

## CHAPTER XCIX.

How we launched the two sloops, and how the Great Montezuma said that he wished to go hunting, and went in the sloops to a rocky Island<sup>1</sup> where there were many deer and much other game, for no one went hunting there under pain of very severe punishment.

WHEN the two sloops were finished building and had been launched, and the masts and rigging had been set up and adorned with the Royal and Imperial banners, and the sailors had been got ready to navigate them, they went out in them both rowing and sailing, and they sailed very well. When Montezuma heard of it, he said to Cortés that he wished to go hunting on a rocky Island standing in the lake which was preserved so that no one dared to hunt there, however great a chief he might be, under pain of death. Cortés replied that he was very welcome to go, but he must remember what he had told him on the former occasion when he went to visit his Idols, that to raise any disturbances was more than his life was worth; [moreover] he could go in the sloops, as it was better sailing in them than in the canoes and pirogues however large they might be. Montezuma said that he would be delighted to sail in the sloop that was the swiftest, and he took with him many lords and chieftains, and advised his huntsmen to follow in canoes and pirogues. A son of Montezuma and many Caciques went in the other sloop. Then Cortés ordered Velásquez de Leon who was captain of the Guard and Pedro de Alvarado and Cristóbal de Olid, Alonzo de Ávila with two hundred soldiers, to accompany Montezuma, and to remember the great responsibility he was placing on them in looking after him, and as all those Captains whom I have named were very alert, they took on board all the soldiers I have spoken about, and four

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<sup>1</sup> The *Peñon de Tepepolco* or *del Marques*.

bronze cannon and all the powder that we possessed, and our gunners, named Mesa and Arvenga, and they put up a highly decorated awning as a protection from the weather, and Montezuma and his chieftains went under it. As at that time there was a strong breeze blowing, and the sailors were delighted to please and content Montezuma, they worked the sails so well that they went flying along, and the canoes which held his huntsmen and chieftains were left far behind in spite of the large number of rowers they carried. Montezuma was charmed, and said that it was a great art this of combining sails and oars together. So he arrived at the Peñol, which was not very far off, and he [Montezuma] killed all the game he wanted, deer and hares and rabbits, and returned very contented to the city. When we arrived near Mexico, Pedro de Alvarado and Juan Velásquez de Leon and the other Captains ordered the cannon to be discharged, and this delighted Montezuma, and as we saw him so frank and kind, we treated him with the respect in which the Kings of these countries are held, and he behaved in the same manner to us. If I were to relate the traits and qualities that he showed as a great Prince, and the reverence and service that all the Lords of New Spain paid to him, I should never come to an end. There was not a thing that he ordered to be brought that was not immediately there, even if it were flying. I say this because one day three of our Captains and some of us soldiers were in Montezuma's presence, when by chance a hawk swooped down through the halls which were like corridors, after a quail, for near the houses and palaces where Montezuma was confined, there were some tame pigeons and quails kept for breeding purposes by the Indian steward (whose duty it was to keep the rooms swept) so as to give himself importance.

When our Captains saw the hawk swoop and carry off

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its quarry, one of them, named Francisco de Sauzedo, the elegant, who had been house steward to the Admiral of Castile, called out, "Oh! what a beautiful hawk! and how well he struck and how well he flew," and most of the soldiers answered that it was capital and that there were hereabouts many good birds for hawking, and Montezuma was watching what we said, and he asked his page Orteguilla about our conversation, and he replied that those Captains were saying that the hawk which came in hunting was a very good one, and that if we had some like it we would show him how it would come to hand, and that in the open, when it was flown at any bird, although it might be rather a large one, it would kill it. Then Montezuma said: "Then I will send now to have that same hawk caught, and we will see if you can tame it and hunt with it." All of us who were present doffed our head-pieces and thanked him for his kindness, and he at once sent to summon his fowlers, and told them to bring him that same hawk, and they were so skilful in its capture, that by the time of Ave Maria they brought that very hawk and gave it to Francisco de Sauzedo, and he showed it the lure, but as other things soon happened to us more important than the chase, I will stop talking about it now, but I have told the story because he was such a great Prince, that not only did he take tribute from nearly all parts of New Spain, and lord it over so many lands, and make himself fully obeyed, but even when he was a prisoner his vassals trembled before him, and they even captured for him the birds that fly in the air. Let us waive this and say how by degrees adverse fortune turned its wheel.

At that time it had been agreed between the nephews and relations of the great Montezuma and other Caciques and throughout all the country that we should be attacked

and Montezuma released, and that some of them should proclaim themselves as Kings of Mexico, as I will go on to relate.

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## CHAPTER C.

How the nephews of the great Montezuma went about assembling the other Lords and persuading them to come to Mexico and free the great Montezuma from his imprisonment and drive us out of the City and kill us.

AS Cacamatzin, lord of the City of Texcoco, which after Mexico is the largest and most important city that there is in New Spain, knew that his uncle, Montezuma, had been imprisoned for many days, and that we were taking the upper hand in every way that was possible, and also got to know that we had opened the chamber where the great treasure of his grandfather Axayaca was kept, but had not taken anything from it, he determined, before we could take possession of the treasure, to call together all the Lords of Texcoco, who were his vassals, and the lord of Coyoacan, who was his cousin and Montezuma's nephew, and the lord of Tacuba, and the lord of Iztapalapa, and another great Cacique who was lord of Matalcingo, who was very nearly related to Montezuma and of whom it was even said that he was the rightful heir to the kingdom and lordship of Mexico, and who was a chieftain known among the Indians for his personal bravery. While he [Cacamatzin] continued to negotiate with these and other Mexican chieftains that on a given day they should come with all their forces and attack us, it seems that the Cacique whom I have said was known for his personal bravery (whose name I do not know), said that if he [Cacamatzin] would assure to him the Kingship of Mexico, to which he was the rightful heir, that he and all his relations, and the people of the province called Matalcingo,