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MASTER MONTEZUMA.

With Illustrations copied from Mexican Hieroglyphics.

BY C. C. HASKINS.

[NOTE.—Montezuma II., the last of the Aztec (or native Mexican) emperors, was born about 1480. He was taken prisoner by Hernando Cortes, the commander of the Spanish army which conquered Mexico, and, in the hope of quelling an insurrection which had arisen among his former subjects, he consented to address them from the walls of his prison. Stung by the apparent desertion of their leader to the cause of the enemy, the Mexicans assaulted him with stones and other missiles. He was struck on the temple by one of the stones, and died from the effects in a few days. The illustrations are true copies of old Mexican pictures which appeared originally in the "Collection of Mendoza," a work frequently referred to by all writers on ancient Mexico.—C. C. H.]

The Emperor Montezuma was a great man, and historians have recorded much about him, but of his earlier life, when he was plain Master Montezuma, comparatively little is known of this rising young gentleman.

Master M. commenced his earthly career as a crying baby, in the year "one cane," which, when properly figured down according to



MASTER MONTEZUMA IS TAUGHT HOW TO FISH.

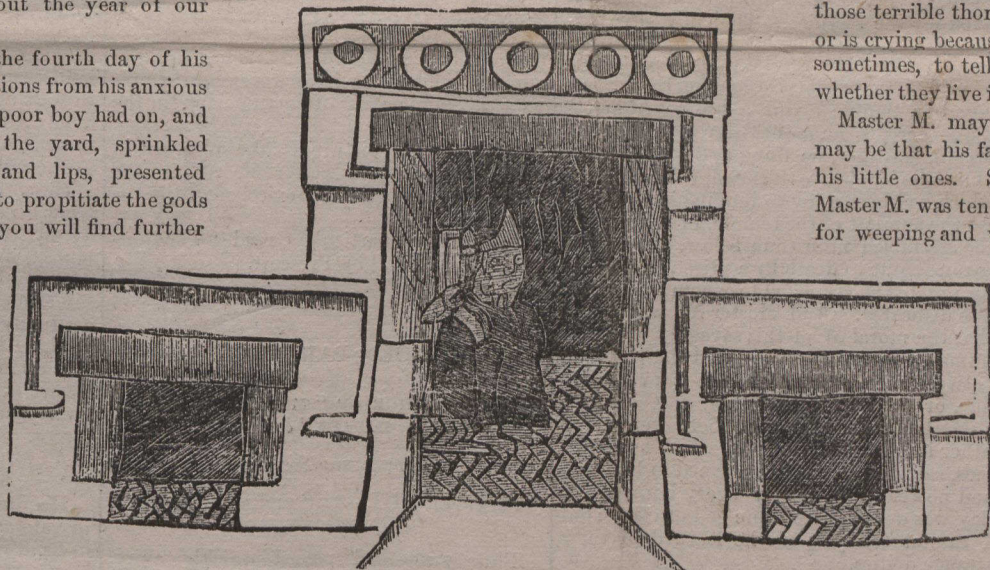


CARRYING THE BRIDE.

the Gregorian calendar, would be about the year of our Lord 1480.

No sooner had Master M. reached the fourth day of his existence, than the nurse, under instructions from his anxious mamma, took off what few clothes the poor boy had on, and repairing to the baptismal font in the yard, sprinkled cold water upon his naked breast and lips, presented his credentials in the shape of offerings to propitiate the gods of war, agriculture, &c., whose names you will find further along in this history, repeated a prayer in which "the Lord was implored to wash away the sin that was given him before the foundation of the world, so that the child might be born anew," and told the three little boys who sat near by what Master M.'s name was to be. The three little boys left off eating their parched corn and boiled beans, repeated the name, and the little baby was christened.

