

MOTOCGRAPHY

EXPLOITING

MOTION PICTURES

Published Bi-Weekly by Electricity Magazine Corporation, Monadnock Building, Chicago

ESSANAY'S
"THE FALL OF MONTEZUMA"



"The Fall of Montezuma"

Essanay's Splendid Historical Pageant

HISTORY contains no more spectacular achievement than the conquest of the mighty Mexican Empire by that sturdy Spanish invader, Hernando Cortez.

Early in the year of 1518 an expedition of four ships, under the command of Juan de Grijalva, a Spanish adventurer, landed on the shores of Mexico, at the point now called St. Juan de Ulua. Kindly received by the natives, they were loaded with costly presents of pure gold in exchange for glass beads and other baubles, and heard vague reports of the wonderful interior country, ruled by the mighty monarch, Montezuma. Grijalva at once sent back one of his ships to Cuba laden with the treasures of the newly discovered land, and Velasquez, governor of the island, dispatched the welcome tidings to Spain and instantly set about preparing an extraordinary expedition for the exploration of Mexico.

The man who heard these tidings with a thrill of real emotion was Hernando Cortez, then living a life of ease on his Cuban plantation.

Born in 1485, in the secluded village of Medellin, Spain, Cortez had been reared by his proud, but poor, Castilian father, to follow the honorable profession of law. But his wild nature brooked no such restraint and, at the age of sixteen, his disappointed father withdrew



Cortez Lands on the Coast.

him from the celebrated University of Salamanca, after two years of indolent dissipation. Cortez had the blood of soldiers in his veins and at nineteen was assigned posts of profit and honor in Hispaniola. It was here he received his first schooling in methods of Indian warfare, and his courage and imperturbable self-possession dominated every enterprise in which he took part. In

1511 he joined a filibustering expedition under Don Velasquez and assisted in wresting the island of Cuba from the natives. Velasquez was made governor of the conquered territory and rewarded Cortez with a wealthy plantation that brought him in a handsome income yearly.

Seven years later the tidings of the wonderful Mexican empire came from Grijalva, and Velasquez cast about for a man to command the expedition sent to explore the new land. Seeing the greatest opportunity of his career opening before him, Cortez brought the most powerful influences to bear upon the governor to place him at the head of the expedition. Only too well did Velasquez know that Cortez was the one man to fill the important post because of his energy and limitless courage. Only too well did he also realize that Cortez was a leader of men, not one to be in turn led by any higher authority than his own judgment. Velasquez hesitated. Would Cortez prove



The Great Feast in Honor of Cortez's Arrival.

submissive to his orders? He feared not.

At last he yielded to the powerful persuasions brought to bear upon him, and publicly announced Cortez as captain general of the armada for the exploration of Mexico.

Full well did Cortez realize the mighty destinies that had been placed in his hands, and the fire of enthusiasm consumed his very soul. He was to penetrate the mighty empire of Montezuma, abolish the worship of idols and establish the faith of Christianity abroad in the land by means of the bloody sword, rushing horses and artillery, things unknown in the new world that lay beyond the sea. Too late did Velasquez realize to a certainty that Cortez would follow no instructions and might, with his marvelous genius, become a formidable rival. Resolved to depose Cortez as commander of the armada, Velasquez cast about for a less intrepid adventurer to fill the place, only to have the wily Cortez anticipate his plan and set sail with his uncompleted expedition during the night. Landing at Mocaca the ships were fitted out, and provisioned, and the next stop was made at Trinidad, where Cortez raised his banner, secured volunteers, collected his military supplies and went on to Cape Antonio where a last desperate effort to stop him was made by Velasquez, but all in vain. His force consisted of some four hundred men, armed with cross bow guns, muskets, swords and spears, a few horses, and a few pieces of artillery. Such was the expedition on which Cortez relied to subjugate a nation.

History tells us that Cortez was now thirty-three years of age, a handsome, finely proportioned man of medium stature, pale, intellectual features, piercing black eyes, and the most courtly manners, inherited from his proud Castilian ancestry. On the 18th day of February, 1519, the last preparations were completed and



Cortez Usurps the Throne.



