CONQUEST OF PERU.

BOOK III.

CONQUEST OF PERU.

(CONTINUED.)

CHAPTER IX.

NEW INCA CROWNED.—MUNICIPAL REGULATIONS.—TERRIBLE MARCH OF ALVARADO.—INTERVIEW WITH PIZARRO.—FOUNDATION OF LIMA.—HERNANDO PIZARRO REACHES SPAIN.—SENSATION AT COURT.—FEUDS OF ALMAGRO AND THE PIZARROS.

1534–1535.

THE first care of the Spanish general, after the division of the booty, was to place Manco on the throne, and to obtain for him the recognition of his countrymen. He, accordingly, presented the young prince to them as their future sovereign, the legitimate son of Huayna Capac, and the true heir of the Peruvian sceptre. The annunciation was received with enthusiasm by the people attached to the memory of his illustrious father, and pleased that they were still to have a monarch rule over them of the ancient line of Cuzco.

Every thing was done to maintain the illusion with the Indian population. The ceremonies of a coronation were studiously observed. The young prince kept the prescribed fasts and vigils; and on the appointed day, the nobles and the people, with the whole Spanish soldiery, assembled in the great square of Cuzco to witness the concluding ceremony. Mass was publicly performed by Father Valverde, and the Inca Manco received the fringed diadem of Peru, not from the hand of the high priest of his nation, but from his Conqueror, Pizarro. The Indian lords then tendered their obeisance in the customary form; after which the royal notary read aloud the instrument asserting the supremacy of the Castilian Crown, and requiring the homage of all present to its authority. This address was explained by an interpreter, and the ceremony of homage was performed by each one of the parties waving the royal banner of Castile twice or thrice with his hands. Manco then pledged the Spanish commander in a golden goblet of the sparkling *chicha;* and, the latter having cordially embraced the new monarch, the trumpets announced the conclusion of the ceremony.[1] But it was not the note of triumph, but of humiliation; for it proclaimed that the armed foot of the stranger was in the halls of the Peruvian Incas; that the ceremony of coronation was a miserable pageant; that their prince himself was but a puppet in the hands of his Conqueror; and that the glory of the Children of the Sun had departed for ever!

Yet the people readily gave in to the illusion, and seemed willing to accept this image of their ancient independence. The accession of the young monarch was greeted by all the usual *fêtes* and rejoicings. The mummies of his royal ancestors, with such ornaments as were still left to them, were paraded in the great square. They were attended each by his own numerous retinue, who performed all the menial offices, as if the object of them were alive and could feel their import. Each ghostly form took its seat at the banquet-table—now, alas! stripped of the magnificent service with which it was wont to blaze at these high festivals—and the guests drank deep to the illustrious dead. Dancing

[1] Pedro Pizarro, Descub. y Conq., MS.—Ped. Sancho, Rel., ap. Ramusio, tom. III. fol. 407.

succeeded the carousal, and the festivities, prolonged to a late hour, were continued night after night by the giddy population, as if their conquerors had not been intrenched in the capital![2]—What a contrast to the Aztecs in the conquest of Mexico!

Pizarro's next concern was to organize a municipal government for Cuzco, like those in the cities of the parent country. Two *alcaldes* were appointed, and eight *regidores,* among which last functionaries were his brothers Gonzalo and Juan. The oaths of office were administered with great solemnity, on the twenty-fourth of March, 1534, in presence both of Spaniards and Peruvians, in the public square; as if the general were willing by this ceremony to intimate to the latter, that, while they retained the semblance of their ancient institutions, the real power was henceforth vested in their conquerors.[3] He invited Spaniards to settle in the place by liberal grants of land and houses, for which means were afforded by the numerous palaces and public buildings of the Incas; and many a cavalier, who had been too poor in his own country to find a place to rest in, now saw himself the proprietor of a spacious mansion that might have entertained the retinue of a prince.[4] From this time, says an old chronicler,

[2] Pedro Pizarro, Descub. y Conq., MS.

"Luego por la mañana iba al enterramiento donde estaban cada uno por orden embalsamados como es dicho, y asentados en sus sillas, y con mucha veneracion y respeto, todos por orden los sacaban de alli y los trahian á la ciudad, teniendo cada uno su litera, y hombres con su librea, que le trujesen, y ansi desta manera todo el servicio y aderezos como si estubiera vivo." Relacion del Primer. Descub., MS.

[3] Ped. Sancho, Rel., ap. Ramusio, tom. III. fol. 409.—Montesinos, Annales, MS., año 1534.—Actto de la fundacion del Cuzco, MS.

