

Washington, D.C.
June 30, 1939

Mr M.W. Stirling,
Chief of the Bureau of American Ethnology,
Smithsonian Institution,
Washington, D.C.

Sir:

The following report is submitted on work done, during the fiscal year ending June 30, 1939, on the ethnographic and Indian sign language material contained in the manuscripts of the late Major General Hugh L. Scott, U.S.A. These manuscripts, together with other material, were donated to the Bureau by the widow of General Scott. The material donated consisted of newspaper clippings, pamphlets and other printed matter, photographs, and manuscript.

This material was examined, read and classified. The photographs were turned over to their proper custodian in the Bureau for filing and record. The pamphlets and other printed matter were disposed of in like manner. The manuscript was read and examined, and classified in separate filing jackets. Many historical references in these manuscripts were checked for accuracy.

An extensive research was made into the writings of most of the early discoverers and explorers of the North American continent, beginning with the Norsemen, in order to determine the extent to which and the localities in which the sign language was used by the North American Indians. It was ascertained, as far as the records which have been examined to date reveal, that the sign language was confined to the buffalo hunting tribes of the plains west of the Mississippi river, and to tribes adjacent to the plains who made seasonal hunts into the buffalo country. This confirms the statements made by General Scott in his manuscripts.

In addition to the above work research has been made for the purpose of giving answers to various inquiries addressed to the Bureau on subjects relating to the Indian tribes of the plains.

Respectfully,

NOTES ON NORTH AMERICAN INDIAN SIGN LANGUAGE.

I.

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EARLY EXPLORERS. COMMUNICATION WITH INDIANS.

(Bibliography: Books, pictures and manuscripts on Indian Sign
Language, Note Book IV, Page 280.)

1.

NORTH AMERICA.
EXPLORATION ZONES.

PENINSULAS: Alaska.

Florida. Michigan.
Lower California.
Yucatan.

ISTHMUS: Central America. (Honduras, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Salvador,

ISLANDS: Cuba. Costa Rica, Panama).

Jamaica.
Santo Domingo.
Bermuda.
Antilles.

CENTRAL PLATEAUS:

Columbia river basin.
Salt Lake basin.
Mexico city.

DRAINAGE SYSTEMS:

McKenzie River.
Hudson Bay.
East Labrador.
St. Lawrence. (including Newfoundland).
Great Lakes.
North Atlantic, (coast to Chesapeake Bay).
South Atlantic, (Chesapeake Bay to Florida).
Southeast central, (east of Mississippi, south of Ohio).
Northeast central, (east of Mississippi, north of Ohio).
Northern plains, (west of Mississippi, north of Platte).
Southern plains, (west of Mississippi, south of Platte).
Rio Grande watershed.
Colorado watershed.
South Pacific, (pacific coast north to San Francisco bay).
Central Pacific, (Pacific coast north to Puget Sound).
North Pacific, (Pacific coast north to Cook Inlet).
West Mexico, (Mexican waters draining into Pacific).
East Mexico, (Mexican waters draining into Atlantic).

The above zones are set forth for purposes of convenience, not accuracy.

See Maps in pocket in the back of Note Book III, Miscellaneous Notes.

DEFINITIONS.

Funk and Wangalls New Standard Dictionary. New-York-London, 1927.

Gesture. I. A motion of the body, head, or limbs, especially a movement or action of the hands or face, expressive of some idea or emotion, or illustrative of some utterance; any posture or action intended to emphasize or enforce an argument or opinion.

Pantomime. n. I. A series of actions, as gestures and postures, used to convey ideas or information; sign language, as to converse with Indians in pantomime.

Bureau of American Ethnology, Smithsonian Institution, Bulletin 30, Part 2, Handbook of American Indians North of Mexico, Hodge.

Sign language. A system of gestures in use by the Indians of the plains for intercommunication among tribes speaking different languages. Article by James Mooney.

Bureau of American Ethnology, Smithsonian Institution, Bulletin 40, Part 1, Handbook of American Indian Languages, Introduction by Franz Boas, Page 15.

Definition of Language. --- In our present discussion we do not deal with gesture-language, or musical means of communication, but confine ourselves to the discussion of articulate speech; that is, to communication by means of groups of sounds produced by the articulating organs - the larynx, oral cavity, tongue, lips, and nose.

JGC:- Sign language: Conventional gestures, commonly understood and agreed upon to convey thoughts and desires.

Pantomime: Imitative gestures independently made and contingent on individual initiative, imagination and ability and undersnding for success in transmitting wishes and ideas, thoughts and desires.

SCOPE.

Place and people: North American Continent. Aboriginal inhabitants.

Time: A.D. 985 to A.D. 1885.

Sources of material: First hand accounts of explorers and settlers.

Subject: Sign language.

USE.

Utility: A. To ethnologists working among plains Indians to gain confidence of Indians, and to work among them without aid of interpreters. B. As an adjunct to increase vocabulary of language of deaf and dumb. C. As an international language, since it overcomes difficulties due to pronunciation and study of grammar. D. As a military aid, to be used when noise of battle makes speech difficult to understand, or the presence of enemy listening posts makes it not advisable.* E. In factories, where noise of machinery makes it difficult to transmit orders by word of mouth.

DEFINITIONS.

A sign is anything from which or by which something beyond itself is known.

An arbitrary sign is one whose signification depends on convention, that is, agreement between men.

Language in general is a natural sign, but any given word is an arbitrary sign. Elementary Handbook of Logic, John J. Toohy.

Conventional - Arising out of custom or tacit agreement. Webster, Dictionary

*Also useful for soldiers and civilians in gas masks.

DISTINCTION BETWEEN PANTOMIME AND SIGN TALK AND CRITICISM OF ORIGINAL RECORDS OF EXPLORERS.

Pantomime is the act of making ones wishes known by action. It is action, and depends for its success upon the ability of the actor and the understanding of the observer. Sign Talk is a system of conveying thought by the use of the hands, in highly conventionized gestures, not understandable by one not versed in that system. Pantomime is generally improvised. Sign Talk is a predetermined system. In the narratives of explorers both systems are referred to as signs, and this makes it difficult to determinewhich tribes used Sign Talk and which used pantomime. Many tribes versed in Sign Talk may have had to use pantomime with the early explorers because they knew that these explorers were not conversant with Sign Talk. On the other hand many explorers may have used Sign Talk as an every day method of communication with the Indians, to such an extent that they did not consider it worth while mentioning in their journals. All of these facts makes it extremely difficult to determine, from the records now at hand, the diffusion of Sign Talk among the North American Indian. It is a difficulty that confronts the student at the outset of his investigation.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN SIGN LANGUAGE AND PANTOMIME.

SIGN LANGUAGE.

PANTOMIME.

