

down the causeway and canals, we found waiting for us on land and in the lake many batalions of warriors, and, as soon as day dawned, they made such an attack on us that we could hardly bear up against it ; but they did not defeat us, although they killed two soldiers and one horse, and wounded many both of us and the Tlaxcalans. Little by little the attack slackened and we returned to Texcoco, half ashamed at the trick and stratagem to throw us into the water, and also because we gained very little credit in the battle they fought against us afterwards, as our powder was exhausted. Nevertheless, it frightened them, and they had enough to do in burying and burning their dead, and curing their wounds and rebuilding their houses. There I will leave them, and relate how other pueblos came to Texcoco to make peace, and what else happened.

CHAPTER CXXXIX.

How three pueblos in the neighbourhood of Texcoco sent to ask for peace and pardon for the wars that were passed, and for the death of Spaniards, and the excuses that they made about it, and how Gonzalo de Sandoval went to Chalco and Tlamanalco¹ to help them against the Mexicans, and what else happened.

WHEN we had been two days in Texcoco after our return from the expedition to Iztapalapa, three pueblos came peaceably to Cortès to beg pardon for the past wars and the deaths of Spaniards whom they had killed. The excuses they gave were that it was by the order of the Prince of Mexico, called Cuitlahuac² (who was chosen after the death of Montezuma) that they went out to fight

¹ By an unfortunate oversight Tlamanalco is not marked in the Map of the Valley of Mexico ; it is marked on the Map in Vol. I.

² Coadlavaca in the text.

in company with his other vassals, and that if they killed some Teules and captured and robbed others it was this same Prince who [had ordered it and] had commanded them to carry the Teules to Mexico, and they had done so, and taken the Teules to Mexico to be offered as sacrifices, and they had also taken there the gold and the horses and the cloths, and now they begged pardon for it, for the reason that no blame could attach to them, because they had been ordered and compelled by force to do it. These pueblos that came at this time were called Tepezcuco¹ and Otumba. The name of the other pueblo I do not remember, but I do remember that this town of Otumba was where they fought the celebrated battle against us when we were fleeing from Mexico, where we were opposed to the greatest armies of warriors that ever came against us in all New Spain, and where they thought that we could never escape alive, as I have related more fully in former chapters which treat of that subject. As those pueblos knew that they were guilty, and were aware that we had made an expedition against Iztapalapa, and that its inhabitants had been the worse for our coming (although they did try to drown us in the water and [aided by] many squadrons of Mexicans had borne the brunt of two pitched battles) in short, so as not to find themselves in similar troubles as those that had already happened, they came to sue for peace before we could go to their pueblos to punish them. As Cortés saw that there was nothing else to be done at the time, he pardoned them, but he gave them a severe reprimand, and they bound themselves by many promises always to be hostile to the Mexicans and to be the vassals of His Majesty, and to serve us, and so they did.

Let us stop talking about these pueblos, and say how

¹ Tepetexcoco?

about the same time the inhabitants of the pueblo named Mixquic,¹ which is also called Venezuela, which stands in the lake, came to beg for peace and friendship. These people had apparently never been on good terms with the Mexicans, and in their hearts they detested them. Cortés and all of us were greatly pleased at these people coming to seek our friendship, because their pueblo was in the lake, and through them we hoped to get at their neighbours who were likewise established on the water, so Cortés thanked them greatly and dismissed them with promises and gentle speeches. While this was taking place they came to tell Cortés that great squadrons of Mexicans were advancing on the four pueblos which had been the first to seek our friendship,² named Guatinchan or Guaxultán³ and two other pueblos whose names I forget,⁴ and they told Cortés that they did not dare to stay in their houses and that they wished to flee to the mountains or to come to Texcoco where we were, and they said so many things to Cortés to induce him to help them, that he promptly got ready twenty horsemen and two hundred soldiers, thirteen crossbowmen and ten musketeers and took with him Pedro de Alvarado and Cristóbal de Olid who was Maestre de Campo, and went to the pueblos which, as I have said, had sent to Cortés to make so many complaints, a distance from Texcoco of about two leagues. It appeared to be true that the Mexicans had sent to threaten them and warn them that they would be destroyed for accepting our friendship, but the point of dispute over which they uttered the worst threats concerned some large maize

¹ Mezquique in the text.

² See Chapter CXXXVII.

