THF. INDIANS.

at all times by multitudes of devotees. To induce the Indians to welcome the Virgin Mary as their tutelar divinity, the priests took care to represent her with a dark complexion and the courtly robes worn by noble Mexican maidens in their time of prosperity. The story of the Aztec Virgin is so characteristic of the sanguinary instincts of the people who raised her to the rank of a deity, that we will tell it.

The Mexicans, after a series of wanderings and adventures, during which they endured all the hardships of a migratory life, succeeded at length in establishing themselves on the muddy islets of the principal lake, in the year 1325. Here they raised a temple to their war-god, Huitzilopochtli, on whose altars human sacrifices were offered. Prisoners were generally reserved for this purpose, but in times of public calamity the god required the best of the land. It is told how on one occasion, the oracle of Huitzilopochtli demanded that a Royal Princess should be sacrificed to him; and how the Aztec monarch sent to one of his vassals, the King of Colhuacan, to petition for one of his daughters to become the mother of the tutelar god—and as such share with him divine honours. The King of Colhuacan, flattered by the honour reserved for his daughter, unable besides to refuse, confided the young Princess to the care of the Aztec envoys, who escorted her with great pomp to the city where she was sacrificed, her skin being taken off after death to clothe the young priest who was to represent the deity in this solemnity. The cruelty was carried so far as to invite the father to be present at the bitter mockery of his child’s deification; he came, penetrated the sanctuary, but at first the gloom of the temple did not let him see anything, until he was given a copal-gum torch, the flame of which bursting up suddenly revealed the horrible picture of the young priest standing close to the idol and receiving the homage of the multitude. The skin fitted
so tightly that the monarch recognised his daughter’s mask, and almost mad with grief he fled the temple to mourn for his murdered child.*

The Mexican valley was occupied successively by various tribes, which advancing from the north and north-west, entered the country towards the end of the seventh century. The first and most remarkable of these, both from the mildness of their character and the degree of their civilisation, were the Toltecs, who occupied Chapultepec as early as the eighth century, and established their capital at Tula, north of the Mexican valley, whose name Toltec was synonymous with architect. After a time, a rude tribe, the Chichimecs, entered the territory and were soon followed by other races, amongst which were the Aztecs or Mexicans, and the Acolhuans or Tezcucans. Some of these obtained leave from

* Clavigero, “Historia Antigua,” vol. i. p. 75. Ramirez, chap. iv. p. 120.
Xolotl, King of the Chichemecs, to settle on Chapultepec, which in the course of time became a royal residence, and a royal burial-place, whilst its rocks were made to transmit to posterity the
features of the Mexican monarchs, Azayacoatl and the two Montezumas, together with the sons of the last Aztec emperor; two statues of this monarch and his father were to be seen as late as the last century, when they were destroyed by order of the Government.

Father Duran tells how Montezuma I. had himself and his first minister sculptured. Feeling that his end was drawing near, he summoned the doughty warrior Tlacael, who for three reigns had shown his valour on the field of battle and his wisdom in council: "Brother Tlacael," said the monarch, "it would be well that our names and persons should be graven on the rock of Chapultepec, and thus pass to posterity." "Your wish, most noble king, shall instantly be obeyed." And calling together the most renowned sculptors, Tlacael imparted to them the royal command. In a few days two bas-reliefs were executed, so striking in resemblance, and so exquisite in workmanship, as to surprise Montezuma himself.

The Castle, which was built by the Viceroy Galvaez at the close of the seventeenth century, was transformed into a Military School by the Government in 1841; Maximilian during his short reign altered it, and made it his favourite residence. The Palace is once more occupied by the Military College, whose pupils have shown themselves worthy of it, by their heroic defence at the time of the American war. An observatory has been lately built, at the expense of the Government.

But it is time to return to Mexico, where we shall find the Indian pretty much what he was three or four hundred years ago. This arises from his having been subjected, from the earliest times, to Aztec rule and the severe discipline of its priests and afterwards to the still more cruel and unjust yoke of the Spaniards, who, by depriving him of civil rights and all his goods, degraded him to the low rank he now occupies. Before
the conquest the people was divided in three distinct and almost equally honourable classes, land proprietors, warriors, and merchants; but the conquerors, reserving for themselves all these good things, restricted the Indians to the occupations of macchual (tiller of the ground), or tamene (porter), that is, a beast of burden, used by marching armies or merchants in their distant expeditions; and, although all careers are now opened to him, he is slow to avail himself of his newly-acquired privileges.

As an aguador, he still conveys water to every household, in jars, which he carries one behind, the other in front, supported by leather thongs covering his head; as a vendor he brings coals in nets made of aloe strings; his earthenware, poultry, eggs, vegetables, in huacales or cases made of twigs, kept together by strings; and, indeed, his tools, kitchen utensils and the like, are the same as he formerly used. The only alteration he has made in his costume has been to adopt nether garments, but in the Uplands he dispenses with this and is satisfied with his maxtli, "broad band." He has not varied his diet, nor the manner of preparing it; the staple of his food is still Indian corn, which he grinds with a metate, granite roller, or bakes into flat cakes, tortillas, in comals, or baking ovens. His vegetables he seasons highly, and on days of festival he adds to this simple fare a turkey when he is well-to-do, a piece of pork when poor; his drink is the pulque, the invention of which dates nearly four hundred years back; his jacal, or hut, composed of sticks lined with clay, roofed with aloe leaves, measuring at the basement some seven or ten feet square, is exactly the jacal of ancient chroniclers, without any pavement, hardly any furniture, save some few images of saints, which have replaced the terra-cotta household divinities.

In former times, when he lived on the lagoons, with no right to the land, which was held by his enemies, he satisfied his hunger
with frogs and serpents, to be found in the marshes, salamanders, flies and flies' eggs, *ahuatliti*, which latter were made into cakes, a dish which was adopted by the Spaniards; and, when further pressed by want and dearth, he invented *chinampas*, those floating gardens which so much surprised the conquerors. Chinampas were rafts of reeds, rushes, and other fibrous materials, which, tightly knit together, formed a sufficient basis for the heaps of black mud which the natives drew up from the bottom of the lake. Gradually islands were formed, some reaching two or three hundred feet in length, and three or four feet in depth, with a very rich soil, on which the thrifty Indian raised maize and vegetables for himself and flowers for the market, his prince, and his gods. Some of these chinampas were firm enough to allow the growth of small trees, and to have a hut for the owner, who, with a long pole resting on the sides or the bottom of the shallow basin, could change his position at pleasure, whether to move from an unpleasant neighbour or take his family on board, and moved on like some enchanted island over the water. In later times these floating gardens increased to such an extent that they completely girdled the city around with flowers and verdure, when every morning early numbers of boats, richly freighted, would be seen to glide through the canals and file out towards Plaza Mayor.* Mexico, since the diminution of the lake, has become a high and dry city of the main land, with its centre nearly a league distant from the water; chinampas are no more; small flower-beds, divided by narrow causeways, where the Indian still mans his canoe, are all that remain of the floating gardens of olden time. Should the traveller wish to study the natives, he should go on market days toward the road which leads out of S. Cosme, by which great numbers both of men and women enter

He hecho medir en un punto determinado de las embarcaciones en que iba, la altura de mi vista sobre el río, y por tanto sólo tenía que dirigir la visual á la línea en que el agua tocaba á la orilla. El ángulo indicado por este telémetro me daba el tercer elemento de un triángulo rectángulo, uno de cuyos lados me era conocido. Haciendo esta operación sucesivamente por babor y por estribor, podía construir dos triángulos rectángulos cuyas dos bases reunidas constituían con mucha aproximación la anchura del río.

