



BOOK XIV.

THE EXPEDITION TO HONDURAS.

CHAPTER CLXXIV.

How Hernando Cortés set out from Mexico on the road to Las Higueras in search of Cristóbal de Olid and Francisco de Las Casas and the other Captains, soldiers, and gentlemen whom he had sent there; and what Captains he took from Mexico to accompany him, and about the material and retinue he took with him as far as the town of Coatzacoalcos, and other things that happened.



WHEN some months had passed since Captain Hernando Cortés sent Francisco de Las Casas against Cristóbal de Olid, as stated in the last chapter, it seemed to him that perchance the armada he had dispatched had not been successful. Moreover he had been told that the land was rich in gold mines and for that reason he was as covetous about the mines as he was anxious about the contentions which might have arisen in the armada, taking into consideration the mischances that ill luck is wont to occasion on such journeys. As he was naturally of high courage he had repented

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having sent Francisco de Las Casas instead of going himself. However, he had no doubt that the man he had sent was strong enough to repel any offence.

Being of this way of thinking, he decided to set out himself, and he left behind in Mexico a good supply of artillery in the fortress as well as in the dockyards, and the Treasurer Alonzo de Estrada, and the Accountant Albornoz, as lieutenant governors in his place; and had he known about the letters which Albornoz had written, speaking evil of him to His Majesty in Castile, he would not have left him such authority and I do not yet understand how he happened to do so. He left as his principal Alcalde the Licentiate Zuazo, already mentioned by me, and, as lieutenant to the principal Alguacil and as Mayordomo of all his estate, his kinsman one Rodrigo de Paz. He left as large a garrison as he was able to do in Mexico.

He charged all these officers of the King's Treasury, on whom he left the burden of Government, to devote great care to the conversion of the natives, and he also impressed it on Fray Toribio Motolinia of the order of Señor San Francisco and other good ecclesiastics. With a view to preventing Mexico and the other provinces from revolting, and in order that they should remain peaceful and not be influenced by the more important Caciques, he carried with him the great Lord of Mexico named Guatemoc, often mentioned by me before, the same who made war on us when we captured Mexico, also the Lord of Tacuba and one Juan Velásquez, a Captain of the same Guatemoc, and many other chieftains—among them one Tapiezuelo, a chieftain of great importance; and he even brought other Caciques from Michuacan, and [he took with him] Doña Marina, the interpreter, for Gerónimo de Aguilar was already dead. He took in his company many gentlemen and Captains

who were settlers in Mexico, namely Gonzalo de Sandoval, who was chief Alguacil, and Luis Marin and Francisco Marmolejo, Gonzalo Rios de Ocampo and Pedro de Írcio, Avalos and Sayavedra who were brothers, and one Palacios Rubios and Pedro de Sauzedo the flat-nosed, Gerónimo Ruiz de la Mota, Alonzo de Grado, Santa Cruz Burgalés,¹ Pedro Solis Casquete, Juan Jaramillo, Alonzo Valiente, and one Navarrete, and one Serna, and Diego de Mazariegos, a cousin of the Treasurer, Gil Gonzáles de Benavides and Hernan López de Ávila and Gaspar de Garnica, and many others whose names I do not remember. He also took with him a priest and two Franciscan Friars, Flemings and great theologians, who preached during the journey. As Mayordomo he took one Carranza, and as Maestresala Juan de Xaso and one Rodrigo Mañuelo, and as Butler one Zervan Vejarano and as Chamberlain Fulano² de San Miguel, who was living in Oaxaca, and for Steward one Guinea, who was also a settler in Oaxaca. He took great services of gold and silver plate, and he who had charge of it was Tello de Medina. The chamberlain was a certain Salazar, a native of Madrid, and the doctor a Licentiate Pedro López, who was a settler in Mexico, and the Master Surgeon Diego de Pedraza, and many others as pages, one of them being Don Francisco de Montejo, who was in after time Captain in Yucatan (I am not speaking of the Adelantado his father); besides two lance pages, one of them named Puebla, and eight grooms and two falconers named Perales and Garci Caro and Alvaro Montañez. He also brought five players on the oboe, sackbut and dulcimer,

¹ Of Burgos?

² It has been thought best to retain the term "Fulano," as it is not easily translated. The term is Arabic in origin, and means "such a one," "so and so," and is used when the first name is not known, or not worth mentioning.

and an acrobat and another who did sleight of hand tricks and worked puppets, and as equerry Gonzalo Rodríguez de Ocampo; also some mules with three Spanish Muleteers, and a great herd of swine, which fed along the roadside. The Caciques whom I have named were accompanied by over three thousand armed Mexican Indians, and many others who were the servants of those Caciques.

When [the expedition] was on the point of setting out, the Factor Salazar and the Veedor Chirinos, who were to remain in Mexico, seeing that Cortés had assigned no office to them, nor treated them with as much consideration as they expected, decided to become very friendly with the Licentiate Zuazo and Rodrigo de Paz and all the old conquistadores who were friends of Cortés and remained behind in Mexico. All of them together made a petition to Cortés that he should not leave Mexico, but stay and govern the country, and they pointed out to him that the whole of New Spain might revolt, and over this arose long discussions and replies between Cortés and those who made the petition, and when they could not convince him that he should remain, the Factor and Veedor said that they wished to serve him and accompany him as far as Coatzacoalcos as his road passed through that town.

Having set out from Mexico in the way I have related, I wish to record that the great reception and fiestas which they gave Cortés in all the towns he passed through were wonderful, and moreover there joined him on the road fifty more soldiers and other stray persons newly arrived from Castile.

Cortés ordered the expedition to proceed by two separate roads as far as Coatzacoalcos, for had all gone together there would not have been enough food.

As they went their way, the Factor Gonzalo de Salazar

and the Veedor performed a thousand services for Cortés, especially the Factor, who, when Cortés spoke to him, doffed his cap to the ground, with many deep bows and suave speeches, evincing great friendship, and with lofty eloquence continually advised him to return to Mexico and not to engage in such a long and laborious journey, placing before him the many obstacles [in the way] and even sometimes so as to humour him, he sang as he went along the road, saying in his songs :

Ay tio volvamosnos	Let us go back Uncle
Ay tio volvamosnos	Let us go back Uncle
Questa mañana he visto	This morning I have seen
Una señal muy mala	A very bad omen
Ay tio volvamosnos	Let us go back Uncle.

and Cortés answered in song :

Adelante mi sobrino	Forward my nephew
Adelante mi sobrino	Forward my nephew
Y no creays en agueros	And do not believe in auguries
Que sea lo que Dios quisiere	It will be as God wills
Adelante mi sobrino	Forward my nephew.

Let us cease talking about the Factor and his courteous and suave speeches, and I will relate how, on the journey, at the pueblo of one Ojeda the squint-eyed, near another pueblo named Orizaba, Juan Jaramillo was married in presence of all to Doña Marina the interpreter. Let us go on and I will relate how they continued their march towards Coatzacoalcos and arrived at a large pueblo called Guaspaltepec in the encomienda of Sandoval. When we knew in Coatzacoalcos that Cortés was coming with so many gentlemen, we went out with the Chief Alcalde, the Captains, and all the municipality, a distance of thirty-three leagues to receive Cortés and give him welcome, as though we were about to receive favours from him. This I state here, so that interested

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readers and others may see that Cortés was so greatly esteemed as well as feared, that now nothing was done except what he wished, were it good or bad.

From Guaspaltepec he marched to our town, and at a great river that he passed on the way he began to meet with misfortune, for in crossing it two canoes were overturned and he lost some plate and clothes, and Juan Jaramillo lost the half of his baggage, and nothing could be recovered because the river was full of great alligators. From there we went to a pueblo named Uluta, and we accompanied him thence to Coatzacoalcos through inhabited country all the way.

I wish to mention the large collection of canoes which we had ordered to be in readiness, tied together two and two, at the great river near to the town, for they numbered over three hundred; and the grand reception that we gave him, with triumphal arches and dances of Christians and Moors and other great rejoicings and cunning diversions, and we lodged him as well as we were able—both Cortés and all those he brought in his company—and he stayed there for six days.

All this time the Factor kept on saying to him that he ought to turn back from his journey, that he ought to bear in mind to whom it was that he had delegated his authority, that he [the Factor] held the Accountant to be very rebellious and double dealing and a friend of innovations, and that the Treasurer boasted that he was a son of the Catholic King and that he [the Factor] did not think well of certain doings and conversations, and had noticed that they were conversing in secret after Cortés had placed them in power and even before. In addition to this Cortés had already received, while on the journey, letters from Mexico speaking evil of the Government of those he had left in authority, and the friends of the Factor had informed him of this, and

speaking on this subject the Factor said to Cortés that he and the Veedor, who was there present, would know how to govern as well as those he (Cortés) had left behind in Mexico; they professed themselves his most obedient servants and they spoke such honied words, with such affectionate expression, that they induced him to confer on [them], the Factor and the Veedor Chirinos, power to act as Governors, under condition that, should they see that Estrada and Albornoz were not doing what they ought to do for the service of our Lord and His Majesty, they were to be the sole governors. These powers were the cause of many troubles and revolts which took place in Mexico, as I will relate further on after I have finished the next four chapters, and our very laborious journey. Until that journey is ended and we are stationed at a town called Trujillo I will not relate in my story anything that happened in Mexico.

I wish to mention that for this reason Gonzalo de Ocampo said in his defamatory libels: "Oh fat brother Salazar maker of quarrels, you deceived the Prior with your false show of reverence. A Friar of holy life told me to beware of a man who spoke such polished rhetoric."

Let us cease speaking about libels and I will state that when the Factor and Veedor took leave of Cortés on returning to Mexico, it was with many compliments and embraces, and the Factor had a way of sobbing which made it appear as though he must weep at saying good-bye; but he carried his commission in his breast in such a manner as to draw attention to it, and the Secretary named Alonzo Valiente, who was his friend, had drawn it up in the way that he wished it to be worded.

They returned to Mexico, and with them returned Hernan López de Ávila, who was ill with pain and crippled with boils.

Let them go on their journey, for I will not touch in this present story on the great tumults and discords which arose in Mexico, until their proper time and place. From the time when all these gentlemen I have mentioned, and many others, had joined Cortés and we set out from Coatzacoalcos, until we accomplished this laborious journey, we [continually] risked losing our lives as I will relate further on; but as two sets of events happened at the same time and I do not wish to break the thread of one in order to speak of the other I have decided to go on with our most laborious journey.

CHAPTER CLXXV.

What Cortés arranged after the Factor and Veedor returned to Mexico, and about the hardships we endured on our long journey, and about the great bridges we made and the hunger we suffered during the two years and three months that we spent on the journey.¹

AFTER despatching the Factor and Veedor to Mexico, the first thing Cortés decided was to write to Villa Rica, to his Mayordomo named Simon de Cuenca, to lade two vessels of small burden with maize biscuits (for at that time Mexico did not produce wheat) and six pipes of wine, oil and vinegar, and bacon, and horse shoes and other kinds of supplies, and ordered them to go coasting along towards the North, saying that he would write to him and inform him where to make port, and that Simon de Cuenca himself should go as Captain. Then he ordered all of us settlers of Coatzacoalcos to accompany himself and only the infirm to remain behind. I have already stated that this town was settled by the Conquistadores who had been longest in Mexico, and by all the best born among those who had taken part in

¹ For the route traversed see Appendix A.

the late victories in Mexico, and at the time when we should have been resting from our great labours, and endeavouring to acquire some wealth and estates, he ordered us to go a journey of more than five hundred leagues, with all the country through which we passed up in arms [against us], while all we possessed was given up as lost, and we were on that march more than two years and three months.

To go back to my story, we were all of us ready with our arms and horses, for we did not dare to say no (and when anyone did say so, he made him go by force,) and we numbered in all, those from Coatzacoalcos as well as those from Mexico, over two hundred and fifty soldiers—one hundred and thirty horsemen and the others musketeers and crossbowmen—without counting many other soldiers newly arrived from Castile.

He promptly ordered me to go as Captain of thirty Spaniards and three thousand Mexican Indians to some pueblos which were at war with us, named Cimatan,¹ and quartered the three thousand Mexican Indians on them; but, should the natives of that province be peaceable or come to render service to His Majesty, I was to do them no harm and put no pressure on them, beyond ordering them to feed these people. But if they did not wish to come [to peace], that I should summon them three times to make peace in a way they should fully understand, and in presence of a notary who accompanied me and witnesses. That if they would not then come in, I was to make war on them, and for this he gave me authority and instructions which I still possess to-day, signed with his name and that of his Secretary Alonzo Valiente.

¹ According to Melchior Alfaro Sta. Cruz, the Cimatanes were a Mexican people settled there by Montezuma, who held Cimatan and Xicalango as outposts of his empire (cf. *Relaciones de Yucatan*, vol. i, p. 352).

So I made that journey as he had ordered it, the pueblos keeping the peace, but a few months later, when they saw how few Spaniards remained in Coatzacoalcos and that we Conquistadores had gone with Cortés, they again rose in revolt.

I promptly set out with my Spanish soldiers and Mexican Indians for the pueblo whither Cortés had ordered me to go, which was named Iquinuapa.

Let us now return to Cortés and his journey. He set out from Coatzacoalcos and went to Tonalá, a distance of eight leagues, and at once crossed a river in canoes and went to another pueblo named Ayagualulco, and crossed another river in canoes, and from Ayagualulco at a distance of seven leagues he crossed an estuary flowing to the sea, and they made him a bridge half a quarter of a league in length. It was a marvellous thing how they made it in the estuary, but Cortés always sent ahead two Captains from among the settlers at Coatzacoalcos, one of these was named Francisco de Medina, a quick-witted man, who thoroughly understood how to manage the natives of this country.

Beyond that great bridge he went through some small pueblos before arriving at another great river called Maçapa, which is the river coming from Chiapas, called by the sailors the Rio de dos Bocas.¹ There he had many canoes, tied together two and two, and after crossing that river he went on to other pueblos whither I had set out with my company of soldiers, which as I have stated was called Iquinuapa.² After that he crossed another river on bridges, which we made of timber, and then an estuary, and arrived at another large town named Copilco ;

¹ The river with two mouths.

² Bernal Díaz was instructed to meet Cortés at Iquinuapa, but Cortés makes no mention of that Pueblo, and Bernal Díaz probably passed on to meet Cortés at Copilco.

from that point begins the province which they call La Chontalpa, which was all thickly peopled and full of orchards of Cacao and quite peaceful.

From Copilco we passed through Nacajuca¹ and arrived at Zaguatan, and on the road crossed another river in canoes. There Cortés lost certain horse-shoes. When we arrived at this town we found it peaceful, and then during the night the inhabitants went fleeing from it and crossed to the other side of a great river, all among swamps. Cortés ordered us to go and search for them in the woods, and that which he ordered was very inconsiderate and profitless.

The soldiers who went on the search crossed the river with the greatest difficulty and brought back seven chieftains and some common people, but it profited us little, for they quickly took to flight again and we were left alone without guides.

At that time the Caciques from Tabasco arrived with fifty canoes laden with maize and provisions, and there also came some Indians from the pueblos in the encomienda that I held at that time, named Teapa and Tecomajiaca,² bringing canoes laden with supplies. Then we went on our way to other pueblos named Tepetitan and Istapa, and on the road there was a river of great volume called Chilapa, and we spent four days in making rafts. I told Cortés that I had heard say that up stream was a town called Chilapa, which is the same name as that of the river, and that it would be as well to send [to that town], in a broken canoe which we had found, five of the Indians whom we had brought with us as guides, and to send word [to the people of Chilapa] to bring canoes. Cortés gave orders accordingly, and a

¹ Nacaxuxuyca, in the original.

² Tecomajayaca.

soldier went with the five Indians, and as they went up the river they met two Caciques who were bringing six large canoes and supplies, and with those canoes and the rafts we got across, and we were occupied four days over the passage. Thence we went to Tepetitan which we found deserted and the houses burnt down, and, as we then learnt, other pueblos had made war on it a few days before and had carried off many captives and burned the pueblo.

The whole of the road we traversed during the three days after crossing the river Chilapa was very boggy and the horses sank in the mud up to their girths, and there were some very large toads there. Thence we marched to another town named Istapa, and the Indians fled through fear of us and crossed to the other side of a very rapid river, and we went in search of them and we brought in the Caciques and many Indians with their wives and children, and Cortés spoke caressingly to them and ordered that four Indian women and three men whom we had captured in the forest should be given up to them, and in payment for this and quite willingly they brought and presented to Cortés some pieces of gold of small value.

We stayed in this pueblo for three days, for there was good forage there for the horses and plenty of maize, and Cortés said that it would be a good place to found a town, for we received information that there were good villages in the neighbourhood for the service of such a town.

In this pueblo of Istapa Cortés learned from the Caciques and native merchants all about the road we had to follow, and he even showed them a hennequen cloth which he brought from Coatzacoalcos, on which all the pueblos we should pass on the way were marked as far as Gueacalá, which in their language means the great

Acalá, for there is another pueblo which they call Acalá the Less. There [in Istapa] they told us that all the rest of our journey led across many rivers and great estuaries, and that before reaching another pueblo named Tamastepec¹ we should meet three more rivers and a great estuary, and that we should be three days on the road. When Cortés knew this and learnt about the rivers he asked all the Caciques to go and build bridges and provide canoes, but they did not do it. So with toasted maize and other vegetables we made provision for three days, believing what they told us. However, it was [merely] to get us out of their houses that they said the journey would be no longer, for it took seven days, and we found the rivers unbridged and no canoes, and we had to build a bridge of very thick timbers to enable the horses to pass, and all of us soldiers and Captains went off to cut wood and haul it, and the Mexicans helped all they could. We were three days building it and had nothing to eat but herbs, and some roots of what in this country they call wild quequexque,² which burned our tongues and mouths.

