

CHAPTER III.

WEST COAST OR PACIFIC STATES.

OAJACA — EXTENT — BOUNDARIES — GEOLOGY — VALLEY — INDIANS — DEPARTMENTS — POPULATION — MINES — PORTS — PRODUCTIONS — CATTLE — TOWNS — ANCIENT REMAINS — MITLA — THE PALACE — TOMBS — ANTIQUARIAN SPECULATIONS — CONNECTION OF MEXICAN REMAINS — QUIOTEPEC, OR CERRO DE LAS JUNTAS.

THE STATE OF OAJACA.

THIS rich and beautiful State lies, for 118 leagues, along the Pacific Ocean. On the north-west, it is bounded by the State of Puebla, on the north by Vera Cruz, and east by the State of Chiapas and the republic of Central America or Guatemala. It extends from east to west about 115 leagues, and from north to south 322 leagues, containing an area of 5,046 square leagues.

We pass now from the hot and sickly sands and marshes of the eastern coast to a region which has been considered by many writers and travellers as the most delightful in Mexico. Beauty of natural scenery and salubrity of climate, fertility of soil and richness of productions, combine to render Oajaca valuable, not only in a commercial aspect, but as a residence in which it would be agreeable to pass a life time. Nor is this the opinion only of the present inhabitants, for the remains of antiquity still found within the limits of the State, prove it to have been the seat of Indian civilization long before the arrival of the Spaniards. The geological structure of this State is different from that of Puebla and Mexico; and the vegetation is quite as vigorous as that of other prolific regions, without the rankness which produces rapid decomposition and miasma. The rains are generally abundant from May to October.

In our general description of the geological and geographical characteristics of Mexico, we have already shown that the great

Cordillera, forming the spine of this continent, divides into two arms after leaving the Isthmus, which connects North and South America. One of these mountain ranges with its high vallies and table lands forms the barrier along the Pacific, while the other spreads out its massive veins throughout the middle and eastern portions of Mexico. Between these formations, the Valley of Oajaca lies embosomed; and from this beautiful and fruitful region, which was bestowed by the Spanish crown upon Cortéz, he obtained his Marquisate del Valle de Oajaca, in which his family still possessed, previous to the revolution, 49 villages, with a population of 17,700 persons.

In these two mountain regions, thus sundered by the valley, have dwelt, from the earliest periods, two Indian races known as the Mixtecas and the Zapotecas; the former of which is characterised by activity, intelligence and industry. Besides these tribes, seventeen others are reckoned still to inhabit Oajaca.

The State is divided into eight departments, which are subdivided into districts or cantons.

1st. The Department of the Centre, with the cantons of Oajaca, Partido del Torané, Etna, Tlacolula, and Zimatlan.

2d. Department of Ejutla, with the cantons of Octolan, Miahuatlan, and Pochutla.

3d. Department of Jamiltepec, with the cantons of Jamiltepec and Juquila.

4th. Department of Tehuantepec, with the cantons of Tehuantepec, Quechapa and Lachixila.

5th. Department of Teposcolula, with the cantons of Teposcolula, Tlaxiaco and Nocnistlan.

6th. Department of Huajuapam, with the cantons of Huajuapam and Justlahuaca.

7th. Department of Toochila and Villalta, with the cantons of Ixtlan, Yalalag and Chuapam.

8th. The Department of Teutilan del Camino, with the cantons of Teutilan and Teutila.

These eight departments and twenty-three cantons, — with nearly 700,000 inhabitants, — contain one city, — the capital, Oajaca; — eight towns; nine hundred and thirteen villages; one hundred and thirty-seven large *haciendas*; two hundred and thirty-five *ranchos*; sixty-eight sugar mills or *trapiches*, and six *estancias* or cattle estates and grazing farms. Besides these elements of agricultural wealth, Oajaca possesses ten mills, driven by water power, nearly

all of which lie in the neighborhood of the capital, and are used chiefly for wheat. Corn is ground or rubbed, for *tortillas*, on the *metate* by the Indian women throughout Mexico; and consequently but little of this kind of grain is ever brought to the mills. There are five mines or mineral workings in the State, at Ystepéxi, Taléa, Tejomulco, Peñoles, and Las Péras, with ten smelting and amalgamating establishments.

