



CHAPTER VI.

MOVEMENTS OF THE CONSPIRATORS.—ADVANCE OF VACA DE CASTRO.—PROCEEDINGS OF ALMAGRO.—PROGRESS OF THE GOVERNOR.—THE FORCES APPROACH EACH OTHER.—BLOODY PLAINS OF CHUPAS.—CONDUCT OF VACA DE CASTRO.

1541-1543.

THE first step of the conspirators, after securing possession of the capital, was to send to the different cities, proclaiming the revolution which had taken place, and demanding the recognition of the young Almagro as governor of Peru. Where the summons was accompanied by a military force, as at Truxillo and Arequipa, it was obeyed without much cavil. But in other cities a colder assent was given, and in some the requisition was treated with contempt. In Cuzco, the place of most importance next to Lima, a considerable number of the Almagro faction secured the ascendancy of their party; and such of the magistracy as resisted were ejected from their offices to make room for others of a more accommodating temper. But the loyal inhabitants of the city, dissatisfied with this proceeding, privately sent to one of Pizarro's captains, named Alvarez de Holguin, who lay with a considerable force in the neighborhood; and that officer, entering the place, soon dispossessed the new dignitaries of their honors, and restored the ancient capital to its allegiance.

The conspirators experienced a still more determined opposition from Alonso de Alvarado, one of the principal captains of Pizarro,—defeated, as the reader will remember, by the elder Almagro at the bridge of Abancay,—and now lying in the north with a corps of about two hundred men,

as good troops as any in the land. That officer, on receiving tidings of his general's assassination, instantly wrote to the Licentiate Vaca de Castro, advising him of the state of affairs in Peru, and urging him to quicken his march towards the south.¹

This functionary had been sent out by the Spanish Crown, as noticed in a preceding chapter, to coöperate with Pizarro in restoring tranquillity to the country, with authority to assume the government himself, in case of that commander's death. After a long and tempestuous voyage, he had landed, in the spring of 1541, at the port of Buena Ventura, and, disgusted with the dangers of the sea, preferred to continue his wearisome journey by land. But so enfeebled was he by the hardships he had undergone, that it was full three months before he reached Popayan, where he received the astounding tidings of the death of Pizarro. This was the contingency which had been provided for, with such judicious forecast, in his instructions. Yet he was sorely perplexed by the difficulties of his situation. He was a stranger in the land, with a very imperfect knowledge of the country, without an armed force to support him, without even the military science which might be supposed necessary to avail himself of it. He knew nothing of the degree of Almagro's influence, or of the extent to which the insurrection had spread,—nothing, in short, of the dispositions of the people among whom he was cast.

In such an emergency, a feebler spirit might have listened to the counsels of those who advised to return to Panamá, and stay there until he had mustered a sufficient force to enable him to take the field against the insurgents with advantage. But the courageous heart of Vaca de Castro shrunk from a step which would proclaim his incompetency

¹ Zarate, *Conq. del Peru*, lib. 4, cap. 13.—Herrera, *Hist. General*, dec. 6, lib. 10, cap. 7.—*Declaracion de Uscategui*, MS.—*Carta del Maestro, Martin de Arauco*, MS.—*Carta de Fray Vicente Valverde, desde Tumbes*, MS.

to the task assigned him. He had confidence in his own resources, and in the virtue of the commission under which he acted. He relied, too, on the habitual loyalty of the Spaniards; and, after mature deliberation, he determined to go forward, and trust to events for accomplishing the objects of his mission.

