



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

hours before dawn he reached the town and went straight-way to the church, the door of which was open, and entered it with all his company.

It was very early in the morning when the Sacristan, who was a man newly come from Castile, arrived and saw the church full of men, and, as he did not know Cortés nor those who were with him, he ran out to the street shouting and calling to the Alguacils that the church was full of strange men, so that they should order them out. On hearing the cries of the Sacristan, the chief Alcalde, with other subordinate Alcaldes and three Alguacils and many other settlers, came out armed, thinking that something worse had happened, and entered in haste and began to order us with angry words to leave the church. As Cortés was gaunt from his journeys they did not recognise him until they heard him speak, and when they saw that it was Cortés they all went to kiss his hands and bid him welcome.

Then Cortés embraced the Conquistadores who lived in the town and called them by their names, asked them how they were and spoke kindly words to them, and then Mass was said, and they took him to lodge in the best houses which belonged to Pedro Moreno Medrano, and he stayed there eight days and they entertained him with many feasts and rejoicings. They sent messengers post haste to Mexico to say that he had arrived, and Cortés wrote to the Treasurer and to the Accountant, although he was unfriendly, and to all his friends and to the Monastery of San Francisco, and all were delighted at the news.

As soon as the Indians in the neighbourhood knew about it, they all brought him presents of gold and cloths and cacao, poultry and fruits. Then he set out from Medellin and went on his journey over roads which they had cleared for him, and his lodgings were all

garlanded¹ and plentifully supplied with food for Cortés and all who went in his company. Then I could tell what the Mexicans did in the way of rejoicings, how all the pueblos round the lake combined to send him during his journey a great present of gold and cloth and poultry and all sorts of fruits of the country that were ripe in that season, and sent to ask his pardon for not sending more owing to his sudden arrival, but when he should go to his city they would do their duty and render service to him as the Captain who had conquered them and dealt with them justly ; and other pueblos came to do the same thing.

Nothing was forgotten in the province of Tlaxcala, for all the chieftains came out to receive him with dances and routs and rejoicings and plenty of food. When he arrived within three leagues of the City of Texcoco, which is a City with its subject pueblos nearly the size of Mexico, the Accountant Albornoz sallied forth [to meet him], for he had come for the purpose of receiving Cortés so as to stand well with him, for he feared him greatly.

He collected many Spaniards from all the pueblos in the neighbourhood, and together with those who were in his company and the Caciques of that City they went to receive Cortés more than two leagues [out from the city] with great preparations of games and dances. Cortés was pleased at this.² Then when he reached Texcoco they gave him another great reception, and he slept there that night and the next morning continued his journey.

Then the Municipality of Mexico, and the Treasurer,

¹ Blotted out in the original : "with flowers and roses and sweet scent."

² Blotted out in the original : "showing much affection towards Albornoz because he knew that in him he had a friend."

and all the gentlemen and Conquistadores and friends of Cortés, wrote to him begging him to tarry in some pueblos two leagues distant from Tenochtitlan Mexico, although he could well have entered that day, but that he should delay it until the next morning early, so that all might enjoy the great reception they would give him. Then the Treasurer sallied forth with all the gentlemen and Conquistadores, and the municipality of the City, and all the officials in their robes, wearing the richest garments and hose and doublets they possessed, with all kinds of musical instruments, and the Caciques for their part with many sorts of devices and liveries as was their wont, and the lake full of canoes with Indian warriors in them, just as they were used to fight with us in the time of Guatemoc, and others who came along the causeway. There were so many games and such rejoicings that one could say they went on all day long, and in the streets of Mexico all was routs and dances, and as soon as it was night much illumination in the doorways. The best of all remains to be told, for the day after Cortés arrived the Franciscan Friars formed processions giving many thanks to God for the mercy He had shown in the return of Cortés.

Then (to go back to his entry into Mexico), he went at once to the Monastery of Señor San Francisco, where he had Mass said and gave thanks to God for delivering him from the past hardships in Honduras, and bringing him back to the city.

Then he went to his houses which were well built like rich palaces, and there he was served and treated by all like a prince. And the Indians from all the provinces came to see him and brought him presents of gold, and even the Caciques from the Hill of Coatlan, who had been in rebellion, came to bid him welcome and brought him presents.

Cortés made his entry into Mexico in the month of June 1524 or 1525, and as soon as he had rested he promptly ordered the bandits to be seized, and began to make investigation into the dealings of the Factor and Veedor, and he also seized Gonzalo de Ocampo or Diego de Ocampo (I do not remember clearly his Christian name), for it was on him that they found the papers with the defamatory libels.¹ He also arrested one Ocaña, a notary who was a very old man, whom they called the body and soul of the Factor. When they were prisoners Cortés had the intention, seeing that he had justice on his side, of taking proceedings against the Factor and Veedor and as a penalty to take their lives, and, if he had done so at once, there would have been no one in Castile who would have said it was ill done, and His Majesty would have approved of it. I heard it stated before the members of the Royal Council of the Indies in the presence of the Bishop Fray Bartolomé de las Casas in the year 1540, when I went there about my lawsuits, that Cortés was very careless in the matter, and they charged him with weakness and carelessness.

CHAPTER CXCI.

How the Licentiate Luis Ponce de Leon, who came to take the 'Residencia' of Cortés, arrived at this very moment at the port of Vera Cruz with three ships, and what happened about it.

IT is necessary to go back a little, so that what I say now may be clearly understood.

I have already told in former chapters about the many complaints which were made against Cortés before His

¹ Blotted out in the original: "which was that he was making a Monastery with certain Friars, and attributing to each one of them things without truth."

Majesty when the Court was at Toledo, and how those who laid the complaints were the partizans of Diego Velásquez and all the others I have often mentioned, and the letters of Albornoz gave support to them. As His Majesty thought they [the complaints] were true, he had ordered the Admiral of Santo Domingo to come with a great company of soldiers and arrest Cortés, and all of us who went with him when he defeated Narvaez. I have also related how when the Duque de Béjar, Don Alvaro de Zuñiga, heard of it, he went to beg His Majesty not to believe the letters of a man who was very hostile to Cortés until he could ascertain the truth. As the Admiral did not come, nor the evidence in support of the suit, His Majesty ordered a nobleman who was at that time in Toledo, named the Licentiate Ponce de Leon (a cousin of the Count of Alcandete), to come and take his Residencia [of Cortés], and, if he should find him incriminated by the accusations which were brought against him, to punish him in such a way that the sentence which he should deliver should resound throughout the land. In order to obtain information regarding all the accusations that were brought against Cortés, he [Ponce de Leon] took along with him the records of all the matters they were talking of and alleging, as well as instructions as to where he was to take the Residencia. He promptly started on his journey and voyage with three ships (I do not remember exactly whether there were three or four), and, with the good weather he experienced, reached the port of San Juan de Ulua and at once disembarked and came to the town of Medellin. As soon as it was known who he was, and that he had come as judge to take the Residencia of Cortés, a Mayordomo of Cortés named Gregorio de Villalobos sent post haste to inform Cortés, and within four days he knew it in Mexico. And Cortés marvelled to hear of the sudden arrival, for he would have wished to

know it as early as possible so that he could go and give him the greatest honour and reception that he was able.

At the time when the letters reached him he was in the Monastery of San Francisco, and about to receive the body of our Lord Jesus Christ, and with much humility he prayed God to aid him in all things. When he heard that the news was quite true, he at once despatched messengers to find out who those were who were coming, and whether they brought letters from His Majesty. Two days after the messengers had arrived with the first news there came three messengers sent by the Licentiate Luis Ponce with letters for Cortés, and one was from His Majesty, from which he learned that His Majesty had ordered his Residencia to be taken.

When he saw the Royal Letters he kissed them with great reverence and humility, and placed them on his head and said that he was receiving a great favour, in that His Majesty was sending someone who would listen to him with fairness, and he immediately sent messengers with a reply to Luis Ponce himself, with pleasant words and assurances much better expressed than I know how to write them. He asked him to give him notice by which of the two roads he wished to come to Mexico, for there was one road in one direction and another by a short cut, so that he might have prepared all that was suitable for a servant of such a mighty King and Lord.

When the Licentiate saw the nature of his reply, he answered that he was very tired from his voyage and that he wished to rest for a few days, and gave him many thanks and acknowledgments for the great goodwill that he showed.

Now some settlers in that town who were enemies of Cortés, and some others whom Cortés had brought with him from the expedition to Honduras, who were not on good terms with him (they were amongst those whom

he had deported from Panuco), wrote letters from Mexico to Luis Ponce, and other opponents of Cortés told him that Cortés wished to have the Factor and Veedor executed before the Licentiate could go to Mexico. Moreover they told him that he should look well to his personal safety, for, if Cortés wrote to him with so many assurances and [tried] to find out by which of the two roads he wished to come, it was in order to kill him, and that he should place no faith in his words and assurances. They told him many other iniquities which they said Cortés had perpetrated as well on Narvaez as on Garay, and about the soldiers whom he had left abandoned in Honduras, and the three thousand Mexicans who had died on the journey, and about a Captain named Diego de Godoy whom he left settled there with thirty soldiers, all of them invalids, and it was believed that they were dead, (it turned out to be true what they said about Godoy). They begged him at once to go post haste to Mexico, and not to worry about doing anything else, and implored him to take warning from the affair of Captain Narvaez and that of the Adelantado Garay, and that of Cristóbal de Tápia who refused to obey him, whom he made to embark and return whence he had come; and they told him many other hurtful things and nonsense against Cortés in order to create prejudice, and they even made him believe that Cortés would not obey him. When the Licentiate Luis Ponce heard all this, he had in his company other gentlemen, namely the Chief Alguacil Proaño, a native of Córdoba, and his brother, and one Salazar de la Pedrada who came as Alcaide of the fortress and soon died of pleurisy, and a Licentiate or Bachelor named Marcos de Aguilar, and one Bocanegra of Córdoba, and certain Dominican Friars and their Provincial, one Fray Tomas Ortiz, who they say had been for some years Prior in some country

of which I do not remember the name ; and about this monk who was their Prior, all who came in his company said that he was more diligent in looking after business than after the office he held. To go back to my story—Luis Ponce took counsel with these gentlemen whether he should go to Mexico at once or no, and all advised him not to tarry by day or night, believing that the rumours were true about the iniquities of Cortés, so that when messengers from Cortés arrived with more letters in reply to those which the Licentiate had written, and brought many fresh supplies for him, the Licentiate was already close to Iztapalapa, where he was given a great reception on account of the great happiness and contentment that Cortés felt at his coming. He ordered a very sumptuous banquet for him, and after being well served at the dinner with many and excellent viands, Andrés de Tápia (for so he was called), who acted as steward at that feast, suggested as an appetizing and novel matter, and at that time a new thing in those countries, that His Excellency might like to be served with cream and curds. All the gentlemen who dined there with the Licentiate were delighted that they should be brought, and ate of them, and the cream and curds were very good, and some of them ate so much of them that their greed turned and overflowed. This I state as true, that when I eat them my stomach turns because they are cold, but others had no sensation of their having done any harm in the stomach. Then that Friar named Fray Tomas Ortiz, who came as Provincial Prior, said that the creams and curds had been mixed with realgar¹ and that he did not wish to eat them for fear of it, and others who ate there said that they saw the Friar eat of them to repletion, and he had said that they were very good,

