perpendicular frieze, like those at Palenque, and in most Yucatec monuments. The front, 162 feet, is almost entire and pierced by seven openings; two have columns and primitive rude capitals, corresponding to the same number of narrow low apartments. As usual the ornamental wall is narrowing towards the top, and is distinctly seen through the vegetation covering the roof.

The rear is a complete ruin. Traces of painting, of which tracings were made, are still visible in the central chamber. It was here that I thought I recognised the rude drawing of a horse and his rider, which was hailed with Homeric laughter; but, although I was mistaken in my supposition, I was very near the truth, since the fact I erroneously heralded at Kabah was found in the north. The discovery is due to S. Salisbury, who, in 1861, whilst exploring a group of mounds and structures, near the hacienda of Xuyum, fifteen miles north of Merida,
unearthed the remains of *two horses' heads*, made of very hard chalk, with bristling hair like a zebra.* The work shows considerable artistic skill, and the explorer thinks that it formed part of some bas-reliefs which had belonged to the demolished monuments. Indeed, it is highly probable that these heads were placed on the edifices built by the natives between Montejo's departure in 1530 and his return in 1541; proving that the aborigines had skilfully copied the Spanish horses, and that there was at Xuyum one monument at least similar to those we know. To comment on this would be sheer loss of time.

To the left of this building is a rectangular pyramid, with several stories, 162 feet at the base by 113 feet. Four outer staircases led up from story to story to edifices in an advanced state of ruin, having apartments extending all round, and doorways, some supported by columns, while others are mere openings, as shown in our drawing, which reproduces the north-west side. In this monument and in the second palace are found for the first time lintels of stone, nearly all in very good preservation. Historians have told us nothing regarding Kabah; nevertheless we have some guiding landmarks from which to reconstruct its history and that of Uxmal, of which in all probability it was a close ally, since the two cities lie at a distance of five leagues from each other, and were connected by a plastered road, traces of which are still visible. Consequently the same fate must have been common to both. We know that a century before the Conquest the lord of Mayapan ruled over the whole peninsula, having razed to the ground the capitals of his vanquished rivals, amongst whom were the caciques of Uxmal, Kabah, Labna, etc. This king of Mayapan introduced into the country a force of Mexican soldiers for

El palacio de las Monjas es uno de los mayores de Chichen-Itza; se le ha convertido en convento, como se hizo con el gran edificio de Uxmal al cual se dió el mismo nombre. Algunos autores nos dicen al hablar de México que los aztecas tenían la costumbre de consagrar a los dioses, por espacio de algún tiempo, niñas de doce a trece años, de buenas familias. La mayor parte de ellas abandonaban el templo en la época de su casamiento; pero otras pronunciaban votos eternos. Sahagún nos dice que aquellas doncellas, llamadas sacerdotisas o hermanas, vivían en los edificios adscritos a los templos bajo la severa vigilancia de las madronas, y que observaban una vida monástica, sujetas a las prácticas más rigurosas. Les cortaban el cabello; se levantaban de noche para rezar y barrer los templos; ayunaban perpetuamente y se infligían una porción de tormentos en obsequio de los dioses. Se atravesaban lengua y orejas con espinas; dormían siempre vestidas para estar más prontas a trabajar; silenciosas siempre, vivían con los ojos bajos y se les imponía la pena de muerte por cualquier infracción de las leyes de la etiqueta religiosa. Por consiguiente, había monjas.

Este palacio se componía de un cuerpo principal y de dos alas; nuestro grabado representa la fachada del ala izquierda, que es muy hermosa y se conserva perfectamente; se
the maintenance of his authority;* and to ensure the good behaviour of the caciques he obliged them to reside at his court, where their state of vassalage was made up to them by a life of great pomp, at the expense of the sovereign.†

Now as the Aztec independence only dates from the reign of Itzcoatl (1426), their conquests and subsequent power cannot be earlier than the reign of Montezuma I. (1440); it is obvious, therefore, that they were not in a position to send reinforcements before 1440 to the ruler of Mayapan. This autocracy lasted but a few years; a coalition of the people of the Sierra was formed, war broke out, the king of Mayapan was vanquished, the city captured and sacked, when the hostage caciques returned to their native provinces. Landa places this event in 1420, whilst Herrera gives 1460 as the probable date. We think the latter justifies his chronology, since he writes “that seventy years elapsed between the fall of Mayapan and the coming of the Spaniards, varied by years of plenty, storms, pestilence, intestine wars, followed by twenty years of peace and prosperity down to the arrival of the Europeans.”‡

