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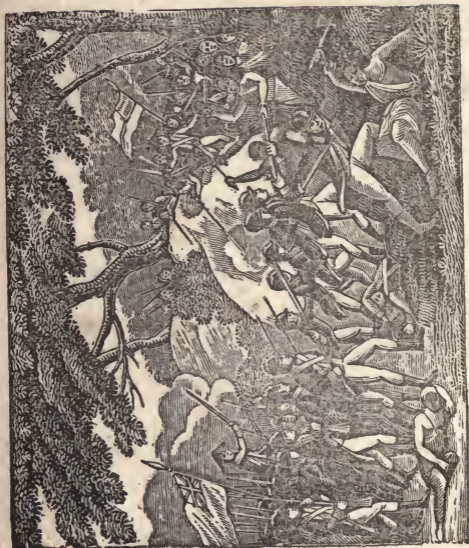














**STORIES**  
OF THE  
SPANISH CONQUESTS  
IN  
AMERICA.

DESIGNED FOR THE USE OF CHILDREN.

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BY THE AUTHOR OF

'THE BEATITUDES,' AND 'LESSONS WITHOUT BOOKS.'

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**VOL. II.**

BOSTON:  
LEONARD C. BOWLES.  
1830.

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DISTRICT OF MASSACHUSETTS, *to wit:*

*District Clerk's Office.*

BE IT REMEMBERED, that on the 10th day of August, A. D. 1829, in the fifty-fourth year of the Independence of the United States of America, LEONARD C. BOWLES, of the said district, has deposited in this office the title of a book, the right whereof he claims as proprietor, in the words following, to wit:

Stories of the Spanish Conquests in America. Designed for the use of Children. By the author of the Beatitudes, and Lessons Without Books.

In conformity to the act of the Congress of the United States, entitled 'An act for the encouragement of Learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned; and also to an act, entitled 'An act supplementary to an act, entitled, "An act for the encouragement of learning by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies during the times therein mentioned;" and extending the benefits thereof to the arts of designing, engraving, and etching historical and other prints.'

JNO. W. DAVIS,

*Clerk of the District of Massachusetts.*

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## CHAPTER IX.

Conquest of Mexico. Expedition of Cordova.  
of Grijalva. Cortes. Montezuma.

I must now go back a few years in order to recount to you the discoveries which led to a momentous event in the history of the new world—the Conquest of Mexico.

In 1517, an expedition under the command of one Cordova, was fitted out from the Island of Cuba with the approbation and patronage of Diego Velasquez, Governor of that Island.

It was destined to explore the sea which stretches to the west of Cuba, of which, as yet, very little was known.

The first land discovered was Cape Catoche the eastern point of the large peninsula, which still retains the name of Yucatan. Here the inhabitants were found decently dressed in garments of cotton; a novel spectacle in the new world, as all the natives of the Islands, and of those parts of South America which had been discovered, were naked savages. As the party advanced into the country, they were still more surprised at perceiving large houses built of stone.

But if the inhabitants were more civilized, they were also more warlike; and though they seemed friendly at first, it was not long before an ambush was laid for the Spaniards, and a combat ensued, in

which several of them were wounded by the Indian arrows.

The natives, however, terrified by a sudden discharge of fire arms, fled precipitately.

Cordova proceeded on to Campeachy, and thence to a river called Potouchan. Here too, the natives were very hostile, and attacking the Spaniards with great fury, while they were engaged in procuring a supply of water, killed forty seven of them upon the spot, and wounded more or less, every man, with a single exception.

After this disaster, it was deemed necessary to return immediately to Cuba. On their way thither they suffered great distress from the want of water, distress which was aggravated by the sickly and wounded

state of the crews, shut up in small vessels, and exposed to the heat of the torrid zone. Several died on the passage, and the commander expired, just after he landed in Cuba.

Still, the ardor of the Spaniards was unchecked by any of these adverse circumstances, and directly, another expedition was fitted out under the command of one Grijalva, who sailed from St Jago, in Cuba early in the year 1518.

The first land which he discovered, was Cozumel, a small Island, east of Yucatan; he then proceeded on to Potouchan, which he reached without the occurrence of any important incident, and being determined to revenge the death of his countrymen there, he had a battle with the natives, whom however, he conquer-

ed with difficulty. He then proceeded, directly west, keeping near the shore, and marvelled at seeing all along the coast, villages, with houses of stone, which in the distance appeared white and large. One of the soldiers happening to remark that the country looked like Spain, Grijalva immediately gave it the name of New Spain, by which it is known to this day.

Grijalva and his followers landed at the mouth of a river called Tobacco, which empties into the bay of Campeachy, where they were greeted in a friendly manner, and received such presents from the cacique of the country, as increased their ideas of its riches.

They next touched in a part of a province, since known by the name

of Guapaca, where they were treated still more magnificently, the people burning incense to them, and making them offerings of their choicest effects.

The Spaniards likewise procured from them many curious ornaments of gold, in exchange for the merest trifles. Grijalva brought away from Yucatan two prisoners who had hitherto served him as interpreters, but not understanding the Mexican language they were of no use on the present occasion, and Grijalva was obliged to converse by signs with the inhabitants of Guapaca, who told him that they were the subjects of a great king called Montezuma, whose dominion was very extensive.

Still proceeding in a westerly direction, Grijalva discovered one island which he called the Isle of Sac-



rifices, because there he first beheld human sacrifices, and another which he named St Juan de Vlúa. From this place he dispatched one of his officers to Cuba, with information of his progress together with the treasures which had been collected, and then proceeded along the coast to a river called Pamaco; the country still appearing populous and fertile. He returned to Cuba, however, without having made any settlement, though his officers earnestly contended that their success must be considered as incomplete, unless they established a colony in some appropriate station.

This was the longest and most important voyage of discovery that had ever been made in the new world.

Soon as Velasquez received the dispatches sent by Grijalva, he transmitted the intelligence which they contained to Ferdinand, and while waiting for an answer, hastened to make preparations for another expedition so that when Grijalva returned he found an armament nearly ready to sail.

Velasquez hoped, by this enterprise, to procure for himself both fame and wealth, and advanced a large part of his private fortune to facilitate its accomplishment.

But his energy not being equal to his ambition, he had no idea of conducting the expedition in person, and was extremely puzzled in choosing a commander entirely adapted to his purposes, viz: one who with abilities and resolution sufficient to ensure the

success of his object, united, a spirit so tame and obsequious, as would yield implicit deference to Velasquez and give him no cause of jealousy. Velasquez must have been very ignorant of human nature, or he would have known that no such man existed.

His extreme perplexity and irresolution, induced some of his officers to urge very strongly the appointment of Fernando Cortes, a Spaniard of noble birth who had been originally destined for an academical education, but being a dissipated, self-willed young man, with a decided taste for the life of a soldier, rather than that of a student, his father was glad to comply with his inclinations, by sending him an adventurer to the new world.

Orando, the governor of Hispaniola who was his kinsman, received him kindly, and appointed him to several stations, which were both honorable and lucrative; but still he was not satisfied, for [the great activity of his character had not sufficient scope. He therefore accompanied Velasquez in his expedition to conquer Cuba, and soon distinguished himself so much on several occasions of difficulty and danger, that he became very conspicuous, and excited great expectations in regard to his future achievements.

Some differences which had arisen between him and Velasquez, were afterwards composed, and he had lately been treated with great favor by that important personage, who now hoped by this new mark of con-

fidence, to attach him, inviolably, to his interests.

Cortez received his commission with many expressions of gratitude and respect.

He immediately assumed the military dress, together with other ensigns of his new dignity. He likewise appropriated all his funds, to the purchase either of provisions and military stores, or of handsome equipments for those for his officers who were too poor to provide for themselves, and he even mortgaged all his lands and Indians to increase his resources.

Some rivals of Cortez immediately represented to Velasquez, that he was aiming to establish an independent authority over the troops, and that he would most probably use his new-

ly acquired influence to revenge the injuries he had formerly received.

Cortez being aware that Velasquez already regretted having reposed in him so great a trust, hastened his departure for Ferdinand, a small settlement on the same side of the island, with St Jago the place of Velasquez's residence, where he wished to obtain some further supplies of provisions and military stores. Hardly had he arrived there, when the chief magistrate, Verdaguio, received orders from Velasquez, to deprive Cortez of his commission. But Cortez had become very popular among his followers, having a fine countenance, a graceful and commanding person, and manners such as usually characterize a soldier who loves his profession, and has made himself em-

inent by it ; combining dignity with frankness and cordiality. He was greatly skilled in all martial exercises, he formed his schemes with prudence and wisdom, and prosecuted them with indefatigable activity. Such a commander is never long in winning the hearts of those who are associated with him, particularly in an enterprise, personally interesting to each individual.

Finding that all his men were disposed to support his authority, even in defiance of Velasquez ; he resisted the magistrate with so much firmness, that either from imbecility or fear, he was suffered to depart unmolested. Cortez then sailed for the Havana to complete his preparations there ; but Velasquez, apprised of his departure from Ferdinand, im-

mediately dispatched an agent upon whom he was sure he could rely with peremptory orders to Pedro Barbra his lieutenant governor, residing at the Havana, to arrest Cortez, send him prisoner to St Jago, and likewise to countermand the sailing of the fleet until further orders.

But intelligence of this design upon his person, was secretly transmitted to Cortez through his chaplain, a Franciscan monk, by a friar of St Jago, who belonged to the same order, and was received in season to avert his threatened fate.

There was one of his officers upon whom Cortez could not perfectly rely, on account of his great friendship for Velasquez. To him he gave the command of a vessel, destined to take in provisions in a small harbor be-



yond, and thus made sure of his absence, when the critical moment should arrive, without giving him reason to suppose that suspicions were entertained of his fidelity. He then disclosed to his troops Velasquez's purposes concerning him.

The communication was received with loud murmurs of indignation against Velasquez for his mean and wavering conduct ; the men were all impatient to set out on an expedition, in preparation for which most of them had expended the whole of their fortunes, and they declared to Cortez that they were ready to spend the last drop of their blood in supporting his authority. Of course he was equally ready to promise in the most solemn manner, that he would never desert men who had given him such

a signal proof of their attachment, and it was determined that they should set sail immediately.

Now what do you think of Cortez's conduct in this occasion? There is no doubt that the apostle's injunction 'to submit to the powers that be' is of almost universal approbation; but there are exceptions to every rule, and I confess, that in this instance, my sympathies are entirely with Cortez. If he chose to incur the risks of such a defiance of lawful authority, rather than submit to be a mere feather at the mercy of every breath of Velasquez's mean jealousy, I see no objection; as he was too far distant from the sources whence Velasquez denied his power to obtain redress.

The fleet destined for this mighty enterprise consisted of only eleven vessels, most of which were very small, and three of them little open barks. On board this fleet were six hundred and seventeen men, five hundred and eighteen of whom were soldiers. They had but a small quantity of arms and artillery. The fleet sailed from Cuba Feb. 10, 1519.

The Spaniards of this period were remarkable for a curious combination of religious ardor with an absorbing rapacious spirit of adventure. Proposing to themselves always a two-fold object, that of accumulating wealth and of converting to their own faith the people whom they plundered ; they felt sure of the protection of Heaven. The device which the standard of Cortez bore, was a cross,

under which was the inscription, 'Let us follow the cross, for under this sign we shall conquer.' Thus making this sacred emblem of suffering and self-sacrifice, in the cause of humanity, an excitement to invasion, injustice and oppression ! What think you of this, that Cortez did it in mockery of our blessed Saviour, and his peaceful religion ? Oh no ! He was under one of those unhappy delusions by which men so frequently hide from themselves, the true character of their worst actions, and persuade themselves that it is right 'to do evil that good may come.' I pray my young readers to beware of such a sentiment ; Cortez did really believe in the religion of his country, and hoped to carry it as a blessing wherever he went, being ignorant

that conversion cannot be effected by violence.

Cortez, having determined to touch at every place which Grijalva had visited, directed his course first to the island of Cozumel where he was so fortunate as to redeem Jerome De Hynilar, a Spaniard who had been eight years a captive among the Indians, and was afterwards of great use to him as an interpreter. At the river of Tabasco he met with a hostile reception ; the Indians made an attack upon him, but finally sued for peace, and acknowledged themselves subjects of the king of Castile. They then supplied Cortez with provisions and made him presents of cotton garments, some gold, and twenty female slaves.

When he arrived at the island of

St Juan de Velua, as he entered the harbor, he saw a canoe approaching full of people among whom were evidently two persons of distinction, who made signs of peace. They came on board his ship with the utmost confidence, and addressed him with an appearance of great deference ; but Hynilar, the interpreter, could not understand a word they said, which occasioned Cortez a great deal of perplexity. Fortunately, a female slave who had been presented to him by the cacique of Tabasco was present at the interview, and understanding the Mexican language, which was that used by these Indians, she explained it to Hynilar in the Yucatan tongue. This woman called by the Spaniards, Donna Marina, was afterwards of great use to Cortez as an interpreter.

He was now made aware through her intervention, that these two principal personages were, one of them, governor of a province which was subject to the great king Montezuma, and the other, general of his forces there, and that they were sent by that monarch to inquire why Cortez visited his country, as well as to render him any assistance in their power. Cortez told them that he came with a friendly purpose to propose to their monarch matters of great importance to the welfare of both himself and his people.

The next morning, without waiting to hear from these deputies again, he landed his troops, horses, and artillery, and began to erect huts for his men, and to fortify his camp, while the natives instead of opposing, as-

sisted him. On the same day the two ambassadors came again with a numerous train, and Cortez received them with great formality. He told them that he had come as ambassador from the king of Castile, and could communicate the purpose of his mission to none but the Emperor himself, and therefore, requested to be conducted into his presence.

The Mexican deputies could not conceal their uneasiness at this proposition, but before presenting a remonstrance they endeavored to ingratiate themselves with Cortez, by presents, which were displayed with great parade ; they consisted of fine cotton cloth, plumes of various colors, and ornaments of gold and silver curiously wrought. These, of course, instead of allaying, increased



the desire of the Spaniards to conquer a country which yielded such valuable productions. Therefore when the ambassadors endeavored to dissuade Cortez from his purpose of visiting the capital, he insisted in a firm and determined tone, on being admitted to an interview with Montezuma.

In the mean time, some painters in the train of the ambassadors had been diligently employed in the tracing upon cotton cloth, figures of the ships, the horses, the artillery and whatever was most striking to them in the fleet and encampment of the Spaniards, and Cortez being apprised of this, thought it an occasion not to be lost of producing a great impression of his power. He ordered the trumpet to sound and the troops to

form in order of battle, and perform various evolutions, calculated to display their military skill, and show the use of their weapons ; all which was concluded by a discharge of artillery, that made great havoc among the trees. At this, the Indians were so frightened that he found it difficult to compose them, and their invention was stretched to the utmost in representing all these wonderful things.