³ Coatlinchan.

⁴ These towns were probably Huexotla, to the south of Texcoco, and Atengo to the N.W.

plantations lying near the lake which were ready for the harvest, whence the people of Texcoco were providing our camp. The Mexicans wanted to take the maize, for they said that it was theirs, for it had been the custom for those four pueblos to sow and harvest the maize plantations on that plain for the priests of the Mexican Idols. Over this question of the maize field many Indians had been killed, both on one side and the other. When Cortés understood about it, after telling the people not to have any fear, but to remain in their homes, he promised them that when the time came for them to go and gather maize, either for their own needs or to supply our camp, he would send a Captain and many horsemen and soldiers to protect those who went to fetch the maize. They were well pleased with what Cortés had said to them, and we returned to Texcoco. From that time forward, whenever we had need of maize in our camp, we mustered the Indian warriors from all those towns and with our Tlaxcalan allies and ten horsemen and a hundred soldiers with some musketeers and crossbowmen, we went after the maize. I say this because I went twice for it myself and on one occasion we had a capital skirmish with some powerful Mexican Squadrons which had come in more than a thousand canoes, and awaited us in the maize fields, and as we had our allies with us, although the Mexicans fought like brave men, we made them take to their canoes, but they killed one of our soldiers and wounded twelve, and they also wounded some Tlaxcalans, but the enemy had not much to brag about for fifteen or twenty of them were lying dead, and we carried off five of them as prisoners.

Let us leave this and say how next day we heard the news that the people of Chalco and Tlamanalco and their dependencies wished to make peace, but on

account of the Mexican garrisons stationed in their towns, they had no opportunity to do so, and that these Mexicans did much damage in their country and took their women, especially if they were handsome, and violated them before their fathers and mothers or husbands.

We had also heard that the timber for building the launches had been cut and prepared at Tlaxcala, and as the time was passing, and none of the timber had yet been brought to Texcoco, most of the soldiers were a good deal worried about it. Then, in addition to this, the people came from the pueblo of Venezuela which they call Mixquic¹ and from other friendly pueblos to tell Cortés that the Mexicans were coming to attack them because they had accepted our friendship. Moreover some of our friends the Tlaxcalans, who had already grabbed clothing and salt and gold and other spoil, wished to return home, but they did not dare to do so because the road was not safe. When Cortés found that to succour some of those towns that clamoured for help and to give assistance to the people of Chalco as well, which would enable them to come and accept our friendship, would make it impossible to give security to either one or the other (for in Texcoco itself we had to be keeping constant watch and to be very much on the alert) he decided to put aside all other matters and first of all to go to Chalco and Tlamanalco. For that purpose he sent Gonzalo de Sandoval and Francisco de Lugo with fifteen horsemen and two hundred soldiers and musketeers and crossbowmen and our Tlaxcalan allies, with orders by all means to break up and disperse the Mexican garrisons and to drive them out of Chalco and Tlamanalco, and leave the road to Tlaxcala

¹ Mezquique in the text.

quite clear, so that one could come and go to Villa Rica without any molestation from the Mexican warriors. As soon as this was arranged he sent some Texcocan Indians very secretly to Chalco to advise the people about it, so that they might be fully prepared to fall on the Mexican garrison either by day or night. As they wished for nothing better, the people of Chalco kept thoroughly prepared.

When Gonzalo de Sandoval marched with his army he considered it advisable to leave a rearguard of five horsemen and as many crossbowmen with [to protect] the large number of the Tlaxcalans, who were laden with the spoil that they had seized. As the Mexicans always had watchmen and spies on the lookout, they knew that our people were marching on Chalco, and in addition to the garrison posted in Chalco, they had recently got together many squadrons of warriors, who fell on the rearguard where the Tlaxcalans were marching with their spoil, and punished them severely, and our five horsemen and the crossbowmen could not hold out against them, for two of the crossbowmen were killed and the others were wounded, and although Gonzalo de Sandoval promptly turned round on the enemy and defeated them, and killed ten Mexicans, the lake was so near by that the enemy managed to take refuge in the canoes in which they had come. All that country is thickly peopled with subjects of Mexico.