There are nine sea ports, roadsteads and anchorages in Oajaca, the best of which are Tehuantepec, Huatulco, Escondido, Chacáhua, and Jamiltepec.

Corn, chile, agave, cotton, coffee, sugar, cacao, vainilla, tobacco, cochineal, wax, honey, and a small quantity of indigo, are the staple productions of this State. Nearly all the fruits which we have already described as growing in the State of Vera Cruz, are produced here abundantly, and of excellent quality.

The State is estimated as containing, on an average of years —

44,106	Horses.
18,438	Mules.
10,420	Asses.
171,518	Neat cattle.
213,156	Sheep.
158,009	Goats.
47,947	Hogs.

Total, 663,600 head of cattle.

The worth of which is calculated, in the home market, at \$3,332,757.

Gold, silver, copper, quicksilver, iron, rock salt, limestone, gypsum, &c., are found in Oajaca. In the thirty-nine years between January, 1787, and March, 1826, the official registers show a product in the State of 4,820 marks of gold, and 544,257 marks of silver; and in the five years from March, 1826, to the end of 1830, 95 marks of gold, and 21,701 of silver. But these sums must not be regarded as perfect indications of the absolute product of Oajaca, inasmuch as its proximity to the sea, and the facilities for smuggling in the lonely districts of the west coast have no doubt enabled the trading community to export a large portion of the real avails of the mines, which, of course, never appear in the authentic registers and returns of the State.

The chief towns and villages of this State are: Oajaca, the capital; Guayápa or Huazapa, Talistaca, Santa Maria del Tule, Tlaco-chahuáya, Teutilan del Valle, Tlacolula, Mitla, the ancient Leoba;

San Dionisio, Totolapa, San Carlos, Villa de Nejapa, Quijichápa, Quiegolani, Tequisistlan, Villa de Jalapa, Tlapalcatepec, Tehautepc, San Francisco de la Mar, Petapa, Juchuitan, Niltepec, Yshuatan, Zanatepec, Tepanatepec, Xoro or Xojocatlan, Cuylapa, Zachila, the ancient Teozapotlan; San Bartolomeo de Zapéche, Zimatlan, Villa de Santa Anna, Chilateca, Santa Cruz Mistepc, San Juan Elotepec, Etila, San Juan del Estado, San Pablo Huizo or Guajolotitlan, Ejutla, Ocotlan, Chichicapa, Ayoquesco, Miahuatlan, Pochutla, Santa Cruz de Huatulco, Juchatengo Tonamaca, Jamiltepec, Acatepec, Juquila, Sacatepéc, Santa Maria Istapa, Teojomulco, Huajuapan, Justláhuaca, Chicahuástla, Achintla, Teita, Villa de Teposcolula, Talaxiaco, Santa Maria Chimalapa, Yanguitlan, Los Pueblos de Almoyas, San Miguel Chimalapa Nochistlan, Tilantongo, Xaltepec, Teutilan del Camino, San Antonio de los Cues, Tecomavaca, Quiotepec, Cuicatlan, San Pedro Chiezapotl, Donomingullo, Coyula, Teutila, Villalta, Zochila, Zolaga, Quetzaltepec, Totontepec, Chuapan, Chinantla, Istlan.

ANCIENT REMAINS IN OAJACA.

MITLA.

About ten leagues from the capital, on the road leading to Tehuantepec, are the remains of what antiquarians have styled the sepulchral palaces of Mitla, lying in the midst of a rocky granitic region, and surrounded by sad and sombre scenery. According to tradition, these edifices were erected by the Zapotecs, as palaces and sepulchres for their princes. It is asserted that at the death of members of the royal family, their bodies were laid in the vaults beneath, while the sovereign and his relatives retired to mourn the loss of the departed scion in the chambers above these solemn sepulchres, which were screened from the public eye by dark and silent groves.

Another tradition declares that these edifices were the abodes of a sect of priests, whose duty it was to dwell in seclusion and offer expiatory sacrifices for the royal dead who reposed in the vaults beneath.

