

**ANCIENT NAHUATL POETRY,
CONTAINING THE NAHUATL TEXT
OF XXVII ANCIENT MEXICAN
POEMS. LIBRARY OF ABORIGINAL
AMERICAN LITERATURE, NO. VII**

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Ancient Nahuatl poetry, containing the nahuatl text of XXVII ancient mexican poems. Library of aboriginal American literature, No. VII by D. G. Brinton

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D. G. BRINTON

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Daniel Garrison Brinton,

BRINTON'S LIBRARY OF
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NUMBER VII.

ANCIENT
NAHUATL POETRY,

CONTAINING THE NAHUATL TEXT OF XXVII ANCIENT
MEXICAN POEMS.

WITH A TRANSLATION, INTRODUCTION, NOTES AND
VOCABULARY.

BY

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*Professor of American Linguistics and Archaeology in the University
of Pennsylvania.*

PHILADELPHIA :
D. G. BRINTON.
1890.

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PREFACE.

It is with some hesitation that I offer this volume to the scientific public. The text of the ancient songs which it contains offers extreme and peculiar difficulties to the translator, and I have been obliged to pursue the task without assistance of any kind. Not a line of them has ever before been rendered into an European tongue, and my endeavors to obtain aid from some of the Nahuatl scholars of Mexico have, for various reasons, proved ineffectual. I am therefore alone responsible for errors and misunderstandings.

Nevertheless, I have felt that these monuments of ancient native literature are so interesting in themselves, and so worthy of publication, that they should be placed at the disposition of scholars in their original form with the best rendering that I could give them at present, rather than to await the uncertain event of years for a better.

The text itself may be improved by comparison with the original MS. and with the copy previously made by the Licentiate Chimalpopoca, referred to on page 48. My own efforts in this direction have been confined to a faithful reproduction in print of the MS. copy of the Abbé Brasseur de Bourbourg.

The Notes, which might easily have been extended, I

have confined within moderate compass, so as not to enlarge unduly the bulk of the volume.

To some, the Vocabulary may seem inadequate. I assume that those persons who wish to make a critical study of the original text will provide themselves with the Nahuatl Dictionaries of Molina or Siméon, both of which are now easily obtainable, thanks to Mr. Julius Platzmann for the reprint of Molina. I also assume that such students will acquaint themselves with the rules of grammar and laws of word-building of the tongue, and that they will use the vocabulary merely as a labor-saving means of reaching the themes of compounds and unusual forms of words. Employed in this manner, it will, I hope, be found adequate.

In conclusion, I would mention that there is a large body of Nahuatl literature yet unpublished, both prose and poetry, modern and ancient, and as the Nahuatl tongue is one of the most highly developed on the American continent, it is greatly to be desired that all this material should be at the command of students. The Nahuatl, moreover, is not a difficult tongue; for an Englishman or a Frenchman, I should say it is easier to acquire than German, its grammar being simple and regular, and its sounds soft and sonorous. It has special recommendations, therefore, to one who would acquaint himself with an American language.

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