

when one takes his first drink the sensation is that of swallowing a torchlight procession. The best brand of this comes from the Tequila hacienda, and from this all mescal is ordinarily called tequila, just as all brandy is often called cognac.

The conditions of the state, especially under the present governor, Rafael Cravioto, lend themselves very favorably to the establishment of new enterprises, only a few of which I may name. One of them is irrigation, there being in every part of the state large tracts under almost every condition of climate which would yield enormous returns by the establishment of systems of irrigation. *Per contra*, there are also extensive tracts where there is too much water, which, while now subject to inundation and not suitable for agriculture, would yield excellent returns if properly drained. There is room for a large extension of textile industries, the raw material for wool and silk manufacture being abundant. In the northern part of the state



OMITLAN.

there is opportunity to develop at great profit the cabinet woods and deposits of marble, pitch, petroleum, and coal.

In the capital there is a scientific and industrial literary institute, in which are prosecuted the studies necessary for the occupations of assaying and topographic, hydrographic, and mining engineering. There is also a practical mining school belonging to the federal government, in which pupils sent from Mexico City acquire practical training under the direction of a professor of metallurgy and one of mining exploitation.

In this state I have added to my already large and varied

collection of aboriginal names such beauties as Tlaxcoapan and Polotitlan, on the Central road, and Zimapan, Zacualtipan, Metztlán, Yahualica, Huejutla, Jacala, Molango, and Ixmiquilpan, to which the railway has not yet penetrated.

And now, having noted within the limited space at my disposal my impressions of the material part of the noted state of Hidalgo, I can only add a word concerning its distinguished chief magistrate, General Rafael Cravioto, a brave and patriotic soldier and statesman, whose every heart-beat is for his state and his country. Hidalgo and her people are fortunate in their noble governor. One of his chief efforts has been in the promotion of public instruction, compulsory education in this state having been decreed years before it was in the capital of the republic. Another testimony to his zeal in this direction is the establishment of the State Literary and Scientific Institute, where the methods of education are based on lines similar to those adopted in the city of Mexico.

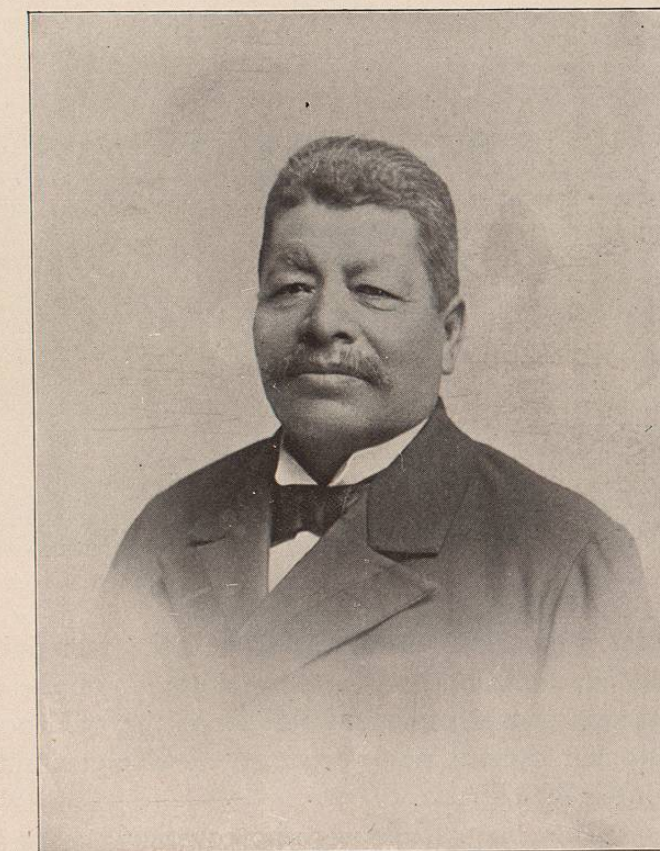
CHAPTER XVII

TLAXCALA

SOUTH of Hidalgo lies the historic state of Tlaxcala, the scene of so much human tragedy during Cortez's conquest. Tlaxcala is one of the oldest places in all Mexico, and was founded by the Chichimecs. For many years before the conquest this gallant little republic had maintained its independence against the Aztecs, of whose great family it was a branch. According to Prescott, "they came on the grand plateau about the same time with the kindred races, at the close of the twelfth century, and planted themselves on the western borders of the lake of Tezcuco. Here they remained many years, engaged in the usual pursuits of a bold and partially civilized people. From some cause or other, perhaps their turbulent temper, they incurred the enmity of surrounding tribes. A coalition was formed against them, and a bloody battle was fought on the plains of Poyauhtlan, in which the Tlascalans were completely victorious. Disgusted, however, with their residence among nations with whom they found so little favor, the conquering people resolved to migrate. They separated into three divisions, the largest of which, taking a southern course by the great volcano of Mexico, wound around the ancient city of Cholula, and finally settled in the district of country overshadowed by the sierra of Tlascala.