The Meeting of Cortez and Marina.

the fleet set sail. Numerous stops were made at various islands, notably Cozumel, where the natives were defeated in a terrible battle and Christianity established after the destruction of the idols. Striking boldly into the unknown waters of the interminable ocean before them, Cortez turned the prows of his vessels westward and at last cast anchor in the broad mouth of the Tabasco River, which Grijalva had entered before him. Here he reduced the capital city of Tabasco and changed its name into St. Mary of Victory. The faith of the invaders was established throughout the nation.

Here it was that Cortez was presented with Marina, a beautiful Indian maiden, daughter of the chief of a subjected tribe. Marina spoke two languages, the Mexican and Yucatanese, and soon mastered Spanish. She ever

proved of the greatest value to the great invader during the later conquest of the Mexican Empire, because of her knowledge of the Aztec race, and her ability to act as his interpreter on every occasion.

Early in the month of April, 1519, the expedition at last dropped anchor in one of the great harbors of the Mexican empire near the island of San Juan de Ulua.

At last the prize for which they were braving the terrors of an unknown continent was close at hand. Some two hundred miles in the interior was the mighty capital city of Mexico, ruled by Montezuma, a monarch as powerful as ever the world had seen.

Cortez lost no time in preparing for his memorable march into the interior. Rallying a powerful Indian tribe called the Totonacs, under his banner, Cortez set at defiance all the embassies sent by Montezuma, to warn him from entering the interior, quelled a threatened mutiny among his army by sinking his ships in the harbor so that nothing was left for them to do but push on, and, on the 15th



Prince Cacamatazin Demands the Beaked War Crown from Montezuma.

day of August, began the great march that was to terminate in the conquest of the mighty Aztec nation.

Conquering a powerful native nation called the Tlascalans, who had resisted all the efforts of Montezuma to crush and bring them under his rule, Cortez added their untold numbers to his standard and pushed on. The great city of Cholula, but some sixty miles distant from the Mexican capital, was the means by which Cortez cruelly threw defiance into the teeth of the mighty Montezuma; for, upon discovering that the city treacherously meant to overwhelm his army he sacked the place with fire and sword and slaughtered the inhabitants by the tens of thousands. Little wonder is it that Montezuma trembled upon his throne when word of the awful fate of Cholula reached his ears. He feared Cortez' entrance into his city, but realized he was helpless to prevent it. The terrible cannon and horses of the Spanish, that belched forth flaming death and rode down the Indian legions ruthlessly, caused him to become panic-stricken. In despair he sent terms to Cortez, agreeing to pay him four loads of gold, one for each of his captains, and also a yearly tribute to the King of Spain, if the invader would only turn back. But Cortez still pushed on, declaring he would meet the ruler of men face to face. Entering the great cities of Cuitlahuac and Iztapalapan, the Spaniards and their allies pressed on. It was now the 8th of November, 1519.

Arriving at the great causeway which led from the main land to the capital city, built on an island in the midst of a vast lake, Cortez was met by a procession of the principal inhabitants who announced that the Emperor Montezuma, was advancing to welcome him. A more picturesque meeting can hardly be imagined. The glittering train of Montezuma in all its barbaric splendor of waving plumes and priceless gold, bore in the center the emperor in his palanquin, covered with a canopy of exquisite workmanship, embellished with precious gems. On his head was a golden crown, surmounted



The Usurping Prince Attacks Cortez.

with a rich head-dress of plumes. A beautifully embroidered mantle studded with costly ornaments, graced his shoulders, and gold-fringed buskins fitted closely to his limbs. The soles of his shoes were pure gold. History tells us Montezuma was a tall, well-formed and strikingly handsome man. An interchange of courtesies, and the whole cortege turned and marched on into the imperial city.

Thus was Cortez taken into the very bosom of this mighty ruler of men, and the dark hour was fast approaching.

No sooner was he established within the walls of the city, then Cortez placed his cannon to sweep the vast streets, stationed his army in fortified positions and posted sentries at important points and marshalled a large division of his troops for instant service night or day. Little by little he encroached upon the power of Montezuma, until the harrassed emperor, driven to desperation, begged him to leave the city. But the wily Cortez, realizing the time had come in which to show his hand, now accused Montezuma of treachery and made him a prisoner in his own palace.

