

that, when he saw that the catapult was a thing to be laughed at, he decided that Gonzalo de Sandoval should go in command of all the twelve launches and invade that part of the City whither Guatemoc had retreated, which was in a part where we could not reach the houses and palaces by land, but only by water. Sandoval at once summoned all the Captains of the launches and what he did I will go on to relate.

## CHAPTER CLVI.

How Gonzalo de Sandoval with twelve launches entered into the part of the City where Guatemoc was [had taken refuge] and took him prisoner, and what happened about it.

As I have said Cortés not only saw that the Catapult was useless but was angry with the soldier who advised him to have it made, and in consequence of Guatemoc and his Captains not wishing for peace of any sort, he ordered Gonzalo de Sandoval to invade that part of the City where Guatemoc had taken refuge with all the flower of his Captains and the most distinguished persons that were in Mexico, and he ordered him not to kill or wound any Indians unless they should attack him, and even if they did attack him, he was only to defend himself and not do them any other harm, but he should destroy their houses and the many defences they had erected in the lake. Cortés ascended the great Cue of Tlatelolco to see how Sandoval advanced with the launches, and at that time Pedro de Alvarado, Francisco Verdugo, Luis Marin and other soldiers were there with Cortés.

Sandoval advanced with great ardour upon the place where the Houses of Guatemoc stood, and when Guatemoc saw himself surrounded, he was afraid that they would

capture him or kill him, and he had got ready fifty great piraguas with good rowers so that when he saw himself hard pressed he could save himself by going to hide in some reed beds and get from thence to land and hide himself in another town, and those were the instructions he had given his captains and the persons of most importance who were with him in that fortified part of the city, so that they should do the same.

When they saw that the launches were getting among the houses they embarked in the fifty canoes, and they had already placed [on board] the property and gold and jewels of Guatemoc and all his family and women, and he had embarked himself and shot out into the lake ahead, accompanied by many Captains. As many other canoes set out at the same time, the lake was full of them, and Sandoval quickly received the news that Guatemoc was fleeing, and ordered all the launches to stop destroying the houses and fortifications and follow the flight of the canoes, and to have a care that they kept track of where Guatemoc was going, and not to molest him or do him any injury but try to capture him without using violence. As a certain García Holguin a friend of Sandoval, was captain of a launch which was very fast and a good sailor and was manned by good rowers Sandoval ordered him to follow in the direction in which they told him that Guatemoc was fleeing with his great piraguas, and instructed him not to do him [Guatemoc] any injury whatever beyond capturing him in case he should overtake him, and Sandoval went in another direction with other launches which kept him company. It pleased our Lord God that García Holguin should overtake the canoes and piraguas in which Guatemoc was travelling, and from the style and the awnings and the seat he was using he knew that it was Guatemoc the great Lord of Mexico, and he made signals for them to stop, but they would not stop, so he made as

though he were going to discharge muskets and crossbows. When Guatemoc saw that, he was afraid and said "Do not shoot, I am the king of this City and they call me Guatemoc, and what I ask of you is not to disturb my things that I am taking with me nor my wife nor my relations, but carry me at once to Malinche." When Holguin heard him he was greatly delighted, and with much respect he embraced him and placed him in the launch, him and his wife and about thirty chieftains and seated him in the poop on some mats and cloths, and gave him to eat of the food that he had brought with him, and he touched nothing whatever in the canoes that carried his [Guatemoc's] property but brought it along with the launch. By this time Gonzalo de Sandoval had ordered all the launches to assemble together, and he knew that Holguin had captured Guatemoc and was carrying him to Cortés, and when he heard it he told the rowers on board his launch to make all the speed possible and he overtook Holguin and claimed the prisoner, and Holguin would not give him up and said that he had captured him and not Sandoval, and Sandoval replied that that was true, but that he was the Captain General of the launches, and that García Holguin sailed under his command and banner, and it was because he was his friend and his launch the fastest that he had ordered him to follow after Guatemoc, to capture him, and that to him as his General he must give up his prisoner. Still Holguin contended that he did not wish to do so, and at that moment another launch went in great haste to Cortés (who was very close by in Tlatelolco, watching from the top of the Cue how Sandoval was advancing) to demand a reward for the good news, and they told Cortés of the dispute which Sandoval was having with Holguin over the capture of the prisoner. When Cortés knew of it he at once dispatched Captain Luis Marin and Francisco de Verdugo to summon Sandoval and Holguin to come as

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they were in their launches without further discussion, and to bring Guatemoc and his wife and family with all [signs of] respect, and that he would settle whose was the prisoner and to whom was due the honour of it [the capture].

