

IV. THE GREAT SPANISH CONQUESTS AND EXPLORATIONS

1.

Untrained in the science of navigation, and obsessed by mystic delusions concerning the scope of his mission and the nature of the world he came so near to discovering, Columbus could not but fail to do justice to the great opportunity that so gratuitously knocked at his door. As Admiral of the Ocean and Viceroy of the Indies, with almost unlimited authority in matters of administration and policy concerning the Spanish maritime domain, he soon became an obstacle, rather than an incentive, in the way of further progress in the discovery, exploration, and conquest of the New World. It may be considered fortunate, therefore, that he should so soon reveal his lack of true genius and lose thereby the confidence of his sovereigns, and, with it, the discretionary powers they had bestowed on him.

Spain was ripe for the prosecution of the greatest conquest and colonization ever undertaken by men, but her heroic sons were unable to move outside of the vicious circle of Columbus' fantastic dreams. When Columbus fell from the pinnacle of prestige and power he had attained, she was free once more to display her extraordinary genius, her inexhaustible stores of energy and initiative, of courage and daring, of imagination and heroic grandeur, without which the conquest and civilization of the New World could never have been accomplished. Thus it came to pass that, within a short century and long before the landing of the Pilgrim Fathers on Plymouth Rock, in a march as swift as it was spectacular, through

acts of valor and endurance that would reduce to utter insignificance those performed by Alexander, Caesar or Hannibal, Spain started and finished the conquest, exploration and colonization of the wildest and most difficult three fourths of the vast continent of America.

To enumerate all the discoveries, conquests, and heroic deeds performed in the New World by Spain between Columbus and the first successful foothold taken by England on the American soil, would be an endless and impossible task.

The beginning of the great Spanish activities in America dates from 1499, when Juan de la Cosa explored the coasts of Venezuela and Vincent Yañes Pinzón discovered the two mighty rivers Amazon and Orinoco and explored the Brazilian coasts that lie between them. Other memorable events related to the huge Spanish-American adventure may be briefly and partially summarized in the following chronological table:

- 1501 Juan de la Cosa makes the first map of America, proving the existence of the new continent which Columbus denied even when he himself had touched it.
- 1505 Juan de la Cosa and Vespucius search for a passage through the isthmus of Darien and discover the golden placers of Atrato river.
- 1508 Vincent Y. Pinzón and Juan Díaz de Solís explore the coasts of Brazil to the 40th parallel.
- 1512 Juan Ponce de León, who had conquered Porto Rico in 1508, discovers Florida.
- 1513 Balboa crosses the isthmus of Panama and discovers the Pacific after 25 days of a frightful journey.

- 1516 Juan Díaz de Solís discovers the Plata river.
- 1517 Hernández de Córdoba and Antón de Alaminos discover Yucatán and carefully explore its coasts.
- 1518 Juan de Grijalba and Alaminos discover Mexico and explore the gulf of the same name.
- 1519 Cortes lands in Mexico and lays the foundation of the City of Veracruz.
- Alvarez de Pineda discovers the mouth of the Mississippi river.
- The first geography of America is published in Seville by Enciso.
- Magellan starts his famous voyage of circumnavigation of the Globe, which is terminated in 1522 by his second in command—Juan del Cano.
- 1521 Cortes accomplishes his epoch making conquest of Mexico. Ponce de Leon makes his first attempt at the conquest of Florida.
- 1523 González Dávila conquers Nicaragua.
- 1524 Hernández de Córdoba and Sebastián Belalcázar continue Dávila's work in Nicaragua, and found the cities of Granada, León and Segovia.
- Lucas Vazquez de Ayllón explores the James river, Chesapeake Bay, and the lands then known by the name of Chicora and Guadalupe in the present United States
- First expedition of Pizarro to Perú.
- Father Pedro de Gante founds the first schools for the Indians.
- Pedro de Alvarado founds the city of Santiago de los Caballeros in Guatemala, whose conquest he brings to a close the following year.

- 1525 **Hervão Gomez**, a Portuguese at the service of Spain, explores the east coast of North America, from Florida to Labrador, and especially the Connecticut, Hudson and Delaware rivers, in search of the Northwest passage to Asia.
- 1530 **Pizarro's second expedition to Perú**, during which Bartholomew Ruiz discovers the Chincorazo.
- Vázquez de Ayllón** founds the colony of St. Michael near Jamestown.
- Sebastian Cabot**, in the service of Spain, explores the Plata, Paraná and Paraguay rivers.
- 1529-36 **Alvaro Cabeza de Vaca** makes his portentous journey on foot across the United States, from Florida to California and down to Mexico, in a march of 10,000 miles beset with such dangers and privations as few men ever experienced before or since.
- 1531-36 **Third expedition of Pizarro** in which he conquers Perú.
- 1534 **Pedro Alvarado** enters Equador.
- 1535 **Fray Thomás de Berlanga** discovers Galápagos.
- Expedition of Almagro** to Chile.
- 1536 **The Bishop Zumárraga** establishes in Mexico, and therefore in America, the first printing press. The first to appear in the English Colonies came 102 years later.
- 1536-38 **Gonzalo Ximónez de Quesada** conquers New Granada and lays the foundation of Bogotá and Tunja.
- 1539 **Fray Marcos de Niza** discovers New Mexico and Arizona.

- 1539-42 Hernando de Soto explores Florida, Georgia, Arkansas, Mississippi, Alabama, Louisiana, and the northeast part of Texas.
- 1540 Hernando de Alarcón sails up the Colorado river as far as the Great Bend.
- Francisco Orellana performs the still more difficult feat of navigating down the Napo river to the Amazon, and down the Amazon to the sea.
- Chile is conquered by Pedro de Valdivia.
- Expedition of Francisco Vázquez Coronado to New Mexico and Arizona, during which Lieutenant García López de Cárdenas discovers the Grand Canyon of Colorado, at the time when Queen Elizabeth of England was only six years old.
- 1542 Andrés Bernaldoz de Quiroga explores the territory of Kansas for the space of nine years, travelling about 20,000 miles in the midst of fearful difficulties and deprivations.
- 1542-43 Moscoso, de Soto's lieutenant, navigates the Mississippi for nineteen days.
- 1543 Schools of Industrial Arts are founded for the Indians.
- Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo and Bartholomew Ferrello journey to the coasts of the Pacific Ocean in the United States and reach the parallel 43° north.
- 1551 Foundation of the University of Lima.
- 1553 Foundation of the University of Mexico.
- 1556 Expedition to Virginia.
- 1565 St. Agustín, in Florida, is founded by Avilés de Menéndez, and Fray Francisco Pareja builds its first church.

- 1567 In this year and during the remainder of the century the Jesuits found their famous colleges in Mexico, Yucatán, Ecuador, Peru and Chile.
- 1579 The public autopsy of the cadaver of an Indian was performed in Mexico in order to determine the causes of an epidemic.
- 1580 Foundation of Buenos Aires.
- 1581 Three Franciscan Friars make an expedition of about 1,000 miles through the Rio Grande and establish many missions during their journey.
- 1582 Expedition of Antonio de Espejo to New Mexico.
- 1590 Gaspar Castaño de Sosa makes another expedition to New Mexico.
- 1596 Sebastián Vizcaino goes in an expedition in search of a strait through North America which may lead to Asia.
- 1597 Oñate colonizes New Mexico and founds San Gabriel in the following year. This is the second European city in the United States.
- 1600 Zaldivar makes an expedition to Nebraska; arrives in the gulf of California in 1604; and founds San Francisco in 1605.
- 1606 Santa Fé, New Mexico, was founded by the Spaniards.

This brief outline of the great Spanish epic in America brings us down to the date of the foundation of Jamestown (1607), the first English settlement on the east coast of North America. "By that

time," says Lummis, "the Spanish were permanently established in Florida and New Mexico, and absolute masters of a vast territory to the south. They had already discovered, conquered and partly colonized inland America from northern Kansas to Buenos Ayres, and from ocean to ocean. Half of the United States, all Mexico, Yucatán Central America, Venezuela, Ecuador, Bolivia, Paraguay, Perú, Chile, New Granada, and a huge area besides, were Spanish by the time England had acquired a few acres on the nearest edge of America." (1)

3.

In fact, what had England done in the way of maritime enterprise in one century of Spanish and two centuries of Portuguese phenomenal activity in all the seas and unknown lands of the Globe? Her record is negative to say the least.

Her first explorer—the Italian Cabot—reached America (Nova Scotia) in 1497, spurred and guided, of course, by the tremendous success of both Spanish and Portuguese navigators. His son Sebastian, following in his footsteps, may have reached Hudson Bay in 1498. However, as he failed to bring cargoes of rich merchandise his services were not appreciated by England, and in 1512 he left her service for that of Spain. Consequently England lost all interest in America for more than half a century afterwards—that is, to 1584, when Amadas and Barlow reached Cape Hatteras and Roanoke. The following year Sir Richard Grenville discovered Cape Fear, and in the next two years Davis made a voyage to the Northwest, and Raleigh went in a futile expedition to Virginia, New Guinea, and Orinoco.

(1) Lummis. (Spanish Pioneers), p.20.

These expeditions had no permanent results and were not appreciated by the home government, for the simple reason that they failed to produce gold, the only thing that England expected from her adventures. It was owing to this failure that Raleigh lost his head at the tender mercies of his King, after his second fruitless expedition to the Orinoco, and why England is not heard of again in America till the advent, in 1620, of the Pilgrim Fathers, who did not come to open up a new world, but to seek a place of refuge and safety from English intolerance.

Two other celebrated names, known by every Anglo-Saxon-American child, should be added to the credit (or discredit) of England. These names are those of Drake and Hawkins. What did they do of a constructive nature for England or for the world at large? Nothing that deserves to be chronicled among the assets of the age of maritime enterprise. Their work was characteristically destructive, revengeful, antihumanitarian. It consisted in obtaining riches by unlawful means—by piracy, and finally by the African slave trade. That such was the spirit of England of that time is shown by the enthusiasm their heroes' exploits caused among the English people and by the honors showered upon them by Good Queen Bess.

