

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 Admiral<sup>1</sup> 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-

---

<sup>1</sup> 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