

On the appointed day, the Aztecs assembled to the number of about six hundred (some writers say a thousand). The company was composed almost entirely of the rich and the officials of the city, attired in their gala dress and wearing gold necklaces, armlets, anklets, and precious stones in profusion.

Alvarado and his Spanish soldiers, fully armed, attended as spectators; some remained outside the walls, some at the gates as if by chance, and others mingled with the crowd. The fact of the Spaniards being armed excited no suspicion, as they always carried their arms when about the city. When the Aztecs became fully engrossed in the dances, at a given signal Alvarado and his men rushed upon them, slaughtering their unarmed victims without the slightest pity or mercy. Those who ran to the gates were hewn down by the soldiers stationed there, while those who climbed the wall were shot by the soldiers stationed on the outside for that purpose. "The pavement," says a writer who witnessed it, "ran with streams of blood, like water in a heavy shower." Not an Aztec of all that gay company was left alive, and after the slaughter the civilized and Christianized Spaniards rifled the dead of their valuable ornaments.

This most inhuman and atrocious act opened the eyes of the deluded Aztecs living in the City of Mexico, to the fact that the Spaniards were most assuredly *not* the descendants of the good "God of the Air," and from that moment the old tradition began to lose its hold upon their minds. The Emperor