An account of these transactions, together with the paintings and a present from Cortez of some European articles which, though of no great value, would appear very curious to the Mexicans, was immediately sent to Montezuma. In order to facilitate the transmission of intelligence from all parts of the empire, the Mexican monarchs had introduc-

ed a refinement in police, which was then unknown to the Europeans. They had carriers posted at proper intervals all along the principal roads, who being trained to their business acquired so great facility in running as to convey intelligence with astonishing rapidity, and though the capital was at the distance of one hundred and eighty miles, an answer was received to the despatches of Cortez in a very few days.

It was unpropitious, however, and so great was the fear with which the Spaniards had already inspired the ambassadors, that they did not return to communicate it, without first making a peace-offering, consisting of further numerous and valuable presents which were sent by Montezuma, and gave a greater idea of his

magnificence than had been conceived before. One hundred Indians were employed in bringing them ; there were cotton stuffs so fine and delicate as to resemble silk, pictures of natural objects composed of feathers of different colours, tastefully mingled and shaded, two large circular plates, one of gold made to represent the sun, the other of silver to represent the moon, an innumerable quantity of trinkets, and some boxes filled with grains of gold, pearls and precious stones.

Cortez, in receiving these, put on an appearance of profound veneration for the generous monarch, who had laid him under such obligation, but when informed that Montezuma would not consent to an interview, he replied in a more determined tone than ever, saying that he could not

discharge his duty to his king with honor until he had fulfilled that object of his mission.

The Mexicans were in amazement at seeing any man dare to oppose the will of their sovereign, which they were in the habit of regarding as supreme and incontestible. They were obliged to content themselves, however, with extorting a promise from Cortez, that he would not stir from his camp until he had heard again from Montezuma.

The perserverence of Cortez should have convinced Montezuma that he ought to decide at once whether to receive him as a friend, or oppose him as an enemy. He was monarch of a rich and powerful kingdom, whose inhabitants were warlike and enterprising, and had he attacked the

Spaniards in their present and unprotected situation he must have completely destroyed or expelled them, as the superiority which their use of fire arms gave them would not have been sufficient to counterbalance that which the Mexicans might derive from their greater number of forces. But though his power was great, and his character as a monarch usually marked by energy as well as severity, so that he was both feared and respected by his subjects, and dreaded by his enemies, he manifested the most entire irresolution in this emergency.

The Spaniards seem to have been regarded by the Mexicans as they were by the natives of the islands, with a sort of awe. It is supposed too, that Montezuma's energies were

palsied by a superstitious dread which was universally felt among his subjects, that the nation was about to experience the fulfilment of a prophecy long since made, in reference to a dreadful calamity which would some time or other be inflicted upon them by a race coming from towards the rising sun, that is from the east. The origin of this prediction is not known; perhaps it was not to be traced further back than to the interview which you recollect Columbus, in his last voyage, had at one of the islands, with a canoe full of people who told him they were the subjects of a great monarch that lived at the west. They might have conceived such an idea of the wonderful strangers at that time, as led to this prediction, in which case it was something more than

a mere superstitious presentiment. The Mexicans, however, were said to be the most superstitious of all the Americans.

Notwithstanding, this weakness of Montezuma, when the continued inflexibility of Cortez's determination was announced to him, he was thrown into a violent transport of rage in which he threatened to seize those imprudent strangers and sacrifice them to his gods. But this was only a momentary impulse, his doubts and fears speedily returned, and prevented the execution of his purpose. A council was then assembled in which nothing more was decided than to issue another still more positive injunction upon Cortez to leave the country without delay ; but they were so very foolish as to accompa-



ny this mandate with another present of immense value, which counteracted their object as effectually as if they beckoned him with one hand, while with the other they made sign for him to depart.

## CHAPTER X.

Cortez, resigns his command, is chosen Captain general and chief magistrate of the colony ; destruction of the fleet ; settlement at Quiabisan ; the Zempoallans ; march to Tuscula.

Meanwhile there were differences of opinion among Cortez's followers, some thought that it was rashness to adventure farther into the midst of so powerful a nation, while others, overlooking the intermediate difficulties and dangers, fastened their attention on the prospect of rich booty, beyond, and advocated the boldest measures. Cortez secretly encouraged the latter, having openly defied the authority of Velasquez,

which might be construed also into a defiance of the king, from whom Velasquez had received his commission, he was conscious that his situation was that of a desperado, and that his only chance of safety was in some achievement of sufficient importance to atone for his offence. Therefore when Montezuma's last peremptory order accompanied by the present, was received, Cortez, instead of acquiescing, only renewed his demand for an audience with that monarch, whereupon the messengers abruptly quitted him in a manner expressive of angry resentment.

The next morning none of the natives who had been in the daily habit of bartering with the Spaniards appeared, and all friendly intercourse being now at an end, it was

expected that hostilities would speedily commence. This emboldened some of Cortez's followers who were still secret adherents of Velasquez to present a formal remonstrance by the hand of one of his principal officers, against making any attempt to proceed farther. Cortez had so much self command as to receive it without any appearance of temper, and was cunning enough to issue immediate orders for the departure of the fleet to Cuba on the following day ; relying upon the clamorous resistance which he foresaw many of his men would make, to prevent their execution.

In this he was not disappointed, for when the orders were proclaimed, they produced so great an excitement, that there was danger of a in-

stant mutiny. The troops called loudly and vociferously for their commander, and Cortez was not slow in answering the summons. When he appeared, the advocates for proceeding expressed boldly and bluntly their sense of the degredation of shrinking from the first appearance of danger and of flying even before the enemy came in sight. They said that if Cortez chose to return to Cuba they should stay behind, but that if he would continue with them, they should follow him with more alacrity than any other leader.

Cortez replied that his determination to depart had been entirely owing to the belief that such a step would be most agreeable to the wishes of his troops, that for his own part he was decidedly inclined to es-

tablish a settlement somewhere upon the sea coast, and then penetrate into the interior of the country as far as possible ; and that now, as he perceived they were ready to join with him, he would resume his original purpose with fresh ardor, hoping to lead them in the career of victory and fortune.

This declaration was received with shouts of applause, and the resolution seemed to be adopted by unanimous consent ; for such as secretly disapproved it, did not like to expose themselves to the reproach of cowardice from their fellow soldiers, or to excite suspicions of their disaffection to Cortez.

All this proceeding was managed with extreme adroitness on the part of Cortez, and the same nice obser-

vation of the minds of men, which had hitherto guided him through all difficulties, still prompted him not to allow time for the ardor of his troops to cool.

He immediately set about accomplishing his design, and began by establishing a form of government, taking care to choose his magistrates from among his own partisans.

In their elections he avoided any recognition of the authority of Velasquez ; they were chosen in the king's name.

The name which Cortez bestowed upon the settlement 'Villa Rica de la Vera Cruz,' that is, 'the rich town of the true cross,' shows how strangely sentiments of religion were blended with the passion of avarice in the breasts of the Spaniards.

As soon as the new council were convened, Cortez requested permission to appear before them and, advancing in the most respectful manner, formally renounced his commission saying that he now considered them as representatives of the royal authority, and that he should confer with them on what he deemed essential to the public welfare in the same spirit that would actuate a dutiful subject in addressing his king. He then went on to suggest that as they were in a hostile country their security would depend very much upon having the strictest order and discipline maintained among the troops who might at any time dispute his authority because he had derived his commission from Velasquez, by whom it was afterwards revoked, and



therefore he chose to resign it at once. And leaving the choice of a new commander, where it properly belonged, he was determined to show his men, that he could obey as well as command. Then kissing his truncheon, which was the symbol of his office, he laid it upon the table, and withdrew.

Of course, and as he had probably foreseen, the council were not long in deciding upon his re-election. He was chosen chief justice of the colony and captain-general of the army, with ample powers deputed in the king's name. That this might not seem a preconcerted measure, the troops were immediately called together and the appointment being declared to them, they testified their joy in the most extravagant and un-

questionable manner. Cortez was now upon a much better footing with the army; his authority was no longer, as it respected them, on a sandy foundation, and, besides, by concurring in his present nomination, his followers shared with him the guilt and danger of a rebellious independence of Velasquez, a circumstance which of course rendered their adherence to his interests more sure and inviolable.

Still there were some who had never made up their minds to renounce their allegiance to Velasquez, and these were not able to conceal their disaffection at the proceedings of the council, but openly denounced them, as illegal. Cortez perceiving the necessity of checking this spirit at once, seized the ring-leaders of the

faction and sent them aboard the ships in chains.

By this means, their associates were completely overawed ; but Cortez was not content with such a result, he wished to make them his friends, and for this purpose he practised so much address, aided, it is said by the Mexican gold, that a complete reconciliation took place, and these very men were ever afterwards his firm adherents.

Not long after this, some Indians approached his camp who were found to be ambassadors from the cacique of Zempoalla, a town at no great distance. From them he learnt, that this cacique was tributary to Montezuma whose yoke was so oppressive that he would accept of any assistance in shaking it off.

It instantly occurred to Cortez's active sagacious mind, that he might avail himself of this disaffection to Montezuma, which probably was not confined to a single province of the empire, in the prosecution of his designs against that monarch, and he therefore determined to get all the information he could upon the subject. He received the Zempoallans very graciously, and promised soon to visit their cacique. Zempoalla happened to be directly in the way to Quiabiskan, a place forty miles north of Vera Cruz, to which Cortez had intended to remove, thinking it a more favorable situation both on account of the superiorities of its harbor and because its soil was much better than that of the place which he had previously selected.

When he arrived at Zempoalla he was received as a mighty deliverer with a respect amounting almost to adoration, and loaded with gifts. The cacique informed him with tears in his eyes that Montezuma was a severe, suspicious tyrant, who treated his own subjects very harshly, and oppressed his conquered provinces with cruel exactions, sometimes even tearing from them their sons to be sacrificed to the gods, and their daughters to live in his harem. Cortez was artful enough in his reply to pretend that one great object which the Spaniards had proposed to themselves in coming to a country so far distant from their own, was that of relieving the oppressed, and avenging their wrongs, and promised that the Zempoallans should have his assistance.

He then proceeded on to Quiabislan which he had previously known only by the report of some of his officers whom he had employed to survey the coast. He was so much pleased with its situation as instantly to commence a settlement with fortifications, officers as well as the soldiers, Cortez himself setting the example, put their hands to the work, and with the assistance which the natives of Zempoalla and Quiabislan rendered them, they were soon able to put the new settlement which proved a prolific nest egg, in a good state of defence.

While engaged in this work Cortez had frequent interviews with the caciques of his new allies, and he succeeded in inspiring them with such high ideas of the Spanish power,

that relying on his protection they soon ventured to defy Montezuma's authority, to which before they had always bowed a trembling knee.

Some of Montezuma's officers who were sent to demand of them a certain number of human victims to be sacrificed as an expiation for the offence they had committed in holding intercourse with the proscribed strangers, instead of being obeyed, were seized and imprisoned, and as the superstition of the Zempoallans was no less barbarous than that of the Mexicans, the latter would have been sacrificed but for the intervention of Cortez, who showed the greatest horror at the bare suggestion.

Cortez had now been three months in New Spain, and had laid the foundation of his future success, but be-

ing aware that Velasquez would probably complain of him to the king, and that he was liable not only to be deprived of his command, but to be disgraced and punished, he thought it necessary, before commencing his march, to take every possible precaution against such a consequence.

He therefore presented the magistrates of the colony, to address a communication to the king, setting forth the importance of their discoveries, and the splendor of their expectations, explaining why they had renounced their allegiance to Velasquez, and beseeching him to ratify what they had done. Cortez wrote also to the same purpose, and as he knew that similar pompous accounts, being now very commonly received, were considered as matters of course



from every discoverer, in the new world, and might not be accredited without substantial proof, he persuaded his followers to relinquish each his own share in the treasures that had been hitherto collected, and was thus enabled to bestow upon the king of Spain the richest present which he had ever yet received from the new world. That the followers of Cortez should suffer him to lay his hands upon that gold, which was to them as the very apple of their eye, and appropriate it to a use in which they had comparatively, but little concern, was a new and striking proof of his power over their minds. Postocarrero and Montejo, the chief magistrates, were commissioned to convey these dispatches to Spain, with peremptory orders not to touch

at Cuba, in their passage thither. While a vessel was being prepared to convey them, some of the secret friends of Velasquez among both soldiers and sailors, formed the design of seizing one of the brigantines and making their escape to Cuba, that they might give intelligence to Velasquez, of this intended mission to Spain, and enable him to intercept it. Their plan however, was discovered in season to be prevented, but it occasioned Cortez a great deal of inquietude, as a proof that there was so much disaffection still lurking among a portion of his troops, as subjected him to the constant danger of being deserted by them, more especially as he knew that many of them were weary with the fatigue they were obliged to endure, and longed

to return to their settlements at Cuba. There could be no doubt that they would yield to this desire on the first trying emergency.

And what do you think was his plan for preventing this? I don't believe that even a yankee boy could guess. Why, he resolved to render it utterly impossible, by destroying the whole of the fleet!! and thus abandoning himself and his followers, irretrievably to whatever fate might befall their little band in the midst of a populous and hostile nation. None but a man capable of conceiving such a measure would have been able to persuade men, so circumstanced, to acquiesce in it. He labored to convince some that the ships had been so long at sea as to be unfit for further service;

he represented to others how valuable to the troops would be the accession of one hundred men, now employed as sailors, and to all he enlarged upon the necessity of fixing their eyes on what was before them, without allowing the idea of turning back, to enter their minds. By universal consent, therefore, the ships were drawn ashore, and after being stripped of every thing that could in any way, be converted to the use of the colony, were broken to pieces.

So, now, we have to accompany five hundred men, in their march through an enemy's country, from which they have no power of retreating. Had their cause been better, had they been deliverers instead of oppressors, had they been engaged in defence rather than aggression,

had their object been such as would enlist in any degree, our moral sympathies, by proposing results favorable to virtue or improvement, their heroism would have been truly sublime; and with every qualification, it has excited the admiration of mankind, as one of the most striking instances of unconquerable courage recorded in the annals of history.

Not long after this event took place, Cortez came very near forfeiting the friendship of the Zempoallans, by a rash exercise of his religious zeal. Being excessively occupied, he had made no attempt to convince them of the errors of their faith, or the truth of his own, but he ordered his soldiers to overthrow the altars in the chief temple of Zempoalla, destroy the idols, and substitute in their

place an image of the Virgin Mary, with a crucifix.

This seems an astonishing indiscretion on the part of a man whose conduct was usually marked with great prudence. His was not a blinder zeal, however, than is often exercised by more enlightened people, in their interference with the religious concerns of others. But there is no subject on which heathens, as well as christians, are so tenacious. The religious rights of a people are always held dearer than any other, and as this sentiment is universal, the very same feeling which prompts an interference of one part or sect, leads to indignant and strenuous opposition on the part of another.

The Zempoallans were seized with horror, and angry resentment,

and nothing but the unerring ascendant which Cortez had acquired over them, prevented them from resorting to arms. The quarrel was finally appeased without bloodshed.

Cortez began his march from Zempoalla on the 16th August, 1519, with five hundred men, fifteen horses and ten field pieces. The rest of his troops, consisting of such as from age or infirmity were less fit for laborious service, were left in the garrison, under the command of Escalante, a faithful officer extremely attached to Cortez.