When we had crossed that estuary we found no road and we had to open one with our swords in our hands, and we travelled for two days along this road we had opened, thinking that it would lead us straight to a pueblo, until one morning we turned back into this same road which we had opened, and when Cortés saw this he was like to burst with rage; moreover he heard the murmur of evil things which they said of him and of his journey, on account of the great hunger we endured, and that he only looked to [the satisfaction of] his own appetite without

¹ Cortés calls this pueblo Tatahuitapan and says Tamastepec is another name for Tepititan.

² Quequexque = ichintal, the root of the huisquil. (Sechium Edule?)

sufficient forethought, and that it was far better for us to turn back than all to die of hunger.

There was, moreover, another consideration, the forest was so excessively high and thick we could seldom see the sky, and, when they attempted to climb some of the trees in order to survey the country, they could see nothing at all, so dense was the forest, and two of the guides we had brought with us fled, and the one who remained was so ill that he could explain nothing about the road or any other matter. As Cortés was always prompt and was not careless from wanting in anxiety, we had with us a compass and a pilot named Pero López, and, with the plan on the cloth he brought from Coatzacoalcos on which the pueblos were marked, he ordered us to follow the compass through the forest, and with our swords we opened a road towards the east, which was where the pueblo was marked on the cloth, and Cortés even said that if we did not reach an inhabited place next day, he did not know what we should do, and many of us soldiers and all the others wanted to return to New Spain. Still we followed our direction through the forest, and it pleased God that we should find some trees which had been felled long ago and then a small pathway, and I and the pilot Pero López, who were going in front opening the road with some other soldiers, returned to tell Cortés to cheer up, as there were some farms, at which all our army expressed great content, but before reaching the habitations there was a river, which we crossed with very great difficulty in all haste, and came on a pueblo which had been deserted that very day, and there we found plenty to eat, both maize and beans and other vegetables, and as we were almost dead with hunger we had a real gorge and even the horses recovered, and for all this we gave many thanks to God.

The Juggler we brought with us, whom I have already

mentioned, and three other Spaniards who had lately come from Spain, had died on the road, as well as some of the Mechuacan and Mexican Indians, and many others fell ill and remained on the road in despair.

As the pueblo was deserted and we had no interpreter nor anyone to act as guide, Cortés ordered two companies to go through the forest and the farms to search for the inhabitants, and other soldiers went in some canoes which they found on the great river which flowed near the pueblo, and came upon many of the inhabitants of the pueblo, and with soft speeches and flatteries induced more than thirty of them and nearly all the Caciques and priests to come in. When Cortés spoke to them amicably through Doña Marina, they brought much maize and poultry and pointed out the road we had to follow to another pueblo named Ciguatepecad, which was distant three days' march, about sixteen leagues. Before reaching it there was another small pueblo subject to this Temastepeque from whence we set out.

Before I go on any further I wish to say that on account of the great hunger we endured, both Spaniards and Mexicans, it appears that certain Mexican Caciques had seized two or three Indians in the pueblos which we had left behind us, and had brought them along concealed [from us], as they carried burdens and were clothed as they were.

Then, on account of the hunger they endured on the march, they killed them and baked them in ovens made for the purpose in the ground with stones, as they had been accustomed to do in their time in Mexico, and they ate them, and in the same way they had seized the two guides we had brought with us who had fled, and they ate them.

When Cortés came to hear of it, on the advice of Guatemoc he ordered the Mexican Caciques to be called

before him and scolded them badly, and said that if it happened again he would punish them, and one of the Franciscan Friars we had brought with us, already mentioned by me, preached many holy and good words to them, and when he had finished his sermon, Cortés ordered one Mexican Indian to be burnt as punishment for the death of the Indians they had eaten, although he knew that all were guilty of it, so that he should appear to be doing justice, as though he did not know of the other culprits beside the one he burned.

I must refrain from telling in full all the many other hardships we endured, and how the players on the oboes, sacbuts and dulcimers, whom Cortés had brought with him, as I have already recorded, and who were accustomed to dainties in Castille, and knew nothing of hardships and had fallen ill through hunger, made no music, excepting one of them, and all the soldiers cursed the sound of it and we said it was like foxes and jackals howling and it would be better to have maize to eat than music.

To go back to my story, I must say that many persons have asked me how was it that enduring as much hunger as I have stated, we did not eat the herd of swine they brought for Cortés, for the necessity of hunger has no laws, even had they been [reserved] for the king, and that when Cortés saw the hunger we were enduring he would on such an occasion order them to be divided among us all. To this I answer that one who had come as Steward and Mayordomo to Cortés, named Guinea, a double dealer, had already spread a report and caused it to be believed that when crossing the rivers they had been eaten by the sharks and alligators, and in order that we should not see them they were always left behind four days' journey in the rear. Moreover, for as many soldiers as we were the whole of them would

not have sufficed for one day, and this is the reason we did not eat them, besides there was the fear of angering Cortés.

Let us leave this talk and I will relate that in all the pueblos and roads we passed we left crosses placed wherever there were good trees to cut them on, especially Ceibas,¹ on which the crosses remain [clearly] defined and are more permanent when cut on those trees than when made of timber, for the bark grows and the crosses remain perfect. Then we left notices in places where they could be read, and in these it was stated "Cortés passed by here at such a time" and this was done so that if others should come in search of us they might know that we had gone on ahead.

To return to our march to Ciguatpecad, we had with us over twenty Indians from that pueblo of Temastepeque, and they helped us to cross the rivers on rafts and in canoes; moreover they went as messengers to tell the Caciques of the pueblo whither we were going not to have any fear, as we would do them no harm whatever, so many of them remained in their houses, and what happened there I will relate further on.

CHAPTER CLXXVI.

How we had arrived at the town of Ciguatpecad and how he [Cortés] sent Francisco de Medina to meet Simon de Cuenca and proceed with the two vessels already mentioned by me to Triunfo de la Cruz or to the Golfo Dulce, and what else happened.

WHEN we arrived at the town I have mentioned, Cortés cajoled the Caciques and chieftains and gave them good Chalchihuites from Mexico, and asked where the large

¹ Cottonwood (*Bombax Ceiba*).

and rapid river flowed to which ran near the town, and they told him that it ended in some lagoons where stood a pueblo named Gueatasta and near to it was another large pueblo called Xicalango. It occurred to Cortés at once to send two Spaniards in canoes to the north coast to find out about Captain Simon de Cuenca and his two ships which he had ordered to be laden with provisions for the journey I have spoken about, and he wrote to him informing him about our hardships and telling him to go on ahead along the coast, and, after having clearly informed him how he could reach the townships I have mentioned by that river, he despatched the two Spaniards of whom the more important was Francisco de Medina, often named by me before. He gave him authority as Captain jointly with Simon de Cuenca, because Medina was very active and spoke the language of the country, and he was the soldier who caused the revolt of the pueblo of Chamula when we went with Luis Marin to the conquest of Chiapas, as I have related in the Chapter which speaks of it. It would have been better had Cortés never given him that authority, on account of what afterwards happened, which was that he went down the river to where Simon de Cuenca was stationed with his two ships at Xicalango, awaiting news of Cortés, and after delivering Cortés's letters, presented his commission as Captain ; and over the right to command, disputes arose between the two Captains so that they came to blows, and owing to their siding with one or the other all the Spaniards in the ship lost their lives except six or seven.

When the Indians of Xicalango and Gueyatasta saw this strife they fell on these latter and killed them all and burned the ships. However, we knew nothing of this until two years and a half later, and I will stop talking about it and return to the town where we were stationed, named Ciguatepecad, and tell how the Indian

Chieftains told Cortés it was three days journey thence to Gueyacalá, and that there were two rivers to cross on the way and one of them was very deep and broad, and then there were some bad bogs and great swamps, and that unless he had canoes he could not get the horses across, nor even a single soldier of his army. Cortés promptly sent two soldiers, with three Indian Chieftains from the pueblo to show them the road, to examine the river and swamps and see how we could cross, and bring a full report. The two soldiers whom he sent were Martin García the Valencian, the Alguacil of our army, and Pedro de Ribera. Martin García, to whom Cortés gave the principal charge, saw the rivers and with some small canoes which they had in this same river he examined it and saw that by making bridges it would be possible to cross it; however, he did not take the trouble to examine the bad swamps a league beyond, but returned to Cortés and told him that by making bridges they would be able to cross, believing that the swamps were not as difficult as we afterwards found them to be.

Cortés promptly ordered me and one Gonzalo Mexia, whom we nicknamed Rapapelo¹ [the Barber], to go with some chieftains from Ciguatpecad to the towns of Acalá and coax the Caciques, and by pleasant speeches persuade them not to flee, because that settlement of Acalá was composed of more than twenty small pueblos on the main land and others on islands. We did all the journey in canoes by rivers and lagoons, and we took with us the three Indians from Ciguatpecad as guides, and the first night we slept on the road they ran away from us, for they did not dare to go with us, for, as we afterwards learnt, they [the people of Acalá] were their enemies and

¹ Blotted out in the original: "because he was the grandson of a Captain who went robbing in company of a certain Zenteno in the time of King Don Juan."

they were at war with one another. So we had to go forward without guides, and crossing the swamps with difficulty reached the first pueblo of Acalá, and although the people were excited and inclined to be hostile, with friendly speeches and the gift of some beads we cajoled them and begged them to go to Ciguatpecad to see Malinche and take him food. It appears that at the time we arrived this pueblo had heard no news of the coming of Cortés with a large following of horsemen as well as of Mexicans, and next day, when they heard reports through Indian merchants of the great force which Cortés was bringing, the Caciques [then] showed greater willingness to send supplies than [they did] when we arrived, and said that when he should come the pueblos would serve him and do what they were able towards supplying food, but as for going to where he was stationed they did not wish to go because [the people there] were their enemies. While we were engaged in such conversation with the Caciques, two Spaniards arrived with the letters from Cortés, in which he ordered us to set out from thence with all the provisions we could collect, and march back for three days along the road, because all the people of the pueblo at which we had left him had abandoned it and gone away; and he informed me that he was already on his way to Acalá and had brought no maize and could not procure any, and that I should make every effort to prevent the Caciques from making off.

The Spaniards who brought the letter told me that Cortés had sent four Spaniards—three of them men newly arrived from Castile—up the river from Ciguatpecad to ask for supplies from the other pueblos which were said to be near at hand, and that they had not returned and it was believed that they had been killed, and this turned out to be true.

Let us return to Cortés, who began his march and in

two days reached the great river which I have already mentioned, and at once worked hard at building a bridge—and it was built with such toil, and with such huge and thick timbers, that after it was made the Indians of Acalá marvelled to see the timbers so placed. It took four days in the making. When Cortés started with all his soldiers from the pueblo already mentioned by me many times, they brought neither maize nor [other] provisions and during the four days that we remained in the pueblo while Cortés was building the bridge, there were deaths from hunger, although some of the old soldiers supported themselves by felling some lofty trees which appeared to be palm trees and had fruit which looked like very thick-shelled nuts, these they roasted and broke open and ate. Let us stop talking about the hunger and say that the very night on which they finished the bridge I and my three companions arrived with one hundred and thirty loads of maize and eighty fowls, and honey and beans, salt and eggs and fruits. Although I came at night time, and it was already dark, nearly all the soldiers were watching for the food, for they already knew that I had gone to fetch it, and Cortés had said to his Captains and soldiers that he had hope in God that they would soon all have something to eat as I had gone to Acalá to bring it, if the Indians had not killed me as they had killed the four other Spaniards he had sent out.

So as I arrived with the maize and provisions at the bridge when it was night time, the soldiers fell on it and seized it all and left nothing at all for Cortés and his Captains. There were shouts of "Leave this, for it is for the Captain Cortés," so too his Mayordomo Carranza (for so he was called) and the steward Guinea cried out, grasping the maize in their arms and saying that they must leave at least one load for them, but as it was night time the soldiers told him "You and Cortés have

been eating fat pigs” and they did not mind a bit what was said, but seized all of it. When Cortés heard how they had seized it and left nothing for him he cursed with impatience and stamped his foot, and was so furious that he said he would make enquiry who had taken it, and they told him what was said about the pigs, and when he saw and reflected that his anger was useless and merely “lifting up his voice in the wilderness” he ordered me to be called, and asked me very angrily why I had not guarded the provisions better. I replied that His Excellency should have endeavoured to send guards ahead to take charge of them, but that even had he himself been in charge of them they would have been seized, for God preserve him from hunger which respects no laws. When he saw that matters could not be mended, and he was in great need [of food], he flattered me with honeyed words in the presence of Captain Gonzalo de Sandoval and said :—“Oh Señor and brother Bernal Días del Castillo, for love of me, if you have left anything hidden on the road share it with me. I have great belief in your forethought, and that you have brought something for yourself and for your friend Sandoval.” When I heard his words and noted the way in which he spoke them, I was sorry for him, and Sandoval also said to me, “I swear that I too have not a handful of maize with which to make Cazalote.” Then I thought it over and said that it would be all right, and to-night towards dawn when the camp was asleep we would go for twelve loads of maize and twenty fowls and three jars of honey and beans and salt, and the two Indian women who had been given to me in those pueblos to make bread, but we must go by night lest the provisions be snatched from us on the road, and I would divide the food between His Excellency and Sandoval and myself and my people. Cortés was freed

from anxiety and he embraced me, and Sandoval said that he wished to go with me that night for the food; so we brought it and their hunger was appeased, and I also gave Sandoval one of the Indian women. All this I call to mind so that it may be understood what hardships Captains go through in new countries, and that even for Cortés, who was so greatly feared, they [his followers] left no maize to eat, and that the Captain Sandoval went with me himself to bring his share of the food, and would trust no one else, although he had many soldiers whom he could have sent.

Let us cease talking about the great labour in building the bridge, and of the hunger we went through, and I will tell how at the distance of a league we came on the very bad swamps already mentioned, and they were of such a nature that they could not attempt to place timber or branches or employ other devices to enable the horses to pass, and they sank in the mire of the great swamps until their whole bodies were submerged, and we thought that not one would escape, but all would be left there dead. Still we persisted in going forward, because about half a crossbow shot ahead there was firm ground and a good road, and we made a passage through this swamp of mud and water, which they got through without too much difficulty although at times they were half swimming in that swamp and water. As soon as we reached dry land we gave thanks to God for it, and Cortés promptly ordered me to return in haste to Acalá and impress strongly on the Caciques that they should keep the peace, and should at once send provisions along the road. This I did, and the very day that I arrived at Acalá I sent by night three Spaniards who accompanied me with over one hundred Indians laden with maize and other things. And when Cortés sent me for this purpose I said to

him that he should take care that His Excellency in person should take charge of the food, so that it should not be seized as on the last occasion; this he did, and went ahead together with Sandoval and Luis Marin and took possession of all of it and divided it up, and the next day about midday they reached Acalá, and the Caciques went to bid him welcome and carried food to him, and I will leave them there and will relate what else happened.

CHAPTER CLXXVII.

What Cortés attended to after reaching Acalá, and how, in another pueblo further ahead, subject to this same Acalá, he ordered Guatemoc the Great Cacique of Mexico, and another Cacique, the lord of Tacuba, to be hanged, and the reason why he did it, and other things that happened.

WHEN Cortés had arrived at Gueyacala—for so it is called—the Caciques of that pueblo approached him peaceably and he spoke to them through Doña Marina the interpreter in such a way that to all appearance they were satisfied, and Cortés gave them articles from Spain, and they brought maize and provisions, and then he ordered all the Caciques to be summoned and asked them for information about the road we had to take, and questioned them whether they knew of other men with beards like us and with horses, and whether they had seen ships sailing on the sea. They replied that eight days' journey from there were many men with beards, and women from Castile, and horses and three Acales, for in their language they call ships Acales. Cortés was delighted to hear this news, and, on asking about the pueblos and the road along which we must go, they brought it to him all drawn on some cloths, even to

the rivers and swamps and miry places, and he begged them to build bridges over the rivers and to bring canoes, for they had numerous followers and there were populous villages. The Caciques replied that because there were more than twenty pueblos, most of which would not obey them, especially certain pueblos situated between some rivers, it was necessary for Cortés at once to send some of his Teules (for so they called the soldiers) to make them bring maize and other things, and order them to obey them [the Caciques], for they were their subjects.

When Cortés understood this, he at once summoned a certain Diego de Mazariegos (a cousin of the Treasurer Alonzo de Estrada who was left as governor in Mexico) and in order that he might see and understand that he (Cortés) held him in great esteem, he honoured him by sending him as Captain against those pueblos and others in the neighbourhood, and when he despatched him he told him secretly that as he did not well understand the ways of the country, being newly arrived from Castile, and had not so much experience in dealing with Indians, he should take me in his company and not swerve from what I advised. This he did, and I should not write this in my story so that I might appear to boast of it, and I would not write it down but that it was made known throughout the camp, and later on I have even seen it engrossed in certain letters and reports which Cortés wrote to His Majesty informing him of all that happened during this journey in the Indies, and for this reason I write it down.

To return to my story, we started with Mazariegos, a company of eighty soldiers in canoes which the Caciques gave us, and when we arrived at the villages, all with the utmost willingness gave us of what they possessed, and we brought back over one hundred canoes with maize

and supplies, and fowls, honey and salt, and ten Indian women whom they held as slaves, and the Caciques came to see Cortés. So the whole camp had plenty to eat, and within four days nearly all the Caciques took to flight and only three of the guides remained with whom we set out on the road.

We crossed two rivers, one on bridges which promptly broke down on our crossing them, and the other on rafts, and we went to another pueblo subject to Acalá, which was already abandoned, and there we searched for food which had been hidden away in the forest.

Let us cease talking about our hardships and journey and I will relate how Guatemoc the great Cacique of Mexico, and other Mexican chieftains who accompanied us, had been deliberating or had arranged to kill us all and return to Mexico, and when they had reached their city to unite all their great forces and attack those [Spaniards] who remained in Mexico.

