

June 1904 the temperature of the surface water was 60°·8 Fahr. (16° C.), and of the bottom water, where the depth was only about 427 feet, 40°·2 Fahr. (4°·9 C.). In August 1873 Le Conte<sup>1</sup> found the temperature of the surface water to be 66°·9 Fahr. (19°·4 C.), falling to 41° Fahr. (5° C.) at 772 feet, and to 39°·2 Fahr. (4° C.) at the bottom in about 1506 feet. The winters in this region are usually severe, so that the air probably remains far below the freezing point for a considerable period each year. Notwithstanding this fact, however, ice never forms on the lake except in the shallow bays. The water is very transparent; a Secchi disc just disappeared from view at a depth of 66 feet (20 metres). When most of the snow has disappeared the transparency is said to be much greater, white objects being easily seen at a depth of more than 98 feet, and Le Conte records that in August 1873 he found that a white plate was still visible at a depth of 108 feet.

Mexico and  
Central  
America.

Mexico contains two types of inland drainage areas. The most interesting is that in the volcanic highlands of Anahuac, in the latitude of the city of Mexico, where the lakes are enclosures in the irregular topography of the piled-up volcanic material; but this is now no longer a true inland drainage area, for by means of immense artificial water-ways the lakes lying within the depression have been made to drain, as we shall presently have occasion to point out, with some detail, into the Gulf of Mexico. The principal lakes of this area are Tezcuco, near the shores of which the city of Mexico now stands, and Chalco. Both are noteworthy for their magnificent scenery, surrounded as they are by volcanic peaks and extinct craters of great height; but they, like the other lakes in the same basin, have shrunk greatly in size. The depth of water in Lake Tezcuco at the present day under normal conditions hardly exceeds 2 feet over a large part of its area.

The ancient town of Tenochtitlan, formerly standing on the site of the modern Mexico (7524 feet above sea-level), was actually founded in the lake, like another Venice, cut up by canals and connected with the shores by narrow viaducts and bridges. It was built there by Aztec immigrants in order that they might defend themselves against surrounding enemies; but, on gaining power and riches, they set to work trying to drive back the waters from their city by means of great dams, and thus free themselves from the danger of destruction by floods. They were only partly successful in this. After the complete destruction of the city at the conquest in 1521, Cortez built up the city of Mexico on the ruins of Tenochtitlan; and, partly by means of dams, partly by the turning aside of streams, Mexico

<sup>1</sup> Cited by Juday, *op. cit.*, p. 791.