

drew upon the family the ill-will of the first Insurgents; and the estate was so continually laid waste, that for some years it was entirely abandoned.

The Hacienda possesses a great extent of woodland,—ground sufficient for sowing 400 fanegas of maize, the whole of which is irrigated—rich and abundant pastures—and a plentiful supply of water. A river passes through the estate, and Cienegas, or marshes, (very valuable for cattle during the dry season,) extend for some leagues around. In front of the house there is a singular volcanic mountain, the crater of which forms an “Alberga,” or natural lake. The water commences about 200 feet from the edge of the crater; it is salt; and no attempt to find a bottom has yet proved successful.

The basin in which it is contained is perfectly circular, and the descent to the water's edge almost precipitous: the distance across must be 200 or 250 feet. From a little above the “Alberga” we had a fine view of the surrounding countries; and Mr. Torres pointed out to us the marsh, in the centre of which the fort of Jäuxillä stood, once the seat of the only independent government of which Mexico could boast.

Jan. 13.—From Cïpimëö we proceeded to Tëcächö, (twelve leagues,) a Hacienda and Venta, which was to be our last stage on the way to Vällädölid.

The road continued to be exceedingly picturesque, being surrounded by hills, some of the most fantastic shapes, while others, though isolated, looked

as if they had been cast in the same mould. In passing the marshes I killed nine ducks, and brought down two wild geese at a double shot, as they rose out of some rushes near the road. We found them most excellent eating, and regretted that it was not possible to add them more frequently to our bill of fare; but, except by a chance shot, it is extremely difficult to obtain so great a prize. In the lakes of the valley of Mexico they are seldom seen, though ducks, snipes, and bitterns, are found there in prodigious numbers. I have frequently shot twenty and thirty snipes in a morning; and a great *tiro de patos* near Mexico is one of the most curious scenes that it is possible to witness. The Indians, by whom it is principally conducted, prepare a battery composed of seventy or eighty musket barrels arranged in two rows, one of which sweeps the water, while the other is a little elevated, so as to take the ducks as they rise upon the wing. The barrels are connected with each other, and fired by a train; but the whole apparatus, as well as the man who has charge of it, are concealed in the rushes, until the moment when, after many hours of cautious labour, one of the dense columns of ducks, which blacken, at times, the surface of the lake, is driven by the distant canoes of his associates sufficiently near to the fatal spot. The double tier of guns is immediately fired, and the water remains strewed with the bodies of the killed, and the wounded, whose escape is cut off by the circle of canoes beyond.

Twelve hundred ducks are often brought in as the result of a single tiro; and during the whole season they form the ordinary food of the lower classes in the Capital, where they are sold for one, or at most two reals each.

In the North I saw no such masses of ducks, but they were replaced by wild geese, swans and cranes, with herons of a prodigious size, in flocks that covered a vast extent of country when they alighted, and filled the air with discordant screams when on the wing. I never could succeed, however, in securing any of the larger birds, as they were so extremely wary that it was difficult to approach them even within rifle shot.

Jan. 14.—We left Tecacho at seven, and reached Valladolid (twelve leagues) at half-past three.

There was nothing on the way to announce that we were either upon a high road, or approaching the Capital of a flourishing State. A few wretched hovels, at one of which we stopped to breakfast, and two or three miserable arrieros, were the only objects that reminded us of the presence of man. The forest scenery, however, was fine, and we saw occasionally some stupendous masses of lava, looking as fresh as if they had been produced by a very recent eruption. The frequent recurrence of these volcanic remains is a singular feature in New Spain; for since the Conquest there has not been a single eruption of any consequence, (excepting that of Jorullo,) and most of the volcanoes now known are

extinct. Yet masses of scoria, and districts covered with lava, are found in every part of the Federation; in the vicinity of the Capital, on the road to Guanajuato, in parts of San Luis, between Sombrerete and Durango, throughout Valladolid, and on the ascent from Veracruz, between Jalapa, Jilotepec, and Las Vigas, as well as in the plains of Tepeyagualco; while everywhere their vast extent proves that the convulsions which produced them must have been fearful indeed.

I know few places the approach to which is so tedious as that to Valladolid. For more than two hours you see the city apparently below you, while the road continues to wind amongst the surrounding hills. At length, a rapid descent conducts you to the plain, where a long causeway built across a marsh forms the entrance to the town. The suburbs are poor and insignificant, but the high street is fine, and the Cathedral, standing alone and unobscured by any subordinate buildings, produces a very imposing effect.

Not having any acquaintances in Valladolid, we took up our quarters at the inn of Nuestra Señora de la Soledad, where we obtained very decent apartments, with tables, chairs, and a number of other luxuries, not at all general as yet in the Mexican Republic.