Those who made this known to Cortés were two great Caciques named Tápia and Juan Velásquez: this Juan Velásquez was Guatemoc's Captain-General when they were fighting us in Mexico. When this came to the knowledge of Cortés he had the evidence taken down [in writing] not only of the two who revealed the plot, but of other Caciques who were involved in it. What they confessed was, that as they saw us travelling over the roads carelessly and discontentedly, and many soldiers suffering from illness, and that food was always wanting, and that the four players on the oboe, and the acrobat, and eleven or twelve soldiers, had already died of hunger; and three other soldiers had fled back on the way to Mexico and had taken their chance of a state of war along the road by which we had come, and preferred to die rather than continue the advance; it would be a favourable opportunity to attack us when

we were crossing some river or swamp, for the Mexicans numbered three thousand, bearing arms and lances, and some of them had swords. Guatemoc confessed that it was as the others had said, but the plot was not hatched by him, and he did not know if they were all privy to it or would bring it to pass, that he never thought to carry it out but only [joined in] the talk there was about it. The Cacique of Tacuba stated that he and Guatemoc had said that it were better to die once for all than die every day on the journey, considering how their followers and kinsmen were suffering famine.

Without awaiting further proofs Cortés ordered Guatemoc and his cousin the Lord of Tacuba to be hanged; and before they were hanged the Franciscan Friars aided them and commended them to God through the interpreter Doña Marina.

When they were about to hang him, Guatemoc said "Oh! Malinche I have long known that you meant to kill me and I have understood your false speeches for you kill me unjustly, and God will call you to account for it, for I did not do myself justice when you delivered yourself to me [into my hands] in my city of Mexico." The Lord of Tacuba said that death was welcome, dying as he did with his Lord Guatemoc. Before they were hanged the Franciscan Friars confessed them through the interpreter Doña Marina.

In truth I grieved keenly for Guatemoc and his cousin, having known them as such great lords, and they had even done me honour during the journey when occasion offered, especially in giving me Indians to bring forage for my horse, and this death which they suffered very unjustly was considered wrong by all those who were with us.

Let us turn to continue our march, which we did with the greatest caution from fear lest the Mexicans seeing

their chieftains hanged, should rise in revolt; however, they were bearing such sufferings through hunger and sickness that they could give no thought to it. After the chieftains had been hanged as I have related, we at once continued our march towards another small pueblo, and before entering it we passed a deep river on rafts and found the town uninhabited, for the people had fled that day. We searched for food among the farms and we found eight Indians who were priests of Idols, and they willingly returned to their pueblo with us. Cortés told them through Doña Marina to summon the inhabitants and to have no fear, but to bring us food. They replied to Cortés begging him to give orders that no one should go near some Idols, which were close to a house where Cortés was lodged, and they would bring food and do all they were able. Cortés told them he would do what they requested and nothing should happen to the Idols, but “why did they care for such Idols which were made of clay and old wood for they were evil things which deceived them?” and he preached such [convincing] things through the Friars and Doña Marina, that they replied favourably to what he said, and [declared] they would abandon them, and they brought twenty loads of maize and some fowls.

Cortés then asked them how many days journey from there were there men with beards like us, and they replied seven days journey, and that the pueblo where the men with horses lived was called Nito, and that they would go as guides as far as the next pueblo, but we should have to sleep one night in an uninhabited country before reaching it.

Cortés ordered them to make a cross on a very large tree called a Ceiba which stood near the houses where they had their Idols.

I also wish to say that Cortés was in a bad humour,

and even very regretful and discontented at the hardships of the journey we had undertaken, and because of having ordered Guatemoc and his cousin the Lord of Tacuba to be hanged, and at the daily hunger, and the sickness and death of so many Mexicans, and it appears that he did not rest at night through thinking about it, but got up from his bed where he slept to walk about in a room where the Idols stood, which was the principal apartment of that small pueblo where they kept other Idols, and he was careless and fell. It was a fall of more than twice the height of a man and he injured his head, but he kept quiet and said nothing about it only tended the wound and endured and suffered it all. The next day very early in the morning we began to march with our guides without anything happening worth recording, and slept by a lagoon near some forests, and the next day we continued our march and about the time of high mass arrived at a new pueblo, and its inhabitants had deserted it that same day and taken refuge in some swamps. The houses had been newly built only a few days before, and in the town were many barricades of thick beams and all surrounded by other beams of great strength, and there were deep ditches in front of the entrance, and inside two fences, one like a barbican with towers and loopholes, and in one part in place of a fence were some very lofty rocks full of stones fashioned by hand, with great breastworks, and on the other side was a great swamp which was [as good as] a fortress.

When we entered the houses we found so many turkeys and fowls cooked in the way the Indians eat them, with chili peppers and maize cakes—which among them are called 'tamales'—that on the one hand we wondered at so novel an event, and on the other we were delighted at the plentiful food. We also found a large house full of small lances and arrows, and we searched the neighbour-

hood of that town for maize plantations and people, but found none, not even a grain of maize.

While we were thus situated, fifteen Indians approached from the swamps and they were the chieftains of that town, and they placed their hands on the ground and kissed the earth and said, half weeping, to Cortés, that they begged as a favour that he would not allow anything in the pueblo to be burned, because they were but newly arrived there and had to fortify it on account of their enemies, (who it seems to me that they said were called Lacandones,) who had burnt and destroyed the two pueblos where they had lived, and had robbed them and killed many of their people. These pueblos we would see further along the road we must follow, which was [over] a very level country, and they then gave an account of how and in what manner they [the Lacandones] attacked them and why they were their enemies.

Cortés asked them how it happened that they had so many turkeys and fowls ready cooked, and they replied that they were hourly expecting their enemies to come and attack them, and, that if they were conquered, the enemy would be sure to seize their goods and their poultry and carry them off captive, and so that they should not do that or have the benefit of them, they wished to eat them first; [on the other hand] if they defeated their enemies they would go to their pueblos and seize their goods.

Cortés said that he was sorry for it and for their war, but as he must continue his march he could not mend matters.

This pueblo and other great settlements which we passed the next day are called the Mazatecas, which in their tongue means the pueblos or lands of deer, and they have good reason for giving that name as what I will relate later shows. Two of these Indians accom-

panied us and showed us their burnt townships and gave information to Cortés about the Spaniards who were on ahead of us. I will leave off here and relate how the next day we left that pueblo, and what else happened on the journey.

CHAPTER CLXXVIII.

How we went on our way, and what happened to us.

WHEN we left the "fenced pueblo" (for so we called it), we entered from there onwards on a good and flat road all through treeless savannahs with a sun so hot and strong that greater noontide heat we had never felt throughout our march. As we went along those flat plains we saw many deer and they hardly ran at all, so that we soon overtook them on horseback, however little we raced after them, and over twenty of them were killed.

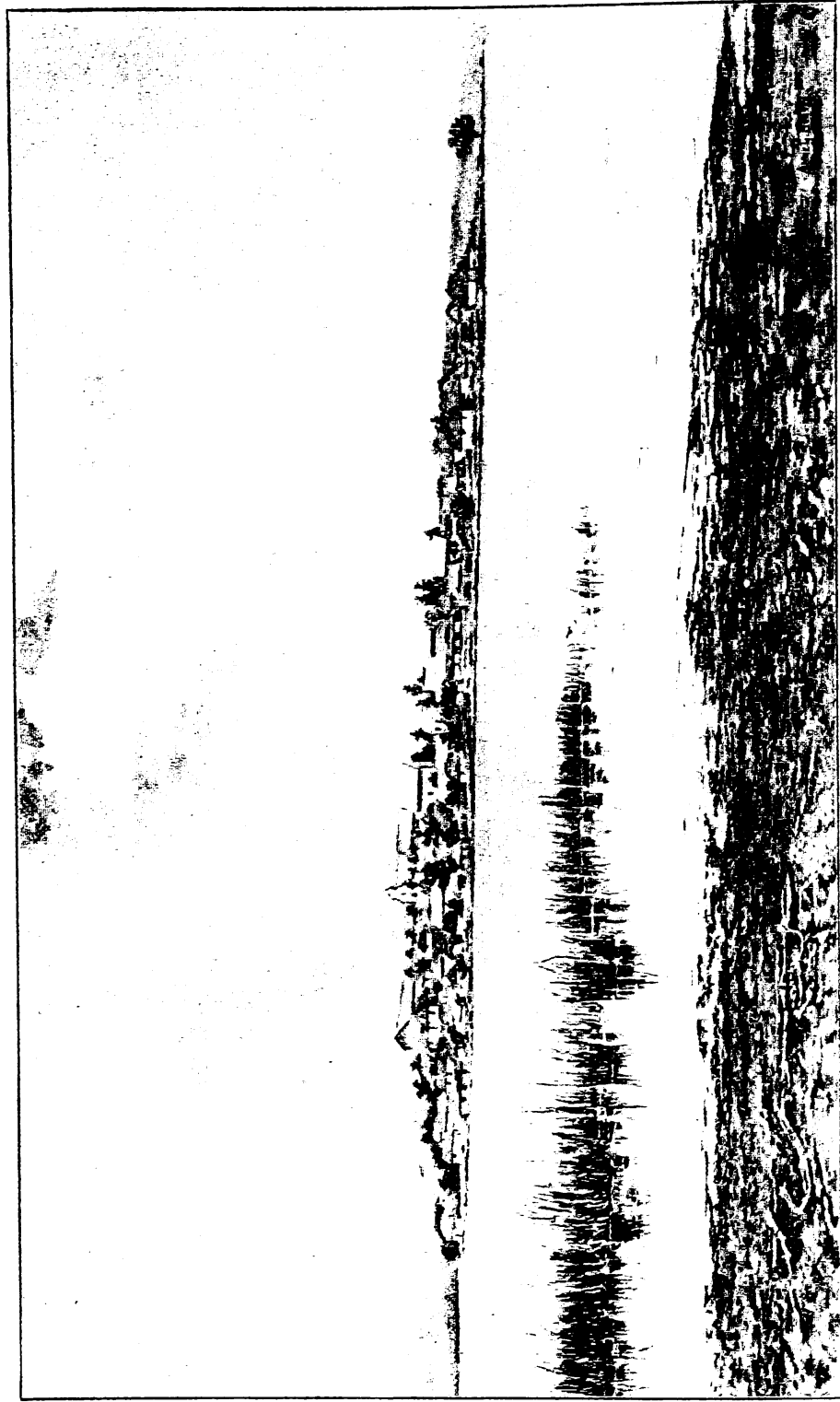
On asking the guides we had with us why the deer ran so little, and why they were not frightened at the horses nor at anything else, they replied that in those pueblos, which I have already said they call the *Mazatecas*, they are considered to be gods, because gods have appeared in their shape, and their Idol has commanded them not to kill or frighten them, and they have not done so, and this is the reason why they do not run away.

During that chase the horse of a relation of Cortés, named Palacios Rubios, died, for the fat of his body melted from having galloped so much.

Let us leave this chase and I will say that we soon reached the settlements already mentioned by me, and it was sad to see them all destroyed and burnt. As we went on our way, as Cortés always sent scouts ahead on horseback and active men on foot, they overtook two

Indians, natives of another pueblo which was ahead of us on the road we had to take, who were returning from the chase laden with a great lion and many iguanas, which are of the form of small serpents, and in these parts they are called iguanas and are very good to eat. They asked these Indians if their pueblo was near by, and they answered 'yes,' and they would guide them to the pueblo which was in a narrow strait surrounded by fresh water, and we could not reach it from the side where we were except in canoes. So we went round a little more than half a league to where there was a ford, and the water came up to one's waist, and we found more than half the inhabitants in the pueblo, and the rest had hurried away to some cane brakes which were near their plantations, where many of our soldiers slept; for by staying in the maize fields they supped well and provisioned themselves for some days. We took guides for another pueblo, and were two days in reaching it, and found there a great lake of fresh water full of fish which were like very tasteless shad and full of bones. With some old cloaks and some rotten nets which we found in the pueblo, which was already deserted, we caught all the fish in the pool, which numbered over a thousand.

Then we searched for guides and captured them in some cultivated land, and after Cortés had told them through Doña Marina that they must show us the way to the pueblo where there were men with beards and horses, they were delighted to find we should do them no harm, and said they would willingly show us the road, for at first they thought we wished to kill them. Five of them went with us along a broad road, but the further we advanced the narrower it became, on account of a great river and lagoon which was near to it, and it appears that they used to embark and disembark from canoes and go on to that pueblo



Tayasal (Flores) Lake of Peten Itza.
From Photo by A. P. M.

named Tayasal, whither we were bound, which stood on an island surrounded by water, and it could not be reached by land, but only in canoes. The houses and oratories were whitewashed so that they could be seen for more than two leagues. It was the capital of other small pueblos which were near to it.

To go back to my story, when we saw that the broad road which we had hitherto followed changed to a very narrow pathway, we fully understood that the way was by the lagoon and the guides we brought with us told us that it was so. We decided to sleep near to some thick forest, and that night four companies of soldiers went along the paths which led to the lagoon to capture guides, and it pleased God that they captured two canoes laden with maize and salt, with ten Indians and two women, and they at once took them to Cortés, who coaxed them and spoke very affectionately to them through the interpreter Doña Marina. They stated that they were natives of the pueblo on the small island, and they explained by signs that it was distant about four leagues. Cortés promptly ordered that the larger canoe with four Indians and the two women should remain with us, and he sent the other canoe to the pueblo with six Indians and two Spaniards to ask the Cacique to bring canoes for the passage of the river, and [to say] that no annoyance would be given him, and he sent him some beads from Castile. We at once set out on our way by land towards the great river, and the one canoe went by the lagoon to reach the river, and the Cacique was already there with many other chieftains waiting with five canoes to pass us across, and they brought four chickens and maize.

Cortés showed them great goodwill, and after much persuasion by the Caciques he agreed to go with them to their pueblo in those canoes, and he took with him

thirty Crossbowmen, and when he arrived at the houses they gave him food to eat, and even brought gold, which was of poor quality and little value, and some cloths; and they told him that there were Spaniards the same as ourselves in two pueblos. One I have already said was called Nito, which is at San Gil de Buena Vista near the Golfo Dulce, and they then gave him the news that there were many other Spaniards at Naco, and that it was ten days' journey from one pueblo to the other, that Nito was on the North Coast and Naco inland.

Cortés said to us that perhaps Cristóbal de Olid had divided his people among two towns, for at that time we knew nothing of the people of Gil González de Ávila who settled at San Gil de Buena Vista.

To return to our journey we all crossed that great river in canoes and slept about three leagues beyond, and we marched no further because we were waiting for Cortés who was coming from the pueblo of Tayasal. As soon as he arrived, he ordered us to leave at that pueblo a black horse which was ill from the chase after deer, and the fat of its body had melted and it could not stand upright.¹

¹ The fate of this horse is interesting :—

In 1618 the Padres Bartolomé de Fuensalida and Juan de Orbita set out from Merida on a Missionary expedition to Peten by way of Tipu, then the Spanish outpost in Yucatan, situated on the Rio Hondo, near the present frontier of British Honduras, and within a few days' march of the Lake of Peten.

On reaching Tayasal the missionaries were well received by the Chief of the Itzáes, and on the day after their arrival were conducted round the town.

“The Padres estimated the number of houses at about two hundred; these stood along the shore of the lagoon at a little distance from one another, and in each of them dwelt parents and sons with their families. On the higher ground in the middle of the island stood the Cués or oratories, where they kept their Idols. They (the padres) went to see them and found twelve or more temples equal in size and capacity to any of the churches in this province of Yucatan, and according to their account each one could hold more than a thousand persons. In the middle of one of these temples there

At this pueblo a negro and two Indian servants ran away, and three Spaniards remained behind, who were not missed until three days later; they preferred to stay among enemies than to go with us through such hardships. This day I was very ill with fever and from

was a great Idol in the form of a horse, made of stone and cement. It was seated on the floor of the temple on its haunches, with its hind legs bent under it, raising itself on its fore legs. It was worshipped as the God of Thunder and called Tzimin Chac, which means the horse of thunder or the thunderbolt. The reason why they possessed this Idol was that when Don Fernando Cortés passed through this land on his way to Honduras, he left behind him a horse which could travel no further. As the horse died the Indians, terrified at the thought of not being able to give it up alive should Cortés by chance return that way and ask them for it, had a statue made of the horse and began to hold it in veneration, so that it might be clear that they were not to blame for its death.

“Believing the horse to be an intelligent being, they gave it to eat chickens and other meat, and offered it garlands of flowers as they were wont to do to their own chieftains. All these honours, for such they were in their sight, helped to bring about the death of the poor horse, for he died of hunger. It was given its name (the God of the Thunderbolt) because they had seen some of the Spaniards discharging their arquebuses or guns when on horseback hunting the deer, and they believed that the horses were the cause of the noise, which appeared to them like thunder, and the flash from the muzzle of the gun and the smoke of the powder they mistook for lightning. Upon this the devil took advantage of the blindness of their superstition so to increase the veneration in which the statue was held that, by the time the missionaries arrived, this Idol had become the principal object of their adoration.

“As soon as the Padre Fray Juan de Orbita caught sight of the Idol (says the Padre Fuensalida) it seemed as if the Spirit of Our Lord had descended on him, for, carried away by a fervid and courageous zeal for the glory of God, he took a great stone in his hand, climbed to the top of the statue of the horse and battered it to pieces, scattering the fragments on the ground.” (From *Cogolludo's History of Yucatan*, 1688.)

This act naturally roused the anger of the Indians, who, however, refrained from attacking the missionaries, but a few days later the Padres, finding that their preaching was of no effect, left the island and returned to Tipu.

I may add that the tradition still exists in the locality, for when crossing the lake my Indian canoemen told me that had the water been clear I might have seen a white horse at the bottom of the lake. The description of the temples as holding a thousand persons, unless the courtyards of the temples were included, must have been a gross exaggeration.

A. P. M.

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the heat of the sun, which had penetrated my head and all my body.