The cacique of Zempoalla furnished Cortez with provisions, and with two hundred Indians, called *Tame-nes*, who were used in the double capacity of beasts of burden, and servants. He offered also a considera-

ble body of troops, but Cortez accepted only four hundred, and took care to select such as were of sufficient importance and distinction to serve the purpose of hostages for the fidelity of their masters.



## CHAPTER XI.

War with the Flascalans ; Massacre at Cholula ; March to Mexico ; Interview with Montezuma.

Cortez proceeded without interference until he arrived at Flascalá, an independent province whose inhabitants were bitter foes of Montezuma, and had long been allies of the Zempoallans.

As these people are to act a conspicuous part, in some of the scenes of which follow, I will give you a brief account of them. They were not so far advanced in civilization as the subjects of Montezuma, but they had a regular form of government,

lived in towns ; had made considerable progress in agriculture, and were acquainted with some species of commerce. Still, they were dependant for their subsistence principally upon hunting, and had the qualities which usually characterize a barbarous people, with whom, that is almost, an exclusive occupation. They were fierce, high-spirited, independent, and revengeful ; they had not much intercourse with the neighboring states, and they maintained a successful resistance to the authority of Montezuma.

Of course, Cortez entertained no doubt of meeting a friendly reception from these people, as he was a professed enemy of Montezuma, and a friend of their allies, the Zempoallans. He sent four of the princi-

pal Zempoallans to the Flascalans to request permission for himself and his army to pass through their dominions. But the ambassadors instead of being listened to, were seized and imprisoned, and preparations were speedily made to sacrifice them, according to their usual method of treating prisoners, and troops were assembled to oppose the invaders. Many reasons is assigned for this unexpected conduct. Being very jealous of all strangers it is probable that the Flascalans felt no confidence in the representations of Cortez, but suspected him to be in fact a friend of Montezuma. They had heard, too, of his violating the temple of Zempoalla, and as their gods were the same with those of their allies, they must have considered that act a

horrid sacrilege, and perhaps thought it their duty to avenge it, by seizing and sacrificing its impious authors. Not knowing in what the superiority of the Spaniards consisted, they probably supposed that they would be easily conquered.

After waiting in vain for the return of the ambassadors, Cortez advanced into the territories of the Flascalans. He found troops assembled ready to oppose him, who made a bold attack, wounding some of the Spaniards, and killing two horses, a serious loss to Cortez. He conducted himself with the greatest prudence, chose his stations very judiciously, and fortified each successive encampment with great care. During fourteen days he was exposed to constant assaults from numerous ar-

mies of the Flascalans, who fought with a valor and perserverance, which the Spaniards had not hitherto met with in the new world. There were obvious reasons why, notwithstanding this, they made very little impression upon the Spaniards; they were unaccustomed to order or discipline, in their mode of warfare, and therefore lost the advantage which might have been derived from their superiority of numbers; their weapons, too, were very imperfect, consisting principally of arrows and spears, headed with flint, stakes hardened in the fire, and wooden swords, which, though sufficiently destructive among the naked Indians, could not penetrate the quilted jackets of the Spaniards.

After three battles, and a great

many skirmishes, it was ascertained, that not a single Spaniard had been killed, in the field, though the combatants often fought hand to hand. Another impediment to the success of the Flascalans was found in the constant solicitude they manifested to recover their dead and wounded. This was a very interesting trait of tenderness, in so fierce a people. Besides this they had a peculiar principle of honor more chivalrous, than ever actuated the heroes of the age of chivalry. Never attacking an enemy without giving previous notice of their intentions ; and as they knew that the Spaniards were in want of provisions, they sent to their camp a large supply of poultry, and maize, desiring them to eat plentifully, as they scorned either to attack an en-

my enfeebled by hunger, or to offer to their gods famished victims ; a curious mixture of the most savage superstition with humanity, that would have done honor to a highly enlightened people.

In the present instance the Flascallans finding their enemies apparently invulnerable, none of them being either killed or wounded, began to regard them as a superior order of beings. In this perplexity they had recourse to their priests, requiring them to disclose the mysterious causes of their want of success, and to tell them what means they must employ in future

The priests after various ceremonies and incantations, replied that the strangers were offsprings of the sun, warmed with life by his beams, that

by day, therefore, under the protection of his cherishing influence they were invulnerable, but that at night when that influence was withdrawn, they were no longer superior to the common race of men. It is possible that the priests really believed this theory, but it is more probable that they invented it to avoid acknowledging their total ignorance in the matter, which they believed would never be detected, as it was an established maxim among the Flascalans not to attack an enemy by night.

But this answer of the priests being of course received as oracular, the people considered themselves as thereby released from the authority of their ancient usage, and determined to attack Cortez in his camp that very night. He was too wary, how-



ever not to get information of their design and to be ready for them. When they began to advance, his troops all ready under arms, sallied out and repulsed them without giving them a chance to approach the Spanish quarters.

Misled by their priests and defeated in all their schemes, the Flascalans were now inclined to peace, but they were at loss whether to regard their enemies as beings of malevolent or benignant nature. There were circumstances which favored either opinion.

On the one hand, Cortez sent back all the prisoners not only without injury, but with presents, which, to a people accustomed to offer them in sacrifice, must have seemed most marvellous magnanimity, and he

likewise made new offers of peace after every victory ; but on the other hand he had seized fifty of their countrymen who carried provisions to his camp, and taking them for spies, sent them back with their hands cut off, a cruel and shameful act.

This, together with the impression made by their fire arms, gave an appalling sense of the ferocity of the Spaniards.

The Flascalans therefore addressed them in the following manner. ‘ If you are divinities of a cruel and savage nature, we present to you five slaves that you may drink their blood and eat their flesh. If you are mild deities, accept an offering of incense and variegated plumes. If you are men, here is meat and bread

and fruit to nourish you.' A treaty was speedily concluded. The Flascalans acknowledged themselves subjects of the king of Castile, and promised to assist Cortez in all his undertakings.

This treaty was concluded at a favorable moment for the Spaniards, who were exhausted with the great fatigue they had been obliged to endure day and night after entering the territories of the Flascalans. Many were sick with the diseases of the climate, some were suffering from their wounds, and all from a scarcity of provisions. Already a spirit of discontent and rebellion was threatening to subvert the authority of Cortez. But the timely submission of the Flascalans, and a triumphant entry into their chief city, where the

strangers were treated in all respects like beings of a superior order, made them forget their past sufferings, and resume their original confidence.

-Cortez remained at Flascala twenty days, which season of repose he turned to great advantage, by collecting such information concerning the character of Montezuma, and the state of the empire, as would enable him to regulate his future conduct and proceedings, in the most judicious manner. During this time Cortez ingratiated himself more and more with the Flascalans. Under these circumstances, it is strange that he should have been guilty of a similar indiscretion to that which had nearly cost him the friendship of the Zempoallans.

Relying upon the veneration with which he had inspired the Flascalans

he was encouraged to explain the doctrines of his religion, and insist that they should abandon their own superstitions and embrace the christian faith.

But though ready to acknowledge that what he taught was good and right, they contended that their deities were entitled to worship as well as the God of the Spaniards. Cortez nevertheless persevered, and soon exchanged the language of persuasion for that of authority, until the Flascalans became indignant, and conjured him not to mention the subject again, lest the gods should punish them for the sin of listening to such an impious proposal. Cortez provoked by their obstinacy was about to proceed to the demolition of their altars and temples, when

father Bartholomew de Olmedo, his chaplain interposed, representing the madness of such an attempt where the Spaniards were completely at the mercy of a superstitious and barbarous people, as tenacious of their religious rights as any other. He also suggested that religion was not to be propagated by the sword, but by patient example and instruction ; a most remarkable instance of liberality and good sense, in a Spanish monk of the sixteenth century. Cortez yielded to his remonstrances, and left the Flascalans in the undisturbed exercise of their religion, requesting only that they should relinquish the horrid custom of sacrificing human victims.

Cortez and his followers now directed their course to Cholula, a town

not far distant from Flascalá, whither Montezuma, who had at length consented to an interview, summoned them to meet him. It is conjectured that he selected this place on account of its having been a sort of holy city, the chief seat of their gods, where pilgrims resorted from every part of New Spain; and he might have had some superstitious notion that the gods, in this their chosen seat, would pour down vengeance on the impious strangers, and assist him in accomplishing their destruction. The Flascalans advised Cortez to keep a vigilant eye upon all the motions of the Cholulans, and though he was received by them with appearances of friendship, it was not long before circumstances occurred which excited suspicions of treachery.

The Flascalans being ancient enemies of the Cholulans, were kept without the city; but two of them being in the habit of entering it, in disguise, by night, observed the women and children retiring in a hurried manner, at the close of every day, as if to put themselves out of the reach of an approaching conflict; and on one occasion six children had been sacrificed in the principal temple in token that some warlike enterprise was at hand. About the same time Donna Marina, the interpreter, was informed by a woman, whose friendship she had gained, that a plot, was laid for the destruction of the Spaniards; that there were Mexican troops in the vicinity, that some of the streets were barricaded, and others were full of holes, slightly



covered over, in order to entrap the horses, and that stones had been collected on the tops of the buildings, with which to overwhelm the soldiers, as they passed.

Three priests being secretly arrested and examined, confirmed this intelligence, and Cortez determined to anticipate the Cholulans in their treacherous design. Perhaps it was right that he should do so for the purposes of self defence ; but still humanity shrinks at the dreadful scene which ensued, and which perhaps might have been avoided by peaceful measures. The Spaniards and Zempoallans were drawn up in a large square which had been assigned them as their quarters near the centre of the city. The Flascalans had orders to advance, and the magistrates and

principal citizens were summoned under various pretences, and arrested. On a signal given, the Flascalans from one quarter, and the Spaniards from another, all rushed upon the inhabitants of Cholula, who, surprised and stupified by the suddenness of the attack, were too much off their guard, to make any effectual resistance, and were besides completely hemmed in between one party of the enemy in their front, and another in the rear. The temples, whither many had fled for refuge, were set on fire, and altogether, a frightful scene of misery and bloodshed was produced, that lasted for two days, during which time sixty thousand inhabitants of the city perished. Then Cortez released the magistrates, reproached them for their

intended treachery, adding that he now forgave their offence, and requiring them to recal the fugitives and restore order to the city. In a few days it was again full of people, whose obsequiousness to the men from whom they had received such bitter injuries, proves what an astonishing ascendant the Spaniards had acquired.

Cortez now advanced directly towards the city of Mexico, which is only twenty leagues distant. Wherever he passed, the caciques received him as a friend about to deliver them from a yoke which all felt to be very burdensome. Finding the dislike to Montezuma so strong and universal, Cortez was encouraged to proceed. The soldiers were at the same time very much animated, for more obvi-

ous reasons addressed to their senses. As they descended from the mountains of Chalco in the progress of their march, the vast and beautiful plains of Mexico, said to be one of the most charming spots on the globe, appeared before them. Its fair cultivated fields stretching to what was apparently an illimitable distance, the bright expanse of the beautiful lake Tetzuco, so large as to resemble a sea, set round with large towns, and bearing, like a gem upon its bosom, the island-city, distinguished in the distance by its lofty temples and gilded spires, made it seem to them like a scene of enchantment.

Like their prototypes, the numerous class who in tales of romance 'go to seek their fortune,' these men had travelled by sea and land,

encountered innumerable dangers, and come nigh to despair, but had at length discovered the fairy regions, the enchanted palaces, of which they were in quest.

No enemy appeared to oppose their progress, though many messengers arrived from Montezuma, sometimes bidding them to retire, sometimes to advance. The astonishingly imbecile and wavering conduct of Montezuma, can only be accounted for on the supposition that he felt a superstitious awe and dread of the Spaniards.

Cortez arrived almost at the gates of Mexico before that monarch determined whether to receive him as a friend or an enemy. He continued his march along the principal causeway which led through the lake

to the city, with great circumspection, though with an appearance of confidence. As he drew near the city he was met by a train of a thousand men, adorned with plumes and covered with mantles of fine cotton. One by one, they passed near Cortez in the manner which was considered by them the most respectful and submissive. Soon after this, Montezuma himself appeared, preceded by two hundred persons, dressed alike, with large plumes of feathers, marching two and two, barefooted, in silence, and with down cast eyes. They were followed by another company seemingly of higher rank, and in a very showy apparel, bearing in the midst of them, Montezuma, on a litter, richly ornamented with gold and feathers. He was carried

by four men on their shoulders, while others supported a canopy over his head. Three officers went before him with golden rods in their hands, and when these were lifted up at certain intervals, the people bowed their heads and hid their faces, in token of respect to their monarch.

As he drew near, Cortez dismounted in a hurried manner as if impatient to testify his veneration, for so great a sovereign. At the same time Montezuma alighted, and the road being first covered with cotton cloth, that his feet might not touch the ground, he advanced leaning on the arms of two of his attendants. Cortez saluted him in the European manner, that is, I suppose, by a profound bow, or perhaps by kneeling and kissing his hand. He returned

the salutation, in the fashion of his own country, by kissing his hand, after having first touched the earth with it ; this was considered such an amazing, unparalleled condescension in their monarch, that his subjects supposed the people whom he honored in this extraordinary manner, must be superior beings, and the Spaniards had the satisfaction of hearing themselves frequently denominated *Teules*, which they knew meant divinities.

He then conducted Cortez to the place prepared for his reception, and there took leave of him, saying with great courtesy, ‘ you are now with your brothers in your own house ; refresh yourselves after your fatigue, and be happy until I return.’ This house was one which had been built



by Montezuma's father ; it was surrounded with a stone wall, having towers at proper intervals to answer the purpose either of ornament or defence, and it was sufficiently spacious, including its courts, to accommodate the Spaniards, together with their allies.

Cortez's first measures were precautionary. He placed the artillery where it could command all the avenues, and appointed a portion of his troops, to be constantly on guard, directing them to observe the same discipline as if they were in the vicinity of an enemy's camp. In the evening Montezuma returned, bringing presents of value, not only to Cortez and his officers, but also to the private soldiers. I am sure Cortez could not have felt much pleasure

at receiving them, when conscious that he was meditating the most injurious designs against the generous giver. Montezuma told him of a tradition universally believed by the Mexicans, that their ancestors came from a remote country and conquered the provinces which now constituted his kingdom, and that afterwards the great captain, who had conducted the colony, went back again to his own country, saying that sometime or other his descendants would visit the empire, assume the government and reform the laws. Montezuma then added that from the moment he heard of Cortez and his followers, he had believed them to be the same to whom this tradition referred, and therefore he had received them, not as strangers, but as friends.

Cortez, in his reply, took care to speak in such a manner of the design of his sovereign in sending him there, as would confirm Montezuma's idea.

The next morning the Spaniards were admitted to a public audience of the emperor, and three days were afterwards spent in reviewing the city.

## CHAPTER XII.

Capture of Montezuma ; Death of Quolpopoca ;  
Arrival of Naroaer.

The country of Mexico, called by the natives Tenuchtitlan, is situated in a large plain, surrounded with mountains, so that, though in the torrid zone, its climate is temperate and delightful.

