

worth more than two hundred dollars. They also brought some cloaks and skirts, such as they wear, and said that we must accept these things in good part as they had no more gold to give us, but that further on, in the direction of the sunset, there was plenty of gold, and they said "Colua, Colua, Méjico, Méjico," but we did not know what this Colua or Méjico could be. Although the present that they brought us was not worth much, we were satisfied, because we thus knew for certain that they possessed gold. As soon as they had given their present they said that we should at once set out on our way and the Captain, Juan de Grijalva, thanked them for their gift and gave them a present of beads. It was decided that we should go on board at once, for the two ships were in much danger should a northerly gale blow for it would put them on a lee shore, and moreover we wanted to get nearer to where we were told there was gold.

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## CHAPTER XII.

How we followed along the coast towards the setting sun, and arrived at a river called the Rio de Banderas, and what happened there.

WE returned on board and set our course along the coast and in two days came in sight of a town called Ayagualulco, and many of the Indians from that town marched along the shore with shields made of the shells of turtle, which sparkled as the sun shone on them, and some of our soldiers contended that they were made of low grade gold.

The Indians who carried them as they marched along the sandy beach, knowing that they were at a safe distance,

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cut capers, as though mocking at the ships. We gave the town the name of La Rambla, and it is thus marked on the charts.

Coasting along we came in sight of a bay into which flows the river Tonalá, which we entered on our return journey and named the Rio de San Antonio, and so it is marked on the charts.

As we sailed along we noted the position of the great river Coatzacoalcos, and we wished to enter the bay [not merely] to see what it was like, but because the weather was unfavourable. Soon we came in sight of the great snow mountains, which have snow on them all the year round, and we saw other mountains, nearer to the sea, which we called the range of San Martin, and we gave it that name because the first man to see them was a soldier from Havana who had come with us named San Martin.

As we followed along the coast, the Captain Pedro de Alvarado, went ahead with his ship and entered a river which the Indians call Papaloapan, and which we then called the Rio de Alvarado because Alvarado was the first to enter it. There, some Indian fishermen, natives of a town called Tlacotalpa gave him some fish. We waited at the mouth of the river with the other three ships until Alvarado came out, and the General was very angry with him for going up the river without his permission, and ordered him never to go ahead of the other ships again, lest an accident should happen when we could not give him help.

We kept on our course, all four ships together until we arrived at the mouth of another river, which we called the Rio de Banderas,<sup>1</sup> because we there came on a great number of Indians with long lances, and on every

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<sup>1</sup> Rio de Banderas is the Rio Jamapa of the modern maps.

lance a great cloth banner which they waved as they beckoned to us. And what happened I will tell in the next chapter.

### CHAPTER XIII.

How we arrived at the Rio de Banderas and what happened there.

SOME studious readers in Spain and other people who have been to New Spain, may have heard that Mexico was a very great city built in the water like Venice, and that it was governed by a great prince who was King over many provinces and ruled over all the lands of New Spain, a territory which is more than twice as large as Castille, and that this Prince was called Montezuma, and that as he was so powerful he wished to extend his rule beyond what was possible. He had received news of our arrival when we came first, with Francisco Hernández de Córdova, and of what had happened at the battle of Catoche and at Chanpoton, and also what had happened at the battle at this same Chanpoton during this voyage, and he knew that we soldiers being few in number had defeated the warriors of that town and their very numerous allies, and he knew as well that we had entered the Rio Tabasco and what had taken place between us and the caciques of that town, moreover he understood that our object was to seek for gold, in exchange for the things we had brought with us. All this news had been brought to him painted on a cloth made of *hennequen*<sup>1</sup> which is like linen, and as he knew that we were coasting along towards his provinces he sent orders to his governors that if we should arrive in their

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<sup>1</sup> Hennequen, or Sisal hemp, is a species of Aloe (*Agave Ixtli*) now largely used for cordage.