I have already said the sun was very fierce, and the reason became apparent, because presently it began to rain in floods and it never ceased raining for three days and nights, but we did not halt on the road because, although we might have wished to wait for better weather, we had no supply of maize, and for fear of it failing us we kept on our way.

To go back to my story: After two days we came to a range of hills which was not very lofty, and consisted of stones which cut like knives, and although our soldiers went more than a league on one side and the other in search of another road so as to avoid that Sierra de los Pedernales they could not find another road, and we had to follow on the way we were going; but those stones did much damage to the horses, for as it rained they slipped and fell and cut their hind and fore legs and even their bodies, and the further we went the worse were the stones and, when we reached the descent from these hills, two horses were left there dead, and most of those which escaped were hocked.

A soldier named Palacios Rubio, a kinsman of Cortés, broke his leg, and when we found ourselves free from that Sierra de los Pedernales, for so we called it thenceforward, we gave many thanks and much praise to God. When at last we approached a pueblo called Tayca, we even rejoiced, thinking to find food. Before reaching it there was a river which flowed from a range between great rocky cliffs and precipices, and as it had rained for three nights it came down so furiously and with such an uproar, one could hear it two leagues off falling among the rocks: in addition to this it ran very deep and it was impossible to ford it. We determined to make a bridge from one cliff to the other, and we put

such haste into getting it finished with very thick tree trunks that in three days we began the passage to the pueblo. As we had to delay there for three days making the bridge, the native Indians had time to hide their maize and all their provisions, and place themselves in safety, so that we could not find them anywhere round about. On account of the hunger that was already wearing us out we were all dazed with thinking of food. I say assuredly that never had I felt such grief in my heart as we all suffered then, seeing that neither had I myself anything to eat or [food] to give to my men, besides being ill with fever. We searched for food diligently throughout the neighbourhood within two leagues of the pueblo, and this was on the eve of the festival of the holy resurrection of our Saviour Jesus Christ. Let my readers think what sort of Easter we should pass with nothing to eat, and we should have been very contented with [only] maize.

When Cortés observed the state of things, he at once, on the first day of Easter, sent off his servants and grooms with the guides to search for maize through the woods and plantations, and they brought in a matter of a fanega.¹ And when Cortés saw the extreme necessity, he ordered certain soldiers to be summoned, nearly all of them settlers from Coatzacoalcos, and among them he named me, and he said to us that he prayed us earnestly to turn the country upside down in our search for food, for we could see in what a condition the whole camp found itself. At that time when Cortés was giving us our orders, there stood before Cortés one Pedro de Ircio who was a great talker, and he begged Cortés to send him as our Captain, and Cortés replied—"Go and good luck to you." When I understood this, knowing that

¹ About eight bushels.

Pedro de Ircio could not march on foot and would hinder rather than aid us, I said secretly to Cortés and to Captain Sandoval that Pedro de Ircio had better not go, because he was not able to march through the mud and swamps with us for he had a game leg, and he was no good for that sort of thing, but only for talking a lot, and not fit to go on expeditions, and that he would stop or sit down on the road from time to time. So Cortés promptly ordered that he should remain behind, and we set out five soldiers and two guides through two rivers, both very deep, and after we had crossed the rivers we came on to some swamps and then into some farms where most of the people of the pueblo had collected, and there we found four houses full of maize and beans in quantity, and over thirty chickens and melons of the country which they call ayotes,¹ and we seized four Indians and three women, and we had a fine Easter. That night more than a thousand Mexicans, whom Cortés ordered to go after us and follow us so that they should get something to eat, arrived at the farms, and all of us, very jubilantly, loaded the Mexicans with all the maize they could carry for Cortés to apportion, and we also sent for him and Sandoval twenty fowls and the Indians and Indian women. We remained to guard two of the houses full of maize, lest the natives of the pueblo should burn them or carry it off during the night.

The next day we went on ahead with other guides and came on other farms where there was maize and poultry and different sorts of vegetables, and I at once wrote² to Cortés to send me many Indians for I had found other farms, and how I had sent him the Indian

¹ Pumpkins.

² Blotted out in the original: "I made ink [and wrote] on the skin of a drum."

men and women already mentioned, and all the camp heard about it.

The next day more than thirty soldiers and five hundred Indians arrived, and all carried away provisions, and in this way, thanks to God, the camp was supplied.

In that pueblo, which I have already said was called Tayca, we stayed five days.

Let us leave this, for I wish to mention how we made this bridge, and all along the journey we had made great bridges as I have already stated. Later on when those lands and provinces were pacified, the Spaniards who passed along those roads found, and still find at the present time, some of the bridges undestroyed after so many years have passed, and wonder at the great tree trunks which we placed in them, and now they are in the habit of saying “ Here are the bridges of Cortés,” as though they were saying “ Here are the Pillars of Hercules.”

Let us leave these reminiscences, for they do not belong to our story, and I will relate how we went on our way to another pueblo called Tania, and we were two days reaching it and found it deserted, and we searched for food and found maize and other vegetables but not very plentiful, and we went about the neighbourhood looking for roads and found nothing but rivers and brooks, and the guides, whom we had brought from the pueblo we had left behind, ran away one night from certain soldiers who guarded them, who were newcomers from Castile and who apparently had fallen asleep. As soon as Cortés knew of it he wished to punish the soldiers for it, but owing to entreaties he let it alone. Then he sent to search for guides and a road. It was useless to look for them by dry land, for the pueblo was altogether surrounded by rivers and streams and we were unable to capture any Indian men or women, and in addition

to this it rained continuously, and we could not make a stand against so much wet. Cortés and all of us were horrified and distressed at not knowing or finding a road by which we could travel, and then Cortés said very angrily to Pedro de Ircio and other Captains who were of the Mexican company "I wish now that there was somebody to say that he would like to go and search for guides and a road, and not leave everything to the settlers from Coatzacoalcos." When Pedro de Ircio heard those words he got ready with six soldiers, his companions and friends, and went off in one direction, and Francisco Marmolejo, who was a person of quality, with other six soldiers went in another, and a certain Santa Cruz Burgalés, who was regidor of Mexico, went in another direction with other soldiers, and they all walked the whole of three days and found neither guides nor a road—nothing but streams and rivers. When they had returned without any supplies, Cortés nearly burst with rage and asked Sandoval to tell me the great straits we were in, and to beg me on his behalf to go and look for guides and a road, and he said this with affectionate expressions like entreaties, because he knew for certain that I was ill.¹ They had already named me before Sandoval spoke to me, to go with Francisco Marmolejo who was my friend, and I said I could not go because I was ill and tired, and that they always put all the work on me and they could send someone else. Then Sandoval came again to my ranch and implored me to go with two companions whom I might choose myself, for Cortés said that after God he had faith in me to bring provisions, and although I was ill I could not permit myself to be shamed, and asked that a certain Hernando

¹ Blotted out in the original: "as I have already said I still had fever and was feeling ill."

de Aguilar and one Ynojosa should go with me, as I knew they were men who could endure hardships. So we all three set out and followed down some streams, and away from the streams in the bush there were some signs of cut branches, and we followed that trail more than a league, and at last we left the stream and came on some small ranchos which had been deserted that day, and following the trail we saw on a hill in the distance some maize plantations and a house, and we observed people in it. As the sun had already set, we stayed in the wood until the night was well advanced, and it seemed to us the inhabitants of those maize plantations should be asleep, so keeping very quiet we came very suddenly on the house and captured three Indians and two women, young and good-looking for Indians, and one old woman. They owned two fowls and a little maize, and we carried off the maize and fowls and the Indian men and women, and very cheerfully returned to camp. When Sandoval knew it, and he was the first found waiting for us on the road at the close of the day, we went before Cortés, who valued it more than if we had given him a much greater thing. Then Sandoval said to Pedro de Ircio, who had come with him, before many of the gentlemen—“It seems to us Señor Pedro de Ircio that Bernal Díaz was right the other day when he went to search for maize, that he only wished to go with men, and not with one who would go all the way very slowly, relating what happened to the Conde Durueña and Don Pedro Giron his son (for these were stories Pedro de Ircio told many times), and you have no reason to complain saying that he stirs up trouble with the Señor Captain and with me.” They all laughed at this, and Sandoval said it because Pedro de Ircio was unfriendly to me.

Then Cortés thanked me for it and said it ever happened that I had to bring in provisions, and “I pledge

you this (meaning his beard) that I will remember your honour."

I must leave these flatteries, for they are hollow and bring no profit, but others repeated them in Mexico when they told the story of this toilsome journey. I must go back to say that Cortés sought information from the guides and the two women, and all agreed that we must go down stream to a pueblo which was distant two days' march, and the name of the pueblo was said to be Oculizte, which contained more than two hundred houses and had been deserted a few days before.

As we went on our way down stream we came on some large ranchos which were used by Indian traders when they are travelling. There we slept and the next day we followed the same river and water-course, and after following it for about half a league we came upon a good road, and that day arrived at the pueblo of Oculizte, where there was plenty of maize and vegetables. In a house which was a shrine of their Idols was found an old red cap and a hempen shoe as an offering to the Idols. Some soldiers who went through the farms brought to Cortés two old Indians and four women whom they had captured in the maize fields belonging to the pueblo, and Cortés questioned them through the interpreter Doña Marina about the road, and how far off the Spaniards were, and they replied "two days," and that there was no inhabited land until we arrived there, and that they [the Spaniards] have their houses near the sea coast.

Then Cortés instantly ordered Sandoval to proceed on foot with six other soldiers and find his way to the sea, and by some means or other to enquire and to find out whether there were many Spaniards who were settled there with Cristóbal de Olid, for at that time we did not believe there could be any other Captain in that country.

Cortés wanted to know this so that we might fall on Cristóbal de Olid in the night if he were there, and might capture him and his soldiers.

Gonzalo de Sandoval set out with the six soldiers and three Indians as guides whom he took for that purpose from the pueblo of Oculizte, and as he went along the north coast he saw a canoe rowing and sailing swiftly over the sea, and he hid himself during the day in the forest, for they saw that the canoe which was coming over the sea belonged to Indian traders, and it was coasting along and bringing salt and maize as merchandize and was about to enter into the great river of the Golfo Dulce, and during the night they [the Spaniards] took possession of it in a bay which was a canoe harbour, and Sandoval got into the canoe with two of his companions and the Indian rowers who had brought the canoe and his three guides, and set off along the coast, the rest of the soldiers going by land, for they knew that the great river was near by. When they were close to the great river, as chance would have it, four settlers and a Cuban Indian from the town which had been settled by the followers of Gil Gonzáles de Ávila had come that morning in a canoe, and crossed to that side of the river in search of a fruit which they call zapotes, to be eaten when roasted, for in the town whence they came they were enduring great hunger because most of them were ill, and [they] did not dare to go out in search of food among the pueblos because the Indians in the neighbourhood had made war on them and killed six soldiers since Gil Gonzáles de Ávila had left them there.

While these followers of Gil Gonzáles de Ávila were pulling down zapotes from the tree, and two of the men were up the tree, when they saw a canoe coming along the sea in which were Sandoval and his two companions, they were startled and marvelled at such a novel sight,

and did not know whether to stay or flee. When Sandoval approached them he told them to have no fear as they were men of peace, so they stood quiet but very much terrified. After Sandoval and his companions had been fully informed by the two Spaniards, how and in what way the followers of Gil Gonzáles de Ávila had been settled there, and of the ill fate of the Armada of Las Casas, which was lost; and how Cristóbal de Olid had made prisoners of Las Casas and Gil Gonzáles de Ávila; and how they had beheaded Cristóbal de Olid at Naco in execution of the sentence then pronounced against him; and how they had already set off for Mexico; they learned who and how many were in the town and the great hunger they were enduring, and how a few days earlier they had hanged in that town the Lieutenant and leader, a man named Armenta, whom Gil Gonzáles de Ávila had left there; and the reason why they hanged him, which was because he would not let them go to Cuba. Sandoval determined to carry those men at once to Cortés, and not to attract attention or go to the town without him, in order that he [Cortés] should receive the information from these men in person. Then a soldier named Alonzo Ortiz, who was afterwards a settler at a town called San Pedro, begged Sandoval to do him the favour of permitting him to go on one hour ahead to take the news to Cortés and all of us who were with him, so that he might get a reward. This he did and Cortés and all the camp were delighted at the news, believing that there would come an end to all the hardships we were suffering, but they were to increase twofold as I shall tell later on. To Alonzo Ortiz who carried the news Cortés gave a very good chestnut horse called Cabeza de Moro,¹ and we all gave him something from what we still possessed. Then Captain

¹ The Moor's Head.

Sandoval arrived with the soldiers and the Cuban Indian, and they gave a report to Cortés of all I have stated, and many other things which they were asked about. As they owned at that town a ship, which was being caulked in a harbour about half a league distant, which had room enough in it for all of them to embark and go to Cuba, and because the lieutenant Armenta had not let them embark, they had hanged him, also because he had ordered a cleric who revolutionized the town to be flogged; and they chose for lieutenant one Antonio Nieto in place of Armenta whom they had hanged.

Let us stop talking about the news brought by the two Spaniards, and I will speak of the lamentations they raised in that town when they knew that the two settlers and the Cuban Indian who had gone to search for zapote fruit (for so they call it) had not returned, and they believed they had been killed by Indians or by lions or tigers. One of the settlers was married and his wife wept much for him, and the priest named the Bachelor Fulano Valásquez and all the settlers assembled in the Church and prayed God to help them and deliver them from further misfortune, and the woman was all the time praying God for the soul of her husband.

To go back to my story. Cortés promptly ordered the whole army to go along the road by the sea, a distance of six leagues. There was yet on the road a very swollen lagoon which rose and fell with the tide, and we waited half a day for the water to fall and crossed it jumping and swimming and reached the great river of the Golfo Dulce.

The first to go to the town, which was two leagues distant, was Cortés himself with six soldiers and two pages. He set out in two canoes tied together, the one in which the two soldiers of Gil González had come to search for zapotes, and the other which Sandoval had taken from the Indians on the coast, and as it was necessary to

conceal it they had stuck it in the ground and hidden it in the bush. They went to launch it in the water and tied the two one to the other so that they were well secured, and in them Cortés and his servants crossed over, and then with the same canoes he ordered two horses to be sent over, and it was done in this manner: the canoes were paddled, and the horses, tied by their halters, swam near the canoes, and care had to be taken not to give too much rope to the horse lest it should upset the canoe. Cortés sent to say that, until we received an order or a letter from him, none of us were to cross in these same canoes on account of the great risk of the passage, for he had repented of going in them himself as the river came down with such great fury. I will leave off here then go on to say what else happened.

CHAPTER CLXXIX.

How Cortés entered the town where the followers of Gil Gonzáles de Ávila were settled, and about the great joy shown by all the inhabitants, and what Cortés decreed.

AFTER Cortés had crossed the great river of the Golfo Dulce in the way I have related, he went to the town where the Spaniards of Gil Gonzáles de Ávila were settled, about two leagues distant and close to the sea, and not to where they made their first settlement named San Gil de Buena Vista.¹

When these saw a man on horseback and six others on foot among their houses, they were greatly startled, and when they knew that it was Cortés who was so renowned throughout the Indies and in Castile they were beside themselves with delight. After all the caciques had come to kiss his hand and give him a welcome

¹ Nito, in the Fifth letter of Cortés.

Cortés addressed them very affectionately and instructed the Lieutenant, who was called Nieto, to go to where they careened the ship and bring the two boats they possessed, and if there were any canoes to bring them also, tied two and two, and he ordered them to collect all the cassava bread in the place and take it to Captain Sandoval (for they had no maize bread), that it might be divided and eaten by all of us belonging to his army. The Lieutenant promptly searched but did not find so much as fifty pounds of it, for they lived only on roasted zapotes, vegetables, and some shell fish which they fished for, and even the cassava which they gave us they were preserving as stores for the voyage to Cuba when the ship should have been calked.

By the two boats and eight sailors who came promptly, Cortés at once wrote to Sandoval that he personally and Captain Luis Marin should be the last to cross that great river, and that they should see to it that only those whom he ordered to do so should embark, and that the boats should not be overladen on account of the great current of the river which was coming down greatly swollen and very rapid, and that two horses [should be carried] by each boat, but that no horse should be brought in the canoes, lest it should be lost and the canoes overturned by the raging stream.

About the question of precedence in crossing over, a man named Sayavedra, and his brother Avalos, relations of Cortés, claimed to cross over first, notwithstanding Sandoval's decision that the Franciscan friars (because they were entitled to consideration in the first place) should cross in the first boatload; but as Sayavedra was a relative of Cortés, and inspired by Lucifer with a desire to command, he did not like Sandoval's raising objections, and wished him to hold his tongue and [therefore] answered him less respectfully than was proper. Sandoval

would not put up with it, and they had words, so much so, that Sayavedra plucked out his dagger, and as Sandoval was standing in the river knee deep in water preventing the boats from being overladen, he seized Sayavedra just as he stood, and caught hold of his hand which held the dagger and flung him into the water, and if we had not promptly thrown ourselves between them and parted them, certainly Sayavedra would have come out of it badly, for nearly all of us soldiers were openly on the side of Sandoval.

Let us leave this dispute and I will state that we were four days in crossing that river, and as for food it was useless to think about it, were it not for some "pacayas" which grow on certain small palms, and other things like nuts which we roasted and broke open, and ate the kernels of them.

One soldier with his horse was drowned in that river; the soldier's name was Tarifa, and he crossed over in a canoe and never appeared again, neither he nor his horse. Two horses were also drowned, one belonging to a soldier called Solis Casquete, who growled about it and cursed Cortés and his journey.

I wish to speak about the great hunger we endured at the passage of the river, and the grumbling against Cortés and his expedition, and even against all of us who were his followers; for when we arrived at the pueblo there was not a mouthful of cassava to eat, and even the people in the neighbourhood had none, and they did not know the roads except to two pueblos which used to be close by, but were already deserted.

Cortés next ordered Captain Luis Marin to set out with the settlers from Coatzacoalcos and search for maize, which I will go on to tell about.

