

BOOK V.

THE MEXICAN STATES AND TERRITORIES;  
THEIR GEOGRAPHICAL DIVISIONS, CITIES, TOWNS, PRODUCTIONS,  
MINES, GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS, ANTIQUITIES, ETC.

CHAPTER I.

DIVISION OF MEXICO INTO STATES—EASTERN, WESTERN, INTERIOR.  
YUCATAN—BOUNDARIES, DEPARTMENTS, POPULATION, DISTRICTS,  
TOWNS, PARISHES, PRODUCTIONS, PRINCIPAL TOWNS, ISLANDS, HAR-  
BORS.—CHIAPAS—BOUNDARIES, PRODUCTS, DEPARTMENTS, TOWNS,  
RIVERS, POPULATION—REMAINS IN YUCATAN AND CHIAPAS.—DIS-  
COVERIES OF STEPHENS, CATHERWOOD, NORMAN, ETC.—PALENQUE  
—UXMAL—YUCATAN CALENDAR.—YUCATAN, CHIAPAN, MECOACAN,  
NICARAGUA AND MEXICAN MONTHS.—YUCATESE AND CHIAPAN CY-  
CLE.—YUCATESE AND MEXICAN SOLAR YEAR—DIFFERENCES.—  
YUCATESE MONTHS.—TABASCO—BOUNDARIES, RIVERS, LAGUNE,  
INHABITANTS, PRODUCTIONS, TOWNS AND VILLAGES.

IN treating this branch of our subject we have followed the order adopted by Mühlenpfordt in his "Republik Mejico," and acknowledge the important assistance we have derived from the careful, minute and laborious personal researches made by that industrious German author relative to the geography of Mexico. Since the publication of his volumes, in which he had been greatly aided by the previous works of Humboldt, Ward, Burkhardt and other explorers during the present century, the Mexican government has organized a Statistical Commission, whose investigations have been published in a series of Bulletins, and to these we are indebted for recent authentic information about some of the most interesting portions of Mexico. The northern regions, meanwhile, have been illustrated by the explorations of Frémont, Abert, Emory, Wislizenius, Cooke, Simpson, and other officers of the American Government; but as most of the territory examined by them has become the property of the United States by the Treaty of Guadalupe, their labors are not of importance in describing the Republic of Mexico as at present bounded. In the last Book of this work, however, which we have devoted to the consideration of California and New Mexico, we shall recur to those brave and scientific explorers of a remote region, so recently a wilderness, but which their labors, and

the combined fortune of war and mineral wealth have subdued for the benefit of mankind.

In accordance with the plan proposed in the separate consideration of the several States and Territories of Mexico, we shall divide them into three groups:—those on the eastern or Gulf coast; those on the western or Pacific coast, and those in the interior.

I.—EASTERN OR GULF COAST.

- The State of Yucatan.                      The State of Vera Cruz.
- “ State of Chiapas.                      “ State of Tamaulipas.
- “ State of Tabasco.

II.—WESTERN OR PACIFIC COAST.

- The State of Oajaca.                      The State of Jalisco.
- “ State of Puebla.                      “ Territory of Colima.
- “ Territory of Tlascala.                      “ State of Sinaloa.
- “ State of Mexico and Federal District.                      “ State of Sonora.
- “ State of Guerrero.
- The State of Michoacan.                      “ Territory of L. California.

III.—INTERIOR.

- The State of Queretaro.                      The State of New Leon.
- “ State of Guanajuato.                      “ State of Coahuila.
- “ State of Zacatecas.                      “ State of Durango.
- “ State of San Luis Potosi.                      “ State of Chihuahua.

THE STATE OF YUCATAN.

The State of Yucatan, sometimes known by the name of Merida or Campeché, occupies the greater portion of the peninsula which bounds the southern edge of the Gulf of Mexico. Its eastern side is washed by the Caribbean Sea, and touched by the settlements at Balize; on the south it is bounded by Guatemala; on the west by the Gulf of Mexico and the States of Chiapas and Tabasco, from which it is separated by the river Paicutun that falls into the Laguna de Terminos. Its northern coast extends from Cape Catoché to the Punta de Piedras, about eighty-six leagues; and the whole area of the State is computed at 3,823 square leagues.

