

BOOK III.

CONQUEST OF PERU.

CHAPTER I.

PIZARRO'S RECEPTION AT COURT.—HIS CAPITULATION WITH THE CROWN.—HE VISITS HIS BIRTHPLACE.—RETURNS TO THE NEW WORLD.—DIFFICULTIES WITH ALMAGRO.—HIS THIRD EXPEDITION.—ADVENTURES ON THE COAST.—BATTLES IN THE ISLE OF PUNÁ.

1528-1531.

PIZARRO and his officer, having crossed the Isthmus, embarked at Nombre de Dios for the old country, and after a good passage, reached Seville early in the summer of 1528. There happened to be at that time in port a person well known in the history of Spanish adventure as the Bachelor Enciso. He had taken an active part in the colonization of Tierra Firme, and had a pecuniary claim against the early colonists of Darien, of whom Pizarro was one. Immediately on the landing of the latter, he was seized by Enciso's orders, and held in custody for the debt. Pizarro, who had fled from his native land as a forlorn and houseless adventurer, after an absence of more than twenty years, passed, most of them, in unprecedented toil and suffering, now found himself on his return the inmate of a prison. Such was the commencement of those brilliant fortunes, which, as he had trusted, awaited him at home. The circumstance excited general indignation; and no sooner was the Court advised of his arrival in the coun-

try, and the great purpose of his mission, than orders were sent for his release, with permission to proceed at once on his journey.

Pizarro found the emperor at Toledo, which he was soon to quit, in order to embark for Italy. Spain was not the favorite residence of Charles the Fifth, in the earlier part of his reign. He was now at that period of it when he was enjoying the full flush of his triumphs over his gallant rival of France, whom he had defeated and taken prisoner at the great battle of Pavia; and the victor was at this moment preparing to pass into Italy to receive the imperial crown from the hands of the Roman Pontiff. Elated by his successes and his elevation to the German throne, Charles made little account of his hereditary kingdom, as his ambition found so splendid a career thrown open to it on the wide field of European politics. He had hitherto received too inconsiderable returns from his transatlantic possessions to give them the attention they deserved. But, as the recent acquisition of Mexico and the brilliant anticipations in respect to the southern continent were pressed upon his notice, he felt their importance as likely to afford him the means of prosecuting his ambitious and most expensive enterprises.

Pizarro, therefore, who had now come to satisfy the royal eyes, by visible proofs, of the truth of the golden rumors which, from time to time, had reached Castile, was graciously received by the emperor. Charles examined the various objects which his officer exhibited to him with great attention. He was particularly interested by the appearance of the llama, so remarkable as the only beast of burden yet known on the new continent; and the fine fabrics of woollen cloth, which were made from its shaggy sides, gave it a much higher value, in the eyes of the sagacious monarch, than what it possessed as an animal for domestic labor. But the specimens of gold and silver manufacture, and the wonderful tale which Pizarro had to tell of the

abundance of the precious metals, must have satisfied even the cravings of royal cupidity.

Pizarro, far from being embarrassed by the novelty of his situation, maintained his usual self-possession, and showed that decorum and even dignity in his address which belong to the Castilian. He spoke in a simple and respectful style, but with the earnestness and natural eloquence of one who had been an actor in the scenes he described, and who was conscious that the impression he made on his audience was to decide his future destiny. All listened with eagerness to the account of his strange adventures by sea and land, his wanderings in the forests, or in the dismal and pestilent swamps on the sea-coast, without food, almost without raiment, with feet torn and bleeding at every step, with his few companions becoming still fewer by disease and death, and yet pressing on with unconquerable spirit to extend the empire of Castile, and the name and power of her sovereign; but when he painted his lonely condition on the desolate island, abandoned by the government at home, deserted by all but a handful of devoted followers, his royal auditor, though not easily moved, was affected to tears. On his departure from Toledo, Charles commended the affairs of his vassal in the most favorable terms to the consideration of the Council of the Indies.¹

There was at this time another man at court, who had come there on a similar errand from the New World, but whose splendid achievements had already won for him a name that threw the rising reputation of Pizarro comparatively into the shade. This man was Hernando

¹ Pedro Pizarro, *Descub. y Conq.*, MS.—Naharro, *Relacion Sumaria*, MS.—*Conq. i Pob. del Piru*, MS.

“Hablaba tan bien en la materia, que se llevó los aplausos y atencion en Toledo donde el Emperador estaba dióle audiencia con mucho gusto, tratolo amoroso, y oyole tierno, especialmente cuando le hizo relacion de su consistencia y de los trece compañeros en la Isla en medio de tantos trabajos.” Montesinos, *Annales*, MS., año 1528.