The waters which pour down from these mountains are collected in several lakes, the two largest of which are united together. The city of Mexico is situated partly on the western shore of the lake Tetzuco and partly on some adjoining islands. The avenues to the city at that time

consisted of artificial causeways or streets formed of stone and earth, which were thirty feet wide, and as the flat country was liable to be overflowed at certain seasons by the waters of the lake, the causeways sometimes extended to a considerable distance. There were three principal causeways, that of Tezeuco on the north-west, of Tepeaca on the west, and of Cuoyacan towards the south; the latter was six miles in length. In all these causeways there were openings through which the water flowed, but they were covered over with beams of timber on which earth was laid, so that the whole presented a uniform appearance. On the east, the city was approached only by canoes.

The buildings, compared with any

others that had been seen in the new world, were magnificent. This was true, particularly of the temples and the houses of the principal inhabitants; and though the dwellings of the common people resembled the huts of other Indians, they were arranged with so much regularity as not to mar the appearance of the city. This architectural skill of the Mexicans was the more remarkable because they were unacquainted with the use of iron, without which the tools of our carpenters and joiners would be useless; nor had they any beasts of burden to draw their timber and stones. There were several large open squares in the city, one of which, where the market was held, was capable of containing forty or fifty thousand people.

The Flascalans had strenuously endeavored to dissuade Cortez from entering the city where he would be entirely at the mercy of Montezuma, who, as they believed, admitted the strangers only that he might have them more completely in his power. Cortez now perceived that there was sufficient reason for the apprehensions of his allies, since the Mexicans by breaking the bridges or destroying a part of the causeways, might cut off his retreat entirely and render his situation truly appalling. He therefore became very anxious, the more so, because just before he left Cholula, he had received information from Villa Rica that Qualpopoca, one of Montezuma's generals, having been sent to punish some of the natives for forming an alliance

with the Spaniards. Escalante had marched out with a part of the garrison to their assistance, and had been mortally wounded together with seven of his men. One horse also was killed, and one Spaniard taken alive. All this was a sufficient proof of Montezuma's hostile intentions, but still Cortez had proceeded without regarding it. He now became sensible of his rashness and saw that as his only hope was in keeping up the veneration of the Mexicans for the Spaniards, it would be fatal to betray the least symptom of timidity. He was aware too, that his favor as well as safety with the Spanish king depended upon his performing something of magnitude.

The expedient which his bold inventive spirit suggested in this ex-



tremity, was in perfect keeping with the previous displays of his character. He determined to seize Montezuma and carry him a prisoner to the Spanish quarters!! Once having him in possession he trusted that the blind and superstitious veneration of the Mexicans for their monarch, would secure to his captor the complete direction of affairs.

When he proposed the matter to his troops, it was received by one and another according to the timidity or boldness of each individual; but enough were found who approved it, warmly. Cortez repaired to the palace at the usual hour of paying his respect to the king, accompanied by his five principal officers—Alvarado, Lugo, Sandoval, Velasquez de Leon and Davilla, and as many trusty sol-

diers. These were followed by thirty chosen men, who, to avoid suspicion, sauntered along as if they had no particular object in view. Small bodies of men, also, were posted in all the streets leading from the Court to the Spanish quarters, and all the troops were under arms ready to obey the slightest signal.

Whenever the king was visited by Cortez, it was the custom of his Mexican attendants, respectfully, to retire. On this occasion when Cortez and his suite had been admitted as usual, without reserve or suspicion, he began by exchanging his former tone of respect for one of bitter reproach, demanding reparation for the attack which had been made upon Escalante, and the insult which had thus been offered to his sove-

reign. Montezuma instantly changed color, either from a consciousness of guilt, or from a feeling of resentment at the unwarranted freedom of Cortez, but as a proof of his innocence gave immediate orders that Qualpopoca and his officers should be brought prisoners to Mexico; Cortez then expressed himself satisfied, but said that his soldiers would require some further proof that Montezuma did not harbor hostile designs against them, and would not be convinced of his sincerity unless he consented to take up his residence in the Spanish quarters, where he should be treated, in all respects as became so great a monarch.

The amazement of Montezuma at so singular a proposition, for a moment deprived him of the power of

utterance. As soon as he was sufficiently recovered from his surprise, he replied 'that persons of his rank, were not accustomed voluntarily to yield themselves prisoners, and that even if he were sufficiently base and abject, his subjects would never consent that their sovereign should submit to such an affront.' Cortez, unwilling to use coercive measures, now tried to soothe, now, to intimidate him. The discussion continued three hours, and became more and more violent. At length Velasquez de Leon, an impetuous high spirited young man exclaimed impatiently, 'Why waste more time in vain; let us either seize him instantly, or stab him to the heart.'

Montezuma, though he did not understand the words of Velasquez, was

struck with his looks and gestures ; and perceiving his danger, abandoned himself to his fate. His officers were called, and being entirely unaccustomed to dispute the will of their sovereign, they did not presume to remonstrate when he communicated his resolution, but bathed in tears, prepared to carry him to the Spanish quarters.

When the people first heard a rumor of this intended proceeding, they were greatly enraged and threatened instant destruction to Cortez and his men ; but when Montezuma appeared among them, and with seeming cheerfulness waved his hand, the uproar ceased. He then informed them that it was his will to go to the Spanish quarters ; and, so potent is the magic wand of despotism, they

quietly dispersed. If you ask why he did not avail himself of this popular commotion to achieve his rescue, I am sure I cannot tell; perhaps he thought his life would unavoidably be the forfeit of such an attempt. Does he not remind you in all this scene of a person in a bad dream, who seeing dangers on every side, has yet no power of escape or remedy; for though both are at hand, some secret influence palsies his faculties, and makes him incapable of the least effort. Surely it must have seemed like a dream to Montezuma, when the excitement was over, and he began to realize that he had actually been seized in his palace, in the midst of his capital, at noon-day, and carried off by a handful of strangers.

He was treated by the Spaniards

with all the respect Cortez had promised, being attended by his own domestics, and having his usual officers constantly about him, and he continued to administer the government, as if he were still on the throne.

Qualpopoca, together with his son, and five of the officers who served under him, were soon brought to the capital, and delivered up to Cortez. He pretended to have them formally tried by a court-martial, and they were condemned to be burnt alive, for doing their duty to their king and country. Their execution was not long suspended, and to complete this insult to the Mexican nation, the pile on which they were laid, was composed of the weapons which had been collected in the royal magazine,

for the public defence ; a spectacle which was beheld by the Mexicans in silent astonishment. This conduct of Cortez cannot be justified ; he was probably induced to condemn these men, by the wish that it should be considered a heinous crime to kill a Spaniard.

He did another thing, which though not so wicked, was entirely unworthy of him, as it seemed to result from the mere wantonness of power. Just before Qualpopoca was led out to execution, Cortez entered the apartment of Montezuma, with some of his officers, and a soldier bearing fetters, telling him that he too was bound to make reparation for the crime of his general, who had accused him of being its author. Then without awaiting a reply, he made a



sign to the soldier to put on the fetters. Poor Montezuma, accustomed to consider his person as sacred, and regarding this outrage as a prelude to his death, burst forth in lamentations. His attendants fell at his feet, and bathed in tears, endeavored to relieve him from the pressure of the fetters, by bearing them up in their hands. Cortez soon returned, and ordered them to be taken off; upon which Montezuma passed from a state of unmanly dejection to the opposite extreme of a joy, that was equally unmanly.

All these measures of Cortez produced the desired effect. During six months that he remained in Mexico, himself and his followers were entirely unmolested; every thing went on just as when Montezuma

was at liberty; and though that monarch was constantly permitted to repair to the temples, and also to make hunting excursions, attended by only a very small guard, such was the veneration or the dread which the Spaniards had inspired, that no attempt was made for his rescue.

Cortez had now great power in his hands, and he employed it diligently. He sent men accompanied by officers, whom Montezuma appointed for the purpose, into all parts of the empire, to collect information, fix upon proper stations for future colonies, and use their influence, in preparing the minds of the people to submit to the Spanish yoke. If any one of the Mexican officers excited the jealousy of Cortez, by his superior abilities, Montezuma was easily

prevailed upon to appoint some one else in his stead. He was still insecure, however, so long as he had not the means of retreating, in case the Mexicans should at any time choose to break down the causeways.

He therefore contrived to awaken Montezuma's curiosity to see some display of the naval art of the Spaniards, of which he gave him pompous accounts; and he persuaded him to send some of his subjects to Vera Cruz, for the purpose of bringing from thence a part of his naval stores, while at the same time others were employed in felling and preparing timber. With their assistance, the Spanish carpenters soon completed two brigantines under the pretext of furnishing amusement to Montezuma.

At length Cortez ventured to put that monarch's submission to still severer proof by urging him to acknowledge himself a subject of the king of Castile. He was so humbled as to comply, but when he announced his intention to the people, his speech was interrupted with tears and groans. The assembly were at first, silent with astonishment, but soon indignant murmurs arose, like the grumbling of a coming storm, which Cortez foresaw might terminate in some violent excitement, and he therefore hastened to say that he did not intend to deprive Montezuma of his authority, or alter the laws and constitution of the empire. At length the Mexicans influenced by the example of their monarch, and their dread of the Spaniards, were

induced to go through a formal act of submission.

Montezuma, at the suggestion of Cortez accompanied this act, by a magnificent present to the king of Spain, and his subjects followed his example. The Spaniards now collected all the treasure which had been amassed in various ways, and the gold and silver being melted the whole was divided. A fifth was assigned to the king as his tax; another fifth to Cortez as Commander; then the sums which had been advanced by Cortez and others, for fitting out the expedition were deducted, after which, the share of each man was much less than had been expected, and many were so loud in their murmurs that Cortez had great difficulty in appeasing them. The

total amount, indeed, was much less than the riches of Mexico gave reason to anticipate; but this circumstance is accounted for by the fact, that the Mexicans knew nothing of the use of gold and silver, as money. With them it only served the purpose of ornaments for themselves, or their temples, for which a comparatively small quantity sufficed. Not understanding the art of working the mines they had no gold except what was obtained from the beds of rivers, into which it was washed down, mixed with earth, by torrents from the mountains.

There was but one subject on which Montezuma was inflexible. Though Cortez exerted all his influence in urging him to renounce his false gods and adopt the faith of

the Spaniards, he rejected the proposal with horror. And why should he not, since these Spaniards exhibited nothing in their characters or conduct which furnished the slightest proof that they had a better or more enlightened religion than the heathen. Cortez, provoked to find his most zealous attempts entirely ineffectual, in a transport of rage, commanded his soldiers to throw down the idols in the great temple, but the priests and people simultaneously taking arms to resist them, he had prudence enough to revoke the order.

From that moment, the Mexicans who had hitherto submitted quietly and patiently to all the wrongs inflicted by the Spaniards, determined upon revenge, and the leading men

held frequent consultations on the subject, with Montezuma. That unfortunate monarch, preferred, first trying to get rid of Cortez by peaceful means, and therefore said to him in a tone of some authority, that now, as the objects of his mission were all fulfilled, the gods had signified a wish in which himself and his people entirely coincided, that he and his followers should immediately depart from the Empire, adding, moreover, that if this request was not complied with, instant destruction would fall upon their heads.

Cortez immediately concluded that this threat was made in consequence of some deep laid scheme concerted by Montezuma, and his subjects.



He therefore, thought it most prudent to feign acquiescence, and replied very warily, that he had already began to prepare for returning to his own country, but that as he had destroyed all the vessels in which he came originally, he could not depart until others were provided in their stead.

Whereupon Montezuma, with great promptness, dispatched some of his subjects to fell timber for that purpose, and Spanish carpenters were appointed to superintend the work.

In the meantime Cortez hoped, that his ingenuity which had never failed him yet, would contrive some means of averting the necessity, which seemed now to threaten him.

Nine months had now elapsed since Portocarrero, and Montejo, sailed with dispatches for Spain, and Cortez became very anxious to hear from them, the more so as he was still in doubt whether the authority deputed to him by the magistrates of the colony would be confirmed by the king, for, if not, his conditions and prospects were no better than those of a traitor, nor could he obtain from the Islands, such reinforcements as were now indispensable to the completion of his undertaking.

While he was in this painful uncertainty a Mexican courier arrived with tidings that there were ships on the coast, but the joy they occasioned was soon converted into sadness and alarm, when a messenger from Sandoval, the successor of Escalante, in

the command of the garrison at Vera Cruz, brought intelligence that these ships composed a large armament fitted out by Velasquez for the express purpose of snatching from Cortez all the fruits of his enterprize, and bringing him to disgrace and destruction.

All this had happened in consequence of the indiscretion of Portocarrero and Montejo, who, for reasons that are not mentioned, touched at Cuba, in violation of the most positive orders, on their way to Spain; Velasquez, learning through them the whole history of Cortez since the time of his departure from that Island, jealousy combined with revenge and stimulated him to an immense effort, in which he derived great encouragement from the

fact of having received after the departure of Cortez a commission from the king of Spain, for the discovery of New Spain, with much more ample powers than had ever been conferred for a similar purpose. In a short time a fleet was fitted out, consisting of eighteen ships, eighty horsemen, eight hundred foot soldiers, of whom eighty were musketeers, and twelve were cross-bowmen, and twelve pieces of cannon. He gave the command to Pamphilo de Narvaez, with orders to seize Cortez together with his officers, and send them prisoners to Cuba, and then to accomplish the conquest of the country in his name.

Narvaez landed first at St Juan de Ulua, where he was immediately joined by three of Cortez's soldiers

who had been sent there to search for mines and from whom he obtained all the information he wanted in regard to their master; but, as is common with deserters, they were influenced more by a desire to make what they knew would be the most agreeable representation, than to communicate the actual truth, and described Cortez's situation as much more desperate than it really was.

The first measure of Narvaez was to summon the garrison at Vera Cruz to surrender; but Guevara, a priest whom he sent for the purpose behaved with so much insolence that Sandoval, who was a very high spirited officer, immediately seized him, together with his attendants, and sent them prisoners to Mexico. Cortez, instead of treating them with

severity, ordered their chains to be taken off at once ; and condemning the conduct of Sandoval, exercised so much kindness, that he soon gained their confidence, and obtained from them all the most important information concerning the situation and plans of Narvaez.

He ascertained that Narvaez had commenced his operations by representing to the Mexicans that Cortez and his followers were fugitives and outlaws, whom he had been sent to punish, that he had also received instructions to relieve the nation whom Cortez oppressed, and especially to rescue Montezuma whose imprisonment had excited great indignation. Cortez soon perceived that all this had been communicated to Montezuma, who, it was evident kept up a constant intercourse with Narvaez.

## CHAPTER XIII.

Battle with Narvaez. Attack of the Mexicans.  
Death of Montezuma.

