

THE
SPANISH
CONQUEST
IN
AMERICA



HELPS

VOL. I

Francis Lieber.

THE SPANISH CONQUEST

IN AMERICA,

AND ITS RELATION TO THE HISTORY OF
SLAVERY AND TO
THE GOVERNMENT OF COLONIES.

BY ARTHUR HELPS.

VOL. I.

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TO THE

REV. ROBERT PHELPS, D.D.,

MASTER OF SIDNEY SUSSEX COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I DEDICATE this book to you, because it is based upon "*The Conquerors of the New World and their Bondsmen*," which I dedicated to you several years ago.

Finding that, for the completeness of the work, it required to be more developed, I have been obliged to extend its plan and to enlarge its form.

I need hardly dwell upon the difficulty of my enterprise, and the labor which, for many a weary year, it has entailed upon me. I feel, however, that the more it has cost me, with the greater confidence I can dedicate it to you, who will not look so much upon the result, whether successful or unsuccessful, as upon the expense of life and energy which it represents.

If the work should afford the least aid or enlightenment to those who would legislate wisely upon matters connected with slavery or colonization, neither you nor I shall regret any labor that has been expended upon it.

At the time of my former dedication you were Vice-chancellor of Cambridge, and I had the additional

pleasure of paying a mark of respect to the first officer in a University which I always look upon with due filial reverence and gratitude. These feelings have not grown weaker in the lapse of time, and I am glad to have an opportunity of renewing my expression of them.

It is nearly seven years since I dedicated the "*Conquerors*" to you; and it is a pleasure to think that, though so much has changed in us and around us during these boisterous years, we have the same secure friendship for each other as we had then, and, indeed, as we had when we were at college together.

I remain, my dear friend, yours affectionately,

ARTHUR HELPS.

June, 1855.

P R E F A C E.

THE present history being a work of a peculiar kind, and the drift of it not likely to be perceived until the reader has advanced some way in the work, it may save him trouble, and may secure his attention to what he would otherwise be likely to pass by as unimportant, if I endeavor to explain at once the object in view, and the mode in which that object has been pursued.

Some years ago, being much interested in the general subject of slavery, and engaged in writing upon it, I began to investigate the origin of modern slavery. I soon found that the works commonly referred to gave me no sufficient insight into the matter. Questions, moreover, arose in my mind, not immediately connected with slavery, but bearing closely upon it, with respect to the distribution of races in the New World. "Why," said I to myself, "are there none but black men in this island; why are there none but copper-colored men on that line of coast; how is it that in one town the white population predominates, while in another the aborigines still hold their ground? There must be a series of historical events, which, if

brought to light, would solve all these questions, and I will endeavor to trace this out for myself."

In the simplicity of one who had never before devoted himself to historical writing, I thought, after a time, that I would give a slight sketch of what I had discovered, and that this would be sufficient for my purpose.

Eventually, however, I found that I was involved in a large work, and that there was much to be told about the early discoveries and conquests in America which is not to be met with in its history as hitherto narrated. I am confirmed in this opinion by one of the greatest lawyers and most learned men that Spain has produced, whose office* gave him access to all the colonial records of that country. He justly remarks that the historians of New Spain neglected to treat of that which was the great result of all the political transactions they narrated. He alludes to the subject of *encomiendas*.† I have, unconsciously as far as his remark is concerned (for I did not meet with it until

* ANTONIO DE LEON PINELO, Relator del consejo de las Indias. He was also the author of the great bibliographical work *Epítome de la biblioteca oriental y occidental náutica y geográfica*. The *Biographie Universelle* thus describes his labors: "Le nombre des pièces dont il eut à faire le dépouillement, est vraiment prodigieux: le tome premier contient l'extrait d'environ cinq cents volumes de cédules royales, comprenant 120,000 feuilles, et plus de 300,000 décisions."

† "No parece tan fácil el fundar, con decisiones Reales, í continuación de tiempos, el estilo que en las Encomiendas se observa en Nueva-España; punto en que no ha reparado, siendo tan esencial al gobierno, ninguno de sus historiadores Francisco Lopez de Gomara, Fr. Antonio de Remesal, Antonio de Herrera, Fr. Juan de Torquemada, ni otros, que tratando sus materias políticas, dexan la de las Encomiendas, siendo el fin á que todas se dirigen."—ANTONIO DE LEON PINELO.—*Tratado de Confirmaciones Reales*, part i., cap. 4. Madrid, 1630.

I had matured my own plan), been endeavoring to write a history that should not be liable to this censure. To bring before the reader, not conquest only, but the results of conquest—the mode of colonial government which ultimately prevailed—the extirpation of native races—the introduction of other races—the growth of slavery, and the settlement of the *encomiendas*, on which all Indian society depended—has been the object of this history.

I have now a few words to say about the mode of accomplishing my object. I found that I could not avail myself of any thing that had been written before. Other men have written, and I believe successfully, of the various conquests and discoveries made in America; but I have been obliged, both for the reader's sake and for my own, to tell my story in my own way. It does not suffer itself to be told in any one conquest or in any one discovery. It sometimes lies wholly in the New World, sometimes wholly at the court of Spain. It depends, at one time, on some powerful minister; at another, upon some resolute conqueror. It follows the course of the remarkable men of the day, and now rises up in one colony, now in another, its direction not being governed by the relative importance of the colonies. Guatemala, for instance—a country of which we have heard but little in Europe—becomes, at one period, a most important field for investigation in a general history of Spanish Conquest in America. A number of remarkable men happen to be in Guatemala at the same time. Their proceedings give the most apt illustration of their theories respecting slavery, colonization, and colonial gov-

ernment. Hence Guatemala becomes, for several years, the geographical centre of the narrative, as the Pearl Coast had been at a former period.

I feel that, in a work of such extent as this history of the Spanish Conquest, there must be much that is imperfect, and much that is briefly narrated. Being obliged to take a general survey of a large field of history, as well as to enter minutely into detail in those parts of the subject which are important for my purpose and comparatively new to the world, there are particular sections of the history which have necessarily been treated by me with a certain brevity. But, as Oviedo, an historian constantly referred to in the following pages, declares, most men are delighted at coming to an end (*los mas hombres son amigos de conclusion*); and, therefore, any brevity which is not merely justifiable, but requisite, will, I doubt not, be readily accepted.

I may add that, as regards the authorities I have had recourse to in writing this history, I am greatly indebted to the vast collections of the historian Muñoz (wisely intrusted to the care of that courteous and learned body, the Royal Academy of Madrid), to the publications which have taken place, in recent times, of documents and even of histories which had hitherto remained in manuscript; and also, incidentally, to the spirit of research which has grown up of late years in America, and which has brought to light many valuable works connected with the early records of that country.

I have also been singularly fortunate in the number of friends who have taken an almost paternal interest

in the book, and who have aided me by advice, criticism, research, and co-operation.*

I commend the work to the reader in the hope that it will make him desirous to turn from my pages to those of other historians, ancient and modern, who will enable him to supply for himself the deficiencies which there are in this history, and to correct the errors with which it must abound, whatever pains may have been taken.

* In speaking of the co-operation I have had the good fortune to meet with, I must especially mention the assiduous labors of a gentleman who has done much to add to the value of this work by illustrating it with maps, carefully executed according to scale, and, in several instances, based upon original authorities which he has anxiously scrutinized.

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BOOK I.

PRINCE HENRY OF PORTUGAL.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.—DISCOVERY OF THE CANARY ISLANDS.
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PRINCE HENRY OF PORTUGAL.

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CA DA MOSTO'S VOYAGE.—PRINCE HENRY'S DEATH.—HIS CHARAC-
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THE
SPANISH CONQUEST IN AMERICA.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.—DISCOVERY OF THE CANARY ISLANDS.—BÉTHENCOURT.—PORTUGUESE DISCOVERIES IN AFRICA UNDER PRINCE HENRY OF PORTUGAL.

THE history of almost every nation tells of some great transaction peculiar to that nation, something which aptly illustrates the particular characteristics of the people, and proclaims, as we may say, the part in human nature which that nation was to explain and render visible. In English history, the contest between the Crown and the Parliament; in that of France, the French Revolution; in that of Germany, the religious wars, are such transactions. All nations of the same standing have portions of their several histories much alike. There are border wars, intestine divisions, contests about the succession to the throne, uprisings against favorites, in respect of which, if only different names be applied to the account of one and the same transaction, it will serve very well for the history of various nations, and nobody would feel any strangeness or irrelevancy in the story, whether it were told of France, England,

Germany, or Spain. Carrying on this idea to the history of our system, if the other worlds around us are peopled with beings not essentially unlike ourselves, there may be among them many Alexanders, Cæsars, and Napoleons: the ordinary routine of conquest may be commonplace enough in many planets; and thus the thing most worthy to be noticed in the records of our Earth may be its commercial slavery and its slave-trade; for we may hope, though the difference be to our shame, that they have not had these calamities elsewhere.

The peculiar phase of slavery that will be brought forward in this history is not the first and most natural one, in which the slave was merely the captive in war, "the fruit of the spear," as he has figuratively been called, who lived in the house of his conqueror, and labored at his lands. This system culminated among the Romans; partook of the fortunes of the Empire; was gradually modified by Christianity and advancing civilization; declined by slow and almost imperceptible degrees into serfage and vassalage; and was extinct, or nearly so, when the second great period of slavery suddenly uprose. This second period was marked by a commercial character. The slave was no longer an accident of war. He had become the object of war. He was no longer a mere accidental subject of barter. He was to be sought for, to be hunted out, to be produced; and this change accordingly gave rise to a new branch of commerce. Slavery became at once a much more momentous question than it ever had been, and thenceforth, indeed, claims for itself a history of its own.

Black against mankind, and almost unaccountably mean and cruel as much of this history is, still it is

not without a phase of true valor and noble endeavor, which may compensate a little for the deep darkness on the other side. The history of slavery is not merely an account of commercial greediness and reckless cruelty carried to the uttermost, but it embodies the efforts of the greatest men of many periods; displays in the fullest light their errors, their disputations, their bewilderments; partakes largely of the nice questions canvassed by ecclesiastics; is combined with the intrigues of courts and cabinets; and, alas! is borne on the winds by the resolute daring of hardy mariners and far-seeing discoverers—men who should have been foremost in the attack upon all mean cruelty, and some of whom thought that they were so. Again, in the history of slavery, if it could be well worked out, lie the means of considering questions of the first importance respecting colonization, agriculture, social order, and government.

The remarkable persons connected with the history of modern slavery are alone sufficient to give it some interest. These are the members of the royal family of Portugal throughout the fifteenth century, with Prince Henry at their head; then there are Ferdinand and Isabella, Columbus, and the whole band of brave captains who succeeded him in the discovery and conquest of Spanish America; there are Charles the Fifth, Ximenes, Las Casas, Vieyra, and hosts of churchmen and statesmen from those times down to the present.

Lastly, there is the fate of one continent, perhaps we may say of two, deeply concerned in the history of slavery.

The importance of the records in this matter is not to be measured by the show they make, which is

often poor enough. There is many a small skirmish in the history of slavery, which has had more effect upon the fortunes of mankind than pitched battles have had between rival nations contending apparently for universal empire; for the result of any battle may almost be said to depend for importance, not so much upon the measure of success obtained by either side, nor certainly upon the original object of the war, as upon the essential difference between the contending parties, and upon the opinions they hold of each other: greatly on the contempt, whether deserved or not, which the victors have for the vanquished. Supposing, therefore, that one nation or race fails to appreciate another which it wars successfully against, the result of that war is likely to be larger, especially for evil, as the misappreciation in question is greater. The consequences of battle, whether between races or individuals, where each knows the worth of the other, are seldom such as to obliterate the fame and courage, or change the whole social aspect of the vanquished party. But when Spartan conquers Helot, barbarian Goth or Visigoth subdues the polished Roman, or civilized man with his many implements invades and oppresses the simple savage, then come the cruelty and dire mismanagement which are born of ignorance and want of sympathy. And thus, as in all human affairs, we have to discover the righteousness that there is in right understanding.*

With all due appreciation, however, of the subject of slavery, it must be confessed that it is one which,

* "Then shalt thou understand righteousness, and judgment, and equity; yea, every good path.

"When wisdom entereth into thine heart, and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul."—*Prov.*, chap. ii., v. 9, 10.

if treated by itself alone, would lack dramatic interest for a history. It has no single thread to run upon, like the account of any man's life, or the history of a nation. The story of slavery is fragmentary and confused—having a different state of progress to deal with in different parts of the world at the same time—and is deficient in distinct epochs to be illustrated by great adventures. Moreover, people think that they have already heard all about it; but this, however, is not so.

It may therefore be allowed that the reader must bring with him much of the interest which he would have to maintain in studying the history of slavery, if considered strictly by itself. Even then, however, it would not be without that element of the sublime, which consists in great extent, although of desolation. In looking over a vast morass, unmarked by tower, or citadel, or town, which the horizon descends upon but does not bound, the shaping mind may discover more to think of than in the landscape that laughs with every variety of scenic beauty. And here, too, in this subject of slavery is one which, were it ever so dull, presents at all times an indefinite extent of human struggle and human suffering. Happily, however, a subject so deeply and terribly connected with humanity, and which demands the study of the historian, has entwined itself with the most interesting events in secular history; and whenever these are truly and fully told, it can not but appear, even though it be sedulously kept in the background.

My intention in this work is to make a contribution to the general history of the second period of slavery, by giving such an account of the origin and progress of modern slavery as will embrace the principal events which led to the subjection of the Indians of the New

World, and to the introduction of negro slavery in America and the West Indies. The work will thus become, in great part, a history of Spanish America; and, as such, will track Columbus over seas hitherto unsounded by mortal man, will follow the fortunes of Vasco Nuñez, Cortes, and Pizarro; and through the mother country—at that time the most important and menacing state in the world—be intimately connected with the perplexed affairs of European politics in the sixteenth century.

Previously, however, to entering upon these interesting times, the history of modern slavery must commence with the history of African discovery; and the first great step in that was the discovery of the Canary Islands. These were the “Elysian fields” and “fortunate islands” of antiquity. Perhaps there is no country in the world that has been so many times discovered, conquered, and invaded, or so much fabled about, as these islands. There is scarcely a nation upon earth of any maritime repute that has not had to do with them. Phœnicians, Carthaginians, Romans, Moors, Genoese, Normans, Portuguese, and Spaniards of every province (Aragonese, Castilians, Gallicians, Biscayans, Andalucians) have all made their appearance in these islands.* The Carthaginians are said to have discovered them, and to have reserved them as an asylum in case of extreme danger to the state. Sertorius, the Roman general, who partook the fallen fortunes of Marius, is said to have meditated retreat to these “islands of the blessed,” and by some writers is supposed to have gone there.

* VIERA Y CLAVIGO, *Historia General de las Islas de Canaria*, Madrid, 1772, lib. iii.

Juba, the Mauritanian prince, son of the Juba celebrated by Sallust, sent ships to examine them, and has left a description of them.*

Then came the death of empires, and darkness fell upon the human race, at least upon the records of their history. When the world revived, and especially when the use of the loadstone began to be known among mariners, the Canary Islands were again discovered. Petrarch is referred to by Viera to prove that the Genoese sent out an expedition to these islands.† Las Casas mentions that an English or French vessel bound from France or England to Spain was driven by contrary winds to the Canary Islands, and on its return spread abroad in France an account of the voyage.‡ The information thus obtained (or per-

* VIERA, lib. i., sec. 18.

† PETRARCA, *de Vitâ Solitariâ*, lib. ii., sec. 6, cap. 3.

‡ LAS CASAS, *Historia General de las Indias*, MS., lib. i., cap. 17. The original of this work is to be found in the library of the Royal Academy of History at Madrid. Four or five copies have been taken, of which the author possesses one. It is a work of the highest historical value, as Las Casas saw with his own eyes, and was himself engaged in, many of the transactions which he narrates; and, moreover, he had taken care to collect contemporary documents, relating to important events, which have since perished.

The course of the narrative is often broken by outbursts of generous indignation at the treatment of the Indians, or by laborious trains of argument to prove that they were free men. These parts, therefore, of the history, which were very fitly addressed to the reader of his own time, have ceased to interest the modern reader, who is generally too much disposed to agree with Las Casas to care to listen to his arguments or his denunciations. Occasionally, as will be seen, the narrative is admirable, sparkling with the vivacity and intelligence of the writer, and adequately expressing the deep concern which he took in his subject. Indeed, his history is in great part his autobiography.

It would be surprising that a work of such value should not have been printed, but for the fact that Herrera, the royal historiographer of the Indies in the seventeenth century, has made the greatest use of Las Casas, weaving in long extracts from the *Historia General*, taken almost verbatim.

haps in other ways of which there is no record) stimulated Don Luis de la Cerda, Count of Clermont, great grandson of Don Alonzo the Wise of Castile, to seek for the investiture of the Crown of the Canaries, which was given to him with much pomp by Clement the Sixth, at Avignon, A.D. 1344, Petrarch being present.* This sceptre proved a barren one. The affairs of France, with which state the new king of the Canaries was connected, drew off his attention, and he died without having visited his dominions. The next authentic information that we have of the Canary Islands is that, in the times of Don Juan the First of Castile, and of Don Enrique his son, these islands were much visited by the Spaniards.† In 1399, we are told that certain Andalucians, Biscayans, Guipuzcoans, with the consent of Don Enrique, fitted out an expedition of five vessels, and making a descent on the island of Lanzarote, one of the Canaries, took captive the king and queen, and one hundred and seventy of the islanders.‡

Hitherto there had been nothing but discoveries, rediscoveries, and invasions of these islands; but, at last, a colonist appears upon the scene. This was Juan de Béthencourt, a great Norman baron, lord of St. Martin le Gaillard, in the county of Eu, of Béthencourt, of Granville, of Sancerre, and other places in Normandy, and chamberlain to Charles the Sixth of France. Those who are at all familiar with the history of that period, and with the mean and cowardly barbarity which characterized the long-continued contests between the rival factions of Orleans and Burgundy, may well imagine that any Frenchman would

* VIERA, lib. i., sec. 21.

† ORTIZ DE ZUÑIGA, *Annales*, A.D. 1399, p. 262.

‡ VIERA, lib. iii., sec. 25.

then be very glad to find a career in some other country. Whatever was the motive of Juan de Béthencourt, he carried out his purpose in the most resolute manner. Leaving his young wife, and selling part of his estate, he embarked at Rochelle in 1402 with men and means for the purpose of conquering, and establishing himself in, the Canary Islands. It is not requisite to give a minute description of this expedition. Suffice it to say, that Béthencourt met with fully the usual difficulties, distresses, treacheries, and disasters that attach themselves to this race of enterprising men. After his arrival at the Canaries, finding his means insufficient, he repaired to the court of Castile, did acts of homage to the king, Enrique the Third, and afterward renewed them to his son Juan the Second, thereby much strengthening the claim which the Spanish monarchs already made to the dominion of these islands. Béthencourt, returning to the islands with renewed resources, made himself master of the greater part of them, reduced several of the natives to slavery, introduced the Christian faith, built churches, and established vassalage. On the occasion of quitting his colony in A.D. 1405, he called all his vassals together, and represented to them that he had named for his lieutenant and governor Maciot de Béthencourt, his relation; that he himself was going to Spain and to Rome to seek for a bishop for them; and he concluded his oration with these words: "My loved vassals, great or small, plebeians or nobles, if you have any thing to ask me or to inform me of, if you find in my conduct any thing to complain of, do not fear to speak; I desire to do favor and justice to all the world."*

* VIERA, lib. iv., sec. 20.

The assembly he was addressing contained none of the slaves he had made. We are told, however, and that by eye-witnesses, that the poor natives themselves bitterly regretted his departure, and, wading through the water, followed his vessel as far as they could. After his visit to Spain and to Rome, he returned to his paternal domains in Normandy, where, while meditating another voyage to his colony, he died A.D. 1425.

Maciot de Béthencourt ruled for some time successfully; but afterward falling into disputes with the bishop, and his affairs generally not prospering, Maciot sold his rights to Prince Henry of Portugal—also, as it strangely appears, to another person—and afterward settled in Madeira. The claims to the government of the Canaries were for many years in a most entangled state, and the right to the sovereignty over these islands was a constant ground of dispute between the crowns of Spain and Portugal.

Thus ended the enterprise of Juan de Béthencourt, which, though it can not be said to have led to any very large or lasting results, yet, as it was the first modern attempt of the kind, deserves to be chronicled before commencing with Prince Henry of Portugal's long-continued and connected efforts in the same direction. The events also which preceded and accompanied Béthencourt's enterprise need to be recorded, in order to show the part which many nations, especially the Spaniards, had in the first discoveries on the Coast of Africa.

We now turn to the history of the discoveries made, or rather caused to be made, by Prince Henry of Portugal. This prince was born in 1394. He was the

third son of John the First of Portugal and Philippa the daughter of John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster. That good Plantagenet blood on the mother's side was doubtless not without avail to a man whose life was to be spent in continuous and insatiate efforts to work out a great idea. Prince Henry was with his father at the memorable capture of Ceuta, the ancient Septem, in the year 1415. This town, which lies opposite to Gibraltar, was of great magnificence, and one of the principal marts in that age for the productions of the Eastern World.* It was here that the Portuguese nation first planted a firm foot in Africa; and the date of this town's capture may, perhaps, be taken as that from which Prince Henry began to meditate farther and far greater conquests. His aims, however, were directed to a point long beyond the range of the mere conquering soldier. He was especially learned for that age of the world, being skilled in mathematical and geographical knowledge. And it may be noticed here, that the greatest geographical discoveries have been made by men conversant with the book-knowledge of their own time. A work, for instance, often seen in the hands of Columbus, which his son mentions as having had much influence with him, was the learned treatise of Cardinal Petro de Aliaco (Pierre d'Ailly), the *Imago Mundi*.

But to return to Prince Henry of Portugal. We learn that he had conversed much with those who had made voyages in different parts of the world, and particularly with Moors from Fez and Morocco, so that

* "Toda Europa considerava a Ceuta como hum erario das preciosidades do Oriente, indo a ella buscar as drogas de preço, que produzia, naõ só Alexandria, e Damasco, mas a Libia, e o Egypto."—*Vida do Infante*, Lisboa, 1758, p. 26.

he came to hear of the Azenegues, a people bordering on the country of the negroes of Jalof.

Such was the scanty information of a positive kind which the prince had to guide his endeavors. Then there were the suggestions and the inducements which to a willing mind were to be found in the shrewd conjectures of learned men, the fables of chivalry, and, perhaps, in the confused records of forgotten knowledge once possessed by Arabic geographers. The story of Prester John, which had spread over Europe since the Crusades, was well known to the Portuguese prince. A mysterious voyage of a certain wandering saint, called Saint Brendan, was not without its influence upon an enthusiastic mind. Moreover, there were many sound motives urging the prince to maritime discovery, among which a desire to fathom the power of the Moors, a wish to find a new outlet for traffic, and a longing to spread the blessings of the faith, may be enumerated. The especial reason which impelled Prince Henry to take the burden of discovery on him-



self was, that neither mariner nor merchant would be likely to adopt an enterprise in which there was no clear hope of profit.* It belonged, therefore, to great men and princes, and among such he knew of no one but himself who was inclined to it. This is not an uncommon motive. A man sees something that ought



to be done, knows of no one who will do it but himself, and so is driven to the enterprise, even should it be repugnant to him.

And now, the first thing for those to do who would thoroughly understand the records of maritime discovery, is the same as it was for Prince Henry, in which we may be sure he was not remiss, namely, to study our maps and charts. Without frequent reference to

* "E porque o dicto senhor quis desto saber a verdade, parecendo-lhe que se elle ou alguõ outro senhor se nom trabalhasse de o saber, nehuõs mareantes, nem mercadores, nunca se delle antremeteryam, porque claro sta que nunca nehuõs daquestes se trabalham de navegar senom pera donde conhedidamente speram proveito." — AZURARA, *Chronica de Guiné*, cap. 7.

maps, a narrative like the present forms in our mind only a mirage of names, and dates, and facts; is wrongly apprehended even while we are regarding it, and soon vanishes away. The map of the world being before us, let us reduce it to the proportions it filled in Prince Henry's time; let us look at our infant world. First, take away those two continents, for so we may almost call them, each much larger than a Europe, to the far west. Then cancel that square, massive-looking piece to the extreme southeast: happily there are no penal settlements there yet.* Then turn to Africa: instead of that form of inverted cone which it presents, and which we now know there are physical reasons for its presenting, make a cimeter shape of it by running a slightly-curved line from Juba on the eastern side to Cape Nam on the western. Declare all below that line unknown. Hitherto we have only been doing the work of destruction, but now scatter emblems of Hippogriffs and Anthropophagi on the outskirts of what is left in the map, obeying a maxim not confined to the ancient geographers only: where you know nothing, place terrors. Looking at the map thus completed, we can hardly help thinking to ourselves, with a smile, what a small space, comparatively speaking, the known history of the world has been transacted in up to the last four hundred years. The idea of the universality of the Roman dominion shrinks a little, and we begin to fancy that Ovid might have escaped his tyrant.† The ascertained confines of the world were now, however, to be more than doubled in the course of one century; and to Prince Henry of

* This was written before gold was discovered in Australia, and when penal settlements were the most notable things in the colony.

† "But the empire of the Romans filled the world; and when that

Portugal, as to the first promoter of these vast discoveries, our attention must be directed.

This prince, having once the well-grounded idea in his mind that Africa did not end where it was commonly supposed, namely, at Cape Nam (Not), but that there was a world beyond that forbidding negative, seems never to have rested until he had made known that quarter of the globe to his own. He fixed his abode upon the promontory of Sagres, at the southern part of Portugal, whence for many a year he could watch for the rising specks of white sail bringing back his captains to tell him of new countries and new men. We may wonder that he never went himself, but he may have thought that he served the cause better by remaining at home, and forming a centre whence the electric energy of enterprise was communicated to many discoverers, and then again collected from them. Moreover, he was much engaged in the public affairs of his country. In the course of his life he was three times in Africa, carrying on war against the Moors; and at home, besides the care and trouble which the state of the Portuguese court and government must have given him, he was occupied in promoting science and encouraging education.

In 1415, as before noticed, he was at Ceuta. In 1418 he was settled on the promontory of Sagres.

empire fell into the hands of a single person, the world became a safe and dreary prison for his enemies. The slave of imperial despotism, whether he was condemned to drag his gilded chain in Rome and the senate, or to wear out a life of exile on the barren rocks of Seriphus, or the frozen banks of the Danube, expected his fate in silent despair. To resist was fatal, and it was impossible to fly. On every side he was encompassed with a vast extent of sea and land, which he could never hope to traverse without being discovered, seized, and restored to his irritated master."—GIBBON'S *Decline and Fall*, vol. i., p. 97, Oxford edition.

One night in that year he is thought to have had a dream of promise, for on the ensuing morning he suddenly ordered two vessels to be got ready forthwith, and to be placed under the command of two gentlemen of his household, Joham Gonçalvez Zarco and Tristam Vaz, whom he ordered to proceed down the Barbary coast on a voyage of discovery.

A contemporary chronicler, AZURARA, whose work* has recently been discovered and published, tells the story more simply, and merely states that these captains were young men, who, after the ending of the Ceuta campaign, were as eager for employment as the prince for discovery, and that they were ordered on a voyage having for its object the general molestation of the Moors, as well as that of making discoveries beyond Cape Nam. The Portuguese mariners had a proverb about this cape, "He who would pass Cape Not, either will return or not" (*Quem passar o Cabo de Nam, ou tornará ou nam*), intimating that if he did not turn before passing the cape, he would never return at all. On the present occasion it was not destined to be passed; for these captains, Joham Gonçalvez Zarco and Tristam Vaz, were driven out of their course by storms, and accidentally discovered a little island, where they took refuge, and from that circumstance called the island Porto Santo. "They found there a race of people living in no settled polity, but

* This authentic and most valuable record was discovered in the *Bibliothèque Impériale* at Paris, by Senhor Fernando Denis, in 1837; was published by the Portuguese ambassador, the Visconde Da Carreira, who transcribed the MS. with his own hand, and was annotated by the learned Visconde Da Santarem. It is a book well worth the care that has been bestowed upon it, as being "O primeiro livro escripto por autor europeu sobre os paizes situados na costa occidental d'Africa alèm do Cabo Bojador."

not altogether barbarous or savage, and possessing a kindly and most fertile soil.”* I give this description of the first land discovered by Prince Henry’s cap-



* “Hallaron allí gente nada política, mas no del todo bárbara ó selvage, y poseedora de un benévolo y fertilíssimo terreno.”—FARIA Y SOUSA, *Asia Portuguesa*, Lisbon, 1666, tom. i., part i., cap. 1.

tains, thinking it would well apply to many other lands about to be found out by his captains and by other discoverers. Joham Gonçalvez Zarco and Tristam Vaz returned. Their master was delighted with the news they brought him, more on account of its promise than its substance. In the same year he sent them out again, together with a third captain, named Bartholomew Perestrelo, assigning a ship to each captain. His object was not only to discover more lands, but also to improve those which had been discovered. He sent, therefore, various seeds and animals to Porto Santo. This seems to have been a man worthy to direct discovery. Unfortunately, however, among the animals some rabbits were introduced into the new island, and they conquered it, not for the prince, but for themselves. Hereafter we shall find that they gave his people much trouble, and caused no little reproach to him.

We come now to the year 1419. Perestrelo, for some cause not known, returned to Portugal at that time. After his departure, Joham Gonçalvez Zarco and Tristam Vaz, seeing from Porto Santo something that seemed like a cloud, but yet different (the origin of so much discovery, noting the difference in the likeness), built two boats, and, making for this cloud, soon found themselves alongside a beautiful island, abounding in many things, but most of all in trees, on which account they gave it the name of Madeira (wood). The two discoverers, Joham Gonçalvez Zarco and Tristam Vaz, entered the island at different parts. The prince their master afterward rewarded them with the captaincies of those parts. To Perestrelo he gave the island of Porto Santo to colonize it. Perestrelo, however, did not make much of his captaincy,

but after a strenuous contest with the rabbits, having killed an army of them, died himself. This captain has a place in history as being the father-in-law of Columbus, who, indeed, lived at Porto Santo for some time, and here, on new-found land, meditated far bolder discoveries.

Joham Gonçalvez Zarco and Tristam Vaz began the cultivation of their island of Madeira, but met with an untoward event at first. In clearing the wood, they kindled a fire among it, which burned for seven years, we are told; and in the end, that which had given its name to the whole island, and which, in the words of the historian, overshadowed the whole land, became the most deficient commodity. The captains founded churches in the island; and the King of Portugal, Don Duarte, gave the temporalities to Prince Henry, and all the spiritualities to the knights of Christ.

While these things were occurring at Madeira and Porto Santo, Prince Henry had been prosecuting his general scheme of discovery, sending out two or three vessels a year, with orders to go down the coast from Cape Nam, and make what discoveries they could; but these did not amount to much, for the captains never advanced beyond Cape Bojador, which is situated seventy leagues to the south of Cape Nam. This Cape Bojador was formidable in itself, being terminated by a ridge of rocks with fierce currents running round them; but was much more formidable from the fancies which the mariners had formed of the sea and land beyond it. "It is clear," they were wont to say, "that beyond this cape there is no people whatever; the land is as bare as Libya—no water, no trees, no grass in it; the sea so shallow that at a league from

the land it is only a fathom deep; the currents so fierce that the ship which passes that cape will never



return;”* and thus their theories were brought in to justify their fears.

This outstretcher (for such is the meaning of the

* AZURARA, Paris, 1841, cap. 8.

word Bojador) was therefore as a bar drawn across that advance in maritime discovery which had for so long a time been the first object of Prince Henry's life.

The prince had now been working at his discoveries for twelve years, with little approbation from the generality of persons (*con poca aprovacion de muchos*), the discovery of these islands, Porto Santo and Madeira, serving to whet his appetite for farther enterprise, but not winning the common voice in favor of prosecuting discoveries on the coast of Africa. The people at home, improving upon the reports of the sailors, said that "the land which the prince sought after was merely some sandy place like the deserts of Libya; that princes had possessed the empire of the world, and yet had not undertaken such designs as his, nor shown such anxiety to find new kingdoms; that the men who arrived in these foreign parts (if they did arrive) turned from white into black men; that the king, Don John, the prince's father, had endowed foreigners with land in his kingdom, to break up and cultivate it—a thing very different from taking people out of Portugal, which had need of them, to bring them among savages to be eaten, and to place them upon lands of which the mother-country had no need; that the Author of the world had provided these islands solely for the habitation of wild beasts, of which an additional proof was, that those rabbits the discoverers themselves had introduced were now dispossessing them of the island."*

There is much here of the usual captiousness to be found in the criticism of by-standers upon action, mixed with a great deal of false assertion and premature knowledge of the ways of Providence. Still it were

* FARIA Y SOUSA, tom. i., part i., cap. 1.

to be wished that most criticism upon action was as wise; for that part of the common talk which spoke of keeping their own population to bring out their own resources had a wisdom in it, which the men of future centuries were yet to discover throughout the Peninsula.

Prince Henry, as may be seen by his perseverance up to this time, was not a man to have his purposes diverted by such criticism, much of which must have been in his eyes worthless and inconsequent in the extreme. Nevertheless, he had his own misgivings. His captains came back one after another with no good tidings of discovery, but with petty plunder gained, as they returned, from incursions on the Moorish coast. The prince concealed from them his chagrin at the fruitless nature of their attempts, but probably did not feel it less on that account. He began to think, Was it for him to hope to discover that land which had been hidden from so many princes? Still he felt within himself the incitement of "a virtuous obstinacy," which would not let him rest. Would it not, he thought, be ingratitude to God, who thus moved his mind to these attempts, if he were to desist from his work, or be negligent in it?*

* Porém quando os capitaes tornavam, faziam algumas entradas na costa de Berberia (como atrás dissemos), com que elles refaziam parte da despeza, o que o Infante passava com soffrimento, sem por isso mostrar aos homens descontentamento de seu serviço, dado que não cumprissem o principal a que eram enviados. Porque como era Principe Catholico, e todalas suas cousas punha em as mãos de Deos, parecia-lhe que não era merecedor que per elle fosse descuberto, o que tanto tempo havia que estava escondido aos Príncipes passados de Hespanha. Com tudo, porque sentia em si hum estímulo de virtuosa perfia, que o não leixava descançar em outra cousa, parecia-lhe que era ingratidão a Deos dar-lhe estes movimentos, que não desistisse da obra, e elle ser a isso negligente."—BARROS, Lisbon, 1778, dec. i., lib. i., cap. 4.

solved, therefore, to send out again Gil Eannes, one of his household, who had been sent the year before, but had returned, like the rest, having discovered nothing. He had been driven to the Canary Islands, and had seized upon some of the natives there, whom he brought back. With this transaction the prince had shown himself dissatisfied; and Gil Eannes, now intrusted again with command, resolved to meet all dangers rather than to disappoint the wishes of his master. Before his departure, the prince called him aside and said, "You can not meet with such peril that the hope of your reward shall not be much greater; and, in truth, I wonder what imagination this is that you have all taken up—in a matter, too, of so little certainty; for if these things which are reported had any authority, however little, I would not blame you so much. But you quote to me the opinions of four mariners, who, as they were driven out of their way to Frandes or to some other ports to which they commonly navigated, had not, and could not have used, the needle and the chart; but do you go, however, and make your voyage without regard to their opinion, and, by the grace of God, you will not bring out of it any thing but honor and profit."*

We may well imagine that these stirring words of the prince must have confirmed Gil Eannes in his resolve to efface the stain of his former misadventure; and he succeeded in doing so; for he passed the dreaded Cape Bojador—a great event in the history of African discovery, and one that in that day was considered equal to a labor of Hercules. Gil Eannes returned to a grateful and most delighted master. He informed the prince that he had landed, and that the

* AZURARA, cap. 9.

soil appeared to him unworked and fruitful; and, like a prudent man, he could not only tell of foreign plants, but had brought some of them home with him in a barrel of the new-found earth—plants much like those which bear in Portugal the roses of Santa Maria. The prince rejoiced to see them, and gave thanks to God, “as if they had been the fruit and sign of the promised land; and besought our Lady, whose name the plants bore, that she would guide and set forth the doings in this discovery to the praise and glory of God, and to the increase of His holy faith.”*

The pious wish expressed above is the first of the kind that we have occasion to notice in this history; but similar wishes seem to have been predominant in the minds of the greatest discoverers and promoters of discovery in those times. I believe this desire of theirs to have been thoroughly genuine and deep-seated; and, in fact, that the discoveries would not have been made at that period but for the impulse given to them by the most pious minds longing to promote, by all means in their power, the spread of what to them was the only true and saving faith. There is much to blame in the conduct of the first discoverers in Africa and America; it is, however, but just to acknowledge that the love of gold was not by any means the only motive which urged them, or which could have urged them, to such endeavors as theirs. We shall more readily admit the above conclusion if we keep in our minds the views then universally entertained of the merits and efficacy of mere formal communion with the Church, and the fatal consequences of not being within that communion. A man so enlightened

* BARROS, dec. i., lib. i., cap. 4. AZURARA, cap. 9.

as LAS CASAS scorns to be bound by passages brought against him in argument from the works of heathen writers—men who are now living in hell, as he says; and Columbus, in giving an account of his third voyage to the Catholic sovereigns, says that in temporal matters he has only a “blanca” for the offertory, and that in spiritual matters he is so apart from the holy sacraments of the holy Church, that if he were to die where he is, his soul would be forgotten (*que se olvidará desta ánima si se aparta acd del cuerpo*). “Weep for me,” he adds, “ye that are charitable, true, or just.”

And, doubtless, in the minds of the common people, the advantage of this communion with the Church stood at the highest. This will go a long way to explain the wonderful inconsistency, as it seems to us, of the most cruel men appealing to their good works as promoters of the faith. And the maintenance of such Church principles will altogether account for the strange oversights which pure and high minds have made in the means of carrying out those principles, fascinated as they were by the brilliancy and magnitude of the main object they had in view.

The Old World had now obtained a glimpse beyond Cape Bojador. The fearful “outstretcher” had no longer much interest for them, being a thing that was overcome, and which was to descend from an impossibility to a landmark, from which, by degrees, they would almost silently steal down the coast, counting their miles by thousands, until Vasco de Gama should boldly carry them round to India.

After the passing of Cape Bojador there was a lull

in Portuguese discovery, the period from 1434 to 1441 being spent in enterprises of very little distinctness or importance. Indeed, during the latter part of this period the prince was fully occupied with the affairs of Portugal. In 1437 he accompanied the unfortunate expedition to Tangier, in which his brother Ferdinand was taken prisoner, who afterward ended his days in slavery to the Moor. In 1438, King Duarte dying, the troubles of the regency occupied Prince Henry's attention. In 1441, however, there was a voyage which led to very important consequences. In that year Antonio Gonçalvez, master of the robes to Prince Henry, was sent out with a vessel to load it with skins of "sea-wolves," a number of them having been seen, during a former voyage, in the mouth of a river about fifty-four leagues beyond Cape Bojador. Gonçalvez resolved to signalize his voyage by a feat that should gratify his master more than the capture of sea-wolves, and he accordingly planned and executed successfully an expedition for capturing some Azeneghi Moors, in order, as he told his companions, to take home "some of the language of that country." Nuño Tristam, another of Prince Henry's captains, afterward falling in with Gonçalvez, a farther capture of Moors was made, and Gonçalvez returned to Portugal with his spoil.

In the same year Prince Henry applied to Pope Martin the Fifth, praying that his Holiness would grant to the Portuguese crown all that it should conquer, from Cape Bojador to the Indies, together with plenary indulgence for those who should die while engaged in such conquests. The Pope granted these requests. "And now," says a Portuguese historian, "with this apostolic grace, with the breath of royal favor, and already with the applause of the people, the prince pur-

sued his purpose with more courage and with greater outlay.”*

In 1442, the Moors whom Antonio Gonçalves had captured in the previous year promised to give black slaves in ransom for themselves, if he would take them back to their own country; and the prince, approving of this, ordered Gonçalves to set sail immediately, “insisting as the foundation of the matter that if Gonçalves should not be able to obtain so many negroes (as had been mentioned) in exchange for the three Moors, yet that he should take them; for, whatever number he should get, he would gain souls, because they (the negroes) might be converted to the faith, which could not be managed with the Moors.”† Here again may be seen the religious motive predominating; and, indeed, the same motive may be deduced from numerous passages in which this prince’s conduct comes before us.

Gonçalves obtained ten black slaves, some gold dust, a target of buffalo hide, and some ostriches’ eggs, in exchange for two of the Moors, and, returning with his cargo, excited general wonderment on account of the color of the slaves.‡ These, then, we may presume, were the first black slaves that made their appearance in the Peninsula since the extinction of the old slavery.

* FARIA Y SOUSA, tom. i., part i., cap. 1.

† “Ordenou o Infante de o despachar logo em hum navio, fazendo fundamento, que quando Antão Gonçalves não pudesse haver tantos negros a troco destes tres Mouros, já de quantos quer que fossem ganhava almas; porque se converteriam á Fé, o que elle não podia acabar com os Mouros.”—BARROS, dec. i., lib. i., cap. 7.

‡ “Entraron en el Reyno con admiracion comun, causada del color de los esclavos.”—FARIA Y SOUSA, tom. i., part i., cap. 1.

I am not ignorant that there are reasons for alleging that negroes had before this era been seized and carried to Seville. The *Ecclesiastical and Secular Annals* of that city, under the date 1474, record that negro slaves abounded there, and that the fifths levied on them produced considerable gains to the royal revenue; it is also mentioned that there had been traffic of this kind in the days of Don Enrique the Third, about 1399, but that it had since then fallen into the hands of the Portuguese. The chronicler states that the negroes of Seville were treated very kindly from the time of King Enrique, being allowed to keep their dances and festivals; and that one of them was named "mayoral" of the rest, who protected them against their masters, and before the courts of law, and also settled their own private quarrels. There is a letter from Ferdinand and Isabella in the year 1474, to a celebrated negro, Juan de Valladolid, commonly called the "Negro Count" (el Conde Negro), nominating him to this office of "mayoral of the negroes," which runs thus: "For the many good, loyal, and signal services which you have done us, and do each day, and because we know your sufficiency, ability, and good disposition, we constitute you mayoral and judge of all the negroes and mulattoes, free or slaves, which are in the very loyal and noble city of Seville, and throughout the whole archbishopric thereof, and that the said negroes and mulattoes may not hold any festivals, nor pleadings among themselves, except before you, Juan de Valladolid, negro, our judge and mayoral of the said negroes and mulattoes; and we command that you, and you only, should take cognizance of the disputes, pleadings, marriages, and other things which may take place among them, forasmuch as you are a person suf-

ficient for that office, and deserving of your power, and you know the laws and ordinances which ought to be kept, and we are informed that you are of noble lineage among the said negroes.”*

But the above merely shows that in the year 1474 there were many negroes in Seville, and that laws and ordinances had been made about them. These negroes might all, however, have been imported into Seville since the Portuguese discoveries. True it is, that in the times of Don Enrique the Third, and during Béthencourt's occupation of the Canary Islands, slaves from thence had been brought to France and Spain; but these islanders were not negroes, and it certainly may be doubted whether any negroes were imported into Seville previous to 1443.

Returning to the course of Portuguese affairs, an historian of that nation informs us that the gold obtained by Gonçalvez “awakened, as it always does, covetousness;”† and there is no doubt that it proved an important stimulus to farther discovery. The next year Nuño Tristam went farther down the African coast; and, off Adeget, one of the Arguim Islands, captured eighty natives, whom he brought to Portugal. These, however, were not negroes, but Azenegues.

The tide of popular opinion was now not merely turned, but was rushing in full flow in favor of Prince Henry and his discoveries. The discoverers were found to come back rich in slaves and other commodities; whereas it was remembered that in former wars and undertakings, those who had been engaged in them

* ORTIZ DE ZUÑIGA, *Annales Ecclesiásticos y Seculares de Sevilla*, p. 374. Madrid, 1677.

† FARIA Y SOUSA.

had generally returned in great distress. Strangers, too, now came from afar, scenting the prey. A new



mode of life, as the Portuguese said, had been found out; and "the greater part of the kingdom was moved with a sudden desire to follow this way to Guinea."*

* BARROS, dec. i., lib. i., cap. 8.

In 1444, a company was formed at Lagos, who received permission from the prince to undertake discovery along the coast of Africa, paying him a certain portion of any gains which they might make. This has been considered as a company founded for carrying on the slave-trade; but the evidence is by no means sufficient to show that its founders meant such to be its purpose. It might rather be compared to an expedition sent out, as we should say in modern times, with letters of marque, in which, however, the prizes chiefly hoped for were, not ships, nor merchandise, but men. The only thing of any moment, however, which the expedition accomplished, was to attack successfully the inhabitants of the islands Nar and Tider, and to bring back about two hundred slaves.* I grieve to say that there is no evidence of Prince Henry's putting a check to any of these proceedings; but, on the contrary, it appears that he awarded with large honors Lançarote, one of the principal men of this expedition, and received his own fifth of the slaves. Yet I have scarcely a doubt that the words of the historian are substantially true—that discovery, not gain, was still the prince's leading idea.† We have an account from an eye-witness of the partition of the slaves brought back by Lançarote, which, as it is the first transaction of the kind on record, is worthy of notice, more especially as it may enable the reader to understand the motives of the prince, and of other men of those times.

* BARROS does not say of what race these slaves were, but merely calls them "almas." FARIA Y SOUSA gives them the name of "Moors," a very elastic word. I imagine that they were Azenegues.

† "Porque huma das cousas, que o Infante naquelle tempo trazia ante os olhos, e em que o mais podiam comprazer, e servir, era em aquelle descubrimento, por ser cousa, que ella plantára, e creára com tanta industria, e despeza."—BARROS, dec. i., lib. i., cap. 8.

It is to be found in the *Chronicle*, before referred to, of AZURARA. The merciful chronicler is smitten to the heart at the sorrow he witnesses, but still believes it to be for good, and that he must not let his mere earthly commiseration get the better of his piety.

“O thou heavenly Father,” he exclaims, “who, with thy powerful hand, without movement of thy divine essence, governest all the infinite company of thy holy city, and who drawest together all the axles of the upper worlds, divided into nine spheres, moving the times of their long and short periods as it pleases thee! I implore thee that my tears may not condemn my conscience, for not its law, but our common humanity constrains my humanity to lament piteously the sufferings of these people (slaves). And if the brute animals, with their mere bestial sentiments, by a natural instinct, recognize the misfortunes of their like, what must this my human nature do, seeing thus before my eyes this wretched company, remembering that I myself am of the generation of the sons of Adam! The other day, which was the eighth of August, very early in the morning, by reason of the heat, the mariners began to bring to their vessels, and, as they had been commanded, to draw forth those captives to take them out of the vessel; whom, placed together on that plain, it was a marvelous sight to behold, for among them there were some of a reasonable degree of whiteness, handsome and well made; others less white, resembling leopards in their color; others as black as Ethiopians, and so ill formed, as well in their faces as their bodies, that it seemed to the beholders as if they saw the forms of a lower hemisphere. *But what heart

* “Mas qual serya o coração, por duro que seer podesse, que fosse pungido de piedoso sentimento, veendo assy aquella companha;

was that, how hard soever, which was not pierced with sorrow, seeing that company; for some had sunken cheeks, and their faces bathed in tears, looking at each other; others were groaning very dolorously, looking at the heights of the heavens, fixing their eyes upon them, crying out loudly, as if they were asking succor from the Father of nature; others struck their faces with their hands, throwing themselves on the earth; others made their lamentations in songs, according to the customs of their country, which, although we could not understand their language, we saw corresponded well to the height of their sorrow. But now, for the increase of their grief, came those who had the charge of the distribution, and they began to put them apart one from the other, in order to equalize the portions; wherefore it was necessary to part children and parents, husbands and wives, and brethren from each other. Neither in the partition of friends and relations was any law kept, only each fell where the lot took him. O powerful fortune! who goest hither and thither with thy wheels, compassing the things of the world as it pleaseth thee, if thou canst, place before the eyes

ca huïs tiinham as caras baixas, e os rostros lavados com lagrimas, olhando huïs contra os outros; outros estavam gemendo muy doo-ramente, esguardando a altura dos ceos, firmando os olhos em elles, braadando altamente, como se pedissem acorro ao Padre da natureza; outros feryam seu rosto com suas palmas, lançandosse tendidos em meo do chaão; outros faziam suas lamentaçooes em maneira de canto, segundo o costume de sua terra, nasquaaes postoque as pallavras da linguaagem aos nossos nom podesse seer entendida, bem correspondya ao graao de sua tristeza. Mas pera seu doo seer mais acrecentado, sobreveherom aquelles que tiinham carregó da partilha, e começaram de os apartarem huïs dos outros; afim de poerem seus quinhooes em igualleza; onde conviinha de necessydade de se apartarem os filhos dos padres, e os molheres dos maridos, e os huïs irmaãos dos outros. A amigos nem a parentes nom se guardava nhũa ley, somente cada huï caya onde o a sorte levava!"

VGL. I.—C

of this miserable nation some knowledge of the things that are to come after them, that they may receive some consolation in the midst of their great sadness ! and you others who have the business of this partition, look with pity on such great misery, and consider how can those be parted whom you can not disunite ! Who will be able to make this partition without great difficulty ? for while they were placing in one part the children that saw their parents in another, the children sprang up perseveringly and fled to them ; the mothers inclosed their children in their arms, and threw themselves with them on the ground, receiving wounds with little pity for their own flesh, so that their offspring might not be torn from them ! And so, with labor and difficulty, they concluded the partition, for, besides the trouble they had with the captives, the plain was full of people, as well of the place as of the villages and neighborhood around, who in that day gave rest to their hands, the mainstay of their livelihood, only to see this novelty. And as they looked upon these things, some deploring, some reasoning upon them, they made such a riotous noise as greatly to disturb those who had the management of this distribution. The Infante was there upon a powerful horse, accompanied by his people, looking out his share, but as a man who for his part did not care for gain, for, of the forty-six souls which fell to his fifth, he speedily made his choice, as all his principal riches were in his contentment, considering with great delight the salvation of those souls which before were lost. And certainly his thought was not vain, for as soon as they had knowledge of our language, they readily became Christians ; and I, who have made this history in this volume, have seen in the town of Lagos young

men and young women, the sons and grandsons of those very captives, born in this land, as good and as true Christians as if they had lineally descended, since the commencement of the law of Christ, from those who were first baptized.”*

The good AZURARA wished that these captives might have some foresight of the things to happen after their death. I do not think, however, that it would have proved much consolation to them to have foreseen that they were almost the first of many millions to be dealt with as they had been; for in this year, 1444, Europe may be said to have made a distinct beginning in the slave-trade, henceforth to spread on all sides like the waves upon stirred water, and not, like them, to become fainter and fainter as the circles widen.

In 1445, an expedition was fitted out by Prince Henry himself, and the command given to Gonsalvo de Cintra, who was unsuccessful in an attack on the natives near Cape Blanco. He and some other of the principal men of the expedition lost their lives. These were the first Portuguese who died in battle on that coast. In the same year the prince sent out three other vessels. The captains received orders from the Infante, Don Pedro, who was then regent of Portugal, to enter the River d’Oro, and make all endeavors to

* AZURARA, cap. 25. I have not scrupled to give AZURARA’s description of this remarkable scene without abridgment; and, indeed, throughout this narrative I shall be obliged to quote largely. Many of the works referred to are in manuscript. Several even of the printed ones are of the highest rarity. In such a case, it seems to be a service to literature to quote as copiously from the original documents as can be done without embarrassing the narrative or encumbering the page.

convert the natives to the faith, and even, if they should not receive baptism, to make peace and alliance with them. This did not succeed. It is probable



that the captains found negotiation of any kind exceedingly tame and apparently profitless in comparison with the pleasant forays made by their predeces-

sors. The attempt, however, shows much intelligence and humanity on the part of those in power in Portugal. That the instructions were sincere, is proved by the fact of this expedition returning with only one negro, gained in ransom, and a Moor who came of his own accord to see the Christian country.

This same year 1445 is signalized by a great event in the progress of discovery along the African coast. Dinis Dyaz, called by BARROS, and the historians who followed him, Dinis Fernandez, sought employment from the Infante, and being intrusted by him with the command of a vessel, pushed boldly down the coast, and passed the River Sanaga (Senegal), which divides the Azenegues (whom the first discoverers always called Moors) from the negroes of Jalof. The inhabitants were much astonished at the presence of the Portuguese vessel on their coasts, and at first took it for a fish, or a bird, or a phantasm; but when in their rude boats (hollowed logs) they neared it, and saw that there were men in it, judiciously concluding that it was a more dangerous thing than fish, or bird, or phantasm, they fled. Dinis Fernandez, however, captured four of them off that coast; but as his object was discovery, not slave-hunting,* he went on till he discovered Cape Verde, and then returned to his country, to be received with much honor and favor by Prince Henry. These four negroes taken by Dinis Fernandez were the first taken in their own country by the Portuguese.† That the prince was still engaged in

* "Como seu proposito mais era descubrir terra por servir o infante, que trazer cativos pera seu proprio proveito."—BARROS, dec. i., lib. i., cap. 9.

† "Os quaaes foram os primeiros que em sua propria terra foram filhados per Xpaãos, nem ha hi cronica nem estorya em que se conte o contrairo."—AZURARA, cap. 31.

high thoughts of discovery and conversion, we may conclude from observing that he rewarded and honored Dinis Fernandez as much as if he had brought him large booty; for the prince "thought little of whatever he could do for those who came to him with these signs and tokens of another greater hope which he entertained."*

In this case, too, as in others, we should do great injustice if we supposed that Prince Henry had any of the pleasure of a slave-dealer in obtaining these negroes: it is far more probable that he valued them as persons capable of furnishing intelligence, and, perhaps, of becoming interpreters for his future expeditions; not that, without these especial motives, he would have thought it any thing but great gain for a man to be made a slave, if it were the means of bringing him into communion with the Church.

After this, several expeditions, which did not lead to much, occupied the prince's time till 1447. In that year, a fleet, large for those times, of fourteen vessels, was fitted out at Lagos by the people there, and the command given by Prince Henry to Lançarote. The object seems to have been, from a speech that is recorded of Lançarote's, to make war upon the Azeneghi Moors, and especially to take revenge for the defeat before mentioned which Gonsalvo de Cintra suffered in 1445, near Cape Blanco. That purpose effected, Lançarote went southward, extending the discovery of the coast to the River Gambia. In the course of his proceedings on that coast, we find again that Prince Henry's instructions insisted much upon

* "Que sempre lhe parecia pouco o que fazia aquellas, que lhe vinham com estas mostras, e sinaes d'outra maior esperança que elle tinha."—BARROS, dec. i., lib. i., cap. 9.

the maintenance of peace with the natives.* Another instance of the same disposition on his part deserves to be especially recorded. The expedition had been received in a friendly manner at Gomera, one of the Canary Islands. Notwithstanding this kind reception, some of the natives were taken prisoners. On their being brought to Portugal, Prince Henry had them clothed and afterward set at liberty in the place from which they had been taken.†

This expedition under Lançarote had no great result. The Portuguese went a little farther down the coast than they had ever been before, but they did not succeed in making friends of the natives, who had already been treated in a hostile manner by some Portuguese from Madeira. Neither did the expedition make great spoil of any kind. They had got into feuds with the natives, and were preparing to attack them, when a storm dissipated their fleet and caused them to return home.

It appears, I think, from the general course of proceedings of the Portuguese in those times, that they considered there was always war between them and the Azeneghi Moors—that is, in the territory from Ceuta as far as the Senegal River; but that they had no declared hostility against the negroes of Jalof, or of any country farther south, though skirmishes would be sure to happen from ill-understood attempts

* “Gomes Pires, a quem o Capitão Lançarote mandou em hum batel, que fosse a elles, parecendo-lhe que os provocava mais a paz, que lhe o infante muito encommendava em seu regimento, lançou-lhes em terra hum bollo, hum espelho, e huma folha de papel, em que hia debuxada huma cruz.”—BARRÓS, dec. i., lib. i., cap. 13.

† “Infidelidad que el infante castigó con mandarlos vestir, y ponerlos libres, y luzidos en su naturaleza.”—FARIA Y SOUZA, tom. i., part i., cap. i.

at friendship on the one side, and just or needless fears on the other.

The last public enterprise of which Prince Henry had the direction was worthy to close his administration of the affairs relating to Portuguese discovery. He caused two ambassadors to be dispatched to the King of the Cape Verde territory to treat of peace, and to introduce the Christian faith. One of the ambassadors, a Danish* gentleman, was treacherously killed by the natives, and upon that the other returned, having accomplished nothing.

Don Alfonso the Fifth, the nephew of Prince Henry, now took the reins of government, and the future expeditions along the coast of Africa proceeded in his name. Still it does not appear that Prince Henry ceased to have power and influence in the management of African affairs; and the first thing that the king did in them was to enact that no one should pass Cape Bojador without a license from Prince Henry. Some time between 1448 and 1454 a fortress was built in one of the islands of Arguim, which islands had already become a place of bargain for gold and negro slaves.† This was the first Portuguese establishment on the coast of Africa. It seems that a system of trade was now established between the Portuguese and the negroes.‡

* This employment of a foreigner, which is not the only instance, seems to show that the Portuguese prince cultivated good relations with intelligent men of other countries.

† “Porque á las Islas de Arguim concurría rescate de oro, y negros, mandó el Rey levantar á una dellas el Castillo de aquel nombre (y fué el primero que se levantó en nuestras conquistas).”—FARIA Y SOUSA, tom. i., part. i., cap. 2.

‡ “A este tempo o negocio de Guiné andava já mui corrente entre os nossos, e os moradores daquellas partes, e huns com es outros se communicavam em as cousas do commercio com paz, e amor, sem

Having come to an important point in the course of Portuguese discovery, we may now make a pause, not without some satisfaction at having got through a tedious part of the narrative—a part chiefly marked by names, dates, and bare events, which stand in the undiversified story like solitary post-houses in the “steppes” of Russia or the “landes” in France.

Admitting, however, to the full, any tediousness that there may be in this account of early Portuguese discovery, we ought not, I think, to consider it uninteresting. The beginnings of great things, even if obscure, trivial, isolated, without the details which bring reality into presence, and round which the hopes and the fortunes of men have not yet gathered, still can not be devoid of interest to any thoughtful, forecasting mind. The traveler willingly dismounts to see the streamlet which is the origin of a great river, and the man of imagination (who is patient in research because he is imaginative), as, in science, he laboriously follows with delight the tracks now hardened in the sandstone of obscure birds which paddled over those buried plains ages ago, so, in history, he will often find material to meditate upon, and to observe, in slight notices, which, however, like the others, indicate much to him of by-gone times and wondrous changes.

aquellas entradas, e saltos de roubos de guerra, que no princípio houve.”—BARROS, dec. i., lib. ii., cap. 2. See also AZURARA, cap. 95.

CHAPTER II.

CA DA MOSTO'S VOYAGE.—PRINCE HENRY'S DEATH.—HIS CHARACTER.—FARTHER DISCOVERIES OF THE KINGS OF PORTUGAL.

AT the close of the preceding chapter it was intimated that the narrative of these Portuguese voyages is rather uninviting. Could we recall, however, the voyagers themselves, and listen to their story, we should find it animating enough. Each enterprise, as we have it now, with its few dry facts, seems a meagre affair; but it was far otherwise to the men who were concerned in it. We have seen that piety had a large part in these undertakings: doubtless the love of adventure and the craving for novelty had their influences also.* And what adventure it was! new trees, new animals, new stars, to be seen: nothing bounded, nothing trite; nothing which had the bloom taken off it by much previous description! These early voyagers, moreover, were like children coming out to take their first gaze into the world, with ready credulity and unlimited fancy, willing to

* "They err who regard the Conquistadores as led only by a thirst for gold, or even exclusively by religious fanaticism. Dangers always exalt the poetry of life; and, moreover, the powerful age which we here seek to depict in regard to its influence on the development of cosmical ideas, gave to all enterprises, as well as to the impressions of nature offered by distant voyages, the charm of novelty and surprise, which begins to be wanting to our present more learned age in the many regions of the earth which are now open to us."—HUMBOLDT'S *Kosmos*, Sabine's translation, London, 1848, vol. ii., p 272.

believe in fairies and demons, Amazons and "forms of a lower hemisphere," mystic islands, and fountains of perpetual youth.

Then, too, besides the hopes and fears of each individual of the crew, the conjoint enterprise had in it a life to be lived and a career to be worked out. It started to do something; fulfilled its purpose, or at least some purpose; and then came back radiant with success, from that time forward to be a great fact in history. Or, on the other hand, there was some small failure or mischance, perhaps, early in the voyage: the sailors then began to reckon up ill omens, and to say that little good would come of this business. Farther on, some serious misadventure happened which made them turn; or from the mere lapse of time, they were obliged to bethink themselves of getting back. Safety, not renown nor profit, now became their object, and their hope was at best but the negative of some fear. Thereupon, no doubt, ensued a good deal of recrimination among themselves, for very few people are magnanimous enough to share ill-success kindly together. Then, in the long, dull evenings of their voyage homeward, as they sat looking on the waters, they thought what excuses and explanations they would make to their friends at home, and how shame and vexation would mingle with their joy at returning.

This transaction, teeming as it did with anxious life, must make a poor show in some chronicle: they sailed; and did something, or failed in doing, and then came back; and this was in such a year: brief records, like the entry in an almanac, or the few emphatic words on a tombstone!

At the period, however, we are now entering upon,

the annals of maritime discovery are fortunately enriched by the account of a voyager who could tell more of the details of what he saw than we have hitherto heard from other voyagers, and who was himself his own chronicler.

In 1454, Ca da Mosto, a young Venetian, who had already gained some experience in voyaging, happened to be on board a Venetian galley that was detained by contrary winds at Cape St. Vincent. Prince Henry was then living close to the cape. He sent his secretary and the Venetian consul on board the galley. They told of the great things the prince had done, showed samples of the commodities that came from the lands discovered by him (Madeira sugars, Dragon's-blood, and other articles), and spoke of the gains made by Portuguese voyagers being as great as 700 or 1000 per cent. Ca da Mosto expressed his wish to be employed, was informed of the terms that would be granted, and heard that a Venetian would be well received by the prince, "because he was of opinion that spices and other rich merchandise might be found in these parts, and knew that the Venetians understood these commodities better than any other nation."*

In fine, Ca da Mosto saw the prince, and was evidently much impressed by his noble bearing. He obtained his wishes, and, being furnished with a caravel, he embarked his merchandise in it, and set off on a voyage of discovery. There was now for the first time an intelligent man on board one of these vessels, giving us his own account of the voyage.

From Ca da Mosto the reader at once learns the state of things with regard to the slave-trade. The

* ASTLEY'S *Voyages*, vol. i., p. 574.

Portuguese factory at Arguim was the head-quarters of the trade. Thither came all kinds of merchandise, and gold and slaves were taken back in return. The "Arabs" of that district (Moors the Portuguese would have called them) were the middle men in this affair. They took their Barbary horses to the negro country, and "there bartered with the great men for slaves," getting from ten to eighteen slaves for each horse. They also brought silks of Granada and Tunis, and silver, in exchange for which they received slaves and gold. These Arabs, or Moors, had a place of trade of their own, called Hoden, behind Cape Blanco. There the slaves were brought, "from whence, Ca da Mosto says, they are sent to the mountains of Barka, and from thence to Sicily; part of them are also brought to Tunis, and along the coast of Barbary, and the rest to Argin, and sold to the licensed Portuguese. Every year between seven and eight hundred slaves are sent from Argin to Portugal."*

"Before this trade was settled," says Ca da Mosto, "the Portuguese used to seize upon the Moors themselves (as appears occasionally from the evidence that has before been referred to), and also the Azenegues who live farther toward the south; but now peace is restored to all, and the Infante suffers no farther damage to be done to these people. He is in hopes that, by conversing with Christians, they may easily be brought over to the Romish faith, as they are not, as yet, well established in that of Mohammed, of which they know nothing but by hearsay."†

No doubt the prince's good intentions were greatly furthered by the convenience of this mode of trading. In short, gain made for itself its usual convenient

* ASTLEY'S *Voyages*, vol. i., p. 577.

† *Ibid.*, p. 578.

channels to work in, and saved itself as much as it could the trouble of discovery, or of marauding.

Ca da Mosto being, as was said before, the first modern European visiting Africa who gives, himself, an account of it, and being, moreover, apparently an honest and intelligent man, all that he narrates is most valuable. He notices the difference of the people and the country on the opposite sides of the Senegal River. On the northern side he finds the men small, spare, and tawny; the country arid and barren: on the southern side, the men "exceeding black, tall, corpulent, and well made; the country green and full of green trees." This latter is the country of Jalof, the same that Prince Henry first heard of in his intercourse with the Moors. Ca da Mosto gives a minute description of the people, which is well worth noting. Both men and women, he says, wash themselves four or five times a day, being very cleanly as to their persons, but not so in eating, in which they observe no rule. Although very ignorant and awkward in going about any thing which they have not been accustomed to, yet in their own business which they are acquainted with, they are as expert as any Europeans can be. They are full of words, and never have done talking; and are, for the most part, liars and cheats. Yet, on the other hand, they are very charitable, for they give a dinner, or a night's lodging and a supper, to all strangers who come to their houses, without expecting any return.

"These negro lords often make war among themselves and with their neighbors. They have no cavalry for want of horses: they wear no arms save a large target for their defense, made of the skin of a beast called Danta, which is very difficult to be pierced,

and Azagays, or light darts, in throwing of which they are very dexterous. These darts are pointed with iron, the length of a span, barbed in different manners, so that they make dangerous wounds in the body wherever they enter, tearing the flesh grievously when pulled out. They also have a Moorish weapon, which is like a Turkish half-sword; that is, bent like a bow, and made of iron (without any steel) brought from the kingdom of Gambia by the negroes, who thereof make their arms; and if they have any iron in their own country, they know nothing of it, or want industry to work it. They use also another weapon, like our javelin, besides which they have no other arms.

“As they have but few arms, their wars are very bloody, for their strokes do not fall in vain. They are extremely bold and fierce, choosing rather to be killed than to save their lives by flight. They are not afraid to die, nor scared, as other people are, when they see a companion slain. They have no ships, neither did they ever see any before the Portuguese came upon their coast. Those inhabiting near the river, and some who live by the sea, have Zappolies or Almadias, made out of a single piece of wood, the largest whereof carries three or four men. In these they fish sometimes, and go up and down the river. These negroes are the greatest swimmers in the world, by the experiments the author has seen of them in these parts.”*

Ca da Mosto left the country of the Jalofs and proceeded eight hundred miles farther, as he says, but he must, I think, have over-estimated his reckoning, to

* *ASTLEY'S Voyages*, vol. i., p. 582.

the country of a negro potentate called King Budomel. Budomel received the voyager courteously, and made purchases of him, which were paid for in slaves. Ca da Mosto gives an account of the religion of Budomel's country, which deserves notice: it seems to show that the religion of the court, at least, was Mohammedan; but it was not very strong in the affections of the people, and must have been comparatively a recent introduction.*

Perhaps there is hardly any thing which tells more of the condition and the skill of a people than their markets. According to Ca da Mosto, the markets in Budomel's country indicated the poverty of the people, and showed that they had not advanced beyond the state of barter in their commercial transactions.†

* "Toward evening, Budomel ordered the Azanaghi or Arabs, whom he always has about him, to say prayers. His manner was thus: Being entered into the mosque (which was in one of the courts) with some of the principal negroes, he first stood with his eyes lifted up, then he advanced two steps and spoke a few words softly, after which he stretched himself on the ground and kissed it. The Azanaghi and all the rest did the same. Then rising, he repeated the same acts over again ten or twelve times, which took up half an hour. When he had done, he asked the author's opinion of their manner of worship, and to give him some account of his own religion. Hereupon Ca da Mosto told him, in presence of his doctors, that the religion of Mohammed was false, and the Romish the true one. This made the Arabs mad, and Budomel laugh; who, on this occasion, said that he looked upon the religion of the Europeans to be good, for that none but God could have given them so much riches and understanding. He added, however, that the Mohammedan Law must be also good; and that he believed the negroes were more sure of salvation than the Christians, because God was a just Lord; and therefore, as he had given the latter a Paradise in this world, it ought to be possessed in the world to come by the negroes, who had scarce any thing here in comparison of the others."—ASTLEY'S *Voyages*, vol. i., p. 584.

† "He, Ca da Mosto, went three or four times to see one of their markets or fairs, which was kept on Mondays and Fridays in a meadow not far from the place where he was lodged. Hither repaired,

Ca da Mosto left Budomel's country, and, sailing southward, came to the River Gambia (now called Gambia), which the voyagers entered, but could not succeed in conciliating the inhabitants. A contest ensued, which deserves to be recorded as an instance of signal valor, of almost unparalleled valor, considering that the arms used by the Europeans were totally unknown to their opponents.

“The Almadias came under the prow of Ca da Mosto's ship, which was foremost, and, dividing themselves into two divisions, took him in their centre. This gave him an opportunity to tell their number, which was fifteen, and as large as barks. They ceased to row, raised their oars, and looked upon the caravel with wonder. There were between a hundred and thirty and a hundred and fifty negroes, all well made, of a good size, and very black. They wore white cotton shirts on their bodies, and white caps on their heads, like the Germans, but with a wing on each side, and a feather in the middle, by which they distinguished themselves to be soldiers of war. At the prow of each Almadia there stood a negro with a round target, which seemed to be of leather, on his arm, yet they neither attacked the caravel nor she them.

with their wares, both men and women, for four or five miles about, and those who lived at a greater distance went to other markets near them. The great poverty of this people appeared in the goods found in these fairs, which were a few pieces of cotton cloth, cotton yarn, pulse, oil, millet, wooden tubs, palm mats, and every thing else for the use of life. Here also one meets with arms, and small quantities of gold. As they have no money or coin of any kind, all trade is carried on by way of barter, exchanging one thing for another, according to the different values. These blacks, both men and women, came to gaze on Ca da Mosto as if he had been a prodigy, and thought it a great curiosity to behold a white man, for they had never seen any before.”—ASTLEY'S *Voyages*, vol. i., p. 587.

“Thus they continued peaceably till they saw the other two ships bear down on them. Then they prepared, dropped their oars, and, without any farther ceremony, shot their arrows at them. The ships, seeing the attack made upon them, discharged four pieces of cannon at the enemy, the report whereof so stupefied them that they threw down their bows, and, looking some time one way and some time another, remained surprised to see the stones shot by the cannon fall in the water near them. They continued in this suspense for a considerable while; but, seeing the cannon fired no more at them, plucked up courage, and, laying hold of their bows, renewed the fight with great fury, approaching within a stone's throw of the ships. Hereupon the sailors began to discharge their cross-bows at them. The first shot was made by the bastard son of the Genoese gentleman, which hitting a negro in the breast, he immediately dropped down dead. Those in the *Almadia* took up the dart and gazed at it with wonder, but did not give over the attack, which they carried on vigorously, and were as courageously opposed by the caravels, insomuch that in a little time many of them were killed, without the loss of one European. The negroes observing the disadvantage they labored under, all the *Almadias* agreed to attack the little caravel in stern, which was both ill manned and ill armed. They executed this design with great fury, which *Ca da Mosto* observing, he moved forward to her assistance, and, getting her between the two large caravels, they all discharged their cannon and cross-bows at the *Almadias*, which made them retire.”*

During their stay in the River Gambia, *Ca da Mosto* and his companions saw the constellation of the South-

* *ASTLEY'S Voyages*, vol. i., p. 590.

ern Cross for the first time. Finding that the natives would have nothing to do with them, for they believed that the Christians were very bad people, and bought



negroes to eat them, Ca da Mosto and the other commanders wished to proceed a hundred miles farther up the river; but the common sailors would not hear

of it, and the expedition forthwith returned to Portugal.

In 1456 Ca da Mosto made another voyage, in the course of which he discovered the Cape de Verde Islands. Leaving them, he went again to the Gambia River, which he ascended much farther than he had done during his previous expedition, and he also succeeded on this occasion in conciliating the natives. The voyagers entered what they called the "Lord Batimansa's" territory, and sought to make a treaty with him. It is curious to see the nature of the commodities dealt in. The fact of the commodities being colored would seem to indicate an advance in civilization, but it is to be recollected that in all torrid countries the desire for color is very great.*

Leaving the River Gambia, Ca da Mosto and his company went down to the coast, discovered Cape Roxo, and afterward sailed up the Rio Grande; but, for want of any knowledge of the language of the people, they were forced to return to Portugal.

* "As soon as the messengers had declared their commission, Batimansa immediately ordered certain negroes to the caravel, with whom they not only entered into a treaty of friendship, but also bartered several things for negro slaves and some gold. They value their gold as a very precious thing, and at a greater rate than the Portuguese did; yet, for all that, the latter had it very reasonably, since they gave them for it things of very little value.

"They traded with cotton and cotton yarn. Some pieces were all white; others striped with blue and white; and a third sort with red, blue, and white stripes, very well wrought. They likewise brought civet, and civet-cat-skins, monkeys, large and small baboons of various sorts, which, being very plenty, they sold them cheap—that is, for something not exceeding ten marquets a head; and the ounce of civet for what was not worth more than forty or fifty (marquets); not that they sold the things by weight, but the author judged it to be about that quantity."—ASTLEY'S *Voyages*, vol. i., p. 594.

Some time between 1460 and 1464, an expedition went out under Pedro de Cintra, one of the King of Portugal's gentlemen, to make farther discoveries along the African coast. These voyagers, whose story is briefly told by Ca da Mosto, discovered Sierra Leone (so called on account of the roaring thunder heard there), and went a little beyond Cape Mesurado. The historian BARROS says that the African coast, from Cape Bojador to Sierra Leone, was discovered in Prince Henry's time, in which case it seems probable that this voyage of Pedro de Cintra's was before the prince's death; but Ca da Mosto (whose authority is, I think, of more weight) places it later. However that may be, we may fairly consider Sierra Leone as being the point of discovery attained at or about the death of Prince Henry; of whose character, before parting with him in this history, something deserves to be said.

"He had a grandeur of nature," says FARIA Y SOUSA, "proportionate to the greatness of his doings; he was bulky and strong; his complexion red and white; his hair coarse, and almost hirsute; his aspect produced fear in those who were not accustomed to him; not to those who were, for, even in the strongest current of his vexation at any thing, his courtesy always prevailed over his anger; he had a grave serenity in his movements, a notable constancy and circumspection in his words, modesty in all that related to his state and personal observance within the limits of his high fortune; he was patient in labor, bold and valorous in war, versed in arts and letters; a skillful fencer; in the mathematics superior to all men of his time; generous in the extreme; zealous in the extreme for the increase of the faith. No bad habit was known in him. He did not marry, nor was it known that he

ever violated the purity of continency. His memory was equal to the authority he bore, and his prudence equal to his memory. He died at Sagres in the year one thousand four hundred and sixty-three, in the sixty-seventh year of his age, and lies with his father in the most illustrious church of Batalla.”*

The above is of the class of characters, somewhat unqualified and general, which historians are wont to give, but I believe it is one of the truest of its kind. It lacks, however, those slight touches and variations in which so much of individual resemblance consists. We may map down the main qualities of a man one by one, but this alone will hardly suffice to convey to us such a complex, perverse, varying, dubious thing as any one human character. Fortunately, in this case, we are enabled, from the chronicler AZURARA, who evidently knew the prince well, and speaks with perfect honesty about him, to supply two or three of those little niceties of description, which give life and reality to the picture. AZURARA says that the prince was a man “of great counsel and authority, wise and of good memory, but in some things slow, whether it was through the prevalence of the phlegmatic temperament in his constitution, or from intentional deliberation, being moved to some end which men did not perceive.”†

His portrait confirms the latter hypothesis, giving the idea of a man of great deliberation, but with no laxity of purpose: and we may notice how this would

* FARIA Y SOUSA, tom. i., part i., cap. 1.

† “Foe homem de grande conselho e autoridade, avisado e de boa memoria, mais em alguãs cousas vagaroso, ja seja que fosse pollo senhoryo que a freima avya em sua compreissom, ou por enliçom de sua voõtade, movida a algũa certa fim, aos homeçs nom conhecida.”—AZURARA, cap. 4.

agree with the story of his apparently sudden resolve in sending out his first expedition, a thing with him probably long thought of, little talked of, and rapidly put in execution. Again, in another place, the chronicler hints at a defect in the prince, where he says, "There was no hatred known in him, nor ill-will against any person, however great the injury he had received from him; and such was his benignity in this respect, that judicious men remarked against him that he was deficient in distributive justice (*justiça distributiva*), for, in all other respects, he conducted himself justly." There are instances in his conduct which bear out this, and one especially, in which he is stated to have overlooked the desertion of his banner, on an occasion* of great peril to himself, and afterward to have unjustly favored the persons who had thus been found wanting in courage. This, no doubt, was an error on his part, but at least it was an heroic one, such as belonged to the first Cæsar; and, in the estimation of the prince's followers, it probably added to their liking for the man what little it may have taken away from their confidence in the precision of his justice as a commander.

We learn, from the same authority, that his house was the resort of all the good men of the kingdom, and of foreigners, and that he was a man of intense labor and study. "Often the sun found him in that same place where it had left him the day before, he having watched throughout the whole arc of the night without any rest."†

Altogether, whether we consider this prince's motives, his objects, his deeds, or his mode of life, we must acknowledge him to be one of the most notable

* At the taking of Tangier.

† AZURARA, cap. 6.

men, not merely of his own country and period, but of modern times and of all nations, and one upon whose shoulders might worthily rest the arduous beginnings of continuous maritime discovery. Would that such men remained to govern the lands they have the courageous foresight to discover! Then, indeed, they might take to themselves the motto, *talant de bien faire*, which this prince, their great leader, caused to be inscribed by his captains in many a land, which as yet, at least, has not found much good from its introduction, under his auspices, to the civilization of an older world.

In the year 1469, perhaps in consequence of Prince Henry's superintendence of African discovery being missed, King Alfonso adopted a new system, and farmed out the commerce with the coast of Africa to a certain Fernando Gomez for five years, at one thousand ducats a year, upon conditions, one of which was that he should advance the discovery along the coast, beginning from Sierra Leone, three hundred miles in the course of each of the five years.* Fernando Gomez, by his captains Juan de Santarem and Pedro de Escobar, discovered the Gold Coast, which they called Oro de la Mina, and gained great riches, which he expended in aid of the king's expeditions against the Moors. He was, in consequence, ennobled, and received the name of El Mina. Fernando Po discovered an island which was then called Formosa, but which is now known by the name of its discoverer. The last discovery in the life of King Alfonso was that of Cape Catharina.

* BARROS, dec. i., lib. ii. cap. 2.

Don Juan the Second succeeded his father Don Alfonso on the throne of Portugal. The new king was very earnest in African discovery. He resolved that a fort should be built at La Mina; and for this purpose sent an expedition under Diego de Azambuja, with five hundred soldiers, one hundred artisans, and the fort already constructed in separate pieces, as we now send out palaces for native chiefs, or light-houses, to distant parts.

The account of the proceedings of this expedition is interesting. On the arrival of the ships at La Mina, Azambuja sprang on shore to take possession, fixed the Portuguese flag upon a tree, raised an altar at the foot of the tree, and caused the first mass to be said that was ever celebrated in those parts. The Portuguese commander then prepared to receive the negro king with due pomp. The king arrived, surrounded by a large company of his subjects, well armed. Their helmets, however, made of skins, were such as to provoke "more mirth than terror." Their king's arms and legs were covered with ornaments of gold. On his neck was a chain with bells suspended to it, like that of the first mule in a set. Before him went the band, with numerous and various instruments, producing "more noise than harmony." The instruments were such as are well known—timbrels, horns, and bells. At last the negro king himself arrived, "serene and severe," and the Portuguese captain came forward to meet him, "magnificent in dress and grave in aspect." The king took the hand of the other in sign of peace, and the ceremonious part of the matter being ended, Azambuja made known the proposition he had brought from his master (here we must use the words of the historian), "which was to make the negro

king understand first the way of the Catholic rites, and then to hide from him the way of our covetousness, asking leave to make a house in which our people could live; and force was to be used to compel them, if it should be necessary." "I do not," adds the candid historian, "imagine that I shall persuade the world that our intent was only to be preachers; but, on the other hand, the world must not fancy that our intent was merely to be traders."*

The Portuguese captain was listened to with "marvelous silence," and the proposition touching the Christian faith well received; the other, about building a fort, was listened to very coldly. The negro king was not so dull as to be without an unpleasant foresight of what evil consequences such an occupation of his country might lead to. However, the Portuguese captain pressed the point, and the negro king, conceding it, quitted the place of conference. The Portuguese artisans forthwith began their work, but, unfortunately, commenced upon a rock that was held sacred by the natives, who immediately rushed to the defense of the holy ground. Azambuja diverted this danger by an instant distribution of presents, which soothed the negroes completely, thus verifying the proverb, says the historian, that "gifts break through rocks." The castle was built, and called the fort of St. George. Azambuja, being made lieutenant, ruled for three years, and came out of his employment with applause, "a difficult thing to attain among the Portuguese." The writer might have added, and among all people; for delegated authority has always within

* "Yo no imagino persuadir al mundo que nuestro intento era solo el de ser predicadores, á trueque de que él no imagine, que era solo el de ser mercaderes."—FARIA Y SOUSA, tom. i., part i., cap. 3.

it the elements of decay and disapprobation—meeting with that criticism and supervision, when in the full force of its existence, which, in the case of other authority, is often postponed until after its decease.