This instrument, which belongs to the collection of Muñoz, records not only the names of the magistrates, but of the *vecinos* who formed the first population of the *Christian* capital.

[4] Actto de la fundacion del Cuzco, MS.—Pedro Pizarro, Descub. y Conq., MS.—Garcilasso, Com. Real., Parte 1, lib. 7, cap. 9, et seq.

Pizarro, who had hitherto been distinguished by his military title of "Captain-General," was addressed by that of "Governor."[5] Both had been bestowed on him by the royal grant.

Nor did the chief neglect the interests of religion. Father Valverde, whose nomination as Bishop of Cuzco not long afterwards received the papal sanction, prepared to enter on the duties of his office. A place was selected for the cathedral of his diocese, facing the *plaza*. A spacious monastery subsequently rose on the ruins of the gorgeous House of the Sun; its walls were constructed of the ancient stones; the altar was raised on the spot where shone the bright image of the Peruvian deity, and the cloisters of the Indian temple were trodden by the friars of St. Dominic.[6] To make the metamorphosis more complete, the House of the Virgins of the Sun was replaced by a Roman Catholic nunnery.[7] Christian churches and monasteries gradually supplanted the ancient edifices, and such of the latter as were suffered to remain, despoiled of their heathen insignia, were placed under the protection of the Cross.

The Fathers of St. Dominic, the Brethren of the Order

When a building was of immense size, as happened with some of the temples and palaces, it was assigned to two or even three of the Conquerors, who each took his share of it. Garcilasso, who describes the city as it was soon after the Conquest, commemorates with sufficient prolixity the names of the cavaliers among whom the buildings were distributed.

[5] Montesinos, Annales, año 1534.

[6] Garcilasso, Com. Real., Parte 1, lib. 3, cap. 20; lib. 6, cap. 21.—Naharro, Relacion Sumaria, MS.

[7] Ulloa, Voyage to S. America, book 7, ch. 12.

"The Indian nuns," says the author of the Relacion del Primer. Descub., "lived chastely and in a holy manner."—"Their chastity was all a feint," says Pedro Pizarro, "for they had constant amours with the attendants on the temple." (Descub. y Conq., MS.)—What is truth?—In statements so contradictory, we may accept the most favorable to the Peruvian. The prejudices of the Conquerors certainly did not lie on that side.

of Mercy, and other missionaries, now busied themselves in the good work of conversion. We have seen that Pizarro was required by the Crown to bring out a certain number of these holy men in his own vessels; and every succeeding vessel brought an additional reinforcement of ecclesiastics. They were not all like the Bishop of Cuzco, with hearts so seared by fanaticism as to be closed against sympathy with the unfortunate natives.[8] They were, many of them, men of singular humility, who followed in the track of the conqueror to scatter the seeds of spiritual truth, and, with disinterested zeal, devoted themselves to the propagation of the Gospel. Thus did their pious labors prove them the true soldiers of the Cross, and showed that the object so ostentatiously avowed of carrying its banner among the heathen nations was not an empty vaunt.

The effort to Christianize the heathen is an honorable characteristic of the Spanish conquests. The Puritan, with equal religious zeal, did comparatively little for the conversion of the Indian, content, as it would seem, with having secured to himself the inestimable privilege of worshipping God in his own way. Other adventurers who have occupied the New World have often had too little regard for religion themselves, to be very solicitous about spreading it among the savages. But the Spanish missionary, from first to last, has shown a keen interest in the spiritual welfare of the natives. Under his auspices, churches on a magnificent scale have been erected, schools for elementary instruction founded, and every rational

[8] Such, however, it is but fair to Valverde to state, is not the language applied to him by the rude soldiers of the Conquest. The municipality of Xauxa, in a communication to the Court, extol the Dominican as an exemplary and learned divine, who had afforded much serviceable consolation to his countrymen. "Es persona de mucho exemplo i Doctrina i con quien todos los Españoles an tenido mucho consuelo." (Carta de la Just. y Reg. de Xauxa, MS.) And yet this is not incompatible with a high degree of insensibility to the natural rights of the natives.

means taken to spread the knowledge of religious truth, while he has carried his solitary mission into remote and almost inaccessible regions, or gathered his Indian disciples into communities, like the good Las Casas in Cumaná, or the Jesuits in California and Paraguay. At all times, the courageous ecclesiastic has been ready to lift his voice against the cruelty of the conqueror, and the no less wasting cupidity of the colonist; and when his remonstrances, as was too often the case, have proved unavailing, he has still followed to bind up the broken-hearted, to teach the poor Indian resignation under his lot, and light up his dark intellect with the revelation of a holier and happier existence. In reviewing the blood-stained records of Spanish colonial history, it is but fair, and at the same time cheering, to reflect, that the same nation which sent forth the hard-hearted conqueror from its bosom sent forth the missionary to do the work of beneficence, and spread the light of Christian civilization over the farthest regions of the New World.