He further states that each cacique took away from Mayapan all

* Eligio Ancona writes: “The king of Mayapan, whom we will call Cocom, distrusting both his great vassals and their allies, sought the support of foreigners against them. He entered into negotiations with the Aztec military authorities of Tabasco and Xicalango” (he probably means Goaatzacoalco, for it is certain that the Aztec dominion did not extend beyond that limit), “and it is said that the Mayapan ruler promised to quarter the troops they should send to his capital. Cocom’s proposals were accepted, and a strong Nahua garrison entered the city. The names of the Mexican leaders given in the Maya MS. are Ahiiti-Tyut-Chan Tsimitzecum, Taxcotl, Ponte-Mit Litztecatl and Kakautecatl.” All the traditions are agreed on the arrival of the Mexicans in the peninsula, and the investigations of Don Juan Kamil show that the witnesses he examined swore that his ancestors had come from Mexico by order of Montezuma the Elder.—C. E. Ancona, “Hist. de Yucatan,” Merida, 1878.
† Cogolludo, lib. iv. cap. iii.
‡ Herrera, Decade IV. lib. x. cap. iii.
the scientific books they could conveniently carry, and that on
their return home they erected temples and palaces, which is
the reason why so many buildings are seen in Yucatan; that
following on the division of the territory into independent
provinces, the people multiplied exceedingly, so that the whole
region seemed but one single city.”* Landa says “the monu-
ments were built by the natives in possession of the country
at the time of the Conquest, since the bas-reliefs represent them
with their types, their arms, and their dress; and “that on
going through the woods and forests, groups of houses and
palaces of marvellous construction were found.”† This is suffi-
ciently clear, and whether these monuments were inhabited or
not at the coming of the Spaniards, is beside the question. On
the other hand, the prosperity mentioned by Herrera and Landa
found expression in the peculiar monument, which in its original
plan represented the florid style, always observable at the end
or the brilliant beginning of a new art, being the reproduction of
an older style, varied by elaborate ornamentation of questionable
taste.

It is usual for a nation to commemorate a return to in-
dependence by the erection of triumphal arches, statues, and
monuments. That this was the case at Kabah is shown in
the two remarkable bas-reliefs in our drawings, which were
probably part of a monument raised in honour of the victory
obtained by the allied caciques. Like the Tizoc stone, these
bas-reliefs represent a conqueror, in the rich Yucatec costume,
receiving the sword of a captive Aztec; the latter is easily
recognised from his plainer head-dress and the maxtli girding
his loins. His head-dress is identical to those described by

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* Herrera, Decade IV. lib. x. cap. ii.
† Landa, “Relacion de las Cosas de Yucatan,” sec. x. p. 59.
Lorenzana in his letters to Cortez and Charles V., and not unlike those which the Mexican conquerors sometimes exacted from their vanquished foes. The other bas-relief has the same characteristics, but the head-dress is even more significant, for it is fashioned out of the head of an animal like those of the Mexican manuscripts. In this relief the conqueror spares the life of the vanquished, bidding him depart in peace. It is obvious, nay, we affirm, that this is a representation of a battle between Yucatecs and Mexicans dating somewhere between 1460.
and 1470; * since we know that Mayapan was the only city which implored the aid of the Aztecs, and that after its destruction the inhabitants obtained permission to establish themselves in the province of Maxcanu, east of Merida, where their descendants are found to this very day. These repetitions were necessary to convince a class of archaeologists who claim for these monuments a hoary antiquity.

* Compare the striking resemblance between the Aztec warrior in our Temalacatl drawing, chap. iii. p. 42, and the kneeling figure.
CHAPTER XX.

UXMAL.


From Kabah to Santa Helena we travel at last on a good road, wide enough to secure us against collisions, smooth enough and shady enough to make locomotion highly agreeable; a sensation which is increased rather than diminished on reaching the beautiful native village of Santa Helena, extending over a wide expanse divided in square blocks like a modern town. Each
dwellings are planted with ciruelos, with orange-trees, a profusion of flowers, and encompassed by a fencing wall. Near the huts are aerial gardens, made by means of poles fixed in the ground supporting twined branches covered over with a few inches of earth, where the cottagers grow flowers and vegetables; while the yard is occupied by multitudes of cackling hens, quacking ducks, and grunting pigs. The church stands in the centre of the village, on the site of an ancient temple.

