

CHAPTER CXLIX.

How Cortés sought the rowers who were needed to row the launches, and appointed the Captains who were to go in them, and other things that were done.

AFTER the review (which I have already spoken of several times) had taken place, Cortés saw that not enough men who knew how to row could be found to row the launches, although those who had been brought in the ships which we destroyed when we came with Cortés were thoroughly experienced and the sailors from the ships of Narvaez and those from Jamaica also knew how to row, and all of them were placed on the list, and had been warned that they would have to row. Yet counting all of them, there was not a supply for all the thirteen launches. As many of the men refused, and even said that they would not row, Cortés made enquiries to find out who were seamen, or had been seen to go out fishing, and if they came from Palos or Moguer or from Triana or 'El Puerto', or from any other port or place where there were sailors, he ordered them under pain of heavy penalties to go on board the launches. However high born they might say they were, he made them go and row, and in this way he got together one hundred and fifty men as rowers, and they were much freer from hardships than we were who were stationed on the causeways fighting, and they became rich from plunder as I will relate further on.

After Cortés had decided who should go in the launches, he divided the crossbowmen and musketeers and the powder, cannon and arrows and everything else that was necessary among them and ordered them to place in each launch the royal banners and other banners with the name that was given to each launch, besides other things which were needed, and he named as Captains

for each one of them those whom I will now mention here:—Garcí Holguin, Pedro Barba, Juan de Linpias Carvajal the deaf, Juan Jaramillo, Jerónimo Ruíz de la Mota, his companion Caravajal, who is now very old and lives in the street of San Francisco, and one Portillo who had just come from Castile, a good soldier who had a handsome wife, and a Zamora who was a ship's mate and now lives in Oaxaca, a Colmenero who was a seaman and a good soldier, a Lema, a Jínes Nórtes, a Briones a native of Salamanca, another Captain whose name I do not remember, and Miguel Díaz de Auz.

After he had named them, and ordered all the cross-bowmen and musketeers, and the other soldiers who had to row to obey the Captains whom he was placing over them, and not to leave their commands under heavy penalties, he gave instructions to each Captain what he was to do, and to what part of the causeways he was to go, and with which one of the Captains who were on land [he was to co-operate]. When he had finished arranging all that I have mentioned, they came to tell Cortés that the Captains from Tlaxcala with a great number of warriors were approaching, and that Xicotenga, the younger, was coming as their commander in chief, the same who was commander during the wars in Tlaxcala, and it was he who plotted the treachery in Tlaxcalá when we came out in flight from Mexico, as I have many other times recounted, and that he was bringing in his Company his two brothers, sons of the good old man Don Lorenzo de Vargas. He [Xicotenga] was also bringing a great force of Tlaxcalans under the command of Chichimecatecle and men from Huexotzingo, and another regiment of Cholulans, although they were few in number, because, from what I always observed after we had punished the people of Cholula (already spoken about by me in the Chapter treating of it), they never afterwards sided with

Mexicans nor yet with us, but were keeping on the look out,¹ and even when we were expelled from Mexico they were not found in opposition to us.

Let us leave this, and go back to our story. When Cortés knew that Xicotenga and his brothers and other Captains were approaching, (and they were coming one day before the time he had told them to come,) Cortés went out a quarter of a league from Texcoco to receive them with Pedro de Alvarado and others of our Captains, and as soon as he met Xicotenga and his brothers, Cortés paid them great respect and embraced them and all the other Captains. They approached in fine order, all very brilliant with great devices, each regiment by itself with its banners unfurled, and the white bird, like an eagle with its wings outstretched, which is their badge. The ensigns waved their banners and standards, and all carried bows and arrows, two handed swords, javelins and spear throwers; some carried macanas and great lances and others small lances. Adorned with their feather head-dresses, and moving in good order and uttering shouts, cries, and whistles, calling out, "Long live the Emperor our Master", and "Castile, Castile, Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala". they took more than three hours entering Texcoco.

Cortés ordered them to be lodged in good quarters, and to be supplied with everything we had in our camp. After many embraces and promises to enrich them, he took leave of them and told them that next day he would give them orders what they were to do, and that now they were tired and should rest.

At the very moment that these chiefs from Tlaxcala, of whom I have spoken, arrived, letters reached our camp sent by a soldier named Hernando de Barrientos, from a town named Chinantla, distant about ninety leagues

¹ A la mira, *i.e.*, on the look out to see which side to take.

from Mexico, and what was said in them was, that at the time when we were expelled from Mexico, the Mexicans had killed his three companions who were at the farm and mines where the Captain Pizarro (for so he was called) had left them to search and explore all the neighbourhood for rich gold mines, as I have related in the Chapter that treats of that subject, and that Barrientos had taken refuge in the town of Chinantla where he remained, for they [the people of Chinantla] were enemies of the Mexicans. This [Chinantla] was the town whence they brought the pikes when we went against Narvaez ; and because other particulars which were given in the letter, do not concern our story, they will be omitted. Cortés wrote to him [Barrientos] in reply, giving an account of how we were marching to invest Mexico, and telling him to give his compliments to all the chieftains of those provinces, and to take care not to leave that country until he should learn by letter from him what he was to do, lest the Mexicans should kill him on the road. Let us leave this and say how Cortés gave orders as to the way we should go to invest Mexico and who were to be the Captains.

CHAPTER CL.

How Cortés ordered three divisions [each composed] of cavalry crossbowmen and musketeers to go and invest the great city of Mexico, and the Captains that he named for each division, and the soldiers, horsemen, crossbowmen, and musketeers that he divided between them, and the positions and cities where we were to establish our camps.

HE [Cortés] appointed Pedro de Alvarado Captain of one hundred and fifty sword and shield soldiers (and many of them carried lances) and thirty horsemen and eighteen musketeers and crossbowmen, and he named his brother