Formal, fixed and conventional gestures are employed by all users of the sign language, and these gestures are commonly understood by all who know the sign language.	:	Gestures are not formal, fixed or conventional, and are improvised. For their success they depend upon the ability to act and mimic of the user, and the quick perception and understanding of the observer.
The gestures are not improvised.	:	

Economy of motion and concept is employed in the gesture, only some salient feature of the act or thing depicted being given.	:	Because the gestures are not conventional, the mimicry and acting must be more elaborate and complete to convey the idea sought to be put over.
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Sign language must be learned to be understood. A conversation in sign language is for the most part unintelligible to a person who has not learned the language.	:	Pantomime is for the most part improvised, although some acts of pantomime are common to all men, and are readily understood by all men.
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Most sign language gestures require only the use of the hands within a small area, and do not require the voice, facial expressions or postures of the body for their execution.	:	Pantomime frequently requires sweeping movements of the hands, use of the voice, facial expression and postures of the body, with much pointing at objects in order to get the idea across.
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Most objects in sign language can be described by a short sign for the object, which sign is the conventional sign for that object.	:	Pantomime has no conventional signs for objects, and this must be supplied by pointing at objects which are the same or similar to the object desired.
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POINTS TO BE OBSERVED IN EXAMINING SOURCE MATERIAL:

1. An Indian who knew sign language would have to use pantomime with a white man who did not know sign language, if neither had a language in common, and there was no interpreter at hand.
2. It is possible for a white man to live among Indians who used sign talk and remain in complete ignorance of its existence, due to his failure to observe it.
3. White men who lived among sign talking Indians, and used the sign talk, failed to mention it, because it was too commonplace a thing to be mentioned, and it never occurred to them to write of such an ordinary matter.
4. In general early explorers, missionaries and traders only make mention of things that are of primary interest to them, and ignore all other things.
5. It must also be remembered that these same explorers, missionaries and traders were writing, for the most part, for home consumption, and in their own particular interests.

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Gestures are not formal, fixed or conventional, and are improvised for their purpose they depend upon the ability to act and mind of the user, and the quick perception and understanding of the observer.

Formal, fixed and conventional gestures are employed by all users of the sign language, and these gestures are commonly understood by all who know the sign language. The gestures are not improvised.

Because the gestures are not conventional, the mystery and acting must be more elaborate and complete to convey the idea sought to be put over.

Economy of motion and concept is employed in the gesture, only some salient feature of the act or thing depicted being given.

Letter of Christopher Columbus to Rafael Sanchez, written on board the Caravel while returning from his first voyage. Published at Barcelona, May, 1493, and dated Lisbon, March 14. Chicago: The W.H. Lowdermilk Co., 1893. Page 8.

On my arrival I took by force from the first island a few of the Indians, in order that we might become acquainted with one another's language, and to gain a knowledge of what their country contained. These were of singular use to us, as we came to understand each other in a short time by the help of words and signs. I have them still with me, and they continue in the belief that we come from heaven.

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NO SIGN LANGUAGE. NORTHMEN, COLUMBUS AND CABOT. 985-1503. INDIANS.

Original Narratives of Early American History, The Northmen, Columbus and Cabot, 985-1503, New York, 1906. Edited by Olson and Bourne.

- (14-44) Saga of Eric the Red.
- (36-37) Karlsefni and his followers meet the Skrellings (Indians).
Peace signs, that is, Skrellings wave staves, revolving them in the same direction as the sun and the Norse display a white shield. Norse barter for furs and other things, giving cloth.
- (41) Karlsefni captures two Skrelling boys, who are kept by the Norse and taught to speak their language.
- (45-66) Flatey, or Flat Island, Book.
- (55) Thorvald's fight with the Skrellings.
- (60) Karlsefni and the Skrellings. "Neither could understand the others language."
Karlsefni: Trading milk to Skrellings for fur and other things.
- (80-258) Journal of the First Voyage of Columbus, 1492-1493.
Signs, evidently pantomime: (111) Made signs to Indians and they made signs back, on Friday, October 12, 1492. (112) Saturday, October 13. Spaniards make signs for gold. (113) Sunday, October 14. "We understood they asked us if we came from heaven." (114) Captured seven natives, who will be taught Spanish. Natives, by signs, indicate there are so many islands they cannot be numbered, and give their names. (115) Monday, October 15. People of San Salvador "tell" Columbus, etc. (116) Indians make signs that there is much gold. (117) "and it must be gold, for they point to some pieces that I have." (i.e. the Indians point). (119) Tuesday, October 16. Natives say gold is at Samaot. Boy told me he saw a large serpent. (120) Wednesday, October 17. Indians make signs to south quarter as the source of gold. (122) Indians of Fernandina reply that they do not barter. Indians say the island is smaller than Samaot. (124) Friday, October 19. Indians tell Columbus about a king with much gold. Saturday, October 20. "where, I understood from the Indians I brought with me, was the village of the king." (126) Sunday, October 21. "I requested him" (the Indian) "to get me some water." "another much larger island, which I believe to be Cipango, judging from the signs made by the Indians I bring with me." "They call it Cuba." (127) Tuesday, October 23. "I desired to set out today for the island of Cuba, which I think must be Cipango, according to the signs these people make, indicative of its size and riches." (128) Wednesday, October 24. "They" (the Indians) "showed me that the course thither would be W.S.W., and so I hold. For I believe that it is so, as all the Indians of these islands, as well as those I brought with me in the ships, told me by signs. I cannot understand their language, but I believe that it is of the island of Cipango that they recount these wonders." (129) Friday, October 26. "The Indians on board said that thence to Cuba was a voyage in their canoes of a day and a half---I departed thence for Cuba, (130) for by the signs the Indians made of its greatness, and of its gold and pearls, I thought that it must be Cipango." (131) Sunday, October 28. Indians "said by signs that there are ten great rivers, and that they cannot go round the island in twenty days." Columbus "understood that large ships of the Gran Can came here, and that from here to the mainland was a voyage of ten days." (132) Monday, October 29. "He saw another river much larger than the others, as the Indians told him by signs." (133) Tuesday, October 30. "The Indians on board the caravel Pinta said that beyond that cape there was (134) a river, and that from the river to Cuba was four days' journey." (135) Thursday, November 1. The Indians

NO SIGN LANGUAGE. COLUMBUS. 1492. CARIBS, AND OTHER INDIANS OF ANTILLES.

Original Narratives of Early American History, The Northmen, Columbus and Cabot, 985-1503, New York, 1906.

