the Californian coast is only two a year. However it may be, we will for the present leave to others the task of elucidating the question of origin.

The interior of the temple is a large room, receiving its light through three apertures in the façade; the end is occupied by a sanctuary, and each side by a small dark room. The sanctuary is a kind of oblong tabernacle, crowned with a richly decorated frieze and stuccoed mouldings. Two pilasters supported the roof, and formerly were covered with inscriptions or sculptured slabs representing various subjects; these flags have been broken or taken away, and not one remains in loco.

Those which were in the Temple of the Cross No. 1, have already been described and a drawing given. The end of the sanctuary is occupied by three slabs in juxtaposition, with sculptures of a religious character; in the central portion or tablet is a hideous face, with protruding tongue, identical with
that found on the Aztec calendar in Mexico, known as the Tablet of the Sun. This symbolical figure is found also at Tikal carved in wood.

In our cut of the Temple of the Cross No. 2, three distinct subjects are seen: in the central slab is a cross, branching out with palms supporting two figures; the body of the cross, which rests on a hideous head, is sculptured in the centre, and at the upper end are two human figures, crowned by a symbolic bird having a long tail and eagle claws. The left slab represents a man richly habited, with collar, medallion, girdle, and greaves; the right slab a woman, to judge from her size, long plait of hair, and peculiar clothing. This female is borne on palms having the very well-preserved outline of human heads. Both the male and female seem to stand before the symbolic bird offering presents, the nature of which it is not easy to specify. To the rear of each device is an inscription of sixty-eight characters, doubtless explanatory of the ceremony the whole sculpture represents, but which no one has yet been able to read.

We are of opinion that the Temple of the Cross No. 1 was a sanctuary consecrated to Tlaloc and Quetzalcoatl, and that the altar in the same Temple No. 2 was dedicated to Tlaloc; our only ground for this belief, however, is the cross, which we know was a later symbolic personification of the god of rain; but we will leave this question until we come to Lorillard, where monuments of the same kind, and the authority of ancient writers, will furnish data to strengthen our theory. It may not be irrelevant to add that neither temples nor palaces were provided with doors, and that stuff or matting curtains were used for all apertures, indicated by the large and small rings fixed on the pilasters on each side of the entrances, and the whole length of the inner cornice. We know that neither the Toltecs nor Aztecs had doors to their houses, which seems to show great respect for property, or as Clavigero
puts it, "the severity of the laws was a powerful preservative." What he says of Mexico is equally applicable to Palenque: "Houses had no doors, for they deemed that dwellings were sufficiently guarded by the stringency of the laws; and the people, not to be overlooked by their neighbours, had curtains to all the openings, while resounding pottery, or some other rattling object, was suspended over the entrance to warn the inmates whenever a stranger raised the curtain to pass into the house. No one was allowed admittance who had not the owner's full permission to do so, unless the degree of relationship or necessity justified the liberty." *

Notwithstanding the deplorable circumstances in which I had to work, I was able to take more than 325 square feet of impressions; and here I take much pleasure in recording the

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debt of gratitude I owe Mr. de Laval for his admirable invention, which by means of paper instead of plaster makes the taking of impressions in distant countries comparatively easy, when the difficulty of transport and the expense of plaster would, in our case, have placed the reproduction of reliefs and inscriptions entirely beyond our power. As it was, my impressions, which, had I used plaster, would have weighed at least 30,000 lb., only weighed 500 lb.; but even so, the taking of impressions is not so easily effected as may be imagined, especially in a damp region where the utmost care was required to reproduce faithfully the delicate, faint, and defaced reliefs on these old slabs. It would be impossible to give an idea of the immense and minute brush-work which was required to cover 325 feet square of paper six sheets deep.

Furthermore, the reliefs were only reached by a shaky scaffolding of wet twigs; next came the drying process round huge fires to secure the moulds against the rain getting into them, and the stowing them speedily away before they got spoiled. Well, but we had every reason to be satisfied with our work; the precious squeezes had been satisfactorily stored up in the galleries of the palace, when, on the night of January 26th, a night I shall never forget, a hideous smell of burning startled us out of our sleep to witness the flames which were consuming my mouldings, the result, too, of three weeks’ hard labour, now fast vanishing into smoke. To snatch the burning rolls and throw them into the yard, where the Indians were ready to deluge them with water, was the work of a moment, but, alas! to no purpose; the mischief was irretrievable, and we had to begin all over again. Whether done by accident or of malice prepense, it was idle to inquire; we set to work again with renewed ardour, and after ten days of incessant labour we brought out copies finer than the first, and these are now to be found in the Trocadéro.
La desdichada sufre la lluvia enteramente desnuda; y es que, en el país de los carijonas lo mismo que en el de los rucuyos, la mujer que acaba de ser madre ha de ir en cueros algunos días. Dadas estas costumbres, ¿es de extrañar la rápida desaparición de los indígenas de la América del Sur? ¿Es posible que haya gentes tan crueles que obliguen a navegar a una mujer una hora después de su alumbramiento? Y las criaturas de pecho llevadas a lejanas expediciones, ¿no están destinadas a una muerte segura?