While the governor, as we are henceforth to style him, lay at Cuzco, he received repeated accounts of a considerable force in the neighborhood, under the command of Atahuallpa's officer, Quizquiz. He accordingly detached Almagro, with a small body of horse and a large Indian force under the Inca Manco, to disperse the enemy, and, if possible, to capture their leader. Manco was the more ready to take part in the expedition, as the enemy were soldiers of Quito, who, with their commander, bore no good-will to himself.

Almagro, moving with his characteristic rapidity, was not long in coming up with the Indian chieftain. Several sharp encounters followed, as the army of Quito fell back on Xauxa, near which a general engagement decided the fate of the war by the total discomfiture of the natives. Quizquiz fled to the elevated plains of Quito, where he still held out with undaunted spirit against a Spanish force in

that quarter, till at length his own soldiers, wearied by these long and ineffectual hostilities, massacred their commander in cold blood.[9] Thus fell the last of the two great officers of Atahuallpa, who, if their nation had been animated by a spirit equal to their own, might long have successfully maintained their soil against the invader.

Some time before this occurrence, the Spanish governor, while in Cuzco, received tidings of an event much more alarming to him than any Indian hostilities. This was the arrival on the coast of a strong Spanish force, under command of Don Pedro de Alvarado, the gallant officer who had served under Cortés with such renown in the war of Mexico. That cavalier, after forming a brilliant alliance in Spain, to which he was entitled by his birth and military rank, had returned to his government of Guatemala, where his avarice had been roused by the magnificent reports he daily received of Pizarro's conquests. These conquests, he learned, had been confined to Peru; while the northern kingdom of Quito, the ancient residence of Atahuallpa, and, no doubt, the principal depository of his treasures, yet remained untouched. Affecting to consider this country as falling without the governor's jurisdiction, he immediately turned a large fleet, which he had intended for the Spice Islands, in the direction of South America; and in March, 1534, he landed in the bay of Caraques, with five hundred followers, of whom half were mounted, and all admirably provided with arms and ammunition. It was the best equipped and most formidable array that had yet appeared in the southern seas.[10]

[9] Pedro Pizarro, Descub. y Conq., MS.—Naharro, Relacion Sumaria, MS.—Oviedo, Hist. de las Indias, MS., Parte 3, lib. 8, cap. 20.—Ped., Sancho, Rel., ap. Ramusio, tom. III. fol. 408.—Relacion del Primer. Descub., MS.

[10] The number is variously reported by historians. But from a legal investigation made in Guatemala, it appears that the whole force amounted to 500, of which 230 were cavalry.—Informacion echa en Santiago, Set. 15, 1536, MS.

Although manifestly an invasion of the territory conceded to Pizarro by the Crown, the reckless cavalier determined to march at once on Quito. With the assistance of an Indian guide, he proposed to take the direct route across the mountains, a passage of exceeding difficulty, even at the most favorable season.

After crossing the Rio Dable, Alvarado's guide deserted him, so that he was soon entangled in the intricate mazes of the sierra; and, as he rose higher and higher into the regions of winter, he became surrounded with ice and snow, for which his men, taken from the warm countries of Guatemala, were but ill prepared. As the cold grew more intense, many of them were so benumbed, that it was with difficulty they could proceed. The infantry, compelled to make exertions, fared best. Many of the troopers were frozen stiff in their saddles. The Indians, still more sensible to the cold, perished by hundreds. As the Spaniards huddled round their wretched bivouacs, with such scanty fuel as they could glean, and almost without food, they waited in gloomy silence the approach of morning. Yet the morning light, which gleamed coldly on the cheerless waste, brought no joy to them. It only revealed more clearly the extent of their wretchedness. Still struggling on through the winding Puertos Nevados, or Snowy Passes, their track was dismally marked by fragments of dress, broken harness, golden ornaments, and other valuables plundered on their march,—by the dead bodies of men, or by those less fortunate, who were left to die alone in the wilderness. As for the horses, their carcasses were not suffered long to cumber the ground, as they were quickly seized and devoured half raw by the starving soldiers, who, like the famished condors, now hovering in troops above their heads, greedily banqueted on the most offensive offal to satisfy the gnawings of hunger.

