

23613

350
HAMP

No 10.

DESCRIPTION

OF THE

PANORAMA

OF THE

SUPERB

CITY OF MEXICO,

AND THE

SURROUNDING SCENERY,

PAINTED ON 2700 SQUARE FEET OF CANVAS, BY

ROBERT BURFORD, ESQ.

FROM DRAWINGS MADE ON THE SPOT, AT THE REQUEST
OF THE MEXICAN GOVERNMENT,

BY MR. W. BULLOCK, JR.

NOW OPEN FOR PUBLIC INSPECTION.

PRINTED BY A. E. MILLER,
No. 4, Broad-Street,
1830.

PRICE 12 1-2 CENTS.

PROBATE

OF

WILLS

IN THE

CITY OF NEW YORK

IN SENATE

CHAMBER

OF THE

LEGISLATURE

OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK

DESCRIPTION

OF THE

VIEW OF MEXICO,

150 FEET LONG BY 18 FEET HIGH.



The Capital of Mexico Proper, and of all Mexico, or New Spain, (the oldest city in America of which there is any authentic account,) is situated in the centre of a vast plain, or table land called the valley of Mexico, 7470 feet above the level of the sea; from which the Cordilleras of Mexico rise in various groups, to the height of from 14,000 to 17,000 feet; Long. $90^{\circ} 0' 30''$ W. Lat. $19^{\circ} 25' 45''$ N. The air of this elevated region is extremely salubrious: although under the torrid zone, it enjoys, from its height, all the advantages of a temperate climate, and its inhabitants attain to as great longevity as those of any part of the globe. In the coldest season, the mean heat of the day is from 55 to 70° Fahrenheit, and in the summer never above 75° in the shade: the mean temperature is about 62° , which is similar to that of Rome. Fires are unknown, except for culinary purposes.

The original, splendid, and but little known city of Mexico, or Tinochtitlan, was founded, according to the hieroglyphic picture histories* and oral traditions of its early inhabitants, about the year 1325, by several tribes who had emigrated from Aztlan, on the north borders of the Californian Gulf, about 1160; and, after fifty-six years' wandering, settled in the valley of Zumpango, Tepeyacac, and Acocola, where they remained, continually harassed by the princes of Xaltocan, and part of the time slaves to the king of Colhuacan,† until 1325, when, in obedience to an oracle preserved amongst them, (which fixed the termination of their migration at the spot where they should discover an eagle sitting on a nopal, the roots of which penetrated a rock,) they commenced building the city, on some small islands in the midst of Lake Tezcuco, the rock on which the oracle was fulfilled, forming the foundation of the great Teocalli, or Temple of Mexitli,

* Fac-similies of these picture histories may be seen in the third volume of Purchas's collection. Several of them were taken to England by Mr. Bullock, and are now returned to the Archives of Mexico.

† The Mexicans were not the first inhabitants of the Plain. The Kingdom of Toltecan, which is supposed to have existed four centuries, and was dispersed about the year 1052, by four year's dearth and sickness; the Chichimecs, the Nalmaltecs, the Calhaucnas, &c. &c. all preceded the Mexicans.—CLAVIGERO.

or Huitzilopochtli.* At the arrival of Cortez, in 1520, the city (which was approached by three causeways of stone,) and provinces were governed by Montezuma, the ninth sovereign; and, according to Bernal Diez and other writers of the time, the Mexicans had attained an extraordinary degree of wealth and splendour, were considerably advanced in arts and manufactures, and were considered the most enlightened nation of the American continent.† The effect produced on the Spaniards by their first view of the city, is thus described by Dr. Robertson:—"When in descending the mountains of Chalco, the Spaniards first beheld the plain of Mexico, one of the most striking and beautiful on the face of the earth; when they observed fertile and cultivated fields, stretching farther than the eye could reach, when they saw a lake, resembling the sea in extent, encompassed with large towns, and discovered the capital city rising upon an island in the middle, adorned with its temples and turrets, the scene so far exceeded their imagination that some believed the fanciful descriptions of romance realized, and that enchanted palaces and gilded domes were presented to their views: others could hardly persuade themselves that this wonderful spectacle was any thing more than a dream." Cortez himself speaks of the city as very beautiful, containing magnificent buildings, canals, squares, &c. and having at least 60,000 inhabitants. The city was besieged for seventy-five days and nights without intermission, and was defended by the Mexicans street by street, with the most determined bravery: both victors and vanquished destroyed all in their power, and committed cruelties without parallel in history. On the 13th of Aug. 1521, more than three-fourths of the buildings being demolished, the canals choked up, and every means of defence being at an end, the Mexicans surrendered. The fate of the capital decided that of the empire; the provinces immediately submitted: Mexico became a colony of Spain, and from that period enjoyed an uninterrupted tranquillity for nearly three centuries; no internal hostility having disturbed, nor the foot of a foreign enemy trod the soil, annually distributing over Europe, treasure to an almost incredible amount.