CHAPTER CLXXX.

How the day after arriving at that town, which I know by no other name than that of San Gil de Buena Vista, we set out with Captain Luis Marin and nearly eighty soldiers, all on foot, to search for maize and explore the country, and what happened I will go on to relate.

I HAVE already said that when we reached the town which Gil Gonzáles de Ávila founded, there was nothing to eat, and there were nearly forty men and four Castilian women and two Mulatto women, and all were ill and very yellow in colour. And as neither we nor they had anything to eat, we could barely await the hour to go and look for it.

Cortés ordered Captain Luis Marin to set out and search for maize, and more than eighty of us foot soldiers went with him to find out if there were roads fit for horses, and we took with us a Cuban Indian who guided us to some farms and pueblos eight leagues distant, where we found much maize and very numerous cacao plantations, and frijoles and other vegetables, where we had plenty to eat and we even sent to say that he [Cortés] should send all the Mexican Indians to carry maize, and we relieved him immediately with ten fanegas of it by means of other Indians, and we sent for our horses.

As soon as Cortés knew that we were in a good country, and learned from Indian merchants, whom they had just then captured in the River of the Golfo Dulce, that the place where we were was on the direct way to Naco, where they beheaded Cristóbal de Olid, he sent Sandoval with the greater part of his army to follow us, and ordered us all to stay in that camp until we received his orders. When Sandoval arrived where we were and saw that there was abundance of food, he was delighted, and promptly sent to

Cortés over thirty fanegas of maize by some Mexican Indians, and he divided it among the settlers who remained in the town, and, as they were ravenous and accustomed to eat only roasted zapotes and cassava, they gorged themselves on tortillas made from the maize we sent them, until their bellies swelled, and, as they were [already] enfeebled, seven of them died. When they were in the condition I have described, it pleased God that a ship arrived in port which came from the Island of Cuba laden with seven horses, forty hogs and eight casks of salt meat and cassava bread, and about fifteen passengers came in her, and eight sailors, and the owner of most of the cargo of that ship was called Anton de Carmona the buskin maker. Cortés bought on credit all the supplies that came in it, and he divided part of them among the settlers and, as they had been formerly in such necessity and were run down, they gorged themselves on the salt meat and it gave many of them diarrhoea and fourteen of them died.

As that ship had arrived with men and sailors, it seemed to Cortés that it would be a good thing to go and explore and survey that mighty river, [and see] if there were towns up stream and what kind of land there was, so he promptly ordered a good launch belonging to the followers of Gil Gonzáles de Ávila, which had gone ashore, to be calked, and a boat to be repaired to serve as a lighter, and with four canoes tied one to the other, and thirty soldiers and the eight seamen from those lately arrived in the ship, and twenty Mexican Indians and Cortés himself as Captain, he went up the river. When he had proceeded a matter of ten leagues up stream, a broad lake was discovered six leagues in length and in width, and there were no villages at all around it, for it was all swampy, and going on up the river the stream became swifter than before, and there were some rapids which the launch, boats, and canoes could not ascend, so he decided to leave them there where the

stream was sluggish, with six Spaniards to guard them, and to go by land along a narrow track. He reached some small deserted villages and then came on some maize fields, and from there took three Indians as guides, and they led him to some small pueblos where there was much maize and many fowls and they even kept pheasants, which in this country they call "Sacachules," and partridges of the country and pigeons. This way of keeping partridges I saw and noticed [myself] among the pueblos in the neighbourhood of this Golfo Dulce, when I went in search of Cortés, as I shall relate further on.

To go back to my story: there Cortés captured guides and passed on and went to some other small pueblos which are called Çinacantençintle,¹ where they had great cocoa groves and maize fields and cotton, and before reaching them they heard the sound of drums and trumpets, for they were holding feasts and drunken orgies. So as not to be observed, Cortés and his soldiers remained hidden in the wood, and, as soon as he saw it was time to start, they fell upon them altogether and captured about ten Indians and fifteen women, but most of the Indians of the pueblo made off quickly to seize their arms, and returned with bows and arrows and lances, and began to shoot at our people. Cortés and his followers went against them and put to the sword eight Indians who were chieftains, and as soon as they saw how ill the fight was going, and that their women were captives, they sent four elders—and two of them were priests of Idols—and they approached very meekly to pray Cortés to give up the prisoners to them, and they brought some golden jewels of small value. Cortés spoke to them through Doña Marina who came there with her husband Juan Jaramillo, because Cortés could not understand the Indians without her.

5 ★ ¹ This is the pueblo called Chacujal by Cortés.

and he told them to take the maize, poultry, and salt, and all the provisions he indicated, to the place to which he explained they had come in the canoes and launches, and that then he would give up the prisoners to them. They replied that they would do so, and that near by there was a sort of creek which opened into the river, and they promptly made rafts, and, wading, they conveyed them to where they came to deep water, where they were able to float quite well. Then, although Cortés had agreed to give up all the prisoners, it appears that he ordered three of the Indian women with their husbands to stay with them, and make bread and wait on the Mexican Indians, and he would not give them up, and over this matter all the Indians of that pueblo got together and from the high banks of the river sent a great shower of darts, stones, and arrows, at Cortés and his soldiers, so that they wounded Cortés himself in the face, and a dozen of the soldiers. One boat came to grief there, and half its freight was lost and one Mexican was drowned. In that river there are so many mosquitos that they are beyond bearing, and Cortés endured it all and returned to his town (I don't know what it was named), and provisioned it much better than it had been before.

I have already stated that the pueblo which Cortés reached was named Sinacatençintla,¹ which is seventy leagues distant from Guatemala. Cortés was delayed on this journey, and he returned to the town in twenty-six days when he saw that as there were no Indian pueblos it would be no use to form a settlement there. As he was well provisioned both from what had already been collected before, and also from what he was now bringing, he decided to write to Gonzalo de Sandoval

¹ Çinacantençintle on the previous page.

to proceed at once to Naco,¹ and he told him all about his voyage on the Gulfo Dulce, just as I have related it here, and how he was going to settle at the Puerto de Caballos, and that Sandoval must send him ten soldiers who were Coatzacoalcos men, for without them he was not content when on expeditions.

CHAPTER CLXXXI.

How Cortés embarked with all the soldiers, both those which he had brought in his company and those who had remained at San Gil de Buena Vista, and went to settle the place now called Puerto de Caballos, which he named La Natividad, and what he did there.

AFTER Cortés had seen that the place he found settled by the followers of Gil Gonzáles de Ávila was of no use, he decided to embark in the two ships and the launch, with all those who were in the town, leaving none behind, and after voyaging for eight days he disembarked at what is now called Puerto de Caballos, and, when he beheld that it was a fine bay for a port and learnt that there were Indian villages near by, he decided to found a town, which he named "Natividad," and placed one Diego de Godoy in command. From this place he made two expeditions inland to some neighbouring pueblos, which are now deserted, and he learned from them that there were other pueblos near by, and

¹ Naco was situated in an inland valley, probably between the rivers Chamelicon and Santiago, the latter a branch of the Rio Ulua, and was sixty to seventy miles distant from Puerto Caballo.

"De ay (Puerto Caballo) a la villa de San Pedro . . . ay Catorze ó quinze leguas . . . estan cerca de alli 4 leguas las Minas de Zula . . . y quasi otras 4 el Valle de Naco . . . este Valle de Naco es muy llano y fertil corcado todo de Sierras." (*Relacion de la Provincia de Honduras y Higueras por el Obispo D. Cristóbal de Pedraza, 1544* ; *Relaciones de Yucatan*, vol. i, p. 398.)

he supplied the town [Natividad] with maize, and he also learned that the pueblo of Naco, where they beheaded Cristóbal de Olid, was near that town; so he wrote to Gonzalo de Sandoval—believing that he had already arrived and was settled at Naco—telling him to send him ten soldiers who were Coatzacoalcos men, and he said in the letter that without them he was not confident when making expeditions. He also wrote to him that he wished to go from there [Puerto de Caballos] to the Port of Honduras where the town of Trujillo had been settled, and that Sandoval and his soldiers should pacify those lands and found a town. This letter came into Sandoval's possession when we were stationed in the camp already mentioned by me, and we had not reached Naco.

Let us cease speaking of Cortés and his expeditions which he made from the Puerto de Caballos, and about the many mosquitos which bit them on the journeys both by day and night, and, from what I afterwards heard him say, gave him such bad nights that his head was stupid from want of sleep.

When Gonzalo de Sandoval saw the letters, he promptly left the camp I have mentioned for some small pueblos named Cuyuacan, seven leagues distant. He was not able to go at once to Naco as Cortés had ordered him, if he were to avoid leaving behind on the road many soldiers who had gone off to other farms, to find food for themselves and their horses; and on account of the passage of a very deep river¹ which could not be forded on the road from the farms, and in order to leave provision of a canoe by which the Spanish stragglers, and a number of Mexican Indians who were out of health, could pass; (and it was also done for fear of some pueblos near

¹ Rio Motagua.

by the farms on the borders of the river and Golfo Dulce, for many Indians from these pueblos came every day to attack us). So that there should be no ill deeds and deaths of Spaniards and Mexican Indians, Sandoval ordered eight soldiers to remain at that crossing (and left me in command of them), and we were always to have a canoe drawn up on shore ready to make the passage, and to be on the alert so that, when passengers who had been left behind at the farms should raise shouts, we could promptly bring them over.

One night many Indian warriors from the neighbouring pueblos and farms, thinking that we were not keeping watch and hoping to take the canoe from us, fell suddenly on the ranchos in which we lived and set them on fire, but they did not come so secretly that we had not already heard them, and all of us, eight soldiers and four Mexican Indians who were in good health, attacked the warriors and with sword thrusts made them return whence they had come; however they wounded two soldiers and one Indian with their arrows, but the wounds were not serious. When we saw this, three of us companions went to the farms a league distant, where we believed some sick Indians and Spaniards had been left, and brought away one Diego de Mazariegos, often mentioned by me before, and some other Spaniards who were in his company, and some Mexican Indians who were ill, and we crossed the river at once and went to where Sandoval was stationed. As we went on our way one of the Spaniards whom we had picked up at the farms became very ill; he was one of those newly come from Castile and part native of the Canary Islands and the son of a Genoese, and as he grew worse, and we had nothing to give him to eat but tortillas and *pinole*,¹ when

¹ *Pinole* = a drink made of parched maize ground and mixed with sugar and water.

we were within half a league of where Sandoval was stationed he died on the road, and I had no men [able] to carry the dead body to the camp. When we arrived where Sandoval was stationed I told him about our journey, and about the man who was left dead, and he was angry with me because between all of us we had not brought him in on our shoulders or on a horse, and I answered him that we were bringing two sick men on each horse and came ourselves on foot, and for this reason we could not bring him. Then a soldier named Villanueva, who was my companion, answered Sandoval very arrogantly that it was as much as we could do to bring ourselves along without carrying dead men on our backs, and that he cursed the hardship and loss that Cortés had caused us. Sandoval at once ordered me and Villanueva to go without delay and bury the body, and we took two Indians with us and a hoe, and dug a grave and buried him and set up a cross. We found in the headpiece of the dead man a small bag with many dice, and a paper with a written record of where he was born and whose son he was, and what property he possessed in Tenerife, and later on that record was sent to Tenerife ; may God have mercy on him, Amen.

Let us stop telling stories, for I wish to say that Sandoval then decided that we should go to some other pueblos, which are now near to some mines which were discovered three years later, and thence we went to another pueblo named Quimiztlan, and the next day at the hour of Mass we went to Naco. At that time it was a good pueblo, but we found it had been deserted that very day, and we took up our quarters in some large courts where they had beheaded Cristóbal de Olid. The pueblo was well provisioned with maize and beans and Chili peppers, and we also found a little salt which was the thing we needed most, and there we settled ourselves

with our baggage as though we were going to stay there for ever. In this pueblo is the best water we have found in New Spain, and a tree which in the noonday heat, be the sun ever so fierce, appears to refresh the heart with its shade, and there falls from it a sort of very fine dew which comforts the head. At that time this pueblo was thickly peopled and in a good situation, and there was fruit of the zapotes, both of the red and small kind, and it was in the neighbourhood of other pueblos. I will leave off here and relate what happened to us there.

CHAPTER CLXXXII.

How the Captain Gonzalo de Sandoval began the pacification of that Province of Naco, and what else he did.

WHEN we arrived at the Pueblo of Naco and had collected maize, beans and peppers, we captured three chieftains in the maizefields and Sandoval coaxed them and gave them beads from Castile, and begged them to go and summon the other caciques and we would do them no harm whatever.

They set off as they were ordered to do, and two caciques came in, but Sandoval could not induce them to repeople the pueblo, only to bring a little food from time to time: they did us neither good nor harm, nor we to them, and thus we continued for the first [few] days. Cortés had written to Sandoval, as I have stated, to send ten soldiers, men of Coatzacoalcos, to the Puerto de Caballos. All ten were mentioned by name and I was one of them. At that time I was rather ill, and I told Sandoval that he must excuse me for I was disinclined, and, as it met his wishes, I remained and he sent eight soldiers, all good men to face any

difficulty, but yet they went with such ill-will that they cursed Cortés and his journey, and they had good reason to do so, for they did not know whether the country they had to go through was at peace. Sandoval decided to ask the caciques of Naco for five Indian chieftains to accompany them to Puerto de Caballos, and threatened them that if any of the soldiers came to any harm he would burn their town, and would go in search of them and make war on them. He also ordered them to supply the soldiers plentifully with food at each pueblo they might pass through.

The soldiers went on their march to Puerto de Caballos, where they found Cortés who was wishing to embark and go to Trujillo. He was pleased to hear that we were well, and he took the soldiers with him in the ships, and then embarked, leaving behind in that town of Puerto de Caballos one Diego de Godoy as Captain and about forty settlers, who were most of them those who had been with Gil Gonzáles de Ávila and those who had recently come from the Islands.

As soon as Cortés had embarked, his Lieutenant Godoy, who remained in the town, made expeditions with the soldiers who were least infirm to the neighbouring pueblos, and he made peace with two of them; but when the Indians saw that almost all the soldiers who were left there were invalids, and were dying every day, they took no count of them, and for this reason they did not support them with food, nor were they [the settlers] in a condition to go and seek for it, and they suffered great hardship from hunger and even within a few days half of them died. Three soldiers abandoned the town and came fleeing to where we were camped with Sandoval, and I will leave them here in this condition and return to Naco.

When Sandoval saw that the neighbouring Indians

and natives of Naco did not want to come and settle in the pueblo, although he had sent to summon them many times, and that the people of the neighbouring pueblos did not come or take any notice of us, he decided to go himself and manage to make them come. We went at once to some pueblos called Girimonga and Açula, and to three other pueblos near to Naco, and all of them came to give fealty to His Majesty. Then we went to Quismistan¹ and to other pueblos of the Sierra, and they too came in, so that all the Indians of that district submitted, and as nothing was demanded of them beyond what they were inclined to give, their submission did not weigh on them, and in this manner all was pacified as far as up to where Cortés founded the town which is now called Puerto de Caballos.

Let us leave this matter, for I am obliged to go back and speak of Cortés, who disembarked at the Port of Trujillo, because at one and the same time two or three things happened, as I have said repeatedly in former chapters. I must contract my writing into a limited space as to where and how we conquered and settled [the country], and although for the present the story of Sandoval and what happened to him at Naco is put aside, I wish to relate what Cortés did in Trujillo.

CHAPTER CLXXXIII.

How Cortés disembarked at the Port of Trujillo, and how all the settlers at that town came out to receive him, and how content they were with him, and what he did there.

CORTÉS embarked at Puerto de Caballos, and took in his company many soldiers, both those whom he had brought from Mexico and those Gonzalo de Sandoval

¹ Quimiztlan in preceding chapter. Quimistan on map.

sent him, and with fair weather he arrived at the Port of Trujillo in six days. As soon as the inhabitants who lived there, who had been left as settlers by Francisco de las Casas, knew that it was Cortés, they all went down to the beach, which was near by, to receive him and kiss his hands, for many of them were outlaws who had been turned out of Panuco and had advised Cristóbal de Olid to rebel; they had been banished from Panuco, as I have related in the chapter that tells about it. As they knew themselves guilty they implored Cortés to pardon them, and Cortés with many blandishments and promises embraced them all and pardoned them. Then they went to the church and after evening prayers they lodged him as well as they were able, and gave him an account of all that had happened to Francisco de las Casas and Gil González de Ávila, and for what reason they had beheaded Cristóbal de Olid, and how they had started in the direction of Mexico, and how they had brought to peace some pueblos of that Province. After Cortés had thoroughly understood, he honoured them all by addressing each, and confirming them in their offices as they then held them, except that he made his cousin Sayavedra, for so he was called, Captain General of those provinces, which met with their approval. Cortés then sent to summon the people of all the neighbouring pueblos, and when they heard the news that it was the Captain Malinche, for so they called him, and they knew that he had conquered Mexico, they came promptly at his summons and brought presents of food. As soon as the caciques of the four most important pueblos were assembled, Cortés spoke to them through Doña Marina and told them things touching our holy faith, and that we were all vassals of a great Emperor named Don Carlos of Austria, who had many great lords as his vassals and had sent us to these parts to do away with sodomy

and robberies and idolatry, and to prohibit the eating of human flesh and sacrifices, and they should not rob or make war on one another, but be brothers and treat each other as such. We also came in order that they should give their fealty to so great a King and Lord as he had told them we possessed, and pay tribute by service and from what they might possess, as all of us vassals did, and he told them many other things which Doña Marina knew well how to express, and that those who would not come and submit themselves to the rule of His Majesty he would punish. The two Franciscan friars whom Cortés had brought with him preached very good and holy things to them, which were explained to them by two Mexican Indians who knew the Spanish language, and other interpreters of that language. Moreover Cortés told them that in all matters he would take care that justice was done to them, for that was the order of our Lord and King. Because he used many other arguments and the Caciques understood them very clearly, they replied that they gave themselves as vassals to His Majesty and would do what Cortés ordered them. He at once told them to bring provisions to that town, and he also ordered many Indians to come and bring their axes and fell a wood which stood in the town, so that one could see the sea and harbour from that point. He also ordered them to go in canoes and summon three or four pueblos built upon some islands called the Guanages, which at that time were inhabited, and to bring fish which was plentiful there, and this they did, and within five days the people from the pueblos on the islands arrived, and all brought presents of fish and fowls, and Cortés ordered them to be given some sows and a boar which were found at Trujillo, and some of those which were brought from Mexico so as to raise a breed of them, for a Spaniard told him that it was a good

country for them to increase in, if they were let loose on the island without the necessity of guarding them. It turned out as he said, and within two years there were many pigs and they went out hunting them.