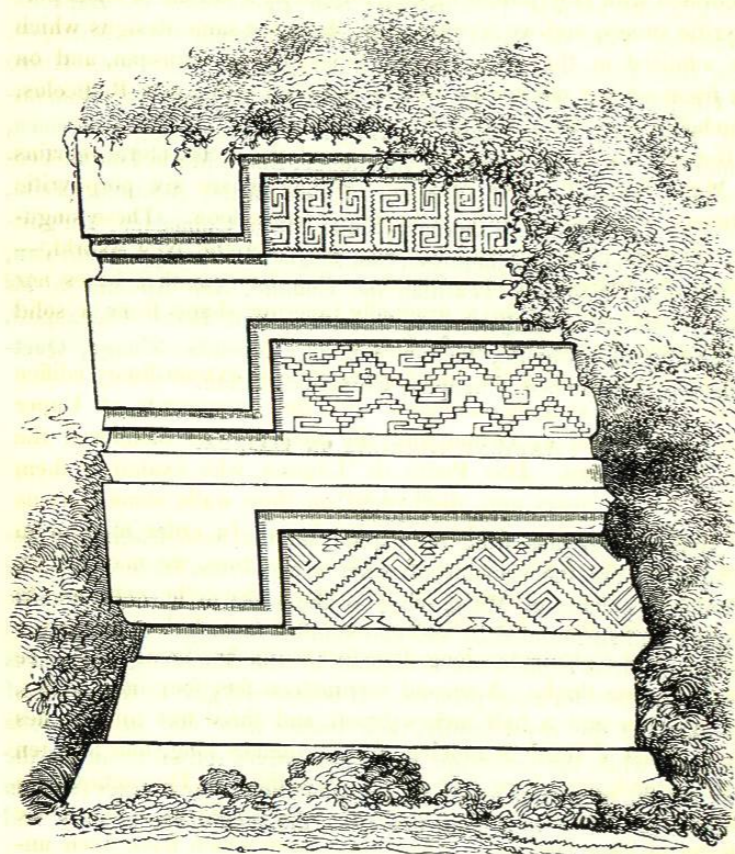
The village of Mitla was called Miguitlan, signifying, in the Mexican tongue, a place of sadness; while by the Zapotecs it was named Leoba, or "the tomb."

The palaces or tombs of Mitla, form three edifices, symmetrically arranged in an extremely romantic site; the principal and best preserved edifice has a front of nearly one hundred and fifty feet. A

stair-way through a dark shaft leads to a subterranean apartment of one hundred feet in length, by thirty in width, whose walls are covered with Grecian ornaments similar to those on the exterior of the edifice, as shown in the plate. These external walls are said to be decorated with labyrinthine figures, formed by a mosaic of small porphyritic stones, and we recognize in them the same designs which are admired in the ancient vases, falsely called Etruscan, and on the frieze of the old temple usually assigned to the god Redicolus, which lies near the grotto of Egeria at Rome.

But the objects which chiefly distinguish the architectural remains of Mitla from all other Mexican antiquities are six porphyritic columns, which support the ceiling of a vast saloon. These singular columns,—almost the only ones found in the New World,—evince the extreme infancy of art;—they have neither bases nor capitals, and are cut in a gradually tapering shape from a solid stone, more than fifteen feet in length.

The distribution of the apartments in this extraordinary edifice presents some striking analogies with the monuments of Upper Egypt, described by Denon and the *savants* who composed the institute at Cairo. Don Pedro de Laguna, who examined them carefully many years ago, discovered on their walls some curious paintings of sacrifices and martial trophies. In order to form an idea of the almost Cyclopean style of architecture, we may remark the extraordinary dimensions of the stones above the entrances to the principal halls. Mr. Glennie states that one of these masses is eighteen feet eight inches long, four feet ten inches broad, and three feet six inches thick. A second is nineteen feet four inches long, four feet ten and a half inches broad, and three feet nine inches thick, whilst a third is nineteen feet six inches long, four feet ten inches broad, and three feet four inches thick. The antiquarian will not fail to observe, that there is some similarity between the exterior of these Oajacan remains and those which have been uncovered and described in Yucatan, by Stephens, during his second expedition. It is not improbable that an intercourse existed between the inhabitants of these districts, prior to the Spanish Conquest. We believe that these architectural remains and nearly all of those in Yucatan, Chiapas and Guatemala, were the abodes and temples of the Indians who dwelt in Mexico and the adjacent countries when Grijalva and Cortéz first landed on our continent. The distance from Oajaca, through Chiapas and Tabasco, to Yucatan is not too great to have prevented even a rapid communication from Mitla to Úxmal, or Palenque. The reader will recollect that the