The King of Portugal about this time took the title of “Lord of Guinea,” and desired his captains to leave formal notice of their discoveries at the place of discovery; to set up stones, declaring “the king, the captain, and the time; by whose order, by whom, and when” the discovery was made. The first captain sent out after this order was Diego Cam, whom Martin Behaim (Martin of Bohemia), a celebrated astronomer and geographer of those times, is said to have accompanied. They discovered the kingdom of Congo; and, at the request of the king, took back some of the sons of the principal men to be baptized, and to learn the Christian faith. Diego Cam was also the bearer of a request from this negro king, that priests should be sent to his dominions. The King of Benin, a territory between the Gold Coast and Congo, made at this time a similar request, by an ambassador sent to the King of Portugal. This ambassador, while at Lisbon, happened to speak about a greater power in Africa than his master, to whom indeed his master was but the vassal, which instantly set the Portuguese king thinking about Prester John, the search after whom is in the annals of maritime discovery what the alchemists’ pursuit after the great Arcanum was in chemistry. The king concluded that this greater power must be Prester John, and accordingly Bartholomew Diaz and two other captains were sent out on farther discovery. They did not find Prester John, but made their way southward along a thousand and fifty miles of new coast, as far as a cape which, from experience, they

called Cape Stormy, but which their master, seeing in its discovery an omen of better things, renamed as the Cape of Good Hope.



It is a fact of great historical interest, and a singular link between African and American discovery, that Bartholomew Columbus was engaged in this voyage.

The authority for this important statement is LAS CASAS, who says that he found, in a book belonging to Christopher Columbus, being one of the works of Cardinal D'Ailly, a note "in Bartolomé Colon's handwriting," which he knew well, having several of his letters and papers concerning this voyage in his own possession,* which note gives a short account in bad Latin of the voyage, mentions the degree of latitude of the Cape, and concludes with the words "*in quibus omnibus interfui.*"

In fiction, too, this voyage of Bartholomew Diaz was very notable, as it presented an occasion for the writing of one of the most celebrated passages in modern poetry; a passage not easily to be surpassed for its majesty and tenderness, and for a beauty which even those tiresome allusions to the classics, that give a faded air to so much of the poetry of the sixteenth century, can not seriously disfigure nor obscure.

It is to be found in the *Lusiadas* of CAMÖENS; and indicates the culminating point of Portuguese discovery in Africa, as celebrated by the national poet.

Just as the mariners approach the Cape, a cloud rises, darkens the air, and then discloses a monstrous giant, with deep-set, caverned eyes, of rugged countenance, and pallid earthy color, vast as that statue of Apollo, the colossal wonder of the world. In solemn language, this awful shape pours forth disastrous prophecies, and threatens his highest vengeance on those who have discovered him—maledictions which, alas! may be securely uttered against those who accomplish

* "La cual muy bien conocí y agora tengo hartas cartas y letras tuyas tratando deste viaje."—LAS CASAS, *Hist. de las Indias*, MS., lib. i., cap. 27.

aught that is bolder than has hitherto been attempted by their fellow-men.

When vexed by the question, "Who art thou?" the "stupendous body" harshly and mournfully replies that he is that great Stormy Cape, hitherto hidden from mankind, whom their boldness in discovering much offends.*

He then relates the touching story of his love; how he was Adamastor, of the race of Titans; and how he loved Thetis, the fairest being of the sea; and how, deceived by the (magic) arts of her, "who was the life of this body," he found himself caressing a rough and horrid crag instead of her sweet, soft countenance; and how, crazed by grief and by dishonor, he wandered forth to seek another world, where no one should behold him and mock his misery; how still the vengeance of the gods pursued him; and how he felt his flesh gradually turning into rock, and his members extending themselves among the long waves; and how, forever to increase his agony, the beautiful Thetis still encircled him.

Having told his grief, he made himself into a dark cloud (*Desfez-se a nuvem negra*), and the sea roared far off with a sonorous sound. And then the Portuguese mariner lifted up his hands in prayer to the sacred chorus of angels, who had guided the vessel so long on its way, and prayed God to remove the ful-

* "Eu sou aquelle occulto, é grande Cabo,
A quem chamais vós outros Tormentorio,
Que nunca á Ptolomeo, Pomponio, Estrabo
Plinio, é quantos passaram, fui notorio:
Aqui toda a Africana costa acabo
Neste meu nunca vista promontorio,
Que para o polo Antartico se estende,
A quem vossa ousadia tanto offende."

fillment of the evil things which Adamastor had prophesied against his nation.*

The Genius of the Stormy Cape might have taken up a direr song of prophecy against the inhabitants of the unfortunate land of which he formed so conspicuous and mournful a prominence.

Maritime discovery had now, by slow and painful degrees, proceeded down the coast of Africa nearly to the southernmost point, and from thence will soon be curving round in due course to India. But expeditions by sea were not the only modes of discovery undertaken by the Portuguese in the reign of John the Second of Portugal. Pedro de Covilham and Alfonso de Paiva went on an enterprise of discovery mainly by land. The latter died at Cairo; the former made his way to Cananor, Calcut, and Goa, and thence back to Cairo, where he found that his companion had died.

* Vasco de Gama is made by CAMŌENS, using more than poetic license in favor of his hero, to appropriate the episode of Adamastor to himself. It seems hard, however, to take away any honor from Bartholomew Diaz, who, according to the learned MAFFEI, appears to have had the greatest difficulty in contending with his own men as well as with the fury of the elements, before he succeeded in discovering that "insane headland" which was to make his voyage forever memorable. The words of MAFFEI, who had ample access to Portuguese state-papers, are as follows:

"At ex Lusitana parte, superiorum ducum laudem non adæquasse modò, verùm etiam superasse visus, è Joannis familiaribus egregia fortitudine et constantia vir, Barptolomæus Diazius. Huic, non modò cum ventis et mari, sed etiam cum sociis navalibus diu luctandum fuit, navigationis longissimæ tædio fessis, et reversionem quotidiano convitio efflagitantibus, quorum ille cùm ferociam, et expostulationes prudentia et lenitate sedasset, Cani columnas (*some columns set up by Diego Cam in obedience to King John's orders, before referred to*) longo intervallo transgressus, insanum terræ projectum denique patefecit."—J. P. MAFFEI, *Bergomatis, Historiarum Indicarum*, libri xvi., Cologne, 1589, p. 15.

He then set out again, and eventually came into the kingdom of Shoa,* to the court of "the King of Habbesh," who fulfilled sufficiently in Covillham's eyes the idea of Prester John, and was accordingly called so. It is a curious coincidence that an ambassador from the King of Habbesh, called Lucas Marcos, a priest of that country, came about this time to Rome, and afterward to Lisbon, which circumstance gave a new impetus to all the King of Portugal's "hopes, wishes, and endeavors."

A more remarkable person, even, than an ambassador from Prester John, arrived nearly at the same time at Lisbon. This was Bemoin, Prince of Jalof. Bemoin came to seek the protection of the King of Portugal, and the reason of his coming was as follows: He was the brother, on the mother's side, of Brian, King of Jalof. This king was inert and vicious. He had, however, the wisdom to make Bemoin prime minister, and to throw all the cares and troubles of governing upon him. Nothing was heard in the kingdom but of Bemoin. But he, seeing perhaps the insecurity of his position, diligently made friends with the Portuguese, keeping aloof, however, from becoming a convert, though he listened respectfully to those who expounded the Christian faith to him. Cibitab, a brother of the inert Brian by the father's side, became jealous of Bemoin, revolted, killed Brian, and vanquished Bemoin, who thereupon threw himself upon the protection of his Portuguese friends, and came to Lisbon.

Bemoin was received magnificently by King John of Portugal. The negro prince had formerly alleged

* A country south of Abyssinia. Tegulet, the ancient capital of Shoa, is in 38° 40' E. long., and 9° 45' N. lat.

that one of his reasons for not becoming a Christian was the fear of disgusting his followers ; but, being in Portugal, that reason no longer held good, and he became a convert, being baptized as Don John Bemoin, having King John for a godfather. Twenty-four of Bemoin's gentlemen received baptism after him. This is the account of his reception : " Bemoin, because he was a man of large size and fine presence, about forty years old, with a long and well-arranged beard, appeared indeed not like a barbarous pagan, but as one of our own princes, to whom all honor and reverence were due. With equal majesty and gravity of demeanor he commenced and finished his oration, using such inducements to make men bewail his sad fortune in exile, that only seeing these natural signs of sorrow, people comprehended what the interpreter afterward said. Having finished the statement of his case as a good orator would, in declaring that his only remedy and only hope was in the greatness and generosity of the king, with whom he spoke aside for a short time, he was answered by the king in few words, so much to his satisfaction that immediately it made a change in his whole look, spirits, and bearing, rendering him most joyous. Taking leave of the king, he went to kiss the queen's hand, and then that of the prince, to whom he said a few words, at the end of which he prayed the prince that he would intercede in his favor with the king. And thence he was conducted to his lodgings by all the nobility that accompanied him."*

After this, Bemoin had many conversations with the king, and always acquitted himself well.† Among

* BARROS, dec. i., lib. iii., cap. 6.

† "Mostrava ser dotado de mui claro entendimento."—BARROS, dec. i., lib. iii., cap. 7.

other things, he gave information respecting various African nations, and especially of the king of a Jewish people who in many things resembled Christians. Here again the Portuguese monarch was delighted at finding himself upon the traces of Prester John.

It must not be forgotten to mention that the king made great rejoicings in honor of Bemoin's conversion, on which occasion the negro prince's attendants performed singular feats on horseback.*

Bemoin maintained his favor at the Portuguese court, and succeeded in his object of obtaining military assistance. He was sent back to his own country with a Portuguese squadron of twenty caravels, which had for its instructions, besides his restitution, to found a fort on the banks of the River Senegal.

The Portuguese arrived at the river, and began building the fort, but are said to have chosen an unhealthy spot to build on. Whether they could have chosen a healthy one is doubtful. The commander, however, Pedro Vaz, thought that there was treachery on Bemoin's part, and killed him with the blow of a dagger on board his vessel. The building was discontinued, and Pedro Vaz returned to Portugal, where he found the king excessively vexed and displeased at the fate of Bemoin.†

* "Elle D. João Bemoij, tambem á seu modo, quiz fazer as suas ; porque como trazia alguns homens grandes cavalgadores, diante del Rey corriam á carreira em pé, virandose, é assentando-se, é tornando-se levantar, tudo em huma corrida : é com á mão no arção da sella saltavam no chão, correndo á toda força do cavallo ; é tornavam-se à sella tão soltos, como o podiam fazer á pè quedo."—BARROS, dec. i., lib. iii., cap. 7.

† FARIA Y SOUSA dismisses the matter with the following pithy remark : "The way to heaven by the Portuguese hand (baptism) came dear to Bemoin ; and more so, if by chance it was hidden from him, by his despair at finding so little faith in one who sought to teach him the true faith."

The story of this negro prince is interesting, not that it carries forward the history much, but it and other such narratives show what were the temper, manners, and disposition of Europeans and Africans toward each other at that period; and go far to indicate what good results to the inhabitants of both continents might have proceeded from their peaceful intercourse.*

King John the Second was more successful in converting the inhabitants of Congo than he had been with those of Jalof. The ambassador from Congo, having spent two years at Lisbon, during which his attendants learned the Portuguese language and were instructed in Christian doctrine, was sent back to his own country with three Portuguese vessels. The Portuguese were well received: mass was performed in the midst of thousands of negroes; a church was built; and the King of Congo became Christian, and took the name of John. He had occasion at that time to make war against a neighboring people; and sailing forth with a cross depicted on his banner, he was victorious. After this, the Portuguese expedition, which seems to have come out for no other purpose than to introduce Christianity into Congo, returned, leaving persons capable of continuing the work of conversion. The old negro king soon grew a little cold

* The kindly treatment which the first negroes who were brought into Spain experienced from their masters, is mentioned in the *Annals of Seville* before referred to. It appears that in the chronicler's time, A.D. 1677, they had still a chapel of their own. "Dura su nombre (el Conde Negro) en una calle, y corrales, fuera de la Puerta de Carmona, á las espaldas del sitio, en que tienen los Negros su Capilla intitulada de nuestra Señora de los Angeles."—*Annales de Sevilla*, A.D. 1474.

toward Christianity, disliking much its interference with his doctrine and practice as regarded the plurality of wives. He had two sons; the elder approving, and the other disapproving, of the new faith. The king himself inclined to the faction of his pagan younger son, and the other was disinherited. On the death of the old monarch, the younger son suddenly attacked his brother, who had only about him thirty-seven followers, Portuguese and negroes. However, under the Christian banner, and probably with some little aid of Christian discipline, the elder vanquished his younger brother with all his host, became king, and did his best to establish Christianity throughout his dominions.

This King of Congo reigned fifty years: he was not only a warm favorer of Christianity, but an active preacher, having qualified himself by learning the Portuguese language and by studying the Scriptures. He sent his children and grandchildren over to Portugal; had them well taught both in Latin and Portuguese; and of his own lineage there were two bishops in his kingdom. BARROS tells us that all these things were done at the expense of the kings of Portugal.* A very noble undertaking it was of theirs; and in the present state of that kingdom, these are the works which may console the Portuguese nation and their rulers with a not unbecoming recollection of past greatness, and, perhaps, animate them to great deeds again.

The historian may now stop in his task of tracing Portuguese discovery along the coast of Africa. We have seen it making its way with quiet perseverance for seventy years, from Cape Nam to the Cape of Good

* BARROS, dec. i., lib. iii., c. 10.

Hope, a distance of some six thousand miles.* This long course of discovery has been almost entirely thrown into shade by the more daring and brilliant discovery of America, which we have now to enter upon. Yet these proceedings on the African coast had in them all the energy, perseverance, and courage which distinguished American discovery. Prince Henry himself was hardly a less personage than Columbus. They had different elements to contend in. But the man whom princely wealth and position, and the temptation to intrigue which there must have been in the then state of the Portuguese court, never induced to swerve from the one purpose which he maintained for forty years, unshaken by popular clamor, however sorely vexed he might be with inward doubts and misgivings; who passed laborious days and watchful nights in devotion to this one purpose—enduring the occasional shortcomings of his agents with that forbearance which springs from a care for the enterprise in hand, so deep as to control private vexation (the very same motive which made Columbus bear so mildly with insult and contumely from his followers)—such a man is worthy to be put in comparison with the other great discoverer who worked out his enterprise through poverty, neglect, sore travail, and the vicissitudes of courts. Moreover, it must not be forgotten that Prince Henry was undoubtedly the father of modern geographical discovery, and that the result of his exertions must have given much impulse to Columbus, if it did not first move him to his great undertaking. After the above eulogium on Prince Henry, which is not the least more than he merited, his kinsmen, the contemporary Portuguese monarchs,

* That is, taking the coast line.

should come in for their share of honorable mention, as they seem to have done their part in African discovery with much vigor, without jealousy of Prince Henry, and with high and noble aims. It would also be but just to include in some part of this praise the many brave captains who distinguished themselves in these enterprises.

The rediscovery of America (I say "rediscovery," because there is no doubt that it was discovered by the Northmen in the ninth and tenth centuries),* just at the time when the whole of the western coast of Africa had been made out by the Portuguese, appears to us, humanly speaking, to have furnished a most inopportune conjuncture for evil. Had America not afforded a market for slaves, we hardly see where else it could have grown up at that period, and if it had not grown up then, legitimate commerce would have come in its place, and prevented any such trade. Black slaves might have been for some time a favorite part of the grandeur of a great household, but we do not see how they could have occupied a country already stocked with hardy laborers, fitted for the soil, as was the case with Europe. Ca da Mosto, as before mentioned, states that in 1455, the export of slaves from Africa was between seven and eight hundred yearly. Seeing how careless people are in the use of numbers, so that shrewd men of the world mostly divide by two or three the account in numbers of every thing they hear, except ruined men's accounts of their own debts and engagements, it is not improbable that Ca da Mosto gives an exaggerated statement of the number of slaves exported, which

* See SMITH'S *Discovery of America by the Northmen*. London, 1842.

at the most is but a small affair, when compared with the immense exportations of modern days. Moreover, from what is mentioned of the voyages undertaken from that time to the one we are now speaking of, *i. e.*, from 1455 to 1492, it may be concluded that the trade in slaves had fallen off, so seldom are they mentioned, while at the same time there are signs of other articles of commerce engaging the attention of the Portuguese.*

Leaving now, for a while, all mention of Portuguese affairs, we commence the chapter of that man's doings, who, when last heard of, was mentioned incidentally as the son-in-law of Perestrelo, and as living at Porto Santo, but whose name was now about to become one of the few which carry on from period to period the tidings of the world's great story, as beacon fires upon the mountain tops. There is a singular fascination in the account of such a deed as the discovery of America, which can not be done any more, nor any thing like it—which stands alone in the doings of the world. We naturally expect to find something quite peculiar in the man who did it, who was indeed one of the great spirits of the earth, but still of the same order of soul to which great inventors and discoverers have mostly belonged. Lower down, too, in mankind there is much of the same nature leading to various kinds of worthy deeds, though there are no more continents for it to discover.

* "Precedieron otros á estos ; como la costa de donde vino la primera malagueta."—FARIA Y SOUSA, tom, i., part i., cap. 2.

"El Rey D. Juan II., que sucedió á su Padre D. Alonso, cõsiderando que en la tierra nuevamente conocida avia riquezas que aumentavan sus rentas, y viendo disposicion en sus habitantes para admitir nuestra ley, ordenó que se levantasse una fortaleza en aquella parte adonde se hazia el rescate del oro que llamaron de la Mina."—FARIA Y SOUSA, tom. i., part. i., cap. 3.

But to return to the renowned personage of whom we are speaking. There was great simplicity about him, and much loyalty and veneration. The truly great are apt to believe in the greatness of others, and so to be loyal in their relations here; while, for what is beyond here, a large measure of veneration belongs to them, as having a finer and more habitually present consciousness than most men of something infinitely above what even their imaginations can compass. He was as magnanimous as it was possible, perhaps, for so sensitive and impassioned a person to be. He was humane, self-denying, courteous. He had an intellect of that largely-inquiring kind which may remind us of our great English philosopher, Bacon.* He was singularly resolute and enduring. The Spaniards have a word, *longanimidad*, which has been well applied in describing him, as it signifies greatness and constancy of mind in adversity. He was rapt in his designs, having a ringing forever

* One, who of all living men has perhaps the best right to pronounce upon an intellect of a "largely-inquiring kind," has thus described the intelligence of Columbus when applied to the observation of nature: "Ce qui caractérise Colomb, c'est la pénétration et la finesse extrême avec lesquelles il saisit les phénomènes du monde extérieur. Il est tout aussi remarquable comme observateur de la nature que comme intrépide navigateur. Arrivé sous un nouveau ciel et dans un monde nouveau (*comme il viage nuevo al nuevo cielo y mundo*, écrit-il à nourrice de l'infant Don Juan), la configuration des terres, l'aspect de la végétation, les mœurs des animaux, la distribution de la chaleur, selon l'influence de la longitude, les courans pélagiques, les variations du magnétisme terrestre, rien n'échappait à sa sagacité. Recherchant avec ardeur les épiceries de l'Inde et la rhubarbe, rendue célèbre par les médecins Arabes, par Rubriquis et les voyageurs Italiens, il examine minutieusement les fruits et le feuillage des plantes. Dans les Conifères, il distingue les vrais pins, semblables à ceux d'Espagne, et les pins à fruit monocarpe: c'est reconnaître avant L'Héritier le genre *Podocarpus*."—HUMBOLDT, *Examen Critique*, tome 3me, p. 20, Paris, 1837.

in his ears of great projects, making him deaf to much, perhaps, that prudence might have heeded; one to be loved by those near him, and likely by his presence to inspire favor and respect.

Such was the hero under whose guidance we are now called to enter upon a wider sphere of the history of discovery and colonization; and also, somewhat to his shame, of the mournful annals of Slavery.



BOOK II.

C O L U M B U S.

CHAPTER I.

DISCOVERY OF AMERICA.

CHAPTER II.

ADMINISTRATION OF COLUMBUS IN THE INDIES.

CHAPTER I.

DISCOVERY OF AMERICA.

COLUMBUS was born in the Genoese territory in the year 1447 or 1448.* His family was obscure, but, like most others, when the light of a great man's birth is thrown upon its records, real and possible, it presents some other names not altogether unworthy to be inscribed among the great man's ancestors. Columbus was sent to Pavia for his education, and seems to have profited by it; for he wrote legibly, designed well, was a good Latin scholar, and it is probable that he then acquired the rudiments of the various sciences in which he afterward became proficient. At the age of fourteen he went to sea. Of his many voyages, which of them took place before, and which after his coming to Portugal, we have no distinct record, but are sure that he traversed a large part of the known world, that he visited England,† that he made his way to Iceland,‡ that he had been at El Mina, on the coast

* I am aware that this date differs considerably from those given by some biographers of Columbus; I have, however, determined it for myself upon the evidence of ancient authorities which seemed to me the most to be relied upon.

† "Ví todo el Levante y Poniente, que dice por ir al camino de Septentrion, que es Inglaterra."—NAVARRETE, *Coleccion*, Madrid, 1825, vol. i., p. 101.

‡ "Yo navegué el año de quatrocientos y setenta y siete en el mes de Febrero ultra Tile . . . es tan grande como Inglaterra, van los Ingleses con mercadería; especialmente los de Bristol."—LAS CASAS, *Hist. de las Indias*, MS., lib. i., cap. 8.

of Africa,* and had seen the islands of the Grecian Archipelago.† He also mentions having been employed by King René of Provence to intercept a Venetian galliot. The next thing that we may say we know for certain of him is that he went to Portugal, where he married Donna Felipa Muñiz Perestrelo; and he is said to have been shown by his mother-in-law the papers of her deceased husband, the first governor of Porto Santo. Indeed, Columbus lived in this little island‡ for some time; and it is a curious fact that the great chief of American discoverers should thus have inhabited a spot which was the first advanced outpost in African discovery. He also made voyages to different parts of Africa in company with Portuguese mariners.

At what precise period his great idea came into his mind there are no records to show. The continuous current of Portuguese discoveries had excited the mind of Europe, and must have greatly influenced Columbus, living in the midst of them. This may be said without in the least detracting from the merits of Columbus as a discoverer. In real life men do not spring from something baseless to something substantial, as people in sick dreams. A great invention or discovery is often like a daring leap, but it is from land to land, not from nothing to something; and if we look at the subject with this consideration fully before us, we shall

* "Yo estuve en la Fortaleça de San Jorge de la Mina."—*Hist. del Almirante Christ. Colon.*, cap. 4. BARCIA, *Historiadores*, Madrid, 1749.

† "En otra parte hace mencion haber navegado á las Islas del Archipiélago donde en una dellas que se llama Enxion (perhaps the Naxia of the Cyclades) vido sacar almaciga de ciertos árboles."—LAS CASAS, *Hist. de las Indias*, MS., lib. i., cap. 3.

‡ LAS CASAS affirms this fact upon the authority of Diego Columbus.—*Hist. de las Indias*, MS., lib. i., cap. 3.

probably admit that Columbus had as large a share in the merit of his discovery as most inventors or discoverers can lay claim to. If the idea which has rendered him famous was not in his mind at the outset of his career of investigation, at any rate he had from the first a desire for discovery, or, as he says himself, the wish to know the secrets of this world.* It may be a question whether this impulse soon brought him to his utmost height of survey, and that he then only applied to learning in order to confirm his first views; or whether the impulse merely carried him along, with growing perception of the great truth he was to prove, into deep thinking upon cosmographical studies, Portuguese discoveries, the dreams of learned men, the labors of former geographers, the dim prophetic notices of great unknown lands, and vague reports among mariners of drift-wood seen on the seas. But, at any rate, we know that he arrived at a fixed conclusion that there was a way by the west to the Indies, that he could discover this way, and so come to Cipango,†

* "Muy altos Reges; de muy pequeña edad entré en la mar navegando, é lo he continuado fasta hoy: la mesma arte inclina á quien le prosigue á desear de saber los secretos deste mundo. Ya pasan de cuarenta años que yo voy en este uso: todo lo que fasta hoy se navega todo lo he andado."—NAVARRETE, *Coleccion Diplomática*, Núm. 140.

The *Coleccion Diplomática* forms the second volume of the general work of NAVARRETE, entitled *Coleccion de los Viages y Descubrimientos, que hicieron por mar los Españoles desde fines del siglo 15*.

† Cipango, or Zipangu, is described as an island in Marco Polo's *Travels* (book iii., cap. 2). "The name which is here, as well as in the British Museum and Berlin manuscripts, written *Zipangu*, in the Basle edition *Zipangri*, in the older Latin *Cyampagu*, and in the early Italian epitomes *Cimpagu*, is evidently intended for those islands which we in a collective sense term Japan."—(See *Travels of Marco Polo*, by Wm. MARSDEN, 1818.)

From the pleadings in the cause between the Fiscal (the Treasury) of Spain and Don Diego Columbus, the son and heir of the great discoverer, we learn how this word Cipango, or Cipanso, was impressed

Cathay, the Grand Khan, and all he had met with in the gorgeous descriptions of Marco Polo and other ancient authorities. We may not pretend to lay down the exact chronological order of the formation of the idea in his mind—in fact, to know more about it than he would probably have been able to tell us himself.

Of the works of learned men, that which, according to Ferdinand Columbus, had most weight with his father, was the *Cosmographia* of CARDINAL ALIACO.* Columbus was also confirmed in his views of the existence of a western passage to the Indies by Paulo Toscanelli, the Florentine philosopher, † to whom much

upon the mind of Columbus. “Otra pregunta dice que si saben que habia dado aviso Cristoval Colon al Martin Alonso destas Indias por la dicha escriptura que dijo ser del tiempo de Salomon, que contenia navegadas por el mar Mediterraneo hasta el fin de España y allí al poniente del sol entre el norte y el Mediodía por via *temporada* hasta noventa y cinco grados de camino é fallarás una tierra de *Cipango* la cual es tan fértil y abundosa é con su grandeza sojuzgará á Africa y Europa.”—LAS CASAS, *Hist. de las Indias*, lib. i., cap. 34.

* The following passage is particularly referred to by Ferdinand Columbus: “Et dicit Aristoteles ut mare parvum est inter finem Hispaniæ a parte occidentis et inter principium Indiæ a parte orientis. Et non loquitur de Hispaniâ citeriori, quæ nunc Hispania communiter dicitur, sed de Hispaniâ ulteriori, quæ nunc Africa dicitur.”—ALIACO, *Imago Mundi Capitulum octavum*.

† See his letter to Columbus, from which I take the following extract, as Cipango makes a great appearance in it:

“Este espacio es casi la tercera parte de la esfera, la cual Ciudad (la Ciudad del Cielo) es en la provincia de Mango vecina de la Ciudad de Catayo en la cual está lo mas del tiempo el Rey de la Isla de Antilla que vosotros llamais de siete Ciudades, de la cual tenemos noticia: fasta la nobilissima Isla de Cipango hay diez espacios que son dos mil y quinientas millas, es á saber, doscientas veinte y cinco leguas; la cual Isla es fertilissima de oro y de perlas y de piedras preciosas: sabed que con oro puro cobijan los templos y las casas reales: así que por no tener conocido el camino estan todas estas casas encubiertas; y á ella se puede ir muy seguramente.”—Extract of a letter from Toscanelli to Columbus, dated Florence, 25th June, 1474.—LAS CASAS, lib. i., cap. 12.

credit is due for the encouragement he afforded to the enterprise. That the notices, however, of western lands were not such as to have much weight with other men, is sufficiently proved by the difficulty which Columbus had in contending with adverse geographers and men of science in general, of whom he says he never was able to convince any one.* After a new world had been discovered, many scattered indications were then found to have foreshown it.

One thing which can not be denied to Columbus is that he worked out his own idea himself. How he did so must now be told. He first applied himself to his countrymen, the Genoese, who would have nothing to say to his scheme. He then tried the Portuguese, who listened to what he had to say, but with bad faith sought to anticipate him by sending out a caravel with instructions founded upon his plan. The caravel, however, returned without having accomplished any thing, the sailors not having had heart to venture far enough westward. It was not an enterprise to be carried out successfully by men who had only stolen the idea of it.

Columbus, disgusted at the treatment he had received from the Portuguese court, quitted Lisbon, and, after visiting Genoa, as it appears, went to see what favor he could meet with in Spain, arriving at Palos in the year 1485. He was fortunate enough to make

* "Ya saben Vuestras Altezas que anduve siete años en su Corte importunándoles por esto : nunca en todo este tiempo se halló piloto, ni marinero, ni filósofo, ni de otra sciencia, que todos no dijessen que mi empresa era falsa, que nunca yo hallé ayuda de nadie, salvo de Fray Antonio de Marchena (he must have been a relation, I think, of Juan Perez de Marchena, the Guardian of La Rabida) despues de aquella de Dios eterno."—LAS CASAS, *Hist. de las Indias*, MS., lib. i., cap. 32.

There is a peculiar conservative ignorance belonging to the learned, which has always stood firmly in the way of the advancement of the world in true knowledge.

a friend, ever afterward true to him, in the guardian of La Rabida, a Franciscan monastery near Palos. Having intrusted his young son to the care of the good monk, Columbus made his way, in January, 1486, to the court of Ferdinand and Isabella, then at Cordova. There Columbus found at once a friend in the Treasurer of the Household, Alonso de Quintanilla, a man who, like himself, took delight in great things (*que tenia gusto en cosas grandes*), and who obtained a hearing for him from the Spanish monarchs. They were then engaged in war against the Moors—a religious war, and could not give more than a slight and superficial attention to a matter which must have seemed remote and most uncertain. Indeed, when it is considered that the most pressing internal affairs of kingdoms are neglected* by the wisest rulers in times of war, it is wonderful that Columbus succeeded in obtaining any audience at all. Ferdinand and Isabella did not, however, dismiss him abruptly. On the contrary, it is said they listened kindly, and the conference ended by their referring the business to the queen's confessor, Fray Hernando de Talavera. This important functionary summoned a junta of cosmographers (not a promising assemblage!) to consult about the affair. They thought that so many persons wise in nautical matters as had preceded the Genoese mariner never could have overlooked such an idea as that which had presented itself to his mind; moreover, they had their own arguments against the scheme, among which was the not unnatural one that Columbus, after he had

* "Las cuales (sus Altezas), oida y entendida superficialmente por las ocupaciones grandes que tenían con la dicha guerra, porque esto es regla general que cuando los Reyes tienen guerra poco entienden ni quieren entender en otras cosas."—LAS CASAS, *Hist. de las Indias*, MS., lib. i., cap. 29.

descended the hemisphere, would not be able to ascend again, for it would be like getting up a mountain, as they said. In fine, they decided that this scheme of the Genoese mariner was "vain and impossible, and that it did not belong to the majesty of such great princes to determine any thing upon such weak grounds of information."*

Ferdinand and Isabella seem not to have taken the extremely unfavorable view of the matter entertained by the junta of cosmographers, or, at least, to have been willing to dismiss Columbus gently; for they merely said that, with the wars at present on their hands, and especially that of Granada, they could not undertake any new expenses, but when that war was ended they would examine his plan more carefully.†

Thus ended a solicitation at the court of Ferdinand and Isabella, which, according to some authorities, had lasted five years; for the facts above mentioned, though short in narration, occupied no little time in transaction. One who, from an experience larger even than that which fell to the lot of Columbus, knew what it was to endure the cold and indolent neglect of superficial men in small authority, and all the vast delay, which can not be comprehended except by those who have suffered under it, that belongs to the transaction of any affair in which many persons have to co-operate, compares the suit of Columbus to a battle—"a terrible, continuous, painful, prolix battle."‡ The tide

* HERRERA, *Historia General*, dec. i., lib. i., cap. 8. Madrid, 1601.

† "Despues de mucho tiempo mandaron los Reyes Católicos, que se respõdiessse á don Christóual, que por hallarse ocupados en muchas guerras, y en particular en la conquista de Granada, no podían emprender nuevos gastos, que acabado aquello mandarian examinar mejor su pretension, y le despidieron."—HERRERA, dec. i., lib. i., cap. 9.

‡ "Llegado en la Corte comenzó á entrar en una terrible, continua,

of this long war (for war it was rather than a battle) having turned against him, Columbus left the court, and went to Seville with "much sadness and discomfiture" (*con mucha tristeza y desconsuelo*). During this dreary period of a suitor's life, which, however, has been endured by some of the greatest men the world has seen, which was well known by close observation or bitter experience to Spenser, Camöens, Cervantes, Shakspeare, Bacon—one joy, at least, was not untasted by Columbus, namely, that of love. His beloved Beatrice, whom he first met at Cordova, must have believed in him, even if no one else had done so; but love was not sufficient to retain* at her side a man goaded by a great idea, or perhaps that love did but impel him to still nobler efforts for her sake, as is the way with lovers of the greater sort.

After giving up his hopes at court, Columbus is said to have applied to the Duke of Medina Sidonia, and afterward to the Duke of Medina Celi. It is certain that when Columbus succeeded in his enterprise, the Duke of Medina Celi wrote to the Cardinal of Spain, showing him that he (the duke) had maintained Columbus two years in his house,† and was ready to

penosa y prolija batalla que por ventura no le fuera tanto áspera ni tan horrible la de materiales armas, cuanto la de informar á tantos que no le entendian, aunque presumian de le entender, responder y sufrir á muchos que no conocian ni hacian mucho caso de su persona recibiendo algunos baldones de palabras que le affigian el ánima."—LAS CASAS, *Hist. de las Indias*, MS., lib. i., cap. 29.

* "Ni las honras que le hacian diversos señores, ni la liberalidad del contador mayor Alonso de Quintanilla que le sustentaba, ni los amores que le dieron un hijo en Córdoba, nada bastó para hacerle tolerable la dilacion."—MUNOZ, *Hist. del Nuevo-Mundo*, p. 60.

† "Suplico á vuestra Señoría me quiera ayudar en ello, é ge lo suplique de mi parte, pues á mi cabsa y por yo detenerle en mi casa dos años, y haberle enderezado á su servicio, se ha hallado tan grande cosa

have undertaken the enterprise, but that he saw it was one for the queen herself, and even then he wished to have had a part in it. I do not doubt that any man in whose house Columbus resided for two years would have caught some portion of his enthusiasm, and have been ready to embark in his enterprise. It may be conjectured, however, that none of the nobles of the Spanish court would have been likely to undertake the matter without some sanction from the king or queen.

Columbus now resolved to go into France, and with this intent went to the monastery of La Rabida for his son Diego, intending to leave him at Cordova. At the monastery there was the faithful friend of Columbus, Juan Perez de Marchena, the guardian, to whom he doubtless confided all his griefs and struggles, and who could not bear to hear of his intention to leave the country for France or England, and to make these nations greater by allowing them to aid him. Juan Perez took Garcia Hernandez into council upon the affairs of Columbus. This Hernandez is conjectured to have been a physician, somewhat skilled in physical science,* and therefore capable of appreciating the arguments of Columbus. It is worthy of notice that a person who appears only once, as it were, in a sentence in History, should have exercised so much influence upon it as Garcia Hernandez, who was probably a man of far superior attainments to those around him, and in the habit of deploring, as such men do, his hard lot in being placed where he could be so little understood. Now, however, he was

como esta."—D. of MEDINA CELI to CARDINAL MENDOZA.—NAV., *Col. Dip.*, Núm. 14.

* LAS CASAS speaks of him as "médico ó físico."

to do more at one stroke than many a man who has been all his days before the world. These three—the monk, the learned physician, and the skilled cosmographer—discussed together the propositions so unhappily familiar to the last-named member of their little council. The affection of Juan Perez and the learning of Hernandez were not slow to follow in the track which the enthusiasm of the great adventurer made out before them; and they were, no doubt, on that day as convinced as Columbus himself of the feasibility of his undertaking. The difficulty, however, was not in becoming believers themselves, but in persuading those to believe who would have power to further the enterprise. Their discussions upon this point ended in the conclusion that Juan Perez, who was known to the queen, having on some occasions acted as her confessor, should write to her highness. He did so, and the result was favorable. The queen sent for him, heard what he had to say, and, in consequence, remitted money to Columbus to enable him to come to court and renew his suit. He attended the court again; his negotiations were resumed; but were again broken off on the ground of the largeness of the conditions which he asked for. His opponents said that these conditions were too large if he succeeded, and if he should not succeed, and the conditions should come to nothing, they thought that there was an air of trifling in granting such conditions at all.* And, indeed, they were very large; namely, that he was to be made an admiral at once, to be appointed viceroy of the countries he should discover,

* "Les parecia mucho lo que queria si la empresa sucedia bien, y sino juzgavan por ligereza el concederlo."—HERRERA, dec. i., lib. i., cap. 8.

and to have an eighth of the profits of the expedition. The only way, as it appears to me, of accounting for the extent of these demands and his perseverance in making them, even to the risk of total failure, is that the discovery of the Indies was but a step in his mind to greater undertakings, as they seemed to him, which he had in view, of going to Jerusalem with an army, and, in fact, of making another crusade; for Columbus carried the chivalrous ideas of the twelfth century into the somewhat self-seeking fifteenth. The negotiation, however, failed a second time, and Columbus resolved again to go to France, when Alonso de Quintanilla and Juan Perez contrived to obtain a hearing for the great adventurer from Cardinal Mendoza, who was pleased with him. Columbus then offered, in order to meet the objections of his opponents, to pay an eighth part of the expense of the expedition. Still nothing was done. And now finally Columbus determined to go to France, and indeed had actually set off one day in January of the year 1492, when Luis de Santangel, receiver of the ecclesiastical revenues of the crown of Aragon, a person much devoted to the plans of Columbus, addressed the queen with all the energy that a man throws into his words when he is aware that it is his last time for speaking in favor of a thing which he has much at heart. He told her that he wondered that, having always had a lofty mind for great things, it should be wanting to her on this occasion.* He endeavored to pique her jealousy as a monarch by suggesting that the enterprise might fall into the hands of other princes. Then he said something in behalf of Columbus himself; and the queen

* "Que aviendo tenido siempre doblado ánimo para grandes cosas, le faltasse en esta ocasion."—HERRERA, dec. i., cap. 8.

was not unlikely to know well the bearing of a great man. He intimated to her highness that what was an impossibility to the cosmographers might not be so in nature. Nor, continued he, should any endeavor in so great a matter be attributed to lightness, even though the endeavor should fail, for it is the part of great and generous princes to ascertain the secrets of the world. Other princes (he did not mention those of neighboring Portugal) had gained eternal fame this way. He concluded by saying that all the aid Columbus wanted to set the expedition afloat was but a million of maravedis,* and that so great an enterprise ought not to be abandoned for the sake of such a trifling sum of money. These well-addressed arguments, falling in, as they did, with those of Quintanilla the treasurer,† who had great influence with the queen, prevailed. She thanked these lords for their counsel, and said she would adopt it, but they must wait until the finances had recovered a little from the drain upon them occasioned by the conquest of Granada, or, if they thought that the plan must be forthwith carried out, she would pledge her jewels to raise the necessary funds. Santangel and Quintanilla kissed her hands, highly delighted at succeeding; and Santangel offered to lend the money from his own estate. Upon this the queen sent an alguazil to overtake Columbus and bring him back to the court. He was

* Equivalent to about £308.

† NAVARRETE supposes that Luis de Santangel held a similar office under the crown of Aragon to that which Alonso de Quintanilla held under the crown of Castile. It is a curious fact, that two finance ministers should have been the principal and the most effectual supporters at court of the project of Columbus. In our times, persons holding such offices are generally supposed to have a particular aversion to all inventors and projectors.

overtaken at the bridge of Pinos, two leagues from Granada, returned to Santa Fé,* was well received by Isabella, and finally the agreement between him and their Catholic highnesses was settled with the secretary Coloma.†

Not much is seen of King Ferdinand in all these proceedings; and it is generally understood that he looked rather coldly upon the propositions of Columbus. We can not say that he was at all unwise in so doing. His great compeer, Henry the Seventh, did not hasten to adopt the same project submitted to him by Bartholomew Columbus, sent into England for that purpose by his brother Christopher;‡ and I do not know that it has been thought to derogate from the English king's sagacity. Those who govern are in all ages surrounded by projectors, and have to clear the way about them as well as they can, and to take care

* The camp before Granada, which afterward became a town.

† HERRERA, dec. i., lib. i., cap. 9.

‡ It is difficult to say how the project brought before Henry the Seventh's notice by Bartholomew Columbus was received. Some say it was made a mockery of at the English court; others speak of it as actually accepted. The truth, perhaps, lies equally between these two statements. Not that truth, as some think, is apt to be found in choosing the mean between two opposite statements; but, in this particular case, the known facts seem to warrant such a conclusion. It is probable that Henry listened with interest to Bartholomew Columbus, who was a man of much intelligence and great maritime knowledge. Moreover, the king probably expressed a wish to see Christopher Columbus, and a readiness to entertain the proposition he had to make, if it were feasible. But it seems unlikely that the negotiation went much farther, considering the rigid manner in which Columbus insisted upon his exact conditions being accepted by the Spanish court. No such bargain at a distance, with a reserved and parsimonious monarch, was likely, therefore, to have been concluded.

For authorities on this subject, see LAS CASAS, *Hist.*, MS., lib. i., cap. 29; BARCIA, *Hist. del Almirante*, cap. 10; BACON'S *Henry VII.*; HERRERA, dec. i., lib. ii.; OVIEDO, lib. i., cap. 4; GOMARA, *Hist. de las Indias*, cap. 15.

that they get time and room for managing their own immediate affairs. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, if good plans should sometimes share the fate which ought to attend, and must attend, the great mass of all projects submitted to men in power. Here, however, the ultimate event would justify the monarch's caution; for it would be hard to prove that Spain has derived aught but a golden weakness from her splendid discoveries and possessions in the New World.

Moreover, the characters of the two men being essentially opposed, it is probable that Ferdinand felt something like contempt for the uncontrolled enthusiasm of Columbus; and, upon the whole, it is rather to be wondered that the king consented to give the powers he did, than that he did not do more. Had it been a matter which concerned his own kingdom of Aragon, he might not have gone so far, but the expenses were to be charged on Castile, and perhaps he looked upon the whole affair as another instance of Isabella's good-natured sympathy with enthusiasts.

The agreement between Columbus and their Catholic highnesses was signed at Santa Fé on the 17th of April, 1492; and Columbus went to Palos to make preparation for his voyage, bearing with him an order that the two vessels which that city furnished annually to the crown for three months, should be placed at his disposal.

There was no delay in furnishing the funds for this expedition. From an entry in an account-book belonging to the bishopric of Palencia,* it appears that one million one hundred and forty thousand maravedis were advanced by Santangel in May, 1492, "being the sum he lent for paying the caravels which their

* NAVARRETE, *Col. Dip.*, Núm. 2.

highnesses ordered to go as the armada to the Indies, and for paying Christopher Columbus, who goes in the said armada."

Juan Perez, we are told, was active in persuading men to embark. The Pinzons, rich men and skillful mariners of Palos, joined in the undertaking, subscribing an eighth of the expenses; and thus, by these united exertions, three vessels were manned with ninety mariners, and provisioned for a year. At length all the preparations were complete, and on a Friday (not inauspicious in this case), the 3d of August, 1492, after they had all confessed and received the sacrament, they set sail from the bar of Saltes, making for the Canary Islands.

Columbus was now fairly afloat; about to change the long-continued, weary, dismal life of a suitor for the sharp, intense anxiety of a struggle in which there was no alternative to success but deplorable, ridiculous, fatal failure. Speaking afterward of the time he spent as a suitor at court, he says, "Eight years I was torn with disputes, and, in a word, my proposition was a thing for mockery."* It was now to be seen what mockery was in it. The account which I shall give of the voyage is mainly taken from an abridgment of Columbus's own diary, made by LAS CASAS, who in some places gives the admiral's own words.

The little squadron reached the Canary Islands in a few days, with no event worth recording except that the caravel "Pinta," commanded by Martin Alonso Pinzon, unshipped her rudder. This was supposed to be no accident, but to have been contrived by the

* "Los ocho fuí traído en disputas, y en fin se dió mi aviso por cosa de burla."—NAVARRETE, *Col. Dip.*, Núm. 137.

owners of the vessel, who did not like the voyage. The admiral (from henceforth Columbus is called the admiral) was obliged to stay some time at the Canary Islands to refit the "Pinta," and to make some change in the cut of her sails. In the abridgment of the diary, under the date of the 9th of August, the admiral remarks that many Spaniards of these islands, respectable men (*hombres honrados*), swear that each year they see land; and he remembers how, in the year 1484, some one came from the island of Madeira to the King of Portugal to beg a caravel in order to go and discover that land which he declared he could see each year, and in the same manner.* Had not the admiral been conscious of the substantial originality of his proceedings, he would hardly have been careful to collect these scattered notices, which might afterward be used, as many like them were used, to depreciate that originality. There is no farther entry in the diary until the 6th of September, when they set out from Gomera (one of the Canary Islands) on their unknown way. For many days what we have of the diary is little more than a log-book giving the rate of sailing, or, rather, two rates, one for Columbus's own private heed, and the other for the sailors. For instance, when they go sixty leagues in a day and night, it is put down at forty-eight for the sailors. On the 13th of September, it is noted that the needle declined in the evening to the northwest, and on the ensuing morning to the northeast—the first time that such a variation had been observed, or, at least, recorded by Europeans. On the 14th, the sailors of the caravel "Niña" saw two tropical birds, which they said were never wont to be seen at more than fifteen or twenty

* NAVARRETE, *Col.*, vol. i., p. 5.

leagues from shore. On the 15th they all saw a meteor fall from heaven, which made them very sad. On the 16th they first came upon those immense plains of sea-weed (the *fucus natans*), which constitute the Mar de Sargasso, and which occupy a space in the Atlantic almost equal to seven times the extent of France.* The aspect of these plains greatly terrified the sailors, who thought they might be coming upon submerged lands and rocks; but, finding that the vessels cut their way well through this sea-weed, the sailors thereupon took heart. On the 17th they see more of these plains of sea-weed, and, thinking themselves to be near land, they are almost in good spirits, when, finding that the needle declines to the west a whole point of the compass and more, their hopes suddenly sink again; they begin to "murmur between their teeth," and to wonder whether they are not in another world. Columbus, however, orders an observation to be taken at daybreak, when the needle is found to point to the north again; moreover, he is ready with a theory, sufficiently ingenious for that time, to account for the phenomenon of variation which had so disturbed the sailors, namely, that it was caused by the north star moving round the pole.† The sailors are therefore quieted upon this head. In the morning of the same day they catch a crab, from which Columbus infers that they can not be more than eighty leagues distant from land. The 18th they see many birds, and a cloud in the distance, and that night they expect to

* HUMBOLDT'S *Kosmos*, vol. ii., p. 287.

† He thus accounted for a purely telluric phenomenon by an astronomical fact of which the pilots were ignorant. As M. Humboldt well expresses it: "Les pilotes se rassurèrent, ignorant à la fois la variation de la boussole et la non-fixité de l'étoile polaire."—*Examen Critique*, tome 3me, p. 57, note.

see land. On the 19th, in the morning, comes a pelican (a bird not usually seen twenty leagues from the coast); in the evening, another; also drizzling rain without wind, a certain sign, as the diary says, of proximity to land.

The admiral, however, will not beat about for land, as he concludes that the land which these various natural phenomena give token of can only be islands, as indeed it proved to be. He will see them on his return; but now he must press on to the Indies.* This determination shows his strength of mind, and indicates the almost scientific basis on which his great resolve reposed.

Accordingly, he was not to be diverted from the main design by any partial success, though by this time he knew well the fears of his men, some of whom had already come to the conclusion "that it would be their best plan to throw him quietly into the sea, and say he unfortunately fell in, while he stood absorbed in looking at the stars."† Indeed, three days after he had resolved to pass on to the Indies, we find him saying, for LAS CASAS gives his words, "Very needful for me was this contrary wind, for the people were very much tormented with the idea that there were no winds on these seas that could take them back to Spain."

On they go, having signs occasionally in the presence of birds, and grass, and fish that land must be

* "Mas de que tuvo por cierto que á la banda del Norte y del Sur habia algunas islas, como en la verdad lo estaban y él iba por medio dellas; porque su voluntad era de seguir adelante hasta las Indias, y el tiempo es bueno, porque placiendo á Dios á la vuelta se veria todo: estas son sus palabras."—NAVARRETE, *Col.*, vol. i., p. 11.

† "No faltó quien dixo, que para quitar contiendas, era lo mejor echalle á la mar con disimulacion, y dezir, que desgra ciadamente avia caydo, mientras estava embevido en considerar las estrellas." — HERRERA, dec. i., l. i., c. 10.

near; but land does not come. Once, too, they are all convinced that they see land: they sing the "Gloria in excelsis;" and even the admiral goes out of his course toward this land, which turns out to be no land. They are like men listening to a dreadful discourse or oration that seems to have many endings which end not; so that the hearer listens at last in grim despair, thinking that all things have lost their meaning, and that ending is but another form of beginning.

These mariners were stout-hearted, too; but what a daring* thing it was to plunge down hill, as it were, into a new world of waters, mocked day by day with signs of land that neared not. And these men had left at home all that is dearest to man, and did not bring out any great idea to uphold them, and had already done enough to make them important men in their towns, and to furnish ample talk for the evenings of their lives. Still we find Columbus, as late as the 3d of October, saying "that he did not choose to stop beating about last week during those days that they had such signs of land, although he had knowledge of there being certain islands in that neighborhood, because he would not suffer any detention, since his object was to go to the Indies; and if he should stop on the way, it would show a want of mind."†

Meanwhile he had a hard task to keep his men in any order. PETER MARTYR,‡ who knew Columbus

* The Greek dramatist rightly puts it as a proof that man is the most dread of known creatures, since driven by the wintry wind he goes beyond the gray sea, traversing the waves howling around him:

Πολλὰ τὰ δεινὰ, κούδεν ἀνθρώπου δεινότερον πέλει.
τοῦτο καὶ πολιοῦ πέραν πόντου χειμερῖω νότῳ
χωρεῖ, περιβρυχίοισι περῶν ἐπ' οἴδμασι.

ANTIG., 332-337.

† "*Que no fuera buen scso.*"—NAV., Col., vol i., p. 16.

‡ This Peter Martyr must not be confounded with the Peter Martyr

well, and had probably been favored with a special account from him of these perilous days, describes his

who took a prominent part in the Reformation. Our historian is Pietro Martire d'Anghiera, a Milanese, born in 1455, at Arona, on the Lago Maggiore.

Having finished his education, he went to Rome, where he entered into the service of Cardinal Visconti, and where he remained ten years. From Rome, accompanying a Spanish ambassador, Peter Martyr went to the court of Ferdinand and Isabella, by whom he was well received. This was in the year 1487.

His career was thenceforward mixed up with the greatest affairs of Spain, which he had good opportunities of observing, as he was one of those persons, common in that age, unhappily uncommon in ours, who in their time play many parts. He was a soldier, a schoolmaster, an ambassador, a statesman, a priest, a historian, and a gossiping man of letters, who reminds the English reader occasionally of Horace Walpole and of Mr. Pepys. He delighted in the society of the great, and he was upon the frankest and most intimate terms with them. "Felicicia hæc (blandimenta naturæ) deliciosi prædicant, magnorum me virorum sola commercia beant."—*Epist.* 95.

Peter Martyr served two campaigns in Ferdinand and Isabella's armies. To use an expression of his own, he fed with his learning the studious youths of Spain. ("Suxerunt mea literalia ubera Castellæ principes fere omnes.") He was intrusted with an embassy to the Sultan of Egypt, of which he has given an account (*De Legat. Babilonica, libri tres*); and, during the troubles which ensued with Spain, after Charles the Fifth came to the throne, he was in correspondence with the Regent Adrian, afterward Pope, and was a privy councilor. This appears from a letter in which Peter Martyr regrets not having been sent for by the regent to a council. "Æquo tuli animo solitudinem hanc" (the beautiful Granada). "Nunc autem, quandoquidem tua Reverendiss. Dom. (*Dominatio*. See Ducange) jussit illum accersiri, quid me jam diutius hic patitur morari?"—*Epist.* 728.

The principal works which Peter Martyr has left in reference to American affairs are, *De Rebus Oceanicis et Orbe Novo Decades*, and *De Insulis nuper Inventis et Incolarum Moribus*. His letters (*Opus Epistolarum Petri Martyris Anglerii*) are of the utmost service to those who wish to study the nature of the home government of Spain at that period.

A very learned and penetrating historian has thrown the gravest doubts upon Peter Martyr's writings. "Whoever," he says, "will take the trouble of comparing the two first letters in the decades of Peter Martyr with any authentic history, will perceive that they are a

way of dealing with the refractory mariners, and how he contrived to win them onward from day to day ;

negligent and palpable imposture, every date being falsified, even that of the year in which Columbus made his great discovery. It is a strange instance of oversight in Robertson that he has uniformly quoted them as written at the time, for the least attention must have shown him the contrary."—HALLAM'S *Int. to the Lit. of Europe*, vol. i., cap. 4.

Mr. HALLAM'S suspicions, very reasonably entertained, have, in my judgment, been entirely confuted by Mr. Prescott (see *Hist. of Ferdinand and Isabella*, fourth edition, vol. ii., p. 68), and, by anticipation, in the prologue of the Spanish historian Muñoz (*Hist. del Nuevo-Mundo*, Madrid, 1793). I am enabled to strengthen the arguments of these last-named historians by referring to the important evidence of a contemporary. "De los cuales *cerca destas primeras cosas á ninguno se debe dar mas fee que á Pedro Martir* (the italics are in the original) que escribió en Latin sus decadas estando aquellos tiempos en Castilla : porque lo que en ellas dijo tocante á los principios, fué con diligencia del mismo Almirante descubridor primero, a quien habló muchas veces, y de los que fueron en su compañía inquirido y de los demas que aquellos viajes á los principios hicieron."—LAS CASAS, *Hist. de las Indias*, MS. Prologo.

One thing seems to have escaped the attention of Peter Martyr's biographers, or only to have been slightly alluded to by them, namely, that he was a member of the first council of the Indies, appointed in 1518. "En estos días negoció Pero Martyr que lo hiciesen del consejo mismo de las Indias, y ansi lo alcanzó, y lo fué."—(LAS CASAS, *Hist.*, lib. iii., cap. 102.) He was also Abbot of Jamaica. He died in 1526.

It is a great felicity for the historian to have so trustworthy and so intelligent a man as Peter Martyr as a daily witness of the great affairs which were transacted at the court of Spain at that period. Far from his writings having any thing factitious about them, their merit is that they reflect his uncorrected thoughts and feelings on the very day in which he recorded any transaction. He was a man of strong impulses, and his bitterness against the Flemings who came over in the suite of Charles the Fifth is expressed with the utmost latitude of imprudence. They had deprived him of his salary.

He professed, and I believe felt, an indifference to fame, saying that it was better to be unknown than to be carped at in the public ways of men. "Satius namque est latere, quam in compitis populari dente corrodí." His letters were written very carelessly and in haste. A learned contemporary, Juan de Vergara, mentions having seen Peter Martyr writing a couple of letters while his servants were laying the table for dinner.—See NICOLAS ANTONIO, *Bibl. Hispan. Nova*, ii., p. 372.

now soothing them with soft words, now carrying their minds from thought of the present danger by spreading out large hopes before them, not forgetting to let them know what their prince would say to them if they attempted aught against him, or would not obey his orders.* With this untutored crowd of wild, frightened men around him, with mocking hopes, not knowing what each day would bring to him, on went Columbus. At last came the 11th of October, and with it indubitable signs of land. The diary mentions their finding on that day a table-board and a carved stick, the carving apparently wrought by some iron instrument. Moreover, the men in one of the vessels saw a branch of a haw-tree with fruit on it. Now, indeed, they must be close to land. The sun went down upon the same weary round of waters which for so long a time their eyes had ached to see beyond, when, at ten o'clock, Columbus, standing on the poop of his vessel, saw a light, and called to him, privately, Pedro Gutierrez, a groom of the king's chamber, who saw it also. Then they called Rodrigo Sanchez, who had been sent by their highnesses as overlooker. I imagine him to have been a cold and cautious man, of the kind that are sent by jealous states to accompany and curb great generals, and who are not usually much loved by them. Sanchez did not see the light at first, be-

His personal knowledge of Columbus, and of others among the first voyagers to the Indies, must ever make Peter Martyr one of the great authorities for any history of the New World.

* "Post trigesimum jam diem furore perciti, proclamabant, ut reducerentur: nè ulterius procederet, stimulabant hominem: ipse verò, blandis modò verbis, amplà spe modò, diem ex die protrahens, iratos mulcebat, deposcebat: proditionis quoquè taxandos esse à regibus, si adversi quicquam in eum molirentur, et si parere recusarent, predicabat."—PETER MARTYR, dec. i., lib. i.

cause, as Columbus says, he did not stand in the place whence it could be seen, but at last even he sees it; and it may now be considered to have been seen officially. "It appeared like a candle that went up and down, and Don Christopher did not doubt that it was true light, and that it was on land; and so it proved, as it came from people passing with lights from one cottage to another."*

Their highnesses had promised a pension of ten thousand maravedis to the fortunate man who should see land first. The "Pinta" was the foremost vessel; and it was from her deck, at two o'clock in the morning, that land was first seen by Rodrigo de Triana. We can not but be sorry for this poor common sailor, who got no reward, and of whom they tell a story, that in sadness and despite he passed into Africa, after his return to Spain, and became a Mohammedan. The pension was adjudged to the admiral: it was charged, somewhat ominously, on the shambles (*carnicerías*) of Seville, and was paid him to the day of his death; for, says the historian HERRERA, "he saw light in the midst of darkness, signifying the spiritual light which was introduced among these barbarous people, God permitting that, the war being finished with the Moors, seven hundred and twenty years after they had set foot in Spain, this work (the conversion of the Indians) should commence, so that the Princes of Castile and Leon might always be occupied in bringing infidels to the knowledge of the holy Catholic faith."

These last words are notable. They are such as Columbus himself would probably have made use of in describing this, the crowning event of his life. In the preface to his diary, which is an address to Ferdi-

* HERRERA, dec. i., lib. i., cap. 12.

nand and Isabella, he speaks at large of the motives of their highnesses. He begins by saying how, in this present year of 1492, their highnesses had concluded their war with the Moors, having taken the great city of Granada, at the siege of which he was present, and saw the royal banners placed upon the towers of the Alhambra. He then tells how he had given information to their highnesses of the lands of India, and of a prince called the Grand Khan, who had sent ambassadors to Rome, praying for doctors to instruct him in the faith; and how the Holy Father had never provided him with these doctors; and that great towns (*tantos pueblos*) were perishing, from the belief of their inhabitants in idolatry, and from receiving among them "sects of perdition." After the above statement, he adds, "Your highnesses, as Catholic Christians and princes, lovers and furtherers of the Christian faith, and enemies of the sect of Mohammed, and of all idolatries and heresies, thought to send me, Christopher Columbus, to the aforesaid provinces of India, to see the aforesaid princes, the cities and lands, and the disposition of them and of every thing about them, and the way that should be taken to convert them to our holy faith."*

Columbus then speaks of the expulsion of the Jews from Spain as occurring at the same time as that in which he received orders to pursue a westerly course to India, thus combining the two transactions together,

* "Vuestras Altezas, como católicos cristianos y Príncipes amadores de la santa fé cristiana y acrecentadores della, y enemigos de la secta de Mahoma y de todas idolatrías y heregías, pensaron de enviarme á mí Cristóbal Colon á las dichas partidas de India para ver los dichos príncipes, y los pueblos y tierras, y la disposicion dellas y de todo, y la manera que se pudiera tener para la conversion dellas á nuestra santa fé."—NAVARRETE, *Col.*, tom i., p. 2.

no doubt as proofs of the devout intentions of their highnesses: and, indeed, throughout the document, he ascribes no motives to the monarchs but such as were religious.

The diary to which this address was prefixed is probably one of the books which their highnesses allude to in a letter to Columbus as being in their possession, and which they assured him they had not shown to any body. I see no reason to doubt the perfect good faith of Columbus in making such a statement as that just referred to; and it is well to remark upon it, because we shall never come to a right understanding of those times, and of the question of slavery as connected with them, unless we fully appreciate the good as well as the bad motives which guided the most important persons of that era.

As for Queen Isabella, there can be no doubt about her motives. Even in the lamentably unjust things in which she was too often concerned, she had what to her mind was compelling reason to act as she did. Perhaps there is hardly any great personage whose name and authority are found in connection with so much that is strikingly evil, all of it done, or rather assented to, upon the highest and purest motives. Whether we refer to the expulsion of the Jews, the treatment of the Moorish converts, or the establishment of the Inquisition, all her proceedings in these matters were entirely sincere and noble-minded. Methinks I can still see her beautiful, majestic face (with broad brow, and clear, honest, loving eye), as it looks down upon the beholder from one of the chapels in the cathedral at Granada: a countenance too expressive and individual to be what painters give as that of an angel, and yet the next thing to it. Now I could al-

most fancy she looks down reproachfully, and yet with conscious sadness. What she would say in her defense, could we interrogate her, is, that she obeyed the voice of Heaven, taking the wise and good men of her day as its interpreters. Oh! that she had but persisted in listening to it, as it spoke in her own kindly heart, when with womanly pity she was wont to intercede in favor of the poor cooped-up inmates of some closely-beleaguered town or fortress! But at least the poor Indian can utter nothing but blessings on her. He might have needed no other "protector," had she lived; nor would slavery have found in his fate one of the darkest and most fatal chapters in its history.

But now, from Granada, and our fancies there, the narrative brings us back to the first land touched by Columbus. The landing of Columbus in the New World must ever be a conspicuous fact in the annals of mankind; and it was adorned by a ceremonial worthy of the occasion. On the ensuing morning after the light had been observed from the ships, being a Friday, the 12th of October, 1492, Columbus, clad in complete armor, and carrying in his hand the royal banner of Spain, descended upon the level shores of the small island which had first greeted him, and which he found to be very fruitful—fresh and verdant, and "like a garden full of trees."* The other captains accompanied him, each of them bearing a banner with a green cross depicted upon it, and with

* "Es una isla de quince leguas de luengo poco mas ó menos, toda baja sin montaña alguna como una huerta llena de arboles, verde y fresquisima como son todas las de los Lucayos que hay por alli cerca de esta Española y se estienden por luengo de Cuba."—LAS CASAS, *Hist. de las Indias*, MS., lib. i., cap. 40.

the initials of Ferdinand and Isabella surmounted by their respective crowns*—a device that well expressed the loyalty and devotion of Columbus, and had been chosen by him. These chief officers were followed by a large retinue from their crews. In numerous lines along the shore stood the simple islanders, looking on with innocent amazement.

On touching land, Columbus and all the Spaniards who were present fell upon their knees, and with tears—tears of that deepest kind, which men do not know the cause of—poured forth their “immense thanksgivings to Almighty God.”†

The man who, of all that embassy, if we may call it so, from the Old to the New World, was certainly the least surprised by all he saw, was at the same time the most affected. For thus it is, that the boldness of a great design is never fully appreciated by the designer himself until he has apparently accomplished his work, when he is apt, if it be indeed a great work, to look back with shuddering awe at his own audacity in having proposed it to mankind. The vast resolve which sustains such a man through his

* “Y los dos Capitanes (sacaron) sendas banderas de la Cruz verde que el Almirante llevaba en todos los navios por señal y divisa, con una F., que significaba el Rey Don Fernando, y una Y por la Reyna Doña Ysabel, y encima de cada letra su corona una del un cabo de la cruz y otra del otro.”—LAS CASAS, *Hist. de las Indias*, MS., lib. i., cap. 40.

† OVIEDO, whose account of the landing is not to be compared with that of LAS CASAS, from which the above is taken, describes the admiral as reciting the “Te Deum laudamus”—Assi como el almirante vido la tierra, hincado de rodillas é saltándosele las lágrimas de los ojos del extremado plaçer que sentia, commençó á decir con Ambrosio y Augustino: *Te Deum laudamus, Te Dominum confitemur*, etc.; y assi, dando gracias á nuestro Señor con todos los que con él yban, fue inextimable el gozo que los unos y los otros haçian.”—OVIEDO, *Hist. Gen. y Nat. de Indias*, lib. ii., cap. 5. Madrid, 1851.

long and difficult enterprise, having for the moment nothing to struggle against, dies away, leaving a strange sinking at the heart; and thus the greatest successes are often accompanied by a peculiar and bewildering melancholy. New difficulties, however, bred from success (for nothing is complete in life), soon arise to summon forth again the discoverer's energies, and to nerve him for fresh disappointments and renewed endeavors. Columbus will not fail to have his full share of such difficulties.

The followers of the great man, whose occasional faintheartedness must often have driven all sleep from his weary eyelids throughout the watches of the night, now began to think with remorse how much suffering they had needlessly inflicted upon their greatly-enduring leader. They sought his pardon with tears, and, subdued for the moment by his greatness when illustrated by success, expressed in loving terms their admiration, their gratitude, and their assurances of fidelity. The placable Columbus received their gracious sayings with all the warmth and tenderness that belonged to his large and amiable character.

The great business of the day then commenced; and Columbus, with the due legal formalities, took possession, on behalf of the Spanish monarchs, of the island Guanahani, which he forthwith named San Salvador. The gravity of the proceedings must have astonished the beholding islanders. Their attention, however, was soon turned to the Spaniards themselves; and they approached the strangers, wondering at their whiteness and at their beards. Columbus, as being the noblest-looking personage there present, and also from wearing crimson over his armor (*por ir vestido de grana*), attracted especial attention, and

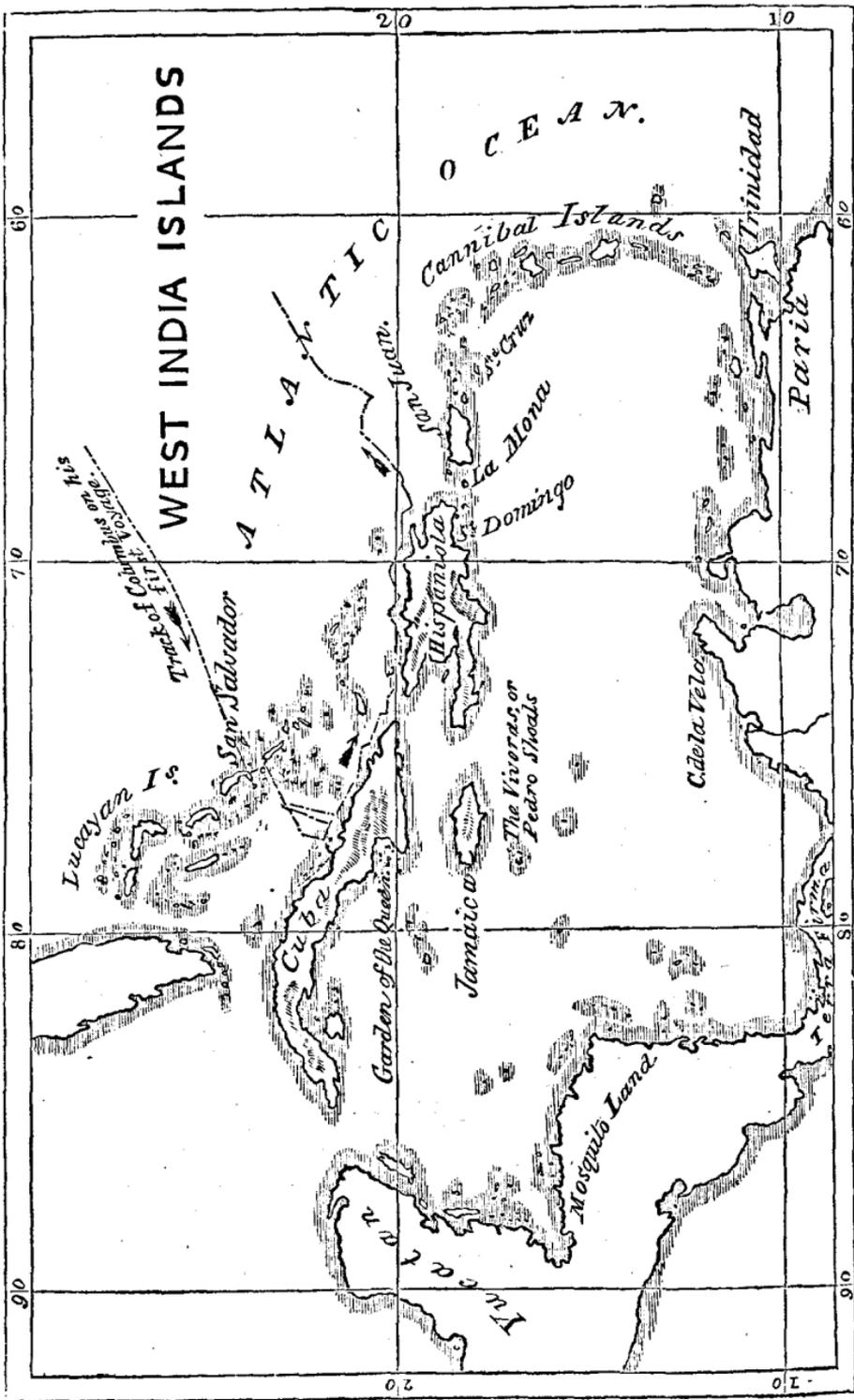
justly seemed, as he was, the principal figure in this great spectacle.

Columbus is for the present moment radiant with success. Our interest passes now from him to the new people he was among. And what were they like? Were they worthy of the efforts which the Old World had made to find them? Was there mind and soul enough in them for them to become good Christians? What says the greatest of the men who first saw them? What impression did they make on him? Let him answer for himself.

“Because they had much friendship for us, and because I knew they were people that would deliver themselves better to the Christian faith, and be converted more through love than by force, I gave to some of them some colored caps, and some strings of glass beads for their necks, and many other things of little value, with which they were delighted, and were so entirely ours that it was a marvel to see. The same afterward came swimming to the ships’ boats where we were, and brought us parrots, cotton threads in balls, darts, and many other things, and bartered them with us for things which we gave them, such as bells and small glass beads. In fine, they took and gave all of whatever they had with good will. But it appeared to me they were a people very poor in every thing. They went totally naked, as naked as their mothers brought them into the world.”*

Then Columbus goes on to say, that these Indians were well made, with very good faces, but hair like horsehair, their color yellow; and that they painted themselves. They neither carried arms nor understood such things; for when he showed them swords,

* NAVARRETE, *Col.*, vol. i., p. 21.



they took hold of them by the blade and hurt themselves. Their darts are without iron, but some had a fish's tooth at the end. In concluding his description he says, "They ought to make faithful servants and of good understanding, for I see that very quickly they repeat all that is said to them; and I believe they would easily be converted to Christianity, for it appeared to me that they had no creed."

A little farther on, the admiral says of the people of a neighboring island that they were more domestic and tractable than those of San Salvador, and more intelligent too, as he saw in their way of reckoning for the payment of the cotton they brought to the ships. At the mouth of the Rio de Mares* some of the admiral's men, whom he had sent to reconnoitre, brought him word that the houses of the natives were the best they had seen. They were made, he says, like "alfaneques (pavilions), very large, and appeared as royal tents without an arrangement of streets, except one here and there, and within they were very clean, and well swept, and their furniture very well arranged. All these houses were made of palm branches, and were very beautiful. Our men found in these houses many statues of women, and several heads fashioned like masks and very well wrought. I do not know, he adds, whether they have these for the love of the beautiful or for purposes of worship."† The Span-

* In Cuba, now Nuevitas del Principe.

† Eran hechas á manera de alfaneques, muy grandes, y parecian tiendas en real sin concierto de calles, sino una acá y otra acullá, y de dentro muy barridas y limpias, y sus aderezos muy compuestos. Todas son de ramas de palma muy hermosas. Hallaron muchas estátuas en figura de mugeres, y muchas cabezas en manera de caratona muy bien labradas. No sé si esto tienen por hermosura ó adoran en ellas."
—NAVARRETE, *Col.*, vol. i., p. 42.

iards found also excellent nets, fish-hooks, and fishing-tackle. There were tame birds about the houses, and dogs which did not bark.

The admiral, speaking of the Indians of the coast near the Rio de Sol,* says that they are "very gentle, without knowing what evil is, neither killing nor stealing."† He describes the frank generosity of the people of Marien,‡ and of the honor they thought it to be asked to give, in terms which may remind his readers of the doctrines maintained by Christians in respect of giving.§

It is interesting to observe the way in which, at this point of the narrative, a new product is introduced to the notice of the Old World—a product that was hereafter to become, not only an unfailing source of pleasure to a large section of the male part of mankind, from the highest to the lowest, but was also to distinguish itself as one of those commodities for revenue which are the delight of statesmen, the great financial resource of modern nations, and which afford a means of indirect taxation that has perhaps nourished many a war and prevented many a revolution. Two discoverers whom the admiral had sent out from the Puerto de Mares (one of them being a learned Jew, who could speak Hebrew, Chaldee, and some Arabic, and would have been able to discourse, as Columbus probably thought, with any of the subjects of the Grand Khan, if he had met them) found that

* A river at the northeastern part of Cuba.

† "Muy mansos, y sin saber que sea mal, ni matar á otros, ni prender."—NAVARRETE, *Col.*, vol. i., p. 53. ‡ A province of Hispaniola.

§ "Y como sea esta gente de muy franco corazon que quanto le piden dan con le mejor voluntad del mundo, les parece que pidiéndoles algo les hacen grande merced: esto dice el Almirante."—NAV., *Col.*, tom. i., p. 105.

the men of the country they came to investigate indulged in a "fumigation" of a peculiar kind. The smoke in question was absorbed into the mouth through a charred stick, and was caused by burning certain herbs wrapped in a dry leaf, which outer covering was called "tabaco." LAS CASAS, who carefully describes this process of imbibing smoke, mentions that the Indians, when questioned about it, said that it took away fatigue, and that he has known Spaniards in the island of Hispaniola who adopted the same habit, and who, being reproved for it as a vice, replied that it was not in their power to leave it off. "I do not know," he adds, "what savor or profit they found in them" (*tabacos*).* I can not help thinking that there were several periods in his own life when these strange fumigations would have afforded him singular soothing and comfort. However that may be, there can be no doubt of the importance, financially and commercially speaking, of this discovery of tobacco—a discovery which in the end proved more productive to the Spanish crown than that of the gold mines of the Indies.

* "Hallaron estos dos cristianos por el camino mucha gente que atravesaban á sus pueblos mugeres y hombres: siempre los hombres con un tizon en las manos y ciertas yerbas para tomar sus sahumericos, que son unas yerbas secas metidas en una cierta hoja seca tambien á manera de mosquete, hecho de papel de los que hacen los muchachos la pascua del Espíritu Santo; y encendido por la una parte de él, por la otra chupan ó sorben, ó reciben con el resuello para adentro aquel humo; con el cual se adormecen las carnes y quasi emborracha, y así diz que no sienten el cansancio. Estos mosquetes, como los llamáremos, llaman ellos *tabacos*. Españoles cognosí yo en esta Isla Española que los acostumbraron á tomar quesien do reprendidos por ellos, diciéndoseles que aquello era vicio, respondian que no era en sus manos dejarlos de tomar: no sé que sabor ó provecho hallaban en ellos."—LAS CASAS, *Hist. de las Indias*, MS., lib. i., cap. 46. See also NAVARRETE, *Col.*, vol. i., p. 51, note.

The excellent relations that existed between the expedition of Columbus and the inhabitants of Cuba may be seen from the fact that these two Christians, who were the first witnesses of tobacco-smoking, and who traveled with only two Indian attendants, were every where well and reverently received.*

Resuming the thread of the history, it remains to be seen what more Columbus did and suffered in this voyage. The first Indians he met with had some few gold ornaments about them—poor wretches, if they had possessed the slightest gift of prophecy, they would have thrown these bawbles into the deepest sea!—and they were asked whence came this gold. From a race, they said, living southward, where there was a great king, who had much gold. On another occasion, other Indians, being asked the same question, answered, “Cubanacan, Cubanacan.” They meant the middle of Cuba; but their words at once suggested to Columbus the idea that he was now upon the traces of his long-looked-for friend, Kublai Khan, the Khan of Khans. Indeed, it is almost ludicrous to see throughout how Columbus is possessed with the notions borrowed from his reading of Marco Polo and other travelers. He asks for “his Cipango,” as HERRERA slyly puts it, and the natives at once point out to him the direction where that is. They thought he meant Cibao, where afterward the best mines of gold were found. The admiral, bent on discovery, and especially on finding the terra firma which adjoined “his” India, did not stay long any where. Proceed-

* “Todas las gentes que topaban estos dos cristianos en viendolos se ponian en grande admiracion y los hacian el mismo acatamiento.”—LAS CASAS, *Hist. de las Indias*, MS., lib. i., cap. 46.

ing southward from San Salvador, he discovered an island, or rather a group of islands, to which he gave the general name of Santa Maria de la Concepcion; he then discovered Cuba, and coasted along the northeastern part of that island; and afterward, in due course, came to Hispaniola, called by the natives Hayti, in which island he landed upon the territory of King Guacanagari, where he was received most cordially.

Various conjectures have been made as to the different results which would have followed, both for the New and for the Old World, if Columbus had steered a little to the northward or the southward of the course which he actually took. One thing, however, is obvious, that in arriving at Hispaniola he came to a central point, not only of the West Indies, but of the whole of the New World, and a point, therefore, most felicitously situated for the spreading of future discovery and conquest.

It may be mentioned here that Martin Alonso Pinzon had willfully parted company from the admiral while on the coast of Cuba, covetousness being probably the cause of this most undutiful proceeding. But, indeed, there is another instance of the insubordination of the mariners, which makes the wonder only still greater how Columbus could have brought them across the Atlantic at all. One evening the admiral, after paying a visit to Guacanagari, seeing the sea quite calm, betook himself to rest. As he had not slept for two days and a night, it is probable his slumber was deep. Meanwhile, the steersman, contrary to the distinct orders of the admiral, gave the helm to a common sailor, a youth. All of the sailors went to sleep. The sea was as calm "as water in a dish." Little by

little the ship drifted on to a shoal. Directly they touch, the sailor-boy at the helm starts from his dream, haply about his mother, and cries out. The admiral jumps up first (for the responsibility of command seldom goes quite to sleep); then the officer, whose watch it ought to have been, hurries up, and the admiral orders him to lower the boat which they carried on the poop, and to throw out an anchor astern. Instead of obeying the admiral, this cowardly villain, with others like him, sprang into the boat, and made off for the other vessel, which was about half a league off. The other vessel would not receive them, and they rowed back again. But it was too late. The admiral did what he could in the emergency; he cut down the mast, lightened the vessel as best he might, took out his people, and went with them to the other caravel, sending his boat to Guacanagari to inform him of the misfortune. The good Guacanagari was moved to tears by this sad affair. He gave not only sympathy, however, but assistance. His people went out with their canoes, and in a few moments cleared the vessel of all the goods in it. Guacanagari was very careful that nothing should be lost. He himself stood guard over the things which had been taken out of the ship. Then he sent comforting messages to the admiral, saying that he would give him what he had to make up for the loss. He put all the effects under shelter, and placed guards round them. The admiral was evidently touched to the heart, as well he might be, by the kindness of these Indians. He thus expresses himself: "They are a loving, uncovetous people, so docile in all things, that I assure your highnesses I believe in all the world there is not a better people or a better country: they love their neighbors as themselves,

and they have the sweetest and the gentlest way of talking in the world, and always with a smile.”*

The admiral resolved to found a colony in Guacanagari's land, “having found such good will and such signs of gold.”† In relating this, the Spanish historian, HERRERA, makes some curious reflections. He looks upon the loss of the vessel as providential, in order that the true faith might be preached in that country. Then he says how Providence causes its work to be done, not on high motives only, but also on the ordinary ones which influence mankind. He concludes by observing that Providence dealt with the Indians as a prudent father who has an ugly daughter, but makes up for her ugliness by the help of a large dowry. By the ugliness in this case he means the seas to be traversed, the hunger to be endured, and the labors to be undertaken, which he considers no other nation but the Spaniards would have encountered, even with the hope of greater booty. There we may venture to differ from him.

Columbus built a fort, and called it La Navidad, because he entered the port near there on Christmas day. He remained on very friendly terms with the good cacique Guacanagari, and might have established himself most advantageously in that part of the

* “Son gente de amor y sin cudicia, y convenibles para toda cosa, que certifico á vuestras Altezas que en el mundo creo que no hay mejor gente ni mejor tierra: ellos aman á sus prójimos como á sí mismos, y tienen una habla la mas dulce del mundo, y mansa, y siempre con risa.”—NAVARRETE, *Col.*, vol. i., p. 113.