The situation of Cortez was sufficiently critical before, but what do you think of it now, hemmed in on every side? His destruction was inevitable, should Narvaez advance into the city of Mexico, and if in order to go out and meet that officer, Cortez should set Montezuma at liberty, and thus lose his own hold upon the Mexicans, he must renounce the fruit of all his toils. It was in vain to think of an accommodation with Narvaez, whose haughty unbending nature he well knew, he saw

that the contest must be decided by arms, but still he thought it more becoming, or perhaps more politic to attempt a negociation, and for this purpose appointed Olmedo, his chaplain, who was extremely well fitted for the undertaking. Though he had not the least success with Narvaer, he exerted a good deal of influence among his followers, many of whom listened favorably to the proposal of an immediate accommodation. The arguments of Olmedo probably derived great effect from letters accompanied with presents of valuable trinkets which he brought from Cortez and his officers, and which excited in the minds of some, an ardent desire to share in the riches, of which these presents were considered a specimen, while others acted from



the more disinterested and patriotic motive which Cortez may have suggested of avoiding a civil war, as an event that would be very unfavorable to the final establishment of the Spanish dominion in Mexico.

Narvaez immediately issued a proclamation in which Cortez and his men were pronounced rebels and enemies to their country, after which Cortez prepared to advance upon him without further delay, leaving in Mexico one hundred and fifty soldiers under the command of Pedro de Alvarado, an officer who was held in high respect by the natives. To the custody of these few men he was obliged to commit the city together with all his treasures and what was of still more importance the person of the captive monarch. He took

great pains to conceal from Montezuma the real object of his march, telling that monarch, that he was going to meet his countrymen, who after having had an interview with him, would immediately depart from the country, in a peaceable manner.

He made Montezuma promise too, to remain quietly in the Spanish quarters, until his return, and to preserve the same friendly intercourse with Alvarado, that he had always maintained with him.

The whole of Cortez's forces, even after he joined with them, those of Sandoval, amounted only to two hundred and fifty men. His march was not encumbered by baggage, as he wished to advance with the greatest possible rapidity. In order to guard in some degree against the su-

periority which Narvaez might derive from his cavalry, he provided his soldiers with native spears of extraordinary length and force which he had seen used with great effect in one of the provinces, and which, when a body of troops was compactly arranged, formed quite a wall of defence.

Meanwhile Naroaer had taken possession of Zempoalla, and Cortez on approaching, renewed his negotiations. As he probably expected, they answered no other purpose than that of giving him an opportunity to gain some of Narvaez's officers by presents, conciliate the good will of others by an appearance of great moderation, and dazzle them all by a great show of wealth among his troops, most of whom had converted their share of the Mexican gold into

ornaments, which were displayed with great ostentation.

Narvaez discovering, ere long, that nearly all the army were inclined to an accommodation, was so much enraged as to offer a reward for the head of Cortez and of his principal officers, and learning that he was now within a league of Zempoalla, he marched out to give him battle. Cortez was too good a soldier, however, to fight on equal ground an army so superior in number, and took his station on the opposite bank of the river de Canoas, where he knew that he should be secure from an attack.

The wet season had just commenced, and it rained violently during a great part of the day. The soldiers of Narvaez complained so

much at being needlessly exposed to such stress of weather, that he suffered them to retire to their quarters in Zempoalla.

The very circumstance which induced them to behave in such an unsoldierlike manner suggested to Cortez a bold scheme of terminating the war at once. He saw that his hardy veterans, accustomed to all kinds of hardships, shrunk not from the pelting of the rain, which continued to fall in torrents, although they had not a tent or the slightest shelter to cover them.

Indeed so far were they from complaining, that they seemed full of spirit, and ready at any moment for active service. He therefore resolved to attack Narvaez in the night, when it was altogether probable, his

whole army would be reposing in the perfect security, which the weather in their opinion, afforded them against any attack. His soldiers warmly approved this plan ; indeed, so great was their ardor that Cortez in a speech addressed to them before they began their march, seemed more anxious to check than to increase it.

He divided them into three bands. The first was under the command of Sandoval, who had the dangerous service allotted to him, of seizing the artillery, which was placed directly before the principal tower of the temple, in which Narvaez had fixed his quarters. Christoval de Olid, who was at the head of the second division, had orders to assault the tower, and seize the general. The third division was conducted by

Cortez, and constituted a body of reserve, ready to come up, at any moment, to the assistance of the others. Encumbered by their arms, they passed with great difficulty, the river de Canoas, which was so much swollen by the rains, that the water came up almost to their chins.

Narvaez had posted only two centinels that night. One of these was seized; but the other escaped, and gave a timely alarm, which, however, was not at all heeded by Narvaez, who imputed it entirely to the timidity of the centinel, not believing that Cortez would have the temerity to attack him, with so small a force.

But it was not long before the shouts of Cortez's soldiers, rushing on to the assault, confirmed the report of the centinel. Such was their

impetuosity, that only one cannon could be fired, before Sandoval's division drove the enemy from their guns, and began to make their way up the steps of the tower. Narvaez armed himself in haste, and roused his men for the fight. Olid and Cortez soon came up, and the latter rushing forward, inspired the assailants with fresh ardor, who with their impenetrable front of long spears, bore down all opposition. They had reached the entrance to the tower, and were endeavoring to break through, when a soldier set fire to some reeds with which it was covered, and Narvaez was obliged to emerge from his covert. Immediately after he appeared, being severely wounded in the eye with a spear, he fell to the ground, and was made prisoner.



After this misfortune, his followers soon yielded, and the victory was gained almost without bloodshed: only two of Cortez's soldiers were killed, and but two officers, together with fifteen privates of Narvaez.

Cortez treated the conquered with great kindness, offering either to send them back to Cuba, or take them into his service. Most of them preferred the latter, willing to join a leader, who had given such a distinguished proof of his abilities to command. It is impossible to determine now, whether Cortez owed his astonishing success on this occasion, principally to valor or bribery; probably they concurred in producing the fortunate result, which placed him at the head of a thousand Spaniards, ready to follow wherever he

should lead. Soon after the defeat of Narvaez, Cortez received information that the Mexicans had taken arms, seized and destroyed the two brigantines, attacked the Spaniards, who had already suffered much, and their magazine of provisions being burnt, were in danger of perishing either by famine or the sword, unless speedily relieved. These troubles Alvarado had brought upon himself by great imprudence.

After Cortez left Mexico, he perceived or suspected that the inhabitants of that city were planning how they should take advantage of the favorable moment, for ridding themselves forever of their enemies, and he had not the sagacity and address which would probably have enabled Cortez to soothe their spirits, and

disconcert their projects. Force seemed to him, the only means to be employed, though it was undoubtedly the most questionable, that he could have adopted under the circumstances. He therefore seized the opportunity afforded by the occurrence of a religious festival, when the principal persons in the empire were dancing, as was their custom, in the great temple of Mexico, to make an attack upon them, and the avenues to the temple being all guarded, none escaped except them that fled over the battlements. Not only the city but the whole empire was roused to indignation by this cruel and treacherous act, and though the life of their sovereign was in the hands of their enemies, the loud cry for vengeance was succeeded by

those numerous acts of violence against the Spaniards of which Cortez was now apprised. He instantly set out for Mexico, at the head of all his forces, and at Flascala he was joined by two thousand native warriors.

When he again entered the Mexican territories, he found that the dislike to the Spaniards had become universal ; the towns were all deserted, not a person appeared to greet him with the usual salutations ; no provision was supplied for his troops ; and though he was permitted to advance, unmolested, yet this total suspension of intercourse, and the dismal solitude and silence which everywhere reigned, augured an implacable aversion, which was justly a source of great anxiety.

It is astonishing that the Mexicans did not prevent his return into their city by breaking down the bridges, a measure which would also have ensured the destruction of Alvarado, but he was suffered to enter as freely as if he had been a citizen.

Cortez in the transport of joy which he felt on being reunited to those whom he had left in so hazardous a situation, and in the exultation which he experienced on account of having obtained such a considerable accession to his forces, seems to have forgotten his usual prudence. He neglected to visit Montezuma, and was heard to utter expressions of contempt, in regard both to himself and his subjects, which filled them with rage. They were now convinced that he had de-

ceived them in pretending to have come among them for the purpose of courting the alliance of their sovereign, and that his only object was conquest.

They therefore immediately resumed their arms with increased fury, and having attacked a body of soldiers that were marching to the great square where the market was held, with some advantage, they were emboldened by this circumstance to advance the next day in battle-array and assault the Spaniards in their quarters. Though the artillery which was pointed against them swept off great numbers as they approached, their places were instantly supplied, for the multitude was like a raging sea, which sends on wave after wave to cover up the

dark places of destruction ; and though the weapons of the Spaniards were very destructive among the naked bodies of the natives, the terrible slaughter hardly seemed to diminish their numbers, which were constantly receiving fresh accessories.

It was with great difficulty, notwithstanding all the disadvantages under which they labored, that they were prevented from forcing their way into the fortifications, and Cortez was surprised to find a people who had hitherto appeared so very tame, now exhibit such dreadful ferocity. The soldiers of Narvaez were indignant at finding themselves in the midst of such dangers, and complained loudly that Cortez had deceived them, since they had been led to expect that they should share

in the spoils of a conquered empire. At the setting of the sun, the Mexicans, according to their national custom, suspended hostilities.

The next day, Cortez hoped by a sudden and violent attack, to produce such an effect as would compel the people either to leave the city or listen to terms of accommodation ; but though he and his followers sensible that their situation required a mighty effort, exerted themselves to the utmost, it was in vain, for they fought with men who were in a state of desperation, and whose numbers seemed inexhaustible. At the close of the day, though the slaughter had been great among the Mexicans, and a part of the city had been burnt, the Spaniards were obliged to retire with the mortifying consciousness



that nothing had been gained of sufficient importance to compensate them for the misfortune of twelve men killed, and sixty wounded. Cortez, too, had been wounded in the hand. He now perceived, in the whole extent, the mistake he had made, in treating the Mexicans with defiance and contempt, rather than in his usual conciliating manner:

But one resource now remained, and that was to try the effect which Montezuma's influence might have upon his people. He was conducted to the battlements the next day, dressed in the royal robes, and with all the pomp in which he usually appeared on occasions of great importance. At the sight of their monarch whom they were accustomed to regard with great reverence, they

instantly dropped their weapons and some bowed their heads, while others prostrated themselves in silence. But at the conclusion of a speech in which Montezuma endeavored to soothe their angry feelings and persuade them to desist from hostilities, a murmur of disaffection arose, which was succeeded by a more violent expression of their feelings, until such an excitement was produced, that, losing all sense of restraint, they suddenly discharged a volley of arrows and stones upon the ramparts. Before the Spanish soldiers had time to cover Montezuma with their bucklers, he was wounded with two arrows, and received so violent a blow upon his temple with a stone, that it prostrated him to the ground.

On seeing him fall, an instant

change of feeling was produced in his people, who immediately fled with horror at the idea of having committed so great an indignity on the sacred person of their monarch. He did not long survive the disgrace. Becoming sensible of the degradation into which he had fallen, his haughty spirit at length seemed to revive, and scorning to protract longer an ignominious existence, he purposely tore the bandages from his wound, and so obstinately refused all nourishment, that he expired in a few days.

This event deprived Cortez of his last hope of bringing the Mexicans to an accommodation, and he began to prepare for an immediate retreat, in which he now saw that his only safety consisted, but a sudden expe-

dient of the Mexicans subjected him, unavoidably to fresh conflicts. They took possession of a high tower in a temple, which overlooked the Spanish quarters, and a garrison being placed there, every Spaniard who ventured abroad was exposed to a shower of missile weapons. An attempt was made by Escalante, to dislodge the garrison, but he was thrice repulsed.

Cortez having been wounded in the hand, as was mentioned before, could not hold a buckler, but aware that the reputation and safety of his army both depended on the success of this assault, he had one tied to his arm and then rushed into the thickest of the combat. The Spaniards, animated by the presence of their general, returned to the charge with

fresh ardor, and soon made their way up the steps of the tower, driving the Mexicans to a platform on the top. A dreadful scene of bloodshed ensued, and two young Mexicans performed an act of heroism not unworthy Leonidas, or any other distinguished patriot. They approached Cortez in a suppliant posture as if intending to yield and sue for mercy ; then, suddenly seizing him, they forced him to the battlements over which they threw themselves, intending to draw him with them, and thus sacrificing their own lives, in delivering their country from so formidable an enemy.

But his wonderful agility and strength enabled him to free himself from their grasp, and thus their magnanimous purpose was defeated.

As soon as the Spaniards got possession of the tower, they set it on fire, and then continued their preparations for a retreat. This was now the more necessary, because the Mexicans, discouraged by the last astonishing display of valor which the Spaniards had exhibited, from attempting to compete with them in arms, had recourse to a much surer method of accomplishing the ruin of their enemies, by barricading the streets and breaking down the causeways, thus placing them in the situation of a besieged party that must sooner or later perish by famine.

## CHAPTER XIV.

Cortez's retreat from Mexico ; is interrupted by a battle with the Mexicans ; Cortez arrives at Tlascala ; accidental reinforcements ; affairs of Mexico ; Cortez marches back to Tezeuco ; a conspiracy ; materials for the building of a fleet brought from Tlascala.

After much deliberation on the subject it was determined, that the retreat of the Spaniards had better be made in the night. Sandoval led the van of the army, Pedro Alvarado and Velasquez de Leon the rear, while Cortez conducted the main body, in which he placed a son and two daughters of Montezuma, besides several Mexicans of distinction, together with the artillery,

baggage, and a bridge of timber, to be used, whenever a breach occurred in the causeways, made it necessary.

They marched in silence along the causeway to Tacuba, preferring that route, both on account of its being shorter, and because it had been left more entire by the Mexicans, for being in a direction contrary to that which led to Tlascala, there was little probability that the Spaniards would resort to it.

They reached the first breach without molestation, and trusted that they were safe from discovery, but the Mexicans had secretly watched all their motions and prepared for a furious attack. While the Spaniards were busily engaged in passing this breach with the aid of their portable



bridge, over which they were endeavoring to conduct the horses and artillery, the stillness of the night was suddenly broken by a loud shout, as from a numerous multitude accompanied with the sound of warlike instruments. The lake was instantly covered with canoes, and volleys of arrows and stones poured in upon the Spaniards from every direction. The bridge had now become so wedged into the stones and mud, that there was no possibility of removing it, and this appalling circumstance, completed the hopelessness of their situation; they were crowded together on a narrow causeway, where they must of course fight to great disadvantage, while the darkness added to their perplexity, and prevented their deriving much use

from their fire arms. All Mexico rushed on to the assault, and the Spaniards at length, wearied of slaughter, were unable to sustain the multitude pressing upon them ; for such was the eagerness of those who were not near enough to join in the assault, that they passed on like an impetuous torrent which carries all before it. The confusion became universal, and a dreadful havock ensued.

The breach being soon filled up with dead bodies, Cortez with one hundred foot soldiers and a few horses, forced his way over, and reached the mainland. Having reduced them to order, he immediately returned with as many men as were still capable of service to assist and encourage the rest. He met a par-

ty who had broken through the enemy, but he perceived many more who were overwhelmed with the multitude or perishing in the lake, and worse than all, the lamentations of those who had been taken alive and whom the Mexicans were hurrying off to be sacrificed to their gods, struck upon his ear. Before the dawn of day all who had escaped, assembled at Tacuba.

