

practically the whole City of Mexico. It lasted several months, and the defence was of the most desperate character. Assaults and deeds of daring failed against the multitudes, and nothing less than the levelling of the houses as the troops advanced, and the filling up of canals, made success possible ; so that so far as the City of Mexico goes, it is wholly Spanish in its streets and public squares, and the character of its principal houses.

At the time of the Conquest it was a city of dykes and canals, with here and there squares made solid with

every class. To-day, along the canal de Vega, by taking passage in one of the curious flat-bottomed gondolas, with an awning stretched over it, you may go for a mile or two past little groups of single-roomed adobe-houses, thatched in a way quite as primitive, I am sure, as any ever were at the Conquest. This class of house or cabin is developed, as one sees in different cities in different parts of the country, to an indefinite extent. Ordinarily it is one-storied, but its walls outside may be neatly made and plastered with the same class of material as the



THE CATHEDRAL, MEXICO.

earth. Now the remains of the old city make ground for the new ; and in laying foundations to-day the workman daily exhumes some sculptured stone or other relics of the past ; while by causeways, canals and tunnels, the water level of the valley has been and is still being lowered, so that a first-class system of sewers in all parts of the city will soon be an accomplished fact. But what of old Mexico ? Gradually, we are told, as the conquerors began to build, the Mexicans returned to certain portions of the old city, and engaged in the work as laborers of

bricks are made of ; it may be divided into a number of rooms and even have two stories. Owing to the dry climate, the intense sunlight of the plateau, and, I presume, the character of the soil, it is likely that the large sun-dried mass of clay, with chopped grass to bind it, made in a mould a foot square or more, will long remain a convenient building material for the common people, and for making walls for corrals and other similar purposes. Practically the only other building material is stone. Remembering the volcanic character of the Sierra Madre,