He was confirmed in this purpose by the advices he now received from Alvarado; and without longer delay, he continued his march towards Quito. Here he was well received by Gonzalo Pizarro's lieutenant, who had charge of the place during his commander's absence on his expedition to the Amazon. The licentiate was also joined by Benalcázar, the conqueror of Quito, who brought a small reinforcement, and offered personally to assist him in the prosecution of his enterprise. He now displayed the royal commission, empowering him, on Pizarro's death, to assume the government. That contingency had arrived, and Vaca de Castro declared his purpose to exercise the authority conferred on him. At the same time, he sent emissaries to the principal cities, requiring their obedience to him as the lawful representative of the Crown,—taking care to employ discreet persons on the mission, whose character would have weight with the citizens. He then continued his march slowly towards the south.²

He was willing by his deliberate movements to give time for his summons to take effect, and for the fermentation caused by the late extraordinary events to subside. He reckoned confidently on the loyalty which made the Span-

² Herrera, Hist. General, dec. 6, lib. 10, cap. 4.—Carta de Benalcázar al Emperador, desde Cali, MS., 20 Septiembre, 1542.

Benalcázar urged Vaca de Castro to assume only the title of Judge, and not that of Governor, which would conflict with the pretensions of Almagro to that part of the country known as New Toledo, and bequeathed to him by his father. "Porque yo le avisé muchas veces no entrase en la tierra como Gobernador, sino como Juez de V. M. que venia á desagraviar á los agraviados, porque todos lo rescibirían de buena gana." Ubi supra.

iard unwilling, unless in cases of the last extremity, to come into collision with the royal authority; and, however much this popular sentiment might be disturbed by temporary gusts of passion, he trusted to the habitual current of their feelings for giving the people a right direction. In this he did not miscalculate; for so deep-rooted was the principle of loyalty in the ancient Spaniard, that ages of oppression and misrule could alone have induced him to shake off his allegiance. Sad it is, but not strange, that the length of time passed under a bad government has not qualified him for devising a good one.

While these events were passing in the north, Almagro's faction at Lima was daily receiving new accessions of strength. For, in addition to those who, from the first, had been avowedly of his father's party, there were many others who, from some cause or other, had conceived a disgust for Pizarro, and who now willingly enlisted under the banner of the chief that had overthrown him.

The first step of the young general, or rather of Rada, who directed his movements, was to secure the necessary supplies for the troops, most of whom, having long been in indigent circumstances, were wholly unprepared for service. Funds to a considerable amount were raised, by seizing on the moneys of the Crown in the hands of the treasurer. Pizarro's secretary, Picado, was also drawn from his prison, and interrogated as to the place where his master's treasures were deposited. But, although put to the torture, he would not—or, as is probable, could not—give information on the subject; and the conspirators, who had a long arrear of injuries to settle with him, closed their proceedings by publicly beheading him in the great square of Lima.³

Valverde, Bishop of Cuzco, as he himself assures us, vainly interposed in his behalf. It is singular, that, the last time this fanatical prelate appears on the stage, it

³ Pedro Pizarro, Descub. y Conq., MS.—Carta de Barrio Nuevo, MS.—Carta de Fray Vicente Valverde, desde Tumbes, MS.

should be in the benevolent character of a supplicant for mercy.⁴ Soon afterwards, he was permitted, with the judge, Velasquez, and some other adherents of Pizarro, to embark from the port of Lima. We have a letter from him, dated at Tumbez, in November, 1541; almost immediately after which he fell into the hands of the Indians, and with his companions was massacred at Puná. A violent death not unfrequently closed the stormy career of the American adventurer. Valverde was a Dominican friar, and, like Father Olmedo in the suite of Cortés, had been by his commander's side throughout the whole of his expedition. But he did not always, like the good Olmedo, use his influence to stay the uplifted hand of the warrior. At least, this was not the mild aspect in which he presented himself at the terrible massacre of Caxamalca. Yet some contemporary accounts represent him, after he had been installed in his episcopal office, as unwearied in his labors to convert the natives, and to ameliorate their condition; and his own correspondence with the government, after that period, shows great solicitude for these praiseworthy objects. Trained in the severest school of monastic discipline, which too often closes the heart against the common charities of life, he could not, like the benevolent Las Casas, rise so far above its fanatical tenets as to regard the heathen as his brother, while in the state of infidelity; and, in the true spirit of that school, he doubtless conceived that the sanctity of the end justified the means, however revolting in themselves. Yet the same man,