When the enemy had been put to flight and Sandoval saw that the five horsemen, whom he had left in the rearguard with the musketeers and crossbowmen, were wounded both they and their horses, and that two crossbowmen were dead and the others wounded, although [I repeat] he saw all this, he did not fail to say to the others whom he had left to defend the rear, that they were not worth much for not having been able to resist the enemy and defend

themselves and our allies, and that he was very angry with them ; they were from among those who had lately come from Spain, and he told them that it was very clear that they did not know what fighting was like. Then he placed in safety all the Tlaxcalan Indians with their spoil, and he also despatched some letters which Cortés was sending to Villa Rica, in which Cortés told the Captain, who had remained in command there, all that had happened about our conquests, and about his intention to blockade Mexico, and that he [the Captain] should always take care to keep a good lookout, and if there were any soldiers who were disposed to take part in the fighting, that he should send them to Tlaxcala, but that they should not go beyond that town until the roads were safer, for they would run great risk.

When the messengers had been despatched and the Tlaxcalans sent off to their homes, Sandoval returned towards Chalco which was near by, marching with the utmost caution with his scouts out ahead, for he knew well that from any of the pueblos and hamlets by which he passed he might be suddenly attacked by the Mexicans. As he marched on towards Chalco he saw many squadrons of Mexicans coming against him, and on a level plain, where there were large plantations of maize and magueys (the plant from which they extract the wine that they drink), they attacked him fiercely with darts, arrows, and stones from slings, and with long lances with which to kill the horses. When Sandoval saw such a host of warriors opposed to him, he cheered on his men and twice broke through the ranks of the enemy, and with the aid of the muskets and crossbows, and the few allies who had stayed with him, he defeated them, although they wounded five soldiers and six horses, and many of our allies. However, he had fallen on them so quickly and with such fury that he made them pay well for the

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damage they had first done. When the people of Chalco knew that Sandoval was near, they went out to receive him on the road with much honour and rejoicing. In that defeat eight Mexicans were taken prisoners, three of them chieftains of importance.

When all this had been done, Sandoval said that on the following day he wished to return to Texcoco, and the people of Chalco said they wanted to go with him to see and speak to Malinche and take with them the two sons of the Lord of that province who had died of small-pox a few days before, and before dying had charged all his chieftains and elders to take his sons to see the Captain, so that by his hand they might be installed Lords of Chalco, and that all should endeavour to become subjects of the Great King of the Teules, for it was quite true that his ancestors had told him that men with beards who came from the direction of the sunrise would govern these lands, and from what he had seen, we were those men.

Sandoval soon returned with all his army to Texcoco and took in his company the sons of the Lord of Chalco and the other chieftains, and the eight Mexican prisoners.

When Cortés knew of his arrival he was overjoyed, and when Sandoval had given an account of his journey, and how the Lords of Chalco had come with him, he went to his quarters. The Caciques presented themselves at once before Cortés, and, after having paid him every sign of respect, they told him of the willingness with which they would become vassals of His Majesty, as the father of these two youths had commanded them to do, [and begged] that they might receive the chieftainship from his hands. When they had made their speeches, they presented Cortés with rich jewels worth about two hundred pesos de oro. When Cortés thoroughly understood through our interpreters Doña Marina and Jerónimo de

Aguilar what they had said, he showed them much kindness and embraced them, and under his hand gave the Lordship of Chalco to the elder brother with more than the half of the subject pueblos, and those of Tlamanalco and Chimal he gave to the younger brother together with Ayotzingo and other subject pueblos. After Cortés had given much advice to the principal elders and to the newly appointed Caciques, they told him that they desired to return to their country, and that in everything they would serve His Majesty and us in his Royal name against the Mexicans, such having always been their wish, but owing to the Mexican garrisons which had been stationed in their province, they could not come earlier to render their fealty. They also gave Cortés news of two Spaniards who had been sent to that province for maize, before we had been driven out of Mexico, whom (so that the Culuans should not kill them) they had one night placed in safety among our friends at Huexotzingo, so that their lives were saved. We already knew about this some time before, for one of these men was he who went to Tlaxcala.

Cortés thanked them very sincerely for this, and begged them to wait in Texcoco for two days, as he was about to send a Captain to Tlaxcala, for the timber and planking, who would take them in his company, and conduct them to their country, so that the Mexicans should not attack them on the road; for this they thanked him greatly and went away well contented.