Now, if Master M. had been a girl—which he was not—the offerings would have been a mat, a spinning machine and a broom, all of which would have been buried under the *metate*, the stone where corn was ground. As it was the offerings were implements of war, articles of metal, pottery, &c., and these were buried, as near as they could guess at the location, where they either hoped or feared there



THE EMPEROR MONTEZUMA, SEATED IN THE ROYAL HALLS.

might some day be a battle with their enemies. When Master M. had eaten, and slept, and kicked, and cried for sixteen days longer, his parents took him to the priest, and to the teacher, and promised that he should be instructed by these worthy gentlemen in war, politics, religion, and other branches of general education. They promised that

he should be an Alfalqui, or priest, and should also serve in the army as a soldier. In that little, wiggling baby, that seemed all fists and mouth, it was impossible to foresee the future Emperor of Mexico, whose name has since become familiar to the civilized world.

Young Master M. worried along pretty well, and up to six years of age he had done nothing remarkable. At this age he was granted one and one-half rolls at a meal, and commenced doing little errands and picking up scattered beans and corn in the Tianquez, which is what the Mexicans called the market-place.

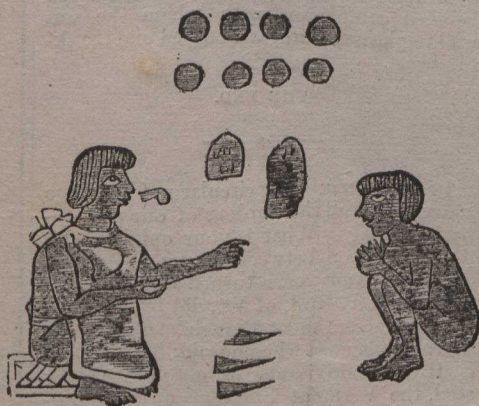
The restless spirit of a military chieftain now began to show itself in the embryo warrior, and, by the time he had reached his eighth year, discipline became necessary to curb his growing inclination to despotism. He was fast becoming one of that class of boys who think "it's too bad to be good all the time." In the second picture see the scalding tears! Whether Master M. is sorry that he has done wrong, or whether he only fears being pricked with

those terrible thorns of the aloe with which he is threatened, or is crying because he is cold, who shall tell? It is hard, sometimes, to tell what eight-year-old boys are crying for, whether they live in the United States, Canada, or in Mexico.

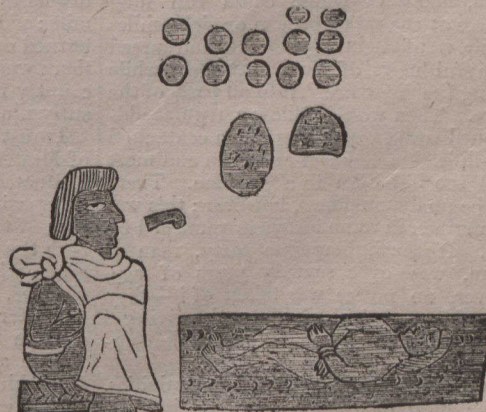
Master M. may have been better than most boys, and it may be that his father was a better driver than leader for his little ones. Some fathers are. In any event, when Master M. was ten years old there came another opportunity for weeping and wailing, and Master M. was submitted to the mortification of lying on the damp ground all day while he listened to a parental lecture; and this, too, after he was twelve years old!

Then Master M. reformed, and became an industrious, faithful boy. I have sometimes questioned whether he wasn't hungry, and if he had been better fed whether he would not have done better. At fourteen years of age they gave him two rolls at a meal, and he was instructed in the art of fishing with a net. You can tell how old the boy is by the number of round marks in the picture, and the person who is speaking is denoted by a tongue in front of the mouth.

When his fifteenth year came, Master M. found he would have plenty to do. After this, old Mr. M. had no trouble with him. It is curious—the more we have to do, the less



MASTER MONTEZUMA MUST BE PUNISHED.



MASTER MONTEZUMA IS TALKED TO BY HIS FATHER.