⁴ "Siendo informado que andavan ordenando la muerte á Antonio Picado secretario del Marques que tenian preso, fui á Don Diego é á su Capitan General Joan de Herrada é á todos sus capitanes, i les puse delante el servicio de Dios i de S. M. i que bastase en lo fecho por respeto de Dios, humillandome á sus pies porque no lo matasen: i no bastó que luego dende á pocos dias lo sacaron á la plaza desta cibdad donde le cortaron la cabeza." Carta de Fray Vicente de Valverde, desde Tumbez, MS.

who thus freely shed the blood of the poor native to secure the triumph of his faith, would doubtless have as freely poured out his own in its defence. The character was no uncommon one in the sixteenth century.⁵

Almagro's followers, having supplied themselves with funds, made as little scruple to appropriate to their own use such horses and arms, of every description, as they could find in the city. And this they did with the less reluctance, as the inhabitants for the most part testified no good-will to their cause. While thus employed, Almagro received intelligence that Holguin had left Cuzco with a force of near three hundred men, with which he was preparing to effect a junction with Alvarado in the north. It was important to Almagro's success that he should defeat this junction. If to procrastinate was the policy of Vaca de Castro, it was clearly that of Almagro to quicken operations, and to bring matters to as speedy an issue as possible; to march at once against Holguin, whom he might expect easily to overcome with his superior numbers; then to follow up the stroke by the still easier defeat of Alvarado, when the new governor would be, in a manner, at his mercy. It would be easy to beat these several bodies in detail, which, once united, would present formidable odds. Almagro and his party had already arrayed themselves against the government by a proceeding too atrocious, and which struck too directly at the royal authority, for its perpetrators to flatter themselves with the hopes of pardon. Their only chance was boldly to follow up the blow, and, by success, to place themselves in so formidable an attitude as to excite

⁵ "Quel Señor obispo Fray Vicente de Balverde como persona que jamas ha tenido fin ni zelo al servicio de Dios ni de S. M. ni menos en la conversion de los naturales en los poner é dotrinar en las cosas de nuestra santa fée catholica, ni menos en entender en la paz é sosiego destos reynos, sino á sus intereses propios dando mal exemplo á todos." (Carta de Almagro á la Audiencia de Panamá, MS., 8 de Nov. 1541.) The writer, it must be remembered, was his personal enemy.

the apprehensions of government. The dread of its too potent vassal might extort terms that would never be conceded to his prayers.

But Almagro and his followers shrunk from this open collision with the Crown. They had taken up rebellion because it lay in their path, not because they had wished it. They had meant only to avenge their personal wrongs on Pizarro, and not to defy the royal authority. When, therefore, some of the more resolute, who followed things fearlessly to their consequences, proposed to march at once against Vaca de Castro, and, by striking at the head, settle the contest by a blow, it was almost universally rejected; and it was not till after long debate that it was finally determined to move against Holguin, and cut off his communication with Alonso de Alvarado.

Scarcely had Almagro commenced his march on Xauxa, where he proposed to give battle to his enemy, than he met with a severe misfortune in the death of Juan de Rada. He was a man somewhat advanced in years; and the late exciting scenes, in which he had taken the principal part, had been too much for a frame greatly shattered by a life of extraordinary hardship. He was thrown into a fever, of which he soon after died. By his death, Almagro sustained an inestimable loss; for, besides his devoted attachment to his young leader, he was, by his large experience, and his cautious though courageous character, better qualified than any other cavalier in the army to conduct him safely through the stormy sea on which he had led him to embark.

Among the cavaliers of highest consideration after Rada's death, the two most aspiring were Christoval de Sotelo, and Garcia de Alvarado; both possessed of considerable military talent, but the latter marked by a bold, presumptuous manner, which might remind one of his illustrious namesake, who achieved much higher renown under the banner of Cortés. Unhappily, a jealousy grew up between these

two officers; that jealousy, so common among the Spaniards, that it may seem a national characteristic; an impatience of equality, founded on a false principle of honor, which has ever been the fruitful source of faction among them, whether under a monarchy or a republic.