RUINS AT MITLA.

realm of Montezuma is alleged to have extended to near the present limits of the Republic of Central America; nor will he forget with what rapidity the well trained Indian couriers of the Emperor passed over the three hundred intervening miles of mountain, plain and valley, between Vera Cruz and the Valley of Mexico, in order to inform their sovereign of the Spaniards' arrival and their leader's determination to visit the Aztec Court. At Cozumel, and elsewhere in Yucatan, the earliest Spanish adventurers were struck by the architecture of the edifices which were inhabited by the Indians. In their letters and narratives they always speak of these "buildings of stone and lime" as indicating civilization. The Indian deities were, at that time, unquestionably, worshipped in them. At Cholula, Tlascalala, and Tenochtitlan or Mexico, as well as at Tezcoco, — pyramids, dwellings, palaces, walls, streets, causeways, were all built of stone cemented by mortar, and many of these objects were profusely ornamented. There can be no doubt of these facts, for they were attested at the time by numerous witnesses, while many of the material relics of that age have descended even to the present time, and may still be inspected in the capital of the Republic. Why, then, should we hesitate to believe that a vast chain of civilized, intelligent and affiliated nations, *co-existed* on the central part of this continent in the sixteenth century, and that the ruined cities, temples and pyramids which are spread from the waters of the Gila as far south as Peru and Chili, and whose wonderful remains are now gradually unearthed by the industry of antiquarians, are the architectural fragments of their national grandeur?

We do not conceive it necessary to throw back the Indian architects into the gloom of antiquity, long anterior to the arrival of the Spaniards. There is a natural yearning in the human mind for the mystery with which a vague, indefinite epoch, surrounds ruins that are accidentally discovered. But this is a poetical sentiment, rather than a fair starting point in archaiological researches; and, in spite of the national vanity which might be gratified by proving that the aboriginal civilization of our continent was as old as that of Egypt, we shall adhere to the belief that Mitla, Palenque, Uxmal and Quemada were inhabited by the builders or their descendants, whilst the thrones of Mexico and Peru were occupied by Montezuma and Atahualpa.

QUIOTEPEC, OR CERRO DE LAS JUNTAS.

In 1844, an examination was made by order of the Governor of Oajaca of the ancient remains situated near the village of Quiotepec, about thirty-two leagues north from the capital of Oajaca. These ruins are found on the Cerro de las Juntas, or Hill of the Union, so called from its vicinity to the junction of the rivers Quiotepec and Salado.

The eminence is covered in almost every direction with remains of military works of a defensive character, calculated to protect the dwellings erected on the hill, and the extensive temple and palace, whose massive ruins still crown the summit. These remains are said to resemble those of Chicocomoc or Quemada, in the State of Zacatécas, which will be fully described in our notice of that portion of Mexico. The similarity consists in the style of the architecture, and the evident mingling of defence and worship. There is no resemblance, however, to the remains found in Yucatan as described by Stephens, Catherwood and Norman, where the designs are all highly ornamental, denoting a higher state of luxury, taste and progress in civilization. The *teocalli* or temple of Quiotepec and that of Chicocomoc or Quemada are both pyramidal, like most of the Aztec religious structures; but the architectural style, generally, at the former place, is rather more sumptuous than at Quemada.¹

Besides these remains, there are many others in the State of Oajaca, which are still inadequately known or described, such for instance, as the *turmuli* and pyramids at Montealban, two leagues south-west from Oajaca; — the relics of many strong-holds; — the *turmuli* at Zachila; — the ruins at Coyúla and at San Juan de los Cués.

In the museum of the University of Mexico, and in the private collection of the late Ex-Conde del Peñasco, we found some remarkable figures chiselled from a finely grained sand stone, two of which are represented in the succeeding pages. They were found in the State of Oajaca. Their use or their symbolical character have never been accurately detected; but in the last of the two we may observe quite a remarkable resemblance to some of the idols still to be seen in the temples of India.