¹ Realgar = red sulphide of arsenic.

and because Andrés de Tápia served as steward they suspected him of a thing that never entered his head. To go back to our story—Cortés was not present at this reception at Iztapalapa and remained in Mexico.¹ Then, as Iztapalapa is two leagues from Mexico, he had men posted to advise him at what hour they were coming to Mexico, and Cortés went out to receive him with all the horsemen that Mexico could turn out. With Cortés himself went Gonzalo de Sandoval, and the Treasurer Alonzo de Estrada, and the Accountant and all the Municipality and the Conquistadores, and Jorge de Alvarado and Gomez de Alvarado (for Pedro de Alvarado was not in Mexico but in Guatemala whither he had gone in search of Cortés), and many other gentlemen came out who had recently arrived from Castile. When they met on the Causeway great respect was shown between the Licentiate and Cortés, and the Licentiate in every way appeared² very reserved,³ giving himself airs in the matter of Cortés shaking hands with him, not wishing to take his hand, and they paid each other compliments until he took it. When they entered the City the Licentiate expressed admiration at the great fortress which was in it, and at the many cities and towns which he had seen on the lake, and said that he felt sure that there had never been a Captain in the world who, with so few soldiers, had won so many countries and captured such a strong city. As they went along talking of this they proceeded straight to the Monastery of Señor San Francisco where Mass was at once said. When Mass was

¹ Blotted out in the original: "there was a report that on his behalf he sent very secretly to Luis Ponce a good present of blocks and bars of gold, and they say he would not accept it."

² Blotted out in the original: "a true gentleman."

³ Blotted out in the original: "a very courteous and upright judge."

over Cortés asked the Licentiate Luis Ponce to exhibit the Royal Decrees and decide to carry out what His Majesty had ordered him to do, because he [Cortés] was obliged to seek justice against the Factor and the Veedor, and he [Luis Ponce] replied that it should stand over till next day.

Cortés then, accompanied by all the horsemen who had come out for the reception, took him to lodge in his palaces, which were all hung with tapestry, and to a very stately dinner served with so much gold and silver plate and so well arranged that Luis Ponce himself said secretly to the Chief Alguacil Proaño, and to one Bocanegra, that from all his arrangements and speeches and deeds Cortés certainly appeared to have been a great lord for many years past.

I will cease speaking of these praises and say that the next day they went to the principal church, and, after Mass had been said, he [Luis Ponce] ordered the Municipality of the City to be present, and the officers of the Royal Exchequer, and the Captains and Conquistadores of Mexico, and when he saw them all together, in the presence of the two notaries (one on behalf of the Municipality and the other whom Luis Ponce brought with him), he presented his Royal Decrees. Cortés with great respect kissed them and placed them on his head, and said that he obeyed them as commands and edicts of his Lord and King, and would fulfil them with his breast to the ground, and so did all the gentlemen and Conquistadores and the Municipality and His Majesty's officials. After this had been done the Licentiate took the wands of justice from the Chief Alcalde and the subordinate Alcaldes, and from the Hermandad¹ and Alguacils, and after he had them in his possession he

¹ An association forming a minor Court of Justice.

gave them back to all of them, and said to Cortés: “Señor Capitan, this Government of your Excellency His Majesty has commanded me to take over for myself, not because you cease to be worthy of many other and greater offices, but we are obliged to do what our Lord and King commands us.” Cortés with great respect gave him thanks for this, and said that he was ready to do what he was ordered to do in the service of His Majesty, which his Excellency would quickly perceive, and, through the evidence and the investigation to which he would subject him, would learn how loyally he had served our Lord the King, and would understand the malignity of certain persons who had already gained a hearing from him with advice and letters full of malice. The Licentiate replied “Wherever there are honest men there are also others who are not, for such is the way of the world, and those who have received benefits from a man will speak well of him and those who have suffered wrongs will do the contrary.”

Thus that day passed, and the next day after hearing Mass, which was said in the palaces where the Licentiate was lodging, he [Luis Ponce] sent a gentleman with much respect to summon Cortés, and in the presence of Fray Tomas Ortiz who had come as Prior—no other persons being present, only those three in secret—the Licentiate Luis Ponce de Leon said to him [Cortés], with much respect: “Señor Capitan, Your Excellency should know that His Majesty commanded and charged me that to all the Conquistadores who left the Island of Cuba and were present at the capture of these lands and cities, and to most of the Conquistadores who arrived later, I should give assignments of good Indians, and should give precedence and should favour the former somewhat more, and this I say because I am informed that many of the Conquistadores who came with Your Excellency hold poor assignments, and you have given

the better ones to persons who have now lately come from Castile, who do not deserve them. If this is so, His Majesty did not give you the Government for this purpose but to carry out his royal commands.”

Cortés replied that he had given Indians to all, and that the luck of each one was that good Indians fell to the share of some, and to others not such good ones, but that he [Luis Ponce] could correct this, as he had come for that purpose, and the Conquistadores were worthy of it. He [Luis Ponce] also asked him what had become of all the Conquistadores whom he had taken with him to Honduras, and how it was that he left them there abandoned and dying of hunger. They had especially told him about one Diego de Godoy, whom he left as leader of a company of thirty or forty men at Puerto de Caballos, and that the Indians had probably killed him, for all [his companions] were very ill (and what they told him turned out to be true as I shall relate further on), and that it would have been well if, after capturing that great city and New Spain, they should have remained to enjoy the reward and rest, and that he should have taken those who had lately arrived to labour and form settlements there; and he asked after Captain Luis Marin and many of the soldiers and about me. Cortés replied that in matters of assault and wars he did not dare to go to distant lands unless he took trustworthy soldiers, and that they would soon reach the city, for they ought already to be on the road, and that His Excellency [Luis Ponce] should assist them in every way and give them good assignments of Indians.

The Licentiate Luis Ponce also asked him with pleasant words how was it that he had gone on such a long and distant journey against Cristóbal de Olid without having His Majesty's permission, leaving Mexico

in danger of being lost. To this Cortés replied that, as His Majesty's Governor and Captain General, it seemed to him to be advisable in His Majesty's interest, in order that other Captains should not revolt, and that he reported it first to His Majesty. In addition to this [the Licentiate] asked him about the capture and defeat of Narvaez, and how the fleet and soldiers of Francisco de Garay were lost, and what he died of, and why he forced Cristóbal de Tápia to embark; and he asked him about many other things which I do not record here, all in the presence of Fray Tomas Ortiz.

And Cortés replied to them all, giving very good reasons, so that Luis Ponce appeared to be partially satisfied. All these questions that he asked him he brought in a memorandum from Castile, and many others were about things they had told him on the road and had communicated to him in Mexico. As Fray Tomas Ortiz was present at these questionings, when they had finished talking and Cortés had gone to his quarters, the Friar secretly took aside three Conquistadores, who were friends of Cortés, and told them that Luis Ponce intended to cut off Cortés' head, for such were the orders he had brought from His Majesty, and to that end he had asked him what I have recorded. Early in the morning of the following day this same Friar very secretly addressed Cortés in these words: "Señor Capitan, on account of my great regard for you, and as my duty and religion [impel me] to offer advice in such cases, I give you to know, Señor, that Luis Ponce brings decrees from His Majesty to have you beheaded."

When Cortés heard this, after they had carried on the conversations reported by me, he became very distressed and thoughtful. On the other hand they had told him that the Friar was ill-conditioned and seditious, and that he had better not believe much of what he said, and it

seemed as though he had addressed these remarks to Cortés to ensure his taking him as intercessor and petitioner, so that the decree should not be carried out against him, and in order that Cortés should give him some bars of gold for it. Other persons reported that Luis Ponce told it to Cortés in order to frighten him, so that he should implore not to be beheaded. When Cortés perceived this, he replied to the Friar with much courtesy and with great promises that he would give him the wherewithal to return to Castile, and Cortés told him that he had confidence that His Majesty, as a most Christian King, would send to confer favours [on him] for his many and great services which he had always rendered him, and would not find that he had done him any disservice whatever; this confidence which he held he likewise placed in Señor Luis Ponce de Leon as a person who would not go beyond what His Majesty had commanded him. When the Friar heard this, and found that Cortés did not beg him to become his intercessor with Luis Ponce, he became disconcerted, and I will relate what more happened, for Cortés never gave him any of the money he had promised him.

CHAPTER CXCVII.

How the Licentiate Luis Ponce, after he had exhibited the Royal Decrees and met with obedience, ordered the Residencia of Cortés and those who had held judicial office to be proclaimed, and how he fell ill of sleeping sickness and died of it, and what else happened.