Al medio día pasamos por delante de un gran afluente llamado Otenara, que es casi la mitad del alto Caquetá. Remontando este río se encuentran dos grandes cabañas de indios coreguajes establecidos á dos días de la desembocadura. A una semana de navegación se encuentran algunas gentes civilizadas que explotan los árboles de quina.

A la una y media pasamos por delante de una isla llamada Cuay, nombre que sirve para designar la palmera miritis en la lengua de los carijonas y en la de los rucuyos. A las dos nos
Our labours in the palace did not prevent our making explorations on the hill or mountain. We had spied to the north of the palace, some 812 feet distant, a group of four houses, or small palaces, the ruins of which appeared sufficiently interesting to be reproduced, which I did, after having had the southern portion cleared of its luxuriant vegetation, when I found that the whole length of the northern side was occupied by a dead wall, without apertures or fronts of any kind, facing the palace and overlooking a deep precipice. These structures, like those we discovered subsequently, were all built on the same plan, but in various sizes and dimensions. The inner vault of the left building, however, is ornamented with round lines forming pretty devices, unlike the others, which are quite plain. The pyramids on which these structures were reared had three stories supported by perpendicular walls. To this group of buildings belonged a small sanctuary or chapel; notwithstanding its dilapidated con-

RUINS TO THE NORTH OF THE PALACE.
dition it deserves mention because of some decorative remains, which give a good idea of what must have been its profuse ornamentation.

After our visit to the Lion's Temple, now in a deplorable state of dilapidation, we crossed the high-banked river and reached a high level at the base of Cerro Alto, where we came upon a cluster of buildings composed of diminutive compartments which were used as tombs; two more were found by us in some other buildings to the north of the palace. These small monuments were constructed with uncemented stones, and were in good preservation. The tombs measured 6 feet 7 inches by 1 foot 8 inches to 1 foot 9 inches wide; they occupied the centre of the rooms and were built with flagstones; the bodies were found with two large flat-bottomed vases, ornamented with a little sunk flower, identical with those found at Teotihuacan.

Among the innumerable ruins we discovered were five temples; one, to judge from the height of the pyramid, which was divided into four stories, and its noble remains must have been important. As we descend the river to the north-west, pyramids, ruined buildings, groups of low houses, temples, and palaces, are found occupying the slopes of the Cordilleras, from the crest of the lesser chain to their base. The buildings are found on the high level and temples on eminences, followed by a vast space apparently unoccupied, perhaps the site of ancient gardens. To form an accurate idea of the plan of the city would necessitate the felling of forest over several square miles, an undertaking not to be thought of in our case. Bridges and roads connected the various edifices; some of these roads or streets measure several hundred yards, and I found one bridge of 32 feet square with one single opening, 3 feet 6 inches by 9 feet 9 inches deep. All were built with
uncemented stones. Now most bridges have crumbled away, the torrents they spanned are blocked up, and the waters are drained through beds they have hewn for themselves, running over the structures and depositing on their façades stalactites which give them a strange appearance.

The explorer who sees the complete desolation of this ancient city must bear in mind, that in a tropical region excessively hot and damp a long time is not necessary to destroy even structures of solid stone, in order to avoid attributing great antiquity to these ruins. Now the ornamentation, both in the palaces of Palenque, on the upper part of friezes, or the dress of figures, consists of small rolls or round lines of plaster, studded with diminutive spheres or dots, which, as we explained before, were added at the very last, and is clearly seen in our restoration. That ornamentation at once so fragile could not last many hundred years in such surroundings, is proved by the fact that on the least touch round lines and dots come down, and that the ground is strewn with them. If we examine the stairways, which on both sides of the courtyard of the palace connected the two edifices, we shall find the steps unworn, the stairs new; yet communication must have been incessant, and if for long ages thousands of people descended and ascended these stairs, would not the wear and tear be traceable?

The stairs of our public buildings are worn away in no time; if we find them entire at Palenque, it is a proof that they were not long trodden. Nor is this all. The roofs, the walls and courts of the palaces are so well hidden under the thick vegetation which covers them, that a stranger might pass a few yards distant and never suspect their presence. The size of the trees growing between and over these structures has been adduced as a conclusive proof of the age of these
monuments. Waldeck calculated their age at 2,000 years and more; Mr. Lorainzar computed that these monuments must be 1,700 years old, because he found a mahogany table made of one single piece from a tree in these ruins. His reasoning was based on the erroneous notion that a concentric circle represents one year, whereas I ascertained that in a tropical country nature never rests; for chancing to cut a twig some eighteen months old, I counted no less than eighteen concentric circles. To assure myself that this was not an isolated fact, I cut branches and trees of every size and description, when the same phenomenon occurred in exactly the same proportions. More than this: in my first expedition to Palenque in 1859, I had the eastern side of the palace cleared of its dense vegetation to secure a good photograph. Consequently the trees that have grown since cannot be more than twenty-two years old; now one of the cuttings measuring some two feet in diameter, had upwards of 230 concentric circles; that is at the rate of one in a month, or even less; it follows that the seventeen centuries of Mr. Lorainzar must be reduced to 150 or at most 200 years.

