

he came with his fleet it would greatly interfere with our conquest,—they decided to send a Licentiate named Lucas Vázquez de Ayllon, who was Oidor of this same Royal Audiencia, to stop this fleet of Diego Velásquez and not to let it sail, under pain of heavy penalties. The Oidor came to Cuba and took the needful steps and made protest according to the command of the Royal Audiencia in order that Velásquez should not carry out his project, but all the injunctions and penalties that he proclaimed were of no avail, for as Diego Velásquez had the backing of the Bishop of Burgos, and had spent all he possessed in raising that army against us, he did not care a snap of the fingers for all the injunctions issued against him, on the contrary he became very blustering, and when the Oidor saw this he himself accompanied Narvaez so as to keep the peace and to promote agreement between Cortés and Narvaez. There are other soldiers who say that he came with the intention of giving us assistance, and, if he could not do so, that he meant to take the country himself as Oidor in the name of His Majesty. In this way he came to the port of San Juan de Ulúa, and there I will leave him and go on to say what was done about it.

CHAPTER CX.

How Pánfilo de Narvaez arrived at the port of San Juan de Ulúa, which is called Vera Cruz, with all his fleet, and what happened to him.

AS Pánfilo de Narvaez came across the sea with all his fleet of nineteen ships, it appears that on nearing the Sierra of San Martin, for so it is called, he was struck by a north wind, which is a head wind on that coast, and during the night he lost one ship of small burden which foundered ; her Captain was a gentleman named Cristóbal de

Morante, a native of Medina del Campo, and a number of other persons were drowned. All the rest of the fleet arrived at San Juan de Ulúa.

When the arrival of this great fleet was known, (for it must be called great as having been equipped in the Island of Cuba,) it came to the ears of those soldiers whom Cortés had sent to look for mines, and these three men, namely Cervantes the jester, and Escalona, and the third called Alonzo Hernández Carretero, came to the ships of Narvaez. When they found themselves safe on board ship and in Narvaez' Company, it is said that they raised their hands to God who had delivered them from the power of Cortés and got them out of the great City of Mexico where every day they expected to be killed. When they had eaten with Narvaez and drunk wine, and were satiated with too much drink, they kept saying to one another before the General himself, "See here, is it not better to be here drinking wine than to be unhappy in the power of Cortés who made such slaves of us night and day that we hardly dared to speak, expecting from day to day to meet death staring us in the face." And Cervantes, who was a buffoon, even said by way of pleasantry, "Oh, Narvaez, Narvaez, how fortunate you are to have come at this time, for this traitor of a Cortés has got together more than seven hundred thousand dollars of gold, and all the soldiers are very discontented with him because he has taken a great part of their share of the gold, and they do not want to accept what he is giving them." So those soldiers who had deserted from us as they were mean and worthless, told Narvaez much more that he wanted to know. They also informed him that eight leagues distant from where he was, a town had been founded named Villa Rica de la Vera Cruz and that Gonzalo de Sandoval was in command of it with seventy soldiers, all of them old and invalid, and that if he should send some fighting men there at once,

they would surrender to him, and they told him many other things.

Let us leave all these discussions and relate how the great Montezuma soon got to know that there were ships anchored in the port with many captains and soldiers on board, and he secretly sent some of his chiefs, without Cortés knowing anything about it, and ordered them [the Spaniards in the ships] to be given food, gold and cloth, and the neighbouring villages were told to furnish them with supplies of food. Narvaez sent to tell Montezuma many abusive and many uncivil things about Cortés and all of us, [such as] that we were bad men and thieves who had fled from Castile without the permission of our Lord and King, and that when our Lord the King had heard that we were in this country, and knew about the evil deeds and robberies we had committed and that we had taken Montezuma prisoner, he had ordered Narvaez to set out at once with all these ships and soldiers and horses, to put an end to such evils and to free him [Montezuma] from his prison, and either to kill Cortés and all of us evil-doers, or to capture us and send us back to Spain in these same ships, and that when we arrived there we should be condemned to death ; and he sent to tell him much more nonsense. The interpreters who explained all this to the Indians were the three soldiers who already understood the language. In addition to these messages, Narvaez also sent some gifts of things from Spain.

When Montezuma heard all this he was very well satisfied with the news, for as they said that there were so many ships and horses and cannon and musketeers and crossbowmen, and that there were thirteen hundred or more soldiers, he believed that they would take us prisoners. In addition to this when his chieftains saw our three soldiers with Narvaez and perceived that they said much evil of Cortés, they accepted as the truth all

that Narvaez had told them to say. They brought with them a picture of the fleet painted quite correctly on some cloths. Then Montezuma sent Narvaez much more gold and cloths and ordered all the towns in his neighbourhood to take them plenty to eat, and for three days Montezuma was in possession of this news and Cortés knew nothing at all.

One day when our Captain went to see Montezuma and to pay him court, after the usual civilities had passed between them, it seemed to Captain Cortés that Montezuma was looking very cheerful and happy, and he asked him how he felt, and Montezuma replied that he was better. When Montezuma saw that he came to visit him twice in one day, he was afraid that Cortés knew about the ships, and so as to get ahead of him and to avoid suspicion, he said to him, "Señor Malinche, only just now messengers have come to tell me that at the port where you landed there have arrived eighteen more ships and many people and horses, and they have brought it all to me painted on some cloths, and as you came twice to visit me to-day I thought that you must have come to bring me this news ; now you will have no need to build ships. Because you did not tell me about it, on the one hand I was annoyed with you for keeping me in ignorance, and on the other hand I was delighted at the arrival of your brothers, for now you can all return to Spain and there need be no further excuse."

When Cortés heard about the ships, and saw the picture on the cloth, he rejoiced greatly and said, "Thank God! who at the right moment provides for us," and we soldiers were so delighted that we could not keep quiet, and the horsemen rode skirmishing round about and we fired off shots. But Cortés was very thoughtful, for he well understood that that fleet was sent by Diego Velásquez the Governor of Cuba against him and against all of us, and,

wise man as he was, he said what he felt about it to all of us captains and soldiers, and by great gifts of gold to us, and promises to make us rich, he induced us all to stand by him. He did not know who had come in command (of the fleet) but we were greatly rejoiced at the news, and at the gold that Cortés had given us by the way of gratuity, as if he had taken it from his own property and not from that which should have been our share. It was indeed great help and assistance that Our Lord Jesus Christ was sending to us. I will stop here and say what took place in the camp of Narvaez.

CHAPTER CXI.

How Pánfilo de Narvaez sent five persons from his fleet to demand of Gonzalo de Sandoval, who was in command at Villa Rica, that he should surrender himself and all the settlers, and what happened about it.

AS those three scoundrelly soldiers of ours, already mentioned, had gone over to Narvaez, and had given him news of all the things that Cortés and all of us had done since we entered New Spain, and had told him that Captain Gonzalo de Sandoval was about eight leagues distant at a town which had been founded and called the Villa Rica de la Vera Cruz, and that he had with him seventy settlers, nearly all of them old or invalids, Narvaez determined to send to the town a priest named Guevara, who had good address, and another man of considerable importance named Amaya, a relation of Diego Velásquez of Cuba, and a notary named Vergara, and three witnesses whose names I do not remember. He sent them to give notice to Sandoval to surrender at once to Narvaez, and for this purpose they said that they brought copies of the decrees. It is said that Gonzalo de Sandoval had already