This hamlet was like a vision of the past, for from all we had seen and knew, it was easy to conjure up what it had been in former times. Nor will it seem unnatural that little or no modification should be observable in an Indian village, if it be considered what powerful factors are traditions, instincts, and surroundings, particularly with a rural population. When the Spaniards imposed their religion on the Mayas, they did so by the sword rather than persuasion; but the natives retained their culture, their customs, and their national dress, whereas the conquerors forgot their own language, were modified at the contact of the subdued race, and adopted their ancient institutions, the better to replace the caciques.

Yucatan, as we have seen, was under a feudal system of government before the Conquest, when it was followed by "encomiendas," giving the Spaniards the right to enforce the services of the natives to the number of one or two thousand to each cavalier according to his importance. The marks of this system are observable in all great buildings which formerly were a centre or a manor-house; whilst from the number of pyramids may be surmised the power of the cacique once the lord of the locality. At the present day, it is true, centres are few in number, and in consequence of the cruel treatment of the natives by the conquerors, they havefallen to a tenth of their primitive numerical strength; yet cities, ham-
lets, and haciendas are even now standing witnesses of how far superior was the condition of the Mayas before the coming of the Europeans. Nothing is changed, save that the ancient lords have fallen into servile condition, that haciendas and Moorish-Spanish structures have superseded the princely palaces and the mansions of the gentry, and that the straight American doorway and triangular arch are replaced by the Arab-Hispano arch; but if the ancient palaces are a ruinous mass, the huts of the peasantry cluster now as of old around the manor-house. Religion alone has changed; the church has succeeded to the temple without replacing it; the Christian dogma seems cold and arid to a singularly mystic people, who in the days of their national life peopled the forests with votive chapels and mysterious voices.

To continue: we reach safely Sac-Akal, a wretched hacienda lost in a trackless wilderness, when we disappear in the dense vegetation which completely invades our path, and after much difficulty we arrive at the hacienda of Uxmal late in the evening. We are received by the mayor-domo, Don Perez, and, under the auspices of his charming daughter, an excellent supper is soon got ready; when, with feet under the table, and a pleasant talk with our host, the fatigues and harass of the journey are soon forgotten. The hacienda is no longer the dismal habitation of former days; on its site is reared an imposing pile of building, containing lofty apartments, surrounded by open cloisters. A sugar factory gives employment to a large number of hands, while a tramway connects it with the sugar plantations, and facilitates the transport to the mill. All is bustle, movement, and noise; but the place is now as unhealthy as ever, and the mayor-domo himself is a martyr to fever and ague.

The ruins are some two thousand yards beyond. We set
out the next day to visit them; but the aspect of these old palaces, which I had looked forward to visiting with so much anticipation, was most disappointing. Owing to the vegetation which is suffered to clothe everything with its thick green mantle, the general outline of the city, nay, an entire structure, is no longer discernible. From their state of good preservation some monuments at Uxmal seem to belong to the revival we noticed at Kabah, and to be more recent than those at Chichen.

The place has been so often visited and written about that we will limit ourselves with describing the palaces reproduced in our cuts, noticing, at the same time, any fresh indication in support of our theory.

The Governor's Palace, reared on three successive colossal terraces, is the most extensive, the best known, and the most magnificent monument of Central America; its ornamentation is in turns simple or very elaborate. The frieze, which runs in a line of 325 feet, having a row of colossal heads, divided in panels, filled alternately with grecques in high relief, and diamond or lattice-work, is most striking in its effect. The palace looks new, although it has been abandoned for over three hundred years; and it would be entire had it not been for the vandalism of its owners, who used the stones of the basement for the erection of their hacienda.

The youthful appearance of this edifice is obvious to the observer, for monuments, like men, carry more or less their age on their countenance, which a thoughtful mind can easily read. Their wrinkles are seen in the fissures of their walls, in their stones eaten away by the elements, whilst the moss, the trees, and the lianas mantling over them, complete their hoary exterior.

