order and to be prepared for accidents, and cautioned the Indians not to obstruct the way nor come too near the ranks, unless they chose to be treated as enemies. In Cuitlahuac they were well accommodated and entertained. The lord of that city complained in secret to Cortes of the tyranny of the king of Mexico, entered into a confederacy with him, and informed him of the most convenient way to go to the court, and the consternation into which the oracles of the gods, the phenomena in the heavens, and the success of the Spanish arms, had thrown Montezuma.

From Cuitlahuac they proceeded by the other road of the lake towards Iztapalapan, but in the way Cortes was entertained with a new piece of good fortune. The prince Ixlilxochitl finding that Cortes was not to make his journey through Calpolalpan, where he was waiting for him, resolved to meet him on the road to Iztapalapan: he marched with a considerable number of troops, and passed close to Tezcuco: this having been known to the prince Coanacotzin, his brother, who, since the rupture which, as we have already mentioned, happened three years before between them, had been totally alienated from him, either moved by fraternal affection, or led on by the hopes of the greater advantages to be derived from the union of both their interests, came also to meet with him upon this road: here they mutually exchanged sentiments, were reconciled, and united together in order to make a confederacy with the Spaniards. They travelled together until they came to Iztapalatenco, where they joined the strangers. Cortes, upon seeing so many armed troops, was a little uneasy, but being informed of the rank of the persons who were come to find him, and the motive of their coming, he went out to meet them, and the usual compliments having passed between them, the two princes invited him to the court of Tezcuco, to which he allowed himself to be easily persuaded to go, from the great service he hoped to gain by the prince

SECT.  
XXXIII.  
Visit of the  
princes of  
Tezcuco, and  
entrance of  
the Spaniards  
into that  
court.

BOOK VIII. prince Ixtlilxochitl, whose attachment to the Spaniards was now strongly apparent.

Tezcuco then, though somewhat inferior to Mexico in splendour and magnificence, was the largest and most populous city of the country of Anahuac : its population, including the cities of Huexotla, Coatlichan, and Atenco, which were so near as to appear like its suburbs, occupied one hundred and forty thousand houses : to the Spaniards it seemed twice as large as Seville. The grandeur of the temples and royal palaces, the beauty of the streets, the fountains and gardens, furnished ample variety of subject for their admiration. Cortes entered into this great city accompanied by the two princes and many of the Acolhuan nobility, amidst an infinite concourse of people. He was lodged with all his army in the principal palace of the king, where the treatment to his person was suitable to the dwelling. There the prince Ixtlilxochitl explained his pretended right to the kingdom of Acolhuacan, and his complaints against his brother Cacamatzin and the king of Mexico his uncle. Cortes promised to put him in possession of the throne, as soon as he had finished his negociations in Mexico ; and, without stopping in that court, he marched towards Iztapalapan.

SECT.  
XXXIV.  
Entry of the  
Spaniards  
into Iztapa-  
lapan.

Iztapalapan was a large and beautiful city, situated towards the point of that small peninsula which is between the two lakes of Chalco to the south and Tezcuco to the north : from this peninsula a road led to the little island of Mexico, which was paved for more than seven miles, and made on the lake many years before. The population of Iztapalapan consisted then of more than twelve thousand houses, built chiefly on several little islands contiguous to each other and the same peninsula, close to which were innumerable floating fields and gardens. This city was then governed by the prince Cuitlahuatzin, brother of Montezuma, and his immediate successor in the crown of Mexico, who, together with his other brother Matlatzincatzin lord of the city of Cojohuacan, received Cortes with the same ceremonies used by the other lords through whose cities he passed. He was complimented in an elegant harangue, and he, and his troops which accompanied him, lodged in his own palace. This was an extensive and most capacious

edifice of stone and lime, fresh built, and not yet completed : besides many halls and chambers of excellent accommodation, the roofs of which were cedar, and the walls covered with fine cotton tapestry, and besides many large squares where the allied troops were quartered, it had a garden of surprizing extent and beauty, already described by us when we treated of the agriculture of the Mexicans. After dinner the prince conducted his guests to this garden, where they received great recreation, and were impressed with a very elevated idea of Mexican magnificence. In this city the Spaniards observed, that instead of murmurings and complaints as elsewhere, they heard nothing but praises of the government; supposed to have been owing to the neighbourhood of the court, which made the inhabitants more cautious in speaking.

The next day the Spaniards marched along that road which united, as we have already mentioned, Iztapalapan with Mexico, which was intersected by seven small canals for the passage of boats from one lake to the other, and over these were wooden bridges for the convenience of passengers, which lifted up easily when it was necessary to obstruct the passage of an enemy. After having passed through Mexicaltzinco, and viewed Colhuacan, Huitzilopochco, Cojohuacan, and Mixcoac, cities all situated upon the borders of the lake, they arrived, amidst an immense concourse of people, at a place called *Xoloc*, where this and the road of Cojohuacan met each other. In the angle formed by these two roads, which is not more than half a league distant from the capital, there was a bastion with two little towers, surrounded by a wall more than ten feet high, with battlements, two entrances, and a draw-bridge; a place most memorable in the history of Mexico, from having been the camp of the Spanish general in the siege of that great city; there the army made a halt, to receive the compliments of more than a thousand Mexican nobles, all uniformly dressed, who, in passing before the Spanish general, made a bow with the usual ceremony of touching the earth and kissing the hand.

These compliments being over, in which the space of an hour was consumed, the Spaniards continued their course, all in as regular order as if they had been going to the field of battle. A little way before they

SECT.  
XXXV.  
Entry of the  
Spaniards  
into Mexico:



## BOOK VIII.

reception  
from the king  
and nobility.

they reached the city, Cortes was informed that the king of Mexico was coming to meet him; and a little after he appeared, with a most numerous and noble attendance. Three nobles preceded, each holding up in his hand a golden rod, as the insignia of majesty, by which the people were advertised of the presence of their sovereign. Montezuma came richly clad in a litter covered with plates of gold, which four nobles bore on their shoulders, under the shade of a parasol of green feathers embroidered with fancy works of gold; he wore hanging from his shoulders a mantle adorned with the richest jewels of gold and precious stones, on his head a thin crown of the same metal, and upon his feet shoes of gold tied with strings of leather worked with gold and gems; he was accompanied by two hundred lords, dressed in a style superior to the other nobles, but all barefooted, two by two, keeping close on each side to the walls of the houses, to shew the respect they bore to their sovereign. As soon as the king and the Spanish general saw each other, both alighted, Cortes from his horse, and the king from his litter, who began to walk leaning on the arms of the king of Tezcuco and the lord of Iztápalapán. Cortes, after having made a profound bow to the king, approached him to put about his neck a small cord of gold, on which were strung glass beads which appeared like gems, and the king bowed his head to receive it (*m*); Cortes was also going to embrace him, but the two lords did not permit it. The general expressed in a short speech, as the circumstances required, his benevolence, his respect, and the pleasure he had in the knowledge of so great a monarch. Montezuma answered him in few words, and having performed the usual ceremony of touching the earth and kissing the hand, he in return for the present of the glass beads, gave him two necklaces of beautiful mother of pearl, from which hung some large cray-fish of gold in imitation of nature: he charged the prince Cuítlahuatzin to conduct Cortes to his dwelling, and he himself retired with the king of Tezcuco.

(*m*) Solís, in his account of that meeting, makes four mistakes: 1. He says, that the present made by Cortes was not a band or chain of glass. 2. That those two lords who accompanied Montezuma did not permit Cortes to put it about his neck. 3. That they did it with some disdain. 4. That they were reprimanded by the king. The whole of this is false, invented at caprice, and contrary to the account given by Cortes himself.

The nobility as well as the populace, who, from the tops, doors, and windows of the houses, were observing all that passed, were equally surprized and astonished at the sight of so many extraordinary objects presented to their eyes, and the unheard of complaisance of the king, which contributed much to raise the character of the Spaniards. The latter, full of wonder at seeing the grandeur of the city, the magnificence of the buildings, and the multitude of inhabitants, marched along that grand and spacious way, which, without varying the least from a right line, continued the road of Iztapalapan, built upon the lake, to the southern gate of the greater temple, admiration alternately giving way to fear in their minds for their fate, seeing so small a number of them in the center of a strange and populous kingdom. Thus they travelled on for near a mile and a half within the city, unto the palace destined for their reception, which formerly belonged to king Axajacatl, not far distant from the western gate of the same temple. Here Montezuma, who had gone before, waited for them. When Cortes arrived at the gate of that palace, Montezuma took him by the hand, led him into a large hall, made him sit down upon a foot-stool similar in form to those of the altars of the moderns, and covered with a fine tapestry of cotton, and close to a wall also covered with a tapestry embroidered with gold and gems; and, taking leave of him, said to him "You and your companions are now in your own house, refresh and repose yourselves; I will return shortly."

The king went to his palace, and Cortes immediately ordered a volley of all the artillery to be fired, in order to awe and intimidate the Mexicans by the sound: in the mean while, he went to see all the chambers of the palace where his people were to lodge. This edifice was so large, that both the Spaniards and their allies, who, together with their women and servants whom they brought with them, exceeded seven thousand in number, were accommodated in it; every where there was the greatest cleanliness and neatness, almost all the chambers had beds of mats, of rushes, and palm, according to the custom, and other mats in a round form for pillows, with coverlets of fine cotton, and seats made of single pieces of wood; some chambers had the floor covered with mats, and the walls also covered with tapestries of cotton of various colours. The walls were moderately thick, and at certain

## BOOK VIII.

distances there were little towers; the Spaniards therefore found every thing which they could wish for their security. The indefatigable and cautious general immediately distributed his guards, placed a battery of his cannon facing the gate of the palace, and took as much care to fortify himself as if he had expected to be assaulted that night by his enemies. That day there was a magnificent entertainment prepared for Cortes and his officers, and served by the nobility, and for the rest of the army were brought various and abundant provisions, though of an inferior quality. This day, not more memorable to the Spaniards than to the Mexicans, was the eighth day of November, 1519, seven months after their arrival in the country of Anahuac.



## B O O K IX.

*Conferences of king Montezuma with the Spanish general; imprisonment of the kings of Mexico and Acolhuacan, and other lords; cruel punishment of Quauhpopoca; attempts of the governor of Cuba against Cortes, and the defeat of Panfilo Narvaez; the killing of many of the nobles, and insurrection of the people against the Spaniards; battle of Otompan, and retreat of the Spaniards to Tlascala; election of king Cuitlahuatzin; victories of the Spaniards in Tepejacac, in Xaltatzinco, in Tecamachalco, and in Quauquechollan; havoc made by the small-pox; death of king Cuitlahuatzin, and the princes Maxizcatzin and Cuicuitcatzin; election in Mexico of the king Quaubtemotzin.*

AFTER the Spaniards had dined and ordered every thing necessary for their security, the king returned, accompanied by many of the nobility to visit them. Cortes came to meet him along with his officers, and both parties entered together into the principal hall, where they quickly placed another footstool close to that of the Spanish general. The king presented to him many curious pieces of work of gold, silver, and feathers, and more than five thousand very fine dresses of cotton. Having at last sat himself down, he made Cortes sit down also, while every other person remained standing. Cortes in lofty expressions protested his gratitude to him, and as he was proceeding in his discourse Montezuma interrupted him, with these words: " Brave general, and you his companions, all my domestics

## BOOK IX.

## SECT. I.

First conference and new presents of the king Montezuma.

" and courtiers are witnesses of the pleasure I have received from your

" happy arrival at this court; and if, hitherto, there has been any

" appearance of a wish to oppose it, so much has only been done to hu-

" mour my subjects. Your fame has enlarged objects and alarmed

" minds. It was reported that you were immortal gods; that you

" came mounted on wild beasts of tremendous size and fierceness;

BOOK IX.

“ and, that you darted thunder with which the earth trembled : some  
 “ related, that you were monsters thrown up by the sea ; that the  
 “ insatiable thirst of gold made you abandon your native country ;  
 “ that you were greatly addicted to pleasures ; and such gluttons, that  
 “ one of you eat as much as ten of us : but all these errors are dissi-  
 “ pated by the experience which my subjects have had of you ; now  
 “ it is known that you are mortal men like us, although differing in  
 “ complexion and beard ; we have now seen with our own eyes that  
 “ those wild beasts so renowned, are only stags more corpulent than  
 “ ours ; and, that your pretended thunder and lightning are only a  
 “ more artificial species of shooting tubes, whose balls are pushed with  
 “ more force, and do more hurt than ours : with regard to your per-  
 “ sonal qualifications, we are well informed by those who have had  
 “ communication with you, that you are kind and generous, that you  
 “ patiently endure misfortunes, that you are not disposed to severity,  
 “ unless against those who provoke your anger by hostilities, nor  
 “ make use of your arms but in defence of your persons.

“ I do not doubt that you will in like manner have banished from  
 “ your minds, or that you soon will banish, those false ideas with which  
 “ you may have been impressed by the flattery of my vassals or the adu-  
 “ lation of my enemies : some of them may have told you that I am  
 “ one of the gods, and that I put on at pleasure the form of a lion,  
 “ a tyger, or any other animal ; but now you see (taking hold with  
 “ his fingers of the skin of his arm) that I am of flesh and bone like  
 “ other mortals, although more noble by birth and more powerful  
 “ from the elevation of my rank. The Chempoallese, who, under  
 “ your protection, have renounced obedience to me (although their  
 “ rebellion shall not pass unpunished) will have made you believe,  
 “ that the walls and roofs of my palaces are of gold, but your own eyes  
 “ have now undeceived you : this is one of my palaces, and you here  
 “ see that the walls are made of stone and lime, and the roofs of wood.  
 “ I will not deny that my riches are great, but they are exaggerated by  
 “ my subjects : some of them will have complained to you of my  
 “ cruelty and tyranny ; but they term the lawful exercise of the su-  
 “ preme authority tyranny, and call that cruelty which is but the ne-  
 “ cessary rigour of justice.

“ Abandoning,



“ Abandoning therefore all false conceptions occasioned to either of us by unjust representations, I accept the embassy of your king who sends you ; I respect his friendship, and offer all my kingdom to his obedience ; since from the signs we have observed in the heavens, and what we have seen in you, the period seems to be arrived when the predictions of our ancestors are to be fulfilled, that is, that there were to come from the quarter of the East, certain men different in habit and in customs from us, who were to become lords of all this country ; for we are not the original people of this land. It is not many years since our ancestors came here from the regions of the North, and we have not ruled these people but as the viceroy of Quetzalcoatl our god and lawful sovereign.”

Cortes answered, by thanking him warmly for the singular kindnesses he had hitherto received from him, and for the honourable idea he had formed of the Spaniards. He told him he was sent by the greatest monarch of Europe, who, although he might aspire to some thing higher in virtue of his being the descendant of Quetzalcoatl, nevertheless, he contented himself with establishing a confederacy and perpetual friendship with his majesty and his successors ; that the end of his embassy was not to take away from any one that which he possessed, but that of announcing a true religion, and communicating some important information which would improve his government, and render his vassals happy ; this he would do upon another occasion, if his majesty would vouchsafe to hear him. The king assented to his proposal, and having informed himself of the rank and condition of every one of the Spaniards, he took leave, and some little time after he sent them a large present, consisting of some works of gold, and three bales of fine feathers, dresses for each of the officers, and two bales of dresses of fine cotton for each of the soldiers. This prosperous beginning might have secured to the Spaniards the quiet possession of all that vast monarchy, if they had conducted themselves with prudence equal to their courage (n).

(n) The learned and judicious Acosta, treating of the first conference with Montezuma, in book vii. chap. 25. of his History says, “ Many are of opinion, that considering the state of things on that first day, it would have been easy for the Spaniards to have done with the king and the kingdom whatever they pleased, and to have communicated to them the law of Jesus Christ with peace and contentment to all.” &c.



## BOOK IX.

SECT. II.  
Visit of Cortes to the king.

The next day Cortés being desirous to pay his visit to the king, sent to demand an audience, and obtained it so speedily, that those who brought him the answer of the king were the persons themselves appointed to introduce ambassadors, and were to conduct him and instruct him in the ceremonials of that court. Cortes dressed himself in his most splendid habit, and took along with him the captains Alvarado, Sandoval, Velasquez, and Ordaz, and also five soldiers. They proceeded to the royal palace, amidst an immense multitude of people, and as soon as they reached the first gate, the persons who accompanied them ranged themselves in two files, one on each side of them, as it was deemed a want of respect to majesty to enter in a crowded manner. After passing through three courts, and some halls, to the last antichamber in order to come at the hall of audience, they were politely received by several lords who kept guard, and were forced to put off their shoes, and to cover their pompous dresses with some coarse garments. When they entered the hall of audience, the king made some steps towards Cortes and took him by the hand, and giving a look of kindness to all the rest, he made them all sit down. Their conference was long on different subjects. The king asked several questions concerning the government and natural productions of Spain; and Cortes, after having satisfied him in every thing, artfully led the discourse upon matters of religion. He explained to him the unity of God, the creation of the world, the severity of the judgments of God, the glory with which he rewards the just, and the eternal punishments to which he condemns the wicked. Then he spoke of the rites of Christianity, and in particular of the pure and unbloody sacrifice of the mass; to draw a comparison between it and the inhuman sacrifices of the Mexicans, declaiming warmly against the barbarous cruelty of sacrificing human victims, and feeding on their flesh. Montezuma answered, that with respect to the creation of the world they were of one sentiment; as that which Cortes had just said had been communicated to him by his ancestors; that as to the rest he had already been informed by his ambassadors of the religion of the Spaniards. I, however, he added, do not doubt of the goodness of the God whom you adore; but if he is kind to Spain, our gods are equally so to Mexico, as the experience of many centuries has shewn to us. Spare yourselves

selves therefore the trouble of endeavouring to induce me to leave their worship. With regard to our sacrifices, I do not know why we are to be blamed for sacrificing to the gods those men who, either on account of their own crimes, or from their fate in war, are destined to death. But although Cortes did not succeed in converting him to the Christian religion, he obtained a promise, as has been affirmed, that there never should be any human flesh prepared for the royal table, either because the reason urged by Cortes against it, awakened in his mind the horror natural at such food, or because he was desirous of shewing compliance with the Spaniards in some of their demands. On this occasion also he displayed the royal beneficence towards them, presenting to Cortes, and his four officers, several labours of gold, and ten bales of fine dresses of cotton, and a golden necklace to every soldier.

Cortes having returned to his quarters (for thus we may hereafter name the palace of Axajacatl where the Spaniards were lodged, he began to reflect on the danger which surrounded him in the heart of a city so strong and populous, and resolved to conciliate the minds of the nobles by good conduct, obsequious and kind manners, and ordered his people to behave themselves with so much guard and discretion that the Mexicans might have nothing to complain of: but while he appeared to watch with diligence to keep peace, he was revolving in his mind most daring and rash designs, totally adverse to tranquillity; and in order to bring them to maturity, it being necessary to inform himself with his own eyes of the fortifications of Mexico, and the forces of the Mexicans, he demanded permission of the king to visit the royal palaces, the greater temple, and the square of the market. The king cheerfully granted his request, unsuspecting of the crafty general, nor foresaw the consequences of his great indulgence. The Spaniards saw all they wished to see, and found every where new subjects of admiration.

The city of Mexico was then situated, as we have already said, upon a small island in the lake of Tezcuco, fifteen miles to the westward from that court, and four to the eastward from that of Tlacopan. For the convenience of passing to the main land, there were three great causeways of earth and stone, raised in the lake. That of Iztapalapan,

SECT. III.  
Description  
of the city of  
Mexico..



## BOOK IX.

Iapan, towards the south, upwards of seven miles; that of Tlacopan, towards the west, about two miles; and that of Tepejacac, towards the north, of three miles in length (*p*); and all three so broad, that ten men on horseback could pass abreast. Besides these three roads, there was another somewhat narrower for the two aqueducts of Chapultepec. The circumference of the city, exclusive of the suburbs, measured more than ten miles, and the number of houses were at least sixty thousand (*q*). The city was divided into four quarters, and each quarter into several districts, the Mexican names of which are still preserved among the Indians. The dividing lines of the four quarters, were the four broad roads, leading from the four gates of the area of the greater temple. The first quarter called *Tecpan*, now St. Paul, comprehended all that part between the two roads leading from the southern and eastern gates. The second *Mojotla*, now St. John, the part between the southern and western roads. The third *Tlaquechiubcan*, now St. Mary, the part between the western and northern roads; and the fourth *Alzacualco*, now St. Sebastian, the part of the city between the roads which led from the northern and eastern gates. To those four parts into which the city was divided from the time of its foundation, the city of Tlatelolco was added as a fifth, situated towards the north-west, having been united after the conquest of king Axajacatl to Tenochtitlan, and both together formed Mexico.

(*p*) Dr. Robertson puts instead of the road of Tepejacac, that of Tezcuco, which, in the part where he describes Mexico, he places towards the north-west, and when he speaks of the polis of the Spanish forces at the siege of that capital, he places it towards the east: though he has already said, that there was no road upon the lake towards the east: but there never was, nor could be, any road on the lake from Mexico to Tezcuco, on account of the prodigious depth of its bed in that part; and if there could have been any, it would not have been only three miles as this author affirms, but fifteen miles in length, which is the distance between them.

(*q*) Torquemada affirms, that the population of the capital amounted to one hundred and twenty thousand houses; but the anonymous conqueror, Gomara, Herrera, and other historians, agree in the number of sixty thousand houses, not that of sixty thousand inhabitants, as Robertson says; for no ancient author computed them so few in number. It is true, that in the Italian translation of the relation of the anonymous conqueror we read *sessante mila abitanti*; but this has been, without doubt, a mistake of the translator, who having, perhaps, found in the original *sesanta mil Vecinos*, translated it sixty thousand *abitanti*, when he ought to have said *fuochi*; because, otherwise Cholula, Xoehomilco, Iztapalapan, and other such cities would be made greater than Mexico. But in the above mentioned number the suburbs are not included. It appears that Torquemada included the suburbs, but still his calculation appears excessive.

Around



Around the city there were many dykes and reservoirs for collecting water when it was necessary; and within it so many canals, that there was hardly a district which could not be approached by boats; a circumstance which did not less contribute to embellish the city, and to make the transportation of provisions, and all other commodities of traffick easy, than to give the citizens security from the attempts of their enemies. Although the principal streets were broad and strait, of many others, some were mere canals, where there was no passing but in boats; others were paved and free of water, and some had a small channel between two terrasses, which served for the convenience of passengers, and for the unloading of vessels, or were little gardens planted with trees and flowers.

Among the various buildings of the city, besides many temples and magnificent royal palaces, of which we have already spoken, there were other palaces, or great houses, which the feudatory lords had constructed for their habitation during the time which they were occasionally obliged to reside at court. Almost all the houses, except those of the poor, had balconies with parapets, and some of them even battlements and towers, though much smaller than those of the temples: so that upon the whole, the Mexicans provided for their defence in their streets and houses as well as their temples.

Besides the large and famous square of Tlatelolco, where the principal market was held, there were other little market-places distributed through the city, where they sold ordinary provisions. There were also in different places fountains and fish-ponds, particularly near to the temples, and many gardens, part laid out on the natural level of the earth, and part raised into high terrasses.

The many and great buildings, neatly whitened and polished, the lofty towers of the temples, scattered through the four quarters of the city, the canals, trees, and gardens, formed an assemblage of objects so beautiful, that the Spaniards appeared never satisfied with viewing it, particularly when they beheld it from the upper area of the greater temple, which not only commanded a prospect of all the extent of Mexico, but also of the lake, and the beautiful and populous cities around it. They were not less astonished at seeing the royal palaces, and the wonderful variety of plants and animals which were reared

## BOOK IX.

there; but nothing struck their minds with more amazement than the large square of the market. There was not a Spaniard who did not extol it with singular praises, and some of them, who had travelled through almost all Europe, declared, as Bernal Diaz reports, that they had never seen in any place of the world, either so great a number of merchants, or such variety of merchandize so well ordered and disposed.

SECT. IV.  
Effects of  
Cortes's reli-  
gious zeal.

When the Spaniards mounted the greater temple, they found the king there, who had anticipated their arrival, in order to prevent, by his presence, any attempt of violence against his gods. After having observed the city from that great height, at the instance of the king himself, Cortes demanded permission to see the sanctuaries which the king granted to him after consulting the priests. The Spaniards entered there, and contemplated, not without compassion and horror, the blindness of those people, and the horrid slaughter which superstition committed at their sacrifices. Cortes then turning to the king, said, "I wonder, prince, that a monarch, so wise as you are, can adore those abominable figures of the devil as gods." "If I had known," answered the king, "that you would have spoken disrespectfully of our gods, I should not have yielded to your request." Cortes, seeing him so much incensed, begged his excuse, and took leave to withdraw to his quarters. "Go in peace," said the king; "for I will stay here to appease the anger of our gods, which you have provoked by your blasphemy."

Notwithstanding this circumstance of disgust, Cortes not only obtained permission from the king to build within the enclosure of his quarters a chapel in honour of his god, but also the workmen and materials for the building, in which they celebrated mass, although without wine, and the soldiers daily assembled there to perform their devotions. He fixed also, in the principal court, a great cross, that the Mexicans might see the high veneration in which they held that symbol of their religion. He was moreover desirous of consecrating the very sanctuary of Huitzilopochtli to the worship of his god, but at that time he was restrained by respect for the king and the priests; but he accomplished this purpose some months after, having acquired a  
greater

greater authority by the imprisonment of the king, and other actions not more prudent or less rash, as will presently appear.

He broke the idols which were worshipped there, made them clean and adorn the sanctuary, placed a crucifix and an image of the mother of God in it, and placing himself upon his knees before those sacred images, he thanked the Almighty for having granted leave to adore him in that place, so long destined to cruel and detestable idolatry. His pious zeal made him frequently repeat to Montezuma his arguments for the truth of his religion; but although Montezuma was not disposed to embrace it, moved however by his suggestions, he commanded that from that time forward no human victims should be sacrificed; and although he did not agree with the Spanish general in renouncing idolatry, he continued to caress him, and no day passed without his making some present to, and shewing new civilities to the Spaniards. The order which the king gave respecting the sacrifices were not strictly observed, and that great harmony, which had hitherto subsisted, was disturbed by the daring attempts of the Spanish general.

Six days were hardly elapsed after the entry of the Spaniards into Mexico, when Cortes, finding himself, as it were, insulated in the centre of an immense myriad of people, and considering how dangerous their situation would become, if the mind of the king should ever change, which event might happen, was persuaded there was no other conduct to be followed for their security than to make himself master of the person of the king; but such a measure being extremely repugnant to justice and reason, which demanded from him both respect to the majesty of that monarch, and gratitude for his great beneficence, he sought for pretences to quiet his conscience, and to shield his honour; for which purpose he found none so fitting as the revolutions at Vera Cruz, the intelligence of which he had kept secret in his breast till this time, but being willing now to avail himself of it, he revealed it to his officers, that they might take into their serious consideration what would be most proper and effectual to deliver themselves from such imminent danger; and, in order to justify his attempt, and excite the Spaniards to execute it, he made some principal persons of the allies be called (whose information ought always to be suspicious, on account of their bitter enmity to the Mexicans), and demanded of them if they had ob-

SECT. V.  
Imprison-  
ment of king  
Montezuma.



## BOOK IX.

served any thing new in the inhabitants of that court? They replied, that the Mexican populace was then amused with the public rejoicings, which the king had ordered, to celebrate the arrival of such noble strangers; but that amongst the nobility they perceived a suspicious look; and, among other things, they had heard them say, that it would be easy to lift up the bridges upon the canals, which seemed to indicate some secret conspiracy against the Spaniards.

Cortes could not sleep from uneasiness that whole night, and passed it traversing his quarters in deep meditation. A centinel told him, that in one of the chambers there was a door which had been fresh walled up. Cortes made it be opened, and upon entering they found several chambers, where the treasure of the deceased king was deposited. He saw there many idols, a great quantity of works of gold, of gems, of feathers, of cotton, and several other things which were paid by the tributary provinces, or presented by the feudatory lords to their sovereign. After beholding with amazement so much riches, he made the door be again walled up, and left in its former state.

The next morning he called together his captains, represented to them the hostilities committed by the lord of Nauhtlan upon the garrison at Vera Cruz and the Totonacas their allies, which the allies themselves said would not have been offered without the express order or permission of the king of Mexico. He painted, in strong colours, the danger in which they then stood, and declared his design to them, exaggerating the advantages which were to be expected from the execution of it, and diminishing the evils which it might occasion. Their opinions were various. Some of them rejected the proposition of the general as rash and impracticable, and said, that it would be fitter to ask permission from the king to retire from the country, since as he had endeavoured, with so much earnestness, and such large presents, to turn them from their resolution of coming to Mexico, he would promptly consent to their departure. Some of them thought, that although it was necessary for them to depart, yet they imagined that it would be proper to do it secretly, in order to give the Mexicans no opportunity of betraying them in any manner; but the greater part of them having, it is probable, been previously biassed by the general, embraced his proposal, rejecting the others as more dangerous and ignominious. “What will  
“they

“ they say of us ?” they asked, “ when they see us go suddenly from a court where we have been crowned with honour ; who will not be persuaded that it is fear which chafes us away ? If we ever lose the reputation of courage, what security can we promise ourselves, either in those places of the Mexicans through which we must pass, or among our allies, who will no longer be restrained by respect for our arms ?” At last, the resolution was formed to take Montezuma in his palace, and to bring him prisoner to their quarters ; a resolution most barbarous, however, and wild to excess, suggested by apprehensions for their fate, and their past uniform experience of success, which, more than any thing else, encourages men, and leads them gradually on always to some still more daring undertaking.

For the execution of this dangerous plan, Cortes put all his troops in arms, and stationed them at proper places. He commanded five of his officers and twenty-five of his soldiers, in whom he placed chief confidence, to repair two by two to the palace, but in such a manner that they might all meet there at once, as if by accident ; and having previously obtained leave of the king, he went himself with his interpreter Marina, at the usual hour of his visit to him. He was introduced with the other Spaniards into the hall of audience, where the king, far from suspecting what was to happen, received them with his wonted kindness. He made them sit down, presented them to some works of gold, and besides presented one of his daughters to Cortes. Cortes, after having expressed his gratitude, in the most polite terms, apologised for not accepting her, alledging that he was married in Cuba, and according to the Christian law, he was not permitted to have two wives ; but at last he received her into his company, to avoid giving disgust to the king, and to have an opportunity of making her a Christian, as he afterwards did. To the other officers also he gave some daughters of Mexican lords of those he had in his seraglio. They conversed afterwards, for some time, on various subjects ; but Cortes, seeing that those discourses diverted him from his object, told the king that his visit then was made to communicate to him the proceedings of his vassal the lord of Nauhtlan : he complained of the hostilities committed by that lord on the Totonacas, on account of their friendship with the Spaniards ; of the war made on the Spaniards

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at Vera Cruz, and the death of Escalante the governor, and six soldiers of that garrison. "I (he added) must give an account to my sovereign of the death of those Spaniards; and in order to be able to give him proper satisfaction, I have made enquiry into so singular an event. All consider you the principal author of those revolutions; but I am far from thinking so great a monarch capable of such perfidy as to persecute me as an enemy in that province, while at the same time you are heaping favours upon me in your court." "I do not doubt (replied the king) but those who accuse me of the war of Nauhtlan are the Tlascalans, my sworn enemies; but I protest I had no influence in it. Quauhpopoca has proceeded to do so without my orders, and rather against my inclination; and that you may be assured of the truth, I will make him immediately come to court, and put him into your hands." He immediately called two of his courtiers, and delivering to them a certain gem, which he always wore hanging at his arm, and served in place of a seal as a sign of his commands, he ordered them to go with all possible speed to Nauhtlan to bring Quauhpopoca from thence to court, and the other principal persons who were concerned in the death of the Spaniards, and gave them authority to raise troops, and take them by force if they should refuse to obey.

The two courtiers departed immediately to execute their commission, and the king said to Cortes, "What can I do more to assure you of my sincerity?" "I have no doubt of it (answered Cortes); but in order to clear up the error into which your vassals have likewise fallen, that the affair of Nauhtlan had been executed by your orders, we wish for a strong proof of it, which will manifest your benevolence towards us; and no one seems more adapted for this purpose than that of your condescending to live with us until the guilty persons appear, and manifest your innocence by their confession. That will be sufficient to satisfy my sovereign, to justify your conduct, to honour and shelter us under the shade of your majesty." In spite of the artful words in which Cortes endeavoured to disguise his daring and injurious pretension, the king immediately penetrated his meaning, and was disturbed. "When was there ever an instance (he said) of a king tamely suffering himself to be led into prison? And although

"I was



“ I was willing to debase myself in so vile a manner, would not all my  
“ vassals immediately arm themselves to set me free? I am not a man  
“ who can hide myself, or fly to the mountains; without subjecting  
“ myself to such infamy, I am here now ready to satisfy your com-  
“ plaints.” “ The house, prince (returned Cortes), to which we invite  
“ you, is one of your palaces; nor will it excite the wonder of your sub-  
“ jects, who are accustomed to your change of habitation, to see  
“ you now go to inhabit the palace of your deceased father Axajacatl,  
“ from a motive of shewing your benevolence towards us. In case  
“ your subjects afterwards should dare to do any thing against you or  
“ us, we have enough of courage, strong arms, and good weapons, to  
“ repel their violence. In other respects I engage my faith you  
“ shall be as much honoured and attended upon by us as by your own  
“ subjects.” The king persevered in his refusal, and Cortes in his im-  
portunity; until at last, one of the Spanish officers, extremely daring  
and impetuous, not brooking this delay to the execution of their pro-  
ject, said, in passion, that they should leave discoursing, and resolve to  
take him by force, or put him to death. The king, who discerned in  
the aspect of the Spaniard, what was his purpose, eagerly demanded of  
Marina what that furious stranger said? “ I, prince (she answered  
with mildness and discretion), “ as your subject, desire your happiness;  
“ but as the confidant of those men, know their secrets, and am ac-  
“ quainted with their character. If you condescend to do what they  
“ require, you will be treated by them with all the honour which is  
“ due to your royal person; but if you persist in your refusal, your life  
“ will be in danger.” That unhappy king, who from the time that  
he had the first intelligence of the arrival of the Spaniards, had been  
struck with a superstitious panick, and had become daily more pu-  
sillanimous, seeing himself in such difficulty, and being persuaded that  
before his guards could come to his succour he might perish by the  
hands of men so daring and resolute, at last yielded to their importu-  
nity. “ I am willing to trust myself with you; let us go, let us go,  
“ since the gods thus intend;” and immediately he ordered his litter to  
be prepared, and he got into it, in order to be transported to the quar-  
ters of the Spaniards.

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Our readers will probably, on reading and considering all the circumstances of this extraordinary event, feel the same displeasure we feel in giving the relation; as the Spaniards cannot but appear to have been the severest instruments fate ever made use of to farther the ends of Providence in the discovery and connection of the new with the old continent.

Montezuma, at length, left his palace never to return to it again. He departed, declaring to his courtiers, for certain reasons, after consultation with his gods, he was going to pass some days, of his own free will, with those strangers, commanding them to publish it through all the city. He went with all the pomp and magnificence with which he usually appeared in public, and the Spaniards kept close to him, guarding him, under pretence of doing him honour. The news this singular event immediately spread through the whole capital, and the people assembled in crowds; some were affected so as to weep, and others threw themselves upon the ground in despair. The king attempted to console them, telling them, that it was with his own pleasure, that he went to be among his friends; but being apprehensive of some disorder, he gave orders to his ministers to chase the rabble from the streets, and threatened death to any one who caused any commotion or disturbance. Having arrived at the quarters, he caressed the Spaniards, and took the apartments that pleased him most, which his domestics quickly decorated with the finest tapestry of cotton and feathers, and the best furniture of the royal palace. Cortes placed guards at the entry to those apartments, and doubled those which were usual for the security of their quarters. He intimated to all the Spaniards and all the allies, that they were to treat him and serve him with all the respect which was due to majesty, and permitted the Mexicans to visit him whenever they pleased, provided there were but few at a time; so that he wanted nothing that he had in his own palace but liberty.

SECT. VI.  
Life of the  
king in pri-  
son.

Here Montezuma was allowed to give free audience to his vassals, heard their petitions, pronounced sentences, and governed the kingdom with the assistance of his ministers and counsellors. His domestics served him with the same diligence and punctuality as usual. A band of nobles waited upon him at table, ordered in ranks of four at a time,

a time, carrying the dishes raised up in their hands for the sake of ostentation; after having chose what he liked, he divided the rest among the Spaniards who assisted and the Mexican nobles who attended him: not contented with this, his generosity made him distribute frequent and magnificent presents among the Spaniards.

Cortes, on his part, shewed so much earnestness that his people should pay him the respect which was due, that he ordered a Spaniard to be whipped for answering the king rudely, and would have made him be hanged, as some historians affirm, if the king himself had not interposed in his behalf. But if the soldier was deserving of chastisement for insulting the majesty of that king by a rude word, what punishment did he merit who had so outrageously deprived him of his liberty? Every time that Cortes went to visit him he observed the same ceremony, and paid him the same compliments which he had been used to do when he went to the royal palace. In order to amuse him in prison, he made the soldiers go through the military exercise, or made them play at games before him; and the king himself frequently condescended to play with Cortes and the captain Alvarado, at a game which the Spaniards called *bodoque*, and shewed himself happy to lose in order to have an opportunity of exercising his liberality: once after dinner he lost forty pieces of unwrought gold, which, as near as we can guess, was equal to one hundred and sixty ounces at least.

Cortes perceiving his liberality, or rather prodigality, told him one day that some knavish soldiers had stolen some pieces of gold from the treasury of his deceased father Axajacatl, but that he would make them immediately restore the whole of their theft. "Provided," said the king, "they do not touch the images of the gods, nor any thing destined for their worship, they may take as much as they please." Having got this permission, the Spaniards took out soon after more than a thousand fine habits of cotton; Cortes commanded them to be replaced, but Montezuma opposed it, saying he never took back what he had once given away. Cortes also imprisoned some soldiers, because they had taken out of the same treasure a certain quantity of liquid amber; but, at the desire of the king, they were again set at liberty. Montezuma, not contented with yielding up his riches to the Spaniards,



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ards, presented to Cortes another of his daughters, whom the general accepted, in order to marry her to Christopher Olid, camp-master to the Spanish troops. This princess, as well as the other formerly presented, were immediately instructed and baptized, without any opposition from their father.

Cortes, having no longer any doubt of the friendly disposition of the king, which had been manifested not only by his extraordinary liberality, but also by the pleasure he took in living among the Spaniards, after some days of confinement allowed him to go out of the quarters, and exhorted him to go as often as he pleased to amuse himself with the chase, of which he was immoderately fond. That debased monarch did not refuse this miserable use of his liberty; he went frequently, sometimes to the temples to perform his devotions, sometimes to the lake to catch water-fowl, sometimes to the wood of Chapultepec, or some other place of pleasure; always guarded, however, by a strong company of Spanish soldiers. When he went upon the lake, he was escorted by a vast number of boats, or by two brigantines, which Cortes had caused to be built as soon as he entered that capital (*r*). When he resorted to the woods, he was accompanied by two thousand Tlascalans, besides a numerous retinue of Mexicans, who always were in attendance to serve him; but he never passed a night out of the quarters.

SECT. VII.  
Punishment  
of the lord of  
Nauhtlan,  
and new in-  
sults to the  
king.

Upwards of fifteen days had elapsed since the imprisonment of the king, when the two messengers returned from Nauhtlan, conducting Quauhpopoca, his son, and fifteen other nobles, accomplices in the death of the governor Escalante. Quauhpopoca came richly dressed, in a litter: when he arrived at the quarters he pulled off his shoes, according to the ceremony of the palace, and covered himself with a coarse habit; he was introduced to the audience of the king, and having observed the usual forms of respect, he said, "Behold, most great and powerful prince, your servant obedient to your commands, and ready to comply in every thing with your desire." "You have conducted yourself not a little amiss in this point," returned

(*r*) In order to set forth at once the life of Montezuma while in prison, we recount here some events which happened posterior to others; which are still to be related.

the king, with disdain, "by treating those strangers, whom I have received like friends into my court, as enemies; and your temerity has been excessive, in blaming me as the author of such proceedings; you shall therefore be punished as a traitor to your sovereign." Quauhpopoca endeavoured to excuse himself, but the king would not listen to him; and made him be immediately delivered up to Cortes, with his accomplices, that, after the crime was examined into, he might punish them as he should think proper. Cortes put the necessary questions, and they openly confessed the fact, without at first blaming the king; until being threatened with the torture, and believing their punishment inevitable, they declared that what they had done was enjoined by the king, without whose orders they would not have dared to attempt any thing against the Spaniards.

Cortes, after hearing their confession and pretending not to believe their excuse, condemned them to be burned alive before the royal palace, for being guilty of treason to the king. He repaired immediately to the king's apartment, with three or four of his officers, and a soldier who carried irons in his hands; and, without omitting even upon this occasion the usual ceremony and compliments, he said to the king, "The delinquents, prince, have now been examined, and all of them have confessed their guilt, and blame you as the author of the death of my Spaniards: I have condemned them to the punishment which they, and which you also, deserve, agreeable to their confession; but, in consideration of the many kindnesses you have rendered us hitherto, and the regard you have manifested for my sovereign and towards my nation, I am willing to grant you the favour of your life, although I cannot avoid making you feel a part of the punishment which you merit for your crime." Upon saying this, he, in an angry tone, commanded the soldier to put the irons upon his legs, and without deigning to hear a word from him, turned about and departed. The stupefaction of the king at seeing this outrage offered to his person was so great, that it left him no power of resistance nor any words to express his affliction: he remained for some time in a state of insensibility; his domestics who attended signified their grief in silent tears; and throwing themselves at his feet, eased the weight of the irons with their hands, and endeavoured to prevent their contact with

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his legs by placing bandages of cotton between them. As he returned to himself, he broke out into some expressions of impatience, but he soon calmed again, attributing his miseries to the supreme dispensations of his gods.

This bold action was hardly performed, when Cortes proceeded to execute another not less presumptuous. After having given orders to the guards not to admit any Mexican to see the king, he commanded Quauhpopoca, his son, and the rest of his accomplices, to be led to punishment; they were conducted by the Spaniards themselves, all armed and formed in order of battle, to keep the people in awe in case they should be willing to oppose the execution of their sentence. But what could that small troop of men have done against the immense multitude of Mexicans who assembled to be spectators of the event? The fire was kindled before the principal palace of the king. The fuel made use of was a great quantity of bows, arrows, darts, lances, swords, and shields, which were taken from an armoury; for Cortes had demanded these of the king, that he might rid himself of the uneasiness which the sight of so many arms occasioned. Quauhpopoca, tied hand and foot and placed upon the pile where he was to be burned, again protested his innocence, and repeated that what he had done was by the express order of his king; he then made prayers to his gods, and encouraged his companions to bear their sufferings. The fire being kindled they were all in a few minutes consumed, (s) in sight of a numerous multitude, who made no commotion because they were persuaded as is probable that this punishment was executed by order of the king; and it is to be imagined that the sentence had been published in his name.

(s) Solis, when he makes mention of the sentence of Cortes against Quauhpopoca, speaks thus: "Juzgóse militarmente la causa, y se les dio sentencia de muerte, con la circunstancia de que fuisen quemados publicamente sus cuerpos." Wherein, without mentioning the species of punishment to which they were condemned, he makes it be understood, that the prisoners were not burned, but their dead bodies only. This is not at all consistent with the sincerity which is requisite from an historian. He studied to dissemble whatever did not conform with the panegyric of his hero; but his dissimulation is of but little consequence, while not only other historians, but even Cortes himself affirms it openly, in his letter to Charles V. See in particular Herrera, in his *Decad II.* book viii. chap. 9.

This



This conduct of Cortes is by no means to be justified, since besides arrogating to himself an authority which did not belong to him, if he believed the king had been the author of the revolutions at Vera Cruz, why condemn to death, and to so cruel a death, men who had no other guilt than that of executing punctually the orders of their sovereign? If he did not believe the king guilty, why subject him to so much ignominy, in contradiction to the respect due to his character, the gratitude which might naturally have been felt for his bounty, and the justice claimed by his innocence? It is probable, that Quauhpopoca had an express order from the king to bring the Totonacas again under obedience to his crown, and that being unable to execute that order without embroiling himself with the Spaniards, who protected the rebels, he carried things to the extremity which we have seen.

As soon as the criminals were punished, Cortes went to the apartment of the king, and saluting him with expressions of affection, and boasting the favour which he had done him in granting him his life, he made his fetters be taken off. The joy which Montezuma then felt, was proportioned to the anguish the ignominy had excited; he lost all his fears of having his life taken from him, and received this phantom of liberty as an incomparable benefit; he was so fallen in dignity and spirit, that he embraced Cortes with the utmost affection, expressed his gratitude to him in the strongest terms, and that day shewed extraordinary complaisance to the Spaniards and his own vassals. Cortes took off his guard, and told the king that whenever he pleased he might return to his palace; well assured, however, the king would not accept his offer; for he had frequently heard him say, that it would not be fitting for him to return to his palace while the Spaniards were in his court. He was unwilling to quit the quarters, on account of the dangers the Spaniards would be in whenever he abandoned them; but it is also probable, that his own personal danger likewise prevented him from resuming his liberty, for he was not ignorant how much he had offended and disgusted his vassals, by his debasement of spirit and excess of submission to the Spaniards.

It is also probable, that the punishment of Quauhpopoca excited some ferment among the nobility; for, a few days after, Cacamatzin king of Acolhuacan, unable to brook the authority which the Spaniards

SECT. VIII.  
Attempts of  
the king of  
Acolhuacan  
against the  
Spaniards.

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ards were gaining in Mexico, and ashamed to see the miserable situation of his uncle Montezuma, sent to tell him,—that he should remember that he was a king, and not to make himself the slave of those strangers: but finding that Montezuma refused to attend to his counsel, resolved himself to make war upon the Spaniards. Their ruin would have been inevitable, if the esteem of Cacamatzin with the Mexican and Tezcucan subjects had been equal to his intrepidity and resolution; but the Mexicans suspected, that under function of zeal for the honour of his uncle he disguised some lurking ambition and design to usurp the crown of Mexico; among his own subjects of Tezcuco he was not very popular, on account of his pride and the injury he had done his brother the prince Cuicuitatzin, who, to shun being persecuted, had taken shelter in Mexico, and was more acceptable to the people on account of his more affable disposition.

Cacamatzin therefore went to Tezcuco, and having called together his counsellors and the most respectable persons of his court, represented to them the deplorable state of Mexico, owing to the unequalled audacity of the Spaniards, and pusillanimity of the king his uncle; the authority which those strangers were acquiring, the outrages offered to the king by the imprisonment of his person as if he had been a slave, and the insult rendered to their gods by the introduction of the worship of a strange deity into that kingdom; he exaggerated the evils which might result from such beginnings to the court and kingdom of Acolhuacan: “It is time now,” he said, “to fight for our religion, for our country, for our liberty, and for our honour, before the power of those men is increased by reinforcements from their own country or new alliances in this.” At last he enjoined them all to speak their opinions freely. The majority of his counsellors declared for war, either in complaisance to their king or because they were all of the same opinion, but some aged respectable persons told the king plainly, that he should not suffer himself to be led away by the ardour of youth; that before any resolution was taken it ought to be remembered, that the Spaniards were warlike resolute men, and fought with arms superior to their’s; that he should not consider the relation between himself and Montezuma so much as the alliance of the latter with the Spaniards; that a friendship of that  
8
nature,

nature, of which there were the clearest and most certain proofs, would make him sacrifice all the interests of his family and his country to the ambition of those strangers.

In spite of those representations war was resolved upon, and immediately they began to make preparations for it with the utmost secrecy; but still not sufficient to prevent the intelligence of it from reaching Montezuma and Cortes: this general became extremely uneasy at it, but reflecting that all his daring designs had succeeded, he resolved to ward off the blow, by marching with his troops to make an assault upon Tezcuco. Montezuma dissuaded him from so dangerous a step, informing him of the strength of that capital and the immense number of its inhabitants. Cortes determined, therefore, to send an embassy to that king, calling to his recollection the friendship formerly agreed upon between them in Ajotzinco when he came to meet him in the name of his uncle, and also to tell him to reflect that it was not easier to undertake war than difficult to succeed in it, and that it would turn out to better account for him to keep up a good correspondence with the king of Castile and the Spanish nation. Cacamatzin answered, that he could not regard men as friends who injured his honour, wronged his blood, disdained his religion, and oppressed his country; that he did not know who the king of Castile was, nor was it of any importance for him to know it; that if they would escape the storm which was now ready to pour upon them they should immediately quit Mexico, and return to their native country.

Notwithstanding this firm answer, Cortes repeated his embassy; but being again answered in the same tone, he complained to Montezuma; and, in order to engage him in the affair, he feigned to suspect even him of having some influence in the hostile designs of his nephew. Montezuma cleared himself from suspicion by the most sincere protestations, and offered to interpose his authority. He sent to tell Cacamatzin to come to Mexico to visit him, and that he would find means to accommodate the difference. Cacamatzin, amazed at seeing Montezuma more interested in favour of those who destroyed his liberty, than of his own relation who was zealous to restore it to him, answered, that if after such infamous treatment he had a spark  
of



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of honour left, he would be ashamed of seeing himself made the slave of four rustians, who, while they cajoled with fair words, heaped acts of affront upon him; that since neither zeal for the Mexican religion and the gods of the Acolhuans, whom those strangers had blasphemously insulted, nor the glory of his ancestors, obscured and debased by his own pusillanimity, could move him, he himself was disposed to aid his religion—to vindicate his gods—to preserve the kingdom, and recover the honour and liberty of him and every Mexican subject; that he would indeed see him at Mexico, not however with his hands in his bosom, but wielding his sword, to wipe off and cancel with the blood of the Spaniards the disgrace which stained the nation.

SECT. IX.  
Exaltation of  
the prince  
Cuicuitzeat-  
zin.

Montezuma was extremely alarmed by this answer, fearing that, either from the revenge of the Spaniards or the fury of king Cacamatzin, he would become the victim of the approaching storm; upon which account he resolved to adopt the last resource to prevent it, and save his own life by treachery. He therefore gave secret orders to some Mexican officers, who served in the guard of his nephew the king of Acolhuacan, to exert their utmost efforts, and without delay, to seize his person and conduct him with the greatest care to Mexico, because it was of importance to the nation at large. He suggested to them the manner of doing it, and probably also made them some gift and promised them some reward to encourage them in the undertaking. They again solicited other officers and domestics of the king Cacamatzin, whom they knew to be disposed to such a faction, and by the assistance of the last they obtained all that Montezuma desired. Among other palaces of the king of Acolhuacan, there was one built upon the edge of the lake, in such a manner that by a canal, which ran under it, vessels could come out or go in to it. There, as Cacamatzin was then residing at this palace, they placed a number of vessels with armed men, and in the darkness of the night, which favours all conspiracies, they suddenly seized upon the king, and, before any persons could come to his assistance, put him into a vessel and conveyed him with the utmost expedition to Mexico. Montezuma, without paying any respect to the character of sovereign nor his relation with Cacamatzin, delivered him up immediately to Cortes. This general, by what appears from his conduct, had not the least idea of the respect which

is due to majesty even in the person of a barbarian, put him in irons, and confined him under a strong guard. The reflections to be made on this, and other extraordinary events in this history, are too obvious to require any interruption of the course of our relation with them.

Cacamatzin, who began his unhappy reign with the dissension of his brother Ixtlilxochitl and the dismemberment of the state, concluded it with the loss of his crown, his liberty, and his life. Montezuma determined, with the consent of Cortes, that the crown of Acolhuacan should be given to the prince Cuicuitzcatzin, who had been entertained by Montezuma in his palace from the time that, in order to avoid the persecutions of his brother Cacamatzin, he had taken refuge in Mexico and put himself under his protection. This election did great wrong to the princes Coanacotzin and Ixtlilxochitl, who, by having been born of the queen Xocotzin, had a better right to the crown. The motive does not appear which made Montezuma refuse Coanacotzin, although with respect to Ixtlilxochitl it is certain that he was afraid of increasing the power of so troublesome an enemy. However it was, Montezuma made Cuicuitzcatzin be acknowledged king by the nobles of Tezcuco, and accompanied him, along with Cortes, to the vessel in which he was to cross the lake, and recommended to him the constant friendship of the Mexicans and the Spaniards, as he was indebted to them both for his crown.

Cuicuitzcatzin repaired to Tezcuco, accompanied by many nobles of each court, and was received there with acclamations, triumphal arches, and dances, the nobility transporting him in a litter from the vessel to the royal palace, where the eldest noble made him a long discourse in the name of the whole nation, congratulating him and exhorting him to love all his vassals, and promising to treat him as a father and to revere him as their sovereign. It is impossible to express the grief which this event occasioned to Cacamatzin, who found himself in the flower of youth, being still no more than twenty-five years of age, deprived of the crown which three years before he had inherited from his father, and reduced to the confinement and solitude of a prison by the very king whom he had purposed to make free, and those strangers whom he had designed to drive out of the kingdom.

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Cortes had now got into his power the two most potent kings of Anahuac, and it was not long before he took also the king of Tlaco-pan, the lords of Iztapalapan and Cojohuacan, both brothers of Montezuma, two sons of this same king, Itzquauhtzin lord of Tlatelolco, a high-priest of Mexico, and several more of the most respectable personages into custody, although we do not know the particulars of their imprisonment; but it is probable, that he proceeded to take them one after another, as they came to visit Montezuma.

SECT. X.  
Submission of  
Montezuma  
and the Mex-  
ican nobility  
to the crown  
of Spain.

The general, encouraged by his various successes, and seeing the king of Mexico totally devoted to his will, told him it was now time for his subjects to acknowledge the king of Spain their lawful sovereign, who was descended from the king and god Quetzalcoatl. Montezuma, who had not courage to contradict him, assembled the principal nobility of the court and the neighbouring cities; they came all readily to receive his orders, and being met in a large hall of the Spanish quarters, the king made them a long discourse, in which he declared the affection he bore them as a father, from whom consequently they ought not to fear that he would propose any thing to them which was not just and advantageous: he called to their memory the ancient tradition concerning the devolution of the Mexican empire on the descendants of Quetzalcoatl, whose viceroys he and his ancestors had been, and the phenomena observed in the elements, which, according to the interpretation of the priests and divines, signified that the time was now arrived when the oracles were to be fulfilled: he then proceeded to compare the marks observed in the Spaniards with those of the tradition, from whence he concluded that the king of Spain was evidently the lawful descendant of Quetzalcoatl, to whom therefore he yielded up the kingdom and owned obedience, and exhorted them all to do the same (s). In pronouncing himself the subject of another king he

felt

(s) The circumstances of the above mentioned assembly, of the homage rendered to the king of Spain, and of the order intimated from Montezuma to Cortes to depart from the court, is related by his origins with such variety, that no two of them are found to agree. In the narration of these events we chiefly follow the accounts of Cortes and Bernal Diaz, who were both eye witnesses. Solis affirms, that the acknowledgment made by Montezuma was, a mean artifice, that he never had any intention to fulfil what he promised, that his aim was to hasten the



felt his spirit so wounded, that his voice failed him and tears were substituted for words. The sorrows of the king were succeeded by such bitter sobs from the whole assembly, that they affected and drew the pity of the Spaniards. To these emotions a melancholy silence succeeded, which was at length broken by one of the most respectable Mexican chiefs, with these words: "Since, the time, O prince, is arrived when those ancient oracles are to be fulfilled, and the gods incline and you command that we become the subjects of another lord, what else have we to do but to submit to the sovereign will of heaven intimated to us from your mouth."

Cortes then thanked the king and all the lords who were present for their ready and sincere submission, and declared that his sovereign did not presume to take the crown from the king of Mexico, but only to make his supreme dominion over that kingdom be acknowledged, that Montezuma would not only continue to govern his subjects, but would also exercise the same authority over all those people who should submit themselves to the Spaniards. Having dismissed the assembly, Cortes ordered a public memorial of that act to be made with all the solemnity which he thought necessary, in order to send it to the court of Spain.

Having thus happily accomplished his purpose, he represented to Montezuma, that since he had acknowledged the dominion of the king of Castile over those countries, it was necessary to manifest his submission by the contribution of some gold and silver, in consequence of the right which sovereigns had to exact such homage from their vassals, in order to support the splendor of the crown, to maintain their ministers, the expences of war, and the other necessities of the state. Montezuma, with truly royal munificence, gave him up the treasure

SECT. XI.  
First homage  
of the Mex-  
icans to the  
crown of  
Spain.

*the departure of the Spaniards, and to temporize for the secret purposes of his ambition, without any regard for his words or engagement; but if the act of Montezuma was a mere artifice, and he did not mean to effect what he promised, why in owing himself the vassal of another monarch did he feel so much anguish, that it cut his voice short and drew tears from his eyes, as this author himself says. If he only meant to hasten the departure of the Spaniards, there was no occasion for such a faint. How often, with a single beck to his vassals, could he have sacrificed the Spaniards to his gods, or sparing their lives, have made them be bound and conducted to the port, that thence they might resume their course to Cuba? The whole of Montezuma's conduct was entirely inconsistent with the intentions which Solis ascribes to him.*

## BOOK IX.

of his father Axajacatl, which was preserved, as we have already said, in the same palace, from which nothing had been taken by Cortes hitherto, although it had been expressly permitted him by the king to take whatever he pleased. The whole of this treasure fell into the hands of the Spaniards, together with all that had been contributed by the feudatory lords of that crown, which amounted to so much, that, after deducting a fifth part for the king of Spain, Cortes had as much as was necessary to pay all his debts, contracted in Cuba in raising his corps and equipping the armament, and to reward his officers and soldiers, leaving still behind enough for future expences. For the king they appropriated, besides a fifth part of the gold and silver, some particular pieces of work preserved entire on account of their wonderful workmanship, which, according to the valuation made of them by Cortes, were worth more than one hundred thousand ducats; but the greater part of this wealth was lost, as we shall find hereafter.

SECT. XII.  
Discontent  
of the Mex-  
ican nobles,  
and new fears  
of Montezu-  
ma.

The Spaniards exulted to see themselves the masters of so much wealth at so small a cost; and a kingdom so great and opulent, subjected to their sovereign with so little trouble; but their prosperity was now at its height, and, according to the condition of human affairs, it was necessary that their successes should be chequered with adversities. The Mexican nobility, who had hitherto preserved a respectful silence in deference to the will of their sovereign, seeing him thus fallen and degraded, the king of Acolhuacan and other persons of rank put in chains, and the nation subjected to the dominion of a strange monarch whom they knew not, began first to whisper, then to speak out with more freedom, to blame their own patience, to hold assemblies, and at last, as is reported, to levy troops to free their king and their nation from such ignominious oppression. Montezuma was spoken to by some of his favourites, who represented to him the pain his misfortunes and disgrace gave his vassals, who considered his power to be almost expiring and the splendour of his dignity obscured, and the ferment which began to rise not only among the nobles but also among the common people, who were grown impatient of seeing themselves subjected and condemned to sacrifice to a strange king the harvest of their labours: they exhorted him to dispel the fears which had taken possession of him, and



to resume his wonted authority; since, if he would not do it, his vassals would, as they were determined to drive those insolent and destructive guests from the kingdom. On the other hand, the priests exaggerated the injuries which religion suffered, and intimidated him with the threats which, they said, the gods in anger had made, to deny the necessary rain to the fields, and their protection to the Mexicans, if he did not dismiss those men who were so disdainful of their worship.

Montezuma moved by those representations of his favourites, and menaces of his gods, ashamed of being reproached for his cowardice, and affected by the disgrace of his nephew Cacamatzin, whom he had always loved with particular tenderness, and the dishonour which had befallen his brother Cuitlahuatzin, and other persons of the first nobility, although he did not consent to the design of taking away the lives of the Spaniards, to which some advised him, resolved, however, to tell them openly, that they must depart from that kingdom. He one day, therefore, sent for Cortes, who being apprised of the secret conferences which the king had had with his ministers, his nobles, and priests, felt many apprehensions; but dissembling his uneasiness of mind, he repaired immediately to the king accompanied by twelve Spaniards. Montezuma received him with less cordiality than usual, and freely laid open his resolution. "You cannot," he said, "doubt of the great attachment I bear you, after so many and clear demonstrations of it. Hitherto I have willingly entertained you in my court, have even been so desirous of the pleasure of your company and conversation, as to remain here and live amongst you. As for my own part, I would retain you here without any change, daily making you experience some fresh proofs of my good will towards you; but it cannot be done; neither will my gods permit it, nor will my subjects endure it. I find I am threatened with the heaviest punishments of heaven if I let you remain any longer in my kingdom; and such discontent already prevails among my vassals, that unless I quickly remove the cause, it will be altogether impossible to pacify them. Wherefore it is become necessary for my own, as well as yours, and the good of all the kingdom, that you prepare yourselves to return to your native country." Cortes, although extremely mortified and distressed, dissembled yet his feelings, and assumed great serenity of

coun-



## BOOK IX.

countenance, answered, that he was extremely ready to obey him; but as they wanted vessels to transport them, on account of those which they had come in from Cuba having become useless, they required time, workmen, and materials, to make others. Montezuma, full of joy at the readiness with which he was obeyed, embraced him, and told him, that it was not necessary to precipitate his departure; that he might build his vessels; that he would supply him with the necessary timber, and people to cut it, and transport it to the harbour. Immediately he gave orders to a number of carpenters to cut the necessary timber from a grove of pines, which was at a small distance from the port of Chiahuitztlan, and Cortes, on his part, sent some Spaniards there to superintend the woodcutters, expecting, in the mean time, that something would change the state of affairs in Mexico, or that some new reinforcement of Spaniards would be sent to him from the islands or from Spain (*t*).

Eight days after this resolution had been taken, Montezuma sent for Cortes a second time, and this general was again rendered uneasy. The king told him, that it was no longer necessary to build vessels, for that a short time ago eighteen vessels, similar to those which had been destroyed, had arrived at the port of Chalchiuhcucan, in which he might embark with all his troops; that he should therefore hasten his departure, as it was of importance to the welfare of the kingdom. Cortes dissembled the joy which he received from such intelligence, and offering secret thanks to heaven for having sent him such timely assistance; he answered the king, that if that fleet was making its voyage towards Cuba, he was ready to depart, but that otherwise it would be requisite to continue the building of his vessels. He saw and examined the paintings which had been sent to the king of this new armament by the governors upon the coast, and he did not doubt that it was Spanish; but very far from imagining that it was sent against him, he persuaded himself that it was his commissioners whom he had sent home the year before to the court of Spain, who were re-

(*t*) Almost all the Spanish historians say, that when the king made Cortes be called to intimate to him the order to depart, he had levied an army to make him be obeyed by force if necessary; but there is a great difference of opinion among them, as some affirm that there were an hundred thousand men in arms; others say, only half that number; and others lastly say only five thousand. We are persuaded that some troops were in readiness, but not by the order of the king, but of some of the nobles, who had taken a more active part in this matter.

turned,

turned, and brought with them the royal dispatches, and a large number of troops for the conquest.

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This pleasing consolation lasted until the letters of Gonzalez de Sandoval, governor of the colony of Vera Cruz arrived, which acquainted him that that armament, consisting of eleven ships, and seven brigantines, of eighty-five horses, eight hundred infantry, and upwards of five hundred seamen, with twelve pieces of artillery, and plenty of warlike ammunition under the command of Panfilo Narvaez, was sent by Diego Velasquez, governor of Cuba, against Cortes himself, as a rebel, vassal, and traitor to his sovereign. He received this unexpected blow in the presence of the king Montezuma, but, without shewing the smallest marks of emotion in his countenance, he gave the king to understand, that those who had arrived at the port of Chalchiuhcuecan were new companions sent him from Cuba. He made use of the same dissimulation to his own Spaniards, until their minds were prepared for the truth.

SECT. XIII.  
Armament of  
the governor  
of Cuba a-  
gainst Cortes.

It is beyond a doubt, that this was one of those singular occasions on which Cortes displayed his unshaken fortitude and magnanimity. He found himself on the one hand threatened by all the power of the Mexicans if he remained at the court; and on the other, he saw an army levied against himself, composed of his own countrymen, far superior to his own force; but his sagacity, his unremitting activity and industry, and wonderful courage, diverted all the evils which hung over him. He endeavoured, by means of letters, and some mediators in whom he chiefly trusted, to gain the mind of Narvaez, and to bring him to reflection; proposing various measures to him, and representing to him the advantages which the Spaniards would derive from the union of their armies and the co-operation of their forces; and, on the contrary, the disasters which might be occasioned by discord to them both: Narvaez, by the advice of three deserters from Cortes, had already disembarked with all his fleet upon the coast of Chempoalla, and put himself in quarters in that city; the lord of which, knowing them to be Spaniards, and believing that they came to unite with Cortes his friend, or fearful of their power, received them with the greatest honour, and provided them every thing they wanted. Montezuma also, believing the same thing in the beginning, sent rich presents to Narvaez, and gave orders to his governors to offer him the same civilities



BOOK IX. which they had already shewn to Cortes; but in a few days after, in spite of the great dissimulation of Cortes, and although he used every effort to hinder such intelligence from reaching the king or his vassals, the want of harmony between them was discerned.

Montezuma had now the fairest opportunity to destroy them both, if he had harboured in his breast those bloody designs which several historians have imputed to him. Narvaez endeavoured to alienate him from Cortes, and those of his party, accusing them all of treason, and promising to punish their unheard of audacity in imprisoning so great a king, and to free not only the king himself, but the whole nation from their oppression; but Montezuma was so far from plotting any thing against Cortes from these suggestions, that, on the contrary, when this general made him acquainted with the expedition he intended against Narvaez, Montezuma expressed great uneasiness at the danger to which he exposed himself with troops so inferior in number, and offered to raise immediately a great army to his assistance.

Cortes had now used every possible means to bring about a peaceable accommodation, which would unquestionably have been advantageous for both armies, but without any other effect than that of producing fresh menaces and disdain from the fierce and arrogant Narvaez. Finding himself therefore compelled to make war upon his countrymen, and not willing, on account of his diffidence and distrust of the Mexicans to avail himself of the assistance which Montezuma offered, he requested the senate of Tlascala to raise four thousand warriors to go along with him, and sent one of his soldiers, named Tobilla, a man well skilled in the art of war, to Chinantla, to demand two thousand men from that warlike nation; and also to procure three hundred pikes of the kind made use of by these Indians for the purpose of resisting the cavalry of Narvaez, as they were both longer and stronger than those of the Spaniards. He left in Mexico one hundred and forty soldiers (u), with all their allies, under the command of Pedro d'Alvarado, recommending it to them to guard and treat the king well, and to

(u) Bernal Diaz says, that the Spaniards left behind in Mexico were eighty-three in number. In the modern editions of Cortes's letters, they are said to have been five hundred; but the ancient editions say one hundred and forty, which appears to have been the truth, considering the total amount of the Spanish troops. The number of five hundred is evidently false, and contradicts Cortes in his own account.



maintain harmony between them and the Mexicans, particularly the royal family and the nobility. Upon taking leave of the king, he told him, that he left in his place the captain *Tonatiuh* (as Alvarado was called by this name of the sun among the Mexicans, because he was fair), who was charged to serve his majesty in every thing; that he requested him to continue his protection to the Spaniards; that he was going to find that captain who was lately arrived, and to do every thing possible for putting his royal commands into execution. Montezuma, after having made new protestations to him of his good-will and attachment, furnished him plentifully with provisions and men of burthen to transport his baggage, and took leave of him with the utmost friendship.

Cortes set out from Mexico in the beginning of May, in the year 1520, after having been six months in that capital, with seventy Spaniards, and some Mexican nobles, who chose to accompany him a part of the way. Several historians are persuaded that the Mexicans went to become spies, and to give the king an account of every thing which happened; but Cortes did not consider them as such, although neither did he place much confidence in them. He made his journey through Cholula, where he was joined by the captain Velasquez, who was returned from Coatzacualco, having been sent there by Cortes to search for a more commodious harbour for the ships. There Cortes also received a considerable supply of provisions, which were sent him by the senate of Tlascala; but he had not the four thousand men he demanded; either because they durst not enter into new wars against the Spaniards, as Bernal Diaz affirms, or because they were unwilling to remove themselves so far from their native country, as is reported by other historians; or from seeing Cortes with forces so inferior in number to those of his enemy, they dreaded another defeat in the expedition. Some days before he arrived at Chempoalla, Cortes was joined by the soldier Tobilla, with three hundred pikes from Chinantla, and in Tapanacuetla, a village about thirty miles distant from that city, he was joined by the famous captain Sandoval with sixty soldiers from the garrison of Vera Cruz.

At length after having made new proposals to Narvaez, and having distributed some gold among the partizans of this arrogant general,

SACR. XIV.  
Victory of  
Cortes over  
Narvaez.

## BOOK IX.

Cortes entered into Chempoalla at midnight with two hundred and fifty (x) men, without horses, or any other arms than pikes, swords, shields and daggers, and marching without the smallest noise or rumour to the greater temple of that city, where his enemy were quartered, he made so furious an assault, that, before break of day, he rendered himself master of the temple, of all his enemies, the artillery, arms, and horses, only four of his soldiers being killed, and fifteen of the enemy, though many on both sides were wounded (y). He made himself be acknowledged captain-general and supreme magistrate by them all, put Narvaez and Salvatierra, a respectable officer, and sworn enemy of Cortes, both in irons in the fort of Vera Cruz, and made the sails, rudders, and compasses of the ships, be brought on shore. The light of the morning of that day, which was Whitsuntide, the 27th of May, had hardly appeared, when the two thousand troops from Chinantla arrived in good order, and well armed (z), but they came only to be witnesses of the triumph of Cortes, and the shame of the party under Narvaez, to see themselves conquered by so few enemies, who were less armed than they. The success of this attack was in a great measure owing to the unparalleled bravery of Sandoval, who, with eighty men, mounted into the temple in the midst of a storm of arrows and balls, attacked the sanctuary where Narvaez was fortified, and seized his person.

Cortes now finding himself master of eighteen vessels, and almost two thousand men of Spanish troops, with nearly a hundred horses, and great sufficiency of ammunition, thought of making new expeditions on the coast of the Mexican gulf, and had already appointed the commanders who were to head them, and the people who were to be under their orders, when unlucky news arrived from Mexico, which obliged him to repair in haste to that capital.

(x) Bernal Diaz says, that Cortes went to Chempoalla with two hundred and six men; Torquemada makes two hundred and sixty-six, besides five captains; but Cortes, who knew better than them, affirms, they were two hundred and fifty.

(y) Authors are not agreed as to the number killed in that assault, we put the number which appears the most probable, according to the account of the different authors.

(z) Some authors say, that the *Chinantlans* were present at the assault made on the quarters of Narvaez; but Bernal Diaz, who was present, affirms the contrary. Cortes does not make mention of them.

During

During the time Cortes was absent from Mexico, the festival of the incensing of Huitzilopochtli happened, which was held in the month *Toxcatl*, which that year began on the 13th of May. This festival, the most solemn of all which yearly occurred, was usually celebrated with dances by the king, the nobles, the priests, and the people. The nobility requested captain Alvarado to consent that the king might go to the temple on this occasion to perform his devotion. Alvarado excused himself from granting the request, on account of the orders given him by Cortes, or because he suspected the Mexicans would meditate some revolution when they had the king with them, well knowing how easily public rejoicings are changed into tumults and disorder. They adopted the design, therefore, of making that religious dance in the court of the palace (*a*), or quarters of the Spaniards, either by the direction of that captain, or by the order of the king himself, that he might be present according to custom. When the day of the festival arrived, many men of the first nobility assembled in the court, (the number (*b*) of whom is not known), adorned with various ornaments of gold, gems, and feathers. They began to dance and to sing to the sound of musical instruments; and in the mean while, Alvarado stationed some soldiers at the gate. When he saw the Mexicans become heated, and possibly also weary with dancing, he gave a signal to his men to attack them; they immediately charged with the utmost fury upon those unfortunate victims, who were unable to make any resistance, as they were unarmed and fatigued, nor was it possible for them to escape by flight, as the gates were guarded. The slaughter was terrible, and the cries piteous which the dying uttered, and the copious blood which was shed. This fatal blow was most sensibly felt by the Mexicans, for they lost by it the flower of their nobility; and, to per-

(*a*) The historians of the conquest say in general, that the dance was made in the lower area of the greater temple, but it is not probable, that the immense crowd of people which must have assembled there, would have permitted so horrid a slaughter to have been made of the nobility, especially, as the armories were there from whence they could have taken out as many arms as they required to oppose the attempt of those few strangers; nor is it credible, that the Spaniards would run such an evident risk of their own destruction. Cortes and Bernal Diaz make no mention of the place of the dance. Acosta says, that it was made in the palace, nor could it have been in any other than that which the king was then inhabiting.

(*b*) By Gomara, the nobles who were present at the dance are reckoned six hundred, by other historians more than a thousand, and by Las Casas more than two thousand.



BOOK IX. petuate the memory of it among their descendants, they composed dirges and elegies on the subject, which they preserved for many years after the conquest. When the horrid tragedy was ended, the Spaniards stripped the dead bodies of all the riches with which they were adorned.

The motive is not known which induced Alvarado to commit an action so abominably inhuman. Some have said he was influenced alone by his insatiable thirst for gold (*c*). Others affirm, and which is more probable, that it having been whispered that the Mexicans designed at this festival to strike a decisive stroke on the Spaniards, to deliver themselves from oppression, and set their lord and king again at liberty whom the Spaniards had imprisoned, he prevented them, thinking, according to the vulgar adage, he who attacks, conquers. However the case was, his conduct cannot be defended neither from the charge of imprudence nor cruelty (*d*).

The common people were irritated by a blow which touched them so deeply, and treated the Spaniards ever after as the mortal enemies of their country. Some Mexican troops assaulted their quarters with such impetuosity, that they broke down a part of the wall, undermined the palace in different places, and burned their ammunition, but they were repelled by the fire of the artillery and musketry, by which the Spaniards had an opportunity of repairing the wall. That night the Spaniards reposed purely from the fatigues of the day, but the day after the assault was so furious, that they thought they must have perished, and certainly not one of them would have remained alive, five or six

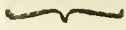
(*c*) The Mexican historians, Sahagun, in his history, Las Casas, in his formidable account of the destruction of the Indies, and Gomara, in his Chronicle, affirm, that the avarice of Alvarado was the cause of the slaughter committed on the Mexican nobility; but we cannot believe it without stronger proofs. Gomara and Las Casas have unquestionably followed Sahagun in this opinion, and he must have received it from the Mexicans, who, being the enemies of the Spaniards, are not to be trusted in this matter.

(*d*) It is altogether incredible that the Mexicans should upon occasion of the dance, have plotted against the Spaniards, that treason which some historians have supposed, and still more that they had actually prepared the vessels in which they were to boil the flesh of the Spaniards, as Torquemada says. These are fables invented to justify Alvarado. What appears the most probable solution of this event is, that the Tlascalans out of the great hatred they bore to the Mexicans, inspired Alvarado with suspicions of this pretended treachery. The history of the conquest furnishes us with many examples of such kind of artful reflecting conduct in the Tlascalans.

of them being already killed, had not the king shewn himself to the croud of assaulters, and by his authority restrained their fury. Respect to the presence of their sovereign checked the multitude from continuing the attack upon the Spanish quarters; but it did not make them desist from other hostilities; they burned the four brigantines which Cortes had ordered to be built, in order to save himself in them provided he could not at any time make his escape by the roads made upon the lake, and resolved to destroy the Spaniards by famine denying them provisions, and contriving to hinder the introduction of any to them, by drawing a ditch all round their quarters.

In this situation the Spaniards found themselves in Mexico, when Alvarado sent advice to Cortes, requesting him by two different messengers, carried by the Tlascalans, to hasten his return, unless he chose to let them all perish. The same thing was desired by Montezuma, who acquainted him how distressed he was at the insurrection of his vassals, which, however, had been occasioned by the rash and bloody attempt of the captain Tonatuih.

Cortes after having given orders to transplant the colony of Vera Cruz to a more convenient situation, near the port of Chalchuihcuecan (although this was not then executed), marched with his people by long journeys towards the capital. In Tlascala, he was magnificently lodged in the palace of the prince Maxixcatzin. There he made a review of his troops, and found them consist of ninety-six horses, and thirteen hundred Spanish infantry, to which two thousand Tlascalans were added by the republic. With this army he marched into Mexico on the 24th of June. He met with no opposition to his entry, but very soon he was sensible of a ferment among the people, not only from seeing few or none of them in the streets, but also by their having raised some bridges from the canals. When he entered into the quarters with the rejoicing which is easy to be imagined on both sides, Montezuma came to meet him in the court with the most obsequious demonstrations of friendship; but Cortes, either grown insolent from the victory obtained over Narvaez, the number of people under his command, or being persuaded that it was necessary to affect to believe the king blameable for the disturbance made by his vassals,

BOOK IX.  passed along without paying any attention towards him. The king, pierced to the heart at seeing himself so disdainfully treated, retired to his apartment, where his affliction was still increased by the information brought by his servants that the Spanish general had expressed himself in words most injurious to his majesty (e).

Cortes reprimanded the captain Alvarado with great severity, and would certainly have inflicted upon him the punishment he deserved, if the circumstances of the time and the person had permitted. He foresaw the great storm which was now to pour upon them, and he thought it would have been imprudent to have created himself an enemy, upon an occasion of so much danger, of one of the bravest captains he had in his army.

With the new troops which Cortes brought to Mexico, he had an army of nine thousand men, but there not being accommodation for them all in the quarters, they occupied some of those buildings which were within the enclosure of the greater temple, and the nearest to the quarters. From their multitude also the scarcity of provisions, already occasioned by the want of a market, was augmented, for the Mexicans, in hatred to the Spaniards, would no longer hold any. Cortes therefore sent to tell Montezuma, with strong threats, that he should give orders for a market to be held, that they might provide themselves with every thing necessary. Montezuma answered, that the persons of the greatest authority to whom he could trust the execution of such an order, were all, as he was, in prison; that some of them must be set at liberty, that his wish might be accomplished. Cortes let the prince Cuitlahuatzin, the brother of Montezuma, out of confinement, not

(e) The historian Solis is not disposed to believe that this mark of contempt was shewn by Cortes to Montezuma; and in order to vindicate that general, he wrongs B. Diaz, who affirms, it as having been an eye-witness; and Herrera, who relates it on the support of good documents. He undeservedly accuses B. Diaz of partiality against Cortes; and of Herrera he says, that it is to be suspected that he chose to adopt the account of B. Diaz, for the purpose of making use of a sentence of Tacitus; *ambition*, he adds, *dangerous to historians*, but to none more than Solis himself; for every impartial and well-informed person in the history of Mexico will perceive, in reading the works of Solis, that this author, instead of adjusting the sentences to the relation, on the contrary, adjusts the relation to the sentences. Lastly, as he adduces no better reasons than those offered by B. Diaz, we ought to give more credit to the latter as an eye-witness of the fact.



foreseeing that the liberty of that prince would be the cause of ruin to the Spaniards. Cuitlahuatzin never returned to the quarters, nor re-established the market, either because he would not favour the Spaniards, or because the Mexicans would not consent to it, but compelled him to exercise his post of general. In fact, it was he who from that time commanded the troops, and directed all the hostilities against the Spaniards, until at last, by the death of his brother, he was elected king of Mexico.

On the day on which Cortes entered into Mexico, there was no movement made by the people; but the day after they began to sling and shoot so many stones at the Spaniards, that they appeared, as Cortes says, like a tempest; and so many arrows, that they covered the pavement of the court and the terraces of the palace; and the number of the assaunders was so great, that they covered all the ground of the streets. Cortes did not think it proper to stand wholly upon his defence, lest that should be ascribed to cowardice, and inspire the enemy with more courage. He made a sally out upon them with four hundred men, part Spaniards and part Tlascalans. The Mexicans retired with little loss, and Cortes, after having made fire be set to some of the houses, returned to his quarters; but finding that the enemy continued their hostilities, he made the captain Ordaz go out with two hundred soldiers against them. The Mexicans affected to be put into confusion, and to fly, in order to draw the enemy to a distance from their quarters, in which they succeeded; for suddenly the Spaniards found themselves surrounded by the Mexicans on all sides, and attacked by a body of troops in front and another behind, but in such a tumultuous manner, that their disorder impeded their action. At the same time appeared a numerous rabble on the tops of the houses, who kept up a constant shower of arrows and stones. The Spaniards found themselves now in imminent danger, and this occasion was certainly one of those on which the brave Ordaz displayed his skill and courage. The contest was most bloody, but with no great loss to the Spaniards, who, with their guns and cross-bows cleared the terraces, and with their pikes and swords repelled the multitude which deluged the streets, and at last were able to retire to their quarters, leaving many Mexicans, though not more than eight of their own people, killed; but they

SECT. XVI.  
Action between the  
Mexicans and  
the Spaniards  
in the capital.

were

were almost all wounded, and even Ordaz himself. Amongst the distresses suffered by the Spaniards from the Mexicans that day, the setting fire to different parts of the quarters was one, and the fire was so violent in some places, that the Spaniards were obliged to throw down the wall, and defend the breach with the artillery, and a number of soldiers whom they stationed there, till night, when the enemy gave them opportunity to rebuild the wall and take care of the wounded.

The following day, the 26th of June, the assault was more terrible, and the fury of the Mexicans still greater. The Spaniards defended themselves with twelve pieces of artillery, which committed uncommon havock upon their enemy; but as the number of them was infinite, they covered the sight of the dead with fresh substitutes in their place. Cortes perceiving their obstinacy, sallied out with the greater part of his troops, and proceeded fighting his way through one of the principal streets of the city, took possession of some of the bridges set fire to some houses, and after continuing in action almost the whole day, he returned to the quarters with more than fifty Spaniards wounded, leaving innumerable Mexicans dead in the streets.

Experience had made Cortes sensible, that the greatest annoyance his troops met with was from the terraces of the houses; to shun which in future he ordered three machines of war to be constructed, called by the Spaniards *Mantas*, so large that each of them would carry twenty armed soldiers, covered with a strong roof to defend them from the stones thrown from the terraces, furnished with wheels also to make them easy to move, and little windows or port-holes for the discharge of their guns.

While those machines were constructing, great changes took place at court. Montezuma, having ascended one of the towers of the palace, observed from it one of the above mentioned engagements, and amongst the multitude his brother Cuitlahuatzin, commanding the Mexican troops. At the sight of so many objects of misfortune, his mind was seized with a croud of melancholy thoughts. On the one hand, he saw the danger he was in of losing both his crown and his life; and on the other, the destruction of the buildings of his capital, the slaughter of his vassals, and the success of his enemies; and found there was no other remedy to all those evils but the immediate departure

ture of the Spaniards. In these meditations he passed the night, and the day following he sent early for Cortes, and spoke to him on the subject, praying him earnestly not to defer any longer his removal from that city. Cortes required no such intreaty to resolve upon his retreat from it. He found provisions were scanty in extreme; food was given to the soldiers by measure, and that so little, it was sufficient only to support life, not the strength necessary to oppose such enemies as incessantly harassed them. In short, he saw it was impossible to render himself master of that city as he intended, nor could he even subsist there. But, on the other hand, he felt no small regret to abandon the undertaking he had begun, losing in one moment, by his departure all the advantages which his courage, his industry, and his good fortune had gained him; but submitting to the circumstances of his situation, he answered the king, that he was ready to depart for the peace of the kingdom, provided his subjects would lay down their arms.

This conference was hardly ended, when "To arms" was cried through the quarters, on account of a general assault of the Mexicans. On every side they attempted to mount the walls, on purpose to enter while some troops of archers, conveniently posted, shot an immense multitude of arrows, to check the opposition made by the besieged, while some of the besiegers pushed so strenuously forward, that, in spite of the artillery and muskets, they got within the quarters, and began to fight man to man with the Spaniards, who, thinking themselves now almost vanquished and overpowered by the multitude, fought with desperation. Montezuma, observing this moment of the conflict, and his own immediate danger, resolved to let himself be seen, in order to restrain by his presence and his voice the fury of his subjects. Having for this purpose put on the royal ensigns, and attended by some of his ministers and two hundred Spaniards, he mounted on a terrace and shewed himself to the people, his ministers making a signal for silence, that they might hear the voice of their sovereign. At the sight of the king the assault ceased, all were mute, and some in reverence kneeled down. He spoke in an audible voice, and addressed them to the following effect: "If the motive which

SECT. XVI.  
The king's  
address to the  
people.



BOOK IX.

“ liberty, I thank you for the love and fidelity you shew me ; but you  
 “ deceive yourselves in thinking me a prisoner, for it is in my own  
 “ option to leave this palace of my late father, and return to my own,  
 “ whenever I chuse it. If your resentment is caused by their stay in  
 “ this court, I acquaint you that they have given me assurance, and I  
 “ assure you, that they will depart as soon as you will lay down your  
 “ arms. Quiet therefore your emotions ; let your fidelity to me ap-  
 “ pear in this, unless what I have heard is true, that you have sworn  
 “ to another that obedience which you owe to me ; which I cannot  
 “ believe, nor can you ever do, without drawing the vengeance of  
 “ heaven down upon you.”

The people remained silent for sometime, until a Mexican (*f*), more daring than the rest, raised his voice, calling the king cowardly and effeminate, and fitter to manage a spindle and a shuttle than to govern a nation so courageous ; and reproaching him for having, from his cowardice and baseness, suffered himself to be made the prisoner of his enemies : and not content with reviling him with words, taking a bow in his hand, he shot an arrow at him. The common people, who are always apt to be moved by the first impulse which is given them, quickly followed his example ; reproaches and contumelious language were heard on every side ; and showers of stones and arrows poured towards the quarter where the king stood. The Spanish historians say, that although the person of the king was covered with two shields, he was wounded by a blow from a stone on the head, by another in the leg, and by an arrow in the arm. He was immediately carried by his servants to his chamber, more wounded in soul by anger and vexation, than hurt by the sacrilegious weapons of his subjects.

In the mean while, the Mexicans persisted in their attacks, and the Spaniards in their defence, until some nobles called Cortes to that same place where the king had received his wounds, in order to treat with him about certain articles, of which we do not find any historian give a proper and clear account. Cortes demanded of them why they were inclined to treat him as an enemy, having done them no wrong ? “ If you would avoid farther hostilities (said they), depart immediately

(*f*) Acosta says, that the Mexican who spoke these insults to the king was Quauhquemotzin, his nephew, and the last king of Mexico.

“ from

“ from this city ; if not, we are resolved to die, or to kill you all.” Cortes replied, that he did not complain to them because he was afraid of their arms, but because he was pained to be obliged to kill so many, of them and destroy so beautiful a city. The nobles went away, repeating their menaces.

The three warlike machines being at length finished, Cortes went out with them early on the 28th of June, and proceeded through one of the principal streets of the city with three thousand Tlascalans and other auxiliary troops, with the greater part of the Spaniards, and ten pieces of artillery. When they came to the bridge over the first canal, they drew the machines and scaling-ladders near to the houses, in order to drive the crowds from the terraces ; but the stones were so many and so large which were thrown at the machines, that they broke through them. The Spaniards fought courageously until mid-day, without being able to take possession of the bridge ; on which account they returned in shame to their quarters, leaving one man killed, and carrying back many wounded.

The Mexicans having been greatly encouraged by this last event, five hundred nobles fortified themselves in the upper area of the greater temple, well furnished with arms and provisions, and from thence began to do great damage to the Spaniards with stones and arrows, while other Mexican troops attacked them by the streets. Cortes sent a captain with a hundred soldiers to drive the nobles from that station, which, being so very high and neighbouring, entirely commanded the quarters ; but having made three different attempts to ascend there, they were vigorously repulsed. The general then determined to make the assault upon the temple himself, although he still suffered from a severe wound he had received in his left hand ever since the first engagement. He tied his shield to his arm, and having caused the temple to be surrounded by a sufficient number of Spaniards and Tlascalans, began to ascend the stairs of it with a great part of his people. The nobles who were now besieged disputed their ascent with great courage, and overturned some of the Spaniards ; in the mean while, other Mexican troops having entered the lower area, fought furiously with those who surrounded the temple. Cortes, though not without the utmost fatigue and difficulty, at last gained

SECT. XVII.  
Terrible engagement in the temple.

BOOK IX. the upper area along with his party. Now came on the greatest heat and danger of the contest, which lasted upwards of three hours. Part of the Mexicans died by the point of the sword, and part threw themselves down to the lower floors of the temple, where they continued the fight until they were all killed. Cortes ordered the sanctuary to be set on fire, and returned in good order to the quarters. Forty-six Spaniards lost their lives in this action, and all the rest came off wounded and bathed in blood. This spirited assault was one of those in which the opponents fought with the greatest courage on both sides, and on that account the Tlascalans as well as the Mexicans represented it in their paintings after the conquest (g).

Some historians have added the circumstance of the great danger in which, according to their account, Cortes was of being precipitated from the upper area by two Mexicans, who being resolved to sacrifice their lives for the good of their country, seized Cortes in their arms upon the edge of it in order to drag him along with themselves in their fall from thence, trusting to put an end to the war by the death of that general; but this fact, of which neither Cortes nor Bernal Diaz, nor Gomara, nor any other of the more ancient historians make mention, is rendered still more improbable by the circumstances added to it by some modern authors (h).

Cortes having returned to the quarters, had a fresh conference with some respectable persons among the Mexicans, representing to them the losses they sustained from the Spanish arms. They answered, that it was of no importance to them provided the Spaniards were destroyed; that if they were not all cut off by the Mexicans,

(g) The differences of opinion among historians respecting the order and circumstances of the engagements which happened in those days, is inexpressible. We follow the account given by Cortes, considering him the best authority.

(h) Solis says, that the two Mexicans approached on their knees to Cortes, in the act of imploring his mercy, and without delay threw themselves downwards with their prey in their hands, increasing the violence of the effort with their natural weight; that Cortes got clear of them and repulsed them, though not without difficulty. We find it rather difficult to believe Cortes possessed of such surprising force: the very humane gentlemen Raynal and Robertson, moved with compassion it would appear, for the danger Cortes was in, have provided some kind of unknown battlements and iron rails, by which he saved himself until he got clear of the Mexicans; but neither did the Mexicans ever make iron rails, nor had that temple any battlements. It is wonderful that these authors, so incredulous concerning what is attested by the Spanish and Indian writers, should yet believe what is neither to be found among the ancient authors nor probable in itself.

they



they would infallibly perish by famine shut up in their quarters. Cortes having observed that night some inattention and want of vigilance among the citizens, sallied out with some companies of soldiers, and proceeding through one of the principal streets of the city, he set fire to more than three hundred houses (*i*).

The next day his machines being repaired, he went out with them and the greatest part of his troops, and directed his course along the great road of Iztapalapan with more success than before; for in spite of a vigorous resistance from the enemies in their intrenchments made to defend them from the fire of the Spaniards, he took possession of the four first bridges, and set fire to some of the houses upon that road, and made use of the ruins to fill up the ditches and canals, that there might be no difficulty of passage if the Mexicans should raise the bridges. He left a sufficient garrison upon the posts which he had taken, and returned to quarters with many wounded, leaving ten or twelve dead behind him.

The day after he continued his attacks upon the same road, took the three bridges which remained, and charging the enemy which defended them, he at last got upon the main-land. Whilst he was attending to fill up the last ditches, to facilitate as is probable his retreat from that capital by means of that same road by which he had been now seven months entered, he was told that the Mexicans were willing to capitulate; and, in order to hear their propositions, he returned in haste to the quarters with the cavalry, leaving the infantry to guard the bridges. The Mexicans intimated that they were ready to desist from all hostilities; but, that the capitulation might take place, it was necessary to have the high-priest, who had been made prisoner by the Spaniards when they made the assault upon the temple: Cortes set him at liberty, and a suspension of arms took place. This appears to have been a mere stratagem of the electors to recover the chief of their religion, for whose person they had occasion to anoint the new king whom they had chosen, or were going now to choose; for Cortes had hardly obtained a cessation of arms, when some Tlascalans arrived with the news that the Mexicans had retaken

(i) Bernal Diaz says, that it was a great fatigue to make them burn, from their being covered with terraces and separated from each other.

## BOOK IX.

the bridges and killed some Spaniards, and that a great body of warriors were coming against the quarters; Cortes went immediately to meet them with the cavalry, and making way through them with the utmost difficulty and danger, he recovered the bridges, but whilst he was retaking the last, the Mexicans had again taken the four first, and had began to draw out the materials with which the ditches had been filled up by the Spaniards. The general returned at length to regain them, and then retired to the quarters with his people, who were now all weary, melancholy, and wounded.

Cortes, in his letter to Charles V. represents the great danger he was in, that day, of losing his life, and ascribes it to particular providence that he escaped from among such a multitude of enemies. It is certain, that from the moment they rose against the Spaniards, they would have been able to have destroyed them with all their allies, if they had observed a better order in fighting, and if there had been more agreement among the inferior officers who led on the attacks; but they could not agree among themselves, as will appear hereafter, and the populace were merely actuated by their tumultuous fury. On the other hand, it is not to be doubted, that the Spaniards must have appeared to them to have been made of iron; for they neither yielded to the distress of famine, nor to the necessity of sleep, nor to continual fatigue and wounds; after having employed all the day in combating with their enemies, they spent the night in burying the dead, curing the wounded, and repairing the damages done to their quarters during the day by the Mexicans, and even in the little time which they allowed for repose, they never quitted their arms, but were always ready to rise before their enemy. But the hardiness of their troops will appear still more extraordinary in those terrible engagements which we shall presently relate.

SECT.  
XIX.  
Death of king  
Montezuma,  
and other  
lords.

On one of those days, probably the thirtieth of June, died, in the quarters of the Spaniards, the king Montezuma, in the fifty-fourth year of his age, in the eighteenth of his reign, and the seventh month of his imprisonment. With regard to the cause and the circumstances of his death, there is so great a difference and contradiction among historians, it is altogether impossible to ascertain the truth. The Mexican historians blame the Spaniards, and the Spanish historians

accuse

accuse the Mexicans of it (*k*). We cannot be persuaded that the Spaniards should resolve to take away the life of a king to whom they owed so many benefits, and from whose death they could only expect new misfortunes. His loss was lamented, if we are to credit Bernal Diaz, an eye-witness and most faithful writer, not less by Cortes and every one of his officers and soldiers, than if he had been their father. He shewed them infinite favour and kindness, whether it had been from natural inclination or fear; he always appeared to them to be their friend at heart, at least there is no reason to believe the contrary, nor was it ever known that he spoke like an enemy of them, as they themselves protested.

