

then they wounded me with an arrow shot, but it was a small matter, and we got through with great difficulty although many warriors from Guatemala and other towns, were stationed in the pass.

As there is much to tell about this and I am obliged to recall to mind some things which should come in their proper time and place, (and all this happened at the time when there was a report that Cortés and all of us who had gone with him to Higuera were dead) I will leave it now and tell about the expedition that Cortés sent to Higuera and Honduras; I will also state that in this province of Guatemala the Indians were not fighters for they only lay in wait for us in the barrancas, and with their arrows they did nothing.

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#### CHAPTER CLXV.

How Cortés sent a fleet to pacify and conquer the provinces of Higuera and Honduras, and sent Cristóbal de Olid as Captain, and what happened I will go on to relate.

NOW Cortés heard news that there were rich lands and good mines in the country of Higuera and Honduras, and some pilots who had been in those parts, or very near to them, gave him to understand that they had met with some Indians fishing in the sea, whose nets they had seized, and the sinkers attached to them for the fishing were made of a mixture of gold and copper, and they also told him that in those parts they believed that there was a strait by which one could pass from the north to the south coast. Moreover, as we understood that His Majesty had instructed and ordered Cortés during all his discoveries to be on the look-out, and use the greatest diligence and perseverance in searching for a strait, pass or passage to the Spice Islands, so at this time, whether it was on account of the

gold, or to search for the passage, Cortés decided to send Cristóbal de Olid, who had been Quartermaster during the affair of Mexico, as Captain of the expedition—on the one hand because he was a man of his own making, and was married to a Portuguese lady named Doña Felipa de Arauz, already mentioned by me on other occasions,—on the other hand because Cristóbal de Olid held a good assignment of Indians near to Mexico, and Cortés thought he would be faithful and do what he was told to do.

Because such a long journey by land involved great difficulty, hardship and expense, he decided to send him by sea as it would not be so troublesome and costly, and he gave him five ships and a sloop well supplied with guns and powder and provisions and sent in them one hundred crossbowmen and musketeers and twenty-two horses, and among the soldiers were five Conquistadores of our company who came with Cortés himself in the beginning, and had served His Majesty well throughout the conquest, and they already possessed homes and were taking their rest. I thus express it because it was no use saying to Cortés, “Señor, let me take a rest, for I have done work enough,” for he made them go, whither he ordered, by force if they would not go willingly.

He (Cristóbal de Olid) took with him one Briones, a native of Salamanca who had been a Captain of a launch and a soldier in Italy, and this Briones was very turbulent and an enemy of Cortés, and he took many other soldiers who were not on good terms with Cortés because he had not given them good assignments of Indians nor shares of the gold. In the instructions which Cortés gave him (C. de Olid) it was stated that from the port of Villa Rica his course would be to the Havana, and that there in the Havana he would find one Alonzo de Contreras an old soldier of Cortés, a native of the town of Orgaz, who had taken with him six thousand pesos de oro, with which to

buy horses and cassava, hogs, bacon and other things necessary for the fleet. Cortés sent this soldier on ahead of Cristóbal de Olid, because if the settlers at the Havana saw the fleet approaching they would raise the price of horses and all the other provisions. He ordered Cristóbal de Olid, on arriving at the Havana to take over all the horses which had been bought, and from thence to shape his course for Higueras, which was an easy passage and quite near by, and he ordered him, as soon as he had disembarked, in a friendly way, and without killing any Indians, to endeavour to found a town at some good harbour and to bring the natives of the province to peace, and to seek for gold and silver, and to make enquiries and endeavour to find out if there was a Strait, and what harbours there were on the South Coast, if he should reach it. He gave him two Clerics, and one of them understood the Mexican language, and he ordered him to preach diligently to the natives on the subject of our holy faith, and not to permit sodomy nor human sacrifices but quietly and in a friendly way to root them out. He also ordered him to break open all the wooden houses where they kept Indian men and women imprisoned, fattening them to be sacrificed and eaten, and to free the unhappy prisoners. He also ordered him to set up crosses all over the country, and he gave him many images of Our Lady the Virgin Santa Maria so that he could place them in the towns, and he said these words to him :

“Brother Cristóbal de Olid, in the manner which you have seen that we have acted in this New Spain, endeavour to act yourself.”

And after embraces and farewells with much affection and good will Cristóbal de Olid took leave of Cortés and all his household and went to Villa Rica where his fleet was stationed fully equipped, and on a certain day of the month and year he embarked with all his soldiers and with

good weather arrived at the Havana. There he found the horses that had been bought and all the rest of the supplies, and five soldiers, who were persons of quality, of the company that had been turned out of Panuco by the orders of Diego de Ocampo because they were such robbers and so turbulent. I have already given the names of some of those soldiers in a former Chapter dealing with the pacification of Panuco, and for that reason I will not name them now. These soldiers advised Cristóbal de Olid, as there was reported to be rich country where he was going, and as he had such a large and well equipped fleet and many horses and soldiers, to revolt at once against Cortés and not to acknowledge him any longer as his superior, or to support him in anything. Moreover, Briones, often mentioned by me before, who accompanied him in the flagship had often said the same thing to him in secret, and as soon as this plot was agreed upon he [Briones] promptly wrote on the subject to the Governor of the Island who as I have already said many times was named Diego Velásquez, the mortal enemy of Cortés.

Diego Velásquez came to where the fleet was stationed, and what was arranged was that he and Cristóbal de Olid should between them take the land of Higueras and Honduras for His Majesty, in his royal name, and that Diego Velásquez would provide what was necessary and would make it known to His Majesty in Castile so that the Government should be given to him [Velásquez]. In this way the partnership in the fleet was arranged.