† HERRERA, dec. i., lib. i., c. 18. There is a good expression of OVIEDO's, when describing the friendship of these Indians, and the reliance which the admiral placed in them: “Viendo el almirante que aquesta gente era tan doméstica, parescióle que seguramente podría dexar allí algunos chripstianos.”—*Hist. Gen. y Nat.*, lib. ii., cap. 6.

country if he could have been content to be a settler; but, from the first moment of his discovery, he doubtless had an anxious desire to get back to Spain and tell what he knew, and at times, perhaps, was fearful lest his grand secret, through some mischance to the expedition, should still perish with him. The great discoverer, therefore, now prepared to return homeward. He left his fort in trust to a small body of his followers,* whom he commended to the good offices of Guacanagari, not forgetting to impress upon them the excellent advice to do no violence to man or woman, and, in short, to make their actions conformable to the idea (which the Indians first entertained of them) that they had come from heaven. Then, having received the necessary provisions for his vessel from the friendly cacique, the admiral set sail for Spain on the 4th of January, 1493.

* They were forty in number; and it would be strange to find, but for the well-known fact that nothing brings men of different races together more than maritime and commercial enterprise, that in this small list there is an Irishman, "Guillermo Ires (*Qy.*, *William Herries*, or *Rice*), natural de Galney, en Irlanda;" and an Englishman, "Tallarte de Lajes (*Qy.*, *Arthur Lake*), Ingles." See "lista de las personas que Colon dejó en la Isla Española."—NAVARRETE, *Col. Dip.*, Núm. 13.

CHAPTER II.

ADMINISTRATION OF COLUMBUS IN THE INDIES.

AS this history does not undertake to give a life of Columbus, it is not requisite to relate the minor discoveries which he made after leaving La Navidad, or the troubles and difficulties he had on his voyage homeward, or his reception at Lisbon, where he was obliged to take refuge from a storm, and where displaying the signs of a new world at a court which had refused to aid in the discovery must have been almost too much of a triumph for a generous mind. Suffice it to say that he arrived at Palos, the port he had set out from, on the 15th of March, 1493, and forthwith commenced his journey to Barcelona, where the court then was. HERRERA tells us that the admiral now "entered into the greatest reputation;" and the historian goes on to explain to his readers what the meaning of "reputation" is. It does not consist, he tells us, in success, but in doing something which can not be easily comprehended; which compels men to think over and over again about it;* and, certainly, this definition makes the word particularly applicable to the achievement of Columbus.

The court prepared a solemn reception for the admiral at Barcelona, where the people poured out in such numbers to see him that the streets could not contain them. A triumphal procession like his the

* HERRERA, dec. i., lib. ii., cap. 3.

world had not yet seen: it was a thing to make the most incurious alert, and even the sad and solitary student content to come out and mingle with the mob. The captives that accompanied a Roman general's car might be strange barbarians, of a tribe from which Rome had not before had slaves; but barbarians were not unknown creatures. Here, with Columbus, were beings of a new world. We may imagine the rumors that must have gone before his coming; and now he was there. Ferdinand and Isabella had their thrones placed in the presence of the assembled court. Columbus approached the monarchs, and then, his countenance beaming with modest satisfaction (*modesta risa*), knelt at the king's feet, and begged leave to kiss their highnesses' hands. They gave their hands; then they bade him rise, and be seated before them. He recounted, briefly, the events of his voyage—a story more interesting than the tale told by Æneas in the court of Dido—and he concluded his unpretending narrative by showing what new things and creatures he had brought with him.

Ferdinand and Isabella fell on their knees, giving thanks to God with many tears, and then the choristers of the royal chapel closed the grand ceremonial by singing the "Te Deum." Afterward men walked home grave and yet happy, having seen the symbol of a great work—something to be thought over for many a generation.

Other marks of approbation for Columbus were not wanting. The agreement between him and Los Reyes (Ferdinand and Isabella will henceforth be often called Los Reyes, as they are in the histories of that time) was confirmed. An appropriate coat of arms, then a thing of much significance, was granted to him in aug-

mentation of his own. In the shield are conspicuously emblazoned the royal arms of Castile and Leon.* Nothing can better serve to show the immense favor which Columbus had obtained at court by his discovery than such a grant; and it is but a trifling addition to make, in recounting his new honors, that the title of Don was given to him and his descendants, and also to his brothers. He rode by the king's side, was served at table as a grandee, "All hail" was said to him on state occasions, and the men of his age, happy in that, had found out another great man to honor.

The more prosaic part of the business had then to be attended to. Los Reyes applied to the Pope, Alexander the Sixth, to confer on the crowns of Castile and Leon the lands discovered and to be discovered in the Indies. To this application they soon received a favorable answer. The Pope granted to the Princes of Castile and Leon, and to their successors, the sovereign empire and principality of the Indies, and of the navigation there, with high and royal jurisdiction and imperial dignity and lordship over all that hemisphere. To preserve the peace between Spain and Portugal, the pontiff divided the Spanish and Portuguese Indian sovereignties by an imaginary line drawn from pole to pole one hundred leagues to the west of the Azores and the Cape de Verde Islands.†

* "Le dieron las mismas armas reales de Castilla y de Leon, mezcladas y repartidas con otras que assi mesmo le conçedieron de nuevo." —OVIEDO, *Hist. Gen. y Nat.*, lib. ii., cap. 7.

† It is conjectured by Humboldt that this imaginary line had reference to the line of no variation noticed by Columbus, or rather to be inferred from his observations of the variation of the needle on those occasions which had caused the sailors such terror in his first voyage.

Meanwhile the preparations were being made for a second voyage to be undertaken by the admiral. After the arrival of the apostolic bulls, and before the departure of Columbus from Barcelona, the nine Indians brought by him were baptized. Here, parenthetically, we may take note of something which, if the fact did correspond with what the Spaniards thought about it, would indeed be notable. One of the Indians, after being baptized, died, and was, we are told, the first of that nation, according to pious belief, who entered heaven.*

We can not help thinking of the hospitable and faithful Guacanagari, and imagining that, if his race had been like him, some one might already have reached the regions of the blessed. I do not, however, refer to this passage of HERRERA for its boldness or its singularity, but because it brings before us again the profound import attached to baptism in those times, and may help to account for many seeming inconsistencies in the conduct of the Spaniards to the Indians.

In the conduct, however, of Los Reyes toward the Indians there was nothing equivocal, but all that they did showed the tenderness and religious care of these monarchs for their new subjects. The instructions which Columbus carried out in his second voyage, dated the 29th of May, 1493, are the first strokes

For several curious and interesting observations on this papal bull, see HUMBOLDT, *Examen Critique de l'Histoire du Nouveau Continent*, tome iii., p. 52, note.

* "Y porque ellos mismos pidieron el bautismo, quisieron los Reyes ofrecer á nuestro Señor las primicias desta gentilidad, y fueron padrinos, el Rey y el Príncipe don Juan su hijo: el qual quiso, que uno de los Indios quedasse en su casa en su servicio, que no mucho despues murió, que segun piadosamente se deve creer, fué el primero que desta nacion entró en el cielo."—HERRERA, dec. i., lib. ii., cap. 5.

upon that obdurate mass of colonial difficulty, which at last, by incessant working of great princes, great churchmen, and great statesmen, was eventually to be hammered into some righteous form of wisdom and of mercy. In the course of these instructions, the admiral is ordered to labor in all possible ways to bring the dwellers in the Indies to a knowledge of the holy Catholic faith. And that this may the easier be done, all the armada is to be charged to deal "lovingly" with the Indians; the admiral is to make them presents, and to "honor them much;" and if by chance any person or persons should treat the Indians ill, in any manner whatever, the admiral is to chastise such ill-doers severely.* Their highnesses also, to insure an authorized teaching of the faith, sent out a certain Father Buil, with other ecclesiastics, to superintend the religious education of the Indians.

With these instructions, Columbus set sail again on the 25th of September, 1493, having with him seventeen vessels and fifteen hundred men. After making various discoveries, which we need not follow out, the admiral arrived at Hispaniola, and had the misfortune to find his little colony at La Navidad entirely destroyed. The account of this which Guacanagari gave to Columbus, and which I see no reason for doubting, is, that the Spaniards who had been left at La Navidad took to evil courses, quarreled among themselves,

* "Procure é haga el dicho Almirante que todos los que en ella (la armada) van, é los que mas fueren de aquí adelante, traten muy bien é amorosamente á los dichos indios, sin que les fagan enojo alguno, procurando que tengan los unos con los otros mucha conversacion é familiaridad, haciéndose las mejores obras que ser pueda; é asimismo, el dicho Almirante les dé algunas dádivas graciosamente de las cosas de mercaderías de sus Altezas que lleva para el rescate, é los honre mucho."—NAVARRETE, *Col. Dip.*, Núm 45.

straggled about the country, and finally were set upon, when weak and few in numbers, by a neighboring Indian chief, named Caonabó, who burned the tower, and killed or dispersed the garrison, none of whom were ever discovered.* Columbus built another fort in a different part of the island, and called his new colony Isabella. Hearing of the mines of Cibao, he sent to reconnoitre them, and the Indians, little foreseeing what was to come of it, gave gold to the Spanish messengers, who thereupon returned with good signs of success. Columbus accordingly resolved to found a colony at Cibao.

At this period (January, 1494), Columbus sent home an account of the state of his colony. It is in the form of instructions to a certain Antonio de Torres, the receiver of the colony, who was to proceed to the court of Spain, and inform the monarchs of such things as were written in these instructions, and doubtless to elucidate them by discourse, as in the present day we send a dispatch to be read by, an ambassador to the foreign minister of the power we are treating with. There remains a copy, made at the time, of this document, and of the notes in the margin containing the resolutions of Los Reyes. The original, thus noted, was taken back to Columbus. It is a most valuable document, very illustrative of the cautious and wise dealing of the Catholic sovereigns.

The document begins with the usual strain of complimentary address to great personages. "*Their highnesses hold it for good service*" is the marginal remark.

* This is the more to be regretted, as we might possibly have had from the Englishman or the Irishman an account of the first voyage of Columbus in our own language.

The next paragraph consists of a general statement of the discoveries that have been made. "*Their highnesses give much thanks to God, and hold as very honored service all that the admiral has done.*"

Then follow the admiral's reasons why he has not been able to send home more gold. His people have been ill; it was necessary to keep guard," &c. "*He has done well*" is in the margin.

He suggests the building a fortress near the place where gold can be got. Their highnesses approve; and the note in the margin is, "*This is well, and so it must be done.*"

Then comes a paragraph about provisions, and a marginal order from Los Reyes "*that Juan de Fonseca is to provide for that matter.*"

Again, there comes another paragraph about provisions, complaining, among other things, that the casks in which the wine for the armada had been put were leaky. Their highnesses make an order in the margin "*that Juan de Fonseca is to find out the persons who played this cheat with the wine-casks, and to make good from their pockets the loss, and to see that the canes*" (sugar-canes for planting, I suppose) "*are good, and that all that is here asked for be provided immediately.*"

So far, nothing can run more pleasantly with the main document than the notes in the margin. Columbus now touches upon a matter which intimately concerns our subject. He desires his agent to inform their highnesses that he has sent home some Indians from the Cannibal Islands as slaves, to be taught Castilian, and to serve afterward as interpreters, so that the work of conversion may go on. His arguments in support of this proceeding are weighty. He speaks

of the good that it will be to take these people away from cannibalism and to have them baptized, for so they will gain their souls, as he expresses it. Then, too, with regard to the other Indians, he remarks, we shall have great credit from them, seeing that we can capture and make slaves of these Cannibals, of whom they, the peaceable Indians, entertain so great a fear. Such arguments must be allowed to have much force in them; and it may be questioned whether many of those persons who, in these days, are the strongest opponents of slavery, would then have had that perception of the impending danger of its introduction which Los Reyes appear to have entertained from their answer to this part of the document. "*This is very well, and so it must be done; but let the admiral see whether it could not be managed there*" (i. e., in the Cannibal Islands), "*that they should be brought to our holy Catholic faith, and the same thing with the Indians of those islands where he is.*"

The admiral's dispatch goes much farther. In the next paragraph he boldly suggests that, for the advantage of the souls of these Cannibal Indians, the more of them that could be taken the better; and that, considering what quantities of live-stock and other things are required for the maintenance of the colony, a certain number of caravels should be sent each year with these necessary things, and the cargoes be paid for in slaves taken from among the Cannibals.* He touches again on the good that will be done to the Cannibals themselves; alludes to the customs duties that their highnesses may levy upon them, and concludes by desiring Antonio de Torres to send or bring an answer,

* "Las cuales cosas se les podrian pagar en esclavos de estos canibales."—NAVARRETE, *Col.*, vol. i., p. 232.

“because the preparations here” (for capturing these Cannibals) “may be carried on with more confidence if the scheme seem good to their highnesses.”

At the same time that we must do Columbus the justice to believe that his motives were right in his own eyes, it must be admitted that a more distinct suggestion for the establishment of a slave-trade was never proposed. To their honor, Ferdinand and Isabella replied, “*As regards this matter, it is suspended for the present, until there come some other way of doing it there, and let the admiral write what he thinks of this.*”*

This is rather a confused answer, as often happens when a proposition from a valued friend or servant is disapproved of, but has to be rejected kindly. The Catholic sovereigns would have been very glad to have received some money from the Indies; money was always welcome to King Ferdinand; the purchase of wine, seeds, and cattle for the colonists had hitherto proved any thing but a profitable outlay; the prospect of conversion was probably dear to the hearts of both these princes, certainly to one of them; but still this proposition for the establishment of slavery was wisely and magnanimously set aside.

While Antonio de Torres was absent from Hispaniola, laying these propositions before Los Reyes, Columbus was busy about the affairs of the colony, which were in a most distracted state. The number of men which the admiral had brought out with him was disproportionate to his means of sustaining them. Pro-

* “En este se ha suspendido por agora hasta que venga otro camino de allá, y escriba el Almirante lo que en esto le pareciere.”—NARRARETE, *Col.*, vol. i., p. 233.

visions and medicines began to fail ; sickness pervaded the whole armament, and men of all ranks and stations—hidalgos, people of the court, and ecclesiastics—were obliged to labor manually under regulations strictly enforced. The rage and vexation of these men, many of whom had come out with the notion of finding gold ready for them on the sea-shore, may be imagined ; and complaints of the admiral's harsh way of dealing with those under him (probably no harsher than was absolutely necessary to save them) now took their rise, and pursued him ever after to his ruin. The colonists, however, were somewhat cheered, after a time, by hearing of gold mines and seeing specimens of ore brought from thence ; and the admiral went himself and founded the fort of St. Thomas in the mining district of Cibao. But the Spaniards gained very little real advantage from these gold mines, which they began to work before they had consolidated around them the means of living ; in fact, dealing with the mines in Hispaniola as if they had been discovered in an old country where the means of transit and supplies of provisions can with certainty be procured.

There was also another evil besides that of inconsiderate mining, and perhaps quite as mischievous a one, which stood in the way of the steady improvement of these early Spanish colonies. The Catholic sovereigns had unfortunately impressed upon Columbus their wish that he should devote himself to further discovery, a wish but too readily adopted and furthered by his enterprising spirit. The hankering of the Spanish monarchs for further discovery was fostered by their jealousy of the Portuguese. The Portuguese were making their way toward India, going eastward. They, the Spaniards, thought they were

discovering India, going westward. The more rapidly, therefore, each nation could advance and plant its standard, the more of much-coveted India it would hereafter be able to claim. Acting upon such views, Columbus now proceeded onward, bent upon further discovery, notwithstanding that his little colonies at Isabella and St. Thomas must have needed all his sagacity to protect them, and all his authority to restrain them. He nominated a council to manage the government during his absence, with his brother Don Diego as president of it: he appointed a certain Don Pedro Margarite as captain-general; and then put to sea on the 24th of April, 1494.

In the course of the voyage that then ensued, the admiral made many important discoveries, among them Jamaica, and the cluster of little islands called the "Garden of the Queen." The navigation among these islands was so difficult that the admiral is said to have been thirty-two days without sleeping. Certain it is, that after he had left the island called La Mona, and when he was approaching the island of San Juan, a drowsiness, which LAS CASAS calls "pestilential," but which might reasonably be attributed to the privations, cares, and anxieties which the admiral had now undergone for many months, seized upon him, and entirely deprived him for a time of the use of his senses.*

His object in going to San Juan was to capture Cannibals there; and LAS CASAS looks upon this lethargical attack as a judgment upon the admiral for so unjust a manner of endeavoring to introduce Chris-

* "Le dió una modorra pestilencial, que totalmente le quitó el uso de los sentidos, y todas las fuerzas, y quedo muerto, y no pensaron que un dia durara."—LAS CASAS, *Hist. de las Indias*, MS., lib. i., cap. 99.

tianity. The mariners turned the fleet homeward to Isabella, where they arrived the 29th of September, 1494, bearing with them their helpless commander.

On Columbus's arrival at Isabella, where he remained ill for five months, he found his brother, Bartholomew Columbus, whose presence gladdened him exceedingly. His brothers were very dear to the admiral, as may be gathered from a letter to his eldest son Diego, in which he bids him make much of his brother Ferdinand, the son of Beatrice; for, says he, "Ten brothers would not be too many for you. I have never found better friends, on my right hand and on my left, than my brothers." Afterward came Antonio de Torres with provisions and all things needful for the colony. But nothing, we are told, delighted the admiral so much as the dispatches from court; for he was a faithful, loyal man, who loved to do his duty to those who employed him, and to have his faithfulness recognized. Peace or delight, however, was not at any time to be long enjoyed by Columbus. He found his colony in a sad state of disorganization; the Indians were in arms against the Spaniards; and Father Buil, Don Pedro Margarite, and other principal persons had gone home to Spain in the ship which had brought Bartholomew Columbus.

The admiral, before his departure, had given a most injudicious command to Margarite, namely, to put himself at the head of four hundred men and go through the country, with the twofold object of impressing upon the natives a respect for the power of the Spaniards, and of freeing the colony from supporting these four hundred men. The instructions to Margarite were, to observe the people and the natural productions of the country through which he should pass;

to do rigorous justice, so that the Spaniards should be prevented from injuring the Indians, or the Indians the Spaniards; to treat the Indians kindly; to obtain provisions by purchase if possible, if not by any other means; and to capture Caonabó and his brothers either by force or artifice.*

The proceedings of the men under Margarite were similar to those of the Spaniards formerly left at La Navidad. They went straggling over the country; they consumed the provisions of the poor Indians, astonishing them by their voracious appetites; waste, rapine, injury, and insult followed in their steps; and from henceforth there was but little hope of the two races living peaceably together in those parts, at least upon equal terms. The Indians were now swarming about the Spaniards with hostile intent: as a modern historian well describes the situation, "they had passed from terror to despair;"† and, but for the opportune arrival of the admiral, the Spanish settlements in Hispaniola might again have been entirely swept away.

Caonabó, the cacique who in former days had put to death the garrison at La Navidad, was now threatening that of St. Thomas, the fort which the admiral had caused to be built in the mining district of Cibao. Guatiguaná, the cacique of Macorix, who had killed eight Spanish soldiers and set fire to a house where there were forty ill, was now within two days' march

* Muñoz, *Hist. del Nuevo-Mundo*, lib. v., cap. 10.

† "Crecen las insolencias hasta el punto de hacerse intolerables á los vecinos de la Vega. Los soldados, sin cabeza que los adune y contenga, corren divididos por varias partes, entregándose á quanto les dicta la necesidad, la pasion, y el antojo. Cansados de sufrir los miserables Indios pasan del terror á la desesperacion."—Muñoz, *Hist. del Nuevo-Mundo*, lib. v., sec. 25.

of Isabella, besieging the fort Magdalena. Columbus started up forthwith, went off to Magdalena, engaged the Indians, and routed them utterly. He took a large part of them for slaves, and reduced to obedience the whole of the province of Macorix. Returning to Isabella, he sent back, on the 24th of February, 1495, the four ships which Antonio de Torres had brought out, chiefly laden with Indian slaves. It is rather remarkable that the very ships which brought that admirable reply from Ferdinand and Isabella to Columbus, begging him to seek some other way to Christianity than through slavery, even for wild man-devouring Caribs, should come back full of slaves taken from among the mild islanders of Hispaniola.

Caonabó, not daunted by the fate of Guatiguaná, still continued to molest St. Thomas. The admiral accordingly sallied out with two hundred men against this cacique. On the broad plains of the Vega Real the Spaniards found an immense number of Indians collected together, amounting, it is said, to one hundred thousand men. The admiral divided his forces into two bands, giving the command of one to his brother Bartholomew, and leading the other himself; and when the brothers made an attack upon the Indians at the same time from different quarters, this numerous host was at once and utterly put to flight. In speaking of such a defeat, the modern reader must not be lavish of the words "cowardly," "pusillanimous," and the like, until, at least, he has well considered what it is to expose naked bodies to fire-arms, to the charge of steel-clad men on horseback, and to the clinging ferocity of bloodhounds. A "horrible carnage" ensued upon the flight of the Indians. Many of them, less fortunate, perhaps, than those who were

slain, being taken alive, were condemned to slavery.* Caonabó, however, who was besieging the fortress of St. Thomas at the time of the battle on the Vega Real, remained untaken. The admiral resolved to secure the person of this cacique by treachery, and sent Ojeda (a man of whom we shall hear much hereafter in this history) to cajole Caonabó into coming to a friendly meeting. There are some curious instructions of Columbus's to Margarite in 1494,† respecting a plot to take this formidable Caonabó. They are as thoroughly base and treacherous as can well be imagined. This time the admiral's plan was completely successful.

The story‡ which was current in the colonies of the manner in which Ojeda captured the resolute Indian chief is this: Ojeda carried with him gyves and manacles, the latter of the kind called by the Spaniards, somewhat satirically, *esposas* (wives), and all made of brass (*laton*) or steel, finely wrought, and highly polished. The metals of Spain were prized by the Indians in the same way that the gold of the Indies was by the Spaniards. Moreover, among the Indians there was a strange rumor of talking brass, that arose from their listening to the church bell at Isabella, which, summoning the Spaniards to mass, was thought by the simple Indians to converse with them. Indeed, the natives of Hispaniola held the Spanish metals in such estimation, that they applied to them an Indian word, *Turey*, which seems to have signified any thing that descends from heaven.§ When, therefore, Ojeda

* MUÑOZ, *Hist. del Nuevo-Mundo*, lib. v., cap. 27.

† NAVARRETE, *Col. Dip.*, Núm. 72.

‡ The learned MUÑOZ considers this story as a legend. (See the prologue to his *History*.) I do not know why it should be so considered.

§ "El ardid fué aqueste; que como los Indios llamaban el laton nuevo. I.—G

brought these ornaments to Caonabó, and told him they were Biscayan *Turey*, and that they were a great present from the admiral, and that he would show him how to put them on, and that when they were put on, Caonabó should set himself on Ojeda's horse, and be shown to his admiring subjects as, Ojeda said, the kings of Spain were wont to show themselves to theirs, the incautious Indian is said to have fallen entirely into the trap. Going with Ojeda, accompanied by only a small escort, to a river a short distance from his main encampment, Caonabó, after performing ablutions, suffered the crafty young Spaniard to put the heaven-descended fetters on him, and to set him upon the horse. Ojeda himself got up behind the Indian prince, and then whirling a few times round, like a pigeon before it takes its determined flight, making the followers of Caonabó imagine that this was but display, they all the while keeping at a respectful distance from the horse, an animal they much dreaded, Ojeda darted off for Isabella; and after great fatigues, now keeping to the main track, now traversing the woods in order to evade pursuit, brought Caonabó bound into the presence of Columbus. The unfortunate cacique was sent to Spain to be judged there, and his forces were afterward put to flight by a troop of Spaniards under the command of this same Ojeda. Some were killed; some taken prisoners; some fled to the forests and the mount-

estros Turey é á los otros metales que habíamos traído de Castilla por la grande estima que de ellos tenían como cosa venida del Cielo, y así hacían joyas de ellos en especial del latón, llevó el dicho Alonso de Ojeda unos grillos y unas esposas muy bien hechos sotiles y delgados y muy bruñidos y acicalados en lugar de presente que le enviaba el Almirante, diciendole que era Turey de Vizcaya, como si digera era cosa muy preciosa venida del Cielo que se llamaba Turey de Vizcaya."

—LAS CASAS, *Hist. de las Indias*, MS., lib. i., cap. 102.

ains; some yielded, "offering themselves to the service of the Christians if they would allow them to live in their own ways."*

Never, perhaps, were little skirmishes, for such they were on the part of the Spaniards, of greater importance than those above narrated, which took place in the early part of the year 1495. They must be looked upon as the origin in the Indies of slavery, vassalage, and the system of *repartimientos*. We have seen that the admiral, after his first victory, sent off four ships with slaves to Spain. He now took occasion to impose a tribute upon the whole population of Hispaniola. It was thus arranged: Every Indian above fourteen years old, who was in the provinces of the mines, or near to these provinces, was to pay every three months a little bell-full of gold; all other persons in the island were to pay at the same time an *arroba* of cotton for each person. Certain brass or copper tokens were made—different ones for each tribute time—and were given to the Indians when they paid tribute; and these tokens, being worn about their necks, were to show who had paid tribute.† A remarkable proposal was made upon this occasion to the admiral by Guarionéx, cacique of the Vega Real, namely, that he would institute a huge farm for the growth of corn and manufacture of bread, stretching from Isabella to St. Domingo (*i. e.*, from sea to sea), which would suffice to maintain all Castile with bread. The cacique would do this on condition that his vassals were not to pay tribute in gold, as they did not know how to collect that. But this proposal was not accepted, be-

* "Ofreciéndose al servicio de los Christianos si les permiten vivir en su naturaleza."—Muñoz, *Hist. del Nuevo-Mundo*, lib. v., cap. 29.

† HERRERA, dec. i., lib. ii., cap. 17.

cause Columbus wished to have tribute in such things as he could send over to Spain.*

This tribute is considered to have been a most unreasonable one in point of amount;† and Columbus was obliged to modify his demands upon these poor Indians, and in some instances to change the nature of them. It appears that in 1496 service instead of tribute was demanded of certain Indian villages; and as the villagers were ordered to make (and work) the farms in the Spanish settlements,‡ this may be considered as the beginning of the system of *repartimientos*, or *encomiendas*, as they were afterward called.

We must not, however, suppose that Indian slavery would not have taken place by means of Columbus even if these uprisings and defeats of the Indians in the course of the year 1495 had never occurred. Very early indeed we see what the admiral's views were with regard to the Indians. In the diary which he kept of his first voyage, on the 14th of October, three days after discovering the New World, he describes a

* “Ofreció Guarionex, Rey de la gran Vega Real, al Almirante que le haria una labrança de pan, que llegasse desde la Ysabela hasta Santo Domingo, que es de mar á mar, y ay buenas cinquenta y cinco leguas de camino, con lo qual bastaria á mätener de pan á toda Castilla, con que no le pidiesse oro, porque sus vassallos no lo sabian coger, pero como el Almirante era forastero, sólo y desfavorecido de los ministros de los Reyes Católicos, y como prudēte conocia, que lo que le avia de conservar, eran las riquezas que embiasse, davase priesa por el oro.”—HERRERA, dec. i., lib. ii., cap. 17.

† “Contribucion durisima, y ordenada con suma ligereza.”—MUNOZ, lib. v., cap. 30.

‡ “Antes que se fuesse á Castilla el Almirante, el año de 1496, por el mes de Março ó poco despues de partido, en lugar de los tributos se impuso á algunos pueblos, que tuviessen cuydado de hazer las labranças de las poblaciones de los Castellanos, á imitacion de lo que usavan con sus Caziques.”—HERRERA, dec. i., lib. iii., cap. 13.

position which he thinks would be a very good one for a fort; and he goes on to say, "I do not think that it (the fort) will be necessary, for this people is very simple in the use of arms (as your highnesses will see from seven of them that I have taken in order to bring them to you, to learn our language, and afterward to take them back), so that when your highnesses command, you can have them all taken to Castile, or kept in the island as captives."*

Columbus was not an avaricious nor a cruel man, and certainly he was a very pious one; but early in life he had made voyages along the coast of Africa, and he was accustomed to a slave-trade. Moreover, he was anxious to reduce the expenses of these Indian possessions to the Catholic sovereigns, to prove himself in the right as to all he had said respecting the advantages that would flow to Spain from the Indies, and to confute his enemies at court.

Those who have read the instructions to Columbus given by the Catholic monarchs will naturally be curious to know how the news of the arrival of these vessels laden with slaves, the fruit of the admiral's first victory over the Indians, was received by Los Reyes, recollecting how tender they had been about slavery before. This, however, was a very different case from the former one. Here were people taken in what would be called rebellion—prisoners of war. Still we find that Ferdinand and Isabella were heedful in their proceedings in this matter. There is a letter of theirs to Bishop Fonseca, who managed Indian affairs, telling him to withhold receiving money for the sale of these Indians that Torres had brought with him until their highnesses should be able to inform themselves, from

* NAVARRETE, *Col.*, vol. i., p. 2.

men learned in the law, theologians, and canonists, whether, with a good conscience, these Indians could be ordered to be sold or not.* One who has been indefatigable in his researches† among the documents relating to Spanish America declares that he can not find that the point was decided; and if he has failed, we are not likely to discover any direct evidence about the decision. We shall hereafter, however, find something which may enable us to conjecture what the decision practically came to be.

Many of the so-called free Indians in Hispaniola had, perhaps, even a worse fate than that which fell to the lot of their brethren condemned to slavery. These free men, seeing the Spaniards quietly settling down in their island, building houses, and making forts, and no vessels in the harbor of Isabella to take them away, fell into the profoundest sadness, and bethought them of the desperate remedy of attempting to starve the Spaniards out by not sowing nor planting any thing. But this is a shallow device when undertaken by the greater number, in any country, against the smaller. The scheme reacted upon themselves. They had intended to gain a secure though scanty sustenance in the forests and upon the mountains; but, though the Spaniards suffered bitterly from famine, they were only driven by it to farther pursuit and molestation of the Indians, who died in great numbers of hunger, sickness, and misery.

About this period there arrived in the Indies from

* "Porque Nos queriamos informarnos de letrados, Teólogos é Canonistas, si con buena conciencia se pueden vender estos por solo vos (qy. esclavos for solo vos) ó no."—NAV., *Col. Dip.*, Núm. 92.

† The historian MUÑOZ.

the court of Spain a commissioner of inquiry (*Juez pesquisidor*), his mission being doubtless occasioned by the various complaints made against the admiral by Father Buil, Margarite, and the Spaniards who had returned from Hispaniola. The name of this commissioner was Juan Aguado, and his powers were vouched for by the following letter from Los Reyes:

“THE KING AND THE QUEEN.

“*Cavaliers, Esquires, and other persons, who by our command are in the Indies, we send you thither Juan Aguado, our Gentleman of the Chamber, who will speak to you on our part: we command that you give him faith and credence.*

“*I the King: I the Queen.*

“*By command of the King and Queen, our Lords.*

“HERNAND ALVAREZ.

“*Madrid, the ninth of April, one thousand }
four hundred and ninety-five.*” }

The royal commissioner arrived at Isabella in October, 1495, and his proceedings in the colony, together with the fear of what he might report on his return, quickened the admiral's desire to return to court, that he might fight his own battles there himself. Leaving, therefore, his brother Bartholomew as lieutenant governor (*Adelantado*), the admiral quitted Isabella on the 10th of March, 1496, and anchored in the Bay of Cadiz on the 11th of June in that year. He proceeded to Burgos, where the court then was, and appears to have been well received by Ferdinand and Isabella, and to have made his case good against all maligners. It was long, however, before he was able to return to Hispaniola with such an armament as he required. Meanwhile, about ten months after his arri-

val, he managed to send out two ships under Peter Fernandez Coronel with such things as were necessary for the colony. The admiral himself did not leave Spain again until May, 1498.

During the two years that elapsed from the admiral's leaving Hispaniola in 1496 to his return there in 1498, many things happened on both sides of the Atlantic which need recording. In 1496, we find that Don Bartholomew Columbus sent to Spain three hundred slaves from Hispaniola. He had previously informed Los Reyes that certain caciques were killing the Castilians, and their highnesses had given orders in reply that all those who should be found guilty should be sent to Spain. If this meant the common Indians as well as the caciques, then it seems probable that the question about selling them with a safe conscience was already decided.

In 1497, two very injudicious edicts were published by the Catholic sovereigns, upon the advice, as we are told, of Columbus: one authorizing the judges to transport criminals to the Indies; the other giving an indulgence to all those who had committed any crime (with certain exceptions, among which heresy, *lèse-majesté*, and treason find a place) to go out at their own expense to Hispaniola, and to serve for a certain time under the orders of the admiral.* The remembrance of this advice on his part might well have shamed Columbus from saying, as he did three years afterward in his most emphatic manner, "I swear that numbers of men have gone to the Indies who did not deserve water

* NAVARRETE, *Col. Dip.*, Núm. 116 and 120.

from God or man.”* It is but fair, however, to mention, that LAS CASAS, speaking of the colonists who went out under these conditions, says, “I have known some of them in these islands, even of those who had lost their ears, whom I always found sufficiently honest men.”

In 1497, letters patent were issued from Los Reyes to the admiral, authorizing him to grant *repartimientos* of the lands in the Indies to the Spaniards. It is noticeable that in this document there is no mention of Indians, so that they had not come to form a portion of a *repartimiento* at this period. The document in question is of a formal character, expressed in the style of legal documents of the present day, by virtue of which the fortunate Spaniard who gets the land is “to have, and to hold, and to possess,” and so forth (*haya é tenga é posea*); and is enabled “to sell, and to give, and to present, and to traffic with, and to exchange, and to pledge, and to alienate, and to do with it and in it all that he likes or may think good.”†

While the acts of legislation above narrated, which can not be said to have been favorable to good government in the Indies, were being framed at the court of Spain, Don Bartholomew Columbus was doing much in his administration of Hispaniola that led to very mischievous results.

Before the admiral left the island, he had discovered some mines to the southward, and had thought of choosing a port in their vicinity where he might estab-

* “Fago juramento que cantidad de hombres han ido á las Indias que no merecian el agua para con Dios y con el mundo.”—Carta del ALMIRANTE al AMA del PRINCIPE.—NAV., Col., vol. i., p. 271.

† MUÑOZ mentions that, in order to encourage emigration to the Indies, the perpetual possession of the houses which they should build and the lands they should cultivate had been offered to the Spaniards in 1495.—MUÑOZ, *Hist. del Nuevo-Mundo*, lib. v., cap. 33.

lish a colony. He had spoken about this in his letters to the government at home. As he entered the Bay of Cadiz on his return, he met some vessels there which were bound for Hispaniola, and which contained letters from their highnesses approving of his suggestion. By these ships, therefore, he sent orders to his brother to make this southern settlement; and the Adelantado accordingly proceeded southward, and fixed



upon a port at the entrance of the River Ozama. He sent for artisans from Isabella, and commenced building a fortress which he called St. Domingo, and which afterward became the chief port of the island.

There was one part of Hispaniola into which the Spaniards had not yet penetrated: it was called Xaragua, and was reigned over by a cacique named Bohechio, whose sister, Anacaona, the wife of Caonabó, seems also to have had much authority in those parts. The Adelantado, after seeing the works at St. Domingo commenced, resolved to enter the kingdom of Xaragua, whither he proceeded at the head of one hundred men. Arriving at the River Neyba, he found an im-

mense army of Indians drawn up there to oppose his progress. Don Bartholomew made signs to them that his errand was peaceful; and the good-natured Indians accepting his proffers of amity, he was conducted some thirty leagues farther to the city of Xaragua, where he was received with processions of dancing and singing women, and feasted magnificently. After having been well entertained by these Indians, the Adelantado proceeded to business, and in plain terms demanded tribute of them. Bohechio pleaded that there was no gold in his dominions, to which the Adelantado replied that he did not wish to impose tribute upon any people except of the natural productions to be found in their country. It was finally settled that Bohechio should pay tribute in cotton and cazabi-bread. He acceded to this agreement very willingly, and the Adelantado and this cacique parted on the most friendly terms.

Don Bartholomew then returned to Isabella, where he found that about three hundred men had died from disease, and that there was great dearth of provisions. He distributed the sick men in his fortresses and in the adjacent Indian villages, and afterward set out on a journey to his new fort of St. Domingo, collecting tribute by the way. In all these rapid and energetic proceedings of the Adelantado, and still more from causes over which he had no control, the Spaniards must have suffered much, and, doubtless, those complaints on their part which were soon to break out very menacingly were not unheard at the present time.

If the Spaniards, however, complained of the labors which Don Bartholomew imposed upon them, the Indians complained still more, and far more justly, of the tribute imposed upon them. Several of the minor

chiefs, upon this occasion of collecting tribute, complained to the great Cacique Guarionex, and suggested a rising of the Indians. This cacique seems to have been a peaceful, prudent man, and well aware of the power of the Spaniards. But he now consented to place himself at the head of an insurrection, which, however, the lieutenant governor, soon made aware of it, quelled at once by a battle, in which he was victorious over Guarionex, taking him and other principal persons captive. The chief movers of the revolt were put to death, but Guarionex was delivered up to his people, who flocked by thousands to his place of imprisonment, clamoring for his restitution.

About this time messengers came from Bohechio and Anacaona, informing the Adelantado that the tribute of that country was ready for him, and he accordingly went to fetch it. During his absence from the seat of government, and under the less vigorous administration of Don Diego Columbus, who had been left at the head of affairs at Isabella, those discontents among the Spaniards, which had, no doubt, been rife for a long time, broke out in a distinct manner. I allude to the well-known insurrection of Roldan, whom the admiral, on his departure, had left as chief justice in the island. The proceedings between the chief justice and the governor were to form an original to many similar ones to happen hereafter in many colonies even to our own times. It may be imagined that the family of Columbus were a hard race to deal with; and any one observing that the admiral was very often engaged in disputes, and almost always in the right, might conjecture that he was one of those persons who pass through life proving that every body about them is wrong, and going a great way to make them so.

This would have been an easy mode of explaining many things, and therefore very welcome to a narrator; but it would not be at all just toward Columbus to saddle upon him any such character. The men and the circumstances he had to deal with were of the most difficult character. Here were men who had come out with very grand expectations, and who found themselves pinched with hunger, having dire storms to encounter and vast labors to undergo; who were contained in due bonds by no pressure of society; who were commanded by a foreigner, or by members of his family, whom they knew to have many enemies at court; who thought that Los Reyes themselves could scarcely reach them at this distance; who imagined that they had worked themselves out of all law and order, and that they deserved an Alsatian immunity. With such men (many of them, perhaps, "not worthy of water") the admiral and his brothers had to get useful work of all kinds done, and did contrive to get vessels navigated, forts built, and some ideas of civilization maintained. But it was an arduous task at all times, and this Roldan did not furnish the least of the troubles which the admiral and his brothers had to endure.

Roldan, too, if we could hear him, would probably have something to say. He wished, it appears, to return to Spain, as Father Buil and Margarite had done; and urged that a certain caravel which the governor, Don Bartholomew Columbus, had built, might be launched for that purpose. Such is the account of Ferdinand Columbus, who maintains that the said caravel could not be launched for want of tackle. He also mentions that Roldan complained of the restless life the Adelantado led his men, building forts and

towns; and said that there was no hope of the admiral coming back to the colony with supplies. Without going into these squabbles—and, indeed, it is very difficult, when a quarrel of this kind breaks out, taking it up at the point where it breaks out, to judge it upon that only, seeing the stream of ill-will may have run underground for a long time—suffice it to say that Roldan and his men grew more and more insubordinate, were not at all quelled by the presence of the Adelantado on his return from Xaragua, and finally quitted Isabella in a body. The Adelantado contrived to keep some men faithful to him, promising them, among other things, two slaves each. Negotiations then took place between the Adelantado and Roldan, which must be omitted for the present, to enter upon the farther dealing of Don Bartholomew with the Indians.

These poor islanders were now harassed both by the rebels and by the loyal Spaniards, whom the Adelantado could not venture to curb much for fear of their going over to the other party. The Indians were also tempted by Roldan to join him, he contending that tribute had been unjustly imposed upon them. From all these difficulties Guarionex made his escape by flying to the territories of Maiobanex, the cacique of a hardy race who inhabited the hilly country toward Cabron. This flight of Guarionex was a very serious affair, as it threatened the extinction of tribute in that cacique's territory, and Don Bartholomew accordingly pursued the fugitive cacique. After some skirmishes with the troops of Maiobanex, in which, as usual, the Spaniards were victorious, the Adelantado sent a messenger to Maiobanex, telling him that the Spaniards did not seek war with him, but that he must give up the fugitive, otherwise his own territory would be de-

stroyed by fire and sword. Maiobanex replied "that every one knew that Guarionex was a good man, endowed with all virtue," wherefore he judged him to be worthy of assistance and defense, but that they, the Spaniards, were violent and bad men, and that he would have neither friendship nor commerce with them.

Upon receiving this answer, the Adelantado burned several villages and approached nearer to the camp of Maiobanex. Fresh negotiations were entered into: Maiobanex convoked an assembly of his people; and they contended that Guarionex ought to be given up,



and cursed the day when first he came among them. Their noble chief, however, said "that Guarionex was a good man, and deserved well at his hands, for he had given him many royal gifts when he came to him, and had taught him and his wife to join in choral songs and to dance, of which he made no little account, and for which he was grateful; wherefore he would be party to no treaty to desert Guarionex, since he had fled to him, and he had pledged himself to take care of the fugitive; and would rather suffer all extremities than

give detractors a cause for speaking ill, to say that he had delivered up his guest."* The assemblage of the people being dismissed, Maiobanex informed his guest that he would stand by him to the last.

The fugitive cacique, however, finding that Maiobanex's people were ill disposed toward him, quitted, of his own accord, their territory; but by so doing he was not enabled to save his generous host, who, with his family, was surprised and taken; and Guarionex himself being shortly afterward captured and put in chains at Fort Concepcion, the two caciques probably shared the same prison. Thus concludes a story, which, if it had been written by some Indian Plutarch, and the names had been more easy to pronounce, might have taken its just place among the familiar and household stories which we tell our children, to make them see the beauty of great actions.

The history now passes from the doings of the Adelantado to those of his brother the admiral. Columbus had at last obtained sufficient supplies for his expedition, and had set forth from Spain with eight ships, the 30th of May, 1498. In the course of this, his third voyage, he discovered Paria,† on the continent of America, where he made no stay, however, being obliged to proceed to Hispaniola, which he

* "Maiobanexius autem Guarionexium virum esse bonum et de se bene meritum, quod regia illi dona, cum ad eum veniret, multa præbuisset, uxoremque suam et ipsum chorizare tripudiarumque docuisset, quod non parvi faciebat, sibi que curæ esse respondit: propterea se nullo pacto eum, quandoquidem ad se confugerat, et ipse tutandi fidem dederat, deserturum: malleque se extrema omnia cum eo perpeti, quàm obloquendi causam, quòd hospitem tradiderit, detractoribus præbere."
—PETER MARTYR, *De Rebus Oceanicis*, dec. i., lib. vii.

† It will be desirable, in a later part of the narrative, to give an account of this third voyage of Columbus.

reached on the 30th of August, 1498. He found the state of his colony far from cheering, the defection of Roldan and his followers having put every thing into confusion. The admiral supposed at first that the enmity of Roldan's party was chiefly directed against the Adelantado, and the admiral hoped that now he had arrived, some agreement would speedily be concluded with Roldan, of which he might inform the Catholic sovereigns by the vessels which he purposed to send back immediately to Spain. This was very far, however, from being the case. These vessels, five in number, left the port of St. Domingo bearing no good news of peace and amity among the Spaniards, but laden with many hundreds of Indian slaves, which had been taken in the following manner. Some cacique* failed to perform the personal services imposed upon him and his people, and fled to the forests; upon which orders were given to pursue him, and a large number of slaves were captured and put into these ships. Columbus, in his letters to Los Reyes, enters into an account of the pecuniary advantage that will arise from these slave-dealing transactions, and from the sale of logwood. He estimates that "in the name of the sacred Trinity"† there may be sent as many slaves as sale could be found for in Spain, and that the value of the slaves, for whom there would be a demand to the number of four thousand, as he calcu-

* LAS CASAS conjectures it to have been the cacique of the Vega Real, and it might either be Guarionex or his successor.

† "De acá se pueden con el nombre de la Santa Trinidad enviar todos los esclavos que se pudiesen vender, y brasil, de los cuales si la informacion que yo truje es cierta, me dicen que se podrán vender cuatro mil, y que á poco valer valorán veinte cuentos; y cuatro mil quintales de brasil que pueden valer otro tanto, y el gasto puede aquí ser seis cuentos; así que á prima az buenos serian cuarenta cuentos si esto saliese así."—LAS CASAS, *Hist. de las Indias*, MS., lib. i., cap. 150.

lated from certain information, and of the logwood, would amount to forty *cuentos* (*i. e.*, forty million maravedis).* The number of slaves who were sent in these five ships was 600, of which 200 were given to the masters of the vessels in payment of freight. In the course of these letters, throughout which Columbus speaks after the fashion of a practiced slave-dealer, he alludes to the intended adoption, on behalf of private individuals, of a system of exchange of slaves for goods wanted from the mother country. The proposed arrangement was as follows: The masters of vessels were to receive slaves from the colonists, were to carry them to Spain, and to pay for their maintenance during the voyage; they were then to allow the colonists so much money payable at Seville, in proportion to the number of slaves brought over. This money they would expend according to the orders of the colonists, who would thus be able to obtain such goods as they might stand in need of.† It was upon the same occasion of writing home to Spain that the admiral strongly urged upon the Catholic sovereigns that the Spanish colonists should be allowed to make use of the services of the Indians for a year or two, until the colony should be in a settled state,‡ a pro-

* Equivalent to about £12,345.

† “Y salieron agora dos ó tres Maestres de navíos, que pusieron á la puerta cédulas para quien se quicra obligar á les dar mil y quinientos maravedises en Sevilla, que les llevarán allí tantos esclavos, y les faria la costa, y la paga seria de los dineros que dellos se sacasen. Plugó mucho á la gente toda, é yo lo acepté por todos, y les protesté de les dar la carga; y así vernán y traerán bastimentos y cosas que son acá necessarias.”—LAS CASAS, *Hist. de las Indias*, MS., lib. i., cap. 155 and 156.

‡ “Suplico á Vuestras Altezas tengan por bien que esta gente se aproveche agora un año ó dos fasta que este negocio esté empié, que ya se endereza.”—LAS CASAS, *Hist. de las Indias*, MS., lib. i., cap. 155 and 156.

posal which he did not wait for their highnesses' authority to carry out, and which led to a new form of the *repartimiento*. But this brings us back to Roldan's story, being closely connected with it.

After great trouble and many attempts at agreement, in which mention is more than once made of slaves,* the dispute between Roldan's party, rebels they might almost be called, and Columbus, was at last, after two years' negotiation, brought to a close. Roldan kept his chief justiceship, and his friends received lands and slaves. It brings to mind the conclusion of many a long war in the Old World, in which two great powers have been contending against each other, with several small powers on each side, the latter being either ruined in the course of the war, or sacrificed at the end. The admiral gave *repartimientos* to those followers of Roldan who chose to stay in the island, which were constituted in the following manner. The admiral placed under such a cacique so many thousand *matas* (shoots of the cazabi), or, which came to the same thing, so many thousand *montones* (small mounds a foot and a half high, and ten or twelve feet round, on each of which a cazabi shoot was planted); and Columbus then ordered that the cacique or his people should till these lands for whomsoever they were assigned to.† The *repartimiento* had now grown to its second state—not lands only, but lands and the tillage of them. We shall yet find that there is a farther step in this matter before the

* *Hist. del Almirante*, BARCIA, cap. 80.

† "Y de aquí tomaron origen los repartimientos, ó encomiendas de todas las Indias, porque los dava el Almirante por sus cédulas, diciendo que dava en tal cacique tantas mil matas, ó montones, que todo es uno, y que aquel cacique, ó sus gentes, labrasen para quien las dava, aquellas tierras."—HERRERA, dec. i., lib. iii., cap. 16.

repartimiento assumes its utmost development. It seems, too, that in addition to these *repartimientos*, Columbus gave slaves to those partisans of Roldan who staid in the island. Others of Roldan's followers, fifteen in number, chose to return to Spain: they received a certain number of slaves, some one, some two, some three; and the admiral sent them home in two vessels which left the port of St. Domingo at the beginning of October, 1499.

On the arrival in Spain of these vessels, the queen was in the highest degree angered by the above proceedings, and said that the admiral had received no authority from her to give her vassals to any one. She accordingly commanded proclamation to be made at Seville, Granada, and other places, that all persons who were in possession of Indians given to them by the admiral should send those Indians back to Hispaniola, under pain of death, "and that particularly they should send back those Indians, and not the others who had been brought before, because she was informed that they had been taken in just war."* The former part of this proclamation has been frequently alluded to, and no doubt it deserves much praise; but from the latter part it is clear that there were some Indians who could justly, according to Queen Isabella, be made slaves. By this time, therefore, at any rate, the question had been solved, whether by the learned in the law, theologians and canonists, I know not, but

* "La Reyna Católica recibió grandíssimo enojo, y dixo que el Almirante no tenia su poder para dar á nadie sus vasallos, y mandó pregonar en Sevilla, Granada, y otras partes, que todos los que tuviessen Indios, que les huviesse dado el Almirante, los bolviessen á la Española sopena de muerte, y que particularmente bolviessen estos Indios, y no los otros que antes se avian traydo, porque estava informada, que eran avidos de buena guerra."—HERRERA, dec. i., lib. iv., cap. 7.

certainly in practice, that the Indians taken in war could be made slaves. The whole of this transaction is very remarkable, and in some measure inexplicable on the facts before us. There is nothing to show that the slaves given to Roldan's followers were made slaves in a different way from those who had been sent over on former occasions, both by the admiral and his brother, for the benefit of the crown. And yet the queen, whom no one has ever accused of condescending to state craft, seems to deal with this particular case as if it were something quite new. It can not be said that the crown was favored, for the question is put upon the legitimacy of the original capture; and to confirm this, there is a letter from the sovereigns to one of their household, from which it may be inferred, though the wording is rather obscure, that they, too, gave up the slaves which had come over for them on this occasion.*

Every body would be sorry to take away any honor from Isabella; and all who are conversant with that period must wish that her proclamation could be proved to have gone quite to the root of the matter; but at least it can not be characterized as a mere blowing of trumpets for injured dignity, if it be not altogether a blast of wrath against an outrage to humanity.

To return to the affairs of Hispaniola. Columbus had now settled the Roldan revolt and other smaller ones; he had now, too, reduced the Indians into subjection; the mines were prospering; the Indians were to be brought together in populous villages, that so they might better be taught the Christian faith, and serve as vassals to the crown of Castile; the royal

* See NAVARRETE, *Col. Dip.*, Núm. 134.

revenues (always a matter of much concern to Columbus) would, he thought, in three years amount to sixty millions of reals; and now there was time for him to sit down and meditate upon the rebuilding of the temple of Jerusalem, or the conversion of Cathay.* If there had been any prolonged quiet for him, such great adventures would probably have begun to form the staple of his high thoughts. But he had hardly enjoyed more than a month of repose, when that evil came down upon him, which “poured the juice of aloes into the remaining portion of his life.”†

The Catholic sovereigns had hitherto, upon the whole, behaved well to Columbus. He had bitter enemies at court. People were forever suggesting to the monarchs that this foreigner was doing wrong. The admiral's son Ferdinand gives a vivid picture of some of the complaints preferred against his father. He says, “When I was at Granada, at the time the most serene prince Don Miguel died, more than fifty of them (Spaniards who had returned from the Indies), as men

* “David en su testamento dejó tres mil quintales de oro de las Indias á Salomon para ayuda de edificar el templo, y segun Josefo era el destas mismas tierras. Hierusalem y el monte Sion ha de ser reedificado por mano de cristianos: quien ha de ser, Dios por boca del Profeta en el décimo cuarto salmo lo dice. El Abad Joaquin dijo que este habia de salir de España. San Gerónimo á la santa mujer le mostró el camino para ello. El Emperador del Catayo ha dias que mandó sabios que le enseñen en la fé de Cristo. Quién será que se ofrezca á esto? Si nuestro Señor me lleva á España, yo me obligo de llevarle, con el nombre de Dios, en salvo.”—COLUMBUS to LOS REYES; NAVARRETE, *Col.*, vol. i., p. 309.

† “Entonces vino el golpe fatal que acibaró todos los dias de su vida.”—Muñoz, *Hist. del Nuevo-Mundo*, lib. vi., cap. 57.

These are the last printed words of Muñoz's *History*; and they are somewhat ominous of the fate of the excellent historian himself. There is more in manuscript of his *History*, which surely some lover of literature among the Spaniards will yet cause to be given to the world.

without shame, bought a great quantity of grapes, and sat themselves down in the court of the Alhambra, uttering loud cries, saying that their highnesses and the admiral made them live in this poor fashion on account of the bad pay they received, with many other dishonest and unseemly things, which they kept repeating. Such was their effrontery, that when the Catholic king came forth, they all surrounded him and got him into the midst of them, saying, 'Pay! Pay!' and if by chance I and my brother, who were pages to the most serene queen, happened to pass where they were, they shouted to the very heavens, saying, 'Look at the sons of the admiral of Mosquito-land—of that man who has discovered the lands of deceit and disappointment, a place of sepulchre and wretchedness to Spanish hidalgos:' adding many other insulting expressions, on which account we excused ourselves from passing by them."*

Unjust clamor like the above would not, alone, have turned the hearts of the Catholic sovereigns against Columbus; but this clamor was supported by serious grounds for dissatisfaction in the state and prospects of the colony; and where there is a constant stream of enmity and prejudice against a man, his conduct or his fortune will some day give good way for it to rush in upon him. However this may be, soon after the return of the five vessels from St. Domingo, mentioned above, which first told the news of the revolt of Rodan, Ferdinand and Isabella appear to have taken into serious consideration the question of suspending Columbus. He had himself, in the letters transmitted by these ships, requested that some one might be sent

* *Hist. del Almirante*, BARCIA, cap. 85.

to conduct the affairs of justice in the colony ; but if Ferdinand and Isabella began by merely looking out for such an officer, they ended in resolving to send one who should take the civil as well as judicial authority into his hands. This determination was not, however, acted upon hastily. On the 21st of March, 1499, they authorized Francis de Bobadilla “to ascertain what persons have raised themselves against justice in the island of Hispaniola, and to proceed against them according to law.”* On the 21st of May, 1499, they conferred upon this officer the government, and signed an order that all arms and fortresses in the Indies should be given up to him.† On the 26th of the same month they gave him the following remarkable letter to Columbus :

*“Don Christopher Columbus, our admiral of the ocean : We have commanded the Comendador Francis de Bobadilla, the bearer of this, that he speak to you on our part some things which he will tell you : we pray you give him faith and credence, and act accordingly.**

“I THE KING, I THE QUEEN.

“By their command,

“MIGUEL PEREZ DE ALMAZAN.”

Bobadilla, however, was not sent from Spain until the beginning of July, 1500, and did not make his appearance in Hispaniola till the 23d of August of the same year. Their highnesses, therefore, must have taken time before carrying their resolve into execu-

* NAVARRETE, *Col. Dip.*, Núm. 127.

† *Ibid.*, Núm. 128-29.

† *Ibid.*, Núm. 130.

tion, and what they meant by it is dubious. Certainly not that the matter should have been transacted in the coarse way which Bobadilla adopted. It is a great pity, and a sad instance of mistaken judgment, that they fixed upon him for their agent. I imagine him to have been such a man as may often be met with, who, from his narrowness of mind and distinctness of prejudice, is supposed to be high-principled and direct in his dealings, and whose untried reputation has great favor with many people, until, placed in power some day, he shows that to rule well requires other things than one-sidedness in the ruling person, and is fortunate if he does not acquire that part of renown which consists in notoriety by committing some colossal blunder, henceforth historical from its largeness.

The first thing that Bobadilla did on arriving at St. Domingo was to take possession of the admiral's house (he being at the fort La Concepcion), and then to summon the admiral before him, sending him the royal letter. Neither the admiral nor his brothers attempted to make any resistance; and Bobadilla, with a stupid brutality, which, I suppose, he took for vigor, put them in chains, and sent them to Spain. There is no doubt that the Castilian population of Hispaniola were rejoiced at Bobadilla's coming, and that they abetted him in all his violence. Accusations came thickly against Columbus: "the stones rose up against him and his brothers," says the historian HERRERA, emphatically. The people told how he had made them work, even sick men, at his fortresses, at his house, at the mills, and other buildings; how he had starved them; how he had condemned men to be whipped for the slightest causes—as, for instance, for stealing a peck of wheat when they were dying of hunger. Con-

sidering the difficulties he had to deal with, and the scarcity of provisions, many of these accusations, if rightly examined, would probably have not merely failed in producing any thing against Columbus, but would have developed some proofs of his firmness and sagacity as a governor. Then his accusers went on to other grounds, such as his not having baptized Indians, "because he desired slaves rather than Christians;" moreover, that he had entered into war unjustly with the Indians, and that he had made many slaves in order to send them to Castile. It is highly unlikely that these latter charges were preferred by a single colonist, unless, perhaps, by some man in religious orders. The probability is, that they came from the other side of the water; and this does give considerable strength to the report that the displeasure of the court with respect to the admiral's proceedings against the Indians had to do with his removal from the government of the Indies. If so, it speaks largely for the continued admirable intentions of the Spanish court in this matter.

Poor Columbus! his chains lay very heavily upon him. He insisted, however, upon not having them taken off, unless by royal command, and would ever keep them by him ("I always saw them in his room," says his son Ferdinand), ordering that they should be buried with him. He did not know how many wretched beings would have to traverse those seas in bonds much worse than his, with no room allowed to them for writing, as was his case—not even for standing upright; nor did he foresee, I trust, that some of his doings would further all this coming misery. In these chains Columbus is of more interest to us than when in full power as governor of the Indies; for so it is,

that the most infelicitous times of a man's life are those which posterity will look to most and love him most for. This very thought may have comforted him, but happily he had other sources of consolation in the pious aspirations which never deserted him.*

We have come now to the end of Columbus's administration of the Indies. Whatever we may think of his general policy, we can not but regret his removal at the present time, when there appeared some chance of solidity in his government, though we must honestly admit that the Catholic sovereigns, with such evidence as they had before them, were far from wrong in recalling him, had it been done in a manner worthy of his and of their greatness.

Little remains to be said about the government of Bobadilla. Ferdinand Columbus makes many dire complaints against this governor, of his favoritism, covetousness, injustice, and mob service; but these accusations, coming from that quarter, must be received with caution; and, indeed, whatever fault Bobadilla might have had, there is good reason for thinking that he was quite free from any thing like personal corruption.

One thing, however, he seems to have done, or permitted, which was most mischievous. Columbus placed a cacique and his followers on certain lands, and

* "Hope in him who created all men sustains me; his succor was always very speedy. At another time, and not long ago, when I was lower still, he raised me with his divine arm, saying, 'O man of little faith, arise: it is I, be not afraid.'"

"La esperanza de aquel que crió á todos me sostiene: su socorro fué siempre muy presto. Otra vez, y no de lejos, estando yo mas bajo, me levantó con su brazo divino, diciendo: 'ó hombre de poca fé, levántate: que yo soy, no hayas miedo.'"—NAVARRETE, *Col.*, vol. i., p. 265.

then named certain Spaniards who were to receive the benefit from the tillage of these lands. We find also that he allowed Indians to be taken to work in the mines; but then an especial license was necessary, and it was given from such a month to such a month.* This, however, was a considerable extension of the *repartimiento*, and a very evil one for the poor Indians. But Bobadilla seems, if we may trust CHARLEVOIX, to have gone farther, and to have allowed the Spaniards to treat their Indians as a labor-gang, to be taken to work any where and without any restriction.† He also, according to the same authority, numbered the inhabitants of the island, and made a distribution of them.

It is very difficult to lay down correct limits and periods for the various extensions of the *repartimiento* as defined by law, still more of what it was made by custom, and we may therefore be wronging Bobadilla in attributing this last extension to him; but we have accounts of the general course of his proceedings, which represent him, like the unjust steward in the Scriptures, though not upon the same motives, bidding the Spaniards under his dominion make as much haste as they could to profit by their present advantages, and making friends for himself by easy treatment of his master's debtors.

* LAS CASAS, *Hist. de las Indias*, MS., lib. i., cap. 161.

† "Il contraignit les caciques de fournir à chaque Espagnol un certain nombre de ses sujets, dont ceux-ci se servaient, comme ils auraient pu faire des bêtes de charge; et pour empêcher ces malheureux de pouvoir se soustraire au joug qu'il venait de leur imposer, il comença par faire un dénombrement de tous les Insulaires, puis il les répartit par classes, ensuite il les distribua aux habitans, plus ou moins, suivant qu'il voulait gratifier un chacun. De cette sorte toute l'isle se trouva réduite sous le plus dur esclavage qui fut jamais."—CHARLEVOIX, *Hist. de S. Domingue*, lib. iii., p. 205.

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His government did not last much more than a year and a half. He was removed in consequence of the just remonstrances of Columbus, and the government was given, on the 3d of September, 1501, to Nicholas de Ovando, a distinguished knight of the order of Alcantara.



BOOK III.

OVANDO.

CHAPTER I.

WRITTEN INSTRUCTIONS TO OVANDO.—SINGULAR INTERVIEW BETWEEN FERDINAND AND ISABELLA AND THE NEW GOVERNOR.—STATE OF THE ROYAL FAMILY OF SPAIN.—OVANDO'S ARRIVAL AT SAINT DOMINGO.—REVOLT OF HIGUEY.—ULTIMATE FORM OF REPARTIMIENTO.

CHAPTER II.

OVANDO'S MODE OF MANAGING THE SPANIARDS.—HIS TYRANNY IN XARAGUA.—BARBARITIES IN HIGUEY.—DEATH OF QUEÉN ISABELLA.—CAPTURE OF THE LUCAYANS.—DON DIEGO COLUMBUS APPOINTED GOVERNOR OF THE INDIES.—CHARACTER OF OVANDO'S GOVERNMENT.

CHAPTER I.

WRITTEN INSTRUCTIONS TO OVANDO.—SINGULAR INTERVIEW BETWEEN FERDINAND AND ISABELLA AND THE NEW GOVERNOR.—STATE OF THE ROYAL FAMILY OF SPAIN.—OVANDO'S ARRIVAL AT ST. DOMINGO.—REVOLT OF HIGUEY.—ULTIMATE FORM OF REPARTIMIENTO.

IN considering history, nothing is more curious to reflect upon than the fortuitous way, as it seems to us, in which the particular actors present themselves for notice. These Indians, for instance, who have been mentioned in the course of this narrative, will always have a certain place in history, and how strange it is to find them there! For centuries, many such as Guacanagari, and many such as Caonabó, had shot off their puny arrows, smoked their long pipes, and gone down to the shades of their forefathers “unwept, unhonored, and unsung,” at least by Europeans; when, suddenly, among the listless threads of Indian affairs is plied the busy shuttle of European enterprise, till they come out woven into something like historical tapestry, and the relationships and alliances of petty caciques become part of a story which, if it be moderately well told, the world will always listen to.

Now, if we mortals had the making of historical events, we should, I suppose, choose to have the game played by the greatest personages of each successive era; but how much more interesting it is, after all, that history should embrace almost every variety of human

character as well as of worldly circumstance. There is no class or kind of person, for example, to whom supreme power has not been intrusted. The real king, the good sort of man, the utter sensualist, the mere soldier, the intriguer, the idiot, the madman, have all been crowned; nor, in our own times, have we been without instances of most unlikely persons being suddenly called to supreme power, to see what they could make of it.

In the present narrative nothing can be more abrupt than the change from Columbus to the two governors who succeeded him; both of them knights of a religious order, with a certain narrow way of looking at things, incident to their profession, and with no especial culture that we know of; while he was of various accomplishments, large-minded, enthusiastic, fluent, affectionate, inventive.

In choosing Ovando, however, Ferdinand and Isabella seem to have taken great pains to provide a worthy governor for the Indies. He was well known to them, having been chosen by the queen as one of the companions for her eldest son, Prince John.* With regard to Ovando's personal appearance, we are told that he was of moderate stature, and had a vermilion-colored beard, which fact hardly conveys much to our minds, but it is added in general terms that his presence expressed authority. With respect to his mental qualifications, we learn that he was a friend to justice, an honorable person both in words and deeds, and

* "Era el comendador mayor su criado antiguo, é de la Cathólica Reyna; la qual por caballero virtuoso y bien acostumbrado, le puso en el número de aquellos primeros caballeros que los Reyes Cathólicos escogieron en todos sus reynos, para que sirviessen al principe don Johan, su hijo primogénito y heredero."—OVIEDO, *Hist. de las Indias*, lib. iv., cap. 1.

that he held all avarice and covetousness in much aversion. He was humble, too, they say; and when he was appointed Comendador Mayor of the order of Alcantara, he would never allow himself to be addressed by the title of "lordship," which belonged to that office.

Previous to Ovando's departure from court, the monarchs were particular in giving him instructions, both verbal and written. Among these instructions was one which Isabella especially insisted on, namely, "that all the Indians in Hispaniola should be free from servitude, and be unmolested by any one, and that they should live as free vassals, governed and protected by justice, as were the vassals of Castile."* Like the vassals in Spain, the Indians were to pay tribute; they were also to assist in getting gold, but for this they were to be paid daily wages. Other commands were given at the same time for the conversion of the Indians, and to insure their being treated kindly.

Respecting the general government of the country, it was arranged that on Ovando's going out, all those who received pay from the government in the Indies, as well those who had accompanied Bobadilla as those who had come out originally with Columbus, should return to Spain, and a new set to replace them should go out with Ovando. This was done because the major part of these soldiers and officials had necessarily been connected with the late troubles in the colony, and it would be a good plan to start afresh, as it were. At the same time, it was provided that no Jews, Moors, or new converts were to go to the Indies, or be permitted to remain there; but negro slaves

* HERRERA, dec. i., lib. iv., cap. 2.

“born in the power of Christians were to be allowed to pass to the Indies, and the officers of the royal revenue were to receive the money to be paid for their permits.”* This is the first notice about negroes going to the Indies. These instructions were given in the year 1501.

On Ovando's arrival in the colony, Bobadilla was to undergo the ordeal of a “*residencia*,”† a kind of examination well known and constantly practiced in Spain, to which authorities were subject on going out of office—a sort of general impeachment. It is satisfactory to find that among the orders given to Ovando there are some for the restitution of the admiral's property and the maintenance of his mercantile rights.

Just before Ovando took leave of the king, he received a formal lecture upon the duties of a governor. The king, the queen, and a privy councilor, Antonio de Fonseca, were the persons present, and, as I imagine, the latter addressed Ovando on the part of their highnesses.‡ As it is not often that we have an opportunity of hearing a didactic lecture on the modes and duties of government given in the presence of a

* “Que se dexassen passar esclavos negros, nacidos en poder de Christianos y que se recibiesse en cuenta á los oficiales de la Real hacienda, lo que por sus firmas se pagasse.”—HERRERA, dec. i., lib. iv., cap. 12.

† “Residencia. La cuenta que toma un juez á otro ó a otra persona de cargo publico de la administracion de su oficio por aquel tiempo que estuvo á su cuidado.”—*Diccionario de la Leng. Cast. por la Acad. Española*. Paris, 1824.

‡ “Aliende de las ordenes referidas en el precedente capitulo, despidiendose el Comendador Nicolas de Obando del Rey, en presencia de la Reyna Católica, y estando con sus Altezas Antonio de Fonseca, señor de Coca, que era de su Consejo, le dixo lo siguiente.”—HERRERA, dec. i., lib. iv., cap. 13.

great master of that art, and probably looked over, if not prepared by him, we must enter the royal cabinet, and hear some part of this discourse.

The first point which Fonseca impresses upon Ovando is that, before all things, he is to look to what concerns the reverence of God and his worship. Then he is to examine into the life and capacity of the men about him, and to put good men into office; taking care, however, not to leave all the authority in the hands of subordinates (*here, we may well imagine, Ferdinand nodded approvingly*), to the diminution of his own power, "nor to make them so great that they shall have occasion to contrive novelties" in order to make themselves greater. Also, let there be change of authorities, so that many may have a share of profit and honor, and be made skillful in affairs.

That he should use moderation in making *repartimientos* and tributes, not overtaxing the people, which moderation would be furthered by his taking care that his personal and his household expenses were within due bounds. (*Here, I fancy, the monarchs looked at each other, thought of their own frugal way of living, and Isabella smiled.*)

That he should not make himself judge in a cause, but let culprits be tried in the ordinary way. Thus he will avoid unpopularity, for "the remembrance of the crime perishes; not so that of the punishment." (*This aphorism must, I think, have been composed by Ferdinand himself. His writing is always exceedingly concise and to the purpose.*)

That he should not listen to tale-bearers (*parleros*), either of his own household or to those out of it, nor take vengeance upon any body who had spoken ill of him, it being "an ugly thing to believe that any body

could speak ill of one who did ill to no one, but good to all." That it is one of the conditions of bad governors, "moved therein by their own consciences," to take ill that which, if it had been said, they had better not have heard. Rather let injurious sayings be overcome by magnanimity.

That it would be good for him to give free audience to all, and to hear what they had to say; and if their counsel turned out ill, not to look coldly upon them for that. The same in war or in any other undertaking; his agents must not have to fear punishment for failure, nor calumny for success; "for there were many persons who, to avoid the envy of their superiors, sought rather to lose a victory than to gain it." (*Here Ferdinand ought to have looked a little ashamed, being conscious that his own practice by no means came up to what he perceives to be noble and wise policy in the matter.*)

That he (Ovando) should look to what example he gives both in word and deed, governors living, as in a theatre, in the midst of the world. If he does ill, even those who follow him in that will not the less disesteem him.

That although it is necessary for him to know the life of every one, yet he must not be over-inquisitive about it, nor rout up offenses which are not brought before him officially; "since, if all offenses were looked into, few men, or none, would be without punishment." Besides, for secret faults men may correct themselves: if those faults are made known, and especially if they are punished in excess, shame is lost, and men give way to their bad impulses.

That he is to encourage those who work, and to discourage the idle, as the Universal Father does.

That, as regards liberality, he should so conduct himself that men should not dare to ask him for things which they would know he must deny: this would be a great restraint upon them, and a great proof of good reputation in a governor.

That, in fine, all that had been said consisted in this, that he was to govern as he would be governed; and that "it behooved him to be intent in business, to show courage in difficulties and management in all things, brevity in executing useful determinations, yet not as if carried away by passion, but always upon good counsel; considering much what a charge was upon him, for this thought would be useful to him at all times; and above all things he was to take heed (in order that the same thing may not happen to him which happened to the admiral)* that when any occasion for dealing briefly with an offense occurred, he should have swift recourse to punishment, for in such cases the remedy ought to be like a thunderbolt."†

After reading the above, we can not say that the Catholic monarchs were inattentive to the government of their Indian possessions, nor can the sagacity which directed that attention be for a moment questioned. Indeed, that sagacity is so remarkable, that it may naturally occur to the learned reader to inquire whether MACHIAVELLI'S *Prince* had yet been published, and

* This passage is remarkable, as it shows the king supposed the admiral to fail as a governor from indecisiveness, a very different thing from severity, and yet not inconsistent with it. The position of Columbus as a foreigner may account for this want of decision, if the king was right in attributing it to him.

† "Y que sobre todo le encargava (porque no le aconteciesse lo del Almirante) que quando algun caso se ofreciesse con brevedad, acudiesse al castigo, pues en tales negocios el remedio avia de ser como rayo."—HERRER dec. i., lib. iv., cap. 13.

whether King Ferdinand could have read that much-abused manual of crafty statesmen. It was, however, about twelve years after this memorable audience granted by Ferdinand and Isabella to Ovando that *The Prince* is alluded to by MACHIAVELLI, and described as a small unpublished work.*

But to return to the new Governor of Hispaniola: it is recorded by HERRERA and LAS CASAS that the Catholic sovereigns assigned a duration of two years to his government; and CHARLEVOIX, in his History of St. Domingo, says that it was their intention, at the end of those two years, to reinstate the admiral. I do not give credit to this; and in the document appointing Ovando, the words are, that he is to be governor as long as it is their highnesses' will and pleasure.† There is a restriction upon him, but it is one that regards the extent of his government, and not the duration of it. It is declared that his authority should not extend to the "islands" where Alonso de Ojeda and Vicente Yañez Pinzon were governing. I have not hitherto made mention of these two discoverers, nor, indeed, of any others besides the admiral, being desirous to keep, if possible, to the main current of the history of the New World. If we suffer ourselves to be diverted from that, we shall get into some such perplexity as we should if we were navigating without chart in the midst of those West In-

* See MACHIAVELLI's letter to Vittori.—"Io ho ragionato con Filippo di questo mio opuscolo (*Il Principe*), se gli era bene darlo o non lo dare; e se gli è ben darlo, se gli era bene che io lo portassi, o che io ve lo mandassi."

† See the "Titulo de Gobernador de las Indias á Frey Nicolas de Ovando, Comendador de Lares, en la Orden y Caballeria de Alcántara, exceptuando las Gobernaciones de Alonso de Hojeda y Vicente Yañez Pinzon. (Registrado en el Sello de Corte en Simancas.)"—NAVARRETE, *Col. Dip.*, Núm. 138.

dian seas thick with shoals and islets. Where the proceedings in respect of any one island will not give an adequate view of the general policy, recourse must be had to the history of other islands; but, for the present, we follow the fate of the island first settled, and which may be considered as the seat of government in the West Indies, Hispaniola.

At the same time, it must not be forgotten that American discovery was at this time spreading out in several directions. Their highnesses had already made terms with many adventurers whom the wondrous products brought home from the Indies, and the renown that men had gained there, tempted irresistibly to further daring.

On the 13th of February, 1502, Nicholas de Ovando left the port of San Lucar to take possession of his new government, having under him a gallant company of two thousand five hundred persons, a large proportion of them being *Hidalgoes*. He met with a terrible storm on his way, and had some difficulty in reaching St. Domingo at all. Before entering upon the affairs of his government, it will be desirable to consider the critical state and prospects of the royal family of Spain, which materially affect this narrative, and which, I have no doubt, were subjects often and eagerly discussed on the voyage by the Spaniards in this expedition.

Death had made many a sad inroad into the home of Ferdinand and Isabella. They had lost their only son, Prince John, in 1497. Of their four daughters, Isabel had married the heir of the Portuguese throne, and, after his death without children, the next heir. She died in giving birth to a son; and the child died

soon afterward. Juana, the second daughter, was married to the Archduke Philip, son of Maximilian the Emperor, and had two sons, Charles, afterward Charles the Fifth, and Ferdinand, afterward King of the Romans. Catharine of Aragon, another daughter, was married, as is well known, into the royal family of England. Then there was Maria, who married the widower of her sister Isabel.

Juana was now the heiress, and she was *Juana la Loca*—Juana the insane. Her husband, Philip, had lately visited Spain; but, wearied of the Spaniards, and probably not less so of his doting and imbecile wife, he had set off again for Flanders. Doubtless all these domestic troubles had saddened the heart and injured the health of Isabella; and the affairs of the New World were soon to lose the light of her loving countenance upon them. As long, however, as there was any spark of life in her, she was not wanting in good thoughts and good endeavors for her new subjects.

It must be remembered, while discussing the affairs of the royal family of Spain, that the kingdom of Castile was essentially separate from that of Aragon, and that, on Isabella's death, Castile, and with it the Indies, must go to the helpless Juana, and therefore to her husband; not to the politic Ferdinand, into whose capacity for government we have just had some insight from the foregoing address to Ovando. On every account, then, the state of the royal family was a matter of moment to the Indies.

We may also mention at this time, though it is not necessarily connected with our subject, that Columbus was received very graciously by their highnesses; was promised to be reinstated in his rights; and was about

to commence his fourth and last voyage of discovery. He was not, however, to be allowed to land at St. Domingo, for reasons which are obvious.

Nicholas de Ovando arrived at St. Domingo on the 15th of April, 1502. LAS CASAS, now in his 28th year, came out in the same fleet; and he mentions, that as the vessels neared the shore, the Spanish colonists ran down to hear the news from home, and to tell their good news exultingly in return, which was, that an extraordinary lump of gold had been found, and that certain Indians were in revolt. "I heard it myself," the historian says; and he is right to chronicle the fact, showing, as it does, the views which prevailed among the settlers of the advantage of an Indian revolt in furnishing slaves. This great piece of gold which they talked about had been found accidentally by an Indian woman at the mines, while listlessly moving her rake to and fro in the water one day during dinner-time. Its value was estimated at 1,350,000 maravedis,* and in the festivities that took place on the occasion, was used as a dish for a roast pig, the miners saying that no king of Castile had ever feasted from a dish of such value. We do not find that the poor Indian woman had any part in the good fortune. Indeed, as LAS CASAS observes, she was fortunate if she had any portion of the meat, not to speak of the dish.

Amid the clamor of such welcome, the new governor landed, was duly received by the authorities, and commenced the affairs of government. He announced the *residencia* of Bobadilla, and placed Roldan under arrest. The people he had brought with him rushed

* Equivalent to about £416.

off to the mines, knowing nothing of the nature of the work, nor of their capacity for enduring it. Their provisions failed them; fevers seized them; and, in a short time, more than a thousand of Ovando's two thousand five hundred had perished in a wretched manner. The only persons who had food to traffic with were the three hundred Castilians, old residents, as we may call them, and as they had scarcely any clothes, such of the new comers as had clothes or tools were enabled to get food for a time. It could not be expected, however, that the food provided by three hundred improvident people would go far among two thousand five hundred.

Here it may be noticed that in general those colonists who devoted themselves to mining remained poor, while the farmers grew rich. When melting-time came, which was at stated intervals of eight months, it often happened that, after the king's dues were paid, and those who had claims upon the produce for advances already made to the miners were satisfied, nothing remained for the miner himself. And so all this blood and toil were not paid for even in money; and many still continued to eat their meals from the same wooden platters they had been accustomed to in the old country, only with discontented minds, and souls beginning to be embruted by cruelty.

While Ovando was doing what he could in the troubles that met him at the outset of his administration, Columbus suddenly appeared again upon the scene—a presence thoroughly unwelcome, no doubt, to the new governor. One of Columbus's vessels wanted refitting, and he wished to change her for another in the fleet; moreover, as he informed Ovando, he desired to enter the port of St. Domingo because

he foresaw that a hurricane was coming on. The landsman Ovando perceived nothing of the kind, and was only anxious to get Columbus away as soon as he could, and thus to obey the orders received from their highnesses, which were, that Columbus should not land at St. Domingo. Besides, Bobadilla had not yet taken his departure, Roldan and his faction were still in the island, so there was no knowing what tumult might arise if Columbus were permitted to disembark. In fine, Ovando stood upon the orders he had received, and very wisely, as it appears to me, with his disbelief in the admiral's scientific foresight, refused to allow Columbus to enter the harbor. That Ovando put no faith in the great navigator's prophecy about the coming hurricane is manifest, because the governor sent away at that moment the return fleet to Spain. Columbus made as quickly as he could for some safe anchorage. The hurricane did come on, and raged furiously. The greater part of the return fleet sank. Bobadilla perished, Roldan perished; and with them, doubtless, many of the less notorious enemies of Columbus, who thus was signally avenged by the disaster which his skill would have averted. Among the few vessels that escaped was a lumbering one, the worst in the fleet it is said, which was taking back the goods of Columbus to Spain. The men of that day saw in this the especial hand of Providence.

The same hurricane did great damage to the town of St. Domingo, and the governor took occasion to change the site of the town to the other side of the river, where it now stands. About this time, too, he bestirred himself in founding settlements. The first that he resolved to found was on the north of the island, at the Puerto de Plata, one of his reasons

for founding a settlement there being the great multitude of Indians in that part;* so that, at any rate, at that time, Hispaniola was not depopulated. The expedition, in its way to Puerto de Plata, had occasion to touch at or near the island of Saona, the very spot which the colonists alluded to when, coming down to the shore to welcome the governor, they had joyfully exclaimed that the Indians were in revolt. The cause of this outbreak must now be told. Between the inhabitants of the little island of Saona and the Spaniards there had originally been much



friendship. These Indians had been in the habit of supplying their new friends with bread; and on one occasion lately, a Spanish party had been sent to the island to get bread there. The cacique of the place, with a stick in his hand, was urging his men and hastening the preparations. The Spaniards were looking on; one of them had his dog with him, and

* "Por la mucha multitud de Indios que en ella avia."—HERRERA, dec. i., lib. v., cap. 4.