"said, by signs, that within three days many merchants from inland would come to buy the things brought by the Christians, and would give information respecting the king of that land. So far as could ~~(136)~~ be understood from their signs, he resided at a distance of four days' journey." (138) Sunday, October 4. "The Admiral showed the Indians some specimens of cinnamon and pepper he had brought from Castile, and they knew it, and said, by signs, that there was plenty in the vicinity, pointing to the S.E.. He also showed them gold and pearls, on which certain old men said that there was an infinite quantity in a place called Bohio, and that the people wore it on their necks, ears, arms, and legs, as well as pearls. He further understood them to say that there were great ships and much merchandise, all to the S.E. He also understood that, far away, there were men with one eye, and others with dogs' noses who were cannibals, and that when they captured an enemy, they beheaded him and drank his blood, and cut off his private parts." (140) Monday, November 5. "An Indian said by signs that the mastic was good for pains in the stomach." (141) Tuesday, November 6. "The Spaniards showed the natives specimens of cinnamon, pepper, and other spices which the Admiral had given them, and they said, by signs, that there was plenty at a short distance from thence to S.E., but that ~~there they did not~~ know whether there was any. --- The Admiral conversed with them, and showed them much honor. They made signs respecting many lands and islands in those parts." (143) Monday, November 12. "The Admiral left the port and river of Mares before dawn to visit the island called Babeque, so much talked of by the Indians on board, where, according to their signs, the people gather the gold on the beach at night with candles, and afterwards beat it into bars with hammers." (144) "The Admiral says that, on the previous Sunday, the 11th of November, it seemed good to take some persons from amongst those at Rio de Mares, to bring to the Sovereigns, that they might learn our language, so as to be able to tell us what there is in their lands." (146) Tuesday, November 13. "It appeared that here was the division between the land of Cuba and that of Bohio, and this was affirmed by signs, by the Indians who were on board." (153) Friday, November 23. The Indians "said that it" (the land) "was very large, and that there were people in it who had one eye in their foreheads, and others who were cannibals, and of whom they were much afraid." (158) Tuesday, November 27. "Three Christians were put on shore, who told them not to be afraid, in their own language, for they had been able to learn a little from the natives who were on board." (159) "And besides, I do not know the language, and these people neither understand me nor any other in my company; while the Indians I have on board often misunderstand. Moreover, I have not been able to see much of the natives, because they often take to flight. But now, if our Lord pleases, I will see as much as possible, and will proceed little by little, learning and comprehending; and I will make some of my followers learn the language. For I have perceived that there is only one language up to this point." (165) Monday, December 3. "The Admiral thought he was assuring him that he was pleased at his arrival; but he saw the Indian who came from the ship change the color of his face, and turn as yellow as wax, trembling much, and letting the Admiral know by signs that he should leave the river, as they were going to kill him. He pointed to a cross-bow which one of the Spaniards had, and showed it to the Indians, and the Admiral let it be understood that they would all be slain, because that cross-bow carried far and killed people. He also took a sword and drew it out of the sheath, showing it to them, and saying the same, which, when they had heard, they all took to flight;" while the Indian from the ship still

NO SIGN LANGUAGE. COLUMBUS. 1492. CARIBS AND OTHER TRIBES OF THE ANTILLES.

Original Narratives of Early American History, The Northmen, Columbus, and Cabot, 985-1503, New York, 1906.

(166) "I thought it was a temple, and I called them and asked, by signs, whether prayers were offered there." (167) Wednesday, December 5. "The Indians relate other things, by signs, which are very wonderful; but the Admiral did not believe them." (170) Thursday, December 6. The Indians "were already suspicious, because he did not shape a course towards their country; whence he neither believed what they said, nor could he understand them, nor they him, properly." (175) Tuesday, December 12. "Each day we understand better what the Indians say, and they us, so that very often we are intelligible to each other." (176) "The woman pointed out the position of the village." (177) Thursday, December 13. "They were so impressed with what he said, that upwards of two thousand came close up to the Christians, putting their hands on their heads, which was a sign of great reverence and friendship." (182) Sunday, December 16. "But neither the Indians, who were on board, who acted as interpreters, nor the king, believed a word of it." (183) Monday, December 17. "The Indians pointed out two men who wanted certain pieces of flesh on their bodies, giving to understand that the Canibales had eaten them by mouthfuls." --- "When he had no more left, he said by signs that he had sent for more, and that he would bring it another day." --- "When they arrived on the beach, all the people of the village sat down in sign of peace, and nearly all the crew came on shore." (185) Tuesday, December 18. "When he came under the poop, he made signs with his hand that all the rest should remain outside." --- "And both he and his tutor and councillors were very (186) sorry that they could not understand me, nor I them." "The Admiral heard from an old man that there were many neighboring islands, at a distance of a hundred leagues or more, as he understood, in which much gold is found; and there is even one island that was all gold. In the others there (187) was so much that it was said they gather it with sieves, and they fuse it and make bars, and work it in a thousand ways. They explained the work by signs. This old man pointed out to the Admiral the direction and position." (193) Saturday, December 22. "At dawn the Admiral made sail to shape a course in search of the islands which the Indians had told him contained much gold, some of them having more gold than earth." (194) "It took a good part of the day before they could be understood. Not even the Indians who were on board understood them well, because they have some differences of words for the names of things. At last their invitation was understood by signs." (195) Sunday, December 23. "They" (the Indians) "said that here the Admiral would find as much (gold) as he wanted. Others came, who confirmed the statement that there was much gold in the island, and explained the way it was collected." (196) "The Admiral understood all this with much difficulty; nevertheless, he concluded that there was a very great quantity in those parts." (197) Monday, December 24. "Among the numerous Indians who had come to the ship yesterday, and had made signs that there was gold in the island, naming the place whence it was collected, the Admiral noticed one who seemed more fully informed." (198) "Most of their" (the Indian's) "orders are given by a sign with the hand, which is understood with surprising quickness." (202) Wednesday, December 26. "The king rejoiced much when he saw that the Admiral was pleased. He understood that his friend wanted much gold, and he said, by signs, that he knew where there was, in the vicinity, a very large quantity; so that he must be in good heart, for he should have as much as he wanted. He gave some account of it, especially saying that in Cipango, which they call Cibao, it is so abundant that it is of no value."

PANTOMIME. COLUMBUS. 1492. CARIBS AND OTHER TRIBES OF THE ANTILLES.

Original Narratives of Early American History. The Northmen, Columbus, and Cabot. 985-1503. New York, 1906.

(203) "The Admiral said, by signs, that the Sovereigns of Castile would order the Caribs to be destroyed, and that all should be taken with their hands tied together." (206) Saturday, December 29. "As the Admiral was always worning to find out the origin of the gold, he asked everyone, for he could now understand somewhat by signs."

YEAR 1493.

(222) Sunday, January 13. "The Admiral asked about the Caribs, and he" (the Indian) "pointed to the east, near at hand, which means that he saw the Admiral yesterday before he entered the bay." (223) "He understood a few words, and the Indians who were on board comprehended more, there being a difference in the language owing to the great distance between the various islands." --- "The Indians landed, and signed to the others to put down their bows and arrows."

(229) COLUMBUS STARTS BACK TO SPAIN. Thursday, January 17. FIRST VOYAGE.

(203) Letter of Columbus to Luis de Santangel, March 14, 1493.

(267) "And as soon as I arrived in the Indies; in the first island that I found, I took some of them" (the Indians) "by force, to the intent that they should learn (our speech) and give me information of what there was in those parts. And so it was, that very soon they understood (us) and we them, what by speech or what by signs; and those (Indians) have been of much service."

(283) Letter of Dr. Chanca on the Second Voyage of Columbus. 1493-1494.