Aparte de estas observaciones, he hecho echar con frecuencia la sonda; al sondar, he mandado practicar cortes trasversales, y he continuado tomando nota de las presiones barométricas, y aúin de la constitución de las orillas, de la vegetación, etc.

No cabe duda de que este trabajo dista mucho de presentar las garantías de exactitud rigurosa de un plano hidrológico ejecutado con todos los medios perfeccionados de que disponen nuestros ingenieros; pero lo juzgo suficiente para llenar el gran vacío que se nota en las cartas actuales de la región explorada.

En tales condiciones, el viaje en piragua no tiene nada de divertido. Para evitar los rayos perpendiculares del sol, hemos puesto en la embarcación una especie de toldo. Este abrigo, que los indios llaman pamacari, no puede sobresalir de los bordes de la piragua más que unos cincuenta ó sesenta centímetros á fin de no desviár demasiado el centro de gravedad. La temperatura se mantiene bajo el á unos 35° por término medio: al sol ha llegado á marcar hasta 58°, y bajo este cielo abrasador, mis indios han remado desde la mañana hasta la noche sin cubrirse la cabeza con nada. Además, se habían rapado de un modo especial para este viaje, dejándose tan sólo sobre la frente un cerquillo que llegaba de oreja á oreja: el resto del cráneo estaba pelado, y según me dijeron «así iban más frescos!»

Llegamos al caserío del Ahuano á las ocho horas de nuestra salida de la aldea de Napo. En las chozas no había alma viviente. Por la tarde vino de su chacra un tal Flores, el único blanco de la comarca, y me dijo que encontrarámos la misma soledad en todo el camino. Como mis indios estaban pagados hasta Santa Rosa, resolví darles unos cuantos duros más para que me condujesen al Coca.

A la tarde siguiente nos acercamos al pueblo de los indios ohas, donde encontramos un pescador algo mestizo llamado Rodas. Quiso la casualidad que regresara de sus excursiones de pesca (las cuales duraban á veces dos ó tres meses) algunas horas antes de nuestra llegada. Renove mis provisiones en su casa; me vendió pescados salados y plátanos y, mediante una gratificación bastante razonable, me proporcionó indios para relevar á los de Napo.

Durante la primera jornada de viaje más abajo de Santa Rosa, gozamos del sorprendente espectáculo que se había desplegado á nuestra vista delante de la vivienda del Sr. Rodas: al suroeste estaba cerrado el horizonte por la cresta dentilada de las cordilleras nevadas que, pareciendo inflamarse al caer la tarde en el inmenso hornillo del sol poniente, formaban con sus líneas doradas el marco de un cuadro admirable.

No sé precisamente cuál de esos gigantes he visto; es posible que sean el Altar, el Antisana ó el Sinchilagua; pero falta saber si el lado opuesto de estas montañas, vuelto hacia Oriente, presenta los mismos contornos que su cara occidental, la que se ve desde la Entre-
the city, their legs and backs bent under burdens heavier sometimes than an animal could carry. Indian women wear a dark woollen petticoat, striped with yellow, red, and green, and a
piece of the same stuff, with an opening for the head, covers the bust and completes the costume. Notwithstanding their rags, some are not wanting in good looks, whilst most are well made, and were they cleanly and better dressed, many would be found strikingly pretty.

I only speak of young girls, for the old, covered with dirt rather than rags, are generally to be seen reeling under the influence of pulque. It is not too much to say that the Indian has retained all his primitive vices, and has added thereto those given him by his conquerors. Though he still preserves some of his popular legends, it is quite a chance if he understands anything about them; for in olden times, these were kept and transmitted by the upper classes, which have long ceased to exist, and the modern Indian knows absolutely nothing of his past history.

And here, to illustrate my meaning, I may be permitted to give an example of this marvellous ignorance, even regarding recent events. I happened to be in a village situated on Lake Chalco, when a number of Indians of both sexes, dressed up in old, ludicrous European costumes, got into boats and landed a short distance further, entering the village amidst a population which came out to meet them, with cries, hootings and blows, finally forcing them to re-embark. It was evident to me that this represented an invasion, which had been successfully repulsed, referring perhaps to the war of intervention, but though I asked, no one was able to enlighten me, contenting themselves with repeating "Francia, Francia." At last an old man said that the masquerade commemorated an incident in the Spanish war of 1808, during the first empire. And on my expressing my astonishment at the ignorance of the actors about a subject they represented every year: "Are your common people much wiser when they sing their Latin Mass?" objected
my American friend. I felt that I was answered, and I was silent.

The Indian is fond of money, his delight is to hoard, yet he is no better for it, as regards his daily life; he has all the instinct of a miser without its benefit; for your miser enjoys his money, he visits it by stealth, spends his time in counting, in contemplating it, whereas the Indian buries his hoardings out of sight; the satisfaction of knowing that he is rich is all-sufficient for him, and he does not care for the things which his gold would procure. The Valley of Oaxaca, which for generations supplied the world with cochineal, is supposed to have millions of money buried underground. During my residence there, I knew a man who, it was rumoured, was fond of hoarding; on one occasion he received some £200 for ingots and cochineal, and two days after asked me for the loan of four shillings. “Well, but what have you done with the money you got two days since?” I asked. “Esta colocado, Señor.” “It’s invested” (stowed underground). This secretive instinct, however, is not confined to the Indian, it is to be found among all conquered and persecuted races: serfs under Louis XIV. hid away both their bread and their money; the inhabitants of Indo-China and others only pay their taxes under pressure of the stick. It may be that the thrifty habit of our own middle classes, their wish to hoard for the mere sake of it, their aversion to part with it for any purpose of public good, which forms such a striking contrast to our Transatlantic fellow-citizens, is attributable to this instinct, which still survives when the need for it has long ceased to exist. We are, alas, but the freedmen of yesterday, whereas Americans have now long enjoyed the blessings of free institutions, and have besides the enormous advantage of trying them in an entirely new country. Untramelled alike by traditions or the bonds which still fetter us, they are able to work out their benevolent or brilliant schemes, con-
fident that their intelligence and their industry will lead them to new paths of progress and prosperity.