See also Columbus's letter to the Pope, anno 1502.

the animal was wild to get at the cacique. The Spaniard could hardly hold it in; and, unfortunately, happened to remark to a comrade standing by him, "What a thing it would be if we were to set the dog at him!" His friend in jest said, "At him!" (*tomalo*), thinking that the Spaniard could certainly restrain the dog. But, with this encouragement, it burst from its master, rushed on the cacique, and killed him in a manner hideous to think of. The adjacent province rose in arms; and it was no wonder, therefore, that when the mariners, whom Ovando sent to found his new colony of Puerto de Plata, touched at a spot near to that where the above transaction took place, the natives should have considered them as invaders, and have attacked them accordingly. In the conflict that ensued nine Spaniards were killed, and the news of their slaughter being brought to the governor, he ordered war to be declared—war, according to the phrase of the time, "of fire and blood." From all the Spanish citadels forces were sent under various captains, and a certain Juan de Esquivel was named captain general of the force, which amounted to four hundred men. On the arrival of this body in Higüey, the province of Hispaniola adjacent to the island of Saona, and which had been concerned in the original revolt, the Indians seem to have behaved with sufficient bravery; but finding that their naked bodies and childish weapons could in no way contend with well-clad, well-armed men, they soon abandoned open fighting, and fled to the forests. From a war it degenerated into a hunt. Many of the Indians who were taken had both their hands cut-off, and were told by the Spaniards to carry those letters to their lords, meaning that they should show what mutilation they had suffered, in order that

it might inspire general terror. Nor was it only by twos or threes that they suffered: on one occasion six or seven hundred prisoners were put to the sword at once. Harassed in every way, the poor Indians at last sought to make terms; and it was agreed that, as a condition of peace, they should construct in their territory a great manufactory of cazabi-bread for the Spaniards. They were not, however, to be required to come with the bread to St. Domingo, which service they were very glad to avoid.

Among the chiefs who came to do reverence to the captain general was Cotubano, the principal cacique of those parts. He was a man of great bodily strength and courage, and was in such esteem that the captain general did not think it derogatory to exchange names with him. The practice of exchanging names, meant for a sign of perpetual love and amity, was an Indian custom.* The persons so exchanging names were called "Guatiao;" and I imagine the relationship was considered in somewhat of the same light as that of foster brethren among the Irish. It shows a degree of refinement which we might not have expected; but it is not, perhaps, in the affections that civilization finds the most to change and to develop.

The war with the inhabitants of Higüey was thus successfully brought to a close; welcome news for Ovando, in whose favor it may be noted that he is said to have given such instructions to the captain gen-

* "Este trueque de nombres en la lengua comun desta isla se llama ser yo y fulano, que trocamos los nombres, Guatiao, y así se llamaba el uno al otro. Teníase por gran parentesco y como liga de perpetua amistad y confederacion. Y así el Capitan General y aquel Señor quedaron guatiao como perpetuos amigos y hermanos en armas, y así los indios llamaban al Capitan Cotubano y al Señor Juan de Esquivel."—*LAS CASAS, Hist. de las Indias*, MS., lib. ii., cap. 8.

eral as showed that he wished for peace, though peace was only arrived at through such fearful cruelties.

The governor's greatest difficulty at this period of his administration was to know how to provide for the wants of the Castilian population; and this difficulty would have been felt still more urgently but for the great mortality above mentioned, and the return of many men in those vessels which were sent back to Spain in the fleet that perished. The stores which Ovando had brought with him from Spain were soon exhausted, and the Spaniards began to suffer greatly from hunger. They were compelled to eat all manner of uncleanly things. The Indians also suffered from this famine, for they had not put in the usual crops (their suicidal mode, as we have seen before, of getting rid of their Spanish visitors); and it is stated that, in consequence of the famine, new diseases made their appearance both among the native population and the Spaniards.

Another great difficulty for the governor was that the Indians would have little or no communication with the Christians. Ovando stated that this aversion of the Indians was the result of the declaration of their freedom. But LAS CASAS, with more probability, asserts that the Indians never knew any thing about their freedom having been declared, and that they shunned the Spaniards as naturally as "sparrows the sparrow-hawk." It is easy to see that this conduct of the Indians would appear to present a great hinderance to their conversion, a circumstance which Ovando did not omit to mention to Ferdinand and Isabella when he laid the matter before them. He probably took care also to point out the difficulty of procuring gold, or making prosperous settlements while the Indians thus stood apart.

The Catholic sovereigns, in a reply dated the 20th of December, 1503, directed Ovando to compel the Indians to have dealings with the Spaniards, and to make them work for such wages as he should think fit. The monarchs further ordered that the Indians should work under the guidance of their caciques; that they should go and hear mass, and be instructed in the faith; and further, that they should do all these things "as free persons, for so they are." Ferdinand and Isabella were great and very sagacious princes, but it was beyond their power and their wisdom to combine the execution of such orders with the maintenance of freedom for their Indians. Ovando adopted the following system: he distributed Indians among the Castilians, giving to one man fifty, to another a hundred, with a deed that ran thus: "To you, such a one, is given an *encomienda* of so many Indians with such a cacique, and you are to teach them the things of our holy Catholic faith."* The word *encomienda*, which will now be more frequently used than *repartimiento*, was a term belonging to the military orders, corresponding to our word commandery or preceptory; and this term naturally enough came into use with the appointment as governors in the Indies of men who held authority in those orders, such as Bobadilla and Ovando. With respect to the implied condition of teaching the Indians the "holy Catholic faith," it was no more attended to from the first than any formal clause in a deed, which is supposed by the parties concerned to be a mere formality, and, indeed, to be put in chiefly to gratify the lawyers.

* "A vos fulano se os encomiendan tantos Indios, en tal Cacique, y enseñaldes las cosas de nuestra santa Fé Católica."—HERRERA, *Hist. de las Indias*, dec. i., lib. v., cap. 11.

We have now arrived at the climax of the *repartimiento* system. That which Bobadilla did illegally was now done with proper formalities on parchment; and from henceforward many a dreary day will have to pass in the world's history before the statesmen most impressed with humane and wise counsels will be able to reduce this gigantic evil in the least. We may notice again that the first *repartimientos* made by Columbus were very different in principle to the *encomiendas* of Ovando, though in practice the two things might ultimately have come to much the same result. Columbus apportioned to any Spaniard whom he thought fit such and such lands, to be worked by such a cacique and his people—a very different procedure to giving *men*—a feudal system,* not a system of slavery.

Let no one say that the Indians were to be blamed for keeping away from the Spaniards, or that this aversion of theirs to join their invaders showed any inaptness for civilization. Such arguments were of great force in those days, but can not be accepted now. These Indians were sufficiently provided with the principal means of living, and even with some of the luxuries of life, before Columbus set foot in their island; and what did the so-called civilization of the Spaniards offer them? What peace, what love, what beauty or holiness of life did they see among the Spaniards that should have tempted any sane Indian to take up his abode among these new men, especially

* "De consiguiente los compañeros de la empresa debian tener su parte en lo ganado, y ser establecidos y heredados alli en calidad de señores, reducidos los naturales á la condicion de villanos feudatarios."
—Muñoz, *Hist. del Nuevo-Mundo*, lib. vi., cap. 50.

if his companionship was only to be some form of servitude? The civilized man did not then possess those "fire-waters" which are now so potent in attracting and clearing off the savages adjacent to the outskirts of civilization. The Indians possessed already what excitement or distraction can be obtained from intoxicating liquors—the produce of certain roots or fruits of their own—and were not obliged to go to the Spaniards for those dangerous allurements. The implements, dress, and toys of the new-comers may have had some attraction for the Indians, but surely not enough to conquer their reasonable distaste for Spanish bloodhounds. And as for any inducements which the Spanish religion held out to the Indians, we may judge how far these were understood or estimated by the story of Hatuey, cacique of a part of Cuba, who had spies at Hispaniola to keep him informed of the proceedings of the Spaniards there. He was in apprehension that they would come, as they afterward did, to his territory; so, calling his people together, and recounting the cruelties of the Spaniards, he said that they did all these things for a great lord whom they loved much, which lord he would now show them. Accordingly, he produced a small basket filled with gold. "Here is the lord whom they serve, and after whom they go; and, as you have heard, already they are longing to pass over to this place, not pretending more than to seek this lord; wherefore let us make to him here a festival and dances, so that when they come, he may tell them to do us no harm."* The

* "Veis aqui su señor a este sirven, y tras este andan, y como aueys oydo, ya quieren passar aca, no pretendiendo mas de buscar este señor, y por tanto hagamos le aqui fiesta, y bayles, porque quando vengan, les diga que no nos hagan mal."—HERRERA, *Hist. de las Indias*, dec. i., lib. ix., cap. 3.

Indians approved this counsel, and danced round the gold until they were exhausted, when the cacique turned to them and said that they should not keep the god of the Christians any where; for were it even in their entrails it would be torn out, but that they should throw it in the river, that the Christians might not know where it was. "And so," says the account, "they threw it."

There is something so ironical in this story, that it almost seems as if it had been invented by some good Dominican in the Indies as a satire on his parishioners; and it may have crept into history without good warrant. We shall not be wrong, however, in concluding that the inducements held out, either by the religion or the polity which the Spaniards exhibited in the Indies, were not such as to lead any Indian to give up his freedom willingly, and to come and live in fellowship with them and their dogs. An impartial observer would have thought much more slightly of the mental powers of the Indians if they had shown this willingness; and he would have pronounced those Indians the wisest who betook themselves at once to the remotest and most inaccessible parts of the island, or who, by war or artifice, strove most unremittingly to get rid of their invaders.

Before the Catholic sovereigns had authorized Ovando to give *repartimientos* of the peaceful Indians of Hispaniola, these monarchs had issued an edict allowing the capture of Cannibals when rebels. In this edict are recounted the steps which had previously been taken on behalf of these Cannibals—how it had been forbidden to capture them, how some that had been captured had been sent back; yet, as they still

persevered in their idolatrous and cannibal ways (*idolatrando y comiendo los dichos Indios*), and also persevered in attacking her peaceful Indian subjects, it was now declared by Isabella that, if the Cannibals would not receive her captains, and listen to them in order to be instructed in the faith, and to be taken into her service and under her sway, they might be made captives.* As was to be expected, this permission led to great abuse.

* “Si todavía los dichos Canibales resistieren, é non quisieren recibir é acoger en sus tierras á los Capitanes é gentes que por mi mandado fueren á facer los dichos viages, é oirlos para ser dotrinados en las cosas de nuestra santa Fé Católica, é estar en mi servicio é so mi obediencia, los puedan cautivar é cautiven para los llevar á las tierras é Islas donde fueren, é para que los puedan traer é traigan á estos mis Reinos é Señorías, é á otras cualesquier partes é logares do quisieren é por bien tovierén, pagándonos la parte que dellos nos pertenesca, é para que los puedan vender é aprovecharse dellos, sin que por ello cayan nin incurran en pena alguna, porque trayéndose á estas partes é serviéndose dellos los Cristianos, podrán ser mas ligeramente convertidos é atraídos á nuestra santa Fé Católica.” — Apendice, NAVARRETE, *Col. Dip.*, Núm. 17.

CHAPTER II.

OVANDO'S MODE OF MANAGING THE SPANIARDS.—HIS TYRANNY IN XARAGUA.—BARBARTIES IN HIGUEY.—DEATH OF QUEEN ISABELLA.—CAPTURE OF THE LUCAYANS.—DON DIEGO COLUMBUS APPOINTED GOVERNOR OF THE INDIES.—CHARACTER OF OVANDO'S GOVERNMENT.

BUT we must return to Hispaniola, where worse things than capturing Cannibals were about to take place. Before entering, however, upon that part of Ovando's administration, which it is impossible not to condemn, we must premise that in his government of the Spaniards he seems to have been exceedingly successful. He caused many towns to be built; he founded a hospital, dedicated to St. Nicholas, for the poor; he boldly resisted the king's ministers at home when he thought they were acting prejudicially to the colony; he probably appointed, and certainly maintained in office, one of the best judges that ever was known in the Indies—one who sought, as a good citizen, to compose differences and abridge law proceedings, "avoiding the expense of paper and ink, which with other judges is wont to be more costly than the blood of those who have their heads broken"—doing these good works in the streets and public places as he went along.* The sterner duties of a governor

* "En las calles é cantones por do yba, avenia é concertaba las partes y deshacia los agravios y excusaba las contiendas en quanto podia, sin dar lugar á gastos de papel y tinta; la qual con otros jueces

were well fulfilled by Ovando himself, who fully acted up to King Ferdinand's advice, of coming down upon malefactors like a thunderbolt. If there were a turbulent person, one who seemed likely to act the part of Roldan in the colony, Ovando would send for him on some fair pretext just when there happened to be vessels returning to Spain. Then, inviting him to dinner, he would talk with him about his neighbors, and inquire on what terms they lived with each other. The unsuspecting colonist exulted in thinking that he was now in high favor with the governor, and likely to have more Indians allotted to him; when suddenly Ovando would turn upon him with this question: "In which of those ships (probably visible from where they were sitting) would you like to go to Castile?" The contented look of a man who is expecting some benefit changes to the terrified appearance of one who is about to be sent home ruined to his friends. He falteringly asks, "Why, my lord?" The stern Comendador Mayor answers, "You have nothing else to do but to go." "But, my lord, I have not the wherewithal, not even for my passage." "It shall be my care to provide for that," replies the governor; and in this summary manner he was wont to ship off a dangerous person at once, and thus to clear the colony of a possible nuisance.*

Ovando's treatment of the Indians was equally swift and immeasurably more severe. The greatest stain

uele doler é costar mas que la sangre de los descalabrados."—OVIEDO, *Hist. Gen. y Nat.*, lib. iv., cap. 1.

I am particular in noticing this good trait in Maldonado, as he was afterward selected to fulfill one of the most difficult offices ever imposed upon a civil servant, and will appear again at a most critical point in the history.

* LAS CASAS, *Hist. de las Indias*, MS., lib. ii., cap. 40.

upon his administration is his conduct to Anacaona, the Queen of Xaragua. The reader will recollect how well this Indian queen and her brother received the admiral's brother, Don Bartolomé, on a former occasion. The Spaniards then affirmed her to be a wise woman, of good manners and pleasant address; and she is said to have earnestly entreated her brother to take warning by the fate of her husband, Caonabó, and to love and obey the Christians. As she was now to play the hostess again, we may refer to the account of her former reception of a Spanish governor, the Adelantado, of which there are some details furnished by PETER MARTYR.

After mentioning that the queen and her brother received the lieutenant with all courtesy and honor, he says, "They brought our men to their common hall, into which they come together as often as they make any notable games or triumphs, as we have said before. Here, after many dancings, singings, maskings, runnings, wrestlings, and other trying of mastries, suddenly there appeared in a large plain near unto the hall two great armies of men of war, which the king, for his pastime, had caused to be prepared, as the Spaniards use the play with reeds, which they call *Juga de Canias*. As the armies drew near together, they assailed the one the other as fiercely as if mortal enemies with their banners spread should fight for their goods, their lands, their lives, their liberty, their country, their wives, and their children, so that within the moment of an hour four men were slain and many wounded. The battle also should have continued longer if the king had not, at the request of our men, caused them to cease."*

* Dec. i., lib. vi., Eden's translation.

At this time, in the year 1503, some of Roldan's former partisans were settled in the province of Xaragua, and were a great trouble to the colony. HERRERA says, in a quiet, sarcastic way, "They lived in the discipline they had learned from Roldan;" and the governing powers of Xaragua found them "intolerable." He also adds that Anacaona's people were, in policy, in language, and in other things, superior to all the other inhabitants of the island.* As might be expected, there were constant disturbances between these



Spaniards and the adjacent Indians; and the Spaniards took care to inform the governor that their adversaries, the Indians of Xaragua, intended to rebel. Perhaps they did so intend. Ovando resolved, after much consultation, to take a journey to Xaragua. It must be said, in justice to Ovando, that this does not look as if he thought the matter were a light one.

* "Anacaona, muger de autoridad, i los Señores de la Provincia, que eran muchos, i que en policia, lengua, i en otras muchas calidades, excedian à todas las otras Tierras de la Isla."—HERRERA, *Hist. de las Indias*, dec. i., lib. vi., cap. 4. Madrid, 1730.

Xaragua was seventy leagues from St. Domingo. The governor set out well accompanied, with 70 horsemen and 300 foot soldiers. Anacaona, who had probably some suspicion of his intentions, summoned all her feudatories around her "to do honor" to him when she heard of his coming. She went out to meet Ovando with a concourse of her subjects, and with the same festivities of singing and dancing as in former days she had adopted when she went to receive the Adelantado. Various pleasures and amusements were provided for the strangers, and probably Anacaona thought that she had succeeded in soothing and pleasing this severe-looking governor, as she had done the last. But the former followers of Roldan were about the governor, telling him that there certainly was an insurrection at hand; that if he did not look to it now, and suppress it at once, the revolt would be far more difficult to quell when it did break out. Thus they argued, using all those seemingly wise arguments of wickedness which from time immemorial have originated and perpetuated treachery. Ovando listened to these men; indeed he must have been much inclined to believe them, or he would hardly have come all this way. He was now convinced that an insurrection was intended.

With these thoughts in his mind, he ordered that, on a certain Sunday, after dinner, all the cavalry should get to horse, on the pretext of a tournament. The infantry, too, he caused to be ready for action. He himself, a Tiberius in dissembling, went to play at quoits, and was disturbed by his men coming to him and begging him to look on at their sports. The poor Indian queen hurried with the utmost simplicity into the snare prepared for her. She told the governor that her ca-

ciques, too, would like to see this tournament, upon which, with demonstrations of pleasure, he bade her come with all her caciques to his quarters, for he wanted to talk to them, intimating, as I conjecture, that he would explain the festivity to them. Meanwhile, he gave his cavalry orders to surround the building; he placed the infantry at certain commanding positions; and told his men that when, in talking with the caciques, he should place his hand upon the badge* of knighthood which hung upon his breast, they should rush in and bind the caciques and Anacaona. It fell out as he had planned. All these deluded Indian chiefs and their queen were secured. She alone was led out of Ovando's quarters, which were then set fire to, and all the chiefs burned alive. Anacaona was afterward hanged, and the province was desolated.

Humanity does not gain much, after all, by this man's not taking the title of "Lordship," which he had a right to.

Finally, the governor collected the former followers of Roldan in Xaragua, and formed a town of their settlement, which he named "the city of the true peace" (*La villa de la vera Paz*), but which a modern chronicler well says might more properly have been named "Aceldama, the field of blood."† I observe that the arms assigned to this new settlement were a dove with the olive-branch, a rainbow, and a cross.

The next occasion Ovando had to chastise the Indians was upon another outbreak in the province of Higüey, that province which had before been reduced

* "Su insignia (orden de Alcántara) era un Dios Padre en Abito blanco."—MARQUEZ, *Tesoro Militar de Cavallería*, p. 24.

† CAPTAIN SOUTHEY, *Hist. of the West Indies*, vol. i., p. 93.

to obedience by Juan de Esquivel. The Indians of this district had agreed to make bread for the Spaniards, but not to carry it to St. Domingo. This new condition was now endeavored to be imposed upon them. LAS CASAS expresses his conviction, founded on experience, that the conduct of the little garrison which had been left in Higüey was disorderly and licentious, according to the usual custom of the invaders. The result was, that the Indians rose and attacked the fort, burned it, and put to death the garrison, with the exception of one Spaniard, who escaped to tell the news. The governor instantly proclaimed war, and gave Juan de Esquivel the command. The war was carried on in the accustomed way, as regards the unavailing efforts of the Indians, and with more than the accustomed ferocity on the part of the conquering Spaniards. There were some signal instances of valor shown by the Indians. On one occasion, when LAS CASAS was an eyewitness, a naked Indian, with only his bow and arrows, maintained, unhurt, a close contest with a well-armed Spaniard, to the admiration of both armies, standing aloof to behold the engagement. The Indians, however, found their chief safety in flight; and it is recorded that those whom the Spaniards compelled to act as guides, and whom they kept attached to them by ropes, often threw themselves off the precipices, and thus balked their masters. Unfortunately, among the Spaniards themselves were men who had become very skillful in tracking Indians, so much so that from the turn of a withered leaf they could detect which way their prey had gone. The cruelty wreaked by the Spaniards upon their captives was excessive. They used the same mode of sending terror among the Indians which had been adopted in the former war,

namely, cutting off the hands of their captives. LAS CASAS mentions that on one occasion they hanged up thirteen Indians "in honor and reverence of Christ our Lord and his twelve apostles." These men, hanging at such a height that their feet could just touch the ground, were used as dumb figures for the Spaniards to try their swords upon. This hideous cruelty LAS CASAS says he saw, but at the same time he adds, with a shrinking which all will feel to be natural, that he fears to relate these things now, hardly being able to persuade himself but that he must have dreamed them. On another occasion he saw some Indians being burned alive in a sort of wooden cradle. Their cries disturbed the Spanish captain taking his siesta in his tent, and he bade the alguazil, who had the charge of the execution, to dispatch the captives. This officer, however, only gagged the poor wretches, who thus fulfilled their martyrdom in the way he originally intended for them. "All this I saw with my bodily mortal eyes,"* emphatically exclaims the witness for the fact.

And here I must say for LAS CASAS that I have not the slightest doubt of the truth of any statement which he thus vouches for. He manifests throughout, in various little things, his accuracy and truthfulness. For instance, he is careful to point out the exact pronunciation of the Indian names. He shows a fair appreciation of those persons he is most bitterly opposed to; as, for example, he says of Ovando that he was a man fit to govern, but not Indians, which is much the same conclusion that the modern reader will probably come to in reviewing the conduct of this governor.

Notwithstanding all the efforts of the Spaniards,

* "Todo esto yo lo vide con mis ojos corporales mortales."—LAS CASAS, *Hist. de las Indias*, MS., lib. ii., cap. 17.

Cotubano, the chief cacique of Higüey, the same who exchanged names with Juan de Esquivel, remained untaken, and the subjection of the province was therefore considered incomplete. This cacique had retired to the little island of Saona, where he had his spies who watched for the approach of the Spaniards. One day these spies, two in number, were seized. One was put to death, the other made to serve as a guide. The Spaniards hurried off in different directions, each anxious to distinguish himself in the capture; at last one of them, Juan Lopez Labrador, came suddenly upon twelve Indians marching in a line one after another. The Spaniard asked for Cotubano; the Indians said that he was the last of the line, and the poor frightened wretches made way for the Spaniard, who dealt a blow with his sword at the cacique, which he received upon his hands, that were thus rendered nearly useless. The other Indians fled, and the Spaniard, seizing Cotubano by the throat, with a sword pointed to his body, was carrying him off captive, when the cacique made a sudden spring on one side to avoid the sword; then, maimed as he was, rushed on Labrador, got him down, and was on the point of slaying him, when a party of Spaniards came to the rescue. They struck Cotubano down senseless, took up their almost lifeless comrade, and afterward conveyed the cacique to St. Domingo, where he was hanged by order of the governor.

Higüey was now considered to be at peace, and two settlements were made in it, called Salvaleon and Santa Cruz.

Meanwhile, the news of Anacaona's punishment had reached Spain, and it may be imagined how wrathful

Queen Isabella was on hearing of such things; for, with all her sweetness, she was capable of stern and fierce thoughts. Ovando, we are told, strove much to justify himself; but the queen was resolved to make "a great demonstration" (these are the very words used), and she is reported to have said to the president of the council, "I will have you take such a *residencia* of him as never was before."*

Nevertheless, Ovando maintained his place, probably on account of the queen's illness, which began to be severe in August, 1504; and this is the last occasion on which Queen Isabella is heard of as taking part in the affairs of the Indies.

It was about this time, late in the year 1504, that Columbus returned to Spain after his fourth voyage, which had proved very disastrous. Poor, old, infirm, he had now to receive intelligence which was to deepen all his evils. He remained at Seville, too unwell to make a journey himself, but sent his son Diego to court to manage his affairs for him. The complaints of the admiral, that he had no news from court, are quite touching. He says he desires to hear news each hour. Couriers are arriving every day, but none for him; his very hair stands on end to hear things so contrary to what his soul desires.† He alludes, I imagine, to the state of the queen's health; for in a memorandum of instructions to his son, written at this period, the first thing, he says, to be done is "to commend affectionately, with much devotion," the soul of

* "Yo vos le harè tomar una Residencia, qual nunca fue tomada."
—HERRERA, *Hist. de las Indias*, dec. i., lib. vi., cap. 4. Madrid, 1730.

† "Muchos correos vienen cada dia, y las nuevas acá son tantas y tales que se me encrespan los cabellos todos de las oír tan al revés de lo que mi ánima desea."—Letter of Columbus to his son Diego.—NÁVARRETE, *Coleccion*, tom. i., p. 338.

the queen to God. Could the poor Indians but have known what a friend to them was dying, one continued wail would have gone up to heaven from Hispaniola and all the western islands. The dread decree, however, had gone forth, and on the 26th of November, 1504, it was only a prayer for the departed that could have been addressed, for the great queen was no more. If it be permitted to departing spirits to see those places on earth they yearn much after, we might imagine that the soul of Isabella would give "one longing, lingering look" to the far west.

And if so, what did she see there? How different was the aspect of things from what governors and officers of all kinds had told her; how different from aught that she had thought of or commanded! She had maintained that the Indians were to be free: she would have seen their condition to be that of slaves. She had declared that they were to have spiritual instruction: she would have seen them less instructed than the dogs. She had insisted that they should receive payment for their labor: she would have found that all they received was a mockery of wages, just enough to purchase once, perhaps, in the course of the year, some childish trifles from Castile. She had always ordered that they should have kind treatment and proper maintenance: she would have seen them literally watching under the tables of their masters to catch the crumbs which fell there. She would have beheld the Indian laboring at the mine under cruel buffetings, his family neglected, perishing, or enslaved; she would have marked him on his return, after eight months of dire toil, enter a place which knew him not,

or a household that could only sorrow over the gaunt creature who had returned to them, and mingle their sorrows with his; or, still more sad, she would have seen Indians who had been brought from far distant homes linger at the mines, too hopeless or too careless to return.

Turning from what might have been seen by Queen Isabella had her departing gaze pierced to the outskirts of her dominions, we may note what were her latest provisions in their behalf. Her will, as regards Ferdinand, was to the following effect: She bequeathed the regency of Castile to him in case of certain specified contingencies; and she left him half the produce of the Indies, and a definite sum charged upon the three military orders, both of these legacies being limited to his lifetime. The following are her words touching the conduct she wished to be pursued toward the Indians. After declaring that the ground on which they (the Catholic sovereigns) had received these kingdoms from the Pope was to bring the people to Christianity, "wherefore," she goes on to say, "I very affectionately supplicate my lord the king, and charge and command my said daughter (Juana) that they act accordingly, and that this (the conversion of the Indians) should be their principal end, and that in it they should have much diligence, and that they should not consent or give occasion that the Indians who dwell in those islands, or on the terra firma gained or to be gained, should receive any injury in their persons or goods, but should command that they be well and justly treated. And if the Indians have received any injury, they (the king and her daughter Juana) should remedy it, and look that they do not infringe in any

respect that which is enjoined and commanded in the words of the said concession (of the Pope).”*

Having thus transcribed the injunctions of this pious and admirable princess, we have to return, with somewhat of a foreboding mind, to the history of those poor Indians to whom she meant so kindly.

This bequest of Isabella's of half the revenues of the Indies was not well-advised. It is said that Ferdinand attended more to profit from the Indies than to the preservation of them. This statement is probably much exaggerated; but certainly to leave a portion of the proceeds, for life only, of such an estate, was not the way to insure its being well administered. Still, it would be laying too much stress upon this bequest to attribute any very remarkable consequences to it. The truth is, that the troubles and confusions which ensued in Spain on Isabella's death made it almost impossible for Ferdinand, or for any one else in Spain, to give the requisite attention to the affairs of the Indies.

The story of these troubles is well known, but, for the sake of clearness, it may as well be briefly recapitulated here. The Castilian nobles did not wish to have Ferdinand for their master. If it was only on account of being tired of his rule (whether it were good or bad), that was, perhaps, a sufficient motive to sway them. Negotiations ensued between Ferdinand and his son-in-law Philip which led to no amicable result. Ferdinand was nearly successful in procuring a paper signed by Juana constituting him Re-

* For a copy of the will, see MARIANA, *Hist. Gen. de España*, Valencia, 1796, tom. ix., apendices.

gent, which being discovered by Philip, he immediately placed his wife in confinement. Ferdinand resolved to marry again, and allied himself to the French king, Louis XII., taking to wife Germaine de Foix, niece of that monarch. Upon this Philip came to terms with Ferdinand, and an agreement was made by which the regency of Castile was shared between them.

In 1506, Philip came over from Flanders with Juana to Spain, and, notwithstanding the compact mentioned above, demanded the sole authority over the kingdom which had descended to his wife. A large majority of the Spanish nobles siding with Philip, the old king had to give way, and he went to visit his newly-conquered kingdom of Naples. Philip lived but a short time to enjoy the exercise of his authority; for in three months after gaining possession of the Castilian crown, he suddenly fell ill at Burgos, and died in that city on the 25th of October, 1506.

A few months before, a much more important person in history had also departed this life. Columbus, since his return from his fourth voyage to the Indies, had done little else than memorialize, and petition, and negotiate about his rights and his claims. The proverb, "Fear old age, for it does not come alone,"* was especially applicable to him, while suffering sickness without the elasticity to bear it, poverty with high station and debt, and all the delay of suitorship, not at the beginning, but at the close of a career. A similar decline of fortune is to be seen in the lives of many men; of those, too, who have been most adventurous and successful in their prime. Their fortunes grow old and feeble with themselves; and those clouds, which were but white and scattered during the vigor

* "Time senectutem; non enim sola venit."

of the day, sink down together, stormful and massive, in huge black lines across the setting sun.

Shortly after the arrival of Philip and his queen in Spain, Columbus had written to their highnesses deploring his inability to come to them through illness, and saying that, notwithstanding his pitiless disease (the gout), he could yet do them service the like of which had not been seen.* Perhaps he meant service in the way of good advice touching the administration of the Indies; perhaps, for he was of an indomitable spirit, that he could yet make more voyages of discovery. But there was then only left for him that voyage in which the peasant who has seen but the little district round his home, and the great travelers in thought and deed, are alike to find themselves upon the unknown waters of farther life. Looked at in this way, what a great discoverer each of us is to be! But we must not linger too long, even at the death-bed of a hero. Having received all the sacraments of the Church, and uttering as his last words, "*In manus tuas, Domine, commendo spiritum meum,*" Columbus died, at Valladolid, on Ascension Day, the 20th of May, 1506. His remains were carried to Seville and buried in the monastery of Las Cuevas; afterward they were removed to the Cathedral at St. Domingo, and in modern times were taken to the Cathedral at Havana, where they now are.

King Ferdinand ordered an epitaph to be inscribed for Columbus at Seville, which tells in the fewest words that he had given a new world to Castile and Leon.

"A Castilla y a Leon
Nuevo Mundo dió Colon."

* "Bien que esta enfermedad me trabaja así agora sin piedad, que yo les puedo aun servir de servicio que no se haya visto su igual."—NAV., Col., tom. iii., p. 530.

The death of Columbus is the most memorable event which occurred in Spain between the time of Philip's landing and his decease. That king being dead, there could now be no reasonable opposition to Ferdinand: Juana was quite incompetent; Charles but a boy; and so the affairs of Spain and the Indies were once again administered by one of the wariest and most experienced of monarchs.

During the interval between Isabella's death in 1504, and the restoration of King Ferdinand to the regency of Castile in 1506, there are, as may be expected, but few documents relating to the government of the Indies. One letter, however, has been found, of much importance. Not long after Ovando had come to the government of Hispaniola, it appears that he "solicited that no negro slaves should be sent to Hispaniola, for they fled among the Indians and taught them bad customs, and never could be captured."* It is therefore not a little astonishing to find a letter from the king to Ovando, dated Segovia, the 15th of September, 1505, of the following tenor. "I will send more negro slaves, as you request; I think there may be a hundred. At each time" (*I suppose at each time of their going to the mines*) "a trustworthy person will go with them, who may have some share in the gold they may collect, and may promise them ease if they work well."† There is some appearance in this of Indians becoming scarce, or being found defi-

* HERRERA, *Hist. de las Indias*, dec. i., lib. v., cap. 12.

† Puerto de la Plata.

"El Rey a Obando. Segovia, 15 de Setiembre de 1505.—Embiare mas esclavos negros como pedis, pienso que sean ciento. En cada vez hira una persona fiable que tenga alguna parte en el oro que cogieren y les prometa alibio si trabajan bien."—*Coleccion de Muñoz*, MS., tom. xc.

cient in physical energy for the severest kind of labor. It is important to notice that negroes, in some numbers, were employed in the Indies much earlier than has been supposed.

It has been seen that the troubled state of the mother country was one of the causes of the injury to the Indies which took place about this period. Another cause doubtless was that the knowledge of the queen's death (the queen having always been a vigorous defender of the natives) removed a wholesome restraint from the Spanish colonists. Moreover, it must be acknowledged that the tendency of the state of things which existed then in the Spanish colonies, even under favorable administration, must have been downward; so that even such a sovereign as Isabella at the head of affairs, a true-hearted Columbus as governor, with a LAS CASAS ever at his side to plead the cause of the Indians (had such a concurrence been permitted), would have had difficulty enough to prevent the *encomienda* system from falling into great abuse. A total change of system, such as with the experience of centuries we, if we were lookers-on, might in this nineteenth century devise, would perhaps have averted the mischief, or even such a system as that adopted by the Paraguay missionaries. But that was not to be, and could hardly be expected. In Ferdinand's government of the Indies there are many proofs of sagacity; many, too, of anxiety for the welfare of the Indians; and we must be careful not to lay any undue share of blame upon this shrewd monarch for that deterioration of the Indies which now took place.

One of the first things, however, which the king did must have been mischievous, and, indeed, HERRERA

puts it down as the beginning of the perdition of Hispaniola, though, as I have stated, there was much reason to apprehend that such perdition was manifestly impending, and was indeed inevitable, unless a totally new system were adopted.*

The troublous and perplexed condition of Spain from Isabella's death to Ferdinand's return from Naples to take the regency, and for some time after, must have made many suitors for royal favor whom it was hard to deny. Ferdinand was not fond of giving, and, with the great and costly affairs he was engaged in, seldom had much to give. Indians, however, were now a sort of money. The courtiers asked for *repartimientos* of Indians, some proposing to go themselves to Hispaniola and push their fortunes there, and others intending merely to farm their Indians out, as absentee proprietors. Ferdinand did not resist these applications; and though the governor, Ovando, probably aware of the mischief and alive to the inconvenience, remonstrated as much as he dared, especially against absentee proprietors, there were many cases in

* OVIEDO, not only a historian, but a man versed in affairs, who, at the time he wrote the following sentence, was acting as alcalde of the fortress of St. Domingo, enumerates under four heads the causes of ill government in Hispaniola: 1. The distance from Spain. 2. The want of truth among men. 3. The want of time at court to investigate things. 4. The lateness of any remedy, even when an evil was understood and provided against. "Lo primero, de aqui á España hay muchas leguas, é suélese decir que de luengas vias, etc.; y aunque fuese mas corto el camino, el día de hoy, por nuestros pecados, anda ofendida é olvidada la verdad en la mayor parte de las lenguas; y aunque se quieran escudriñar las verdades, no hay tiempo para saberse lo cierto dellas; y quando algo se sabe en Castilla, que requiera proveerse, quando acá llega lo proveído es tarde, y el que queda lastimado, nunca suelda su dolor."

I think, admitting the weight of all the causes named above, the greatest cause was the want of consideration for the natives.

which he must have been obliged to give way. The mania for gold-finding was now probably at its height,* and the sacrifice of Indian life proportionately great. At the same time, however, that the king is chargeable with furthering this great mischief of giving *repartimientos*, it is to be observed that he was not inattentive to those things which were, or were supposed to be, for the true interests of the colony. He promoted discovery; he encouraged the growth of the sugar-cane; he urged the building of churches (not too costly); he allowed all his subjects to trade to the Indies (hitherto it had only been permitted to the favored inhabitants of Seville); he looked after the pearl fisheries; he took Amerigo Vespucci into his service; and, in short, like a prudent man, sought to make the most of his estate, furthering whatever was humane when it came in his way to do so. As regards the *repartimientos*, he did not look upon them as final and irrevocable, but only as subsisting during his pleasure.†

As the Indians in Hispaniola were now beginning to grow scarce, the next thing that was almost sure to happen was, that importations would be made from other islands to fill up the vacuum produced by the working at the mines and by other causes. The first

* 470,000 pesos of gold were found annually.—HERRERA, *Hist. de las Indias*, dec. i., lib. vi., cap. 18.

† "Valladolid, 12 de Noviembre de 1509—Declaracion del poder del Almirante para el repartimiento de Yndios.

"DON FERDINANDO, &c.—A vos el Almirante sabeis que os dirigi la cedula siguiente (La va supra, folio 51-52) E por quanto en ella no fue señalado el tiempo que se havian de tener los Yndios repartidos: mando por esta sobre carta que los tengan quanto nuestra merced e voluntad fuere e no mas—Cumplase lo dispuesto en la cedula que va incorporada."—*Col. de Muñoz*, MS., tom. xc.

large transaction of this kind furnishes us with one of the most affecting narratives in history. The king was told that the Lucayan islands* were full of Indians, and that it would be a very good action to bring them to Hispaniola, "in order that they might enjoy the preaching and political customs" which the Indians in Hispaniola enjoyed. "Besides," it was added, "they might assist in getting gold, and the king be much served." The king accordingly gave a license, and the evil work commenced.

It will be remembered that the first land seen by Columbus, and called by him St. Salvador, was one of these Lucayan islands, and it is peculiarly shocking to think that this spot should have been signalized by such an atrocity as that about to be recorded.

The first Spaniards who went to entrap these poor Lucayans did it in a way that brings to mind the old proverb of "seething a kid in its mother's milk," for they told the simple people that they had come from the heaven of their forefathers, where these forefathers and all whom the Indians had loved in life were now drinking in the delights of heavenly ease; and the good Spaniards would convey the Lucayans to join their much-loved ancestors, and dearer ones than ancestors, who had gone thither.† We may fancy how

* The names of the Lucayan islands, according to OVIEDO, were as follows: Guanahani, Caycos, Jumeto, Yabaque, Mayaguana, Samana, Guanima, Yuma, Curatheo, Ciguatelo, Bahama (que es la mayor de todas), el Yucayo y Nequa, Habacoa é otras muchas isletas pequeñas que por allí hay.—*Hist. de las Indias*, l. ii., cap. 6.

† "Dixeron que yvan de la isla Española á donde las animas de sus padres, y parientes, y de los que bien querian estaban en holgura, y que si querian yr a verlos, los llevarian en aquellos nauios, porque es cosa cierta, que las naciones de todas las Indias creyeron la inmortalidad del alma y que se yvan, muertos los cuerpos, a ciertos lugares deleytosos, adonde ninguna cosa de plazer, y de consuelo les faltava :

the more simple among them, lone women, and those who felt this life to be somewhat dreary, crowded round the ships which were to take them to the regions of the blessed.*

This hideous pretense of the Spaniards did its work; but there were other devices, not mentioned to us, which were afterward adopted; and the end was, that in five years, forty thousand of these deluded Lucayans were carried to Hispaniola. Most men in the course of their lives have rude awakenings which may enable them to form some notion of what it was to come down from the hope of an immediate paradise to working as a slave in a mine. Some lived on in patient despair; others, of fiercer nature, refusing sustenance, and flying to dark caves and unfrequented places, poured forth their lives, and we may hope were now, indeed, with the blessed. Others, of more force and practical energy, "peradventure the wisest," as PETER MARTYR says, made escape to the northerly parts of Hispaniola, and there, with "arms outstretched" toward their country, lived at least to drink in the *y en algunas partes crehian, que primero padecian algunas penas por los pecados que en esta vida avian hecho.*"—HERRERA, *Hist. de las Indias*, dec. i., lib. vii., cap. 3.

* I picture to myself some sad Indian, not without his doubts of these Spanish inducements, but willing to take the chance of regaining the loved past, and saying, like the King Arthur of a beautiful modern poem to his friend, Sir Bedivere, upon the shore,

"I am going a long way
With these thou seest—if indeed I go—
(For all my mind is clouded with a doubt)
To the island-valley of Avilion;
Where falls not hail, or rain, or any snow,
Nor ever wind blows loudly; but it lies
Deep-meadow'd, happy, fair with orchard-lawns
And bowery hollows crown'd with summer sea,
Where I will heal me of my grievous wound."

ALFRED TENNYSON, *Morte d'Arthur*, vol. ii., p. 15.

breezes from their native lands. Those lands were now a paradise to them.

There is a tree in Hispaniola called the yaurumá—a large, light, pithy tree. A Lucayan more enterprising than the rest, who had been a carpenter in his own island, cut down one of these yaurumás, hollowed it out, provisioned the hollow part with maize and some calabashes of water; then put the stems of smaller trees across the main trunk; then lashed those stems together with *berucos*, which are stringy roots like cords, and filling in well with leaves the interstices between the stems, thus made something of a raft.* He took on board with him another Indian man and a woman, being all three related to each other, and, having provided themselves with oars, away they paddled, having the north star for their guide. There is somewhat of immortality in a stout-hearted action, and, though long past, it seems still young and full of life; one feels quite anxious now, as if those Indians were yet upon that sea, to know what becomes of them. On they went, day after day, night after night; the loathed Hispaniola had long been out of view; they had already gone two hundred miles. “Cheer up, sister Indian, not many mornings will dawn upon us ere we behold our own dear land again.” But what, alas! is that black thing in the distance? No land of home, but one of those accursed caravels, coming, perhaps, with more Lucayans. It has already seen our raft, and the bold wanderers are again in the power of their adversaries, are again on their way to the hated Hispaniola.

The careful reader of history, who wishes, if possible, to make out what it all means, will treasure up

* HERRERA, *Hist. de las Indias*, dec. i., lib. vii., cap. 3.

these slight incidents, as the astute man of the world marks the small traits of character in those whom it is his interest to understand thoroughly. Farther on, there will be much controversy as to the capability of these Indians, which question an intelligent reader may be able to solve without Dr. Sepulveda, Las Casas, or any theologian or statesman whatever.

This enormity in dealing with the wretched Lucayans is one of the last acts mentioned of Ovando's government. Diego Columbus had for some time been urging the king to give him the rights which he claimed as his father's heir. He was enabled to urge his claim with more effect, having married Maria de Toledo, a grand-niece of Ferdinand's and niece of the Duke of Alva. That duke had great claims upon the king, being one of the nobles who had distinguished himself by a steady adherence to Ferdinand when the young King Philip's star was in the ascendant. Ferdinand allowed Don Diego's cause to be heard in the courts. It was as if he had said, "Let right be done," as the phrase is here, when the sovereign gives permission that a cause against the crown shall be heard in the courts of law. And right was so far done as to appoint Don Diego admiral and governor of the Indies, but "without prejudice" to the rights of either party; that is, I imagine, as to whether the governorship was to be hereditary in the family of Columbus or not.

The arrival of Don Diego Columbus in Hispaniola closes the administration of Ovando—an administration which received much praise from the Spaniards, even from those who lived under it, who in after years still continued to regret this governor's departure.

Thinking, however, on what the Indians must have

suffered during his time, we can not look on his administration, as a whole, otherwise than with profound regret and dissatisfaction, though we must not lay the entire blame upon him, and make him out to be a monster in human form. The modern historian of St. Domingo* says it is remarkable that the governors of the Indies, even those who were noted as good men before, all turned out cruel tyrants. This uniformity might have suggested to the good father the strength of the current of evil into which these men were thrown, and which, perhaps, none but a really great man could have stemmed.

The extent of the evil which had taken place in Ovando's time may be seen from a letter of the king's, written in May, 1509, about two months before Ovando's government ended. "You say," writes the king, "that there are few Indians in this island, and that it will be well to bring them from other islands; I now order the governor that he should provide for the mines as many Indians as may be requisite."†

Few Indians! "It is most populous," said the first discoverer. There were twelve hundred thousand souls, declares the ardent LAS CASAS; and in recording the treachery practiced toward Anacaona, a historian‡ who had access to all official documents speaks of the large numbers in her province of Xaragua.

If history did indeed constitute that high court of appeal in virtue of which each generation sat in judg-

* FATHER CHARLEVOIX.

† "Respuesta y despacho al Gobernador y Oficiales de la Española. Valladolid, 3 de Mayo de 1509."

"Decis que hay pocos Yndios en esta Ysla y será bien traer de otras, ya mando al Gobernador que probea para las minas todos los que sean menester."—*Coleccion de Muñoz*, MS., tom. xc.

‡ HERRERA.

ment upon all the preceding ages, then the tribunal of the present day might well exclaim with indignation, "Ovando, and the rest of you Spanish colonists and authorities, what had become of all these Indians?"

I am afraid that, answering what they could for themselves, making much of the deaths by famine and disease, and which might fairly be put down as unavoidable, there would still remain a fearful number of their brethren of whom they could not say that they were not the keepers. And brethren they were, though then—and this is some excuse for these Spaniards—it was not thought so.

Arraigned before the bar of history, as I have just imagined Ovando to be, we must hear what an advocate would say for him. He would tell us that this governor did keep order among the Spaniards; that he did not enrich himself, needing money even for his passage home;* that what property he chanced to have in the island he left for charitable purposes; and that we hear of no private vice in him. Faultless to his order, faithful to his king, complete in panoply of personal virtue, with true Castilian dignity in his demeanor, so that to gain respect he needed not the title of lordship, which in his humility he would not take, what is there to justify your condemnation of him?

And we on the other side should answer, that that kind of character was not unknown to us, which, free from the softer and the weaker vices and vanities, was yet fit to preside over or countenance such treachery as that of Xaragua, such cruelties as those in Higüey, such tearings asunder as those in the Lucayan islands. And we should add that he gave up the weak to

* "Quando se ovó de partir desta cibdad, le prestaron quinientos castellanos para su camino."—OVIEDO, *Hist. Gen. y Nat.*, lib. iii., cap. 12

the oppression of the strong; that as these oppressed ones died away, he collected the survivors together again, like a pack of cards, and dealt them out anew to those whom he favored, thus mingling folly with cruelty, till nature pronounced against his government by its desolation.*

* "En tiempo de los dichos ocho años que aquel gobernó, perecieron mas de las nueve de diez partes."—JUAN CASAS, *Hist. de las Indias*, MS., lib. ii., cap. 14.

BOOK IV.
THE DOMINICANS.

CHAPTER I.

DON DIEGO COLUMBUS LANDS AT ST. DOMINGO.—NEW REPARTIMIENTOS.—EARLIEST NOTICE OF LAS CASAS.—ARRIVAL OF THE FIRST DOMINICAN FRIARS.—HISPANIOLA DISPEOPLED.—MODES OF REPLENISHING THE COLONY WITH INDIANS.—NEGROES IN THE INDIES.

CHAPTER II.

THE DOMINICANS PROTEST AGAINST INDIAN SLAVERY.—FATHER ANTONIO'S SERMON.—BOTH THE COLONISTS AND THE MONKS APPEAL TO SPAIN.—FATHER ANTONIO SEES THE KING.—THE LAWS OF BURGOS.

CHAPTER I.

DON DIEGO COLUMBUS LANDS AT ST. DOMINGO.—NEW REPARTIMIENTOS.—EARLIEST NOTICE OF LAS CASAS.—ARRIVAL OF THE FIRST DOMINICAN FRIARS.—HISPANIOLA DISPEOPLED.—MODES OF REPLENISHING THE COLONY WITH INDIANS.—NEGROES IN THE INDIES.

IN the midst of the crash of dynasties, the downfall of kingdoms, and the wild havoc in great cities which prevails in these unquiet times,* the study of any transaction which occurred a long while ago, which may not be dramatic, or, at least, not of the same liveliness as the present proceedings in the world, and which derives most of its importance from the largeness of the result, and not from the imposing presence of the means, seems somewhat tame and profitless. And, indeed, in all stirring periods, those engaged in the ordinary affairs of life, especially those who are students, whether readers or writers, feel as if they had been left behind, or as a man sitting in a gloomy room, confined by ill health or dull business, while at intervals comes in the merry noise of boisterous children playing in the sun.

But these feelings and fancies are fallacious. The essential greatness of a thing often lies altogether in the principle upon which it is done. The mere physical fate of empires, monarchies, and popedoms, much less of mere swarms of thoughtless people, may not be

* Written A. D. 1848.

equal in depth and significance to one man's one sin; nor, on the other hand, is a great example of duty performed, though of a simple character (as we shall find in this coming chapter of the doings of some poor monks), to be postponed in consideration to the most loud-sounding battle-fields and ever so much frivolous slaughter. There is a similar thing in fiction: an old Greek drama, which shall have but one mind brought before you greatly tortured by conflicting passions and duties, presents some picture of the universe, throws a sudden light down into the abysses of human misery and madness, and rivets the attention immeasurably more than an ill-told, inconsequent tragedy, in which, however, the deaths may be as numerous as the perplexed spectator can desire.

Still less is the benefit which may be derived from the study of history to be measured by the noise and pageantry of the things recorded, but rather by the examples they afford and the formation of character they give rise to. Men have not outgrown the aid which history might afford them: duty—political duty—still requires to be expounded and inculcated; greatness is not yet fully understood; and to revert to the image used above, the man who would come down from his dull chamber and play well with those children in the sun, had better have made up his mind in quiet of what it is well to play at, and what should be the rules of the game.

So, too, the student of the records of Spanish America may be content, in the midst of all this present tumult, to go on quietly with his work, and make the most he can of a story which will show what the vain doctrines and desires of men, their cruelty, their piety, and their charity, all mingling together, did with the

materials which a so-called "New World" afforded them.

The new governor, Don Diego Columbus, and his wife, Maria de Toledo, arrived at St. Domingo in July, 1509. The island had not before been graced by a Spanish lady of her rank, and the arrival of the new authorities was honored by a large assemblage of the colonists, and by grand festivities of various kinds. Behind all this scenic representation of greatness there was, as often happens, but little real power. The governor did not possess the king's confidence (it is a question whether any viceroy would have long enjoyed that), which was chiefly bestowed upon the treasurer Passamonte. There was a correspondence carried on between the king and this officer, in cipher, which did not bode Don Diego much good, for Passamonte was a steady enemy of his. And the treasurer was only one out of many enemies whom the son of Columbus had to encounter, both in Hispaniola and in Spain.

Before entering upon the transactions of the new governor, it remains to be seen what became of Ovando. A *residencia* was held, as usual, upon the late governor and the two *alcaldes mayores*, which terminated favorably, and left no stain upon them. There was no *residencia* in this life, as LAS CASAS remarks, about the treatment of the poor oppressed Indians; and with regard to the Spaniards, if indeed their welfare could be considered as a separate thing from that of the Indians, it has always been acknowledged that Ovando managed his own countrymen with much vigor and discretion. Indeed, there must have been something good about Ovando. LAS CASAS, a fair judge of character, admiring greatness of every kind, was evidently at-

tached to this governor. Would to God, he exclaims, that the final judgment (not man's *residencia*) may have been favorable to him; for "in truth I loved him, with the exception of those errors into which he fell through moral blindness."

There is a story of Ovando from which we may perhaps infer that he was not deficient in good-nature to those about him. Some official person had been extravagant and was ruined. Ovando liked the man, and, attending at the sale of his effects, contrived to raise the prices so that all the debts were satisfied, every one striving by excessive biddings to please the governor. This was not a very high-minded or correct proceeding, but still there is a good-nature in it we might not have expected from so stern a man. He returned home safely to Spain, and was well received by Ferdinand, but did not exercise any influence upon Indian affairs, dying a short time after his arrival. He is said to have written some account of his government, which has not yet reached posterity; but, among the treasures which lie hid in Spanish libraries, it may still be found, and will probably throw light upon those times. It would be curious to see what he says of some of the doings at Xaragua and elsewhere. Peace be with him. Happily, he was to be judged by One who understood him infinitely better than he could his fellow-men, the Indians.

We turn now to the proceedings of Don Diego Columbus. The king's instructions to this governor had been given partly in writing and partly by word of mouth,* and, as regards the Indians, were to the following effect: That they should be well treated, being made Christians of, with much management, "little

* HERRERA, dec. i., l. vii., c. 8. NAVARRETE, *Col. Dip.*, Núm. 169.

by little, without scandalizing them ;” that they should live together in settlements, each of them possessing a cottage and land for himself, which he should not be allowed to part with for less than its just value ; that they should have their own magistrates, and be under the government of their caciques ; that, with regard to bringing Indians from other parts of the Indies to Hispaniola, it might be done if the Indians in question were Caribs or had made resistance ; that the Indians who worked in the mines should labor with moderation ; and with that view, as the king heard that many of the Indians had died who were brought to Hispaniola, he would, for the first year, demand less tribute for each Indian, that so their masters might demand less work from them.

These laws of Ferdinand’s were well-intentioned, and to a certain extent sagacious ; but, as they were all subject to the old system of *repartimientos*, much could not be hoped from them. It would, perhaps, have astonished the king if any one had accused him of furthering a slavery which he put so many restraints upon ; but that one thing alone, the permission to bring Indians from other parts of the Indies to Hispaniola, however guarded, was sure to lead to the greatest abuse. Who was to define resistance ? Who was to say whether resistance had or had not been made ?

Don Diego began by giving *repartimientos* of Indians to himself, his wife, and to those who had royal orders for these gifts ; and it is said that the Indians were not treated better in this governor’s time than in Ovando’s. An arrival, from which the natives had much more to hope than from the coming of any governor or other lay authority, was that of a vessel which reached St. Domingo in the year following, A.D. 1510,

and which was honored in carrying the first Dominican friars who appeared in those lands. In the records of this year, too, there appears the earliest notice of LAS CASAS, who sang the first "new mass" in the Indies.* As from this point in the narrative his philanthropic efforts will perpetually reappear before the reader, it will be well to give some description of this remarkable man.

BARTHOLOMEW DE LAS CASAS was the son of Antonio de Las Casas, one of Columbus's shipmates in his first voyage. Bartholomew was born in 1474. His father became rich, and sent him as a student to Salamanca, where he took a licentiate's degree. He came with Ovando to Hispaniola in 1502, was afterward ordained priest, and now, at the age of thirty-six, eight years after his arrival in the Indies, began to make his appearance on the stage of history. He was a very notable person, of that force of character and general ability that he would have excelled in any career. Indeed, he did fulfill three or four vocations, being an eager man of business, a considerable annalist, a great reformer, a great philanthropist, and a vigorous ecclesiastic. The utmost that friends or enemies, I imagine, could, with the slightest truth, allege against him, was an over-fervent temperament. If we had to arrange the faculties of great men, we should generally, according to our easy-working fancies, com-

* "En este mismo año avia cantado Missa el Licenciado Bartolomé de Las Casas, natural de Sevilla, que fue la primera Missa nueva que se cantò en las Indias, y fue muy celebrada del Almirante, y de todos los que se hallavan en la ciudad de la Vega. * * * * Tuvo una calidad notable esta primera Missa nueva, que los clerigos que a ella se hallaron no bendezian."—HERRERA, dec. i., lib. vii., cap. 12.

The first mass said by a newly-ordained priest is called the "new mass." From this it appears that LAS CASAS was the first priest ordained in the Indies.

bine two characters to make our men of; and, in this case, we should not be sorry, if it might have been so, to have had a little of the wary nature of King Ferdinand intermixed with the nobler elements of LAS CASAS. Considering, however, what great things LAS CASAS strove after, and how much he accomplished, it is ungracious to dwell the least more than is needful upon any defect or superfluity of his. If it can be proved that he was on any occasion too impetuous in word or deed, it was in a cause that might have driven any man charged with it beyond all bounds of prudence in the expression of his indignation. His ardent nature had the merit of being as constant as it was ardent. He was eloquent, acute, truthful, bold, self-sacrificing, pious. We need not do more in praise of such a character than show it in action.

In the whole course of West Indian colonization, a wise and humane forethought never could have been more wanted than at this period. Hispaniola was rapidly becoming depopulated of Indians; and on the mode of renewing the population, we may almost say, depended the future destinies of slavery. Ojeda and Nicuesa, whose career will afterward be minutely narrated, had started upon their voyages, and, though with their own ruin, were to lay the foundations of a colony at Darien. Velasquez was to go over to Cuba in the course of this year, which island was in its turn to be the starting-point of Cortez for still wider discovery and conquest. And what were the orders issued at this important and interesting period, upon which so much depended? On the 6th of June in this year the king wrote thus: "With respect to the doubt about bringing Indians from the island of Trinidad, look well if there is gold there, for you know

what the Indians suffer in changing them from one place to another. Perhaps it will be better to make use of them there, but do what may seem best to you; and that more Indians may be brought, proclaim a license for doing so without paying us the fifth of them, of which we make a present to the inhabitants of Hispaniola and San Juan.

“The conversion of the Indians is the principal foundation of the conquest, that which principally ought to be attended to. So act that the Indians there (in Trinidad) may increase, and not diminish, as in Hispaniola.”*

This is a most unsatisfactory and vacillating letter, which it is not harsh to construe shortly in this way: “Get gold, humanely if you can, but at all hazards get gold, and here are facilities for you.” The king tries to wash his hands of the ill consequences of this permission in a letter of the next month, in which he says, “Take care that our conscience be not burdened, and that the importation of Indians be without damage to them and to our people. I feel much the great loss of people (Spanish people) that Nicuesa and Ojeda have had.”†

These are but useless words: how was it possible to enter a country, take a number of its people, and transport them to another place, in any velvet manner? The only thing to be said for the king is that

* El Rey al Almirante. Sevilla, 6 de Junio de 1511. — *Coleccion de Muñoz*, MS., tom. xc.

† “Cerca de la necesidad de traer Yndios posque mueren muchos y no se multiplican he concedido que no se paguen el quinto: pero cuidado en la forma de traerlos que no se cargue nuestra conciencia y sea sin daño dellos y de los nuestros. Siento la gran perdida de gente que han tenido Nicuesa y Ojeda.”—El Rey al Almirante etc. y Oficiales. Tordesillas, 25 de Julio de 1511.—*Colccion de Muñoz*, MS., tom. xc.

he was deeply engaged in wars and negotiations at home, and had to meet the expenses consequent thereon. These poor Indians could little have conceived how much the troubles in the Italian states concerned their welfare, and were eventually to be paid for by them.

That the reader may better understand the process by which Indians were now acquired, we may turn to a proclamation issued by the Ojeda mentioned above, and which was according to the general form used on similar occasions. It begins thus: "I, Alonso de Ojeda, servant of the very high and powerful kings of Castile and Leon, notify and make known to you the following things."

The proclamation then proceeds to tell the Indians of the creation of man, and of all men being of one race, but of their having dispersed on account of their large increase, and having formed various provinces and nations. Then it declares how God gave charge of all these nations to one man called St. Peter, that he should be the head of the human race, and have rule over them all, and fix his seat at Rome "as the fittest place for governing the world." He was called Father, as the father and governor of all men. Then the proclamation goes on to say how all the men of St. Peter's time obeyed him and took him for lord, as likewise all men have obeyed his successors, and will continue to obey them to the end of time.

Having now established the papal power, the proclamation proceeds to inform the Indians how a certain pope gave to the Catholic sovereigns all these western islands and this western continent, as appears from certain writings which the Indians are told they may see if they like (*que podeis ver si quisieredes*). Then

they are duly informed how well the inhabitants of other islands, who have had this notice, have received his majesty and obeyed him, listening without any resistance or delay to religious men, and becoming Christians, and how kind his majesty has been to them. "Wherefore I entreat and require you," said Ojeda, or any other privateering discoverer, "that after taking due time to consider this, you acknowledge the Church as sovereign lady of the world, and the Pope in her name, and his majesty, in his place as lord of these isles and this continent, and that you receive these religious men. If you do so, his majesty will greet you with all love and affection, and leave you your wives and children free, and will give you many privileges and exemptions. But if you do not, by the help of God I will enter with power into your land, and will subdue you, and will take your wives and children, and make slaves of them, and sell them as such, and take all your goods, and do you all the mischief I can, as to vassals that do not obey, and will not receive their lord. And I protest that all the death and destruction which may come from this is your fault, and not his majesty's or mine, or that of my men."*

There is something irresistibly grotesque in this document. How remote and hazy must have been the conceptions of the Indians as to the meaning of the word "Church" (not an easy thing to explain at any time or to any people), or of such general terms as "privileges" and "exemptions!" Moreover, the difficulties inherent in the substance of the proclamation would not have been much smoothed over by translation. It was altogether farcical in the extreme to ut-

* HERRERA, dec. i., lib. i., cap. 14.

ter any such words to men who could so little understand them. But we must come to the serious part of the matter. Whenever this proclamation had no effect, and it was scarcely the interest of the proclaimers that it should have, then hostilities commenced, and those who were taken in war ("*Indios de guerra*" they were called) were branded and made slaves, and the fifth part of them given to the king.*

If the government of the Indians resident in Hispaniola had been ever so good at this time, and if there had been such communities as those pictured in the king's instructions to Don Diego Columbus, still what a great disturbance this perpetual introduction of slaves would have been to the well-being of the community. I do not believe, however, that any such communities as the king speaks of were formed at this period; and that the state of the Indians at peace was most wretched, we shall soon have good reason for concluding. Meanwhile, we must turn for a short time from the Indians to their brethren in adversity, and the heirs of their misfortunes, the negroes.

The royal historiographer, HERRERA, speaks of the king having informed the Admiral Don Diego Columbus, in 1510, that he had given orders to the officials at Seville that they should send fifty negroes to work in the mines of Hispaniola. We have already seen what the king had said to the former governor, Ovando, on the same point, and what number of slaves he had sent over. In June, 1511, there is a sentence in one of the king's letters, addressed to a man of the name

* "E quanto toca a esto de la Guerra, no ai mas que decir al presente, sino que todos los que en la Guerra se tomaron, se herraron, i se hicieron Esclavos, de los quales se dió el quinto de su magestad al Tesorero Baltasar de Mendoça."—BARCIA, *Historiadores*, vol. i., p. 159.

of Sampier, who held some office in the colony, about the negroes, and which sentence runs thus : “ I do not understand how so many negroes have died ; take much care of them.”* In October of the same year, there is an order from the king to his officials at Seville, authorizing them to pay Ledesma, one of the royal pilots, what was due to him for the last voyage he had made at the king’s command to carry negroes to Hispaniola.† I wish the reader to keep these facts in mind. They are mentioned now, as they occurred about this period.

Returning to the Indians, we find that concern for them developing itself among the Dominican monks in Hispaniola, which was hereafter to obtain such root in that brotherhood as almost to become one of the tenets of their faith. Grieved, astonished, and terrified must these good fathers have been at all the barbarities they heard of, and saw, on their arrival in the Indies. The treatment of the Indians was, no doubt, the daily talk at the convent ; and at last the monks resolved to speak out their minds, whatever danger to themselves might come from it. The noble way in which they effected their purpose will be recorded in the ensuing chapter.

* “. . . No entiendo como se han muerto tantos negros : Cuidadlos mucho.”—El Rey à Sampier. Sevilla, 21 de Junio de 1511.—*Coleccion de Muñoz*, MS., tom. xc.

† “ Que á Pedro de Ledesma nuestro piloto paguen lo que se le deviere del ultimo viage que por nuestro mandado hizo a llebar negros a la Española.”—El Rey à los Oficiales de Sevilla. Burgos, 24 de Octubre de 1511.—*Coleccion de Muñoz*, MS., tom. xc.

CHAPTER II.

THE DOMINICANS PROTEST AGAINST INDIAN SLAVERY.—FATHER ANTONIO'S SERMON.—BOTH THE COLONISTS AND MONKS APPEAL TO SPAIN.—FATHER ANTONIO SEES THE KING.—THE LAWS OF BURGOS.

THE Dominican monks of Hispaniola were about twelve or fifteen in number, living under the government of their vicar, Pedro de Cordova. Coming to a new country, they had deepened the severity of their rules, so that it kept its due proportion with the general hardness of living throughout the colony. One of their new rules was that they would not ask for bread, wine, or oil except in cases of sickness; and their habitual fare was most scanty, and of the poorest description. Being fully intent upon the work they had undertaken, they would soon have comprehended, from their own observation, the extent of evil in the state of things about them; but their insight into the treatment of the Indians was rapidly enlarged, and their opinions confirmed, by the acquisition of a new lay brother. This was a man who had murdered his wife, an Indian woman, and then had fled to the woods, where he remained two years; but on the arrival of the Dominicans in the island, he sought what refuge from his sin and his sorrow could be found under the shadow of their order. This man recounted to his brethren the cruelties he had been witness of; and that narration may have brought them sooner to

the determination they now adopted, which was, to make a solemn protest against the ways of their countrymen with the Indians.

The good monks determined that their protest should express the general opinion of their body; accordingly, they agreed among themselves upon a discourse to be preached before the inhabitants of St. Domingo, and signed their names to it. They farther resolved that Brother Antonio Montesino should be the person to preach; a man, we are told, of great asperity in reprehending vice. In order to insure a fit audience on the occasion, the monks took care to let the principal persons of St. Domingo know that some address of a remarkable kind, which concerned them much, was to be made to them, and their attendance was requested. The Sunday came; Father Antonio ascended the pulpit, and took for his text a portion of the Gospel of the day, "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness."

There is only a short account of the sermon, but we may be certain that it was an energetic discourse; for, indeed, when any body has any thing to say, he can generally say it worthily. And here, instead of nice points of doctrine (over which, and not unreasonably, men can become eloquent, ingenious, wrathful, intense), was an evil uplifting itself before the eyes of all men, and respecting which neither preacher nor hearers could intrench themselves behind generalities. He told them that the sterile desert was an image of the state of their consciences; and then he declared, with "very piercing and terrible words" (*palabras muy pungitivas y terribles*), that "the voice" pronounced that they were living in "mortal sin" by reason of their tyranny to these innocent people, the Indians. What authority was there for the imposi-

tion of this servitude? what just ground for these wars? How could the colonists rightly insist upon such cruel labors as they did from the Indians, neglecting all care of them, both in the things of heaven and those of earth? Such Spaniards he declared had no more chance of salvation than so many Moors or Turks.

We shall but make a worthy ending to Father Antonio's sermon if we imagine it to have concluded with words like those used by a very renowned Portuguese preacher on the same subject and a like occasion: "But you will say to me, This people, this republic, this state can not be supported without Indians. Who is to bring us a pitcher of water or a bundle of wood? Who is to plant our mandioc? Must our wives do it? Must our children do it? In the first place, as you will presently see, these are not the straits in which I would place you; but if necessity and conscience require it, then I reply, yes! and I repeat it, yes! you, and your wives, and your children ought to do it! We ought to support ourselves with our own hands; for better is it to be supported by the sweat of one's own brow than by another's blood. O ye riches of Maranhã! What if these mantles and cloaks* were to be wrung? they would drop blood."†

If we can throw ourselves back in imagination to that period, and make ourselves present at such a discourse, we might almost hear during it the occasional clang of arms, as men turned angrily about to one another, and vowed that this must not go on any longer. They heard the sermon out, however, and went to din-

* Probably of a scarlet color.

† VIEYRA's first sermon at St. Luiz, A.D. 1653, quoted in SOUTH-
EY's *History of Brazil*, vol. ii., p. 479.

ner. After dinner, the principal persons conferred together for a short time, and then set off for the monastery, to make a fierce remonstrance. When they had come to the monastery, which, from its poor construction, might rather have been called a shed than a monastery, the vicar, Pedro de Cordova, received them, and listened to their complaint. They insisted upon seeing the preacher himself, Father Antonio, declaring that he had preached "delirious things," and that he must make retractation next Sunday. A long parley ensued, in the course of which Pedro de Cordova informed the remonstrants that the sermon did not consist of the words of any one brother, but of the whole Dominican community. The angry deputation exclaimed that if Father Antonio did not unsay what he had said, the monks had better get ready their goods in order to embark for Spain. "Of a truth, my lords," replied the vicar, "that will give us little trouble;" which was true enough, for (as LAS CASAS mentions) all that the monks possessed—their books, clothes, and vestments for the mass—might have gone into two trunks. At last the colonists went away, upon the understanding that the matter would be touched upon next Sunday, and, as the remonstrants supposed, an ample apology would be offered to them.

The next Sunday came. There was no occasion, this time, to invite any body to attend, for all the congregation were anxious to come, in the hope of being about to hear an apology to themselves from the pulpit. After mass, Father Antonio was again seen to ascend the pulpit. He gave out the text from the thirty-sixth chapter of Job, the third verse: "*Repetam scientiam meam a principio, et operatorem meum probabo justum.*" Those of his audience who under-

stood Latin, and were persons of any acuteness, perceived immediately what would be the drift of this sermon, and that it would be no less unwelcome to them than the previous one; and so it proved. Father Antonio only repeated his former statements, clinched his former arguments, and insisted upon his former conclusions. Moreover, he added that the Dominicans would not confess any man who made incursions among the Indians: this the colonists might publish, and they might write to whom they pleased at Castile. The congregation heard Father Antonio out, and this time they did not go to the monastery, but they determined to send a complaint to the king, and afterward to dispatch a Franciscan (monk against monk) to argue their case at court. Thither the colonists had already sent two agents to plead for having the Indians assigned to their *encomenderos* for two or three lives, or even in perpetuity.

The Franciscan chosen for this embassy was Alonso de Espinal, and he went out in great favor with the inhabitants of St. Domingo, having all his wants amply provided for. The Dominicans resolved to send their advocate, and found two or three pious persons from whom they contrived to procure the wherewithal for his voyage. Father Antonio, as might have been expected, was the monk chosen by the Dominicans to represent them.

When the letters from the authorities of St. Domingo, complaining of the contumacious conduct of the Dominicans, reached the king, he sent for the head of their order in Spain, and made much complaint to him of the scandal which had been occasioned in the colony by this preaching. Not long afterward came the agents from the principal parties themselves: Father

Antonio on behalf of the Dominicans, and Father Alonso on behalf of the colonists. The latter was well received by people in authority, had free access to the king, and was much favored by him. Father Antonio, on the contrary, was little befriended, found the doors of the presence-chamber generally closed against him, and the ushers very peremptory. At last, one day, after an ineffectual attempt to persuade some porter or door-keeper to admit him to the royal presence, he watched an opportunity while the porter was speaking to some one else, made a bold rush at the door, passed the obstacle, and found himself at once in the royal presence, supplicating for an audience. The king spoke kindly to him, and, in reply to his request to be heard, answered thus: "Say, father, what you will." Father Antonio accordingly produced his papers, and began to make his statement. In the course of it, as an illustration of the cruelty of the Spaniards toward the Indians, he mentioned that, some Spaniards standing together joking near a river, one of them took up a little Indian child of one or two years old, and, merely for the amusement of the thing, threw it over the heads of the others into the water. He was heard to say, as he turned back and saw the little creature rising once or twice to the surface, "You boil up, little wretch, do you?" (*Bullis, cuerpo de tal, bullis.*)

No one, I believe, has ever supposed King Ferdinand to be a cruel man, and I should think he would have had an especial dislike to wanton cruelty—to any waste of wickedness. On hearing this story, he exclaimed, "Is this possible?" "Not only possible, but necessary," replied the father, "for so the thing hap-

pened, and can not (now) be left to be done.”* He meant, I suppose, that it had the necessity incident to a past transaction of having been what it was. Then the monk went on to say, “Did your highness command such things? I am sure you did not.” “No, by God, nor ever in my life,” replied Ferdinand. Father Antonio then resumed the reading of his statement; and the king, after having heard it all, declared that he would give orders for the matter to be looked to immediately and with diligence. Upon that the monk rose, and, having kissed the king’s hands, left the royal presence with the consciousness that he had amply justified his boldness.

The king was true to his word, and lost no time in summoning a Junta to consider the matter which Father Antonio had urged upon him. The Junta was formed partly of persons belonging to the king’s council, and partly of unofficial persons, chiefly theologians. This mode of forming a Junta seems to afford a feasible means of getting work well done for a government; and the union of those who had official experience, and who would have official responsibility, with those who were supposed to be peculiarly cognizant of the principles upon which the legislation in the particular case should proceed, appears to have been a very happy device. I can not say, however, that this Junta showed any great sagacity in dealing with the matter in hand, though I dare say their intelligence respecting it was, at the least, not below that of the principal men of their age and country.

The historian HERRERA says that the Junta first considered the question on the ground that the Indians

* “*Àntes es necessario, por que pasó así, y no puede dejar de ser hecho.*”—LAS CASAS, *Hist. de las Indias*, MS., tom. i., cap. 6.

were not free men, but that afterward Ferdinand re-submitted it to them, ordering them to take as their basis the words of the late queen's will respecting the Indians. It may have been so, but I find nothing to support this statement, and am inclined to think that the following account, which is that of LAS CASAS, is the true one.

He does not speak of any interference on the part of the king with the powers of the Junta, but merely says that, after having had many conferences and heard evidence on both sides, they came to a decision which may be summed up thus: That the Indians were free men; that they ought to be instructed in the Christian faith; that they might be ordered to work, but so that their working should not hinder their conversion, and should be such as they could endure; that they should have cottages and lands of their own, and time to work for themselves; that they should be made to hold communication with the Christians, and that they should receive wages, not paid in money, but in clothes and in furniture for their cottages.

These propositions, being put in due form, were given to the king as the answer of the Junta. It was signed by Bishop Fonseca, who had from the first been the person principally charged with the management of Indian affairs; by Doctor Palacios Rubios, a learned jurist and writer of those days; by the licentiates Santiago, De Sosa, and Gregorio, and by Thomas Duran, Peter de Covarrubias, and Mathias de Paz, who were monks. Several of these persons, at a future period, when they came to understand the question better, favored the Indians more; and it appears that, even at this time, one of them, Mathias de Paz, was

not satisfied with the decision of the Junta, for he wrote a work, the substance of which was, that the king could not give *encomiendas* without the Pope's permission, declaring all that had hitherto been done in this matter illegal.

We may be sure that Father Antonio was not idle during this period. He was still much discountenanced by people in authority, while his opponent, Father Alonso, the Franciscan, had free access to the Junta, and was made aware of its views and proceedings. The agents for the colonists were very active, and no doubt furnished much evidence to show that the Indians were idle; that they had no good polity among them; that they shunned the Christians, and, in fine, that if they were not to be savages, they must be slaves. Meanwhile, Father Antonio, who felt he could answer all these statements, must have grieved exceedingly at not being able to obtain a sufficient hearing. At last he resolved upon what will appear a very bold undertaking. He determined to convince his especial adversary, the Franciscan; so, waylaying him as he came out of some monastery of his order in Burgos, Father Antonio told Father Alonso that he wished to speak to him, and thus commenced his address: "Have you any thing to take out of this life with you but that ragged robe, full of filthy insects, which you carry on your shoulders?" This does not seem a winning mode of address to begin with, but Father Antonio showed more skill in the course of the conversation than would appear probable from the outset. He told the Franciscan that other men were but using him as a tool; that he was periling the reward of a life of sanctity in a matter which could not possibly benefit him; that he was doing the Devil's work

without being paid for it even in the Devil's wages. He spoke to him touchingly upon the treatment of the Indians, and appealed to his own experience as regarded the inhumanity he had witnessed ; and, strange to say, the conversation between the two monks ended in the Franciscan being entirely gained over by the Dominican, and putting himself under his guidance, so that he afterward gave him information as to what occurred in the Junta, which enabled Father Antonio to shape the case for the Indians more skillfully. The colonists, therefore, did not gain much by their spiritual ambassador ; their lay representatives, however, equally implicated in the result with themselves, were staunch and busy.

On receiving the answer from the Junta, the king's ministers requested the Junta to draw up a body of laws in conformity with the principles which they had affirmed in their decision ; but this the Junta were unwilling to do, saying that they had laid down the basis for legislation, and that, with respect to the particular laws which would be requisite, they had only to observe that the more closely such laws could be adapted to this basis the better. Such, at least, was the line taken by the unofficial members of the Junta.

Meanwhile, whether on account of the solicitations of Father Antonio, or on account of the book of Father Mathias, which I imagine was published at this time, the king does not appear to have been satisfied with the principles laid down by the Junta, or, at any rate, he was willing that the question should be farther considered ; for he asked an opinion in writing from the Licentiate Gregorio, who was one of the Junta, and also from Bernardo de Mesa, both of them king's preachers.

It must be noticed that the decision of the Junta,

though not expressly mentioning the words *repartimiento* or *encomienda*, is in substance built upon the reasons which had led to the establishment of these forms of servitude in Ovando's time.

The opinion which Bernardo de Mesa laid before the king was to the following effect: That especial heed should be taken to convert the Indians; that they were not slaves, but vassals; that, for "their own good," they must be ruled in some manner of servitude; that they had nothing but personal services to give; that idleness is the mother of all evil; that, finally, the Indian might be given in *encomienda*, but not to every Spaniard, only to those who were of good conscience and customs, and who, besides employing the Indians who should be allotted to them, would instruct them in matters of the faith. If the Indians, he said, were to remain under their caciques, how could they learn the faith? But while he concluded that it would be right to give the Indians in *encomienda*, he was for their being well treated, and for their having regulated tasks allotted to them.

Bernardo de Mesa's opinion is in general well expressed and well reasoned, that is, according to his erroneous facts and limited experience; but there is one dictum of his which those of us who are islanders may be inclined to question. He says that it would be contradicting the goodness of God to assert that the Indians were not fit to receive the Christian faith; but that to maintain them in it, and to teach them good customs, would be a matter of great labor, for, as an insular people, they naturally have less constancy, by reason of the moon being the mistress of the waters.*

* "La naturaleza de ellos no consiente tener perseverancia en la

The above seems too gross a folly to do any thing but laugh at; yet opinions grounded on little better reason, and empty phrases thrown prettily together, and words far too big for the occasion (so that in the vacant spaces there is ample room for combustibles), are the things which, in all times, have to be translated into various kinds of misery and ruin. A mist of foolish words comes down sometimes, now as then, in a rain of blood.*

The other preacher was of the same mind as Bernardo de Mesa, but carried his conclusions farther; for he maintained that the king might justly inflict slavery upon the Indians for their idolatry, especially such a qualified slavery as that proposed.

The opinion of the king's preachers coinciding with that of the Junta, it was adopted by the king, and nothing remained but to carry it into execution. A set of laws was therefore drawn up by certain members of the king's council, appointed for that purpose, taking as their basis that the system of *encomiendas* was to be retained.

In their preamble these legislators pronounce upon the indolence and depravity of the Indians, and declare that the best thing which can be done at present is to break up the Indian settlements and to place the Indians in the neighborhood of the Spaniards: that thus both in body and mind the aborigines will be well cared for.

The laws were to the following effect:

The Indians were first to be brought among the Spaniards, all gentle means being used toward the ca-

virtud, por ser Insulares que naturalmente tienen menos constancia, por ser la Luna Señora de las Aguas."—LAS CASAS, *Hist. de las Indias*, lib. iii., cap. 9.

* Written in 1848.

ciques to persuade them to come willingly. Then, for every fifty Indians, four *bohios* (large huts) should be made by their masters. The *bohios* were to be thirty feet in length by fifteen in breadth. Three thousand *montones* (the hillocks which were used to preserve the plants from too much moisture*) of *yuca*, of which they made the cassava-bread, two thousand *montones* of yams, with a certain space for growing pimento, and a certain number of fowls, were to be assigned for the living of these fifty Indians.

Every Spaniard who had an *encomienda* of Indians was to make some sort of building, however rude, for a chapel, and in it were to be placed an image of the Virgin Mary and a bell. Prayers were to be read morning and evening—the Ave Maria, the Pater Noster, the Credo, and the Salve Regina. Besides this chapel for each *encomienda*, there was to be built a church for the general neighborhood, in which mass was to be said.

By these laws it was settled that the Indians appointed to work at the mines were to stay there five months; then they were to have forty days for holidays, in which time, however, they were to till their own lands; then they were to go to the mines for another five months. Certain regulations follow about the food to be given to the Indians working at the mines, or on the Spanish farms. Las Casas grows furious in condemning the quantity and quality of this food as being utterly inadequate. Among other ar-

* The Indians planted their potatoes also upon hillocks, a circumstance which may be worth heeding in the present times. "Cada monton tiene ocho ó nueve pies en redondo, é las haldas del uño tocan, con poco intervalo, çerca del otro: é lo alto del monton no es puntiagudo, sino quassi llano, é lo mas alto dél será á la rodilla ó algo mas." —OVIEDO, *Hist. Gen. y Nat.*, lib. vii., cap. 2. See also cap. 4.

rangements, certain little fishes called sardines were ordered to be eaten on fast-days. Such an order, as Las Casas says, was ridiculous; for men employed in such labors as the Indians were would have no time for fishing, and it would have been impossible to bring a sufficient supply of fish from Spain and to convey it into the interior of Hispaniola.

The employment of the Indians in the mines is not only encouraged, but insisted upon; for it is ordered that a third part of each *encomienda*, or, if the owner should wish it, more than a third part, should be so employed. Those Spaniards who were very distant from the mines (one hundred leagues, for instance) were not to be bound by this law. They might, however, be in partnership with those of their countrymen who lived near the mines. And in practice it came to this: that those who lived near the mines furnished provisions, and those who lived far off brought Indians; so that this exception to the law only added to the misery of the natives.

With regard to the wages, it was ordered that one peso of gold should be given annually to each Indian, to provide clothes with. -

Then there was a law in favor of women with child.