¹ See Museo Mejicano, vol. 3d, p. 329, for lithographic sketches of the palace and temple, and their monuments. See also vol. 1st of the same work, p. 401; and vol. 3d id., p. 135, for descriptions of Zapotec remains; and vol. 1st id., p. 246, for an imperfect account of military remains, fortifications, &c. &c., near Guiengola, near Tehuantepec.

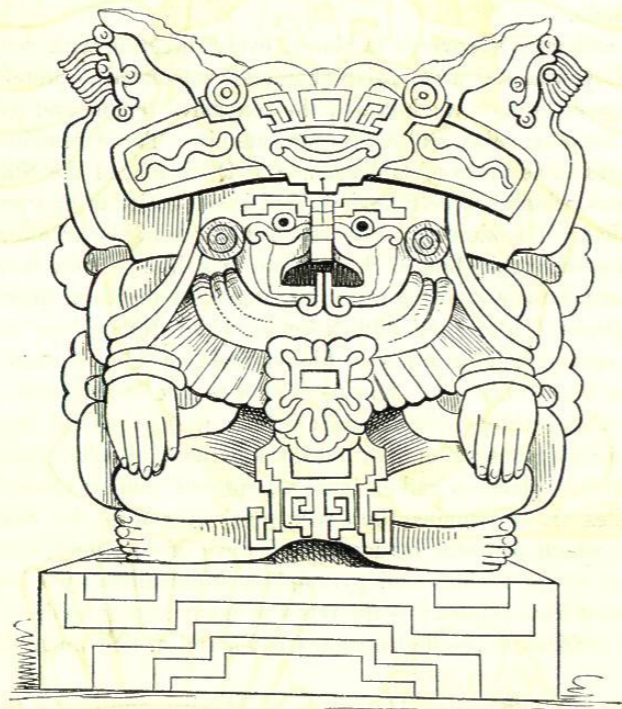
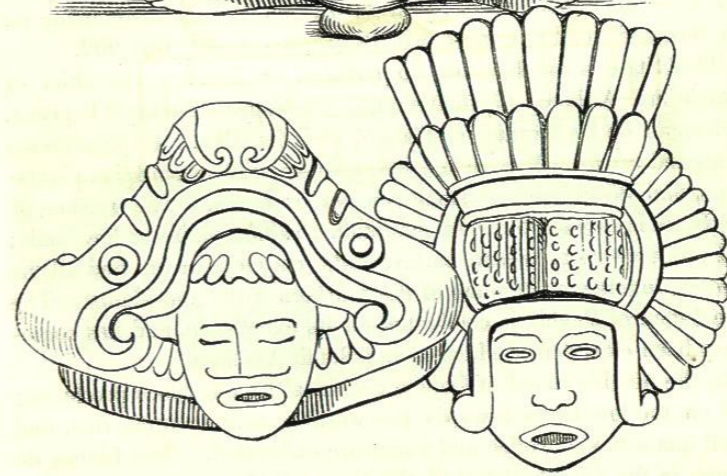
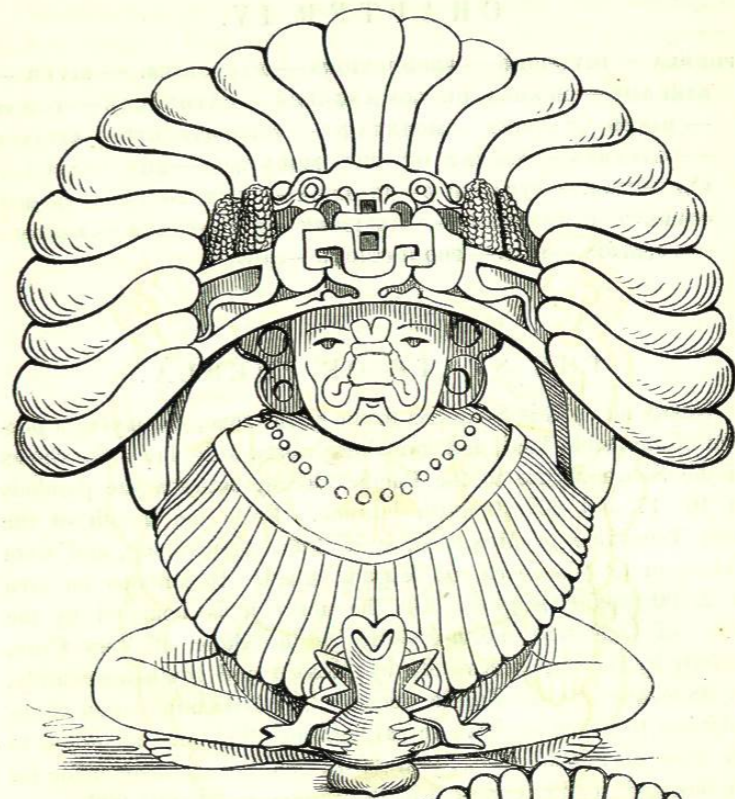