A tradition derives the name of Uxmal from a word meaning
ornamentación exterior; pero el interior era de gran riqueza, y las columnas y paredes están cubiertas de bajos relieves en los que se ostentan largas filas de personajes, tan corroídos por el tiempo que no podemos copiar ninguno. Por fortuna, encontraremos otra sala del mismo género mejor conservada. En medio de las dos grandes paredes había emportadas, una enfrente de otra, dos grandes anillas de piedra por cuyo agujero había de pasar la pelota ó bala de los jugadores, anilla semejante á la que representa el grabado de la pág. 294 descubierta por mí en Tula y que procedía del Juego de pelota de la antigua ciudad tolteca. Las anillas de Chichen, una de las cuales está todavía en su sitio, son poco más ó menos de las mismas dimensiones que la de la Tula.

La sola existencia de este gran monumento destinado al juego nacional del que nos hablan todos los historiadores y al cual llaman Tlachtli y Tlachco, es ya una prueba harto convincente de la influencia tolteca en el Yucatan, por cuanto representa las construcciones que tenían el mismo destino en las tierras altas. Las enormes proporciones del Tlachtli de Chichen-Itza, la riqueza ornamental del monumento, del cual se pueden admirar algunos detalles, nos demuestran que el juego nacional de las altas mesetas no había desmerecido en el Yucatan.

A juzgar por los fragmentos de escultura que nos quedan, como basas, fustes de columna y bajos relieves, podemos suponer que este magnífico edificio estaba dedicado á Quetzalcoatl ó Cuculcan, que representan el mismo personaje deificado. En efecto, hay en el extremo sur de la pared oriental un monumento en el cual se ve su imagen simbólica por doquiera.

Este monumento se compone de dos piezas de rica ornamentación, la primera de las cuales tenía un pórtico como las que ya hemos visto, descolgaba con proporciones mucho más grandiosas: la fotografía que de ella damos bastará para que se juzgue de su importancia. La cabeza de serpiente que sirve de basa á la columna y cuya lengua maciza sale de su boca entreabierta, tiene más de tres metros de largo; el asunto está bien tratado, la escultura muy acabada y el conjunto lleno de gracia y majestad. La serpiente es la imagen consagrada de Quetzalcoatl. El estilo de esta cabeza es enteramente igual á las que debían adornar el gran templo de México, acabadas de descubrir al abrir unas zanjas delante de la catedral, y que datan de 1434 á 1486.

En la parte superior de este mismo monumento y mirando al Sur, hay un bonito friso con una serie de tigres que tienen las patas levantadas, de hermoso carácter, cuyo friso debe representar también á Quetzalcoatl: lo cual viene á corroborar mi aserto de que los toltecas dedicaron en Chichen este Juego de pelota á dicha divinidad, puesto que no tan sólo la encontramos bajo la imagen simbólica de la serpiente cubierta de plumas, sino que también bajo la de los tigres del friso, los cuales deben recordar una leyenda que encontramos en Mendieta y que más adelante reproduciremos.

En este mismo edificio, la pieza reentrant del pórtico arruinado del que hemos presentado la imagen contenía hace veinte años los documentos más preciosos; era una serie de pinturas que reproducían varios episodios de la vida íntima y de la vida pública de los mayas. Estas pinturas han desaparecido hoy, destruidas por exploradores bárbaros ó por los antiguos
"thrice built;" whether the town was demolished and reconstructed, or whether its monuments were built three times, does not appear. The latter version would indicate the Indian method of building. In fact, this is seen in all our drawings of the palace, where the fallen edifice shows that the inner wall is in a perfect state of preservation, forming an independent work. These inner walls formed the apartments of the edifice, and in all probability were perpendicular to a height of some 6 to 9 feet, when the side walls began to approach each other so as to form the false vault (triangular arch) of the double range of apartments of the palace.

This was the shell or first construction. Then the interval between the arches was filled by layers of stone, whilst the outside walls, resting on the arches, were solid masonry. This was the second construction. Then came the third, when the outer walls were covered with tenons and sculptures. It should be added that this mode of building is applicable to all stone structures, and may have been generally adopted.

Two cisterns and a picoté are found on the esplanade facing the palace. The entrance or mouth to each cistern is a circular opening, 9 feet deep by 16 feet in diameter. Similar excavations are of frequent occurrence throughout the city of Uxmal and the vicinity, where they were chiefly used by the lower orders. There were also great artificial reservoirs, with cisterns at the bottom for collecting rain-water.