His good and bad qualities may be gathered from an account of his actions. He was circumspect, magnificent, liberal, zealous for justice, and grateful for the services of his subjects; but his reserve and distance made the throne inaccessible to the complaints of his people. His magnificence and liberality were supported by the burdens laid on his subjects, and his justice degenerated into cruelty. He was exact and punctual in every thing appertaining to religion, and jealous of the worship of his gods and the observance of rites (*l*). In his youth he was inclined to war and courageous, and came off conqueror, according to history, in nine battles; but in the last year of his reign, domestic pleasures, the fame of the first victories of the Spaniards, and, above all, superstition, weakened and debased his mind to such a degree, that he appeared, as his subjects reproached him, to have changed his sex. He delighted greatly in music and the chase, and was as dextrous in the use of the bow and arrow as in that of the shooting-tube. He was a person of a good stature, but of an indifferent complexion, and of a long visage with lively eyes.

(*k*) Cortes and Gomara affirm, that Montezuma died of the blow from the stone with which his people hit him on the head. Solis says his death was occasioned by his not having his wound dressed. Bernal Diaz adds to this omission and neglect, his voluntary abstinence from food. The chronicler Herrera says, that the wound was not mortal, but that he died of a broken heart. Sahagun, and other Mexican historians, affirm, that the Spaniards killed him, and one of them mentions the circumstance of a soldier having pierced him with an cel-spear.

(*l*) Solis says that Montezuma *hardly bent his neck*, that is bowed his head to his gods; that he had a higher idea of himself than of them, &c. He adds also, that *the devil favoured him with frequent visits*. Such credulity does not become the greater historiographer of the Indies.



## BOOK IX.

He left at his death several sons, of whom three perished that unlucky night of the defeat of the Spaniards, either by the hands of the Spaniards themselves, as the Mexicans affirm, or by the hands of the Mexicans, as the Spaniards report. Of those who survived, the most remarkable was Johuālicahuatzin, or Don *Pedro Montezuma*, and of him descended the Counts Montezuma and Tula. Montezuma had this son by Miabūaxochitl, the daughter of Ixtlilcuechahuac, lord of Tollan. By another wife he had Tecuichpotzin, a beautiful princess, from whom descended the two noble houses of Cano Montezuma and Andreda Montezuma. The Catholic kings granted singular privileges to the posterity of Montezuma, on account of the unparalleled service rendered by that monarch in voluntarily incorporating a kingdom so great and rich as Mexico with the crown of Castile. Neither the repeated importunities made to him by Cortes, nor the continual exhortations of Olmedo, particularly in the last days of his life, were sufficient to prevail upon him to embrace Christianity.

As soon as the king died, Cortes communicated intelligence of his death to the prince Cuitlahuatzin, by means of two illustrious persons who had been present at his death, and a little after he made the royal corpse be carried out by six nobles, attended by several priests, who had likewise been in prison (*m*). The sight of it excited much mourning among the people; the last homage which they pay to their sovereign, extolling his virtues to the stars, whom a short time before they could find possessed of nothing but weaknesses and vice. The nobility, after shedding abundance of tears on the cold body of their unfortunate king, carried it to a place of the city called *Copalco* (*n*), where they burned it with the usual ceremonies, and buried the ashes

(*m*) Torquemada, and other authors, say, that Montezuma's dead body was thrown into the *Tehuajoc*, along with others; but from the accounts of Cortes and B. Diaz, it is certain that it was carried out of the quarters by the nobles.

(*n*) Herrera conjectures that Montezuma was buried in Chapultepec, because the Spaniards heard a great mourning towards that quarter. Solis affirms positively, that it was buried in Chapultepec, and that the sepulchre of the kings was there; but this is totally contrary to the truth, because Chapultepec was not less than three miles distant from the Spanish quarters: it was therefore impossible that the Spaniards should have overheard the mourning which was made there, especially when they were in the center of a populous city, and at a time of so much tumult and noise. The kings, besides, had no fixed place of burial; and it is also certain, from the depositions of the Mexicans, that Montezuma's ashes were buried at Copalco.

with the utmost respect and veneration, although some low illiberal Mexicans treated the ceremony with ridicule and abuse.

Upon this same occasion, if there is any truth in what historians relate, Cortes ordered the dead bodies of Itzquauhtzin lord of Tlatelolco, and other imprisoned lords, of whose names there is no mention, to be thrown out of the quarters into a place called *Tebuajoc*, all of whom had been put to death, as they affirm, by order of Cortes, although none of them assign a reason for such a conduct, which, even if it was just, can never be cleared from the charge of imprudence, as the sight of such slaughter must necessarily have exasperated the anger of the Mexicans, and induced them to suspect that the sovereign likewise had been sacrificed by his command<sup>(o)</sup>. However it was, the people of Tlatelolco carried off the dead body of their chief in a vessel, and celebrated his funeral rites with great lamentation and mourning.

In the mean time, the Mexicans continued their attacks with still more ardour. Cortes, although he made great slaughter of them and came off always conqueror, yet saw that the blood spilt of his own soldiers was a greater loss than the advantages obtained by his victories compensated; and that at last the want of provisions and ammunition, and the multitude of his enemies, would prevail over the bravery of his troops and the superiority of his arms: believing, therefore, the immediate departure of the Spaniards indispensibly necessary, he called a council of his captains, to deliberate upon the method and time for executing such resolution. Their opinions were different. Some of them said that they ought to depart by day, forcing their way by arms, if the Mexicans opposed them: others thought that they should depart by night; this was the suggestion of a soldier named Botello, who pretended skill in astrology, to whom Cortes paid more deference than was proper, having been induced to do so by having seen some of his predictions accidentally verified. It was resolved, therefore, the vain observations of that wretched soldier being preferred to the dictates of

(o) Concerning the death of those lords, no mention is made by Cortes, B. Diaz, Gomara, Herrera, and Solis; but Sahagun, Torquemada, Betancourt, and the Mexican historians, report it as certain. In respect to the latter, and the fidelity due to history, we recite the event, though one of great improbability.

## BOOK IX.

military skill and prudence, to depart during the night, with all possible secrecy : as if it had been possible to conceal the march of nine thousand men, with their arms, their horses, their artillery, and baggage, from the detection of so numerous and watchful an enemy. They fixed the night of the first of July for their departure (*p*), a night the most unlucky and memorable to the Spaniards, from the great slaughter they suffered, on which account they gave it the name of *noche triste*, by which it is still known in their histories. Cortes ordered a bridge of wood to be made, which could be carried by forty men, to serve for the passing of ditches. He then made all the gold, silver, and gems, which they had hitherto amassed, to be brought out, took the fifth part of it which belonged to the king, and consigned it to the officers belonging to his majesty, declaring the impossibility which he found of preserving and saving it. He left the rest to his officers and soldiers, permitting each of them to take what he pleased ; but at the same time, he warned them how much fitter it would be to abandon it all to the enemy ; for, when free of that weight, they would find less difficulty to save their lives. Many of them, rather than be disappointed of the principal object of their desires, and the only fruit of their labours, loaded themselves with that heavy burden, under the weight of which they fell victims at once to their avarice and the revenge of their enemies.

SECT. XX.  
Terrible defeat suffered by the Spaniards in their retreat.

Cortes ordered his march in the greatest silence of the night, which was rendered still darker by a cloudy sky, and more troublesome and dangerous by a small rain which never ceased falling. He committed the van guard to the invincible Sandoval, with some other officers, and two hundred infantry and twenty horses ; the rear guard to Pedro de Alvarado, with the greater part of the Spanish troops. In the body of the army the prisoners were conducted, with the servants and baggage people, where Cortes took also his station, with five horses and an hundred infantry, in order to give speedy relief wherever it should be necessary. The auxiliary troops of Tlascala, Chempoalla,

(*p*) B. Diaz says, that the defeat of the Spaniards happened on the night of the tenth of July ; but we believe this to have been a mistake of the printer, as Cortes affirms, that in their retreat, they arrived at Tlascala on the tenth of July ; and from the journal of their march kept by this conqueror, it is evident that their defeat could not have happened on any other day than the first of July.

and.



and Cholula, which amounted then to more than seven thousand men, were distributed among the three divisions of the army. Having first implored the protection of Heaven, they began to march by the way of Tlacopan. The greatest part of them passed the first ditch or canal by the assistance of the bridge which they carried with them, without meeting any other resistance than the little which the centinels who guarded that post were able to make; but the priests who watched in the temples having perceived their departure, cried loudly "to arms," and roused the people with their horns. In an instant the Spaniards found themselves attacked by water and by land, by an infinity of enemies, who impeded their own attack by their number and confusion. The encounter at the second ditch was most terrible and bloody, the danger extreme, and the efforts of the Spaniards to escape most extraordinary. The deep darkness of the night, the sounds of arms and armour, the threatening clamours of the combatants, the lamentations of the prisoners, and the languid groans of the dying, made impressions both horrid and piteous. Here was heard the voice of a soldier calling earnestly for help from his companions, another imploring in death mercy from Heaven: all was confusion, tumult, wounds, and slaughter. Cortes, like an active feeling general, ran intrepidly here and there, frequently passing and repassing the ditches by swimming, encouraging some of his men, assisting others, and preserving the remains of his harrassed little army, at the utmost risk of being killed or made prisoner, in as much order as possible. The second ditch was so filled with dead bodies, that the rear guard passed over the heap. Alvarado, who commanded it, found himself at the third ditch so furiously charged by the enemy, that, not being able to face about to them, nor swim across without evident danger of perishing by their hands, fixed a lance in the bottom of the ditch, grasping the end of it with his hands, and giving an extraordinary spring to his body, he vaulted over the ditch. This leap, considered as a prodigy of agility, obtained to that place the name which it still preserves of *Salto d' Alvarado*, or Alvarado's leap.

The loss sustained by the Mexicans on this unlucky night was unquestionably great: concerning that of the Spaniards, authors are, as

## BOOK IX.

in other affairs, of various opinions (*q*); we are apt to think the computation true which has been made by Gomara, who appears to have made the most diligent enquiries, and to have informed himself both from Cortes and the other conquerors; that is, there fell, besides four hundred and fifty Spaniards, more than four thousand auxiliaries, and among them, as Cortes says, all the Cholulans: almost all the prisoners the men and women who were in the service of the Spaniards, were killed (*r*), also forty-six horses; and all the riches they had amassed, all their artillery, and all the manuscripts belonging to Cortes, containing an account of every thing which had happened to the Spaniards until that period, were lost. Among the Spaniards who were missing, the most considerable persons were, the captains Velásquez de Leon, the intimate friend of Cortes, Amador de Laviz, Francisco Morla, and Francisco de Saucedo, all four, men of great courage and merit. Among the prisoners who were killed was Cacamatzin, that unfortunate king, and a brother and son, and two daughters of Montezuma (*s*), and a daughter of prince Maxixcatzin.

In spite of his greatness of soul, Cortes could not check his tears at the sight of such calamity. He sat down upon a stone in Popotla, a village near Tlacopan, not to repose after his toil, but to weep for the loss of his friends and companions. In the midst of so many disasters, however, he had at least the comfort of hearing that his brave captains Sandoval, Alvarado, Olid, Ordaz, Avila, and Lugo, his inter-

(*q*) Cortes says, that one hundred and fifty Spaniards perished; but he either designedly lessened the number for particular ends, or there was some mistake made by the copyist or first printer of that letter. B. Diaz numbers eight hundred and seventy to have fallen; but in this account he includes, not only those who were killed on that unlucky night, but also those who died before he reached Tlascala. Solis reckons only upon two hundred, and Torquemada two hundred and ninety. Concerning the number of auxiliary troops which perished then, Gomara, Herrera, Torquemada; and Betancourt, are agreed. Solis says only, that more than two thousand Tlascalans were missed; but in this he does not agree with the computation made by Cortes, or other authors.

(*r*) Ordaz affirms, that all the prisoners were killed; but he ought to have excepted Cuicuitcatzin, whom Cortes had already placed on the throne of Acolhuacan; because we know from the account of Cortes, that he was one of the prisoners, and on the other hand, it is certain that he was killed afterwards in Tezeuco.

(*s*) Torquemada affirms, as a well certified point, that Cortes, a few days after he took Cacamatzin, made him be strangled in prison. Cortes, B. Diaz, Betancourt, and others, say that he was killed along with the other prisoners on that memorable night.

preters Aguilar and Donna Marina, were safe, by means of whom he chiefly trusted to be able to repair his honour and conquer Mexico.

BOOK IX.

SECT. XXI.  
Fatiguing  
march of the  
Spaniards.

The Spaniards found themselves so dejected and enfeebled with fatigue, and with their wounds, that if the Mexicans had pursued them, not one of them could have escaped with life; but the latter had hardly arrived at the last bridge upon that road, when they returned to their city, either because they were contented with the slaughter already committed, or having found the dead bodies of the king of Acolhuacan, the royal princes of Mexico, and other lords, they were employed in mourning for their death and paying them funeral honours. They would have observed the same conduct with their dead relations or friends; for they left the streets and ditches entirely clean that day, burning all the dead bodies, before they could infect the air by corruption.

At break of day the Spaniards found themselves in Popotla, scattered about, wounded, wearied, and afflicted. Cortes having assembled and formed them in order, marched through the city of Tlacopan, still harrassed by some troops of that city and of Azcapozalco, until they came to Otoncalpolco, a temple situated upon the top of a small mountain nine miles to the west of the capital, where at present stands the celebrated sanctuary or temple of the Virgin *de los remedios*, or succour. Here they fortified themselves as well as they could, to defend themselves with the less trouble from the enemy, who continued to annoy them the whole day. At night they reposed a little, and had some refreshment furnished them by the Otomies, who occupied two neighbouring hamlets, and lived impatient under the yoke of the Mexicans. From this place they directed their course towards Tlascala, their only retreat in their misfortunes, through Quauhtitlan, Citlaltepec, Xoloc, and Zacamolco, annoyed all the way by flying troops of the enemy. In Zacamolco they were so famished, and reduced to such distress, that at supper they eat a horse which had been killed that day by the enemy, of which the general himself had his part. The Tlascalans threw themselves upon the earth to eat the herbs of it, praying for assistance from their gods.

The day following, when they had just began their march by the mountains of Aztaquemecan, they saw at a distance in the plain of Tonan, a little way from the city of Otompan, a numerous and bril-

SECT. XXII.  
Famous bat-  
tle of Otom-  
pan.

liant



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liant army, either of Mexicans, as authors generally report, or, as we think probable, composed of the troops of Otompan, Calpolalpan, Teotihuacan, and other neighbouring places, assembled at the desire of the Mexicans. Some historians make this army consist of two hundred thousand men, a number computed solely by the eye, and probably increased by their fears. They were persuaded, as Cortes himself attests, that that day was to have been the last of all their lives. This general formed his languid troops, by enlarging the front of his maimed and wretched army, in order that the flanks might be in some manner covered by the small wings of the few cavalry he had left; and with a countenance full of fire he addressed them: “In such a difficult situation are we placed, that it is necessary either to conquer or die! Take courage, Castilians! and trust, that He who has hitherto delivered us from so many dangers, will preserve us also in this!” At length the battle was joined, which was extremely bloody, and lasted upwards of four hours. Cortes seeing his troops diminish and in a great measure discouraged, and the enemy advance still more haughtily notwithstanding the loss they suffered from the Spanish arms, formed a bold and hazardous resolution, by which he gained the victory and put the miserable remains of his army in security. He recollected to have often heard, that the Mexicans went into disorder and fled whenever their general was killed or they had lost their standard. Cihuacatzin, general of that army, clothed in a rich military habit, with a beautiful plume of feathers on his helmet, and a gilded shield upon his arm, was carried in a litter upon the shoulders of some soldiers; the standard which he bore was, according to their usage, a net of gold fixed on the point of a staff, which was firmly tied upon his back, and rose about ten palms above his head (*t*): Cortes observed it in the center of that great multitude of enemies, and resolved to strike a decisive blow; he commanded his brave captains Sandoval, Alvarado, Olid, and Avila, to follow behind, to guard him from attack, and immediately, with others who accompanied him, he pushed forward through that quarter where his attempt appeared most practicable with such impetuosity, that he threw many down with his lance and others with his horse. Thus he advanced through the lines of the enemy,

(*t*) This sort of standard was called by the Mexicans *Tlabuixmatlaxopilli*.

until he came close up with the general, who was accompanied by some of his officers, and with one stroke of his lance extended him on the ground. Juan de Salamanca, a brave foldier, who attended Cortes, dismounting quickly from his horse, put an end to his life, and seizing the plume of feathers on his head presented it to Cortes (*u*). The army of the enemy, as soon as they saw their general killed, and the standard taken, went into confusion and fled. The Spaniards, encouraged by this glorious action of their chief, pursued, and made great slaughter of the fugitives.

This was one of the most famous victories obtained by the Spanish arms in the New World; Cortes distinguished himself in it above all the rest; and his captains and soldiers said afterwards, that they had never seen more courage and activity displayed than upon that day; but he received a severe wound on the head, which daily growing worse, brought his life into the utmost danger. Bernal Diaz justly praises the bravery of Sandoval, and shews how much that gallant officer contributed to this victory, encouraging them all not less by his example than his words. The Spanish historians have also highly celebrated Maria de Estrada, the wife of a Spanish soldier, who, having armed herself with a lance and shield, ran among the enemy, wounding and killing them with an intrepidity very extraordinary in her sex. Of the Tlascalans, Bernal Diaz says, that they fought like lions, and amongst them Calmecahua, captain of the troops of Maxixcatzin, particularly distinguished himself. He was not, however, less remarkable for his bravery than for his longevity, living to the age of one hundred and thirty years.

The loss of the enemy was undoubtedly great in this defeat, but greatly less than several authors represent it, who make it amount to twenty thousand men; a number rather incredible, according to the miserable state to which the Spaniards were reduced, and the want of artillery and other fire-arms. On the contrary, the loss of the Spaniards was not so small as Solis reports it (*x*), for almost all the Tlascalans

(*u*) Charles V. granted some privileges to Juan de Salamanca, and among others a shield of arms for his house, which had a plume upon it in memory of the one which he had taken from the general Cihuacatzin.

(*x*) Solis, in order to exaggerate the victory of Otompan says, that amongst the troops under Cortes some were wounded, of whom two or three Spaniards died in Tlascala: but this  
author

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lans perished, and many of the Spaniards in proportion to the number of their troops, and all of them came off wounded.

The Spaniards, tired at length with pursuing the fugitives, resumed their march towards Tlascala by the eastern part of that plain, remaining that night under the open sky, where the general himself, after the fatigue and wounds he had received, kept guard in person for their greater security. The Spaniards were now not more than four hundred and forty in number. Besides those who had been slain in the engagements, preceding the unfortunate night of their departure from Mexico, there perished during it and the six days following, as Bernal Diaz, an eye-witness affirms, eight hundred and seventy, many of whom having been made prisoners by the Mexicans, were inhumanly sacrificed in the greater temple of the capital.

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Return of the  
Spaniards in-  
to Tlascala.

The next day, the 8th of July, 1520, they entered, making ejaculations to heaven, and returning thanks to the Almighty, into the dominions of Tlascala, and arrived at Huejotlipan (y), a considerable city of that republic. They feared still to find some change in the fidelity of the Tlascalans, well knowing how common it is to see men abandoned in their misfortunes by their dearest friends: but they were soon undeceived by meeting with the most sincere demonstrations of esteem and compassion for the disasters they had undergone. The four chiefs of that republic had no sooner intelligence of their arrival, than they came to Huejotlipan to pay their compliments to them, accompanied by one of the principal lords of Huexotzinco, and many of the nobility. The prince Maxixcatzin, though severely afflicted by the death of his daughter, endeavoured to console Cortes with hopes

author, solely attentive to the ornament of his style, and the panegyric of his hero, took little note of numbers. He affirms, that Cortes, after the defeat of Narvaez, carried eleven hundred men with him to Mexico, who with other eighty that, according to his account, remained with Alvarado, make eleven hundred and eighty. In the engagements, preceding the defeat of the Spaniards at Mexico, he makes no mention of any death. In the defeat he reckons two hundred only to have been killed; and, in his account of their journey to Tlascala, he speaks of no other but the two or three who died in Tlascala of the wounds they had received at Otompan. Where then are, or how have the other five hundred men and upwards disappeared, which are wanting to make up the number of eleven hundred and eighty. We have a very different idea given us of the battle of Otompan from those who were present at it, as appears from the letters of Cortes, and the History of Bernal Diaz.

(y) Huejotlipan is called by Cortes and Herrera *Gualipan*, by Bernal Diaz *Gualipar*, and by Solis *Gualipar*.

of



of revenge, which he assured him he might obtain from the courage of the Spaniards and the forces of the republic, which from that time he promised him, and all the other chiefs made offers to the same purpose. Cortes returned them thanks for their kind wishes and offers, and laying hold of the standard which he had taken the day before from the Mexican general, he presented it to Maxixcatzin, and gave to the other lords some other valuable spoils. The Tlascalan women conjured Cortes to revenge the death of their sons and relations, and vented their grief in a thousand imprecations against the Mexican nation.

After reposing three days in this place, they proceeded to the capital of the republic, distant about fifteen miles, for the more speedy cure of their wounded, of whom, however, eight soldiers died. The concourse of people at their entry into Tlascala was great, and perhaps greater than when they made their first entry into that city. The reception which Maxixcatzin gave them, and the care he took of them were becoming his generosity of mind, and demonstrative of the sincerity of his friendship. The Spaniards acknowledged themselves every day more and more obliged to that nation, the friendship of which, by being properly cultivated, proved the most effectual means not only for the conquest of the capital of the Mexican empire, but also of all the provinces which opposed the progress of the Spanish arms, and for the subduing of the barbarous Chichimecas and Otomies, by whom the conquerors were long harassed.

While the Spaniards were reposing after their fatigues and recovering of their wounds in Tlascala, the Mexicans were employed in repairing the evils done to their capital and their kingdom. The losses and injuries which they had sustained in the space of one year, were truly heavy and distressing; for, besides immense sums of gold and silver, gems, and other precious things, expended partly in presents to the Spaniards, partly in homage to the king of Spain, of which they recovered but little, the fame of their arms was obscured, and the respect of the crown of Mexico diminished; the Totonacas, and other people, had renounced their obedience; all their enemies had grown more insolent; their temples were materially damaged, and their religion spurned at; many houses of the city were totally demolished, and above all other grievances, they had lost their king, several royal

SECT. XXIV.  
Election and  
proceedings  
of the king  
Cuitlahuat-  
zin in Mexi-  
co.

BOOK IX. personages, and a great part of the nobility. To those reasons for dependence and disgust at the Spaniards, those which were caused by their own civil war were added, for the knowledge of which we are indebted to the manuscripts of a Mexican historian who happened to be at this time in the capital, and survived a few years the ruin of the empire. At the time the Spaniards were so much distressed in the capital by famine from the hostilities of the Mexicans, several lords of the first nobility, either in order to favour the party of the Spaniards, or, what is fully more probable, to give succour to the king, who, by being among them was necessarily an equal sufferer with them, secretly supplied them with provisions, and perhaps, declared themselves openly in their favour, in confidence of their own personal authority. From this cause arose a fatal dissension among the Mexicans, which could not be terminated without the death of many illustrious persons, and particularly some of the sons and brothers of Montezuma, according to the account of the above historian.

The Mexicans found the necessity of placing at the head of their nation a man capable of re-establishing its honour, and repairing the losses suffered in the last year of the reign of Montezuma. A little before, or a little after the defeat of the Spaniards; the prince Cuitlahuatzin was elected king of Mexico. He, as we have said already, was lord of Iztapalapan, the particular counsellor of his brother Montezuma, and Tlachcocalcatl, or general of the army. He was a person of great talents and sagacity, agreeable to the testimony of Cortes his rival, and liberal and magnificent like his brother. He took great delight in architecture and gardening, as appears from the splendid palace he built in Iztapalapan, and the celebrated garden which he planted there, in whose praises no ancient historian is silent. His bravery and military skill acquired him the highest esteem amongst the Mexicans; and some authors affirm, from particular information of his character, that if he had not met an early death, the capital would never have been taken by the Spaniards (z). It is probable, that the sacrifices

(z) Solís gives Cuitlahuatzin the name of *Quetlabaca*, and says, that he lived on the throne but a few days, and those were sufficient to make the memory of his name amongst his countrymen be for ever cancelled from his cowardice and insignificance. But this is false, and contrary to the accounts given by Cortes, Bernal Diaz, Gomara, and Torquemada, authors who were

crifices made at the festival of his coronation were those Spaniards whom he himself had taken prisoners in the night of their defeat.

As soon as the festival of his coronation was over, he employed himself to remedy the disasters suffered by the crown and the empire. He gave orders to repair the damaged temples, and to rebuild the demolished houses, augmented and improved the fortifications of the capital, sent embassies to the different provinces of the empire, encouraging them to the common defence of the state against those hostile strangers, and promised to relieve those who would take up arms in behalf of the crown, from all their tributes. He sent also ambassadors to the republic of Tlascala, with a considerable present of fine feathers, habits of cotton, and some salt, who were received with due honour, according to the laws established among the polished nations of that country. The purport of the embassy was to represent to that senate, that although the Mexicans and Tlascalans had hitherto been the inveterate enemies of each other, it was now become necessary to unite themselves together as the inhabitants originally of one country, as people of the same language, and as worshippers of the same deities, against the common enemy of their country and religion; that they had already seen the bloody slaughter which had been committed in Mexico, and other places, the sacrilege to the sanctuaries, and the venerable images of the gods, the ingratitude and perfidy shewn to his brother and predecessor, and the most respectable personages of Anahuac; and lastly, that insatiable thirst in those strangers for gold, which impelled them to violate every sacred law of friendship; that if the republic continued to favour the perverse designs of such monsters, they would in the end meet with the same recompence which Montezuma had for the humanity with which he received them into his court, and the liberality which he exercised so long towards them: the Tlascalans would be execrated by all nations for giving aid to such iniquitous usurpers, and

SECT. XXV.  
Embassy of  
the king Cu-  
itlahuatzin to  
the Tlascala-  
nans.

were better informed than Solis. How could the memory of his name amongst the Mexicans be cancelled, while it was preserved indelibly among the Spaniards, they having considered him as the person who was the cause of their defeat on the first of July, as they themselves testify? Cortes was so mindful of him, and felt so much resentment for those disasters, that when he found he had forces sufficient to undertake the siege of Mexico, being desirous of revenging himself on that king, but not being able to get revenge on his person, he took it upon his favourite city. This was the motive, as Cortes himself says, of his expedition against Iztapalapan.



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the gods would pour down all the vengeance of their anger upon them for confederating with the enemies of their worship. If, on the contrary, they would as he prayed, declare themselves the enemies of those men who were abhorred by heaven and earth, the court of Mexico would form a perpetual alliance with them, and from that time forward have a free commerce with the republic, by which they would escape the misery to which they had been hitherto subjected: all the nations of Anahuac would acknowledge their obligation to them for so important a service, and the gods, appeased with the blood of those victims, would shower down the necessary rain upon their fields, stamp success upon their arms, and celebrate the name of Tlascala through all that land.

The senate, after having listened to the embassy, and dismissed the ambassadors from the hall of audience, according to their custom, entered into consultation upon that important question. To some among them the proposals of the court of Mexico appeared just and consistent with the security of the republic; they exaggerated the advantages which were offered to them; and on the other hand, the unlucky issue of the undertaking of the Spaniards in Mexico, and the slaughter made of the Tlascalan troops which had been under their command. Amongst the rest the young Xicotencatl, who had always been the bitter enemy of the Spaniards, raised his voice, and endeavoured, with all the reasons he could urge, to persuade the senate to the Mexican alliance; adding, that it would be much better to preserve the ancient customs of their fathers than to submit to the new and extravagant policy of that proud and imperious nation; that it would be impossible to find a fitter opportunity to rid themselves of the Spaniards than then, when they were reduced in number, feeble in strength, and dejected in mind. Maxixcatzin, who, on the contrary, was sincerely attached to the Spaniards, and possessed of more discernment of the laws of nations, also of a disposition more inclined to observe them, arraigned the sentiments of Xicotencatl, charging him with abominable perfidy in counselling the senate to sacrifice to the revenge of the Mexicans, men who had just felt the rod of adversity, and sought an asylum in Tlascala, trusting in the promises and protestations of the senate and the nation. He continued, that if they flattered themselves with receiving the advantages which  
the

the Mexicans offered, he on the contrary hoped for greater from the bravery of the Spaniards; that if there was no motive to place confidence in them, they ought still less to confide in the Mexicans, of whose perfidy they had so many examples; lastly, that no crime would be capable of provoking so strongly the anger of the gods, and obscuring the glory of the nation, as such impious treachery to their innocent guests. Xicotencatl pressed his counsel upon the senate, presenting to them an odious picture of the genius and customs of the Spaniards. So great an altercation ensued, and their minds became so much heated, that Maxixcatzin, transported with passion, gave a violent push to Xicotencatl, and threw him down some steps of the audience chamber, calling him a seditious traitor to his country. Such an accusation made by a person so circumspcct, so respected and loved by the nation, obliged the senate to imprison Xicotencatl.

The resolution which they came to was, to answer to the embassy that the republic was ready to accept the peace and friendship of the court of Mexico, when it did not require so unworthy an act, and a crime so enormous, as the sacrifice of their guests and friends; but when the ambassadors were sought for, to have the answer of the senate delivered to them, it was found they had already departed in secret from Tlascala: for having observed the people a little unquiet upon their arrival, they were afraid that some attempt might have been made against the respect due to their character. It is therefore probable that the senate sent Tlascalan messengers with their answer to the court. The senators endeavoured to conceal from the Spaniards the purport of the embassy, and all that had happened in the senate; but, in spite of their secrecy, Cortes knew it, and with justice thanked Maxixcatzin for his good offices, and engaged to confirm him in the favourable idea he entertained of the bravery and friendship of the Spaniards.

The senate, not content with those proofs of its great fidelity, acknowledged fresh obedience to the Catholic king; and what was still more flattering to their guests, the four chiefs of the republic renounced idolatry, and were baptized, while Cortes and his officers stood their godfathers, and the function was celebrated by Olmedo with great rejoicing and jubilee through all Tlascala.

Cortes.

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SECT. XXVI.  
New discon-  
tents and  
fears among  
some of the  
Spaniards.

Cortes was now freed from the danger to which his life was exposed from the blow he had received on his head in the last battle; and the rest of the Spaniards, except a few who died, were cured of their wounds by the assistance of the Tlascalcan surgeons. During the time of his sickness, Cortes thought of nothing else than the means he must use to conduct his undertaking of the conquest of Mexico to a prosperous end; and to further this, he had ordered a considerable quantity of timber to be cut for the construction of thirteen brigantines; but while he was forming those grand projects, many of his soldiers were indulging very different thoughts in their minds. They beheld their number diminished, themselves poor, ill accoutred, and unfurnished with horses as well as arms. They could not chase from their thoughts the terrible conflict and tragic night of the first of July, and were unwilling to expose themselves any more to new adventures. Their present ideas, and future apprehensions, were both too much for them; and they blamed their general for his obstinacy in so rash an undertaking. From murmurs in private, they proceeded to make a legal request to him, desirous of prevailing on him, by a variety of arguments, to return to Vera Cruz, where they could procure fresh troops, and a supply of arms and provisions, for the purpose of attempting the conquest with greater hopes, as at present they deemed it impossible. Cortes was much troubled at this alteration of their sentiments, which threatened to frustrate all his designs; but exercising his talent to persuade his soldiers to his own pleasure, he made them a pointed energetic speech, which had effect enough to make them give up their pretensions. He reproached them for that bud of cowardice he saw springing in their minds, awakened their sentiments of honour, by a flattering recital of their glorious actions, and the protestations full of ardor and courage which they had frequently made him. He made them fully sensible how much more difficult it would be for them to return to Vera Cruz than to remain at Tlascala; assured them of the fidelity of that republic, of which they seemed a little doubtful. Lastly, he prayed them to suspend their resolution, until they should see the event of the war, which he designed to make upon the province of Tepejacac, in which he hoped to find new proofs of the sincerity of the Tlascalans.

SECT.  
XXVII.  
War of the  
Spaniards a-  
gainst Tepe-  
jacac.

The lords of the province of Tepejacac, which bordered on the republic of Tlascala, had declared themselves the friends of Cortes, and subjects



subjects of the court of Spain, ever since that terrible massacre which the Spaniards had made in Cholula; but seeing afterwards that the Spaniards were worsted, and the Mexicans victorious, they put themselves again under obedience to the king of Mexico; and, in order to conciliate his favour, they killed some Spaniards who were on their journey from Vera Cruz to Mexico, and unapprised of the tragedy which had happened to their companions there; they admitted a Mexican garrison into their territory, and occupied the road which led from Vera Cruz to Tlascala; and, not even contented with that, they made some incursions into the lands of that republic. Cortes proposed to make war upon them, not less to punish their perfidy than to secure the road from that port for the succours he expected from thence. He was instigated also to this expedition by the young Xicotencatl, who had been set at liberty by the mediation of the Spaniard general himself, and that he might remove every suspicion against him concerning what had passed in the senate, offered to assist him in that war with a strong army. Cortes accepted his offer; but before he took up arms, he in a friendly manner demanded satisfaction of the Tepejacans, and advised them to quit the Mexican cause, promising to pardon the trespass they had committed in murdering those Spaniards; but his proposition having been rejected, he marched against them with four hundred and twenty Spaniards and six thousand Tlascalan archers, while Xicotencatl was levying an army of fifty thousand men. In Tzimpozinco, a city of the republic, so many troops assembled from the states of Huexozinco, and Cholula, that it was imagined their number amounted to a hundred and fifty thousand.<sup>1</sup>

The first expedition was against Zacatepec, the place of the confederacy of the Tepejacans. The inhabitants of it laid in ambuscade for the Spaniards. They fought on both sides with great courage and obstinacy, but at last the Spaniards were victors, and a considerable number of the enemy left dead on the field (a). From thence the army marched against Acatzinco, a city ten miles to the southward of

(a) Several Historians say, that the night after the battle of *Zacatepec* the allies of the Spaniards had a great supper of human flesh; part roasted on spits of wood, part boiled in fifty thousand pots. But this appears a complete fable. It is not probable that Cortes, or Bernal Diaz, should have omitted an event in their relations of so remarkable a nature, particularly Diaz, who is generally too prolix and tedious in his recital of such acts of inhumanity.

Tepejacac,

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Tepejacac, into which the Spaniards entered triumphant, after gaining a battle little less difficult than that of Zacátepec. From Acatzinco Cortes sent detachments to burn several places in that neighbourhood, and to subject others to his obedience; and when it appeared to be time to attack the principal city, he set out with all his army for Tepejacac, where he entered without any resistance from the citizens. Here he declared many prisoners taken in that province to be slaves, and made the mark of a seal upon them with a hot iron, according to the barbarous custom of that century, allotting the fifth part of them to the king of Spain, and dividing the rest among the Spaniards and the allies. He founded there, according to the manner of speaking of the Spaniards in those days, a city which he called *Segura della Frontera*, the founding of which consisted in establishing Spanish magistrates there, and erecting a small fortification (*b.*)

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XXVIII.  
War of  
Quauhque-  
chollan.

The Mexican troops, garrisoned in that province, retreated from it, not having sufficient strength to resist the power of their enemies; but, at the same time, there appeared at the city of Quauhquechollan (*c.*), distant about four miles from Tepejacac, towards the south, an army of Mexicans sent there by king Cuiclahuatzin, to hinder the passage of the Spaniards by that quarter to the capital, if they now should attempt it. Quauhquechollan was a considerable city, containing from five to six thousand families, pleasantly situated, and not less fortified by nature than by art. It was naturally defended on one side by a steep rocky mountain, and on another side by two parallel running rivers. The whole of the city was surrounded by a strong wall of stone and lime, about twenty feet high and twelve broad, with a breast-work all round, of about three feet in height. There were but four ways to enter, at those places where the extremities of the wall were doubled, forming two semicircles, as we have already represented in the figure given in our eighth book. The difficulty of the entrance was increased by the elevation of the site of the city, which was almost equal to the height of the wall itself; so that in order to enter, it was necessary to ascend by some very deep steps.

(*b.*) The city of Tepejacac, or Tepeaca, as the Spaniards call it, is still existing; but the name of *Segura della Frontera* was soon forgotten. Charles V. gave it the title and honour of Spanish City in 1545. At present, it belongs to the marquissate of the valley.

(*c.*) Quauhquechollan is called by the Spaniards Guaqueechula, or *Huacachula*. At present, it is a pleasant Indian village, abounding with good fruits.

The lord of that city, who was partial to the Spaniards, sent an embassy to Cortes, declaring his submission to the king of Spain, who had been already acknowledged sovereign of all that land, in the celebrated assembly held by king Montezuma with the Mexican nobility, in the presence of Cortes; that, although desirous, he was not permitted by the Mexicans to manifest his fidelity; that, then there were a great number of Mexican officers in Quauhquechollan, and thirty thousand men of war partly in that city, partly in the places around it, for the purpose of preventing any confederacy with the Spaniards: nevertheless, he requested him to come to his assistance, and free him from the vexations which he suffered from those troops. Cortes was pleased with the intelligence, and immediately sent with the same messengers a party of thirteen horses, two hundred Spaniards, and thirty thousand auxiliary troops, under the command of captain Olid. The messengers, according to the order of their lord, undertook to conduct the army by a way little travelled, and apprised captain Olid that when they came near to the city, the Quauhquechellans were to attack with some armed bodies the quarters of the Mexican officers, and to endeavour to seize or kill them, in order that when the Spanish army entered the city, it might be easy for them to defeat the enemy without their leaders. But twelve miles before the army reached Quauhquechollan, the Spanish commander became suspicious that the Huexotzincas might be secretly confederated with the Quauhquechollans and the Mexicans, in order to destroy the Spaniards. His suspicion, occasioned by secret information, and rendered still more strong by the numbers of the Huexotzincas, who of their own accord joined the army, obliged him to return to Cholula, where he made some of the most respectable persons among the Huexotzincas and the ambassadors of Quauhquechollan be seized, and sent them under a strong guard to Cortes, that he might make enquiry into this supposed stratagem.

Cortes was extremely vexed at this proceeding against such faithful friends as the Huexotzincas: nevertheless he carefully examined them, discovered the innocence and fidelity of both parties, and observed, that the late disasters had made the Spaniards more timorous, and that fear, as usual, had induced them to carry their suspicion farther than was proper or necessary. He gave kind treatment and made presents to the



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Quauhquechollans and the Huexotzincas ; and, accompanied by them, he marched for Cholula, with a hundred Spanish infantry and ten horses, having resolved to execute this enterprize in person. He found the Spaniards in Cholula apprehensive, but he soon encouraged them, and then marched for Quauhquechollan, with all his army, which consisted now of three hundred Spaniards and upwards of a hundred thousand allies : such was the readiness of those people in taking arms to free themselves from the yoke of the Mexicans. Before he arrived at Quauhquechollan, Cortes was informed by the chief of that city, that all the purposed measures had been taken ; that the Mexicans were confiding in their centinels posted upon the towers of the city, and on the road ; but that the centinels had already been secretly seized and confined by the citizens.

The Quauhquechollans no sooner saw the army which was coming to their assistance, than they attacked the quarters of the Mexican officers with such fury, that, before Cortes entered the city, they presented him forty prisoners. When the general entered, three thousand citizens were assailing the principal dwelling of the Mexicans, who, though greatly inferior in number, defended themselves so bravely that they could not take the house, although they had rendered themselves masters of the terraces. Cortes made the assault, and took it ; but in spite of the efforts he made to seize any one of them, from whom he might learn some intelligence of the court, the Mexicans fought with such obstinacy, that they were all killed, and he with difficulty obtained some few particulars from a dying officer. The other Mexicans, who were scattered through the city, fled out precipitately to incorporate themselves with the body of the army, encamped on a high ground which commanded all the environs. They immediately formed in order of battle, entered the city, and began setting fire to the houses. Cortes affirms, that he never saw an army make a more beautiful appearance, on account of the gold and the plumes with which their armour was adorned. The Spaniards defended the city with their cavalry and many thousands of allies, and forced them to retreat to a high and almost inaccessible ground ; but being likewise thither pursued by their enemies, they betook themselves to the summit of a very lofty mountain, leaving numbers dead on the field. The conquerors, after having sacked the Mexican camp, returned to the city loaded with spoils.

The

The army rested three days in Quauhquechollan, and on the fourth marched towards Itzocan (*d*), a city containing from three to four thousand families, situate on the side of a mountain, about ten miles from Quauhquechollan, surrounded by a deep river and a small wall. Its streets were well disposed, and its temples so numerous, that Cortes imagined them, including small and large, to be more than a hundred in number. The air of it is hot, from being situated in a deep valley, shut in by high mountains; and its soil, like that of Quauhquechollan, fertile, and shaded by trees bearing the most beautiful blossoms and excellent fruits. A prince of the royal blood of Mexico governed the state at this time, to whom Montezuma had given it in fief, after having put its lawful lord to death, for some misdemeanor of which we are ignorant; and there was now in it a garrison of from five to six thousand Mexican troops. All these particulars having been communicated to Cortes, he was induced to make an expedition against Itzocan. His army was so much increased, that it amounted, according to his own affirmation, to about the number of a hundred and fifty thousand men. He stormed the city on that side where the entry was least difficult. The Itzocanese, seconded by the royal troops, made at first some resistance; but having been at last overcome by superiority of force, they went into confusion, and fled by the opposite part of the city: and, having crossed the river, they raised the bridges to prevent the pursuit of the enemy. The Spaniards and the allies, in spite of the difficulty of getting across the river, chased them four miles, killing some, making others prisoners, and striking terror and dismay to the whole. Cortes, having returned to the city, made all the sanctuaries be set on fire, and by means of some prisoners recalled the citizens who were scattered through the mountains, and invited them to return without fear to inhabit their houses. The lord of Itzocan had absented from the city, and set out for Mexico, whenever the army of the enemy came in sight. That was sufficient to the nobility to declare the state vacant, particularly as in all probability he was not very acceptable to them; on which account they agreed, with the authority and under the protection of Cortes, to give it to a son of the lord of Quauhquechollan and a daughter of that lord who was put to

(*d*) Itzocan is called Izucar by the Spaniards.

## BOOK IX.

death by Montezuma; and because he was still a youth of few years, his father, his uncle, and two other nobles, were appointed his tutors.

The fame of the victories of the Spaniards spread suddenly through all the country, and drew the obedience of many to the Catholic king. Besides Quauhquechollan, Itzocan, and Ocopetlahuacan, a large city at a little distance from the two first, some lords came to pay homage to the crown of Castile, from eight places of Coaixtlahuacan, a part of the great province of Mixtecapan, more than a hundred and twenty miles distant towards the south from the city of Quauhquechollan, courting with emulation the alliance and friendship of such brave strangers.

SECT. XXX.  
War of Xalatzinco, Tecamachalco, and Tochtepec.

Cortes, having returned to Tepejacac, made war, by means of his captains, on some cities who had shewn hostilities to the Spaniards. The inhabitants of Xalatzinco, a city at a little distance from the road of Vera Cruz, were conquered by the brave Sandoval, and the principal persons carried prisoners to Cortes, who, upon seeing them humble and penitent, set them at liberty again. Those of Tecamachalco, a city of considerable size, of the Popolocan nation, made a stout resistance; but at last they surrendered, and two thousand of them were made slaves. Against Tochtepec, a large city upon the river Papaloapan, where there was a Mexican garrison, he sent a captain, named Salcedo, with eighty Spaniards, of whom not one returned alive to bring the general the news of their defeat. This loss was sensibly felt by Cortes, and on account of the few Spaniards he then had, was a very heavy one; but, in order to revenge it, he sent two brave captains, Ordaz and Avila, with some horses and two thousand allies against the garrison, who, notwithstanding the great courage with which the Mexicans defended themselves, took the city, and killed a number of the enemy.

The loss of those eighty soldiers was not the only thing which distressed Cortes. Those who a little time before had conjured him to return to Vera Cruz, persisted now so obstinately in their demand, that he was obliged to grant them permission not to return to Vera Cruz, to wait for some reinforcement, but to Cuba, in order to be at a greater distance from the dangers of war, it appearing a less evil to that judicious and discerning leader to diminish the number of his troops than to keep discontented men, who, by their want of spirit, would relax



the courage and damp the minds of the rest; but this loss was quickly and abundantly supplied by a considerable number of soldiers, who arrived with horses, arms, and ammunition, at the port of Vera Cruz; one party being sent by the governor of Cuba to the assistance of Narvaez, the other by the governor of Jamaica, to the expedition of Panuco: who all willingly joined themselves to Cortes, converting those very means, which were employed by his enemies for his ruin, into instruments of his success.

The conquests of the Spaniards, and the number of their allies, so aggrandised their name, and procured such authority to Cortes among those people, that he was the umpire in all their differences, and they repaired to him as if he had been the sovereign lord of all the region, to obtain confirmation of the investiture of vacant states, and in particular those of Cholula and Ocotelolco in Tlascala, both vacant by deaths occasioned by the small-pox. This scourge of the human race, totally unknown hitherto in the new world, was brought there by a Moorish slave belonging to Narvaez. He infected the Chempoallese, and from thence the infection spread through all the Mexican empire, to the irremediable destruction of those nations. Many thousands perished and some places were utterly depopulated. They whose constitution surmounted the violence of the distemper, remained so disfigured and marked with such deep pits in the face, that they raised horror in every person who viewed them. Among other disasters occasioned by this disorder, the death of Cuitlahuatzin, after a reign of three or four months, was most sensibly felt by the Mexicans, and the death of prince Maxixcatzin by the Tlascalans and Spaniards.

SECT. XXXI.  
Havock made  
by the small-  
pox. Death  
of king Cuit-  
lahuatzin and  
the prince  
Maxixcatzin,  
and election  
of king  
Quauhtemot-  
zin.

The Mexicans chose Quauhtemotzin, nephew of the deceased Cuitlahuatzin, for their king, as no brother of the two last kings was surviving. This was a youth of about twenty-five years, of great spirit; and although not much practised in the art of war, on account of his age, he continued the military dispositions of his predecessor. He married his cousin Tecuichpotzin, daughter of Montezuma, and formerly wife to his uncle Cuitlahuatzin.

The death of Maxixcatzin was greatly lamented by Cortes, as much on account of the particular friendship formed between them, as to him it had been principally owing that there was so much harmony  
between

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between the Tlascalans and the Spaniards. Having rendered the road of Vera Cruz perfectly secure, and sent the captain Ordaz to the court of Spain, with a distinct account in writing, addressed to Charles V. of all that had hitherto happened; and the captain Avila to the island of Hispaniola, to solicit new succours for the conquest of Mexico, he departed from Tepejacac for Tlascala, entered there, dressed in mourning, and made other demonstrations of grief for the death of his friend the prince. At the request of the Tlascalans themselves, and in the name of the Catholic king, he conferred the vacant state of Ocotelco, one of the four principal states of that republic, on the son of the late prince, a youth of twelve years, and, in honour of the merits of his father, he armed him as a knight according to the custom of Castile.

SECT.  
XXXII.  
Exaltation of  
prince Coanacotzin and  
death of Cuicuitzcatzin.

About this same time, though from a very different cause, the death of the prince Cuicuitzcatzin happened, whom Montezuma and Cortes had placed on the throne of Acolhuacan in the room of his unfortunate brother Cacamatzin. He was not permitted to enjoy long his borrowed dignity, for he who had given him the crown very soon deprived him of his liberty. He departed from Mexico among the other prisoners that night of the defeat of the Spaniards; but he had then the fortune, or perhaps rather misfortune to escape, as he was soon to lose his life in a more ignominious manner. He accompanied the Spaniards in their engagements as far as Tlascala, where he remained, until having become either impatient of oppression or desirous of recovering the throne, he fled in secret to Tezcuco. At this court his brother Coanacotzin was then reigning, to whom, after the death of Cacamatzin the crown in right belonged. Cuicuitzcatzin had hardly made his appearance when he was made prisoner by the royal ministers, who gave speedy advice to their king of it, who was then absent at Mexico. He communicated it to king Quauhtemotzin his cousin, who considering that fugitive prince a spy of the Spaniards, thought he should be put to death. Coanacotzin, either to please that monarch, or to take away from Cuicuitzcatzin any opportunity of attempting to recover the crown to the prejudice of his own right and the peace of the kingdom, executed that sentence upon him.

## B O O K X.

*March of the Spaniards to Tezcucó; their negotiations with the Mexicans; their excursions and battles in the environs of the Mexican lakes; expeditions against Ixcapichtlan, Quaubnahuac, and other cities; construction of the brigantines; conspiracy of some Spaniards against Cortes; review, division, and posts, of the Spanish army; siege of Mexico, imprisonment of king Quaubtemotzin, and fall of the Mexican empire.*

CORTES, who never quitted the thought of the conquest of Mexico, attended most diligently, while in Tlascala, to the building of the brigantines and to the discipline of his troops. He obtained of the senate a hundred men of burden, for the transportation of the sails, cordage, iron, and other materials of the vessels, which he had unrigged the preceding year on purpose to equip the brigantines; for tar he extracted a large quantity of turpentine from the pines on the great mountain Matlalcueje. He gave notice to the Huexotzincas, Cholulans, Tepejache, and other allies, to prepare their troops and collect a large store of provisions of every kind for a numerous army, which was to be employed in besieging Mexico. When it appeared to him to be time to march, he made a review of his troops, which consisted of forty horse and five hundred and fifty infantry. He divided this small body of cavalry into four troops and the infantry into nine companies, some of them armed with guns, some with crossbows, some with swords and shields, and others with pikes. From the horse on which he was mounted, while he was reviewing his troops and ordering the ranks, he made them this speech: “ My friends and  
“ brave companions! any discourse which I might make to animate  
“ your zeal would be altogether superfluous, as we all acknowledge  
“ ourselves bound to repair the honour of our arms, and to revenge  
“ the

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SECT. I.

Review and  
march of the  
Spanish army  
to Tezcucó.



## BOOK X.

“ the death of the Spaniards and our allies : let us go to the conquest of  
 “ Mexico, the most glorious enterprize which can present itself to us  
 “ through life ; let us go, to punish, with one stroke, the perfidy,  
 “ the pride, and the cruelty of our enemies ; to extend the dominions  
 “ of our sovereign, by adding this large and rich domain to them ; to  
 “ pave the way to religion, and open the gates of heaven to many millions  
 “ of souls ; to gain with the labour of a few days a competence for  
 “ our families, and to render all our names immortal ; motives all ca-  
 “ pable of encouraging even the most dastardly minds, as well as your  
 “ generous and noble hearts : I see no difficulty before us, which your  
 “ bravery may not overcome : our enemies are indeed numerous, but  
 “ we are superior to them in courage, in discipline, and in arms ; be-  
 “ sides, we have such a number of auxiliaries under our command, that  
 “ we might conquer with their assistance not one only, but many cities  
 “ equal to Mexico : however strong it may be, it is not yet so powerful  
 “ as to withstand the attacks we shall make upon it by land and water :  
 “ lastly, God, for whose glory we fight, has shewn a disposition to  
 “ prosper our designs ; his providence has preserved us in the midst  
 “ of all our disasters and dangers, has sent us new companions in the  
 “ room of those we have lost, and converted to our benefit the means  
 “ which our enemies employed for our ruin : what may we not expect  
 “ in future from his mercy ? let us confide in him, and not render  
 “ ourselves unworthy of his protection by diffidence and pusillani-  
 “ mity.”

The Tlascalans, who endeavoured to imitate the discipline of the Spaniards, thought proper also to make a review of their troops before Cortes. The army was preceded by their martial music of horns, sea-shells, and other such wind-instruments, after which came the four chiefs of the republic, armed with sword and shield, and adorned with most rich and beautiful plumes, which rose more than two feet above their heads ; they wore their hair tied with fillets of gold, pendants of gems at their lips and ears, and shoes of great value upon their feet ; behind them came their four shield-bearers, armed with bows and arrows ; next the four principal standards of the republic appeared, each with its proper ensign wrought of feathers ; then passed in regular ranks of twenty each the troops of archers, carrying at certain distances,

distances the particular standards of their companies, every one of which was composed of three or four hundred men. They were followed by the troops, armed with swords and shields, and lastly, by the pikemen. Herrera and Torquemada affirm, that the archers amounted to sixty, the pikemen to ten, and the others armed with swords to forty thousand in number. Xicotencatl, the younger, made also an address to his troops, after the example of Cortes, in which he told them, that the next day, as had already been intimated, they were to march with the brave Spaniards against the Mexicans, their inveterate enemies; that although the Tlascalan name was sufficient to intimidate all the nations of Anahuac, they must exert themselves to acquire new glory from their actions.

Cortes, on his part, assembled the principal lords of the allied states, and exhorted them to constant fidelity to the Spaniards, exaggerating to them the advantages they might hope for, from the ruin of their enemy, and the evils they might dread, if ever from the suggestions of the Mexicans, or the fear of war, or fickleness of mind, they should violate their promised faith. He then published a military proclamation for the conduct of his troops, containing the following articles:

1st. No person shall blaspheme against God, nor the blessed Virgin, nor against the saints.

2d. No person shall quarrel with another, nor put his hand to his sword, nor any other weapon, to strike him.

3d. No person shall game with his arms, or his horse, or iron tools.

4th. No person shall force any woman, under pain of death.

5th. No person shall take away the property of another, nor punish any Indian, unless he is his slave.

6th. No persons shall make excursions from the camp without our permission.

7th. No person shall make any Indian prisoner, nor plunder his house, without our permission.

8th. No person shall ill use the allies, but, on the contrary, must exert every means to maintain their friendship.

And because it is of no service to publish laws, if the observance of them is not zealously attended to, and delinquents punished, he ordered

BOOK X. two Moors, his slaves, to be hanged, because they stole a turkey and two cotton mantles. By these, and other similar punishments, he made his orders be regarded, which greatly contributed to the preservation of his troops.

After he had made all the dispositions which he thought would conduce to the happy issue of his enterprise, he at length marched with all his Spaniards, and a considerable number of the allies, on the 28th of December, 1520, having first heard mass, and invoked the Holy Spirit. He did not then choose to take the whole army of the allies with him, which had been reviewed the day before, both on account of the difficulty which there would be to maintain so numerous an army in Tezcuco, and because he thought it necessary to leave the greater part of them in Tlascala to guard the brigantines, when it should be time to transport them. Of the three roads, which led to Tezcuco, Cortes chose the most difficult, being wisely persuaded that the Mexicans would not expect him there, and his march would consequently be more safe. He proceeded therefore by Tetzmellocan, a village belonging to the state of Huexotzinco. On the 30th, they discovered, from the highest summit of those mountains, the beautiful vale of Mexico, partly with gladness, because there lay the object of their desires; partly with some disgust, from the remembrance of their disasters. In beginning to descend towards that vale, they found the way obstructed with trunks and branches of trees laid across it designedly, and were obliged to employ a thousand Tlascalans to clear it. As soon as they reached the plain, they were attacked by some flying troops of the enemy; but upon some of them being killed by the Spaniards, the rest fled. That night they quartered in Coatepec, a place about eight miles distant from Tezcuco; and the day following, as they were marching towards that capital, in some doubt and anxiety concerning the disposition of the Tezcucans, but at the same time resolved not to return without having taken some revenge of their enemies, they saw coming to them four respectable persons unarmed, one of them with a little golden flag in his hand; and Cortes recollecting that this was an ensign of peace, he advanced to confer with them. These four messengers were sent by king Coanacotzin to compliment the Spanish general, to invite him to the court, and to request him not to com-  
mit



mit any hostilities in his states, which presented him the flag, containing thirty-two ounces of gold. Cortes, notwithstanding this shew of friendship, reproached them for the death they had a few months before been the cause of to forty-five Spaniards, five horses, and three hundred Tlascalans, who accompanied them loaded with gold, silver, and arms for the Spaniards who were then in Mexico, and executed with such inhumanity, that they had hung up the skins of the Spaniards, with their arms and habits, and those of the horses with their armour, as trophies in the temples of Tezcucó. He added, that although it was impossible to compensate the loss of his people, they must at least pay the gold and silver which they had robbed from them; that if they did not make the due satisfaction, he would, for every Spaniard they had killed, slay a thousand Tezcucans. The messengers answered, that the Mexicans, and not the Tezcucans, under whose orders the Zoltepechese had acted, were blameable for that; but, notwithstanding, they would use every endeavour to make all be restored to him; and having taken polite leave of the Spanish general, returned in haste to Tezcucó with the news of the near arrival of the Spaniards at that court.

Cortes entered with his army into Tezcucó, on the last day of that year. Some nobles came out to meet him, and conducted him to one of the palaces of the late king Nezahualcojotl, which was so large, that not only the six hundred Spaniards were lodged in it, but, according to what Cortes says, it could have accommodated six hundred more. That general soon perceived the concourse of people in the streets remarkably diminished, as he thought he did not see the third part of of the inhabitants which he had seen upon former occasions, and particularly observed that the women and children were out of the way, which was a manifest token of some evil disposition in that court. In order to lessen the distrust of the citizens, and avoid any accident to his own people, he published a proclamation, in which he forbade, under pain of death, any of his soldiers to leave their quarters without his permission. After dinner, they observed from the terraces of the palace a great number of people abandoning the city, some withdrawing to the neighbouring woods, and others to different places around the lake. The night following, the king Coanacotzin absented,

SECT. II.  
Entry of the  
Spaniards into  
Tezcucó,  
and revolutions in that  
court.

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transporting himself to Mexico by water, in spite of Cortes, who designed to have taken him, as he had formerly done, his three brothers Cacamatzin, Cuicuitzcatzin, and Ixtlilxochitl. Coanacotzin could not pursue any other measure; for how was it possible he could think himself secure among the Spaniards, after having seen what had happened to his brothers, and Montezuma his uncle? And particularly being apprehensive that many of his own subjects would take occasion to declare themselves his enemies, some from their fear of the Spaniards, or the particular interest of their families; others, to revenge the death of Cuicuitzcatzin, and place Ixtlilxochitl on the throne.

The revolutions which happened in that court sufficiently justified the resolution he formed. Cortes was hardly three days in Tezcuco, when the lords of Huexotla, Coatlichan, and Atenco, three cities so near, as we have already mentioned, to Tezcuco, that they appeared like its suburbs, presented themselves to him, intreating him to accept their alliance and friendship. Cortes, who desired nothing more earnestly than to augment his party, received them kindly, and promised his protection. The court of Mexico, as soon as it knew of this change, sent a severe reprimand to those lords, telling them, that if their motive for adopting so base a measure was the fear which they had of the power of their enemies, it was fit for them also to know, that the Mexicans had still greater forces, by which they would soon see the Spaniards, with their favourite allies the Tlascalans, totally crushed; that if they had been obliged to it, for the interest of the states and possessions which they owned in Tezcuco, they might come to Mexico, where they would be assigned better lands. But those lords, instead of being intimidated with the reprimand, or yielding to the promises made them, seized the messengers, and sent them to Cortes. He demanded of them the purport of their embassy? To which they answered, that as they knew those lords to be in his favour, they had come to intreat them to be mediators for peace between the Mexicans and the Spaniards. Cortes affected to believe what they told him, set them at liberty and charged them to tell their sovereign, that he did not wish for war, nor would not wage it, if he was not compelled by hostilities from the Mexicans; that therefore the king should attend, and guard against offering any injury to the Spaniards, otherwise

otherwise they would become his enemies, and infallibly ruin his capital.

The alliance of those cities was of no small importance to Cortes, but of all things it was most necessary to bring that court in his favour, both on account of the numerous nobility which it contained, and their influence on the other cities of the kingdom. From the first moment he entered that city he studied to gain their minds by every civility and courtesy, and enjoined the same thing to his people, forbidding most severely all kinds of hostility towards the citizens. He discovered, from the beginning, a party of the nobility favourable to the prince Ixtlilxochitl, whom he still kept confined for some purpose in Tlascala. He made him be brought to court by a strong party of Spaniards and Tlascalans, presented him to the nobility, and got them to acknowledge him king, and crown him with the same ceremonies and rejoicings usually made for their lawful sovereign. Cortes promoted his advancement as much to revenge himself of the lawful king Coanacotzin, as because the kingdom was dependent upon him. The people accepted him, either because they durst not oppose the Spaniards, or perhaps because they were tired of the government of Coanacotzin. Ixtlilxochitl was a youth of about twenty-three years; from the time of the first entry of the Spaniards into Tlascala he had declared himself openly for the Spaniards, had presented himself to Cortes with offers of his army, and invited him to make his journey to Mexico by Otompan, where he was then encamped; but, in spite of his friendly intentions and obsequiousness, he was made prisoner by the Spaniards, when they came off in defeat from Mexico, and was confined in Tlascala until he was called to the throne. The circumstances of this event makes us believe, that his imprisonment was an honourable oppression of his liberty, coloured with one of those specious pretexts, which are usually invented by artful politicians, when, on account of some particular diffidence and distrust, they wish to render themselves secure. From long habit with the Spaniards he had become familiarised with their customs and manners. On the throne he had but the appearance of majesty; he was much less the lord of his subjects than minister of the pleasure of the Spaniards, to whom he rendered great services, not only in the conquest of Mexico, in which he



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served with his person and troops, but also in the rebuilding of that capital, for which he furnished some thousands of architects, masons, and labourers. He died extremely young, in 1523, and was succeeded in the sovereignty of Tezcuco by his brother Don Carlos, of whom afterwards we shall make honourable mention. By the advancement of Ixtlilxochitl, and the civilities shewn him by Cortes, the party of the Spaniards was considerably augmented, and all those families of Tezcuco which had absented from fear of hostilities from those strangers, finding themselves now secure, gladly returned to their houses.

Cortes was resolved to keep his quarters in Tezcuco, and had therefore busied himself in fortifying the royal palace, where his troops were lodged. He could not take any measure more conducive to his purposes. Tezcuco, the capital of the kingdom of Acolhuacan, and a city of great extent, abounded with every sort of provision for the support of an army. It had good houses for their habitations, excellent fortifications for their defence, and plenty of artificers for every kind of labour they required. The dominions of Tezcuco also, from bordering on those of Tlascala, rendered the necessary communication with that republic more easy; the neighbourhood of the lake was of great importance for the construction of the brigantines, and the advantageous situation of that court gave the Spaniards a knowledge of all the movements of their enemies, without exposing them to their attacks.

SECT. III.  
Dangerous  
expedition a-  
gainst Izta-  
palapan.

After having arranged matters in Tezcuco, Cortes resolved to make an assault on the city of Iztapalapan, to revenge himself upon it and its citizens, for the offences received from their ancient lord Guitlahuatzin, whom he knew to be the author of the memorable defeat of the first of July. He left a garrison of more than three hundred Spaniards, and many allies, under the command of Sandoval, in Tezcuco, and marched himself with upwards of two hundred Spaniards, and more than three thousand Tlascalans, and a great many of the Tezcucan nobility. Before they arrived at Iztapalapan, they were met by some troops of the enemy, who feigned to oppose their entry, fighting partly on land, and partly by water, but retiring as they fought, with a shew of not being able to withstand the attack. The Spaniards and Tlascalans

calans thus employed in driving the enemy before them, entered the city, the houses of which they found in a great measure unpeopled, the citizens having withdrawn with their wives and children, and the greater part of their goods, to the houses which they had upon the little islands in the lake; but there they were pursued by their enemies, who fought also in the water. The night was now well advanced, and the Spaniards, who were rejoicing at the victory which they believed they had obtained, were busied in sacking the city, and the Tlascalans were setting fire to the houses; but their gladness soon changed into terror, for by the same light of the burning of the city, they observed the water overflow the canals, and begin to lay the city under water. As soon as the danger was discovered, a retreat was founded, and the city was in haste abandoned, in order to return to Tezcuco; but in spite of their diligence they came to a place where there was so much water that the Spaniards passed it with difficulty, and some of the Tlascalans were drowned, and the greatest part of the booty lost. Not one of them would have escaped with life, if, as Cortes affirms, they had continued three hours longer in the city; for the citizens, in order to drown all their enemies, broke the mole of the lake, and entirely deluged the city. The next day they continued their march along the lake, still harassed by the enemy. This expedition did not prove very agreeable to the Spaniards; but although they lost their plunder, and many were wounded, only two Spaniards and one horse died. The loss of the enemy was a great deal more; for, besides the ruin of their houses, upwards of six thousand of them, agreeable to the account made by Cortes, were slain.

The disgust, which this expedition gave to Cortes was soon compensated by the obedience which he received by means of their ambassadors from the cities of Mizquic, Otompan, and others in that quarter, alledging, in order to obtain his favour, that those states having been solicited by the Mexicans to take arms against the Spaniards, would never consent. Cortes, who was continually increasing his authority, the more he augmented his party, required from them, as a necessary condition for the obtainment of his alliance, that they should seize all the messengers which were sent to them from Mexico, and all the Mexicans who arrived at their cities. They, though not without the

SECT. IV.  
New confederacies with the Spaniards.

BOOK X. the greatest difficulty, bound themselves to do so, and from that time forward were constantly faithful to the Spaniards.

This confederacy was immediately followed by that with Chalco, a considerable city and state on the eastern border of the lake of sweet water; for Cortes knowing that the Chalchese were disposed to adhere to his party, but dared not declare themselves for fear of the Mexican garrison in their state, sent Sandoval there with twenty horses, two hundred Spanish infantry, and a number of allies; but, previously, he ordered some Tlascalan troops to march, who were desirous of carrying home to their own country that part of the booty which they had brought off from Iztapalapan, and from thence to return towards Chalco, and drive the Mexicans from that state. Sandoval gave the van-guard to the Tlascalans; some Mexican troops, who were in ambush, charged suddenly upon them, threw them into disorder, killed some of them, and took their booty; but the Spaniards coming up, defeated the Mexicans and put them to flight. Having recovered their booty, the Tlascalans continued their journey in safety, and Sandoval marched towards Chalco; but long before he arrived at the city, the greatest part of the Mexican garrison came to meet him, which, as some historians affirm, consisted of twelve thousand men. A battle was fought, which lasted two hours, and concluded with the slaughter of many Mexicans, and the flight of the rest. The Chalchese, apprised of the victory, came with great rejoicing to meet the Spaniards, and introduced them in triumph into their city (*e*). The lord of that state, who had died a short time before of the small-pox, had, in the last moments of his life, warmly recommended it to his two sons to confederate with the Spaniards, to cultivate their friendship, and adopt Cortes for a father. In consequence of his last desire, those two youths repaired to Tezcucuo, accompanied by the Spanish army, and many Chalchese nobles, presented the value of one hundred and fifty sequins in gold to Cortes, and established the alliance, to which they were always faithful. The

(*e*) Solis, in his account of this event, commits two geographical errors: first, he supposes the city of Chalco contiguous to Otompan, whereas the court of Tezcucuo, and other considerable cities of the kingdom of Acolhuacan are between them, as we have shewn in our geographical chart of the Mexican lakes. Secondly, he says, that the states of Chalco and Tlascalala bordered upon each other, whereas there is a wood of fifteen miles long, and a part of the dominions of Huexotzinco between them.



cause of rebellion, so frequent among the people of that empire, was in some the fear of the Spanish arms, and the power of their allies; and in others, their hatred to, and impatience under, the Mexican yoke. It is impossible to expect constant fidelity from subjects who are rather influenced by terror than kindness. No throne can be more unstable than that which is supported by force of arms more than by the love of the people. Cortes, after caressing the two Chalchese youths, divided the state between them, either at their own request, or the suggestions of the nobility. He conferred on the eldest the principal city, and some other places; and on the youngest he settled Tlalmanalco, Chimalhuaca, and Ajotzinco.

The Mexicans did not cease to make incursions into the states which had confederated with the Spaniards, but the diligence used by Cortes in sending succour to them, made their attempts generally fruitless. Amongst others, the Chalchese came in the space of a few days to request the assistance of the Spaniards; for they had learned that the Mexicans were preparing to strike a severe blow upon that state which had recently renounced subjection to them. Cortes could not at this time comply with their demand; for having now finished all the labour of the masts, the planks, and other apparatus of the brigantines, he had occasion for all his troops to transport them safely to Tezcuco. He advised the Chalchese, however, to make an alliance with the Huexotzincas, the Cholulans, and the Quauhquechollans. They objected to such a confederacy, on account of their ancient enmity to those people. The Chalchese were hardly departed, when three messengers came seasonably to Tezcuco from Huexotzinco and Quauhquechollan, sent by those lords to express their apprehensions, on account of certain smoke, observed by the centinels whom they had posted on the tops of the mountains, which was a strong indication of war, and to offer their troops to his command whenever he chose to make use of them. Cortes availed himself of this favourable opportunity to unite those states in alliance with that of Chalco, obliging them to lay aside for their common benefit any resentment subsisting between individuals. This alliance was so firm, that from that time forward they mutually assisted each other against the Mexicans.

## BOOK X.

SECT. V.  
Transport of  
the materials  
of the brigantines.

It being now time to transport the timber, sails, cordage, and iron, for the brigantines, Cortes sent Sandoval with two hundred Spaniards and fifteen horses for that purpose, charging him to go first to Zoltepec, and take ample revenge on those citizens for the slaughter of the forty-five Spaniards and three hundred Tlascalans, of whom we have already made mention. The Zoltepechefe, when they perceived this storm coming upon them, deserted their houses to save their lives by flight, but they were pursued by the Spaniards, and many of them killed, and others made slaves. From thence Sandoval marched to Tlascala, where he found every thing ready for the transport of the finished materials of the brigantines. The first brigantine was built by Martino Lopez, a Spanish foldier, who was an engineer in the army of Cortes, and was put to proof in the river Zahuapan. After that model the other twelve were built by the Tlascalans. The transport of them was executed with great rejoicing and expedition by the Tlascalans, the load appearing to them of little weight, which was to contribute to the ruin of their enemies. Eight thousand Tlascalans carried on their backs the beams, sails, and other materials, necessary for the construction of the brigantines; two thousand were loaded with provisions, and thirty thousand were armed for defence, under the command of the three chiefs Chichimecatl or Chichimecateuctli, Ajotecatli, and Teotepil or Teotlipil. This convoy occupied, according to Bernal Diaz, upward of six miles of space, from van to rear. When they set out from Tlascala, Chichimecatl commanded the vanguard, but whenever they got without the dominions of the republic, Sandoval gave him the rear-guard, fearing some attack from the enemy. This occasioned great disgust to the Tlascalan, who boasted of his bravery, alledging, that in all the battles in which he had ever been concerned, he had always, in example of his ancestors, taken the most dangerous post; and Sandoval was obliged to make use of arguments and entreaties to pacify him. Cortes, arrayed in his most splendid apparel, and accompanied by all his officers, came to meet them, and embraced and thanked those Tlascalan lords for their kind services. Six hours were spent in entering into Tezcucó in the best order, and  
with

with the cry of *Castile! Castile! Tlascala! Tlascala!* in the midst of the noise of the military music. BOOK X.

The general Chichimecatl was hardly arrived, when, without taking any rest after the fatigue of his journey, he requested Cortes to employ him and his troops against the enemy. Cortes, who waited for nothing else than the arrival of the auxiliary troops of Tlascala, to execute an expedition which he had been meditating for some time, after leaving a strong garrison in Tezcuco, and giving the proper orders for the completing of the brigantines, set out on his march in the beginning of spring 1521, with twenty-five horses, and six small pieces of artillery, three hundred and fifty Spaniards, thirty thousand Tlascalans, and a part of the Tezcuacan nobility; and because he was afraid that the Tezcuicans, whom he did not altogether trust, might give secret advice to the enemy and frustrate his designs, he left Tezcuco without publishing the object of his expedition. The army travelled twelve miles towards the north, and remained that night under the open sky. The next day it proceeded to attack Xaltocan, a strong city situated in the middle of a lake, with a road leading to it, cut like those of Mexico, with several ditches. The Spanish infantry, assisted by a considerable number of the allies, passed the ditches, through a thick shower of darts, arrows, and stones, by which many were wounded; but the citizens not being able to endure longer the slaughter which the Spanish arms made of them, abandoned the city, and saved themselves by flight. The conquerors plundered the city, and set fire to some of the houses.

SECT. VI.  
Expedition  
against the  
cities of Xal-  
tocan and  
Tlacopan.

The day following they proceeded towards the large and beautiful city of Quauhtitlan, as Cortes justly calls it, but they found it depopulated; the citizens having been terrified by what had happened to Xaltocan, and betaken themselves to some place of security.

From thence they passed to Tenajocca, and to Azcapozalco, and because they met with no resistance from any of those three cities they did them no hurt. At last they came to the court of Tlacopan, the limit which Cortes had proposed to himself for the expedition, where he meant to solicit some accommodation with the court of Mexico, and if that should not succeed, to inform himself in the neighbourhood of its designs and preparations. He found the citizens of that



## BOOK X.

place disposed to dispute his entrance. They attacked the Spaniards with their usual fury, and fought courageously for some time; but at length becoming unable to withstand the fire of their guns, and the impetuosity of the horses, they retreated to the city. The Spaniards, on account of its being late, lodged in a large house of the suburbs. The next day the Tlascalans set fire to many houses of the city, and, during six days, which the Spaniards remained there, they had continual skirmishes, and some famous duels were fought between the Tlascalans and the citizens of Tlacopan; but they both fought with extreme bravery, and vented the hatred which they bore each other in a thousand reproaches. Those of Tlacopan called the Tlascalans the damsels of the Spaniards, without whose protection they never would have dared to advance so near to that city. The Tlascalans answered in their turn, that the Mexicans, and all their partizans, rather ought to have the name of women given them; being so superior in number and yet never able to subdue the Tlascalans. The Spaniards themselves did not escape from insults of this kind. They were ironically invited to enter Mexico to command there like lords, and to enjoy all the pleasures of life. "Do you think Christian," they said to Cortes, "that things will go on in the same way as they did last time? Perhaps you imagine there is another Montezuma reigning in Mexico devoted to your pleasures? Enter, enter the court, where you will all be made a sacrifice to the gods." During the engagements, which they had in those six days, the Spaniards entered that fatal road and approached to those memorable ditches, where, nine months before they had been so cruelly defeated. They found there a terrible resistance, and in an instant they apprehended to be utterly destroyed; for by being busied in pursuing some Mexican troops who had come designedly to insult them, and lead them into danger, they found themselves unexpectedly attacked, from both quarters on the road, by such a numerous enemy, that they with difficulty retreated, combating most furiously until they came to the main land. In this conflict five Spaniards were killed and many wounded. Of the Mexicans, many were slain in this and the other engagements. Cortes, disgusted with the ill success of his expedition, returned with his army by the same road to Tezcuco, suffering new insults from the enemy in his march,

march, who ascribed his retreat to fear and cowardice. The Tlascalans, who accompanied the Spaniards in their expedition, having amassed a large quantity of spoils, demanded permission of Cortes to carry them into their own country, which was readily granted.

Sandoval, who, in the absence of Cortes, had taken care of that post, departed from it two days after the arrival of that general with twenty horses, three hundred Spaniards, and a great number of allies, to the succour of the Chalchese, who were apprehensive of a strong assault from the Mexicans; but having found a great number of the troops of Huextotzinco and Quauquechollan, who were come to their assistance, and knowing that the greatest damage was done to that city by the Mexicans, who were in the garrison of Huaxtepec, a city situated in the mountains, fifteen miles to the southward of Chalco, he proceeded there. On their march they were attacked by two great bodies of the enemy, but they quickly defeated them; this was owing in a great measure to the immense multitude of allies, whom the Spaniards took with them. They entered into Huaxtepec, and lodged themselves in some great houses of that city, to rest themselves and cure their wounded; but immediately they had a new assault from the Mexicans, and were compelled to take up arms again to repulse them. Having defeated and pursued them upwards of three miles until they were entirely routed, they returned to the city, where they halted two days. Huaxtepec was a city at that time famous not only for its excellent manufactures of cotton, but also for its wonderful garden, of which we have already made mention.

From Huaxtepec Sandoval sent messengers to offer peace to the inhabitants of Jacapichtla, a very strong place about six miles distant, situated on the top of a mountain, almost inaccessible to cavalry, and defended by a competent garrison of Mexicans; but his proposals being rejected, he marched towards that city, determined to strike a blow there, which would humble their pride, and for ever deliver the Chalchese from the evils which harassed them continually from that quarter. The Tlascalans, and other allies, were intimidated by the sight of so much difficulty and danger; but Sandoval, animated by that great spirit which displayed itself in all his actions, resolved to conquer or die. He began to ascend with his infantry, having to surmount at the  
same

## BOOK X.

same time both the ruggedness of the mountain, and the multitude of the enemy, who defended it with a shower of darts, and stones, some of which were of immoderate size, and although they broke in falling on the rocks between, wounded the Spaniards with the fragments; but nothing could restrain them from entering the city bathed in sweat and blood, after which example the allies did the same. The fatigue and their wounds inflamed their indignation so much, that they attacked the enemy with the utmost fury; who, to escape from their swords, fled down the precipices of the mountain. So much blood was spilt, that it purpled a little stream which ran there, and changed its waters so, that for more than an hour the conquerors could not use it to quench the thirst which distressed them (*f*); “This,” says Cortes, “was one of the most signal victories, in which the Spaniards gave the strongest proofs of their courage and constancy.” This day cost the life of Gonzalo Dominguez, one of the bravest soldiers Cortes had, and whose loss was most sensibly felt by them all.

The Mexicans were so enraged at the slaughter committed at Jacapichtla, that they sent twenty thousand armed men, in two thousand vessels, against Chalco. The Chalchese implored as before the assistance of the Spaniards, and their messengers arrived just as Sandoval returned from Jacapichtla, with his army fatigued, exhausted, and wounded. Cortes, ascribing too inconsiderately those repeated hostilities of the Mexicans against the Chalchese to some neglect of that unparalleled commander, without first enquiring into his conduct, hearing, or allowing him a moment of repose, commanded him to march immediately to Chalco with the soldiers who were least wounded, to the assistance of those allies. Sandoval was extremely disgusted with the flight offered him by his general, at the time he ought rather to have expected the greatest praises; but he had as much prudence in dissembling his sense of this injury, and as much readiness to obey, as he had shewn courage in that arduous enterprise. He set out without delay for

(*f*) Bernal Diaz ridicules Gomara for this account of the waters having been so discoloured with blood: but Diaz was not present at this expedition, and we ought therefore to give more faith to Cortes, who says, the slaughter which the Spaniards made of the enemy, and which the enemy made of themselves by precipitating themselves from that eminence, was so great, that all who were present affirm, that a little river which surrounded almost all that place, remained for upwards of an hour so tinged with blood that they could not drink of it.

Chalco;



Chalco ; but when he arrived there he found the battle over, in which the Chalchese remained victorious, with the assistance of their new allies of Heuxotzinco and Quauhquehoilan ; and although they sustained a considerable loss, they killed a number of the enemy and made forty prisoners, among whom were a general of the army and two persons of the first nobility, who were consigned by the Chalchese to Sandoval, and by him sent to Cortes. This general having discovered his error, and being well informed of the irreprehensible conduct of Sandoval, endeavoured to appease his just resentment by particular marks of honour and esteem.

Cortes being desirous of an accommodation with the court of Mexico, both in order to avoid the fatigue and distresses of war, and to make himself master of so beautiful a city without ruining it, resolved to send those two persons who were prisoners with a letter to king Quauhtemotzin ; which, although it could not be understood by the court, as they were totally ignorant of the characters of it, would however be a credential and token of his embassy. He explained the contents of the letter to the messengers, and charged them to represent to their sovereign, that he pretended to nothing more than that the king of Spain should be acknowledged lord of that land, agreeable to what had been granted by the Mexican nobility in that respectable assembly which was held in Mexico, in presence of Montezuma ; that they should remember the homage which the Mexican lords then did to the great monarch of the East ; that he wished to establish a peace, and to make a perpetual alliance with them, and was not disposed to war unless constrained to it by their hostilities ; that it would grieve him to spill so much Mexican blood, and destroy such a large and beautiful city ; that they themselves were witnesses of the bravery of the Spaniards, the superiority of their arms, the multitude of their allies, and the success of their enterprizes ; that they should finally reflect within themselves, and not oblige by their obstinacy a war to be continued to the utter ruin of the court and the empire.

SECT. VIII.  
Fruitless negotiation of Cortes with the court of Mexico.

The fruit of this embassy was soon discovered in the lamentations of the Chalchese, who knowing of the great force which was levying against their state, came to implore the assistance of the Spaniards ;  
shewing

## BOOK IX.

shewing to Cortes, painted on a cloth, the cities which were arming against them by order of the king, and the routes which they were to take. While Cortes was preparing his troops for this expedition, messengers arrived at Tezcuco from Tuzapan, Mexicatlicinco, and Nauhtlan, cities situated on the coast of the Mexican gulf beyond the colony of Vera Cruz, to offer obedience in the name of their chiefs to the king of Spain.

SECT. IX.  
March of the  
Spanish army  
through the  
southern  
mountains.

On the fifth of April Cortes set out from Tezcuco, with thirty horses, three hundred Spanish infantry, and twenty thousand allies, leaving the command of that place and the care of the brigantines to Sandoval. He went straight to Tlalmanalco, and from thence to Chimalhuacan (g), where he increased his army with other twenty thousand men, and who, to revenge themselves on the Mexicans, or from the hopes of spoil, or from both motives, came from different places to serve in that war. Directing his way according to the route marked in the Chalchese paintings, he travelled through the southern mountains towards Huaxtepec; he saw near to the road a steep mountain, the top of which was occupied by a vast number of women and children, and the sides by innumerable warriors, who, trusting to the natural strength of that place, made game of the Spaniards with howling and whistling. Cortes, unable to endure this mockery, attacked the mountain on three sides; but they were hardly begun to ascend with the greatest difficulty through a shower of darts and stones, than he ordered a retreat; for, besides that he perceived the attempt to be rash and more dangerous than fruitful, an army of the enemy came in sight, marching towards the same place, with an intent to attack the Spaniards behind, when they were most engaged in the assault. Cortes immediately made against them, with his troops well formed. The battle lasted a short time, for the enemy soon finding their inferiority of strength, quickly abandoned the field. The Spaniards pursued them upwards of an hour and a half, until they were entirely routed. The loss of the Spaniards on this occasion was almost nothing, but in the assault of the mountain eight were killed and many of them wounded.

(g) There were, and still are, two places of this name; the one situated upon the border of the lake of Tezcuco, close to the peninsula of Iztapalapan, and called simply *Chimalhuacan*; the other, which is in the mountains to the southward of the vale of Mexico, is called *Chimalhuacan Chaleo*; and it was to this last place that Cortes went.

The thirst which distressed the army, and the intimation which Cortes had of another mountain three miles off similarly occupied, forced him to march towards that part. He observed on one side of the mountain two lofty rocks, defended by many warriors; but they, thinking that the Spaniards would attempt the assault on the side opposite, abandoned the rocks, and repaired where they apprehended most danger. Cortes, who knew well how to profit by all conjunctures which either fortune, or the imprudence of his enemies presented, ordered one of his captains to endeavour to occupy one of the rocks with a competent number of men, while he employed the besieged on the opposite quarter. He began then to ascend, though not without the utmost difficulty; but when he had reached a post as high as that taken by the enemy, he saw the Spanish flag hoisted upon one of the rocks. The enemy finding themselves attacked on both sides, and having already begun to feel the loss which the fire-arms occasioned among them, surrendered. Cortes treated them with the utmost humanity; but demanded from them, as a condition necessary to obtain his pardon, that they should induce those also who occupied the first mountain to surrender also, which they accordingly did.

Cortes, finding these obstacles removed, proceeded through Huaxtepec, Jauhtepec, and Xiuhtepec, to the large and pleasant city of Quauhnahuac (*b*), the capital of the nation of the Tlahuicas, upwards of thirty miles distant from Mexico, towards the south. This city was very strong from its natural situation; being on one side surrounded by steep mountains, and on the other by a hollow about seven perches deep, through which ran a little river. The cavalry could not enter there except by two ways, which were unknown to the Spaniards, or by the bridges which had been raised as soon as they had appeared. While they were seeking a convenient place to begin the assault, the Quauh-

SECT. X.  
Conquest of  
Quauhna-  
huac.

(*b*) The name Quauhnahuac has been strangely altered by the Spaniards: Cortes calls this city *Cocanabac*, Bernal Diaz *Coadalbac*, Solis *Quotlabaca*, &c. That of *Cucinahuac* prevailed afterwards, by which it is known among the Spaniards at present; but the Indians still retain the old name Quauhnahuac. It is one of the thirty places which Charles V. gave to Cortes, and is at present part of the estates of the duke of Monteleon, a marquis of the valley of Oaxaca.



## BOOK X.

nahuachefe shot an incredible number of arrows, darts, and stones at them. But a courageous Tlascalan having observed, that two great trees, which grew on the opposite sides of the hollow inclining towards each other, had crossed and mutually interwoven their branches, he made a bridge of them to pass to the other side; and his example was quickly followed, though with great difficulty and with great danger, by six Spanish soldiers, and afterwards by many Spaniards and Tlascalans (*i*). This act of intrepidity so intimidated those who defended the assault in that quarter, that they immediately retreated, and went to join the other citizens, who, at another part of the city, were opposing the troops led by Cortes; but while most employed in the defence, they found themselves unexpectedly attacked by those troops, who, following that courageous Tlascalan, were now entered by the undefended part into the city. Terror made the citizens give up resistance, and put them to flight precipitately through the mountains; while the allies, without any opposition, burned a great part of the city. The lord of it, who had fled with the rest, fearing to be overtaken in the mountains by the Spaniards, took occasion to surrender himself, declaring that he had not done it before because he waited till the rage of the Spaniards should be exhausted on the city, and by being satisfied with other hostilities, might abstain from treating his person cruelly.

SECT. XI.  
Conquest of  
Xochimilco.

After some repose the army left Quauhnahuac, loaded with spoils, directing their way towards the north, through a large wood of pines, where they endured a great thirst, and the day following found themselves near the city of Xochimilco. This beautiful city, the largest next to the three royal residences of all those in the Mexican vale, was founded upon the border of the lake of Chalco, a little more than twelve miles distant from the capital: its inhabitants were numerous, its temples many, its buildings magnificent, and its gardens floating on the lake singularly beautiful, from whence it took its name of Xo-

(*i*) Solis, without making mention of that Tlascalan, attributes all the glory of that action to Bernal Diaz; in which particular he contradicts Cortes, and other historians. Bernal Diaz himself, who, in the relation of this event, does himself all the honour he can, boasts of having been one of those who did not regard the risk of their lives, and passed the depth on the branches of the trees; but by no means takes the honour to himself of having been the first who passed or suggested the attempt.

chimilco (*k*): it had, like the capital, many canals or ditches, and for fear of the Spaniards, they had now several entrenchments. As soon as they saw the enemy approach, they raised the bridges of the canals, to make the entry more difficult. The Spaniards divided their army into three squadrons, to attack the city by as many places, but every where they met with a stout resistance, and could not take the first ditch until after a terrible engagement of more than half an hour, in which two Spaniards were killed and many wounded; but having at last overcome those obstacles, they entered the city, pursuing the inhabitants, who persevered till night, fighting in the vessels in which they had made their retreat. They frequently heard voices among the combatants who demanded peace, but the Spaniards understanding that those cries were made with no other view than to gain time to place their families and goods in security, and to receive the succour which they expected from Mexico, pressed them still harder; until, finding all resistance dropt, they retired to repose and cure the wounded: but they had hardly began to draw their breath a little, when they saw themselves attacked by a great number of enemies, who came formed in order of battle by the same road by which the Spaniards had entered. They were now reduced to great difficulties, and Cortes himself was in imminent danger of becoming a prisoner of the enemy; for his horse having fallen from fatigue, as he says, or being cut down by the blows from the Xochimilcas, as some historians report, he continued fighting on foot with his lance; but being overpowered by the enemy, he would not have been able to have saved himself from ruin, if a brave Tlascalan (*l*), and after him two of his own servants, had not seasonably come to his relief.

The Xochimilcas being at last defeated, the Spaniards had leisure to repose a little after the fatigues of the day, in which some of their soldiers had been killed, and almost all of them wounded, and the general himself and the principal officers Alvarado and Olid among the rest.

(*k*) *Xochimilco* means gardens and fields of flowers.

(*l*) Herrera and Torquemada say, that the day after the great hazard Cortes had been in of being made prisoner, he sought for the Tlascalan who had rescued him, but could not find him either dead or alive; on which account, from the devotion which the general paid to St. Peter, he became persuaded that, that apostle had been the person who saved him.

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Four Spaniards, made prisoners, were conducted to the capital, and sacrificed without delay, and their arms and legs sent to different places to encourage the subjects against the enemies of the state. It is beyond a doubt, that on this, as well as on other occasions, Cortes might easily have been put to death by the enemy, if they had not had so much anxiety to take him alive to sacrifice him to their gods.

The news of the taking of Xochimilco threw the court of Mexico into great consternation. King Quauhtemotzin assembled some military chiefs, and represented to them the loss and danger occasioned to Mexico by the capture of so considerable a place, the service they would render their gods and the nation in retaking it, and the courage and strength which was necessary to overcome those daring and destructive strangers. They immediately gave orders, therefore, to raise an army of twelve thousand men, to be sent by land, and another to be sent by water; which were so speedily executed, that the Spaniards had hardly reposed after the fatigues of the preceding day, when Cortes was advised by his centinels of the march of the Mexicans towards that city. This general divided his army into three divisions, and gave his captains the necessary orders; he left some troops to garrison the quarters, and commanded that twenty horse with five hundred Tlascalans should pass across the enemy's front, to occupy a neighbouring little mountain, and wait there his final orders for the attack. The Mexican commanders advanced full of pride, making great ostentation of some European swords which had been taken from the Spaniards on the night of the first of July. The battle was begun without the city, and when it appeared proper time, Cortes ordered the troops posted on the little mountain to attack the rear of the Mexicans. They finding themselves attacked on every side, went into disorder and fled, leaving five hundred dead on the field. The Spaniards, on their return to their quarters, found that the body of men left there had been in great danger from the great number of Xochimilcas who had encountered them. Cortes, after having been for three days in Xochimilco in frequent skirmishes with the enemy, made the temples and houses be set on fire, and went to the market-place, which was without the city, to order his people for their march. The Xochimilcas being persuaded that his departure was the effect of fear, fell upon the rear-guard with great



great clamour ; but they were soon so severely repulsed by the Spaniards, that they never dared again to attack them.

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Cortes advanced with his army as far as Cojohuacan, a large city situated upon the bank of the lake, six miles distant from Mexico towards the south, with a view to observe all those posts, and make the fitter dispositions for the siege of the capital. He found the city evacuated, and the next day he set out from it, to examine the road which led from that city to the road of Iztapalapan. He found an entrenchment made there by the Mexicans, and ordered his infantry to attack it, who, in spite of the terrible resistance of the enemy who defended it, took it ; ten Spaniards being wounded, and some Mexicans killed. Cortes having mounted the trench, saw the road of Iztapalapan darkened with an innumerable enemy, and the lake covered with some thousands of boats, and after having observed every thing necessary to his purpose, he returned to the city, whose houses and temples he caused to be set on fire.

SECT. XII.  
March of the  
Spaniards  
round the  
lake to Tez-  
cuco.

From Cojohuacan he marched the army to Tlacopan, though harassed on the way by some flying troops of the enemy, who attacked the baggage. In one of those scuffles, where Cortes was in great danger, they took two of his servants prisoners, who were conducted to Mexico and immediately sacrificed. Cortes arrived at Tlacopan in affliction at this misfortune, but his displeasure was greatly increased when he beheld from the upper area of the greater temple of that court, along with some other Spaniards, that fatal road wherein some months before he had lost so many of his friends and soldiers, and considered attentively the great difficulties which must be overcome before he could render himself master of the capital. Some of his officers suggested to him, to send his troops by that road to commit some hostilities on the Mexicans ; but he did not chuse to expose them to so great risk ; and, without remaining longer in that city, he returned by Tenajoccan, Quauhtitlan, Citlaltepec, and Acolman, to Tezcuco, having made a circuit in this expedition round all the lakes of the Mexican vale, and observed what efforts and exertions were necessary to execute the great enterprize in his mind with success.

In Tezcuco Cortes continued all the preparations for the siege. The brigantines were equipped, and a canal formed, a mile and a half long, sufficiently

SECT. XIII.  
Conspiracy  
against Cor-  
tes.

## BOOK X.

sufficiently deep, and furnished on both sides with a fence, to receive the water of the lake into which the brigantines were to be launched, and a machine constructed to launch them. The troops which Cortes had under his command were almost without number, and likewise that of the Spaniards was considerably augmented by some who a few days before had arrived at the port of Vera Cruz, in a vessel from Spain loaded with horses, arms, and ammunition. Every thing appeared to promise a happy issue, at the moment the enterprize was in the greatest danger of being totally frustrated and ruined. Some Spanish soldiers, partisans of the governor of Cuba, incited either to hatred of Cortes, or envious of his glory, or, what seems still as probable, from fear of the dangers which threatened them in the siege of the capital, secretly agreed to take away his life, and those of his captains Alvarado, Sandoval, and Tapia, and all those who appeared to be most attached to the party of the general. The conspirators had not only determined the time and manner of securely executing the blow, but elected also those on whom the vacant posts of general, judge, and captains were to be conferred; when one of the accomplices, having repented of the deed, seasonably revealed the treason to Cortes. This general immediately made Antonio de Villafañá, the chief of the conspirators, be seized, committed his examination to a judge, and he having freely confessed the crime, was according to justice hanged from a window of the quarters. With respect to his accomplices, Cortes prudently dissembled, affecting not to believe them culpable, and ascribing the infamy imputed to them by the confession, to the malice of Villafañá; but, in order that in future he might not be exposed to so much risk of his life, he formed a body-guard of several soldiers whose fidelity and courage he had tried, who attended him day and night, and watched continually over the safety of his person.

SECT. XIV.  
The last preparation for the siege of Mexico.

