

Idols and their sacrifices, for they will do anything we tell them to do on account of the great fear they have of the Mexicans." The friar replied, "Sir, that is true, but let us leave the matter until they bring their daughters and then there will be material to work upon, and your honour can say that you do not wish to accept them until they give up sacrifices—if that succeeds, good, if not we shall do our duty."

So thus the matter rested until next day, and what was done I will go on to relate.

CHAPTER LXXVII.

How they brought their daughters to present to Cortés and to all of us, and what was done about it.

THE next day the same old Caciques came and brought with them five beautiful Indian maidens, and for Indians they were very good looking and well adorned, and each of the Indian maidens brought another Indian girl as her servant, and all were the daughters of Caciques, and Xicotenga said to Cortés, "Malinche, this is my daughter who has never been married and is a maiden, take her for your own," and he gave her to him by the hand, "and let the others be given to the captains." Cortés expressed his thanks, and with every appearance of gratification said that he accepted them and took them as our own, but that for the present they should remain in the care of their parents. The Chiefs asked him why he would not take them now, and Cortés replied that he wished first to do the will of God our Lord, whom we believed in and worshipped, and that for which our Lord the King had sent us, which was to induce them to do away with their Idols, and no longer to kill and sacrifice human beings, and the other infamies they were wont to practise, and to lead them to

believe in that which we believed, that is in one true God, and he told them much more touching our holy faith, and in truth he expressed it very well, for Doña Marina and Aguilar, our interpreters, were already so expert at it that they explained it very clearly. He showed the Caciques an image of our Lady, with her precious Infant in her arms, and explained to them how that image was in the likeness of our Lady, who is called Santa Maria, who dwells in the high heavens and is the mother of our Lord, who is that Child Jesus whom she holds in her arms, whom she conceived by the grace of the Holy Spirit, being a virgin before His birth, and remaining a Virgin during His birth, and after His birth, and how that Great Lady prays for us to her precious Son who is our God and Lord, and he told them many other things which it was fitting to say about our holy faith. He also told them that if they wished to be our brothers and to have true friendship with us, so that we should willingly accept their daughters and take them, as they said, for our wives, that they should at once give up their evil Idols and believe in and worship our Lord God, who is He in whom we believe and whom we worship, and they would see how well things would go with them, for in addition to having good health and good seasons, other things would prosper with them, and when they died their souls would go to Heaven to enjoy glory everlasting ; but that if they went on making sacrifices as they were accustomed to do to their Idols, which were devils, they would be led to Hell where they would burn for ever in live flames. And as in other discourses he had already said much about the giving up of their Idols, he said nothing more now and what they replied to it all is as follows :—

“ Malinche, we have already understood from you before now, and we thoroughly believe that this God of yours and this great Lady are very good, but look you, you have only

just come to our homes, as time goes on we shall understand your beliefs much more clearly, and see what they are, and will do what is right. But how can you ask us to give up our Teules which for many years our ancestors have held to be gods and have made sacrifices to them and have worshipped them? Even if we, who are old men, might wish to do it to please you, what would our priests say, and all our neighbours, and the youths and children throughout the province? They would rise against us, especially as the priests have already consulted the greatest of our Teules, and he told them not to forget the sacrifice of men and all the rites they were used to practise, otherwise the gods would destroy the whole province with famine, pestilence and war." Thus they spoke and gave as their answer that we should not trouble to talk to them on that subject again for they were not going to leave off making sacrifices even if they were killed for it.

When we heard that reply which they gave so honestly and without fear, the Padre de la Merced, who was a wise man, and a theologian, said, "Sir, do not attempt to press them further on this subject, for it is not just to make them Christians by force, and I would not wish that you should do what we did in Cempoala, that is, destroy their Idols, until they have some knowledge of our Holy Faith. What good is it to take away now their Idols from one oratory or cue, if they carry them at once to another. It would be better that they should gradually feel the weight of our admonitions which are good and holy, so that later on they may realize the good advice which we are giving them." Furthermore three gentlemen, namely, Juan Velásquez de Leon and Francisco de Lugo, spoke to Cortés and said "The Padre is right in what he says, you have fulfilled your duty with what you have done, and do not touch again on this matter when speaking to these Caciques," and so the subject dropped. What we induced

the Caciques to do, by entreaty, was at once to clear out one of the cues, which was close by and had been recently built, and after removing the Idols, to clean it and white-wash it so that we could place a cross in it and the image of Our Lady, and this they promptly did. Then Mass was said there and the Cacicas were baptized. The daughter of the blind Xicotenga was given the name of Doña Luisa, and Cortés took her by the hand and gave her to Pedro de Alvarado, and said to Xicotenga that he to whom he gave her was his brother and his Captain, and that he should be pleased at it as she would be well treated by him, and Xicotenga was contented that it should be so. The daughter or niece of Mase Escasi was named Doña Elvira and she was very beautiful and it seems to me that she was given to Juan Velásquez de Leon. The others were given baptismal names, always with the title of nobility (doña), and Cortés gave them to Gonzalo de Sandoval, and Cristóbal de Olid and Alonzo de Ávila. When this had been done Cortés told them the reason why he put up two crosses, and that it was because their Idols were afraid of them, and that wherever we were encamped or wherever we slept they were placed in the roads; and at all this they were quite content.

Before I go on any further I wish to say about the Cacica the daughter of Xicotenga, who was named Doña Luisa and was given to Pedro de Alvarado, that when they gave her to him all the greater part of Tlascala paid reverence to her, and gave her presents, and looked on her as their mistress, and Pedro de Alvarado who was then a bachelor, had a son by her named Don Pedro, and a daughter named Doña Leonor who is now the wife of Don Francisco de la Cueva, a nobleman, and a cousin of the Duke of Alberquerque, who had by her four or five sons, very good gentlemen, and that lady Doña Leonor, is so very excellent a lady, as might be expected, being

the daughter of such a father, who was a commendador of [The Order of] Santiago, Adelantado and Governor of Guatemala, and the same who went to Peru with a great fleet, and through his relation to Xicotenga was a great Lord of Tlaxcala.

I must leave these stories and return to Cortés who questioned those Caciques and informed himself more completely about the affairs of Mexico. What they said about it is what I shall go on to relate.

CHAPTER LXXVIII.

How Cortés questioned Mase Escasi and Xicotenga about things in Mexico, and what account they gave of them.

CORTÉS then took those Caciques aside and questioned them very fully about Mexican affairs. Xicotenga, as he was the best informed and a great chieftain, took the lead in talking, and from time to time he was helped by Mase Escasi who was also a great chief.

He said that Montezuma had such great strength in warriors that when he wished to capture a great city or make a raid on a province, he could place a hundred and fifty thousand men in the field, and this they knew well from the experience of the wars and hostilities they had had with them for more than a hundred years past.

Cortés asked them how it was that with so many warriors as they said came down on them they had never been entirely conquered. They answered that although the Mexicans sometimes defeated them and killed them, and carried off many of their vassals for sacrifice, many of the enemy were also left dead on the field and others were made prisoners, and that they never could come so secretly that they did not get some warning, and that when they knew of their approach they mustered all