

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

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CHAPTER CLXXXI.

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

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

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

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

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

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

When Gonzalo de Sandoval saw the letters, he promptly left the camp I have mentioned for some small pueblos named Cuyuacan, seven leagues distant. He was not able to go at once to Naco as Cortés had ordered him, if he were to avoid leaving behind on the road many soldiers who had gone off to other farms, to find food for themselves and their horses; and on account of the passage of a very deep river<sup>1</sup> which could not be forded on the road from the farms, and in order to leave provision of a canoe by which the Spanish stragglers, and a number of Mexican Indians who were out of health, could pass; (and it was also done for fear of some pueblos near

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<sup>1</sup> Rio Motagua.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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## CHAPTER CLXXXII.

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

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

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