Cortés, the Conquerer of Mexico. He had come home to lay an empire at the feet of his sovereign, and to demand in return the redress of his wrongs, and the recompense of his great services. He was at the close of his career, as Pizarro was at the commencement of his; the Conqueror of the North and of the South; the two men appointed by Providence to overturn the most potent of the Indian dynasties, and to open the golden gates by which the treasures of the New World were to pass into the coffers of Spain.

Notwithstanding the emperor's recommendation, the business of Pizarro went forward at the tardy pace with which affairs are usually conducted in the court of Castile. He found his limited means gradually sinking under the expenses incurred by his present situation, and he represented that, unless some measures were speedily taken in reference to his suit, however favorable they might be in the end, he should be in no condition to profit by them. The queen, accordingly, who had charge of the business, on her husband's departure, expedited the affair, and on the twenty-sixth of July, 1529, she executed the memorable *Capitulation*, which defined the powers and privileges of Pizarro.

The instrument secured to that chief the right of discovery and conquest in the province of Peru, or New Castile,—as the country was then called, in the same manner as Mexico had received the name of New Spain,—for the distance of two hundred leagues south of Santiago. He was to receive the titles and rank of Governor and Captain-General of the province, together with those of Adelantado, and Alguacil Mayor, for life; and he was to have a salary of seven hundred and twenty-five thousand maravedis, with the obligation of maintaining certain officers and military retainers, corresponding with the dignity of his station. He was to have the right to erect certain fortresses, with the absolute government of them; to assign *encomiendas* of Indians, under the limitations prescribed

by law; and, in fine, to exercise nearly all the prerogatives incident to the authority of a viceroy.

His associate, Almagro, was declared commander of the fortress of Tumbez, with an annual rent of three hundred thousand maravedis, and with the further rank and privileges of an hidalgo. The reverend Father Luque received the reward of his services in the Bishopric of Tumbez, and he was also declared Protector of the Indians of Peru. He was to enjoy the yearly stipend of a thousand ducats,—to be derived, like the other salaries and gratuities in this instrument, from the revenues of the conquered territory.

Nor were the subordinate actors in the expedition forgotten. Ruiz received the title of Grand Pilot of the Southern Ocean, with a liberal provision; Candia was placed at the head of the artillery; and the remaining eleven companions on the desolate island were created hidalgos and cavalleros, and raised to certain municipal dignities,—in prospect.

Several provisions of a liberal tenor were also made, to encourage emigration to the country. The new settlers were to be exempted from some of the most onerous, but customary taxes, as the *alcabala*, or to be subject to them only in a mitigated form. The tax on the precious metals drawn from mines was to be reduced, at first, to one tenth, instead of the fifth imposed on the same metals when obtained by barter or by rapine.

It was expressly enjoined on Pizarro to observe the existing regulations for the good government and protection of the natives; and he was required to carry out with him a specified number of ecclesiastics, with whom he was to take counsel in the conquest of the country, and whose efforts were to be dedicated to the service and conversion of the Indians; while lawyers and attorneys, on the other hand, whose presence was considered as boding ill to the harmony of the new settlements, were strictly prohibited from setting foot in them.

Pizarro, on his part, was bound, in six months from the date of the instrument, to raise a force, well equipped for the service, of two hundred and fifty men, of whom one hundred might be drawn from the colonies; and the government engaged to furnish some trifling assistance in the purchase of artillery and military stores. Finally, he was to be prepared, in six months after his return to Panamá, to leave that port and embark on his expedition.²

Such are some of the principal provisions of this Capitulation, by which the Castilian government, with the sagacious policy which it usually pursued on the like occasions, stimulated the ambitious hopes of the adventurer by high-sounding titles, and liberal promises of reward contingent on his success, but took care to stake nothing itself on the issue of the enterprise. It was careful to reap the fruits of his toil, but not to pay the cost of them.

A circumstance that could not fail to be remarked in these provisions was the manner in which the high and lucrative posts were accumulated on Pizarro, to the exclusion of Almagro, who, if he had not taken as conspicuous a part in personal toil and exposure, had, at least, divided with him the original burden of the enterprise, and, by his labors in another direction, had contributed quite as essentially to its success. Almagro had willingly conceded the post of honor to his confederate; but it had been stipulated, on Pizarro's departure for Spain, that, while he solicited the office of Governor and Captain-General for himself, he should secure that of Adelantado for his companion. In like manner he had engaged to apply for the see of Tumbes for the vicar of Panamá, and the office of Alguacil Mayor