With the Indian this same instinct borders on fanaticism; the man who finds a treasure covers it up again carefully, not dreaming of making use of it; should he have a confidant, the latter will starve, nay, go through torture, rather than betray his friend. And here I cannot resist the temptation of telling an anecdote related to me by a Mexican friend bearing on the subject: A well-to-do Indian, who lived not far from Mexico, had a daughter whom a Frenchman was willing to marry, in the hope of inheriting the old man’s fortune, which was supposed to amount to some £20,000. Like most Indians, he died intestate, when a search was made for his money, but none could be found. His only available property was his cottage and garden. The deceased was known to have had a wretchedly poor friend, the confidant of all his secrets. He was immediately applied to, and subjected to numerous questions by the heirs regarding the money, and to induce him to speak, they offered the quarter, nay, the half of the hidden treasure, but he still refused; at last they thought of making him drunk, hoping that what they had been unable to obtain would be effected by pulque. He was made comfortable, when he became very confiding, so confiding that the expectant heir fully believed that a moment more would see him the happy recipient of the long-treasured-up secret, but the poor man suddenly stopped, horrified at what he was going to say, seeming to see his friend’s ghost before him, reproaching him for his disloyalty.

We shall not be taking leave of the Indian if we pay a visit to the Museum, where Aztec pottery, Aztec jewellery, Aztec kings, and Aztec gods will remind us of him everywhere. The Mexican Museum cannot be called rich, in so far that there is nothing remarkable in what the visitor is allowed to see. After
reading the glowing accounts regarding Mexican manufacture and their marvellous objects of art, it was natural that I should be anxious to see the jewels, stuffs, manuscripts, and above all the paintings made with birds' feathers, representing domestic scenes, and the portraits of Aztec monarchs, but I saw nothing in the two large rooms devoted to Mexican antiquities. I was told that the Museum was not in working order, that nothing was classified, that more space was being prepared in which the precious objects now shut up in numerous cases would be laid out for the benefit of the public. It may be so. For the present, we have to content ourselves with a collection of obsidian, marble, and porphyry heads; a number of large yokes, beautifully carved, besides several pieces of jade, rock-crystal, and bars of gold. As for the long rows of so-called "ancient vases," there is not one that is not imitation. This I know to my cost, for with a credulity which subsequent events hardly justified, I no sooner was told that these vases were of great antiquity, than I immediately ordered three hundred to be cast from them, which I caused to be placed in the Trocadéro during the Paris Exhibition; but on an expert in such matters seeing them, he at once detected and exposed the fraud, and in my disappointment it was not much comfort to reflect, that with half the money expended on these comparatively worthless objects, I might have bought, close to Mexico, a whole collection of vases of undoubted antiquity. It is a curious circumstance, that Mexicans, even the best informed among them, as well as foreigners, should so often be victimised by vulgar forgers of antiquities, who trade on the passions of the collector and the gullibility of the public; and that such things cannot be done in Europe without immediate detection, can only arise from the superior knowledge of our savants, and the greater facility afforded them of observing, classifying, and comparing the productions of all the civilised nations
of the world, in the numerous collections with which our museums, both public and private, abound. In my own case, after my excavations, I never could have been so grossly imposed upon by pottery modern in shape, over which ancient bas-reliefs had been incongruously reproduced, forming a monstrous medley of things old and new, without any originality whatever. Their history is this: the manufacture was carried out on a large scale at Tlatiloco, a Mexican suburb, between 1820 and 1828, and the author must have realised an enormous fortune, if we are to judge from the quantity which he sent broadcast into the world—most museums, nearly all private collections are infested with them, whilst a great number are even now bought by the unwary. The thing was done in this way. Vases of every shape were chosen, without much thought or care, relying on the ignorance and the stupidity of the public; every form was used, whether a common water-jug, a flat or round vase, a rude or shapely jar, and by means of ancient moulds found in vast quantities in the whole area of the valley, heads, images, tiny figures, whistles, geometrical designs, palm-leaves, etc., were inlaid on the object, which had a simple, double, or treble twisted handle according to its size; it was a tripod with a gaping mouth, or topped with arabesque, when the occasion served. Variety was its distinctive merit; and when completed this fine work of art was buried some twelve months or more to impress upon it the hand of time, and thus prepared was launched on its course.

I trust that these few observations will serve as a warning to people, and save them from experience as costly as my own. Having now relieved my conscience, we will go back to the Museum and look at what I consider the finest portion, namely the court, planted with beautiful palm-trees, shrubs, and flowers, amongst which may be seen the most interesting
bandera en el mástil, pude aplicar á mi embarcacion la antigua divisa parisiense: Fluctuat nec mergitur.

A la mañana siguiente pudimos ponernos de nuevo en marcha, aunque algo tarde, y á las dos horas de navegacion pasamos por delante de Sinchi-Chicta. En la orilla iquierda había unas cuantas chozas habitadas por una familia de zaparros, á quienes nuestros indios tienen por amigos.

En la tarde del mismo día, los hombres de proa gritan: «¡Auco, Auco!» Con este nombre designan á los salvajes «infieles», es decir, á los indígenas no bautizados. Cogimos las escopetas y nos dirigimos en la canoa grande hacia el banco de arena del que salía una espesa humareda en medio de un campamento. Cada abrigo se componía de algunas hojas de palmera secadas por el sol; estas hojas estaban hincadas en el suelo, y doblando bajo su propio peso, formaban curvas graciosas. A su escasa sombra, varias indias desnudas componían redes, atendían á sus hijos ó ensartaban simientes para collares. Los muchachos nos miraban abriendo mucho los ojos y sin dejar de mascar arena; estos infelices la tragan en cantidades considerables, siendo esta la causa de que tengan el vientre extraordinariamente abultado.

Algunos indios acudieron desde el fondo de la llanura. Eran los zaparros de Sinchi-Chicta, que nos recibieron muy bien. Toda la política de estas gentes consiste en dar á entender lo que les agrada de nuestro traje, y en pedir lo que les parece bonito ó útil. Dí á aquellos semisalvajes unas cuantas agujas y cuentas de vidrio, y quedaron tan satisfechos que nos prometieron reunirse con nosotros en la desembocadura del río Ahuarico, á donde fuimos á pescar y cazar para completar nuestras provisiones que empezaban á agotarse. Cuando nuestro segundo percance habíamos perdido cierta cantidad de plátanos y de conservas. Volvimos pues á nuestra balsa, y los zaparros se quedaron contemplando cómo surcaba el río, con una curiosidad y un asombro no disimulados.