"Drake made his first spectacular haul when he fired the town of Nombre de Dios and plundered the mule-train carrying the treasure over the gold road."⁽²⁾ This was the road that led from Acapulco to the east coast and over which the Spaniards carried on mule-back merchandise they obtained in their commerce with the Moluccas and the Philippines. Both Spanish and Chinese ships were engaged in this commerce, which consisted of precious stones, silks, pottery,

(2) Spilhaus, *ibid.*, p. 215.

gold and silver, furniture, embroideries and spices. It was one of these caravans that Drake captured, after he had reduced to ashes a defenseless town. Queen Elizabeth, though at peace with Spain, fostered these acts of piracy with that spirit of duplicity that was characteristic of her reign. On the occasion of another piratical voyage of her faithful co-worker she assured the Spanish Ambassador that Drake was going to Alexandria, while in reality his destination was the east coast of South America, and his mission not one of discovery and conquest but of robbery and destruction. Says Spilhaus "He (Drake) had this advantage: the Spaniards had received no information and had no idea of his presence...Drake was to introduce the era of piracy into them, and his arrival caused the greatest astonishment, to say nothing of consternation." (3) Other advantages that the authoress does not mention were that Drake, as good a pirate as the best of Barbary, was armed to the teeth, and the Spaniards had the naïve belief that England was a civilized nation and that the word of her queen still counted for something.

But stolen wealth had a great lure for Queen Bess and her kingdom for, according to Spilhaus, herself a great admirer of the boldest pirate of his day, "From the Queen to her humblest subject all England was thrilled, as you know. On board the Golden Hind at Deptford Elizabeth knighted her piratical but Valiant sea-captain, to crown his profitable, though unlawful, voyage." (4) The same good luck did not come to Cavendish who, in the words of Spilhaus, "was not of the same caliber as Drake, nor had he the

(3) Spilhaus, p. 217.

(4) Id., p. 220.

advantage of an unprepared enemy."(5) Believing the Spaniards to be still unprepared, Queen Elizabeth, in 1594, ordered Drake and Hawkins to go out and look for the Spanish fleet, but not to venture to the Indies and not to be away too long. They took the law in their own hands and attacked Grand Canary. They were beaten and some of their men captured."(6) Later on "they attacked Porto Rico and were beaten off. The Spaniards had had time to warn their people to be in readiness."(7) Drake "tried his old game of capturing Nombre de Dios and the mule-train. He managed to burn Nombre de Dios, but all else failed."(8)

Is a lawless bandit who burns defenseless towns, plunders unarmed caravans, sinks unprepared merchant ships without warning, but is beaten both on the high seas and on land when the intended victims are warned or prepared, a fit hero for children to admire? If he is, then Dillinger must be counted as one of our great heroes.

"At the opening of the peace with Spain (1604)," says Professor Andrews, "not a single colony of Englishmen had found place either in Asia, Africa or America."(9) And of England's activities on the sea, the same authority goes on to say: "No colonies resulted from these various voyages and freebooting expeditions of the Elizabethan period...The passions that stirred men's souls were not born of a desire for peaceful expansion, they were brewed in the crucible of hate for Spain, for the spoiling and destroying of the Spaniards 'lyms of Antichrist', as they were

(5) Spilhaus, p. 228.

(6) Id., p. 223.

(7) Id., *ibid.*

(8) Id., *ibid.*

(9) Andrews, p. 53g

still called in 1620...During these years (1580-96) every expedition that set forth from English shores took on a semi-piratical form, seeking booty, capturing cities and ships...Making war with Spain and not the planting of colonies was the driving force that determined the direction of Elizabethan activities."(10)

Of the almost super-human difficulties overcome by the Spaniards in all the length and breadth of America, and of the trifling ones met with by the English in the nearer shores of North America, Charles F. Lummis gives this graphic account: "When her sons (England's) came at last to the eastern verge of the New World they made a brave record; but they were never called upon to face such inconceivable hardships, such endless dangers as the Spaniards had faced. The wilderness they conquered was savage enough, truly, but fertile, well wooded, well watered and full of game; while that which the Spaniards tamed was such a frightful desert as no human conqueror ever overrun before or since, and peopled by a host of savage tribes to some of whom the petty warriors of King Philip were no more to be compared than a fox to a panther. The Apaches and Araucanians...were the deadliest savages that Europeans ever encountered. For a century of Indian wars in the east there were three centuries and a half in the Southwest." (11)

When England did not begin to awaken from her lethargy of two centuries until the opening of the XVIIth century; the XVIth was for Spain, from its inception "the beginning of a century of such exploration and conquest," says Lummis, "as the world never

(10) Andrews, p. 53.

(11) Lummis (Spanish Pioneers), p. 22.

saw before or since. Our part of the hemisphere has never made such startling chapters of conquest as were carved in the grimmer wildernesses to our south by Cortes, Pizarro, Valdivia and Quesada, the greatest subduers of wild America.

"There were at least a hundred other Spanish heroes, unknown to public fame and buried in obscurity until real history shall give them their well-earned praise...No other mother-nation ever bore a hundred Stanleys and four Julius Caesars in one century; but that is part of what Spain did for the New World." (12)

The work of these great leaders is typical of the deeds performed in many lines of endeavor, devotion, and duty by hundreds of Spanish conquistadores, explorers and missionaries in the vast continent of America for over a century, long before England set foot on what would in time become the thirteen colonies. The results of these labours were so stupendous, both in imperishable glory for the doers of such deeds, and in unheard of wealth for Spain and her heroes, that the other nations, especially England, Netherlands, and France, were not able to conceal their jealousy, which soon turned into irreconcilable rancor and hatred. This jealousy explains the mad attacks on the Spanish work of conquest and colonization, and is the only justification for the base and cowardly calumnies directed especially at those Spanish conquistadores whose heroism and greatness was never surpassed and very seldom equaled by any other people. It was the jealousy and hatred, and sometimes the mere ignorance, of the Drapers, Prescotts and others, that created the legend of Spanish greed and Spanish cruelty. True historical research on the authentic and incontrovertible documents so long

(12) Lummis (Spanish Pioneers), p. 22.

buried in dozens of Spanish and foreign archives stamp such judgments as arbitrary and malicious fabrications, a stigma that rather than to the accused more rightfully attach to the accusers.

3.

Of all Spanish conquistadores none were so maligned and lied about as Cortez and Pizarro. It was natural and logical, once we understand the motives that inspired their detractors.

Of the four Julius Caesars and a hundred Stanleys that Lumis says Spain produced in the first century of American conquest and colonization, Cortez and Pizarro were the greatest and the most heroic, and it was they also who procured for Spain the greatest amount of wealth.

That Spain should produce military geniuses who have never been surpassed either in America or in Europe, must have been always humiliating to the pride of her detractors, especially those who believe in their innate racial superiority. This is even more true today than in the XVIIth century, and therefore it is their racial and patriotic duty to keep, by all means, those military giants where they belong.

The thought that they brought to Spain galleon after galleon of unheard of wealth, while the rest of Europe was living in stark poverty, was even more difficult to endure. Consequently it was necessary to discredit them and the whole hateful Spanish race; to make everybody believe that their greed and rapacity had no parallel in the history of any other nation; that to obtain this wealth they resorted to every conceivable device of cruelty, to the most fiendish acts of inhumanity towards the American aborigenes, whom they conquered by the mere accident of possessing superior

and more deadly weapons, and not through bravery and the observance of the rules of fair play, which is an exclusive attribute of the superior races.

The implication has been, of course, and is, that we were neither greedy nor cruel. Our treatment of the Indians has always been just, human and fair. We never coveted their property, were never inhumane towards them. We love fair play, and always give a fellow a chance. Words with which we try as best we can to fool ourselves, and with which we actually succeed in fooling the un-informed. But nobody else.

The Spanish record is open to any searching student of world affairs in the archives of Spain, Latin America, and other nations of the world. The American scholars--Handelier, Lummis, and many others--have made accessible to us material sufficient to reverse completely our opinion concerning the work of Spain in America. Our own record regarding our treatment of the natives, and the motives that led us to ~~exterminate~~ them, is in the archives of the War Department and in various other Bureaus in Washington. All of them indicate conclusively that, so far, the shoe has been on the wrong foot. In fact the Spanish-Indian policy was for three and a ~~half~~ half centuries the most enlightened, benign, and humanitarian ever pursued by any colonial power; ours, on the contrary, was exceedingly inhumane, brutal, and unfair. It was a policy of greed, rapacity, and murder. That of England, Holland, Germany, Belgium, ^{Italy}, etc., has been of a similar nature.

Have we ever given any thought to the fact that the native population of Latin America has actually increased materially since the Spanish conquest, in spite of the natural encroachment produced

by the juxtaposition of a more advanced race, while our own native population has decreased to one fifteenth of its original number, in spite of the fact that there is enough land in these United States for many times their present population? Have we taken note of the many writers of note, authors in every branch of the sciences and letters, priests and bishops, generals, statesmen, ministers and presidents, recruited from the native population of Spanish America, while under our rule such a phenomenon is scarcely conceivable?

If Spanish greed and cruelty produced such beneficial results for the natives, and our disinterestedness and humanitarianism such devastation and barrenness, we cannot escape the conclusion that the former must have been eminently superior to the latter, or that we have been using our qualifications in their opposite sense.

I shall try to present some facts intended to prove how unjustly, and cowardly, sometimes, Spain has been calumniated by those who have served jealousy, hatred, and racial prejudice, instead of truth, and how we have tried to hide our own sins under the cloak of hypocritical righteousness, deceit, and unblushing lies. And first of all I shall give a brief sketch of those two heroic figures—Cortez and Pizarro—not as a Draper or a Prescott would have us believe them to be, but as true history has sculptured them for posterity.

4.

With only 11 boats, 400 Spanish soldiers, 200 Indians, 32 horses and a few small bronze cannons, Cortez started for the

conquest of one of the two richest and most powerful empires in the whole American continent.

On March 4, 1519, he landed in Tabasco province and proceeded to gain the adherence of the natives, sometimes by persuasion and diplomacy, sometimes by force of arms. In this way he won the city of Tabasco and both the allegiance and the friendship of the natives of the province. This devotion of the Tabascans was due not merely to their hostility to Montezuma's domination but to the just and fair treatment accorded to them by Cortez, whose sincerity they had never reason to doubt hereafter.

