IN THIS SECOND VOLUME we present eight new essays. Like the essays of Volume I, they are extensions of a central core of inquiry carried out over a lengthening number of years. Since we explain the concerns and development of that inquiry in the preface to Volume I, we now merely remind the reader that our underlying interest has been the impact of European conquest and subsequent domination upon the aboriginal population of the Western Hemisphere. Our studies, initially limited for monographic focus to central Mexico, later extended to an examination of other regions and of the vital characteristics of the post-Conquest Mexican population down to the present. We have tried to rework highly diverse sources into comparable form in order to examine vital phenomena over a number of centuries, the longest span possible covering from the early or middle sixteenth century to the present. These eight new essays continue both extensions of interest.

Our first essay in this volume examines the population Yucatan in terms of numbers and settlement over a period of four and a half centuries: at the time of the coming of the Spaniards, during the initial decades of operation of lethal factors unleashed by that coming, and in subsequent centuries until the Mexican national census of 1960. The essay thus parallels the study of west-central Mexico in Volume I and our monograph on the population of the Mixteca Alta published in Ibero-Americana. It also parallels the chapters on Hispaniola and Colombia in Volume I and our previous work on the coasts of central Mexico. Yucatan is a low-lying peninsula which both resembles central Mexico in having humid, tropical areas and differs from it in having a high proportion of semi-arid land of low annual precipitation, high temperatures, and effectively lesser possible utilization of rainfall by plant life. A dominant karst formation increases the effective aridity. Culturally, the Yucatec Maya belong to southern Meso-America. Our inquiry began with the question whether or not we should find the same
general patterns we had found in central Mexico of massive destruction of native population upon the introduction of lethal factors by the Europeans but with variations in that destruction according to humidity and temperature. We quickly ran into unexpected problems arising from the fact that two essentially different groups of scholars have studied northern and southern Meso-America, each group with different interests and questions. The ethnohistorical sources show a similar difference in the information they furnish. Accordingly, an inquiry like ours that must rely upon the substructure provided by ethnohistorical sources and later scholarly studies could be carried across the divide of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec only with considerable difficulty. There is no need to repeat the rather complex findings of the chapter, but it is worth mentioning that our plotting of population as reported in the Mexican national censuses has also left us with the surprising discovery that the War of the Castes may not be entirely extinguished even in our day.

Our second essay in this volume examines the miscellaneous but substantial body of data available to us on racial groups in the Mexican population since the landing of Cortés on the Veracruz coast began the introduction of European and African genetic stock into a vast Amerindian reservoir. Mexico today is generally described as a mestizo country, but that term is both general and ambiguous. We have been interested in the progress of interbreeding, in determining regions of high and low occurrence, and in attempting on the basis of the relatively good data of the later eighteenth century to project trends across the far less satisfactory data of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. We were already aware of the extent of Negro and part-Negro participation in the repopulation of the coasts; we were less prepared for the finding that there has been substantial participation by Negro and part-Negro genetic stock in the settlement of the North. The population of the Mexican North, with its often-reported vigor, derives from the thorough mixing of three racial stocks and within those stocks from the equally thorough mixing of substocks.

Six of our chapters are linked in that they deal with phenomena usually termed vital characteristics. Chapter III concerns itself with such data as we have been able to collect on age of marriage: samples from the parish records of the Mixteca Alta, ranging in date from the seventeenth century to perhaps
1850; samples from the Civil Register for the past century for a group of ex-districts in Oaxaca centering around the Mixteca Alta, again essentially a rural environment; and samples from the Civil Register for the city of Guadalajara. All marriage data since 1850 suffer from the major flaw that a large part of the population forms its reproductive units without civil or religious ceremony and so cannot be traced. Nevertheless, even with the limitation that formal marriage has been to some extent a class phenomenon, our data show a steady rise in the age at which Mexicans marry.

Chapters IV and V continue inquiry into the basic question underlying interest in age of marriage, namely, reproductivity. Chapter IV analyzes data available to us on baptismal and birth rates. For baptisms we had material from the parish registers of the Mixteca Alta and some more general reporting via diocesan authorities for the last decades of the colonial period. For recorded births, we had material from the Civil Register for the Mixteca Alta and adjacent regions and Mexican federal summaries of reporting from the entire network of the Civil Register. In our examination we have had to balance the deficiencies of baptisms as a record of births against failure to record births in the Civil Register. Our conclusions differ from those of demographers who have studied recent fluctuations in recorded and reconstructed Mexican birth rates.

Another approach to the study of reproductivity is through fertility and similar ratios, which on the whole are better adapted to make use of data from earlier centuries and from underdeveloped countries in this century. Our data permit study from the later eighteenth century to the census of 1960. We find no detectable change over that span of time, a conclusion congruent with our findings from baptismal and birth rates.

Our last three chapters deal with mortality. Chapter VI examines such data as we have been able to assemble on mortality prior to 1850. The available materials force us to examine death data in relation to recorded numbers of births or baptisms rather than to follow the more conventional procedure of calculating death rates. For comparison, we have calculated in parallel form data for Mexico in 1959–1960. We are led to the tentative conclusion that there was no change in mortality status in colonial and republican Mexico before the middle of the nineteenth century.

That there has been sweeping change in age and cause
of death in Mexico at some time since 1850 is easily apparent to any student. Chapters VII and VIII address themselves to an examination of change in mean age at death and in cause of death, respectively, searching for differences between two such dissimilar states as Oaxaca and Jalisco, selected as samples, and between subregions within these states such as coast and plateau or countryside and city. Our data consist of samplings of death certificates from the Civil Register for selected districts in those two states. Over a period of ten years we were able to have data extracted from perhaps 600,000 death certificates. Processing the data turned out to be unexpectedly difficult both in technique and expense; we were helped by an able research assistant trained in computer methods and by the generosity of the computer center on the Berkeley campus, which donated computer time in off-hours. Our examination of change in mean age and cause of death show substantial differences between Oaxaca and Jalisco despite similarity of general trend and substantial differences between subregions within those states.

In the years we have been engaged in these studies we have had help from many entities and people, whose kindness we should not want to forget. The acknowledgment in Volume I records many of our debts, which extend equally to Volume II. For Volume II we should mention further Professor France V. Scholes and Peter Gerhard, who generously furnished materials they had collected on Yucatan; Dr. Gloria Grajales of the Biblioteca Nacional in Mexico, who secured copies of rare materials for us; and Professor Hardin B. Jones, who introduced us to the possibilities of probability theory for the analysis of racial mixture. We have mentioned our debt to the computer center on the Berkeley campus; the research assistant trained in computer methods is Antonio Seward. Other research assistants in Mexico and the United States, too many to name, have helped us by taking off our shoulders the almost interminable chores of copying, transcribing, and initial tabulating.