The invasion of Spain by France, the overthrow of the Spanish arms, and the great progress made towards the subjugation of the mother-country placed the Mexicans in rather a critical situation. Although they professed allegiance to the existing government in all its fortunes, and a firm determination not to submit to the

* Clavigero.

† When Cortez landed, he received presents from Montezuma, which, in a letter to his sovereign, he describes to consist of "fine cotton cloth, boxes of pearls, ornaments in feathers, and various articles in gold and silver, the beautiful workmanship of which was only exceeded by the value of the materials." LETTERS OF CORTEZ.

Amongst other things were two dishes:—one of gold, representing the sun, the other silver, the moon;—the latter was valued at £20,000 sterling.—BERNALD DIEZ.

usurped power of France, yet, under these expressions of loyalty, a party was formed whose aim was complete independence. The flame rapidly spread; and the crisis being hastened by a violent exercise of authority, at Queritaro (in the arrest of one of the members of the Cabildo,) the standard of liberty was first hoisted on the 15th of September, 1810; and the struggle was continued with various success until 1819, when the exertions of the patriots were almost extinguished. The revolution in Spain, which followed the revolt in the island of Leon, again revived their hopes. The Viceroy Apodaca, having evaded the proclamation of the Constitution to which Ferdinand had subscribed, discontent was openly manifested in every province; headed by General Iturbide, who had long served in the royal army, and possessed the most extensive influence, the revolution assumed a formidable appearance. On the arrival of General O'Donoju, the new Viceroy, he found the country he came to govern an independent state, no longer subject to Spain. On the 24th of August, 1821, he signed the treaty of Cordova, from which the Mexicans date their independence; and their first congress met on the 24th of the following February.

Fifteen years of internal anarchy, with all its concomitant miseries, has wrought a melancholy alteration in the state of the country, and in the fortunes of individuals; a few years, it is to be hoped, will effect as great a change for the better. Possessing all the material for a most extensive exchange, Mexico offers the greatest advantages to commercial speculation: the employment of its present very numerous and unemployed population, by a combination of foreign talent, capital and machinery, together with an active and unrestricted intercourse, will raise them from the lethargy and shackles in which they have been so long bound by the narrow and barbarous policy of Spain, to that rank amongst nations, which, from their character, the fertility of their soil, and the almost inexhaustible riches of their mines, they are so well calculated to maintain.

The present city commenced in 1524, occupies the same site as ancient Mexico, but is not so large; and artificial means having been employed to reduce the Lake Tezcuco,* there now intervenes between the water and the city a morass, about two miles in breadth, through which are five *calzada*, or causeways; three originally built by the Mexicans, and two by the Spaniards. Approached by the great road from Vera Cruz, the appearance of the city is not particularly striking; but, viewed from an eleva-

* Surrounded by high mountains, Mexico was constantly exposed to the dangers of inundation. The most remarkable of these occurred in 1629, when water remained at the height of three feet and a half, in the streets, for five years. To remedy these evils, a Canal, called the Desague real de Huehuetoca, has been cut through the rock of Nochistonga, to carry off the waters of the Guantilan and Zumpango. From frequent alterations and errors, this work was not completed until 1789, having been in progress nearly two centuries, at the cost of one million sterling.

tion in the interior, the regularity of the streets, the beauty and extent of the public buildings, the number and variegated colours of the houses, the luxuriant appearance of the surrounding valley* studded with numerous towns and villages, and the extensive lakes, covered with the boats of the Indians, and bordered by their *chinampas*, or floating gardens; the whole enclosed by a vast amphitheatre of lofty mountains, form a scene magnificent and beautiful beyond description.

