

time on Gonzalo Mejía and Cortés were not very good friends. I have called all this to mind although it is outside my story, so that one may see that Cortés, under colour of doing justice, so that we should fear him, was full of craftiness, and I will leave off here.

CHAPTER CVII.

How the Great Montezuma told Cortés that he wished to give him one of his daughters in marriage, and what Cortés answered. Nevertheless he took her and they served and honoured her as was becoming to the daughter of such a Prince.

I HAVE many times said that Cortés and all of us always endeavoured to please and serve Montezuma and to pay him court. One day Montezuma said, "Look here, Malinche, I love you so much that I want to give you one of my daughters, who is very beautiful, so that you can marry her and treat her as your legitimate wife"; Cortés doffed his cap in thanks, and said that it was a great favour that Montezuma was conferring on him, but that he was already married and had a wife, and that among us we were not permitted to have more than one wife, he would however keep her [Montezuma's daughter] in the rank to which the daughter of so great a prince was entitled, but that first of all he desired her to become a Christian, as other ladies, the daughters of Chieftains, already were; and to this Montezuma consented.

The Great Montezuma always showed his accustomed good will to us, but from one day to the other he never ceased his sacrifices at which human beings were killed, and Cortés tried to dissuade him from this but met with no success. So Cortés took counsel with his captains as to what should be done in the matter, for he did not dare to put an end to it for fear of a rising in the City and of the

priests who were in charge of Huichilobos. The advice that the captains and soldiers gave about this was, that he should pretend that he wished to go and throw down the Idols from the lofty temples of Huichilobos, and that if we saw that they intended to defend them, and were going to rise in revolt, that we should then demand permission to set up an altar inside the Great Cue, and place a Crucifix there and an image of Our Lady. When this was settled Cortés went to the Palace where Montezuma was imprisoned and took seven captains and soldiers with him, and said to Montezuma: "Señor, I have often asked you not to sacrifice any more human beings to your gods who are deceiving you, and you will not cease doing it, I wish you to know that all my companions and these captains who are with me have come to beg you to give them leave to remove the gods from your temple and put our Lady Santa Maria and a Cross in their place, and, if you will not give them leave now, they will go and remove them, and I would not like them to kill any priests."

When Montezuma heard those words and saw that the Captains were rather angry, he said, "Oh! Malinche, how can you wish to destroy the city entirely! for our gods are very angry with us, and I do not know that they will stop even at your lives, what I pray you to do for the present is to be patient, and I will send to summon all the priests and I will see their reply." When Cortés heard this he made a sign that he wished to speak quite privately to Montezuma without the presence of the captains whom he had brought in his company, so he ordered them to go out and leave him alone. When they had left the hall he said to Montezuma, that in order to prevent this affair from becoming known and causing a disturbance and becoming an offence to the priests on account of their Idols being overturned, that he would arrange with these Captains to the effect that they should do nothing of the sort, provided

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they were given an apartment in the Great Cue where they might make an altar on which to place the Image of Our Lady and set up a Cross, and that as time went on it would be made plain how good and advantageous it was for their souls, and for giving them health and good harvests and prosperity. Then Montezuma, with sighs and a very sorrowful countenance, said that he would confer with his priests. After much discussion had taken place about it, on the ¹ day of the month of ¹ in the year fifteen hundred and nineteen, this was done and our altars and an image of Our Lady and a Cross were set up, apart from their curséd Idols, with great reverence and with thanks to God from all of us, and the Padre de la Merced chanted Mass, assisted by the priest Juan Díaz and many of our soldiers. Our captain ordered an old soldier to be stationed there as guardian, and begged Montezuma to order the priests not to touch the altar, but only to keep it swept and to burn incense and keep wax candles burning there by day and night, and to decorate it with branches and flowers.

I will leave off here and say what it led to.

CHAPTER CVIII.

How the great Montezuma told our Captain Cortés to leave Mexico with all his soldiers, for all the Caciques and priests wanted to rise and wage war on us until they killed us, for so it had been decreed and advised by their Idols, and what Cortés did about it.

THERE was never a time when we were not subject to surprises of such a kind, that had our Lord God not assisted us, they would have cost us our lives. Thus as

¹ Blank spaces in the original.