Let us stop talking about this and say how Cortés decided to send to Mexico the eight prisoners, whom Sandoval had captured in the rout at Chalco, to tell the Prince named Guatemoc, whom the Mexicans had then chosen as king, how greatly he desired to avoid being the cause of his ruin and that of so great a city; they should therefore sue for peace, and he would pardon

them for the losses and deaths we had suffered from them in the city, and would ask nothing from them, and he [Guatemoc] should remember that it is easy to remedy a war in the beginning but very difficult towards the middle and at the end, and that finally they would be destroyed; that he [Cortés] knew all about the ditches and the warlike preparations, and the store of darts and arrows, lances, broadswords, round stones and slings and all other warlike material which they were continually making and preparing, but it was a mere waste of time and useless for them to do it, and how could he [Guatemoc] desire all his people to be slain and his city destroyed? He [Guatemoc] should bear in mind the great power of our Lord God in whom we believe and whom we worship, and who always helps us, and he should always remember that all the pueblos in the neighbourhood were now on our side, that the Tlaxcalans had no wish but for war, in order to avenge treachery to, and the deaths of their compatriots. Let them lay down their arms and make peace, and he [Cortés] would promise the Mexicans that he would always treat them with great honour. Doña Marina and Aguilar made use of many other sound arguments and gave them good advice on the subject. Those eight Indians went before Guatemoc, but he refused to send any answer whatever, and went on making dykes and gathering stores, and sending to all the provinces an order that if any of us could be captured straying, we should be brought to Mexico to be sacrificed, and that when he sent to summon them, they should come at once with their arms, and he sent to remit and free them from much of their tribute, and even made them great promises.

Let us cease talking about the preparations for war that they were making in Mexico, and say how again many Indians came from the pueblos of Guautinchon

or Guaxuntlan¹ who had been wounded by the Mexicans because they had accepted our friendship, and on account of the disputes over the maize fields, which they had been accustomed to sow for the Mexican priests during the time when they were their dependents, as I have already explained in the Chapter that treats of it. As they were situated close to the Lake of Mexico, every week the Mexicans came and attacked them and even carried off some of them prisoners to the city. When Cortés heard this, he determined to go again himself with a hundred soldiers and twenty horsemen and twenty musketeers and crossbowmen, and he had good spies on the lookout to see when the Mexican troops were coming, so that he might be promptly informed. As the distance from Texcoco was only one or two leagues, on one Wednesday morning he arrived at dawn where the Mexican squadrons were posted, and he fought them in such a manner that they were soon broken up and took refuge in their canoes on the lake. Four Mexicans were killed there and three others were taken prisoners, and Cortés returned with his people to Texcoco. From that time forward the Culuans did not attack those pueblos any more. Let us leave this subject and say how Cortés sent Gonzalo de Sandoval to Tlaxcala for the timber and planking for the launches, and what happened to him on the road.

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¹ Coatlinchan.

CHAPTER CXL.

How Gonzalo de Sandoval went to Tlaxcala to fetch the timber for the launches, and what else he did on the road at a pueblo which we named the town of the Moors (el Pueblo Morisco).

AS we were always longing to get the launches finished, and to begin the blockade of Mexico our Captain Cortés, so as not to waste time to no purpose, ordered Gonzalo de Sandoval to go for the timber, and to take with him two hundred soldiers, twenty musketeers and crossbowmen, fifteen horsemen and a large company of Tlaxcalans as well as twenty chieftains from Texcoco ; also to take in his company the youths and the elders from Chalco and to place them in safety in their towns.

Before they set out Cortés established a friendship between the Tlaxcalans and the people of Chalco. Formerly the people of Chalco used to belong to the party and the confederation of the Mexicans, and when the Mexicans went to war against Tlaxcala they took people from Chalco to aid them, as they lived in that neighbourhood, and from that time the Tlaxcalans bore them ill will and treated them as enemies ; but, as I have said, here in Texcoco Cortés made them friends again, so that a great friendship continued between them, and from that time on they helped one another.

Cortés also ordered Gonzalo de Sandoval as soon as he had taken the people of Chalco to their homes, to go to a pueblo subject to Texcoco which was near by the road, to which we had given the name in our language of " El Pueblo Morisco " [the town of the Moors], because more than forty soldiers of the followers of Narvaez and some of our own men and many Tlaxcalans had been killed in that pueblo, and the people had also stolen three loads of gold, when we were turned out of Mexico