Alvarado, anxious to secure the booty which had fallen into his hands at an earlier part of his march, encouraged

every man to take what gold he wanted from the common heap, reserving only the royal fifth. But they only answered, with a ghastly smile of derision, "that food was the only gold for them." Yet in this extremity, which might seem to have dissolved the very ties of nature, there are some affecting instances recorded of self-devotion; of comrades who lost their lives in assisting others, and of parents and husbands (for some of the cavaliers were accompanied by their wives) who, instead of seeking their own safety, chose to remain and perish in the snows with the objects of their love.

To add to their distress, the air was filled for several days with thick clouds of earthy particles and cinders, which blinded the men, and made respiration exceedingly difficult.[11] This phenomenon, it seems probable, was caused by an eruption of the distant Cotopaxi, which, about twelve leagues southeast of Quito, rears up its colossal and perfectly symmetrical cone far above the limits of eternal snow,—the most beautiful and the most terrible of the American volcanoes.[12] At the time of Alvarado's expedition, it was in a state of eruption, the earliest instance of the kind on record, though doubtless not the earliest.[13] Since that period, it has been in frequent commotion, sending up its sheets of flame to the height of half a mile,

[11] "It began to rain earthly particles from the heavens," says Oviedo, "that blinded the men and horses, so that the trees and bushes were full of dirt." Hist. de las Indias, MS., Parte 3, lib. 8, cap. 20.

[12] Garcilasso says the shower of ashes came from the "volcano of Quito." (Com. Real., Parte 2, lib. 2, cap. 2.) Cieza de Leon only says from one of the volcanoes in that region. (Cronica, cap. 41.) Neither of them specify the name. Humboldt accepts the common opinion, that Cotopaxi was intended. Researches, I. 123.

[13] A popular tradition among the natives states, that a large fragment of porphyry near the base of the cone was thrown out in an eruption, which occurred at the moment of Atahuallpa's death.—But such tradition will hardly pass for history.

spouting forth cataracts of lava that have overwhelmed towns and villages in their career, and shaking the earth with subterraneous thunders, that, at the distance of more than a hundred leagues, sounded like the reports of artillery![14] Alvarado's followers, unacquainted with the cause of the phenomenon, as they wandered over tracts buried in snow,—the sight of which was strange to them,—in an atmosphere laden with ashes, became bewildered by this confusion of the elements, which Nature seemed to have contrived purposely for their destruction. Some of these men were the soldiers of Cortés, steeled by many a painful march, and many a sharp encounter with the Aztecs. But this war of the elements, they now confessed, was mightier than all.

At length, Alvarado, after sufferings which even the most hardy, probably, could have endured but a few days longer, emerged from the Snowy Pass, and came on the elevated table-land, which spreads out, at the height of more than nine thousand feet above the ocean, in the neighborhood of Riobamba. But one fourth of his gallant army had been left to feed the condor in the wilderness, besides the greater part, at least two thousand, of his Indian auxiliaries. A great number of his horses, too, had perished; and the men and horses that escaped were all of them more or less injured by the cold and the extremity of suffering.—Such was the terrible passage of the Puertos Nevados, which I have only briefly noticed as an episode to the Peruvian conquest, but the account of which, in all its details, though it occupied but a few weeks in duration, would give one a better idea of the difficulties encountered

[14] A minute account of this formidable mountain is given by M. de Humboldt, (Researches, I. 118, et seq.,) and more circumstantially by Condamine. (Voyage à l'Equateur, pp. 48–56, 156–160.) The latter philosopher would have attempted to scale the almost perpendicular walls of the volcano, but no one was hardy enough to second him.

by the Spanish cavaliers, than volumes of ordinary narrative.[15]

As Alvarado, after halting some time to restore his exhausted troops, began his march across the broad plateau, he was astonished by seeing the prints of horses' hoofs on the soil. Spaniards, then, had been there before him, and, after all his toil and suffering, others had forestalled him in the enterprise against Quito! It is necessary to say a few words in explanation of this.

When Pizarro quitted Caxamalca, being sensible of the growing importance of San Miguel, the only port of entry then in the country, he despatched a person in whom he had great confidence to take charge of it. This person was Sebastian Benalcazar, a cavalier who afterwards placed his name in the first rank of the South American conquerors, for courage, capacity,—and cruelty. But this cavalier had hardly reached his government, when, like Alvarado, he received such accounts of the riches of Quito, that he determined, with the force at his command, though without orders, to undertake its reduction.