Yucatan possesses very few streams and none of importance that are known or explored. On the west of the peninsula, debouching into the Gulf of Mexico, there are the rivers or rivulets of Escatalto, Chen, Champoton;—the San Francisco falls into the Bay of Campeché; in the north there are the Silan, the Cedros, and the Conil; while the streams of Bolina, the Rio Nuevo, the Bacalar, the As-

cension, and the Honda or Rio Grande pour into the Caribbean Sea. In 1841 the population of the State is stated in a census, taken by order of the government, as follows:

| Departments.          | Men.    | Women.  | Total.  |
|-----------------------|---------|---------|---------|
| Merida, . . . . .     | 48,606  | 58,663  | 107,269 |
| Izamal, . . . . .     | 32,915  | 37,933  | 70,848  |
| Tekax, . . . . .      | 58,127  | 64,697  | 122,824 |
| Valladolid, . . . . . | 45,353  | 46,926  | 92,279  |
| Campeché, . . . . .   | 39,017  | 40,639  | 79,656  |
| Total, . . . . .      | 224,018 | 248,858 | 472,876 |

This census, although it professes to be accurate, may nevertheless be incomplete, inasmuch as the inhabitants of Yucatan, dreading new contributions and detesting military service, endeavor to reduce as much as possible the number of their families in the lists prepared for government. Besides this, it does not appear to comprehend *all* the departments according to Mühlendorff, who divides the State into fifteen departments.<sup>1</sup> The population has been estimated by some careful writers, acquainted with the people and the country, at 525,000 souls; in our table of population on page 42 of this volume, we have on good authority stated the number to be, in 1842, 508,948, while others have increased the number to 600,000 and even to 630,000, which amount is assigned to Yucatan by a census in 1833! The last mentioned number will give about 165 individuals to each square league.<sup>2</sup>

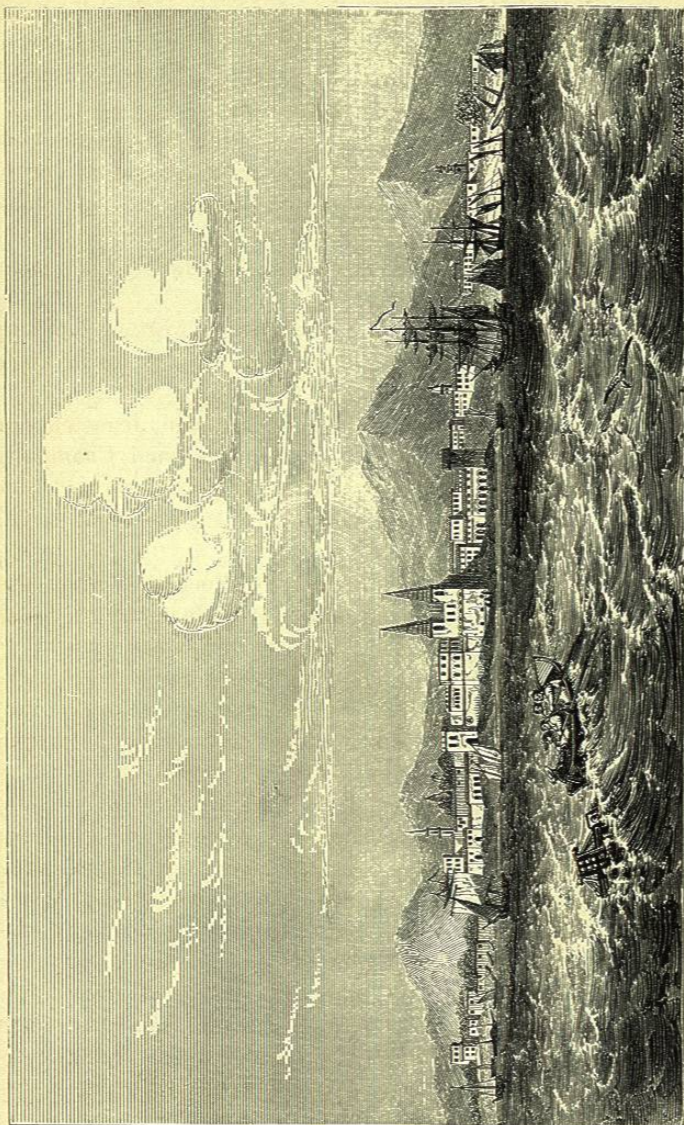
The character and quality of the productions of Yucatan may be estimated by the following statistical table, which has been translated and published by Mr. Stephens in the first volume of his Incidents of Travel in that State.