Having thus crushed, by the punishment of the ringleader, that pernicious conspiracy, Cortes applied himself with the utmost activity to put the last hand to his great undertaking. On the twenty-eighth of April, after the celebration of the mass of the Holy Spirit, at which all the Spaniards communicated, and the brigantines were given benediction by a priest, they were launched into the water, and immediately displaying their sails, began to plough the lake under a discharge of the artillery

artillery and small arms, which was followed by the singing of Te Deum to the music of military instruments. All those demonstrations of satisfaction were in consequence of the great confidence Cortes had in the brigantines for the success of his enterprize, without which perhaps he would never have been able to have conducted it to a happy end. He afterwards made a review of his army, and found it to consist of eighty-six horses, and more than eight hundred infantry, three large iron cannon, fifteen smaller of copper, a thousand Castilian pounds of gunpowder, and a large quantity of balls and arrows, the number and strength of his little army having been doubled by the supplies of that year from Spain and the Antilles. In order to encourage them, he made them an harangue similar to that which he had delivered to them when he left Tlascala. He sent messengers to this republic, to Cholula, Huexotzinco, and other cities, to let them know that the brigantines were now completed, and requesting them to send within ten days as many chosen troops as they could muster, for that now the time was come for giving siege to that proud city, which had for so many years oppressed their liberty. Five days before the feast of Pentecost, the army of Tlascala arrived at Tezcuco, consisting, according to what Cortes affirms, of more than fifty thousand men, under the command of several famous chiefs, among which came the young Xicotencatl and the brave Chichimecatl; who were met by Cortes and his people. The troops of Huexotzinco and Cholula passed thither through the mountains of Chalco, agreeable to the orders given them. In the two following days came other troops from Tlascala and other neighbouring places, which, together with those above mentioned, made more than two hundred thousand men, as is attested by their leader and conductor Alfonso d'Ojeda.

On the Monday of Pentecost, twentieth of May, Cortes mustered his people in the greater market-place of Tezcuco, to make a division of his army, to appoint the commanders, to assign to each the station where they were to form their camp, and the troops which were to be immediately under them, and to publish afresh the military proclamation formerly published in Tlascala. He ordered Pedro de Alvarado to remain in camp in the city of Tlacopan, to prevent any assistance coming through that quarter to the Mexicans, and assigned him thirty horses

SECT. XV..  
Disposition  
of the army  
in the siege of  
the capital.



## BOOK X.

and one hundred and sixty-eight foot soldiers, distributed into three companies under as many captains, with twenty thousand Tlascalans and two pieces of artillery. Christopher Olid was created camp-master, and chief of the division destined for the city of Cojohuacan, and assigned thirty-three horses, one hundred and sixty-eight foot soldiers, under three other captains, with two pieces of artillery, and more than twenty-five thousand allies. To Gonzales de Sandoval he gave twenty-four horses, one hundred and sixty-three Spanish infantry, under two captains with two cannons, and the allies of Chalco, Huexotzinco, and Cholula, who were more than thirty-thousand in number, and ordered him first to go and destroy the city of Iztapalapan, and then to encamp himself wherever he thought he could most effectually hem in the Mexicans. Cortes, in spite of the remonstrances made him by his captains and soldiers, took the command of the brigantines, where he thought his assistance would be most necessary. He distributed among the thirteen brigantines three hundred and twenty-five Spaniards and thirteen falconets, assigning to each brigantine a captain, twelve soldiers, and as many rowers; so that the whole army destined to begin the siege of the capital, consisted of nine hundred and seventeen Spaniards, and more than seventy-five thousand auxiliary troops (*m*); which number was soon after increased, as we shall find, to two hundred thousand and more. All the other troops which had repaired to Tezcuco, either remained there to be employed when it was necessary, or returned to their own places of abode, as they were not too distant from the capital to be speedily summoned whenever it was requisite.

SECT. XVI.  
Punishment  
of Xicotencatl.

Olid and Alvarado departed together with their troops from Tezcuco, to go to their respective posts assigned them by the general. Among the higher ranks of Tlascalans who accompanied Alvarado, were the young Xicotencatl, and his cousin Pilteuētlī. In a quarrel which happened, the latter was wounded by a Spaniard, who, regardless of the orders published by the general, or the respect due to that person, was near occasioning the desertion of the Tlascalans. This outrage dis-

(*m*) Solis says, that Bernal Diaz complains often that the allies gave them more hindrance than assistance; but this is totally false, for Bernal Diaz on the contrary frequently says, that the allies were of great assistance, and fought courageously against the Mexicans; "The Tlascalans our friends," he says, in chap. 151. "assisted us greatly during the whole war, like brave people."

gusted them extremely, and made them express their dissatisfaction in an open manner. Ojeda, their leader, endeavoured to pacify them, and gave permission to Pilteuctli to return to be cured in his native country. Xicotencatl, who, on account of his rank as well as his relation to Pilteuctli, was most sensible of the insult, finding no other way to be revenged, secretly abandoned the army, and, with some other Tlascalans, took the road to Tlascala. Alvarado gave immediate advice of this to Cortes, who ordered Ojeda to overtake and seize him; and after being taken made him be publicly hanged in the city of Tezcuco (*n*), as Herrera and Torquemada say, or in a place near to it as Bernal Diaz affirms; it having been first published by a herald, that the cause of his condemnation was his having deserted, and excited the Tlascalans against the Spaniards. It is probable that Cortes would not have risked the execution of such a sentence, if he had not first obtained, as Herrera expressly affirms, the consent of the senate of Tlascala; which was not difficult, considering their severity in punishing crimes even when committed by the most eminent persons, and the particular hatred also which they bore to that prince, whose pride and arrogance of character they could not endure. So alarming a punishment, which ought naturally to have inflamed the minds of the Tlascalans against the Spaniards, intimidated them to such a degree, as well as the other allies, that from that time forward they observed more punctually the articles of war, and kept under more subordination to those strangers who were their leaders; the Spaniards profiting even from their faults and misconduct: but the Tlascalans were not afraid to make many demonstrations of their esteem and veneration for that prince, bewailing his death and distributing his cloaths as precious relics among themselves, and celebrating, as is probable, his funeral with usual honours. The family and property of Xicotencatl were adjudged to the king of Spain, and brought

(*n*) Cortes does not make mention of this event: it is probable he had particular motives for concealing it. Solis thinks it impossible that Xicotencatl was punished in Tezcuco; "Because Cortes would have risked too much by the execution of so violent a sentence under the eyes of so many Tlascalans, who would naturally have been shocked and disgusted at so ignominious a punishment being inflicted on one of the first men of their nation." But Cortes risked a great deal more, when he imprisoned Montezuma in his own court, and under the eyes of a much superior number of Mexicans, who must have been equally sensible of the outrage done to the first man of their nation.

BOOK X. to Tezcuco. In his family were thirty wives, and amongst his property a large quantity of gold.

SECT. XVII.  
First hostilities of the Spaniards, and beginning of the siege of Mexico.

Alvarado and Olid continued their march towards Tlacopan, where their object was to break the aqueduct of Chapoltepec, to cut off the water from the Mexicans; but they were unable to execute this measure without surmounting a powerful resistance from the enemy, who, having foreseen the blow, had made preparations both by land and water for their defence. They were soon defeated, and the Tlascalans in pursuing them killed twenty, and made seven or eight prisoners. Having so successfully accomplished this step, those two commanders resolved to go by the way of Tlacopan, to take some ditch by assault; but so great was the multitude of Mexicans who came against them, and so thick the shower of arrows, darts, and stones, which were shot at them, that eight Spaniards were killed and more than fifty wounded, and they with difficulty were able to retreat in shame to Tlacopan, where Alvarado encamped, according to the order of the general, and Olid marched to Cojohuacan on the thirtieth day of May, consecrated that year to the solemnity of Corpus Domini, on which day began, according to the computation made by Cortes, the siege of Mexico.

While Alvarado and Olid were employed in filling up some ditches which were made upon the border of the lake, and were repairing some passages for the convenience of the cavalry, the commander Sandoval, with the number of Spaniards above mentioned, and with more than thirty-five thousand allies, marched from Tezcuco on the thirty-first of May, with an intent to take the city of Iztapalapan by assault, against which Cortes was particularly bent. Sandoval made his entry there, committing terrible devastation and havoc by fire upon the houses and by his arms upon the inhabitants, who in terror attempted to save their lives by water. Cortes, in order to attack at the same time that part of the city which was contiguous to the water, after having made the whole lake be founded, embarked with his people in his brigantines, and proceeded by means of sails and oars towards Iztapalapan. He struck ground near to an insulated little mountain, at a small distance from that city, the top of which was occupied by a numerous enemy, resolved to defend themselves and annoy the Spaniards as much as possible.



sible. Cortes disembarked there, and, with one hundred and fifty men, surmounting the steepness and difficulty of the ascent and the resistance of the enemy, took the mount and killed all the Mexicans who defended it. But they had hardly taken possession of it, when they perceived a fleet of boats coming against them, which had been summoned there by a signal of smoke, that, on the first appearance of the brigantines, was made from that little mountain and from some temples in that neighbourhood. The Spaniards immediately re-embarked and stood without moving upon their defence, until at length being favoured with a fresh breeze which sprung up suddenly, and increasing the velocity of the brigantines, with the impulse of the oars, they rushed violently upon the boats, breaking some of them to pieces and oversetting others. Some of the enemy were killed by balls and many were drowned; all the others fled, and were pursued for eight miles by the brigantines, as far as the capital.

The commander Olid, as soon as he discovered from a temple of Cojohuacan the engagement of the brigantines, marched with his troops in order of battle along the road which led to Mexico, took some ditches and trenches, and killed a number of the enemy. Cortes, on his part, collected that night all his brigantines, and went with them to attack the bastion, which, as we have already mentioned, was erected in that angle which was formed by the junction of the road of Cojohuacan with the road of Iztapalapan. He made the attack by land as well as water, and in spite of the bravery with which it was defended by the Mexican garrison posted there, he took it, and made a horrid slaughter, with two large pieces of cannon, of the multitude which covered the lake as well as the road. That place, called by the Mexicans *Xoloc*, appeared extremely advantageous to Cortes for the establishment of his camp, and it certainly would not have been easy to have found another more suitable to his designs; for, by means of it he became master of the principal road and that part of the lake where the greatest succours could enter to the city, and besides that of the road of Cojohuacan which formed a communication with the camp of Olid. The small distance of that place from the camps of Cojohuacan and Tlacopan was of great importance to Cortes, in giving his orders with expedition,

## BOOK X.

dition, and to render assistance when it proved necessary. In short, its vicinity to Mexico contributed to make every attack more easy.

There he assembled his brigantines, and abandoning the expedition against Iztapalapan, formed a resolution to give very soon a commencement to his operations. He ordered to his camp one half of the troops of Cojohuacan, and fifty chosen soldiers from the troops under Sandoval. That night he heard a great body of enemies coming towards his camp. The Spaniards, knowing that the Mexicans were not used to combat by night unless when they were secure of victory, were at first apprehensive; but, although they received some hurt from the enemy, they obliged them by the fire of their artillery and muskets to retire to the city. The next day they found themselves attacked by a prodigious multitude of warriors, who enlarged their number in the imagination of the Spaniards with dreadful howls. The supply expected from Cojohuacan being arrived, Cortes made a sally with his people in order of battle. They fought with great courage and obstinacy on both sides, but the Spaniards and their allies took one ditch and an intrenchment, and did so much damage to the Mexicans with their artillery and horses, that they were compelled to retreat to their city; and because, by that part of the lake which was to the west of the road, they were much annoyed by the vessels of the Mexicans, Cortes made one of the ditches be enlarged, that the brigantines might pass there, which immediately charged impetuously upon them, pursued them as far as the capital, and set fire to some houses of the suburbs.

In the meanwhile, Sandoval having successfully terminated, though not without infinite peril, the expedition of Iztapalapan, marched with his troops towards Cojohuacan. On his way thither, he was attacked by the troops of Mexicaltzinco, but he defeated them, and set fire to the city. Cortes, apprised of his march, and also of a great ditch which had been recently made in that road, sent two brigantines to facilitate the passage to the army. It marched towards Cojohuacan, and Sandoval came with ten cavalry to the camp of Cortes. When he arrived there he found the Spaniards in combat with the Mexicans: the fatigue of the journey and the battle of Mexicaltzinco was not sufficient to restrain him from engaging: he joined battle with his usual courage, but while fighting he was pierced in the leg by a dart, and many other

Spaniards



Spaniards were wounded with him. Those advantages, if we may call them so, are little in comparison with the loss which the Mexicans sustained that day, or the dread which the fire of the artillery excited in them; which was so great, that for some days they durst not come near the Spanish camp. The Spaniards continued for six days in continual skirmishes; the brigantines sailing round the capital, set fire to many houses of the suburbs, and in their expeditions discovered a large and deep canal, by which they could easily enter the city. This was in future a circumstance of great advantage to the Spaniards.

Alvarado, on his part, hemmed in the Mexicans as much as possible, by taking at different encounters some ditches and intrenchments on the road of Tlacopan; but some of his men were killed, and many wounded. He observed, that by the road of Tepejacac, situated towards the north, provisions were continually introduced to the city, and perceived also, that by that road the besieged could easily escape, when they found they could no longer resist the besiegers. He communicated this observation to Cortes, who commanded Sandoval to go with one hundred and eighteen Spaniards and a very strong army of allies to occupy that place, and intercept the supplies which should come that way to the enemy. Sandoval obeyed, though still unrecovered of the wound in his leg, and took possession without opposition of that station, by which means every communication of the Mexicans with other cities by land was cut off (o).

This being done, Cortes determined to make an entry the next day into the city, with more than five hundred Spaniards and more than eighty thousand allies from Tezcuco, Tlascala, Chalco, and Huexotzinco, leaving some cavalry with ten thousand allies to guard the camp; ordering Sandoval and Alvarado to enter there at the same time, each by his different road, with their troops, which were not less

SECT.  
XVIII.  
First entry of  
the besiegers  
into Mexico.

(o) Doctor Robertson says, that Cortes designed to attack the city at three different places; from Tezcuco, on the east side of the lake; from Tacuba, on the west; and from Cuzocan (that is, Cojohuacan), in the south; those cities, he adds, commanded the principal causeways which led to the capital, and were built for its defence: but this is an error; because to the eastward there was not, nor could be, any road which led to the capital, on account of the depth of the lake. Sandoval did not encamp in Tezcuco, from whence it was impossible to attack Mexico, but in Tepejacac, towards the north.

than



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than eighty thousand in number. Cortes marched along his road, with his numerous army well marshalled and flanked by the brigantines; but had advanced only a short way when they met with a broad deep ditch and intrenchment more than ten feet high. The Mexicans courageously opposed their passage, but being beat back by the artillery from the brigantines, the Spaniards passed, pursuing the enemy as far as the city, where they found another great ditch and a strong and high intrenchment. The force of the water in this ditch, the monstrous swarms of the enemy who assembled to defend it, their dreadful and menacing airs and the unceasing shower of arrows, darts, and stones, which they discharged, staggered for some time the resolution of the Spaniards; but having at length, with the fire of all the artillery and other arms, driven those from the intrenchments who defended them, the army passed and advanced, taking other ditches and intrenchments, unto the principal square of the city, which was full of people. In spite of the havoc they saw made on the multitude by a large cannon planted in the entrance of the square, the Spaniards dared not to enter there, until the general himself, reproaching them for their ignominious fear and charging intrepidly upon the enemy, infused new courage into his soldiers. The Mexicans, intimidated by such great intrepidity, fled for shelter within the inclosure of the greater temple, and finding themselves attacked there also, they took refuge in the upper area of the temple, whither they were still pursued; but all on a sudden the Spaniards found themselves attacked behind by other Mexican troops, and reduced to such difficulty, that not being able to withstand the fury of the enemy neither within the inclosure nor without in the square, they were obliged to retire to the road by which they had entered the city, leaving the piece of artillery in possession of the enemy. A little time after, three or four horses came seasonably into the square, and the enemy being persuaded that the whole cavalry was coming against them, went into confusion from the fear they had of those large and fiery animals, and ignominiously abandoned the temple and the square, which were immediately occupied by the Spaniards. Ten or twelve Mexican nobles were fortified in the upper area of the great temple; but, in spite of their obstinate resistance, they were vanquished and killed by those who attacked them. The Spanish army in its retreat  
set

set fire to the largest and most beautiful houses on the road of Iztapalapan, though not without the utmost danger, on account of the impetuosity with which the Mexicans attacked the rear, and the annoyance they suffered from the terraces. Alvarado and Sandoval made great havoc of the Mexicans with their troops, and the allies received on this day great encomiums from the Spanish general.

The forces of the Spaniards were daily so much increased with fresh supplies, and with the alliance of new cities and whole provinces; that although there were not in their three camps at first more than ninety thousand men, in the space of a few days they amounted to two hundred and forty thousand. The new king of Tezcucó, in order to manifest his gratitude to Cortes, endeavoured to gain the whole nobility of his kingdom to his party, and equipped an army of fifty thousand men, which he sent to the assistance of the Spaniards, under the command of a prince, his brother; a youth, of whose bravery all ancient historians give testimony, and, amongst others, Cortes himself, who boasts of the seasonableness and importance of his aid. That prince remained with thirty thousand men in the camp of Cortes, and the other twenty thousand were distributed in the camps of Sandoval and Alvarado. This supply of the king of Tezcucó was quickly followed by the confederacy of the Xochimilcas and the Otomies, the mountaineers, with the Spaniards, which new troops added twenty thousand men to the army of Cortes.

SECT. XIX.  
Augmen-  
tation of the  
auxiliary  
troops.

There was nothing wanting to this general for the completion of the siege, but the prevention of the supplies which were introduced by water into the city. Retaining seven of the brigantines, he therefore sent the other six towards that part of the lake which was between Tlacopan and Tepejacac, that there they might be ready to assist the camps of Sandoval and Alvarado, when those commanders should require it; but while not employed by them, they were to cruise two by two, and endeavour to intercept all the vessels which were transporting either men or provisions to the city.

Cortes, finding he had now a sufficient number of allied troops, determined, in the course of three days to make an entry into the city. He gave the necessary orders for this purpose, and on the day appointed he marched with the greater part of his cavalry, with three hundred infantry,

## BOOK X.

infantry, seven brigantines, and innumerable multitudes of allies. They found the ditches open, the intrenchments thrown up, and the enemy well prepared to resist them; but notwithstanding this, they took all the ditches and intrenchments, which were formed between them and the principal square of Tenochtitlan. Here the army made a halt, Cortes not permitting them to proceed forward, without leaving all the difficult passes which they had taken levelled; but while ten thousand of the allies were busied in filling up the ditches, others set fire to and demolished some of the temples, houses, and palaces, and, amongst others, that of king Axajacatl, where the Spaniards were formerly quartered, and the celebrated palace of birds of Montezuma. After having committed those hostilities with great difficulty and danger, on account of the efforts which the Mexicans made to hinder them, Cortes founded a retreat, which was happily effected, although the rear-guard was incessantly harassed by the troops of the enemy. The same thing was performed by Sandoval and Alvarado in their quarter. This was indeed a day of great fatigue to the Spaniards and their allies, but likewise of unspeakable affliction to the Mexicans, as much on account of so many beautiful edifices which were destroyed, as the scorn and mockery they suffered from their own vassals who were leagued with the Spaniards, and from their mortal enemies the Tlascalans, who, while they combated, shewed the arms and legs of the Mexicans whom they had slain, and threatened to eat them that night to their supper, as in fact they did.

SECT. XX.  
New entries  
into the city.

The next day, in order to give no time to the Mexicans to dig the ditches which had been filled up, or repair the intrenchments which had been beat down, Cortes set out early from his camp, in the same manner as the preceding day; but, in spite of his diligence, the Mexicans had already renewed the greater part of the fortifications, and defended them so obstinately, that the army of the besiegers could not take them till after a most furious engagement of five hours. The army pushed forward, and took two ditches on the road of Tlacopan; but the day being now near finished, they retired to their camp, fighting all the way with the troops of the enemy, who fell upon the rear-guard. The armies of Sandoval and Alvarado had similar contests, the besieged being obliged to oppose, at the same time, three most numer-



ous armies, superior to them in arms, in horses, in the brigantines, and in military discipline. Alvarado, on his side, had now demolished all the houses, from one end to the other, on both sides of the road of Tlacopan (*e*), for the habitations of the capital were continued on that road unto the continent or main land, according to the accounts both of Cortes and Bernal Díaz.

Cortes would willingly have saved his troops the trouble and fatigue of daily repeating their engagements to take the same ditches and intrenchments, but he could not leave a garrison to preserve those acquisitions, without sacrificing it to the fury of the enemy, nor was he willing to encamp within the city, as some of his captains advised him; for, besides the incessant assault which they must have endured from the enemy, they could not from thence so easily as from the post of Xoloc prevent supplies from coming into the city.

While succours were daily diminishing to the besieged, those of the besiegers were gradually increasing; and at this very juncture they received one which was as advantageous for them as it was hurtful to the enemy. The inhabitants of the cities situate upon the border and little islands of the lake of Chalco, had been hitherto the enemies of the Spaniards, and could have done much damage to the camp of Cortes, if their troops had attacked it from one part of the road, while at the same time the Mexicans had attacked it from another; but they had not attempted any hostilities against the Spaniards, perhaps because they reserved themselves for some very favouring occasion. The Chalchese, and other allies, who did not like the neighbourhood of so many enemies, endeavoured to draw them over to their party, sometimes by promises, sometimes by threats and vexations; and their importunity, and perhaps also the fear of revenge from the Spaniards, had so much influence, that the nobles of Iztapalan, Mexicaltzinco, Colhuacan, Huitzilopochco, Mizquiz, and Cuitlahuac, which cities formed a considerable part of the Mexican vale, came to the camp to make a confederacy with the Spaniards. Cortes was extremely glad of their alliance,

SECT. XXI.  
Confederacy  
of several ci-  
ties on the  
lake with the  
Spaniards.

(*e*) These houses were not built on the road itself, but upon little islands near to it, on both sides. We do not find that there was any other building upon the road but a temple, situated on that part where the road broadened out, and formed a little square. This temple was taken by Alvarado, who kept a garrison there almost the whole time of the siege.

## BOOK X.

and requested of them that they would not only assist him with their troops and vessels, but likewise transport materials for the erection of huts along that road; for it being now the season of rain, his people suffered much from the want of habitations.

His demand was so readily complied with, that they sent immediately a large body of troops, the number of which is not known, to be under the command of Cortes, and three thousand vessels to assist the brigantines in their operations. In these they transported the materials, with which they built such a number of barracks, that all the Spaniards, and two thousand Indians employed in their service, were conveniently accommodated; for the majority of the allied troops were encamped in Cojohuacan, four miles distant from Xoloc; and, not content with giving this assistance, they brought many provisions to the camp, particularly fish and cherries in great quantities.

Cortes, finding himself so well reinforced with troops, entered two or three days successively into the city, making dreadful slaughter of the citizens. He was inclined to imagine that the besieged would necessarily surrender, seeing such an excessive number of troops armed against them, and having experienced the ruinous effects of their obstinacy: but in this he was mistaken, for the Mexicans were determined to lose their lives sooner than their liberty. He resolved therefore to make continued entries into the city, in order to compel them by hostilities to ask for that peace which they had refused. He formed two armaments of his vessels, each consisting of three brigantines and fifteen hundred small boats, ordering them to proceed towards the city, to set fire to its houses, and do the Mexicans all the mischief in their power. He gave orders to Sandoval and Alvarado to do the same on their side, while he with all his Spaniards, and eighty thousand allies, by what appears, marched as usual by the road of Iztapalapan towards the city, but without being able to gain, neither in this nor other entries which he made in those particular days, any other advantage than that of gradually reducing the number of the enemy, demolishing some of their buildings, and advancing daily some little way farther for the purpose of opening a communication with the camp of Alvarado, although then it was not in his power to effect it.

Alvarado

Alvarado and all his troops, seconded by the brigantines, had already taken possession of a temple, which stood in a little square in the road of Tlacopan, in which he maintained from that time a garrison, in spite of the violent assaults of the Mexicans. He had also taken some ditches and entrenchments, and knowing that the greatest force of the enemy was in Tlatelolco, where the king Quauhtemotzin resided, and numbers of the inhabitants of Tenochtitlan had resorted, he directed his operations towards that quarter; but although he fought frequently with all his force both by land and water, he could not advance where he wished, from the gallant opposition of the besieged. In those engagements many perished on both sides. In one of the first contests a strong and courageous warrior of Tlatelolco, disguised like one of the Otomies, with an *Ichca'upilli*, or breast-plate of cotton, and with no other arms than a shield and three stones, made his appearance, and running most swiftly towards the besiegers, he threw his three stones successively with such dexterity and with such force, that with each he knocked down a Spaniard, exciting no less indignation among them than fear and wonder in the allies. They endeavoured, by every means, to get him into their hands, but could never take him, for in every engagement he appeared differently dressed, and in each occasioned much loss to the besiegers, having as much swiftness in his feet to make his escape as force in his arms to strike his blows. The name of this celebrated hero of Tlatelolco was *Tzilacatzin*.

Alvarado, elated with some advantages obtained over the Mexicans, strove one day to push forward as far as the market-place: he had already taken several ditches and intrenchments, and among others, one which was fifty feet broad, and more than seven feet deep; but forgetting, through his success, to make it be filled up, as his general had enjoined, he advanced with forty or fifty Spaniards, and some allies. The Mexicans having observed this neglect, soon poured in numbers upon them, and defeated and put them to flight, and in repassing the ditch, killed some of the allies and made four Spaniards prisoners, who were instantly sacrificed in sight of Alvarado and his people, in the greater temple of Tlatelolco. Cortes was extremely troubled at this disaster, as it must have increased the courage and pride of the enemy, and went immediately to Tlacopan, to give a severe reprimand to Alvarado for his



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disobedience and rashness; but when he was informed how courageously he had conducted himself that day, and taken possession of the most difficult posts, he gave him only a kind admonition, and inculcated his former orders respecting the manner of making his entry.

SECT. XXIII.  
Treachery of  
the Xochi-  
milcas and  
other people.

The troops of Xochimilco, Cuitlahuac, and other cities on the lake, which were in the camp of Cortes, willing to profit by the opportunity which presented itself in the entries which the Spaniards made, to plunder the houses of the capital, availed themselves of a most abominable piece of treachery. They sent a secret embassy to king Quauh-temotzin, declaring their inviolable fidelity to the crown, and complaining of the Spaniards, because they had forced them to take arms against their natural lord; and adding, that they designed on their next entry to unite with the Mexicans against those enemies of their country, to kill them all, and thus put an end to his calamities. The king praised their resolution, appointed them the posts which they were to occupy, and also returned them gifts in reward of their pretended fidelity. Those traitors entered the city as usual, and feigning at first to turn their arms against the Spaniards, began afterwards to plunder the houses of the Mexicans, killing those who opposed them, and imprisoning the women and children; but the Mexicans soon detecting their perfidy, fell upon them with such merciless fury, that almost every one of them atoned for his treachery with his life. A great many of them were killed in the contest, and the others, who were made prisoners, were immediately sacrificed by order of the king. This treason appears to have been both designed and executed by the very lowest of the populace of those cities, who are always guilty of such meanneffes.

SECT XXIV.  
Victory of  
the Mexicans.

Twenty days were now past in which the Spaniards had made continual entries into the city. Some captains and soldiers weary of so many repeated engagements, the fruits of which appeared still very distant to them, complained to the general, and earnestly conjured him, to exert all the forces he had in one decisive blow, which would end all his dangers and fatigues. The design formed by them was to advance as far as the center of Tlatelolco, where the Mexicans had assembled all their forces, and attempt to ruin them in one night, or at least bring them to a surrender. Cortes, who well knew the immi-

nent danger of this enterprize, strove to divert them from it with all his arguments; but those being of no avail, nor being able to reject a measure which had been almost generally adopted, yielded at last to their importunities. He ordered Sandoval to join Alvarado with one hundred and fifteen Spaniards and ten horses, to put the cavalry in ambuscade, and carry off the baggage under pretence of making a departure, and abandoning the siege of the city, in order that the Mexicans, by being induced to pursue them, might be attacked by the cavalry in their rear; to aim at gaining possession, by the assistance of six brigantines, of that great ditch where Alvarado was defeated, making it be filled up and levelled; to advance not a step without leaving the road well accommodated for a retreat, and then to enter in a body into the square of the market.

On the day fixed for the general assault, Cortes marched with twenty-five horses, with all his infantry, and more than an hundred thousand allies. His brigantines, with more than three thousand canoes, formed the two wings of his army on both sides of the road. He entered the city without opposition, and quickly divided his army into three parts, that they might each, by three different roads, arrive at the same time in the square of the market. The command of the first division was given to Julian Alderete, treasurer to the king, who was the person that had most earnestly pressed Cortes to undertake this expedition; and he was ordered to proceed through the principal and largest road with seventy Spaniards, seven horses, and twenty thousand allies. Of the other two roads, which led from the great road of Tlacopan to the square of the market, the least confined, was assigned to the captains Andrea de Tapia, and George Alvarado, brother of P. de Alvarado, with eighty Spaniards, and upwards of ten thousand allies; and the narrowest and most difficult, the general charged himself with, having one hundred soldiers, and the body of the auxiliary troops, leaving the cavalry and artillery in the entry to each road. The parties entered all at one time, and engaged courageously. In the beginning the Mexicans made some resistance, but afterwards feigning cowardice, they retreated, abandoning the ditches to the Spaniards, in order that, allured by the hopes of victory, they might run themselves into greater dangers. Some Spaniards pushed forward to the streets near to the square  
of

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of the market, unwarily leaving behind them a broad ditch badly filled up, and when they were most ardently advancing, and striving who should first enter into that square, they heard the formidable sound of the horn of the god Painalton, which was blown by the priests in cases of public and pressing necessity, to excite the people to arms. Immediately such a multitude of Mexicans assembled, and poured with such fury upon the Spaniards and allies, that they threw them into confusion, and compelled them to return precipitately back towards the ditch, which was apparently filled up with faggots, and other light materials; but when they attempted to pass, it sunk with the weight and violence of the multitude. Here the sharpest conflict and greatest peril of the fugitives happened; for being unable at the same time to defend themselves and pass by swimming, they were wounded and taken by the Mexicans. Cortes, who with the usual diligence of a good general, had advanced to the ditch when his defeated troops arrived there, endeavoured to stop their flight by his cries, that their disorder and confusion might not increase the slaughter made of them by the enemy; but words are not capable of restraining the flight of a disordered multitude to whom fear adds wings. Pierced with vexation at the disasters of his people, and regardless of his own personal danger, he approached to the ditch to save all those he could. Some were got out disarmed, some wounded, and some almost drowned. He at last put them into some order to proceed towards the camp, he himself remaining behind with from twelve to twenty men to guard their rear; but they had hardly begun to march, when he found himself in a narrow pass surrounded by the enemy. That day would certainly have been his last, in spite of the extraordinary bravery with which he defended himself, and with his life all hopes would have fled of the conquest of Mexico, if the Mexicans, instead of wishing to kill him, which was frequently in their power, had not eagerly strove to take him alive, to honour their gods with the sacrifice of so illustrious a victim. They had already seized him, and were leading him off for this purpose, when his people, apprised of his being a prisoner, came speedily to relieve him. Cortes owed his life and his liberty to a soldier of his guard, called Christoval de Olea, a man of infinite courage and great dexterity in arms; who, upon another occasion, had rescued him from similar danger, and upon



on this saved him at the risk of his own life, by cutting off with one stroke of his sword, the arm of that Mexican who had taken him. Cortes was indebted in like manner for his liberty to the prince D. C. Ixtlilxochitl, and to a brave Tlascalan, named Temacatzin.

The Spaniards at last, though not without the greatest difficulty, and a number of wounds, got upon the great road of Tlacopan, when Cortes was able to rally them, and took himself the rear-guard with the cavalry; but the boldness and fury with which the Mexicans pursued them were such, that it appeared impossible for them to escape with their lives. The divisions which had entered by the other two roads, had also had terrible encounters; but, because they had been more careful in filling up the ditches, their retreat was less difficult when Cortes ordered them to march to the greater square of Tenochtitlan, where they all collected. From thence they discovered, with the utmost mortification, the smoke of copal arising from the stoves of the greater Temple, which the Mexicans were burning as a thanksgiving for the victory they had obtained; but the vexation was still stronger, when they saw the heads of some Spaniards thrown towards them by the Mexicans, to dispirit them, and when they heard a report that the commanders Alvarado and Sandoval were slain. From the square they proceeded by the road of Iztapalapan, to their camp, still pursued by a multitude of the enemy.

Alvarado and Sandoval had made an effort to enter into the square of the market by a road, which led from that of Tlacopan to Tlatelolco, and had advanced their operations so far as to a post at a little distance from that square, but upon seeing the sacrifices of the Spaniards, and having heard the Mexicans say, that Cortes and his captains were killed, they retired, though with the greatest difficulty; for the enemy, with whom they had been engaged, were joined by those who had defeated the troops of Cortes.

The loss sustained by the besiegers on that day was seven horses, a number of arms and boats, and a piece of artillery, upwards of one thousand allies, and more than sixty Spaniards, part killed in battle, part made prisoners, and immediately sacrificed in the greater temple of Tlatelolco, in sight of the troops of Alvarado. Cortes received a  
wound.

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wound in his leg, and not one of the besiegers hardly came off without being either wounded or otherwise discomfited.

The Mexicans celebrated the victory for eight successive days with illuminations and music in their temples; they spread the fame of it through all the kingdom, and sent the heads of the Spaniards through all the provinces of the empire who had rebelled against the crown, to recall them to obedience, to which many were induced. They dug the ditches again, repaired the intrenchments, and put the city, excepting the temples and houses ruined by the enemy, into the state it was in before the siege commenced.

SECT. XXV.  
Engagements  
of the brigantines and stratagems of the Mexicans.

In the mean while the Spaniards kept themselves upon the defence in their camps, curing their wounded, and recruiting themselves for future combats; but in order also that the Mexicans might not avail themselves of their idleness, Cortes ordered the brigantines to go two by two to cruize upon the lake. The Mexicans, sensible of the superiority of the Spanish vessels and arms, and though not able to equal the last, they endeavoured in some measure to match the brigantines. They had for this purpose constructed thirty large vessels, called by the Spaniards *periaguas*, well finished, and covered with thick planks, to enable them to combat in them without so much danger of being damaged. They determined to lay an ambuscade for the brigantines in one of the small woods, or thickets of reeds, formed by the floating fields of the lake, and fixed in several places large stakes under water, that the brigantines might strike upon them and founder, or at least be made less capable of defence. Having prepared their ambuscade, they sent out two or three little ordinary vessels from among the reedy places of the lake, that they might, by attracting the notice of the brigantines, lead them in their flight towards the place of the ambuscade. The Spaniards, as soon as they saw them, gave them chase, but while they were in the heat of the pursuit, the brigantines struck upon the stakes, and at the same time, the thirty large vessels came out, and attacked them on every quarter. The Spaniards were in great danger of losing not only their vessels, but their lives; but while the small guns kept the enemy in play, some expert swimmers had time to clear the stakes, upon which being freed from this hindrance,

drance, they were able to make use of their artillery to drive off the enemy.\* The brigantines were a good deal damaged, the Spaniards wounded, and of the two captains who commanded them, one was killed in the fight, and the other died in three days of his wounds. The Mexicans refitted their vessels to repeat the stratagem, but Cortes being secretly informed of the place where they lay, disposed himself a counter-ambuscade of six brigantines, and profiting by the example of the enemy, he ordered one brigantine to cruize near the place where the Mexican vessels were in ambush. Every thing succeeded as he had planned, for the Mexicans, upon seeing the brigantine, pushed out immediately from their ambuscade, and when they imagined themselves most certain of their prey, the other five brigantines came out impetuously against them, and began to play off their artillery, with the first fire of which they overset some of the enemy's vessels and routed the rest. The greater part of the Mexicans perished in the attack, some were made prisoners, and among them some nobles, whom Cortes thought immediately of employing to solicit some accommodation with the court of Mexico.

Those noble prisoners were accordingly sent to tell king Quauhtemotzin that he should reflect how much the forces of Mexico were daily diminishing, while, at the same time, those of the Spaniards were augmenting: that at the last they would be obliged to yield to superior strength; that although the Spaniards did not enter the capital to commit hostilities, in order to reduce them, it would be sufficient alone to hinder them from receiving any supplies; that they might still shun the disasters which awaited them; that if they would accede to propositions of peace, he would immediately cease all hostilities; the king should remain in quiet possession of his crown, with all his grandeur, power, and authority, which he had hitherto enjoyed; that his subjects should remain free, and masters of all their property, without any thing being demanded from his majesty, or his subjects, but the homage due to the king of Spain, as the supreme lord of all that empire, whose right had been already acknowledged by the Mexicans themselves, as founded on the ancient tradition of their ancestors; that if on the contrary he persisted in war, he would be deprived of his crown, the greater part of his vassals would lose their lives, and their

SECT. XXVI.  
Frontless embassy to the king of Mexico.



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large and beautiful city totally destroyed. The king consulted with his counsellors, with the generals of the army, and the heads of their religion; he explained to them the subject of the embassy, the state of the capital, the scarcity of provisions, the afflictions of his people, and the still greater evils which threatened them, and commanded them to speak their opinions freely. Some of them, foreseeing the issue of the war, were inclined to peace; others, instigated by hatred to the Spaniards, or the sentiments of honour, advised war. The priests, whose authority in this, as well as in other matters, was highly respected, declared strongly against peace; alledging several pretended oracles of their gods, whose indignation ought to be dreaded if they yielded to the claims of those cruel enemies of their worship, and whose protection ought to be implored with prayers and sacrifices. This opinion at last prevailed, from the superstitious fear which had seized their minds; and, accordingly, they answered the Spanish general, that they would continue the war, for they were determined to defend themselves to the last breath. If they had not been moved to this resolution by superstition, but by a sense of honour, from the love of their country and native liberty, they would not have been so blameable; for, although they saw their ruin inevitable in continuing the war, they had not much hope of bettering their fortune by means of peace. The experience of past events did not permit them to confide in the promises which were made them; on which account they must have represented to themselves, that it was more consistent with ideas of honour to die with their arms in their hands in defence of their native country and liberty, than to abandon all to the ambition of those strangers, and reduce themselves by a surrender to a wretched state of slavery.

S E C T.  
XXVII.  
Expeditions  
against the  
Malinalchefe  
and Matla-  
zincas.

Two days after the defeat of the Spaniards, some messengers sent from the city of Quauhnahuac arrived at the camp of Cortes, to complain of the great injuries done them by their neighbours the Malinalchefe, who, according to their affirmations, were going into confederacy with the Coahuicas, a very numerous nation, on purpose to destroy Quauhnahuac, because they had become the allies of the Spaniards, and afterwards to pass the mountains to make an assault, with a large army, on the camp of Cortes. This general, although he felt him-

himself rather in a state to demand assistance than to give it, nevertheless, for the reputation of the Spanish arms, and to prevent the blow which was threatened, sent the captain Andrea de Tapia with the messengers, two hundred Spaniards, ten horses, and a large number of allies, with orders to unite themselves with the troops of Quauhnhuac, and to do every thing which he thought would conduce to the service of his king, and the security of the Spaniards. Tapia executed all that was enjoined him by the general, and in a place situated between Quauhnhuac and Malinalca, had a pitched battle with the enemy, defeated, and pursued them to the foot of the mountain, on whose top the city of Malinalco stood. He could not, according to his wish, make an assault upon it, as it was inaccessible to his cavalry, but he laid the country waste, and the ten days being now expired, which was the time of absence prescribed him, he returned to the camp.

Two days after, messengers from the Otomies of the valley of Tolloccan arrived at the same camp, praying aid against the Matlatzincas, a powerful and warlike nation of the same valley, who kept them continually at war, had burned one of their settlements, made many of them prisoners, and besides had agreed with the Mexicans to attack with all their forces the camp of Cortes, by the way of the main land while the Mexicans attacked them from the city. In the entries which the Spaniards had made into Mexico, they had sometimes heard the Mexicans threaten them with the power of the Matlatzincas, and Cortes now perceived, from the account of the Otomies, the great danger he would run, if he should give the enemy an opportunity of putting their design in execution. He would not trust this expedition to any other than the brave and gallant Sandoval. This indefatigable officer, although he had been wounded on the day of the defeat of Cortes, had acted for some days as general, incessantly going round the three camps, making the best disposition for their security. Scarcely fourteen days elapsed after the defeat of Cortes, when he marched towards the valley of Tolloccan with eighteen horses, a hundred Spanish infantry, and sixty thousand allies. In their way they saw some marks of devastation committed by the Matlatzincas, and when they entered the valley, they found a settlement newly laid in ruins, and saw the troops of the enemy



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loaded with spoils, which however they quickly abandoned as soon as the Spaniards appeared, in order to be sooner ready for battle. They passed a river which crosses the valley, and stood upon its border waiting for the Spaniards. Sandoval forded it intrepidly with his army, attacked the enemy, put them to flight, and chased them for nine miles into a city, where they took refuge, leaving more than a thousand of them dead on the field. Sandoval laid siege to the city, and forced the enemy to abandon it, and betake themselves to a fortress built on the top of a steep mountain. The victorious army entered the city, and, after having plundered it, set fire to the buildings; and because it was then late in the day, and the troops wearied, they reserved the assault of the fortress till the following morning, when, however, although expecting to meet with a strong opposition, they found the fortress evacuated. Sandoval determined, as he returned, to pass through some settlements which had also declared themselves hostile to the allies of the Spaniards; but he had no occasion to make use of arms against them, for they were so intimidated at seeing so great an army, which was much augmented by numerous troops of the Otomies, that they immediately surrendered. Sandoval treated them with the greatest mildness, and requested of them that they would persuade the nation of the Malatzincas to enter into friendship with the Spaniards, by representing to them the advantages which they would derive from it; and, on the contrary, the misfortunes which might spring from their enmity to them. Those expeditions proved of the utmost importance, for four days after Sandoval had returned, several Matlatzincan, Malinalchefe, and Cohuixcan lords, arrived at the camp of Cortes, to make an excuse for their hostilities, and to establish a confederacy, which was most strengthening to the Spaniards, and eminently prejudicial to the Mexicans.

From the side of the main land, or continent, the Spaniards had no more enemies to alarm them, and Cortes had under his direction such an excessive number of troops, that he was able to have employed in the siege of Mexico more people than Xerxes sent against Greece, if from the nature of the site of that capital, such a multitude of besiegers would not have been rather a hindrance. The Mexicans, on the contrary, found themselves forsaken by their friends and their subjects,  
surrounded



surrounded by enemies, and oppressed by famine. That unfortunate capital had armed against it, the Spaniards, the kingdom of Acolhuacan, the republics of Tlascala, Huexotzinco, and Cholula, almost all the cities of the Mexican vale, and the populous nations of the Totonacas, Mixtecas, Otomies, Tlahuicas, Coahuixcas, Matlatzincas, and others; so that, besides external enemies, more than half of the empire had conspired against its ruin, and the other part stood neuter in its cause.

While the commander Sandoval was displaying his courage against the Matlatzincas, the general Chichimecatl gave a signal instance of his against the Mexicans. This famous general, when he saw that the Spaniards, after their defeat, stood upon the defensive only; resolved to make an entry into Mexico with his Tlascalans alone. He set out with this view from the camp of Alvarado, where he had constantly been stationed since the beginning of the siege, accompanying the Spaniards in all their engagements, and every where signalizing his bravery. He took on this occasion all the ditches in the road of Tlacopan, and leaving four hundred archers as a guard to the most dangerous pass, that they might secure his retreat, entered with the main body of his troops into the city, where he had a terrible encounter with the Mexicans, in which many were killed and wounded on both sides. The Mexicans flattered themselves they would have been able to have defeated them in their retreat, as they passed the ditch; but by the arms of the archers posted there on the opposite bank, he passed it safely with his Tlascalans, and returned full of glory to the camp.

In order to revenge this audacious attempt of the Tlascalans, the Mexicans one night attacked the camp of Alvarado; but having been heard in their approach by the centinels, the Spaniards and allies ran to arms. The engagement lasted three hours, during which time Cortes having heard from his camp the cannonade, and suspecting the cause of it, it appeared to him to be a proper time to make an entry into the city with his people, who were now cured of their wounds. The Mexicans, who had gone to Tlacopan, not being able to overcome the resistance made by the Spaniards, returned to the city, where they found Cortes with his army: they fought with spirit, but without any considerable advantage being gained by either party.

At

SECT.  
XXVIII.  
Memorable  
action of the  
general Chi-  
chimecatl.

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At this same time, when there was the greatest necessity of arms and ammunition, a vessel arrived at Vera Cruz, and which brought new supplies to the Spaniards, by which they were put in a state fit to continue their operations. The prince D. C. Ixtlilxochitl had advised the Spanish general not to exhaust himself in new assaults, in which his army might suffer too much; that without exposing himself to such an evil, or ruining the beautiful edifices of the capital, he would be able to make himself master of it, merely by hindering the introduction of any supplies; for the more numerous the besieged were, the sooner they would consume the few provisions they had left. Cortes was not inattentive to the acuteness of this advice, and valued it the more, as it came from a person, who from youth and intrepidity of temper, might rather have desired an occasion of displaying his bravery: but he could only adhere to it for a few days. Becoming soon weary of the tediousness of the siege, he re-commenced former hostilities, though not without first making propositions of peace to the Mexicans, drawing a comparison to them between his and their forces, and repeating the reasons which he had formerly urged. The Mexicans answered, that they would never lay down their arms until the Spaniards set off to their own country.

SECT.  
XXIX.  
Slaughter  
made in Mex-  
ico, and the  
bravery of  
some women.

Cortes now seeing the resolution of the Mexicans, after forty-five days of siege, and that the more he made overtures of peace the more obstinately they rejected them, determined not to make another step into the city, without destroying every building on either side of the road, not only to prevent the mischief which the troops suffered from the terraces, but likewise to force the besieged, by constant hostilities, to accept of his propositions. He applied, therefore, and obtained from his allies, some thousands of their villagers and peasants, furnished with instruments fit for demolishing buildings and filling up ditches. For some days following he made several entries into the city, with his Spaniards and brigantines, and upwards of a hundred and fifty thousand allies, demolishing every house, filling up all the ditches, and diminishing the number of his enemies by death, although not without the utmost peril to his own person and his people; for he was nearly made a prisoner, when he was relieved by his own soldiers, and his troops were sometimes obliged to escape the fury of the enemy  
by



by flight. Some Spaniards and allies perished in those encounters, and two brigantines were almost captured by a fleet of canoes; but a third coming up to their assistance, extricated them from the danger.

In those entries several Spanish women made themselves famous by their bravery (*q*): they voluntarily accompanied their husbands to war, and, from the continual hardships they underwent and the examples of valour which they had always before their eyes, were in a manner become soldiers: they kept guard, marched along with their husbands, armed with breast-plates of cotton, shields, and swords, and threw themselves intrepidly into the midst of the enemy, adding in spite of their sex to the number of the besiegers.

On the twenty-fourth of July they made a new entry into the city with a greater number of troops than on the preceding days; and, vigorously bent on conquest, the Spaniards at last got possession of that road by which the large road of Iztapalapan communicated with that of Tlacopan; the object which Cortes had so ardently longed to accomplish, for the free communication of his with the camp of Alvarado. They took by assault and afterwards filled up several ditches, and burned and destroyed many buildings; among others, a palace of king Quauhtemotzin, which was a vast and strong edifice surrounded with intrenchments. The Spaniards that day remained masters of three of the four quarters of the capital, the besieged being now reduced to the part of Tlatelolco, which, on account of there being more water in it, was more strong and secure.

From a Mexican woman of rank, taken in the last assault, the Spanish general learned the miserable state of the city, through the scarcity of provisions and the discord prevailing among the besieged: for the king, and his relations, and many of the nobles, were determined to die rather than surrender; while the people were discouraged and weary of the siege. Her account was confirmed by two deserters of inferior rank, who were impelled by hunger to come to the camp of Cortes.

Upon gaining this intelligence, Cortes resolved not to let a day pass without entering the city, until he took or ruined it; he therefore returned with his army on the twenty-fifth, and got possession of a large

(*q*) Those women were Maria de Estrada, whose courage we have formerly mentioned, Beatrice Bernaudéz de Valasco, Juanna Martin, Elizabetha Roderiguez, and Beatrice Palacios.  
road,



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road, in which there was so great a ditch that the whole day was not time sufficient to stop or fill it up. They demolished or burned all the houses of that quarter, in spite of the resistance of the enemy. The Mexicans, on beholding the allies busied in rasing the houses, cried out to them, "Demolish, ye traitors! lay those houses in ruin, for afterwards you will have the labour of repairing them." "We," answered the allies, "will unquestionably rebuild them, if you should be conquerors; but if you should be conquered, yourselves must rebuild them; and your enemies inhabit them." The Mexicans being unable to repair the buildings; made little fortifications of wood on the roads to annoy the besieged from them as they had done from the terraces; and to impede the motions of the Cavalry, they strowed the square with large stones; but the besiegers made use of them to fill up the ditches.

In the entry which was made on the twenty-sixth, two large ditches were taken, which had been recently dug by the Mexicans. Alvarado in his quarter was daily advancing farther into the city, and on the twenty-seventh pushed so far, taking several ditches and intrenchments, that he came at last to occupy two towers neighbouring to the palace where king Quauhtemotzin resided; but he could proceed no farther on account of the great difficulty he found from other ditches, and the gallant resistance of the enemy, who obliged him to retreat, charging furiously upon his rear-guard. Cortes having observed an extraordinary smoke which arose from those towers, made by way of signal, and suspecting that which had actually happened, entered as usual into the city, and employed the whole day in repairing every bad step. He wanted but one canal and one intrenchment to come at the square of the market; he determined to push on until he got there, which at last he effected; and then, for the first time after the commencement of the siege, his troops met with those of Alvarado, to the inexpressible satisfaction of both. Cortes entered with some cavalry into the square, and found innumerable people there, lodged in the porticos, the houses of that district not being sufficient to contain them. He mounted the temple, from whence he observed the city, and perceived, that of the eight parts of which it consisted, only one remained to be taken. He ordered his people to set fire to the lofty and beautiful towers of that temple,

where, as in the greater temple of Tenochtitlan, the idol of the god of war was adored. The Mexican populace, on seeing the great flame which arose from thence and seemed to reach the clouds, uttered deep lamentations. Cortes, moved with pity at seeing so great a body of people reduced to the utmost distresses, commanded all hostilities to cease for that day, and new proposals to be made to the besieged, if they would surrender; but they answered, that they never would, and that while but one Mexican remained alive he would continue the defence till death.

Four days having passed without hostilities, Cortes entered anew into the city, and encountered with a large croud of miserable creatures, of men, women, and young children, emaciated and almost dying of hunger; the famine being so great, that many of them lived solely upon herbs, marsh roots, insects, and even the bark of trees. The general, compassionating such wretches, ordered his troops not to do them any hurt, and passed on to the square of the market, where he found the porticos filled with people who were unarmed; a certain token of the dependency of the people and their displeasure at the obstinacy of the king and the nobles. The greater part of that day was employed in negotiations for peace; but Cortes finding that nothing would avail, ordered Alvarado to advance with an armed body through a great road where there were more than a thousand houses, while he with all his army made an attack in another quarter. The slaughter which they made of the besieged that day was so great, that there were upwards of twelve thousand killed and taken prisoners. The allies raged so cruelly against these unhappy victims, that they spared neither age nor sex, the severe orders of the general being of no effect to control them.

SECT. XXX.  
Lamentable  
state of the  
Mexicans.

The next day Cortes returned with all his forces, but commanded them to do no hurt to the besieged, moved not less by the compassion which the sight of their misery excited than the hope he had of inducing them to surrender. The Mexicans seeing such a host of enemies come against them, and among them their own subjects who had formerly served them and now threatened them with ruin, finding themselves reduced to the most distressing situation, and viewing before their eyes so many objects of affliction, having hardly a place to set a



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foot upon, except the dead bodies of their citizens, vented their anguish in horrid cries, and demanded death as the only cure for their pitch of misery. Some of the common people requested Cortes to treat with some nobles who defended an intrenchment about an accommodation: Cortes went to them, but with little hopes of success to his propositions: they happened to be some of those persons who could no longer endure the severity of the siege. When they saw Cortes advancing towards them, they called out with the accents of desperation, "If you are the child of the sun, as some do imagine, when your father is so swift that in the short space of a day he finishes his airy course, why are you so tedious in delivering us from all our calamities by death? We would die, that we may pass to heaven, where our god Huitzilopochtli waits to give us the repose and reward our fatigues and services and sacrifices to him have earned." Cortes made use of various arguments to move them to a surrender; but, as they answered that it was not in their power, nor had they any hope of persuading the king to it, he withdrew, in order to make a solicitation to the same purpose by means of an illustrious person whom he had three days before made a prisoner; he was an uncle of the king of Tezcuco; him he charged, though wounded, to go to Tlatelolco to confer on the subject with the king: but he saw no other fruits of his embassy than the clamours of the people repeated, with which they demanded their deaths. Some Mexican troops made a desperate assault on the Spaniards, but they were so enfeebled by the want of common sustenance, that their efforts made little impression, and the repulse of their enemies was too strong to be withstood.

SECT. XXXI.  
Further fruitless attempt to bring the Mexicans to a surrender.

Cortes returned the day following to the city, expecting every moment that the Mexicans would surrender; and, without allowing any hurt to be done them, he directed his way to some persons of eminence stationed in an intrenchment; who were known to him from the first time he had been at that court, and demanded of them why they would defend themselves so obstinately, being unable for more resistance, and finding themselves in such a state that with one blow he could take away every life among them. They answered, that they saw most clearly that their ruin was inevitable, and they would willingly have prevented it, but it did not lie with them to determine the point. They offered



offered however to petition the king to listen to propositions of peace. They accordingly went immediately to the palace, and in a short time after returned, saying that it was so late in the day, the king could not come, but that they did not doubt he would meet with Cortes in the same place to-morrow. There was in the center of this place a large square terrace, where the Mexicans made their theatrical representations, as we have already mentioned. Cortes ordered tapestries and little stools or chairs to be placed on this theatre, on purpose to hold the desired conference, and a good entertainment to be provided for the king and the nobility who might accompany him. The day being arrived, he sent notice to the king that he waited for him at that place; but the king returned five respectable persons, to apologise for his not coming in person, on account of an indisposition he had, and because he could not place confidence in the Spaniards. Cortes received them with the greatest benignity, gave them an elegant banquet, and sent them back to the king, to request him in Cortes's name to come to that interview without fear; as he pledged his faith to pay due respect to his royal person, that his presence was absolutely necessary, and nothing could be concluded without him; and accompanied this embassy with a present of provisions, which at this juncture was the more valuable. The ambassadors, after discovering in the course of the entertainment the great necessities they suffered, retired, and about two hours after returned, bearing Cortes a present of the finest garments, which were sent him by the king, and a repetition of his former excuses. Three days were spent in those negotiations, to no effect.

Cortes had given orders to the allies to remain without the city, as the Mexicans had requested him not to allow them to be present when he held a conference with the king; but having now lost every hope of an accommodation, he recalled all the troops of his camp, in which there were upwards of one hundred and fifty thousand men, and those also of the camp of Alvarado; and with all those forces collected he began to storm some ditches and intrenchments, which were the strongest fortifications remaining to the Mexicans, and at the same time Sandoval with his army attacked the city in the quarter of the north. Of all days this was the most unfortunate for that city, as on it the Mexican blood was most lavishly spilt; the wretched citi-

SECT.  
XXXII.  
Terrible conflict, and horrid slaughter of the Mexicans.

## BOOK X.

zens having now neither arms to repel the multitude and fury of their enemies, strength to defend themselves, nor space to fight upon; the ground of the city was covered with dead bodies, and the water of every ditch and canal purpled with blood. Nothing was to be seen but slaughter and ruin, and nothing was heard but piteous moans and cries of desperation. The allies grew still more cruel against that miserable people, and gave the Spaniards more trouble to check their fierceness and inhuman rage, than to combat with the enemy. The havoc made of the Mexicans that day was so great, that, according to the account of Cortes himself, the number of victims exceeded forty thousand.

SECT.  
XXXIII.  
Last assault,  
and taking of  
the city and  
king.

The intolerable stench arising from so many unburied dead carcases, obliged the besiegers at this time to withdraw from the city: but the day after, being the thirteenth of August, they returned, to give the last assault to that district of Tlatelolco which yet remained in the possession of the Mexicans. Cortes carried three pieces of artillery with him, assigned to each captain the place where he was to make the assault, and commanded them to make every exertion to force the besieged to throw themselves upon the water towards that place where he expected Sandoval with the brigantines, which was a sort of harbour entirely surrounded with houses, where the vessels of the merchants used to come on shore when they came to the market of Tlatelolco; and, above all, to endeavour to seize the king Quauhquemotzin, as that was sufficient to render them masters of the city, and to put an end to the war: but, before he proceeded to this decisive blow, he made new attempts to bring about an accommodation. He was induced to this, not only from compassion on so many wretched people, but likewise from the desire of making himself master of the royal treasures and those of the nobility; for if this last part of the city was taken by assault, the Mexicans, when bereft of every hope of saving their riches, might throw them into the lake, that the victors might not enjoy them; and in case that was not done, they would be seized by the allies, who, from being innumerable and more acquainted with the houses, would leave little or nothing to the Spaniards in the disorder and confusion of the assault. He, for this purpose, went to an eminence to speak with some respectable Mexicans who were well known to him, represented to them their extreme danger, and requested them to make new applications



cations to the king, to consent to that conference which he so much desired for the good of the kingdom, himself, and all his subjects; for that, if he persisted in his purpose of defending himself, he was determined not to leave a Mexican alive that day among them. Two of those nobles took upon them to persuade the king, but they were no sooner gone than they returned, accompanying the *Cihuacoatl*, or supreme magistrate of the court. He was received by Cortes with many tokens of cordiality and respect; but, with an air of sovereignty, by which it appeared he designed to shew his mind superior to all calamities, he said to Cortes, "Spare me, O general! the trouble of soliciting a conference for you with my king and lord Quauhtemotzin: he is resolved to die rather than appear before you: I cannot express to you how painful his resolution is to me; but there is no remedy: you, however, will follow the counsel you think proper, and act agreeable to your designs." Cortes told him to go and prepare the citizens for the death which they would soon suffer.

In the mean time, numerous bodies of women and children and low people came to surrender themselves to the Spaniards, hastening to extricate themselves from the impending danger; some of them, however, perished, in attempting to swim across the ditches, for want of strength. Cortes ordered no injury to be offered to those who surrendered, and stationed some Spaniards in different places, to check by their authority the barbarous cruelty of the allies; but in spite of his orders, more than fifteen thousand men, women, and children, perished in the hands of those furious and inhuman troops.

The nobles and warriors who remained obstinate in their resolution to defend themselves to the last moment, occupied the terraces of the houses and some of their paved roads. Cortes observing that it was late, and that they did not chuse to surrender, made some shots of artillery be fired upon them; but that not being sufficient, he discharged an arquebuse as a signal for the assault. All the besiegers made the attack at once, and pressed so hard upon the feeble and harrassed citizens, that finding no place within the city to fly to, to defend themselves from the fury of so numerous an enemy, many threw themselves into the water, and others came to surrender themselves to the conquerors. The Mexicans had prepared vessels, to save themselves by flight



## BOOK X.

flight from the fury of the enemy ; but Cortés having been aware of this resource for escape, had given orders to Sandoval to take possession with the brigantines of the port of Tlatelolco, and to seize every bark. In spite of the utmost diligence employed by Sandoval, many escaped, and among others, the one which carried the royal personages. This active commander having discovered it, ordered Garcia de Holguin, the captain of the swiftest brigantine, to give chase ; he made such speed that in a short time he came up with it, and the Spaniards were preparing to fire into it, when they ceased their oars and threw down their arms in token of surrender. In that large vessel, or piragua, were the king of Mexico Quauhtemotzin, the queen Tecuichpotzin his wife, Coanacotzin the king of Acolhuacan, Tetelepanquetzaltzin the king of Tlacopan, and other persons of rank. The brigantine boarded them, and the king of Mexico advancing towards the Spaniards, said to the captain, “ I am your prisoner : I have no favour to ask, but that you will shew the queen my wife and her attendants the respect due to their sex and rank.” And, taking hold of the queen by the hand, he passed with her into the brigantine. Observing afterwards, that the Spanish captain looked anxiously after the other vessels, he told him that he needed not doubt, that as soon as they all knew that their sovereign was prisoner they would come to die with him.

The captain Holguin conducted those illustrious persons to Cortes, who was then upon the terrace of a house in Tlatelolco. He received them with every mark of respect and humanity, and made them sit down. Quauhtemotzin, with much greatness of mind, told him ; “ I have done ; brave general ! in defence of myself and my subjects, every thing which the honour of my crown and regard for my people demanded ; but, as my gods have been against me, I see myself now deprived of my crown and my liberty : I am now your prisoner ; at your pleasure dispose of my person : ” and putting his hand upon a dagger which Cortes wore at his girdle, he added, “ with this dagger take that life from me which I have not lost in the defence of my kingdom.” Cortes strove to console him, with many arguments, declaring that he did not consider him as his prisoner, but the prisoner of the greatest monarch of Europe, from whose clemency he ought to trust, that not only the liberty which he had lost, but also the throne

of his illustrious ancestors, which he had so worthily occupied and defended, would be restored to him. But what solace could he have from such declarations, or what confidence could he put in the words of Cortes, who had always been his enemy, and after having seen that though the friend and protector of Montezuma, both were not sufficient to save to that monarch his crown, his liberty, or his life? He desired of Cortes, that he would do no hurt to his subjects; and Cortes in return desired of him, that he would command them all to surrender. Both gave their orders, and both were instantly obeyed. It was ordered also, that all the Mexicans should leave the city without arms or baggage; and, according to the affirmation of an eye-witness of the utmost sincerity (r), for three days and three nights all the three roads leading from the city were seen full of men, women, and children; feeble, emaciated, and dirty, who went to recover in other places of the empire. The fetid smell, which so many thousand putrid bodies emitted, was so intolerable, that it occasioned some sickness to the general of the conquerors. The houses, the streets, and the canals, were full of disfigured carcases; the ground of the city was in some places found dug up by the citizens, who searched under the earth for roots to feed on, and many trees were stripped of their bark, to supply the exigencies of famine. The general caused the dead bodies to be buried, and large quantities of wood to be burned through all the city, as much in order to purify the infected air as to celebrate his victory.

The news of the taking of the capital spread quickly through all the land; most of the provinces of the empire acknowledged obedience to Cortes, though some few for two years after continued to war upon

(r) "Es verdad y juro amen que toda la laguna y casca y barbacoas estaban llenas de cuerpos y cabezas de hombres muertos; que yo no sé de que manera lo escriba; pues en las calles y en los mismos patios de Tlatelolco no habia otras cosas y no podiamos andar, sino entre cuerpos y cabezas de Indios muertos. Yo he leído la destrucion de Jerusalem; mas si en ella hubo tanta mortandad como esta yo no lo sé," &c. Bernal Diaz, chap. 156. of his history. Such expressions, from an eye-witness of great sincerity, who was not given to exaggeration, convey to us a just idea of that horrid slaughter. We suspect that the Mexicans left the dead bodies unburied, that the stench of them might drive away the besiegers; as otherwise it is probable that, on account of their strict attention to funeral rites, they would have removed them all.



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the Spaniards. The allies returned to their native districts, joyful beyond measure with their prey, and gratified in extreme to have shaken and convulsed that court whose dominion they never could brook, and whose arms kept them in perpetual uneasiness; never perceiving, that with their own hands they had been forming the chains which were to fetter their liberty, and that when that empire was fallen, all the other nations of the region must be degraded and enslaved.

The plunder was greatly inferior to the hopes and expectations of the conquerors. The garments and apparel which they found in the capital were divided among the allies: those works of gold, silver, and feathers which, on account of the singularity of their workmanship were preserved entire, were sent as presents to the emperor Charles V. all the rest of the gold, which was melted, hardly amounted to nineteen thousand two hundred ounces (*s*); not only because the Mexicans threw the greater part into the lake (*t*), but also, because individuals both Spaniards and allies, endeavoured in plundering, to recompense themselves secretly for their hardships and toils.

The taking of that capital happened on the thirteenth of August, 1521, one hundred and ninety-six years after the foundation of it by the Aztecas, one hundred and sixty-nine years after it was erected into a monarchy, which was governed by eleven kings. The siege of Mexico, something resembling in the disasters and slaughters with which it was attended that of Jerusalem, lasted seventy-five days; during which time, of two hundred thousand and more allies, some thousands perished; and of nine hundred Spaniards, more than one hundred were killed and sacrificed. The number of the Mexicans killed is not known; but according to the account of Cortes and Bernal Diaz, and what other historians say on that subject, it appears that

(*s*) Cortes says, that the gold which was melted down weighed one hundred and thirty thousand *castellanos*, equal to nineteen thousand two hundred ounces. There were among the spoils sent to Charles V. pearls of an enormous size, most valuable gems, and some curious works of gold. The ship in which they were carried was taken by I. Florin, a famous French pirate, and the treasure was sent to the court of France; which authorised such depredations, under the not less famed than frivolous pretence, that the most Christian king was a son of Adam as well as the Catholic king.

(*t*) Bernal Diaz says, that he saw some things of gold got up out of the lake, and amongst others, a sun similar to that which Montezuma sent to Cortes when he was on the coast of Chalchiuhneacan.



the slain exceeded one hundred thousand in number. With respect to those who died by famine, or sickness occasioned by the brackish water which they drank and the infection of the air, Cortes himself affirms they were more than fifty thousand. The city appeared one complete ruin. The king of Mexico, in spite of the magnificent promises of the Spanish general, was in a few days put ignominiously to the torture, which he bore with unshaken firmness, that he might declare where the immense riches of the court and temples were deposited (*u*); and, in three years after, was hanged, together with the kings of Tezcuco and Tlacopan, on account of some suspicious circumstances in their conduct (*w*). The Mexicans, and all the nations that contributed to their ruin, notwithstanding the humane and benevolent dispositions of the Catholic kings, remained abandoned to misery and oppression, and the contempt not only of the Spaniards, but even of the lowest African slaves and their infamous descendants.

Thus, it has been said, in conducting the Spaniards, a polished nation of Europe, to overturn the rude monarchy of the Mexicans, in America, did Providence punish the latter for the injustice, cruelty, and superstition of their ancestors. But there the victors, in one year of merciless massacre, sacrificed more human victims to avarice and ambition, than the Indians during the existence of their empire devoted

(*u*) The torture given to king Quauhtemotzin, was burning his feet slowly after they were anointed with oil. An intimate friend of the king voluntarily shared his sufferings, and died under the torment. Bernal Diaz also adds, that the king of Tlacopan was tortured along with him. Cortes, in spite of his abhorrence of this act, was driven to it by the suggestions and insinuations of some avaricious Spaniards, who suspected that he had intended not to put the king to the torture in order to possess himself secretly of all the royal treasure.

(*w*) Quauhtemotzin king of Mexico, Coanacotzin king of Acolhuacan, and Tetlepanquetzaltzin king of Tlacopan, were hanged upon a tree in Izancanac, the capital of the province of Acallan, on one of the three days preceding Lent of the year 1525. The occasion of their death was, some discourse they had among themselves relative to their misfortunes, in which they insinuated how easy it would be for them if they inclined to kill Cortes and the Spaniards and to recover their liberty and their crowns. A Mexican traitor, in order to gain the favour of the Spanish general, communicated what had been said, but altered the sense of the words, and represented the casual remarks of conversation as a formed conspiracy against him. Cortes, who was then on his journey towards the province of Comajagua, with a few Spaniards almost exhausted by fatigue, and upwards of three thousand Mexicans whom he carried along with him, was persuaded there was no way of shunning the danger which threatened him, but putting the three kings to death. "This sentence," says Bernal Diaz, "was extremely unjust, and much blamed by all who were travelling with him that day." It occasioned some watchings and melancholy to Cortes.

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in chaste worship to their native gods : there the legislative art of Europe corrected the bloody policy of American tribes, and introduced the ministry of justice, by despoiling Indian caziques of their territories and tributes, torturing them for gold, and enslaving their posterity : and there the mild parental voice of the Christian religion was suborned to terrify confounded savages with the malice of a strange, and by them unprovoked, God ; and her gentle arm in violence lifted up, to raze their temples and hospitable habitations, to ruin every fond relic and revered monument of their ancestry and origin, and divorce them in anguish from the bosom of their country.

# A P P E N D I X:

CONTAINING

## D I S S E R T A T I O N S

ON

THE LAND, THE ANIMALS, AND THE INHABITANTS OF  
MEXICO:

IN WHICH

The ANCIENT HISTORY of that COUNTRY is confirmed, many POINTS of  
NATURAL HISTORY illustrated, and numerous ERRORS refuted, which  
have been published concerning AMERICA by some celebrated modern  
AUTHORS.





## I N T R O D U C T I O N.

THE Dissertations which we enter upon are both useful and necessary, to illustrate the ancient history of Mexico, and confirm the truth of many points maintained in it. The first Dissertation is requisite, to supply the defective knowledge we have respecting the first population of that new world. The second, though tedious and less calculated to interest, ought not to be omitted, in order that we may know the foundations of our chronology; and will prove useful to whoever may hereafter write the history of Mexico. All the others are equally important, to guard incautious readers from the mistakes and deceptions they would otherwise be led into, by the crowd of modern authors, who, without possessing sufficient knowledge, have not been ashamed to write on the land, the animals, and inhabitants of America.

Any person who reads the work of M. de P. must entertain a thousand ideas contrary to the sincerity of our history. He is a philosopher of the present fashion, and learned; particularly on certain subjects, where it is his misfortune to be wise; and ignorance would have been his bliss. He mingles insult and buffoonry in his discourses; enters without respect into the house of God, and sheds malevolence and invective from his pen without reverence for truth or feelings for innocence. He decides rashly, and in a magisterial tone; incessantly cites the writers of America, and declares his work to be the fruit of ten years toil. This he means should recommend him with many readers of this philosophic age, who esteem nothing but philosophy, and think those men philosophers only who satirize religion and talk in the language of impiety.

The attempt made by M. de P. is to persuade the world, that in the vast region of America all nature has degenerated; in the plants, in the animals, and in the inhabitants. The earth, incumbered with lofty mountains and rocks, and in the plains deluged with stagnant and cor-

rupted waters, or covered with woods so vast and so thick, that the sun's rays never penetrate them, is, he says, generally barren, and more abounding in poisonous plants than all the rest of the world: the air unwholesome, and more cold than that of the other continent: the climate unfavourable to the propagation of animals: all the animals native to these countries were smaller, more deformed, feeble, cowardly, and stupid, than those of the ancient world; and those which were transported there soon degenerated, as well as all the plants transplanted there from Europe: the men hardly differed from the beasts, except in figure; but even in this, many marks of degeneration appear; their colour olive, their heads extremely hard and armed with coarse thick locks, and the whole of the rest of their bodies totally destitute of hair: they are brutal and weakly, and subject to many violent disorders, occasioned by the insalubrity of their climate; but however their bodies may be formed, their minds are still more imperfect; they are so irretentive in memory, that they forget to-day what they did yesterday; they can neither reflect nor order their ideas, nor are capable of improving them, nor of thinking, because their brains circulate only gross viscous humours; they are insensible to the desires of love, or any other passion; their sloth holds them sunk in a savage state; their cowardice was made manifest at the conquest; their moral vices are correspondent to their physical defects; drunkenness, lying, and pederasty, were common in the islands, in Mexico, Peru, and over all the new continent; they lived without laws; the few arts they knew were very rude; agriculture was totally neglected by them, their architecture pitiful, and their utensils still more imperfect: in the whole new world were only two cities, Cuzco in North, and Mexico in South America, and even these constituted but miserable hamlets, &c.

This is a slight sketch of the monstrous picture which M. de P. draws of America: we do not give it at length, nor say how other authors, as ill informed or strongly prejudiced as he is, have represented it: it would waste too much time to copy their absurdities and errors; neither do we intend to make the apology of America or the Americans; that would require a very voluminous work: to write an error, two lines are sufficient; two pages, or two sheets may not be sufficient



to refute it: we shall, therefore, reply to those only which affect the truth of our history: we have chosen the work of M. de P. because in it the errors of most others are collected.

Although M. de P. is the principal author to whom we direct our animadversions, we shall have occasion to remark upon others, and, among those, on Count de Buffon. We have the utmost esteem for this celebrated author, and consider him the most diligent, the most accurate, and most eloquent naturalist of the age; perhaps there never was in the world one who made such progress in the knowledge of animals as he has done; but as the subject of the work he has undertaken is so vast and so various, it is not wonderful that he has sometimes erred, or forgot what he has written with respect to America, where nature is so inexhaustible; the mistakes, therefore, or proofs we may adduce of his errors, can have no influence on the reputation of one so deservedly respected by the learned world.

In the quotations of the History of Quadrupeds of count de Buffon, we made use of the Paris edition, in thirty-one volumes, twelve, concluded in the year 1768. In those of the work of M. de P. we have used the London edition of 1771, in three volumes, including the answer made him by Don Pernety, and reply of M. de Paw.

## DISSERTATION I.

On the Population of AMERICA, and in particular that of  
MEXICO.

DISSERT.  
I.

**N**O problem in history has been more difficult of solution than the population of America, or has occasioned a greater diversity of opinions. Ancient philosophers were not more divided concerning the supreme good than the moderns about this. To examine them all would be a fruitless labour. Neither do we intend to establish a new system, having no foundation to support one: we mean simply to offer and submit to the judgment of the learned a few conjectures, which we presume may not be useless. In order to proceed with clearness and precision, we shall divide our general subject into several parts, and explain our sentiments on each separately.

## S E C T. I.

*At what Period America began to be peopled.*

BETANCOURT, and other authors, are persuaded, that the new world began to be peopled before the deluge. That certainly might have happened, because the space of one thousand six hundred and fifty-six years elapsed from the creation of the first man until the deluge, according to the chronology of the Hebrew text of Genesis, and our common reckoning; and still more, the space of two thousand two hundred and forty-two, or two thousand two hundred and sixty-two years, according to the computation of the Seventy, was certainly enough to people all the world, as has been already demonstrated by some writers; at least after ten or twelve centuries, some of those families which scattered themselves towards the most eastern parts of Asia, might pass to that part of the world which we call at present America, whither it was, as we believe, united to the other, or separated

rated by a small arm of the sea from it. But how do those authors prove that America was peopled before the deluge? Because they say there were giants in America, and the race of giants was antideluvian. Because God, others will say, did not create the earth to remain uninhabited; and it is not probable that, after creating America for that purpose, he would leave it so long without inhabitants. Admitting the sacred text to be taken in the vulgar sense, and that the giants were men of extraordinary size and bigness, this would by no means confirm such opinion, because we read in the sacred writings also of giants posterior to the deluge. Neither does the text of Isaiah prove any thing in favour of that opinion, because although God created the earth to be inhabited, no one can divine the time prefixed by him for the execution of his designs.

The traveller Gemelli says, on the evidence of some ancient pictures of the Mexicans, that the city of Mexico was founded in the year II Calli, corresponding to the year 1325 of the creation of the world, that is, more than three hundred years before the deluge; but this erroneous absurdity was not an error of his mind, but a slip of his pen, as plainly appears from the context of his narration; wherefore he is unjustly reprobated by Mr. de P. who also accuses Siguenza of the same error, whereas we are very certain this most learned Mexican was of a very different opinion. It is true, that the city of Mexico was founded in the year II Calli, and that that was the year 1325, not of the world, however, but of the vulgar era, which the above mentioned traveller certainly meant to have written.

It is therefore useless to investigate whether America was peopled before the deluge, because on one hand although we were able to discover it, on the other we are certain, that all men perished in the deluge. We are therefore obliged always, after that general inundation, to seek for new peoplers of America. We know that some writers circumscribe the deluge to a certain part of Asia; but we know also that that opinion is contrary to the Sacred Writings, to the traditions of the Americans, and physical observations.

Dr. Siguenza believed the population of America began not long after the dispersion of nations. As we have not the manuscripts of that celebrated Mexican, we are ignorant on what foundation he rested



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I.

his opinion, which was very conformable to the tradition of the Chiapanese. Other authors, on the contrary, believe that population very modern, because the writers of the history of the Mexicans and Peruvians did not find among those nations any memory of their particular events farther back than eight centuries. But those authors confound the population of Mexico made by the Chichimecas and the Aztecas, with that which their ancestors had made many ages before in the northern countries of America, nor distinguish the Mexicans from other nations who occupied that country before them. Who can ascertain when the Otonies, Olmecas, Cuitlatecas, and Michuacanes entered into the country of Anahuac? It is not surprising that some writers of Mexico could not find any memorials more ancient than eight centuries; since, besides the loss of the greater part of the historical monuments of those nations, as they did not know how to adjust the Mexican years with ours, they frequently committed gross anachronisms; but they who had procured greater abundance of the ancient and select paintings, and knew a little better how to trace the chronology of those people, such as Seguenza and Ixtlilxochitl, found records certainly more ancient, and used them in their valuable manuscripts.

We do not doubt that the population of America has been very ancient, and more so than it may seem to have been to European authors. 1. Because the Americans wanted those arts and inventions, such, for example, as those of wax and oil for light, which, on the one hand, being very ancient in Europe and Asia, are on the other most useful, not to say necessary, and when once discovered, are never forgotten. 2. Because the polished nations of the new world, and particularly those of Mexico, preserve in their traditions and in their paintings the memory of the creation of the world, the building of the tower of Babel, the confusion of languages, and the dispersion of the people, though blended with some fables, and had no knowledge of the events which happened afterwards in Asia, in Africa, or in Europe, although many of them were so great and remarkable, that they could not easily have gone from their memories. 3. Because neither was there among the Americans any knowledge of the people of the old continent, nor among the latter any account of the passage of the former to the new world. These reasons, we presume, give some probability to our opinion.

S E C T.

## S E C T. II.

DISSERT.

I.

*Who were the Peoplers of America.*

THOSE who question the authenticity of the sacred writings say the Americans derive not their origin from Adam and Noah, and believe, or feign to believe, that as God created Adam that he might be the father of the Asiatics, also made before or after him other men, that they might be the patriarchs of the Africans, Europeans, and Americans. This does not arraign the authority of the sacred writings, says a modern author (*a*), because although Moses makes mention of no other first patriarch than Adam, it was owing to his having undertaken to write the history of no other people than the Israelites. But this is contrary to the tradition of the Americans, who in their paintings and in their hymns called themselves the descendants of those men who escaped from the general deluge. The Toltecas, Mexicans, Tlascalans, and all the other nations were agreed on this point. They all said that their ancestors came from elsewhere into those countries; they pointed out the road they had come, and even preserved the names, true or false, of those their first progenitors, who, after the confusion of languages, separated from the rest of men.

F. Nunez de la Vega, bishop of Chiapa, says, in the preface to his *Synodal Constitutions*, that in the visit which he made to his diocese towards the end of the last century, he found many ancient calendars of the Chiapanese, and an old manuscript in the language of that country, made by the Indians themselves, in which it was said, according to their ancient tradition, that a certain person named *Votan* (*b*), was present at that great building, which was made by order of his uncle, in order to mount up to heaven; that then every people was given its language, and that Votan himself was charged by God to make the division of the lands of Anahuac. The prelate adds afterwards, that there was in his time in Teopixca a great settlement of

(*a*) The author of a miserable little performance, entitled, *Le Philosophe Douceur*, printed at Berlin, in the year 1775.

(*b*) Votan is the chief of those twenty famous men whose names were given to the twenty days of the Chiapanese month.

DISSERT.  
I.

that diocese, a family of the surname of Votan, who were the reputed descendants of that ancient populator. We are not here endeavouring to give antiquity to the populator of America on the faith of the Chiapanese, but merely to shew that the Americans conceived themselves the descendants of Noah.

Of the ancient Indians of Cuba several historians of America relate, that when they were interrogated by the Spaniards concerning their origin, they answered, they had heard from their ancestors that God created the heavens, the earth, and all things; that an old man, having foreseen the deluge with which God designed to chastise the sins of men, built a large canoe, and embarked in it with his family, and many animals; that when the inundation ceased, he sent out a raven, which, because it found carrion to feed on, never returned to the canoe; that he then sent out a pigeon, which soon returned, bearing a branch of *Hoba*, a certain fruit of America, in its mouth; that when the old man saw the earth was dry, he disembarked, and having made himself some wine of the wood-grape, he became intoxicated and fell asleep; that then one of his sons made ridicule of his nakedness, and that another son piously covered him; that, upon awaking, he blessed the latter, and cursed the former. Lastly, that they drew their origin from the cursed son, and therefore went almost naked; that the Spaniards, as they were well clothed, descended perhaps from the other.

The Mexicans used to call Noah *Coxcox*, and *Teocipaëlli*; and the Michuacanese, *Tezpi*. They used to say, "That there was once a great deluge, and that Tezpi, in order to save himself from being drowned, embarked in a ship formed like an ark, with his wife, his children, and many different animals, and several seeds of fruits; and that as the water abated, he sent out that bird which bears the name of *aura*, which remained eating dead bodies, and then sent out other birds, who did not return either, except that little bird (the flower-lucker) which was much prized by them on account of the variety of the colours of its feathers, that brought a small branch with it; and from this family they all believed they drew their origin. If therefore we refer to the sacred writings, or the traditions of those Americans, we must seek for the peoplers of America among the descendants of Noah.

But



But who were they? Which of the sons of Noah was the root of the American nations? D. Siguenza, and the very ingenious Mexican Sister J. Agnes de la Cruz, believed or conjectured, that the Mexicans, and other nations of Anahuac, were the descendants of Naphtuhim, son of Mezraim, and nephew of Cham. Boturini was of opinion, that they descended not only from Naphtuhim, but likewise from his other five brothers. The learned Spaniard Arias Montano was persuaded that the Americans, and particularly the Peruvians, belonged to the posterity of Ophir, fourth son of Shem. The reasons of this author are so weak that they do not merit mention. Of those of Siguenza we shall speak presently.

The other authors, who have not been willing to carry their inquiries so far into antiquity, have sought for the origin of the Americans in different countries of the world. Their opinions are so numerous and different, it is not easy to recite them. Some think they find the ancestors of the Americans in Asia, others trace them in Africa, and others from Europe. Among those who imagine they have found them in Europe, some have supposed their ancestors the Grecians, others the Romans, others the Spaniards, others the Irish, others the Courlanders, and some the Russians. Among those who report them originally from Africa, some make them the descendants of the Egyptians, some of the Carthaginians, and some of the Numidians. But there is no where greater variety of sentiment than among those who believe the population of America due to Asia. The Israelites, the Canaanites, the Assyrians, the Phœnicians, the Persians, the Tartars, the East Indians, the Chinese, the Japanese, all have their advocates among the historians and philosophers of the two last centuries. Some, however, not content to look for the populators in the known countries of the world, draw the famous *ille Atlantida* out of the waters of the ocean, to send colonies from it to America. But this is not extraordinary; since there are authors who, in order to do wrong to no people, believe the Americans the descendants of all the nations of the world.

So great a variety and extravagance of opinion is owing to a persuasion, that to make one nation be believed to have sprung from another, no more is necessary than to find some affinity in the words of their languages, and some similarity in their rites, customs, and manners. Such

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are the foundations of the above mentioned opinions, collected and illustrated with a great shew of erudition, by the Dominican Garcia, and those learned Spaniards who reprinted his work with additions: which those who please may consult, as we have no time to refute them.

We cannot, however, dispense with the mention of the opinions of D. Siguenza, adopted also by the famous bishop F. P. Daniel Huet, as it appears to us to be the best founded. Siguenza was persuaded, that the nations which peopled the Mexican empire belonged to the posterity of Naphtuhim, and that their ancestors, having left Egypt not long after the confusion of tongues, travelled towards America. The reasons on which he grounds this opinion are mentioned only in the *Bibliotheca Mexicana*. As we are deprived of his excellent manuscripts, we can only cite them, as Eguiera did, in the *Bibliotheca* above mentioned.

Those reasons, from what appears, are first, the conformity of those American nations with the Egyptians in the construction of pyramidal edifices, and the use of hieroglyphics in the method of computing time, in their dress, and in some of their customs; and, lastly, the resemblance of the word *Teotl* of the Mexicans to the *Theuth* of the Egyptians, which occasioned bishop Huet to adopt the same sentiment with Siguenza. If this opinion is proposed as a conjecture, we shall not contradict it; but if it is offered as a truth on which we are to depend, the proofs do not appear sufficient.

Siguenza conceived that the children of Naphtuhim set out from Egypt towards America not long after the confusion of tongues; it would therefore be necessary to make the comparison of the customs of the Americans with those of the first Egyptians, not of their descendants who dwelt in Egypt many years after, and from whom the Americans are not believed to be descended. But who can imagine that the Egyptians, immediately after the dispersion of the people, began to build pyramids, and make use of hieroglyphics, and that from thenceforward they ordered and arranged their years and months in the form they had afterwards? All those things were certainly posterior to that epoch, nor was it necessary to have seen the pyramids of Egypt to make the Americans think of building such kind of edifices;

for



for the mountain's alone were sufficient to suggest them : whoever desires to build an edifice to immortalize his name, will easily think of making it in the form of a pyramid ; because no other sort of building can be raised to the same height with so little expence and trouble, as the higher it rises the fewer materials in proportion are required. Besides, the Mexican edifices were entirely different from those of Egypt. The latter were truly pyramidal, the former not ; they were composed of three, four, or five square or oblong bodies, of which the higher was less in amplitude than the lower ; those of the Egyptians were in general hollow, those of the Mexicans solid ; these served for the bases of their sanctuaries, those for the sepulchres of their kings. The temples of the Mexicans and other nations of Anahuac, were of a species so singular, that we do not know they were ever used by any other people of the world : on which account they ought to be considered as an original invention of the Toltecas or some other people more ancient than them.

In the mode of computing time, the Mexicans were much more similar to the Egyptians ; that is, of the latter Egyptians, not of the former, of whose method we know nothing. The Egyptian solar year was composed of three hundred and sixty-five days, like that of the Mexicans : the one and the other contained three hundred and sixty-five days in their months, and as the Egyptians added five days to their last month *Mejori*, so did the Mexicans to their month *Izcalli*, in which particular they agreed with the Persians ; but in other respects, there was a great difference between them ; the Egyptian year consisted of twelve months and these of thirty days, the Mexican year consisted of eighteen months and these of twenty days (*c*). The Egyptians, like many other nations of the old continent, counted by weeks ; the Mexicans by periods of five days in their civil and thirteen days in their religious year.

The Mexicans, like the Egyptians, employed hieroglyphics ; but how many other nations have done the same to conceal the mysteries of their religions ; and if the Mexicans learned hieroglyphics from the Egyptians, why had they not also the use of letters from them ? Be-

(*c*) We speak of the religious year of the Mexicans, for of their civil or astronomical year we have no account.



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cause letters, it may be said, were invented after their separation; but how is it known that before they separated they had made the invention of hieroglyphics?

The dress of the first Egyptians may have probably been the same as that of the other sons and nephews of Noah; at least we have no reason to think otherwise. Respecting the political customs of those first men we know nothing. The most ancient Egyptians, of whom we have any certain marks, were those who lived in the times of the patriarch Joseph. If we mean to make a comparison of their usages mentioned in the sacred books with those of the Mexicans, instead of any similarity, we shall find the strongest difference between them. Lastly, we do not pretend to demonstrate the opinion of Siguenza to be false, but only to shew that it is not a truth upon which we can safely rely.

The extravagant M. de P. says, that the Mexicans derive their origin from the southern Apalachites; but he neither does nor can offer any reason to make such a supposition probable; and, although it were true, the difficulty would remain still unresolved with regard to the origin of the Apalachites themselves. It is true, that author finds little difficulty, as he sometimes gives us to understand that he is not unfavourable to the romantic system of La Peyrere.

With respect to the opinion we have ventured to form ourselves, we shall explain it in the following conclusions.

I. The Americans descended from different nations, or from different families, dispersed after the confusion of tongues. No person will doubt of the truth of this, who has any knowledge of the multitude and great diversity of the American languages. In Mexico we have already found thirty-five: in South America there are still more known. In the beginning of the last century the Portuguese counted fifty in Maragnon. It is true, that there is a great affinity between some of those languages, which shews that they are sprung from the same parent, namely, the *Eudeve*, *Opata*, and *Tanabumara*, in North America, and the *Mocobi*, *Toba*, and *Abipona* in South America; but there are many others also, as different from each other as the Illyrian from the Hebrew. We can safely affirm, that there are no living or dead languages which can differ more among each other than the languages of the Mexicans, Otomies, Tarascas, Mayas,

Mayas, and Miztecas, five languages prevailing in different provinces of Mexico. It would therefore be absurd to say, that languages so different were different dialects of one original. How is it possible a nation should alter its primitive language to such a degree, or multiply its dialects so variously, that there should not be, even after many centuries, if not some words common to all, at least an affinity between them, or some traces left of their origin?

Who can ever believe what we read in the history of Acosta? That the Aztecas, or Mexicans, having arrived after their long peregrination in the kingdom of Michuacan, were allured by the agreeableness of the country, and became desirous of establishing themselves in it; but as the whole nation could not settle there, their god Huitzilopochtli consented that some of them might stay, and suggested to the others, when those who were to remain went to bathe in the lake of Pazcuaro, to steal their cloaths from them and pursue their journey; that those who bathed finding themselves robbed of their garments and fooled by their companions, were so provoked, that they not only resolved to remain there, but to adopt a new language; and that thence arose the Tarasca language. The account adopted by Gomara, and other historians, is still more incredible: that, of an old man called *Iztac Mixcoatl* and his wife *Itancueitl* were born six children, each with a different language, called *Xolhua*, *Tenoch*, *Olmecatl*, *Xicallancatl*, *Mixtecatl*, and *Otomitl*, who were the founders of as many nations, which peopled the country of Anahuac. This allegory by which the Mexicans signified that all those nations drew their origin from one common stock, was made a fable of by the above mentioned authors, from ignorance of its meaning.

II. The Americans do not derive their origin from any people now existing in the ancient world, or at least there is no grounds to affirm it. This inference is founded on the same argument with the preceding, since if the Americans descended of any of those people, it would be possible to trace their origin by some marks in their languages in spite of the antiquity of their separation: but any such traces have not been discovered hitherto, although many authors have searched with the utmost attention, as appears from the work of the Dominican Garcia. We have leisurely compared the Mexican and other American

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languages with many others which are now living, and with those which are dead, but have not been able to discover the least affinity between any of them. The resemblance between the *Teotl* of the Mexicans and the *Theos* of the Greeks, has induced us sometimes to compare those two languages, but we have never found any agreement between them. This argument is strong in respect to the Americans, as they shew great firmness and constancy in retaining their languages. The Mexicans preserve their language among the Spaniards, and the Otomies retain their difficult dialect among Spaniards and Mexicans, after two centuries and a half of communication with both.

If the Americans descended from different families dispersed after the confusion of tongues, as we believe, and have been separated since then from those others who peopled the countries of the old continent, authors will labour in vain, to seek in the language or customs of the Asiatics for the origin of the people of the new world.

## S E C T. III.

*From what part and how the inhabitants and animals passed to America.*

THIS is the second and most difficult point in the problem of the population of America, on which, as on others, authors are various in opinion. Some of them attribute the population of the new world to certain Phœnician merchants, who, in traversing the ocean, landed there by accident. Others imagine that the same people, whom they suppose to have passed from the old continent to the isle Atlantida, from thence got easily to Florida, and from that great country gradually scattered themselves over America. Others believe that they passed there from Asia, by the Straits of Anian; and others, that they were transported there from the northern regions of Europe, over some arm of the frozen sea.

Feijoo, a Spanish Benedictine, thought a few years ago to propose to the world a new system; and what is this new system? That America was united in the north to the old continent, by which both  
men



men and animals passed there. But this opinion is as ancient as Acoſta, who, one hundred and forty-four years before Feijoo, published it in his History of America: besides, it is not sufficient to solve all the difficulties respecting the passage of animals, as we shall see hereafter.

The count de Buffon, notwithstanding his great genius and pointed accuracy, contradicts himself openly in this point. He supposes the two continents united by oriental Tartary, and affirms that by it the first inhabitants passed to America, and also all those animals which have been found common to both continents; such as *buffalos*, called in Mexico *cibolos*, wolves, foxes, martins, deer, and other quadrupeds, which agree with cold climes; but that there could not be in America neither lions, tygers, camels, elephants, nor any of those eighteen species of apes which are found in the old continent; and, in short, no quadruped peculiar to hot climes could be common to both continents, because they were not able to resist the cold of northern countries, by which they must pass from one to the other world. This he repeats incessantly through all his natural history, and on this account he denies antelopes, goats, and rabbits to America. He thinks those quadrupeds American only which live in the hot countries of the new world, among which he numbers thirteen or fourteen species of American apes, divided by him into the two classes of *Sapayus* and *Sagoini*; of those, he adds, there were none in the old continent, as there were none of the eighteen species of the old continent in the new world. What then was the origin of those and other quadrupeds really American? This doubt, which occurs frequently in the natural history of that great philosopher, remains undecided until the last volume but one of the history of quadrupeds, in which he says (*d*), “As it cannot be doubted that all animals in general were created in the old continent, we must admit them to have passed from it to the new; and must suppose also, that those animals, the deer, wild-goat, and *monffettes*, instead of having degenerated like others in the new world, have on the contrary arrived at perfection there, and from the suitableness of the climate excelled their own nature. There having been so many animals found in the new world, which have no like-

(*d*) Hist. Nat. tom. xxix. Discourse on the Degeneration of Animals.

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“ nefs to any of the old world, fhews fufficiently clear, that the  
 “ origin of thofe animals which are proper to the new world ought  
 “ not to be afcribed to fimple degeneration. However great and pow-  
 “ erful we may fuppoſe its effects, we cannot reaſonably be perfuaded  
 “ that theſe animals have been originally the ſame as thoſe of the old  
 “ continent; and unqueſtionably it is more conſiſtent with reaſon to  
 “ believe, that the two continents were formerly contiguous and  
 “ united, and that thoſe ſpecies which retired into the regions of the  
 “ new world, becauſe they found its climate and productions more  
 “ agreeable to their nature, were there ſhut up and ſeparated from the  
 “ others, by the irruptions of the ſea which divided Africa from  
 “ America(e),” &c. &c. From this diſcourſe of count de Buffon we  
 conclude, 1. That there is no animal properly American; becauſe all  
 of them went from the old continent, where they were created. 2.  
 That the argument founded on the nature of the animals repugnant  
 to cold, is of no weight to ſhew that the animals could not paſs to  
 the old continent; becauſe thoſe animals which could not paſs by the  
 northern countries from their nature, could paſs by that part where  
 America and Africa were formerly united, as that author believes. 3.  
 That by the way in which the Sapayus and Sagoini paſſed to the new  
 world, in like manner could elephants, camels, lions, tygers, &c.