Stephens mentions a ceiba twenty-two years old of 6 feet 10 inches in diameter, and I noticed in Mexico some eucalyptus not eighteen years old, measuring 6 feet 9 inches in diameter; could these trees have only eighteen or twenty concentric circles?

To recapitulate, Palenque seems to us more modern, as she is far better preserved than Comalcalco; if the latter was inhabited at the time of the Conquest (and we think we have proved it), the former must have been likewise. Comalcalco was a Toltec city just as was Palenque, and this is clearly demonstrated in the pyramidal form given to the basement of edifices, in the invariable shape of the monuments, bearing so striking a
resemblance to the Toltec calli, in the fragments, in the masks of terra-cotta, the pottery, and the small figures, facsimiles of those we found on the plateaux; in the cultus of the cross, emblem of the Toltec Tlaloc, and lastly in the important quotations from Juarros and Diaz, affirming that Palenque was called Tula.

We shall leave for the present this Toltec branch which founded Ocosingo, Colhuacan, and other cities of the Uplands, to visit the other branch which settled in the Yucatan peninsula.
CHAPTER XV.

YUCATAN, MERIDA, AND THE MAYA RACE.


We will next proceed to the study of the Toltec branch which penetrated the Yucatan peninsula by Patonchan, and from which the reigning family of the Cocomes were descended.

The main harbour on the north-east coast was formerly Sisal,
but the requirements of an increasing trade have moved it on to Progreso, where we cast anchor in a gale of wind which obliged us to remain five or six miles outside, to keep clear of the shoals which make this coast dangerous. We land with considerable difficulty at last, and are not sorry to get rid of the unpleasant sensation known as sea-sickness. The peninsula has no rivers and no water, and is of calcareous formation; flat and barren to the north, where the soil is but few inches deep; more hilly and productive towards the centre, because of its older formation; it rises to the south to the Sierra Madre, which runs through Central America.

The direction of Yucatan is from north to south, between the eighth and twelfth degree longitude east of Mexico, and between the eighteenth and twenty-second degree of latitude. The first to mention it is Columbus, who, on July 30th, 1502, finding himself at Pine Island, saw a large barque manned by twenty-four rowers, having a cacique and family on board, dressed in the costume known since as Yucatec; the boat was freighted with cacao, tortillas, and a beverage made of Indian corn, wooden swords with blades of obsidian, copper axes, and cotton tissues as soft as silk, dyed in brilliant hues.

A reasonable doubt may be entertained as to this canoe, said to have measured 8 feet wide, having come from Yucatan, a country by its nature exceedingly dry, arid, stony, and without rivers, circumstances hardly favourable to making sailors of its inhabitants; moreover, copper axes and obsidian blades were scarce among the Mayas, and the Spaniards, under Grijalva, never met them until they reached Tabasco.* It seems, therefore, probable, that the canoe came from Tabasco, a region

* There were fewer in Yucatan, where they were imported.
civilised like Yucatan, intersected by large rivers, clad with an exuberant vegetation, noble cedar and mahogany trees, from which to build capacious boats. As for the dress, it is nearly the same as that worn by the Mayas; but what is even more significant is that cocoa is one of the chief pro-

* It was only cultivated towards Bacalar lagoon, nearly 100 leagues from the north coast.
was common to both districts. Had Columbus followed the canoe, he would have added to his own the glory Cortez achieved later; at all events he had been the first to discover the central regions of America.

The first to visit Yucatan was Vincente Yanez Pinzon, who with Diaz Solis, in 1505, coasted the eastern side, without, however, identifying it. In 1511, Valdivia was wrecked on the Alacranes reefs on his way to Cuba; he and his crew effected a landing, when the only survivors of the ill-usage of the natives were Gonzalo Guerrero and Geronimo de Aguilar, of whom I shall speak later. In 1517, Cordova sailed along the northern coast, where he observed great cities and high pyramids; he landed at Campeche, and saw stately temples, having serpentine walls in relief, similar to that of the great temple in Mexico, dedicated to Cukulcan (Quetzalcoatl). He landed at Patonchan or Champeton, when the natives massacred fifty-seven of his companions. It would seem strange that Cortez, in all his encounters with the natives of the Uplands, should have had so few casualties, were it not known that they strove to take their enemies alive that they might offer them on the altar of their deities. To this prevailing custom Cortez twice owed his life during the siege of Mexico, but as he was being led away to be sacrificed to their war-god he was both times rescued by his companions.