The die was cast! Instantly the people rose in furious revolt against this insult, while the humiliated emperor trembled in fear of his life. Cacamatzin, a nephew of the emperor, and chief of a powerful city nearby, regarding his uncle as degraded, seized the reins of power, rallied the Aztecs to his standard and headed the revolt

that now spread like wildfire throughout the nation. A general order issued by Cortez to destroy the idols up-reared in the shrines of the people added to their rage and the attack began. Besieged in the palace, Cortez and his troops defended themselves and their royal prisoner with bravery unsurpassed in the annals of civilized history. The Aztecs were slaughtered in countless numbers by the terrific hail of death from the Spanish cannon. The situation was desperate for Cortez and his men and, after three days and nights ceaseless conflict, he resolved upon a desperate extremity.

Gathering his men he fought his way out of the city in the terrible battle aptly termed the Noche Triste, or Battle of the Dismal Night, meeting with serious reverses that for a time threatened to overwhelm him.

But the indomtable Cortez did not despair. Montezuma was now dead, having been mortally wounded when forced to speak to his enraged people as a last resort in attempting, at Cortez' command, to quell the revolt. Humiliated and ashamed, the mighty emperor had torn the bandages from his wounds and perished from loss of blood. Guatemozin, his son-in-law, was by unanimous acclaim, placed upon the throne, and rallied his nation for the final struggle.

History now contains no more remarkable achievement than the final conquest of the imperial city by Cortez and his band. Reaching the territory of Tlascala, his



The Great Battle on the Causeway.



The Fight at the Shrine.

powerful ally tribe, he recruited his legions from all sources, returned to the assault and, in the most remarkable siege ever recorded, conquered the city, swept it with fire and sword and terminated the awful struggle in the short space of seventy-five days. Over one hundred and fifty thousand of the Aztecs perished, Guatemozin died miserably under the torture, and the great territory became a colony of Spain, with the abolishment of idol worship and establishment of Christianity. But two years had passed since Cortez had landed on the coast, and the mighty empire was conquered.

Little remains to be told. In the succeeding years Cortez rebuilt the great city, established the customs and trades of the Old World and ruled the nation wisely and well.

Such, in brief, is the bare outline of probably the greatest conquest in history. Realizing the possibilities for a film-pageant, the historical value of which would prove inestimable to the entire world, the Essanay Company began last March to plan a stupendous three reel production of "The Fall of Montezuma." Any attempt to portray the entire conquest of the ancient Mexican Empire would be impossible even in forty reels, consequently Essanay constructed a scenario based upon a series of the most important incidents leading up to the final overthrow of the nation by Cortez and his doughty band.

With this working script in hand the massive production was gotten under way. For weeks the great Chicago studio toiled day and night constructing the enormous set-pieces required to duplicate the architecture of the ancient Aztecs. A score of scenic artists labored over a month alone designing and painting fifteen thousand square feet of canvas scenery. Then came the question of costumes. Histories were ransacked in order to determine authentic styles of dress in those early days and at last an order was sent that kept one of the largest costume concerns in the country in a turmoil for another whole month filling the enormous contract, and the Essanay studio took on the appearance of a vast arsenal as the shipments of glittering armor and richly ornamented Aztec costumes arrived, together with countless numbers of cross-bow guns, muskets, swords, spears, arrows and javelins.

Early in May, after final preparations had been completed, the splendid Essanay special train, comprising of twelve sleeping cars, diners and four baggage coaches, steamed out of Chicago, bearing the great company to distant fields for the production of the gigantic pageant. For almost another month they worked unceasingly under the hot glare of a tropical sun, portraying the stupendous and difficult scenes throughout the three reels. The "special" was their home during the entire filming of the production, and returned only when



The Festival of Quetzal, God of Peace.

The costuming and action of this scene are magnificent.

the last foot of film had been completed. Several weeks were now occupied at the Chicago studio in selecting 3,000 feet of the choicest film from the many thousand feet of negative taken. And it is this great 3,000-foot photoplay masterpiece that the Essanay Company will release to the world during the latter part of the coming month of August.

The scenario was prepared and written by Harry McRae Webster, Essanay's chief dramatic producer, and was staged by Mr. Webster with the valuable assistance of Theodore Wharton.

CAST OF PRINCIPAL CHARACTERS:

AZTECS.