Once peace and alliance was made with the Tabascans he laid the foundations of the city of Veracruz and established in it a government independent from that of Cuba. A fort was erected for protection against the forces of Montezuma, and in order to make sure that there would be no defections among his diminutive army he ordered all the ships to be burned.

The arrival of the Spaniards caused a great sensation among the natives. Especially the horses (the natives had never seen one before) and those contraptions that produced fire and thunder, appeared to them so extraordinary, not to say supernatural, that they thought that not men, but gods, had landed in their midst. This superstitious was, naturally, very favorable to the Spaniards but the delusion was not to last very long.

Rumors soon reached Cortez and his army of the power and immense wealth of Montezuma, the head war-chief of the Nahuatl, as the ancient Mexicans were called. As no expedition of conquest was ever undertaken but for spoils and plunder, it is no wonder that the Spaniards decided to throw their dice against all odds and capture

the capital of Montezuma. Nothing could suit better the heroic audacity of Cortez. It was the difficult, the impossible, the almost superhuman enterprises that revealed his genius in all its magnitude. If it were not for Pizarro, Cortez would be counted as the greatest military genius that America has ever seen.

A garrison was to be left in Veracruz and thus his forces were considerably reduced. So, with great diplomacy, of which he was a consummate master, he studied the attitude of the different tribes in their relations to Montezuma, widened the breaches existing among them, and prevailed upon the most dissatisfied to become his friends and allies, and either give him material help or take no sides in his titanic struggle with the overlord of Mexico.

The tribes of Tlascala and Cholula, though enemies of Montezuma, opposed Cortez, but were routed, sued for peace and became his best allies and friends. They contribute six thousand men for the army of Cortez, who, forthwith, continued his march without serious opposition except that caused by the nature of the country and the inclemency of the weather. On the 8th of November he was at the gates of the strange, barbarously magnificent and impregnable city, where Montezuma received him with great ceremony and handed over to him one of his large communal houses.

The Spaniards had the freedom of the city, and in this way they had ample occasion to notice much gold in its warehouses, which, without doubt, must have been a great temptation to most of them; However, there is no record of any violence having been committed on his score, as the purpose of Cortez was to make Montezuma a vassal of the King of Spain, and Mexico an appendage

of his far-flung empire. But the Mexican war-chief was not easy to persuade and, while he treated his guests with all outward deference and courtesy, he was all the time planning their destruction.

His first act of duplicity consisted in sending one of his subordinates, Quauhpopoca, to attack Veracruz, which was done with the worst possible results for the Spaniards. Not only were many of the garrison of Veracruz killed, including its commander Excalante, whose head was sent to Montezuma, but the belief that the strangers' gods were gods changed in an instant to the grim determination to destroy or, better still, to take them alive in order to sacrifice them as was the Mexican's wont with all prisoners of war, on the bloody altar of their gods.

That the prospects were desperate for the little band of Spaniards is sufficiently clear, and Cortez decided on desperate measures. First he fortified the communal house, where he and his men were lodged, in all haste and in the best way he could. Then, with some of his officers, he boldly walked to the house of Montezuma, seized him and threatened to kill him if he should not give up those who had attacked Veracruz. Montezuma complied with Cortez' demands and the poor Indians who had obeyed their chief's commands were seized and burned in public. This barbarity cannot be condoned, but it was in harmony with the standards and practices of those times, by which alone Cortez ought to be judged.

One of the usual lies, perpetrated by Spain's detractors, is to the effect that Montezuma was compelled to buy his freedom for six hundred thousand marks of gold and an immense quantity of precious stones. There is not the least historical evidence that Montezuma ever paid any gold to the Spaniards for his deliverance.

As for precious stones, besides some garnets and turquoises of no value whatever to the Spaniards, there were none.

About this time there arrived in Veracruz Panfilo de Narvaez with about eight hundred men and an order from governor Velasquez, to arrest Cortez and bring him as a prisoner to Cuba. As soon as Cortez received this intelligence he entrusted Alvarado with the command of part of his small contingent, and, with a handful of followers, hastened to meet this new foe in the field of battle. Narvaez was defeated and taken prisoner, and his men were persuaded by Cortez to join him in the conquest of a mighty empire. With this valuable and unexpected assistance Cortez returned to Mexico City, where things had taken a very ominous aspect.

Since the time Cortez had punished those immediately responsible for the attack of Veracruz, the chiefs of the Nahuatl had been laying their plans for the annihilation of the Spaniards. At last, under the pretext of performing a religious ceremony, they assembled in the main square accompanied by many thousands of warriors in disguise. Alvarado was notified of the significance of this meeting and of the intentions of the military leaders of Mexico, and before becoming a victim to their treachery he fell on the conspirators with the swiftness and fury that the certainty of eminent danger made perfectly justifiable. The punishment was terrible, it is true, but perfectly justified under the extraordinary circumstances of the case.

This attack of Alvarado on the leaders and nobles of Mexico who were supposed to be occupied in a religious dance has been portrayed as a brutal, cruel, and unwarranted interference with

an innocent native festival. "But," says Lummis, "that is simply because of ignorance of the subject. An Indian dance is not a festival; it is generally, and was in this case, a grim rehearsal for murder...Alvarado, seeing in progress a dance which was plainly only the superstitious prelude to a massacre, had tried to arrest the medicine-men and other ringleaders...But the Indians were too numerous for his little force, and the chief instigators of war escaped."(13)

Cortez was unaware of these happenings when he approached the gates of the city on his return journey from Veracruz. Sure that he was about to play into their hands, the Indians received him and his soldiers very politely and led them to the center of the capital. Once inside of the trap they had so cleverly prepared, the four dykes—the only entrance to, and exit from, the impregnable city—were occupied and strongly guarded by countless thousands of Indian warriors, who had been organized and assembled by the leaders who had escaped Alvarado's punishment.

Hostilities broke out immediately with great fury and brave determination on the part of the Mexicans. The Spaniards, had scarcely time to close their ranks and resist the first onslaught of ten times their number of brave, well trained, and desperate warriors.

Montezuma, who was still a prisoner of the Spaniards, attempted to speak to the multitude in behalf of conciliation, but the Indians no longer recognized his leadership and, perhaps because they ignored the fact that he was under duress, considered him a traitor to his people and country. Consequently, led by Guatimozin, whom they had

(13) Lummis (Spanish Pioneers), p. 62.

appointed their new head war-chief, the Mexicans not only attacked the Spaniards, but Montezuma himself, whom they mercilessly stoned to death.

The unequal battle raged for several days and nights and the doom of the Spaniards was too clear, should they be unable to leave the city by flight. Cortez, taking advantage of the first dark night that presented itself, cut his way through thousands of the enemy, secured one of the dykes, and fought desperately for every inch of its breadth and length. Two thirds of his forces, consisting of both his Indian allies and less than 1200 Spaniards, were slain at the hands of the infuriated and determined Mexicans, or drowned in the waters of the Lake Texcoco. Forty Spaniards were captured alive and kept as most valuable prizes to be sacrificed on the altars of the Mexican gods. This sad and tragic occasion is still known as la Noche Triste (the sad night) of story and song.

Pursued by countless warriors, Cortez fled in the direction of Tlascala, losing another thousand of his fast vanishing army. On July 7, 1520, after six days of the most terrible and discouraging retreat, he found himself in the plains of Otumba, completely surrounded by the victorious legions of the Nahuatl. It was the most desperate moment of this epic adventure, in which a handful of bedraggled, worn out, famished soldiers, were to decide the fate of an immensely rich and powerful nation.

Cortez had no choice. He rallied his troops, offered battle to the enemy, and won a victory that placed in his hands the destinies of Mexico. The attack was made through three of the four dykes and also by water, for which the Spaniards had prepared a small fleet of portable boats.

For three months the Aztecs fought bravely and savagely, and both the houses and the streets had to be taken one by one, and the former destroyed to prevent the Mexicans from using them as fortresses against the Spaniards. On August 13 Guatimozin, the soul and organizer of the desperate defense, was taken prisoner, and the city, by this time a pile of ruins, was finally given up, bringing the bloody war to a close.

One of the first acts of Cortez, after he was the sole master of Mexico, was to order the destruction of the native idols, and to compel the natives to embrace the Christian religion. The other was to execute Guatimozin and the other chiefs, with refinements of cruelty comparable to those employed then and at a later date throughout all Europe and North America against dissenters of every kind.

If we look dispassionately at the acts of cruelty committed towards the American aborigines by Cortez, considered by the enemies of Spain as the archetype of Spanish cruelty and bloodthirstiness, and compare them to similar acts committed by Anglo-Saxon-American heroes against conquered natives, and taking into consideration the circumstances that accompanied them, we cannot but marvel at the unblushing hypocrisy of those who have accused, and still persist in accusing, the Spaniards of inhumanity towards the American-Indians.

The execution of those who led the attack against Veracruz, of Guatimozin and other chiefs responsible for the disaster of Lake Tezcuco, and that ordered by Alvarado on the war chiefs who were rehearsing, under his own eyes, the massacre of himself and his troops, were measures of extreme necessity which no general would let go unpunished, however just and highly patriotic the resentment and uprising of the natives might be.

We may condemn the invasion, conquest, and occupation of Mexico altogether, or any portion of America, as an infringement of the right of other people to live in the way that suits them best. In such case we must also condemn the beginnings of every nation on the face of the globe, for none came into the possession of its respective home-land but by conquest, which is nothing more than violence, bloodshed, treachery, and rapine. But if we leave this question out of consideration, would any other general have acted differently than Cortez?

That these executions, though justified by the grim necessity of the moment, were needlessly cruel and brutal, is perfectly evident. But such was the spirit of the times everywhere. Even today there are refinements of cruelty practiced by many in the form of the Third Degree, lynchings, chain-gangs, self-established guardians of law and order, terrorizers of labor, and so forth, that would put to shame the bloodthirstiest inquisitor of the Dark Ages.