It is said that when the light of the morning revealed to Cortez the shattered state of the troops, rendered still more impressive by their extreme dejection and their great number of wounds, he was pierced to the soul and formed them into ranks with the tears streaming down his cheeks. Many officers of distinction perished in this fatal retreat, and

among them Velasquez de Leon, second in command to Cortez. The artillery, ammunition, and baggage were all lost, two thousand Tlascalans and a greater part of the horses were killed, and but very little of the treasures which had been amassed, was saved.

This same treasure was the cause of the destruction of many soldiers who being unwilling to relinquish it, so encumbered themselves with the bars of gold, that they could neither fight nor fly. Amidst so many calamities, it was gratifying to discover that Donna Marina and Aguilar so important as interpreters, had escaped.

Cortez now continued his march which was much impeded by the continued attacks of the natives.

Happily it was not long before he was fortunate enough to find a temple situated upon an eminence, which answered the purpose both of shelter and refreshment, as it was found to contain an unexpected supply of provisions. The Spaniards were now on the west side of the lake, and it was necessary to go quite round its northern extremity in order to put themselves on the route to Tlascala. In performing this circuit, they encountered incessant obstacles, both from the hostility of the natives, who were continually hovering about them, and from the marshy nature of the soil. The country, too, was very barren, so that they were obliged to subsist on a few roots and berries, or the stalks of maize.

On the sixth day they reached Otumba which was near the road that lead directly from Mexico to Tlascala. Flying parties of the enemy still continued to hang about them, and Donna Marina remarked that they often exclaimed, with an appearance of great satisfaction, 'Go on, robbers, to the place where you shall soon meet the vengeance you deserve.' It was not till they attained an eminence which lay in their way, that they realized the full import of this threat. They then perceived that a spacious valley which spread out before them, was swarming with hosts of enemies, in battle array. At sight of this, the stoutest hearts were appalled, but Cortez, whose spirit never flagged, did not allow his soldiers time to de-

liberate. He told them that nothing remained for them but to conquer or die, and led them instantly to the charge.

They fought valiantly, and as usual, wherever their small compact body directed its course, it made its way, dispersing numerous battallions. Like the band of Leonidas, however, they had so many enemies to kill, that they must die from the mere fatigue of fighting before the work could be accomplished. Was there any hope of escape? Could it be possible that they should avoid the danger, unless through some miraculous intervention? Cortez at least, did not despair. Perceiving the standard of the Mexican Empire, and recollecting to have heard that upon safety of that, was thought to

depend the fate of every battle, Cortez assembled a few of his bravest officers whose horses were still capable of service, and placing himself at their head, rushed forward with an impetuosity that defied all opposition. He soon reached the spot where the standard was erected, dispersed the body of troops who guarded it, though they made some resistance, and then, with one stroke of his lance, prostrated the Mexican general who bore it, and got possession of the prize.

The moment this was done, the Mexicans were seized with universal dismay, and as if firmly persuaded, that with the loss of their standard, fortune had entirely deserted them, threw down their arms and fled.



The Spaniards did not attempt to pursue them far ; they hastened to collect the spoils which were sufficient to compensate them in a considerable degree for the treasure they had lost in the commencement of their retreat, as many of the warriors who had fallen, were found dressed in their richest ornaments.

And here I hope you will not fail to remark upon the great benefit which Cortez constantly derived from his nice habits of observation, and the tact or skill with which he used the knowledge, that was thus acquired. It was to this circumstance, quite as much as to his undaunted valor, that he owed the greatest achievements, and the most fortunate escapes, that marked his wonderful career, and it is this qual-

ity, or aptitude, which constitutes a considerable proportion of the difference between men of common and uncommon abilities, in all the practical affairs of life.

The next day, to their great joy, Cortez's little band entered the Tlascalan territories where they felt sure of a friendly reception. Cortez now learnt that a considerable detachment of Spaniards had been cut off in their march from Zempoalla to Mexico, and also that a smaller party who were employed to transport from Tlascala to Vera Cruz that share of the treasure which was allotted to the garrison, had met with a similar fate. These were very important losses, and they were particularly so to Cortez, because, strange as you may think it, he had

not the least idea of relinquishing his plans of conquest. The Zempoallans and Tlascalans still continued his faithful allies. The colony at Vera Cruz had remained unmolested, and he was still at the head of as great a number of forces as that with which he had first penetrated to the city of Mexico.

During the interval which it was necessary to allow his troops for rest and refreshment, as well as to give them an opportunity for taking care of their wounds, which had been sadly neglected, Cortez applied himself with undiminished ardor to all the means of furthering his plans. He paid the most polite attention to the Tlascalans, distributing the rich spoils of Otumba among them with a liberal hand. He drew a small

supply of provisions, with three field pieces, from Vera Cruz, and he despatched an officer with four ships of Narvaez's fleet to Hispaniola and Jamaica, for the purpose of producing recruits, and purchasing a supply of horses and of military stores. He likewise gave orders to prepare, in the mountains of Tlascala, materials for building twelve brigantines, as he knew that without having command of the lake, he could never hope to reduce the city of Mexico.

Soon as his soldiers discovered his intention of returning hither, they manifested a mutinous spirit. Those of Narvaez's followers who had survived the perils to which they had been so unwillingly exposed, had before this repented ever having engaged in the service of Cortez, and now,

it was with the utmost difficulty that he could induce them to delay, even for a short time, their departure. To prevent their having any leisure for reflecting on the sources of their discontent, he immediately employed them in chastening the people of Tepeaca, by whom one of the detachments before spoken of had been cut off, and that province was in a few weeks reduced to complete subjection.

But all his efforts would have been of no avail without a reinforcement of Spanish soldiers, and the gratification of his ardent wishes in this particular, he owed not to his own forethought or influence, but to some of those fortunate accidents of which wit few exceptions, his whole life was one continued series.

Velasquez, governor of Cuba, not doubting the success of Narvaez, dispatched two small ships with a supply of men and military stores. These were artfully decoyed into the harbor of Vera Cruz by the officer who commanded there, and seized ; after which the soldiers whom they contained, were easily persuaded to join the standard of Cortez.

Not long after this, three ships arrived, one after another, which had been sent out by the Governor of Jamaica in pursuance of that passion for discovery and conquest, which had become a national characteristic with the Spaniards. Unfortunately for their success, the armament made their first attempt on the more northern provinces, where the country was barren, and its inhabitants fierce

and warlike ; so that after meeting with a succession of disasters, they determined to throw themselves on the mercy of their countrymen, and seek the harbor of Vera Cruz. Of course, they too, were induced to enrol themselves among the followers of Cortez.

Last of all, and not less fortunately, a ship arrived from Spain, which had been sent out by some Spanish merchants on an adventure, and was freighted with military stores. Cortez eagerly purchased, a cargo which consisted of just such articles as he was most in need of, and the crew constituted a new accession to his army.

From these various sources, he obtained one hundred and eighty men, and twenty horses, which would seem

at first too inconsiderable a number to afford him essential benefit, but we have already seen that in the new world a very small number of men, comparatively, were able to effect things of great moment.

The first advantage which Cortez derived from this accession to his numbers, was being able to dismiss those of Narvaez's men who still wished to return. After their departure, he numbered five hundred and fifty infantry, eighty of whom were armed with muskets or cross bows, forty horsemen and nine field pieces. With these, and ten thousand Tlascalans, and other friendly Indians, he began his march towards Mexico on the twenty eighth of December in the year of our Lord 1520,



just six months after his memorable retreat from that city.

Upon the death of Montezuma, the Mexicans immediately elected his brother Quetlavaca in his stead, an able, courageous man, who had conducted in person those fierce attacks by which the Spaniards were driven from his capital. As soon as this object was accomplished, he began to provide against their return with a degree of prudence and forethought which was very uncommon in a native. He strengthened the city with such fortifications as the natives were capable of constructing, filled his magazines with weapons, and had long spears made, and headed with the swords and daggers taken from the Spaniards, intending to

use them expressly for the purpose of annoying the cavalry.

He summoned all the people of the Empire to take arms, promising them by way of inducement to make great efforts, an exemption from taxes. Above all, he labored to wean the Tlascalans from their alliance with the Spaniards, by reminding them that the latter were not only professed enemies of the gods whom they worshipped, but would undoubtedly subject the Tlascalans ultimately to the same yoke, which they were now endeavoring, with the assistance of their native allies, to impose upon the Mexicans. He used these arguments with so much effect, that it required all Cortez's address to prevent the accomplishment of his design.

But in the midst of these operations, Quetlavaca died of the small pox, a disease which is to be reckoned among the other terrible calamities brought upon the new world, in consequence of its discovery by the Spaniards. Guatimozin, nephew and son in law of Montezuma, a young man of distinguished abilities and valor, was unanimously chosen as his successor on the throne.

Cortez's troops made their way without much difficulty to Tezeuco the second city of the Empire, situated on the lake about twenty miles from Mexico, where he established his head quarters. To render his residence there more safe, he availed himself, with his usual adroitness, of a rivalship existing between the reigning cacique and another person

whom a faction of the nobles designated as lawfully entitled to the highest dignity. By espousing successfully the cause of the latter, Cortez attached him and his adherents inviolably to his interests.

Cortez could not think of making an attack upon Mexico until he should be enabled, by the completion of his brigantines, to obtain command of the lake. Three months elapsed before the materials for these were finished, and before he received any intelligence from the officer whom he had sent to procure a reinforcement from Hispaniola.

Meanwhile he was not idle, but subjected several of the towns which were situated round the lake, and such as would not submit, he reduced to ruins. He gained many by

gentle and conciliating measures, though every effort was made by the Mexicans to counteract his influence ; he was obliged too, to carry on his negotiations through the intervention of interpreters, a disadvantage, which was not sufficient to prevent his managing them with the dexterity for which he was so remarkable.

Most of the cities in the vicinity of Mexico, had been originally the capitals of independent provinces, some of which were but lately annexed to the Mexican empire, and submitted impatiently to the yoke. Cortez, by promising to deliver them from their oppression, and extend to them better treatment, induced them not only to acknowledge themselves subjects of the king of Castile,

but to furnish him with provisions and troops. Guatimozin tried in vain to prevent these defections, and saw with great concern that many upon whom he relied for powerful assistance, were turning their arms against him.

About this time a deep laid conspiracy was formed against the life of Cortez, by some of the soldiers of Narvaez, who were instigated by their reluctance to encounter the dangers which they knew must attend another attempt upon Mexico. They began by questioning the propriety of this measure, then proceeded boldly to censure it, and finally ended by considering how they might provide for their own safety, of which they deemed Cortez perfectly reckless. This spirit of revolt was artfully formed by one Antonio Vil-

llefagna, a bold intriguing man, strongly attached to Velasquez, who persuaded them that there was no alternative but that of assassinating Cortez and his officers.

At length the plan was all arranged, and the conspirators signed an agreement, by which they bound themselves with the most solemn oaths, to fidelity ; but on the very evening before the appointed day, one of Cortez's ancient followers, who had been persuaded to join the conspiracy, touched with remorse, went to him privately and disclosed the whole affair. He, with his usual promptness, repaired instantly to Villefagna's quarters, accompanied by his most trusty officers. The agitation and confusion of Villefagna at this unexpected appearance of his

general, were such as to render any further confession unnecessary. He was seized, and a paper was snatched from his bosom containing a list of the conspirators, on which were several names that Cortez was both surprised and grieved to discover there. Villefagna's guilt being atrocious and unquestionable, he was hung after a short trial, and the sight of his body suspended before the door of the cabin where he lodged, probably conveyed to many, the first instruction of his fate, and of the discovery of the conspiracy.

Cortez then called his troops together and explained to them why such a fate had been inflicted. Of course there were many present, who listened to him with an anxious face and a beating heart, but he hastened



to reassure them, by wisely and prudently declaring that as Villefagna when seized had torn and swallowed the paper which probably contained an account of the conspiracy, and had refused to reveal the names of his accomplices, he was entirely ignorant on the subject. All the delinquents therefore, flattered themselves that their guilt was undiscovered, and endeavored to prevent all suspicion, by redoubling their efforts in the service of Cortez.

Happily he found immediate employment for the disaffected, whom he sent with others under the command of Sandoval, to transport from Tlascala, the materials for the brigantines which he was now informed were completed. The beams, planks, masts, cordage, iron work, in short

every thing necessary for the construction of thirteen vessels, were to be brought sixty miles, over land without the aid of any beasts of burden—or of a single labor-saving machine. In lieu of these, the Tlascalans furnished eight thousand *Tamemes*, destined literally to put their shoulder to the burden, with fifteen thousand warriors to accompany and defend them—who were placed some in the front, others in the rear, or on their flanks, so that they were protected on all sides.—In some places the line of march extended six miles ; they of course advanced slowly ; but in very good order, and though parties of Mexicans were continually moving on their skirts, these made no attack upon a body which they perceived to be so nu-

merous and well guarded. This important convoy, therefore was conducted in safety to Teseuco, and its arrival was followed by an event of no less moment. Four ships arrived in Vera Cruz, which had been sent from Hispaniola, with two hundred soldiers, two battering cannons, together with a supply of ammunition and arms.

## CHAPTER XV

Landing of the brigantines; The seige of Mexico; Cortez obtains possession of Mexico; Guatimozin put to torture; Subjection of the Empire; Magellan's discovery; Cortez superseded in the government; is again appointed; Distrust of Cortez; He goes to Spain; His second voyage; Cortez's death.

As all his preparatory schemes had now succeeded, Cortez was impatient to begin the seige, and hastened the launching of the briganties. To facilitate this operation he had for two months employed a vast number of Indians in deepening a small river, which ran by the city of Terseuco, with the lake, and forming it into a canal two miles in length. It was

in vain that the Mexicans made every possible effort both to interrupt this work and burn the brigantines.

On the 28th of April, all the soldiers, together with their Indian auxiliaries, were drawn up on the banks of the canal; and the launching of the ships was celebrated with great military pomp, rendered more imposing by religious ceremonies. As they fell down into the canal, one after another, father Olmedo, invoked a blessing, at the same time, bestowing its name upon each. Had the religion of this good father been of a more enlightened kind he might have thought it almost impious to call upon God in behalf of a wicked and cruel enterprise. A general shout of joy announced that the ships had reached the lake,

where their sails being hoisted, they bore away before the wind as if in exultation at finding themselves in their appropriate element.

Cortez stationed one division of the army under the command of Sandoval at Topocea which was on the east side of the lake ; another, under Pedro de Alvarado at Tacuba on the west side ; and a third with Christoval de Olid at their head, in Cuyscan, towards the south. These towns were situated on the three principal causeways which led to the city, and were designed to protect them. The whole army consisted of eighty six horsemen, and eight hundred and eighteen foot Soldiers ; of whom one hundred and eighteen were armed with muskets, or cross bows. The artillery comprised three

battering cannons and fifteen field pieces.

Cortez reserved to himself the most dangerous service, that of conducting the brigantines.