In Yucatan and Tabasco, where Aztec influence was of recent date, the introduction of human sacrifice comparatively new, the natives killed rather than captured their enemies; and this explains the great losses sustained by the Spaniards in the peninsula, and is another proof of Toltec teachings in these districts.

In 1518, Grijalva landed at Cozumel, when he perceived on the opposite coast a city supposed to be Tuloom-Pamal or
Paamul; he followed the route of his predecessor and halted in the Islands of Sacrificios and Uluo, opposite the site of future Vera Cruz; and lastly Cortez, who, in 1519, found here Aguilar and further on in Tabasco Marina.

The name of Yucatan is variously derived from Chac-nuitan, Tcctcan, tectetan, "we don't understand," from a misunderstanding by the Spaniards when the natives were questioned about the name of their country; or from Yuc-Tan, "land of yuca," not to be confounded with the yuca of our gardens, for the former yielded a substance out of which the Spaniards made cazabe, bread; and Ciu-Than, "say yourself," or, according to Landa, Ulumil y etel Ceh, "land of turkeys and deer." Another authority, Ramesal, believes the name to be derived from Tectetan-Ylatli and Teloquitan;* Cogolludo adopts these various appellations, remarking that as the country was named after its chief city, it differed at each successive epoch, being in ancient times Mayapan, but in the time of the writer Campeche. Ternaux-Comphans declares that from the fall of Mayapan to the coming of the Spaniards, the country had no general name, but was severally called after each province, as district of Choaca, Bakhalal, Campeche, etc.; but there is little doubt that the name of Yucatan, at the coming of Europeans and afterwards, was Maya. However that may be, we will turn to the monuments, which afford a far surer guide whereon to construct a history of this country so rich in works of "los antiguos."

Progreso is a miserable hamlet surrounded by low-lying swamps; here the luggage is examined, but in our case only pro forma, and we are glad to resume our seats and to steam out of this unhealthy zone, although the country we

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* Landa, "Relacion de las Cosas de Yucatan," sec. 2.
El Orizaba es, juntamente con el Popocatepetl, la montaña más alta de México; su nevado pico es visible en el mar a más de treinta leguas, es decir, casi a sesenta leguas de distancia; á su pié se asienta la ciudad del mismo nombre. Pero no debo olvidar que estos sitios han sido descritos con sobrada frecuencia: sigamos adelante.

A partir de Orizaba la subida es más rápida y escueta. Entramos en las gargantas del Infiernillo, y por los puentes más atrevidos y los terraplenes más espantosos atravesamos ramblas y barrancos y costeamos insodables precipicios: todos los viajeros asoman la cabeza á las ventanillas para admirar el paisaje. Esos desmontes entre empinadas rocas, retorcidas, reducidas á pasta por las evoluciones volcanicas, harían las delicias de un geólogo.

Llegamos á Maltrata, donde el tren, provisto de locomotoras construidas exprofeso para esta línea, se apresta á franquear las cumbres que nos han de conducir á la meseta.

Estamos en tierra templada y muy en breve llegaremos á la fria.

El camino se dilata ante nosotros formando largas curvas y contorneando las pendientes mas rápidas; los puentes y los túneles se suceden sin tregua á lo largo de la vía, y la enorme máquina nos arrastra, sudando, resollando, silbando, anhelante, á través de los paisajes más grandiosos. En tres horas hemos subido á la altura de mil doscientos metros que nos separaba de Esperanza, á donde llegamos á las once. Allí, una fonda bien servida nos depara un almuerzo excelente.

Mas á partir de Esperanza cesa el encanto; y penetramos en inmensas y polvorientas llanuras que parecen un desierto. Dejamos á la derecha el Orizaba, que seguiremos viendo todavía mucho tiempo, y corremos al Oeste entre torbellinos de polvo. ¡Cuán triste es el país y qué contraste forma con el verdor y el brillante colorido de la tierra caliente! Apéñas si de vez en cuando se divisa una hacienda, leve mancha blanca perdida en el espacio, y los raquíticos maizales y los trigos pobres y espaciados revelan cuán grande es la sequía de la tierra. Ninguna vegetacion, ni un árbol, ni escuálidos cactus; ¡qué desnudez!

Sin embargo, las grandes lineas de montañas que limitan el horizonte, la inmensidad de la llanura, los escasos cerrillos que rompen su uniformidad, las trombas de arena que surgen por todas partes, constituyen un paisaje de extraño aspecto y le imprimen un sello de desolacion severa. El camino de hierro ha contribuido á aumentar la tristeza de la comarca; las máquinas y los vagones parecen allí fuera de lugar y lo han hecho desierto mas que todos los demás. En efecto, el vapor ha sido causa de que desaparezca el arriero; hoy ya no se ven esas largas reatas de mulas que se escalonaban de Veracruz á México, poblando la soledad; ya no se ven pesadas carretas, ni mulas jadeantes, ni carreteros ni arrieros con sus trajes pintorescos. ¡Adios relinchos y juramentos sonoros! Ya no se escucha el alegre retintín de las campanillas de las madrinas, de esas yeguas que iban á la cabeza de las reatas, conductoras de los convoyes.

