

nobles, surrounded by ornamental walls and battlements, rising among them.

They had a systematized form of government, with crown lands and levied taxation; they had a perfect system of jurisprudence, embracing a common court, a court of appeal, and a supreme court, over which the priest and the emperor himself presided.

All the larger cities were garrisoned. A system of post-stations was established between all points, each point being connected with the other by means of swift-footed runners.

The Aztecs had a national standard with a design very similar to that of the ancient Romans, having embroidered in gold and feather-work, the armorial bearings of the empire.

In the centre of each city was a large market place, where domestic goods were bartered, and booths of all kinds conducted.

Manufactories of many kinds were established throughout the country, where ornamental armor, dresses, dress cloths, mantles, vases and plates of gold and silver were made, also many utensils of copper. In pottery, they manufactured every form of culinary vessel, vases and stands; they built canals for irrigation; erected reservoirs for storing water to supply the various cities in the dry seasons; they cultivated millions of acres of lands, they had many fruit orchards full of the most luscious products of the tropics.

They possessed many public institutions, which form important features in our modern civilization: For instance: They had hospitals for the sick and afflicted, also homes and retreats for their aged soldiers, or those disabled in battle; they had many monasteries and institutions similar to convents, in which the opposite sexes lived in rigid chastity and morality, and were vowed to celibacy; they possessed a system of schools in which the youth were instructed in the principles of philosophy, taught precepts of life, simple and exalted enough to bear comparison with the ethical culture of to-day.

But it was in religion that they had formulated a creed, the like of which has no parallel in history. Fundamentally it rested in the belief of a Supreme God and Creator of the universe. But in practical detail, it was at once a paradox and a horror. It was under the ministry of an immense number of priests, of whom the Emperor was the head. These priests were chosen from the ranks of the nobles and princes, and controlled not only religious matters, but affairs of State in the Empire.

Though recognizing a Supreme God, Invisible, Incorporeal, they had many tutelary deities who presided over the various seasons and affairs of life. To these different gods they offered up sacrifice of various forms.

At certain seasons pastoral processions were formed, and youths and maidens bearing wreaths of flowers, or laden with offerings of the ripened maize, swinging censers smoking with resinous gums and sweet herbaic incense, wound slowly up the city streets to the lofty temple and as the first rays of the rising sun kissed the white walls they joined hands and circled around, chanting and dancing, with eyes fixed on the golden god of day.

Another sacrifice most hideous and horrible

was performed at midnight by the priests of the different temples. This was the offering up of a human life to the god of war.

The wild eyed priests, with blood-besmeared features, clotted locks, and claw-like hands, danced wildly around a stone altar on the very top of the temple, until just as the hour of midnight tolled, the chosen victim, oftentimes a virgin selected for her beauty, was led forth, when the high priest grasped her by the hair, and bending her backwards over a square block of stone, laid bare her bosom, and drove deep therein a sharp stone knife; inserting his fiendish claws, he tore out the recking heart, and cast it all palpitating on the altar of the terrible deity.

The Aztecs had a perfect system of time, one that was on the whole, little different from ours of the present day.

In mathematics they possessed a profound knowledge; one of practical use, as attested in their division of lands, arrangement of cities, towns, provinces, of the army, and in the erection of walls, temples, palaces and public works.

This brief summary will give an idea of the advanced civilization attained to by the Aztecs. To consider briefly their chronology and tradition.

According to Spanish historians, who had access to the Aztec manuscripts, these people came originally from the far North, from the land of Aztalan; and were a period of something over 400 years in making the journey.

Humboldt avers they left Aztalan—which means "land of water," as early as 544 A. D.

They claimed to have left vast works and a great extent of country in a state of civilization. Their towns, villages, and cities numbered over *three thousand*.

Their long journey, they divided into 15 stages or zones. In each of these zones they remained for a certain period, then continued southward until they arrived on the Mexican frontier. Crossing the Rio del Norte they still pressed onwards until they came to a spot where they espied an eagle perched on a cactus-tree, which they took as a providential omen, divining the site whereon they were to found a city. Here they accordingly rested, and began the foundation of their city beside the Lake of Tezcuco, to which they gave the name it bears to-day, Mexico—a city with a history strange and varied as is no other in the land of the New World.

But in this favored country they were not alone; already was located there another people, peaceful and industrious, who possessed a civilization higher than their own.

These other people were called Toltecs. They possessed cities of superior construction, and were the builders of great pyramids, walls, and public works.

At first there was peace between the two nations, but as the Aztecs grew more powerful, they began to encroach upon the domains of their industrious neighbors, thereby provoking a war in which their own prowess proved vastly superior. In the course of centuries they became not only masters of the possessions of the Toltecs, but of all possessions of the kindred Nahua family, until at the date of the Spanish invasion, their powerful Empire swelled from ocean to ocean, embracing about the same area

now covered by the Mexican Republic.

From the Toltecs, the Aztecs appear to have derived many of the advanced ideas they possessed, when conquered by Cortez. Their complex system of time, for instance, was borrowed from the nations they subdued.

The Toltecs possessed the belief in God, pure and simple, using in sacrifice only the blood of animals or offerings of fruit and flowers. The Aztecs may always have had the same exalted belief, but the terrible rites of human sacrifice were their own.

From Toltec tradition transmitted along with the Aztec, we learn that they came likewise from a northerly direction, arriving in Mexico early in the Christian era.

They were preceded in turn by the Nahua family, that mysterious ante-Christ race who have come down to us in a mist of vagueness, who are said to have been a race of *white* and *bearded* men, who were the builders of the great works of Central America and Guatemala, and perhaps the founders of the mysterious Aymaran Empire of Peru.

So much then for the history and traditions of the races of Mexico, so different from the abstract and disconnected legends of the Nomadic tribes of the North.

Now, to turn again to the Mound Builders.

We demonstrated in a former paper that the Mound Builders in the extreme North when defeated, would fall back upon their kindred people, and stubbornly contesting every foot of ground would retreat slowly southward.

This slow retreat would, no doubt extend over centuries of resistance. Finally, however, the Mound Builders would be driven into the extreme South. Once here, they must look for some other road of escape.

What more natural therefore, than that they should follow the migratory course to the south—westward, over which their late arriving kindred had gone, as indicated in the first part of this paper?

They would pass over the same route, and eventually arrive at the same destination, viz.: Mexico.

Already our readers must have surmised the connection.

We have seen from Toltec and Aztec tradition that each people claimed to have come from the North, one some centuries in advance of the other; we have seen that each appeared to be a kindred race, though the one was the more savage and warlike, made so by the centuries of resistance they had undergone combating an aggressive and never tiring foe.

Aztec tradition stated they were driven from a fair country with many cities and towns and vast works, the country of Aztalan or Lake region.

Could further testimony be asked than this one coincidence alone, to prove that the builders of the great mounds in Central North America, and the Toltec and Aztec nations of Mexico were one and the same people.

Such at least is our conclusion, erroneous though it may be.

And the traveller who to-day journeys in Mexico, may see in the grave sad features of the Indian by the wayside, trudging along with