The circumference of the city is about eight miles; the streets, many of which are two miles in length, run nearly north and south, east and west, intersecting each other at right angles. They are well paved with porphyry, and are kept extremely clean by means of sewers running through the centre of each. At night, they are lighted with convex lamps. Water can always be procured at the depth of three feet, but of bad quality, the same as that of Lake Tezcuco. An abundant supply of good water is, however, brought to the city, by the means of two aqueducts; the one from the Santa Fé, 33,464 feet in length; the other from Chapultepec, 10,826 feet in length; and is conveyed from the reservoirs to the houses by the water-carriers (a numerous body,) in large jars. The houses are regular, and strongly built with a porphyry of vitreous feldspath or a porous amygdaloid, called *tetzontli*: they are square, with an open court in the centre, usually filled with flowering shrubs in china vases. They seldom exceed three stories in height,* and the roofs, being flat, form an agreeable terrace. Externally, they are painted of various bright colours, or covered with porcelain, according to the taste of the owners; and have one or two balconies of light Biscayan iron, gilt or bronzed. Some have passages from Scripture painted on their fronts. The apartments (the upper of which are the principal,) are usually from ten to fifteen feet in height: they are gaudily painted, but the vast wealth displayed before the revolution has disappeared: the various utensils of gold, the solid silver picture-frames, chandeliers, &c. then to be found in almost every house, are now no more; having nearly all passed through the mint for the service of the state.

There are fifty-six monasteries, nunneries, and churches, in the city; all of which are remarkable for the beauty of the architecture, or the richness and value of their internal decorations. There is but one theatre, which is of large dimensions, and contains four tier of boxes; but was so badly attended, that, during Mr. Bullock's visit in 1823, its final close was announced. The shops are not numerous; neither is their appearance at all attractive, the fronts being open, and the articles sold mostly manufactured in sight, without the least indication of wealth; few have even the name of the owner painted on them. The barbers

* The valley of Mexico is of an oval form, 18 3-4 leagues in length, by 12 1-2 in breadth; of which the lakes of Tezcuco, San Christoval, Zumpango, Xochimilco and Chalco, occupy about 22 leagues.

and the pulque-sellers* make the greatest show: the former being decorated with the various utensils of the trade, intermixed with large gilt basons and pictures of saints; the latter neatly arranged with bottles of various coloured spirits. Confectioners and coachmakers are numerous, as are the milliners, in which twenty or thirty young men are usually employed, making caps and other articles of female finery. The bakers have large establishments, and their journeymen are absolutely slaves, being never permitted to leave the place in which they work. During the revolution, this system was for a short time abolished, and the city remained for several days without bread.

The resident inhabitants are estimated at between 150,000 and 160,000; of these nearly two thousand are monks and nuns, and about ten thousand more are attached to religious houses and colleges. The number of white Europeans does not exceed two thousand; of these the females are in the proportion of only one to one hundred; the remainder are mixed castes and Indians. There are about thirty thousand persons, chiefly Indians, destitute of any habitation; they are called Guachinangos, and much resemble the Lazzaroni of Naples; their chief employment is carrying water, sweeping the streets, or begging; and, as very little work enables them to buy pulque, they are frequently intoxicated, when they are removed by the police; thus passing their time pretty equally between work, drunkenness, and imprisonment.

*Pulque the favourite drink of the Mexicans, is extracted from the Maguey, or great American Aloe, at the time of throwing up its flower-stem it is hollowed in the centre, and the juice, which should have supplied the flower, taken from it daily for about two months, which juice, when fermented, is immediately fit for drinking. A very strong brandy is also obtained by distillation. So great is the consumption, that the duty collected at the city-gates, amounts annually to 600,000 dollars.

PLATE I.

No. 2.—De los Viscaynos.