AFTER he [the Licentiate] had exhibited the Royal Decrees, and they had been obeyed with much reverence by Cortés, by the Municipality, and by the rest of the Conquistadores, he ordered a Residencia General to be proclaimed against Cortés and against those who had

held judicial office, and had been Captains. Since many persons were ill-disposed towards Cortés, and others were in the right in what they petitioned, what haste they made to lodge complaints of Cortés and to present witnesses, so that the city was seething with lawsuits and claims made against him! Some said that he did not give them the share of gold they were entitled to, others brought action because he did not give them Indians in accordance with His Majesty's commands, but gave them to servants of his father, Martin Cortés, and to other unworthy persons, servants of noblemen of Castile; others claimed for horses killed in the wars, for although there had been much gold with which he could have paid them, he had not satisfied them, in order to keep the gold himself. Others lodged complaints on account of personal insults that they suffered by order of Cortés, and one Juan Juarez, his brother-in-law, brought a wicked claim against him on account of Cortés's wife Doña Catalina Juarez la Marcaida. At that time a Fulano de Barrios had arrived from Castile, and Cortés married him to a sister of Juan Juarez and sister-in-law of his [own], and that claim which Juan Juarez had brought was settled for the time.

This Barrios is the man with whom one Miguel Díaz had a lawsuit about half the pueblo of Mestitan, as I have stated in the chapter that speaks about it.

To return to our Residencia—As soon as the Residencia was begun it pleased our Lord Jesus Christ on account of our sins and misfortune that the Licentiate Luis Ponce fell ill of sleeping sickness, and it happened in this way: coming from the Monastery of Señor San Francisco, after hearing Mass, he got a very severe fever and took to his bed and remained four days unconscious and out of his right mind, and most of the day and night he was asleep. When this was observed by

the doctors who attended him, namely the Licentiate Pero López and Doctor Ojeda, and another physician whom he [Luis Ponce] had brought from Castile, they unanimously agreed that it would be advisable for him to confess himself and receive the Holy Sacraments, and the Licentiate himself desired it most willingly.¹ After receiving them with humility and with great penitence he made his will, and appointed as his Lieutenant Governor the Licentiate Marcos de Aguilar, whom he had brought with him from the Island of Hispañola. Others say that this Marcos de Aguilar was a Bachelor and not a Licentiate, and that he had not the qualities for command. He [Ponce] left the power to him with this condition, that all the matters of lawsuits and contentions and Residencias, and the Edicts concerning the Factor and Veedor, should remain in the condition he left them until His Majesty had been informed of what had happened, and that they should at once send a messenger in a ship to His Majesty. When his will was made and his soul composed, on the ninth day after he had fallen ill he gave up his soul to Our Lord Jesus Christ. As soon as he was dead, the mourning and grief which the Conquistadores, one and all, felt was very great, and they wept for him as though he had been the father of them all, for he certainly came to assist those whom he should find to have served His Majesty faithfully, and he made this public before he died, and it was found in the decrees and instructions which he brought from His Majesty, that he was to give the best assignments of Indians to the Conquistadores, so that they should experience improvement in everything.

Cortés and most of the gentlemen of that City put on

¹ Blotted out in the original: "for he was a very good Christian of very many virtues."

mourning, and they carried him [the body] to bury it with great pomp at [the monastery of] Señor San Francisco, and with all the wax [candles] that could then be obtained. His burial was most solemn considering those times.

I have heard it said, by certain gentlemen who were present when he fell ill, that, as Luis Ponce was a musician and a man of naturally cheerful disposition, in order to cheer him up they went to play a guitar to him and give him a serenade, and he ordered them to play him a dance, and as he lay in bed he beat time with his fingers and feet and moved them about until the dance was finished, and at the very moment the dance ended he lost power of speech.

When he was dead and buried as I have related, one could hear the muttering there was in Mexico among persons who were hostile to Cortés and Sandoval, for they said and declared that they had given him [Luis Ponce] poison from which he died, and that he had done the same to Francisco de Garay, and he who insisted on it most was Fray Tomas Ortiz, already mentioned by me before, who came as Prior of certain Friars whom he [Luis Ponce] brought in his company, who also died of sleeping sickness within two months, as well as some of the other Friars. I also wish to state that it appears that the pestilence was caught in the ships in which Luis Ponce came, for more than one hundred persons who came in them caught sleeping sickness and disease of which they died at sea, and, after disembarking, many others died in the town of Medellin. Even of the Friars, very few survived, and among those who died was the Provincial or Prior who died within a few months; and there was a report that sleeping sickness spread in Mexico.

CHAPTER CXCIH.

How, after the death of the Licentiate Luis Ponce de Leon, the Licentiate Marcos de Aguilar began to govern, and the disputes that arose about it; and how Captain Luis Marin and all those of us who were in his company chanced to meet Pedro de Alvarado who was marching in search of Cortés, and how both parties rejoiced, because the country was hostile and could not be traversed without great danger.

WHEN Marcos de Aguilar undertook the Government of New Spain in accordance with the will of Luis Ponce de Leon, many persons who were on bad terms with Cortés and all their friends and the majority of the Conquistadores wished the Residencia to be proceeded with as the Licentiate Luis Ponce de Leon had begun it, but Cortés objected that he [Aguilar] could not deal with it under the authority of Luis Ponce de Leon's last will, however, if Marcos de Aguilar desired to go on with it, that he was welcome to do so.

Another objection was raised by the Municipality of Mexico urging that Luis Ponce had no power to dispose in his will that the Licentiate Aguilar should govern alone, firstly because he was very old, in his dotage, and crippled with tumours, and had little authority and showed this in his appearance, and he knew nothing about the affairs of the country nor had he informed himself about them, nor about the persons who were worthy. Moreover, they would neither respect him nor dread him. It might [therefore] be best for him to take Cortés as his colleague in the government, until His Majesty should order otherwise, in order that all should fear [him] and the justice of His Majesty be greatly revered.

Marcos de Aguilar replied that he would depart neither much nor little from what Luis Ponce ordered in his will, and that he must govern alone, and that if they intended

to install another Governor by force they would not be doing what His Majesty commanded. Added to what Marcos de Aguilar said, Cortés was afraid of further steps being taken, notwithstanding the speeches which the proctors of the cities and towns of New Spain made to him that he should endeavour to become Governor, and that they would persuade Marcos de Aguilar to [agree to] it by sound arguments, for it was clear that he was very infirm, and it would be to the service of God and of His Majesty. However, for all they said to Cortés, he would never touch on that point again but [preferred] that the aged Aguilar should be sole governor, although he was so infirm and consumptive that he was provided with a Castilian woman to suckle him, and some she-goats that he might drink their milk as well. At that time a son whom he had brought with him died of sleeping sickness in the same way that Luis Ponce died.

I will leave this to its proper time, as I wish to turn far back in my story and relate what was done by Captain Luis Marin, who stayed behind with all the people at Naco, awaiting a reply from Sandoval in order to know whether or not Cortés had embarked, and we received no reply whatever. I have already told how Sandoval left us to go and force Cortés to embark and go to New Spain, and promised to write to us what happened, so that we could go with Luis Marin on the road to Mexico; and, although Sandoval and Cortés wrote on two separate occasions, we never received a reply, and Sayavedra never cared to write to us. So it was decided by Luis Marin, and all of us who had come with him, that ten mounted soldiers should go quickly to Trujillo to find out about Cortés, and Francisco de Marmolejo went as our Captain, and I was one of the *tep*. We went inland through a hostile country until we reached Olancho, which is now called Guayape, where the rich gold mines were, and there

we heard the news from two invalid Spaniards and from a Negro how Cortés had embarked a few days before with all the gentlemen and conquistadores who were with him, because the City of Mexico had sent to summon him as all the settlers in Mexico were willing to obey him, and that a Franciscan Friar had come for him ; and that Sayavedra, Cortés's cousin, remained behind as Captain in some hostile towns near by.

We were delighted at the news and at once wrote to Captain Sayavedra, by some Indians of that pueblo of Olancho which was at peace, and in four days a reply came which told us of certain things which have already been stated, and we gave many thanks to God for it, and with forced marches we returned to where Luis Marin was stationed. I remember that we hurled stones at the country we were leaving behind, crying "Stay where you are evil land, for with God's help we will march to Mexico," and continuing our journey we found Luis Marin in a pueblo called Acalteca, and when we arrived with our news he was greatly cheered. Presently we struck the road to a pueblo named Maniani and found there six soldiers belonging to the company of Pedro de Alvarado who were searching for us, and one of them was Diego López de Villa Nueva who is now a settler in Guatemala, and when we recognised each other we embraced, and on asking after their Captain Pedro de Alvarado they replied that he was close by with many gentlemen who had come in search of Cortés, and they told us all that had happened in Mexico, which I have already related, and how they had sent to summon Pedro de Alvarado to become governor, and the reason why he did not go, which I have stated in the chapter that treats of the subject. Continuing our march, within two days we met Pedro de Alvarado and his soldiers near a town called Chuluteca Malalaca.

One can hardly describe his delight when he knew that Cortés had gone to Mexico, for it released him from the laborious journey which he was to take in search of him, and was a relief to them all.

While we were there in this pueblo of Chuluteca, there arrived at the same time certain Captains of Pedrarias de Ávila named Garavito and Canpañon, and others whose names I forget, and, according to what they said, they came to explore the country and to settle boundaries with Pedro de Alvarado. After we arrived at that pueblo with Captain Luis Marin we all stayed together there for three days—the people of Pedro Arias de Ávila and Pedro de Alvarado and ourselves.

From this place Pedro de Alvarado sent Gaspar Arias de Ávila, who was [afterwards] a settler in Guatemala, to discuss certain matters of business with the Governor Pedro Arias de Ávila, and I have heard say that it was about marriages, for Gaspar Arias de Ávila paid great court to Pedro de Alvarado.

To go on with our journey—the people of Pedro Arias stayed in that pueblo and we continued our march towards Guatemala. Before reaching the province of Cuscatlan¹ it rained heavily, and a river called Lempa came down in flood and we had no means whatever of crossing it, so we decided to fell a tree called a Ceiba, and it was large enough to make into a canoe, larger than any that had ever been seen in these parts. With great labour we crossed the river in five days, and there was a great scarcity of maize. After the passage of the river we came on some pueblos which we called “los Chaparristiques,” for such is their name, where the Indians, natives of those pueblos, killed a soldier named Nicuesa and wounded three of our men who had gone to search

¹ A province of Salvador.

for food. We went to rescue them, and they [the Indians] were already routed, but in order to avoid delay they were left unpunished, and this happened in the province where now the town of San Miguel is settled.