Pocos kilómetros más adelante resonó el mismo grito de: ¡Auco! En la orilla derecha se elevaba una humareda. Saltamos otra vez á las piraguas, y á los diez minutos estábamos junto á la hoguera; pero no vimos allí chozas ni gente. Esta había corrido á esconderse al vernos llegar, y no pudimos encontrar á nadie; pues la casa de estos indios es la selva, cuyas revueltas conocen. Al volver á la playa, de la cual nos habíamos alejado de doscientos á trescientos metros, sorprendimos á dos de los fugitivos, un hombre y una mujer. El hombre, enteramente desnudo, iba armado con dos lanzas de palma chonta; la mujer llevaba una especie de delantal de fibras vegetales llamado yauchama.

El hombre era raquitico y la mujer vieja y fea, y no trataron de huir. Adquirimos el traje completo de la india á cambio de un par de tijeras, con lo cual quedó muy contenta y sin sentir al parecer que la hubiéramos desnudado así. El hombre no quiso vendernos sus lanzas.

Estos indígenas pertenecían á la tribu de los piojos y se trasladaban á Yasuni, en donde habían sembrado, durante una excursión de caza efectuada tiempo antes, un campo de yuca y de plátanos. Les invitamos á venir á bordo, pero se negaron á ello energeticamente. Estos dos primeros salvajes que encontramos en nuestro camino eran de carácter muy apacible.
specimens of the whole collection. First and foremost is a statue of a man lying on his back, holding a cup with both hands and pressing it against his body. It was found at Chichen-Itza, in Yucatan, by Leplongeon, an American explorer, who was obliged to part with it in favour of the Mexican Government, in virtue of the law which declares all antiquities to be national property. Next to this in interest come two other statues, like it in all respects: one discovered at Tlascala, the other marked "unknown." This similarity of objects of art found among the populations of the plateaux and those of the Yucatan peninsula seems to point to identity of worship among those tribes. Sanchez, the director of the Museum, believes this statue to be Tetzcatzoncatl, god of wine; but Perez and Dr. Hamy are of opinion that it represents Tlaloc, god of rain, in which view I coincide. However that may be, we will speak of it at greater length when we come to Chichen-Itza, where it was unearthed. On the second plan, to the left, stands the Tlascalan Tlaloc, and behind it Quetzalcoatl, "the feathered serpent," tutelar deity of the Toltecs, and worshipped by all American tribes; he came to have many names, and was represented under various forms, according to his multifarious attributes. He was the Zoroaster of Anahuac: "under him the earth produced fruits and flowers of its own accord. An ear of Indian corn was as much as a man could carry. The air was filled with perfumes and the sweet melody of birds," etc.

At the extremity of the court, to the left, we find a block of serpentine with a magnificent head beautifully sculptured, marked in the catalogue as "the rising moon," but which Bustamente thinks to be Temascaltoci, the goddess who presided over ablutions, and Chavero, one of the many forms under which Quetzalcoatl was represented. In the same line with these stands a huge block, having a hideous figure of Death, Teoyaomiqui (a goddess),
besides a vast number of divinities, ranging over the whole Indian Olympus, collected under the gallery at the furthest extremity of the court, most of which are frightful, and would give a poor idea of Aztec talent, did we not know that they are all specimens of hieratic art, and as such were not permitted to vary in shape or design. And now we come to Tizoc's stone, or Temalacatl, the sun's stone, one of the most interesting in
the collection, and connected with a bloody episode which is reported by most historians. It would have been broken up for paving the square, like many other monuments of this kind found on the same spot and about the same time, had not Canon Gamboa arrested the work of destruction, and caused the stone to be placed in the north-west side of the churchyard, where it was left undisturbed until 1824, when it was transferred to the University for a short time, and finally placed in the middle of the court of the New Museum. This monument is a block of trachyte, oblong in shape, measuring over eight feet in diameter, thirty-one feet in circumference, and some two feet six inches in depth. The surface is ornamented with two figures, portrayed in fifteen different attitudes, recalling the victories of the Emperor Tizoc. Two women are seen among the
vanquished, from which it would appear that the Salic Law was not in force among the Indians. In every one of these groups Tizoc is represented holding by the hair the vanquished, who, in a supplicating posture, seems to ask for mercy. Over each figure may be seen a hieroglyph, expressive of the conquered city represented by her chief. The surface of the stone is occupied by an image of the sun, having in the centre a hole some six inches deep, which is connected with a tube terminating on the upper circumference. This hole is supposed to have been made by the Spaniards in their attempt to split the stone, which was so fortunately stopped by Canon Gamboa, but not before they had mutilated every face of the different groups. This supposition seems borne out by the fact that it was not likely the original makers would have bored a hole right through the bassi-relievi, and thus deface their own work.

The *Tecmatlacr* or *gladiatorial stone,* as it was called by the Spaniards, must not be confused with the *Tecmatl*, or *stone of sacrifice.* The former was always to be found in the courts of the Temple, placed over a basement varying in bulk according to the size of the stone, from which the captive, particularly if he happened to be a man of distinction, was allowed to fight against a number of enemies in succession; but, besides the inequality of numbers, he was furnished only with a wooden sword ornamented with feathers along the blade, whereas his adversaries had weapons of obsidian, "as sharp as steel." If he succeeded in defeating them all, as did occasionally happen, he was allowed to escape, but if vanquished he was dragged to the stone, the upper surface of which was somewhat convex to receive the victim; on this the prisoner was stretched, five priests securing his head and his limbs, while a sixth, clad in a scarlet mantle, dexterously opened the breast of the victim with a sharp knife,
and inserting his hand in the wound, tore out the heart, and holding it up first towards the sun—a god common to all—cast it at the face or the feet of the divinity to whom the temple was dedicated, whilst the multitudes knelt in humble adoration at the foot of the stone or pyramid ready to receive the body, which was hurled down by the priests, and which the people divided among themselves, to have it served up in an entertainment in honour of the particular god they were celebrating.

The sacrifice ceremonial, whether from the summit of the Temple or from the gladiatorial stone, was exactly the same, save that the latter, standing but a few feet from the ground, allowed the whole city to witness the ghastly details of the sight. These stones were perfectly plain or beautifully sculptured, like the one under notice, according to the teocalli it was destined for, or the degree and importance of the donor. The temalacatl or stone of Montezuma I., which up to the present time has not been found, is supposed to lie buried under the "Plaza de las
Armas" in Mexico. Besides these, there was a smaller circular stone, the Cuauhxicalli, "eagle's cup," so called from the hearts of the victims being thrown into the hole situated in the centre, and which now, by a curious contrast, is used as a drinking trough by pigeons and small birds.*

The last Montezuma would have also erected a Temalacatl, for which a huge block of stone was transported from Aculco, beyond Lake Chalco, but in crossing a bridge which traversed one of the canals, the supports gave way, and the gigantic mass was precipitated into the water, where it still lies.