Cortez and his followers are accused of vandalism towards the temples and images of the Mexican gods. This charge is perhaps well merited but not in the spirit it is made. It is represented as something unheard of, peculiar to the Spaniards, unknown among the Superior Races, a thing truly shocking to our conception of freedom of conscience. However, they did not live in our time, and even if they had they could scarcely have found effective lessons of tolerance among any sect of today who really believes in its tenets. The Spaniards believed the heathen temples and images to be the abode of the evil spirit, just as the Anglo-Saxon Protestants thought the Pope to be the Antichrist and that the witch had communion with the devil. The demolition of monasteries and

churches, and the destruction of sacred images by Anglo-Saxon Protestants during the fever of the Reformation, were certainly less excusable. Besides, no one should expect the Spaniards to have had much love or reverence for those shrines in whose altars they had heard the horrible shrieks of agony of their compatriots, who were sacrificed every day to the Mexican gods, while they laid siege to the city of Montezuma.

Cortez was far from cruel or unjust towards the natives. In fact he was beloved by them, a thing that does not make sense at all if he were inhuman towards them. With his own countrymen he was tyrannical and cruel after he became drunken with glory and power. But it is not on this score that his detractors base their accusation. It is on his Indian policy, in its turn a reflex of the Indian policy of Spain, which, as it will be shown in a later chapter was far superior to the few best examples given by England and America in regard to their respective colonial policies.

6.

Pizarro is not as well known as Cortez, perhaps because the latter was a well educated man and elegant writer, while the former was of such a poor and humble extraction that he could neither read nor write, even his own name. His indomitable courage, however, his perseverance, his spirit not only heroic and inflexible, but human and prudent, generous, just and loyal, together with the almost superhuman magnitude of his work and the insuperable difficulty of his accomplishments, make him tower much above any other pioneer of American conquests, not excepting Cortez. "America," says the author of Spanish Pioneers, "was already what it is so proud to be today,—the poor man's chance. And it is a very

striking fact that nearly all who made great names in America were not those who came great, but of the obscure men who won here the admiration of "a world which had never heard of them before." (14)

To relate all the circumstances, the difficulties, the hardships, including hunger, thirst and sickness, the Homeric deeds and unparalleled heroism concomitant with the conquest of Peru—the greatest epopee of the American history—would require a large volume all by itself. We shall here record only the essential facts of the case, and see how much untruth there is in the appraisal of this giant of American conquest.

The way Peru has been represented by the makers of romance and fairy-tales, like Prescott, to name just one, may be better expressed in the words of Lummis: "We were told," he says, "that Peru was a great, rich, populous, civilized empire, ruled by a long line of kings who were called Incas; that it had dynasties and noblemen, throne and crown and court; that its kings conquered vast territories, and civilized their conquered savage neighbors by wonderful laws and schools and other tools of the highest political economy; that they had military roads...a thousand miles in length... that this wonderful race believed in one Supreme Being; that the king and all of the royal blood were...mild, just, paternal and enlightened; that there were royal palaces everywhere; that they had canals four or five hundred miles long, and country fair and theatrical representations of tragedy and comedy; that while the policy of ~~the remarkable aborigines of Mexico was the policy of~~

(14) Lummis, (Spanish Pioneers), p. 204 ff.

the remarkable aborigines of Mexico was the policy of hate, that of the Inca kings was the policy of love and mildness. Above all, we were told much of the long life of Inca monarchs...whose last great king, Huayna Capac, had died not a great while before the coming of the Spaniards. He was represented as dividing the throne between his sons Atahualpa and Huascar, who soon quarreled and began a wicked and merciless fratricidal war with armies and other civilized arrangements. Then, we were told, came Pizarro and took advantage of this unfraternal war, arrayed one brother against the other, and thus was enabled at last to conquer the empire."(15)

Much ethnological and historical research has been made since Prescott and other romanticists had free reign on this and other subjects pertaining to both pre- and post-columbian America, and its conclusion is that, in spite of their remarkable civilizations and power, the Incas were not essentially different from all other Indians, who never knew other than the tribal form of government, without hereditary kings, palaces, academies, monotheistic religion and what not. "They were the only Indians in the Americas who had the smelter; and that enabled them to make rude gold and silver ornaments and images; so their country was the richest in the New World, and they certainly had a remarkable though barbaric splendor."(16) Their impregnable city of Cuzco, with its two or three only possible narrow entrances strongly fortified, was what made it possible for the Incas to become very prosperous and a formidable foe to all their neighbors. Like the powerful barons of

(15) Lumis (Spanish Pioneers), p. 238 ff.

(16) Id., *ibid.*, p. 241.

the Middle Ages in Europe they could make sorties when it best suited them, devastate, plunder and fill with terror the helpless neighboring villages and tribes. These, in order to be secure in their homes and fields yielded to them and paid them tribute, but were never knit into a homogenous and integrate nation. Under such conditions the most important official of the tribe was the head war-chief, the one whose business it was to lead the more or less organized bands of marauders on successful expeditions of plunder and devastation. And such were not only Huayna Capac, Huascar and Atahualpa, but also Montezuma, Philip, Powhatan, and others.

According to Lummis, "Huayna Capac's sons were also Indian war captains, and nothing more,—moreover, war-captains of different tribes, rivals and enemies. Atahualpa moved down from Quito with his savage warriors, and had several fights, and finally captured Huascar and shut him up in the Indian fort at Xauxa... It was into the strongholds of this/irritational but uncommon Indian tribe that Pizarro was now leading his little band."(17)

As organized fighters, countless thousands of them, there were no such in the Americas with the exception of the followers of Montezuma, with whom Cortez had to contend. As for Pizarro he had only one hundred and seventy seven men and sixty seven horses. For such an army there were three guns and twenty crossbows. Others were armed with swords, daggers and lances. Conscious of the foolhardiness of the enterprise he was undertaking Pizarro addressed

(17) Lummis (Spanish Pioneers), p. 243.

his followers, made perfectly clear to them the dangers and difficulties ahead of them, and gave them entire liberty to leave him or follow him. Four footmen and five cavalrymen went back to their homes. The rest vowed to follow him to the end.

Atahualpa, who had been advised of Pizarro's arrival, sent a message of invitation to the Spanish leader to visit him in Caxamarca where he was with his warriors. Although Pizarro was warned by one Indian of the evil intentions of Atahualpa, and by another that his forces numbered fifty thousand, the daring exwine-herd undertook the fearful journey across the Cordilleras. When the small band of Spaniards led by Pizarro, was nearing the trap Atahualpa had laid for it, Pizarro's Indian spy appeared and reiterated that the wily Peruvian war-chief meant treachery. Such intelligence, however, would not move Pizarro at all, even if it had been possible for him to retrace his steps.

The Spaniards, by order of Atahualpa, were lodged in the houses in the center of Caxamarca, which they entered Nov. 15, 1532. On finding the city deserted, and Atahualpa in the middle of an army of 40,000 warriors encamped on one side of the Caxamarca valley, their suspicions of that certainty which became too evident the following day, began to take form. Pizarro and his 167 followers were indeed in a trap, effectively locked up in the center of the town, with an immense army of ruthless warriors in front of them, and the only pass by which they could retreat blocked by a numerous band of warriors whom Atahualpa had posted there during the night. What was Pizarro to do under such fearful circumstances, when to falter even for a single moment would mean complete and ruthless destruction? He considered that his

life and that of his faithful followers were worthy of fighting for, and, with a bold and reckless stroke of genius, he decided to do it in the most effective way at his command.

Atahualpa had promised to visit Pizarro the following day, and, as the city was deserted, Pizarro was able, unperceived, to make the proper preparations for his reception. He placed his companions in three hallways which converged towards the empty center of the town, and the two pieces of artillery on the top of a strong building commanding the entrance of the city. When Atahualpa made his appearance, not unarmed, as he had promised, but accompanied by several thousand warriors with knives, bows, and war-clubs, Pizarro, who was at the head of twenty of his men, sent Father Valverde to meet the Indian war-chief. Father Valverde, through Pizarro's Indian interpreter, told Atahualpa that the Spaniards came as servants of a mighty king and that they wished to be his friends. And, in accordance with his own calling and the wishes of the Spanish kings, he asked him to abandon his idols, submit to the Christian religion and accept the king of Spain as his ally.

All this may sound preposterous and lacking in reality today, but for the Spaniards of those times, it was all very serious, and was in the best spirit of both the Spanish and the Portuguese work of discovery and conquest of heathen lands and peoples. We, realists of the twentieth century, may sneer at their credulity or at lack of sense of reality in their dealings with heathen peoples, who, in many instances, were happy in the condition in which they lived. But in so doing we lose the right perspective basing our judgements on the standards of another age. This is a very poor

exhibition of our wisdom, if not a clear proof of lack of sincerity and spirit of fair-play. To give the heathen peoples a better way of life by means of education and of what the Spaniards conceived as the only true religion was one of the great aims and pre-occupations of the first conquistadores, and a very noble aim it was. In such spirit spoke Father Valverde to Atahualpa who, undoubtedly with as good reasons of his own, declined the good offices of the priest. What was not in good reason was the curt and insulting way in which he did it, adding other clear signs of hostility towards the Spaniards.

When Father Valverde reported the results of his embassy to the head of the expedition, Pizarro thought that the moment had arrived to decide the fate of the Spaniards, or that of the Incas, by a single throw of the dice. One of the toy-cannons was fired. No one was killed, of course, nor such was the intent of the Spaniards. What good would that do? Two small, old, weather beat on falconets, that a horse could carry across the Cordilleras, would not diminish appreciably the number of forty thousand warriors. The three flintlock muskets, would be even more useless for such purpose. The other arms carried by the 167 men of Pizarro were no better than those carried by the Indians. To try with such numbers and such equipment to decimate the ranks of the warriors of Atahualpa would be too ridiculous for serious consideration. No less fantastic is the massacre of two thousand Indians which, according to current accounts, was accomplished in about half an hour. Are not Pizarro's detractors unwittingly flattering the military prowess of the Spaniards? What these really wanted was to capture Atahualpa and keep him as a hostage for the good conduct of his braves. This they did, though not without killing many of his body-guard who, naturally, made a stout resistance against the aggressors of their chief.