From there we entered the province of Cuscatlan, which was hostile, and we found plenty to eat, and from there we came to some pueblos near to Petapa. The Guatemaltecos had some hills intrenched on the road and some very deep gullies where they awaited us, and we were three days in capturing and passing them. There they wounded me with an arrow, but the wound was of no importance.

Then we came to Petapa, and the next day came upon this valley, which they called the [valley of the] cross-eyed, where now this city of Guatemala¹ is settled. At that time it was altogether hostile and we found many barricades and pits, and we fought with the natives to force a passage; and I remember that as we were descending a slope the earth began to tremble so that many soldiers fell to the ground, for the earthquake continued a long time.

Then we went to the site of the old city of Guatemala,² where the Caciques named Zinacan and Sacachul used to reside. Before entering the city there was a very deep gully where the squadrons of Guatemaltecos were waiting to prevent our entry, and we made them flee, unfortunately for them, and went on to sleep in the city, and the lodgings and houses were good and the buildings very fine, in fact befitting Caciques who ruled all the neighbouring provinces. From there we went out to the plain and built ranchos and huts, and stayed in them for ten days, for Pedro de Alvarado sent twice to summon the people of Guatemala and other pueblos in the neigh-

¹ Now Antigua.

² Iximché.

bourhood to make peace, and we waited the time I have mentioned to learn their reply. As none of them would come in, we went on by long days' marches without halting to where Pedro de Alvarado had left his army settled, for it was a hostile country and he had left his brother named Gonzalo de Alvarado there as Captain.

The village where we found them was called Olintepec, and we rested there several days and then we went to Soconusco and thence to Tehuantepec. At this time two Spaniards, settlers in Mexico, who had come with us on that toilsome march, died, as well as a Mexican Cacique named Juan Velásquez, one of Guatemoc's Captains, already mentioned by me. Then we went post haste to Oaxaca, for by that time we had got to know about the death of Luis Ponce and other things already related by me, and they said much good of him, and that he came to carry out what His Majesty had ordered, and we could hardly await the hour of our arrival in Mexico.

Then, as we were [a company] of over eighty soldiers with Pedro de Alvarado among them, when we arrived at a pueblo named Chalco we sent messengers thence to inform Cortés that we would enter Mexico on the following day, so that they might have quarters prepared for us, for we were arriving very much worn out, as it was more than two years and three months since we set out from that city. When it was known in Mexico that we had reached Iztapalapa, Cortés and many gentlemen came out on the causeway to receive us, and when we arrived, before going anywhere else, we went to the principal church to give thanks to our Lord Jesus Christ who had brought us back to that City. From the Church Cortés took us to his Palace, where they had prepared a grand feast for us very well served. Alvarado's quarters were already prepared, as the fortress was then his home,

for at that time he was appointed Alcayde of the fortress and the arsenal. Sandoval took Captain Luis Marin to lodge in his house, and Andrés de Tápia took me and another friend named Captain Miguel Sánchez to lodge in his house, and he paid us great honour. Sandoval sent me clothes in which to array myself, and gold and cacao to spend, and so did Cortés and other settlers in the city to soldiers and friends among those who had come there.

The following day, after commending ourselves to God, I and my companion Captain Luis Sánchez set out through the city, and we took with us as intercessors Captain Sandoval and Andrés de Tápia, and we went to see and speak to the Licentiate Marcos de Aguilar, who, as I have said, was governor through the authority that Luis Ponce had left to that effect. The mediators who went with us, whom I have already said were Captain Sandoval and Andrés de Tápia, made a statement to Marcos de Aguilar concerning our persons and services, in order to beg him to give us Indians in Mexico, as those in Coatzacoalcos were of no use to us. After many speeches and promises which he made to us on the subject, he said that he had no authority either to give or take away any Indians whatever, for so Luis Ponce de Leon left in his will when he died, that all the affairs and lawsuits and unemployed Indians in New Spain should remain in the condition in which they stood until His Majesty should send to order otherwise; that if he were sent authority for [assigning] Indians he would give us the best he could find in the country. We then took our leave of him.

At this time a certain Diego de Ordás, very often mentioned by me, arrived from the Island of Cuba,¹ and as it

¹ Blotted out in the original: "who had gone to purchase mares and calves, as I have originally stated."

was he who had written the letter to the Factor stating that all of us who had gone out from Mexico with Cortés were dead, Sandoval and other gentlemen asked him with very bitter words why he had written this, when he neither knew nor possessed any evidence of it, and [added] that those letters which he sent to the Factor were so mischievous that New Spain might have been lost through them. Diego de Ordás replied with solemn oaths that he never wrote such a thing, but only that he had received news from a pueblo named Xicalango that the pilots and sailors of two ships had quarrelled and killed each other, and that the Indians had ended by killing certain sailors who were left in the ships, and that if the letters themselves should be produced they would see if it were not true; and that if the Factor altered them or substituted others he [Diego de Ordás] was not to blame, and if Cortés wished to find out the truth,—the Factor and Veedor were [still] prisoners in the cages. However, Cortés did not dare to bring them to justice on account of the orders left by Luis Ponce de Leon, and as he had many other contentions [on hand] he decided to keep quiet in this case of the Factor until orders came from His Majesty, and he was afraid lest further ill consequences should follow; also because at that time he made claim that they should return a great quantity of his property which they had sold, and spent for funeral honours and to say Masses for his soul, although those funeral honours and Masses were celebrated with malice and to instil belief throughout the city, and they conferred benedictions and paid funeral honours to Cortés and ourselves so that it should be believed to be true that we were all dead. Concerned in these lawsuits a settler in Mexico, called Juan Cáceres the rich, purchased the benedictions and Masses which had been celebrated for the soul of Cortés, to be applied to that of Cáceres.

I must stop telling old stories and will relate how Diego de Ordás, who was a man of good counsel, seeing that they no longer respected Cortés and took no account of him after the coming of Luis Ponce de Leon, and that the Government had been taken from him and many persons were insolent to him and held him of no account, advised him to claim treatment as a nobleman, and style himself "My Lord," and to assume a title and not be called simply Cortés but Don Hernando Cortés. Ordás also told him that he should remember that the Factor was a servant of the Commendador Mayor, Don Francisco de los Cobos, the man who ruled all Castile, and that some day he might need the help of Don Francisco de los Cobos, and that Cortés himself was in no great favour with His Majesty nor with the members of his Royal Council of the Indies, and that he had better beware of killing the Factor until he was sentenced by the Courts, for there were strong suspicions in Mexico that he [Cortés] wished to despatch and kill him in the cage itself.

As we now come to the point, I wish to state before going on with my story, why I am so concise in all that I write, and, when it comes to conversations, in mentioning Cortés I have not called him and will not call him Don Hernando Cortés, nor by other titles of Marquis or Captain, but only plainly Cortés. The reason of this is because he himself preferred to be called simply Cortés, and at that time he was not a Marquis, for this name of Cortés was as highly considered and esteemed throughout Castile¹ as that of Julius Cæsar or Pompey was in the time of the Romans, or in our times we hold that of Gonzalo Hernández surnamed "The Great Captain," or among the Carthaginians that of Hannibal, or of that

¹ Blotted out in the original: "and in many parts of the Christian world."

valiant and never vanquished gentleman Diego García de Paredes.

Let us stop talking of these past glories and I will relate how at that time the Treasurer Alonzo de Estrada married his two daughters, one to Jorge de Alvarado, brother of Don Pedro de Alvarado, and the other to a gentleman named Don Luis de Guzman, son of Don Juan de Sayavedra Count of Castellar, and then it was arranged that Don Pedro de Alvarado should go to Castile to beg His Majesty to grant him the Government of Guatemala, and while he was away he sent Jorge de Alvarado as his Captain for the pacification of Guatemala. When Jorge de Alvarado went, he took with him on the road more than two hundred Indians from Tlaxcala, Cholula, Mexico and Guacachula and other provinces, and they aided him in the wars. At that time also Marcos de Aguilar sent to settle the province of Chiapa, and a gentleman named Don Juan de Enríquez de Guzman, a near relation of the Duke of Medina Sidonia, went [with this expedition]. He also sent to settle the province of Tabasco, which is on the river called Grijalva, and a gentleman named Baltazar Osorio, a native of Seville, went as Captain. He also sent to pacify the pueblos of the Zapotecs, which stand among very high sierras, and there went as Captain one Alonzo de Herrera, a native of Jérez, and this Captain was one of Cortés' soldiers. Not to enumerate at present what each of these Captains did in his conquests, I will leave the account of them until the proper time and season shall arrive, and I wish to relate how at this time Marcos de Aguilar died, and what happened about the will he made that the Treasurer should become Governor.

CHAPTER CXCIV.

How Marcos de Aguilar died, and by his will appointed the Treasurer Alonzo de Estrada as Governor (but he was not to give judgment in the suits of the Factor or Veedor, nor to grant or take away Indians, until His Majesty should ordain what was most to his advantage), in the same way as Luis Ponce had delegated his authority to him.

WHILE Marcos de Aguilar held the government, as I have stated, he was very consumptive and suffering from boils, and the doctors ordered him to be suckled by a woman of Castile, [by which means] and the milk of goats he supported himself for about eight months, then from those diseases and fevers which he caught he died.

In the will which he executed he enacted that the Treasurer Alonzo de Estrada should be sole Governor, with neither more nor less powers than he himself had received from Luis Ponce de Leon.