FIGURE FROM OAJACA.



FIGURES FROM OAJACA.

CHAPTER IV.

PUEBLA — DIVISIONS — PRODUCTIONS — FACTORIES. — RIVER — STREAMS — PUEBLA DE LOS ANGELES — CATHEDRAL — TOWNS — MINES, QUARRIES — MOUNTAINS — POPOCATEPETL — ATLIXCO — OLIVARES — ASCENT OF THE MOUNTAIN — THE CRATER — ELEVATION. — PYRAMID OF CHOLULA — VISIT TO THE PYRAMID — CORRECT DIMENSIONS. — TERRITORY OF TLASCALA — HISTORY — POSITION — SIZE — PRODUCTIONS — TOWNS.

THE STATE OF PUEBLA.

Nearly all of this State lies in the torrid zone, occupying a portion of the table land, and stretching westwardly down the slopes of the Sierra Madre to the Pacific Ocean, between the parallels of $16^{\circ} 17'$ and $20^{\circ} 40'$ north latitude. From the mouth of the river Tecoyáme to Mextitlan, it is 126 leagues long, and from Tehuacan to Mecameca, 53 leagues broad. It contains an area of 2,700 square leagues. On the north it is bounded by the State of Queretaro, north-easterly by the State of Vera Cruz, easterly by Oajaca, westwardly by Mexico and south-westwardly, for 28 leagues, by the Pacific Ocean. The last enumeration of inhabitants to which we have access, assigned 954,000 individuals to the State of Puebla, in the year 1832; but the estimate made for the basis of a call of congress in 1842, gave it only 661,902.

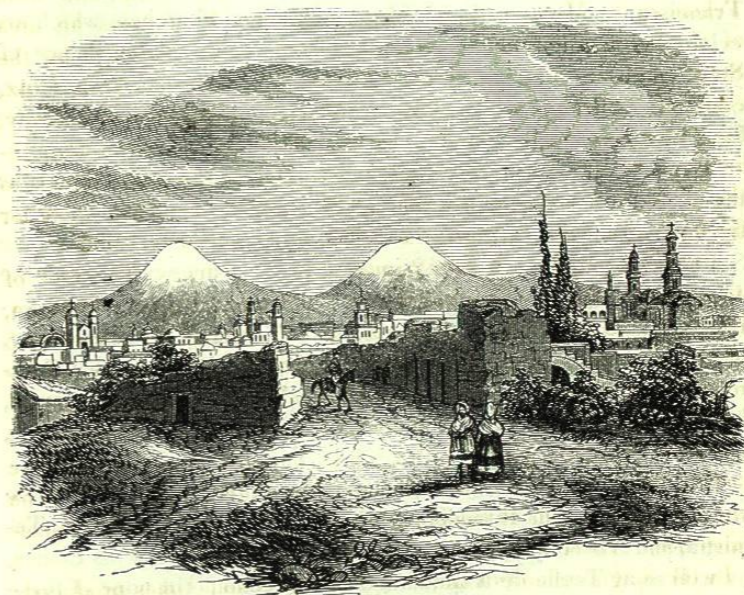
This State is divided into 25 *partidos*, or districts, the chief of which are Atlixco, Guauchinango, Ométepéc, Puebla, Tepéaca, Tehuacan de las Granádas, Tlapan, and Zacatlan. It possesses 5 cities and towns, 126 parishes, 590 villages, 412 *haciendas* or plantations, and 857 large and small *ranchos* or farms. The surface of this State is divided between mountains, vallies, plains or low lands; and produces corn, wheat, barley, chile, maguey, beans and all the hardier, together with some of the southern fruits and plants. The wheat flour of Puebla is celebrated for its excellence, and has sometimes been exported to Havana and South America.