Alvarado and Olid in repairing to their respective posts, broke down the aqueducts which had been contrived by the Mexicans for the purpose of conveying water into the city, which circumstance alone occasioned great distress there. These officers found the towns of which they had been ordered to take possession, deserted of their inhabitants who had fled to the capital.

The first effort of the Mexicans was to destroy the fleet of brigantines, as they were aware what advantages Cortez must necessarily derive from them. Accordingly on the

10th of May, which was the day when the contest actually began, the lake presented one continued surface of canoes, rowing on with great spirit to the charge, but though the brigantines were rudely constructed and unskilfully managed, principally by landsmen, still their superiority over the canoes was such, that the latter were easily dispersed with great destruction and slaughter.— From that time Cortez was sole master of the lake and was able not only to keep up a communication between the Spaniards in their respective stations, which were considerably distant from each other, but also to shelter the causeway and protect the troops as they advanced towards the city.

The mode of operation was ne-



cessarily very slow, for the Mexicans constantly repaired by night what the Spaniards had destroyed during the day, in their arduous effort to penetrate into the city, by breaking down the barricades, erected upon the causeways, and forcing their way through trenches and canals, whose bridges had been destroyed. Cortez did not dare with so small a number of men, to make a lodgment in the city, amidst such a multitude of enemies—and besides, he was extremely solicitous to preserve it from injury much as possible. But such was the indefatigable resolution of the Mexicans, that they kept up one perpetual scene of conflict by night and by day, so that at the end of a month, though Cortez had hardly gained any thing of consequence, he

found his men so much exhausted as to be ready to sink under their incessant toils, now rendered still more laborious by the periodical rains which had just commenced.

He therefore determined upon making a general assault, and his troops animated with the expectation of some decisive result, pressed forward in spite of every obstacle, with great importunity, and having found their way quite into the city, continued to advance rapidly in spite of the determined resistance of an infuriated multitude. Notwithstanding his success Cortez did not forget that it might yet be necessary to retreat, and ordered one of his captains to fill up the canal and gaps on the causeway as the main body advanced. But that officer, thinking it dishonorable to

be thus employed while his companions were advancing in the glorious career of victory, neglected the station which had been assigned to him : and heedlessly marched on, to join the combattants.

The Mexicans who were constantly acquiring military skill, immediately reported this circumstance to Guatimozin, and he hastened to take advantage of it. Ordering his troops which were posted front, to relax their efforts on purpose to facilitate the advance of the Spaniards, he secretly dispatched a large body of men, by different routs towards the great breach in the causeway, which had been left unguarded, contrary to the express directions of Cortez. On a signal given, the great drum of the temple consecrated to the god of war

was struck by the priests, and the solemn dismal sound which it sent out, seemed to inspire the Mexicans as much as if the imagined deity had himself addressed them, and they rushed upon their enemies with new ardor.

The Spaniards immediately began to retire, at first leisurely, and in good order ; but as the enemy pressed on, and the danger became more imminent their impatience to escape, produced a scene of universal confusion ; When they arrived at the fatal breach in the causeway Tlascalans and Spaniards, cavalry and infantry, threw themselves in promiscuously, while the Mexicans attacked them fiercely on all sides, their light canoes being able to pass over the shoals which effectually prevented the approach of the brigantines.

fresh attack. They also sent the heads of their Spanish victims into the several provinces, saying that the god of war appeased by their blood, had declared that in the space of eight days the Mexicans should be entirely deprived from their enemies, and the Empire should recover its former prosperity and tranquillity. This prediction of course gained universal credit among so superstitious a people. The consequence was, that the Spaniards were deserted by most of their Indian auxiliaries, who considered them as a people devoted to destruction, and even the fidelity of the Tlascalans was shaken.

Cortez with his usual wisdom contrived to derive an advantage from this accidental circumstance. He carefully abstained from all military

operations during the specified period ; and meanwhile his troops remained in safety under cover of the brigantines. At the end of that time his allies finding themselves deceived, returned to their allegiance, and with such an augmentation of their numbers that according to his own report he was at the head of fifty thousand Indians.

He now resumed his former cautious method of conducting the attack ; being satisfied with very gradual advances. The Indian auxiliaries regularly repaired the causeways over which the Spaniards had passed, and as soon as the latter got possession of any part of the city, the houses were levelled with the ground. The Mexicans continually forced to retire, were constantly reduced to narrower limits.

Cortez in vain attempted to rally his flying troops, but finding his efforts entirely unavailing, his next care was to save some of his men who had thrown themselves into the water ; While thus employed he was seized by six Mexicans, who were proceeding to carry him off in triumph, when two of his officers rescued him at the expense of their own lives, not, however, until he had received several dangerous wounds.

Forty Spaniards fell alive into the hands of their ruthless conquerors, the most fearful fate, they could have met with ; and twenty perished on the spot.

Night was welcome to the Spaniards, as it delivered them from the assaults of the Mexicans, but it was

rendered terrific by the noise of the barbarous triumph of the latter which would of course be celebrated with bloody rites. The whole city was illuminated, so that the Spaniards could plainly see the people hurrying to and fro, and the priests evidently preparing for the horrid sacrifice of their prisoners whose shrieks are said to have reached the ears of their countrymen, and wrung tears from the most unfeeling among them.

Cortez though laboring under this accumulated weight of disaster, was necessarily obliged to hide his despondency for fear of its effect upon the spirits of his men, so that he was denied even the relief of giving vent to his sorrows.

The Mexicans elated with their victory sallied out the next day to a



Guatimozin though unable to prevent the progress of the enemy, defended his capital with great valor, but in consequence of Cortez having command of the lake, famine was soon added to other calamities. The stores which Guatimozin had provided were exhausted by the multitude who had crowded into the city, and to fill up the sum of their woes infectious and fatal disease began its ravages. Still, Guatimozin rejected with scorn all overtures of peace, being determined to conquer or die.

At length all three divisions of the army penetrated into the centre of the city, three quarters of which was in ruins, and established themselves securely in the great square. The nobles anxious to save the life

of their king, prevailed upon him to retire that he might go to the more distant provinces and arouse them to arms. Meanwhile they endeavored to amuse Cortez by overtures of submission, but he was too wary not to suspect their motives, and immediately ordered Sandoval to take charge of the brigantines, with directions to watch closely, every motion of the enemy. It was not long before that officer observed some canoes rowing rapidly across the lake, and gave an instant signal to chase. One of the brigantines soon overtook the foremost canoe which evidently had some person of great importance on board, and prepared to fire upon it. The rowers immediately dropped their oars and all on board conjured him to forbear, saying, that the Emperor was there.

Guatimozin yielded himself a prisoner, with dignified submission to his fate, stipulating only that no indignity should be offered to the Empress or his children.

When conducted to the presence of Cortez 'I have done' said he, 'what became a monarch in defending my people to the last extremity. It now only remains for me to die : then pointing to the dagger which Cortez wore, 'take this' he added, and plant it in my breast, for my life is no longer of use.'

From the moment their sovereign was a captive, the Mexicans ceased all opposition, and the seige of Mexico, a memorable event, terminated, after having lasted seventy five days. The exultation of the Spaniards at first excessive, was very much damp-

ed when they found only a small booty instead of the inexhaustible wealth they had expected. Guatimozin, had ordered what remained of the treasures of his ancestors to be thrown into the lake, and the Indian auxiliaries had carried off the most valuable part of the spoil which remained while the Spaniards were engaged in fighting. So small therefore, was the share of each, that many of the soldiers disdained to accept it, and some were inclined to suspect Cortez of having secretly appropriated a large share to his own use.

This circumstance induced Cortez to the commission of an act which is an everlasting stain upon his memory. He put Guatimozin and his chief favorite to torture, hoping

thereby to extort from them a disclosure which would put him in possession of the royal treasures, but Guatimozin behaved with that fortitude which distinguishes the Indians, on such occasions. His fellow sufferer in the extremity of his agony turned an imploring look towards his master as if for permission to reveal the secret, who sternly reproved him saying, 'Am I, your master, on a bed of flowers?' Intimidated by this rebuke, the unfortunate man meekly endured in silence, until death put an end to his sufferings; At length, Cortez, ashamed of the horrid scene, rescued Guatimozin from the hands of his torturers.

The whole empire speedily shared the fate of the capital, one province after another submitting to the con-

querors. Cortez immediately began to form schemes of further discovery, hoping to accomplish that which Columbus had so much at heart, a nearer and more direct passage to India. He was ignorant that this had been already done.

Ferdinand Magalhaens or Magellan, a Porteguese gentleman, who had been illy requited for some important services that he had rendered his sovereign in the East Indies, renounced his allegiance and repaired to the court of Castile. The king of Portugal at that time engrossed the trade of India, and Magellan, thinking he should be best revenged upon him by finding a westerly passage to that country of spices, which would secure to some other nation a share in its commerce, offered his

services to Ferdinand for that purpose.

His proposal, meeting with a favorable reception, he set sail on the 10th of August 1519, with five small ships—His voyage was very much protracted by accidental circumstances, and was rendered particularly trying by a dangerous mutiny of the sailors which arose in consequence of the suffering they experienced from the cold, in the port where they wintered. It was not until about the close of Spring that he entered the straits which now bear his name; and the navigation of which he found very difficult. After sailing in these twenty days, he discovered the great south sea, and with tears of joy returned thanks for his success.

He then proceeded on in a north westerly direction three months and twenty days, without discovering the land he was in quest of; and during this time he suffered much from various causes; his stock of provisions became very scanty; the water was putrid, he was obliged to put his men upon the very smallest allowance that would sustain life, and their sufferings brought upon them a terrible disease, the scurvy, to which none but sea-faring men are subject.

The only alleviation to these calamities was found in the fine weather and favorable winds which prevailed without interruption from the time they entered the south sea: and induced Magellan to bestow upon it the name of the *Pacific*. At length, when reduced to the greatest ex-



tremity, they fell in with the Ladrones and then with the Phillippines, where Magellan was most unfortunately killed in a skirmish with the natives.

The expedition was then continued under the command of the other officers, who after touching at several islands and taking in a valuable cargo, returned to Spain by the cape of Good Hope, the 7th of September A. D. 1522, having sailed round the globe in three years and 28 days. The naval glory of Spain now exceeded that of any other nation; they had not only discovered a new continent, but by circumnavigating the globe, had ascertained its form and extent.

To return to Cortez, who you remember had acted to this time

without any commission or authority derived from the king. Owing to the influence of Fonseca, who from his dislike to Columbus or some other cause, seems to have felt a sort of spite against every successful adventurer in the new world—the king determined neither to gratify Cortez's wishes or reward his merits. He appointed one Christoval de Tapia to supersede Cortez, with instructions to arrest him, institute a strict examination into his proceedings, and send a report thereof to Spain. Tapia, however was utterly disqualified for the station, and duties assigned to him, so that Cortez, though he publicly expressed the greatest veneration for the authority of the Emperor, prevailed upon this officer either by bribes or threats to relinquish all

his pretensions to the government, which he had been sent to assume : Cortez then lost no time in dispatching to Spain, a pompous account of his success, together with rich presents and further specimens of the productions of the country. These measures had the desired effect, the public voice was loud in favor of Cortez, and the Emperor no longer hesitated to appoint him captain general and governor of New Spain.

Before he received this commission he had begun to exercise all the powers of a governor, endeavoring to render his conquest in every way a valuable acquisition to his country, determined to establish the seat of government, where it was before, and commenced the rebuilding of Mexico, on a scale of magnificence

which made it the most splendid city in the new world.

He employed skilful persons to search for mines, and by that means discovered some of the richest which had yet been known in America, and he encouraged some of his principal officers to settle in the remote provinces by bestowing upon them large tracts of land and appropriations of Indians.

The Mexicans of course did not submit without many attempts to throw off the yoke of their conquerors, and dreadful cruelties were often practised upon them which disgrace the annals of Spanish history. Poor Guatimozin was ignominiously hanged, together with the caciques of Tezucoco and Tacuba, on a slight suspicion that they were endeavoring to

rouse their former subjects to arms. The Mexicans would probably have disappeared from the face of the earth with the same rapidity which marked the decline of the islanders, but for this circumstance that their first conquerors did not attempt to penetrate the bowels of the earth for gold and therefore they were saved from that formidable engine of destruction, which had been such a scourge in other parts of the new world. In Mexico the Spaniards were for some time content with the Indian method of cleansing and sifting the earth which was washed down from the mountains. In process of time, too, many useful and humane regulations were made, with express reference to the security and preservation of the Indians.

Cortez and his followers experienced in all respects the fate which usually attends the first conquerors of a new country, they had all the danger and toil, but their successors reaped the fruits—history recounts their continued sufferings and poverty.

It was not long, before a set of narrow minded men who had been appointed by the king to receive and administer the royal treasures in New Spain, took offence at the degree of power which Cortez exercised there, unable in consequence of the notions they had acquired in the court of a despotic monarch, to comprehend that the state of things in a newly conquered country, made such an assumption of power necessary and proper, they complained to the

king, accusing Cortez of being an ambitious tyrant who aimed at sovereign and independent authority.

These representations produced such an impression upon the mind of the Emperor Charles, that he immediately instituted a commission with power to examine into the conduct of Cortez, seize his person, and send him prisoner to Spain. This commission was entrusted to one Ponce de Leon, who died, however, a few days after his arrival in New Spain, before he had time to execute it. But Cortez had been apprised of the object of his coming and was deeply wounded by the intelligence. He endeavored nevertheless, to maintain his standing and recover the good will of his sovereign.

But there are always low minded

jealous spirits in every community with whom the extraordinary power or success of any individual is a sufficient reason, to excite their ill will and opposition against him. Fresh complaints were continually made, and it was not long before a new commission of inquiry was issued, involving still more extensive powers. When Cortez was informed of this, he was agitated and indignant.

Perhaps there is nothing harder for a mind, conscious of high desert, to bear, than an ungrateful requital of services; but though some of his adherents urged him to seize the power which he was basely accused of aiming at, he had sufficient self command or sense of honor, to reject these counsels. He was determined however, not to endure the ignominy of



a trial in a place which had been the scene of his glory, and departed immediately for Spain with the purpose of throwing himself upon the justice of his sovereign.

He appeared in Spain with the splendor which became his high reputation as the conqueror of a mighty Empire, attended by some Mexicans of distinction and the most considerable of his own officers. The Emperor received him as one whom consciousness of innocence had brought into his presence, and bestowed upon him the highest marks of his respect. He gave him the title of Marquis, together with a large grant of territory in New Spain and admitted him to the most friendly and familiar intercourse with himself. It is remarkable that notwithstand-

ing the life of rough, and in some respects savage adventure which Cortez had led, his manners still retained an unusual degree of elegance.

But here the favors of the emperor ended. Cortez in vain solicited to be reinstated in the government of New Spain, and returned thither with diminished authority. He was still suffered to retain the military power, but the civil power passed into other hands, being entrusted to a board called 'The Audience of New Spain.' At a subsequent period an officer was appointed under the title of viceroy, whose jurisdiction was much more extensive.

This division of power proved as might have been foreseen, a source of perpetual dissensions which embittered the remainder of Cortez's life.