Montezuma, Emperor of Mexico.....Mr. Frank Dayton
 Cacamatzin, his nephew, the Usurping Prince.....
Mr. William Walters
 Guatemozin, His Brother.....Mr. William Bailey
 Huitzil, High Priest of War.....Mr. Harry Cashman
 Quetzal, High Priest of Peace.....Mr. Howard Missimer
 Second High Priest of War.....Mr. Roy Tyrrell
 First Priestess of Quetzal.....Miss Florence Levy
 Second Priestess of Quetzal.....Miss Elaine Hayman
 Montezuma's Envoy.....Mr. Milton Newman
 Fisherman (Messenger).....Mr. William Armstrong
 Aztec Warriors.....Messrs. Mammey and Mullen
 First Aztec Woman.....Miss Luvena Buchanan
 Aztec Water Carrier.....Miss Frances Thorp

SPANISH.

Hernando Cortez, the Great Spanish Invader.....
Mr. Francis X. Bushman
 Alvarado, His First Officer.....Mr. E. M. Sincere
 Bernal Diaz, Second Officer.....Mr. C. D. Faulkner
 Padre Olmedo.....Mr. A. D. Gibbs

High Priestesses, Flower Girls, Dancing Maidens,
 Lords, Embassadors, Warriors, Soldiers, Burden Bear-
 ers, Aztec Chieftains, Indian Maids, Envoys,
 Etc., Etc., Etc.

FIRST REEL.

Cortez and his army land on the coast of Mexico and, after

holding impressive religious ceremonies, and then the march into the interior is begun. Word of the landing of the invaders is brought to Montezuma by a fisherman during the festival of Quetzal in honor of the God of Peace. Fearing the strange men from beyond the seas, Montezuma causes a peace offering to be made to Huitzil, the God of War, but the enraged high priest, desiring that Montezuma declare war against Cortez, attempts to offer up a blood sacrifice to appease his god, which is prevented by the interference of Quetzal. Declaring that Montezuma must be crowned with the beaked crown of war, Huitzil, Cacamatzin and Guatemozin appear before the emperor's throne and Huitzil warns Montezuma not to allow Cortez to enter the city. Montezuma wavers and dons the war crown as a sign of peace only. Huitzil becomes violent in his denunciation of the emperor's humility and is ejected by the guards. Once outside Huitzil and Guatemozin urge Cacamatzin to lead his people to war against the invaders, and the usurping prince agrees. Wild with thoughts of possible conflicts, the followers of the War God now indulge in fanatical and warlike games to arouse the fighting spirit of the populace, which continue with unabated ardor by the subjects.

SECOND REEL.

Reaching the capital city of Tabasco, Cortez is presented with Marina, the beautiful daughter of an Indian chief. Her knowledge of the Aztecs and ability to interpret the language later proved of the greatest value to the great invader. Four months elapse and Montezuma sends ambassadors to Cortez forbidding him to enter the imperial city. Cortez returns his helmet in defiance and declares he will meet the ruler of men face to face. In despair Montezuma refuses to consider the propositions of war urged by Cacamatzin, loads the envoy with rich gifts and bids him tell Cortez the gates of the city are open to him. Mad with fury, Huitzil warns Montezuma that his Empire will totter into oblivion at this rash step and rushes from the room. Secretly delighted at the welcome extended, Cortez and his army take up their march to the city. Arriving at the great causeway he is met by the glittering train of the emperor, courtesies are exchanged and all enter the city. That night a great feast is given in the palace in honor of Cortez' arrival. At its conclusion, Cacamatzin and Guatemozin retire, but the emperor, on attempting to leave the room, is made a captive in his own palace by the wily Cortez. Realizing his empire is lost, Montezuma sinks at the foot of the throne on which the usurping invader is now comfortably seated.

THIRD REEL.

With Cortez in power, Huitzil tears the garlands of peace from the black altar of war, commands Cacamatzin to stir up a feeling of unrest among the populace and lead them against the Spaniards. That night a party of warriors capture a Spanish sentinel and Huitzil offers him up as a blood sacrifice to the delight of the frenzied people. The alarm is given and the Spaniards, enraged at the murder of their comrade, invade the shrine and destroy the God of War, then engage in a terrific battle with the Aztecs. Later Cacamatzin and Guatemozin appear before Cortez and demand that Montezuma be brought to them. Cacamatzin now compels the emperor to give up the beaked war crown and, hurling defiance at the Spanish invader, rushes from the room. Marina is alarmed and warns Cortez to be on his guard. Amidst the ruins of the war shrine, Cacamatzin is now crowned emperor, dons the beaked crown and declares war against the Spaniards. The revolt spreads rapidly and Cortez, fearful of the outcome, forces Montezuma to publicly speak to his people in order to quell the attack. Montezuma, now an object of degradation in the eyes of his subjects, is mortally wounded by a shower of javelins hurled from the street and is carried to his room. Realizing the danger, Cortez orders the cannon trained on the Aztecs and dispatches his troops to put down the revolt. He is now suddenly assaulted by the infuriated Cacamatzin, and a desperate hand-to-hand