This was peculiarly unfortunate for Almagro, whose inexperience led him to lean for support on others, and who, in the present distracted state of his council, knew scarcely where to turn for it. In the delay occasioned by these dissensions, his little army did not reach the valley of Xauxa till after the enemy had passed it. Almagro followed close, leaving behind his baggage and artillery that he might move the lighter. But the golden opportunity was lost. The rivers, swollen by autumnal rains, impeded his pursuit; and, though his light troops came up with a few stragglers of the rear-guard, Holguin succeeded in conducting his forces through the dangerous passes of the mountains, and in effecting a junction with Alonso de Alvarado, near the northern seaport of Huaura.

Disappointed in his object, Almagro prepared to march on Cuzco,—the capital, as he regarded it, of his own jurisdiction,—to get possession of that city, and there make preparations to meet his adversary in the field. Sotelo was sent forward with a small corps in advance. He experienced no opposition from the now defenceless citizens; the government of the place was again restored to the hands of the men of Chili; and their young leader soon appeared at the head of his battalions, and established his winter-quarters in the Inca capital.

Here, the jealousy of the rival captains broke out into an open feud. It was ended by the death of Sotelo, treacherously assassinated in his own apartment by Garcia de Alvarado. Almagro, greatly outraged by this atrocity, was the more indignant, as he felt himself too weak to punish the offender. He smothered his resentment for the present, affecting to treat the dangerous officer with more

distinguished favor. But Alvarado was not the dupe of this specious behavior. He felt that he had forfeited the confidence of his commander. In revenge, he laid a plot to betray him; and Almagro, driven to the necessity of self-defence, imitated the example of his officer, by entering his house with a party of armed men, who, laying violent hands on the insurgent, slew him on the spot.⁶

This irregular proceeding was followed by the best consequences. The seditious schemes of Alvarado perished with him. The seeds of insubordination were eradicated, and from that moment Almagro experienced only implicit obedience and the most loyal support from his followers. From that hour, too, his own character seemed to be changed; he relied far less on others than on himself, and developed resources not to have been anticipated in one of his years; for he had hardly reached the age of twenty-two.⁷ From this time he displayed an energy and forecast, which proved him, in despite of his youth, not unequal to the trying emergencies of the situation in which it was his unhappy lot to be placed.

He instantly set about providing for the wants of his men, and strained every nerve to get them in good fighting order for the approaching campaign. He replenished his treasury with a large amount of silver which he drew from the mines of La Plata. Saltpetre, obtained in abundance in the neighborhood of Cuzco, furnished the material for gunpowder. He caused cannon, some of large dimensions, to be cast under the superintendence of Pedro de Candia, the Greek, who, it may be remembered, had first come into the country with Pizarro, and who, with a

⁶ Pedro Pizarro, *Descub. y Conq.*, MS.—Zarate, *Conq. del Peru*, lib. 4, cap. 10-14.—Gomara, *Hist. de las Ind.*, cap. 147.—*Declaracion de Uscategui*, MS.—Carta de Barrio Nuevo, MS.—Herrera, *Hist. General*, dec. 6, lib. 10, cap. 13; dec. 7, lib. 3, cap. 1, 5.

⁷ "Hizo mas que su edad requeria, porque seria de edad de veinte i dos años." Zarate, *Conq. del Peru*, lib. 4, cap. 20.

number of his countrymen,—Levantine, as they were called,—was well acquainted with this manufacture. Under their care, fire-arms were made, together with cuirasses and helmets, in which silver was mingled with copper,⁸ and of so excellent a quality, that they might vie, says an old soldier of the time, with those from the workshops of Milan.⁹ Almagro received a seasonable supply, moreover, from a source scarcely to have been expected. This was from Manco, the wandering Inca, who, detesting the memory of Pizarro, transferred to the young Almagro the same friendly feelings which he had formerly borne to his father; heightened, it may be, by the consideration that Indian blood flowed in the veins of the young commander. From this quarter Almagro obtained a liberal supply of swords, spears, shields, and arms and armor of every description, chiefly taken by the Inca at the memorable siege of Cuzco. He also received the gratifying assurance that the latter would support him with a detachment of native troops when he opened the campaign.