<sup>1</sup> Bacalar, Campeché, Ichmul or Izamal, Isla de Carmen, Jequetzacan, Junoma, Lerma, Mama, Merida, Oxhucab, Seyba, Playa, Sotula, Tizizimin, and Valladolid. These are the names of the Departments given by Mühlendorff: the first table is taken from Stephens.

<sup>2</sup> Our table of population on page 43 of this volume, adds about 10 per cent. to this number to give the population estimated in 1850.

TABLE OF STATISTICS OF YUCATAN

| DISTRICTS.                       | PRINCIPAL PLACES.                | PARISHES. | VILLAGES ANNEXED. | PRODUCTIONS.   |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------|-------------------|--|
| Capital . . . . .                | Merida . . . . .                 | 4         | 5                 | Horned cattle, horses, mules, tallow, jerked beef, leather, salt, gypsum, hemp, raw and manufactured, straw hats, guitars, cigars, and extract of logwood.   |
| Campeché . . . . .               | City of Campeché . . . . .       | 2         | 4                 | Salt, logwood, rice, sugar, and marble of good quality.  |
| Lerna . . . . .                  | Village of Lerna . . . . .       | 3         | 8                 | Logwood, timber, rice, and fish oil.   |
| Valladolid . . . . .             | City of Valladolid . . . . .     | 11        | 17                | Cotton, sugar, starch, gum copal, tobacco, cochineal, saffron, vanilla, cotton fabrics, yarns, &c., wax, honey, castor oil, horned cattle, hogs, and skins.  |
| Coast . . . . .                  | City of Izamal . . . . .         | 16        | 27                | Horned cattle, horses, mules, tallow, jerked beef, castor oil, hides, wax, honey, timber, indigo, hemp, raw and manufactured, straw cigars, barilla, and salt.   |
| The Upper Highlands . . . . .    | City of Tekax . . . . .          | 9         | 7                 | Horned cattle, horses, mules, hogs, sheep, skins, sugar, molasses, timber, rice, tobacco in the leaf and manufactured, spirits, arrow-root, straw hats, cotton lace, ochre, flints, and grindstones.   |
| The Lower Highlands . . . . .    | Village of Teabo . . . . .       | 8         | 5                 | Horned cattle, horses, mules, hogs, sheep, skins, tallow, dried beef, hemp, raw and manufactured, and cotton lace.   |
| The Upper Royal Road . . . . .   | Town of Jequelehakan . . . . .   | 6         | 11                | Cattle, horses, mules, skins, tallow, dried beef, logwood, tobacco, sugar, and rum.  |
| The Lower Royal Road . . . . .   | Village of Maxcanú . . . . .     | 5         | 7                 | Horned cattle, horses, mules, oil of palma Cristi, tobacco, hemp, and fine straw hats.   |
| The Upper "Beneficios" . . . . . | Village of Ichmul . . . . .      | 7         | 15                | Sugar, molasses, rum, tobacco of good quality, rice, laces, pepper, gum copal, sarsaparilla, hats, hammocks, ebony, barilla, gypsum, and skins.  |
| The Lower "Beneficios" . . . . . | Village of Sotuta . . . . .      | 6         | 16                | Horned cattle, horses, mules, hogs, skins, tallow, and dried beef.   |
| Tizimin . . . . .                | Village of Tizimin . . . . .     | 7         | 18                | Tortoise-shell, skins, timber, logwood, India-rubber, incense, tobacco, achiotte (a substitute for saffron, and a very rich dye), starch from the yuca, cotton, wax, honey, molasses, sugar, rum, castor oil, salt, amber, vanilla, hogs, cochineal. |
| Island of Cármen . . . . .       | Town of Cármen . . . . .         | 2         | 1                 | Logwood.   |
| Seiba-playa . . . . .            | Village of Seiba-playa . . . . . | 3         | 6                 | Timber, rice, logwood, and salt.   |
| Bacalar . . . . .                | Town of Bacalar . . . . .        | 2         | 4                 | Logwood, valuable timber, sugar of inferior quality, tobacco of the best description, rum, a fine species of hemp, known under the name of pita, resin, India-rubber, gum copal, pimento, sarsaparilla, vanilla, and gypsum.                         |
| Total . . . . .                  | 15                               | 91        | 143               |  |