While they were bringing him, Cortés ordered a guest chamber to be prepared as well as could be done at the time, with mats and cloths and seats, and a good supply of the food which Cortés had reserved for himself. Sandoval and Holguin soon arrived with Guatemoc, and the two captains between them led him up to Cortés, and when he came in front of him he paid him great respect, and Cortés embraced Guatemoc with delight, and was very affectionate to him and his captains. Then Guatemoc said to Cortés “Señor Malinche, I have surely done my duty in defence of my City, and I can do no more and I come by force and a prisoner into your presence and into your power, take that dagger that you have in your belt and kill me at once with it”<sup>1</sup> and when he said this he wept tears and sobbed and other great Lords whom he had brought with him also wept. Cortés answered him through Doña Marina and Aguilar our interpreters, very affectionately, that he esteemed him all the more for having been so brave as to defend the City, and he was deserving of no blame, on the contrary [this circumstance] must be more in his favour than otherwise.

What he wished was that he [Guatemoc] had made peace of his own free will before the city had been so far destroyed, and so many of his Mexicans had died, but now, that both had happened there was no help for it and it could not be mended, let his spirit and the spirit of his Captains take rest, and he should rule in Mexico and over his provinces as he did before. Then Guatemoc and his

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<sup>1</sup> Blotted out in the original “and Guatemoc himself was going to lay hold of it.”

Captains said that they accepted his favour, and Cortés asked after his wife and other great ladies, the wives of other Captains who, he had been told, had come with Guatemoc. Guatemoc himself answered and said that he had begged Gonzalo de Sandoval and García Holguin that they might remain in the canoes while he came to see what orders Malinche gave them. Cortés at once sent for them and ordered them all to be given of the best that at that time there was in the camp to eat, and as it was late and was beginning to rain, Cortés arranged for them to go to Coyoacan,<sup>1</sup> and took Guatemoc and all his family and household and many chieftains with him and he ordered Pedro de Alvarado, Gonzalo de Sandoval and the other captains each to go to his own quarters and camp, and we went to Tacuba, Sandoval to Tepeaquilla and Cortés to Coyoacan. Guatemoc and his captains were captured on the thirteenth day of August at the time of vespers on the day of Señor San Hipólito in the year one thousand five hundred and twenty-one, thanks to our Lord Jesus Christ and our Lady the Virgin Santa Maria, His Blessed Mother, Amen.

It rained and thundered and lightning flashed that afternoon and up to midnight heavier rain fell than usual. After Guatemoc had been captured all the soldiers turned as deaf as if some one had stood shouting from the top of a belfry with many bells clanging and in the midst of their ringing all of a sudden they had ceased to sound. I say this purposely, for during all the ninety-three days that we were besieging this city, both by night and day, some of the Mexican Captains kept on uttering so many shouts and yells, whilst they were mustering the squadrons and warriors who were to fight on the causeway, and others

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<sup>1</sup> Betancurt, *Teatro Mexicano, Sucesos Militares*, chap. x, say Cortés sent them to Acachinanco.

were calling out to those in the canoes who were to fight with the launches, and with us on the bridges, again others to those driving in piles and opening and deepening the water openings and bridges and making breastworks, or those who were making javelins and arrows, or to the women preparing rounded stones to hurl from the slings, while from the oratories and towers of the Idols, the accursed drums, trumpets and mournful kettle-drums never ceased sounding, and in this way both by night and by day, there was such a great din that we could not hear one another. On the capture of Guatemoc, the shouts and all the clamour ceased, and it is for this reason I have said that up to then we seemed to be standing in a belfry.

Let us leave this and say that Guatemoc was of a very graceful make both in figure and features. His face was rather long, but cheerful, and when his eyes looked at you, they appeared rather grave than gentle, and there was no waver in them ; he was twenty-one years of age,<sup>1</sup> and his colour inclined rather more to white than the colour of the brown Indians, and they say that he was a nephew of Montezuma, the son of one of his sisters, and he was married to a daughter of this same uncle Montezuma, who was a young and beautiful woman.

Before we go any further, let me relate how the dispute between Sandoval and García Holguin came to an end. It was in this way ; Cortés told them a story about the Romans having just such another dispute between Marius and Cornelius Sylla. It took place when Sylla brought Jugurtha a prisoner to Rome with his father-in-law, the King Bocos. When they entered Rome glorying over the deeds and exploits they had accomplished, it seems that Sylla placed Jugurtha in his triumphal procession with an iron chain round his neck, and Marius said that he

<sup>1</sup> Blotted out in the original, "twenty-three or twenty-four years."

and not Sylla should have done this, and that before Sylla had thus placed him he must explain that Marius gave him the right to do so, and had sent him in his stead so that he might take Jugurtha prisoner in Marius's name, and that the King Bocos gave himself up to the name of Marius. Then as Marius was Captain General and he (Sylla) was fighting under his command and banner, and as Sylla was one of the Roman patricians and was held in high favour, and as Marius came from a town near Rome named Arpino and therefore a foreigner, although he had been several times Consul, he was not in as high favour as Sylla, and about this matter there were Civil Wars between Marius and Sylla, and it was never settled to whom should be given the honour of capturing Jugurtha.