Before making a final appeal to arms, however, Almagro resolved to try the effect of negotiation with the new governor. In the spring, or early in the summer, of 1542, he sent an embassy to the latter, then at Lima, in which he deprecated the necessity of taking arms against an officer of the Crown. His only desire, he said, was to vindicate his own rights; to secure the possession of New Toledo, the province bequeathed to him by his father, and from

⁸ "Y demas de esto hizo armas para la Gente de su Real, que no las tenia, de pasta de Plata, i Cobre, mezclado, de que salen mui buenos Coseletes: haviendo corregido, demas de esto, todas las armas de la Tierra; de manera, que el que menos Armas tenia entre su Gente, era Cota, i Coracinas, o Coselete, i Celadas de la mesma Pasta, que los Indios hacen diestramente, por muestras de las de Milan." Zarate, *Conq. del Peru*, lib. 4, cap. 14.

⁹ "Hombres de armas con tan buenas celadas borgoñesas como se hacen en Milan." Carta de Ventura Beltran al Emperador, MS., desde Vilcas, 8 Octubre, 1542.

which he had been most unjustly excluded by Pizarro. He did not dispute the governor's authority over New Castile, as the country was designated which had been assigned to the marquess; and he concluded by proposing that each party should remain within his respective territory until the determination of the Court of Castile could be made known to them. To this application, couched in respectful terms, Almagro received no answer.

Frustrated in his hopes of a peaceful accommodation, the young captain now saw that nothing was left but the arbitrament of arms. Assembling his troops, preparatory to his departure from the capital, he made them a brief address. He protested that the step which he and his brave companions were about to take was not an act of rebellion against the Crown. It was forced on them by the conduct of the governor himself. The commission of that officer gave him no authority over the territory of New Toledo, settled on Almagro's father, and by his father bequeathed to him. If Vaca de Castro, by exceeding the limits of his authority, drove him to hostilities, the blood spilt in the quarrel would lie on the head of that commander, not on his. "In the assassination of Pizarro," he continued, "we took that justice into our own hands which elsewhere was denied us. It is the same now, in our contest with the royal governor. We are as true-hearted and loyal subjects of the Crown as he is." And he concluded by invoking his soldiers to stand by him heart and hand in the approaching contest, in which they were all equally interested with himself.

The appeal was not made to an insensible audience. There were few among them who did not feel that their fortunes were indissolubly connected with those of their commander; and while they had little to expect from the austere character of the governor, they were warmly attached to the person of their young chief, who, with all the popular qualities of his father, excited additional sympathy

from the circumstances of his age and his forlorn condition. Laying their hands on the cross, placed on an altar raised for the purpose, the officers and soldiers severally swore to brave every peril with Almagro, and remain true to him to the last.

In point of numbers, his forces had not greatly strengthened since his departure from Lima. He mustered but little more than five hundred in all; but among them were his father's veterans, well seasoned by many an Indian campaign. He had about two hundred horse, many of them clad in complete mail, a circumstance not too common in these wars, where a stuffed doublet of cotton was often the only panoply of the warrior. His infantry, formed of pikemen and arquebusiers, was excellently armed. But his strength lay in his heavy ordnance, consisting of sixteen pieces, eight large and eight smaller guns, or falconets, as they were called, forming, says one who saw it, a beautiful park of artillery, that would have made a brave show on the citadel of Burgos.¹⁰ The little army, in short, though not imposing from its numbers, was under as good discipline, and as well appointed, as any that ever fought on the fields of Peru; much better than any which Almagro's own father or Pizarro ever led into the field and won their conquests with. Putting himself at the head of his gallant company, the chieftain sallied forth from the walls of Cuzco about midsummer, in 1542, and directed his march towards the coast in expectation of meeting the enemy.¹¹

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¹⁰ "El artilleria hera suficiente para hazer bateria en el castillo de Burgos." Dicho del Capitan Francisco de Carvajal sobre la pregunta 38 de la informacion hecha en el Cuzco en 1543, á favor de Vaca de Castro, MS.