At the head of about a hundred and forty soldiers, horse and foot, and a stout body of Indian auxiliaries, he marched up the broad range of the Andes, to where it spreads out into the table-land of Quito, by a road safer and more ex-

[15] By far the most spirited and thorough record of Alvarado's march is given by Herrera, who has borrowed the pen of Livy describing the Alpine march of Hannibal. (Hist. General, dec. 5, lib. 6, cap. 1, 2, 7, 8, 9.) See also Pedro Pizarro, Descub. y Conq., MS.,—Oviedo, Hist. de las Indias, MS., Parte 3, lib. 8, cap. 20,—and Carta de Pedro de Alvarado al Emperador, San Miguel, 15 de Enero, 1535, MS.

Alvarado, in the letter above cited, which is preserved in the Muñoz collection, explains to the Emperor the grounds of his expedition, with no little effrontery. In this document he touches very briefly on the march, being chiefly occupied by the negotiations with Almagro, and accompanying his remarks with many dark suggestions as to the policy pursued by the Conquerors.

peditious than that taken by Alvarado. On the plains of Riobamba he encountered the Indian general Ruminavi. Several engagements followed, with doubtful success, when, in the end, science prevailed where courage was well matched, and the victorious Benalcazar planted the standard of Castile on the ancient towers of Atahuallpa. The city, in honor of his general, Francis Pizarro, he named San Francisco del Quito. But great was his mortification on finding that either the stories of its riches had been fabricated, or that these riches were secreted by the natives. The city was all that he gained by his victories,—the shell without the pearl of price which gave it its value. While devouring his chagrin, as he best could, the Spanish captain received tidings of the approach of his superior Almagro.[16]

No sooner had the news of Alvarado's expedition reached Cuzco, than Almagro left the place with a small force for San Miguel, proposing to strengthen himself by a reinforcement from that quarter, and to march at once against the invaders. Greatly was he astonished, on his arrival in that city, to learn the departure of its commander. Doubting the loyalty of his motives, Almagro, with the buoyancy of spirit which belongs to youth, though in truth somewhat enfeebled by the infirmities of age, did not hesitate to follow Benalcazar at once across the mountains.

With his wonted energy, the intrepid veteran, overcoming all the difficulties of his march, in a few weeks placed himself and his little company on the lofty plains which spread around the Indian city of Riobamba; though in his progress he had more than one hot encounter with the natives, whose courage and perseverance formed a contrast sufficiently striking to the apathy of the Peruvians. But the fire only slumbered in the bosom of the Peruvian. His hour had not yet come.

[16] Pedro Pizarro, Descub. y Conq., MS.—Herrera, Hist. General, dec. 5, lib. 4, cap. 11, 18; lib. 6, cap. 5, 6.—Oviedo, Hist. de las Indias, MS., Parte 3, lib. 8, cap. 19.—Carta de Benalcazar. MS.

At Riobamba, Almagro was soon joined by the commander of San Miguel, who disclaimed, perhaps sincerely, any disloyal intent in his unauthorized expedition. Thus reinforced, the Spanish captain coolly awaited the coming of Alvarado. The forces of the latter, though in a less serviceable condition, were much superior in number and appointments to those of his rival. As they confronted each other on the broad plains of Riobamba, it seemed probable that a fierce struggle must immediately follow, and the natives of the country have the satisfaction to see their wrongs avenged by the very hands that inflicted them. But it was Almagro's policy to avoid such an issue.

Negotiations were set on foot, in which each party stated his claims to the country. Meanwhile Alvarado's men mingled freely with their countrymen in the opposite army, and heard there such magnificent reports of the wealth and wonders of Cuzco, that many of them were inclined to change their present service for that of Pizarro. Their own leader, too, satisfied that Quito held out no recompense worth the sacrifices he had made, and was like to make, by insisting on his claim, became now more sensible of the rashness of a course which must doubtless incur the censure of his sovereign. In this temper, it was not difficult for them to effect an adjustment of difficulties; and it was agreed, as the basis of it, that the governor should pay one hundred thousand *pesos de oro* to Alvarado, in consideration of which the latter was to resign to him his fleet, his forces, and all his stores and munitions. His vessels, great and small, amounted to twelve in number, and the sum he received, though large, did not cover his expenses. This treaty being settled, Alvarado proposed, before leaving the country, to have an interview with Pizarro.[17]

[17] Conq. i Pob. del Piru, MS.—Naharro, Relacion Sumaria, MS. —Pedro Pizarro, Descub. y Conq., MS.—Herrera, Hist. General, dec. 5, lib. 6, cap. 8-10.—Oviedo, Hist. de las Indias, MS., Parte 3, lib. 8, cap. 20.—Carta de Benalcazar, MS.