En los polvorientos caminos se elevaban pobres cabañas, donde el palmoteo de las tortilleras formaba un ruido armonioso para el oído del viandante hambriento, donde apagaba su sed el arriero dirigiendo á las Hebes de la llanura cumplidos algo picantes; ya no hay esos mesones en cuyos inmensos corrales se encerraba todas las noches á las cansadas mulas.
YUCATAN, MERIDA, AND THE MAYA RACE.

traverse, on which nothing grows save brambles and brushwood, is no less flat or monotonous. We come presently to immense estates of henequen, a kind of agave, having long narrow leaves, yielding a solid shining thread, which is hardly known out of American markets; patches of verdure, bananas, palm-trees, and maritime pines, betray now and again a private residence, while smoking mills show the factories where the henequen is being prepared ready for exportation.

Were it not for the mysterious spirit of "los antiguos," which seems to fill the whole country, the landscape to a less enthusiastic explorer must appear dreary and melancholy in the extreme. We pass eminences on our right on which once stood noble temples; these remains carry me back to the time when I first visited these parts, and when these ruins fixed my resolve to make archaeology the business of my life. Next came a few straggling hamlets; groups of dark women in short petticoats, and naked urchins, gaze on us with wondering eyes as they stand at the entrance of their huts while we speed along. We reach Merida after a run of three hours over a distance of ten leagues, where we learn that no hotel or house is to be found, and it is only after searching the whole place that we can at last secure a room of some fifteen feet square, in which my two companions and myself have to settle down. There is but one atrociously bad restaurant where to get any kind of food; our thoughts, however, are taken up with exploring the ruins rather than with a good maître d’hôtel; we find, besides, a small Anglo-American colony, and in their midst our abominable fare is soon forgotten.

Francisco de Montejo, who founded Merida, had occupied Chichen in 1527, but had been compelled to abandon it and seek reinforcements in Mexico. On his return he was enabled,
through a traitorous cacique, to establish himself here, and built Merida in 1542. The conquest of Yucatan was longer and beset with greater difficulties than that of Mexico; here the Spaniards were continually threatened by a warlike population, ever on the alert to raise the standard of rebellion. The history of this people can only be read on the monuments they have left, which have given rise to so many divergent hypotheses. Yet documents were not wanting, and had the religious zeal of the men of that time been less ill-judged, they would have found in the various and multiform manuscripts, in the charts or maps, in the idols, in the pottery and living traditions, ample and reliable materials from which to write an exhaustive history of the Maya civilisation. But the Spaniards were more careful to demolish than to preserve. Zumarraga, Bishop of Mexico, destroyed all the Aztec annals he could lay his hand upon, and Landa, Bishop of Merida, made an auto-da-fe of all the monuments he could collect, having done which, he set himself to writing his history, “De las Cosas de Yucatan.”

All there now remains for us are mere gleanings, the interpretation of certain passages in this very Landa, in Cogolludo and Herrera, and above all by a careful comparison between these monuments and bas-reliefs with those we already know; for with their help only can we hope to reconstruct a past which becomes more familiar the more it is studied. These monuments have been endowed with fabulous antiquity; whereas, on the

* From data obtained from Pablo Moreno, and a letter of the Jesuit Don Domingo, dated 1805, we can give the following list of objects destroyed by Landa:

- 5,000 idols of various form and dimensions;
- 13 huge stones, which were used as altars;
- 22 smaller, of various shapes;
- 27 manuscripts on deer skins;
- 197 of all shapes and sizes.

To this should be added the auto-da-fe at Mani, in which numerous manuscripts were consumed. Cogolludo, tome 1. appendix to book iv. p. 479. Campeche, 1842
strength of my explorations, I assert that they are comparatively recent.

Merida stands on the site of ancient Ti-hoo or T-hoo, one of the chief cities of the peninsula; but nothing positive is known, and tradition is almost silent respecting it. If we are to believe the Spaniards, it had long been abandoned on their arrival; but this is not borne out by facts, for although they beheld a dense vegetation amidst the pyramids, the edifices on their summits were entire;* moreover, Montejo was able to quarter his troops here, as well as the Indian contingent from Mani. Furthermore, Eligio Ancona, the modern Yucatec historian, describes a celebrated sanctuary known as H-Chun-Caan, "The centre and foundation of heaven," which was the object of great veneration; it follows therefore that its imposing ceremonies were presided over by revered and powerful priests, that the temples and palaces in Merida were standing after the arrival of the Spaniards,† although not in the vast proportions assigned to them by the Abbé Brasseur, whose lively imagination is apt to lead him astray.