(297) As we passed by the province called Xamana, we sent on shore one of the Indians, who had been taken in the previous voyage, clothed, and carrying some trifles, which the Admiral had ordered to be given him." --- The Indians "were received on board with great kindness, and taken to the Admiral's ship, where, through the medium of an interpreter, they related that a certain king had sent them to ascertain who we were, and to invite us to land, adding that they had plenty of gold, and also of provisions, to which we should be welcome." (300) "When they" (the Indians) "were asked concerning the Spaniards" (who had been left behind on the First Voyage), "they replied that all of them were dead; we had been told this already by one of the Indians whom we had brought from Spain, and who had conversed with the two Indians that on the former occasion came on board with their canoe, but we did not believe it." (303) "The chief men of the party then went on shore in the boat, proceeded to the place where Guacamari was, and found him stretched on his bed, complaining of a severe wound." --- "Guacamari desired them by signs as well as he was able, to tell the Admiral that as he was thus wounded, he prayed him to have the goodness to come to see him." (304) "Guacamari "did not arise, but made from his bed the best gesture of courtesy of which he was capable. He showed much feeling with tears in his eyes for the death of the Spaniards, and began speaking on the subject, with explaining to the best of his power, how some died of disease, others had gone to Caonabo in search of the mine of gold, and had there been killed, and the rest had been attacked and slain in their own town." (305) "Then he told the Admiral that the wound was made with a ciba, by which he meant with a stone." (306) "All this passed through the interpretation of two of the Indians who had gone to Spain in the last voyage, and who were the sole survivors of seven who had embarked with us; five died on the voyage, and these but narrowly escaped." (309) "My idea of this people is, that if we could converse with them, (310) they would all become converted." (319) Third Voyage of Columbus, Narrative of Las Casas's History.

PANTOMIME. COLUMBUS. 1498. CARIBS AND OTHER TRIBES OF THE ANTILLES.

Original Narratives of Early American History. The Northmen, Columbus and Cabot, 985-1503. New York, 1906.

(335) The Indians took the gifts "and as if in gratitude (336) for what had been given them, by signs said to him that he should go to land with them, and there they would give him what they had." (337) "And according to the signs and gestures which they" (the Indians) "made, he says he could understand from them that they believed the Admiral came from the south." (342) Monday, August 6, 1498. "The Admiral asked them questions and they replied, but they did not understand each other." (343) Wednesday, August 8. Columbus captures six Indians. (344) "And one of the Indians he had taken told him there was much gold there, and that they made large mirrors of it, and they showed how they gathered it. He says mirrors, wherefore the Admiral must have given some mirrors and the Indians must have said by signs that of the gold they made those things, for they did not understand the language." (345) The Indians said "as well as he could understand by signs, (346) that there were some islands there where there was much of that gold, but that the people were canibales." --- "The Admiral asked the Indians where they found them" (the pearls) "or fished them, and they showed him some mother-of-pearl where they are formed; and they replied to him by very clear signs, that they grow and are gathered towards the west, behind that island, which was the Cape of Lapa, the Point of Paria and mainland, which he believed to be an island, but which was the mainland." (347) And Columbus says "it is certain that that was an island, because the Indians said thus, and thus it appears that he did not understand them." (348) "The Indians whom he had taken said - according to what he understood - that the people there were Canibales and that yonder was where the gold was found and the pearls which they had given the Admiral they had sought and found on the northern part of Paria toward the west."

No reference in Cabot to signs as Cabot did not talk to any Indians.

INTERPRETERS. BERNAL DIAZ. 1517-1521. MAYA, AZTEC AND OTHER INDIAN
(Mar. 4, 1517-Apr. 24, 1519) (-1-) LANGUAGES.
(Cordova, Grijalva, Cortes)

The Discovery and Conquest of Mexico by Bernal Diaz del Castillo,
Translated from the manuscript of Genaro Garcia by Alfred Percival
Maudslay, 1928 Edition, Published in The Broadway Travellers.

Cape Catoche, de Cordova expedition, March 4, 1517.

(47) On the morning of the fourth of March we saw ten large canoes, called piraguas, full of Indians from the town, approaching us with oars and sails. --- They came close to our ships, and we made signs of peace to them, beckoning with our hands and waving our cloaks to induce them to come and speak to us, although at the time we had no interpreters who could speak the languages of Yucatan and Mexico. --- The chief man among them, who was a Cacique, made signs to us that they wished to embark in their canoes and return to their town, and that they would come back again another day with more canoes in which we could go ashore. ----

March 5, 1517, Cape Catoche. The next morning the same Cacique returned to the ships and brought twelve large canoes, with Indian rowers, and with a cheerful face and every appearance of friendliness, made signs that we should go to his town. He kept on saying in his language, "cones catoche", "cones catoche", which means "come to my house", and for that reason we called the land Cape Catoche, and it is still so named on the charts. ----

(48) When the Cacique saw us all on shore, but showing no intention of going to his town, he again made signs to our captain that we should go with him to his houses, and he showed such evidence of peace and good-will, that we decided to go on, and we took with us fifteen crossbows and ten muskets, so with the Cacique as our guide, we began our march along the road, accompanied by many Indians. ----

(49) When we had seen the gold and the houses of masonry, we felt well content at having discovered such a country. In these skirmishes we took two Indian prisoners, and later on, when they were baptized, one was named Julian and the other Melchior, both of them were cross-eyed. When the fight was over we returned to our ships, and as soon as the wounded were cared for, we set sail.

De Cordova at Campeche. March 20, 1517.

(50) When the casks were full, and we were ready to embark, a company of about fifty Indians, clad in good cotton mantles, came out in a peaceful manner from the town, and asked us by signs what we were looking for, and we gave them to understand that we had come for water, and wished to return at once to our ships. They then made signs with their hands to find out whether we came from the direction of the sunrise, repeating the word "Castilan" "Castilan" and we did not understand what they meant by Castilan. They then asked us by signs to go with them to their town, and we decided to go with them, keeping well on the alert and in good formation. ----

(51) These were the priests of the Idols, and they brought us incense of a sort of resin which they call copal, and with pottery braziers full of live coals, they began to fumigate us, and by signs they made us understand that we should quit their land before the firewood which they had piled up there should burn out, otherwise they would attack us and kill us. . After ordering fire to be put to the reeds, the priests withdrew without further speech.

De Cordova at Champoton, about April 5, 1517.

(53) Their faces were painted black and white, and ruddled and they came in silence straight towards us, as though they came in peace, and by signs they asked whether we came from where the sun rose, and we replied that we did come from the direction of the sunrise.

INTERPRETERS, PANTOMIME. DIAZ. 1517-1521. MAYA, AZTEC AND OTHER INDIAN LANGUAGES.

The Discover and Conquest of Mexico by Bernal Diaz del Castillo, Translated by Alfred Percival Maudslay. Broadway Travellers, 1928.

(53) We were at our wits end considering the matter, and wondering what the words were which the Indians called out to us for they were the same as those used by the people of Campeche, but we never made out what it was that they said.

Grijalva at Cozumel, April 26, 1518.