Then followed a law which might have led to important results, but little good came of it. It was, that visitors should be appointed, two for each Spanish settlement; but these visitors were permitted to have *encomiendas*, and therefore it was hardly to be expected that their proceedings should be considerate, or even impartial.

The Indian dances were forbidden.

The regulations respecting the caciques were, that they should have a certain number of their Indians set

apart for their service (never to exceed six), and that the cacique and his attendants were to go to whatever Spaniard had the greatest number of that Indian prince's tribe allotted to him. The cacique and his servants were not, however, to be idle, but were to be employed in easy and light services. These poor caciques! What a fall in life for them; to descend from governing a people (which they had done after their fashion, and not so badly) to some such occupation as looking after fowls!

The above laws were promulgated at Burgos on the 27th of December, 1512, and have ever since been called the Laws of Burgos. Much can not be said in praise of their justice, wisdom, or humanity.

The reader may recollect that King Ferdinand, on receiving the complaints from the official persons of St. Domingo against the Dominican monks, sent for the provincial of that order, and spoke to him about the sermons of Father Antonio, blaming them exceedingly. The provincial, on his part, wrote to Pedro de Cordova, the head of the Dominicans in Hispaniola; and in consequence of that communication from his superior, or wishing to aid Father Antonio by his presence, Pedro de Cordova came over to Spain and presented himself at court. He was a person of great repute and authority; and when he had read these laws of Burgos, and had expressed to the king his dissatisfaction with them, Ferdinand said to him, "Take upon yourself, then, father, the charge of remedying them; you will do me a great service therein; and I will order that what you decide upon shall be adopted." "It is not my profession to meddle in so arduous a matter," the vicar replied; "I beseech your highness, do not

command me." And so passed away one of the greatest opportunities of doing good that any man ever had. Those who have taken up a great cause must sacrifice even their reserve and their humility to it—often, perhaps, the hardest thing for a good man to do. And, with regard to responsibility, he who is not prepared to take all the responsibility that may come of his moving in any matter, has some difficulty to justify his moving in it at all. Any one, however, who is cognizant of those times, will be desirous to say as little as possible against Pedro de Cordova, who was a very good man, and, on all other occasions, a devoted friend to the Indians.

As Pedro de Cordova would not take the arrangement of the Indian laws upon himself, the king summoned another Junta with two new theologians in it, to see if the laws could be ameliorated. Pedro de Cordova assisted at this council, but did not succeed in doing much, though all that was then determined proved to be of very good tendency, and entirely in accordance with his views.

This Junta, in their report, suggested certain additions to the laws of Burgos, namely, that married women should not be compelled to go and serve with their husbands in the mines or on the farms; that boys and girls under fourteen years of age should not be employed in hard work, but only in matters of household service; and that, until their coming of full age, they should be intrusted to their parents or to appointed guardians.

This Junta also recommended that the unmarried Indian women should work in the company of their parents, and that the laws which applied to the clothing of men should apply to that of women also.

The above suggestions, all of which have for their object the cultivation of family ties and of decorum, are good as far as they go, and deserve to be commended. In the course of this report there is a sentence, added probably by the Dominican vicar, or on his remonstrances, which is important in principle, to the effect that if the Indians were to become civilized, they should be allowed to live by themselves.* However, as LAS CASAS justly declares, if these people had lived to the day of judgment, they never would have got their liberty in this way.†

The Junta concluded by informing his highness that, these additions being made to the laws of Burgos, "his royal conscience would be entirely discharged," and LAS CASAS observes, with some justice, "It is delightful to see how free the king remained from the sins which were committed in the perdition of those people" (the Indians).

The summoning of these Juntas is the first occasion of the grievances of the Indians being brought before the court of Spain in a public manner, and the laws of Burgos are the first attempt at legislation to remove such grievances. We may naturally make a pause here in the narrative, and pass in review the main events and circumstances of the history up to this time.

* "Que porque con el tiempo y la conversacion de los Cristianos se podrian hacer capaces y politicos para vivir por si é por si regirse, se les diese a los que tales se cognosciesen facultad para por si vivir." —LAS CASAS, *Hist. de las Indias*, MS., lib. iii., cap. 18.

† These Juntas seem to have entirely failed in appreciating the gist of the subject submitted to them. As LAS CASAS says, they did not foresee that there must be a burrow near the spot where the hare always takes refuge (*no sintieron la madriguera donde se acogia la Liebre*), meaning that they did not perceive the consequences of things.

At the time of passing these laws of Burgos, nearly a century had elapsed since Prince Henry of Portugal, suddenly resolving upon his first expedition of discovery, sent out two gentlemen of his household to get beyond Cape Nam if they could, and to do what mischief to the Moors might come in their way. Since then, how changed and how enlarged a world it had become! The whole coast-line of Africa had been followed out, and the way by sea to India ascertained; the Atlantic had been crossed; the most important of the West India islands, Hispaniola, Cuba, and Jamaica, had been discovered; nor was the continent of America unknown, though the margin only of a small part of it was yet beginning to be colonized. Navigation, instead of being the childish, timid thing it was in the first instance, had sprung up at once into full manhood; and mariners now lost sight of land altogether, and yet went to sleep as fearless as if they were in their own ports. Europe had become acquainted with new plants, new animals, new trees, new men; and these new things and creatures will not remain mere curiosities for the Old World, but will henceforth be mixed up with its policy, its wars, its daily and domestic habits, and become part of its nearest anxieties. The finances of great nations and the sustenance of numerous people will depend upon plants which the Spanish discoverers of this century were just beginning to notice, and were speaking of with an indifference which seems almost wonderful to us who know what a large part these things are hereafter to play in the commodities of European life.

As regards the civil history of these new climes of Africa and America, much had already taken place in the course of this first century of modern discovery,

which determines, if we may say so, the fate of millions of people to come. Already a slave-trade had been established in Africa; already had the first instance taken place of colonists destroying aborigines (an example hereafter to be so frequently followed); already had the peculiar difficulties attendant upon modern colonization begun to be felt, and the first beginnings been made of state papers, fearful to think of from their number and extent, to regulate the relations between the colony, the mother country, and the original inhabitants.

Nor in other departments besides those of conquest and colonization had the European men of this century been idle. They had invented printing about the same time that they introduced a negro slave-trade—opponents which were destined to have a deadly battle for many generations. Literature had maintained its revival. Art may be said to have culminated in a century which possessed a Leonardo da Vinci, a Michael Angelo, a Raffaele, and a Titian. The science of international politics had begun, for it was during this period that the policy of European nations became something like what it is now, so that we feel as if we were immediately related to the men of that day, though if we step back a few years in history, men then seem ancients to us. Taking it altogether, this particular hundred years will only yield as yet to one other century in the annals of the world.

There is never wanting, however, the slave to sit in the triumphal chariot, and to remind the conqueror that he is, after all, but a poor mortal. And when, with some knowledge of what has taken place since, we look over the proceedings of this century (especially as regards the discoveries and conquests with which

we are at present concerned), we almost feel as if nothing had been gained for humanity, so large are the drawbacks. Not that I can believe that the world goes on toiling, and suffering, and aspiring, yet gaining nothing, or that we are to conclude that the conquests and discoveries of this century were not a furtherance of the intelligence and the worth of mankind. But Ignorance and Evil, even in full flight, deal terrible back-handed strokes upon their pursuers.

In the very case before us, in this discovery of the Indies, what do we find? From want of understanding their fellow-men, from want of comprehending what should be the first objects of colonization, these early discoverers were doing what they could to produce a displacement of human life which will be very mischievous to as remote a period in the history of the world as we can at all presume to foresee. It is probable that no considerable changes take place even in insect life without affecting us—it may be largely; and what must we expect from abrupt extinctions and introductions of races of mankind in any country, which are so many shocks, as it were, to social nature? What but troubles and disasters of the direst kind? And such they have proved to be, large in themselves, prolific in their nature, and of vast extent in their operation.

To bring the above remarks closely home to the present subject, keeping within the bounds of what has already been related, let us take the case of Hispaniola, and we shall see that the circumstances under which that island was occupied were as unfavorable to human life as can well be imagined. The conquered people were employed in a manner alien from all

their former pursuits, habits, and enjoyments. They worked for the production of commodities which had no interest in their eyes. They were hurried off to the mines without any suitable provision being made for a great movement of population. Nothing, in such a mode of government, had time to grow. It was not, as in older and settled countries, a surplus part of the adventurous youth that was attracted to a severe but gainful occupation, but the most stable and precious part of the community, such as fathers of families, was suddenly demanded for a kind of labor for which it had received no previous training, and in the profits of which it had no concern. It would have been contrary to all the laws by which life is regulated if such a mode of proceeding had been otherwise than most fatal to the people among whom it was introduced. They died, as they must have died, by thousands, and the mode of supplying this vacuum was equally contradictory to the laws of nature.

In a limited space, like that of an island, we are able to trace clearly the results of this outrageous and barbarous statesmanship, and we must be prepared in the course of the narrative to watch the gradual extinction of the Indian inhabitants of the West India islands, just as we might observe the extinction of so many lights which there was not air enough to support, and which die out from sheer inanition.* Such is the unwelcome but manifest conclusion which follows from our first general consideration of the various events that have already been recorded in the history of Spanish America.

* Knowing the fate of these Indian nations, I have been anxious to put on record any Indian names that occur, that the ethnologist may have before him the few words that are left of their languages, which may furnish some slight clew to the genealogy of these destroyed races.



BOOK V.

OJEDA AND NICUESA.

CHAPTER I.

NATURE AND CUSTOMS OF THE INDIANS. — MINOR VOYAGES. —
OJEDA AND NICUESA START ON THEIR VOYAGE. — OJEDA'S MIS-
FORTUNES. — HIS DEATH.

CHAPTER II.

ENCISO'S RE-ENFORCEMENTS. — ESTABLISHMENT AT DARIEN. —
NICUESA'S MISFORTUNES WITH HIS OWN COLONY. — NICUESA
REJECTED BY THE MEN OF DARIEN.

CHAPTER I.

NATURE AND CUSTOMS OF THE INDIANS.—MINOR VOYAGES.

—OJEDA AND NICUESA START ON THEIR VOYAGE.—OJEDA'S MISFORTUNES.—HIS DEATH.

THE course of history is like that of a great river wandering through various countries; now, in the infancy of its current, collecting its waters from obscure small springs in plashy meadows, and from unconsidered rivulets which the neighboring rustics do not know the names of; now, in its boisterous youth, forcing its way through mountains; now, in middle life, flowing with equable current busily by great towns, its waters sullied yet enriched with commerce; and now, in its burdened old age, making its slow and difficult way with an ever-widening expanse of waters, over which the declining sun looms grandly, to the sea. The uninstructed or careless traveler generally finds but one form of beauty or of meaning in the river or upon its banks. The romantic gorge or wild cascade is perhaps the only kind of scenery which delights him. And so it has often been in our estimate of history. Well-fought battles, or the doings of gay courts, or bloody revolutions, have been the chief sources of attraction; while less adorned events, but not of less real interest or import, have often escaped our notice altogether.

In order to gain some of that interest in the present

subject which would arise from better knowledge of the persons principally concerned, it is desirable to endeavor to understand the nature of the Indian people, on whose fate this narrative mainly turns—a fate which has, perhaps, had as much effect upon the world as that of any of the most distinguished races.

It is a very difficult thing for one people to understand another, even if they are of the same age as a nation and equally advanced in civilization; still more difficult is it for a partially-civilized people to appreciate a people living comparatively in a state of nature. And as this was the relation between the Spaniards and many nations of the Indians, we must translate, as it were, with much circumspection, the accounts which the conquerors give of the conquered into our own reading of the matter. We see in this day that civilized people of the same race, religion, habits, manners, and language often misunderstand each other utterly. Imagine, then, how great must be the chance of false interpretation when men of different races talk together in language most imperfectly understood, eked out by signs, about subjects upon which they have scarcely any common ideas!

And then, too, there is that tyrannous desire for uniformity which confounds the judgment of men when they are commenting upon each other individually; so that you often find that a long criticism upon a man or his work is but a demand that he should be somebody else, and his work somebody else's work. And nations make the same foolish comments upon each other that individual men do. What a world it would have been if a man had been listened to in the making of it! One or two kinds of trees, a few flowers of the form and colors which pleased him, and hap-

pened to suit the exact spot where he was standing, and one species of mankind—his own—would have filled up, handsomely, as he would think, his formal village world. But great rich Nature, apparently unreckoning, almost reckless in her affluence, though we know all the time how bound she is to weight and number, smiles with every variety and inequality of form and color, of life and desire, of character and conduct.

Having thus put in some plea for diversity of nature among men, I will endeavor to give the reader some notion of the Indians, not supporting my views by exact and formal references, but simply giving such a description of the Indians as a traveler might have done who had just come from those parts of the world, and was asked what were his general impressions of the people he had been staying among.

In the first place, the outward appearance of the Indians was prepossessing; they had a mild expression of countenance, a gentle smile, a beautiful form, with good complexion and softness of body, and a general gracefulness of movement.

In many parts of America, the manners, and perhaps the whole aspect of the people, would have given a traveler the notion of persons of decayed fortune, who had once been more prosperous and formidable than they were now, or who had been the offshoot of a more defined and forcible people. These nations had probably traveled much, whether they had come from Judæa or Phœnicia (as some have said), or, as I should say was most probable—if called upon to pronounce some opinion on the matter—from Eastern Asia and the adjacent islands. The rumor of a deluge

was largely current in some parts of the Indies. Then the singular correspondence, in point of length of the Mexican year, 365 $\frac{1}{4}$ days, with that of the Egyptians, the five complementary days, corresponding to the epagomena of the Memphian year, the resemblance of the Teocalli, or god-houses, to the temple of Jupiter Belus, with many other strange resemblances in rites and modes of thought and expression, almost compel us to give a common origin to these nations of the New World and to the eastern nations of the Old World.*

In some of the Indian tribes things were to be found which reminded the traveler of the highest products and the highest thoughts of civilization. Hieroglyphics, statues, carvings, pictures, works of metal, and delicate fabrics of cotton, attest this. Various kinds of bread were to be seen among them, and not unskillful modes of cultivation. In dances and in songs they excelled. Moreover, some of the most elevating and some of the most subtle and far-fetched notions that have ever entered into the minds of men were to be found domesticated among the Indians. Thus prayer, prophecy, monastic life, the confession of sin to appointed confessors, the immortality of the soul, and hopes of a future state of bliss, belief in witchcraft, and the propitiation of idols by living sacrifices—the deepest thoughts and the wildest superstitions—were not unknown in the New World.

In order to bring home more clearly to the mind of the reader what kind of mental civilization the Indians had when they were civilized, I can not do better than

* Such, I imagine, would be the conclusion of HUMBOLDT, from whom I gain these particulars, but who is very careful of pronouncing any judgment, as, indeed, large investigation in these doubtful matters makes men careful of coming to any conclusion.

give an account of two prayers that remain to us, which were in use among the Mexicans. The one was used after a kind of auricular confession, which, however, it appears occurred only once in a lifetime.

After the penitent had confessed his sins to the satrap, the satrap addressed the god Tezcatlipuk in this fashion: "Our Lord most gracious, the defender and favorer of all, you have just heard the confession of this poor sinner, in which he has made known in your presence his rottenness and filthiness." The satrap then went on to say, in words which I shall abridge, that the sinner might have concealed some of his sins, in which case dire will be his punishment; but perchance he has spoken the whole truth, and now feels "dolor and discontent" for all that is past, and firm resolve never to sin more. Then the satrap* said, "I speak in presence of your majesty, who knowest all things, and knowest that this poor wretch did not sin with entire liberty of free will, but was helped and inclined to it by the natural condition of the sign under which he was born. And since it is so, O most gracious Lord, defender and favorer of all men, even if this poor man has grievously offended against you, peradventure will you not cause your anger and your indignation to depart from him?" Continuing in this strain, the satrap besought pardon and remission of sins, "a thing which descends from heaven as clearest and

* I keep the word "satrap," as it is used in the original, and may give a clew to the Mexican word which it represents. "Satrap," in the Middle Ages, had a signification it has since lost. "Chartam Æthelredi Regis Angl. post Duces subscribunt aliquot viri nobiles, cum hoc titulo, *Satrapa Regis*. Quæ appellatio eadem est forte quæ *Ministri*. Vide in hac voce. (S. BERNARDUS *de Consid.*, lib. iv. Quid illud sit dicam, et non proderit. Cur? quia non placebit Satrapis, plus majestati quam veritati faventibus.)"—DUCANGE, *Gloss.* "Satrapa."

purest water," with which "your majesty," he said, "washes away and purifies all the stains and filthiness which sins cause in the soul" (*todas las manchas, y suciedades, que los pecados causan en el anima*).

Then the satrap addressed the penitent, and told him that he had come to a place of much danger, and labor, and dread, where there is a ravine from which no one who had once fallen in could make his escape; also, he had come to a place where snares and nets are set one with another, and one over against another. All this is said metaphorically of the world and of sin. The satrap proceeded to speak of the judgment to come in another world, and of the lake of miseries and intolerable torments. "But now, here you are," he said to the penitent, "and the time is arrived in which you have had pity on yourself to speak with our Lord, who sees the secrets of hearts." And then the satrap told the penitent there was a new birth for him, but he must look to his ways well, and see that he sinned no more. Finally, he must cleanse his house* and himself, and seek a slave to sacrifice before God (there is the blot on the whole proceeding), and he must work a year or more in the house of God, and undergo penitential exercises, piercing his tongue for the injurious words it had uttered; and he must give in charity even to the depriving of himself of sustenance; "for look," said the satrap, speaking of the poor, "their

* In reference to this cleansing of the house, the exhortation is as follows: "Carefully cleanse and preserve thy house, and thou wilt often meet that most gracious youth who ever goes through our houses, and through our districts, comforting and recreating, and works, seeking his friends to console them, and be consoled with them." This is said entirely in a spiritual sense, for the prayer has just declared that God is "invisible and impalpable."—AGLIO, *Antiquities of Mexico*. KINGSBOROUGH'S *Collection*, vol. v., p. 370.

flesh is as thy flesh, and they are men as thou art, especially the sick, for they are the image of God. There is no more to say to thee; go in peace, and I pray God that he may help thee to perform that which thou art bound to do, for he is gracious to all men.”*

The next prayer is that of a king, or governor, upon his election, in which, after celebrating the greatness of God (this also is addressed to Tezcatlipuk), and debasing himself before Him, saying that he deserves blindness of his eyes and crushing of his body (a confession which many rulers might make after they have had the government), he goes on to say that he it is who requires to be governed, and that the Lord must know many to whom he could confide this charge of government; but since “you are determined,” he says, “to put me forward as an object of scandal and laughter for the world, let your will be done. Peradventure,” he exclaims, “you do not know who I am. After that you know what person I am, you will seek another, depriving me of the government, being weary of enduring me. Perchance,” he adds, “it is a dream, or as when one rises from his bed in his sleep, this thing which has happened to me.” The prayer then proceeds, as the prayer of a ruler naturally would do, against war and against pestilence, and speaks of former rulers, and, if I understand it rightly, of their joys and privileges in heaven; and then he comes to speak of his own inferiority—how he has no possibility of ruling himself—how he is in darkness—how he is a

* “Mira que su carne és como la tuya, y que son hombres como tu; mayormente á los enfermos porque son imágen de Dios. No hay mas que te decir; vete en paz, y ruego á Dios que te ayude á cumplir lo que eres obligado á hacer, pues que el favorece á todos.”—KINGSBOROUGH'S *Collection*, vol. v., p. 371.

heap of refuse in a corner. "Be gracious, therefore, O Lord," he exclaims, "and give me a little light, if it be no more than so much as a glow-worm which moves by night throws out from itself, that I may find my way in this dream and this sleep of life, which lasts as a day, where there are many occasions for stumbling, and many things to give occasion for laughter, and other things that are as a rugged road, which have to be passed by leaping."*

He concludes by saying, "Our Lord most gracious, you have made me sit in your seat and be your instrument of voice (*vuestra flauta*)† without any desert of my own;" and afterward he adds, "Although I am a poor creature, I wish to say that unworthily I am your image, and represent your person, and the words which I shall speak have to be held as your words, and my countenance to be esteemed as your countenance, and my hearing as your hearing, and the punishments that I shall ordain have to be considered as if you ordained them; wherefore, I pray you, put within me your spirit and your words, that all may obey, and that none may be able to contradict."‡

* "Tened por bien, Señor, de me dar un poquito de lumbre, aunque no sea mas de quanto echa de si una lucerna que anda de noche, para ir en este sueño y en esta vida dormida que dura como espacio de un dia, donde hay muchas cosas en que tropezar, y muchas cosas en que dar ocasion de reir; y otras cosas que son como camino fragoso, que se han de pasar saltando."—KINGSBOROUGH'S *Collection*, vol. v., p. 379.

† The force of this expression will be understood when an account is given of Tezcatlipuk's festival, in which a flute was sounded at certain intervals.

‡ A doubt will occur to many minds as to how these long prayers were retained in the memory of the Mexicans, whose means of writing with exactitude were, comparatively speaking, limited. The same doubt occurred to the celebrated Acosta three hundred years ago, and he expressed it to one who was able to satisfy him. In the original

After reading such prayers as the above, which at any rate have some grandeur in them, it is impossible to help smiling when some Spanish narrator, who has been commenting upon the folly and idolatry of the Indians, shows himself to be any thing but free from superstition, relating a story, perhaps, how an evil spirit, who was kept in durance by an English monk, promised, if released, to give him figs at Christmas, and accordingly brought figs from the Indies at that time, for which the evil spirit received his liberty.*

With respect to the moral qualities of the Indians, I think it may be said that they were less treacherous than most other uncultivated people. Of their valor, or the want of it, it is difficult to speak, because it is almost impossible to estimate duly the advantages which their conquerors, the Spaniards, possessed in having firearms, horses, and discipline. Individual instances of the most determined bravery on the part of the Indians are frequent in the early histories of their conquerors. The Spaniards are wont to speak of the idleness of the Indians; but what alacrity could be

manuscript of JUAN DE TOVAR, possessed by Sir Thomas Phillips, Bart., of Middle Hill, the letter of ACOSTA and the answer of TOVAR are given. "Pero, para conservarlos por las mismas palabras, que los dixeron sus oradores y poetas, avya cada dia exercicio dello, en los colegios de los mozos principales, que avyan de ser sucesores á estos, y con la continua repeticion, se les quedava en la memoria, sin discrepar palabra, tomando las oraciones mas famosas, que en cada tiempo se hazian por método, para imponer á los mozos, que avyan de ser retóricos, y de esta suerte se conservaron muchos parlamentos, sin discrepar palabra, de gente en gente, hasta que vinieron los Españoles, que en nostra letra escribieron muchas oraciones, y cantares, que yo vi, y assí se han conservado. Y con esto queda respondido á la última pregunta, de 'Cómo era posible tener estos memoria de las palabras,' etc."—JUAN DE TOVAR, *Historia de los Indios Mexicanos*, MS.

* See OVIEDO, *Hist. Gen. y Nat.*, l. iv., c. ii. Madrid, 1851.

expected from any man who, under a tropical sun, is employed in gathering gold for other people?*

Another complaint often urged against the Indians for the first sixty or seventy years after the discovery of America was that it was impossible to make them live in polity. This was an ill-founded complaint. The Indians hated the polity of the Spaniards, and very justly so, considering the expounders of this polity whom they encountered. But succeeding events, and indeed contemporaneous ones, showed that the Indians were a docile people, and could adopt with all reasonable readiness the religion and polity which the Spaniards were desirous of impressing upon them.

I do not pretend that all the traces of cultivation I have mentioned were to be found in any one tribe or nation of Indians; but looking at them for a moment as one race of men under different circumstances, it is not unfair to bring together the different developments of this race, for the purpose at least of showing the possibilities which were in it. It is also worthy of remark that those Indians who had, perhaps, the least of what we ordinarily call cultivation, give the idea of having been the most cultivable, while the Mexicans, rich in arts and knowledge of various kinds, were cruel idolaters. In the case of the Indians who lived more simply, such as the aborigines of Cuba, Hispaniola,

* The Indians, on the other hand, might well complain of the idleness of the Spaniards. An old Indian of Nicaragua thus addresses BENZONI, who commenced his travels in the Indies in 1541: "Christiani operari nolunt, ludificatores sunt, aleatores, pravi et blasphemii. Quum ad Missam audiendam templum ineunt, de absentibus detrahunt: et alii aliis plagas et vulnera imponunt. Ad extremum eo evasit ut concluderet Christianos minime esse bonos. Quumque excepissem, malos, non autem bonos, ea facere: tum ille, Ubinam sunt illi boni? inquit. Quippe ipse quidem nondum ullos, nisi malos, cognovi."—BENZONI, *Hist. Novi Orbis*, lib. ii., cap. 16.

and the Terra-firma (near the Isthmus of Darien), the very simplicity of life went far to prevent covetousness; and even where religious rites and ceremonies were least developed, natural religion, in its best form, seems to have prevailed. "They had no form of worship," says HERRERA, speaking of the people of the Terra-firma, "but they held it sinful to kill, to steal, and to commit adultery; and they abhorred lying."*

This difference which I have just noticed between the Mexicans and the inhabitants of Cuba seems to me to pervade great part of the continent, and to make it appear as if there had been two centres from which the development of the various nations in America proceeded, generating two kinds of cultivation. The one was adroit, unimaginative, cruel, and tending to a worship of the outer world. This cultivation culminated in the Mexicans.

Then there was the other, which received its highest development among the Peruvians, in whose religion and religious worship a grand simplicity prevailed. It has been noticed, I think, that the favorable view which the first inca gave of death, by what he said at the approach of his own death, was probably the means of preventing human sacrifices in Peru. Calling his principal people around him, he told them that he intended to return immediately to the heavens, to rest himself with his father, the sun, who was calling him; and this form of speech was used by all succeeding incas when they felt themselves to be dying. The worship of the Peruvians was not a mere worship of the sun alone, as of the most beautiful and powerful

* "No tenían adoracion alguna, sinó tener por pecado, el matar, hurtar, y tomar agena muger, y aborrecian el mentir."—HERRERA, *Hist. de las Indias*, dec. ii., lib. iii., cap. 5.

thing which they beheld, but they had also a worship of a far more refined and elevated nature addressed to Pachacamac, the soul of the universe, whom they hardly dared to name; and when they were obliged to name this being, they did so inclining the head and the whole body, now lifting up the eyes to heaven, now lowering them to the ground, and giving kisses in the air. To Pachacamac they made no temple and offered no sacrifice, but they adored him in their hearts. Their sacrifices to the sun were rams and sheep, and the produce of the earth, and, as the Romans poured out libations to their gods, so the Peruvians, in sign of adoration to the sun, were wont to throw a drop into the air, and kisses with it.

How different from the formal, elaborate, and bloody sacrifices of the Mexicans!

This difference, which I seem to see throughout the Indian nations, may point to two different races, or may be merely a development in different directions of the same race; and, indeed, if the opinion is sound that men are all to be traced up to one family, the difference of all races has been produced in this way, namely, by a development of one part of the human character and form, the rest remaining comparatively latent.

One peculiar circumstance, as HUMBOLDT remarks, is very much to be noted in the ancient records and traditions of the Indian nations. In no less than three remarkable instances has superior civilization been attributed to the sudden presence among them of persons differing from themselves in appearance and descent.

Bochica, a white man with a beard, appeared to the Mozca Indians in the plains of Bogotá, taught them how to build and to sow, formed them into communities, gave an outlet to the waters of the great lake, and, having settled the government civil and ecclesiastical, retired into a monastic state of penitence for two thousand years.

In like manner, Manco Capac, accompanied by his sister, Mama Oello, descended among the Peruvians, gave them a code of admirable laws, reduced them into communities, and then ascended to his father, the sun.

Among the Mexicans there suddenly appeared Quetzalcohuatl (green-feathered snake),* a white and bearded man, of broad brow (*ancha la frente*), dressed in strange dress, a legislator, who recommended severe penances, lacerating his own body with the prickles of the agave and the thorns of the cactus, but who dissuaded his followers from human sacrifice. While he remained in Anahuac, it was a Saturnian reign; but this great legislator, after moving on to the plains of Cholula, and governing the Cholulans with wisdom, passed away to a distant country, and was never heard of more. It is said briefly of him† that “he ordained sacrifices of flowers and fruit, and stopped his ears when he was spoken to of war.”‡ Such a saint is

* Green-feathered means eloquent. “Plumage rico y de perfecto color. Dícese por la oracion elegante ó muy bien compuesta.”—KINGSBOROUGH'S *Collection*, vol. vii., p. 181.

† HUMBOLDT'S *Researches in America*.

‡ “Dicen que quando quiera que nombraban delante de él, muertes, ó guerras, ó otros males, tocantes á daños de los hombres, bolvia la cara á otra parte, y se tapaba los oidos, por no verlos, ni oirlos.”—TORQUEMADA, *Monarquia Indiana*, lib. vi., cap. 24.

See also LAS CASAS, *Historia Apologetica*, where the same words with a slight variation are used: “Volvia la cara y tapaba los oidos por no los ver ni oir.”—Cap. 122.

needed in all times, even in the present advanced state of civilization in the Old World.

I can not help imagining that somewhat of the same difference which has been pointed out between the two great branches of the Indians might perhaps be traced in their numerous languages also. The language that first sounded on the ears of Columbus was exquisitely sweet, and so the Indian tongues were found to be in other parts, but the language of the Mexicans is to our apprehension harsh in the extreme. Indeed, a language in which the word for a kiss is *tetennamiquliztli*, can hardly be an inviting one for the "gay science" of troubadours, or for aught that is gentle.

I can not conclude this brief account of the Indians without adverting to their ancient monuments and ruined cities. Those who wish to study this people must turn to the ruins of the temples, or the tombs, at Mitla, Palenque, and Copan; must investigate the primæval remains of buildings to be found on the borders of the vast lake of Titicaca and the adjacent plain of Tiahuaco; must consider well the pyramids of Papantla and Cholula; and still farther ponder over the clear signs of an early and considerable civilization which seems to have existed in a somewhat similar form in places so widely asunder as Canada and the banks of the Orinoco. It has been said that little will be learned to advance art, or increase our knowledge of beauty, from a study of any American monuments—an assertion which I think is completely contradicted by the Grecques on the temple or palace at Mitla, and still more by the recently-discovered ruins of Copan. There is a monument among the many remark-

able ones brought to light there which I think is one of the grandest that remains to us, as far as I know, of all antiquity precedent to the Grecian era.* This monument is a colossal figure, the head of which greatly resembles that of Napoleon, only that it has that grand mildness and that sedate intelligence which fascinate our attention in the monuments of that mysterious country that is created, if we may say so, by the Nile.

Putting aside, however, all questions of beauty, I have no doubt that it is of the utmost importance that the learned should deeply investigate and consider the ancient monuments of America. I think I foresee a time (if the wiser nations of the earth are not obliged to be too much employed in warring, and so have little energy left for other exertions) when these and similar researches, which are being undertaken in various parts of the world, will be made to converge to a far larger knowledge of the early records of this earth than has hitherto been obtained, and will thus assist in solving some of the most important questions which exist with respect to the early peopling of the world, the migrations of races, and the capabilities of different races in enduring different climates.

In the narrative we are about to resume, questions of race occupy the foremost place, not only in the cells of the studios, but in the courts of kings and on battle-plains. I have not the slightest doubt, for instance, that the account in the Bible of the origin of our first parents and the unity of the human race (which will be found constantly referred to) was the cause of millions of people, whole nations, being maintained upon the earth.

* STEPHENS'S *Central America*, vol. i., p. 140.

Those Indians whom the Spanish priests and statesmen were able to preserve from the cruelty and recklessness of their countrymen owed their preservation to this basis of thought, that, whatever appearances might say to the contrary, the conquerors and conquered were originally of one race.

Again, the interest of these ancient stone-written or parchment-painted records of America is redoubled by the wonderful resemblance, and occasionally the absolute identity, of the Indian traditions with the history in the Bible, of which resemblance the account of the Deluge and of the tower of Babel are most striking examples.* And, in fine, to determine what we must hold to and what we must dismiss in early chronology is a branch of research that must not be abandoned. Indeed, increased knowledge of the arts of life, of science, and of the nature of man, far from rendering such research of less interest, will only give a deeper meaning to it.

Having said thus much of the nature, customs, religion, and antiquities of the Indians, I resume the general story of the Spanish Conquest, which left off at the publication of the laws of Burgos in favor of the Indians.

Hitherto the narrative has been confined to Hispaniola and the mother country, and has gone chronologi-

* "He," Xelhua, "ordered bricks to be made in the province of Tlamanalco, at the foot of the Sierra of Cocotl, and to convey them to Cholula he placed a file of men, who passed them from hand to hand. The gods beheld with wrath this edifice, the top of which was to reach the clouds. Irritated by the daring attempt of Xelhua, they hurled fire on the pyramid. Numbers of the workmen perished; the works were discontinued, and the monument was afterward dedicated to Quetzalcoatl, the god of the air."—HUMBOLDT'S *Researches in America*, vol. i., p. 96.

cally in one direction ; but it will be necessary now to turn back to those enterprises which led to the colonization of the continent of South America—of the *Terra-firma*, as it was always called at that time.

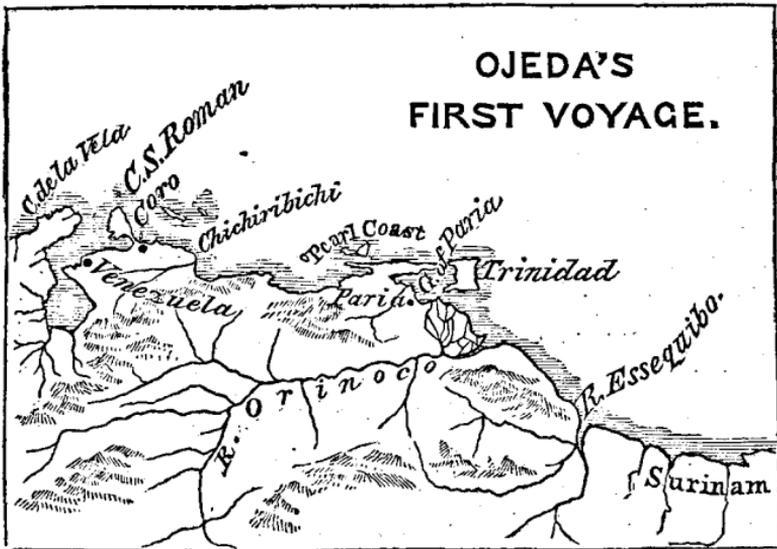
The voyages which for this purpose must be examined and recounted, were for the most part disjointed undertakings, often fruitless and discreditable to those engaged in them, and very unsatisfactory and difficult to relate. But they led to great changes in the world. They give a picture of Spanish enterprise during that period, and show it spreading over the New World like water finding its level ; unhappily, however, not in force or quantity enough to form great navigable rivers or deep seas, but merely wide, stagnant, unhealthy marshes. So many of these smaller enterprises were eminently unsuccessful as regards the fortunes of the persons engaged in them, that we may wonder at first at the steady continuance of such undertakings. But who at that time could resist embarking in them ? The truth is, life is tedious ; we mock at gamblers, and rightly, because the chances are often manifestly against them ; but who, except a few cold-blooded philosophers, does not wish to try his fortunes in some adventurous way ? Every body knows well the inconveniences of the state in which he lives, and where he has probably missed the respect or the love which he hoped for ; and he thinks that at least it will be something gained to have a change of evils.

Then the notions of the earth which were held at that period were so wild, so vague, so tempting. Copernicus* had not as yet made known those beginnings of astronomical science which were to reduce, even in

* Copernicus was born in 1473, and died in 1543.

the popular imagination, the bounds of the world to their just insignificance. The earth was indefinitely large; there was then an India for every body to discover; the stars were concerned in the destinies of men; and even wise and prudent persons partook somewhat of the mood of children when deep in the study of fairy-tales, where courage and adventure always come to a good end.

The first discovery of the main land of America was made by Columbus in the course of his third voyage,



in the year 1498.* It was at Paria. In the next year, Alonso de Ojeda—having on board that personage who

* This voyage will have, hereafter, to be carefully recounted. I am so convinced, however, that the best chance for the reader to remember any of the entangled history of the discovery and settlement of Spanish America is to have it told to him according to place, and not to date, that I entirely postpone all farther allusion to Columbus until that part of the coast which he discovered becomes important in the general narrative.

makes a dubious figure in the history of the New World, Amerigo Vespucci—accomplished a somewhat similar voyage to that of Columbus, having been aided by a knowledge of the admiral's route. Ojeda, however, touched on a more southerly point than Columbus, somewhere, it is conjectured, on the coast of Surinam, and from thence went northward to the Gulf of Paria; after that, to Venezuela,* which he so named from some similarity of the position and the buildings to those of Venice.† The farthest point westward of this voyage was the Cape de la Vela. Vespucci's account of the natives is curious and interesting;‡ and his narrative spreading over Europe was the cause of his name being given to the third part of the habitable globe. It would be a curious question to investigate whether lies and false rumors have had more practical effect in the affairs of the world than absolute facts.

There was also a voyage made to these parts by Rodrigo de Bastidas, with Juan de la Cosa for pilot, which was successful; and we have LAS CASAS'S authority for saying that Bastidas was a humane man

* Venezuela is sometimes placed, but wrongly, to the S.W. of the Lake of Maracaibo. Its position in the opposite map has been determined with great care.

† "Vieron una gran poblacion y las casas que la formaban fundadas artificiosamente en el agua sobre estacas hincadas en el fondo y comunicándose de unas á otras con canoas."—NAV., *Col.*, tom. iii., p. 8.

‡ His account of their medical proceedings deserves to be recorded. "Observamos frecuentemente que cuando alguno de ellos tenia calentura, en el punto y hora en que la fiebre lo atormentaba con mas rigor, lo metian en un baño de agua muy fria, y despues por espacio de dos horas le obligaban á correr y dar muchas vueltas al rededor de una gran lumbre hasta que llegaba á calentarse estraordinariamente, y entónces le llevaban al lecho para que durmiese; con cuya medicina vimos sanar á muchos. Usan tambien muy frecuentemente de la dieta, tan rigorosa que estan sin comer ni beber cosa alguna por espacio de tres y cuatro dias."—NAV., *Col.*, tom. iii., p. 215.

toward the Indians. Indeed, he afterward lost his life by this humanity; for, when governor of Santa Martha, not consenting to harass the Indians, he so alienated his men, that a conspiracy was formed against him, and he was murdered in his bed. The renowned Vasco Nuñez was in this expedition, and the knowledge he gained there had the greatest influence on the fortunes of his varied and eventful life.

Passing over the other voyages which were made to the Terra-firma as not immediately relevant to our purpose, we come now to the complicated but important events which belong to the contemporaneous expeditions of Ojeda and Nicuesa, from which there ensued a consistent course of discovery and colonization, leading to the greatest results.

The expeditions of Nicuesa and Ojeda were interwoven together in a curious manner. It is probable that during the short regency of the Archduke Philip,* and while Ferdinand was at Naples, the course of enterprise toward the New World languished; and thus, on the death of Philip and the return of the old king to the government of Castile, those undertakings, which had their origin at the court of Spain, were naturally brought forward at the same time.

The characters of the two commanders were entirely dissimilar. Ojeda was a strong, daring, devout common soldier, of great personal endurance and resolution, but with no power of managing other men. A remarkable feat of his in early life, performed in the presence of Queen Isabella—walking swiftly out upon a plank from the top of the Giralda at Seville and

* The son of the Emperor Maximilian, and the father of Charles the Fifth. He had married Juana, the daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella. See p. 185, where the state of the Spanish royal family is discussed.

back again—was typical of what he could do.* His personal strength was immense. Placing himself at the bottom of the Giralda, he could throw an orange to the top, a height of two hundred and fifty feet. His connections in Spain were powerful. He had a first cousin of the same name, one of the inquisitors, and a favorite of Ferdinand and Isabella; and he himself had been brought up in the family of the Duke of Medina Celi, where it is probable Columbus first met with him, and induced him to accompany him in his second voyage. Under such a commander as Columbus, Ojeda was most serviceable, as may be inferred, for instance, from the romantic capture of Caonabó, whether that story be true or mythical; but when in command himself, Ojeda seems to have been but a poor creature, for thews and sinews are not the things by which men are long governed, even the rudest.

Nicuesa, on the other hand, was a courtly person of good birth,† a good speaker, a good musician. He came to Hispaniola with Ovando, acquired wealth there, and was deputed by the colonists to go to the court of Spain to solicit that their Indians should be given to them for one life, and that thus they might be so far independent of the caprices of the governor for the time being. This important concession he obtained for them, and it is a step in the history of *en-*

* “Se subió en el madero que sale veinte piés fuera de la torre, y lo midió por sus piés apriesa como si fuera por un ladrillado, y despues al cabo del madero sacó el un pie en vago dando la vuelta, y con la misma priesa se tornó a la torre.”—LAS CASAS, *Hist. de las Indias*, MS., lib. i., c. 82.

† He had been bred up in the family of the king's uncle. “Hombre de limpia sangre de hijosdalgo; é crióle el muy ilustre Señor Don Enrique Enriquez, mayordomo mayor é tio del Rey Cathólico, hermano de su madre.”—OVIEDO, *Hist. Gen. y Nat.*, lib. xxviii., cap. 4.

comiendas. At the same time, he procured for himself the government of Veragua. As this province had been discovered by Columbus,* such a grant of its government must have been very offensive to his son, the present governor of the Indies.

Ojeda, who was favored by Bishop Fonseca, obtained at the same time the appointment to the government of the province of Urabá, adjacent to Veragua. Ojeda was poor, his previous voyages having been of little or no profit to him; but he was aided in furnishing his present expedition by the celebrated pilot, Juan de la Cosa, and by a lawyer named Martin Fernandez d'Enciso,† whom Ojeda at once appointed alcalde in his province, which received the name of Nueva Andalucia.

Nicuesa, as the richer personage, had the larger fleet and more men; but he, too, went far beyond his means in fitting out his fleet, and came thereby into great embarrassments.

Both these commanders arrived at St. Domingo, which was to be their starting-point, at the same time, and, as was natural, began to quarrel about the limits of their respective governments. Finally, however, Juan de la Cosa persuaded the two governors to accept the River Darien as the boundary line between their two provinces. The province of Urabá was to extend from the River Darien eastward to Cape de la Vela; the province of Veragua from the River Darien westward to Cape Gracias á Dios. The former province was called Castilla del Oro, which name it gained from the flattering accounts that Columbus had given of it.

* In his fourth and last voyage.

† Enciso was the author of the valuable work *Suma de Geographia*, which is now very rare. There is a copy in the British Museum.

drawbacks, often the proximate causes of failure in great adventures, show the evil of divided and conflicting authority! The governor of the Indies ought to have been the chief, if not the sole responsible agent for farther discovery. How strange it is, too, to see an island like Jamaica, from which so much wealth has since been extracted, treated as a mere adjunct to greater gifts, and as a sort of store-house for provisions. Either of these governors would have done well to have taken this store-house in lieu of his province, if he could have been content to cultivate it. But such small and practical forms of ambition were not congenial to the men, nor to the age in which they lived.

Ojeda was the first to sail for his province. He left the port of St. Domingo on the 10th or 12th of November, 1509, with two ships, two brigantines, three hundred men, and twelve mares. As horses and dogs played such an important part in the wars of the Spaniards against the Indians, these animals well deserve to be named in the enumeration of any forces.

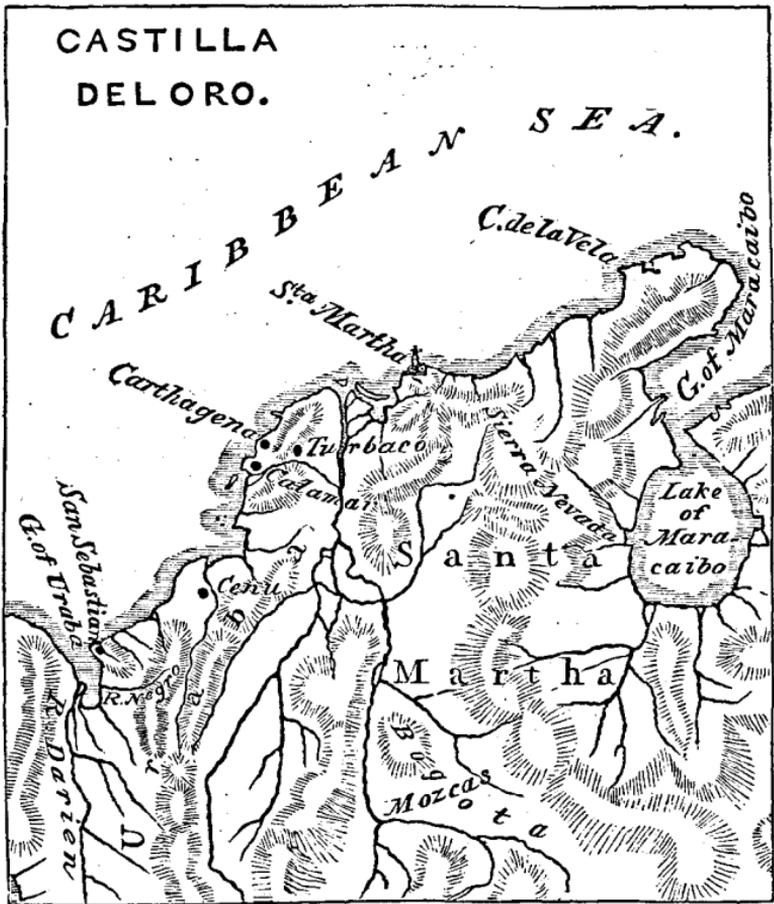
Nicuesa's departure was delayed by the difficulty he had in providing for his debts. It is probable that the admiral's well-known enmity toward him, as to one who was unjustly about to reap the fruits of his father's discovery, increased the difficulty. Even when Nicuesa's vessels had started, and he himself was just going to embark, or indeed had embarked (for, to the best of LAS CASAS'S recollection, who was an eye-witness, Nicuesa was taken out of his boat),

la gobernacion de una isla que se llama Jamáica, que hay en ella muchos mantenimientos de lo que ellos tenian harta necesidad, y ansimismo se la quitaron."—See *Memorial de COLMENARES*; NAV., Col., tom. iii., p. 387.

he was arrested for five hundred castellanos. If Nicuesa could but have known from what evils this hard creditor was unconsciously endeavoring to save him, he would have gone to prison with a merry heart. But, indeed, even a very little of the knowledge possessed by the seer would often make us resign ourselves to misfortunes without much struggling, accounting them as blessings in disguise, or as, at least, the smallest evils in a long series. Some friendly notary came forward and paid this debt for Nicuesa, who was thus enabled to start at last, about ten days after Ojeda. Nicuesa's fleet consisted of two good ships, a caravel, and two brigantines, and he was accompanied by six hundred and fifty men.

Meanwhile Ojeda, who no doubt was delighted at having got the start of Nicuesa, had not profited much by this precedence. In four or five days he reached the port of Carthagena. Having received permission from those who had the management of Indian affairs in Spain to make war upon the Indians, he began at once to avail himself of it. The grounds of this permission were very slight and questionable. The Indians had, on some occasions, resisted the violence of the Spaniards, or shown an unwillingness to let them land, and therefore they were to be accounted enemies. Ojeda, it is said, disregarded the advice of Juan de la Cosa, the second in command, who wished him not to enter the country at Carthagena, where the Indians were not friendly, and where they used poisoned arrows, but to pass on at once to the Gulf of Urabá, and found his settlement there. But to this Ojeda would not listen, and, taking Juan de la Cosa with him, he made an attack upon a town called Calamar, where he

captured seventy Indians, and sent them to his ships. He then marched upon a large Indian town called Turbaco, which he found deserted. He pursued the fugitive Indians, and, while doing so, his men spread themselves over the country in a disorderly manner. The



Indians, seeing this disorder, collected together, and came down suddenly upon the Spaniards, who in their turn had to become the fugitives, and to take refuge in a fort constructed hastily of palisades. The In-

dians gave the Spaniards no rest, and pressed the advantage they had gained with so much vigor, that they succeeded in putting all the Spaniards to death, with the exception of Ojeda and one other. It was by an impetuous sally that Ojeda saved himself; and his smallness of stature was of good service to him on this day, for he was thus enabled to shelter himself well behind his shield. All the rest of the Spaniards, to the number of seventy or a hundred, perished.

The luckless commander fled to the woods; meanwhile the fleet, ignorant of what had befallen their chief, was quietly coasting along. At last, however, gaining intelligence of what had happened, his men went to seek him, and they found him almost speechless with hunger, his sword in his hand, and the marks, it is said, of three hundred arrows in his shield. They made a fire, warmed and fed him. As he recovered, and while he was narrating his adventures to the men, Nicuesa's fleet hove in sight. The contest between these two governors, while they were at St. Domingo, having been carried on in the most offensive and personal manner, Ojeda might well expect ill treatment from Nicuesa, or at least contempt; and so Ojeda begged his men to return to the ships, to leave him where he was, alone, and to say nothing about him while Nicuesa was on that coast.

Ojeda's men did not act exactly in accordance with their instructions. They told Nicuesa how Ojeda and his party, having destroyed Calamar, had then entered the country, but had not been heard of since; that they, however—the remainder of the force—were determined to do their duty by their commander; that they would go and seek for him, and would bring him, if Nicuesa would assure them that he would overlook

what had occurred between Ojeda and himself in times past.

Nicuesa was angry at their even imagining that he could take advantage of his present superiority to punish former affronts, and he assured them that he would be a brother to Ojeda; on which assurance they produced their commander, whom Nicuesa received most kindly.

The friendship of the Spaniards boded no good to the Indians. The two governors joined company, and went with four hundred men to seek for Juan de la Cosa, and to chastise the Indians. By public proclamation, the Spanish commanders forbade that any quarter should be given to the Indians; and, falling upon Turbaco, they committed incredible slaughter, burning the Indians in their cottages, and slaying men, women, and children. To show the terror the horses inspired, it is mentioned that the Indian women, when about to fly from the burning huts, rushed back into the flames at the sight of those terrible quadrupeds.

The Spaniards succeeded in finding the body of Juan de la Cosa, but it was in a horrible condition, on account of the poison in the arrows which had been the cause of his death. This sight appears to have daunted his countrymen, who lost no time in returning to their ships.

Ojeda now took leave of Nicuesa, and made his way to the Gulf of Urabá, capturing Indians in the course of his voyage. Entering the gulf, he endeavored to find the River Darien, which the two governors had agreed to accept as the boundary of their respective territories. This river he could not discover, but he disembarked on the eastern side of the gulf, and founded a town on a height there, calling it San Sebastian.

This was the third town founded upon the Terra-firma, the first having been the one which the old admiral, Columbus, began to found in Veragua, and the second that of Vera Cruz, which Ojeda himself had founded, during a former voyage, in Bahiahonda. Neither of these towns was now in existence.

Ojeda sent his stolen gold and Indians home to Saint Domingo, in order that more men and supplies might in return be dispatched to him; and he inaugurated the building of his new town by a foray into the territories of a neighboring Indian chief, who was reported to possess much gold. This foray, however, produced nothing for Ojeda, and his men were soon driven back by clouds of poisonous arrows.

How their people should be fed seems always to have been a secondary consideration with these marauding governors; and, indeed, on like occasions in all periods of the world, it appears as if gold were supposed to be meat, drink, and clothing, the knowledge of what it is in civilized and settled communities creating a fixed idea of its universal power, of which people are not able to divest themselves. Famine now began to make itself felt at San Sebastian. Just at this point of time, however, a supply from a most appropriate quarter came suddenly to the aid of the hungry inhabitants of the new town. There came in sight a vessel, which had been stolen from some Genoese by its commander Bernardino de Talavera, who was bringing it to the new settlement, as being a place where the title to any possessions would not be too curiously looked into. The supplies which this vessel brought were purchased by Ojeda, and served to relieve, for the moment, his famishing colony. But their necessities soon recommenced, and, with their ne-

cessities, their murmurings. The Indians also harassed them by perpetual attacks, for the fame of Ojeda's deeds was rife in the land, and the natives were naturally very unwilling to have such a neighbor near them. The Spanish commander did what he could to soothe his people by telling them that Enciso, the partner in his expedition and his alcalde, was coming; and as for the Indians, Ojeda repelled their attacks with his usual intrepidity. His Indian enemies, however, began to understand the character of the man they had to deal with, and, resolving to play upon his personal bravery, which amounted to foolhardiness, they laid an ambuscade for him. The Indians then feigning an attack, Ojeda rushed out with his wonted impetuosity until he came within reach of their ambuscade, which concealed four bowmen. These discharging their poisoned arrows, one of them passed through his thigh, and this was the first time, strange to say, in his adventurous and riskful life, that he had been wounded. No veteran, however, could have shown more indifference to pain in the remedy which he insisted upon adopting. He ordered two plates of iron brought to a white heat to be tied on to the thigh, threatening the reluctant surgeon to hang him if he did not apply this remedy. It was so severe that it not only burned up the leg and the thigh, but the heat penetrated his whole body, so that it became necessary to expend a pipe of vinegar in moistening the bandages which were afterward applied. All this torture Ojeda endured without being bound. Would that this terrible energy and power of endurance had been given to a career more worthy of them!

The supplies brought by Talavera being now entirely consumed, Ojeda's company began to feel again the

pressure of famine, and to murmur accordingly. * They also took counsel among themselves about seizing furtively the brigantines and returning to Hispaniola, for they disbelieved, or affected to disbelieve, that Enciso was coming at all. Ojeda resolved to anticipate their designs, and, in these straits, to return himself to Hispaniola, leaving Francisco Pizarro, a name now first appearing in history, in command as his lieutenant.

Before parting from his people, Ojeda made this agreement with them, that if within fifty days he did not return, they might then dispeople the settlement, and go wherever they pleased in the two brigantines. This being agreed upon, the wounded commander, with a few attendants, embarked in Talavera's vessel.

Whether Bernardino de Talavera and his crew were not able to manage the stolen craft, or that they met with very bad weather, the result was that they could not make the island of Hispaniola, but were shipwrecked on the coast of Cuba, near the port of Xagua. During the voyage the most violent feud had broken out between Ojeda and his fellow-passengers. Their interests were not likely to have coincided; for these marauders, who had stolen their vessel from some port in Hispaniola, would hardly be anxious to come within sight of that island, to which Ojeda's course was anxiously bent. Whatever may have been the cause of the quarrel, it went to such lengths that Talavera and his ruffians, who were much the stronger party, put Ojeda in chains. In this way they traveled together, after they were wrecked, toward the eastern part of Cuba, the brave Ojeda being freed from his chains whenever his companions feared an attack from the Indians. He, though outnumbered, did not lose his accustomed daring, heaping reproaches upon his

companions, and saying he would kill them all if he only had them to fight with two by two. The greatest danger, however, which these Spaniards had to encounter as they made their way along the coast, was, not from the Indians, but from a horrible swamp, in which they floundered on day after day; the swamp extending as they marched along, and they, poor shipwrecked men, with wet clothes and damaged provisions, now sinking up to the armpits, now disappearing altogether in the mud.

Ojeda's courage had never failed him: his devotion was now to be made manifest. In his wallet he always carried an image of the Virgin Mary, a present from his patron, Bishop Fonseca, which he revered much, "for he was always a very devout servant of the Mother of God" (*porque siempre fué muy devoto servidor de la Madre de Dios*). When they rested on any spot where the mangrove trees, which love such swamps, were above the waters, Ojeda was wont to hang up his image on a bough, paying adoration to it himself, and exhorting the rest to do the like. So they journeyed through this dreadful swamp for a whole month, and not till they had left half their company buried in it did they arrive at an Indian town on the firm ground, called Cueyba. They were a wretched band, almost dead with fatigue, but the good Indians of Cueyba fed the Spaniards, washed them, and succored them in every way. There Ojeda left his image, having vowed to do so at the first Indian town he should arrive at. He also persuaded the cacique to build an oratory for the image, and endeavored to explain to him what it meant.

The friendly Indians furnished the Spaniards with guides into the province of Macaca; from thence the

shipwrecked men, remembering that there were Spaniards in Jamaica, sent one of their company, Diego Ordaz, in a canoe to inform their fellow-countrymen of their fate. Ordaz reached Jamaica safely; and, upon hearing his story, Juan de Esquivel, the governor of Jamaica, sent a vessel for Ojeda and his companions. The captain deputed to receive Ojeda was Pamphilo de Narvaez, who, when Ojeda's canoe reached the vessel, thus courteously addressed him: "Senor Ojeda, will your worship please to come hither; we have to take you on board;" but the shipwrecked governor of Urabá, as if conscious that honors scarcely belong to the unfortunate, replied with a proverb expressive of his ill fortune, "*Mi remo no rema*"—my oar rows not. Narvaez, however, received the unfortunate man with all honor, and conducted him to Juan de Esquivel at Jamaica. This was the governor upon whose appointment Ojeda, much enraged that Jamaica had not been assigned to Nicuesa and himself for their provision grounds, had said that if he went to Jamaica, he would cut off the governor's head; but Juan de Esquivel, putting aside all remembrance of these threats, received Ojeda very kindly, and furnished him with the means of transport to St. Domingo. As for Bernardino de Talavera and his confederates, they fell into the clutches of the law on account of their act of piracy; but no notice was taken of any thing that they did to Ojeda, and he made no stir about it himself, for, as LAS CASAS says, Ojeda was not the man to accuse them (*no era hombre Ojeda que los acusaria*).

The fifty days agreed upon by Ojeda and his men as the term of their stay at San Sebastian had doubtless passed before he reached Hispaniola, and even if the time had not expired, the penniless Ojeda would

not the less have been unable to fulfill his part of the contract. It appears that he lived for some time afterward at St. Domingo, and the only thing we hear of him is the characteristic one of his narrowly escaping assassination by his activity. He never regained power or influence; and this man, who had been engaged from the first discovery of the New World in so many great enterprises, and who was governor of Urabá, died in the extreme of poverty. It appears that he became a Franciscan monk for a few hours before his death, and was clad in the habit of that order when he died, "making," as OVIEDO assures us, "a more laudable end than other captains in these parts have done."* He was buried just beyond the threshold of the church in the monastery of St. Francisco, perhaps from a wish of his own that the multitude of passers-by might walk upon his tomb. He was a type of many men of that time, who, like himself, were reckless, valiant, devout, adventurous. So much does one love bravery, even of the coarsest kind, that many will echo the pious wish of LAS CASAS, that it may have pleased God to bless Ojeda before his death with a knowledge of his sins, and with repentance for his dealings with the Indians.†

* "E quando se vido al cabo de la vida, pidió el hábito de la 'Orden, en que no perseveró el conde Guido, por el qual dixo: 'Yo fuy hombre de armas y despues fuy cordelero,' significando la órden de Sanct Francisco, porque los religiosos se çinen la cuerda. 'E assi Hojeda, de capitan é hombre guerrero, se convirtió en devoto frayle de la observançia; pero hizolo mejor que aquel conde Guido, puesto que perseveró en la 'Orden y se hizo frayle para pocas horas, y fué enterrado en el monasterio de Sanct Francisco de aquesta cibdad, en el qual hábito murió é acabó como cathólico, haçiendo mas loable fin que no han hecho otros capitanes en estas partes."—OVIEDO, *Hist. Gen. y Nat.*, lib. xxvii., cap. 4.

† "Plega ó haya placido á Dios de haberle dado conoscimiento antes de la muerte de haber sido pecador los males que hizo á Indios."—LAS CASAS, *Hist. de las Indias*, MS., lib. ii., cap. 61.

CHAPTER II.

ENCISO'S RE-ENFORCEMENTS.—ESTABLISHMENT AT DARIEN.

—NICUESA'S MISFORTUNES WITH HIS OWN COLONY.—NICUESA REJECTED BY THE MEN OF DARIEN.

THE narrative now returns to Ojeda's men, who had been left at San Sebastian, in the Gulf of Urabá. When the fifty days had expired, and there were no signs of their commander, who, indeed, at that moment was plunging through the dismal swamp upon the coast of Cuba, they resolved to dispeople the settlement and to sail away. But as the two brigantines would not hold them all, they were obliged to wait until hunger and the assaults of the Indians had reduced them to the proper number. Then they killed and salted the horses that were left; and, having thus provided themselves with some food for the voyage, they embarked, Pizarro commanding one of the brigantines, and a man named Valenzuela the other. Their sojourn at San Sebastian had lasted six months.

When they were twenty leagues from the shore, Valenzuela's brigantine, struck, as it was imagined, by some large fish, went down suddenly. Pizarro made for the port of Carthagena, and, as he entered, saw a ship and a brigantine coming in at the same time. These proved to contain the men and the supplies brought at last by the Bachiller Enciso, Ojeda's alcalde mayor. He had with him one hundred and fifty men, several horses, arms, powder, and provisions. A curious incident, fraught with great results, had occur-

red early in Enciso's voyage. In the midst of his cargo, unknown to its owner, was a barrel* containing no provisions, but a living man, of whom much will hereafter have to be said. His name was Vasco Nuñez de Balboa, a native of Xerez de Badajoz, an adventurer, a skillful master of the art of fencing,† who, as he was in debt, and as indebted people might not leave the island of Hispaniola without the permission of the authorities, had secretly, by the aid of a friend named Bartolomé Hurtado, contrived to get into this barrel, and to form part of Enciso's stores. When the vessel had got out to sea, Vasco Nuñez made his appearance, much to the dissatisfaction of Enciso, a precise lawyer, who must thoroughly have objected to aid in any breach of the law. He threatened to put Vasco Nuñez on a desert island, but suffered himself to be pacified at last. To those who know the part that Vasco Nuñez was about to play, it almost seems as if the Arabian story of the unfortunate man who freed a malignant spirit from durance, and found that it had sworn to destroy the person who should deliver it, was so far about to be acted over again.

On the meeting of the remnant of Ojeda's company, under Pizarro's command, with the re-enforcements brought by the Bachiller Enciso, the latter commander at once concluded that these people had fled away from their duty, and had deserted Ojeda. Indeed, Enciso was so convinced of this that he was inclined to put them into confinement, and at first would give

* OVIEDO says that Vasco Nuñez was concealed in the folds of a sail: "Escondido envuelto en la vela cogida en la entena de la nao." —*Hist.*, lib. xxix. Prohemio.

† This, at least, is the meaning that has been given to PETER MARTYR'S word "digladiator."

no credit to the story they told him. Their famished appearance, however, was an undeniable witness in their favor, and at last they succeeded in convincing the Bachiller of the truth of what they were saying; and then, naturally enough, they did all they could to dissuade him from proceeding to San Sebastian; but he, full of his lawyer-like notions that he must do what he had contracted to do (and he is to be honored for this), resolved to go on to Urabá; and partly persuading them with a hope of plunder, partly insisting upon their obedience, he contrived to carry them along with him.

Enciso, with his vessels in good trim, sailed out from Carthagena to pursue his way to Urabá; but, unfortunately, just as he was making for land near San Sebastian, from some oversight on the part of the man at the helm, his vessel was thrown upon a rock, and in a very short time beaten to pieces. The men with difficulty saved themselves in the boat and the brigantine, but all the cattle and almost all the provisions were lost; and when Enciso and his men made their way to San Sebastian, they found the fortress entirely destroyed. Their situation was manifestly most perilous. For some time they managed to subsist upon wild animals caught in the mountains, and upon the buds of the palm-tree; but this precarious supply soon came to an end, and then it was necessary to obtain food by force.

The Indians here, however, as Ojeda had found before, were most formidable opponents. It is mentioned that three naked Indians with poisoned arrows pierced as many Spaniards as they had arrows for, and then fled like the wind.

We may easily imagine how the desire to return now grew upon the men, and how Pizarro and the remnant of Ojeda's people clamored at their advice and entreaties not having been listened to. While the hearts of all men in this little colony were thus down-stricken, and their purposes confused, each man giving or listening to advice (*oyendo cada uno á cada cual su sentencia*), Vasco Nuñez spoke out. He said that he recollected, when he was with Rodrigo de Bastidas, entering this Gulf of Urabá, and that they disembarked in the western part of it; where they found an Indian town near a great river, in the midst of a fertile country. He also said, which was most to the present purpose, that the Indians in those parts did not use poisoned arrows. How deeply it is to be regretted that this knowledge of poisoned arrows did not overspread the continent, for, as every reader of the Iliad is always on the Trojan side, so it is impossible, in reading this conquest of the New World, not to wish for the success of the weaker party, or, at least, not to regret that their weapons were for the most part so lamentably unequal to those of their invaders.

This river, that Vasco Nuñez spoke of, proved to be the River Darien. His advice was instantly listened to; and the Bachiller Enciso, taking with him Vasco Nuñez and a hundred men, set out to find the Indian town. They succeeded in finding it; but the Indians, who had heard of their doings in other parts, were not inclined to receive them amicably. Five hundred men (the women and children having been sent away) had taken up a position on a hill, awaiting the orders of Cemaco, their cacique, for battle.

This being a critical period in the fortunes of the new colony, the Spaniards then present knelt down

devoutly, and made a vow, that if victorious, they would dedicate their first church and settlement to Santa Maria de la Antigua, alluding to an image so called in Seville, which was much revered by all the citizens there; and they also vowed that they would send a company of pilgrims with jewels to her shrine at Seville. The Bachiller, moreover, in a pedantic way, as it seems to me, made all his men take an oath that they would not turn their backs on the enemy. When the fight commenced, Vasco Nuñez proved to be right in his report of there being no poison in the arrows of these Indians, who accordingly, with their puny weapons, made no resistance worthy of the name to the blows with sword and lance dealt by the Spaniards. Those Indians who were not killed fled at once, leaving an easy victory to the Spaniards, who might, I imagine, have saved themselves the jewels which they had promised to send to the shrine of Santa Maria de la Antigua.

There is a different version of this story mentioned by LAS CASAS. It is said that the Indians received Enciso and his party well, and gave them gold; but that, upon a demand being made to be informed where this gold came from, the cacique, counseled by his elders, would not tell the Spaniards, for fear they should settle in those parts; that they then applied the torture to him, when he confessed where the gold was to be found, but afterward, collecting his forces, resolved to attack them.

Whichever story is right, it is certain that Enciso had this skirmish with the natives of Darien, in which his forces were victorious. He afterward entered the Indian town, where he found a store of provisions; and, pursuing his researches, he discovered in a cane-

brake the household gods of the Indians, among which were also found golden breastplates and golden chains. Sending for the rest of his people from San Sebastian, Enciso founded the town of Santa Maria de la Antigua del Darien.

But a far more difficult task than building a town had to be attempted by the Bachiller Enciso: he had to rule a number of discontented, disappointed men, and it does not seem that he possessed any peculiar talents for that difficult undertaking. They had now, too, a good pretext for refusing obedience to his authority; they said that he had no power over them, as they were not in Ojeda's territory, but in that of Nicuesa, which was true. Such a pretext would never have distressed a real commander, but it was of sufficient force against the Bachiller Enciso. It appears he had given great offense by issuing a peremptory mandate that no one, on pain of death, should traffic with the Indians for gold. Vasco Nuñez was, no doubt, at the head of the malcontents, and he is said to have complained bitterly of the injustice of the Bachiller, declaring that he had nothing but the name of an educated man, but was, in reality, a most cunning fox.* The men, resolving to depose Enciso, proceeded to an election of their officers, and, in straits like these, a good choice is nearly sure to be made. They chose Vasco Nuñez and a man named Zamudio for their alcaldes, and a person of the name of Valdivia for regidor; but even this election was not decisive in the minds of these unfortunate colonists. There still

* "Nec se Baccalaureo pariturum, qui in jure dicendo privato magis quæstui quam communi omnium utilitati consuleret, nihilque præter litterati nomen haberet, reapse vulpem astutissimam referens."—BENZONI, *Hist. Novi Orbis*, lib. i., cap. 20.

remained three factions ; one in favor of Vasco Nuñez, another devoted to Enciso, and a third to Nicuesa.

An accident determined the matter in favor of Nicuesa. He had left behind him in Hispaniola his lieutenant, Rodrigo de Colmenares, who was to follow with stores and provisions. Colmenares met with great hinderance from the authorities in Hispaniola ; and it was not until ten months after his chief had sailed that he was able to follow him. The first point he had touched upon in the Terra-firma was near the Sierra Nevada, in the province of Santa Martha. From thence he had proceeded westward along the coast in search of Nicuesa, making smoke-signals on the shore and firing off guns, which were at last heard by Enciso's men, who, returning the signals, brought Colmenares to them. He arrived at Darien in November, 1510.

The provisions which Colmenares brought in his ships were powerful arguments in favor of Nicuesa ; the recollection of his pleasant manners and of his kindness to their late commander, Ojeda, must have told in his favor ; and, in fine, the greater part of Enciso's company joined in sending Colmenares to Nicuesa to ask him to come and take the command of them.

It is necessary now to turn back to Nicuesa, and to ascertain what had become of him while Enciso was being deposed. The narrative is exceedingly tangled, but unavoidably so. The events, however, if not important in themselves, were so important in their consequences, and are such needful links in the great chain of the New World's history, that they must be patiently recounted.

Nicuesa left the port of Carthagena soon after Ojeda

had quitted it, and bent his course at once to his province of Veragua. Lope de Olano, of whose previous life we only know that he was concerned in the revolt of Roldan against Columbus, was Nicuesa's captain general. The mode of sailing was this: Nicuesa went in a caravel, attended by the two brigantines, in one of which was Lope de Olano. Nicuesa's caravel and the brigantines kept close to the shore; the two large ships stood out more to sea, as was requisite. They were all to sail westward, making their way to Veragua; but soon after quitting Carthagena the weather became very contrary, and one stormy night, Nicuesa, to avoid danger near the coast, put out to sea, and in the course of that night parted company with all the other vessels.

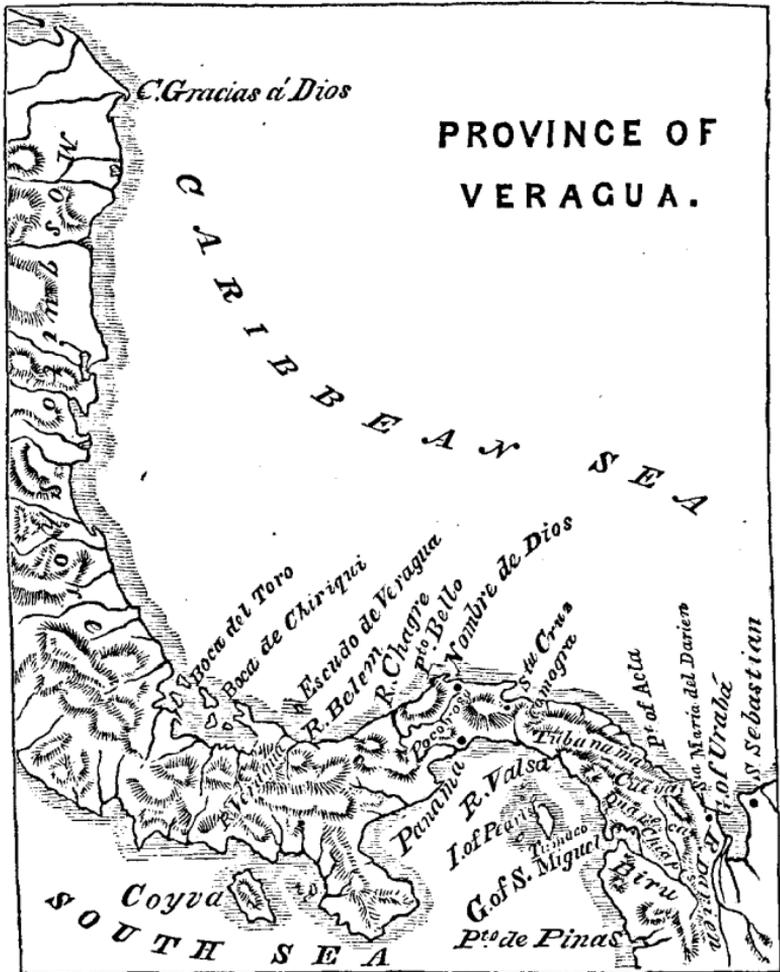
On the morning neither the brigantines nor the other two vessels were to be seen. Nicuesa was in great tribulation, thinking that his fleet had been lost. He returned toward the coast, and went up a river, of which the name is not given. There the tide, flowing out with a great rapidity unperceived by the ship's crew, left him on a sand-bank. The caravel instantly fell on its side, and began to go to pieces. Nicuesa and his ship's company were only saved by the boldness of one of them, who contrived to fasten a rope to a tree, by which, as on a bridge, the men made their way to land; but all the stores, provisions, and clothes were lost.

One thing, however, of value remained to them—the boat. In that Nicuesa put four seamen, and ordered them to coast along to the west, keeping near him, while he and the rest pursued their course by land. The journey was a terrible one; half naked and without shoes, they had to make their way across swamps, and amid an unknown and untraversed coun-

try. Neither were they free from fear of hostile Indians, for one morning a page of Nicuesa's, who was conspicuous from wearing a white *sombrero*, and whom probably the Indians took for the chieftain of the Spaniards, was shot dead by an arrow, to the great sorrow of his master. Thus they proceeded for some days, when, on one occasion, imagining that they could save much distance by going all of them in a boat from one promontory to another, where the land made a great curve inward,* they did so, using the boat by turns, and all of them got safely to this headland, which proved, however, not to be part of the coast, but a desert island, where there was not even fresh water. The only thing like it was a pool here and there of muddy swamp. The four seamen who managed the boat went off with it one night, very likely the night after they had made the discovery that this was an island, and Nicuesa and his men were left to endure the extreme of suffering. Some of the men went mad with misery. Like the beasts of the field, they went on all fours, and fed on whatever herbage they could find, but were ignorant, as the beasts are not, of what herbage was good and what was noxious.

Leaving Nicuesa and his men in this deplorable state, we have to return to his second in command, Lope de Olano, and to his proceedings on the morning after the storm in which Nicuesa parted company from his fleet. I can not perceive that Lope de Olano was much to blame in what he did on this occasion, though, perhaps a very zealous officer in his master's behalf might have done more. Meeting with the other brigantine, which a certain Pedro de Umbria commanded,

* I conjecture this to have been the Boca de Chiriqui, beyond the island Escudo de Veragua.



the two captains took counsel together, and, concluding that Nicuesa would be sure to make his way to Veragua, they resolved to hold on their course in that direction. They found the other vessels in the River Chagre, which was then called the River of Lizards, a name it had received from Columbus. It was then, I imagine, that Lope de Olano, finding that the great vessels had no tidings of the caravel, said that their

commander was lost (which perhaps Olano really thought), and, by general consent, he took command of the expedition.* But it was no longer in a hopeful state. The ships had suffered greatly from a worm which was very destructive to ship-timber on that coast, and all the provisions had been spoiled or lost. After several unimportant movements from the River Chagre to the River Belem, and then to the River Veragua, where it appears that Olano endeavored to

* An account, varying from the above in several important particulars, is given by OVIEDO in the twenty-eighth book of his history, recently published (1852) from MS. by the Royal Academy at Madrid. According to that, it would appear that Nicuesa and his fleet anchored safely at a port in the province of Cueva, which he called Puerto de Misas (probably on account of mass being said there); that he left his two large vessels and one brigantine in that port; that he went on in the caravel to find Veragua, being accompanied by Lope de Olano in the other brigantine; and that he had a quarrel with the pilot of Olano's vessel, which was the cause of his being deserted. The pilot maintained, and rightly, that they had arrived at Veragua, and thus expressed himself: "This is Veragua, and I came here with the Admiral Don Christoval Colon when he discovered this land." But Nicuesa, relying upon some papers which the Adelantado Bartolomé Colon had given him, persisted in saying that they had not come to Veragua, and spoke abusively to the pilot from on board the caravel. The pilot said to Olano that they might cut off his head if they did not find that he was right.

Then, according to OVIEDO's account, on the following night, "it appearing to this bad captain that the governor was a lost man" (*parcsciéndole á este mal capitan quel gobernador yba perdido*), he commanded the pilot and the mariners to turn back, and not to follow the lantern of the caravel.

The remaining part of the story is not essentially different, except that it makes Lope de Olano, who was a Biscayan, secure his power by means of the other Biscayans, who were in some numbers in the fleet. The writing of history, like all other human affairs, is, for the most part, but a choice among difficulties. In this case, however, it is not important to make a choice, and I shall, therefore, merely leave the two accounts to stand side by side. It must be noticed, in justice to Nicuesa, that OVIEDO's account throws much more blame on the lieutenant, Lope de Olano.

found a colony, which endeavor failed, we find him on the shore near the River Belem, with the great ships knocked to pieces, and a caravel formed out of them, with his two brigantines, with no stores, no provisions, and many of his men dead.*

The treachery of the four mariners who left Nicuesa on the desert island proved eventually a fortunate treachery for him. Coasting along to the eastward, they came to the spot where Lope de Olano was, and told him of the ill fortune of Nicuesa, saying that they had left without telling their commander, in order to save the whole party. The news of the existence of Nicuesa was probably very unwelcome to Olano; but he sent a brigantine to fetch off Nicuesa, and in it what provisions he could spare, being palm-tree buds and such like wretched stuff, which was all that they had to eat there.

The brigantine succeeded in reaching the desert island where Nicuesa was, and in bringing him off to rejoin his company at the River Belem. The first thing he did, on meeting his people, was to command the arrest of Lope de Olano, † and bitterly to reproach his

* It was noticed that the men always died when the tide was ebbing: "Notaban en estas angustias, que nunca moria alguno sino cuando la mar menguaba."—LAS CASAS, *Hist. de las Indias*, MS., lib. ii., c. 65.

† According to OVIEDO, the punishment which Nicuesa inflicted upon Lope de Olano was condemning him to grind maize in the public street, with two stones, as the Indian women grind it, his feet being chained together as the Moorish slaves are chained, who, at the gate of Triana, in Seville, pound sedge. "Pero haçiale en pago de su trayçion, moler públicamente mahiz en la calle cada dia á fuerça de braços, sobre una piedra algô cóncava con otra redonda é rolliça, como lo acostumbran moler las indias; é de tantas tortillas que molia, dábanle una que comiesse por su trabaxo, estando presso con una cadena á lcs pies, al modo de aquellos moros esclavos que á la puerta de Triana en Sevilla maxan esparto."—OVIEDO, *Hist. Gen. y Nat.*, lib. xxviii., cap. 3.

other principal officers for not having made efforts to discover him. They humbly implored forgiveness. Had they not suffered enough, they said? four hundred were already lost, and they, the rest, were in a fair way to perish. But Nicuesa, whose good qualities were such as flourish only in sunny seasons, was no longer gracious, but, on the contrary, very ill-conditioned (*mal condicionado*). Here we may see the difference between a commander by nature and an accidental one. In all the chief enterprises which distinguish the early colonization of the New World, the most striking thing to notice is the way in which the great commanders endure, not merely hunger and want, but revilings and upbraidings. Columbus, Cortez, Pizarro, Vasco Nuñez, shine out in adversity, and in those times when the ordinary bonds of discipline are loosed. And no one, who has not shared adversity with a number of his fellows, can estimate the meanness of mankind in such cases. It is only the great souls who are great throughout. Certainly Nicuesa did not possess one of these souls, and even what he did rightly bore the air of caprice and petulance.

Meanwhile, the state of things around him grew worse and worse, but the severity of his temper did not abate, and his men believed that he absolutely took delight in imposing upon them dreadful burdens, when he sent them into the country to see what they could get by force from the Indian villages. To such an extremity were the Spaniards reduced, that on one occasion they are said to have been driven by hunger to cannibalism.

Nicuesa resolved to leave a spot which had been so fatal to him; but even in doing this he contrived to show his newly-born harshness. Each of his men,

made wise by adversity, had sown a little bit of maize ; and as, in that glowing country, harvests ripen soon, they were expecting in a few days to reap the benefit of their sowing. They implored him, therefore, to stop for these few days, but he would not listen to their entreaties.

Taking with him in the caravel and the two brigantines their complement of men, he left the others behind, and set sail, directing his course toward the east. When they had gone four leagues, one of the seamen happened to recollect that a port was thereabout. He had been with the "Old Admiral," for so Columbus was called, when he discovered the province of Veragua ; and this mariner said that, if he were not mistaken, there would be found half buried in the sand an anchor, and near it a tree, under which there would be a spring of fresh water. They went, and found the mariner to be right ; and the harbor proved to be Portobello, so named by Columbus. Here they endeavored to make an entrance into the country, in order to get some supplies of any kind ; but they were so weak that they could hardly hold their weapons in their hands. The Indians succeeded in resisting them, and in killing twenty. From Portobello they went sailing toward the east until they came to another harbor. "In the name of God (*en nombre de Dios*), let us stay here," they exclaimed ; and "Nombre de Dios" is the name the port has ever since retained.* What poetry and

* It afterward became the great port for the reception and transmission to Spain of the riches of Peru. "Nombre de Dios, ques por donde han salido en estos postreros tiempos en que estamos á esta parte tantos millones de pessos de oro, é innumerables quintales de plata, y se han llevado á España y traydo mucho dello á estas nuestras Islas, en tanta manera que no se sabria estimar su cantidad y valor çierto."—OVEDO, *Hist. Gen. y Nat.*, lib. xxviii., cap. 3.

sions gained by these attacks seldom lasted long. Hunger, which had dogged the steps of this expedition from the night of that fatal tempest and dispersion, still relentlessly pursued it. At last, all the ordinary rules of discipline were at an end, and there could not even be found one man in the company strong enough to do the duty of a sentinel.