Omitting many other opinions unworthy of mention, we ſhall ſub-  
 mit our own; not with a view to eſtabliſh any new ſyſtem, but to  
 offer materials for other abler pens, and to illuſtrate ſome points of  
 our hiſtory.

I. The men and animals of America paſſed there from the old con-  
 tinent. This is confirmed by the ſacred writings. Moſes, who de-  
 clares Noah the common ſtock of all men after the deluge, ſays ex-  
 preſſly, that in that general inundation of the earth all its quadrupeds,

(e) We requeſt our readers to compare what the count de Buffon ſays concerning the an-  
 cient union of Africa and America, with that which he writes in the eighteenth volume, where  
 he ſpeaks of the lion. “ The American lion,” he ſays, “ cannot be deſcended from the lion  
 of the old continent, becauſe the latter only inhabits between the tropics; and nature hav-  
 ing, it appears, ſhut up all the paſſages by the north, it could not paſs from the ſouthern  
 parts of Aſia and Africa into America, as theſe two continents are ſeparated by immenſe ſeas;  
 on which account we ought to infer, that the American lion is an animal proper and peculiar  
 to the new world.”

birds, and reptiles, perished, except a few individuals which were saved in the ark, to generate their species. The repeated expressions which the sacred historian uses to signify its universality, do not permit us to doubt, that all quadrupeds, birds, and reptiles, which are in the world, descended from those few individuals which were saved from the general inundation.

II. The first peoplers of America might pass there in vessels by sea, or travel by land, or by ice. 1. They might either pass there in vessels designedly, if the arm of the sea which separated the one continent from the other was small; or be accidentally carried upon it by winds. There is not a doubt that the first peoplers of the new world might arrive there in the same manner in which, many centuries after, the pilot or mariner did to whom, in the opinion of many authors, Columbus owed the first hints which incited him to his glorious and memorable discovery (*f*). 2. They might pass there by land on the supposition of the union of the two continents. 3. They might also make that passage over the ice of some frozen arm of the sea. No person is ignorant how vast and durable the frozen parts of the northern seas are: it would not therefore be wonderful, that a strait of the sea between the two continents should have been frozen for some months, and that men had passed over it, either in search of new countries or in pursuit of wild beasts. We are, however, only mentioning what could have happened, not what positively did happen.

III. The ancestors of the nations which peopled the country of Anahuac, of which alone we are treating, might pass from the northern countries of Europe into the northern parts of America, or rather from the most eastern parts of Asia to the most westerly part of America. This conclusion is founded on the constant and general tradition of those nations, which unanimously say that their ancestors came into Anahuac from the countries of the north and north-west. This tradition is confirmed by the remains of many ancient edifices built by those people in their migrations, which we have already mentioned,

(*f*) Some authors affirm, that the mariner who gave intelligence to Columbus of the new countries in the west, was a native of Andalusia: some say he was of Biscay, and others that he was a Portuguese; others deny the fact entirely. However the case was, it is certain that history records, many instances of vessels having been driven by winds and carried many degrees out of their course,



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and the common belief of the people in the north. Besides, from Torquemada and Betancourt we have a clear proof of it. In a journey made by the Spaniards, in the year 1606, from New Mexico unto the river which they call *Tizon*, six hundred miles from that province, towards the north-west, they found there some large edifices and met with some Indians who spoke the Mexican language, from whom they were told, that a few days journey from that river towards the north was the kingdom of Tollan, and many other peopled places, from whence came those who peopled the Mexican empire; and that by the same peoplers these and other like buildings had been erected. In fact, the whole people of Anahuac have usually affirmed, that towards the north-west and the north, there were the kingdoms and provinces of Tollan, Teocolhuacan, Amaquemecan, Aztlan, Tehuajo, and Copalla, names which are all Mexican, and the discovery of which, if the population of the Spaniards should spread into those parts, will throw great light on the ancient history of Mexico. Boturini says, that in the ancient paintings of the Toltecas, was represented the migration of their ancestors through Asia and the northern countries of America, until they established themselves in the country of Tollan, and even endeavours to ascertain in his General History the route they pursued in their travel; but as he had not opportunity to compose the history which he designed, we can say no more of this matter.

Those countries in which the ancestors of those nations established themselves, being situated towards that part where the most westerly coast of America approaches to the most easterly part of Asia, it is probable that by that part they passed from the one to the other continent; either in vessels, if the strait of the sea then divided them which is there at present, according to the discoveries of the Russians, or by land, if the continents were united, as we shall presently find. The traces which those nations left of themselves from time to time, lead us to that very strait which is undoubtedly the same which was discovered by the navigators of the sixteenth century, and called by them the *Straits of Anian* (g).

(g) In the charts of America published in the last century, the strait of Anian was usually described, though with much difference in the representation of it. For some years past it has been omitted, from an opinion that the account of it was fabulous; but since the discoveries of the Russians some geographers have begun again to give it a place.

With respect to the other nations of America, as there is no tradition among them concerning the way by which their ancestors came to the new world, we can say nothing of them. It is possible, that they all passed by the same way in which the ancestors of the Mexicans passed; and yet perhaps they may have passed by some other very different route. We conjecture, that the ancestors of the nations which peopled South America went there by the way in which the animals proper to hot countries passed, and that the ancestors of those nations inhabiting all the countries which lie between Florida and the most northern part of America, passed there from the north of Europe. The difference of character which is discoverable in the three above mentioned classes of Americans, and the situation of the countries which they occupied, make us suspect that they had different origins, and that their ancestors came there by different routes; but still this is a mere suspicion and conjecture.

Some authors assign another part for the passage of the first peoplers, which is the island Atlantida; the existence of which, contradicted by Acosta, was maintained by Siguenza, by what appears from the account of Gemelli, and lately supported with great shew of erudition by the celebrated author of the American Letters. If there were not so many fables mixed with the account of that island which Plato gives in *Timeus*, the authority of so grave a philosopher might induce us to assent to his opinion. We shall, therefore, omit this contest, and come to the most difficult point of our problem.

IV. The quadrupeds and reptiles of the new world passed there by land. This fact will be made most manifest, by demonstrating the improbability and inconsistency of other opinions. The great doctor of the church Augustin, was of opinion, that the wild beasts and destructive animals which are in the islands might have been transported there by the angels. But this solution, although it cuts off every difficulty in the passage of wild beasts to the new world, would not be acceptable in the century in which we live.

The same doctor suggests three other solutions to the difficulty: the wild beasts, he says, might pass by swimming to the isles; they might be transported there by men for the sake of hunting; and they might also have been formed there by nature as they were in the beginning.

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But none of these solutions are sufficient to remove the difficulties which are in the way of the passage of the wild beasts to the new world; for as to the first, it is certain that whatever strait there was between the two continents, it is quite ridiculous to think that animals which are not destined to go into the water or accustomed to swimming, would attempt such a passage: it is true, that some might have passed by swimming, as the bears go from Corsica to France; but who would believe this of so many American apes, that are totally unfitted for swimming; or the *Perico ligero*, or sloth, which is so slow and difficult to move? Besides, what could induce so many wild animals to abandon the land and encounter the dangers of the sea?

It is not less incredible, that those animals were transported there by men in ships, especially if we suppose their arrival on the coasts of America to have been accidental and fortuitous. If such voyage was undertaken from design, they might have carried some squirrels and curious apes with them for amusement, some rabbits, hares, and *techichis*, that, after multiplying, they might serve for food, and some deer, martins, and even tygers, for their skins to clothe them; but to what purpose carry wolves, foxes, American lions, &c. which, instead of being of any use, might prove destructive to them? For the chase? But might they not have enjoyed this recreation without any injury from animals less ferocious? And if, lastly, we suppose those first peoplers so foolish as to carry such pernicious animals to new countries to hunt them, we cannot still think them to have been so mad as to take also so many species of serpents, for the pleasure of killing them afterwards.

With respect to the third solution, that God had created the animals in America, as he had created them in Asia, that would unquestionably cut off every difficulty, were it not contradictory to sacred history.

There remains another solution of the passage of beasts, which is the same that we mentioned in treating of men. It may be imagined that beasts might pass over some frozen strait of the sea; but can any person persuade himself, that several species of voracious animals should transport themselves to those regions destitute of every thing which could serve for their food; and that others, whose natures were repugnant to cold, should dare to venture, in the rigor of winter, over regions of ice?



As it is not probable that the beasts of the new world passed to it by swimming, or over ice, nor that they were transported either by men, or by angels, nor created afresh by God, we ought to believe that the quadrupeds, as well as the reptiles which are found in America, passed to it by land, and of course that the two continents were formerly united. This is the opinion of Acoſta, Grotius, Buffon, and other great men. We are far from adopting the system of count de Buffon in its full extent: he cannot persuade us, however eloquent his philosophy and great his learning, that that which is now land has once been the bed of the sea; or, that the old continent has been subject to a general inundation distinct from that of Noah, and more lasting than it. In the series of forty centuries and upwards, comprehended in the history of the sacred writings, there is no chasm or void by which we could account for this supposed inundation. In our third Dissertation we shall shew there are no grounds to believe that the new continent has suffered any inundation different from that of Noah.

There is not a doubt, however, that our planet has been subject to great vicissitudes since the deluge; ancient and modern histories confirm the truth which Ovid has sung in the name of Pythagoras:—

*Vidi ego quod fuerat quondam solidissima tellus,  
Esse fretum; vidi factas ex æquore terras.*

At present they plough those lands over which ships formerly sailed, and now they sail over lands which were formerly ploughed: earthquakes have swallowed some lands, and subterraneous fires have thrown up others: the rivers have formed new soil with their mud: the sea retreating from the shores, has lengthened the land in some places; and advancing in others, has diminished it: it has separated some territories which were formerly united, and formed new streights and gulfs. We have examples of all these revolutions in the past century. Sicily was united to the continent of Naples, as Eubœa, now the Black Sea, to Bœotia. Diodorus, Strabo, and other ancient authors, say the same thing of Spain and Africa, and affirm that by a violent irruption of the ocean upon the land between the mountains Abyla and Calpe, that communication was broken, and the Mediterranean sea was

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formed. Among the people of Ceylon there is a tradition, that a similar irruption of the sea separated their island from the peninsula of India. The same thing is believed by those of Malabar, with respect to the isles of Maldivia, and by the Malayans with respect to Sumatra. It is certain, says the count de Buffon, that in Ceylon the earth has lost thirty or forty leagues, which the sea has taken from it; on the contrary, Tongres, a place of the Low Countries, has gained thirty leagues of land from the sea. The northern part of Egypt owes its existence to inundations of the Nile (*b*). The earth which this river has brought from the inland countries of Africa, and deposited in its inundations, has formed a soil of more than twenty-five cubits of depth. In like manner, adds the above author, the province of the Yellow River in China, and that of Louisiana, have only been formed of the mud of rivers. Pliny, Seneca, Diodorus, and Strabo, report innumerable examples of similar revolutions, which we omit, that our Dissertation may not become too prolix; as also many modern revolutions, which are related in the theory of the earth of the count de Buffon, and other authors. In our America, all those who have observed with philosophic eyes the peninsula of Yucatan, do not doubt that that country has once been the bed of the sea; and, on the contrary, in the channel of Bahama many indications shew the island of Cuba to have been once united to the continent of Florida. In the strait which separates America from Asia many islands are found, which probably were the mountains belonging to that tract of land which we suppose to have been swallowed up by earthquakes; which is made more probable by the multitude of volcanos which we know of in the peninsula of Kamtschatka. We imagine, however, that the sinking of that land, and the separation of the two continents, has been occasioned by those great and extraordinary earthquakes mentioned in the histories of the Americans, which formed an æra almost as

(*b*) Faro or Farion, an island of Egypt, which, according to what Homer mentions in his *Odyssey*, was distant one day and one night's sail from the northern land of Egypt, was so near to it in the times of the celebrated Cleopatra, that it was hardly seven furlongs off: for so much was the length of the bridge which that queen ordered to be made for the Rhodians, in order to facilitate the communication between that island and the continent. Herodotus, Aristotle, Seneca, Pliny, and other ancient authors, make mention of this remarkable augmentation of the territory of Egypt.

memorable as that of the deluge. The histories of the Toltecas fix such earthquakes in the year I Tecpatl; but, as we know not to what century that belonged, we can form no conjecture of the time that great calamity happened. If a great earthquake should overwhelm the isthmus of Suez, and there should be at the same time as great a scarcity of historians as there were in the first ages after the deluge, it would be doubted in three or four hundred years after, whether Asia had ever been united by that part to Africa, and many would firmly deny it.

V. The quadrupeds and reptiles of America passed by different places from the one continent to the other. Amongst the American beasts, there are some whose natures are averse to cold; such as apes, dantes, crocodiles, &c. There are others, whose dispositions lead them to cold countries, as martens, rein-deer, and gluttons. The former could not go to America by the frigid zone, because in that case they would be acting violently against their genius, and would not survive the passage.

The apes which are in New Spain passed there certainly by South America (*i*). The center of their population is the country under the equator, and between it and the fourteenth or fifteenth degree of latitude; in proportion to the distance from the equator their numbers decrease, and beyond the tropics there are none to be found, except in some districts which from some particularity of situation are as hot as the equinoctial lands. Who, therefore, can imagine that such species of animals should have travelled to the new world through the rigid climate of the north? It may be said, that it is not improbable that they were transported by men, as they were valued for their extravagant resemblance and ridiculous imitations of men. But besides that, the argument which this forms in regard to apes, may be adduced with respect to many other quadrupeds which have no value to make them be coveted, but rather many bad qualities to make them be avoided; it is not to be believed, that men would have conducted with them so many species of apes as there are in America; and far less, some,

(*i*) Don Ferdinand d'Alba Ixtlilxochitl, an Indian well informed in the antiquities of his nation, says in his Universal History of New Spain, that there were no apes in the country of Anahuac; that the first which appeared there came from the quarter of the South, after the period of the great winds. The Tlascalans make a tale of this event, and say, that the world was destroyed once by wind, and that the few men who survived were transformed into apes.



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which instead of being agreeable, are on the contrary of a brutal aspect and ferocious disposition, namely, those called *zambos*; and, provided men had been determined to have taken two individuals at least of every species, they could never arrive either by the seas or the countries of the north, although their conductors had endeavoured to defend them from the cold. They must, therefore, have transported them from the hot countries of the old continent to the warm countries of the new world, over a sea subject to a clime not dissimilar to that of the native country of those quadrupeds, that is by the countries of the south of Asia to the south of America, over the Indian and Pacific Oceans, or from the western countries of Africa to the eastern countries of America, over the Atlantic Ocean. If men, therefore, transported those beasts from the one to the other world, they did it across those seas. But was this navigation casual or designed? If casual, how and wherefore did they conduct so many animals with them? If it was designed, and with a determined purpose to pass from the one to the other world, who gave them intelligence of it? Who shewed them the situation of those countries? Who pointed out their course? How did they venture to cross such vast seas without the compass? In what vessels? If they landed there happily, why does there not remain among the Mexicans some memory of their construction?

Besides, in the torrid zone of the new world crocodiles are common animals which require a hot or temperate clime, and live alternately on land or in sweet water; how did such animals pass there? Not by the north, certainly; because their nature is strongly averse to cold: neither were they transported by men, we may safely say; as little can we think by swimming two thousand miles through the salt waters of the ocean.

There remains no other solution, but that of admitting an ancient union between the equinoctial countries of America and those of Africa, and the continuation of the northern countries of America with those of Europe or Asia; the latter for the passage of beasts of cold climes, the former for the passage of quadrupeds and reptiles peculiar to hot climes. For the reasons we have already submitted, we are persuaded, that there was formerly a great tract of land which united the now most eastern

eastern part of Brazil to the most western part of Africa; and that all that space of land may have been sunk by some violent earthquakes, leaving only some traces of it in the isles of Cape de Verd, Fernando de Norona, Ascension, St. Matthew, and others; and many sand-banks discovered by different navigators, and in particular by de Buache, who sounded that sea with great care and exactness (*k*). Those islands and sand-banks may probably have been the highest parts of that sunken continent. In like manner we believe that the most westerly part of America was formerly united by means of a smaller continent to the most easterly part of Tartary, and perhaps America was united also by Greenland with other northern countries of Europe.

Upon the whole, from all we have said, we cannot but believe that the quadrupeds and the reptiles of the new world passed there by land, and by different parts, to that continent. All other systems are subject to heavy difficulties; even this is not without some, but they are not altogether insurmountable. The greatest consists in the apparent improbability of an earthquake so great as to sink a space of land of more than one thousand five hundred miles, which, according to our supposition, was that which united Africa to America, and sunk it so much as to the depth, observed in some of the places of that sea. But we do not ascribe that stupendous revolution to one single shock, as there are in the bowels of the earth such extensive masses of combustible matter, the inflammation of one could easily communicate to others, (in the same manner as Cassendus explains the propagation of lightning) and the violent concussion of the air, contained within those natural mines, could at once shake, agitate, and overwhelm a space of land of two or three thousand miles. This is not impossible, nor improbable, nor is history unfurnished with examples of it. The earthquake which was felt in Canada, in the year 1663, overwhelmed a chain of mountains of freestone more than three hundred miles long, the whole of that immense tract remaining changed into a plain. How great then must the convulsion have been which was occasioned by

(*k*) M. de Buache, in the year 1737, presented to the Royal Academy of Sciences of Paris the hydrographical charts of that sea, made according to his observation, which were examined and approved of by the Academy. The celebrated author of the *American Letters* has inserted a draft of those charts in the second volume of his work.

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those extraordinary and memorable earthquakes, mentioned in the histories of America, when the world was thought to have been coming to an end!

It may be objected to our system, that if beasts passed by land from the one continent to the other, it is not easy to divine the cause why some species passed there without leaving a single individual in the old continent; and, on the contrary, that some entire species should remain in the old continent, and not a single individual of them pass to America. Why, for example, did the fourteen species of apes, which are now in America, pass there, and not the eighteen species which count Buffon enumerates in Asia and Africa, although they are all of one clime, and were equally at liberty and freedom to pass? How came the sloths to pass, which are so sluggish, and not the antelopes which are so swift? If the beasts proceeded from Armenia towards America, the species destined for America must necessarily have performed a journey of six thousand miles, spreading from Armenia through Mesopotomia and Syria to Egypt, from thence through the center of Africa to the supposed space of land which formerly united the two continents, and from that, lastly, to Brasil; and although to other beasts there appears no difficulty of their having made that progress in ten, twenty, or forty years, nevertheless with respect to the sloths, it is not to be comprehended how they could, even in constant motion, execute this in less than six centuries. If we give credit to the count de Buffon, the sloths cannot advance more than a perch in an hour or six Parisian feet, wherefore, to make a progress of six thousand miles, they would require about six hundred and eighty years and more, if we believe what Maffei, Herrera, and Pison have written, who affirm, that that miserable quadruped can hardly go the length of a stonethrow in fifteen days or a fortnight.

This is what may be objected to our system, but some of the above mentioned arguments are more forcible against all the other opinions, except the one which employs the angels in the transportation of beasts. If they were men who transported beasts, why, instead of wolves and foxes, did they not carry horses, oxen, sheep, and goats? And why did not they leave a species of each individual in the old continent? If such animals are supposed to have passed by swimming,  
then



then the difficulty of the sea passage to land animals comes in the way. If all the animals are supposed to have passed, even those of South America by the north, then, instead of making a journey of six thousand miles, they must have made one of more than fifteen thousand, for which length of way their sloth would have had occasion for more than one thousand seven hundred and forty years.

We answer then to the above objections, 1. That as all the quadrupeds of the earth are not yet known, we cannot say how many are in the one or in the other continent. The count de Buffon numbers only two hundred species of quadrupeds. Bomare, who wrote a little after that author, makes them two hundred and sixty-five; but to say how many more there may be, until we have examined the inland regions of Africa, of a great part of Tartary, the country of the Amazons, North Louisiana, the countries beyond the river *Colorado*, the country of the Apaches, the Salamon isles, New Holland, &c. which countries make a considerable part of our globe. It is not wonderful that the animals of these unknown countries are still strangers to us, when those of countries which have been known, and inhabited for these two hundred and sixty years by the Europeans, are yet unnoticed by zoologists. The count de Buffon, although he is the most informed on this subject, omits some quadrupeds of Mexico, places many out of their native country, and confounds others together, as we shall shew in our Dissertation on animals. But with respect to the animals which are certainly not original in America, such as camels, elephants, and horses, several reasons may be assigned for this want. Possibly those animals did pass to the new world, but were destroyed by other wild beasts, or extirpated by some distemper. Perhaps they never did pass there. Some, such as elephants and rhinoceroses, the multiplication of which is slow, stopped in the southern parts of Asia and Africa, because they found a climate agreeable and suitable to their natures, and had not occasion therefore to go further for pastures or food. It is true, that many authors are persuaded that the great bones dug up near the river Ohio, and other places of America, have belonged to elephants, which would argue their ancient existence in that continent; but as modern zoologists are not agreed with respect to the species of quadruped to which such bones may have belonged, no argument from them can

DISSERT. I. be deduced against us (1). Lastly, other beasts did not pass to the new world, perhaps because men detained them. But however the matter may be, the passage of some beasts and not of others proves nothing against our system.

With respect to the calculation above mentioned, of what time the sloth would require to move from America to Brazil, it raises no inconvenience; for if it had occasion for more than a thousand years, on the supposition we made of the union of the two continents continuing all that time it might arrive there at last. The count de Buffon declares, that authors have exaggerated the slowness of the sloth; and Mr. Aubenton acknowledges, that it was not so slow as the turtle. Besides, it being a harmless animal, it may have been transported by men.

(1) Muller said, that those bones belonged to certain large quadrupeds, which he called *Mammouths*. The count de Buffon, trusting too much to him, computed that those quadrupeds were seven times larger than elephants. Some have believed that those bones belonged to the sea-horses, some to other sea-animals; and, lastly, some have thought they belonged to some unknown quadrupeds that are now extinct: but they may, from what appears, have belonged to giants of the human as well as of any other race.

## DISSERTATION II.

*On the Principal Epochs of the History of Mexico.*

THE different opinions of authors concerning the chronology of the history of Mexico, oblige us to examine with attention the epochs of the principal events. If we had done this in the body of our history, it would have interrupted the narration with unseasonable disputes. The variety of sentiments among writers on this head, arises from their not having adjusted the Mexican years with ours. We have laboured with great diligence to investigate the truth, and we think we have in great part succeeded, as we shall endeavour to shew in the present dissertation, which will, however, prove little interesting to those who have no taste for, or curiosity in points of chronology.

## S E C T. I.

*On the Epoch of the Arrival of the Toltecas, and other Nations in the Country of Anahuac.*

WE do not treat now of the first peoplers, but only of those nations who make a conspicuous figure in our history. Authors in the first place disagree about the order of the arrival of such nations; as the Chechemecas for example, who, according to Acosta, Gomara, and Siguenza, were the first to arrive in that country, and, according to Torquemada, the third were the fourth, if we believe Boturini. Nor are they less discordant about the arrival of every other nation.

None of them doubt that the Toltecan nation was very ancient. It appears from the histories of the Chechemecas, that they did not arrive in Anahuac until after the ruin of the Toltecas, whose buildings they met with in their travels, and remains of whom they found on the banks of the Mexican lakes, and other places. In this point Torquemada, Betancourt, and Boturini are agreed. Acosta and Gomara make no mention of the Toltecas, because perhaps those authors whom



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they consulted omitted to speak of them, as their knowledge of them was but little and obſcure.

With reſpect to the time of their arrival in Anahuac, Torquemada ſays, in book III. of his hiſtory, that it happened in the year 700 of the vulgar era; but from what he writes in book I. it appears to have happened in 648. Boturini makes them one century more ancient, as he believed that in 660 Ixtlalcuechahuac, the ſecond king of that nation; was reigning in Tula. From their pictures we know, that they left Huehuetlapallan in the year I Tecpatl; that, after having travelled one hundred and four years, they ſettled in Tollantzinco, and then in Tula; and that their monarchy commencing in the year VII Acatl laſted three hundred and eighty-four years. After comparing theſe epochs of the Toltecas with thoſe of the Chechemecas, their ſucceſſors, we are perſuaded that the departure of the former from Huehuetlapallan happened in 544, and that their monarchy began in the year 667. Whoever will trace back towards that time, the ſeries of Mexican years contraſted with Chriſtian years, ſet forth at the end of our firſt volume, will find the year 544 of the vulgar era to have been I Tecpatl, and the year 667 to have in like manner been VII Acatl. There is no reaſon to anticipate theſe epochs, nor can they be poſtpoſed without confounding thoſe of other later nations. That monarchy having begun then in 667, and laſted three hundred and eighty-four years, the end of it, and ruin of the Toltecas, ought to be fixed in the year 1051.

Between the ruin of the Toltecas and the arrival of the Chechemecas; Torquemada allows but nine years; this interval is too ſmall, becauſe the Chechemecas found, as the ſame author ſays, the edifices of the Toltecas in ruins; and it is improbable that they would have gone to ruin in only nine years. Beſides, we cannot fix the beginning of the Chechemecan monarchy in that century, without increaſing the number of their kings, or prolonging their lives immoderately, as Torquemada has done. Who can believe that Xolotl reigned a hundred and thirteen years, and lived two hundred? That Nopaltzin his ſon lived one hundred and ſeventy; that Techotlala, his great great grandſon ſhould reign one hundred and four; and Tezozomoc, his deſcendant, ſhould reign in Azcapozalco one hundred and ſixty, or one hundred

dred and eighty years? It is true, that a man of robust constitution, assisted by sobriety of life, and so mild a clime as that of Mexico, might arrive at so advanced an age; and in that country there are not a very few examples of men who have prolonged their life beyond the regular time prescribed to mortals. Calmecahua, one of the Tlascalan captains who assisted the Spaniards in the conquest of Mexico, lived one hundred and thirty years. Pedro Nieto, a Jesuit, died in the year 1536 at the age of one hundred and thirty-two years. Diego Ordoñez, a Franciscan, died in Sombrerete aged one hundred and seventeen (*m*), making preachings to the people until the last month of his life. We could make a long catalogue of those who in the two centuries past have exceeded one hundred years of life in these countries. Particularly among the Indians there are not a few who reach ninety and one hundred years, preserving to old age their hair black, their teeth firm, and their countenance fresh; but as there have been so very few who since the twenty-third century of the world have prolonged their lives to one hundred and fifty years, that they are regarded as prodigies, we cannot assent to the extravagant chronology of Torquemada, supported only perhaps on the evidence of some painting or history of the Tezcucans, and particularly as that author himself confesses that that nation kept no account of years. We believe, however, without hesitation, that the arrival of the Chechemecas in Anahuac happened in the twelfth century, and probably towards the year 1170.

Eight years had scarcely elapsed after Xolotl, the first Chechemecan king, was established in Tenajuca, when new people arrived there, conducted, as we have already said, by six chiefs. We do not doubt that these new people were the six tribes of the Xochimilcas, Tepanecas, Colhuas, Chalchese, Tlahuicas, and Tlascalans, separated from the Mexicans in Chicomoztoc, and arrived in the vale of Mexico not all at once, but in the order and distance of time we have mentioned. It is certain that when the Acolhuas arrived a few years after, they found the city of Azcapozalco already founded by the Tepanecas, and Colhuacan by the Colhuas. It is known besides, that these tribes came to that country after the Chechemecas, as their arrival happened

(*m*) Diego Ordonez lived in religion one hundred and four years, and in the priesthood almost ninety-five. In his last preaching he took leave of the people of Sombrerete with those words of St. Paul: "Bonum certamen certavi, cursum consummavi, &c."

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in that interval between the arrival of the Chechemecas and that of the Acolhuas.

There is no memory of any other people who came into Anahuac about that time, except those tribes conducted by the above mentioned chiefs. Acofta makes these tribes almost three centuries more ancient, as he says they arrived on the banks of the Mexican lake in the year 902, after a peregrination of eighty years; but this chronology does not accord well with history, from which it appears that when Xolotl arrived at the vale of Mexico with his colony of Chechemecas, he found the banks of that lake depopulated, and the arrival of this colony could not happen before the middle of the twelfth century, according to what we have said.

The year of the arrival of the Acolhuas is not known; but we do not doubt that it has been towards the end of the twelfth century, because they came a few years after the arrival of those six tribes; and besides, it is evident from history itself, that Xolotl survived their arrival some years.

The last nation, or tribe, which arrived at Anahuac was that of the Mexicans. Among so many historians consulted by us, we have not found one of a contrary opinion except Betancourt, who makes the Otomies come after them.

Acofta fixes the arrival of the Mexicans on the banks of the Mexican lake in the year 1208, because he affirms that they arrived there three hundred and six years after the Xochimilcas, and other tribes of the Nahuatlacas, who he believes arrived in 902. Torquemada, according to the calculation made by Betancourt founded on his account, dates the arrival of the Mexicans in Chapoltepec in the year 1269. An anonymous Mexican History cited by Cav. Boturini, fixes the arrival of that tribe in Tula in the year 1196, and upon that epoch it appears that several Indian historians are agreed. Besides, this chronology agrees perfectly with all the other epochs; on which account we have adopted it as the most probable, and almost certain. On this supposition it is necessary to say, that the Mexicans arrived at Tzompanco in the year 1216, and at Chapoltepec in 1245; because it is known that they stayed at Tepexic in Tula nine years, and in other places, before they arrived at Tzompanco, eleven years. In Tzompanco they sojourn-



ed seven years, and in other places, before they arrived at Chapoltepec, twenty-two years. After having been eighteen years in Chapoltepec, they passed to Acolco, in 1262, where they remained fifty-two years, and from thence they were conducted slaves to Colhuacan in 1314.

With respect to the Otomies there is a great difference of opinion among authors: some confound them with the Chechemecas, namely Acofta, Gomara, and the greater part of the Spanish authors. Torquemada, in book I. distinguishes them expressly, but in other places he confounds them together. Betancourt, after having copied the relation of Torquemada, in every thing relative to the Toltecas, the Chechemecas, and other nations, speaking of the reign of Chimalpopoca, third king of Mexico, says, that in his time the Otomies arrived in Anahuac, and established themselves principally in Xaltocan. This anecdote from Betancourt is deserving of notice; for he undoubtedly took it from the writings of Siguenza, although he does not usually depart from Torquemada, unless it is to follow that learned Mexican; but he errs in chronology when he fixes the arrival of the Otomies in the year VI Tecpatl, which he believes to have been the year 1381. He is certainly deceived, for as it appears from the chronological table put at the end of our second volume, the year 1381 was not VI. Tecpatl, but VI Calli; neither was Chimalpopoca reigning at that time, but Acamaptizin, as we shall shortly shew. If the arrival of the Otomies in the Mexican vale (not in the country of Anahuac, where they were settled many years before) happened in the year VI Tecpatl, and under the reign of Chimalpopoca, that must certainly have been in the year 1420. There being no mention of the Otomies before this epoch, and they having been found less civilised than other nations, scattered about in several provinces, and in places surrounded by other nations of different languages, inclines us to believe, that they began to live in society under the dominion of the Tepanecas exactly at that time, and afterwards under that of the Mexicans and Tlascalans. We are persuaded that on account of having found the land occupied by other nations, they could not, like the others, establish themselves all in one country, although the greater part of that nation peopled that part of land which is to the north-west, and north of the capital, where at first they lived scattered about like the wild beasts.

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The cause of the Otomies having been confounded with the Chechemecas by many historians, may be gathered from the same history. At the time the ancient Chechemecas were rendered civilized by the Toltecas and Nahuatlacas, many families of that nation abandoned themselves to a savage life in the country of the Otomies, chusing the exercise of the chase rather than the fatigues of agriculture. They retained the name of Chechemecas, and the others who were brought to civilization began to be called *Acolhuas*, honouring themselves with the name of a nation which was esteemed the most polished. Of the Otomies, those who adopted a civil life retained the name of Otomies, by which they are known in history; but the others, who were spread in the woods, and mingled with the Chechemecas, would never give up their barbarous liberty, and were by many called Chechemecas, from the name of that celebrated nation; on which account some writers, treating of those barbarians, who for more than a century after the conquest, harassed the Spaniards, distinguish the Mexican Chechemecas from the Chechemecas of the Otomies; for the one spoke the Mexican language, and the others that of the Otomies, according to the nation whence they drew their origin.

From all that we have hitherto said, we may conclude with the greatest probability possible in so obscure a subject, that the order and time of the arrival of those nations in the country of Anahuac was as follows:

The Toltecas, in the year 648.

The Chechemecas, about the year 1170.

The first Nahuatlacas, about 1178.

The Acolhuas, toward the end of the twelfth century.

The Mexicans arrived at Tula in the year 1196, at Tzompanco in the year 1216, and at Chapoltepec in the year 1245.

The Otomies entered the vale of Mexico, and began to form into societies in the year 1220.

We know well that the Tepanecas boasted of their city of Azcapozalco being so old, that according to Torquemada they counted one thousand five hundred and sixty-one years from the foundation of it to the beginning of the last century: so that they imagined it to have been founded immediately after the death of our Saviour; but  
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the error of this opinion appears manifest, from the histories of other nations, which make the Tepanecas little more ancient in Anahuac than the Mexicans, and also from the series itself of the chiefs of Azcapozalco, whose portraits were preserved unto our time in an ancient edifice of that city. They did not count more than ten princes from the foundation of their city, unto the memorable destruction of their state, occasioned by the combined arms of the Mexicans and Acolhuas, which happened, as we shall find, in the year 1425: on which account it would be necessary to allow to each of their sovereigns one hundred and forty years of reign to fill up that period.

The Totonacas, on their part, reported themselves more ancient than the Chechemecas; for the boast of antiquity is a weakness common to all nations. They relate, that having been at first, for some time, established on the banks of the Tezcucan lake; from thence they went to people those mountains, which took from them the name of Totonacapan; that there they were governed by ten lords, each of whom governed the nation precisely eighty years, until the Chechemecas having arrived in Anahuac, in the time of the second lord of that nation, named Xatoncan, at length subjected them to their dominion; and that lastly they were the subjects of the kings of Mexico. Torquemada, who relates this account of the Totonacas, in the third book of his Indian Monarchy, adds, that this is certain and confirmed by authentic histories worthy of faith; but whatever he may say, it is certain that the time of the arrival of that nation in Anahuac, neither is nor can be known, and that the story of the ten lords, who governed the nation each precisely eighty years, is only fit to amuse children.

Still less is it known when the Olmecas and Xicallancas arrived. Boturini says, that he could find neither picture nor monument concerning these nations, although he believes them more ancient than the Toltecas; but still it is unquestionable that they were not the most ancient.

We do not here make mention of any other nations, because their antiquity is absolutely unknown; but we do not doubt, considering what we have already explained and set forth, that the Chiapanec were amongst the most ancient, and perhaps the first of all those who peopled the country of Anahuac.



## S E C T. II.

*Concerning the Correspondence of the Mexican Years with ours, and the Epoch of the Foundation of Mexico.*

ALL the Mexican as well as Spanish writers, who have made mention of the Mexican chronology, are agreed respecting the method which those nations had of computing their centuries and their years, explained by us in book VI. of our history, and in the latter part of the end of vol. II. Whenever, therefore, we find the correspondence of any one Mexican year with any one Christian year, the correspondence of all the rest will easily be known. If, for example, we know that the year 1780 was the II Tecpatl, as it really was, we are certain that the year 1781 was the III Calli; the year 1782, was IV Tochtli, &c. All the difficulty consists in finding a Mexican year the correspondence of which with a Christian year is absolutely certain and indubitable; but we find this difficulty surmounted, by being assured not less from the ancient pictures of the Indians than by the testimony of Acoſta, Torquemada, Sigüenza, Betancourt, and Boturini, that the year 1519, in which the Spaniards entered into Mexico, was I Acatl, and of consequence that the year 1518 was XIII Tochtli, the year 1517 XII Calli, &c. so that there is no room for doubt of the exactness of our table, put at the end of volume II. respecting the correspondence of Mexican with Christian years. Those authors who disagree with it, have erred in their calculation, and contradicted themselves. Betancourt, in order to make us comprehend the manner which the Mexicans had of computing years, presents us with a table of Mexican years, contrasted with Christian years, from the year 1663 unto 1688, but this table is erroneous from beginning to end; for the author supposes the year 1663 to have been the year I Tochtli, which is demonstrated to be false by the continuation of our table to that year. He affirms that 1519 was a secular year; by the admission of this error, his chronology cannot but be false throughout. If the year 1519 was I Acatl, as he supposes, with other writers, we shall find, by going backwards in our table, that 1507 was not a secular year, but 1506 was. In order to confirm his-

his chronology, he adduces the testimony of his friend and fellow-countryman Siguenza, who, he says, found that the year 1684 had been IX Acatl. If this was the case, his calculation would certainly be right; but although we do not doubt his veracity in the citation of Siguenza, we have reason to believe that this learned Mexican corrected his chronology; nor could he do otherwise, when he knew that the year 1519 had been I Acatl, a certain foundation and beginning on which all the Mexican chronology ought to rest, and from which it is clearly deducible that the year 1684 had not been IX Acatl, but X Tecpatl. Torquemada, in his third book, treating of the Totonacas, says of a noble of that nation, that he was born in the year II Acatl, and that the year before 1519, in which the Spaniards arrived in that country, was, among the Mexicans, the year I Acatl. When Torquemada wrote this he was either dreaming, or absent in mind; for he knew well that the year among the Mexicans which comes after I Acatl, is not II Acatl, but II Tecpatl, and such was the year 1520, of which he speaks.

Supposing then that the year 1519 was I Acatl, and that the correspondence of the Mexican with the Christian years is known, it is not very difficult to trace back the epoch of the foundation of Mexico. All historians who have consulted the paintings of the Mexicans, or who have been informed by them by words, agree in saying, that that celebrated city was founded by the Aztecas, in the 14th century; but they differ a little as to the year. The interpreter of Mendoza's collection fixes the foundation of it in the year 1324. Gemelli, following Siguenza, makes it in 1325. Siguenza, cited by Betancourt and an anonymous Mexican, cited by Boturini, in 1327. Torquemada, according to the calculation made by Betancourt, from his account, in 1341; and Arrigo Martinez, in 1357. The Mexicans make the foundation in the year II Calli, as appears from the first painting of the collection of Mendoza and others, cited by Siguenza. It being certain, therefore, that that city was founded in the 14th century, and in the year II Calli, that cannot have been in 1324, nor in the year 1327, or 1341, or 1357, because none of those years was II Calli. If we go back from the year 1519 to the 14th century, we shall find in it two years II Calli: that is 1325, and 1377. But the foundation could not have happened in this last year; for then it would be ne-

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cessary to shorten very much the reign of the Mexican monarchs, in contradiction to the chronology of the ancient paintings. Nothing remains to be offered therefore but that that celebrated capital was founded in 1325 of the vulgar era: and this was most certainly the opinion of Siguenza; for Gemelli, who had no other instruction on this subject but that which was given him by that learned Mexican, places the foundation of this city in 1325, which he says was the year II Calli. If at first he was of a different opinion, he changed it afterwards on perceiving that it would not have agreed with that fixed principle, namely, that the year I Acatl was certainly the year 1519.

### S E C T. III.

#### *On the Chronology of the Mexican Kings.*

IT is difficult to illustrate entirely the chronology of the Mexican kings, on account of the disagreement between authors. We will avail ourselves of some certain points, to clear up those which are uncertain. In order to give our readers some idea of the diversity of opinions, it will be sufficient to present the following table, where we mark the year in which, according to Acofta, the Interpreter of Mendoza's collection, and Siguenza each of the kings began to reign.

| Acofta.       |      | The Interpreter. |      | Siguenza.    |      |
|---------------|------|------------------|------|--------------|------|
| Acamapitzin   | 1384 | -                | 1375 | 3 May        | 1361 |
| Huitzilihuitl | 1424 | -                | 1396 | 19 April     | 1403 |
| Chimalpopoca  | 1427 | -                | 1417 | 24 February  | 1414 |
| Itzcoatl      | 1437 | -                | 1427 | -            | 1427 |
| Montezuma I.  | 1449 | -                | 1440 | 13 August    | 1440 |
| Axajacatl     | 1481 | -                | 1469 | 21 November  | 1468 |
| Tizoc         | 1477 | -                | 1482 | 30 October   | 1481 |
| Ahuitzotl     | 1492 | -                | 1486 | 13 April     | 1486 |
| Montezuma II. | 1503 | -                | 1502 | 15 September | 1502 |

Acofta, and after him Arrigo Martinez, and Herrera, not only disagree with other authors in chronology, but also in the order of the kings, placing Tizoc on the throne before Axajacatl; whereas the contrary is evident, not less from the testimony of the Mexicans than that of other

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Spanish authors. Gomara perplexes the reigns of the lords of Tula with those of the kings of Colhuacan and the Mexican kings. Torquemada points out the years of both, and his chronology disagrees with that of other authors. Solis makes Montezuma II. the eleventh of the Mexican kings; but we know not how he supported so strange a paradox. De Paw, in order to shew his extravagance of genius even in this does not ennumerate more than eight kings of Mexico, but it is certain and indubitable that the Mexicans had the nine kings above mentioned, and after them Cuitlahuatzin and Quauhtemotzin. Some authors do not reckon the two last among their kings, because they reigned for so short a time; but having been lawfully elected and peaceably accepted by the nation, they have as much right to be counted among the kings of Mexico as any of their ancestors. Acosta says, he does not make mention of them because they had nothing but the name of king, as in their time the whole of the kingdom almost was subject to the Spaniards; but this is absolutely false, because when Cuitlahuatzin was elected, the Spaniards had only the province of the Totonacas under them, and they even were rather allies than subjects. When Quauhtemotzin was elected, they had added to that province five other states, and some small places in that neighbourhood; but all those states, compared with the rest of the Mexican empire, were less to it than Bologna is to the whole papal territory.

To investigate the chronology of these eleven kings, it is necessary to adopt another method, beginning with the last, and continuing in a retrograde course to the commencement of the monarchy.

**QUAUHTEMOTZIN.** This king finished his reign on the thirteenth of August, 1521, having been made prisoner by the Spaniards just as Mexico was taken. The day of his election is not known, but from the accounts of Cortes it is to be inferred, that he was elected in October or November of the preceding year; wherefore he could not have reigned more than nine or ten months.

**CUITLAHUATZIN.** This king, successor of his brother Montezuma, ascended the throne on the beginning of July, 1520, as appears by the account given by Cortes. Some Spanish authors say that he did not reign above forty days; others say, that he reigned sixty; but from that

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which Cortes heard said by a Mexican officer in the war of Quauhquechollan, it is to be concluded, that that king was alive in October. We do not therefore doubt that his reign was at least three months.

MONTEZUMA II. It is known that he reigned seventeen years and more than nine months, and that he began to reign in September, 1502, and died in the latter end of June, 1520. The reason why some authors have fixed the beginning of his reign in 1503 was, because they knew that he had reigned seventeen years, and made no account of the nine months after them.

AHUITZOTL. Acofta allows this king eleven years of reign. Martinez, twelve; Siguenza, sixteen; and Torquemada, eighteen. I believe we can trace back the years of his reign, and the time of his exaltation, from the epoch of the dedication of the greater temple. This happened, without doubt, in 1486, as several authors agree. On the other hand it appears, that king Tizoc having hardly began this building, Ahuitzotl continued and finished it, which he could not do in the same year in which he began it, nor in two or three years, it having been so vast an edifice as we know it was. Neither could he, in so short a time, have made the war which he did in countries so distant from each other, and procure that surprising number of victims which were sacrificed on that great festival. We believe, therefore, that the commencement of his reign cannot be fixed after 1482, and neither can it be anticipated without confounding the epochs of his predecessors, as we shall presently see. Having begun therefore to reign in 1482, and finished in 1502, we ought to allow him nineteen years some months, or about twenty years of reign.

TIZOC. No person doubts that the reign of this monarch was extremely short, and no author gives him more than four years and a half of life upon the throne. We could resolve the time of his reign, and that also of his predecessor, from that of Nezahualpilli, king of Acolhuacan; for that king having been so celebrated, and had so many historians at his court, we have certain accounts of his reign. Nezahualpilli died in 1516, after having reigned in Acolhuacan forty-five years and some months; the commencement of his reign therefore must be fixed in 1470. It is known also, that the eighth year of the reign of Nezahualpilli was the first of Tizoc, so that this last must

have begun his reign in 1477, and reigned four years and a half, as several historians say. Torquemada says, that he reigned less than three years; but this author contradicts himself openly, not only in this but in many other parts of his chronology, for as he adopts the above mentioned calculation of the reign of Tizoc, he ought to have fixed his death in 1480, and consequently to have given Ahuitzotl not eighteen but twenty-two years of reign.

**AXAJACATL.** It is known that this king began to reign six years before Nezahualpilli, that is, in 1464, and that he finished, as we have said, in 1477, when his successor Tizoc ascended the throne. From that it is deducible that he reigned thirteen years, as Siguenza and other historians affirm. Acofta does not give him more than eleven years, nor the interpreter of Mendoza's collection more than twelve. It is most probable that the thirteen years were not completed.

**MONTEZUMA I.** All affirm, that this famous king completed twenty-eight years on the throne. Some give him a year more, because they reckon the months which he reigned more than the twenty-eight years, another year, which has not been reckoned by others. He began therefore to reign in 1436, and finished in 1464. In his time the *Toxibumolpia*, or secular year, was celebrated, not in the sixteenth year of his reign, as Torquemada says, but in the eighteenth, or 1454.

**ITZCOATL.** Almost all historians give thirteen years of reign to this great king. Acofta and Martinez only give him twelve. The reason of this difference is the same as that above mentioned, that is, Itzcoatl not having completed the thirteen years on the throne, Acofta and Martinez paid no attention to the odd months over the twelve years, whereas the others made a complete year of them. He began to reign in 1323; he could not begin either sooner or later, for he ascended the throne a year after Maxtlaton usurped the throne of Acolhuacan. Maxtlaton reigned three years, and with him the reign of the Tepanecas finished. The following year, that is, three years after Itzcoatl had begun to reign, Nezahualcojotl was established on the throne of Acolhuacan, which had been usurped by the Tepanecas. It is known besides, that Nezahualcojotl reigned forty-three years and some months; he having finished therefore in 1470, it appears that the commencement



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ment of his reign ought to be fixed in 1426, the ruin of the Tepanecas in 1425, the beginning of the reign of Itzcoatl in 1423, and that of the tyranny of Maxtlaton in 1422.

CHIMALPOPOCA. This unhappy king was confounded by Acoſta, Martinez, and Herrera, with his nephew Acolnahuacatl, ſon of Huitzilihuitl; from whence theſe authors allow Chimalpopoca only ten years of reign, and make him die by the hands of the Tepanecas; but the contrary appears from the paintings and relations of the Indians, cited by Torquemada, and partly ſeen by ourſelves. Siguenza, by inattention, falls into a contradiction; for he ſays that Chimalpopoca was the younger brother of Huitzilihuitl: of this king he affirms, that he began to reign at eighteen years of age, and that he reigned leſs than eleven, ſo that he muſt have died before he was twenty-nine years of age; and Chimalpopoca, who immediately ſucceeded him, muſt have been at leaſt twenty-eight when he began to reign; notwithstanding Siguenza makes him aſcend the throne at forty years and upwards. In the collection of Mendoza this king is not given more than ten years of reign. Torquemada and Siguenza give him thirteen, which account is certainly the moſt probable, conſidering the ſeries of his actions and events: but Betancourt following Torquemada, makes many notable anacroniſms on this ſubject. He fixes the election of Chimalpopoca in the time of Techotlalla, king of Acolhuacan; let us ſuppoſe that it was in the laſt year of this king: Techotlalla was ſucceeded by Ixtlilxochitl, who reigned ſeven years. Ixtlilxochitl by Tezozomoc, who tyranniſed over that empire nine years, and to him Maxtlaton ſucceeded, in whoſe time Chimalpopoca died. According to thoſe ſuppoſitions adopted by Torquemada and Betancourt, we muſt give Chimalpopoca at leaſt ſixteen years of reign, reſulting from the ſeven of Ixtlilxochitl and the nine of Tizozomoc; which is contrary to their own chronology and that of other hiſtorians. If we chuſe to combine the chronology of the kings of Mexico with that of the kings of Tlatelolco, agreeable to the calculation of the above mentioned authors, there will hardly remain nineteen years to be divided between the two kings Chimalpopoca and Itzcoatl, as we ſhall afterwards find. Granting therefore thirteen years of reign to Chimalpopoca, according to the opinion of moſt hiſtorians, we ought to fix the beginning of it

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in 1410. Maxtlaton succeeded to Tizozomoc, his father, a year before the death of Chimalpopoca, that is, in 1422. Tizozomoc kept the crown of Acolhuacan nine years; having died in 1422, his tyranny began therefore in 1413. With respect to Ixtlilxochitl, the lawful king of Acolhuacan, we know that he reigned seven years until 1413, when his life, together with his crown, was taken from him by the tyrant Tizozomoc; he began therefore to reign in 1406.

HUITZILIHUITL. Respecting the number of years which this monarch reigned historians are extremely different in opinion. Siguenza says, ten years and ten months. Acofta and Martinez give him thirteen; the Interpreter, twenty-one. Toquemada attests, that among the Mexican historians whom he consulted, some give him twenty-two years and others twenty-six; but we have no doubt that the true number of years is that mentioned by the Interpreter; because we know, from the historical paintings of the Mexicans, that the thirteenth year of this king was a secular year, which, according to our chronological table, must have been the year 1402; he began therefore to reign in 1389. Having died in 1410, as appears from what we have said concerning the reign of Chimalpopoca, we ought to allow Huitzilihuitl twenty-one years of reign.

ACAMAPITZIN. Supposing the chronology of the preceding kings to be just, and the epoch of the foundation of Mexico to be established, we have little to say with regard to the reign of this king. Torquemada affirms, that the paintings and manuscript histories fix the election of Acamapitzin in the twenty-eighth year after the foundation of Mexico. He was elected therefore in 1352, or in the beginning of 1353, and his reign must have lasted thirty-seven years, or something less. The interregnum which happened after the death of this king was of four months, as Siguenza says; whereas all the others were but of a few days.

## S E C T. IV.

*Concerning the Epochs of the Events of the Conquest.*

IT is not very difficult to trace the epochs of the events of the conquest, because we find them in general mentioned by the conqueror Cortes,

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Cortes, in his letters to Charles V. but many anacronisms being committed by the Spanish historians, either because they did not consult those letters, or because they were indifferent about knowing on what days the moveable festivals happened in those years of which Cortes sometimes made mention, it is necessary to fix some points of chronology, omitting others of smaller importance, to avoid proving tedious to our readers.

The arrival of Cortes's armament on the coast of Chalchicuecan happened, as every one knows, on Holy Thursday, 1519. This was on the 21st of April, for Easter was that year on the 24th.

The entry of the Spaniards into the city of Tlascala did not happen, as Herrera and Gomera say, on the 23d of September, but on the 18th, as Bernal Diaz, Betancourt, and Solis write. This is easily demonstrated by making a calculation according to the account given by Cortes of the days which the Spaniards staid in Tlascala and Cholula, and those which they employed in their journey to Mexico. Bernal Diaz says, that before they entered Tlascala they were twenty-four days in the territories of that republic, and afterwards twenty in that city; as is also confirmed by the letters of Cortes. They entered Cholula on the 14th of October, and into Mexico on the 8th of November. Six days after Montezuma was made prisoner, as Cortes himself affirms. This general remained in the capital until the beginning of May following, at which time he went to Chempoalla, to oppose Narvaez. He assaulted and gained a victory over his enemy on the Sunday of Pentecost, which that year (1520) happened on the 27th of May. The insurrection of the Mexicans, caused by the violent proceedings of Alvarado, happened on the great festival of the month Toxcatl, which began that year on the 13th of May. Cortes returned to the capital after his victory, on the 24th of June, as every one attests. In the accounts of the events which occurred in the last days of June, and the first days of July, we find some confusion and anacronisms among historians. We have followed Cortes in his letters, which contain the most authentic account of the conquest.

The death of Montezuma appears to have happened on the 30th of June, for he died, according to Cortes, three days after he received the wound from a stone. This happened while those two machines  
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of war were constructing, of which we have made mention in our history: these were constructed on the night of the 26th of June and the day following, as is to be gathered from the account of this conqueror. We cannot fix the death of Montezuma therefore later nor sooner than the 30th, without perplexing the series of events.

The first of July we make the *noche triste*, that is, the night when the Spaniards came off defeated, for Cortes gives seven days to their journey from Mexico to Tlascala, and affirms that they entered there on the 8th of July. Diaz and Betancourt say, that the Spaniards left Mexico on the 10th, and entered on the 16th into the lands of that republic; but in this particular the greatest faith is due to Cortes. The events which happened from the 24th of June to the first of July will appear many, considering the shortness of the time: but it is not wonderful that in circumstances of such difficulty and danger actions should multiply, as the saving of lives called forth the greatest efforts.

The war made by the Spaniards in Quauhquechollan happened in the month of October, by what appears from the account of Cortes. This epoch becomes of importance to us, in order to know the time which Cuitlahuatzin reigned, for a Mexican captain, of whom Cortes gained information of the state of the court, gave him intelligence of the diligence used by that king in preparations against the Spaniards. Those who do not allow Cuitlahuatzin to have reigned more than forty days, reject that information as a falsehood; but as they alledge no reason to convince us of its falsity, we ought to believe it.

Concerning the day on which the siege of Mexico began, and the time of its duration, authors in general are mistaken. They say for the first part that the siege lasted ninety-three days; but they have not made the calculation exactly, for Cortes made the review of his troops in the great square of Tezcuco, and assigned the posts which the three divisions were to occupy on the Monday of Pentecost, in the year 1521. But although we should suppose, contrary to the truth of history, that on the same day of the review the siege was begun, there would not be ninety-three, but only eighty-five days; for that Monday happened on the 20th of May, and it is universally known that the siege terminated with the taking of the capital on the 13th of August. If they reckon the hostilities committed on the cities of the lake to

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be part of the siege, they ought to fix the beginning of the siege on the first day of January, and count not ninety-three days, but seven months to it. Cortes, who in this point merits more faith than any other historian, says expressly, that the siege commenced on the 30th of May, and lasted seventy-five days. It is true, that the letter itself of Cortes might occasion an error, for there it is given to be understood, that on the 14th of May the divisions of Alvarado and Olid were in Tacuba, from whence the siege began; but this is a manifest error in the cyphers, for it is certain that those two officers did not go to Tacuba till after the review of the troops; and we know from Cortes, and other historians, that this happened on Monday of Pentecost, the 20th of May.

Torquemada says, in book IV. cap. 46. that the Spaniards entered into Mexico, for the first time, on the 8th of November; but in chap. 14. of the same book he affirms, that this entry happened on the 22d of July; that they remained there one hundred and fifty days, ninety-five days in friendship with the Mexicans, and forty at war with them, which was occasioned by the slaughter made there by Alvarado, on the festival of the month Toxcatl, corresponding, as he believes, to our April, &c. The series of anachronisms, errors, and contradictions, contained in the chapter above cited of this author, is sufficient to give us an idea of his preposterous chronology.

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## DISSERTATION III.

*On the Land of Mexico.*

WHOEVER reads the horrid description which some Europeans give of America, or hears the injurious slander with which they speak of its soil, its climate, its plants, its animals, and inhabitants, will easily be persuaded that malice and unnatural rancour have armed their pens and their tongues, or that the new world is truly a cursed land, and destined by heaven for the punishment of malefactors. If we rest faith in count de Buffon, America is an entirely new country, scarcely arisen out of the waters which overwhelmed it (*n*), a continual marsh in its plains, a land uncultivated and covered with woods, even after having been peopled by Europeans more industrious than Americans, or incumbered with mountains that are inaccessible, and leave but a small territory for cultivation and the habitations of men; an unhappy region, lying under a sordid sky, where all the animals that have been transported from the old continent are degenerated, and those native to its clime are small, deformed, weak, and destitute of arms for their defence. If we credit Mr. de Paw (who in a great measure copies the sentiments of count de Buffon, and where he does not copy, multiplies, and exaggerates errors) *America has been in general, and is at present a very barren country*, in which all the plants of Europe have degenerated, except those which are aquatic and succulent. Its stinking soil bears a greater number of poisonous plants than all the other parts of the world. Its lands, either overloaded with mountains, or covered with woods, present nothing to the eye but a vast and barren desert; its climate is extremely unfavourable to the greater part of quadrupeds, and most of all pernicious to, men who are degenerated, debilitated, and vitiated in a surprising manner in all the parts of their organization (*m*).

(*n*) H. N. Natur. tom. vi.(*m*) Recherches Philosophiques, parte i.



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The historiographer Herrera, although in many respects judicious and moderate, when he makes a comparison of the climate and soil of Europe with America, shews himself eminently ignorant even of the first elements of geography, and utters such absurdities as would not be tolerated in a child. “ *Our hemisphere, he says, is better than the new one with respect to climate. Our pole is more embellished with stars, because it has the north to  $3\frac{1}{2}$  degrees, with many resplendent stars.* By which he supposes, first, that the southern hemisphere is new, though so many centuries are past since it has been known in Asia and Africa. Secondly, that all America belongs to the southern hemisphere, and that North America is not connected with the same pole and stars of the Europeans. *We have, he adds, another pre-eminence, which is, that the sun is seven days longer towards the tropic of Cancer than towards that of Capricorn;* as if the excess of the sun’s stay in the northern hemisphere was not the same in the new as in the old continent. It appears that our good historiographer was persuaded, that the greater love which that luminary bears to beautiful Europe was the cause of his longer stay in the northern hemisphere. A thought truly gallant, and fit for a French poem, and from whence it comes, proceeds our chronicler, that the Arctic is colder than the Antarctic part, because it enjoys less of the sun. But how can there be less of the sun enjoyed in the Arctic part, when this luminary is seven days longer in the northern hemisphere? *Our land extends from west to east, and is therefore more accommodating to human life than the other, which growing narrow from west to east, enlarges too much from one to the other pole; for the land which lengthens itself from west to east is at a more equal distance from the cold of the north, and the heat of the south.* But if the north is the region of cold, and the south that of heat, as our chronicler supposes, the equinoctial countries, according to his principles, would certainly be the best calculated for human life, from being those which are equidistant from north and south. In the other hemisphere our author concludes, there were no dogs, asses, sheep, or goats, and no lemons, oranges, figs, nor quinces, &c.

These, and other such absurd notions of several authors, are the effects of a blind and immoderate partiality to their own country, which makes them ascribe to it certain imaginary pre-eminences over all others  
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in the world. It would not be difficult to oppose to their invectives the great praises which many very celebrated Europeans, better informed than them, have bestowed on those countries; but besides that, it would be foreign to our purpose, it would be disgusting to our readers: we shall therefore content ourselves with examining in this Dissertation that which has been written against the land of America in general, or against that of Mexico in particular.

## S. E C T. I.

*On the pretended Inundation of America.*

ALMOST all that M. Buffon and M. de Paw have written against the land of America, respecting its plants, its animals, and its inhabitants, is founded on the supposition of a general inundation, different from that which happened in the time of Noah, and much more recent, on account of which that vast country remained a long time under water. From this recent inundation arises, says M. Buffon, the malignity of the climate of America, the sterility of its soil, the imperfection of its animals, and the coldness of the Americans. Nature had not had time to put her designs in execution, nor to take all her extension. The lakes and the marshes left by that inundation, according to the affirmation of M. de Paw, occasion the excessive humidity of the air which is the cause of its insalubrity, of the extraordinary multiplication of insects, of the irregularity and smallness of the quadrupeds, of the sterility of the soil, of the barrenness of the women, of the abundance of milk in the breasts of the men, of the stupidity of the Americans; and a thousand other extraordinary phenomena which he has observed much more distinctly from his closet in Berlin, than we who have passed so many years in America. These two authors, though they are agreed with respect to an inundation, differ with respect to the time of it; for M. de Paw believes it to have been much more ancient than M. Buffon does.

This supposition; however, is ill founded, and the inundation pretended to have happened to the new world is a chimera. M. de  
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Paw endeavours to support it on the testimony of Acofta, on the almost infinite number of lakes and marſhes, on the veins of heavy metals, which are found almoſt on the ſurface of the earth, on the marine bodies which are found heaped together lying in the moſt low inland places, on the deſtruction of the great quadrupeds, and, laſtly, on the unanimous tradition of the Mexicans, Peruvians, and all the ſavages from the land of Magellan to the river St. Lawrence, who all teſtify of their anceſtors on the mountains during the time the valleys were laid under water.

It is true that Acofta, in book I. chap. 25 of his hiſtory, doubts whether that which the Americans ſay of the deluge ought to be underſtood of that of Noah, or of ſome other particular one which happened in their land, as thoſe of Deucalion and Ogyges in Greece; and it appears alſo that he inclines to adhere to this opinion, which he ſays has been adopted by ſome judicious men: but, notwithſtanding, in book V. chap. 19, ſpeaking of the firſt conqueſt of the Incas, he gives us to underſtand that he firmly believed, that it ought to be underſtood of the deluge of Noah. “The pretext, (he ſays) under which they conquered and rendered themſelves maſters of the land was that of feigning that after the *universal deluge* (of which all thoſe Indians had knowledge) they had new peopled the world, ſeven of them iſſuing from the cave of Pacaritambo, and that all other men therefore ought to render them homage as their progenitors.” Acofta, therefore, knew that that tradition of the Americans reſpected the univerſal deluge, and that the fables with which it was blended had been invented by the Incas to eſtabliſh the right of their empire. What would that author have ſaid, if he had had thoſe proofs in favour of the tradition which we have? The Mexicans, as their own hiſtorians affirm, make no mention of the deluge, without commemorating alſo the confuſion of tongues and the diſperſion of the people, and thoſe three things were repreſented by them in a ſingle painting, as appears from that picture which Siguenza had from D. F. d’Alba Ixtlilxochitl, and he from his noble anceſtors, a copy of which has been given in our hiſtory. The ſame tradition has been found among the Chiapaneco, the Tlaſcalans, the people of Michuacan, of Cuba, and the Indians of the continent, with the circumſtance of a few men, with ſome animals  
having



having been saved in a vessel from the deluge, and to have set at liberty first a bird, which did not return again to the vessel, because it remained eating carrion, and afterwards another, which returned with a green branch in its mouth: this renders it evident, that they did not speak of any other deluge than that which drowned all the earth in the time of the patriarch Noah. All the circumstances which have disguised or changed this most ancient and universal tradition among nations, have either been allegories, such as those of the seven caves of the Mexicans, to signify the seven different nations which peopled the country of Anahuac, or the fictions of ignorance or ambition. None of those nations believed that men were saved upon the mountains, but in an ark or vessel, or, if possible, any one thought otherwise, it was certainly because the tradition of the deluge, after so many centuries, had been changed. It is therefore absolutely false that there was an unanimous tradition of an inundation peculiar to America, among all those people who dwelt between the land of Magellan and the river St. Lawrence.

The lakes and the marshes which appear to Mr. Buffon and Mr. de Paw incontestible marks and traces of this pretended inundation, are unquestionably the effects of the great rivers, the innumerable fountains, and the very plentiful rains of America. If those lakes and marshes had been made by that inundation, and not by the causes we have assigned, they would, after so many ages, have been consumed and dried up by the continual evaporation which the heat of the sun produces, particularly under the torrid zone; or at least they would have been considerably diminished; but no diminution is observable, except in those lakes, from which human industry has diverted the rivers and torrents which discharged themselves into them, as in those of the vale of Mexico. We have seen and observed the five principal lakes of New Spain, which are those of Tezcucó, Chalco, Cuisco, Pazcuaro, and Chapalla, and are confident that they have not been formed, nor are preserved, but by plentiful rain-waters, rivers, and fountains. All the world is acquainted, that no rains are more copious and violent, nor any rivers so great, as those of America. Why then invent inundations while we have causes at hand more natural and certain? If the lakes were proofs of an inundation, we ought rather to believe it

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to have happened in the old than in the new continent, because all the lakes of America, including even those of Canada, which are the largest, are not comparable to the Black, White, Baltic, and Caspian seas, which though vulgarly called seas, are, however, according to Buffon himself, true lakes, formed by rivers which pour into them. If to those we add the lakes of Lemano, Onega, Pleskow, and many others, extremely large, of Russia, Tartary, and other countries (*p*), we will soon discover how much they, who have so exaggerated the lakes of America, had forgotten the nature of their own continent. The lake of Chapalla, which, in the geographical maps, is honoured with the magnificent name of Mare Chapallicum, or sea of Chapalla, which we have also seen and coasted round three times, is hardly a hundred miles in circumference. But if the rivers Don, Wolga, Borysthenes, Danube, Oder, and others of the ancient continent, though less by far than the Maragnon, the river of Plata, that of Maddalena, St. Lawrence, Oroonoko, Mississippi, and others of the new world, are nevertheless extremely sufficient, according to what Buffon says, to form those lakes which are so great, that they have always been esteemed seas, what wonder is it that the monstrous rivers of America make smaller lakes and marshes? Mr. de Paw says, that those lakes appear receptacles of water, which have not yet been able to issue from those places formerly overflowed by a violent agitation given to all the terraqueous globe. The numerous volcanos of the *Andes*, or American Alps, and of the hills of Mexico, and the earthquakes which are incessantly felt in one part or other of those Alps, let us see that that land is not yet at repose even in our day. But if that violent agitation was general over the terraqueous globe, how came the lands of Peru and Mexico to be inundated, which are so highly elevated above the level of the sea, as Buffon and de Paw both confess, and not the lands of Europe, which are so very much lower? Whoever has observed the stupendous elevation of the inland countries of America, will not easily persuade himself that the water could rise so as to cover them without inundating Europe. Besides, we may also say,

(*q*) Bomare enumerates thirty-eight lakes in the cantons of Switzerland, and says, that into that of Harlem vessels of great size enter. The lake of Aral in Tartary has, according to the same author, a hundred leagues of length and fifty of breadth.

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that Vesuvius, Etna, Hecla, and the numerous volcanos of the Moluccas, the Philippine islands, and Japan, and the frequent earthquakes of those islands, and of China, Persia, Syria, Turkey, &c. let us also see that even the old world is not yet at repose in our day (r).

The veins of metals, adds de Paw, which are found in some places on the surface of the earth, appear to indicate, that the soil was once overflowed, and that the torrents carried away part of it. But would it not be better to say, that some violent eruptions of subterraneous fires, which appear manifest in the many volcanos of the Cordilleras, destroying the surface of some soils, left the veins of metals almost naked ?

The finding of marine bodies heaped together in some inland places of America, if it should prove the pretended inundation would prove still more strongly a greater inundation of the old continent; for whereas there are few places in America in which these masses of sea-shells, and other petrified marine bodies, are found; Europe, on the contrary, is almost full of petrifications of such bodies, which demonstrates with certainty that it was formerly overflowed by the sea (s). Every person knows the wonders and the calculations which several French natural philosophers have made of that immense quantity of shells which are seen in Tourain, and nobody is ignorant either that such kind of petrified marine bodies are found also in the Alps. Why then ought we to conclude, from some marine bodies having been found in some places of America, that that country suffered an inundation, and not still more confidently conclude, that Europe has suffered an inundation from such bodies having been found in still greater abundance in many places of it? If the transportation of those bodies to inland places of Europe is to be ascribed to the waters of the universal deluge,

(r) M. de Paw himself, after having made mention of Vesuvius, Etna, Hecla, and the volcanos of Liparis, speaks thus: "Amongst the great volcanos are reckoned the *Paranucan*, in the island of Java; the *Canapis*, in the island of Banda; the *Balaluan*, in the island of Sumatra. The island of Ternate has a flaming mountain, the irruptions of which are not inferior to those of Etna. Of all the islands, small and large, which compose the empire of Japan, there is not one which has not a volcano that is not more or less considerable; and also the Philippine isles, the Azores, the Cape de Verd islands, &c." Letter III. *Sur les Vicissitudes du notre Globe*.

(s) Burguet, in his *Treatise on Petrifications*, and Torribia, in his *Introduction to the Natural History of Spain*, gives us a very long account of the places of Europe and Asia, where petrified marine bodies are found.



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why ought they not to be ascribed to the same cause in America ( *t* ) ? On the contrary, if the waters of the universal deluge were not those which carried the above mentioned marine bodies into the inland places of Europe, but those of a posterior inundation : if Europe is in general, according to what Buffon says ( *u* ), a new country : if it is not long since it was covered with woods and marshes, why do we not see in Europe, and why were there not seen two thousand years ago, those stupendous effects of the inundation which those authors see in America ? Why have the animals of Europe degenerated like those of America ? Why are not the Europeans cold in constitution like the Americans ? Why are or have not the women of both the one and the other part of the world been equally barren ? Why, if Europe was overflowed like America, and more so, and for a much longer time than it, as is clearly deducible from the arguments of Buffon, has its soil remained fertile, and that of America barren ? Why are the skies of Europe so mild, those of America so inclement ? Why to Europe should all the blessings have been destined, to America all the evils ? Whoever would be better informed respecting those difficulties, may read Buffon on the inundation of Europe.

The last argument of M. de Paw is taken from the extinction or destruction of the great quadrupeds in America, which he says are the first to perish in water. This author believes that anciently there were elephants, camels, sea-horses, and other large quadrupeds in America, but that they all perished in this supposed inundation. But what person will not wonder that elephants and camels, who are so swift, should

( *t* ) One of the highest mountains of America is the *Descabezado*, situated among the alps of Chili, upwards of five hundred miles from the sea. Its perpendicular height above the level of the sea is, according to Molina, a learned and diligent historian of that kingdom, more than three miles. On the top of this very lofty mountain is found a great quantity of petrified marine bodies, which certainly could not have been carried to that stupendous height by the waters of any partial inundation, different from the deluge which happened in the time of Noah. Neither can it be said that that summit might formerly have been the bed of the sea, and gradually have been raised by subterraneous fires, bearing along with it those marine bodies ; because although this case is not improbable in some places, which we see but a little elevated above the level of the sea, and we even think it may frequently have happened, notwithstanding, in a height so extraordinary as this, it appears entirely incredible : so that those marine bodies, found on that summit, ought to be considered as unquestionable proofs and indubitable traces of the universal deluge.

( *u* ) Tom. Theorie de la Terre.

perish,

perish, and that the sloth, which is so slow, and unable to move, should escape? that they could not, as well as men, betake themselves to the mountains, either by swimming, at which they are most dexterous, or by availing themselves of the swiftness of their feet, which is so great, that in one day, according to the account of Buffon, they go one hundred and fifty miles; and yet the sloths could find leisure to ascend to the tops of the mountains, which, according to the account of the same author, can hardly move a perch in an hour? Although we should admit that such quadrupeds have been formerly in America, we are not obliged to believe that their destruction has been occasioned by the supposed inundation, because it might be ascribed to other causes very different. M. de Paw himself affirms (*x*), that if elephants were transported to America, as the Portuguese have attempted, they would meet with the same fortune with camels; that they would not propagate, although they were left in the woods to their own instinct? because the change of aliment and clime is infinitely more sensibly felt by elephants than all other quadrupeds of the largest kind. He likewise declares in another place, that the causes which operate to the destruction of those animals, that is, the quadrupeds of the new world, are difficulties of a high degree, and at the same time one of the most interesting subjects of the natural history of the terraqueous globe. Why then does he decide so positively, that the supposed inundation was the cause of their extirpation?

Buffon endeavours to persuade us of the recent inundation of America by several arguments, to which we will answer in a few words. *If this continent is as ancient as the other*, he says, speaking of America, *why have so few men been found there?* The men who have been found there cannot be called few, but in respect to the very extensive country which they have inhabited. Those who lived in societies, as the Mexicans, the natives of Michuacan, the Acolhuas, and others who occupied all that very extensive tract of the country, which lies between nine and twenty-three degrees of latitude, and two hundred and seventy-one and two hundred and ninety-four of longitude, were bodies of people as numerous as those of Europe, which we shall shew

(*x*) Recherches Philosophiques, parte i.

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in another dissertation (y). Those who lived more dispersed, formed smaller nations or tribes, because their smaller multiplication has been always a necessary effect of savage life in all countries in the world. "If savages are shepherds, says Montesquieu, they require a great country to be able to subsist in a certain number. If they are hunters, as the savages of America were, they exist in still smaller numbers, and in order to maintain themselves, form a still less populous nation."

Why returns Mr. Buffon to ask, were they almost all savage and dispersed? It is not so. How can it be said they were all savage and dispersed; whilst we know that the Mexicans, the Peruvians, and all the people subject to them, lived in societies; which, as Mr. Buffon himself confesses, were extremely numerous, and cannot be called new. The other nations continued savages, from a violent attachment to liberty or some other cause of which we are ignorant. In Asia, although it is a most ancient country, there are still many nations that are savage and dispersed. Why, he says, have those who were united in societies, hardly counted two or three hundred years since they assembled? This is another error. The Mexicans hardly counted two hundred years from the foundation of their capital; the Tlascalans something more from the establishment of their republic, but those nations, and the others subjected to them, lived in society from time immemorial, as well as the Toltecas, Acolhuas, and Michuacanese. Neither Buffon, de Paw, nor Dr. Robertson, can distinguish the establishment of those nations in Anahuac, from the settlements which they had many centuries before in the northern regions of the new world.

"Why, he again asks, were those nations who lived in society ignorant of the art of transmitting to posterity the memory of events by means of durable signs, considering that they had found the manner

(y) These arguments of the count de Buffon against the antiquity of America, are found in the sixth volume of his Natural History; but a little before, in the same volume, he says thus: "There have been discovered in Mexico and Peru, civilized men, and cultivated people, subject to laws, and governed by kings; they possessed industry, arts, and a species of religion; they lived in cities in which order and government were maintained under the authority of a sovereign. These people, are certainly very numerous, and cannot be said to be new," &c.

"of



“ of communicating together at a distance by means of knots on cords ?” What then were the pictures and characters of the Mexicans, and the other polished nations of Anahuac, if not durable signs, destined to perpetuate the memory of events ? See what Acoſta has ſaid on this ſubject, in the viith book of chap. 7. of his hiſtory, and what we ſay in our diſſertation on the culture of the Mexicans.

Why, he continues, had they not domeſticated animals, nor employed any other than the Llama (z) and Paco, which were not domeſtic, faithful, and docile, like ours ? Be cauſe there were no others which could be domeſticated. Does Mr. Buffon think that they ſhould have domeſticated tygers, *Pume*, wolves, and other ſuch wild beaſts ? M. de Paw reproaches the Americans for their little induſtry, in not having employed the rein-deer as the Laplanders have ; but thoſe animals were not to be found but in countries extremely diſtant from Mexico ; and the ſavages in whoſe lands thoſe animals were found, would not make uſe of them, be cauſe they had no occaſion for them, or it did not come into their minds to domeſticate them. Beſides, the propoſition of Mr. Buffon taken in ſo general a ſenſe, is certainly falſe ; as he himſelf ſays that the *alco*, or *tecbiche*, a quadruped ſimilar to a little dog, which is common to both Americas, was domeſticated by the Indians. In the ſame manner the Mexicans domeſticated rabbits, ducks, turkeys, and other animals.

“ Laſtly, their arts, concludes Mr. Buffon, were as rude as their ſociety, their talents inferior, their ideas not yet developed, their organs rough, and their language barbarous :” the errors contained in thoſe words we ſhall effectually refute in the following diſſertations.

We muſt, therefore, upon the whole, deny that pretended inundation, as one of thoſe philoſophical chimeras invented by the unquiet geniuses of our century : ſince among the Americans there has been no memory of any other inundation than that univerſal deluge of which the Scriptures make mention. We would, on the contrary, ſay, that if it was true that the deluge of Noah did not overflow the whole earth,

(z) Llama, not Lama was, according to what Acoſta ſays, the generic name of the four ſpecies of quadrupeds of that kind ; but at preſent it is uſed only to ſignify the one which the Spaniards called *Carnus*, that is, the ram of Peru. The other three ſpecies are the *Paco*, the *Guaraco* or *Huannaco*, and the *Vicugna*. The name Llama is pronounced *Lyama*.

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no country might be sooner supposed to have been exempted from that calamity than Mexico; for besides its great elevation above the level of the sea, there is no inland country where petrified marine bodies are more rare.

## S E C T. II.

### *On the Climate of Mexico.*

IF we were to employ ourselves to refute all the absurd notions which M. de Paw has written against the climate of America, a large volume, instead of a dissertation, would be necessary. Let it suffice to say, he has collected all that has been said by several authors, right or wrong, against different particular countries of the New World, in order to present his readers with an assemblage of fictions that is monstrous and horrid, without considering, that if we were to follow his steps, and undertook to make a similar representation of the different countries of which the old continent is composed, (which would not be difficult) we would make a description still more hideous than his; but as it would be foreign to our purpose we will confine ourselves to treat of the climate of Mexico.

This country, as it is extremely extensive, and divided into so many provinces, different in their situation, is necessarily subjected to a variety of climates. Some of its lands, such as the maritime, are hot, and in general moist and unhealthy; others are like all inland places, temperate, dry, and healthy. The latter are extremely high, the former very low. In some the south wind, in others the east, and in others the north wind prevails. The greatest cold of any of the inhabited places, does not equal that of France or even Castile; nor can the greatest heat be compared to that of Africa, or the dog-days in many countries of Europe. The difference between winter and summer is so little in any part, that the most delicate persons wear the same cloaths in August and January. This and a good deal more which we have already said, respecting the mildness and sweetness of that climate is so notorious, that there is no need of arguments to support it.

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M. de Paw in order to demonstrate the malignity of the American climate, adduces first the smallness and irregularity of the animals of America. Secondly, the size and enormous multiplication of the insects, and other little animals. Thirdly, the diseases of the Americans, and particularly the venereal disorder. Fourthly, the defects of their natural constitution. Fifthly, the excess of cold in the countries of America, in comparison of those of the old continent, situated at an equal distance from the equator.

But this supposed smallness and less ferocity of the American animals, of which we shall treat hereafter, instead of the malignity, demonstrate the mildness and bounty of the clime, if we give credit to Buffon, at whose fountain Sig. de Paw has drank, and of whose testimony he has availed himself against Don Pernetty. Buffon who in many places of his Natural History produces the smallness of the American animals as a certain argument of the malignity of the climate of America; in treating afterwards of savage animals, in tom. II. speaks thus: "As all things, even the most free creatures, are subject to natural laws, and animals as well as men are subjected to the influence of climate and soil, it appears that the same causes which have civilized and polished the human species in our climates, may have likewise produced similar effects upon other species. The wolf, which is perhaps the fiercest of all the quadrupeds of the temperate zone, is however incomparably less terrible than the tyger, the lion, and the panther of the torrid zone; and the white bear and hyena of the frigid zone. In America, where the air and the earth are more mild than those of Africa, the tyger, the lion, and the panther, are not terrible but in the name. They have degenerated, if fierceness joined to cruelty, made their nature; or, to speak more properly, they have only suffered the influence of the climate: under a milder sky their nature also has become more mild. From climes which are immoderate in their temperature are obtained drugs, perfumes, poisons, and all those plants whose qualities are strong. The temperate earth on the contrary, produces only things which are temperate; the mildest herbs, the most wholesome pulse, the sweetest fruits, the most quiet animals, and the most humane men are the natives of this happy clime. As the earth makes the  
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plants, the earth and plants make animals; the earth, the plants, and the animals make man. The physical qualities of man, and the animals which feed on other animals, depend, though more remotely, on the same causes, which influence their dispositions and customs. This is the greatest proof and demonstration, that in temperate climes every thing becomes temperate, and that in intemperate climes every thing is excessive; and that size and form which appear fixed and determinate qualities, depend notwithstanding, like the relative qualities, on the influence of climate. The size of our quadrupeds cannot be compared with that of an elephant, the rhinoceros, or sea-horse. The largest of our birds are but small if compared with the ostrich, the condore, and *casôare*." So far Mr. Buffon, whose text we have copied, because it is of importance to our purpose, and entirely contrary to what M. de Paw writes against the climate of America, and Buffon himself in many other places.

If the large and fierce animals are natives of intemperate climes, and small and tranquil animals of temperate climes, as Mr. Buffon has here established; if mildness of climate influences the disposition and customs of animals, Mr. de Paw does not well deduce the malignity of the climate of America from the smaller size and less fierceness of its animals; he ought rather to have deduced the gentleness and sweetness of its climate from this antecedent. If, on the contrary, the smaller size and less fierceness of the American animals, with respect to those of the old continent, are a proof of their degeneracy, arising from the malignity of the climate, as Mr. de Paw would have it, we ought in like manner to argue the malignity of the climate of Europe from the smaller size and less fierceness of its animals, compared with those of Africa. If a philosopher of the country of Guinea should undertake a work in imitation of M. de Paw, with this title, *Recherches Philosophiques sur les Europeens*, he might avail himself of the same argument which M. de Paw uses to demonstrate the malignity of the climate of Europe, and the advantages of that of Africa. The climate of Europe, he would say, is very unfavourable to the production of quadrupeds, which are found incomparably smaller, and more cowardly than ours. What are the horse and the ox, the largest of its animals, compared with our elephants, our rhinoceroses, our sea-

sea-horses, and our camels? What are its lizards, either in size or intrepidity, compared with our crocodiles? Its wolves, its bears, the most dreadful of its wild beasts, when beside our lions and tigers? Its eagles, its vultures, and cranes, if compared with our ostriches, appear only like hens. In order to avoid prolixity, we omit other such observations which might be made against Europe, still adhering to the materials and words of M. de Paw. What Buffon and de Paw would answer to that African philosopher, we will now answer to those philosophers of Europe; since their arguments either do not prove, that the climate of America is bad, or say that the climate of Europe is bad, or at least that the African is better than the European climate.

From the scarcity and smallness of quadrupeds M. de Paw passes to the enormous size, and prodigious multiplication of the insects, and other noxious little animals. “The surface of the earth, he says, infested by putrefaction, was over-run with lizards, serpents, reptiles, and insects monstrous for size, and the activity of their poison, which they drew from the copious juices of this uncultivated soil, that was corrupted and abandoned to itself, where the nutritive juice became sharp, like the milk in the breast of animals which do not exercise the virtue of propagation. Caterpillars, crabs, butterflies, beetles, spiders, frogs, and toads, were for the most part of an enormous corpulence in their species, and multiplied beyond what can be imagined. Panama is infested with serpents, Carthagena with clouds of enormous bats, Portobello with toads, Surinam with *kakerlucas* or *cuca-rachas*, Guadaloupe, and the other colonies of the islands, with beetles, Quito with niguas or chegoes, and Lima with lice and bugs. The ancient kings of Mexico, and the emperors of Peru, found no other means of ridding their subjects of those insects, which fed upon them, than the imposition of an annual tribute, of a certain quantity of lice. Ferdinand Cortes found bags full of them in the palace of Montezuma.” But this argument, full throughout of fallacy and exaggerations, proves nothing against the climate of America in general, much less against that of Mexico. There being some lands in America, in which, on account of their heat, humidity, or want of inhabitants, large insects are found, and excessively multiplied, will

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prove at most that in some places the surface of the earth is infected, as he says, with putrefaction; but not that the soil of Mexico, or that of all America is stinking, uncultivated, vitiated, and abandoned to itself, as is weakly asserted by M. de Paw. If such a deduction were just, he might also say, that the soil of the old continent is barren, and stinks; as in many countries of it there are prodigious multitudes of monstrous insects, noxious reptiles, and vile animals, as in the Philippine Isles, in many of those of the Indian archipelago, in several countries of the south of Asia, in many of Africa, and even in some of Europe. The Philippine Isles are infected with enormous ants, and monstrous butterflies; Japan with scorpions; South of Asia and Africa, with serpents; Egypt, with asps; Guinea and Ethiopia, with armies of ants; Holland with field-rats; Ukrania, with toads, as M. de Paw, himself affirms (*i*). In Italy, the Campagna di Roma (although peopled for so many ages), with vipers, Calabria with tarantulas, the shores of the Adriatic sea with clouds of gnats; and even in France, the population of which is so great and so ancient, whose lands are so well cultivated, and whose climate is so celebrated by the French, there appeared, a few years ago, according to Mr. Buffon, a new species of field mice, larger than the common kind, called by him *Surmulots*, which have multiplied exceedingly, to the great damage of the fields. Mr. Bazin, in his Compendium of the History of Insects, numbers seventy-seven species of bugs, which are all found in Paris and its neighbourhood. That large capital, as Mr. Bomare says, swarms with those disgusting insects. It is true that there are places in America where the multitude of insects, and filthy vermin, make life irksome; but we do not know that they have arrived to such excess of multiplication as to depopulate any place, at least there cannot be so many examples produced of this cause of depopulation in the new as in the old continent, which are attested by Theophrastus, Varro, Pliny (*k*), and other authors. The frogs depopulated one place in Gaul, and the locusts another in Africa. One of the Cyclades, was depopulated by mice; Amiclas, near to Taracina,

(*i*) *Defense des Recherches Philosophiques, sur les Americains, chap. 13.*

(*k*) *Pliny Hist. Natur. lib. viii. cap. 19.*



by serpents; another place, near to Ethiopia, by scorpions and poisonous ants; and another by scolopendras; and not so distant from our own times, the Mauritius was going to have been abandoned on account of the extraordinary multiplication of rats, as we can remember to have read in a French author.

With respect to the size of the insects, reptiles, and such animals, M. de Paw makes use of the testimony of Mr. Dumont, who, in his *Memoirs on Louisiana*, says, that the frogs are so large there that they weigh thirty-seven French pounds, and their horrid croaking imitates the bellowing of cows. But who can trust to that author, particularly after knowing what Mr. de Paw says, (in his answer to Don Pernetty, cap. 17) that all those who have written about Louisiana from Henepin, Le Clerc, and Cav. Tonti, to Dumont, have contradicted each other sometimes on one and sometimes on another subject. We wonder however, that M. de Paw should have had the boldness to write that these monsters do not exist in the rest of the world. We know extremely well that there are neither in the old nor new continent frogs of thirty-seven pounds in weight; but there are in Asia and Africa serpents, butterflies, ants, and other animals of such monstrous size, that they exceed all those which have been discovered in the new world. In what place of America has a serpent of fifty Roman cubits in length been seen, such as that which was shewn by Augustus to the Roman people at the public spectacles, as historians affirm (1), or so gross as that which was killed in the Vatican in the time of the emperor Claudius, and attested by Pliny, an author almost cotemporary, in the belly of which an entire child was found. But, above all, where has there been seen, even in the most solitary woods of America, a serpent which can in any manner be compared with that most enormous and prodigious one of one hundred and twenty feet in length, seen in Africa at the time of the first Punic war, and killed with war machines by the army of Attilius Regulus, the skin and jaw-bones of which were preserved in a temple of Rome, until the war of Numantia, according to the testimonies of Livy, Pliny, and other Roman historians? We know very well that some American historian says,

(1) Suetonius in Octaviano Cesare.

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that a certain gigantic species of serpents is to be found in the woods, which attract men with their breath, and swallow them up; but we know also that several historians, both ancient and modern, report the same thing of the serpents of Asia, and even something more. Megasthenes, cited by Pliny, said, that there were serpents found in Asia, so large, that they swallowed entire stags and bulls (*m*). Metrodorus, cited by the same author, affirms, that in Asia there were serpents which, by their breath, attracted birds, however high they were, or quick their flight. Among the moderns, Gemelli, in vol. V. of his Tour of the World, when he treats of the animals of the Philippine isles, speaks thus: "There are serpents in these islands of immoderate size; there is one called *Ibitin*, very long, which suspending itself by the tail from the trunk of a tree, waits till stags, bears, and also men pass by, in order to attract them with its breath, and devour them at once entirely:" from whence it is evident, that this very ancient fable has been common to both continents (*n*).

Mr. de Paw would perhaps say, that these monstrous animals were formerly seen in the old continent when its clime was not yet perfected. But when that which the ancients wrote is compared with that which we know of Asia and Africa at present, who is there that will not perceive that the climate of those countries is at present, for the most part, what it was two thousand years ago; that there is the same heat, the same dryness or humidity, the same kind of plants, animals, and men, &c. Besides, even in our days, various sorts of monstrous animals have been seen in those regions which infinitely surpass those analogous to them in the new world. In what country of America could M. de Paw find ants to equal those of the Philippine islands, called *Sulum*, respecting which Hernandez (*o*) affirms, that they are six fingers broad in length,

(*m*) Megasthenes scribit, in India serpentes in tantam magnitudinem adolefcere, ut solidos hauriant cervos tauroſque. Metrodorus circa Rhyndacum amnem in ponto ut ſupervolantes quamvis alte perniterque, alites hauſtu raptas abſorbeant. Nota eſt in Punicis bellis ad flumen Bagradam an Regulo imper. baleſtis tormentiſque ut oppidum aliquod expugnata ſerpens CXX pedum longitudinis. Pellis ejus maxillæque uſque ad bellum Numantinum duravere Romæ in templo. Faciunt hiſ fidem in Italia appellatæ boæ in tantem amplitudinem exeuntes ut Divo Claudio, principe occiſæ in Vaticano ſolidus in alvo ſpectatus ſit infans. Plin. Hiſt. Nat. lib. viii. cap. 14.

(*n*) See Bomare on the *Minia* of Africa, and the *Reinherab* of Ceylon.

(*o*) Hern. Hiſt. Inſector. N. Hiſp. cap. 30.

and one in breadth? Who has ever seen in America butterflies so large as those of Bourbon, Ternate, the Philippine isles, and all the Indian Archipelago? The largest bat of America (native to hot shady countries) which is that called by Buffon *vampiro*, is, according to him of the size of a pigeon. *La Rougette*, one of the species of Asia, is as large as a raven; and the *Roussette*, another species of Asia, is as big as a large hen (*p*). Its wings, when extended, measure from tip to tip three Parisian feet, and according to Gemelli, who measured it in the Philippine isles (*q*), six palms. Mr. Buffon acknowledges the excess in size of the Asiatic bat over the American species, but denies it as to number. Gemelli says, that those of the island of Luzon were so numerous that they darkened the air, and that the noise which they made with their teeth, in eating the fruits of the woods, was heard at the distance of two miles (*r*). M. de Paw says, in talking of serpents (*s*), “it cannot be affirmed that the new world has shewn any “serpents larger than those which Mr. Adanson saw in the deserts of “Africa.” The greatest serpent found in Mexico, after a diligent search made by Hernandez, was eighteen feet long; but this is not to be compared with that the Moluccas, which Bomare says, is thirty-three feet in length (*t*); nor with the *Anacandaja* of Ceylon, which the same author says is more than thirty-three feet long (*u*); nor with others of Asia and Africa, mentioned by the same author. Lastly, the argument drawn from the multitude and size of the American insects is fully as weighty as the argument drawn from the smallness and scarcity of quadrupeds, and both detect the same ignorance, or rather the same voluntary and studied forgetfulness of the things of the old continent.

With respect to what Mr. de Paw has said of the tribute of lice in Mexico, in that, as well as in many other things, he discovers his ridiculous faith. It is true that Cortes found bags of lice in the maga-

(*p*) Buffon, Hist. Nat. tom. xix.

(*q*) Gemelli, tom. v.

(*r*) What Gemelli says respecting the surprising noise of the bats of the island of Luzon is confirmed by several persons worthy of credit, who have been some years in that island.

(*s*) *Défense des Recherch. Philosoph.* chap. 22.

(*t*) Bomare *Diction. Univ. d'Histoire Natur.* V. *Couleuvre*.

(*u*) *Id.* V. *Anacandaja*.



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zines of the palace of king Axajacatl. It is also true, that Montezuma imposed such a tribute, not on all his subjects however, but only on those who were beggars, not on account of the extraordinary multitude of those insects, as Mr. de Paw affirms, but because Montezuma, who could not suffer idleness in his subjects, resolved that that miserable set of people, who could not labour, should at least be occupied in lousing themselves (x). This was the true reason of such an extravagant tribute, as Torquemada, Betancourt, and other historians relate, and nobody ever before thought of, that which Mr. de Paw affirms merely because it suited his preposterous system. Those disgusting insects possibly abound as much in the hair and cloaths of American beggars, as of any poor and uncleanly low people in the world; but there is not a doubt that if any sovereign of Europe was to exact such a tribute from the poor in his dominions, not only bags but great vessels might be filled with them.

Lastly, to reserve the examination of the proofs of the bad climate of America, founded on the diseases and defects of the physical constitution of the Americans to another Dissertation, in which we will demonstrate the errors and puerile prejudices of Mr. de Paw, let us attend to what he says on the excess of cold in the countries of the new world with respect to those of the old, which are situate at an equal distance from the equator. "Comparing," he says, "the experiments made with thermometers in Peru, by Messr. Condamine and d'Ulloa with those of the indefatigable Mr. Adanson in Senegal, it is easily understood, that the air is less hot in the new than in the old world. Upon calculating, with the greatest possible exactness, the difference of temperature, I believe it will be found equal to twelve degrees of latitude; that is, it is as hot in Africa at thirty degrees from the equator as at eighteen degrees from the same line in America. The liquor did not mount to so great a height in Peru in the torrid zone as it mounted in France at the greatest heat of the summer. Quebec, although it is in the same latitude almost with Paris, has an incomparably more severe and cold climate than it. The difference

(x) It is certain that Montezuma was extremely attentive to cleanliness, as well as an enemy to idleness; it is therefore extremely probable that from both these motives he was induced to impose that extraordinary tribute.

" between

“ between Hudson’s Bay and the Thames, situate both in the same latitude, is equally sensible.”

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Although we should grant all this to Mr. de Paw, it would not assist him to demonstrate the malignity of the American climate. Why would he deduce the badness of climate from the excess of cold in the lands of America, and not rather deduce the badness of climate of the old continent from the excess of heat in countries equidistant from the equator? Mr. de Paw can form no argument in this point against America, which the Americans cannot powerfully retort against Europe, or against Africa. But all the observations made by him are not sufficient to establish, as a general principle, that the countries of the new world are colder than those of the old continent situated in the same latitude; and still less to make it be believed that there is as much heat in the old continent at thirty degrees of latitude as in the new world at eighteen degrees. Mr. de Paw says (*y*), that the cold beyond the eightieth degree in the old continent ought to become in November so destructive to men that no mortal could live there; therefore no men should be able to live in America beyond the seventy-seventh degree. How then does he affirm, that in the country of the Esquimaux there are inhabitants found beyond the seventy-fifth degree of latitude? And if the feeble Americans can subsist in that latitude, we may believe that the hardiest Europeans would be able to bear the cold of the eightieth degree. Farther, if this principle were true, it would be as cold in Jerusalem, situated in little less than thirty-two degrees, as in Vera Cruz, which is situated in little less than twenty degrees; which idea none but Mr. de Paw is capable of entertaining. In like manner other absurd consequences might be deduced, particularly if we were to adopt the calculation of Dr. Michell, who, according to what Dr. Robertson says, concluded, after thirty-three years observation, that the difference between the climate of the old and that of the new world is from fourteen to fifteen degrees, that is, it is as hot in the countries of the old continent at twenty-nine or thirty degrees as in the countries of the new continent, which are at fifteen degrees. It is certain that as there are many

(*y*) Recherches Philosophiques, part iii. sect. i. p. mibi 304.