Let me take up the thread of my story, which is that Cortés said that he would refer the matter to His Majesty as to which of the two he would favour by making it [the subject of] a grant of arms, and that the decision about it would be brought from Spain, and in two years time there came a command from His Majesty that Cortés should have in the ornaments of his Coat of Arms, seven kings, who were Montezuma, the great Lord of Mexico, Cacamatzin, the Lord of Texcoco, and the Lords of Iztapalapa, Coyoacan, Tacuba and another great Lord who was a nephew of Montezuma, to whom they said would come the Caciqueship and Lordship of Mexico, (he was the Lord of Mataltzingo and of other provinces,) and this Guatemoc about whom the dispute arose.

Let us leave this and let us speak of the dead bodies and heads that were in the houses where Guatemoc had taken refuge. I say on my oath, Amen, that all the houses and the palisades in the lake were full of heads and corpses and I do not know how to describe it for in the streets and courts of Tlatelolco there was no difference, and we could not walk except among corpses and heads of dead Indians.

I have read about the destruction of Jerusalem but I know not for certain if there was greater mortality than this, for of the great number of the warriors from all the provinces and towns subject to Mexico who had crowded in [to the city] most of them died, and as I have already said, thus the land and the lake and the palisades were all full of dead bodies, and stank so much that no one could endure it, and for this reason, as soon as Guatemoc was captured, each one of the Captains went to his own camp, as I have already said, and even Cortés was ill from the stench which assailed his nostrils, and from headache, during the days we were in Tlatelolco.

Let us leave this and go on ahead and say that the soldiers who went about in the launches were the best off, and gained much spoil because they were able to go to the houses in certain quarters in the lake where they knew that there was cloth and gold and other riches, and they also went to search in the reed beds whither the Mexicans had carried it [their property] so as to hide it when we gained possession of some houses or quarter [of the city]. Also because under pretext of giving chase to canoes which carried food or water, when they came on those in which some of the chieftains were fleeing to the mainland to get among the pueblos of the Otomies who were their neighbours, they robbed them of all they carried with them. I wish to say that we, the soldiers who were fighting on the causeways and on land gained no profit except arrow and lance wounds, and wounds from darts and stones, because when we captured any houses, the inhabitants had already carried off whatever property they possessed; and we were not able to go through the water without first of all closing up the openings and bridges and, for this reason, I have said, in the chapter which tells of [the time] when Cortés was looking for sailors to go in the launches, that they were the



best off, and not we who fought on land. This seems clear, for the Mexican Captains and even Guatemoc, when Cortés demanded from them the treasure of Montezuma, told him that the crews of the launches had stolen the greater part of it.

Let us stop speaking of this until later on, and say that as there was so great a stench in the city, Guatemoc asked permission of Cortés for all the Mexican forces left in the city to go out to the neighbouring pueblos, and they were promptly told to do so. I assert that during three days and nights they never ceased streaming out and all three causeways were crowded with men, women and children, so thin, yellow, dirty and stinking, that it was pitiful to see them. When the city was free of them, Cortés went to examine it and we found the houses full of corpses and there were some poor Mexicans, who could not move out, still among them, and what they excreted from their bodies was a filth such as thin swine pass which have been fed upon nothing but grass, and all the city was as though it had been ploughed up and the roots of the herbs dug out and they had eaten them and even cooked the bark of some of the trees, and there was no fresh water to be found, only salt water. I also wish to state that they did not eat the flesh of their own Mexicans, only that of our people and our Tlaxcalan allies whom they had captured, and there had been no births for a long time, as they had suffered so much from hunger and thirst and continual fighting.