A large manufactory for lace. The tower contiguous, is part of the ruins of the monastery of St. Phillip, now used as a stable for the Count de Regla, one of the richest men in Mexico. His stud is remarkably fine, all stallions of the Andalusian breed; the best he values at two thousand dollars; they are each kept in a separate room, with a boarded floor, and are carefully groomed, but are not allowed straw or litter of any kind.

No. 4.—Chapultepec.

The palace of the Viceroy Galvez, on the hill of Chapultepec; although it has externally the appearance of a merely ornamental building, is strongly fortified towards the city, with salient walls and parapets for cannon. There are also vaults capable of containing many month's provisions. About one and a half millions of livres were expended on this building, which is now going fast to ruin. In the gardens are some immense cypresses: Mr. Bullock estimates the trunks at sixty feet in circumference. There is a manufactory of arms belonging to the government at this place.

No. 5.—Los Cigarros.

A very large building, where above six hundred persons are constantly employed in making cigarros and puros. The monopoly of tobacco, where smoking is so much indulged in by both sexes, was a profitable branch of the revenue, and produced the old government 4,500,000 dollars annually. Orizaba and Cordova were the only districts in which it was allowed to be raised. All that was gathered was obliged to be sold to the government, and when manufactured was retailed at the royal Estancos.

No. 6.—Espirito Santo.

This church is the most gaudy in Mexico, being profusely covered with ornaments of every description, in the worst possible taste.

No. 8.—St. Francisco.

The Franciscan convent is an immense establishment, with an income of £21,000 per annum, principally from alms. The church, cloisters, &c. are covered with pictures, descriptive of the life and miracles of its patron.

Immediately opposite the convent is a national establishment for lending money on plate, jewels, &c. The property remains a certain time at a small interest, and, if not then redeemed, is sold to the highest bidder; and, after deducting the interest and expenses, the overplus is returned to the original owner.

No. 9.—La Profesa.

The Church belonging to this Convent is one of the most modern in Mexico, and is next in size to the Cathedral. There are a series of pictures in it, representing the heart of man possessed by the devil and the deadly sins, and the regeneration of it to religion and virtue.

No. 10.—La Alameda.

A large park, planted with a variety of trees in lines diverging from the different centres, and laid out with paved walks. In the middle is a large basin, from which water is supplied to all parts.

The Paseo, near the Alameda, is a broad road, about two miles in length, raised three feet above the surrounding meadow, and planted on each side with tall stiff willows, resembling Lombardy poplars. These places are much frequented on Sundays and holidays, and the varied and splendid costumes of the various classes in Mexico, are here seen to the greatest advantage. The usual dress of ladies and children is black, the head being covered by a veil only. On holidays their dress is more gay, artificial flowers being abundantly used. The European costume, or a light jacket of printed calico, is the dress of the higher classes of males; the long cloak is universally worn. The dress of the Pasanos, or country gentlemen, is the most showy and expensive; an embroidered shirt; a jacket of printed calico; a manga or cloak of cloth, velvet or calico embroidered or laced with gold; breeches of coloured leather, open at the knee, ornamented with silver lace and a profusion of small silver buttons; shoes or boots of soft leather, over which are tied gaiters of cinnamon-coloured leather, curiously carved in relief, which generally cost forty or fifty dollars per pair, and, when embossed with gold or silver, from 100 to 150; and a large flat hat, with a gold band. When they ride, their horses are equally splendid; the large Spanish saddle and stirrups are covered with gold and silver; and the hinder part of the animal is usually enveloped in a covering of stiff jacked leather, call a Cortez shield, terminating in a fringe of iron chain. Their ladies appear in a worked shift, a light open jacket, and a petticoat of some bright colour, embroidered and spangled. The lower classes wear linen, woollen or leather jackets and trowsers, and straw hats; many only, a blanket worn as a toga. The women in jackets and petticoats of calico.

No. 11.—Mineria.

The School of Mines recently erected, is not to be equalled, in extent and beauty of architecture, by any similar building in Europe. It cost £125,000, and has been liberally furnished by the mine-holders and wealthy inhabitants; but, unfortunately, the foundation not being well secured, it has given way. Part has already been pulled down, and it is feared the remainder must soon follow. It contains an excellent philosophical apparatus, and a collection of minerals; but the funds having, during the revolution, been diverted to other uses, the lectures and studies have ceased.