(61) With the help of the two Indians Julianillo and Melchorejo whom Francesco Hernandez (de cordova) brought away (49), who thoroughly understood that language the captain (Grijalva) spoke kindly to these old men and gave them some beads and sent them off to summon the cacique of the town, and they went off and never came back again. While we were waiting, a good-looking Indian woman appeared and began to speak in the language of the Island of Jamaica, and she told us that all the men and women of the town had fled to the woods for fear of us. As I and many of our soldiers knew the language she spoke very well, for it is the same as that spoken in Cuba, we were very much astonished, and

(62) asked the woman how she happened to be there; she replied that two years earlier she had started from Jamaica with ten Indians in a large canoe intending to go and fish near some small islands, and that the currents had carried them over to this land where they had been driven ashore, and that her husband and all the Jamaica Indians had been killed and sacrificed to the Idols. When the Captain heard this it seemed to him that this woman would serve very well as a messenger, so he sent her to summon the people and caciques of the town, and he gave her two days in which to go and return. We were afraid that the Indians Melchorejo and Julianillo if once they got away from us would go off to their own country which was nearby, and on that account we could not trust them as messengers.

Grijalva at Chompoton, May 4, 1518.

(63) In that skirmish we captured three Indians one of whom was a chief, and the Captain sent them off to summon the Cacique of the town, giving them clearly to understand through the interpreters Julianillo and Melchorejo that they were pardoned for what they had done, and he gave them some green beads to hand to the cacique as a sign of peace, and they went off and never returned again. So we believed that the Indians Julianillo and Melchorejo had not repeated to the prisoners what they had been told to say to them but had said something quite different.

Grijalva at Rio Tabasco, May, 1518. (65)

Many other canoes full of warriors were lying in the creeks, and they kept a little way off as though they did not dare approach as did the first fleet. When we perceived their intentions we were on the point of firing at them, but it pleased God that we agreed to call out to them, and through Julianillo and Melchorejo, who spoke their language very well, we told them that they need have no fear, that we wished to talk to them, for we had things to tell them which when they understood them they would be glad that we had come to their country and their homes. Moreover, we wished to give them some of the things we had brought with us.

- * The Book of Chilam Balam of Chumayel by Ralph L. Roys, Published by Carnegie Institution of Washington, November, 1933.

(3) The Books of Chilam Balam are the sacred books of the Maya of Yucatan and were named after their last and greatest prophet. Chilam, or chilan, was his title which means that he was the mouth-piece or interpreter of the gods. Balam means jaguar, but it is also a common family name in Yucatan, so the title of the present work could well be translated as the Book of the Prophet Balam.

During a large part of the colonial period, and even down to the Nineteenth century, many of the towns and villages of northern Yucatan possessed Books of Chilam, and this designation was supplemented by the name of the town to which the book belonged. Thus the Book of Chilam Balam of Chumayel is named for a village in the District of Tekax, a short distance northwest of the well-known town of Teabo.

This Prophet Balam lived during the last decades of the Fifteenth Century and probably the first of the Sixteenth century and foretold the coming of strangers from the east who would establish a new religion. The prompt fulfilment of this prediction so enhanced his reputation as a seer that in later times he was considered the authority for many other prophecies which had been uttered long before his time. Inasmuch as prophecies were the most prominent feature of many of the older books of this sort, it was natural to name them after the famous soothsayer.

(187) Chilam Balam lived at Mani during the reign of Mochan Xiu. In Katun 2 Ahau (first two decades of the sixteenth century, 1500-1520), he predicted that in the Katun 13 Ahau following, bearded men would come from the east and introduce a new religion. His prophecy was somewhat more definite than those of his predecessors, except for the suspicious case already mentioned. This can be accounted for by rumors of the arrival of the Spaniards in the West Indies, for we know that fishing canoes were occasionally driven across to Yucatan by storms. What Chilam Balam had in mind was the return of Quetzalcoatl and his white-robed priests, but after the Spaniards landed in Yucatan in Katun 13 Ahau according to schedule, he never ceased to be regarded as the most famous of the Maya prophets.

(167) "The prophecy of Chilam Balam, the singer, of Cabal-chen, Mani. On the day 13 Ahau the katun will end in the time of the Itza, in the time of Tanch Mayapan, lord. There is the sign of Hunab-ku (the only living and true god, and he was the greatest of the gods of the people of Yucatan.) on high. The raised wooden standard shall come. There has been a beginning of strife, there has been a beginning of rivalry, when the priestly man shall come to bring the sign of God in time to come, lord. A quarter of a league (maya, hun auat, the distance that a cry can be heard), a league away he comes. You see the mut-bird surmounting the raised wooden standard. A new day shall dawn in the north, in the west

(168) Itzamna K'auil shall rise. Our lord comes, Itza. Our elder brother comes, oh men of Tantun. Receive your guests, the bearded men, the men of the east, the bearers of the sign of God, lord. Good indeed is the word of God that comes to us. The day of our regeneration comes. You did not fear the world, Lord, you are the only God who created us. It is sufficient, then, that the word of God is good, lord. He is the guardian of our souls. He who receives him, who has truly believed, he will go to heaven with him." ---- "Let us exalt this sign on high, let us exalt it, that we may gaze upon it today with the raised standard. Great is the discord that arises today. The First Tree of the World is restored; it is displayed to the world. This is the sign of Hunab-ku on high. Worship it, Itza.

INTERPRETERS, PANTOMIME. DIAZ. 1517-1521. MAYA, AZTEC AND OTHER INDIAN LANGUAGES.

The Discovery and Conquest of Mexico by Bernal Diaz del Castillo, Translated by Alfred Percival Maudslay, Broadway Travellers. 1928.

Grijalva at Rio Tabasco, May, 1518.

(66) Then through Julianillo and Melchorejo as interpreters, the Captain told them that we came from a distant country and were the vassals of a great Emperor named Don Carlos, who had many great lords and chiefs as his vassals, and that they ought to acknowledge him as their lord, and it would be to their advantage to do so, and that in return for the beads they might bring us some food and poultry.

Grijalva at Rio de Banderas or Rio Jamalpa, June, 1518.

(70) They (the Indians) brought many of the fowls of the country and maize bread such as they always eat, and fruits such as pineapples, and zapotes, which in other parts are called mameies, and they were seated under the shade of the trees, and had spread mats on the ground, and they invited us to be seated, all by signs, for Julianillo the man from Cape Catoche, did not understand their language which is Mexican. ----- In return he (Grijalva) treated them in a most caressing manner and ordered them to be given blue and green glass beads and by signs he made them understand that they should bring gold to barter with us. -----

(71) We took one of the Indians from this place on board ship with us, and after he had learnt our language he became a Christian and was named Francisco, and later on I met him living with his Indian wife.

Grijalva at Rio de Tonala, July 12 to 20, 1518.

(74) The captain showed them (the Indians) much attention and ordered them to be given white and green beads, and made signs to them that they should bring gold for barter.

Cortes at Cozumel, March 1519.

(88) and he (Cortes) sent for the two Indians and the woman whom we had captured, and through Melchoréjo (Julianillo his companion was dead), the man we had brought from Cape Catoche who understood the language well, he spoke to them telling them to go and summon the Caciques and Indians of their town,

Cortes at Cozumel, March 1519.

(90) So through Melchorejo, who already understood a little Spanish and knew the language of Cozumel very well, all the chiefs were questioned, and every one of them said that they had known of certain Spaniards and gave descriptions of them, and said that some Caciques, who lived about two days' journey inland, kept them as slaves. We were all delighted with this news, and Cortes told the Caciques that they must go at once and summon the Spaniards, taking with them letters.