Let us continue. Cortés ordered all the launches to assemble where some dockyards were built later on. To go back to my story, when this great and populous city so famed throughout the whole world had been captured, after giving many thanks to God our Lord and Our Lady His Blessed Mother, and having made certain offerings to Our Lord God, Cortés ordered a banquet to be held at

Coyoacan in celebration of the capture of the city, and had already procured plenty of wine for the purpose out of a ship which had come from Spain to the port of Villa Rica, and he had pigs which they had brought him from Cuba and in order to make a festival of the occasion he ordered all the captains and soldiers whom he thought worth consideration from all three camps to be invited, and when we went to the banquet there were neither seats nor tables placed sufficient for a third part of the captains and soldiers who came, and there was much disorder, and it would have been better not to have given that banquet on account of many things which happened at it which were not creditable<sup>1</sup>; and they gambled, and this also it would have been better not to have done, and all the gold should have been used for holy purposes and given with

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<sup>1</sup> Blotted out in the original, "such as to get rid of all this supper and the kinds of dances and the . . . . . and other things that were not suitable and also because this plant of Noah's made some people behave crazily, and men walked on the top of the tables after they had eaten and could not find the way out to the patio. Others said that they must buy horses with golden saddles and there were crossbowmen who said that all the darts and guides that they would have in their quivers must be made of gold from the share which would be given them, and others went rolling down the steps. Then when they had cleared away the tables, such ladies as were present, went out to dance with the gallants who were weighted with their (quilted) cotton armour and it seemed to me to be a thing to be laughed at. They were ladies whom I will not here describe for there were no others in camp nor in the whole of New Spain. First of all, the elderly Maria Destrada who afterwards married Pero Sanchez Farfan, and Francisca de Ordás who married a gentleman, Juan Gonzalo de Leon; la Bermuda, who married Olmos de Portillo, him of Mexico; another lady, the wife of Captain Portillo who died in (one of) the launches, but as she was a widow they did not bring her to the feast; and a somebody Gómez, who was the wife of Benito de Vargas; and another beautiful lady called la Bermuda—I don't remember her Christian name—who married one Hernan Martin and went to live in Oaxaca; and another elderly woman named Ysabel Rodríguez, who at that time, was the wife of a somebody Guadalupe, and another somewhat elderly woman who was called Mari Hernández who was the wife of the rich Juan de Cáceres. I cannot call to mind any others who were then in New Spain. Let us leave the banquet and capering and dances, for the next day that dawned, the tables . . . . ."

thanks to God for the many benefits and favours He had already shown us and continued to show us.

Let us cease to speak of this, for I wish to tell of other things that happened which I was forgetting, and which do not belong here, but should have been reported somewhat earlier, and it is that our friends Chichimecatecle and the two jouthful Xicotengas, the sons of Don Lorenzo de Vargas, who used to be called Xicotenga the old and blind, fought very valiantly against the great forces of Mexico, and helped us very much, and so too did a brother of Don Fernando, the Lord of Texcoco, many times mentioned by me, who was called Ixtlilxochitl,<sup>1</sup> who was afterwards named Don Carlos; he did the deeds of a very daring and valiant man. There was another Indian Captain whose name I do not remember, a native of a pueblo on the lake, who performed wonders, and many other captains from the pueblos which assisted us. All fought very mightily, and Cortés gave them many thanks and much praise for having helped us, and made them many promises that he would make them rulers, and he would give them in time to come lands and vassals, and he bid them farewell, and as they were all rich and weighed down with the gold and spoil they had taken they went back to their lands and even carried with them the dried flesh of the Mexicans and divided it among their relations and friends as pertaining to their enemies, and they ate it at festivals.

Now that I am [far] away from the conflicts and arduous battles which we fought against the Mexicans by night and day, for which I give many thanks to God who delivered me from them, I wish to relate a thing that happened to me after seeing the sixty-two soldiers of Cortés, who were carried off alive, sacrificed, and their

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<sup>1</sup> Este suchel in the text.

chests cut open and their hearts offered to the Idols. What I shall say now will appear to some persons to be due to my want of any great inclination for fighting, but on the other hand, if it is well thought out, it arose out of the reckless daring and great courage with which in those days, I was obliged to expose myself in the thickest of the fights, for at that time it was expected of a good soldier and was necessary in order to maintain that reputation, that one should do whatever the boldest soldier was obliged to do. As each day I beheld my companions carried off to be sacrificed, and had seen how they sawed open their chests and tore out their still beating hearts and cut off their feet and arms and ate them, to the number of sixty-two, as I have already said, besides ten of our company whom they had captured before that, I feared that one day or another they would do the same to me, for they had already seized me twice to carry me off to be sacrificed, but it pleased God that I should escape from their power. When I called to mind those hideous deaths, and as the proverb says, "The little pitcher which goes many times to the fountain, &c.," for this reason, from that time I always feared death more than ever. I say this because, before going into battle there was a horror and sadness in my heart, and I fasted once or twice, commending myself to God and His Blessed Mother, but on going into battle it was always the same, the fear promptly left me.