On the Azotea, or flat roof of this building, is the observatory, from which the Baron Humboldt made his astronomical calculations.

No. 17.—Casa de Stado.

The palace of Montezuma stood on this spot, and occupied the ground from the street of Tacuba to the monastery of the Profeza. Cortez originally occupied the palace; but, it being found more suitable for the Audencia, he resigned it, and built the present Casa de Stado, which has descended, with the rest of the heritage, to the Neapolitan Duke de Monteleon, its present occupant.

No. 20.—Calle de Tacuba.

The ancient street of Tlacopan. At the first entry of the Spaniards into Mexico, they were lodged in the Palace of King Axajacatl, in this street: it was there they sustained the assaults of the Mexicans: it was there that Montezuma was entrapped, kept prisoner, and finally killed whilst endeavouring to quell a tumult amongst his own subjects. The ruins of this palace are still visible: and it was down this street, towards the mountain of Tepeyacac, that the Spaniards made their disastrous retreat on the Noche Trieste, (Melancholy night,) 1st of August, 1520. A small bridge in the Calzaday preserves the name of Salto de Alvarado, (Alvarado's leap,) in memory of a prodigious leap taken by don Pedro Alvarado, who being closely pressed, cleared at a bound, a dyke of great breadth.

No. 23.—St. Domingo.

The Dominican Convent is of great extent, and has occasionally been used as a state prison. The executions of the Inquisition took place in the court-yard. The interior of the Church is splendidly ornamented, the capitals of the columns and sanctuaries being richly gilt.

No. 25.—Casa de l'Ynquisicion.

An elegant building, exhibiting but little appearance of the purpose for which it was erected. It is at present occupied as a Polytechnic School, the Inquisition having been abolished by Iturbide, in 1820.

No. 27.—Plaza de Gallos.

Cock-fighting is an amusement common to all Spanish America, from which the government derives an annual income of 45,000 dollars. Large sums are betted by both rich and poor; and the cocks being armed with slashers, the contest is soon over.

No. 29.—The Cathedral.

Is erected on the precise spot whereon stood the great Teocalli of Huitzilopochli, many of the idols and gods of which lie buried beneath the foundation. The length, including a small building behind the altar, is 500 feet; the breadth, in front, 420; it occupied ninety years in building. A small portion is in the Gothic style. The two towers, which are ornamented with pilasters, statues, &c. in the Italian taste, are very beautiful, and of recent erection. The present View having been taken from the summit of one, it was, of course, impossible to introduce them in the painting. In the north-west wall is a large stone of basaltic porphyry, called Montezuma's Watch, on the exposed side of which are cut in relief, various singular figures and characters, representing the Mexican calendar. The interior of the church is profusely ornamented with carving, gilding, pictures (some good) and painted statues. The altar is enclosed by a massive railing of metal, supposed to contain so much gold, that a silversmith of Mexico, offered to replace it by one of solid silver of the same weight. The Churches of Mexico are not divided into pews; no distinction being made in places of worship. The ground beneath is the burial-place. Funerals are conducted in a most unostentatious manner; the corpse is carried to its resting-place in a coffin, which has been used for the same purpose by many preceding generations; and no monument, or even an inscription, marks the place where they are deposited.

No. 30.—La Encarnacion.

This Church, which is attached to a large Convent of the same name, is particularly rich and splendid: the high altar is surmounted by a pyramid of embossed silver, fifteen feet in height.

No. 32.—Calzaday miena de Guadalupe.

On the barren rock of Tepeyacac, to which the Calzaday leads, formerly stood the Temple of the Mexican Ceres, Tonantzin; on which site is now erected the magnificent Church of Neustra Senora de Guadalupe. This church contains a miraculous picture of the Virgin. "The Virgin appeared to a peasant, and ordered him to impart to the archbishop a vision he had seen. Awed by the magnificence of the prelate, the peasant omitted his mission. The Virgin again appeared, and he asked for a token: the following day he found the barren hill covered with beautiful flowers; some of these he presented to the archbishop. The tale, so corroborated, was instantly credited; a procession was formed to the rock, where the miraculous picture was found, and the present richly endowed Church erected for its reception." At a short distance is a mineral spring, and a small chapel.