It can not be said, however, that these men were utterly neglected by fortune. They were just at this moment in a state of extreme and apparently hopeless peril, when Colmenares, pursuing steadily his course eastward, came upon their track, and found them. Great was the delight of the seventy* men who remained—for their number had now dwindled to seventy; and Nicuesa's delight was not the least, when, shedding tears, he threw himself at the feet of one who brought him present safety and such good hopes for the future. Indeed, it was a change of fortune such as seldom occurs except in fiction. According to PETER MARTYR'S account, Colmenares found Nicuesa "of all living men the most unfortunate, in a manner dried up with extreme hunger, filthy and horrible to behold;" and now he was summoned to become governor to those who remained of his rival Ojeda's force, and who, unfortunate as they had been, had, at any rate, made a less wretched settlement than Nicuesa and his men could boast of having done.

But Nicuesa's good temper and good sense were not now to be recovered by any gleam of good fortune. Indeed, he seems to have acted on this occasion, or

* It may show the difficulty of making any thing like a clear account of these events to find that Colmenares, the man of all others who should have known, makes the numbers left two hundred; all the best historical authorities say seventy or thereabouts.

rather to have talked, which is often more dangerous, like a man bereft of common sense. Hearing that Ojeda's company had collected gold, upon which, as, strictly speaking, they were settled in the country assigned to him, he had some claim, he gave out that he should take it away. The disgust which the deputies from Darien began at once to conceive for him may be easily imagined; nor was this disgust likely to be diminished by any good words that would be said of him by his own men at Nombre de Dios. Lope de Olano, though in chains, contrived to put in his word, privately telling the new-comers that Nicuesa would do with them as he had done with his own people, when they sent for him from the desert island. Lope de Olano's words had the more effect, as he was able to communicate with some relations and men from his own province, Biscayans, who were at Darien. The bond of community which existed between men belonging to the same province is one of the most remarkable things in this history, and forms an undercurrent which influences the narrative in very unexpected ways. It is a circumstance which shows how badly welded together were the various provinces of Spain, and what different interests arose from this diversity of race, habits, and language. Still, had Nicuesa been swift in acting upon his good news, he might have anticipated the consequences of his foolish and tyrannical sayings, and have defeated his Biscayan enemies; but, while he sent on to Darien a caravel in which there were many of the people who murmured against him, he himself, in the brigantine, stopped on the way for about a week to reconnoitre some little islands and to capture Indians, for which iniquity there came a terrible retribution. No sooner had the

people in the caravel reached Darien than they began to influence the colonists there against him, and with such success that the Darienites became quite mad with themselves at their folly in having invited Nicuesa. It was as if the frogs in the fable had already foreseen the conduct of King Stork before he came among them. It may easily be imagined, and was generally reported, that Vasco Nuñez did what he could to incite the people against the coming governor, and it is said that he canvassed with great secrecy the principal persons, man by man, convincing them of their error in having chosen Nicuesa, and showing them the remedy for it.

When Nicuesa neared the place of disembarkation, expecting, no doubt, to be received with whatever pomp and honor men so tattered and buffeted would still endeavor to show their new chief, he found an array of armed men drawn up on the shore, looking as if they meant to repel an invasion rather than to receive a governor. Among them were Vasco Nuñez and the procurador of the settlement; and this latter officer, in a formal manner, proclaimed aloud that Nicuesa should not be permitted to land, but should return to his own settlement at Nombre de Dios. At this astounding reception, Nicuesa, for a short time, could hardly speak; then he said, "Gentlemen, you yourselves sent for me. Let me land, and we will talk the matter over; you have to hear me, and I have to hear you, and we have to understand one another. Afterward do with me what you will." This speech seems to contain some of his former graciousness of manner; but the men of Darien knew him too well now, and sternly refused to have any thing to do with him.

It was evening, and he drew off for that night, intending to return the next day, and to see whether they would change their minds.

The next day, when he appeared, they called him to come to them, meaning to take him prisoner; for, when he landed, they rushed upon him, but, as he was remarkably swift of foot, he escaped from them. Vasco Nuñez, who had some grandeur of soul, felt ashamed of this sorry scene, rebuking his company for their ill manners; and Nicuesa, now much fallen, asked them to take him for a companion if not for a governor, and, if not as a companion, as a prisoner, saying that they might put him in chains; but they only mocked him. Vasco Nuñez did his best to make them change their behavior, and he even inflicted the punishment of a hundred stripes on one of those who took most part against Nicuesa; but, seeing that he could not resist the whole settlement, he sent privately to Nicuesa, telling him not to trust himself among them unless he should see him, Vasco Nuñez, with them. Nicuesa, however, gave no heed to this; for afterward, when there came a deputation to him, saying that they would give him welcome, but that he must pardon the rudeness of their former reception, he listened to them, and placed himself in their hands. But no sooner had they got him into their power than, it is said, they made him swear that he would go away, and not stop until he should appear before the King of Spain and his council. This, I imagine, was meant for mockery. In vain the wretched Nicuesa reminded them that they were in his territory, and protested before God, as he could not before the king, against their cruelty in sending him away so ill provisioned as he was for any voyage. They paid no attention to his entreaties, but

turned him adrift in the most wretched brigantine that was there.* Hopeless of moving his enemies, or indignant at their mockery, Nicuesa set sail from Darien, and was never heard of more. The last words that he was heard to utter as he left the shore were, "Show thy face, O Lord, and we shall be saved."† Some suppose that he perished at sea, others that he either went to, or was driven upon, some island on the coast of Veragua, and was destroyed by hunger or by the natives, as it was reported that these words were found cut out in the bark of a tree, "*Aqui anduvo perdido el desdichado Diego de Nicuesa* (Here went lost the unfortunate Diego de Nicuesa). But, even if such an inscription were ever found, it might have been made at the time of his former calamity, when he was left on the desert island. It was on the 1st of March, 1511, that he set sail in his crazy vessel, and he was accompanied by seventeen companions who still remained faithful to him.

It is sad, notwithstanding their lamentable errors, to see how these adventurous commanders one after another drop from the scene. I say their lamentable errors, because, with our modern notions at least, it is impossible to regard their conduct toward the Indians as otherwise than infamous; but we must not let this blind us to any merits they might have had. And certainly their sad fate, and the fate of those under

* Indeed, PASCUAL DE ANDAGOYA says that the brigantine was calked with iron, as the wretch who did it told him. "Y aún decian que calafateado con ferro grosso: esto al mismo calafate que le aderezó se lo oí yo."—PASCUAL DE ANDAGOYA, *Relacion; Nav., Col.*, tom. iii., p. 395.

† "De personas que se hallaron pressentes supe que le oyeron decir en su partida, con lágrimas, llamando á Dios: *Ostende faciem tuam, et salvi erimus.*"—OVIEDO, *Hist. Gen. y Nat.*, lib. xxix. Prohemio.

them, seem to afford some retribution for their sins toward the Indians.*

Ojeda, as we have already seen, died in the utmost poverty; Nicuesa perished either from hunger or shipwreck. Of the companions whom they brought out with them, full of hope and proud designs, only forty-three remained of Nicuesa's men, and thirty or forty of Ojeda's. The men who were now at Darien were those who had come in the re-enforcements brought by Enciso to Ojeda, and by Colmenares to Nicuesa.

* Vasco Nuñez, in one of his letters to Charles the Fifth, discusses the fate of Nicuesa, and attributes it to his tyranny toward his own men, which was evidently the proximate cause of his destruction.—*NAV., Col.*, tom. iii., p. 360.



BOOK VI.

VASCO NUÑEZ DE BALBOA.

CHAPTER I.

VASCO NUÑEZ'S DEALINGS WITH THE NEIGHBORING CACIQUES.
—FIRST NOTICE OF THE PACIFIC. — FACTIONS AT DARIEN.—
VASCO NUÑEZ RESOLVES TO DISCOVER THE SOUTH SEA.—SUC-
CEEDS IN HIS ENTERPRISE, AND TAKES POSSESSION OF THE
PACIFIC FOR THE KINGS OF CASTILE. — HIS RETURN TO DA-
RIEN.

CHAPTER II.

THE GOVERNMENT UNDER PEDRARIAS, WITH THE VARIOUS EX-
PEDITIONS UNDERTAKEN BY HIS CAPTAINS.

CHAPTER III.

THE FATE OF VASCO NUÑEZ.

CHAPTER I.

VASCO NUÑEZ'S DEALINGS WITH THE NEIGHBORING CA-
CIQUES.—FIRST NOTICE OF THE PACIFIC.—FACTIONS AT
DARIEN.—VASCO NUÑEZ RESOLVES TO DISCOVER THE
SOUTH SEA.—SUCCEEDS IN HIS ENTERPRISE, AND TAKES
POSSESSION OF THE PACIFIC FOR THE KINGS OF CASTLE.
—HIS RETURN TO DARIEN.

THE facts in history often form themselves into groups so much resembling one another as to give the impression of the same play being acted over and over again, only with a change of names and with new scenery. This is especially the case in the events I am now recounting; and, knowing beforehand the fate that generally awaits the principal actors, it appears to me as if I were but presenting new versions of the same story.

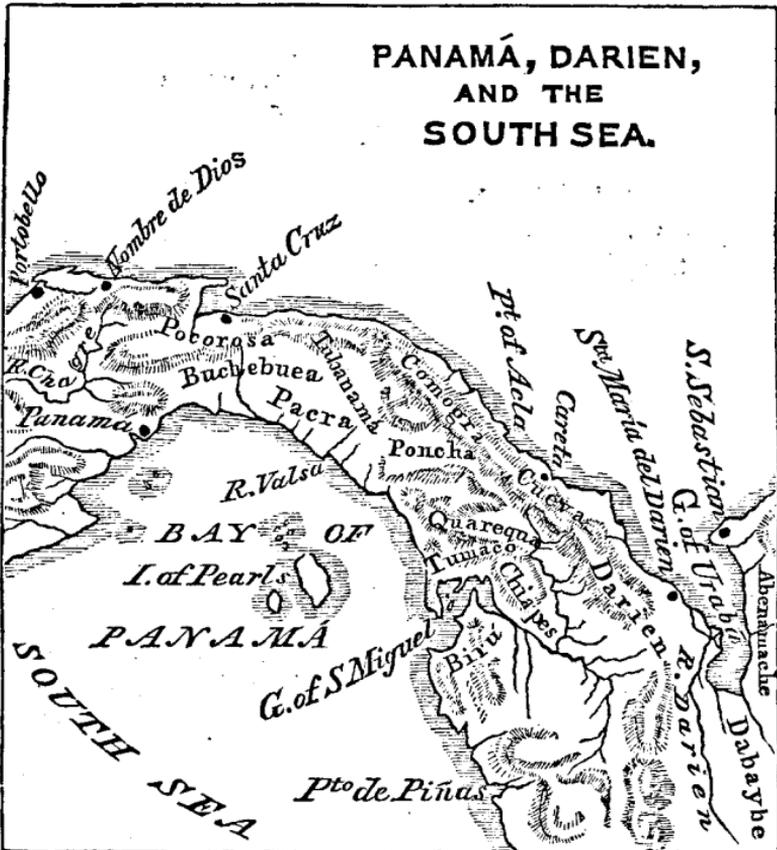
The principal interest of the narrative is now centered in Vasco Nuñez. The valorous Ojeda, the polished Nicuesa, and the flourishing lawyer Enciso, little dreamed that the conduct of their enterprise was to devolve upon a man who should furtively come out in a cask to evade his creditors. He had, however, most of the qualities necessary for a great commander in those times. He was clever, crafty, courageous, forward in enterprise, good-humored, and handsome. I think, too, he had considerable nobility of nature; and I am not disposed to lay the whole blame of the

rejection of Nicuesa upon Vasco Nuñez. His conduct to Enciso is far more questionable, and has justly laid him open to the accusation of having kept in mind the threats and reproaches which Enciso addressed to him when he made his unwelcome and undignified appearance from amid the cargo of Enciso's vessel.

After Nicuesa's departure, Vasco Nuñez instituted a process against the Bachiller, saying that he had usurped a jurisdiction to which he had no claim, as he had received no authority from the king, but only from Ojeda, who was already dead. Upon this poor pretext Vasco Nuñez sequestered Enciso's goods and put him in prison, but afterward freed him, upon the understanding that he should sail for Castile or for Hispaniola. It seems a very weak proceeding of Vasco Nuñez to have sent home a man who, he must have known, would be a powerful enemy; but he took care to send in the same ship his own comrades in office, Zamudio and Valdivia: Valdivia, to make the proper representations to Don Diego Columbus and the treasurer Passamonte at St. Domingo; Zamudio, to go on to Spain, and there to represent to the king the services which the colonists at Darien had rendered to his highness. Valdivia did not go empty-handed.

After the departure of the deputies, some Indians came to Darien as spies, under the pretext of bringing provisions; and they told the Spaniards, probably with a view to getting rid of them as neighbors, that there was much gold at Cueva, a province at thirty leagues distance. Vasco Nuñez sent Pizarro, with six companions, to discover this province. The Indians, under their cacique Cemaco, who had been dispossessed by the Spaniards, set upon these seven men;

but, as the Indians of Darien did not use poisoned arrows, they were not able to overpower this small detachment, though they wounded them severely, while, on the contrary, even this handful of Spaniards contrived to kill a great many of the natives before re-



turning to Vasco Nuñez. He then, accompanied by a hundred men, made an incursion into these regions; but, in the mean time, the Indians had sought refuge in flight, a measure which, had there been a Fabius to advise them, would always have been adopted as their surest mode of warfare. Vasco Nuñez, finding none

to subdue or to treat with, returned to his town of Darien. This, therefore, proved a thoroughly fruitless enterprise. There are signs of Vasco Nunez having been discouraged at this time, and his career might have ended as deplorably as that of Nicuesa or Ojeda; he might have been contented with making petty incursions, have thus deprived himself of the neighborhood of the Indians, and eventually have perished from starvation, had it not been for the curious and lamentable circumstance about to be related.

Nicuesa not returning to Darien, of which event it appears Vasco Nuñez had for some little time an expectation, he sent for the remnant of Nicuesa's men who were left at Nombre de Dios. As these people were on their way to Darien, and were in a port of the province of Cueva, there came to meet them two Spaniards, without clothes, and with painted bodies, like the Indians.

These were men who, on some occasion about a year and a half before, had fled from Nicuesa's ships to escape punishment, probably well deserved, and who, entering the country, had been received kindly by Careta, the cacique of Cueva; indeed, he had made one of them, named Juan Alonso, his principal captain. This wretch bade the Spaniards tell Vasco Nuñez that if he would come to Careta's town, he, Juan Alonso, would deliver his master, the cacique, bound into the hands of Vasco Nuñez; and he also gave the alluring intelligence that there were great riches in that province.

Vasco Nuñez was delighted at this news, and he prepared at once to act upon it, entering Careta's territory at the head of a hundred and thirty men. Having arrived with his "apostles," as LAS CASAS calls

them, at the Indian town where Careta dwelt, he found the cacique awaiting his coming. Vasco Nuñez, conscious of the treachery he was about to commit, and perhaps not liking to gild it over with fair words, rudely demanded provisions from the cacique. The Indian chief replied that whenever Christians had passed by his home, he had ordered provisions to be given them liberally, and he would do so now; at the same time he remarked that he was straitened himself, as he was at war with a neighboring chief, Poncha, and his own people had not been able to sow as usual.

Juan Alonso, probably speaking in Spanish in presence of the cacique, then suggested to Vasco Nuñez to pretend to take leave of the chief, and afterward to come back at night in order to make an attack on the town: he, for his part, would do his best to secure the person of the cacique. Vasco Nuñez adopted the suggestion. He went away, but, returning at night, made his attack in three divisions, awakening the sleeping Indians with the war-cry of "Santiago."

Juan Alonso, true to his promises of treachery, secured the person of the cacique; and Vasco Nuñez thus succeeded in carrying him and his family to Darien, and in devastating his town.

The good Bishop of Chiapa,* who is the principal authority for these transactions, does not fail to introduce a few words of moral discourse, in which he naturally likens Juan Alonso to Judas Iscariot; but such proceedings need little comment. Careta, however, was not upon this occasion ill treated by the Spaniards, but, on the contrary, was conciliated and converted into a most useful ally. He gave his daugh-

* LAS CASAS.

ter to Vasco Nuñez, who loved her much; and the cacique entered into an agreement (here we may trace the wisdom of the Spanish commander) to aid in growing supplies for the Spaniards, if they would assist him in carrying on war against his enemy Poncha.

This is the way in which an invading force generally makes its footing good in a country, by converting the foolish enmities of the natives into stepping-stones of conquest. The above conditions were agreed upon and were fulfilled. Careta's Indians prepared their maize crops, and the Spaniards, on their part, united with Careta's men in making an incursion into Poncha's territory. That cacique, however, being well-informed of what was going on, fled, and left his territory to be devastated by the united forces of Nuñez and Careta.

Forty leagues from Darien, and adjoining to Careta's territory, was a country called Comogra, situated on the sea-coast, the cacique of which country was named Comogre. This chief being brought into friendship with the Spaniards by one of Careta's relations, who had taken refuge from his own lord at Comogre's court, Vasco Nuñez went with his men to visit his new ally. The Spaniards were much surprised by the signs of comfort and civilization which they found in this Indian chief's dwelling. Indeed, it was the most like a palace of any thing that had been seen since the discovery of the Indies.* Its dimensions were a hundred and fifty feet in length, eighty in breadth, and eighty in height; the floors and ceiling were exquis-

* "Estaba fundada sobre unos muy gruesos posteles cercada de muro hecho de piedra, entretegida madera por lo alto, como zaquizamí, por tan hermosa arte labrada que los Españoles quedaron espantados de verla, y no sabian dar á entender su artificio y hermosura."—LAS CASAS, *Hist. de las Indias*, MS., lib. iii., cap. 41.

itely wrought,* and it contained many apartments, a granary, cellars, and, what perhaps was most curious, a room where the bodies of the king's ancestors were preserved as mummies.

Comogre gave his Spanish visitors a splendid welcome, and presented them with four thousand pesos of gold and seventy slaves. A fifth part of whatever gold was discovered belonged by right to the King of Spain, and it was to watch over his rights that a *veedor* was appointed to attend each expedition. While the Spaniards were weighing out this fifth part of the gold which Comogre had given them, or dividing the residue among themselves, there arose, to use the expressive words of an old translation of PETER MARTYR, a "brabbling among the Spaniards about the dividing of the gold."

Now Comogre had seven sons, of noble appearance and large stature, and the eldest was a young man of great spirit and ability. It would have been well, perhaps, for the whole of South America if he had not been a man of this kind.

The youth, seeing this miserable contention among the Spaniards, which must have appeared singularly contemptible in the eyes of an Indian who would value little the substance these strangers were quarreling about, and who, even for a great thing, would have thought such contention unseemly and undignified (for a noble indifference about most earthly things is to be seen at the bottom of the Indian character throughout both continents), was disgusted at this clamor. So, after the fashion of Brennus, dashing with his hand the scales in which the gold was, and scattering it

* "Laquearibus et pavimentis arte eximiâ laboratis."—PETER MARTYR, dec. ii., cap. 3.

about, he made the following speech: "What is this, Christians? is it for such a little thing that you quarrel?*" If you have such a love of gold that, to obtain it, you disquiet and harass the peaceful nations of these lands, and, suffering such labors, banish yourselves from your own lands, I will show you a country where you may fulfill your desires. But it is necessary for this that you should be more in number than you are now, for you would have to fight your way with great kings, and among them, in the first place, with King Tubanamá, who abounds with this gold, and whose country is distant from our country six suns."

Then he signified to them that this rich territory lay toward a sea, and southward; at which sea they would arrive, he said, after passing over certain sierras. It was navigated, he added, by ships with sails and oars, a little less in size than those of the Spaniards. Traversing that sea, they would find a land of great riches, where the people had large vessels of gold out of which they ate and drank; where, indeed, there was more gold than there was iron in Biscay—(it appears that the shrewd Indian had been making inquiry with respect to the manufacture of the Spanish swords). The above is not to be taken as a speech set down in a classical history, but it appears that the substance of it really was uttered by the young Indian prince. Juan Alonso and the other Spaniard who had lived with King Careta, served as interpreters; and these men seem to have been fated to be the conduits, as it were,

* PETER MARTYR adds, "— and that you make so much turmoil about a little gold, which nevertheless you melt down from beautifully-wrought work into rude bars (for they carried their melting instruments with them)."—Dec. ii, cap. 3.

of great evil, and their intelligence the cause of great adventures.

It appears, moreover, that the young prince informed his attentive audience that a thousand men would be requisite for this undertaking; and that, when asked for the grounds of his information and for his advice, he made another speech, in which he told the Spaniards that his countrymen too had wars, and that he had learned these facts from one of his own men ("Behold him!" he exclaimed) who had been a captive in those countries he spoke of. He also offered to accompany the Spaniards; and he said that they might hang him on the next tree if his words should not prove true. The substance of his speeches, and, probably, some of the exact words, were conveyed to the Spanish court. This was the first notice of the Pacific, and also of Peru. It is likely that Pizarro was a by-stander. "Our captains," says PETER MARTYR, "marveling at the oration of the naked young man, pondered in their minds and earnestly considered his sayings."

It seems that, for injuries done in former times to his nation, this youth wished to stir up the Spaniards against his neighbors, and that he suggested a joint invasion whenever the Christians should be re-enforced, offering to join them with his father's forces. "A prudent youth" this prince is called by both historians, PETER MARTYR and LAS CASAS; but it is not the description, I think, that would now be given of him; and one would say that it needed not the lights of history or the thoughtfulness of refined civilization to make all prudent people well aware of the latent danger of an over-powerful ally.

The Spaniards, having baptized Comogre and his

family, giving him the name of Don Carlos, took their leave and returned to Darien, joyful and thoughtful, in the feverish state of mind of persons seeing before them great enterprises for which they are not quite prepared. When they arrived, they found that Valdivia had come with a ship and some provisions, also with a gracious message from the authorities of Hispaniola; but, as LAS CASAS well says, "In the house of a gambler joy lasts but a short time."* Their provisions were consumed in a few days, and Famine, always dogging their steps, soon began to attack them again. It was not altogether their own fault on this occasion, for a great storm had destroyed what they had sown. They lived now, as some of the feudal barons in the Middle Ages, by predatory forays, robbing and devastating wherever they could.

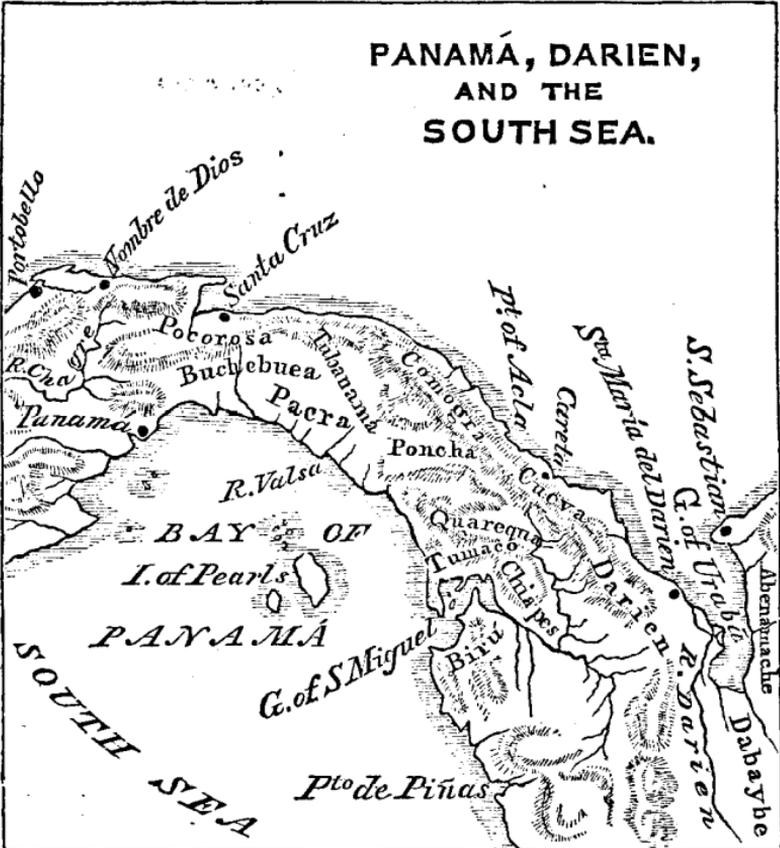
It was about this time that Vasco Nuñez sent Valdivia to Hispaniola with the king's fifth of the gold. It amounted to fifteen thousand *pesos*; but neither he nor his gold ever reached their destination, for his vessel was wrecked in a perilous part of the sea near Jamaica, called the Vívoras, or Pedro Shoals, and he himself perished by the hands of the Indians.

Vasco Nuñez has been held to be a man who dealt very wisely, and, upon the whole, very mercifully with the Indians; but we are told that he was accustomed to put them to the torture† in order to make them discover those towns which had most gold and provisions, and then to attack these towns by night. He wrote to the admiral saying that he had hanged thirty ca-

* "En casa del tahir poco dura la alegría."

† This is confirmed incidentally by Vasco Nuñez himself, in his letter of the 20th of January, 1513: "Lo he sabido en muchas maneras y formas, dando á unos tormento y á otros por amor y dando á otros cosas de Castilla."—NAV., *Col.*, tom. jii., p. 365.

ciques, and must hang as many as he should take, for the Spaniards, being few, had no other way until he should be supplied with more men.* He meant that terror was his only means of supplying the defect of force.



Hearing of a temple full of gold in the country of a cacique called Dabaybe, toward the south of the Gulf

* "Escribió Vasco Nuñez al Almirante, que habia ahorcado treinta caciques, y habia de ahorcar cuantos prendiese, alegando que, porque eran pocos, no tenian otro remedio hasta que les enviase mucho socorro de gente."—LAS CASAS, *Hist. de las Indias*, MS., lib. iii., cap. 42.

of Urabá, the Spaniards made an incursion into his caciquedom, and, the Indians offering little or no resistance, Vasco Nuñez's men devastated the country. Meanwhile Colmenares had been sent to the east of the gulf, whither Vasco Nuñez, after his return from Dabaybe, went to join him, and, uniting their companies, they entered the territory of a cacique called Abenamache. This chief and his men made as stout a resistance as they could with their two-handed wooden swords, called *macanas*, rushing fiercely on the Spaniards, but to little purpose. After the battle, a common soldier, whom Abenamache had wounded, came up to him, and, with one blow of his sword, struck the cacique's arm off. From thence Vasco Nuñez, leaving Colmenares behind him, went up a river, and entered the territory of a cacique named Abibeyba, where the houses were in trees (as the ground was marshy) of such bigness that seven or eight men hand in hand were scarcely able to surround one of them; but these Indians, though living in this strange manner, do not seem to have been particularly barbarous or neglectful of the comforts of life, for it is mentioned that they had their cellars under ground for fear of the wine being spoiled by the motion of the trees when shaken by the wind. Abibeyba was summoned to descend from his tree fortress, and, when he refused, the Spaniards began to cut the tree, upon which he was obliged to come down.

They asked him for gold, in reply to which he said he had none of it himself, and did not care for it any more than for stones, but he promised to endeavor to get some, and was allowed to depart for that purpose. As he did not return, however, at the stated time, the Spaniards destroyed his settlement. This Abibeyba,

in his wanderings among the mountains, came upon Abenamache, the cacique who had lost his arm: bewailing their hard fate, they betook themselves to Abraibe, a neighboring chief, into whose country a foraging expedition, headed by a Spaniard named Raya, of the force left with Colmenares, had lately penetrated.

The caciques compared their fears and their griefs. "How long," they said, "shall we bear with the cruelty of these strangers; is it not better to die than to endure what they inflict upon us?" Encouraging each other in this way, they resolved to make an attack with five or six hundred men upon the station of Colmenares; but, unfortunately, on the very evening preceding their attack, Colmenares had received a reinforcement, and the Spaniards were able not only to repel their assailants, but to capture many of them. These were sent to Darien, to labor there.

Colmenares and Vasco Nuñez now returned to Darien, leaving in Abenamache's country a man named Hurtado in command of thirty Spaniards. These Spaniards making a foray and capturing some of the neighboring Indians, Hurtado sent a boat with the prisoners and with many of his men, who were ill, down the Rio Negro to Darien. On their way the boat was attacked by four large canoes, and all the Spaniards but two were drowned. These two, clinging to logs and concealing themselves in the bundles of drift-wood that were floating down the river, made their way to the shore, and thence back to Hurtado. He and the few who were with him, abandoning their post in terror, set out for Darien; and, being greatly alarmed by this attack on their boats, they made inquiry of their prisoners, and found that five caciques—Cemaco, the dispossessed of Darien, Abenamache, Abibeyba, Dabaybe,

and Abraibe—had formed a conspiracy, if by such a name it can be called, and had sworn to collect their forces and make a joint attack on Darien, in order to destroy the Spaniards utterly. This plan might have been successful had not a foolish Indian betrayed it to his sister, a favorite of Vasco Nuñez, named Fulvia. Addressing his sister tenderly,* the Indian told her that their chiefs could no longer bear the insolence of these new-comers; that they had prepared a hundred canoes; that their army would amount to five thousand men; that provisions were being stored up at Tirichi; that their designs had gone so far that the caciques had agreed upon the division of the goods of the Spaniards; and he warned her to look after her own safety when the day for the attack should come. She, more mindful of her lover than her country, betrayed the secret to him.

To be forewarned, in the case of men fighting with iron swords and lances against others with wooden ones, was not merely to be forearmed, but to be victorious. Indeed, Vasco Nuñez turned this conspiracy to great advantage. He caused Fulvia to induce her brother to come to him, and the foolish, confiding Indian, when put to the torture, confessed that this conspiracy was the work of the indefatigable Cemaco; that he planned the attack in the canoes; and that certain men, whom he had sent as a pledge of friendship to Vasco Nuñez, and who tilled his grounds at Darien, had instructions to kill him, which they had never been able to do, as he always overlooked his laborers on horseback with a lance in his hand.

* "Dilecta mihi soror, dilecta, ausculta meis dictis, et celato quæ referam, si tibi, mihiq̄ue, universo etiam generi nostro bene consultum iri desideras."—PETER MARTYR, dec. ii., cap. 5.

Vasco Nuñez compelled the young Indian to conduct Colmenares, at the head of seventy men, to Tirichi, the spot where the forces of the caciques were assembling for their enterprise. He himself went with another seventy to hunt for Cemaco, but was unsuccessful. Colmenares, however, falling suddenly on Tirichi, captured the confederates, seized their provisions, put the chiefs to death, and terrified the whole country into submission.

Vasco Nuñez and the colonists at Darien now resolved that a messenger should be sent to the king in Spain, to inform his highness of what had happened, to tell him of the speech of Comogre's son, and to seek for countenance and succor. Vasco Nuñez wished to go himself, thinking probably that he should plead his own case best at court; but his companions would not hear of this. They chose Quicedo and Colmenares as their deputies, who were well furnished with funds for their important mission; but their means of transport were of the most miserable description. One of the old brigantines, which had been set aside for six months as unfit for use, was now repaired, and all the tackle for it manufactured out of the bark of trees. With a very scanty stock of provisions, and with not a soul on board who knew any thing of navigation, in this crazy vessel, the deputies from Darien left that colony in October, 1512. As was to be expected, they made a very bad passage, and being driven to Cuba, and afterward going to Hispaniola, which was in accordance with their instructions, they did not arrive in Spain until May, 1513. PETER MARTYR, who says he frequently entertained these deputies from Darien, gives an account of their appearance, in which he mentions that "they are as yellow as people in the jaun-

dice, and are swollen." This he attributed to the bad air of Darien, which was situated in a most unhealthy spot; but they accounted for their appearance by the starvation they had undergone.

One part of their intelligence seems particularly to have caught the fancy of their countrymen at home. An Indian had mentioned that there was a river where the natives fished for gold with nets; the deputies repeated this story; and as all persons, from the weakest to the strongest, thought that this was a kind of fishing at which they would be singularly expert and fortunate, all Spain became anxious to fish in those waters.

Unfortunately for Vasco Nuñez, the deputies from Darien were not the only persons of that colony at this time present at the court of Spain. The Bachiller Enciso was there too, and no doubt loud and bitter in making his complaints of Vasco Nuñez. Besides, there was the intelligence of what had happened to Nicuesa; and as it appeared that Vasco Nuñez had been the greatest gainer from Nicuesa's repulse, he had also to bear the greatest part of the blame for that transaction. The king ordered him to be proceeded against criminally; and in the civil courts he was cast in all the expenses which Enciso had by his means been put to.

Meanwhile, Vasco Nuñez had no easy time at Darien, where factiousness reigned supreme. It seems as if this spirit of faction exists in a new colony in amount almost equal to that in which it is found in a village, or a small town, at home, and that this spirit is still farther developed by the general activity which is necessary, and the sharper way in which men come

against each other, in such a colony. It appears that there was a man named Bartholomew Hurtado, whom Vasco Nuñez favored much, and to whom, as we have seen, he intrusted authority. This man, for some reason or other, became particularly obnoxious to several of his comrades. Their faction, uniting under a person of the name of Alonso Perez, and another called the Bachiller Corral, sought to take prisoners both Hurtado and his chief; but Vasco Nuñez, who was always alert, made the first move, seizing Alonso Perez and putting him in prison. The Bachiller's party at once drew out in battle array in the centre square of the town; Vasco Nuñez and his faction did the same; and the contending parties would have come to blows but for the prudence of some of them, who saw that, whichever gained the day, the Indians would probably destroy the victors. The dispute, therefore, was suppressed for the moment on Vasco Nuñez agreeing to release Alonso Perez, the ringleader on the other side. The ill feeling, however, was not in the least subdued, and a second time the opposite party resolved to seize upon Vasco Nuñez. The cause of this outbreak was as follows: The division of gold naturally formed a pregnant source of dispute among those rude men who composed the remnant of the forces of Ojeda and Nicuesa, and who were now under the unauthorized command of Vasco Nuñez. They accused their commander of unfairness in this division, and, as there was a sum of ten thousand *castellanos* just about to be divided, this was the cause, or they made it the pretext, of their intention to seize upon him. The way in which he surmounted this difficulty may serve to show the abilities of the man for command. Far from seeking to be the great personage in this important busi-

ness, on the very evening of the day of the partition, or the day before, the politic Vasco Nuñez went out to hunt, and left his enemies to seize upon the gold and divide it. They, as was to be expected, made enemies in doing so, and loosened the bands of their own faction, while those who were injured, or who thought they were, made a great tumult, recalled Vasco Nuñez to full power, and put his enemies, Alonso Perez and the Bachiller Corral,* in prison. There they probably consoled themselves by drawing up papers of accusation against their enemies.

About this time there arrived at Darien two vessels, with a hundred and fifty men in them, laden with provisions which had been sent from Hispaniola by the Spanish authorities in that island. These ships also brought something which was very welcome to Vasco Nuñez, namely, his appointment as captain general. This was done by Passamonte the treasurer, whose power, it was said, stretched to this extent; and certain it is that he was always in favor with King Ferdinand, and was regarded as one of the king's especial servants, in contradistinction to those of the admiral. Any show of authority must have been very welcome to Vasco Nuñez; and in his joy, as if it had been a birth-day, he willingly consented to let loose all the prisoners, as an act of grace upon the receipt of good news.

* Bachelors of law were always odious to Vasco Nuñez. In a letter to the king, in which he was very sparing indeed in making any claim for himself, he says, "One thing I supplicate your highness, for it is much to your service, and that is, that you would give orders, under a great penalty, that no bachelor of law, or of any thing else, except medicine, should be allowed to come to these parts of the Terra-firma, for no bachelor comes here who is not a devil, and who does not lead the life of a devil; and not only are they bad themselves, but they also make and contrive a thousand lawsuits and iniquities. This regula-

However, amid all these flowers of rejoicing, there came (it is conjectured in the same ships, certainly soon afterward) some adder-like news, which must have filled the heart of Vasco Nuñez with apprehension, and that was the report of his own disfavor at court, caused by the complaints of the Bachiller Enciso,* and by the intelligence of Nicuesa's fate. I should think that the rumor of the king's intention to appoint a governor of Darien was very likely to have accompanied this news, which came in a letter from Zamudio, a former colleague of Vasco Nuñez.

His position was now most perilous. The maxim, *confugiendum est ad imperium*, must have occurred to him, not exactly in the words of the original, for Vasco Nuñez had little learning, but only by that intuitive knowledge which great peril, coming upon great resources of mind, easily strikes out. In truth, it is melancholy to observe, as wise men have done, how much of private misery is at the bottom of great actions, and what sleepless furies have driven many an Orestes to enterprises that were transcendently difficult, but not so difficult as staying still, or so painful as looking backward.

Vasco Nuñez resolved, therefore, to be the discoverer of that sea and of those rich lands to which Comogre's son had pointed, when, after rebuking the Spaniards for their "brabbling" about the division of the gold, he turned his face toward the south. In the

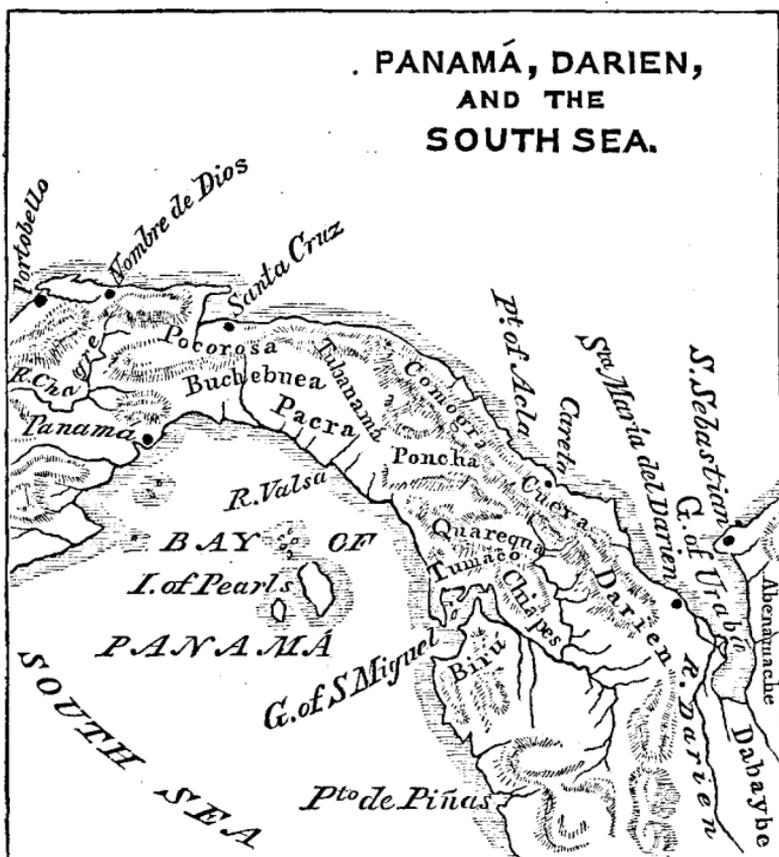
tion would be greatly for your highness's service, for the land is new." *Carta al REY*, Jan. 20, 1513. *NAV., Col.*, tom. iii., p. 374.

* The error of Vasco Nuñez in his treatment of Enciso followed him throughout his career. But, indeed, this is a common case in ordinary life, as a large part of the best time in many men's lives is spent in extricating themselves from the consequences (or in enduring them) of one or two thoughtless blunders.

peril which so closely impended over Vasco Nuñez, there was no use in waiting for re-enforcements from Spain; when those re-enforcements should come, his dismissal would come too. Accordingly, early in September, 1513, he set out on his renowned expedition for finding "the other sea," accompanied by a hundred and ninety men well armed, and by dogs, which were of more avail than men, and by Indian slaves to carry the burdens. He went by sea to the territory of his father-in-law, King Careta, by whom he was well received, and accompanied by whose Indians he moved on into Poncha's territory. This cacique took flight, as he had done before, seeking refuge among his mountains; but Vasco Nuñez, whose first thought in his present undertaking was discovery, not conquest, sent messengers to Poncha, promising not to injure him. The Indian chief listened to these overtures, and came to Vasco Nuñez with gold in his hands. It was the policy of the Spanish commander on this occasion to keep his word. We have seen how treacherous he could be when it was not his policy to be true; but now he did no harm to Poncha, and, on the contrary, secured his friendship by presenting him with looking-glasses, hatchets, and hawks'-bells, in return for which he obtained guides and porters from among this cacique's people, and was enabled to prosecute his journey.

Following Poncha's guides, Vasco Nuñez and his men commenced the ascent of the mountains, until he entered the country of an Indian chief called Quarequa, whom they found fully prepared to resist them. The brave Indian advanced at the head of his troops, intending to make a vigorous attack; but they could not withstand the discharge of the fire-arms. Indeed,

they believed the Spaniards to have thunder and lightning in their hands—not an unreasonable fancy—and, flying in the utmost terror from the place of battle, a total rout ensued. The rout was a bloody one, and is described by an author, who gained his



information from those who were present at it, as a scene to remind one of the shambles.* The king and his principal men were slain, to the number of six

* "Veluti per macella lanii bovinas arietinasque secant in frusta arnes, ita huic nates, illi femur, alteri humeros uno ictu nostri scindcant."—PETER MARTYR, dec. iii., cap. 1.

hundred. Speaking of these people, PETER MARTYR makes mention of the sweetness of their language, saying that all the words in it might be written in Latin letters, as was also to be remarked in that of the inhabitants of Hispaniola. The writer also mentions, and there is reason for thinking that he was correctly informed, that there was a region, not two days' journey from Quarequa's territory, in which Vasco Nuñez found a race of black men, who were conjectured to have come from Africa, and to have been shipwrecked on this coast.

Leaving several of his men, who were ill or overweary, in Quarequa's chief town, and taking with him guides from this country, the Spanish commander pursued his way up the most lofty sierras there, until, on the 25th of September, 1513, he came near to the top of a mountain from whence the South Sea was visible. The distance from Poncha's chief town to this point was forty leagues, reckoned then six days' journey; but Vasco Nuñez and his men took twenty-five days to accomplish it, as they suffered much from the roughness of the ways and from the want of provisions.

A little before Vasco Nuñez reached the height, Quarequa's Indians informed him of his near approach to the sea. It was a sight in beholding which, for the first time, any man would wish to be alone. Vasco Nuñez bade his men sit down while he ascended, and then, in solitude, looked down upon the vast Pacific—the first man of the Old World, so far as we know, who had done so. Falling on his knees, he gave thanks to God for the favor shown to him in his being permitted to discover the Sea of the South. Then with his hand he beckoned to his men to come up. When they had come, both he and they knelt down and pour-

ed forth their thanks to God. He then addressed them in these words: "You see here, gentlemen and children mine, how our desires are being accomplished, and the end of our labors. Of that we ought to be certain; for, as it has turned out true what King Comogre's son told of this sea to us, who never thought to see it, so I hold for certain that what he told us of there being incomparable treasures in it will be fulfilled. God and his blessed Mother, who have assisted us, so that we should arrive here and behold this sea, will favor us that we may enjoy all that there is in it."

Afterward they all devoutly sang the "Te Deum Laudamus," and a list was drawn up by a notary of those who were present at this discovery, which was made upon St. Martin's Day.*

Every great and original action has a prospective greatness, not alone from the thoughts of the man who achieves it, but from the various aspects and high thoughts which the same action will continue to present and call up in the minds of others, to the end, it may be, of all time. And so a remarkable event may go on acquiring more and more significance. In this case, our knowledge that the Pacific, which Vasco Nuñez then beheld, occupies more than one half of the earth's surface, is an element of thought which in our minds lightens up and gives an awe to this first gaze of his upon those mighty waters. To him the scene might not at that moment have suggested much more than it would have done to a mere conqueror; indeed,

* "Andrés de Valderrábano, escribano de Sus Alteças en la su corte y en todos sus reynos é señorías, esteve pressente é doy fée dello, é digo que son por todos sessenta y siete hombres estos primeros chripstianos que vieron la mar del Sur, con los quales yo me hallé é cuento por uno dellos: y este era de Sanct Martin de Valdeiglesias."—Oviedo, *Hist. Gen. y Nat.*, lib. xxix., cap. 3.

PETER MARTYR likens Vasco Nuñez to Hannibal showing Italy to his soldiers.*

Having thus addressed his men, Vasco Nuñez proceeded to take formal possession, on behalf of the kings of Castile, of the sea and of all that was in it; and, in order to make memorials of the event, he cut down trees, formed crosses, and heaped up stones. He also inscribed the names of the monarchs of Castile upon great trees in the vicinity.

Descending the sierras, he entered the territory of an Indian chief called Chiapes. The Indians here, trusting to their numbers, were disposed to make a valorous resistance, but were very soon put to flight. Vasco Nuñez sent messengers to Chiapes with overtures of peace, which being accepted by the Indian chief, he came to the camp, bringing four hundred *pesos* of gold, and was graciously received by the Spanish commander, who in return presented him with the usual showy trifles which were given to the Indians. With such presents Vasco Nuñez, having gratified the Indians he had brought from Quarequa's country, sent them back. This conduct was very politic; it conciliated and reassured the Indians thus sent back; it gave confidence to the fresh ones who accompanied him, and it prevented him from being overburdened with Indians, who might rather impede than advance the march. In truth, throughout this expedition Vasco Nuñez seems to have acted with great sagacity.

While he was in the town belonging to Chiapes, he sent on Francisco Pizarro, Alonso Martin, and others, to find the shortest way to the sea-shore. Alonso Martin was the first to discover it. He then descend-

* "Hannibale, Italiam et Alpina promontoria militibus ostendente, ferocior, ingentes opes sociis pollicetur."—Dec. iii., cap. 1.

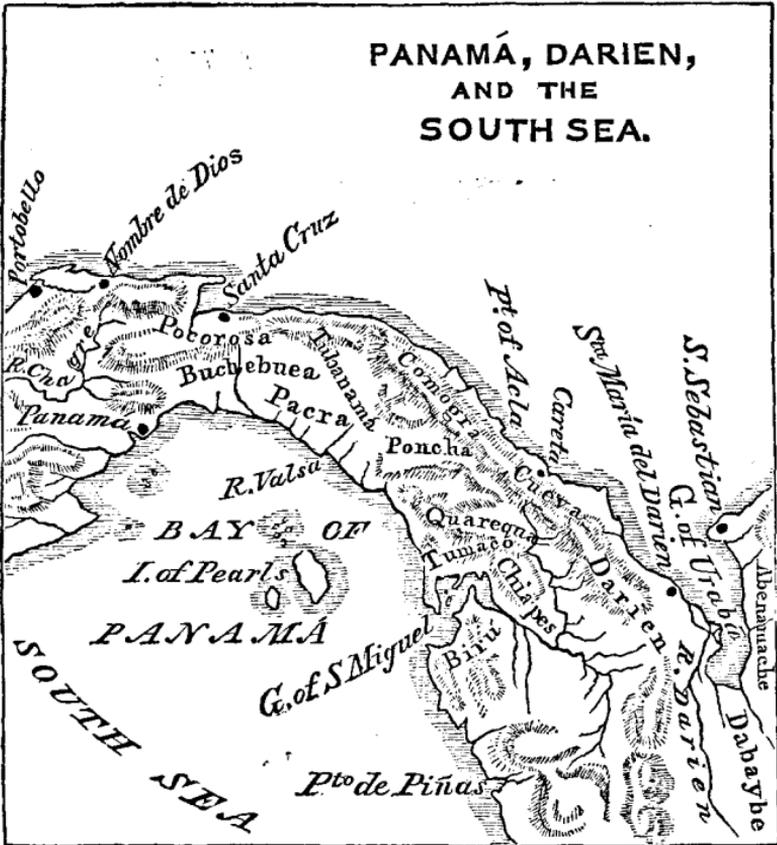
ed to the shore, and found two canoes lying high and dry in a place where he could perceive no sea. At this he was astonished; but, the sea making its appearance and gradually advancing to the canoes, he entered one of them, begging his companions to bear witness that he was the first to float upon that sea. Pizarro and Alonso Martin returning with their intelligence, Vasco Nuñez himself went down to the shore, accompanied by eighty of his men. He entered the sea up to his thighs, having his sword on, and with his shield in his hand; then he called the by-standers to witness how he touched with his person and took possession of this sea for the kings of Castile, and declared that he would defend the possession of it against all comers.

After this, Vasco Nuñez made friends in the usual manner, first conquering and then negotiating with the next Indian chief, named Coquera, who brought him a present of gold.

But, among all the Indian chiefs into whose good graces Vasco Nuñez fought or negotiated himself, there was no one who seems to have felt so much friendship for him as Chiapes. Vasco Nuñez, whose energy was inexhaustible, who "could not be quiet even while his bread was being baked,"* resolved to navigate a certain gulf in those parts, to which he gave the name of San Miguel, a name it still retains. The friendly cacique, Chiapes, endeavored to dissuade Vasco Nuñez from this enterprise, on account of the danger at that time of the year; but not succeeding, the cacique resolved to go with his friend and to share the peril. Vasco Nuñez declared that God would assist them in

* A proverb, I imagine, of that time, which LAS CASAS uses in reference to Vasco Nuñez.

their attempt, for that much service to God and increase of the faith would arise from this voyage by means of the great treasures which, he said, had to be discovered to enable the kings of Castile to make war against the infidels. Vasco Nuñez found the naviga-



tion of the gulf very hazardous, and nearly lost his life there. With great difficulty he made his way to the country of a chief called Tumaco, in a corner of the gulf. This chief sought to resist the invaders, but the Spaniards easily vanquished him, as usual; and Chiapes sent messengers to Tumaco, telling him how

fearful the Spaniards were to their enemies, how gracious to their friends. Chiapes lived to tell another story. But Tumaco was incredulous ; he had received a wound in his battle with the Spaniards, and he sent his son to them instead of going himself. The son, however, being well treated, Tumaco found courage to come in person, and, being kindly received by Vasco Nuñez, this Indian chief sent for ornaments of gold, and two hundred and forty large pearls, which he presented to the Spaniards. He also desired his people to fish for more. The Spaniards could hardly contain their joy. One thing alone occurred to damp it. The Indians, not knowing better, were accustomed to open oysters by means of fire. This injured the color of the pearl ; and, accordingly, the Spaniards taught the Indians the art of opening oysters without fire, with far more diligence, indeed, than they expended in teaching their new friends any point of Christian doctrine.

It was said that this cacique spoke of the riches of Peru to Vasco Nuñez ; and there is something to countenance this in the report of the Spanish commander's letter to the king, for he says that he had learned from Tumaco wonderful secrets of the riches of that land, which for the present he wished to keep to himself. Both caciques, the friendly Chiapes and Tumaco, spoke to Vasco Nuñez of an island in the Gulf of San Miguel, ruled over by a powerful king, who made incursions into their territories, and who possessed great pearls. Vasco Nuñez threatened fearful things against this king, and was anxious to go to the island, but his confederate caciques persuaded him not to do so, on account of the dangers of the navigation at this season.

The Spanish commander, after having given some attention to pearl-fishing, resolved to return home to

Darien, but by a different route from that which he had taken in coming. He now bade farewell to these friendly caciques; and the simple Chiapes absolutely shed tears at the parting. Every where, in the course of his way homeward, the Spaniard found obedient and hospitable caciques. A fierce and brutal tyrant of the name of Pacra, who, according to the account of Vasco Nuñez, had committed various injuries against his neighbors, was solemnly judged by the Spanish commander, and, being condemned, was, with three of his lords, torn in pieces by the Spanish dogs. After staying some little time in Pacra's country, Vasco Nuñez moved on to Buchebuea's, where he was well received, and thence into the territory of Pocosora. This part of the Terra-firma was divided into small caciquedoms, of which the government was truly a paternal one. To use the words of a soldier who was afterward stationed here, and who was witness of the ceremonies at Pocosora's death, "they lived in much justice, in the law of nature, without any ceremony or adoration" (*en mucha justicia, en ley de naturaleza, sin ninguna ceremonia ni adoracion*). Their caciques in person, like our kings of yore, judged causes, and their way of judging was to summon before them the parties in the cause, who had to give their own account of the case. Then the caciques, without hearing witnesses, "holding it for certain that the parties would speak the truth (for he who lied to his lord immediately died for it), gave judgment, and there was an end of the matter."* The caciques had no tribute, but only per-

* "Teniendo por cierto que las partes le habian de decir verdad (porque el que mentia al señor luego moria por ello), determinaba el pleito, y no habia de haber mas altercacion sobre ello."—PASCUAL DE ANDAGOYA; NAV., *Col.*, tom. iii., p. 399.

sonal service: for instance, when they were sowing, or building, or fishing, or carrying on war, all their vassals had to assist them, and they, in return, gave their vassals food and drink to make merry with (*por fiesta*). Death was the punishment for murder and for theft. They believed in witchcraft, and there were witches and wizards among them. Of their origin and history these Indians could give but little account; but they had some knowledge of a deluge, and of a man who had escaped in a canoe with his wife and children, and had peopled the earth; and that in heaven there was a Lord who caused rain and all the other things which descend from above.

This is the description, the best, as far as I know (given by a soldier, too, and not by a priest), that we have of the ways and thoughts of the Indians in that part of the Terra-firma. It is easy to perceive that they were a people who might, without much difficulty, have been converted and civilized.

Pocorosa, at Vasco Nuñez's approach, took to flight, but afterward returned, and was won over by Vasco Nuñez in the usual way. The Spanish commander learned that to get to Darien he must pass through Tubanamá's country. This was the much-dreaded chieftain whom Comogre's son made mention of in his speech. Vasco Nuñez, by no means daunted at the rumors of Tubanamá's greatness, made a forced march with the best of his men, came upon Tubanamá's town suddenly by night, and captured him and his family. Adjoining to Tubanamá's abode was a hall of a hundred and twenty feet long and fifty broad, which served as a barrack for this Indian chieftain's levies when he was about to make war. The town was a very scattered one, built so on purpose, to avoid the danger of

hurricanes; and thus the Indians, before the Spaniards had time to secure them, were able to fly. The people from Pocorosa's country who had accompanied Vasco Nuñez, and others who were enemies to Tubanamá, began to seek his destruction. He was represented to be another Pacra, and his neighbors mocked and rejoiced at his fall.

The Spanish commander made a show of great severity toward Tubanamá, and ordered him to be brought out as if for death, saying that he would have him thrown into the river, into which he heard that in former days Tubanamá had threatened that he would throw the Spaniards if they should come that way. The cacique, with tears, begged for his life, declaring that all that had been alleged against him was said by the envy of enemies who were not able to subdue him, and that, as regarded the Spaniards, he had certainly never done them any harm; as for the threats attributed to him, such things might have been said by his chiefs when drunk, for which he blamed them. Coming up to Vasco Nuñez, and putting his hand upon his sword, he exclaimed, "Who that had any brains would contend against this *macana*, which at one blow can cleave a man in two?" He also promised to get much gold if he were but released.

Vasco Nuñez, who had never intended to put the cacique to death, but who doubtless thought this a good opportunity of showing his own power, now softened his countenance and released Tubanamá, who caused about six thousand *pesos* worth of gold to be brought, all worked up into trinkets for women. Upon being questioned closely about the gold, he denied that it came from his territory; but Vasco Nuñez, trying the ground, discovered that it was auriferous, and ac-

cordingly he resolved to found two settlements, one in Pocosora's country, and another in Tubanamá's.

Ordering Tubanamá to collect gold and send it to him, Vasco Nuñez quitted that chieftain's territory, and, pursuing his course to Darien, came next to Comogra. The labors and the changes of climate he had endured began to tell even upon the hardy Nuñez; for we hear that he suffered now from fever, and was carried in a litter borne by Indians. In Comogra, where he had first received that intelligence which had been all-important to him, he must have felt as if almost at home. The old chief was dead, but the eldest son, who had made that eloquent but unwise speech, the cause of so much mischief, was reigning in his stead. By him Vasco Nuñez was hospitably entertained, and doubtless they had many things to hear from and to tell each other. In a few days, Vasco Nuñez, having recovered from the fever, pursued his way to Darien. As if to crown his good fortune, when he entered Poncha's territory he found messengers from Darien to tell him that two ships, well laden with provisions, had arrived from Hispaniola. Taking a chosen body of his men as an escort, he hastened onward, and on the 29th of January, 1514, reached Darien, which he had quitted on the 1st of September, 1513, this most important expedition having occupied not quite four months.

His men at Darien received him with exultation, and he lost no time in sending his news, "such signal and new news" (*tan señaladas y nuevas nuevas*) to the King of Spain, accompanying it with rich presents. His letter, which gave a detailed account of his journey, and which, for its length, was compared by PETER MARTYR to the celebrated letter that came to the sen-

ate from Tiberius, contained in every page thanks to God that he had escaped from such great dangers and labors. Both the letter and the presents were intrusted to a man named Arbolanche, who departed from Darien about the beginning of March, 1514.

In his letter to the king, Vasco Nuñez mentioned that he had not lost a man in these battles with the Indians. But indeed why should he have done so; for what was there in their simple weapons and innocent mode of warfare that could, unless by accident, destroy a well-armed man?

CHAPTER II.

THE GOVERNMENT UNDER PEDRARIAS, WITH THE VARIOUS EXPEDITIONS UNDERTAKEN BY HIS CAPTAINS.

VASCO NUÑEZ'S messenger, Arbolanche, reached the court of Spain too late for his master's interests. It is probable that previously even to the arrival of Quicedo and Colmenares, who had brought such wonderful news about the discoveries in the Terra-firma, the Spanish government had resolved to appoint a new governor.* And the news brought by the deputies from Darien served to heighten the importance of the appointment, and greatly to augment the numbers of the expedition. As all Spain was in a state of excitement at the idea of fishing up gold with nets, the appointment of governor of Darien was much sought after, but ultimately was conferred upon the man whom the Bishop of Burgos favored, namely, Pedrarias de Avila.

He was an elderly man, of rank and high connections, of much repute in war, having served with honor in Africa, but in wisdom he does not seem to have been much superior to Bobadilla. From his feats in the tournament, he had acquired the name of "*Justador*," the jousting.

* Quicedo and Colmenares reached Spain in May, 1513: the date of Pedrarias's appointment is July 27, 1513, so that it is very probable, especially as Enciso and his complaints reached the court of Spain before these deputies, that the appointment of a governor was quite settled before they arrived.

There is one thing to be said for the appointment of men of that age and station, which, if it had occurred to King Ferdinand, would have been very likely to have had great weight with him. It is, that they are nearly sure to be faithful to their sovereign. It is too late to form great independent schemes of their own; but then they lack the lissomness of mind, as well as body, which is necessary in dealing with such entirely new circumstances as those which the Spanish captains in the New World had to encounter. I conjecture Pedrarias to have been a suspicious, fiery, arbitrary old man. "*Furor Domini*" was a name given him by the monks in after days, just as Attila enjoyed and merited the awful title of the "Scourge of God."

Comogre's son had said that a thousand men would be necessary to make their way to the sea, and to obtain the riches which were there to be obtained. For greater safety, twelve hundred was the number assigned to Pedrarias, and fifteen hundred was the number which went; for it happened that there was a great disbanding of troops at that time, and the men thus set free were anxious to enter the service of Pedrarias. The victory of Ravenna, gained by the French over the Spaniards and their allies, had alarmed King Ferdinand for his Neapolitan possessions: he had hastily raised levies which he intended to place under the command of the great captain, Gonsalvo de Córdoba; but, not finding it necessary to send succor to Naples, or being jealous of the great captain (which jealousy a perilous emergency had suppressed for a time), this expedition was abandoned.

When Pedrarias arrived at Seville, he found no fewer than two thousand young men eager to be en-

rolled in his forces, and "not a small number of avaricious old men," many of whom offered to go at their own expense. It was necessary, however, not to overload the ships, and therefore many of these candidates were rejected. Among those chosen were several nobles. A bishop also was appointed to the new colony, whose name was Juan de Quevedo. Four principal officers accompanied the governor, namely, a treasurer, a factor, a contador, and a veedor.

Gonsalvo Hernandez de Oviedo, the celebrated historian, went out as veedor in this expedition, Gaspar de Espinosa as alcalde mayor, and as alguazil mayor the Bachiller Enciso, whose appointment boded no good to Vasco Nuñez.

The instructions given to Pedrarias on this occasion still exist; and the introduction to them is so curious, and bears so closely on the present subject, that it will be desirable to give an account of it. After reciting in few words the discovery of Terra-firma, the document goes on to declare the motives for the expedition.

"And, in order that our Lord may be served in the said lands, and His holy name made known, and the inhabitants of the aforesaid country converted to our sacred Catholic faith, that they may be instructed in it and put in the way of salvation, and that there may not be lost such a number of souls as hitherto have perished, and in order that this design may have the effect which we desire, we have sent to beg our very holy father that he would provide prelates who may be ecclesiastical persons, learned and of good example, to go and teach and preach to these nations; and, for the security of these persons, it has been necessary to provide a certain number of people who should go and

settle in the said lands, in order that, by the doctrine of these ecclesiastics, and by the means of conversion of the other Christians" (that is, by the communication between the Christians and the Indians), "the natives may more quietly, when converted to our holy faith, remain in it, until they shall be more capable of receiving Christian doctrine than it appears they now are."

Considering what we know of the proceedings of this and other armaments, the foregoing extract may seem to be a mere pretense; but I do not think that it was so, and it entirely embodies the views of the men of that period. The Indians were to be converted to Christianity and formed in Christian polity, but these great ends could not be accomplished, at least as these Spanish statesmen and jurists thought, by doctrine alone, but they needed also, they maintained, the daily intercourse of the Indians with a civilized people. The Indians were therefore to have the benefit of the example and conversation of the Christians. The particular means by which this conversion was to be effected are given in another document of a later date, called the "Instruction by the King to Pedrarias de Avila," in which the utmost tenderness toward the Indians is insisted upon. They are to be attached by good works to Christianity. They are to see that the Spaniards tell the truth, that so they may have confidence in them. They are by no means to be made war against, unless they are the aggressors; and, as it will be the interest of the men under Pedrarias's command that he should make war, to enable them to get slaves, "it appears to me," says the king, "that the soundest opinion in reference to mak-

ing war will be that of the bishop and the clergo, as being freer from passion and motives of self-interest.”*

The important question of *encomiendas*† is then touched upon. Three modes of dealing with this subject are suggested. First, the Indians may be given as personal servants, in which case the ordinances in their favor are to be carefully observed, and, far from being diminished in their humane tendency, are to be made more considerate. The shrewd king throws in a worldly reason for this. “If,” he says, “in the island of Hispaniola the Indians have fled to the mountains to escape the labors they were accustomed to, they will be more able to do so in the Terra-firma.” The next plan would be (which is the one the king rather leans to), that the Spaniards should make use of the Indians by an agreement with them (*por via de paz y de concierto*); in which case the caciques, if there are such lords in those parts, will supply a part of the men under them to serve the Spaniards, a third, or a fourth, or a fifth of the people, to be changed every few months. If neither of these plans should be carried into effect, the Indians might be left to live as they were then living, but in that case they were to pay tribute.

* “Y parece á mí que el mas sano parecer para esto será el del R. P. Fr. Juan de Quevedo, obispo del Darien, é de los clérigos que estan mas sin pasion é con ménos esperanza de haber dellos intereses.”—*Instruccion dada por EL REY á PEDRARIAS DÁVILLA*; NAV., Col., tom. iii., p. 348.

† The words *repartimiento* and *encomienda* are often used indiscriminately by Spanish authors; but, speaking accurately, *repartimiento* means the first apportionment of Indians—*encomienda* the apportionment of any Spaniard’s share which might become “vacant” by his death or banishment.—See ANTONIO DE LEÓN, *Confirmaciones Reales*, cap. i.

So much for the system of *encomiendas* laid down by the king in this very wise and humane document.

With respect to making war upon the Indians, they were to be carefully informed and to have thorough notice (*entera noticia*) of the danger they would run from war being once commenced, namely, of those taken alive being made slaves. For this purpose a document had been framed by Dr. Palacios Rubios, a very learned jurist of that day, and a member of the council—a document before quoted, but which it is desirable to present again to the reader.* It went by the name of *El Requerimiento* (the Requisition), and it ran thus :

“ On the part of the king, Don Fernando, and of Doña Juana, his daughter, queen of Castile and Leon, subduers of the barbarous nations, we their servants notify and make known to you, as best we can, that the Lord our God, living and eternal, created the heaven and the earth, and one man and one woman, of whom you and we, and all the men of the world, were and are descendants, and all those who come after us. But, on account of the multitude which has sprung from this man and woman in the five thousand years since the world was created, it was necessary that some men should go one way and some another, and that they should be divided into many kingdoms and provinces, for in one alone they could not be sustained.

“ Of all these nations God our Lord gave charge to one man, called St. Peter, that he should be lord and superior of all the men in the world, that all should

* In the present affluence of books, few readers will take the trouble of making a reference : it is necessary, therefore, to repeat sometimes an important statement.

obey him, and that he should be the head of the whole human race, wherever men should live, and under whatever law, sect, or belief they should be; and he gave him the world for his kingdom and jurisdiction.

“And he commanded him to place his seat in Rome, as the spot most fitting to rule the world from; but also he permitted him to have his seat in any other part of the world, and to judge and govern all Christians, Moors, Jews, Gentiles, and all other sects. This man was called Pope, as if to say Admirable Great Father and Governor of men. The men who lived in that time obeyed that St. Peter, and took him for lord, king, and superior of the universe” (imagine what Tiberius or Nero would have said to this assertion!); “so also they have regarded the others who after him have been elected to the pontificate, and so has it been continued even till now, and will continue till the end of the world.

“One of these pontiffs, who succeeded that St. Peter as lord of the world in the dignity and seat which I have before mentioned, made donation of these isles and Terra-firma to the aforesaid king and queen and to their successors, our lords, with all that there are in these territories, as is contained in certain writings which passed upon the subject as aforesaid, which you can see if you wish.

“So their highnesses are kings and lords of these islands and land of Terra-firma by virtue of this donation; and some islands, and indeed almost all those to whom this has been notified, have received and served their highnesses, as lords and kings, in the way that subjects ought to do, with good will, without any resistance, immediately, without delay, when they were informed of the aforesaid facts. And also they re-

ceived and obeyed the priests whom their highnesses sent to preach to them and to teach them our Holy faith; and all these, of their own free will, without any reward or condition, have become Christians, and are so, and their highnesses have joyfully and benignantly received them, and also have commanded them to be treated as their subjects and vassals; and you too are held and obliged to do the same. Wherefore, as best we can, we ask and require you that you consider what we have said to you, and that you take the time that shall be necessary to understand and deliberate upon it, and that you acknowledge the Church as the ruler and superior of the whole world (*por Señora y Superiora del universo mundo*), and the high priest called Pope, and in his name the king and queen Doña Juana our lords, in his place, as superiors, and lords, and kings of these islands and this Terra-firma by virtue of the said donation, and that you consent and give place that these religious fathers should declare and preach to you the aforesaid.

“If you do so you will do well, and that which you are obliged to do to their highnesses, and we in their name shall receive you in all love and charity, and shall leave you your wives, and your children, and your lands free without servitude, that you may do with them and with yourselves freely that which you like and think best, and they shall not compel you to turn Christians, unless you yourselves, when informed of the truth, should wish to be converted to our holy Catholic faith, as almost all the inhabitants of the rest of the islands have done; and, besides this, their highnesses award you many privileges and exemptions” (hard words in a new world!), “and will grant you many benefits.

“But, if you do not do this, and maliciously make delay in it, I certify to you that, with the help of God, we shall powerfully enter into your country, and shall make war against you in all ways and manners that we can, and shall subject you to the yoke and obedience of the Church and of their highnesses; we shall take you, and your wives, and your children, and shall make slaves of them, and as such shall sell and dispose of them as their highnesses may command; and we shall take away your goods, and shall do you all the mischief and damage that we can, as to vassals who do not obey, and refuse to receive their lord, and resist and contradict him; and we protest that the deaths and losses which shall accrue from this are your fault, and not that of their highnesses, or ours, nor of these cavaliers who come with us. And that we have said this to you, and made this Requisition, we request the notary here present to give us his testimony in writing, and we ask the rest who are present that they should be witnesses of this Requisition.”

If ever there was a document which it was worth while to give in full in such a narrative as the present, it is this Requisition, drawn up by the learned Doctor Palacios Rubios. The folly that spreads through it, when contrasted with the sagacity which pervades the instructions and the private letters of the king and the council, is an illustration of how long foolish conceits linger in the halls of learning and among professions, even when they are beginning to be banished from the world at large. I must confess that the comicality of the document has often cheered me in the midst of tedious research or endless details of small battles. The logic, the history, even the grammatical construction, are all, as it seems to me, alike in error. Stupendous

assumptions are the staple of the document, and the very terms "Church," "privileges," "vassalage," "exemptions," are such as require a knowledge of Christianity and of the peculiar civilization of Europe for any one to understand. Then, when it is imagined how little these difficulties would be smoothed by translation, we may fancy what ideas the reading of the document, even when it was read, conveyed to a number of Indians sitting in a circle, and listening to European voices for the first time.

The above Requisition, however, which at least was meant to be very gracious to the Indians, was not necessarily to be used on all occasions. There were Indians who might be taken without even the reading of the Requisition. These were the Caribs, or Cannibals. There is an especial paragraph in the instructions to Pedrarias devoted to these Cannibals, in which that governor is ordered to touch, if he can do so without delay or inconvenience, at the islands of the Cannibals, which are named Isla Fuerte, Isla de San Bernaldo, Santa Cruz, Guira, Carthagena, and Camarico de Gó. The inhabitants of these "islands" (Carthagena is not an island) are given as slaves because they were said to eat human flesh, and because of the injuries they were said to have done to the Spaniards and to the other Indians.

This is the weakest part, according to my judgment, of the whole of the policy of those who ruled over Indian affairs at the court of Spain. Who was to define cannibalism? And would not the modes of dealing with the Cannibals necessarily spread to others? And would not any injuries inflicted on the innocent read, in an official document, as if they were all justifiable, by the easy introduction of the word cannibal?

I had come to the conclusion that cannibals and those who used poisoned arrows were sure to be set down as one and the same people, and I am confirmed by a stanza in the works of a poet and soldier of that age, JUAN DE CASTELLANOS, where, speaking of some Caribs in the neighborhood of Santa Martha, he says that they were called Caribs, not because they ate human flesh, but because they defended their houses well.*

It is true that in these instructions it is ordered that, for the sake of being more entirely in the right, the Requisition should be read even before proceeding to capture cannibals, if the way of doing so can be found; but, if not, they might be captured without any of these formalities.

Furnished, however, with all these aids, with wise instructions, with this grotesque Requisition, probably with the thoughtful suggestions given in conversation by the king or by the Bishop of Burgos, with an able staff of official men, among whom was one who had gained such experience of the country as the Bachiller Enciso—above all, with a gallant company of fifteen hundred men, armed well and well accoutred,† Pedrarias set sail with his men from the port of San Lucar, in twelve or fifteen vessels,‡ on the 12th of April, 1514. This was one of the greatest expeditions sent out to the Indies in those times, and it cost the King

* "Mas al fin fueron á provincia llana
Que llamaron Caribes, tierra rasa,
No porque allí comiesen carne humana,
Mas porque defendian bien su casa."

Elegías, parte ii., canto iii.

† "La mas lucida gente que de España ha salido," says one of them, PASCUAL DE ANDAGOYA.

‡ PASCUAL DE ANDAGOYA says nineteen vessels; every other account that I have seen makes the number of the vessels smaller.

of Spain a very large outlay. Had it been under the command of a wise and great man like Columbus, or even of a great commander like Cortez or Vasco Nuñez, it might have been the beginning of a wise colonization of South America. But great means seldom come into great hands, or, perhaps, the world would advance too fast; while, on the contrary, the most important and successful experiments are often made, like those of renowned inventors in mechanics or chemistry, with few, shabby, and ill-fitting materials.

The armament under Pedrarias was, at its first outset, driven back by a great storm, and obliged to refit, but afterward met with little disaster, and not with much adventure, in the course of its voyage. The governor had an early opportunity of manifesting the severity of his character, as, for a comparatively slight act of disobedience, he caused one of his own attendants to be hanged, and thus created terror throughout the fleet, for it was justly argued that if he was so severe upon one of his own men, without even going through the ordinary forms of law, what would he not do with the others, each of whom it behooved to look carefully how "he planted his foot."* Before reaching Darien, they entered the harbor of Santa Martha on the main land, where Colmenares (who knew something of the Caribbean language), together with an Indian interpreter, undertook to confer with the Indians of that coast. But, in truth, these Indians "did not understand them better than a Biscayan talking Basque could make himself intelligible to a person speaking

* "Que convenia cada uno mirar como assentaba el pié, pues que en sus criados començaba á mostrar como avia de castigar á otros."—OVIEDO, *Hist. Gen. y Nat.*, lib. xxix, cap. 6.

German, or Arabic, or any other strange language.”* The Indians, who were now well aware of the nature of their visitors, entering into the sea as far as they could wade, discharged their poisoned arrows at the ships. The next day Pedrarias ordered an incursion to be made for the purpose of discovery and to secure some interpreters. He gave the command of the foray to his nephew. As this was the first occasion in which the new governor made use of his formidable Requisition, and as the historian Oviedo himself was employed in the foray, it is quite worth while to record the circumstance.

“The governor,” says OVIEDO, “desired me to take the Requisition, and gave it to me from his own hand, as if I understood the Indians, or as if we should find any one there who would make them understand it, even if they were willing to listen.”†

Meanwhile three hundred men-at-arms disembarked to form the escort of the Requisition; the preachers, about whom that document speaks so much, remained in the ships “to see what would happen.”

The Spaniards commenced their “entry” in a disorderly manner, and the Indians from time to time made head against their pursuers. The historian himself, with a small party, found himself much pressed, and lost one of his men by a poisoned arrow. At last the Spaniards succeeded in gaining the heights and

* “Pero en la verdad no los entendian mas que se entendiera un vizcayno en su vascuence con un tudesco ó arábigo, ó otro mas extremado language.”—OVIEDO, *Hist. Gen. y Nat.*, lib. xxix, cap. 6.

† “E mandó el gobernador que yo llevasse el requerimiento *in scriptis* que se avia de haçer á los indios, é me lo dió de su mano, como si yo entendiera á los indios, para se lo leer, ó tuvieramos allí quien se lo diera á entender, queriéndolo ellos oyr.”—OVIEDO, *Hist. Gen. y Nat.*, lib. xxix., cap. 7.

capturing some Indian women. The contest, however, must have been more stoutly maintained than was expected, for on the ensuing morning the governor joined his nephew with a thousand men-at-arms. A singular scene then ensued. They came to a deserted *pueblo*, in one of the houses of which the principal Spanish officers took up for the moment their quarters—namely, the governor, his lieutenant Juan de Ayora, the contador, the factor, and the *alcalde mayor*.

Oviedo, who probably felt that this foray had been made in a very questionable manner, and that he, as the man intrusted with the Requisition, might be compromised by such modes of proceeding, took occasion to say, in the presence of all of them, “My lord, it appears to me that these Indians will not listen to the theology of this Requisition, and that you have no one who can make them understand it: would your honor be pleased to keep it until we have some one of these Indians in a cage, in order that he may learn it at his leisure, and my lord bishop may explain it to him?” “I gave him the Requisition,” the historian adds, “and he took it with much laughter, both on his part and from all those who heard me.”*

Shortly afterward a skirmish ensued between the Spaniards and the Indians; a cannon was fired, the dogs were let loose, the Indians fled, and the Spaniards returned to their ships.

Oviedo took occasion afterward to give an account

* “En pressença de todos yo le dixé: ‘Señor, parésceme que estos indios no quieren escuchar la teología deste requerimiento, ni vos teneis quien se la dé á entender: manda vuestra merçed guardalle, hasta que tengamos algun indio destes en una jaula, para que despaçio lo aprenda é el señor obispo se lo dé á entender.’ ‘E díle el requerimiento, y él lo tomó con mucha risa dél é de todos los que me oyeron.’—Oviedo, *Hist. Gen. y Nat.*, lib. xxix., cap. 7.

of this day's adventure to Dr. Palacios Rubios, the author of the Requisition, who, however, did not do otherwise than the rest of the world, nor omit to laugh at these proceedings on the coast of Santa Martha. If our own age did not abound in things as remote from all common sense as this Requisition, we should wonder how such a folly could ever have been put forward, or even acquiesced in, by persons of such intelligence as those who surrounded the Spanish court.

Before the expedition re-embarked, it appears that Pedrarias let some of the captives go free. As yet, perhaps, the king's orders to be kind to the Indians were not forgotten. Pursuing its course westward, the expedition touched at the Isla Fuerte, and afterward, entering the Gulf of Urabá, made its way to the new settlement of Santa Maria de la Antigua del Darien.

Immediately on the arrival of the fleet in the Gulf of Urabá, Pedrarias sent a messenger to Vasco Nuñez to inform him of his arrival. The messenger did not find Vasco Nuñez surrounded by any of the usual signs of power and splendor, but clothed in a cotton shirt, loose drawers, and sandals, overlooking and helping some Indians to put a straw thatch on a house. On hearing the message, Vasco Nuñez, who had, no doubt, well considered his part, sent a respectful welcome to the new governor, and said that the colonists were ready to receive him. The little colony now consisted of four hundred and fifty soldiers, men inured to danger, and, to use the expressive words of the original, "tanned with labors." It is said that there was much discussion among them as to how they should receive Pedrarias; and the historian HERRERA thinks, but not justly, as it seems to me, that these

four hundred and fifty men could have mastered the fifteen hundred whom Pedrarias brought with him. In a month's time this might have been so, but at present these fifteen hundred men, being chosen persons, full of hope and confidence, admirably equipped, and with the terror of the king's name, would have scattered Vasco Nuñez's men like chaff before the wind. Vasco Nuñez's counsels of peace prevailed, and it was agreed that they should go out unarmed, and in the peaceful dress of magistrates, not of soldiers. The new colonists therefore—one of them certainly with a heavy heart, but all with apparent joyfulness—came out to meet their countrymen, singing the "Te Deum." Pedrarias landed and billeted his men. This was on the 30th of June, 1514.

It is a custom, I believe, even in our own times, that in some departments the minister coming in should have a long conference with the minister going out; and if this is requisite in settled countries, it was far more so in those new-found states, where the inhabitants, the climate, the provisions, the geography, and the mode of warfare were all unknown to the newcomers. On the day after his arrival, Pedrarias summoned Vasco Nuñez to his presence,* and, with gracious words respecting the appreciation of Vasco's services which was now entertained at court, requested him to give an exact account of this new land, and of the men who inhabited it. Vasco Nuñez replied fittingly to this courtesy, and promised to give an account in writing, which he did in the course of two days, and which contained the whole narrative of his administration that had now continued for three years.

* OVIEDO was present at this interview.—See *Hist. Gen. y Nat.*, lib. xxix., cap. 7.

He also described the rivers, fissures (*quebradas*), and mountains where he had found gold, the caciques he had made allies of (these were more than twenty), and his journey of discovery to the South Sea and to the "Rich Isle," as it was called, of pearls. It is probable that Vasco Nuñez may, on this occasion, have given some account of what he supposed to be the population of Darien, which is stated to have been above two millions.*

The first thing after this to be done was to take the *residencia* of Vasco Nuñez, the result of which was, that for the injuries done to Enciso and others, he was condemned to pay several thousand *castellanos*, and was put into confinement, but afterward, in consideration of his services, was set free.

The next thing was to prepare to make settlements in the territories of Comogre, Poncha, and Pocórosa, as Vasco Nuñez had written to advise the king, when he was suggesting the expedition to discover the South Sea. While preparation was being made for these expeditions, Pedrarias's people began to fall ill. The situation of Darien was very unhealthy, and the newcomers not only suffered from the effects of the climate, but from those of sheer hunger. On disembarking, the provisions brought by the fleet had been divided among the men, but the flour and the greatest part of the provisions were found to have been spoiled by the sea. The old colonists were not in any way prepared for such an accession to their numbers, and there were no neighboring Indians who might assist in such an emergency. The expedition had thus sail-

* "E es verdad que los indios que en aquella saçon avia en aquella gobernación, passaban de dos millones, ó eran incontables."—OVIEDO, *Hist. Gen. y Nat.*, lib. xxix., cap. 9.

ed into the very jaws of famine.* Men clad in silks and brocades absolutely perished of hunger, and might be seen feeding like cattle upon herbage. One of the principal hidalgos went through the street saying that he was perishing of hunger, and in sight of the whole town dropped down dead. In less than a month seven hundred men perished. Pedrarias himself was taken ill, and by the advice of physicians went to a station at a little distance from the town. All these misfortunes delayed the sending out of the expeditions, and probably indisposed the minds of men for the adventure they had come upon.† They must have felt disappointed and desperate, and therefore were ready for any cruelty.