The State of Michoacan comprises the territory formerly belonging to the Tarascos, a powerful Indian nation, first allies, and afterwards rivals of the

Aztecs, whom they are said to have followed in their emigration from the North. Their capital was situated upon the banks of the Lake of Pätzq̄arō, called by them Tzinzunzan, from the number of humming birds (Tzinzun) in its vicinity, with the feathers of which the statues of their gods were adorned.* Driven into the mountains by the persecutions of their conquerors, the Indians led a wild and barbarous life, until they were reclaimed by the exertions of Vasco de Quiroga, first Bishop of Valladolid, who devoted thirty years of his life to the mitigation of the evils, which the ambition of his countrymen had brought upon the aboriginal race. The Bishopric was created in 1536, and held by Quiroga until 1565, during which time the valleys were once more filled with inhabitants, and the natives distributed into villages, where they have continued ever since to cultivate the lands assigned to them by their protector; and, in some instances, to exercise the trades, in which he caused them to be instructed.

The registered population of the State in 1822, was 365,080 souls. It may be calculated at 450,000 at the present day, adding one-sixth for omissions, and making some additional allowance for the inhabitants who have returned to their homes

* The Indians of Patzquaro are still famous for this art. They compose figures of saints with the feathers of the Colibri, which are remarkable both for the delicacy of the execution, and the brilliancy of the colours.

since the re-establishment of tranquillity, Valladolid being one of the provinces that suffered most during the Civil War. It has been justly termed the cradle of the Revolution; most of the proprietors are old Insurgents; and, with the exception of the Congress assembled by Morelos at Oaxaca, all the governments successively established by the Independent leaders (the Junta of Zitācuarō, the Congress of Apätzingān, and the Junta of Jäuxillā) sought a refuge in the territories of Mīchōācān. The result was almost universal desolation, and many years will still be required to repair the wide-spread ruin, which so protracted a struggle has occasioned.

Valladolid contains two cities, (Ciudades,) (Pätzcuarō and Vallādōlid,) three towns, (Villas,) 256 Pueblos, 333 Haciendas, and 1356 Ranchos, distributed into eighty-three parishes, and twenty-one "Partidos," or districts.

The legislature consists of one chamber, composed of eleven deputies, who receive a monthly salary of 150 dollars, during the sessions only. The whole expences of the Government do not exceed 120,000 dollars. The contingent amounts to 175,000 dollars, of which one-half remained due for the year 1825. The reduced contingent of 1826 was paid.

From the universal distress occasioned by the Civil War, the revenue of Michoacan, in 1827, was still very inconsiderable. The former riches of the State consisted almost entirely in its agricultural

produce, the most ordinary manufactures being introduced from the neighbouring towns of the Băxīō. The Pueblos have now so little to give in exchange for these supplies, that the Alcavalas (or excise upon home-made goods) yield little or nothing. A contribution directa, calculated at two reals a-head, has never yet produced 20,000 dollars; and even for tobacco the demand is very trifling. The tithes, one moiety of which belongs to the State, formerly produced 500,000 dollars; they now yield only 200,000 dollars; nor is there any immediate prospect of an increase, as their falling off is attributed not only to the depressed state of the agricultural interests, but to the dissemination of ideas unfavourable to the rights of the Church, which are gaining ground every day.

The only mines now in activity in Michoacan are those of Tlālpūjāhūa, Ōzūmātlān, and Angangeo. There are many other districts said to be rich in the Sierra Madre, and the mines of Huētāmō, amongst others, have excited the attention of some of our Companies; but it does not appear that their value is sufficient to compensate for the disadvantages of a scanty population, and a very unhealthy climate. The whole Western declivity of the Sierra Madre comprehended within the province of Michoacan is remarkable for its insalubrity. Agues of the most dangerous kind prevail there during a great part of the year, and the inhabitants are afflicted not only with wens, (as in parts of Sonora,) but with

the disease called Quiricua, a sort of leprosy, which discolours the face and body with large blue splotches, without otherwise affecting the health of those attacked by it. The principal seat of the disorder is in the valleys between Tēmāscāltēpēc, Huētāmō, and the Coast, where nearly the whole population is composed of "Pintos;" the affection is said to be contagious, and spreads gradually towards the interior, so that a mottled race may probably be propagated into the very vicinity of the Capital.

The *Tierra Caliente* at the foot of the Cordillera, which is fertilized in part by the Rio Balsas, is rich in all the ordinary productions of the tropics; and even in the more elevated valleys, sugar was grown before the Revolution to a very considerable extent. The best sugar lands are now about twelve leagues South of Pāscuārō, where the proprietors of almost all the sugar estates reside; but only a small portion of the machinery destroyed during the war has been yet replaced. At the foot of the mountain of Jōrūllo, there are some plantations of cacao and indigo belonging to General Michilena, but they have not yet attained any considerable value, or extent.