A military point of honour, as understood among the western nations of Europe, was so deeply rooted in the Indian warriors that they would suffer death rather than be guilty of any act that could lower them in the estimation of their fellow-citizens. With the Mexicans and Tlaxcaltecs, a soldier, if unfortunate enough to be made a prisoner, was reserved for sacrifice, especially if he happened to be of superior rank; to be ransomed was deemed unworthy and a disgrace. A few years before the arrival of the Spaniards, the Uexotzincas, the Tlaxcaltecs and the Mexicans were at war with each other. In one of the frequent skirmishes between the rival nations, it happened that a Tlaxcaltec chief, by name Tlahuicole, was captured. His fame as a warrior had spread far and wide; his prowess was so well known that few cared to measure their strength with his, or feel the weight of his huge tomahawk, which a man of common stature could hardly lift. But one day, in the heat of pursuit, he got far ahead of all his companions, when he was waylaid in a morass, immediately surrounded, placed in a cage, and conveyed to Mexico amidst the rejoicings of the enemy. He was brought

to the Emperor Moteuhçoma, who, on hearing his name, not only spared his life but offered him his liberty, and treated him with marked distinction. But Tlahuicole refused everything, and besought the Emperor to devote him to the gods according to custom. Seeing that he could not be prevailed upon to accept any offer, however brilliant, Moteuhçoma gave orders that he should be tied on the gladiatorial stone and that some of his best soldiers should fight him, whilst he himself, with a numerous retinue, witnessed the scene. Tlahuicole killed successively eight men, and wounded upwards of twenty; but he succumbed at last, and was carried off to be offered to the war-god Huitzilopochtli.*

But to return: this temalacatl clearly belongs to Tizoc, for his portrait is seen on the edge of the stone, whilst a speckled leg (he is supposed to have had varices) is sculptured above his image. The monument, however, like the great temple, may have been completed by his successor Ahuitzotl between 1484-1486.

Human sacrifices were made even more revolting by cannibalism, which from the Aztecs spread among all the surrounding nations, and were adopted by the populations with which they were at war by way of reprisals. The more humane chiefs, such as Netzahualcoyotl, king of Texcoco, tried to oppose this barbarous custom; but they were obliged to yield before the ignorance of the people and the fanaticism of the priests, who seeing that the supply of prisoners of war began to fail, clamoured for more, and urged on the monarchs the necessity of sacrificing their own subjects, on the ground that they would be more easily obtained; that they would be fresher, more acceptable, and in the same condition as children and slaves. In the year 1454, the

* Torquemada, "Monarquia Indiana," vol. i. lib. i. p. 82. Diego Duran, chap. lxvi.
country was visited by a horrible famine, and the priests declared that the celestial wrath could only be appeased by regular and numerous sacrifices; to obtain which a treaty was entered into by the three allied kings of Mexico, Texcucó, and Tlacopan with the three republics of Tlascala, Huezotzinco, and Cholula, by which they agreed that their troops should engage to fight on the first days of each month, on the territory between Cuantepec and Ocelotepec, and thus supply themselves with human victims. The men engaged in these encounters received the terrible name of "enemies of the house," whilst these monthly affrays are known in history as the "Holy War." It was not on the circular Temalacatl that victims were sacrificed, but on the dreadful Techcatl, "stone of sacrifice," which was 6 ft. 6 in. long by 3 ft. 3 in. wide, and about 3 ft. high, so as to enable the officiating priests to have a thorough command over their victim. At the dedication of the great temple of Huitzilopochtli in 1486, the prisoners who for some years had been reserved for this solemn occasion, were drawn up and ranged in files, forming a procession along the narrow causeways two miles long, when the number sacrificed is almost beyond belief, and is variously estimated at 80,000 and 20,000. The massacre lasted four days, and was begun by the kings of Mexico, Texcucó, Tacuba, and the Minister Tlacael, until they were relieved by the priests. However, the number of victims immolated has no doubt been much exaggerated.

It is difficult to reconcile these revolting usages with a people that had made great advance in civilisation. American writers have tried to palliate the abominable practices of their ancestors, on the ground that they shared them in common with every other nation in the early stage of their history. In their eyes the Aztecs, if not commendable, were at least pardonable, and Orozco

y Berra says that "human sacrifices originate from an error of the mind rather than from evil disposition; that it is the result of an exaggerated religious feeling, and not a real desire to do evil. That this institution, if philosophically considered, is not deserving of the intempestive lamentations of a few sentimental moralists.* The horror I feel," he adds, "for the revolting abuse of human sacrifice, yields to what I feel for utter impiety; I will go further, and say that I prefer human sacrifice to atheism, as I prefer the ignorant negro who bows before his fetish, to a free-thinker." Obviously Orozco is animated with the same spirit as his ancestors. An Aztec of the olden time would have adduced better reasons, for he held that to be sacrificed on the altar of his god was even more glorious than to die in battle, since it ensured him a speedy passage into paradise; and as the enemy was never slain if there were a chance of taking him alive, the number of those who disappeared was a fixed quantity. The same argument is urged in favour of cannibalism, but it is at least doubtful if it ever existed as an institution among other civilised nations. Men, however cruel, do not feed on one another, unless obliged by an absolute necessity; and cannibalism, which no doubt existed with all primitive populations, only continued among those who were deprived of sufficient space where they could hunt and feed their flocks, and who were reduced to a scanty supply of roots and herbs for their subsistence. This was observed among the Caraibs at the time of the Conquest; in the islands of the Pacific, in Australia, where the soil is so poor, that although cannibalism prevails, the increase of population has to be kept down, and the recent introduction of pigs in the islands has diminished but not eradicated this ancient practice, which has never flourished with races provided with bears, reindeer, horses, and herds. This usage, which at first was

a necessity, became a sacred tradition with the Aztecs, with whom religion was all-powerful; it directed the State, presided over the minutest details of domestic life, and as the influence of the priests was unbounded, peasants and princes had to bow their necks to their tyranny. They cannot be called cannibals, however, in the coarsest sense of the word, for they did not feed on human flesh to gratify their appetite, but as a duty, and in obedience to their religion; and during the long and terrible siege of Mexico not a single case of cannibalism is recorded against them by ancient authorities. Whence did they derive this religious practice? Not from the nations of the ancient continent with whom they have so much in common, for at that time cannibalism was no longer practised among the nomadic tribes of Eastern Asia; nor from Japan or China, where the people had always lived on the produce of the soil; it is probable that they received it from the Caraibs of the Antilles and the Polynesian races of the Pacific, who made them forget the mild teachings and higher civilisation of the Toltecs.