I wish to state here the quality and demeanour of Cristóbal de Olid; had he been as wise and prudent as he was personally energetic and brave both on foot and on horseback he would have been a perfect man, but he was not fit to command but only to be commanded; he was about thirty-six years of age and a native from near Baeza or Linares and in appearance was tall, brawny, very

robust and broad across the shoulders, he had a good figure and was somewhat ruddy, and he had very good features and his lower lip was always wrinkled as though it were cleft. His speech was somewhat coarse and threatening, but he was a fluent talker and had the additional good trait of being generous.<sup>1</sup> In the beginning when he was in Mexico he was a faithful follower of Cortés, but his ambition to command and not be commanded, added to [the advice of] bad councillors, blinded him, moreover as he was brought up in the house of Diego Velásquez when a youth, and was interpreter in the Island of Cuba, he felt the obligation of the bread that he had eaten in his house, [although] he was more beholden to Cortés than he was to Diego Velásquez.

When this arrangement had been made with Diego Velásquez, many other settlers from the Island of Cuba joined Cristóbal de Olid, especially those who as I have stated, advised a revolt.

As there was nothing further to be done in that Island, for all the stores had been placed on board the ships, he ordered the whole fleet to hoist sail, and with favourable weather, went on to disembark in a sort of bay about fifteen leagues beyond Puerto Caballos. He arrived there on the 3rd May, and for this reason he named the town, which he promptly laid out, Triunfo de la Cruz, and he appointed as Alcaldes and Regidores those to whom (when he was in Mexico) Cortés had ordered him to give appointments and pay respect. He took possession of those lands for His Majesty and for Hernando Cortés in his Royal Name, and he issued other decrees which were necessary, and all this that he did was so that the friends of Cortés should not understand that he was in revolt, and so that if

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<sup>1</sup> Blotted out in the original, "he never had anything of his own, for he gave it all away." G. G.

possible he might make good friends of them when the matter came to their knowledge.

Moreover, he did not know if the land would turn out to be rich and productive of mines as they told him. He shot at two marks, the one was, as I have said, that if there were good mines and the country was thickly peopled, to revolt with it, and the other, if it did not turn out so well, to return to Mexico to his wife and assignments and to excuse himself to Cortés by telling him that the partnership which he made with Diego Velásquez was in order that he should supply him with provisions and soldiers and not to support him [Velásquez] in any way, and this he could easily [see], for he took possession through Cortés; and these were his thoughts according to what many of his friends, who have been consulted on the subject have stated.

Let us leave him already settled at Triunfo de la Cruz, Cortés knew nothing about it for more than eight months. And because I shall be obliged to return again and speak about him I will drop the matter at present and relate what happened to us at Coatzacoalcos and how Cortés sent me with Captain Luis Marin to pacify the province of Chiapas.

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#### NOTE TO CHAPTER CLXVI.

THE topography of the States of Tabasco and Chiapas presents great difficulties. The modern maps are very imperfect, and many of the original Indian names have disappeared. The topography of the State of Tabasco will be more fully dealt with in the next Volume (which deals with Cortés's march to Honduras), in which I hope to include the map of the State drawn by Melchior de Santa Cruz in 1579. It will here suffice to say that in the sixteenth century the main stream of the great river of Chiapas, after passing Huimanguillo, appears to have flowed into the sea at the Barra de dos Bocas, by what is now marked on some maps as the Rio Seco, and what is

now the main stream between Huimanguillo and San Juan Bautista, called the Rio Mescapalapa, was then merely a connecting link between the Rio de Chiapas and the Rio Grijalva.

Between Latitude 17° 50' N. and the sea, the rivers Chiapas, Grijalva and Usumacinta are all connected by a network of waterways.

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## CHAPTER CLXVI.

How those of us who had settled at Coatzacoalcos were constantly going about pacifying the provinces which revolted against us, and how Cortés ordered Captain Luis Marin to go and conquer and pacify the Province of Chiapas and ordered me to go with him and what happened during the pacification.

As many of us old Conquistadores and persons of quality were established in the town of Coatzacoalcos and had large tracts [of land] allotted to us consisting of this same province of Coatzacoalcos and Cintla,<sup>1</sup> Tabasco, Cimatan,<sup>2</sup> Chontalpa<sup>3</sup> and in the mountains above Quechula<sup>4</sup> and the [land of the] Zoques and Quilines towards Zinacantan<sup>5</sup> and Chamula<sup>6</sup> and the City of Chiapas of the Indians and Papanaguastla and Pinola<sup>7</sup> and on the other side, toward the borders of Mexico, the province of Xaltepec<sup>8</sup> and Huaspaltepec,<sup>9</sup> Chinantla, Tepeca and many other pueblos, and as at the beginning most of the provinces of New Spain rose in revolt when we demanded tribute from

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<sup>1</sup> Çitla in the text, Cintla near Tabasco, see vol. i, p. 108.

<sup>2</sup> Çimatan in the text is not marked on the modern maps. In the map of Melchoir de Santa Cruz the cattle ranch of Don Francisco Cimatan is marked on the Rio Mescapalapa and the three pueblos of Oscimatanes on the Rio Acatlapa (Acachapa).

<sup>3</sup> Chontalpa, now Cardenas, a province of Western Tabasco.

<sup>4</sup> Cachula in the text, 40 miles N.W. of Tuxtla Gutierrez.

<sup>5</sup> Zinacantan, near San Cristóbal, State of Chiapas.

<sup>6</sup> Chamula, near San Cristóbal, State of Chiapas.

<sup>7</sup> Pinola, between San Cristóbal and Comitán.

<sup>8</sup> Xaltepec, or Jaltepec, District of Choapam.

<sup>9</sup> Guaspaltepec in the text, near Playa Vicente, Dist. of Choapam