CAMPECHE.

The principal towns of Yucatan, are, 1st: the capital, MERIDA, in the northern part of the state, about ten leagues from the coast, containing a population of near 15,000 individuals. Its port is the small haven of Sisal, which is in reality nothing but a bleak roadstead, protected by a fort and a sand bank.

2nd: SAN FRANCISCO DE CAMPECHÉ, with a population of about 9,000;—a port which is considered by navigators one of the best in the state, yet is by no means, a secure or comfortable anchorage.

3rd: VALLADOLID, the chief town of the district of that name, with near 4,000 inhabitants.

4th: San Felipe de Bacalar, or Salamanca; a town and military post in the district of that name, containing a garrison and about one hundred and twenty houses.

Besides these, there are the villages of Xampolan, Jequetchacan, Lerma, Champoton, between the rivers Campeché and Champoton on the west coast, and Silan, Santa Clara, Vigia del rio and Chaboána, on the north coast. In the interior there are many Indian villages.

The Island of Cozumel on the east coast of Yucatan—which was the first land discovered by the Spaniards in their voyage to Mexico,—is now almost uninhabited, and contains some ancient remains, which are probably the ruins of the splendid structures that attracted the attention of the adventurers, and satisfied them they had reached a land which was sufficiently civilized to be worthy their exploration and plunder.

It has generally been supposed that Yucatan affords no safe harbors or anchorages, which would either tempt commercial enterprise to her shores, or afford vessels of war sufficient protection so as to render the peninsula valuable in a military point of view. Yet it seems from an official copy of a recent British survey of the coast of Yucatan, which is to be found in the office of our Coast Survey in Washington, that there is a fine harbor for vessels of any size under the island of Mugerres, the easternmost point of Yucatan, where they may ride at anchor in safety, protected from winds in every direction. The harbors of Ascension and Espiritu Bay, are represented as good; the latter being capable of holding a fleet of the heaviest kind of English frigates and war steamers. There is good anchorage, moreover, off the north-east point of the island of Cozumel.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Senator Cass' speech, on the proposed occupation of Yucatan, in the Senate, May 10th, 1848, p. 7.

## THE STATE OF CHIAPAS.

This state has been very inadequately examined. It is bounded north by Tabasco; south and south-west by the Republic of Central America, or Guatemala; west by the state of Vera Cruz and by a small part of Oajaca; and on the east partly by Yucatan and partly by Guatemala. Until the year 1833 the territory comprised in this division belonged to Guatemala, when it joined the Mexican confederacy. Comprehending the northern declivities of the Cordilleras and table lands of Central America, Chiapas is, throughout a considerable part of its territory, cut up into successions of ridges and valleys, which are rich in many of the finest tropical productions. Corn, cacao, sugar and garden vegetables are produced readily. Tobacco of good quality grows in the district of Sandoval, and in the neighborhood of Oajaca. In the district of Tonalá, a small quantity of indigo of an extraordinarily fine quality is cultivated; and here, also, pepper and the maguey plant are yielded plentifully. Ananas, sapotes, bananas, figs, apricots and various similar fruits abound in Chiapas, while in its forests, oaks, cedar, mahogany, ebony, and other valuable woods are found in considerable quantities. But the greater part of this fruitful state is still an unknown waste, which the labors of other races must fully explore and develop.