The decoration on the main entrance of this palace deserves particular mention. The wooden lintels have been removed, the projecting cornice has fallen; but above it the walls were covered with ornamentation in high relief of infinite skill and magnificence, which, alas! has been destroyed or carried away by early explorers. Higher still are three eagles with half-spread wings, followed by a circular pedestal supporting the mutilated bust of
a human figure, without arms, and whose head, now deficient, was surmounted by a lofty plumed head-dress. In the plinth are three heads of Roman type, beautifully executed; while on each side of the main figure are the inscriptions which we reproduce.

At Uxmal, all the lintels over the doorways are of wood, of which a large proportion is in a perfect state of preservation—a clear proof of their recent period. Nor were these the only pieces of wood used in these buildings: across the ceilings from side to side, and about mid-height, stretched small wooden beams, the ends of which were built in the stone-work, as seen by the holes in the walls and the ends of the beams which have not completely disappeared. We have said in a former chapter that doors were unknown to the aborigines; here four rings or stone hooks are found inside the doorways near the top, from which it is easy to conjecture that a wooden board was placed inside against the opening, and kept in place.
by two transversal bars entering the stone hooks. It is the only place where I have observed this innovation, which seems to indicate a later epoch for Uxmal.

Phallus worship was recognised and practised both on the
plateaux and in Yucatan, and numerous traces have been found everywhere; whilst here, a collection is to be seen in the Governor’s Palace.

The Nunnery is the largest building at Uxmal; if less magnificent than the Governor’s Palace, its ornamentation is throughout exceedingly rich, varied, and elaborate. We give Stephens’ plan and measurements. This monument, supported on three superimposed terraces, forms a vast quadrangle consisting of four wings of different dimensions, surrounding a court 258 feet by 214 feet. The southern front is 279 feet long, while the centre is occupied by the main entrance, 10 feet 8 inches wide, with a triangular arch some 20 feet high. This side is less richly decorated than the rest. Facing
this entrance stands the northern wing, the ornamentation of which is wonderfully diversified, consisting of grecques, lattice-work, and bas-reliefs, representing birds and human beings, whilst small porticoes, intersected by pavilions with the usual superimposed great idols, are found everywhere. The southern front is reared on a terrace which is reached by a stairway 264 feet long by 95 feet wide, and about 25 feet high; it is pierced by thirteen openings, corresponding to a range of thirteen small apartments two deep. The western wing, almost entirely destroyed, gives nevertheless a good idea of its fine ornamentation. It consisted of a frieze divided into panels with the usual devices, and huge Indian statues in high relief; two immense feathered serpents wreathed the panels occupying the whole length of the façade, 173 feet from end to end, whilst the heads, and the tails with rattles, met at the extremities, like those on the table-land. The eastern wing is entire and almost intact; the front measures 158 feet, having an elegant frieze composed of stone trellis-work, intersected by serpentine trophies disposed in fan-like fashion, while towards the top are symbolic figures admirably treated. This side is severe in design, more simple, and in better taste than the rest. The Nunnery consisted of eighty-eight apartments, of all dimensions, varying from 19 feet to 32 feet long.

The Dwarf's House, also the Casa del Adivino, the Prophet's House, is a charming temple crowning a pyramid with a very steep slope 100 feet high. It consists of two parts: one reared on the upper summit, the other a kind of chapel lower down, facing the town. It was richly ornamented, and presumably dedicated to a great deity. Two stairways facing east and west led to these buildings. Padre Cogolludo, who visited this temple in 1656, is the first to complain of the steep staircase, which caused
his head to swim. He found in one of these apartments offerings of cocoa and copal which had been burnt very recently; consequently, fifteen years after the Conquest the natives were still sacrificing to their gods, and practising their superstitions in their own temples. That these edifices were entire in Cogolludo’s time is beyond doubt, since the Governor’s Palace, the eastern and southern sides of the Nunnery, are still standing. They appeared new to Lizana, who (1616) says: “These buildings are alike both in style and architecture; all are reared on supporting mounds (ku, plural kues), which inclines one to think that they were built at the same time, by the order of one guiding head, seeing that they are similar. Some look so new and so
clean, their wooden lintels so perfect, that they do not seem to have been built more than twenty years. These palaces must have been used as temples and sanctuaries, for the dwellings of the
natives were thatched, and always in the depths of the forests." *