Merida was built with the materials of the Indian city, and like all the Spanish places of the New World, is but a huge chess-board, with streets running at right angles, consisting of square blocks of buildings. The centre is occupied by a large plaza, having a waterless fountain and gardens, the flowers of which are perishing for want of water; as for the young trees planted about, they doubtless will afford shade to future generations; for the present the glare of this open

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* See Landa, "Relacion de las Cosas de Yucatan," sec. 42, p. 333 and following.
† Lorenzo Bienvenida, in a letter to the King of Spain (1548), says that the monuments were deserted and the pyramids covered with large trees, and that the natives of the place lived in straw huts. The city, therefore, had been destroyed a few years before, as Mayapan had been, of which no trace was visible, whereas the monuments at T-hoo were entire, but its history has been lost.
space is intolerable. When I visited it some twenty years ago, if not so symmetrical it was certainly more picturesque. In the plaza are found the municipal palace and the cathedral, of monumental proportions for a place of 30,000 souls; it numbered, probably, only the third of this when it was built in 1598. Its erection cost the pious Meridans £60,000, equivalent at the present day to fifteen times that sum, but it is doubtful if even with its greater population so large a sum could now be raised. The front, 179 feet wide, is occupied by a central pavilion in which the principal entrance intervenes, ornamented by an indifferent Corinthian portico, over which, at a height of some 97 feet, a great vaulted arch supports an elegant gallery; on each side of the pavilion are two steeples with a number of galleries narrowing in upward succession, forming with their balustrades a
museos están infestados de ellas, sin contar las colecciones particulares, y aún se las continúa comprando todos los días.

Procediéase del modo siguiente: se preparaban vasijas de todas formas, sin pretensión alguna, sin que el fabricante se esmerase ni pusiera ningún cuidado en construirlas: hasta tal punto contaba con la ignorancia ó la necedad humana. Un jarro común, cacharros de panza estrecha ó abultada, urnas toscas de angosto gollete ó de ancha boca, todo era bueno: se cubría el objeto de aplicaciones sacadas de moldes antiguos hallados en número inmenso en el valle, máscaras, ídolos, figurillas, silbatos, figuras geométricas, palmas, etc. Se añadía á la vasija un asa retorcida, ó dos, ó tres, ó cuatro, según su dimension; se le ponían tres piés, según el caso; se la dejaba destapada la ancha boca ó se la dotaba de una tapadera historiada; en seguida se enterraba esta obra maestra, dejándola así un año ó más para darle carácter de antigüedad, y ya se podía petardear á alguien.

Ignoro si esta breve explicación servirá para que los aficionados abran los ojos y les evite ser víctimas del costoso engaño de que yo lo he sido; la escribo guiado por un fin laudable, pidiendo al propio tiempo perdón á los ingeniosos falsificadores por la gran libertad que me tomo, en el caso de que pueda perjudicar á su vituperable industria, como así lo deseo.

Después de esta digresión que me imponía mi conciencia, vuelvo á ocuparme del museo cuyo patio es para mí lo mejor que tiene: está plantado de cuatro grandes palmeras, y lleno de arbustos y flores entre los cuales se encuentran diseminadas las piezas más importantes de la colección.

Véase de lejano la estatua del dios del vino, el Baco indio, tendido de espalda con la copa de licor puesta sobre el vientre; su tamaño es mayor que el natural, y es una de las más hermosas que se conocen, habiéndola encontrado M. Leplongeon en Chichinitza, de donde fue sacada y llevada á México en virtud de la ley que ha declarado todas las antigüedades propiedades nacionales.

La piedra del Sol ó piedra de Tizoc ocupa el centro.

Más adelante se ve otro Baco en la misma postura que el primero, pero menos bello, esculpido en una piedra tosca, y hallado en Tlascala.

En tercer término aparece la diosa Tenanci, la diosa madre, enorme pedrusco esculpido en forma de serpiente cubierta de plumas sobre un zócalo lleno de ranas.

En el fondo, á la izquierda, hay una soberbia cabeza magnificamente labrada en un bloque de serpentina que representa, según me han dicho, la salida de la luna.

A la izquierda se encuentra asimismo una inmensa piedra figurando un monstruoso ídolo llamado el Teoyami.