Atahualpa was made a prisoner, confined to one building and

watched by a strong guard. But he was treated with due respect, lived in the company of his family and had the best of all that the Spaniards could offer. Father Valverde and even Pizarro tried to convert him to the Christian religion, but to no avail, though he had long since lost faith in his own native gods, who were unable to deliver him from the hands of his enemies. The Spanish soldiers, whom the Indians, deprived of their war-chief, were not inclined to attack, obtained much booty, including llamas, rich garments, and much gold.

When Atahualpa saw how much this strange people coveted the precious metal, he offered for his ransom an amount of gold which would fill the room where he was, plus a smaller one filled with silver. The large one is supposed to have been 22 feet long and 17 feet wide, and it was to be filled with vessels and trinkets—not bars or ingots—to a height of 9 feet from the floor.

"There is," says Lumis, "no reason whatever to doubt that Pizarro accepted this proposition in perfect good faith. The whole nature of the man, his religion, the laws of Spain, and the circumstantial evidence of his habitual conduct lead us to believe that he intended to set Atahualpa free when the ransom should have been paid. But later circumstances, in which he had neither blame nor control, simply forced him to a different course." (18) Messengers were dispatched by Atahualpa to different points of Peru and soon much gold began to arrive.

There is today no room for doubt that this whole transaction was a clever piece of Atahualpa's treachery. It gave him occasion

(18) Lumis (Spanish Pioneers), p. 257.

and time to send his envoys to rally and organize his warriors for a surprise massacre of the whole Spanish force. The Spaniards themselves began to suspect trickery, and soon learned that, in fact, Indian contingents had started to assemble in different parts of the country.

Other proofs were not wanting. Huascar, who was a prisoner of his brother Atahualpa, heard of what had happened and sent a messenger to Pizarro to appraise him of his plight. Pizarro gave orders to bring him to Caxamarca so that the two brothers might confront each other and present the proofs of their respective claims. "Before Huascar could be brought to Caxamarca," says Lummis, "he was assassinated by his Indian keepers, the henchmen of Atahualpa,—and, it is commonly agreed, by Atahualpa's orders." (19)

To better understand the true situation Pizarro sent his brother Hernando to Pachacáncas, three hundred miles away. Hernando interviewed Chalicuchima, who was at Xauxa with a strong armed force. Chalicuchima decided to accompany Hernando to Caxamarca, as in this manner he could better learn from the head war-chief what to do for the extermination of the strangers.

Meanwhile Atahualpa was being treated royally although he was no king. According to Lummis the Spaniards "seem to have been trying their utmost to make him their friend,—which was Pizarro's purpose all along. Prejudiced historians can find no answer to a significant fact: The Indians came to regard Pizarro and his brothers Gonzalo and Juan as their friends,—and an Indian, suspicious and observant far beyond us, is one of the last men in the world to be fooled in such things. Had the Pizarros been the cruel, merciless men that partisan and ill-informed writers have

(19) Lummis (Spanish Pioneers) p. 287.

represented them to be, the aborigenes would have been the first to see it and to hate them. The fact that the people they conquered became their friends and admirers is the best of testimony to their humanity and justice.

"Atahualpa was even taught to play chess and other European games; and besides these efforts for his amusement, pains were also taken to give him more and more understanding of Christianity. Notwithstanding all this, his unfriendly plots were continually going on."(20)

When an amount of gold equivalent to about \$1,135,000 of today was gathered together, Pizarro had a notary draw an official document freeing Atahualpa from further obligation, notifying him, however, that his release from prison had to be delayed a little longer, that is, until the Spaniards had time to increase and organize their forces sufficiently to have a fair chance against his warriors, should he persist in starting hostilities. "He (Pizarro) was rather better acquainted with the Indian vindictiveness," says Lummis, "than some of his closest critics are."(21)

In fact news of Indian plots and uprisings began to come faster and faster, and became more and more terrifying. Two hundred thousand warriors from Quito and thirty thousand cannibal Caribs were reported on their way to Caxamarca to destroy the invaders to the last man. It is hardly possible, of course, that the Incas could

(20) Lummis (Spanish Pioneers), p. 260.

(21) Id., *ibid.*, p. 261.

assemble such a vast army, but such was the belief of the Spaniards, and by this belief alone they must be judged. That Atahualpa was plotting their destruction there has never been the least doubt. The Spaniards became seriously alarmed and insisted that Atahualpa, as a traitor and breaker of his promises, should be put to death. Much against his will and his principles Pizarro had to bow to the demands of his army. Atahualpa was tried and found guilty of his brother's murder and of conspiring against the lives of the Spaniards, and in consequence was condemned and executed that same night. Would America, England or Germany act differently?

The execution of Atahualpa was a severe blow to the organized resistance of the Indians, but by no means put a stop to it. The appointment of Toparca by Pizarro to succeed Atahualpa was not well received and he was soon murdered, apparently at the instigation of the second war-chief Ohalicushima. Pizarro had him tried and, having been found guilty of treason, he also was promptly executed.

In the meantime Pizarro was on his way to Cuzco, the main town of the Inca tribe. This march was a tremendously difficult one, not only on account of the topographical nature of the country but especially in consideration of the strong and numerous war bands which assailed the invaders on every side. But Cuzco was finally entered Nov. 15, 1533, thus putting Peru definitely in the hands of the Spaniards. The conquest of Peru and of its impregnable stronghold, Cuzco, is, without doubt, the greatest episode ever enacted on American soil. As an administrator and organizer of a nation Pizarro's excellency can only be matched by his greatness as a conqueror, but it is not our purpose to relate this phase of his work and genius.

"From 1524 to 1532," says Lummis in a burst of well justified enthusiasm, "he (Pizarro) was making superhuman efforts to get to the unknown and golden land of Peru, overcoming such obstacles as not even Columbus had encountered, and enduring greater dangers and hardships than Napoleon or Caesar ever met. From 1532 to 1541, he was busy in conquering and exploring that enormous area, and founding a new nation amid its fierce tribes,—fighting off not only the vast hordes of Indians, but also the desperate men of his own forces by whose treachery he at last perished...Pizarro's conquest has been most unjustly dealt with by some historians ignorant of the real facts in the case, and blinded by prejudice; but that marvellous story...is coming to its proper rank as one of the most stupendous and gallant feats in all history...The conquest of Peru did not by far cause as much bloodshed as the final reduction of the Indian tribes of Virginia. It counted scarcely as many Indian victims as King Philip's War, and was much less bloody, because more straightforward and honorable than any of the British conquests in the East Indies...His conquest covered a land as big as California, Oregon and most of Washington...swarming with the best organized and most advanced Indians in the Western Hemisphere; and he did it all with less than three hundred gaunt and tattered men."(22)

6.

Mexico and Peru were the most civilized, the most highly militarized and the richest of all confederacies of American

(22) Lummis (Spanish Pioneers), p. 67 ff.

Indians. Their conquest by Cortez and Pizarro, respectively,—the first with a little over a thousand Spaniards, the second with less than two hundred—, in the middle of the greatest obstacles imaginable and with equipment scarcely better than that of the natives themselves, were feats of such heroic valor, so astounding in their execution and results, that they took a powerful hold on men's imagination, and appeared as so unprecedented and so unsurpassable in magnitude that no room seemed to have been left for further portents of a similar nature. And yet, the meteoric career of Spain in the field of colonial enterprise was only dawning in the roseate horizon of her destiny; so glorious, so pregnant of heroic deeds, so full of supreme sacrifices, so vast in its civilizing and humanitarian results, so fruitful to the whole human race, and especially to the European peoples, that even the gigantic labours of Cortez and Pizarro became subsidiary episodes of the greatest epic of all ages, and men were henceforward unable to follow the dizzy heights of Spain's glory and almost superhuman grandeur.

No wonder that hundreds of Spanish heroes of that age, who were plowing the virgin soil of America in many diverse ways, and preparing it for the establishment of nineteen new nations of the European stock, were simply taken for granted, while all the rest of Europe continued in their lethargic insatiation or, stung by galling jealousy, procured by all means to obstruct the great work of Spain over-seas; or, failing to attain their goal, employed their masters of venomous propaganda to build the hugest legend of vilification, misinterpretation, and straightforward falsehood regarding the Spanish deeds and the Spanish character,

that the world has ever seen either before or since.

True to their genius for the most stupendous adventure, for the most supreme sacrifices in any cause that to their minds or to their hearts appears to be true, the Spaniards did not rest on the laurels won by their two first great conquistadores, but each one, according to his capacity or his special calling, went forward spurred by the same heroic spirit, determined to reach some distant goal, as long as there were new worlds to conquer, new secrets of Nature to reveal, more savage tribes to civilize, heathen peoples to bring to what they conceived to be the true fold, to that ideal that for them was above all others.

Consequently new explorations, new conquests, new discoveries, new acts of unsurpassed heroism followed those which won for Spain both Mexico and Peru and had before won all the islands of the Antilles. Mexico herself sent numerous expeditions of discovery, conquest, and settlement to the west and southwest of the present United States, to Central America and later on throughout the whole Pacific ocean as far as Australia and the Philippines. Peru, also in her infancy, sent expeditions to Ecuador, to Chile, to Bolivia, thus increasing the Spanish empire to vast proportions. The Caribbean settlements explored Columbia and Venezuela. From Spain new expeditions continued to be sent to the various colonies or to the discovery and conquest of new lands, such as Argentina and Paraguay. That these labours were no children's play was recognized by Charles E. Chapman who says: "Any one of the hundreds of their expeditions, if duplicated today, would excite the wonder of the world." (23)

(23) Chapman, p. 552

There is no room in this brief account of Spain's work in America to mention the hundreds of heroes who took part in the gigantic task of conquering countless savage tribes, of taming the most fearful and dismal wildernesses, of crossing and recrossing for five, ten or twenty thousand miles, unknown regions, dismal wildernesses, frightful and forbidding deserts. The work of exploration, discovery, civilization, and Christianization of millions of natives, performed by Spanish missionaries at the cost of tremendous sacrifices, including that of their own lives, would by itself fill up many large volumes. Nor are all of the great heroes of this magnificent epic known to history. The names and deeds of many are still hidden in the Spanish and American archives; those of others will never be known, because, though the head of every expedition or mission was commanded to keep a record of their doings, leaders were remarkably negligent about speaking of themselves. They thought that it was their deeds that counted, not their own names, glory, and fame.