This quotation is not indicative of very early monuments, while it shows that the similarity of the monuments was noticed and recorded by the first explorers; it will not, therefore, appear unnatural that aided by documents, when we write the history of one monument should be equivalent to writing the history of all; and that the architectural manifestations which are identical throughout Central America should be ascribed to one people, the Toltecs. The culture of a nation is gauged by their monuments; if so, where are the structures marking the existence of the Toltecs? Although of great solidity, and not four hundred years old, had they entirely disappeared at the time of the Conquest, and are the monuments we now behold the remains of ancient buildings unknown to them? But such a conclusion is belied by history and tradition. We will terminate these discussions with a few words from Cogolludo, who says of these edifices: "They are about the same as those in New Spain, described by Torquemada in his 'Indian Monarchy.'" †

Stephens has a legend relating to the Dwarf's House, which we reproduce: "An old woman lived alone in her hut, rarely leaving her chimney-corner. She was much distressed at having no children; in her grief, one day she took an egg, wrapped it up carefully in a cotton cloth, and put it in a corner of her hut. She looked at it every day with great anxiety, but no change in the egg was observable; one morning, however, she found the shell broken, and a lovely tiny creature was stretching out its arms to her. The old woman was in raptures; she took

* Lizana, chap. ii. This author does not take into consideration the abandonment of the cities by the natives at the Conquest.
† Cogolludo, tome i. lib. iv. cap. vi.
it to her heart, gave it a nurse, and was so careful of it, that at
the end of a year the baby walked and talked as well as a grown-
up man; but he stopped growing. The good old woman in her
joy and delight exclaimed that the baby should be a great chief.
One day, she told him to go to the king's palace and engage
him in a trial of strength. The dwarf begged hard not to be
sent on such an enterprise; but the old woman insisted on
his going, and he was obliged to obey. When ushered into
the presence of the sovereign, he threw down his gauntlet; the
latter smiled, and asked him to lift a stone of three arobes
(75 lb.). The child returned crying to his mother, who sent
him back, saying: 'If the king can lift the stone, you can lift
it too.' The king did take it up, but so did the dwarf. His
strength was tried in many other ways, but all the king did
was as easily done by the dwarf. Wroth at being outdone
by so puny a creature, the prince told the dwarf that unless
he built a palace loftier than any in the city, he should die. The
affrighted dwarf returned to the old woman, who bade him not
to despair, and the next morning they both awoke in the palace
which is still standing. The king saw with amazement the
palace; he instantly sent for the dwarf and desired him to collect
two bundles of cogoiol (a kind of hard wood), with one of which
he would strike the dwarf on the head, and consent to be struck
in return by his tiny adversary. The latter again returned to
his mother moaning and lamenting; but the old woman cheered
him up, and placing a tortilla on his head, sent him back to
the king. The trial took place in the presence of all the State
grandees; the king broke the whole of his bundle on the dwarf's
head without hurting him in the least, seeing which he wished
to save his head from the impending ordeal, but his word
had been passed before his assembled court, and he could not
well refuse. The dwarf struck, and at the second blow, the
king's skull was broken to pieces. The spectators immediately proclaimed the victorious dwarf their sovereign. After this the old woman disappeared; but in the village of Mani, fifty miles distant, is a deep well leading to a subterraneous passage which extends as far as Merida. In this passage is an old woman sitting on the bank of a river shaded by a great tree, having a serpent by her side. She sells water in small quantities, accepting no money, for she must have human beings, innocent babies, which are devoured by the serpent. This old woman is the dwarf's mother."

Uxmal is the only city where the monuments are so grouped as to make it possible to take a panoramic view, which the reader can follow one by one in our drawing. To the left, in the distance, is the "Casa de la Vieja," the Old Woman's House; next comes the Governor's Palace, showing the west side and about three-fourths of the edifice; more in front, to the right, the "Casa de las Tortugas," Turtle House, so called from a row of turtles occurring at regular intervals above the upper cornice. To the rear, a great pyramid crowned by a vast platform, without monuments, known as "Cerro de los Sacrificios," Mound of Sacrifice. It is on the plan of the Mexican temples, which consisted, like this monument, of a pyramid with small wood chapels containing idols and the terrible teotchcall. The Toltecs, who did not practise human sacrifice, had real temples on the summits of their pyramids, like those in Yucatan, where they developed this kind of architecture. Consequently, if human sacrifices are met among the Mayas, they must be attributed to Mexican influence, and all writers agree that the monuments devoted to this horrible practice date from the fifteenth century (1440), and are of Aztec origin.