Chiapas is divided into four departments and nine districts, which, together, possess 92 parishes.

1st: The Department of the Centre, with 12 parishes, besides the capital of Ciudad-Real, or San Cristoval de los Llanos and the the town of Chamúla.

2nd: The Department of the South, with 10 parishes, in the district of Llanos, 11 in Ocozingo, and 17 in Tuxtla.

3rd: The Department of the West, with the district of Ystocmitan, containing 17 parishes; Tonalá, 3 parishes; and Palenque, 4 parishes.

4th: The Department of the North, with the districts of Tila, containing 6 parishes, and Simojoval, 12 parishes.

The chief towns are, CIUDAD-REAL, or SAN CRISTOVAL DE LOS LLANOS; a fine town with about 6,000 inhabitants, possessing a cathedral church, four convents for monks, and one for nuns, two chapels, and a hospital. The first bishop of Chiapas, who erected the see of that name in 1538, was the renowned Bartolomé de las Casas, whose fame is so intimately connected with the early history of the country, by his constant and merciful interference in behalf of the Indians.

The other important towns are San Juan Chamúla, containing 4,000 inhabitants; San Bartolomé de los Llanos, whose 7,000 people are chiefly engaged in the cultivation of cotton, sugar, tobacco and corn; San Domingo Comitlan; San Jacinto Ocozingo, with 3,000 inhabitants who devote themselves to the care of cattle, and cultivate some cacao and corn; Tuxtla, with 5,000 inhabitants who trade in tobacco and cacao; San Domingo Sinacantan, on the borders of Tabasco in the territory of the Zoques, with 2,500 inhabitants who employ themselves in the culture of silk, of which they weave shawls and other similar fabrics, which are esteemed of a good merchantable quality, and are used in the country or adjacent states; Chiapa de los Indios; Tecpatlan; Ostoacan; Teopixca; Acapala; Capanabastla; Izcuintenango; San Fernando Guadalupe; and Simojovel.

Chiapas is represented to be rich in rivers which rise chiefly in the highlands towards the state of Tabasco and debouche into the Mexican Gulf. The Tabasco river or the Rio de Grijalva; the Usumasinta, the Chicsoi or the Santa Isabella; — the Machaquita, San Pedro, Dolores, Yalchitan, Chacamas, Zeldales, Yeixihujat, Chatlan, and some others; the Pacaitún or Paicutun; the laguna de Chiapa; some mineral waters; and a valuable salt spring in the vicinity of San Mateo, enrich various portions of this fertile state, whose climate, especially in its higher regions, is said to be delicious and uniform. The number of the population of this state is not officially known. In 1831, a census made by order of the governor Ignacio Gutierrez, which however, did not include fifteen parishes, gave 118,775 inhabitants for the rest of the state. An estimate in a Mexican calendar of 1833 represents the number to be about 96,000, while the government calculation for a basis of representation in Congress in 1842, gives it 141,206, to which about 10 per cent. should be added to give the proximate population in 1850. The Indian tribes of the Zoques, Cendales or Zeldales, Teochiapanecos and Mames are still very numerous, and, of course, form the greater part of the population.

## ANCIENT REMAINS IN YUCATAN AND CHIAPAS.

The physical description of these two States, presented in the preceding pages, will have satisfied the reader that they possess a prolific soil and an agreeable climate which would probably attract a large population had they been properly explored and developed by an energetic race. We are sustained in this belief by the fact,