For these reasons I shall add only a few more names representative of the heroes who, in diverse ways, cultivated the soil where we, together with nineteen other nations, have reaped abundant and rich harvest of blessings utterly unknown even in the courts of the European potentates previous to the work of Portugal and Spain over-seas.

7.

Three more great Spanish conquests deserve at least a passing notice; that of New Granada, by Jiménez de Quesada; that of Chile, by Pedro de Valdivia; and, finally, that of Acoma, by Vicente de Zaldivar.

Commissioned to find the sources of the Magdalena River, in present Colombia, Quesada began in 1536 what some commentators consider one of the most extraordinary journeys of exploration and conquest ever undertaken in America. He started with a contingent of 800 men and 100 horses, but after he advanced several hundreds of miles he suffered great deprivations, was harrassed by storms and floods, scourged by deadly pestilence and the poisoned arrows of enemy tribes, and thus his contingent soon was reduced to 166 men and 59 horses. With this small force he left the Magdalena and ascended a great plateau seven thousand feet above sea-level, and here he found a delightful and thickly populated country. It was the home of the Chibchas, over a million in number, and considered the most civilized and best organized nation of South America, with the exception of the Incas.

Here, according to Charles E. Chapman, Quesada "embarked upon a stirring conquest, to the accompaniment of the usual slaughter of the natives, the frenzied search for gold, and the torture of chieftains." (24)

It is unfortunately true that this giant among so many great Spanish conquistadores deviated from the usual policy, which, terrible as it might have been in the heat of battle, was always milder, more human, and more equalitarian than that of any other colonial power towards the natives of their respective territories, as will be shown later on. The alleged frenzied search for gold seems to be well established; so is the fact that Quesada submitted the chief Bogotá to torture in order to compel him to reveal the hiding place of his treasures. As for the "usual slaughter of the natives," there

(24) Chapman, p. 57.

was nothing usual about it as far as the Spaniards were concerned.

It has already been remarked that the Indians themselves were the staunchest friends of Cortez and Pizarro, who, according to the detractors of Spain, were the most cruel and ruthless exterminators of the American natives. The rabid accusations of Voltaire, Montesquien, Buckle, Draper, Benzoni, etc., based not on any valid documents, but on jealousy and hatred, originating on reasons we shall present later on, are unconsciously repeated by the historians who prefer not to trouble themselves with the search of dusty and moth-eaten documents.

In civilization and organization the Chibchas were second only to the Aztecs and Incas. They numbered over a million. Among other weapons they used poisoned arrows. They knew their country as only Indians do. The Spaniards, on the other hand, were in an unknown wilderness, more than a thousand miles from any settlement that might bring them help. For weapons they had a few rusty and worn out flintlocks, whose efficiency, speed, and range, could not be superior to the poisoned arrows of their by no means peaceful adversaries, and, above all, the Spanish forces did not number more than 166 men. This slaughter of the natives related by Chapman has too Draperesque a flavor for easy credence, and must be classified with the slaughter of 2000 (others say 10,000) in half hour by the equally small band of Pizarro.

For his treatment of the chief Bogotá, conduct wholly contrary to the humanitarian policy of Spain towards the Indians, Quesada was punished by the Spanish authorities and denied the governorship of that New Granada, which he had so heroically explored and conquered in twenty seven months with only a handful of companions.

8.

While Quesada was conquering a new empire for Spain in the northern part of South America, other soldiers of fortune were winning laurels for themselves and their mother country, towards the south, by deeds of almost superhuman valor, endurance and skill.

The first expedition to Chile was led by Almagro in 1535, and although it yielded no results of lasting value, it demonstrated once more what heights of heroism the Spaniards could reach whenever they pitched their courage and iron will against all odds. "Going by way of Lake Titicaca," says Charles E. Chapman, "the province of Tucumán (Argentina), the mountains of the Andes, and the deserts of northern Chile, he encountered incredible hardships—anyone acquainted with that difficult country may well wonder how even one man got through!—but at length reached the habitable part of Chile at Copiapó." (25) After they explored the whole region between the Andes and the sea, and had gone as far south as Maule, they crossed the deserts of Atacama and Tarapacá on their return journey, and reached Arequipa after two years of a journey so beset with almost superhuman difficulties that no further attempt was made by Almagro to conquer this barren and desolate country.

In spite of these discouraging prospects a new expedition was organized under the leadership of Pedro de Valdivia, who, eventually became the conqueror of Chile and one of the four Caesars whom, according to Lummis, Spain produced during the period of the

(25) Chapman, p. 60.

American conquest. With a contingent of only 180 men Valdivia started from Cuzco in January 1540 through the Arequipa valley, rested for a while at Atacama, crossed its forbidding desert and arrived finally at Copiapó valley where he took possession of the country in the name of Spain. In the early part of 1541 he founded the city of Santiago at the foot of Santa Lucía hill, and made preparations for a permanent sojourn in that desolation that captivated Almagre so little.

That the intent of this and similar expeditions was not primarily to obtain easy wealth, but promote colonization and civilization, having always the highest regard for the welfare of the natives, is abundantly proved by the attitude of the new settlement in regard to their future and to that of the people among whom they were starting a new mode of life. In the first place, finding no means of subsistence in the desolation of the deserts that surrounded them, they proceeded, while building their primitive dwellings, to sow wheat, corn, and all kinds of vegetables, and to raise horses, llamas, cows, pigs and chickens. In the second place, away from women of their own race, they entered into marital relations with the native women, not in the spirit of the superior races who, while using the natives for their own pleasure, disclaim any responsibility towards them and their children, but in that of true humanity and equality. These facts show that the new settlers went for the purpose of founding new homes, of implanting even in such barren regions the best that the Spanish civilization could offer, of sharing their fortunes with a people whose women they took as wives and whose cooperation was absolutely necessary to their own welfare and happiness.

Speaking of these events, Chapman has this to say: "the story in itself of the conquest of Chile can hardly be surpassed, and the people who were to develop out of the Spanish-Indian amalgam were to become one of the leading, if not the foremost, of the peoples of Hispanic America." (26)

However, these intentions were not to be carried out, nor these results to be attained, without the fiercest struggles with the elements and the savage tribes surrounding them. The bellicose spirit of the Araucanians, as the natives of Chile were called, was superior to that of any other American tribe, and the Incas themselves, who had the best military organization in all America, were never able to subdue them or penetrate far into their territory. It is not difficult to see, therefore, the tremendous hostility the Spaniards had to contend with to establish themselves among such savage and war-like neighbors.

Two years had not gone by since the arrival of the Spaniards under Valdivia when the Cacique Machimelongo started a campaign of extermination and destruction against the newcomers. Their new city was reduced to ashes and their first promising crops uprooted and destroyed. In a fierce battle between the best of the two rival camps Machimelongo was routed, but the Spaniards found themselves in worse circumstances than when they first arrived. However, they were not discouraged. They rebuilt the city and replanted their farms, while some of their companions watched outside and took care of the defense of the twice incipient colony. In 1542 the Spaniards gathered the first fruits of their farming.

Concepción, La Serena, Valdivia, and other colonies were successively founded during the governorship of Valdivia, but the difficulties seemed to increase instead of decrease owing to the perpetual hostility of the seemingly unconquerable Araucanians. The stratagems they resorted to in order to get themselves rid of their unwelcome guests may be judged by the following incident of that protracted war of over three centuries. A young Araucanian, Lautaro by name, entered the service of Valdivia, and even accepted baptism, for the secret purpose of learning the methods by which the Spaniards were so often victorious over his people though their forces were less than one to one hundred. After he was well instructed in all the methods of Spanish warfare, he escaped and three years of the most vicious carnage followed. Valdivia himself was captured and subjected to the most horrible torments. Parts of his body were cut out with sea-shells, half roasted and eaten by the savages before his own eyes. At last the forces of Lautaro were routed and their leader killed in the heat of battle. Although this battle did not end entirely the hostilities between Araucanians and Spaniards, it gave undisputed supremacy to the latter, whose very existence was never again threatened seriously.

It would be interesting to speculate on the treatment the remnants of the vanquished Araucanians would receive at the hands of other colonial powers, should the latter be the conquerors instead of the Spaniards, in this death-struggle of years and of centuries. If we remember the fate that overtook the Australians, Tasmanians, and other weak and helpless tribes of primitive peoples at the hands of the English, and that of almost every American Indian tribe

at the hands of the American colonists, up to a few years ago, it is not difficult to guess what would be the lot of savages that kept on the war path for over three centuries, although the ascendancy of the Spaniards in Chile was complete and undisputed by the end of Valdivia's career.

9.

The conquest of Acoma, the most impregnable stronghold of all America except Cuzco, forms such a thrilling chapter of Spain's bravery and heroism, such a brilliant page of her son's military prowess, on the one hand, and of her humaneness on the other, that it is impossible not to include it in this brief sketch of the Spanish conquests in America.

Acoma is an immense rock about three hundred and fifty seven feet high, of about seventy acres in area, with perpendicular walls, and standing in the midst of a long valley four miles wide, guarded in its turn by almost impassable precipices. On its flat top was one of the largest Pueblo-cities of the Quéres Indians, without any other means of approach than a kind of stairway consisting of small indentures in the wall by which the Indians climbed up and down, as the necessity dictated. In this impregnable fortress lived a numerous population with an abundant supply of food and water that they carried from the valley; but so strongly entrenched was the city that one man with a few rocks would be able to laugh at the efforts of a whole army which might try to conquer them by means of weapons no better than swords, lances and a few flintlocks.

Coronado saw Acoma in 1540, and was even received in the city proper by the natives, who thought that both he and his men

were gods. But it was not until 1598 that the Spaniards were to besiege and conquer this formidable fortress. Oñate had entered New Mexico in that year with a force of four hundred men, only half of whom were armed, and soon subjected to the Spanish rule most of the adjoining tribes without needing to employ violence. After founding San Gabriel de los Españoles he departed for a journey of some thousands of miles of inspection, and in October of the same year he reached the stronghold of Acoma. Its chiefs met Oñate in the valley receive him with respect and made their allegiance to the king of Spain.