We give the drawings of two yokes: No. 1 is the yoke which up to the present time has been universally accepted as that used for securing the victim during the sacrifice, of which several specimens are to be seen in Mexican museums and in our own Trocadéro, but which, owing to the cylindrical shape of the arch, measuring some sixteen inches in height by about seven in width, we maintain could never have been used for the purpose assigned to it; whereas No. 2, which we claim to have unearthed, answers in our opinion exactly to the requirements of a yoke for such a purpose. It is almost the width of the Techeatl, and is concave
on its lower surface, which makes it a perfect fit for a convex stone; it has, moreover, a round hollow in the centre, sufficiently large to steady a man’s neck, so that the priest had only to apply this yoke to prevent any movement, when, to use Father Duran’s expression, he let fall his sharp silex knife and the victim opened “like a pomegranate.”*

Notwithstanding the assertion of most historians respecting the work of the Aborigines, it is difficult to account how with the tools they were acquainted with they could cut not only the hardest substances, but also build the numerous structures which are still seen in Mexico and Central America, together with the sculptures, bas-reliefs, statues, and inscriptions like those we reproduce. These monuments were innumerable, of all dimensions, and according to Leon y Gama,† there was no town or settlement which did not possess on the stones of its walls, on the rocks of its mountains, the year of its foundation, its origin, and the history of its progress engraved in symbols and characters which could only be read by the Indians themselves. It is all the more inexplicable that they should have only used stone implements, that copper was abundant, and that they knew how to temper and make it nearly as hard as steel. The method employed by stone sculptors, however, has in all probability been lost.

Clavigero‡ says that stone was worked with tools of hard stone; that copper hatchets were used by carpenters, and also to cultivate the soil and to fell trees; and Mendieta writes that both carpenters and joiners used copper tools, but that their work was not so beautiful as that of the sculptors on stone who had silex implements.§

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† Antonio de León y Gama, “Descripción Hist. & Cronológico de las Dos Piedras,” pp. 2 and 5.
‡ Clavigero, “Historia Antigua,” vol. 1. p. 242; id. notes, p. 6; id. vol. 1. chap. vii.
Some historians have proved to their own satisfaction that copper was unknown to the Indians; but had they taken the trouble to read, however slightly, any authority on the subject, they would have paused before they advanced a theory which is entirely at variance with all writers, both ancient and modern. It is an ascertained fact that very rich copper-mines have been worked since the Conquest;* and in 1873, whilst sinking a shaft in a copper-mine at Aguila, in the State of Guerrero, the miner lost suddenly the vein; and on examining the cause of the accident an excavation was found 4 ft. 4 in. long, 4 ft. 9 in. deep, and over 3 ft. wide, in which was a rich copper vein from 2 to 4 in. in thickness. The engineer, Felipe Lorainzar, could see no sign of iron or powder having been used, but the walls showed marks of fire; and both the copper ore and the rock in which it was embedded, were shattered and split in various places. In the rubbish were found 142 stones of different dimensions, shaped like hammers and wedges, the edges of which were blunt or broken; these stones were of a different substance from the surrounding rock, clearly indicating that the mine had originally been worked by the natives.†

Copper was likewise found in Chili, Columbia, Chihuahua, and in New Mexico. Before the Conquest, the Indians procured lead and tin from the mines of Tasco, but copper was the metal used in mechanic arts. Hatchets, arms, and scissors were made of copper found in the mountains of Zocatollan. The letters of Cortez tell us that among the taxes paid by the conquered people, figured copper hatchets and lingots of the same metal, which were paid every eighty days. Bernal Diaz‡ says that in his second expedition

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* Between the years 1832–1842, copper-mines were worked successively by an Italian of the name of Chialiva, and others.—Transl.
† "Anales del Museo de Mejico," vol. 1.; art. by Don Jesus Sanchez.
‡ "Bernal Diaz del Castillo," lib. 1. cap. xvi.
with Grijalva, the inhabitants of Goatzacoalco brought them upwards of six hundred copper hatchets in three days, having wood handles exquisitely painted, and so polished that "we thought at first they were gold." Copper was also found in Venezuela, where, at the present day, jewels of copper, or mixed with gold, crocodiles, lizards, and frogs are found. We procured some and placed them in the Trocadero, having the same dimensions as those in Central America. Those we found on our first visit to Mitla, are thin, shaped like a tau, and hardly 4 in. long. Dupaix found similar hatchets at Mitla, and he thinks they were used as currency, a supposition all the more probable, that an Indian from Zochoxocotlan, near Oaxaca, found an earthen pot containing twenty-three dozen of these taus, but differing slightly from each other both in size and thickness. We read in Torquemada,* that copper tablets, varying in thickness and shaped like a tau, were used as currency in various regions, and that they contained a large proportion of gold.

Gumesindo Mendoza mentions copper scissors in the Mexican Museum which were found to contain 97.87 lead, 100 copper, 213 platinum, 100 tin, and infinitesimal quantities of gold and zinc. On removing the oxide which covered them the bronze looked like red gold, its density being equal to 8.815; it is harder than copper and breaks under strong pressure, the broken part showing a fine granulation, like steel; but its hardness is less than carburetted iron and insufficient for the use it was intended for.

Humboldt says that Peruvian scissors contained 94 lead, 100 copper, 6 platinum, 100 tin, and that their specific weight was 8.815; other scissors analysed by Ramirez yielded 90 lead, 100 copper, 10 platinum, and 100 tin. It seems almost impossible that the Indians

* Torquemada, "Monarquia Indiana," vol ii. p. 560. Ixtlixochitl, in his fourth Relacion, says that the Toltecs used oblong pieces of copper shaped like hatchets, about the thickness of a real.
should not have used these admirable bronze scissors to build palaces, sculpture their idols and the images of their kings, which are still visible on the porphyry rocks of Chapultepec; and if it is denied that they were able to carve such hard substances, they must be credited with having easily worked the calcareous stones of Chiapas and Yucatan.

The American tribes had reached the transition epoch between the polished stone and the bronze period, which was marked by considerable progress in architecture and some branches of science. With them this period lasted longer than in the old world, owing to their never having come in contact with nations of a higher civilisation and possessed of better tools. Their only scientific data in the past were traditions which, if we believe their apologists, were carefully preserved and developed; but they have nearly all been lost, and great uncertainty must for ever rest upon the degree of their scientific progress; for it is equally impossible to accept either the wild theories of the good Abbé Brasseur, who sees in the Troano and Chimalpoca codices, a whole system of geology dating ten thousand years back, as it is impossible to accept the childish dreams of Leplongeon, who credits the Mayas with every discovery down to the electric telegraph; nor yet those who maintain that without astronomical instruments (since they were unacquainted with glass) the Aztecs had discovered the composition of the sun and the transit of Venus. It seems as futile to make the Nahuas the inventors of everything as to rank them with mere savages. The religion of a people is a sure index of the degree of its culture; we know that the moral code and religion of the Toltecs showed wonderful growth towards all the essentials of a high civilisation, for religion in its early stage is but a gross fetishism, of which the head of the family is the priest, who performs before his household god the simple ceremonies he learnt from his
forefathers. But as the tribe rises in importance his duties become more complicated, and he is willing to lay down his priestly office in favour of a poet or prophet, who, whilst the warriors are engaged in warfare and other avocations, shall pray for the welfare of the tribe and expound the wishes of the deity, receiving for his services part of the booty or the produce of the chase, and later, have his share of the land under cultivation. He soon adopts a dress so as to be distinguished from the warriors and the people; and as the number of priests increases, offerings are multiplied; a more imposing ceremonial replaces the simple worship of former days, temples and chapels are built, the image of the god is placed in the sanctuary, and only approached by the high priest, who becomes the sole interpreter between god and man. The former is now given numerous personalities, according to his various attributes, and the simple fetish of an early epoch develops in process of time into a mighty host, frequently numbering upwards of three thousand deities like the Aztec Olympus, for whose service a numerous priesthood and great wealth are required, implying a high degree of civilisation.