The Cabildo of Mexico and the procurators of certain cities, who at the time happened to be in Mexico, realised that Alonzo de Estrada would not be able to govern as well as the circumstances required, for the [following] reason: Nuño de Guzman, who two years previously had come from Castile to govern the province of Panuco, occupied the border-lands of Mexico, claiming that they belonged to his province. He came full of fury and regardless of the orders His Majesty had given in the decrees relating to the matter, which he had brought [with him]. Then because a settler from Mexico named Pedro Gonzáles de Trujillo, a man of high birth, had said that he did not wish to stay under his rule but under that of Mexico (because the Indians of his "encomienda" were not natives of Panuco), and on account of other words that passed; without giving him [Pedro Gonzáles] a chance to defend himself, he ordered him to be

hanged. In addition to this, he committed other follies, and hanged another Spaniard in order to make himself feared, and he had no respect for, and took no notice of, the Treasurer, Alonzo de Estrada, although he was Governor, nor did he hold him in such reverence as he was in duty bound to do. When they observed these follies of Nuño de Guzman, the Cabildo of Mexico and other gentlemen residents, in order to inspire Nuño de Guzman with fear, and make him obey His Majesty's commands, entreated the Treasurer to associate Cortés with himself in the government, as it would be to the advantage and to the service of God our Lord and of His Majesty. However, the Treasurer would not do so. Other persons said that Cortés did not wish to accept, in order that no malicious [persons] should [be able to] say that he wanted to assume the government by force, also because there were murmurs that suspicion attached to the death of Márcos de Aguilar, and that Cortés had caused it, and given him the dose from which he died. It was arranged that Gonzalo de Sandoval, who was Chief Alguacil, and a person held in very high esteem, should govern conjointly with the Treasurer, and the Treasurer thought well of it, but other persons alleged that if he agreed, it was in order to marry his daughter to Sandoval, for if the marriage took place he would be far more highly esteemed, and perchance would obtain the Government, for at that time this New Spain was not thought so much of as it is to-day.

During the Government of the Treasurer and Gonzalo de Sandoval, it seems that there were such crazy people in the world that one Fulano Proaño, who, it was said at that time, had gone to Jalisco fleeing from Mexico, and who afterwards became a very rich man, got into a dispute with the Governor Alonzo de Estrada, and made use of discourtesy of such a nature that I will not repeat

it here. Sandoval, who as governor should have arrested Proaño and tried the case, did not do so. Rumour said that he rather encouraged him to commit the atrocious crime and take to flight, whither he could not be got at, in spite of all the great efforts the Treasurer made to arrest him. [Moreover] a few days after this insult had taken place, another most evil crime was committed, in that they placed on the doors of the Treasurer's house some foul and very evil libels, and although it was well known who placed them there, seeing that justice could not be obtained, he [Sandoval] let it pass, and from that time onward the Treasurer was very ill disposed towards Cortés and Sandoval, and he detested them as very evil things.

Let us leave this and I will relate that at that time, when the plan was afoot which I have already mentioned for associating Cortés in the Government with the Treasurer—and they gave him Sandoval as a colleague, as I have related—Alonzo de Estrada was advised to go post haste in a ship to Castile and to give an account of it to His Majesty, and they even persuaded him to say that it was by force that they gave him Sandoval as an associate, as I have already related, because he did not wish and would not consent to Cortés governing with him. In addition to this, certain persons who were not on good terms with Cortés wrote other letters on their own account, and in them stated that Cortés had ordered poison to be administered to Luis Ponce de Leon and to Marcos de Aguilar and also to the Adelantado Garay¹; for it was believed that in some curds which they gave him at a pueblo named Iztapalapa, there was realgar, and on that account a friar of the order of Santo Domingo would

¹ Blotted out in the original: and they even made the ecclesiastic named Fray Tomas Ortiz write this, he who was Provincial of Santo Domingo and had come from Castile with Luis Ponce de Leon.

not eat them¹; and all this that they wrote was abomination and treachery which they stirred up against him.

They also wrote that Cortés wished to kill the Factor and Veedor.

At that time there also went to Castile the accountant Albornoz, who was never on good terms with Cortés. When His Majesty and the members of the Royal Council of the Indies saw the letters I have mentioned speaking evil of Cortés, and made enquiries of the accountant Albornoz regarding the affair of Luis Ponce and that of Marcos de Aguilar, it told very heavily against Cortés. Besides, they had heard about the defeat of Narvaez and about Garay and Tápia and the story of Catalina Juarez la Marçayda, his first wife, and they were misinformed about other matters and believed what they [the enemies of Cortés] had now written to be true. His Majesty promptly ordered by decree that Alonzo de Estrada should be the sole governor, and approved whatever he had done and the assignment of Indians he had made. He also ordered the Factor and Veedor to be released from their prisons and cages and their property to be returned to them. A ship came post haste with the decrees, and, in order to punish Cortés for the crimes of which he was accused, he [the Emperor] ordered a gentleman named Don Pedro de la Cueva, Grand Commander of the order of Alcántara, to proceed at once and to take with him three hundred soldiers at the expense of Cortés, and if he found him guilty to cut off his head, and [the heads] of those

¹ Blotted out in the original: and in addition to this they sent with the letters some copies of defamatory libels against Cortés which they found on one Gonzalo de Campo, in which it was said: "Oh! Fray Hernando Provincial, more complaints go about your person before His Majesty than those of the Duque de Arxona before his general," and I omit quoting five other documents which they wrote against him, for they are not fit to be advanced against a brave man such as Cortés.

who, together with him, had done any wrong to His Majesty, and to give the pueblos taken from Cortés to us, the true Conquistadores. He also ordered a Royal Audiencia to be ready to come, thinking that by this means true justice would be done. While the Comendador Don Pedro de la Cueva was preparing to set out for New Spain, either owing to certain discussions which took place later on at court, or because they did not give him as many thousand ducats as he demanded for the voyage, or because they believed that justice could be done through the Royal Audiencia [alone], or [may be] because the Duque de Bejar went surety for us as he had done on other occasions, his voyage was put off.

I must return to the Treasurer, who, when he saw himself thus favoured by His Majesty, and, having been so many times governor, that now again His Majesty had ordered him to be sole governor—and they had even made the Treasurer believe that our Lord the Emperor had been told that he was a son of the Rey Católico—became puffed up with pride and had reason for it. The first thing he did was to send a cousin of his, named Diego de Mazariegos, as Captain to Chiapa, with instructions to take the Residencia of Don Juan Enríquez de Guzman, who had been sent as Captain by Marcos de Aguilar, and it was found that he had committed more robberies and quarrels than he had bestowed benefits on that province. He also sent to conquer and bring to peace the pueblos of the Zapotecs and Mijes, and they were to go in two divisions so that they [the pueblos] might more easily be brought to peace. [In command of] the division [marching] from the north he sent a Fulano de Barrios, reported to have been a Captain in Italy and very valiant, who had recently come to Mexico from Castile (I do not mean the Barrios of Seville who was Cortés's brother-in-law), and he gave him over one hundred soldiers and among them

many musketeers and crossbowmen. When this Captain reached the pueblos of the Zapotecs, which are called the Tiltepeques, the native Indians of those pueblos sallied out one night and fell on the Captain and his soldiers, and so sudden was the attack that they killed Captain Barrios and seven other soldiers and wounded most of the others, and, if they had not all quickly taken to their heels¹ and found refuge in some friendly pueblos, all would have fallen. Here one can see the superiority of old Conquistadores over those recently come from Castile, who know nothing about warfare with Indians nor of their cunning. This put an end to that conquest.

I must tell now about the other Captain who went by way of Oaxaca. He was named Figueroa, a native of Cáceres, and was also reported to have been a very valiant Captain in Castile, and a great friend of the Treasurer, Alonzo de Estrada. He also took with him one hundred soldiers newly arrived in Mexico from Castile, many of them musketeers and crossbowmen, and ten of them even cavalrymen. When they reached the province of the Zapotecs he sent to summon one Alonzo de Herrera, who was stationed in those pueblos as Captain of thirty soldiers by order of Marcos de Aguilar while he was governor, as I have related in the chapter which treats of the subject. Alonzo de Herrera, having obeyed the summons (for it seems that Figueroa brought authority to place him [Herrera] under his orders), on certain disputes taking place and because he would not remain in his [Figueroa's] company, they came to drawing swords, and Herrera wounded Figueroa and three of his soldiers who came to his assistance.

When Figueroa saw that he was wounded and one of his arms maimed, he did not dare to penetrate into

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¹ "Tomaran Calzas de Villadiego" (adage).

the mountains of the Mijes, which were very lofty and difficult to take; moreover, the soldiers he had brought with him knew nothing about conquering such countries. He determined to undertake the excavation of the graves in the burial places of the Caciques of those provinces, for he found in them a quantity of golden jewels which it was the custom in olden days to bury with the chieftains of those pueblos, and he attained such dexterity that he took out from them over five thousand pesos de oro, in addition to other jewels obtained from the pueblos. So he determined to abandon the conquest, and he left some of the pueblos in which he stayed more hostile than he found them, and he went to Mexico and thence to Castile, and the soldiers went each his own way.

When Figueroa had embarked at Vera Cruz, and was already on his way to Castile with his gold, such was his luck that the ship in which he sailed met with a furious head gale near Vera Cruz, and he and his gold were lost, and fifteen passengers were drowned, and everything was lost. Thus ended the expeditions which the Treasurer sent to make conquests, and those pueblos were never pacified until we settlers from Coatzacoalcos conquered them.

As the mountains are so lofty that horses cannot be used, I racked my body on the three occasions that I was present at those conquests, for although we might bring them to peace in the summer, as soon as the rains began they again rebelled, and killed such Spaniards as they were able to catch straying. However, as we always followed them up, they were brought into subjection and a town was founded [there] named San Alifonso.

Let us get on, and stop calling to mind disasters of Captains who did not know how to conquer, and I will relate that when the Treasurer knew that they had wounded his friend Captain Figueroa, he sent promptly

to arrest Alonzo de Herrera, but was not able to capture him because he fled to the mountains, and the Alguacils whom he sent after him brought back as prisoner a soldier, one of those whom Herrera used to have with him, and when he arrived in Mexico, without granting him a hearing, the Treasurer ordered his right hand to be cut off. The soldier was named Cortejo and he was a gentleman by birth.

In addition to this, at that time a page of Gonzalo de Sandoval had some dispute with one of the Treasurer's servants, and stabbed him, at which the Treasurer was very wroth and ordered his hand to be cut off; and this happened at a time when neither Cortés or Sandoval were in Mexico, for they had gone to a great pueblo named Cuernavaca, and they went there so as to remove themselves from Mexico from tumults and gossip, and also to settle certain questions which had arisen between the Caciques of that pueblo.