Let us leave this, for it does not touch our story, and I must not grow long-winded telling old tales, and I will relate that so many Indians came to fell the wood in the town as Cortés ordered them, that in two days one got a clear view of the sea, and they built fifteen houses and one very good one for Cortés. When this was done, Cortés enquired which pueblos and lands were rebellious and refused to make peace, and certain Caciques of a pueblo called Papayeca, which was the capital of other pueblos and at that time a large town (although it has now very few or hardly any inhabitants), gave Cortés a memorandum of many pueblos which would not make peace ; they were situated on great mountain ranges and had their defences ready. Cortés promptly sent to summon Captain Sayavedra and the soldiers that it seemed to him necessary for him to take, and, with the eight men of Coatzacoalcos, Sayavedra set out on his march and arrived at the pueblos which usually were warlike, but most of them now met them peaceably except three pueblos which refused to come in. Cortés was so greatly feared by the natives and so celebrated that as far as the pueblos of Olancho, where the mines are which were afterwards discovered, he was feared and revered, and they called him throughout those provinces 'El Capitán hue hue de Marina,' and what they meant to say was 'the old Captain who brought Doña Marina.'

Let us leave Sayavedra who remained near the pueblos which declined to give in—I think they were called the Acaltecas—and return to Cortés who was at Trujillo. The Franciscan friars had already fallen ill, as well as his cousin named Avalos, and the licentiate Pero López and the

mayordomo Carranza and the steward Guinea, and one Juan Flamenco and many other soldiers, whom Cortés had brought with him as well as some of those he found in Trujillo, and even Anton de Carmona who brought the ship with the supplies ; so he decided to send them to the Island of Cuba, to Havana or Santo Domingo, if the weather at sea should appear good enough. For this purpose he gave them a ship well repaired and calked, and the best crew he could find, and he wrote to the Royal Audiencia of Santo Domingo and to the Geronimite Friars and to Havana, giving an account of how he had set out from Mexico in search of Cristóbal de Olid, and how he left his authority to His Majesty's officials, and about the laborious march he had undertaken ; and how Cristóbal de Olid had imprisoned a certain Captain named Francisco de las Casas, whom Cortés had sent to seize the fleet of the same Cristóbal de Olid, who had also taken prisoner one Gil Gonzáles de Ávila who was governor of the Golfo Dulce ; and that when Cristóbal de Olid held them prisoners the two Captains stabbed Cristóbal de Olid, and after they had taken him prisoner they passed judgment on him and beheaded him. That at the present time he [Cortés] was settling the country and the pueblos subject to that town of Trujillo, which was a country rich in mines, and that they should send him the soldiers who had no means of subsistence in the Island of Santa Domingo. In order to give credence [to what he had stated] about there being gold, he sent many jewels and pieces from what he brought from Mexico amongst his equipage and table service, and even from his sideboard. He sent his cousin named Avalos as Captain of that ship, and ordered him on his way to capture twenty-five soldiers who had been left by a Captain who, as he was informed, went about attacking Indians on the small Islands and the neighbourhood of Cozumel.

After leaving the Port of Honduras, for so it is sometimes called, they passed, sometimes with fair wind and sometimes with foul, beyond the Cape of San Anton, which is near the range called the Sierra of Guaniguanico, sixty or seventy leagues distant from Havana, and then in a tempest the ship went ashore and the friars were drowned, but the Captain Avalos and many of the soldiers saved themselves in a boat and on boards, and with great hardship reached the Havana. From there the report spread flying all over the Island of Cuba that Cortés and all of us were alive, and a few days later the news reached Santo Domingo, for the licentiate Pedro López the doctor, who was on his way there and had escaped on a board, wrote to the Royal Audiencia of Santo Domingo, in the name of Cortés, all that had happened and how he [Cortés] was settled at Trujillo, and had need of supplies and wine and horses, and that to purchase these he was bringing much gold, but it had been lost in the sea, in the way I have already related.

When that news was known everyone rejoiced, for already there was a widespread report, and they thought it was true, that Cortés and all of us his companions were dead, as they had heard that news from a vessel which had come from New Spain.

When it was known in Santo Domingo that Cortés was stationary, settling the provinces as I have stated, the judges [of the Audiencia] and the merchants began to lade two old ships with horses and foals, shirts, caps and ordinary metal ware, and they brought no provisions except one pipe of wine, and no fruit, only horses, and the rest rubbish.

While they were preparing the ships to sail, and before they arrived at the port, I wish to say that, while Cortés was at Trujillo, certain Indians came to him from the Islands of the Guanages, eight leagues distant, to make

complaint, and they said that a ship was anchored near their pueblo, and that a boat-load of Spaniards from the ship armed with muskets and crossbows wanted to capture their mazeguales (for so they call their vassals) by force. From what they understood they were robbers, and in this manner they had captured many Indians in past years, and had carried them off as prisoners in another ship like the ship which was now at anchor, and they [begged him] to send and give them protection against it.

As soon as Cortés knew it he promptly ordered a launch to be armed with the best cannon they possessed, and [manned] by twenty soldiers under a good Captain, and he commanded them to capture the ship the Indians spoke of without fail, and bring it captive with all the Spaniards who were in it, for they were robbers of the vassals of His Majesty. He ordered the Indians to arm their canoes with darts and arrows and go in company with the launch, and help it to seize those men, and for this he gave authority to the Captain, who sailed along with the armed launch and many canoes belonging to the natives of the Islands. No sooner did the people in the ship, which was at anchor, see them sailing along, than they did not waste time in waiting, but made sail and went fleeing, for they knew quite well that they were coming to attack them, and the launch could not overtake them. It was afterwards found out that it was a Bachelor Moreno, whom the Royal Audiencia of Santo Domingo had sent on a certain commission to Nombre de Dios, and it seems that he swerved from his course, or came with the definite purpose of stealing Indians from the Guanages.¹

Let us return to Cortés, who remained in that province bringing it to peace, and turn back to relate what happened to Sandoval in Naco.

¹ Blotted out in the original : "and as I do not know it very well I will omit it."

CHAPTER CLXXXIV.

How Captain Gonzalo de Sandoval, who was at Naco, captured forty Spanish soldiers and their Captain, who had come from the province of Nicaragua, and did much damage and robbed the Indians of the pueblos through which they passed.

WHILE Sandoval was at the pueblo of Naco pacifying nearly all the pueblos of that neighbourhood, there came before him four Caciques of the pueblos named Quespan and Talchinalchapa, who said that in their pueblos there were many Spaniards of the same kind as those who were with him, with arms and horses, and that they seized their property and their daughters and wives and put them in iron chains. At this Sandoval was very indignant and asked how far off they were, and they replied that we could arrive there early in one day. Sandoval promptly ordered us who were to go with him to get ready as well as we could with our arms and horses, our crossbows and muskets, and we were seventy men who went with him. When we arrived at the pueblos where they were, we found them very tranquil, without a suspicion that we were about to capture them, and as soon as they saw us coming in that manner they were aroused and grasped their arms, but we quickly seized the Captain and many of the others before blood was shed on one side or the other. Sandoval asked them in rather bitter words whether they thought it right to go about robbing the vassals of His Majesty, and if that was a proper sort of conquest and pacification, bringing Indian men and women in chains and collars? Then he had them [the chains] taken off and gave the women to the Cacique of that pueblo and ordered the others to go back to their own country which was near by.

When that was done he ordered the Captain who had come there, who was named Pedro de Garro, and his soldiers, to be arrested and to accompany us at once to the pueblo of Naco, whither we marched them, and they brought many Indian women from Nicaragua, some of them handsome, and Indian women servants whom they kept to wait on them, and most of them had horses with them. As we were so battered and ragged from the past journeys and had no Indian women to make bread for us, or only very few, they looked like counts in comparison with our poverty.

When we arrived with them at Naco, Sandoval gave them lodgings in a convenient place, for there were among them some hidalgos and persons of quality. When they had rested a day, their Captain Garro, seeing that we belonged to the company of Cortés who was so celebrated, became great friends with Sandoval and all of us, and they took pleasure in our company.

I wish to state how and in what manner and for what reason that Captain and those soldiers had come; it was in the way I will relate :—

It seems that Pedrarias de Ávila, who was Governor of Tierra Firme at that time, sent a Captain named Francisco Hernández, a man of great importance among them, to conquer and pacify the country of Nicaragua, and to explore other lands, and he gave him a company of soldiers, both horsemen and crossbowmen, and he [Francisco Hernández] arrived at the provinces of Nicaragua and Leon, for so they were called, and pacified and settled them; thus he was prosperous, had command of many soldiers, and was out of reach of Pedrarias de Ávila.

Then he consulted certain advisers, among them, as I understand, a certain Bachelor Moreno, of whom I have already spoken as having been sent by the Royal

Audiencia of Santo Domingo and the Geronimite Friars, who govern the islands, to Tierra Firme because of a certain lawsuit which, if my memory serves me, was about the death of Balboa the son-in-law of Pedro Arias, who beheaded him after he had married him to his daughter Doña Ysabel Arias de Peñalosa, for so she was called. This Bachelor Moreno said to Captain Francisco Hernández that as soon as he conquered any country he should appeal to our King and Lord to make him Governor of it, as that would not be treason, for it was contrary to justice for Pedrarias to behead his son-in-law Balboa, because Balboa had first sent his proctor to His Majesty asking to be made Adelantado.

Under the influence of these speeches of the Bachelor Moreno, Francisco Hernández sent his Captain Pedro de Garro to search for a port on the North coast, so that he could inform His Majesty about the provinces which he had pacified and settled, in order that he should grant him the favour of being the governor of them, as they were widely separated from the Government of Pedro Arias.

Pedro de Garro was captured while employed on that mission, as I have already stated, and when Sandoval understood the object of his coming he conversed very secretly with Garro, and orders were given that we should inform Cortés, who was at Trujillo, about it, for Sandoval felt certain that Cortés would help him so that Francisco Hernández should remain as Governor of Nicaragua.

When this had been arranged, Sandoval and Garro sent ten men, five of ours and the other five soldiers of Garro's company, to go along the coast to Trujillo with the letters, for, as I have stated in the chapter that treats of it, Cortés was at that time stationed there. They also took with them more than twenty Nicaraguan Indians, whom Garro had brought, to help them to cross the rivers.

When they went on their way they were not able to cross the Rio Pichin or another called the Rio de Balahama, for they were in flood, and at the end of fifteen days the soldiers returned to Naco without having accomplished anything they were ordered to do, at which Sandoval was so much incensed that he reviled the commander who went in charge of them. Then without delay he ordered Captain Luis Marin to go overland with ten soldiers, five of them Garro's men and the others our own, and I was one of them.

We all went on foot and passed through many hostile pueblos, and if I were to describe at length the great hardships and the fights with warlike Indians that we went through and the rivers and bays we crossed swimming or on rafts, or the hunger we some days endured, I should not quickly finish. Other notable things I have to speak of, such as how on one day we crossed three rapid rivers on rafts and by swimming, and when we reached the coast there were many creeks where there were alligators, and we were two days in crossing on rafts a river called Xagua which is ten leagues from Triunfo de la Cruz, because it was running so swiftly, and there we found skulls and bones of seven horses which had died of the poison grass they had grazed on, and they had belonged to the followers of Cristóbal de Olid.

Thence we went to Triunfo de la Cruz and found some wrecked ships on their beam ends. Thence we marched in four days to a pueblo named Quemera, and many hostile Indians came out against us with long and heavy lances and shields, and they use them [the lances] with the right hand over the left arm and make play with them in the way we fight with pikes, and they came on to fight hand to hand. Owing to the crossbows we carried and our sword thrusts, they gave way to us,

and we went on ahead, but they wounded two of our soldiers there.

These Indians who, as I have related, came out to attack us, did not believe that we belonged to the party of Cortés, but to other Captains who went about robbing the Indians.

Let us stop talking about past hardships and I will state that after two more days on the road we reached Trujillo. Before entering the town, about the hour of Vespers, we observed five horsemen, who were Cortés and other gentlemen on horseback who had gone for a ride along the shore, and when they saw us from afar off, they did not know what new thing it could be. When Cortés recognised us he dismounted from his horse and with tears in his eyes came to embrace us and we him, and he said to us, "Oh! my brothers and comrades, how I longed to see you and know how you were." He was thin and we were grieved to see it, for, as we knew, he had been at the point of death from fever and the melancholy which held him, for still at that time he knew neither good or bad news from Mexico. Other persons said that he was still so near death that they had already prepared for him a cowl of [the order of] Señor San Francisco for him to be buried in. Then he went with us all on foot to the town and found us lodgings and we supped with him, and he was so badly off that there was not even enough cassava for us to eat our fill. When we had made our report of why we had come, and he had read the letters about the affair of Francisco Hernández, begging for help, he said that he would do all he was able for him. At the time we arrived at Trujillo, three days had passed since the arrival of the two small vessels with the merchandise which I have before mentioned was sent from Santo Domingo, which consisted of horses and foals and mules and old

arms, and some shirts and red caps and things of little value, and they only brought one pipe of wine and nothing more that was useful, yet those vessels had no sooner come than we all of us got into debt buying gew-gaws and foals.

While we were with Cortés telling him about the hardships of our journey, they saw a sailing ship coming from the high seas, and it arrived in port having come from the Havana sent by the Licentiate Zuazo, the same licentiate whom Cortés had left in Mexico as Chief Alcalde; he sent a few provisions for Cortés and a letter which now follows, and if I do not repeat the exact terms which it contained at least I give the substance of it.

CHAPTER CLXXXV.

How the Licentiate Zuazo sent a letter to Cortés from the Havana, and what was contained in it I will now relate.

WHEN the ship I have mentioned had come into port, and the gentleman who was her Captain had come ashore, he went to Cortés to kiss hands, and gave him a letter from the Licentiate Zuazo whom he had left in Mexico as Chief Alcalde.

As soon as Cortés had read the letter he became so miserable that he shut himself in his chamber and began to sob, and he did not come out again until the next morning, which was Saturday, and he ordered Mass of Our Lady to be said early in the morning. After Mass had been said, he begged us to listen to him and we should hear news from New Spain, how a report had been spread that we were all dead, and how they had seized our property and sold it at auction, and taken away our Indians and divided them among other

Spaniards who did not deserve them. Then he read the letter from the beginning, and the first item in it was the news which came from Castile from his father Martin Cortés and from Ordas, [stating] how the Accountant Albornoz had gone against him [Cortés] in the letters he wrote to His Majesty and to the Bishop of Burgos and to the Royal Audiencia, and what His Majesty had ordered to be done about it, [namely] to send the Admiral¹ with men, as I have stated in the chapter that treats of it; and how the Duke de Bejar had become surety and pledged his fortune and head for Cortés and for us, that we were very loyal servants of His Majesty, and other things which I have already mentioned in the chapter which tells about it; and how they had allotted the conquest of the Rio de Palmas to the Captain Narvaez, and had given to one Nuño de Guzman the Government of Panuco, and that the Bishop of Burgos was dead.

About affairs in New Spain he said that as Cortés, when at Coatzacoalcos, had given authority and decrees to the Factor Gonzalo de Salazar and to Pedro Almírez Chirinos to be governors of Mexico, if they should see that the Treasurer Alonzo de Estrada and the Accountant Albornoz were not governing well, as soon as they, the Factor and Veedor, arrived in Mexico with their powers, they set about making themselves great friends of the said Licentiate Zuazo, who was chief Alcalde, and of Rodrigo de Paz, who was chief Alguacil, and of Andrés de Tápia and Jorge de Alvarado and most of the Conquerors of Mexico. Then, as soon as the Factor saw that he had so many friends in his party, he said that the Factor and Veedor must be governors and not the Treasurer and Accountant, and about this there were many dis-

¹ Admiral of Santo Domingo, see vol. iv, p. 364.

turbances and deaths of men, some because they favoured the Factor and Veedor, and others because they were friends of the Treasurer and Accountant. However it ended in the office of Governors remaining with the Factor and Veedor, who imprisoned their opponents the Treasurer and Accountant and many of their supporters. Every day there were woundings and revolts, and the Indians who were unemployed they gave to their friends although they did not deserve them. And they did not allow the Licentiate Zuazo himself to administer justice, and had imprisoned Rodrigo de Paz because he had taken his part, and this same Licentiate Zuazo conciliated and reconciled both the Factor and the Treasurer and Accountant as well as Rodrigo de Paz, and they remained in harmony for eight days.

At this time there rose in revolt [the people of] certain provinces named the Zapotecs and Mijes, and a pueblo and stronghold where there was a great rock which was called Coatlan, and they sent to it many soldiers who had lately come from Castile, and others who were not Conquistadores, and sent as their Captain the Veedor Chirinos, and expended many golden pesos from His Majesty's property and from what was in his royal Treasury, and they took such great supplies to the camp where they were stationed that all was riot and card playing, and the Indians from the rock sallied forth in the night and fell upon the camp of the Veedor and killed some of his soldiers and wounded many others. For this reason the Factor despatched on the same service a Captain who was one of the followers of Cortés, named Andrés de Monjaraz, to be in company with the Veedor, for this Monjaraz had become great friends with the Factor, but at that time Monjaraz was crippled with boils, and was not fit to do any good whatever, and the Indians were very victorious and Mexico was ready for revolt any day.