struggle ensues in which Cortez is victorious and hastens out to lead his men. Feeling he cannot bear to live and see the fall of his empire, Montezuma tears the bandages from his wounds and dies. The great battle at the causeway is now fought, in which Cortez and his men cut their way through the Aztecs and vanquish them with terrible slaughter. Cacamatzin is slain and his body drifts down the river. The Conquest of Mexico is ended. Years later Cortez, now the Ruler of the vast Empire, is given a magnificent ovation by both Aztecs and Spanish, who mingle in common brotherhood.

Such is the wonderful and spectacular film story of Essanay's great historical pageant "The Fall of Montezuma." Unparalleled in the pages of civilized history, it forms as thrilling and beautiful a background for film-adaptation as could be desired. The Essanay Company presents this great three reel production to the world with the assurance that it has spared neither time nor money in making it as well-nigh perfect in every detail as possible. Every step in the undertaking has been carefully thought out, and the result has been gratifying. To all students of history it will prove a source of the most valuable and instructive study. To those searching for thrills and rare excitement it is a veritable bonanza, and those who are inclined to be skeptical concerning film entertainment, will witness a marvel of artistic photoplay triumph that unquestionably will go down in picture history as a masterpiece.

Another Celluloid Substitute

Without question, any substitute that can take the place of celluloid at the base for cinematograph film stock is to be welcomed. So much prejudice exists in the minds of the general public, and even the authorities, against the existing material, that a substance which can take its place with equally good results cannot but have an enlivening effect upon the industry says our English contemporary, *The Bioscope*. There have been numerous difficulties in the way of manufacturing a substance possessing all the good qualities, and none of the bad, of celluloid. What are the requirements of a film base? Transparency and longevity, it must be flexible, tough, practically unshrinkable in the process of development and fixing, and must have sufficient natural moisture to prevent shriveling in its normal passage through the relatively hot gate of the projector. Celluloid is a material that meets these requirements in most ways, and any substitute, to be of value, must, in addition to these qualities, possess that of non-inflammability, or, we had better say, of safety. Inflammability is one of degree, and it is doubtful if any substance can be manufactured which, by the attainment of sufficient temperature, cannot burn. Celluloid, however, has many of the properties of gun-cotton, and so must be a dangerous substance to handle.

We have, however, inspected a new film base which, would seem to be an ideal substitute for celluloid, possessing all the good qualities of the substance, with as



The Death of Montezuma.

great a degree of non-inflammability as we have hitherto met with. The new material is Boroid, resembling in appearance the highest class of celluloid; and a series of tests have been conducted which demonstrate these remarkable qualities. Frankly, if a match be applied to the material for a sufficient length of time, it will flame slightly, and so may not meet the requirements of some of the "hair-splitting" fraternity. However, no degree of heat concentrated upon the gate of the medicine affects this substance in any way.

With the concentrated light from a 60-ampere arc lamp, with the film stationary in the gate, the picture soon shriveled away on the screen; but, upon examination of the film, it was found that only the gelatine emulsion had in any way been affected. A piece of clean film base was next placed in the machine, with the light of the arc concentrated so much that the red marginal rays were projected upon the four corners of the screen. For a period of three minutes, under a current of 60 amperes, the base was unaffected in any way. No sign of shriveling was apparent.

As a further test, the film was cut with a pen-knife in the gate, and a sharp edge turned towards the light. It was thought that the ragged edge would be bound to scorch or show some sign of shriveling; but after a further five minutes, there was no indication of any harmful effect. We have, therefore, no hesitation in saying that in Boroid we have a substance that can take its place as a standard film base, possessing all the qualities of celluloid, but none of its disadvantages. The films and stock inspected had been in use for a period of over six months, the films having been printed and developed at the end of last year by a well-known English house.

The New Theater opened in Cincinnati by the Waldorf Amusement Company is doing a very large business. Mr. Dinglestedt of Norwood, is doing a fine business with his new Air Dome; he is a real hustler and is always on the job.