² This remarkable document, formerly in the archives of Simancas, and now transferred to the *Archivo General de las Indias* in Seville, was transcribed for the rich collection of the late Don Martin Fernandez de Navarrete, to whose kindness I am indebted for a copy of it.—It will be found printed entire, in the original, in *Appendix, No. 7.*

for the Pilot Ruiz. The bishopric took the direction that was concerted, for the soldier could scarcely claim the mitre of the prelate; but the other offices, instead of their appropriate distribution, were all concentrated in himself. Yet it was in reference to his application for his friends, that Pizarro had promised on his departure to deal fairly and honorably by them all.³

It is stated by the military chronicler, Pedro Pizarro, that his kinsman did, in fact, urge the suit strongly in behalf of Almagro; but that he was refused by the government, on the ground that offices of such paramount importance could not be committed to different individuals. The ill effects of such an arrangement had been long since felt in more than one of the Indian colonies, where it had led to rivalry and fatal collision.⁴ Pizarro, therefore, finding his remonstrances unheeded, had no alternative but to combine the offices in his own person, or to see the expedition fall to the ground. This explanation of the affair has not received the sanction of other contemporary historians. The apprehensions expressed by Luque, at the time of Pizarro's assuming the mission, of some such result as actually

³ "Al fin se capituló, que Francisco Piçarro negociase la Governacion para si: i para Diego de Almagro, el Adelantamiento: i para Hernando de Luque, el Obispado: i para Bartolomé Ruiz, el Alguacilazgo Maior: i Mercedes para los que quedaban vivos, de los trece Compañeros, afirmando siempre Francisco Piçarro, que todo lo queria para ellos, i prometiendo, que negociaria lealmente, i sin ninguna cantela." Herrera, *Hist. General*, dec. 4, lib. 3, cap. 1.

⁴ "Y don Francisco Piçarro pidio conforme á lo que llevaba capitulado y hordenado con sus compañeros ya dicho, y en el consejo se le rrespondio que no avia lugar de dar governacion a dos compañeros, á causa de que en santa marta se avia dado así á dos compañeros y el uno avia muerto al otro. . . . Pues pedido, como digo, muchas vezes por don Francisco Piçarro se les hiziese la merced á ambos compañeros, se le rrespondio la pidiesse parassi sino que se daria á otro, y visto que no avia lugar lo que pedia y queria pedio se le hiziese la merced a el, y así se le hizo." Descub. y Conq., MS.

occurred, founded, doubtless, on a knowledge of his associate's character, may warrant us in distrusting the alleged vindication of his conduct, and our distrust will not be diminished by familiarity with his subsequent career. Pizarro's virtue was not of a kind to withstand temptation,—though of a much weaker sort than that now thrown in his path.

The fortunate cavalier was also honored with the habit of St. Jago;⁵ and he was authorized to make an important innovation in his family escutcheon,—for by the father's side he might claim his armorial bearings. The black eagle and the two pillars emblazoned on the royal arms were incorporated with those of the Pizarros; and an Indian city, with a vessel in the distance on the waters, and the llama of Peru, revealed the theatre and the character of his exploits; while the legend announced, that “under the auspices of Charles, and by the industry, the genius, and the resources of Pizarro, the country had been discovered and reduced to tranquillity,”—thus modestly intimating both the past and prospective services of the Conqueror.⁶

These arrangements having been thus completed to Pizarro's satisfaction, he left Toledo for Truxillo, his native place, in Estremadura, where he thought he should be most likely to meet with adherents for his new enterprise, and where it doubtless gratified his vanity to display himself in the palmy, or at least promising, state of his present circumstances. If vanity be ever pardonable, it is certainly in a man who, born in an obscure station in life, without family, interest, or friends to back him, has carved out his

⁵ Xerez, Conq. del Peru, ap. Barcia, tom. III. p. 182.—Oviedo, Hist. de las Indias, MS., Parte 3, lib. 8, cap. 1.—Caro de Torres, Historia de las Ordenes Militares, (ed. Madrid, 1629,) p. 113.