The Factor endeavoured by every means to send gold to Castile to His Majesty, and to the chief Knight Commander of Leon, Don Francisco de los Cobos, for at that time he gave out that Cortés and all of us had been killed at the hands of the Indians at a pueblo named Xicalango.

At that time one Diego de Ordas, often named by me, had returned from Castile, he was the man whom Cortés had sent as Solicitor from New Spain, and what he solicited was for himself a commandery [of the order] of Señor Santiago, which he brought by decree from His Majesty, besides Indians and a coat of arms representing the volcano which is near Huexotzingo. When he arrived in Mexico, Diego de Ordas wished to go and search for Cortés, and this was because he saw the revolts and discords, and because he became a great friend of the Factor. He went by sea in a large ship and a launch to find out whether Cortés were alive or dead, and coasted along until he reached a port called Xicalango, where Simon de Cuenca and Captain Francisco de Medina and the Spaniards who were with him had been killed, as I have related at length in the chapter which treats of it. When Ordas heard this news he returned to New Spain without disembarking, and on landing he wrote to the Factor by some passengers, that he was certain that Cortés was dead. As soon as Ordas had published this news, he promptly crossed over to the Island of Cuba to purchase calves and mares, in the same vessel in which he had gone in search of Cortés.

As soon as the Factor saw the letter from Ordas, he went about showing it to people in Mexico, and the next day he put on mourning and had a tomb and monument placed in the principal church of Mexico, and paid honour to Cortés. Then he had himself proclaimed with trumpets and drums as Governor and Captain General of

New Spain, and ordered all the women whose husbands had died [in the company of Cortés] to pray for their souls and to marry again. He even sent this message to Coatzacoalcos and to other towns, and because the wife of one Alonzo Valiente, named Juana de Mansilla, did not wish to marry and said that her husband and Cortés and all of us were alive ; and that we old Conquistadores were not of such poor courage as those who were at the Rock of Coatlan with the Veedor Chirinos, where the Indians attacked them, and not they the Indians ; and that she had trust in God that she would soon see her husband Alonzo Valiente and Cortés and all the rest of the Conquistadores returning to Mexico ; and that she did not want to marry ; because she spoke these words the Factor ordered her to be whipped through the public streets of Mexico as a witch.

There are always traitors and flatterers in this world, and it was one of these (one whom we held to be an honourable man, and out of respect for his honour I will not name him here) who said to the Factor, in presence of many other persons, that he had been badly scared, for as he was walking one night lately near Tlatelolco, which is the place where the great Idol called Huichilobos used to stand, and where now stands the church of Señor Santiago, he saw in the courtyard the souls of Cortés and Doña Marina and that of Captain Sandoval burning in live flames, and that he was very ill through the fright from it. There also came another man whom I will not name, who was also held in good repute, and told the Factor that some evil things were moving about in the courtyards at Texcoco, and that the Indians said they were the spirits of Doña Marina and Cortés, and these were either all lies and falsehoods only reported to ingratiate themselves with the Factor, or the Factor ordered them to be told.

At that time Francisco de las Casas and Gil Gonzáles de Ávila, the Captains so often mentioned by me, who beheaded Cristóbal de Olid, arrived in Mexico. When Las Casas observed those revolutions, and that the Factor was having himself proclaimed as Governor, he said, publicly, that it was wrong and such a thing could not be allowed, for Cortés was alive and he certainly believed so, but, that if God should decree otherwise, Pedro de Alvarado was more the man and had better claim to be Governor than the Factor, and that Pedro de Alvarado should be summoned; and his brother Jorge de Alvarado and even the Treasurer and other Mexican settlers wrote to him [Pedro de Alvarado] to come in any case to Mexico with all the soldiers he had, and they would endeavour to give him the Government until they knew whether Cortés was alive, and they could send and inform His Majesty [and hear] if he were pleased to give other commands.

When Pedro de Alvarado was already on his way to Mexico on account of these letters, he grew frightened of the Factor, on account of the threats which he received from the Factor while he was on his journey [to the effect] that he would kill him, for he knew that they had hanged Rodrigo de Pas and imprisoned the Licentiate Zuazo. At that time the Factor had collected all the gold he could procure, to make it a pretext for a message to His Majesty, and to send a friend of his named Peña with it and his secret despatches. Francisco de las Casas and the Licentiate Zuazo and Rodrigo de Paz objected to this and so did the Treasurer and Accountant, until it should be known for certain whether Cortés were alive, and that he should not spread the report that he was dead, as they were not sure of it, and that if he wished to send gold to His Majesty from his Royal Fifths that was all right, but that it should be done jointly with the

countenance and consent of the Treasurer and Accountant, and not solely in his own name. Because he had already placed it on board the ships and they were ready to sail with it, Las Casas went with orders from the Chief Alcalde Zuazo (and with the approval of Rodrigo de Paz and the other officials of His Majesty's Treasury and the Conquistadores) to detain the ship until others should write to our King and Lord about the condition of New Spain, for it appeared that the Factor did not allow of other persons writing, but that only his own letters [should be sent].

When the Factor saw that Las Casas and the Licentiate Zuazo were no friends of his but were restraining him, he promptly ordered them to be arrested, and brought a suit against Francisco de las Casas and against Gil Gonzáles de Ávila for the death of Cristóbal de Olid, and sentenced them to be beheaded, and wished to carry out the sentence at once, although they appealed to His Majesty, but at their earnest entreaty he allowed the appeal and sent them as prisoners to Castile with the suits that he brought against them.

No sooner was this done than he turned against Zuazo himself, unjustly and faithlessly captured him, carried him on a cargo mule to the Port of Vera Cruz, and embarked him for the Island of Cuba, alleging as reason that he must make his report of the time he was Judge in the Island. He cast Rodrigo de Paz into prison and demanded from him the gold and silver which belonged to Cortés, because as his mayor-domo he knew where it was kept, saying that he had hidden it, because he [the Factor] wished to send it to His Majesty, for it was property which Cortés had wrongfully seized from His Majesty. Because he [Rodrigo de Paz] would not give it up, (indeed it was clear that he had not got it) for this reason he tortured him and burned his feet and

even part of his legs with oil and fire, and he was so thin and ill from imprisonment that he was nearly dying. Not content with torturing him, the Factor, knowing that if he left him alive he would go and complain about him to His Majesty, ordered him to be hanged as a rebel and a robber, and he ordered nearly all the soldiers and settlers in Mexico who were partizans of Cortés to be arrested. Jorge de Alvarado and Andrés de Tápia and most of the partizans of Cortés took refuge in the Monastery of Señor San Francisco, but many others of the Conquistadores went over to the Factor because he gave them good Indians, and they elected to shout with the winning side.

The Factor removed everything from the storehouse of ammunition and arms and ordered it to be placed in his palaces, and he ordered the cannon which were in the fortress and arsenal to be placed in front of his houses, and appointed as Captain of Artillery a certain Don Luis de Guzman, a relative of the Duke of Medina Sidonia, and appointed as Captain of his Guard one Archiaga or Artiaga (I cannot now remember his name), and Gínes Nórtes and one Pedro Gonzáles Sabiote and other soldiers were to guard his person.

Moreover in the letter which Zuazo wrote he said that he commanded Cortés to return at once and give security to Mexico, for in addition to all these evils and scandals there were other greater ones, [namely] that the Factor had written to His Majesty that they had found in the equipage of Cortés, hidden away, a false die with which he marked the gold that the Indians brought him secretly, and that he did not pay the "fifth" of it. Zuazo also stated, so that one could see how things were going in Mexico, that a settler from Coatzacoalcos, who came to that city to ask for some Indians (who at that time were unclaimed owing to the

death of another settler from among those who peopled that town,) most secretly asked a woman with whom he lodged, why she had married again, for her husband and all those who went with Cortés were certainly alive, and gave reasons and arguments in support of it. When the Factor knew of it, (and they at once went to him with the gossip) he sent four alguacils for the man who had said it, and carried him manacled to the prison, and he wished to order him to be hanged as a rebel, until the poor settler who was named Gonzalo Hernández gave in, and said that when he saw the woman weeping for her husband, so as to console her, he had said that her husband was not dead, but it was [now] certain we were all dead. Then he [the Factor] promptly gave him the Indians he asked for, and ordered him not to remain any longer in Mexico, and not to say anything else or he would order him to be hanged. Moreover Zuazo said at the end of his letter "this which I here write to your Excellency happened as I have stated, and I left them there and they put me on board ship and brought me in fetters here where I now am."

When Cortés had read this, we were so sorrowful and enraged, both with Cortés who had brought on us so many hardships, as well as with the Factor, that we uttered two thousand curses against one as well as the other, and our hearts beat with rage. Cortés could not keep back his tears, and with this same letter he went at once to shut himself up in his quarters, and did not want us to see him until past midday.

We one and all addressed him and begged him to embark at once in the three ships which were there for us to go to New Spain. He replied very affectionately—"Oh my sons and comrades, I see on one side that bad man the Factor who is very powerful, and I fear that as

soon as he knows that we are at the Port he will inflict other outrages and affronts on us more than he has done already, or he will kill me or hang me or imprison both me and you. I will embark at once, with God's help, with only four or five of your honours, and I must go very secretly and disembark at a port, so that they know nothing about it in Mexico until we enter unobserved into the city. Besides this, Sandoval is in Naco with very few soldiers and has to go through a hostile country, especially in Guatemala which is not peaceful, and it is desirable that you, Señor Luis Marin, with all your companions who came here in search of me should return and join Sandoval and take the road for Mexico."

Let us leave this, for I wish to state that Cortés wrote at once to Captain Francisco Hernández, who was in Nicaragua, who had sent Pedro de Garro, already mentioned by me, to look for a harbour, and he offered to do all that he could for him, and he sent him two mules laden with horse-shoes because he knew that he was in need of them. He also sent him iron mining tools, and rich clothes for him to wear, and four cups and jars of silver from his table service, and some jewels of gold, all of which he entrusted to a gentleman named Fulano de Cabrera, who was one of the five soldiers who went with us in search of Cortés, and this Captain was later on Captain of Benalcazar—a very valiant Captain and a cheerful man personally, a native of Old Castile. He was Quarter-master to Vasco Nuñez de Balboa, and died in the same battle in which the Viceroy died. I must leave old stories, for I wish to state that when I saw that Cortés had to go to New Spain by sea, I went to beg him as a favour in any case to take me in his company, and to remember that throughout all his hardships and wars he had always found me at his side, and I had helped him, and that now the time had come when I

should know whether he had consideration for the services and friendship I had rendered him and for my present supplication. Then he embraced me and said—"If I take you with me, who will go with Sandoval? I pray you, my son, to go with your friend Sandoval, and I pledge my beard I will grant you many favours which I certainly owe you from time back."

In short I profited nothing, for he would not let me go with him. I also wish to state that while we were staying at that town of Trujillo, a gentleman named Rodrigo Mañueco, the steward of Cortés, a courtier, to please and amuse Cortés, who was very mournful and had good reason to be so, made a bet with some other gentlemen that fully armed he would climb up to some houses which the Indians of the province had lately built for Cortés (as I have stated in the chapter which treats of the subject). These houses stood on a rather high hill, and while he was climbing up fully armed he burst [a blood vessel] while ascending the cliff and died from it.

Also when certain gentlemen, among those whom Cortés found in that town, saw that he did not give them offices as they desired, they began to form factions, and Cortés quieted them by saying that he would take them with him to Mexico, and that there he would give them honourable appointments.

Let us leave this now, and I will relate what more Cortés did, which was that he ordered Diego de Godoy, whom he had appointed Captain at Puerto de Caballos, and certain settlers who were ill and could not endure the fleas and mosquitos, and had nothing with which to support themselves and had all these reasons for misery, to go to Naco where there was good land. He ordered us to go with Captain Luis Marin on the road to Mexico, and that, if there were opportunity, we were to go to see the province of Nicaragua, so as to claim its government

from His Majesty, for even of that Cortés was covetous, to take the government in time to come if he should reach port in Mexico.

After Cortés had embraced us and we him, we left him on board, and he set sail for Mexico and we set out for Naco, very cheerful at the thought that we were marching on the road to Mexico, and, with great hardship from want of food, we arrived at Naco, and Sandoval was as pleased as we were when we arrived.

Pedro de Gallo and all his soldiers had already taken leave of Sandoval and gone off very cheerfully to Nicaragua to make his report to Captain Francisco Hernández of what he had arranged with Sandoval. Then the next day after our arrival at Naco we left it and set out on the road for Mexico, and the soldiers of the company of Garro, who had gone with us to Trujillo, went on their way to Nicaragua with the presents and letters which Cortés was sending to Francisco Hernández.

I will stop talking about our march, and will relate what happened about that present to Francisco Hernández with the governor Pedro Arias de Ávila.

CHAPTER CLXXXVI.

How certain friends of Pedrarias de Ávila went post haste from Nicaragua to inform him that Francisco Hernández, whom he had sent as Captain to Nicaragua, was in correspondence by letter with Cortés, and had revolted with the provinces, and what Pedrarias did about it.

AS a soldier named Fulano Garavito and a comrade, and another called Zamorano, who were intimate friends of Pedrarias de Ávila, the Governor of Tierra Firme, observed that Cortés had sent presents to Francisco

Hernández and understood that Pedro de Garro and other soldiers conversed in secret with Francisco Hernández, they began to suspect that he wished to give those provinces and lands to Cortés. Moreover Garavito was an enemy of Cortés, for, when they were youths in the Island of Santo Domingo, Cortés had stabbed him over a love affair with some woman. When Pedrarias de Ávila got to know this by letters and messengers, he came in a hurry with a great company of soldiers both horse and foot, and seized Francisco Hernández. Pedro de Garro, when he got to know that Pedrarias was coming in a great rage against him, promptly took to flight and came with us. If Francisco Hernández had desired to come he could have done so, but he did not wish [to come], believing that Pedrarias would treat him differently, as they had been great friends. After Pedrarias had brought Francisco Hernández to trial and found that he had rebelled, he sentenced and beheaded him in the same town which he had settled, and so ended the coming of Garro and the presents of Cortés, and we will leave them there and I will relate how Cortés returned to the port of Trujillo in a storm.

CHAPTER CLXXXVII.

How Cortés, going by sea in the direction of Mexico, met with a hurricane, and twice turned back to the port of Trujillo, and what happened to him there.

As I have stated in the last chapter, Cortés embarked at Trujillo and it seems that he encountered tempests at sea, foul winds on some occasions, and on another the foremast was carried away, and he gave orders to run to Trujillo for shelter. As he was enfeebled, out of health, and worn out by the sea, and very uneasy about

going to New Spain for fear lest the Factor should seize him, it seemed to him that it was not wise to go to Mexico at that season, so he disembarked at Trujillo and ordered masses to be said to the Holy Ghost, and processions and prayers offered to our Lord God and to our Lady the Virgin Mary to guide him as to what might most tend towards their holy service, and it appears that the Holy Spirit enlightened him not to undertake that journey then, but to conquer and settle those lands. Then without any delay and at breakneck speed he sent three messengers after us with his letters as we were on our march, imploring us not to proceed further ahead, but to conquer and settle the country, for his good guardian Angel had inspired it and enlightened his mind, and he thought of acting accordingly.

When we saw the letter and that his orders were definite, we could not stand it, and we hurled a thousand curses at him, wishing him ill luck in anything he put his hand to, and that he might be ruined as he had ruined us. In addition to this we said, one and all, to Captain Sandoval, that if Cortés wanted to settle, he might keep those he wished, for he had brought us defeat and loss enough, and we vowed not to wait for him any longer but to go to the lands in Mexico which we had gained. Sandoval also was of our opinion, and what he settled with us was that we should write to Cortés post haste by the same messengers as brought the letters, informing him of our determination.

A few days later he received our letters signed by all of us, and the answer he made us was, to make grand promises to those who might wish to stay and settle in that country, and the end of the letter contained a short threat that if we refused to obey his orders there were [plenty of] soldiers in Castile and elsewhere. When we all saw that reply we wished to continue our march to

Mexico and cause him to give up his fears. As soon as Sandoval observed this he implored us, very affectionately and with great entreaty, to wait some days while he personally went to make Cortés embark. In answer to his letter we wrote to Cortés that he must have compassion, and more consideration than he had shown in having brought us to this pass, and it was his fault that they had robbed us and sold our estates and taken our Indians, and those who were with us who were married said that they had no news of wife and children, and we prayed him to embark promptly and proceed on his way to Mexico. As for what he said about there being soldiers in Castile and everywhere else, he knew also that there were Governors and Captains stationed in Mexico, and wherever we arrived they would give us Indians.

Then Sandoval set out and took in his company one Pedro Saucedo, the flat-nosed, and a farrier named Francisco Donayre, and he took with him his good horse called Motilla, and he swore that he would make Cortés embark and go to Mexico. I have here called to mind this matter of the horse Motilla; he was a fine galloper and easily turned, a rather dark chestnut and the best looking all round that could be found in New Spain. He was so good that His Majesty had heard of him, and Sandoval even wished to send him as a present. Let us cease talking about the horse Motilla and go on to say that Sandoval wished to send it to His Majesty, and begged my horse of me, which was a very good one both for sport and racing as well as a good roadster, and this horse I had bought for six hundred pesos. It used to belong to one Avalos the brother of Sayavedra. The other horse that I brought, which had cost me at that time over six hundred pesos, was killed on an expedition to a pueblo named Zulaco. Sandoval gave me one of his in exchange for the one I gave him, and this one

that he gave me did not last two months, and it was killed in another war, and there remained to me only a very miserable colt which I had bought from the merchants who came to Trujillo, as I have related before in the chapter that treats of it. Let us go back to my story and stop talking of damage done to horses and of my bad luck. Before Sandoval left us he addressed us all with much affection, and left Luis Marin as Captain, and we went at once to some pueblos called Maniani and thence to another pueblo named Acalteca, where at that time there were many houses, where we were to await the reply from Cortés. Sandoval reached Trujillo in a few days, and Cortés was delighted to see him, and when he saw what we had written to him, he did not know whom he could ask for advice, for he had already ordered his cousin Sayavedra who was a Captain to go with all the soldiers to pacify the pueblos that were at war, and notwithstanding all the speeches and solicitations that Sandoval addressed to Cortés, as well as those of Pedro Saucedo the flat-nosed, to induce him to go to New Spain, he never would embark ; and what happened I will go on to relate.