One of the first of his captains whom Pedrarias sent out was Juan de Ayora, with four hundred men, in a ship and three caravels, to get gold, and to make settlements by building fortresses in Comogre's country, and in that of Pocorosa and Tubanamá. Juan de Ayora proved to be a terrible tyrant.‡ The friendly

* OVIEDO gives another account of the cause of this famine, and one which is very discreditable to the king's officers. He says that there were plenty of provisions, but that the official persons, who suffered no deficiency of food themselves, showed very little pity to the rest. ("Pero cómo los oficiales querian poner recabdo en la hacienda real, y á ellos no les faltaba de comer, tuvieron poca missericordia con los demás."—OVIEDO, *Hist. Gen. y Nat.*, lib. xxix., cap. 9.) They took out all the provisions and put them in a large hut, which they called the "toldo" (pavilion), and he intimates that the mayordomos of this "toldo," very conveniently for their own purposes, set fire to it; but Oviedo, though a pious and strict man, was inclined to put the worst interpretation upon all that happened.

† Some of the principal men were allowed to return to Spain, and they went to Cuba, as will afterward be seen.

‡ OVIEDO sums up Ayora's proceedings in the following fearful words: "En este camino Johan de Ayora, no solamente dexó de haçer los requirimientos é amonestaciones, que se debian haçer á los indios, antes de les mover la guerra; pero salteábanlos de noche, é á los

caciques, Comogre, Poncha, and Pocorosa, who had been very dutiful to Vasco Nuñez, came with their gold to this new Spanish chief; but their people were harassed and made slaves, and their wives were carried off. The same thing happened to Tubanamá, who, being more valorous and powerful, took to arms, but without avail. Juan de Ayora sought to deal with a cacique called Sacativa as he had done with the rest; but this Indian chief, whose territories were on the sea-shore, having put the women and children in safety, deserted his town, and lay hid in ambuscade. When the Spaniards landed, he made an attack upon them, and wounded Juan de Ayora, who resolved to revenge himself on Pocorosa's territory—where he had built a town called Santa Cruz—and would have done so on Pocorosa himself, had not a friendly Spaniard, named Eslava, warned the cacique, who sought safety in flight. For this timely notice given by Eslava, when it was discovered, he narrowly escaped hanging at the hands of Juan de Ayora.

The Licentiate Zuazo, a distinguished lawyer, who was sent by Cardinal Ximenes, a few years afterward, to the West Indies, describes graphically the dealings of this Spanish captain, Juan de Ayora, with one of the friendly caciques. On the approach of the Spaniards, the Indians, supposing it was their old friend Vasco Nuñez, made great preparations with roast meat, game, bread, and wine, to entertain him. When Juan

caçiques é indios principales atormentábanlos, pidiéndoles oro ; é unos assaban, é otros haçian comer vivos de perros, é otros colgaban, é en otros se hicieron nuevas formas de tormentos, demas de les tomar las mugeres é las hijas, é haçerlos esclavos é prissioneros, e repartirlos entre sí, segund é de la manera que á Johan de Ayora le paresció é á cada uno de los otros capitanes, por donde auduvieron.”—*Hist. Gen. y Nat.*, lib. xxix., cap. 9.

de Ayora arrived, he and his men sat down to this repast. "But where is the tiba?" said the cacique (*tiba* was their name for chief), upon which Juan de Ayora was pointed out to him; but he replied, this was not the "tiba," for he knew Vasco Nuñez well. The poor cacique was soon to understand the difference more clearly; for after dinner Juan de Ayora sent for him, and ordered him to give gold unless he wished to be burned or thrown to the dogs. The cacique sent for a little gold that he had, and presented it. This did not satisfy the Spanish captain. Then the wretched cacique, who was bound, desired his vassals to bring all the gold that they had, but, when it was brought, Juan de Ayora was still dissatisfied with the quantity, and demanded more. The cacique begged that the Spaniard would be content, as he had given all the gold he had; but Juan de Ayora, with all the relentless rage of a robber who finds smaller booty than he expected, caused the unhappy Indian to be burned.* By such doings, or at least by the most wanton rapine, he succeeded in obtaining a large quantity of gold; but neither the king, nor Pedrarias, nor the expedition, was any the better for this gold, as Juan de Ayora took ship, and, furtively making off with all his ill-gotten plunder, was never heard of more in Darien. "In all the turmoils that have taken place beyond sea, nothing has displeased me so much as this man's avarice, which has thus disturbed the minds of the chiefs, who before were at peace with us." Thus does the honest and outspoken PETER MARTYR express himself, who, although he was a friend to Pedrarias, did not hesitate to throw some suspicion in the matter

* NAVARRETE, Y SALVA, *Documentos Inéditos para la Historia de España*, tola. ii., p. 369.

upon that governor, for which, however, there does not appear to be the slightest foundation.

As for Juan de Ayora's colony at Santa Cruz, it met with the fate which its founder and his doings deserved. The Spaniards there gave the greatest offense to the surrounding Indians. Pocosora and his people came down upon the settlement in the dead of the night; the Indians and Spaniards had a desperate encounter, and, when morning broke, there were only five left of the Spaniards, who, flying, bore the news of their defeat to Darien. The town of Santa Cruz was not in existence more than six months. There is an episode in this story of Juan de Ayora's expedition which is very significant, and furnishes in itself almost a summary of the proceedings at Darien.

While Juan de Ayora was robbing and murdering in the manner above mentioned, his absence seemed somewhat protracted to those at Darien who were not so profitably employed. Accordingly, the bishop suggested to the governor that they should send to see "what God had done with the lieutenant, Juan de Ayora, of whom they had had no intelligence whatever." The person whom the bishop suggested should be sent to see after Ayora was no other than Bartolomé Hurtado, the great friend and ally of Vasco Nuñez, which circumstance tends to show that some friendship had already sprung up between the bishop and Vasco Nuñez.

Hurtado set out upon his mission. He succeeded in finding Ayora, and returned before him, but he did not return empty-handed, for he brought back more than a hundred peaceable Indians (*Indios de paz*) whom he had stolen, and among them several whom he had merely borrowed from the friendly cacique of

Careta as porters to carry burdens. Well aware how little his proceedings would bear inquiry, he sought at once to make powerful friends. He gave to the governor six Indians; to the bishop six Indians; to the treasurer four; to the contador four; the factor four, and four to the alcalde mayor. This was the first instance of these high officers at Darien receiving such gratifications. Then the king's fifths were paid, and the slaves who formed this portion, and who happened to be the men lent by Careta, were immediately disposed of by public sale, and branded. Most of them were afterward carried across sea.* At last, after these gifts had been received, and dues had been paid, so that many persons were interested in declaring the original capture legal, out came the true story of how these Indians had been acquired, and it appeared—a thing almost too ludicrous to mention—that this famous Requisition had never been read to these wretched Indians until they were actually led along as prisoners in chains, and beaten if they did not step along sufficiently fast.† Certainly the element of comedy, which is never far from the most tragical of human events, was seldom closer to them than in this terrible Conquest of the Indies.

* “Los quales luego fueron vendidos en almoneda é herrados, é los mas dellos se sacaron de la tierra por mar, é los llevaron á otras partes.”—OVEDO, *Hist. Gen. y Nat.*, lib. xxix., cap. 9.

† “Paresçió que avian seydo salteados, é que primero fueron atados que les dixessen ni supiesen que avia Papa, ni Iglesia, ni cosa de quantás el requirimiento deçia: é despues de estar metidos en cadena, uno les leia aquel requirimiento, sin lengua ó intérprete, é sin entender el letor ni los indios; é ya que se lo dixeran con quien entendiera su lengua, estaban sin libertad para responder á lo que se les leia, y al momento tiraban con ellos aprisionados adelante, é no dexando de dar de palos á quien poco andaba.”—OVEDO, *Hist. Gen. y Nat.*, lib. xxix., cap. 9.

Oviedo has been supposed to be a hard and severe man, and one who was any thing but friendly to the Indians, but we must do him the justice to believe that he was thoroughly shocked at the proceedings in Darien, and that it was from the best motives that he resolved to return to Spain, for the purpose of giving information to the king, and, as he expresses it, "to live in a country more secure for my conscience and my life." His pretexts for going were the state of his health and a wish to see his wife. After being obliged to submit to a *residencia*, in the course of which no charge was preferred against him, he was allowed to depart. The account of the colony which he had to carry back to the king was fearful, and did not depend upon his own testimony alone. The governor sent word home by Oviedo what a hinderance the bishop was to good government, and how covetous and insolent of tongue he was, and how unruly and dishonest were his *clerigos*.* The bishop, on his side, charged Oviedo to inform the king of the governor's "avarice and inconstancy," and of the peculations of the *alcalde mayor*. It will hereafter be seen that the governor and the bishop appreciated each other's faults with nice discrimination.

The bishop very urgently begged the historian to inform the king what a good and skillful servant his highness had in Vasco Nuñez.

There was one slight circumstance which Oviedo could have mentioned (and probably did so) against both the governor and the bishop, and which alone was

* "É dióme sus cartas é memoriales, en que deçia del obispo quánto estorbo era para la buena gobernaçion, é quánto cobdiçioso é roto de su lengua, é sus clérigos quánto exentos é deshonestos."—OVIEDO, *Hist. Gen. y Nat.*, lib. xxix., cap. 9.

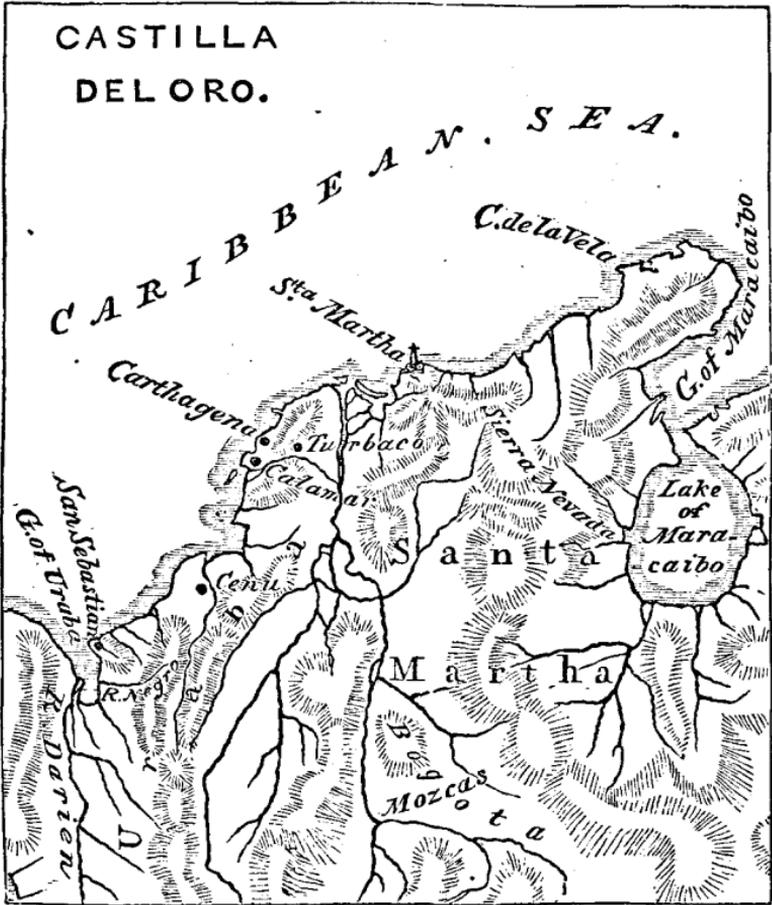
fatal to any thing like good government in the colony : it was that they were in the habit of letting their young men, their negroes, and their dogs* accompany the expeditions that were sent out, and receive the due apportionment of the spoil† for their masters.

The next enterprise worth mentioning is that which Pedrarias intrusted to the Bachiller Enciso, sending him into the territory of Cenuí. The Bachiller, as a man learned in the law, could not comport himself after the fashion of rude captains, but, before making any attack upon the Indians, he duly read to them that long Requisition which is now well known to the reader. It may be noticed, I think, in the course of this narrative, that the men of education always behave a little better than the rest. Enciso's account of the effect of reading this Requisition (which he gives in a simple, innocent way) is very interesting. Making his appeal to two of the caciques of Cenuí, he tells

* The reader must not be surprised at the dogs receiving their share. Vasco Nuñez had a dog called Leonçico, who always received his share of gold and slaves ; and his instinct was said to be such that he could distinguish between an "Indio de guerra" and an "Indio de paz"—a distinction which was often overlooked by his Spanish friends. "Assimesmo quiero hacer memoria de un perro que tenia Vasco Nuñez que se llamaba Leonçico, y que era hijo del perro Beçerrico de la isla de Sanct Johan, y no fué menos famoso quel padre. Este perro ganó á Vasco Nuñez en esta y otras entradas mas de mill pessos de oro, porque se le daba tanta parte como á un compañero en el oro y en los esclavos, quando se repartian." * * * "Era aqueste perro de un distinto maravilloso, y assí conosciá el indio bravo y el manso como le conoscié yo ú otro que en esta guerra anduiera, é tuviera raçon."—OVIEDO, *Hist. Gen. y Nat.*, lib. xxix., cap. 3.

† "É desta causa, é por el interesse destas partes, que se daban á los gobernadores é obispo é oficiales en los indios, y al gobernador en los indios y en el oro de cada entrada, y en llevarles sus moços y negros y perros, y darles las mejores partes en los repartimientos de los indios que se tomaban contimieron á enviar capitanes á unas partes é á otras de la tierra."—OVIEDO, *Hist. Gen. y Nat.*, lib. xxix., c. 9.

them the whole story of the world as written in the Requisition: How there was one God, Three and One, who governed the heavens and the earth; and how He had come into the world, and had left in his place Saint Peter; and how Saint Peter had left, as suc-



cessor, the Pope, as lord of the universe; and how, as such lord, the Pope had given this land of the Indies and Cenu to the King of Castile. All this being premised, it was easy to show that obedience was to be

instantly rendered to him, the Bachiller Enciso, as one of the captains of the King of Castile. But the caciques took an objection, to use a lawyer's phrase, to Enciso's history. "They replied to him," he tells us, "that, with respect to what I said about there being but one God, and that He governed the heaven and the earth, and was Lord of all things, it seemed good to them, and so it must be; but that in what I said about the Pope being the lord of all the universe in the place of God, and that he had given the land of the Indies to the King of Castile, the Pope must have been drunk when he did it, for he gave what was not his;* also, that the king, who asked for or received this gift, must be some madman (*algun loco*), for that he asked to have that given him which belonged to others; and they added, that, should he come there to take it, they would put his head on a stake. They were lords of this country, and there was no need of any other."

Upon this bold answer Enciso proceeded in his formal way to expound to them the threatenings of the Requisition; to which they only replied that they would put his head on a stake, a threat which, he says, they tried to carry into effect, but he was too strong for them, and put them to flight, though they made a vigorous resistance. Afterward he captured one of these caciques; and Enciso mentions that the cacique was a man of much truth, who kept his word, and that evil seemed to him evil, and good, good; by which the Bachiller means that they thought alike on many points of law and morality. To us, who are by-standers as it were, it seems a sad pity to have destroyed by force

* "Dijeron que el Papa debia estar borracho cuando lo hizo, pues daba lo que no era suyo."—Enciso, *Suma de Geographia*.

the polity which had brought such a man as this cacique to the head of affairs in his tribe; and we can not help thinking that the speech of the two caciques of Cenú, stripped of its rudeness, was somewhat of an answer to the demands of both pope and king.

No farther information is given by Enciso of this expedition to Cenú; and it needed not his silence to convince us of the unprofitable nature of the undertaking.

Among other expeditions fitted out by Pedrarias, there is one which deserves mention, and at the head of which was a certain Gaspar de Morales. This captain was sent to the South Sea, to find pearls in the islands called Tezaregui, situated in the Gulf of San Miguel, the chief island being that one renowned for pearls, which Vasco Nuñez, after discovering the South Sea, was anxious to visit, but had been dissuaded from doing so by his friend Chiapes. The force which Gaspar de Morales had at his command consisted of eighty men, that is, eighty Spaniards, for in all these expeditions there was generally a numerous retinue of Indians.

On his way to the Gulf of San Miguel, Morales met with another of the captains of Pedrarias, named Becerra, who was laden with gold, and accompanied by slaves taken from the territories of those caciques who had been friendly to Vasco Nuñez, and who had received Becerra as if he too were a friend. The names given by the Spaniards to the caciques whose territories this Becerra had ravaged, are sufficient indication of the nature of his ravages. One was called "*el Suegro*," the father-in-law, and another "*el Quemado*," the burned one. The explanation of these names is as

follows: the *Suegro* had three or four daughters who were carried off, and the *Quemado* was burned because he did not give as much gold as the Spaniards demanded of him.* Morales pursued a like system of devastation with that of Becerra, gleaning what spoil he could after the devastation made by his brother officer. On one particular occasion—which may serve to illustrate the proceedings of Morales—he and his men came upon an Indian town in the midst of some festivity. It was the custom in these festivals for the men and the women to sit apart. The followers of Morales thought this a good opportunity for capturing female prisoners; they therefore seized the Indian women present, and carried them off, the men making the most desperate efforts to rescue their wives and daughters, but without avail. This mode of converting the Indians to Christianity—for we must recollect that, according to the tenor of King Ferdinand's instructions, it was to protect missionaries that these bands of armed men were employed—naturally aroused the most deadly hatred in the Indians. They formed a great conspiracy to destroy Morales, in which no fewer than twenty caciques were engaged. Unfortunately, among the conspirators there was a cacique accompanying the principal body of Spaniards, for at that time they happened to be divided into two or three parties. This cacique was informed of the partial success of the conspiracy, that is, of the Indians having destroyed ten

* “El Suegro se llamó aquel cacique, porque llegados allí los chripstianos le tomaron (ó les dió de temor), tres ó quatro hijas que tenia á los capitanes: é por este hospedage é adulterios de los yernos, qué no quisiera, le llamaron el Suegro; mas su propio nombre era Mahe. Al otro cacique que llamaron Quemado, fué porque de hecho é sin causa le quemaron, porque no daba tanto oro como le pedian.”—OVIEDO, *Hist. Gen. y Nat.*, lib., xxix, cap. 10.

Spaniards who were separated from the main body, upon which he instantly fled during the night. Morales, with his suspicions awakened by this sudden flight, ordered pursuit to be made after the fugitive cacique, who, being taken, and the torture being applied to him, confessed what he knew. By means of the intelligence thus obtained, the Spanish commander was enabled to defeat the plans of the conspirators. Falling at daybreak upon the united forces of the Indians, when they were quite unprepared for such an attack, he put them to flight, and afterward capturing twenty caciques, he destroyed them by giving them to his dogs to tear to pieces. All this took place on the return of Morales from the islands to which he had been sent, where he had been received in the most friendly manner, and had obtained a great number of most valuable pearls.

By the failure of this conspiracy and the slaughter of the caciques Morales probably felt more at his ease, and, instead of returning at once to Darien, he directed his course to the territories of a cacique called Birú, at the eastern end of the Gulf of San Miguel. This cacique was said to be very warlike and very rich. It is conjectured to have been from a corruption of his name that the great kingdom of Peru was so called.

In such a case as this, where a warlike chief was to be attacked, it is not probable that the reading of the Requisition was a very public and formal one. Indeed, LAS CASAS says that, in general, the Spaniards approached the Indian towns, marching silently, and halting about midnight, when those primeval forests must have been witnesses to strange scenes. For then they read to themselves and to the trees* that Requi-

* "Entre si leian el requerimiento á los árboles."

sition, no doubt muttering very fast the well-known words, "Caciques and Indians of the town of so and so, we give you to know how there is one God, etc., etc.; and how he left our holy Pope as universal Lord, etc., etc.; and how the holy Pope gave to the kings of Castile," etc., etc.; and thus, having gabbled through the document, they resumed silence, until they burst upon the Indian town with the cry of "Santiago," a word which I do not find in the Requisition, though it is the word which must often have been the first and the only Spanish one the Indians lived to hear.

The warlike cacique Birú, though he was attacked by night and his town was set fire to, did not give himself up as conquered. He fled at first, but then turned upon the Spaniards, and fought with them for a whole day, the result appearing doubtful. The Spaniards were at last victorious, but it was too hardy earned a victory to profit much by, and they did not stay in Birú's country. Meanwhile, the people of the twenty slaughtered caciques united together, and pressed Morales hard as he was making his way back to Darien. To free himself, the Spanish commander had recourse to a most cruel expedient. He stabbed his Indian captives at intervals as he went along, hoping thus to occupy the pursuing Indians. This incident is alluded to in becoming terms of indignation by Vasco Nuñez, now a critical observer of other men's doings, in a letter to the king, where he says that a more cruel deed was never heard of among Moors, Christians, or any other people.* OVIEDO speaks of this transaction as a "Herodian cruelty," and states that ninety or a hundred persons

* "Una crueldad la mayor que nunca se ha hecho entre alárabes y cristianos, ni otra ninguna generacion."—NAV., *Col.*, tom. iii., p. 378.

perished through it.* However atrocious, it seems to me to be surpassed by many of the transactions in the Terra-firma, and it had at least the justification of being done in self-defense. At last Morales and his men, having fought their way with immense valor, if such a word can be justly applied to the proceedings of such men, and having had the most frightful difficulties and sufferings to contend with from the nature of the country they passed through, reached Darien. Pizarro was in this expedition, and seems to have been employed as second in command. It was a terrible school which the future conqueror of Peru was brought up in.

The Governor of Darien continued to send out expeditions such as those of Morales, which are painful to read of and tiresome to relate, and which, when they brought back much gold and many slaves, were still, even in the views of statesmen of that time, unfortunate, as they founded nothing, and led to nothing except to a profound hatred in those parts of the name and nation of the Spaniards.

The next expedition of note that Pedrarias sent out was led by Becerra, the same man whom Morales met when commencing his expedition to the Pearl islands, and who had already distinguished himself by the ravages he had made in the territories of the caciques formerly in strict alliance with Vasco Nuñez. Becerra was not only well furnished with men, but carried with him all the apparatus of war, among which were pieces

* "Acordaron de degollar en cuerda todos los indios que estaban pressos é atados, no perdonando muger ni niño chico ni grande de todos ellos, imitando la crueldad herodiana, para que los indios que venian de guerra contra ellos se detuviessen allí, viendo é contemplando aquel crudo espectáculo; é assí se puso por la obra, é degollaron desta manera sobre noventa ó çient personas."—OVIEDO, *Hist. Gen. y Nat.*, lib. xxix., cap. 10.

of artillery capable of throwing large balls—large for that time at least—“as big,” we are told, “as an egg.” Becerra’s destination was Cenú, a territory familiar to the reader as the scene of the Bachiller Enciso’s singular conversation with the two caciques. The reason why all this apparatus which Becerra carried with him was considered particularly requisite was, that he had to carry on war with the Caribs.* We know, however, that it effected no good result. After hearing so often of the destruction and dispersion of the Indians, that, in general, each story seems but a counterpart of the one that came before it, it is a comfort to find occasionally that they have a great success. It was so in this case. Not one of Becerra’s men returned to tell the tale of the total destruction which this expedition met with. One Indian youth alone made his way back to Darien, half dead with hunger, and he told the governor of the fate of Becerra and his company.

The Indian’s story was, that Becerra had entered by unknown ways into this province of Cenú, which Enciso with all legal forms had duly ravaged, and where, therefore, the Indians were fully prepared to receive such theological instruction as was commonly sent to them by the Bishop and the Governor of Darien. Accordingly, they wounded Becerra’s men with poisoned arrows, they embarrassed the ways with felled timber, and finally, using the arts of dissimulation as well as of war, they contrived, when assisting Becerra’s men to cross a great river, to destroy them all. It was one of the few chances still remaining for the Indians in their warfare that it should be in or near water, in which element they were far more at home

* “Ad bellum Caribibus in ipsa Caribana gerendum versus vicum Turufy.”—PET. MARTYR, dec. iii., cap. 10.

than the Spaniards were; and this exemplifies that complete saying of Napoleon upon the art of war, that it is "the art of being strongest on a given point at a given time."

The late expeditions had been so manifestly unsuccessful that the Governor of Darien began to take the state of affairs much to heart. He ordered the melting-house, "*Casa de la Fundicion*," to be closed—a most clear signal of distress; he also, in conjunction with the bishop, ordered public prayers to be offered up that God might remove his anger from them. I do not find, however, that any change of policy took place in accordance with those prayers, unless it was that the next expedition, commanded by Gonzalo de Badajoz, seems to have been sent out in a different direction from the other ones, namely, to Nombre de Dios, and thence to the South Sea. Badajoz behaved like the rest of the captains, and succeeded in obtaining an immense quantity of money (eighty thousand *castellanos*, it is said), but lost it all by the cunning device of an Indian cacique named Paris, who contrived by false intelligence to direct the attention of Badajoz to another quarter, while he attacked and pillaged the station where Badajoz had left his gold. This expedition also must have returned to Darien in very disconsolate mood, and could not have brought much comfort to the governor's mind.

The last that I shall mention, and one of the most memorable of Pedrarias's expeditions, was that sent out under his *alcalde mayor*, Espinosa. In this expedition there went a Franciscan monk, named Francisco de San Roman. He wrote a letter to Father

Pedro de Córdoba, the head of the Dominicans, which letter the father gave to Las Casas, and in which San Roman begged that Pedro de Córdoba, for the love of God, would speak to the authorities at St. Domingo, and put it as a matter of conscience to them to provide a remedy for the Terra-firma which those tyrants were destroying. Afterward the Franciscan returned to Spain, and, when he was at Seville in the College of San Tomás, of the order of the Dominicans, he stated that he had seen with his own eyes, killed by the sword, or thrown to savage dogs, in this expedition of Espinosa's, above forty thousand souls.* This seems almost incredible; but let no one doubt it, or imagine that he can realize to his mind what such an expedition would be capable of, until he has fully pictured to himself what his own nature might become, if he formed one of such a band, toiling in a new fierce clime, enduring miseries unimagined by him before, gradually giving up all civilized ways, growing more and more indifferent to the destruction of life—the life of animals, of his adversaries, of his companions, even his own—retaining the adroitness and sagacity of man, and becoming fell, reckless, and rapacious as the fiercest brute of the forest. Not more different the sea, when, some midsummer morning, it comes, with its crisp, delicate little waves fondling up to your feet like your own dog, and the same sea when, storm-ridden, it thunders in against you with foam and fury like a wild beast, than is the smiling, prosperous, civilized man, restrained by a thousand invisible fetters, who has not known real hunger for

* "Que habia visto por sus ojos matar á espada y echar á Perros bravos en este viaje de Espinosa sobre cuarenta mil ánimas."—LAS CASAS, *Hist. de las Indias*, MS., lib. iii., cap. 71.

years, from the same man when he has starved, and fought, and bled, been alternately frozen and burned up, and when his life, in fact, has become one mad, blinding contest with all around him.

Espinosa's expedition, however murderous, being composed of such men as have been just described, was not unsuccessful in the way in which success was then reckoned, for he recovered the gold which Badajoz had lost, and brought back eighty thousand *pesos* and two thousand slaves. We are assured of this on the authority of an earlier historian than LAS CASAS,* whose words are as follows: "He, Espinosa, brought with him full two thousand captives, which, for carrying to Hispaniola, were then worth much money. Thence came that rapid as well as miserable diminution which these wretched nations suffered, since, from desire for the gold which the merchants gave for these slaves in Darien, all the time that they were outside the walls of that city, both those acquired in peace, as well as those taken in war, were put in irons."† Speaking probably of this expedition of Espinosa's, one of the captains in it, PASCUAL DE ANDAGOYA, says that they returned with such a number of slaves that they were obliged to make two days' journey of such a short distance as three or four leagues; and he adds, that "all his company of slaves perished at

* DIEGO DE LA TOVILLA, *Historia Barbárica*. This writer is alluded to both by LAS CASAS and HERRERA, but in modern times his work has not been seen. It would be a service to history to discover it.

† "Traia largos dos mil captivos, que para llevarlos los mercadantes á la Española valian entonces muchos dineros. De donde nació la tan presta como miserable caída que estas infelices Gentes dieron, pues con la cudicia del mucho oro que por ellos en el Darien los trantantes les daban todo el tiempo que fuera de sus muros se veian así al de paz como al de guerra ponian en hierros."—LAS CASAS, *Hist. de las Indias*, MS., lib. iii., cap. 72.

Darien, as did all the rest who were brought there.”* This statement is inconsistent with that of Tovilla, just referred to; but I have no doubt that the contradiction between these two witnesses is but one of place, and that the truth is, that all the slaves in question perished rapidly, some at Darien and some at Hispaniola.

Throughout these expeditions in the Terra-firma, which would else, perhaps, be as interesting as they are important, the reader is vexed and distracted by new and uncouth names of people and of places. The very words Rome, Constantinople, London, Genoa, Venice, stir the blood and arrest the attention: any small incident in their fortunes enjoys some of the accumulated interest which is bound up with these time-honored names, while it requires an effort of imagination to care about what may happen to Comogra, Dabaybe, Poncha, or Pocososa. It is only on perceiving the immense importance of those events which happen in the early days of new-found countries that we can sufficiently arouse our attention to consider such events at all.

Then, however, we may see that the fate of future empires, and the distribution of races over the face of the earth, depend upon the painful deeds of a few adventurers and unrenowned native chieftains, they themselves being like players, whose names and private fortunes we do not care much about, but who are acting in some great drama, the story of which concerns the whole world.

* “La cual con toda la demas que al Darien fué, acabó allí sus dias.”—NAV., *Col.*, tom. iii., p. 413.

CHAPTER III.

THE FATE OF VASCO NUÑEZ.

WHILE narrating the melancholy results of these various expeditions, nothing has been said of Vasco Nuñez, and of the dealings of Pedrarias with one whom he was naturally inclined to look upon as a rival and to treat as an enemy. Many and severe must have been the comparisons made by the men who had served under Vasco Nuñez between the successful mode in which he had alternately soothed and terrified the Indian caciques, and the unsuccessful manner in which the captains of Pedrarias had prosecuted their disastrous adventures. For some time it appears that Vasco Nuñez remained an unemployed man, and, as may be seen from his letters to the king, a very discontented and critical observer. He resolved to undertake an expedition of his own, and sent secretly to Cuba for men to accompany him in peopling the coasts of the Southern Sea.

It was, perhaps, at the solicitation of the Bishop of Darien, or it might have been from motives of policy, that the governor resolved at this period to employ Vasco Nuñez in making an entrance (a favorite phrase of the Spaniards) into the country of Dabaybe, of which Vasco had written great accounts to the court of Spain. If he succeeded in this enterprise, the governor would share in his success; if he failed, the governor would gain, at least in credit, by any failure of an undertaking conducted by Vasco Nuñez. And fail he did, for

the very same reason alluded to in the notice of a recent expedition, namely, that he encountered the Indians on an element in which they were naturally the masters. Attacking him on the water, they were completely successful, and Vasco Nuñez himself was wounded and escaped with difficulty. The scarcity, also, of provisions prevented him from making any stay in Dabaybe's country, which had recently been stripped by locusts.* Vasco Nuñez could not induce Dabaybe, whose principal town he had seized upon, to come near him, and he had nothing to do but to return to Darien with confirmed intelligence of the mineral wealth of the country he had traversed, but with no visible signs of treasure. It may be imagined what joy this ill success must have given to the captains of Pedrarias, and probably to the governor himself.

It was mentioned some time back that Vasco Nuñez, soon after his discovery of the South Sea, had sent a man named Arbolanche to the court of Spain with the good news and with rich presents. This messenger did not come in time to stop the appointment of Pedrarias, but the tidings which Arbolanche brought were well received; and the king not only pardoned Vasco Nuñez, but conferred upon him the title of Adelantado. Hitherto it had been the fashion at the court of Spain to speak very slightly of Vasco Nuñez, but this intelligence of the discovery of the South Sea, the greatest that had reached the mother country since Columbus had brought back the tidings and the signs of a new world, must have changed in great measure the opinions of the king and of the court respecting Vasco Nuñez. And the good opinion they now entertained of him would be likely to increase rather than to di-

* See his letter to the king.—NAV., *Col.*, tom. iii., p. 381.

minish, when men came to reflect upon the nature of his discoveries, and the mode in which he had followed them out.

It was probably about the time that Pedrarias had sent the Bachiller Enciso to Cenú that the title of Adelantado came out for Vasco Nuñez. Joined with this title, the government of Coyva and Panamá was also granted to him. Coyva is a small island where Vasco Nuñez thought that there were pearls. The king did not omit to endeavor to make Pedrarias and Vasco Nuñez act harmoniously together, recommending the governor to show all kindness to so useful a servant of the crown as Vasco Nuñez, and Vasco Nuñez to endeavor to please Pedrarias as much as possible. But, as one of Vasco Nuñez's biographers observes, "that which was easy at court was impossible at Darien, where factions prevented it."

Not long after this time, Andres Garavito, the man whom Vasco Nuñez had sent to Cuba to negotiate for him there, returning to Darien with seventy men and all the necessary provisions for an expedition, came to place himself under the orders of Vasco Nuñez. Garavito, when at six leagues from the port, sent secretly to advise Vasco Nuñez of his arrival; but the intelligence also reaching the ears of Pedrarias, caused the utmost offense to that jealous governor, who gave orders that Vasco Nuñez should be arrested and put in prison. At the entreaty, however, of the Bishop of Darien, the governor did not send Vasco Nuñez to prison, but set him free on certain conditions which were arranged between them.

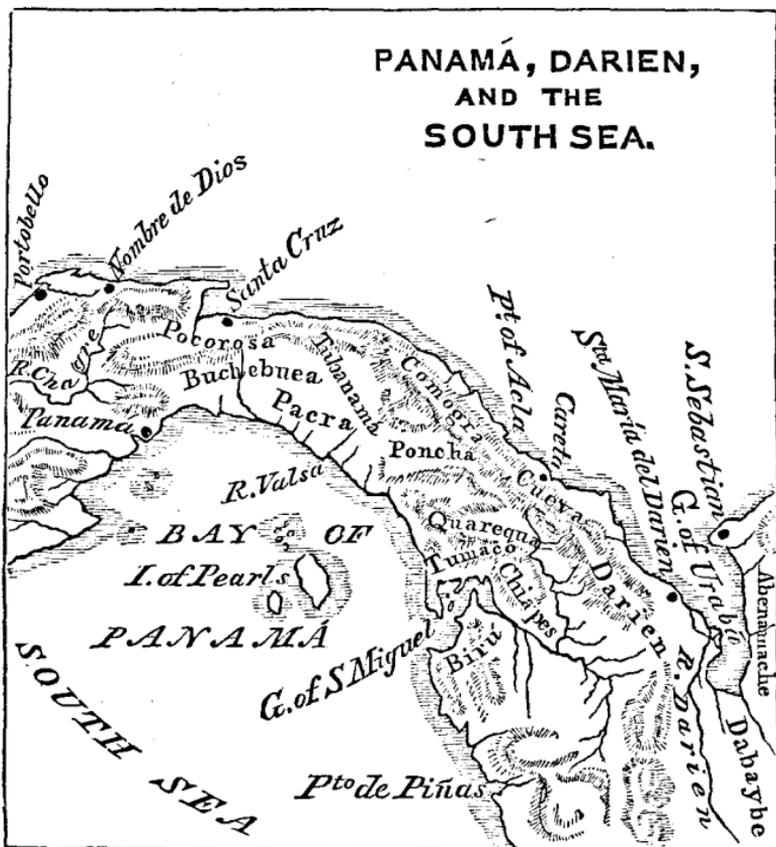
It seems that Vasco Nuñez was now left for some time in neglect, and might have remained so but for the interposition of the Bishop of Darien, between

whom and Vasco Nuñez a strong friendship or alliance had sprung up. I imagine that the bishop, himself a man of ability, recognized the abilities of Vasco Nuñez. However that may be, the bishop succeeded in making Vasco Nuñez and the governor friends; and he proposed to cement this friendship by the strongest family bonds, suggesting that Pedrarias should give his daughter in marriage to Vasco Nuñez. This was, no doubt, a wise step to take; the governor assented, and the espousals were formally made, the young lady herself being in Spain. It does not appear, however, that either Pedrarias or his intended son-in-law was in a great hurry for the marriage to be solemnized; and it is probable that the attachment of Vasco Nuñez to one of his Indian captives rendered him very indifferent about the marriage, except as a matter of policy.

The rivals being now reconciled, or appearing to be so, were at liberty to push their united fortunes forward with vigor. Pedrarias sent Vasco Nuñez to occupy a town in the port of Acla* (founded by Gabriel Rojas, one of Pedrarias's captains, and afterward abandoned for fear of the neighboring Indians), whence he was to prepare to embark upon the South Sea. Acla, however, as may be seen in the map, is on this side of South America. It was therefore the bold, and, considering the number of lives that were consumed by it, we must say, the cruel scheme, of Vasco Nuñez to prepare for the construction of his vessels at Acla, and to carry the materials over land to the South Sea. When arrived at Acla, Vasco Nuñez,

* Acla signifies "the bones of men." "Acla en la lengua de aquella tierra quiere decir huesos de hombres ó canillas de hombres." —*Relacion de PASCUAL DE ANDAGOYA.* (Orig. en el Arch. de Ind. en Sevilla, Relac. y Descripc., leg. ii.)—*NAV., Col.*, tom iii., p. 397.

who always showed himself a true commander, took care to order each of his men, with the assistance of his slaves, to till the ground, that they might be sure of subsistence. He himself set the example of work-



ing with his own hands at this prudent employment, as "in all labors he took the foremost part."*

Just at this period it happened that Espinosa and

* "En esto él era el primero, por que era hombre de muchas fuerzas, y seria entonces de cuarenta años; y siempre en todos los trabajos llevaba la delantera."—LAS CASAS, *Hist. de las Indias*, MS., lib. iii., cap. 73.

his men, with all their riches and their slaves, came to Acla on their return to Darien. The shrewd Vasco Nuñez foresaw that when these men, accustomed to an adventurous life, had reached Darien, and had divided the spoil, they would soon begin to tire of inactivity. He accordingly followed them to Darien, and contrived to bring back with him to Acla two hundred of them, the governor favoring the efforts of his intended son-in-law.

Vasco Nuñez and his men now began the terrible labor of their undertaking, which was to cut wood and fashion it at Acla, thence to convey it across the sierras to the River Valsa, there to construct four brigantines, and thence to launch them on the South Sea, to pursue a grand career abounding in riches and discovery.

One of the first things to be done was to make a station on the top of the sierras, where those might rest who had to bring up the burden of the building materials—wood, iron, and cordage. For this purpose Vasco Nuñez sent a man called *Compañon* with some Spaniards and thirty negroes. How these thirty negroes came to be under the orders of Vasco Nuñez is rather surprising. I suppose they must have been imported from Hispaniola. If so, it shows that there was a greater number of negroes there at that time than has ever been imagined. But it is just possible that these negroes were taken from that tribe which was found so unaccountably in this very region of South America, close to Quarequa's country.

When the station had been made on the top of the sierra, Vasco Nuñez caused the wood to be carried up there immediately. From Acla to this station it was twelve leagues of terrible road, over mountains and

rivers, which latter, being of the nature of mountain torrents, were at one time shallows, at another floods. In encountering this stupendous labor, five hundred Indians perished. This fact appears in a statement which Vasco Nuñez's friend, the Bishop of Darien, made afterward at the court of Spain.*

As the Indians died, Vasco Nuñez sent companies to impress other Indians for the terrible labor. It may be noticed that no single Spaniard or negro is said to have perished of this work, in which the Indians died by hundreds.

After all the wood had been transported in this painful manner to the River Valsa, Vasco Nuñez divided his company into three parties: one to cut wood; the second, to bring from Acla the iron-work and cordage for the ships; the third, to get provisions in the neighboring country, and to capture Indians. The enterprise was now interrupted by a most unexpected misfortune, which, if discovered earlier, might have saved the lives of many of those wretched Indians who had perished in bringing the wood over the mountains. This wood, when it was already formed and fashioned, and some of it probably on the stocks, turned out to be eaten through and through with worms. Another time also, when the Spaniards were far advanced in their work, and were in the midst of it, there came suddenly upon them a very high tide, which swept away part of the wood, buried the rest in the mud and slime, and drove the terrified work-

* "Yo vi firmado de su nombre, del mismo Obispo, en una relacion que hizo al Emperador en Barcelona el año de quinientos y diez y nueve, quando él de la Tierra firma vino, como mas largo adelante placiendo á Dios será referido, que habia muerto el Vasco Nuñez por hacer los Vergantines quinientos Indios."—LAS CASAS, *Hist. de las Indias*, MS., lib. iii., cap. 73.

men up into the trees for safety. Vasco Nuñez was not a little discouraged by these mishaps. To add to his troubles, the third division of his men had been unsuccessful in obtaining food, so that the whole community suffered extremely from hunger, and Vasco Nuñez himself was obliged to live upon such roots of the earth as he could get. "It may be imagined," says LAS CASAS, "what the five or six hundred Indians in attendance had to eat."

The Adelantado, however, did not give up the undertaking, but returned to Acla, whence he sent to the governor, who furnished him with fresh men and supplies of provisions. With these he returned to the river, and, after incredible labor, contrived to build two brigantines. No sooner were these vessels finished than he put to sea at once in them, and made for the Island of Pearls, leaving a part of his company to complete the other two brigantines which he needed. Thence he proceeded down the coast as far as the Puerto de Piñas. The natives of those parts, who had suffered from the cruelties of Morales, came out to battle with Vasco Nuñez; but he soon put them to rout, and despoiled them. From thence he returned to the Island of Pearls, to cut wood for the two other brigantines. He was also in want of iron and pitch, for which commodities he resolved to send to Acla.

It happened that about this time a report had reached that town that Pedrarias was to be superseded, and Lope de Sosa appointed governor of the Terra-firma. This, which, some time ago, would have been most joyous news for Vasco Nuñez, was now most unwelcome, his fortunes and those of his future father-in-law being bound up together. Talking one

evening with two friends, one named Valderrabano,* and the other a cleric, by name Rodrigo Perez, about the news of Lope de Sosa's coming, Vasco Nuñez observed, "It seems probable that he is either come, or that there is news of his approaching arrival; and, if he is come, Pedrarias, my lord, is no longer governor, and we are defrauded of our hopes, and such labors as we have undergone are lost. It seems to me, therefore, that to get some information about that which we desire to know, Francis' Garavito had better go to Acla to ask for the iron and pitch which we want, and to learn if the new governor is come; and if he is, to return, and we will finish our ships as best we can, and pursue our enterprise; and, whatever may happen to us, it is probable that, whoever may be governor, will receive us well, in order that we may assist and serve him. But if Pedrarias, my lord, should still be in power, then Garavito should let him know in what state we are, and he will provide what we want, and then we shall set off on our voyage, of which I hope in God the success for us will be such as we so much desire."

This counsel was adopted; and we learn from a soldier in the expedition in what way the plan was to be carried out. It was arranged that when the party under Francis Garavito came near to Acla, they were to halt, and one of them, named Luis Botello, was to enter the town by night, and learn, at the house of Vasco Nuñez, if there were any news of the appointment of another governor. If there were, he would be able to communicate the intelligence to his

* The notary who drew up the account of the discovery of the South Sea, before quoted.

friends, and they might return without entering the town.*

The conversation which preceded this resolve, and which has been reported above, was very innocent, that is, if it had been reported fully. At the worst, it did not contain any thing which Pedrarias could have complained of. It happened, however, that, as Vasco Nuñez was talking, it began to rain, and that the sentinel whose duty it was to keep guard at his quarters (*la guarda persona*) took shelter under the eaves of the hut where Vasco and his friends were sitting; and this sentinel heard just so much of the conversation as would convey to him the idea that Vasco Nuñez proposed to his companions to go away with the ships, and make the expedition on their own account. This way of concluding, from a small portion of what is heard or understood, forms, no doubt, a daily cause of the largest misrepresentations and mistakes. The sentinel keeps to himself, for the present, what he has heard, and what he thinks he understands.

Meanwhile, Pedrarias had heard from Andres Garavito that Vasco Nuñez intended to free himself from allegiance to his superior in command. It will astonish the reader that such intelligence should come from this quarter, as Andres Garavito has hitherto appeared as the chosen friend of Vasco Nuñez. But it

* "Mandaba que enviase un hombre, de que llegase cerca de Acla, y que de noche entrase, y que supiese su casa del Vasco Nuñez si habia novedad de gobernador, y que si le hubiese se volviese con toda la gente que llevaba, porque el nuevo gobernador no le deshiciese en armada, y que iriamos á poblar á Chepabar, que es seis leguas mas hácia Acla de Panamá."—*Relacion de PASCUAL DE ANDAGOYA* (Orig. en el Arch. de Ind. en Sevilla, Relac. y Descripc., leg. ii.); *NAV., Col.*, tom. iii., p. 405.

seems probable that Andres courted the Indian woman, daughter of Careta, who was much beloved by Vasco Nuñez; and, at any rate, that high words had passed between the friends with respect to this beautiful Indian.* It is stated that, upon the governor's receiving this traitorous information from Andres Garavito (or perhaps upon the capture of Luis Botello, who, coming into Acla by night, was seized as a spy and sent to Darien), the suspicious and irritable old man went to Acla, and found there Francis Garavito, who, in accordance with the intentions of Vasco Nuñez (expressed that wet evening to his friends), had been sent to Acla to get what was wanted for the ships, and to make out the news from Spain. He succeeded in soothing the governor's suspicions, but, unluckily for Vasco Nuñez, an enemy of his, Alonso de la Puente, obtained intelligence, either from the sentinel, or perhaps from some one who had accompanied Francis Garavito, of what the sentinel thought he had heard.† Alonso de la Puente carried this news to Pedrarias, and the rage and suspicions of the governor, which had often been soothed or suppressed, now burst out with uncontrollable vehemence.

It must be allowed that Pedrarias had good reasons, or rather reasonable motives, for disliking and suspecting Vasco Nuñez. The incompetent, when in pow-

* "Digeron que esta falsedad ó Testimonia falso, ó quizá verdad, escribió Garavito á Pedrarias por que Vasco Nuñez, por una India que tenia por amiga, le habia de palabra maltratado."—LAS CASAS, *Hist. de las Indias*, MS., l. iii., c. 75.

† OVIEDO does not mention this story; and his account of the causes of Vasco Nuñez's ruin is throughout slightly different from the above, but without substantially altering the relation between the parties, or affecting the justice of the case.—See *Hist. Gen. y Nat.*, lib. xxix., cap. 12.

er, dislike the competent who are looking on, hating them for all the comments they imagine them to be making. And in this case there was no imagination in the question, for, in a letter from Vasco Nuñez to the king, which bears date the 16th of October, 1515, there are the strongest expressions of blame respecting the conduct of the government and the character of the governor. Vasco Nuñez, with all the bitterness of a man who sees the results of his best labors sullied and despoiled, tells the king of the atrocities committed by the captains of Pedrarias; of their turning friendly Indians into watchful enemies, ravaging the country, branding slaves in the most reckless manner, and desolating the land to such an extent, that, as he justly prophesies, hereafter it will not be possible to find a remedy for it. He speaks of the confusion in the government, of the want of concert and unity of purpose, of the neglect of the king's *hacienda*. He then proceeds to give his opinion of the governor's character: "He is a man in whom reign all the envy and covetousness in the world; he is wretched when he sees that there is friendship between any persons of worth; it delights him to hear fables and chatter from one and the other; he is a man who very lightly gives credit to evil counsels rather than to those of good; he is a person without any discretion, and without dexterity or talent for the affairs of government."* And in this strain Vasco Nuñez goes on, summing up the governor's character in a manner which, though probably very consistent with truth,† would not fail to keep up in full force the deadly enmity between

* NAV., *Col.*, tom. iii., p. 384.

† The reader will recollect the character of the governor given by the bishop, in which he speaks of his inconstancy.

them, when it was reconveyed, as it very likely was, from some person at the court of Spain to the governor of Darien.

Pedrarias, now fully bent upon revenge for all his real and fancied wrongs, still masters his fury sufficiently to write a crafty letter to Vasco Nuñez, begging him to come to him at Acla, that they may confer together upon business. Meanwhile, Vasco Nuñez was quietly and serenely awaiting the return of his messenger, Francis Garavito. Whatever that answer might be, Vasco Nuñez might feel well assured of fortune. If his father-in-law was still in power, he might be joined by new adventurers, and be sure of fresh supplies; if Lope de Sosa had come, he would sail away with his trustful company, free from any superior, and confident in his future fortunes, the light of his unique renown throwing forward a brilliant track in the future, along which he would sail to still bolder adventures and still greater discoveries. And such, indeed, would have been the probable result, had he once more spread his sails upon the waters which owned him for their great discoverer. In that case the conquest of Peru would not have troubled us much with the name or the deeds of the ignorant Pizarro, but would have been made by one fitted to govern and to reconstruct as well as to conquer. It was a career which, in the opinions of the men of that age, the stars were certain to have much concern with; and, accordingly, we learn that a Venetian astrologer and natural philosopher, called Micer Codro, who had come to those parts to see the world, had told Vasco Nuñez that the year in which he should see a certain "star," which the astrologer pointed out in such a place of the heavens, he would run great risk of his life, but

if he escaped that danger, he would be the greatest and richest lord in all the Indies.

Walking one evening—an evening in the tropics where Nature is so large and so gracious—probably along the sea-shore, from whence he could see his brigantines lying idly in the harbor, Vasco Nuñez looked up and beheld his fateful star in that quarter of the heavens which the astrologer had pointed out to him. In the merry mood of a man who is near his doom, what the Scotch call “fey,” he turned to his attendants, and began to mock at the prophecy. “A sensible man, indeed, would he be, who should believe in diviners, especially in Micer Codro, who told me this and this (here he related the Italian’s words of omen), and behold I see the star he spoke of, when I find myself with four ships and three hundred men on the Sea of the South, just about to navigate it.” Though Vasco Nuñez did thus despise the prophecy, it was a very judicious one (there is no little wisdom sometimes in the words of charlatans, a wisdom built upon great knowledge of life), for men’s fortunes come to a focus, or rather to a point in the intersection of many curves of other lives and circumstances; and what is done by them then has life and warmth in it, and can be done then only. It was easy to perceive, even for a person less versed in the foibles and wild wishes of mankind than an astrologer would be, that Vasco Nuñez was rapidly nearing some such crisis in his stormy life.

When Vasco Nuñez was uttering these confident words, and continuing, it is said, in the same boastful strain, he was little aware that the sleepless furies were even then close behind him. Dramatically, at that moment, really a few days afterward, a messenger from

Pedrarias brought his treacherous letter to Vasco Nuñez, who was then in the little island called the Island of Tortoises. It has been remarked by LAS CASAS as singular that no one sent a warning word to Vasco Nuñez, no, not even his own messenger at Acla; but this may be accounted for by the dissimulation of the governor, who, perhaps, confided to no one his real intent. Vasco Nuñez went with the utmost readiness to meet his father-in-law at Acla. On the road he fell in with Pizarro, who had come with soldiers to arrest him. "What is this, Francisco Pizarro?" he exclaimed; "you were not wont to come out in this fashion to receive me." But he attempted neither flight nor resistance, and being thus taken, he was put into confinement in the house of a man called Casteneda, while the licentiate Espinosa was ordered to proceed against him with all possible rigor. At first Pedrarias pretended that he did this only to give Vasco Nuñez an opportunity for justifying himself, but afterward he showed his true wishes, and broke out into violent reproaches against his son-in-law, who protested that he was innocent of the meditated offense laid to his charge, asking why should he have come to Acla to meet Pedrarias if he had not been conscious of his innocence. It was not difficult to frame a good indictment against Vasco Nuñez, introducing the imprisonment of Enciso, the death of Nicuesa, and the reported conversation of Vasco Nuñez with his friends, partially overheard by the sentinel, which must have been the main ground of the charge. There was also a letter from a friend in Darien which counseled flight;*

* This friend's name was Argüello, and the subject of his letter indicates another cause of ill feeling between the governor and Vasco Nuñez. It appears that a certain time had been appointed for Vasco

and I conjecture that imprudent sayings by Vasco Nuñez in former times were now remembered, if not formally brought up against him. The governor was not the only enemy of Vasco Nuñez; but the treasurer, Alonso de la Puente, for some dispute about money, and Andres Garavito, for the love affair before mentioned (the two great moving mischiefs of the world being thus arrayed against Vasco Nuñez), were his enemies.* The soft hand of some fair woman not seldom interweaves the fatal thread of that coil in their affairs which strangles out the lives of the greatest men.

It is but just, however, to mention, that there is an account of the last days of Vasco Nuñez, entitled to considerable credit, which takes away a great deal of the baseness laid to the charge of Andres Garavito; and as the minor characters in history require to be considerably dealt with, as well as those of the more notable men, I think it right to give this friend of Vasco Nuñez the benefit of OVIEDO'S testimony. That writer, who afterward came into possession of some of Vasco Nuñez's papers, says that Andres Garavito was

Nuñez to commence his undertaking—a year and a half—that he had exceeded that time, and sought for the enlargement of the period; that his enemies at the governor's court prevented a favorable answer being at once given to this reasonable request; and that Argüello, being at Darien, and cognizant of all these circumstances, wrote to Vasco Nuñez, advising him to take his departure. “De esto todo le avisó aquel Hernando de Argüello por una carta, que le costó la cabeça, en la qual le escribió que no le querian dar mas término, ni prorogación, é que le aconsejaba que no curasse dello, ni dexasse de haçer su viage.” —OVIEDO, *Hist. Gen. y Nat.*, lib. xxix., cap. 12.

* There is a confusion in this story as given by HERRERA, which is to be accounted for, as I conjecture, by there being two brothers of the name of Garavito; one Francis who was true to Nuñez, the other Andres who was not so.

placed in arrest, and turned king's evidence in order to save his own life.*

Whatever may be the exact truth, which would reconcile or displace these somewhat conflicting statements, the main facts remain tolerably clear, and present much of the same appearance in modern times as they did at that time in the court of Spain, where PETER MARTYR thus summed up, in his rapid fashion, what he had heard of the matter: "Pedrarias summons Vasco Nuñez from the south: Vasco obeys the command, and is put in chains. Vasco denies the treason imputed to him. Witnesses are sought for to prove the crimes which he has committed: his words from the beginning are collected" (this is the point at which a friend's hostility would be so fatal), "his offense is judged to be worthy of death, he is destroyed."†

It seems hard that Vasco Nuñez should be condemned for an offense of which he was, comparatively speaking, innocent. But this is the way in which, both in small and great matters, we are all punished, namely, for those things which we did not commit; and this is quite reasonable, considering how many of our worst actions do not find their fitting retribution just yet. The Licentiate Espinosa, in giving a report to Pedrarias of the result of the process, said that Vasco Nuñez

* "Estando assi pressos, fué aconsejado el Garavito que descubriese lo que sabia deste negocio, é pidiessse misericordia é merçed de la vida: é assi lo hiço, é dixo al governador é juró lo que es dicho; é por esta su confession ó declaraçion le fué remitida ó perdonada la culpa ó parte que le cabia en el conçierto que es dicho."—OVEDO, *Hist. Gen. y Nat.*, lib. xxix., cap. 12.

† "Vaschum ab Austro accersit Petrus Arias: paret dicto Vaschus, in catenas conjicitur. Negat Vaschus tale consilium cogitasse. Testes quærentur malefactorum, quæ patrauerat: ab initio dicta colliguntur, morte dignus censetur, perimitur."—PETER MARTYR, *De Orbe Novo*, dec. iv., cap. 9.

had incurred the penalty of death, but, taking into consideration the eminent services which he had rendered to the state, the licentiate recommended that his life should be spared. Pedrarias, however, was implacable. "Since he has sinned, let him die for it" (*Pues se pecó, muera por ello*), was the exclamation of the fiery old man, and he ordered the sentence to be instantly carried into effect, which was that they should cut off Vasco Nuñez's head, the crier going before him and saying with a loud voice, "This is the justice which our lord the king, and Pedrarias, his lieutenant, in his name, command to be done upon this man as a traitor and usurper of the lands subject to the royal crown." It was in vain that Vasco Nuñez protested against the sentence. He was beheaded, and after him four of his friends,* who were implicated in the so-called conspiracy, among whom was the lay friend, Valderrabano, to whom he confided his intentions on that wet evening which proved so fatal to him. The clerigo, probably on account of his profession, escaped a like fate.

Thus perished Vasco Nuñez de Balboa, in the forty-second year of his age, the man who, since the time of Columbus, had shown the most statesmanlike and warriorlike powers† in that part of the world, but

* Argüello, the friend who had written from Darien to Vasco Nuñez, was the last who came to the place of execution; and daylight was beginning to fade. The whole of the Spanish population of Acla began to implore the governor to spare Argüello, as it seemed that God, by sending the night, was preventing that death. But Pedrarias furiously replied that, rather than that man should live, he would prefer that upon himself the sentence should be executed. And so light enough was found for Argüello's execution.

† In addition to his other qualities for a commander, Vasco Nuñez was celebrated for humanity toward his men, being personally attentive to any who were ill when engaged in active service. OVIEDO says,

whose career only too much resembles that of Ojeda, Nicuesa, and the other unfortunate commanders who devastated those beautiful regions of the earth. Like the career of most even of the greatest men, it puts one in mind of the half-hewn stones which are still found in quarries—stones that were just about to be taken to some signal place in some great old temple, when from a convulsion on the face of the earth, or in the kingdoms of it, the work seems to have been broken off, and the workmen came to that quarry no more.

With his death, we may, for the present, take leave of the proceedings in the Terra-firma: I wish I could have dealt with them in the way that PETER MARTYR does, in his work “on the islands lately discovered,” where he says, speaking of the doings of Pedrarias, “I will give them in few words, because they were all horrid transactions, nothing pleasant in any of them.”*

The foregoing account, however, is eminently instructive as regards the dealings of the Spaniards with

and he was no friend to Vasco Nuñez, that of all the commanders he had seen in the Indies, Vasco Nuñez was the best in this respect. “Tenia otra cosa, especialmente en el campo, que si un hombre se le cansaba y adolesçia en qualquier jornada quél se hallasse, no lo desamparaba: antes si era nesçessario, yba con una ballesta á le buscar un páxaro ó ave, y se la mataba y se la traia; y le curaba, como á hijo ó hermano suyo, y lo esforçaba y animaba. Lo qual ningun capitán de quantos hasta hoy, que estamos en el año de mill é quinientos é quarenta y ocho años, han venido á Indias, en las entradas y conquistas que se hallaron no lo ha hecho mejor, ni aun tan bien como Vasco Nuñez.”—OVEDO, *Hist. Gen. y Nat.*, lib. xxix., cap 2.

* “Brevibus absolvam, quia horrida omnia, suavia nulla. Ex quo nostræ decades desierunt, nil aliud actum est, nisi perimere ac perimi, trucidare ac trucidari.”—PETER MARTYR, *De Insulis nuper inventis*, p. 360

the Indians, though it is with difficulty that any readable narrative can be made of such a thicket of facts, and names, and dates, so perplexed and yet disjointed. The utmost I can hope is, that the persons who were involved in this story might, perhaps, were they to read it now, recognize themselves in it. This is not putting the truth of the narrative very high. It is probable, however, that there are many accounts of things in which the persons engaged, except for the similarity of the names to their own, would not recognize themselves, and would imagine they were reading fiction. The dialogues of the dead upon history would, I suspect, often make the ears of the living narrator tingle.

In considering the long tissue of misdirected efforts narrated in this and the preceding chapters, it is natural to employ our minds in conjecturing what would have been the best course to have been pursued by men in power at that period. That many of them earnestly desired to do right is manifest, and it seems hard perpetually to criticise their doings without suggesting what they ought to have done. Had they been contented with a reasonable gain in trade, there is but little doubt in my mind that they would have prospered greatly. We see, I think, that the expeditions which were thus conducted were almost the only successful ones. This would not have prevented the gradual settlement of the Spaniards in America, but would only have made it proceed in the most natural, and, therefore, successful manner. Mercantile forts would have been erected: these would have depended for their supply not wholly on the surrounding country, but on their fellow-countrymen; and by

degrees that knowledge of the ways, customs, and especially of the language of the Indians, would have been learned, which would have proved most serviceable in farther communication with them, and in forming more extended settlements of the Spaniards. If, on the other hand, settlements were to be made without reference to trade, it is clear that agriculture should have been the first and the principal object of each new settlement. Trade and agriculture—these are the two chief sources of well-being for an infant colony. No colony is supported for any long time upon conquest, unless, indeed, the conquerors at once adopt the ways and means of procuring livelihood in use among the subject people.

It would also have been possible, perhaps, for a more extended colonization to have taken place with good effect under a strict and limited government, such as might have been provided if, for instance, one of the young princes of the house of Spain, Ferdinand, Charles the Fifth's brother, had been sent out to administer the Indies, and afterward to possess what he should there acquire; for the want of unity in government, the distance from the centre of power, and the consequent strength and temerity of faction, were some of the main causes of the deplorable failures which have just been described.

This, however, is all *ex post facto* wisdom. The recklessness of the conquerors, their love of wild adventure, the attractive power of gold, which uses men for its divining-rods, drawing them hither and thither through the utmost dangers to the most wretched parts of the earth, as it lists—all these together prevented, and must have prevented, any thing like patient, steady, forbearing, concentrated colonization.

Throughout the history of the peopling of the Terra-firma by the Spaniards, it is impossible not to feel the greatest pity for the Indians, who seem, from the first, like a devoted people given over to destruction, who learn no new thing but despair from the presence of their invaders, who might, however, have brought to them and taught them so much that was good. For the Spaniards, too, seeing their undaunted energy and immense endurance,* it is impossible not to have some pity. They may be conquerors, but they seem, after all, more like demon-driven captives. Little, apparently, is gained for humanity by all they do; and the majority of them, after filling up their measure of destruction, die miserably and contemptibly, with the hard eyes upon them of suffering companions, suffering too much themselves to have any pity left for others.

Of the eminent men among the conquerors who came to a miserable end, long lists have been formed, in which the names of Nicuesa, Ojeda, and Vasco Nuñez are sure to be found. But still the ranks closed up again, and there were always men ready to take the places of those commanders who had vanished from the scene. Indeed, there is nothing in the fate of these men very different from that of other adventurous people. Most men are hastening to meet some great disaster. With most men, the object they pursue, which is ever present to their imagination as something radiant, in white robes and most beautiful, is attended by a companion clad in very different guise, wholly invisible to the pursuer, and but too often,

* It is curious to observe that they make little or no mention, for the most part, of those minor miseries which we know they must have suffered so much from.

when he comes close to that which he has so long desired and so long pursued, and is just at the summit of his wishes, the other—the dark thing—steps forward to receive him. And it is this that he has all along been struggling up to. What, however, is peculiar about these Spanish conquerors is not so much their own fate as the miserable nature of their objects, the deplorable idea they had of success, and the villainous path over which they hurried to their doom—each Spaniard leaving a long track of desolation behind him, and being attended to the shades by hosts of slaughtered Indians.

The reader of these things feels, as the Indians sometimes felt themselves, that great prophecies of old were being unrelentingly fulfilled against them.

I am reminded of an old proverb of awful import which, in these wars and devastations, applies to the conquerors as to the conquered, and which says, “God may consent, but not forever” (*Dios consiente, pero no para siempre*), indicating that there is an end, however remote, to all that is not built up in consonance with His laws.

BOOK VII.

CUBA.

CHAPTER I.

CUBA DISCOVERED BY COLUMBUS.—COLONIZED UNDER VELASQUEZ.
—FATE OF THE CACIQUE HATUEY.—EXPEDITION OF NARVAEZ
AND LAS CASAS.—MASSACRE AT CAONAO AND ITS CONSEQUENCES.—TOWNS FOUNDED IN CUBA BY VELASQUEZ.

CHAPTER I.

CUBA DISCOVERED BY COLUMBUS.—COLONIZED UNDER VELASQUEZ.—FATE OF THE CACIQUE MATUEY.—EXPEDITION OF NARVAEZ AND LAS CASAS.—MASSACRE OF CAONAO AND ITS CONSEQUENCES.—TOWNS FOUNDED IN CUBA BY VELASQUEZ.

THE next difficulty, after discovering and adopting a general rule, is to know when to break through it. It is from not mastering this difficulty that three of the principal historians who have written on the subject of the Spanish conquests have, as I venture to think, fallen into considerable error, and made books which none but those who have a love for history will read. PETER MARTYR, LAS CASAS, and HERRERA endeavored in their histories to maintain chronological order: a very desirable thing, no doubt, as a general rule, but absolutely incompatible with a clear understanding of the various complicated and place-shifting events which these historians had to chronicle.

If a single drama may be bound down by the Unities, the course of history certainly will not allow itself to be restricted by any such nice rules, and the attempt to make it exact and undeviating in one respect often lets in a flood of confusion in others. The historian, it is true, may be unimpeachable as regards the unbroken sequence of his dates, but this is no gain if the reader's apprehension is to be entirely confused by a narrative which requires his imagination to fly from

place to place, or to be nearly ubiquitous, and his memory to retain before it at the same moment several independent trains of fact and reasoning.

I make the foregoing remarks to explain why, though in general striving to maintain the order of time, I have nevertheless related, without any break, the principal circumstances connected with the first occupation of the Terra-firma.

The reader may now, to a certain extent, dismiss that course of events from his mind, remembering the main outlines of the story, namely, that the northern coast of South America has been investigated and traversed; the great South Sea discovered; the neighboring Indians subjugated, enslaved, or driven away from the coast; two or three cities founded; and a very large proportion of the Spaniards destroyed by disease, famine, hardship, and the assaults of the natives.

The occupation of Cuba by the Spaniards is the next great stepping-stone in this history. It was from Cuba that two or three of the most important expeditions, such as that of Francisco de Córdova to Yucatan, of Juan Grijalva to Panuco, and of Cortez to Mexico, were directed. It was at Cuba that Las Casas commenced his career of humanity; and the settlement of the Spaniards in that island affords a memorable example of their general policy and conduct toward the Indians.

Cuba was discovered by Columbus in the course of his first voyage, but it seems not to have been much regarded by the Spaniards for some years. They were doubtful, indeed, whether it was an island until King Ferdinand directed Ovando to investigate the fact, when he dispatched a certain commander, named

Ocampo, to coast about Cuba, who ascertained that it was an island.

The disposition of the inhabitants was similar to that of the Indians in Hispaniola, and hitherto those Spaniards who had been thrown upon the coast of Cuba had for the most part experienced nothing but kind treatment from the natives. One of the caciques was called Comendador, having been baptized by some Spaniards, and having chosen this name from the title of Ovando, the Governor of Hispaniola, who was a Comendador of the order of Alcántara.



It chanced that a Spanish vessel, passing by that part of the coast which is near to the Cape de la Cruz, left there a young mariner who was ill, but who afterward recovered. This mariner placed an image of the Virgin Mary in one of the houses of the Cacique Comendador, and taught the people to come there every evening, and on their knees to say the *Ave Maria* and the *Salve Regina*. The neighboring caciques were very angry because this cacique and his people

had deserted the idol they had all been accustomed to worship, and which was called, in the language of that country, their Cemi. Many battles took place about the matter in dispute, but the victory was ever with the Christian cacique. The others said that neither Comendador nor his men gained the battles, but a beautiful woman clad in white, with a wand in her hand. Both parties at last came to an agreement to try the relative merits of the Cemi and of the Virgin Mary in this fashion, namely, that the infidel caciques should take an Indian of Comendador's party, and should bind him as they pleased, and that Comendador should take an Indian from their party and bind him as he pleased, and that the two should be left alone, by night, in a field; then, if the Cemi was more powerful than the Virgin Mary, he would come and set free his worshiper; but if the Virgin Mary was more powerful than the Cemi, she would come and unbind her worshiper. Guards were appointed to see what should happen. The men being bound and left, as agreed upon, at midnight came the Cemi to unbind his man, and while he was unbinding him, the Virgin Mary, clothed entirely in white, and very beautiful, with a wand in her hand, appeared, upon which the Cemi fled. But she touched her worshiper with the wand, and as she touched him he was loosed, and all his bonds went upon the other Indian, in addition to those which he had before. The caciques said that it was some deceit, and they resolved to try the thing again, and see whether it were true or not. Again the witnesses told the same story. The caciques themselves resolved to watch; and as they too saw the miracle, they said that the Virgin Mary was a good cacique, and that Comendador might take the Virgin

Mary for his lord, and that the others might choose which they pleased, the Virgin Mary or the Cemi. Afterward there came a clerigo that way and baptized many of these Indians; he also endeavored to teach them, at the risk of his life, not to put food for the Virgin Mary as they were accustomed to do for their Cemi. Every Christian that came in their way they made sit down, and gave him to eat, and insisted upon his saying his *Ave Maria*, whether he liked it or not, for they were very zealous, as converts are apt to be; "and they took me too," says ENCISO,* "and I said it many times, and I remained with them three days." I give this account, not as vouching for its historical fidelity, but to show how little wedded to their own superstitions were these Indians of Cuba, and how willing to adopt any thing that came recommended to them by those whom they deemed to be of superior intelligence.

It was in the year 1511 that the Admiral Don Diego Columbus, Governor of Hispaniola, undertook the subjection of Cuba. He chose for his captain Diego Velasquez, one of the original conquerors, a man of wealth, whose possessions in Hispaniola were in that part of the island nearest to Cuba. Velasquez was a person of imposing presence and demeanor, who, as HERRERA intimates, required to have all the honor paid to him that was due to his station, but was of a kindly nature and very forgiving. This will seem an astonishing description when we come to read of his

* "Tambien ví que á qualquiera Christiano que salia á tierra le tomavan los indios, y le fazian sentar, y le davan de comer, porque les rezasse el Ave Maria: y sino que decia de grado, hazian se la dezir aun que no queria. Y a mí mismo me tomaron, y yo se la dixi muchas vezes, y estuve con ellos tres dias."—ENCISO, *Suma de Geografía, Indias Orientales*.

deeds; but it requires almost the genius of goodness for a man to go far beyond the goodness of his fellows—in fact, to be so good as to lose all chance of popular esteem, which, naturally, is reserved for the people's idea of goodness, not for such as may transcend it.

The principal man in Cuba was Hatuey, the cacique mentioned before, who kept spies at Hispaniola to tell him of the transactions of the Spaniards, and who had assembled his people to inform them of the God worshipped by the Spaniards, on which occasion he produced a basket of gold, and made his Indians dance round it and honor it.*

Diego Velasquez sailed for Cuba at the end of the year 1511, and disembarked at Puerto de Palmas, in the territory of the Cacique Hatuey. The cacique endeavored to defend his country against the inroad of the Spaniards, but could offer only a feeble resistance, as the naked bodies and barbarous weapons of his men were no match whatever for the well-armed, well-accounted Spaniards. Indeed, the only safety for the Indians was in flight; and the nature of the country (for that part of Cuba is very mountainous) afforded them some present means of escape from their enemies. The Spaniards then commenced their Indian hunts, in the course of which they put to death as many men, women, and children as they pleased. The rest they tied together and drove before them like cattle, giving them the same name (*piezas*) as cattle. The Indians thus acquired were not called slaves, though they were so in reality; and Velasquez distributed them, now to one follower, now to another, as it seemed best to him.

* See ante, book iii., chap. i.

The only restriction was, that these Indians were not to be bartered—a restriction which was easily eluded.

Great efforts were made by the Spaniards to secure the person of Hatuey. The captive Indians were in some instances tortured, in order to elicit from them where their chief was hidden, and at last Hatuey fell into the hands of the Spaniards. His fate was a terrible one. He was sentenced to be burned alive, and this sentence was literally carried into effect. At the stake the attendant priest exhorted him to be baptized and to become a Christian, as he would then go to heaven. The cacique asked in reply if the Christians went to heaven, and finding that some of them were expected to do so, he said that he had no wish to go to that place. More sarcasm has been supposed to belong to this answer than it really contains: it was probably no more than the simple expression of a wish not to meet his enemies and persecutors in a future life, whatever regions of bliss they might be enjoying.

It was shortly after the burning of Hatuey that Las Casas was sent for by Diego Velasquez from the island of Hispaniola. He arrived at Cuba at the same time as Pamphilo de Narvaez (a name which has already been mentioned in this history, and which will often occur in it), who was sent from Jamaica with thirty archers to assist in the population and pacification—for such were the terms in vogue—of the island of Cuba. Velasquez appointed Pamphilo de Narvaez his lieutenant, and Las Casas was joined with Narvaez in the office of bringing under submission all the rest of the island. One of the first expeditions of Narvaez was unsuccessful: it was in the province of Bayamo;

and he himself was nearly killed, and would never have escaped but for the terror which his horse, an animal not hitherto seen by these Indians, inspired. Both these Indians, however, and those of Hatuey's country, who had fled at the approach of the Spaniards, returned to beg pardon, and to be received into subjection. This appears astonishing, but may be easily explained. The territories into which they fled were occupied by other Indians who had food enough for themselves only; and, therefore, after a brief sojourn, the unhappy fugitives, becoming most unwelcome guests, were tempted to return to their own country; for the Spaniards, though terrible visitors in other respects, did not at once create a famine in those parts which they occupied, by reason of the comparative smallness of their numbers.



By these means, the province where the Spaniards first landed, called Maici, and the adjacent one of Bayamo, were brought into complete subjection; and the inhabitants were then divided into *repartimientos*, and

apportioned by Velasquez among his followers. After this, Velasquez, who was about to be married, went to receive his bride, leaving his nephew, Juan de Grijalva, as his lieutenant (for Narvaez had not yet returned), and Las Casas as an adviser to the lieutenant. On the return of Narvaez, orders from Velasquez reached the place where Narvaez and Las Casas were stationed, directing them to make an expedition into the country of Camaguey for the purpose of "assuring" it, to use their phrase. The narrative of this expedition, which is given in full detail by LAS CASAS, an eye-witness and a principal actor in the scene he relates, is very instructive.

Before they reached the province of Camaguey they came to a place called Cueyba. This was the very spot where Ojeda, when shipwrecked, had left an image of the Virgin. Ojeda, as may be remembered, had been received with great kindness by the Indians in that vicinity, and the image which he left was now held in the highest reverence by the natives, who had built a church, adorning it inside with ornamental work made of cotton, and had set up an altar for the image. Moreover, they had composed couplets in honor of the Virgin, which they sang to sweet melodies, and accompanied with dancing. This image was also held in especial reverence by the Spaniards, and Las Casas, being anxious on that account to obtain it in exchange for another image which he had brought with him, entered into treaty with the cacique for that purpose. The Indian chief, however, was so alarmed at these overtures, that he fled by night, taking the beloved image with him. Las Casas, when he heard of this, was greatly disconcerted, fearing lest the neighboring population should take up arms on behalf of their im-

age. He managed, however, to quiet them, assuring them that he would not only let them keep their own image, but that he would bestow upon them the one which he had brought with him.

Such gentle means as these were invariably pursued by Las Casas with the greatest effect; and it is evident from this story how very easy the conversion of the Indians would have been by mild means, which conversion was made the pretext with some, and the real justification with others, for the greatest inhumanities.

The commands of Las Casas met with such reverence from these simple people, that when he sent by a messenger any bit of paper inserted at the end of a stick, the messenger declaring that the paper bore such and such orders, they were implicitly obeyed. The Indians had in general the greatest respect and wonder for the communication among the Spaniards by letter, for it appeared to the Indians quite a miracle how the information of what had been done in one place was made known in another by means of these mysterious pieces of paper.

One of the chief cares of the clerigo (the title by which LAS CASAS describes himself) was, whenever they halted in any Indian town or village, to assign separate quarters to the Indians and the Spaniards. By this means he prevented many disorders and much cruelty. But his principal business was to assemble the children in order to baptize them;* and, as he ob-

* "El Clérigo Casas luego en llegando al Pueblo hacía juntar todos los Niños chiquitos y tomaba dos ó tres Españoles que le ayudasen con algunos Yndios de esta Ysla Española ladinos que consigo llevaba, y alguno que había él criado bautizaba los Niños que en el Pueblo se hallaban.

"Así hizo en toda la Ysla de allí adelante, y fueron muchos á los

serves, there were many that God bestowed his sacred baptism upon in good time; for none, or nearly none, of all those children remained alive a few months afterward.

In the course of this journey of pacification, the Spaniards approached a large town of the Indians called Caonao, where an immense number of the natives had congregated together, chiefly to see the horses which the Spaniards brought with them. In the morning of the day on which the Spaniards under Narvaez



and Las Casas, amounting to about a hundred men, arrived at Caonao, they stopped to breakfast in the dry bed of a stream where there were many stones suitable for grindstones, and they all took the opportunity of sharpening their swords. From thence a wide and arid plain led them to Caonao. They would

que Dios proveyó de su Santo Bautismo, por que los tenia para su gloria predestinados, y proveyólo al tiempo que convenia, por que ninguno ó casi ninguno de aquellos Niños quedó vivo desde pocos meses, como abajo será, Dios queriendo, declarado."—LAS CASAS, *Hist. de las Indias*, MS., lib. iii., cap. 29.

have suffered terribly from thirst, but that some kindly Indians brought them water on the road. At last they reached Caonao at the time of vespers. Here they halted. The chief population of this Indian town and the vicinity was assembled together in one spot, sitting on the ground, and gazing, no doubt with wonderment, at the horses which they had come to see. Apart, in a large hut, were five hundred of the natives, who, being more timid than the others, were content to prepare victuals for the Spaniards, but declined any nearer approaches. The Spaniards had with them about a thousand of their own Indian attendants. The clerigo was preparing for the division of the rations among the men, when all of a sudden a Spaniard, prompted, as was thought, by the devil, drew his sword; the rest drew theirs; and immediately they all began to hack and hew the poor Indians, who were sitting quietly near them, and offering no more resistance than so many sheep. At the precise moment when the massacre began, the clerigo was in the apartment where the Spaniards were to sleep for the night. He had five Spaniards with him. Some Indians who had brought the baggage were lying on the ground, sunk in fatigue. The five Spaniards, hearing the blows of the swords of their comrades without, immediately fell upon the Indians who had brought the baggage. Las Casas, however, was enabled to prevent that slaughter, and the five Spaniards rushed out to join their comrades. The clerigo went also, and, to his grief and horror, saw heaps of dead bodies already strewed about, "like sheaves of corn," waiting to be gathered up. "What think you these Spaniards have been doing?" exclaimed Narvaez to Las Casas; and Las Casas replied, "I commend both you and them

to the Devil.”* The clerigo did not stop, however, to bandy words with the commander, but rushed hither and thither, endeavoring to prevent the indiscriminate slaughter which was going on, of men, women, and children. Then he entered the great hut, where he found that many Indians had already been slaughtered, but some had escaped by the pillars and the wood-work, and were up aloft. To them he exclaimed, “Fear not; there shall be no more slaughter, no more;” upon which, one of them, a young man of five-and-twenty, trusting to these words, came down. But, as LAS CASAS justly says, the clerigo could not be in all places at once, and, as it happened, he left this hut directly—indeed, before the poor young man got down, upon which a Spaniard drew a short sword, and ran the Indian through the body. Las Casas was back in time to afford the last rites of the Church to the dying youth. To see the fearful wounds that were made, it seemed, the historian says, as if the devil that day had guided the men to those stones in the dry bed of the river.

When inquiry was made as to who had been the author of this massacre, no one replied. This shows how causeless the massacre was, for if there had been any good reason for it, the Spaniard who first drew his sword would have justified himself, and perhaps claimed merit for his proceeding. It may have been panic in this one man; it may have been momentary madness, for such things are taken much less into account than is requisite; but, whatever the cause, the whole transaction shows the conduct of the Spaniards toward the Indians in a most unfavorable light.

* “Que os ofresco á vos y á ellos al Diablo.”—LAS CASAS, *Hist. de las Indias*, MS., lib. iii., cap. 29.

Indeed, the maxim which has elsewhere been laid down in this history seems to me to continue applicable throughout, namely, that the evil consequences of war depend, not so much upon the nature of the victory, or the rage of the combatants, or the cause of the quarrel, as upon the contempt, justifiable or not, which the victorious side has for the vanquished. The wars between nations that respect one another may have most sanguinary and cruel results, but not so injurious to humanity as when Spartan conquers Helot, Mohammedan conquers Christian, Spaniard conquers Moor or Indian; or as, in general, when one nation with much civilization or much bigotry conquers another nation of little civilization or of another creed. The Romans may in some instances have offered a splendid exception to this rule, but in the history of the world it holds good.