"The warm and fruitful valleys locked up in the embraces of this rugged brotherhood of mountains afforded means of subsistence for an agricultural people, while the bold eminences of the sierra presented secure positions for their towns."

Tlaxcala signifies "land of bread," and the name was indicative of the fruitfulness of the soil then as now. Yellow harvests of maize and the bountiful maguey covered the rocky hill-sides, just as they do now, and contributed to the wealth of the little republic. Their geographical position was encompassed with mountains, and their warlike bravery gave them



SEÑOR GOBERNADOR CORONEL PROSPERO CAHUANTZI.

a great reputation as soldiers, and excited the wonder and admiration of Cortez and his army. Nowhere else did the Spaniards encounter such troops or meet with such determined resistance; and the great Spaniard was quick to see that the Tlaxcalans would serve him much better as friends than as enemies.

Says Prescott, "Nothing could be more picturesque than the aspect of these Indian battalions, with the naked bodies of the common soldiers gaudily painted, the fantastic helmets of the chiefs glittering with gold and precious stones, and the glowing panoplies of feather-work which decorated their persons. Innumerable darts and spears, tipped with points of transparent itztl or fiery copper, sparkled bright in the morning sun, like the phosphoric gleams playing on the surface of a troubled sea, while the rear of the mighty host was dark with the shadows of



GOVERNOR'S PALACE IN TLAXCALA.

banners on which were emolazoned the armorial bearings of the great Tlascalan and Otomi chieftains. Among these, the white heron on the rock, the cognizance of the house of Xicotencatl, was conspicuous, and still more, the golden eagle with outspread wings, in the fashion of a Roman signum, richly ornamented with emeralds and silver-work, the great standard of the republic of Tlascala.

"The common file wore no covering except a girdle round the loins. Their bodies were painted with appropriate colors of the chieftain whose banner they followed. The feather-mail of the higher class of warriors exhibited also a similar selection of colors for the like object, in the same manner as the colors of the tartan indicate the peculiar clan of the Highlander. The caciques and principal warriors were clothed in quilted cotton tunics, two inches thick, which, fitting close to the body, protected also the thighs and the shoulders. Over these the

wealthier Indians wore cuirasses of thin gold plate or silver. Their legs were defended by leathern boots or sandals trimmed with gold. But the most brilliant part of their costume was a rich mantle of the *plumaje*, or feather-work, embroidered with curious art, and furnishing some resemblance to the gorgeous surcoat worn by the European knight over his armor in the Middle Ages. This graceful and picturesque dress was surmounted by a fantastic head-piece, made of wood or leather, representing the head of some wild animal, and frequently displaying a formidable array of teeth. With this covering the warrior's head was enveloped, producing a most grotesque and hideous effect. From the crown floated a splendid panache of the richly variegated plumage of the tropics, indicating by its form and colors the rank and family of the wearer. To complete this defensive armor, they carried shields or targets made sometimes of wood covered with leather, but more usually of a light frame of reed quilted with cotton, which were preferred as tougher and less liable to fracture than the former. They had other bucklers in which the cotton was covered with an elastic substance, enabling them to be shut up in a more compact form, like a fan or umbrella. These shields were decorated with showy ornaments, according to the taste or wealth of the wearer, and fringed with a beautiful pendant of feather-work.

"Their weapons were slings, bows and arrows, javelins, and darts. They were accomplished archers, and would discharge two, or even three, arrows at a time. But they most excelled in throwing the javelin. One species of this, with a thong attached to it, which remained in the slinger's hand that he might recall the weapon, was especially dreaded by the Spaniards. These various weapons were pointed with bone or the mineral itztl (obsidian), the hard substance already noticed as capable of taking an edge like a razor, though easily blunted. Their spears and arrows were also frequently headed with copper. Instead of a sword they bore a two-handed staff about three feet and a half long, in which at regular distances were inserted transversely sharp blades of itztl,—a formidable weapon, which, as an eye-witness assures us, he had seen fell a horse at a blow.

"Such was the costume of the Tlascalan warrior, and indeed of that great family of nations generally who occupied the plateau of Anahuac."

Their weapons, however, even with their bravery, were no match for the military science of the Spaniards; and after four terrible battles, preceded by a good deal of sharp skirmishing, the Tlaxcalans were defeated. After some politic delays they were completely subdued and became the faithful allies of the Spanish. Had this not been effected, it is doubtful if Cortez's name would have descended as "the great conqueror," at least in Mexico.