No. 33.—Pyramidas de St. Juan.

Called by the Indians Tonatiuh Ytzaqual (house of the Sun,) and Metzli Ytzaqual (house of the Moon.) The pyramid of the sun, the most southern, is 171, and the moon 140 feet in height: they are surrounded by a group of several hundred small pyramids, of twenty-nine or thirty feet in height, dedicated to the stars. They are supposed to have been erected by the Toultec nation, in the eighth or ninth century. It was near this place that Cortez engaged and defeated an innumerable host of Indians, who opposed his retreat after the dreadful first of August.

PLATE II.

No. 1.—Lake of Tezcuco.

The lake of Tezcuco is about ten square leagues in extent, and from nine to sixteen feet in depth: it formerly completely surrounded the city, and was more than double its present size. On the opposite border is the city of Tezcuco, the capital of the kingdom of Acolhuacan, supposed to have been built much earlier than Mexico; and the remains of temples, palaces, &c. prove it to have been much larger. Within a very short distance, on the conical mountain of Tezcozingo, is the Bano de Montezuma, consisting of a basin, twelve feet by eight; in the centre of which is a well, five feet by four deep, and a throne or chair, all cut in the solid porphyry rock. The Bano commands a most extensive view of the whole valley, as well as the city of Mexico, from which it is distant nearly thirty miles.

No. 3.—Penon de los Banos.

At this place are warm mineral springs, and baths for the use of invalids, which are much frequented; also the salt works, which supply the city. The same works, and the same process in the manufacture, were in use in the time of Montezuma.

No. 4.—Santa Teresa la Antigua.

A very handsome Church; the architecture in good taste, and the interior richly ornamented.

No. 10.—Casa de Moneda.

The mint occupies a large portion of the palace, being 364 feet in front, by 260 in depth. The silver which comes from the mines in bars, after being refined and melted into narrow pieces, is, by a succession of wooden machinery, (of which there are ten sets, worked by sixty mules) drawn into long thin strips, the size and thickness of a dollar; then, by means of fifty-two screw presses, being cut round, are weighed, regulated, then stamped by fly presses, of which there are twenty. This machinery is said to be capable of coining 100,000 dollars in ten hours. At present, the number of men employed is under 200, and one hundred mules: when the mines were in a state of activity, 400 were employed, and the coinage amounted to £500,000 sterling per annum. During the last three centuries, about £410,000,000 sterling has been coined in this building, and issued from the treasury, which is contiguous. Gold has not, on an average of several years, produced above 7000 marks, or 56,000 ounces. The silver mines, which are about 3,000 in number, have produced in a series of years, at the commencement of the present century, (according to the revenue books, in which a tax called the fifths is registered) 22,170,000 piastres, and taking into account the quantity which has probably evaded this duty, the total may be estimated at 25,000,000 piastres, or £5,400,000 sterling annually.

Nearly opposite the mint, is the Palace of the Archbishop of Mexico, a large two-story building, not in the least remarkable for its magnificence, although the revenue of the Archbishop is 130,000 dollars per annum.

No. 13.—Palacio.

The palace of the Viceroys, commenced by Cortez as a palace for himself, but exchanged with the government for the present Casa de Stado: it is a large irregular building, in the several courts and squares of which, are the mint, prison, botanic garden and most of the public offices. In the public library is a History of Mexico, collected by order of the government, in 40 vols. 4to.

No. 16.—Iztaccihuatl.

Or the White woman, a mountain of Puebla. 15,700 feet in height.

No. 17.—Popocatepetl.

Or the Smoking Mountain, also in Puebla, 17,716 feet in height.

No. 18 —Botanic Garden.