¹¹ Pedro Pizarro, Descub. y Conq., MS.—Declaracion de Uscategui, MS.—Garcilasso, Com. Real., Parte 2, lib. 2, cap. 13.—Carta del Cabildo de Arequipa al Emperador, San Joan de la Frontera, MS., 24 de Sep. 1542.—Herrera, Hist. General, dec. 7, lib. 3, cap. 1, 2.

which he had been most unjustly excluded by Pizarro. He did not dispute the governor's authority over New Castile, as the country was designated which had been assigned to the marquess; and he concluded by proposing that each party should remain within his respective territory until the determination of the Court of Castile could be made known to them. To this application, couched in respectful terms, Almagro received no answer.

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ceding year, was advancing slowly towards the south. His first act, after leaving that city, showed his resolution to enter into no compromise with the assassins of Pizarro. Benalcazar, the distinguished officer whom I have mentioned as having early given in his adherence to him, had protected one of the principal conspirators, his personal friend, who had come into his power, and had facilitated his escape. The governor, indignant at the proceeding, would listen to no explanation, but ordered the offending officer to return to his own district of Popayan. It was a bold step, in the precarious state of his own fortunes.

As the governor pursued his march, he was well received by the people on the way; and when he entered the cities of San Miguel and of Truxillo, he was welcomed with loyal enthusiasm by the inhabitants, who readily acknowledged his authority, though they showed little alacrity to take their chance with him in the coming struggle.

After lingering a long time in each of these places, he resumed his march, and reached the camp of Alonso de Alvarado, at Huaura, early in 1542. Holguin had established his quarters at some little distance from his rival; for a jealousy had sprung up, as usual, between these two captains, who both aspired to the supreme command of Captain-General of the army. The office of governor, conferred on Vaca de Castro, might seem to include that of commander-in-chief of the forces. But De Castro was a scholar, bred to the law; and, whatever authority he might arrogate to himself in civil matters, the two captains imagined that the military department he would resign into the hands of others. They little knew the character of the man.

Though possessed of no more military science than belonged to every cavalier in that martial age, the governor knew that to avow his ignorance, and to resign the management of affairs into the hands of others, would greatly impair his authority, if not bring him into contempt with the

turbulent spirits among whom he was now thrown. He had both sagacity and spirit, and trusted to be able to supply his own deficiencies by the experience of others. His position placed the services of the ablest men in the country at his disposal, and with the aid of their counsels he felt quite competent to decide on his plan of operations, and to enforce the execution of it. He knew, moreover, that the only way to allay the jealousy of the two parties in the present crisis was to assume himself the office which was the cause of their dissension.

Still he approached his ambitious officers with great caution; and the representations, which he made through some judicious persons who had the most intimate access to them, were so successful, that both were in a short time prevailed on to relinquish their pretensions in his favor. Holguin, the more unreasonable of the two, then waited on him in his rival's quarters, where the governor had the further satisfaction to reconcile him to Alonso de Alvarado. It required some address, as their jealousy of each other had proceeded to such lengths that a challenge had passed between them.

Harmony being thus restored, the licentiate passed over to Holguin's camp, where he was greeted with salvoes of artillery, and loud acclamations of "Viva el Rey" from the loyal soldiery. Ascending a platform covered with velvet, he made an animated harangue to the troops; his commission was read aloud by the secretary; and the little army tendered their obedience to him as the representative of the Crown.