Then, as soon as Cortés and Sandoval learned by letter that Cortejo and the page were prisoners, and that they intended to cut off their hands, they at once came to Mexico, and when they had spoken and found that there was no help for it, they felt this affront which the Treasurer had put both on Cortés and Sandoval deeply. It is said that Cortés addressed such words to the Treasurer in his presence that he would not listen to them, and was even afraid that they intended to kill him, and on account of this fear the Treasurer summoned soldiers and friends to protect him, and he released the Factor and Veedor from the cages, so that as officials of His Majesty they might help one another against Cortés.

After they had been released about eight days, the Treasurer was advised by the Factor and other persons who were not on good terms with Cortés that in any

case he should at once banish Cortés from Mexico, for as long as he [Cortés] remained in the city he could never govern properly or secure peace, for there would always be bands of robbers and factions. As soon as this banishment was signed by the Treasurer they went to notify Cortés, who said that he would comply with it very readily, and that he thanked God that, in being banished from the land and city which he and his companions had discovered and gained, through the shedding of much blood and the deaths of so many soldiers, he was thus repaid by persons who were in no way worthy of the offices which they held from His Majesty, and that he would go to Castile to report it to His Majesty and demand justice against them, and that it was gross ingratitude on the part of the Treasurer who was forgetful of the favour [he] Cortés had shown him. He left Mexico at once and went to one of his towns named Coyoacan, and thence to Texcoco, and a few days later to Tlaxcala.

At that time the wife of the Treasurer named Doña Marina Gutiérrez de la Cavalleria, certainly worthy of good remembrance for her many virtues, when she learned what her husband had done in releasing the Factor and Veedor from the cages and in banishing Cortés, on account of the great anxiety she felt, said to her husband, the Treasurer: "Pray God that the things you have done will not turn out badly," and she reminded him of the benefits and favours which Cortés had conferred on them, and the Indian pueblos which he had given them, and [said] that he should endeavour to make friends with him again so that he could return to the City of Mexico, and that he should take great care that they did not kill him; and she said so many things to him that, according to what many persons report, the Treasurer repented of the banishment and even of having released those named by me from the cages, for

in every matter they restrained him and were very hostile to Cortés.

At that time there came from Castile Don Fray Julian Garçes, who was the first Bishop of Tlaxcala and a native of Aragon, and, in honour of the most Christian Emperor our Lord, called himself Carolense; he was a great preacher, and as soon as he came to his Bishopric of Tlaxcala and knew what the Treasurer had done in banishing Cortés, it appeared to him very wrong, and so as to make peace between them he came to a city often mentioned by me, named Texcoco, and, as it is close to the lake, he set out with two large canoes in company with two priests and a friar and his baggage, and came to the City of Mexico. Even before his arrival they had heard in Mexico of his coming, and they went out to receive him with great pomp, and with all the Crosses, and Clergy and religious orders, and the Cabildo and Conquistadores and gentlemen and soldiers, who could be found in Mexico.

After the Bishop had rested for two days, the Treasurer put him forward as mediator to go to the place where Cortés was residing at that time and make them friends again, as he was repealing the decree of banishment so that he [Cortés] could return to Mexico.

The Bishop went off and discussed this [proposed] friendship, but he could effect nothing with Cortés; on the contrary, as I have said, he went on to Texcoco and Tlaxcala accompanied by many gentlemen and other persons.

What Cortés was engaged on was the collection of all the gold and silver he could gather together in order to go to Castile, and in addition to what they gave him as tribute from his pueblos, he pledged other rents and those of his friends and Indians who were willing to assist him. Captain Gonzalo de Sandoval and Andrés de Tápia made

the same preparations and gathered together and collected all the gold and silver they were able from their pueblos, for these two Captains went in company with Cortés to Castile.

While Cortés was at Tlaxcala, many of the settlers from Mexico and other cities went to see him, also soldiers who had no assignment of Indians, and the Caciques from Mexico went to offer their services, and, as there are always turbulent men ready for strife and novelty, these went to advise him that, if he wished to raise himself to be King of New Spain, now was his opportunity, and that they would help him to do so. Cortés made prisoners two of the men who came with this suggestion, and treated them severely, calling them traitors, and was about to hang them. There was also brought to him a letter from other bandits which was sent to him from Mexico, in which they told him the same thing, and, according to rumour, this was done to tempt Cortés so as to catch him in some expressions which might fall from his lips concerning this evil opportunity. As, however, Cortés was always faithful to His Majesty, he uttered threats against those who came to him with these proposals, that they should not come before him again with these suggestions of treason or he would order them to be hanged, and he promptly wrote to the Bishop that he should tell the Treasurer, who, as Governor, should order the traitors who came with these proposals to be punished, [to see to it], otherwise he would himself order them to be hanged.

Let us leave Cortés in Tlaxcala getting ready to go to Castile, and return to the Treasurer and the Factor and Veedor, for just as men who were bandits and longed for disturbances and to mix in tumults came to Cortés, so they went to the Treasurer and Factor and said that Cortés was collecting men to come and kill them, although

he spread the report that he was going to Castile, and it was for that reason that all the Caciques of Mexico and Texcoco and nearly all the pueblos around the lake were in his company, waiting to see when he should order them to begin the attack.

Then the Factor and Veedor were in great fear, believing that he [Cortés] was going to kill them, and in order to enquire and find out if it were true they again importuned the same Bishop to go and see what was the matter, and they wrote with great concern to Cortés asking pardon. The Bishop thought that going to visit Tlaxcala with the intention of creating friendship was a worthy act, and as soon as he arrived where Cortés was staying (after the whole province had come out to receive him), and observed the great loyalty of Cortés and what he had done in arresting the bandits, and the words he had written on that subject, he promptly sent a messenger to the Treasurer and said that Cortés was a very loyal gentleman and faithful servant of His Majesty, and that one might place him in the list of the most famous servants of the Royal Crown of our times, and as for his present occupation it was to provide for his journey and go before his Majesty, and they might drop all suspicion of what had been in their minds. He also wrote that he thought it ill-advised to have banished him [Cortés] and that he [the Treasurer] did not hit the mark on that occasion. It is reported that he said in the letter he wrote: "Oh, Señor Tesorero Alonzo de Estrada, how you have spoiled and muddled this affair."

Let us leave this affair of the letter, for I do not remember whether Cortés returned to Mexico to leave instructions with the persons to whom he gave authority to look after his estate and house, and demand tribute from the pueblos of his encomienda, except that he left a general power of attorney to the Licentiate Juan

Altamirano, a person of great repute, and to Diego de Campo, Alonzo Valiente, and Santa Cruz Burgales, but above all the others to Altamirano. He had already collected many birds differing from those found in Castile, which was a thing well worth seeing, and two tigers and many kegs of coagulated liquid amber and balsam, and another of oil; and four Indians skilful in juggling with a stick with their feet, which in Castile and in all other places would be a thing worth seeing, and other Indians, distinguished dancers, who were accustomed to use some sort of contrivance, so that to all appearance they seem to fly in the air while dancing; and he took three Indian humpbacks who were monstrosities, for their bodies appeared broken and they were very dwarfish. He also took Indian men and women who were very white, and owing to their great whiteness they did not see well. Then the Caciques of Tlaxcala begged him to take in his company three sons of the principal chieftains of that province, and among them was a son of the old blind Xicotenga, who was afterwards called Don Lorenzo de Vargas, and he took other Mexican Caciques.

When his departure was arranged, he received news from Vera Cruz of the arrival of two good and swift ships which brought him letters from Castile, and I will go on to relate their contents.

CHAPTER CXCIV.

How letters came to Cortés from Spain from Don Garcia de Loaysa, Cardinal of Sigüenza, who was President of the [Council of] the Indies and soon afterwards Archbishop of Seville, and from other gentlemen, [advising him] in any case to come at once to Castile, and they brought the news that his father Martin Cortés was dead, and what he did about it.

I HAVE already related in the last chapter what took place between Cortés, the Treasurer, the Factor, and the Veedor, and the reason of his banishment from Mexico, and how the Bishop of Tlaxcala came on two occasions to attempt a reconciliation, and how Cortés, who would not [allow himself to] be influenced in the least by letters or in any other way, got ready to go to Castile. At that very moment letters came to him from the President of the Indies, Don Garcia de Loaysa, and from the Duque de Bejar and other gentlemen, in which they told him that, during his absence, complaints against him had been laid before His Majesty, and the complaints contained reports of many ill deeds and deaths which he had caused to be inflicted on those who had been sent out by His Majesty, and that in all events he should return to defend his honour. They also brought him news that his father Martin Cortés had died, and when he saw those letters he was greatly grieved both on account of the death of his father and also for what they falsely said that he had done; and he put on mourning, although he already wore it for the death of his wife Doña Catalina Juarez la Marcayda. He showed great grief about his father and paid him as great funeral honours as he was able, and if hitherto he had been eager to go to Castile, from this time forward he made the greater haste about it, for he at once ordered his Mayordomo, named Pedro Ruiz de Esquivel, a native of Seville, to go to Vera Cruz and buy the

two ships which had arrived there and had the reputation of being new and swift, and he was preparing biscuit and salt beef and bacon and all that was necessary for ships' stores very completely, as was befitting a great and rich lord such as Cortés, [including] all such things as could be found in New Spain that were of use on a voyage, and preserves which had come from Spain, and they were so abundant and of such variety that what was left over [when they arrived] in Castile would have sufficed for two ships for another couple of years, even if they had carried many more men.

As the Mayordomo was crossing the Lake of Mexico in a large canoe on his way to a pueblo named Ayotzingo, which is where they disembark from the canoes, and, in order to do more quickly what Cortés had ordered, passed by that place and took with him six Mexican Indian rowers and a negro and certain bars of gold, [somebody] whoever it may have been, laid in wait for him on this same lake and killed him. It was never known who [did the deed] nor were the canoe or the Indians who rowed it or even the negro ever seen again, only about four days later Esquivel was found on an island in the lake, his body half eaten by birds of prey.