They seemed to have realized, however, the full significance of Oñate's mission, and afraid to lose that freedom for which they had built, at such cost, their amazingly strong city fortress, they decided to get rid of him. They invited him to go up to their eagle's nest on a tour of inspection. Ignorant of their real intentions, the following day Oñate and his companions climbed up the walls of Acoma, after leaving their horses in the charge of a guard. They were shown the interesting sites of the city, and finally Oñate was led to the entrance of the council chamber with access through a trapdoor in the roof of a large house. The interior of this chamber was in complete darkness, and when the Indians insisted that Oñate should descend its ladder he had a suspicion that they meant treachery, and refused to comply with their wishes. Not knowing until later that he had almost fallen into a trap, he soon left Acoma with his companions and continued his long and trackless journey to other Indian tribes. The council chamber was in reality a trap for it was full of armed Indian warriors who were to kill him as soon as he arrived below.

Juan de Zaldivar, whom Oñate had sent to explore a distant region in another direction, and ordered to join his chief later on, left San Gabriel with thirty men on November 18th, and reached Acoma on December 4th. He was received by the Indians with all demonstrations of hospitality and persuaded to ascend the lofty mesa with half of his men, while the others were left on the plain to guard the horses. The visitors had such trust in their hosts that they soon scattered about the whole wonderful city without any suspicion of ill-will or treachery. But soon the wild whoop of the war-chief resounded throughout the whole city and all the natives armed with bows and flint-knives, with clubs and rocks, fell upon the unsuspecting Spaniards. Thus assailed, unexpectedly, treacherously, each one by hundreds of fierce and desperate enemies, the Spaniards fought bravely with their backs against the walls and died heroically under wave after wave of murderous bands of resolute and brave Indian warriors. Zaldivar himself and two other officers were among the first victims. Of the 17 men who had entered Acoma only five were able to join forces and fight their way to the brink of the high cliff, all bleeding and exhausted by the terrific and unequal fight. Having no alternative but to jump or die, they threw themselves from these dizzy heights to their only possible avenue of escape. It is not known at what precise point they jumped, but even the lowest point of the rock would be a very dangerous way of escape, being as it was, 180 feet high. Still only one was killed, the four others joining their companions at the foot of the huge rock.

Realizing that this treacherous massacre was the signal for the uprising of the other pueblos, twenty five or thirty in number, the survivors decided to take the necessary measures to save the Spanish population, including women, children and numerous missionaries, who were scattered all over the vast territory of the Pueblo Indians. A small party (they were only eighteen in all) hastened to Moqui in order to warn Oñate of the general danger; another hurried to San Gabriel to make whatever preparations they could for the defense of the Spanish colonists; others went to different points to apprise their compatriots of the impending danger. In this way, by the quick action of these self-appointed deliverers of their countrymen, all the Spaniards of New Mexico were safely gathered in San Gabriel before the end of 1598.

Oñate realized that to punish the treacherous Indians of Acoma was the only alternative to the total abandonment of New Mexico. But how was he to conquer that impregnable fortress when he had only 200 men at his command, at the same time that San Gabriel could scarcely spare any of them should the Indians attack them unexpectedly? Acoma alone had 400 warriors and its inaccessibility to outside attack made it strong enough to stand the siege of the largest army. But there was no alternative, and Oñate decided to bring it to terms.

Vincent de Zaldívar, brother of Juan who had been slain one month before, was chosen the leader of a small force of 70 men, all that San Gabriel could spare under the circumstances. Some of them were armed with the very ineffective flint-locks used in those times. The rest had swords and lances, and for artillery they had a small pedrero (stone

thrower) which was carried on the back of a horse. On January 13, 1599, they reached Acoma, where the Quéres and their Navajo allies awaited them ready for battle. Zaldiver stopped as near the high cliff as possible, and, as was the Spanish practice, and in conformity with the law of civilized nations, he had a notary read in loud voice a summons to surrender in the name of the king of Spain. The summons was read three times, according to custom, and it was specified that the ringleaders of previous massacre were to be given up and taken to San Gabriel for trial, without any further harm to the people of Acoma. Mockery, insult, and defiance was the only answer of the Indians well entrenched in their stronghold.

The following morning the Spaniards began the assault. Twelve men went unobserved around the cliff dragging the pedrero with them. Overcoming the most insuperable obstacles they succeeded in climbing to the top of an immense rock separated from the city by a narrow but very deep chasm. The pedrero was shot and both Spaniards and Indians were apprised of the advantage won by the little band of twelve athletes. During the night more Spaniards climbed the precipitous walls of Acoma.

Early in the morning of 23 the Spaniards succeeded in throwing a pine log across the chasm and began to cross it over an abyss hundreds of feet deep. In his excitement one of the men pulled the log after him when only about a dozen had crossed the chasm to the side of Acoma. Only a miracle could save the little band already mixed in deadly combat

with hundreds of Indian warriors. And a miracle took place. A daring young man of strong arm, light body, and heroic spirit, flew in an incredible jump from the detached rock to the nearest edge of Acoma over the yawning gap, thrust the log back to his companions, who immediately joined those already on the side of the city. Not only the brave band of Zaldivar but also the cause of Spain in New Mexico were saved by this heroic youth.

One of the most desperate hand to hand battles in all American history followed. It is unnecessary to say that neither the pedrero nor the few flintlocks of the Spaniards were of any use in this kind of warfare. In fact they, as well as their clumsy armor, were a decided disadvantage. Moreover the Indians numbered several hundred, besides their 400 professional warriors, and all of them fought doggedly and died bravely. At last the Indians took refuge in their houses. The pedrero was then aimed at them and the crumbling adobe walls made these fortresses even more impregnable to that primitive artillery. This crumbling of walls and roofs over their fireplaces started many fires of which women and children were the principal victims. In truly Spanish fashion Zaldivar did all in his power, even at the risk of his own life, to save the women and children, whom the Indians themselves, in the heat of battle, had somewhat abandoned to their fate.

As the battle seemed practically won Zaldivar summoned again the Indians to surrender those responsible for the previous massacre as the price of peace and cessation of

further bloodshed. They refused. The Spaniards had to take their houses one by one and slay numerous determined warriors. It was only at noon of the third day that the war-chief sued for peace and surrendered to the mercy of the Spanish conquistador. This was enough. Peace was granted immediately, their rebellion was forgotten, and their treachery forgiven, for those responsible for the tragedy of nearly two months before had already paid the supreme penalty on the field of battle.

More than 500 Indians were slain or wounded, and all the surviving Spaniards wore to their death the ghastly marks of the bloodiest struggle ever staged in New Mexico. All the other Pueblos, who had been watching with great interest the outcome of that deadly encounter, were awe struck and hastened to renew their friendship with the Spaniards.

Zaldívar took to San Gabriel eighty Acoma girls. These were educated by the nuns of Old Mexico and then returned to Acoma.

10.

The glorious pages of the history of colonial Spain are not made up exclusively of deeds in the fields of battle, in the realms of diplomacy and statesmanship, in the organization and administration of peoples and regions as vast as those the Spanish conquistadores knit into a great empire in both continents of America. The quest of the fabulous and impossible—the twin sister of scientific inquiry—and the religious zeal of the missionaries, that transcends even the most unquench-

able thirst for gold or fame, caused many a humble Spaniard to win the laurels the greatest heroes who ever lived could have desired.

One such man was Francisco de Orellana, the explorer of the mightiest river in the whole world—the Amazon—from its sources, near the Pacific ocean, to the end of its mouth in the Atlantic ocean.

A member of an expedition led in 1539 by Gonzalo Pizarro in quest of El Dorado, Orellana was sent for provisions down a river which flowed past the Andes just east of Quito. It proved to be the Amazon river, originating thousands of miles away from the sea in the west, the father of a thousand other mighty rivers, the blood life of such huge and exuberant forests as human eyes had ever seen, where more abundant life thrived and more death lurked in every inch of its soil than in any other spot on earth. On and on Orellana rowed and sailed for days, and weeks, and months, until by the end of 1541 he and his men covered more than four thousand miles of exhausting and dreary rowing. The dangers and perils they encountered on this epic voyage, the fights they had to wage with cruel and hostile Indians, the hunger, the heat and cold, and all sorts of deprivations they suffered in this Odyssey, one thousand times more remarkable than that of Ulysses, are neither describable nor even conceivable. "No more astounding voyage was ever made in the history of the world," (27) says Charles

(27) Chapman, p. 58.

H. Chapman of this epic adventure. Among other things Orellana observed or thought he observed, was that some villages were inhabited by women exclusively in different parts of the mighty river, and this is the reason why it was subsequently called the Amazon, in reference to the kingdom of the Amazons of antiquity related by Herodotus.

11.

We return once more to the southwest of the present United States, where some of the most heroic deeds were performed by those remarkable Spaniards—travelers, explorers, missionaries, and conquistadores—who knew no dangers, no hardships, no obstacles of any kind, and for whom glory and praise meant nothing whatever unless it was those derived from a clear conscience and the proper performance of what they felt was their duty to God or to their fellow-beings.

The first who deserves to be remembered by every daring and generous heart is Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca, the first American traveler and one of the greatest of all time. As an achievement of physical endurance, mental resourcefulness and extreme adaptability to the most varied and trying circumstances, his life is second to none in the annals of similar adventures.

Cabeza de Vaca sailed from Spain in 1527 in the capacity of treasurer of an expedition led by Panfillo de Narvaez, who was sent to conquer Florida, previously discovered by Ponce de León. The expedition consisted of 600 men, but shipwreck and desertion reduced them to 345 before they reached Cuba.

From here they started for Florida, where they arrived on Good Friday of 1528, making their landing in Tampa Bay. As was customary they took formal possession of the country in the name of Spain and then started for the conquest of the treacherous and forbidding wilderness of the Flowery Land.

The tremendous difficulties of this gigantic enterprise soon began to appear from every side in rapid succession. Treacherous swamps extended before their eyes in an endless procession. Lakes and rivers without number retarded their march at every step. Food began to be scarce, and the surprise attacks of untamed Indian tribes began to be annoying at first and very destructive of their exiguous forces the more they advanced into their territory. The explorer's condition became desperate and the survivors, unable to retrace their steps, decided to build some boats and head towards the coasts of Mexico, a plan which they carried out at a point far west of Tampa Bay. In five wretched boats, which they had constructed with great difficulty, they started across the Gulf, but violent storms sank one after another, with all their crews, including the leader of the expedition—Narvaes. Many others perished on shore by exposure and starvation. Only 15 escaped after having lost all their arms and clothing.