I also wish to say what a very new sensation it seemed to me to feel that unaccustomed fear, for I had been present in many battles and many very dangerous warlike encounters, and my heart as well as my courage and spirit must have been well hardened and now at the very end it ought to have been more so than ever. For I can easily recount and remember how from the time I came as discoverer with Francisco Hernández de Córdoba and

Grijalva, and again with Cortés, I was present at the affairs of Punta de Catoche, and in that of Lazaro, which is also called Campeche, and at Potonchan, and in Florida, as I have written about more fully when I came exploring with Francisco Hernández de Córdoba. Let us leave this and go on to speak of the expedition under Grijalva and in that same the affair at Potonchan and now with Cortés in the affair at Tabasco and that of Cingapacinga and in all the battles and encounters in Tlaxcala and that of Cholula, and how when we defeated Narvaez they picked me out and I was among those who went to capture the artillery, which numbered eighteen guns, all loaded with stones and balls, and we captured them and it was a critical moment of great danger ; and I was present in the first defeat when the Mexicans drove us out of Mexico, when they killed within about eight days over eight hundred and fifty of our soldiers, and I was present during the expeditions to Tepeaca and Quechula and their neighbourhood, and in other encounters we had with the Mexicans, when we were in Texcoco, about seizing the maize-fields, and I was present at the affair of Iztapalapa when they wanted to drown us, and I was present when we climbed the Peñoles, as they now call the forts or fortresses which Cortés captured, and at the affair of Xochimilco in four battles and many other skirmishes, and I was among the first to go with Pedro de Alvarado to invest Mexico, when we cut off the water of Chapultepec, and was in the first expedition along the causeway with Alvarado himself and afterwards when they defeated our Company on the same causeway and carried off eight soldiers, and they seized me and carried me off to be sacrificed, and in all the battles already recorded by me which took place every day, up to the time that I saw, as I have stated, the cruel deaths which they inflicted on our companions before my eyes, [I repeat as] I have already

said, that although I had passed through all these battles and risks of death, I had never felt fear so greatly as I felt it now at the last. Let those gentlemen who understand soldiering and have been at critical moments in peril of death, say to what cause they attribute my dread, whether to faint-heartedness or to excessive valour; for, as I have said, I felt in my mind that having to thrust myself when fighting into such dangerous positions, I must of necessity fear death then more than at other times, and that was the reason why my heart trembled, for it feared death. All these battles at which I was present and of which I have here spoken, they will see in this my story. And when and how and where and in what way I took part in many other expeditions and encounters from now onwards, which I do not record until their proper time and place, they will see further on in the story. I may add that I was not always in very good health for I was often badly wounded, and for this reason was not able to go on all the expeditions. Still, the hardships and risks of death that I have personally encountered are not insignificant, for after we had captured this great and strong city of Mexico, I went through other conflicts in company with captains who understood soldiering, as will be seen later on when the opportunity occurs.

Let us leave this now and I will state and declare why in all these Mexican wars, when they killed our comrades, I have said, "they carried them off," and not "they killed them," and the reason was this, because the warriors who fought with us although they were able to kill those of our soldiers whom they carried off alive, did not kill them at once, but gave them dangerous wounds so that they could not defend themselves, and carried them off alive to sacrifice to their Idols, and they even first made them dance before Huichilobos, who was their Idol of War; and this is the reason why I have said, "they carried

them off." Let us leave this subject and I will relate what Cortés did after the capture of Mexico.

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## CHAPTER CLVII.

What Cortés ordered to be done and certain commands that he gave after the Very Great City of Mexico had been captured and Guatemoc and his captains had been made prisoners.

THE first order that Cortés gave to Guatemoc was, that they [the Mexicans] should repair the water pipes from Chapultepec in the way they used to be, so that the water should at once come through the pipes and enter the City of Mexico; next, that all the streets should be cleared of the bodies and heads of the dead, and that they should be buried so that the city could be kept clean and free from any stench; that all the bridges and causeways should be thoroughly restored to their former condition, and that they should rebuild the palaces and houses, and within two months they should return to live in them, and he (Cortés) marked out where they were to settle and what part they were to leave clear so that we could settle there.

Let us leave these orders and others which I no longer remember and relate what Guatemoc and his captains told Cortés, that many of the captains and soldiers who went as crews of the launches as well as those who had marched along the causeways fighting, had carried off many of the daughters and wives of the chieftains, and they begged him as a favour that they should be given back to them and Cortés answered that it would be difficult to take the women from those who held them, but they might seek them out and bring them before him and he would see if they had become Christians or preferred to return to their homes to their fathers and husbands, [in the latter case] he

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