In the neighborhood of Oajaca cochineal is sometimes produced; and on the low lands towards the western coast, cotton, rice, and small quantities of coffee and sugar are cultivated. The Llanos de Apam, in the neighborhood of the State of Mexico are celebrated for their fertility, and especially renowned for the excellence of the *pulque*, produced from the maguey or Agave Americana.

Nearly four-fifths of the real property of Puebla either belongs or is hypothecated to the church and to hospitals, and consequently the agriculture of the State is not as well managed as if the land belonged to independent farmers, who derived their wealth directly from the soil. Great poverty prevails among the lower classes, and their sad condition is generally attributed in Mexico to the mismanagement of real estate by the clergy.

The water power in the neighborhood of the city of Puebla has given a stimulus to manufactories, and the reader will find in our chapter upon that branch of Mexican industry some interesting statistical facts showing the progress made by the inhabitants of this portion of the Republic.

The only river of any importance in Puebla is the Rio de Tlascalca or Papagallo, which rises in the table lands, and runs southerly from the village of Ayútla to the Pacific. The Pascaqualca, Tacunapa, Tecoyama, and the San José are insignificant streamlets along the coast.



CITY OF PUEBLA.

The chief cities of this State are Puebla or Puebla de los Angeles — the “City of the Angels,” — which is the capital and the seat of the State government. It is a beautiful town, lying in the midst

of a fruitful plain bounded by the mountains, and shut in at the west by the gigantic peaks of Popocatepetl and Iztaccihuatl. Broad, clean and well paved streets cross it at suitable distances. The houses are large, convenient and neat, and numerous churches forever send forth the music of their bells. A beautiful public walk, planted with rows of trees, runs along a small stream on the outskirts of the city; and an Alameda, of exceeding beauty, lies opposite the extensive pile of San Francisco on the west. In the centre of the town is a large well paved public square, surrounded by *portales* or arches, similar to those of Bologna, in Italy, while in its centre is the massive cathedral whose wealth is renowned among the Roman Catholic churches of America. A splendid and weighty chandelier, composed of gold and silver, weighing altogether several tons, depends from the dome, whilst the figures of saints, the tops of altars, and the recesses of chapels, gleam, on State occasions with a display of precious metals and jewels which is perhaps unequalled even by the cathedral of Mexico or the sanctuary of Guadalupe. There are other establishments in Puebla belonging to the Franciscan and Augustin monks, and several churches, which are celebrated for their elegance, comfort and wealth. The Palace of the Bishop, in the vicinity of the cathedral, is a massive edifice, containing a library of many thousand volumes in a saloon 200 feet long by 40 broad.

The other towns of this State are:—CHOLULA, adjacent to the remains of the *Pyramid of Cholula*, which will be subsequently noticed;—ATLIXCO; GUAUCHINANGO, in the northern valley of the State, where the Indians still indulge in their ancient sport of the *Juego del Volador* or flying game;—TEHUACAN DE LAS GRANADAS, containing near 6,000 inhabitants; TEPEACA or TEPÉYACAC, where Cortéz laid the foundations of a city which he called "*Segura de la Frontera*;"—HUAJOCINGO or HUEXOTZINGO; Chiautla, Tlapan, Tlacotepec, Amozoqué, San Martín, Nopaluca, Acajete, Ojo de Agua.

In the eighteenth century various mines of gold and silver were wrought in the old Intendencia de Puebla, at Yxtacmaztillan, Temistla, and Alatlanquitepec in the district of San Juan de los Llanos, as well as at Tetéla de Xonotla and at Zacatlan; but none of these are at present productive. Quarries of fine marble exist at Totaméhuacan and Tecali, two and seven leagues distant from the capital. Limestone is found in quantities, and a beautiful transparent alabaster is also procured, which is used for windows in the library, museum and churches. If the transportation of these weighty arti-

FLYING INDIANS.

