

the victim had been a captive taken in war, the body was delivered to his captor, who caused it to be dressed and prepared as a grateful repast for his friends. Can we wonder that the wrath of God should at last overtake a people so totally given over to idolatry and all wickedness, and sweep them as with the besom of destruction from the face of the earth? Could anything be more hurtful in his sight than this sacrifice of man once created in His own image, and still endowed with capabilities of serving him, thus offered at the altar of devils? We rather marvel that the vengeance is so long delayed, the sword not sooner whetted. But the decree had gone forth, the avenger of blood is at the door, a fearful retribution is at hand. Montezuma, in the midst of his luxurious indolence, is startled by whispers of strange and ominous import—tidings reach the capital of the arrival of a band of strangers; white men of great wisdom and power, carrying in their hands the thunders and lightning:—by referring to the picture writing, which was the usual mode of communication, he sees depicted the Spaniards,—their costumes, arms, and equipments, with a fidelity that gave him a real picture of his opponents. Horses were then unknown in Mexico; at first the horse and rider were supposed to be one, a new and terrible engine of destruction; the water houses, as they called the ships of the strangers, were included in the sketch which was to convey the fatal news to the capital. Montezuma trembled; he felt as if his glory had departed; his resistless power overthrown; and his kingdom lay under sentence of death and destruction. Again and again did a prophecy, long since made, return to his agitated mind, viz., that the posterity of the god Metzalcoatl were one day to return and resume possession of the empire of Mexico. A general feeling seems to have prevailed at that period that this promise was about to be accomplished; and many of the tribes recognized in the fair complexion of the Spaniards, their great valor and superior knowledge, these conquerors whose arrival had been so long anticipated. This universal belief paved the way for the approach of the Spaniards; disarming the hostility of some; commanding the reverence of others, and investing the strangers with a superstitious character, which greatly aided their enterprise.

Montreal, June, 1853.

*(To be Continued.)*