On the news of this massacre at Caonao,* all the inhabitants of the province deserted their *pueblos*, flying for refuge to the innumerable islets on that coast, called the "Garden of the Queen." The Spaniards, leaving the Indian town of Caonao, which they had desolated in the manner related above, formed a camp in the vicinity, or rather ordered the Indians to form it for them, for each Spaniard had at least eight or ten native attendants. Among those of Las Casas was an old Indian of much repute in the island, called Camacho, who had accompanied the clerigo voluntarily, to be under his protection. One day, while the Spaniards were at this camp, a young Indian, sent as a spy from the former inhabitants of Caonao, came into the

* "No quedó piante ni mamante."—LAS CASAS. A proverbial expression: "There remained neither the child that sucks nor the one that chirrups."

camp, and making his way directly to the clerigo's tent, addressed Camacho, begging to be taken into the clerigo's service, and requesting that he might be allowed to bring his younger brother also. Camacho informed Las Casas of this, who was delighted with the news, as it gave an opportunity of communicating with those Indians who had fled. Accordingly, he received the Indian very kindly, made him some trifling presents, and besought him to bring back his countrymen to their homes, and to assure them that they should not be farther molested. The young man, to whom Camacho gave the name of Adrianico, took his leave, promising to bring his brother and the rest of the Indians. Some days passed away, and Las Casas began to think that Adrianico would not be able to perform his promise, when one evening he made his appearance with his brother and a hundred and eighty Indian men and women. Children are not mentioned, and I conjecture these Indians would not run the risk of bringing them within the power of the Spaniards.

It was a melancholy sight to see the little band of fugitives, with their small bundles of household things on their shoulders, and their strings of beads as presents for the clerigo and the Spaniards, returning, perforce, for want of food—and perhaps, too, with some of that inextinguishable fondness for home which makes so large a part of the world habitable to men—to the spot where they had but lately seen such cruelties perpetrated on their friends and relations. The clerigo was delighted to see them, but very sad too, when he considered their gentleness, their humility, their poverty, and their sufferings.* Pamphilo de

* "Considerando su mansedumbre, humildad, su pobreza, su trabajo," &c.—LAS CASAS, *Hist. de las Indias*, MS., lib. iii., cap. 30.

Narvaez united with Las Casas in doing all he could to assure these poor people of their safety, and they were dismissed to their empty homes. This example of good treatment reassured the Indians of that vicinity, who, in consequence, returned to their houses.

The Spaniards pursued their purpose of pacificating Cuba, now taking to their vessels and coasting along the northern shore, and now traversing the interior of the country. When they came to the province of Havana, they found that the Indians, having heard of the massacre at Caonao and other such proceedings,



had all fled, upon which Las Casas sent messengers to the different caciques, the messengers bearing mysterious pieces of paper inserted at the end of sticks, which had before been found so efficacious, and assuring these caciques of safety and protection. The result was, that eighteen or nineteen of these caciques came and placed themselves in the power of the Spaniards; and it is an astonishing instance of the barbarity and folly of the Spanish captain Narvaez, that he

put them in chains, and expressed an intention of burning them alive. Probably he thought that the province by this means, losing all its chiefs at one blow, would become hopeless and obedient. The clergy in the strongest manner protested against this monstrous treachery, to which he would have been so unwilling a party, and partly by entreaties, partly by threats, succeeded in procuring the release of all these caciques except one, the most powerful, who was carried to Velasquez, but was afterward set at liberty.

This seems a strange method of assuring and pacificating the Indians; but their want of resources, and the absence of any experience of such war as they had now to encounter, if they made any resistance, caused them easily to succumb. The island of Cuba was now considered to be pacificated.* Pamphilo de Narvaez and Las Casas were ordered to join Velasquez at Xagua; and the attention of the governor was directed to the peaceful arts of founding cities, discovering mines, and giving Indians in *repartimiento*.

The names of the towns which Diego Velasquez founded were La Villa de Trinidad, La Villa de Sancti Spiritus, San Salvador, Santiago, and Havana, most of them majestic and holy names, but much abused, as such names have often been, both before and after these transactions.

* There was an expedition sent to the province farthest westward, called Haniguanica, but no details are preserved of its doings. "De allí envió Diego Velasquez á Narvaez á pacificar, como ellos dicen, la Provincia última que está al Cabo mas occidental de aquella Isla que los Indios llamaban de Haniguanica; no me acuerdo con quanto derramamiento de sangre humana hizo aquel camino, aunque estuve presente á su ida y su venida, por ser el negocio tan antiguo."—LAS CASAS, *Hist. de las Indias*, MS., lib. iii., cap. 32.



BOOK VIII.

LAS CASAS AS A COLONIST AND A REFORMER.

Vol. I.—T

CHAPTER I.

THE CONVERSION OF LAS CASAS.—HIS VOYAGE TO SPAIN.—THE
DEATH OF KING FERDINAND.

CHAPTER II.

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CHAPTER I.

THE CONVERSION OF LAS CASAS.—HIS VOYAGE TO SPAIN.
—THE DEATH OF KING FERDINAND.

THE course of this narrative now becomes closely connected with the life of Las Casas—so much so, that his private affairs and solitary thoughts are matters of history, as they had a most important bearing on the welfare of no inconsiderable portion of the New World.

Las Casas, as the reader will hereafter see, had many troubles and sorrows to bear; but at this particular period he was blessed with that which is always one of the greatest blessings, but which, I sometimes fancy, like hospitality in a partially civilized country, seems to have flourished more, as being more needed, in rude, hard times. In a word, he had a real friend. This friend's name was Pedro de la Renteria. Their friendship was most intimate, and had subsisted for many years. De Renteria, as often happens in friendship, presented a curious contrast to Las Casas. He was a man who might well have been a monk—a devout, contemplative person, given much to solitude and prayer; and Las Casas mentions a trait in his character which exactly coincides with the rest of it, namely, that he was a most liberal man, but his liberality seemed rather to flow from habit and a carelessness about worldly goods than from a deliberate judgment exercised in matters of benevolence. This good man's oc-

cupations, however, were entirely secular, and he was employed by Diego Valasquez as alcalde.

When the island was considered to be settled, and the governor began to give *repartimientos*, knowing the friendship that existed between Las Casas and Renteria, he gave them a large *pueblo* in common, and Indians in *repartimiento*.* This land of theirs was about a league from Xagua, on the River Arimáo; † and there they lived, the *padre* having the greater part of the management of the joint affairs, as being much the more lively and the busier man. Indeed, he confesses that he was as much engaged as others in sending his Indians to the mines and making as large a profit of their labor as possible. At the same time, however, he was kind to them personally, and provided carefully for their sustenance; but, to use his own words, “he took no more heed than the other Spaniards to bethink himself that his Indians were unbelievers, and of the duty that there was on his part to give them instruction, and to bring them to the bosom of the Church of Christ.” ‡

As there was but one other clerigo in the whole island, and no friar, it was necessary for Las Casas oc-

* “Dióle (á Pedro de Renteria) Indios de repartimiento juntamente con el Padre, dando á ambos un buen Pueblo y grande con los cuales el Padre comenzó á entender en hacer grangerías y en echar parte de ellos en las minas, teniendo harto mas cuidado de ellas que de dar doctrina á los Indios, habiendo de sér como lo era principalmente aquel su oficio; pero en aquella materia tan ciego estaba por aquel tiempo el buen Padre como los Seglares todos que tenia por hijos.”—LAS CASAS, *Hist. de las Indias*, MS., lib. iii., cap. 32.

† “Llegámos á un pueblo de Indios, que se dezia Yaguarama, el qual era en aquella sazón del Padre Fray Bartolomé de las Casas, que era Clérigo Presbítero, y despues le conocí Fraile Domingo, y llegó á ser Obispo de Echiapa: y los Indios de aquel pueblo nos dieron de comer.”—BERNAL DIAZ, cap. 7. See also LAS CASAS, lib. iii., cap. 78.

‡ LAS CASAS, *Hist. de las Indias*, MS., lib. iii., cap. 78.

asionally to say mass and to preach. It happened that he had to do so on "the Feast of Pentecost," in the year 1514; and studying either the sermons that he preached himself or that he heard the other clerigo preach at this time, he came to thinking with himself on certain passages ("authorities" he calls them) of Scripture. The 34th chapter of *Ecclesiasticus*, the 18th, 19th, 20th, 21st, and 22d verses, first arrested, and then enchained his attention:

"He that sacrificeth of a thing wrongfully gotten, his offering is ridiculous; and the gifts of unjust men are not accepted.

"The Most High is not pleased with the offerings of the wicked; neither is he pacified for sin by the multitude of sacrifices.

"Whoso bringeth an offering of the goods of the poor doeth as one that killeth the son before his father's eyes.

"The bread of the needy is their life; he that defraudeth him thereof is a man of blood.

"He that taketh away his neighbor's living slayeth him; and he that defraudeth the laborer of his hire is a bloodshedder."

I think that the clerigo might have dwelt upon one of the remaining verses of the chapter with great profit:

"When one prayeth, and another curseth, whose voice will the Lord hear?"

In recounting the steps which led to his conversion, Las Casas takes care to say that what he had formerly heard the Dominicans preach in Hispaniola was, at this critical period of his life, of great service to him. Then he had only slighted their words; but he now particularly remembers a contest he had with a certain

Religioso, who refused to give him absolution because he possessed Indians. This is an instance of the great mistake it may be to hold your tongue about the truth, for fear it should provoke contest and harden an adversary in his opinion. The truths which he has heard sink into a man at some time or other, and, even when he retires from a contest apparently fixed in his own conceits, it would often be found that if he had to renew the contest the next day he would not take up quite the same position that he had maintained before. The good seed sown by the Dominicans had now, after having been buried for some years, found a most fruitful soil; and it shot up in the ardent soul of the clergy like grain in that warm land of the tropics upon which he stood. Las Casas studied the principles of the matter; from the principles he turned to considering the facts about him, and, with his candid mind thus fully aroused, he soon came to the conclusion that the system of *repartimientos* was iniquitous,* and that he must preach against it.

What then must he do with his own Indians? Alas, it was necessary to give them up! Not that he grudged giving them up for any worldly motive, but he felt that no one in Cuba would be as considerate toward them as he, even in the days of his darkness, had been; and that they would be worked to death, as indeed they were. But still, the answer to all the sermons he might preach would be his own *repartimiento* of Indians. He resolved to give them up.

* "Pasados pues algunos dias en aquesta consideracion, y cada dia mas y mas certificándola por lo que leia quanto al derecho, y via del hecho, aplicándolo uno al otro, determinó en si mismo convencido de la misma verdad, ser injusto y tiránico todo quanto cerca de los Indios en estas Indias se cometia."—LAS CASAS, *Hist. de las Indias*, MS., lib. iii., cap. 78.

Now, as Las Casas was not only the friend, but the partner of Pedro de Renteria, this determination on the part of the clerigo was a matter which would affect the interests of his friend; and, unluckily, Renteria happened to be absent from home at this time, having gone to Jamaica upon their joint affairs. Las Casas, however, went to the governor, and laid open his mind to him upon the subject of the *repartimientos*, putting the matter boldly to Velasquez, as it concerned his lordship's own salvation, as well as that of Las Casas and the rest of the Spaniards. The clerigo added that he must give up his own slaves, but wished that this determination might be kept secret till Pedro de Renteria should return.

The governor was greatly astonished; for Las Casas, who, no doubt, took warmly in hand any thing he did take up at all, passed for a man fond of gain, and very busy in the things of this world. Velasquez, in replying, besought the clerigo to consider the matter well; to take fifteen days, indeed, to think of it, and to do nothing that he would repent of afterward. Las Casas thanked his lordship for his kindness, but bade him count the fifteen days as already past, and added, that if he, Las Casas, were to repent and were to ask for the Indians again, even with tears of blood, God would punish the governor severely if he were to listen to such a request. Thus ended the interview; and it is to the governor's credit that he ever afterward held the clerigo in greater esteem than before.

Las Casas, however, did not long confine his efforts at conversion to the governor alone, nor did he conceal his intention until his partner had returned home; for, when preaching on the day of "The Assumption of Our Lady," he took occasion to mention publicly the

conclusion he had come to as regards his own affairs, and also to urge upon his congregation in the strongest manner his conviction of the danger to their souls if they retained their *repartimientos* of Indians. All were amazed; some were struck with compunction; others were as much surprised to hear it called a sin to make use of the Indians as if they had been told it were sinful to make use of the beasts of the field.

After Las Casas had uttered many exhortations both in public and in private, and had found that they were of little avail, he meditated how to go to the fountain-head of authority, the King of Spain. His resources were exhausted; he had not a *maravedí*, or the means of getting one, except by selling a mare which was worth a hundred *pesos*. Resolving, however, to go, he wrote to Renteria, telling him that business of importance was taking him to Castile, and that unless Renteria could return immediately, he, Las Casas, could not wait to see him, a thing, as he adds, not imaginable by the good Renteria, so firm was their friendship.

It was a singular coincidence that, not long before this time, the services of the Church had also brought into active existence very serious thoughts in the breast of Pedro de Renteria. There may be a community of thought not expressed in language; and perhaps these two good men, while apparently engaged in their ordinary secular business, had, unknown to themselves, been communicating to each other generous thoughts about their poor Indians, which had not hitherto been embodied in words. While Renteria was waiting in Jamaica for the dispatch of his business, he went into a Franciscan monastery to spend his Lent in "retreat" (these pauses from the world

are not to be despised!); he, too, had been thinking over the miseries of the Indians, and the shape his thoughts had taken was, whether something for the children, at least, might not be done. Finally, he had come to the conclusion to ask the king's leave to found colleges where he might collect the young Indians, and have them instructed and brought up. For this purpose Renteria resolved to go to Spain himself, in order to obtain the king's sanction; and, immediately after receiving the letter of the clerigo, he hurried back to Cuba.

As the meeting of the friends took place in the presence of others, and as Renteria was welcomed back by the governor in person, they had no opportunity for any explanation until they were alone together at night; then, in their dignified Spanish way, they agreed who should speak first, and, after a friendly contention, the humble Renteria spoke first, which was the mark of the inferior. "I have thought sometimes," he said, "upon the miseries, sufferings, and evil life which these native people are leading; and how from day to day they are all being consumed, as the people were in Hispaniola. It has appeared to me that it would be an act of piety to go and inform the king of this, for he can not know any thing of it, and to ask him that at the least he should give us his royal license to found some colleges, where the children might be brought up and taught, and where we may shelter them from such violent and vehement destruction."* Las Casas heard Renteria's words with astonishment and reverential joy, thinking it a sign of divine favor that so good a man as Renteria should thus unexpectedly confirm his own resolve.

* LAS CASAS, *Hist. de las Indias*, MS., lib. iii., cap. 79.

When it was the clerigo's turn to speak, he thus began: "You must know, sir and brother" (for these people did not omit the courtesy which, however varied in its form, affection should not presume to dispense with), "that my purpose is no other than to go and seek a remedy for these unhappy men" (the Indians). The clerigo then gave a full account of what he had already thought and done in this matter during Renteria's absence. His friend replied in all humility that it was not for him to go, but for Las Casas, who, as a lettered man (*letrado*), would know better how to establish what he should urge. Renteria begged, therefore, that the stock and merchandise which he had just brought with him from Jamaica, and the farm, their joint property, might be turned into money to equip Las Casas for his journey and his stay at court; and he added, "May God our Lord be He who may ever keep you in the way and defend you."

The farm was sold, and in this manner Las Casas was provided for his journey. Bad as the world is said to be, there is always money forthcoming for any good purpose, when people really believe in the proposer.

At this time Pedro de Córdova, the prelate of the Dominicans in the New World, sent over four brethren of his order from Hispaniola to Cuba. They were very welcome to Las Casas, as he was to them. They listened with interest to his account of the state of the Indians in Cuba; and Brother Bernardo, the most eloquent and learned among them, preached to the same purpose, and with fully as much animation,* as

* The following is a portion of a sermon preached by Father Bernardo: "Ya os habemos predicado despues que vinimos el estado malo

the clerigo himself had done. Their sermons terrified the hearers, but did not seem to change their way of proceeding. The Dominicans accordingly resolved to send back one of their brotherhood, Gutierrez de Ampudia, to Pedro de Córdoba, to inform him of the state of things at Cuba. It was arranged that Gutierrez should accompany Las Casas, who, by giving out that he was going to Paris to study there and take a degree, contrived to leave Cuba without attracting the notice of the governor, who might, perhaps, have detained him, had his true purpose and destination been known.

So Las Casas quitted the island of Cuba in company with Gutierrez de Ampudia and another Dominican, without being much observed by any one, or meeting with any hinderance.

After their departure from the island, the cruelties of the Spaniards toward the Indians increased; and, as the Indians naturally enough sought for some refuge in flight, the Spaniards trained dogs to pursue them. The Indians then had recourse to suicide as a means of escape, for they believed in a future state of being where ease and felicity, they thought, awaited them. Accordingly, they put themselves to death, whole families doing so together, and villages inviting other villages to join them in their departure from a

en que estais por oprimir é fatigar y matar estas Gentes: no solo no os habeis querido enmendar, pero segun tenemos entendido cada dia lo haceis peor derramando la sangre de tantas Gentes sin haberos hecho mal; yo pido á Dios que la sangre que por ellos derramó sea Juez y testigo contra vuestra crueldad el dia del Juicio donde no tendréis excusa alguno pretendiendo ignorancia de que no se os dijo y requirió, declarándoseos la injusticia que haccis á estas Gentes; y vosotros mismos sois testigos de vuestras obras, y seréis de las penas que por ellas os estan por venir."—LAS CASAS, *Hist. de las Indias*, MS., lib. iii., cap. 80.

world that was no longer tolerable to them. Some hanged themselves; others drank the poisonous juice of the yuca.

One pathetic and yet ludicrous occurrence is mentioned in connection with this practice of suicide among the Indians. A number of them belonging to one master had resolved to hang themselves, and so to escape from their labors and their sufferings. The master, being made aware of their intention, came upon them just as they were about to carry it into effect. "Go seek me a rope too," he exclaimed, "for I must hang myself with you." He then gave them to understand that he could not live without them, as they were so useful to him; and that he must go where they were going. They, believing that they would not get rid of him even in a future state of existence, agreed to remain where they were, and with sorrow laid aside their ropes to resume their labors.

It was an additional evil for the Indians that some of that swarm of unfortunate men who had come with Pedrarias to Darien betook themselves with their hungry ferocity to Cuba; and, as LAS CASAS notices,* proved afterward most cruel toward the Indians.

Meanwhile, Las Casas and his companions were pursuing their journey, having arrived at the port of Hanaguana in Hispaniola. Father Gutierrez, unhappily, fell ill of a fever and died on the road, but Las Casas reached St. Domingo in safety. On arriving there, he found that the prelate of the Dominicans was

* "En este tiempo vinieron á aportar muchos Caballeros á aquella Isla y donde Diegò Velasquez estaba del Darien de los que habia llevado Pedrarias hambrientos y perdidos, y allí se les dió de comer: algunos de los cuales fueron despues crudelísimos para los Indios."—LAS CASAS, *Hist. de las Indias*, MS., lib. iii., cap. 79.

absent, having just commenced a voyage for the purpose of founding monasteries in the Terra-firma, being accompanied not only by monks of his own order, but also by Franciscans, and by some monks from Picardy, who had lately come to the Indies.

This voyage of Pedro de Córdova was undertaken in accordance with a plan which, when in Spain, he had communicated to King Ferdinand. After the laws of Burgos had been passed, and when Pedro de Córdova saw that the business for which he had come to court was settled, he prayed the king that he and other Dominican brethren might be allowed to go from Hispaniola to that part of the Terra-firma nearest to the island, to preach the Faith there. This good man thought that in the Terra-firma his efforts for the conversion of the Indians would be secure from hindrance on the part of his lay countrymen. The king assented readily to this plan, and furnished Pedro de Córdova with the necessary orders to the authorities at Hispaniola for ships and provisions. Moreover, at Seville the prelate of the Dominicans was supplied with bells, vestments, and all things requisite for the performance of the services of his church. As for the men necessary to carry out this important mission, Pedro de Córdova had no difficulty in finding them; and he had only occasion to go to one monastery, that of St. Stephen at Salamanca, from whence he was able to choose fourteen brethren to take with him to the Indies.

On his return from Spain to St. Domingo, Pedro de Córdova dispatched a vessel to the Terra-firma with three monks of his order—Antonio Montesino, already well known to the readers of this history as the preacher of a memorable sermon, Francis de Córdova, a near

relative of the prelate, and a lay brother named Juan Garces. These brethren were to gain experience of the new country and the new people, and to prepare the way for the entrance of a more numerous band of missionaries. Whether intentionally or not, the part of the Terra-firma which the monks came to was not the Terra-firma proper, the nearest part to Hispaniola, but the Pearl Coast. Montesino, fortunately for himself, fell ill at the island of San Juan, at which the vessel touched first. The other two Dominicans proceeded to the Pearl Coast, and, being set on shore, established themselves at a place some twenty leagues from Cumaná, called Piritú de Maracapana. The Indians received the Dominican monks with joy and hospitality, and the vessel which had brought them returned. In a short time one of the Spanish vessels connected with the pearl fisheries touched at this part of the coast. Pedro de Córdova did not prove happy in his conjecture that the coast would be free from molestation on the part of his lay countrymen; but at the time that he made his request to the king, little was known of the Terra-firma. In general, when the Indians perceived a Spanish vessel approaching the coast, they fled; but now, relying upon the presence of the Dominicans, the natives welcomed the newcomers, and gave them provisions. After a few days spent amicably, the cacique of that region, with his family and servants, amounting in number to seventeen persons, accepted an invitation on board the Spanish vessel. If the cacique thought at all about any danger from this visit, he must have thought that the Dominican brethren who were left in the hands of his subjects constituted a sufficient guarantee for his safety; but no sooner were the Indians on board,

of the first Spanish vessel arrived at St. Domingo. They had sold, or were selling, the poor cacique and his family, when the Judges of Appeal came down upon the prize, said that these captives had not been made with the proper license, and forthwith divided the Indians among themselves (the judges!). In a few days after this transaction, the vessel whose crew had taken charge of the letters from Francis de Córdova and Juan Garces entered the port of St. Domingo. The captain of the pearl-fishers, seeing his villainy on the point of being discovered, fled at once to a monastery of the order of La Merced, which was just then being established, and took the habit of a lay brother. He hardly fancied, I imagine, that his foul trick upon the poor Dominicans would in a few weeks make a monk of him! No sooner were the letters from the captive monks delivered at the monastery, than a great ferment, no doubt, arose among the brotherhood, eager to rescue their unhappy brethren on the Pearl Coast. Antonio Montesino had by this time recovered from his illness, and had returned from San Juan to St. Domingo. He went to the Judges of Appeal, and prayed to have the cacique and his family liberated and sent back to the Terra-firma. If Montesino could preach with such force as he did when he excited the rage of the colonists about their dealings with the Indians, what must he not have said now? But all was in vain. The Judges of Appeal did not give up their slaves; and the Indians of the Terra-firma, after waiting the time agreed upon of four months, put to death their two prisoners, Francis de Córdova and Juan Garces.

This transaction is important, as it will have other consequences than the death of these two poor monks.

But in itself it claims our notice, as showing the disposition of those with whom then rested the supreme power in the Indies.

Not daunted, however, by this calamity which had befallen his first mission to the Terra-firma, Pedro de Córdoba had himself just set out upon another like expedition when Las Casas arrived. It happened that a great storm compelled the prelate and his company to return to port; and thus Las Casas was fortunate enough to obtain an interview with one of whom he ever speaks with great veneration, the prelate of the Dominicans, Pedro de Córdoba.

This excellent monk received Las Casas very kindly, and applauded his purpose greatly, but at the same time gave but little hope of its being brought to a successful termination in King Ferdinand's time, on account of the credit which, he said, the Bishop of Burgos and the secretary, Lope Conchillos, had with the king, and their being entirely in favor of the system of *repartimientos*, and, moreover, possessing Indians themselves.

The clerigo, grieved but not dismayed at these words, declared his intention to persevere, to the delight of Pedro de Córdoba, who, as the Dominican monastery was very poor, and only partly built, resolved to send Antonio Montesino in company with Las Casas to the king, to ask alms for completing the building. Moreover, if any opportunity should offer, he was to aid the clerigo in his mission. And so, in September, 1515, Las Casas, Montesino, and another brother embarked at St. Domingo for Spain.

Before giving an account of the proceedings of Las Casas at the court of Spain, it is necessary to mention

briefly what had been done in the course of the preceding year with respect to the Indians, both in Hispaniola and in the mother-country. Rodrigo de Albuquerque, a near relative of a member of the Council in whom the king put great trust, had been sent to make a new division of the Indians, and he was called *Repartidor*. What occasion there was for this new repartition is not told, and it is difficult to imagine any good reason for such a proceeding. It did no good to the Indians; in fact, it seems to have riveted their fetters, as it gave the Indians for two lives—for the life of the person to whom Albuquerque made the *repartimiento*, and for the life of his next heir, whether a son or a daughter. It created the most vehement rage and opposition among the old colonists, some of whom found themselves deprived altogether of the services of the Indians; and it was an affront to the governor, Don Diego Columbus, as this power of giving away Indians was one of his chief privileges, and one most likely to render the Spanish colonists obedient to him.

Albuquerque was much blamed for the manner in which he exercised his office, and he was accused of bribery. It was an office in which it must have been impossible to give content. The rapid diminution of the Indians is shown by this repartition, if we can trust the figures of LAS CASAS, as I think we can in this case, for they were probably taken from official documents. When the Treasurer Pasamonte came to Hispaniola in 1508, there were seventy thousand Indians; when Don Diego Columbus obtained the government of that island, there were forty thousand Indians; but when Albuquerque came to divide, there were only thirteen thousand or fourteen thousand In-

dians left. When Hispaniola was first discovered, there were, according to Las Casas, three millions of Indians; according to the Licentiate Zuazo, one million one hundred and thirty thousand.

The governor, Don Diego Columbus, returned to Spain, or was recalled, at the end of the year 1514, in which Albuquerque came to make the repartition. Whether Don Diego's representations had any weight at court, or whether the intense disgust which Albuquerque's repartition had produced among the colonists had any effect there, does not appear; but the Licentiate Ibarra was selected to go to Hispaniola to take a *residencia* of Marcos de Aguilar, the principal alcalde in St. Domingo, to see how the ordinances in favor of the Indians were executed, and also to make a new repartition. I am not aware whether the same process was to be gone through in Cuba, and other of the Spanish possessions, but it may have been so; and certainly the king at this time sent an account to the governor of Cuba of the motives upon which his council had come to the conclusion that Indians were to be given in *repartimiento*. These motives were the ones that we are familiar with, namely, that converse with the Spaniards would Christianize the Indians, and that this converse was to be obtained by the system of *repartimientos*.

Before Ibarra could enter upon his duties to any purpose, he died, having, according to rumor, been "assisted" to quit the world; for he was said to be a just man, and was feared. Another licentiate, named Lebron, was appointed in Ibarra's place; he was not to have the same general powers as Ibarra, but was to proceed with the repartition of the Indians. This frequent repartition was one of the greatest grievances

that can be imagined, both to the Indians and the Spanish colonists; and, by a very competent authority (Zuazo), is put forward as one of the chief causes of the diminution in numbers of the natives. Change of climate, change of water* (which is particularly noticed as one of the causes), change of masters, and the indifference consequent on that, in the minds of the masters, to the welfare of their Indians, all so wrought together in this matter, that the most rapid rate of increase known in population shows small when compared with the rate of decrease of these Indian nations.

The affairs of the Indies were in the state above described when Las Casas and his companion, Antonio Montesino, arrived at Seville. Montesino presented Las Casas to the Archbishop of Seville, Don Fray Diego de Deza, a prelate in great favor with King Ferdinand, who had been persuading the king to come to his diocese, as being an excellent climate for the aged. This advice Ferdinand had listened to, and was now making his way from Burgos to the south of Spain. The archbishop received Las Casas graciously, and furnished him with letters to the king and to some of the courtiers. Armed with these letters, the clerigo continued his journey, and found the king at Plasencia, arriving there a few days before

* "De manera que como muchos destes indios estaban acostumbrados á los aires de su tierra é á beber aguas de jagueyes, que llaman las balsas de agua llovediza, é otras aguas gruesas, mudábanlos á donde habia aguas delgadas é de fuentes é rios frios, é lugares destemplados, é como andan desnudos hanse muerto casi infenito número de indios, dejados aparte los que han fallecido del muy immenso trabajo é fatiga que les han dado tratándolos mal."—*Documentos Inéditos*, tom. ii., p. 353.

Christmas in the year 1515. Las Casas shunned the ministers Lope de Conchillos and the Bishop of Burgos, knowing how prejudiced they were likely to be; but he sought an interview with the king, and, obtaining it, spoke at large to the monarch of the motives which had brought him to Spain. He had come, he said, to inform his highness of the wrongs and sufferings of the Indians, and of how they died without a knowledge of the faith and without the sacraments, of the ruin of the country, of the diminution of the revenue; and he concluded by saying that, as these things concerned both the king's conscience and the welfare of his realm, and as to be understood they must be stated in detail, he begged for another and a long audience. Ferdinand, now an old and ailing man, whose death was near at hand, did not deny Las Casas the second audience he asked for, but said he would willingly hear him some day during the Christmas festival.

In the mean time, Las Casas poured his complaints against the king's ministers, and his narrative of the wrongs of the Indians, into the ears of the king's confessor, Tomas de Matienzo, who, repeating them to the king, received orders to tell Las Casas to go to Seville and wait there for the king's coming (Ferdinand was about to set off immediately), when he would give him a long audience, and provide a remedy for the evils he complained of. The confessor advised Las Casas to see the Bishop of Burgos, who had the chief management of Indian affairs, and also Conchillos, for, as he observed, the matter would ultimately have to come into their hands; and, perhaps, when they had heard all the miseries and evils which the cleric could tell them, they would soften. Las Casas, to show that he

was not obstinate, sought out these ministers, and submitted his views and his information to them. Conchillos received the clerigo with the utmost courtesy and kindness, and seems to have listened a little to what Las Casas had to tell him; the bishop, on the contrary, was very rough. Las Casas finished his audience with the bishop by informing him how seven thousand children had perished in three months;* and, as the clerigo went on detailing the account of the death of these children, the ungodly bishop broke in with these words, "Look you, what a droll fool; what is this to me, and what is it to the king?" (*Mirad, que donoso necio, que se me da á mí, y que se le da al Rey?*); to which Las Casas replied, "Is it nothing to your lordship, or to the king, that all these souls should perish? Oh great and eternal God! And to whom, then, is it of any concern?" And, having said these words, he took his leave.

Considering the number of excellent churchmen whose conduct comes out nobly in this history, it is not surprising that we should meet with one bad bishop; but it is almost heart-breaking to consider that it is *the* one who could have done more than all the rest to redress the wrongs of the Indians, and to recover affairs in the New World. Let men in power see what one bad appointment may do!†

* I do not know to what transaction he alludes.

† The Bishop of Burgos must have been one of those ready, bold, and dexterous men, with a great reputation for fidelity, who are such favorites with princes. He went through so many stages of preferment, that it is sometimes difficult to trace him; and the student of early American history will have a bad opinion of many Spanish bishops if he does not discover that it is Bishop Fonseca who reappears under various designations. Since his first introduction to the reader, he had held successively the Archdiaconate of Seville, the Bishoprics of Badajoz, Cordova, Palencia, and Conde, the Archbishopric of Rosano (in

Las Casas soon after left the court for Seville, where almost the first thing he heard of on his arrival was the death of the king, which took place at Madrigalejos, a little village on the road to Seville, on the 23d of January, 1516.

Before entering upon a new reign, some words remain to be said about King Ferdinand. This is not the place for discussing his general character and government; but, as regards his administration of the Indies, it has now been minutely brought forward, and we may fairly have some opinion upon it. His grant-

Italy), with the Bishopric of Burgos, besides the office of Capellan mayor to Isabella, and afterward to Ferdinand.

The Indies had a narrow escape of having him for their Patriarch. In the year 1513, Ferdinand instructed his ambassador at Rome to apply for the institution of a universal patriarchate of the Indies to be given to Archbishop Fonseca. The following words, in which the king recommends him, are remarkable: "Y porque las tales personas, unas han de ser para lo ir á hacer en persona, y otras para lo favorecer y encaminar desde acá, y el muy Reverendo en Cristo Padre D. Juan de Fonseca, Arzobispo de Rosano, nuestro Capellan mayor y de nuestro Consejo, de claro linage y de los principales Nobles destes Reinos, como sabeis desde el principio que las Indias se descubrieron hasta agora, y al presente por nuestro mandado se ha ocupado y ocupa en la provision y gobernacion dellas, y por su industria y vigilancia, diligencia y cuidado con muy probada fidelidad sin otro interes alguno, salvo por servir á nuestro Señor y cumplir nuestros mandamientos, ha sido y es causa muy principal de muchos bienes que en las dichas Indias han sucedido y suceden, y siempre continúa sus trabajos para en lo porvenir con mucho zelo que las ánimas de todas aquellas gentes se conviertan á nuestro Señor" * * * "Suplicaréis de nuestra parte á nuestro muy Sancto Padre por virtud de la nuestra Carta de creencia que va con esta, que habiendo consideracion." * * * "Instituya al dicho Arzobispo D. Juan Rodríguez de Fonseca, universal Patriarca de toda ella, conforme á los otros Patriarcados que hay en la Iglesia."—NAVARRETE, *Col. Dip.*, núm. 174.

What answer the Pope gave to this application does not appear; but it is at any rate satisfactory to find that Bishop Fonseca was not appointed Patriarch of the Indies.

ing *repartimientos* to the courtiers was doubtless wrong; his sanctioning the removal of Indians from one island to another was wrong; we, with our lights upon the subject, may also say that the whole system of *repartimientos* was injudicious and oppressive. But this is no reason for concluding that Ferdinand, in adopting the views of his council in this matter, was not really influenced by the reasoning prevalent in his day, which made these *repartimientos* prominent and necessary means toward the conversion of the Indians. It is but fair, too, to notice, on Ferdinand's behalf, that when the Junta (summoned in 1512) came to him with a conclusion unfavorable to the liberty of the Indians, he returned the Indian question again upon their hands, saying that it must be placed upon the basis arranged in Isabella's will, which pronounced the Indians to be free men.

Again, in the instructions, before alluded to, which were given in 1514 to Pedrarias, the governor of Darien, the king makes a suggestion which may thus be paraphrased. "You will have to consult your principal men about making war; but remember that it is their interest to obtain Indians by war, therefore allow for that in any credit you may give to their advice. Listen rather to the Bishop of Darien and the priests who accompany him, who are less likely to be guided by passion and self-interest than the rest." This is humane and considerate, especially when we recollect that the king himself was one of those who profited by wars with the Indians, as he received a share of the prisoners taken in war. If it is said that, at this period of his life, his affairs were mainly managed by his ministers (though I think this can not be maintained), and that these instructions to Pedrarias,

for example, were not his, then, in that case, he must be relieved from much of the responsibility of the injudicious measures passed at that time.

With regard to the personal treatment of the Indians, the reader will have seen that in some of the king's letters there are minute orders for the good treatment of his new subjects. It were certainly to be wished that he had repressed the general ardor for getting gold instead of encouraging it. But we must remember the necessities which his wars brought upon him. In one of his short letters to Don Diego Columbus, he says, "No gold rests" with us; and his last letter to his successor, Charles the Fifth, in which Ferdinand commends, in the most touching manner, Germane his queen to Charles's protection, shows the destitute state, as regards money, in which the king died. Again, whatever may be charged against Ferdinand, it can not be said that he knowingly sent inferior men to take authority in the Indies. Bobadilla's appointment was a pure mistake; Ferdinand and Isabella supposed that they had chosen a high-minded, just man, while in reality he was a narrow-minded, hard, short-seeing man—a sort of mistake that has frequently occurred. But I am not aware that there is any other instance of a manifestly bad appointment having been made by Ferdinand, or of any appointment having been made from corrupt motives.

It is probable that in later life Ferdinand trusted too much to his ministers; and it must always be the case in a pure monarchy, that it partakes of the failings of one man, and that its action is apt to grow feeble as his powers decay.* The affairs, however, of

* PETER MARTYR, speaking of the king in the year 1513, says,
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Spain and of the Indies would have gone well enough if all the powers of the state had been as well represented as the head of it was by the general ability and worth of King Ferdinand.

The last notice that I have been able to find of what were the king's views with regard to the importation of negroes into the Indies is to be seen in a letter of his, very briefly expressed, in which, replying to a request of the Bishop of La Concepcion in Hispaniola that more negroes should be imported, the king says that there are already many negroes, and that it may occasion "inconvenience" (a thoroughly official phrase) if more male negroes should be introduced into the island.*

"Non idem est vultus, non eadem facilitas in audiendo, non eadem lenitas."—*Epist.* 529.

* "Para mas presto acabar la Iglesia podréis pasar diez esclavos. Decis que así aprueban los esclavos negros i combendrá pasen mas. Siendo varones no, pues parece que hay muchos i podra traer incombeniente."—REY á DON PEDRO SUAREZ DE DEZA, *Obispo de la Concepcion*. Valladolid, 27 de Setiembre de 1514. *Coleccion de Muñoz*, MS., tom. 90.

CHAPTER II.

LAS CASAS SEES THE CARDINAL XIMENES.—THE ADMINISTRATION OF INDIAN AFFAIRS BY THE CARDINAL. — APPOINTMENT OF THE JERONIMITES.

AT the time of Ferdinand's death, his daughter Juana, the occupant of the throne of Castile (for the late king had been but regent), and the immediate heiress of that of Aragon, was insane; and her eldest son, Charles the Fifth, was but in his sixteenth year. Ferdinand, therefore, nominated by will a regent to the kingdom, choosing the celebrated Cardinal Ximenes for that office. The king, when discussing on his death-bed the question of the regency, is said to have expressed himself thus: "If we could make a man for the occasion, I should wish for a more tractable one than Ximenes; for to deal with the ways of men every day degenerating, after the rigorous old fashion which Ximenes holds by, is wont to create difficulties in the state." But the king added that the integrity and justness of Ximenes were qualities of the first order; and then, again, that he had no connections among the great nobles, and no private friendships which he would give way to: moreover, mindful of the benefits he had received from Ferdinand and Isabella, he had been very intent upon their affairs; and the king concluded by saying, "Ximenes has shown con-

stant and clear examples that he is of our mint, if I may so express myself."*

As there is good reason to think that Ferdinand had no especial liking for the cardinal, the king's choice does both of them the more credit. And, indeed, of all the public men of those times in that kingdom, there was not one to be compared with Ximenes, especially in the faculty for government. There was now, then, some hope that, should he turn his attention to Indian affairs, something distinct and forcible would be done in them.

Adrian of Utrecht, the Dean of Louvain, who had been Charles the Fifth's tutor, and who, in the latter days of Ferdinand, had been sent to Spain to watch over the prince's interests, produced powers from the young prince nominating him (Adrian) to the government. Ximenes would not admit the validity of these powers, it being contended on his side that the regency of Castile had been left by Isabella's will to Ferdinand until Charles should be twenty years of age, and consequently that any act done by Charles during Ferdinand's life was invalid. On the other side, it was argued that a regent could not create by will a regency. Finally, it was agreed that the question should be referred to Charles himself for decision, and that, meanwhile, Ximenes and Adrian should govern jointly. Afterward there came a letter from Charles, confirming the nomination made by Ferdinand's will of Ximenes, or, rather, the recommendation given, for it appears not to have amounted to more than that, and

* "Porro beneficia, quæ ego et Isabella regina in illum contulimus, nostrarum rerum studiosissimum fecerunt, atque in nostro (ut sic dicam) ære est, quod quotidianis exemplis haud obscure declaravit."—GOMEZIUS, *de rebus gestis Ximenii*, p. 126, folio, Francofurti.

putting Adrian into communication with Ximenes, still calling the former ambassador.

Adrian was a quiet, scholastic, just man with good purposes, very averse to much business. He could not have any preponderating influence in affairs, and is said to have sent a complaint to Flanders of the way in which Ximenes took all the government upon himself. Afterward the Flemish ministers of Charles sent over Monsieur de Laxao, a great wit and one of Charles's household, and also, at a subsequent period, another Fleming, to act in concert with the cardinal, who received them courteously, but did not admit them to much authority. One day, when they must have been in a daring mood, they resolved to exercise some power independently of the Cardinal Governor, and affix their names first to some document, leaving Ximenes to add his. The cardinal sent for the clerk who drew up the document, tore it up, bade him write out another, and it is said that thenceforward the cardinal did not trouble his so-called colleagues for their signatures. I have little doubt that this was not mere arrogance, but that he acted strictly within the limits of his power; and, indeed, a regency is sufficiently weak of itself, without being cumbered with unwelcome colleagues of dubious powers and unfriendly intentions. Moreover, the cardinal had quite enough to contend against from his own countrymen. Of the high-handed way in which he managed them, there is the well-known story of his reply to certain Spanish grandees who wished to be informed of the grounds of his authority, whereupon he showed them the documents upon which it rested, namely, the will of Ferdinand and the written approbation of Charles; then, leading them to a window, he requested them to look out on

a large body of troops with a park of artillery, which he suggested to them were the ultimate reasoning of princes.

There is another story of him not so often mentioned, but which is very significant. The Duke de Infantado, being highly incensed against Ximenes, sent a priest of his ducal household with a most insulting message to the cardinal, reproaching him, among other things, with his low origin. The priest, after kneeling down and begging the cardinal's pardon for what he was about to say, said it. His eminence asked the priest if he had any thing more to observe. He replied, "No;" on which the cardinal made this answer: "Return to your master, whom you will find already regretting his insolent and foolish message." And so it proved to be.

Having now obtained some little insight into the Cardinal Governor's general character and mode of proceeding, we come to those transactions of his which more immediately concern the purpose of this history.

Ximenes had not been an uninterested spectator of the policy of the Catholic monarchs with regard to their American possessions, and he had urged them to send, which they did, ecclesiastics to the Indies, for the purpose of converting the natives. With an important diocese to manage, and with many other matters requiring his attention, the cardinal had not particularly devoted his care to Indian affairs, and, as far as we know, had not been invited to do so. Now, however, as pertaining to the kingdom of Castile, and thus coming under his charge, the West Indies were sure to meet with due care from this great statesman, and it was not long

before their affairs were brought under his immediate notice.

Las Casas, as may be recollected, was at Seville, awaiting King Ferdinand's arrival, when the news came of his death, upon which the clerigo prepared to go to Flanders, to produce what impression he could upon the new king; but, previously to taking this step, he went to Madrid to lay his statement of the wrongs of the Indians before the Cardinal Governor and the ambassador. He resolved to let them know of his intended journey, and to tell them that if they could remedy the evils he complained of, he would stay with them; if not, he would go on to Flanders.

He drew up his statement in Latin, and began by laying it before Adrian. That good man was horrified at what he read; and without delay he went into the apartment of the cardinal (for the two great men were lodged in the same building), to ask him if such things could be. The result of the conference was, that Las Casas was informed by Ximenes that he need not proceed to Flanders, but that a remedy for the evils he spoke of should be found there, at Madrid.

The associates whom the cardinal took into council, to hear what Las Casas had to tell of Indian affairs, were the Ambassador Adrian, the Licentiate Zapata, Dr. Caravajal, Dr. Palacios Rubios, and the Bishop of Avila. These important personages summoned the clerigo many times before them, and heard what he had to say. In the course of these hearings a curious circumstance took place, which is well worth recording. During one of these juntas the cardinal ordered that the laws of Burgos (the last laws made touching the Indians) should be read. It is a slight circumstance,

but serves to give some indication of the excellence of the cardinal as a man of business and a member of a council, that he should wish to know exactly where the matter was, and what they were to start from. The clerk of the junta, an old retainer of Conchillos, when he came to the law about giving a pound of meat to the Indians on Sundays and feast-days, probably thinking that this in some way touched himself or his friends, read it wrongly. Las Casas, who knew the laws almost by heart, at once exclaimed, "The law does not say that." The cardinal bade the clerk read it again. He gave the same reading. Las Casas said again, "That law says no such thing." The cardinal, annoyed at these interruptions, exclaimed, "Be silent, or look to what you say." But Las Casas was not to be silenced by fear, when he knew himself to be in the right. "Your lordship may order my head to be cut off," he exclaimed, "if what the clerk reads is what the law says." Some members of the council took the papers from the clerk's hands, and found that Las Casas was right. "You may imagine," he adds, "that that clerk (whose name, for his honor's sake, I will not mention) wished that he had not been born, so that he might not have met with the confusion of face he then met with." Las Casas concludes by remarking "that the clerigo lost nothing of the regard which the cardinal had for him, and the credit which he gave to him."

The result of these meetings was, that the cardinal appointed Las Casas and Dr. Palacios Rubios, who had all along shown great interest in favor of the Indians, to draw up a plan for securing their liberty and arranging their government. At the request of Las Casas, Antonio Montesino was afterward added to this

committee. Their way of proceeding was as follows : Las Casas, as the more experienced in the matter, made the rough draft of any proposition, which he then showed to Antonio Montesino, who generally approved it, then to the doctor, who did the same, except that he perhaps added to it, and put it in official language. It was then taken to the cardinal and the ambassador, and council held upon it.

The thing to be done and the mode of doing it were thus, after much labor, arrived at: the legislation was accordingly complete. And now the persons who were to have the great charge of administering the law had to be sought out. The cardinal bade Las Casas find these persons ; but the clerigo, from his absence for so long a time from Castile, did not know fit persons, and begged to give the commission back into the cardinal's hands, presenting at the same time a memorial in which he stated what in his opinion were the qualifications for the office in question. The cardinal, smiling, observed to Las Casas, "Well, father, we have some good persons."

The cardinal resolved to look for his men among the Jeronimite monks, on account of their not being mixed up with the contention that had already taken place between the Franciscans and Dominicans touching the fitness of the Indians for freedom. Ximenes accordingly wrote to that effect to the general of the Order, who called a chapter, when twelve of the brethren were named, and a deputation of four priors was sent to the cardinal to inform him of the nomination.

Las Casas, who was naturally anxious about the answer of the Jeronimites, went one Sunday morning to hear mass at their convent near to Madrid. There he found a venerable man praying in the cloister. Upon

asking him whether there was any reply to the cardinal's missive, the old man told him that he was one of the priors who had brought an answer; that they arrived last night; and that the cardinal, having been made aware of their arrival, was to come to the convent that day.

Accordingly, in the course of the day, the cardinal and Adrian came with a cavalcade of courtiers to the convent. The monks received the Junta in the sacristy, the main body of the courtiers remaining outside in the choir; among them, doubtless, to his no small chagrin, the Bishop of Burgos, long accustomed to direct Indian affairs, but now of no authority in them.

The cardinal, after thanking the Order for the tenor of their reply, and magnifying the work in hand, desired Las Casas to be called for, who, with great delight, walked through the assembled courtiers, much regarded by them, but most of all, as he conjectures, by the Bishop of Burgos.

Entering the sacristy, Las Casas knelt down before the cardinal, who told him to thank God that the desires which God had given him were in the way of being accomplished. The cardinal then informed him that the priors had brought twelve names of persons who might be chosen for the work, but that three would suffice. His eminence added that this night Las Casas should have letters of credit to the general of the Jeronimites and money for his journey, and that he was to go and confer with that prelate about the choice of the three, informing the general of the requisite qualities for the office in question. Las Casas was then to bring to court the first Jeronimite of the chosen three whom he should find ready to accompany him. The

dispatches should thereupon be prepared, after which he might at once set off with them* for Seville.

We may observe throughout that nothing lingers in the cardinal's hands. Commonplace statesmen live by delay, believe in it, hope in it, pray to it; but his eminence worked as a man who knew that the night was coming "in which no man can work."

Las Casas, almost in tears with joy, poured out his thanks and blessings on the cardinal, and concluded by saying that the money was not necessary, for that he had enough to sustain him in this business. The cardinal smiled and said, "Go to, father, I am richer than you are." (*Andá, Padre, que yo soy mas rico que vos.*) And then Las Casas went out, "The cardinal saying many favorable things of some one who shall be nameless."†

The clericgo received his letters, conferred with the general of the Order of St. Jerome, and three brethren were chosen. Their names were Luis de Figueroa, Prior of La Mejorada, Alonso de Santo Domingo, Prior of the Convent of Ortega, and Bernardino Manzanedo.

Las Casas brought with him Bernardino Manzanedo to Madrid; the other two joined him there; and they all lived with him at his inn. Afterward, however, they went to a hospital of their own Order in that city. While staying there, they were waylaid, so to speak, by the agents for the Spanish colonists, who told them all manner of things against the Indians, and spoke ill of Las Casas; and, in the end, succeeded, as he thinks,

* "Y habido el primero que de los tres mas presto hallaredes, venios con él á esta Corte, y hacerse han los Despachos, y de camino para Sevilla los podeis despues llevar."—LAS CASAS, *Hist. de las Indias*, MS., lib. iii., cap. 85.

† "Diciendo multa favorabilia de Johanne."—LAS CASAS, *Hist. de las Indias*, MS., lib. iii., cap. 85.

in prejudicing the minds of the fathers to that extent that, even before they set out, Las Casas and Dr. Palacios Rubios began to think that no good would come of this mission, which promised at the first so well.

The preparations, however, for their departure went on, and their orders and instructions were made ready. The first order was a *cedula* to the effect that on their arrival at St. Domingo they should take away all the Indians belonging to members of the council, or to any other absentees. The second was, that they should also deprive the judges and officers in the Indies of their Indians. The third was, that they should hold a court of impeachment upon all the judges and other officers in the colony, "who had lived, as the saying is, 'as Moors without a king.'"

Then came the main body of the instructions, which commences with a preamble to the following effect: The first thing the Jeronimite fathers are to do, on arriving in the Indies, is to call the principal colonists together, and to tell them that the cause of their coming is the report of the ill treatment of the Indians; that as their highnesses, the cardinal and the ambassador, wish to know the truth of these matters, they have sent these fathers, to whom the colonists are to tell what they know of the past and present state of things. They are to be made to understand that all this is done for their good and preservation, and that if by voluntary consent any good remedy can be suggested, by which God and their highnesses may be served, it should be taken; wherefore, let them talk the matter over, and tell the fathers what conclusion they have agreed upon by common consent.

Then the fathers are to go to the principal caciques, and to tell them that their highnesses, the cardinal and

the ambassador, have heard of the oppressions and injuries which they and their people have suffered in times past; and, as their highnesses wish so to remedy these evils that thenceforward the caciques and their Indians may be well treated, since they are Christians, free and capable of governing themselves (*súbditos de sus almas*), their highnesses have sent the said fathers to search out the truth, to chastise the past wrong-doing, and to provide security for the future. Then the caciques, as well as the colonists, are to talk the matter over, and to see whether they can suggest any good way in which both they and the colonists may be benefited. The address to the Indians is to conclude with an assurance "that the will of their highnesses, the cardinal and the ambassador, is, that the Indians should be treated as Christians and freemen, and that such is the principal cause of their ordering the fathers to go to those parts."

And here it is well to put on record, as LAS CASAS does at this juncture, an account of the part which Ximenes himself took in this great matter of the freedom of the Indians. The clerigo mentions that as he saw the tyranny of the Spaniards so deeply rooted, he did not dare to go about speaking of the Indians as free men, until one day, talking to the cardinal of the evils which the Indians endured, the clerigo remarked, "With what justice can these things be done, whether the Indians are free or not?" to which Ximenes replied with vehemence, "With no justice! what, are they not free? who doubts about their being free?" From that time forward the clerigo went about saying openly in every place that the Indians were free men. On this ground Ximenes may fairly be put forward as

one of the earliest champions of freedom, though at the same time it must in truth be said that the credit which has been given him* for protesting against negro slavery is quite gratuitous. The greedy courtiers of Charles the Fifth persuaded that young monarch, while he was in Flanders, to grant licenses for the importation of negroes to the West Indies, to the number of four hundred or more.† When Ximenes heard of this,

* ROBERTSON'S *America*, vol. i., p. 253: "Cardinal Ximenes, however, when solicited to encourage this commerce, peremptorily rejected the proposition, because he perceived the iniquity of reducing one race of men to slavery, while he was consulting about the means of restoring liberty to another."

The authority quoted by ROBERTSON for this fact gives quite a different reason for the objection of Ximenes, viz., that the licenses above mentioned were a loss to the revenue.

† Such are the Spanish accounts. But in a life, or rather, perhaps, a eulogy, which has been written of Chièvres, it appears as if he himself had bought six hundred negroes and caused them to be sent to America; and that when Ximenes opposed this on the ground of danger from the warlike character of the negroes, Chièvres imagined that this opposition arose from national jealousy, persevered in his resolution, and caused the king to uphold him. "Chièvres en fit acheter six cens, et on les mena par son ordre dans l'Amerique où l'on representa aux Espagnols habituez dans cette nouvelle partie du Monde, l'avantage qu'ils auroient de se servir des Esclaves Negres, puis qu'ils les auroient à si bon marché. Mais le Cardinal Ximenez y trouva fort à redire; et prétendit que si les Espagnols en ne se servant pas des Esclaves de Guinée avoient le déplaisir de voir souvent leurs travaux imparfaits, ils avoient en recompense la satisfaction d'être assurés que les Indiens occidentaux qu'ils introduisoient dans leurs maisons, n'en abuseroient jamais en conjurant et se soulevant contre eux. Au lieu que les Negres qui n'avoient pas moins de malice que de force, ne se veroient pas plutôt dans le nouveau Monde en plus grand nombre que les Espagnols, qu'ils prendroient des mesures entr'eux pour leur donner les chaines qu'ils leurs faisoient porter. Ayala fut renvoyé à la Cour de Bruxelles pour exagerer cet inconvenient, mais Chièvres n'en fut pas satisfait. Il crût que ce n'etoit pas là ce qui faisoit agir Ximenez, et il luy attribua une consideration plus raffinée. Il la tira de ce que la jalousie des Espagnols pour les Indes alloit jusqu'à ne pas souffrir qu'aucune autre nation que la leur y mit le pied, de peur qu'il ne luy

he protested against it, on the ground that the negroes were a warlike race, and that they would excite a servile war,* a prediction which was soon verified by the result.

Leaving the question of what Ximenes might have thought or done for the freedom of another race, it remains to be seen what plan he and his Junta for Indian affairs did resolve upon for placing the Indians in a way to live like free men. The instructions which were given to the Jeronimite fathers may thus be summed up.

They were ordered to visit every island, to ascertain the number of Indians, and to find out how they had been used, putting down in writing their information on this head.

They were to take note of the nature of the land, for the purpose of forming settlements near to mines, where, if possible, there should be rivers and good soil for farms.

These settlements were to consist of about three hundred persons, with the requisite number of houses, a church, a public square, where the cacique's house

prit envie d'en partager les richesses avec elle. . . . Le Roy Catholique ne laissa donc pas nonobstant la remontrance de Ximenez, d'envoyer à l'Isle Espagnole les Negres que Chièvres avoit fait acheter : mais il eut occasion cinq ans après de s'en repentir."—*La pratique de l'Education des Princes, ou Histoire de Guillaume de Croy, surnommé le Sage, Seigneur de Chièvres, Gouverneur de Charles D'Autriche qui fut Empereur Cinquième du Nom.* Par MON^{seigneur}. VARILLAS. Lib. iv., p. 242, 243. Amsterdam, 1684.

* "Esse enim Aethiopes illos bellicis studiis aptos, neque omnino animis destitui ad egregiè plerunque dimicandum. Sciret itaque scelerum ministros trans Oceanum misisse, à quibus rudes populi gladiatoriam audaciam condiscerent, et qui adversus Hispanorum imperium servile bellum aliquando concitarent."—GOMECIUS, *de rebus gestis Ximenii*, lib. vi., p. 185.

should be placed, and a hospital for the purposes which will hereafter be named.

The settlements were to be formed, as much as possible, in those places which the Indians preferred: lands were to be apportioned to each settlement, every individual Indian receiving a certain plot of land, and the cacique four times as much as any other, there being also common land left for pasture.

These settlements were to be peopled by the neighboring Indians, who, it was to be expected, would come with better will than others. If there were not a sufficient number of Indians in the vicinity living under one cacique, then two or three caciques and their people were to be united to form the settlement, each cacique ruling over his own people, and their being one superior cacique, who, together with the ecclesiastic (*religioso ó clérigo*) who might be stationed there, and with a civil officer, called an administrator, should take charge of the government of the settlement.

The cacique was, with the consent of the ecclesiastic, to have the power of stripes over his people, but no more. Any crime demanding higher punishment was to be dealt with in the ordinary course of justice. The subordinate officers of the settlement were to be appointed conjointly by the cacique, the clerigo, and the administrator. A Spaniard might marry a cacique's daughter, and so succeed to a caciquedom, which was rather to be encouraged.

One administrator was to be appointed to two or three settlements; but he was not to live within the precincts of any one of them, for fear his attendants, who might be Spaniards, and who were allowed to bear arms, should oppress the Indians, who were not to be allowed to bear arms. He was to be a married man

and a colonist. His salary was to be paid partly by the treasury and partly by the settlement he administered. His business was to confer with the cacique and the clerigo, and to see that the Indians lived in policy, and that they worked—but not excessively. He was to administer justice; he was to see that the Indians did not gamble away, or part foolishly with, their mining tools and means of subsistence; he was to prevent polygamy; and, in fine, he was to civilize and to judge the Indians committed to his charge.

Then came instructions for the religious observances in these settlements.

Education was to be provided for in the following manner. A sacristan was to be appointed—an Indian, if one competent to fill the place could be found: he was to serve in the church, and to teach the children up to nine years of age to read and write, especially the children of the caciques and principal Indians; and he was to show them how to speak Spanish, and also to endeavor to make the grown-up people speak Spanish as much as possible.

Mention has before been made of a hospital: this hospital was to be in the middle of the village, and was to be rather what we should call a poor-house than a hospital; for not only the sick, but the old who could not work, and the orphans, were to be placed in it. Lands were to be set apart for the hospital.

The instructions then entered upon the difficult question of labor. There would be some settlements which, from their locality, would have nothing to do with mining operations: these were to tend herds and cultivate cotton, and to pay a tribute to the king, bearing a just proportion to what the others, which worked

mines, would have to pay. With regard to the settlements near mines, the following regulations were to be adopted. The third part of the men between twenty and fifty years of age were to work at the mines, setting off at sunrise and working till dinner-time; then they were to have three hours' recreation, and afterward to resume their work, continuing until sunset. This company (gang they would now be called) was to work in the above manner for two months consecutively, and then to be relieved by another company. The period of two months might be varied according to the pleasure of the cacique. The women were not to work at the mines unless they desired to do so. The overseers of the workmen were to be Indians. After having served in the mines their appointed time, the Indians were to work at their own allotments, under the inspection of the cacique and the clerigo, or of the administrator. The cacique was to have fifteen days' work gratis every year from each Indian upon his farm; and the women and children were to look after his plantations.

.Then came the arrangements about the pasturage of the land. Each settlement was, if possible, to be provided with ten or twelve mares, fifty cows, and six or seven hundred pigs. These cattle and pigs were to be in the hands of the cacique, to be looked after by the community, in order to sustain them in common, until they should be able and accustomed to take care of these animals for themselves individually. This last provision is a very important one, as it left room for the development of the individuals composing the community.

The wives of those men who were working at the mines were to make bread for them from the produce

of their own allotments, and this was to be sent to them on the mares, with maize and red pepper, and whatever was necessary. Cattle also were to be taken to the mines, to feed the workmen there; and a dispensation was to be procured to allow them to eat meat some days in Lent, as fish was difficult to be got.

Lastly came the regulations about the gold obtained at the mines. All the gold obtained each day was to be given to the *Nitayno* (a native word signifying an officer inferior to the cacique), and when melting-time came, say every two months, the *Nitayno*, the cacique, and the administrator should take the gold to be melted. The proceeds were to be divided into three parts, one for the king, and the remaining two for the cacique and the Indians.

Out of these two remaining parts the stock that had been furnished to the settlement and all the common expenses of the settlement should be paid for. What then remained was to be divided equally among the heads of families, except that the cacique was to have six shares, and the *Nitayno* two shares. Out of each Indian's share tools were to be bought, which should be his own, and for which he should be accountable.

With what gold might still remain to any Indian, the cacique, in conjunction with the ecclesiastic or the administrator, should buy fowls for him to keep, linen, and any furniture that might be necessary for his cottage.

If any remained after this, it was to be intrusted to an upright person, who was to be accountable to the Indian for it—to be, in short, a sort of banker to him. Every thing was to be certified by writing, and a reg-

ister kept of the tools and other things bought for the Indians.

A hundred Spaniards were to be appointed as pioneers to discover mines; they were to be paid partly by the king and partly by these communities of Indians.

It will naturally occur to any one reading the above instructions to ask what was to become of the Spanish colonists when their Indians were mostly taken from them and formed into these communities. But remedies were provided for the Spaniards as well as for the Indians. The Spaniards were to be paid for the land which would be required for the settlements; then they would have the offices of administrator and of the mine-discoverers, and also, if the Indians were taught trades, the Spaniards were to teach them. Moreover, they were to have a license to get gold for themselves, married men paying only a tenth to the crown, and single men a seventh. Then each Spaniard might have four or five slaves, being permitted to take slaves from among the Caribs. Many of the Spaniards were indebted to the crown: they were not to be imprisoned on account of these debts, and might pass to the continent of America; and, if they did go there, they were to receive certain gratifications, I suppose in stores or money.

In reading the foregoing instructions for these little Indian commonwealths, we can not but be impressed with the thoughtfulness and kindness which pervade the general body of them. Perhaps there is an attempt at too much management; but, under wise and prudent administrators, this, if an error, would have

been easily remedied. In considering the compensations for the Spanish colonists, there are two things which seem to me very injudicious. The first is, the encouragement given to the peopling of the Terra-firma, as they were wont to call it, which all the princes and statesmen of that time were in sad haste to accomplish before any one colony in the West Indies had been well constituted; whereas they might have been quite sure that the love of novelty, the exaggeration of rumor, and the wild hopes and fancies about unknown lands, would effect that purpose rapidly enough; and the aim of the home government ought, I think, to have been to concentrate, and not to scatter their colonists.

Then the permission to capture Caribs was sure to lead to the greatest abuse, as it had already done.

Las Casas objects to the compulsory* working at the mines, and to the payment to be demanded from the Indians for whatever cattle and implements were to be furnished them. He is also averse to the provision for the capture of the Caribs, and declares that all these things were inserted contrary to his wishes. I hardly see how, without prophetic vision, any body of statesmen of that time, who had not themselves been in the Indies, could have been wise and foreseeing enough to leave the Indians alone in their settle-

* The words of LAS CASAS on this subject, though somewhat unpractical, are very remarkable for the noble spirit they indicate. "Y solo el pensamiento de que habian por fuerza de andar en las Minas la tercera parte bastaba para del todo acaballos. Manifiesto es que se les habia de dar las Haciendas y los Ganados y lo demas de valde para que comenzaran á respirar y saber que cosa era LIBERTAD (*sic* in MS.), ó á costa del Rey, ó de los Españoles que de ellos con tanto riesgo de sus vidas se habian aprovechado."—LAS CASAS, *Hist. de las Indias*, MS., lib. iii., cap. 88.

ments, not compelling them to go to the mines, but looking forward to the time when they would become civilized and taxable communities.

What was wrong, however, in these provisions, might have been modified; and Las Casas would have had less reason to be dissatisfied if the above had been the only instructions which the Jeronimite fathers were to carry out with them. But, as there were some persons in the Junta upon Indian affairs who held that the Indians would not live in polity, another so-called remedy was provided in case the fathers should conclude that the Indians were still to remain in *repartimiento*. This remedy consisted in some modification of the laws of Burgos. In addition to these modifications, the cardinal himself suggested two things: first, that there should be a person to represent the Indians at court; and, secondly, that laborers should be sent out to the Indies from Castile. But these two propositions remained unacted upon at that time. It is very remarkable—and an excellent trait in Las Casas, his mentioning the circumstance—that the cardinal was ready to provide more remedies than those already named for the evils endured by the Indians; but that he himself, Las Casas, went about the matter with some timidity (*paso á paso, y como acobardado*), both from not having thought more on the subject, and also from knowing the tyranny of the Spaniards to be so deeply rooted.

The dispatches for the Jeronimite fathers being now concluded, other matters connected with this great proposed reform were brought to a close. Las Casas was by a *cedula* formally appointed to advise and inform the Jeronimite fathers, to be in correspondence with the government, and generally to take such steps in

the matter as might be for the service of God and their highnesses. All authorities were to abet him in the same. He was also named "Protector of the Indians," with a salary of a hundred *pesos* of gold, which he himself observes "was then not little, as that hell of Peru" (*inferno del Peru*) "had not been discovered, which, with its multitude of *quintals* of gold, has impoverished and destroyed Spain." These are remarkable words for that time.

It now only remained that the legal part of the reform contemplated by Ximenes should be provided for. To insure this, the cardinal chose a lawyer of repute named Zuazo, giving him very large powers. He was to take a *residencia* of all the judges in the Indies, and, what was of more importance, his decisions were not to be appealed against. The Licentiate Zapata and Dr. Carvajal called these powers exorbitant (the reader will recollect that Albuquerque, the first *repartidor*, was a cousin of Zapata's), and they refused to give their signature, which was necessary, to the instructions.* This led to much delay. Zuazo threat-

* This has given occasion to ROBERTSON to write the following passage, which has no foundation. "To vest such extraordinary powers, as might at once overturn the system of government established in the New World, in four persons, who, from their humble condition in life, were little entitled to possess this high authority, appeared to Zapata, and other ministers of the late king, a measure so wild and dangerous that they refused to issue the dispatches necessary for carrying it into execution."

The authority he refers to expressly contradicts him. ZAPATA there says, "No se avia de fiar tanto de un hombre solo." But, indeed, the whole error is based on a misapprehension of the age the historian was writing about. These Jeronimites were not necessarily persons of "humble condition" or of small authority in those days. OVIEDO speaks of them in these terms: "Tres religiosos de la Orden de Sanct Hierónimo, *personas de grand auctoridad é letras é de aprobada vida.*" —*Hist. Gen. y Nat.*, lib. iv., cap. 2.

ened to return to Valladolid, saying, if he once returned to his college, no one should get him out of it again. Upon this Las Casas hurried off to the cardinal, who supposed that Zuazo had already gone upon his mission, when the clerigo informed his eminence of the delay and the cause of it. The cardinal, who, as LAS CASAS then observes, was not a man to be played with (*ninguno con él se burlaba*), sent for the Licentiate Zapata and Dr. Caravajal, and bade them in his presence sign all the provisions of the powers for Zuazo; which they did, putting, however, a private mark to their signatures, which was to denote what they intended afterward to say, namely, that the cardinal had forced them to sign.

At last, all was ready for these seeds of well-devised legislation to be taken out and sown in the Indies. Las Casas went to take leave of Ximenes and to kiss hands. He could not, on this occasion, refrain from uttering his mind to the cardinal, telling him that the Jeronomite fathers would do no good thing, and informing him of their interviews with the agents from the colonies. It moves our pity to think that the sick old man, wearied enough with rapacious Flemish courtiers and untamable Spanish grandees, should now be told, after he had given so much time and attention to this business of the Indies, that the mission would do no good. Well may LAS CASAS add that the cardinal seemed struck with alarm, and that, after a short time, he said, "Whom then can we trust? You are going there; be watchful for all."* Upon this, after receiving the cardinal's benediction, Las Casas left for Seville.

* "Pues de quien lo habemos de fiar! Allá vais, mirad por todos."
—LAS CASAS, *Hist. de las Indias*, MS., lib. iii., cap. 89.

The Jeronimite fathers and the clerigo then commenced their voyage, in different vessels, however, for probably being somewhat tired of his discourses, and perhaps not wishing to alarm the colonists more than could be helped by being seen in such close contact with one so odious to them as Las Casas, the fathers had contrived, on some pretext, to prevent his going with them, though he much wished it. And when they arrived at St. Domingo, they seemed inclined there, too, to take a separate course from what he thought right. He speaks of them as gained over by the shrewd official men they fell among, such as the Treasurer Passamonte. In discourse with Las Casas, the fathers began, he says, to gild over and excuse the inhumanity of the colonists; and what was a shameful defect in their mode of proceeding, according to his view of the case, they did not put in execution the charge they had received, to take away the Indians from the Spanish judges and men in office, though they deprived the absentees of their Indians.

The fathers asked the opinion of the official persons, and also of the Franciscans and Dominicans, touching the liberty of the Indians. It was very clear beforehand what the answers would be. The official persons and the Franciscans pronounced against the Indians, and the Dominicans in their favor.

In three months' time Zuazo arrived. Las Casas now resolved on a bold, perhaps we may say a violent step, though if we had been eyewitnesses of the cruelties that he had seen, our indignation, like his, might not always have been amenable to prudence. He resolved, himself, to impeach the judges.* To use his own phrase, he brought against them a tremendous ac-

* The "Jueces de apelacion."

cusation (*púsoles una terrible acusacion*), both in respect to their conduct in bringing Indians from the Lucayan Islands, and also in reference to the infamous proceedings connected with that incident in Cumaná, before mentioned, whereby the two poor Dominicans, Francisco de Córdova and Juan Garces were left to be murdered by the natives. Certainly, if any charges were to be made against these judges, it must be admitted that the subjects of accusation were well chosen.

The Jeronimite fathers were much grieved at this bold step taken by Las Casas. They evidently wished to manage things quietly, and were proceeding mainly with the second class of remedies for the Indians, giving them in *repartimiento* to such of the colonists as they thought well of, and publishing the orders for ameliorating the condition of the subject people.* The fathers seem, on the whole, to have made great efforts to do good, which must not pass without due recognition. I think, with Las Casas, that if they had ventured to adopt the scheme which he, Dr. Palacios Rubios, and Antonio Montesino had planned, it would have been better; and there is no doubt that, while Ximenes lived, they would have had a sufficiently powerful protector to enable them to carry out such a measure. But, not resolving upon such a bold undertaking, which few men indeed would have had courage for, and leaving many of the colonists (I suppose most of them) in possession of their Indians, they still made great efforts to carry out the second class of measures for the relief of the Indians and the benefit of the colony. They looked well after the king's farms, they paid great attention to the cultivation of sugar, and they impressed the Indians with such an

* HERRERA, dec. ii., lib. ii., cap. 15.

opinion of their power and willingness to protect them, that the Indians were emboldened to come to the fathers and to make complaints of any injuries suffered by them.

Acting in the same spirit (and it shows the largeness of the powers with which the Jeronimite fathers were invested), they wrote to Pedrarias, of whose proceedings they seem to have been made well aware,* ordering him to make no more expeditions, and to send an account of the gold and slaves which had been the fruit of his past enterprises. They even went much farther, and desired that Pedrarias, taking into council the Bishop of Darien and some learned men, theologians and jurists, should examine whether those Indians whom his captains had brought back were justly made slaves, and if not, that they should be restored. These same learned men were also to make it a subject of inquiry whether these entries into the country were lawful. Las Casas may complain of the Jeronimites, but I have no doubt that they were more vigorous, and aimed at better purposes than almost any mere officials would have done; and their conduct illustrates to my mind, what I have long thought about government, that there are occasions when those do best in it who are not strictly bred up for it, and who are not, therefore, likely to have the vigor and force of their natures incrustated with routine and deadened by a slavish belief in the incomplete traditions of the past.

Finally, and probably after Las Casas had returned to Spain, the Jeronimite fathers formed some of the Indians into settlements consisting of four or five hundred, which might have thriven very well, for aught

* Probably by Francisco de San Roman. See ante, book vi., chap. ii.

that is told us to the contrary, but at that period, or a little before, the small-pox broke out with much virulence, and carried off many of the natives. The destruction caused by this malady has been much exaggerated, and it has been put down as one of the great causes of the depopulation of the West Indies; but, in reality, the utmost number of persons who were collected together in these settlements were not more than between eleven and twelve hundred, while hundreds of thousands had long ere this been destroyed by other causes.

Such measured proceedings as the Jeronimite fathers at first adopted did not accord with the temperament of Las Casas, neither were they such remedies as the fearful nature of the disease demanded. Moreover, in addition to his disapproval of their measures, he distrusted the men themselves. He states that they had relations whom they wished to benefit in the island of Hispaniola; but as they feared him too much to do so there, they recommended these relations to Diego Velasquez, the Governor of Cuba; and Las Casas observed that in a letter which he happened to see when they were about to close it, they signed themselves "Chaplains to Your Honor" (*Capellanes de Vuestra Merced*), a mode of describing themselves which seemed to him conclusive of the position the fathers were going to take up with regard to this governor. The Protector of the Indians, therefore, resolved to return to Castile and to appeal against the fathers; and in this resolve he was strengthened by the opinion of Zuazo and of Pedro de Córdoba, who still continued to be the head of the Dominican Order in those parts.

The fathers were much disconcerted when they heard

of the intention of Las Casas to return to court, saying that he was a torch that would set every thing in a flame, and they had thoughts of stopping him; but this was not within the scope of their powers. What they could do, and what they afterward did, was to send one of their own body to court, to make representations on their behalf.

Meanwhile the clerigo left St. Domingo in May, 1517, and in July reached Aranda on the Douro, where he found Cardinal Ximenes at the point of death. Las Casas seems to have been fated to appear to great personages a few days before their death. This time, though, whatever complaints he might have been able to make of the administration of Indian affairs, he had nothing to say which could wound the conscience of the dying statesman. The clerigo's letters to Ximenes had, he says, been intercepted, and, in the little that passed between them then, the Protector of the Indians found the cardinal ill informed of what had occurred in Hispaniola.

It will be well to quit for a moment the bed of the dying cardinal, to see what was the political state of the court and kingdom of Spain at this period. Ximenes had throughout his regency urged upon Charles the Fifth the necessity of coming forthwith to take possession of his Spanish dominions. This had been delayed from time to time. At last Charles had set sail from Flanders, and being driven by a great storm, he landed unexpectedly at Villa Viciosa, in the province of Asturias. The common people of that remote district, imagining they beheld a French fleet, retired into the mountains; but when from the royal ship were proclaimed the words "Spain, Spain, our Catholic king,

our king," casting down their arms, as some evil things which they had taken up unawares, they threw themselves on their knees, and raised their voices to the stars. Such is PETER MARTYR'S picturesque account in one of his letters of the landing of the young Spanish monarch.

Meanwhile the cardinal had moved from Aranda to Roa, a distance of about twenty miles. The state of his health may be seen from his mode of traveling. "His shoes, gloves, and sleeves were covered with precious skins which they call *zebellines*; he was also well wrapped in woolen garments when he entered his litter. There was at his feet a silver chafing-dish with juniper ashes, and in his hands he carried a silver globe with hot iron inside."*

Many of the courtiers and official persons set off at once to see the new king, without asking the leave of Ximenes, who complained of this conduct on their part. Charles rebuked them severely by letter, and commanded them to return. This does not appear like disrespect on Charles's part. But he has been accused, not merely of disrespect, but of the grossest ingratitude toward the cardinal. That the Flemish courtiers were unwilling to let their royal master confer with Ximenes was the general report at that time, and it may have been true. Charles himself, however, was but a boy of sixteen, and like a well-conditioned youth of that age, was greatly, if not entirely, under the guidance of those who had brought him up, especially of the governor, the Lord of Chièvres. If,

* GOMECIUS, *de rebus gestis Ximenii*, lib. vii., p. 230.

See also PETER MARTYR'S account of the cardinal's health. "Cardinalis gubernator Matrili febribus aegrotaverat. convaluerat. nunc recidivavit.—Breves fore dies illius, Medici autumant. est octogenario major."—*Epist.* 598.

therefore, the prince had at this time said or done any thing arguing thoughtlessness of the services of Ximenes, it would have been but a trifling matter of reproach to him. What he did do was this. Before seeing Ximenes, he determined to go to Tordesillas to see his mother. Whether this was suggested by designing courtiers or by his own heart, it certainly was not an ill-advised measure, or one that was likely to do him disservice with the Spanish people, who were always extremely jealous of the rights and claims of Juana. Charles then wrote a letter* to the cardinal. In this letter the king begins by telling his eminence that he is going to Tordesillas (to see his mother); that he and the cardinal should meet at Mojador, where, after they had transacted together some matters of state, and he (Charles) had taken counsel of the cardinal for arranging his private affairs and settling his whole household, the cardinal should then consult his repose by returning home; "that he had undergone enough labor for the state, the reward for which, since no mortal could worthily repay it, he must expect from God; that he (Charles) would, as long as he lived, be grateful to him, and would go on in that observance toward him which sons well brought up are wont to

* This letter and the effect of it on Ximenes has been thus described. "He lamented the fate of his country, and foretold the calamities which it would suffer from the insolence, the rapaciousness, and ignorance of strangers. While his mind was agitated by these passions, he received a letter from the king, in which, after a few cold and formal expressions of regard, he was allowed to retire to his diocese, that, after a life of such continued labor, he might end his days in tranquillity. This message proved fatal to Ximenes. His haughty mind, it is probable, could not survive disgrace; perhaps his generous heart could not bear the prospect of the misfortunes ready to fall on his country. Whichsoever of these opinions we embrace, certain it is that he expired a few hours after reading the letter."—ROBERTSON'S *Charles the Fifth*.

pay the best of fathers." What effect this letter might have produced upon the cardinal we do not know. His honest biographer, GOMEZ, notwithstanding the temptation of a biographer to make a scenic ending for his hero, thus speaks out: "These letters being received from Charles, Ximenes, plainly perceiving himself to be rejected and repelled, was seized, as they say, with a fatal fever. But Abulensis, who writes of this thing to Lupus" (Lupus was of the cardinal's household, then living, a friend of the author, who furnished him with a great part of the materials for the cardinal's life), "says that Ximenes was attacked by the fever the evening preceding the receipt of these letters, and therefore they were not shown him, but were sent to the council."* There is, therefore, good reason for affirming that he never saw the letter in question; nor need we look far to account for the death of a man of eighty, who had undergone a most laborious life, and whose state of health had for some time been most critical. As well as we can judge, the cardinal's feelings toward Charles were those of confidence in his gratitude; for, a few hours before he died, he began to dictate a letter to Charles, in which he commended to the king his university, his monasteries, and his household. This letter he was unable to sign.†

* "His literis a Carolo acceptis, Ximenius se plane rejici repellique sentiens, febris lethali (ut ferunt) correptus fuit. Abulensis vero, qui de hac re ad Lupum scribit, pridie quam hæc literæ Ximeno redditæ essent, sub vesperam ea febris laborasse ait: atque idcirco Caroli literas graviter jam ægrotanti datas non esse, sed ad senatum regium missas. Adriano vero qui eas literas miserat, vii. idus Novembris rescripsisse, quo in statu Ximenius esset: nam eo ipso die quo literas receperat, decimam octavam horam a febris incremento numerari, et medicos affirmare vigesima quarta e vita migraturum."—GOMEZIUS, *de rebus gestis Ximenii*, lib. vii., p. 241.

† "Paulo antequam moreretur, epistolam dictare ad Carolum cœpe-

After he had received the last offices of his Church, and had been anointed, repeating to himself the psalm *In te Domine speravi*, "In thee, O Lord, have I trusted," he breathed forth his last.

I have not thought it an unworthy digression (if any thing affecting the character of those we have largely to do with in any history can be called a digression from it) to give, on the authority of his earliest biographer, the above account of the death of Ximenes. For Ximenes to have died of this letter would have been as unworthy a thing as for Charles to have written a letter which could wound so deeply a faithful public servant, and such an attached follower of the royal house.

To any of those who have been deeply interested in the history of the New World, and have been hoping that at last some great mind would look into the perplexed affairs there and set them to rights, the loss of Ximenes seems irreparable. We feel that he was a man who might have remedied the evils in that new-found country. Throughout the whole of the arrangements for the Jeronimite mission, his conduct realizes for the moment what the student of history, unversed in the difficulty of managing men, fancies might be done, and what he himself, poor student, would do, if he had the power. There are even kindly traits in it, which, according to the common notion entertained of Ximenes, we should not have expected to meet. And, indeed, I doubt whether any transaction of his life

rat, quâ illi suam Academiam, et cœnobîa a se constructa et dotata, familiamque suam suppliciter commendabat, sed digitorum rigido stupore subscribere non valuit."—GOMEZIUS, lib. vii., p. 242.

elicits more of his character than this mission, which has now, for the first time, I believe, been made known in full detail from the manuscript history of Las Casas. Like a certain great man, too, of our own times, the cardinal seemed to appreciate the difficulty of government, and the necessity for it. Then he was "so clear in his great office." Peculation, unjust heed of relationship, and mean doings of all kinds, must have withered up in his presence. He was like a city on the margin of deep waters, such as Genoa, where no receding tide reveals any thing that is mean, squalid, or unbecoming. Of a spirit as great as our own Chatham, but with more simplicity, he was the man to make a whole nation think after him. His subordinates could have relied on his unwavering support, and the pulsations of his constant mind would have been felt in the most distant regions of his action.

The force and influence of the Jeronimite mission perished with him; and we shall have to take up the next portion of this history under new auspices, and to find the very policy which he had wisely condemned adopted by those who succeeded to his power, but not to his wisdom or his complete integrity.

If Ximenes had lived but a year or two longer, and Charles the Fifth had happily not listened to the prayers of his Spanish subjects, but staid in Flanders, it is not improbable that a widely different fate would have attended the Indian and the negro race. On such comparatively small events, humanly speaking, does the fate, not only of nations, but of races, turn; as if they were nests of insects, which are destroyed or saved as the husbandman happens to turn his attention to the right hand or the left, and thus unheedingly avoids or crushes whole communities.

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