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countries in America more cold than others of the old continent equidistant from the equator, there are also others more hot. Agra, the capital of Mogul, and the port of Loretto in California, are nearly in the same latitude, and still the heat of that Asiatic city is not comparable to that of the American port. Hue, the capital of Cochin-China and Acapulco, are almost equidistant from the equator, and yet the air of Hue is cool in comparison of that of Acapulco. That other proposition of Mr. de Paw is equally false and improbable, namely, that in the center of the torrid zone the liquor of the thermometer does not rise to so great a height as it does in Paris in the greatest heat of summer. If that was true, the difference between the American and European climates would not be only twelve degrees, as Mr. de P. would make it, but forty-nine, that is as much as the difference of latitude between the center of the torrid zone and Paris. It is true, that according to the observations made in Quito and compared with those made in Paris, the heat of that equinoctial city never equals that of Paris in the summer; but it is equally certain, that, according to the observations made by the same academicians with the same thermometers, in the city of Carthagena, which is not the center of the torrid zone, but ten degrees from it, that the usual heat of this city is equal to the greatest heat of Paris, agreeable to the testimony of Ulloa, one of the observers (z).

There are many reasons, besides vicinity to or distance from the equator, which make a country hot or cold. The elevation of the soil, the neighbourhood of some lofty mountain covered with snow, abundance of rains, &c. contribute much to the coolness of the atmosphere; and, on the contrary, low ground, scarcity of water, drowths, &c. must increase the heat. *Cividad Real*, the capital of the diocese of Chiapa, because it is situated on a high ground, is cool; and the city of Chiapa, of the Indians, at a little distance from it, is extremely hot, because it is situated very low. Chachicomula, a large village, situated at the foot of the very lofty mountain Ozizaba, is

(z) In the year 1735, at Carthagena, the liquor of the thermometer of Reaumur kept at 102½, without any variation, except that sometimes it fell to 102¼, or rose to 1026. At Paris, the same year, it never rose higher than 1025½, in the greatest heats of July and August. *Ulloa Relacion del Viage a la America Meridional*, part i. tom 1.

cool,



cool, but Vera Cruz, placed in the same latitude, is very hot; and what is more, the air of Ciudad Real is cool in the latitude of  $16\frac{1}{2}$ , and that of Loreto, in California, in lat.  $25\frac{1}{2}$ , is very hot.

The observations made by M. de Paw convince us that the climate of America is not so various as that of Europe; that the inhabitants of the new world are not like those of the greater part of Europe, obliged to endure the alternate extremes of excessive cold, and intolerable heat. The more uniform a climate, the more easily are men familiarized to it, and escape those pernicious effects which follow a vicissitude of seasons. In Quito the thermometer does not rise so high as it does in Paris in the summer; but neither does it fall so low as it does in the temperate climes of Europe in winter. What can be more desirable in a climate than a temperature of air which is equally distant from either extreme, such as that of Quito, and the greater part of Mexico? What climate more sweet and kind to life than that in which the delights of the country are enjoyed all the year, and the earth is continually adorned with herbs and flowers; where the fields are covered with corn, and the trees loaded with fruit; the herds and the flocks spare man his fatigues, and have no need of his provision to maintain them, or his roof to resist the inclemency of the weather; neither snow nor frost compel him to keep near a fire, nor do burning heats in summer check his increase; but constantly experiencing the bounty of nature towards him, he enjoys equally in all seasons the social converse of his fellow-creatures, or the innocent recreations of the country. This is the idea entertained by man of a perfect climate; and the poets, therefore, when they strove to extol the happiness of certain countries, used to say, that a perpetual spring reigned in them; as Virgil said of his Italy, (*a*) and Horace of the Fortunate Isles (*b*), to which he invited his countrymen. Thus the ancients represented the Elysian fields; and also in the Holy Writings, in order to convey some idea of the felicity of heavenly Jerusalem, it is said, that there, there is no heat nor cold.

(*a*) Hic ver assiduum atque albinis mensibus æstas;  
Bis gravida pecudes, bis pomis utilis arbos. Virg. Georg. ii.

(*b*) Ver ubi longum, tepidasque præbet  
Jupiter brumas. Horat. lib. ii. ode 4.

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Acosta, whose history is called by M. de Paw an *excellent work*, and who was acquainted with the climes of both continents, and at the same time was not partial to America, nor had any interest in extolling it, treating of the American clime, he speaks thus (c): “ When I perceived the mildness of the air, and sweetness of the climate of many countries of America, where it is not known what thing winter is that contracts, or summer which relaxes with heat ; where a mat is sufficient for defence from every inclemency of the weather ; where it is scarcely necessary to alter cloathing through the whole year ; considering, I say, all this, I have many times thought, and I even think at this moment, that if men would disengage themselves from the snares which avarice lays for them, and abandon useless and vexatious pretensions, they might lead in America a life of tranquillity and pleasure ; for that which the poets sing of the Elysian fields, or the famous Tempe, and that which Plato told, or feigned, of his island Atlantida, are both to be found in those lands, &c.” Other historians speak the same thing as Acosta of America, and particularly of Mexico and its surrounding provinces, the inland countries of which, from the isthmus of Panama unto the 40th degree of latitude (for those beyond that degree of latitude have not yet been discovered), enjoy a mild air, and a climate favourable to life, excepting a few places, which, either by their being low, are moist and hot, or by being very high, are rather severe in climate. But how many in the old world are not severe and noxious ?

## S E C T. III.

*On the Qualities of the Land of Mexico.*

IT is certain, says Mr. de Paw, that America in general has been, and is at present, a very barren country ; but it is rather more certain that this is in general a gross error ; and if M. de Paw wishes to assure himself of it, he may obtain information from many Germans, lately

(c) Stor. Nat. e Mor. lib. ii. cap. 14.

come from America, where some of them have been for many years, and are at present in Austria, in Bohemia, in the Palatinate of the Rhine, and even in Prussia; or he may re-peruse that excellent work of Acoſta, and he will find there, in book ii. chap. 14. that if there is any land in the world to which the name of Paradise may be applied, it is that of America. This is the expression of a learned, judicious, and impartial European, born in Spain, one of the best countries in Europe; and speaking, in book iii of the countries of the Mexican empire, he says, that New Spain is the best country of all those which the sun surrounds. Certainly Acoſta would not speak thus of America in general, and of New Spain in particular, under which name the continent of Spanish North America is comprehended, if America were in general a barren country. Many other Europeans speak not less favourably of America, and particularly of Mexico, whose testimony we must omit, to avoid seeming prolix to our readers (*a*). From the same motive we shall omit also what Mr. de Paw has written against other countries of the new world, as it would be impossible to examine the complaints made by him against each of them, without filling a large volume; we shall therefore confine ourselves to what belongs to Mexico.

Messieurs Buffon and de Paw are persuaded that all the territory of America is composed of inaccessible mountains, impenetrable woods and wastes, watry plains and marshes. Those philosophers have read in the descriptions of America, that the famous Andes, or American Alps, formed two large chains of lofty mountains, covered in part with snow; that the vast desert of the Amazons consists of thick woods; that Guayaquil, and some other places, are moist and marshy; and so much they have thought sufficient to warrant them to say, that America is nothing but mountains, woods and marshes. Mr. de

(*d*) Thomas Gages, the oracle of the English and French, with respect to America, speaking of Mexico, says as follows. “ Il ne manque rien à Mexique de tout ce qui peut rendre une ville heureuse; et si ces écrivains qui ont employé leurs plumes à louer les provinces de Grenade en Espagne et de Lombardie et de Toscane en Italie dont ils font des paradis tenebreux, auroient vu ce nouveau monde et la ville de Mexique, ils se dediroient bientôt de tout ce qu’ils ont dit en faveur de ces lieux là.” Parte i. chap. 22. Thus does an author who could scarcely speak favourably of any thing, represent Mexico.



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Paw read in the history of Gumilla that which the author says about the method which the Indians of Oroonoko had of preparing the terrible poison of their arrows; and in the history of Herrera, or other authors, that the Canibals, and other barbarous nations, made use of poisoned arrows; and this was enough for him to say, that the new continent produces a greater number of poisonous herbs than all the rest of the world. He read that neither corn nor the fruits of Europe grow in very hot countries; and that was sufficient for him to say, that peaches and apricots have only borne fruit in the island of Juan Fernandez (*e*), and that corn and barley have not thriven but in a few countries of the North. Such is the logic adopted by Mr. de Paw through all his work.

But of all that he says against America, nothing holds true with respect to Mexico. There are certainly very lofty mountains in Mexico, eternally covered with snow: there are large woods, and also some marshy places in it; but the fertile and cultivated soil forms beyond comparison the far greater part of it, as is well known to all those who have visited that country. In all that immense space of land, where wheat, barley, maize, and other kind of grain and pulse with which that country abounds, are sown at present; they formerly sowed maize, pepper, beans, cacao, chia, cotton, and such like plants, which served for the sustenance, clothing, and luxuries of those people, who having been so numerous as we have already mentioned, and shall elsewhere demonstrate, could not have been able to have provided for their necessities, if the country had been nothing but mountain, wood, and marsh. Mr. de Buffon, who in his first vol. says, that America is nothing but a continued marsh, and in vol. v. affirms, that the inaccessible mountains of America scarcely leave any small spaces for agriculture, and the habitation of men, in the same vol. v. confesses

(*e*) In order to shew how extremely distant Mr. de Paw is from the truth, we must here observe, that on the miserable island of Juan Fernandez, where he says that peaches ripen well, they on the contrary are small, and very indifferent, according to the information we have had from Abbé D. G. Garcia, who was there seven months, and particularly while the season of fruit lasted. On the other hand, in almost all the temperate and cold countries of Spanish America, where he imagines peaches do not grow, they thrive surprisingly; and in many places, particularly of Chili, and in some of New Spain, they ripen better than in Europe.

that the people of Mexico and Peru were very numerous. But if those people who occupied a very large part of America were very numerous, and lived as he says in societies, and under the controul of laws, America is certainly not a continued marsh: if those people supported themselves, as is certain they did, on corn and fruits which they cultivated, the spaces are not small which the mountains leave for agriculture, and the habitation of men.

The multitude, variety and excellence of the plants of Mexico, leave us in no doubt of the very singular fertility of its lands. The pasture grounds, says Acoſta, of New Spain are excellent, and breed, accordingly an innumerable quantity of horses, cows, sheep, and other animals. It is also as abundant in fruit as in any kind of grain. In short, there is no grain, pulse, kitchen-herbs, or fruit, which does not thrive in that soil. The wheat, which Mr. de Paw scarcely allows to some countries of the North, does not grow in general in the hot lands of New Spain, as it does not in the greater part of Africa, and many other parts of the old continent; but in the cool and temperate lands of that kingdom it thrives well, and is more abundant than it is in Europe.

It is sufficient to say, that the quantity gathered in the diocese of Angelopoli is so great, that with what remained, after all its numerous inhabitants were provided, they supplied the Antilles, and the fleet of ships which formerly came to Havanna, under the name of *Armata de Barbovento*. In Europe there is but one seed-time, and one harvest. In New Spain there are several. "In those lands," says the European author Torquemada, who was there many years, and travelled through the whole kingdom, "where they cultivate wheat, in every season of the year may be seen one crop reaping, another ripening, another still green, and another sowing," which plainly demonstrates the wonderful fertility of the soil. The same author makes mention of several lands which yielded seventy, eighty, or an hundred for one; and as great a multiplication of wheat has been seen in some fields of those countries by us (f); which,

(f) We have been in a country of America, where the land yielded commonly fifty for one, and sometimes an hundred for one. In Cinaloa, although it is a cold country, the land, we have been credibly informed, yields two hundred for one. Our learned friend, the

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which, speaking in general, is certainly greater than that of Europe, and with less cultivation, as is well known to European superintendants of agriculture who have been in that part of America. What we say of wheat we can also say of barley, although this is not sown but in proportion to the consumption there is made of it, in the support of horses, mules, and hogs. We might say still more of maize, which is the grain peculiarly native to America.

Mr. de Paw pretends that all the plants of Europe have degenerated in America, except aquatic and juicy plants; and to prove this absurd notion, he says that peaches and apricots have borne fruit in the island of Juan Fernandez only. Although we should grant that those fruits grow in no country of America, it would not avail him to prove what he intends to prove, but even this particular is as false as his general proposition. Acosta, treating of those fruits in particular, says, "Peaches, quinces, and apricots grow well in America, but best in New Spain (*g*)."

In all New Spain, except the hot countries, those fruits, and all others transplanted from Europe, have thriven and grow in abundance (*b*). "Lastly," says Acosta, speaking of America in general, "Almost every thing good which is produced in Spain grows there, sometimes better, and sometimes not; wheat, barley, fallads, kitchen-herbs, pulse, &c." (*i*) If he had spoke only of New Spain, he would have omitted that *almost*.

"There is also another advantage," says Acosta, "which is, that the things of Europe are better in America than those of America are in Europe." But this may appear but a small advantage to Mr. de Paw. It alone would be sufficient however to demonstrate that, if there is any preference, it is to be given to America. In New Spain, many European authors attest, and all who have been

the Abbé Molina in his History of Chili, says, that the land of that kingdom usually yields an hundred and fifty for one. The plenty of grain is so great, that it is sold at five paoli the *fonaga*, and every year about thirty vessels loaded with it come to Peru.

(*g*) Acosta, lib. iv. cap. 31. Peaches are so plentiful in New Spain, that they are sold by twenties; and for the smallest currency there, two, three, or four twenties are given. In the kingdom of Chili, they count twelve different species of peaches, some of which are so large as to weigh a pound Spanish, or sixteen ounces. Molina Stor del Chili.

(*b*) Pears are also sold in twenties at Mexico; and there are upwards of fifty species of them.

(*i*) Acosta, lib. iv. cap. 31.

there



there know, that wheat, barley, and every grain of Europe; peas, beans, and every other pulse; lettuces, cabbages, turnips, asparagus, and other sallads and roots, and every sort of kitchen herbs; peaches, apples, pears, quinces, and other fruits; carnations, roses, violets, jessamines, sweet-basil, mint, marjoram, balm gentle, and other flowers and odorous plants brought from Europe all prosper there: but in Europe the plants of America do not, nor cannot in general come to perfection. Wheat grows in the lands of Europe, but much smaller, and not so good as that of America. Of the many delicious fruits of the new world, some, such as the musa and ananas, have thriven in the gardens of the princes of Europe, by means of hot-houses, and great care and attention, but not so well flavoured, or in such abundance, as in their native climes. Others still more valuable than these, such as the chirimoya, the maney, and chicozapote have not yet, as far as we know, been made to grow, notwithstanding the studied efforts of European industry for that purpose. The cause of this great difference between America and Europe is that which Acoſta mentions: that in America there is a greater variety of climate than in Europe; from whence it is more easy to give each plant a temperature proper for it. As it is not an argument of the sterility of Europe, that the plants proper to America do not thrive in it, neither is it an argument of the sterility of some countries of America, that some plants of Europe do not thrive in them; because *non omnia fert omnia tellus. Hic segetes ibi proveniunt felicius uvæ.* On the contrary, the hot countries in which wheat and European fruits do not ripen, are yet the most pleasant and fruitful.

We do not doubt that if a comparison is made of America with the old continent, they will be found equal in their productions: for Asia and Africa have lands and climes suited to all the plants of America, which, on account of the differences of their nature, could not succeed in Europe. But what advantage is it to Europeans that Asia has abundance while it is at so great a distance? On the contrary, the Mexicans being surrounded by countries of every sort of climate, enjoy all their different fruits. The market of Mexico, like that of many other cities of America, is the emporium of all the gifts of nature. There we find apples, peaches, apricots, pears, grapes, cherries,

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ries, *camotes*, *xicames*, and other numerous fruits, roots, and savory herbs, which cool and temperate climes yield; ananas, mufas, cocoas, anonas, chirimoyas, mameys, chicozapotes, zapotes, and many others which hot countries produce; melons cucumbers, oranges, pomegranates, and others which cold or hot countries equally produce. At all seasons of the year their market is abundantly provided with variety of excellent fruits, even at those times when the Europeans must content themselves with their chestnuts, or at most with apples and grapes, which their industry has preserved. Through all the year, even in the severity of winter, vessels enter their market by one of the innumerable canals of the city, loaded with such variety of fruits, flowers, and herbs, that it seems as if all the seasons of the year offered their productions at once; the most valuable plants of Europe, as well as all the native productions of Mexico being collected there; which all Europeans who have visited that part can testify.

Nor is that land less abundant in plants of medicinal nature. To be satisfied of this truth, it will be sufficient to look into the work of the celebrated naturalist Hernandez; in which nine hundred plants, that are for the most part produced in the neighbourhood of Mexico, are described and designed, whose virtues have been ascertained by experience; besides three hundred others, the uses of which are not mentioned; and without doubt there are innumerable others yet undiscovered. Mr. de Paw, on the contrary, says that America produces a greater number of poisonous plants than all the rest of the world. But what does he know of the plants which are bred in the inland countries of Africa and Asia, to enable him to make a comparison? The soil of America is so fertile, that it is not to be wondered at if there is abundance of every sort in it. But to mention the truth, we do not know that one twentieth part of those poisonous plants which are produced in the old continent have been discovered in New Spain.

With respect to gums, resins, oils, and other juices which the trees yield either spontaneously or with the aid of human industry, New Spain, says Acofta, excels: there are whole woods of acacia, which yields the true Arabian gum; but from its plenty it is not sufficiently

sufficiently valued. There is besides balsam, incense, copal of many species, liquid amber, tecamaca, oil of fir, and many other juices valuable for their fragrant odours, and medicinal virtues.

Even those very woods with which the land of America is covered, as Buffon and de Paw affirm, demonstrate its fertility. There have been, and there are still, in these most extensive regions, great woods; but there are not so many as that a journey of five or six hundred miles may not be made without meeting one of them? And what kind of woods are they? for the most part consisting of fruit-bearing trees, such as the musa, maney, apple, orange, and lemon, in the woods of Coatzacualco, Misteca, and Michuacan; or of trees valuable for their wood or their gums, such as those which separate the vale of Mexico from the diocese of Angelopoli, and those of Chiapa, of the Zapotecas, &c.; besides pines, oaks, ashes, hazels, firs, and a great many others, common to both continents. The trees peculiar to that land are in still greater number, and of more value. There are whole woods of cedar, as we have already mentioned. The conqueror Cortes was accused by his rivals before Charles V. of having used for the palace which he made be built in Mexico, seven thousand beams of cedar; and he excused himself by saying that it was a common wood in that country. It is in fact so very common, that they make the stakes for the foundation of houses in the marshy places of the capital, of this wood. There are also woods of ebony, that so justly celebrated tree, in Chiapa, Yucatan, and Cozumel; of brasil wood in hot countries, and the odorous wood of aloes in Misteca. The *Tapincoren*, the *Granadillo* or red ebony, the *Camote*, and others which we have mentioned in our history, afford better timber than is to be had in Europe. Lastly, to avoid a tedious enumeration, we refer the reader to Acosta, Hernandez, Ximenes, and other European authors who have been in New Spain, although all they say is not sufficient to convey a competent idea of the fertility of that land. Acosta affirms, that “as well in respect to “number as to variety of trees produced by nature, there is a greater “abundance in America than in Asia, Africa, and Europe.”(k)

(k) Acosta, lib. iv. cap. 30.



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The nature and quality of a soil is best discovered by the plants which it spontaneously produces without the assistance of art. Let us compare, then, the productions of Europe with those, not of America, but only of New Spain. "The reason of there being so many "savages in America," says Montesquieu<sup>(l)</sup>, "is that the land there "produces of itself many fruits on which they can feed." I believe that those advantages would not be obtained in Europe if the land were left to itself without culture; it would produce nothing but woods of oaks and other useless trees. "Examining," says M. de Paw, "the history and origin of our plants, our kitchen-herbs, our fruit-trees, and also our grains, we find they are all foreign, and have "been transplanted from other climes to our own. We can easily "imagine the misery of the ancient Gauls, and even that of the "Germans, in whose land no fruit-trees were produced in the time of "Tacitus. If Germany was to restore the foreign vegetables which "are not originals of its soil or climate, almost none would remain, "nor would it preserve among its seeds which serve for nourishment "any but the wild poppy and the wild *Vena*<sup>(m)</sup>." What Mr. de Paw openly confesses respecting Germany and Gaul, might also be said of the other countries of Europe, and also of Greece and Italy, which supplied the others. If Italy was obliged to restore all those fruits which do not belong originally to its soil, what would remain but acorns? These terms, (*malum Persicum, malum Medicum, Assyrium, Punicum, Cidonium, nux Pontica, &c.*) serve to keep us in remembrance that those fruits came from Asia and from Africa. "It is known," says Mr. Busching<sup>(n)</sup>, "that the best and most beautiful fruits passed "from Italy into those countries which produce them at present. "Italy received them from Greece, from Asia, and from Africa. "Apples came to her from Egypt, and Greece; apricots from "Epirus; the pear from Alexandria, Numidia, and Greece; "the lemon and orange from Medea, Assyria, and Persia; the fig "from Asia; the pomegranate from Carthage; the chestnut from "Catania in Magnesia, a province of Macedonia; almonds from "Asia to Greece, and thence to Italy; the walnut from Persia; "olives

(l) Montesquieu L'Esprit des Loix, lib. xviii. chap. 9.  
part i.

(n) Busching Geograph. tom. i.

(m) Recherch Philosoph.

“ filberts from Ponto; olives from Cyprus; plums from Armenia;  
 “ the peach from Persia; quinces from Cidonia in Candia to Greece,  
 “ and thence to Italy.”

Pliny says, that men at first fed upon nothing but acorns (*o*). This, though false with respect to men in general, appears to be true with respect to the first peoplers of Italy, at least such was the opinion of the ancients, as their writings shew. Pliny adds, that even in his time many people, from the want of grain, were esteemed rich in proportion to the quantity of acorns which they had, of the flour of which they made bread, as they do at present in Norway of the bark of the pine, and in other northern countries of bones of fishes; which is no small indication of their misery. Bomare declares that all the beauties of European gardens are foreign (*p*), and that the most beautiful flowers they have come from the East (*q*). Mr. de Paw makes a more general confession of the ancient misery of the Europeans, where he affirms that the useful plants which they have at present passed from the south of Asia into Egypt, from Egypt to Greece, from Greece into Italy, from Italy into Gaul, and from thence into Germany (*r*); so that the soil of Europe, with respect to native and original productions, is one of the poorest and most barren in the world. On the contrary, how fruitful and abundant the American soil is, and especially that of Mexico, in native plants proper for nourishment and cloathing, and the other necessaries of life, may be learned from reading the European authors who have written of the natural history of that new world.

This is the answer to that ridiculous comparison which Herrera makes in his first Decad mentioned in the beginning of this dissertation. “ In America,” “ he says, “ there were not, as in Europe, “ either lemons, oranges, pomegranates, figs, quinces, melons, “ grapes, olives, sugar, rice, or wheat.” The Americans will then say, first, that Europe had none of those fruits until they were transplanted there from Asia and Africa; secondly, that at present these fruits grow in America as well as in Europe, and in general better of

(*o*) Plin. Hist. Nat. lib. ii. 2. cap. 56.  
 V. Plante.

(*q*) Id V. Fleur.

(*p*) Bomare Diction. Univ. d'Histoire Nat.

(*r*) Recherch. Philosoph. part i.

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their kind and in greater plenty, particularly oranges, lemons, melons, and sugar canes; thirdly, that if America had not wheat, Europe had not maize, which is not less useful or wholesome; if America had not pomegranates, lemons, &c. it has them now: but Europe never had, has, nor can have, chirimoyas, Ahuacates, musas, chicozapotes, &c.

Finally, Mr. de Buffon, and Mr. de Paw, and other European philosophers and historians, who inveigh so much against America for its barrenness, its woods, its marshes, and deserts, will please to remember, that the miserable countries of Lapland, Norway, Iceland, Nova Zembla, Spitzbergen, and the vast horrid deserts of Siberia, Tartary, Arabia, Africa, and others are countries of the old continent, and make at least the fourth part of its extent. Yet what countries are those? Let us attend to the eloquent description which Buffon gives of the deserts of Arabia: “a country, he says, without  
“verdure, and without water; a sun always burning, an atmosphere  
“always dry, sandy plains, mountains still more parched, over which  
“the eye roams in vain to fix upon a single living object; a land, if we  
“may say so, pale and excoriated with the winds, which presents no-  
“thing to the sight but bones, scattered stones, and rocks in pyramids  
“or in ruins; a desert entirely bare, in which the adventurous travel-  
“ler never bates under the shade, where there is nothing that can be  
“made companionable to him, or preserve his remembrance of living  
“nature: a solitude greatly more frightful than that of the woods; for  
“the trees are at least animated substances, which afford some con-  
“solation to man, but here he finds himself alone, detached, more  
“naked and more bewildered, in places that are waste and without  
“boundary; all the soil which he views appears to him like his se-  
“pulchre; the light of the day, more melancholy than the shades of  
“night, does not return but to make him see his nakedness and impo-  
“tence, and set before him his horrible situation, lengthening to his  
“sight the limits of the void, and enlarging around him the abyss of  
“immensity which separate him from the habitable world; a space so  
“immeasurable, that in vain he would attempt to pass it; for hun-  
“ger, thirst, and burning heat, shorten the moments which remain to  
“him between desperation and death (s).”

(s) Buffon Hist. Nat. tom. xxii.



## D I S S E R T A T I O N IV.

*Of the Animals of Mexico.*

ONE of the arguments most insisted on by Buffon and de Paw, to illustrate the unhappy nature of the American soil, and the malignity of its clime, is the pretended degeneracy of animals, both of those which are native to that land, and those which have been transported there from the ancient continent. In the present Dissertation we shall examine their proofs, and detect some of their errors and contradictions.

## S E C T. I.

*Of the Animals proper to Mexico..*

ALL the animals which are found in the new, have passed there from the old world, as we have established in the first Dissertation; and it is confessed also by Mr. Buffon himself, in the twenty-ninth volume of his Natural History; and it ought likewise to be credited, if we rely on the authority of the sacred writings in this point. We call those animals proper to Mexico which were found there by the Spaniards; not because they draw their origin from that land, as we are given to understand by Mr. de Paw in all his work, and by Mr. Buffon in the first twenty-eight volumes of his History; but only to distinguish those animals which, from time immemorial, were bred in those countries, from those others which were afterwards transported there from Europe: we shall therefore call the latter *European*, the former *American*.

The first ground of disparagement to America, with the count de Buffon, is the small number of its quadrupeds, compared with those of the old continent. He reckons two hundred species of quadrupeds hitherto discovered over all the globe, of which one hundred and thirty belong to the old continent, and only seventy to the new world.

And

And if we take from this number the species which are common to both continents, we shall hardly find, he says, forty species of quadrupeds properly American. From these premises he infers that in America there has been a great scarcity of matter (*a*).

But why would he take from the seventy species of quadrupeds America has, those thirty which are common to both continents, as they, from their very ancient habitation in those countries, are as much American as the others? Besides, if those animals, which he calls properly American, had been created originally in America, with greater shew of probability he might have affirmed the supposed scarcity of matter in that part of the world. But all beasts having been Asiatic in their origin, as he himself confesses, we do not see his grounds for drawing such a conclusion. "Every animal," says Buffon, "when abandoned to its own instinct, seeks a zone and a region adapted to its nature (*b*)."  
Hence the cause of the small number of species of quadrupeds in America; because, upon supposition that animals after the deluge, when abandoned to their own instinct, sought a zone and a region suitable to their natures, and found it in the countries of the old continent, they had no occasion to make so long a journey as to America: if the animals, instead of being saved on the mountains of Armenia, had been collected on the American Alps, by the same way of reasoning the number of species of quadrupeds in the old continent would have been less, and the American philosopher would have been liable to censure, who, from such an incident, would have endeavoured to infer the prodigious scarcity of matter, and barren niggard lky of that which we call the old continent.

But although all those quadrupeds were actually original in America, we ought not from thence to infer the supposed scarcity of matter, because a country cannot be said to have a scarcity of matter which has the number of species of its quadrupeds proportioned to its extent. The extent of America is the third part of the whole earth, therefore it cannot be said that there is a scarcity of matter there, when it has a third part of all the species of quadrupeds. The species of quadrupeds, according to Buffon, are two hundred, of which America has

(*a*) Hist. Nat. tom. xxiii.

(*b*) Ibid. tom. xxix.

seventy, which is something more than a third; it cannot therefore be said that there is a scarcity of matter there.

Hitherto we have reasoned on the supposition that what Mr. Buffon has said was true with respect to the number of species of quadrupeds; but who is certain of this, as the real distinguishing character of species has not yet been discovered? Mr. Buffon, as well as several other naturalists who have written after him, believe, that the sole indubitable proof of the specific difference of two animals, similar to each other in many circumstances and properties is, that of the male not being able to cover the female, and of producing by means of generation another individual that is fruitful and similar to themselves. But this proof of diversity of species, besides that it fails in some animals, is, with respect to others, very difficult to be determined. To shew the incertainty of it, let us put an ass and a mare together, and a mastiff and a greyhound together, two breeds of dogs extremely different. From this last couple is bred a dog, which partakes of mastiff and greyhound; from the first is produced a mule, which partakes also of the ass and the mare. I wish to know why the ass and the mare are two different species of quadrupeds, and the mastiff and the greyhound are only varieties of one species. Because this last couple, says Buffon, generates a fruitful individual, the other not. But how? Mr. Buffon, in the twenty-ninth volume of his History, freely affirms, that the mules not being able to conceive is not because they are absolutely impotent, but only on account of the excessive heat and extraordinary convulsions which they suffer in coition. Mr. Bomare (c), after having cited the testimony of Aristotle, who reports, in his History of Animals, that in his time the mules of Syria springing from horses and asses, produced young mules similar to themselves, adds, "This fact, related by a philosopher so worthy of faith, proves that mules are animals specifically fruitful in themselves, and in their posterity." Similar cases, shewing the fruitfulness of mules, are to be found attested by many authors, ancient as well as modern, worthy of credit; and some cases

(c) Diction. d' Histoire Nat. V. Mulet.



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have happened of this kind in our own time in Mexico (*d*). There is no other dissimilarity therefore between those two pair of quadrupeds, except that the births of the bitches generated by that couple of dogs are more frequent than those of the mules.

Besides, who has informed Mr. Buffon, that the *Gibbon* and *Mangoto*, the *Mammon* and Pappion (four sorts of apes), do not copulate together, and produce a fruitful individual? The author has not made any experiment of it, nor cited any other naturalist who had; and notwithstanding he decides that all the above mentioned quadrupeds are so many different species. The distinction of the species of quadrupeds adopted by him is therefore very doubtful and uncertain, and we cannot know whether certain quadrupeds, which he reckons different species, are not one single species; and on the contrary, if others which he believes to be one species, may not be specifically different.

But leaving this aside, it would be sufficient to cause a great diffidence of the division which Mr. Buffon has made of quadrupeds, to perceive the contradictions which appear in this and the other parts of his history, though in other respects it is extremely valuable. In the discourse which he gives in the twenty-ninth volume, on the Degeneracy of Animals, he affirms, that if we are to enumerate the quadrupeds proper to the new continent, we shall find fifty different species; and in the enumeration which he makes of the quadrupeds of both continents, he says, that those of America hardly make forty species. In the above enumeration he reckons the tame goat, the shamois goat, and wild goat, three different species; and in vol. xxiv. treating of those animals, he says, that those three quadrupeds, and the other six or seven species of goats which are distinguished by different names, are all of one and the same species. So that we ought to abate the eight or nine species from the one hundred and thirty which he numbers in the old continent. In the above mentioned enumeration he counts the dog, the mouse, and marmotte; and adds, that no one of

(*d*) Amongst others worthy of mention are the repeated births of a mule got by an ass and a mare, on the farm called *Foreſt of Zurita*, near to the city of Lagos, the property of D. F. G. Rubalcaba. This mule conceived by an ass, and brought forth a mule in 1762, and another in 1763.

those quadrupeds was in America ; but treating afterwards of the animals common to both continents, he says, that the marmots and mice are common to each continent, although it is difficult to decide if such American quadrupeds are of the same species with those of the old continent ; and in vol. xvi. he affirms, that mice were carried to America in European vessels. With respect to dogs, which, in the above enumeration, he denies to America, he grants them to it in vol. xxx. for he affirms that the *Xolitzcuintli*, the *Itzcuintepotzotli*, and *Techichi*, were three different breeds of the same species of dogs with those of the old continent. This sketch is sufficient to shew that Mr. Buffon, notwithstanding his great genius and great diligence, sometimes forgets what he has written.

Amongst the one hundred and thirty species of quadrupeds of the old continent, he enumerates seven species of bats common in France and other countries of Europe, five of which, that were hitherto unknown and confounded with others, were lately discovered and distinguished by Mr. Daubenton, as he affirms in vol. xvi of his History. If then in learned France, where so many centuries have been passed in the study of natural history, five species of bats were hitherto unknown, what wonder is it that in the vast regions of America, where no such able naturalists have gone yet, and where but lately that study has been in esteem, should remain many species of quadrupeds still unknown ? We do not doubt that if there had been some Buffons and Daubentons in the new world, they would have been able to have counted a few more quadrupeds than he numbers from Paris, where he cannot be informed respecting American animals, as he is about those which are European. We feel extreme regret that a philosopher so celebrated, so ingenious, so learned, and so eloquent, who has endeavoured to write of all the quadrupeds of the world, distinguishes their species, families, and breeds, describes their character, disposition, and manners, numbers their teeth, and even measures their tails, should at the same time shew himself ignorant of the most common animals of Mexico. What quadruped is more common or more known in Mexico than the *coyote* ? All the historians of that kingdom make mention of it, and Hernandez gives an exact and minute description of it in his History ; which is most frequently cited by Buffon ; yet this author makes not the least

mention of it under that or any other name (*e*). Who does not know that the rabbit was a quadruped excessively common in the provinces of the Mexican empire, under the name of *Tochtli*? That the figure of it was one of the four characters of the Mexican years, and that the hair of its belly was woven into waistcoats for the use of the nobles in winter? Notwithstanding Mr. Buffon will make the rabbit one of those quadrupeds which were transported from Europe to America; but, among all the European historians of Mexico, we have not found one who thinks so; on the contrary, all suppose, that it has from time immemorial inhabited those countries, and we do not doubt that the Mexicans, as often as they read this singular anecdote, must smile at the count de Buffon.

Hernandez enumerates, in his History of Quadrupeds, four Mexican animals of the class of dogs, mentioned by us in book I. of this history: the first, the *Xoloitzcuintli*, or hairy dog; the second, the *Itzcuintepozotli*, or hunch-back dog; the third, the *Tecbichi*, or eatable little dog; and the fourth, the *Tepeitzcuintli*, or little mountain dog. These four very different species of dogs have been reduced by the count de Buffon to one single species. He says, that Hernandez was deceived in what he wrote of the *Xoloitzcuintli*, for no other author makes mention of it, and therefore it ought to be believed that that quadruped was transported there from Europe, since Hernandez himself affirms, that he saw it first in Spain, and that it had no name in Mexico, as *Xoloitzcuintli* is the proper name of the wolf, given by Hernandez to that other quadruped; that all those dogs were known in Mexico by the generic name of *Alco*. Here, in a few words, we have a mass of errors. The name *Alco*, or *Allco*, neither is Mexican, nor ever was used in Mexico, but in South America. That of *Xoloitzcuintli* is not the name of the wolf, nor do we know that it was ever called so by any one at Mexico. The Mexicans call the

(*e*) The animals of the old continent, which most resemble the Cojote, are the *Chacal*, the *Adive*, and the *Isatis*; but it is different from them. The *Chacal* is of the size of a fox, the Cojote is twice as large. The *Chacals* go always in herds of thirty or forty together; the Cojotes, in general, alone. The *Adive* is still smaller and weaker than the *Chacal*. The *Isatis* is peculiar to the frigid zone, and shuns the woods; but the Cojote loves the woods, and inhabits warm and temperate countries.



wolf *Cuetlachtli*, and in some places where they do not speak Mexican properly, they call it *Tecuani*, which is a generic name for wild beasts. It is evident besides, from the very text of Hernandez, which we here subjoin (*f*), that neither the *Xoloitzcuintli* was transported from Europe to Mexico, nor was such a name given to it by Hernandez, but that it was the name by which the Mexicans themselves used to call it. Hernandez had seen that quadruped in Spain, because it had been transported there from Mexico, as he mentions himself, where he had also seen in the gardens of Philip II. several Mexican plants. But why has no author made mention of the *Xoloitzcuintli*? because neither before nor since his time has any one undertaken to write a history of Mexican quadrupeds; and the historians of that kingdom have been contented to mention some of the commonest animals. Moreover every wise and impartial person should necessarily give more credit to Hernandez in the Natural History of Mexico, as he employed himself in it so many years by order of king Philip II. and as he observed with his own eyes the animals of Mexico, of which he wrote and informed himself from the speech of the Mexicans themselves, whose language he learned, than to the count de Buffon, who, although more ingenious and more eloquent, had no other lights concerning Mexican animals than those which he procured from the works of Hernandez, or from the relations of some other author, not so deserving of credit as that learned and skilful naturalist.

The count de Buffon would make the *Tepeitzcuintli* of Hernandez, the glutton, a quadruped which is common in the northern countries of both continents; but whoever will compare the description which the count de Buffon makes of the glutton with that which Hernandez gives of the *Tepeitzcuintli*, will immediately discern the most striking difference between those two quadrupeds (*g*). The glutton is, according to the count de Buffon, a native of the cold countries of the North, the *tepeitzcuintli*, of the torrid zone; the glutton is, according to count

(*f*) *Pæter canes notos nostro orbi qui omnes pene ab Hispanis translati ab Indis in his plagis hodie educantur, tua alia offendas genera, quorum primum antequam huc me confurerem, vidi in Patria, ceteros vero neque conspexeram neque adhuc eo delatos puto. Primus Xoloitzcuintli vocatus alios corporis vincit magnitudine, &c. Hern. Hist. Quadrup. N. Hisp. cap. 20.*

(*g*) Buffon, *Hist. Nat.* tom. xxvii. Hernandez, *Hist. Quadrup. N. Hisp.* cap. xxi.

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de Buffon twice as large as the badger. The tepeitzcuintli is, as Hernandez says, *parvi canis magnitudine*. The glutton is so named on account of its incredible and dreadful voracity, which even impels it to dig up dead carcases to eat them; Hernandez says nothing of any such quality in the tepeitzcuintli, and he certainly would not have omitted what constitutes its chief character: on the contrary, he affirms that the tepeitzcuintli becomes domestic, and feeds upon the yolks of eggs and bread soaked in hot water; but a beast so carnivorous as the glutton could never support itself on such diet. In short, to omit other arguments of their diversity, the skin of the glutton is, as count de Buffon says, as valuable as that of the zibelline (*b*); but we do not know that the skin of the tepeitzcuintli was ever esteemed or made use of.

The xoloitzcuintli therefore being different from the wolf and the tepeitzcuintli from the glutton, and those four American quadrupeds of the class of dogs, being very different from each other in size, in disposition, and many other remarkable circumstances, notwithstanding that they couple together, and can procreate a third individual, which is fruitful, we ought to conclude that they are four different species; and therefore these three species, which count de Buffon has unjustly taken from America, ought to be restored to it.

We should never finish if we were to mention all the mistakes of this author respecting American quadrupeds: but merely to shew that the number of seventy species ascribed by him to America is not just, but different, and even contrary to what he has written in the course of his History, we shall subjoin to this dissertation a list of American quadrupeds taken from that history, to which we shall add the quadrupeds which he confounds with others which are different, and those which he has entirely omitted; from which it will appear how far he has been from the truth, in saying that in America there has been a prodigious scarcity of matter. For in order to determine such a scarcity, it is not enough to know that the species are few in number, but it would be necessary also to demonstrate that the individuals of

(*b*) Bomare says, that the skin of the glutton is more valued by the people of Kamtschatka than the zibelline; and that in Sweden it is much in demand, and very dear.

such species are also few in number; for if the individuals of the seventy species of American quadrupeds are more numerous than those of the one hundred and thirty species of the old continent, although the nature of them were less various, still it would not prove a greater scarcity of matter. It would be necessary, besides, to demonstrate, that the species of reptiles and birds are fewer, and also the individuals less numerous, as both of these serve to shew the abundance or scarcity of matter; but no one is so ignorant of the country of America, as to need to be informed of the incredible variety and surprising number of American birds. We should wish to know why nature, which has been so niggardly of quadrupeds to America, as count de Buffon and Mr. de Paw report, has been so prodigal of birds?

These authors, not contented with diminishing the species of American quadrupeds, attempt also to lessen their stature: "All the animals of America," says count de Buffon (*i*), "both those which have been transported by man, such as horses, asses, bulls, sheep, goats, hogs, dogs, &c. and those which passed there by themselves, such as wolves, foxes, deer, and alcos, are considerably smaller in size than they are in Europe:" and this, he adds, is the case *without any exception*. This astonishing effect he ascribes to the niggard sky of America, to the combination of the elements, and other natural causes. "There was not," says Mr. de Paw, "one large animal under the torrid zone of the old continent. The largest quadruped amongst the natives of that country which exists at present in the new world between the tropics, is the tapir, which is about the size of a calf (*k*)." "The most corpulent beast of the new continent," says count de Buffon, "is the tapir, which is about the size of a small mule; and next to it the cabiai, which is about the size of a middling hog."

We have already demonstrated, in the preceding Dissertation, that although we should grant to those philosophers the supposed smallness of American quadrupeds, nothing could from thence be concluded against the land or climate of America: as according to the principles established by Mr. de Buffon already quoted by us, the larger

(*i*) Hist. Nat. tom xviii.(*k*) Recherch. Philosoph. part iii. sect. 2.



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kind of animals are peculiar to intemperate climes, and the smaller kind to climes which are mild and temperate; and if the advantages of climate are to be deduced from the size of quadrupeds, we would unquestionably say, that the climate of Africa and the south of Asia is much better than that of Europe. But if in America, when it was first discovered by the Europeans, there were no elephants, rhinoceroses, sea-horses, camels, &c. they were however once there, if we give credit to de Paw, Sloane, Du Pratz, Lignay, and several other authors, who affirm the ancient existence of these great quadrupeds in America, founded on the discovery of bones, and entire skeletons of immense size, which were dug up in different places of the new world; likewise, if we believe what count de Buffon has written in the eighteenth volume of his History, there was formerly an animal seven times larger than the elephant, called by Mr. Muller the *Mammout* (*l*); but in Europe there never was, nor can there be, any quadruped of such a size. There were no horses, asses, or bulls (*m*) in America until they were transported there from Europe; but neither were these in Europe until they were transported there, or brought from Asia. All animals drew their origin from Asia, and thence spread through other countries; the neighbourhood of Europe, and the commerce of the Asiatics with the Europeans, facilitated the passage of these animals into Europe; and with these also were introduced there some customs and inventions useful to life, of which the Americans were deprived, on account of their distance from those countries, and the want of commerce.

When count de Buffon affirmed, that the largest quadruped of the new world was the tapir, and the next the cabiai, he had entirely lost memory of the morse, sea-calves, bufflers, rein-deer, alcos, bears, and

(*l*) According to the account given by Muller of this quadruped, it should be one hundred and thirty-three feet in length, and one hundred and five in height. The count de Buffon speaks thus of it in volume xvi. "The monstrous *mammout*, whose enormous bones we have frequently considered, and which we have conceived to be at least six times larger than those of the biggest elephant, exists no more." In volume xxii. he says, that he is assured that those immense bones have belonged to elephants seven or eight times larger than the one whose skeleton he had examined in the royal museum of Paris: but in his new work entitled *Epoques de la Nature*, he again affirms the former existence of that enormous quadruped in America.

(*m*) When we say there were no bulls in America, we allude only to the common species employed in agriculture; for there were *bifontes*; which the count de Buffon sometimes thinks to be the common species; at other times he is doubtful of it.

others. He himself confesses (*n*) that the sea-calf seen by lord Anson and Rogers in America, and by them called the sea-lion, was incomparably larger than all the sea-calves of the old world. Who would compare the cabiai, which is not larger than a middling hog, with the bufflers and alcos? The bufflers are equal in general to the common bulls of Europe, and often exceed them in size. Let us attend to the description which Bomare makes of one of these quadrupeds transported from Louisiana to France, and measured exactly by that naturalist at Paris, in the year 1769 (*o*). There was an immense multitude of these large quadrupeds in the temperate zone of North America. The alcos of New Mexico are of the size of a horse. There was a gentleman in the city of Zacatecas, who made use of them for his chariot instead of horses, according to the testimony of Betancourt; and sometimes they have been sent as presents to the king of Spain.

The universal position of the count de Buffon, that all the quadrupeds common to both continents are smaller in America *without any exception*, has been proved false by several European authors who have seen these animals; and even by count de Buffon himself, in other places of his History. Dr. Hernandez says of the *mextli*, or American lion, that it is larger than the lion of the same species of the old continent. Of the tyger he affirms the same (*p*). Neither the count de Buffon, nor Mr. de Paw have a just idea of this wild animal. We saw one a few hours after it was killed by nine shots: but it was much larger in size than we are made to believe by Mr. Buffon. Those authors, since they do not trust the accounts of Spaniards, ought at least to give credit to Mr. Condamine, the learned and impartial French author, who says that the tygers seen by him in the hot countries of the new world did not appear to him to differ

(*n*) Hist. Nat. tom. xxvii.

(*o*) Diction. d'Hist. Nat. V. Bison. Bomare calls that American animal on account of its great size the colossal quadruped; he says that its length from its snout to the beginning of its tail measured by its flanks was nine feet and two inches; its height from the summit of its back to its hoof, five feet and four inches; its thickness measured over the hunch of its back ten feet in circumference. He adds that he understood from the owner of that animal, that the females were still larger.

(*p*) *Vulgaris est huic orbi tygris, sed nostrate major.* Hist. Quad. N. Hisp. cap. x.

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from the African tygers, neither in the beauty of their colours, nor in their size. Of the Mexican wolf Hernandez says, that in figure, colour, and disposition, as well as in size it resembles the European wolf, except that it has a larger head (*q*). The same thing he affirms of the common deer, and Oviedo also of both the common and other deer. The count de Buffon, notwithstanding the universality of the position which he has laid down *without any exception*, concerning the smaller size of American quadrupeds, treating, in volume xxix. of the degeneracy of animals, he says, that deer are among the quadrupeds common to both continents those alone which are more large and strong in the new than they are in the old world; and speaking, in volume xvii. of the *lodra* of Canada, he confesses that they are larger than those of Europe; and the same thing he says of the American beaver: although he allowed no exception to his principle, he still admits those of the deer, *lodra*, beavers, and sea-calves. If to these we add the tygers, the lions without hair, and the stag, according to the testimony of Hernandez and Oviedo, we shall find at least eight species of quadrupeds common to both continents which are larger of their kind in the new than they are in the old world. To those above mentioned we ought also to add those quadrupeds which are equally large in both continents; as the latter as well as the former demonstrate the falsity of such a general principle. Hernandez affirms, that the Mexican wolf is of the same size with the European. Count de Buffon says, that there is no difference between them, except that the Mexican wolf has a finer skin, and five toes in its fore feet, and four in its hind feet. With respect to bears, there are at present many persons in Europe who have seen the bears of Mexico and those of the Alps. We do not believe that among all of these witnesses there will be found one who has acknowledged that the European bears are the larger of the two. For ourselves at least we can declare, that all those we have seen in Mexico appeared to be larger than those which we have seen in Italy (*r*).

(*q*) Forma, colore, moribus, ac mole corporis Lupo Nostrati similis est *Quetlachili*, atque adeo ejus, ut mihi videtur, speciei, sed ampliore capiti. Ibid. cap. xxiii.

(*r*) The count de Buffon distinguishes the species of black from that of brown bears, and affirms that the black bears are not at all ferocious; but the Mexican bears, which are all black, are extremely fierce, as is notorious in Mexico, of which also we can bear testimony.



It is therefore no just assertion that all the animals of the new world are without exception smaller than those of the old. The count de Buffon spoke at random when he affirmed in another place that the animals were all *much* smaller, and that nature had in the new world made use of a different scale of dimensions (*u*). It is easy also to demonstrate the mistake of Mr. de Paw, when he says that all the quadrupeds of America are a sixth less than their correspondents in the old continent. The Tuza of Mexico is analogous to the European mole, but is larger according to what count de Buffon says. That Mexican quadruped called by count de Buffon *coqualline*, and by us *tlahmototli*, is analogous to the European squirrel, and yet according to the same author is of twice its size. The coyote, analogous to the chacal, is of twice its size. The llama, or ram of Peru, analogous to the European ram, is beyond comparison larger, &c. But those philosophers are so eager to depreciate and undervalue its animals, that they even find subject for censure in their tails, in their feet, and in their teeth. “Not only,” says count de Buffon, “has there been a scarcity of matter in the new continent, but likewise the forms of its animals are imperfect, and appear to have been neglected. The animals of South America, which are those that properly belong to the new continent, are almost all deprived of tusks, horns, and tails: their shape is extravagant, their limbs disproportionate, and ill set; and some of them, like the ant-killers and sloths, are of so miserable a nature, that they have hardly ability to move, and to eat.” “The animals native to the new world,” says Mr. de Paw, “are in general of an ungraceful form; some of them so awkwardly made, that those who first made designs of them could hardly express their characters. It has been observed that the greater part of them want the tail, and have a particular irregularity in their feet. This is remarkable in the tapir, the ant-killer, the llama of Margraf, in the sloth, and the *cabeay*. The otriches, which in our continent have not more than two toes, united by a membrane, all have four in America, and those separated.”

(*u*) Hist. Nat. tom xxviii.

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Such a mode of reasoning is rather a censure of the conduct of providence than of the clime of America, and not unlike the sceptical opinions attributed to king Don Alphonso the Wise, respecting the disposition of the heavenly bodies. If the first individuals of those animals came not so from the hand of the Creator, but the clime of America has been the cause of their supposed irregularity, whenever those animals should be transported to Europe their forms would grow perfect, and their disposition and instinct also; at least after ten or twelve generations those miserable animals which the malignant clime of America has deprived of their tails, their horns, and their tusks, would recover them under a more benignant clime. No, those philosophers would say, because it is not so easy to recover from nature what is lost, as to lose what she has given; so that although those poor animals would not in the old continent recover their tails, their tusks, or their horns, still it must be allowed that the climate of America has been the cause of their losing them. Be it so. At present, however, we shall not treat of irregularities which consist in any deficiency but of those where there is an excess of matter. We allude at present to the ostriches, which, according to Mr. de Paw (x), have from a vice of nature, two extraordinary toes in each of their feet; but that we may not quit the quadrupeds, we shall mention the Unau, a species of American sloth, which amongst other of its irregularities, has got forty-six ribs. "The number of forty-six ribs in "an animal of so small a body," says Mr. de Buffon, "is a kind of "error or excess of nature; for no animal even among the largest, "or among those which have the longest body in proportion to their "thickness, has so many. The elephant has not more than forty, the "horse thirty-six, the badger thirty, the dog twenty-six, and man "twenty-four." If the first Unau which ever was, had the same number of ribs given it by the Creator which its posterity have at present, the reasoning held by Mr. de Buffon is a censure of Providence; and when he says that that excessive number of ribs has been an error of nature, he means an error of Providence, who is efficient

(x) Mr. de Paw is deceived with regard to the number of toes of the ostrich of America, for it has no more than three; although in the hinder part of its feet it has a round and callous swelling which serves in place of a talon, and by the vulgar is thought to be a toe.

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nature. We are certain such an idea is far from the elevated mind of the count de Buffon; but the spirit of philosophy, which runs through all his works, leads him sometimes into rather exceptionable expressions (*a*). If, on the contrary, those philosophers believe, that the Unau had originally a number of ribs proportioned to the size of its body, and that the malignant clime of America did increase them gradually afterwards, we ought to believe, that if that species of quadruped was transported to the old continent, and was bred under a more favouring sky, it would at last be restored to its primitive perfection. Let the experiment be made; let two or three males of this ungraceful species, and as many females, be transported there, and if, after twenty or more generations, it is found that their number of ribs begins to diminish, then we shall acknowledge that the land of America is the most unhappy, and its climate the most baneful in all the world. If it happens otherwise, we will say, as we shall henceforward say, that the logic of these gentlemen is more contemptible than that quadruped, and that their reasonings are mere paralogisms. In other respects it is truly to be wondered at in a country where there has been such a scarcity of matter, that nature should have made a transgression by an excess of it in the ribs of sloths, and in the toes of ostriches.

But to shew that those philosophers, while exerting themselves to fix the character of malignity on the climate of the new world, had totally lost recollection of the miseries of their own continent; let us ask them what is the most miserable animal in America, they will immediately answer, the sloth; because this animal is the most imperfect in its organization, the most incapable of motion, the most unprovided with arms for its defence, and above all, that it appears to have less sensations than any other quadruped; an animal, truly wretched, condemned by nature to inactivity, listlessness, famine, and melancholy, by which it continually excites the compassion and horror of

(*a*) The count de Buffon, desirous of assigning a reason why man resists the influence of climate better than the animals, says, in volume xviii. "Man is altogether the work of heaven, the animals in many respects are but productions of the earth." This proposition appears a little too bold; but we meet with many still stronger in his *Epoques de la Nature*.



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other species. But this class of quadrupeds, so famous for their misery, is common to both continents. Count de Buffon will not believe it, because it does not suit his system, and says, that if any sloth is found in Asia, it must have been transported there from America; but whatever he may say, it is certain, from the attestations of Klein, Linnaeus, Brisson, the publisher of the Cabinet of Seba, and above them all Vosmaer, a learned and diligent naturalist of Holland (*a*), that the Unau, one of the species of sloths, is an Asiatic animal. The Unau of Bengal, which has been seen, bred, and exactly described by this naturalist, cannot have been transported from America; for no commerce between South America and Asia has ever subsisted. Besides, the Unau of Bengal differs from that of America: the former has five, the latter only two toes to its feet. If the count de Buffon is persuaded that the climate of Asia could increase the number of toes of the American quadruped, we would then say to those quadrupeds that the climate of the old continent would be capable of restoring the tails, horns, and tusks, of which the pernicious climate of America has deprived them. Whoever will read the eloquent description given of the American sloth by the count de Buffon, and compare it with that given by Mr. Vosmaer of the sloth *pentadactylus* of Bengal, will soon perceive that this Asiatic quadruped is as miserable as those of America.

But let us philosophically examine what those authors say respecting the supposed irregularity of those quadrupeds. Real irregularity in animals is some disproportion of their limbs, or singularity in the form, or in the dispositions of some individuals with respect to the generality of their species, not that which is observed in a new species compared with one which is known. It would be extremely absurd to consider the *teckichi* an irregular animal, because it does not bark. This is an American quadruped, which, from its resemblance to European dogs, was called dog by the Spaniards: not because it was of the same species: and from thence rose the fable propagated by not a few authors, that in America dogs were mute. Wolves are extreme-

(*b*) *Description de plusieurs Animaux.* A work printed at Amsterdam.

ly similar to dogs, but they do not bark. If the first Spaniards who went to Mexico had not seen wolves in Europe, when they saw those of Mexico they would have reported, that there were large dogs there which could not be tamed, and that they did not bark but howled. And this would have furnished count de Buffon and Mr. de Paw with a new argument to prove the degeneracy and irregularity of American animals.

The argument of Mr. de Paw concerning American ostriches has no more weight. The *Touyou* is an American bird specifically different from the ostrich; but because it is large, and very similar to that African bird, it has been vulgarly called ostrich. This is sufficient to make Mr. de Paw affirm that there is irregularity in those American birds; but if we should allow that the *Touyou* is truly an ostrich he could not make out his position. He would make us believe the American ostrich irregular, because instead of having only two toes united by a membrane like the African, it has four separate toes. But an American might say that the African ostrich is rather irregular, because instead of having four separate toes, it has only two, and those united by means of a membrane. "No," Mr. de Paw would reply in rage, "it is not so: the irregularity is certainly in your ostriches, because they do not conform with those of the old world which are the original species; nor with the representation which the most famous naturalists of Europe have left us of such birds." "Our world," the American would return, "which you call new, because three centuries ago it was not discovered by you, is as ancient as yours, and our animals are cotemporary with yours. They are under no necessity of conforming with your animals, neither are we to blame that the species of our animals have been unknown to your naturalists, or confounded by a superficial knowledge of them. Therefore either your ostriches are irregular because they do not conform with ours; or at least ours ought not to be called irregular because they do not conform with yours. Until you demonstrate to us by incontestible proofs, that the first ostriches came from the hand of the Creator with only two toes

(c) In Peru the ostrich is known by the name of Suri.

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“ united by a membrane, you will never persuade us of the irregularity of our Touyou.” This mode of argument, which is without doubt unanswerable, is sufficient to defeat the systems adopted by those philosophers, arising from slight and indigested ideas, and strong prepossessions in favour of the old continent.

Those philosophers are not more happy in their discourses on the tails of quadrupeds than in their observations on the feet of ostriches. They say directly, and without any regard to truth, that the greater part of the quadrupeds of the new continent are totally destitute of tails; which, like all the other effects observed by them in those unfortunate countries, they ascribe to the misery of the American sky, to the infancy of nature in that part of the world, to the fatality of the climate, and other combinations of the elements. Thus those celebrated philosophers of this enlightened century reason. But there being, according to count de Buffon, seventy species of American quadrupeds, it would be necessary that at least forty of them were without tails in order to verify what Mr. de Paw has said, that the majority of them were deprived of this member; and many more would be requisite to prove true, that almost all the quadrupeds were unfurnished with tails as count de Buffon affirms. However, animals of this description in America, as we shall presently find, are only six in number, therefore the proposition is a monstrous hyperbole, not to say an idle falsehood.

It appears that in the time of Pliny no other animals were known to be without tails but man and the ape. If since that time there had been no other animal unfurnished with such member discovered in the old continent, count de Buffon and M. de Paw would have been right in taxing the American quadrupeds with it; but from the History of count de Buffon it is evident, the species without tails are more numerous in the old continent than in America. Here follows a list of both, extracted from the History of count de Buffon.

#### Quadrupeds without tails in the old continent.

1. The *Pongo*, or Orang Outang, or Satyr or Man of the Woods.
2. The *Pithecus*, or Proper Ape.

3. The



3. The *Gibbon*, another species of ape.
4. The *Cynocephalus*, or Magoto.
5. The Turkiih dog.
6. The *Tanrec* of Madagascar.
7. The *Loris* of Ceylon.
8. The Indian Pig.
9. The *Rouffette* }
10. The *Rougette* } Two species of great bats of Asia.
11. The golden mole of Siberia,

To which the three following should be added :

12. The five-toed sloth of Bengal, described by Vosmaer.
13. The *Klipda*, or bastard marmot, of the Cape of Good Hope, described by Vosmaer.
14. The *Capiverd*, or *Capivard* of the Cape of Good Hope, described by Bomare.

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1. The Unau species of sloth.
2. The *Cabeay*, or amphibious hog.
3. The *Aperea* of Brasil.
4. The Indian pig.
5. The *Saino*, *Pecar*, or *Cojametl*.
6. The *Tapeto*.

Therefore in the old continent there are at least fourteen species of quadrupeds (*d*) unfurnished with tails, and in America only six, of which we might except the two last, as they are uncertain (*e*). In all the thirty volumes of the History of Quadrupeds of count de Buffon,

(*d*) To the fourteen species above mentioned we might add the Unau *Dydaelytus* of Ceylon, mentioned by several authors, and the Porte-muse, described by Mr. Aubenton and Bomare ; but we omit the first, because we are not certain that it is different from the *Loris* of Buffon ; we pass the second also, because it may have some little tail, although the diligent M. d' Aubenton did not find it.

(*e*) The Pecar is described by Oviedo, Hernandez, and Acosta, under the names *Saino* and *Cojametl* ; but they say nothing of its want of a tail. We have been informed by accurate and distinct persons, who have seen many Pecars, that they had a tail, although it was small. With respect to the Tapeto, the count de Buffon believes it to be the *Citli* of Hernandez. But all Mexicans know that the *Citli* of Hernandez is the hare of Mexico, and we are certain it has a tail like the common hare of Europe.

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we have found no other American animal without a tail except those above mentioned: and notwithstanding he ventured to affirm that in the new world almost all the animals were deprived of tails; it appears from hence that such universal propositions are as easily offered as they are difficult of proof.

If the clime of America is so pernicious to the tails of animals, how comes it that while four species of apes of the old continent are deprived of such a member, namely, the *Pongo*, the *Pithecius*, the *Gibbon*, and the *Cynocephalus*, all the species of apes of the new world have them, and some, such as the *Saki*, have tails so long that they are twice the length of their bodies; why do squirrels, *Coquallines*, ant-killers, and other such quadrupeds, abound in America, which are furnished with such enormous tails in proportion to their bodies? Why has the marmot of Canada, although it is of the same species with that of the Alps, a larger tail, as count de Buffon himself confesses? Why have the deer of America, although smaller than those of the old continent, a longer tail, as the same author affirms (*f*)? If the climate of America was ever possessed of some principle destructive to tails of animals, those which Columbus transported there from Europe, and the Canary Isles, in 1493, would have by this time lost all tail, particularly hogs, which carried such short tails there, or at least they would have been remarkably shortened after two hundred and eighty-eight years; but among all the Europeans who have seen the sheep, horses, oxen, &c. bred in America, and those which were bred at the same time in Europe, there has not been one writer who could find any difference between the tails of the one and the other.

This same argument is equally valid against what count de Buffon says upon the want of horns, and tusks in the greater part of American quadrupeds, as the oxen, the sheep, and goats, preserve without change their horns, the dogs and hogs their teeth, and the cats their nails, as all those who have seen and compared them with those of Europe can testify. If the clime of America was so destructive to the teeth and horns of animals, a number of them would have been lost, at least by the posterity of those quadrupeds of Europe, which were transported

(*f*) Hist. Nat. tom. xviii.

there almost three centuries ago, and much more the generations of wolves, bears, and other similar quadrupeds, which passed there from Asia, perhaps in the first century after the deluge. If, on the contrary, the temperate zone of Europe is more propitious to the teeth of animals than the torrid zone of the new world, why did nature give to the latter, and not to the former, the tapir and crocodile, which in number, size, and sharpness of their teeth, exceed all the quadrupeds and reptiles of Europe?

Lastly, If there are some animals in America without horns, without teeth (*g*), and without tails, it is not owing to the climate or niggard sky of America, or any imaginary combination of the elements, but because the Creator, whose works and whose counsels we should humbly revere, chose it so, that such variety might serve to embellish the universe, and make his wisdom and his power more conspicuous. What gives beauty to some animals would render others deformed. It is perfection in a horse to have a large tail, in the stag to have a small one, and in the Pongo to have none at all.

With respect to what our philosophers say of the ugliness of the animals of America, it is true, that among so many, there are some whose forms do not correspond with the ideas which we entertain of the beauty of beasts; but who has assured us, that our ideas are just, and not imperfect, and occasioned by the narrowness of our minds? And how many animals could we not find in the old continent still worse formed than any beast of America? What quadruped is there in America which can be compared, in the deformity and disproportion, of its limbs with the elephant, called by the count de Buffon a *monster of matter* (*h*)? Its vast mass of flesh, higher than it is long, its

(*g*) Among all the quadrupeds of the new world, the ant-killers alone are destitute of teeth, like the *Pangolino* and *Tatagino* of the East Indies, which quadrupeds are covered with scales in stead of hair. All those quadrupeds which feed on nothing but ants have no occasion for teeth; but they are furnished by the Creator with a long tongue, with which they can dexterously lick up the ants and swallow them.

(*h*) En considerant cet animal, (says Fomare of the elephant) relativement à l'idée, qui nous avons de la justesse des proportions, il semble mal-proportionné a cause de son corps gros et court, des ses jambes roides et mal-formées, des ses pieds ronds et tortus, de sa tête grosse, de ses petits yeux et des ses grandes oreilles; on pourroit dire aussi que l'habit dont il est couvert est encore plus mal taille et plus mal fait. Sa trompe, ses defenses, ses pieds le rendent aussi extraordinaire que la grandeur de sa taille.



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disgustful skin without hair and furrowed with wrinkles; its enormous trunk instead of a nose; its long teeth placed without its most hideous mouth, and turned upwards, contrary to what is observed in other animals, in order to increase the deformity of its face; its vast polygonous ears; its thick, crooked, and proportionably small legs; its unformed feet, with toes scarcely distinguished; and lastly, its diminutive eyes and ridiculously small tail to a body so immense, are all circumstances which render the elephant a most irregular quadruped. We challenge our philosophers to find in the new world an animal more disproportioned, or whose form is more ungraceful. Similar reflections arise from viewing the camel, the *Macaco*, of which count de Buffon says that it is *hideously deformed*, and more so than all other animals of the old continent; we dare not, however, blame the clime to which they belong, nor censure the Supreme Artificer who formed them.

What our philosophers say with respect to the smaller ferocity of American wild beasts, instead of assisting them to prove the malignity of that clime, serves only to demonstrate its mildness and bounty. "In America," says count de Buffon, "where the air and the land are more mild than those of Africa, the tyger, the lion, and the panther are terrible only in name . . . They have degenerated, if fierceness joined to cruelty made their nature; or, to speak more properly, they have only suffered the influence of the climate." What more can be desired in favour of the climate of America? Why, therefore, does he ever adduce the smaller ferocity of American animals as an argument of their degeneracy occasioned by the malignity of that clime? If the climate of the old continent should be esteemed better than that of the new world, because under the former the wild beasts are found more terrible, for the same reason the climate of Africa ought to be esteemed incomparably more excellent than that of Europe. This argument, which we have already made use of, might be carried much farther to the confusion of our philosophers.

But those authors have not a just idea of American animals. It is true that the *Messé*, or Mexican lion, is not to be compared with the celebrated lions of Africa. The latter species either never did pass into the new world, or was extirpated by man; but the former does

not

not yield to those of its species, or the lion without hair of the old continent, according to the testimony of Hernandez, who knew both the one and the other. The Mexican tyger, whether it is or is not of the same species with the royal tyger of Africa, as that is of no importance, has surprising strength and ferocity. There is no quadruped, among those of Europe or America, which can be opposed to it. It intrepidly attacks and tears men, deer, horses, bulls, and even the most monstrous crocodiles, as Acosta affirms. This learned author vaunts both its intrepidity and swiftness. G. de Oviedo, who had travelled through many countries of Europe, and was not ignorant of natural history, speaking of those American tygers, says, "They are animals very strong in the legs, well armed with claws, and so terrible, that, in my judgment, none of the greatest royal lions can rival their strength and ferocity." The tyger is the terror of the American woods; it is not possible to tame it or catch it when it is grown up: those which are taken when young are not to be kept without danger, unless they are shut up in the strongest cages of wood or iron. Such is the character of those animals which are called cowardly by Mr. de Paw and other authors, who were unable to distinguish the species of quadrupeds with spotted skins.

It is however certain, that those authors shew themselves as credulous of every thing they find written concerning the size, strength, and intrepidity of the royal tygers of the old continent, as they are obstinate in denying faith to what eye-witnesses say of American tygers. Count de Buffon believes, upon the attestation of we do not know what author, that the royal tyger is from thirteen to fourteen feet in length, and five in height; that it will engage with three elephants, kill a buffalo, and drag it wherever it pleases, and other similar absurdities, which can only gain belief from those who are prejudiced in favour of the old continent. If some authors deserving of faith should relate of the American tygers a few of the particulars which are told of Asiatic tygers they would be considered as idle exaggerating boasters (*i*). The account which Pliny (*k*) gives of the artifices of hunters in robbing the

(*i*) It is sufficient to observe the little credit given by these authors to the testimony of Mr. Candamine, notwithstanding the esteem in which they held that learned mathematician.

(*k*) Nat. Hist. lib. viii. cap. 18.

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tyger of its young, and the coolness of temper with which it carries them off again one by one, and that which Bomare relates (*k*) of the combat in the year 1764, in Windsor forest, in England, between the stag and a tyger brought from India to the duke of Cumberland, in which the stag came off conqueror, shews us that the ferocity of those Asiatic wild beasts is not so great as count de Buffon and Mr. de Paw represent it.

The American wolves are not less strong nor bold than those of the old continent, as all who have had any experience of them both know. Even stags, which as Pliny says, are very tranquil animals, are so daring in Mexico, that they frequently attack the hunters; this fact is testified by Hernandez, and is notorious in that kingdom; we have seen in our own dwelling the vicious nature of a stag, which had become almost domestic, shew itself most cruelly upon an American girl.

But let the American quadrupeds be smaller in size, more ungraceful in form, and more pusillanimous in their nature; let us grant to those philosophers that from such a position the happiness of the climate of the old continent is to be deduced; they will not still persuade us, that it is a full proof and a certain argument of the malignity of the American climate, while they do not shew us in the reptiles and birds of America (*l*) the same degeneracy which they suppose in quadrupeds. Mr. de Paw says of American crocodiles, whose ferocity is notorious, that it appears from the observations of Mr. du Pratz, and others, that they have not the fury and impetuosity of those of Africa. But Hernandez, who knew both the one and the other, found no difference between them (*m*). Acosta says, that those of America are extremely fierce, but slow; but this slowness is not in a progressive line forwards, in which motion they are

(*k*) Bomare Diction. d'Histoire Nat. V. Tigre.

(*l*) The count de Buffon might say, as he observes in vol. xviii. that we ought not to consider the birds with respect to climate in this particular, because it being easy for them to pass from one climate to another, it would be almost impossible to determine which belonged properly to the one or to the other. But as the cause of the passage of birds is the cold or the heat of the seasons, which they wish to avoid, on this account the American birds have no occasion to leave their continent, because there they have countries of every sort of climate to shelter themselves from every hurtful season, and where they can always find their food. We are altogether certain, that the Mexican birds do not travel to the old continent.

(*m*) Hern. Hist. Nat. lib. ix. cap. 3.

most



most swift and active, but in turning only, or bending from one side to another, as is the case with the crocodiles of Africa, on account of the inflexibility of their *vertebræ*. Hernandez affirms that the *Acuetzpalin* or Mexican crocodile flies from those who attack it, but pursues those who fly from it, although the former case happens more seldom than the latter. Pliny says the same thing of African crocodiles (*n*). In short, if we compare what Pliny says of the latter with what Hernandez says of the former, it will appear that there is not even a difference of size between them (*o*).

With regard to birds, Mr. de Paw makes mention only of ostriches, and that so negligently as we have shewn. He certainly designed to be silent on this subject, discovering that on this side his cause was lost, for whether we consider number or variety of species, intrepidity, or beauty of plumage, and excellence of song, the old continent cannot be compared with America as to birds. Of their surprising multitude we have already spoken. The fields, the woods, the rivers, the lakes, and even inhabited places are filled with innumerable species. Gemelli, who had made the tour of the world, and seen the best countries of Asia, Africa, and Europe, declares that there is not a country in the world which can compare with New Spain in the beauty and variety of its birds (*p*). See what is said by the historians of New France, Louisiana, Brasil, and other countries of the new world, on this subject.

Of the strength and courage of American birds many European authors worthy of credit make mention. Hernandez, who had so much experience of birds of prey, in the court of Philip II. king of Spain, at the time when hawking was most in vogue, and had observed also those of Mexico, confesses when he talks of the *Quauhlotli*, or Mexican falcon, that all the birds of this class are better and more

(*n*) *Terribilis hæc contra fugaces bellua est, fugax contra insequentes.* Plin. Hist. Nat. lib. viii. cap. 25.

(*o*) Pliny says that the African crocodile is often more than eighteen cubits, or twenty-seven Roman feet in length. Hernandez affirms that the Mexican crocodile is usually more than seven paces long. If he speaks of Castilian paces, they make almost twenty-eight Roman feet; if he speaks of Roman paces, they will make thirty-five feet, so that the difference is trifling, or if there is any it is in favour of the American crocodile.

(*p*) *Ella è tanta la vaghezza e la varietà degli uccelli della N. Spagna che non v'è paese al mondo, che ne abbia pari.* Giro del Mondo. tom. vi. lib. ii. cap. 9.

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courageous in New Spain, than they are in the old continent (q). On account of the excellence of the Mexican falcons having been known and acknowledged, Charles the V. ordered that every year fifty hawks should be sent to him from New Spain, and as many from the island of Hispaniola, as the historian Herrera attests; and Acofta relates, that the falcons of Mexico and Peru, because they were much esteemed, were sent in presents to the grandees of Spain. Acofta also says, that the condors, or Mexican vultures, are of an immense size, and have so much strength, that they not only tear a ram, but even a calf; and D. A. Ulloa testifies, that a stroke of their wing will knock down a man (r). Hernandez says, that the *Itzquauhtli*, or royal eagle of Mexico, attacks men, and even the fiercest quadrupeds. If the climate of America had taken from the quadrupeds their strength and courage, it would without doubt have produced the same effect on birds: but from the testimony of the above mentioned writers, and other European authors, it is manifest that they are not feeble or pusillanimous, but that they excel those of the old continent in intrepidity and strength.

With respect to the beauty of birds, those authors do not refuse the superiority to America, although in other respects they have so eagerly depreciated the new world. Whoever would form to himself a competent idea of them, may consult Oviedo, Hernandez, Acofta, Ulloa, and other European authors, who have seen the birds of America. In New Spain, says Acofta, there is a great plenty of birds adorned with such beautiful plumage, that they are not equalled by any in Europe.

It is true, say many European authors, that American birds are superior in beauty of plumage, but not in excellence of song, in which they are exceeded by those of Europe. So think two modern Italians (s):  
but

(q) *Fateor accipitrum omne genus apud hanc novam Hispaniam, Jucatanicamve provinciam repertum præstantius esse atque animosius veteri in orbe natis.* Hernandez de Avibus N. Hisp. cap. 92.

(r) The condor is so large as to measure from fourteen to sixteen feet from tip to tip of the wings when extended. Bomare says it is common to both continents; and that the Swiss call it the *laemmer-geyer*; but notwithstanding this, it is certain that no bird of prey has been found yet on the old continent equal in size and strength to the condor of America.

(s) The author of a certain Dissertation metaphysical and political, *Sulla Proportione de' Talenti*

but however learned they are in certain speculative subjects, they are equally ignorant of the productions of America: it will be sufficient, in order to confute those authors, to subjoin the testimony of Hernandez to this point (*t*); who, after having heard the singing of the best nightingales at the court of Philip II. heard for many years the *centzontli* or polyglots, the cardinals *tigrets*, the *cuitlaccobis*, and other innumerable species of vulgar singing birds in Mexico unknown in Europe, besides the nightingales, *calderines* calandras, and others common to both continents. Among the singing birds most esteemed in Europe the nightingale is the most celebrated, but it sings still better in America, according to the affirmation of Mr. Bomare. The nightingale of Louisiana is, he says, the same with that of Europe; but it is more tame and familiar, and sings the whole year, and has a more varied song. These are three considerable advantages which it possesses over the European bird. But although there were not in America either nightingales, calandras, or any one of those birds which are esteemed in Europe for their song, the centzontli or polyglot alone would be sufficient to excite the envy of any country in the world. We are free to declare to our Anti-american philosophers, that what Hernandez says of the excellence of the polyglot over the nightingale is extremely true, and agreeable to the opinion of many Europeans who have been in Mexico, and also of many Mexicans who have been in Europe. Besides the singular sweetness of its song, the prodigious variety of its notes, and its agreeable talent in counterfeiting the different tones of the birds and quadrupeds which it hears (*u*); it is less

*Talenti e del loro Ufo*, in which he has written most preposterous particulars respecting America, and shewn himself as ignorant as a child of the land, the climate, the animals and the inhabitants of that new world. The other is the author of some beautiful Italian fables in one of which an American bird holds a discourse with a nightingale.

(*t*) In caveis quibus detinetur, suavissime cantat; nec est avis ulla, animalve ejus vocem non reddat luculentissime et exquisitissime æmuletur. Quid? Philomelam nostram longo superat intervallo, ejus suavissimum concentum tantopere laudant celebrantque, vetulli auctores, et quidquid avicularum apud nostrum orbem cantu auditur suavissimum. Hernandez de Avibus N. Hiép. cap. 30 de centzontlatole five centzontli.

Linnaeus calls the centzontli *orpheus*. Other authors call it *mocqueur*, the mocking-bird, or Bestardo.

(*u*) Mr. Barrington, vice-president of the Royal Society of London, says, in a curious work he has written on the singing of birds, and presented to that learned academy, that he heard a polyglot which counterfeited in the space of one single minute, the singing of the lark, the chaffinch, the black-bird, the sparrow, and the thrush.



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fly than the nightingale, and more common, as its species is one of the most numerous. If we were disposed to reason in the manner of Mr. de Paw, we could, in order to demonstrate the benignity of the American clime, add, that some birds which are not valued in Europe for their singing, sing much better in America. The sparrows, says Valdecebro, an European author, which do not sing in Spain, are in New Spain better than *calderines* (x).

What we observe of singing birds may be applied also to those which imitate the human voice; for in Asia and Africa the species of parrots are neither so many nor so numerous as they are in America.

But as we are discoursing of birds, we will, before we end this subject, make an obvious reflection. There is not an American animal which draws so much reproach upon it from our philosophers as the sloth, on account of its astonishing indolence and inability of motion. But what would they say if there was a bird of this nature? This would certainly be the most irregular animal in the world, for such an inactivity or slowness is more preposterous in a bird than a quadruped. But where is this bird? In the old continent, and has been described by count de Buffon; who says that the *Dronte*, a bird of the East Indies, larger than the swan, is among birds what the sloth is among quadrupeds: it appears, he says, a turtle in the cloathing of a bird; and nature in granting it those useless ornaments, wings and tail, seems to have intended to add embarrassment to its weight, and irregularity of motion to the inactivity of its body, and to make its cumbrous largeness still more afflicting, by putting it in remembrance that it is a bird.

From what we have said we cannot avoid concluding, that the sky of America is not niggardly, nor its climate unfavourable to the generation of animals; that there has been no scarcity of matter, nor has nature made use of a different scale of proportions in that region: that what count de Buffon, and Mr. de Paw have said of the smallness, of the irregularity and defects of American quadrupeds is erroneous, or rather a series of errors: and though it was true, it would be of no assistance

(x) In a work entitled *Gobierno de las Aves*, lib. v. cap. 29. But we have already observed, that the Mexican sparrow, though resembling, is different from, the true sparrow.

to prove the malignity of the climate of America. But we shall now enquire whether they have done less wrong to the new world in what they say of the supposed degeneracy of quadrupeds transported there from Europe.

## S E C T. II.

*Of the Animals transported from Europe to America.*

ALL the animals transported from Europe to America, such as horses, asses, bulls, sheep, goats, hogs, and dogs, are, says count de Buffon, *considerably smaller there* than they are in Europe, and that, *without one single exception*. If we seek for the proof of so general, or rather an universal assertion, we shall find no other in all the history of that philosopher, than, that cows, sheep, goats, hogs, and dogs are smaller in Canada than they are in France. The European or Asiatic animals, says Mr. de Paw, that were transported to America immediately after its discovery, have degenerated, their corpulence has diminished, and they have lost a portion of their instinct and genius: the cartilages or fibres of their flesh have become more rigid and more gross. Such is the general conclusion of Mr. de Paw. Let us now attend to the proofs. First, The flesh of oxen in the island of Hispaniola is so fibrous than it can hardly be eaten; secondly, the hogs in the island of Cubagua changed in a short time their forms to such a degree, that they could hardly be known again; their nails grew so much that they were half a palm in length. Thirdly, Sheep suffered a great alteration in Barbadoes. Fourthly, Dogs transported from their own countries lose their voice, and cease to bark, in the greater part of the regions of the new continent. Fifthly, The cold of Peru incapacitated camels carried there from Africa, in their organs of generation. Such are the arguments which those philosophers use to ascertain the degeneracy of animals of the old continent, in the new world; arguments which, if they were true, would not be sufficient to prove so universal a position: because of what importance is it that the flesh of oxen is so fibrous in the island of Hispaniola, if in all the other parts of America it is good, and

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in many, particularly in all those of Mexico which are situated on the coast of the Pacific Ocean, equal to the best in Europe, and possibly better? What signifies it that sheep have undergone some change in Barbadoes, and other hot countries, if, in the temperate countries of Mexico and South America they continue the same as they came there from Spain? What does it avail that hogs have become disfigured in Cubagua, a miserable little island, deprived of water and every thing necessary for life, if in other parts of America they have acquired, as Mr. de Paw says himself, an extraordinary corpulence and their flesh has become so improved, that the physicians there, prescribe it to the sick in preference to all other meat. If the hogs, having grown disfigured in Cubagua, it does not prove that the clime of America is not the most suitable to them, why should the sheep having suffered some change in Barbadoes, the flesh of oxen having become more fibrous in Hispaniola, and some quadrupeds having grown less in Canada, serve to prove that the clime of America in general is unfavourable to the generation of animals, to their corpulence and instinct?

If such logic was to be tolerated, we could adduce much stronger arguments against the climate of the old continent without making use of any other materials than those that are furnished to us by count de Buffon in his Natural History. Camels have never multiplied, as he says, in Spain, although that clime of all the climes of Europe is the least contrary to their nature. Oxen have degenerated in Barbary, and in Iceland they have lost their horns. Sheep, says count de Buffon, have degenerated in our country from their first existence in it; and in all the hot countries of the old continent they change their wool into hair. Goats have grown small in Guinea and other countries. In Lapland dogs have become extremely small and deformed, and those of the temperate climes when transported into cold climes cease to bark, and after the first generation are born with strait ears. From the accounts of travellers it is certain that mastiffs, grey-hounds, and other breeds of dogs of Europe transported to Madagascar, Calcutta, Madeira, and Malabar, degenerate after the second or third generation, and that in excessive hot countries, such as Guinea and Senegal, this degeneration is more rapid; as in the space of three or four years they



they lose their hair, and their voice. Stags in mountainous countries which are hot and dry, such as those of Corsica and Sardinia, have lost a half of their corpulence. If to these and other accounts given us by count de Buffon we were to add those of many other authors, what examples should we not have of the degeneracy of animals in the old continent, more numerous and true than those of our philosophers? But that we may expose the exaggeration and falsity which belong to their examples let us examine one by one the species of Asiatic and European animals transported into the new world which by them are said to have degenerated.

## C A M E L S.

A M O N G all the quadrupeds transported to America, says Mr. de Paw, the camels are unquestionably those which have thriven the least. In the beginning of the sixteenth century some of them were transported from Africa to Peru, where the cold disabled the organs necessary for their production, and they left no posterity. Setting aside the chronological error into which he falls, as being immaterial to our purpose (z), if it was cold that destroyed the species of camels in America, the same thing would have happened in the European northern countries, where the cold is beyond comparison greater than in any country whatever of Peru. If cold was the cause of their extirpation, let Mr. de Paw blame those who settled those quadrupeds in places unsuitable to their nature, and not America, where there are lands that are hot and dry, and proper for the subsistence of Camels. The same experiment which was made in Peru with camels, was also made in Spain, and with the same want of success; but still there are no persons who will doubt that the climate of the latter is one of the most mild and temperate in Europe. Count de Buffon says, that if proper precautions were taken, those animals would succeed not only in America but in Spain: and there is no doubt that they would prosper very well in New Galicia. Besides, it is false

(x) Hist. Nat. tom. xviii.

(y) Recherch. Philosoph. part. i.

(z) Camels were not transported to Peru in the beginning of the sixteenth century, because that country was not then discovered; but towards the middle of that century, as Herrera shews in his Decades.

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that the camels which were transported to Peru did not leave any posterity; for Acoſta, who went there ſome years after, found that they had multiplied, though but a little (z).

## O X E N.

THIS is one of thoſe ſpecies of animals which our philoſophers imagine to have degenerated in America; which effect they attribute to the clime. But if poſſibly in Canada the oxen have loſt part of their corpulence, as count de Buffon affirms, and if their fleſh has become fibrous in Hiſpaniola, as Mr. de Paw would inſinuate, this at leaſt is not the caſe in the greater part of the countries of the new world, in which the multitude and ſize of thoſe animals, and the goodneſs of their fleſh, demonſtrate how favourable the climate is to their propagation. Their prodigious multiplication in thoſe countries is atteſted by many authors both ancient and modern. Acoſta relates (z), that in the fleet in which he returned from New to Old Spain, in 1587, about ſixty years after the firſt bulls and cows had been transported to Mexico, they carried with them from that country ſixty-four thouſand three hundred ſixty ox hides; and from Hiſpaniola alone, which Mr. de Paw believes ſo unfavourable to the propagation of thoſe quadrupeds, thirty-five thouſand four hundred and forty-four ox hides. We do not doubt, that if the number of bulls and cows carried from the old continent to the new, was compared with the number of hides returned by America to Europe, there would be found more than five millions of hides for every one of thoſe animals. Valdeobro, a Dominican Spaniard, who lived ſome years in Mexico, towards the middle of the laſt century, relates, as a fact which was notorious that the cows belonging to D. G. Ordugna, a private gentleman, yielded him in one year thirty-fix thouſand calves (a), which produce could not ariſe from a herd of leſs than two hundred thouſand bulls and cows taken together. At preſent there are many private perſons who are owners of herds of fifty thouſand head of cattle. But nothing can ſhew the aſtoniſhing multiplication of thoſe quadrupeds ſo well as the cheapneſs of them in thoſe countries in which they are neceſſary for the

(z) Hiſtor. Nat. y Mor. lib. iv. cap. 33.

(a) In his work entitled *Gobierno de Animales*, lib. iv. cap. 34.

subsistence of man, and the labours of the field, and where, on account of the abundance of silver, every thing is sold dear (*c*). In short, oxen have multiplied in Mexico, in Paraguay, and other countries of the new world more than in *more ancient* Italy (*d*).

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With respect to the size of American oxen it is easy to gain perfect information, as ships loaded with their skins frequently arrive at Lisbon and at Cadiz (*e*). Let Mr. de Paw, therefore, or any person who maintains the degeneracy of European animals in the new world, measure fifty or one hundred of those hides, and if they are found smaller than those of the common oxen in Europe, we shall immediately confess, that the climate of America has shortened their bodies, and there is a scarcity of matter there; on the contrary, they ought to confess that their information and intelligence is false, their observations ill founded, and their system visionary and chimerical: but that they may understand why we ought not to trust to their knowledge, G. Oviedo, who was one of the first peoplers of the island of Hispaniola, and sojourned there some years, discoursing of the oxen of that island, the flesh of which, Mr. de Paw says cannot be eaten because it is so fibrous, says that “the herds there are more numerous, and more beautiful, than any in Spain; and as the air in those regions is mild and never cold, the oxen never become meagre, nor is their flesh ever of a bad taste.” Count de Buffon affirms that cold countries are more favourable than

(*c*) In the country round Mexico, the capital of New Spain, although it is well peopled, a pair of oxen for the plough are sold for ten sequins, and bulls by wholesale at forty-five paolis each. In the country round Guadalaxara, the capital of New Galicia, a pair of good oxen are worth from six to seven sequins, a cow twenty-five paoli. In many other countries of that kingdom, those animals are sold for less. In many places of the provinces on the river of Plata a cow is to be had for five paoli. According to an account we have obtained from a person of credit, well acquainted with the provinces on the above river, the oxen which are in herds amount to about five millions in number, and it is computed there are about two millions running wild in the woods.

(*d*) Timeus, a Greek author, and Varro, both cited by Aulus Gellius (Noct. Attic. lib. ii. cap. 1.) have said that Italy was so called from the abundance of oxen in it, which in the ancient Greek language were called *ιταλοι*: whence Gellius affirms that *italia* signifies *armentosissima*.

(*e*) Every person knows that no country has more commerce with Spain in ox-hides than Paraguay, from whence vessels are sent entirely loaded with them. We have been informed by persons of credit who were experienced in that country, that the skins that were carried from thence to Spain, are at least three *varas* (a Spanish measure) long, and many are four, or more than ten Parisian feet. There are not, we conceive, three countries in Europe where oxen grow to such a size.

hot



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hot to oxen; but this is not the case in New Spain: as although the oxen of cold and temperate countries may be excellent, yet the oxen of warm countries are better. The flesh of these animals in maritime lands is so admired, that it is sent to the capital by way of present from places at two and three hundred miles distance.

### S H E E P.

COUNT de Buffon confesses (*e*) that sheep have not succeeded so well in the hot as in the cold countries of the new continent; but he adds, that although they have multiplied considerably, they are, notwithstanding, more meagre, and their flesh is less juicy, and less tender than it is in Europe, from which it appears that he has not been well informed. In the hot countries of the new world sheep in general do not thrive, and the flesh of wethers is not good; at this, however, we need not wonder, as the hot climes in the old continent are so pernicious to sheep that, as count de Buffon himself says, they become clothed with hair instead of wool. In the cold and temperate countries of New Spain they have multiplied superiorly to bulls, their wool in many places is as fine as the wool of the sheep in Spain, and their flesh as well tasted as any in Europe; which all those who have visited those countries can testify. The multiplication of sheep in America has been surprising. Acosta relates (*f*) that before he went to America, there were in that country individuals possessing seventy, and sometimes one hundred thousand sheep; and at present there are persons in New Spain who own four and five and even seven hundred thousand sheep (*g*). Valdebro says (*h*) that D. Diego Muñoz Camargo, a Tlascalcan noble, of whom we have made mention in our account of the writers of the ancient History of Mexico, obtained from ten sheep an increase of forty thousand in the space

(*e*) Hist. Nat. tom. xvii.

(*f*) Stor. Nat. e Mor. lib. iv. 33.

(*g*) The Europeans who have not been in America are extremely apt to be incredulous with regard to what we say of the number of oxen, horses, sheep, and goats, which many American farmers have upon their estates; but having been long in that country, we assert no more than we know to be truth.

(*h*) In his work of *Gobierno de Animales*, lib. iv. cap. 34.

of ten years. How therefore could the climate be pernicious to their propagation, if they multiplied so excessively? With respect to size, we declare sincerely, we have seen no rams in Europe larger than those of Mexico.

## G O A T S.

THE count de Buffon, although so much disposed to revile the animals of America, confesses, notwithstanding, that the goats have prospered well in the climes of America, and that their multiplication is greater there than in Europe (*b*); for whereas in Europe they bring but a single kid, or two at most, at a birth, in America they bring three, four, and sometimes five. Mr. de Paw, who very justly gives to the count de Buffon the title of the Pliny of France, and refers to his authority on the subject of animals, as to one who has made a review of all the animals of the earth, ought to have considered and weighed these and other confessions of that learned philosopher, before he undertook to write or speculate concerning the animals or the productions of America.

## H O G S.

OUR philosophers are not agreed upon this subject; for whereas the count de Buffon places hogs among the animals which have degenerated in America, Mr. de Paw on the contrary affirms, that these are the only animals which have acquired in the new world an extraordinary corpulence, and whose flesh has been improved. This contradiction arose without doubt from the not distinguishing as they ought to have done the different countries of America. It may be, there are some places unknown to us where the hogs have lost something of their size: but it is certain that in New Spain, the Antilles, Terra-firma, and other places of America they are as large as those of Europe; and in the island of Cuba there is a breed of hogs twice as large as those of Europe; which all who have been in those countries must have witnessed. Our philosophers may, if they please, have information from many European authors, who have seen the hogs of Toluca, of Angelopoli

(*b*) Hist. Nat. tom xviii.

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in New Spain, of Carthagena, of Cuba, &c. respecting their excessive multiplication, and the excellence of their flesh (*i*).

## OF HORSES AND MULES.

OF all the reflections thrown out by the count de Buffon and Mr. de Paw against the animals of the new continent, there is no instance where they have done stronger injustice to America, and to truth, than in the supposed degeneracy of horses there. Of them Acoſta ſays (*k*), “ that in many countries of America, or in the greater part, they have prospered and prosper well, and some breeds are as good as the best of Spain, not only for the course and for parade, but also for journeys and labour.” A testimony of this kind from a European so critical, so impartial, and so well versed in the things of America and Europe, is of more weight than all the declamations of these philosophers against the new world. The lieutenant general D. Antonio Ulloa, a learned Spanish mathematician still living (*l*) speaks with astonishment of the American horses which he saw in Chili and Peru; and celebrates those of Chili for their pace, those which are called *aguilillas* for their extraordinary velocity, and those called *parameros* for their wonderful agility in running in chace of the stag with riders upon them, down the sides, and up the steepest rocky parts of the mountains. He relates, that on one of those horses called *aguilillas* which, he adds, was none of the fleetest of his kind, he has frequently gone upwards of fifteen miles in fifty-seven or fifty-eight minutes. In New Spain there is an incredible plenty both of horses and mules. The multitude of them may be conjectured from their price; at the time of the conquest an ordinary horse was worth a thousand crowns, at present a good one may be purchased for ten or

(*i*) It will suffice to read what Acoſta has written in lib. iv. cap. 38. of his History. “ It is certain,” says he, “ that hogs have multiplied abundantly through all America. Their flesh is eat fresh in many places, and esteemed very wholesome, and as much so as that of the sheep; namely in Carthagena. . . . In some places they are fattened with corn, and become extremely fat. In others they make excellent lard and bacon of them, namely in Toluca of New Spain, and in Paria.” The count de Buffon, in the same, volume xviii. in which he classes the hog among the animals which have degenerated in America, says positively, that the hogs transported to America have thriven there well.

(*k*) Hist. Nat. y Mor. lib. iv. cap. 33.