Cortes at Cozumel, March, 1519.

* (93) The man replied with difficulty that his name was Jeronimo de Aguilar, a native of Ecija, and that he had taken holy orders, that eight years had passed (1511) since he and fifteen othersmen and two women left Darien for the Island of Santo Domingo, and that the ship in which they

(94) sailed, struck on the Alacranes so that she could not be floated, and that he and his companions and the two women got into the ship's boat, thinking to reach the Island of Cuba or Jamaica, but that the currents were very strong and carried them to this land, and that the Caláchiones of that district had divided them among themselves, and that many of his companions had been sacrificed to the Idols, and that others had died of disease, and the women had died of overwork only a short time before, for they had been made to grind corn; that the Indians had intended him for sacrifice, but that one night he escaped and fled to the Cacique with whom since then he had been living, and

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(94) and fled to the Cacique with whom since then he had been living, and that none were left of all his party except himself and a certain Gonzalo Guerrero, whom he had gone to summon, but he would not come. ---- When questioned about Gonzalo Guerrero, he said that he was married and had three sons, and that his face was tattooed and his ears and lower lip were pierced, that he was a seaman and a native of Palos, and that the Indians considered him to be very valiant; that when a little more than a year ago a captain and three vessels arrived at Cape Catoche, it was at the suggestion of Guerrero that the Indians attacked them, and that he was there himself in the company of the Cacique of the large town. When Cortes heard this he exclaimed "I wish I had him in my hands for it will never do to leave him here." Cortes sets out from Cozumel, March 4, 1519.

(95) On the 4th of March, 1519, with the good fortune to carry such a useful and faithful interpreter along with us, Cortes gave orders for us to embark in the same order as before, and with the same lantern signals by night.

Cortes at Rio Tabasco, March 12, 1519.

(96) When Cortes saw them (the Indians) drawn up ready for war he told Aguilar the interpreter to ask the Indians who passed near us, in a large canoe and who looked like chiefs, what they were so much disturbed about, and to tell them that we had not come to do them any harm, but were willing to give them some of the things we had brought with us and to treat them like brothers, and we prayed them not to begin a war as they would regret it, and much else was said to them about keeping the peace. However, the more Aguilar talked to them the more violent they became, and they said

(97) that they would kill us all if we entered their town, and that it was fortified all around with fences and barricades of large trunks of trees. Aguilar spoke to them again and asked them to keep the peace, and allow us to take water and barter our goods with them for food, and permit us to tell the Calachiones things which would be to their advantage and to the service of God our Lord, but they still persisted in saying that if we advanced beyond the palm trees they would kill us.

Cortes at Rio Tabasco, March 13, 1519.

(98) When Cortes saw how matters stood he ordered us to wait a little and not to fire any shots from our guns or crossbows or cannon, for as he wished to be justified in all that he might do he made another appeal to the Indians through the Interpreter Aguilar, in the presence of the King's Notary, Diego de Godoy, asking the Indians to allow us to land and take water and speak to them about God and about His Majesty, and adding that should they make war on us, that if in defending ourselves some should be killed and others hurt, theirs would be the fault and the burden and it would not lie with us, but they went on threatening that if we landed they would kill us.

Cortes at Rio Tabasco, March 14, 1519.

(100) The next morning Cortes ordered Pedro de Alvarado to set out in command of a hundred soldiers, fifteen of them with guns and crossbows, to examine the country inland for a distance of two leagues, and to take Melchorejo the interpreter in his company. When Melchorejo was looked for he could not be found as he had run off with the people of Tabasco, and it appears that the day before he had left the Spanish clothes that

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(100) had been given to him hung up in the palm grove, and had fled by night in a canoe. Cortes was much annoyed at his flight, fearing that he would tell things to his fellow countrymen to our disadvantage - well, let him go as a bit of bad luck, and let us get back to our story. Cortes at Rio Tabasco, March 14, 1519.

(102) In those skirmishes we killed fifteen Indians and captured three, one of whom seemed to be a chief, and through Aguilar, our interpreter, we asked them why they were so mad as to attack us, and that they could see that we should kill them if they attacked us again. Then one of the Indians was sent with some beads to give to the Caciques to bring them to peace, and that messenger told us that the Indian Melchorejo whom we had brought from Cape Catoche, went to the chiefs the night before and counselled them to fight us day and night, and said that they would conquer us as we were few in number; so it turned out that we had brought an enemy with us instead of a help. This Indian, whom we despatched with the message went off and never returned. From the other two Indian prisoners Aguilar the interpreter learnt for certain that by the next day the Caciques from all the neighboring towns of the province would have assembled with all their forces ready to make war on us, and that they would come and surround our camp, for that was Melchorejo's advice to them. Cortes at Rio Tabasco, March 26, 1519.

(107) When Aguilar spoke to the prisoners he found out from what they said that they were fit persons to be sent as messengers, and he advised Cortes to free them, so that they might go and talk to the Caciques of the town. These two messengers were given green and blue beads, and Aguilar spoke many pleasant and flattering words to them, telling them that they had nothing to fear as we wished to treat them like brothers, that it was their own fault that they had made war on us, and that now they had better collect together all the Caciques of the different towns as we wished to talk to them, and he gave them much other advice in a gentle way so as to gain their good will. The messengers went off willingly and spoke to the Caciques and chief men, and told them all we wished them to know about our desire for peace. When our envoys had been listened to, it was settled among them that fifteen Indian slaves, all with stained faces and ragged cloaks and loin cloths, should at once be sent to us with fowls and baked fish and maize cakes. When these men came before Cortes he received them graciously, but Aguilar the interpreter asked them rather angrily why they had come with their faces in that state, that it looked more as though they came to fight than to treat for peace; and he told them to go back to the Caciques and inform them, that if they wished for peace in the way we offered it, chieftans should come and treat for it, as was always the custom, and that they should not send slaves. Cortes at Rio Tobasco, March 27, 1519.

(109) Cortes, through Aguilar the Interpreter, answered them in another grave manner, as though he were angry, that they well knew how many times he had asked them to maintain peace, that the fault was theirs, and that now they deserved to be put to death, they and all the people of their towns, but that as we were the vassals of a great King and Lord named the Emperor Don Carlos, who had sent us to these countries, and ordered us to help and favour those who would enter his royal service, that if they were now as well disposed as they said they were,

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(109) that we would take this course, but that if they were not, some of those Tepustles would jump out and kill them (they call iron Tepustle in their language) for some of the Tepustles were still angry because they had made war on us.

Cortes at Rio Tabasco, March, 1519.

(110) This present, however, was worth nothing in comparison with the twenty women that were given us, among them one very excellent woman called Dona Marina, for so she was named when she became a Christian.

(111) One other thing Cortes asked of the chiefs and that was to give up their idols and sacrifices, and this they said they would do, and, through Aguilar, Cortes told them as well as he was able about matters concerning our holy faith, how we were Christians and worshipped one true and only God, and he showed them an image of Our Lady with her precious Son in her arms and explained to them that we paid the greatest reverence to it as it was the image of the Mother of our Lord God who was in heaven.