En el fondo debajo de la galería, hay una numerosa colección de dioses de todas clases. En su mayoría son espantosos y repugnantes, y darian una triste idea de los artistas aztecas, si no supiéramos que lo que allí se ofrece á nuestra vista son tan sólo muestras de un arte hierático que consagra por siempre las formas más raras, primeros esbozos de un pueblo que procuraba fabricarse un dios.
pleasing contrast to the plain façade. The interior of the church, 289 feet long, is imposing; it consists of three naves with round arches, supported by twelve immense columns, and twenty of like dimensions imbedded in the walls. Small chapels run along the sides, and the structure altogether bears the impress of solidity which is so conspicuous a feature of the conquerors’ work. To the south of the square stands Montejo’s house, bearing the date of 1541; it is the oldest in Merida, and an interesting specimen of that epoch. It may be worthy of mention that the sculptures in this house are as defaced as those of the Indian monuments, which seems to indicate similarity of date. The pillars on each side of the entrance bear aloft two Spanish soldiers, whilst on the first floor, by the window, knights armed cap-à-pie are standing on two recumbent Indians, personating the subjugation of the race. The façade with its columns, statues, arabesques, and shields, is a fair specimen of American Renaissance; but if the composition was Spanish, the work, probably, was due to Indian hands, for at the time of its erection the Spaniards were a handful of soldiers or adventurers, whose pride would not have suffered them to do any manual labour.

Artisans were plentiful among the Mayas, who have interspersed their country with so many remarkable monuments, and whose building aptitude is notable even at the present day. Beside these edifices the town, with very few exceptions, is an assemblage of low houses having but the ground floor, while all the windows are stoutly grated to secure the inmates against housebreakers. But the impression produced by this unpromising exterior soon gives place to agreeable surprise on being introduced into spacious apartments opening on the “patio,” encompassed by Moorish cloisters. The patios are planted with flowers, shrubs, and palm-trees, which, towering
above the terraced roofs, break the monotonous lines of the town panorama. Our cut shows Don Alvaro Peon's house with its charming gallery on the first floor.

All movement and life centre towards the market-place, where Spaniards, Indians, and Mestizos are seen in their picturesque costumes; sellers are crying out their goods, consisting of pottery and baskets, the facsimiles of those we bought at Tula; somewhat further we come across some natives bending under heavy loads of "ramon," the green twigs of a particular tree, affording the only forage in a country without grass. Here young caballeros are stopped by cumbersome carts taking up the whole street with their enormous bales of henequen; further on, women in snowy white costumes
sit in long rows, offering with a pretty grace their small stock-in-trade spread before them. Among this motley crowd I spied a diminutive “aguador” looking so bonnie that I wished to take his photograph, making his less favoured companions envious thereat.*

The Mayas, both in type and language, are unlike both the surrounding tribes and those of the plateaux; they are

* The types we give are pure Indian and not Meztizas.
said to be an ancient race, but this assumption is based on no positive proof. Cogolludo believes the first inhabitants to have come from Cuba; and Agassiz, who studied these tribes in their respective homes, leans to the same opinion. Traditions and ancient writers, confirmed in modern times by Humboldt, all are unanimous in asserting that this country was invaded towards the end of the eleventh and the beginning of the twelfth century by the Toltecs.* Granted their building genius, seeing that both the architecture and the decorations of the edifices correspond to the descriptions left by historians respecting Toltec palaces and temples of the Uplands, we are in a position to affirm that there was no other civilisation in Central America except the Toltec civilisation, and that if another existed, our having met with no trace of it gives us the right to deny it altogether.

When two civilisations come in contact, the outcome is a mixture of both which is easy of recognition. Take as an instance India after the Mohammedan Conquest, where Indo-Arabic monuments are notable to the most inexperienced eye. If, therefore, Yucatan had possessed an indigenous civilisation, we should certainly have found monuments or ruins indicating as much; or if destroyed by time, we should have found others of a composite character, showing the fusion of the two races, whereas nothing of the kind occurs, and the older monuments, or those which appear so, are in no respect different from the more recent or Toltec ones. Consequently the Mayas, who were peculiarly well fitted for receiving a superior culture, had their share in the artistic manifestations to be met with through the length and breadth of the peninsula, and being the stronger nationality they opposed a stouter and longer

* "The tribes who from Aztlan established themselves in Yucatan and Guatemala, had reached a certain degree of civilisation."—HUMBOLDT.
resistance to the hated invaders. Even now, after three centuries of degrading oppression, a Maya, or Maya-Toltec, preserves distinctive characteristics by which he can be singled out from among a number of different nationalities, nor would it be easy to find among the rural classes of Europe men of a better build, or with more intelligent and open countenances. Their heads are round, their eyes black, their noses arched, their ears and mouth small, they are deep-chested, straight-jawed, with round chin and sound square teeth, their hair is black, straight, and coarse, their complexion reddish brown.

The form of government was monarchical and almost absolute;
below were the nobles, the priests, the people, and the slaves. Such a partition, amounting to almost castes, presupposes an anterior conquest. The lands were divided between the crown, the nobility, the temples, and the people. The division was by no means equal, by far the greater proportion being appropriated by the king, the aristocracy, and the temples. The lands of the people were the common property of the community and not of individuals. Every member of the community had a portion suitable to his position and requirements, which he was entitled to hold as long as he cultivated it. As the soil was very poor, no plough was used in ancient times, nor later by the Spaniards. Four-fifths of the land was suffered to lie fallow, and every five years the brushwood was cut down and burnt to manure the ground ready to receive the Indian corn. The work was chiefly done by men; the women planting the seed, husking the corn, and doing such light labours as were suitable to their weaker frames. The peasants were bound to till the land for their lord, to supply him with game, fish, flowers, salt, and other comforts, and to accompany him in battle.