That there should be great uncertainty upon questions resting chiefly on vague traditions is natural enough, but that the same should be the case with matters that admitted of easy proof seems unaccountable; as, for instance, the name of Montezuma, in whose intimacy the Spaniards lived several months; yet of the twenty-three chroniclers who wrote about him, two call him Motecuhzoma, three Montezuma, and the remaining eighteen spell his name in as many different ways.

And here we will take leave of the Aztecs, whose history has been so admirably written by Prescott. My object in writing about them was to give some idea, however slight, of this people, in order to prepare the reader to follow me in my investigations
respecting the far more ancient civilisation of the Toltecs—a civilisation which from them passed to the Aztecs, the Nahua tribes, and the people of Central America; the remains of which are still to be seen, whilst its stones will compose, together with chroniclers and historians, the foundation of our work.

The journey to Tula, capital of the Toltecs, our next destination, is performed partly by railway and partly by diligence over a distance of some sixteen leagues north of Mexico. The valley in this month (August) is at its best; immense plantations of Indian corn give it the aspect of a green sea, whilst a grand range of mountains and lofty summits bound it at the horizon. We go through the Tejan district, stopping a few minutes at Tacuba, where the old cypress of the "Melancholy night" is again pointed out to us. Our next station is Atzacapotzalco, once an independent state; then Tlanepantla. The country, as far as the eye can reach, presents nothing but the same plantations, the same hamlets, the same poor squalid huts, whilst here and
there a few Indians in tatters, and swarms of naked children, gaze at us stupidly as we speed along. Now we come to a fortress-like church, formerly used as a stronghold by the Pronunciados; we notice for the first time some stunted poplars, some rare willow-trees, and by-and-by hedges of prickly pear; and now that we are in the diligence, the country somewhat changes; instead of long stretches of green maize, we have immense plantations of aloe, which to my mind, whether viewed from afar or near, are never a picturesque feature in the landscape. It is a wonder how we advance at all, for the wheels of our carriage almost disappear in the ruts of the worst road I ever travelled upon; I am confident that nothing has been done to it since the day it was opened. We cross a muddy river, when, with cracking of whip and galloping horses, we enter a village shaded by great ash-trees, and draw up before a respectable-looking inn, where we take up our quarters, for we are in Tula, once the brilliant capital of the Toltecs, but now reduced to a small straggling town numbering some 1,500 souls.

The Toltecs, as was stated before, were one of the Nahuan tribes, which from the seventh to the fourteenth century spread over Mexico and Central America. Their existence has been denied by various modern historians, although all American writers agree that the numerous bands which followed them in the country received their civilisation from them. It must be admitted, however, that our knowledge rests chiefly on traditional legends full of anachronisms, transmitted to us by the nations that came after them; but it will be our care to fill up the enormous discrepancies to be met with at almost every page, by the monuments it has been our good fortune to bring to light. Two writers, Ixtlilxochitl and Mariano Veytia, have written about this people: the first in his "Historia Chichemeca" and "Relaciones," the second in his "Historia Antigua de
Mejico;" the latter being more explicit, it is from him that we will chiefly borrow, without neglecting, however, other chroniclers. Both made use of the same documents, drew from the same
sources, the traditionary legends of their country; and Veytia, besides his own, had access to Botturini's valuable collection of Mexican manuscripts, so that he was well acquainted with American antiquities. Ixtlilxochitl, on the other hand, as might be expected, in writing the history of his ancestors, whose language he understood and whose hieroglyphs he could decipher, is inspired by patriotic zeal; and it will be found that these historians have just claims to our admiration for the compass of their inquiries, and the sagacity with which they conducted them.

A third writer, Ramirez, by far the most illustrious of those who have treated the same subject, speaking of the two historians who preceded him, says: "I am not claiming infallibility for our historians, yet it must surely be conceded that, if no credence is given to our own, the same measure must be meted out to all the traditions of other countries, for neither Diodorus, Josephus, Livy, Tacitus, nor other historians, are able to bring the array of documents with which our history abounds in support of their assertions. I have purposely omitted Herodotus, the most curious and instructive among ancient historians, because modern discoveries and modern criticism have cleared him from the unjust attacks of Plutarch. A history is true and highly instructive, although it may contain absurd propositions, if it faithfully transmits the traditions, the belief, and the customs of a people; as it may be absolutely false, although relating facts which seem natural and probable, but are only the invention of the author. Mexican history and biography, like those of other nations, are founded on tradition and historical documents; than which none are better authenticated or more trustworthy."

We think Ramirez proves his case, and, in writing these chapters, we will not be more critical than he is.*

Veytia,* like all historians of that time, places the primitive home of the Toltecs in Asia, to make his account agree with Genesis, where it is said that after the destruction of the Babylonian Tower, "The Lord scattered the sons of men upon the face of all the earth." According to him, they crossed Tartary and entered America through the Behring Straits, by means of large flat canoes, and square rafts made of wood and reeds; the former are described, and called acalli, "water houses," in their manuscripts. Directing their course southward, they built their first capital, Tlapallan, "coloured," subsequently Huehue-Tlapallan, to distinguish it from a later Tlapallan. Huehue-Tlapallan was the cradle whence originated the various tribes which peopled America. Each tribe was called after the father or chief of the family, who was also its ruler; hence came the Olmecs, from Olmecatl; the Xicalancas, from Xicalantl, etc.; it is uncertain whether the Chichemecs derived their appellation from Cichen, the man, or Chichen, the town in Yucatan.†

The Toltecs, by the common consent of historians, were the most cultured of all the Nahua tribes, and better acquainted with the mode of perpetuating the traditions of their origin and antiquities. To them is due the invention of hieroglyphs and characters, which, arranged after a certain method, reproduced their history on skins of animals, on aloe and palm-leaves, or by knots of different colours, which they called nepohualtzitzin, "historical events," and also by simple allegorical songs. This manner of writing history by maps, songs, and knots, was handed down from father to son, and thus has come to us.‡

Tlacatzin was the next city they built; and here, after thirteen years of warfare, they separated from the main body of the nation...