Although the garden is very small, being in one of the courts of the palace, yet it contains a numerous collection of all that is rare and beautiful in botany. The numerous walks are paved in the Spanish fashion, and bordered by pots of flowers: a marble fountain in the centre, supplies in small streams, all parts of the garden, where the plants of the tropics, as well as of all Europe, flourish and blossom in the open air, almost without the assistance of art.

No. 20.—Universidad.

The University of Mexico was founded in 1551, and is well endowed. The building is very spacious, and contains a neat library. There are at present but very few students, although the number has at times exceeded 200; in the court-yard lies buried the largest Mexican Idol that has yet been discovered, the goddess Teoyaomiqui.

No. 25.—Plaza del Bolador.

The market is held in a large square, near the Plaza Major, and is abundantly supplied from the neighbouring Haciendas with beef, mutton, pork, &c. of a good quality, (veal is forbidden by law,) and by the Indians with game, wild fowl,* fish, and the produce of their gardens. The fruits and esculent vegetables of every climate, as well as those which are indigenous, (many of extraordinary shape and beautiful colour, the names even of which are unknown here) are produced in the greatest possible perfection on the borders of the lakes. So exceedingly fertile is the soil, that, after the rains, if a few grains of maize, which is the chief food of the lower class, is pushed into the ground, in ninety days a rich harvest may be gathered, exceeding by two hundred fold the quantity sown. Baron Humboldt asserts that a quarter of an acre planted with bananas, will yield 44cwt. of nutritious food; and that all the sugar used in France (18,000 tons) might be raised on seven square leagues.

* Hernandez describes 200 birds peculiar to the country; of which, Clavigero enumerates seventy species which afford an agreeable and wholesome food.

No. 27.—Hospitales de Jesus de los Naturales.

Built and endowed by Ferdinand Cortez. The house forms a large square, enclosing a court; the apartments for the patients are clean, airy, and comfortable. In a small neat church attached are deposited the remains of the conqueror, in a strong iron-bound chest; there is also a monument, the only one in Mexico, with a pompous inscription to his memory.

No. 29.—Plaza de Toros.

A temporary ampitheatre, capable of holding 3000 persons erected by order of the late Emperor Iturbide, for the purpose of exhibiting bull-fights, at his coronation. The equestrian statue of Charles IV. which occupies the centre of the area, and is enclosed in a globe of painted paper, was cast in bronze in Mexico, by Sig. Tolza, and is considered a work of great merit, the finest in the country, in a part of the world so destitute of mechanical resources. Round the enclosure of the statue are to be found a class of men called Evangelistas, whose business is to indite and write letters, memorials, &c. Many are good improvisatori, and write letters of all descriptions, in prose and verse, with the greatest facility.

No. 35.—St. Augustin.

Both externally, and internally, a very beautiful and magnificent Church.

No. 37.—Religious Procession.

On holidays the religious processions of Mexico exceed in splendor, and the value of sacred ornaments, even those of Rome. This part of the Plaza Major was occupied by a bazaar or market, called the Parian: the buildings being very shabby, and their immediate removal anticipated, they have been omitted.

No. 38.—Sacrificial Stone.

Discovered among the ruins of ancient Mexico: it is twenty-five feet in circumference, and has a groove on the top for the purpose of letting the blood of the victims run off: the sides are ornamented with fifteen groups of warriors in relief. Baron Humboldt supposes it to have been a stone called Temalacatl on which the more distinguished prisoners fought for their lives. "Placed on the Temalacatl, surrounded by spectators, they were to fight six Mexican warriors in succession: if they were

fortunate enough to conquer, their liberty was granted; if, on the contrary the prisoner sunk under the strokes of his adversaries, a priest, called Chalchiuhlepehua, dragged him dead or living, to the altar, and tore out his heart." All writers agree that the number of victims annually immolated at the shrines of the Mexican idols, was very great but vary in number. Kirwan in his *Metaphysics*, states the number at 25,000. Zumarraga, first bishop of Mexico, says that in the capital alone 20,000 were annually sacrificed. Acosta writes, that on a certain day in the year, it was customary to sacrifice 20,000, and on another day 5000. At the coronation of Montezuma, 30,000 were sacrificed; and, on the mountain Tepeyacac, 20,000 to the goddess Tonantzin.