These fifteen men ^{were} now among kindly Indians in an island which they called del Mal Hado—the Isle of Misfortune. The Indians treated them the best way they could, and thus the little band survived till the following spring, when all the healthy ones determined to save their lives. Cabeza de Vaca, however, Oviedo and Alaniz were left behind, the last one

unable to move on account of sickness, Alaniz soon died of his malady and, not long after, Oviedo fled from some real or imaginary danger and was never heard of again.

Now began for Cabeza de Vaca those nine years of the most thrilling journey, of the most awe-inspiring experiences, of the most terrible suffering of both body and soul that any man has ever endured. "His nine years of wandering on foot," says Charles Lummis, "unarmed, naked, starving, among wild beasts and wilder men,...gave the world its first glimpse of the United States inland, and led to some of the most stirring and important achievements connected with its early history...It is a long way back to those days...Elizabeth, the Virgin Queen, was not born when de Vaca started on his appalling journey, and did not begin to reign until twenty years after he had ended it...There was not a white man in North America above the middle of Mexico; nor had one gone two hundred miles inland in this continental wilderness, of which the world knew almost less than we know now of the moon."(28)

For six years Cabeza de Vaca lived in absolute loneliness in a state of servitude to the Indians who had treated him kindly on the Isle of Misfortune, and he was a real burden to them on account of their stark poverty. On leaving the island for the mainland, and in their wanderings through parts of the continent, in search of the scantiest fare, he accompanied them but was unable to be of any real service to them owing to

(28) Lummis (Spanish Pioneers), p. 103.

permanent enfeeblement and starvation.

His recovery on the Isle of Misfortune was attributed by the simple savages to some secret power that he himself possessed, and on this basis they forced upon him the practice of medicine, of which, of course, he knew no more than any of his former companions of misfortune. At first he laughed at the strange idea of his savage benefactors but, finally, considering that even his most rudimentary knowledge of certain curative practices followed by the humblest of his countrymen might prove superior to those followed by the savages, he accepted his new position and tried his best to do justice to their confidence. That he must have succeeded somewhat is proved by the esteem in which he was held for many years by many tribes of savages from the Gulf of Mexico to that of California.

Of all his companions who deserted him on the Isle of Misfortune only three escaped alive: Andrés Durantes, Castillo Maldonado and Estevanico, who had been born in Africa and was to play an important role in the explorations of the North American south-west. In his wanderings throughout the limitless regions of the southern United States, Cabeza de Vaca had occasionally heard of his three lost companions, but it was not until 1536, six years after their separation, that all four were again reunited, and it was thanks to de Vaca's medical accomplishments that their hopes of eventual deliverance were again revived.

By this time Cabeza de Vaca, to whom the Indians gave free reign to roam at will, began to make long excursions

northward and along the coast and bring several manufactured goods from other tribes, which he traded for other articles produced by the tribe he happened to live with, and so he enlarged more and more the horizons of his prison, became acquainted with more and more tribes and increased more and more his influence over wider regions and a greater number of peoples of different clans and customs. These forced excursions of many thousands of miles were necessary preliminaries to his plans of eventual return to civilization. Moreover they afforded him many opportunities of observing no end of novel things never seen before by white man, among which was the American bison.

Meanwhile the four companions did not cease to make plans for their escape. After ten months of careful deliberation they escaped in the direction of the Avavares tribe reaching there in August 1535. Cabeza de Vaca had instructed his companions in his new art which he had learned from the natives and through the long experience which had been forced upon him. So they presented themselves to the Avavares as expert healers and were, in consequence, received as men sent to them by the gods.

They were free men now, and could go where they pleased, doing a measure of good wherever they went and being treated well by the tribes they visited in compensation for their good work, or at least for their good intentions. Thus, slowly and painfully, they crossed Texas, Chihuahua, and Sonora, stopping with each tribe for a while to heal the sick, and heal themselves, as well, of the many hardships they had undergone for

nine years. After many adventures on their journey across Mexico they finally reached Mexico city in safety at the end of nine years of travel across most of the present United States and along the present republic of Mexico.

The report they gave of this unique and tremendously difficult journey of over 10,000 miles with all the strange peoples and countries to the north was the origin of many expeditions of discovery to Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, Kansas, Colorado and elsewhere.

12.

A less known but even more remarkable journey than that of Cabeza de Vaca was the one performed by Andrés Docampo, not by sheer necessity but voluntarily and for a definite purpose.

Docampo was one of the soldiers who accompanied Coronado on his first expedition to New Mexico in 1540. From Bernalillo the little band, composed of Fray Juan de Padilla, Docampo, and a few others, mostly Indians, started for the Quiviras in northeastern Kansas in the following year. After wandering for more than fifteen hundred miles in those fearful wildernesses, sometimes without food or water and subject to great suffering, the expedition returned to Bernalillo and finally left New Mexico. However, Fray Padilla, two lay brothers, Docampo, and a few Mexican Indians, remained, and finally went back to the plains where the Sioux and other numerous Indian tribes lived. They went through Pecos, part of Colorado, and across almost the whole length of Kansas, till they again reached the region

of the Quivira Indians. Here Fray Padilla established a mission, and though in the beginning the Indians were unusually hostile, he soon won them completely over.

Eager to make new conquests for his religion Fray Padilla decided to move to another territory. Not far from the place the expedition had left they met a band of roving Indians of a different tribe who were on the war path. Knowing their murderous intentions, the good missionary commended Docampo and his companions to flee for their lives, while he knelt down to commend his soul to God. As he prayed the Indians riddled his body with arrows, but his companions were saved from certain death to be soon captured by other Indians who kept them as slaves, beat them and subjected them to the most terrible hardships imaginable.

After ten months of suffering and planning, they made their escape and started their great odyssey of nine years through every nook and corner of the great state of Kansas and back to Tampico, Mexico, after a walk of over twenty thousand miles, one of the greatest feats of its kind in the whole history of exploration.

The details of this extraordinary journey are not known, but the fact itself is, according to Charles Lummis, historically established. However, we would like to know more about the particulars of such heroic deeds, as well as about the heroes themselves who performed them. But "the Spanish chroniclers of the day," says Lummis, "do not dilate upon the difficulties and dangers (of such journeys); it is almost a pity that they had not been vain enough to 'make more' of their obstacles.

But however curt the narrative may be on these points, the obstacles were there and had to be overcome; and to this very day, after three centuries and a half have mitigated that wilderness which covered half a world,...such journeys as were looked upon as every-day matters by those hardy heroes would find few bold enough to undertake them. The only record at all comparable to that Spanish overrunning of the New World was the story of the California Argonauts of '49; ...but even that was petty, so far as area, hardship, danger, and endurance went, beside the travels of the Pioneers...I have no desire to disparage the heroism of our Argonauts,...but they had never a chance to match the deeds of their brother-heroes of another age."(29)

13.

We feel proud, and rightly so, of the arduous work of exploration of the Grand Canyon of Colorado in 1869 by Lieutenant Wheeler and Major Powell. Although they conducted their work in a tamed country, with all of the modern implements and conveniences required for that kind of work, it was a great feat none the less. Yet, in 1540, that is, 329 years before Major Powell gazed on the Mammoth chasm, one of the greatest wonders of Nature, it had been discovered by Garcia López de Cárdenas, a lieutenant of Coronado. With only a few companions he walked through a barren desert for an enormous distance, and on September 14, 1540, he came upon its brink on the eastern side, and was therefore the first white man to see

(29) Lummis (Spanish Pioneers), p. 117 ff.

this marvel of creation.

Some years later, 1576, a missionary, Fray Silvestre de Escalante, made its first crossing at a place still called Vado de los Padres—the Padres' Ford. Naturally the thing did not happen just as summarily as it is told. The Spaniards, as we have just noticed, were very reticent about, and unmindful of, deeds that today would be considered stupendous and heroic. How much work and heroism the discovery of this path across the Grand Canyon must have taken we may imagine, by supposing what would be today our predicament if we were to find such a path in a Virgin Grand Canyon of Colorado with no more means than the Spaniards had at their disposal.

14.

The great missionary-pioneer Fray Junipero Serra had founded the flourishing mission of Monterey, which became the center of his indefatigable activity in our present California. Sonora was then the nearest point from where the mission of Monterey and its sucursals could obtain not only many necessities of life but also their missionaries, colonists and domestic animals. It was necessary, therefore, to open communications between Sonora and Monterey. Juan Bautista Anza was chosen to perform this task, and lead at the same time the first caravan through unknown, unchartered and frightful deserts of the southwest, without roads or bridges, a task which would be almost impossible today, in view of the actual difficulties and the results of this memorable expedition.

It took place in 1774. The caravan consisted of 240 men, women and children, 670 horses and colts, and 355 cattle. After fording the Colorado River near Yuma they crossed immense deserts and journeyed for 1500 miles. Of this population of 1265 living beings, how many had their bones bleach on the frightful and forbidding desert? Only one woman who died of childbirth! However, this loss was well made up by the birth of three babies, and all reached their destination without mishap.

No, not all reached their destination. Father Garcés remained in San Gabriel with three Indians as companions. But he remained with a purpose. He explored the Colorado River from Yuma to its mouth. Then he retraced his steps and went up the river as far as Mojave, crossed the grim California desert, discovered the Mojave River, climbed the Mountains of San Bernardino, and then returned to the Mission of San Gabriel. Not satisfied with these labours he went to explore the Tulare country, discovered the lake of the same name, then, by the Kern and Mojave rivers, returned to Colorado. His next journey took him to the Moqui pueblos and he was the first white man to see the Grand Canyon from the west. From here he returned to Mojave, followed it to as far as Yuma, ascended the Gila River and reached Tucson. Eleven months of continuous exploration in which he traveled over 8000 miles of forbidding desert with only three Indian companions. A grander Odyssey than that of Homer. With one difference: it was real, and the hero forgot to mention the fearful hardships he must have gone through. So, we have to use our imagination to realize what they must have been.