(*l*) Voyage to South America, part. I. lib. vi. cap. 9.



twelve (*m*). Their size is the same as that of the common horses of Europe. In Mexico there is seldom a horse to be seen so small as the breed of Slavonia which we see in Italy, and still seldomer so small as those of Iceland and other countries in the North, as Anderson, or those of India as Tavernier and other authors relate. Their hardiness is such, that it is a frequent custom with the inhabitants of those countries to make journies of seventy, eighty, or more miles at a good pace the whole way, without stopping or changing their horses, however fatiguing the road. Saddle horses, although they are geldings for the most part, have a prodigious spirit. Mules, which through the whole of that country serve for carriages, and for burdens, are equal in size to those of Europe. Those for burdens which are conducted by drivers, carry a load of about five hundred pounds weight. They do not travel more than twelve or fourteen miles a-day, according to the custom of that country; but in this manner they make journies of eight hundred, a thousand, and fifteen hundred miles. Carriage mules go at the rate of the posts of Europe, although they draw a great deal more weight on account of the baggage of passengers. Saddle mules are made use of for very long journeys. It is common to make a journey on a mule from Mexico to Guatemala, which is about a thousand miles distance, over a track of country that is mountainous and rough, at the rate of three or four stages a-day. The above facts which we have inserted to shew the mistakes of our philosophers, are public and notorious in that kingdom, and agreeable to the report of several European authors. But nothing in our judgment can be a stronger indication of the plenty and excellence of American horses than the following observation which we have had occasion to make. Among the various things which are ordered from Spain, at great expence, by the Spaniards established in America, from the attachment they preserve to their native country, we do not know (at least with regard to Mexico) that for these two hundred years past,

(*m*) In New Galicia a middling horse is to be had for two sequins, a mule for three, or two and a half, and a herd of twenty-four mares with a stallion for twenty-five sequins. In Chili, for half a sequin or a crown may be purchased one of those horses that trot, which are much admired for their hardiness and activity in running, and a mare may be bought for an equally small consideration.

they have imported any horses; and on the contrary, we are certain that American horses have frequently been sent to Spain as presents to the grandees of the court, and sometimes to the catholic king himself.

## D O G S.

AMONG the absurd opinions entertained by Mr. de Paw, which are not a few, his ideas respecting dogs are not the least extraordinary: "Dogs," he says, (n) "when transported from our countries, immediately lose their voice, and cease to bark in the greater part of the regions of the new continent." The Americans meet a number of things to make them smile in the work of Mr. de Paw, but in reading this passage it may provoke their loud laughter. Although we should grant to Mr. de Paw that dogs have degenerated in many places, nothing could from thence be inferred against the new, which could not be equally well applied to the old world: for, according as Mr. de Buffon affirms, dogs when transported from the temperate into the cold climes of the old continent lose their voice, and when transported into extremely hot climes, they lose not only their voice, but also their hair. This assertion of the count de Buffon is supported by the experiment made on European dogs transported into Asia and Africa, whose degeneracy, he says, is so quick in Guinea and other very hot countries, that after three or four years they remain entirely mute and bald. Mr. de Paw does not dare to say so much of the dogs transported to America; but even that which he affirms is most false. In what countries of America have dogs lost their voice? On the faith of what author has he dared to publish such a fable? The greater part of the countries of America to which European dogs have been transported are subjected to the king of Spain, and in none of them has such an accident happened to dogs. Neither among the European authors who have observed and noted the peculiarities of America, nor among the many Americans lately arrived from the countries of Spanish America, have we found one to confirm this anecdote from Mr. de Paw. That, however, which we know both

(n) Recherch. Philosoph. part i.

from several writers of America, and many persons acquainted with those countries, is, that dogs never run mad either in Peru, Quito, or in other countries of the new world. Mr. de Paw perhaps read, that in some countries of America there were dogs which did not bark, and this was enough for him to publish that European dogs when transported to America soon lost their voice. In like manner it might be said, that figs when transplanted from Europe to America become immediately thorny, because the *nochtli* or *tuna* has thorns, and from some resemblance to the fig was called by the Spaniards Indian fig, in the same way as they called the *techichi*, the little dog of Mexico, because it resembled a little dog; but neither is this quadruped a real dog, nor that fruit a true fig. It is easy to be betrayed into such errors when the ideas of men wander in speculation, and the passions help their going astray. The count de Buffon, on the contrary, affirms (*o*) that European dogs have prospered in the hot as well as the cold countries of the new world: in which affirmation he grants certainly a great superiority to the clime of America over that of the old world.

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OUR philosophers say nothing in particular concerning the degeneracy of cats in America: but they ought to be comprehended in their universal assertion. Nevertheless count de Buffon, who in the passage above quoted does not admit any exception in that which he says of the degeneracy of animals in America, treating afterwards of cats in particular, after boasting those of Spain as the best of all, he affirms that these Spanish cats transported to America have preserved their fine colours, and have not in the least degenerated (*p*).

These are the quadrupeds (*q*) transported from the old to the new continent, all of which, except camels, have multiplied excessive-

(*o*) Histoire Nat. tom. x.

(*p*) Id. tom. xi.

(*q*) The count de Buffon adds to the above mentioned quadrupeds transported to America the Guinea pig and the rabbit; but affirms that those two species have prospered. With respect to mice it would certainly be a great distress to America if they could not live in that climate.



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ly, and have preserved without alteration their corpulence, their figure, and the perfection of their originals; which is confirmed partly by the confession of these philosophers themselves, partly by the depositions of European authors who are impartial, judicious, and well experienced in those countries; and partly by the notoriety also of what we have alledged, and which we trust cannot be confuted. We do not doubt that candid readers will be sensible from what we have set forth of the mistakes and contradictions of these philosophers occasioned by their ridiculous attempt to discredit the new world, the fallacy of their observations, the insufficiency of their arguments, and the rashness of their censure.

## CATALOGUE OF AMERICAN QUADRUPEDS.

## S E C T. I.

*Species acknowledged and admitted by the Count de Buffon.*

(The Number added to each Species refers to the Volume in which the author speaks of it.)

ACOUTI, a small quadruped of Paraguay and Brazil, similar to the rabbit. The true name in the Paraguese tongue is *Acuti*, 17.

AI, a species of sloth furnished with a tail, 26.

AKOUCHI, a small quadruped of Guiana, 30.

ALCE, vulgarly called *Great-beast* (*a*), by the French *Elan*, by the Canadians *Orignac*, 24.

ALCO, amongst the Peruvians *Alleo*, among the Mexicans *Techichi*, a mute eatable quadruped similar to a little dog.

APAR, species of *Tatu* or *Armadillo*, furnished with three moveable bands, 21.

APEREA, a quadruped resembling the rabbit, but without a tail, 30.

BUFFLER, or hunch-backed bull, called in Mexico *Cibolo*, a large quadruped of North America, 23.

(*a*) In America they call the Tapir or Danta the *Great-beast*.

- CABASSOU, a species of Tatu, covered with two plates or shells, and twelve moveable bands, 21.
- CABCAI, or *capibara* (*b*), an amphibious quadruped similar to the hog, 25.
- CACHICAMO, a species of Tatu, covered with two plates, and nine moveable bands, 21.
- CHAMOIS, 24.
- CHEVRUEIL, 29.
- BEAVER, 17.
- STAG, 11.
- CHINCHE, a species of American polecat (*c*), 27.
- COAITA, a species of *cercopithecus*, or ape furnished with a tail, 30.
- COASO, a species of polecat.
- COATI, or rather *Cuati*, a small and curious quadruped of the southern countries of America, 17.
- COENDU', or rather *Cuandu*, the porcupine of Guiana or Paraguay, called in Oronoko *Arura*, 25.
- COJOPOLLIN, (not Cayopollin, as count de Buffon writes it) a small quadruped of Mexico, 21.
- CONEPATA, in Mexican *conepatl*, the smallest species of polecat, 27.
- COQUALLINO, (these count de Buffon calls the *Coxocotecuillin* of Mexico) a quadruped similar to the squirrel, but different, 26.
- COUGUAR, or *Cuguar*, a spotted wild beast of the tyger kind, 19.
- FALLOW-DEER, 12, 29.
- ENCOBERTADO, Tatu covered with two plates or shells and six bands, 21.
- EXQUIMA, a species of *cercopithecus*, 30.
- FALANGER, the name given to a small quadruped, similar to the mouse, 26.

(*b*) The Cabiai of Buffon is called *Capibara* or *Capiguara* by the Tucumanese nation, *Capiba* or *Capibara* by the Paraguese, *Cappiva* by the Tamanachese, by the Chiquitans *Oquis*, and by other nations *Chiaco*, *Ciguiri*, *Irabubi*.

(*c*) *Chinche* is the Spanish for bug; from whence it seems the name of this insect was given, likewise to the polecat, on account of the intolerable smell it emits behind; but we do not doubt that count de Buffon has rather altered the name *Chinghe*, by which the polecat is known in Chili; for we do not find the name *Chinche* used to signify that quadruped in any country of America.

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FER DE LANCE, a species of bat so called by Buffon, on account of a membrane which it has similar to the iron of a lance, 27.

FILANDRO of Surinam, a quadruped similar to the Marosa and *Tlacuatzin*, but different, 30.

ANT-KILLER (*e*), a quadruped of the hot countries of America, 20.

GLUTTON, called by the Canadians *Carcaju*, a wild beast of northern countries, 27.

JAGUAR (*f*), or American tyger, 19.

JAGUARETE (*g*), or rather *Jaguarètè*, a wild beast of the tyger kind, 18.

ISATIS, a wild beast of cold countries, 27.

LAMENTIN, so the French call the *Manati*, a large animal of the sea, of lakes, and rivers, classed by Buffon among quadrupeds, although it can hardly be called *bipes*, or rather *bimanus*, 27.

SEA-LION, so Lord Anson called the greater sea-calf, which in Chili has the name of *Lame*, 27.

COMMON HARE, 13.

LYNX, 19.

LLAMA, not *lama*, as Buffon writes it, nor *glama*, as Mr. de Paw writes, the Peruvian ram, 26.

LONTRA, called by the Peruvians *Miquilo*, 14.

COMMON WOLF, called by the Mexicans *Cuetlachtli*, 14, 19.

SEA-WOLF, or smaller sea-calf, 27.

BLACK-WOLF, different from the common wolf, 19.

MAPACH, a curious quadruped of Mexico, 17.

MARGAI, or Tyger-cat. This name may have been taken from the *Mbaracaja* of the Paraguese, 27.

MARIKINA, or lion-ape, a species of *cercopithecus*, 30.

MARMOSA, a small and curious quadruped of hot and temperate countries of America, 21.

(*e*) The Ant-killer is called by the Spaniards *oso ormiguero*, or ant-bear, although it is as unlike to a bear as a dog is to a cat. Buffon distinguishes the species of them in America. The first is called by him simply *Fourmillier*, the second *Tanmannoir*, and the third *Tamandua*. The Peruvians call them *Hucumari*.

(*f*) *Jagua* in the Guarani language is the common name for tygers and dogs. The Peruvians call the tygers *Uturunco*, and the Mexicans *Ocelotl*.

(*g*) The generic name for tygers in the Guarani language is *Jaguar-etc.*



MARMOT, called by the Canadians *Muax*, 26.

MICO, the smallest species of the *cercopithec*i (b), 30.

MORSE, a large amphibious animal of the sea, 27.

OCELOTL, or leopard-cat of Mexico, 27.

ONDATRA, (*rat musque du Canada*) a quadruped similar to the mouse, 20.

BROWN-BEAR, 17.

BLACK-BEAR, specifically different from the brown, 17.

PACA, a quadruped similar to the pig in hair and grunting, but in head like a rabbit. In Brazil *Paca*, in Paraguay *Pag*, Quito *Picuru*, and Oronoko *Accuri*, 21.

PACO, a quadruped of South America of the same kind, not however of the same species, with the Llama. The Indian name is *Allpaca*, 26.

PECARI, a quadruped which has upon its back a humorous gland which stinks, by many supposed to be its navel. The true names of it in different countries of America, are those of *saino*, *cojametl*, *tatabro*, and *pachira* (l) 20.

PEKAN, or American marten, 27.

PETIT-GRIS a quadruped of cold countries similar to the squirrel, so called by Buffon, 20.

PILORI, (*rat musque des Antilles*) a small quadruped similar to the mouse, and different from the Ondatra, 20.

PINCHIS, (with Buffon, *Pinche*) a species of small *cercopithecus*, 30.

POLATUCA, a quadruped partly like a squirrel, called by the Mexicans *Quimichpatlan*, or flying-rat, 20.

INDIAN-PIG, (in French *porc de Inde*) a small quadruped of South America resembling the pig and rabbit, without a tail, 16.

PUMA, or American lion, called by the Mexicans *Miztli*, and in Chili *Pagi*, 18.

(b) *Mico* in Spanish is the generic name of the *cercopithec*i, but Buffon only applies it to the smallest species.

(i) *Ocelotl* in Mexican is the name of the tyger; but Buffon applies it to the Leopard cat.

(l) It is not improbable that the *Pecari* has been so called by Buffon from *pachira*, which is the name given to this quadruped in Oronoko. Buffon calls it also *Tayassou*, but *Tajazn*, as it should be written in the Guarani tongue, is the common name for all the species of hogs.

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QUIRQUINCHO, a species of Tatu covered with a shell and eighteen bands (*m*).

REIN-DEER, in Canada *Caribu*, 24.

SAI (*n*), a species of *cercopithecus*, 30.

SAIMIRI, or rather *Caimiri*, a curious species of *cercopithecus*, 30.

SAKI, a species of *cercopithecus* with a long tail, 30.

SARICOVIENNE, particular Lontra of Paraguay, Brazil, Guiana, and Oronoko. In Paraguay it is called *Kija*, and in Oronoko *Cairo*, and *Nevi*, 27.

SAYU, (perhaps *Caju*) a species of *cercopithecus*, 30.

WATER-RAT, 30.

SURICATE, quadruped of South America, which, like the Hyena, has four toes to every foot, 26.

SVIZZERO, called by the Mexicans *Tlalmototli*, a quadruped in form like the squirrel, but different in its mode of life, and almost twice as large, 20.

TAIRA, or weasel of Guiana.

TAMANDUA, or rather *Tamandua*, the middling species among the Ant-killers, 26.

TAMANNOIR, the largest species of the Ant-killers, 26.

TAPET, or Tapeto, a quadruped of South America, resembling both the hare and rabbit. The true name in the Guarani language is *Tapiiti*, 30.

TAPIR (*a*), a large quadruped of America, called by the Spaniards *Anta*, *Danta*, and *Granbestia*, and in other American languages, *Tapii*, *Tapiira*, *Beori*, *Tlacaxolotl*, &c. 23.

TARSIERE, a quadruped something like the Marmosa and *Tlacuatzin*. 29.

(*m*) *Quirquincho*, amongst the Peruvians, *Ajotochli*, amongst the Mexicans, *Tatu* amongst the Paraguese, and *Armadillo* among the Spaniards, are all generic names of these species of quadrupeds. Buffon confines the name *Quirchincho* not *Cirquincon* as he writes it to one single species; as also that of *Ajotochli*.

(*u*) *Cai*, not *Sai* as Buffon writes it, is in the Guarani tongue the generic name of all the *Cercopithecus*; but he confines it also to one species.

(*o*) We willingly adopt the name *Tapir*, because it is already in use among modern zoologists, and is not otherwise equivocal. That of *Great-beast* is proper to the Alce; that of *Anta* or *Danta* is likewise given to the Zebu, a quadruped of Africa very different from the Tapir.

TATU.

TATUETO, a name given by count de Buffon to that species of Tatu which is covered with two shells and eight bands, 21.

TLACUATZIN, a curious quadruped, the female of which carries its young, after having brought them forth, in a bag or membrane which it has under its belly. In different countries of America it has the following names, *Cbucha*, *Cburcha*, *Mucamuca*, *Jariquè*, *Fara*, and *Auarè*. The Spaniards of Mexico call it *Tlacuache*. Some naturalists have given it the improper name of *Filandro*, and others, the extremely proper one of *Dielfus*. Count de Buffon calls it *Larigue* and *Carigue*, changing the name *Jarique*, by which it is known in Brasil. 21.

TOPORAGNO (in the Spanish *musaraña*). 30.

TUZA, not *Tucan*, as count de Buffon writes (*p*); in Mexican, *Tozan*; a quadruped of Mexico, of the mole kind, but larger and more beautiful. 30.

VAMPIRO, great bat of America.

UARINA, with Buffon, *Ouarine* (*q*); great-bearded *cercopithecus*, called in Quito *Omeco*. 30.

VISON, or American polecat. 27.

UISTITI, species of small *cercopithecus*, 30.

UNAU, a species of sloth without tail. (*r*) 26.

COMMON FOX. 14.

URSON, quadruped of cold countries, similar to but different from the beaver. 25.

ZORRILLO, or Zorriglio, a species of polecat (*s*). 27.

(*p*) We know not if the Tuza is of the same species of quadruped which the Peruvians call *Tupu tupu*.

(*q*) The count de Buffon doubts whether the *Aluata* which is a *cercopithecus* of a large size, is of the same species with the Uarina; but we assure him it is certainly of the same species, and therefore we have not put down the *Aluata*, (which he writes *Alouate*) in this catalogue.

(*r*) The count de Buffon justly distinguishes two species of the sloth, the one furnished with a tail, the other not; because besides this they bear other different characters. In Quito they call the sloths *Quillac* or *Quigllac*, and in Oronoko *Proto*. The Spaniards call them *Perezza*, which means slothfulness, and *Perico ligero*, or swift dog, by way of antiphrasis.

(*s*) *Zorrillo*, or little fox, is the generic name which the Spaniards give to Polecats. The Mexicans call them *Epatl*. In Chili *Chinghe*, and in other countries of South America *Mufarito*, *Agnatuja*, &c.



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From this catalogue we see that the count de Buffon, who could not find more than seventy species of quadrupeds in all America, in the progress of his Natural History acknowledges and distinguishes at least ninety-four; we say *at least*, as besides those above mentioned we ought to mention the common hog, the ermine, and others, which, denied by Buffon to America in some places of his history, are granted to it in others.

## S E C T. II.

*Species which Count de Buffon has confounded with others that are different.*

The *Guanaco* with the *Llama* or *Gliama* (*t*).

The *Vicugna* with the *Paco*.

The *Citli* with the *Tapete* or *Tapiiti* (*u*).

The *Huiztlacuatzin*, or Mexican porcupine, with the *Cuandu* or porcupine of Guiana (*x*).

The *Tlacocelotl* with the *Ocelotl* (*y*).

The *Tepeitzcuintli*, or mountain dog of Mexico with the *Glutton* (*z*).

The *Xoloitzcuintli*, or bald dog with the *Wolf*.

(*t*) Besides other characters of distinction between the *Llama*, the *Guanaco*, the *Vicugna*, and *Paco*, they have never been known to copulate though put together in one place. If this circumstance is sufficient to allow us to infer a difference of species between the dog and the wolf, quadrupeds very similar in external figure and internal organization, what ought we to conclude respecting four quadrupeds which are more different from each other than the dog is from the wolf?

(*u*) To render ourselves certain of the difference between the *Citli* and the *Tapete* it is sufficient to compare the descriptions which Hernandez and Buffon give of each.

(*x*) See what we have said in the first book of our History concerning the difference between the Mexican ostrich and that of Guiana.

(*y*) The count de Buffon is desirous of persuading us that the *Tlacocelotl* and *Ocelotl* are but one same animal; the last the male, the other the female; that *Ocelotl* is the same name with *Tlacocelotl* excepting the syncope. We might as well say that *Canis* is not different from *Semicanis*, and that *Tygris* is the same as *Semitygris*, because the Mexican *Ocelotl* is the same thing with *Tygris* and *Tlacocelotl* means nothing but *Semitygris*. The count de Buffon is not blameable for not knowing the Mexican language; but neither ought he to be excused for deciding on matters in which he was ignorant. Hernandez, who saw and examined as a naturalist both those two wild animals, certainly deserves the greater credit.

(*z*) See what we have said respecting these three last quadrupeds in our fourth Dissertation.

The

The *Itzcuintepozotli*, or hunch-backed dog, with the *Alco* or *Techichi*. We ought therefore to add these eight species, which he has confused with others, to the ninety-four above mentioned, which will make one hundred and two.

## S E C T. III.

*Species unknown, or unjustly denied by the the Count de Buffon to America.*

ACHUNI, *cercopithecus* of Quito, furnished with a long snout and very sharp teeth, and covered with hair like bristles. Manuscript in our possession.

AHUITZOTL, small amphibious quadruped of Mexico, described by us in our first book.

AMIZTLI, an amphibious quadruped of Mexico, described by us (a).

CACOMIZTLE, a quadruped of Mexico, similar to the pole-cat in its mode of living, but different in shape, described in our first book.

DOG of Cibola, or dog of burden, a quadruped of the country of Cibola, similar in form to a mastiff, which the Indians employ to carry burdens. Several historians of Mexico mention this strong animal.

CHICHICO, *cercopithecus* of Quito, so small that it can be held in the hand. It is found of different colours. MS.

CHILLIHUEQUE, a large quadruped of Chili, similar to the Guanaco, but different. History of Chili, by Molina.

CHINCHILLA, species of woolly field-rat, mentioned by many historians of South America.

CHINCHIMEN, or sea-cat, an amphibious quadruped of the sea of Chili. Nat. Hist. of Chili.

CINOCEPHALUS *Cercopithecus*, a quadruped of Mexico, of which Hernandez, Brisson, and others make mention.

COJOTE, (in Mexico Cojotl) a wild beast described in this history.

(a) In a note of the first book of our History we said that the *Amiztli* appeared to us the same quadruped with that called by Buffon *Saricoriene*; but on farther reflection and consideration we have found those two quadrupeds specifically different.

# HISTORY OF MEXICO.

COMMON RABBIT, called by the Mexicans *Tochtli*.

CUL, or Peruvian rabbit, a small quadruped, similar to the Indian pig, of which several historians of Peru make mention.

CULPEU, a particular species of large fox in Chili. Hist. of Chili.

DEGU, or dormouse of Chili. Ibid.

SEA-HOG, a particular species of amphibious hog of Chili. Ibid.

FERRET of Chili and Paraguay, called in Guarani *Jaguarokape*. Ibid. and MS. with us.

HONEY-CAT. Thus the Spaniards name a quadruped of the province of Chaco, in South America, similar in form to the cat, which lies in watch for birds upon trees, and is extremely fond of the honey of bees. MS. with us.

GUANQUE, a species of field-rat, of a blueish cast, in Chili. Nat. Hist. of Chili.

HORRO, great *cercopithecus* of Quito and Mexico, all black but the neck, which is white. It cries loudly in the woods, and when upright on its feet measures the height of a man. MS. with us.

HUEMUL, cloven footed horse of Chili. Hist. of Chili.

JAGUARON, in Guarani *Jaguaru*, an amphibious wild animal of Paraguay, called by some naturalists the water-tyger. MS. with us.

KIKI, quadruped of Chili, of the weazel kind. Hist. of Chili.

MAJAN, quadruped similar to a hog, which has a round body, and its bristles sticking up. It inhabits Paraguay. MS. with us.

PISCO-CUSHILLO, or *avis cercopithecus*, *cercopithecus* of Quito, which is covered from the neck to the tail with a certain kind of feathers. MS. with us.

Common HEDGE-HOG of Paraguay. MS. with us.

RAT, most common in America before the Spaniards landed there, and called by the Mexicans *Quimichin*. Described by us.

The common FIELD-RAT of Mexico and other countries of America.

TAJE, a quadruped of California, of which mention is made both in the printed history and in manuscripts of that peninsula. The *Taje* is unquestionably the *Ibex* of Pliny, described by count de Buffon under the name *Bouquetin*.



TAITETU a quadruped of Paraguay, of the hog kind, the female of which brings forth two young which are united together by means of the navel-string. MS. by us.

WHITE BADGER of New York, described by Brisson.

THOPEL-LAME, an amphibious quadruped of the sea of Chili, a species of sea-calf, more similar still to the lion than that seen by lord Anson. History of Chili.

TLALCOJOTE, in Mexico *Tlalcojotl*, a common quadruped of Mexico, described in book i.

Common WHITE FIELD MOUSE of Mexico.

Common FIELD MOUSE of Mexico and other countries of America.

MOUSE of Maule, a quadruped of that province, in the kingdom of Chili, similar to the Marriot, but twice as large. Hist of Chili.

TREFLE, or *Trefoil*, a large quadruped of North America, described by Bomare.

VISCACHA of the fields, a quadruped similar to the rabbit, but furnished with a large tail turned upwards. Acosta and other historians of South America mention it.

VISCACHA of the mountains, a quadruped extremely beautiful, of the same kind with that of the fields, but different in species. MS. by us.

USNAGUA, or *Cercopithecus nocturnus* of Quito. MS. &c.

These forty species, added to those one hundred and two above mentioned, make one hundred and forty-two species of American quadrupeds. If we add to those, horses, asses, bulls, sheep, goats, common hogs, and Guinea-pigs, dogs, cats, and house mice, transported there since the conquest, we shall have at present an hundred and fifty-two species in America. Count de Buffon, who in all his Natural History does not enumerate more than two hundred species of quadrupeds in the countries of the world hitherto discovered, in his work entitled, *Epoques de la Nature*, reckons now three hundred; so large has the increase been in the space of a few years! But now that they are three hundred, America, although it does not make more than a third part of the globe, has notwithstanding almost one half of the species of its quadrupeds. We repeat *almost*, because we have omitted

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all those of which we are in doubt whether they are different from those described by Buffon. Our principal aim in forming this catalogue has not been to shew the mistakes of the count de Buffon in his enumeration of American quadrupeds, and the error of his opinions concerning the imagined scarcity of matter in the new world, but to be of some service to European naturalists by pointing out to them some quadrupeds hitherto unknown, and removing in some degree those difficulties which have been occasioned by indistinct appellations of them. They might desire to have exact descriptions along with them, and even in this we should be willing to contribute every thing in our power, were it not foreign to our purpose. In order to make this catalogue, besides the great study in which it has engaged us, we have obtained written informations from persons of learning and accuracy of knowledge, experienced in different countries of America, for whose obliging communications we owe them the greatest acknowledgements.

DISSER-

## DISSERTATION V.

*On the Physical and Moral Constitution of the Mexicans.*

**I**N Mexico and the other countries of America four classes of men may be distinguished. First, The proper Americans, commonly called Indians, or those who are descended of the ancient peoplers of that new world, and have not mixed their blood with the people of the old continent. Secondly, The European Asiatics and Africans established in those countries. Thirdly, The sons or descendants of them who have been called by the Spaniards *Criollos*, that is *Creoles*, although the name principally belongs to those descendants of Europeans whose blood has not been mixed with that of the Americans, Asiatics, or Africans. Fourthly, The mixed breeds called by the Spaniards *castas*, that is those who are born or descended of an European and an American, or from an European and an African, or from an African and American, &c. All those classes of men have been fated to meet with the contempt and defamation of Mr. de Paw. He supposes or feigns the climate of the new world to be so malignant as to cause the degeneracy of not only the Creoles and proper Americans who are born in it, but also those Europeans who reside there, although they have been born under a milder sky, and a climate more favourable, as he imagines, to all animals. If Mr. de Paw had wrote his philosophical researches in America, we might with reason apprehend the degeneracy of the human species under the climate of America; but as we find that work and many others of the same stamp produced in Europe, we are confirmed by them in the truth of the Italian proverb taken from the Greek, *Tutto il mondo è paese*. But leaving aside the prejudices and prepossessions of that philosopher and his partizans against the other classes of men, we shall only treat of that which he has written against the native Americans, as they are the most injured and the least defended. If in the writing of this Dissertation we had

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given way to interest or passion, we would rather have undertaken the defence of the Creoles, which, besides that it would have been more easy, should naturally have interested us more. We are descended of Spanish parents, we have no affinity or relation to the Indians, nor can we hope for any recompence from their misery: our motive is the love of truth, and the cause of humanity.

## S E C T. I.

*Of the Corporeal Qualities of the Mexicans.*

MR. de Paw, who finds fault with the stature, the formation, and the supposed irregularities of the animals of America, has not been more indulgent towards its men. If the animals appeared to him a sixth part less in size than those of Europe, the men, as he reports, are also smaller than the Castilians. If in the animals he remarked the want of tail, in the men he complains of the want of hair. If in the animals he found many striking deformities, in the men he abuses the complexion and shape. If he believed that the animals there, were not so strong as those of the old continent, he affirms, in like manner, that the men are feeble in extreme, and subject to a thousand distempers occasioned by the corruption of the air and the stench of the soil.

Concerning the stature of the Americans he says, in general, that although it is not equal to the stature of the Castilians, there is but little difference between them. But we are confident, and it is notorious through the whole of New Spain, that the Indians who inhabit those countries, lying between nine and forty degrees of north latitude, which are the limits of the discoveries of the Spaniards, are more than five Parisian feet in height, and that those who do not reach that stature are as few in number amongst the Indians as they are amongst the Spaniards. We are certain besides, that many of those nations, as the *Apaches*, the *Hiaquesse*, the *Pimese*, and *Cochimies*, are at least as tall as the tallest Europeans; and we are not conscious, that in all the vast extent of the new world, a race of people has been found, except the *Esquimaux*, so diminutive in stature as the *Laplanders*, the *Samojeds*,  
and

and Tartars, in the north of the old continent. In this respect, therefore, the inhabitants of the two continents are upon an equality.

In regard to the regularity and proportion of the limbs of the Mexicans, we do not need to say more than we have already said in our first book. We are persuaded, that among all those who may read this work in America, no one will contradict the description we have given of the shape and character of the Indians, unless he views them with the eye of a prejudiced mind. It is true, that Ulloa says, in speaking of the Indians of Quito, he had observed, “that imperfect people abounded among them, that they were either irregularly diminutive, “or monstrous in some other respect, that they became either insensible, “dumb, or blind, or wanted some limb of their body :” but having ourselves made some enquiry respecting this singularity of the Quitans, we were informed by persons deserving of credit, and acquainted with those countries, that such defects were neither caused by bad humours, nor by the climate, but by the mistaken and blind humanity of their parents, who, in order to free their children from the hardships and toils to which the healthy Indians are subjected by the Spaniards, fix some deformity or weakness upon them, that they may become useless : a circumstance of misery which does not happen in other countries of America, nor in those places of the same kingdom of Quito, where the Indians are under no such oppression. M. de Paw, and, in agreement with him, Dr. Robertson, says, that no deformed persons are to be found among the savages of America ; because, like the ancient Lacedemonians, they put to death those children which are born hunch-backed, blind, or defective in any limb ; but that in those countries where they are formed into societies, and the vigilance of their rulers prevent the murder of such infants, the number of their deformed and irregular individuals is greater than it is in any other country of Europe. This would make an exceeding good solution of the difficulty if it were true : but if, possibly, there has been in America a tribe of savages who have imitated the barbarous example (*a*) of the celebrated Lacedemonians, it is certain that those authors have no

(*a*) That inhuman practice of killing children which were born deformed, was not only permitted in Rome, but was prescribed by the laws of the Twelve Tables. *Pater insignem ad deformitatem puerum cito necato.*

grounds to impute such inhumanity to the rest of the Americans; for that it has not been the practice, at least with the far greater part of those nations, is to be demonstrated from the attestations of the authors the best acquainted with their customs. Besides, in all the countries of Mexico, or New Spain, which make at least one fourth of the new world, the Indians lived in societies together, and assembled in cities, towns, and villages, under the care of Spanish or Creole magistrates and governors, and no such instances of cruelty towards their infants are ever seen or heard of; yet deformed people are so uncommon, that all the Spaniards and Creoles, who came from Mexico to Italy, in the year 1768, were then, and are still much surprised to observe the great number of blind, hunch-backed, lame, and otherwise deformed people, in the cities of that cultivated peninsula. The cause of this phenomenon, which so many writers have observed among the Americans, must therefore be different from that to which the above mentioned authors would impute it.

No argument against the new world can be drawn from the colour of the Americans; because their colour is less distant from the white of the Europeans than it is from the black of the Africans, and a great part of the Asiatics. The hair of the Mexicans, and of the greater part of the Indians, is, as we have already said, coarse and thick; on their face they have little, and in general (*b*) none on their arms and legs: but it is an error to say, as M. de Paw does, that they are entirely destitute of hair in all the other parts of their body. This is one of the many passages of the Philosophical Researches, at which the Mexicans, and all the other nations, must smile to find an European philosopher so eager to divest them of the dress they had from nature. He read, without doubt, that ignominious description, which Ulloa gives of some people of South America (*c*), and from this single premise, according to his logic, he deduces his general conclusion.

(*b*) We say, in general, because there are Americans in Mexico who are bearded, and have hair on their arms and limbs.

(*c*) Ulloa, in the description which he gives of the Indians of Quito, says, that hair neither grows upon the men nor upon the women when they arrive at puberty, as it does on the rest of mankind; but whatever singularity may attend the Quitans, or occasion this circumstance, there is no doubt that among the Americans in general, the period of puberty is accompanied with the same symptoms as it is among other nations of the world.



The very aspect of an Angolan, Mandingan, or Congan, would have shocked Mr. de Paw, and made him recall that censure which he passes on the colour, the make, and hair of the Americans. What can be imagined more contrary to the idea we have of beauty, and the perfection of the human frame, than a man whose body emits a rank smell, whose skin is as black as ink, whose head and face are covered with black wool, instead of hair, whose eyes are yellow and bloody, whose lips are thick and blackish, and whose nose is flat? Such are the inhabitants of a very large portion of Africa, and of many islands of Asia. What men can be more imperfect than those who measure no more than four feet in stature, whose faces are long and flat, the nose compressed, the *irides* yellowish black, the eyelids turned back towards the temples, the cheeks extraordinarily elevated, their mouths monstrously large, their lips thick and prominent, and the lower part of their visages extremely narrow? Such, according to count de Buffon (*d*), are the Laplanders, the Zemblans, the *Borandines*, the *Samojeds*, and Tartars in the East. What objects more deformed than men whose faces are too long and wrinkled even in their youth, their noses thick and compressed, their eyes small and sunk, their cheeks very much raised, the upper jaw low, their teeth long and disunited, their eye-brows so thick, that they shade their eyes; the eye-lids thick, some bristles on their faces instead of beard, large thighs and small legs? Such is the picture count de Buffon gives of the Tartars, that is of those people who, as he says, inhabit a tract of land in Asia, twelve hundred leagues long and upwards, and more than seven hundred and fifty broad. Amongst these the Calmucks are the most remarkable for their deformity, which is so great, that, according to Tavernier, they are the most brutal men of all the universe. Their faces are so broad that there is a space of five or six inches between their eyes, according as count de Buffon himself affirms. In Calicut, in Ceylon, and other countries of India, there is, say Pyrrard and other writers on those regions, a race of men who have one or both of their legs as thick as the body of a man; and that this deformity among them is almost hereditary. The Hottentots, besides other gross imperfections, have that

(*d*) Hist. Nat. tom. vi.

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monstrous irregularity attending them, of a callous appendage extending from the os pubis downwards, according to the testimony of the historians of the Cape of Good Hope. Struys, Gemelli, and other travellers affirm, that in the kingdom of Lambry, in the islands of Formosa, and of Mindoro, men have been found with tails. Bomare says (*e*), that a thing of this kind in men is nothing else than an elongation of the *os coccygis*; but what is a tail in quadrupeds but the elongation of that bone, though divided into distinct articulations (*f*)? However it may be, it is certain, that that elongation renders those Asiatics fully as irregular as if it was a real tail.

If we were, in like manner, to go through the nations of Asia and Africa, we should hardly find any extensive country where the colour of men is not darker, where there are not stronger irregularities observed, and grosser defects to be found in them, than M. de Paw finds fault with in the Americans. The colour of the latter is a good deal clearer than that of almost all the Africans, and the inhabitants of southern Asia. The scantiness of beard is common to the inhabitants of the Phillippine Islands, and of all the Indian Archipelago, to the famous Chinese, Japanese, Tartars, and many other nations of the old continent. The imperfections of the Americans, however great they may be represented to be, are certainly not comparable with the defects of that immense people, whose character we have sketched, and others whom we omit. All these circumstances might have restrained the pen of M. de Paw, but they slipped his memory, or he shut out the recollection of them.

M. de Paw represents the Americans to be a feeble and diseased set of nations: Ulloa, on the contrary affirms, that they are healthy, robust, and strong. Which of the two merits the greater credit? M. de Paw, who undertook at Berlin to review the Americans without knowing them; or Ulloa, who resided amongst them for some years, and conversed with them in different countries of South America; M. de Paw, who employed himself to degrade and debase them, in order to establish his absurd system of degeneracy, or Ulloa, who, though

(*e*) Diction. de Histoire. Nat. v. Homme.

(*f*) See Heister. Anat. de *Ossibus trunci*.

by no means favourable in general to the Indians, was not bent on forming any system, but only on writing what he judged to be true? The impartial reader will decide this question.

M. de Paw, in order to demonstrate the weakness and disorder of the physical constitution of the Americans, adduces several proofs, which we ought not to omit. These are, 1. That the first Americans who were brought to Europe went mad during their voyage, and their madness continued till death. 2. That grown men in many parts of America have milk in their breasts. 3. That the American women are delivered with great facility, have an extraordinary plenty of milk, and the periodical evacuation of blood is scanty and irregular. 4. That the least vigorous European conquered in wrestling any American whatever. 5. That the Americans could not bear the weight of a light burden. 6. That they were subject to the venereal distemper, and other endemic diseases.

With regard to the first proof, we deny it as being altogether false and inconsistent. Mr. de Paw says, on the faith of the Fleming Dappers, that the first Americans whom Columbus brought with him in 1493, were going to kill themselves during the voyage, but that having been bound in order to prevent them from doing so, they run mad, and their madness lasted while they lived; that when they entered into Barcelona, they frightened the citizens to such a degree with their howls, their contorsions, and their convulsive motions, that they were thought to be delirious. We have never seen the work of Dappers, but we have no doubt that his account is a string of fables; for we do not find, that either any of his cotemporary authors, nor those who wrote in the years immediately following, make any mention of such an event; but, on the contrary, from what they say, it is easy to demonstrate the fallacy of his story. Gonzalez Hernandez Oviedo, who was in Barcelona when Columbus arrived, saw, and knew those Americans, and was an eye-witness of what happened, says nothing of their madness, their howls, and contorsions, which he would not naturally have omitted had they been true, as he was rather unfavourable to the Indians, as we have said before, particularly when he was minutely relating their entry into that city, their baptism, their names, and in part their end. He says, that Columbus brought with him, from the island of Hispaniola,



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paniola, ten Americans, one of which died on the passage, three remained sick in Palos, a port of Andalusia, where, as he imagines, they died soon after, and the other six came to Barcelona, where the court was then held, that they were well instructed in the Christian doctrines and baptised: Peter Martyr, of Aighera, who was also in Spain when Columbus arrived, makes mention of the Indians (*k*) which that famous admiral brought with him, but does not say a word about their madness: on the contrary, he relates, that when Cortes returned to Hispaniola, he carried back three of the Indians with him, as all the others had died by that time, from change of air and food (*l*); and that he employed one of them to gain information of the state of the Spaniards whom he had left in that island. Ferdinand Columbus, a learned and diligent writer of the life of Christopher Columbus his father, who happened also to be in Spain at that time, makes a minute detail of the voyages and actions of his glorious parent, speaks of the Indians whom he had seen, and relates nothing more of them than P. Martyr. The account given by Dappers, therefore, is false, or at least we will say, that madmen learned the Spanish language, that the Catholic kings chose madmen to be with them, to amuse them with their horrible howls; and lastly, that Columbus, the prudent Columbus, made use of one of these madmen, to gain information of all that had happened to the Spaniards in Hispaniola while he had been absent.

The anecdote of milk in the breasts of the Americans is one of the most curious which we read in the Philosophical Researches, and most worthy to excite our smiles, and the mirth of all the Americans: but

(*k*) Sommar. della Stor. delle Ind. Occid. cap. 4.

(*l*) To the causes of the death of those Americans, mentioned by P. Martyr, may be added the extraordinary hardships they suffered in that horrid voyage, the circumstances of which are to be found in the letters of Columbus, published by his son. From the number of those who died, mentioned by Martyr, an exception ought to be made of that American whom the prince Don John retained with him, as he did not die till two years after, according to the testimony of Oviedo. But although they had all died on the voyage, or become frantic and mad, it should not cause any wonder, considering what is recited by M. de Paw himself, in Part iii. sect. 2. of his Researches: "Les academiciens Francois," he says, enleverent au de la de "Torneo deux Lappons, qui, obsédés et martyrisés par ces philosophes, moururent de de- "sespoir en route." Neither the country which the Laplanders left, nor the voyage which they had to make, can be compared with the country and the voyage of those Americans; nor can we imagine the Spanish sailors, of the fifteenth century, so humane as the French academicians of the eighteenth.

it is necessary to confess, that Mr. de Paw has shewn more moderation than many others whom he has quoted. The celebrated naturalist Johnston, affirms, in his *Thaumatrographia*, on the faith of we know not what travellers, that in the new world almost all the men abound with milk in their breasts. In all Brasil, says the author of the Historical Researches, the men alone suckle children, for the women have hardly any milk. We do not know whether most to admire the effrontery and impudence of those travellers who invent and publish such fables, or the excess of simplicity in those who repeat them. If there had ever been a nation of the new world, in which such a phenomenon had been observed (which M. de Paw cannot prove), that certainly would not have been sufficient to say, that in many places of America milk abounds in the breasts of men; and much less to affirm, as Johnston does, of almost all the men in the new world.

Those singularities, which Mr. de Paw remarks in the American women, would be most acceptable to them if they were true; for nothing certainly could be more desirable to them, than to be freed from the pains and difficulties of child-bearing, to abound with that liquor which nourishes their children, and to be spared the inconveniencies which are occasioned by those periodical and disagreeable evacuations? But that which would be esteemed by them a circumstance of happiness, is reported by M. de Paw as a proof of their degeneracy; for that ease of delivery, he says, shews the expansion of the vaginal passage, and the relaxation of the muscles of the matrix, on account of the fluids being too copious: their abundance can only proceed from the humidity of their constitutions, and that, otherwise, they do not conform with the women of the old continent; whereas they, according to M. de Paw's legislation, are the model of all the world. Surely it must excite the wonder of every one, that whereas the author of the Historical Researches remarks such a scarcity of milk in the American women, that the men are obliged to suckle their own children; the author of the Philosophical Researches on the contrary, should attribute to them such an extraordinary abundance of it; and who is there, that in reading these and other similar contradictions and tales published in Europe, particularly a few years back, will not discover that the travellers, historians, naturalists, and philosophers

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sophers of Europe, have made America the magazine of their fables and fictions; and in order to render their works more entertaining, from the marvellous novelty of their pretended observations, have ascribed to all the Americans, whatever singularities have been observed in one individual, or perhaps in none?

The American women are subject to the common sentence of nature, and are not delivered without pains; possibly, not with so much apparatus as attends the women of Europe; because they are less delicate, and more accustomed to the inconveniencies of life. Thevenot says, that the Mogul women are delivered with great ease, and that the day after they are seen going through the streets of the cities, and yet there is no reason to find fault with their fruitfulness, or their constitution.

The quantity and quality of milk in the American women in Mexico, and other countries of America, are well known to the European and Creole ladies, who take them commonly as wet-nurses to their children; they find that they are wholesome, faithful, and diligent, in such service. Nor does it matter to say, that the ancient Americans are talked of, and not the moderns, as M. de Paw has sometimes replied to his adversary Don Pernety; since besides, that his propositions against the Americans are all meant of the present day, as it is manifest to every one who has read his work, that distinction has no place in many countries of America, and particularly in Mexico. The Mexicans use, for the most part, the same food which they fed upon before the conquest. The climate, if possibly it is changed in some regions, from the cutting down of the woods, and the draining of stagnant waters, in Mexico is still the same. Those who have compared, as we have, the accounts of the first Spaniards, with the present state of that kingdom, know that the same lakes, the same rivers, and, in general, the same woods, still subsist.

With respect to the *menfes* of the American women, we can give no account, nor do we know who can. M. de Paw, who has from Berlin seen so many things of America, has, perhaps, found, in some French author, the manner of knowing that which we neither can, nor chuse to enquire into. But granting that the menstrual evacuation of the American women is scanty and irregular, it argues nothing  
against



against their constitution, as the quantity of that evacuation depends, as count de Buffon justly observes, on the quantity of their aliment, and insensible perspiration. Women who eat much, and take little exercise, have abundant *menfes*. In hot countries, where perspiration is more copious than it is in cold, that evacuation is more sparing. If the scantiness of such evacuation can proceed from sobriety in eating, from the heat of the clime and exercise, why produce it as an argument of a bad constitution? Besides, we do not know how to reconcile that scantiness of the *menfes* with the superabundance of fluids, which M. de Paw supposes in the women of America, to be a consequence of the disorder of their physical constitution.

The proofs abovementioned of the weakness of the Americans, are not better supported. M. de Paw says, that they were overcome in wrestling by all the Europeans, and that they sunk under a moderate burden; that by a computation made two hundred thousand Americans were found to have perished in one year from carrying of baggage. With respect to the first point, it would be necessary that the experiment of wrestling was made between many individuals of each continent, and that the victory should be attested by the Americans as well as the Europeans. But however that may be, we do not pretend to maintain, that the Americans are stronger than the Europeans. They may be less strong without the human species having degenerated in them. The Swiss are stronger than the Italians, and still we do not believe the Italians are degenerated, nor do we tax the climate of Italy. The instance of two hundred thousand Americans having died in one year, under the weight of baggage, were it true, would not convince us so much of the weakness of the Americans, as of the inhumanity of the Europeans. In the same manner that those two hundred thousand Americans perished, two hundred thousand Prussians would also have perished had they been obliged to make a journey of between three and four hundred miles, with a hundred pounds of burden upon their backs; if they had collars of iron about their necks, and were obliged to carry that load over rocks and mountains; if those who became exhausted with fatigue, or wounded their feet so as to impede their progress, had their heads cut off that they might not retard the pace of the rest; and if they were not allowed but a small morsel

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of bread to enable them to support so severe a toil. The same author (*m*) from whom M. de Paw got the account of the two hundred thousand Americans who died under the fatigue of carrying baggage, relates also all the above mentioned circumstances. If that author therefore is to be credited in the last, he is also to be credited in the first. But a philosopher who vaunts the physical and moral qualities of the Europeans over those of the Americans, would have done better, we think, to have suppressed facts so opprobrious to the Europeans themselves. It is true, that neither Europe in general, nor any nation of it in particular, can be blamed for the excesses into which some individuals run, especially in countries so distant from the metropolis, and when they act against the express will and repeated orders of their sovereigns; but if the Americans were disposed to make use of M. de Paw's logic, they might from such premises deduce universal conclusions against the old continent in the same manner, as he is continually forming arguments against the whole of the new world, from what has been observed in some particular people, or possibly only in some individuals.

He allows the Americans a great agility of body, and swiftness in running; because they are accustomed from childhood to this exercise: neither then ought he to deny them strength; for, as it is clear from their history and from their paintings, that as soon as they could walk, they were habituated to carry burdens, in which occupation they were to be employed all their lives; in like manner no other nation ought to be more vigorous in carrying burdens, because no other exercised itself so much as the Americans in carrying loads on their backs, on account of their want of beasts of burden (*n*), with which other nations were provided. If Mr. de Paw had seen, as we have, the enormous weights which the Americans support on their shoulders, he would never have reproached them with feebleness.

But nothing demonstrates so clearly the robustness of the Americans as those various and lasting fatigues in which they are continually engaged. Mr. de Paw says (*o*), that when the new world was disco-

(*m*) Las Casas.

(*n*) Although the Peruvians had beasts of burden these were not such as could serve them in transporting those large stones which were found in some of their buildings, and in those of Mexico: having no machines either for assisting them in that work, it must have been done solely by the strength of men.

(*o*) Defence de Recherches, cap. xii.

vered, nothing was to be seen but thick woods; and that at present there are some lands cultivated, not by the Americans however, but by the Africans and Europeans; and that the soil in cultivation is to the soil which is uncultivated as two thousand to two millions. These three assertions are precisely as many errors. To reserve, however, what belongs to the labours of the ancient Mexicans for another Dissertation, and to speak only of latter times, it is certain that since the conquest the Americans alone have been the people who have supported all the fatigues of agriculture in all the vast countries of the continent of South America, and in the greater part of those of South America subject to the crown of Spain. No European is ever to be seen employed in the labours of the field. The Moors, who, in comparison of the Americans, are very few in number in the kingdom of New Spain, are charged with the culture of the sugar-cane and tobacco, and the making of sugar; but the soil destined for the cultivation of those plants is not with respect to all the cultivated land of that country in the proportion of one to two thousand. The Americans are the people who labour on the soil. They are the tillers, the sowers, the weeders, and the reapers of the wheat, of the maize, of the rice, of the beans, and other kinds of grain and pulse, of the cacao, of the vanilla, of the cotton, of the indigo, and all other plants useful to the sustenance, the clothing, and commerce of those provinces; and without them so little can be done, that in the year 1762, the harvest of wheat was abandoned in many places on account of a sickness which prevailed and prevented the Indians from reaping it. But this is not all; the Americans are they who cut and transport all the necessary timber from the woods; who cut, transport, and work the stones; who make lime, plaister, and tiles; who construct all the buildings of that kingdom, except a few places where none of them inhabit; who open and repair all the roads, who make the canals and sluices, and clean the cities. They work in many mines of gold, of silver, of copper, &c. they are the shepherds, herdsmen, weavers, potters, basket-makers, bakers, couriers, day-labourers, &c.; in a word, they are the persons who bear all the burden of public labours. These are the employments of the weak, dastardly, and useless Americans, while



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the vigorous M. de Paw and other indefatigable Europeans are occupied in writing invectives against them.

These labours, in which the Indians are continually employed, certainly attest their healthiness and strength; as, if they are able to undergo such fatigues, they cannot be diseased, nor have an exhausted stream of blood in their veins, as M. de Paw insinuates. In order to make it believed that their constitutions are vitiated, he copies whatever he finds written by historians of America whether true or false, respecting the diseases which reign in some particular countries of that great continent; and especially concerning the venereal distemper, which he conceives to be truly American. With respect to the venereal disorder, we shall treat of it at large in another Dissertation: concerning other diseases, we grant, that in some countries in the wide compass of America men are exposed more than elsewhere to the distempers which are occasioned by the intemperature of the air, or the pernicious quality of the aliments; but it is certain according to the assertion of many respectable authors acquainted with the new world, that the American countries are for the most part healthy; and if the Americans were disposed to retaliate on M. de Paw and other European authors who write as he does, they would have abundant subject of materials to throw discredit on the clime of the old continent, and the constitution of its inhabitants in the endemic distempers which prevail there, such as the *elephantiasis* and leprosy of Egypt and Syria (*p*), the *verben* of southern Asia, the *dragoncello* or worm of Medina, the *pircal* of Malabar, the yaws or Guinea-evil, the *tiriafi* or *morbis pedicularis* of Little Tartary, the scurvy and dysentery of northern countries, the *plica* of Poland, the goiters of Tyrol and many alpine countries, the itch, rickets, the small-pox (*q*), and above all the plague, which has so often depopulated

(*p*) The *elephantiasis*, an endemic disease of Egypt, and entirely unknown in America, was so common in Europe in the thirteenth century, that there were, according to what Mathew Paris says, an exact writer of that time, nineteen thousand hospitals for it.

(*q*) The small pox was carried to America by the Europeans, and made as great a havoc there as the venereal disease did in Europe. The rickets is a distemper unknown in the new world; this we conceive the principal cause of there being fewer deformed and imperfect shaped people there than in Europe. The itch exists either not at all, or so rarely, that during many years residence in different countries of Mexico, we never saw one infected with that disease, nor ever heard of any one who was. The *vomito prieto*, which appears to be an endemic distemper

lated whole cities and provinces of the old continent, and which annually commits immense havoc in the East: the most terrible scourge of the human race, but hitherto warded off from the new world.

Lastly, The supposed feebleness and unsound bodily habit of the Americans do not correspond with the length of their lives. Among those Americans whose great fatigues and excessive toils do not anticipate their death, there are not a few who reach the age of eighty, ninety, and an hundred years; and, what is more, without there being observed in them that decay which time commonly produces in the hair, in the teeth, in the skin, and in the muscles of the human body. This phenomenon, so much admired by the Spaniards who reside in Mexico, cannot be ascribed to any other cause than the vigour of their constitutions, the temperance of their diet, and the salubrity of their climate. Historians, and other persons who have sojourned there for many years, report the same thing of other countries of the new world. But if possibly there is any region where life is not so much prolonged, at least there is no one where it is so much shortened as in Guinea, in Sierra Leona, in the Cape of Good Hope, and other countries of Africa, in which old age commonly begins at forty; and he who arrives at fifty is looked upon as an octogenary is with us (*r*). Of them it might be said with some shew of reason, that their blood is wasted, and their physical constitution is overthrown.

temper also, is extremely modern, and is not felt except in some places of the torrid zone frequented by Europeans. The first who were seized with it were the sailors of some European vessels, who immediately after the bad diet they had during their voyage, eat greedily of fruit, and drank immoderately of brandy. Ulloa affirms, that in Carthagena, one of the most unhealthy places of America, this distemper was not known before the year 1729, and that it began among the crews of the European vessels, which arrived there under the command of D. D. Giustiniani.

(*r*) The Hottentots, says Buffon, are short livers, for they hardly exceed forty years of age. Drack attests that certain nations inhabiting the frontiers of the Ethiopian districts, on account of the scarcity of aliment, feed on salted locusts, and that this wretched food produces a horrid effect; when they arrive at the age of forty, certain flying insects breed upon their bodies, which soon occasion their deaths, by devouring first their belly, then their breast, and lastly their very bones. These, and the kind of insects by which, as M. de Paw himself confesses, the inhabitants of Little Tartary are destroyed, are certainly greatly worse than those worms which, he says, are found amongst some people of America.

*On the mental Qualities of the Mexicans.*

HITHERTO we have examined what M. de Paw has said concerning the corporal qualities of the Americans. Let us now see what are his speculations concerning their minds. He has not been able to discover any other characters than a memory so feeble, that to-day they do not remember what they did yesterday; a capacity so blunt, that they are incapable of thinking, or putting their ideas in order; a disposition so cold, that they feel no excitement of love; a dastardly spirit, and a genius that is torpid and indolent. In short, he paints the Americans in such colours, and debases their souls to such a degree, that although he sometimes inveighs against them, that they put their very rationality in doubt, we do not doubt, that if he had then been consulted, he would have declared himself contrary to the opinion of *rationalists*. We know well that many other Europeans, and, what is still more wonderful, many of those children or descendants of Europeans who are born in America, think as M. de Paw does; some from ignorance, some from want of reflection, and others from hereditary prejudice and prepossession. But all this and more would not be sufficient to belie our own experience and the testimony of other Europeans whose authority have a great deal more weight, both because they were men of great judgment, learning, and knowledge of these countries, and because they gave their testimony in favour of strangers against their own countrymen. The attestations and arguments which we could adduce in favour of the mental qualities of the Americans are so numerous, that they would fill a great volume; we shall, however, to avoid prolixity or confusion, confine ourselves to a few, which are worth a thousand others.

Zumarraga, first bishop of Mexico, a prelate of happy memory and highly esteemed by the catholic kings, for his learning and irreproachable life, his pastoral zeal and apostolic labours, in his letter written in the year 1531, to the general chapter of the P. P.

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Franciscans, assembled in Tolosa, speaks thus of the Indians: "They are temperate and ingenious, particularly in the art of painting. They are not ungifted with mental talents. The Lord be praised for all." If M. de Paw does not value the testimony of this most venerable prelate, whom he calls a bigot and barbarian, in right of that authority which he has arrogated to himself to injure those whose sentiments are not conformable to his extravagant system of degeneracy, let him read what Las Casas, the first bishop of Chiapa, has written, who knew them well, from having resided many years in different parts of America. He in a memorial presented to Philip II. speaks of them thus: "The Americans also are people of a bright and lively genius, easy to be taught and to apprehend every good doctrine, extremely ready to embrace our faith and virtuous customs, and the people of all others in the world who feel least embarrassment in it." He makes use almost of the same expressions in his refutation of the answers of Dr. Sepulveda; "The Indians have," he says, "as good an understanding and acute a genius, as much docility and capacity for the moral and speculative sciences, and are, in most instances, as rational in their political government, as appears from many of their extremely prudent laws, and are as far advanced in the knowledge of our faith and religion, in good customs and civilization where they have been tutored by persons of religious and exemplary life, and are arriving at refinement and polish as fast as any nation ever did since the times of the apostles." Since M. de Paw believes all that which this learned exemplary prelate wrote against the Spaniards, although he was not present at the greater part of the facts which he relates, he ought much more to believe that which the same bishop, deposes in favour of the Americans, as an eye-witness and resident among them; as there is much less requisite to make us believe that the Americans are people of a good genius and disposition, than to persuade us of those horrid and unheard of cruelties of the Spanish conquerors.

But if he does not admit the testimony of that great bishop, because he esteems him, though wrongfully, to have been a cheat, and ambitious hypocrite, he may read the deposition concerning them of the first bishop of Tlascala, Garces, a most learned man, and highly and justly

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justly esteemed by his famous patron Ant. de Nebrija, the restorer of letters in Spain. This renowned prelate in his Latin Letter to pope Paul III. written in 1536, after ten years continual commerce with, and observation of the Americans, among many praises which he bestows on their dispositions, and the gifts of their minds, he extols their genius, and in some degree raises it above that of his countrymen, as may appear from the passage of his letter which we have subjoined here below (s). What person is there who would not give greater faith to those three bishops, who, besides their probity, their learning, and character, had long commerce with the Americans, than to other authors who either never saw the Americans, or viewed them without reflection, or paid improper and unjust deference to the informations of ignorant, prejudiced, or interested men?

But lastly, if M. de Paw refuses the depositions of these three witnesses, however respectable, because they were ecclesiastics, to whom he thinks weakness of mind attached, he cannot, but submit to the judgment of the famous bishop of Angelopoli, Palafox. Mr. de Paw, though a Prussian and a philosopher, calls that prelate *the venerable servant of God*. If he gives so much faith to this *venerable servant of God* in what he wrote against the Jesuits in his own cause, why not believe him in what he has written in favour of the Americans! Let him read the work of this prelate, composed in order to demonstrate the disposition, genius, and virtues of the Indians.

Notwithstanding the implacable hatred which M. de Paw bears to the ecclesiastics of the Roman church, and to the Jesuits in particular, he praises the Natural and Moral History of Acofta, and calls it very justly *an excellent work*. This judicious, impartial, and very learned Spaniard, who saw and observed with his own eyes the Americans in Peru as well as Mexico, employs the whole sixth book of this *excellent work* in demonstrating the good sense of the Americans by

(s) “ Nunc vero de horum sigillatim hominum ingenio, quos vidimus ab hinc decennio, quo ego in Patria convectatus eorum potui perspicere mores ac ingenia persecutari, testificans coram te, Beatissime Pater qui Christi in terris Vicarium agis quod vidi quod audiui et manus nostræ contrectaverunt de his progenitis ab ecclesia per quaecumque ministerium meum in verbo vitæ quod singula singulis referendo, id est paribus paria, rationis optimæ compotes sunt et integri sensus ac capitis sed insuper nostratibus pueri istorum et vigore spiritus et sensu una vivacitate dexteriore in omni agibili et intelligibili prælantiores reperiuntur.”

an explanation of their ancient government, their laws, their histories in paintings and knots, calendars, &c. To be informed of his opinion on this subject, it will be sufficient to read the first chapter of that book. We request M. de Paw, as well as our readers, to read it attentively, as there are matters in it worthy of being known. M. de Paw will discover there the origin of the error into which he, and many Europeans, have fallen, and will perceive the great difference there is between viewing things while the sight is dimmed by passion and prejudices, and examining them with impartiality and cool judgment. M. de Paw thinks the Americans are bestial; Acosta, on the other hand, reputes those persons weak and presumptuous who think them so. M. de Paw says, that the most acute Americans were inferior in industry and sagacity to the rudest nations of the old continent. Acosta, extols the civil government of the Mexicans above many republics of Europe. M. de Paw finds, in the moral and political conduct of the Americans, nothing but barbarity, extravagance, and brutality; and Acosta finds there, laws that are admirable and worthy of being preserved for ever. To which of these two authors our greatest faith is due, the impartial reader will decide.

We cannot here avoid the insertion of a passage of the Philosophical Researches, in which the author discovers his turn for defamation as well as enmity to truth. “ At first, he says, the Americans were not believed to be men, but rather satyrs, or large apes, which might be murdered without remorse or reproach. At last, in order to add insult to the oppression of those times, a pope made an original bull, in which he declared, that being desirous of founding bishopricks in the richest countries of America, it pleased him, and the Holy Spirit, to acknowledge the Americans to be true men: in so far, that without this decision of an Italian, the inhabitants of the new world would have appeared, even at this day, to the eyes of the faithful, a race of equivocal men. There is no example of such a decision, since this globe has been inhabited by men and apes.” We should rejoice that there was no other example in the world of such calumnies and insolence as those of M. de Paw, but that we may put the complexion of this passage in its true light, we shall give a copy of that decision, after having explained the occasion of it.



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Some of the first Europeans who established themselves in America, not less powerful than avaricious, desirous of enriching themselves to the detriment of the Americans, kept them continually employed, and made use of them as slaves; and in order to avoid the reproaches which were made them by the bishops and missionaries who inculcated humanity, and the giving liberty to those people, to get themselves instructed in religion, that they might do their duties towards the church and their families, alledged, that the Indians were by nature slaves and incapable of being instructed; and many other falsehoods of which the Chronicler Herrera makes mention against them. Those zealous ecclesiastics being unable, either by their authority or preaching, to free those unhappy converts from the tyranny of such misers, had recourse to the Catholic kings, and at last obtained from their justice and clemency, those laws as favourable to the Americans as honourable to the court of Spain, that compose the Indian code, which were chiefly due to the indefatigable zeal of the bishop de las Casas. On another side, Garces, bishop of Tlascala, knowing that those Spaniards bore, notwithstanding their perversity, a great respect to the decisions of the vicar of Jesus Christ, made application in the year 1586, to pope Paul III. by that famous letter, of which we have made mention; representing to him the evils which the Indians suffered from the wicked Christians, and praying him to interpose his authority in their behalf. The pope, moved by such heavy remonstrances, dispatched the next year the original bull, a faithful copy of which we have here subjoined (t), which was not

(t) Paulus papa III. universis Christi Fidelibus presentes Litteras inspecturis Salutem & Apostolicam Benedictionem—" Veritas ipsa, quæ nec falli, nec fallere potest, cum Prædicatores Fidei ad officium prædicationis destinaret, dixisse dignoscitur: *Euntes docete omnes gentes*: omnes d'xit absque omni delectu, cum omnes Fidei disciplina capaces existant. Quod videns & invidens ipsius humani generis amulus, qui bonis operibus, ut pereant, semper adversatur, modum excogitavit hæcenus inauditum, quo impediret, ne Verbum Dei Gentibus, ut salvæ fierent, prædicaretur: ut quosdam suos satellites commovit, qui suam cupiditatem adimplere cupientes. Occidentales & Meridionales Indos, & alias Gentes, quæ temporibus istis ad nostram notitiam pervenerunt, sub prætextu quod Fidei Catholicæ expertes existant, uti bruta animalia, ad nostra obsequia redigendos esse, passim asserere præsumant, & eos in servitutem redigunt tantis afflictionibus illos urgentes, quantis vix bruta animalia illis servientia urgeant. Nos igitur, qui ejusdem Domini nostri vices, licet indigni, gerimus in terris, & Oves gregis sui nobis commissas, quæ extra ejus Ovile sunt, ad ipsum Ovile toto nixu exquirimus, attendentes Indos ipsos, utpote veros homines, non solum Christianæ Fidei capaces existere sed, ut nobis innotuit, ad Fidem ipsam promptissime currere, ac volentes super his congruis remediis providere, prædictos Indos & omnes alias gentes ad notitiam Christianorum in poste-

not made, as is manifest, to declare the Americans free men; for such a piece of weakness was very distant from that or any other pope: but solely to support the natural rights of the Americans against the attempts of their oppressors, and to condemn the injustice and inhumanity of those, who, under the pretence of supposing those people idolatrous, or incapable of being instructed, took from them their property and their liberty, and treated them as slaves and beasts. The Spaniards, indeed, would have been more pitiable than the rudest savages of the new world, if they had waited for a decision from Rome before they would acknowledge the Americans to be true men. It is well known, that long before the pope dispatched that bull, the Catholic kings had earnestly recommended the instruction of the Americans, had given the most careful orders that they should be well treated, and that no wrong should be offered either to their property or their persons; and had sent several bishops to the new world, and some hundreds of missionaries at the royal expence, to teach those satyrs the faith of Jesus Christ, and train them in the Christian mode of life. In 1531, six years before that bull was out, the French missionaries alone had baptized in Mexico more than a million of those satyrs; and in 1534, the seminary of the Holy Cross was founded in Tlatelolco, for the instruction of a considerable number of those large apes, where they learned the Latin language, Rhetoric, Philosophy, and Medicine. If at first the Americans were esteemed satyrs, no body can better prove it than Christopher Columbus their discoverer. Let us hear, therefore, how that celebrated admiral speaks, in his account to the Catholic kings Ferdinand and Isabella, of the first satyrs he saw in the island of Haiti, or Hispaniola. "I swear," he says, "to your majesties, that there is not a better people in the world than these, more affectionate, affable, or mild. They love their neighbours as themselves; their language is the sweetest, the softest, and the most

"rum deveniunt, licet extra fidem Christi existant, sua libertate & dominio hujusmodi uti, & potiri, & gaudere libere & licite posse, nec in servitutem redigi debere, ac quicquid secus fieri contigerit irritum & inane, ipsosque Indos, & alias Gentes Verbi Dei prædicatione, & exemplo bonæ vitæ ad dictam Fidem Christi invitandos fore. Auctoritate Apostolica præsentibus literis decernimus, & declaramus, non obstantibus præmissis, ceterisque contrariis quibuscunque."—Datum Romæ anno 1537. IV. Non. Jun. Pontificatus aostri anno III. Questa, non altra è quella famosa bolla, per la quale s'è fatto un sì grande schiamazzo.

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“chearful; for they always speak smiling; and although they go naked, let your majesties believe me, their customs are very becoming; and their king, who is served with great majesty, has such engaging manners, that it gives great pleasure to see him, and also to consider the great retentive faculty of that people, and their desire of knowledge, which incites them to ask the causes and the effects of things (*u*).” As M. de Paw employed ten continued years to search into the affairs of America, he ought to have known, that in the countries of the new world subjected to the Spaniards, no other bishopricks are founded there than those which the Catholic king has constituted. To him belong, from the patronage given him over American churches by pope Julius II. in 1508, the foundation of bishopricks, and the presentation of bishops. To affirm, therefore, that Paul III. would acknowledge the Americans to be true men, in order to found bishopricks in the richest countries of the new world, is but the calumny of an enemy of the Roman church; for if he was not blinded by enmity, he would rather have perceived the zeal and humanity which the pope displays in that bull.

Dr. Robertson, who, in a great measure, adopts the extravagant notions of M. de Paw, speaks thus of the Americans, in the VIIIth book of his History of America. “Some missionaries astonished equally at their slowness of comprehension, and at their insensibility, pronounced them a race of men so brutish, as to be incapable of understanding the first principles of religion.” But what missionaries these were, and how much their judgment is to be trusted, can be understood from no body better than Garces, in the above mentioned letter to pope Paul III. Let the passage which we have here subjoined be read (*x*), it will appear from it, that the reasons of such

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(*u*) Cap. xxxii. of the History of Chr. Columbus, written by his son.

(*x*) Quis tam impudenti animo ac perficata fronte incapaces fidei asserere audet, quos mechanicarum artium capacissimos intuemur, ac quos etiam ad ministerium nostrum redactos bonæ indolis, fidelis, & solertes experimur? Et si quando, Beatissime Pater, Tua Sanctitas aliquem religiosum virum in hanc declinare sententiam audierit, etsi eximia integritate vitæ, vel dignitate fulgere videatur is, non ideo quicquam illi hac in re præstet auctoritatis, sed eundem parum aut nihil insudasse in illorum conversione certo certius arbitretur, ac in eorum ad discenda lingua, aut investigandis ingeniis parum studuisse perpendat: nam qui in his caritate christiana laborarunt, non frustra in eos jactare verba caritatis affirmant; illi vero qui solitudini dediti, aut ignavia præpediti neminem ad Christi cultum sua industria reduxerunt, ne in-

culpari



an error, were the ignorance and sloth of those missionaries ; and we add, the false ideas they had imbibed from their infancy. Las Casas, Acosta, and other grave writers on America, say the same thing as Garces.

“ A council held at Lima,” continues Dr. Robertson, “ decreed, “ that on account of this incapacity they ought to be excluded from “ the sacrament of the Eucharist. And though Paul III. by his famous bull, issued in the year 1537, declared them to be rational creatures, entitled to all the privileges of Christians ; yet, after the lapse “ of two centuries, during which they have been members of the “ church, so imperfect are their attainments in knowledge, that very “ few possess such a portion of spiritual discernment, as to be deemed “ worthy of being admitted to the holy communion. . . . Even after “ the most careful instruction, their faith is considered feeble and dubious, and though some of them have been taught the learned languages, and have gone through the ordinary course of academic education with applause, their frailty is so much suspected, that no Indian is ever ordained a priest, or received into any religious order.” In a few words, here are four errors at least. 1. That a council of Lima had excluded the Indians from the sacrament of the Eucharist, on account of their imbecility of mind. 2. That Paul III. declared the Indians rational creatures. 3. That very few Indians possess such a portion of spiritual discernment as to be judged worthy to approach to the sacred table. 4. That no Indian is ever ordained a priest.

With respect to the first, it is true, that in an assembly held at Lima, in the year 1552, which was called *Primum concilium Limæ*, though it was not a council, nor had ever any authority of a council, it was ordained that the Eucharist should not be administered to the Indians until they were perfectly instructed and persuaded in things of faith ;

culpari possint quod inutiles fuerint, quod propriæ negligentiae vitium est, id Infidelium imbecillitati adscribunt, veramque suam desidiam falsæ incapacitatis impositione defendunt, ac non minorem culpam in excusatione committunt, quam erat illa, a qua liberari conantur. Lædit namque summe istud hominum genus talia asserentium hanc Indorum misererrimam turbam : nam aliquos religiosos viros retrahunt, ne ad eosdem in fide instruendos proficiscantur : quamobrem nonnulli Hispanorum qui ad illos debellandos accedunt, horum freti judicio illos negligere, perdere, ac mactare opinari solent non esse flagitium. *Ex litteris Julani Garces Ep. Tlasc. ad Paulum III. Pont. Max.*

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because that sacrament is the food of the perfect, but not because they were esteemed weak of understanding. This is clear from the first provincial council vulgarly called the second, held in Lima in the year 1567, which ordered priests to administer such sacrament to all the Indians who found themselves disposed for it (y). But notwithstanding that order to make those ecclesiastics comply, of which Acosta justly complained, the second council of Lima held in 1583, at which S. Toribio Mogrobejo presided, endeavoured to remedy those disorders by the decrees which we here subjoin (z), from which it is to be seen, that they for the same reasons equally denied the eucharist to the Indians and to the Moors, who were slaves brought from Africa: that the true reasons for denying it were, in the judgment of the council, the negligence or sloth, and the indiscreet and misapplied zeal of those ecclesiastics, and that the council found itself obliged to put a remedy to so great a disorder by new decrees and severe punishments. We know well also, that those respectable decrees were not exactly executed, and it became necessary for the diocesan synod of Lima, Plata, Paz, Arequipa and Paraguay, to inculcate them afresh;

(y) Quamquam omnes Christiani adulti utriusque sexus teneantur Santissimum Eucharistiæ Sacramentum accipere singulis annis saltem in Paschate, hujus tamen Provinciæ Antistites cum animadverterent gentem hanc Indorum & recentem esse & infantilem in fide, atque id illorum salutis expedire judicarent, statuerunt ut usque dum fidem perfecte tenerent, hoc divino sacramento, quod est perfectorum cibus, non communicarentur, excepto si quis ei percipiendo satis idoneus videretur. . . . Placuit huic Sanctæ Synodo monere, prout serio monet, omnes Indorum Parochos, ut quos audita jam confessione perspexerint, huic caelestem cibum a reliquo corporali discernere, atque eundem devote cupere & poscere, quoniam sine causa neminem divino aliminto privare possumus, quo tempore cæteris Christianis solent, Indis omnibus administrare. Conc. Lim. I. vulgo II, cap. 58.

(z) Cæleste viaticum, quod nulli ex hac vita migranti negat Mater Ecclesia, multis abhinc annis Indis atque Æthiopibus, cæterisque personis miserabilibus præberi debere Concilium Limense constituit. Sed tamen Sacerdotum plurimum vel negligentia, vel zelo quodam præpostero atque intempestivo illis nihilo magis hodie præbetur. Quo fit, ut imbecilles animæ tanto bono, tamque necessario priventur. Volens igitur Sancta Synodus ad executionem perducere, quæ Christo duce ad salutem Indorum ordinata sunt, severe præcipit omnibus Parochis, ut extreme laborantibus Indis atque Æthiopibus viaticum ministrare non prætermittant, dummodo in eis debitam dispositionem agnoscant, nempe fidem in Christum, & pœnitentiam in Deum suo modo. . . . Porro Parochos qui a prima hujus decreti promulgatione negligentes fuerint, noveriat se, præter divinæ ultionis judicium, etiam pœnas Arbitrio Ordinariorum, in quo conscientie onerantur, daturos: atque in Visitationibus in illos de hujus statuti observatione specialiter inquirendum. Conc. Lim. II. vulgo III. Act. 2. cap. 19.

In Paschate saltem eucharistiam ministrare Parochus non prætermittat iis, quos & satis instructos, & correctione vitæ idoneos judicaverit: ne & ipse aliqui ecclesiastici præcepti violati reus sit. Ibid. cap. 20.

but



but that demonstrates the obstinacy of the ecclesiastics, not the want of capacity in the Americans.

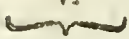
With respect to the bull of Paul III. we have already shewn that it was not intended to declare the Americans men, but, on account of their right to all the privileges of men, to condemn their oppressors.

In regard to the third error of Dr. Robertson which we have mentioned above, omitting at present what belongs to other countries of America as it is not necessary here; it is certain and notorious, that in all New Spain the Indians are obliged as much as the Spaniards to receive the Eucharist at Easter, except those of remote countries, who are admitted or not to the sacred table according to the judgment of the missionaries. In the three audiences into which New Spain is divided, there are, says Robertson, at least two millions of Indians (*a*). We are confident that this number is much inferior to the truth; but be it so and no more. The Indians therefore, are not very few in number who possess so great a portion of spiritual discernment as to be judged worthy of approaching to the sacred table, unless two millions appear very few to him, or he thinks those bishops and priests rash, who not only admit but even oblige those Indians to communicate. But when we add to those the Indians of many provinces of South America who are equally obliged to receive the sacred Eucharist, the number will be greatly increased.

His fourth error, in which he affirms that no Indian is ever ordained priest is not less gross. It is subject of wonder, that a writer who collected so great a library of writers on America, and for whom so many accounts of the things of the New World were obtained from Madrid, should have been so ill informed on this as well as on other points. Dr. Robertson will please to know, therefore, that although the first provincial council held in Mexico in the year 1555 forbid that the Indians should be ordained, not on account of their incapacity, but because it was thought the lowness of their condition might draw some discredit on the ecclesiastical state, nevertheless the third provincial council, held in 1585, which was the most celebrated of all, and whose decisions are still in force, permitted them to be ordained priests, provided there was great care taken in admit-

(*a*) History of America, Book viii.



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We have had intimate commerce with the Americans, have lived for some years in a seminary destined for their instruction, saw the erection and progress of the royal college of Guadaloupe, founded in Mexico, by a Mexican Jesuit, for the education of Indian children, had afterwards some Indians amongst our pupils, had particular knowledge of many American rectors, many nobles, and numerous artists; attentively observed their character, their genius, their disposition, and manner of thinking; and have examined besides with the utmost diligence their ancient history, their religion, their government, their laws, and their customs. After such long experience and study of them, from which we imagine ourselves enabled to decide without danger of erring, we declare to M. de Paw, and to all Europe, that the mental qualities of the Americans are not the least inferior to those

(*d*) Torquemada, lib. xvii. cap. 13.

of the Europeans, that they are capable of all, even the most abstract sciences, and that if equal care was taken of their education, if they were brought up from childhood in seminaries under good masters, were protected and stimulated by rewards, we should see rise among the Americans, philosophers, mathematicians, and divines who would rival the first in Europe. But it is a little difficult, not to say impossible, to make great progress in the sciences, in the midst of a life of misery, servitude, and oppression. Whoever contemplates the present state of Greece will not be apt to believe that those great men flourished there whom history records, were we not convinced of it by their immortal works, and the voice of all ages. But the obstacles which the people of Greece have to surmount before they can become learned are not comparable to those which the Americans always had, and still have to overcome. Nevertheless, we wish M. de Paw, and some other persons who think as he does, could be present without being observed in those assemblies or councils which are held by the Americans on certain days to deliberate on public affairs, that they might hear how those satyrs of the new world discourse and harangue.

Lastly, The whole ancient history of the Mexicans and Peruvians evinces to us, that they knew how to think and order their ideas, that they are susceptible of all the passions and impressions of humanity, and that the Europeans have had no other advantage over them than that of having been better instructed. The civil government of the ancient Americans, their laws, and their arts evidently demonstrate they suffered no want of genius. Their wars shew us that their souls are not insensible to the excitements of love, as count de Buffon and M. de Paw think; since they sometimes took up arms in his cause.

In regard to their courage, we have explained, when we spoke of their character, what we have observed in the present, and what we judge of the ancient Americans on this head. But as Mr. de Paw alledges the conquest of Mexico as a convincing proof of their cowardice, it may be proper to enlighten his ignorance, or rather to strengthen his little faith.

“Cortes,” he says, “conquered the empire of Mexico with four hundred and fifty vagabonds and fifteen horses, badly armed;

DISSERT. V. “his miserable artillery consisted of six falconets, which would not  
 “at the present day be capable of exciting the fears of a fortress de-  
 “fended by invalids. During his absence the capital was held in awe  
 “by the half of his troops. What men! what events!”

“It is confirmed,” he adds, “by the depositions of all historians  
 “that the Spaniards entered the first time into Mexico without mak-  
 “ing one single discharge of their artillery. If the title of hero is  
 “applicable to him who has the disgrace to occasion the death of a  
 “great number of rational animals, Ferdinand Cortes might pretend  
 “to it; otherwise I do not see what true glory he has acquired by the  
 “overthrow of a tottering monarchy, which might have been destroyed  
 “in the same manner by any other assassin of our continent.” Those  
 passages of the Philosophic Researches detect that M. de Paw was igno-  
 rant of the history of the conquest of Mexico, or that he suppresses  
 what would openly contradict his system; since all who have read  
 that history know well, that the conquest of Mexico was not made with  
 four hundred and fifty men, but with more than two hundred thou-  
 sand. Cortes himself, to whom it was of more importance than to  
 M. de Paw to make his bravery conspicuous, and his conquest appear  
 glorious, confesses the excessive number of the allies who were under  
 his command at the siege of the capital, and combated with more  
 fury against the Mexicans than the Spaniards themselves. Accord-  
 ing to the account which Cortes gave to the emperor Charles  
 V. the siege of Mexico began with eighty-seven horses, eight hun-  
 dred and forty-eight Spanish infantry, armed with guns, cross-bows,  
 swords, and lances, and upwards of seventy-five thousand allies,  
 of Tlascala, Huexotzinco, Cholula, and Chalco, equipped with va-  
 rious sorts of arms; with three large pieces of cannon of iron, fif-  
 teen small of copper, and thirteen brigantines. In the course of the  
 siege were assembled the numerous nations of the Otomies, the Co-  
 huixcas, and Matlazincas, and the troops of the populous cities of the  
 lakes; so that the army of the besiegers not only exceeded two hun-  
 dred thousand but amounted to four millions according to the letter  
 from Cortes; and besides these, three thousand boats and canoes,  
 came to their assistance. We therefore ask M. de Paw if it appears to  
 him to have been cowardice to have sustained, for full seventy-five days,  
 the



the siege of an open city, engaging daily with an army so large, and in part provided with arms so superior, and at the same time having to withstand the ravages of famine? Can they merit the charge of cowardise, who, after having lost seven of the eight parts of their city, and about fifty thousand citizens, part cut off by the sword, part by famine and sickness, continued to defend themselves until they were furiously assaulted in the last hold which was left them (*p*).

“It is certain,” says M. de Paw, “by the depositions of all historians, that the Spaniards entered the first time into Mexico without making a single discharge of their artillery.” If this argument is peculiar to the logic of M. de Paw; if the Mexicans were cowards because the Spaniards entered into Mexico without a single discharge of their artillery, it might as well be said that the Prussians are cowards because the ambassadors of several courts of Europe enter into Berlin without discharging even a fusil. Who does not know that the Spaniards were admitted into that city as the ambassadors of the monarch of the East? Historians all recount this as well as Cortes himself, who feigned himself the ambassador of the Catholic king. If the Mexicans had been willing to oppose him then as they did the second time, how would the Spaniards have been able to enter with only six thousand men, when their second entry was so difficult with two hundred thousand (*q*)?

With respect to what M. de Paw adds against Cortes, we do not mean to make the apology of this conqueror, neither can we endure the panegyric which Solis has written in place of a history; but as an impartial person, well informed of all his military actions, we must confess, that in courage, constancy, and military prudence, he rivals the most famous generals; and that he possessed that species of heroism which we acknowledge in Alexander and the Cæsars, in

(*p*) All that we have here said respecting the siege and conquest of Mexico is taken from the letter of the conqueror Cortes to Charles V.

(*q*) “It is not less certain,” says Acoña, “that it was the aid of the Tlascalans which obtained to Cortes his victories, and the conquest of Mexico; and without them it would have been impossible to have made himself master of that place, nor to have continued longer there. Those who make little of the Indians, and think the Spaniards could have conquered any country or nation by the superiority of their arms, valour, and horses, are grossly deceived.”

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whom we praise their magnanimity in spite of the vices with which it was blended.

The cause of the rapidity with which the Spaniards conquered America has been partly mentioned by M. de Paw: "I confess," he says, "that the artillery was a destructive and all-powerful engine, which necessarily subdued the Mexicans." If to the artillery we add the other superior arms, horses, and discipline on the part of the conquerors, and the divisions which prevailed among the conquered, it will be seen that there is no reason to charge the Americans with pusillanimity, or to wonder at the violent convulsion of the new world. Let M. de Paw imagine, that at the time of the noisy and cruel factions of Sylla and Marius the Athenians had invented artillery and other fire arms, and equipped only six thousand men with them, joining themselves not to the army of Marius, but only to some part of his troops, and undertaken the conquest of Italy; does not M. de Paw think that they would have succeeded in spite of all the power of Sylla, the courage and discipline of the Roman troops, their numerous legions and cavalry, the multitude of their armies, their machines and the fortifications of their city? What terror would the horrid sound of the artillery, and the destructive violence of the balls, not have struck to the minds of the boldest centurions, when they saw whole ranks of men carried off by them? What then must the effect have been on those nations of the new world who had no arms nor cavalry, no discipline, machines, or fortifications like the Romans? That, on the contrary, which is truly to be wondered at, is, that the brave Spaniards, with all their discipline, artillery, and arms, have not been able, in two centuries, to subdue the *Araucan* warriors of South America, though armed only with clubs and lances, nor the *Apaches* [in North America, armed with bows and arrows; and above all, what appears incredible, but is notwithstanding certain, five hundred men of the nation of the *Seris*, have for many years been the scourge of the Spaniards of Sonora and Cinaloa.

Lastly, omitting many other absurd opinions of M. de Paw against the Americans, we shall only now take notice of the injury which he does them of the grossest kind in regard to their customs. There are four principal vices with which he charges the Americans, gluttony, drunkenness, ingratitude, and pederasty.

We

We never heard of the Americans being reproached with gluttony until we met with that passage in Mr. Condamine, cited and adopted by M. de Paw. We have found no author, who was the least instructed in the affairs of America, who did not praise the temperance of the Americans in eating. Whoever pleases may on this point consult Las Casas, Garcés, the anonymous conqueror, Oviedo, Gomara, Acosta, Herrera, Torquemada, Betancourt, &c. All historians mention the wonder of the Spaniards at the temperance of the Indians; and, on the contrary, the wonder of the Indians to see the Spaniards eat more in one day than they did in a week. In short, the sobriety of the Americans is so notorious, that to defend them on this subject would be superfluous. Mr. Condamine perhaps saw in his travels on the river Maragnon, some famished Indians eat very greedily, and from them was persuaded, as happens often to travellers, that all the Americans were gluttons. It is certain that Ulloa, who was in America with Mr. Condamine, remained there a longer time, and got more knowledge of the customs of the Indians, speaks of them in a manner quite contrary to that French mathematician.

Drunkenness is the prevailing vice of those nations. We confess it sincerely in the first book of this history, explain its effects, and point out the cause of it; but we add also, that it did not prevail in the country of Anahuac before the Spaniards came there, on account of the great severity with which that vice was punished, though in the greater part of the countries of the old continent it is still incorrupted, and serves as an excuse for more heinous crimes. It is certain, from the inquiries made by authors into the civil government of the Mexicans, that there were several laws against drunkenness in Mexico as well as Tezcuco, in Tlascala, and other states, which we have seen represented in their ancient paintings. The sixty-third painting of the collection made by Mendoza represents two youths of both sexes condemned to death for having intoxicated themselves, and at the same time an old man of seventy, whom the laws permit, on account of his age, to drink as much as he pleases. There are few states in the world whose sovereigns have shewn greater zeal to prevent excesses of this kind.

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In the above mentioned book also we have reported the common error respecting the gratitude of the Indians: but as what was said there will not be sufficient to convince those who are prepossessed against them, we shall here relate an instance of gratitude which will of itself be enough to dissipate this prejudice. In the year 1556 died, in Uruapa, a considerable place of the kingdom of Michuacan, on a visit to his diocese at the age of ninety-five, Vasco de Quiroga, founder and first bishop of that church, who, after the example of St. Ambrose, was translated from the secular jurisdiction to the episcopal dignity. This celebrated prelate, worthy of comparison with the first fathers of Christianity, laboured indefatigably in favour of the people of Michuacan, instructing them as an apostle, and loving them as a father; he erected temples, founded hospitals, and assigned to each settlement of the Indians a branch of commerce, that the mutual dependance upon each other might keep them in stronger bonds of union, perfect the arts, and provide a manner of life for every one. The memory of such benefits is, after more than two ages, preserved as fresh in the minds of the Americans, as if their benefactor was yet living. The first care of the Indian women, as soon as their children begin to have any judgment, is to give them an account of their *Tata Don Vasco*: for so they still call him on account of the pious respect they bear to his memory. They communicate a knowledge of him by means of pictures of him, explaining all that he did in favour of their nation, and never pass before his image without kneeling. This prelate also founded, in 1540, a seminary in the city of Pazcuaro for the instruction of youth; and enjoined the Indians of *Santa Fe*, a place settled by him on the bank of the lake *Pazcuaro*, to send every week a man to serve in the seminary. He was obeyed, and for two hundred and thirty years past an Indian has never been wanted to attend upon the seminary without any necessity to force or even call them, from their zeal to make a return by such service for the benefits which that worthy prelate conferred on them. They preserve his bones with such veneration in the city of Pazcuaro, that once as the chapter of the cathedral of Valladolid attempted to transport them there, the Indians became uneasy, and prepared to oppose it by force of arms, which they would have certainly done had not the chapter,

in order to prevent any such disorder, abandoned their resolution. Can there be imagined a more conclusive proof of the gratitude of a nation? Similar demonstrations of the same disposition have been given by the Indians in many places of the kingdom, where they wished to retain the missionaries who had instructed them in their faith. Those instances, which happened in the two last centuries, may be learned from the third volume of Torquemada, and the Mexican Theatre of Betancourt. Of those which have occurred in our own times there are many living witnesses; and we can testify some ourselves. If the Americans ever shew themselves ungrateful to their patrons, it is because the continual experience of evils from them renders even their benefits suspicious: but whenever they are convinced of the sincere benevolence of their benefactors, they are capable of making a sacrifice of all their possessions to gratitude. All who have seen and observed with impartiality the manners of the Americans confirm this character.

But of all the remarks made by M. de Paw against the Americans, nothing has been more injurious than his affirmation that pederasty was much a vice in the islands, in Peru, in Mexico, and in all the new continent. We cannot conceive how M. de Paw, after having vented so horrid a calumny, had confidence to say in his reply to Don Pernety, that all his work of *Philosophical Researches* breathes humanity. Can it be humanity unjustly to defame all the nations of the new world with a vice so opprobrious to nature? Is it humanity to be enraged against the Inca Garcilasso because he defends the Peruvians from such a charge? Although those were respected authors who ascribed this crime to all the people of America, there being many respected authors who say the contrary, M. de Paw, according to the laws of humanity, ought to have abstained from so gross an accusation. But how much more ought he to have avoided it when there is not any writer of authority on whose testimony he can support so universal an assertion. He may find some authors, as the anonymous conqueror, Gomara, and Herrera, who have accused some Americans of such a vice, or at most some people of America; but he will find no historian of credit who has dared to say that pederasty was much a vice in the *islands*, in *Peru*, in *Mexico*, and in all the new continent? On  
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the contrary, all the historians of Mexico say unanimously, that such a vice was held in abomination by those nations, and make mention of the severe punishments prescribed by the laws against it, as appears from the works of Gomara, Herrera, Torquemada, Betancourt, and others. Las Casas, in his memorial to Charles V. presented in 1542, attests, that having made a diligent enquiry in the Spanish islands, Cuba, Jamaica, and Porto Rico, he found there was no memory of such a vice among those nations. The same thing he affirms of Peru, Yucatan, and all the countries of America in general; in some one place or other, he says, there may be some addicted to that crime; but he adds, the whole new world, however, must not be taxed with that vice. Who then has authorised M. de Paw to defame, in a point so injurious, the whole of the new world? Although the Americans were, as he believes, men without honour, and without shame, the laws of humanity forbid him to calumniate them. Such is the excess into which his ridiculous eagerness to depreciate America leads him, and such are the consequences of his unnatural logic, that he constantly deduces from particular premises universal conclusions! If possibly the Panuchese, or any other people of America, were infected with that vice, is it from thence to be affirmed that pederasty was much a vice in all the new world? The Americans might as well defame in the same manner the whole old continent, because among some ancient people of Asia and among the Greeks and Romans it was a notorious vice. Besides, it is not known that there is any nation at present in America infected with that vice; whereas we are informed by several authors, that some people of Asia are still tainted with it; and that even in Europe, if what Mr. Locke and M. de Paw say is true, among Turks of a certain profession, another vice more execrable, of the same kind, is common; and that instead of being severely punished for it, they are held, by that nation, in the light of saints, and receive the highest marks of respect and veneration.

Amongst the crimes charged to the Americans by M. de Paw suicide is included. It is true that at the times of the conquest many hanged themselves, or threw themselves down precipices, or put an end to themselves by abstinence; but it is not the least wonderful that men who had become desperate from continual harassment and vexations,



tions, who thought their gods had abandoned, and the elements conspired against them, should do that which was frequent with the Romans, the Franks, and ancient Spaniards, the modern English (x), French, and Japanese, for a slight motive; for some false idea of honour, or some caprice of passion? Who could persuade himself that a European would reproach the Americans with suicide in an age in which it is become a daily event in England and France (y); where the just ideas we have from nature and her religion, are banished from the mind, and arguments invented, and books published, to vindicate it? So great is the rage for defaming America and the Americans.

A similar passion seems to have affected that Spaniard who formed the general Index of the Decads of Herrera, inconsiderately imputing to all the Americans what Herrera says in his work of some individuals, with various exceptions. We copy here what we have read in that Index. “The Indians,” he says, “are very slothful, very full of vices, great drunkards, by nature lazy, weak, lyars, cheats, fickle, inconstant, have much levity, cowardly, nasty, mutinous, thievish, ungrateful, inexorable, more vindictive than any other nation, of so low a nature, &c. that it is doubtful if they are rational creatures; barbarous, bestial, and led like the brutes by their appetites.” This is the language of M. de Paw, and other most humane Europeans; so it appears they do not think themselves obliged to believe the truth with regard to the people of the new world, nor observe the laws of fraternal charity, published by the son of their own God in the old world.

But it would be easy for any American of moderate genius, and some erudition, who was desirous of retaliating upon those authors, to compose a work with this title, Philosophical Enquiries concerning the Inhabitants of the Old Continent. In imitation of the method pursued by M. de Paw, he would collect whatever had been written of the barren countries of the old world, of inaccessible mountains, of marshy plains, of impenetrable woods, of sandy deserts, and malignant climes; of disgusting and noxious reptiles and insects, of serpents, of toads,

(x) We have been informed by a person who was at the same time in London, that a suicide left in writing, that he killed himself to get free of the trouble of dressing and undressing himself every day.

(y) We know in one of these last years, there have been one hundred and fifty suicides committed in the city of Paris alone.

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of scorpions, of ants, of frogs, of scolopendras, of beetles, of bugs and lice; of quadrupeds, irregular, small, without tails, imperfect and pusillanimous; of people, degenerated, ill-coloured, irregular in stature, deformed in shape, of bad constitutions, dastardly minds, dull genius, and cruel dispositions. When he came to the article of vices, what abundance of materials would be ready for his work! What examples of baseness, perfidy, cruelty, superstition, and debauchery; what excesses in every kind of vice. The history of the Romans alone, the most celebrated nation of the ancient world, would furnish him with an incredible quantity of the most horrid depravities. He would be sensible, that such defects and vices were not common to all the countries, nor all the inhabitants of the ancient continent; but that would not signify, as he must follow his model in M. de Paw, and make application of his logic. This work would, unquestionably, be more valuable, and more worthy of faith than that of M. de Paw; for as this philosopher does not cite against America and the Americans any but European authors, that American writer, on the contrary, would, in his curious work, refer to, and quote only the authors of the same continent against which he wrote.

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# DISSERTATION VI.