Nearly all the public edifices, not immediately connected with the Government, in Valladolid, are due to the munificence of the bishops of that See, most of whom have contributed to enrich, or adorn, the town. The cathedral, the hospitals, and the aqueduct, are all the works of the Church. The first is a magnificent building, and wealthy, though de-

spoiled of a large proportion of its treasures by the Royal Commandant Truxillo, during the Revolution. The massive silver balustrades around the principal altar escaped the fate of the lamps and candelabras, (melted down as a loan to the Royal Treasury,) by being painted the colour of mahogany, which they retain to the present day.

The bishoprick of Michoacán has been vacant for many years; but I know no place where the recollection of the long line of Prelates who have occupied the episcopal chair, seems to be preserved with such respectful and affectionate regret. Indeed, I have often heard Mexicans, but little disposed to speak well of Spain in any other respect, admit that the conduct of the great dignitaries of their Church has been in general most exemplary. Amongst the Parochial clergy in New Spain, the distance of the livings from each other, and the absence of all control, have led occasionally to a very relaxed state of morals, and converted religion into a cloak for the greatest excesses; but the bishops, in general, have been men of great simplicity, and benevolence, whose primitive habits, and unambitious lives, their Creole successors will do well to imitate.

We left Valladolid on the 16th of January. The view of the town from the Mexican side is really beautiful: gardens and orchards form the foreground, while the lofty aqueduct, the gorgeous churches, and a bold range of mountains behind, fill up the remaining space. Our road lay through Charo, and In-

dapărăpëö, to Sınäpëcuärö, where Mrs. Ward and the rest of the party slept. This town is the head of a Partido, or district, containing 25,174 inhabitants, and abounding in the ordinary productions of the Table-land. The name is derived from the Indian word "Tzinäpü," which, in the language of Otömīs, or Täräscös, signifies Obsidian, a great abundance of which is found in the vicinity of the town. By a grammar of the Tarascan tongue in my possession, the language appears to be very far from simple. The alphabet consists of only twenty-one letters, five vowels and sixteen consonants. F and L are not known. The L (as already observed) is particularly prevalent in the Aztec language, while the R, rejected by the Aztecs, is almost universal amongst the Otömīs. Yet the two tribes emigrated from the North together, and continued allies, until, from too close a neighbourhood, they became enemies, and were both overwhelmed by the common foe. A pure breed of the Otömīs still exists in many parts of Valladolid. They live chiefly in the mountainous districts, and never intermarry with any other tribe.

At Indäpărăpëö, I quitted the high road to the Capital, and struck off across the mountains to Özümätlän, a little isolated district, where the Real del Monte Company is working the mines of San Pedro Barreno, Los Apostoles, and La Machorra.

Özümätlän is exceedingly difficult of access, the mountains being intersected by immense ravines, and

the paths so little frequented that all trace of them is frequently lost. I succeeded however, with an excellent horse, in making my way to the mouth of a Barranca more than a league in length, towards the upper part of which the village and mines are situated. The mountains on either side are lofty, and clothed with a fine growth of oaks and firs, while a rapid, though shallow, stream occupies nearly the whole of the intervening space. The road winds alternately from bank to bank, until, at a sudden turn, a little platform is discovered, upon which the village stands. The only air-tight house in it is that occupied by the Company, close to the Socabon of San Pedro. The Hacienda built by them stands a little below. It is in the establishment of the reduction works that the principal expence of the Company at Ozumatlan has consisted, for the goodness of the mines had been ascertained by Mr. Dollar, (who had laid out 22,000 dollars upon them,) before they were contracted for. The Hacienda has cost about 35,000 dollars more. It contains a large water-wheel for stamping the ores, and every other requisite for a smelting establishment; this being the only process used in Ozūmātlān, where the ores contain a quantity of lead: and where amalgamation in the Patio would be doubly tedious, on account of the total absence of sun, there being only three or four hours out of the twenty-four, in which its rays can penetrate into the lower parts of the Barranca. At the time of my visit, nine

hundred cargass of very rich ore were already in the magazines; and it was the opinion of the miners, that, as soon as the Hacienda was completed, seven hundred cargass more might be raised weekly from the Socabon of San Pedro alone. The principal vein is nearly four varas in width, and presents every indication of being both abundant, and durable in its produce. The richest ores however, containing massive crystallizations of lead and silver, (some fine specimens of which I saw at Real del Monte,) were raised from a little side vein, which was abandoned after a short trial, being found to continue such a mere thread, (hilito,) that the ores, though exceedingly valuable, would not pay the costs of extraction.

Workmen are easily procured at Ozūmātlān; provisions are abundant, and, from its vicinity both to Valladolid and to the *Tierra Caliente* to the South and West, supplies of all kinds may be obtained with facility. But as a residence, the place is dreary beyond description, being completely shut out from the world. The result of the speculation to the Company does not appear to be doubtful; for the ore already on hand in 1827, was thought to be sufficient very nearly to cover the outlay, as soon as the completion of the Hacienda should afford the means of converting it into bars.

Jan. 17.—From Ozūmātlān, I proceeded across the mountains to Sīnāpēcuarō. The road, after emerging from the Barranca, is good for about three