CHAPTER CLXXXVIII.

How Cortés sent a Ship to New Spain, with a follower of his named Martin de Orantes as Captain, with letters and decrees appointing Francisco de las Casas and Pedro de Alvarado as Governors if they were there, and if not then Alonzo de Estrada and Albornoz.

NOW as Gonzalo de Sandoval could not induce Cortés to embark, for he was still intent on conquering and settling that country, which at this time was thickly peopled and said to contain gold mines, it was settled that without further delay he should send by ship to

Mexico one of his followers named Martin Dorantes,¹ an active man whom he could trust in any business of importance, and he went as Captain of the ship and took with him decrees appointing Pedro de Alvarado and Francisco de las Casas (if they had returned to Mexico) Governors of New Spain, until Cortés [himself] arrived, and if they were not in Mexico, the Treasurer Alonzo de Estrada and the Accountant Albornoz should be Governors, in the same way as he had given them authority before, and he revoked the powers given to the Factor and the Veedor. He wrote very amiably to the Treasurer and also to Albornoz, although he knew of the hostile letters he [the latter] had written to His Majesty against Cortés. He also wrote to all his friends the Conquistadores, and to the monasteries of San Francisco and the Friars. He ordered Martin Dorantes to go and disembark at a bay between Panuco and Vera Cruz, and he also impressed this on the pilot and sailors, and moreover he paid them well not to put anyone ashore except Martin Dorantes, and as soon as they had put him ashore to up anchor, make sail, and go to Panuco. He had given them the best of the three vessels which there were, and had provisioned it, and after having heard Mass they set sail, and it pleased our Lord to give them such good weather that in a few days they reached New Spain and went directly to the bay near Panuco which Martin Dorantes knew very well.

As soon as he had landed and given many thanks to God for it, Martin Dorantes disguised himself so that he should not be known, taking off his clothes and donning others like those of a farmer, for so Cortés had instructed him, and he had even carried these clothes ready with him from Trujillo. With all the letters and

Written both Dorantes and de Orantes.

decrees well hidden and secured to his body so that they should not appear bulky, he set out swiftly on his journey afoot, for he was an active pedestrian. When he reached Indian pueblos where there were Spaniards, he kept among the Indians so as not to hold converse nor to be asked questions, and when he was obliged to treat with Spaniards, they could not recognise him, for it was two years and three months since we left Mexico and his beard had grown. When someone asked him his name, or where he was going or whence he had come, in case he could not avoid answering them, he said he was called Juan de Flechilla. So four days after leaving the Ship he entered Mexico by night and went to the Monastery of Señor San Francisco, where he found many refugees, and among them Jorge de Alvarado, Andrés de Tápia, Juan Nuñez de Mercado, Pedro Moreno Medrano and many other Conquistadores and friends of Cortés. When they beheld Orantes and learned that Cortés was alive and saw his letters, one and all they could not contain their delight, but danced and jumped. Then the Franciscan Friars, and among them Fray Toribio Motolinia and Fray Diego de Altamirano, all jumped for joy and gave thanks to God for it. Then without further delay they closed all the gates of the Monastery so that no traitor, and there were many of them, should get out to take a message or talk about it [the news], and at midnight they informed the Treasurer and the Accountant and other friends of Cortés, and as soon as they heard the news they came to San Francisco, without making any noise, and examined the powers which Cortés had sent them, and decided before anything else to go and seize the Factor. They spent all the night going about warning friends and preparing arms so as to seize him [the Factor] on the following morning, for at that time the Vedor was on the hill of Coatlan.

As soon as it was dawn the Treasurer and all the partizans of Cortés set out, and Martin de Orantés went with them, so that he might be recognized, and they went to the houses of the Factor crying in the streets "Long live the King our Lord and Hernando Cortés in his royal name, for he is alive and is now coming to the city, I am his servant Orantes." When the settlers heard that noise so early in the morning, and heard cries of "Viva el Rey," all ran to arms as they were bound to do, thinking that there was something afoot in which they could support the cause of His Majesty, and when they heard that Cortés was alive and beheld Orantes they were delighted. Many of the settlers in Mexico joined the Treasurer in order to assist him, for, as it appears, the Accountant was not very enthusiastic, and behaved trickishly until Alonzo de Estrada reproved him, and over this some very angry words passed between them, because they did not please the Accountant. Going on to the Factor's houses they found him very well prepared for them, for he soon knew all about it as the Accountant himself had given him warning how they were coming to arrest him, so he ordered his cannon to be primed in front of his house, and the Captain of the artillery was Don Luis de Guzman, a cousin of the Duke of Medina Sidonia, and he had his Captains ready with many soldiers (and these Captains were named Archilaga and Gínes Nórtes and Pedro González Sobiote). When the Treasurer and Jorge de Alvarado and Andrés de Tápia and all the other Conquistadores arrived with the Accountant (although he came slowly and with an ill will) and all his people shouting for the King and Hernando Cortés in his royal name, they began to find their way in, some over the flat roofs, others by the doors of the chambers and by two other entrances. All those who were on

the side of the Factor lost heart because the Captain of the Artillery, Don Luis de Guzman, leaned towards one side and the Gunners to the other, and [the latter] abandoned the cannon. Then the Captain Archilaga made haste to hide himself, and Gínes Nórtes slipped away and went out by some corridors down below, and only Pedro Gonzáles and four of his servants remained with the Factor.

When he saw himself thus deserted the Factor himself seized a brand with which to fire the cannon, but they fell upon him so quickly that he could do no more, and there they arrested him and placed guards over him until they made a prison cage of stout beams and placed him within it, and there they fed him, and thus ended the affair of his Government. Then they promptly sent messengers to all the towns of New Spain reporting all that had happened.

This being the state of affairs some persons were pleased at it, and those to whom the Factor had given Indians and offices were sorry for it. The news reached the hill of Coatlan and Oaxaca where the Veedor was stationed. When the Veedor and his friends heard it, his sorrow and concern was so great that he fell ill and transferred the office of Captain to Andrés de Monjaraz, often mentioned by me, who was ill from boils, and came post haste to the city of Texcoco and took refuge in the Monastery of Señor San Francisco. When the Treasurer and Accountant, who were now the Governors, knew about it, they sent to arrest him in the Monastery, for already they had sent Alguacils and soldiers with orders to arrest him wherever he might be found, and also to deprive him of his office as Captain. When they knew that he was in Texcoco they removed him from the Monastery and brought him to Mexico and placed him in another cage near the Factor. Then they sent mes-

sengers to Guatemala post haste to inform Pedro de Alvarado of the imprisonment of the Factor and Veedor, and, as Cortés was in Trujillo, not far away from his [Alvarado's] conquests, he was to go quickly in search of him and make him come to Mexico, and they gave him letters and reports of all that I have stated and noted above, exactly in the way that it happened.

In addition to this the first thing the Treasurer did was to order honour to be paid to Juana de Manzilla, the wife of Alonzo Valiente, whom the Factor had ordered to be flogged as a witch. It was done in this way: he ordered all the Caballeros in Mexico to parade on horseback, and he, the Treasurer, himself carried her on the croup of his horse through the streets of Mexico, and they said that like a Roman Matron she did what she had done, and the insult which the Factor had put on her turned to her honour, and with much rejoicing they called her from thenceforward La Señora Doña Juana de Manzilla, and said that she was worthy of much praise. Moreover the Factor had not been able to compel her to marry or to say otherwise than what she had first said, that her husband and Cortés and all of us were alive. And for that honor of "Don" which they gave her, Gonzalo de Ocampo, who made the foul-mouthed lampoons, said that she extracted "Don" from her back like a nose [the length] of an arm.¹

Let us leave off here, and I will relate what more happened.

¹ This is a play on the word "Don"=a title, and don=a gift. Narices de brazo (a nose the length of an arm)=something very great, *i.e.*, she gained something very great, her title of Doña, as compensation for her thrashing.

CHAPTER CLXXXIX.

How the Treasurer and many other gentlemen prayed the Franciscan Friars to send one Fray Diego Altamirano, a relation of Cortés, in a ship to Trujillo to make him [Cortés] return, and what happened about it.

THE Treasurer and other gentlemen who were partizans of Cortés saw that it was advisable for Cortés to return at once to New Spain, for factions and parties were already springing up, and the Accountant was not content that the Factor and Veedor should remain prisoners, and above all the Accountant stood in great fear of Cortés, when he should hear of what he [the Accountant] had written about him to His Majesty, as I have already stated in parts of former Chapters which tell about it. So they decided to go and beg the Franciscan Friars to grant leave for Fray Diego Altamirano to go to Trujillo in a ship, which they had ready for him well provisioned and with a good crew, and make Cortés come back, for that Friar was his kinsman and before he had become a Friar had been a soldier, a man of war who understood negotiation, and the Friars approved of it and Fray Diego Altamirano was quite willing to go.

We need not dwell on the voyage of the Friar, who was making his preparations, and I will relate that while the Factor and Veedor were prisoners, the Accountant, as I have repeatedly mentioned, apparently behaved very trickily and with ill will when he saw that the affairs of Cortés were on the mend. As the Factor used to have as friends many men who were brigands and always on the look-out for disputes and revolutions, and were well disposed towards the Factor and Chirinos because they gave them golden pesos and Indians, a number of them agreed to unite, and certain persons of quality and of all

sorts besides decided to release the Factor and Veedor and to kill the Treasurer and the jailors, and it is said that the Accountant knew about it and was delighted at it. In order to carry out their plans they spoke very secretly to a locksmith named Guzman, who was a maker of crossbows, a low fellow who made scurrilous jokes, and told him secretly to make them keys to open the gates of the prison and of the cages where the Factor was [confined] and they would pay him very well, and they gave him a piece of gold as a retainer for the making of the keys, and they warned him and charged him to be very secret. The locksmith replied with very flattering and cheerful expressions that he was glad to do it, and that they should be more careful of the secret than they were, for this affair upon which so much depended they had revealed to him knowing who he was, but they must not disclose it to others; and he was delighted that the Factor and Veedor should come out of prison, and he asked them who and how many were in the plot, and where they were to meet when they went to do that good deed, and what day and at what hour, and they told him everything clearly about the way they arranged it. The locksmith began to forge some keys in the shape of the pattern they brought him for the keys to be made from, but not with the intention of perfecting them or making them of any use for unlocking, and he did this on purpose, and mischievously made the keys so that they could not unlock, in order to induce them to come and go to his shop on the matter of the keys being made to fit properly, and meanwhile to get at the root of the conspiracy that had been made. The longer he delayed the making of the keys, the more thoroughly he gained this knowledge, and when the day came for him to deliver the keys which he had perfected, and all were ready posted with their arms, the

locksmith went quickly to the house of the Treasurer Alonzo de Estrada and reported the affair to him. When the Treasurer knew about it, he sent secretly without delay to collect all the partizans of Cortés, and without letting the Accountant know of it they went to the house where those were assembled who were about to release the Factor; and they quickly arrested as many as twenty of them who were all armed, and the others fled and could not be captured. When enquiry had been made for what purpose they had assembled there, it was found to have been in order to release those I have named, and to kill the Treasurer. Then it was also found out that the Accountant had approved of it. As there were among them three or four men very seditious and bandits, who had been concerned in all the revolts and discords that had taken place in Mexico at that time, and even during one of them had violated a Castilian woman, after a suit had been brought against them (this was done by a Bachelor named Ortega, who was acting as Chief Alcalde and came from the same district as Cortés), Ortega sentenced three of them to be hanged and others to be flogged, and the names of those who were hanged were Pastrana, the second Balverde and the third Escobar, and I do not remember the names of those who were flogged. The locksmith hid himself for many days, for he feared the partizans of the Factor would kill him for having revealed what they had told him under such great secrecy.

Let us stop talking of this, for the men are already dead, and although it is taking a great jump which I seem to make outside of my story, yet what I shall relate now falls into its place. It is that, when the Factor had sent a ship with all the gold he could obtain to His Majesty, as I have stated in former Chapters, and had written to His Majesty that Cortés was dead,

and how they had paid him funeral honours, and had informed him about other things which suited him, and was sending to beg His Majesty to grant him the favour of the Governorship, there went, it appears, in the same ship in which he sent his despatches, other letters well concealed, so that the Factor knew nothing about them, and these letters were for His Majesty so that he should know all that was happening in New Spain, and of the atrocities and injustice which the Factor and Veedor had committed.

In addition to this, His Majesty already had a report through the Royal Audiencia of Santo Domingo and the Geronimite Friars, who were Governors of the Indies, that Cortés was alive and was serving his royal crown by conquering and settling the province of Honduras. When the Royal Council of the Indies and the Chief Commander of Leon knew this they informed His Majesty of it. Then it is reported that the Emperor our Lord said "All that has been done in New Spain has been badly done in that they have rebelled against Cortés, and they have done me much disservice. However he is alive, and I have this opinion of him, that they will be punished in retribution for their evil deeds when he arrives in Mexico."

To go back to my story, the Friar Altamirano embarked at the port of Vera Cruz as it was arranged, and meeting with good weather arrived in a few days at the port of Trujillo where Cortés was residing.

As soon as the townspeople and Cortés observed a powerful ship sailing towards the port they at once guessed the truth that it was coming from New Spain to carry him to Mexico. As soon as it made the port and the Friar had landed, accompanied by all those whom he had brought with him, and Cortés knew some of them whom he had seen in Mexico, they all went to kiss his

hands, and the Friar embraced him, and with holy and good words all went to the Church to say their prayers, and thence to their quarters, where the Padre Fray Diego Altamirano told him that he was his cousin, and related all that had happened in Mexico, as I have already fully written it down, and what Francisco de las Casas had done for Cortés and how he had gone to Castile.

All that the Friar told him Cortés already knew through the letter of the Licentiate Zuazo, as I have related in the chapter that treats of it, and he showed great concern at [hearing] it and said that it pleased our Lord that it had so happened, and he gave great thanks to Him for it and for Mexico being already at peace, and that he wished to go there at once by land, as he did not dare to go by sea, for, as was already known by Zuazo's letter, he had already embarked twice, and he could not lay his course because the sea was beset by strong and adverse currents and it was always laborious sailing, moreover he was sickly. When the pilots told him that as it was the month of April there were no currents and the weather was fair at sea, he agreed to embark. He could not set sail at once, not until Captain Gonzalo Sandoval should arrive, whom he had sent to some pueblos called Olancho, which were distant fifty-five leagues, and he had only just started to eject from that district one of Pedrarias' Captains named Rojas, whom Pedrarias had sent from Nicaragua to explore the country and seek for mines, after he had beheaded Francisco Hernández as I have related. It appears that the Indians of that province of Olancho came to complain to Cortés that certain soldiers from Nicaragua were seizing their wives and daughters and stealing their poultry and all else they possessed. Sandoval promptly set out and took sixty men with him, and wished to capture Rojas, but through certain gentlemen, who

mediated between one party and the other, they were made friends, and Rojas even gave Sandoval [a present of] an Indian page to wait upon him. Just at that time Cortés' letter arrived [ordering him] to come back without delay with all his soldiers, and telling him of the coming of the Friar and all that had happened in Mexico. When Sandoval heard this he was very pleased and could hardly await the hour to turn back, but came post haste after having ejected Rojas from there [the district].

Cortés was delighted at Sandoval's return, and gave instructions to Captain Sayavedra, who remained behind as his lieutenant in that province, as to what he was to do. He then wrote to Captain Luis Marin, and to all of us, at once to take the road to Guatemala, and he told us about all that had happened in Mexico, in the way it is mentioned here, and of the coming of the Friar and about the imprisonment of the Factor and Veedor. He also ordered Captain Godoy, who was stationed at Puerto de Caballos [engaged in] forming a settlement, to go to Naco with all his people. These letters he gave to Sayavedra with orders to send them to us with all speed, and Sayavedra, out of spite, did not want to forward them and neglected his duty, and we learnt that in fact he would not deliver them, and we never knew about them.

To go back to my story, Cortés embarked with all his friends, and with favourable weather laid his course for Havana, for the wind was more favourable for that course than for New Spain. There he disembarked, and all the settlers at Havana who were his acquaintances rejoiced at it, and they took refreshment and heard the news (brought by a ship which had come to Havana from New Spain a few days before) that Mexico was pacified, and that the Indians who had fortified the hill of Coatlan and were waging war against the Spaniards, as soon as they knew that Cortés and we Conquistadores were alive, had made peace with the Treasurer on certain conditions. I will now go on with my story.



BOOK XV.

THE RETURN TO MEXICO.

CHAPTER CXC.

How Cortés embarked at Havana to go to New Spain and with favourable weather arrived at Vera Cruz, and the delight shown by all at his coming.



AFTER Cortés had rested five days in Havana he could hardly await the hour when he would be in Mexico, and he promptly ordered all his people to embark and set sail, and with good weather he arrived in two days near to the Port of Medellin, opposite to the Island of Sacrificios. There he ordered the ships to be anchored (for the wind was not favourable for going any further), and so as not to sleep that night at sea, Cortés, with twenty soldiers who were friends of his, went ashore and marched on foot about half a league, and, as luck would have it, came on a drove of horses which had come to the port with certain passengers who were about to embark for Castile, and they went to Vera Cruz, a matter of five leagues, on the horses and mules of this drove. He ordered that no one should go and give notice that he was coming by land, and about two