⁶ “Caroli Caesaris auspicio, et labore, ingenio, ac impensa Ducis Pizarro inventa, et pacata.” Herrera, Hist. General, dec. 4, lib. 6, cap. 5.

own fortunes in the world, and, by his own resources, triumphed over all the obstacles which nature and accident had thrown in his way. Such was the condition of Pizarro, as he now revisited the place of his nativity, where he had hitherto been known only as a poor outcast, without a home to shelter, a father to own him, or a friend to lean upon. But he now found both friends and followers, and some who were eager to claim kindred with him, and take part in his future fortunes. Among these were four brothers. Three of them, like himself, were illegitimate; one of whom, named Francisco Martin de Alcántara, was related to him by the mother's side; the other two, named Gonzalo and Juan Pizarro, were descended from the father. “They were all poor, and proud as they were poor,” says Oviedo, who had seen them; “and their eagerness for gain was in proportion to their poverty.”⁷

The remaining and eldest brother, named Hernando, was a legitimate son,—“legitimate,” continues the same caustic authority, “by his pride, as well as by his birth.” His features were plain, even disagreeably so; but his figure was good. He was large of stature, and, like his brother Francis, had on the whole an imposing presence.⁸ In his character, he combined some of the worst defects incident to the Castilian. He was jealous in the extreme; impatient not merely of affront, but of the least slight, and implacable in his resentment. He was decisive in his measures,

⁷ “Trujo tres o cuatro hermanos suyos tan soberbios como pobres, é tan sin hacienda como deseosos de alcanzarla.” Hist. de las Indias, MS., Parte 3, lib. 8, cap. 1.

⁸ Oviedo's portrait of him is by no means flattering. He writes like one too familiar with the original. “É de todos ellos el Hernando Pizarro solo era legítimo, é mas legitimado en la soberbia, hombre de alta estatura é grueso, la lengua é lablos gordos, é la punta de la nariz con sobrada carne é encendida, y este fue el desavenidor y estorbador del sosiego de todos y en especial de los dos viejos compañeros Francisco Pizarro é Diego de Almagro.” Hist. de las Indias, MS., ubi supra.

and unscrupulous in their execution. No touch of pity had power to arrest his arm. His arrogance was such, that he was constantly wounding the self-love of those with whom he acted; thus begetting an ill-will which unnecessarily multiplied obstacles in his path. In this he differed from his brother Francis, whose plausible manners smoothed away difficulties, and conciliated confidence and coöperation in his enterprises. Unfortunately, the evil counsels of Hernando exercised an influence over his brother which more than compensated the advantages derived from his singular capacity for business.

Notwithstanding the general interest which Pizarro's adventures excited in his country, that chief did not find it easy to comply with the provisions of the Capitulation in respect to the amount of his levies. Those who were most astonished by his narrative were not always most inclined to take part in his fortunes. They shrunk from the unparalleled hardships which lay in the path of the adventurer in that direction; and they listened with visible distrust to the gorgeous pictures of the golden temples and gardens of Tumbez, which they looked upon as indebted in some degree, at least, to the coloring of his fancy, with the obvious purpose of attracting followers to his banner. It is even said that Pizarro would have found it difficult to raise the necessary funds, but for the seasonable aid of Cortés, a native of Estremadura like himself, his companion in arms in early days, and, according to report, his kinsman.⁹ No one was in a better condition to hold out a helping hand to a brother adventurer, and, probably, no one felt greater sympathy in Pizarro's fortunes, or greater confidence in his eventual success, than the man who had so lately trod the same career with renown.

The six months allowed by the Capitulation had elapsed, and Pizarro had assembled somewhat less than his stipulated complement of men, with which he was preparing to

⁹ Pizarro y Orellana, Varones Ilustres, p. 143.

embark in a little squadron of three vessels at Seville; but, before they were wholly ready, he received intelligence that the officers of the Council of the Indies proposed to inquire into the condition of the vessels, and ascertain how far the requisitions had been complied with.

Without loss of time, therefore, Pizarro, afraid, if the facts were known, that his enterprise might be nipped in the bud, slipped his cables, and crossing the bar of San Lucar, in January, 1530, stood for the isle of Gomera,—one of the Canaries,—where he ordered his brother Hernando, who had charge of the remaining vessels, to meet him.

Scarcely had he gone, before the officers arrived to institute the search. But when they objected the deficiency of men, they were easily—perhaps willingly—deceived by the pretext that the remainder had gone forward in the vessel with Pizarro. At all events, no further obstacles were thrown in Hernando's way, and he was permitted, with the rest of the squadron, to join his brother, according to agreement, at Gomera.

After a prosperous voyage, the adventurers reached the northern coast of the great southern continent, and anchored off the port of Santa Marta. Here they received such discouraging reports of the countries to which they were bound, of forests teeming with insects and venomous serpents, of huge alligators that swarmed on the banks of the streams, and of hardships and perils such as their own fears had never painted, that several of Pizarro's men deserted; and their leader, thinking it no longer safe to abide in such treacherous quarters, set sail at once for Nombre de Dios.

Soon after his arrival there, he was met by his two associates, Luque and Almagro, who had crossed the mountains for the purpose of hearing from his own lips the precise import of the capitulation with the Crown. Great, as might have been expected, was Almagro's discontent at