To the right of this mound is another pyramid, having several stories like the Castillo at Chichen, and similar monuments at
que se servían, y esto vendría a explicar esa muchedumbre de edificios construidos con rapidez asombrosa, á juzgar por el gran templo de México.

Este templo, cuyo patio embaldosado tenía cerca de doscientos metros de lado, encerraba tantos edificios que se le comparaba a una ciudad; su pirámide maciza, que tenía cien metros de base por treinta y cinco de altura, estaba enriquecida con enormes piedras esculpidas: pues bien, tan gigantesca obra quedó terminada en seis años.

Nuestros peones han abierto de un modo muy rudimentario el camino que va á parar á las ruinas; á cada paso tropezamos con rocas y troncos de árboles en los que está expuesto cien veces á volcar nuestro carruaje, y por más prudencia que recomendamos, los malditos cocheros no hacen caso; al contrario, corren, la volanta da un salto, y un tronco más voluminoso que halla al paso es causa de que todos rodemos por el suelo. Nos levantamos sin grave daño, habiéndose estropeado únicamente el techo de la volanta, y como nos hallamos a dos pasos de las ruinas, nos trasladamos á ellas á pie sin más percance.

Los historiadores apenas hacen mención de las ruinas de Kabah, como tampoco de las de Labnah, Suecuy, Labphak, Iturbide, etc., grupos de ciudades antiguas á treinta y cuarenta leguas al Sur de Mérida, pero cuyos príncipes designan incidentalmente, dáéndoles el nombre de gentes de la Sierra, porque dichas ciudades estaban situadas al otro lado de la cadena de colinas que atraviesa el Yucatan.
Palenque; it was crowned by a beautiful temple, now in a very ruined condition. Still to the right, but more in front, is the curious building known as “Casa de las Palomas,” Pigeon House, owing to immense peaks terminating the decorative wall, pierced by large openings arranged in horizontal rows, which may well have served as a pigeon-house. It should be added that at Uxmal the decorative wall is only found in the most dilapidated monuments deficient of any stucco mouldings, showing an earlier epoch.

Fronting these buildings, on the second plan, are more ruins; the most conspicuous being the Tlachtli or Tennis-court, and the south side of the Nunnery with its main entrance, which gives access to the inner court, where traces of pavement are still visible.

An official document given by Stephens will confirm our views respecting these monuments. Stephens found it among the papers of the Peon family, in a petition from Don Lorenzo Evia to the King of Spain (1673), praying a grant of four leagues of land from the buildings of Uxmal, “since,” he says, “no injury could result to any third person, but on the contrary very great service to God our Lord, because with that establishment it would prevent the Indians in those places from worshipping the devil in the ancient buildings which are there, having in them their idols, to which they burn copal and perform other detestable sacrifices, as they are doing every day notoriously and publicly.” And further: “In the place called the edifices of Uxmal and its lands, the 3rd day of the month of January, 1688,” etc.,* concluding: “In virtue of the power and authority given me by the Governor, I took the hand of the said Lorenzo, and he walked with me all over Uxmal and its buildings, opened and shut some doors, cut within the

space some trees, picked up stones and threw them down, drew water from one of the aguados, and performed other acts of possession."*

This was 150 years after the Conquest; but by this time the reader must be convinced that edifices, notably at Uxmal, were inhabited before and after the coming of Europeans; that they were recent, and that, broadly speaking, the monuments of Yucatan were the work of the existing race, erected at various epochs by the Toltec conquerors.