## *Of the Culture of the Mexicans.*

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**M**R. de Paw, perpetually incensed against the new world, terms all the Americans barbarians and savages, and esteems them inferior in industry and sagacity to the coarsest and rudest nations of the old continent. If he had confined himself to say, that the American nations were in great part uncultivated, barbarous, and beastly in their customs, as many of the most cultivated nations of Europe were formerly, and as several people of Asia, Africa, and even Europe are at present; that the most civilized nations of America were greatly less polished than the greater part of the European nations; that their arts were not nearly perfected, nor their laws so good, or so well framed; and that their sacrifices were inhuman, and some of their customs extravagant, we would not have reason to contradict him. But not to distinguish between the Mexicans and Peruvians, and the Caribs and Iroquese, to allow them no merit or virtues, to undervalue their arts, and to depreciate their laws, and place those industrious nations below the coarsest nations of the old continent, is obstinate persistence in an endeavour to revile the new world and its inhabitants, instead of pursuing, according to the title of his book, the investigation of truth.

We call those men barbarous and savage, who, led more by caprice and natural will than guided by reason, neither live in society, nor have laws for their government, judges to determine their differences, superiors to watch over their conduct, nor exercise the arts which are necessary to supply the wants, and remedy the miseries of life; those, in short, who have no idea of the Divinity, or, at least, have not established any worship by which they acknowledge him. The Mexicans, and all the other nations of Anahuac, as well as the Peruvians, confessed a supreme omnipotent Being, although their belief



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was like that of other idolatrous people, mixed with errors and superstition. They had priests, temples, sacrifices, and established rites, for the uniform worship of the Divinity. They had a king, governors, and magistrates; they had numerous cities, and a most extensive population, as we shall make appear hereafter. They had laws and customs, the observance of which was attended to by their magistrates and governors. They had commerce, and took infinite care to enforce justice and equity in contracts. Their lands were distributed, and every individual was secured in the property and possession of his soil. They exercised agriculture and other arts; not only those necessary to life, but also those which contributed to luxury and pleasure alone. What more is necessary to defend nations from the imputation of being barbarous and savage? Money, says M. de Paw, the use of iron, the art of writing, and those of building ships, constructing bridges of stone, and making lime. Their arts were imperfect and rude; their language extremely scarce of numeral terms and words fit to express universal ideas, and their laws must be reckoned none; for laws cannot be where anarchy and despotism reign.

## S E C T. I.

*Of the Want of Money.*

MR. de Paw decides that no nation of America was cultivated or civilized, because no one made use of money; and to support this assertion he quotes a passage from Montesquieu: "Aristippus," says this politician (a), "having been shipwrecked, made by swimming to the neighbouring shore; he saw upon the sand some figures of Geometry drawn, and became full of joy, being persuaded that he was thrown among a Greek people, and not any barbarous nation. Imagine to yourself that by some accident you are placed in an unknown country; if you find any money there, do not doubt that you are arrived among a polished people." But if Montesquieu justly infers the civilization of a country from the use of money, M. de Paw does not well

(a) *Esprit des Loix*, liv. xviii. chap. 13.

deduce the want of civilization from the deficiency of money. If we are to understand by money, a piece of metal, with the stamp of the prince, or the public, it is certain that the want of it in a nation is no token of barbarity. "The Athenians," says the same author, Montesquieu, "because they had no use of the metals, employed oxen for money, as the Romans did sheep;" and from thence took its origin, as we all know, the word *pecunia*; as the Romans put the stamp of a sheep on the first money they coined, which they employed afterwards in their contracts. The Greeks were certainly a very cultivated nation in the times of Homer, since it was impossible that in the midst of an uncultivated nation, a man should spring up capable of composing the Iliad and the Odyssey, those two immortal poems, which, after twenty-seven centuries, are still admired, but have never been equalled. The Greeks, however, at this period, did not know the use of coined money, as appears from the works of that renowned poet, who, whenever he means to signify the value of any thing, expresses it no otherwise than by the number of oxen or sheep which it was worth; as in the VIIth book of the Iliad, when he says, that Glaucus gave his arms of gold, which were worth an hundred oxen, for those of Diomedes, which were of copper, and not worth more than nine. Whenever he speaks of any purchase by contract, he mentions it no otherwise than by barter, or exchange. And therefore in that ancient controversy between the Sabinians and Proculians, two sects of lawyers, the first insisted that a real purchase and sale could be made without a price, supporting this position by certain passages of Homer, where those are said to buy and sell who only exchange. The Lacedæmonians were a civilized nation of Greece, although they did not use money; and among the fundamental laws published by Lycurgus, was that law of not carrying on commerce otherwise than by means of exchange (b). The Romans had no coined money until the time of Servius Tullius; nor the Persians until the time of Darius Hystaspes; and yet the nations which preceded those epochs were not called barbarous. The Hebrews were civilized at least from the time of their judges, but we do not find that stamped money was in use among

(b) *Emi singula non pecunia sed compensatione mercium jussit.* Justin, lib. iii.

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them until the time of the Maccabees. The want of coined money, therefore, is no argument of barbarity.

If by money is understood a sign representing the value of all merchandize, as Montesquieu defines it (*c*), it is certain, that the Mexicans, and all the other nations of Anahuac, except the barbarous Chechemecas and Otomies, employed money in their commerce. What was the cacao, of which they made constant use in the market to purchase whatever they wanted, but a sign representing the value of all merchandize. The cacao had its fixed value, and was reckoned by numbers; but to save the trouble of counting it, when the merchandize was of great value and worth, many thousands of the nuts, they knew that every bag of a certain size contained three Xiquipilli, or twenty-four thousand nuts. Who will not acknowledge, that the cacao is much fitter to be made use of as money than oxen or sheep, which the Greeks and Romans made use of, or the salt which is at present employed by the Abyssinians? The oxen and sheep could not be employed to purchase any thing of small value, and any sickness, or other misfortune, which might befall those animals, would impoverish those who had no other capital. "Metal has been adopted for money," says Montesquieu, "that the sign may be more durable. The salt which the Abyssinians use has this defect that it is continually diminishing." Cacao, on the contrary, could pass for any merchandize, was transportable, and guarded more easily, and preserved with less danger and with less care.

The use of cacao in the commerce of those nations, will appear, perhaps, to some persons, a mere exchange; but it was not so: for there were several species of cacao, and the *Tlalvacahuatl*, small cacao, which they used in their diet and beverages, was not used as money: they employed other species, of inferior quality and less useful for food, which were in constant circulation as money (*d*), and used in no other way almost then in commerce. Of this sort of money, all historians of Mexico, Spanish, as well as Indian, make mention. Of the

(*c*) L'Esprit de Loix.

(*d*) In the capital itself of Mexico, where from eighteen to twenty thousand crowns (pesos fuertes) annually coined in gold and silver, the poor people still make use of the cacao to purchase small articles in the market.



other four species, which we spoke of in our VIIth book of this history, Cortes and Torquemada both give an account. Cortes, in his last letter to the emperor Charles V. affirms, that having made inquiries concerning the commerce of those nations, he found that in Tlachco, and other provinces, they trafficked with money. If he had not meant to be understood to speak of coined money, he would not have restricted the use of it to Tlachco, and some other provinces; because, he knew very well, without making such enquiries, that at the markets of Mexico, where he had been frequently present, they employed, instead of money, the cacao, and certain little cloths of cotton, called by them *Patolquachtli*, and gold in dust enclosed in goose quills. It is therefore somewhat suspicious, notwithstanding what we have said in our former book, that there was also coined money among them, and that both those thin pieces of tin which Cortes mentions, and those pieces of copper, in form of T, mentioned by Torquemada, as two species of money, had some stamp upon them authorised by the sovereign, or his feudatory lords.

To hinder any frauds in commerce, nothing but common articles of food could be sold out of the market-place, which was kept, as we have already said, in the greatest order that can be imagined. There were measures fixed by the magistrates; the commissaries we mentioned formerly, were continually observing all that happened; and the judges of commerce were charged to take cognisance of all disputes between the merchants, and punish every trespass which was committed; and notwithstanding it must be said, that the Mexicans were inferior in industry to the rudest people of the old continent; among whom are some, that after so many centuries, and the example of other nations of their own continent, do not yet know the advantages of money.

## S E C T. II.

*On the Use of Iron.*

The use of iron is one of those things which M. de Paw requires to call a nation cultivated; and from the want of it he believes all the Americans barbarians. So that if God had not created this metal, all  
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men must, according to the sentiments of this philosopher, have of necessity remained barbarous. But in the same place of his work where he reproaches the Americans with barbarity, he furnishes us all the arguments we could desire to refute it. He affirms, that in all the extent of America there are found but few mines of iron, and those so inferior in quality to those of the old continent, that it cannot even be made use of for nails. He tells us, that the Americans were in possession of the secret, now lost in the old continent, of giving copper a temper equal to that of steel: that Godin sent, in 1727 (probably 1747, as in 1727, he was not gone to Peru), to the count de Maurepas, an old ax of hard Peruvian copper; and that count Caylus having observed it, he discovered that it equalled the ancient arms of copper in hardness, of which the Greeks and Romans made use, who did not employ iron in many of those works in which we employ it at present; either because then it was more scarce, or because their tempered copper was better in quality than our steel. Lastly, he adds, that the count de Caylus, being surprised at that art, became persuaded that (though in this he is opposed by Mr. de Paw), it was not the work of the beastly Peruvians, whom the Spaniards found there in the times of the conquest, but of some other more ancient and more industrious nation.

From all this, observed by M. de Paw, we draw these four important conclusions: 1. That the Americans had the honour of imitating the two most celebrated nations of the old continent in the use of copper. 2. That their conduct was wise in not making use of an iron so bad, that it was not even fit for making nails, but by making use of a sort of copper to which they gave the temper of steel. 3. That if they did not know the very common art of working iron, they were in possession of that more singular skill of tempering copper like steel, which the European artists of this enlightened century have not been able to restore. 4. That the count de Caylus was as much deceived in the judgment which he formed of the Peruvians, as M. de Paw has been in his respecting all the Americans. These are the lawful inferences to be drawn from the doctrine of this philosopher, on the use of iron, and not that of want of industry which he pretends to deduce. We should be glad to know from him, if there is more industry required to work iron as the Europeans do, than to work without iron every sort of stone

stone and wood, to form several kinds of arms, and to make without iron, as the Americans used to do, the most curious works of gold, of silver, and of gems. The particular use of iron does not prove great industry in the Europeans. Invented by the first men, it passed easily from one to another; and as the modern Americans received it from the Europeans, in the same manner the ancient Europeans had it from the Asiatics. The first peoplers of America certainly knew the use of iron, as the invention of it was cotemporary with the world; but it is probable, that that happened which we have conjectured in our first Dissertation, that is, not having found at first the mines of that metal in the northern countries of America where they had settled themselves, the memory of it was lost to their descendants.

But, finally, if those are barbarians who know not the use of iron, what must they be who know not the use of fire? In all the vast region of America, no nation has been found, nor tribe so rude, which did not know the art of kindling fire, and employing it for the common purposes of life; but in the old world people have been found so barbarous, that they neither used nor had any knowledge of fire. Such have been the inhabitants of the Marian Islands, to whom that element was totally unknown until the Spaniards arrived there, as the historians of those isles attest: yet M. de Paw would persuade us that the American people are more savage than all the savages of the old world.

In other respects, M. de Paw is as wrong in what he says of the iron of America as in what he thinks of the copper. In New Spain, Chili, and many other countries of America, numerous mines of good iron have been discovered, and if it was not prohibited to work them, in prejudice of the commerce of Spain, America could furnish Europe all the necessary iron in the same manner as she supplies it with gold and silver. If M. de Paw had known how to make his enquiries concerning America, he would have learned from the chronicler Herrera, that even in the island of Hispaniola, there is a better iron there than in Biscay. He would have found also from the same author, that in Zacatula, a maritime province of Mexico, there are two sorts of copper; the one hard, which is used instead of iron, to make axes, hatchets, and other instruments of war and agriculture, and the other flexible and more



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common, which they use to make pots, basons, and other vessels, for domestic use; so that they had no occasion for the boasted secret of hardening copper. Our sincerity also compels us to defend in the same manner the true progress of American industry, and to reject those imaginary inventions which are attributed to the new world. The secret of which the Americans were really in possession of is that which we read in Oviedo, an eye witness, and a person skilled and intelligent in metals. "The Indians," he says, "know very well how to gild copper vessels, or those of low gold, and to give them so excellent and bright a colour, that they appear to be gold of twenty-two carats and more: this they do by means of certain herbs. The gilding is so well executed, that if a goldsmith of Spain or Italy possessed the secret he would esteem himself very rich."

## S E C T. III.

*On the Art of building Ships, and Bridges, and of making Lime.*

IF other nations deserve the reproach of being ignorant how to build ships, it is certainly not due to the Mexicans; as not having rendered themselves masters of the sea-coasts, until the last years of their monarchy they had no occasion nor convenience for contriving any such structures. The other nations, who occupied the shores of both seas before the Mexicans gained dominion over them, were satisfied with the boats which were in use among them, for fishing, and commerce with the neighbouring provinces; because, being free from ambition and avarice, which have been the first incentives to long navigations, they did not think of usurping the states lawfully possessed by other nations, nor desired to transport from distant countries those precious metals for which they had no demand. The Romans, although they had founded their metropolis near to the sea, remained five hundred years without constructing large vessels (e), until the ambition of enlarging

(e) Appian used every possible diligence to come to the aid of the Mamertines. In order to accomplish this he thought of passing the strait of Messina, but the enterprise was rash, even dangerous, and according to all prudent appearances impossible. The Romans had no naval armament, but mere barges, or vessels coarsely constructed, which might be compared with the canoes of the Indians. Rollin, Rom. Hist. lib. ii.

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their dominions, and making themselves masters of Sicily, prompted them to build ships to pass the strait which divided them from it. What wonder is it then if those nations of America, who felt no such impulses to abandon their native country, did not invent vessels to transport themselves to distant lands? It is certain, that the not having constructed ships does not argue any want of industry in them who had no interest in the invention.

Thus it is with regard to the invention of bridges. M. de Paw affirms, that there was not a single stone bridge in America at the time it was discovered, because the Americans did not know how to form arches; and that the secret of making lime was altogether unknown in America. These three assertions are three very gross errors. The Mexicans did know how to make bridges of stone, and among the remains of their ancient architecture are to be seen at present the large and strong pilasters which supported the bridge which was upon the river Tula. The remains of the ancient palaces of Tezcucó, and still more their *Temazcalli*, or vapour baths, shew us the ancient use of arches and vaults among the Mexicans, and the other nations of Anahuac. Diego Valades, who went to Mexico a few years after the conquest, and remained there thirty years, gives us, in his *Christian Rhetoric*, the image of a small temple which he saw, and therefore leaves no sort of doubt in this matter.

With respect to the use of lime, it requires the forwardness of M. de Paw to be able to affirm, as he does, that the secret of making lime was totally unknown in all America; since it is certain, from the testimony of the Spanish conquerors as well as the first missionaries, that the nations of Mexico not only made use of lime, but that they had the art of whitening and curiously smoothing and polishing the walls of their houses and temples. It appears from the histories of B. Diaz, Gomara, Herrera, Torquemada, and others, that the wall of the principal palace of Mexico appeared to the first Spaniards who entered the city to be made of silver, from their being so finely whitened, and shining with polish. It is certain, lastly; from the paintings of the Tributes which are in Mendoza's collection, that the cities of Tepejacac, Techama-chalco, Quecholac, &c. were obliged to pay annually to the king of Mexico four thousand sacks of lime. But although we had none of these proofs, the remains of ancient edifices, still extant in Tezcucó,

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Miſtlan, Guatufco, and many other places of that kingdom, would be ſufficient to evince the truth of what we have aſſerted, and make M. de Paw bluſh at his raſhneſs and indiſcretion.

In regard to Peru, although Acoſta confeſſes that lime was not in uſe there, and that its natives neither conſtructed arches nor bridges of ſtone; which circumſtances proved ſufficient for M. de Paw to ſay, that the uſe of lime was totally unknown in all America; notwithſtanding Acoſta, who was no vulgar man, and neither exaggerated nor extenuated facts with reſpect to the Americans, gives much praiſe to the wonderful induſtry of the Peruvians for their bridges of *tatora* or reeds at the mouth of the lake of Titicaca, and in other places, where the immense depth, or the extraordinary rapidity of the rivers, did not permit them to make bridges of ſtone, or made the uſe of boats dangerous. He affirms to have paſſed ſuch kind of bridges and boats, and alſo the eaſineſs and ſecurity of the paſſage. M. de Paw takes upon him to ſay, that the Peruvians did not know the uſe of boats, that they did not make windows to their houſes, and even ſuſpects that their houſes had no roofs. Theſe are the abſurd ſpeculations in the cloſet of a writer on America: he makes it very clear, that he does not know any thing of the *bejucos* of the Peruvian bridges, and that he has formed no idea of the rivers of South America.

## S E C T. IV.

*On the Want of Letters.*

NO nation in America knew the art of writing, if by it we are to underſtand the art of expreſſing on paper, on ſkins, on cloths, or on ſome other ſimilar ſubſtance, any ſort of words by the different combinations of certain characters: but if the art of writing is taken for that of repreſenting and explaining any ſubject to abſent perſons, or poſterity, by means of figures, hieroglyphics, and characters, it is certain that ſuch an art was known and much uſed by the Mexicans, the Acolhuas, the Tlaſcalans, and all the other poliſhed nations of Anahuac. The count de Buffon, in order to demonſtrate that Ame-

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rica was a country entirely new, and the people who inhabited it also new, has alledged, as we have already said elsewhere, that even the nations who lived in societies were ignorant of the art of transmitting their events to posterity by means of durable signs, although they had found the art of communicating together at a distance, and of writing by making knots on cords. But this same art which they made use of to treat with those who were absent could not serve also to speak to posterity. What were the historical paintings of the Mexicans but durable signs to transmit to posterity the memory of events to distant places and distant ages? The count de Buffon shews himself truly as ignorant of the history of Mexico as he is acquainted with the history of nature: M. de Paw, although he grants that art to the Mexicans which the count de Buffon unjustly denies them, makes, however, several remarks to depreciate it; and among others some so singular we must mention them.

He says that the Mexicans did not use hieroglyphics; that their paintings were nothing but the coarse drafts of objects; that, in order to represent a tree they painted a tree; that their paintings no where shew any understanding of light and shade, any idea of perspective, or imitation of nature; that they had made no progress in that art, by means of which they attempted to perpetuate the memory of events and things passed; that the only copy of historical painting saved from the burning which the first missionaries made of them, is that which the first viceroy of Mexico sent to Charles V. which was afterwards published by Thevenot in France, and Purchas in England; that this painting is so coarse and ill executed, that it is not to be discerned whether it treats, as the interpreter says, of eight kings of Mexico; or eight concubines of Montezuma, &c.

M. de Paw shews his ignorance throughout here, and from thence proceeds his forwardness in writing. Shall we give more faith to a Prussian philosopher, who has seen only the gross copies by Purchas, than to those who have seen and carefully studied many original paintings of the Mexicans? M. de Paw will not allow the Mexicans to have made use of hieroglyphics, because he would not have it thought that he grants them any resemblance to the ancient Egyptians. Kircher,

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cher, that celebrated enquirer into, and praiser of Egyptian antiquities, in his work entitled *Oedipus Egyptiacus*, and Adrian Walton in his preface to the Polyglott Bible, are of the same opinion with M. de Paw; but their opinion has no other support than the same copy by Purchas: but Motolinia, Sahagun, Valades, Torquemada, Arrigo, Martinez, Siguenza, and Boturini, who knew the Mexican language, conversed with the Indians, saw and diligently studied many ancient paintings, say, that among the different modes practised by the Mexicans to represent objects, that of hieroglyphics was one, and that of symbolical pictures another. The same point is attested by Acoſta and Gomara, in their histories; by Eguiaſa, in the learned preface to the Mexicana Bibliotheca; and by those learned Spaniards who published, with new additions, the work of Garcia *on the Origin of the Indians*. Kircher was strongly refuted by Siguenza in his work entitled *Theatre of Political Virtues*. It is certain that Kircher contradicts himself openly; for in the first volume of the *Oedipus Egyptiacus*, where he compares the religion of the Mexicans with that of the Egyptians, he freely confesses that the parts of which the image of the God Huitzilopochtli was composed, had many secret and mysterious significations. Acoſta, whose history is justly esteemed by M. de Paw, in the description which he gives of that image, says, “all this ornament which we have  
“ mentioned, and the rest, which was considerable likewise, had its  
“ particular significations, according to what the Mexicans declared:” and in the description of the idol of Tezcatlipoca expresses himself in these terms: “His hair was tied with a golden cord, from the ex-  
“ tremity of which hung an ear-ring of the same metal, with clouds of  
“ smoke painted upon it, which signified the prayers of the afflicted and  
“ sinners, who were listened to by that God when they recommended  
“ themselves to him. In his left hand he had a fan of gold, adorned  
“ with beautiful green, blue, and yellow feathers, so bright that it seemed  
“ a mirror; by which they intimated, that in that mirror he saw every  
“ thing which happened in the world. In his right hand he had four  
“ arrows to signify the punishment he gave to criminals for their mis-  
“ deeds.” What are all those, and other insignia of the Mexican idols, of which we have made mention in the sixth book of this history,

story, but symbols and hieroglyphics, very similar to those of the Egyptians?

M. de Paw says, that the Mexicans did nothing else to represent a tree but paint a tree: but what did they to represent day and night, the month, the year, the century, the names of persons? How could they represent time and other things which have no figure, without making use of symbols or characters? "The Mexicans," says Acosta, "had their figures and hieroglyphics, by which they represented things in this manner; that is, those things which had a figure were represented by their proper figures; and for those which had no proper image they made use of other characters to signify them; thus they represented whatever they would; and to mention the time in which any event happened, they employed painted wheels, each of which comprehended a century of fifty-two years, &c. (f)"

But here we have another piece of insult from the ignorance of M. de Paw. He ridicules the secular wheels of the Mexicans, the explanation of which he says Carreri ventured to give, in imitation of a Castilian professor called *Congara*, who did not dare to publish the work which he had promised on this subject: because his relations and friends assured him that it contained many errors. It would appear that M. de Paw cannot write without committing errors. That professor whom Carreri or Gemelli imitates, was not a Castilian, but a Creole, born in the city of Mexico; nor was he called *Congara*, but *Siguenza* and *Gongora*: he did not print his Mexican ciclography, which was the work Gemelli made use of, not because he feared any censure from the public, but because of the excessive expences of printing in those countries; which have also prevented the publication of many other excellent works, not only of *Siguenza*, but other most learned authors. To say that the relations and friends of *Siguenza* dissuaded him from the publication of that work because they found many errors in it, is not a mere mistake occasioned by inattention, but appears a fiction devised to abuse and mislead the public. Who has communicated to M. de Paw so strange an anecdote which is altogether unknown to New Spain, where the memory and fame of that great man is so celebrated,

(f) Stor. Nat. e Mor. lib. vi. cap. 7.



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and where the learned lament the loss of that and many other works of the same author? What could Siguenza fear from the publication of the Mexican wheels, published already by Valades in Italy a century before him, and described by Motolinia, Sahagun, Gomara, Acoſta, Herrera, Torquemada, and Martinez, all Europeans, and by the Mexican, Acolhuan, and Tlaſcalan hiſtorians, Iztlilxochitl, Chimalpain, Tezozomoc, Niza, Ayala, and others? All thoſe authors are agreed with Siguenza in that which reſpects the Mexican wheels of the century, the year, the month, and only differ reſpecting the beginning of the year, and the name of ſome months, for the reaſons which we have mentioned in the ſixth book of this hiſtory. Beſides, all authors who have wrote on this ſubject, both Spaniſh and American, who are many in number, agree in ſaying that the Mexicans and other nations of thoſe countries made uſe of ſuch wheels to repreſent their century, their year, and their month; that their century conſiſted of fifty-two years, their year of three hundred and ſixty-five days, divided into eighteen months of twenty days each, and five days which they called *nemontemi*; that in their century they counted four periods of thirteen years, and that the days alſo were counted by periods of thirteen; that the names and characters of the years were only four, that is thoſe of the *rabbit*, the *cane* or *reed*, the *flint*, and the *houſe*, which without interruption were alternately uſed with different numbers.

This cannot be, ſays M. de Paw, becauſe it would ſuppoſe them to have made a long ſeries of aſtronomical obſervations, and thereby attained a knowledge ſufficient to enable them to regulate the ſolar year, and theſe could not happen to be united with that profound ignorance which thoſe people were immerſed. How could they perfect their chronology while they had no terms to count a higher number than three? Therefore, if the Mexicans had really that method of regulating time, they ought not to be called barbarians and ſavages, but rather a cultivated and poliſhed people; becauſe a nation muſt be moſt cultivated which has made a long ſeries of accurate obſervations and acquired exact knowledge in aſtronomy. But the certainty of the regulation of time among the Mexicans is ſuch as not to admit of the ſmalleſt doubt: becauſe, if the unanimous teſtimony of the Spaniſh writers reſpecting the *communion* of the Mexicans is not to be

be doubted, which M. de Paw himself says is not (*g*), how can we doubt of the method which those nations had to compute years and centuries, and its conformity to the solar course, both facts being attested unanimously by the Spanish, Mexican, Acolhuan, and Tlascalcan historians? Besides, the deposition of the Spaniards in this matter is of very great weight, as they were, as M. de Paw says, rather inclined to degrade the nations of America so far as even to doubt of their rationality. It is necessary, therefore, to believe what historians say of those wheels, and to confess that the Mexicans were not immersed in that profound ignorance which M. de Paw pretends. With regard to what he says of the scarcity of words to express numbers in the Mexican language, we shall, in another place, demonstrate his error as well as his ignorance.

It cannot be known, resumes M. de Paw, what was contained in the Mexican paintings; because the Spaniards themselves could not understand them, until they were explained by the Mexicans, and none of the latter have known hitherto enough to be able to translate a book! In order that the Spaniards should have understood the Mexican paintings, it was not necessary that the Mexicans should know the Spanish language, because it was sufficient that the Spaniards comprehended the Mexican; nor is there so much necessary to explain a picture as to translate a book. M. de Paw says, that on account of the roughness of the Mexican language, no Spaniard has ever learned to pronounce it, and that, from the incapacity of the Mexicans, none of them have yet learned the Spanish tongue: but both the one and the other assertion are far from being true. Of the Mexican language we shall treat in its place. The Castilian has always been very common among the Mexicans, and there are many amongst them who can speak it as well as the Spaniards. Many of them have wrote their ancient history in Castilian, and also that of the Conquest of Mexico; some of whom we have mentioned in the Catalogue prefixed to this history. Others have translated Latin books into Castilian, Castilian into Mexican, and Mexican

(*g*) “ Je vous avoue que le consentement de tous les Historiens Espagnols ne permet gueres de douter que ces deux peuples Américains (*de Mexicains and Peruvians*) n’eussent dans la somme immense de leurs superstitions grossieres, de quelques usages qui ne differoient pas beaucoup de ce qu’on nomme la Communion parmi nous.” Tom. II. Lettre I.

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into Castilian : amongst others deserving of mention, are D. F. Ixtlil-xochitl, whom we have so often cited ; D. A. Valerianes, of Azcapozalco, the master in the Mexican language to the historian Torquemada, &c. We know from the History of the Conquest, that the celebrated Indian donna Marina, learned with great quickness and facility the Castilian language, and that she spoke the Mexican, and also the Maya language well, which are more different from each other than the French, the Hebrew, and the Illyrian. There having been at all times, therefore, very many Spaniards who have learned the Mexican, as we shall shew, and very many Mexicans who have learned the Spanish, why might not the Mexicans have been able to instruct the Spaniards in the significations of their pictures ?

With respect to the copies of the Mexican paintings, published by Purchas and Thevenot, it is true that the proportions, or laws of perspective, are not observed in them ; but those gross coarse copies having been cut in wood, these authors have possibly increased the defects of the originals ; nor ought we to wonder if they have omitted some things contributing to the perfection of those pictures ; as we know that they omitted the copies of the twelfth and twenty-second paintings of that collection altogether, and the images of the cities in most of the others ; and besides, they change the figures of the years corresponding to the reigns of Ahuitzotl and Montezuma II. as we have already mentioned. Boturini, who saw in Mexico the original paintings of those annals, and of the register of the tributes which were contained in the copies published by Purchas and Thevenot, laments the great defects of those editions. It is sufficient to compare the copies published in Mexico, in 1770, by Lorenzana, with those published in London by Purchas, and in Paris by Thevenot, to perceive and know the great difference there is between copy and original. But we do not mean to maintain the perfection of the original, copied by Purchas ; we rather doubt not that they have been imperfect, as all the historical paintings were, in which the painters contented themselves with outlines, regardless of the proportions or colouring of objects, the light and shade, or rules of perspective. Nor was it possible they should observe those laws of the art, on account of their extraordinary expedition in making pictures, as Cortes, Diaz and other eye-witnesses



have attested. But let us observe the conclusions M. de Paw deduces from thence. His arguments are these: the Mexicans did not observe the laws of perspective in their paintings; they could not therefore, by means of them, perpetuate the memory of events: the Mexicans were wretched painters, therefore they could not be good historians; but at the same time that he makes use of this species of logic, he ought also to have said, that all those who in writing do not make good characters cannot be good historians; for that which letters are to our historians, were the figures of the Mexican historians; and as good histories may be written with a bad character, so may facts be well represented by coarse pictures; it is sufficient that either historian make himself understood.

But this is what Mr. de Paw cannot find in the copies made by Purchas. He declares that having compared the figures of them in different manners with the interpretations annexed, he could never discover any connection between them; that which they interpret to be eight kings of Mexico, they might equally well interpret to be eight concubines of Montezuma. But the same thing might be said by M. de Paw, if the book *Chun-yum* of the philosopher Confucius, written in Chinese characters, was presented to him, with the interpretation in French beside it. He would compare in various modes those characters with the interpretations, and supposing that he could not find any connection between them, he might say, that as they interpret that book of the nine qualifications which a good emperor ought to have, they might also interpret it of nine concubines, or nine eunuchs of some ancient emperor, because he understands almost full as much of the Chinese characters as of the Mexican figures. If we had an interview with M. de Paw, we could explain to him what connexion these figures have with their interpretation; but, as he does not know it himself, he ought to take the judgment of those who understand them.

He believes, or would make us believe, that those pictures alone which Purchas copied, were saved from the burning made by the first missionaries; but this is most erroneous, as we have already made appear against Robertson in the beginning of the first volume. The paintings saved from that burning were so many in number, that they supplied the materials for the ancient history of Mexico, not only to the

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Spanish writers, but also to the Mexicans themselves. All the works of don Ferdinand Alba Ixtlilxochitl, of don Dominic Chimalpain, and others named in the catalogue of writers, at the beginning of this history, have been composed by the assistance of a great number of ancient paintings. The indefatigable Sahagun, consulted an infinity of paintings for his history of New Spain. Torquemada often cites the pictures which he examined for his work. Siguenza inherited the manuscripts and paintings of Ixtlilxochitl, and procured many others at a great expence, and after having made his extracts from them, left them at his death, together with his valuable library, to the college of St. Peter and St. Paul, of the Jesuits of Mexico; in which library we saw and studied some of those paintings. During the two last centuries, ancient paintings were frequently produced at tribunals by the Mexicans, as titles of property, and the possession of lands; and on that account, interpreters skilled in the significations of such paintings were consulted. Gonzalez Oviedo makes mention of that custom at tribunals in the times of Sebastiano Ramirez de Fuenleal, president of the royal audience of Mexico; and as the knowledge of such titles was of great importance to the decision of suits, there was formerly a professor in the university of Mexico, appointed to teach the science of Mexican paintings, hieroglyphics, and characters. The many pictures collected a few years ago by Boturini, and mentioned in the Catalogue of his Museum, published at Madrid, in 1746, demonstrate, that not quite so few as M. de Paw and Dr. Robertson imagine, have escaped the burning by the missionaries.

In short, to confirm what we have written in this history, and let M. de Paw understand the variety of Mexican paintings, we shall mention here briefly what Dr. Eguiera has written in his learned Preface to his *Bibliotheca Mexicana*. “There were,” he says, “among  
“the Mexican pictures those of the lunar course, called by them *Tonalamatl*, in which they published their prognostics respecting the  
“changes of the moon. One of those pictures is introduced by Siguenza, in his *Ciclographia Mexicana*, as he himself acknowledges  
“in his work, entitled, *Libra Astronomica*. Others contained the  
“horoscopes of children, in which they represented their names, the  
“day and sign of their birth, and their fortune. Of this sort of  
“paint-

“ painting, mention is made by Jerom Roman, in his *Republic of the World*, Part II. Tom. ii. Others were dogmatical, containing the system of their religion; others historical, others geographical,” &c. “ It is true,” adds the same author, “ that those paintings which were made for familiar and common use, were clear and intelligible to every one: but those which contained the secrets of religion were full of hieroglyphics, the meaning of which could not be comprehended by the vulgar. There was great difference in their paintings, both with respect to their authors, and the method of doing them, and the design and use of them. Those which were made for the ornaments of the palaces were perfect; but in others containing some secret meaning, particular characters, and some monstrous and horrible figures were employed. The painters were numerous; but the writing of characters, the composing of annals, and the treating of matters concerning religion and politics, were employments peculiar to the priests.” So far EGUIARA.

M. de Paw will please to know therefore, that among the Mexican paintings some were mere images of objects; they had also characters not composing words as ours do, but significative of things like those of astronomers and algebraists. Some paintings were solely intended to express ideas or conceptions, and, if we may say so, to write; but in these they paid no regard to proportion or beauty, because they were done in haste, and for the purpose of instructing the mind, not of pleasing the eye: in those, however, where they strove to imitate nature, and which they executed with that leisure which works of such kind require, they strictly observed the distances, proportions, attitudes, and rules of the art, though not with the perfection which we admire in the good painters of Europe. In short, we wish M. de Paw would shew us some rude or half-polished people of the old continent which has exerted so much industry and diligence as the Mexicans to perpetuate the memory of events.

Dr. Robertson, where he treats of the culture of the Mexicans in the seventh book of his History, explains the progress which human industry makes to arrive at the invention of letters, by the combinations of which are expressed all the different sounds of discourse. This successive progress, according to him, proceeds from actual painting to sim-



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ple hieroglyphic, from it to allegorical symbols, from thence to arbitrary characters, and lastly to the alphabet. If any person would wish to know from his history to what degree the Mexicans were arrived, he certainly will not be able to find it; as that historical reasoner speaks with so much ambiguity, that sometimes it appears that he believes they were hardly arrived at the second degree, that is simple hieroglyphic; and sometimes it seems that he judges them arrived at the fourth degree or at arbitrary character. But, independent of what he says, it is certain, that all the above mentioned ways of representing ideas, except that of the alphabet, were used by the Mexicans. Their numeral characters, and those signifying night, day, the year, the century, the heavens, the earth, the water, &c. perhaps were not truly arbitrary characters. The Mexicans were arrived then as far as the famous Chinese, after many ages of civilization. There is no difference between the one and the other, except that the Chinese characters are multiplied to such excess, that a whole life-time is not enough to learn them.

Dr. Robertson, far from denying, like Mr. de Paw, the secular wheels of the Mexicans, confesses their method of computing time, and says, that their having observed, that in eighteen months, of twenty days each, the course of the sun was not completed, they added the five days Nemontemi. "This near approach to philosophical accuracy is a remarkable proof that the Mexicans had bestowed some attention upon enquiries and speculations to which men in their rude state never turn their thoughts (*b*)."

What would he have said had he known, as appears from the chronology of the Mexicans, that they not only counted three hundred sixty-five days to the year, but also knew of the excess of about six hours in the solar over the civil year, and remedied the difference between them by means of thirteen intercalary days, which they added to their century of fifty-two years.

(*b*) Hist. of America, book vii.

S E C T.

## S E C T. V.

*On the Arts of the Mexicans.*

MR. de Paw, after having given a contemptuous description of Peru, and the barbarity of its inhabitants, speaks of Mexico, of which state, he says, there are as many falsties and miracles related as of Peru; but it is certain, he adds, that those two nations were upon an equality; whether we consider their government, their arts, or their instruments. Agriculture was abandoned by them, and their architecture most wretched: their paintings were coarse, and their arts very imperfect; their fortifications, their palaces, and their temples, are mere fictions of the Spaniards. If the Mexicans, he says, had had fortifications, they would have sheltered themselves from the musketry, and those six poor pieces of cannon, which Cortes carried with him, would not have overthrown in a moment so many bastions and entrenchments. The walls of their buildings were only great stones, laid loosely, one upon another. The boasted palace, where the kings of Mexico resided, was a mere hut; on which account, F. Cortes, finding no suitable habitation in all the capital of that state, was obliged to erect a palace for himself in haste, which still exists. It is not easy to enumerate the absurdities thrown out by M. de Paw on this subject: omitting, however, what belongs to Peru, we shall examine what he has written against the arts of the Mexicans.

Of their agriculture we have spoken in other places, where we have shewn, that the Mexicans not only cultivated most diligently all the lands of their empire, but likewise by wonderful exertions of industry, created to themselves new territory for cultivation, by forming those floating fields and gardens on the water, which have been so highly celebrated by all the Spaniards and foreigners, and are still the admiration of all who sail upon those lakes. We have demonstrated that not only all the plants which were necessary for food, for clothing and medicine, but likewise the flowers and other vegetables which contributed solely to luxury and pleasure, were all most plenteously cultivated by them. Cortes, in his letters to Charles V. and Bernal Diaz, speak  
with

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with astonishment of the famous gardens of Iztapalapan and Huaxtepec, which they saw; and they are also mentioned by Hernandez, in his Natural History, who saw these gardens forty years after. Cortes, in a letter to Charles V. of the 30th of October, 1520, speaks thus: "The multitude of inhabitants in those countries is so great, that there is not a foot of land left uncultivated." It is being very obstinate to refuse faith to the unanimous testimony of the Spanish authors.

We have set forth, on the support of the same testimony, the great skill of the Mexicans in bringing up animals, in which kind of magnificence Montezuma surpassed all the kings of the world. The Mexicans could not have bred up such an infinite variety of quadrupeds, reptiles, and birds, without having great knowledge of their natures, their instinct, their habits of life, &c.

Their architecture is not to be compared with that of the Europeans, but it was certainly greatly superior to that of most of the people of Asia and Africa. Who would form a comparison between the houses, palaces, temples, bastions, aqueducts, and roads of the ancient Mexicans, with the miserable huts of the Tartars, Siberians, Arabs, and other wretched nations, which live between the Cape de Verd, and the Cape of Good Hope; or the buildings of Ethiopia; of a great part of India, and the Asiatic and African isles, except those of Japan?

M. de Paw says, the boasted palace of Montezuma was nothing else than a mere hut. But Cortes, Diaz, and the anonymous conqueror, who saw this palace so often, affirm the direct contrary. "He had," says Cortes, talking of Montezuma, "in this city of Mexico, such houses for his habitation, so deserving of admiration, that I cannot sufficiently express their grandeur and excellence; I shall therefore only say, that there are none equal to them in Spain." Thus writes this conqueror to his king, without fear of being contradicted by his officers or soldiers, who had also themselves viewed the palaces of Mexico. The anonymous conqueror, in his curious and faithful relation, speaking of the buildings of Mexico, writes thus: "There were beautiful houses belonging to the nobles, so grand and numerous in their apartments, with such admirable gardens to them, that the sight of them filled us with astonishment and delight. I entered from curiosity four times into a palace belonging to Montezuma, and having pervaded it, until

" I was



“I was weary, I came away at last without having seen it all. Around  
 “a large court they used to build sumptuous halls and chambers; but  
 “there was one above all so large that it was capable of containing up-  
 “wards of three thousand persons without the least inconvenience: it  
 “was such, that in the gallery of it alone a little square was formed,  
 “where thirty men on horse-back might exercise.” It is certain from  
 the affirmation of all the historians of Mexico, that the army under  
 Cortes, consisting of six thousand four hundred men and upwards, in-  
 cluding the allies, were all lodged in the palace formerly possessed by  
 king Axajacatl; and there remained still sufficient lodging for Monte-  
 zuma and his attendants, besides the magazine of the treasures of king  
 Axajacatl. The same historians attest the most beautiful disposition of  
 the palace of birds; and Cortes adds, that in the apartments belonging  
 to it two princes might have been lodged with all their suit, and mi-  
 nutely describes its porticos, lodges, and gardens. He says also to  
 Charles V. that he lodged in the palace of Nezahalpilli, at Tezcuco,  
 with six hundred Spaniards, and forty horses, and that it was so large  
 it could easily have lodged six hundred more. He speaks in a similar  
 manner of the palaces of Iztapalapan, and other cities, praising their  
 structure, their beauty, and magnificence. Such were the *butts* of the  
 kings and chiefs of Mexico.

M. de Paw says, that Cortes made a palace be constructed in haste for  
 his own habitation, because he could not find any one in all that capi-  
 tal sufficiently commodious; but M. de Paw is in a great mistake, or ra-  
 ther he asserts without truth, and condemns without reason. It is  
 true that Cortes, during the siege of Mexico, burnt and demolished  
 the greater part of that great city, as he himself relates; and for that  
 end he had demanded and obtained from his allies some thousands of  
 country people, who had no other employment than to pull down and  
 destroy the houses and buildings as the Spaniards advanced into the  
 city, that there might not remain behind them any house from which  
 the Mexicans could annoy them. It is therefore not very wonderful  
 that Cortes did not find a convenient habitation for himself in a city  
 which he had himself destroyed; but the ruin of it was not so ge-  
 neral, but that there remained a considerable number of houses in the  
 division of Tlatelolco, where the Spaniards might have lodged con-

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veniently, with a good number of allies. "Since it has pleased our Lord," says Cortes in his last letter to Charles the V. "that this great city of Tlatelolco should be conquered, I have not thought proper to reside in it on account of many inconveniences; I have therefore gone, with all my people, to stay at Cuyoacan." Had what M. de Paw says been true, it would have been sufficient for Cortes to have said that he did not remain in Mexico because there were no houses left fit to be inhabited. The palace of Cortes was erected in the same place where formerly that of Montezuma stood. If Cortes had not ruined this palace, he might have lodged conveniently in it, as that monarch had done, with all his court. It is false that the palace erected for Cortes is still in existence; it was burnt in the time of a popular sedition, in 1692. But it is still false that the walls of the Mexican houses were only loose stones laid one upon another without any cement, as the contrary is proved by the testimony of all historians, and by the remains of ancient buildings, of which we shall speak in their place. From hence it appears, that the whole passage above cited from M. de Paw, is idle and fictitious.

M. de Paw, not contented with annihilating the houses of the Mexicans, engages also with their temples; and in anger against Solis, because he affirms that the temples of Mexico were not less than two thousand in number, including large and small, writes thus, "There never has been so great a collection of houses in any city from Perkin to Rome, on which account Gomara, less rash or more discerning than Solis, says, that computing seven chapels, there were not more than eight places destined for the repositories of the idols of Mexico." In order to shew the unfaithfulness of M. de Paw in citing authors, we shall insert the passage from Gomara to which he alludes. "There were," says Gomara, in chapter eighty of his Chronicle of New Spain, "many temples in the city of Mexico, scattered through the different districts, that had their towers, in which were the chapels and altars for the repositories of the idols . . . They had almost all the same form, so that what we shall say of the principal temple will suffice to explain all the others." And after making a minute description of that great temple, of which he boasts the height, largeness, and beauty, he adds, "Besides those towers, which

“ which were formed with their chapels above the pyramid, there were  
 “ more than forty other towers, great and small, in other smaller  
*Teocalli* (i), which were within the inclosure of that principal tem-  
 “ ple, all of which were the same in form . . . There were other Teo-  
 “ calli or *Gues* in other places of the city . . . All those temples had  
 “ houses belonging to them, their priests, and their gods, together  
 “ with every thing necessary for their worship and service.” So  
 that Gomara, who, according to M. de Paw, does not enumerate in  
 Mexico more than eight places destined for the repositories of the idols,  
 including seven chapels, reckons clearly more than forty temples within  
 the inclosure of the principal temple, besides many others scattered  
 through the other districts of the city. Can we give any faith to M.  
 de Paw after so manifest a falsification ?

It is true that Solis was inconsiderate in asserting that number of tem-  
 ples for a certainty which the first historians mentioned only from con-  
 jecture. But M. de Paw shews himself not very discerning in including  
 amongst the public buildings those chapels also which the Spaniards  
 call temples. Of these the quantity was innumerable ; all those who  
 saw that country before the conquest testify unanimously, that not  
 only in the inhabited places, but on the roads and mountains they  
 saw such kinds of buildings, which, although small and totally  
 different from our churches, were yet called temples, because they  
 were consecrated to the worship of the idols. From the letters of  
 Cortes, as well as from the history of Diaz, we know that the con-  
 querors hardly went a step in their expeditions without meeting with  
 some temple or chapel. Cortes says he numbered more than four  
 hundred temples in the city of Cholula alone. But there was a great  
 difference in the size of the temples. Some were nothing else than  
 small terraces of little height, upon which was a little chapel for the  
 tutelar idol. Others were of stupendous dimensions. Cortes, where  
 he speaks of the greater temple of Mexico, declares to the emperor,  
 that it is difficult to describe its parts, its grandeur, and the things  
 contained in it ; that it was so large, that within the inclosure of that  
 strong wall which surrounded it, a village of five hundred houses might

(i) *Teocalli*, the house of God, was the name which the Mexicans gave to their temple.



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be contained. This and the other temples of Mexico, Tezcucó, Chólula, and other cities, are spoken of in the same style by B. Díaz, the anonymous conqueror, Sahagún, and Tobar, who saw them, and the Mexican and Spanish historians, who wrote after them and informed themselves accurately on the subject. Hernandez described one by one, the seventy-eight parts of which the greater temple was composed. Cortes adds, that among the high towers which adorned that great capital were forty, so elevated that the smallest of them was not inferior in height to the famous *Giralda* (k) of Seville. D. F. de A. Ixtlilaochitl makes mention in his manuscripts of the tower of nine floors, that his famous ancestor Nezahualpilli, erected to the Creator of heaven, which appears to have been that famous temple of Tezcutzinco, so much extolled by Valades in his work.

All this cloud of witnesses depose against M. de Paw. Notwithstanding he cannot believe in that great multitude of temples in Mexico, because he says Montezuma I. was he who gave the form of a city to that village: from the reign of this monarch until the arrival of the Spaniards, no more than forty-two years elapsed, which space of time is not sufficient to build two thousand temples. These three assertions, make, as is usual with this author, as many errors. 1. It is false that Montezuma I. gave the form of a city to Mexico, because we know from history that that court had the form of a city from the time of Acamapitzin the first king. 2. It is false, besides, that there intervened but forty-two years between the reign of Montezuma and the arrival of the Spaniards. Montezuma began to reign, as we have shewn in Dissertation second, in the year 1436, and died in 1465, and the Spaniards did not come to Mexico before 1519. Therefore, from the beginning of that reign until the arrival of the Spaniards elapsed eighty-three years, and from the death of that king till then fifty-five. 3. M. de Paw discovers his total ignorance of the structure of the Mexican temples, nor does he know what multitude of workmen assembled for the construction of the public edifices, and what expedition they made in building. In those times a whole village has been raised, though composed of huts of wood, covered

(k) The very lofty and famous steeple of the Dome of Seville.

or thatched with hay or straw, and the new settlers have conducted their families, their animals, and all their other property to it, in one single night.

As to their fortifications it is certain and indubitable, from the depositions made by Cortes and all those who saw the ancient cities of that empire, that the Mexicans, and all the other neighbouring nations living in societies, raised walls, bastions, palisades, ditches, and intrenchments for their defence. But without the attestations of those eye-witnesses, the ancient fortifications which still exist in *Quauhatchco* or *Guatusco*, and near to *Molcaxac*, would be sufficient to shew the error of M. de Paw. It is true that such fortifications were not comparable to those of the Europeans, because neither was their military architecture perfected, nor had they occasion to cover themselves from artillery, of which they had no experience or conception: but they gave plain proofs of their industry in inventing many different kinds of expedients to defend themselves from their native enemies. Whoever will read the unanimous deposition of the conquerors, will not entertain a doubt of the great difficulty they found in taking the ditches and intrenchments of the Mexicans during the siege of that capital, although they had such an excessive number of troops of allies, and the advantages of fire arms, and the brigantines. The terrible defeat the Spaniards met with when they meant to have retired in secret from Mexico, will not suffer a doubt to remain concerning the fortifications of that capital. It was not surrounded by walls, because its situation was rendered secure by ditches which intersected all the roads by which an enemy could approach; but other cities which were not placed in so advantageous a situation, had walls and other means of defence. Cortes himself gives an exact description of the walls of *Quauquechollan*.

But it is not necessary to consume time in accumulating testimonies and other proofs of the architecture of the Mexicans, while they have left, in the three roads which they formed upon the lake itself, and the very ancient aqueduct of Chapoltepec, an immortal monument of their industry.

The same authors who attest the architectural skill of the Mexicans, witness also the ingenuity of their gold-smiths, their weavers, their gem-cutters, and their artificers of works of feathers. Many  
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Europeans who saw such kind of works were astonished at the abilities of the American artists. Their art in casting metals was admired by the goldsmiths of Europe, as many European writers, then living, have said; and amongst others the historian Gomara, who had the works in his hands, and heard the opinion of the Sevillian gold-smiths concerning them, who despaired of ever being able to imitate them. When shall we find any one capable of making those wonderful works already mentioned by us, in Book viii. Sect. 51. of this history, and attested by many writers, namely that, for instance, of casting a fish, which should have its scales alternately, one of gold and the other of silver? Cortes says, in his second letter to Charles V. that the images made of gold and feathers were so well wrought by the Mexicans that no workman of Europe could make any better; that in respect to jewels, he could not comprehend by what instruments their works were made so perfect; and their feather-works could not be imitated neither by wax nor silk. In his third letter, where he speaks of the plunder of Mexico, he says, that among the spoils of Mexico he found there certain wheels of gold, and feathers, and other labours of the same matter, so wonderfully executed, that being incapable to convey a just idea of them in writing, he sent them to his majesty that he might be assured by his own sight of their excellence and perfection. We are certain that Cortes would not have spoke in that manner to his king of those works, which he sent him in order that he might view them, if they had not been such as he represented. Bernal Diaz, the anonymous conqueror, Gomara, Hernandez, and Acosta, and all those authors who saw them, of them in the same Manner.

Dr. Robertson (1) acknowledges the testimony of the ancient Spanish historians, and believes that they had no intention to deceive us; but he affirms that they were all induced to exaggerate from the illusion of their senses produced by the warmth of their imagination. Such a solution might be made use of to deny faith to all human historians. All therefore must have been deceived, without excepting even the celebrated Acosta, or the learned Hernandez, the gold-smiths of Seville, king Philip II. or Pope Sextus V. who were all admirers,

(1) History of America, book vii.



and praised those Mexican labours (*m*)! their imaginations were all heated, even those who wrote some years after the discovery of Mexico! Robertson the Scotsman, and de Paw the Prussian, after two centuries and a half have alone that temperance of imagination which is required to form a just idea of things, perhaps, because the cold of their climes has checked the heat of their imaginations. “It is not from those descriptions,” adds Robertson, “but from considering such specimens of this art as are still preserved, that we must decide concerning their degree of merit . . . Many of their ornaments in gold and silver, as well as various utensils employed in common life, are deposited in the magnificent cabinet of natural and artificial productions, lately opened, and I am informed, by persons on whose judgment and taste I can rely, that these boasted efforts of their art are uncouth representations of common objects, or very coarse images of the human and some other forms, destitute of grace and propriety.” And in a note he says, “in the armory of the royal palace of Madrid are shewn suits of armour, which are called Montezuma’s. They are composed of thin lackered copper-plates. In the opinion of very intelligent judges they are evidently eastern. The forms of the silver ornaments upon them may be considered as a confirmation of this. They are infinitely superior in point of workmanship to any effort of American art. The only unquestionable specimen of Mexican art that I know of in Great Britain, is a cup of very fine gold, which is said to have belonged to Montezuma. A man’s head is represented on this cup. On one side the full face, on another the profile, and on a third the back parts of the head. The features are rude, but very tolerable, and certainly too rude for Spanish workmanship. This cup was purchased by Edward Earl of Oxford, while he lay in the harbour of Cadiz.” Thus far Robertson, to whom we answer, first, That there is no reason to believe that those rude works are really Mexican; secondly, That neither do we know whether those persons in whose judgment he could confide, may be persons fit to merit our faith: because we have observed that Robertson trusts frequently to the testimony of Gages, Corral, Ibanez,

(*m*) See our Seventh, book sect. 51.

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land other such authors, who are entirely undeserving of credit. Possibly those persons who gave their judgment of such labours had their imaginations heated also; as it is easier, according to the state of our degenerate nature, to feel the imagination heated against a nation than in favour of it. Thirdly, It is more probable that those arms of copper, believed by intelligent judges to be certainly oriental, are really Mexican, because we are certain, from the testimony of all the writers of Mexico, that those nations used such plates of copper in war, and that they covered their breasts, their arms, and thighs with them, to defend themselves from arrows; whereas we do not know that such were ever in use among the inhabitants of the Philippine isles (*n*), or among any other people who had commerce with them. The dragons represented in those arms, instead of confirming, as Robertson thinks, the opinion of those who think them oriental, rather strengthen our opinion, because there never was any nation in the world which used the images of terrible animals on their arms so much as the Mexicans. Nor is it matter of wonder that they had an idea of dragons while they had ideas of griffins, as Gomara attests (*o*). Fifthly, That although the images formed in these works of gold and silver are rude, they might still be excellent, wonderful, and inimitable; because in those works two distinct points ought to be considered; that of the design, and that of the casting; so that the fish, of which we have made mention above, might be ill formed as to figure, and yet wonderful and surprising in that alternation in the scales of gold and silver, done by cast work. Sixthly and lastly, The judgment of some persons entirely unknown upon those few doubtful works which are in the royal cabinet of Madrid, should not avail against the unanimous depositions of all ancient writers, who certainly saw innumerable labours of this kind which were really Mexican.

From what we have said, it is manifest that M. de Paw has done the greatest injustice to the Mexicans, in believing them inferior in industry and sagacity to the rudest people of the old continent. Acofta,

(*n*) Dr. Robertson says, that the Spaniards had those arms possibly from the Philippine isles.

(*n*) Chronicle of New Spain, chap. xxi.

where,

when he treats of the industry of the Peruvians speaks thus: "If those men are beasts, let who will judge; since I am certain, that in that to which they apply themselves, they excel us." This ingenious confession of a European of so much criticism, so much experience, and so much impartiality, is certainly of more weight than the airy speculations of any Prussian philosopher, or all the reasoning of a Scottish historian; the one and the other ill informed in the affairs of America, or prejudiced against it. But although we should grant to M. de Paw, that the industry of the Americans in the arts is inferior to that of other people in the world, he can infer nothing from them against the talents of the Americans, or the climate of America; as it is certain and indubitable, that the invention and progress of arts are generally more owing to chance, avarice, and necessity, than genius. The men the most industrious are not always the most ingenious in arts, but often the most necessitous, or eager for gold, are so. The barrenness of the earth, says Montesquieu, makes men industrious (*p*). It is necessary that they procure to themselves that which the earth does not yield them. The fertility of a country from the facility with which he is supported, begets indolence in man. "Necessity," says Robertson, "is the spur and guide of the human race to inventions." The Chinese certainly would never have been so industrious, if the excessive populousness of their country had not rendered their support difficult; nor would Europe have made such progress in the arts, if artists had not been encouraged by rewards and the hopes of acquiring fortune. Nevertheless, the Mexicans could boast of many inventions worthy of immortalizing their name, such as, besides those of casting metals and mosaic works of feathers and shells, the art of making paper (*q*); those of dying with indelible colours, spinning and weaving the finest hair of the rabbits and hares; making razors of Itztli (*r*); breeding so industriously the cochineal to make use of its colours; making cement for the pavements of their houses, and many others

(*p*) *Esprit des Loix*, liv. xviii. chap. 4.

(*q*) The invention of paper is certainly more ancient in America than in Egypt, from whence it was communicated to Europe; it is true, that the paper of the Mexicans was not comparable to the paper of the Europeans; but it ought to be observed that the former did not make theirs for writing but painting.

(*r*) See Book VII. sect. 56. of this history, respecting that art.



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not less valuable, as may be known from the works of the historians of Mexico. But where is the wonder that such inventions were found among those civilized nations, while, amongst other people of America, less polished, arts of the most singular nature have been discovered? What art more wonderful, for example, than that of taming sea-fish, and employing them to chase other larger fish, as the inhabitants of the Antilles used to do. This art alone, of which Oviedo (*s*), Gomara, and other authors make mention, would be sufficient to refute the charge of want of industry among the Americans.

## S E C T. VI.

*Of the Languages of the Americans.*

“THE languages of America, says M. de Paw, are so limited, and so scarce of words, that it is impossible to express any metaphysical idea in them. In no one of those languages can they count above the number three (*t*). It is impossible to translate a book either into the languages of the Algonquines, or Paraguese, or even into those of Mexico or Peru, on account of their not having sufficient plenty of proper terms to express general ideas.” Whoever reads those dogmatical decisions of M. de Paw, will be persuaded, undoubtedly, that he determines after having travelled through all America, after having had commerce with all those nations, and after having examined all their languages? But it is not so. M. de Paw, without moving from his closet at Berlin, knows the things of America better than the Americans themselves, and in the knowledge of their different languages even excels those who speak them. We have learned the Mexican, and have heard it spoken by the Mexicans for many years;

(*s*) Oviedo Stor. Gener. e Nat. lib. xiii. cap. 10. Sommario della Stor. &c. cap. 8. Gomara Storia Gener. cap. 20. The species of fish which the Indians trained to chase large fish, as they train hawks in Europe, to chase other birds was rather small, called by them *Guaican*, and by the Spaniards *Reverso*. Oviedo explains the manner in which they made use of the fish to chase others.

(*t*) In the same section i. of the 5th part of the *Recherches Philosophiques*, in which he affirms, that no language of America had terms to count more than three, he says the Mexicans could count as high as ten.

but

but never knew that it was deficient in numerical terms, and words signifying universal ideas, until M. de Paw gave us that information. We know that the Mexicans gave the name of *Centzontli* (four hundred), or rather that of *Centzontlatle* (he who has four hundred words), to that bird which is so renowned for its sweetness and matchless variety of song. We know besides that the Mexicans anciently counted by *Xiquipilli*, and the nuts of the cacao, in their commerce, and in numbering their troops of war; that *Xqivipilli* was eight thousand; so that when they said that an army consisted of forty thousand, they expressed that it had five *Xiquipilli*. We know lastly, that the Mexicans had numeral words to express as many thousands, or millions, as they pleased; but M. de Paw knows the direct contrary, and there is not a doubt but he knows better than us; because we had the misfortune to be born under a clime less favourable to the operations of the intellect. Nevertheless, we shall subjoin, to satisfy the curiosity of our readers, the series of numerical terms which the Mexicans have always employed (*u*). It will appear thence, that those who had not, according

to

(*u*) Numeral Terms of the Mexican Language.

|     |    |          |    |            |    |            |     |
|-----|----|----------|----|------------|----|------------|-----|
| Ce  | 1. | Nahui    | 4. | Chicome.   | 7. | Matlachtli | 10. |
| Ome | 2. | Mecuilli | 5. | Chicuci    | 8. | Chaxtolli  | 15. |
| Jei | 3. | Chieuace | 6. | Chiuenahui | 9. |            |     |

With these terms differently combined together with these three following,

*Pobualli* or *Poalli* 20, *Tzontli* 400, and *Xiquipilli* 8000, they express any quantity, thus:

|                               |    |                 |          |
|-------------------------------|----|-----------------|----------|
| Cem poalli                    | 20 | Nauhpoalli      | 80       |
| Ompoalli                      | 40 | Macuilpoalli    | 100      |
| Epoalli                       | 60 | Chieuacempoalli | 120, &c. |
| Matlaempoalli ten times 20    |    |                 | 200      |
| Caxtolpoalli fifteen times 20 |    |                 | 300      |

Thus they proceed until they come to 400.

|                                 |      |                  |           |
|---------------------------------|------|------------------|-----------|
| Centzontli                      | 400  | Nachtzontli      | 1600      |
| Ontzontli                       | 800  | Macuilzontli     | 2000      |
| Etzontli                        | 1200 | Chieuacentzontli | 2400, &c. |
| Matlaczontli ten times 400      |      |                  | 4000      |
| Caltoltzontli fifteen times 400 |      |                  | 6000      |

Thus they go on to 8000.

|                                    |       |                    |             |
|------------------------------------|-------|--------------------|-------------|
| Ce-xiquipilli                      | 8,000 | Nauhxiqipilli      | 32,000      |
| Onxiqipilli                        | 16000 | Macuilxiqipilli    | 40,000      |
| Exiquipilli                        | 24000 | Chieuacexiquipilli | 48,000, &c. |
| Matlaxiquipilli ten times 8000     |       |                    | 80,000      |
| Caxtolxiqipilli fifteen times 8000 |       |                    | 120,000     |
| Cempoalxiqipilli twenty times 8000 |       |                    | 160,000     |

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to M. de Paw, numeral words to count above three, had, in spite of his ignorance, words to count to at least forty-eight millions. In like manner, we could expose the error of M. Condamine and M. de Paw, in many other languages of America, and even in those which are reckoned the most barbarous; as there are in Italy at present persons acquainted with the new world, and capable of giving an account of more than sixty American languages. Among the materials we collected for this work, we have the numeral words of the Araucan language, which although it is a more warlike than civilized nation, has words to express millions.

M. de Paw is not less wrong in affirming, that the languages of America are so poor, that they cannot express a metaphysical idea; which opinion M. de Paw has learned of M. Condamine. Time, says this philosopher, treating of the languages of America, duration, space, being, substance, matter, body, all these words, and many others, have no equivalents to them in their languages; and not only the names of metaphysical beings, but also those of moral beings cannot be expressed, unless imperfectly and by long circumlocutions. But M. Condamine knew as much of the language of America as M. de Paw; and he certainly gained his information from some ignorant person, which is a usual case with travellers. We are perfectly sure that many American languages have not that poverty Mr. Condamine ascribes to them; but without attending to that we shall examine the state of the Mexican.

It is very true, that the Mexicans had no words to express such conceptions, as matter, substance, accident, and the like; but it is equally so, that no language of Asia, or Europe, had such words before the Greeks began to refine and abstract their ideas, and to create new terms to express them. The great Cicero, who knew the Latin language so well, and flourished in those times when it was at its greatest perfec-

|                                               |                 |
|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Ompoalxiquipilli forty times 8000             | 320,000, &c.    |
| Centzonxiquipilli four hundred times 8000     | 3,200,000       |
| Ontzonxiquipilli eight hundred times 8000     | 6,400,000       |
| Matlactzonxiquipilli four thousand times 8000 | 32,000,000      |
| Caltoltzonxiquipilli six thousand times 8000  | 48,000,000, &c. |

We mentioned that they had words to count as far as forty-eight millions at least, but those above are sufficient to confute M. de Paw.

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tion, although he esteemed it more copious than the Greek, is often at the greatest difficulty in his philosophical works, to find words corresponding to the metaphysical ideas of the Greeks. How often was he constrained to create new terms equivalent in some manner to those of the Greek, because he could not find any such in use among the Romans; but even at this day, after that language has been enriched by Cicero, and other learned Romans, who, after his example, applied themselves to the study of philosophy, many terms are wanting to express metaphysical notions, unless recourse is had to the barbarous Latin of the schools. None of those languages which are spoken by the philosophers of Europe, had words signifying matter, substance, accident, and other similar ideas; and therefore it was necessary that philosophers should adopt the words of the Latin, or the Greek. The ancient Mexicans, because they had no concern with the study of metaphysics, are very excusable for not having invented words to express those ideas; their language, however, is not wanting in terms signifying metaphysical and moral things, as Condamine affirms those of South America to be; we, on the contrary, affirm, that it is not easy to find a language more fit to treat on metaphysical subjects than the Mexican; as it would be difficult to find another which abounds so much as it in abstract terms; for there are few verbs in it from which are not formed verbals corresponding with those in *io* of the Romans; and but few substantive or adjective nouns from which are not formed abstracts expressing the being, or as they say in the schools, the quiddity of things: equivalents to which we cannot find in the Hebrew, in the Greek, in the Latin, in the French, in the Italian, in the English, in the Spanish, or Portuguese; of which languages, we presume, at least, to have sufficient knowledge, to make a comparison. In order to give some specimen of this language to the curious among our readers, we subjoin some words signifying metaphysical and moral ideas, which are understood by the rudest Indians (\*).

The

(\*) Specimen of words in the Mexican language, signifying moral and metaphysical conceptions.

|             |          |                     |             |
|-------------|----------|---------------------|-------------|
| Tlamantli   | King     | Nejolnonotzaliztli  | Reflexion   |
| Jeliztli    | Essence  | Tlachtopaittaliztli | Foresight   |
| Qualloti    | Goodness | Nejoltzotzonaliztli | Doubt       |
| Neltiliztli | Truth    | Tlalnamiquiliztli   | Remembrance |
|             |          |                     | Ceti-       |

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The excessive abundance of words of this nature has been the reason that the deepest mysteries of religion have been explained in the Mexican language without great difficulty, and that some books of the Holy Writings have been translated into it; among which are those of the Proverbs of Solomon, and the Apostles; which like those of Thomas Kempis, and others, translated into Mexican, could not have been done into those languages which are wanting in terms of metaphysical and moral ideas. The books published in Mexico on religion are so numerous, that of them alone might be formed a large library. To this Dissertation we shall add a short catalogue of the principal Mexican authors, in gratitude to their labours, as well as to illustrate what we have advanced.

What we have said of the Mexicans, we may, in great part, affirm also of the other languages spoken in the dominions of Mexico; as there are Dictionaries and Grammars of them, as well as of the Mexican, and treatises in religion have been published in them all.

|                    |                                        |                            |               |
|--------------------|----------------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------|
| Cetiliztli         | Unity                                  | Tlalcahualitzli            | Forgetfulness |
| Ometiliztli        | Binity                                 | Tlazotaliztli              | Love          |
| Jeitiliztli        | Trinity, &c.                           | Tlacocoliztli              | Hatred        |
| Teotl              | God                                    | Tlamautiliztli             | Fear          |
| Teojotl            | Divinity                               | Netemachiliztli            | Hope          |
| Tloque             | He who has every thing within himself. | Necocoliztli               | Pain          |
| Nahuaque           |                                        | Nejoltquipacholiztli       | Repentance    |
| Ipalnemoani        | Him by whom we live                    | Ellehutliztli              | Desire        |
| Amaciacaconi       | Incomprehensible                       | Qqaltihuani                | Virtue        |
| Cemicacjani        | Eternal                                | Jestihuani                 |               |
| Cennancanjelitzli  | Eternity                               | Aquallotl                  | Malice        |
| Cahuatl            | Time                                   | Tolchicahualiztli          | Strength      |
| Cenjocojani        | Creator of all                         | Tlaixejecoliztli           | Temperance    |
| Cenhuelitini       | Omnipotent                             | Jollomachiliztli           | Prudence      |
| Cenhueliciliztli   | Omnipotence                            | Tlamelahuacachicahualiztli | Justice       |
| Tlacatl            | Person                                 | Jolhueiliztli              | Magnanimity   |
| Tlacajotl          | Personality                            | Tlapaccaihijohuiliztli     | Patience      |
| Tajotl             | Fatherhood                             | Tlanemaciliztli            | Liberality    |
| Nanjotl            | Motherhood                             | Paccanemiliztli            | Gentleness    |
| Tlatlcpactlacajotl | Humanity                               | Tlatlacajotl               | Benignity     |
| Tejolia            | Soul                                   | Necnomatiliztli            | Humility      |
| Teixtlamatia       | Mind                                   | Tlazocamatiliztli          | Gratitude     |
| Tlamatiliztli      | Wisdom                                 | Nepohualiztli              | Pride         |
| Ixtlamachiliztli   | Reason                                 | Teojehuacatiliztli         | Avarice       |
| Ixaxiliztli        | Comprehension                          | Nexicolitli                | Envy          |
| Tlaiximaciliztli   | Knowledge                              | Tlatzihuiliztli            | Sloth         |
| Tlanemiliztli      | Thought                                |                            |               |

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Those Europeans who have learned the Mexican tongue give it the highest praises, and equal it to the Latin; some to the Greek, as we have already observed. Boturini affirms, that in urbanity, politeness, and sublimity of expressions, no language can be compared with the Mexican. This author was not a Spaniard, but Milanese, learned and critical. He knew at least the Latin, Italian, French, and Spanish, and of the Mexican so much as to be able to make the comparative judgment. Let M. de Paw, therefore, observe his error, and learn not to decide on matters of which he is ignorant.

Among the proofs on which count de Buffon would rest his system of the recent organization of the matter of the new world, he says, that the organs of the Americans were rude, and their language barbarous. "Observe," he adds "the list of their animals, their names are so difficult to be pronounced, it is wonderful that any European ever took the trouble of writing them;" but we do not so much wonder at their taking the trouble of writing them as at their negligence in copying them. Among all the European authors who have written the natural and civil history of Mexico, in Europe, we meet with no one who has not so much altered the names of persons, animals, and cities, that it is impossible to guess at what they mean. The history of the animals of Mexico passed from the hands of Hernandez to N. A. Recchi, who knew nothing of the Mexican; from Recchi, to the Lincean academicians at Rome, who have published it with notes and dissertations; and count de Buffon made use of this edition. Among the hands of so many Europeans ignorant of the Mexican language, the names of the animals could not at least escape alteration. To shew the alterations which they have suffered in the hands of count de Buffon, it will be sufficient to compare the Mexican names in the history of that philosopher, with those of the Roman edition of Hernandez. It is certain, that the difficulty which we find to pronounce a language to which we are not accustomed, and particularly if the articulation of it is different from that of our own, is no proof that it is barbarous. The same difficulty which count de Buffon finds to pronounce the Mexican names, would be felt by a Mexican who would pronounce the French names. Those who are accustomed to the Spanish language, find great difficulty to pronounce the German and Polish,

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and esteem them the most tough and harsh of all languages. The Mexican language has not been our mother tongue, nor did we learn it in infancy; yet the Mexican names produced by count de Buffon as an argument of the barbarity of that tongue, appear to us beyond comparison more easy to be pronounced than many others taken from other European languages, which he adopts in his Natural History (y); and, perhaps, will appear so to many Europeans who are not used to either of the languages; and there will not be wanting persons who will wonder that count de Buffon has taken the trouble to write those names which are capable of terrifying the most courageous readers. In short, with respect to the American languages, he ought to repose in the judgment of those Europeans who have known them, rather than in the opinion of those who have not.

## S E C T. VII.

*Of the Laws of the Mexicans.*

MR. de Paw, desirous of opposing that antiquity which Gemelli, by mistake, has attributed to the court of Mexico, alledges *the anarchy of their government, and the scarcity of their laws*; and treating of the government of the Peruvians, says, that there cannot be laws in a state of despotism; and although they may have once been, it is impossible to make an analysis of them, because we do not know them; nor can we know them, because they were never written, and the memory of them necessarily terminated with the death of those who knew them.

No body has made mention of the anarchy of the kingdom of Mexico till M. de Paw came to the world, whose brain seems to have a particular organization to understand things in a manner contrary to all other men. No person is so ignorant of the history of Mexico, as not to know that those people were subjected to particular heads and

(y) The reader will please to read and compare the following names which the count de Buffon has adopted with those which he has taken and altered from the Mexican language :

Baurd manet-jes  
Brand hirts  
Chemik-ikarzeefek  
Ildgiers diur

Miszczeczovva  
Stachel-schvvein  
Seebeuschlafer  
Sterzeczleck

Niedzviedz  
Przavviaka  
Meer-schvvein  
Sczurez, &c.

the

the whole state to a chief who was king of Mexico. All historians record the great authority of that sovereign, and the high respect his vassals bore him: if this is anarchy, then all the states of the world are surely anarchised.

Despotism was not introduced into Mexico until the last years of the monarchy: in prior times the kings had always respected the laws established by their ancestors, and attended zealously to the observance of them. Even in the reign of Montezuma II. who was the only truly despotic king, the magistrates governed according to the laws, and Montezuma himself punished transgressors severely; and abused his power only in things which served to increase his wealth and his authority.

Those laws were never written, but they were perpetuated in the memories of men, not only by tradition but also by paintings. No subject was ignorant of them, because fathers of families did not fail to instruct their children in them, that they might avoid transgression, and escape punishment. The copies of the paintings of the laws were unquestionably infinite in number, because, although they underwent a furious persecution from the Spaniards, we have seen many of them. The understanding of those paintings is not difficult to any person, who has a knowledge of the manner in which the Mexicans usually represented things, the characters which they made use of, and their language; but to M. de Paw they would be as unintelligible as those of the Chinese expressed in the proper characters of that nation. Besides, after the conquest many intelligent Mexicans wrote in European characters the laws of Mexico, Acolhuacan, Tezcucó, Michuacan, &c.; amongst others, D. F. de Alba Ixtlilxochitl, wrote in Spanish the eighty laws formerly published by his ancestor king Nezahualcojotl, as we have already mentioned. The Spaniards afterwards investigated the laws of those nations with more diligence than any other part of their history, because the knowledge of them was essentially requisite to the christian government civil and ecclesiastical; particularly in respect to marriages, the privileges of the nobility, the conditions of vassalage, and of slaves. They gained information from the mouths of the Indians who were the best instructed, and they studied their ancient paintings. Besides the first missionaries, who laboured successfully in this under-

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taking, D. A. Zurita one of the principal judges of Mexico, learned on the subject of the law, and acquainted with those countries, made diligent enquiry, by order of the catholic king, into their government and composed that very useful work, which we have mentioned in our catalogue of writers of the ancient history of Mexico. Thus the laws of the Mexicans came to be known although they were never written.

But what sort of laws? "Many of them worthy," says Acoſta, "of our admiration, and according to which those nations should still be governed in their Christianity." The constitution of their state, with respect, to the succession to the crown, could not have been better framed, as by means of it they not only avoided the inconveniences of hereditary succession, but those of election also. An individual of the royal family was always chosen king, both to preserve the dignity and splendour of the crown, and to hinder the throne from ever being occupied by a man of low birth. As a son did not succeed but a brother, there was no danger of so high and important a charge being exposed to the indiscretion of a youth, or the stratagems of an ambitious regent.

If the brothers had succeeded according to the order of their birth, the crown would necessarily have sometimes fallen to a person unfit to govern; and it could have happened besides, that the presumptive heir might plot against the life of the sovereign. Both those inconveniences were obviated by the election. The electors chose first among the brothers of the deceased kings; and on failure of brothers, among the sons of former kings, the fittest person for the command of the nation. If it had been in the power of the king to have named the electors, he could have chosen those who would have been most favourable to his designs, and procured their votes in favour of that brother who was most dear to him, or perhaps in favour of a son, without adhering to the fundamental laws of the state; but it was otherwise, for the electors themselves were elected by the body of the nobility, which included the suffrages of the whole nation. If the office of the electors had been perpetual, they might, by an abuse of their authority, have become the patrons of the monarchy; but as their electoral power finished with the first election, and other new electors were chosen for the next election, it was not easy for ambition to usurp



authority. Lastly, To avoid other inconveniences, the real electors were not more than four in number, men of the first nobility, of known probity and prudence. It is true, that after all those precautions, disorders could not always be avoided : but what government amongst men has not been exposed to greater evils ?

The Mexican nation was warlike, and required a chief who was intrepid, and experienced in the art of war ; what custom, therefore, could be more conducive to such end, than that of not electing any one king who had not, by his merits, obtained the charge of general of the army ; and of not crowning him who had not, after his election, taken himself the victims which, according to their system of religion, were to be sacrificed at the festival of his coronation.

The speed with which the Mexicans threw off the Tepanecan yoke, and the glory they acquired by their arms in the conquest of Azcapotzalco, naturally excited the rivalry and jealousy of their neighbours, and particularly the king of Acolhuacan, who had been, and was at that time, the greatest king of all that land ; but the throne of Mexico being still in a tottering condition, required a firm prop to support it. The king of Acolhuacan, who had recently recovered, by the aid of the Mexicans, that crown which had been usurped by the tyrant Tezozomoc, had reason to apprehend some powerful subject, following the steps of that tyrant, might excite a rebellion in his kingdom, and deprive him, like his father, of his crown and his life. The king of Tlacopan, who was on a newly established throne not very powerful, had still more to fear. Each of those kings by himself was in no state of security, and had reason to be diffident of the other two ; but by uniting together, they could form an invincible power. They therefore made a triple alliance, which rendered each of them secure with respect to the other two, and all three so with regard to their subjects. This was the alliance which fortified the thrones of Acolhuacan and Tacuba, and paved the way for the conquests of the Mexicans ; an alliance so firm and well concerted, that it lasted until the arrival of the Spaniards. This single political arrangement is sufficient to evince the discernment and sagacity of those nations.

The judicial forms of the Mexicans and Tezcucans afford many useful political lessons. The diversity of rank in the magistrates con-

tributed to good order; their attendance in the tribunals, from the break of day until the evening shortened the process of causes, and prevented many clandestine practices which might have interested their decisions. The capital punishments prescribed against prevaricators of justice, the punctuality of their execution, and the vigilance of the sovereigns, kept the magistrates in check; and that care which was taken to supply them with every necessary at the expence of the king, rendered any misconduct in them inexcusable. Those assemblies which were held before the sovereign every twenty days, and particularly that general assembly of the whole of the magistrates every eighty days, to terminate all causes then depending, besides avoiding all the evils occasioned by the delay of justice, were productive of a communication between the magistrates of their different lights, made the king know those whom he had constituted the delegates of his authority, innocence had more resources, and the form of judicature rendered justice still more respectable. That law which permitted an appeal from the tribunal of the Tlacatecatl to that of the Cihuacoatl in criminal but not in civil causes, evinces that the Mexicans, respecting the laws of humanity, discerned, that there was more required to prove a man guilty of such crimes than to declare him a debtor. In the trials of the Mexicans they admitted no other proof against the accused than that of witnesses. They never made use of the torture to make the innocent declare themselves guilty, nor those barbarous proofs by duel, fire, boiling-water, and such like, that were formerly so frequent in Europe, and which we now read of in history with amazement and abhorrence. "There will be no person who will not wonder," says Montesquieu, speaking on this subject, "that our ancestors made the fame, fortune, and property of citizens depend on certain things which belonged less to law and reason than to chance, and that they should have used constantly those proofs which were neither connected with innocence nor guilt: what we now say of those proofs posterity will say of the torture, and will never cease to wonder that such a kind of proof was generally in use, for so many centuries, in the most enlightened part of the world." An oath was of great weight in the trials of the Mexicans, as we have already said: because, as they were convinced



vinced of the terrible punishments inflicted by the gods on those who perjured themselves, they conceived no one would dare to offend against them; but we do not know that this kind of proof was permitted to the prosecutors against the accused, but only to the accused to clear himself from the crime imputed to him.

The Mexicans punished with severity all the crimes which are particularly repugnant to nature, or prejudicial to a state, such as high treason, murder, theft, adultery, incest, and other excesses of this kind; sacrilege, drunkenness, and lying. So far they conducted themselves wisely in punishing misdeeds; but they erred in the measure of the punishment, which in some cases was excessive and cruel. We do not attempt to palliate the failings of that nation, but neither can we avoid observing, that the most famous people of the old continent have afforded such examples of error and vice in their legislature, as make the laws of the Mexicans appear comparatively more mild and conformable to reason. "The celebrated laws of the Twelve Tables are full," says Montesquieu, "of the most cruel ordinations; attend to the punishment of fire, and other sentences, which are always capital." Yet this is that most famous compilation which the Romans made from the best they found among the Greeks. If then the best laws of greatly polished Greece were such, what must those have been which were not so good? What sort of legislature must those people have had whom they called barbarous? What can be more inhuman and cruel than that law of the Twelve Tables which permitted creditors to divide the body of a debtor who did not pay, and each creditor to take a portion of in satisfaction of his debt? This law was not published in the rude beginning of that renowned city, but three hundred years after its foundation. What could be more iniquitous than that law of the famous legislator Lycurgus, which permitted theft to the Lacedæmonians? The Mexicans punished this pernicious crime, but not capitally, except where the thief was unable to pay for the offence with his liberty or with his goods. But this law was not the same in cases of robbery from the fields; because, these lying more exposed to be plundered, required to be more guarded by the laws: but this very law which prescribed capital punishment against the person who robbed,



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bed a certain quantity of fruit or maize, permitted necessitous travellers to eat as much as was necessary to supply present want. How much more reasonable and just was this law than that of the Twelve Tables, which condemned without distinction every person to be hanged who stole any thing from the field of another.

Lying, that pernicious crime to society, was left unpunished in most countries of the old continent, but in Japan was frequently punished with death. The Mexicans kept at an equal distance from both extremes. Their legislators, who discerned the genius and turn of the nation, perceived, that if they did not prescribe a heavy pain against lying and drunkenness, truth would be wanting at trials of justice, and faith disregarded in contracts. Experience has shewn how prejudicial impunity in those two crimes has been to those nations.

But in the midst of their severity the Mexicans were cautious not to involve the innocent in punishment with the guilty. Many laws of Europe and Asia prescribed the same punishment against those guilty of high treason, and their families. The Mexicans made the crime capital; they did not, however, deprive the relations of the traitor of life, but only of liberty; and not all of them neither, but only those who, conscious of the treason, had not made a discovery, and thereby made themselves criminal. How much more humane is this than the law of Japan. "Those laws," says Montesqueu, "by which they punish a whole family for a single crime, or a whole district; those laws which do not discriminate the innocent where there are any guilty." We do not know that the Mexicans prescribed any punishment against those who spoke ill of the government; it appears that they did not pay much regard to that liberty of speech in the subjects, which is so much feared in other countries.

Their laws concerning marriage were unquestionably more decent and becoming than those of the Romans, the Greeks, the Persians, the Egyptians, and other people of the old continent. The Tartars marry their daughters; the ancient Persians and Assyrians took their mothers to wife; the Athenians and Egyptians their sisters. In Mexico every marriage was forbid between persons connected in the first degree of consanguinity or affinity, except those between brothers and sisters in law, where the brother in dying left a son. That prohibition

hibition shews, that the Mexicans judged more justly of matrimony than all the above mentioned nations. That exception demonstrates their humanity of sentiments. If a widow married a second time, she had frequently the displeasure of seeing her children little beloved by a father who did not give them birth: the new husband little respected by his children, who considered him as a stranger; and the children of each marriage as discordant among themselves, as if they were born of different mothers. What better measure could those nations have adopted, than that of marrying widows with their brothers-in-law. Many ancient nations of Europe, imitated by not a few of the modern people of Asia and Africa, bought their wives; and, on that account, exercised over them an authority greater than the Author of nature has intended, and treated them more like slaves than companions. The Mexicans did not obtain their wives but by lawful and honourable pretensions; and though they presented gifts to the parents, those were not given as a price for the daughter whom they courted, but merely a piece of civility to gain their good will, and dispose the parents to the contract. The Romans, although they did not scruple to lend their wives (z), had, notwithstanding, a right by law to take away their lives whenever they found them out in adultery. This iniquitous law, which made the husband judge and executioner in his own cause, instead of hindering adulteries, increased parricides. Among the Mexicans, that infamous commerce with wives was not permitted; nor had they any authority over their lives. He who took away his wife's life, was, although he caught her in adultery, punished with death. This, they said, was to usurp the authority of the magistrates, to whom it belonged to take cognisance of crimes, and to chastise criminals according to law. Before that law *Julia de Adulteriis* was made by Augustus, we do not know, says *Vives* (a), that a cause of adultery was ever tried in Rome; as much as to say, that that celebrated nation failed in justice in a point of this importance for seven centuries.

(z) In Rome, says Montesquieu, the husband was permitted to lend his wife to another person. It is known that Cato lent his wife to Hortensius, and Cato was incapable of violating the laws of his country. Liv. xxv.

(a) L'Esprit de Loix, liv. xx. chap. 14.

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If, after making a comparison of the laws, we should also compare the nuptial rites of the two nations, we should find in them both a great deal of superstition ; but in other respects a strong difference between them ; those of the Mexicans were decent and becoming, those of the Romans indecent and reproachable.

In regard to the laws of war, it is seldom we meet with them just, among a warlike people ; the great esteem of valour and military glory, creates enemies of those who are not otherwise hostile ; and ambition to conquer instigates them to trespass on the limits prescribed by justice. Nevertheless, in the laws of the Mexicans, traits appear which would do honour to more cultivated nations. They never declared war until they had examined the motives for it in full council, and received the approbation of the high-priest. Besides, they generally endeavoured by embassies and messages, to those on whom war was designed, to bring about what they wished by peaceable measures, before they proceeded to a rupture. Those kinds of delay gave their enemies time to prepare themselves for defence ; and besides, the justification of their conduct, contributed to make it attended with honour ; as it was esteemed very base to make war on an unguarded enemy without having first challenged them, that victory might never be ascribed to any thing else than their bravery.

It is true, that these laws were not always observed, but they were not therefore less just ; and if there was any injustice in the conquests of the Mexicans, it was certainly not less in those of the Grecians, Romans, Persians, Goths, and other celebrated nations. One of the great evils attending on war is that of famine, from the waste committed by enemies on the fields. It is not possible totally to prevent this evil ; but if there ever has been any thing capable of moderating it, it was certainly that usage of the Mexicans, and other nations of Anahuac, of having in every province a place appointed for the field of battle. The other custom which they had of making every fifth day, in time of war, a day of truce and repose, was not less dictated by humanity than reason.

Those nations had formed a species of *jus gentium*, by virtue of which, if the chief, the nobility, and people, rejected the propositions made them by another people, or nation, and left the decision of a point  
to



to arms; if they were conquered, the chief lost his sovereign power; the nobility, the supreme right which they had over their possessions; the common people were subjected to personal service; and all those who had been made prisoners in the heat of battle were, *quasi ex delicto*, deprived of liberty, and the right of life. This is certainly contrary to our ideas of humanity; but the general agreement of those people in such customs rendered their inhumanity less culpable, and examples much more barbarous among the most cultivated nations of the old continent, dissipate the horror which on first consideration is occasioned by the cruelty of those people of America. Among the Greeks, says Montesquieu (a), the inhabitants of a city taken by force of arms lost their liberty, and were sold as slaves. Certainly, the inhumanity which the Mexicans shewed to the prisoners of their enemy, is not to be compared with that which the Athenians used towards their own citizens. A law of Athens, says the same author, ordained, that whenever the city was besieged, all useless people should be put to death. We shall not find among the Mexicans, or any other polished nation of the new world, a law so barbarous as this of the most cultivated people of ancient Europe. The greatest anxiety, on the contrary, of the Mexicans, and other people of Anahuac, whenever any of their cities was besieged, was to lodge their women, children, and invalids, in a place of security, by sending them to other cities, or into the mountains. By these means, they protected the defenceless members of the community from the fury of the enemy, and prevented all unnecessary consumption of provisions.

The tribute which they paid to the king of Anahuac was exorbitant, and the laws which enforced them were tyrannical; but those laws were the effects of despotism, introduced in the last years of the Mexican monarchy; which, at its greatest height, never reached that excess of monopolizing the lands of an empire, and the property of the subjects, which we justly condemn in Asiatic monarchs; nor were there ever laws published respecting tributes so extravagant and severe as those which have been published in the old world; as for example, by the emperor Anastasius, who laid a tax even on breathing; "*Ut unusquisque pro haustu aeris pendat.*"

(a) L'Esprit de loix, Liv. xx. ch. 14.

But if we censure the tyrannical ambition of those monarchs in the laws on tributes, we cannot at least but admire and praise the refinement of those nations, and the prudence of their legislators in the laws of commerce. They had, in every city or village, a public place or square, appropriated for the traffic of every thing which could supply the necessities and pleasures of life; where all merchants assembled for the more speedy dispatch of business, which they transacted under the eyes of inspectors, or commissaries, in order that frauds might be prevented, and all disorder in contracts avoided. Every merchandize had its particular place, which preserved order and convenience to those who wished to make purchases. The tribunal of commerce, established in the same square, to determine disputes between dealers, and to punish instantaneously every offence committed there, preserved the rights of justice inviolate, and secured the public tranquillity. To these wise dispositions was owing that wonderful order, which, in the midst of such an immense crowd of merchants and merchandize, raised the admiration of the first Spaniards.

Lastly, in the laws respecting slaves, the Mexicans were superior to all the most cultivated nations of ancient, and perhaps, modern Europe. If we compare the laws of the Mexicans with those of the Romans, Lacedæmonians, and other celebrated people, we shall perceive in the latter a barbarity that is shocking and cruel; in the former, the greatest humanity and respect to the laws of nature. We do not speak here of prisoners of war. What could be more humane than that law which made men born of slaves free; which allowed a slave a property in his goods, and in whatever he acquired with his own industry and toil; which exacted of the owner to treat his slaves like men, and not like beasts; which gave him no authority over his life, and even deprived him of the power of selling him at market, unless it was after he had, in a lawful manner, declared him intractable and incorrigible: how different were the Roman laws? They, from the high authority granted to them by the laws, were not only owners of all the property of their slaves, but likewise of their lives, of which (b) they deprived

(b) It is not wonderful that the Romans granted that barbarous authority to owners over their slaves, since they granted it to fathers over their lawful children: *Endo liberis justis jus vite, necis, vendundæque potestas Patri.*

them at pleasure ; treated them with the greatest inhumanity, and made them suffer the most cruel torments ; and what still shews more strongly the inhuman disposition of this nation, while they enlarged the authority of owners of slaves, they restrained whatever was in their favour. The law *Fusa Caninia*, forbid owners to free by will more than a certain number of slaves. By the *Silanian* law it was ordered, that whenever an owner was killed, all the slaves who inhabited the same house should be put to death, or in any place near where they could hear his voice. If he was killed on a journey, all the slaves who were with him, and also all those who fled, however manifest their innocence, were put to death. The *Aquilian* law made no distinction between the wound given to a slave, and that given to a beast. So far was the barbarity of the very polished Romans carried. The laws of the Lacedæmonians were not more humane, which permitted no slave to have redress at law against those who insulted or injured him.

If, in addition to what we have said hitherto, we should compare the system of education of the Mexicans with that of the Greeks, it would appear that the latter did not instruct their youth so sedulously in the arts and sciences as the Mexicans taught their children the customs of their nation. The Greeks endeavoured to inform the mind, the Mexicans to form the heart. The Athenians prostituted their youth to the most execrable obscenities in those very schools which were destined for their instruction in the arts. The Lacedæmonians tutored their children according to the prescriptions of Lycurgus, in stealing, in order to make them crafty and active, and whipped them severely when they caught them in any theft ; not for the theft, but for their want of dexterity, and being detected. But the Mexicans taught their children, together with the arts, religion, modesty, honesty, sobriety, labour, love of truth, and respect to superiors.

Thus we have given a short but true picture of the progress in refinement of the Mexicans taken from their ancient history ; from their paintings, and the accounts of the most correct Spanish historians. Thus were those people governed whom M. de Paw thinks the most savage in the world. Thus were those people governed who are inferior in industry and sagacity to the rudest people of the old continent. Thus were those people governed of whose rationality some Europeans have doubted.



## C A T A L O G U E

## O F S O M E

European and Creole AUTHORS, who have written on the DOCTRINES  
of CHRISTIANITY and MORALITY, in the LANGUAGES of  
New Spain.

A. stands for *Augustinian*. D. for *Dominican*. F. for *Franciscan*. J. for *Jesuit*. P. for *Secular Priest*; and (\*) denotes, that the Author printed some of his Works.

## IN THE MEXICAN LANGUAGE.

- \* A G. de Betancurt, F. Creole.  
Al. de Escalona, F. Span.  
Al. de Herrera, F. Spaniard.  
\* Al. Molina, F. Spaniard.  
Al. Rangel, F. Spaniard.  
Al. de Truxillo, F. Creole.  
And. de Olmus, F. Spaniard.  
Ant. Davila Padilla, D. Creole.  
Ant. de Tovar Montez. P. Cr.  
Arn. Bassace F. Frenchman.  
Baldassare del Castillo, F. Sp.  
Bald. Gonzalez, J. Creole.  
Barn. Pacz, A. Creole.  
Barn. Vargas, P. Creole.  
Bart. de Alba, P. Creole.  
Ben. Fernandez, D. Spaniard.  
Ber. Pinelo, P. Creole.  
\* Ber. de Sahagun, F. Spaniard.  
\* Car. de Tapia Centeno, P. Cr.  
Fil. Diez. F. Spaniard.  
Fran. Gomez, F. Spaniard.  
Fran. Ximenez, F. Spaniard.  
Garcia de Cisneros, F. Spaniard.  
Juan de la Anunciacion, A. Sp.

- Juan de Ayora, F. Spaniard.  
Juan Battista, F. Creole.  
Juan de S. Francisco, F. Span.  
Jean Focher, F. Frenchman.  
\* Juan de Gaona, F. Spaniard.  
\* Juan Mijangos.  
Juan de Ribas, F. Spaniard.  
Juan de Romanones, F. Sp.  
\* Juan de Torquemada, F. Sp.  
Juan de Tovar, J. Creole.  
Jerom Mendieta, F. Spaniard.  
\* Jos. Perez, F. Creole.  
\* Ign. de Paredes, J. Creole.  
\* Louis Rodriguez, F.  
\* Mart. de Leon, D. Creole.  
\* Mat. Gilbert, F. Frenchman.  
Mich. Zarate, F.  
\* Pierre de Gante, F. Fleming.  
Pedro de Oroz, F. Spaniard.  
\* Toribio de Benavente, F. Sp.

## IN THE OTOMEE LANGUAGE.

- Al. Rangel.  
Barnaba de Vargas  
\* Fran. de Miranda, J. Creole.  
Gio. di Dio Castro, J. Creole.

Orazio

Orazio Carochi, J. Milanese.

Pedro Palacios, F. Spaniard.

Pedro de Oroz.

Seb. Ribero, F.

N. Sanchez, P. Creole.

#### IN THE TARASCAN LANGUAGE.

\* Mat. Gilbert.

Juan Battista Lagunas, F.

\* Angelo Sierra, F. Creole.

#### IN THE ZAPOTECAN LANGUAGE.

Bernardo de Albuquerque D. Sp.  
and bishop of Guajaca.

Al. Camacho, D. Creole.

Ant. del Pozo, D. Creole.

Crist. Aguero, D. Creole.

#### IN THE MIZTECAN LANGUAGE.

Ant. Gonzalez, D. Creole.

\* Ant. de los Reyes, D. Span.