(112) Cortes then ordered this man (Melchorejo, the interpreter) to be brought before him, but they replied that when he saw that the battle was going against them, he had taken to flight, and they did not know where he was although search had been made for him; but we came to know that they had offered him as a sacrifice because his counsel had cost them so dear. ----

Then we brought another interpreter named Francisco, whom we had captured during Grijalva's expedition, who has already been mentioned by me, but he understood nothing of the Tabasco language, only that of Culua which is the Mexican tongue. By means of signs he told Cortes that Culua was far ahead, and he repeated "Mexico" which we did not understand. ----

The same friar, with Aguilar as interpreter, preached many good things about our holy faith to the twenty Indian women who had been given us, and immediately afterwards they were baptized. One Indian lady, who was given to us here was christened Dona

(113) Marina, and she was truly a great chieftainess and the daughter of great Caciques and the mistress of vassals, and this her appearance clearly showed. Later on I will relate why it was and in what manner she was brought here. Cortes allotted one of the women to each of his captains and Dona Marina, as she was good looking and intelligent and without embarrassment, he gave to Alonzo Hernandez Puertocarrero. When Puertocarrero went to Spain, Dona Marina lived with Cortes, and bore him a son named Don Martin Cortes.

About Dona Marina.

(115) Her father and mother were chiefs and Caciques of a town called Paynala, which had other towns subject to it, and stood about eight leagues from the town of Coatzacoalcos. Her father died while she was still a little child, and her mother married another Cacique, a young man, and bore him a son. It seems that the father and mother had a great affection for this son and it was agreed between them that he should succeed to their honours when their days were done. So that there should be no impediment to this, they gave the little girl, Dona Marina, to some Indians from Xicalango, and this they did by night so as to escape observation, and they then

(116) spread the report that she had died, and as it happened at this time that a child of one of their Indian slaves died they gave out

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(116) that it was their daughter and the heiress who was dead. The Indians of Xicalango gave the child to the people of Tabasco and the Tabasco people gave her to Cortes. I myself knew her mother, and the old woman's son and her half brother, when he was already grown up and ruled the town jointly with his mother, for the second husband of the old lady was dead. When they became Christians, the old lady was called Marta and the son Lazaro. I knew all this very well because in the year 1523 after the conquest of Mexico and the other provinces, when Cristoval de Olid revolted in Honduras, and Cortes was on his way there, he passed through Coatzacoalcos and I and the greater number of the settlers of that town accompanied him on that expedition as I shall relate at the proper time and place. As Dona Marina proved herself such an excellent woman and good interpreter throughout the wars in New Spain, Tlascalala and Mexico (as I shall show later on) Cortes always took her with him, and during that expedition she was married to a gentleman named Juan Jaramillo at the town of Orizaba. Dona Marina was a person of the greatest importance and was obeyed without question by the Indians throughout New Spain. When Cortes was in the town of Coatzacoalcos he sent to summon to his presence all the Caciques of that province in order to make them a speech about our holy religion, and about their good treatment, and among the Caciques who assembled was the mother of Dona Marina and her half-brother, Lazaro. Some time before this Dona Marina had told me that she belonged to that province and that she was the mistress of vassals, and Cortes also knew it well,

(117) as did Aguilar, the interpreter. In such a manner it was that mother, daughter and son came together, and it was easy enough to see that she was the daughter from the strong likeness she bore to her mother. ----- Dona Marina knew the languages of Coatzacoalcos, which is that common to Mexico, and she knew the language of Tabasco, as did also Jeronimo de Aguilar, who spoke the language of Yucatan and Tabasco, which is one and the same. So that these two could understand ~~one another~~ **clearly**, and Aguilar translated into Castilian for Cortes. This was the great beginning of our conquests and thus, thanks be to God, things prospered with us. I have made a point of explaining this matter because without the help of Dona Marina we could not have understood the language of New Spain and Mexico.

17.

NO SIGN LANGUAGE. CORTES. 1519-1526. AZTEC, MAYA, AND OTHER MEXICAN INDIANS.

Hernando Cortes, Five Letters, J.B. Morris, (1519-1526), The Broadway Travellers, London, 1928.

There is no reference to sign language used by the Indians in these five letters. The account of how they obtained interpreters is the same as that of Bernal Diaz, but is not as detailed or as satisfactory as Diaz account.

1612. AZTECS. TORQUEMADA ACCORDING TO H.L. SCOTT. SIGN LANGUAGE.

AZTEC. SIGNS. TORQUEMADA. SCOTT. 1612. MANUSCRIPT, H.L. SCOTT, B.A.E.

The first appearance of sign language in history is found in the Spanish work of Juan Torquemada, printed for the first time in Madrid, in 1612. Torquemada came to Mexico in the time of the Conquistadores, and became intimate with the Aztec Historians, while the affairs of the pre-conquest were still important and fresh in their minds. He learned what they had to tell him and based his conquest history upon what he learned from them. They told him of the meeting between the Tulteca Ecitiu and his wife Axochiatl, with Nopaltzin, the Chichemaca chief, near what is called "Chapultepec" or the hill of the Grasshopper, the summer palace of the sovereigns of Mexico. They conversed together, communicating an amount which in Spanish filled two columns of Torquemada's book, The account ends by saying: "they conversed together by signs because their languages were different." We note at once that the amount of material conveyed was of such a nature as required a language to convey it, and was of such length and character it could not be conveyed by pantomime alone. Historians dispute among themselves as to the time of the replacement of the Toltecas in the valley of Mexico, some saying it was about A.D. 1170, but we are little concerned in this dispute as to dates, and are even indifferent as to whether the replacement ever took place at all. The one fact we can surely gather from this chronicle is that the Aztec historians in the time of Cortez believed that there had been a sign language in use in the valley of Mexico, centuries before the Spanish Conquest. The question then becomes pertinent as to what became of it, since we hear no more of it in existence there, although there are today many different linguistic families in that country. The answer is very plain and sufficient. It was forced out of use by the Aztec conquerors in introducing the Nahuatl, or Aztec. Oviedo, Herrera, Solis, Clavigero, are all clear about this. To quote only Herrera in support of this statement: "The Mexican tongue is used all over the land -- it is impossible to state the diversity of tongues of New Spain because they are many and very different. The more elegant is the Mexican (Nahuatl) which like that of the Slaves is spoken all over the Levant, and the Latin in the Christian kingdom; so there exists the same state of things in New Spain and in all towns there are interpreters, called Nahuatlato; as the Mexican Empire was extended to all sections of the country the Mexican language was extended and introduced throughout the land." So when the language of the conquerors was imposed by force, the Sign Language was driven out as the Aztec was later displaced by the conquering Spanish.