Not finding sufficient scope with his present circumscribed powers, for his great activity, he turned his attention to prosecuting new discoveries. Several squadrons which he fitted out from some ports of New Spain in the South sea proving unsuccessful, he determined to take the command himself, and discovered the large peninsula of California. This achievement might have satisfied one who had not before accomplished much greater things, but it had no tendency to allay the fever of his ardent mind.

Disgusted with what seemed to him but ill-success and weary of contending with adversaries whom he despised, he again repaired to his native country to obtain the redress of his grievances.

His reception was cold, like Columbus, when he had rendered his country all the services he could, he was discarded as an unprofitable servant.

After spending several years in fruitless attendance upon ministers and judges, he expired the 2d of December, 1547, in the sixty second year of his age.

While we admire his wonderful talents and regret that they did not receive a more virtuous direction, we will hope that the moral darkness and ignorance of the period in which he lived, shall go far towards atoning for the errors of his life in the eyes of Him, 'who knoweth our frame, and remembereth that we are but dust.'

## CHAPTER XVI.

### *The Conquest of Peru.*

A plan for exploring the coasts of the Pacific ; first voyage of Pizarro ; meeting of Almagro with Pizarro ; they reach the coast of Quito ; Almagro returns to Panama ; Pizarro is recalled by the governor ; he refuses to obey and withdraws to the island of Gorgona ; arrival of a ship for his relief ; discovery of the coast of Peru ; Pizarro returns to Panama ; Pizarro goes to Spain ; he is appointed Governor and Captain General of Peru ; his return to Panama ; differences between Pizarro and Almagro ; Pizarro's second voyage ; origin of the Empire of the Incas.

We come now to the conquest of Peru, which next to that of Mexico, was the greatest event that happened in the New World after its first discovery.

From the time that Balboa discovered the great south sea, and received intimations of a rich kingdom on its coast, several armaments were fitted out one after another for the purpose of taking possession of the countries east of Panama, but as the researches which were made, did not extend beyond the limits of the province since known by the name of Terra Firma, which is extremely unhealthy and was then thinly inhabited ; the adventurers returned with discouraging reports of the forbidding aspect of the country.

When, however, every one else renounced as chimerical the schemes which Balboa had entertained, there happened to be in Panama three men whose spirit of adventure was too bold to be cheated by such consider-

ations at influenced persons of less ardent temperament, and they determined to prosecute these discoveries at all hazards. Their names were Francisco Pizarro, Diego de Almagro and Hernando Luque. Of these, Pizarro became the most distinguished, who was of low origin on the mother's side, and whose father though of an honourable family, resolved that he should not rise above the condition of his mother, and therefore subjected him when he was quite a young man to the occupation of a swine-herd. But Pizarro's spirit was one of those over which untoward circumstances have as little control, as the withs and cords with which Sampson was bound had over him.

Pizarro quickly abandoned this degrading employment, enlisted himself as a soldier, and after serving some years in Italy, he embarked for the new world, determined to seek his fortune there.

He was particularly fitted for the sphere which he chose, being of a hardy constitution, and of an active, vigorous, daring mind. Though he was a man of no education, not even knowing how to read, the striking qualities of character developed rapidly from the time that he was thrown entirely upon his own resources.

Circumstances are in their bearing upon character what the touch-stone is in its application to metals.

Almagro had no advantage over Pizarro in respect to his descent, but he united with the same manly quali-



ties a greater degree of that openness and generosity which usually belongs to the character of a soldier, but which had been, perhaps stifled in Pizarro by the early circumstances of his life. Luque was originally an ecclesiastic.

These men commenced their enterprise under the patronage of Pedrarias, Governor of Panama. Pizarro having less wealth than the others to throw into the common stock, offered to take upon himself the most dangerous and fatiguing service, that of commanding in person the earthly passions of ambition and avarice, which we so often remark in the history of the Spanish adventurers of this period. Their last act of preparation for this expedition of plunder and violence, was the ob-

servance of one of the most solemn religious ceremonies of the catholic church, which is called mass. Luque officiated as priest, and having divided a consecrated host, which is equivalent to the bread and wine used in the communion service of protestants, into three parts, he reserved one for himself, and gave the other two, to his companions, by way, I suppose, of sealing their contract, and securing, as they thought, the blessing of God upon its fulfilment.

Pizarro set sail for Panama November 14, 1524, with only one small vessel, and one hundred and twelve men. It happened that this was the most unpropitious season of the year which he could have selected for his enterprise, as the periodical winds had just set in, and were in an adverse direction ; so

that after beating about for seventy days, he had proceeded no farther towards the point of destination, than under more favorable circumstances, he might have gone in as many hours.

He touched at several places on the coast of Terra Firma, and found the aspect of the country quite as forbidding as had been represented.

His followers suffered so much from famine, fatigue and the diseases of a sultry climate, and in conflict with the natives, too, that their numbers being a good deal reduced, he was at length obliged to withdraw them to Chuchama, opposite the Pearl islands, in the bay of Panama, until he could receive a supply of provisions, together with reinforcements from his colleagues.

Almagro, however, had steered directly for that part of the continent where he expected to find Pizarro. Being disappointed, he landed with his followers to prosecute the search, and they experienced the same sufferings which had compelled Pizarro to abandon the coast. At length, being repulsed in a sharp conflict, during which Almagro lost one of his eyes by the wound of an arrow, they, too, were obliged to return to their ships, after which, accident led them to the place of Pizarro's retreat. Almagro immediately repaired to Panamá, where, after great difficulty he procured a further reinforcement of eighty men.

With these the two commanders again set sail, and after a variety of disasters, a part of the armament

succeeded in reaching the coast of Quito, south of what is now called the Gulf of Guyaquil. Landing at a place called Tacamez, they directly perceived that the country had a great appearance of fertility, and that the natives were clad in garments of woollen or cotton stuffs, and adorned with ornaments of gold ; but Almagro and Pizarro considering that it would be rash to attack so populous a country with a few men, unfit for service in consequence of the fatigue endured on the voyage, retired to a small island called Gallo, and Almagro went a second time to Panama for the purpose of procuring reinforcements. Meanwhile, Pedrarias had been succeeded in the government of that province by Pedro de los Rios, who being a good deal influ-

enced by the representations which some of Pizarro's men sent home of their sufferings, soon came to the conclusion that an expedition attended with such certain loss of lives was detrimental to the interests of an infant colony, and instead of facilitating new levies, he sent a vessel to recal all who had embarked in the enterprize. Pizarro peremptorily refused to obey the orders of the governor, and used all the eloquence he was master of in persuading his men to remain with him ; but so painful was the impression of their sufferings, and so alluring the idea of revisiting their homes, that, when he drew a line with a sword upon the sand, to divide those who chose to return, from those who were willing to stay, only thirteen were found who did

not, by passing over the line, signify their determination to comply with the orders of the governor.

With this small band Pizarro retired to the island of Gorgona, more distant from the coast than Gallo, and trusted that Almagro and Luque might yet be able to furnish him with supplies. He was not disappointed; they were indefatigable in their efforts, representing to the governor that it was shameful to expose brave men, who had hazarded their lives and fortunes in the service of the public, to perish in a desert island; until at length he consented to send one small vessel to their relief. Meanwhile Pizarro and his followers suffered five months, from a confined situation in a dreadfully unhealthy climate, and were on the point of com-

mitting themselves to the ocean upon a float, rather than remain were they were.

Their spirits were so much revived however, by the arrival of the ship from Panama, that Pizarro easily persuaded them, as well as the ship's crew, to join him in the further prosecution of his enterprise.

They stood directly to the south east, and were so fortunate as to discover the coast of Peru, on the twentieth day after their departure from Gorgona. After touching at several villages, they landed at a place called Tumbez, distinguished by a stately temple and a palace of the *Incas*, or sovereigns of the country. Here they received a most favorable impression of the wealth and civilization of the Peruvian Empire. The



country was populous and evidently cultivated with a considerable degree of care, while at the same time the abundance of gold and silver was very evident from the profusion with which the natives lavished ornaments made of those precious metals, not only on their persons, but on their temples, and it is even said that they had vessels and utensils for common use, of the same materials.

Pizarro could do little more, however, with so slender a force, than explore the country. He everywhere maintained a peaceful intercourse with the natives, while the Spaniards and Peruvians regarded each other with mutual astonishment. Having obtained such a knowledge of the country as would enable him to convey an idea of the value of his discov-

ery, he procured from the inhabitants, in confirmation of his intended report, individuals of a species of domestic animals which they called Llamas, and some vessels and ornaments of gold and silver, with other specimens of Peruvian ingenuity. He took care also to provide himself with two young men, who after being instructed in the Castilian language, might serve as interpreters in his intended expedition.

With these he returned to Panama, after an absence of three years. It is said that no adventurer in the new world had ever suffered so great dangers and hardships as he was subjected to, during all this period, but still his spirit was unsubdued and his ardor greater than ever.

Finding that the governor of Panama still continued unpropitious to their undertaking, the triumvirate of adventurers after having agreed that Pizarro should claim to be governor of the country which they proposed to conquer, Almagro, Lieutenant Governor, and Luque, bishop, determined that Pizarro should go to Spain to solicit a commission from the emperor Charles.

Their fortunes were now so much exhausted that it was with difficulty they could borrow a sum sufficient for his expenses.

Pizarro hastened his departure, and his representations had the desired effect upon the emperor Charles. He obtained for Luque the ecclesiastical dignity to which he aspired, but in regard to Almagro,

whose pretensions interfered with his own purposes, he acted very dishonorably, soliciting for him nothing but the command of a fortress to be erected at Tumbez, while he obtained for himself the appointment of Governor, Adelantado and captain-general of all the country which he had discovered ; whereby he became invested with supreme power, civil and military, which he held under the king, independently of the governor of Panama.

In return for these favors, he promised to procure two hundred and fifty men, and to provide the ships with all their equipments. He was not able, however, to raise more than half that number, and after obtaining his patents, he hurried away, privately, to elude the scrutiny of the

officers whose duty it was, to see that he fulfilled these stipulations. Just before his departure, he received some assistance from Cortez, who returned to Spain about that time, and was probably actuated by a fellow feeling with his brother-adventurers. Pizarro was accompanied on his return, by his three brothers, Ferdinand, Juan, and Gonzalo.

On his arrival at Panama, Almagro exasperated by his perfidious conduct, refused any longer to co-operate with him, but Pizarro understood so well the value of alliance with Almagro, that rather than renounce it, he offered to relinquish, in his favor, the office of Adelantado, and use his influence to obtain the emperor's concurrence. By this means a reconciliation was effected.

Their united efforts, however, were only able to procure three small vessels with one hundred and eighty soldiers, thirty-six of whom were horsemen.

Pizarro taking care now to choose the most favorable season, and aided by experience, accomplished the voyage in thirteen days. He was forced, however, by winds and currents to land in the bay of St Matthews, a hundred leagues north of Tumbez, his original destination. He immediately began his march towards the south, taking care not to deviate widely from the sea-coast, and thus diminish his chance of retreating, and of being benefitted by the supplies he hoped to receive from Panama. The soldiers suffered so much in this march, from the difficulty of

passing the rivers, as they were obliged to do, near their mouths, and from various other inconveniences, incident to an unhealthy and hostile shore, for Pizarro had now thrown off his disguise and appeared as an enemy, that they began to reproach their leader, saying that he had deceived them in his account of the country. This dissatisfaction, on their part, might have led to serious consequences, had not they shortly arrived at a considerable town, where a valuable body of gold and silver vessels, was found which inspired the most sanguine expectations that they should realize their dreams of wealth. Pizarro immediately sent a large remittance to Almagro, and another to Nicaragua, in hopes of al-

luring adventurers by a display of the wealth so speedily acquired.

He then continued his march attacking the inhabitants wherever he met with them, and compelling them either to yield, or to withdraw into the interior, for the sudden appearance of these terrible invaders, whose power seemed irresistible, produced the same appalling effect upon the natives here, as in other parts of America. Pizarro met with hardly any resistance, until he attacked the island of Puna in the Gulf of Guayaquil ; there he found the inhabitants both numerous and fierce, so that he was obliged to spend six months in reducing them to subjection. He then proceeded to Tumbez, where he was compelled to remain three months on account of the diseases which raged among his followers.



In the meantime he received two reinforcements from Nicaragua, which though small, were a valuable accession to his slender band ; especially, as they were commanded by officers of great merit. Soon after this, he established the first Spanish colony in Peru, and gave it the name of Saint Michael.

Before I proceed to give you a further account of his progress, I must inform you of some particulars in regard to the empire of Peru, which had a necessary and intimate connection with its conquest.

At the time of this invasion by the Spaniards, it extended along the coast of the Pacific ocean, fifteen hundred miles ; on the east its limits were circumscribed by the Andes ; and therefore its breadth was

much less than its length. According to the traditions of its inhabitants, it was originally possessed by small independent, and exceedingly barbarous tribes who roamed about, naked, in the forests, and lived more like brutes, than like human beings. In this condition they remained for ages without making any progress towards civilization until there appeared on the bank of the Lake Titiaca a man and woman of majestic form, clothed in decent garments, who professed to be the offspring of the Sun, and sent by their beneficent parent in pity to the miseries of mankind, for the purpose of communicating such knowledge as would rescue them from their present suffering condition, and secure to them the blessings of civilization. In consequence

of this, many of the dispersed savages united together to place themselves under the direction of these heavenly leaders, and assisted them in founding the city of Cures.

The names of these extraordinary personages were Manco Capac, and Mama Ocollo. The former taught the men agriculture and other useful arts. The latter instructed the women in spinning and weaving. The condition of the savages, of course, improved rapidly in consequence of the regular mode of life, and the industrious habits which they adopted, under these auspices. They soon became provided with comfortable food, clothing and habitations ; after which, Manco Capac devised a regular form of government, and by the wisdom of his institutions, gradual-

ly introduced the virtues and refinements of civilized life.

Thus was formed the empire of the *Incas* of Peru, which though at first limited to a small territory, gradually increased until it comprised within its jurisdiction, the whole Peruvian nation. The *Incas* were treated, not only with the respect due to them as monarchs, but with the reverence which their divine origin inspired. Their blood was considered sacred, and their families never intermarried with the people, from whom they were distinguished not only by the regal insignia, but by certain peculiarities in dress and ornaments, which it was a sacrilege for others to assume.

Though their power was despotic, it is said that they used and valued

it only as the means of diffusing the blessings of knowledge and civilization, and that during a succession of twelve monarchs, there was not found a single exception to the truth of this assertion.

This tradition affords abundant exercise to the imagination, for though we must of course reject that part of it which attributes a supernatural origin to Manco Capac and Mama Ocollo, it seems certain, or at least highly probable, that it was founded on some fact of extraordinary occurrence.

For aught we can tell, these two people may have been accidentally cast upon the Peruvian shores, and being possessed of the requisite talents and knowledge, contrived to turn, what at first seemed an unfortu-

nate accident into the means of obtaining power and distinction. The natives may have ascribed to them, as other Americans every where did to the Spaniards, a divine origin, and they perhaps encouraged the idea for the sake of establishing and confirming their own influence.