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* Veytia, "Hist Antigua," vol. i. chap. i.
† Veytia. Ixtlixochitl says the same thing.
‡ These knots were Chinese; in Peru they were called quipos.
and migrated some seventy miles to the south, where in 604 they founded Tlapallanco, "small Tlapallan," in remembrance of their first capital. But the arrival of fresh immigrants caused them to remove further south, and, under the command of their wise man, Hueman,* "the Strong Hand," who is endowed with power, wisdom, and intelligence, the Toltecs set out in 607, and marked their progress by building Jalisco, where they remained eight years; then Atenco, where they were five years; and twenty years at Iztachuexuca. In after times other Nahuan tribes followed them by different routes, as the ruins in New Mexico and the Mexican Valley everywhere attest.

Las Casas Grandes, the settlements in the Sierra Madre, the ruins of Zape, of Quemada, recalling the monuments at Mitla, others in Queretaro, together with certain features in the building of temples and altars, which remind one of the Mexican manuscripts from which the Toltec, Aztec, and Yucatec temple was built, make it clear that the civilising races came from the northwest; and Guillemin Tarayre,† like ourselves, sees in the calix the embryo of the teocalli, which developed into the vast proportions of the pyramidal mounds found at Teotihuacan, Cholula, in Huasteca, Misteca, Tabasco, and Yucatan.

The next city built by the Toltecs was Tollatzinco, where they remained sixteen years; and finally settled at Tollan or Tula, which became their capital. The date of its foundation is variously given; Ixtlilxochitl sets it down at 556, Clavigero 667, and Veytia assigns 713 A.D. as the probable date. In our estimation, this divergence of opinion confirms rather than invalidates the existence of this people.

When the Aztecs reached Anahuac, Atzacapotzalco, Colhuacan,

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* The same as Kab-ul, "the Working Hand," which we shall see at Izamal.
and Texcoco were small flourishing states. They had inherited from the Toltecs many useful arts, their code of morals, philosophy and religion, which in their turn they taught the Aztecs, so that the institutions and customs of these different tribes were common to all; and in default of documents which have been lost, we ascribe nearly all the historians of the Conquest relate of the Aztecs, whom they found the dominant race, as applicable to the Toltecs, the fountain of all progress both on the plateaux and in Central America, where we shall follow them. As for the Aztecs, who settled for the first time on the Mexican lake at the beginning of the fourteenth century, they were at that period nothing but a rude, barbarous tribe, and to the last day of their political existence they remained a military caste.

Among the ruins to be found at Tula are those of an unfinished temple called Quetzali, consisting of pillars in the shape of serpents, the heads of which form the basement and the tails the capital.

Some writers, amongst whom is Botturini, think the Toltecs were preceded by the Olmecs and Xicalancas on the territories of Tlaxcala, Huexcotzinco, and Puebla, when, after years of inter-tribal conflict, they settled in the Yucatan peninsula. But we have found in several Indian writers, that at the coronation of Chalchiuhtlanetzin, "bright stone," King of the Toltecs, the Olmecs and Xicalancas came to swear allegiance and submit to his authority; and there is nothing to make one suppose that they were compelled to leave the country, for they seem to have amalgamated so well with the new-comers that their very name was merged in theirs, although they retain the memory of their origin even to this day. "There can be no doubt," says Veytia, "that some of these people (Toltecs) established themselves in Yucatan"*—a remarkable passage, which we find confirmed at

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every step. According to the same authority, they built Tula in six years, when, to avoid the personal jealousy of the Caciques, they petitioned for the second son of King Huehue-Tlapallan, whom they proclaimed their ruler under the name of Chalchiuhtlanetzin.

All the Toltecs did was excellent, graceful, and delicate; exquisite remains of their buildings covered with ornamentation, together with pottery, toys, jewels, and many other objects are found throughout New Spain, for, says Sahagun,* "they had spread everywhere." Both Veytia and Ixtlilxochitl† ascribe

![Toltec Pottery](image)

a common origin to the Nahua, Toltec, Acolhuan, and Mexican tribes. "The Toltecs were good architects and skilled in mechanic arts; they built great cities like Tula, the ruins of which are still visible; whilst at Totonac they erected palaces of cut stone, ornamented with designs and human figures, recalling their chequered history." "At Cuernavaca" (probably Xochicalco), he adds, "were palaces entirely built of cut stone, without mortar, beams, girders, or wood of any kind." Torquemada speaks of the Toltecs in the same terms, observing that "they were supposed to

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have come from the west, and to have brought with them maize, cotton, seeds, and the vegetables to be found in this country; that they were cunning artists in working gold, precious stones, and other curiosities.”* On the other hand, Clavigero thinks “they were the first nation mentioned in American traditions, and justly celebrated among the Nahuas, for their culture and mechanic skill; and that the name Toltec came to be synonymous for architect and artificer.”† Quotations might be multiplied ad infinitum, but the foregoing will suffice to prove the existence of this people and their peculiar genius.

Their law of succession was somewhat curious: each king was to rule one of their centuries of fifty-two years; if he lived beyond it he was required to give up the crown to his son, and, in case of death, a joint regency took the reins of government for the remaining years. Their sacred book, teomoxtli, contained both their annals and their moral code. It is conjectured, with what evidence is uncertain, that they worshipped an “unknown god,” perhaps the origin of the “unknown god” to whom the King of Texcuco raised an altar. Their principal deities, however, were Tonacatecuhtli, the “Sun” and the “Moon,” to whom temples were first erected; to these they added Tlaloc, god of rain, and Quetzalcoatl, god of air and

* Torquemada, “Monarquia Indiana,” vol. i. chap. xiv.
wisdom.* Tlaloc, according to Torquemada, was the oldest deity known, for when the Acolhuans, who followed the Chichemecs, arrived in the country, he was found on the highest summit of the Texcucan mountain.† His paradise, called Tlalocan, was a place of delight, an Eden full of flowers and verdure; whilst the surrounding hills were called "Tlaloc mounts."‡ He was emphatically the god of many places, of many names, and numerous personifications; as Popocatepetl he presided over the formation of clouds and rain, he was the "world-fertiliser," the "source of favourable weather," sometimes represented dark in colour, his face running with water to signify a rich yielding soil; he carried a thunderbolt in his right hand, a sign of thunder and lightning; whilst his left held a tuft of variegated feathers, emblem of the different hues of our globe; his tunic was blue hemmed with gold, like the heavens after rain. His wife, Chalchiuhtlicue, goddess of waters, was represented wearing a blue petticoat, the colour of the mountain Iztaccihuatl when seen at a distance, which was sacred to her.

Most historians mention Quetzalcoatl, at first a generic name, whom posterity endowed with every virtue and deified.§ His great temple was at Tula, but he was also worshipped in Yucatan under the name of Cakulcan,|| having the same meaning with Quetzalcoatl. He had travelled thither with a branch of the Toltecs, which, advancing from west to east, had taken Tabasco on their way, and occupied the peninsula earlier than a second branch, which entered the country by a southern route, under the command of their chief Tutulxin, and became the rival

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† Torquemada, tome II. lib. vi. cap. xxiii.
|| Torquemada, tome II. lib. vi. cap. xxiii.