Over the death of this Mayordomo there was much conjecture, for some said that he was the sort of man who boasted of things that he himself said happened with mistresses and other ladies, and they spoke of other evil things which they said he did, and on this account he was hated, and there were suspicions about many other things which I will not mention here. His death was never made clear, nor was it much enquired into, nor [did the question] who killed him rouse any deep interest.

Cortés promptly sent other Mayordomos to get the ships ready for him and put in all the provisions and pipes of wine, and ordered proclamation to be made that

whoever wished to go to Castile, he would give them food and a passage free of charge, provided they went with the permission of the Governor. Then Cortés, accompanied by Gonzalo de Sandoval and Andrés de Tápia and other gentlemen, went to Vera Cruz, and after they had confessed and received Communion they embarked. It pleased our Lord God to give him such a passage that in forty-two days he arrived in Castile, without stopping at Havana or at any other island, and he disembarked near the town of Palos near to Our Lady of Rabida, and as soon as they were safely on shore, they fell on their knees on the ground and raised their hands to heaven, giving many thanks to God for the mercies he had always shown them.

They arrived in Castile in the month of December, in the year fifteen hundred and twenty seven. It appears that Gonzalo de Sandoval was very unwell, and sorrow followed on their great joy, for it pleased God within a few days to take him from this life at the town of Palos. The house where he lay belonged to a ropemaker who made ship's tackle, cables and hempen rope, and before he [Sandoval] died he [the rope-maker] stole from him thirteen bars of gold. Sandoval saw him with his own eyes take them from a box, for the rope-maker waited until no one remained in Sandoval's company or he was cunning enough to send Sandoval's servants post haste to La Rabida to summon Cortés. Although Sandoval saw this [done] he did not dare to cry out for, as he was very feeble, languid and ill, he feared the rope-maker (who looked to him to be a ruffian,) would clap a pillow or bolster over his mouth and suffocate him. This host at once fled to Portugal with the bars of gold and nothing was recovered.

Let us return to Cortés, who, as soon as he knew that Sandoval was very ill, came in all haste to where he was,

and Sandoval told him of the crime that his host had committed, and how he had robbed him of the bars of gold and had fled, and, although they made the greatest efforts to recover them, as he had taken refuge in Portugal, he kept possession of them.

Sandoval grew worse of his malady day by day, and the doctors who were attending him advised him to confess at once and receive the holy sacraments and make his will. This he did with great piety and ordered many legacies for the poor as well as to monasteries, and he named Cortés as his executor and a sister of his, Maria (or sisters), as heiress, who later on married a bastard son of the Conde de Medellin, and after he had prepared his soul and made his will he gave up his spirit to our Lord God who created him.

Great grief was felt at his death, and they buried him in the Monastery of Our Lady of La Rabida with all the pomp that was possible, and Cortés and all the gentlemen in his company put on mourning. May God pardon him, Amen.

Cortés then sent a messenger to His Majesty, and to the Cardinal de Siguenza, to the Duque de Bejar, the Conde de Aguilar and other gentlemen, to announce his arrival at that port, and that Gonzalo de Sandoval had died, and he made a report on the quality of his person and the great services which he had rendered to His Majesty, and that he was a Captain of high reputation, esteemed both as a commander of armies, and for his personal valour. When these letters reached His Majesty, he was delighted at the arrival of Cortés, but he was grieved at the death of Sandoval, for he had already great reports of his magnanimous personality, so too was the Cardinal Don Garcia de Loaysa and the Royal Council of the Indies. Moreover, the Duque de Bejar, the Conde de Aguilar, and other gentlemen

rejoiced greatly, although all regretted the death of Sandoval.

The Duque de Bejar together with the Conde de Aguilar proceeded forthwith to give His Majesty further particulars, for he [Bejar] had already received Cortés' letter, and stated that he was well assured of the loyalty of the men whose sponsor he had become, and that a gentleman who had rendered him [the Emperor] such eminent services would in all other matters prove his loyalty, and that he was grateful to his King and Lord, as was now clearly shown by his acts. This was said by the Duke because at the time they were making accusations and alleging many evil things against Cortés to His Majesty, and he had pledged his head and his fortune three times as surety for Cortés and all of us soldiers who were in his company, that we were very loyal and faithful servants of His Majesty and worthy of great favours, for at that time Peru had not been discovered, nor had it the glamour that it afterwards possessed. His Majesty then sent orders to all the cities and towns, through which Cortés should pass, to show him every honour, and the Duque de Medina Sidonia gave him a great reception in Seville, and presented him with some very fine horses. After he had rested there two days, he went by long stages to Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe to hold novenas,¹ and such was his good fortune that at the same time the Señora Doña Maria de Mendoza, wife of the Comendador Mayor² de Leon, Don Francisco de los Cobos, arrived, who had brought in her company many ladies of high rank, and among them a young lady her sister. When Cortés learned this it gave him much pleasure and as soon as he arrived

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¹ Nine day devotions.

² Head of the Military order.

and had worshipped at the shrine of Our Lady and given alms to the poor and ordered masses to be said (for he was in mourning for his father and his wife and for Gonzalo de Sandoval), he went well attended by the gentlemen he had brought from New Spain, and others who had joined his service, to pay his respects to the Lady Doña Maria de Mendoza and the maiden lady her sister, who was very beautiful, and to all the other ladies who had come with them.

Cortés was very courteous and cheerful in every way, and the fame of his great deeds rang throughout Castile, and [the gift of] conversation and graceful expression did not fail him, and above all he showed himself very open-handed, and, as he had riches to give away, he began making valuable presents of many golden jewels of many different shapes to all those ladies, and besides the jewels he gave them plumes of green feathers full of gold and silver work and of pearls, and in all that he gave he showed preference for the Lady Doña Maria de Mendoza and her sister. After he had made those rich presents he gave to the young lady, for herself alone, certain slabs of very fine gold, so that she might make jewels of them. After this he ordered much liquid amber and balsam to be given them so that they might perfume themselves, and he ordered the dexterous Indian jugglers to perform with the stick with their feet so as to give entertainment to those ladies, and they [the jugglers] passed the stick from one foot to the other, a thing which pleased them and caused them wonder to behold. In addition to all this, Cortés found out that one of the mules of the litter in which the young lady had come had gone lame, and secretly he ordered two good ones to be bought and given to the Mayordomos who had charge of her service. He remained in that town of Guadalupe until they set out for the Court, which at that time was at Toledo, and accom-

panied them, paying them attentions and giving banquets and fêtes, and proved himself to be the perfect courtier who well knew how to represent and act the part, so that the Señora Doña Maria de Mendoza proposed to him marriage with her lady sister. If Cortés had not been betrothed to the Señora Doña Juana de Zuñiga, a niece of the Duque de Bejar, he certainly would have received great favour from the Comendador Mayor de Leon and from the Señora Maria de Mendoza his wife, and His Majesty would have given him the government of New Spain.

Let us stop talking about this marriage, for all things are guided and directed by the hand of God, and I will relate how the Señora Doña Maria de Mendoza wrote in haste to her husband the Comendador Mayor de Leon, greatly extolling the affairs of Cortés, [saying] that the fame that he had acquired by his heroic deeds was nothing in comparison to what she had seen and known of his personality and conversation and openhandedness, and she related to him other excellencies she had noticed in Cortés, and the services he had rendered her, and [added] that she might consider him her devoted courtier, and that he should inform His Majesty of it all and beg him to grant him favours. As soon as the Comendador Mayor saw the letter of his wife he was very pleased with it, and as he was the most intimate friend of our Lord the Emperor that there was, or had been in our times, he took the letter itself to His Majesty of Glorious Memory, and on his own behalf entreated him to favour him [Cortés] in all things, and this His Majesty did, as I shall relate further on.

Some time after Cortés had arrived at the Court, the Duque de Bejar and the Admiral told Cortés himself in sport, that they had heard His Majesty say, when he knew that he [Cortés] had come to Castile, that he was

desirous to see and know personally one who had rendered him so many great services, and of whom they had related so many iniquities that he had perpetrated with craft and cunning.

After Cortés's arrival at Court, His Majesty had quarters allotted to him, while the Duque de Bejar on his own part, and that of the Conde de Aguilar and other great Lords his relations, sallied forth to receive him, showing him much honour. Next day by His Majesty's permission he went to kiss his royal feet, taking in his company as mediators, so as to dignify him the more, the Admiral of Castile, the Duque de Bejar and the Comendador Mayor de Leon.

After Cortés had asked leave to speak, he knelt on the ground and His Majesty bade him rise, then he set forth his many services and all that had happened in the conquests, and the journey to Honduras, and the plots hatched in Mexico by the Factor and Veedor, and related all that he could call to mind, and as it was a very long story, so as not to weary him with other matters, he said: "Your Majesty must be tired with listening to me, and for so great an Emperor and monarch of all the world as is your Majesty, it is not fitting that a vassal such as I should be so daring, and as my tongue is not accustomed to converse with your Majesty, it may be that my meaning is not expressed with that proper respect that I ought to show. I have here a memorandum in which your Majesty can note, if so inclined, all the events in detail as they happened." Then he fell on his knees to kiss his feet for the favour he had deigned to show him in having listened. Then our Lord the Emperor bade him rise, and the Admiral and the Duque de Bejar said to His Majesty that he was worthy of great favour, and he [the Emperor] created him Marques del Valle and caused certain pueblos to be

bestowed upon him, and further ordered him to be invested with the insignia of Santiago, and as they did not assign revenues with them he kept silent at the time; I do not well know in what manner [it was arranged]. He also appointed him Captain General of New Spain and the South Sea. Then Cortés again bowed down to kiss his royal feet, and His Majesty once more bade him rise.

A few days after he had received these great favours Cortés fell ill and was so exhausted that they thought he would die, and the Duque de Bejar and the Comendador Mayor, Don Francisco de los Cobos, entreated His Majesty that, as Cortés had rendered him such distinguished services, he would go to visit him at his lodging before he died, and His Majesty went attended by Dukes, Marquesses and Counts, and by Don Francisco de los Cobos, and visited him, and it was a very great favour and as such it was looked on by the Court.