Vaca de Castro's next step was to send off the greater part of his force, in the direction of Xauxa, while, at the head of a small corps, he directed his march towards Lima. Here he was received with lively demonstrations of joy by the citizens, who were generally attached to the cause of Pizarro, the founder and constant patron of their capital. Indeed, the citizens had lost no time after Almagro's departure in expelling his creatures from the municipality,

and reasserting their allegiance. With these favorable dispositions towards himself, the governor found no difficulty in obtaining a considerable loan of money from the wealthier inhabitants. But he was less successful, at first, in his application for horses and arms, since the harvest had been too faithfully gleaned, already, by the men of Chili. As, however, he prolonged his stay some time in the capital, he obtained important supplies, before he left it, both of arms and ammunition, while he added to his force by a considerable body of recruits.¹²

As he was thus employed, he received tidings that the enemy had left Cuzco, and was on his march towards the coast. Quitting Los Reyes, therefore, with his trusty followers, Vaca de Castro marched at once to Xauxa, the appointed place of rendezvous. Here he mustered his forces, and found that they amounted to about seven hundred men. The cavalry, in which lay his strength, was superior in numbers to that of his antagonist, but neither so well mounted or armed. It included many cavaliers of birth, and well-trying soldiers, besides a number who, having great interests at stake, as possessed of large estates in the country, had left them at the call of government, to enlist under its banners.¹³ His infantry, besides pikes, was indifferently well supplied with fire-arms; but he had nothing to show in the way of artillery except three or four ill-mounted falconets. Yet, notwithstanding these deficiencies, the royal army, if so insignificant a force can deserve that name, was

¹² Declaracion de Uscategui, MS.—Pedro Pizarro, Descub. y Conq., MS.—Herrera, Hist. General, dec. 7, lib. 1, cap. 1.—Carta de Barrio Nuevo, MS.—Carta de Benalcazar al Emperador, MS.

¹³ The Municipality of Arequipa, most of whose members were present in the army, stoutly urge their claims to a compensation for thus promptly leaving their estates, and taking up arms at the call of government. Without such reward, they say, their patriotic example will not often be followed. The document, which is important for its historical details, may be found in the Castilian, in *Appendix*, No. 13.

so far superior in numbers to that of his rival, that the one might be thought, on the whole, to be no unequal match for the other.¹⁴

The reader, familiar with the large masses employed in European warfare, may smile at the paltry forces of the Spaniards. But in the New World, where a countless host of natives went for little, five hundred well-trained Europeans were regarded as a formidable body. No army, up to the period before us, had ever risen to a thousand. Yet it is not numbers, as I have already been led to remark, that give importance to a conflict; but the consequences that depend on it,—the magnitude of the stake, and the skill and courage of the players. The more limited the means, even, the greater may be the science shown in the use of them; until, forgetting the poverty of the materials, we fix our attention on the conduct of the actors, and the greatness of the results.

While at Xauxa, Vaca de Castro received an embassy from Gonzalo Pizarro, returned from his expedition from the "Land of Cinnamon," in which that chief made an offer of his services in the approaching contest. The governor's answer showed that he was not wholly averse to an accommodation with Almagro, provided it could be effected without compromising the royal authority. He was willing, perhaps, to avoid the final trial by battle, when he considered that, from the equality of the contending forces, the issue must be extremely doubtful.

¹⁴ Pedro Pizarro, Descub. y Conq., MS.—Zarate, Conq. del Peru, lib. 4, cap. 15.—Carta de Barrio Nuevo, MS.

Carbajal notices the politic manner in which his commander bribed recruits into his service,—paying them with promises and fair words when ready money failed him. "Dando á unos dineros, é á otros armas i caballos, i á otros palabras, i á otros promesas, i á otros graziosas respuestas de lo que con él negociaban para tenerlos á todos muy contentos i prestos en el servicio de S. M. quando fuese menester." Dicho del Capitan Francisco de Carbajal sobre la informacion hecha en el Cuzco en 1543, á favor de Vaca de Castro, MS.