Tlaxcala City is the capital of the state, and dates far back of Cortez's arrival in the place,



LA PARROQUIA.

where he fought and subdued them with such excellent effect. This historic town has now less than six thousand inhabitants, but the very air is alive with romance and tradition. Age, hoary and musty, is stamped everywhere, although the people are as wide awake and prosperous as could be required. There are many relics of Cortez's visit in the picturesque old town, among them a grant from Charles the Fifth, with his signature, and a silken flag which the great conqueror presented to the Tlaxcalans. The latter is in a fair state of preservation, and is handsomely embroidered in silk with a curious battle-scene between the Spaniards and Tlaxcalans. Then there are idols from neighboring mounds, the city charter from Philip II. in book form, bound in vellum and dated May 10, 1585, with the royal signature, baptismal robes of chiefs, and their ancient genealogical trees.



AN ARCHWAY IN TLAXCALA.

In this city, too, which at the time of the conquest was compared favorably by Cortez with Granada, but which is now the mere shadow of its former self, a half-deserted, decaying village, is found the most interesting collection of Cortez relics in all Mexico. One sees here the banner which accompanied Cortez in his memorable march, the standard which Cortez presented to the Tlaxcalan chiefs who befriended him, portraits in oil of the latter, the robes which they wore at their baptism, the font in which they were baptized, and a silken embroidery on which is pictured the first battle between the Spaniards and Tlaxcalans; and one can visit the house occupied by Cortez.

Cortez declared in all his accounts that the city had then thirty thousand souls, and that it was larger than Granada, then the capital of Spain. But one feels it necessary to take this statement "with a grain of salt."

The houses were built, for the most part, of mud or earth, the better sort of stone and

lime, or of bricks dried in the sun. They were unprovided with doors or windows, but in the apertures for the former hung mats fringed with pieces of copper or something which by its tinkling sound would give notice of any one's entrance.

The streets were narrow and dark. Cortez asserts that thirty thousand people were often gathered in the market on a public day. These meetings were fairs, held, in all great towns, every fifth day, and attended by the inhabitants of the adjacent country, who brought there for sale every description of domestic produce and manufacture with which they were acquainted. They peculiarly excelled in pottery, which was considered equal to the best in Europe. It is a further proof of civilized habits that the Spaniards found barbers' shops, and baths, both of vapor and of hot water, familiarly used by the inhabitants. A still higher proof of refinement may be discerned in the existence of a vigilant police which repressed everything like disorder.

The ancient capital, through one quarter of which flowed the rapid current of the Zahuatl, stretched along the summits and sides of hills at whose base are now gathered the remnant of its once flourishing population. Far beyond, to the southeast, extended the bold sierra of Tlaxcala, and the huge Malinche, crowned with the usual silver diadem of the highest Andes, its shaggy sides clothed with dark-green forests of firs, gigantic sycamores, and oaks whose towering stems rose to the height of forty or fifty feet unencumbered by a branch. The clouds which sailed over from the distant Atlantic gathered around the lofty peaks of the sierra, and, settling into torrents, poured over the plains in the neighborhood of the city, converting them, at such seasons, into swamps. Thunder-storms, more frequent and terrible here than in other parts of the table-land, swept down the sides of the mountains and shook the frail tenements of the capital to their foundations. But, although the bleak winds of the sierra gave an austerity to the climate unlike the sunny skies and genial temperature of the lower regions, it was far more favorable to the development of both the physical and the moral energies. A bold and hardy peasantry was nurtured among the recesses of the hills, fit equally to cultivate the land in peace and to defend it in war. Unlike the spoiled Aztecs, who, from a soil not riven by such facilities of prodigal hand as supererogation on his part, the bread—from a soil not the sweat of his brow, and toil. Cut off the Aztecs from commerce driven chiefly to agriculture most propitious to sinewy strength of conbreast glowed with payment to the soil, which culture, while he was consciousness of indebirthright of the child of says Prescott, was the was now associated for great work.



SACRED WELL OF OCOTLAN.

What of the Tlaxcala of to-day? Situated in the centre of so beautiful a country, it has illimitable advantages. Tlaxcala has the oldest church in North America, with its cedar ceiling and beams brought from Spain, Cortez's church of San Francisco, constructed in 1521. In this church, too, is the pulpit from which the gospel was first preached in the New World. There is artistic wood-carving by Indian artists of power and taste in the church of Ocotlan, perched on a hill in the same city of Tlaxcala; indeed, almost every leading church of every considerable town has a treasure of some sort, a Murillo, an alleged Titian, or some other exhibit to interest the sight-seer. The pastor of the famous shrine of Ocotlan, Father Angelo Morales Rodriguez, gave a dinner October 18, 1895, at his home to the American bishops who had come to Mexico to celebrate the ceremony of the coronation of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

The governor of Tlaxcala, who is a full-blooded native Indian, was unable to be present,