We will end these long discussions by a quotation from Baron Friedrichsthal, regarding the probable age of these ruins, showing that our theory was promulgated some forty-three years ago, not only by Stephens, but also by the illustrious German scholar: "Historians are unanimous in ascribing all the existing stone structures to the Toltecs or the Aztecs. The latter, however, did not invade New Spain until the middle of the thirteenth century, while no traces are found of their having migrated south. Aztec architecture is quite distinct from the Toltec, which a comparison of Mexican buildings with those found at Palenque sufficiently show; the latter being generally ascribed to the Toltecs by all ancient authorities. The evident analogy which exists between the edifices at Palenque and the ruins in Yucatan, favours the assumption of one origin, although different epochs must be assigned to each, by reason of the progress visible in their treatment. To fix these epochs with some show of probability seems to us, if not impossible, at least very difficult. A thorough exploration, supported by a minute and exhaustive comparison of the standing remains, coupled with a careful observation of the causes and circumstances which have produced or contributed to the state of dilapidation wherein these ruins are

* Stephens, "Incidents of Travels in Yucatan," tome 1, p. 324.
found, could alone throw some light across the darkness which has settled over these monuments for so many centuries.” (This is exactly what we have done.)

“The solidity of these edifices is not equal to that of monuments of other nations, which were built throughout the thickness of their walls with stones of different size; whereas the inside of the American wall is a rude mixture of friable mortar and small irregular stones. This heterogeneous composition must have produced the rupture or dislocation of the outward facing as soon as the whole was under the influence of atmospheric moisture, and the rapid infiltrations which were produced by its upper portions. Moreover, the calcareous stone used in these buildings is considered as a very inferior material, as seen by the progressive decomposition of those portions of the buildings which are exposed to the direct influence of the north-east wind, and the consequent action of the prevailing rain. Nor is this all. In the wood used in almost all northern structures, examples are met of resinous wood having lain buried or submerged, in a semi-state of petrifaction, over a thousand years. Now in the Yucatec ruins the cornices and lintels of the doorways, of zapoté wood, were exposed to the open air. This wood, although very hard, not being resinous like cedar, is attacked by devouring insects. For this reason it does not seem probable that these woods are more than six or seven hundred years old. If this supposition be called purely hypothetical, the thoughtful reader has a perfect right to form his opinion from more solid data, while I claim the same to express mine; not that I deem myself infallible—for, says the German proverb, ‘Truth is only attained after repeated tumbles on the rocks of error.’” *

American monuments, considered artistically, are but the rude manifestations of a semi-barbarous race, which it were idle to endow with intrinsic value, seeing that their original plans are wanting both in accuracy and symmetry, while their materials are ill-cut, their joints far apart even in bas-reliefs, where the intervening spaces are filled up with cement. Consequently these buildings cannot compare with Indian, Egyptian or Assyrian monuments: for here we have a nation who in the whole course of their political life, extending over several centuries, produced but one note, emitted but one sound; because they had neither traditions nor a higher civilisation around them to draw from. And, although here and there some happier mood is seen, whether in sculpture or cement modelling, their occurrence is too rare ever to have become general. The chief merit of these buildings lies in their interest for the archaeologist and the intelligent, who are necessarily few; and this explains the silence of the conquerors respecting them. How well I remember my servant's strictures on hearing my exclamation of delightful surprise as I stood the first time before the Governor's Palace: "Well, I can't, for my part, see anything so wonderful in it; there isn't a French bricklayer who couldn't do quite as well and better." François, on his return home, would no more have dreamt of recounting of the wonderful buildings he had seen in the New World, than did the Spaniards three hundred years before.

It is with something of the feeling which is experienced at parting from a long-cherished friend that we take leave of the curious, barbarous, yet withal charming ruins, thrice visited with delight ever fresh, with interest all the more vivid that I have succeeded in lifting the deep shroud which covered them, and if on that account they are no longer surrounded with mysterious awe, they will not be less interesting.
We set out, directing our march through Muna, which has a fine well, seemingly of Indian construction. A native feast is being held, and here, as throughout the State, it means a grand opportunity for getting drunk. We push on, sleep at a broken-down hovel called Abala, and the next day we are once more comfortably settled among our household gods.
CHAPTER XXI.

CAMPECHE AND TENOSIQUE.


Here we take our passage for Campeche on the Asturias, a diminutive, small steamer, having but four Liliputian berths; luckily enough we are the only passengers; had it been otherwise, we must have kept on deck day and night. The sea is like an immense sheet of glass, the heavens radiant with stars; our boat draws very little water, so that we skirt close to the shore, and are able to follow the graceful panorama which unfolds before us; and in the morning early we cast anchor four miles off Campeche because of the high surf, but the outline of which is plainly visible.

Campeche was built on the site of an Indian city, and visited by Antonio Cordova in his first ill-fated expedition (1517). "The natives," says Diaz, "were friendly, and took us to ex-