Ben. Fernandez, D. Spaniard.

#### IN THE MAYA LANGUAGE.

Al. de Solana, F. Spaniard.

And. de Avendaño, F. Creole.

Ant. de Ciudad Real, Span.

Bern. de Valladolid, F. Span.

Car. Mena, F. Creole.

Jos. Dominguez, F. Creole.

#### IN THE TOTONACAN LANGUAGE.

And. de Olmos.

Ant. de Santoyo, P. Creole.

Crist. Diaz de Anaya, P. Creole.

#### IN THE POPOLUCAN LANGUAGE.

Fran. Toral, F. Sp. bp. of Yucatan.

#### IN THE MATLAZINCAN LANGUAGE.

Andrea de Castro, F. Span.

#### IN THE HUAXTECAN LANGUAGE.

And. de Olmos.

\* Car. de Tapia Centeno.

#### IN THE MIXE LANGUAGE.

\* Ag. Quintana, D. Creole.

#### IN THE KICHE' LANGUAGE.

Bart. de Anleo, F. Creole.

Ag. de Avila. F.

#### IN THE CAKCIQUEL LANGUAGE.

Bart. de Anleo.

Alv. Paz, F. Creole.

Ant. Saz. F. Creole.

Ben. de Villacañas, D. Creole.

#### IN THE TARAUMARAN LANGUAGE.

Ag. Roa, J. Spaniard.

#### IN THE TEPEHUANAN LANGUAGE.

Ben. Rinaldini, G. Neapolitan.

There are many other languages,  
as also many other writers; but  
we omit mentioning any but  
those whose works have been  
printed, or at least particularly  
esteemed by the learned.

# AUTHORS of GRAMMARS and DICTIONARIES of the above mentioned Languages.

## OF THE MEXICAN.

FRAN. Ximenes, Gram. and Dict.

And. de Olmos, Gram. and Dict.

Bern. de Sahagun, Gram. and Dict.

\* Al. de Molina, Gram. and Dict.

\* Car. de Tapia Centeno, Gram. and Dict.

Al Rangel, Gram.

\* Ant. del Rincon, J. Cr. Gram.

\* Orazio Carocho, Gram.

Bern. Mercado, J. Cr. Gram.

Ant. Davila Padilla, Gram.

\* Ag. de Betancurt, Gram.

Barnaba Paez, Gram.

Ant. de Tovar Montezuma, Gra.

\* Ign. de Paredes, Gram.

\* Ant. de Castelu, P. Cr. Gram.

\* Jos. Perez, Gram.

Gaetano de Cabrera, P. Cr. Gram.

\* Ag. de Aldana y Guevara, P. Cr. Gram.

Jean Focher, F. Frenchm. Gram.

\* Ant. Cortes Canal, Indian Priest, Gram.

## OF THE OTOMEE.

Juan Rangel, Gram.

Pedro Palacios, Gram.

Orazio Carocho, Gram.

N. Sanchez, Dict.

Seb. Ribero, Dict.

Giov. di Dio Castro, Gram. and Dict.

## OF THE TARASCAN.

\* Mat. Gilbert, Gram. and Dict.

\* Ang. Sierra, Gram. and Dict.

Juan Battista de Lagunas, Gram.

## OF THE ZAPOTICAN.

Ant. del Pozo, Gram.

Crist. Agüero, Dict.

## OF THE MIZTECAN.

Ant. de los Reyes, Gram.

## OF THE MAYA.

And. de Avendaño, Gram. and Dict.

Ant. de Ciudad Real, Dict.

Louis de Villanpando, Gram. and Dict.

\* Pedro Beltran, F. Cr. Gram.

## OF THE TOTONACAN.

And. de Olmos. Gram. and Dict.

Crist. Diaz de Anaya, Gram. and Dict.

## OF THE POPULUCAN.

Franc. Toral, Gram. and Dict.

## OF THE MATLAZINCAN.

And. de Castro, Gram. and Dict.

OF



## OF THE HUAXTECAN.

And. de Olmos, Gram. and Dict.  
Car. de Tapia, Gram. and Dict.

## OF THE MIXE.

\* Ag. Quintana, Gram. and Dict.

## OF THE CAKCHIQUEL.

Ben. de Villacañas, Gram. and Dict.

## OF THE TARAUMARAN.

Jerom Figueroa, J. Cr. Gram. and  
Dict.

Ag. de Roa, Gram.

## OF THE TEPEHUANAN.

Jerom Figueroa, Gram. and Dict.

Tom. de Guadalajara, J. Cr. Gram.

Ben. Rinaldini, Gram.

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## DISSERTATION VII.

*Of the Boundaries and Population of the Kingdoms of Anahuac.*

THE mistakes of many Spanish authors concerning the boundaries of the Mexican empire, and the romantic notions of M. de Paw, and other foreign authors, respecting the population of those countries, have compelled us to engage in this Dissertation to ascertain the truth ; which we shall do as briefly as possible.

## S E C T. I.

*Of the Boundaries of the Kingdoms of Anahuac.*

SOLIS, following several ill-informed Spanish authors, affirms that the Mexican empire extended from the isthmus of Panama to the cape of Mendocina in California ; Tournon, a French Dominican, desirous, in his General History of America, of enlarging those boundaries, says, that all the discovered countries in North America were subject to the king of Mexico ; that the extent of that empire, from east to west, was 500 leagues, and from north to south 200, or 250 leagues : that its boundaries were on the north, the Atlantic ocean ; in the west, the gulf of Anian ; in the south, the Pacific Ocean ; and in the east, the isthmus of Panama ; but besides the geographical errors of this description, there is also a contradiction in it ; because, if it ever were true, that that empire extended from the isthmus of Panama to the gulf or strait of Anian, the extent of it would not be only 500, but 1000 leagues, as it would not comprehend less than 50 degrees.

The origin of this error is, that those authors were persuaded that there was no other sovereign in Anahuac, but that of Mexico : that the kings of Acolhuacan and Tlacopan were his subjects, and that the Michuacanese and Tlascalans, also depending on that crown, had latterly

terly rebelled. But none of those states ever belonged to the kingdom of Mexico. This appears evident from the testimony of all the Indian historians, and all the Spanish writers who received their information from them; namely, Motolinia, Sahagun, and Torquemada. The king of Acolhuacan had always been the ally of Mexico, from the year 1424, but was never the subject. It is true, that when the Spaniards arrived there, the king Cacamatzin appeared to depend on his uncle Montezuma; because, on account of the rebellious spirit of his brother Ixtlilxochitl he required the protection of the Mexicans. The Spaniards afterwards saw Cacamatzin come as ambassador from the king of Mexico, and serve him likewise in other capacities. They saw him also led prisoner to Mexico, by order of Montezuma. All this renders the errors of the Spaniards, in great measure, very excusable; but it is certain, that those demonstrations of services towards Montezuma were not those of a vassal to his king, but those of a nephew to his uncle; and that Montezuma, in ordering him to be taken to please the Spaniards, arrogated to himself an authority which did not belong to him, and did that king a heavy injury, of which he afterwards repented. As to the king of Tlacopan, it is true, that he was created a sovereign by the king of Mexico, but he had absolute and supreme dominion over his states, on the single condition of being the perpetual ally of the Mexicans, and of giving them assistance with his troops whenever it was necessary. The king of Michuacan, and the republic of Tlascala, were always rivals and professed enemies of the Mexicans, and there is no memory that either the one or the other was ever subject to the crown of Mexico.

The same thing might be said of many other countries which the Spanish historians believed to be provinces of the Mexican empire. How was it possible that a nation, which was reduced to a single city, under the dominion of the Tepanecas, should, in less than a century, subdue so many people as were between the isthmus of Panama and California? What the Mexicans really did, though far less than the above mentioned authors report, was truly surprising, and would not be credible, if the rapidity of their conquests had not been confirmed by incontestible proof. Neither in the narratives of the Indian historians, nor in the enumeration of the states conquered by the kings of



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Mexico, which is found in the collection of Mendoza, nor in the register of the tributary cities explained in that collection, can we find any foundation for assenting to that arbitrary enlargement of the Mexican dominions; but, on the contrary, it is entirely contradicted by Bernal Diaz. He, in the xciii<sup>d</sup> chapter of his history says, “the great Montezuma had several garrisons and people of war on the frontiers of his states. He had one in Soconusco, to defend himself on the side of Guatemala and Chiapa; another to defend himself from the Panuchese, between Tuzapan and that place, which we call *Almeria*; another in Coatzacualco, and another in Michuacan (c).”

We are certain, therefore, in the first place, that the Mexican dominions did not extend in the south beyond Xoconochco; and that none of all the provinces which at present are comprehended in the dioceses of Guatemala, Nicaragua, and Honduras, belonged to the Mexican empire. In our iv<sup>th</sup> book we have said, that *Tliltototl*, a celebrated Mexican general, in the last years of king Ahuitzotl, carried his victorious arms as far as Guatemala; but there we also add, that it is not known that that country remained subject to the crown of Mexico; the contrary appears rather from history to be the truth. Torquemada, in book ii. c. 81. makes mention of the conquest of Nicaragua by the Mexicans, but what he affirms there of an army of the Mexicans in the time of Montezuma, is in book iii. c. 10. attributed by him to a colony which had gone out many years before, by order of the gods, from the neighbourhood of Xoconochco; wherefore his account is not to be depended upon.

Bernal Diaz, in chap. clxvi. expressly affirms, that the Chiapanese were never subdued by the Mexicans; but this is not to be understood of their whole country, but of a part only; because we know from Remezal, Chronicler of that province, that the Mexicans had a garrison in Tzinacantla; and it is certain from the tribute list, that Tochtlan, and other cities of that country, were tributaries of the Mexicans.

In the north, the Mexicans did not advance farther than Tuzapan, as we are told in the last quoted passage of Diaz; and we know for certain, that the Panachese were never subjected to them. In

(c) What we have to say of the boundaries of the kingdoms of Anahuac will be better understood by consulting our charts.

the east, we have already fixed their boundaries at the river Coatzacoalco. Diaz says, that the country of Coatzacoalco was not a province of Mexico; on the other hand we find, among the tributary cities of that crown, Tochtlan, Michapan, and other places of that province. We are, however persuaded, that the Mexicans possessed all that was to the west of the river Coatzacoalco, but not that which was to the east of it; and that this river was their boundary in that quarter. Towards the north, their possessions were bounded by the country of the Huastecas, who were never subdued by the Mexicans. Towards the north-west, the empire did not extend beyond the province of Tulba; all that great tract of land which was beyond this province, was occupied by the barbarous Otomies and Chechemecas, who had no society, nor obeyed any sovereign. In the west it is known that the empire terminated at Tlaximalojan, the frontier of the kingdom of Michuacan; but on the sea-coast is extended as far as the western extremity of the province of Coliman, and no farther. In the catalogue of the tributary cities, Coliman, and other places of that province appear, but none that are beyond it: nor are they mentioned in the history of Mexico. The Mexicans had nothing to do with California, nor could they expect any advantage from the conquest of a country so distant, so unpeopled, and miserable. If that dry and rocky peninsula had ever been a province of the Mexican empire, some population would have been found there; but it is certain, that there was not a single house met with upon it, nor the least remains or traces of inhabitants. Lastly, in the south, the Mexicans had made themselves masters of all those great states, which were between the Vale of Mexico and the Pacific Ocean. The greatest length of their dominions was on the sea coast from Xoconochco to Coliman.

Dr. Robertson says, that the territories belonging to the chiefs of Tezcuco and Tacuba, scarcely yielded in extent to those of the sovereign of Mexico (*d*). But this is very far from being true, and contrary also to what all the historians of Mexico say. The kingdom of Tezcuco, or Acolhuacan, was bounded on the west partly by the

(*d*) There were three places of the name of *Tochtlan*, (called by the Spaniards *Tusila*), the first in the province of Chiapa, the second in Xoconochco, or Soconusco, and the third in Coatzacoalco.

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lake of Tezcucó, partly by Tzompanco, and other Mexican states; and in the east, by the dominions of Tlascala; so that it could not extend from west to east, above sixty miles; on the south it was bounded by the state of Chalco, belonging to Mexico; and in the north by the independent state of the Huastecas. From the frontier of this country to that of Chalco, the distance is about two hundred miles, which is the whole extent of the kingdom of Acolhuacan, but does not make one eighth part of that of the Mexican dominions. The states of the petty king of Tlacopan, or Tacuba, were so small, that they did not merit the name of a kingdom; for from the Mexican lake in the east, to the frontier of the kingdom of Michuacan in the west, the extent was not more than eighty miles; nor from the valley of Toloacan in the south, to the country of the Otomies in the north, more than fifty. The comparison therefore made by Robertson, of the dominions of Acolhuacan and Tacuba, with those of Mexico, is erroneous.

The republic of Tlascala, surrounded by the Mexican and Tezcucan dominions, and by the states of Cholula and Huexotzinco, was so confined, that from east to west it had scarcely fifty, and from south to north not above thirty miles of extent. We have met with no author who gives a greater latitude to this state except Cortes, who says, that the dominions of this republic were ninety leagues in circumference; but this is a manifest error.

With respect to the kingdom of Michuacan, no one, as far as we know, has mentioned all its ancient boundaries except Boturini. This author says, that the extent of that kingdom, from the valley of Ixtlahuacan, near Toloacan, to the Pacific Ocean, was five hundred leagues; and from Zacatollan to Xichu, one hundred and sixty leagues; and that in the dominions of Michuacan, were comprehended the provinces of Zacatollan, Coliman, and that province which the Spaniards called *Provincia d' Avalos*, situate to the north-west of Coliman. But this author was wholly deceived in his account; for it is certainly known, that the kingdom of Michuacan had not its boundaries in Ixtlahuacan, but Tlaximalojan, where the Mexican dominions reached. We know from the list of tributes, that the maritime provinces of Zacatollan and Coliman, belonged to Mexico. Lastly, the Michuacanese could not extend their dominions as far as Xichu, without subduing the barbarous



barous Chechamecas, who occupied that quarter; but we know that the last were not subdued till many years after the conquest by the Spaniards. The kingdom of Michuacan, therefore, was not so large as Boturini believed it; its extent did not comprehend more than three degrees of longitude, and about two of latitude.

What we have said hitherto, tends to shew the exactness of our description, and of our geographical charts with respect to the boundaries of those kingdoms, founded on the history of them, the register of the tributes, and the testimony of the ancient writers.

## S E C T. II.

*On the Population of Anahuac.*

WE do not propose here to treat of the population of all America; that would be too large a subject and foreign to our purpose; but solely of that of Mexico which belongs to this history. There were and there are in America, many populous countries, and there are also vast deserts; and they are not less distant from the truth who imagine the countries of the new world as populous as those of China, than they who believed them as unpeopled as those of Africa. The calculation of P. Riccioli is as uncertain as those of Sufmilch and M. de Paw. Riccioli gives three hundred millions of inhabitants to America. The political arithmeticians, say M. de Paw, do not reckon more than one hundred million. Sufmilch, in one part of his work, computes them at one hundred, and in another at one hundred and fifty millions. M. de Paw, who mentions all these calculations, says, there are not of real Americans, more than from thirty to forty millions. But we must repeat, that all those calculations are most uncertain as they are not founded on any proper grounds; for if we do not know hitherto the population of those countries in which the Europeans have established themselves, such as those of Guatimala, Peru, Quito, Terra Firma, Chili, who is capable of guessing the number of inhabitants of the numerous countries little or not at all known to the Europeans, such as those which are to the north and north-west of Coahuila, New Mexico, California, and the river *Colorado*, or Red River, in North  
Ame-

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America? Who can number the inhabitants of the new world, while he does not know the number of provinces and nations which it contains? Leaving aside therefore such calculations which cannot be undertaken with the least degree of certainty, we shall content ourselves with examining what M. de Paw and Dr. Robertson say on the population of Mexico.

“The population of Mexico and Peru,” says M. de Paw, “has undoubtedly been exaggerated by the Spanish writers, who are used to represent objects with immoderate proportions. Three years after the conquest of Mexico, the Spaniards had occasion to bring some people from the Lucayos, and afterwards from the coast of Africa, to people the kingdom of Mexico. If this monarchy contained in 1518, thirty millions of inhabitants, why in 1521 was it depopulated?” We shall never deny, that among the Spanish writers there are many addicted to exaggerating, as there are also among the Prussians, the French, the English, and other people; because the immoderate desire to magnify things which they describe is a passion common to all nations in the world, from which M. de Paw himself is not free, as he demonstrates through the whole of his work: but to censure all the Spaniards together is an indiscriminate charge most injurious to that nation, which, like every other, has a mixture of good and bad in it. After having read, at least, the best historians of the cultivated nations of Europe, we have not found two who appear comparable as to sincerity with the two Spaniards Mariana and Acosta, who are highly esteemed therefore, and extolled by all writers. Among the ancient historians of Mexico, there have been some, such as Acosta, Diaz, and Cortes himself, of whose sincerity of relation there is no doubt. But although each of these authors had not been possessed of those qualities which are required to merit our belief, nevertheless, the uniformity of their testimonies would be an undeniable proof of the fidelity of their accounts. Authors of little veracity disagree among themselves, except when they copy each other; but this does not happen to those historians, who, intent only on relating what they have themselves seen, or found probable from information, did not regard what others had written; on the contrary, it appears from their works, that at the time they they were writing, they had not the writings of  
others

others under their eyes. M. de Paw himself (*f*), speaking in one of his letters of that rite of the Mexicans of consecrating and eating the statue of paste of *Huitzilopochtli*, by him called *Vitzilipultzi*, and of the rite among the Peruvians at their festival *Capac-raime*, writes thus to his correspondent: "I confess to you, that the unanimous testimony of the Spanish writers does not allow us to doubt of it." If the consent then of the Spanish historians, concerning what they did not see, does not allow us to doubt of it, how should he doubt of that which they depose as eye-witnesses?

Let us enquire therefore what the ancient Spanish writers say of the population of America. All agree in affirming, that those countries were well peopled, that there were very many large cities, and an infinite number of villages and hamlets; that many thousands of merchants assembled at the markets of populous cities: that they mustered most numerous armies, &c. Cortes, in his letters, and the anonymous conqueror, Alfonso de Ojeda, and Alfonso de Mata, in their memoirs, Las Casas in his work entitled, the *Destruction of the Indies*; B. Diaz, in his history, Motolinia, Sahagun, and Mendieta, in their writings; all eye-witnesses of the ancient population of America: Herrera, Gomara, Acosta, Torquemada, and Martinez, are all of the same opinion with respect to the great population of those countries. M. de Paw cannot produce a single ancient author who does not confirm it by his testimony; whereas, we can cite several authors who do not make any mention of that superstitious rite of the Mexicans, namely, Cortes, Diaz, and the anonymous conqueror, the three most ancient Spanish writers on Mexico. Notwithstanding M. de Paw affirms, that we cannot doubt of such a rite, because of the unanimous testimony of the Spaniards; who then would doubt of the great population of Mexico, or rather deny it so strongly against the uniform depositions of all the ancient historians? But if the population of Mexico was so great in 1518, why in 1521 was it necessary to bring people there from the Lucayos, and afterwards from the coast of Africa, to people it? We confess ingenuously we cannot read this objection of M. de Paw, without being extremely offended at his affirming with such hardiness, that

(*f*) Tom. II. Letter i.

which



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which is directly false, and contrary to the accounts of authors. Where has M. de Paw read that it was necessary to transport people from the Lucayos to people Mexico? We defy him to produce a single author who says so; we know rather the contrary from many writers. We know from Herrera and others, that from 1493, when the Spaniards established themselves in Dominica, to 1496, the third part of the inhabitants of that large island perished in war, and through other distresses. In 1507, there did not remain more than the tenth part of the Indians which were in 1493, according to Las Casas, an eye-witness; and from that time the population of that island diminished to such a degree, that in 1540, there hardly remained two hundred Indians; on which account, from the beginning of the fifteenth century, the Spaniards began to transport thousands of Indians from the Lucayos, to recruit the population of Hispaniola; but those having likewise died, they began before the conquest of Mexico to carry people from Terra Firma, and other countries of the continent of America, according as they discovered them. It is known from a letter written to the council of the Indies by the first bishop of Mexico, sent by Las Casas to the emperor Charles V. that the cruel governor of Panuco, Nugno Guzman, sent from thence twenty-eight vessels loaded with Indian slaves to be sold in the islands: so that it is far from being true, that the Spaniards carried people from the islands to inhabit the continent of North America; that on the contrary they carried people from the continent to inhabit the isles, which the above authors expressly relate. It is true, that after the conquest of Mexico, slaves were imported there from Africa; not because there was any want of people; but because the Spaniards required them to serve in the making of sugar, and to work in the mines, to which they could not compel the Americans, on account of the laws then recently published: it is, therefore false, and contrary to the deposition of those above mentioned authors, that Mexico was depopulated three years after the conquest; or that it was necessary to bring people there from the Lucayos and Africa to recruit its inhabitants. We are rather certain, that some colonies were sent a few years after the conquest, from the countries subject to the king of Mexico, and the republic of Tlascala, to people other lands, namely, Zacatecas, Suis, Potosi, Saltillo, &c. &c.

But let us see what those ancient writers say in particular of the population of Mexico. We do not know that any one of them has had the boldness to express the number of the inhabitants of Mexico; whether it did or did not contain thirty millions, could have been known from the kings of Mexico and their ministers; and although the Spaniards might have informed themselves from them of this particular, we do not find that any one of them has done so. That which several of them affirm is, that among the feudatories of the king of Mexico were thirty who had each about an hundred thousand subjects, and other three thousand lords who had a smaller number of vassals. Laurentius Surius affirms (*f*) that this is certain from records which were in the royal archives of the emperor Charles V. Cortes, in his first letter to that emperor, speaks thus: "The multitude of inhabitants in those countries is so great, that there is not a foot of soil left uncultivated; but notwithstanding there are many who, for want of bread, go begging through the streets and markets." B. Diaz, the anonymous conqueror, Motolinia, and other eye-witnesses, give us similar ideas of the population of Mexico. To come to the particular countries of Anahuac, we are certain, from the depositions of the above mentioned, and almost all the ancient authors, of the great population of the Mexican vale, of the countries of the Otomies, of the Malatzincas, Tlahuicas, Coahuicacas, Miztecas, Zapotecas, and Cuitlatecas; of the province of Coatzacualco; of the kingdoms of Acolhuacan, and Michuacan, and the states of Tlascala, Cholula, Huexotzinco, &c.

The vale of Mexico, although that a great part of it was occupied by the lakes, was at least as well peopled as the most populous country of Europe. It contained forty considerable cities, which we have already named, and are mentioned likewise by the ancient writers. The other inhabited places of it were innumerable, the names of which we could also give, if we were not afraid of tiring our readers. The very sincere B. Diaz, describing, in chap. viii. of his History, what he saw in his way through the vale towards the capital, speaks thus: "When we beheld things so wonderful we knew not what to say, nor whether the objects before our eyes were real; we saw so many great cities

(*f*) Surius in Commentario brevi rerum in orbe gestarum ab anno 1500 ad 1568.

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“situated on the main land, and many others in the lake, and an infinity of little vessels upon it.” He says farther, that some soldiers, his companions, in wonder beyond measure at seeing so great and beautiful a territory, were in doubt whether what they saw was the effect of a dream, or enchantment. Those and many other candid confessions of Diaz are sufficient to answer Robertson, who availed himself of certain words of that author, which he did not well comprehend, to make his readers believe that the population of Mexico was not so great as it certainly was.

Concerning the population of the ancient capital there are various opinions; nor can the case be otherwise where an attempt is made to judge of the populousness of a great city by the eye: but all the writers who saw it, or were informed by eye-witnesses, are agreed in saying that it was very great. Herrera says it was twice as large as Milan. Cortes affirms that it was as large as Seville and Cordova; Surius citing certain records which were in the royal archives of Charles V. says, that the population of Mexico amounted to an hundred and thirty thousand houses. Torquemada, following Sahagun and other Indian historians, reckons an hundred and twenty thousand houses; and adds, that in each house were from four to ten inhabitants. The anonymous conqueror speaks thus of it: “this city of Temistitan may be about two leagues and a half or near three leagues, more or less, in circumference; the greater part of those who have seen it judge that there are upwards of sixty thousand fires in it, and rather more than less.” This calculation, adopted by Gomara and Herrera, appears to us to come nearest the truth, considering the extent of the city, and the manner of dwelling of those people.

But the whole of this is contradicted by M. de Paw. He calls the description excessive and exaggerated, which is given of this city of America; “which contained, according to some authors, seventy thousand houses in the time of Montezuma II. so that at that time it must have had three hundred and fifty thousand inhabitants; whereas it is notorious, that the city of Mexico, considerably increased under the dominion of the Spaniards, has not at present above sixty thousand inhabitants, including twenty thousand negroes and mulattoes.” This is another passage of the *Recherches Philosophiques* which will make  
the



the Mexicans smile. But who can avoid smiling when they see a Prussian philosopher, so bent on diminishing the populousness of that American city, and angry at those who represent it greater than he wishes it? Who will not be surprised to hear that the number of the inhabitants of Mexico is notorious in Berlin, when it is not many years since it has been known to the ecclesiastics, who every year make an enumeration; we shall therefore give M. de Paw some certain information concerning that city of America, that he may in future avoid those errors into which he has fallen in speaking of its populousness.

Mexico, he must know, is the most populous city of all those which the catholic King has in his vast dominions. From the bills of mortality published daily in the cities of Madrid and Mexico, it appears that the number of the inhabitants of Madrid is a fourth less than that of Mexico; for example, if Madrid has a hundred and sixty thousand inhabitants, Mexico has without doubt two hundred thousand. There has been a great difference of opinions respecting the number of souls of the modern city of Mexico, as there was also respecting the ancient city, and all other cities of the first rank; but there being an enumeration made with great accuracy of late years, partly by the priests, and partly by the magistrates, it has been found that the inhabitants of that capital exceeded two hundred thousand, although they have not ascertained how much more. We may form some idea of its populousness from the quantity of *pulque* (*q*) and tobacco which is daily consumed there (*r*). Every day are brought into it upwards of six thousand *arrobas* of pulque, that is a hundred and ninety thousand Roman pounds; in the year 1774, there were two millions, two hundred and fourteen thousand two hundred and ninety-four and an half *arrobas* entered, that is more than seventy-three millions of Roman pounds; but in this computation we do not comprehend what is introduced by smuggling, nor that which the Indians who are pri-

(*g*) *Pulque* is the usual wine, or rather beer, of the Mexicans, made of the fermented juice of the Maguei. This liquor will not keep above one day, and therefore what is made is daily consumed.

(*h*) Our account of the daily consumption of *pulque* and tobacco in Mexico is taken from the letter of one of the chief accomptants of that custom-house, of the 23d of February, 1775.

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vileged, sell in the principal square of the city. This amazing quantity of pulque is almost solely consumed by the Indians and Mulattoes, the number of which is surpassed by that of the Whites and Creoles, few of whom make use of this beverage. The tax upon it amounts annually, in the capital alone, to about two hundred and eighty thousand crowns (pesos fuertes). The daily consumption of tobacco for smoking, in that capital, is reckoned at one thousand, two hundred and fifty crowns, or thereabouts; which in one year makes the sum of four hundred and fifty thousand crowns and more. But it is necessary to be understood, that among the Indians very few use tobacco; among the Europeans and Creoles very many do not use it, and some of the Mulattoes do not. Who will put greater faith in the calculations made by M. de Paw than in the registers of the capital? or who will place more value on the judgment of a modern Prussian, who is so extravagant respecting the ancient populousness of that city, than on that of so many ancient writers who saw it.

With regard to the city and court of Tezcucó, we know from the letters of Cortes to Charles V. that it contained about thirty thousand houses; but this ought to be understood solely of the court; for including the other three cities of Coatlichan, Huexotla, and Atenco, which, as Cortes attests, appeared to form a separate population, it was, by a great deal, larger than Mexico. Torquemada, following Saha-gun, and the accounts of the Indians, affirms, that the population of those four cities, contained an hundred and forty thousand houses; from which number, although we deduct an half, a considerable population would remain. No historian has told us the population of Tlacopan, although all affirm it was considerable. Of Xochimilco we know, that next to the three royal residences it was the largest of all. Of Iztapalapan, Cortes affirms, it had from twelve to fifteen thousand fires; of Mixcoac, he says, that it had about six thousand; Huitzilopochco from four to five thousand; Acolman and Otompan, each four thousand; and Mexicaltzinco, three thousand. Chalco, Azcapozalco, Cojoacan, Quauhtitlan, were, without comparison, larger than these last mentioned cities. All these, and a great many others, were comprehended in the vale of Mexico alone: the sight of which  
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caused no less admiration than fear to the Spaniards when they first observed them from the top of the mountains of that delightful valley. They felt the same astonishment when they saw the population of Tlascala. Cortes, in his letter to Charles V. speaks thus of that city ; “ It is so large and wonderful, that although I omit a great deal of “ what I could say, I believe that little which I say will appear incre- “ dible ; for it is much larger and more populous than Granada when “ it was taken from the Moors, more strong, has as good buildings, “ and more abundance of every thing.”

The anonymous conqueror speaks of it in the same manner, “ There “ are,” he says, “ great cities, and among others that of Tlascala, “ which, in some respects, resembles Granada, and in others, Segovia, but it is more populous than either.” Of Tzimpantzinco, a city of the republic, Cortes affirms (*i*), that the enumeration of the houses having been made at his desire, there were found to be twenty thousand. Of Huejotlipan, a place of the same republic, he says, that it had from three to four thousand fires. Of Cholula Cortes affirms, that it had about twenty thousand houses, and as many in the neighbouring villages, which were like its suburbs. Huexotzinco and Tepayacac were the rivals of Cholula in greatness. These are some of the peopled places which the Spaniards saw before the conquest ; we omit many others, of the greatness of which we are certified by the testimony of these and other authors.

We are not less convinced of the population of those countries from the innumerable concourse of people which were seen at their markets, from the very numerous armies which they raised whenever it was necessary, and the surprising number of baptisms immediately after the conquest. With respect to the numbers at their markets, and of their armies, we have said enough in our history on the faith of many eye-witnesses. We might suspect, that the conquerors had exaggerated the number of the Indian troops, in order to make their conquest appear more glorious, but this would appear only when they reckoned the number of the troops of the enemy, not when they counted their own allies, as the more the number of the latter was

(*i*) Cortes speaks of this city without naming it, but it appears from the context to have been the same ; and Torquemada mentions it expressly.



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increased, their conquests became the less difficult and glorious. The conqueror Ojeda, however, numbered an hundred and fifty thousand men among the allied troops of Tlascala, Cholula, Tepeyacac, and Huexotzinco, in the review which was made of them in Tlascala, as they were going to the siege of Mexico. Cortes himself affirms, that the allied troops who accompanied him to the war of Quauquechollan exceeded an hundred thousand, and that those which assisted him in besieging the capital, exceeded considerably two hundred thousand in number. On the other hand, the besieged were so numerous, that although an hundred and fifty thousand died during the siege, as we have already said, when the capital was taken by the Spaniards, and it was ordered that all the Mexicans should leave it, for three successive days and nights the streets and roads were filled with people who were leaving the city to take refuge in other places, according to the testimony of B. Diaz, an eye-witness. With respect to the number of baptisms, we are assured, by the testimony of the religious missionaries themselves, who were employed in the conversion of those people, that the children and grown persons baptised by the Franciscan(k) fathers alone, from the year 1524 to the year 1540, were upwards of six millions in number; who were, for the most part, inhabitants of the vale of Mexico and the circumjacent provinces. In this number are not comprehended those who were baptised by the priests, Dominicans, and Augustinians, amongst whom, and the Franciscans, were divided those most abundant harvests; and besides, it is certain that the Indians were innumerable who remained obstinate in their paganism, or did not receive the Christian faith till many years after the conquest. We know also, from the noisy controversies excited there by some religious, and reported to the pope Paul III. that on account of the extraordinary and before unseen multitude of catechumens, the missionaries were obliged to omit some ceremonies of the baptism, and amongst others the use of their spittle, because, from doing it so much they dried up and almost excoriated their mouths, their tongues, and their throats.

From the discovery of Mexico till now the number of the Indians has been gradually diminishing. Besides the many thousands which

(k) Motolinia, one of the religious missionaries, baptised more than four hundred thousand Indians; an account of which he left in writing.

perished by the first contagion of the small-pox, carried there in 1520, and in the war of the Spaniards, in the epidemic of 1545 eighty thousand perished, and in that of 1576 upwards of two millions, in the dioceses alone of Mexico, Angelopoli, Michuacan, and Guaxaca, which is known by the bills of mortality presented by every curate to the viceroy. Notwithstanding Herrera, who wrote towards the end of the sixteenth century, reports, on the faith of authentic documents sent him by the viceroy of Mexico, that in the dioceses alone of Mexico, Angelopoli, and Guaxaca, and in those provinces of the diocese of Mexico which were circumjacent to the capital, there were, at that time, six hundred and fifty-five principal settlements of Indians, and innumerable other smaller ones dependent upon them; in which were contained ninety thousand Indian families of tributaries. But it is necessary to be known, in those are not included the nobles, nor the Tlascalans, and other Indians who assisted the Spaniards in the conquest; for in respect to their birth, or the services which they rendered the conquerors, they were exempted from tributes. Herrera, who was well informed on this subject, affirms, that in those times, four thousand Spanish families, and thirty thousand Indian houses were counted in the capital. From that time the number of Indians has gradually been diminishing, and the number of the Whites or Spaniards has been increasing.

M. de Paw will answer according to his style, that all the proofs which we have adduced to demonstrate the population of Mexico, are of no weight, for they are obtained from soldiers who were rude and illiterate, or from ignorant and superstitious ecclesiastics; but if this was the character of all the writers we have quoted, their testimony would be still of great force because of their uniformity. Who can believe that Cortes, and the other officers who subscribed his letters, should deceive their king, where they could have been so easily detected by hundreds of witnesses, and not a few enemies? is it possible that so many Spanish and Indian writers should all agree to exaggerate the population of those countries, and not one amongst them shew some respect for posterity? Of the veracity of the first missionaries there can be no doubt. They were men of exemplary life, and much learning, selected from amongst many to promulgate the gospel in the new world.

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world. Some of them had been professors in the most celebrated universities of Europe; had obtained the first rank in their orders, and merited the favour and confidence of the emperor Charles V. Those honours which they resigned in Europe, and those which they never received in America, clearly demonstrated their disinterested zeal; their voluntary and rigid poverty, their continual treaty with the great Being of nature, their incredible fatigues in so many long and difficult journeys on foot, without provisions, in laborious service, and still more their excessive charity, mildness, and compassion, towards those afflicted nations, will make their memory ever venerated in that kingdom. In the writings of those immortal men, so many characters of sincerity are discovered, that we are not permitted to entertain the least doubt of their accounts. It is true, they committed a heavy sin, in the judgment of M. de Paw, in burning the greater part of the historical paintings of the Mexicans, because they thought them full of superstition. We valued still more than M. de Paw those paintings, and lament their loss; but we neither despise the authors of that unfortunate burning, nor curse their memory; because the evil which their intemperate and heedless zeal made them commit is not to be compared with the good which they did; besides, they endeavoured to repair the loss by their works, particularly Motolinia, Sahagun, Olmos, and Torquemada.

M. de Paw has gone so far to lessen the population of those countries, that he has dared to affirm (who could believe it) in a decisive magisterial tone, that in all those regions there was no city but Mexico. Let us attend to him purely for amusement. "So that as there are not," he says, "the least vestiges of the Indian cities in all the kingdom of Mexico, it is manifest that there was no more than one place which had any appearance of a city, and this was Mexico, which the Spanish writers would call the Babylon of the Indies, but it is now a long time since they have been able to deceive us with the magnificent names they gave to the miserable hamlets of America."

But all the authors who have written on Mexico unanimously affirm, that all the nations of that vast empire lived in societies; that they had many well-peopled, large, well-laid out settlements; name the cities which



which they saw; and they who travelled through those regions two centuries and a half after the conquest, saw the same settlements in the places mentioned by those writers; so that M. de Paw is either persuaded that those writers prophetically announced the future population of those places, or he must confess that they have been from that time where they are at present. It is true that the Spaniards founded many settlements, such as the cities of Angelopoli, Guadalajara, Valadolid, and Veracruz, Zelaja, Potosi, Cordova, Leone, &c. but the settlements made by them in the districts of the Mexican empire with respect to those made by the Indians are as one to a thousand. The Mexican names given to those settlements are still preserved to this day, and demonstrate that the original founders of them were not Spaniards but Indians. That those places of which we have made frequent mention in this history were not miserable villages, but cities, and large well formed settlements, such as those of Europe, is certified by the united testimony of all writers who saw them.

M. de Paw is desirous of being shewn the vestiges of these ancient cities; but we could shew him more than that, the ancient cities now existing. However, if he chuses to see traces of them he may go to Tezcuco, Otumba, Tlascala, Cholula, Huexotzinco, Chempoalla, Tulla, &c. where he will find so many that he will have no doubt of the ancient greatness of those American cities.

This great number of towns and inhabited places, although so many thousands perished annually in the sacrifices and continual wars of those nations, gives us clearly to understand the vast population of the Mexican empire, and the other countries of Anahuac; but if all this which we have said is not sufficient to convince M. de Paw, in charity we advise him to enter into an hospital.

What we have applied against M. de Paw may serve likewise to refute Dr. Robertson, who, seeing so many eye-witnesses contrary to him in opinion, recurs to a subterfuge similar to that of the warmth of the imagination which he made use of to deny faith to the Spanish historians respecting what they said of the excellence of the Mexican labours of cast metal. Treating of the wonder which the sight of the cities of Mexico caused to the Spaniards in his seventh book, he says, "In the first fervour of their imagination, they compared Chempoalla,

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“ though a town only of the second or third size, to the cities of  
 “ greatest note in their own country. When afterwards they visited  
 “ in succession Tlascala, Cholula, Tacuba, Tescuco, and Mexico itself,  
 “ their amazement was so great that it led them to convey ideas of their  
 “ magnitude and populousness bordering on what is incredible . . . For  
 “ this reason some considerable abatement ought to be made from their  
 “ calculation of the number of inhabitants in the Mexican cities ; and  
 “ we may fix the standard of their population much lower than they  
 “ have done.”

Thus Robertson commands, but we are not disposed to obey him. If the Spaniards had written their histories, letters, or relations *in the first fervour of their admiration*, we might then justly suspect that stupefaction had led them to exaggerate ; but it was not so ; for Cortes, the most ancient of those writers, did not write his first letter to Charles V. till a year and an half after his arrival in that country ; the anonymous conqueror wrote some years after the conquest ; B. Diaz, after forty years continual residence in those countries, and the others in like manner. Is it possible that this *fervour of their admiration* should endure for one, twenty, and even forty years afterwards ? But whence arose such wonder in them ? Let us hear it from Dr. Robertson himself. “ The Spaniards, accustomed to this mode of habitation among all  
 “ the Indians with which they were then acquainted, were astonished,  
 “ on entering New Spain, to find the natives residing in towns of  
 “ such extent as resembled those of Europe.” But Cortes and his companions, before they went to Mexico, knew very well that those people were not savage tribes, and that their houses were not huts ; they had heard from those who, a year before, had made the same voyage with Grijalva, that there were beautiful settlements there, consisting of houses of stone and lime, with high towers to them ; as Bernal Diaz attests, who was an eye-witness. That, therefore, was not the occasion of their wonder, but it was the real largeness and multitude of the cities which they saw. “ It is not surprising, then,” adds Robertson, “ that Cortes and his companions, little accustomed to  
 “ such computations, and powerfully tempted to magnify, in order to  
 “ exalt the merit of their own discoveries and conquests, should have been  
 “ betrayed into this common error, and have raised their descriptions  
 con-

“considerably above truth.” But Cortes was not so weak, and saw very well that the exaggeration of the number of his allies, far from raising the merit, served rather to diminish the glory of his conquests. He often confesses that he was assisted in the siege by eighty, and sometimes an hundred, and two hundred thousand men; and as those ingenuous confessions discover his sincerity, in the same manner those numerous armies demonstrate the population of those countries. Besides, Dr. Robertson supposes, when the Spanish writers wrote concerning the number of the houses of the Mexican cities, it was only expressed by conjecture, and the judgment which they had formed by the eye; but this was not the case, for Cortes affirms, in his first letter to the emperor Charles V. that he ordered the houses, which belonged to the district of Tlascala to be numbered, and found there was an hundred and fifty thousand, and in the single city of Tlascala more than twenty thousand.



## DISSERTATION VIII.

*On the Religion of the Mexicans.*

WE have nothing to say in this Dissertation as we had in the others to M. de Paw, as he ingenuously acknowledges the resemblance there is between the delirium of the Americans, and that of other nations of the old continent in matters of religion. "As," he says, "the religious superstitions of the people of America (1) have had a sensible resemblance to those which other nations of the old continent have entertained, he has not spoken of those absurdities, but to make a comparison of them, and in order to observe that, notwithstanding the diversity of climes, the weakness of the human spirit has been constant and unvariable." If he had delivered himself with the same judgment in other respects, he would have saved much contention, and preserved his work from those heavy censures which have been made on it by many wise men of Europe. We direct this Dissertation, therefore, to those who, from ignorance of what has passed and passes at present in the world, or from want of reflection, have made much wonder in reading in the history of Mexico at the cruelty and superstition of those people, as if such things had been never heard of among mortals. We shall make their error conspicuous, and shew that the religion of the Mexicans was less superstitious, less indecent, less childish, and less unreasonable than that of the most cultivated nations of ancient Europe; and that there have been examples of cruelty, perhaps more cruel, amongst all other nations of the world.

The system of natural religion depends principally on that idea which is formed of the Divinity. If the supreme Being is conceived to be a Father full of goodness, whose providence watches over his creatures, love and respect will appear in the exercise of such religion.

(1) In the preface to *Recherches Philosophiques*.

If, on the contrary, he is imagined to be an inexorable tyrant, his worship will be bloody. If he is conceived to be omnipotent, veneration will be paid to one alone; but if his power is conceived to be confined, the objects of worship will be multiplied. If the sanctity and perfection of his being is acknowledged, his protection will be implored in a pure and holy service; but if he is supposed subject to imperfections, and the vices of men, religion itself will sanctify crimes.

Let us compare the idea, therefore, which the Mexicans had of their gods with that which the Greeks, Romans, and other nations from whom they learned their religion, had of their deities, and we shall discover the superiority of the Mexicans, in this matter, over all those ancient nations. It is true, that the Mexicans divided power among various deities, imagining the jurisdiction of each to be restricted, "I do not doubt," Montezuma used to say to Cortes, in their conferences on religion, "I do not doubt of the goodness of the God whom you adore, but if he is good for Spain our Gods are equally so for Mexico.

"Our God *Camaxtle*," the Tlascalans used to say to Cortes, "grants us victory over our enemies; our goddess *Matlalcueje* sends the necessary rain to our fields, and defends us from the inundation of Zahuapan. To each of our gods we are indebted for a part of the happiness of our life." But they never believed their gods so impotent as the Greeks and Romans believed theirs. The Mexicans had more than one deity under the name of *Centeotl* who took care of the country and the fields, and although they were so fond of their children they had but one god for their protection. The Romans, besides the goddess *Ceres*, had a crowd of deities for the care of the fields alone (*m*), and for the guard and education of their children upwards of twenty, besides a number which were employed in the generation and

(*m*) *Seja* was charged with the grain which was newly sown, *Proserpina* with the grain which was just sprung, *Nodus* with the knots on the stem, *Volatina* with the eyes on buds, *Patelena* with the leaves which were spread, *Flora* with the flowers, *Segetia* with the new grains, *Lactantia* with the grain yet milky, *Matuta* with the ripe grain, *Tutanus* or *Tutilina* with the grain in the granary; to all whom we ought to add the god *Sterculius* who attended the manuring of the fields, *Priapus* who defended the grain from the birds, *Rubigo* who defended it from insects, and the nymphs *Napis* who had the care of its nutritive juices.

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birth of infants (*n*). Who would believe that they would have occasion for their Gods merely to guard their doors? Forculus was charged with the door posts, Carua with the hinge, and Lamentinus with the threshold. "Ita," exclaims St. Augustin, "ita non poterat, Forculus simul fores, et cardinem limenque fervare." So wretched was the power of the gods in the judgment of the Romans! Even the names by which some of them were called shew the pitiful conception entertained of them by their adorers. What names more unworthy of divinity than those of Jupiter Pistor, Venus Calva, Pecunia Caca, Subigus and Cloacina? Who would ever think that a statue formed by Tatius in the principal sink of Rome was to become a goddess with the name of Cloacina? This was certainly a mockery of their religion, and rendering the very gods whom they adored, vile and contemptible.

But the Greeks and Romans shewed the opinion they had of their gods in nothing more strongly than the vices which they ascribed to them. Their whole mythology is a long series of crimes: the whole life of their gods was composed of enmities, revenge, incest, adultery, and other base passions, capable of defaming the most degenerate of men. Jove, that omnipotent father, that beginning of all things, that king of men and of gods as the poets call him, appears sometimes disguised as a man to treat with Alcumena, sometimes as a satyr to enjoy Antiope, sometimes as a bull to ravish Europa, sometimes as a swan to abuse Leda, and sometimes in a shower of gold to corrupt Danae, and at other times assumes other forms to accomplish his guilty designs. In the mean time the great goddess Juno, mad with jealousy, thinks of nothing but having revenge of her disloyal husband. Of the same stamp were the other immortal gods; especially the *dii majores*, or select gods, as they were called by them; select, says St. Augustin,

(*n*) The goddess *Opis* was charged with giving assistance to the child which was delivering, and to receive it in her lap, *Vaticanus* to open its mouth to cry, *Lewana* to raise it from the ground, *Cunina* to watch the cradle, the *Carmentes* to announce its destiny, *Fortuna* to favour it in all accidents, *Rumina* to introduce the nipple of the mother's breast into the mouth of the child, *Potina* took care of its drink, *Educa* of its pap, *Faustia* wiped its slabbings, *Venilia* had to cherish its hopes, *Volupta* to attend its pleasures, *Agnesia* to watch its motions, *Stimula* to make it active, *Stredua* to make it courageous, *Numeria* to teach it numbers, *Camena* singing, *Conso* to give it counsel, *Seneca* resolution, *Juventa* had charge of its youth, and *Fortuna Bar-bata* was enjoined that important office of making hair grow upon adults

for



for the superiority of their vices, not for the excellence of their virtues. But what good examples could those nations imitate in the gods, who, while they boasted to teach virtue to men, had nothing consecrated but their vices? What merits obtained deification to Leena among the Greeks, and to Lupa Faula and Faula among the Romans, but that of having been famous courtezans? From thence sprung various deities, charged with the most infamous and shameful employments.

But what shall we say of the Egyptians, who were the first authors of superstition (o)? They not only paid worship to the ox, dog, cat, crocodile, hawk, and other such animals, but likewise to leeks, onions, and garlick, which was the occasion of that satyrical saying of Juvenal, *O sanctas gentes quibus hic nascuntur in hortis Numina!* and, not contented with that, they deified likewise the most indecent things. That custom of marrying with their sisters was imagined to be authorized by the example of their gods.

The Mexicans entertained very different ideas of their deities. We do not find, in all their mythology, any traces of that excess of depravity which characterised the gods of other nations. The Mexicans honoured the virtues not the vices of their divinities; the bravery of Huitzilopochtli, the beneficence of Centeotl, Tzapotlatman, and Opochtli, and others, and the chastity, justice, and prudence of Quetzalcoatl. Although they feigned deities of both sexes, they did not marry them, nor believe them capable of those obscene pleasures which were so common among the Greeks and Romans. The Mexicans imagined they had a strong aversion to every species of vice, therefore their worship was calculated to appease the anger of their deities, provoked by the guilt of men, and to procure their protection by repentance and religious respect.

The rites observed by those nations were entirely agreeable to the idea they had of their gods. Superstition was common to them all, but that of the Mexicans was less, and not so puerile; this the comparison of their auguries will be sufficient to shew. The Mexican diviners observed the signs or characters of the days concerning marriages, journeys, &c. as the European astrologers observed the position of the

(o) Nos in Tempia tuam Romana accepimus Istin.  
Semicanesque Deos et Sistra moventia luctum. *Lucanus.*

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stars, to foretel from thence the fortunes of men. Both of them were equally fearful of eclipses and comets, as they suspected them the forerunners of great calamities. This superstition has been common to all the people of the world. They were also all afraid of the voice of the owl, or any other such bird. These and other such superstitions have been general, and are still common to the vulgar of the old and new continents, even in the center of most cultivated Europe. But all which we know of those American nations in this matter, is not to be compared with that which we are told of the ancient Romans by their poets and historians. The works of Livy, Pliny, Virgil, Suetonius, Valerius Maximus, and other judicious authors, which cannot be read without smiling, shew us to what excess the childish superstition of the Romans arrived. No animal among the quadrupeds reptiles and birds was not employed to foretel future events. If a bird flew towards the left hand, if the raven croaked, if they heard the voice of the crow, if a mouse tasted honey, if a hare passed across the road, all those incidents were prognostics of some great calamity. Formerly there was a lustration made of all Rome for no other reason than because an owl entered the Capitol (*p*). Not only animals, but also trivial and contemptible circumstances were sufficient to excite superstitious dread; as the spilling of wine or salt, or the falling of some meat from table. Who would not have been amazed to contemplate the aruspices persons of such high respect seriously occupied in examining the movements of the victims, the state of their intrails, and colour of their blood, to prognosticate from those signs the principal events of that famous republic? “I wonder,” said the great Cicero, “that an aruspex does not smile when he views another of his own profession.” What can be more ridiculous than that kind of augury which was called *tripudium*? Who would have imagined that a nation in some respects so enlightened, and also so warlike, should carry along with their armies, as the most important thing to the success of their arms, a cage of chickens, and dare not to begin the battle without consulting them? If the chickens did not taste the food which was put before

(*p*) Bubo funebris et maxime abominatus publicis precipue auspiciis. . . Capitolii cellam ipsam intravit. Sex. Papellio Istro L. Pedanis Coss. propter quod nonis Martiis urbs lustrata est eo anno, Plin. Hist. Nat. lib. x. cap. 12.

them

them it was a bad omen; if, besides not eating it, they escaped out of the cage, it was worse; if, on the contrary, they eat greedily, the augury was most happy; so that the most effectual means to secure victory would have been to keep the chickens without food, until they were consulted.

To such excesses is the spirit of man led, when resigned to the capricious dictates of passion, or stimulated by fears arising from a sense of his own weakness.

But Americans, Greeks, Romans, and Egyptians were all superstitious and puerile in the practice of their religion; not so however, in the obscenity of their rites, because we find not the least traces in the rites of the Mexicans, of those abominable customs which were so common among the Romans and other nations of antiquity. What could be more indecent than the Eleusinian feasts which the Greeks made, or those which the Romans celebrated in honour of Venus, in the calends of April, and above all others those very obscene games which they exhibited in honour of Cybele, Flora, Bacchus, and other such false deities? What rite could be more obscene than that which was observed on the statue of Priapus, among the nuptial ceremonies? How could they celebrate the festivals of such incestuous and adulterous gods but with such obscene practices? How was it possible they should have been ashamed of those vices which they saw sanctioned by their own divinities?

It is true, that although nothing obscene mingled with the rites of the Mexicans, some of them were such, as on the supposition of the Divinity of their gods would have been very indecent, namely that of anointing the lips of the idols with the blood of the victims: but would it not have been more indecent to have given them blows, as the Romans gave the goddess Matuta at the *Matral* feasts? Considering the error of both, the Mexicans were certainly more rational by giving their gods a liquor to taste which they imagined was acceptable to them, than the Romans by executing an action upon their goddess which has been esteemed highly insulting among all nations of the world.

What we have said hitherto, though sufficient to shew that the religion of the Mexicans was less exceptionable than that of the Romans,



Greeks, or Egyptians, we are sensible that the comparison between them ought not to have been solely with respect to the above articles, but rather with respect to the nature of their sacrifices. We confess, that the religion of the Mexicans was bloody, that their sacrifices were most cruel, and their austerities beyond measure barbarous; but whenever we consider what other nations of the world have done, we are confounded at viewing the weakness of the human mind, and the series of errors into which they have fallen from their miserable systems of religion.

There has been no nation in the world which has not at some time sacrificed human victims to that god whom they adored. We know from the sacred writings, that the Ammonites burned some of their sons in honour of their god Moloch, and that other people of Canaan did the same, whose example was followed by the Israelites. It appears from the fourth book of the Kings, that Achaz and Manasseh, kings of Judea, used that pagan rite of passing their sons through the fire. The expression of the sacred text appears rather to signify a mere lustration or consecration, than a burnt-offering, but the hundred and fifth Psalm does not leave a doubt that the Israelites sacrificed their children to the gods of the Canaanites. Of the Egyptians we know, from Manetho, a priest and celebrated historian of that nation, cited by Eusebius Cæsariensis, that daily three men were sacrificed in Eliopolis to the goddess Juno alone, in like manner as the Ammonites sacrificed human victims to their Moloch, and the Canaanites to their Beelfegor; the Persians sacrificed to their Mitra or sun, the Phœnicians and Carthaginians to their Baal or Saturn, the Cretans to Jove, the Lacedæmonians to Mars, the Phocians to Diana, the Lesbians to Bacchus, the Thessalians to the Centaur Chiron and Peleus, the Gauls to *Efsè* and *Teutate* (q), the *Bardi* of Germany to *Tuiston*, and other nations

(q) A certain French author, through a blind attachment to his native country, hardily denies that human victims were ever sacrificed by the Gauls; but he adduces no authority to confute the testimony of Pliny, Seutonius, Diodorus, and in particular Cæsar, who was well acquainted with the Gauls, and knew their customs. "Natio est omnis Gallorum," he says, "admodum dedita religionibus, atque ob eam causam qui sunt affecti gravioribus morbis, qui-  
"que in prælio periculique versantur, aut pro victimis homines immolant, aut se immolatu-  
"ros vovent, ministris ad ea sacrificia Druidibus; quod pro vita hominis, nisi vita hominis red-  
"datur, non posse aliter decorum immortalium numen placari arbitrantur, publice ejusdem  
genus

tions to their tutelar gods. Philon says that the Phœnicians in public calamities offered in sacrifice to their inhuman Baal their dearest sons, and Curtius affirms that such sacrifices were in use among the Tyrians until the ruin of their famous city. The same did the Carthaginians with their countrymen in honour of Saturn the *cruel*. We know that when they were vanquished by Agathocles, king of Syracuse, with a view to appease their deities, whom they believed incensed, they sacrificed two hundred noble children, besides three hundred youths who spontaneously offered themselves for sacrifice, to shew their bravery, their piety towards the gods, and their love to their country; and, as Tertullian affirms, who was an African, and lived little latter than that epoch of which we are speaking, and therefore ought to know it well, sacrifices were used in Africa until the time of the emperor Tiberius, as in Gaul till the time of Claudian, as Suetonius reports.

The Pelasgians, the ancient inhabitants of Italy, sacrificed a tythe of their children, in order to comply with an oracle, as is related by D. Halicarnassicus. The Romans, who were as sanguinary as they were superstitious, did not abstain from such kind of sacrifices. All the time they were under the government of their kings, they sacrificed young children to the goddess Mania, mother of the *Lares*, for the prosperity of their houses, to which they were directed by a certain oracle of Apollo, as Macrobius says; and we know from Pliny, that human sacrifices were not forbid until the year 657 of Rome; but notwithstanding this prohibition, those examples of barbarous superstition did not cease; since Augustus, as authors cited by Suetonius affirm, after the taking of Perusia, where the consul, L. Antony, had fortified himself, sacrificed in honour of his uncle Julius Cæsar, who was by this time deified by the

“genus habent instituta sacrificia. Alii immani magnitudine simulacra habent; quorum co-  
“texta viminibus membra vivis hominibus complent quibus succentis circumventi flamma ex-  
“aminantur homines. Supplicia eorum qui in into aut Latiticio aut aliqua noxa sint com-  
“prehensi gratiora diis immortalibus esse arbitrantur. Sed cum ejus generis copia deficit,  
“etiam ad innocentiam supplicia descendunt. Lib. vi. de Bello Gallico, cap. 5. From this it ap-  
pears the Gauls were more cruel than the Mexicans.

(r) DCLVII. demum anno urbis Cn. Corn. Lentulo. P. Licinio Coss. Senatus consultum factum est, ne homo immolaretur. Plin. Hist. Nat. lib. xxx. cap. 1.

(s) Perusia capta in plurimos animadvertit; orare veniam, vel excusare se conantibus una voce occurrens, moriendum esse. Scribunt quidam trecentos ex dedititiis electos utriusque ordinis ad aram D. Julio exstructam Idib. Martiis victimarum more mactatos. Suetonius in Octaviano.

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Romans, three hundred men, partly senators and partly Roman knights, upon an altar erected to that new deity. Lactantius, who was a man well instructed in the affairs of the Romans, who flourished in the fourth century of the church, says expressly, that even in his time, those sacrifices were made to Jupiter Latialis(*t*). Nor were the Spaniards free from this barbarous superstition. Strabo recounts, in book iii. that the Lusitanians sacrificed prisoners, cut off their right hand to consecrate it to their gods, observed their entrails, and examined them for auguries; that all the inhabitants of the mountains used to sacrifice prisoners as well as horses, offering their victims by hundreds at a time to the god Mars; and speaking in general, he says, it was peculiar to the Spaniards to sacrifice themselves for their friends. This is not very different from what Silius Italicus reports of the *Betici*, his ancestors, which is, that after they had passed the age of youth, grown weary of life, they committed suicide; and which he praises as an heroic action. Who would believe, that ancient custom of Betica would be revived at this time in England and France. To come to later times, Mariana, in speaking of the Goths, who occupied Spain, writes thus: "Because they were persuaded that the war would never be prosperous when they did not make an offering of human blood for the army, they sacrificed the prisoners of war to the god Mars, to whom they were principally devoted, and used also to offer him the first of the spoils, and suspend from the trunks of trees the skins of those whom they had slain." If those Spaniards who wrote the history of Mexico, had not forgotten this, which happened to their own peninsula, they would not have wondered so much at the sacrifices of the Mexicans.

Whoever would wish to see more examples, may consult Eusebius of Cæsarea, in book iv. *de Preparatione Evangelica*, where he gives a long detail of the nations by whom such barbarous sacrifices were practised: what we have said is enough to shew that the Mexicans have done nothing but trod in the steps of the most celebrated nations of the old continent, and that their rites were neither more cruel, nor less rational. It is, perhaps, greater cruelty and inhumanity to sacrifice

(*t*) Lactantius, Instit. Divin. lib. i. cap. 21.



fellow-citizens, children, and themselves, as the greater part of those nations did, than to sacrifice prisoners of war as was practised among the Mexicans. The Mexicans were never known to sacrifice their own countrymen, unless it was those who forfeited their lives by their crimes; or the wives of nobles, that they might accompany their husbands to the other world. That answer which Montezuma gave to Cortes, who reproached him for the cruelty of the Mexican sacrifices, shews us that although their sentiments were not just, they were less inconsistent than those of other nations who had fallen into the same superstitions. "We," he said, "have a right to take away the life of our enemies; we could kill them in the heat of battle, as you do your enemies. What injustice is there in making them, who are condemned to death, die in honour of our gods."

The frequency of such sacrifices was certainly not less in Egypt, Italy, Spain, and Gaul, than in Mexico. If in the city of Eliopolis alone, they annually sacrificed, as Manetho says, more than a thousand victims to the goddess Juno; how many must have been sacrificed in the other cities of Egypt to the famous goddess Isis, and other innumerable deities, adored by that most superstitious nation? How frequent must they have been among the Pelasgians, who sacrificed a tenth part of their children to their gods? What numbers of men must have been consumed in those hecatombs of the ancient Spaniards? And what shall we say of the Gauls, who, after having sacrificed prisoners of war and malefactors, made also innocent citizens die in sacrifice, as Cæsar relates? The number of the Mexican sacrifices has certainly been exaggerated by the Spanish historians, as we have already observed.

The very humane Romans, who had scruples in observing human entrails, although at the end of six centuries and a half after the foundation of their famous metropolis they forbid the sacrifices of men, still permitted with great frequency the gladiatorian sacrifices. So we call those barbarous combats, which, as well as serving for the amusement of that fierce people, were likewise prescribed by their religion. Besides the great quantity of blood spilt at the Circensian games, and at banquets, there was not a little also shed at the funerals of wealthy persons, either of gladiators, or prisoners who were put to death to appease the manes of the deceased; and they were

so firmly persuaded of the necessity of some human blood being spilt for this purpose, that when the circumstances of the dead could not bear the expence of gladiators or prisoners, *presicæ* were paid, that they might draw blood from their cheeks with their nails. How many victims must thus have fallen by the superstition of the Romans, at their funerals, especially as they vied with each other who should exceed in the number of gladiators and prisoners whose blood was to celebrate the funeral pomp? It was this bloody disposition of the Romans which made such havoc on the people of Europe, Asia, and Africa, and which, besides overflowed Rome with the blood of its own citizens, especially during those horrid proscriptions which sullied the glory of that famous republic.

The Mexican were not only inhuman towards their prisoners, but likewise towards themselves, by their barbarous austerities mentioned in this history. But the drawing of blood with the prickles of the aloes from their tongues, arms, and legs, as they all did, and the boring their tongue with pieces of cane, as the most austere amongst them used to do, will appear but slight mortifications compared with those dreadful and unheard of austerities executed upon themselves by penitents of the East-Indies and Japan, which cannot be read without horror. Who will ever think of comparing the inhumanities of the most famous *Tlamacazqui* of Mexico, and Tlascala, with those of the priests of Bellona and Cybele (*u*)? When did the Mexicans tear their limbs, or their flesh, with their teeth, or castrate themselves in honour of their gods, as those priests did in honour of Cybele?

Lastly, the Mexicans, not content with sacrificing human victims, eat also their flesh. We confess in this their inhumanity surpassed other

(u) *Dex Magnæ Sacerdotes, qui Galli vocabantur, vilitia si i amputabant, & furore perciti caput rotabant cultisque faciem musculosque totius corporis dissecabant: moribus quoque se ipsos impetebant. August. de Civ. Dei. lib. ii. cap. 7.*

Ille viriles sibi partes amputat, ille lacertos fecat. Ubi iratos Deos timent, qui sic propitios merentur? . . . Tantus est perturbatæ mentis & sedibus suis pulsæ furor, ut sic Dii placeant, quemadmodum ne homines quidem fœviunt teterrimi, & in fabulas traditi crudelitatis Tyranni laceraverunt aliquorum membra; neminem sua lacerare jussunt. In regia libidinis voluptatem castrati sunt quidam; sed nemo sibi, ne vir esset, jubente domino manus intulit. Se ipsi in templis contrucidant, vulneribus suis ac sanguine supplicant. Si cui intueri vacet quæ faciunt, quæque patiuntur, inveniet tam indecora honestis, tam indigna liberis, tam dissimilia sanis, ut nemo fuerit dubitaturus furere eos, si cum paucioribus furerent; nunc sanitatis patrociniū insanientium turba est. *Seneca, lib. De Superstit.*

nations ; but examples of this kind have not been so rare even among cultivated nations of the old continent, as to make the Mexicans be classed with nations absolutely barbarous. That horrible custom, says the historian Solis, of men eating each other, was seen first among the barbarians in our hemisphere, as is confessed by Gallicia, in his Annals. Besides the ancient Africans, whose descendants at this day are in part cannibals, it is certain, that many of those nations which were formerly known by the name of Scythians, and also the ancient inhabitants of Sicily, and the continent of Italy, as Pliny and other authors say, were men-eaters likewise. Of the Jews, who lived in the times of Antiochus *the illustrious* Appion, an Egyptian, not Greek writer, as M. de Paw says, has written, that they used to keep a Greek prisoner to eat him at the end of one year. Livy says of the famous Hannibal, that he made his soldiers eat human flesh to encourage them to war. Pliny severely censures the Greeks for their custom of eating all the parts of the human body, to cure themselves of different distempers (x). Is there any wonder then that the Mexicans should do that from a motive of religion, which the Greeks observed as a rule of medicine? But we do not pretend to apologise for them on this head. Their religion, with respect to Canibalism, was certainly more barbarous than that of the Romans, Egyptians, or those other cultivated nations ; but, at the same time, in other points, it is not to be denied, that it was less superstitious, less absurd, and less indecent.

(x) Quis invenit singula membra humana mandere ? Qua conjectura inductus ? Quam potest medicina ista originem habuisse ? Quis veneficia innocentiora fecit quam remedia ? Esto, barbari externique ritus invenerint ; etiam ne Græci suas fecere has artes ? &c. *Plin.* *Hist. Nat.* lib. xxviii. cap. 1.



## D I S S E R T A T I O N IX.

*On the Origin of the French Evil.*DISSERT.  
IX.

IN the present Dissertation we have not only to dispute with M. de Paw, but also with almost all Europeans, who are generally persuaded that the French evil had its origin in America; for some nations of Europe having reciprocally accused each other of propagating this opprobrious distemper, at last agreed to charge it upon the new world. We should certainly deserve to be taxed with rashness in combating so universal an opinion, if the arguments which we are to offer, and the example of two modern Europeans, did not render our attempt pardonable (a). As among the supporters of the common opinion, the principal, the most renowned, and he who has written most copiously and learnedly upon the subject, is Mr. Astruc, a learned French physician, he will necessarily be principally opposed by us, for which purpose we shall make use of those very materials which his work presents to us (b).

## S E C T. I.

*The Opinion of the first Physicians concerning the Origin of the French Evil.*

DURING the first thirty years after the French evil began to be known in Italy, there was not a single author, as we shall mention afterwards, who ascribed the origin of it to America. All the authors

(a) These two authors are William Becket, a Surgeon of London, and Antonio Ribero Sanchez. Becket wrote three Dissertations, which were inserted in vol. xxx. and xxxi. of the Philosophical Transactions, to prove, that the French evil was known in England as far back as the fourteenth century. Ribero wrote a Dissertation, which was printed in Paris, with this title, *Dissertation sur l'Origin de la Maladie Venerienne, dans la quelle on prouve qu'elle n'a point été portée de l'Amerique*. Having read the title of this Dissertation in the Catalogue of Spanish books and manuscripts, prefixed to Dr. Robertson's History of America, we sought for it in Rome, in Genoa, and Venice, but without success.

(b) De Morbis Venericis, vol. ii. Venice Edition.

who wrote upon it, before 1525, and even some of those who wrote after, attributed it to different causes, the mention of which will excite the smiles and pity of our readers.

Some of the first physicians then living, namely, Corradino Gillini, and Gaspare Torella, were persuaded, according to the ideas of those times, that the French evil was occasioned by the near conjunction of the Sun with Jupiter, Saturn, and Mercury, in the sign of Libra, which happened in 1483.

Others, in agreement with the opinion of the celebrated Nicolaus Leoniceus (c), attributed it to the very abundant rains and inundations which happened in Italy that year in which the contagion began.

G. Manardi, a learned professor of the university of Ferrara, ascribed the origin of the evil to the impure commerce of a Valentian gentleman who was leprous, with a courtesan; and Paracelsus to the commerce of a French person who was also leprous, with a prostitute. Antonia Musa Brasavola, a learned Ferrarese, affirms, that the French evil took its beginning from a courtesan, in the army of the French in Naples, who had an abscess in the mouth of the uterus.

Gab. Fallopio, a celebrated Modenese physician, affirms, that the Spaniards, being few in number in the war of Naples, and the French extremely numerous, one night poisoned the water of the wells, of which their enemies were to drink, and that from thence the distemper arose.

Andrea Cesalpino, physician to Clement VIII. says, he knew from those who were present at the war of Naples, when the French besieged Somnia, a place of Vesuvius, where there is a great abundance of excellent Greek wine; that the Spaniards escaped one night in secret, leaving behind them a great quantity of that wine, mixed with the blood of the sick of San Lázaro; and that the French when they entered that place drank of this wine, and soon after felt the effects of the venereal disorder.

(c) Itaque dicimus, nullum hoc, quod morbum Gallicum vulgo appellant inter epidemias debere connumerari . . . Illud satis constat, eo anno magnam aquarum per universam Italiam fuisse exuberantiam . . . æstivam autem ad illam venisse intemperiem calidam scilicet & humidam, &c. *Opusc. de Morbo Gallico.*

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Leonardo Fioravanti, a learned Bolognese physician, says in his work, entitled, *Capricci Medicinali*, that he was informed by the son of one who had been sutler to the army of Alfonso, king of Naples, about the year 1456; that the army of the king, as well as the French, becoming short of provisions from the length of the war, the sutler supplied them both with dressed human flesh, and that from thence sprung the French evil. The celebrated chancellor Bacon, lord Verulam, adds (*d*), that the flesh supplied them, was of men killed in Barbary, which they prepared like the tunny fish.

As no body knew, nor could know, who was the first in Europe that suffered that great evil, neither can we know the cause of it: but let us attend to what may have happened.

## S E C T. II.

*The French Evil could be communicated to Europe from other Countries of the old Continent.*

TO prove that the French evil could be communicated by means of contagion to Europe, from other countries of the same continent, it is necessary, but will be also sufficient to shew that that evil was first felt in some of those countries, and that they had commerce with Europe before the new world was discovered. Both of these points shall be fully demonstrated.

Vatablo, Pineda, Calmet, and other authors, have maintained, that among the distempers with which Job was afflicted, the French evil was one. This opinion is so ancient, that as soon as that evil appeared in Italy, some called it the evil of Job, as Battista Fulgosio, an author then living, attests (*e*). Calmet attempts (*f*) to prove his opinion with a great deal of erudition; but as we know nothing of the complaints of Job, except what is mentioned in the sacred books, which may easily be conceived to speak of other distempers then known, or of some one entirely unknown to us, we can therefore build little on this opinion.

(*d*) Sylva Sylvarum centur. 1. art. 26.

(*e*) In a work entitled, *Dicta Faustaue Memorabilia*, lib. i. c. 4.

(*f*) Dissert. in Morbum Jobi.



Andrè Thevet, a French geographer (*g*), and other authors affirm, that the French evil was endemic in the internal provinces of Africa, situate on both sides of the river Senegal.

And Cleyer, first physician of the Dutch colony, in the island of Java, says (*h*), that the venereal disease was proper and natural to that isle, and as common as the quotidian fever. Thuanus has affirmed the same thing (*i*).

J. Bonzius, physician to the Dutch in the East-Indies, testifies, that (*k*) that distemper was endemic in Amboyna and the Moluccas, and that it was not necessary to have any previous carnal commerce to catch the infection. This was confirmed in part by the account of the companions of Magellan, the first who made the tour of the world in the famous vessel, *Victory*, who attested, as Herrera says (*l*), that they found in Timor, an island of the Moluccan Archipelago, a great number of the islanders infected with the French evil; which was certainly neither carried there by the Americans nor Europeans, previously diseased.

Forneau, a French Jesuit, learned, accurate, and experienced in the affairs of China, having been asked by Mr. Astruc (*m*), if the physicians of China thought the venereal distemper originated in their country, or brought there from other places; answered, that the Chinese physicians whom he had consulted were of opinion, that that distemper was suffered there since the earliest antiquity; and that the Chinese books written in Chinese characters, which were esteemed by them to be ancient, said nothing of the origin of that disease, but make mention of it as a distemper very ancient even at that time, in which these books were written; that also it was neither known, nor probable, that the distemper was carried there from other countries.

Lastly, Dr. Astruc says, according to his opinion (*n*), after having examined and weighed the testimonies of authors, that the venereal

(*g*) Cosmographie Universelle, liv. i. cap. 11.      (*h*) Epist. ad Christ. Mentzium.

(*i*) Hist. Sui Temporis, cap. 71.

(*k*) In Methodo medendi quo in Indiis Orientalibus oportet uti in cura morborum illic vulgo ac populariter grassantium.

(*l*) Dec. III. lib. iv. cap. 1.

(*m*) Dissert. de Origine Morborum Venereorum inter Sinias. Ad Calc. tom. i.

(*n*) De Morbis Venereis, lib. i. cap. 11.

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disease was not peculiar solely to the island Haiti, or Hispaniola, but also common to many regions of the old continent, and, perhaps, to all the equinoctial countries of the world in which it prevailed from antiquity. This ingenuous confession, from a person so well informed on this subject, and besides so prejudiced against America, as well as the testimonies above mentioned, are sufficient to demonstrate, that although we suppose the French evil to have been anciently existing in the new world, nothing can be adduced on this subject by the Europeans against America, that cannot be said by America against many countries of the old world, and that if the blood of the Americans was corrupted, as M. de Paw would argue, that of the Asiatics and Africans was not more wholesome.

Dr. Astruc adds, that from those countries of Asia and Africa, in which the French evil was endemic, it might be communicated by commerce to the neighbouring people, though not to the Europeans; because, the torrid zone having been deemed uninhabitable, there was no commerce between those countries and Europe. But who is ignorant of the commerce which Egypt had for many centuries with the equinoctial countries of Asia, and on another side with Italy? Why therefore, might not the Asiatic merchants have brought along with their drugs the French disease into Egypt, and from thence the Venetians, Genoese, and Pisans, carry it into Italy, as they had for along time a continual commerce with the city of Alexandria, in the same manner as other Europeans carried into Italy from Soria and Arabia, the leprosy and small-pox? Besides, among the many Europeans, who, from the twelfth century forward, undertook to travel into the southern countries of Asia, namely B. di Tudela, Carpini, Marco Polo, and Mandeville; amongst whom some, as M. de Paw says, advanced as far as China, might not one bring with him on his return to Europe, the infection from those Asiatic countries? Here we do not treat of what actually did happen, but only of that which might have happened.

The French evil might not only pass from Asia, but also from Africa into Europe, before the discovery of America; as the Portuguese, thirty years before the glorious expedition of Columbus, had discovered a great part of the equinoctial countries of Africa, and carried on commerce there. Might not some Portuguese, therefore, infected thence with  
the

the French evil, communicate it to his country people, and in course to other nations of Europe, as possibly did happen from what we shall say presently? Dr. Astruc may thus observe, by how many channels the French evil might be communicated to Europe without the intervention of America, although the ancients conceived the torrid zone inaccessible.

## S E C T. III.

*The French Evil might arise in Europe without Contagion.*

BEFORE we handle this argument, it is necessary to say a little on the nature and physical cause of this distemper. The French distemper is, according to physicians, a species of *cachexia*, in which the lymph, and particularly the wheyish part of it, assumes a singular thickness and acrimony. The venereal poison, says Astruc (*o*), is of a salt, or rather acid salt, corrosive, and fixed nature. It occasions the condensation and acrimony of the lymph, and from thence proceed the inflammations, warts, ulcers, erosions, pains, and all the other horrid symptoms known to physicians.

This poison, when communicated to a sound man, ought not to be considered, says this author, as a new humour added to the natural humours, but rather as a mere *dyscrasia*, or vicious quality of the natural humours, which degenerating from their natural state, are changed into acid salts.

Almost all physicians have been persuaded, that this evil cannot arise otherwise than by means of contagion communicated by the seminal liquor, or by milk, or saliva, or sweat, or by contact with venereal ulcers, &c. But we presume to maintain, that the French evil can positively be produced in man, without any contagion or communication with those infected; because it can absolutely be generated in the same manner as it was generated in the first person who suffered it; such person could not get it by contagion, because he would not in that case been the first who suffered it, but from another cause very different; therefore, by a similar cause, whatever it was, some

(*o*) *Ib*.d. Lib. ii. cap. 2.

*cachexia*.



*cachexia* might have been produced without contagion, in other individuals of the human species. This is true, says Astruc in America, or another such country, but not in Europe. But wherefore exempt Europe? Because, says this author, the causes which could at first have occasioned this evil in America, do not take place there; and what are those causes? Let us examine them.

In the first place Dr. Astruc says (*p*) that the air ought not to be numbered among the causes, as although it might occasion other disorders in the island of Hispaniola, it could not cause the venereal disease, because the Europeans who for two hundred years and upwards inhabited that island have not contracted that distemper but by means of contagion; and the air is not at present different to what it was three hundred years ago: and if it should be different at present, at least it was not so in the beginning of the fifteenth century. We ought, therefore, to make no conclusions from the air in treating of the origin of this evil. Although Dr. Astruc excludes the air from the number of the causes of the French evil, he has recourse to it in open contradiction to himself, in another place.

Two causes alone are assigned by Dr. Astruc; these are food and heat. As to food, he says, that the inhabitants of Hispaniola, when their maize, cassava, &c. was scarce, fed on frogs, worms, bats, and such like small animals. With respect to heat he affirms, that the women of hot countries are much afflicted with acrid, and, as it were, virulent courses, particularly if they eat unwholesome food. On that supposition the author speaks thus: “*Multis ergo & gravissimis morbis*  
“*indigenæ insulæ Haitî affici olim debuerunt, ubi nemo a menstruatis*  
“*mulieribus se continebat: ubi viri libidine impotentes in venerem*  
“*obviam belluarum ritu agebantur: ubi mulieres, quæ impudentissimæ*  
“*erant, viros promiscue admittebant, ut testatur Consalvus de Oviedo*  
“*Hist. Indiar. lib. v. cap. 3. immo eosdem & plures impudentius*  
“*provocabant menstruationis tempore, cum tunc incalescente utero*

(*p*) Videtur quidem e numero causarum expungendus aer, qui in Hispaniola morbos alios forsan inferre potuit, at vero luem veneream minime. Utique constat. Europæos, qui eam insulam jam a 200 annis (*immo fere 300*) incolunt luem veneream ibidem nunquam contraxisse nisi contagione. Europæi tamen aerem ibidem ducunt & eundem, quem olim ducebant indigenæ, & dubio procul eodem modo temperatum & constitutum. Astruc De Morbis Venereis, lib. i. c. 12.

“libidine magis insanirent pecudum more. Quid igitur mirum varia,  
 “heterogenea, acria multorum virorum semina una confusa, cum a-  
 “cerrimo & virulento menstruo sanguine mixta intra uterum æstuantem  
 “& olidum spurcissimarum mulierum coercita, mora, heterogeneitate,  
 “calore loci brevi computruisse, ac prima morbi venerei seminia con-  
 “stituisse, quæ in alios, si qui fortè continentiores erant, diman-  
 “verè?”

This is the whole discourse of Dr. Astruc on the origin of the vene-  
 real distemper, and is full from beginning to end of falsity, as we shall  
 presently demonstrate: but allowing that it was true what he says  
 happened in Hispaniola, the same thing might have happened in  
 Europe; because as those Americans when they were in want of  
 maize and other food fed on frogs, worms, &c. in like manner the  
 Europeans, when they were in want of wheat and other good ali-  
 ment, have been obliged to eat rats, lizards, and such little  
 animals, the excrements of other animals, and even bread made of  
 human bones, which brought them various disorders. It is sufficient  
 to call to mind the horrid famine formerly suffered in Europe, partly  
 by severe weather, partly by war. There have been men too there who  
 have, like beasts, allowed themselves to be led away by intemperate lust  
 to the most execrable excesses. There have always been abandoned  
 and filthy women too, and what Plautus said might be affirmed with re-  
 spect to them, *Plus scortorum ibi est, quam muscarum, cum cal-  
 etur maxumè.* Extreme acrid seminal fluids, *uteri æstuentes* and virulent  
 courses, have never been wanting either. Such causes therefore could  
 have produced the French evil in Europe, as they produced, it accord-  
 ing to Astruc, in America.

“No,” answers this author; “they could not; because the air being  
 “more temperate in Europe, (he has recourse to the air, after he had ex-  
 “cluded it from the number of causes of the French evil) *non adest eadem*  
 “*in virorum semine acrimonia, eadem in menstruo sanguine virulentia, idem*  
 “*in utero mulierum fervor, quales in insula Haiti fuisse probatum est:* (the  
 “proofs of Dr. Astruc are no others than those above set forth whence  
 “heads,) that those symptoms cannot be produced there from a similar  
 “concourse of causes. Of diseases, and their causes also, we ought to  
 “judge, as of the generation of animals and plants. As lions are not  
 bred.



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“ bred in Europe, nor apes propagate, nor parrots build their nests nor,  
 “ many Indian or American plants grow in Europe, although they are  
 “ sown there; in like manner, the French evil could never be pro-  
 “ duced in Europe by these causes, from whence, as we have already  
 “ said it was, produced in Hispaniola; because every clime has its par-  
 “ ticular properties, and those things which arise in one clime spon-  
 “ taneously can by no art be produced in another; for as the poet says,  
 “ *non omnis fert omnia tellus*”.

We shall grant many things to Dr. Astruc which would not be granted to him by any other person. We grant that there has never been in Europe that abuse of *feminarum menstruatarum*, nor that acrimony nor virulence in the fluids of the human body, nor that heat in the uterus which he supposes in the island of Hispaniola; although the contrary appears from the books of medicine published in these last two hundred years. We grant to him that they have no examples there of luxurious excesses; because to him it appears too much to confess them to have been in Europe (q); and we grant to him also, that all the women of Europe have been most healthy and chaste. All that we grant to him, though it is contradicted by history, and the common opinion of Europeans themselves. Notwithstanding, we affirm, that the French evil could be generated in Europe without contagion; because all those disorders which Astruc supposes to belong to the island of Hispaniola, could also take place in Europe, although they never had been known there. Those chaste women induced by violent passions, which are common to all the children of Adam, might become as incontinent and abandoned as that author supposes the Americans of Hispaniola were. Those sound and healthy men might find an aliment as pernicious as that which was the food of the natives of *Haiti*. The human sperm, which of itself is very acrid, as Astruc says, might, by reason of unwholesome food, become more and more so, until it had that degree of acrimony, which produces the venereal ailment. The *menfes* might become virulent; either from suppression, or plethora, or many other causes in the fluids or the vessels. It ap-

(q) Sed esto: demus in Europa venerem aque impuram, atque in Hispaniola exerceri; neque enim contra pugnare placet, quanquam ea tamen nimia videantur. *Astruc* De Morbis Venereis, lib. 1. cap. 12.



pears from the letters of Christopher Columbus, quoted by his learned son D. Ferdinand, that he landed the first time in Hispaniola, on the 24th of December, 1492, because a vessel of his miserable fleet had struck upon a sand bank; that all the time he remained there from the 24th of December to the 4th of January, they were employed in getting the wood and timbers of the vessel up from the sand, to erect a little fortress, in which he left forty men, and embarked that same day with the rest of his people for Spain, to bear the news of the discovery of that new world. All the circumstances of their arrival in that island do not allow us to suspect, that the Spaniards had opportunity to have such commerce with any of the American women as to depart infected by them. Their mutual admiration of each other, the sight of so many new objects, and the very short stay of only eleven days, which were employed in the great fatigue of getting up the wreck, and erecting that fort in so much haste, after the inconveniences of the longest and the most dangerous voyage which had ever been performed, make a conjecture of this kind entirely improbable. It is not less improbable, from the silence of Columbus himself, his son D. Ferdinand, and of Peter Martyr d'Angheira, who in describing the sufferings of that voyage, say nothing of such a distemper.

But although we should grant, that those Spaniards who returned from the first voyage were infected by the French evil, we should still say, that the contagion of Europe did not proceed from them, according to the testimony of some respectable authors then living. Gaspare Torrella, a learned physician above mentioned, says, in his work, entitled, *Aphrodisiacum* (r), that the French evil began in Alverne, a province of France, very distant from Spain, in 1493. B. Fulgosio or Fregoso, doge of Genoa, in 1478, in his curious work, entitled, *Dieta Faustaque Memorabilia*, and printed in 1509, affirms (s), that the French evil began to be known two years before Charles VIII. came into Italy.

(r) Incepit hæc maligna ægritudo in Alvernia anno M.CCCCXCIII. & sic per contagionem pervenit, &c.

(s) Biennio antequam in Italiam Carolus (VIII.) veniret, nova ægrotudo inter mortales detecta fuit, cui nec nomen, nec remedia Medici ex veterum Auctorum disciplina inveniebant, varie, ut regiones erant, appellata. In Gallia Neapolitanum dixerunt morbum, at in Italia Gallicum appellabant. Lib. i. cap. 4. sect. ultimo.

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He came into Italy, in September 1494, therefore that evil was known ever since 1492, or at the latest in 1493, that is, some years before Columbus returned from his first voyage. Juan Leone, once a Mahometan, a native of Granada in Spain, vulgarly called *Leone Africano*, in his description of Africa, written in Rome, under the pontificate of Leo X. after he was converted, says, that the Hebrews, when driven from Spain, in the times of Ferdinand the Catholic, carried the French evil into Barbary, and infected the Africans; on which account it was then called the *Spanish evil* (t). The edict of the Catholic kings respecting the expulsion of the Hebrews, was published in March 1492, as Mariana says, allowing them no more than four months to sell all their effects, if they did not chuse to carry them along with them; and in the following month, another edict was published by T. Torquemada, inquisitor-general, in which it was prohibited to Christians, under the heaviest penalties, to treat with the Hebrews, or to furnish them with provisions after the term prescribed by the king; so that all but those who became, or feigned to be Christians, were compelled to quit Spain, before Columbus set out to discover America, as he did not weigh anchor before the 3d of August that year; the French evil, therefore, began in Europe before America was discovered. We find besides, among the poetry of Pacificus Maximus, a poet of Ascoli, published in Florence, in 1479, some verses, in which he describes the *gonorrhœa virulenta* and venereal ulcers which he suffered, occasioned by his excesses (u).

Oviedo, not content with affirming, that the French evil came from Hispaniola, attempts to prove it. Behold his first proof. 1. *That horrid complaint of the biles is cured by the guaiacum better than any other medicine; and Divine mercy where it permits evil for our sins, provides there, in compassion to us, a remedy.* If this argument could

(t) Hujus mali ne nomen quidem ipsis Africanis notum erat antequam Hispaniarum Rex Ferdinandus Judæos omnes ex Hispania profligasset: qui ubi in patriam jam redissent, ceperunt miseri quidam ac sceleratissimi Æthiopes cum illorum mulieribus habere commercium, ac sic tandem veluti per manus pestis hæc per totam se sparsit regionem, ita ut vix sit familia, quæ ab hoc malo remanserit libera. Id autem sibi firmissime atque indubitate persuaferunt ex Hispania ad illos tr. snigrasse. Quamobrem & illi morbo *Malum Hispanicum* (ne nomine destitueretur) indiderunt. Lib. 1.

(u) Hecatalegii, lib. iii. Ad Priapum et lib. viii. ad Mentulam. We do not copy the verses on account of their indecency.

hold,

hold, we should conclude, that Europe, rather than Hispaniola, was the native country of the French evil: as many persons know that the most powerful remedy against that disorder is mercury, which is common in Europe, but has not been found in Hispaniola, nor known by the Indians: it is certain, that as soon as the French disease appeared in Europe mercury was employed, and that Carpi, Torella, Vigo, Hooek, and many other famous physicians of that time, made use of it, although it was discredited afterwards by the indiscretion of some empirics, and grew for some time into disuse. *Guaiacum* was not first made use of until 1517, twenty-five years after the discovery of the French evil. *Sarsaparilla* began to be employed in 1535, and China root about the same time; and *sassafras* a little after.

The other proof by Oviedo, for he only offers two, is, that among the Spaniards who returned with Columbus from his second voyage in 1496, was D. P. Margarit, a Catalonian, “who,” he says, “was so ailing, and complained so much, that I do believe he felt those pains which persons infected with such distempers feel, though I never saw a pimple in his face. A few months after in the same year, this ailment began to be felt amongst some prostitutes; for, at first, the distemper was confined to low people. It happened afterwards, that the great captain was sent with a large and fine army into Italy, . . . and among those Spaniards who went in this force were many infected with this distemper; from whom, by means of women, &c.” such are Oviedo’s proofs, which have not merited even this mention.

M. de Paw thinks he has gained the argument, and demonstrated the truth of the common opinion, from the testimony of Roderigo Diaz de Isla, a physician of Seville, whom he calls a contemporary author, as he thinks his testimony decisive; but Diaz was neither a contemporary author, having written sixty years after the discovery of the French evil, nor does his account merit any faith. He says, that the first Spaniards, when they returned with Columbus from Hispaniola, in 1493, carried the contagion to Barcelona where the court was then held; that this city was the first infected; that it made such havoc there, that prayers, fasting, and almsgiving were appointed to appease the anger of God; that Charles of France, having gone the year after into Italy, certain Spaniards who were infected there,



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or many regiments, as M. de Paw says, sent by Spain, to repel the invasion of king Charles, gave the French the infection. But we know from history, that no regiment, either sound or infected, nor any other Spaniard were sent into Italy before Charles went out of Naples with his army, then infected, to return into France. With respect to the contagion of Barcelona, we know that when Columbus arrived, Oviedo was then at that place. But if that which the Sevillian physician relates is true, Oviedo, who was searching every where for proofs to confirm his extravagant opinion, would most unquestionably have alledged the havoc occasioned there, those prayers, fastings, and charities, and not have made use of those miserable proofs of *guaiacum*, and the complainings of Margarit. But besides, the French evil is still more ancient than that epoch in Europe, as we have already explained.

It appears, that the physicians of Seville in those times were the worst informed with respect to the origin of the French evil; as Nicolas Monardes, a physician also of that city, and contemporary of Diaz, gives so fabulous an account of it, that we cannot read it without losing all patience. He says, "that in the year 1493, in the war of Naples, between the Catholic and the French kings, Columbus arrived after his first discovery of the island of Hispaniola, and brought with him from that island a multitude of Indians, men and women, whom he carried to Naples, where the Catholic king then was, after the war was over. And as there was peace between the two kings, and the armies communicated together, when Columbus came there with his Indian men and women, the Spaniards began to have commerce with the Indian women, and the Indians with the Spanish women, and in that manner the Indian men and women, infected the Spanish army, the Italians, Germans, &c." Who could believe, that a literary Spaniard would disfigure the public facts of his own nation, which occurred not more than eighty years before, so much that not one of his propositions is correct; but when he means to disparage America he loses all regard to truth. It is certain and notorious, that there was no war between Spain and France in 1493; that the Catholic king was not then in Naples, but in Barcelona, nor recovered of his wounds which he had received from a mad person; that

that Columbus did not bring with him a multitude of Indian men and women, but only ten men; that Columbus did never come into Italy after his glorious expedition; that the Indians he brought with him never saw Italy.

After having made the most diligent enquiry, we discover no grounds for believing the French evil came from America into Europe; we rather find ourselves induced to believe it as well as the small-pox, was brought from Europe to America. 1. Because, neither Columbus, in his journal, nor his son, in the life of his renowned father, who saw those countries, and noted their peculiarities, make mention of the French evil, although they relate minutely the hardships and sufferings of the first voyages. Neither is there any mention made of it in the histories of those countries written by Peter Martyr of Anghera (x), an author contemporary with Columbus, and well-informed, having been prothonotary to the council of the Indies, and abbot of Jamaica. Oviedo, the first who attributed that distemper to America, did not go there till twenty years after the island Haiti had been inhabited by the Spaniards. What we say of the silence of these authors respecting the Antilles, we may also say of that of the first historians of the other countries of America. 2. If America had been the real native country of the French evil, and if the Americans had been the first who suffered it, it would have been more prevalent there than in any other country, and the Americans would have been more subject than any other nation to that evil; but this is not the case. Of the Indians of the Antilles we can say nothing; for it is now two centuries since they have been totally extinct: but among the present inhabitants of those islands, that contagion is less frequent than among the people in Europe, and seldom appears but where there are a great concourse of soldiers and seamen. In the capital of Mexico, some Whites and Indians are infected with the venereal disorder, but very few in proportion to the number of the inhabitants. In other great cities of that vast kingdom, the contagion is extremely rare, and in some it is hardly known; but in those settle-

(x) Of all things which were brought from the West Indies belonging to the art of medicine. Part i. cap. 9.

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ments of Americans, where there is no resort of seamen or soldiers, the distemper is never seen or heard of. With respect to South America, we have been informed by persons of accuracy, sincerity, and great acquaintance with those countries, besides what we have known ourselves, that in the provinces of Chili, and those of Paraguay, that distemper is extremely uncommon among the whites, and never seen among the Americans. Some missionaries who have resided some twenty, others thirty years among different nations of America, agree in affirming, that they have never seen a person infected with that disease, nor ever known that any was.

As to the provinces of Peru and Quito, Ulloa says (*y*), that although in those countries the venereal distemper is common among the whites, and other races of men, it is very rare to see an Indian infected. America, therefore, is not the parent of that disease, of that evil, as has been vulgarly said, nor ought such a distemper, as M. de Paw would insinuate, to be, considered as a consequence of the corrupted blood, and vitiated constitution of the Americans.

What then is the native country of the French evil; as it neither derives its origin from Europe nor America? We do not know. But in the midst of uncertainty if we may be allowed to conjecture, we suspect that contagion to have come from Guinea, or some other equinoctial country of Africa. The very learned English physician Sydenham was of this opinion (*z*), and it is strengthened by what is affirmed by Battista Fulgosio, an eye-witness of the beginning of the French evil in Europe. He says, in the work which we have already cited (*a*), that the French evil was brought from Spain into Italy, and from E-

(*y*) It appears, that this author has confounded the French evil with the scurvy; for we know that Dr. Giulio Rondoli Pefaresse, a famous physician of Sierra, affirmed to a person of credit, that amongst many who were thought infected with the French evil, and whom he cured, he had not found any who was really infected with that distemper; but that all were scorbutic, and that he had succeeded in curing them, by using the remedies for the scurvy.

(*z*) Sydenham affirms in one of his letters, that the French evil is as foreign to America as to Europe, and that it was brought there by the Moors from Guinea; but it is not true, that the Moors brought it to America, for the distemper was known before they were brought to Hispaniola.

(*a*) *Quæ pestis (ita enim visa est.) primo ex Hispania in Italiam allata ad Hispanos ex Æthiopia, brevi totam terrarum orbem comprehendit. Fulgo. Diet. Pactorumque Memorab. lib. i. cap. 4.*



thiopia into Spain. Astruc pretends that Fulgosio means America, under the name of Ethiopia. This is a curious method of solving a difficulty. But who ever called Ethiopia America? We know, on the contrary, that it was common among the authors of that century, to give the name of Ethiopia to any country inhabited by black men, and to call such men Ethiopians; so that the natural sense of the words of Fulgosio is, that the French evil was brought from the equinoctial countries of Africa into Lusitanian Spain, or Portugal; but this we dare not take upon us to maintain, unless we had made more enquiries, and obtained stronger proofs from authors of faith and authenticity.

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F I N I S.











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