TORQUEMADA. History of the Conquest of Mexico, by William H. Prescott, in three volumes, Philadelphia, 1843. Volume I, pp. 73-74:

Two of the principal authorities for this ~~Chapter~~ (On the Aztec government and laws) are Torquemada and Clavigero. The former, a Provincial of the Franciscan order, came to the New World about the middle of the sixteenth century, (circa: 1550) as the generation of the conquerors had not then passed away, he had ample opportunities of gathering the particulars of their enterprise from their own lips. Fifty years, during which he continued in the country, put him in possession of the traditions and usages of the natives, and enabled him to collect their history from the earliest missionaries, as well as from such monuments as the fanaticism of his own countrymen had not then destroyed. From these ample sources he compiled his bulky tomes, beginning, after the approved fashion of the ancient Castilian chroniclers, with the creation of the world, and embracing the whole circle of the Mexican institutions, political, religious, and social, from the earliest period to his own time. In

1612. AZTEC. TORQUEMADA ACCORDING TO H.L. SCOTT. SIGN LANGUAGE.

Prescott on Torquemada, concluded:

handling these fruitful themes, the worthy father has shown a full measure of the bigotry which belonged to his order at that period. Every page, too, is loaded with illustrations from Scripture or profane history, which form a whimsical contrast to the barbaric staple of his story; and he has sometimes fallen into serious errors, from his misconception of the chronological system of the Aztecs. But, notwithstanding these glaring defects in the composition of the work, the student, aware of his author's infirmities, will find few better guides than Torquemada in tracing the stream of historic truth up to the fountain head; such is his manifest integrity, and so great were his facilities for information on the most curious points of Mexican antiquity. No work, accordingly, has been more largely consulted and copied, even by some, who, like Herrera, have affected to set little value on the sources whence its information was drawn. - (Hist. general, dec. 6, lib. 6, cap. 19.) The Monarchia Indiana was first published at seville, 1615, (Nic. Antonio, Bibliotheca Nova, (Matriti, 1783) tom, II, p. 787,) and since, in a better style, in three volumes folio, at Madrid, in 1723.

SIGNS OR PANTOMIME. DE VACA. 1528-1536. TRIBES NEAR GULF OF MEXICO.

Relation of Alvar Nunez Cabeça de Vaca, Translated from the Spanish by Buckingham Smith. New York, 1871.

(31) 1528, June 17.

We traveled without seeing any natives who would venture to await our coming up with them until the seventeenth day of June, when a chief approached, borne on the back of another Indian, covered with a painted deer-skin. A great many people attended him, some walking in advance, playing on flutes of reed. In this manner he came to where the Governor (Narvaez) stood, and spent an hour with him. By signs we gave him to understand that we were going to Apalachen, and it appeared to us by those he made that he was an enemy to the people of Apalachen, and would go to assist us against them.

(66) 1528, November 6.

They (the Indians) told us by signs that they would return in the morning and bring us something to eat, as at that time they had nothing.

(69) I gave them (the Indians) to understand by signs that our boat had sunk and three of our number had been drowned. (Nov. 7, 1528).

(72) November 8, 1528. This day I saw a native with an article of traffic I knew was not onewehadbestowed; and asking whence it came, I was told by signs that it had been given by men like ourselves who were behind.

(87) No date. In this way we went on with some Indians, until we came to a bay a league in width, and everywhere deep. From the appearance we supposed it to be that which is called Espiritu Sancto. We met some Indians on the other side of it, coming to visit ours, who told us that beyond them were three men like us, and gave their names. We asked for the others, and were told that they were all dead of cold and hunger; that the Indians farther on, of whom they were, for their diversion had killed Diego Dorantes, Valdevieso, and Diego de Huelva, because they left one house for another; and that other Indians, their neighbors with whom Captain Dorantes now was, had in consequence of a dream, killed Esquivel and Mendez. We asked how the living were situated, and they answered that they were very ill used, the boys and some of the Indian men being very idle, out of cruelty gave them many kicks, cuffs and blows with sticks; that such was the life they led.

(90) No date. An Indian told me of the arrival of the Christians, and that if I wished to see them I must steal away and flee to the point of a wood to which he directed me, and that as he and others, kindred of his, should pass by there to visit those Indians, they would take me with them to the spot where the Christians were. I determined to attempt this and trust to them, as they spoke a language distinct from that of the others. I did so, and the next day they left, and found me in the place that had been pointed out, and accordingly took me with them.

(115) No date. We said in the language of the Mariames, that we were coming to look for them. They were evidently pleased with our company, and took us to their dwellings.

(168) No date. We possessed great influence and authority; to preserve both we seldom talked with them. The negro was in constant conversation; he informed himself about the ways we wished to take, of the towns there were, and the matters we desired to know.

SIGN LANGUAGE-BUFFALO. CABEÇA DE VACA. 1528-1536. PLAINS INDIANS.

Relation of Alvar Nunez Cabeça de Vaca, Translated from Spanish by Buckingham Smith. New York, 1871.

(65) (November 6, 1528. Location of place unknown).

After the people had eaten, I ordered Lope de Oviedo, who had more strength and was stouter than any of the rest, to go to some trees that were near by, and climbing into one of them to look about and try to gain knowledge of the country. He did as I bade, and made out that we were on an island. He saw that the land was pawed up in the manner that ground is wont to be where cattle range, whence it appeared to him that this should be a country of Christians; and thus he reported to us. -----

(106) (Date and location unknown).

Cattle come as far as here. Three times I have seen them and eaten of their meat. I think they are about the size of those in Spain. They have small horns like the cows of Morocco; the

(107) hair is very long and flocky like the merino's. Some are tawny, others black. To my judgment the flesh is finer and fatter than that of this country (Spain or Mexico). Of the skins of those not full grown the Indians make blankets, and of the larger they makee shoes and bucklers. They come as far as the sea-coast of Florida, from a northerly direction, ranging through a tract of more than four hundred leagues; and throughout the whole region over which they run, the people who inhabit near, descend and live upon them, distributing a vast many hides into the interior country. -----

(159) (Date and exact location unknown).

Here Castillo and Estevanico arrived, and after talking with the Indians, Castillo returned at the end of three days to the spot where he had left us, and brought five or six of the people. He told us he had found fixed dwellings of civilization, that the inhabitants lived on beans and pumpkins, and that he had seen maize. -----

(160) (Date and exact location unknown).

From this place they began to give us many blankets of skin; and they had nothing they did not bestow. They have the finest persons of any people we saw, of the greatest activity and strength, who best understood us and intelligently answered our inquiries. We called them the Cow nation, because most of the cattle killed are slaughtered in their neighborhood, and along up that river for over fifty leagues, they destroy great numbers. -----

(166) (Date and exact location unknown).

We did not wish to follow the path leading to where the cattle are, because it is towards the north, and for us very circuitous, since we ever held it certain, that going towards the sunset we must find what we desired. -----

(168) (Date and exact location unknown).

We passed through many and dissimilar tongues. Our Lord granted us favor with the people who spoke them, for they always understood us, and we them. We questioned them and received their answers by signs, just as if they spoke our language and we theirs; for although we knew six languages, we could not everywhere avail ourselves of them, there being a thousand differences. -----

FLORIDA. Ptolmey's Map, 1548, (14th Ann. Rep. Bur. Amer. Ethn. Pt. 1, facing page 357) gives Florida as all that part of North America, including the present State of Florida, bordering on the the gulf of Mexico, as far as Mexico.