Later on when Cortés was recovered, one Sunday when His Majesty was already in the Cathedral attended by Dukes, Marquesses and Counts, and they were seated in their places according to the style and rank by which among them they were accustomed to take their seats, Cortés arrived rather late at Mass, on purpose, and, as he was considered such an intimate of His Majesty, and the Conde de Nasao and the Duque de Bajar and the Admiral held him in favour, he passed in front of some of those illustrious noblemen with his mourning train held up, and went to seat himself near the Conde de Nasao who had his seat nearest to the Emperor. And when he was seen to pass in front of those great and illustrious noblemen without apology, they murmured at his great presumption and daring and considered it disrespectful, and they could not credit him with the good manners he was reputed to possess. Among these Dukes

and Marquesses was the Duque de Bejar and the Admiral of Castile and the Conde de Aguilar, and they answered that this was not to be attributed to want of consideration on the part of Cortés, because His Majesty, in order to honour him, had commanded him to sit near the Conde de Nasao, and moreover, His Majesty ordered them to mark and take note that Cortés and his companions had conquered so many countries that all Christendom was beholden to him, while they had inherited the position they held for services which had been performed by their ancestors, and because Cortés was betrothed to his [the Duque de Bejar's] niece, His Majesty directed him to be honoured.

To return to Cortés, I must state that finding himself so exalted by his intimacy with our Lord the Emperor and with the Duque de Bejar, the Conde Nasao and even the Admiral, and that he already had the title of Marquis, he began to hold himself in such high esteem that he was not as attentive as he should have been to those who had favoured him and helped him towards His Majesty's conferring the Marquisate on him, neither to the Cardinal Fray Garcia de Loaysa, nor to Cobos nor to the Señora Doña Maria de Mendoza, nor to the Members of the Royal Council of the Indies, for all were neglected. All his attentions were for the Duque de Bejar, the Conde de Nasao and the Admiral, thinking that the game was well started by his being intimate with such great noblemen, and he began to beg His Majesty, with much persistence, to bestow the Government of New Spain on him, and on this account he again recited his services and [said] that if he were governor he would undertake the discovery of very rich islands and countries in the South Sea, and he placed himself at his service with many ceremonious expressions. He even employed again as mediators the Conde de Nasao and the Duque de Bejar,

and the Admiral, and His Majesty answered that he should be content with having been given the Marquisate with the highest revenue, that he must also reward those who had helped him to acquire the country, for, as they had conquered it, they were worthy of enjoying it. From this time on the intimacy he enjoyed [with His Majesty] began to wane, for, according to what many say, the Cardinal, who was President of the Royal Council of the Indies, and most of the other noblemen who were consulted by His Majesty about the affairs and rewards of Cortés, were of opinion that he should not be made Governor; others say that the Comendador Mayor and the Señora Doña Maria de Mendoza were somewhat opposed to him, because he paid little attention to them. Anyhow, for one reason or the other, our Lord the Emperor would not listen to him any more however much he was importuned about the Government.

Presently His Majesty went to Barcelona to embark for Flanders, and many Dukes, Marquises, Counts, and great noblemen accompanied him, and Cortés himself went as far as Barcelona, already bearing his title of Marquis, and he was constantly urging those Dukes and Marquises to intercede with His Majesty to bestow the Government on him, and His Majesty in reply bade the Conde de Nasao not to speak to him again on that subject, for he had given him [Cortés] a Marquisate with greater revenue than he the Conde de Nasao possessed with all his rank.

Let us leave His Majesty embarked on a prosperous voyage, and return to Cortés and some of the grand festivals arranged for his nuptial ceremony, and the rich jewels which he gave to the Señora Doña Juana de Zuñiga his wife, which were of such quality, according to what some say who had seen them and their preciousness, that more valuable ones had never existed in Castile. Our

Lady the most serene Empress Doña Ysabel wished to possess some of them on account of what the lapidaries told her, and it is said regarding certain pieces which Cortés had presented to her, that he had made a mistake, or he did not intend giving her some of the most precious, such as those he gave to his wife Doña Juana de Zuñiga.

I must stop calling to mind other things that happened to Cortés in Castile during the time he remained at Court, where he made ostentation with much festivity, and according to what persons say who came from there and had been in his company, there were rumours that Our Lady the most Serene Empress Doña Ysabel was not so well disposed regarding the affairs of Cortés as when first he arrived at Court, as she had found out that he had been ungrateful to the Cardinal and the Royal Council of the Indies, and even to the Comendador Mayor de Leon and to the Señora Doña Maria de Mendoza, and she got to know he possessed other very rich [precious] stones, better than those he had given to her; notwithstanding all this that was reported to her she ordered the members of the Royal Council of the Indies to assist him in every way. Then Cortés agreed to send, for a given number of years, at his own expense, two ships of war to the South Sea, well found and with sixty soldiers and captains with all kinds of arms, to discover Islands and other countries, and that for whatever he might discover he should be granted certain favour; these contracts I will pass over, for I do not now remember them.

At that time Don Pedro de la Cueva, Comendador of Alcántara, brother of the Duque de Albuquerque, was at Court, and this gentleman was he whom His Majesty had sent to New Spain with a great escort of soldiers to cut off Cortés's head if he should find him guilty, and the heads of any other persons who had done any disservice to His Majesty, and when he saw Cortés

and knew that His Majesty had created him a Marquis and that he was about to be married to the Señora Doña Juana de Zuñiga, he was greatly rejoiced at it, and daily meetings took place between Don Pedro de la Cueva and the Marquis Don Hernando Cortés, and he told Cortés that, if by chance he should have gone to New Spain and taken the soldiers His Majesty commanded him, however loyal and justified he had found him to be, he [Cortés] would have had to pay the cost of the soldiers and even of his own journey, a matter of more than three hundred thousand pesos, so that he [Cortés] did better by presenting himself before His Majesty. They held many other conversations which I will not relate here, about which persons who were present at them wrote to us from Castile, as well as all the other matters mentioned by me in the chapter that treats of it. Besides, our proctors wrote whole chapters on the subject, and even the Marquis himself mentioned the great rewards he obtained from His Majesty, but he did not give the reason why he was not given the Government.

Let us leave this and I will relate how a few days after he was made a Marquis he sent to Rome to kiss the sanctified feet of our Holy Father Pope Clement, for Adrian, who protected us, had been dead three or four years. He despatched a gentleman named Juan de Herrada as his ambassador, and with him he sent a rich present of precious stones and jewels of gold and two Indians dextrous at juggling the stick with the feet, and he reported to him his arrival in Castile, and [mentioned] the countries he had conquered and the services he had rendered to God in the first place and to our great Emperor, and he gave him a full account in a Memorial of those countries, how very extensive they were, and what was their nature, and how all the Indians were idolators and had become Christians, and many

other things which it was proper to mention to our Holy Father. As I did not get to know in detail how this matter ended, I will stop writing about it here, and even this, which I here relate, we came to know later on from Juan de Herrada himself, when he returned from Rome to New Spain, and we learned that he was sent to beg our most Holy Father to remit part of the tithes. In order that curious readers may fully understand—this Juan de Herrada was a good soldier who had gone in our company on the expedition to Honduras when Cortés went, and after his return from Rome he went to Peru, and Don Diego de Almagro appointed him as tutor to his son, the youth Don Diego, and he was most intimate with Don Diego Almagro, who was chief of those who killed Don Francisco Pizarro the elder, and was afterwards *Maestre de Campo*¹ to Almagro the younger, and was present when he gave battle to Vaca de Castro, when Don Diego Almagro the younger was defeated. To return to what happened to Juan de Herrada in Rome—after he had been to kiss the sainted feet of His Holiness, he presented the gifts which Cortés sent to him,² and the Indians who juggled the stick with their feet, and His Holiness greatly appreciated them, and said that he thanked God that such great countries had been discovered in his days, and such numbers of people had embraced our holy faith, and he ordered processions to be made and all to give thanks and praise to God for it, and he said that Cortés and all of us his soldiers had rendered great service, first of all to God, and then to our Lord the Emperor Don Carlos and to all Christendom, and that we were worthy of great reward.

¹ Quarter-master.

² This may have been the occasion on which the Masks mentioned in the Appendix to Vol. I. were presented to Pope Clement VII.

Then he sent us a Bull to absolve us from the blame and punishment of all our sins, and other indulgencies for the Hospitals and Churches, and general pardons, and he approved of all Cortés had accomplished in New Spain in accordance and conformity with what his predecessor Pope Adriano had done, and he wrote to Cortés in answer to his letter, but what was contained in it [his reply] I do not know, for as I have already said it was from this Juan de Herrada and from a soldier named Campo, when they returned from Rome, that I learned what I here write down. According to what they say, after he had been in Rome ten days and had taken the Indians, who were master jugglers with the stick on their feet, before His Holiness and the consecrated Cardinals, who were delighted at the show, His Holiness did Juan de Herrada the honour to make him Conde Palatino, and ordered him a certain number of ducats for his return journey, together with a letter of recommendation to our Lord the Emperor that he should appoint him his Captain, and give him good Indians in assignment. As Cortés no longer held command in New Spain and did not give him any of the things which the Holy Father commanded, he [Herrada] went to Peru, where he became a Captain.





BOOK XVI.

THE RULE OF THE AUDIENCIA.

CHAPTER CXCVI.

How during the time Cortés was in Castile with the title of Marquis, the Royal Audiencia came to Mexico, and with what it was busied.



WHILE Cortés was in Castile bearing the title of Marquis, at that time the Royal Audiencia arrived in Mexico according to His Majesty's orders, as I have already stated in the former chapter which deals with the subject. There came as President Nuño de Guzman, who used to be Governor in Panuco, and four Licentiates as Oidores,¹ whose names were Matienzo, said to be a native of Biscay or the neighbourhood of Navarre, and Delgadillo of Granada and one Maldonado of Salamanca (this was not the Licentiate Alonzo Maldonado the Good who was governor of Guatemala), and there came the Licentiate Parada who used to be formerly in the Island of Cuba.

When these four Oidores arrived at Mexico, after they

¹ Oidor = Judge or Assessor of the Audiencia.