The campaigns were short, sharp, and severe; for as commissariat was unknown, they were generally decided in one engagement, when no pity was shown the vanquished, no quarter given, and what could not be plundered was destroyed. This explains the number of ruined cities which were rebuilt and the new monuments erected after each war. Diaz remarks that the military dress of the warriors consisted of a breast-piece made of quilted cotton, which was completely arrow-proof, and was adopted by the conquerors in place of their heavy steel armour. Their head-dress was a casque ornamented with rich feathers, prominent amongst which were the quetzal. The rank and file wore no clothing except the *maxtli* in battle,
but by painting their faces and bodies in grotesque patterns of brilliant colours, and covering their heads with raw cotton, they presented a fierce and gaudy appearance. Painting the face and body with red, black, and white was universal; on the return from an expedition the warrior's paint was substituted for tattooing. "Stripes, serpents, animals, and birds," says Cogolludo, "were the favourite devices for this kind of decoration, according to their military order; the warrior being entitled to a fresh hieroglyph after each notable feat of arms, an old veteran came to have his whole body covered with them."

Owing to the warm climate the Maya dress was simple and scanty in the extreme. Men wore almost universally the maxtli (a long strip of cotton cloth, wound round the loins); children up to two years of age wore no clothes at all; the baby girls, like those in Java, had a string round their waist, from which depended a shell, the removal of which was looked upon as sinful. The dress of the nobles, both men and women, consisted of loose tunics and flowing mantles dyed in brilliant and variegated colours. The hair was worn short, cut in a fringe on the forehead; no beard was allowed, and the few hairs that made their appearance on the face were immediately extracted. Squinting was fashionable, and mothers ensured it for their daughters by suffering a tuft of hair to hang over their eyes. Their ears, nose, and lips were adorned with jewels. Cranial disfigurement seems to have been confined to the priests and nobles. * According to Landa, † four or five days after birth the child was laid with the face down on a bed of osiers, and the head compressed between two pieces of wood, one on the forehead and the other on the back, the boards being kept in place for several days until the desired cranial flattening was

† Landa, "Relacion de las Cosas de Yucatan," sec. xx.
effected. This Spartan process was often attended with disastrous results. Tamenes practised this flattening on the forehead only, which was thus better adapted to the carrying of burdens. Disfigured Tamenes skulls were found by us at Teotihuacan, and on the pottery of Vera Cruz.

Eligio Ancona draws a mournful picture of the Mayas before the Conquest: "They were much oppressed by the king, the nobles, and in a special manner by the restless and ambitious caciques constantly at war with each other; the education of the youth of both sexes rested entirely with the priests, the clans of the people were ignorant and degraded; men were sold in the market or sacrificed on the altars; women excluded from society and the family circle," etc. The nation prospered in spite of it all; the country was densely populated, while the monuments everywhere attest that the arts flourished.

What have the Spaniards done for them? Have they relieved their misery, dispelled their ignorance, minimised their vices? The peninsula counted millions before the Conquest; there are not a hundred thousand at the present day, and they are more sunk and wretched than at any time of their existence. For a nation is always found to have the religion and the Government best suited to its character or degree of civilisation; let extraneous institutions, whether civil or religious, however superior, be imposed upon them, they seem only to stultify and dishearten a people they were not intended for.

Meztizas are one of the chief attractions of Merida; they are looked upon as an inferior caste, but this they seem to accept with indifference, revenging themselves on society by their attractive ways, which it is not given to man to resist; for even those who are not beautiful, and they are few, have a winning grace, a peculiar charm all their own. To a certain extent this is due to their becoming costume,
which consists in a loose tunic with short sleeves and square body, leaving arms and neck bare; this tunic, *wipil*, is tastefully embroidered at the neck, arms, and bottom with red, blue, or green devices; the under-skirt, *fustan*, is trimmed with rich lace, while their clustering black hair is set off by a silver arrow; they wear rings on their fingers, and chains of gold depend from their lovely necks, often constituting their whole dowry.

Meztizos have a quarter at the outskirts of the town allotted to them, where they inhabit oblong thatched cottages decorated outside with a diamond pattern showing where the lines join. It is probable that these huts are identical with those of the Mayas of ancient days, while there is no doubt as to the decorations being like the mouldings of the old palaces. A hamac, one or two trunks to put their clothes in, a *butaca* or low leather arm-chair, compose the sole furniture of these poor dwellings. From a little distance, the Meztizo quarter looks